

SEXUALITY IN THE AMERICAN MALE

SEXUALITY AND THE AMERICAN MALE

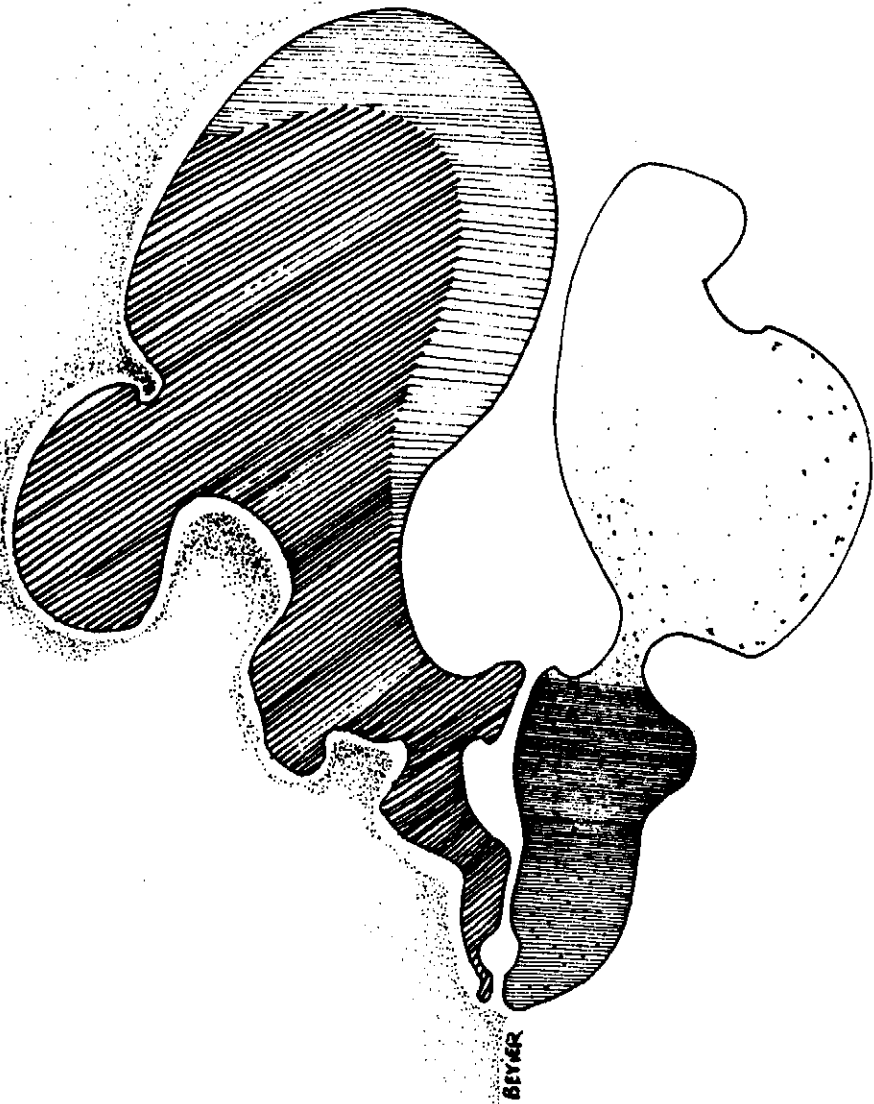
by Bob Fontanella

In America, sexual interpretations have become standard explanations for almost anything — whatever the situation or problem may be. We are taught to sexualize all of our needs and desires, which, quite often, have little or nothing at all to do with sex.

The American male is offered very little opportunity for a warm contact with members of his own sex. Often he needs this closeness or a nonsexual physical contact with another male. Since he has learned to sexualize these desires, he becomes frightened that he may have homosexual tendencies. He projects these fears onto the homosexual who then becomes the target for his frustrations, and his hatred. What one irrationally hates in others is what he fears most in himself.

The American homosexual male also is guilty of sexualization of his needs. Because of society's emphasis on sex, the homosexual male often sexualizes all of his inner needs and as a result can only accept himself on a sexual level. Because of the fears built up through the nonacceptance of the whole individual, sexualization is often a means of protection against what could be a more meaningful relationship.

We, as homosexuals, must place sex into a proper perspective as an important part of our beings but not the entire basis for our existence. By becoming aware of the brainwashing imposed on us, we will realize that we are total human beings with many different desires and many different needs.



COMMUNITY CENTER

lois hart

It has been two months now that Gay Liberation Front was conceived: a turbulent, violently divisive collection of opposing and attracting forces that coalesced sufficiently that the embryonic spirit could be named. During demonstrations, meetings and groups the forces continued to collide and explode, to congeal and reform — new members, new structures emerged — unexpected accords were discovered. And all the while the spirit gets stronger and more harmonic.

Where are we going? What are we all about? I ask myself not really wanting or expecting an answer but rather to savor the experience of this growing romance — more to enjoy the wonder of what is happening to us.

