



# **mattachine REVIEW**

JULY 1962

FIFTY CENTS



**ALBERT ELLIS**  
**Art and Sex**

# Calling Shots

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## Art and Sex

ALBERT ELLIS

THE word *art* may be used broadly or narrowly; and in the present article it will be used largely in its narrower sense: pictorial art. What are some of the most important connections between human sexuality and artistic representation as depicted in drawing, painting, and sculpture? What may be said about sex and the artist? These are the main questions this article will attempt to answer.

### Sex and Art History

The use of sexual motifs in drawing, painting, and sculpture goes back to the earliest days of human history. Primitive art was, and in many sections of the world still is, replete with sexual and reproductive motifs. Primitive peoples, in their pictures and statues, often tended to exaggerate the loins, rumps, breasts, and sex parts of their figures—probably because, as Dell (1930) points out, these parts of the body were of pronounced and often magical importance to them. Much can be said about the place of sex in primitive art; but since this topic is covered by another article in this *Encyclopedia*, it is merely mentioned here.

In civilized times, the ancient Sumerians, Egyptians, and Chinese produced many notable artistic works; but the full flowering of sexual representations in art is usually acknowledged to have started in Ancient Greece. The earliest Greek art known to us was not highly sexualized; but after 500 B.C. Greek artists began to portray the human body for the sake of giving pleasure in its own right rather than for other and less sensual motives; and pictorial and sculptural art became art in the fullest sense when this esthetic revolution occurred

(Wall, 1932). The Greeks became obsessed with the dream of ideal beauty, and, as Garland (1957) points out, "with the development of Greek art the sculptor creates a type of beauty which has never been excelled: for centuries the measurements and features of the antique Kore and classic Venus are accepted as perfection and ensuing civilizations have created nothing more exquisite than these lovely goddesses, unselfconscious in their nakedness." This is not a universally accepted dictum, but would appear to contain some truth.

The Greeks were also noted for their direct erotic representations in art, and graphic reproductions of the sexual act were numerous and met with little opposition or censorship. Every coital activity the ancients could imagine was portrayed and modeled on their walls, ceilings, vases, and other *objets d'art* (Bloch, 1934; Guyon, 1934; Northcote, 1916). It must not be thought, however, that the famous orgiastic representations (such as those found in the Pompeii excavations) were ubiquitous in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. There is reason to believe that they were often done on special assignment of certain members of the nobility and that they were no more typical of ancient art as a whole than modern pornography is typical of today's art. The idealization of physical beauty (in terms of shapes, lines, and volumes) rather than the depiction of naked sensuality was the pronounced theme of Greek and, to a much lesser degree, of Roman art.

During the Middle Ages, largely owing to the suppressive influence of the Catholic Church, sensual and erotic art suffered a severe setback; and from the Byzantine world to England

and the North countries fully clothed and highly asexualized representations became the rule. Then, although still kept under wraps to some degree by ecclesiastical restrictions and conventions, the nudes of the Renaissance began to take the center of the pictorial stage; and masters such as Correggio, Botticelli, Titian, and Tintoretto began to display their highly sensuous paintings, with nudes and semi-draped figures. Rembrandt, Rubens, and many other artists continued this tradition into the seventeenth century; and even during the period of the Restoration nudity in art was perfectly acceptable to courtiers, although their own clothing showed a stricter sense of modesty (Markun, 1930).

At the same time that the sensual movement in art was in progress, a coextensive "earthy" rather than erotic core of pictorial and sculptural art was coming into existence. Artists such as Brueghel and Bosch, though not specializing in nudes, frankly depicted the sex proclivities of some of their subjects; and what has been called "erotic realism" as distinguished from "hard core pornography" (Kronhausen and Kronhausen, 1959) had some of its lustiest beginnings. It may also be noted that some medieval works of art included a grotesque element that was at least quasi-erotic. Thus, the grotesque and "satanic" figures of some of the gothic church sculpture contained an element of "fascination of the evil" which may be considered an interesting subheading under the general classification of "sexual" art.

During the eighteenth century, the erotic content of Western art became even more pronounced in many respects. Masters such as Watteau and Boucher continued to portray sensuous nudes; and in England arose a school of artists who specialized in the erotic, and often in the pornographic. Leading the list of artists who often painted erotic subject matter was the great painter and engraver, William Hogarth; and following him were such minor masters as James Gillray (who specialized in works on flagellation), Thomas Rowlandson, and George Cruikshank (illustrator of a famous edition of the pornographic novel, *Fanny Hill*).

The movement toward the eroticization of art continued in the nineteenth century. Degas, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Goya were

among the outstanding Continental artists whose portrayals of the female form were both reverent and exciting. Gainsborough and Reynolds in England also did some interesting nudes; and a mystic-satanic sexual element was added to painting by Felicien Rops and by the pre-Raphaelites, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones. Mystic voluptuousness, together with overtones and undertones of sexual perversity, were also depicted by Aubrey Beardsley, one of the most famous sexual illustrators of all time.

Late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Impressionism, Cubism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and other movements in modern art, culminating in the considerable vogue for abstract, nonrepresentational, and nonobjective art, which has many followers today, to some extent reduced the direct depiction of eroticism that had been reborn in Renaissance art. But not entirely. Shapes, colors, and textures, to the eye of the sophisticated viewer of contemporary art, can be unusually erotically stimulating. Wilfred Scawen Blunt attended the 1910 Post-Impressionist exhibition in Paris and saw in the paintings there only "that gross puerility which scrawls indecencies on the wall of a privy" (Markun, 1930, p. 337). And Pitirim Sorokin, one of the guardians of sexual traditionalism of our day, insists that surrealist pictures and sculptures of today are overloaded with voluptuous scenes and figures and with depictions of procreation and fertility. If sexuality is not rendered visually in modern art, he contends, it is often explicit in the name given by the artist to his design or contraption. "The general trend in our pictures, photographs, sculpture, and other visual arts," he concludes "has been toward a more naked, more sensuous representation of the human body" (Sorokin, 1956, pp. 26-27).

Contemporary art, moreover, is far from being completely nonrepresentational. Artists are still producing male and female representations of the human body that are at times sensual, sexual, or even intensely romantic. And one of the outstanding twentieth-century painters, Jules Pascin, went even further than the nineteenth-century master of nude portraiture, Renoir, in his rendering of pulsating flesh and gave a most realistic, earthy view of female



sexuality. As Pascin's biographer, Brodzky (1946), has noted: "Pascin worshipped women, as did Renoir, unashamed."

It is often assumed that there is some kind of a significant and integral relationship of sex to art and between sex and the artist; but exactly what these relationships are has been the subject for considerable unresolved debate. We shall now consider some of the most important theories relating sex to art and try to assess their validity.

### Beauty and Art

It is sometimes held that all artistic productions, particularly paintings and sculpture, arise from human concepts of beauty; and that these, in turn, stem from ideas of what is sexually beautiful or exciting. If this is so, then art originates in sexuality and is a major product of the libido. Thus, Freud (1930, 1938), whose views on sexual sublimation and art we shall later discuss in detail, believed that the perception of beauty is at bottom a sensual process and that it becomes esthetic in quality when the sensual aim is inhibited.

The notion that art stems from appreciation of beauty, which in turn originates in sexual desire, has been partly endorsed by several authorities but has also been partly denounced (de Beauvoir, 1953; Bloch, 1908). As Garland (1957) notes in her study of female beauty, art is usually in advance of nature and again and again artists conceive of new types of women which later generations then endorse. Art, Flugel (1945) insists, in a sense achieves a deeper insight into reality than does the mere perception of physical beauty, inasmuch as it abstracts from the uninteresting and irrelevant details of reality more effectively than perception does. Art therefore presents us a sort of quintessence of the aspect of reality that is relevant to the artist's theme and purpose; and if the artist merely followed his biologically inculcated feelings about what is beautiful (or sexually desirable), art in this sense could hardly exist.

André Gide (1949) is even more vociferous on this point: "As the convinced Mohammedan cries 'God is god,' I should like to shout: 'Art is

art.' Reality is always there, not to dominate it, but on the other hand, to serve it." Beigel (1952) also holds that though ideas of physical beauty influence art, these ideas themselves, especially ideas of what is beautiful in the female body, are greatly influenced by the concept of esthetic beauty in art.

In regard to beauty and art, then, it would seem wiser to take a middle rather than any extreme road. Sex desires would appear to have some influence on evaluations of human beauty; and these evaluations to some extent are important artistic considerations. But by the same token, artistic judgments, which depend on many biological and cultural factors of non-sexual origin and which tend to change considerably from one era to another, also importantly affect sexual desire and notions of beauty.

It is most unlikely, then, that the concept of what is beautiful is related entirely to sex. It is partly based on the way in which we perceive things (which itself is both sexually and non-sexually motivated) and the form and proportions of the things themselves. The concept of beauty is intimately related to existing perceptions of time, spatial relations, proportion, texture, and other aspects of external reality as well as to our personal and culturally influenced interpretations of these modes of existence. Sex plays a distinct part in our notions of what is beautiful; but this part hardly equals the whole of those notions.

Sex desire undoubtedly plays an important role in human ideals of personal beauty, particularly of female beauty. Schopenhauer (1898) hotly contended that sex is practically the only influential factor in inducing a male to admire the female form. "It is only," he said, "the man whose intellect is clouded by his sexual impulses that could give the name of the fair sex to that under-sized, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped, and short-legged race; for the whole beauty of the sex is bound up with this impulse. Instead of calling them beautiful, there would be more warrant for describing women as the unesthetic sex." H. L. Mencken (1919) echoed this view; and Havelock Ellis (1936) also presented evidence that women are universally admired by men because they satisfy the male's sensual and sexual impulses.

Nonetheless, a cursory glance at the changing styles in female beauty in the last several decades in the United States would indicate that biological impulses often take a secondary or subsidiary place to social-esthetic standards in the evaluation of feminine beauty. Even in the case of sex attraction, we may still note that our sex "instincts" importantly prejudice our notions of beauty, but at the same time our esthetic ideas significantly influence these very "instincts."

### Nudity and Art

It is sometimes held that artists frequently portray nude figures, particularly those of the female, because they are consciously or unconsciously interested, by reason of their basic sexual proclivities, in such figures. Thus, Guyon (1934, p. 310) states that "the truth is that nudity in art delights us because we find, to our surprise, that the flesh is here presented to us without obstacle or hindrance, recalling to our mind pleasant memories and possibilities." Therefore, he contends, the nude is *not* really chaste, as many artists and critics have held that it is; and when it is supposedly used for esthetic effect, its employment actually has sexual undertones.

Other writers on art differ with this sexualized interpretation of nudity. De Beauvoir (1953) feels that the nude is chaste; and Northcote (1916) holds that "the nude in any given production is not necessarily erotic." Nudity, Wall (1932) insists, is in itself sexual or asexual, decent or indecent, depending on one's attitude toward it—and that attitude tends to be very different at one time and place from what it is at another.

