

GAY YOUTH LIBERATION



IAN EDELSTEIN

Gay Youth began in late February in response to the desire expressed for an alternative to predominately adult Gay groups. Those who suggested the group's formation felt distinct differences between their attitudes and those of older Homosexuals on various sexual, social and political issues. One prime guideline is the avoidance of rhetoric and the constant view of Gay Liberation unobscured by various, and often conflicting, political ideologies.

Gay Youth's functions began with a mixer on May 2nd. Over 50 people came to enjoy dancing, food and refreshments in an atmosphere free of drugs, alcohol and adult control. Such mixers will be continued throughout the summer.

Gay Youth invites all young Homosexual men and women to join.

MEETINGS: every Sunday, 6PM; 300 9th Avenue.

GAY YOUTH LIBERATION PAPER

In our high schools for years we have been ('socialized') indoctrinated by teachers maintaining bla-

tantly sexist attitudes towards Homosexuals. I can remember very recently discussing a book with allusions to someone's Homosexuality and the teacher blurting out in laughter, '...with all these references to boys you know what he was. Well this is getting too risque, let's go on...'

But these sexist views are not fed to us only in high school. Since sexist attitudes are profitable to society, they are carried out into the family, the schools and other institutions. They are part of the dogma that these institutions fill our heads with. The institution's function is to perpetuate the views which turn the wheels of society. Our sexist attitudes are the qualification for good citizenry in our society (sodomy laws) and a way of supporting commodities of our society (masculinity and femininity).

I'm tired of being used as a symbol of the guilt and fear of society. No more of this shit! Confront and recognize your problems. The fact that you are oppressing me is a symptom of the repression and fear of the Homosexuality in your own bodies.

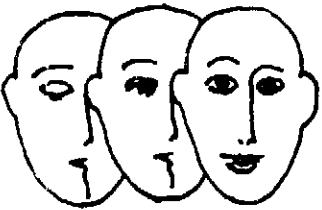
By not being easily identified by the superficial roles of society we threaten this society. Putting people up-

tight about their own assigned identity. Smashing that trick mirror which reflects the beauty of the society 'they' have structured.

As a radical Homosexual I no longer demand tolerance or acceptance. I don't like shit that goes 'you can do what you like in private.' Proud of my identity, I wish to introduce my lover as my lover. And no more of that shit that goes, 'well you can do what you like' while secretly saying to yourself 'what a relief that I don't indulge in such things.' That attitude which implies how superior you feel that you don't do that kind of thing is being shattered. The people who maintain that view are in for a rude awakening.

We are demanding understanding; an understanding of your Homosexual feelings. And the ridding of society's fantasies and distortions, getting down to your own human nature.

You will have to confront us. No longer can you reject Homosexuals or Homosexuality. We reproduce within you, you can't be rid of us. An awakening is inevitable.



REPORT: CHICAGO GAY LIB

by Martha Shelley

The City of Chicago is covered by a giant glass bell which makes even the brightest day seem slightly grey, and the air always slightly stale. A news blackout contributes to the strong impression of peasants-under-glass (all of us - I am not trying to imply that Chicagoans are more provincial, but that we are all peasants under the ruling class); and the New York Times seems like radical journalism out there. Mayor Daley keeps the city clean (except for the ghetto) and, I'm sure, makes the trains run on time.

I was in Chicago on April 16 and 17, a guest speaker at a rally in Grant Park called by University of Chicago-Gay Liberation. Two hundred fifty people attended, and though we didn't have a permit, the cops seemed indifferent to us. There were four speakers - a fellow from A.C.L.U., the President of Mattachine Society Midwest, Lee Weiner of the Conspiracy Eight, and myself. Lee Weiner called himself a certified member of the Freaking Fag Revolution, but didn't seem too aware of what gay oppression is all about, though it was clear to him that we are oppressed. I don't remember what the other fellows said, as I had just been let out of jail and hadn't had sleep for three days, and I'm sorry about that. I did rap about what GLF was doing in New York, and about the jail experience, and the common bond of oppression that unites Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation.

