

## **DRUMMER FEATURE ARTICLE**

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# **REMEMBRANCE OF SLEAZE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE Alternatives to the Queer Theory of Vanillarinas by Jack Fritscher**

- This entire feature article "... " is also available in Acrobat pdf.
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### **AUTHOR'S HISTORICAL CONTEXT INTRODUCTION**



The feature article was written in March, 1990,  
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# **REMEMBRANCE OF SLEAZE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE Alternatives to the Queer Theory of Vanillarinas by Jack Fritscher**

*Editorial by Fledermaus [Anthony F. DeBlase, Publisher]*

*When Jack Fritscher suggested we do an issue on "Remembrance of Sleaze Past," I had the same trepidations I'd felt when planning the spirituality-themed issue (#136), but for obviously different reasons. First, there's the word itself: Sleaze. Like kinky, like pervert, like SM, it has a connotation of the bad, the disreputable, the objectionable, not only to*

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*“vanilla” society, but to many Drummer readers as well. But, like these words, sleaze also has an allure, an attraction, even an obsession.*

*Then there was the word past. Both Fritscher and I have strong interest in recording the history of our community and of the individuals within it. And the free-wheeling lifestyles of the 70's, together with the institutions that facilitated them, are definitely important to document.*

*As the ideas grew and developed, we planned much more than would fit into one issue of Drummer. The West Coast institution, the Catacombs, is covered in this issue. A similar piece on the East Coast variant, the Mine Shaft, is in the works.[Fritscher did the definitive videotaped interview with Wally Wallace, founding manager of the Mine Shaft.] And the American Heartland will not be left out, either. But, just as Fritscher's theme-setting article evolved into more than a look at the past, so did the rest of this issue.*


*Just as “Safe Sex” became the watchword for the 80's, perhaps “Safe Sleaze” will join it as we celebrate our diversity in the 90's. Sleaze, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. As with SM, I believe that an individual defines it primarily on the basis of his acceptance of the concept. Two men can equally love licking sweaty armpits. One considers it sleaze because he likes the concept of sleaze; the other does not consider it sleaze because he does not like the concept. To the second pit-licker, sleaze is what others do. Then, of course, there are those who enjoy pseudo-sleaze. That is not a put-down. It is possible to play with sleaze just as it is possible to play with slavery, interrogation, torture, and other aspects of (another of those words) kink.*

*And while we can simultaneously regret and fondly remember the days of uninhibited sex in all its flavors, we can also continue to enjoy those variations, in nearly the same range, as long as we keep our wits about us. —Anthony F. DeBlase*

Jack Fritscher looks at our sleazy past,  
checks out the present,  
and imagines where we're going.

OUR CHANGING SEX-STYLES HAVE NO MORE MEMORY than the remembrance we give them. Raunch artist Rex is to drawing what Robert Mapplethorpe is to photography. Both epitomize the sleaze slice of the SM leather pie. Both tour through sleaze. Mapplethorpe takes the Concorde. Rex takes the bus. Each, in his rich style, exemplifies the High Art of Sleazy Nights. The rest of us guys, when we were the way we were, wallowed in sleaze through bars, baths, truck stops, and Personal Classifieds.

### NY ITALIAN RAUNCHBAG

Intense, hot, 34, 5-10, 152, 8 inches uncut. Hairy chest, shoulders, back, and butt. Looking for same/similar jock-sniffer into sleaze: sweat, butt holes, rank armpits, spit, snot, puke, licking, sniffing, moustache-chewing, nipple play and J/O, leather, WS, nasty talk. Prefer outdoor scenes with Mutualist Man who prefers natural smells, tastes, and textures of hot manflesh in leather & rubber. Sloppy kisses. Sick talk. Sweaty feet/socks. NYC. 212-555-SLEZ  212-555-SLEZ.”

—Classified Personals Ad, 1978

The Big Kick in becoming a grownup man always has been putting an end to what we were all raised to be: the best little boys in the whole wide world. Shoot! Why shouldn't babies grow up to be "cowboys," leathermen, and fetishists performing High Wire acts center ring without nets? Why buy into "The Peter-Pan Syndrome" when you can become John Rechy's outlaw Captain Hook?

"DON'T LOOK!" Daddy/Mommy said, censoring our boyhood vision, but you *had* to look. Absolutely! All the stuff that hardens our dicks as adult men is the very stuff our parents pointed out as *trash* (usually white, hot, and tattooed), or as *dirty* (body odors, filthy jeans, sweaty hair), or as *dangerous* (going home with strangers, riding motorcycles, inserting things that "hurt,") or as *private* (pissing, dumping, spitting, picking your teeth, and enemas).

