

writer that the ideas found in section 5-8 are more essential to S-M than usually realized by non-S-M people, without denying that in pure "giving and receiving of pain" or "S-M" in the strict sense of the word, use frequently occurs.

9. One final clarification: there are "pure M's," "pure S's," and those who can switch from one role to another depending on mood and/or partner. Don't let anyone, even if he claims to have "some knowledge," insist EITHER that you must be all one or the other, OR that everyone is always both.

CRITICISMS OF S-M AND REPLIES
1. "This stuff turns me off; it positively disgusts me!" Reply: Not only do most heterosexuals say this of homosexuality in general, (and sometimes vice versa,) but a male Gay might say this of female homosexuality (and vice versa.) I imagine that we of the more radical wing in the Gay Liberation Movement would say (paraphrasing Voltaire's remark to Rousseau:) "I am disgusted by what you do in bed but I will defend to the death your right to do it."

"These S-M people are sick." Reply: We know that the word "sick" is merely the pseudo-scientific version of the ancient theological terms "sinful, hateful to God," and the resulting societal term "illegal." "Homosexuals are sick," "transvestites are sick" -- we've heard enough of this garbage! Just as Gay people have a wonderful time being Gay, so S-M's have a wonderful time doing their thing, and enjoyment of any kind cannot be "sick."

3. "S-M is an imitation of heterosexual role-playing." First reply: The only thing in Gay male sexual relations that directly imitates heterosexuality (as far as it can without the presence of a vagina,) is anal intercourse; since this is almost never done mutually at the same moment (as oral sex could be, in the case of "69") there's always someone who is inserting his penis in someone else's hole, in "direct imitation" (it could be said) of heterosexual role-playing. But S-M does not ADD anything to this; apart from the fact that there might also be anal intercourse, everything else (bondage, discipline, etc.) is very different from the ordinary heterosexual relationship. The most that could be said is that "Gay S-M imitates straight; S-M" -- although in actuality a lot of heterosexual S-M's would be glad to imitate the much freer life-styles of the Gay S-M's. Second reply: Ever assuming that some kind of imitating is going on, since when is imitation automatically bad? Are we Gays to start eating only foods that heterosexuals do not eat, wear clothing

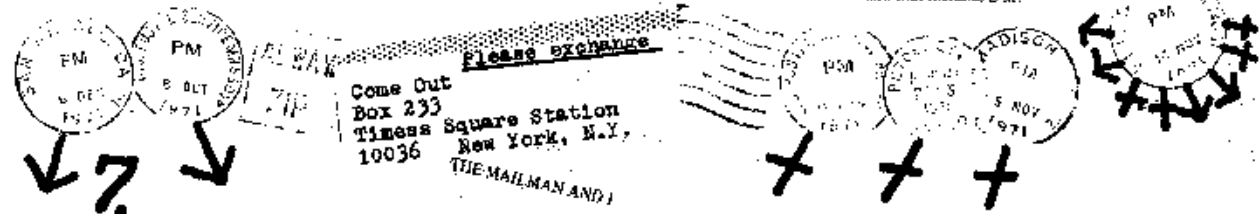
that must avoid being the same as heterosexuals, deny ourselves experiencing any music, art, movies, etc. that heterosexuals enjoy? And even as to "role-playing," in the "tentative notes for a political platform for Gay Liberation" that G.L.F. put together in the summer of 1970 (and on which I was privileged to have worked together with the others involved,) it says: "Roles should be explored as to determine whether they lead to the inhibiting of the person or to forming of new life-styles." In other words, roles are not AUTOMATICALLY bad, even for the radical wing of Gay Liberation; they must be evaluated by each person for himself and herself in terms of his total consciousness. What the radical Gay movement should desire is total individual freedom, which means the freedom to reject roles or to choose them if one wishes.

4. "S-M perpetuates violence, and the exploitation-oppression characteristic of imperialist cultures" (I regard this as the strongest criticism.) First reply: When we say "two gay S-M males met each other", we are speaking of the same kind of usually chance meeting that any two gay males may have on the streets, in the parks, in bars, at parties, clubs (incl. G.L.F., G.A.A.), etc.; in other words, two fellows strike up a conversation, get a general understanding of each other's desires, and voluntarily agree to have a try at a relationship. Neither one is forced into it. In fact (what is well-known among gay S-M's themselves but not generally known among non-S-M gays or straights), there is a much greater tendency for S-M's to make a kind of "verbal contract" beforehand as to what will actually take place between them -- sometimes down to the smallest details. Both parties want a "groovy scene"; neither wants "problems". The rare exceptions where you bear of a so-called "S" bearing up an unwilling "M" are no more frequent than the rare cases in which it is said "homosexuals molest little children"; these are closet cases, and the freer S-M becomes, the more accepted it becomes by our fellow-gays, the fewer such closet cases will be! S-M relationships therefore are voluntary and if a person voluntarily agrees say, to crawl on the floor as a slave, if he really digs doing this, how can we say he is "being oppressed, exploited"?

