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mattachine 50c **REVIEW**

MAY 1959



REVOLT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL

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In addition to *Mattachine REVIEW* (Monthly), the Society and its branch offices issue the following periodicals and newsletters:

INTERIM - Quarterly. National newsletter of the Society, subscription included with each full payment of national dues. Published and mailed

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mattachine REVIEW

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Volume V

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REVOLT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL

by Seymour Krim and David McReynolds

The following interview between a homosexual and a straight guy, together with a reply to the interview, were published in *VILLAGE VOICE*, weekly newspaper of Greenwich Village, New York. Seymour Krim wrote the interview; David McReynolds wrote the reply. The articles are reproduced here with permission of the newspaper, which is located at 22 Greenwich Ave., New York 11, N. Y.

by Seymour Krim

STRAIGHT GUY: You say I can talk frankly to you. O. K. Why have so many fairies come out in the open recently? Wherever I go I run into them—the Village, East Side, Harlem, even the Bronx.

HOMOSEXUAL: We no longer have the energy to hide. You can't know the strain on a person in always pretending. As Donald Webster Cory says in "The Homosexual in America," we have been the great unrecognized minority. That time is ending. We want recognition for our simple human rights, just like Negroes, Jews, and women.

SG: You actually think you'll be accepted on your own terms?

H: Certainly. For years homosexuals in this country have cringed behind a mask of fear. Legally they're criminals, morally they're considered perverted, psychologically they've tortured themselves. Courageous gay people are now beginning to realize that they are human beings who must fight to gain acceptance for what they are—not what others want them to be.

SG: Let me be blunt. Do you think it does your cause any good to see platinum-haired freaks

swishing along 8th Street screaming at the top of their voices? Are you naive enough to believe the rest of us see anything sympathetic in this?

H: You're the naive one because your experience is limited. Such homosexuals are in the minority, as much as a camping prostitute compared with most women.

SG: But you'll admit that most homosexuals are much more effeminate in their actions than ordinary men?

H: I doubt that modern psychology concedes such a thing as an ordinary man or woman. But let that pass. It's true, I think, that we are more aesthetic or perhaps outwardly fastidious than most men. But then it's been pointed out that American women have become increasingly vigorous. Does this make them any less female?

SG: Not necessarily, though my ego would like it better if they were more dewey. But they still go for men, not their own kind.

H: That's not completely true. Many women have a deep hatred for the presumption of superiority that the modern straight man puts on.

SG: I won't argue with you. The important thing is that the essential sexual need for each other is still there and will remain. It may sound obvious, but God or nature obviously intended men and women to make it with each other.

H: That seems logical on the surface. But when you look at history you'll see that there's never been a culture without homosexuality. It's always existed: among the Greeks, Romans, even the American Indians. I believe it is a fundamental part of human life.

SG: Then why do you think it's always been outlawed? I'm fairly sophisticated, but I believe society had no choice in condemning sodomy. Let's face it: if homosexuality were encouraged the family would disintegrate, a farce would be made of every moral principle on which we were raised, and the perpetuation of life itself could conceivably be endangered.

H: Editorial-page gas! The human race can certainly withstand a comparative handful of homosexuals if it's going to survive. Nuclear weapons are obviously a much closer threat. As for the family's falling apart, homosex-

uality is only one tiny cause among hundreds for the tension people have in living with each other today. I have little sympathy for your so-called moral principles. Morals change as we view life differently, and it's right that we abandon them when we can no longer see their truth.

SG: Maybe you can't see their truth. But millions of people still have hopes for leading some kind of traditional life—with families, children, and the rest of the bit.

H: I have nothing but good will toward such people. But nothing gives them the right to impose their desires on human beings who can't or don't want to follow the same goals. It's hypocrisy to pretend that we live in a Victorian world or even one with agreed-upon values.

SG: Is it Victorian to wish for a complete life? People like yourself are amputated and therefore make bitter fun of it. But the majority of us still have the possibility of getting normal satisfactions out of living.

H: No one is preventing you. I personally think you're deluding yourself in pretending a normality which no longer exists. But that's only my private opinion. I merely want my own freedom to behave as I choose and must.

SG: Didn't it ever occur to you that you might be literally sick? Suppose I were a compulsive murderer and said I wanted my own freedom to behave as I had to. You'd smile and have me locked up.

H: But homosexuals murder nothing except a preconception of what people are supposed to be. Certainly it's occurred to me that I'm "sick," in your handy word. Every minority person in America feels this pressure, sometimes to the screaming-point. In fact I was in therapy for almost four years, examining every angle of my so-called problem.

SG: Well?

H: I came to the conclusion that I was different, not sick. Under the analyst's guidance I dated women and even slept with several. But our love-making, the "techniques," ended up exactly as between two men; I could become passionate no other way. I even imagined they were boys during the whole thing. Believe me, I tried incredibly hard to act straight. But it finally just seemed a tortured attempt to be something I'm not.

SG: What did your psychiatrist say?

H: At first he said my fantasizing of men when I was with a woman was a reflection of how deep-seated my problem was. He maintained it could be "cured" and told me he'd had success before. But when I tirelessly tried to suppress my desire for men, and it came upon me anyway, he finally conceded that I would be less miserable as a homosexual. The rest of the therapy tried to blot out the guilt that I and all gay people feel for not being permitted to express ourselves.

SG: Then he finally did say you were abnormal, or sick, but had to make the best of it—correct?

H: Yes. But I myself was beginning to realize for the first time

in my life that I was only sick in relation to a majority standard.

SG: But your analyst didn't agree with you. And most psychiatrists would say that homosexuality is a fixation at an infantile level and represents a sadly distorted and undeveloped personality.

H: I'd find a moral judgement in such a generalization rather than the modest impersonality that's supposed to distinguish science. Undeveloped by what standard? I once read that Carl Sandburg was an "undeveloped Walt Whitman"—and Walt, of course, was gay. So who's infantile there? You use the words "sadly distorted"—in comparison to what? A fantasy of the ideal arrow-collar man or the imperfect flesh-and-boozie mortals whom we both know? I've discovered that much psychiatric language is based on a too-pure and debatable ideal of what people should be like. If you lowered the ideal to the actual reality around us, you wouldn't be so pious about the homosexual.

SG: That's a defensive argument. The standards that psychiatry uses are rationally established after scrupulous and neutral research.

H: Bushwa! Many psychiatrists use conventional middle-class American ideals of psychological well-being as their standard. There is nothing universal about them. They merely happen to reflect the majority attitudes at this time. In the future you'll see the equally suave acknowledgment of different standards, including the right of the homosexual to fully express himself as a "healthy"

individual in terms of his tradition.

SG: Do you actually think society will give up its basic distinctions of right and wrong, a working separation between normality and abnormality, just to accommodate the guilt of homosexuals?

H: It must. Homosexuals have submitted too weakly until now to judgements from above. We now know that what you call society actually gets down to individuals in positions of social power, who call the tune and set the standards. Many of us are no longer willing to put up with this degrading of our personalities. Merely to live, we must assert ourselves as homosexuals who are as proud to be what we are as you are of yourself. When this movement becomes powerful enough—and gay people refuse either to hide or flaunt themselves—it will be openly accepted.

