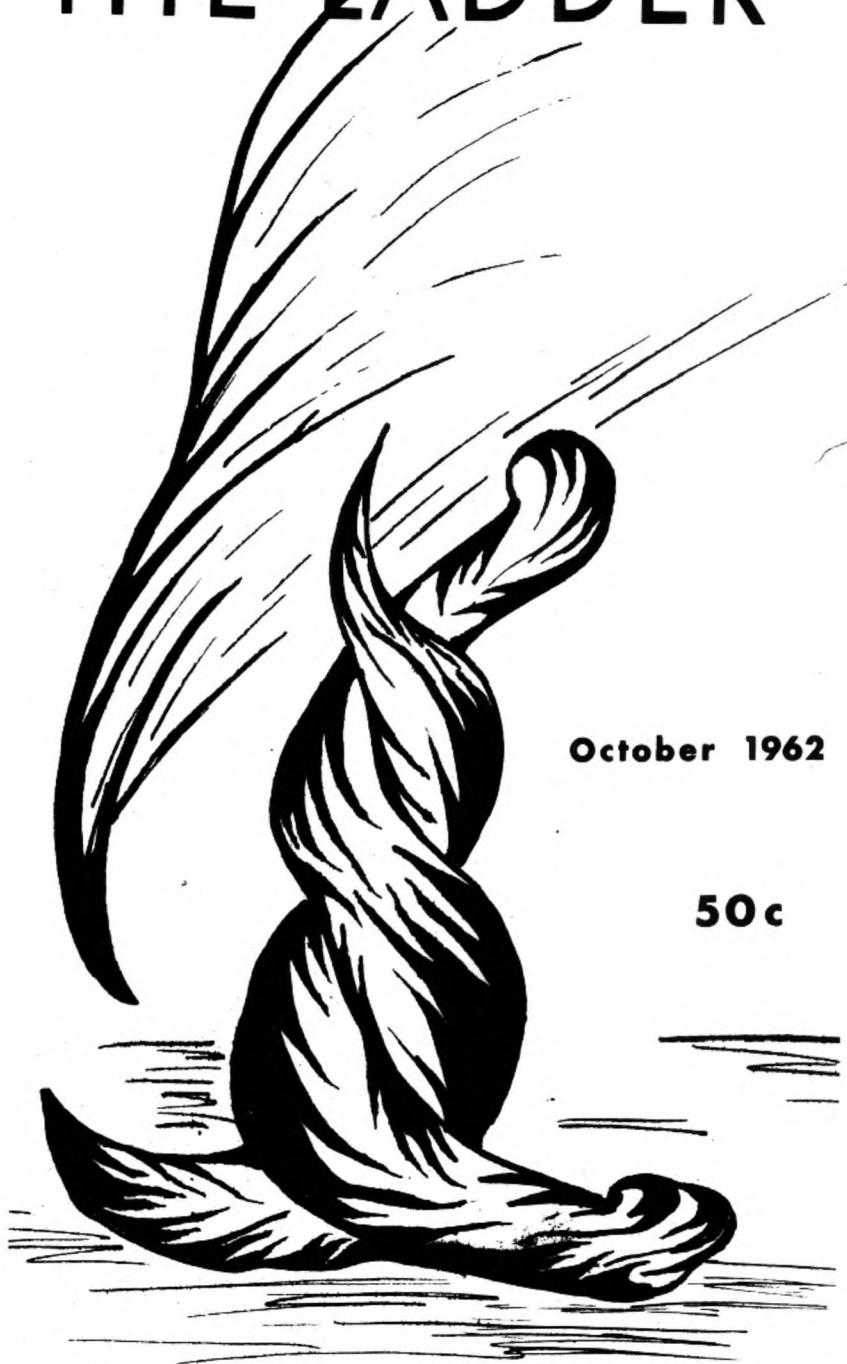


THE LADDER

October 1962

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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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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

contents

ANOTHER YEAR.....	4
MATTACHINE CONFERENCE	
PROGRESS IN V. D. CONTROL.....	5
CHANGING RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES.....	7
GAVIN ARTHUR REPLIES.....	11
MOOD MISCELLANEA.....	14
INCUBUS BY ARTEMIS SMITH.....	16
MASCULINE VIEWPOINT - HOW ABOUT YOU? BY PAUL D'AQUAVIVA.....	18
HERE AND THERE.....	22
LESBIANA BY GENE DAMON.....	23
READERS RESPOND.....	24

COVER BY MELL

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Another Year - -

OCTOBER MARKS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR FOR DOB - AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESTATE ITS AIMS AND GOALS, A CHANCE TO REVIEW THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE YEAR JUST PAST.

THE SEVENTH YEAR OF DOB HISTORY SAW THE ADDITION OF A FOURTH CHAPTER IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO. THE GROUP WHICH STARTED OUT RATHER TENTATIVELY TOWARDS THE END OF 1961 WITH THE NECESSARY FIVE MEMBERS HAS ALREADY GROWN TO A MEMBERSHIP OF ABOUT 15 AND WAS GRANTED A CHARTER BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT DOB'S NATIONAL CONVENTION IN HOLLYWOOD LAST JUNE. THE MAILING ADDRESS OF THE CHICAGO CHAPTER, WHICH IS A VERY ACTIVE GROUP SHOWING MUCH PROMISE, IS 5065 NORTH DAMEN AVE., CHICAGO 25, ILLINOIS.

THE SECOND NATIONAL CONVENTION OF DOB MARKED ANOTHER TRIUMPH FOR THE ORGANIZATION BOTH IN ATTENDANCE AND IN PROVOCATIVE DISCUSSION WITH PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE AND OUT-OF-TOWNERS. OUT OF PUBLICITY ON THE CONVENTION CAME TWO T.V. SHOWS - "PAUL COATES INTERVIEWS" THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOS ANGELES CHAPTER AND THE APPEARANCE OF JAYE BELL, DOB NATIONAL PRESIDENT, ON THE BEN HUNTER SHOW.

ALSO AT THE CONVENTION THE BLANCHE M. BAKER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND WAS OFFICIALLY ESTABLISHED AND THE MACHINERY SET IN MOTION SO THAT THE FIRST AWARDS MAY BE MADE NEXT YEAR. THERE WILL BE TWO CLASSIFICATIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS: (1) FOR FURTHERANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A FULL TIME WOMAN STUDENT ATTENDING A RECOGNIZED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY, AND (2) FOR FURTHERANCE OF THE EDUCATION OF THE LESBIAN ENABLING HER TO BETTER HER EARNING POWER (THIS WOULD INCLUDE ANY VOCATIONAL OR TRADE SCHOOL). A DRIVE FOR FUNDS IS NOW UNDER WAY TO MEET THE YEAR-END DEADLINE.

WITH THE JULY, 1962 ISSUE THE LADDER HAS BEEN COPYRIGHTED AND WILL HENCEFORTH AFFORD PROTECTION TO CONTRIBUTORS UNDER THE COPYRIGHT LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THESE ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR PAST, AND MANY PLANS ARE AFOOT FOR THE COMING YEAR TO BRING THE MESSAGE OF THE HOMOPHILE TO THOSE WITH EYES TO SEE AND EARS TO HEAR.