Kinsey and his associates (1953) found some evidence that artistic portrayals of nude figures often do stem from sexual motives. In a study that is still continuing they reported that if professional artists are given a series of nudes drawn by other artists they can predict quite accurately whether the draughtsmen are heterosexually or homosexually inclined. The Kinsey research team has also found that although 54 per cent of their male subjects have been aroused by seeing photographs, drawings, or paintings of nudes only 12 per cent of females

have been similarly aroused. As would be expected under these circumstances, it has also been found that although female artists frequently produce highly romantic drawings and paintings, they rarely excel in pornographic works of art. By the same token, Dingwall (1957) notes that, as might very well be expected, sex-obsessed countries such as the United States produce better erotic art of the pin-up variety than do other countries. A. Ellis (1900a) also reports that just because nudity in the United States is officially and socially enjoined, it tends to be the more enjoyed. Contemporary mass media are increasingly full of "artistic" nudes that obviously appeal to masculine lasciviousness.

A good case can certainly be made, therefore, for the theory that both artists and their public are sexually motivated when they find "esthetic" satisfaction in the depiction of the nude female form. Artists are, after all, human beings with human desires; and the nude form obviously has connotations, at least to those of the Western world, of sensual activities and delights. To believe that a fine painter or sculptor of female nudes has no sexual interest in or excitement about his work is to be rather naïve. At the same time, it would be equally naïve to assume that graphic portrayals of the nude form are executed *only* because of the conscious or unconscious sexual urges of the artist. The nude body has the kind of form, coloring, and texture that would give it esthetic value even were its representors and their audiences completely sexless. It is these additional nonsexual aspects of nudity that give it such a widespread esthetic appeal.

### Sexual Sublimation and Art

Sigmund Freud has been responsible for the most widely discussed and debated theory of sex and art of all time—the theory that art essentially springs from the individual's repressed unconscious thoughts and wishes and is largely a sublimation of his aim-inhibited sex drives. In his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1920), Freud noted that the artist is constitutionally endowed with a powerful capacity for sublimation as well as with a certain flexibility in the repression determining his inner conflicts.

In the fourth volume of his *Collected Papers* (1925) he stated this hypothesis in more detail:

The artist is originally a man who turns from reality because he cannot come to terms with the demand for the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction as it is first made, and who then in phantasy-life allows full play to his erotic and ambitious wishes. But he finds a way of return from this world of phantasy back to reality. With his special gifts he molds his phantasies into a new kind of reality, and men concede them a justification as valuable reflections of actual life.

In his consideration of an actual artist, Leonardo da Vinci, Freud (1947) held that this painter's genius resulted from "his particular tendency to repress his impulses and, second, his extraordinary ability to sublimate the primitive impulses."

This psychoanalytical theory of sexual sublimation and art was not entirely original with Freud, since several poets and novelists had outlined similar views previously, and Otto Weininger (1906), a contemporary of Freud, independently arrived at the view that art is a sublimation of Eros and that all genius stems from essentially erotic motives, with the artist's love being directed toward the universe and eternal values instead of toward members of the other sex (Klein, 1949). But Freud's version of the sublimation theory quickly won out over all similar views, and it soon had scores of adherents. Ella Sharpe (1950, p. 126) dogmatically stated that "sublimation and civilization are mutually inclusive terms." Lionel Coitein (1948) claimed that "art is possibly the only area for a conflict-ridden humanity to use today, a sublimation for repressed bewilderment and frustrated desire." Emil Cuthell (1951) pointed out that there is a close connection between the daydream and a work of art. And Ernest Jones (1951), in his analysis of the work of Andrea del Sarto, insisted that this artist never fulfilled himself and did not reach the heights as an artist because he shared a domestic existence with his wife, Lucrezia, thus preventing himself from truly sublimating his repressed sex drives.

The Freudian theory that art originates in sexual sublimation has so completely swept the field of psychology, literature, and esthetics that many non-Freudians have vociferously endorsed it—sometimes in enthusiastic ways of

which Freud himself might not have completely approved. The noted gynecologist and sexologist, Robert L. Dickinson (1932), held that sexual desire could easily be diverted into what he called the Third Direction, which included work, amusement, asceticism, illness, art, etc. The academic psychologist, Herbert S. Langfeld (1950), thought that art was an escape to a world of so-called unreality, where the artist could have full power over his environment; and that it was in this world of his own making that he solved his inner problems. The social historian, J. D. Unwin (1934), upheld the extreme view that civilization depends almost entirely on sexual repression and that where people are sexually free their culture never matures or deteriorates.

Several correlates to the Freudian position on sex and art may be particularly noted. The first of these is that the main source of artistic productivity is the artist's unconscious mind (Groddeck, 1951; Neumann, 1959). In its most general form, this theory again predates Freud and his followers; but classical psychoanalysis not only posits an unconscious from which artistic productions are drawn, but also the individual's coping with, defending himself against, and finally mastering his unconscious thoughts and feelings—particularly his unconscious sex and aggressive urges. As Bychowski (1947, p. 56) states, "In a really great artist the mastery of technique is but an expression of the mastery of the unconscious material achieved by the ego."

The second correlate of the Freudian theory of art and sex sublimation is that the material the artist dredges up from his unconscious mind and employs in his work is largely repressed material—it has once been conscious and has been censored and squelched by the ego (or superego) because the artist is ashamed of or frightened by it. Artistic work, Marcuse (1955) points out, although opposed to civilization is at the same time bound to it by increasing instinctual repression. And just as we have repressed childish ways of thinking, Weiss (1947) insists, we have also repressed childish ways of perceiving and representing; and it is these latter repressions which are somehow employed by the artist (and which remain unavailable to nonartistic individuals).

A third corollary of the Freudian position on art and sex is that not merely repressed sex drives are necessary for artistic creativeness, but repressed feelings of love and hate as well. As might well be expected, the classical psychoanalysts place Oedipal strivings, and the conflicts to which these strivings lead, at the core of their theory of art. According to Schneider (1954), the artist achieves his power to identify with his characters and his themes from his early identifications with and subsequent transference relations with his parents. Or, in Ella Sharpe's more concrete exposition (1950, p. 135): "Art is a sublimation rooted in the primal identification with the parents. That identification is a magical incorporation of the parents, a psychical happening which runs parallel to what has been for long ages repressed, i.e., actual cannibalism. The artist externalizes his incorporation of the hostile parent into a work of art. He thus makes, controls his power over his introjected image or images."

Because of the Oedipal foundations of art—as Kris (1952), Schneider (1954), and Tarachow (1949) indicate—the artist must fundamentally be a communicating, social person. By conquering his Oedipal conflicts he learns to love himself and his work and to want to communicate productively with others.

A fourth concomitant of the Freudian view of art and sex sublimation is that an economy of psychic energy is involved in artistic creativity. According to Freud (1947), the energy that might be used for artistic production is usually bound by sexual repression; but if the artist is endowed with a certain flexibility of repression this energy can be freed for the work of artistic transformation from the unconscious to the conscious. The artist thus knows how to find his way back to reality from the world of private phantasy.

Joseph Weiss (1947) has gone beyond Freud himself in this connection and has claimed that just as wit, according to classical psychoanalysis, is the economy of expenditure of psychic energy in inhibition, formal esthetic pleasure is the economy of expenditure of psychic energy in perception. In Weiss' own words (1947, pp. 396-397): "When the perception of a picture causes a comparison with a more economic treatment of the same material, psychic energy

is not saved but wasted, and a disagreeable feeling is produced. Thus if two colors are too similar, they can be perceived easily neither as one color nor as two separate colors. The resulting increase in psychic work causes displeasure and we say the colors clash."

A final correlate of the Freudian theory of art and sex sublimation that we shall consider here is the view that art and neurosis are integrally intertwined and that only out of dealing with his own underlying anxiety and guilt can the artist be creative. A feeling of calm, Sachs (1942) states, is a prerequisite to the creation or appreciation of beauty; but calm is only achieved by one's overcoming one's basic hostility and anxiety. The artist, moreover, never really conquers his underlying neurosis, but keeps producing his work as a continual defense against his still-existing disturbance. In Tarachow's words (1949, pp. 224-225): "The artistic creation of beauty is also a relief, but from the intolerable tension of the fear and aggression of others. . . . A motive in the creation of beauty is anxiety produced by a feared and hated object with whom the artist must become reconciled." Ella Sharpe (1950, p. 127) concurs: "Art rises to its supreme height only when it performs a service—first for the artist and unconsciously for ourselves—that it did in ancient times. That service is a magical reassurance." Lee (1947) agrees that an artistic work represents an atonement for the artist's destructive rage against objects and also a means of self-therapy for his neurotic depression, the depression being a requisite for artistic creation.

Otto Rank (1932, 1950) gave considerable thought to the relationship of art and neurosis and took a somewhat more optimistic view of the artist's ability to resolve his own fundamental disturbance through his creative efforts. Like the Freudians, Rank felt that the forming of unconscious phantasy is essential to artistic creation; and that in his phantasy the artist attempts to solve his own deepest problems. The neurotic and the artist thus have a fundamental point in common—they have both committed themselves to the pain of separation from the herd, from unreflective incorporation of the views of their parents and of society. But the artist, through his work, is able to achieve in-



tegration of his isolated will by establishing a creative relationship to others. Schneider (1954) also takes a more optimistic view of art and neurosis and holds that art does not directly stem from emotional disturbance, even though some neurotic artists may get secondary (rather than primary) gains from being disturbed.

### Critique of the Freudian View of Sublimation and Art

Although there is much to be said in favor of certain aspects of the classical psychoanalytical theory of sex sublimation and art, the one-sided formulations of this theory that are often given fail to do justice to the immensely wide ranging elements of artistic creativity and, at best, give but partial answers to the questions of why some individuals are artists and why they create what they do. Specific limitations of the Freudian position include the following:

1. That the artist must in some manner tap his unconscious mental processes; if he is to produce and communicate to others works of lasting values is almost certainly true. But the "unconscious mind" that he thereby taps is hardly a mysterious entity in its own right. It consists, rather, of the total sum of the individual's experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and memories which, by an act of conscious introspection, he is able to dig into, reactivate, and recombine in an almost infinite number of new ways. All his artistic concepts, as Locke, Hume, and other philosophers have shown for several centuries, merely consist of re-experiences and recombinations of some of his original, if now mainly forgotten, precepts. It is true that he is almost totally unaware (or unconscious) of exactly *how* he reactivates and recombines his past experiences (just as most of us are unaware of exactly *how* we solve a mathematical or a chess problem, although obviously the solution does not really come to us—as it sometimes appears to come—by magic).

