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Fifth Freedom, 1977-05-01

The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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McKuen To Aid Gay Rights

American citizens.  

Miss Bryant, spokeswoman for Florida's citrus industry, has formed a group called Save Our Children that gathered enough signatures in a petition campaign to force the Dade County Commission to call a special June 7 election on the homosexual rights law it passed earlier this year. The measure prohibits discrimination against homosexuals in housing and employment.

McKuen said at a news conference that he has cancelled several appearances outside Florida in order to campaign around the state.

"If the specter of Chairperson Bryant astride a galloping white horse as a kind of Ginny Orangeseed spreading bigotry throughout the land is certainly theatrical enough, the woman is dangerous," McKuen said.

McKuen said if he was a homosexual, said, "I've been attracted to men and I've been attracted to women. I have a 16-year-old son. You put a label on.

Save Our Children spokesman Mike Thompson, called McKuen's comments "an hysterical outburst" and an "attack on Judaism and Christianity."

He called McKuen an "out-of-town carpetbagger" and McKuen denied he was a carpetbagger and said he had made frequent visits to the state over the last 15 years and had served as college scholorships in state schools.

Singer-pot Rod McKuen joined the growing Dade County homosexual rights controversy, criticizing singer Anita Bryant as "a kind of Ginny Orangeseed spreading bigotry throughout the land" and announcing a series of benefit concerts around the state.

"I would ask those who may listen to Anita Bryant, "When are people going to stop taking it upon themselves to be policemen?" McKuen said.

"I am not interested in Ms. Bryant's personal life and I am convinced that there are more constructive things for her to do than to infringe on the privacy of individual gay and lesbian citizens."

ARKANSAS REINSTATES LAWS AGAINST SODOMY

The state of Arkansas has become the second state to reinstate its laws against private, consenting sexual behavior. Less than two years after it had repealed its sodomy laws as part of a general criminal code revision, Gov. David Pryor signed the bill on March 17 after the State House of Representatives had approved a modern law reinstatement by a 66-2 vote and the State Senate followed suit, 25-0.

The new law is the brainchild of State Rep. W.E. Stancill, a Fort Smith football coach. Stancill has made sodomy law reinstatement his personal crusade of the current legislative session after learning of the repeal this year. Stancill's original proposal would have made all oral and anal sex a crime carrying a ten-year prison sentence. However, as revised the new law covers same-sex sexual activity and would make such activity a misdemeanor.

The main Senate sponsor of the bill, Sen. Milt Earnhardt of Fort Smith, told the Senate, "This bill is aimed at weirdos and queers who live in a fairyland world and are trying to wreck family life."

The only other state which has reinstated sodomy laws is Idaho, which repealed its laws in 1972 only to reinstate them after a massive public outcry. An attempt in the Indiana legislature to reinstate the state's recently repealed laws failed in committee by a 6-4 vote during this session of the legislature.

The primary reason for both the Arkansas and Idaho reinstatements is that sodomy repeal has often been carried out as part of general criminal code revisions. Many legislatures have voted for the revisions without apparently realizing that the revisions left their states with no laws against homosexual sexual activity.

Only two states of the nineteen that have repealed their laws did so in an actual vote on the issue of prohibiting consensual sexual activity. California did so last year in a close vote and Wyoming repealed its laws overwhelmingly during this year's legislative session.

Gay Week Human Rights Panel

New York Mayor Abraham Beame has appointed Robert Livingstone as the first openly gay person to serve on the city's Human Rights Commission, which is charged with preventing discrimination based on race, sex, creed, and age in employment and housing. Although the city does not have a gay rights law at this time, the commission would have jurisdiction in enforcing it should it be passed.

Livingston freely admits that his appointment is largely political, related to the upcoming election, in which Beame is expected to be opposed by Bella Abzug and Rep. Edward Koch, both strong supporters of gay rights. "Of course my appointment is related to the election. It's about time the mayor figured out that there are gay voters out there. It doesn't bother me. My own feeling is that gay people have got to learn to play politics like anyone else. It's better to be on the inside than to be outside on the steps. My hope is that members of the city council will read the shift in the winds. I want to use the powers of my office to convert those who have been less than supportive toward us."

