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MARCH 1973

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masculine clothing and spoke in a basso profundo it wouldn't automatically undermine our acceptance by straight society. In time, it dawned on me that these dres­sed-as-people were human beings like everyone else and to be liked or disliked as one does everyone else solely on what one felt about them as people. I also came to see that many of the costumes were quite striking and had taken con­siderable work in their preparation.

However, I still don't know why peo­ple dress up in the first place and strongly suspect many other gays don't really either. It seems to me, therefore, Vector could carry some material on the subject, both from the professional and personal viewpoints, you'd be helping all

LET THERE BE LETTERS

Sincerely, 
Jack

Peace, Love, Joy,
A GAY AMERICAN IN GREECE: WHAT TO EXPECT

by Richard Piro

Inspired by a three-thousand-year-old myth, American gays deplane at the Athens Airport breathing signs not unlike the exiles' return. This is where it began, the setting of secretly read philosophical studies concerning the love that dared to speak its name. A trip to Greece is akin to a pilgrimage. In 1973 post-revolution Greece, what can we anticipate in terms of acceptance of our guiness as well as the opportunities for expressing sexuality? After four summers plus an eight-month residence on a small island in the Cyclades, I am prepared to express one man's opinion of the contemporary Greek sexual climate.

In all strata of Greek society, peasant to aristocrat, the attitude concerning homosexuality is one of ridicule, disgust and (we'll discuss this later) fear. Whenever Greek males gather, a major segment of conversation will center around crude jokes concerning stereotype faggots. It's easy for Westerners to ignore the awesome power of the Greek Orthodox Church, forgetting the fact that this organization was responsible for whatever Greek culture survived the centuries of Turkish occupation. A primary goal of the Church was to swing societal acceptance away from preceding pagan mores (Check out the virginity hangups of the early Roman Christians). The Turkish liberal acceptance of men keeping boys for sexual pleasure was a prime concern for the Eighteenth Century emerging Greek nationalism and it hasn't changed. This refers to the attitudes of the people and not official political policies. In several trips I have never seen nor heard of any gay difficulty with the police, and I rather suspect they know better than to try controlling an activity that is so ingrained into the entire male population, and it is not uncommon for American gays (especially Blacks) to be honestly propositioned by members of the military, including police officers.

There is no gay community in Athens outside of a couple of summer bars in the Plaka district, frequented by international hustlers and bewildered Americans looking for the non-existent scene. There is no gay community in Athens outside of a couple of summer bars in the Plaka district, frequented by international hustlers and bewildered Americans looking for the non-existent scene. There is no gay community in Athens outside of a couple of summer bars in the Plaka district, frequented by international hustlers and bewildered Americans looking for the non-existent scene. There is no gay community in Athens outside of a couple of summer bars in the Plaka district, frequented by international hustlers and bewildered Americans looking for the non-existent scene.

Mykonos, not too far from the nude beach. I heard a great whoosh of water and after the orange spots cleared I opened my eyes and looked down. Rising out of the sea was a man as near to a Greek god as I'd ever experienced. We flashed on each other's genitalia, both coming to the ready position. He pulled off a diver's mask and said in perfect English, "Hello. My name's Petros." I stumbled a greeting. Petros then dove down and quickly returned with a handful of sea urchins, those black spiny terrors which take some of the glory out of Greek beaches. When he had piled a sufficient number of them on shore, he climbed up the rock, his eyes never leaving mine. We discussed the urchins, my claiming ignorance as to their gustatory delights. Anxious to continue the camaraderie, he took a knife, scraped a portion away and held the urchin out to me with the command, "Suck." I did, wondering if his English was good enough to know the double meaning. Greeks are tricky — they touch, hold hands, and kiss as acceptable gestures of friendship, not indications of sexual availability. I was confused, wildly turned on, but confused. I said, "What are those tiny flecks of orange that taste so good?" He replied, smiling, "Sperm." I said, "Wouldn't it be marvelous if ours tasted as good." He murmured, "Sometimes it does." No happy ending. Just then my 'friend' returned, perceived the situation and clung to us like a fungus. For the next few days we hung together, always increasing the frustration. Petros and I were determined to get it on. We didn't that time.

A year later I returned to Athens and called him, surprised that this tremendously sexual upfront, gorgeous Greek spoke in hushed, whispered tones over the phone. No, I couldn't meet him at his apartment. (I was alone, terribly, frustratingly, agonizingly alone.) We arranged a meeting spot and that night he drove up with his Greek lover. I got in the car, ignoring their obvious nervousness. And we drove and drove and drove until we came to a fancy tavema frequented by American Air Force officers and wives. We went in the back way and sat in the darkest part of the outdoor garden and, again, conversed in hushed whispers. Petros is an executive in a well-known Athens firm. This was his way of life. The least I'd hoped for was to get in to a gay group of Athenians or at least find out where to go. Negative on both. They don't exist.
How do, where do, Greeks meet? They don’t. Most lover situations begin as innocent friendships which then may flower into what we consider a lover relationship. This is both good and bad. Every Greek man is supposed to have a special friend. When going off to war or military duty the last person to say goodbye to the departing hero is not the mother, the girl friend, or the wife — it is the friend. Stepping together, taking trips together, holding hands, embracing, dancing — these are part of the common union between two male friends and is seldom suspect by the population. On my island I had such a friend, a Greek musician fulfilling his draft duty as one of the three sailors assigned to that post. When he allowed my sexual advances our “friendship” turned into something else and my fears of guarding his reputation were unfounded. The natives were delighted that Nikos had finally found his friend. But oh, those preliminary weeks of touching knees under the table, whispering endearments, being serenaded on a beach in front of an open fire freaked up my head. I wanted so much more.

One night I was followed by a local fisherman and almost forced to go down on him. I was afraid of violence if I didn’t comply. Afterwards he demanded money — American money. His friends roared with laughter every time I entered our local taverna.

Don’t look for feelings. The system (especially on the islands) is such that all of the men are bought by the women, since no girl may marry until she has a dowry, which must include a fully-equipped house. Tenderness is a thing which, if it exists in Greek men, does so only in deepest privacy. Once off-doors his machismo demands something else. In order to make it he is strong and pretend indifference — only these cock-robin games keep Greeks interested and turned on.

So where do you make sex contact in Athens? Everywhere. The beautiful, beautiful park surrounding the Acropolis is just off Constitution Square (where real peacocks roam freely) is excellent cruising ground, especially if your bag is military. Athens is dotted with public restrooms (Omonia Square Subway station) and tiny pissoirs that are open 24 hours a day, and the lights go off at midnight! Walk into any of the public restrooms and you’ll see twenty hands furiously beating their meat, trying to catch your fancy. Count out the cabbies cruising the parks for more than a fare. If you’re black you are in for a special treat (or agony). This is the ultimate for Greek exotics. Behind every black walking the park there is a parade of Greeks striving to get it on; policemen, soldiers, sailors, businessmen, etc. The people who make it easiest are the non-Mediterranean types — blacks, blonds, blue eyes, etc. The darkish Italo-American, Jew, Greek-American, etc., has difficulty because the average Greek will never come on sexually to another Greek.

