by Andrea Axelrod

Creating a myth in their own rites, the San Francisco Dancers’ Workshop under Andrés Sanchez was the first open gay movement in Williams. Their $8,000 fee was paid by the National Endowment for the Arts, and by the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, the Williams League of the Margaret Bundy Scott Fund.

Many who encountered the group in performance, in workshop, or in passing called their art life form “the most exciting thing I’ve ever seen”; but more tagged it “bullshit.”

To escape the reality and stimulate awareness of self and community, Mrs. Halpern’s dance company has freed itself of all physical and social taboos. The irony of it is that this is staged, even as addiction at all; on stage and off they carry with them a nimbus of unfulfilled theatricality.

Satan and the Zookeeper… Black cape, Tarkan (defined) wearing most actual or crocheted helmet, red patent high heeled boots, the pillicobbled skirt, Daisy Mae shorts and midriff on a former North Carolina football player, bare streetclothes.

Above all else members of the Workshop seek authenticity in life and art. Dance, life, and art are equal terms brought into balance by the “R.L.V. cycle,” radical dancer rhetoric created by Crider. He does not meet the “conflicts, confusion and chaos” Crider so much to which he was a week in the summer of 1969. The cycle defines the four holy aspects of the dancer’s environment which will help “creative development” to creativity.

R Sources, the base of all art
S Scoring, the process of art
V Valuation — the moment of Gestalt awareness of art
P Performance — life as art

To exploit its one-residency at Williams the dance group was to have insurance under the auspice of WMPIRG. It succeeded instead in shocking it. Joy Dewey, the College dance instructor, who choreographed four dances to be student cast to the group, and to find works he gave them with the students. “When I told them it was Parent’s Weekend,” says Joy, “they immediately suggested they dress-up and really shock some of the oldtimers. I agree to reveal reality to Williamstown.”

Apparently they chose to stay aloof from what in Williamstown passes for reality.

by Jonathan Abbott

College students, both here and abroad, have been the most vocal segment of the population. Yet what positive results have they been able to accomplish in the United States? The answer is tragically a qualified “none.”

The reason is clear. Students have been unable or unwilling to employ the three traditional tools popular among groups such as unions or trade associations: acceptable goals, low power, actual or potential economic cloud, and infiltration of the goal and the individuals with their own members.

Furthermore, the student’s life is punctuated by vacations, mid-terms and finals, summer holidays and other escapism. It’s no great coincidence that all the successful peace rallies have been held on weekends or in the mornings in April and May. These leave eight months.

But with the help of Ralph Nader and the Nation, students are finding themselves in a position to effect change through the established channels.

This semester, a group of students from all 20 Western Massachusetts colleges met at Hampshire College to form a Nader-style corporation. Called

The Williams Corporation

by Quoc Binh, D.I.

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The Williams Corporation will suggest that each campus institute a volunteer 4% student tax. Each college would make out a check to WMPIRG for a total amount. (WMPIRG would return a small fee for bookkeeping costs.) During the third week of classes each college WMPIRG would be eligible to any student who does not wish to support WMPIRG. Consequently, no college nor particular student need feel he is “sucking” the actions of WMPIRG.

Need for challenging priorities out of Williams.

Two features of WMPIRG will be especially interesting to a passionate Williams student. Most of us feel the need for research involved in the variety of communities in some way. Those in Minnesota and Oregon have found that many of our concerns meet the needs of and, subsequents, with substantial community interest.

And students working on a paper or private project will be entitled to look through the resource catalogue of WMPIRG to see anyone at any college has done work in the same field.

Perhaps Ralph Nader sums the idea up best.

The potential for student-funded public interest research groups is enormous. The eight million students in over 2,000 colleges and universities in the United States could conceivably finance 150 PIROS, operating at budgets of $200,000 per year. If 2% of the student body participated, a whole new dimension narrow issues and in many cases will come to the fore, and participating in the organization. Grants will be made in the federal bureaucracy, a similar staff in degree of an (working for student) could change the direction of the nation.

Joseph C. Hulick, Chris Henry, Michele Freme and I have all been to one or more of the organizational meetings and are willing to discuss the proposal with anyone.
Well over 10 Gay Liberation groups exist today in American cities and university campuses. The first collegiate organization was Columbia's Homophile League, begun in the fall of 1970. Since then, such groups have sprung up across the country.

An ADVOCATE reporter spoke to a freshly minted Gay Liberation chapter. His interview reflects trends apparent among the nascent collegiate Gay Liberation organizations.

Some 20,000 University of Colorado (CU) students converged on Boulder at the end of February. The weekend was more than 1,300 degrees for lodging in that burgeoning metropolis. Traffic arteries seemed to inflame an insomniac Volkswagen and a few Mercurys with an Eastern breeze piled parking lots.

In his two-room basement apartment on 12th Street, Byron Sullivan was usually well-stocked with flowers. Although he had helped distributed Boulder Gay Liberation literature to registering students as they blundered from the off-campus bookstores until their endless perennial went to wait a schedule.