Then we all marched down the street, chanting "ho, ho, homosexual" and "out of the closets, into the streets" and singing "we're here because we're queer. . ." and generally freaking out the solid citizens of Chicago. We marched to the jail, where one of our men was being held for solicitation or some other ridiculous charge, and chanted in front of the jail. A fair-haired young cop was there, officer manly (dig it), a member of the vice squad whose favorite vice is queer-beating. People sang out, "Yoo-hoo, Officer Manly," embarrassing the hell out of him. Guess he doesn't want people to know that we know him.

Afterwards, we went home, talked and talked, and I was finally allowed to pass out. The next morning we talked again, and ran around trying to get insurance to cover the rental of a hall for a GLF dance.

GLF in Chicago has somewhat different problems than GLF in New York. Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, with no central area like the Village, so there is a north side GLF and a Hyde Park GLF, and GLF's on every campus in northern Illinois. Since the left is so small there, the GLF's are well-integrated racially. There are divisions between men and women.

Gay life is pretty tough there, and the few mafia bars don't appeal to most gays, so a GLF dance attracts as many as three thousand people. The dance we were trying to insure was being held in a convention hotel -

and the only company that would insure us was a black company. The only medium that covered the demonstration was the black radio station.

As in New York, GLF's in Chicago are leaderless groups counting on workers, not on elected officers. However there is still a hang-up on the star system, and I got treated as a star, partly because some people there had read some stuff I wrote, partly because I was from New York, and partly because people there were so hungry for news from the outside world. This was not only embarrassing, it was exhausting. I tried to talk about consciousness-raising as a technique for developing one's political awareness and strength. A revolution can't wait for messiahs - it succeeds or fails according to the degree of development of everyone involved in it. We must all liberate ourselves; we are all the heroes of history.

It seemed to me, coming back, that what we need is a GLF clearing house so we can get information rapidly, instead of waiting for travelers to report what the over-ground media won't tell us. Our communications now are slower than pony express. Perhaps a nation-wide GLF clearing house could be handled through *Come Out*.

We ran into a little trouble with some cops who wanted to bust a sister for her manner of dress - and when I asked if she were actually under arrest, they threatened to bust me too. In Chicago, the pigs will bust you for asking questions - but GLF will bail you out and give you hospitality.

