

# THE LADDER

**JANUARY '64 .50**

(FOR SALE TO ADULTS ONLY)



**in this issue:**

**THE FOURTH SEX - THE LESBIAN**



**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

The Fourth Sex - 'The Lesbian. Review of Jess Stearn's "The Grapevine" - by V. P.....	4
I Want to Stand up and be Counted - M. L.....	6
Cross-Currents.....	7
Noblesse - by Vern Niven.....	9
"To Deprave and Corrupt..." - Original Studies in the Nature and Definition of "Obscenity" - Edited by John Chandos. Book Review by D. K.....	10
Progress Report on Lesbian Research - by Dr. Ralph H. Gundlach.....	13
DOB Convention '64!.....	14
Lesbiana - by Gene Damon.....	15
Living Propaganda - by M. V.....	18
"Dorothy and Red" by Vincent Sheean. Book Review by Gene Damon and Lee Stuart.....	20
Dramatic Arts - by Robin Richards.....	22
Readers Respond.....	24

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# The Fourth Sex - The Lesbian

REVIEW OF "THE GRAPEVINE" BY JESS STEARN (DOUBLEDAY, 1964)\*

"ARREST ME, I'M A LESBIAN," SHOUTED THE WILD-EYED GIRL TO A POLICEMAN ON A SAN FRANCISCO STREET. SHE HAD JUST BEEN JILTED, AND THIS WAS A WAY TO MAKE HER EX-FRIEND "SUFFER." THE POLICEMAN JUST STARED AT HER. "GO HOME," HE SAID, "GO HOME, AND SLEEP IT OFF."

THIS STORY APPEARS IN JESS STEARN'S NEW BOOK, THE GRAPEVINE. IT DESCRIBES EXACTLY THE DILEMMA OF THE POLICE IN HANDLING THE SO-CALLED LESBIAN PROBLEM. "'IN ALL MY THIRTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE FORCE,' THE HEAD OF THE VICE SQUAD TOLD ME, 'WE'VE NEVER ARRESTED A WOMAN FOR BEING A LESBIAN.'" SO SAYS THE AUTHOR IN HIS CHAPTER ON POLICE, ENTITLED "THE GENDARMES."

THERE ARE CHAPTERS ON ALMOST EVERY PHASE OF CONTEMPORARY LESBIAN LIFE IN AMERICA IN THIS ABSORBING BOOK BEING PUBLISHED THIS MONTH. BECAUSE IT IS THE FIRST BOOK ABOUT LESBIANS TO BE PUBLISHED BY SUCH A MAJOR FIRM, IT WILL PROBABLY HIT THE BEST-SELLER LISTS LIKE ITS PREDECESSOR THE SIXTH MAN (DOUBLEDAY, 1961) BY THE SAME AUTHOR. THE LATTER BOOK, EXPOSING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME THE STORY OF THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL, STAYED ON THE BEST-SELLER LISTS FOR 12 WEEKS.

SINCE THE SIXTH MAN SHOOK THE HETEROSEXUAL WORLD, THE GRAPEVINE HAS EVERY PROMISE OF BECOMING A SIMILAR BLOCKBUSTER. THIS IS A BETTER BOOK THAN ITS PREDECESSOR. MR. STEARN HAS LEARNED FAR MORE ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS, PARTICULARLY LESBIANS, IN THE INTERIM. AND WITH KNOWLEDGE HAS COME UNDERSTANDING.

THE TITLE THE GRAPEVINE REFERS TO THE SECRET WORLD OF LESBIANS LINKED ACROSS THE NATION BY A PRIVATE CHAIN OF CONTACTS AND HEARSAY. THE AUTHOR CALLS LESBIANS "THE FOURTH SEX" BECAUSE HE FEELS THEY ARE AS UNLIKE THE THIRD SEX (MALE HOMOSEXUALS) AS THEY ARE UNLIKE OTHER WOMEN.

\* AVAILABLE FROM DOB BOOK SERVICE! ALL INFORMATION ON BACK COVER.

MR. STEARN'S EXCELLENT REPORTORIAL WORK IN CHRONICLING THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, ITS LOS ANGELES CONVENTION IN 1962, A GAB-N-JAVA SESSION IN A PRIVATE HOME, ITS MAGAZINE THE LADDER, AND INTERVIEWS WITH INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION, CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS MASTERFUL. MANY OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK ARE COMPLETELY RECOGNIZABLE TO THOSE IN D.O.B., ALTHOUGH ALL INTERVIEWEES ARE GIVEN PSEUDONYMS. THIS VERISIMILITUDE ENHANCES THE VALUE OF THE BOOK TO THOSE WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION. MR. STEARN IS PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE IN DETAILING THE AIMS OF D.O.B., DESCRIBING ALSO ITS WORK, ITS DIFFICULTIES, AND ITS SUCCESSSES.

THESE CHAPTERS OFFSET THE DREARY PICTURES PRESENTED IN OTHER PARTS OF THE BOOK. FOR THE EVER-PRESENT "BAR CROWD" IS PRESENT, OF COURSE. THEY ARE ALL INTERVIEWED - THE BUTCHES, THE PROSTITUTES, THE NEUROTICS, THE DELINQUENTS AND SO ON.

BUT THE AUTHOR DESERVES CREDIT FOR PRESENTING IMPARTIALLY THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, THOSE NOT OFTEN SEEN BY THE PUBLIC: THE HOME OWNERS, THE PROFESSIONALS, THE RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS WHO WANT TO LIVE THEIR LIVES CONSTRUCTIVELY, UNDISTURBED BY THE PREJUDICES OF SOCIETY. IT IS ONLY TO BE REGRETTED THAT NOT MORE OF SUCH PEOPLE WILL COME FORWARD AT THIS TIME. JESS STEARN IS FIRST AND FOREMOST A REPORTER, AND REPORT HE DOES, WITH AN INDEFATIGABLE DETERMINATION TO FIND ANSWERS, THE TRUE ANSWERS.

THE GRAPEVINE COULD CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THOSE DECENT YET FEARFUL LESBIANS TO TELL THEIR STORIES UNDER PSEUDONYMS. BUT DID THEY EVEN KNOW THIS BOOK WAS GOING TO BE WRITTEN? AND WOULD THEY HAVE OFFERED THEIR STORIES IF SO? WE WILL NEVER KNOW, IF THEY ARE NOT ON THE GRAPEVINE THAT MR. STEARN CONSULTED.

