

Obituary for Arthur D. Sullivan (1945-1992)

by Phillip W. Weiss

Known by his friends as Artie, Arthur David Sullivan was born in Brooklyn, New York on December 16, 1945. His parents were Arthur L. and Lillie Sullivan. He was an only child. Artie grew up in Brooklyn Heights. He graduated from Samuel H. Tilden High School. After high school, he attended college and earned a bachelor's degree. He was employed as a caseworker for the New York City Department of Social Services. His career with the city ended after a court found that he had mismanaged certain public funds.

Artie had many talents and interests. He was an avid sports fan. His favorite baseball team was the New York Mets. He attended the 1973 playoff game between the Mets and the Cincinnati Reds which the Mets won to win the pennant. He also followed current events and routinely expressed his opinions on issues of public interest. He was in Chicago during the 1968 Democratic Convention. He was also an ardent history buff and owned a large collection of history books. He was especially interested in World War Two and the Holocaust. His opinions on both subjects often were controversial and usually sparked lively discussions. His favorite movies were action adventures and comedies. His favorite comedian was Benny Hill. He was an excellent ping pong player and billiards player. Artie also was a cat owner.

However, the role in which Artie most excelled was as a social organizer. Artie was a natural born leader. He had charisma. People followed him. Artie attended hundreds of singles' functions, mostly in New York City and the Catskill Mountains when a hotel was hosting a singles' weekend event. He also attended hundreds of house parties, mostly in New York City and Los Angeles. He was constantly in contact with friends, organizing them into groups to attend functions. He was adept at crashing parties.

Artie achieved his greatest success as a social organizer at Fire Island. Each summer for ten consecutive years Artie rented a house at Fire Island. His house was always crowded with visitors and guests. People traveled from near and far to attend his parties and stay at his house, even if they had to pay. Artie knew how to have a good time and share his good times with others.

Women were the central feature of Artie's life. He dedicated himself to meeting them. He met them everywhere – at work, in the street, on the beach, and on airplanes. But mostly he met women at singles' functions. The singles' function allowed Artie to meet women who were looking to meet men, which was perfect for Artie.

Over the years, Artie met thousands of women. For him, meeting women was more than just an avocation, it was a mission. A date with a woman was never a casual get together. Rather it was a serious encounter with a specific goal: to "score a point." For Artie, scoring a point was a cause for celebration, and he celebrated often. He kept a written record of these contacts. Yet he was not a sexual predator. Women of all ages and ethnicities liked him.

Artie neither smoked cigarettes nor seriously abused drugs. However, he did consume large quantities of alcohol. His main drink was scotch, preferably Dewar's, straight with ice, poured from a half-gallon bottle into a ten or twelve ounce glass. Nevertheless, he was a responsible and sophisticated drinker. He never drank at work and except at Fire Island rarely drank during the day. He drank at night when socializing.

Artie was popular. He became a role model for many men who wanted to emulate his style. He was proud of his Irish background but associated with people from many different ethnicities. He had a wry sense of humor yet knew what to say to cheer people up. Although capable of acts of generosity, Artie shunned the label "nice guy," a term which to him meant loser, and to Artie a loser was chump and a fool and most of all a man who could not score, thus undeserving of respect.

A lifelong resident of Brooklyn Heights, Artie could usually be found at the public library, a local dining establishment or the Brooklyn Heights promenade. However, his favorite venue was a health club located on Livingston Street which he frequented on a daily basis. This was the place where Artie went to unwind. At the club he could be found in the sauna reading a newspaper and conversing with friends.

Artie believed in enjoying life to the utmost. He was upbeat and optimistic, and remained so even when his health began to deteriorate. He had kind words for those in distress and although capable of impetuous acts, never acted with malice. He grabbed life and held on to it for all it was worth.

On July 15, 1992 Artie died. He was 46 years old. For Artie, death happened suddenly. He collapsed on the street, in the middle of day, near where he lived. His death was witnessed by several passers-by. People were saddened and shocked by the news of Artie's passing. At least one-hundred persons attended his funeral. He was interred with his parents at the Evergreens Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York.

At the time of his death, Artie had no close living relatives. For him, his friends were his family. In that respect, he had a large family. At the time of his death, he was involved with a special lady. She was devoted to him. Now, he is at rest with his parents. It is fitting that he is there with them. For as they raised and nurtured Artie in life, so may they now watch over him and be with him for all eternity.