Mattachine Conference

Harold Call, president of the Mattachine Society, opened the society's ninth annual conference held at the Jack Tar Hotel in San Francisco on August 25 with a report on the highlights of Mattachine history since 1950 and an outline of future goals of the organization. Mr. Call made his peace with the rival Mattachine Society, Inc., of New York by conceding that there was no stopping the Mattachine idea wherever it has taken hold.

Progress In V.D. Control

Dr. Edgar C. Cumings, associate director, American Social Health Association in San Francisco, said that his topic might better have been called "Problems in Venereal Disease Control". He said that V.D. is still a national problem, although it is not generally known by the American public.

He said that the 18,781 cases reported in 1961 was double 1960 and triple 1959 and that in 1962 the figures were continuing to climb. For every case that is reported he said there was from three to ten which were not reported. The greatest increase, he noted, was among the young people.

Possible reasons for the increase of venereal disease since 1956 he said were increase in teen-age population, increased mobility of the younger element of the population, increase of promiscuity, lower moral standards, inadequate control of prostitution, inadequate parental control and family breakdown.

In a study of nine hygienic clinics in New York with a sample of 600 it was found, he said, that 71% were non-white (this he admitted to be an illusory figure since the young whites were more apt to go to a private physician), four-fifths were over 16 and under 22, 218 were not infected but all had had one or more sex experience, only 72 had graduated from high

school, 380 had not liked school, of 196 unmarried girls 95 had illegitimate children. It was also found that where sex information had been obtained from the parents, there was less promiscuity, more personalization and relatedness to the sex partner. Religion seemed to prevent deviant sexual behavior, and the study confirmed the theory that a good home atmosphere tends to lessen the incidence of deviant sexual behavior. Promiscuity was mainly a male phenomenon, but the study exploded the theory that the more promiscuity the more incidence of venereal disease.

Dr. Cumings deplored the fact that venereal disease, which has the highest rate of all communicable diseases, is not covered adequately in our school system. He felt that classes in hygiene which covered this subject certainly should be introduced before the senior grade in high school. He said there is still abysmal ignorance of how one may contract V.D. and what the symptoms are.

Estimates as to the spread of V.D. by homosexual contacts ranged from 0 to 80 or 90%, according to Dr. Cumings. The estimate for San Francisco is about 80%, he said. This leads to the question as to whether San Francisco has a larger number of homosexuals, or what? Dr. Cumings pointed out the need for a pilot study on homosexuality and V.D. in the Bay Area.

Dr. Cumings cited the need for better psychological counseling in public health clinics. He said that V.D. is a behavioral disease which is tied up with the emotional background of people.

Dr. Cumings advocates a more rigid reporting system by the doctor treating the case. There is need, too, for better trained teachers and for more emphasis on research. And, of course, society needs to change its attitudes about sex. ...

* * * * *

The September, 1962 issue of the Newsletter of the Mattachine Society, Inc. of New York features an article on this same subject from a report in the GP Magazine, published by the American Academy of General Practice. For a copy send 20c to Mattachine Society, 1133 Broadway, Rm. 304, New York.

Changing Religious Attitudes

Rev. Robert W. Wood, Congregational minister from Spring Valley, New York, and author of "Christ and the Homosexual", was the scheduled luncheon speaker. However, he was unable to attend, and a tape of his prepared address was presented.

Rev. Wood spoke of the Church's "dialogue" on homosexuality. He cited the late Rev. David E. Roberts' foreword in Dr. George Henry's book published in 1955 as the first widely publicized statement. He spoke of the appearance of Bishop James A. Pike, Episcopal Church, and Rabbi Alvin Fine on the recent T.V. program, "The Rejected", as a big step for organized religion, and regretted that the Roman Church had failed to have a spokesman.

But while progress in the "New Frontiers of Christianity" is slow, Rev. Wood suggested that there were many isolated individuals doing ministerial counselling for homosexuals - without the knowledge of their superiors and unknown to the heterosexual congregation. There is a growing number who are aware of the need for a more intelligent approach on the part of the Church as regards the homosexual, and they are meeting and discussing the problem.

As the Church becomes more aware of the population explosion, the role that the homosexual plays in birth control may also come to light, Rev. Wood suggested. He added that procreation might not be the primary purpose of Christian marriage and pointed out that childless couples felt no less Christian. Rev. Wood feels that it is utterly wrong to say that intercourse is for the purpose of having children only. He said that the more the Church comes to realize that there are other reasons for marriage, the more it might come to realize that marriage can also be applied to homosexuals. Marriage he defined as "the giving and receiving of two free spirits" - which mediates good to those who share it.

The gospel message of an existential Church, a new movement, would place emphasis less on the word of God and more on the spirit of God, Rev. Wood declared. And certainly this would help the relationship of the Church and the homosexual.

Rev. Wood cited the May, 1961 Conference on Sexual Problems held at Green Lake, Wisconsin, by the National Council of Churches and the Canadian Council of Churches as contributing some challenging and constructive thinking. In the official findings of some 600 persons from 28 Protestant denominations the question was raised - Is satisfaction of sex an end in itself or a fellowship between two individuals? Rev. Wood notes the use of the words, "two individuals", and the absence of any reference to their being of "the opposite sex". The Conference also asked what revision in attitude and treatment of the homosexual the Church should make to keep communications open with sex deviates. There were many more ramifications, Rev. Wood said, including the need for more education in rehabilitation of the individual and the need "to stop applying out-dated moralism" in pastoral counseling.

There must be a recognition that the vast majority does not concern itself with homosexuality in anything but a negative way, Rev. Wood stated. The Church avoids the seriousness of existential participation, he said. The homosexual remains in the realm of the unreal - "none exist in our congregation".

The Church, which long ago formulated its attitudes, is now being brought face to face that it really doesn't know, yet stoically remains anti-homosexual. As result the homosexual is "denied the one source where he could find redemption."

Rev. Wood said that he considered screening out or expelling all members of the clergy who may be homosexually inclined as un-Christian in ethics. He said he was not implying that all such who seek entrance to the seminary should be accepted, but that if otherwise qualified they should not be rejected.

On the subject of the civil liberties of the homosexual, Rev. Wood deplored the silence of the Church. He said that he was sadly disillusioned when the liberal voices become quiet and when "the high sounding words do not include the homosexual". They do not know what to do and thus keep silent and unconcerned.

While the negative aspect of religion in its confrontation with the subject of homosexuality has been stressed,

Rev. Wood pointed out that homosexuals themselves have also contributed to this negativism. Homosexuals have demanded complete acceptance and when they were not readily received have damned religion as a whole. Homosexuals have hurt themselves by use of expounding, "We will take over."

The chief problem, as Rev. Wood sees it, between the Church and the homosexual is that they talk at each other and do not talk with each other. Homosexuals must seek deep in their comprehension to be Christ followers, and Christian ethics must be re-thought to relate to a changing situation. The challenge is coming from so many directions. Homosexuality exists for so many of God's children, and Christian theology has failed to represent the Christ doctrine in bringing redemption to all.

While the Church must recognize that we are living in a revolutionary time, so too must the homosexual further constructive concentration and learn to understand Christianity as a member of the Church working from within.

Rev. Wood also referred to "thinking and commitment" without which the ethical concept is useless. Too many theologians, he said, have not followed thinking with commitment. "If we want love and understanding, we must give love and understanding."

