



ANNIVERSARY

NOV 1972

SISTERS Magazine is a monthly publication of the San Francisco chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, 1005 Market #208, San Francisco 94103. Subscriptions are \$5.00 per year for 12 issues, mailed in a plain envelope. Sample copies are 50¢ each.

SISTERS is a woman's space, focusing on women's art, graphics, poetry, photographics, prose and opinion, but SISTERS is not a vehicle for any particular political/social viewpoint.

All material appearing in SISTERS will be of the highest available quality. Only by striving towards professionalism will Lesbian women grow to respect and love themselves as creative and powerful in that a woman's most valuable resource is herself. All contributions accepted with love.

Any opinions expressed in SISTERS Magazine reflect only those of the women writers and are not necessarily those of the San Francisco chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis.



v. 3 no. 11

OFFICERS - SFDOB

Pres. Sharon Crase V. Pres. Marley
Secty. Charleen Pyron Ass't. Secty. Diane Richardson
Treasurer Allison House Fund Irene Librarian
Linda M. Wesley

STAFF - SISTERS MAGAZINE

Editor Karen Wells Co-Editor Norma Montgomery
Editorial Staff: Lyndall Cowan, Beth Elliott
Poetry: Terry Ryan; Art: JUDI; Photography: Jenny Wrenn

contents, november 1972

Lesbianism as a Political Statement.....	p 1
By Women	p 6
Football At Dolores Park.....	p 14
Politics of Mental Illness.....	p 16
Poetry.....	p 24
Letters.....	p 28
Book Reviews.....	p 32
The Matchmaker.....	p 36

LESBIANISM AS A POLITICAL STATEMENT

One of the sacred things in the Women's Liberation and Gay Women's Liberation Movements (we who have desecrated so much) is the autonomy of every woman -- her individuality, her distinctiveness, her own dissent within the dissenting movement itself. It is for this reason that I can't presume to speak for Women's Liberation or for Gay Women's Liberation, but only for what these groups mean to me in my association with them. Further, since it's clear (at least to every Lesbian) that homosexual women are as different from homosexual men as either is from the heterosexual, I will be here speaking more of the woman-part of the Lesbian than of her homosexuality; it is in her identity as a woman that she finds her fundamental political identity. Finally, that word "political" will have to bear the additional meaning of the word "revolutionary."

The spectrum that is the homophile community embraces a wide range of people whose political postures vary from the militant to the silent; in it are enraged women and men preparing for an armed struggle, bisexual "hippie-type" drop outs, outspoken homosexuals maintaining a livelihood in the "establishment," "hidden" homosexuals still in the professions and the high-paying jobs, and women and men who have not done more than whisper their fear (and to them it is a fear) that they may be latent homosexuals. The majority of all gay people will admit that their oppression results from something's being horribly wrong with society; the more radical groups, such as Gay Women's Liberation, seem to have a broad concept of things specifically that are wrong and further, a broad vision of what could be -- the ways in which human beings, under different economic and social circumstances, could relate to

each other. Gay Women's Liberation, like the Women's Liberation Movement, is beginning slowly but powerfully to articulate both its discontent with the status quo and its vision of human potential.

Lesbianism is implicitly revolutionary. If I indulge in a homosexual act I am in two significant ways in revolt with my brother, the gay man: first, I rebel with him against the government because I am breaking the law; second, I rebel with him against the Church which requires that my love-making be restricted to the opposite sex (and to only one of those, at that). But at this juncture my gay brother and I part company as revolutionaries and my oppression as a Lesbian becomes distinctively and more fundamentally my oppression as a woman.

1. I am in deeper and more righteous revolt than is my homosexual brother against the exploitative capitalistic economy which looks at the home I live in, i.e., at my very body and tell me (as it does not tell a man) that that body is an object of male pleasure on which I am expected to use thirty tubes of lipstick every year and for which I am to purchase a wardrobe whose shoes will cripple my feet and whose skirt lengths will capriciously change every season at the whim of some Paris or New York designer (male).

2. From a more radical standpoint than a gay man, I am in revolt against the nuclear family structure -- home, motherhood, and even apple pie -- which tells me (as it does not tell any man) that the only choice I have is to marry and have children (as to how many I shall have, I have no say-so) and that I must grow emptier with every passing year as a thin shadow of my superior husband.

3. Unlike the gay man who is in revolt against the Church, I am in revolt against the whole rationalistic, unfeeling, bureaucratic, duty-bound, male-

instigated and male-perpetuated Protestant/Catholic/Jewish ethic which has branded me (as it has not branded any man) a "helpmeet" or a "rib" rather than a person -- the same ethic which (more directly than the Church would care to admit) is responsible for the power-mad waging of war and destruction, the same mentality which with its penis-probing machines and blissful unconcern has robbed and exploited the earth and its resources just as it has robbed and exploited me, a woman.

4. I am in revolt against an educational system which has told me (as it has not told any man) that my mind is inferior and my emotions sub-human, a system of male deans and presidents, male boards of regents, male superintendents and principals, which -- because I am a passive woman -- has paid me less and worked me harder than any man.

5. I am in more angry revolt than is my gay brother at a medical profession which informs me (as it does not inform him) that it will be damned hard for me to become a doctor, which in the name of hygiene makes a concerted effort to alienate my sisters from their children in the sterility of hospital childbirth, and which tells me as Freud has told it that my neurosis is simply my failure to accept the fact of womanhood's inferiority.

I am in revolt against a complex interwoven system whose every part conspires by both subtle and obvious means with every other part to keep me down. So name any institution or institutionalized idea and you name my oppressor, whether it is the mass media with its perpetuation of the myths about me and the automotive industry which profits from my ignorance of carburetors, or the chivalry that would so nobly put me in the lifeboat first, or the superstud who wants me in bed and in the world only in one position -- on my back where I'm helpless.

As the Woman's Movement begins its political involvement (and it is only just beginning), two phenomena stand out: there is within the movement a fear of excessive structure and a desire for honest relationships.

