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Title: Notes on Gay Life in Chicago during the 1910s by Allen Tanner

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Charlesie dear: Amusing...but not at all
consistent, accurate, and, chronologically
incorrect as well! As far back as 1916 when
I went to Chicago as a youth, I heard and knew
the word "Camp" and saw its practiced frequently
in different spots around the town! It was
the exhibitionism ^{the activity} that cheap homosexuals (who were
obviously not real ladies!) indulged in and
which they ^{also alluded to} designated as "letting ^{their} ~~one's~~ hair
down". All around town-in the old Childs' Res-
taurants, at night, there was always a gather-
ing (many chorus "boys" (!!)) from the theater
especially) in some corner of the place where
they "took over, ^{making a manifestation of} revealing their homosexuality
by "performing" ^{and in a kind of group}..i.e. "carrying on"-outrageously
and screamingly-with all their special brand of
"homo wit," impersonations (they always called
themselves ^{either} "Gaby Deslys" "Olga Petrova" or
"Theda Bara" etc etc.) and it was simply the
night ^{time} indulgence of ^{a cult like} an exhibitionism that
had it been conducted in private (as it very
often was) ^{they} it would have been ^{called} ~~vested~~ in out-
rageously "extravagant" costumes ("Drag": ^{the act of} this
expression came obviously from "dragging around
long trains on gowns, ^{feathers} veils etc) and of course

Fags was not common
with a connotation
of a person

very frequently
frenzied

with these

additional
& relevant

since those creatures had ^{actually} absolutely no "taste" ^{at all with} (no cultural, educational, intellectual or even family background) "camping" had nothing ^{therefore} ~~at~~ ^{was} ~~solely~~ to do with ^{domain} ~~the~~ questions of taste: on the contrary ^{and} a quite monstrous violation if it ... a caricature of it if you will, and for this reason it was ^{very} funny to watch and to see by ^{sophisticated} people who found it most amusing - although ~~#####~~ frequently a bit embarrassing in public. I am pretty sure the word "camp" (to pitch camp... ~~etc.~~ ^{denotes} "install oneself" or "take over ^a spot") was adopted ~~###~~ in the sense of just that connotation. For there was usually one who ^{was} a great performer ^{who} took over ^{and} spent the evening in outrageous monologue, impersonations, "homo wit" (and frequently what they called "dishing" dirt ^{usually} about their frustrating lovers or boyfriends, ^{and} ^{or} ~~and~~ ^{above} all about their rivals (often present even at the table - and who were hated with a venom that no scorned woman could ever ^{or aspire!} emulate.) ^{historically} to so here you have, I believe a more accurate (if perhaps less "socially amusing") documentation of the origins and practices of "Camp".

^{task} adopted by the "ultras" - and ^{as a new and fairly amusing} ^{has been} ^{into} the world of standards ^{of taste} ^{and} ^{Non-Taste} - quite an extension ^{of it} ^{the difference} ^{at least} - and I wonder where it will ^{be} ^{from} ^{here}...

very therefore

[Notes on Gay Life during the 1910s by Allen Tanner]

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Charlesie dear: Amusing...but not at all consistent, accurate, or even chronologically correct! As far back as 1916 when I went to Chicago as a youth, I heard and knew the word "Camp" and saw its practiced frequently all the time—very frequently in different spots around the town! It was the frenzied activity exhibitionism that cheap homosexuals (who were obviously not real ladies!) indulged in and which they also designated alluded to as "letting ~~one's~~ their hair down". All around town—in the old Childs' Restaurants, particularly at night, there was always a gathering (many chorus "boys" (!!)) from the theater especially in some corner of the place where they "took over," revealing making manifestation of their homosexuality ~~by through~~ with these performances in a kind of group..i.e. "carrying on"—outrageously and screamingly—with all their special brand of "homo wit," impersonations (they always called themselves either "Gaby Deslys" "Olga Petrova" or "Theda Bara" etc etc.) and it was simply the nighttime indulgence of ~~a cult like~~ an almost cultish exhibitionism that had it been conducted in private (as it very often was) ~~it~~ they would have been ~~vested~~ clad in outrageously "extravagant" costumes ("Drag": this additional & relevant expression came—obviously—from the act of "dragging around long trains on gowns, feathers, veils etc) and of course

[Written upside down in top margin:]

Fags not concerned with taste or non-taste but with exaggeration

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since those creatures actually had absolutely no "taste" at all—(with no cultural, educational, intellectual or even family background) "camping" had therefore nothing absolutely to do with the domain of taste: and on the contrary was a quite monstrous violation if it...a caricature of it if you will, and for this reason it was very funny to watch and to see by sophisticated people who found it most amusing—although ~~however~~ frequently a bit embarrassing—in public. I am pretty sure the word "camp" ("to camp" or "to pitch camp"...denotes "installing oneself somewhere" or "taking over ~~the~~ a spot") was adopted ~~for~~ in the sense of just that very connotation. For there was usually one who had her followers and who had the most personality and was a great performer therefore took over—and spent the evening in a paroxysm of outrageous monologue, impersonations, "homo wit" (and frequently what they called "dishing" dirt—usually about their frustrating lovers or boyfriends, ~~and~~ or above all their rivals (often present even at the table—and who were hated with a venom that no scorned women could ever emulate aspire to!)so there you have, I believe a more historically accurate (if perhaps less "socially amusing") documentation of the origins and practices of "Camp". Now it has been adopted by the "ultras"—and as a new and faddy amusement has been drained of taste into the world of standards of "Non-Taste"—quite an extension of its true definition to say the least—and I wonder where it will go from here!???