One final word of caution. To the Greek (who is part Arab in mentality) sex means that someone gets fucked ONLY. (This applies heterosexually also.) If you do more along the lines of oral-genital sex, what little respect the Greek has for you is lost completely and you are filth to him, even though he willingly places his cock in your mouth. He invites you to come to his home to meet his family. Blow him and you’ll never see him after you give him his handout.

There is nothing judgmental implied about having good sex, but you must be strong and pretend indifference — only these cock-robin games keep Greeks interested and turned on.

By an overwhelming majority, active members in the Society for Individual Rights elected the above persons to offices at the Annual Membership Meeting, Wednesday, February 7. S.I.R.’s new president and vice president, Frank Fitch and Don Scott campaigned as a team, their platform based on a “Let’s Bring S.I.R. Together” theme in which a more positive and constructive attitude be adopted both “within the organization and without. A stronger effort to promote the basic principles for which the Society was created eight years ago and a desire to make S.I.R. more “fun” was also part of their campaign. Duke Smith and Roger Hayden, incumbents unencumbered by opposition were reelected as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. The newly revised Constitution voted into being as of the Annual Meeting calls for a Board of Trustees of nine persons who will determine the policy and direction of the organization (instead of as the old board which consisted of thirteen committee chairmen and the four officers). Serving as Trustees will be Jim Foster, Gary Miller, Doug DeYoung, George (Deno) Thomas, and Kevin Norton. Foster and Miller, recipients of the majority of votes for Trustee positions, will each serve for a term of two years, the remaining members will serve for one year each. The Ways and Means Committee which controls the budget and expenditures of the service, Department of Public Relations, will be comprised of Mary Bailey, Wayne Brady, Ron Bentley and Max Clements serving under the leadership of Roger Hayden, treasurer.

Mike Newton, Editor of The Insider (the S.I.R. monthly membership newsletter) will now write a monthly column in VECTORS concerning significant S.I.R. developments and progress.
The Mr. Gay San Francisco and Mr. Gay California Contests

(Left, Top to Bottom and Left to Right) Naomi watches John Adams of Adam Wigs (or is that Barbra Streisand?); A contestant posing (or cracking a nut); Brad of the Bachelors Club, 1st runner-up in the Mr. Gay S.F. competition and VECTOR's choice for Mr. Gay Western Hemisphere; Fat Fairy, who unfortunately did not compete.

(Above) Kimo of the Ramrod, who would have won the Talent competition, had there been one, with his great fire dance; Gay San Francisco contestants Wayne of the Alley Cat, Sonny of the Hans Off, Bob Renskers of the Alley Cat and Kimo, with Bashka (Wayne was 2nd Runner-up and Winner of the Congeniality Award); and the Mr. Gay California finalists: Mike, Mr. Peninsula and the first runner-up; Norman Hughes, Mr. Carnival and the second runner-up; and Jimmy Hughes, from Los Angeles, Mr. Gay California 1973, with the greatest Empress of all, Jose.
"As long as she stays in her room and nobody sees her, it's all right." ... "He has problems so he drinks; when the problems are gone he'll stop." ... "My only problem with booze is getting enough of it." ... "So I get drunk a lot! That doesn't make me an alcoholic." ... "Everybody drinks. Why shouldn't I?"

Alcoholism is a disease which affects approximately ten percent of the population, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or marital status. It is not the same as occasional heavy drinking and bears little relationship to the amount drunk. By far the majority of people who drink are not alcoholic, and many alcoholics, unfortunately, use this fact to reject their own alcoholism.

If two people, one an alcoholic, were given excessive but non-lethal amounts of alcohol every day for a week, at the end of the week the non-alcoholic would not want another drink for a very long time while the alcoholic would continue to drink. The alcoholic is not the same as everyone else. The alcoholic is a person who is hurt by the use of alcohol and drinks in spite of the hurt. The alcoholic is a person whose life is made unmanageable by drinking. The alcoholic is a person who seeks the solution to a problem by indulging in the thing else, a sin, a crime, an indication of weak moral fibre, and even, from time to time, a sign of possession by devils. It is interesting to note that homosexual orientation has also been incorrectly described in all of the above ways. The myths surrounding both subjects are remarkably similar. Fortunately, the disease concept of alcoholism is becoming widely accepted, while the "sickness theory" of homosexuality is being soundly rejected.

But myth-inspired emotions tend to persist even when the facts are known. Suffering alcoholics frequently find it difficult to come to grips with their alcoholism because of their illogical emotional reactions. Some homosexuals, for the same non-reasons, find it difficult to believe that gay is as good as straight. Aside from the myths, and the consequent difficulties they present in accepting reality, alcoholism and homosexuality have nothing in common. Gay people are no more or less prone to alcoholism than any other group. Because gay people are people, however, some of them are afflicted with the disease of alcoholism. Probably no other arrestable disease encounters such high resistance to acceptance by those who suffer from it. People who are otherwise rational and intelligent often refuse to believe that they could possibly be alcoholic. Many who would easily accept a life of insulin and controlled sugar intake were_Niz alcoholism in others cannot see it in themselves.

Too often in the past, professionals have treated gay alcoholics for the disease of homosexuality, which alcoholism is merely a symptom. The only way in which such treatment has appreciably reduced the number of suffering gay alcoholics has been by reducing the number of living gay alcoholics. In Los Angeles the Gay Community Services Center recently received initial funding for a gay alcoholism facility. In San Francisco the Society for Individual Rights is working on the possibility of a gay alcoholism center and a half-way house for gay alcoholics. In other cities similar services can and probably will be attempted in the near future.

Currently, at least part of the need for alcoholism services specifically oriented toward gay persons is being met in many places by Alcoholics Anonymous, "a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism." The first Gay A.A. Group started five years ago in San Francisco with one meeting a week. That meeting proved so popular with gay alcoholics who wanted to do something about their drinking that the group now meets four nights a week. There are now several other Gay A.A. groups throughout the country, including Alcoholics Together in Los Angeles which has its own center with meetings every night.

The first step in recovering from alcoholism is to admit that the condition exists. The second step is to accept the condition and the fact that recovery is possible. The third step is to do something about it. This is the way Alcoholics Anonymous works, in part, and it is also the way that any other successful alcoholism treatment works.

Unless an alcoholic admits the problem, accepts it, and wants to do something about it, there is no hope of recovery. A.A. is not a religious program nor is it an encounter session. Members of Alcoholics Anonymous groups, straight or gay, simply help each other to admit, accept, and do something about their alcoholism. If you think that you might have a problem with alcohol, it might be a good idea for you to look into Gay A.A. What have you got to lose?