The structure phobia rises out of the realization that an organization can become an institution (like the Church or the education system) the moment it ceases to serve the needs of its members. Thus a mass meeting of women characteristically has no officers, no chairwoman (except one chose impromptu), no agenda (except that brought by those attending), no committees (except those formed spontaneously whenever and wherever women decide to get together for some specific purpose -- and that happens often), and no vote (but rather a consensus that takes into account the diversity of psyches there assembled). However threatening such looseness may be, it finds justification in its contrast to the overly-organized, man-ordered procedures that we're accustomed to. It is cumbersome, time-consuming, rambling, frustrating, tiring, and ultimately effective.

The desire for honest relationships springs from a disenchantment with the roles that men have defined for women and from a realization that lines of communication among women have been blocked by such role-playing. The Small Group has become the indispensable vehicle of women's liberation and of women's committed solidarity. Participation leads to involvement, and participation begins best in the highly personal sharing of experiences with other women, in women learning to love other women -- and yes, that sometimes means loving physically. The Small Group develops the natural and fundamental characteristics of women as relational beings; it strengthens women in their individual battles against oppression; it assures more interest in and a deeper understanding of the political activities undertaken by women in larger groups.

Both Women's Liberation and Gay Women's Liberation are understructured, intensely relational arenas of expression for women who seek more than the status quo can offer. Coffee clatches and quilting bees may be fun and good but they are not enough; gay bars and dances may be fun and good but they are not enough. There is a deeper place we can go with women as persons; there is a wider territory we can cover with women as powerful political entities -- there is sisterhood and there is rebellion.

We are learning that (in the vernacular) the world had better get its shit together. I believe women understand this need better than men, that more women are rapidly coming and will come to understand it. When that happens, over half the population of the world just might be involved. That's a considerable number of people, the proportions of a real revolution -- perhaps the first real revolution we have experienced as a human race.

I invite men, too, to examine themselves -- by themselves -- beginning with full and honest recognition of what they have done and are still doing to half the population of the globe. In discovering their oppressiveness, they may well come upon the causes of their own oppression.

In the Japanese films of Hiroshima's holocaust there is a small child's message written in the atomic dust -- she's desperately searching for her family: "Sister, where are you?" She could also have written, "Brother, where are you?" Both questions are my own. But the first has for me a clear priority. I'll find my sisters first. They will help me to my brothers -- if brothers there be.

- Sally Gearhart
December, 1970

LESBIAN/FEMINIST NEWSPAPER
COMING OUT MONTHLY

\$5 a year

the furies

219 11th st. s.e.

wash. d.c. 20003



AMAZON QUARTERLY

A new lesbian-feminist arts journal coming out this Fall with stories, plays, essays, reviews, poetry, black-and-white drawings and prints.

Send manuscripts and graphics to:

554 Valle Vista

Oakland, Ca. 94610

1 yr. sub. \$4.

Bulk order rates

BY WOMEN

It is surprisingly easy to announce to someone that you are gay. You merely open your mouth and say, "I'm gay." And watch the reaction. Which varies.

At some point in my life -- about a year ago -- I decided that I was tired of playing games with my friends. They were admittedly heterosexual and were free to speak of their husbands or children or lovers in casual conversation. And they did. But I was not free to speak of my lover. I had a choice: I could change the pronoun and call her a he, which is easy enough; or I could ignore my own sexual and social existence and listen to theirs. Neither choice appealed to me.

Living in Berkeley makes everything a great deal easier. Most of my friends are to the left of the liberals and most of them do fully believe in the rights of human beings to do their own things. And, given these conditions, their responses to my announcement should have been easy to judge.

After my decision to "come out" and be open, it was not difficult to choose the time and place. I dropped the news on two of my married friends over a game of pinochle one night. We had been playing for several hours, were into our third quart of beer, had consumed several joints, and my friend Mary chanced to ask about my love life. It was a casual question, tossed onto the table with her ace of clubs. I took a deep breath and said, playing my only club, "As a matter of fact, I've been meaning to tell you. I'm gay."

I don't remember how that particular hand came out. I do know that I was blushing to my roots. Mary said, "Oh, well, that's fine," and continued to play the hand as always. I did not imagine the



sort of silly little smile on her face. But it was Frank who reacted. And in no way which I had expected.

He just stared at me, a bit lopsides, with an ear-to-ear grin on his face. And he was blushing, too. The hand, of course, was a lost cause. I couldn't count cards, Frank wasn't even trying to, and Mary seemed -- at best -- remote, but still smiling.

It wasn't bad for a first attempt. It in no way damaged the friendships and did make them even stronger over the course of time.

My second declaration came with Leslye, whom I had originally been very hung up on. Until I discovered that she was definitely heterosexual. At which point we became very good friends. I broke the news to her over a cup of coffee one afternoon when we were rapping about nothing in particular. She merely looked at me and said, "Yeah, I knew that. So what were you going to say?"

It was more difficult with Curly, who had been my closest friend for years and years. I had managed to avoid telling her because she is, without doubt, the most conservative person I know. She even lives in Los Angeles. But we did get together often, and one night when she was staying with me, I told her. She was not bothered by the news, although she at first tried to convince me that life was difficult enough without making additional problems for oneself.

I told her that I thought heterosexuality -- for me at least -- was an additional problem which I did not want to cope with. I would stay gay and take my chances. She has made no negative comment since then and her awareness of what it means to be a Lesbian seems to be growing with the passage of time.

There were a couple of friends who were a bit more tricky. Both lived back East and were friends I had met when I lived there. Both also knew the woman I had first loved, who had since gone straight and who did not want anyone to suspect that she might have ever been anything but straight. I put off telling them for months, and our friendships suffered by the lack of honesty. I was feeling very good about myself, where I was at, and my renewed knowledge that gay is good.

So, one at a time, I broke it to them. One friend wrote back, "Big deal. I don't consider sexual preference a criterion for much of anything. You have brown hair, you like women. What else is new?"

It was not all rosy, though. The other friend accepted it and said that it was fine with her. But her letters got progressively more terse. She snapped at fragments of my letters which she said were insulting to her intelligence -- even though I was totally unaware that I changed anything about my correspondence to her. She certainly could not have believed that I was in any way denigrating her mind. Why? We have not yet worked it out -- and I doubt that she would see her own pattern of response nor that her pickiness began with my admission of Lesbianism. She is frightened.

Another friend and co-worker was told the news during a long chat one day. She gradually stopped dropping into my office for coffee or conversation. I was surprised, but assume that it is her hangup and not mine that is in the way there.