At first it seemed that I was mainly aware of what I didn't want. Leo has said it well — to no longer consent to be the victims — to throw off every piece of shit that has held me down until now. Shit like "dyke", "sick", "degenerate", "non-woman", "queer", "corruptor of children", "unnatural", "sinful", "damned". In our groups we trace the outlines of our pain; we delineate the scaffolding of a society that has arranged our crucifixion. That festival of life, our Zap of the Village Voice, was more Nay saying. A beautiful day when we said "NO" to the oppressor. But the capitulation of the Voice was not our greatest victory that day. It was that we were there together joyfully, earnestly standing up for ourselves, reaching out to other responding Gays, seeing the respect and affirmation of the Village community Gay and straight.

So a "Yes" has come into it. YES, here I am, goddamit! And as I stand up and take that breath I can feel that being here is no static thing. We are not just existing at a time when an old, unworkable world is dying, but we are living as a new one struggles for birth. I feel my oneness with the struggles and groanings of the entire planet. I know that I am reaching for something beyond my own imaginings; that somehow without really knowing the goal I have begun to move toward it. I have stood up in this too noisy, too crowded, polluted, decaying city and am taking a look around. What do I want to do? It has something to do with sharing, with caring for myself and others, with working to transform my immediate environment so that it fosters our growing humanity. What do I have to work with? Well, I have a sort of dream, not a very sophisticated one, and a few ideas that may or may not be okay. I see that there are a number of people standing near me and they seem to have about the same kind of equipment. So here we are scraping the crud off our psyches as best we can and proceeding to get to work.

We need a place, my friends and I, we who call ourselves G.L.F. We need space to be together — to meet, to rap, to eat, to dance, to dig each other and plan our work. It would be a place for our paper, communal dinners, meetings and dances — space where we can begin to break down our fragmentation — to create a communal environment closer to our needs and purposes.

So far we have been checking out ads for lofts, store fronts, even an old firehouse. No luck! We figure a West Village loft, at least 25 x 100, would be a good start. We have enough skilled labor among us to paint, plaster and do the carpentry. We require 24 hour access and to be able to make noise, because we'll hold dances to pay the rent and support COME OUT, if need be. We should be able to cook so our communal dinners can continue.

So who knows of a loft we can use? Who has money for the deposit and repairs? Who has the time and energy to give to finding both? COME OUT and help us wherever you are. The life you save may be your own!

A

POSITIVE

IMAGE

by Dr. Leo Louis Martello

"Homosexuality is not a problem in itself. The problem is society's attitude towards it."

Being homosexual says only one thing about you: Emotionally you prefer your own sex. It says nothing about your worth, your value as a human being. Regardless of how the church, psychiatry or convention has viewed homosexuality you don't have to go through life being blackmailed by your guilts. Easier said than done.

As a child you're a sponge, indiscriminately absorbing all kinds of impressions. If you were unloved, rejected or abandoned you may grow up thinking that you will not only never be worthy of love but shall continue through life inadequately coping with life's problems and will always be the object of rejection. An unloved child hasn't the capacity to intellectually analyze the truth. Emotionally he blames himself for his parents' lack of love. He doesn't see it as it is: a reflection of his parents' inability to relate to him. The homosexual, whether born or bred (and the psychiatric argument is still raging), has been conditioned into thinking of himself as "sick", and outcast, a "sinner", unworthy, something to be despised. The minute that he discovers that he's "different" he avidly reads anything he can on the subject. And what does he find? More ammunition for his self-contempt. He's told by psychiatric "authorities" that he's "sick". So he begins to tell himself NOT that "The psychiatrists say that I'm sick" BUT "I am sick." He programs himself into perpetual feelings of unworthiness.

Homosexuality is not a problem in itself. The problem is society's attitude towards it. Since the majority condemns homosexuality, the homosexual minority has passively accepted this contemptuous view of itself. "Right" is substituted for "wrong." The greatest battle of the homosexual in an oppressive society is with himself, more precisely the image of himself as forced on him by non-homosexuals. Everybody tells the homosexual what he is... except the homosexual himself. And when psychiatrists do find a positively self-assertive homosexual, they say his views are "subjective". What they don't realize is that their supposed "objectivity" is baseless since they never see healthy homosexuals. A few of them write books claiming "cures" which in itself implies that homosexuality is a sickness. Of course there's no way to prove these "cures", no way to follow up, no way to check these claims. And as long as these psychiatrists keep telling the homosexual that he's "sick" he has a GUEST INTEREST in the negative self-image of the homosexual at \$25 an hour and up.

Religion has always treated sex as a "sin". It has brainwashed millions into believing that a biologically normal drive is "evil". It has ruled by guilt. It knows damn well that it can't eliminate sex. In fact, it doesn't want to for the following reasons: 1) Instill guilt... then collect the guilt "payments" for life. 2) Capture the minds of children. They don't question, analyze or challenge what they're told. This insures emotional guilt... and gratuities. 3) What is the one universal drive that concerns everyone? Sex! Following the adage "The best way to lick a man is between his legs" religion knows that the greater the "sinner", the more he will guiltily defend the very religion that damns him. Theologically, the church and religion has him by his testicles!