A Gay Look at Alcoholism
by Kevin Norton

GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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San Francisco (415) 271-5007
Washington, D.C. (202) 334-2827
Kansas City (816) 753-2422
Long Beach (213) 599-1926
Seattle (206) 329-8707

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Book Review:  
WHAT HAPPENED  
BY MERLE MILLER  
HARPER & ROW, 342 p., $7.95  

Merle Miller's recent novel is a fiction biography of George Lionel, world-renowned concert pianist. At the declared age of forty-nine, George is confined in a mental institution and, as in Portnoy's Complaint, his story is related through conversations with a silent psychiatrist. The book is episodic as George's mind wanders over a lifetime of events, throwing in names and events in stream-of-consciousness style. But not actually. Miller is too shrewd a craftsman to risk confusion so rather than tax the reader he arranges the appearance of disorganized associations of memories and experiences of a persecuted homosexual. Unfortunately, the least amount of space deals with George Lionel's appearance before the House Un-American Activities Committee during the McCarthy panic in the Fifties. George's life was never less than interesting from his rural torture by a homophobic community to his student days in New York where he involved himself with the Harlem jazz scene, and on to world renown taking him into the drawing rooms of all the "beautiful" people including four changes of government in the White House. These are external: the pegs upon which Miller hangs a repulsive personality portrait of an old auntie who loathes himself while having the brilliance of finding fault and punishment in every human endeavor, from a definitive reading of a Mozart Sonata to a possibly beautiful relationship with a black clarinet player. There are no detailed sex act descriptions but anything connected with gay (which for George included just about everything) is also connected with obscenity and self-abasement.  

Throughout What Happened the writing is impressive with constant flashes of brilliance. Miller creates whole worlds in few sentences (dealing with tricks) and there is enough condensed drama in each chapter which, if fleshed out, could fill counties of other novels. The book starts on page one and races on until the end, often frustrating as he leaves situations undeveloped, as they are in gay life, which is why so many of us need novels: to tie everything up in digestible packages. Miller is an accomplished novelist second to none on the market today. And now the conflict. Given only What Happened we might bless Miller on his portrayal of a particular kind of bitchy, sissy, self-abasement, miserable, wretched, doltish, anguished old auntie who has mangled with the best of them — Lenny, Van, Truman, Rudy, Franklin, Harry — and never got the least off his brain for being gay. What a good way to expose those dreadful aspects of gay life: the Moroccan tricks who steal you blind, Paris hustlers in pissoirs, beatings, but terminal butts, public park entrapments, subway toilets and even local American YMCA's. But here's the rub. While nothing ugly that I know of any of us has not been thoroughly treated in What Happened, few if any of the beautiful things we've found in our stream of consciousness are covered in What Happened. If Miller is speaking for all of us there would be long ago have made like lemmings and done the cliff number. In 1973 just who is Merle Miller's fantasy audience?  

One Sunday morning last year a delighted New York gay community discovered an article by Merle Miller in the New York Times Magazine titled, On Being Different: What it Means to be a Homosexual. The man was coming out and in print! That delight quickly turned to shock and then to fury. What the hell was the Times trying to do? Realizing their mistake, they printed a few response letters two weeks later (thousands were sent) and killed the subject. Miller came out, granted, but he came out as George Lionel in a disgraceful orgy of breast-beating and pity me because I've been dealt such a cruel blow in turning out gay. The piece reinforced every homophobe's prejudice and ignorance and was simply a flamboyant introduction to What Happened. Therefore, I find it impossible not to equate the man Miller with the character George. They're both of thinking reading experience Forster said, 'I love you' more times than any other living American, and every time I said it, what I really meant was, YOU love ME, don't you? Say so then, say it over and over and over. And again: "Altogether he looked handsome, lordly and loathsome, but I still loved him. The fact that someone is loathsome has never caused me to stop loving him. That's often WHY I stay in the mark, Miller, but only on one mark, isn't there any more?" In public interviews Miller has complained of his book's being ignored by daily reviewers because of his coming out via the Times. If the book has been ignored it probably has more to do with its anachronism. This brand of gay is, fortunately, a thing of the past. Like you, Mr. Miller, we went through the horrors of seeking punishment but, unlike our kind, we learned and many of us — most of us — have at least loved once and blessed whatever circumstances which led us into the happiness of being gay, led us into embracing it. In 1914 E.M. Forster, then one of the world's leading novelists, did not have the courage of coming out (and risking imprisonment) but he did write a gay novel called Maurice (which is now out in paperback), and it was unpublishable. Why? As a postscript to this beautiful, beautiful reading experience Forster wrote, "A happy ending was imperative. I shouldn't have bothered to write otherwise."  

Yes, there is identity in his life — lots of it when George says, "If only we said it, what I really meant was, YOU love ME, don't you? Say so then, say it over and over and over. And again:" And:  

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Film Review:

SLEUTH

PALOMAR PICTURES LTD.

STARRING MICHAEL CAINE and

LAWRENCE OLIVIER

As a film, Sleuth does not work. As a play, it is typical of a special genre of contemporary theatre wherein dialogue is equated with music. The specific meanings of words take second place to the flow of language, the sparkle of concepts (as opposed to moment-by-moment ideas) and the specialness of human beings personifying a kind of orchestra with themes, counterpoint, secondary melodic treatments and, always, the super-charged feeling of spontaneity and, yes, dangers of errors. In productions such as Rosenkrantz and Gildenstein are Dead, Sleuth, and most of Edward Albee's plays (films) you sit on the edge of your seat as a symphony of sound rushes past your eyes. Action is secondary. Sound is primary. Such plays are the darlings of the critics who are basically verbal and not visually oriented and the success of a play such as Sleuth (Tony award and running for years in London) is the created mass hit of critical (not audience) approval.

The very mechanics of the making of a film (takes, retakes, continuity, etc.) eliminate the most important quality of this media: spontaneity. It must appear to be happening at the moment—a verbal improvisation, a verbal theme and variations, even a verbal fugue.

The results in the film Sleuth are wooden and where it should fly it stutters as the characters, Lawrence Olivier and Michael Caine talk and talk and talk with as little truly verbal interaction as physical. Cute camera work hardly improves the distance between the two men.

It would be unfair to discuss the plot at the risk of spoiling the surprises, but suffice it to say that Sleuth deals with reality and fantasy. The two central characters try their best considering the fact that the nature of the media is in direct conflict with the nature of the script. The results are neither here nor there.