2. Granting that art depends largely on creative processes that involve our past experiences, many of which we no longer consciously remember and whose recollection and recombination into art forms are only vaguely understood by us, there is little evidence that the artist's use of his "unconscious" thoughts

and feelings invariably implies his coping with, defending himself against, and finally mastering his instinctual urges. This is not to say that some artists do not have sexual or aggressive feelings that they are ashamed to admit, that they unconsciously repress, and that consequently impel or compel them to work out these feelings in artistic productions, as a kind of expiation or of defense against these repressed feelings. But to believe that because some artists are thus unconsciously driven to creativity *all* artists *must* be so driven is to make one of the commonest errors of logical thinking and to set up a hypothesis for which there are as yet, no confirmatory data. One of the most unscientific aspects of orthodox psychoanalysis is the conclusion by its devotees that because A and B, who have been treated for some neurotic symptom, display X complex, every other human being who has the same symptom must also show evidence of X complex. Similarly, presenting evidence that artists A and B were impelled to create because of their defenses against their own unconscious sex or aggressive urges scarcely proves that all creative artists have similar repressed urges.

3. Assuming, again, that unconscious thoughts and feelings play a vitally important role in virtually all artistic creations, there are no scientific data whatever to support the Freudian assumption that these unconscious experiences are dynamically repressed. Occasionally, when a person is thoroughly ashamed of his ideas or phantasies, he may dynamically refuse to admit that they exist; and as a result of this kind of repression, he may later be driven to express these unconscious feelings in artistic forms. There is much more reason to believe, however, first that most of our experiences of which we are at any moment unaware consist of fairly neutrally toned thoughts and feelings which we would not hesitate to reawaken to consciousness; and second that the unconscious experiences that artists generally employ in their productions are notably in this class of quite unrepressed ideas and emotions. Freud believed that the artist (for some mysterious reasons which he never could explain) is the type of individual who somehow is flexible about his repressions and is able to dredge up his repressed unconscious ideas and

use them effectively in his work. It would seem to be far simpler and wiser to assume, instead, that either (a) the artist is the kind of person who is less self-blaming than others and therefore likely to do less repressing; or (b) he is an individual whose "talent" or "genius" (by which may well be meant his unusually well organized brain and central nervous system) enable him in the first place to have more vital life experiences than the nonartist or the inferior artist and in the second place to dig into his unrepressed store of these experiences.

4. The Freudian notion that art is intimately related to Oedipal relationships or to repressed feelings of love and hatred for one's parents (which are ultimately transferred to other significant figures in one's life) probably has a grain—but *only* a grain—of truth in it. For great artists (as we shall note in more detail below) almost invariably love their work and to some degree love (or at least seek the approval of) the audiences to which they present this work. And behind all feelings of loving, vital absorption, and desire for the approval of others it is quite likely that there are some remnants of early attitudes and ideas which were learned in one's early family romance. To believe, however, that all emotions of love and absorption as well as those of aversion and hatred stem from a boy's originally lustful after his mother and resenting and being guilty about his resentment of his father's intrusion is to make one more of those overgeneralizations for which orthodox Freudians are unfortunately famous. Again: assuming that an artist's loves and hates significantly influence and affect his productions, there is no evidence that his repressed feelings of affection and hostility are much more important than his open and avowed feelings.

5. If the Freudian theory of art and sex sublimation were true, one would expect artists to be unusually inhibited individuals who lived ascetically in their garrets, had little or no sex-love affairs, and consequently felt compelled to compensate by throwing themselves into their work. But most of the great artists of all time, as we shall indicate in a later section of this article, were reasonably happily married or engaged in distinctly more than their share of heterosexual or homosexual activities. What repressed

instinctual sex-love urges they were artistically "sublimating" is, in the light of these circumstances, difficult to imagine.

6. The Freudian notion that psychic energy is involved in artistic creativity and that formal esthetic pleasure stems from an economy in the expenditure of this energy is particularly hard to take in the light of twentieth-century discoveries in physics and neuroanatomy. Freud's application of nineteenth-century mechanics to the psychic working of the human organism and his "explanations" of human thinking and feeling in terms of his own hypothesized system of libido economy have been much criticized by numerous modern critics of psychoanalysis; and there seems to exist little or no empirical evidence to support his highly imaginative sex-economy theorizings (A. Ellis, 1950; Eysenck, 1953). The mere fact that a host of psychoanalysts, such as Kris (1952), Reik (1945), and Weiss (1947), have heartily endorsed Freud's notion that artistic creativity depends on the economics of the expenditure of libidinous energy by no means adds any validity to these highly theoretical constructs.

7. The view that art and neurosis are integrally related would seem, at first blush, to have some validity, since it is obvious that most great artists have been more or less emotionally disturbed and many of them have even been psychotic (Phillips, 1957). The facts would also seem to indicate that supersensitive and emotionally aberrated individuals (for example, fixed homosexuals) are frequently more interested in art than less sensitive and aberrated persons appear to be. These facts, however, seem largely to be accounted for by several understandable reasons: (a) Great artists are generally unconventional and their very unconventionality is often misinterpreted as severe disturbance. (b) Noted artists are investigated more carefully by their biographers than are hacks or nonartists; therefore we tend to know about their aberrations and to remain unaware of how disturbed were their less great contemporaries. Many outstanding artists who live regular and undistinguished lives are rarely written or talked about; while the more erratic ones, such as Gauguin and Van Gogh, are endlessly biographized. (c) We have no way of



knowing how many thousands of highly talented individuals never became fine artists precisely because they were so disturbed that they never actually produced any works of note. (d) Severely disturbed individuals, who have no creative talents themselves, frequently become interested in art because they are interested in being "cultured" or "superior" persons, and thereby winning a derivative kind of social approval.

What little clinical evidence is available tends to indicate that the more severely disturbed an individual is, the less he tends to actualize whatever artistic potential he may possess (A. Ellis, 1959). Moreover, since great art almost invariably involves a considerable amount of mental integration, concentrated drive, and persistent work on the part of the artist, it may seriously be doubted if most outstanding artists were *severely* neurotic or psychotic when they were at the height of their productivity. The Freudian and Rankian hypotheses that the artist "works through" his disturbances in his artistic creations, and helps therapize himself thereby, may have some validity. But it may just as logically be hypothesized that the truly great artist is somewhat less disturbed in most instances than the lesser artist and that that is why his potential talent is more likely to be effectively actualized. It may also be hypothesized that in the case of the inordinately talented artist his genius is so outstanding that, neurotic or not, he finally produces outstanding works and that in understanding him, we might better focus on his genius than on his reasonably irrelevant emotional aberrations.

### A Multifactor Theory of Art and Sex

The main objection to the Freudian theory of art and sexuality is not that it is entirely mistaken, and certainly not that it adds nothing to our understanding of the creative and the sexual processes, but that it is at the same time too restricted and overgeneralized. In attempting to account for the "deeper" and more complex aspects of the influence of human sex drives on artistic production, it undervalues some of the simpler and more significant factors

involved in sex and art. A wider ranging and more objective theory of the place of sexuality in art would include some of the following factors.

It should first be noted that man appears to be essentially and inherently a creative animal. Even when he is not particularly intelligent or educated, he tends to restructure his environment in terms not only of utility but also of esthetics. The more intelligent and culturally educated he is, the more artistic, in terms of both productivity and audience participation, he tends to be. Art, therefore, may be conceived as a *normal* aspect of human living; and the question may well be asked, "Why does a human being *not* use his creative potential in some way?" rather than "What makes this or that individual artistic?" To be human, and especially to be a highly intelligent human being, to some degree *means* that one will tend to be inventive, problem-solving, and artistically creative. The mystery, if there is a mystery about esthetic productiveness, is why so few individuals in our society actually do invent and create. And one of the fairly obvious answers to this mystery is that we raise our people to be so nauseatingly approval-seeking and terrified of failure that most of them do not *dare* take the risk of committing their creative potential to actual artistic production.

The second point to be noted in trying to arrive at a wide-ranging theory of art and sex is that art is essentially a form of *work* and that no artist produces anything who does not, at some point in the game, push himself into *action*. Arts such as drawing, painting, and particularly sculpture require physical effort along with mental exertion; and unless the artist is willing, quite consistently, to buckle down to the necessary tasks and chores involved in his activity (including the often boring tasks of mixing paints, stretching canvases, etc.), he simply is not going to accomplish anything in his chosen field. Fortunately, however, all animals to some extent *like* to move, to act, to work; and the artist normally becomes thoroughly absorbed, in a pleasant way, in his activities once he manages to overcome his initial inertia and to get these activities under way. Because he learns, by experience, that it is pleasurable to

work in an absorbed, intense manner, he has an incentive to keep going back to his artistic activity, even when he is not too unhappy in a more restful state.

If, as just posited, the creative urge is innate in most men, and if art is a form of activity, which itself is also a normal part of human living, it is not difficult to see that there must inevitably be *some* connection between sex and art. For the human sex drives are certainly to some degree inborn and intrinsic and they are one of the most highly motivating forces (from both an innate and socially learned standpoint) in driving men and women to intense and sustained activity. To accept this fact does not mean that we have to go the whole Freudian or Jungian way and identify life itself as an essentially libidinous or erotic force. Activity-impulsion is probably the most generalized form of aliveness; and sex-impulsion is merely one, albeit a major, form of activitization. But it is hard to conceive of living, behaving, or activity-impulsion without *any* measure of sexuality—especially since, in the human species, reproduction of the race is entirely dependent on sexual processes.

The argument then logically proceeds: If art depends on inborn (as well as culturally acquired) activity-impulsions, and if human behaving and reproducing to some degree depend on inborn (as well as environmentally learned) sexual-impulsions, it would indeed be odd if there were no reasonably direct relationships between art and sex. Or, to state the matter a little differently, under these circumstances it would be remarkable if the main or only influence of sex drives on artistic creativity was, as the Freudians state or imply, the result of such highly indirect factors as sexual sublimation, repression, defenses against anxiety and hostility, reaction formation, and various other kinds of psychic circumlocutions. As Harry B. Lee, himself a psychoanalyst but one who takes a somewhat non-Freudian view of sex and art, has rather poetically stated (1953, p. 283): "Creation and recreation are inventive activities born of spiritual necessity, and they are something more than chance iridescences upon the surface of a daydream."

If we turn from Freudian hypotheses and give a little thought to the possibility of *direct*

influences of human sexuality on artistic production, we may soon come up with the following hypotheses:

1. Sexual desire is a highly activating and motivating force behind many pursuits. It spurs people to achieve fame and fortune, in many instances, in order that they may be more attractive to members of the other sex; and it is quite likely that art is one of the main fields in which this sexually impelled fame and fortune is sought.

2. Sexual urges frequently encourage individuals to enter certain professions—as when the physician studies medicine in order that he may be able to undress women or the actor enters the theatrical field because of the attractive women he may encounter there. Certainly, therefore, some artists must be drawn to their work because of their interest in nude models or (as we noted previously in this article) their sensuous pleasure in depicting the nude form.

It has been hypothesized by Rhoda Winter Russell (personal communication) that many painters have highly enjoyable, positive experiences with members of the other sex; and that in their artistic productions they not only create the sexualized forms of the persons with whom they have had pleasant contact but also recreate the sex pleasures they have had with these individuals. This hypothesis, that direct sex gratification may lead to an urge to recreate images of itself, seems to make good sense and would partially help to explain why many artists are drawn to depict nudes or other sexualized representations in their work—and why some of them may even be drawn to art itself as an enjoyable form of life activity.

