



alphatribe

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**40 YEARS
INTERNATIONAL MR LEATHER**

The father of all competitions turns 40, a reason to celebrate.

ISSUE 8 - USA

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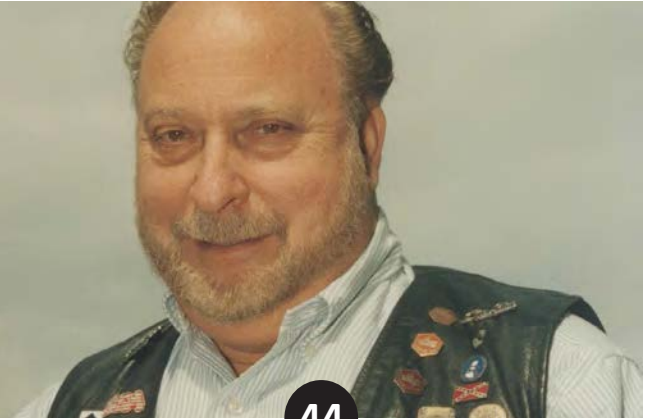
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THE END OF CONDOMS?

First of all, a small apology for not publishing our big Berlin article in this issue as announced. We've moved it forward to the next edition because, faster than we expected, Alphatribe is starting our transatlantic voyage.

Issue 8 will be the first Alphatribe with both European and United States editions. For the first time, Alphatribe US will be available at over 60 gay fetish hotspots across the USA. The move comes as the EU and US fetish communities are coming together more and more. It will be interesting to see the result of this mix in coming years. Alphatribe will be front row to tell you all about it.

Now, back to the title of this edition – the end of condoms? I've been on Grindr for a while

today. Result: seven hook-ups, all requesting bare sex as they are on PrEP. It seems everyone's on PrEP these days. If you're positive, you just mention PrEP. It sounds much better, even a bit trendy.

When you go to a party or club, you're often refused sex when your prospective fuck sees you take out a condom. Times

are changing again it seems. For many, the change must represent a certain sexual liberation. For others it might seem like they are playing with fire. In any case, sex is 'hot' these days, undoubtedly a boost for sex clubs and darkroom bars. Enjoy!

Jeroen



JEROEN VAN LIEVENOOGEN SENIOR EDITOR

Jeroen is publisher of Alphatribe and Cerebral magazine and organises Leather & Fetish Pride Belgium.

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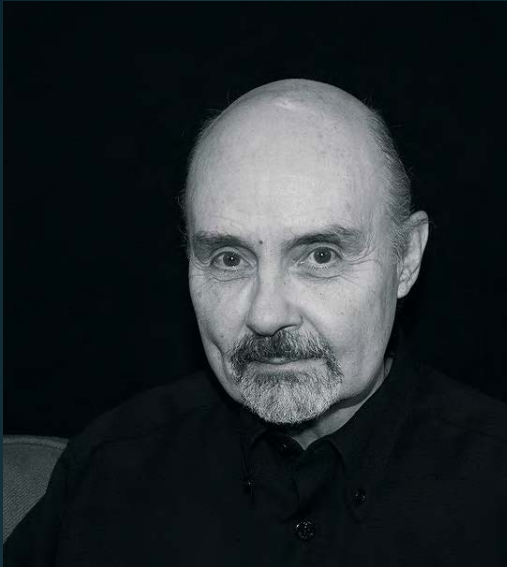
SPILL A DROP FOR LOST BROTHERS! REMEMBERING THE LEGENDARY LARRY TOWNSEND

AUTHOR, "THE LEATHERMAN'S HANDBOOK" 27 OCTOBER 1930 - 29 JULY 2008

By Jack Fritscher

www.DrummerArchives.com

Guest Writer
Jack Fritscher

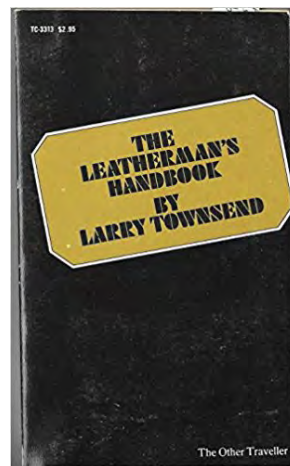


Jack Fritscher - pic by Steven Dansky

One of the core principals of Alphatribe is to document our fantastic fetish history, inform and educate about our incredible fetish forefathers, and the great people whose leather-boot prints we step in every single day.

Jack Fritscher is a massively successful writer whose subject is our fetish origins and past. Alphatribe is honoured to welcome Jack as a regular contributor to our quarterly tome. Jack doesn't write about our history, he was there living through it. We can't think of anyone better to help us appreciate what most of us now take for granted in our fetish lives.