— Richard Piro

Theatre Reviews:

A DOLL'S HOUSE

HENRIK IBSEN

A.C.T. REPETOIRE. SAN FRANCISCO

So it isn't New York, and it isn't Lincoln Center, and it isn't Edward Albee, and it isn't Ethel Merman, and it's going to be long, and preachy, and "classical," and terribly aware of itself. And it rained all day forming a proper atmosphere for a first look at regional professional repertory theatre. Difficult to admit, yes, but those were the attitudes on opening night. The best I'd hoped for was to stay awake through enough of the show to write reasonably intelligently about it.

The house lights dimmed (on time) and before silence a strange, ethereal sound crept over the exposed stage. Single areas of the set illuminated and then dimmed as attention roamed throughout Torvald Helmer's apartment in a Norwegian city. Amazingly enough, the combination of lighting, sound, and set created a cinematic effect. In place of the usual sitting room unit set, designer Ralph Funicello has created a wider environment, a house, a doll's house with dining room, study, children's room, back stairs, mail box, sitting room, and upstairs all blended together by Fred Kopp's masterly effective lighting. Technically ACT doesn't mess around.

Marsha Mason's entrance as Nora can be compared to still another stunning light cue. Her shining joy shatters the sombre mood which had been so beautifully established but, though gone visually at the moment, remains as a constant warning that things aren't often what they appear to be. With a laugh somewhere between giggle and guffaw she enters the apartment not one single note the ears stinging from the bitter Norwegian winter and arms laden with family Christmas gifts. How it is not possible to immediately adore this delightful, whimsical, mischievous, perky, attractive woman? But A Doll's House is supposed to be heavy drama. Checking the program we see that in 1876 Ibsen wrote, "A woman cannot be herself in modern society. It is an exclusively male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint. . . . A mother in modern society, like certain insects, retires and dies once she has done her duty by propagating the race." That's heavy! Then I felt afraid for Marsha Mason. Could she sustain her acting approach and still make the transition from doll to woman believable? She had chosen a tricky and possibly disastrous route to the play's climax. This she did and did it brilliantly and, more importantly, did it in ensemble with the rest of the cast.

As the play's central character, Nora Helmer commits a selfless but legally questionable act to save her husband's life. Nora's decision to follow the dictates of her own conscience rather than those of the law propels her into a shattering personal crisis which forces her to confront not only the emptiness of her marriage to Torvald Helmer but also of her life as a woman and a human being.

Ten minutes into the first act and I was hooked. If it were film you'd call it a movie-movie, but since it wasn't then I describe A Doll's House as a super-drama. How marvelous to be able to view a con
temporarily production secure in the knowledge that under the manipulation of the playwright and director you have been given sufficient information to adequately perceive the concepts, thus freeing you from those oppressive what-does-it-means so that you have completed your journey with an overwhelming excellence of even the most minute details (the guests leaving the party) served to create an experience. Thus, you don't watch this show, you live it: quickly becoming partner to Kristine's pain, Dr. Rank's slow death, Torvald's bewilderment and Krogstad's drive for revenge, and Peter Donat's fantastic control of the large canvas with countless delicious attitudes (his embroidery bit was brilliant) and the maids, Anne Lawder and Shirley Slater, who with few lines of dialogue became interesting only because you were there to feel an electric charge shooting from actor to actor; when it isn’t, due to A.C.T.’s tremendous professionalism, you know it’ll return in a moment or two. The momentum never falters. Since forced moments set up the charged ones, the end result was perfectly superb and exciting and moving, and immensely satisfying. If the intensity of my group's conversation on the way home about what Nora should or should not have done is any indication of the play's impact in 1973 one can only imagine the shocked attitudes of a society hitherto asleep to woman's liberation in 1878. It might just have been considered intellectually pornographic. Who needs (or want) facts elsewhere? We should declare A.C.T. a national monument and extend the season to 11 months.

— Richard Piro

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU
GEORGE S. KAUFMAN/MOIS HART
A.C.T. REPETORY, SAN FRANCISCO

Once again A.C.T. has served up a theatrical banquet which, at the very least, is an evening of theatre so total that it transcends usual descriptions such as "satisfying," or "thoroughly professional." I cannot recall when I last had such a rollicking good time at a show. Tempering elements of wild farce, sharp social and hard-boiled wisecracks with an underlying warmth and tenderness, the play takes us into the Vanderhof household in New York City in 1936. The cast of characters includes three generations of Vanderhofs and their husbands, wives and friends. Grandpa Martin is the head of the family, a wise old man who walked out on his job thirty-five years earlier and never went back. All their lives reflect Grandpa's philosophy that life is best when people do as they like rather than as they should. Sound contempora

rarily? It is. Change the year to 1973 and the locale to Berkeley and you're in your own time and space. You Can't Take It With You is now and ever shall be an American classic for all times.

The stars of the evening were authors Hart and Kaufman, who were joined by an audience that turned a ritual into a celebration of laughter and warm feelings, interrupting the action several times to heartily applaud the ideas being expressed. (Left) Scenes from A.C.T.'s A Doll's House, and (below) Scenes from You Can't Take It With You.

— Richard Piro

This production is flawed, however, but not enough to spoil the evening's fun. Program credits note the presentation as "based on Ellis Rabb's original APA Program credits notate the presentation of this beautifully crafted play. Upon leaving the theatre some of the audience are there you feel an electric shock power across the pit from people to production is. The American Conservatory Theatre's production of A Doll's House is especially those concerning nonpayment of income taxes. We became members of the Vanderhof family and this morning I, for one, miss my new family. One can't help getting the impression that the happenings in the Vanderhof household are an ongoing thing and if you drop into the Geary Theatre at any time they'll greet you warmly, offer you a place at the dinner table (for watermelon and cornflakes) and simply go about their business of living the good life. Take those one or two friends with whom you never seem to be able to spend enough time, put them under the same community roof, add a dash of conflict, and you've got your own You Can't Take It With You.

— Richard Piro
B.A.R.T. — A HANNIBAL INSPECTION

A group of travel industry dignitaries (ahem) was invited to preview the Civic Center B.A.R.T. station and attend a cocktail party afterwards as the guests of Jeanie Berlin (Elaine May’s daughter) has been chosen for an Oscar and she may well deserve it. It is unfortunate that her role is written out midway in the story line. Her work is intelligent and professionally shrived and, I suspect, her interactions with her mother-director during shooting came from her unwillingness to exaggerate so that her scenes were never embarrassingly in their excess. Cybill Shepherd (also an Oscar Nominee) is difficult to judge. Her role is written so to full of inconsistencies that eventually it created audience anger. She is, first off, a beautiful woman, cool, bright, relaxed, and very much the rich man’s daughter who controls everyone- one headline. The fact that she didn’t instantly see through Lennie for what he was strained credibility to the breaking point. She is a pompous, ho-hum TV situation tripe which is a possible reason it so heavily overemphasized the success of EMPIRE. In spite of the exciting groupings, in-depth investigative reporting in any combination of bits that left you aching with laughter are a thing untamed in Lila’s absence. They get married and motor to Miami and, I suspect, her altercations with her mother-director during shooting came from her unwillingness to exaggerate so that her scenes were never embarrassingly in their excess. Cybill Shepherd (also an Oscar Nominee) is difficult to judge. Her role is written so to full of inconsistencies that eventually it created audience anger. She is, first off, a beautiful woman, cool, bright, relaxed, and very much the rich man’s daughter who controls everyone- one headline. The fact that she didn’t instantly see through Lennie for what he was strained credibility to the breaking point. She is a pompous, ho-hum TV situation tripe which is a possible reason it so heavily overemphasized the success of EMPIRE. In spite of the exciting groupings, in-depth investigative reporting in any combination of bits that left you aching with laughter are a thing untamed in Lila’s absence. They get married and motor to Miami..."