Our own Ozzie and Harriets were, appropriately for them, as straight Breeders, *bourgeois*. The discreet charm of their bourgeoisie was that they, ironically, were the ones to point out that the local drugstore had men's adventure mags with Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS, tying up handsome US servicemen on the cover, right next to athletic little mags like *Tomorrow's Man* where muscular young White Trash posed for "artists" wearing no more than a codpiece drawn in with ink over their nakedness. Parents are doomed to point out to their little perverts the very things their little perverts are looking for. Are we just bio/logical expression of their repression, or whu-a-a-t!

#### TOUGH GUYS: ANOTHER ROADSIDE ATTRACTION

Like baseball legend Pete Rose, the groin-groping baseball hero blackballed for gambling, a man can remain the All-American Boy only so long, unless you attend lots of gay-boy-toy theme parties, Lacoste-umed like Pat Boone. When you leave home, and hit the road, jack, on your own, your Family "DON'T-LOOKS" point the way down the Yellow Brick Detour to the lawless firm of Trash, Sleaze, and Raunch.

A male adventurer, coming from a DON'T-LOOK background tends to identify with those men pointed out to him, earlier in life, as The Aggressors: TOUGH GUYS. So your life changes, on the road. To survive, and to attract aggressors, because "like usually seeks like" the same way *opposites attract* (Huh?), you become more like the lowlife you were warned about.

In fact, you become the man who terrified your Ozzie and your Harriet.

You are a baaaad boy!

Tough good ol' boys, bikers, and blue-collar bears are some of the many masculine variants that have become Cult Lifestyles to express manhood in the Leather culture of the USA. Rites of Passage are often problematic. Our American rituals proclaiming, right or wrong, a boy's manhood in this country are set in the collective national consciousness. Holden Caulfield knew that to be a man he had to have sex with black whore. Other peculiar turns include driving fast, drinking, joining the military, smoking, drugs, and getting busted. One might wonder why a boy's innocence can only be lost through being "bad."

"Being Bad" says something about peer-pressure rebellion in a fundamentalist society. Statistics show that almost 70% of American males are arrested at least once in their lives. No wonder Republicans have made a growth industry out of new jails and prisons. Republicans don't like low-class sleaze, because sleaze gives the finger to their white-bread bourgeois values.

So what can a sexual non-conformist do? First, he reacts. Then he acts. He takes his personal life with his individual rights into his hands and uses it to express his wild, uncivilized self, trying to get in touch with his animal nature stolen from him by those who want from him nothing more than slavish obedience to their narrow standards of behavior.

John Rechy was right. Homosexuals, no matter how politically visible, have always been, and will probably always be, sexual outlaws. The incredible lightness of being gay, by its very nature, makes our vision a parallax view. We've been taught the straight angle on life, and we get it. But our off-center sexuality also shows us an alternative, much like Blacks understand white culture that has been crammed down their throats and yet continue, from their parallax view of race, to sing the blues and demand their right to be themselves.

So, like Paul Simon, we leave "our little towns and all the crap we learned in high school." Like all immigrants, we cluster for strength and identity in groups in cities. For the truly perversatile adventurer, eager to experience all the DON'T-LOOKS and the DO'S and DON'T'S (like "Don't you ever let me catching you tying Tommy up again or I'll spank your butt!"), all roads lead to Rome, New York, San Francisco, LA, Berlin...

Big Cities, where the Prodigal Son always goes, are the place where, when you go there, you get to become yourself.

#### I WANNA BE DIRTY! 70'S CREATURE OF THE NIGHT

Ozzie and Harriet had two other kids besides David and Ricky. These strange two were kept in the Nelsons' closet. Their names are Brad and Janet. Like Ricky, who got burned to death in an airplane one New Year's eve because somebody was allegedly free-basing while in flight, Brad and Janet made a media sensation. In the classic raunch film, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, when the All-American Brad and Janet finally bite Eden's unwashed apple, they find it deliciously dirty. Janet sings the Ultimate Aria of a Clean-KVeen who's just discovered that Vanilla Sex is boring and lacks the sleaze that pleases. She begs for lessons in Raunch!

That naughty Janet, played by a very young Susan Sarandon, later photographed by Mapplethorpe, sings a very 70's song about kissing, heavy petting, seat wetting, tasting blood, and wanting more. She lacks resistance, and wants to be touched ["Toucha, toucha, touch me!"], to be dirty, to be thrilled, chilled, and fulfilled. She want to be with, and become, the 70's Creature of the Night.

Even Broadway's Phantom of the Opera, the 90's Ultimate Creature of the Night, seduces his lady with the romantic raunch of the dark, rebellious side of human nature that no civilization, even fascist/fundamentalist, can control: "The Music of the Night!"

Remember Marilyn Chambers? She was the squeaky-clean blonde model for Ivory Snow soap. She created a national scandal when, bored with her image, she got "dirty" starring in a dozen adult films and appearing, so nice-and-nasty, live in the Mitchell Brothers Theaters sex shows.

