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ADVOCATE

THE NATIONAL GAY NEWSMAGAZINE

BIWEEKLY

IN TWO SECTIONS



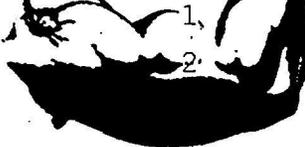
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A'Lelia Walker. A'Lelia was a striking, tall, dark-skinned woman who was rarely seen without her riding crop and her imposing, jeweled turban. She was the only daughter of Madame C.J. Walker, a former washerwoman who had made millions marketing her own hair-straightening process. When she died, Madame Walker left virtually her entire fortune to A'Lelia.

Whereas Madame Walker had been giving money, donating thousands of dollars to charity, A'Lelia used most of her inheritance to throw lavish parties in her palatial Hudson River estate, Villa Lewaro, and at her Manhattan dwelling on 15th Street. Because A'Lelia added the company of lesbians and gay men, her parties had a distinctly gay ambience. Elegant homosexuals Edward Perry, Caska Bonds and Van Vechten became her closest friends and were regulars at her affairs. Everyone from chorus girls to artists to socialites to visiting royalty would come at least once to enjoy her parties.

A'Lelia took particular pleasure from the black poets, artists and writers of Harlem. This should not be surprising. Just as white bohemia served as a refuge for black reformers, so too did black bohemia. Many of the writers, intellectuals and artists of what we now call the Harlem Renaissance were homosexual, bisexual or otherwise sexually unorthodox. Their status as artists, part of the "talented tenth" who were thought by Dubois to be the saviors of their race, protected them from public disapproval of their private lives.

Alan Locke, the Howard University professor who heralded the renaissance in 1925 with his seminal anthology *The New Negro*, received no censure for never marrying, nor for his predilection for intelligent, male students. The brilliant Jean Toomer, author of *Cane*, was criticized for marrying Margery Latimer because of her white skin, not, rather than her intense feminism or her bisexuality. That poet Langston Hughes never married was seen as peculiar, but the motives behind his bachelorhood were never questioned. The Community was certainly aware of poet Countee Cullen's flailing relationship with Harlem schoolteacher Harold Jackman, but people remained to fully give Arna Bontemps would later remember Cullen and Jackman as the "Langston and David of the Harlem Renaissance."

But the most bohemian of them all was Richard Bruce Nugent.

Raised in a proper Washington, D.C., family, Nugent dabbled successfully in painting, drawing, poetry and dancing. He was self-consciously avant-garde and often had no permanent address, preferring to drift from place to place. Nugent spent much of his time drawing erotic, often phallic, drawings.

Nugent was openly homosexual throughout the renaissance period but was seldom rebuffed because of it. He is credited with writing the first fictional portrayal of black male homosexuality: In 1926 in the Harlem little magazine *Fire!*, he published "Smoke, Lilies and Jade" (under the pseudonym "Richard Bruce") to avoid parental disapproval. The story concerned a Harlem homosexual who falls in love with a stunningly beautiful Latin male. A good portion of Harlem society found the story shocking. Locke himself suggested that the rugged and wholesome Walt Whitman would

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 53)

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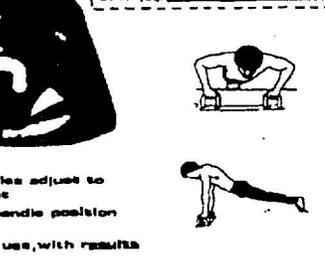
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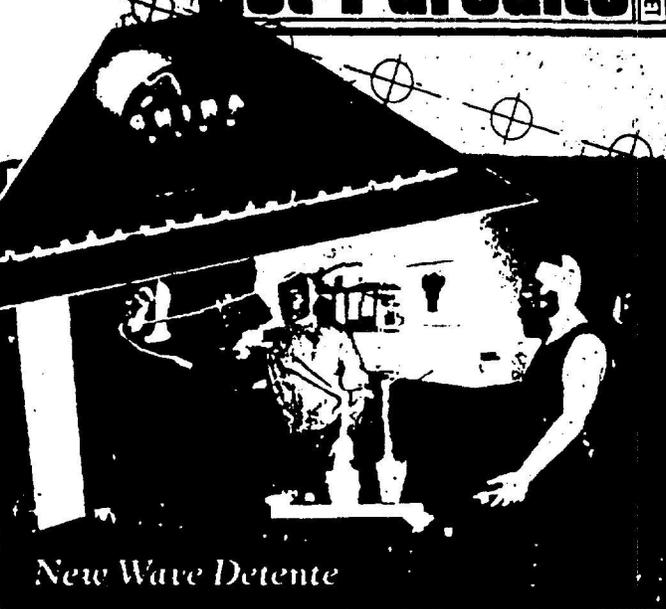
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Hot Pursuits [ENCLOSURE]