THE AUTHOR HAS TRIED NOT TO JUDGE BUT ONLY TO RECORD. IT IS NOT HIS FAULT IF THE MAJORITY OF LESBIANS WHO NEITHER BELONG TO THE BAR-HOPPING CROWD NOR ARE AFFILIATED WITH DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, DO NOT HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE RECORDED--OR IF THE REPORTER DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO REACH THESE SILENT ONES. UNTIL THEY ARE REACHED AND RECORDED, THE GREAT AMERICAN BOOK ABOUT LESBIANS AND LESBIANISM WILL NOT BE WRITTEN. JESS STEARN, IN EXPOSING THE GRAPEVINE AS HE FOUND IT FROM COAST TO COAST, HAS TAKEN A BRAVE PLUNGE INTO ICY AND UNKNOWN WATERS.

- REVIEWED BY V.P.

# I Want to Stand up and be Counted

Yes, I want to stand up and be counted - but I can't afford to. Sometimes I feel like the man who can't afford insurance and who also knows that he can't afford not to have insurance.

Here I sit in my modest home, able to look across the street into the picture window of a very similar modest home. The man of the family in that particular house is not very different from those in all of the houses on both sides of the street. He does have to be off to his job at 5:30 every morning, unlike most of us on the street (including myself) who don't even have to be up at such an early hour. Though most of the lights don't start blinking out at night until after 10 o'clock, it's unusual to see a light on in that home much after nine. But other than that, he and his family are much like all the other families on the street.

Except my family. Because, even though I love the girl I live with, and we both love my son, we aren't recognized as being a family. That's one of the many reasons I have for wanting to stand up and be counted. But you see, even though our neighbors don't consider us a family, we are accepted as a group. We have adjusted to the environment of the street, adhering to the social patterns and standards formed long before we ever heard of the street. We have a great need for social approbation as the man next door to us and the man next door to him. As long as we conform to the general pattern of life on the street, the fact that I do the outside work and my "girl-friend" the housework goes, not unobserved, but un-noted.

Since we both work, it is not difficult to avoid the neighboring housewives' eternal morning coffee-klatch and the ensuing intimacy. I do wonder sometimes what thoughts might flit through the minds of those married couples we may happen to meet as we maneuver the grocery-laden carriage to the check-out aisle, or as we step into line behind them at the ticket window of our town's only movie theater. I wonder, "Do they wonder?" Perhaps I might as well stand up and be counted.

The man across the street waves to me over the sound of the power mowers as we come into each other's view. I wave in return. The man next door has a deep baritone voice and his friendly roar of greeting as we make a convergent turn is apt to startle me. Stopping a moment to light a cigarette, I can easily distinguish the voices of his wife and my "girl," exchanging pleasantries from their respective clotheslines.

Do you have any idea what it means to us, and what it will mean in the future to my son, to be so sincerely accepted? That's why I can't afford to stand up and be counted.

Do you have any idea how incomplete is this acceptance? That's why I want to stand up and be counted.

But I have too much at stake. I have to sacrifice something, to obtain the insurance that I can't afford, that I can't afford not to have.

- M. L.

## Cross-Currents

Beginning true to form--with sensationalism--CONFIDENTIAL magazine carries a report on the East Coast Homophile Organizations' convention held last fall. This article is featured in January CONFIDENTIAL. Surprisingly, it turns out to be a fair-minded report, full of facts, quotes, and sidelights. It is unfortunate that this article, the most detailed coverage of the ECHO convention available to date, has appeared in a magazine of sensationalism.

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The NEW YORK TIMES sat up and took notice. Starting on page one of the December 17th city edition, a six-column article ranges uncertainly over the subject of homosexuality, particularly as it exists in New York--"the city's most sensitive open secret." Police Commissioner Murphy is quoted as stating: "Homosexuality is another one of the many problems confronting law enforcement in this city. However, the underlying factors in homosexuality are not criminal but rather medical and sociological in nature. The police jurisdiction in this area is limited. But when persons of this type become a source of public scandal, or violate the laws...they do come within our jurisdiction. This matter is of constant concern to us in our efforts to preserve the peace and protect the rights of all the people. It has been given, and will continue to be given, special attention."

The reporter states that at The Fawn, a club whose liquor license has now been revoked, "there were 19 police visits this year resulting in summonses and complaints of a noisy jukebox, disorderly premises, insufficient lighting and dancing without a cabaret license, and an arrest for degeneracy." This and another closed-down club "were so



wary about nonmembers of the 'fraternity' that the police used specialists known as... 'actors' to get evidence." The idea of harrassment seems to have escaped the reporter.

The homophile organizations in New York are discussed, though DOB's chapter there goes unmentioned. Discounting the homophile's usual acceptance of his condition, the writer quickly sides with those medicos who would have the general public believe in cure, as if it were very possible, as if it were very desirable. Since the so-called authorities on this subject are much more in disagreement and uncertainty than this article admits, the NEW YORK TIMES has done a disservice to the uninformed reader.

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The Coca-Cola Bottling Co. in Sacramento, California used polygraph (lie-detector) tests on its job applicants right up to Sept. 20th, 1963, when a new state law prohibiting this practice went into effect. Applicants had been required to submit to a "Depth Interview and Polygraph Evaluation." These tests contained questions relating to the applicant's sex life and sympathy towards unions. Coca-Cola's claim: the tests would speed processing of job applications. You bet.

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An English correspondent shares the news: "In Britain, female homosexuality is still something to be swept under the carpet or exiled to that woodshed reserved for things of nameless nastiness. Press, radio, TV, Government and clerical heavies hurry to sit on the concealing carpet. Meanwhile, what is unmentionable follows the usual psychological course: it runs riot in fiction. The postwar flow of novels, books, plays, and films featuring Lesbian characters is almost tidal. And much of what is written is wildly inaccurate, misleading, or deliberately sensational. This only perpetuates the carpet and woodshed tactics. ("Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner" has never been a maxim of appeal to the puritanical mind.)

"It is only a matter of time before the bluff of Bumbledom and fiction-writers alike is called. For this purpose, in January 1964, ARENA THREE - the first British magazine to feature fact and fiction from the "misty, unmapped world" of Lesbianism - is being launched by the Hampstead Minorities Research Group. Full details may be had from the Group's Secretary: Esme Langley, 47-A Broadhurst Gardens, London N. W. 6, England. The Group's aims: research into, and dissemination of, the truth about female homosexuality. Incidentally, even the most progressive of Britain's periodicals have refused to accept any advertisement designed to further these aims."

Cheers and welcome to our new sister magazine, ARENA THREE!