One great lesson we have learned, Rev. Wood said, is that gentiles did not first have to become Jews in order to become Christians; likewise we are now learning that homosexuals do not first have to become heterosexuals to become Christians.

"Christ died for all," Rev. Wood declared, and it is not the prerogative of any churchman to decide which one. Such a re-thinking, long past due, can no longer be postponed.

Rev. Wood reiterated his statement in his book, "Christ and the Homosexual", that under certain limited conditions the Church should recognize and sanction homosexual marriage. It is up to the homosexual to prove by the type of marriage relationship he now has that such a union can reach the heights of a heterosexual marriage. While the Church is to be sensitive where it is now indifferent and is to learn that one can't always say that homosexuality per se is immoral, the homosexual must show his relationship has moral,

constructive ingredients and that he can live as moral a life as the heterosexual. "I am asking the homosexual thus to express himself!"

As for the future, Rev. Wood predicts the major segments of the church will become aware they ought to be aware, but will probably play it safe. Many will be faceless and voiceless, but there will be a few heroic exceptions. There will be a searching spirit, and while denominationwise nothing will happen, there will be individuals who will speak out. Homosexuals should be active in the Church, should worship and serve God; they will exert more influence from within the Church universal, and disillusionment will be lessened. Homosexuals will find redemption for their souls no less than heterosexuals. There will be more pamphlets, more books on this "dialogue", and more attention focused on resolving the problem.

It will take more than the next decade to reach the grass roots, Rev. Wood predicted, for the trail blazers are far ahead of the congregation. But the Church does have something to say to the homosexual. While some of the clergy is at work re-evaluating the doctrine of man, many will let the ACLU do what the Church ought to do. Some will try to keep the message of Christ from the homosexual and continue to compare the worst in homosexuality with the best in heterosexuality. But be reminded, "For Emanuel has come to All his children."

* * * * *

Without mincing words, Rev. Wood becomes the first member of the clergy to offer a way for homosexuals to enter the Christian community and join the Church, yet remain homosexuals without fear or guilt or apology. All aspects of homosexuality in its relation to community and church are forthrightly discussed.

Copies of this startling book may be obtained from the DOB Book Service, 1232 Market St., Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California. \$3.95, 20c handling (4% sales tax in California).

Gavin Arthur Replies

THE FOLLOWING IS THE AUTHOR'S REPLY TO TRACY LAING'S REVIEW OF "THE CIRCLE OF SEX" (SEE THE LADDER, JULY 1962):

IF THE LATE DR. BLANCHE M. BAKER HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO REVIEW MY VERY TENTATIVE SUGGESTIONS IN "THE CIRCLE OF SEX", AS HER HUSBAND WAS IN ONE MAGAZINE, I FEEL SURE I WOULD HAVE RECEIVED A MORE THOUGHTFUL AND PENETRATING HEARING. SHE WOULD NOT HAVE WRITTEN THE INTRODUCTION IF SHE HAD NOT BEEN THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH ME AND APPROVING OF THE NEW CONCEPT IT TRIED, HOWEVER INADEQUATELY, TO EXPRESS. TRACY LAING JUST HITS THE BUD WITH HER SHOVEL BECAUSE IT IS NOT A FULL-BLOWN FLOWER.

IN MY MIND THIS SLENDER VOLUME WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE A FULL TREATISE ON THIS NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT SEX. IT WAS THE FIRST TENTATIVE DISCUSSION OF AN IDEA WHICH HAD ITS INCEPTION ALMOST FORTY YEARS AGO IN DUBLIN, AND WHICH HAS HAD A LONG GESTATION. BUT EVEN A LONG GESTATION DOES NOT PRODUCE A FULL-GROWN ELEPHANT, AND THIS INFANT SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO MERCILESSLY CLOBBERED. AND SUCH PICKING ON DETAIL, SUCH IGNORING OF THE IDEA ITSELF! I MIGHT HAVE REFERRED TO OSCAR WILDE AS THE "POOR DORIAN" WITHOUT HAVING IN MIND SUCH A RICH AND HAPPY DORIAN AS NOEL COWARD.

I SUPPOSE IT IS ANOTHER CASE OF NAME-DROPPING THAT I ALSO SPEAK OF TAKING THE NEWBORN THEORY TO HAVELOCK ELLIS; OR FOR THAT MATTER, TO MAGNUS HIRSCHFELD OR ALFRED KINSEY - AND THAT I FOUND THESE THREE FAMOUS M.D.'S EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT NONE OF THEM BELIEVED IN REINCARNATION. THEY UNDERSTOOD HOW ASTRONOMY HAD DEVELOPED OUT OF ASTROLOGY, CHEMISTRY OUT OF ALCHEMY.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT I MIGHT BE EXCUSED FOR MENTIONING YEATS (MY WIFE AND I HAD MUCH MORE THAN A SPEAKING ACQUAINTANCE WITH HIM) IN SO FAR AS THE IDEA GREW OUT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM, AND ONLY LATER WERE WE EXPOSED TO THE MORE SCIENTIFIC MIND OF ELLIS. ON PAGE 17 OF MY VERY BADLY PROOF-READ ESSAY, I TRY TO EXPLAIN HOW THIS CIRCULAR, AS OPPOSED TO LINEAR, CONCEPT OF SEX WAS BORN. I REFER TO A CERTAIN "POOR LESBIAN" (POOR NOT BECAUSE SHE WAS A

LESBIAN, BUT BECAUSE SHE SEEMED TO WANT TO COMMIT SUICIDE). MY WIFE SAID, "WELL, IF SHE DOES KILL HERSELF, AND IF YEATS IS RIGHT AND WE DO GET A CHANCE TO BUILD A NEW BODY FOR OURSELVES, MORE TO OUR LIKING - I DO HOPE SHE WILL FIND HERSELF IN THE BODY OF A MAN, IN WHICH SHE WILL BE FAR HAPPIER IN THIS UNENLIGHTENED AGE."

"I HOPE SO TOO," I AGREED, "BUT SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO JUMP SUDDENLY INTO THE COMPLETELY MASCULINE VIEWPOINT OF A COMPLETELY HETEROGENIC PATERFAMILIAS. PSYCHOLOGICALLY SHE WILL BE A LESBIAN IN A MALE BODY - WHICH, NOW THAT I COME TO THINK OF IT, IS WHAT BYRON'S DON JUAN OR MOZART'S DON GIOVANNI REALLY WERE."

"THEN THERE MUST BE SOME OPPOSITE CHANGE-OVER FROM MALE TO FEMALE," SHE COUNTERED, "WHERE A COMPLETE 'FAIRY' (THE WORD DORIAN HAD NOT YET BEEN COINED AS A HAPPY COUNTERBALANCE TO LESBIAN) WOULD BE REBORN IN THE BODY OF A WOMAN. HE COULDN'T SUDDENLY TURN INTO A MATERFAMILIAS, BUT WOULD RETAIN MANY VESTIGES OF THE MALE MIND. HER ATTRACTION, HOWEVER, WOULD BE, AS IN HER LAST LIFE, ENTIRELY TOWARD MEN."

THIS WAS CONCEIVED A NEW CATEGORY OF SEX - THE HYPERHETEROGENIC - WHICH MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO SEE SEX, AS ONE CAN ALSO SEE RACES, NOT AS A STRAIGHT LINE RUNNING FROM THE MOST MALE (BLACK?) TO THE MOST FEMALE (WHITE?), BUT RATHER AS A CIRCLE OF INFINITE GRADATIONS.