New Wave Detente

There are those who make no fuss about fashion, and then there are those who are fashion freaks. For those who tend toward the latter camp, the China Club has arrived in Los Angeles as the newest bastion of fashionability.

The China Club, a restaurant/lounge in West Hollywood, is, at the moment, the talk-of-the-town. It has been consistently praised for its exciting, innovative design, but decried by critics who say "How could anything so stylish serve good food!" (Then most go on to say it succeeds in both.) It is passed off as "too trendy" by some, with one critic referring to everything being in trendy trapezoids (nary a square in sight); while other spokesmen for the "real" New Wave set consider it "too pseudo." L.A.'s alternative paper, *The Weekly*, says it's "one of the few places in L.A. where people dress up and go out to look at what everybody else is wearing," while *Wet Magazine* lauds that the "previously disenfranchised artisan class of Los Angeles" finally has a place to go. A recent mention in the L.A. *Times* Fashion Supplement quored club manager Raymond Lee's edict of "no style, no taste, no service," which most everyone agreed was going a bit far.

Nevertheless, the decor is stunning—something the owners refer to as "Chinese Moderne." Beyond its shiny black tile facade, the club offers sleek, stylized elements of designer New Wave, combined with spacy neon flourishes, a traditional Japanese tea garden, a futuristic-Deco mirror behind the bar and a wall of air-brushed murals by artists Pater Sato and Paul Fortune. The waiters are outfitted in Keiko-designed inverted triangle uniforms, and a gallery of changing artists has featured tarot card paintings by David Bowie.

The bar is packed nightly by members of L.A.'s "neo-cafe society," presumably creatives, or at least those who say they are or look like they are. The whole scene is very "Melrose Avenue," L.A.'s

usually more indigenously Los Angeles than either. Sort of New Wave, high clone, with a tan.

Hastening to give the new club some character, a splashy menswear fashion reception was held there in March during the cocktail hour. It was an L.A. media event introducing a new line of menswear called Apriori. The new line is an outgrowth of the Alkire line, the trendy company who pioneered industrial/high-tech fabrics in menswear. The Apriori people were told they could use the China Club for a reception, but that a fashion runway show was being saved for a local shop to present fashion by currently hot designers Kansai Yamamoto and Claude Montana. So the Apriori gang was forced to come up with a clever way to present their clothes, sans runway.

Thus they created surreal tableaux with mannequins wearing their Fall '81 designs. The scenes depicted bizarre vignettes revolving around (appropriately enough in a restaurant) eating, and it was all described in a "forward fashion menu." Designers David Bober and Eugene Rodriguez presented their inventive styles ranging from a "Chinese space cowboy" look, to leather jodhpurs and a Lycra Lacoste shirt. The show was taken in by an enthusiastic and interesting-looking group of guests that included designers Bob Mackie, Van Martin, Carlos Arias and Irene Tsu; celebrities Sylvester, Karen Valentine, Beverly Sassoos and Parker Stevenson; representatives from *GQ*, *Women's Wear Daily* and *Vogue*; as well as the group of fashion freaks, which influenced the L.A. *Weekly* to note that "the men were actually better dressed than the women."

The Apriori/Alkire line is available at Barney's, Macy's and Steves of SoHo in New York; Wilkes-Bashford and Rugby in San Francisco; Jerry Magnin, Gee 2, and Fire in Los Angeles; Ultimo in Chicago; Fast Buck Freddees in Key West; and Union Jack in Texas.

