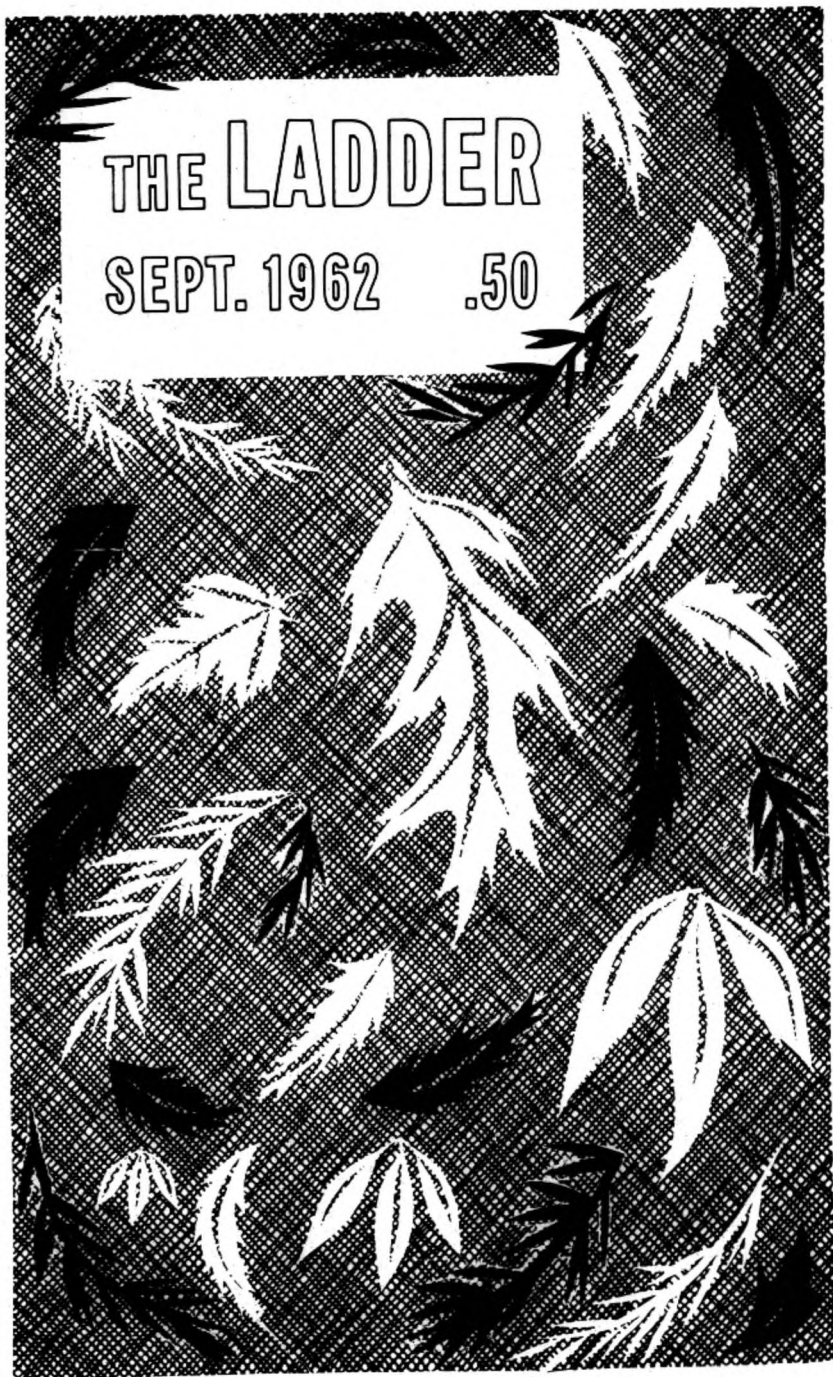


THE LADDER

SEPT. 1962 .50





purpose of the

Daughters of **BILITIS**

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING
THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

- ① Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.
- ② Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.
- ③ Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.
- ④ Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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COVER BY KATHY ROGERS

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Homosexual law changes foreseen in our lifetime

UNITED STATES LAWS RELATING TO HOMOSEXUAL ACTS WILL BE CHANGED (FOR THE BETTER) DURING OUR LIFETIME. THIS WAS THE UNANIMOUS CONCLUSION OF A PANEL OF PSYCHIATRISTS ON THE SAN FRANCISCO TELEVISION PROGRAM "DOCTORS' NEWS CONFERENCE" JULY 9, 1962.

"FOR THE BETTER" MEANT, TO THE DOCTORS, THAT PRIVATE ACTS BETWEEN CONSENTING ADULTS WOULD NOT BE A PART OF CRIMINAL LAW.

APPEARING ON THE PROGRAM, WHICH WAS SUBTITLED "MEDICINE, LAW AND THE HOMOSEXUAL", WERE DR. HAYES NEWBY, MODERATOR; DR. KARL BOWMAN, FORMER HEAD OF THE LANGLEY-PORTER CLINIC OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA HOSPITAL; DR. DAVID H. WILSON, WHO IN ADDITION TO BEING AN ATTORNEY AS WELL AS A MEDICAL MAN IS CHIEF CRIMINOLOGIST OF THE BERKELEY, CALIF., POLICE DEPARTMENT, AND DR. WILLIAM A. BELLAMY. ALL THE DOCTORS ARE PSYCHIATRISTS, AND ALL ARE CONNECTED WITH U.C. HOSPITAL.

QUESTIONERS WERE DAVID PERLMAN, SCIENCE EDITOR OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, AND WILLIAM BOQUIST OF THE SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER.

DR. NEWBY BEGAN THE SESSION BY ASKING FOR A DEFINITION OF HOMOSEXUALITY. DR. WILSON POINTED OUT THAT THERE IS NO LEGAL DEFINITION IN CALIFORNIA - ONLY THE SPECIFIC SEXUAL ACT IS PUNISHABLE, AND THAT HOLDS TRUE EVEN IF THE ACT IS PERFORMED BY MARRIED COUPLES.

THE MEDICAL DEFINITION COMES FROM THE GREEK, HOMO MEANING SAME AND SEXUAL MEANING JUST THAT. IN OTHER WORDS, DR. WILSON SAID, A PERSON ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE OF THE SAME SEX.

DR. BOWMAN POINTED OUT THAT IN EUROPE ONLY WEST GERMANY AND ENGLAND HAVE SPECIFIC LAWS AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY, ALONG WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND ALL SOVIET-DOMINATED COUNTRIES. MOST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES DO NOT CONSIDER HOMOSEXUALITY A CRIME WHEN IT INVOLVES CONSENTING ADULTS IN PRIVATE.

IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE CRIME RATE WAS HIGHER IN COUNTRIES HAVING NO LAWS AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY, DR. BOWMAN SAID "NO, I DON'T THINK SO. CERTAINLY NOT IN THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES AND PROBABLY NOT IN THE OTHERS."