I AGREE THAT THIS SLENDER VOLUME HAS MANY IMPERFECTIONS; ESPECIALLY IN THE FIELD OF EDITING. BUT PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES SHOULD NOT THROW STONES. MISS TRACY (IF I MAY BE SO BOLD, SINCE SHE REFERS TO ME AS MR. GAVIN) SPELLS HERMAPHRODITE H-E-M-E-R-A-P-H-R-O-D-I-T-E. DOES SHE UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS A COMBINATION OF HERMES AND APHRODITE - MERCURY AND VENUS, THE MALE GOD OF THE MIND AND THE FEMALE GODDESS OF THE HEART? I UNDERSTAND THAT "THE HEART HAS REASONS THE MIND KNOWS NOT" - BUT TRULY, A LITTLE BIT OF ERUDITION WOULD NOT DO MISS TRACY ANY HARM. SHE ALSO SPELLS CONTINUUM WITH ONE U.

INCIDENTALLY, SHE REALLY OUGHT TO BONE UP ON HER EINSTEIN AND MODERN CONCEPTS OF THE UNIVERSE GENERALLY. I RECOMMEND THE ARTICLE ON "RELATIVITY" IN COMPTON'S PICTURED ENCYCLOPEDIA (WRITTEN FOR CHILDREN). IN DESCRIBING THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM IT SAYS: IF MATTER IS DISTRIBUTED IN A CERTAIN WAY THROUGHOUT

THE UNIVERSE, IT WILL WARP ALL WORLD LINES WHICH ARE LONG ENOUGH INTO CLOSED CURVES. THEN SPACE WILL BE CLOSED AND CURVED. . . . THUS IF LIGHT CAN KEEP TRAVELING FOR MANY BILLIONS OF YEARS, IT WILL FINALLY RETURN TO ITS STARTING POINT."

THIS ARTICLE ALSO HAS A DIAGRAM OF A SPIRAL WHICH APTLY ILLUSTRATES MY OWN CONCEPT OF HOW OUR SOULS ASCEND THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS STAIRS OF EVOLUTION, ROUND AND ROUND THE "CIRCLE OF SEX" BUT EVER UPWARD. AND YET, WHAT IS UP? TO AN AUSTRALIAN THE DIRECTION WHICH IS UP TO US IS DOWN TO HIM. AND VICE VERSA. MISS TRACY SHOULD READ SOME OF ALAN WATTS' BOOKS TO GET OUT OF HER ANTIQUATED EITHER-OR THINKING. ALAN THINKS I HAVE MADE A REAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONCEPT OF SEX. HE DOES NOT PICK ON MINOR FLAWS, BUT SEES HOW IT TIES IN WITH FIVE-THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD SANSKRIT EXPLANATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE - THAT OUT OF A BASIC UNITY OF WHITE CAME THE MYRIAD DIVERSITY OF COLOR. AND VICE VERSA. MODERN SCIENCE IS COMING BACK TO THIS CONCEPT. I HOPE THAT WHEN, WITH THE INEVITABLE SWING OF LIGHT YEARS, MISS TRACY IS BORN AS A MAN, SHE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THE DOUGHNUT RATHER THAN THE HOLE.

AS I CANNOT REPEAT TOO OFTEN, "THE CIRCLE OF SEX" IS A TRIAL BALLOON. I HAD HOPED TO GET A LOT MORE BASIC COMMENT AND CRITICISM, PRO AND CON, THAN I HAVE - IN ORDER TO EXPAND THE THEORY INTO A FULL-SIZED VOLUME. I WELCOME ALL THOUGHTFUL CRITICISM AND I HAVE BENEFITTED EVEN FROM THIS "DUSTY ANSWER". BUT MOST OF ALL, I WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH MISS TRACY AND ALL THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS TO HAVE QUESTIONS FIRED AT ME SO THAT I CAN SEE THE POINTS THAT HAVE TO BE CLARIFIED IN ORDER THAT I MAY GET THIS REVOLUTIONARY IDEA ACROSS.

- GAVIN ARTHUR

EDITOR'S NOTE: IN ALL FAIRNESS TO "MISS TRACY" IT MUST BE ADMITTED THAT SHE TOO IS THE VICTIM OF FAULTY EDITING.

PHYLLIS LYON, PRESIDENT OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, HAS ANNOUNCED THAT MR. ARTHUR WILL BE INVITED TO A GAB 'N JAVA DISCUSSION IN THE NEAR FUTURE SO THAT THE "CIRCLE OF SEX" MAY BE GIVEN A FAIR HEARING.

IN THE MEANTIME, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT ALREADY READ THIS CONTROVERSIAL VOLUME WITH ITS REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT, COPIES MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DOB BOOK SERVICE (\$2.50, 35¢ HANDLING).

mood miscellanea

DESPAIR

I CANNOT GIVE HIM
MORE THAN HE WOULD KNOW,
NOR CAN I FORCE A PULSE
THAT WOULD BE SLOW.
WHAT MATTERS, THEN
THE UNSEEN, COUNTLESS HOURS --
(WHEN TEARS AS NUMBERLESS
AS DRIFTING STARS
REFLECTED ON A SURFACE
DULL AS STONE) --
PERMITTING A SAD HEART
TO BEAT ALONE?

PERHAPS THERE IS A BOLDER,
SHARPER LIGHT
TO SLASH THE DARKLING
CURTAIN OF THE NIGHT
THAT FALLS TOO QUICKLY
FINAL ON MY DREAMS
FOR LIFE IS NOT THE
CHALLENGE THAT IT SEEMS.

- JO ALLYN

THE FATES AREN'T ALWAYS QUITE SO OBDURATE,
THEY HAVE A GRIM SARDONIC
WAY OF GRANTING MEN THE THINGS
THEY WANTED -- YESTERDAY.

- ANONYMOUS

QUESTION, QUESTION NOT

QUESTION, MORTALS,
THAT WE LAUGH AND CRY, AND SCORN TEMPTATION'S GATE;
THAT WE PLUCK THE PEACOCK'S SILKEN FEATHER,
AND TIP-TOE UP THE STAIRS TOO LATE.
QUESTION
THAT WE BEG TO BE FORGIVEN, AND OFTEN MOURN OUR DEAD;
THAT WE SINK AS LOW AND RISE AS HIGH,
AND REAR WITH EQUAL DREAD.
QUESTION
THAT WE KNOW A GOD, AND SEEK A GREATER WORTH;
THAT WE SOMETIMES CURSE THE LIVELONG DAY,
TO SEE THE NIGHT IN MIRTH.
BUT, MORTALS, QUESTION NOT!
FOR YOU HAVE NO POWER ABOVE,
TO SEE STRANGENESS OR IMPURITY
IN ANY KIND OF LOVE.