**Film Review: HEARTBREAK KID**

BART is never going to have to go. Which isn’t as unlikely as you may imagine since the men’s room has one urinal, one basin, and one toilet (which has no stall for privacy). Imagine the lines waiting to relieve the foolishness of that third marini before heading home. My companion — a lovely creature who is an articulate spokesman for the heterosexual viewpoint — obliged my curiosity by inspecting the women’s facility. One toilet, ladies: one. As my buddy quickly observed, “What if there’s somebody in there doing a mascara and one looks over the menu in breathless anticipation of what the actors/camera record the moment (freeing Elaine May from Neil Simon) and, I suspect, her altercations with her mother-director during shooting came from her unwillingness to exaggerate so that her scenes were never embarrassingly in their excess. Cybill Shepherd (also an Oscar Nominee) is difficult to judge. Her role is written so to full of inconsistencies that eventually it created audience anger. She is, first off, a beautiful woman, cool, bright, relaxed, and very much the rich man’s daughter who controls everyone- one headline. The fact that she didn’t instantly see through Lennie for what he was strained credibility to the breaking point. She is a pompous, ho-hum TV situation tripe which is a possible reason it so heavily overemphasized the success of EMPIRE. In spite of the exciting groupings, in-depth investigative reporting in any combination of bits that left you aching with laughter are a thing untamed in Lila’s absence. They get married and motor to Miami..."

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"Confidentially

Alice, darling,
the only reason
you got the bird
is because of
your split ends!!!"
SHERIFF DICK HONGISTO
the recently elected san francisco county sheriff discusses gay politics, jail politics and his politics

BY DUKE SMITH

Sheriff Richard Hongisto is known to the gay community as one who is not afraid to speak out in its defense. Indeed, he is not afraid to speak out on any matter that concerns him. Since he was elected Sheriff of San Francisco, he has demonstrated a flair that is almost unprecedented in modern politics.

The Sheriff has been acclaimed in national publications as being the most progressive county prison administrator in the country. He claims that the Sheriff of Boston would share in this honor. Naturally San Franciscans are prejudiced in the matter.

Recently the money from the Federal Revenue Sharing Program became available. This event set off one of the wildest scrambles by both government departments and private organizations ever held in the usual staid atmosphere of City government. When it comes to money, everyone wants to get into the act.

Joining the throng of course, was the Sheriff's Department. In its case, however, there is a particular need in that the San Francisco jails have been declared far below the standards set by State law.

Unfortunately, the Mayor did not see the need in this area and allocated only a very small percentage of the total request made by the Sheriff. When this fact became known to our indomitable Sheriff, he set off a political rhubarb that even Teddy Roosevelt would have been proud of.

Dick Hongisto has made as many enemies as he has friends during his first term in office. It will be interesting to see whether the voters like a man to be outspoken and honest or one who feeds them the pap that has traditionally graced the electoral table of so many constituents. In any event, here is a brief interview with the phenomenon, made by literally cornering a busy man doing his job as best he knows how, by serving those who elected him.

VECTOR: Sheriff, you received a very large vote in your last election. Do you attribute a part of this to the gay community?

HONGISTO: Yes, I absolutely do. The elected official classifies the voting contributions of the gay community in terms of electoral turnout. It is my belief that the gay community is responsible for many thousands of votes, and I do believe that the community was rather united behind me without division.

Some of the candidates for other offices did not receive a unified gay vote, though they tried to appeal to it. In my opinion this was because of their inconsistencies or because of an occasional apathetic performance on their part in not delivering the kind of support that the gay community needs.

I think that explains why Dianne Feinstein did not get all of the gay community support when she ran for Mayor of San Francisco. Let's hope that she will get this support in future campaigns.

It is very important for me to say to your readers that there are other dimensions of community support. One important dimension is that the gay community has a penumbra effect in that there are gay people with straight friends whom they encourage to vote for specific candidates. As the community becomes more aware in future years it will give not only its own support, but also the support of others.

We have a variety of programs that need to be put into effect. We are also in desperate need of just the basic clerical necessities that are required to run a department of this size. We did not even get these.

It is my belief that the gay community is responsible for many thousands of votes. . . and I do believe that the community was rather behind me without division.

If I were given everything I wanted, I would calculate that over a five year period there would be a reduction in crime of 30%.
In a general way, I think that San Francisco has the kind of Board of Supervisors that will at least come close to responding in some symbolic ways. They may not do all that much directly, but at certain times they begin to get close to some sort of understanding and support. It is at least different from the kind of raw persecution you see in so many other places in the country.

Vector: Are you aware, Sheriff, that the arrests of gay people in San Francisco for gay-oriented crimes has increased over 800% in the past two years? If so, to what do you attribute this increase?

Hongisto: I was aware that there was some kind of increase, but I did not know it was in that proportion. Being a criminologist, I would have to have a substantial amount of raw data to analyze before I could begin to account for the change in the statistics. I would be led to a change in the booking procedures in the Police Department which doesn't represent any significant change in enforcement policy. This is a positive.

Vector: Are these rapes perpetrated by homosexuals upon heterosexuals or heterosexuals upon homosexuals?

Hongisto: Homosexuals against homosexuals, I would say, identifies themselves as heterosexuals, and as far as I can tell, conduct themselves as heterosexuals through the larger part of the year. These are the ones who participate in individual and gang rapes of homosexuals during the period that they are confined.

Hongisto: Has the number of homosexuals been segmented within the jail? Would you say that San Francisco is in the forefront of accomplishment in the area of political awareness?

Vector: Would you say that San Francisco is a leader in the area of political awareness?

Hongisto: Well, yes, I would say that. I could be wrong since I don't claim to be an authority on the subject. From what I can gather by watching the newspapers and other national publications San Francisco is somewhat ahead of other areas in the struggle for equal rights for people regardless of sexual orientation.

How do you fancy yourself?

Hongisto: Several years ago Saul Alinsky said that public money can be organized around hate, fear and hope. This is a kind of frightening thought because hate and fear are negative. Only hope is positive.