On the contrary, to prevent him from crawling on the floor at such a moment (under the misguided assumption of some theory alien to his consciousness) would be really to oppress him! Second reply: This writer is firmly united with the radical gay movement in condemning

all destructive violence against, and involuntary exploitation or oppression of any individual, cultural-ethnic group, or sexual type. But this kind of violence and oppression has been with us since the beginning of history, and may, at least in part, represent deep-seated human needs to be submissive as well as dominant. (I do not mean that the majority of people who are oppressed "want to be"! I only mean that there are enough subconscious, unself-aware and confused S-M motivations in enough people to contribute to the perpetuation of the crimes against humanity.) Now a theatrical representation of violence, such as a boxing match, is not going to increase real violence in the world, but if anything will tend to decrease it by providing a harmless, controlled outlet; and the more such symbolic representations exist, the more whatever S-M drives we may have (1) become raised from the subconsciousness to the conscious level where we can deal with them, and (2) we are satisfied by being expressed in some way within us, purged, out of us (Aristotle's theory). How much more so in the case of an actual S-M relationship between consenting people: by performing a ritual of dominance and submission, that is as ideally suited to their mutual needs as they can arrange, they not only more precisely satisfy these needs, but they also achieve an understanding of the difference between such a voluntary and ideal relationship, and the confused mess of involuntary oppression-garbage that we see around us. Such clear-cut S-M relationships therefore tend to prevent exploitation and oppression of imperialistic cultures." 5. "But won't the revolution do away with the need for even this much acting-out of S-M drives?" Reply: Only one or two generations after that "mental and social revolution that will insure total personal freedom for all" could anyone be unfrustrated enough by past history to create a purely free pattern of life for himself. We, who are still very much involved in the struggle towards that goal, are too hampered by current conditions to be able to predict and describe just what "post-revolutionary freedom" will look like. Maybe, as some radical gays say, they'll all be unattached, roleless bisexuals in those days, but it would be rash to insist on this from where we're standing now. Let us start the revolution going by granting total personal freedom right now, and in the forms that people desire right now! Let us grant freedom to all, whether we would choose them for ourselves or not, and that includes S-M!

AND THE REVOLUTION!



One day, with the juke-swapping routine established, Pete suddenly said, smiling and looking directly at my crotch, "Looks like you have a boner there."

"I guess I do," I said, somewhat embarrassed. Then Pete reached over with his hand and squeezed my cack.

If felt good, and I didn't object. "What about you? Do you have a boner?" I asked.

Pete glanced knowingly at his own bulge, I reached over and squeezed his cock, rejoicing in the rush of pleasure I experienced.

After that, we spent the 10 minutes riding daily in the third rack with our hands caressing each other's bitches, always to the non-achievement of heterosexual dirty jokes.

Towards the end of spring, Pete said, "How'd you like to go to the drive-in with me?" "OK," I said. Before we left, we put on our usual cut-throat shaves. I was a little surprised when Pete said, "Well, if he thought that I appeared innocent, then I was willing to go along. I felt the pressure that I was going to the drive-in with Pete, and they showed no negative reaction or over-the-top."

frustrated, so I said to Pete, "Let's go somewhere else."

He started the engine and we drove out of the drive-in and down some back roads, parking at the edge of a quiet cornfield. Pete took his pants down, and I did the same. We still sat in the cabin of the pickup, our hands now caressing the bare skin of the cocks we had previously known only behind the cloth of our pants.

I had no idea what was supposed to happen. We had never had an orgasm together, though I knew what orgasm was (from jerking off and from my other sex games with my schoolchums.) I slid along the seat and tried to press my cock against Pete's hip and thighs. He suddenly turned his back to me, lifted up his ass, and urged: "Go ahead!" I did not know what I was supposed to do, or maybe I did, but in any case I felt a flash of fear and I slid back toward my door. Now I held my own cock, and in seconds, without warning, I felt my whole body tremble with climax and spurt of semen out on the seat and on my legs.

Pete then opened the door near the driver's seat and now he stood up and quickly jerked his hip off, smiling his semen on the ground. I can remember some sense of disappointment that I never really got to see him come.