In this issue we conclude "Whip Me, Beat Me: Variations on a Theme", by A. Earl Hershberger.

In this issue is only eight pages, we are cramped for space and could only run a few of our monthly features. We will return to twelve pages with our next issue in early June: a special Gay Pride issue.

Editorial/Comment............2
Short Shots....................3
"Whip Me, Beat Me"........4
Classifieds....................7
Mattachine News.............7
EDITORIAL

ON SUPPORT GROUPS

Unlearning to be "men"...learning to be human: this is what gay liberation and human liberation have to offer males. To be "men" is to be competitive, sexist, unfeeling, isolated ("strong"), and never to cry. To be human, to be a person, is to feel, to be feeling, soft, honest, open, direct, unafraid to cry, and capable of learning the world we were taught to be "men", but where do we learn to be human?

You learn to be human by getting together with other people who want to be human, and knowing yourself in that common effort. Support in this sense means to encourage, assist, and nurture each other in growing; it means to be confrontative when others are being played and trying to be laid; it means to deal with each other and yourself in feeling rather than thinking; it means consciousness raising.

The gay support groups currently active in Buffalo (with the informal collective name of Metro Gay Men) consist of six to ten gay men who meet weekly in each other's homes for three or four hours. There are no group leaders or facilitators for the quality and content of the group's interactions and the moral responsibility of each member of the group. No one member guides or oversees the meetings to assure that no one is left out: it is each member's responsibility to see that his own needs get met. It is not a place for politeness, social conventions, automatic conversations (How are you? Fine. And you? Fine.) or tripling. It is a place to grow in self-knowledge: to understand who you are, what your needs are, why your needs aren't getting met and what you can do to get them met.

What is talked about? Members talk about their feelings about themselves and their lives; they talk about how they feel they are relating to each other, about how they feel they are being related to. Sometimes they don't talk...and then they talk about their silence. Sometimes they shout bullshit...and then they talk about that too. Sometimes they fight, sometimes they cry, sometimes they hug and kiss each other; lots of times it's intense, and it's fun. You come to feel better about who you are.

Being in a group is a serious commitment. The group can only exist and thrive if each member really recognizes and accepts all of its importance in his life and nurtures it accordingly. Like any valued relationship, a group requires a willingness to be open to emotional threat and pain; it requires an attitude of caring love for the group as a whole and for each individual in the group, especially yourself. Lots of energy and lots of work are necessary to keep a group going, growing and meeting your needs; it eludes in return in proportion as it is given to. That it eludes is lots of good feelings about yourself and others, and a real opportunity to get in touch with your own needs and understand how to get them met.

To join a gay man's support group, call the Hotline number (891-5335), and leave your name and how you can be reached. New groups are constantly in formation, and when enough names have been collected for a new group to be formed, you will all be put in contact with each other, to arrange time, meeting place, etc.

COMMENT

ON FATHER McNEILL

When it comes to doing numbers on gay people's lives nothing does it more effectively, with more devastating results, than religion does. The battered psyche syndromes of disturbed homosexuals almost always include painful experiences related to some form of organized religious indoctrination. Probably the world's champion in this area of homophbic havoc is the Catholic Church. If every gay woman or man who has tasted the wrath of Rome were to stand up and be counted the total number would be staggering.

Oppression of gays by the Church has not been by just spiritual means. It has often been physical as well. It's commonly known that Bishop Head of the Western New York Diocese actively supported lobbying efforts in Albany to defeat the Salesian Repagination Bill in 1972, but aptly, punned it: "Head opposed giving head."

Until fairly recently there were only two means of escape with the Roman Catholic Church if you were gay. You either lied or you denied. The former involved deceiving everyone, including yourself, to remain in what is termed (shudder) a state of grace. The latter meant simply cutting yourself off completely from Mother Church and her ministries. What happened to create a compromise position for Catholic gays was the foundation of an organization known as Dignity which was formed by and for Catholic homosexuals, with the help of some enlightened non-gay priests, to devise a way in which one could be comfortably gay and Catholic at the same time.

Several months ago a book was published called, "The Church and the Homosexual." Its author, Rev. John J. McNeill, is co-founder of the New York Chapter of Dignity. His book created a mild sensation among theologians and gays alike and resulted in a controversy that has yet to subside and may not for quite a long time. If it ever does.