# Noblesse

by Vern Niven

"There are some things one doesn't do," she thought as she saw Sally's smile. Donna crossed the room and took Lee's outstretched hand.

"Hi! You two look wonderful! It's been so long I almost didn't recognize you." Her eyes caught Sally's little smile of gratitude.

"Donna. Donna Marcove, of all people! Where did you drop from?" Lee's baritone boomed out at her to match his cheerful smile.

Donna dropped into the lounge chair. "Well, darlings, it's this way," she began. "I'm here for a lecture and I thought I was too tired to make it to my room so I stopped here for a drink and, of course, who should I see but Sally and Lee. I'm glad - so glad - to see you. It's been forever. I've wondered how you were; but you know how it is, so busy, no time," she finished breathlessly.

Lee tamped his pipe. "No time to drop us a line? No time for old friends? We wondered whatever made you disappear so fast, Donna. Didn't we, Sally?" He turned to his wife with a questioning face.

"Yes, of course we wondered, Donna - we missed you..." Sally's face was calm, but her eyes were taut with fear. Donna looked at her a moment and faltered again as she had many years before. She looked up at Lee and once again at Sally, then rose swiftly to her feet.

"Well, darlings, I wish I could linger longer but I must rush. I'll write to you - I promise." Through the murmur of disuasion from Sally and the boom of Lee's protest she stood dauntless. Then she heard only the click of her own heels as she walked toward the wavering elevator doors.

# "To Deprave and Corrupt..."

Original Studies in the Nature and Definition of "Obscenity"

John Chandos, Editor

(London, Souvenir Press; N. Y., Association Press, 1962)

The issues centered about obscenity, pornography, and censorship constitute a largely uncharted wilderness. The nine essays in this collection take the reader on a journey through these issues, with many points of interest noted along the way. But unless the reader is already familiar with the terrain (by having read, for example, Kronhausens' Pornography and the Law or Roth's The Erotic in Literature) he is likely to wander dazedly.

One major recurring theme is that of freedom of expression as it is related in principle to censorship. A second focus is on the fact that obscenity is undefinable. A third recurring topic is that censorship has been directed against different subjects in different historical periods --e. g., religious heresy, political unorthodoxy, or sexual references.

The first two essays significantly begin with references to the old Geneva Conference on the Suppression of the Circulation and Traffic in Obscene Publications, at which the delegates discovered they could not define obscenity, but, undaunted, settled down to a lengthy discussion! The reader quickly discovers that the contemporary situation does not differ. Modern confusion about what constitutes obscenity is said to stem from the Hicklin Case of 1868 from which the courts of England and the United States adopted the test for obscenity: whether the tendency of the matter...is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences, and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall. The pitfalls of this definition and the recent modifications of it (since the Supreme Court in 1957 ruled the "partly obscene" and "most susceptible persons" tests of obscenity unconstitutional) are discussed.

Notable is the juristic study of Lockhart and McClure in which they present and refute the three rationalizations for the notion that "evil" lurks in obscenity: (1) that the stimulation of sexy thoughts is undesirable; (2) that

the arousal of such thoughts will lead to overt sexual misbehavior; (3) that the exploitation of sexual tensions is bad. They add that the "community standard" criterion for defining and/or censoring obscenity is too relative to be of any use. Hard-core pornography is the only area easily defined, but the crucial question of whether even this "ought" to be censored remains unanswered. While acknowledging the importance of freedom of expression, Lockhart and McClure believe that censorship would be justifiable if it were shown by objective scientific research that the uncensored material would lead to overt misbehavior.

Chandos, on the other hand, advances the "freedom" position against all pro-censorship arguments. His logic is sometimes marred by over-generalizations, as when he states, for example: "All censorship is by nature inhibiting to the free exchange of thought, it carries within it the seeds of sexual aberration, and in nineteenth century England the monster of censorship spread into an ubiquitous sexual perversion operating mainly outside the courts through the public libraries and providing unmistakable sexual gratification to the tribes of censor-perverts."

The inhibiting role of censorship on the author of yesterday and today is discussed by Walter Allen. He asserts that since we insist upon writers' maintaining a "meticulous fidelity to life," we must also grant them unfettered freedom of expression. He contends that freedom of expression and authors' responsibilities to themselves and their art are interdependent. Of all the essayists he most clearly distinguishes between pornography and obscenity by pointing out that the former is constant while the latter changes with customs and mores.

The changing views of what constitutes obscenity are chronicled and illustrated by Birkett and St. John-Stevass in their essays on the law and the church in relation to censorship. The striking reversal of roles between the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, in which it is currently the latter which actively participates in formal censorship (whereas two hundred years ago it was the former) is noted.

A social philosopher and psychoanalyst, Ernest van den Haag, offers a hypothesis to justify censorship in principle: the right of rulers to defend societal values. He suggests that censorship is a compromise, a la Freud, between the infantile wish to gratify sexual desires and the later wish to control them, and that as such it reduces anxiety. He finds no quarrel with the present ambiguous state of censorship laws, except that he would add a prohibition against printing anything about the sexual life of an identifiable living person without his consent.

By far the most readable essay is that by an acknowledged publisher of pornography, Maurice Girodias, director of Olympia Press. His study, called "More Heat Than Light," beguiles the reader by beginning, "'To deprave and corrupt' is my business." He sheds more light on the real issues than do the more scholarly efforts. He attributes censorship to jealousy, fear, frustration, and socio-political conservatism disguised as religion. His refreshing approach is "street level" rather than "ivory tower."

A history of censorship is presented by Claire and W.M.S. Russell. Their thesis is that censorship in society is parallel to the Freudian notion of the individual's inner "censor." They argue by analogy that as the individual's censor is whimsical and sometimes even biased against reason and logic, so is society's censor. As individually repressed material (obscurity in the analogy to society) will "out" in dreams, slips of the tongue, etc., and thus demand increased and continually shifting vigilance from the inner censor, so too it is with societally censored subjects. At one time in history, for example, the censor guarded against political heresy and allowed bawdy Elizabethan literature to flourish. During the Victorian era political discussion was free and literature emasculated. The Russells thus maintain that since censorship does not give ground--it only shifts its ground--no subjects are ultimately free from censorship until all are.

The editor, Chandos, has contributed the final essay, "Unicorns at Play." Examples of "offensive" and "alluring" obscene writing are presented with commentary suggesting that censorship is inadequate to the task for which it is designed and has an inevitable attraction for the unenlightened. The issue of pornography is important to Chandos because it has been used to justify censorship, which is to him essentially unjustifiable.

