



The Ladder  
August 1963

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## *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.

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COVER BY KERRY

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# JEANNACE FREEMAN -

## Eradication of a Misfit ??

by Rosa Connor

Twenty-two-year-old Jeannace Freeman, convicted of the murder of a six-year-old boy two years ago, awaits death in the gas chamber in the Oregon State Penitentiary. Unless Governor Mark O. Hatfield commutes her sentence to life imprisonment, she will die soon, for all other legal channels have been exhausted; her case, which has been attended by much publicity and controversy, has been reviewed by the Oregon Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court, both of which have failed to find grounds for a new trial. As of this writing (June 30), no new execution date has been set.

Though the Freeman case is a murder case, it will be of especial interest to readers of THE LADDER, for Jeannace Freeman is a Lesbian, and Lesbianism figured prominently in events leading to her trial, as well as in the publicity. More important, however, are the broader social issues, the meaning of Miss Freeman's case and public reaction to her story within this larger context.

These are the extraordinary facts concerning the background of Jeannace Freeman. At the age of four she was raped by a man who had come home drunk from a dance. Sexual abuse, especially rape, continued up through her adolescence. She was even forced to witness the woman in the house having sexual relations with various boy friends. At 12 years of age, she turned to her school counselor for help, pouring out her sordid story to him. One psychiatrist interviewed her in her early high school years and recommended regular therapy. However, the state of Oregon had no facilities to handle such a case. Also, she begged to be taken from her home because she was afraid of the man there. But apparently the state did not or could not

accomplish this for her. Every counselor she had, recommended prolonged psychiatric help, and when occasional help was given, she responded well. She told one of her counselors, in effect, that whenever a man touched her she became totally rigid and unresponsive, because she remembered being physically violated. What has happened to this tortured child who is now a woman of 22?

In May, 1961, the bodies of two children, a six-year-old boy and a four-year-old girl, were found at the bottom of Crooked River Gorge, in central Oregon. It was first believed that they had been sexually assaulted, but identification of the bodies and subsequent investigation led to the apprehension and arrest of their mother, Mrs. Gertrude Nunez Jackson (Jackson being her name by common-law marriage following a legal marriage to a Mr. Nunez) and Miss Freeman. The Portland OREGONIAN described the two women as "an interesting contrast of femininity and mannishness. Both are rather small, but the Freeman woman, who is liberally tattooed, was wearing Levis and a pink plaid man's cowboy shirt. Her hair was cut like a man's. Mrs. Jackson was wearing a lavender skirt white blouse, and white sweater."

Mrs. Jackson, who confessed to the killing of her daughter and said Jeannace Freeman had killed the boy, told authorities that "I loved the children so much--and I wasn't able to feed them." After further questioning, and at Miss Freeman's September trial, she contended that the children had been thrown into the gorge because they had interfered with the relationship between the two women. Miss Freeman maintained, and still maintains, her innocence, but admitted that she was with the mother at the scene of the crime.

Dr. Gerhard B. Haugen, testifying at the Freeman trial, described Mrs. Jackson in the following terms: "Throughout all this there was no history of any illegal, unlawful activity, except for the extra-marital relationship. She appeared to have a good employment record, to be a good employee. She appeared to have taken fairly good care of her children. She was obviously a passive, submissive, dependent person. She was ignorant, gullible, and suggestible."

With regard to Miss Freeman, Dr. Haugen said that "there was a poor employment record...Her attitude toward things that she had done, toward life in general, was such that I felt she was a very severe sociopath...a ruthless individual whose conscience was practically nil, a person who would, as much as possible, do whatever pleased her regardless of the consequences to herself or other people." In describing their relationship, he said that Mrs. Jackson's "feeling (toward Miss Freeman) was so strong that her entire desire was to please Freeman."

Jeannace Freeman was subsequently found guilty by a jury of eight men and four women, and was sentenced to death. A later trial yielded a sentence of life imprisonment for Mrs. Jackson. Some attributed the mother's lesser sentence to the fact that she had confessed, while others assume she was responding only to Miss Freeman's influence in committing the crime.

It is reported that Miss Freeman, who originally faced the police and jury with braggadocio, has been changed to a broken girl who cries in her cell.

Public reaction to Miss Freeman has been wide and diverse. One could not hope even to touch upon every aspect in such a short article as this. And rather than go into the legal aspects of the case--which are important--we shall consider its larger meaning. Whether Miss Freeman actually participated in the murder and whether she received a fair trial are definitely important. But even if she actually killed the boy, and even if her trial was conducted in accord with the letter of the law--what then? There are many, this writer included, who believe that many of the basic presuppositions regarding crime and punishment are incorrect.

The law per se is not at fault; it is merely impersonal legal machinery. The content of law is a function of prevailing social opinion. Unfortunately, on many key issues, there is considerable cultural lag: the enlightened ones often constitute a minority. This seems to be the case with the problem of the relationship of the criminal to society. With regard to the Freeman story, the following opinion, quoted from the OREGONIAN, is typical of that expressed in many of the letters which

have appeared in Oregon newspapers--and in anonymous letters and telephone calls to persons who have written letters reflecting sympathy for the girl.