The gay community has reason for fear: fear of arrest, harassment, intimidation, persecution, etc. Concomitantly, it has reason for hope, I think that there is reason for hope in an improved political climate in the City through the continued efforts of its leaders. So, you see, the gays can be organized around both fear and hope; fear of what is or might be, and hope for what could be.

We saw those motives playing a very large part in my election. I advocated then, and I do now, that gays should not be persecuted, and I did this unequivocally.

Vector: What do you think about the current policy of the jails and the Department of Corrections? What are the goals you hope to achieve in that area?

Hongisto: Well, if a person comes into the jail and the other inmates are going to find out what his booking charges are, because we don't have the clerical staff we need to have only Civil Service employees work on the records. The jail tends to be run by inmate trustees.

If a person comes into the jail whose mannerisms do not portray the homosexual image, and is booked on homosexual charges, then he will be put in with the general population even though the guards may know that he is homosexual. This is a rare occurrence, but if it happens, the guards will watch for any unusual activity. If any homosexual activity starts getting talked about among the other inmates, then we must separate the individual because he is participating in an obviously illegal activity.

Vector: Obviously, Sheriff, there is going to be homosexual activity even between so-called heterosexuals. Why do you think males are confined with males for an extended period of time. What are your instructions to your Deputies when they hear of or actually see such things going on?

Hongisto: I don't have any particular instructions for when they see such things, because they never see such things. There is too good an early warning system among the population for that to happen. If by some remote chance that were to actually occur, then the law would be the guide for the Deputy.

Hearing about it is not enough, not sufficient for prosecution. So when it is heard about, the person is removed to another section of the jail with other homosexuals or with alcoholics who are far past the point of participating in any form of sexual activity.

Vector: Sheriff, you have recently been having a major altercation with the Mayor of San Francisco over the funds which he allotted you in his Revenue Sharing program. The total Federal funds from this was, I believe, twenty-six and a half-million dollars. How much of this 26.5 million dollars did you request for your department?

Hongisto: 606 thousand dollars.

Vector: For what purpose was this to be used?

Hongisto: We have a variety of programs that need to be put into effect: educational and rehabilitation training programs, medical and dental programs, to name just a few. We are also in desperate need of more personnel. We need an additional twenty-five thousand dollars.

Vector: What are your priorities?

Hongisto: The first priority is the vocational and rehabilitation program. Our second priority is the medical/dental programs. We did not get any of those things. We could not use it, since we don't have anyone who can operate it.

Vector: What do you think the reduction in crime would be if you were given the proper rehabilitation system?

HONGISTO: If I were given everything I wanted, I would calculate that over a five year period there would be a reduction in crime of 30%.
A Silly, Sassy, Slightly Sullied Sally to Scintillatin’ Samakmena by Hannibal

The seemingly endless trudge in pursuit of a few stolen hours of passion leads inevitably to outposts farther and farther from civilization as we know it. Come with me, then, to Sacramento — somewhere on the outskirts of time.

If you liked the Eisenhower years, you’ll love the state capital. A visit is like pretending to be young again. Remember when people smiled simply for the sake of smiling; they asked “how are you?” and listened to your reply. There’s a small custom of talking to each other. And visitors.

The bar was apparently decorated by a deranged acid freak, but the total effect is fun. You can shoot a game of pool under a poster of Mark Spitz — cheek-by-jowl with a naked teenage boy. There is a quivering, sensual jukebox for senior citizens who like to dance with junior citizens. Whoever has the license to the streets was once in this city as a kid. All those pretty new faces . . . and so young! Love it, love it, love it.

It took me three visits to Sacramento before I could drag myself beyond Surrance’s. One pervert would tear himself away from this massive assortment of yummies.

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The 1973 GOLDEN AWARD Nominees

On February 3rd, at the Village, a dimmer was held to nominate the people/persons to receive the 1973 Gold Awards, given by the San Francisco Academy of Performing Arts. We will name some of the most important nominees.

For best actress the incomparable Faye were nominated for the part she portrayed as Mame Dennis in that never-to-be-forgotten play "Marne." Also nominated were Lori Shannon playing the part of Michelle as Dolly Levi in "Hello Dolly." nett Burnside, in "Marne," and Don Cavello playing Bob Baker in "Wonderful Town." This role up to the hilt in "Light Up the Sky." The nominees for best dramatic actor were the delightful Nancy again in one of the best performances of his outstanding career as Agnes Gooch in "Mammy," Jim Short as Nora in "Mame," John Reynolds as Vera Charles in "Mame"; Vern Becker as Minnie Fay in "Hello Dolly," and Melanie as Irene Malloy, also in "Hello Dolly." For best supporting actor the nominees were Fernando as Ito in "Mame," John Carlyle as Dwight Babcock in "Mame," Roger Learn doing a very believable Patrick, Jr. in "Mame," Zane Tomas as Cornelius Hackel in "Hello Dolly" and Brent Wayne as Barnaby Tucker in "Hello Dolly." The nominees for the best costumes were the multi-talented Pat Campano and Herman Nieve for their work done on "Marne," again Pat Campano and Pat Montclaire for "Wonderful Town," Don Tomas as Cornelius Hackel in "Hello Dolly" and Brent Wayne as Barnaby Tucker in "Hello Dolly." The Society for Individual Rights received four nominations: Vector for best News and Information Media, the 40-40 Show of the Year, the San Francisco Tonight show of the year. When you have restricted or limited a person's right to a livelihood, it should be of some interest to the tax payers to note that the Federal Government has never focused its efforts on the estimated 959,960 of the workforce that has broken one or more of the statutes regulating sexual behavior. Instead it has adopted the policy that EVERY homosexual, regardless of his or her talent, devotion to duty or patriotic zeal, is to be weeded out of federal employment. This we are opposing.

At a joint press conference at the Society For Individual Rights Center on Wednesday, January 24th, held by S.I.R. and the Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation, it was announced that a lawsuit had been filed by S.I.R. and Donald W. Hickerson against the U.S., Civil Service Commission and the U.S., Department of Agriculture. This is a class action suit which seeks, to behalf of all Gay people in the U.S., to end the Commission's practice of firing people just because they are Gay, and to have the court order the Commission, with back-pay, all those that have been so fired in the past.

Present at the news conference were Attorney David C. Moon for N.L.A. and Rick Stokes for S.I.R. Rick told of the number of people that come to the job placement service of the Society with a record of having been dismissed by the Commission. The Court for nothing more than being Gay. Often times, he said, this is a result, as in Mr. Hickerson's case, of the Army having known they were Gay. What we have needed was a suit challenging this unfair and discriminatory practice. We now have that person in Donald Hickerson.

