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1980 LA Internat'l Film Expo

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USA

Town Bloody Hall

1979. Color. 1.33 format. 88 min.

Producer: D.A. Pennebaker *Directors:* D.A. Pennebaker, Chris Hegedus *Cinematographers:* Jim Desmond, D.A. Pennebaker *Production Company-Print Source:* Pennebaker, Inc.

Presented at the London film festival 1979

After eight years in the making and waiting, D.H. Pennebaker records the plaintive cry that resounded around the world: "For heaven's sake, Jill, act like a lady." Norman Mailer, poet, essayist and boxer, entered the ring in another of his continuing rounds in the battle between the sexes. It's 1971—the place New York City's Town Hall. The temperature—hot and heavy.

Ostensibly there to defend his article, "The Prisoner of Sex," Mailer instead challenged the feminist hierarchy to dubious battle. Armed with prepared texts and criticism, the four panelists (Germaine Greer, Jill Johnston, Jacqueline Ceballos and Diana Trilling) occasionally outfox their roguish opponent at his own game. Mailer doubles as moderator and victim, and the proceedings become so giddy that they take on their own erotic subtext. The true colors of the convocation unfurl in what may be the most rousing performance of intellectual throat-cutting yet committed to film. —*Carlos Mendez*