WHY LAWS AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY? REASONS GIVEN WERE PREJUDICE, SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE LAWMAKER, NOT TO MENTION THE CHRISTIAN-JUDAIC HERITAGE ON WHICH MOST OF OUR LAWS ARE BASED.

DR. WILSON POINTED OUT THAT PRESENT-DAY LAWS ARE INEFFECTIVE AND USUALLY NOT ENFORCED, ALTHOUGH THE PROHIBITION IS UNIVERSAL IN THIS COUNTRY.

DR. BOWMAN SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE NEW PENAL CODE IN ILLINOIS EXEMPTED HOMOSEXUAL ACTS BETWEEN CONSENTING ADULTS IN PRIVATE, BUT THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN A COPY OF THE LAW AND THUS COULDN'T VOUCH FOR THIS FACT. (SEE THE LADDER, MARCH 1962)

DR. BELLAMY REPORTED THAT MANY PATIENTS WERE SENT TO PSYCHIATRISTS AFTER HAVING BEEN ARRESTED, IN PUBLIC TOILETS, FOR INSTANCE. HE ADDED THAT TREATMENT ON SUCH AN ENFORCED BASIS WAS USUALLY INEFFECTIVE, SINCE THE PATIENT REALLY HADN'T WANTED IT. HE THEN WONDERED OUT LOUD ABOUT THE VALIDITY OF USING THE TAXPAYERS' MONEY TO MAKE SUCH ARRESTS. SUCH PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF EXHIBITIONISM ARE NOT HARMFUL, HE SAID. THEY MAY BE INDECENT.

IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE HOMOSEXUAL IS MORE LIKELY TO COMMIT A CRIME THAN THE HETEROSEXUAL, DR. BOWMAN SAID "NO, NOT NECESSARILY."

THE ARMED SERVICES AND PRISONS BRING ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED "SITUATIONAL HOMOSEXUALITY". DR. WILSON POINTED OUT THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE DISHONORABLE DISCHARGED FROM THE SERVICE FOR MERELY HAVING TENDENCIES TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY.

ASKED ABOUT THE INCIDENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY, DR. BOWMAN POINTED OUT THAT THERE IS MORE OF IT IN MALES THAN IN FEMALES. DR. BOWMAN HAD PREVIOUSLY REMARKED THAT THE DISCUSSION WAS NOT INCLUDING WOMEN BECAUSE "NOBODY PAYS ANY ATTENTION TO WOMEN ANYWAY".

THE KINSEY STATISTIC THAT ONE MAN IN EVERY SIX WAS HOMOSEXUAL WAS CITED, BUT DR. BOWMAN ADDED THAT THE VAST MAJORITY ARE ACTUALLY BI-SEXUAL WITH ONLY 4-6% STRICT HOMOSEXUALS. DR. BELLAMY ADDED THAT EVERYONE HAS A BI-SEXUAL BASIC AT BIRTH.

HE ADDED THAT HE FOUND THE HOMOSEXUAL TO BE MORE DISTURBED THAN THE HETEROSEXUAL. HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS HAVE A TENDENCY TO BE LESS STABLE, "IT IS HARD TO GROW OLD TOGETHER".

MR. PERLMAN ASKED THE DOCTORS "WHICH COMES FIRST, INSTABILITY OR HOMOSEXUALITY?" DR. WILSON POINTED OUT THAT WHAT CAUSES THE INSTABILITY MAY CONTRIBUTE TO HOMOSEXUALITY, WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO CURE THE LATTER. HE ADDED THAT HOMOSEXUALS ARE NOT BAD, THEY ARE JUST STRUGGLING WITH PROBLEMS. AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THEY CAN BE HELPED (CURED) HE SAID IT DEPENDS ON THE BROAD PERSONALITY STRUCTURE, NOT JUST THE HOMOSEXUAL ASPECT.

OF THOSE HOMOSEXUALS SEEKING TREATMENT, MOST WISH TO BECOME HETEROSEXUALS. DR. WILSON ADDED THAT IF THE HOMOSEXUAL IS RELATIVELY ADJUSTED HE DOESN'T WANT TO GIVE UP HIS HOMOSEXUALITY.

PRaise WAS GIVEN FOR CALIFORNIA'S SEXUAL PSYCHOPATH LAW AND FOR THE WORK BEING DONE AT ATASCADERO. THE LAW, HOWEVER, IS NOT PRIMARILY AIMED AT HOMOSEXUALS, ALTHOUGH A HOMOSEXUAL CAN BE SENT TO ATASCADERO IF HE CONSTITUTES A MENACE TO SOCIETY UNDER THE DEFINITION OF THE LAW.

DR. BOWMAN DECLARED THAT THE MENACE OF THE HOMOSEXUAL TO SOCIETY IS GREATLY OVERDRAWN.

IN SUMMING UP, THE DOCTORS AGREED THAT THE PRESENT DAY LAW REFLECTS THE MORES OF SOCIETY AND NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE LAWS CAN BE MADE UNTIL THE PEOPLE ARE READY.

THIS, THEN, MEANS THAT THERE MUST BE MORE EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC TO THE TRUE FACTS. ALL AGREED THAT THERE WOULD BE CHANGES IN THE LAWS WITHIN THEIR LIFETIMES.

- PHYLLIS LYON

The Fable of the Label

People often misuse labels on people. We label the wrong ones and label for the wrong reasons. Perhaps it's because, too often, we go by looks. We see a man with a solid gold tie pin and manicured nails. We call him rich. We see a child under the rule of a strict disciplinarian and call that child abused. We see a woman with short hair ... But I could go on with this, though by now you know what is meant here. Reference to the latter type puts me in mind of a friend who recently told me she learned of her dentist's nurse being "one".

"It was a ghastly experience," she said, "with that ... Lesbian."

I riddled discreet questions at her like atomic missiles and learned that the woman's suspicions had been aroused because the woman wore no wedding ring. (Who ever heard of a dentist's nurse not wearing a wedding ring?!) And the woman wore her hair in a short boyish cut, right along with the fact that she performed her services with a deadly "aggressive efficiency." Why, I thought, oh, why didn't that nurse relax a bit - perhaps on the couch in the waiting room - instead of being so efficient and "obvious?"

"What is worse," I was told, "that woman had the unmitigated gall to hold my hand!"

And I so wanted to ask her if she would've felt better had she gotten hold of her foot, but instead: "What did you do?" I think I asked.

What could I do?" came the answer while the donor of it gawked at me as if I were out of my mind. "The dentist was pulling out my molar!"

"How was it?" I asked.

"Horrifying, what else? When one of them Lesbians takes hold of your hand?"

She seemed so upset I didn't bother to tell her I meant how was the extraction. Anyway, it was a stupid question.

With a villainous glee, chuckling all the way up my insides, I could scarcely suppress asking her how come the attention all of a sudden on the cozy hand-holding, and all that. But I didn't. I did, though, require dental care. That is, I think I thought I needed a dental checkup. (My last one had been way back about five weeks before.)