SG: You're kidding yourself if you believe that what's always been recognized as the number-one human perversion will suddenly be completely whitewashed.

H: What is a perversion? Truly modern people find it hard to see the idea of perversion in any kind of sex relationship. The entire concept is beginning to die as people realize that whatever can be done with the body is ultimately just and natural if it gives pleasure without causing harm. Be realistic. Why is it any worse for a man to perform oral intercourse with another man instead of with a woman? Or for two women to do so, instead of woman and man? Or for masturbation to involve two men instead of woman and man? Do you think our organs themselves are prejudiced and

draw a line? You moralize, but you don't have the courage to carry your logic to the end.

SG: Listen, homosexuality is obviously a substitute for the regular thing. You never mention this ABC of reasoning. You keep trying to wipe out sexual differences and pretend there are no basic distinctions between men and women. I'm convinced you do this because it gives you an excuse to act like a woman.

H: I doubt if there's a man alive who doesn't feel "womanly" at some time, if you mean responsive, tender, sweet, even cuddly. The old categories of a man being Mars and a woman Venus are artificial: only insensitive people or poseurs pretend to a cartoon image of masculinity vs. femininity. I'm not wiping out sexual differences. Social change itself has softened the dividing line. It was once considered mannish for women to drive a car, smoke on the street, drink at a bar, earn an independent buck. We laugh at this today. Those who come after us will laugh at the pressures once put upon men to keep up a front of endless courage, indifference to delicacy, superiority over women. If I prefer gentleness to harshness, I'm not being a woman. I'm being human—something you might be ashamed of, with your straightjacket notion of masculinity.

SG: You mean because I don't mince, I'm a barbarian? Because I don't simper or speak in a falsetto or try to goose a waiter, I'm behind the times? Yeah, I'm a brute, I like women, steak, baseball, poker and bourbon. Maybe I'll be arrested in this beautiful future of yours.

H: In my future you'd merely be seen as a person of limited tastes. But I don't want to be arrested in your present for liking men, coq au vin, bridge, Modigliani, and dry sherry! Thank God that some people are forever deprived of so-called normality so that they can one day see how shallow and intolerant it is. When homosexuality achieves legitimacy, it will be seen as a branch of a river rather than a contamination of the source. When it is given unity, homosexual culture will be seen as constituting a unique view of experience, offering insights to all people. The homosexuality of great figures of the past—not only your Prousts and Whitmans—will be revealed, as Byron's is beginning to be, and

he the outstanding popular symbol of the Don Juan! All the dearly-bought insight that has come out of a closed-door suffering which can no longer bear its isolation will be given to society at large.

SG: I can't see this occurring in my lifetime. No matter how sloppy-liberal I ever get I'll always see homosexuality as anti-masculine, perverse, a short-circuit of nature's obvious logic in creating two sexes. And a pathological Star of David for those who have to carry it.

H: You're the prisoner of what you think is your honesty. We live in a torn-open age where each minority is determined to proclaim itself as good as the

self-appointed judges of a life which no longer provides a rational basis for their prejudices. We homosexuals will be in the leadership of this revolt, with this phrase of Wilhelm Reich's as a motto: "That which is alive is in itself reasonable. It becomes a caricature when it is not allowed to live."

SG: You make it sound like a holy crusade, when you really feel inside—from what faggots have told me—that you're miserable and almost unworthy to live.

H: But that's the point. We've finally rebelled against feeling this way because our human nature can no longer stand it. Look out for people whom you have driven to such an extreme! We refuse to live any longer as exotic

pets. We refuse to be discriminated against in job situations and in the Army and Navy. We refuse to be fired from government service as "security risks" and then have the New York Times refuse to print the details. We refuse to marry in order to disguise what we are, and we refuse to pretend any longer to enjoy a heterosexuality that is foreign to most of us. Life is too fast and mad today for us to accept old-fashioned socially-induced suffering. But accept it or not, we will force our way into open society and you will have to acknowledge us. From 4 to 7 million American adults—at least—are not going to be treated like criminals or freaks because we are no longer going to accept your evaluation of us. Baby, remember my words!

McReynolds Replies to Krim

The Gay Underground—

Seymour Krim deserves credit for tackling the question of homosexuality in the March 18 issue of *The Voice*. With something like 10 per cent of the adult male population involved, homosexuality is due for some serious attention.

However, Krim is off base in suggesting that queer brigades are about to storm the citadels of prudery, with Reichian slogans inscribed on their sequined banners. First, homosexuals as a group aren't going to lead any revolt because the last thing they want is to get involved in any real struggle. They just want to be let alone to lead their precious lives in their presently established dainty fashion. Second, in implying some kind of moral integrity and fervor to the

"gay underground" is to fail to see gay society for what it is—a tragic sub-culture which is every bit as sick as the larger society in which it exists.

Channel of Rebellion

Krim speaks of homosexuals coming out of hiding to demand and insist on their rights as a group. This is nonsense. The homosexuals who are flaunting themselves have no interest in

getting social acceptance. What Krim sees as a growing demand for recognition by society is nothing but the use of homosexuality as a channel of rebellion against society. Negroes and Puerto Ricans, for example, become homosexuals and are often proud of it because it represents a sub-culture which has few color or class lines—the common denominator is sex. In addition, the homosexual sub-culture has the atmosphere of glitter and a pretense to luxury which is difficult to find in the drab and crowded streets of Harlem.

Or in the case of teen-agers, many have turned to homosexuality in the same way that others

have taken up jazz, grow beards, or smoke pot; it represents a rebellion against the established order. I remember when I lived in Santa Monica that every weekend during the summer gangs of teen-age homosexuals would descend on the beach. And they did such a public job of being queer that one had to wonder if perhaps the laddies weren't protesting their homosexuality too much. I doubt very much that their "gayness" had any deep sexual roots. I think it was simply an exotic form of juvenile delinquency.

Must Prove It

I'd like to suggest several factors that contribute to the in-

creasing homosexual population. For one thing, American culture does not have any "rites of passage" to assure a boy that he has become a man. He must prove his manliness repeatedly (and endlessly). The only way he can prove it is by doing "manly" things and by *not doing* "unmanly things"—like writing poetry or taking up dance or painting. The confused years of adolescence generate the "gangs" of American culture, in which boys group together to reassure themselves they are really men. The gang must do exciting and dangerous things. Women are objects external to the gang—things to be conquered sexually, and evidence (through the conquest) of manliness. But the real emotional ties too often lie within the gang. And when the deepest emotional ties are with one's own sex, there is an explosive potential for homosexuality and for guilt. This theory of the "male alliance"—first developed I believe by my friend John Kitsusi, a West Coast sociologist—is an essential part of American culture. The stag party and the fraternal order are as necessary on the adult level as the gang is on the juvenile level. This endless attempt to prove masculinity by close association with other men is simply a device which produces homosexuality.

For every homosexual who feels compelled to "announce" his existence by slithering down 8th Street, there are countless others who act more like men than most men. The tight levis, rough plaid shirt, leather jacket—these are

equally the badge of the new American homosexual and of those members of the male alliance trying so desperately to prove their masculinity.

