

FOREWORD: THE FULL URSUS

**BEAR ROOTS ORAL HISTORY:
A PIONEER MAPS THE GENOME OF BEAR**

Jack Fritscher, Ph.D.

Belly up to the bar, boys, and reset your time lines, cuz Papa Bear's back in town and been asked to "fess up the facts o' life" about your Bearstreaming "Bear Roots." Complementing Les Wright's analytical and anecdotal *Bear Book II* in your hand, this pioneer informant, like Michael Bronski, has "been there/done that *dolce vita*" in gay popular culture as well as in gay liberation, in gay writing (fiction and feature articles), and in gay video and photography. Les Wright asked me to be keynote speaker at the Bear History Project Conference 2000, because my street credential—6,000 gay pages in print—is as one of the keystone voices in the creation of the species Bear. This turnkey information is the thirty-five years of acts, facts, and personalities detailed in this Foreword which is not post-factum academic theory, but is the witness of one writer in the right place at the right time doing the right stuff to define the "species bear" within the "genus homosexuality" from the first days of gay liberation through the millennium. Once, in early 1993, I was actually on *Oprah* talking about women's blue-collar husbands' taste for bearish gay sex!

MAPPING THE GENOME FOR *BEAR BOOK II*

As the most published author in *Bear* magazine, I can write channeling the "Bear Voice" as in the first line above, as well as in three of the five *Bear Annuals*, 1997, 1999, 2000; or, I can write as a university professor with a Ph.D. in literature and criticism, channeling the academic voice of the "discursive entropy of blah blah." Because in 1967, I was a founding member of the legit American Popular Culture Association, I had two years' head-start in pop-culture analysis before Stonewall; so I was prepared to anticipate queers, leather, bears, whatever, as the phenoms appeared, particularly in Chicago, San Francisco, and New York. Taking cue from Les Wright's *Bear Book II*, whose poignancy and character rises from people's voices detailing autobiographical facts of politics and art, my documented life—vetted reportedly by no less than the Mapplethorpe Foundation—details pre-Stonewall education, experience, and politics typical of the pioneers who molded Gay Lib after June 1969.

During the long hot civil-rights summer of 1962, I worked with people of color as an activist Catholic seminarian in the projects on the South Side of Chicago with labor-organizer Saul Alinsky, once marching with Martin Luther King, and once carried bodily out of Mayor Daley's office by the Chicago police whose touch turned me on, though I was not out until May 15, 1967, when I came out officially with a hairy Greek named John Constant from the old Gold Coast, 501 Clark Street. In autumn, 1967, I was a university professor graduated from the Summer of Love, with a doctorate from Loyola University of Chicago, the "heartland home of leather." In May, 1968, in the balcony of the Biltmore Theatre, New York, I sat as a critic on assignment for the *Journal of Popular Culture* witnessing one of the opening performances of the all-important period-musical, *Hair: The American Tribal Love Rock Musical*, whose fetish-empowered title song every bear, particularly *Bear Book II*'s Bear-A-Tones (Chapter 15), might study, adopt, and sing as the Bear Anthem.

“GIMME DOWN TO THERE, HAIR!”

In August 1968, when cops were “pigs” not “bears,” I was in Chicago’s Lincoln Park working the anti-Vietnam protests during the police riot at the Democratic Convention. In May 1969, in Paris still smouldering with student revolution, then in Amsterdam, I was swept up, like Vanessa Redgrave’s *Isadora* (1969), by a lovely, bearded, revolutionary boy named Nick Perrenet, straight out of the leathery Argos Bar (the world’s first leather bar) and into the chair-throwing, shouting maelstrom of students taking over a Dutch University. I didn’t understand Dutch, but the choreography of revolution was absolutely familiar from my campus in the States. In June 1969, I exited a Janis Joplin concert stoned to hear Judy Garland had died. (One person’s history is coat-hook to everybody’s history.) Earlier that same June, tripping with iconic leather-priest, Jim Kane, on two Harley-Davidsons through the mountains—and mountainmen—from Denver to Taos and Santa Fe, I ritually wore, for one glorious evening, Ken Kesey’s brown leather jacket—with all that fetish implies—while floating in a desert pond.

GAY RENAISSANCE 1969-1982: EMERGING BEARS

On July 4, 1969, I met my first of three significant-other bears in Chuck Renslow’s new Gold Coast Bar. He was a 6-2, 190-pound, 23-year-old cub with a strawberry-blond crewcut and moustache. I marched straight up to him and spit in his face. His name was David Sparrow and we became wild, passionate leather-lovers for eight years, shooting together the earliest Bearstream covers of *Drummer* 21, 25, and 30. (See David Sparrow in bondage in “Honeymoon” photograph, *American Men*, p. 37.) Dr. Thomas McCann (Chapter 28) characterizes latter-day 90’s bear fiction out of what are 70’s early themes, vocabulary, and physical attributes. In 1972, inspired by five-years of S&M experience and playing with Male Hide Leather’s Bob Maddox at the first Chicago Hellfire Club Inferno runs, I wrote one of the first S&M novels, *Leather Blues*, featuring two bear-themed scenes: a hairy fuck of a biker and a mountainman fistfucked. (*Leather Blues* appeared again serially spreading bearishness in *Son of Drummer* (June 1978), *Stroke* (1985), and full-length in *MAN2MAN* (1980-1982). Click on Les Wright: “Appendix. Early Published Writings on Bears.” Surf to www.BearHistoryProject.com.

Fritscher Principle: the concept of “bear” is blank enough to absorb countless male identities and fantasies. Thus inclusively, in 1970, David Sparrow and I lived triangularly between New York, Chicago, and San Francisco where—as cameras investigated gay identity—we were hired as bearded photo models for *Whipcrack*, the first West Coast leather-themed magazine published as a one-issue trial balloon years before *Drummer* which appeared June 21, 1975. At the same time in 1970, I interviewed the very straight (and interestingly bearish) Pope of the Church of Satan, the shaved head and goateed Anton LaVey, for my book *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch’s Mouth*, which in 1971 was the first detailing of gay wicca and gay spirituality, particularly as practiced by Gay High Priest, Frederick de Arechaga of Chicago. This gay wicca and leather brought *Advocate* editor Mark Thompson to my kitchen table in 1978 when I was editing *Drummer* and Mark Thompson was—like Candide—collecting his studies for the Leatherstream of *Leatherfolk* and the Radical Fairy/Bearstream of *RFD*.

When *Bear Book II*’s Alex Papadopoulos in Chapter 12, “Theorizing Bear Space,” writes about the varieties of “Bear Space,” consider this historical byte. The urban legend that AIDS was brought to the U.S. by an airline steward in 1982 puts ironic frame to the fact that it was only

in May, 1969, a month before Stonewall, that the first jumbo jet was introduced, enabling much of early gay liberation to be globalized on the mile-high “gay space” of planes connecting the dots of fabled gay cities. Also feeding the Bearstream, on June 26, 1964, five years before Stonewall, was that famous *Life* magazine feature article on San Francisco’s Tool Box bar, which pictured artist Chuck Arnett’s Leatherstream-into-Bearstream drawings that fueled gay consciousness from Arnett’s High Concept Tool Box to his actual advertising graphics for the Slot Hotel and the Barracks Baths and the Red Star Saloon and the Ambush bar. Search for the book *Leatherfolk*. Scroll down to “Arnett.”

THE FIRST BEARISH BAR: RAINBOW MC

By 1972, the world’s first bar to turn not-yet-literally “Bear,” but spinning on the cusp of “bearish” in the Bearstream, was San Francisco’s “The No Name” (later aka “The Brig,” “The Powerhouse”) run by poet and cookbook author, the redheaded Ron Johnson, and bearded photographer Mario Pirami who together in 1971 were the founders of the Rainbow Motorcycle Club (RMC). The original-recipe Rainbows, still existing, including this old Rainbow fuck, were the *avant garde* of the bearish dirty-biker look. (See *The Bear Cult: Photographs by Chris Nelson*, pp. 19, 22, 40.) Like the movies, the boiling clouds of time-lapse creation hovered over us all as gay life invented itself first as *gay*, second as *leather*, third as *twinkie/clone*, fourth as *bear*. (Gay culture thrives on “make-overs.”) To clarify gayspeak spoken then: on Castro, homomascuine men used *twinkie* and *Castro Clone* as synonyms. Yet, by some ironic twist of gay DNA, the clones’ exact style of flannel shirts, bandanas, boots, etc., evolved into “Bear Wear” first at the Ambush bar, South of Market, and later, out of the Castro bar, Bear Hollow, riding through the millennium at the second Lone Star bar across the street from the closed Ambush bar. (Alan Lowery, founder and owner of the 1970’s Leatherneck bar, and I had in 1974 tried to buy what is now the Lone Star space, but the large extended Mexican family who owned it as a cantina wanted to keep it for their family weekends.)

At that time, Joan Didion wrote in her seminal 1960’s novel, *Play It As It Lays*, people (and facts) are swept up into history, and can be swept away by history (and by politically-correct revisionists) if they don’t write notes, take pictures, collect drawings, and shoot movies—all of which pop culture scholars do, so that Bearstream efforts like Les Wright’s The Bear History Project and books like *Bear Book I* and *II* can exist accurately, and the contributors—David Bergman, Ron Suresha (Chapter 27), Elizabeth Kelly, and Katie Kane (Chapter 29)—can keep gay life from slipping through the cracks of history.

UNIFORM BEARS: “PADDING OUT” WITH THE PDP

Pertinent to Robert B. Marks Ridinger’s Chapter 13 which depicts how the paws of bears straddle diverse worlds, and paralleling Larry Toothman’s Chapter 20, a history of localized bears, a prefatory remark needs to be made of a pioneering bear(ish) club. In 1972, a gentlemanly gang of men—fronted by 250-pound Ursus Ed Linotti, Tony Perles (both Harley-Davidson owners), Frank Gonchar, Bob Cato, all-told nearly twenty of us—founded the first San Francisco uniform club, the Pacific Drill Patrol (PDP). In the 70’s grooming style of cops, football pros (Terry Bradshaw, John Matuzak), and bodybuilders (like Ur-Bear bodybuilding brothers, the heavily moustached Mike Mentzer and Ray Mentzer), the PDP featured moustaches for all

members and favored members genetically endowed with body size and body hair, particularly the kind “that grows up thick around the neck of a white teeshirt,” as in one of the first bear stories coded in a nonbear magazine, “Officer Mike: SFPD’s Finest,” a hairy Italian cop with drawing by REX, *Skin*, Vol. 2 #2, November 1980, and again in *Just Men*, Vol. 1 #4, May 1984.