During my "anticipated" ordeal in the dental chair, I had an opportunity (I made it) to visit with the questionable nurse. That is ... the nurse in question. And during our tete-a-tete it was disclosed that the absence of her ring had been due to the fact that her darling little boy had flushed it down the john. Also, as we conversed she repeatedly complained about the heat. "There," I concluded, "is the answer to the short bob." Her aggressive efficiency, acquired with some years of good training and self-discipline. There wasn't an aura of sweet mystery in the damnedably efficient way she thrust that long hypodermic of novocain to doctor. (Come to find out, I'd acquired a bad molar!)

There's the other side to the coin too. I'd had a group of people in my home, one of whom as a dyed-in-the-wool Lesbian and quite unbeknown to the rest of the crowd. Unbeknown to most, that is. Later on in the evening one of the group took me aside solicitously and announced in a hoarse whisper that the big girl (who was a Lesbian) was a "lezbean". Acting properly scandalized, I denied the accusation with well-modulated righteous indignation. Then, thinking that I ought better to act unschooled on the subject, I hastily tacked a question (out of sequence): "But what's that?" When he explained to me what it meant, I said he was nuts, and didn't he know that the "big gal" with the lumberjack's jacket and the woodsman's boots was a cousin to the family who'd been his neighbors since before he was born? And voila! By putting the girl in his own familiar and indigenour environs it immediately absolved her. And her peculiar style of dress was chalked-off to the fact that "The whole damned neighborhood was full of queer jokers." (His words.)

Then there's the case of a friend who, having just moved into an apartment, told me the place had been previously occupied by a "lisbon". (No reference to the city in Portugal, I later learned.) It seems the bathroom of this apartment had been covered from bath to shower (and back again to commode) with cheesecake, and the tenant was a woman.

"Good grief!" I said, "What did the poor thing get out of all that?" I thought I'd spoken too quick, showing my over-concern at the stupidity of nude pictures. But my friend accepted the meaning exactly as it was given.

"That's just what I say," she said. "My gawd! a woman with a Picture gallery of girls."

Shortly afterwards, on meeting the gal who'd complained of the cheesecake in her bathroom, I asked how she was getting on in her new apartment. "Oh that," she said casually. "I left there about a week after I moved in. Had a chance to move in with Betty. Betty and I work together. Heck, it saves me half the rent. The rent at the other place was exorbitant."

"What about the pictures?" I asked.

"What pictures?" she said.

"The ones in your bathroom," I said, heedlessly putting it all in the present tense.

"Bathroom? Oh. Yeh. Those." She laughed. "Far as I know the damn things're still up."

I couldn't help but wonder what the following tenants thought of her when they moved in to find the bevy of pictures there.

Funny, how often the word Lesbian is whittled and buffed and turned. Lezbean. Lisbon. Lessbin. Which calls to

mind: once when starry-eyed and young I announced that I wanted to be a "thespian." And while fleeing round and round the dining table just short of my guardian's furious grasp, I had to explain the meaning of that word before she quit pursuing me. Yet, not only is the word itself often mispronounced - and miscalled - but more seriously, it's very meaning is misunderstood. The act seems to superimpose the state. It's not meant to be implied here that there is no stereotype Lesbian. I guess whenever groups and cliques and gangs are formed, achieving the narrower integration of the circle, a stereotype will inevitably form.

What do I think when I think of women's club? I think (forgive my meager background): rotund, middle-aged matron, wearing pince-nez, skipping willy-nilly betwixt tables of tea, with little more to talk of but the weather and members not present. But - there's the instance of a Lesbian friend who (for reasons of clarity we'll call Meg) had been invited to the home of a fellow women's club member whom we'll call Elsie here.

The purpose of the invite, it seems, had been to inform Meg that a few undesirables in the club had accused her of being "a queer", and Elsie wished to help thwart their obviously malicious intent to have Meg ousted. Not willing to accept Elsie's naive protest (it simply put the woman in a vulnerable spot) Meg admitted that she was a Lesbian and had been for as long as memory served her. Elsie, taking the pronouncement "normally" fidgeted; began several topics about the horse races and capitol punishment; spilled the coffee as she served and all but burst into a wash of tears. So alarmed and timorous had Elsie become that as Meg tells it, she too had gotten somewhat diffident. She asked politely, though hesitantly, if she might not help get dinner started. Her hostess said yes, in a way as though she could think of nothing else at all in the world to say. Her agitation seemed to make premeditated answers impossible.

In the kitchen - a cubicle large enough for the customary appliances and one operator - these two were scarcely able to keep from cracking elbows. And then it happened. Both women turned in the cubicle of kitchen, one fumbling with the French bread, the other juggling egg plants;

each were bent on chores at opposite ends of the room - and from Meg's description of that kitchen it seemed unlikely that there were opposite ends! Anyway, midway they collided. "Hoooaahhh!" piped Elsie in a simulated cough. She threw up her hands and sent the French bread into the air so that landing it knocked over the bottle of Italian wine, while at the same time Meg became more actively preoccupied in juggling (in the electrified air) the eggplants to keep them from plopping onto the floor. If they hadn't ended up laughing, the whole thing might not have been funny.

It seems that Elsie had seen a few of the bold-appearing Lesbians entering and leaving a gay bar she used to live near. Once one of the girls who was drunk advanced the invitation for Elsie to come in and have a drink with her. At once Elsie had considered the invite a vile proposal full of implication. It got so poor old Elsie thought every last Lesbian a sex opportunist.

And then, to imagine that the majority of Lesbians making up the bar crowd is typical of the Lesbian is as far-fetched as inferring that skidrow in any city by and large is representative of the citizenry there. What about the reserved Lesbian? the quiet? the integrated? (the homebody, if you will)? Owing to her need for silence in order to protect her love-life from slander, she remains obscure and unrecognized.

One last aside: some years back a Lesbian in my acquaintance had been warned, by a well-meaning friend, not to go alone to a certain city in the west. The advisor cautioned that in _____, Lesbians accosted you on the streets! The advised (intrepid and spirited gal that she was) heeded not. She had an opportunity to visit the west, and went. And she learned to her dismay that need for the warning was unfounded!!

- Diana Sterling

* * * * *

DOB is soliciting donations for the Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarship Fund. Won't you please help?

WHO AM I ?

There is one thing the American public has in common - problems. And the intense desire to solve these problems. They seek an answer from religion, education, entertainment, philosophy and psychology. Scientific advances become more and more fantastic, while sociologically man wanders around in the same maze of confusion and frustration as his forefathers.

There is one difference today. The all-important question, "Who am I?" is being asked not only by the minister and philosopher, but by the man on the street. Psychoanalysis is the favorite topic of the cartoonist, the Martini-drinker and the Sunday Magazine Supplement. Our plays satirize conformity (The Rhinoceros), report on psychology (The Far Country) and expose our hidden childhood conflicts (Toys in the Attic).