"To the Editor: What has come over some of our people and organizations when they will ask leniency for a convicted murderess like the Freeman woman? Believe me, I won't call her Miss Freeman as the newspapers do...She is a sadistic fiend. Did she show any mercy or have any pity when she beat and clubbed those innocent little children to death...Only God heard their tortured cries...Yet she has a radio and TV in her cell..What are we coming to when we coddle and pamper our convicts?" Does the writer really believe the radio and TV lessen Miss Freeman's distress?

For many people, the desire to see criminals punished is based not merely upon a wish to protect society, but upon vindictiveness and sadism. This is evidenced by the extreme methods suggested by letter-writers, and by those who reject--or even refuse to listen to--statistical evidence which throws considerable doubt on the deterrent theory.

And such persons certainly neglect the fact that the individual and his acts do not exist in a vacuum. While they would agree--and most heartily--that certain acts have harmful effects upon society, they refuse to accept the fact that society affects the individual, that one's experience may be the cause of one's anti-social behavior. Some of the letters reflect this compartmentalized thinking. The following statements, taken from a letter which refers to the rape-murder of a small girl (and which mentions Jeannace Freeman), are a clear example. "If and when the murderer is caught, is the beast going to be sentenced to life imprisonment? After the trial is over people seem to forget the effect on the mind of the criminally attacked person, such as the woman in the Hollywood area last Wednesday night. A human being is not made of steel." (Author's underlining) Yet this man, who has undoubtedly read the many newspaper accounts of Miss Freeman's tragic childhood, including the experience of being raped at the age of four and many times later, condemns her in the same letter.

One does not have to believe in a rigid determinism to accept the view that evil is a function of deprivation of one's basic needs (including love) and an accumulation of unpleasant experiences with others. After all, the individual does have needs; he is not a closed system. Only the person not burdened with pressing needs is free. Society should not be surprised when the frustrated person performs an anti-social act. After all, he has learned that society has little to offer him, that he is not perhaps a part of society. The true humanist can find only one true solution, that of providing a better environment for the individual, one conducive to creativity and expression of one's humanity rather than hostility. Such a society, however, is utopian. Until it can be achieved --and before it can be achieved--the person who accepts the humanistic view must support it vigorously. He must work to eliminate correctional (?) methods based on such degrading notions as eradication of the "misfits," "God's plan for man," or simple expediency. The humanist must see that persons who need help get it, that another thirteen-year-old Jeannace Freeman will not be refused psychiatric help because of a lack of facilities.

"Society" is merely an abstraction, but some people act as if it were more real than individuals--perhaps to evade responsibility. They act as though "society" will change itself. But it can't--only individuals can change society. Several hundred persons have written letters to Governor Hatfield in behalf of Jeannace Freeman. Many, many others share their views but have not stood up to be counted. Well, stand up and be counted--by Governor Hatfield. Write your opinion! Perhaps several thousands of letters would influence him in the right direction.

There are various reasons why people refrain from making their opinions heard. To some, the idea would not occur; others believe it to be useless. Still others are afraid of being linked with an unpopular cause. It is likely that many Lesbians have shied away from the Freeman case simply because Jeannace Freeman is a Lesbian. This case certainly does nothing to advance the image of the homosexual in the public eye. Doubtless some Lesbians shy away from identifying with Miss Freeman, insisting that "I would never kill anyone," and "I'm a respectable, upper-middle class professional woman, not a lower class

butch." They believe that they have only Lesbianism in common with Miss Freeman--and forget that she, too, is a needful human being! According to newspaper reports, Jeannace Freeman has sought religious instruction and has at last been receiving psychological help while in prison--and has benefitted greatly from both. It will be ironic if she is executed!

(Readers may address letters to: Governor Mark O. Hatfield, Oregon State Capitol Building, Salem, Oregon.)

## AN OPEN LETTER TO HOMOSEXUALS

Two years have gone by since the victims of the Freeman-Jackson murder were discovered. Shortly after Miss Freeman's trial and conviction in Madras, there appeared in the OREGONIAN a letter to the editor, entitled "Guilt by Consensus." The writer stated that "Miss Freeman's deed has caused more than the death of a human being; it has also set back the chances toward the lessening of the stigma attached to homosexuality about 10 years in Oregon." She goes on to say, "I have no doubt that had Miss Freeman's jurors all been homosexuals themselves, they would have shown no sympathy, and would have come up with the same verdict of guilty."

Certainly any responsible person, homosexual or heterosexual, would deplore this tragic crime for any number of reasons, and agree to just punishment. However, if Miss Freeman's tragic life, and perhaps eventual death, is to accomplish no more than this letter writer felt was to be anticipated--then truly this is a most heartbreaking situation.

The homosexuals across the country are working toward understanding and acceptance by the public and their rights as law-abiding citizens. How can any citizen, homosexual or heterosexual, demand and expect his constitutional rights, unless he is prepared to accept also the corresponding responsibilities that go along with these



"rights," and also the definite obligations? Does not the better-adjusted homosexual have even more of an obligation toward this sub-group within his minority group, than the general public? After all, he should understand the pressures and problems of his own kind. Would not the general public be far more likely to put sincere effort and money into the necessary research to help this sub-group, if they could see evidence that the homosexual can be a productive and respectable part of a community? It would be interesting to know just how much effort, money and words went into trying, convicting, and now punishing Miss Freeman. I wonder what a small fraction of all this would have accomplished a few years ago? She might have served a useful place in society. As it now stands, she is one more wasted life. One more of how many before her, or how many to follow? Countless numbers of Lesbians have ended as prisoners, drunks, or suicides. How, then, can the thinking homosexual so lightly write off one of his own number, even though she is a perfect example of this sub-group?