3. Karl Groos (as quoted by Forel, 1922), notes that since the object of art is to excite the sensibilities, it is obvious that it will utilize the domain that is richest in emotional sensations—the sexual domain. Drawing, painting, and sculpture in particular are forms of art which require that the sentiments of the observer be attracted and heightened almost instantaneously, whereas certain other art forms (such as literature) must ultimately, but not immediately, strike an emotional cord in the members of the artist's audience. It is therefore to be expected that the graphic and sculptural arts will make particular use of sexual themes.

4. Although sexual orgasm is normally reached, in the final analysis, by means of friction and the sense of touch, sexual arousal in most societies, including our own, is largely mediated by the sense of sight. Art, which appeals particularly to this sense of sight, may consequently again be expected to be more sexualized in many respects than certain other forms of creative expression.

5. Autoerotic impulses, as Havelock Ellis (1936) pointed out, frequently are not directly gratified, but drive the individual into some form of restlessness and nonsexual activity; and it is impossible to say what of the finest elements in art, in morals, in civilization generally may not really be rooted in autoerotism. Ellis quotes Nietzsche in this connection: "Without a certain overheating of the sexual system, we could not have a Raphael."

6. There may well be, as Marcuse (1955) indicates, an inherent trend in the libido itself toward cultural expression, without external repressive modification. Although the Freudian theories of art springing from an economy of energy may well be questioned, as we noted above, there may still be truth in the notion that life is basically an energy-expending process and that sex energy is a most important part of and significantly motivating force behind living. If so, such sex energy could both directly and indirectly contribute to artistic creation.

7. At the bottom of artistic production is sensory input and output. The artist almost hungrily draws sensations from his environment; and, albeit in an often abstract and highly intellectualized form, he communicates them back to his viewers—who, in turn, receive their first impression of the artist's product from their senses. "If man expresses his grasp of the world by his senses," states Erich Fromm (1955, p. 347), "he creates art and ritual, he creates song, dance, drama, painting, sculpture." If this is true, then sex and art are two major ways by which man expresses his grasp of the world by his senses—since in addition to its use of the sense of sight, which we emphasized a few paragraphs back, sex is indubitably a highly sexualized activity. Artists notably draw upon sensations; and it is quite likely that their sensuousness will lap over into sexual expressiveness. Whether consciously or unconsciously,

their art will tend to carry pure tones or overtones of sexuality for themselves and their viewers.

8. In some instances, the artist will very deliberately and consciously employ his art form for the expression of his sex impulses. Thus, a writer may become sexually aroused by his own fictional scenes; and a painter may get an erection while painting a real or an imagined nude. Also, instead of unconsciously repressing his sex urges and sublimating them in his work, an artist may consciously suppress his unsatisfiable desires and throw himself into diverting artistic activity that helps keep him from plaguing himself with lustful thoughts.

In many ways there may be a direct or semi-direct influence of human sexuality on the artist and of artistic creation on sexual desire and fulfillment. The concept of what is artistically beautiful most probably does not depend entirely on sexual craving; but part, and perhaps quite a large part, of this concept does seem to stem from obvious or covert sexual drives.

As for the more indirect aspects of sex and art, particularly those involved with the psychoanalytical theories of sex sublimation, these too would appear to have some validity—in spite of the usual orthodox Freudian attempts to overemphasize their importance. In fact, in the case of any given artist, there is no reason why the sexual sources of his creative work cannot be significantly fourfold. (a) He may have conscious sex desires which he deliberately fulfills to some extent in his art—e.g., by painting exciting nudes, sculpting erotic tableaux, etc. (b) He may have unconscious but unrepressed sex urges, which supply him with considerable artistic raw material (such as sensuous images or predilections for sexualized forms) that he incorporates into either representational or more abstract art forms. (c) He may have conscious sex urges which he consciously suppresses by absorbing himself in his art work and which help give this work either a highly sexualized or a studiously asexualized tone. (d) He may have conscious sex (or aggressive) feelings of which he is quite ashamed, which he then unconsciously represses, and to prevent these repressed impulses from returning to consciousness he may set up compensatory or other neurotic defenses which drive

him to produce works of art and sometimes to produce them in a specifically sexualized manner.

Only by taking into account several major factors such as those just outlined is it possible for us to account for the full scope of the relationship between sex and art. And when this full scope is accurately perceived, it indeed appears almost universal. For all that—and let this caveat be duly emphasized—art is far from being entirely sexualized in either its origin or its execution. As Herbert Read (1947) correctly indicates, art forms have their basis in the laws and organizations of inorganic as well as of living things, in the processes of biological growth and function as well as in the mathematical and mechanical properties of matter. Art is the representation, science the exploration, of the fundamental structure and processes within and around us.

### The Sexual Psychology of Artists

As briefly noted in our discussion of sex sublimation and art, most outstanding artists have hardly been noted for their sexual abstinence or reticence. Craven (1931, 1940) informs us that Titian had at least one mistress; Rembrandt lived in concubinage with Hendrickje Stoffels; El Greco was a man of many loves; Van Gogh was a constant frequenter of brothels; Gauguin frequented brothels and also lived with a mistress; Modigliani was promiscuous; Matisse had an illegitimate daughter; Picasso lived with various women; Turner was a man of strong sexual impulses who had four illegitimate children; and so on and so forth. Brodzky (1946) tells us that Jules Pascin, one of the outstanding painters of nudes, was highly promiscuous and that "a loose life . . . was as food for him."

When not reveling in heterosexual activities, some of the most renowned artists, including Leonardo, Cellini, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Blake, are suspected of having had homosexual or at least homoamative relations during a large part of their lives. Although the stereotype of the bohemian artist who lives in a garret and is sexually promiscuous is probably largely false—since many quite talented and great artists marry conventionally at a reasonably

early age and remain sexually faithful to their mates for the rest of their lives—it still can probably be found that renowned artists tend to be less conventional in their approaches to sex and to life than are men of equal genius in other fields (such as engineering or research). Quite possibly, this may partly be because the artist usually is a free lancer, who is not directly dependent on a single employer for his financial security, and that therefore he allows himself more freedom in his sexual behavior. But there may also be something about the artistic temperament itself that finds it undesirable or difficult to conform to bourgeois sexual morality.

There is a widespread belief that an unusually high proportion of artists and individuals who are interested in art are homosexually inclined. As far as great artists themselves are concerned, this belief does not appear to hold much water, since the great majority seem to have been distinctly heterosexual and some of those who are suspected of being homosexual (such as Leonardo) are placed in this category on only the flimsiest of evidence. In what seems to be the only study of homosexuality and general creativity that has been done to date, a study by the present author (1959), the data clearly showed that the more homosexual an individual is, the less creative—in terms of originality and inventiveness—he tends to be. Dr. Daniel Schneider, a practicing psychoanalyst as well as an authority on art, has also found (1954, p. 300) that "the great homosexual artist is the exception that proves all the rules." The notion of the homosexual's being highly artistically creative is a myth that has largely been fostered by prejudiced observers, such as Edward Carpenter (1914), Havelock Ellis (1936), and John Addington Symonds (1883), who were themselves homosexual or who (as in Ellis' case) were intimately involved by marital or other emotional ties with homosexuals.

There is much more valid evidence that proportionately more homosexuals than heterosexually interested individuals are artistically and esthetically inclined in terms of audience participation. Just as females in our society tend to attend the ballet, dramatic productions, and musical concerts, whereas males frequently are more interested in the more "manly" sports, so



do male homosexuals frequently become esthetically inclined. Part of this participation by homosexuals in artistic interests may be compensatory; part may be imitative and derivative; part may stem from withdrawal from "masculine" interests; and part may be otherwise correlated to homosexual neurosis. Art interest, however, should not be confused with artistic creativity; and there is some reason to suspect that fixed homosexuality takes away from rather than adds to artistic solidity and that those relatively few great artists who have been exclusively homosexual have fought their way to the top of their profession in spite of rather than because of their emotional aberration.

Up until and including the present day, sex differences in artistic creativity have been quite pronounced. Although numerous females attend art school and show considerable talent, and although some of them become outstanding illustrators, relatively few achieve high rank among the truly great artists of their day. Havelock Ellis, after an exhaustive study of sex differences, reported that "there can be no doubt whatever that if we leave out of consideration the interpretive arts, the artistic impulse is vastly more spontaneous, more pronounced, and more widely spread among men than among women" (1929, p. 374). Ludovici (1932, p. 44) concurred: "We find chiefly the names of men in all the records of human greatness." And even Simone de Beauvoir (1953), after pointing out that women have had a unique role in the cultural and intellectual life of Western civilization, was forced to conclude that "however important this collective role of the intellectual woman may have been, the individual contributions have been in general of less value."

Why women have turned out to be less impressive in the field of creative art has often been a matter for debate. Havelock Ellis (1929) believed that although the sexual sphere is more massive in women it is less energetic in its manifestations; and that consequently the female's creativity suffers. Virginia Woolf (1930) held that biology has little to do with the artistic inadequacy of women; rather, she contended, the need for true independence and a room of her own constitute the female's

worst handicaps in competing artistically with the male. Simone de Beauvoir (1953) insisted that art and thought have their living springs in action and that because woman has not been engaged in action to any considerable degree, she does not make the most of her artistic potentialities. Other authors feel that the female's main creative outlet is childbearing and child-rearing; and that because she is biosocially focused on this kind of creativity, her contributions to art tend to be relatively secondary, imitative, and usually second-rate.

The mystery of why women are, on the whole, considerably less artistically creative than men is enhanced by two noteworthy exceptions to the general rule. In the first place, in certain esthetic fields, such as the writing of fiction, women are often outstanding creators—e.g., Jane Austen, the Brontë sisters, Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, Katherine Anne Porter, Elizabeth Bowen, etc. In the second place, women are frequently unusually gifted as performing or interpretive artists, in such fields as dancing, singing, acting, and the playing of musical instruments. Why, then, do they fail, in almost all instances, as outstanding painters, sculptors, and composers?

In addition to the reasons posited two paragraphs back, it may be hypothesized that women, for biological and social reasons, are far more interested in concrete human relations than they are in abstract artistic processes; and that the graphic arts and music, in particular, require for their highest forms of composition a vital absorption in abstract ideas rather than more concrete feelings. None of the foregoing theories of why artistic creativity is lower in the female than in the male, however, have any conclusive data in their support; and the issue remains still scientifically unresolved.

### The Diagnosis of Sexual Disturbances from Artistic Productions

During the last two decades art and sex have become associated in a manner that hardly existed before World War II: namely, the psychological diagnosis of individuals with sex (or nonsexual) disturbances through the interpretation of their paintings, drawings, or sculpture. Several psychologists and psychotherapists, in-

cluding Buck (1949), Hammer (1958), Machover (1948), and Naumberg (1950), have published treatises purporting to show that emotionally disturbed, and particularly sexually disturbed, individuals will project their personality problems into their artistic productions and that if these productions are carefully analyzed these individuals may be accurately diagnosed. Thus, drawings and paintings have been employed in revealing the problems of homosexuals, sadomasochists, fetishists, exhibitionists, and other kinds of potential or actual sex offenders.