There are occasional and entirely matter-of-fact references in this book to homosexuality in literature, particularly to The Well of Loneliness with the storm of attack and support it provoked.

"To Deprave and Corrupt..." is highly recommended to the scholar who wishes to leisurely peruse censorship from a lofty vantage point. For the rest of us, the books by either Roth or Kronhausen provide a less random treatment of pornography, obscenity, and censorship.

- Reviewed by D. K.

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Solution to Cryptogram in October 1963 issue:  
Kites rise highest against the wind, not with it.  
- Winston Churchill

## Progress Report on Lesbian Research

by Ralph H. Gundlach, Ph.D.

It is a pleasure to report our gratification with the returns of completed questionnaires from LADDER readers. As of December 1st, about 130 had been received by us.

We have looked over these questionnaires to see if all information essential for describing certain socio-economic characteristics of the group of 130 is present. As you know, the procedure for our research calls for questionnaires from non-Lesbians comparable to the Lesbians in: age, education, race, and religion, residence (urban, town, rural; east coast, west coast, or middle), father's education and occupation, and whether or not they had therapy. This is a long list, but we feel a necessary one. We believe that the study of two groups similar in these socio-economic respects, but differing in that one is homosexual and the other is largely heterosexual, will reveal important and significant differences on the many questions dealing with attitudes and relations to mother, father, and schoolmates; attitudes and activities in adolescence and maturity, and many other items in the questionnaire.

It may interest you to know that 40% of the 130 Lesbian respondents are under 30 years of age, 38% are in their thirties, 14% in the forties, and 8% in the fifties and sixties. About 37% have completed college, and many of these have advanced degrees. However, only 16% of those under 30 have completed college, while 50% of those 40 or over are college graduates. Thirty-six percent of the total group had some therapy: 43% of those under 30 and 33% of those over 30. The responses came from all over the United States and Canada, with about equal division between west, east, and middle, and a surprising (to us) number from relatively small towns.

Is it true, since 37% of those returning questionnaires are college graduates, that about 37% of Lesbians are college graduates? Hardly! We have no reason to think we know much about Lesbians who are in social circles untapped by THE LADDER. Can we say that readers of THE LADDER have that many college graduates among them? No - for it may be that LADDER readers who did NOT return (or send for) the questionnaire are mostly of high school



education, or for all we know, are mostly college graduates! We do know that many persons wrote in for questionnaires and have not yet returned them. Will these people please answer the questionnaire or mail it back unanswered? The questionnaire is then accounted for and its return will save you from being dunned.

Many people wrote full and significant comments, rich additions to the printed answers, making their questionnaires come alive. We found that a large number of Lesbian couples have had long-lasting and satisfying relationships and a good life. Others feel they could too, were it not for fear of social reprisal. Others have knocked about a great deal and are rather unhappy and lost. How many problems seem to be related to the folkways and myths of our culture!

A number of questionnaires indicate experiences or events which we did not anticipate and about which we would like more information. Our procedure for obtaining this is as follows: We will write some questions about such experiences, put a copy of these questions (with return stamped addressed envelope) into an envelope marked with the questionnaire number of the person who indicated this experience, seal the envelope - and mail it to the Research Committee in San Francisco. They will write the respondent's name and address on the sealed envelope, and mail it to you. In this way we can keep the lines of communication open, and maintain your anonymity.

To the slow or frightened: PLEASE GET YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE IN BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY! At that time we will close the books on the Lesbian group, and using its age, education, and other characteristics as our guide, we will start the long and hard search for heterosexual persons willing to fill out the questionnaire. We seek many housewives, working and career women, who, in total, correspond to the characteristics of the Lesbian group.

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#### DOB CONVENTION '64!

Daughters of Bilitis, Inc. proudly announces that its biennial national convention for 1964 will be held sometime in early summer, in New York City. You are urged to hold your vacation dates open just a bit longer. The exact date of the convention will be announced in next month's issue of THE LADDER if possible. Everyone over 21 is welcome to attend the convention. I personally invite each friend and member of DOB to participate in our gathering!

- Cleo Glenn, Acting President  
Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.

# Lesbiana by Gene Damon

247. THE FLESH IS WILLING BY DORCAS KNIGHT. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1962.

CORI, 29-YEAR-OLD NEWSPAPER WOMAN IN A SMALL SOUTHERN TOWN, HAS ALWAYS BEEN DIFFERENT. THE ARRIVAL OF ELLEN, A 39-YEAR-OLD MARRIED WOMAN, STIRS HER TO LOVE, WHICH SHE FIRST DENIES, THEN ACCEPTS. THE PRESENCE OF ELLEN REMINDS CORI OF A COLLEGE ROMANCE. CORI SOON LEARNS THAT ELLEN TOO HAS HAD A SIMILAR COLLEGE AFFAIR. THE TWO SOON BECOME LOVERS. DIFFICULTIES APPEAR, MOSTLY BECAUSE ELLEN IS MARRIED. A SYMPATHETIC OLDER WOMAN IN THE SAME LOCAL SOCIETY REVEALS TO THEM HER OWN LESBIAN PAST AND OFFERS TO HELP THEM. STORY LINE IS BELIEVABLE, BOOK IS QUITE ROMANTIC, AND PLOT IS NOT NEARLY AS HACKNEYED AS MANY OTHERS OF THE SAME ILK.

248. THE PHOENIX HOUR BY SARAH KILPATRICK. ABELARD-SCHUMAN, 1961, 1962.

TWO MAJOR PLOTS, ONE HETEROSEXUAL AND THE OTHER HOMOSEXUAL: THE GAMES MISTRESS IN A SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND HER HOPELESS LOVE FOR THE VERY BITCHY 16-YEAR-OLD LOIS. NOT AN IMPORTANT BOOK, BUT QUITE AN ANTIDOTE TO THOSE WHO FEEL OLDER PEOPLE ARE DANGEROUS TO THE YOUNG. VERY OFTEN IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND. THE YOUNG TEND TO BE FAR MORE PREDATORY SINCE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND RIGHT FROM WRONG, OR PERHAPS DO NOT CARE.