The "male alliance" also works in reverse—those boys who cannot fit into it, who feel they have to paint, to write, to dance, find themselves called queer. It is all too easy for the young boy, who knows so little of himself and may not respect his differentness, to accept this externally imposed definition and move into homosexual society. A friend of mine, a homosexual and a gifted choreographer, once told me that while not all men were homosexual when they started to dance, almost every single male dancer ends that way. Why? In France, for example, we find leading ballet dancers with a wife and four kids.

And finally I believe a number of men become homosexual because homosexuality is an escape from reality. Their motive is not that of rebellion, but simply escape. The homosexual's gay underground is a world of night lights, mystery, and youth forever beautiful. It is a deodorized world, without children or pain or ugliness or death. It is precisely because it is a way of life which avoids the responsibilities of marriage and children that I think many men choose it. I expect no one is more surprised than such a homosexual, who wanted only to escape reality, when death taps him on the shoulder, interrupting forever his wonderful social life, his endless

round of splendid parties. In such a world I think that sex is not a driving force but only a kind of password, a ritual as meaningless as the dog's ritual of wetting on every lamp post. It is not the form of sexual expression but the way of life which attracts many.

Walking Dead

I do not see, therefore, any capacity to revolt in "gay society." It is a destructive sub-culture, producing corps of clean-shaven, fresh-scented zombies who eat, sleep, walk, talk, and are dead. It is a sub-culture in which sex is substituted for real personal relations. As a sub-culture it produces nothing of value. The Negro subculture has been and remains tremendously vital—because they desperately want to be accepted into the larger framework. They did not voluntarily separate themselves from American society as a whole, and they seek to end that desolate separation. Out of the Negro struggle we saw the birth of jazz—a contribution beyond words. But what has the homosexual society produced as a society? Those writers, poets, and artists who are homosexual and who have produced solid and enduring works of art have done so in every case because they saw themselves as human beings first and as homosexuals second. In every case where a homosexual fails to make that basic identification and tries instead to produce art based on his sub-culture, it is fragile, brittle, and cold beyond words.

HOWEVER, I am with Krim 100 per cent in feeling that sexual relations between adults—whatever sex is involved—is not the busi-

ness of the State, so long as those involved in the sexual relations are involved by consent. I don't feel this way because I think homosexuality is a jolly good thing which we can trace all the way back to Plato. It is just that no group has the right to legislate individual morality because no group can judge what is moral for the individual. Krim might have pointed out, by the way, that one reason for the repressive (and totally ineffective) laws we have is because we have the feeling that if we pass a law repressing someone else's homosexuality, we have somehow proved that we ourselves are not homosexual. Any blow against the queer is really a blow struck against a part of ourselves which we cannot accept or understand. I think in every case it would be correct to say that someone with a strong hostility toward homosexuals has a latent homosexual drive equal to the hostility.

And now, finally, let me suggest that while I think the "homosexual society" is a pretty decadent mess, I also think homosexuality is one legitimate form of sexual expression which the larger society ought to accept, thereby going far toward wiping out the gay underground. But it isn't enough for those who are "normal" to "accept" the existence of those who are queer. The solution may lie in a different kind of cultural approach to sex on the part of all of us. If the homosexual is sick, so perhaps is

the heterosexual. It is just as neurotic to be afraid of embracing another man as it is to fear embracing a woman. It is normal and natural for men to live with women and to raise families. For some men it is equally normal and natural to be able to express sexually their affection toward other men. I am not saying we must develop a bi-sexual culture. I am saying that bi-sexuality is probably as normal as heterosexuality and would occur more often in a healthy culture.

The Firm Handshake

Just now American society is in a pretty bad way. We snicker when we see the French general kiss the soldier on both cheeks as he pins the medal on his chest.

We don't like another man to embrace us, or put his arm around us—we are the society of the swift firm handshake. Why? What are we really afraid of? My hunch is that there would be much less homosexuality in the United States if we were not so afraid of it. The important thing in relations between two people is not their sex, but their spiritual selves. There can be no perversion when sex is used as a form of communication between people, to express love, affection, or respect. Such an attitude toward sex would be a liberating influence in every sphere of our society, and would do far more to eliminate the homosexual underground than all the laws we can pass.

THOUGHTS ON THE LAW

All genuine progress results from finding new facts. No law can be passed to make an acre yield three hundred bushels. God has already established the laws. It is for us to discover them, and to learn the facts by which we can obey them.

—WHEELER McMILLEN



Laws have their proper place, but the responsibility of worthy citizenship is a personal one. We each have a separate and individual share in eradicating social evils and in refusing to perpetuate practices odious to a free nation.

—HERBERT BROWNELL, JR.

Greetings

BY C. V. HOWARD

"Hello."

"Hi!"

"Bill! What's the matter? Where are you?"

"I'm at the office. Down in the booth in the lobby. Why? Did I scare you?"

"No. Well, yes, you did, too. It's only ten o'clock and you always phone between twelve and one. Is something wrong, Honey?"

"Nope, nothing's wrong. In fact, everything is right. I just got a yen to hear your voice so I sneaked down to call you. Isn't that something! I left you — let's see — exactly one hour and thirty-seven minutes ago and I've got so little willpower when it comes to you that I couldn't resist the urge to call and tell you I'm nuts about you. I guess I've really got it bad. What were you doing?"

"Bill, honey, you're the sweetest guy in the world. And I'm the luckiest and happiest person in the world. I mean it — honestly, I have to pinch myself a hundred times a day to be sure that all this isn't just a beautiful dream. Honey, it's so perfect that every time the phone rings I'm afraid that something has happened. Like now, for example — you're sure nothing's wrong?"

"Not a thing in the world. For the first time in my life everything is right and you're what I needed to make everything right. Honestly, I'm just so damned happy that it worries me. And how about that — two months ago who would ever have believed that this inhibited guy would be talking like a young bridegroom? Stick with me and in a few more months I may turn into a real human being."

"What were you doing? Did I drag you away from the dishpan or something?"

"No, I ironed a couple of your shirts and I was just putting around. Bill, what about the drapes in the bedroom? Honey, don't you think they'd look better if..."

"Now, cut it out! That's your department. I've told you a dozen times you can do anything you want to in that department. You could hang up some old potato sacks at the windows and I wouldn't even notice. The only thing I want to see in that apartment when I come home is you. So relax about what I think — just fix it up so you'll be happy. That's the thing that's important to me. If you're happy, I'm happy. Period. No, exclamation point."

"Okay, Bill. Believe me, Honey, I'd take the potato sacks and you before I'd take the swankiest apartment in town with anyone else. Look, Honey, you're going to be home for dinner on time tonight, aren't you?"

"Oh, yeah, that's why I called. How would you like to doll up in your best bib and tucker and let me take you to the fanciest restaurant in town tonight? I'd like to show you off. I feel like spending a little money for a change — something real special. How about it?"

"So you didn't forget! Honey, you're just about as subtle as a Mack truck."

"Forget? Forget what?"

"Our anniversary — thought you were going to catch me, didn't you? Well, I didn't forget either. Four weeks ago today and they're the most perfect four weeks of my life. But dinner at a restaurant is out — O-U-T — out!