Because, some nights, gay bars are full of phoney Bradnjanets, a Raunchman, cruising for some dirty dancing, can hardly handle vanilla conversation about opera when all he wants is to be sleazy, sniffing out male-body raunch. What the hay do Bradnjanet know about bouquets of sweat; toejam; piss in its endless variety; spit; lugers, both white and green; snot; sweet earwax; shit; puke; or our very breath, often nasty smelling from sweet cigars—our bodies always fulsome with the masculine sensual by-products of our

continuing life?

How's a guy supposed to express himself in a consumer-crazed society? There's no such thing as "No Sweat"! Our bodies keep producing juices. Our middle-class society denies those juices. Our raunchy heads say, "Stop and smell the...." We're talking a collision of commercial and individual societal values here.

Bradjanet's main task in life becomes Arrid Deodorant denial of what human excreta represent: that, in fact, as far as human *nature* (not the societal *norm*) is concerned: we're nothing if not bodies. Remember how nature intruded on society when somebody farted in church and everyone pretended not to notice nature?

Nature's value's are bodily values.

Societal values are Attitude values. Though they may aspire to the loftiest flights, they are doomed, literally and metaphorically, by bodily functions and needs, and are, in fact, impossible without sweat and sex. Lofty lifestyles need grounding in natural body functions.

After the always brilliant Episcopal Bishop John Spong ordained the gay man, Robert Williams, a priest, in December 1989, Williams put a spin on holiness and sexuality that surprised the bishop. As reported in *Newsweek*, February 12, 1990, when a priest asked Father Williams if "he thought Mother Teresa would be better off taking a lesbian lover, Williams testily replied: 'If you're asking me do I think Mother Teresa ought to get laid, my answer is *yes*.'"

Bradjanet, Quaylenbush, the Widow O, The Donald and his once-upon-a Ivana all do The Body Thing. Birds do it. Bees do it. Even Rothschilds do it. John Berendt in *The Quiet Rich* reports the historic episode at the Rothschild bank in Paris in the 1830's when a servant, carrying the Baron's chamber pot down the corridor approached a stockbroker walking the opposite direction. What else? The stockbroker deferentially doffed his hat and bowed to the passing pot. (Don't complain. Read Freud. And *The Last Taboo* review in *Drummer* 27, February, 1979.)

With mouthwash, flavored toothpaste, douches, deodorants, maxipads, and celebrity designer fragrances, American TV commercials make bucks off Raunch-phobia, because, like Roseanne's sit-com earthiness, Raunch represents the nonconforming bodily functions that spell social rejection, decay, and death. Abby Hoffman said, "The only thing TV tells us is that we stink."

*Shit happens!*

That's the best Zen bumper sticker ever written.

So get into what you can't get out of. Nature, like the demand for personal freedom, always brings down the polite, proud, and political to a human level no matter what their airy Attitude. Even at the wide-open UC Berkeley—before all its goddam "political correctness"! During the 60's and 70's, Berkeley's gym and library toilets were Spas of Sleaze with Olympics-bound jocks and communist intellectuals. If San Francisco men, bored with sex in Mecca, wanted a change, they headed for the campus of UC Berkeley, straight to the toilets in the English department, the library, the basement of the Student Union, and—hottest of all, the university gym and swimming pool toilets and maze of showers to meet free-wheeling under-grads, and professors, walking on the wild side.

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“Security” excuses and video cameras have ended this free-choice masculine-sex interchange. (As anonymous 24/7 sex has been destroyed, American men’s anxiety and stress levels have risen in direct proportion.) *Check this out!* To determine levels of homophobia concerning men’s restrooms, look for how postmodern men’s rooms doors are designed to be in plain view of everyone, and how the interiors no longer have double doors to bang through with warnings, or corners, or alcoves for assignations. Gone is the love that once was divine! No wonder young gay men think veteran gay men who lived through the 60’s and 70’s are telling fish stories about the way sex once was.

When we talk about Raunch, verbally possible even within limitations after a decade of plague, we mean a sex-encounter with a normally healthy man’s excressences of animal essence. When a person dares to get raunchy, and express his defiant individuality, is he spitting in the face of his own mortality? Some say so. They say he’s a risk-taker who’s become part of the experiment of how viruses can be transmitted. Even so, and this is a matter of personal-social conscience, such a physical tossing down the gauntlet might be, for the individualist celebrant, the greatest of all cosmic adventures.

We honor astronauts and other dare-devils who function, with the greatest care for the least risk, and spit in the face of death.

If the 90’s are anything, the 90’s are *The Decade of Choice*. Informed choice. On every issue: abortion, AIDS, unsafe sex, flag burning, smoking, adult erotica, and everything else you can see “Tomorrow on Geraldo!”