Foreshadowing Laurence Brown (Chapter 2: Fat Is a Bearish Issue), the Pacific Drill Patrol practiced a Bearstream fetish we called “Padding Out” whereby average-sized guys, inventing “prosthetic make-overs,” tied sleeping bags around our waist and torso with rope strategically placed to define the mass; adding red-rubber hot-water bottles and canvas bags of water over pecs and shoulders so the bulk would move realistically; wrapping foam rubber around forearms and thighs; then climbing into huge-sized cop uniforms, fishing waders, construction jackets, rubber raincoats, heading out to walk through the midways of county fairs, biker bars, and even MacDonal’d’s where, one time when Linotti, his 250 pounds padded out to 600 pounds, ordered french fries, the waitress took one look at him, sized him up, turned around, and, no kidding, lifted the dripping wire-basket of fries and dumped the whole load on his tray, so awesome did his size make his appetite seem to be. One of the only prosthetic make-overs to turn “ugly-sexy” erotic on screen is the redheaded “Fat Dirty Bastard” in *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*. The rockstar actor, Meat Loaf, turned another “padded out” performance in the man’s movie, *Fight Club*, with a beefed Brad Pitt. As a coordinate erotic exercise, a 21st-century bear could pad himself out with rolled-up bath towels under latex and leather, topped by flannel, to, say, 400 pounds and go to Home Depot for some quality tool time and ask an actual bear questions about plumbing. “Padding Out,” obviously, also puts one bear paw inside a bondage trip, and another inside latex/rubber/leather.

TWO ESSENTIAL BEAR PHOTO BOOKS

Fulfilling Les Wright’s Bear History Project’s quest for Bearstream artifacts, the Pacific Drill Patrol legal charter exists and bearish PDP photographs, taken in 1974 near the Russian River, which has become the idyllic retreat space of Bears, will be available soon at www.BearArchives.com. Characteristic Pacific Drill Patrol photographs of PDP uniform picnics can be sampled on pages 16 and 34 in the coffee-table photo book, *Jack Fritscher’s American Men*, published by Gay Men’s Press (GMP), London, 1995.

So tied together in creating High Male-Concept are Les Wright’s *Bear Book I* and *Jack Fritscher’s American Men* that the two books were reviewed together in *Lambda Book Report*, May, 1997. Reviewer William J. Mann wrote, “It’s that celebration of masculinity in its rawest manifestations that is celebrated here in Les Wright’s *Bear Book* and *Jack Fritscher’s American Men*...these are images that could redefine what male beauty is supposed to be.”

GMP, now part of Millivres-Prowler, London, intended *American Men* as a kind of “Bear Cult 2” to continue the archetypes of Beardom’s First Photographer, Chris Nelson, in his seminal bear photo book, *The Bear Cult*, GMP, 1991. The pair of books, *The Bear Cult* and *American Men*, are so absolutely important to the photographic genesis of the bear image that each is graced with an introduction written by world-renowned British art critic, photographer, and bear lover, Edward Lucie-Smith. History, even here, too quickly jumps from the 70’s to the late 80’s and 90’s, but only at the expense of early Bear Culture. *The Bear Cult*, *American Men*, and all the bear magazines and near-bear magazines, as well as *The Bear Book I* and *II*, and probably bear culture as a distinct entity might never have emerged, or emerged so distinctly, without the

humanist men who nursed the Bear Roots in early gay culture.

Fortunately, with notebook and camera, I have publically lived with other artists an artist's life in gay culture and media. Personal photographs seem like public snapshots of history. Memoir seems often the autobiography of that culture, written as a primary witness, as well as written as a professionally trained critic and scholar of history. Celebrate! It is exactly that sense of the *personal*, that appreciation of personal oral history, and personal identity, that makes Bear Culture different from depersonalized gay culture with its hired, nameless models, and slick magazines reflecting advertisers' censorship, and awards corrupted by the fascists of the politically correct. (Dr. Lawrence Mass, Chapter 1: Bears and Health, reveals his insights into how the obstructionism of the politically correct can injure bears' health.) Rejoice! The average gay bear probably feels more like a person than the average gay man. (See John R. Yoakam, Chapter 11: Parlaying Playmates into Lasting Friendships.)

FROM STEVE REEVES TO BEAR

"Bears," Michael Bronski tells Ron Suresha in *Bear Book II*, "did not come out of nowhere." The men who created the magazines, photographs, writing, and culture of the first wave of gay lib in the 1970's grew up on the happy post-WWII pop culture of athletic, can-do masculinity. MGM's 1953 spectacle *Quo Vadis* featured a huge, half-naked bear-man named Ursus in the Coliseum. Producer Joe Levine downloaded *Quo Vadis*, *Ben Hur*, and *Demetrius and the Gladiators* into low-budget "gladiator movies" shot in Italy and spun out of Steve Reeves' beard, hair, and muscles usually opposed by an antagonist bear of thicker proportion and shaggier of chest and head. (*Drummer* #19, December 1977) In American homes, for eight years on the TV series *Cheyenne* (1955-1963), the square-jawed and shirtless Clint Walker weekly bared his hairy chest, furry belly, and upholstered shoulders to mesmerized adolescent boys who were about to come out in the Gay Renaissance of the 1970's. See *Drummer* #27, February 1978, and Clint Walker's bank-heist movie, *The Great Train Robbery* (1969) which shows the True North where gay bears were about to head after Stonewall.

As genome tributary to the Bearstream, Bob Mizer's AMG studios in LA shot many returning soldiers, smooth to hairy, from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, publishing them in *Physique Pictorial*. Chuck Renslow's Kris Studios in Chicago featured handsome, dark, brooding men so non-sissy, so masculine, that the reader at that time wondered specifically, "Do these straight guys know what the photographer is doing with their pictures, putting them in magazines where other guys get hard looking at them?" In 1965, Avery Willard at Guild Press in Washington, D.C. published a 70-page, hand-size photo book titled, *Leather!*, which featured hairy men and used key Bearstream totem words, "lumberjacks," "Davey Crockett," "Daniel Boone," and hyper "masculinity at a full 6 on the Kinsey scale." As a footnote, the opening model, nonbear Gary Adams, is the actor Gary Lockwood who starred in *2001: A Space Odyssey* and in *Kit Carson and the Mountain Men*, 1977.

Complementing Ned Wilkinson's Chapter 6, "A Bear Admirer's Point of View," *Bear Classic* 5, March 2000, in the story "Mapping the Genome of Bear" invented a woof-way to judge a guy's essential beariness as a Bear. *URSUS* is the unit of measurement of BEAR the way *RICHTER* measures EARTHQUAKES. So: judge a BEAR on a 1-10 *URSUS SCALE*. HALF-*URSUS* (5). FULL-*URSUS* (10).

THE FIRST BEAR: LEDERMEISTER, FULL URSUS

In 1961, in San Francisco, in North Beach, at the beatnik bookstores, I stood, wearing my big-kid first beard, awe-struck looking at the athletic masculinity of lifeguards in *Young Physique* in color, and the muscular sailors in *Tomorrow's Man* in black and white. By the mid/late 60's, Colt Studios, first in New York, shooting naturally masculine musclemen, with Clint Walker as the platen, struck on the hairy model Ledermeister (Leathermaster) who was in fact the muscular, very upholstered archetype of bear, Paul Garrior, from whom all later bears descend.

Paul Garrior/Ledermeister is the Ur-Daddy Bear who in real life was a lineman for a San Francisco utility company. He appeared Full Ursus in Colt's *Gallery 5*, 1971, and *Manpower 5*, 1972. Rip Colt/Jim French wrote in 1971: "Ledermeister is the Colt prototype...quiet but extremely powerful. He works outdoors, lives simply...is very rugged and prefers surroundings that reflect that quality...a loner who shuns parties and is happier on his motorcycle. He showers daily, disapproves of deodorants and colognes and sleeps nude. If it's masculinity that turns you on, Ledermeister has it in spades."

In 1972, in San Francisco, I shot two reels of Super-8 film of Paul Garrior sitting, boots down in a manhole in the street, splicing cable with his gloved hands between his denim thighs. I consider that bearish 2-reel movie to be the first motion picture shot by Palm Drive Video (then called Spitting Image, with David Sparrow) which used Super-8 film for fifteen years until 1982 when video became possible. Paul Garrior was a god, an archetype, the Platonic Ideal of masculinity. In media, he was virtually the first gay man to look like a man. He was a human rebuttal to the straight stereotype of powerless effeminacy.

Digital bears looking back at history's search for the genesis of the "Bear Face" can note the second official Palm Drive movie, *Cop Faces*. Shot during the 1972 Gay Parade, *Cop Faces* consists of tight close-ups of SFPD cops' (*faces only* featuring *big moustaches*) standing on guard on the route of the parade which continues on around their heads. I stood in front of each cop and held the camera on his face as long as it took for him to break his official mid-distance stare and glance with personal "fuck-off" attitude at the camera; now that's radical film making that breaks the public mask down to the personal face.

Actually, history's memory of the 1970's would be quite different if video-with-sound had been the medium of a decade that was shot on silent Super-8 film on 4-minute reels! Not long ago, a young lesbian asked me to show her on demand the video of the Stonewall Riots. She was quite disturbed to find out that video did not then exist. Her point of view shows the necessity of tracing Bear Roots, in the fashion of *Bear Book I* and *II*, in order to point out the principle that most people think the world began to exist the day they first noticed it.