"I haven't ironed any shirts and I wasn't working on the drapes. Honey, I just came in the door with two of the biggest, thickest, juiciest steaks you ever saw in your life. And I bought two of the biggest artichokes you ever saw in your life; one of the most beautiful bottles of Scotch you ever saw in your life; and the most gorgeous bunch of flowers I could find in front of Magnin's.

"We're going to have the most romantic, candle-light dinner you can imagine and we're going to have it right here at home. Hey, wait a second — the mail just came. Hang on, Honey. Let's see if we got anything interesting."

"Okay, I'll hang on. Make it snappy."

"Bill. Bill, do you suppose you could come home for the rest of the day? Would your boss let you off? It's pretty important. This *would* have to happen right now!"

"Golly, I don't know. But I'll ask. What is it? You really sound shook up. Bad news from home? Tell me — old Bill can fix it."

"Come on home, Bill. Honey, please come on home!"

"I don't know if I can. But I'll try. But, golly, what is it? It can't be *that* grim — you sound as if you're pregnant or something!"

"Well, I wish to God I was! I wish to God I was pregnant!"

"Then what is it? Tell me. Old Bill will fix it. Old Bill can fix anything, you know that! Tell me!"

"Well, okay, old Bill. Old Bill can fix anything! Let's see you fix this — I just got my lousy, goddam, draft notice!"

The past cannot be changed,
the future is still in your power.

—HUGH WHITE

BY STANLEY NORMAN

Whom Should We NOT Tell?

Reading the articles in the *Mattachine Review* entitled "Whom Should We Tell?" by Carl B. Harding (August, 1956), "The Problem of Hypocrisy... Does It Affect Homosexuals?" by Ward Summer (April, 1956) and "Discard the Mask" by Bob Bishop (April, 1958) one gathers the impression that it is better to reveal our identity as a homosexual first and then later take steps to inform our listeners of what homosexuality is. This involves a great deal of courage, more than many homosexuals have, to come right out and tell their friends and associates of their deviated nature. It is a fine thing if we, as homosexuals, can bring ourselves to the point of revealing in an honest, forthright manner what we really are. Many will respect our stand once we have this courage to "Remove the Mask". But what of those who have not reached this point where they are ready to let their guard down completely? These individuals still want to do their part

toward bringing homosexuality out in the open where it can be discussed and the public informed. There is another way we can accomplish almost the same thing without exposing our true identity so abruptly as suggested in the three articles mentioned above.

We can first prepare the ground, as it were, making it more readily acceptable to the idea of homosexuality. We can prepare our listeners for what it is, how extensive it is, and the need to recognize homosexuals as a sizable minority which includes many professional and business people of high standing in the community. This approach will smooth the way and provide the right opportunity or time to tell them what we really are. To reveal our true identity first, especially to those who may not know much about the homophile or who would be easily repulsed by learning that someone they knew was a homosexual, is neither wise nor kind. The authors referred to above would have us come

right out and let family and friends know just what we are, not to continue to live lives of hypocrisy and deceit, to tell the truth no matter how it may hurt those nearest us and to take the chance of severing ourselves completely from family and friends.

There is much to say in favor of the above advice, particularly in confronting boldly our worst fears and discovering, once for all, the exact ground upon which we stand in relation to our closest allies. Yet, is this the wisest and best thing to do? We should consider other approaches before gambling on losing the respect of loved ones (which goodness knows, we need very much). We are lonely enough in a society still hostile toward the deviated individual and minority groups. We need to cherish the respect and love of intimates as long as possible, until we are so sure of our position that we can risk losing that respect and love. It is not always wise to defy custom or the feelings of those near us merely to satisfy our ego or to establish our true identity with sudden fanfare. Much of what the above three authors referred to is true, but we might arrive at the same goal by a more devious route than that suggested by them.

It might be wiser to outline an operation for assault upon the fortress of ignorance, a campaign in which we wage war without exposing our vulnerabilities to openly to the barbs of the adversary. We might do this by pointing out gradually, at opportune moments, the existence of homosexuals in various professions known to the general public, or homosexuals

who have declared themselves such. We can refer to plays or movies in which the homosexual theme is touched upon or to books in which homosexual or Lesbian love are handled discriminately (and sometimes quite patently). We can tell about the well-known figures of history known or alluded to as homosexual, the cultures which recognize homosexuals as a minority group and which extend them the respect they deserve. We can list the important contributions made by homosexuals down through the ages. We can speak of the civilizations which have given the homosexual the assurance that he can devote his interests and energies to creative, original work without having to spend his life in a segregated fashion, fabricating apologies for his existence; the societies which have made it possible for homosexuals to avail themselves of the companionship and respect of loved ones without having to lead a double life. And last, but not least, the tremendous good that can be achieved in the future by releasing homosexuals from the awesome stigma imposed upon them by our present laws and attitudes, which are guilty of creating untold-of neurotics and resultant mental breakdowns.

To wage such a campaign the homophile needs to know a great deal about himself. This knowledge he can gain by reading certain books*, becoming acquainted with individuals who have

*Ellis, Havelock, *STUDIES IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX*, Volume 2: *SEXUAL INVERSION*, Third Edition, 1928.

Cory, Donald Webster, *THE HOMOSEXUAL IN AMERICA*, 1951.

made their adjustment, reading the articles in the *Mattachine Review*, particularly those having to do with the various aspects of the homophile in his or her adaption, and joining discussion groups whose purpose it is to help the homophile solve or meet his or her own individual problems.

Let us think twice before committing ourselves as to "Whom We Should Tell." The homosexual needs all the support that he can obtain from friends and loved ones while he is making his adjustment, which adaption is not easy, at best. The awful truth confronts him that he faces a hostile, obdurate society which evinces neither sympathy nor understanding of the complex, perplexing problems facing the individual who feels "different." At first, the homophile may not realize fully why he or she is different and may need guidance and assurance. Later, when he knows with certainty that he is different — and the reasons — he will seek the companionship of others who are different. It is important that he know where to find companions who can help rather than work toward his detriment. By joining the Mattachine Society and reading the *Mattachine Review*, the homophile can learn how others have made their adjustment. If he is near a city where discussion and therapy meetings are held, he can meet others who are deeply and sincerely interested in solving their problems.

Many adults who are normally broad-minded and considerate in other matters are still woefully ignorant of the homosexual problem. When faced with

it in a loved one, they do not know what to do, or how to act. The immediate reaction is apt to be unfavorable and hostile. Ignorance often spawns intolerance, and intolerance leads to bigotry, misunderstanding, thoughtlessness, and cruelty. Without realizing what they are doing, they may project their worst concepts and fears of the homosexual, talking and acting in a manner they would sincerely regret at a later date. They may develop an antipathy toward the very ones they love. It is human nature to mistrust that which they do not understand. It is for these reasons that we need to absorb the shock by first preparing our loved ones with some knowledge of the homophile problem. If they know something of its content, how it can best be analyzed and criticized, where to seek further knowledge or advice, they will want to advance rather than obstruct the homophile's adaptation to society. They would not resort to venting their wrath against a homosexual any more than they would against one who became physically or mentally ill. If we are to help ourselves, we must enlighten those nearest us, helping them to comprehend the homophile problem before they have to encounter it personally with someone they know.