Another co-worker turned the tables on me. We had had an office celebration and the two of us, half-soused on mulled wine, were left to clean up -- which was fine with us since we were not really sober enough to return to the office routine.

This woman and I had never had much of a relationship at all. She was whiny and bitchy much of the time and her personality clashed most severely with mine. I knew she liked me and knew that I was not likely to respond to her overtures of friendship. But I did not dislike her and she was interesting to talk with. We were office friends: no more.

We began talking about families and what expectations they had for their children, and I rather casually admitted that my mother wanted grandchildren from me but that I was not really very likely to produce them since I was gay.

She smiled broadly and said, "I thought so. As a matter of fact, I've always liked you and wondered why you didn't like me back." And from her expression I could see that she was thinking: you are gay and I like you and therefore you should like me because I am a woman. We can be lovers.

The fact that she was a woman did not remove her negative qualities, unfortunately, and I was not able to alter my lukewarm feelings for her. Which she did not understand. It was the first time another woman had ever made a pass at me. I did not like it, and she did not like being turned down.

Despite the complications, it has been a very interesting year. A good one. More than one friend whom I have told has given the whole scene considerable thought. A married friend has finally come to the realization that, even though she loves her husband, she has always been more attracted to other women. Two others have acknowledge having had serious involvements with other women.

The question that arises in my own mind is simple: Statistics garnered hither and yon would seem to indicate that Lesbians comprise something less than 10% of the population. My own random

sampling among my friends in this particular area would indicate that at least a third of them have had or would be receptive to Lesbian experience. We all know that the data accumulated on homosexuality is unprecise. Homosexuals have always lived in fear of disclosure. Worse, since many authorities and most textbooks in print consider homosexuality to be a disease of the mind, an admission of homosexuality is an admission of mental illness. Who needs that? Of course, the statistics are screwed. Or perhaps the word is supposed to be skewed. Whatever....

I don't believe I am mentally ill because I prefer the gentleness, the warmth, the sincerity of women. I don't believe I am sick because I don't like my sex casually and without emotional involvement. That's a male trip, and I don't buy it.

I have discovered in the past year that a number of my supposedly heterosexual friends were/are Lesbians or so inclined. Let's face the fact: homosexuality is the topic of more confusion and less fact than most human states. And it's really a pity, since homosexuals are people just like everyone else. Some of them are better and some of them are worse.

I consider myself a fairly decent human being -- let it be known that I am a fairly decent Lesbian human being.

- Norma Montgomery
July, 1972

BY WOMEN

GAY (NESS)
IS
ALOVE
AND
WELL

AND
LIVING
IN
EVERY
BODY



donnie

© 1972

Photo: Sasha
Gregory

I am writing this sketch to *Sisters* because I think others might be interested in the unusual situation that I and my lover find ourselves in. To begin with, I have been married to my husband for the past eight years, and I had thought about what it would be like to have a relationship with another woman but never had any opportunity until a year ago when this interesting couple moved in next door. I took one look at her and knew that there would be something more between us than just the usual housewife chit-chat over coffee.

Since I had never been involved within a relationship of this nature, I really did not know how to get started with her. I thought about her day and night; I would watch her come and go. I was completely captivated with her. And for some unknown reason, just the way our eyes would meet and the way she would smile, I knew. So after a couple of weeks, I asked her to go for a hike in the woods, and in my way I questioned her on many subjects, especially sex. I learned so much from her in a round-about way that I was ready to make my move. I must admit that I was a little frightened because all my dreams could blow up in my face; but I took the bull by the horns and one morning after she had taken her husband to work, I had her in for coffee. My stomach was jumping, my hands were wet -- I had never done anything like this before. I asked her to sit down, and while she was sipping her coffee, I told her that I was interested in her in a way that I had never thought could be possible.

For twelve months now the clandestine affair has been going on completely unknown to our husbands. What is so remarkable about the whole affair is that as heterosexual couples, we are the best of friends -- alone we two are lovers. The heterosexual marriage

FOOTBALL AT DOLORES PARK

OR

EAT YOUR HEART OUT, ATILA THE HUN

is only a convenience and a cover-up. We have considered leaving our husbands and making a life of our own, but we seem trapped by the security our husbands represent, and unable to face the social and family pressures that would result from our divorces. So we have decided to remain friends and lovers and enjoy the situation as it stands now. Who knows what the future might hold!

We both enjoy reading *Sisters* and we support DOB and the work they are accomplishing for the Lesbian and her role in life. We only wish we were closer so we could work with you.

- O and S
March, 1972



Being basically naive, I ventured from my warm apartment last Sunday to take part in what the *Sisters* calendar so lightly termed "football at Dolores Park."

My mood on that soft sunny day was one of frivolity: dashing onto field, a rose in hair, teeth glistening in the 2 o'clock shadow of the rolling hills of Dolores. As I look back on those first few fleeting moments of health and jubilation, I don't picture myself as naive anymore. Stupid maybe, but not naive.

My first hint of the battle to come should have occurred to me when I viewed the opposing team in a good light. By the time I discovered they weren't the offensive line of the Green Bay Packers, I had been tackled twice, suffering contusions of the personality and abrasions to my good nature. Then the game started. . . .

I will spare you the emotional and physical consequences and a play-by-play description of the mayhem that ensued. I will say only that by half-time, I had maneuvered myself to the position of left end, thereby spending most of my time in the vestibule of Mission Dolores, reading a copy of the Blue Cross Plan.

I am determined, however, to make a mark on women's football in the Bay Area. My first step is to open an insurance office in Boise, Idaho. My second step is to take up tennis.

- Terry Ryan
February, 1972

THE POLITICS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

With the new militance of the homosexual community and its ever-growing demands for "Gay Liberation," the '70's will see new programs designed to safeguard the "mental health" of homosexuals. The concept of mental illness, based on theory, conjecture and rationalizations of pseudo-scientists and moralists bent on preserving the status quo, is being seriously challenged -- not only by homosexuals themselves, but also by many in the "helping" professions.

In January of this year two homosexuals, Sally Gearhart and Rick Stokes, were seated on the Board of Directors of San Francisco's Family Service Agency. When an ad-hoc committee of homosexuals challenged this United Bay Area Crusade agency, the board and its staff came to realize the unique problems of homosexuals in family counseling. They recognized, too, that the homophile community itself was a valuable resource for helping them to design and implement a realistic counseling program for teenaged homosexuals, for Lesbian mothers and for parents who have just learned that their daughter or son is a homosexual.