TEN YEARS AGO, Larry Townsend, archetribal author of the 1972 "Leatherman's Handbook," died July 29 at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles. Born Scorpio with Aries rising on October 27, 1930, he was 77 and HIV negative when overcome by pneumonia. Writing for 40 years under the pen name "Larry Townsend," Irvin T. Bernhard, Junior, authored nearly one hundred books. When he was 24 and in the US Air Force, the German Consul General in Los Angeles awarded him a medal for diving into the Rhine River at Bonn to save a 9-year-old boy. During World War II, in America, his father, Bernhard, Senior, had served the FBI as a spy on German Bundest activities in New England. Dissatisfied with straight publishers ripping off royalties, Irvin, Junior, broke free as an indie artist-writer in 1972, changed his name, and started LT Publications, the first leather book publisher in America. His mail-order mission was to sell books to liberate readers trapped in small US towns, and to entertain Europeans eager for American leathersex literature. His radical marketing spread kink liberation with more than a million books sold worldwide.



For Larry Townsend the sky was the limit! At the dawn of Stonewall, he stretched the leather archetribes to grow its self-fashioning identity in his masterwork "The Leatherman's Handbook." That signature guide remained perfect for leather life even after the Titanic 1970s crashed into the iceberg of HIV. New readers of all genders seem always to "get" it. His principles and insights remain timeless in the best way possible. Photograph by and © JackFritscher.com

BOY HERO, SEX TOURIST, HOLLYWOOD LEATHER

Born in New York and growing up as a teenager of Swiss-German extraction in Los Angeles a few houses from Noel Coward and Irene Dunne, he ate cookies with his neighbor Laura Hope Crews who was Aunt Pittypat in "Gone with the Wind." He attended the prestigious Peddie School, came out at the primeval Los Angeles leather bar "Cinema" on Santa Monica Boulevard, and was stationed as Staff Sergeant in charge of NCOIC Operations of Air Intelligence Squadrons for nearly five years with the US Air Force in Germany (1950-1954). Day-tripping through Europe reading sadomasochistic literary classics in cafes, he was a psychologist who became a sex spy collecting "intelligence" on domination and submission for his "Handbook" in hush-hush gay pubs, cruisy alleyways, and piss-wet cottages.

Completing his tour of duty, he entered the mid-1950s underground of the LA scene where he and film star Montgomery Clift shared a lover. That romantic triad ended when Clift spirited the ham in their sandwich away to Cuba for the wild New Year's Eve before Castro marched his revolution into Havana on January 8, 1959. In the 1960s, he began photographing slaves in his dungeon for a scrapbook which, like iconic gay author Samuel Steward, he continued to fill with tricks for most of his life. After his graduation as an industrial psychologist from UCLA (1957), he worked in the private sector and as a probation officer for juveniles with the Forestry Service. He was a lifelong animal lover famously favoring Doberman Pincher dogs, and Abyssinian cats who were the only creatures ever able to top him.

A FATHER OF OUR LEATHER ARCHETRIBE

Larry Townsend began his activism in the LA politics of gay liberation in the early 1960s. "The Leatherman's Handbook," published when he was 42, is a pioneering pop-culture study written by an eyewitness participant. Even though his conclusions were mostly based on the experience and wisdom of Stonewall leathermen, leatherfolk of all genders have for nearly 50 years enjoyed, learned, and adapted to themselves the basic leather tropes and codes of the leather lifestyle from his "Handbook" and its 1983 sequel "Leatherman's Handbook 2." Only perverse conservatives would fault his Handbook for chronicling a classic 1972 point of view and not a latter-day politically-correct perspective. Its principles—as examined in "The Prime of Mr. Larry Townsend" in the 25th Anniversary edition—are timeless. Miffed by the queenstream's



The novelist Larry Townsend was one of the most famous and beloved GLBT authors of the 20th-century. He founded the first dedicated gay book publishing house in America, LT Publications (1973), and began his scrupulously ethical mail-order business to ship books to every reader in every closet in every small town. His last writing was published four weeks before his passing in the leather-history book "Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer." Photograph by and © JackFritscher.com

relentless disinformation about the leatherstream, he resisted the bullies of the politically correct sweater crowd when he wrote this opening paragraph in his "Introduction" to his "Handbook":

"There have been many books printed over the last few years dealing with various aspects of homosexual behavior and lifestyle. In all of these the leatherman is constantly neglected—neglected or ridiculed by the fluff or the 'straight' reporter who wrote the book. In reading these previous efforts...I have been more than a little annoyed. So have many of my fellow leather people."