NEWSSTAND READERS: The April issue of the REVIEW did not appear on newsstands in New York and Los Angeles, because it came off the press late. It contained an excellent story, "The Hustlers," and other big features. If you missed your copy, send 50¢ to the Review office, 693 Mission St., San Francisco 5, and one will be mailed to you first class sealed.

BOOKS

PLAYING THE GAME FROM THE GRANDSTAND

THE FLAMING HEART by Deborah Deutsch. Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc., 1959.
271 pages, \$3.75. Reviewed by Jack Parrish.

"The Flaming Heart" is about halfway between Jay Little (*Maybe Tomorrow*) and Eve Linkletter (*The Gay Ones*). It is not quite as effectively salacious as the first and not quite as submoronic as the latter.

The writer's techniques suggest that she was weaned on a diet of Dickens and James Jones. She has a bad habit of interrupting the action with monologues of sometimes two pages long, and constantly makes her own personal comments on the action. It's distracting and takes you away from the story. Dickens and Thackeray did it, but it's not done any more.

I am puzzled as to how a woman could have written it since much of the picture given of homophile life could only have been obtained by one who had lived it.

The reasoning is sometimes infantile, preachy, and once in a great while perceptive. She tries to be heroic, especially in a long sermon one of the characters makes at the end, and fails to ring true.

She has little knack for making the figures of the characters stand out sharply for the reader. When I say the characters don't stand out, I mean that she doesn't cut away unessential material from around them so that they stand out sharply — the way a painter leaves space around the figures in a painting. There is remarkably little description of people or things, it consists mostly of narration of events in chronological sequence and person after person talking with other people.

I would say it's written by someone who's never done any writing before but has strong views on the subject. Curiously enough, she makes fun of homophilic novels — page 251 — with their usual violent endings of suicide or murder, but ends her own story with the wife trying to kill her homophile husband and then shooting herself.

The story could have been a good one, but the ending isn't convincing. It's as if she didn't know how to end it, and so resorted to the wife's act of violence. There are also some errors in the proofreading, as on page 171 where the hero feels deeply sorry for his wife and the sentence states, "He often pitted her" — rather a strange thing to do to someone you care for!

If the writer's name weren't a woman's, I'd say it had been written by someone who had once been some sort of a belle or else lived a wild life. He is quite proud of his sexual prowess, is proud of the way he's lived and yet tries to be moral and preach to people.

Unfortunately, he's gotten rather deeply embedded with an artificial way of living, perhaps by too many years of being in the wrong set. So, like Jay Little, even when trying to be moral and speak of the essential injustice of the way of life he can't say anything that really strikes home to the reader. Nor can he think clearly about reality, though he tries. You can't have your cake and eat it; if you want to write truthfully you have to start living it. Or, at the very least, you have to learn something of the techniques that go into good writing, as with Truman Capote.

Calling Shots

UNEXPURGATED "CHATTERLEY" NOW PUBLISHED IN U. S.

An unexpurgated version of "Lady Chatterley's Lover" is to be published May 4 in a clothbound edition by Grove Press of New York. This will be the first complete version of the D. H. Lawrence classic to appear in the country. Lawrence wrote the final edition of the novel in 1928; it was privately printed in Italy, but there has never been a comparable edition printed in either the U. S. or England. In 1930 the first of several abridged editions was printed in New

York and London. More recent paperback versions have drawn from these. Dial Press of New York printed Lawrence's first version in 1944, but the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice seized it.

A movie version of the story is currently the subject of an important case pending in the U. S. Supreme Court to determine the constitutionality of movie censorship in advance of distribution. The film has been condemned by the New York State Regents.

Grove's edition will be heralded by

large space advertising in such media as *New York Times*, *Saturday Review* and the *New Yorker*. It will be issued initially in a run of 10,000 copies.

'ADULTS ONLY' FILM TAG VOIDED IN CHICAGO

U. S. District Court Judge Philip L. Sullivan recently declared unconstitutional a Chicago ordinance requiring a movie with a sex theme to be limited to 'adults only.' He likened the censorship statute to "burning down the house to roast the pig." He affirmed the argument that such censorship is an infringement on the right of freedom of expression as guaranteed in the Constitution. "A picture is either obscene or it is not," the decision stated. The harmful impression that such a film might create does not diminish with advancing age of the viewer. Movie in question was Paramount's "Desire Under the Elms." The decision condemned the ordinance also because it set the adult age (for purposes of viewing certain motion pictures) at 21, and granted wide censorship authority to five old ladies (widows of former police officers). The decision called the law "capricious" and "vague in its language."

STERILIZATION URGED TO CUT ILLIGITIMACY

North Carolina legislators came up with a bill to permit sterilization as a means of curbing illegitimate births. It would give the state Eugenics board authority to classify as "grossly sexually delinquent" a woman who

gave birth twice out of wedlock and would order her sterilized. Doctors and county officials supported the proposal (which has not yet passed), pointing to the burden of illegitimate children on public welfare rolls, but private citizens have attacked the proposal as contrary to religion, costly, unweildy and as cruel and unusual punishment for "immoral behavior."

Lacking in reports on the measure were any statements about the role of fathers in illegitimate births, as well as any discussion about abortion or birth control.

BIRTH CONTROL FAVORED, MICHIGAN STUDY REVEALS

Birth control has become a widespread topic in all strata of American society, a survey by the University of Michigan shows. In interviews with more than 2700 wives aged 18 to 38, only 1 in 20 flatly opposed family-limitation practices. Unqualified approval of some kind of birth control was voiced by 62% of the wives who were questioned. Most of the interviewed women considered 2-4 children ideal family size.

OHIO LEGISLATURE BUSY ON STRONGER SEX LAWS

The Ohio legislature is attempting to achieve what laws, enforcement practices and courts have almost never succeeded in doing in most other states (although they have also tried): halting major sex crimes by heaping the penalty on minor offenders.

matachine **REVIEW**

Major concern, it seems, is rape. But there is today before the state's Senate Judiciary Committee a bill to require registration of all sex offenders. Main support for this comes from the Ohio Parent-Teachers Association and Cleveland law enforcement officials. Such laws have been declared unconstitutional in other states either wholly or in part.

17 COPS CATCH 1 HOMOSEXUAL IN WELL-PLANNED TRAP

San Francisco Chronicle on April 12 reported that a well-planned joint action among 17 county and city police officers and agents of California's Alcoholic Beverage Control Department resulted in "catching" one homosexual in a bar-restaurant in nearby Marin County. The "stage" was set for catching a lot more of them, but they didn't show up.

A few days later this letter appeared in the Chronicle:

"You reported on April 12 that a task force of 17 State, county and city police officers were busy in Sausalito as a vice squad, hoping to catch homosexuals. I am wondering what the law is which makes this action possible. What is the exact legal offense which could be charged against a person, even obviously homosexual, sitting in a restaurant?... Is there a clear-cut statute against simply being homosexual which makes the present 'vice raids' legal? It would seem that an individual's sexual action with another adult, when violence is not involved, is a personal matter, of no reasonable concern to the police.