The San Francisco Mental Health Association was also challenged by the Homosexual Action Forum to put "mental health" back into the lives of homosexuals instead of safeguarding passé concepts of mental illness. In February the Association appointed a Task Force on Homosexuality, comprised of members of the homophile community and professional persons from various disciplines, to develop a position statement and public education program. While lay members of the Association readily agreed that laws making homosexuals criminals should be repealed and that discrimination and social ostracism directed



Copyrighted © 1972 by Genevieve Namba

against homosexuals is inimical to the mental health not only of the affected minority but of the community as a whole, they nonetheless balked at making any statement to refute the concept of mental illness. On this they deferred to the psychiatric profession, the nation's stalwart guardians of mental illness. However, the Association's Professional Advisory Committee, which includes some psychiatrists along with other "mental health" professionals, had no difficulty in saying, "Homosexuality can no longer be equated with sickness, but may properly be considered as a preference, orientation or propensity for a certain life style."

The National Association for Mental Health had adopted a statement, "Homosexuality and Mental Illness," at its meeting last November, declaring that homosexuality "does not constitute a specific mental or emotional illness" and urging the elimination of criminal penalties for homosexual acts committed in private. The statement briefly traced various theories about the etiology of homosexuality, ending with a summation that, whatever its cause, homosexuality "appears to be as deeply motivated as normal heterosexual behavior...." Further, it pointed out, "There is no evidence either in empirical research or in the experience of other countries that homosexual behavior in itself endangers the health of the individual or of society."

When the adoption of the NAMH statement was reported in *Psychiatric News* of February 3, 1971, there was apparently some flack from a number of psychiatrists. By what right had this upstart, "non-professional" organization made such a statement? Only the holier-than-thou American Psychiatric Association had the right to determine what constitutes mental illness.

The APA has long ignored challenges made from within its ranks by Dr. Thomas S. Szasz, author of

such books as *The Myth of Mental Illness* and *The Manufacture of Madness*. For years Szasz has warned his colleagues about their vague and capricious concepts and classifications of mental illness. He refers to psychiatry as a *theoretical* science based on the study of personal conduct, and he contends that so long as social scientists concern themselves with how man *ought* to live, their stance of being engaged in empirical science cannot be justified. He claims rightly that ethical problems cannot be solved by medical methods. Szasz also questions the reclassification of behavior, like homosexuality, as mental illness -- the new criteria being disability and suffering or "malfunctioning" based on no matter what norm. Thus homosexuality is arbitrarily regarded as illness only because heterosexuality is the accepted social norm.

The gay community is not to be put off any longer by the American Psychiatric Association, however. In May, 1970 during their convention in San Francisco, members of Gay Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation disrupted their proceedings during the presentation of a paper on aversion therapy (the brainwashing technique most Americans deplored when it was applied to our war prisoners during the Korean War). Most of the 600 psychiatrists present lost their cool and indignantly stormed out of the meeting which was hastily adjourned. But a few, who were shocked into facing the fact there might be some justification to the grievances of homosexuals, remained and entered into dialogue with the angry intruders.

As a result, a panel was arranged for this year's convention in Washington, D. C., on "Life Styles of Nonpatient Homosexuals," which should have read "*impatient* homosexuals." But this was only a sop, of course. The panel was scheduled for the last evening of week-long meetings, after many registrants had left; it was one of 22 panels going on

simultaneously; it also had to compete with James Reston, the featured speaker at the main session of the evening; and attendance was more like 60 than 600. Furthermore, earlier in the week at more heavily attended sessions business went on as usual. Dr. Irving Bieber delivered a paper on "Homosexual Psychodynamics in Psychiatric Crisis;" films were shown to demonstrate Behavior Therapy, which, in the case of the homosexual, was euphemistically called "covert desensitization," and consisted really of "scare tactics" in order to get the homosexual to change; and there was an exhibit by the Farrall Instrument Company which sells "conditioning" equipment for "scientific research, education or treatment of patients."

Despite the fact that the APA meetings were heavily guarded and no one was permitted at any of the sessions or exhibits without an official badge because of the "gay zap" the previous year, the Gay Liberation Front stormed through the doors (which had been left unlocked) shouting "Gay is Good" and "Gay is Proud" during the formal convocation held the first evening. The GLF spokesman was wrestled off the platform and pushed to the floor, a drop of about four feet, amid angry epithets from staid and "respectable" psychiatrists in the audience. Frank Kameny, founder of Washington Mattachine and recent candidate for Congress in the District of Columbia's first election this year, rushed forward, picked up the prepared statement, grabbed the microphone and read the "demands" of the gay community. The intruders then filed out peacefully.

Ramsey Clark, former United States attorney general, then gave his keynote address. He urged the psychiatrists to become "involved" with what is happening in the world today, to recognize and to do something about the "overcriminalization" of many of our citizens who are poor, who are addicted to drugs

NOVEMBER BOOK OF

THE MONTH:

Patience & Sarah (A Place for Us)

by Isabelle Miller

Award winning Lesbian novel

Discussions at

150 Landers #4 at 2 PM

November 19, 1972

Women's Auto Works
1998 Evans Ave. - S.F.

8am - 3:30pm 826-9940

Amer. & import. cars
VW Specialists

Call for appointment

Karen & Susan

SF DOB
November '72
Events

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
8			1 RAP 7pm	2	3	4 Football 2pm
5 Porny Book Auction 6pm	6 Board Meet. 7pm	7	8 RAP 7pm	9	10 Bus. Meet. 8pm	11
12 Penny Poker 5pm	13	14	15 RAP 7pm	16	17	18 Watergun Field Day 2pm
19 Book Rap 2pm	20	21	22 RAP 7pm	23 Thanks- giving dinner	24	25
26	27	28	29 RAP 7pm	30		

Listen to DOB women
on KPFA, FM Radio
at 5:30 PM = 95 on your
dial. Tell your friends.

