



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO
CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

..a women's organization to aid the Lesbian in discovering her place in society and to educate society to understand and accept her, without prejudice, and...

1. To encourage and support the Lesbian in her search for her social, economic, personal, interpersonal and vocational identity within society by maintaining and building a library on the themes of homosexuality and on women; by providing social functions where she can communicate with others and expand her social world outside the bar scene; and by providing an organized structure through which she can work to change society's limitations upon her lifestyles; by providing a forum for the interchange of ideas and constructive solutions to women's problems.

2. To educate the public to accept and understand the Lesbian as an individual, thereby leading to the breakdown of taboos, prejudices, and limitations on her lifestyle by sponsoring public discussions; by providing individuals as speakers and participants in various forums designed to educate the public; by disseminating educational and rational literature on the Lesbian.

3. To encourage, support and participate in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.

4. To investigate the penal code and to promote changes, in order to provide equitable handling of cases involving homosexuals, with due process of law and without prejudice

TO SAY AND BELIEVE THAT GAY IS GOOD.



Volume IV, Number 7

OFFICERS - SAN FRANCISCO DCB

President	Sharon Crase
Vice-President	Marley Booklaric
Secretary	Charleen Pyron
Assistant Secretary	Liane Esstelle
Treasurer	Allison Meader

* * *

This issue of SISTERS is dedicated to Jodi and Barb for arranging the first Gay Awards Banquet in our history....

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THE HETEROSEXUAL

The heterosexual usually comes from a home in which there is a dominant father and a passive mother, which is a very oppressive and at times sadistic environment. The heterosexual child soon learns that there are games played and that the rules are very subtle. The child is pushed toward learning and taking part in these games.

The heterosexual learns to manipulate very early in childhood. For instance, the heterosexual boy learns to use aggressive behavior to get his way, and he also starts very early to learn other strategies of manipulation. It is quite common for the father to take the young heterosexual aside and educate him on how to treat women. For instance, he teaches him never to let women dominate him and to keep them under control. He also lectures him on the evils of women.

The mother also educates her daughter on the art of manipulation. The heterosexual mother teaches her daughter how to make the husband feel superior and dominant. The subtle message here is, of course, that the male is truly not superior, just an overgrown baby with a big ego to nurse. However, the female's education is more complicated and puzzling. Her intelligence is tested according to how dumb and helpless she can appear to the male. The male on the other hand is denied his sensitivity and is not allowed to feel weak.

It is quite clear that heterosexuals--female and male--are not brought up to be friends, but rather they grow up with hidden feelings of mistrust and hostility toward each other.

Mutual consent is not necessary to perform the heterosexual act. According to their laws the husband is free to take his wife against her will. Also they have a high incidence of other types of rape.

Another outstanding peculiarity of the male heterosexual is that he often bases his self-worth on his virility. The medical and psychiatric files are filled with case histories of heterosexual males becoming temporarily or permanently impotent due to the experience of not being able to perform sexually. This usually occurs during the wedding night. The victims of this trauma often state that their inability to perform gave them a feeling of dying.

The ritual of matrimony is also a peculiarity of heterosexuals. Until recently, and still to a great degree among older heterosexuals, sexual activities outside of matrimony were thought of as evil, sinful, and immoral. Young heterosexuals suffered frustrations and feelings of guilt when they engaged in such activities. However, these feelings of frustration and guilt were thought to leave the heterosexuals after the ritual of matrimony was performed.

It is hard to know who is a heterosexual just by simple observation. Even the stereotype he-man may not be a heterosexual but a normal, sensitive gay male. The female is perhaps a little easier to observe on sight, since most lesbians find it hard to feign helplessness. But again, we cannot be sure. The helplessness-looking female might just be a lesbian infiltrator.

Statistics show that heterosexuals are dangerous. Eighty-five percent of all sex offenses are committed by heterosexual males.* Also, they are extremely dangerous to the gay community, since they seem to find enjoyment in a sport which they call "rolling queers."

Can the heterosexual be cured?

YES. However, this is a difficult task because most heterosexuals do not realize that they are sick, and do not seek treatment.

*Kinsey Report.

-Zelima

For R

Oh, my darling
lost and gentle
Dear
come down upon
the long and stilly
Night
and blow away
with your sweet
Breath
this narrow shaft
of chilly
Air.

Pomerlean

An Opening...