When Paul Garrior finally exited my bed in 1980, after a four-way with his lover and mine, the hairy bodybuilder, Jim Enger, I saved the designer sheets, tan with two stripes, red and green, and three years later, nearing the end of the shelf-life of fetish items, I brewed the sheets into tea, and the PDP, at a formal supper, toasted and drank the essence of uniform-leather-muscle-bear masculinity: Garrior and Enger. (*Mea culpa*: "I am like so totally dedicated to masculinity.") Every tribe eats the god they desire. I confess. History for me is fetish. Accuracy is obsession. Also early on in the 70's, Colt hit on the ethnicity of Italian bear, Bruno, who was a man adored on the streets of Greenwich Village. Palm Drive Video revived Colt's Bruno in *Big Hairy Bruno, American Men*, p. 52.) With the commanding Ledermeister and the cuddly Bruno, Colt launched its alternately bearish-and-shaved history that by the millennium had landed Full

Ursus on Colt's major-money Bearstream stars, Steve Kelso, Carl Hardwick, and Pete Kuzak. (Bearophiles: Ledermeister, *Best of Colt Films 7*; Bruno, *Best of Colt Films 8*. All Colt films are silent movies.)

COLT THROUGH A LENS DARKLY: TARGET

Les Wright's *Bear Book* theme pursuing "the History and Evolution of a Gay Male Subculture" evokes this oral history of the New York to Los Angeles bicoastal dawn of bears as icons. When Colt, in the early 70's left the dark lofts and cellars of Manhattan for the sunny gyms and beaches of Los Angeles (1974), photographer Jim French during the 70's created the decade's hairiest icons in Dan Pace (Dan Padilla) who was the real life partner of Colt model Clint Lockner (Chuck Romanski), an actual LAPD officer, who was the former lover of my hairy muscle lover, Jim Enger. In the words of Jacques Maritain, we were all friends together. In the 70's, life was a cabaret, oh chum, and even the orchestra was beautiful! (Bruno starred with Clint Lockner in the famous uniform-bear *pas de deux*, *Lockner's Key*, *Best of Colt Film 12*.) When Jim French split New York, his former Colt partner, Lou Thomas/Jon Target, started Target Studios, and Lou's own beautiful, cliché-breaking, bearish photographs ruled out of New York. Thumbnail: Check the drawings of Rip Colt. The parting was so amicable that Colt mailed Target's first brochure.

So powerful are Lou Thomas' leather and western images that his pictures still appear regularly in magazines. Unlike Jim French's wisely guarded copyright to Colt images, most often Lou Thomas' work is not credited either "Lou Thomas" or "Target Studio." Bearophile hint: When a magazine credits a photo as "From the 'Its-Own-Name' Archive," it is virtually stolen, or appropriated by a lazy editor who fails to research ownership. Lou Thomas is worldclass example that every artist's identity so violated is lost to history. Note that even Richard Bulger who founded *Bear* magazine, found his intellectual property "appropriated" against his will by other well-intentioned bears. Click on *Caveat*: The only "gay community" that exists is the one that thinks all gay artists' and gay writers' and gay photographers' work is community property to be used despite copyright, credit, and permission. This year the reader might see a bear image new to the reader that was actually created in 1970-1985 by Lou Thomas/Target. Because so many of the authors in *Bear Book II* write about the personal moment they woke up in mid-Bearstream and discovered "bearness," remember what they're discovering was produced previously by someone else, upstream, working out universal male archetypes in writing, drawing, photography, and video.

CAMERAS: HUNTING BEAR VS WYSIWYG

As *Bear Book II* traces the origins of bears, remember that "gay men" *per se* weren't even invented as an object of desire in anyone's head until about 1972. No man had ever "come out" to bed another gay man until gay media made "gay men" an attractive category. The gay ideal had always been "straight," even straighter than the present when gay personals ads still insist on "seeking straight-acting, straight-appearing." (See David Grieg, Chapter 10: The Epebe Is Dead.) Gay male identity did not burst full-blown out of Stonewall. The first liberated queers had no idea such diverse ways of being gay would come out of the closet. The big surprise was that not every homosexual was a sissy, a drag, or a sweater queen. We all walked around a bit dazed

and confused, asking, *Is that hairy, 6-3, 250-pound, bearded hippie man over there...gay?*

The way fashion designers mimic the streets, gay media aborning reflected the streets of Christopher and Castro. Early gay media was clogged with WYSIWYG gay stereotypes, because the gay media, before *Drummer* went “grassroots,” saw only gay stereotypes of homosexuality and not gay archetypes of homomascularity. The gay stereotype managed to butch itself up to leather, but the leather seemed on some an accessory. The more subtle flavors of homomascularity came out simmering slower in the hot boil of gay lib. Word was out: there were “men’s men” who were gay. But, like bird-watchers, how to spot them? How to get them into magazines? Cameras were the weapons of vice cops. Cameras at the first gay parades were a hot debate. Cameras at the first gay rodeos caused some cowboys to wear an orange patch that meant “No Photos.” The day after the Gay Rodeo, Reno, which I covered as a photographer with reporter Randy Shilts for the Associated Press, newspapers across America published for the first time (August 6, 1979) a first mass-media image introducing a “new” concept to straight American popular culture: The Gay Cowboy. *San Francisco Chronicle*, First Section, page 3, column 1. (The cowboy, who had consented to the photograph, immediately lost his job on a ranch in Wyoming; a second cowboy ended up on the cover of MAN2MAN as well as the cover of the fiction anthology, *Rainbow County*.) Up to the 90’s, cameras were *verboten* in a gay bar.

THE FIRST BEAR CONTEST

Bearstream Note to Les Wright’s Chapter 19, “Bear Contests.” In February, 1987, Palm Drive Video’s Mark Henry and Jack Fritscher shot the first-ever video of the first-ever Bear Contest, hosted by Bear John Muir, and sponsored by Richard Bulger at the Pilsner Inn bar on Church Street near Market. The paranoia about the video camera ran high despite the fact that since ten years before I was the well-known and trusted editor of *Drummer*. No patrons could be photographed. The lights and camera could only be aimed at the stage, and only on the contestants who had agreed beforehand to be taped. It’s a wonder any tangible history of early Bear Culture exists at all. Such attitudes, based on fear of persecution, hampered the emergence of bears, and have caused many digital cubs to think bears were invented in the 90’s when bears finally became camera-ready. (Afterword: No bears were harmed during filming!)

1989 EARTHQUAKE TOPPLES DOMINANT DRUMMER

Also, for years, much like Stewart Holbrook’s charming Chapter 5, “The Beard of Joseph Palmer,” bears had been censored as “undesirable images” by the twinkie/clone media, and as too “oppressively masculine” for the politically-correct “revolutionaries” who took control of the gay male press during the decimation of plague that left empty offices with empty chairs and empty tables. Bear men also hardly helped the photographic advent of Bear Culture by being shyer themselves than a groundhog. It took an earthquake, October 1989, to shoot bears publically in the street. Chris Nelson snapped the group photograph in front of the original Lone Star bar the morning after the Loma Prieta quake. So historically important is the photograph that it is the first photo in *The Bear Cult*.

Of the eleven men standing against the ruins of the Lone Star, three faces are basically hidden or purposely deleted. That’s nearly 30% in 1989 obscuring their faces. On the other hand, eight men boldly give “Bear Face,” with the most assertive, the Black Bear. *Now Loading*: Jason

[HOW TO LEGALLY QUOTE THIS MATERIAL](http://www.JackFritscher.com/Drummer/Research%20Note.html)

www.JackFritscher.com/Drummer/Research%20Note.html

Clark, Chapter 8, “One Black Bear Speaks,” and David Gan, Chapter 9, “An Asian Bear in Minnesota.” On the 2089 centennial of the Loma Prieta earthquake, that Chris Nelson photograph of bears standing in the ruins of the Lone Star will be displayed as an historical artifact. (This from a professional analyst of gay pop culture.) That same earthquake’s damage brought down the San Francisco house of *Drummer*. Publisher Anthony DeBlase put *Drummer* up for sale, and the magazine, quintessentially American, was sold to the Dutch in Amsterdam and lost its American sex appeal that so seduces the world that years before even Tom left Finland for the USA. *Original Fritscher Analysis*: The sudden exit of dominant *Drummer* from the San Francisco magazine scene set the stage for the new-comer rise of Richard Bulger’s *Bear* magazine, started in 1987, and the bear-based publishing empire of Brush Creek Media.

ANTHROPOMORPHS: MEN AS ANIMALS

Lou Thomas’s personal interest in the darker side of leather and fur found expression in his Target take on what had been Colt territory. The Roman Catholic S&M priest, Jim Kane, had introduced me to the hairy Lebanese hunk, Lou Thomas, in 1969, and I played with him regularly in Manhattan until about 1975, but I only modeled for Target once (1970) in a set of black-and-white stills with a 42nd Street/Times Square hustler. I suggested to Lou Thomas themes, which later, as founding San Francisco editor of *Drummer* I was finally able to develop. These Leatherstream themes (eg. cigars) became first articulation of archetypical gay themes that continue to this day, some directly into the Bear Culture. In the early 70’s, at Target I suggested pairings, such as “Tokers and Takers,” which was to be openly gay “Marlboro” men smoking cigarettes as aggressive tops, as well as “Bulls and Bears,” an obvious pairing, I suppose now, because of Wall Street, but I wanted to apply the anthropomorphism to strong masculine role models to balance the anthropomorphism of the guy in the butterfly costume so loved by CNN at Pride parades.

In *The Target Album #3* magazine (1982), Lou Thomas requested and printed a new overt Bearstream story titled, “Dirtiest Blond Contractor in Texas,” which he had illustrated specifically to the text by Etienne. The story featured the hairy bodybuilder god, Kick, who was the primary bear-man of desire in *Some Dance to Remember*, the 1990 novel of gay history, 1970-1982, that *The Atlantic Monthly* reviewed as a “classic,” and critic Michael Bronski called: “A mammoth saga of gay life...the erotic psychology of how gay men (leathermen, musclemen, pornographers) live and love.” *Firsthand*, January 1991. Completed in 1984, *Some Dance to Remember* fought for six years to be published, because the book was not about a sensitive soul coming out politically correct and dying of HIV. Much more satiric, muscular, and bearish than that genre, *Some Dance to Remember* is a fast read with fifteen principal characters and eight story lines. The protagonist is pointedly named after the Ursa Major Bear Constellation, *Orion: Ryan O’Hara*. His first lover is named “Teddy” and in physical description looks like biker-bear David Sparrow. One main theme is what happens to an extremely handsome, extremely hairy, dropdead blond bodybuilder who grooms his fur and grows himself so big, so huge, that he wonders if his human soul can fill so much new manimal flesh. Thumbnail: Go to www.BeefyBoyz.com and click on “Wanna Get BIG?” Link to www.MuscleBear.com and www.MuscleBearz.com.

