

A.C. Shocks D.C. Shrinkers

Washington, DC—About 75 gay women and men invaded the annual convention of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) during the Mayday events to demand that the psychiatric establishment cease its persecution of homosexuals.

With the assistance of a member of the APA's tiny radical caucus, we entered the plush Shoreham Hotel ballroom through a side door and marched in chanting "Say it loud, gay is proud!"

Many of the gay men were in various degrees of drag, some with dresses, others with make-up, war-paint, earrings, or some combination thereof.

The shrinks, more than a thousand of them, sat in shocked silence or yelled with hostility as we stood between them and the dias. A few shrinks came out punching, but were restrained.

Another member of the APA radical caucus took the microphone and presented an anti-war resolution, denouncing the group for its failure to deal with the war in Vietnam and specifically with the arrest of 7000 demonstrators which had just taken place in DC. Several shrinks as if in anguish, cried out things like, "Do I have to be subjected to this?" When asked to stand up in support of the anti-war statement, only about one-third of the shrinks got off their seats.

Then Franklin Kameny of the Washington Mattachine Society began to speak, outlining the demands and grievances of the gay people. As soon as he mentioned the word "homosexual," the gathering of shrinks laughed and tittered. Most of them chose not even to listen to his statement.

Kameny said that psychiatrists were waging war on homosexuals, but that now we were fighting back—and we'd wage our war on our terms. He demanded the psychiatrists cease promoting the idea that homosexuality is an illness, and he called for an end to electric shock and other torture treatments, and for the end to incarceration of homosexuals in mental hospitals. But the shrinks didn't seem to care.



photo by carter tomassi

Before Kameny could finish, the microphone went dead, and we decided to split rather than get busted. We left as suddenly as we had arrived, again chanting "Say it loud, gay is proud!"

At the 1970 APA convention in San Francisco, gay people also carried out an invasion. Our offensive against the shrinks is only beginning.

—gay flames/lms