She sat, small and cowed, the enormity of all around finally hitting a real level - the reason was all clear - a life plan began, faltered, began again. Sudden truth falling on sudden truth all spilling into that noiseless, vacuous space she occupied. All hers - all hers. She watched a small ripple in the rug and used it as a focal...The ripple became totally encompassing and she knew it would do no good to tackle the straightening of it now.. an always small, unnoticed, silent wetness found its way down that soft waiting face. She knew, and now the day was very quiet in her self-imposed cage; she noticed now that even the bars refused to tarnish... and, there was a door...

jSafier

.....
MS-quoted quotes:

- "Behind every great woman there is another woman"-
- "Are you a woman or a mouse?"-
- "Woman cannot live by bread alone"-

-Liane
Esstelle

THE BISEXUAL BLUES

I've got the bisexual blues again, mama. It's one of my secret vices, like keeping a spoon and a box of Jello in my lower left desk drawer. It's called three months without a lover, and I'm starting to make love to my breakfast.

What was wrong with the guy I played frisbee with for an hour? Or the man who sat and made a daisy headband for the small woman I was with?

Isn't it unfair to declare the whole male sex chauvinistic? Since the whole point of separatism is to get women to the point where they can negotiate from a place of equal strength, why not skip the revolution and relate directly? Dial it yourself, you won't have to pay off Gloria Steinem. Don't be so vague and futuristic.

Then I remember how it really was, playing frisbee with that joker. I went to the park to write poetry. The frisbee came along to get some fresh air. I wound up throwing it with him because I couldn't think of a polite way to tell him to fuck off. I didn't want to make him angry. No, I didn't find an acceptable male. I covered up for my servility.

I remember how clearly defined my idea of the revolution is. I want a separate physical space for women, with a separate administration, defense, art, religion, medicine, transportation--everything. I'm trying to get thousands of years of slavery off my back. Nothing less than a separate female society will prove to me that the "myth" of male superiority is a myth.

If I did find a man who would not call me a chick, what would that prove? All the things that are wrong with the system would still exist.

So I waste my time discovering men who are "exceptions," men who don't perpetuate the system, men who are individually liberated. Of course I can fight my oppression individually. Somehow, it doesn't add up

to a "no." It adds up to a "yes, there is room for me in this system."

Anyway, balling a liberated man is no way to treat him. I'd rather make friends with him.

Come to think of it, where does this assumption originate that after the whole mess is cleared away, everyone will be bisexual? It isn't an assumption I want to make. All I really want men to do is to get off my back. Digging them is another project entirely.

The last fact, the one that really stuns me, is that I would get up from screwing, and I would still be a lesbian. I would take it as evidence that I still hadn't liberated myself, and I would go back and work twice as hard for my movement.

Pat Hardman

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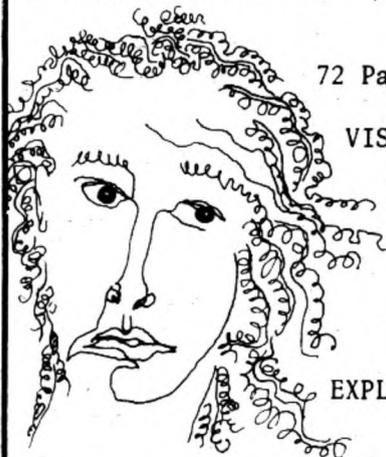
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The Doormat



Beyond the steps of all seasons,
before the door of all faces,
lies a doormat.
All trampled.
Unnoticed.
Unrecognizable.
Unnatural.

Many call it lovely,
Few call it tragic.
A Persian carpet is worth more.

But as they say:
You are so lovely.
And you are so sweet,
and you are so helpless,
and you are so soft,
and you are so stringy,
and you are so muddy,

and you are so worthless,
and you are so sick.

O lovely doormat,
are you sorry you gave birth to the world?
Are you sorry you loved not yourself?
Are you sorry you have been crushed?
Are you sorry you have been scorned?
Are you sorry you have been filthied?
Are you sorry you bathed foreskins
only to be raped by them?
Are you sorry you are breathing?

Are you sorry you are you?

God dammit, doormat!

Say something!

Like: I will kill your ugly feet!
I will break your ugly toes!

Or

I will scream and yell and shout
and fight and curse and struggle
and slash your choking footprints
and make you bless my name.