THE LADDER recently reported on a talk given by Reverend Robert W. Wood, author of "Christ and the Homosexual." Discussing Biblical references to female homosexuality, Rev. Wood was able to give only three, possibly four, and he noted that "women didn't count for much in those days." I wonder just how much the Lesbian counts for in 1963? Is she courageous enough to work for solutions to problems that create circumstances that are responsible for this wasted life of Miss Freeman's? It seems that homosexuals might find a challenge here if they will re-appraise Miss Freeman's life.

There is much to be accomplished in helping the homosexual and who could be better equipped than some of your own group? You might be amazed at the number of people who would gladly rally to such effort on your own behalf.

I copied the following from a Portland paper: "THE VISION TO SEE: THE CONSCIENCE TO REASON: THE COURAGE TO SPEAK." What a wonderful motto this could be for such a worthwhile undertaking, the responsibility of working with one's own kind!

- Mrs. B., Portland, Oregon

# LESBIANA



BY GENE DAMON

228. THE COMFROMISERS BY ERNEST BORNEMAN. LONDON, ANDRE DEUTSCH, 1962.

THIS IS AN ODD BOOK, CURIOUSLY DULL AND UNREWARDING IN SPITE OF BEING WELL WRITTEN AND VERY MAJOR IN LESBIAN CONTENT. THE LACK OF FEELINGS IN THE CHARACTERS, THE STEADY DULL PROGRESSION OF THEIR UNWITTING DOOM, FIT THE TITLE ADMIRABLY. THE LESBIANS IN THE BOOK ARE TREATED WITH SYMPATHY AND EVEN UNDERSTANDING, BUT, FOR ME AT LEAST, THE BOOK WASTES THE PATIENCE IF NOT THE TIME OF THE READER.

229. THE SPOIL OF THE FLOWERS BY DORIS GRUMBACH. DOUBLEDAY 1962.

ALONE, IN A CAST OF NEUROTIC TEACHERS, ARE THE THREE HEROINES OF THE MOST UNUSUAL SCHOOL NOVEL OF RECENT YEARS. ELLEN ACTON, ENGLISH TEACHER, SERVES AS NARRATOR AND BALANCE STICK. SHE IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE AUTHOR. SINCE MRS. GRUMBACH IS MARRIED, AND ON INTERNAL EVIDENCE A ROMAN CATHOLIC, IT IS ALL THE MORE AMAZING THAT OUTSIDE OF ELLEN ACTON, THE ONLY BALANCED, PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THE STAFF OF MISS HANDS' SCHOOL ARE JO LONG, TEACHER OF HISTORY AND HER LOVER ROBBIE PARKS, TEACHER OF LATIN. THEY ARE AFFECTIONATELY DUBBED THE "LESBIAN TWINS" ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT KNOW IT. (THE AUTHOR HAS AVOIDED THE GYM TEACHER STEREOTYPE BY HAVING A FREE-WHEELING HETERO IN THAT ROLE.)

THERE IS NO HYSTERICAL CHAMPIONING OR WHITEWASH, BUT A THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF THE ENTIRE LIVES OF JO AND ROBBIE AND A CLEVER (UNOBTRUSIVE) ANALYSIS OF WHAT LED THEM EACH TO LESBIANISM AND THEN TO EACH OTHER. SOME FUN IS MADE OF THEM, AND THEIR PERSONAL FLAWS ARE PRESENTED WITH CANDOR (SUCH AS THE SHRIEKING FIGHTS THEY SOMETIMES HAVE) BUT THEIR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHINES THROUGHOUT THE BOOK. AS ONE LEARNS TO EXPECT EVERY SO OFTEN, THERE IS ONE OF THOSE VERY POIGNANT SCENES WHICH TAKES ONE BY SURPRISE IN THE BOOK. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

# A DOPE

by Ger van Braam (Indonesia)

The passengers of the big plane began to fill the waiting room.

Lola stood with her hands in the pockets of her dark blue uniform skirt, surveying the crowd, looking for the passengers she had to fetch. Just as she saw them, a tall Pan-Am stewardess came smiling towards her.

"Are you from Shell?" she asked.

"Yes," said Lola, indicating the emblem on her shirt pocket.

"Well," laughed the stewardess, "these children insist that I give you these cigarettes. They say that they know you and that all Shell receptionists smoke." She gave Lola a carton of cigarettes.

"Why, thank you," said Lola, and turning to the children, "Darlings!"

The three little girls ran gaily towards her, throwing their arms around her and chanting "We know you, we know you, we've been here before!"

Lola gathered them in her arms and herded them safely through customs and into the arms of their waiting parents.

She turned, surveying once more the crowd which now came pouring out of the waiting room.

She watched the Pan-Am crew coming out and admired their handsome and spotless uniforms.

Then she frowned - the one she was waiting for didn't emerge. She waited anxiously for some minutes more and then walked swiftly into the waiting room.