BANDERSNATCH'S AGAIN

by Lois Hart

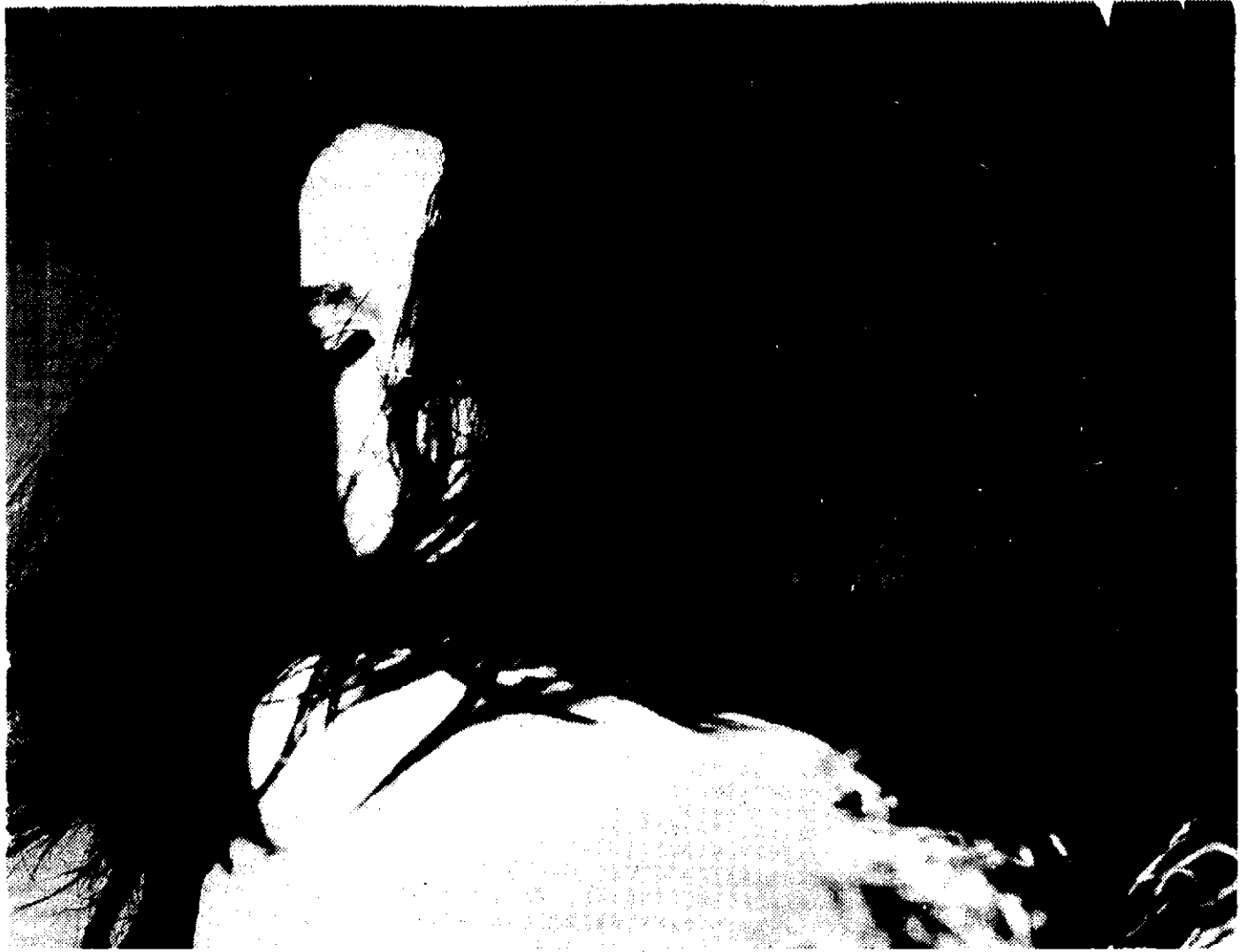
Ya gotta DO IT - read Jerry Rubin's handbook of social revolution and world change. He is a shitty, fuckhead heterosexual-chauvinist pig supremacist and he hasn't looked around to see the revolution that's nipping at his tail - but it's O.K. cuz it's a dynamite book that delivers the viewpoint and attitude that is going to do all the things we have been talking about doing. Really rips through alot of clinging mystifying illusory stuff that keep us in the clutches and postures of the MONSTER CULTURE. If you haven't seen the show from where he's standing you are still in the woods and besides it's a good guide to the guerrilla warfare for the public mind and you might get some good ideas for some actions. So DO IT STEAL IT READ IT only bear in mind you will be choking over the biggest-ass sexist on the scene. He sees a world for men to be children in and women are to deliver the chicken soup (Nancy, for godssake!?!?)

Gay Student LIBERATION!

We of GSL/NYU actively support the 3 resolutions of the Student Strike:

1. U.S. out of LAOS, CAMBODIA, VIETNAM NOW
U.S. out of HOMES, UNIVERSITIES, PEOPLES PARKS, BEDROOMS and OUR LIVES
2. Free all Political Prisoners
Free all Prisoners of Crimes without Victims (Homosexuals, Prostitutes)
3. War Machines Off Campus
ROTC and ARMY Who Chose Who is Moral Enough to Kill - Get Off Campus

WE SUPPORT THE STRIKE! WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO LIVE AS WE CHOOSE!
FREELY AND OPENLY!!



THE TRANSVESTITE IN AMERICA by Laura McAlister

The homosexual community and women's liberation groups at long last have started demanding the rights and privileges the rest of America enjoys. They have begun to achieve a small degree of success. One oppressed group, however, has not yet launched anything resembling a demand for recognition and acceptance — the transvestites. Transvestism, unfortunately, is a practice frequently misunderstood by nearly everyone, including gay people, and this misunderstanding has bred much intolerance. The time has now come to change this.

First of all, the psychiatric profession generally agrees that transvestism, in all its various forms, is a phenomenon occurring almost as frequently as homosexuality. Nevertheless, very few people know much about it and informative literature on the subject is rare, generally unavailable to the wide reading public, and frequently these sources are full of unhealthy assumptions and prejudices. There are very few books that contain the knowledge and understanding of Dr. Harry Benjamin's *The Transsexual Phenomenon*. In addition there are almost no popular publications on the market about transvestism; even Times Square, that remarkable repository of exotic books, has only one bookstore that regularly carries books and magazines on the subject. The quality of these productions is generally quite poor, except for *Transvestia*, and its future is very doubtful right now.