(<http://www.jackfritscher.com/FeatureArticles/Articles/Lthrmans%20Handbook%20Intro.html>)

As a teenager, three months older than James Dean, he was a 1950s rebel with a cause, seduced by the charisma of Brando in "The Wild One" and by the 1960s leather photography of IML founders Chuck Renslow and Etienne at Kris Studio. As a psychologist, he was a "leather identity" author securing gender legitimacy for leathermen un-closeting their virilized homomascuine selves in a Stonewall culture of gay liberation dominated by effeminacy and drag. Humanist rather than feminist, he was a lifelong Democrat and founding president of the Hollywood Hills Democratic Club. He also served on the board of the Whitman-Radclyffe Foundation when gay Californians first set about erecting a united political and philosophical platform. In 1972, as president of the "Homophile Effort for Legal Protection" which he helped found in 1969 to defend gays entrapped in bars and toilets by the LAPD, he led a group in founding the "H.E.L.P. Newsletter," the direct forebear of "Drummer" magazine founded in LA in 1975.



Larry Townsend and "Mueller," 1995, one of the several "Doberpersons" (Townsend's term) with whom over many years he shared his West Hollywood home—as well as many a hike in Griffith Park. Townsend defined a person's humanity in terms of kindness toward animals. He is survived by his Abyssinian cat Monique, perfectly adopted by Townsend's own family. Photograph by and © JackFritscher.com

Townsend's influence shaped the psychology of "Drummer" because he invented a synergy of marketing, initiation, and identity for 1970s men self-fashioning themselves as a new archtribe of homomascuine men in that first decade of gay lib when women were self-fashioning themselves in feminism. His "Handbook" reported the leather lifestyle and thus created even more emerging kink culture. Pushing beyond the shocking "Kinsey Report," his "Handbook" was the first important analysis of leatherfolk in the twentieth century. It pairs perfectly with William Carney's intense leather-identity novel "The Real Thing" (1968), a book which Townsend admired and cited specifically in his "Handbook."

THE VIEW FROM TOWNSEND'S DUNGEON

As writer, photographer, and sado-master, Larry Townsend was an eyewitness of evolving gay liberation in Los Angeles bars and bike clubs, including the political outfall of the infamous LAPD raid of the "Drummer Charity Slave Auction" at the Mark IV Bath on April 10, 1976, when forty-two leatherfolk were arrested on a trumped-up charge of breaking the 1865 Amendment to the Constitution forbidding "slavery." He himself was not arrested because, feuding with "Drummer" publisher John Embry, he had spent the evening practicing "slavery" in his own photo-studio dungeon under his luxurious ocean-view home high in the hills on Sunset Plaza Drive above West Hollywood where many a bound-and-gagged slave experienced Larry's greatest "hits" while his stereo speakers boomed out big-reel tapes of the ominous, fervent hammer blows of Mahler's "Sixth" as well as his dark terminal "Ninth." Townsend documented his own details of that wild night of arrests, the persecution of the leather community, and the fascist LAPD Police Chief Ed Davis in his "Introduction" to the book Gay San Francisco. (http://jackfritscher.com/PDF/Drummer/GSF-Voll_EyeWit_PDF_Chapters/11_Intro%20Townsend_Mar2008_PWeb3.pdf)



Larry Townsend and Fred Yerkes, his domestic partner of 43 years (pictured in 1992). Behind every author, if that author is lucky, there is a lover-partner who is a producer who keeps the author up and running. Fred Yerkes, who was all that, died suddenly in July 2006. Larry survived him by two years. Privately, they were one of those legendary couples who cannot live one without the other. Photograph by and © JackFritscher.com

LEATHER COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

For more than 30 years, whenever a leather organization or fund-raiser invited him to speak on a panel or to read from his work or to judge a contest,

made it a point of honor to show up to help his hosts succeed. His fame drew fans. He was lionized with many awards from the leather community, including a Forebear Award from Dave Rhodes' "Pantheon of Leather." Readers appreciated that his "Handbook" was authentically "descriptive" of emerging leather behavior, and not a nasty "prescriptive" book of old-guard "Thou Shalt Not" rules.

His last public appearance was in March 2008 at the "Mr. San Diego Leather Appreciation Dinner" hosted by Graylin Thornton, the winner of International Mr. Drummer 1993, whose mission was to introduce leather culture to people of color. He was as much a celebrity in London and Berlin and Manhattan and Chicago as he was in Los Angeles. In San Francisco, late in his life, even after the VCR and the Internet began making books an endangered species, he could pack a kink crowd into A Different Light Bookstore at 18th and Castro. In 1996, the San Francisco audience applauded watching him make his grand entrance into that bookstore with a naked young leather slave collared on one leash, and his Doberman on another. When both slave and dog "sat" at his feet at his stern command, he brought down the house with cheers.