I understand that in the past two years the California Appellate Court has held that homosexuals are not a menace to society and have not increased propensity to commit sex crimes."

In addition to the sound logic presented in the above comment, one more pertinent question might be asked of the Marin County citizens: Is such action as the above - utilizing the salaried time and energy of 17 police officers to obtain the arrest of one homosexual - the desirable way to use tax dollars to enforce the law in your county? Court records show that so many of these "misdemeanor vagrancy" arrests are promptly dismissed by judges. One wonders what other serious crimes in Marin county went unnoticed while the 17 officers were so busy setting their trap. Finally, one is also inclined to wonder if perhaps the hunting of homosexuals supplies a novel form of amusement to the police force?

ORPHAN ANNIE A TERROR, PSYCHIATRIST DECLARES

A University of Cincinnati psychiatrist called Orphan Annie of the comics a greater threat than smut literature when he appeared on a panel discussing the merits of newsstand censorship not long ago. "Obscene literature is not much of a problem," Dr. James L. Titchener, assistant professor of medicine, stated. Personality difficulties, he said, develop out of a long history of relationships with other people, "not because

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Being Different

Seems To Be Neglected Art

When I was 11, my parents sent me to a summer camp run along semi-military lines. Part of each camper's uniform was supposed to be a Boy Scout hat, low-crowned, wide-brimmed, to be worn every afternoon when we lined up for formal inspection.

But my parents, through some catastrophic oversight, sent me off instead with one of those Army campaign hats, vintage of 1917. It was wide-brimmed, all right: when I put it on, I was practically in total darkness. As for the crown, it seemed to rise half a mile straight in the air.

Whenever I wore this hat, instead of being inconspicuous and somewhat homesick little boy, I became a freak.

Or so I thought. Looking back now, across more than 30 years, I can smile at the memory. But believe me, it was no joke at the time. I was

The accompanying article was written by Arthur Gordon for the Hollywood Citizen-News, in a series of Lenten messages for 1959.

miserable — utterly, abjectly miserable. Why? Because I was different, different from the others, different from the crowd.

INTO LATER LIFE

There must be few of us who cannot recall from such childhood episode and fewer still who do not carry some of this deep-rooted fear into adult life.

But if we value leadership, if we prize achievement, if we are concerned with our own painful struggle toward maturity, we have to learn to overcome this childish concern.

The rewards of differentness are easy enough to see. No matter what field you choose—science, entertainment, law, education, the business world—the demand is for individuals, whose performance is above average and therefore different. At any dinner party, the liveliest and most attractive guest is the one whose ideas and observations are stimulating because they are different.

I have no doubt that a man's earning power parallels almost exactly his capacity to produce new ideas, to show unusual

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READERS *write*

REVIEW EDITOR: A young man asked me to inquire whether you might be able to advise him concerning the military service and the draft. If he were to tell the draft board he was homosexual to avoid later complications in service would this information ever under any circumstances be made available to anyone such as police, legislative investigating groups, and the like, wherein his future as a teacher would be endangered? Or would it be better for him to go into the service (such as the army) and contact a psychiatrist? I have seen in print the navy's view that a psychiatrist's ethics are to be secondary to his duties as an officer but know nothing of the army's present attitude. —Mr. H.U.S., California.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Anyone who declares himself to be homosexual to his draft board or to the military itself at the time of induction can be reasonably sure that the information is filed somewhere — probably permanently. While this information is not, we presume, available to anyone, we believe it safe to assume that FBI and other duly authorized investigative agencies in our government should have access to such information. This we do not positively know; however, the homosexual is today regarded as a "security risk," by all branches of the armed forces, and in the government itself. This is an example of homosexuality itself (and not overt homosexual acts) constituting criminal status.

In California, and probably in most other states, there are statutes aimed at getting known homosexuals out of the teaching profession in the public schools. The idea, it can be presumed, is that such persons are prone to attack the young. Actually homosexuals seldom do that; experts say that child molestation is most generally the result of various sex repressions, and many so-called heterosexuals are involved in these acts.

Throughout the armed forces, professional ethical codes involving confidences between doctor and patient are secondary to the code of the armed forces itself. The reason is obvious, and we could not expect it to be otherwise. However, we DO take issue with the over-all policy that homosexuals per se are security risks. If the censure, rejection, opprobrium and scorn surrounding homosexuality were taken away, and if the laws were changed so that consenting acts

between adults in private, without use of violence or fraud, were no longer a crime, then much of the stigma would disappear, and so would the evils that permit blackmail to flourish. Then the homosexual would no longer be a security risk.

The executive secretary of a chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union recently addressed a group where he was asked what teachers who are homosexual should do to avoid exposure and thereby lose their jobs. He answered: "Then change your job and your field of employment."

We do not advise anyone to declare himself before entering the armed forces. Instead we advise all concerned to seek the advice of an attorney, a psychiatrist, a minister, or all three before making a decision. Veterans benefits, passports, bonding on a job and other things can be affected or denied to those so declaring. This may sound like a harsh answer. But until laws and attitudes are changed, it is the fact.

REVIEW EDITOR: I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the bibliography you have been including in the REVIEW. I have been meaning to write to ask permission to reproduce a part of it and make it available for friends, mentioning, of course, the source of information... Mr. D. S., Quebec.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Permission for such distribution is granted, providing the copies are not offered for sale. A booklet form of a similar bibliography is now available through Village Books in New York (116 Christopher Street). Publication of the remaining installments of the bibliography is expected to be resumed very soon when the material arrives from New York.

REVIEW EDITOR: I am glad I had the opportunity of meeting you in your office. Truthfully, I went there reluctantly. I didn't know what to expect. But you folks put me at ease at once and I was thrilled that I had met you and I feel that contact with your society will surely help my son — and I think if he will stay interested he can be of help to you as well as your being helpful to him. I shall visit you again when I return to San Francisco. —Mrs. G., N. Mex.

REVIEW EDITOR: I congratulate the Society on the general standard of the REVIEW and its interesting articles. One article in particular from the copy you sent (March 1958) was of help to me in overcoming the

difficulty of being a homosexual. This article was "Self Acceptance v. Rejection," by Harry Benjamin, M. D. But I have gone a long way since then. It is, in fact, because of the inner security which I now have that I am willing to extend a helping hand to others, if asked. Out of anguish and suffering comes compassion. — Mr. R. B., Australia

REVIEW EDITOR: In a movement such as Mattachine, only quality people are interested in quality values. As your co-workers fully realize, articles in the REVIEW are not sufficiently slanted to capture serious attentions of serious people toward the openings of understanding. Like attracts like and cheapness can only beget just that. As pointed out before, I wish to reiterate that the shallow, flippant, unstable homosexual does not read the REVIEW. These ignoramuses pooh-pooh the whole thing and reaching them in this generation is a worthless task. It cannot be done now. It is quite enough to try to reach serious people. The young, who have just discovered that they are homosexual, are often serious. Their letters to you testify to that. This group is trying to think, trying to find their way, and in the future will be the ones who will carry on the search in the serious sense. Freedom for the homosexually-inclined individual will have to be found within, and that with self-imposed restrictions and responsibilities. Unlimited freedom or license would only result in chaos. — Mr. R. M., California.