RAPS: 1st-Irene Gay Scene in London 8th-Sharon Transsexuals in DOB 15th-Lyndall & Marley
Political & Non-political Lesbianism 22nd-Diane R. The Ugly Duckling 29th-Liane ???
Nov. 6 Board meeting in DOB office--board members only. Nov. 10th Business meeting
8pm. in office--1005 Market #208 Come and Vote! All women welcome. Nov 5th PORNY BOOH
AUCTION Come and bid for your favorite trash novel. Coffee and cookies provided. 6pm. in
DOB office. Proceeds will go into the library fund. Nov. 12th Penny Poker 5pm. at 1440
Guerrero (corner of Army) BYOB. Nov. 19 Book Rap 150 Landers 2pm. Nov. 18th Water
Gun Field Day-- bring waterguns, buckets & balloons. McLaren Park off Silver & Gambier 2pm.
FOOTBALL Nov4th & Nov 18th McLaren Park 2pm. Nov 23rd. Thanksgiving Dinner. Sign up in the
DOB office for reservations, time, and place. BYOF with turkey provided by DOB

PEN FRIEND

DOB is now attempting to start a pen friend club. Please indicate if you desire your pen friend to be located as close to your city as possible. Let us know if you would prefer your pen friend's name and address sent to you via postcard or plain envelope. Please send 1.00 with your request to help pay for expenses. This dollar will put you on our mailing list for as long as you wish.

SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS, INCLUDING ZIP CODE TO:

MS. PAULA McCORKEL
1005 MARKET ST. #208
SAN FRANCISCO CA. 94103

**city reproductions
printers**

721 CAMINO PLAZA, SAN BRUNO, CA 94066
(415) 589-2544

**barbara
harry**

or alcohol, who dare to speak out against injustice, who have a different life style or sexual preference. He was given a standing ovation by the audience, very few of whom would be able to see the correlation between Clark's speech and the incident that preceded it.

Dr. Bieber, in the meantime, was panic-stricken and sought protection from convention managers lest there be some sort of outbreak from the homophile community during his presentation the next morning. Dr. Kent Robinson, Baltimore psychiatrist who had coordinated our panel, was asked to co-chair the session. Robinson said he would but only with our approval. We assured him that no demonstration was planned, that the "zap" of the previous evening was timed so as to confront a maximum number of psychiatrists at what was presumed to be the best attended function of the week's program. We merely asked for assurance that we would have an opportunity to respond to Bieber's paper during the discussion period.

Bieber, we found, has changed his tune somewhat: male homosexuality is no longer due to the fear of women, but to the fear of men; there is a "latent heterosexual" component in all homosexuals, but the converse is not true -- now "latent homosexuality" is called "pseudohomosexual crisis;" he does not advocate changing *all* homosexuals, only those who seek it. When Kameny questioned Bieber as an "authority" on homosexuality, Bieber refused to enter into any dialogue, saying questions or comments should be limited to the content of his paper. When I refuted his contention (in his paper) that homosexuals suffered a greater severity of "work disorders" and "avoided high order achievement" by pointing out problems of job discrimination including the fact that employers often pass up for promotion those male employees over 30 who are unmarried, he replied he was not an authority on female

homosexuality. Though I was indeed grateful for this admission, it was hardly an adequate response to my point -- the fact that what is usually purported to be "homosexual behavior" is really a commentary on social intolerance and has nothing to do with homosexuality per se.

During the discussion, one psychiatrist noted, "It is the function of society to define disease and social problems. We can only deal with those who come to use who call themselves sick."

Those of us attending the convention considered ourselves part of society and definitely did not consider ourselves sick. Larry Littlejohn, past president of the Society for Individual Rights, with the help of Dr. Robinson, made an appointment for us to speak with a member of the Nomenclature Committee, which reviews the classifications in the APA's *Standard Diagnostic Manual*. In this booklet are listed various mental illnesses under the headings of Psychosis, Neurosis and Character Disorders. In the last revision of the manual homosexuality was transferred from the list of character disorders to a separate category called Sexual Perversions. Whereas most listings also entail lengthy diagnostic descriptions, in the case of homosexuality there is only the single word -- without explanation. It was our contention that this word should be removed entirely from the next edition, which is scheduled for 1974. The member we spoke with agreed to present our case to the full five-member Nomenclature Committee at its next meeting. In the meantime, it would be helpful to get psychiatrists who are members of the APA to write letters approving of this omission.

The next target was the Farrall Instrument Company's exhibit of slides for use with "visual shockers, manual shockers and systematic desensiti-

zation" on Lesbians, homosexuals, transvestites, gamblers, addicts and alcoholics. By this time Barbara Gittings and George Bodamer, of Philadelphia's Homophile Action League, had joined us. As a body, we voiced our objections to Mr. Farrall on the use of such barbaric tortures on our homosexual sisters and brothers. He merely laughed at us -- until we told him that unless he removed the exhibit from the floor voluntarily that night we would have it forcibly removed the next day. We then requested a meeting with the exhibit committee and lodged our complaint. Farrall's was a commercial exhibit for which he had paid a fee, and the APA was caught in the middle, but a compromise was reached: the words "Lesbian" and "homosexual" were taped over and slides of same were removed for the duration of the exhibit. The next day Farrall was more than willing to "discuss" with us our objections.

After another encounter with the panelists following the aversion therapy film showing alluded to earlier, our panel seemed rather anti-climactic. Jack Baker, newly elected president of the University of Minnesota student body, and Lilli Vincenz, who has been active in various gay women's groups in the East, appeared along with Kameny, Littlejohn and myself. The subject, "Life Styles," often gave way to tirades about self-styled psychiatric authorities on homosexuality, like Bieber and Dr. Charles Socarides. But at least we provoked some psychiatrists into declaring angrily they were tired of being harangued about a few men, who were not necessarily representative and who did not speak for them. To which Kameny retorted, "Then why aren't *you* presenting the papers, writing the books, and appearing on television? If there is differing opinion, the public should know. That's what we are talking about!"

What effect we had on the psychiatrists we had a chance to rap with or on those who are affronted

by demonstrations remains to be seen. But we do know this: the liberal element of APA had 42% of the vote in the business meeting this year, and there is a strong and growing "radical caucus" among the membership of this conservative institution. There is some talk of a return engagement at the Dallas meetings next year. In any event, APA has not heard the last of "Gay Liberation."

- Del Martin



Eyes

My mother said
Of her mother:
Her eyes are
Gold-brown;
Like bee's backs.