There is only one way in which the homosexual can help himself. He must CHALLENGE every single feeling of worthlessness that he has about himself. He must make sure that he is not accepting an UNEARNED GUILT. Deep in his gut he must ask if the deepest, secret, unconscious, inner picture that he has of himself is really of himself... or is it one fostered on him by parents, society, religion, psychiatry, and the heterosexual majority? Are his feelings about himself *his*... or those of others? Is he being psychologically crippled because of a baseless self-contempt? And is this further increased by cultivating others who also dislike themselves, forming unions of mutual contempt? It works this way: if parents keep telling a child, "You're no good. You'll never amount to anything," the child absorbs these negative impressions. He grows up saying to himself, "I'm no good. I'll never amount to anything." He'll do battle with anyone else who tells him this. Yet he will also secretly cultivate those people who confirm his own sense of unworthiness. What he hasn't done is to CHALLENGE HIS FEELINGS ABOUT HIMSELF: "My parents said I'm no good. Is that true? They said I'll never amount to anything. Since when are my parents prophets?" Often the homosexual's self-destructiveness stems from a feeling of "Since they never thought any better of me I won't disappoint them." He is not himself but a carbon copy of what others said he was.

Homosexuals handle their societally-induced problem in many ways: They passively accept everything said about them as true and then proceed to act-out and live down to what others say they are. Or they live a double life: Conventionally proper and respectable and in the most intimate area of their lives furtively acting like fugitives from justice. Or some resent, rebel, and flaunt their homosexuality in defiance of the guilts and self-contempt fostered on them by society. These are all overcompensations. They do not help the homosexual into a sense of his own worthiness.

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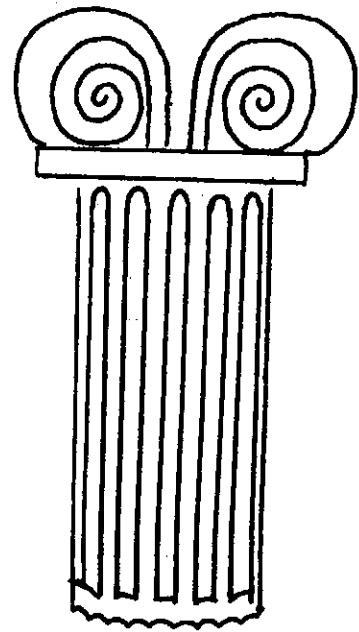
HOMOSEXUAL

STEPS TO A POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE

1) Did you deliberately CHOOSE to be homosexual? Does a black man CHOOSE the color of his skin? Did you CHOOSE the color of your eyes? Since your biological-emotional drives just happened without deliberate choice they are "normal" to you. DON'T ACCEPT AN UNEARNED GUILT.

2) You can't go any higher than your own thoughts. No one can like you more than you like yourself. Like the black man in America, you have to CHALLENGE every single negative feeling you have about yourself. Make sure you haven't passively accepted other people's estimates, views, values, standards, beliefs, ideas and prejudices, creating self-doubt and self-contempt. Reject them.

3) If you don't like yourself, ask yourself why. STOP TREATING YOURSELF AND YOUR FELLOW HOMOSEXUALS THE SAME WAY OTHERS HAVE TREATED YOU (PARENTS, SOCIETY, RELIGION, ETC.) Psychiatrists have called you sick... don't call yourself sick. Society persecutes you... don't persecute yourself and each other. If you feel deep down that you are unlovable you will seek out those people who will confirm your own sense of unworthiness. A "feeling" isn't a FACT so challenge all your negative feelings.



Spayne

4) Being homosexual doesn't deprive you of all virtues. Nor does it imbue you with them. As human beings and citizens you do have some inalienable RIGHTS. Why should others fight for them more than you? Society has used the weapon of divide and conquer. And the supplier for society's ammunition has always been the self-rejecting homosexual himself. Instead of self-assertively organizing to fight for his rights, the self-hating homosexual takes out his spleen on other Gay people. It works like this: If I secretly think of myself as shit then anyone who is involved with me, or who is like me, must be shit too. This is the brainwashed role that all minorities have been forced into: The blacks, Chicanos, poor whites, homosexuals, etc. In order not to be alone join the GAY LIBERATION FRONT. Learn about yourself and others, and more importantly, learn to like yourself. Don't be what others say you are (how the hell do they know if not homosexual themselves?) but what you really are, and what you can be.

5) Don't give your enemies the weapons used against you. Reject any idea that being homosexual is synonymous with being sick, unstable, neurotic, etc. The passive acceptance of homosexuality as a perversion or emotional illness IN YOUR OWN MIND plays into the hands of your persecutors. This is called THE SANCTION OF THE VICTIM. It means that by secretly, subconsciously, passively (regardless of how it is rebelled against) accepting the establishment's "opinion" you give it the weapon for your own psychological destruction.