Four struck hard and fast, a furious four unlike anything I had experienced before, though I did come to know it again in the future. I do now know exactly what I was afraid of -- the full weight of this sexist society is what I would probably call it now, but I knew I was very afraid.

"Take me home," I said to Pete. He did. We rose in absolute silence.

I did not speak to Pete again for more than two years. I was determined to not even set eyes on him. I would not go to the post office if I saw his truck there. I made other arrangements to get home after term practice sessions.

Of course I told no one what had happened, and no one was aware of the intimate relationship between me and Pete. Except for Pete, of course, I still wonder what he was thinking. If I was scared (and oppressed) what about him? If word got out, he would have been the "dirty old man," the "pervert," the "shad molester." If I decided then to make a youthful confession, I would have suffered some, but what about Pete? What about his job, his family, the small town life? Or did he somehow sense that fooling around with with me represented no danger to himself?

Two years or so after the drive-in, now incidents, when I was home from college, I checked I was ready for an encounter with Pete. I saw him at the post office, and our meeting was as cold and brief as I had feared it.

"How're you doing?" Pete asked. "OK," I said. "Do you still lurve around?" Pete asked. I knew what he meant and I answered, truthfully but with wifeliness, "Oh, yea and then."

I knew some people who have very negative feelings about any sexual encounters they had had with older people when they were very young. I feel none of this, only a strange nostalgia about my relationship with Pete and a lingering curiosity about this man.

Contia. on page 14.

I was awakened at three o'clock in the morning.
 "Come quick, we are at Family Hospital, Jim is dying."
 "Dying," I said, still too sleepy to understand. "Dying. What are you talking about?"
 "On the fifth floor. You know where the room is. Come quick."
 I hurried over.
 "Where is he?" I asked.
 "He is in the room. Over there," Mark said. Mark and Eric were there. Mark is sixty and Eric is sixty-five. Eric likes to smoke cigarettes. He was nervously pacing back and forth in front of the small waiting alcove at the end of the hall. He went past the room where the nurses were preparing Jim, I guessed, because they barred the way. Mark was very upset. I took his face in my hands and kissed it often. He still cried. Finally one of the nurses came over to us. He gave us a very official look.
 "Are you the next of kin?"

Kinship



a short story
 by Perry Braun

Yes," I said.
 "You may see him then."
 We went into Jim's room. It was half lit and smelled of all kinds of serious medicines. They had already plugged him into some sort of instrument to measure how fast his heart was beating and how long it would stop. It looked kind of like a speedometer. On one dial it measured how fast his heart was beating and on the other it measured mileage.
 "It was really nice of you to come," he said. He was smiling much more easily than any of us could mark up to.
 "How could we stay away?" Mark asked.
 "I miss all of you," he said. "When we get older, we must have each other. I feel like I've been here for so long." He paused for a moment. "We're all we have, you know." He took my hand. It seemed so young and warm in his hand which was old and cooler, but moist. "It has been so good of you," he said, "to love me, now."
 "But I needed you..." I protested.
 "You are so much younger than I am."
 "I was forty thirty years ago."
 For a moment we looked at each other. It was as if there was a bridge that we were looking back and forth over at each other. He still held my hand and I did not resist it the way I did the first time he held my hand last year when I first became a part of the three of them. Mark was trying very hard not to cry. Mark who had been so very good at making cocktails and talking about the revolution that had taken place so many years ago when I was still a teenager. He used to talk. Chatter all of the time and now, now he was choked with tears. He couldn't speak a word.
 I left them for a moment. They were both holding his hands. They were looking like people on the landing of boats, getting ready to say goodbye. The doctor came over to me. He wore his hair very long in the old style, like pictures from old magazines.
 "Are you his next of kin?"
 "Yes," I said.
 "Where is his wife?"
 "We are all his 'wife'."
 "I only see three men."
 "I told you we are his next of kin."
 "We need his next of kin for the certificate of release. I don't believe any of you are his next of kin. We'll have to keep his body then right here until we find the next of kin."
 "I told you we are his next of kin."
 "He has no children? He is an old man."
 "We are all his children."
 Suddenly his lips curled into a slight smile. "No daughters?"
 The doctor persisted in sticking his hands in and out of the pockets of his smock. It was made of a strange kind of paper. I was sure it would break. He also rocked his head up and down as if he were making a list. I didn't understand why Jimmy's doctor was not there. Hospital doctors were notorious for giving us a hard time. They were the only ones that had not signed the accord that gave women and Gay people autonomy. He still had a specimen of power in the State and made sure everybody knew it.
 "We are all his daughters," I finally said. Suddenly I became very angry. "If you don't stop this, I'm going to report this to the Committee on the Extended Family."
 He nodded his head once more: "Then you are all homosexuals."
 "If you insist on categorizing us as such."
 I hated him. Such a pig. The pigs were always there. Even as Jim who had lived through incredible plights, who grew up in fear, who grew up when men were afraid to be known as homosexuals or Gay or anything other than the Established code of Ethics which had been superseded by the Revolution: even as Jim was dying, I had to deal with this reactionary.
 "Your friend has been here for a week," he finally said.
 "I didn't understand what he was getting at. 'What are you talking about?'"
 "It's just that we don't like to keep people here any longer than we have in. That's why I've got to have the name of his next of kin."
 "I told you that we are his next of kin."
 "I can never understand what you people have for each other."
 "Maybe you were never meant to."