249. THE HEAT OF DAY BY MARCH HASTINGS. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1963.

A VERY GOOD PAPERBACK FROM A PROLIFIC AND VERY UNEVEN WRITER WHOSE BOOKS HAVE RANGED FROM THE POOREST TRIBE TO SOME OF THE BEST PAPERBACKS. IF SHE WERE MORE EVEN IN QUALITY, EITHER GOOD OR BAD, IT WOULD BE EASIER TO IGNORE HER ALTOGETHER OR ELEVATE HER TO THE RANKS OF THE THREE OR FOUR REALLY QUALITY LESBIAN PAPERBACK WRITERS. THIS IS A STORY OF TWO GIRLS, SUMMER COUNSELORS IN A GIRLS' CAMP. THE SLOW ADJUSTMENT FROM JUVENILE IRRESPONSIBILITY TO ADULT ACTIONS IS WELL HANDLED. THE CHARACTER HALLIE, A LESS THAN ADULT "BUTCH" TYPE, IS AN EXCELLENT PORTRAIT.



250. MY SISTER, MY BELOVED BY MIRIAM GARDNER. MONARCH, 1963.

LESBIAN INCEST IS NOT AN APPEALING TOPIC BUT YOU CAN FORGET THE TITLE HERE, SINCE IT HARDLY APPLIES TO THE BOOK AT ALL. MISSY AND HOLLY ARE SISTERS AND THEIR FIRST TENTATIVE SEXUAL PROBINGS ARE WITH EACH OTHER, A NOT UNHEARD-OF HAPPENING. HOWEVER, MISSY IS ACTUALLY A LESBIAN AND AS SHE MATURES SHE TURNS TO THE OLDER NINA STYROS, A DOCTOR, FOR LOVE.

MISSY AND HOLLY ARE THE CHILDREN OF A BRILLIANT, ERRATIC HOLLYWOOD PAIR AND THEY SUFFER ACCORDINGLY. HOLLY'S SUFFERING ENDS IN AN UNWANTED PREGNANCY AND ATTEMPTED SUICIDE. MISSY'S SUFFERING ENDS IN MATURE ACCEPTANCE OF HER LIFE AND REALIZATION OF THE NATURE OF HER LOVE FOR HER SISTER AND FOR NINA, AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LIMITATIONS OF HER RELATIONSHIP WITH NINA.

THE NOVEL IS WELL WRITTEN, UNMARRED BY THE SEXUAL EXCESS EXPECTED IN PAPERBACK ORIGINALS. THE ONLY FLAW IS THE EXCESS OF PLOT; THERE IS ENOUGH FOR THREE TIMES AS MANY PAGES. FAR SUPERIOR TO THE USUAL PAPERBACK IN STYLE AND CONTENT, AS WELL AS IN THE APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT.

251. THE HOMOSEXUAL AND HIS SOCIETY BY DONALD WEBSTER CORY AND JOHN P. LEROY. CITADEL PRESS, 1963.

THIS IS DIRECTED TO THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL AUDIENCE BUT DESERVES ATTENTION FROM ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS OF THE LESBIAN OR MALE HOMOSEXUAL LIFE. CORY'S WRITING HAS RECEIVED WORLD-WIDE NOTICE, AND WE ALL SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTENT OF HIS BOOKS. PRIMARILY, THIS ONE DISCUSSES THE DIFFERENCES IN THE WORLD TODAY FOR THE HOMOSEXUAL MAN, COMPARED TO THE WAY THINGS WERE IN 1940, FOR EXAMPLE.

252. LOVE LIKE A SHADOW BY KIMBERLY KEMP. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1962.

A SPOOF ON ALL THE TURPID WEEPY GAY BOOKS. THE AFFAIRS OF OLIVE, A TRAGIC LESBIAN NOVELIST, KYRA, GOLD-DIGGING SENSATION SEEKER, AND EILEEN, WHO WANTS A MINK COAT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE--ALL HANDLED BY A WRITER WITH A DOUBLED SENSE OF HUMOR. IT'S RATHER FUN AFTER ALL THE SEX-RIDDEN SOMBER ONES. NOT FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T STAND TO BE LAUGHED AT.

253. UNLIKE OTHERS BY VALERIE TAYLOR. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1963.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE'VE HAD A VALERIE TAYLOR TITLE AND HER NEW BOOK IS VERY WELCOME. THE STORY IS FAMILIAR, GIRL NEEDS GIRL, FINDS AND WINS GIRL, BUT THE QUALITY OF THE WRITING (IN SPITE OF A CERTAIN "SLICKNESS") AND THE IMMEDIACY OF THE PLOT ACTION MAKE THIS A VERY GOOD PAPERBACK AND ONE WHICH WILL PLEASE HER LOYAL FANS.

254. FLESH BY BRIGIL BROPHY. WOFLD, 1962, 1963.

THIS IS NOT A GOOD AS HER EARLIER EXCELLENT NOVEL KING OF A RAINY COUNTRY. HERO MARCUS BECOMES A GRADUALLY FEMINIZED CHUBBY BISEXUAL AFTER HIS MARRIAGE TO NANCY. NANCY CLAIMS LOUDLY THAT SHE HAS NO PATIENCE WITH LESBIANISM, BUT MANIFESTS MOST THE SIGNS HERSELF. ILSE, MARCUS' SISTER, IS A LESBIAN WHO IS ATTRACTED TO NANCY, AND THERE IS POLYDORE, MARCUS' BOSS, WHO IS AN ELDERLY "FAIRY" TYPE. IMITATION MURDOCH, WELL WRITTEN BUT OVERLY COLD IN SPOTS.

255. THE LESBIAN IN OUR SOCIETY BY W. D. SPRAGUE. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1962.

UNUSUALLY GOOD NON-FICTION TREATMENT OF LESBIANISM. THE FIRST 42 PAGES ENTITLED "A SHORT HISTORY OF LESBIANISM" ARE EXCELLENT DESPITE THE BREVITY, COVERING MANY ASPECTS MISSED BY SUPPOSEDLY MORE THOROUGH STUDIES. THERE IS THE USUAL SELECTION OF CASE HISTORIES AND THEY ARE PRETTY DULL FARE BY NOW. HOWEVER THE AUTHOR IS QUITE SYMPATHETIC AND DOES INCLUDE A NUMBER OF WOMEN NOT TOO FAR FROM PEOPLE WE KNOW AND EVEN ONE OR TWO WE WOULD ADMIT KNOWING.