- DEL SHEARER

THE CHANGE

EACH DAY MY ROSES SEEM TO GROW MORE FAIR,
THEIR RAINBOW COLORS HAVE A SOFTER GLOW.
AND SKIES AT SUNSET HAVE A RADIANCE RARE,
THE NIGHTS A STILLNESS I HAVE LEARNED TO KNOW.
IN ALL THESE THINGS I SENSE A SUBTLE CHANGE,
THE WORLD ABOUT ME IS A SENTIENT THING.
AND BEAUTY, WHICH HAS BEEN ELUSIVE, STRANGE,
HAS COME TO ME; THE WHOLE WORLD SEEMS TO SING.
THE SONG BIRDS HAVE A SWEETER MELODY,
AND ALL THE WORLD A BRIGHTER, LOVELIER RACE.
AND FROM IT ALL NEW LIGHT HAS COME TO ME,
I'VE FOUND IT IN YOUR DEAR, LOVED, SMILING FACE.
OF COURSE I DREAM; THE WORLD'S THE SAME, I KNOW;
BUT I, IN LOVING YOU SO MUCH, I GROW.

- ROQUA WASSAM

incubus

BY ARTEMIS SMITH

AN EARLY WORK

I WALK WITH A THIRST IN MY LOWER LIP AND STARE AT HIM OR HER AND SAY: HE IS THIS, SHE IS THAT; AND FEEL MY THIRD EYE BORED.

SITTING AT A TABLE I GLIMPSE A SLENDER ANKLE, OR AN INCLINED FINGER AND IT REMINDS ME OF MY STOMACH; HUNGER GNAWS AND I KNOW NOT WHAT I LACK EXCEPT I HUNGER.

THERE WERE DREAMS: OF A BEAUTIFUL LADY WHO WAS MYSELF, WHOSE HANDS I KISSED AND BEFORE WHOM I KNELT AND HUMBLING MYSELF - CONTENT ONLY TO SERVE AND IN THIS SERVING DERIVED PLEASURE (YOU WILL UNDERSTAND, FOR YOU HAVE KNOWN THIRST IN YOUR LOWER LIP, HAVE KNOWN HUNGER).

MY THIRD EYE OFTEN TURNED TOWARD A DOOR, OR TO THE END OF A STREET - TO SEE WHAT HUNGER PLEASED ME TO SEE: THE SLENDER ANKLE OR THE FINGER OR JUST A STRAND OF HAIR CURVED IN A SPECIAL WAY - REMINDING ME OF MYSELF. THEN SPACE BECAME MERELY SPACE AND I COULD HAVE BRIDGED THE GAP, FOR SHE BELONGED TO ME - THE GIRL IN THE DOOR, AT THE END OF THE STREET, EVEN IF HER ESCORT STOOD BESIDE HER. STILL I FIND IT SO.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG ENOUGH TO TREMBLE I DEMANDED VERY LITTLE. THERE WAS ECSTASY DERIVED FROM A VELVET VOICE THAT SAID, "PASS THE SALT, PLEASE." IT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNBEARABLE TO TOUCH THE BOTTOM OF HER SKIRTS THEN - BUT YOU HAVE KNOWN THE PLEASURE.

ONE READS BOOKS AND PRETENDS; ONE READS MANY BOOKS. AND ONE LIES AWAKE NIGHT AND DAY PRETENDING, WRAPPED AROUND A TELEPHONE. BUT IF SHE CALLS, SHE CALLS FOR JOHN, FOR SHE BELONGS TO JOHN. (BUT HOW MUCH MORE EACH ONE KNOWS NOW OF BELONGING.)

THERE ARE TWO CLOSETS IN MY HOUSE AND A CELLAR, LARGE ENOUGH TO BE COFFINS OR A CLOISTER, OR A HAUNTED PLACE WHERE ONE CAN TALK WITH GHOSTS; AND THEN THERE IS A KITCHEN AND A LIVING ROOM AND

MANY BEDROOMS WHERE GHOSTS DO NOT LIE. THERE IS JOHN'S ROOM WITH HIS BOOKS AND HIS DRAFTING TABLE AND HIS SCHOOL BANNERS. I MAY NOT GO THERE EXCEPT TO STEAL HER PICTURE FOR AN HOUR - LIKE THE DOG SNEAKING A NAP ON THE COUCH.

I HAVE LEFT MY FIRST LOVE, FORSAKEN HER AT SCHOOL; I HAVE BROKEN MY SILENT VOWS FOR NOW I MUST BE FAITHFUL TO JOHN'S WIFE (SHE IS NOT YET HIS WIFE, BUT SHE WILL BE), I MUST BE FAITHFUL TO ANISE.

IT IS TERRIBLE TO THROB IN A CLOSET AND THINK OF ANISE. THIS IS THE YEAR THAT I LEARNED ABOUT LOVE. SOMETIMES LOVE IS A MAN BUT IT IS ALWAYS A WOMAN. IT IS WONDERFUL TO SIT IN A CLOSET AND WAIT FOR ANISE.

WHEN SHE OPENS THE DOOR I WILL SEE HER FACE. HUNGER WILL BURST AND SHE WILL NOT SEE THE EXPLOSION ON MY FACE. I WILL TREMBLE BECAUSE I SEEM STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO TREMBLE. SHE WILL PULL ME UP, LAUGHING, AND CALL ME A PIXIE, AND I WILL PRETEND TO BE JOHN'S NAUGHTY LITTLE SISTER.

BUT ONE DAY, SOMEONE WILL TREMBLE FOR ME AND I SHALL NOT MISTAKE IT FOR A JOKE - I SHALL NOT MISTAKE IT FOR A JOKE.

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BALLET HAS CAUGHT UP WITH THE TIMES!

THE SPECTATOR (AUGUST 1962) IN A REVIEW BY CLIVE BARNES ENTITLED "SOCIAL DANCING" REPORTS THAT "THE BALLET HAS CAUGHT UP WITH THE TIMES AND PRODUCED A WORK BASED ON HOMOSEXUALITY."

BARNES POINTS OUT THAT BALLET TO DATE HAS NOT BEEN AN ART WITH ANY PARTICULAR SOCIAL CONSCIENCE, BUT THAT IN A WEDDING PRESENT THE BALLET IN STRAIGHTFORWARD FASHION SAYS IN EFFECT: "SOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE QUEER, AND THIS PRODUCES PROBLEMS. HERE IS ONE!"

"UNCOMPROMISING AND COMPASSIONATE, A WEDDING PRESENT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A REMARKABLE WORK. IT IS WILLING TO GRAPPLE WITH A REAL SITUATION, AND IT SUCCEEDS BECAUSE IT GIVES THAT SITUATION A COMPLETELY CHOREOGRAPHIC VALIDITY. IT COULD MARK THE BEGINNING OF AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT," BARNES STATED.

Masculine Viewpoint

How ABOUT YOU ?

Illustrious Names? Great Big Titles? Honored
Position? How ABOUT YOU? You are important, too -

In the August issue of THE LADDER Dr. Fred Goldstein made a very apt observation when he stated that "given proper circumstances, Man is an animal; in another set of circumstances, he is not. We are human, and not Divine." A very profound statement indeed!

In this world today - and it has apparently been true through the centuries past as well - mankind is much too apt to love and adore the "God whom he cannot see" and yet hate or antagonize the brethren that he can see in his day by day dealings and associations.

Books and education can become a very stultifying foundation or else a very helpful foundation. Those talented people who write great books and great works of prose are individuals who possess a God-given genius for being able to view their people and characters and places in a very universal way. The world is none too big for them; for just as the oceans move from place to place, so can these writers do the same - with their minds and experience and background. However, in so doing, they miss many, many times the fact that a world exists by itself in any given area - a town, a locality, a street, a state, a county or an island. So no matter how elevated our talents become, the greatest of us will miss the acorn upon the ground while viewing the great big Oak Tree in front of us.

