

GETTING OFF

***DRUMMER* expands to bring you the same filth,
but now disguised with socially redeeming scholarly
significance...**

Drummer: THE AMERICAN REVIEW OF GAY POPULAR CULTURE

Written May 14, 1978 and published in *Drummer* 23, July 1978, with a cover shot by my friend, Lou Thomas, Target Studio. Years later, I reflect that no more than a person can trust government, big business, or religion, can one trust the lesbigay establishment of professional homosexuals whose agenda has hijacked and now drives gay culture's media and principles. For instance, there was a time when the personal artist had a voice that created magazines, wrote books, and made films and videos, and showed their work in underground galleries of bars, hallways, and toilets.

I could name corporations that for years have owned the lesbigay world, but more important is the fact that the internet has come onto the table as the wild card that breaks the poker hand the of the lesbigay power structure that has commandeered history. On the internet, individual voices can be read, and those voices' information and opinion are beginning to ride right around the power-blocks of gay media and gay politics. The best thumbnail of how the personal has been lost is to look at the cynical gay videos cranked out on the theorem I posit is this: eight guys, two-ways, three-ways, eight cumshots, eighty minutes.

Another index of the myopia of inbred intellectuality is the heterophobia that fills the lesbigay press. Heterophobia is no answer to homophobia. The structural attitude of lesbigay culture that academic homosexuals have foisted on lesbigay media—and thought—is Marxist at best, Communist at worst, and in either regrettable way does not address how lesbigay people really must live in a cash-and-carry 24/7 world where we are but ten percent.

Separatism works no better than misspelling womyn as if that corrects something. Our isolationist scenario of fear of straights and hate of straights was always a nightmare coming relexively back at homosexuals who while gaining a voice, lost confidence in themselves and especially in the context of American culture which, give and take a bit here and there, is the most hospitable to lesbigays in history, even with all the Reagan and Bush reigns.

Lesbigay culture needs to lighten up, clean up its act, stop reacting, and start acting intellectually, esthetically, politically, and in every other way. Where is real lesbigay leadership? Where is a real lesbigay community that is not a ridiculous fiction of groups groping their way to their own ends with endless fundraisers that rarely, if ever, lead to a more humanist approach to life within the lesbigay world?

Shame on us for allowing this insularity, as if we are all supposed to march to the same *Drummer*.

Lesbigay people should be the avant garde of marching to a different *Drummer*.

That after all was the log line quotation from Thoreau that appeared on the masthead page of every issue of *Drummer*.

I'm basically an analyst who, having climbed up from my father's traveling-salesman household, has had several careers inside groups way more dynamic, powerful, and byzantine than the lesbigay community. I survived religion (11 years in the Catholic Seminary), academia (10 years of university-level teaching with tenure), big business (8 years in one huge engineering company in the Bay Area), and government (two years of working with the San Francisco Municipal Railway). So what do I know from all this insider experience?

I know that lesbigay culture hated Robert Mapplethorpe because he made it outside the lesbigay ghetto, and became the most famous gay man at the end of the twentieth century. I had to shame the Advocate over the phone to get Robert's portrait on the cover of the magazine as "Person of the Year" which meant that Uri Vashid had to share the DATE Advocate honor. I know lesbigay people boo the sublime playwright Edward Albee off the stage at a

lesbigay writers convention in San Francisco YEAR, because he so they yelled “sold out.” I have seen lesbigay culture so high-handed and run amok that the Key West Writers Conference closed down the 1999XC convention suddenly and early because of the lesbigay shredding of straight author Ann Beattie, as well as the cat fights with each other, caused the hosts to say, “Enough. The conference is over.

I’ve never been ashamed to admit I’ve had all kinds of same-sex experiences, but it is embarrassing when people gay and straight think that we all buy into the same attitudes and behavior. Once again with irony: just as all black people know each other, don’t all lesbigay people know each other? Once in 199X, the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival rejected two of my videos because they weren’t “gay enough.” As Mr. Marcus wrote ironically in the Bay Area Reporter: “Jack Fritscher? Not gay enough?” Those same videos were the hit of the Olympia Film Festival, sponsored by the Washington State Arts Commission. This is what constitutes the history of us?