Evidence presented by the above named authors, as well as many studies by others, would tend to indicate that although artistic productions may be of some use in the clinical diagnosis of sexual and nonsexual disturbances, no foolproof method of diagnosis or prognosis yet exists in this connection and predictive results are spotty, inconsistent, and inconclusive. By far the best method of evaluating an individual's general or sexual disturbances would still seem to be a face to face clinical interview; and projective methods of personality assessment, including the use of artistic productions, are of comparative minor value and low validity (A. Ellis, 1953).

### Pornography and Art

Pornography is a term that was originally used to describe prostitutes and their trade but has in recent years been employed to describe literature or art that has been created with the deliberate intention of arousing sexual desire. It is often confused with erotic realism. Thus, some of the descriptions in James Joyce's *Ulysses* or some of the vitally alive nudes of Renoir or Pascin may arouse the most lascivious thoughts in certain readers or viewers; but this does not seem to have been the conscious intent of the creators of these descriptions or portrayals. As Forel (1922) points out, Greek art was enormously concerned with the nude female figure; but most of this art was far from being pornographic or "obscene," since the intention of the artist was to idealize the female form rather than to arouse sexual thoughts and fancies.

The field of art and sex is unusually compli-

cated because the word sex has multiple meanings when used in relation to art. Following the suggestions of Brian Heald (personal communication), we shall attempt to break down the term sex so that it becomes denotatively clearer when used in the phrase "sex and art." We may thus distinguish among three reasonably clear-cut meanings:

1. *Sex-depicting but nonerotic art.* A considerable number of works of painting and sculpture depict or involve sexual content but do so in a nondynamic or nonarousing way. The majority of the better known examples of Greek nudes, for example, are sexual, in that they depict the feminine form, but they are not erotic, in that they do not arouse the sex impulses of the average viewer. Some Greek nudes, however, such as the Venus Callipyge, are erotic or desire-arousing to members of our society because they emphasize sexual features (in this case, the buttocks) which our mores do not (yet) accept or approve. The Callipygian Venus, therefore, tends to become associated in the mind of today's Western viewer not with nudity but with undressing—which to him is ordinarily tabooed and sex-arousing.

By the same token, Rodin's famous piece of sculpture, *The Kiss*, is sex-depicting (because it deals with sex-love processes) but not particularly, to most viewers, erotic or sex-arousing (because it is relatively objectively descriptive or self-contained rather than dynamically excitative). *The Kiss* may also be deemed to be on the borderline of the two categories of sex depiction and sex arousal because (a) a sizeable minority of viewers may become sexually aroused by it and (b) an even larger number of viewers may become amatively or emotionally (rather than sexually) aroused by its glorification of young love.

2. *Sex-arousing or erotic but nonpornographic art.* A great many works of art not only depict sexual content but do so in a dynamic or arousing manner. Thus, Manet's *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* shows a nude in the company of several young Frenchmen and depicts the girl and her companions so that the average viewer's phantasies tend to move out from the time and place of the painting and to use it as a jumping-off point for his personal sex imaginings. Similarly, the depiction of pubic hair in



a drawing or painting tends to make this work erotic or sex-arousing because, in the same sense as Manet's picture, it draws the attention of the viewer to the "realities" of the situation. The "peep-show" aspect of semi-nudity is erotic because it expresses the dynamism of undressing rather than the state of nudity.

Between the objective sex-depicting and the subjective sex-arousing work of art there is often a fine line; and this line changes drastically from community to community and from time to time. Thus, the notorious copulating nudes that were fairly common on public buildings in ancient Greece and India are apt to be sexually-arousing to a much greater extent for us than for their nudity-accustomed and more objective creators. And even for us, if we continue to see many of them and to be accustomed to their nudity, they soon lose most of their erotic or sex-arousing quality. In general, however, there is a considerable body of art that is sex-depicting in an objective way and a body that is sex-arousing in a personal or subjective way. The former will normally be less likely to be banned or bowdlerized than the latter.

3. *Sex-arousing or erotic and pornographic art.* Sex-arousing art may be created by an artist who has little idea of the potential arousability of his work or who wishes to stimulate his viewers esthetically or emotionally and who employs deliberately sex-arousing themes to effect this end. In this case, we refer to his work as being "erotic realism." On the other hand, sex-arousing art may be created by an artist who is fully conscious of what he is doing and who wishes dynamically, concretely, and against some of the mores (or assumed mores) of his day to stimulate the naked sexuality of his viewers. Thus, if Rodin's male in *The Kiss* had his hand on the female's buttocks or genitals his statue would be violently erotic but not necessarily pornographic; while if the female had been having active intercourse with the male or had been another male the statue would be pornographic. Again, the statues of coital figures on Indian temples are erotic, but not pornographic; but the depiction of the same acts in terms of contemporary photography would (in 99 per cent of imaginable cases) be pornographic and not erotic.

It is necessary, again, to distinguish between

the motives of the creator and those of the viewer. In the case of the Indian temple statues, for most of the tourists who see them the figures are unquestionably pornographic, but from the standpoint of their creators it would not be logical (except with careful qualification) to call them pornographic art.

If these three categories of sex-depicting, sex-arousing, and pornographic art are valid, it would appear that pornography can normally only exist where sexual mores are to a degree prohibitive and where pornographic productions can therefore be mores-destroying. The laughter at sex acts and depictions—as shown in the tendencies of many primitive peoples to enjoy lascivious stories and in those of the Chinese and Japanese to enjoy their "pillow book" art—is not necessarily pornographic; but where the mores are quite antisexual, it almost necessarily is. In a perfectly mature and permissive society pornography probably cannot exist.

Clear-cut instances of sex-depicting and sex-arousing art are known from ancient times. Primitive peoples have created much sculpture and pottery that portrays sexual and erotic themes. Cicero and Pliny mention *libidines*—highly erotic pictures and bas reliefs used to adorn Roman villas of Pompeii; and many of these have been unearthed in modern excavations of ancient cities (Northcote, 1916). Erotic as well as pornographic playing cards were fairly prevalent in fifteenth-century England and were quite in vogue in the nineteenth century (Bloch, 1934). As noted previously in this article, an entire school of enormously talented erotic (and sometimes pornographic) artists arose in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Edward Fuchs's monumental three-volume work on the erotic element in caricature (1909-1912) shows that some of the most renowned artists have deliberately drawn and painted sexually arousing pictures. Bloch (1908) lists, among the great names in art who have created paintings that have frequently been called "obscene," Rembrandt, Watteau, Fragonard, Pascin, and Beardsley.

Can there be great erotic art? There almost certainly can, even though most sex-arousing representations are so focused on some of the

more limited aspects of their content that they tend to ignore some of the main elements of composition, organization, and style that are necessary for the existence of truly fine art. But some of the deliberately sex-arousing Japanese drawings—which we would undoubtedly label as being pornographic, though the Japanese themselves would often take a different position—are works of rare beauty and craftsmanship; and when viewed by a cultured person they are likely to appeal to him primarily as works of art and only secondarily as erotica.

Many nonerotic works, ironically enough, have been endowed with a highly stimulating character because of attempts to censor them. Thus, as Haylock Ellis (1936), Forel (1922), and other authorities have pointed out, putting fig leaves on paintings or statues often excites the viewers, by drawing attention to what they conceal, far more than a display of simple nudity would.

Nonetheless, censorship of art representations has been rife from at least the days of early Christianity. Christian opposition to nudity in any form made it a sin, well into the Middle Ages, to use even a naked boy as a model (Stanley, 1955). During the Renaissance, Savonarola preached mightily against nudity in art and burned many pictures portraying delights of the flesh. During the Counter-Reformation, after the Medici popes had passed on, fig leaves were supplied for nude statues in the Vatican, and Michelangelo's "Last Judgment" was made respectable by the addition of painted drawers (Markun, 1930).

In eighteenth-century America, a plaster cast of Venus de Medici could not be publicly shown in Philadelphia; and Vanderlyn's "Ariadne" was looked upon with disfavor. In nineteenth-century America, when Horatio Greenough painted a group of "Chanting Cherubs" for J. Fenimore Cooper, the naked babies aroused great moral indignation. A half-draped statue of George Washington also was looked upon unfavorably. In the 1870's and 1880's, Markun (1930, p. 560) tells us, "it was rather a daring person, even in New York high society, who ventured to hang a nude in his drawing room."

In Victorian England, Watts was called upon to explain in public why he could not have

clothed his *Psyche* and the young girl of his famous *Mammon* work. William Etty and others continued to paint nudes; but Etty's scheme of decoration for a garden house in Buckingham Palace was rejected because of its "immodesty."

Censorship of so-called obscene paintings and sculptural representations continued into the early part of the twentieth century; and, of course, it still persists, except that there has been considerable liberalization in the "so-called." In the early 1900's John S. Sumner of the Society for the Suppression of Vice prosecuted the art dealer who displayed the nude painting, "September Morn"; and the French playwright, Paul Bourget, was shocked to discover, when he was visiting America, that the people of Boston refused to permit the forms of two naked children carved by the American sculptor August Saint-Gaudens to appear on the façade of their public library. Trousers were also put on antique statues in Baltimore and Philadelphia (Dingwall, 1957).

It has only been during the last half of the twentieth century that the realistic portrayal of nudity in art has truly begun to come into its own and to remain essentially unfettered by censorship. "September Morn" is now found to be entirely innocuous by the viewing public; and many of our widely circularized periodicals have become exceptionally unsqueamish about publishing full-length, completely bare-bosomed pictures of appetizing young females (Ellis, 1960a). For the moment, at least, censorship of pictures that combine art and sexual themes is well on the decline. To use the distinctions made at the beginning of this section, we may say that both sex-depicting and sex-arousing paintings and sculpture are both widely accepted in Western society today; but the banning of outright pornography is still very much with us.

## Art and Sex Education

Sex education is normally carried on in a rather hesitant fashion in Western society; and when it is given it usually consists of written words or spoken lectures. Art, when it is employed at all in this kind of sex teaching, is used for the photographlike illustrations of the

sex and reproductive organs that many of the marriage manuals contain.

Other societies, however, are more imaginative and wide-ranging in their use of art for sex education. For centuries, the Japanese "pillow books," which consist of sex manuals illustrated in the most concrete ways, have been given to married couples for use on their wedding nights and subsequent occasions. In New Guinea, Mantegazza (1935) informs us, erotic scenes showing the mingling of men with gods, with the genitals of the portrayed individuals purposely enlarged, are employed to educate young people in sexual pursuits. Recumbent wooden figures four feet long which can be made to move and simulate intercourse are also employed.