256. IN THE SHADOWS BY JOAN ELLIS. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1962.

QUITE GOOD PAPERBACK. ELAINE RANSOME, EXECUTIVE FOR AN ADVERTISING COMPANY, HAS A RATHER UNSATISFACTORY AFFAIR WITH KITTENISH TERRY BROOKS. THEN HER BROTHER ERIC MOVES TO TOWN WITH HIS NEW WIFE KATHY AND ELAINE FALLS FOR KATHY. DESPITE THIS REASONABLY HOPELESS SITUATION, THE BOOK HAS AN UPEAT ENDING AND CONSIDERABLY LESS VULGARITY THAN MOST OF THEM. JOAN ELLIS IS NO BANNON OR CHRISTIAN OR TAYLOR, BUT SHE'S PRETTY GOOD AND PROBABLY WILL DO BETTER.

# Living Propaganda

Gay life is new to me since only a year ago I received my introduction to it. I had always admired women, but I was never lucky enough to become intimate with the girls I loved. But one day I discovered the meaning of "gay," and from then on I no longer was alone. It was a revelation to be with gay girls. At first I was so eager to meet them that I discarded almost all discrimination in choosing a partner. As long as she was gay and nice to me...

My attitude brought about undesirable consequences: the term of my Army enlistment was shortened. I did not think about being careful; I was too enthusiastic. And then I had a discharge on grounds of homosexuality in my pocket. Although I was sorry to leave the service this way, I also felt elated because I no longer had anything to hide. I wrote my good friends about the real reason for my discharge; for the benefit of acquaintances I made up a tale. I felt really free for the first time in my life. From then on, anyone genuinely interested in me would be told the complete story!

I wrote many letters explaining and explaining my overall rebellion and loneliness, and my need for an intimate Lesbian friend. In a way I was testing my friends' sincerity. Also, I was curious about their reactions. They have been quite varied. Most people are extremely surprised, even incredulous. One stupefied girlfriend in Germany wrote, "You never seemed that strange to me... After all, there are plenty of males in the U.S.A., even though many of them may seem unmasculine... Are you that afraid of men?" She thinks I am out of my head. In her view, gay life has no reality.

Others say, "Thank you for your letter. Now we have more insight into your life and can understand what prompted you to do the things you did." Some moralize, with the best of intentions, because they care about me. Two friends were embarrassed. Some have ignored my letters. Others, after the first shock, asked questions revealing their curiosity. Between questions, however, they deplored my involvements and way of life. And when they ran out of things to ask, they expressed their disapproval and sadness.

One girl, though married, accepted me completely right away. I do not feel on display when with her, and can talk freely even in the presence of her husband. She is

interested in hearing about gay life, though she does not have the curiosity of the outsider looking in. For her, being gay is just part of the world, and not worth making a fuss about. She is one of those open-minded persons who regard prejudice - rather than those prejudiced against - as a funny creature whose existence they cannot quite figure out. Another friend actually anticipated my explanation by writing about herself. I asked myself why I had not realized years before that she was like me. I simply had not believed there were others like me!

Reasons for my openness have changed over the years. A long time ago, I desperately wanted to confide in someone and have that person not condemn me; I wanted to be reassured that I was "normal" and would grow out of my immaturity. Then, after my first meeting with gay girls, I wanted to share my experiences with an audience. There was a sensationalistic quality about my narrations: I was telling straight friends about things and people they had never known. Finally the day came when I began to know happiness, and I wanted my really close friends to know about it. I no longer wanted their curiosity but simply their gladness. I continued writing letters and talking to people - though, I hope, never imposingly. Finally I told my not so close friends also. My intentions were to clear the air between us so they would not have a false picture.

I want my friends to be more aware of different possibilities in life. I can give them a little knowledge about people whom they would otherwise never consider as real. Would I not be depriving my straight friends, if I did not tell them about myself? What better time is there to create broader understanding than when one already has the advantage of being liked? Friends are prejudiced for one! What better atmosphere is there than that of friendship for discussion of various ways of life and love? Friends will go out of their way, even in their thinking, if they are informed of the truth. Of course, some people are too set in their mental habits to change. And yet, I can help create a doubt in their minds! The next time they talk about "queers," the image of a concrete person (or two, if they have also met my friend) will emerge. Their abstract judgements will be much less abstract - a simple and promising fact!

- M. V.

What is your "living propaganda" experience? Why not share it with your fellow readers of THE LADDER? The Editor welcomes manuscripts which would be usable in this regular feature.

# Dorothy and Red

by Vincent Sheean. (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1963)

Sinclair "Red" Lewis and Dorothy Thompson were two of the most important people in the literary world between 1920 and 1940. They married on May 14, 1928, less than a year after their first meeting. Miss Thompson was a rising star in journalistic and political circles, and Sinclair Lewis was the celebrated author of MAIN STREET. He was also close to being a sexual cripple, just a step away from impotence. Their marriage was miserable, and it ended, after much hell carefully delineated in this book, in divorce in 1942. Dorothy was married three times in all; her first marriage, before Lewis, was also unhappy, but the last one is reputed "tranquil" and successful.

Chapter Nine is entitled "A Rather Strange Interlude." Nowhere to our knowledge have such open documents concerning Lesbianism appeared in print outside of psychological case histories - where the subject is anonymous, not a recently deceased celebrity. This chapter includes a description of a party, lasting ten days, given by Dorothy at their villa in the hills above Vienna. Among the guests was the Baroness Hatvany, known to all the world as novelist Christa Winsloe, author of the famous Lesbian novel MAEDCHEN IN UNIFORM (THE CHILD MANUELA).

Ironically, during part of the 2 years in which Dorothy was frequently visiting Europe, Sinclair wrote a novel condemning career women and Lesbians, entitled ANN VICKERS.

After describing this party, author Sheean comments on the diary entries concerning Dorothy's three Lesbian attachments. He indicates that some of the names have been changed "for obvious reasons." He appears to mean that the names of the living have been changed. The names of the two women Dorothy was involved with, besides Christa Winsloe, have been changed to initials. The diary entries are otherwise verbatim.

In the important entries, Dorothy recalls her first inter-feminine romance at 20 with a 37-year-old woman, ending this section with, "Sometimes I think I love her better than anyone, and there's a queer tenderness between us still." Following this is a discussion of an affair with "M," a woman whom she hated (and feared) by the end of the affair, but about whom she could still recall a certain day, a certain kiss. There is a deft analysis of the emotional differences between making love to a man and making

love to a woman. Then there are pages and pages recounting her love for Christa Winsloe - an affair complicated by Winsloe's love for a beautiful young girl identified only as "X."