THE FIRST BEAR ARTISTS: NYC’S A. JAY & DOMINO

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At the dawn of the 70's, the very furry artist A. Jay (Al Shapiro) was art director for *Queen's Quarterly* in New York. A. Jay featured fur in his very popular cartoon strip, "The Adventures of Hairy Chess," which moved from *QQ* when A. Jay moved to San Francisco to start-up art direction on *Drummer* which had also moved to San Francisco, escaping Los Angeles after the Great Slave Auction Raid. The arrests that night at the *Drummer* fund-raiser put LA leather's leading artists, writers, photographers, and players behind LAPD bars. Fred Halsted, whose leather films are in MOMA, quipped in his column in *Drummer*: "That crowded jail cell holding tank looked like LA's hottest leather bar."

Influentially, in the mid-70's, before artists like *Bear* magazine's incredible H. K. Tuttle, the first and original heavy-duty bear artist, Domino, was—like the martyrologist photographer Arthur Tress (*Drummer* #30)—working the piers and streets of New York. Domino drew hundreds of pictures of men now defined as bears doing bear activities wearing bear-associated gear in bear-identified spaces. Domino's context for his ursine men (hunting cabins, manholes, toilets, Latin boxing gyms) is First Defining Look at "Bearspace" as theorized in *Bear Book II* by Alex G. Papadopoulos, Chapter 12. Back then, before "gay space" was commercialized into designer playrooms, Fred Halsted marveled at how easily gay men made do: "A garage with the light on is just a garage. With the light out, it's a fuckspace." *Drummer* #20.

Domino's first Bearstream drawings were completed in 1975. His earliest shows, "Domino: Original Drawings and Prints," were exhibited at Stompers, New York, December 15, 1978, and at the opening of Robert Opel's Fey Wey Gallery, San Francisco, March 25-April 2, 1979. Robert Opel, who was a photographer of nasty bikers, and a writer for *Drummer*, is most famously remembered as the naked man who streaked the 1974 Oscars. He was murdered, July 9, 1979, in his gallery, 1287 Howard Street, in a plot that spun out of the assassination of Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone, but that's a private story not appropriate for *Bear Book II*.

ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE SHOOTS BEARS

Click on Kelly-Kane, Chapter 29, "Discursive Construction of Gay Masculinity."

That March 25, 1979, the opening at Fey Way also exhibited Robert Mapplethorpe and several of his San Francisco photographs of leather and mouth-pissing that later were put on trial in a First Amendment battle about gay culture's freedom of expression. Page through any of Mapplethorpe's beautiful coffee-table photo books as part of any study of the emergence of Bear Culture, because, legend that he himself was, Mapplethorpe found time to formalize a few Bearstream men. Click on *Mapplethorpe: Assault with a Deadly Camera*, whose title is a twisted homage to Christopher Isherwood's I-Am-a-Camera memoirs of decadent Berlin, because the nonfiction book is a memoir not only of Robert Mapplethorpe, but of the wildly decadent times in which we conducted our bicoastal affair.

Historians may note: *Mapplethorpe: Assault* is nonfiction companion volume to the novel, *Some Dance*, which is dedicated to Mapplethorpe. Unlike the present when everyone is taking pictures, writing, and publishing off their desktop, in the 70's, few were doing anything but sex, so it was not easy to fill a magazine off a manual typewriter. Under such circumstances, actually, I wrote and shot virtually twelve whole issues of *Drummer* to fill its pages from October 1977 through December 31, 1979. Particularly, *Drummer* needed covers: hot, real, truthful! I wanted the face on the magazine to reflect not models but the faces of the grassroots readership. For *Drummer* #24, I sketched the posture and cast the model, my bearish NYC S&M pal Elliot

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Siegal, whom Mapplethorpe then shot in New York. So, on *Drummer* #24, I produced Mapplethorpe's first magazine cover, September 1978, the Bearstream icon, "Authentic Biker for Hire." The cover copy over the Mapplethorpe photograph read "Sexstar Richard Locke."

LORD OF THE BEARS

So far, so good. Thinking I'd put my two best lovers together, I scheduled Mapplethorpe to shoot the blond bodybuilder, Jim Enger, who looked like a man's man version of the very bearish young Robert Redford who himself was so hairy of chest and torso he was featured in *Drummer* #1, June 1975, playing the biker-bear title role in *Little Faus and Big Halsey*. Jim Enger, with his CHP moustache, grooming, and physique was the Lord of the Bears. (There is a California Golden Bear Physique Contest at the California State Fair each year.) Jim Enger had grown his golden body fur to its full 1.5 to 2 inch length. What a scene! My two friends. One was a star in front of the camera. The other was a star behind the camera. Papal diplomats never performed better than I that day! The shoot turned out glorious black-and-white as well as color photographs, because the voyeur Mapplethorpe needed the exhibitionist Enger, and vice versa, and therein rose my power as producer to get them beyond personality and into the work.

Jim Enger—when Jim French of Colt, shot him—posed frontal. However, Jim Enger refused to sign a frontal release, even though he had a large national endowment. Enger's vascularity, definition, and sheer muscle-mass looked so good stuffed into a pair of two-ounce nylon posing briefs, who of the judges and audience ever noticed his cocking pushing his full monty toward the footlights? The *demanding* Mapplethorpe, pleased by the full frontal photographs, but ticked a bit by the *commanding* Enger's reluctance to sign a model release before he had seen the actual resultant photographs, soon published a four-color greeting card of Jim Enger's big dick and massive furry blond torso, neck to thighs, *head cut off*. Perfectly spinning, the perfect moment of that Mapplethorpe image of Jim Enger is the First Formal Bear Photograph, 1980, seven years before the first appearance of *Bear* magazine. Robert gave me a number of the large black-and-white photographs and they are perfection.

JIM ENGER, TOM OF FINLAND, DOMINO, & RICHARD LOCKE

When CHP/USMC doppelganger Jim Enger was still the lover of actual LAPD cop, Chuck Romanski (Clint Lockner), Tom of Finland made a drawing based on the two of them together in uniform—so absolutely *iconic* did Tom of Finland judge Romanski and Enger who were the toast of El Lay and the height of the Platonic Ideal during the Gay Renaissance, 1970-1982. Tom of Finland confirmed my written and photographic takes on Enger as the most desired man on Castro. (See *American Men*, page 12, Enger Winning Contest.) So did Domino, who in 1981, in my bedroom in San Francisco, drew Jim Enger in CHP uniform seated smouldering on a portable toilet chair. In that fit, nonfat era, Jim Enger was the First Muscle Bear. In association with *Drummer*, Domino also drew gay porno's First Daddy Bear, Richard Locke, star of the Gage Brothers hirsute blue-collar Super-8 double feature which, featured in the pages of *Drummer*, influenced hugely the emerging homomasculine consciousness. See *Kansas City Trucking Company* and *El Paso Wrecking Company*, which in 2000 begat *Big Bear Trucking Company*. Type in www.ToughCustomers.com: Click on the bears of *The Domino Video Gallery*, 2000.

OLD RELIABLE: BLUE-COLLAR EROS

Early on, Jim Stewart, who had moved out from the Midwest with David Sparrow and me to our 25th Street commune, began shooting his Folsom Photographs documenting “Men South of Market.” I produced his first Leatherstream photographs in *Drummer* #14 (May 1977), *Drummer* #16, and *Drummer* #18. In June, 1975, Jim Stewart introduced me to David Hurles, Old Reliable. A versatile entrepreneur, David Hurles shot a museum’s worth of black-and-white photographs, color transparencies, Super-8 films, and taped audio recordings of backstreet boys working out of the Old Crow hustler bar on Market Street and the Tenderloin. His young, tough-guy cons—way harder than Bob Mizer’s at AMG—were graduates of trailer parks, carnival midways, and juvenile halls of the American South. Gay magazines totally rejected Old Reliable’s work, but I saw genius that I pasted directly into perhaps the best-ever single issue of *Drummer* #21, March 1978. Old Reliable was a hit. Readers ate him up. His photographs in 1977 created more sensation than Mapplethorpe who wasn’t famous until the late 80’s. His outlaw boys scared men into orgasm. “Never invite them,” Old Reliable warned, “into your lovely home.” As a man and an artist, he himself confessed about his tattooed scooter trash and bearded ex-cons, “Terror is my only hardon.”

Old Reliable photographed, and employed for cash money, literally thousands of homeless street people in this order: straight, bi, and gay. He shot men of all types as long as they were tough, had attitude, could smoke cigars, and knew choke holds. Old Reliable’s gift to nascent Bear Culture was that his bearded, hairy men introduced hillbilly blue-collar glamour into the homomascularity of the Bearstream. David Hurles still is Old Reliable. His legend was made, when in 1983, as David said, “The French are coming with a camera crew to interview me about my work.” From *Drummer*, David Hurles’ Old Reliable photos for years filled complete issues of magazines titled *Skin*, *Just Men*, *Inches*, often with my homomascularity stories printed alongside his photographs.

Bearstream Guide: Look for the Bear Roots of images and stories in the diversity of vanilla Gaystream magazines that began appearing in 1981. In the 70’s, photographer Crawford Barton shot the occasional fat hairy hippie man as published in *Drummer* sibling, *The Alternate* #8, January 1979. Leather-Bear-Cigar photographer Greg Day has long featured hypermasculine men including Castro Street shots of his once-upon-time college roommate, Jim Enger. Click on Greg Day’s photographs at www.ManDreams.com. Also, the diversifying photographers, Kristen Bjorn, who appeared in *Bear* as early as the first six issues, and Max Julien of Marcostudio, have for years specialized in importing uncut Latin musclebear images from Brazil.

NAME THE LOVE THAT DARE NOT...