REVIEW EDITOR: A recent magazine article brought to my attention the existence of your organization. An existence I wish I had known of much sooner. From what I was able to gather from the very short but highly enlightening article, your standards and aims are to be highly praised. I was very pleased to discover that someone cared enough about other members of the so-called socially unacceptable group to try and lift the curtain of indecency that has too long enveloped us.

I shall appreciate any and all information about the Society you would be able to provide.

If I may be just a little melodramatic for a moment, I would like to inject a Latin phrase which I have admired and which I think describes the majority of our population. *Damnatio quod non intelligunt* ... They condemn that which they do not comprehend. — Miss D. E. — California.

NEGLECTED ART OF BEING DIFFERENT

(Continued from page 26)

persistence or energy, to take charge—in other words, to be different.

PRE-OCCUPATION WITH SELF

The fear of being different, like most fears, tends to diminish when you drag it into the light and take a good look at it. At the bottom of such fears lies an intense pre-occupation with self.

That comical hat, back in my childhood, might have caused some momentary merriment or teasing, but the whole thing was too trivial to have lasted long. I was the one who kept it alive by agonizing about it. Like shyness, this sort of self-consciousness is a form of inverted egotism. Once you face this fact, you are not so likely to be victimized by it.

It also helps to remind yourself occasionally that some of the disapproval or hostility that you shrink from encountering is probably imaginary.

IN GOOD COMPANY

Another way to minimize the fear of being different is to remind yourself, if you really do run into resentment or ridicule, that you are in pretty good company. Very few of the great pioneers of thought or action escaped being laughed at, criticized or even martyred.

Most of the great religious leaders of history have been on-conformists. Christ was the most striking and dramatic example; He was, in fact, a revolutionist. He defied authority, as when He healed sick people on the Sabbath. He upset convention, as when He sat down to dinner with publicans

and sinners. He was not afraid to use violence, as when He drove the money-changers out of the temple.

It takes courage to be different, but there is also an art to it. It's a gentle art, an unobtrusive art, but it requires real skill. It's the art of not antagonizing people unnecessarily by your differentness.

ATTITUDE OF SUPERIORITY

The beginning of wisdom in this area is to realize that people don't object to differentness nearly so much as they object to the attitude of superiority that so often goes with it.

Some very rugged individualists never learn this lesson. Billy Mitchell's concept of air power was prophetic—and correct. Unfortunately, he could not conceal his conviction that anyone who disagreed with him was a fool. As a result, his hopes and dreams were thwarted for years; he didn't live to see their fulfillment.

The rule-of-thumb is very simple: be as different as you like, but try to be tolerant of the people who differ from you.

WE'RE NOT ALIKE

Actually, no two people are alike, and if we all granted to one another the right simply to be ourselves, we would be different enough.

When he was eight years old, someone asked Henry Thoreau what he was going to be when he grew up. "Why," said the boy, "I will be I!" He was, too. And what we remember best about him now is precisely his differentness.

So take a look at your life and check the areas where you are letting a foolish fear of "what people might say" hold you down or hold you back. Then go ahead and do a few of these unorthodox things. The penalties will certainly be less—and the rewards may be much greater than you think.

Problem of the Youth Whose Sex Is Mixed Up

By Dr. Walter C. Alvarez
Emeritus Consultant in
Medicine, Mayo Clinic

Many mothers write me pathetic letters expressing their puzzlement and sorrow over a son who is not very masculine. He may be good-looking, and perhaps "almost too good-looking for a boy." Perhaps his interests have always been decidedly artistic, and the chances are he has never had any interest in athletics. He may never

have cared to go out with a girl.

Perhaps, when he came to be twenty or so, he became terribly upset and almost out of his mind when at last he saw clearly that he was not as other men are; that his love interests were directed toward other men, and hence he might never have the happiness of having a wife and a home and children.

An Accident of Genetics

I don't know how any one

could not feel sympathy for every unhappy lad who has inherited from some ancestors a tendency to feminine interests and feminine ways of life. Certainly, he is not culpable in any way; he is not responsible for what happened to him before he was born. Let us all remember that, but for the grace of God, this disaster could have happened to any one of us. It was just an accident of genetics or of glandular development.

As I was writing this, I stopped to talk for nearly two hours with a fine young college man who is terribly distressed because he has found that he is to some extent mixed-up in his sex. He can go with girls; he can enjoy their company; and he hopes some day to marry; but he knows this is dangerous for him because he feels such great attraction for an occasional man whom he meets.

Such a man is very companionable to him because he can understand my patient's problems and unhappinesses, and his feelings of great loneliness in the world. But, realizing that such close friendships with men are extremely dangerous for him, my patient is fighting hard to keep away from them.

Where Can He Get Help?

As he says, he needs help

Categories (From the London Daily Telegraph)

THE "problem of homosexuality" incessantly discussed in the Press, on radio and television, and soon in Parliament, is becoming as big a bore as the problems of smoke abatement and senile delinquency.

Whatever else it has achieved, this relentless nagging must have had one important effect. Until recently there were large parts of this country where homosexuality was hardly known, for the simple reason that most people had never even heard of it.

This is so no longer. Suggestion is a powerful thing. The number of men who now believe themselves to

in this constant psychologic battle, and he asks me where he can find it. He already has tried several psychiatrists but has not gotten help from them. Some of the wisest of these men told him frankly and honestly that they doubted if they or any one else could change his psychic make-up, any more than they could change the psychic make-up of a normally heterosexual man who adores his wife. This is my strong impression about the subject, and I have studied it for years among both books and patients.

I fear he will have to keep making the fight largely by himself. I would urge him to avoid doing anything that would cause him to be black-mailed or thrown into jail. I would urge him never to marry, simply to get a home or a better "front." It is a miserable trick to play on some poor girl to marry her without the ability to love her properly. I have talked to many women who got caught in such an unhappy marriage, and hence I know whereof I speak.

(Released by the Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1959)

be homosexuals, on one ground or another, adequate or inadequate, must have increased enormously during the past year or so. Perhaps that was the whole idea anyhow.

It is all part of a wider process by which people are no longer allowed to be people, but have to be forced into some abstract category or other, as homosexuals, teenagers, neurotics, housewives, consumers and so on.

It is all extremely sinister. Once people are sorted into categories and told exactly who and what they are, it becomes much easier to sell them things, to mould their opinions and finally to run their lives for them altogether.



"on re-reading gay books..."

BY DICK TYNER

I have been re-reading some of the classics of homophile literature. For the most part they were better reading this time. It is true I found myself skipping the more purple effusions, philosophical maunderings, and precocious speculations; but I do that while reading the more standard classics. (I became quite impatient reading *Green Mansions* for the fourth or fifth time.)

Classic is sometimes used to denote the opposite of romantic. In this sense, I have used it inappropriately: most homophile fiction is certainly romantic; that is, it is characterized by "liberalism in form and subject matter, emphasis on feeling and originality, the use of imaginative suggestion, and sympathetic interest in primitive nature, medievalism, and the mystical." Too often romantic applies in a derogatory sense, "with implications of unrestrained sensuousness, vague imagery, lack of logical precision, escape from the realities of life." (These quotations are from the *New Twentieth Century Dictionary*.)

