

## HARD CO

## POLYLINGUS PERVERSITIES

Spring must be here. Otherwise, how to explain the correspondence of two sex-oriented events beginning April 30. The first, at the Kitchen presents "Polysexuality," described as "two evenings of hard-core theory and performance featuring ergonomic films, polydrag cabaret acts, one-night stand polyritual orchestras, polyritual ontological-distance theater, exploding sex shows and other masculine phos and polyperverse speech acts.

The other, considerably more uptown event, takes place at the Plaza Hotel. Here "Sex and Language" is the subject of the Fifth International Congress of Psychoanalysis, sponsored by the International Congress of Psychoanalysis, sponsored by the International Freudian Movement. Among the more than 150 participants will be (they say) world-renowned psychoanalysts, writers, filmmakers, artists, political scientists, philosophers and logicians, including Federico Fellini, Gunter Grass, Bernard Henri-Lévy, Milan Kundera, Richard Sennet, Thomas Szasz, Alain Resnais, Guy Talbot, William Burroughs and Lisa Wertzstiller.

At the head of both events are European-educated men committed to making academically-inspired thinking acceptable to the masses. First there is French-born Sylvère Lotringer, editor of *Semiotext(e)*, a magazine started in 1974 by a "loose group of semioticians dissatisfied with their sciences being divorced from society." Their science, semiotics, is one of those subjects artists tend to gravitate to when they are in college, and Lotringer,



Armando Verdiglione: 'Sex is not the androgynous'

who teaches French at Columbia, runs his very unofficial magazine out of his office there.

As the science of signs in society, semiotics tends to view the relationship between them by using language as a model, something Lotringer will clarify at his two evenings at the Kitchen. The first will feature live acts — Bloods from England, Richard Foreman's Rap Rap drama experience — readings, dance, music and some surprises. For the time being Lotringer explains polysexuality, a word he coined, as an update of Freud's polymorphous perversity — "multiplying the number of genders." Or, as Lotringer puts it: "Each person is a gender defining his own terms."

The coming issue of *Semiotext(e)*, said Lotringer, who peppers his conversation with references to Michel Foucault, Nietzsche and Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, is "an attempt to break down traditional sex divisions and to suggest any other forms of classification, if there need be one." In the meantime, he hopes that his semiotic approach to sexuality as a political tool will help him "foresee what society can come about from inside of capitalism. Maybe capitalism can produce possibilities for new lives that can be a radical departure from the '60s."

Uptown at the Plaza, they are getting ready for several thousand people expected to show up for the three-day multilingual event that will address questions like: "How does sex permeate language? How does language — the system of signs by which any manner of code can be

transmitted — affect sex? How can sex and language be redefined outside of their conventional biological and social uses?"

The brainchild of Armando Verdiglione, a 36-year-old psychoanalyst and entrepreneur from Milan, the International Freudian Movement was founded in 1972. Previous congresses held in Paris, Milan, London, Barcelona and Lisbon have addressed such subjects as Psychoanalysis and Politics, Madness, Violence and Truth.

With papers such as "Pen, Pencil and Penis," "Copulation and Expression" and "About the Masturbatory Society" scheduled for presentation at the Plaza, it's likely that the crowds Verdiglione hopes to attract will be drawn from the general public as much as from the ranks of professional psychoanalysts. "Sex is not the androgynous," said Verdiglione on a recent visit to New York where he and a staff of 10 were making preparations, meeting the press and dialing telephone calls from their Plaza headquarters. "Sex is not an immovable sphere," he said. "Sex concerns the step of time, the measure not the measurability. Sexuality concerns the logic which rules the rhythm — the sexual, the countersex."

In Italy, Verdiglione is well-known and respected. He has a publishing company that publishes his books and a magazine of international culture, *Sibuz*, which comes in a French and Italian edition. "The first industry of Italy is Fiat," says one analyst who has followed him rising star. "Verdiglione may be the next one." **DE**