It is certainly a truism that the Bible has become the circus piece, so to speak, for so many peoples and groups down

through the years. They have taken a passage here, they have taken a passage there - and then some omnipotent, self-made orator will arise and give his almighty, guaranteed, foolproof version of this passage or that passage or this view or that view. Some will delve into the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. Others will go to the passage of David and Jonathan. And other bitter people will pick out the harlot of Ezekiel's Chapter 23 to show that the scriptures contain a good deal of calumny as well.

The Bible is a proper focus of observation to show how a few people will attempt to condemn the whole earth by citing strictures and scriptures from this book. And so it goes, as well, for other books that are written, in many volumes, either from an academic viewpoint for the professional worker or from a lucrative angle in the fiction books that are offered today for sale on the newsstands.

However, the individual viewpoint never enters into these grandiose volumes, who, because they have a very appropriate or elaborate background or else possess "the keys to the moneys in the counting house", believe that they possess the ultimate in criterion, analysis, observation, judgement and condemnation.

So certainly, is it true that man is human, and not divine.

Father Flanagan stated many years ago that there was no such thing as a bad boy. This is true. Many of us as we become older fully realize that our environments, our close and distant relatives, our deprivations, our luxuries, our sorrows, our education, our lack of education - all - played an important part in our present-day perspective, feelings, and mental outlook upon life. For life is made from experience; and our experiences prove that man has progressed very, very little from that disciple of long ago who stated, "He who loves the God whom he cannot see, and yet hates the brother whom he can see, is a liar."

The catharsis of purging for each man and woman upon the daily stage of life is vastly different - one from the other. The artist feels his greatest elation when he has placed himself in his painted work and has hidden himself. For he feels he has entered the very souls of other men, and has

shared their agonies, their joys, their sorrows. The poet, the visionary whom no one seem to understand, uses his gifted mind to probe to the very atoms of the mental crux itself and thereby paints for mankind in his words the vision, the paradise, the glory that he knows man possesses, but simply will not use for his lack of tolerance and love and charity. The Philosopher, of course, is that wise old owl of a man who sits upon the top of the world, looks down, and knows what mankind needs; but he dares not to enter upon the daily scene, for he would look ridiculous to the masses of the daily herds.

Each of us, within ourselves, represents a diary - a diary of a life unrecorded for anyone but ourselves. Therein lies the many treasures that we each possess. For as the wise men of old have aptly stated, "The actions of men are forever and always the external symbolization of their own interior lives and every thought and act has the tendency to repeat itself. Thoughts are things that give life to desires and struggle for continued life according to the strength given them by the thinker and become manifest in acts which govern life." Therein lies the clue to our daily lives. For men do nothing but repeat themselves - their daily vocations, their likes, their dislikes - just as though we put on our favorite phonograph recording and play it over and over again.

Since Science has proven the polarities of positiveness and negativeness in physics, in electrical principles, in cellular structure, it can then become quite clear that man in his daily living is performing and pursuing the same activities. This would prove that we need all kinds of men - all kinds of women, all kinds of boys, all kinds of girls - for no matter how high or how low our vocation may be in daily life, it is but a puzzle; and we each belong in this daily drama of God's creation.

Man would do well to learn the meaning of toleration - one to the other - before they attempt to pattern the world and all its living by his or her particular pet scheme or plan. In fact, it was a very ingenious writer sometime ago who split the brain into two components - or polarities, stating that Mind represented the facet of the intellect which represented the Devil - Mind which would run everything in the world according to his man-made scheme. Where-

as the other part of the intellect represented Christ or the Principle of Love - knowing no hate, no bitterness, no antagonism.

So again we prove that you, too, are very important - whoever you are. One writer has compared the body of men and women to that of the universe. He states that our particular Galaxy - our Earth, Sun, and accessory eight or nine planets - is just a single cell in a Cosmic body surrounded by the abstraction we call infinitude. If therefore, our individual bodies are made up of countless decillions of individuals cells, each pulsating with a throb of vivacious life, then surely we, each of us, represent that universe, too.

In other words, don't sell yourself short. Illustrious Names? Great Big Titles? Honored Position? How ABOUT YOU? You are important, too. This thing we call nerves and frustration and anxieties and troubles and neurosis is not confined to any one group of people or nations. It confronts all peoples; for by our way of living - and that forced upon us by others - have we made our present troubled world.

Socrates, Plato and Jesus spoke a very profound trinity of phrases when they stated, "Help Thyself, Know Thyself, Give Thyself." This is what they said. They didn't issue forth with a decree of precepts to be shoved down each man's throat. They simply stated what they knew to be the gist of their life and their experience; and that is that man is very frail, he is human, he is animal, he can be divine; he she, we are here upon this Earth to learn our lessons as our experience and environment and good breaks and bad breaks have presented themselves to each of us.

Illustrious Names? Great Big Titles? Honored Position?

How ABOUT YOU? You are important, too.

- Paul d'Aquaviva

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Featured in a panel discussion on "Homophile Organizations in the Public Spotlight" on October 6th at Freedom House in New York City at 8:30 p.m. will be Jess Stearn, author of The Sixth Man, Randolfe Wicker, Homosexual League of New York, and Curtis DeWees, Mattachine Society. Moderator will be Mrs. Elsie Carlton of the Winston Book Service.

Here and There

AN ARTICLE BY SYDNEY J. HARRIS IN THE S.F. EXAMINER BRINGS FORTH THE THEORY THAT 'MOMISM', INSTEAD OF BEING FOSTERED BY 'MOM', IS MORE LIKELY TO BE BROUGHT FORTH BY 'LACK OF FATHER'. HE STATES THAT THE AMERICAN MOTHER, SINCE PHILIP WYLIE'S ATTACK ON 'MOMISM', HAS TAKEN A TREMENDOUS BEATING FROM SOME OF OUR MORE HYSTERICAL SOCIAL COMMENTATORS, AND HAS ALSO - MOST UNFAIRLY - BEEN CASTIGATED FOR THE ALARMING RISE OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN AMERICAN LIFE.

IT IS HARRIS' OPINION THAT THE INFLUENCE OF THE MOTHER UPON THE SON HAS BEEN OVERESTIMATED AND THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FATHER HAS BEEN NEGLECTED. THIS OPINION TENDS TO BE CONFIRMED BY A NEW MEDICAL SURVEY WHICH HAS BEEN DONE.

THE MEDICAL SURVEY, WHICH HAS BEEN STUDYING THE BACKGROUNDS OF HUNDREDS OF HOMOSEXUALS, INDICATES THAT THE HOSTILE-WITHDRAWN FATHER IS THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE, IF VILLAIN THERE IS. NEARLY ALL THE HOMOSEXUALS INTERVIEWED DISCLOSED THAT THEIR FATHERS HAD SHOWN LITTLE INTEREST IN THEM AS SMALL CHILDREN, HAD BEEN IMPATIENT AND PUNITIVE, OR ELSE DETACHED AND PASSIVE AROUND THE HOUSE. WITH SUCH A LACK OF A FATHER-FIGURE, THE ROLE OF THE MOTHER BECOMES TOO DOMINANT AND THE BOY IDENTIFIES WITH HER. BAD FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIPS SEEM MORE THE RULE THAN THE EXCEPTION IN OUR SOCIETY. BLAMING THE MOTHERS FOR 'EFFEMINATING' THEIR SONS IS CITING A SYMPTOM, NOT GIVING A CAUSE.