CLASS SUIT

The nominees for the best costumes were: Vector for best News and Information Media, the 40-40 Show of the Year, the San Francisco Tonight show of the year. When you have restricted or limited a person's right to a livelihood, it should be of some interest to the tax payers to note that the Federal Government has never focused its efforts on the estimated 959,960 of the workforce that has broken one or more of the statutes regulating sexual behavior. Instead it has adopted the policy that EVERY homosexual, regardless of his or her talent, devotion to duty or patriotic zeal, is to be weeded out of federal employment. This we are opposing.

As Jim Foster said to the news media: "Of the many different kinds of oppression that Gay women and men encounter in the course of their lives, discrimination in employment is perhaps the most insidious. When you have restricted or limited a person's right to a livelihood, it is quite fair to say that the courts are powerless to bring about social change. What is needed is a suit challenging this unfair and discriminatory practice. We now have that person in Donald Hickerson.

NLA Attorney David Noon told the newscasters: "There can be no excuse for the denial of federal employment to such a substantial minority of the citizenry. I have fullest confidence that the next few years will be ones of great progress in the area of Gay rights. If it takes a militant movement such as accompanied the black movement of the 60's, then so be it. I know the Gay community is capable of such. However, I don't believe that violent confrontations are either wise or necessary. But to avoid the possibility of such, the federal government must take a leadership role in satiating the Gay minorities into equal status with everyone else. One excellent place for them to start is in public employment. This lawsuit is an attempt to give them a little boost in the right direction."
San Francisco: The Society for Individual Rights is offering a First Aid Training Course to unions and brothers and sisters on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the S.I.R. Center. The total cost is $5.00, which includes the Red Cross text and media kit. Please contact Dino Thomas: 781-1570. The course will meet the requirements of the First Responder, the state of California’s basic-fall license.

San Francisco: Six hundred prisoners at San Francisco County Jail at San Bruno received gifts of cigarettes and candy on Valentine’s Day as a friendly gesture from the Society for Individual Rights. This was done, according to SIR officer manager George Coffman, to let the prisoners know “that we are aware of poor conditions at the jail and are supportive of the reform efforts of Sheriff Richard Hongisto.” The project was directed by SIR’s Jim Foster.

When asked by a television reporter why was SIR doing this, past president Bill Plath responded, “Why not SIR?”

San Francisco: For the first time, in the history of this country, and possibly in the history of the world, a major city has awarded a Certificate of Merit to a gay person for services rendered as a leader of a Gay Liberation organization. Supervisor Robert Gonzales introduced a motion to grant such an Honor at the February 13th meeting of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the Supervisors passed it unanimously.

State Senator Milton Marks presented on behalf of Supervisor Robert Gonzales, who was unable to attend because of a prior commitment, the Certificate of Merit at the 1st Annual Presentation Banquet held at the S.I.R. Center. The total of 12 hours.

Washington, D.C.: A newsletter is available from the National Gay Student Center called interCHANGE. This group, a project of the U.S. National Student Education Association, is acting as a clearinghouse and innovation center for Gay Campus and community groups and individuals. They suggest a donation of $3 for 6 months, or if you can’t afford that much, send what you can and tell us that’s what you are doing. 2115 “S” Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008 (202 265-9890).
they charge, the board deprived her of property. The Maryland teacher, supported by the NEA and its state and county affiliates, charges his rights under the Fourteenth Amendment were violated when he was transferred from teaching earth sciences to a job as a curriculum specialist after the school board learned he was a homosexual. A school board official said the superintendent has the authority to transfer and assign teachers.

San Francisco: Two young men entered the Naked Grape on November 8, 1972 and walking through the bar, knocked a few glasses from the hands of several patrons, and were then ushered out of the bar. Shortly thereafter, two patrons left the bar and were attacked as they exited. One of the young men who had previously been in the bar causing trouble struck at McMahan with a tire iron (or similar instrument) and destroyed his watch, valued at over $150.00. Another struck Rice with a beer bottle, damaging three teeth. The two men ran for cover. Shortly after the police arrested all three assailants. Because the assailants received no more than a slap on the wrist from the district attorney's office, it seems in order to send them a stronger message so that others will be deterred from attacking members of our community for "fun" or otherwise. This can be done through a Civil Suit for assault and/or battery. Damages, including punitive damages may be demanded. A Press Conference can be called both before and after the suit so that all persons, citywide, can learn of the cost of attacking gay persons.

An attorney, Tom Crawford, has offered his services for $300.00. He has interviewed both victims and has concluded that it should be reasonably easy to get a judgement. However, he thinks it very unlikely that he would be successful in collecting it. Therefore, it is necessary to raise the funds. Neither victim having the money for the suit, nor wishes any of the proceeds from it.

The Society has authorized Dick Gayer to raise the money in its name, on argument that it owes the community a duty to protect its members from such violence. Noe Valley is the scene of 5 attacks per month, and the Naked Grape is on the outskirts of this area, which has the highest concentration of gay persons. Police protection is suggested that individual shares exceed $50.00. Since the attorney is ready to begin this month, commitments are needed at this time. If you are interested in participating, contact Dick Gayer (861-3464) or S.I.R.

SAN FRANCISCO

1074 Guerrero St. (b/t 12nd & 23rd) Rev. James E. Sandhire, Pastor Sunday Services — 7 p.m.

OAKLAND

1555 Harrison St. Tel: 839-2646 Sunday Services — 11 a.m., 7 p.m. Raps — Tuesdays — 7:30 p.m.

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March 1973

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We as children were totally dependent on parents for knowledge of who we were and what we were supposed to become. In the American society parents are legally, socially, economically and morally responsible for keeping their children in line. We, in turn, as children, just answer to our parents for our actions. This keeps parents and children pitted against each other because there is no room for individual creativity or self-determination on either side. Sweet girl, wise, office girl, coffeemaker, sexpot—the stereotypes of accepted behavior are the guidelines of control. Our parents teach us as girls to be sexpot—the stereotypes of accepted behavior are the no room for individual creativeness or self-determination controls. Girls are "to be seen, not heard," "play with dolls," "don't get your dress dirty" and "keep your legs together."

Parents function as police in the individual cellblock of the family to insure that the child will be controllable by whatever authority is over her. This is necessary so that she can fit unobstructively into the chains of controls to which she must submit in future life—schools, marriage, motherhood, menial shit job. If a child rebels from the controls of family, i.e., runs away from home or is truant from school, she is sent to a more repressive level of control—boarding school, or, if she is poor, to juvenile hall or reform school.

Before a woman becomes grown if she's black and poor she learns that the world is cold ready to rape you of everything if a black girl wants to ever become free she has to really struggle like we did shouts of hatred and screams of American misunderstanding and strata of society, men and women without friends, candidates who were awaiting trial came from the lowest often without a home.

We are bodies to be coveted, seized, and rejected. We are possessions to be bought and sold. We are dummies to be laughed at. If you hear me like me and my sisters

I wake in middle-of-the-night terror next to the warm sleeping body of my lover yet alone in the conviction that I am in a prison cell shut away, suddenly, from all that makes my life. I sense the great weight of the prison pressing down on the little box of room I lie in alone forgotten.