The minute while I finish this letter." He told me he opened the door to his own lounging room. "I'll never go back to it unless I get it done now." He finished the rest of his words on his walls kept me occupied for a while. One showed a different colymph of poses for one's first time. Another astrologed sign and what can you expect from a water carrier? Taurus, fittingly so, the sign was.

He welcomed an adjacent wall hung Chris's image; "With love, J. was inscribed at the bottom."

I began staring directly behind me last caught my eye: Popeye and Oil in an off-center "Lettuce" can of spinach lying nearby. Nothing, apparently, was sacred.

The phone rang. Byron arranged to meet someone at his office in Denver the following day.

"That was the Denver representative of the Gay Liberation movement," he explained. "We helped organize their movement over in Denver, and they adopted some resolutions on homosexual rights.

He handed me a mimeographed sheet. The Guild is a dissident radical group of a few hundred members, which advocate the use of forceful, open dialogue, including sympathy and tolerance.

The reporter agreed to meet me to make arrangements for legal assistance, which the Guild might be able to provide. I met with them over in Denver the next day. We've talked a little with the ACLU before this new source of information is created.

Byron then settled back in his desk chair, looking levelly at me. "Our group's founding, "I got back from San Francisco a few months ago, the first thing I did was go to talk to the federation." --I have nothing here but a few depressing bars in Denver, an hour's bus trip away. So I asked some people I knew if they'd be interested in starting a Gay Lib group on campus. We put an ad with

...would convince me more of his existence. So we finally met and have become fairly good friends. We still talk on the phone regularly, but he's worried about his appearance and meeting other people--he's a bit too weird, I guess."

"Another one called at two in the morning to ask me what I thought and why I didn't answer the phone. I recommend anyone. I tactfully tried to explain to her that I was in bed and wouldn't be able to talk, but she wouldn't rephrase her question, so I just hung up."

Everyone flashed a toilet above us. The pipes groaned as Byron went on about the chauvinist group.

"We've got a very loose organization here. It has no constitution, rules, dues, or screening for membership. A steering committee, whose members I don't know, meets two or three times a month, and we just attend, sets the agenda for the general meeting, and pick different people to run them.

What about the group's size and activities?"

"When the University's in session, we usually average around forty to fifty people at a meeting. The turnout is really large though, because so many students come and go at each semester."

"We divide our efforts into three categories: educational, legal, and social. The first has taken the greatest amount of time. The ignorance straight about gays and gay life is covering Boulder. Gay Libs has a team that gives informal presentations to classes, usually in the psychology and sociology fields. We send a form letter to all the professors and instructors on campus offering this service. Our students have generally been open to honest discussion about homosexuality and its changing

Sex for is as great a motivating force for the gay person as any other social stimulus."

"Do he know any other gays on campus?"

"Oh, I've heard plenty of rumors, and have probably met a dozen or so. I only know of one other for a fact--someone I ran into this summer in New York, just by coincidence. We have nothing else in common.

But that's someone."

"Sure, of course. But does every gay person find the first girl he meets to be the answer to all his questions? It's primarily trading, but better. But that's the main thing.

"Any other problems for him?"

"The loneliness. That really gets to you. People remark at the paradox of New York: being among eight million people and not knowing a soul. Well, Williams is no better. In the midst of 1,501 peers, I run the risk of complete ostracism, or even worse, of a clawing of depth. When I dare raise the subject of homosexuality, Williams men are all Men, you know."

"Little things, too, add up. At my Freshman Biology, the Ephlats sang "Alexis" to the incoming students. I sat at my table in Baxter Hall and was obliged to add to the spontaneous laughter at the inscribed table, "A Bahamian, a Mariner."

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"How about reaching the general populace?"

"We depend on a leg over, an arm of his chair. "We got a letter from the Sertoma Club of Boulder, which is like the Kiwanis, asking us to speak to them. That really freaked me out to have them write us. Anyway, we went to two meetings. There were about fifteen to twenty people at each meeting, and he brought along a whole list of statistics from the Kinsey Report. I guess they're trying to prove some point--what, I don't know."

"We've also been on a talk show on the "Our Daily Bread," Garden radio show, but those are worthless, for the most part."

"Then there's the Gay-line I mentioned before. We've got some sort of community center, that can be done more permanently."

Did that mean some University function?"

"No, some place off-campus. Probably a rented house, that sort of thing. Association. With the University tends to scare away some of the young people around the school who don't want to be over here. Also, there are some students who don't want to be found out on campus."

"We've gotten a couple of people on University on Friday nights with dancing, but were unsuccessful just because of that problem. We've seen the need to attract a broader spectrum of the gay and lesbian population, and we're presently we principle support what we've done here.

"We've held four or five dances with a live band at a ranch between Boulder and Denver, and we've had a large party facility. Four to five hundred people have come to it.

"The night before the first one in February, there was a tremendous amount of preparation. Every few minutes that morning someone came to see if we needed something. I didn't want to take the responsibility of cancelling it and then have the weather clear up and send them out."