TOWNSEND SUES EVERYBODY

Writing in the "Bay Area Reporter," international leather columnist Mister Marcus noted that the death of his peer was a loss to the "leather universe." Larry Townsend—tall at 6 feet 2 and big at 270 pounds—was a delightfully dominant personality who lived life large as a mercurial twentieth-century writer and photographer whose gusty moods could have been charted by the National Weather Service, and whose roiling Rolodex of friends and frenemies might well be turned into a plot with arias like the operas whose opening nights he and his life-partner Fred Yerkes attended for years. He was my longtime dear friend minus sex. He was a kind man who did not suffer the dogma of fools gladly. As much as he respected women like Jeanne Barney, the straight founding editor of "Drummer," and as much as he would have welcomed today's newest archetribes group "Women of Drummer," he was often upset by the "sexism," he bellowed, "of separatist lesbians ruining leather culture," and by the "theft of his writing." In the way he had dumped exploitative publishers like Greenleaf Classics 35 years before to protect his first copyrights, he died pressing a scandalous lawsuit—chronicled by "Publishers Weekly"—against many LGBT bookstores and one publisher he alleged had violated his copyrights by reprinting his books without authorization, and

without paying royalties.

Over Sunday brunch at the hotel Casa del Mar, on the beach in Santa Monica, the last Sunday of his conscious life before he collapsed, I told him to stop the suit because it would destroy his reputation. For once, he listened, and made a mea-culpa decision, and saved his archetribal leather soul. Apologizing for the fear he created in small bookstore owners, he removed them from his lawsuit because the stores were not part of his problem with the publisher. His lifelong passion was warning LGBT creators not to sign over their copyrights to publishers just to make it into print. Aware of the importance of legal paperwork to the preservation of leather culture, he wrote a codicil to his will in 2007 designating that his manuscripts, correspondence, taped interviews, original photographs, and artwork be archived at John Hay Library at Brown University because it is a private institution that receives no public funds and so cannot be censored the way politicians censored Robert Mapplethorpe in 1989.

MAPPLETHORPE, THE OSCAR STREAKER, AND THE DRUMMER SALON

Along with Robert Mapplethorpe, and Robert Opel who streaked the 1974 Oscars, Townsend was a charter member of the sex, art, and salon around "Drummer." "I'm not a 'Drummer' writer," he wrote of himself, "I'm a novelist whose books were often excerpted in 'Drummer.'" In 1978, Jack Fritscher, the new editor of 'Drummer,' took me to supper and began to convince me over pasta that the San Francisco 'Drummer' of the late 1970s was a different 'Drummer' than the Los Angeles 'Drummer' of 1975. After more months of Jack's friendly persuasion, I came on board because so many of the fans of my books were also 'Drummer' subscribers." His signature "Leather Notebook" column appeared in "Drummer" for twelve years from 1980 to 1992. His column, quickly re-titled "Ask Larry," continued monthly in "Honcho" until the magazine died a week before he did.

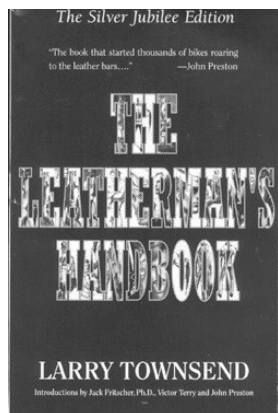
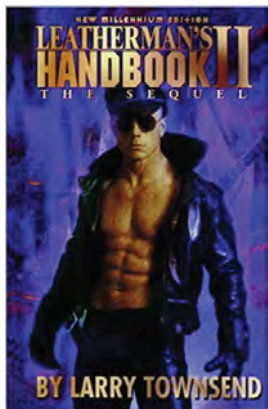
ANDREA BOCELLI: "TIME TO SAY GOODBYE"

Larry Townsend's last novel "TimeMasters" was published April 2008. His last writing was his "Introduction" to the book "Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer - A Memoir of the Sex, Art, and Salon of Drummer Magazine 1975-1999" (June 2008). His lover of 43 years, Fred Yerkes, died two years before him on July 8, 2006, succumbing alone late at night and without warning next to the life-size gold-and-



blue King Tut sarcophagus in their Egyptian-themed screening room. When gay marriage became legal in California on June 16, 2008, six weeks before he died, Larry told me, "I'd like to have someone to marry. Fred and I would have been married. Thank God, though, for the domestic-partner law because it saved me so much trouble when Fred died." Four weeks later he was unconscious in Cedars Sinai ICU. Two weeks later, without regaining consciousness and surrounded by his family, he died, fifteen minutes after his Power of Attorney documents specified he be taken off life support. At his own request, he was cremated with no funeral or memorial service. A suitable keening might be an hour spent reading from one of his novels or from "The Leatherman's Handbook." The man was a giant of our archetribes. I miss him still...

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