In China, as in Japan, illustrated sex picture books have been used for centuries. In Italy, during the Renaissance, Augusto and Annibale Carracci made a series of so-called "figures," showing positions of intercourse, which were sometimes used for sex education. And in the twentieth century the famous gynecologist and artist, Robert L. Dickinson, published his *Human Sex Anatomy* (1933), which was probably the first modern book of repute that contained illustrations of sex positions. In the early editions of this work, these illustrations were published separately, since the publisher was not certain that they would be allowed to circulate through the mails. In later editions, the illustrations were published as an integral part of the book.

Havelock Ellis (1936) believed that art could be very useful in the sex education of children. "Children," he wrote, "cannot be too early familiarized with the representations of the nude in ancient sculpture and in the paintings of the old masters of the Italian school. . . . Early familiarity with nudity in art is at the same time an aid to the attainment of a proper attitude towards purity in nature."

In regard to the use of art in the sex education of adults, most modern writers are still too squeamish to explore the possibilities of the use of erotic art to arouse sex partners who may normally have difficulties in becoming aroused or in achieving orgasm. Some material on this subject, however, is contained in the present author's *Art and Science of Love* (1960b).

## Conclusion

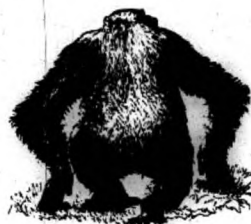
Human sexuality is an exceptionally important facet of life. As such, it would be most unusual if it did not play an important role in and have a significant amount of influence over artistic creativity in general and the production of painting, drawing, and sculpture in particular. Although the classical Freudian theory of art and its origins in sex sublimation seems to be both too narrow and too overgenerally applied, there does appear to be some measure of truth in it. It would be more accurate, however, to point out that sexuality seeps into art directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously; and there would seem to be no special or unique way in which it affects artists or the viewers of their creative productions. Also to the point: unless the word *sexual* is indiscriminately employed to cover virtually all of life's energizing forces, it would appear that artistic endeavor is significantly nonsexual as well as sexual and that any theory that would truly explain why artists create and why members of their audience find their works immensely satisfying must take into account multifactor hypotheses that cannot be condensed into any pat formula. Art is art and sex is sex; and never the twain shall completely merge.

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In *McDermitt v. United States*, 98A. 2d 287, where a police officer, by leading the defendant on and encouraging him, induced him to make a verbal suggestion and a physical gesture and then charged him with committing an assault, the Court held:

"Courts are not so uninformed as not to be aware that there are such things as flirtations between man and man. And when flirtations are encouraged and mutual, and leads to a not unexpected intimacy or an intimacy not discouraged or repelled, such cannot be classified as an assault. Even more strongly should the rule apply when the complaining witness is a policeman. An officer of the law, as we have said, has the duty of preventing, not encouraging crime. As appellant's counsel says in his brief, an officer should not be permitted 'to torment and tease weak men beyond their power to resist' and then attempt to make out a case of assault." (pp. 289 - 290)

"We do not say that the police officer was guilty of entrapment. But the evidence may be tested as if entrapment were claimed. . . . When it appears that 'the person affected' — the police officer — has by his own insidious conduct, by patient and clever encouragement, and by setting the stage for a furtive homosexual gesture, he should not be heard to say of the accused, 'He assaulted me.'"

## FICTION

# ALMOST OVERNIGHT.....

JOHN E. O'CONNOR

Throughout the long, dreary proceedings they kept him in a special chamber, behind a partition of transparent bulletproof glass, from where he would be visible to the judges, the attorneys and the spectators. He could not hear them through the partition (not that it would have mattered: he spoke no Hebrew), but to his left was a small speaker over which the proceedings were translated for his benefit into German.

At first he had felt fear: he was still badly shaken after his seizure in Chile. But then the fear wore off, and again he felt the same boredom of disuse he had felt throughout the years of his concealment. It was not really his show, this trial, though everything appeared to center around him. It was no more his show than were the ancient religious rites the show of the animals who were thrown into the flames. There was just as little uncertainty here: the results were just as preordained. And so he lost interest, be-



came bored with the trial of himself, Hans Reber, Lieutenant Colonel SS (retired), for crimes against the Jewish people.

The trial dragged on during the two hottest months of the year. There were accounts of the conditions of European Jews during the Nazi regime, there were statistics pertaining to their butchery, there were pictures showing piles of corpses, and there were documents signed by himself which authorized the exterminations. There was a lot of talk about personal honor, the degree of one's responsibility to the state, and whether or not Hans Reber had been merely a cog in the administrative machinery; and at the end of the two months he was found guilty and sentenced to be hung on the first day of September.

The verdict had been announced late in the day. When they brought him back to his cell, he found his supper waiting for him—iced tea, a fruit salad, and weiners and sauerkraut. Beside his tray was a German paper, two days old and neatly folded. As he started in on the salad, he heard a noise and looked up to find Avram, his youthful guard, standing outside the cell. It took him a little by surprise, and for a moment the sight of the young man's swarthy skin and hooked nose and bushy eyebrows made him feel as though he were back in his old position as supervisor of mass liquidations, and he felt a surge of pleasure at the notion of committing Avram to the gas chambers.

Avram was smiling.

"Well, *mein Colonel*, so now it is your turn, eh?"

Reber said nothing. He continued to eat his salad.

"I'll bet you're terrified," Avram pursued. "They say Rudolf Hoess was truly scared before they executed him. And that guy who had charge of all the camps... what was his name?"

"Pohl," said Reber, turning to the sauerkraut. "Oswald Pohl." The sauerkraut had become cold.

"Yes. Well, they got him too, and they say he was very scared. It must be a horrible thing to have nothing to look forward to but your own hanging."

"Why don't you go away?" Reber said.

"Go away? But sir, I won't be off duty for another six hours." He hesitated, then laughed. "Besides," he continued, "I'm interested in you. I've never seen a man just after he's been condemned to death. It's a very moving thing, like something you'd read in a poem."

Reber flipped open his newspaper. One of its front page stories concerned an episode in Miami, Florida, where some ninety-four homosexuals had been arrested simultaneously and given prison sentences of five to ten years.

"What are you reading, *mein Colonel*?" asked Avram eagerly.

"Nothing," said Reber. "Go away, you dumb kike."

The young man blushed crimson, stung by the insult. "Why you... you pig!" he stammered furiously. "You think you're so god damned superior. Well, just wait till they slip the old noose around your neck."

"Have you a reserved seat?"

"You're damn right I do! I'll be right beside you, laughing my head off. Any man who slaughters innocent people... you can bet I'll be there, old man!"

For the thousandth time, Reber smiled at the irony of the situation: less than thirty years ago it had been fashionable to detest and brutalize the Jews; now, such persecution had been denounced as a crime; now, because he had been an organizer of the persecution, it was fashionable to detest and murder *him*. How strange and amusing it was, the way fate had completely reversed itself.

During the two weeks remaining before the date of his execution, he entertained himself by reading a couple of books about the history of World War II, though he spent most of his time dictating his memoirs onto a tape recorder provided him by a leading American magazine. In return for the privilege of first publishing rights on his memoirs, the American magazine agreed to pay a generous sum to his wife, who still lived in Chile.

As he recounted those events from his point of view, he naturally tried to justify himself as fully as he could without sounding ridiculous, and this led him into tortuous byways of speculation. He was not to blame for the massacre of the Jews—at least not he alone, or just he and the other leaders. Such persecutions were a sociological phenomenon. Frustration and hatred lay coiling in the bosoms of all people at all times. The desire to strike out, to destroy someone else in atonement for one's own shortcomings and misfortunes is ever present; and, as in the case of the German people, when the pressure is strong enough, it requires but the slightest suggestion, a mere hint that the Jews or some other minority are at the bottom of it all, to cause the serpent to lunge forth, fanged by that instinctive urge to kill that keeps the hunters pacing nervously until the opening of the new season when they can take their weapons into the woods—to lunge forth and convulse an entire nation with wholesale frenzy and bloodshed.

He switched off the tape recorder, a little embarrassed at the unoriginality of the thoughts he had just uttered. They were precisely what his attorneys had stated in pleading his case before the court. But had he no more insight than they? Was there nothing else he could add that would clarify all, and make his guiltlessness as shining and clear as a Mediterranean noon? Why did the truth have to sound so mediocre and unextraordinary?

He could have told more, but it would only have obscured the issue and made his innocence less obvious. For, contrary to one of the basic prem-

ises of his attorneys, he had enjoyed his work as executioner. He had been good at it. He had relished it. And it was really this fact, rather than its negation, which proved his innocence. The guilt would have been in performing acts against his most basic inclinations. But the looks of fear on the faces of those despicable people, the fatuity and hysteria of their pleas for mercy, and their ultimate screams and choking pleased him to the profoundest reaches of his soul. The judges had clothed his actions in a rhetoric of contradiction, calling them unnatural and inhuman. But they were absolutely wrong. For him the performance of the executions had been the most natural and human thing in the world. How ridiculous then that he should die, if that was the only reason. If anybody should be executed, it should be the entire German people: not because of the stale argument that he had been a mere tool of their will (as though a thief could be exonerated by laying all blame merely on the fingers which had snatched the purse), but because it was *they*, not *he*, who had performed the *unnatural* act—the annihilating edicts so opposed to common human nature. If the term *natural* had any meaning at all, it meant the type of behavior characteristic of the great majority of ordinary men; and therefore the execution of the Jews, natural for him (the natural killer) had been unnatural for the German people. It had been their sin, their transgression. Let them atone.

Towards the end of his last week, his thinking grew more involved and he drew completely inward, no longer speaking into the tape recorder, no longer responding to Avram's taunts which became more vicious by the day. He knew what Avram wanted: the same thing that Reber's own victims had lavished so generously upon him—the looks of fear, the entreaties, the weeping. Avram was probably a very quiet and decent sort of fellow: an obedient son, a patriotic citizen, a good provider for his own wife and children. But the season was open—this time on the former hunter, the unnatural war-criminal.

Reber chuckled. Unnatural? Why it was the most natural thing in the world!

On the last day of August he was visited by the prison warden who informed him that he had been granted an indefinite stay of execution. He would not explain why. And, on the following day, on which he should have died, Reber was puzzled by the look of great disappointment on Avram's face and the sudden silence that had descended upon the youth. Strangest of all, perhaps, was the fact that none of his lawyers paid him a visit.

He turned over various explanations in his mind. One in particular appealed to him: it didn't seem too far-fetched that the judges had gotten together and commuted his sentence to life imprisonment, the way so many of the sentences of war criminals had been commuted. So he would live after all. He did not consider what he would live for: his relief was too exclusive of such peripheral concerns. Life is its own justification.

The warden paid him another visit on September 10, opened his cell, and led him back into his private office. His attitude was one of forced cordiality.

"Will you have a cigar, Herr Reber?" he said, extending the copper humidor.

"Yes, thank you." Reber leaned across the desk while the warden lit it. "Well," he said slowly, "I suppose you have some news for me?"

"Yes, Herr Reber. Within another week you will leave this prison."

"Oh? I'm being transferred?"

The warden grimaced sardonically. "Yes, in a way. But not to another prison. Your sentence has been lifted—completely. You will no longer be under the jurisdiction of Israel. You will, in fact, become a free man."