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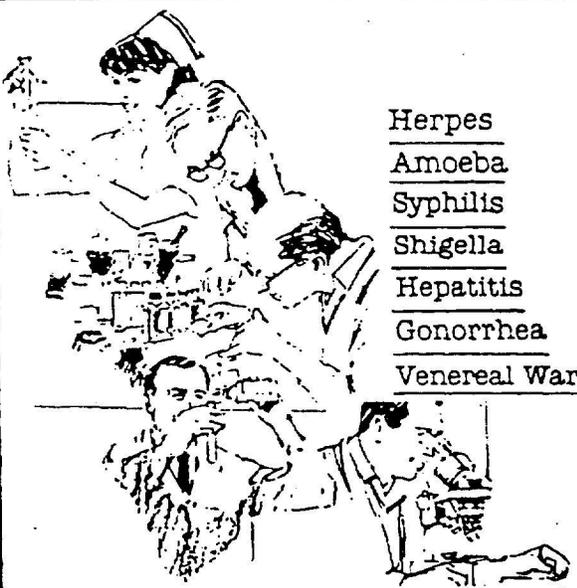
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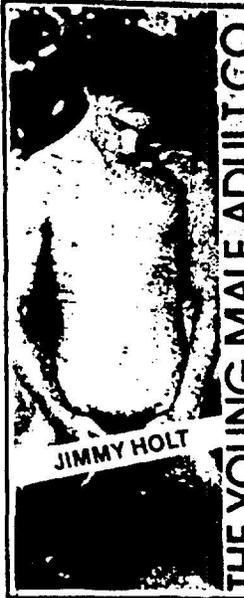
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Books

BY RICHARD HALL

Some scraps and jottings this month, to keep up with recent developments.

Small gay presses are stepping in where the big commercial houses (with the chief exception of Avon, Morrow and St. Martin's) are dropping out—that is, publishing important books for gay audiences. These presses have found a modest but loyal core of readers, to be depended on for a sale of 5,000 to 20,000 copies. The interaction between readers and the gay press, gay bookshops and gay mail-order services has created a profitable environment. In recent months we've benefited from such remarkable titles as *Outlander*, a dazzling collection of stories and essays by Jane Rule (Nanad, Box 10544, Tallahassee, FL 32302, \$6.95), *Queer Free* by Alabama Berdstone, a scary proleptic novel about an America rid of gays (Calamus, Box 689, New York, NY 10276, \$6); *A True Likeness*, new short fiction and poetry edited by Felice Picano (Seahorse, Box 509, New York, NY 10014, \$9.95); *Chapters from an Autobiography*, rich recollections of a celebrity-studded career by Samuel M. Steward (Corey Fox, dist. by Subco, Box 10233, Eugene, OR 97440, \$5.95); *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* by Aaron Fricke, a harrowing but ultimately triumphant tale of growing up gay in Rhode Island (Alyson, Box 2781, Boston, MA 02208, \$4.95); *Look Back in Joy*, Malcolm Boyd's moving tribute to a lifetime of lovers (Gay Sunshine, Box 4097, San Francisco, CA 94140, \$6.95). The signs are good for a continuation of this trend toward excellence, if we keep supporting the small presses.

One of the finest projects in bookland is the Lambda Resource Center for the Blind in Chicago, directed by Terry Goodman and Stephen Hunt. The group records books on cassettes for circulation to the gay blind, with more than a dozen titles taped including the gay *Los* books, John Boswell's opus, *Living Someone Gay* by Don Clark, plus anthologies and poetry. Books are recorded by sighted volunteers. Future talking-book projects include *Cosellou Pages 1961* and a quarterly digest of lesbian/gay periodicals. For more info write Box 1419, Chicago, IL 60660.

A fascinating catalog of gay books, many rare, comes from Deskins & Greene, Box 1092, Atlantic City, NJ 08404, a new mail-order and search service. It's a revelation even to me. Did you know Franz Grillparzer wrote a play about Sappho in the early 1800s? That Marion Zimmer Bradley, author of *The Catch Trip*, was bibliographing lesbian literature as early as 1959? The catalog is \$2 and, most helpfully, includes names of publishers.

Another fascinating book just published is an annotated bibliography, *Homosexuality and the Judeo-Christian Tradition*. Tom Horner, author of *Jonathan Loebl David* (Westminster, 1978), here compiles books, articles and essays, and bibliographies dealing with homosexuality and religion. He is familiar with most and evaluates them. One intriguing entry cites Iris Murdoch in *One magazine*, 1964: "The Moral Decision about Homosexuality." The book is hardbound, 141 pp., \$10 from Scarecrow Press, Box 656, Metuchen, NJ 08840.