But you say nothing, doormat.
Nothing.

If you can't say something,
Then by all means, do something.

Do something!

Like fall apart.

Or unravel into oblivion
so that I can say you never existed.
You never were.

You are just a dream
that putrid threads are made of.
A human debasement.

Indeed, a madman's dream.

~ Rose Ann Roth



A Dedication to your Closet:
· PART III ·

Perhaps you don't feel within your closet
that secure?
Are you looking for an exit?
I Hope, because I'm outside in the cold
waiting here
There is no blueprint or map entitled—
Out of the Closet
In your search for the answer,
I cannot dictate
ONLY hope you'll come to me
There is nothing I can do except wait
It's such an individual, silent, internal
struggle—
A rebirth of identity
So cool, so confident, so alive you try
to appear
While I stand here silently, patiently

As I observe you in your chosen darkness,
stumble
Wanting to reach out but cannot touch
nor come too near
You have made my position,
humble.
I'm trapped by your closet walls
They keep me outside
They keep you inside
Being receptive, I feel your struggle
and its pressure
Because of my own feelings I now have to hide
I'm not in a closet—
But I'm just as much a prisoner
I love you oppressed woman—
IF only you would smile

Well hidden is your vulnerability
The emotionless value of your logic
Sifts through the walls of your closet
In spite of all your external superficialities
And internal mystery
Even if you only throw crumbs my way
Which isn't a lot

It helps me through the week, the day
Ain't no woman like the one I haven't got
In spite of the head-trips,

Space and uneven silence
Which haunts us and dominates
I love you and what could be—
NOT what is!

A gasping, struggling identity
Seeking its birth
In a choking, unkind reality
An imprisoned sensitivity.

~ Liane Esstelle



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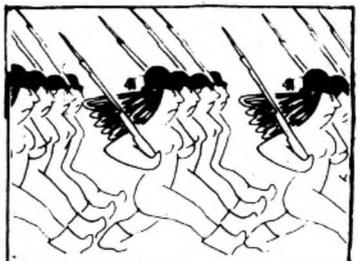
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alone

I would like to
invite you
into my corner
where we could hide
our faces
against the wall
together,
but you're the type
who always steps back,
letting you go in
first.

I suppose
that's the reason
i always get
doors shut in my face
and i suppose
that's the reason
you always find yourself
alone
when you find yourself
with me.

MAN-HATING REVIEWED

Man-hating has been referred to by some lesbians of that genre as "an honorable and viable political act." The number of lesbian feminists who take pride in fulfilling the stereotype of the shit-stomping, mean, man-hating dyke is growing. Cliquey social cadres of lesbians whose common interest revolves around hating men are increasing in number. If a lesbian in the midst of these man-hating Medusas should dare to say that she LIKES some men, she is treated like a traitor. A woman who works politically and socially with men, even if they are faggot effeminists, is also given this same treatment.

I, as a lesbian, can detect many valid reasons for women to hate men. It is they who control our society, who made our sexist institutions, and it is they who raped us and made us "queer." Men oppress women politically, economically, and socially. They are constantly encroaching upon our life-flow, and our personhood. Often, they use the threat of physical violence to control us. When we insist upon claiming our right to equal time in conversation, we are called dominating bitches. In a male supremacist society geared to satisfy male needs and male egos, sometimes I, as a woman, feel like I don't even exist.

There are many logical reasons for hating men, but the rationale for not hating men is just as well-founded. Men, just like women, are people. As people, ALL of us--regardless of sex or gender-identification, have our bad points. There is a tendency within the movement to make woman the sacred cow, the divine source from which all goodness, sweetness, and light emanate; conversely, men have been totally blackballed--they are now the source of all evil. In the statement "All men are sexist pigs," I see parallels to other stereotypical pigeonholing, such as "All Jews have big noses,"

"Women's libbers are all just a bunch of man-hating dykes," and "All homosexuals are mentally ill." Such non-differentiational thinking shows a lack of logic, and an excess of reactionary emotionalism.