Reber felt dizzy.

"You are joking!" he gasped incredulously.

"I would not think of joking about such a matter, not even with..." He hesitated, then changed to another tack. "Tell me, Herr Reber, during your stay in prison, have you been keeping abreast of world events?"

"Not recently," Reber said, frowning. "My memoirs..."

"Yes, yes," interrupted the warden. "Well, let me bring you up to date, sir. A curious thing has taken place in the United States. It seems to have started with the recent depression. You know how they tried one remedy after another, all without success. Then finally, one of their senators gave a speech in which he accused the homosexual population of that country of having undermined the national economy. Almost overnight, in every major city, the police began arresting all known or suspected homosexuals. There were lynching incidents in Tampa and Mobile and—I believe—Savannah. And then, two weeks ago, the federal government formally declared that all homosexuals were enemies of the nation, who had deliberately and systematically attempted to destroy the moral fiber of their fellow citizens, and they ordered the FBI to..."

Reber's eyes were already glowing with feral awareness.

"You needn't tell me more," he said. "I've heard it all before. Now that the Americans have chosen their victims, it remains only for the...uh, the sacrifice to take place. And, in order to carry it off successfully, they need an expert!"

The warden nodded grimly.

"The Israeli government was contacted by the secretary of state, asking in the name of the United States that you not be executed, but rather that you be turned over to them."

Reber let out a deep sigh. Resting his arms over the side of the chair, he gave himself over to that feeling of warmth and contentment that comes from knowing that you are truly needed.



# BOOKS

## A REAL SLEEPER

**A WICKED PACK OF CARDS**, by Hugh Ross Williamson. London: Michael Joseph. 1961. 205 pp. \$3.75. Reviewed by Noel I. Garde.

"A real sleeper" you would call it if it were a movie. It's a most extraordinary sort of little book, in a class all by itself. And a real gem, in this reviewer's opinion. How do you classify it? Well, first of all it's a murder mystery. But hardly the usual sort, since the murder victim, the murderer and the detective are all homosexuals, and each other's lovers at one time or another. And then, aside from being a suspenseful murder mystery, and a homosexual novel, it also contains a heavy dose of metaphysical and philosophical speculation respectively on the symbolism of tarot cards (the type used by gypsy fortune-tellers, whence the title) and on the different approaches to love.

The story is told as a first-person narrative by a 27-year old school-teacher named Adrian Musgrave. While motoring in moor country during his vacation, he is attracted by an inn-sign of the Four Kings, representing the heads of four Tarot kings, except that each head is obviously an individual portrait, and the artist extremely talented. Deciding to satisfy his curiosity, he enters the inn and is given a friendly greeting by a good-looking 20-year old youth named Brian who informs him that the talented painter of the sign had just recently been found dead on the moors, at the bottom of a steep drop, the victim of "death by misadventure" according to the coroner. Adrian gets further information about the 18-year old painter from the owner of the inn, a very attractive woman named Eve Smith, a former actress. She is a great devotee of tarot cards, had inspired the young man, a frequent visitor, to make an inn-sign for her along those lines, and as a result of her reading of the cards, has doubts about the death being accidental. Adrian is persuaded to look into the background of the dead boy, John Adam, and from Eve receives some clues.

Having been furnished with four names, Adrian tracks down the four men in and out of London. It is soon obvious that each of them is the model for one of the four heads on the inn-sign. Symbolically representing functions of tarot kings, one is a wheeler-dealer financier, another a politician, another a clergyman and a fourth a journalist. The thing they all have in common is indeed a startling one! And possibly one of them is John's murderer!

John, it seems, was brought up as an orphan at a good school, and after a short stay with foster parents, took to living, since the age of 16, with a schoolmaster referred to only as A. Since getting out of school, painting and sketching has been the only occupation of his generally bohemian and vagabond life, as far as Adrian can learn. Of course, Adrian doesn't hear too much about John's relations with his schoolmaster friend.

In the course of visits back to the inn, Adrian becomes yet more friendly with young Brian and receives from him a page from John's diary which reveals that John had left his schoolmaster friend because the latter had disdained to try to hold him if he wanted to go. John's view, as revealed in his diary, is that if A. really loved him, he'd have said he'd kill John rather than let him go. But it is also clear that John had decided to go back to A.

The mystery is brought to its startling climax when Brian and Adrian take a day off to visit the spot where John is buried, and also where he had his fatal fall. The conversation is centered very much on John, and it is soon clear that Brian had been John's lover during his stay at the inn and was horrified at the thought of John leaving.

From here on out the story unravels itself with many surprises. Incidentally, not once in the course of this extraordinary book is there a reference to homosexuality as a concept, directly or indirectly.

## A DASH OF REALITY

**FIRE AND THE NIGHT**, by Philip Jose Farmer. Regency Books, 1962. Reviewed by Gene Damon.

Philip Jose Farmer is one of those semi-famous, semi-ignored writers who frequently comment on situations unpalatable to the many, and caviar to the few.

This novel is primarily a diatribe on race relations. The homosexual theme is muted—there are steaming touches of sexual tension between the three main characters, Danny, Vashti, and Virgil.

Danny, the white boy, is never fully revealed as a person. He is rather, somewhat like the mad narrator of Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood*. Vashti, the Negro woman, is a magnificent character, half stereotype and half real, but a very compelling combination. Virgil, the repressed homosexual husband of Vashti, is in some ways more believable than the other two. The emotions he feels for Danny are clearly homosexual, but this is not blatantly emphasized.

Partly because of the unusual side of the theme, this is a must book for the serious collector of male homosexual fiction. It is also an excellent novel and should appeal to even the casual reader. At least to the reader who can take his story with a dash of reality.



# BOOKS

## A REAL SLEEPER

*A WICKED PACK OF CARDS*, by Hugh Ross Williamson. London: Michael Joseph. 1961. 205 pp. \$3.75. Reviewed by Noel I. Garde.

"A real sleeper" you would call it if it were a movie. It's a most extraordinary sort of little book, in a class all by itself. And a real gem, in this reviewer's opinion. How do you classify it? Well, first of all it's a murder mystery. But hardly the usual sort, since the murder victim, the murderer and the detective are all homosexuals, and each other's lovers at one time or another. And then, aside from being a suspenseful murder mystery, and a homosexual novel, it also contains a heavy dose of metaphysical and philosophical speculation respectively on the symbolism of tarot cards (the type used by gypsy fortune-tellers, whence the title) and on the different approaches to love.

The story is told as a first-person narrative by a 27-year old school-teacher named Adrian Musgrave. While motoring in moor country during his vacation, he is attracted by an inn-sign of the Four Kings, representing the heads of four Tarot kings, except that each head is obviously an individual portrait, and the artist extremely talented. Deciding to satisfy his curiosity, he enters the inn and is given a friendly greeting by a good-looking 20-year old youth named Brian who informs him that the talented painter of the sign had just recently been found dead on the moors, at the bottom of a steep drop, the victim of "death by misadventure" according to the coroner. Adrian gets further information about the 18-year old painter from the owner of the inn, a very attractive woman named Eve Smith, a former actress. She is a great devotee of tarot cards, had inspired the young man, a frequent visitor, to make an inn-sign for her along those lines, and as a result of her reading of the cards, has doubts about the death being accidental. Adrian is persuaded to look into the background of the dead boy, John Adam, and from Eve receives some clues.

Having been furnished with four names, Adrian tracks down the four men in and out of London. It is soon obvious that each of them is the model for one of the four heads on the inn-sign. Symbolically representing functions of tarot kings, one is a wheeler-dealer financier, another a politician, another a clergyman and a fourth a journalist. The thing they all have in common is indeed a startling one! And possibly one of them is John's murderer!

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# READERS *write*

Letters from readers are solicited for publication in this regular monthly department. They should be short and all must be signed by the writer. Only initials of the writer and the state or country of residence will be published. Opinion expressed in published letters need not necessarily reflect that of the REVIEW or the Mattachine Society. No names of individuals will be exchanged for correspondence purposes.

## READY TO HELP

REVIEW EDITOR: Am in receipt of your wonderful letter and enclosures this date and from the bottom of my heart I'm humbly thankful to you. There are no words to express the hopelessness that I've felt the past year. The REVIEW and your letter have given me the only real hope for future happiness I have had in several years.

May I take some of your time to tell you my story. It must be told. It's something I've got to tell someone.

To begin with I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio of poor German parents strict in their Catholic belief. Both are wonderful people, believe me, but life was hard and strict for us children. I entered the monastery at the age of 14 for a course of studies which would ultimately lead to the priesthood.

It was a grueling, severe task for me because, I know now, that I was never meant for this type of life. I survived 7 years of this, but ill health made me leave my studies. This broke the heart of my parents for the first time. I went to work for a year then enlisted in the U.S. Army. This was the second heartbreak for them. I remained in the Army for 9 years, attaining the rank of 1st Sergeant of a Medium Tank Co., serving in France and Germany during the war.

After several years in the Army Recruiting service I developed a bleeding ulcer of the stomach and was discharged. I married and lived a very happy life (2 sided) for 14 years, but finally this double life caught up with me and to prison I went for 6 months.

Now I am working in a small restaurant a few hours a day. It's the best I can do here. What terrible crime could I have committed to be so ignored, censured and completely banished from society?

Being born as I was, with the slight difference of whom I want to live and love with does not impress me as being a crime. Do they banish the girl who was

born blind, the boy with only one leg, with only half a brain?

I stated to you that sometimes life does not seem worth living. Believe me these times became more numerous in the past year until I received 4 copies of the REVIEW and today your letter and enclosures really gave me the lift I needed so badly. I have no money to give you but if God listens to the prayers of people like me you will feel His help for I have prayed nightly for the success of the Society. I solemnly promise you that if the time comes to pass, you will never have to ask me for financial help for I will give it humbly and with an eternally grateful heart.

I sincerely hope that I shall have the great honor of meeting you and the other members of the governing body of the Society. I stand ready to help in any way I can.—Mr. T.F.G., Kentucky.

EDITOR'S NOTE: See "Readers Write" in May 1962 issue for Mr. T.G.'s earlier letter.

## CROSS-SECTION?

REVIEW EDITOR: As I carry on my usual various studies, I have, in instances come across your name in various publications—and books, as well.

Having spoken to you recently on the telephone, it is my understanding that you put out an official publication which reaches a cross-section of people throughout the country (somewhat as the *Californian*, edited by Burton Wolfe).

I am enclosing my check for fifty cents for a specimen copy of a current or back issue of your magazine.

I will review your publication carefully; and if I decide that it should find its place among my other periodicals that I receive regularly, I will remit accordingly for the year or six months as you so offer.—Mr. P.A.B., California.

## INQUIRY

REVIEW EDITOR: I have just finished reading *The Sixth Man* by Jess Stearn, and feel that I would like to know more about the Mattachine Society. I find it very hard to write this letter; I have never written or discussed this subject with anyone before.—Mr. R.K., California.