All these Ur-springs of the Bearstream trickled along because in the invention of “gaymen” and “gay culture,” ideas and concepts required the invention of a new vocabulary to describe categories and sub-categories inside the love that so long had dared not speak its name. Writing *Drummer* was an exercise in creating words (vocabulary) to describe what never had been written or even spoken before, but that’s what pioneers do, just as Adam, in the archetypal story of Bible folklore, woke up and found his job was to name everything. Suddenly, in charge of the most original and powerful grassroots magazine in gay history to date, I had to create words and concepts: *homomascularity*, *sensualist* and *mutualist*, *man* as a prefix, “Second

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Coming Out” into fetish, etc. In the same way, Les Wright commissioned the authors in *Bear Book II* to invent words, such as I coined originally for this analytic history: *Bearstream*, *Leatherstream*, *Gaystream*, *Manstream*, the *Ursus Scale*, *Anthro-Morph*, and *morph* as a new category of live bear.

MAGS, BOOKS, & 'ZINES, OH MY!

In the 70's, magazines ruled gay culture. Confer *Bear Book II*, Chapter 27, “Bears in Literature and Culture.” Most publishers of gay books emerged only after HIV, later in the mid-80's, as if suddenly there was time to read more than a magazine. Also, because books carry *gravitas* in American culture, lesbigay historians, themselves writing in the genre “books,” often ignore the vital import of the genre “gay magazines,” as if magisterial books last forever, and a dirty magazine only thirty days. Ironically, gay culture's literary awards fail to even have categories for magazine literary excellence. Sociologically, there is more gay *verite* for the researcher in the features, photos, and personals of gay magazines than in all the gay coming-of-age books in the world. I champion gay magazines because magazines traditionally responded quicker than books to pop-culture mood swings. Long before the first book on bears, there were bears in magazines. Magazines are *radical* in the literal sense of the word *radix*, which means *root*, because magazines show the grass roots of what actual people think and desire. Actually, exactly like the first gay magazines (hand-made, folded, stapled), Personal Pages, homesites on the internet, have become the new gay magazines of grassroots identity and desire: do-it-yourself photo layouts, fantasy fiction, true confession, even banner advertising. Overnight, www.BearStream.com sites and links infinitely outnumbered the dinosaurs of tree-pulp magazines and books. Click on www.HuzBears.com.

By *Drummer* #30, the fourth anniversary issue, I had included a High Concept on the masthead. Because I believe you can make Tinker Bell live, I stretched the *Drummer* concept by subtitling it: “The American Review of Gay Popular Culture.” The importance of *Drummer* in the Gay Renaissance of the 1970's cannot be overestimated. *Drummer*, with no competition, was the Bible of gay culture at the time, with a press run, according to publisher John Embry, in 1979 of 42,000 copies each issue. Consider that the average year-2000 press run of the very successful *Bear* magazine, competing in a crowded bear market, was 20,000+ copies. Most gay books have press runs of 2,000 to 5,000 copies total. Casting about for themes, verbal and visual, I wrote the first article ever on cigars (*Drummer* #22, May 1978) as a gay erotic fetish and then watched cigars come out in gay public spaces where no cigar had gone before. Twinkies ran. Cigars were a way to separate the men from the boys. Cigars have become an accessory of bears. That's how the mix of fetish works. For the sake of Dr. Lawrence Mass, Chapter 1, in that first article on cigars, I defined the difference in tobacco use between a fetish (cool) and a habit (not cool).

SIZE RULES

Click on Laurence Brown, Chapter 2, “Fat Is a Bearish Issue.” In the 1970's the most used gay drug was actually steroids. They were new. They were sexy. Huge bodybuilders like Arnold appeared in *Pumping Iron* (1977). American men, straight and gay, all want to grow bigger. American parents always describe their sons by height and weight, as if being 18, 6-2, and 200 pounds is a way, like money, of keeping score in America! In 1979, a man pumped up at

the gym all week, because come Saturday night without pecs you were dead. First came the oral steroids, then the injectable, which along with speed, suggests that needles, more than sex, killed off the dropdead A-Group. (Bummer!) The lust for body size was so huge that the “pursuit of bigness” is seminal plot line in *Some Dance to Remember*. In fact, the main bear theme, and musclebear theme in the novel is the ordinary gayman’s pursuit of Physical Identity–bigness–which has become homomasculinist signature of bear culture, and masculinist American pop culture of WWF, NFL, and *Sex in the City*’s Mr. Big. In the year-2000 musical play, *The Full Monty*, based on the movie, and written by gay playwright Terrence McNally, the loveable “bear” character, “Dave,” sings in the first act the song, “You Rule My World,” to his tummy. *The Full Monty*, film and musical, is about the physiques of ordinary men who gain self-esteem through feel-good masculine exhibition.

“Dick Size” is absolute: even with a vacuum pump, a man has what he has. Body size is relative along the genetic lines of Sheldon’s somatotyping: ectomorph (lean), endomorph (medium), and every bear’s favorite, mesomorph (just right). Bearophile Note: While a man can’t make his dick bigger, he can make it smaller. Every thirty pounds of fat (not muscle) over normal body weight takes ½ inch off dick.

“Body Size” to contemporary bears is a huge fantasy on the internet where any number of bear-linked websites actually “morph” photographs digitally to add huge shoulders, massive pecs, tiny waists, giant quads, and big guns. (Interestingly, the heads all stay the same size.) Click on Greg’s “Morphs” at www.BeefyBoyz.com. Try to translate the 21st-century shorthand of Size Rules, reminiscent of the arcane symbols in *Physique Pictorial*, that reps a young fireplug of a player making himself available first by email at www.MuscleBear.com: 5-6, 195, 48c, 34w, 18a, 25q, 16c, 18.5n, 14fa. He doesn’t need morphing. He’s a live “morph” like the live “morphs” seen at Bear Gatherings. The Hun is the Leather-Bearstream artist most noted for “morphing” men in his hand-drawings into huge lumberjacks and musclebears long before the e-morphs. See Hun books and *Hun Video Gallery: Rainy Night in Georgia*. Early on, Britain’s Bill Ward, cartoonist for *Drummer*, caught the wave and made his leather bikers increasingly bear, all the way to Full Ursus appearing in *Bear* itself. The LA artist, Jakal, from the early 70’s on always drew his men, especially his handballers, as hairy beasts. REX drew the very polished poster and advertisement for the new Lone Star, the saloon of choice for bears.

BLUE-COLLAR BLUES

Les Wright’s *Bear Book II* dives to the heart of the politically correct controversy about bears who by nature and humanist philosophy are not usually politically correct. Les Wright himself backs out of political infighting at www.BearHistoryProject.com where he writes that ideally bears are *apolitical* and *human, humanist*. Many latter-day saints of the politically correct condemn all words and images of bears and of the 70’s as being authoritarian and oppressive. Not! Those words of the first wave of Gay Liberation were offered as trial balloons trying to invent gay identities. No one got authoritarian until the PC 80s when to justify their jealous politics they failed Logic 101, made the *post-hoc-ergo-propter-hoc* fallacy (what-came-before-this-caused-this), and claimed that 70’s culture caused AIDS. A virus caused AIDS. Not *Drummer*. Not sex. Not the innocent men on the streets of NYC, SF, or LA. After 2000 years of being in the closet, a decade of celebration really doesn’t seem like indulgence! Except maybe to the New Puritans: the politically correct. Intellectually, the lesbigay fundamentalist politically

correct connection of HIV to gay culture is wrong in the same way that Right Wing Republican fundamentalists are wrong about gay culture. Period. Burn me at the fucking stake, but the politically correct are mortal enemies foisting the agenda of failed Marxism/Communism on lesbigays living in a capitalist society that gives everyone a chance. No less a bear and gay culture maven than Richard LaBonté wrote in *The Advocate* #599, February 17, 1992: “Political correctness is an over-the-top attitude any au courant cartoonist is duty-bound to skewer.” *Cartoonist* rhymes with *humanist*.

The politically correct make this “thing” out of “working class” which is a reverse bragging that bears have to think about in fetishizing working-class men, jobs, and gear. Actually, when watching whining politically correct faces on PBS claiming they themselves are working class (“because they collect unemployment”), I think: “Who doesn’t work? Who isn’t working class?” Many people have this ironic stereotype that gay men don’t work at the same time that gay men’s archetypes of desire are of workmen. What if a man gets a job doing his fetish? Paul Garrior, Colt model, was a real lineman. While there are “professional homosexuals,” it nevertheless remains difficult to get a job as a bear.

A uniform bear could be an actual cop, deputy, or at least security guard, like the famous redhead Bob Cato, who trained many a San Francisco bear out of the Pacific Drill Patrol. Once, leaving my leatherbear ranch, Cato drove his van straight into a taxi carrying actresses Mary Martin and Janet Gaynor, killing Gaynor’s press agent. For crashing into Peter Pan (Mary Martin) and Janet Gaynor, winner of the first Oscar ever for Best Actress, Cato, the cop groupie, did his time in the penitentiary, living the other side of his wild desire for cops, in cages with biker bears and convicts and big beefy guards. Be careful what you jerk off to, you may get it. (An orgasm is a wish your heart makes.) Cato wins the award for most living his bear fantasies in the history of bear culture, and I got to live it too, visiting him Sundays at the prison which for all gay fantasy is no place anyone should ever want to go.

BEAR SPACE TRAINING CENTER

In terms of Bear Space, Cato’s kind of bearish cop-prisoner fantasy is best played out at the Academy Training Center outside Atlanta where bodyguards will imprison you in a private prison with real cops and real pro-wrestlers as guards who will turn bear-baiting inside out through bondage, breath control, cigars, and “no-sex” that is so totally erotic you can jerk off to it for years. See *Drummer* #145, December 1990, “The Academy: Incarceration for Pleasure.” In 1989, I coached Chip Weichelt into editing his first videos out of his cells’ security cameras which I named at the time a whole new genre. That style finally arrived overground as the netcam genre on the internet. In fact, the Training Center’s first video feature, I titled *Atlanta Knights* and changed the lead cop’s grooming from nonbear to bear, making sure he grew a moustache and showed his torso hair which he had to stop shaving. As a bear, Dave Munroe grew to so popular a star in a non-sexual role, he was hiring himself out in almost full-page *Frontiers* ads as a dominant no-sex bear cop with uniform and gun in LA to gentlemen of appreciation. That raises a couple questions. What’s a live bear model worth in dollars, yen, marks, and pounds? And if you see a terrific bear for hire, why shouldn’t you rent him? The 1990’s porn model, Tom Katt, first appeared shaved clean, and then renewed his career with one of the most marvelous pelts ever seen on screen in *Leather Obsession*, but did that make him a “bear”? On the other hand, Donnie Russo, who shaves what fur he has, seems a “bear” to many.