Today's American paradoxically faces greater tension and greater opportunity than ever before in the history of civilization. As he becomes more aware of his tremendous potential, he is shocked by the sudden recognition of his limitations. He has barely begun his study of the human mind, and is vaguely aware of his emotions through the communication media's use of "emotional appeal".

Man is faced with the burning desire to understand himself and the world in which he must live, and at the time attend to the pressing necessities of existence. He is torn in several pieces and divided among his family, friends, society and the world. And then, plagued by memories, defeated by his conflicting emotions, misunderstood by family and associates, and certainly misunderstanding them, man finally poses himself on a rock, his elbow on his knee, his head resting on his hand, and thinks, "Who am I?"

Where does he go from here? Perhaps to a doctor for a new diet, some pep-pills or a rest-cure. He may tell his now familiar story to a friend, or the bartender or his secretary. He may consult a minister or a family counselor. If he can afford it, as a final desperate step, he may see a psychoanalyst.

If his problems have not erupted suddenly, he may push them back in his mind and ignore them, perhaps forget them. Temporarily. And the family conflicts continue, and the fears, and the turmoil, and the growing, gnawing sense of frustration. "Who am I?" Indeed.

And the plague spreads, contaminating a family, oozes into the neighborhood as discontent and superstition, into the city as prejudice and graft, deluges the nation with hate and fear and witch-burning, and engulfs the world with crime, poverty, war.

Far-fetched? Not at all. War is but inner conflicts a million times magnified. Prejudice is childhood fear grown-up. Crime is a child's emotions in an adult body.

"Who am I?" Perhaps the best place to find the answer is in the beginning. In man's beginning. In his birth. In his childhood. The river begins at its source, a harmless trickling spring, with little power to erode canyons, or flood farmlands, or power generators, or destroy lives, or irrigate arid wastes of deserts.

The child is born, begins to grow, has experiences. His mind records every sound, sight, sensation. He burns his hand, and remembers not to touch the stove. The memory is filed in his complex brain, and his foundation of memory grows. Hour after hour, day by day, year upon year. One day he is grown up. He is irritated because he is afraid to light the gas heater. He goes to work and worries. Did he unplug all the electric appliances? They might cause a fire. Suppose the water heater were to explode, or a lighted cigarette were to fall on the rug, or his wife were to leave the iron on the ironing board, or his child were to find his cigarette lighter.

One fear, one terrifying plaguing fear and a slender thread of memory, back, back to one experience. A little child burns its hand and its brain records pain, fright, bewilderment in its most savage form. The child laughs soon, plays, forgets. But the memory lies dormant. Waiting. Until a grown-up body reacts with doubt, or terror, or revulsion as childhood memory is triggered.

(Continued on page 23)

HIGH SOCIETY

Moonbeams bouncing on a tiger's tail,
White swallows winging their way to Wonderland,
Green grass growing and burning in the sun.
Calico cats calling for brined bread and beer,
Scabby, skinny dogs devouring caviar,
A breath of winter wind warms a beggar's heart.
Fog busily fogging round droplets of rain,
Cumulous clouds shedding hot summer sun.
"Well adjusted" folks happily, happily depressed --
A patchwork quilt of dollies and diapers.

- Lee

DAWNING

The wings of my soul are too willful to detain my doubting
mind or to hamper my hesitant heart.
I sail from a smooth sea of security and roll on a river of
restless dreams yet to be realized.
I sink slowly and sweetly into the sanguine solution of my
wonderfully wakeful slumber.
I swell with the expectancy of the unknown,
But I am content.

I have broken the bonds which have tied me for too long a
time to callous conventional customs.
I am fed upon the fine food which flows from my inner self.
I am clothed in calm and serenity
And in these clothes I luxuriate in living.
I seek and I shall find because my limitations are lies
of the past.

Oh, Life! I awake!

- Dubby

AFTER FAREWELL

A white old moon waits through the still night
endlessly passive;
rain has washed the air of too poignant sweetness,
left it clear and thin as spring water.
On silent trees and streets faint stars
cool and far
look down incurious....

Might only the pale stillness possess my eyelids,
the fluid air cool an aching throat,
the little stars touch my heart
with their ancient quiet....

But outside a night hawk
swoops and shrills, swoops and shrills,
craving, questing, beating at the calm of
the small hours
with a shattering cry --

To him my heart makes answer.

LADY ELUSIVE

Ripe wheat in summer sun her soft hair,
Pearl birch in dawn light her face,
Eyes blue of twilight when stars wake,
As wind-rippled iris her grace.

Motions all swift as a bird's flight;
Sword-slim, pliant as a reed,
She gleams fleet, fencing, parrying,
Thrusts deep - and goes without heed.

Light step, light laugh, light song,
Lavishing of light hands free;
What of heart behind warm fingers --
True love, or fey witchery?

Live and Let Live

A FIRST IN RADIO BROADCASTING - A DISCUSSION ON HOMOSEXUALITY BY HOMOSEXUALS THEMSELVES - WAS PRESENTED ON STATION WBAI ON JULY 15 WITH RESOUNDING RESULTS FROM THE NEW YORK PRESS, BUT WHEN REPEATED BY STATION KPFA-FM IN BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, ON AUGUST 1, WAS COMPLETELY IGNORED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO PAPERS.

ON THE PROGRAM ENTITLED "LIVE AND LET LIVE", EIGHT PRACTICING HOMOSEXUALS PARTICIPATED IN A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION OF SUCH MATTERS AS THEIR SEXUAL DRIVES, THE PATTERNS OF THEIR SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXISTENCES AND THE PREJUDICES THEY ENCOUNTER IN A HETEROSEXUAL SOCIETY.

JACK GOULD OF THE NEW YORK TIMES CONSIDERED THE DISCUSSION TO HAVE BEEN "HANDLED WITH CANDOR AND TACT". HE SAID IT "WAS BY FAR THE MOST EXTENSIVE CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT TO BE HEARD ON AMERICAN RADIO AND IT SUCCEEDED, ONE WOULD THINK, IN ENCOURAGING A WIDER UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOMOSEXUAL'S ATTITUDES AND PROBLEMS."

MILTON BRACKER, ALSO OF THE NEW YORK TIMES, DESCRIBED THE PROGRAM BRIEFLY AND THEN WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO EXPLAIN THE WOLFENDEN REPORT IN ENGLAND AND THE MODEL PENAL CODE AS ADOPTED BY THE AMERICAN LAW INSTITUTE. IN BOTH CASES HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN CONSENTING ADULTS IS CONSIDERED OUTSIDE OF THE REALM OF THE LAW.