She saw her at once, violently gesticulating before a shrugging Indonesian customs officer. She suppressed a smile while walking towards them. "Can I help?"

They spoke together and she raised her hands in mock despair. She turned to the officer and reproached him in their own language, "Why are you making such a fuss? She's a friend of mine and I would advise her to throw these pocketbooks away, rather than to pay any duties. Can't you see they are old? She has read them already and probably knows them by heart - by the look of them!" She glanced at the books and stopped abruptly, her eyes widening.

The top one read "The Price of Salt - a novel of a love society forbids." She stared at the cover and a warm color crept slowly over her face toward her hair.

She glanced at the tall stewardess who was watching her curiously, a faint smile on her lips, and looked quickly away.

"Well?" she snapped at the officer, who shrugged and motioned them and the books away. "All right, all right, don't snap my head off. Why didn't she say so that she's a friend of yours!" He shoved the suitcases toward them, muttering to himself.

Lola smiled, opened her carton of cigarettes and handed him three packs. "Thanks, Tony, and please remember, every girl in distress is a friend of mine." She laughed heartily as his mouth dropped open in perplexity.

They walked silently together toward the exit. They were equally tall and broad-shouldered, walking with the same easy walk.

The crowd had vanished, leaving the airport quiet and deserted as they stopped outside the building.

"Don't you think it's time?" The stewardess put out her hand and smiled. "I am Joan, and very glad to know you."

Lola pressed her hand warmly. "I am Lola - and very anxious to know where you are staying."

Joan laughed. "Oh, you know, in a Mess or something."

Yes, Lola remembered that the foreign airlines had their own accommodations for their crews.

"I wonder," she began hesitantly, "if you would stay with us? I mean, a girlfriend of mine and I have an apartment to ourselves and we would gladly have you with us. I don't think a Mess very attractive, do you?"

Joan smiled and shook her head. "No, and I am very grateful to you. Are you sure your girlfriend won't mind?"

"Of course not."

They walked towards a telephone to inform Joan's colleagues - and it was okay.

Lola had her own car and shot it skillfully through the heavy traffic towards the outskirts of the city.

They turned into a private drive and stopped in front of a house grown over with ivy.

Lola honked the horn and the front door opened. A girl came in the opening, dressed in a Chinese kimono and black velvet slippers, a long ivory cigarette holder in one hand and with the other trying in vain to hold back a big bulldog who came jumping gleefully towards Lola.

"Ole, Buddy," greeted Lola, "can't you say hello to our guest first?"

The dog looked up at Joan, squatted down obediently and offered her his right paw. Joan took it and said hello. They walked together towards the door, Lola carrying the suitcases.

"Terry," said Lola, "this is Joan. She is staying with us tonight."

Joan looked down upon a head full of rusty colored curls and then into a pair of big brown eyes. She took a small but strong hand in hers and smiled, "If I may..."

Terry laughed. "You are welcome, of course. Please, come in."

Joan entered the room and stopped. It was a studio and full of paintings. In the middle stood an easel with a finished but still wet portrait of a Balinese dancer. Joan stared at the face pensively. It was Lola's.

"Do you like it?" asked Terry.

Joan nodded. "Very much. It's splendid."

"Lola hates it," said Terry with a little smile.

"Why, of course," muttered Lola, coming into the room. "Imagine me as a dancer, ridiculous!"

Joan looked at her and laughed. Terry smiled.

"Come on, Joan," said Lola impatiently. "I'll show you your room and the rest. This isn't our sitting-room, you know, just Terry's lumberroom and she's always busy and doesn't like to be disturbed. Or will you join us, Terry?"

Terry shook her head. "If you don't mind - it's not really finished yet." She stared at the painting and when Joan looked back before leaving the room she saw her still standing there, motionless, pensively.

Darkness filled the studio and found Terry sitting before the easel, her head in her hands.

She looked slowly up to the portrait, murmuring to herself, "...please, I can't stand it any longer. Am I bad if I want you for myself...?"

"Certainly not." Joan stood beside her and Terry froze. Joan touched her shoulder lightly.

"Please, Terry, can't I help you?"

Terry shook her head mutely and Joan dropped beside her on the floor.



"Tell me, darling, is Lola always inviting girls to stay?"

Terry nodded. "Yes, she likes company very much and I'm rather boring her, I guess."

"Why - don't you join her and her company, ever?"

Terry shook her head. "I don't think Lola wants me to. You see, I'm rather shy and too serious to be much fun." Joan looked into the dark pools of eyes which slowly brimmed over with tears.

"Terry, darling, please tell me. Has it always been like this?"

"No. Lola was content with my company, our home, everything...but she is so vivacious, so - what do you say - restless and easily bored. I am too quiet, too serious for her."

Joan stroked her lightly over her soft, short curls.

"Listen, Terry, did you ever invite someone yourself? Did you ever go out by yourself?"

Terry looked up in surprise. "No, why should I? I have my work and I hate going out."

"Has Lola ever been jealous?" asked Joan, lost in thought.

Terry smiled. "Of course not. Why should she?"

Joan hugged her suddenly. "I've found it, Terry! Listen carefully." She whispered urgently for some time and Terry's eyes widened in surprise and then began to shine and sparkle.