On March 25, 1977, Father McNeill was a guest speaker at Daemen College. His appearance there was sponsored by the school's Department of Sociology and Social Work, the campus ministry, and Dignity/Buffalo. A surprisingly large and homogeneous audience gathered to hear the too-brief talk and participate in the question and answer session.

What Father McNeill had to say was mostly a series of predictable and fairly logical personal observations about those passages from scripture which are the basis for the Church's discriminatory stand against homosexual people. None of his insights was one which postulates that the real sin of sodomy and Comorrah was not homosexuality at all, but rather the evil they did. This premise, together with the others he set forth, was carefully rooted in biblical interpretation. But then, so are the positions of the Church that they supposedly refute.
SHORT SHOTS

Nice Choice
The appointment of the "first gay activist" to serve on the New York City Human Rights Commission was announced last month by Mayor Beame. Robert L. Livingston, a former publisher of More magazine and on the finance committee for the National Gay Task Force was one of six new appointments which the mayor said "represent the city's unique diversity." Livingston said, "I don't want to be known as the gay member of the commission, I want to be known as the commissioner who happens to be gay." He described his appointment as "timely recognition of the large number of homosexuals in New York City," which he estimated at "at least half a million." (New York Times)

Gay AA
"Living Sober '77" is the theme of the Second Annual Western Round-Up of the Gay Alcoholics Anonymous. The event will be held in San Francisco July 1, 2, 3, & 4 at a location to be announced. Included on the agenda are speakers, panel discussions, workshops, mini-marathons and much more according to the groups' organizing committee. For registration mail $7.50 to: Treasurer, Western Round-Up, P.O. Box 31474, San Francisco, CA 94131

No Touchee
The Bloomington Indiana Human Rights Commission has ruled gays and same-sex couples have no right to dance together. In a 5-1 decision the commission found that "gays are an invisible class" and said since same-sex couple dancing does not indicate sexual orientation, there is nothing they can do to force discos to lift a ban on same-sex couples dancing together. The commission also held that they had no jurisdiction over bans which forbid persons of the same sex from hugging or sharing an apartment. The city has an ordinance banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The commission stated that bans on same-sex couples dancing or sharing apartments are "neutral" rules and thus are not covered by the ordinance. Indiana gays have protested that the ruling effectively destroys the non-discrimination ordinance. (IBT News)

For Women
A directory of Women's Media, including periodicals, small presses, courses, art resources, library collections, news services and more is now available. Interested people should write Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3108 Ross Place NW, Washington D.C. 20008.

Mass March
The Gay Action Coalition is planning a massive demonstration at the Supreme Court on May 21 to mark the first anniversary of the Court's decision uphold the right of states to govern private, consenting sexual conduct. A spokesperson said, "We must not be quiet, we must be good footsoldiers and demonstrate to the profound and worldwide, the awesome and we are proud and we are beautiful." (okie Belles)

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Anita Booster
Big Brothers Milanese, already under Legal orders because of their anti-gay discrimination policies, have now moved into the Dade County ordinance struggle. The exector director of the Milanese group wrote a letter recently to Anita Bryant and described his battle with the Twin Cities gay ordinance. He also complimented Bryant for her "efforts in behalf of the children of your area." Save Our Children recently designed a full-page newspaper ad using the letter and the Milanese ordinance as part of their anti-gay campaign. "Would you want a homosexual 'Big Brother' for your fatherless boy?" said the headline on an ad placed in the April 3 edition of the Miami Herald. The ad notes that in Milanese the Big Brother organization was forced to discriminate against a gay applicant and warns that the same thing could happen in Miami. (Gay Community News)

Despair
Dr. Renee Richards, the transsexual tennis player who sued to play under the name of Richard Raskind, announced in a press conference in New York City that she is broke and in debt as a result of her attempts to gain legitimacy as a woman's tennis player. Dr. Richards announced that she has given up her practice as a $100,000-a-year ophthalmologist and that he has withdrawn her lawsuit against the tennis establishment. (Philadelphia Gay News)