I’m disappointed I’m not an archetype, but I glad I’m not a stereotype. And I wish the lesbigay movement wasn’t hot to typify. I even wrote a rather famous novel whose political purpose was to dismantle the separatism and body fascism of the 1970s; it drove crazy a couple of politically correct feminist (male) critics who clearly failed to understand its intellectual argument.

At any rate, the fight to keep lesbigay culture moving forward to discover its own humanity continues as the same fight it was back in 1978 when I wrote this feature essay about *Drummer* and idealizing the veracity of gay life. My parents raised me as a Platonist. And a Platonist I am when I cum to the Ideal Whatever.
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ALRIGHT. SO WHERE’S *Drummer* GET THE LEATHER BALLS to *assume*, yeah, *assume* to track, report, and chronicle what’s happening in the masculine world of gay men? How legit

can a rag get without losing its j/o quality? Pretty g .d. legit and pretty hard-assed. No other mag sticks it into the gay subculture the way *Drummer* sticks it for you. No other gay mag touches the same raw nerve of what goes on in a wide cross-section of gay heads after midnight, after the lights go down low. *Drummer* dares to reassure you that even with the extremes that you fantasize about in your most secret heart of hards: you are not alone.

GAY POP CULTURE: A REFLECTION OF YOU, NARCISSUS

Drummer is no plastic fantasy. Every issue increasingly reflects what our readers want as they send us more of what and where they're coming from: photos they snap, stories and articles they write, artwork they draw. *Drummer* exists by popular demand. Readers need their *Drummer* fix. We can't come out fast enough. IF *Drummer* DIDN'T EXIST, WE'D HAVE TO BE INVENTED. *Drummer*'s lucky enough to be a distinct medium for a genuine level of popular consciousness in the gay community. *Drummer* assures guys it's okay not to be locked into a 21-year-old all-American boy image, because our readers (you) are not boys. You're adult men. EVEN BLUEBOYS GET THE COWS

You prefer hard sex the way you prefer men. You're not afraid of your rich fantasy life. You're not afraid of actualizing your fantasies. You've begun to notice that some gay periodicals, like *Blueboy*, are little more than soft-focus clones from erotic-photo mail-order catalogs. *Drummer* has always had a different, harder beat. *Drummer* isn't *Vogue* in butch drag. *Drummer* is increasingly a voice of a now less-closeted part of gay society. *Drummer* is a forum for men who enjoy authentic Sensuality and Mutuality.

We want to touch the way you really are after dark. When you've gone beyond the pretty-baby stage, you want articles, interviews, and fiction that stroke your head. We're not the last word on gay pop culture; but we're the first, and we're working to be the best. We dare to publish attitudes others repress. First, because you want our point of view which we picked up from you. Second, because certain subjects need to be printed to give full dimension to the genuinely alternate ways of being an adult, masculine, gay man in this country at this time.

Drummer IS AGGRESSIVE

Just you mention *Drummer* in a roomful of guys. You'll get a heavy feedback of attitude. They either love us or hate us. They either understand us (meaning themselves) or they refuse to understand us (again, meaning themselves). Some of them have every issue from Number One. Some of them wouldn't let *Drummer* sully their art-deco coffee tables. But lots of them interestingly enough, are closet-*Drummer*-boys: they keep their secret copy of our latest issue hidden handily under the bed next to the grease, the poppers, and the clothes pins.

YOU ARE OUR VOICE: YOU OUT THE *POPULAR* IN *POP*

Drummer is a duo-purpose magazine. As we slowly evolve, we want to get your head off as much as we've always gotten your, uh, other head off. In short, *Drummer* has the balls to assume to report, rehash, and reshuffle at a certain expressive level of gay pop culture, because you keep buying and demanding this certain stuff, issue after issue. You keep telling us what you want to see and read. We go beyond "models"—hot as they are. We prefer to reflect more authentic, real-life men. You ask for the same in our articles and fiction. It's you after all, who puts the *popular* in pop culture. Your very special, adult, masculine voice gives *Drummer* its very definite responsibility, purpose, and direction.

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