"Do you think so? Are you sure?" She sounded anxious and a little bit worried.

Joan hugged her again. "I am sure it will work, don't worry, you ducky." She kissed Terry on top of her rusty colored head - and released her quickly.

"So you're here. I've looked for you everywhere." Lola stepped into the room and switched on the lights.

"I am sorry. I was in the garden and saw the french doors open. I wanted to watch Terry working, so I slipped in but she didn't work, she dozed." She laughed teasingly and stood up.

"Are you coming too, Terry?" asked Lola.

"Yes, in a minute." She watched Joan and Lola strolling out of the studio, glanced at the easel and smiled broadly. "It's because I love you, honey," she told the picture. "Please, don't be too mad."

She slipped through another door into her room.

Lola and Joan sat drinking their whisky-sodas, both changed in slacks and airy shirts, when Terry entered the sitting-room. Joan looked up and whistled softly.

Terry had changed too and was wearing a Shanghai dress, jade-green and clinging around her like a caress, her rusty colored hair gleaming in the light as a soft glowing fire.

She smiled at Joan and then at Lola who sat looking at her with a puzzled frown between her eyes.

"My," said Joan admiringly, "you do look nice, my pet!"

"Thank you." Terry sat down beside her and accepted the drink she offered.

Lola walked over to the pick-up, to set up some records. "Please, Lola," asked Joan, "would you play a tango? I'm sure it's the only dance for Terry - and I'd like to dance it with her."

She stood up and winked at Terry as the melody poured into the room. "May I?" she bowed.

Terry glided into her arms, nestled her head upon her shoulder and shut her eyes.

Joan nuzzled her cheek and saw Lola watching them with the same puzzled expression on her face.

She grinned softly and pressed Terry closer against her.  
"Darling, I love you."

Terry opened her eyes and looked up. "No, please don't look at me. I mean it, you know, I love you!"

Terry smiled "Silly!" and closed her eyes again. Joan nuzzled her hair, her arms tightening around her.  
"You're hurting me," whispered Terry dreamily.

"I'm sorry - no, I am not - you're hurting me too, you know..."

The tango ended and they stopped. Lola sat still looking at them, a cigarette between her fingers and a deeper frown between her eyes. Terry bit her lip nervously.

"Please, don't worry," whispered Joan and took her in her arms again when a rhumba enveloped them.

"I'm sorry." Lola stood beside them, her face pale and drawn. "I am sorry," she repeated haltingly, "but, please, you may think me a dope, but - of, dammit, I can't stand it any longer - you're making me jealous as hell!!" She looked at Joan, her lips quivering, shame and torture in her eyes.

Joan released Terry slowly. "Sure you're a dope," she commented calmly. "The biggest one I ever saw." She took Terry's face between her hands and kissed her on her lips, lingeringly.

"Wire me if she remains a dope, Terry darling, and Pan-Am will fetch you up!" She shoved Terry softly into Lola's arms. "Your last chance, pal."

Lola smiled as her arms tightened around Terry. "Thank you!" Terry buried her face happily against Lola's shoulder and Joan turned towards her drink.

She poured herself a fresh one and sat staring moodily at the liquid in her glass.

"I wonder," she murmured, "who's the dope...?"

## Cross - Currents

AN HISTORIC LEGAL DECISION MAY ARISE FROM THE SUIT OF BRUCE SCOTT, 51, OF SPRINGFIELD, VA., VETERAN AND FORMER LABOR DEPT. EMPLOYEE. SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL CAPITOL AREA CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, SCOTT IS CHALLENGING A CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION DETERMINATION WHICH MAKES HIM INELIGIBLE FOR APPOINTMENT TO POSITIONS IN COMPETITIVE CIVIL SERVICE AND ALSO BARS HIM FROM CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

SCOTT TOOK AND PASSED WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS FOR PERSONNEL OFFICER AND MANAGEMENT ANALYST POSITIONS. THEREAFTER, THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION CONDUCTED AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE SCOTT'S SUITABILITY FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT. DURING THE INTERVIEW, SCOTT WAS ASKED, "THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION HAS INFORMATION INDICATING THAT YOU ARE A HOMOSEXUAL. DO YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON THIS MATTER?" SCOTT REPLIED, "NO. I DO NOT BELIEVE THE QUESTION IS PERTINENT INsofar AS MY JOB PERFORMANCE IS CONCERNED." SUBSEQUENTLY, SCOTT WAS NOTIFIED THAT HE WAS "DISQUALIFIED FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMPETITIVE SERVICE BECAUSE OF IMMORAL CONDUCT."

SCOTT ASSERTS THAT THE FINDING THAT HOMOSEXUAL CONDUCT IS "IMMORAL IN NATURE" IS ARBITRARY AND CAPRICIOUS AND NOT FOUNDED ON GROUNDS AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE. DAVID CARLINER, A COOPERATING ACLU ATTORNEY, FILED SUIT ON SCOTT'S BEHALF IN THE U. S. DISTRICT COURT. THIS SUIT CHALLENGES THE RIGHT AND AUTHORITY OF THE U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION TO CHARACTERIZE HOMOSEXUALITY AS IMMORAL; TO USE IMMORALITY AS A CRITERION FOR SUITABILITY FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT; AND TO MAKE HOMOSEXUAL CONDUCT A BASIS FOR A FINDING OF UNSUITABILITY FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.