One sure antidote to the commercial American culture that denies self to the self: a kiss on the hand may be quite continental, but a good sniff on an armpit can slam-dunk a man back to the center of his own human nature.

Maybe it’s Zen and the Art of Sensual Maintenance.

Maybe it’s a man has to do what a man has to do.

## BIKER AGONISTES

An uncut tattooed dirty biker, muscled from labor and gym, probably while in prison, is the American folk symbol of the heroically free individual. (That’s why unliberated Bradnjanets fear and hate him. That’s why Ron and Nancy Reagan in the White House consult astrologers and read the entrails of small dead animals.) This guy—look in the mirror, if you’re really a Tough Customer—rides wild. He rides free. He is off the norm. His raunch is the spoor of a manimal pitted against the body-function censorship of conformity. He just ain’t nice.

The individual, after all, is the most oppressed minority in the world. Did you notice during the Republican 80’s the emergence of Fundamentalist Gays, who like their Fundamentalist Religionist brothers, can quote chapter and verse how you as a leather individual are not, ugh, part of the “politically correct” community? Talk about Sex Police! Hey, Big Brother cross-dresses and becomes Big Sister. (I never bowed to the patriarchy as a boy, and I ain’t gonna bow to the matriarchy as a man; but I will kneel for muscle and dick.) A fundamentalist is a fundamentalist: left, right, religious, or lesbigay.

What in a black-leather biker is it that scares the hell out of conformists who conform because they suffer fear of freedom, fear of personal choice? Is it the hot stink of his fearlessness? What in a 90’s Warrior-on-Two-Wheels, with Fat Bob between his legs, whets deeper appetites of men for men? Is it the hot raunch of his greasy crotch, open to the wind, saying, “Eat it!”

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It's a free choice one makes between quality of life and quantity of life.

How may one explain the 1990 boxing craze sweeping yuppie Suits who go to sleazy Third-World gyms to punch and be punched *mano-a-mano* literally the way they throw corporate designer-punches in their careers up in glass towers?

Deep down, Bradnjanet know, you know, everyone knows, they wanna be dirty! At least once in awhile: The California Mud Pillow Fight Championships are in their 28th year. People like what they need, and they go for it, until that "proper" streak of Vanilla rears up and tries to make a man, sometimes, feel guilty about being raunchy.

"We got nothin' to be guilty of," Barbra sang.

#### IT CAME FROM BENEATH VANILLA SEX

So what's it to *Entrechat* Vanillarinas if you are a depraved man-hunter scouting rednecks, bikers, cops and cons for raunch, piss, spit, snot, and all the gross stuff that makes pre-teens wet their pants with summer-camp glee? Who can't remember the American folk song of children screaming: "Great big gobs of greasy, grimey gopher guts"? So what if you're a hot manimal smelling and licking funky bodies, sweaty underarms, feet, unwashed asshole, and a snot-locker or two? So what if you're into greasy Levi's, cheesy uncut cocks, sweaty jocks, and eyeball-licking *ala* Mapplethorpe?

So what if you want a beer-gut motherfucker, smoking a big cigar in a toilet, to fuck your face with his horny, arrogant tool while he swats your shoulder with his rolled-up sex-magazine? (Would you rather be thumped by a Bible? In the perverse world, even that can be arranged!)

So what? So far so good. Maybe you're trying to bite life. At least, you're not into the passive S&M of "Stand and Model." Because life-risky now-was always risky, you've got sex with, maybe, existential, free-choice style, as long as you've got a hardon and the taste of raunch in your mouth. Perhaps risk is madness. But life is *alive* with the willing assumption of risk.

"Without madness," Zorba said, "a man is nothing." In the 70's, at that time, there was a wonderful, liberating madness upon us, an extraordinary madness, the kind John Fowles wrote of in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*: "There was a madness on her at that time."

Raunch is a gay man's divine madness and divine decadence. Exercising the controlled madness of a man making informed free choices, you may can act out some of your inner drives if you're lucky enough to find the right guy.

The right guy at the right time is at the heart of your free choice, bubba. Of course, you shouldn't fall victim to the real temptation of old-style sleaze that is now best left to fantasy masturbation. (No coprophagia; no anal; no oral...uhhhh!) In short, boys and girls, don't try any of this at home. Think about sleazy fluid-exchange as metaphor. Yeah. That's the ticket. Metaphor. Symbol! Talk your sleaze. Don't sack yourself before Salk saves us again: first from polio, and finally, one must hope, from HIV.

Once a man has enough balance to realize the difference between being a Public Toilet and a First-Class Private Toilet, then he's got his head on straight enough to forego saying *never* to even the roughest raunch, and start saying *hello* to the feeding of his passionate appetites.