REVIEW EDITOR: I have read with interest of the purposes and activities of the Mattachine Society in the book entitled *The Sixth Man*. It is the first occasion I have had to be knowledgeable of your existence.

Will you send me any information you may have on the Society and include what needs to be done as far as an application for membership in it. I certainly will appreciate your doing so.—Mr. H.A., Wash.

REVIEW EDITOR: I would like to have some information on your publication... I have just finished reading an article on homosexuality reprinted from the REVIEW, and as this is an area that I am interested in, I would like to have any information that you could give....—Mr. W.D., N.C.

REVIEW EDITOR: I have recently heard from a friend living in the United States about your magazine, and being very interested, I should be very happy if you could send me a specimen copy, also details of the annual subscription.—Mr. E.W., England.

REVIEW EDITOR: I wish to take out a subscription to your magazine and would like to know the subscription rate, whether it is possible to pay in sterling and the price of back numbers of your magazine.—Mr. T.S., England.

## ARREST

REVIEW EDITOR: I have recently been arrested and released on bond on a warrant charging gross indecency with a minor (male). A friend who is familiar with the Mattachine Society suggested that I contact you to find out if you have a representative in Michigan who might give me some advice or help in this matter.

If you do, I would appreciate anything you might do or any information which you might send.—Mr. W.B., Mich.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Mattachine Society does not condone adult-child sexual relationships, but it is well aware that the facts in such cases are sometimes not brought to light. The above writer was referred to a competent attorney.

## CENSORSHIP DOWNUNDER

REVIEW EDITOR: Well, your last issue under plain cover came through O.K. and I now have received official Notice of Seizure stating that the copy of the magazine, "Mattachine Review" (Feb., '62), which was forwarded to me per post from U.S.A., on the grounds that the said magazine is a prohibited import within the meaning of Item 7 of the First Schedule to the Customs (Prohibited Import) Regulation.

I did phone the Melbourne Dept. and asked them what was in Item 7, etc., and they switched me from one government servant to the next. And then I was asked why I wanted to know! They explained after a long wait that (such) printed matter is abusive, blasphemous, indecent, insulting, obscene, offensive or profane in words or pictures.

I then asked what was offensive in the said copy, and let them know that the magazine has a clean bill in the States, and asked if they could point out something offensive. The gentleman on the end of the phone said that the magazine was sent to Canberra and a "doctor" had passed judgment on it. My comment was that if medical doctors judge books such as Mattachine REVIEW, they could not find them offensive; but that's the story.

I do suspect that the February issue was stopped because it had reference to NEW LAWS in America, and people might want the same thing in British countries.—Mr. J.W., Australia.

## APPRECIATION

REVIEW EDITOR: I commend you for your excellent and gracious work. Here is a renewal of my subscription for a 6-month period.—Mrs. M.W.P., Okla.

REVIEW EDITOR: I am a fairly new subscriber—just since January of this year. I was amazed to read in the April issue that out of 700 subscribers, only 225 are Supporting Members...

I should like to join the ranks as a Supporting Member, and have enclosed my check. Truly I wish it could be more, but it just isn't possible at this time.

I suppose many feel that unless they live near the San Francisco area, they would reap very little from any financial support. This, of course, is a rather narrow and selfish attitude, but one I'm sure you can understand, nonetheless...

Other than "financial aid" and encouraging others to "subscribe" and "con-



tribute," what can a person stranded in Wyoming do to help the cause? I should truly like to feel a part of the organization....—Mr. F.F., Wyoming.

REVIEW EDITOR: Here is my overdue subscription and a contribution of \$20 in addition. I'm sorry I was so late in paying up. My wife had a serious operation and all 3 young children had the mumps—and my car broke down. Now I'm over the hump and catching up on outside things. ...I enjoyed your letter that started with, "Parting is just plain sad!" Well, I'm not going to part, and I know that you (or we) are making progress. Of course we need a lot more progress, and I'll contribute every year as much as I can to help. ...You are doing good and much-needed work. I like your editorial style, the factual articles, and the refreshing fiction.

Don't stop! Don't give up! If you need more dough, say so! I'm no banker, but I'll help again.—Mr. R.D., California.

REVIEW EDITOR: I have read your April anniversary issue with great interest, both personal, and professional (in the counseling field).

Please enter me for a one year subscription...It will be a pleasure to keep up with your efforts, and to be of assistance in counseling and aiding cases in due time, as needed.—Mr. N.Z., N.Y.

REVIEW EDITOR: My face is red! I completely forgot to send in my monthly contribution at the beginning of this month. Enclosed please find a check for twenty dollars, representing two months' contributions...I trust the May contribution will be considered "better late than never."

A friend of mine who stopped in your offices on his recent trip to San Francisco, tells me in glowing tones of the work you are continuing to do there. His report to me was that he and I are the only two Mattachine members in this area. This only renews my sense of responsibility to continue sending in a monthly ten dollar pledge as long as this is feasible...—Mr. H.S., N.Y.

REVIEW EDITOR: ...Must tell you how impressed I was with that remarkable sonnet, "As He Who in a Vineyard on That Day", in April REVIEW. Very beautiful as well as technically good. The author should (and perhaps he does) take his talent seriously. We need more real poetry—i.e., poetry of imagery, beauty, music, and clarity. Good Lord, deliver me from T. S. Eliot!!!—Mr. K.B., Wash.

REVIEW EDITOR: So glad *The Circle of Sex* has been brought to the light of day. It combines so many apt and simple illustrations with a polysyllabic elaboration of types.

It should delight the simple enquiring mind, while confounding the censorious. It might even tempt the adventurous to box the compass, degree by degree.—Mr. J.D., California.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

REVIEW EDITOR: I tried in vain to buy a copy of your publication here in Dallas. I would be most appreciative of any information which would enable me to acquire a copy of the REVIEW. I am also interested in learning what sort of manuscripts which might appeal to you.

I was made aware of your organization by Lee Hein and a collection of stories published under the title *Harry's Fare*. I am a semi-invalid with a desire to write and in search of an outlet for my efforts.

Any help you can give me regarding the above will be most welcome....—Mr. M. M., Texas.

REVIEW EDITOR: As a professional painter and photographer, may I make a professional inquiry about your Feb. issue cover, attributed to a C. C. Hazard?

I hope you will use more of this very soon, both for cover and interior illustration.—Mr. S.B., California.

REVIEW EDITOR: Just a note to say thank you very much for your most kind welcome and help. Enclosed you will find a check for \$20—\$15 for membership and \$5 for the general fund....—Mr. F.L., Calif.

#### CALLING SHOTS

(Continued from page 2)

perhaps?) in it, their superiors who permitted it, and the relatively few persons who had been victimized by it, We say "relatively few" in reference to the total number of persons who have been spied upon unbeknowningly.

It is an unfortunate concomitant of our judicial system—and one of which police authorities are well aware—that such practices come to light only at great expense to the persons accused. And in this case, three men, in spite of the vices attributed to them by this "enthusiastic" officer, have risked much in order to assert a right which most of us assume to be basic.

But the truth usually comes out eventually though there may be conspiracies to prevent its doing so. In the case at hand, certain police elements—with the knowledge, permission and, undoubtedly, encouragement of their superiors have brought judgment on their own heads by indulging in a practice repugnant even to the most "depraved" elements of a multifarious—no pun intended—society. And in so doing have increased public suspicion of police practices and policemen in general, and so done damage to the image of a most necessary authority and consequently weakening its prestige.

This is very serious. In a number of newspapers recently (in both Canada and the United States), have appeared editorials and articles criticizing the public at large for not show-

ing greater respect for police authority!

If we may for a moment refer to the police as constituting a minority (many people think of them as exactly that), the activities such as that which has recently come to light (tortuously) in California testify to the fact that all minorities have their bad elements, and that the whole group is apt to suffer for the activities of that few. Thus, in the case at hand, we can only expect, as the night follows the day, that honest and sincere policemen will have a difficult job made more difficult, not so much by the activities of that element under discussion, but by the attitudes of the higher-ups who have allowed such generalized "detective work" in the first place, and who—since being put back in their place—have set up a most eloquent howl!

It is the thug in the street (of which there are reputed to be many in San Francisco, for instance) who stands to gain.

Thus, we see how the police authorities (let's not blame the lowly detective who, after all, can't be expected to entertain a very high concept of ethics), by allowing illegal practices to become a commonplace in their repertoire of enforcement practices, have—perhaps naively—brought about a condition which deprives them of the vision of their own purposes.

If we just turn over a few more stones instead of letting them lie, we should not be surprised to uncover methods even more unbelievable—and more il-

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legal. There has been accumulating over a long period of time a great deal of evidence that, all too frequently, police officers themselves have incited the very acts for which they have subsequently arrested their companions. This is especially true of homosexual solicitations.

And there is much yet to be uncovered about "selective enforcement"—i.e., enforcing the law only against those people you don't like!

None of this leads to respect of police authority.

If police authorities are to regain—and maintain—some of the respect that the newspapers—belatedly—have been noticing that they are not always getting (newspapers prefer to keep their heads in the sand about that sort of thing, as evidenced in the *Californian* a number of months ago), then they shouldn't have far to look.

It is always important that a police executive remember that he is not a director of a corporation producing a commodity for which a market must be created.

#### **DORIAN SEEKS REVIEW ON CUSTOMS RULING**

The slow motion wheels of U.S. Customs are now grinding away at another look at two volumes of imported photographs and drawings to determine if they are in reality obscene in terms of the tariff act of 1930.

The volumes are "Der Mann in Photographie" and a subsequent book of

physique figure drawings of the human male, published by *Der Kreis* in Zurich. Each book has 100 slick-paper plates taken from issues of the senior homophile magazine of the world. Included are the works of artists such as Picasso, Mario de Graff, Jean Bouillet, and the fine camera work of the late Rolf of New York, and others from the U.S. and Europe. Viewed by many students of art and photography, no one (outside of Customs) considers either of the volumes obscene in the least. Any such declaration, it has been pointed out, would automatically place all U.S. and foreign physique magazines in the same category, and this is not even a remote possibility, because the U.S. Supreme Court set aside a petition (June 25) in which it was sought to have three such magazines declared unavailable in the U.S. The Court declared it would not consider the matter, so their place in the mails is assured.

A few months ago Customs permitted the importation of the two *Der Kreis* volumes, and collected duty on the shipments to Dorian Book Service. Then in May came the reversal of its policy: the books were now ruled obscene.

Along with copies destined for another bookseller, the impounded shipments caused Dorian to start legal action to have the materials cleared. Assistant Customs Collector O'Riley at San Francisco, notified that this action was being initiated, stated on June 27th that he would once more submit the copies for another review

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and ruling, with the possibility that Customs might change its position.

Thus until that result is known, the action hangs in suspense.

Many back orders for the books are being held up by Dorian at the present time. It has been a disappointment to have to notify those who have

ordered these books that the long-delayed shipments are now held up even longer. We know the delay is an even greater disappointment to them, but perhaps these volumes, if cleared in the near future, will have even greater value as collector's items.

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