SCOTT'S CASE MAY BE TAKEN TO THE U. S. SUPREME COURT, ACCORDING TO ATTORNEY DAVID CARLINER. THE PLAINTIFF, BRUCE SCOTT, IS SECRETARY OF THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE NEW YORK POST ON WEDNESDAY JUNE 19 PRINTED AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT" AS PART OF ITS SERIES "SEX AND LAWS." FORTUNATELY IT WAS A WELL-WRITTEN CAPSULE ACCOUNT OF HOW THE LAWS

AFFECT HOMOSEXUALS. THE WRITER DRAWS THE CONCLUSION THAT LAWS ARE STACKED AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS. IN ANOTHER ARTICLE IN THE SERIES --"SOCIAL PATTERNS AND PRIVATE LIVES"--THE N. Y. MATTHEW SOCIETY RECEIVED QUITE A NICE BIT OF ADVERTISING.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE INDEFATIGABLE RANDOLFE WICKER HAS PROPOSED A PICKETING OF THE WHITE HOUSE "TO HIGHLIGHT NOT ONLY THE HOMOSEXUAL MOVEMENT BUT ALSO DISCRIMINATORY GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES IN A VARIETY OF AREAS."

\* \* \* \* \*

IN A SERMON DELIVERED FROM THE PULPIT OF SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL IN LONDON, CANON D. A. RHYMES DECLARED THE TRADITIONAL MORAL CODE IMPLIED THAT SEX IS UNAVOIDABLY TAINTED. "YET THERE IS NO TRACE OF THIS TEACHING IN THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST," HE SAID. "HE DOES NOT EXALT VIRGINITY OVER MARRIAGE OR MARRIAGE OVER VIRGINITY--HE MERELY SAYS IN ONE PLACE THAT SOME HAVE DELIBERATELY CHOSEN VIRGINITY TO LEAVE THEM FREE FOR THE WORK OF THE KINGDOM. NOR DOES CHRIST EVER SUGGEST THAT SEXUALITY AS SUCH IS UNDESIRABLE OR THAT MARRIAGE IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE OCCASION OF ANY EXPRESSION OF PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP." CANON RHYMES SAID IT HAD BEEN ARGUED THAT MORALITY SHOULD BE BASED ON NATURAL LAW. "BUT WHAT IS NATURAL AND WHAT IS UNNATURAL? MUCH OF THE PREJUDICE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY IS ON THE GROUND THAT IT IS UNNATURAL--BUT UNNATURAL FOR WHOM? CERTAINLY NOT FOR THE HOMOSEXUAL HIMSELF. IT IS VERY DOUBTFUL WHETHER NATURE OFFERS ANY GUIDANCE ON MORALITY. . . WE NEED TO REPLACE THE TRADITIONAL MORALITY BASED UPON A CODE WITH A MORALITY WHICH IS RELATED TO THE PERSON AND THE NEEDS OF THE PERSON. . . IF WE WANT PEOPLE TO LIVE WELL WE MUST EMPHASIZE LOVE, NOT MORALITY."

\* \* \* \* \*

SAN FRANCISCO COLUMNIST HERB CAEN TALKS ABOUT "THE MYSTERIOUS (AND SOMETIMES EXOTIC) EAST BAY: REV. ROBERT PHILLIPS, PRES. OF THE MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE OF SAN PABLO, CAME OUT FOUR-SQUARE AGAINST PUBLIC DANCING AT A HEARING THERE THE OTHER DAY. AFTER TICKING OFF 'THE DIRE SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES' AND HIS BELIEF THAT 'MANY TEEN-AGE PROBLEMS ORIGINATE IN THE DANCE HALL,' HE CONCLUDED: 'I WOULD BE FOR DANCING IF MEN DANCED WITH MEN AND WOMEN DANCED WITH WOMEN.' SORRY, REVEREND. MY PROGRAM'S FILLED."

## Why Are They Second Best?

by Dorothy Lyle

In my article, "Second Best Society," I examined what seems to me to be one of the most dangerous, both individually and collectively, kinds of existence commonly lived by an apparent majority of Lesbians today.

It must be reiterated that in citing three main groups of Lesbians, I am being very general. There are thousands of women who for various reasons could not be included in the groups: "fringe areas," "Second Besters," or "older kids." Very generally these three groups could be divided in this manner: undesirable citizens, salvageable citizens, and adult Lesbians leading constructive lives for the most part.

"Second Best Society" presented a more or less totally condemnatory viewpoint.

Actually, since as we all know nothing is totally black or totally white, there are possible advantages to this form of living. These are, however, negligible in the face of the disadvantages.

In discussing this with a group of girls who quite frankly acknowledge membership in a "bee hive" group in my own city, the points listed below were brought out:

1. There is safety in numbers.
2. They (heterosexuals) band together.
3. A girl who has just "come out" needs guidance and she is alone. (I pointed out here that one could hardly "come out" alone.)
4. Living 4 (2 couples) in a house cuts down expenses and "you always have someone around."

5. Strong people take over in any group; they are brighter. (This was in reply to my asking why they tolerated such didactic leadership from a few individuals.)