BEAR DADDY: MAKING A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY

In 1978, impressed with a foreign film titled *In Praise of Older Women*, I made fetish of dealing with the fact that older men in the pages of *Drummer* would reflect the gay population as it grew older. I produced Richard Locke's interview in *Drummer* #24, because as the breakout star of the Gage films, Locke was a personality to hang a concept on. I remember the interview started, "Now that you're all of 37, what's going to happen to you and your film career?" Richard Locke's frame of reference was "bear." He termed *Kansas City Trucking* co-star Fred Halsted a "teddy bear." Locke went on to success after success, moving up to the Russian River, which is sacred bear territory ritualized each year by any number of bear weekends. When Richard Locke wrote his autobiography, he gave me the manuscript to read and I sent him along to Winston Leyland at Gay Sunshine Press. Richard Locke, the people's bear, became an AIDS activist, sometimes videotaped and broadcast on network TV crossing back and forth across the Mexican border loaded with anti-HIV drugs for distribution in San Francisco. That pretty much describes the true heart of a bear.

Just as Dr. Thomas McCann, Chapter 28, "Laid Bear," describes bearish details in fiction in a variety of gay magazines, *Drummer* continued the Whitmanian drumbeat rhythms of American masculinity and homomascularity that would eventually allow bear and beariness to merge as shield emblems and totems of gay masculine-identified homosexuality. (Homomascularity defines the concept of men liking masculine men. The old dystopic term, homoSEXuality, focuses on the act of sex.). As Les Wright says in *Bear Book II*, I wrote in *Drummer*, "A homomascular man has more in common with a straight man than he does with a female-identified/Streisand-identified homosexual." You can do your "mother's act," or you can do your "father's act." Bear identity is a celebration of the best things in masculine identity: archetypes of strength and warmth; not stereotypes of stone-cold violence. Beariness is nothing more or less than actual male bonding. Attempts to categorize beariness are interesting academic exercises, and worthwhile, but bears are really like "How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?"

MAN2MAN SETS TONE FOR BEARISH 1980'S

By the time 1979 turned into 1980, I wanted to exit the decade dropping stereotyped ideas in media of what homosexuals are, and move into the archetypes of how homosexuals see themselves personally. I moved my *Drummer* work into new magazines, specifically, MAN2MAN, which, as it turned out, almost as a masculine manifesto, set the tone of masculinity and bearishness for the 1980s. MAN2MAN was an international quarterly that lasted eight issues from 1980 to 1982. I wrote it. Mark Henry published it. Mark Henry is the blond bear with Buffalo Bill hair I met under the marquee of the Castro Theatre at Harvey Milk's birthday party, Tuesday, May 22, 1979, the night after the White Night Riots set fire to fifteen police cars outside City Hall. We have been married bears since, living in the woods for twenty years, with beards like ZZ Top. MAN2MAN was first mentioned in *Drummer* #30, June 1979, page 18. *In Touch* immediately reviewed MAN2MAN as a major masculine event in gay publishing.

For Father's Day, the June 1981 *In Touch* #56 published the first article on "The Daddy Mystique" in which my column headline reads: "In Praise of Mature Gay Daddy Bears. Gay men use their sex lives to fill in the blanks of their backgrounds. As the Baby Boom grows older, lots

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of Gay Babies have reached their own maturity. To make a come-on out of necessity, the bar-street concept of Daddy Bear/Baby Bear cruising makes a match on both generational sides of the Daddy Trip.” This June 1981 use of the terms “Daddy Bear” and “Baby Bear,” as well as the psycho-cultural analysis of the phenomenon was a first in mainstream gaystream culture, and a hard sell to the editor, because *In Touch* has a demographic different from MAN2MAN and the Bearstream.

But it was a lonely time: *Drummer* in 1980 dropped into a six-year coma, repeating themes from my issues 19-33. (In October, 1986, new publisher, Anthony DeBlase resurrected *Drummer* with issue 100, two months before the debut of *Bear* magazine.) Mark Hemry and I were like monks illuminating manuscripts. MAN2MAN was created on an electric typewriter on a kitchen table in the last two years before computers and video. Physically, cut-and-paste production was an enormous labor in addition to the writing and design. Magazine distributors refused to handle MAN2MAN, not because of content or pix, but because, get this, it was the wrong size to fit the mag racks in book stores. Distribution of MAN2MAN was very grass roots: subscriptions by mail, and distribution in major cities by friends and fans who sweet-talked local bookstores into racking the hand-sized 'zine as a favor. The rest is history.

To this day, as an on-going homage to *Bear* magazine's primal roots in MAN2MAN, the personals in *Bear* magazine are named “Man-to-Man Personals,” continuing the rhetoric written in MAN2MAN's “Manimals.” Brush Creek Media's other magazine, *Leatherman*, acknowledged on the masthead of *Leatherman* #2 (June, 1994) that its title came from the novel *Some Dance to Remember*. So, seven years before *Bear* magazine, and six years before *Drummer* revived, “MAN2MAN: The Journal of Homomascuine Popular Culture” was a cult hit. The cover of the premiere issue of MAN2MAN featured the hairy torso of Jim Enger—plus his head, with CHP blond moustache. That first issue also coined the anthropomorphism of “Manimals” for the classifieds in every issue. A featured erotic article was titled, “Dogmaster.” Animal references to *chicken* and *hawks* and *sexpigs* evolved to the Anthro-Morphs of the Bearstream slowly. MAN2MAN #1 printed the word *mountainman* for the first time, and—perhaps for the first time ever in a classifieds ad—the word *bear* was used as a discrete category all its own on page 9: “BIG BEAR. Male, shaved head, hairy, masculine, open to spontaneous, inventive, experimental scenes where all goes with Sensuality and Mutuality moving beyond labels. Possible threesome with bearded, well-built lover. Bay Area.” MAN2MAN #3 featured a cover shot by Mario Pirami of hairy bear Clay Russell who is still very much a bear pornstar.

THE FIRST MAG COVER TO HEADLINE “BEARS”

For four years, Mark Hemry and I had total custody of bear incubation. One cannot know the Bearstream of bear without considering the impact of MAN2MAN internationally and the *California Action Guide* in San Francisco. Michael Bronski is correct in pinpointing bears beginning in San Francisco. In fact, in the BEAR VS. BEAR Copyright War of 1987, when bears started fighting other bears over the word *bear* as a trademark, I was called upon to point out that as founding editor of the *California Action Guide*, I went on record as the first editor/writer to spit out in print the actual word *bear*, as a category name on a gay magazine cover. Go to www.Advocate.com and click on *The Advocate* #596, February 17, 1992.

WAKE-UP CALL: THE BIRTH OF BEAR RHETORIC

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Five years before the first issue of *Bear* magazine, the first magazine cover using the word “Bear” was the November 1982, *California Action Guide*: “BEARS: HAIR FETISH RANCH”! The High Concept of Bear headlines appeared on that newspaper, sized the same as the *Bay-Area Reporter*, over a cover photo of film director Wakefield Poole’s hairy model Roger. On the same cover, another High Concept headline read: “BEYOND GAY: HOMOMASCULINITY FOR THE 80’S!” My lead cover feature article was titled “Ambushed in Manbush: Hair Fetish Confidential, ‘Hair-Balling!’”

This November 1982 *California Action Guide* article is to bears and Bearstream development the clarion equivalent of what the June 26, 1964, *Life* magazine article was to leathermen. The pioneering column lines read exactly in bold capitals: “HAIRY BEARS AND BEAR-CHASERS: HUNTING IN THE TRUE HOMOMASCULINE PRESS.”

As a gay pop culturist, I wanted to alert readers by promoting “The Hirsute Club” also known as the “Hair Club” created by Daly City Bob, age 28, who sold his early Bearstream business to my friend, Veet Manu (a Sanscrit name he took in India meaning “Beyond Mind). SoMa leatherman/biker Veet Manu published *The Hirsute Stud Ranch Newsletter*, whose tag line was “The Club for Hairy Men Who Love Hairy Men.” In a personal letter, dated November 10, 1982, Veet Manu wrote to me: “I’m still operating in the red, but I have big plans and want to see the club really expand...So many hunky guys belong. I think you’re right about throwing big open parties...to recruit new blood.” In a personal letter, dated May 23, 1983, Veet Manu wrote: “The first Hirsute J/O parties begin this summer. Thanks for help with graphics and promotion.”

To publicize those parties, by summer 1983, in the *California Action Guide*, I published six photographs featuring Ledermeister, two leatherbears from Target, and my “moustache” shot of the Pacific Drill Patrol’s ultimate bear, the Sacramento cop, Clay Stacey. The three highly-refined, beautiful drawings were by the Hirsute Club’s artist “KA.” The Hirsute Club’s photographer and pencil artist was Joe Lembo with whom Palm Drive Video shared a very hairy model, Chuck Longone, in the video, *A Man’s Man: See Dick Cum*, with John Muir. The *Hirsute* “personals ads” use the same rhetoric written in all “bear personals” to date: *bear, bear-gorilla, mountainman*, etc. The *California Action Guide* article teaser, “Ambushed in Manbush” pun, was homage to the hippie-bear Ambush bar, whose owner, the Full Ursus David Delay appeared in the Palm Drive video, *Daddy’s Beerbelly in Bondage*, under the screen name of “Sam Bush.”

My article was very progressive in its opening endorsement: “This *Hirsute Newsletter* of fair-haired boys and dark, furry men is a fetish idea whose time has come.” The classifieds in that same issue of the *California Action Guide* carried the bold ad: “HAIRY BEARS WANTED FOR JO POSING. I’m good-looking, hot, horny, and VERY INTO MEN who dig their FUR and want to share it.” A Bear Demographic First: Nearly 20 “bears ISO bears” personals ad appeared in that 1983 article! Bearophile News Flash: Previously, on the cover of the September 1982 *California Action Guide*, I featured a special bear photograph of the hairy Hulk Hogan who was so brand new he had not yet shaved off his thick curling pelt of dark-blond chest and belly fur. Woof! Inside, with Hulk’s photos appeared another photographic study of facial hair: twenty-four photographs of cowboys with moustaches. To study how the gay male image was changing toward bearish homomascularity, and how the early classified personals led to Chapter 17, “The Bear Mailing List: Les Wright Interviews Henry Mensch,” see “Those Dirty Classifieds!” in *Just Men*, Vol. 3 #1, January 1984.