Speaking of bibliographies, the Insti-

tute for the Study of Human Resources, in conjunction with One, both in Los Angeles, are coming down the home-stretch with their massive four-volume *Comprehensive Bibliography of Homosexuality*, coedited by W. Durr Legg and Wayne Dynes. It will contain 30,000 entries from Europe and America, replacing such previous shorter bibliographies as that by Vern L. Bullough (1976), William Parker (1971, 1977), Weinberg & Bell (1972) and Ian Young (1975). A project that would strain the resources of even a university, it has been grossly underfunded and needs donations to ISHR, 2256 Venice Blvd., Suite 203, Los Angeles, CA 90006.

The worst reception of the season has been accorded *The Nazi Extermination of Homosexuals* by Frank Rector (Stein & Day), a work "unaccompanied by scholarly or reportorial skills," according to the *New York Times*. Looks like we'll have to wait for Richard Plant's definitive book on the subject, due next year from Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

The demise of Catalyst Press, described by Ian Young in these pages a few issues ago, has left him with unsold inventory, among them poems by Judith Crewe (\$3.50), by Tom Meyer (\$3.95), by Gavin Dillard (\$2), essays on dance by Graham Jackson (\$6.95), a memoir of erotic adventures abroad by E.A. Lacey (\$5) and other titles. For complete list write Catalyst, 315 Blantyre Ave., Scarborough, Ont., Canada, M1N 2S6.

A handsome hardcover edition of *Ami and Amie*, a *chanson de geste* written around 1200, has been translated from Old French by Samuel Danon and Samuel N. Rosenberg. A powerful tale of chivalric love between two knights, a prose version of the tale was translated by William Morris (1896) and abridged in Edward Carpenter's *Johns: An Anthology of Friendship* (1902) from which the excerpt in Byrne Lone's *Hidden Heritage* is taken. This edition, in prose also, offers an analysis of sources and helpful notes. It's \$10 plus \$1 from French Literature Publications, Box 707, York, South Carolina 29745.

The Gay Caucus of the American Booksellers Association met at this year's Atlanta convention in late May. The caucus was formerly coordinated by Paul Welles of the Lambda Book Club, whose untimely death of cancer in early May is deeply mourned by many of us. Information about the Caucus is now available from Michael Denny, St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010.

Press Clips ... A beautiful novel, homoerotic in spirit, set on the Isle of Guernsey, is *The Book of Ebenezer Le Page* by G.B. Edwards (Knopf, \$13.95). ... Mary Renault's newest novel, just finished, is called *Funeral Games*, about the struggle for power after the death of Alexander the Great, who left no natural heirs. ... The paperback edition of *Boswell's Christians, Sexual Tolerance and Homosexuality*, which just won the American Book Award for history, will be issued in July (Chicago) ... *Share to Beauty*, a bit of forgotten gay photographer F. Holland Day (1864-1933) was recently published by David R. Godwin ... *California Crews* by Alan Cartmel, a flashy new-journalism account of the

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The soiled and sordid world of
Pigs
and their
Ilk

By Bill Watson
 Webster's *New World Dictionary* explains a Pig thusly: a domesticated animal with a long, broad snout and a thick, fat body covered with coarse bristles. Or in the slang: a person regarded as acting or looking like a Pig. Further, a slatternly or slutfish woman.
 Imagine that! Old Marion reserving a slang insult for the female of the species. I never could figure out what would motivate a man to write a book like the dictionary, but from his dry account of the English language, one can easily perceive that Webster never spent a Wednesday evening at Mothers in downtown Miami. For if he had, he certainly would have followed the slatternly insult item with a further definition — that of the leather bar customer, the Dings Bar Piggie.
 I had first brushed hips with a Pig