It is painful to read - a little too intimate. There is nothing so intimate as a mirror, and these diaries are the mirrors of the soul of Dorothy Thompson. Some few of her lines say so much about all Lesbian love and yet so much about her personal view of love:

"I put the incident down here as a record of my own sensibility to this woman. What in God's name does one call this sensibility if it be not love? This extraordinary heightening of all one's impressions; this intensification of sensitiveness; this complete identification of feeling? It was so when I read her book and suddenly felt I must translate it, because in its essence I might have written it myself. I was Manuela, as she is Manuela, and everything that has happened to her has in essence, and in other circumstances happened to me. This incredible feeling of sisterhood."

Given a choice, your reviewers feel that this book should have been published, just as it stands, about 50 years from now. In the present, it is a literary bombshell and a very important contribution to the field of variant biography.

- Reviewed by Gene Damon and Lee Stuart

## A FUGITIVE WIND

Where may I bury a heart?

In the open field  
so that earth accomplish sooner  
the dissolution?

Where may I bury a heart?

In the wind?  
In the water?  
So loved  
that they may have some requital of me.

What is now whispering?  
The wind, like a fugitive runs  
and fugitive flows the water.

And love its own way goes  
as water and wind.

- Joan James



# Dramatic Arts

by Robin Richards

The controversial stage adaptation of BALLAD OF THE SAD CAFE (originally a novel by Carson McCullers) is playing to full houses in New York. One side of a passionate triangle is homosexual. A physical contest between the strapping heroine and her husband is the shockingly realistic climax of the play. Upheld by this bizarre story is the essential mystery of human passion.

- - - - -

Television is a much more censored medium than theater or movies, and mentions of homosexuality are few and far between. NBC's "Eleventh Hour" gave the subject a try, on November 13, 1963. WHAT DID SHE MEAN BY GOOD LUCK? dealt frankly with lesbianism, on an adolescent level and in sophomoric language and platitudes. Hallie Lambert, a highly neurotic young actress, is filled with feelings of persecution; she believes director Marya Stone is picking on her. It is transference from a former crush on a drama teacher, and of course Hallie actually loves Marya and doesn't wish to admit it even to herself. Beverly Garland as the director did the only good job of acting in the show. Kathryn Hayes, playing the actress, was especially inept. The handling of the subject was so poor it was embarrassing to watch. The only good angle was that Hallie has a so-so-happy ending instead of being dragged to the nut hatch. May programs on this series improve or cease.

- - - - -

Leaving out consideration of the Lesbian emphasis in this movie, THE HAUNTING is a genuine thriller, directed and acted superbly. The film retains from the novel the strong Lesbian currents which pass between the two leading characters, played by Julie Harris and Claire Bloom. Eleanor (Harris) is a dried-up, frightened, spinsterish woman with an evil and unfortunate past. Theo (Bloom) is an artist. They come to Hill House to investigate rumors that it is haunted. The inhabitants of the house have had a frightening history, punctuated by violent death.

Eleanor has nowhere to go in her personal life, and she comes to Hill House at a desperate moment. Theo is given no past life in the movie at all, except in one scene where she refers to her life and apartment with another

person; and when asked if she is married, she makes it clear she is homosexual. However, this is always clear, for she begins to throw passes at Eleanor (whom she calls Nell, since "it is the affectionate term for Eleanor, isn't it?") from the very first dual scene. After that, all of the homosexual dialogue from Shirley Jackson's novel is retained, except for the "garden scene" which would have been difficult to recreate even if Lesbian love scenes were acceptable.

One criticism: It might not be wholly believable that a beautiful, sophisticated woman like Theo would choose to pursue hotly the drab Eleanor. Not that Miss Harris is drab, but for the role of Eleanor she is deliberately aged and made unattractive. Robin recommends THE HAUNTING!

- - - - -

THE SILENCE, an Ingmar Bergman movie due to be shown in this country in the coming months, has a theme of Lesbian incest. The film's graphic frankness has drawn sharp criticism even in broad-minded Sweden. A friend abroad recently wrote, "There is a character in it who carries on "shocking" with her sister." Watch for a review later.

---

## THAT NEW YEAR - LOVE

The sight of hedons  
Rompig guilty through  
Drunken streets  
Sent me searching  
Dark places  
For wounded eyes.  
Strange people  
In small places  
Furtive soul  
Meets suave faces  
And one Madonna  
Smiling through the lies.

- Kris Carson

Love dies if held too lightly  
Love dies if held too tightly

Lightly or tightly  
How am I to know

Whether I am killing you  
or letting you go?

- Patricia Ann Lower



# READERS RESPOND

"THE ONLY FAULT WITH THE LADDER IS ITS BREVITY. MAYBE I SHOULD BE THANKFUL (AND I AM!) THAT IT IS AS LONG AS IT IS; AND YET WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF THE LADDER ADDED A FEW MORE RUNGS. WHAT IS LACKING - MONEY, PERSONNEL, TIME, AVAILABILITY OF MATERIAL?"

- L. H., DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

EDITOR'S REPLY: THE LADDER'S PRESENT SIZE IS DETERMINED BY OUR EQUIPMENT. A RECENTLY-ACQUIRED ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER ALREADY GIVES US MORE LINES PER PAGE--FOR EXAMPLE, COMPARE PAGES 12 AND 16 IN DECEMBER ISSUE--BUT THE NUMBER OF PAGES IS LIMITED BY THE STAPLING MACHINE. WITH MORE MONEY, WE COULD CHANGE BOTH OUR EQUIPMENT AND OUR PRINTING METHOD AND HAVE A MORE PROFESSIONAL-LOOKING MAGAZINE WITH MORE MATERIAL INSIDE. OF COURSE, GOOD MATERIALS FOR THE LADDER ARE ALWAYS WELCOME--WE CAN NEVER HAVE ENOUGH! GETTING AN ABUNDANCE OF QUALITY MATERIAL TO CHOOSE FROM WOULD CERTAINLY COME BEFORE CONSIDERATION OF MAJOR CHANGES IN OUR EQUIPMENT OR METHOD OF PRINTING. KEEP THOSE MANUSCRIPTS AND LETTERS COMING!

\* \* \* \* \*

"THE VERY MOVING 'PLEA TO THE SILENT ONES' BY ROSE MARIE OF PORTLAND IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE HAS COME LIKE AN UNEXPECTED AND LONG AWAITED CHRISTMAS GIFT TO ME. I HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO THE LADDER SINCE AUGUST AND LOVED EVERY ISSUE; IT HAS BEEN LIKE A LIGHTED CANDLE IN THE DARK FOREST HERE IN OREGON WHERE NOTHING, NO PUBLICATION OR ORGANIZATION OF ANY KIND EXISTS TO HELP THE HOMOPHILE. NOW COMES THIS ARTICLE WHICH SURPASSES ANYTHING I'VE EVER READ.