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In the 80's, The Decade of Denial, we all assumed everybody cleaned up their act. That assumption, as anyone who talks to guys knows, does not confirm reality. There's a big difference between cleaning up one's act with regard to AIDS and figuring out what nasty boys can still do that is AIDS-safe, but still raunchy. We're talking human nature here. As a matter of fact, real fact, the Summer of 1989 in Germany [when Mark Henry and I shot six rough-sex S&M videos for Marathon Studios who had once made the pioneer sleaze film, *Born to Raise Hell*] was like the Summer of 1979 in San Francisco or New York: back rooms, scat clubs with monthly meetings late Saturday nights—and a brunch early Sunday morning. The Euro-trashiness made my heart ache for bygone nights at the Mine Shaft and the Slot. It also wrenched my heart. Backroom sleaziness is Kamikazi Sex. Nostalgia is one thing. Self-defeating ignorance brings its own curse. When tempted while traveling, remember the song, "Poison Ivy." "You can look, but you better not touch.... Late at night while you're sleepin', poison ivy comes a creepin' arou-ow-ow-ounded!"

When you've gone from vanilla to chocolate sex, you can't go home again, but you can be progressive sexually by being creatively careful.

Can you go back to the future? No. Not even after you've admitted to a grown man's natural taste and need for nasty sex and a crash with a perfect stranger; for big uncut cheesy raunch-dick flashing through YMCA gloryholes; for setting your hot buns down in a greasy gas-station toilet, without putting down the "poncho" Sanitary-Paper on the seat still wet and warm from some backhoe operator who didn't lift the horse-shoe seat for his bow-legged piss; for licking out the juicy armpits of a young hitchiker fresh out of bootcamp; for sniffing the feet of the semi-straight dirtbiker who lays back, flopping his sweaty cock up to your mouth for trade; for eating out the ass of a hot married salesman in the john of a motel bar; for trading spit with a trucker at an interstate BUNKS SHOWERS EATS 18-wheeler parking lot, late at night, with a fleet of a hundred rigs humming their low motors, and lower amber parking lights glowing through the wet shadows; for rimming your way through asshole; for harvesting dingleberries where they grow best, in that deep fullbutt crack, down around the hairy circle of ripe asshole; for digging tongue-n-teeth into sloppy mutual moustache sucking; for slapping the playful shit out of Good Sports who slap back.

On the Kerouac road, that's what happens during restless nights in one-night cheap hotels. It's a long time between showers. The number of dicks sucked and assholes rimmed puts more distance between you and your Family DON'T-LOOKS than the geographical miles. When your meat odometer reads over three or four thousand tricks turned, your mileage makes you far and away a different person than Bradnjanet who've only balled each other. If you told them about "somebody you knew" who had a few thousand sex encounters, they'd say, first, "That's impossible," and, second, "That guy's twisted."

At least about the "twisted" part they'd be right. Perversely punk, in these Just-Say-No days, "twisted" has become a postmodern virtue.

"Gone are the days, my friend. We thought they'd never end." They have, and they haven't. We invented our homomasculine leather subculture one sleazy way back in the Stone Age even before Stonewall. We can creatively re-tool it after AIDS. We're nothing if not creative and clever. For proof, cruise the Folsom Street Fair where the demographic is male beauty, age 40, stripped to the waist, and buff in leather, with a big cigar, tattoos, hairy pecs, big nipples, and piercings. [Reference Palm Drive's video many years of documentaries of the changing homomasculine look at a succession of Folsom Street fairs.]

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Raunch, like sex itself, has sophisticated its style around the virus from outer space. Raunch is sometimes, but not always, and never necessarily, about, like, you know, real filth. Maybe for some guys, but not necessarily. Raunch may be more an “approach,” more a state of mind, more a way of styling and presentation than a way of being, more a way of addressing other males with spoor. “Give him a hit of your ‘pit and he’ll follow you home.”

Calvin Klein knows the smell of obsession. Who doesn’t? Man-hunter Cecil Beaton, exiting on hands and knees at dawn, from a night in the open-to-tourists Moroccan army barracks, knew obsessive raunch, and he went on to create the all-white clothes for *My Fair Lady*. Raunch is the smell of barracks, prisons, gyms, toilets, backrooms, and beds that only men sleep in. Even scrubbed and washed up, the barracks and racks at Parris Island, smell, to the sophisticated 90’s Warrior who’s revived his primitive instincts, raunchy! When you tour any men’s institution, say, San Quentin, you smell the smell of raw masculinity. [“San Quentin Prison Blues,” *Drummer* 21, March 1978]

“I love the smell of jockstraps in the morning.”

As individual humans share in the Over-Soul of the collective consciousness, manimals share in a male Over-Raunch bond that identifies us one to the other. Fundamentalists prefer to deny humans are animals descended from animals. Progressive people celebrate their animality. Straight bodybuilder Rod Koontz has tattooed on his right arm: *THEE ANIMAL!* Rod wins physique contests, sometimes, it seems, because the judges get his ballsy message in an age when even women, like the recently late Ava Gardner, now psycho-speak about they themselves having balls. And why shouldn’t they?