Inroads
The U.S. Job Corps has recently distributed to all training centers a radically revised manual on sexuality which eliminates all the antihomosexual elements contained in the previous manual, entitled "Sexual Deviation." The new manual urges respect for differing sexual lifestyles and instructs Job Corps directors that "rules concerning sexual behavior must be the same for heterosexual and homosexual activities." The new manual also states that "a man or woman may not be excluded from participating in the Job Corps solely on the basis of his/her choice of a sexual partner of the same gender. Therefore, homosexuality will be considered as one part of the total spectrum of sexuality, and should be of concern to center staff only when a particular behavior is not or is keeping with the center's regulations." (Gay News)

Classics Banned
The Canadian government has prohibited importation of "The Very Lonely Man," two explicit but high-quality books concerning gay male sexuality. Copies of the books were seized by Canadian customs and were immediately sent to Ottawa for a decision. Officials here ruled the two books "immoral and indecent" and banned them from Canada, Harvey Hayes, author of "Lonely Man" with the late Dr. Mark Friedman, called the ban itself "immoral and indecent." "This decision makes absolutely no sense," said Hayes. "It is a pure case of homophobia." (Toronto World)

T V Envy
Ex-gay evangelist Gay Charles, who claims to have "saved" several young men from homosexuality, is now protesting a made-for-television movie about ex-Sgt. Leonard Matlovich. The organization he works for, Liberation to Jesus Christ, has sent a letter to NBC criticizing the project. The letter goes on: "Why doesn't your network present the other side of the homosexual picture, namely those who are able to change their sexual life-style, rather than attempting to force it upon others?" They also threaten to boycot all sponers of shows with gay themes. (Gay News)
WHIP ME, BEAT ME: VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Part Two

BY E. R. HERSHEYBERGER

So, on to another scene.

There you are all tied up, out or whatever when the phone rings and your master asks if you have forgotten that it is constant noise interrupts his strain of concentration, or something. It's his mother wondering why he hasn't called and you realize that he is in for a long talk. This does give you some time to think, however, and examine your situation. (Not the immediate one- you are thinking of the little ones.) Of course your arms may get tired but that's part of the scene. Just what is the "scene?"

Let me make clear, at this juncture, that I am not advocating S&M, leathersex, pain or whatever you wish to label this variation of human sexuality. For those who are interested it is fun and can be a great turn-on (yeah!) but for others it would be a waste. I have found, at times, this form of experience to be quite exciting and have repeated my experiences when I had the urge to do so. As with all sexual activities it is up to the individuals involved as to "what the right to do what and with whom and to whom."

There are various levels and/or activities that can all fit into the larger category of activities loosely referred to as S&M. Before going much further we must examine some of the jargon used by the participants.

Everyone should be familiar with the terms Master and Slave. These are used in the closest sense possible.

In theory the Master is controlling the Slave. In practice the reverse is usually true. The gratification of both participants is dependent on the slave fulfilling certain role expectations while "in service" to his master. There are limitations, however which the Master can not exceed. To do so would turn the Slave off. This in turn would turn off the Master and the successful completion of the scene. For the Slave the Master must control the action and the Master must be aware of this control. Once these parameters are set, and observed, the scene can proceed on a logical course dependent on the satisfaction of all concerned.

(m.b. - it might be interesting to re-mark here about duality in the scene. If b/d is bondage and discipline for sadist and masochist, yet the role portrayed by the participants are the reverse of their technical indicators; they become Slave and Master. It is strange that this reversal takes the terminology out of the clinical areas and place it in real-life situations.)

Now we proceed to the ultimate in brevity, and usually confusion; the ad in your favorite under-the-counter (or wherever) newspaper, to wit:

"b/d bondage and discipline. N.B. a bondage and discipline. NO fats, fems dopers or freaks need apply. Box B/W/I, my mistress, where you call it; objects love."