Socially, transvestites do not fare much better. Aside from a few private social groups, and the occasional correspondence club whose chief aim appears to be that of fleecing people for a few dollars, there are no permanent organizations to help and enlighten transvestites either socially or politically.

The result of all this is mass ignorance on the subject, which in turn has produced enormous anxieties, guilt feelings, and a terrible sense of isolation in many transvestites, and has also given rise to oppressive laws and attitudes in our society. In short, this is the familiar profile of all oppressed minorities.

To better the situation in New York by providing some information on the practice of transvestism, a series of three discussions took place in October and November at the Christopher End Cafe. The West Side Discussion Group also featured an excellent program one evening in January on the topic of transexualism. (This same topic was also treated fairly well in the January 27, 1970 edition of *Look*.) Unfortunately neither of these discussions was intended as a permanent forum on transvestism, so most of the people they drew soon melted back into their closets. Nevertheless, the information revealed during these discussions appeared to confirm some general theories explaining and describing the phenomenon of cross dressing.

There seem to be two essentially different categories of people who dress as members of the opposite sex:

transvestites and transexuals. Transexuals are those who so completely feel as if they are members of the opposite sex that they remain unhappy until their genders are changed physically. To simply dress like the other sex is unsatisfying and frustrating for them. Transvestites, however, are those who receive a psychic and physical thrill from wearing the clothes of the opposite sex. But the variations of attitudes within this group are quite numerous and complex. Many are heterosexually oriented and these are the ones who seem to receive the greatest thrill from the clothing itself; it is to these persons that the word "transvestite" is most appropriate. Some cross dressers are homosexual and they are frequently called "drag queens." Their interest in cross dressing is a desire to complete a basically feminine attitude towards things and to be treated in a special manner by men.

It is essential to realize, though, that these categories are at best tentative, for there can be a lot of movement by an individual within this entire range. Many transvestites in the heterosexual group have found that they grew to be asexual or transexual as time went by. Many find themselves increasingly attracted to the idea of taking hormone injections to alter the secondary sexual

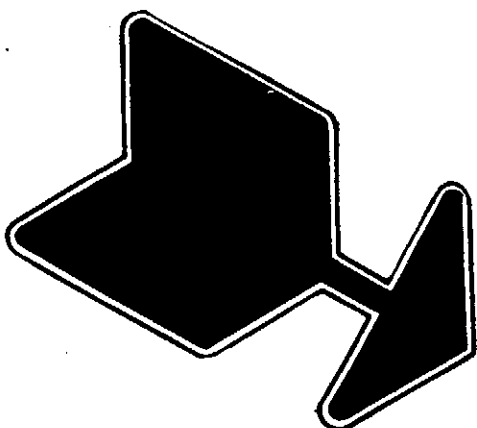
characteristics. The reverse of this occurs when persons who have undergone the sex-change operation suddenly find they are very unhappy with the change and wish they had not done it; these are frequently people who were not genuinely transexual but were confused by the maze of feelings they had and the variety of opinions on the subject. Many true transexuals never have the operation, though, because of the expense and danger involved.

Also, the varieties of personalities among transvestites and drag queens are quite diversified. Transvestites tend to be introverted and quiet, although many are quite the opposite while drag queens tend to be more exhibitionistic. Both groups have their fair share of neuroses, and all individuals involved in cross dressing undergo great changes in personality as well as appearances when drag.

Theories explaining the origins of the transvestite personality are as elusive as those explaining homosexuality. In fact the theories are very similar. So in the final analysis the transvestite is left to his own wits to try to find some relative happiness and understanding in life. This is a difficult task when such persons feel alone, so mystified by their own natures, and harassed by the law and society as well.

Solutions to some of these problems will be difficult but some things clearly can be done now. Political pressure groups such as those within the homosexual community are probably vain wishes for the transvestite right now, but at the very least some strong social organizations must be started so that a sense of identity can be established. From this, political action could be started. It is likewise time for everyone else to begin realizing that transvestites, homosexuals, blacks, women, etc. must be taken as the various components of society at large and must be allowed the same rights and dignities as the "middle American."

Anyone interested in information on the possible development of a discussion group for transvestites in the N.Y.C. area, please write to the author of this article in care of COME OUT.



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