The books I have been reading, however, are the BEST of their kind. They are classics because they are freer of the less pleasant aspects of the romantic. They are not the only good books in the field but they should be remembered for comparison with anything else we read.

I wonder what the reaction was of homophile readers to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* at the time it was published. Literary London pretended to be scandalized. Some biographers surmise that Wilde had not yet become aware of his homosexual tendencies. This seems unlikely though certainly we read more into the story now than could Wilde's contemporaries. At any rate, the painter, Hallward, is unmistakably homosexual and Lord Henry may be Wilde himself as he was later reputed to be; today Dorian would be called "trade" (an equivocal term, to say the least.)

It is amazing how fresh are the conversations; how penetrating and timeless are the epigrams. I do not remember when I read the book last. It was before I was aware of Wilde's nature ... and my own. We studied his plays and poems in school; but I don't remember what we were told about his life.

Just how much of personal experience and conviction is contained in the books containing homophile material? Some is obvious, of course. Some writers are certainly sympathetic if not experienced; perhaps the rest work as did Gertrude Atherton: when a friend of mine told her where his home was, she said she'd like to visit that part of the country; she'd written so many stories about it! It is said too that Edna Ferber was never on a showboat, nor ever visited Texas or Alaska.

But William Maxwell could not have written *The Folded Leaf* from hearsay. This is a classic in any field. All of Maxwell's work shows wonderful understanding of young people's emotional life. (His one book FOR children would not be much understood by them. The recent stories in *The New Yorker*, I don't understand.) Neither of the protagonists in *The Folded Leaf* is aware of any homosexuality; but nowhere have I read a more beautiful evocation of the joys of youthful companionship. The devotion of Lymie to his athletic friend is love; and if it is often unrequited it is not unrewarding. Spud's need of Lymie is for more than help in the gymnasium and the carrying of messages to his girl friend. How their lives became entwined is remarkably well traced. Whether Spud marries Sally, whether Lymie marries Hope or discovers his homosexual inclination, the reader knows neither will forget the other.

I found that I had remembered only the ending of *The City and The Pillar* by Gore Vidal. I had thought it weak and unfocused, but it is a good book. I think the story would have been more satisfying if we had been spared the picture of Jim's drunken remorse at the beginning and his murder of Bob at the end. His memory of the boyhood idyll could have been destroyed as effectively without such melodramatic device.

CALLING SHOTS

(Continued from page 21)

someone picked up a magazine and read it."

"This literature is an irrelevant issue," he said, suggesting that, instead of suppressing magazines and books, it would be better to devote energies to helping younger people develop comfortable attitudes toward

their sexuality." Besides there are other impulses as harmful as the sexual, he said. He cited extreme feelings of aggression and violence which he noted in the comic strip, "Little Orphan Annie."

"It scares me sometimes," he said. "In March, Orphan Annie was inciting people not to pay income taxes."

From reading the fiction on the subject, one should think that most homophile men are not searching for a lover but for a brother or a father. In the Vidal book, Jim's desire is for the long-lost "brother"; but Matthew, in *Finistere* by Fritz Peters, needs a father. His search is not wholly conscious; it is more an unhappy yearning. His naivete when he finds his substitute father is made believable though one suspects the author is not always sympathetic. Matthew's suicide is inevitable too. In fact, one can see no other alternative: it was not the knowledge of his being "perverted" that drove him to it, nor his being discovered by those close to him. He could no longer endure to live surrounded by these people whose essential dishonesty had been revealed: the father who cared more for the comforts of a second wife; the mother who was interested only in her divorce and her new husband; the stepfather who married his mother's purse; the old friend of the family who was more concerned about what the world would think of him than for a little boy's love and need for him; and not least, the lover whose failing was to have loved him too much.

Another characteristic of the homophiles in fiction is that they all profess to admire only the masculine types. Just nobody wants a "queer". This is the "message" in Blair Niles' *Strange Brother*. It has been reported that Mrs. Niles wrote this as a memorial to her own brother. It is an amazing report, dated and without literary style, but based on thorough and sympathetic research. If it is not so absorbing as her novel about Devil's Island, it is because it is a bigger project; there are more kinds of misery to consider.

This is not a classic because it is among the best but because it is among the first. Some of us will always be grateful to Mrs. Niles in spite of her short-comings. Her book was our first encounter with ourselves in fiction; and it was about the only one for nearly fifteen years. The Nellies and Ricos showed up in the novels of the depression and war years but not so importantly as in more recent writings about those years.

Two war novels I liked are *The Cross of Iron* by Heinrich and *The Friend* by Wolff, though neither is notable for its homophile content. My favorite however, is *Look Down In Mercy* by Walter Baxter. Nothing else I've read about the camaraderie of soldiers, their need and love and trust for each other, is so convincingly portrayed. The story is set in the ignominious retreat of the British in Burma during the Japanese invasion. The events are not important or even very interesting in themselves; but we are absorbed in their effects on Captain Tony Kent and his batsman, Anson. Tony is more appalled by his growing need, desire and love for Anson, than he is at evidences of his cowardice.

He is as afraid of these emotions as he is of their being detected. Anson is uncomplicated and unafraid. He is no aggressor either in love or war. He serves Tony faithfully and completely.

When published in England, this book had the usual tragic ending; the version released in America re-unites the friends. I have not read the English edition, but the *deus ex machina* which saved Tony in the later version satisfies me.

All the books I have mentioned were issued by first-line publishing houses and reviewed, generally favorably, in the usual places. Most of them have been given paperbacks. (It is amusing to note that the same "disturbed" boy appears in the cover-painting for both the Peters and Vidal paper-back editions.) Yet the publication of *Quatrefoil* by James Barr was almost a secret. Even when it was first out, it was difficult to obtain. I think I finally sent to the publisher. There were several (how large?) printings before it was withdrawn, under pressure, it is reported. Why was *Quatrefoil* given such treatment? The material is no more sensational than that presented in many others of its kind. The literary style is better than most and the story itself is excellent. It might be argued that the point of view of the writer is too apparent, too objectionable to the censors. Censors cannot be argued with, but we can point out for each of their objections, parallels in any number of accepted books.

The story line of *Quatrefoil* is well worked out. The study of Phillip's family background is comprehensive and the juggling of their money-power is a more than ordinarily interesting secondary theme. The foibles of life among Navy Brass has been done too many times and better, but Barr is accurate and convincing enough. His art-and-society set is not very entertaining but only an Oscar Wilde could make it so.

Each reader will have his own opinion whether Phillip would have realized his homophile potential if he had not been "seduced" by Tim. Each will have to decide if Phillip would have been wiser to retain his place in the family dynasty rather than to take his chances with Tim. And every reader will question the book's weak ending: Phillip thinks "though he might be capable of destroying himself, he knew that he could never destroy that part of him which was Tim" - Tim, whom the author had already destroyed for no apparent reason. There is much in this book, however: a good story, well told; some explanations; some preachings. Now that the author's *Derricks* has been re-issued, maybe Greenberg will bring this one out again.

The only one of these books I would take surely with me to that desert is *The Folded Leaf*. The rest of them, however, I am happy to have in my library so that I may read them again in a year or two.

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