At Jill Johnston's speech in San Francisco recently, a lesbian was selling a newspaper called "Dykes & Gorgons" for 50¢ a copy. When I finally got a look at it, I was glad I hadn't bought one, for it was filled with more sexist hate rhetoric against men. (For the information of those unfamiliar with Greek mythology, a gorgon is one of three sisters--Stheno, Euryale and Medusa--with serpents for hair, so terrifying that the sight of them turned the beholder into stone.) Thusly do these man-hating lesbians try to make themselves as vicious, "butch" and ugly as possible. These man-hating Medusas are just the kind of women I wish to call my "sisters"--that is, if I wish to be turned into stone by looking at one of them. They're just what we need to build an army of lovers--more women filled with hate.

I cannot empathize at all with these man-hating Medusas, nor can I talk with them or communicate with them in any way. They are nothing but a group of dour, embittered, frigid, young old maids. One who is filled with hate cannot love. All they produce is negative energy which goes nowhere. They even alienate their own sisters from themselves. I have already seen too much hate of men spill over onto other sisters at the West Coast Lesbian Conference to know how self-destructive the "profession" of man-hating is. These gorgons may put the fear of God into men, but they do likewise to many of their sisters. I am not frightened--I am just totally repulsed.

But let us not become confused: there is another viable, political alternative, and this is separatism. Man-hating lesbians are, of course, separatists, but not all separatists hate men as a group. As women, we have had to

rub elbows and contend with men for too long. We have been separated from other women. To exclude men as much as possible from one's life can be an enriching and edifying experience. I do not profess to be a separatist, but I have found that separating myself from men has generated much positive energy at certain times in my life. Separatism is a useful outgrowth of the women's movement, but it need not necessarily stem from hating men.

The negative energy which comes from man-hating accomplished nothing politically in terms of real change. It is self-destructive, especially in the political arena. It is foolhardy for the weaker oppressed group to confront a powerful oppressor and scream "I hate you!" It is not politically wise to lay all of your cards on the table; there is merit in being cagey, scheming, and somewhat closety.

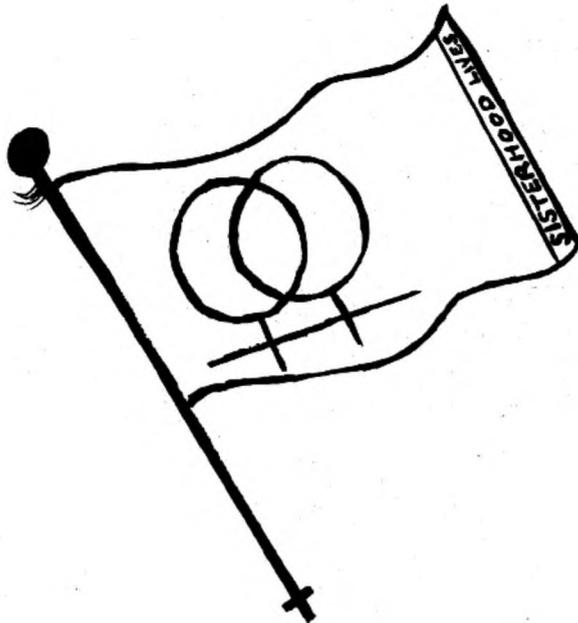
By making ourselves as ugly, vicious and radical as possible, we remove ourselves from any serious political consideration from the establishment. It is significant that out of the many Women's Liberation groups in this country, the one that has accomplished the most constructive political change is a conservative, middle-class organization--the National Organization for Women. "Ms." magazine, with a circulation of over 300,000, is not exactly radical either. Militancy, coercion, and hate vibes will not win us friends or sympathizers.

I like men, and I'm glad they are here. Men don't have the power to hurt me emotionally as women do--maybe that's why they make such good companions and friends. There are men that I hate, but it is comforting to know that when I find myself hating women, as I occasionally do, that there are other outlets for my social proclivities. I firmly believe that one doesn't have to hate men in order to love women.

I may be a stone lesbian, but I refuse to let these man-hating Medusas turn me into stone.

- Roberta Dill

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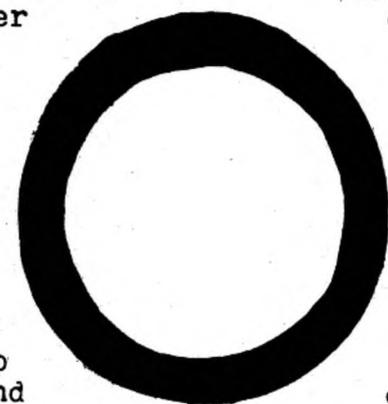
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BY LIANE ESSELLE

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