"DID YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHEN YOU STARTED PUBLISHING THE LADDER HOW VERY FAR ITS BRIGHT MESSAGES OF HOPE MIGHT REACH SOME DAY? THE VERY FEEL GOOD--NOT JUST WORDS--YOUR SMALL MAGAZINE IS CAPABLE OF DOING? ITS POSSIBILITIES ARE STAGGERING!"

- M. M., OREGON

"I AM WRITING A FEW WORDS OF SYMPATHY TOWARDS JEANNACE FREEMAN.

"AMONGST THE AMERICAN PERIODICALS THAT I BUY EACH MONTH IS THE POLICE GAZETTE, AND IN THE MARCH 1963 ISSUE WAS A SHORT WRITE-UP OF THE FREEMAN-JACKSON CASE. THE ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST LADDER WAS MORE FULLY WRITTEN AND ALLOWED A BETTER UNDERSTANDING.

"I'M AFRAID THAT MOST OF MY SYMPATHY IS FOR MISS FREEMAN, AND NOT SO MUCH FOR THE CHILDREN, ALTHOUGH THE POOR LITTLE TYKES DIDN'T DESERVE SUCH A FATE. IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE TO ME THAT PUBLIC SYMPATHY IS NOT MORE WITH JEANNACE FREEMAN, AFTER HAVING READ AN ACCOUNT OF HER EARLY CHILDHOOD. IT IS SO EASY TO CONDEMN, AND SO MANY PEOPLE ARE DOGMATIC IN THEIR VIEWS.

"I CERTAINLY HOPE THAT SHE WAS NOT OR WILL NOT BE EXECUTED, AS NO USEFUL PURPOSE WILL BE SERVED THAT I CAN SEE."

- G. M., AUSTRALIA

\* \* \* \* \*

"YES, INDEED, THE LADDER IS WORTH MORE THAN ANY \$4 TO ME! LET'S KEEP IT GOING AND EVENTUALLY MAKE IT BIGGER AND BETTER!

"I LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING THE LADDER EACH MONTH FOR THE SAME REASON THAT I ANTICIPATE THE COMING OF ANY MAGAZINE--IT BRINGS ME VIEWS THAT ARE NEW AND NOVEL TO CONTEMPLATE, AND NEWS OF PROGRESS BEING MADE. PERHAPS IT MEANS MORE TO ME THAN OTHER PUBLICATIONS BECAUSE I CAN HAVE A PART IN IT.

"THANKS FOR TRANSLATING MY \$ INTO WORDS, PRINTED INFORMATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT."

- M. U., KANSAS

\* \* \* \* \*

"PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF THOSE WHOSE SEXUAL ORIENTATION DIFFERS FROM THAT OF THE MAJORITY MUST EVENTUALLY BECOME A REALITY. I AM OLD ENOUGH NOW TO DO SOME LOOKING BACK OBJECTIVELY. I AM SADDENED WHEN I THINK OF THE HARM CAUSED BY SOME HOMOSEXUALS WHO, I NOW KNOW, MADE THEIR MISTAKES CHIEFLY DUE TO THEIR FEAR-RIDDEN LIVES.

I AM THINKING PARTICULARLY OF SOME ERRORS OF JUDGEMENT, EVEN CRUELITIES, ON THE PART OF HOMOSEXUALS IN THE TEACHING AND SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONS, PEOPLE OF FINE CHARACTER, INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO EARN ADVANCED COLLEGE DEGREES. THE SECRECY WHICH SOCIETY FORCED UPON THEM IN THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF THEIR LIVES - THEIR LOVE-LIFE- CAUSED THE ILL-AT-EASENESS AND TENSION WHICH AFFECTED THEIR WORK.

"TO SOME PEOPLE THIS MIGHT BE AN ARGUMENT FOR PUTTING ALL HOMOSEXUALS OUT OF CIRCULATION, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. NO! MANY OF THE WORLD'S FINEST PEOPLE LOVE ONE OF THEIR OWN SEX. THE WORLD NEEDS THEIR WORK BUT IT NEEDS THEM AT WORK, FREE FROM THE EXCESSIVE PRESSURES PUT UPON THEM BY THE IGNORANT."

- A READER

\* \* \* \* \*

"I'M FOR YOU, ALL THE WAY. BUT SOMETIMES...(GRRR!)...DO I GET UPSET OVER YOUR EMPHASIS ON SEX! WE UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE, BUT THE WORLD DOESN'T; AND WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME TRYING TO CONVINCE THE WORLD THAT WE ARE RIGHT, UNLESS WE CAN REALLY PROVE THAT WE LOVE. THE LADDER IS THE VOICE OF LESBIANISM TO DATE - AND FOR ALL THAT THIS MAGAZINE HAS REALLY SAID, WE MIGHT JUST AS WELL DEPEND ON GREENWICH VILLAGE.

"STRUGGLE, STRUGGLE... THE AVERAGE LESBIAN DOESN'T CARE. LAWS, LAWS... THE AVERAGE LESBIAN IS NOT AFFECTED BY LAWS AS SHE NEVER GETS INVOLVED WITH THEM. THE DECENT-LIVING LESBIAN HAS NO NEED FOR LAWS, AS EVEN HER OWN NEIGHBORS DO NOT KNOW THAT SHE IS A LESBIAN. LAWS? WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO - PARADE THE STREETS WITH SIGNS PROCLAIMING THAT WE ARE LESBIANS, AND NEED LAWS? FOR WHAT? LAWS TO LOVE EACH OTHER? LAWS TO FEEL EMOTION? WHAT DO WE NEED LAWS FOR? WE LOVE IN SECRET; WE LIVE IN SECRET; WE SPEAK IN SECRET. WHEN I LOVE, I DO NOT CONSULT THE LAW.

"WHAT I'M DRIVING AT IS THIS: LET'S HAVE THE LADDER REFLECT THE FEELING OF LESBIAN LOVE - SECRET THOUGH IT MAY BE, HIDDEN, EVEN DENIED. IF WE THINK WE ARE GOING TO GET LAWS TO UPHOLD LESBIANISM, WE ARE MISTAKEN. WE ARE DIFFERENT, WE ARE APART, AND WE MUST REMAIN SO. LET US NOT SEEK EITHER LAWS OR INFLUENCE."

- J. R. J. W., NEW YORK



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*are you on...?*

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\* - Limited supply; please indicate second choice.



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