IN CONTRAST TO THE TIMES COVERAGE, THE NEW YORK JOURNAL AMERICAN HAD THIS TO SAY:

"WE'VE HEARD OF SILLY SITUATIONS IN BROADCASTING, BUT FM STATION WBAI WINS OUR TOP PRIZE FOR SCRAPING THE SICKLY BARREL-BOTTOM. WBAI ANNOUNCES, A BIT PROUDLY, IT WILL GIVE EIGHT YOUNG HOMOSEXUALS EQUAL TIME TO TELL THEIR PERVERTED SIDE OF THE ADMITTEDLY SAD BUT CERTAINLY SINFUL STORY BECAUSE WBAI BELIEVES 'IN THE RIGHT OF MINORITIES TO BE HEARD'.... THIS LOWER-DEPTHS DECISION FOLLOWED THE APPROACH TO THE STATION'S BUBBLEHEADED BRASS OF A FELLOW BEARING THE CARD OF "PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR, HOMOSEXUAL LEAGUE OF AMERICA".... IS THAT A UNION?"

THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE FOUND THE PROGRAM TO BE NEWSWORTHY ALSO, BUT THE SAN FRANCISCO PRESS REMAINED SILENT.

'ECHO'

A STORY BY ZEE NEWELL

"THEY'VE BEEN TOGETHER TWENTY YEARS!" VIRGINIA EXCLAIMED TO THE FRIEND WHO WAS WITH HER, AS THEY BALANCED CAKE AND COFFEE ON THEIR KNEES. IT WAS A NICE PARTY, AND EVERYBODY WAS HAVING A GOOD TIME. THE GUESTS RANGED IN AGE FROM EARLY TWENTIES TO FORTY, AND THE COUPLE WHO HAD BEEN TOGETHER SO LONG HAD JUST PASSED THAT MARK.

"SOME PEOPLE ARE LUCKY, SOME AREN'T," REMARKED GWEN, WHO WAS SEATED NEARBY AND HEARD THE COMMENT. "THEY JUST HAPPENED TO DRAW THE LUCKY NUMBER. THEY'RE THE EXCEPTION - THE ONE IN A MILLION WHO DREW THE LUCKY NUMBER."

"OH, GWEN - YOU'RE SO BITTER!"

"YOU GET THAT WAY," GWEN SAID AND BURIED A FORK IN THE CAKE.

"WHY, GWEN?"

"YOU'LL KNOW WHY AFTER A FEW MORE LOVE AFFAIRS GO PFFFT."

"OURS ISN'T GOING TO GO PFFFT. IS IT DARLING?" VIRGINIA SAID DEFENSIVELY, TURNING A HOPEFUL FACE TO PAT.

"NO. IT IS NOT." PAT'S ANSWER RANG DEEP WITH LOVE - AND DETERMINATION.

WITH ALL THE PROBLEMS HOMOSEXUALS FACE YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE, GWEN THOUGHT TO HERSELF, POKING SOME CAKE IN HER MOUTH TO HOLD DOWN THE WORDS. ADDED TO THEIR OWN ADJUSTMENTS OF LIVING TOGETHER, THIS COUPLE HAD FAMILY AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. VIRGINIA WAS ATTRACTIVE, AND IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL SOMEBODY ELSE....

GWEN ROSE QUICKLY AND MADE HER WAY OVER TO THE PIANO TO JOIN THE OTHERS WHO WERE LISTENING TO THE MUSIC.

"I WANT OURS TO LAST, PAT," VIRGINIA SAID. "I DON'T WANT TO BE ALWAYS CHANGING PARTNERS. DO YOU THINK WE'VE DRAWN THE LUCKY NUMBER

THAT COMES UP ONCE IN A MILLION LIKE GWEN SAID?"

"I DON'T BELIEVE IN LUCKY NUMBERS ANY MORE," PAT REPLIED SOBERLY. "I BELIEVE IN EFFORT. HOMOSEXUALS HAVE NO MORE PROBLEMS THAN HETEROSEXUALS. GWEN THINKS IF SHE WERE ONLY ACCEPTED BY SOCIETY HER TROUBLES WOULD BE OVER. SOCIETY DOESN'T FROWN ON HETEROSEXUALS, YET THEY HAVE PROBLEMS."

"BUT LESBIANS DO HAVE PROBLEMS! YOU KNOW THEY DO!"

"I DIDN'T SAY THEY HAVE NO PROBLEMS. I SAID THEY HAVE NO MORE THAN ANYBODY ELSE. SOMETIMES THEY'RE A DIFFERENT KIND, SOMETIMES THE SAME. ALL THOSE MOTHER-IN-LAW JOKES WERE WRITTEN BY HETEROSEXUALS FOR HETEROSEXUALS. THEY ALSO HAVE OTHER ATTRACTIONS AND FINANCIAL WORRIES, AND THEY'RE NOT 100% UNDERSTOOD BY OTHERS. FURTHERMORE, THEY USUALLY HAVE THEIR CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS IN ADDITION TO THEIR OWN. EVERYBODY HAS PROBLEMS, AND IF GWEN WOULDN'T DWELL SO MUCH ON THEM, SHE WOULD HAVE MORE TIME LEFT FOR SOLVING THEM."

"PAT! GWEN IS OUR FRIEND! YOU SOUND LIKE A TRAITOR!"

"TRAITOR TO WHAT? HOMOSEXUALITY ISN'T A CAUSE - IT'S JUST A PREFERENCE WE HAVE IN COMMON. WE DON'T HAVE TO REFUSE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM FOR FEAR OF LOSING GROUND WITH SOCIETY OR OURSELVES. I'M NOT UNSYMPATHETIC EITHER - I'M ONLY CONCERNED. IT SOUNDS CORNY, BUT THESE ARE MY PEOPLE AND THAT'S WHY I CARE. I'VE GONE THROUGH MY QUOTA OF AFFAIRS, TOO, BUT AFTER THE LAST ONE I DECIDED TO TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT MYSELF - AND I DIDN'T LIKE WHAT I SAW. A LESBIAN MARRIAGE IS JUST LIKE ANY OTHER MARRIAGE, AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T BELIEVE IN LUCKY NUMBERS - I BELIEVE IN EFFORT. IT'S GIVE AND TAKE, AND IF BOTH PARTIES GIVE MORE THAN THEY TAKE, NOBODY ENDS UP WITH A DEFICIT."

"OH, PAT, I FEEL THAT WAY TOO!"

"I KNOW YOU DO. THAT'S WHY WE CAN'T MISS. NOW I'D BETTER GET OUT TO THE KITCHEN, DOLL. I WAS ASSIGNED K.P. DUTY TONIGHT. BUT LET'S HAVE A LONG TALK WHEN WE GET HOME." SHE LEANED OVER AND KISSED VIRGINIA AFFECTIONATELY ON THE CHEEK.