"Well, the mile-long private road leading to the ranch was almost a mile that night, and as people started leaving at two or three in the morning, we had to dig their cars out of the snow. I was told the last one got out at 7:00 am."

"We put ads in all the school papers: The Colorado Daily, The Denver Post, Denver, and the Boulder Daily Camera, and gave telephone numbers for information."

"What political policies?"

"We haven't had any marches or specific political policies declared, we've tried to explain, "but we've been political in a social sense. For example, we've been on the rag bag list, which opened with two gay kissing in public. Some people have been phoning around yelling about this social atrocity and political pressure. In fact, we really just happened to be Gay Lib in the first place."

"We're getting more out of campus than there, to be sure."

In the end, thebeavers beat the Pigs and

Byron shifted his position in the chair again. Outside the window was a cold wind."

"Probably the most important social political objective at the moment is that the women in the group began dancing together at The Sink, a local straight bar. This is the beginning of the women's example, but eventually they will come out of the closet and that's what we expect customers were uptight about it at the beginning, but the management has never said anything to us. I guess we'll keep on doing it in larger numbers until we've completely liberated the place.
editorial: the open community

You hear a lot about "openness," especially on a college campus. People are supposed to verbalize all their problems, all the tension between them and the people around them. Problems once brought to the surface can then be discussed, reasonably, by the people involved, and presumably will be resolved for good instead of being left to smolder in everyone's unspoken thoughts. It's an admirable idea, and to most appearances we are following through on it. Look at the popularity of sensitivity groups and similar forms of "openness." In a larger sense, though, we delude ourselves about our real "openness." What sort of openness, we might well ask, are we talking about, Racists? That we don't trust one another. That we have doubts about the validity of our lifestyle as students. These may all be true, and some of them may be worth admitting, but this is hardly the sort of "openness" we seek in verbalizing deeply private distress. We as students are quite well versed in the standard sociological and psychological jargon of self-consciousness; we can raise through session 2-21 admitting all sorts of things to each other, without once risking anything of ourselves in what we admit. The trick is to abstract away from oneself, admit only those things that everyone else should admit as well.

This is the kind of talk that too often passes for "openness" around here. True openness involves a difficult, painful admission of feelings that we know we unpopular and are going to cause others to take special note of us. And this kind of self-revelation is extremely rare at a place as free-wheeling as Williams. Some words might be said about "taboo" or about the moral bankruptcy of those who refuse to practice what they preach. This would amount to little more than renaming the paradox, however, and would do nothing to explain why a group of people like us at Williams should be so enthusiastic about honesty yet so reticent about practicing it. It might be more useful to consider some ways in which the peculiarities of our situation here inhibit openness. Two significant factors operate in this sense, the fact that we are all highly intelligent, and the fact that we all pretty much know each other. All friendships are based upon the interaction between individuals: there are always personal matters into which one's friends do not pry, and personal matters of theirs which are likewise inviolate. A person's position in a society is determined by a network of interpersonal relationships each of which is in some kind of stable equilibrium with regard to what is shared and what is not. To the extent that few or none of these relationships involve interactions, an individual is free to say and do what he wants, including acting "openly" on this or that issue. And this in turn is a matter of staying sufficiently abstract.

Consider what happens when one makes a truly personal statement, when, through a risk something that is absolutely his own. It usually turns out that the person becomes quite lonely. One's friends are surprised, and whatever their specific response to the content of the statement, it is anger or sympathy or fear or whatever, their attitude and consequently their behavior toward him changes. The individual himself is no different from what he was before he acted "openly," but now all of his close interpersonal relations have changed by the fact of his having expressed something different from what was expected of him. In terms of his distant acquaintances, his fate is perhaps even worse. These people did not know him well, perhaps only through a couple of stray encounters, and probably did not have much of an opinion of one way or another about him. But now the man who has risked a truly personal statement, they type him, they classify him according to it.

He has risked himself, and as a result he is alienated from his friends and burdened by guilt towards them. The two most frequent factors cited above about Williams apply at this point. Because he and his friends are all intelligent, they are unable and unwilling to pretend that no distancing has taken place. The dislocation of friendships cannot be ignored out of mutual distaste for it, since no one involved can delude himself easily that nothing has happened. The fact that everyone at Williams knows or knows of almost everyone else implies that our honest individual, having induced his distorted reputation in the others, cannot escape the consequences through ambivalence. He must daily face many people he knows are thinking "that's the fellow who . . ."

True honesty, true "openness" thus has a considerable psychological cost for any individual, and this is made still more acute at Williams or any comparable small body of intelligent, introspective people. The presence or absence of true openness at Williams, then, is a matter of weighing the possible benefits of any candid declaration against the quite obvious immediate disadvantages. Is it then any wonder that the prevalent attitude seems to be that "It isn't worth the trouble to be honest, it only makes things worse instead of better." (Here is much of what is often called "false consciousness" or "oppression," in its relation to much else.)

Yet the ideal of the Open Community need not sink under the psychological load as long as some individuals remain who find it worthwhile, possible, to make statements of private conviction that can lead us all to a more honest relations.