My mother's eyes
Speckled pebbles
In swift-running
Water.

At the mirror
Observing my own;
Just eyes.

Wondering
What my daughter
Would have seen
If I had had one.

untitled

--Elsa Gidlow
April, 1971

Images
Throbbing syncopation

Touch, touches, touching
Face, faces, facing
Snap, click, spinning.

Imagery of woods, sounds
Sun filtering through the pines
Walking shoulder to shoulder
Arm to arm
Hand in hand
Fredrika at your heels;
Crunching-twigs underfoot
Pause-look into depths of pupils
Doe-like eyes.

(cont.)

I leave you
 wrapped warm
 smiling and dreaming
 I will be a hero
 among them
 for I
 am in love.

--Debbie
 April, 1971

Smiles

When you walked around in Boston,
 Surely Con-Edison had cause to sue
 Everytime you opened your mouth.

And when you entered Paris,
 The City of Light lived up to her name.
 What are they doing for the tourists
 Now that you're gone?

But my San Geronimo cabin is
 The darkest place of all,
 While you --
 So many miles from here,
 Dispel the London fog.

--Pomerleau
 November, 1971

Let It Be

Let us be as flocks of birds
 In the changing skies of circumstance --
 Guiding each other
 By touching wings as we pass.

--Claire Baker
 June, 1971

LETTERS

Dear Sisters:

About 1:15 a.m. here. I just came in from an evening with friends. Some observations from my position as high school woman, and generally that being more of spectator than participant. The young gay woman undergoes much hardship. There is difficulty in relating to high school males with mature bodies and "little boy" sensitivity (e.g., "gimme, gimme, gimme"). There is little opportunity to meet other older males who would hopefully dissipate the rapidly forming distasteful male pig stereotype.

I personally do not know any gay high school women: With straight high school women, there are obvious barriers. Well, obvious to me anyway. Most of them are into a whole male/female trip. The emphasis is on coupling even if there's nobody you particularly care for. Even though this saddens me, I can understand it. The whole high school social scene is built on such "absolutes" as status, popularity, clothes (in this case the authentic shabbiness of one's blue jeans!). . . a regular tyranny. And of course, nobody wants to be left out in the cold.

At our high school prom (remember?), we'll commence a 24-hour whirlwind of activities with ballroom dancing. Coupling?! Whose dress is more expensive?! Actually, I think it might be great fun to waltz around to a string orchestra, approached from a casual standpoint. But the coupling disturbs me. I was thinking of having a close girl friend fly in and we could "make beautiful music" while gliding around the room. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, I won't be in Chicago for the prom. I'm going to the East Coast to do some independent studying.

I leave you wrapped warm
 smiling and dreaming
 I will be a hero among them
 for I am in love.

--Debbie
 April, 1971

Smiles

When you walked around in Boston,
 Surely Con-Edison had cause to sue
 Everytime you opened your mouth.

And when you entered Paris,
 The City of Light lived up to her name.
 What are they doing for the tourists
 Now that you're gone?

But my San Geronimo cabin is
 The darkest place of all,
 While you --
 So many miles from here,
 Dispel the London fog.

--Pomerleau
 November, 1971

Let It Be

Let us be as flocks of birds
 In the changing skies of circumstance --
 Guiding each other
 By touching wings as we pass.

--Claire Baker
 June, 1971

LETTERS

Dear Sisters:

About 1:15 a.m. here. I just came in from an evening with friends. Some observations from my position as high school woman, and generally that being more of spectator than participant. The young gay woman undergoes much hardship. There is difficulty in relating to high school males with mature bodies and "little boy" sensitivity (e.g., "gimme, gimme, gimme"). There is little opportunity to meet other older males who would hopefully dissipate the rapidly forming distasteful male pig stereotype.

I personally do not know any gay high school women. With straight high school women, there are obvious barriers. Well, obvious to me anyway. Most of them are into a whole male/female trip. The emphasis is on coupling even if there's nobody you particularly care for. Even though this saddens me, I can understand it. The whole high school social scene is built on such "absolutes" as status, popularity, clothes (in this case the authentic shabbiness of one's blue jeans!). . . a regular tyranny. And of course, nobody wants to be left out in the cold.

At our high school prom (remember?), we'll commence a 24-hour whirlwind of activities with ballroom dancing. Coupling?! Whose dress is more expensive?! Actually, I think it might be great fun to waltz around to a string orchestra, approached from a casual standpoint. But the coupling disturbs me. I was thinking of having a close girl friend fly in and we could "make beautiful music" while gliding around the room. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, I won't be in Chicago for the prom. I'm going to the East Coast to do some independent studying.

More about the high school scene as I see it: High school sisters are so preoccupied with their blossoming sexuality (hetero) that gayness is never mentioned. The school radiates an extremely stodgy set of values on that matter as well as others, anyway.

My female classmates supposedly come from "liberal" homes, yet as far as I can see, early socialization has definitely left its imprint. Enormous preoccupation with physical appearance. Our older sisters' emphasis on finding "the" pair of saddle-shoes has only been replaced by hours spent embroidering overalls. In the classroom, the girls are getting good grades. They are attentive, always turn in assignments on time. But there is not the same struggle for ideas, the persistence to be heard that seems to characterize the males. In classes, especially English and Social Science where personal opinions and backing-up their validity are important, I stick out like a sore thumb. I talk for about the same amount of time as the average participating male, but compared to the females, I'm Verbiage Feminized.

I'm wary in my relationships with high school women because I realize the limitations and I don't want to become frustrated. However, I feel that it's important that there aren't many high school women who I'd really want a heavy relationship with. Not that I'm a snob. It's just that we have been socialized to be DULL! And many of us are.

I'm active in the Women's Liberation Movement. One of its many joys is the opportunity to meet attractive, dynamic women who aren't afraid to think, and attempt new experiences. Even more significant is their willingness to fall flat on their faces in seeking growth.

Well, it's pretty lonely for me here. I find myself growing increasingly alienated from both high school males and females. I spend time with people but I'm afraid it's on a superficial level. I mean about as much to them as they to me.

Some good friends. All living quite far away. So I sit back and remind myself I will soon be out of this strangling institution known as high school and will be able to spend time with those I care for. And I'm always open to new relationships.