VIRGINIA WATCHED HER WEND HER WAY TOWARD THE KITCHEN, LOVING THE WAY SHE MOVED, THE SHAPE OF HER HEAD, HER LONG LEGS. SHE LOOKED

FORWARD TO TALKING WITH PAT WHEN THEY RETURNED HOME. THEY OFTEN TALKED FOR HOURS AND ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD THEMSELVES BETTER. THEY DISCUSSED FULLY EVERY PROBLEM, AND THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAD SEEN SOME OF THEM DISAPPEAR. NOBODY COULD END UP WITH A DEFICIT, PAT HAD SAID, AND FOR A TIME VIRGINIA ENJOYED THE WARM FEELING OF SECURITY, BUT GRADUALLY THE FEAR BEGAN - THE TERRIBLE, CREEPING DREAD THAT IT WOULD NOT LAST. HADN'T SHE THOUGHT IT WOULD LAST WITH JOANNE? AND MARGIE? AND DOT? I'M ONLY TWENTY-TWO, SHE THOUGHT, AS THE FEAR CONSUMED HER. THREE DOWN. HOW MANY TO GO? GWEN WAS RIGHT. IT WAS ALL A MATTER OF LUCK. PAT'S "PHILOSOPHY" SOUNDED GOOD, BUT WHO HAD PROVED IT?

THEY WERE STANDING TOGETHER NEAR THE PIANO. YOU COULD TELL THEY WERE HAPPY FROM THE WAY THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER WITH A SORT OF SPECIAL QUIET. THEY WERE HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME WITHOUT TRYING AS HARD AS THE OTHERS. MAYBE IT WAS BECAUSE THEY WERE OLD. MAYBE WHEN YOU WERE FORTY YOU HAD NO ENERGY. SHE HAD NOT KNOWN MANY COUPLES THAT OLD, NOR HAD SHE NOTICED ANY IN PUBLIC. MAYBE THEY BURNED THEMSELVES OUT AND DIED. OR COULD IT BE THEY JUST WENT THEIR WAY AND YOU DIDN'T NOTICE THEM? TWENTY YEARS! HOW DID THEY HAPPEN TO DRAW THE LUCKY NUMBER? DID THEY KNOW THEY WERE LUCKY FROM THE START - LIKE HITTING THE JACKPOT? SHE WAS ANGRY, IN SPIKE OF HERSELF, TO THINK THEY WERE THE LUCKY ONES. WHO SAYS WHO DESERVES TO BE LUCKY? WHY DIDN'T THEY HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS AS OTHER LESBIANS?

SUDDENLY THE PIANO STOPPED, AS THE GIRL WHO WAS PLAYING DECIDED TO ENJOY SOME CAKE BEFORE IT WAS GONE. THOSE WHO HAD BEEN LOUNGING AROUND LISTENING TO THE MUSIC MOVED AWAY, AND VIRGINIA NOTICED ONE OF THE TWO OLDER WOMEN START FOR THE KITCHEN. THAT LEFT THE OTHER ALONE FOR A WHILE, AND SHE WENT OVER AND SAT ON A HASSECK NEAR THE FIRE. VIRGINIA STUDIED HER, WONDERING WHY SHE WORE SO MUCH MAKEUP AND EARRINGS WHEN SHE WAS REALLY QUITE MAS-
CULINE. MAYBE PAT WOULD LIKE SOME EARRINGS FOR HER BIRTHDAY - SOME TAILORED ONES SHE COULD WEAR WITH CAPRIS. EARRINGS WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE ON PAT, AND WHAT DID IT MATTER IF NONE OF THEIR FRIENDS IN THE CROWD WORE THEM? FOR A LONG TIME SHE STARED AT THE WOMAN SEATED NEAR THE FIRE. LUCKY NUMBER, LUCKY NUMBER. HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO GET IT?

VIRGINIA CROSSED THE ROOM. THEY CHATTED A WHILE, THEN SHE ASKED THE WOMAN HOW SHE AND HER FRIEND HAD MANAGED TO ESCAPE THE PROBLEMS OF A LESBIAN MARRIAGE.

"BY NOT ESCAPING THEM," WAS THE QUICK REPLY. "AS EVERY PROBLEM DEVELOPED, WE DISCUSSED IT FULLY, LOOKED AT IT OBJECTIVELY - EVEN FROM THE STANDPOINT OF OTHERS, IF OTHERS WERE INVOLVED. WE RELIED ON PATIENCE AND CAREFUL HANDLING FROM THERE ON. BY THIS MEANS, AN ANGUISHED MOTHER'S CRY TO HER DAUGHTER, 'I'D RATHER SEE YOU DEAD!' WAS LATER CHANGED TO 'WORK TOGETHER AND LOVE EACH OTHER.' IT TOOK YEARS, BUT THAT PROBLEM WILL NEVER RETURN TO US, AND THERE WILL BE NO MORE JOYLESS HOLIDAYS SPENT APART.

"LON'S MOTHER HAD HER SIDE OF THE STORY, TOO. SHE MADE SACRIFICES DURING THE DEPRESSION, SUPPORTING TWO CHILDREN AND PROVIDING LESSONS FOR LON'S CAREER AS A JAZZ MUSICIAN. AFTER LON WORKED IN SHOW BUSINESS SEVERAL YEARS, NATURALLY THE MOTHER COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY SHE GAVE UP HER CAREER TO AVOID TRAVELING, LEFT A HAPPY HOME ENVIRONMENT, AND MOVED IN WITH A FRIEND OCCUPYING A TWO-ROOM APARTMENT WITH NOTHING BUT THE LANDLORD'S FURNITURE, ONE BLANKET, AND A DOZEN ROSES. IF WE HAD REACTED WITH RESENTMENT OR ANGER BECAUSE WE WERE 'NOT UNDERSTOOD', WE COULD NEVER HAVE SOLVED THE PROBLEM. THE HABIT OF FULLY DISCUSSING EVERY PROBLEM, INCLUDING OUR OWN PERSONALITY ADJUSTMENTS, HELPED US VIEW THE SITUATION FROM A BETTER ANGLE AND CONTROL OUR EMOTIONAL REACTIONS LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE PLANS FOR CORRECTION AND ACCEPT CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM FROM EACH OTHER WHEN NEEDED."

SHE WAS QUIET FOR A WHILE, OFFERING A CIGARETTE TO VIRGINIA AND LIGHTING ONE HERSELF.

"ANOTHER PROBLEM OCCURRED WHEN I WAS HIRED FOR MY PRESENT POSITION. BY COINCIDENCE, AN OLD FRIEND, WHO KNEW I WAS A LESBIAN, WAS ALSO FRIENDLY WITH ONE OF THE COMPANY EXECUTIVES. SHE WARNED ME TO BE CAREFUL BECAUSE THIS YOUNG MAN HAD REMARKED 'THEY HIRED A DAMNED QUEER AS SECRETARY TO THE BOSS.' IN TIME THIS FELLOW BECAME THE BEST MAN FRIEND I'VE EVER HAD. HIS UPBRINGING WAS SIMPLY SUCH THAT HE COULDN'T ACCEPT ANY DEVIATION, WHETHER IN EVERY DAY ETIQUETTE OR SEX. IF I HAD REACTED TO HIS ATTITUDE WITH PANIC, RESENTMENT OR A FEELING OF BEING UNWANTED, I WOULDN'T HAVE LEARNED WHAT A REALLY NICE GUY HE WAS - AND HE WOULDN'T HAVE LEARNED THAT LESBIANS AREN'T SO 'BAD' AFTER ALL."

