MOTORCYCLE Syndrome

Young men
who drive
motorcycles, are
ent from

they any different from those who don't?

Dr. Armand M. Nicholi
Jr., Harvard psychiatrist,
became interested in nine
college students who were
undergoing psychotherapy.
All nine were unusually
preoccupied with motorcycles, and Dr. Nicholi
began wondering why.

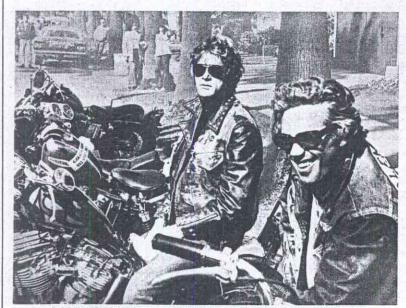
He observed that the nine were frequently worried about possible impotence, homosexuality, fear of aggressive women, bodily injury, and other implicating characteristics. He classified them as suffering from the "motorcycle syndrome."

For such young men, Dr. Nicholi believes, the motorcycle "is a powerful emotional prosthesis for the masculine part of his personality. The patient

suffers from a serious ego defect, causing him to see the motorcycle as an essential part of his body image. He cannot give it up: 'If I get rid of it, there will be nothing but me, and I fear that is not enough.'"

At the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Dr. Nicholi made clear that there are plenty of healthy motorcyclists, but that those suffering from the motorcycle syndrome should be recognized and treated quickly in an attempt to reduce the sharply mounting rate of motorcycle accidents and deaths in this country.

"Two years ago," Dr.
Nicholi pointed out, "2000
people were killed in
motorcycle accidents and a
quarter of a million
injured. Next year, 5000
people will be killed and
close to a million injured
in such accidents."



A SCENE FROM AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES' "HELL'S ANGELS '69," ONE OF SEVERAL FILMS CONCERNED WITH AMERICA'S MOTORCYCLE GANGS.

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