when I was researching the Tricky Bear story which appeared in last week's issue. When I breezed into Cell Block Leathers in search of a Teddy, little did I suspect that I would be swept into the soiled and sordid world of Pigs and their ilk.
 I had been informed that Jim, the owner and operator of the leather emporium at Mothers, was a local expert on retail sales of Pigs so I summoned most of my courage and headed into the bar with a high feeling of anxiety, and more than a little trepidation.
 Let's be real. I was going to have to miss an episode of *Quincy* on TV, so that already had me on edge. And when I got to the bar at 10:30 and Jim wouldn't be there for 30 minutes yet, I had little else to do but seat myself at the bar, order and nurse a rum and coke, and watch some sexual acrobatics on the TV screen over

the bar. This I did, and when the appointed time rolled around, indeed Jim did appear in the front door and I headed for the little shop in the rear of the bar.
 Cell Block Leathers is a bright and cheery little store nestled in a downtown bar known in these parts for roughhousing at all hours of night. But the store is a heaven from the heavy sexual atmosphere of the outside and what with the fashionable wearables, cards, knick knacks and Pigs, one just has to browse for a few moments any time he happens to be in at the bar. This causes the place to be packed most of its open hours, and of course the brighter lighting in the shop is helpful when you want to scrutinize that lumpy number in a more favorable situation.
 When you first enter Cell Block it is the Pig section that catches your eye. Pigs in cards. Pigs on belt buckles. Pigs

on stick pins for the fancy executive. Pigs everywhere. But what a Pig in a jacket, for Jim's Pigs are anything but slovenly. They are actually (dare I say it?) quite the cute little accessory. Kind of a sleazy alternative to a Teddy, actually.
 I presented my credentials to Jim and he proceeded to show me his entire line of Pigs as mentioned above. Pigs come in two sizes — medium and large. There is, so I've heard, nothing remotely resembling a small anything at Mothers and the same holds true for Pigs.
 Now understand, these Pigs simply are not designed for pocket stuffing, but are more likely to be found sitting on a night stand, lounging in a bean bag chair or strapped to most any portion of the anatomy with either the leather harness

continued next page

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An evening in church with Brother Jerry

By Bill Watson

It was almost too easy to pick the guys. Out of the crowd of several thousand assembled in the main sanctuary of the First Baptist Church of West Hollywood, there couldn't have been more than a few dozen of our number (I recognized only three friends inside), but to the trained eye those dozen stuck out like a wolf in the shepherd's flock.

We were the ones dressed obnoxiously, so as not to stick out from the others. We were the ones with the combed hair, clipped just the right length. We were the ones with the crisp, tailored suits and the ones in the properly hemmed skirts. We looked very hot indeed, and of course, very conservative.

The Baptists, those fundamentalist bastions of conservatism, seemed less carefully dressed, if only because they weren't there to spy on the opposition. The men of the group dressed mainly in Sears three-piece suits that reverse and combine to make up three or more separate combinations.

The ladies of the church, young and old alike, looked like the chaste that they are to their Baptist husbands. They dressed drably, though in their Sunday best, a splash of color here and there, and many wore the most bizarre of hair fashions. The best description of the hair would be something akin to a 1960s Priscilla Presley look.

We were all there to hear the man of the hour, the fundamentalist phenomenon as he calls himself, Jerry Falwell. Jerry, the founder and spiritual leader of the vast business empire known as the Moral Majority, brought quite a large entourage with him — but it was he and his ideals that the crowd was there to hear.

I showed up at the First Baptist Church of West Hollywood around 6:30 in order to get a good seat at what I feared would be a mob scene. I had left myself the option of joining the protesters outside, but as I spent more time in the church with the zealots gathered there, I felt I would be better educated if I stayed indoors. To know my enemy would be better than vocally opposing him.

On one of my initial sorties into the church itself, I gathered some specific information about the evening's activities. I learned that the whole reason for

Jerry blamed the preachers for the shape America is in today. He blamed them for allowing the country to slide downhill. He blamed them for their 'silent pulpits'.

Jerry coming to Hollywood that night was to address the final meeting of the 1981 Baptist Bible Fellowship International (BBFI) Conference, which had been going on all that week at the church. The BBFI is a group of fundamentalist preachers, missionaries and ministers from the world over. They have one of these get-togethers every few months and it just so happened that First Baptist of West Hollywood was chosen to host this conference. Jerry Falwell was to be the icing on the cake.