MAN2MAN, the *California Action Guide*, and the *Hirsute Club Newsletter* all happened in 1979/80 through 1983, and crashed with the plague, four years before *Bear* magazine rode to

the rescue of the Bearstream in 1987. This is not to piss on territory, but is to give a time line from both witness and causality. This historicity is one of the reasons publisher Anthony F. DeBlase, after he resurrected *Drummer*, asked me in the summer of 1988 to “anchor” the first leather history column in *Drummer* titled, “Rear-View Mirror.” Click on *Drummer* #125, February 1989, page 82. Additionally, in the creation of bears, Palm Drive Video, coming up in 1982 with the tag line, “Masculine Videos for Men Who Like Men Masculine,” was shooting hairy, bearish cowboys at the Cowboy Poetry Festival in Elko, Wyoming, in documentaries titled, *Cowboy Beards and Moustaches* (1986).

BEAR BOOK II THEORY: SHOW YOUR FACES

In November 1982, in the early rush of the Bearstream, the handsomely upholstered and moustached Tom Selleck tangled with “Bear Art” in the pages of the *National Enquirer*. Selleck was the very popular star of *Magnum P.I.*, a TV series that was watched to watch bear/beefcake Selleck—not plot. According to the *Enquirer*, Selleck filed an \$8 million lawsuit against artist Timothy Anderson whose obviously come-hither “bear” drawing of Selleck had been published as a poster which the straight-laced actor rightly found too titillating: shirt open to below hairy navel, one shoulder exposed with hairy pecs and furry abdominals, all topped by that big famous moustache, that hair, those eyes, the lips that sound out that endearing voice that ultimately played comedy so well in the Paul Rudnick film *In and Out*. Selleck illustrates the quandary some gorgeous straight men must deal with: gay sex appeal, bear sex appeal. He has all the secondary male sex characteristics that cause throbs to throb. In my treasure trove of hot stuff, I have a copy of the forbidden poster by Timothy Anderson whose work, interestingly, seems identifiable as a well-known bear artist.

Quintessential bear point: bearness is less about the genital sex act and more about the celebration of secondary male sex characteristics on a social level that leads to sex. My career as a photographer has been devoted to shooting beef, bulls, and bears, because these are the “Anthro-Morphs” that most resemble mature masculinity and assert positive body types like those grassroots bears exposing their bodies and faces at internet sites like www.MuscleBears.com, www.MuscleBearz.com, www.BeefyBoyz.com, and all the Bear Ring links. The world was not always so liberated.

In 1978, in *Drummer*, I invented a High Concept page called “Tough Customers” which invited men to send in photos of themselves with their personals ads, because I wanted to create a magazine that reflected the readers to themselves. Even before the advent of gay porn studios flooding all the gay rags with modelles who do not reflect the readers, but potentially make the readers feel bad about themselves, I thought the most powerful force in gay culture would be actually real masculine faces, masculine bodies, masculine trips, because the masculinity factor is what is missing in heterosexual society’s judgment and treatment of homosexuals who are by definition men seeking men. At first, I had to berate the guys who sent in their photos with their heads cut off, or masked. (Remember the “gay thing” about cameras well into gay lib.) The concept was revolutionary: homosexual outlaws printing their own faces in a perversely new kind of “Wanted” poster! (Stuff like that, the ability to “spin everything,” even the word *queer*, is why homophobes absolutely fume at us.)

Historically, the first place ordinary, normal gay men showed their personal faces in print was in *Drummer*. (All the other magazines used models.) This liberation opened up the

possibility of grassroots magazines like *Bear* whose heart and soul has always been the personal faces of actual guys and not modelles. “Personality” is a key quality in the incredible lightness of being bear. As David Bergman in *Bear Book II* makes a good and fair assessment of photographer Tom Bianchi’s “look,” I don’t exclude photography that turns a man into a svelte modelle posing in deep shadows holding a hula hoop, but such “glamour fotos” seem a pretentious parody against male nature. My “Tough Customers” was successful enough to spin out as a magazine in its own right. There was a time, before video and before the internet, when a direct lineage of gay magazines actually propelled Bear Culture. *Physique Pictorial* + *Drummer* + *MAN2MAN* + *California Action Guide* leads directly to *Bear*.

RICHARD BULGER: ENTER, PURSUING A BEAR

Edward Lucie-Smith’s 1991 introduction to the photo book, *The Bear Cult*, begins with *Bear* magazine. By 1995, Lucie-Smith deepened his first sense of Bear Roots in his introduction *The Bear Cult* sequel photo book, *American Men*. As a player and scholar, sometimes I smile, because I try to be neither ironic nor cynical. I read lines in *Bear Book II* like “I began to read Foucault in 1979.” Well, I first tortured Foucault in 1976. Postmodernly, of course. Life is more than unraveling six degrees of separation, but here’s one story line of *Bear* magazine.

In 1987, when marketing genius, Richard Bulger, contacted us, Mark Henry recalls Richard’s first words, “I’m modeling *Bear* on MAN2MAN.” What a complement! MAN2MAN had been off the stands for five years. The MacIntosh computer had arrived empowering small publishing. Richard Bulger’s “revival” was the start of *compadre* days at the salon that floated back and forth from early *Bear* to Palm Drive Video. Richard Bulger was also a legit agent for video actors. Most of the first *Bear* models in his *Live Bear* series were also Palm Drive models who, because Palm Drive also shot much still photography, also began to appear in other magazines, even crossing over to many of the late 80’s and 90’s *Drummer* covers, centerfolds, and photo spreads. The Bearstream began to flow.

Within six months of *Bear*’s 1987 debut, *Drummer* #119, July 1988, with an issue titled in large print, “FETISH FEATURE: BEARS & MOUNTAIN MEN,” displayed Bulger/*Bear* discovery, John Muir, using 17 Palm Drive photographs to illustrate my lead feature article, “How to Hunt Buckskin Leather Mountain Men and Live among the Bears.” Again, we were all friends together. Two years later, June 1990, the cover and centerfold of *Drummer* #140 featured the video bear from *Daddy’s Tools*, shot by Jack Fritscher to cover the lead feature article by Les Wright, “The Sociology of the Modern Bear.”

The premier issue of *Bear* #1 looked exactly like MAN2MAN. The first and only advertiser supporting the new magazine was Palm Drive Video and Fantasy Men phone sex. The cover model and centerfold of the 24-page *Bear* #1 was John Muir, the archetype of bear, titled “Best Bear,” as picked by Richard Bulger and shot by Chris Nelson, with additional photography by David Grant Smith. The three videos advertised, shot immediately before there was a *Bear* magazine, were John Muir/Mike Kloubec in *A Man’s Man*, Chuck Longone in *See Dick Cum*, and Big Bruno in *Big Bruno*.

Richard Bulger, cueing himself off my coinage, *homomascularity*, said in his own words: “I’ve been doing a lot of thinking about the roots of *Bear*—its growth, its visuals, its focus. I didn’t start *Bear* to exclusively be a listing of personals for guys that like hairy/bearded men...that’s not what the original image of *Bear* was. I also didn’t start *Bear* to exclusively be a showcase for

great photos of naked, bearded men....I guess I started *Bear* because there was no media product out there which addresses my sexual needs and interests as a hairy, bearded, masculine guy who likes similar men. There was nothing out there with personality....I don't look like the guys in *GQ*, *Advocate Men*, *Honcho*...I am a man-loving man. There's another side to gay media: the side which *Drummer*, *RFD*...among others capture. You can feel the homomascularity in these publications [MAN2MAN]...where we have seen the promotion and development of sexual icons for a gay culture...: leather, spirituality, metal, fur, sweat, piss, respect for nature. I'm not a faery. I'm not a leatherman. I'm not a fashion follower...Something's happening....My friend Al said, 'Richard, it's the Bear Experience and it's as real as any other movement in gay men's history. You just happen to be documenting it and putting it together at the cutting edge.' The Bear Experience? It's the lifestyle and choices of not buying into the gay media role models, because we have bought the wider cultural identification of maleness." Also, see *Bear*, Vol 2, Issue 6, page 23 as well as page 46 where my satiric piece, "Bear Deteriorata," set out to define "the Bearness of Being Bear" in this issue questioning, "Who or what is a bear?"

As quickly as Richard Bulger conceptualized the 'zine of *Bear*, imitators—also empowered on new computers—flattered his genius in producing their own 'zines like *Husky*, *GRUF*, and *Southern Comfort*. Mentioned earlier, the artist, the Hun, who had been around in the 70's, caught the wave of *Bear* which matured his drawings by giving him the bear archetype. No longer was "bear" suggested. The Hun drew hairy men who actually looked like bears. Fur and cigars ruled at the Hun's Shadynook Prison. The Hun's work exists on page and screen in books and tapes like the *Hun Video Gallery 1* and *2*. Oftentimes gay art looks like the therapy of mental patients, but the Hun paved the way for the gorgeous drawings of artists whose work is legendary in *Bear*: Fran Frisch (no relation), Steve Stafford, Dade Ursus, T. C., Rolando Merida, and Douglas to note a few. Richard Bulger was the best kind of friend: he did real business as opposed to gay business; that is he kept his word, he paid his bills, he treated the first nominated bears as people. His salon reflected his personality: fun, easy-going, productive. Balancing *Bear* with Brahma, Richard Bulger and his partner, Chris Nelson, resuscitated the mid-80's collapsed under the tragedy of AIDS, through the publication of Richard Bulger's *Bear* magazine and photographer Chris Nelson's Brahma Studios. Richard Bulger sold *Bear* magazine in December 1994 to Beardog Hoffman and Joseph Bean.

CHRIS NELSON: FIRST *BEAR* MAG PHOTOGRAPHER

In 1987, Chris Nelson shot the proto-typical archetype of bear, John Muir, whose beard, hair, body, and manly beauty define bear-masculinity in the first solo photograph—after Chris Nelson's own self-photograph—in the diversely cast *The Bear Cult*. The photograph was so perfect that Palm Drive received permission to print it on brochures to cross-promote John Muir's Palm Drive video. Like genius Robert Mapplethorpe who spoke very little, Chris Nelson let his photographs speak volumes. His photography was the first to introduce real range of race and age and look. He took homomascularity, ignored by the gay mainstream, and turned it into the *Manstream* (no "i") that is now known as *Bear*. Without photographs, there would have been no *Bear* magazine.