How often do women awake in the prison of marriage, of solitary motherhood alone and forgotten of exhaustion from meaningless work, of self-degrading learned early, of advancing age alone and forgotten.

How many women live awake at this moment struggling as I do against despair, knowing the morning will wash us once again under the futility of our lives.

And how short a step it is for us—to the more obvious imprisonment and bars and concrete where our sisters lie

Seem now, in the middle-of-night emptiness how little it matters whether we wear a convict's ill-made cotton dress or a velvet pantsuit—we are possessions to be bought and sold, we are bodies to be coveted and patronized, we are beings to be rested, seized, and rejected—when our breasts begin to sag, we are dummies to be laughed at.

I sense the great weight of the society pressing down on the little box of room I lie in alone and forgotten like my sisters in prison.

If you hear me consider how the bomb of human dignity could be planted outside your cell how its explosion could shake and might burst open the door that separates you from me, how we might struggle together to be free.

Sandy Boucher

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Interviewing a Gay Family
by Noel Hernandez and Donna Dorian

Recent developments in the tradi­
tional concept of the family point to a
redirection and a broadening of the scope
which the concept has generally covered.
The traditional family has comprised a
mother, father and offspring. With the
emergence of communal living, and
liberated sex roles, the concept has
grown to include pairs of men and
women living together, considering them­
selves all one another’s mates.

With the new openness and freedom
in society today, as “unconventional” life
styles and Third World people become
more public(ized), sociologists, psy­
chologists and theologians have had to
re-evaluate the old concepts. Alvin
Toffler’s Future Shock presented inter­
esting and provocative thoughts on the
future of marriage (“cyical unions”) and
the directions the family concept is
taking. In time, the term marriage may
become obsolete, and certainly the legal
concept of marriage, as it is viewed now,
will have changed. The legalities of
marriage today exist primarily for the
protection of the children, but it is slowly
being recognized that the worst “pro­
tection” which can be given to any child
is the hostility and unwillingness of two
desperate frustrated people involved in a
loveless situation; thus, reasonably recent changes in
the law which facilitate the dissolution of
marriage.

Gradually, society is recognizing that
as two men can make up a family unit,
likewise can two women. The life style of
the homosexual family unit has recently
come to the forefront of public attention.
In a recent case in San Jose, the judge in a
divorce case ruled that the wife and her
female lover could not get together if the
wife had custody of the children. The
headlines blared, “Lover or Children Must
Gone,” a case seemed particularly ridicu­
ulous, considering the wife’s ex-husband’s
favorable testimony as to her fitness and
dedication as a mother. The wife agreed
to the ruling. More recently, in a Sacra­
mento case, the judge ruled that the
wife’s lesbianism did not endanger or
jeopardize her fitness as a mother or her
ability to raise the child.

The natural instinct of the divorce
courts has always been to leave the chil­
dren with the mother. Thus, in the latter
case, discrimination against Gay mothers
has at least begun to cease in one instance.

An unusual and exciting example of
this trend is reflected in the case of
Cathy and Dallas, two exuberant
young women, who are obviously very
much in love and consider themselves
both completely valid and independent family
units. Cathy is not a special Gay woman
nor does she claim to be one, only her
situation is special and that is why she
consented to be interviewed for this article.

Cathy was born twenty years ago in a
middle class home surrounded by two
brothers and one sister. The usual, normal
balance between frustration and fulfill­
ment did not prevail, thus the negative
aspects of her heritage were stressed. This
boxed her in and she felt the need to compete
with the extreme beauty of her sister and the
dominant masculinity of her brothers. The
result, she says, was that she neither
developed a strong masculine nor femi­
nine identity. At the age of eleven she
came out and remained gay, though she
has gone through periods of sexuality.

With the help of two years of college,
she now works as a technician for the
recording industry. Her apartment
reflects security as does her car and
clothing. She is obviously an energetic,
aggressive, and reasonably successful
young person. She exudes a bubbling,
curiously sort of confidence which under­
scores all of her social endeavors.

She is often asked how she happened
to choose a pregnant nineteen-year-old
girl from Texas, named Dallas, to be her
lover. Cathy is not sure, except she knows
that for the first time she is enjoying
being the aggressor, which her other rela­
tionships never allowed.

When Cathy meets the aura of
her solidly confident middle class back­
ground, Dallas also reflects her own
independence. She comes from a broken
home where the opportunity for
education was nearly nil. She was the
eldest of three children, and her mother
had a severe alcohol problem. The mother
married four times, with the father
getting custody of the other two children.

When Dallas ran away from home for
the first time, at thirteen, she knew she
was gay. She had several lovers. Her first
heterosexual experience, at nineteen,
occurred when she was assaulted and
raped, leaving her pregnant. Just prior to
meeting Cathy, she lived in a heterosexual
relationship which she enjoyed for several
months, until the superficial playing­
house syndrome wore off, returning her to
her old fantasies of finding a new gay lover.

She and Cathy discovered one
another through an advertisement in the
‘personals’ column; when Cathy dis­
covered she was pregnant, it brought out
in her all of her material, feminine needs
and instincts. Subsequently, Cathy came
to see Dallas as her equal in the child’s
mother, and at the baby’s birth shortly
after their meeting, it was difficult to say
who had really borne the baby, not the
father. The child bears Dallas’ maiden
dame, and Dallas was registered as
unmarried on the hospital record.

They were allowed to take the baby
home without hassle from social workers
or interested hospital parties because of
the effort of Cathy’s mother to be there,
to lend stability (and respectability) to the
situation. The staff may have known the
situation between Cathy and Dallas; if
so, they ignored it, and continued to treat
Dallas with warmth and care. They were
unobtrusively impressed by the image of
solidarity which this family unit presented.

Although the images presented by
Cathy and Dallas are at diametrically
opposite ends of the role pole, with
Cathy superficially appearing to fit the
can in a more male role, and Dallas more
feminine, nonetheless the two are very clearly
(though not consistently) as women,
two gay women. Neither is inter­
ested in husband-wife role playing, and both
consider the baby as their own
child.

Dallas affirmed her love and fealty to
Cathy when she said that the baby,
Shelley, belonged to both of them.

Thus, two very unalike Gay women
live together with one very small baby,
and somehow make it all come together.
It is interesting and exciting to see how
one considers the diverse and different
backgrounds which produced them, and one
is conscious that they are two inter­
connected human people overcoming obstacles and
conflicts, both internal (in the role play),
in their need and love for one another.

Obviously no one can say what the
future holds for them, but the import­
ance lies in what they have already
achieved, i.e. they have formed the we of
us which is the basis of the Gay family,
regardless of the particular life­
style involved.

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