Incidentally, I'm slowly inching my way out of the closet. In my situation, I have to be cautious. It occurs to me there might be other women in high school that share my sentiments but then I reconsider. I doubt it. I've met some gay women through a workshop and they're beautiful. They don't type me as a high schooler. Their sense of fairness gives me the conviction to feel strength as an individual and attempt overcoming my social, as well as self-imposed, limitations.

I'm about to fall asleep as I write this. It just seemed important to share these thoughts with an empathetic soul. Salutations to all the lovely sisters out there. Best wishes for continued success with the publication.

- "J"
June, 1972

WOMEN ARE ALWAYS INVOLVE
IN UNIMPORTANT CONCERNS

FOOD
SHELTER
CLOTHING
PEOPLE
FRIENDSHIP
LOVE
BIRTH
NURTURANCE
HEALTH
COOPERATION
COMMUNITY
SENSITIVITY
ANIMALS
PLANTS
TRANSPORTATION
GOODS
EDUCATION
LIVING
PEACE
LIFE

MEN ALWAYS TALK ABOUT THE
MOST SIGNIFICANT THINGS

BOOZE
OFFICE
SMOKERS
ANATOMIES
FRATERNIZING
SEX
VIRILITY
HEIRS
SPORTS
COMPETITION
POLITICIANS
CRUDITY
HUNTING
PROPERTY
HORSEPOWER
PROFITS
TAXES
PRODUCTION
WARFARE
DEATH

--Donnie
© 1972

SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL, An Anthology of writings from the women's liberation movement, edited by Robin Morgan and published by Random House, New York, 1970. 602 pages, \$8.95. Paperback edition, \$2.45.

This book, originally called *The Hand That Cradles the Rock*, was prevented from using this title because of threatened court action by Humorist S. J. Perelman, who had written an obscure story by that name some decades ago. Actually, as it turned out, Mr. Perelman did editor Robin Morgan a favor. For the volume she, with the aid of countless other women across the country, put together is a definitive statement of the women's movement (past, present and future) and spells out for the doubters that indeed *SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL*.

The introduction by Ms. Morgan sets the tone with militance, humor, pathos, artistry and love to be found throughout the book in the writings of women, individually and collectively. The book covers the testimony of women from the professions to the factory worker, from a poem by a seven-year-old woman to a piece on the aging woman, from white middle class to radical Lesbians and the additional problems faced by Black and Chicana sisters, from psychological and sexual repression to changing consciousness of high school women, from the lessons of the nineteenth century women's movement to the historical documentation of today's women's organizations, from a general bibliography to counseling references in major U.S. and Canadian cities.

Members of the Daughters of Bilitis will be particularly interested in the two pieces by Gene Damon and Martha Shelley. Ms. Damon writes a glowing report on efforts to attain civil rights for Lesbians by DOB as an organization which is still, for the most part, after fifteen years of operation,

plagued by the fears of those it would help. She addresses herself to heterosexual women and challenges them to understand and accept Lesbians as their sisters. Ms. Shelley speaks from a more radical stance, of Lesbianism as a road to freedom from oppression by men, as a sign of mental health in a male-dominated society, as an alternative life style for women.

Sisterhood is a powerful book that can't help but raise the consciousness of any woman who reads it. The pages weld together an alienated 51% majority of the population who has heretofore "enjoyed" minority status, but who will no longer accept anything less than equality as persons in a society that must and will be reshaped.

Ms. Morgan indicates that all proceeds from the book will go to further the women's liberation movement. Keep this in mind when you do your Christmas shopping!

- Del Martin
December, 1970

Lesbian/Woman, Glide Publications, 1972, by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon.

If I can believe the response I have seen to this book, it must be the most eagerly read book in the Lesbian community. I can believe it. It is the first major book on the subject of Lesbians about themselves, although I'm aware that others are on their way.

I can hardly express the delight I experienced in reading about Del and Phyl and the hundreds of Lesbians they encountered in the 17 years of their experience in forming, nurturing and finally weaning the Daughters of Bilitis. Contrary to my own expectations of the book, most chapters are devoted not to the political growth of the Lesbian but to the personal struggles of the individual Lesbians Del and Phyl have met. The book seems to be directed to the straight community, the emphasis being to indicate the great diversity among Lesbians. The women of whom they speak are and are not stereotypical, they are and are not happy, are and are not adjusted to and accepting of themselves. In other words, the women Del and Phyl chose to describe are human beings, with the problems inherent in so being, but with the added difficulty of being women and Lesbians. This kind of focus is, as I see it, of ultimate importance to the straight community who tend to see us as Sister George or Childie at best. The women described here will confirm some of the beliefs "they" (the outsiders) have of us, because there are women who fit "their" patterns. Other women will blow the image all to hell. This book is honest, real, personal, straight (gay)-forward and non-compromising. Which is the way we are.

I found particular joy in reading this history because of my own commitment to alleviate, somehow,

Lesbian isolation. As Del and Phyl note, and quite honestly, they had been the focal point for all Lesbians in this country (and others) to rally around. Their commitment and the commitment of others has made "Lesbian Liberation" a real thing, instead of an ideal dream in some woman's head. Their relationship of 19 years, of which they speak very openly in their book, has been and still is (even though they won't admit it now) an inspiration to those of us who have grown up with the stereotypical idea that "those relationships don't last." Their untiring (albeit difficult to maintain) efforts to change the structures in this society which oppress us have been and will continue to be an inspiration to me, personally. Their book, some 280 pages, is a document of the struggles many Lesbians have had to endure and win. It is a triumph to read and experience. In itself, it is a release from the sense of isolation we all feel -- there are and have been many, many in our shoes. If you have ever spoken to these two women, your feelings may well appear in the book, under a false name, of course. I found myself described there. The feeling that what you say about your own liberation has been captured in this history is a good one. You know that somehow you have contributed, no matter in how small a way, to the whole liberation movement. It is our pride here they speak of and our agony, but above all things it is us, by us, for us. It is a high point in our liberation, probably the highest, in that Lesbians are finally telling our story. Sisterhood is powerful and is a full blast of sunshine in our lives. Here is our story and we should BASK.

- Karen Wells
August, 1972

Lesbian/Woman is available from DOB for \$8.40 (with tax). Order from DOB, 1005 Market #208, S.F. 94103. Make checks payable to DOB.

