MEMBERSHIP IN THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY

Inquiries are made as to how membership is obtainable in the Mattachine Society. Application for this purpose is made to any of the officers of the San Francisco Area Council. Before the applicant is considered for membership (at the monthly business meetings of the Area Council) the applicant should be known by the various members of the Council as well as know something of the projects done by the local group; such as the work on the Mattachine Review, and other publications; monthly public discussion groups, other social activities, etc. Therefore, for those seriously interested in aiding the Society by becoming members, it is advisable to contact a member of the Area Council to discuss the plan. Our office telephone is EX 7-0773 or write to us at 693 Mission Street, Room 307, San Francisco.

At the monthly public discussion groups, held at the Friend's Center, 1830 Sutter Street, all the Area Council officers attend regularly. We attempt to meet all newcomers and give any information desired by him. However, it is often impossible to meet everyone who attends - if you have been neglected you have our apology. If at any of the meetings you wish to discuss anything with a member or an officer, please feel free to button-hole him.

With this issue of the Newsletter, and on each succeeding issue, we will be printing it on a Multilith printing machine, which will give much better reproduction than the former method of mimeographing the newsletter. We feel sure you'll appreciate the change as much as we do.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION MEETING

Dr. Alfred Auerback spoke at the Friend's Center, 1830 Sutter Street, September 6, 1956, before an audience of some fifty people. This meeting was one of the regularly scheduled monthly public discussion groups sponsored by the San Francisco Chapter of the Mattachine Society.

Dr. Auerback is Chairman of the Committee on Mental Health of the California Medical Association and Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California. He began his discussion of "A Psychiatrist Looks at Sex Deviation," with a brief historical summary of the incidence of homosexuality from early cultures up to and including the present one. He related some of the high points that homosexuality reached as a cultural value in some societies, such as the brief Grecian epoch.

Continuing, the speaker delved into some of the current feelings about homosexuality; the abilities and limitations of psychiatry to help the maladjusted homophile; some of the problems that may beset the homophile, such as the difficulty of suitable meeting places, etc. As to a working definition of causative factors or the causative factor - it's still anybody's guess. Each theory has its particular applicability, but rarely will two people agree to the particular causes of this phenomena. One may as well seek the cause of his heterosexuality. There are numerous justifications for each form of sexuality. It appears that both sides -- heterosexual and homosexual -- are equally far from reaching that neutrality which will accept all facets of sex as distinct and interesting possibilities within the human being. Each side conforms to its own compulsions for it is a compulsion to rigidly follow and adhere to one line of action when others are available and interesting - despite the justifications. To realize fully the fact that all these directions are available and
that each person is able to experience what either side offers is what is necessary. Of course this points to the excessive limitations and strictures that each of us live within, and how little of life we really live.

The speaker reported an instance of homosexuality occurring in one of identical twins. The twins were separated at birth for the purpose of distinction by having one wear blue clothing and the other pink; the one who was dressed in pink later became homophilically inclined - but was aided in this by becoming a "mother's boy" and other acts such as the death of his sister when he donned her clothing in an attempt to assuage the mother's grief.

A question and answer period came after Dr. Auerback's speech - followed by coffee and a general discussion.

Books and Library Notes

It is not generally realized, but we humans pattern ourselves and our behavior according to the concepts held up to us of the way the sort of people we think we are should behave. These concepts, or archetypes, come to us from a variety of sources; the home, school, and popular beliefs as embodied in art-forms being among the main ones. The films also profoundly influence persons in these behavior-patterns. Rodney Garland, the psychiatrist, points out time and time again in his The Heart in Exile, a book which every homophile ought to read at least once, how the people who came to him suffered very genuine grief and sorrow, but expressed it in words and motions similar to those with which they had seen such things portrayed on the screen.

At present, the only art form which makes any real attempt to deal with the homophile is fictional and non-fictional literature. Consequently, this especial form assumes an exaggerated importance in the lives of such people, which it might not if there were less of a general ban upon artistic treatment of the subject.

The short story "Astrological Fricassee" in the anthology Nights of Love and Laughter by Henry Miller, now being issued in pocket book form is one example of such influence. Miller is one of the greatest writers
may well be thoroughly experienced and completely aware of what he is doing. Worse still, is the fact that the few such cases that occur in the homosexual world and by some mischance become known in the heterosexual one are cited as examples of the frequently repeated charge that homosexuals are "corrupters of the young" and that "we must protect our youth."

The appearance, therefore, of such as story as Norman Mailer's new novel The Deer Park gives one hope that possibly the dawn of a new era is commencing. The one homosexual character is only a minor one. But at least he is a recognizable human being with a few sparks of decency to him. He is neither a delicately fragile soul who is "crushed by a world too strong for him" nor an emotionally immature person who seeks exclusively what is termed in certain circles a "mad" existence. He is seen as an individual rather than a type, and his personality rather than his sexual tendency are Mailer's main concern.

The novel itself is extremely readable and seems to be almost exclusively populated by persons totally devoid of sincerity, honesty and ethics. There is also one semi-criminal who is strongly similar to Dostoevsky's fallen angels who seek the bad because of their devotion to the good, as well as a number of vivid sexual episodes that ought to interest those readers who want to relax.

Oddly enough, the story ultimately works out to a highly moral conclusion, but one that scorns what some Puritans called "the filthy rags of righteousness."

The total effect of the novel is to give one the belief that Mr. Mailer is a born story-teller of very great potentialities. The fact also that a novelist of such note should deal so objectively with the homosexual augurs the coming of a time when a finer type of archetype will be held up to the homosexual for him to model himself upon.

This would not be so regrettable, were it not for the fact that the public accepts these portrayals as the last word of truth about such people. Worse still, there are actually homosexuals who sincerely believe that the artificial, unstable and affected mode of existence described by him is what the authentic homosexual life consists of. It is what they regard as a way they occupy their main thoughts with, and it is what they regard as living, it is what they occupy their main thoughts with, and it is what they believe is the way all homosexuals would be were they to let themselves go.

The short story "The Innocent Flesh" in the Bantam Book anthology new campus writing is equally repugnant to homosexual minds. In this case, the central theme is paedophilia, the love of young boys by a mature man. Most heterosexual reviewers would term the story "sensitively handled" and "delicately probing." However, for the homosexual the subject can only have extremely distressing associations.

Paedophilia is usually regarded as originating from an incapacity to experience emotional relationships with persons existing on one's own level of maturity, though no two cases are exactly alike, of course. It is usually compulsive rather than a matter of conscious choice, and has little to do with the goodness or badness of the person, when he is evaluated in terms of what he is as an individual rather than his habit.

The only trouble is that it is illegal, and a far more serious offense than homosexual relationships with consenting adults, even though the juvenile partner...
Calendar

of Events

OCTOBER

4 - Public Discussion Meeting, Friend's Center
1830 Sutter Street, 8 p. m.
Speaker: Ken Zwerin, Subject: Recent Tour of Europe

14 - Mattachine Brunch, 1560A Haight St. 11 til 2

22 - Fellowship Dinner (time and place announced later)

25 - Monthly Business Meeting - members, 8 p. m.

NOVEMBER

1 - Public Discussion Meeting, Friend's Center
1830 Sutter Street, 8 p. m.

11 - Brunch (to be announced later)

19 - Fellowship Dinner (to be announced later)

29 - Monthly Business Meeting - members, 8 p. m.