6. There is no time to worry, since people are in and out all of the time.

The only disadvantage any of the group would admit to, was the lack of time for personal and individual things, such as reading. The cause given for this was the same as for item 6 above, and, too, "there are always so many parties."

Examining each of the arguments in favor of group living, individually, one must admit that there is validity in number 1, and some validity in number 4.

Item 2, however, is rather silly, since this banding together is considered rather destructive in heterosexual society. We certainly will not improve our lot in life by imitating the least desirable aspects of heterosexual life.

Item 3 calls for an audience on the honeymoon; this could hardly be a good idea.

While money is a very important consideration in item 4, the rest of it bespeaks a terrible immaturity and dependency.

It is true that dictators exist everywhere (item 5). Every office has a petty tyrant, but to voluntarily acquire a tyrant is another kind of immaturity and item 6 backs this up even more.

Apparently, the major cause of the "bee hive" life is emotional dependence coupled with a sense of inferiority. None of the girls I questioned believed that they would personally be able just to take off with the girl they lived with and make an existence for themselves on an isolated basis. Most of them would not even attempt to consider the possibility. Many of the replies to this were variations of this quotation from a 27-year-old college graduate with an excellent job of 5½ years standing, currently working on the third big love of her life: "Why, hell, you'd be missing half the fun of the gay life."

When a couple fight or just disagree temporarily, factions side with one or the other of them. Thus even a small quarrel can balloon up into a broken marriage.

There is some tendency rapidly to help the "tearful" one move out, and by the time the tears dry up, it is often too late to go home. Left alone, it is not unreasonable to assume that some of these splits would be avoided. It is almost a parody of the old "going home to mother" bit from second rate jokes.

One piece of evidence which seems to support this is that the older girls seem to be much more permanently mated, some of them for as long as 20 or 25 years.

Infidelity is handled in a similar, nearly hilarious (were it not so tragic), manner. First one girl strays, often with another member of the group. Some of the group happily gather up the new couple, while the rest soothe the "injured" one. Usually, after many talks, the "injured" one takes her place as part of the new household until a new love appears for her. As often as not, the new girl joins the other three and the two couples continue to live together.

This type of society is foreign to the male homosexuals. They are more evenly divided between a fringe group and a socially acceptable group. This is, however, not a moral division in the accepted sense, since promiscuity is patently a part of both groups and this behavior does not create opprobrium.

The male homosexual, in the socially acceptable group, which would be made up of "second besters" and "older kids" if compared to the female societies, is frequently a more useful citizen for several reasons.

Often the women have adopted (consciously or otherwise) the least desirable masculine traits, where the men have adopted the more desirable feminine traits or sensibilities. Despite persecution by law, and a promiscuity that many heterosexuals find despicable (out of jealousy?), the men often contribute a great deal to the world as a whole, through their work, their careers.



This is very unlikely in the Lesbian "second best" group, although it is common among the "older kids."

In addition, many more males are willing to devote some of their energies to bettering the lot of homosexuals in general. This is perhaps partly because of the extreme cruelties the law presently inflicts on the male homosexual.

There is no easy solution to this situation. Each of us who is willing to shoulder her responsibility to the Lesbians who will come after us, must try to influence as many as possible in the "second best" group to "graduate" and start working toward making this a better world.

The homosexual is the last of the persecuted minority groups. Remember, too, that every homosexual will not take his or her burden of responsibility, but the more we can get to help, the shorter the battle. The "Second Best Society" contains thousands of potentially worthwhile women. Let's try to develop the potentiality.

## VOLUNTEER FOR RESEARCH!

Dr. GUNDLACH AND HIS NEW YORK RESEARCH GROUP HAVE BEEN FORGING AHEAD WITH THEIR WORK ON THE QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE NEW STUDY ON LESBIANS (SEE JUNE AND JULY LADDER ISSUES). SOME 15 OR SO MEMBERS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER WERE ASKED IN JUNE TO TAKE PART IN A TRIAL RUN OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE, WITH THE OBJECT OF UNCOVERING AND CORRECTING AMBIGUITIES AND ERRORS, AND PERFECTING THE PROCEDURE FOR ENSURING ANONYMOUS AND PRIVATE REPLIES. NEXT MONTH THE LADDER WILL CARRY A COMMUNICATION FROM DR. GUNDLACH, DESCRIBING HIS PROJECT FULLY, AND PROVIDING A WAY FOR YOU TO INDICATE YOUR INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING.

## READERS RESPOND

"I WANT TO OFFER SOME ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION TO THE BLANCHE M. BAKER SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

"1. THE DOB IS NOT WEALTHY ENOUGH TO PROVIDE SUCH A SCHOLARSHIP AWARD AT THIS TIME, AND IT IS UNLIKELY TO BECOME WEALTHY ENOUGH IN THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE. WHAT MONEY IT CAN BEG OR BORROW SHOULD BE USED FOR IMMEDIATE RESULTS FOR THE LESBIAN IN NEED OF HELP, PREFERABLY THROUGH A COUNSELING SERVICE.