"What do you mean by that? My son is one of you. He left home at the age of thirteen and joined you. He hates me. I don't understand why. I am his father. He resents me. We had him in the old way. Just my wife and I. No machines. No artificial insemination. No artificial conception. And yet he left us to go live with a bunch of males. He said he couldn't be free around me. He said that I oppressed him. I don't understand. I loved him. He is my son, and I love him."
 "Did you ever show him?"
 "We went together. We shot skeet together. We went to the games. I told him about women. I loved him the way my father loved me. How else can I love him?"
 "Did you love him the way men love each other?"
 "I loved him the way I loved a son."
 "That's the way Jim loves us," I said, "and that's the way we love him. We've got to be each other's children and each other's parents. Why should you limit your feelings of closeness and caring... only to children. We've got to keep these feelings all of our lives."
 Eric and Mark came out of Jim's room.
 "He's unconscious again," Mark said.



"Did you notice how much his cardiometer gave him?" the doctor asked.
 "About fifty-three over forty-three."
 "That's very bad. I can cut him off now or leave him on 'natural'. Then he can go on until tomorrow."
 "Leave it on natural," I said.
 "Can you arrange for the body or shall I have the Hospital Termination Team do it for you. If you leave it for us though, we are allowed to give away as much of the donor as it is necessary at the time of termination."
 I couldn't believe how he could talk this way in front of Mark and Eric who were absolutely torn to shreds. I took him aside. "Doctor, can't you just leave us alone until Jim's doctor comes. We'll handle everything. Please, sir."
 "You know," he whispered, "I could have terminated him an hour ago."
 "I know," I said. "What do you want from us?"
 "I don't know. A little love. A little respect. People today treat doctors like we were technicians."
 "Then why do you try to scare us with all those power plays?"
 "I guess we're just human. I'm really afraid of you. We're like everybody else."
 I took both of his hands in mine and raised them to my lips.
 "Don't be afraid," I assured him. "Just don't be afraid."

We spent the night listening to music and playing cards. Jim woke several times and we talked to him, but I don't think he understood what we were saying. Martin, Jim's doctor finally came in from the store where he had gone with Michael and the kids Steven and Erica. Steven might be coming to live with us soon. We were looking forward to his coming. There were so many things that we could learn from a boy of seventeen. By daybreak Martin told us that Jim's cardiometer had dropped to forty over thirty. He could try to jolt it electrically but that might shock Jim's whole system. die. He's seen too many changes. We're not at that point that we could rejuvenate him, you know, wash away all that shit that came from living so long under old Socratic. He's only been able to come out in the last fifteen years or so. He's seventy-two now. Sometimes it's just better to let people go. Do his friends know that he is dying?"
 "Yes," Eric said, "they'll be here soon."

Suddenly Jim called out to us. We hurried into his room where Mark was already. Jim was very happy to see Martin there. We talked for a while, the five of us all together. It was starting to be a beautiful day. The cardiometer was at 35/30. Jim said that it was indeed wonderful of all of us to be there. We talked about music for a while. On the tape machine that Eric had brought in a week before, we played Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante and some old Bob Dylan songs that Jim liked because they reminded him of his youth.

30/25
 He was speaking very softly. "The warmth of you all being here will really last me forever."
 I was really struck by this. It was the last thing Jim said to us. He logged into a coma. 20/15.

Mark was overwhelmed with grief. The three of them had lived together for about twenty years, even before Jim had come out publicly. I kissed Mark and we held each other. Eric seemed lost in thought. I remembered what I had said about being each other's children. We went over and talked to him. Eric had been very strong and now I don't think he was able to really understand that Jim was dead. He had not released any of his feelings and they were there waiting to be felt. The nurses were starting to make their daily rounds. They left Jim's room alone.

The whole community came out for the funeral. There was very slow dancing and chanting. Eric had become very joyous. We planted three cherry trees in Jim's honour and had a communal meal of rice and apples.