Of course this ad doesn't really exist (I hope) but it serves as an excellent example of how the language can communicate some people use to attract others for various reasons. The terminology is pretty much standard no matter which publication you read. B/d is bondage and discipline. This is fairly self-explanatory. The discipline can range from mild spanking to heavier scenes with whips, belts, paddles, etc. Of course bondage is considered to be necessary and an integral part of the scene. S/m usually indicates a desire for a heavy (bvy) scene; ff is fast fucking (a very dangerous practice that seems to be growing in popularity and can lead to all sorts of intestinal and rectal problems. It can even cause death.) j/w/s is water sports a desire to take a golden shower or even drink urine (scat deal with excretion); steel rest, is steel restraints, handcuffs, shackles and even orthopedic braces; isolation is just what it implies- being left alone for long periods of time, usually in some form of semi-painful and restrictive bondage; genitorture is the torture derived from the application of pain to the genitals, a particularly strange sort in which the sufferer might be excruciatingly fascinating (so I've been told).

A comment here on the last line of ad- the highly structured scene of leathersex makes the seeking of the perfect partner more desirable for the participants but also cuts off the poss -ibility of others, possibly more ful- filling relationships. In this way the scene is somewhat exclusive.

Of course the ad described above is apocryphal. It is also very under-scriptive in that it does not deal with the mental state of the writer or the person he seeks. This is something that can only be described, and then only generally, by the participants. Why does one person want to submit to another? Why does any one of us choose the particular form of gratification that we like? Neither question is really answerable by any individual, and can definitely not be answered by an outsider, no matter how many degrees he holds.

Meanwhile, back at the scene....

You are presently hanging around waiting for your lover/Master to get through talking (or listening) to his mother. Over the past few months you and he have put together quite a nice collection of "toys" to aid in the scene that you are both so fond of referring to as "our thing."

The fun of gathering this little collection of esoteric devices and trying them out (usually on you) has been one of the reasons you have been interested in "toys." Another is, of course, that they do produce such nice, and painful, results when used properly (or otherwise). Of course, looking around the apartment you are amazed at how much you have been able to squeeze into the small living space (and conversely out of your mutual waist band). Of course you have found a small rack (it collapses and fits in the back of a closet when not in use; for only $300, plus shipping Charges!) in another corner is a set of stocks ($125) and behind them, on the wall usual concealed by a curtain hangs an assortment of 15 to 20 whips, paddles, etc. (ranging in price from $15 to $45) Your lover while still listening to Mommy, is flicking a studded belt across your delightfully exposed and vulnerable butt (held $15, but negotiable). Your suspension harness (S85) is pinching a little and getting you excited. You can't respond because he has locked his hands ($25) in your wrists, and now both hands are held in place by wrist restraints ($12.95) attached to the chain. Your legs are held firmly apart by leg restraints ($15.95) that are attached to hooks in the door frame. By now you should be getting the idea that the Scene is very EXPENSIVE!!!

"You see mostly the use of leather is costing you a small fortune and it isn't necessary. The specialty shops that deal in these goods have got you where they want you. The items listed above cost over $1000 a sum that few of us can afford.

And there is little or no need to be taking an economic risk in these shops. Quite a few of the toys and/or devices can be made cheaply or can have other materials substituted for them. A few examples is of a writing noose or writing dog collar restraints so popular with the whip set. They pay up to $35 for a set of these restraints when a $10 collar, is available at most pet supply house will sell just as well. The leash-rings are excellent for attaching thing to you and to you things. And the cost for a set of five collars is between $10 and $15, depending on where you shop.

A good leather punch (single size) only costs $1.50 and is all you need to make adjustments for size in the leather straps. Steel choke collars make excellent wrist and ankle restraints that can be kept handy with inexpensive spring clamps or miniature locks (Master Locks- how applicable- makes and excellent one, Model 100A- meaning keyed alike so that several locks all have the same key, a convenience when you are in a hurry!) Don't use a free running choke collar on the throat- it can cause serious problems, like unintentional strangulation. Everybody has a variety of belts. I own at least six (some of which no longer fit) all in leather. Of course you may want a studded belt- so do it yourself. Studding materials, and kits, are available at most leather
a one inch dowel several inches long. Stockes can be made from scrap lumber. A rack (if you really need one) can be made with a little ingenuity. Weights can be made from scrap lead melted down on the kitchen stove and poured into suitable molds. Why be ripped-off? Sure you may want a special piece of equipment every once in awhile and only the specialty shops can filling it. In the meantime use your own skills (and even if they are limited as mine) - you will be $$$ ahead of the game.