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A NEW CALIFORNIA ORGANIZATION YET! ...

ATTENDING THE MATTACHINE CONFERENCE IN AUGUST WERE APPROXIMATELY 10 MEMBERS OF THE DIONYSUS, A HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATION WHICH SPRANG UP IN ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, AROUND THE FIRST OF THE YEAR. THIS ORGANIZATION IS OPEN TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN AND IS PRESENTLY MORE CONCERNED WITH THE HOMOSEXUAL HIMSELF, HIS KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF AND HIS RIGHTS, THAN WITH PUBLIC ATTITUDES. FIRST THINGS FIRST, AS WE SAY IN DOB. ANYONE INTERESTED MAY CONTACT DIONYSUS, P. O. BOX 382, FULLERTON, CALIFORNIA.

LESBIANA



BY GENE DAMON

208. BEEBO BRINKER BY ANN BANNON. FAWCETT GOLD MEDAL, N.Y. 1962

FLATLY THIS IS A DISAPPOINTMENT. BANNON, WHO BUILT A REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL HOMOSEXUAL WORLD IN HER PREVIOUS TITLES, HAS HERE FALLEN SHORT OF HER OWN WRITING STANDARDS. THE MAGIC OF BEEBO SIMPLY ISN'T THERE, AND PROBABLY IT'S OUR FAULT, SINCE I UNDERSTAND THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN MORE OR LESS BY POPULAR DEMAND.

209. THE SOFT SIN BY RANDY SALEM. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1962.

THIS IS SALEM'S BEST BOOK SO FAR. FAMILIAR PLOT OF A MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS WELL HANDLED. GOOD MINOR CHARACTERIZATION, VERY LITTLE SEX (FOR A PAPERBACK) AND NO GAY BAR OR VILLAGE SCENES FOR A CHANGE. (REFRESHING CHANGE.)

210. LILITH BY J. R. SALAMANCA. SIMON & SCHUSTER, '61. BANTAM, '62.

LOVE COMES TO A YOUNG MALE HOSPITAL ATTENDANT IN THE FORM OF THE FEY AND WHOLLY INSANE BUT IRRESISTIBLE LILITH. COMPLICATIONS ARISE WHEN YVONNE MEAGHAN, A LESBIAN AND A PATIENT, ALSO FALLS IN LOVE WITH LILITH. THE PORTRAIT OF YVONNE, WHO IS INSTITUTIONALIZED WHOLLY BECAUSE OF HER PREVIOUS REPRESSED LESBIANISM (ON AN INVOLUNTARY BASIS), IS ONE OF THE BEST YET MANAGED IN A BASICALLY MINOR STUDY. VERY GOOD BOOK.

211. THE INFIDELITY GAME BY ELAINE DORIAN. BEACON BOOKS, 1962.

LAURA'S HUSBAND IS A PHILANDERER AND THEIR TEENAGE DAUGHTER IS A NEAR NEUROTIC. IN THE BACKGROUND OF THIS GENERAL MESS IS THE MINOR AND WELL DONE PORTRAIT OF CASSIE, LAURA'S BOSS AND LONG TIME FRIEND. CASSIE IS CLEARLY IN LOVE WITH LAURA BUT HONORABLY DOES NOTHING ABOUT IT, EXCEPT TO OFFER AID AND COMFORT. NICE, BELIEVABLE DESPITE POOR WRITING.

READERS RESPOND

"COMPULSION ALONE MOTIVATES THIS WRITING. BORN OF DOUBTS, FEAR AND, PERHAPS, TOO LITTLE FAITH IN YOUR CAUSE. BUT DECIDEDLY INNOCENT OF MALICE.

"PLEASE ALLOW ME THE PRESUMPTION OF CHALLENGE. ARE YOU NOT PUTTING THE PROVERBIAL CART BEFORE THE HORSE? ARE YOU NOT SENDING UNFORTIFIED AND UNUNIFIED TROOPS INTO BATTLE? HOW CAN YOU HOPE FOR PRECIOUS VICTORY WHEN THERE IS NO UNION OF THE RANK AND FILE? SHOULD WE NOT SEEK ACCEPTANCE OF OUR OWN BEFORE WE SEEK ACCEPTANCE FROM OTHERS?

"LET US NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THOSE DAMNING SKELETONS IN OUR FAMILY CLOSET. LET US NOT OVERLOOK THE LACK OF ACCORD WITHIN OUR SISTERHOOD. TOO MANY FACTIONS EXIST IN OUR SISTERHOOD. UNTIL THESE FACTIONS ARE UNITED, UNTIL WE PULL IN ONE DIRECTION RATHER THAN AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, WE CANNOT HOPE TO BREAK THROUGH THE WALLS OF SOCIETY.

"YOUR PUBLICATION IS AN EXTRAORDINARY ARM THAT CAN REACH FORTH INTO OUR MIDST AND BRING LIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE WHERE THERE IS NOW DARKNESS AND IGNORANCE, HOPE AND PEACE WHERE THERE IS NOW FEAR AND SUSPICION. COUNTLESS LIVES ARE DOOMED TO FRUSTRATION, LONELINESS AND DESPAIR UNLESS THAT RAY OF HOPE REACHES THEM. EDUCATION OF THE LESBIAN IS THE UTMOST NECESSITY. BUT IT MUST BE DONE BY HER SISTERS. TEACHING HER THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIDE AND SELF RESPECT, TEACHING HER THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER, ASSURING HER SHE IS NOT ALONE. AND ALL IMPORTANT, CONVINCING HER THAT OUR ONLY DIFFERENCE SHOULD NOT BE NAKED TO THE EYE.

"DO WE TAKE PRIDE IN THOSE OF OUR SISTERS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SELF RESPECT AND WHO ARE CONSTANTLY THE SUBJECT OF RIDICULE AND WHO HAVE ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES AS THE EMBLEM OF OUR 'ISM'? I THINK NOT. I HOPE NOT! I PRAY NOT! IS THIS THE WOMAN WE ARE ASKING SOCIETY TO ACCEPT? DO WE ACCEPT HER? OUR OBJECTIVE IS CLEAR - IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE PREJUDICE AGAINST THE LESBIAN, WE MUST FIRST ELIMINATE THE CAUSE. IN ORDER TO HELP SOCIETY UNDERSTAND THE LESBIAN, THE LESBIAN MUST UNDERSTAND HERSELF.

"ALTOGETHER TOO MUCH EMPHASIS IS PLACED UPON OUR OSTRACISM BY SOCIETY. HAVE WE NOT OSTRACIZED OURSELVES BY REFUSING TO CONFORM TO CERTAIN STANDARDS THAT WOULD, IN PART, OPEN THE DOOR WE ARE POUNDING UPON SO WEAKLY? BASICALLY, ALL WE NEED DO IS TO ACT AND DRESS AS BEFITS OUR SEX. MANY OF US CONFORM, NOT OUT OF NECESSITY, BUT TRITE AS IT SOUNDS, OUT OF PRIDE AND SELF RESPECT. AS RESULT, MANY OF THESE CONFORMISTS HAVE FOUND AN EASIER WAY OF LIFE. SOME HAVE FOUND LOVE AND HAPPINESS - THE SAME LOVE AND HAPPINESS ALL OF US ARE SEARCHING FOR - AND, AT THE SAME TIME, HAVE FULFILLED THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO SOCIETY. BUT, MOREOVER AND MORE IMPORTANT, THEY HAVE FULFILLED THEIR OBLIGATION TO THEIR SISTERS. YES, ALL LESBIANS HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO ONE ANOTHER; THE MISDEMEANOR OF ONE IS REFLECTED UPON ALL OF US.