VIRGINIA LISTENED TO SIMILAR EXPERIENCES RIGHT DOWN THE LINE. EVERY PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS THE LESBIAN MARRIAGE HAD PRESENTED ITSELF TO THIS COUPLE OVER THE YEARS. FROM THE TENTH YEAR ON IT WAS

CLEAR SAILING, AND SOLVING THESE PROBLEMS TOGETHER HAD HELPED THEM TO MATURE AND HAD STRENGTHENED THEIR LOVE.

"THEN YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN LUCKY NUMBERS, DO YOU?" VIRGINIA SAID.

"LUCKY NUMBERS? OH, NO! I BELIEVE IN EFFORT. IT'S A GIVE AND TAKE, AND IF BOTH PARTNERS GIVE MORE THAN THEY TAKE, NOBODY ENDS UP WITH A DEFICIT."

Homosexuals and Handwriting

HELEN KING, A NOTED GRAPHOLOGIST AND AUTHOR OF YOUR DOODLES AND WHAT THEY MEAN, ANNOUNCES A NEW PROJECT IN THE OFFING DEPENDING UPON INTEREST IN A "PRIVATE" EDITION OF A COPIOUSLY ILLUSTRATED PAPER ON "HOMOSEXUALITY AND HANDWRITING".

THIS IS THE FIRST, AND ONLY, OBJECTIVE REPORT OF ITS KIND. IT WILL BE DONE ON 8X11 SIZE PAGES TO RETAIN THE ORIGINAL SIZE OF THE HANDWRITINGS. PARTIAL CONTENTS INCLUDE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HETEROSEXUAL, HOMOSEXUAL AND BISEXUAL WRITINGS; PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS AND STUDIES; THE CHANGING CONCEPTS; RESEARCH GROUPS; SEX SYMBOLS IN WRITINGS, AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY.

MISS KING HAS LONG BEEN A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN GRAPHOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND HAS LONG BEEN ACQUAINTED WITH THE SUBJECT OF HOMOSEXUALITY THROUGH HER ASSOCIATION WITH THE LATE DR. BLANCHE M. BAKER. IN 1959 SHE WAS THE SPEAKER AT A PUBLIC DISCUSSION MEETING SPONSORED JOINTLY BY THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS AND THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY IN NEW YORK. FOR A REPORT ON HER TALK ENTITLED "HOMOSEXUALITY IN HANDWRITING AND DOODLING" SEE THE LADDER, APRIL 1959.

DOB IS SOLICITING ADVANCE ORDERS FOR MISS KING'S BOOK. SHE HAS SPECIFIED THAT ON ALL ORDERS OBTAINED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, A PERCENTAGE OF THE RECEIPTS WILL REVERT TO THE BLANCHE M. BAKER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND AND A PART WILL GO INTO DOB'S NATIONAL TREASURY. PRICE OF THE BOOKLET WILL BE \$5.00 AND 25¢ POSTAGE-PACKING.

PLEASE SEND ORDERS TO DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, 1232 MARKET STREET, SUITE 108, SAN FRANCISCO 2, CALIFORNIA.

Here and There

WHAT ARE THE FACTS ABOUT THE PREVALENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE THEATER TODAY? THIS QUESTION WAS ASKED IN AN ARTICLE, CALLED THE THIRD SEX ON STAGE, WHICH APPEARS IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF SHOW BUSINESS ILLUSTRATED. THE AUTHOR IS UNNAMED.

ACCORDING TO AUTHORITIES QUOTED IN THE ARTICLE, THE PROPORTION OF HOMOSEXUALS IN THE THEATER GREATLY EXCEEDS THE PROPORTION FOUND IN OTHER FIELDS. ONE PERSON FEELS THAT A MINIMAL ESTIMATE WOULD BE AROUND 25%. THE AUTHOR, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO FEEL THAT ONE CANNOT SAY 25% OF A GROUP IS ANYTHING WITHOUT TAKING A LARGE SAMPLING AND WITHOUT BEING SURE THAT THE SAMPLING IS BOTH REPRESENTATIVE AND RANDOM. HE ALSO FEELS THAT THE PEOPLE THAT THE DOCTORS ARE DISCUSSING ARE SELF-SELECTED FROM THOSE WHO ARE ABNORMAL TO SOME DEGREE, KNOW IT AND WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

THE AUTHOR GOES ON TO DISCUSS THE NUMBER OF PLAYS WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE PAST FEW YEARS WHICH DEALT WITH SEXUAL DEVIATION IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER. FROM THIS HE CONTINUES AND SUGGESTS A REASON FOR THE ATTENTION CURRENTLY BEING PAID TO THE HOMOSEXUAL. "CERTAINLY, THE LEGAL AND SOCIETAL HOUNDING OF THE MISFIT HAS FALLEN WITH A DREADFULLY HEAVY HAND ON THE HOMOSEXUAL. AND, TO A DEGREE, HE MAY BE RESPONSIBLE, IN THE SENSE OF ASKING FOR IT OUT OF EXHIBITIONISTIC, NARCISSISTIC, GUILT-RIDDEN MASOCHISM."

ONE THING THAT SEEMS TO BOTHER OUR AUTHOR GREATLY (AND WITH VALID REASON) IS THE FACT THAT SOME HOMOSEXUALS SEEM TO BE TOO INVOLVED WITH THEIR HOMOSEXUALITY AND NOT ENOUGH INVOLVED WITH THE PLAY. EXAMPLES OF THIS WERE SUCH THINGS AS COSTUME DESIGNERS WHO GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO MAKE THE GIRLS IN A PRODUCTION AS UNATTRACTIVE AS POSSIBLE AND PLAY UP THE BARE MALE TORSO; UNPLEASANT BITS OF DIALOGUE OR BUSINESS WHICH ARE OBVIOUSLY INSIDE JOKES SINCE THEY ARE USELESS EXCEPT AS A MEANS OF THUMBING ONE'S NOSE AT SOCIETY. ALSO, THE CURRENT PLAY IN WHICH THE STAR WEARS HIS COSTUME AS THOUGH IT WERE DRAG AND EXAGGERATES HIS MANNERISMS UNTIL HE IS CAMPING - NOT ACTING.