"2. MONEY COULD BE LITERALLY POURED INTO MAKING THE LADDER A STRONGER AND PROGRESSIVELY MORE POWERFUL PROPAGANDA TOOL. THE MAGAZINE FINDS ITS WAY INTO THE HANDS OF MANY HETEROSEXUALS, SOME IN A POSITION TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION (WHERE IT COUNTS, I.E., DOCTORS, LAWYERS, TEACHERS, ETC.)

"3. CONTRARY TO (APPARENT) OPINION, THIS LITTLE ITEM WILL NOT BENEFIT US ONE WHIT. IT'S NOT BIG ENOUGH TO BE TRUE LARGESSE. IT CANNOT HAVE BENEFICIAL PROPAGANDA EFFECTS. ASK ANY COLLEGE TEACHER HOW HE OR SHE BELIEVES THE TRUSTEES WOULD REACT TO THIS SORT OF FUND IF THEY KNEW (THEY WOULD RUN UP THE WALLS).

"4. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE (COMMON TO THE VARIOUS HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS) OF CREATING A WAY TO FLY BEFORE WE LEARN TO WALK. WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO GET ACTIVE SUPPORT FROM THE HOMOSEXUALS IN THIS COUNTRY. MONEY COULD BE SPENT IN SPREADING THE WORD, IF NOTHING ELSE. AFTER ALL, EVERY BIG PRINTED PUBLICITY RELEASE THAT DOB HAS HAD HAS RESULTED IN INQUIRIES FROM NUMEROUS PEOPLE. OUT OF EVERY DOZEN OR SO, WE ARE BOUND TO PICK UP A NEW SUBSCRIBER, AND FROM THEM IN TURN A FEW NEW WORKERS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

"5. ACCORDING TO MY LIMITED KNOWLEDGE (GLEANNED FROM THE PAGES OF THE LADDER) THE SCHOLARSHIP MONEY IS BEING SPLIT INTO EVEN LITTLER PIECES THAN WOULD BE OF ANY REALISTIC HELP OR BENEFIT. IF IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO AWARD THE MONEY ALREADY CONTRIBUTED, THEN IT SHOULD BE A SINGLE SCHOLARSHIP, TO ONE INDIVIDUAL AND THAT ONE A LESBIAN. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA JUST HOW MUCH MONEY IS GIVEN IN



SCHOLARSHIPS EACH YEAR IN THIS COUNTRY? SOME SCHOOLS DO NOT EVEN PASS OUT ALL OF THEIR AVAILABLE GRANTS IN A GIVEN YEAR. THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS ARE AVAILABLE TO MEN AND WOMEN WITH CERTAIN LIMITING QUALIFICATIONS. IF WE ARE GIVING OUT SCHOLARSHIPS, THEN WHY NOT AWARD THEM TO DESERVING LESBIANS? WHY SHOULD WE APPEAR ASHAMED OF LIMITING THE GRANTS TO FEMALES OF OUR OWN PERSUASION?

"6. UNDOUBTEDLY WE NEED FUND-RAISING DRIVES - BUT TO RAISE FUNDS TO BUILD THE DOB INTO A LARGER AND MORE INFLUENTIAL ORGANIZATION. EVERY CENT SHOULD GO TOWARD THIS END, AND EVERY POSSIBLE CENT SHOULD GO TOWARD BUILDING THE LADDER INTO AS EFFECTIVE A TOOL AS POSSIBLE.

"7. I CANNOT HELP BELIEVING THAT IF THE DEAR LADY IN WHOSE NAME THIS THING WAS INITIATED WERE AROUND, SHE WOULD POOH-POOH THE IDEA AS UNREALISTIC.

"I AM AGAINST THE SCHOLARSHIP IDEA, NOT BECAUSE IT ISN'T FINE, BUT BECAUSE IT IS TOO IDEALISTIC. WE NEED MEAT AND POTATOES FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME FOR THE 'FRUIT SALAD' LATER!"

- GENE DAMON

\* \* \* \* \*

"PARTICULARLY NOTABLE IN THE MARCH LADDER WAS THE TOUCHING STORY BY NOLA ENTITLED 'TAKE A GOOD LOOK'. NEVER BEFORE HAS ANY WRITTEN WORD AFFECTED ME SO STRONGLY...MY FIRST REACTION WAS TO BURST INTO TEARS. NOLA IS ABLE, WITH A FEW CHOICE WORDS, TO PAINT A PICTURE OF PATHOS, HOSTILITY, TENDERNESS, REJECTION, SACRIFICE, AND CONFUSION AS DEFTLY AS ANY ARTIST WITH HIS WELL-PLACED BRUSH STROKES. SHE IS ABLE TO EXPRESS BEAUTIFULLY WHAT WE ALL KNOW, FEEL, AND HAVE EXPERIENCED. HERS IS REALLY A GIFT. TRULY HOPE WE WILL HAVE MORE FROM NOLA. LOOKING FORWARD TO FUTURE ISSUES.

"P.S. AFTER THINKING ABOUT IT - THIS STORY COULD BE OF INTEREST TO ANY GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO DARE TO LOVE DESPITE PREJUDICES, BE THEY RELIGIOUS, COLOR, OR SEXUAL...NOT NECESSARILY HOMOSEXUALS ALONE. OUR PROBLEMS ARE NOT UNIQUE."

- T. B., BROOKLYN



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**REV. ROBERT W. WOOD**

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