When I had made up my mind that I would be willing to stand through the entire evening's activities, I set out to enter the church once again. This time, as I passed a couple of Baptist ladies near the door, I could hear them mumbling at one another in regards to the protesters outside their church. One said, "I wish I could slap all their faces." The other agreed saying, "It's just terrible, isn't it?" Were I not headed for an evening (inside the lines) I might have taken them to task over their un-Christian attitudes.

I entered through the east doorway and stepped into the sanctuary, which is bisected by a large east-to-west aisle running from door to door. The chapel itself faces south with the pulpit and choir facing in the same direction. A large, lighted electronic organ dominated the area directly in front of the choir area and the rest of the front was now, for the purposes of the show that evening, filled with projectors, microphones, risers and props.

Across the rear of the auditorium from side to side was a full balcony which, when filled, is responsible for containing up to one third of the audience. Underneath the balcony is an auxiliary area which can be partitioned off using sliding doors. Tonight it was used for extra seating and filled with salespersons and clerks selling religious articles of all descriptions.

What was that? Moneylenders and vendors back in the sanctuary? Alway-

lutely! With their prices stuck to large and small, new and old Bibles, and their "MasterCard and Visa Accepted Here" signs dangling from the overhead, the salespeople were reaping the benefits of evangelism, 1981 style. Bibles with gold filigree and Bibles with less expensive bindings were on sale.

Books by the selected speakers at the conference (they all love to write books of their own philosophy for their flock), book markers and pamphlets on subjects from marriage to speaking in tongues filled their racks and the silent cash registers registered the sales.

Later that evening as I stood off to the side, listening intently to what I was hearing, I was approached by a smallish, drab looking young lady who I feared might be one of them who had somehow spotted me spying on their meeting. She asked, "Are you a spy for the opposition?" I replied in the negative and asked her what she referred to. She then indicated that she was a reporter for UP! and flashed her credentials. Sensing an open mind, the first all evening inside the church, I opened up to her.

I told her why we had come and why I had opted to stay inside. Then she tried to swallow her foot. She asked, "I heard there is going to be some sort of disruption tonight. What do you know about it?" I was incredulous. I half-yelled at her, "Do you really think we're so uncivilized as to invade the sanctity of a church, even one so unholy as this? Do you really think Falwell is that important to us that we'd do such a thing?"

I pointed in the direction of the rear of the church with its salespeople milling about selling their wares and continued, "Close to 2,000 years ago, Jesus threw the money lenders and vendors out of the synagogue. Somehow between then and now they somehow managed to slip back in. Why don't you ask them about disruptive activities in the sanctuary?"

She backed down and admitted that she hadn't seen the people in the rear and then trotted off to hush them. I climbed

off by rooftop and made a quick check of the area to see how many people had overheard the exchange. The Baptists were in rapt attention to a very boring slide presentation by a very earnest missionary from England.

After a presentation of the week's speakers by V.S. Ackerman, the head minister of the host church, E.G. Robertson, the Pastor of the New Testament Baptist Church of Miami Lakes called for the offering. He requested "a silent offering. You know, that's the kind where it doesn't make any noise when it hits the offering plate." In other words, they were looking for folding money only. Keep the spare change.

After the offering was taken up and a few other minor subjects were dispensed with, the big time rolled around. With a flourish, Jerry Falwell was brought onto the stage with his guard of lesser preachers and associates. He introduced his assistants and went on swiftly with his program.

What Jerry had come to do was mainly introduce his singing group from Liberty Baptist College, his college. Making this their third stop on a two-year trek across America, the "Look Up America" show had come to the BBFI Conference and Jerry was their leader in both body and spirit.

The show itself is a multi-media assembly of slick projects, fully orchestrated show songs all written by the kids themselves, costumes, choreography and a heavily religious-historical message undermeats it all. The package is neat, slickly produced and slams at the audience like a bowling ball headed for the ten pin. In short, if you don't like the Liberty Baptist College Singers, you must be a Communist sympathizer or worse.

Using three rear-projection screens, more than 1,300 color slides and numerous loops from historical film footage, Jerry and his kids presented the history of the evangelical movement in America from Chris Columbus to the present. When the kids, a dozen lily-white Baptist children of tender years, weren't on stage crooning and harmonizing, they were off stage changing into a battery of lush costumes to dramatize their points home.

continued next page

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