THE AUTHOR THEN COMES TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS A GREATER INCIDENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE THEATER THAN OUTSIDE IT BUT

HE AT THE SAME TIME DECIDES THAT HE SHOULD SHOW SOME LOGICAL REASONS FOR THIS CONCLUSION. HE PROCEEDS TO LIST THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) THE THEATER WORLD IS TRADITIONALLY A BIT LESS THAN CONVENTIONAL,
- 2) THE HOMOSEXUAL'S PSYCHIC NATURE WHICH INVOLVES A GOOD DEAL OF FANTASY AND AN ABILITY TO ACT OUT ROLES THAT ARE ESSENTIALLY UNREAL, AND 3) THE HAZARDOUS ECONOMIC NATURE OF THE THEATER REQUIRES PEOPLE WHO ARE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THEATRICAL LIFE.

THE AUTHOR THEN EVALUATES THE FOREGOING AND DISCUSSES THE PROS AND CONS OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE THEATER. HE EXPRESSES THE OPINION THAT HOMOSEXUALS PER SE ARE NOT DETRIMENTAL - IT IS WHEN THESE SAME PEOPLE ALLOW THEIR PERSONALITIES TO INTRUDE INTO THE THEATER - THEREBY RUINING A PLAY - THAT HE IS AGAINST THEM.

HE ENDS WITH THE FOLLOWING: "WHATEVER THE SHADES OF INFORMED OPINION, THERE IS WIDE AGREEMENT THAT IT IS TIME TO SPEAK OPENLY AND CANDIDLY. AS IN DEALING WITH ANY OTHER ASPECT OF OUR SOCIETY, CLEAR HEADS AND LIGHT AND THE VENTILATION OF IDEAS ARE NEEDED; FACTS DON'T VANISH OR GET SOLVED FOR LACK OF CONFRONTATION."

* * * * *

FROM HERB CAEN: "IN A SAUSALITO BAR, TWO MANNISH-LOOKING GIRLS WERE DISCUSSING A MUTUAL FRIEND, AND ONE SAID, 'I CAN'T STAND HER VOICE - IT'S SO EFFEMINATE.'" "JUST BEFORE THE RAID ON THE TAYBUSH, REPORTS RALPH BARRIE, TWO OF THE CUSTOMERS WERE HAVING A TERRIBLE ARGUMENT - WHICH ENDED WHEN ONE SCREAMED AT THE OTHER, 'DON'T YOU DARE LOWER YOUR VOICE TO ME!'"

WHO AM I?

(Continued from page 13)

One memory out of thousands which have turned man into a robot, a perfect specimen for "hidden persuaders". He has trained himself well to be ruled. He reacts automatically. He lives by habit. Repeat something to him often enough and he will play it back verbatim. Man has become a tape-recorder, a puppet, a robot, a slave. Well, may he ask, "Who am I?"

-Claudia Walker

READERS RESPOND

"Just what is the value of Mrs. Suzanne Prosin's research paper, 'The Concept of the Lesbian--a Minority in Reverse?' About all I can gather is that Mrs. Prosin went to a great deal of trouble to find people who supported her theories.

"She says, for example, that at first she wanted only couples that had been together for three or more years, but just couldn't find them. Since Lesbians can only manage to stay together for a year, she had to settle for that.

"Most of you have been around the gay world for some time. Can you honestly say that these forty people are a valid sampling of the thousands of Lesbians that live in California, let alone the United States?

"From my experience I find that the couple that stays together for over a year is an exception. Is it fair to use only exceptions for statistical purposes? I maintain that the majority of Lesbians do not settle down to the pseudo-marriage that Mrs. Prosin describes. If a person is going to write about the Lesbians, why not write about them as they (the majority) are, not just as they would like to be."

M.S., California

EDITOR'S NOTE: May we refer you to the September, 1959 issue of THE LADDER, page 21. In this study of 157 Lesbians by the Daughters of Bilitis research committee, it was found that the range of duration for the length of relationship of couples was from "just begun" to 20 years. The average was between four and five years.

* * * * *

"The Suzanne Prosin study of Lesbian couples is of magnificent value. Easily as important as the LADDER'S

research on the Lesbian a few years ago. It raises, however, a few points of argument. Not just argument with this study, but argument with the whole sociological basis for the study. Roles are a nonsense game practiced by heterosexual couples as well as homosexual. For a good satire of all this, read the "Flintstones" comic strip a few times.

"If Mrs. Prosin had come to visit us she would have seen some very obvious things which would fit well in her study. We clearly look different - one of us is very masculine looking and in dress - the other very feminine in looks and only tailored in dress. I'd love to open doors for her and light her cigarette - even carry the tape recorder and play 'little boy' endlessly, but it's a game - just a game - I know I'm a girl and secretly I'm much, much weaker emotionally than my feminine looking other half. Oh, it's a big secret and you'd never guess in any one evening but the 'steely glint' in the 'Butch's' eye is put on - like makeup.

"For the rest of the study - well, loud hoorahs. It's the first time anyone ever found the strong emphasis in fidelity which should be obvious to anyone who was faintly interested in female psychology. Women - even emancipated ones - tend to be monogamists. It wreaks havoc with them when they play 'fast and loose' and it's wonderful to have some small proof of this for the doubters.

"It becomes increasingly apparent that once you study homosexuals away from 'the couch' or the institution, you find reasonably well bred, intelligent, responsible citizens with few, if any, differences from the 'parent society!'

"The emphasis on 'possessions' and 'homes' and joint responsibility' were expected - but none the less gratifying after years of bohemian stereotypes.

"The emphasis on togetherness is not valid - really. There is no choice in the Lesbian society. After all, who would you spend a night away from your partner with? In a society set up with rigid sex lives at least socially, the more masculine member of a Lesbian couple could hardly go bowling with the boys. The more feminine member might be

able to trot off to a church group alone - but that would simply be silly.

"Finally one hopes other, longer studies will be undertaken involving larger groups."

G. D., Kansas

* * * * *

"Somewhere along the way, the Homosexual Press of America is sadly and sickeningly missing the boat. The word is not spelled with block letters (homoSEXual), so why write as if it were. After reading years of ONE, the MATTACHINE REVIEW, THE LADDER, DORIAN QUARTERLY, etc., I shudder to imagine the collective impression a few years of these magazines would give the average, intelligent heterosexual.

"I'm not an adolescent ass. I fully realize sex is here to stay. Sex is necessary; everyone needs it to be balanced. But must we wear our need for sex in chain mail armor and neon signs? There is no need for euphemism, no need for 'homophile' or castrated pseudonyms, but there is some need of balance.

"Even taking the ardent Freudian view that sex is present in every act from teeth brushing to looking at the sky, we still need not advertise all the potential beauty of life out of our 'press voice.'

"Surely I am not wholly alone in this reaction. Where is the beauty, the sensitivity, the over-awareness of emotional nuance in our journalism? Must we hard boil all the love out of it? Is it all who got arrested and why? Or all what laws keep us out of public johns or let us in? Which part of you is real or more real? Are you all sex or only sex with love? Have you other needs? What are they?

"No, don't hide your head in the sand or wear loose pants, but let's not all see nothing but the tight pants of life. Let's have a few touches of love - a few flashes of the eye, or maybe even a touch of the subtle."

B.G., Missouri



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