Leather women, as macho sluts, are often prime sleaze *artistes*.

One title-holding muscleman, who is publicly leather-identified, admitted recently that he never washes with soap. He’s into clean-rinsed raunch. He refuses to soap off the power-workout gym-sweat pheromones that are his identifying spoor. Men find him attractive because of his build and face. More subtly, and this Mr. Leathermuscle knows it, they’re attracted to the clean jock-raunch that is uniquely, distinctly as much his own as are his fingerprints.

With this Mr. Leatherwinner, as well as with all men, there’s more to man-to-man sex than meets the eye. But you gotta snort it out!

## PRIMITIVE MALE-WARRIOR IN-STINKS

“My father was French. A soldier in Algeria where he married my mother,” says the hairy Jean-Pierre [who managed the sweet little coffee shop in the famous XXX Motel on 9<sup>th</sup> just off Folsom], one of the raunchiest men in San Francisco. “When my father would come in from hunting, pull off his muddy rubber boots, and walk around the room in his sweaty wool socks, my mother always nagged him to go shower. Instead, he’d kick back, usually with an army buddy or two, light up a cigar, and trade war stories over whiskey. My mother would get angry and head for her territory: the kitchen. I headed straight to sit on the floor next to my father’s feet near his boots.”

(I swear to God, I’m just an investigative reporter with a nose for news. I do interviews. I listen to tricks. Sex partners speak truth. This is not fiction. Call me.)

Raunch is ancient, primitive sensuality. Raunch is not, originally, about lying in

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back-room piss tubs. Raunch is an instinct, and a ritual, of sweat lodges, of wet bodies wrapped in leather-fur animal hides, of uncircumcised foreskin smegma, all older than the First Ape Who Had The First Thought. Smell tells an animal who is in his litter, who bonds with him. Raunch, sniffed out at the door of caves, told whether to admit the approaching stranger, or to kill him. (Just like the Golden Age in a room at the baths.) A man's spoor, when he's in rutting heat, tells your very sophisticated "primitive" sensor if he is friend or foe, trick or troll.

British scientists in the 80's isolated the basic raunch pheromone of male sweat as sex-signal put out naturally by a man's body. This chemical substance, found in the sweat of human males, is so attractive that an "aftershave" is planned. Dr. George H. Dodd, chemist in charge of the 8-member research group at Warwick University, said the project has achieved especially promising results from several natural steroids derived from male secretions, especially alpha androstenol: male sweat. Dr. Dodd added that "the behavior of most animals is dominated by the sense of smell, but in humans, the effects of smell generally seem to be buried between the perceptions of vision and hearing." (Huh? Alpha androstenol? Armpit-sucking as a way to a championship physique? A little dab'll do ya.)

Backroom piss tubs, and, one might say, the entire Interior of That Mecca of Raunch, The Mine Shaft, were, are, and in the Post-AIDS days that will come, will be, an attempt to get back, Jojo, to natural raunch pheromones in a society whose non-aggressive norms have dictated soap, deodorant, and cologne as civilizing bridles to harness raunchy, sweating men in heat. Don't even ask what Liz, Cher, and Baryshnikov are doing shilling designer fragrances besides making money. "Bottled, but not contained!" Give us a bullshit break.

When you lick a *faux* leatherman's 'pit in a bar, and come up with a tongue-ful of aluminum-chlorhydrate, you run to wash his deodorant out of your mouth. Has he, swimming laps through cheap cologne, thought through what the manhunt is all about? The benighted wuss in his leatherdrag has bought in his head, and paid for out of his purse, the Calvinist TV-commercial norm that body excreta are "bad." He's not a *natural* man. He's a programmed, *normal* consumer of the products of middle-class values.

Capote said: "I'd rather be *natural* than *normal*." Aye, there's the bottom line of the rub. When even a "sissy" like Truman admits to preferring *natural* to *normal*, you begin to understand an honest truth about homomasculine man-hunting. The upper classes have always preferred the lower classes sexually, because the white collar professional generally has a fatal attraction to the unwashed, blue-collar, working-class stiff who does not affect the fragrant attitude of more "civilized" society. When people want Rough Trade, they always sniff out a class lower than theirs.

Does 10 Williams' archetypal sweaty manimal, Stanley Kowalski, who became *The Wild One* who created the whole leather/bike/sleaze image that has lasted from the 50's even until now, use Ban Roll-On to keep the Polish sweat-rings off his filthy workman's tanktop? If he did, in *A Street Car Named Desire*, the women (who both are *a-clef* subtext gay men) would never have acted like cats on a hot tin roof.