A rare device, an internally pin-stuck stuffed jock (if you are into geniturtoise) costs over $30.00. Why not use small tacks in a double-seam bathing suit? You can even get away with draw-strings. One size fits all!

With the exceptions of gifts and two special pieces of gear my entire collection of S&M materials cost me less than $30.00 and All of it fits into an attache case. Have fun, will travel!!

Now that the economics have been dealt with let's get back to you and your Master. Let's assume that you and your Lover/Master have been together for two or three years. You have both stayed with in the defined roles. It is Saturday afternoon and you are about to be disciplined. You may not have done anything wrong at all this week but you are being disciplined because you will remember that you are the slave and he is the Master. You would not have it any other way. You have been used, abused and given to other people as part of the scene that you and he have worked out and refined over the period of your relationship.

As he approaches you you start to tremble. He kisses you lightly and rolls your nipples between his finger and thumb increasing the pressure with each light kiss. You are breathing a little heavier. Weights are attached to a chain that hangs from your balls. He whips you. He "rapes" you. You finally reach your own orgasm and both of you collapse into the arms of the Master.

I don't think you would have it any other way. Some of the old zing is missing. You still love him and you know that you still want to be his willing slave.

As you talk you both start to realize that your relationship is changing. You have set higher limits on the action and he is lowering his limits because he does not want to hurt you. Your training as a slave is over and you are now a junior master. He finds you a new slave to train while he still controls the scene, as far as the new parameters will let him. This works for a time as does your going out on your own with other Masters. He even switches roles with you and acts as the slave on some occasions.

Your love for each other continues but one area roles are more flexible, your actions less constrained. You are both independent individuals and recognize this in each other.

To those not familiar with the S&M scene this reshaping of roles and activities may seem strange if not impossible. They are not allowing for human growth and change. They have preconceived notions of what goes in the "whips and chains" set and can not, or will, not allow themselves to think that alternative scenes are possible between the participants.

Most of the people I have talked to who are into S&M agree that change in roles status is possible, and even preferred because it does indicate growth. Stagnation is a deplorable trait in any human endeavor.

Speaking from a purely personal out look I have reservations about some of the things I see in the leather set. The strict discipline of the leather code, the constants use of leather to set one apart from others, (the expense is really too much); the keys worn on one side or the other that are not truly indicative of the wearers intentions for that evening; the extreme scene of the macho that has to be maintained at all times in the bars for fear of exclusion by the rest of the gang for some small flip of the wrist. All of these things can be a stultifying as the harness that paraphral society would have us wear. Conform or be pariah seems to be the message that so many of the leather boys are trying to convey. I can play either role depending on my mood and the person I am with. I can enjoy rough and tumble action or quiet seductive love making. But each of us must chose the type of action that suits us best.

A wine and cheese reception followed in one of Daemen's student lounges. The feeling of disappointment was reflected in one overheard remark. Recalling that Father McNeill had said he felt homosexuality would be the Church's major moral issue of the seventies, as was birth control in the fifties and abortion in the sixties, the wishful comment made was, "Boz, I hope we make it better than they did."

"Somehow, I think it's a seller's market tonight."
"According to the guide book, I think you said "How many rubles is it to the nearest gay bath?" and I think he said, "I am a secret police agent; follow me to the station, please."
MATTACHINE NEWS

The next Mattachine General Membership Meeting will be held on May 15 at the Unitarian Church on Elmwood Avenue at West Ferry. Everyone is invited to a pot luck dinner at 6:00 PM (bring your favorite dish). The meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Gay Pride week activities will be discussed. Anyone interested in planning the workshops, dance and picnic is urged to attend. General membership meetings are always held on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

Mattachine Society is planning a gala dance on June 11 at 9 PM at the Unitarian Church to kick off Gay Pride Week activities. Beer, pop and food will be on hand. There will be the 50/50 Split Club drawing.

Costumes are welcomed.

DINNER THEATER AT THE DOWNTOWN MANOR

The Downtown Manor at 212 Franklin is presenting the play "Hot L Baltimore" from May 22 to June 20. Dinner/Theater is $8.95 (Students $6.95 on Mon. & Tues.). Play only is $5. Dinner is at 6 PM, play at 7. Call 842-1182 for reservations.

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