"YOUR PUBLICATION IS THE MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH WHICH OUR SISTERS CAN BE REACHED. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THEY WILL BE MORE RECEPTIVE TO THE THOUGHTS AND IDEALS PRESENTED IF THEY ARE FORTHCOMING FROM ONE OF THEIR OWN. FURTHERMORE, WE CAN ALL LEARN AND BENEFIT FROM THE WORDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED THE SAME FRUSTRATIONS, THE SAME DESIRES, THE SAME HOPE. THE PATTERN OF OUR DESTINY LIES IN THE PALM OF OUR HAND. ONLY WHEN WE, AS A WHOLE, HAVE SHOWN SOCIETY THAT WE CAN CONFORM TO THE BASIC STANDARDS OF WOMANHOOD, BEHAVING AND DRESSING LIKE WOMEN, ONLY THEN CAN WE LOOK TO SOCIETY AND SAY, 'GIVE US THE RIGHT TO OUR KIND OF LOVE'.

"WE HAVE LIVED SO MANY, MANY YEARS,
WE HAVE SHED SO MANY, FUTILE TEARS.
WE HAVE SUFFERED FROM DESPAIR AND SORROW.
DEAR GOD! PROTECT US FROM TOMORROW."

L. L., NEW JERSEY

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"YES, I SHOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO BECOME AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER (WOULD PREFER BEING ACTIVE, BUT SAN FRANCISCO IS A BIT FAR FOR AN EVENING'S DRIVE).

"I ENJOYED TRACY LAING'S STORY FABLE OF 'THE MUGWUMPS' IN THE AUGUST ISSUE, AND AT PRESENT FEEL LIKE LONELY, QUIET AMTHAR

EXCEPT INSTEAD OF A PUPPY I HAVE A CAT. AH WELL, PERHAPS SOME DAY SOON MY ILDIAN WILL COME ALONG - OR RATHER IT SHOULD BE THE OTHER WAY AROUND."

J. H., BRITISH COLUMBIA

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"YOUR AUGUST ISSUE OF THE LADDER WAS VERY, VERY GOOD. YOU ARE IMPROVING ALL THE TIME. YOU ARE WISELY SHOWING EXCELLENT VARIATION FROM LECTURE DISCUSSIONS TO POETRY TO MUGWUMP TO BOOK REVIEWS. THIS IS EXCELLENT. I WOULD SUGGEST YOU GO A LITTLE STRONGER ON POETRY; AND IF YOU CAN FIND AN EXTRA PAGE, YOU MIGHT OPEN UP A 'LETTERS TO THE EDITOR' SECTION - BOTH PRO AND CON - SUCH AS MATTACHINE. 'OASIS', THE POEM BY DUBBY, WAS VERY EXQUISITE AND LOVELY."

P. A., CALIFORNIA

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"I READ THE JULY ISSUE OF THE LADDER AND NOTICED WITH INTEREST AND APPROVAL THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE BLANCHE M. BAKER SCHOLARSHIP FUND. I NOTICED ALSO AS I READ THAT THE FIELDS OF STUDY TO BE AIDED (ACADEMIC-WISE) WERE THOSE THROUGH WHICH I FELT THE LESBIAN COULD BE HELPED. I WOULD, HOWEVER, VENTURE A REMONSTRANCE TOWARD THOSE IN CHARGE OF THE SELECTION, FOR THEY HAVE OVERLOOKED AN IMPORTANT FIELD - PHILOSOPHY!

"NOW, BEFORE YOU HOOT WITH AMUSED TOLERANCE - WONDERING WHAT PRACTICAL APPLICATION TEDIOUS DISCUSSIONS CENTERED AROUND 'ANGELS AND PIN-HEADS' CAN HAVE - LET ME SAY THAT PHILOSOPHIC ANALYSIS IS BEHIND ALL SERIOUS AND WORTHWHILE ADVANCE IN ANY FIELD. A CAPSULAR FORM OF THIS POINT WAS IN A NEWSPAPER RECENTLY, TO WIT: 'OUR COUNTRY NEEDS BOTH ITS PHILOSOPHERS AND ITS PLUMBERS, FOR WITHOUT THEM NEITHER OUR PIPES NOR OUR THEORIES WOULD HOLD WATER.'

"I WILL NOT CONTINUE AD NAUSEUM LEST I BE ACCUSED OF A BORING PEDANTIC DISSERTATION. I WILL ONLY ASK THE COMMITTEE TO RECONSIDER THEIR LIST OF FIELDS OF STUDY."

L. P., TEXAS



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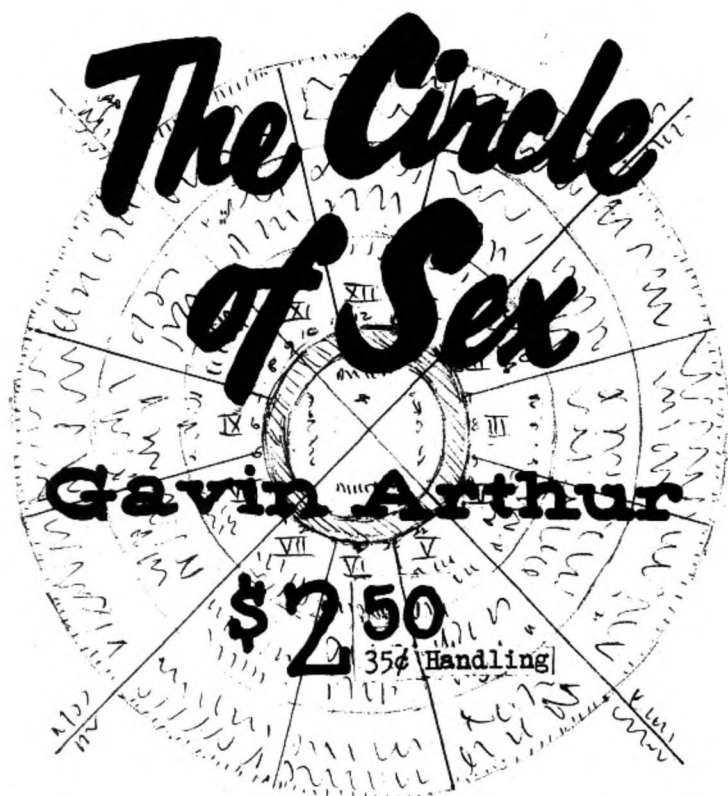
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Newcomer in the Field



Sexual makeup in human beings does not move in a straight line from male through hermaphrodite to female argues Gavin Arthur in **THE CIRCLE OF SEX**. With a clock face symbolizing the continuum, he discusses the infinitely varied gradations and shades from male to female.

the Ladder

is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects

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