Everybody reads "Raunch" for what it is: the aggressive smell of cunning gonads on the prowl.

## RAUNCH-BAR CRUISING

To the sensual nose and tongue, sleaze is the medium used to cruise and separate the "normals" from the "naturals." The Sleaze Factor has always separated the men from the boys. Some guys, turned on by cigars which other men find sleazy, know they can

walk into a crowded bar, and clear a comfortable space for themselves. “I smoke seegars for crowd control,” one Sleazoid said. “I light up and the boys scurry away, giving me space that within a few minutes is filled again by guys attracted by the cigar.”

The social history of the sleaze subculture within the leather subculture is one of discrimination, which, when it is not a bad word, is a good word: as in “a *discriminating* adult.”

Some fairy-dusted nights you can walk into a bar and know immediately it’s not for you: the natural raunch quotient, masked by soap, cologne, smoke, old Crisco, or whatever, is too low for you to pick up on the excesses of natural male bodies. This, among other reasons, is why bars so often are not cruising grounds. Instead, they have evolved into an endlessly social cocktail party ala the “normal” mode.

“Homosexual men,” said a member of the original raunch Motorcycle Club, San Francisco’s Rainbows, “find better matches, even for a night, no matter how light or heavy they are into the varieties of sleaze, if they can identify each other the way animals read each other, to sniff out if they’re the same kind. Dogs do it. In the animal kingdom, like sniffs out like.”

Non-raunch types have Attitude about sleaze, but that Rainbow made sensual sense. He exposes a revitalized animal way to read a man odiferously before committing to a night’s romp. A mutual ‘Pit-Sniffing jerkoff scene can be as hot, and hotter, than a night of cocksucking. Not only can you this way check out matching raunch pheromones; you can widen your sexual repertoire and avoid mismatches.

Sometimes, right in the middle of a scene that has everything going for it something unclicks, and you both know it’s not working. Could be you’ve both got everything except compatible raunch pheromones. If, after you get past the sight and touch, you don’t taste and smell right to each other, nothing but popper, that once-popular “insult to the lungs,” is going to cover the fact that some guys are more *Brut* than brute.

If you’re one of those men, either an Old Hand from the Golden Age, or a New Sleazebag lusting for some naturally nasty encounter, if you’re one of those men who’s always wanting MORE, and wondering what the fuck MORE there is these days: let your dick follow your nose.

What sleaze you can no longer actually do, you can satisfy by a Safe-Sleaze approach with a savvy partner into non-fluid gut-punching, slapping, etc., or you can fantasize along with feelthy pictures and videos. Just remember the bareback actors on screen who choose to make unprotected-sex videos are sex models, not role models.

Each of several graphic artists, superb in his own way, can satisfy a man’s hunger for the sleaze no longer available to thinking animals. No one draws raw sleaze as well as Domino. No one draws leather-stud sleaze better than Rex. The Hun skillfully dramatizes athletic and prison sleaze in his own unique style. Martin of Holland, whose outrageous content supports his discordant drawings, is pre-eminent scatologist. A. Jay, in his serious cartoon style, celebrates watersports, tit-sweat, and rubbers.

No-holds-barred sleaze, obviously, has evolved, because of the current crisis, to the delightful realm of art that maintains access to raunch that real life can no longer allow. The need for sleaze, which will not go away, can still be acquitted, if not in physical fact, in fantasy.

Sleazy fantasy jerkoff will vent your overheated psyche and help keep you from

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physically doing what you know you shouldn't do. This is not the moralizing of a reformed Gloryhole Kveen. This is based on Scandinavian studies that prove that erotica used at home decreases promiscuity and violence that would otherwise have been acted out in public. If sleaze is part of your psyche, be smart enough to enjoy it in the fantasy and safe guidelines of the times. Total repression of that part of one's personality could cause one to succumb to temptation to commit just one unsafe act one night when the will is weakened by lust, alcohol, or drugs.

What a sane man can no longer do, the way we remember sleaze could be once be celebrated, he can do with drawings, photos, and videos (eg. Christopher Rage), or in a limited version with the known-quantity of a supportive, safety-conscious partner who mutually stays within safe bounds. Sex, after all, happens not in one's dick, but in one's head.

In the 90's, sleaze is satisfied with raunchy talk pumped up with mutual jerkoff. Homosexuals are nothing if not clever. A man can be as sleazy in the 90's as in the 70's if he orchestrates his actions and sophisticates his rituals safely. Sleaze, after all, is a state of mind, as well as of state of body, and maybe a state of grace.

The remembrance of sleaze past is foundation for safe-sleaze present.

TAKE THIS RAUNCH AND EAT IT!