THE MATCHMAKER

Leslie was a fine person, and her concern for my singleness was sweet. The two of us were rather casual friends, but since we did work in the same office, there was abundant time to chat about this and that. Her naivete was such that I never felt particularly compelled to discuss my gayness with her and I listened, smiling, to her "We've just got to find some nice guy for you" sort of comment -- which came regularly. Came, in fact, every time she began talking about her Ted.

I think, really, that she wanted nothing more than someone to compare boyfriends with, and until I had one I was not really doing my share. I did occasionally make references to the women I did date, sporadically, turning Jeanne into Gene and Carol into Carl to protect Leslie's tender ears from the awful truth. It was not good enough for Leslie, though, and she set out to remedy the situation by match-making.

The first attempt was really dreadful and pitted me against a first-class clod who was all for making me on the living room floor (Leslie's) after an evening of dinner and conversation and too much wine. I spurned his advances and the entire scene embarrassed Leslie and made Ted uneasy. It also shattered the ego of the clod, which bothered me not at all.

Leslie does not give up. A fighter to the end. And the next weekend I was invited over for a poker game. This time she had done a better job of selecting, and Brian was my potential husband. To make for a less awkward evening, Leslie had invited a couple of other friends of hers -- Susan and Richard.

My interest in Brian, although he was a fine talker and a witty conversationalist, was fairly nil

since he was of the wrong sex, and I was beginning to think I would eventually have to overcome my fear of stunning Leslie and take her aside and break the news of my sexual preferences to her to avoid further such evenings. I didn't mind that she wanted me to be happily paired off, but it did seem that she was going to a lot of trouble for nothing.

It was midway through the evening when things began to happen. Susan was sitting beside me at the table, and to make her occasional comments even more pointed than she was able to do verbally, she would lay a hand on my shoulder or touch my arm. As it happened, she and I were doing all the winning, and our stacks of chips kept growing as we bluffed the other four time and again. I, of course, was delighted by the indication that the two of us could play poker better than, especially, the three men, and Susan also seemed pleased by our abilities.

She was about my age but looked younger (which surprised me in that I pride myself on my ability to still get carded in bars even though I've been eligible for the privilege of consuming alcoholic beverages for, lo, these many years now). And she was pleasing to my eye, although I wasn't really giving her much attention. She had, after all, arrived with Richard.

It began to slowly penetrate my Missourian skull that Susan was apparently oblivious to Richard. They had hardly exchanged two words since the evening began. They were not ignoring each other: it was more as though they had decided to go their separate ways for the evening. And then Susan began the physical point-making and I became super-sensitive to her touches on my sweatshirted sleeve. I liked it.

And I was confused by it. I was already about three beers gone and everything was going undigested, so to speak, through my mind. At one point I was

attempting to bluff Susan with my pair of threes, and she would not be bluffed. We stared at each other without expression as she raised and I raised until everyone else had dropped out and sat watching us. My poker face comes from having spent a lifetime pretending to not have emotions which I did have -- and I wondered where she got hers. Wherever it came from, it was stronger than mine and she took the pot with what I assumed were a pair of deuces from the grin she gave me when I folded.

What happened when it began to happen was that we ran out of beer. Being liberated people, it was not assumed that the men would walk the three blocks to the liquor store for more. Nobody really wanted to go, and for a few minutes we waited for someone else to leap up and volunteer.

And then Susan looked at me and said, "I'll go. Want to come along and protect me?" And she smiled. And I flashed that she was gay. Just like that. The flash came and went and that was all. I am notoriously poor at guessing the sexuality of other women. I know this and compensate for it by assuming I am always wrong. I continue to make assumptions; I just also continue to assume I'm wrong.

"Sure," I said, and went for my coat.

It was dark outside. Clouds had swept in over the Bay and obliterated the stars and what there had been of the moon. We walked out the door and through Leslie's garden, out onto the sidewalk, and down the street. Was it my imagination now or was she intentionally bumping into me every second or third step? Imagination, I thought, as she bumped against me once more. Perhaps it was merely that she could not quite walk a straight line. Or maybe she enjoyed encountering my tender little body....

I looked at her to see if I could tell, but she was poker-faced. Again.

Talking about the poker game, about Leslie, about Brian (very briefly), and nothing substantial beyond that, we made our way to the liquor store, bought the essentials, and started back. She was still walking close enough to bring our bodies into collision with a pleasing degree of regularity, and I was still wondering to what extent I was imagining things. I had decided that it was a fine thing that she bumped me and even managed to bump her a time or two.

All the while this little scene was happening, my mind continued to race drunkenly along with the question of intent. Did she mean it? Was she gay? What was happening?

We stopped in the garden on the way back. As though we had discussed it and decided to just stop our walk there. For a few seconds neither of us spoke, and then she said, "Well?"

"Look," I said, and stopped.

In the dark I could barely see her, but her teeth showed that she was grinning broadly. Which caused me to do the same.

"Well?" she said again, and I could hear the smile in her voice.

It was, of course, impossible for me to say anything at all.

"What do you think of Brian?" she said, finally, as though changing the subject, although I couldn't really tell if that was what she was doing.

"Eh," I said, and the shrug was in my voice.

"Do you know why we came tonight?" she said, and I didn't answer, not knowing.

"Well," she said, "mainly because Richard has a mad crush on Brian and thinks he's gay." And she left it hanging there.

"Look," I said, but again could not quite muster words beyond that.

"Can I call you tomorrow?" she asked.

"Sure," I said. "But what will Leslie think about all this? She really is trying, you know."

"I think she's done very well," Susan said, and in the dark I felt her fingers brush against my cheek. She grinned again, and followed me into the house.

- Anne Morgan
August, 1972

This is SISTERS Magazine's
second anniversary.
This issue is devoted to
those women's work which we
felt you would like to read again.

SISTERS is based on the premise
that women are creative. SISTERS
survives or fails on your con-
tributions of art, poetry, prose,
ad infinitum.

SISTERS is and has been YOURS.
We have come a long way, we
have ten times that far to go.

Please. Take pen in hand and
give to this small, but growing,
Lesbian magazine.

We hope that in a few months,
with your help, all issues of
SISTERS will be as large and
as full as this anniversary
issue is. Let us not wait until
next year to fill our pages with
celebrations.

Thank you.

The SISTERS staff

Cover - Jenny Wrenn