In 1987, Chris Nelson shot me with my ZZ Top beard and a cigar (*The Bear Cult*, page 87), and Richard Bulger, who often listed me on the masthead as a contributor writing for *Bear*, dropped me in my mountainman gear into one of the first *Bear* centerfolds. Fast forward here over

the fifteen years that Mark Hemry and I spent in summer encampments re-enacting the Indian and mountainman period of 1780-1820 with straight blue-collar men in buckskins, and their hatchet-throwing wives, and all of us living happily in teepees, swimming in the creek, and singing under the moon, so we could bring back the words, photographs, and mountainman culture to gay magazines. (Little things say a lot: Rick Redewill, when he was opening the post-quake new Lone Star, called Palm Drive Video, because he wanted to order the Mason jars with glass handles we featured in our videos from our mountainman rendezvous.) Our aim was to conquer the gay world's heterophobia by showing how much masculine-identified gay men have in common with masculine-identified straight men—as opposed to those two new politically correct breeds I've dubbed, the male lesbian man, and the straight male queen.

Chris Nelson during the shoot worked as smoothly as Mapplethorpe, and with his professional equipment created his own “perfect moment” frame to frame. He worked silently, non-directively, having me move about, or simply “be,” while he climbed up a huge scaffold to shoot down at my reclining body. I remember, when he was directly in front of me, kneeling between my legs, bearing down for a close-up with cigar, he spoke two words, “More smoke.” Like Mapplethorpe, he was also very generous with his work, giving his models large-sized fine-art prints of photographs other than the photographs printed in *The Bear Cult*. The list of models shared between *Bear* and Palm Drive include: John Muir (Mike Kloubec); Sonny Butts, Randy Rann, Jason Steele, Vigilante, Russ Wade, Tex Waco, and Mike Cox.

Interestingly, Chris Nelson discovered the young Jack Radcliffe in 1989, *The Bear Cult*, p.13. Jack Radcliffe remains *Bear* magazine/Brush Creek Media's top icon and box office star, followed by the Palm Drive bear who went to Brush Creek, Tom Howard, who at the millennium was Bear #2 in sales reflecting popular taste. By 1983, and continuing, venues like Palm Drive Video *verite* and subsequently in 1987 *Bear* magazine with its *Live Bear* video line, had become safe-sex substitutes for actual sex, because safe sex was not that easily invented or practiced. All sex was said to be dangerous. The camera for Bulger, Nelson, and Fritscher, as well as for many of the models, was in many ways an erotic continuum that kept sex going through the safety of the lens. Richard Bulger created *Bear* on a desktop MacIntosh, which allowed him facility of production that had not been available to MAN2MAN seven years before. The electronic world had changed. The sexual world had changed. The gay male image had changed.

LES WRIGHT ASKS: DAVID GRANT SMITH?

All around the lifeboat of *Bear* was the titanic wreckage of AIDS and the arrival of the technology of rescue: video and computer. Richard Bulger, with an open-door policy, was in a very cordial sense a friend of the arts and artists as well as models. In his left-bankish studio, which was his home in a remodeled storefront, he displayed many photographs. One was a black-and-white picture of a blond muscular man sitting right-profile behind a military foot-locker trunk. Mark Hemry and I admired the photo so particularly that Richard Bulger arranged to introduce us to the photographer, David Grant Smith, who is rightly of so much interest to Les Wright, because David Grant Smith was a purely homomasculinist photographer, a street hunter, capturing the “genus bear.”

The clock was ticking. David Grant Smith was dying, yet he welcomed the three of us to his tiny apartment ablaze with sunlight so bright I've never forgotten how blinding it was and how I feared the UV might be damaging prints of photographs sitting about. Richard helped guide us

through David's work. Hundreds of photographic prints appeared from drawers and files and closets, all of hot bearish blue-collar men shot beautifully, but no "Blond-Behind-Trunk." In the course of tea and the afternoon, we picked out fifteen black-and-white 5x7 photographs of men displaying the burly new look emerging after the first shock of AIDS. Even shooting guys dropping their pants impromptu in alleyways, David Grant Smith was a genius at casting, at composition, and at lighting mostly with dazzling sunlight. I wanted to telephone Robert Mapplethorpe who with Sam Wagstaff had pronounced male photography collectible and respectable in the 1970's; but in San Francisco, Mapplethorpe's "Manhattanization" raid of the City was unfortunately not remembered kindly by any local photographers, including David Grant Smith.

Finally, Richard Bulger said, "David! The blond-behind-the trunk." David, who had been observantly silent as his work spoke for itself, said, "There's only three prints of that photograph, Richard. I have one. You have one...." He hesitated as if in some great pain of parting. We, open wide as history, looked at him who was dying. What our genuine interest promised moved David to say, "They can have one. No one else. These will be the only three prints." These were the days when madness reigned because of anxiety, suffering, and death. David Grant Smith reached into a large folder and pulled out the "Blond-Behind-Trunk."

We urged him to sign it; he hesitated; then he smiled, still reluctant, and with his weak, shaky hand, wrote his signature as "David Smith" in red ink as we wrote the check as if beauty somehow has a price. One of the fifteen photographs was printed as a sepia of a cowboy sitting in a chair in a fancy old-time brothel, looking down at his rising dick. The photo could have been taken a hundred years before. Those David Grant Smith photographs were so seminal to the genome of bear that several men shot by him later turned up, coincidentally, without our ever seeking them out, in Palm Drive Videos: for instance, Jack Husky, *Nasty Blond Carpenter* video, *American Men*, page 58, opposite John Muir, *A Man's Man* video, "American Bear," *American Men*, page 59. Jack Husky made several videos for Palm Drive before he proved bears die. He was accidentally poisoned by a batch of bad medicine that hit San Francisco one weekend killing him while sleeping over at Bob Cato's house above Castro. So also passed David Grant Smith. In a 1988 personal letter, Richard Bulger wrote: "Dear Jack, Here you are [your photographs] as well as the rest of *Bear* #4. Crazy times. This move upstairs (469 Fillmore)! David died...and orders as well as magazine production seem overwhelming...Need a vacation. I'll talk to you soon...wish to talk longer. Thanks for all your help. XXOO, Richard."

CHICKEN HAWKS ENDANGER BEARS

Someone should write all this down. I can only connect some of the dots. The mainstream gay media tried to stop the emergence of bearish diversity. For instance, in the annals of anti-bear villainy, the hands-down winner as the bear movement struggled to begin, was magazine packager, John W. Rowberry, who was a shazam video critic the minute gay video appeared. Dedicated to chicken, Rowberry refused to give any bear-themed, mature-male video a good review because it wasn't stereotype girlyboy gay. I was longtime friends with John W. Rowberry from his first days as office "boy" at *Drummer*. I told him, "You like 'em so young, if sperm could act, they'd get a good review." Single-handedly, Rowberry resisted the tide of the Bearstream as I arm wrestled him all the way through the pages of *Skin*, *Skinflicks*, *Inches*, and *Uncut*, where he continued to print the bearish homomasculine fiction I wrote for him, at his

request, to fill his mags. I wonder did he read it or only look at the column inches of text between his chickie photographs? Historically, many gay magazines have been controlled by straight men who prefer young blond girls and their transference in managing their packagers figures that gay men coordinately prefer smooth, young blond boys. The concept of bearish men was a joke.

I once handed Rowberry in his office above the fetish-clothes re-sale shop, Worn Out West, on Folsom a set of my photographs of Jack Husky who was so dropdead sexy at the time he couldn't walk down the street without men biting at the cuffs of his jeans. The imperial Rowberry looked at the photos, and said, a line I've never forgotten, "I can't give a good review to a balding, bearded, construction worker with a beer belly." He wouldn't even look at the video, *Nasty Blond Carpenter*, which has gone on to sell thousands of copies to Jack Husky fans. Rowberry equally tried to stiff the very bearish, strutting Police Olympics video series because it was full of "the enemy," real cops, sheriffs, and deputies in documentary features titled, *Cop Wrestling*, *Cop Powerlifting: Bears and Bulls*, *Cop Boxing*, *Cop Tug-of-War*. Gay criticism, gay reviews, gay politics, gay exclusiveness often reduce down to just so much "bitter grapes" because "somebody else was the homecoming king!"

Richard Bulger himself experienced the Full Rowberry who was indignant about what he called "sexually excessive pornography on video." He meant bears "getting down." Richard ignored Rowberry, but Rowberry-bound to more commercial and elitist gaystream video studios-was dead-set on stopping the bear movement's video rise. He loathed the *video verite* of grassroots artists' with personal visions putting diverse and real men on screen. Rowberry's choke-hold on video impeded the ability to do business for Richard Bulger's COA Films, Adam and Company, Altomar Video, SIRCO Video, and Palm Drive Video. Rowberry's passing opened the floodgates for bear videos which support the bear magazines which, because they are print in a video age, cannot support themselves in a culture that views but does not read, valuing an 80-minute "bear" video at \$60, and an 80-page "bear" magazine at \$7.95.

FULL-BODY ROGAINE™

Bear Book II references the diversity of the Bearstream and bear magazine publishing. Curiously, bear publishing is all magazines; there is no particular bear-committed small press publishing bear books. Les Wright and his Bear History Project point up the importance to gay male popular culture of archiving and studying the Bearstream of such grassroots *verite* magazines as *American Bear*, *Daddy*, *American Grizzly*, *GRUF*, *Southern Cumfort*, *German Bear*, as well as the bear stories in *MR (Manifest Reader* which is *Drummer's* successor), *Big AD*, *Girth and Mirth*, *Bulk Male*, *TRASH*, etc. Will the plurality of bears go on forever? What could possibly be "post-Bear"?

This digital millennium time predicts-yeah, yeah, yeah-that soon, all tree-based magazines will exist only on-line, except, of course, for some future young radical boy-cub who decides to go back to the kitchen table, type up his erotic masculine thoughts, fold the pages in half, staple them, and...

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