Eating the excreta of another man's healthy body is male ritual older than the Druids. Warriors traditionally ate the hearts and genitals of brave enemies. Christ told his men: "Eat my body and drink my blood." The male bonding ritual of feeding off another man's heroic body is older than recorded history, because psychologically some men need such acts and relations to be complete. To lick and sniff the body, one's own, or a partner's, is to commune and meld one's self into another man's essence.

Only *normal* Bradnjanets cringe like weak sisters at the idea of ritual cannibalism, or even actual cannibalism which 10 Williams used in 1957's *Suddenly Last Summer* to blow away audiences, who should not have been upset, if they'd ever thought through the *natural* logic of their Christian communion service.

Where, if ever, do you draw the line between the *sacred* and the *psychotic*? Anybody can commit the greatest treason: to do the right thing for the wrong reason. The self-actualizing man of the 90's should be able to discriminate and thus fulfill his psychological, natural need with perhaps more fantasy than actuality. S&M, before all, is about self-discipline. Sleaze, like S&M, has developed its own safe standards of mutual, consensual principles of behavior.

So, if late at night, you have the need to feed, the need to Sleaze Out, you are simply hearing the most ancient gods' seductive siren call. Men have a hunger for a man to lead them and feed them, whether it's with loaves and fishes, or the bloody sweat from a hairy pit stretched out in crucifixion, or saliva spit into the crack of a juicy asshole dripping cum. Gods, on the whole, hardly ever make "normal" requests. That's what makes them gods.

Our task, somewhat like *Mission Impossible*, is to evolve and sophisticate our sensual leather-fetish response and ritual to our primal need to get nasty. The need doesn't go away simply because plague stalks the land. The challenge, in the face of bad odds, is to figure out a way to have your sleaze and eat it too. Safely. You are responsible for taking care of yourself and your partner. Get creative. Transcend the once-possible literal acts for more metaphorical, verbal dirty dancing.

## UNMITIGATED BULLSHIT

One the other hand, fuck the philosophy. Slurp up anything you want if it feels good. This is the Decade of Choice. Of *informed* choice. Maybe all the above is just unmitigated bullshit crapped out by the *rational* part of the *animal*, which man is, to understand and justify why, clean or dirty, sexually liberated men aren't afraid to invent new ways to celebrate being nasty boys.

90s' Raunch is a new ball game, a new performance art, celebrating what's left in a society where the former US Surgeon General, Koop, who singlehandedly prescribed safe approaches to sex in all its varieties, commissioned his own official photograph from Robert Mapplethorpe, who was the raunchiest man ever to shoot with a Hasselblad.

The cautious 90's Raunch Manimal, sniffing the nightwind, when he catches the pheromone spoor of another wild man, feels the twitch in his dick, the salivation of his tongue, the click in his head, and he knows, somewhere out there, in the nightrider's hunting ground, another manimal, his kindred kind, calls him, fully aware of staying this side of risk, to a night of sense-ual pleasure, that will, hopefully sooner than we expect, signify that again, soon, humans will be able to restore total physical access to one another through the transcendent exchange of body fluids. Maybe sex without exchange of body fluids isn't even sex at all!

One diehard, filled with dysfunctional rage because he cannot do what he wishes, said, "Without fluid exchange how can sex be sleazy?"

Through cleverness and caring, lad!

Be patient or you'll be a patient.

Jack Fritscher's 1990 novel, *Some Dance to Remember*, a New Narrative epic of the 1970's sex scene in San Francisco, has just been published by Knights Press and is available in bookstores and from *Drummer's* Desmodus, Inc. *Some Dance to Remember*, 562 pages, \$11 + \$3 P&H.

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

*INTRODUCTION TO PHOTO SPREAD: Remembrance of Sleaze Past, by Anthony DeBlase*

*To any self-respecting leather "faggot" (another of those terms; see "Off the Top,") above a certain age, the title "Remembrance of Sleaze Past" has to conjure up all sorts of kinky things that could be done with a madeleine. So, inspired by Jack Fritscher's theme, we decided to do a photo shoot with a hot leatherman nibbling on the scallop-shaped sponge cake for our cover.*

*One of the hottest leathermen in the area is Peter Austin, Mr. San Francisco Leather 1989. At the International Mr. Leather finals each year, I not only help judge and select the winner, but I also make a personal selection of those I would most like to carry off and do dastardly things to. Peter was definitely a winner in this latter category in*

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*1989. Unfortunately what I'd like to do is rarely what I actually get to do—but he did agree to pose for us, and you see a bit of the results here.*

*While we eventually chose another, and sleazier, cover, we are giving you Peter in his “Proustian” moments here. Rest assured, we'll be bringing you a lot more Peter Austin in the near future.*

*Whether you've read it or not—and how many of us have?—you probably know the title of Proust's epic, Remembrance of Things Past. And, very likely, you've heard of Mr. Proust's transcendent experience with a madeleine and a cup of tea. If not, ask an older or more literate queer (another one of those words!).*

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