

The LADDER

A LESBIAN
REVIEW

FOR
SALE
TO
ADULTS
ONLY

50
cents

April
1964



DAUGHTERS of BILITIS

INCORPORATED

is a women's organization devoted to education and research concerning the homosexual. It works both to dispel prejudice and ignorance about homosexuality, and to help the homosexual become a happier, more effective person. The organization's aims are:

1. Educating the variant to understand and accept herself;
2. Educating the public to understand and accept the variant;
3. Encouraging and participating in responsible research;
4. Studying the law as it applies to the sex variant and promoting changes where desirable.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS and San Francisco Chapter: 1232 Market St., Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California.

New York Chapter: Box 3629, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N.Y.

Chicago Chapter: 409 Armitage, Chicago, Illinois, 60614.

MEMBERSHIP in Daughters of Bilitis is limited to women 21 years of age or older. If in San Francisco, New York, or Chicago area, direct inquiry to chapter concerned. Otherwise write to National Office in San Francisco for a membership application form.

THE LADDER is a monthly magazine published by Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., mailed in a plain sealed envelope for \$4.00 a year. Anyone over 21 may subscribe to The Ladder.

CONTRIBUTIONS are gratefully accepted from anyone who wants to support our work. We are a non-profit corporation depending entirely on volunteer labor. While men may not become members of Daughters of Bilitis, many have expressed interest in our efforts and have made contributions to further our work.

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC.

1232 Market Street, Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California.

Please send **THE LADDER** for _____ year(s) in a plain sealed envelope to the address below. I enclose \$_____ at the rate of \$4.00 for each year ordered.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

I am over 21 years of age (Signed) _____

the Ladder

April 1964
Volume 8 Number 7

Published monthly by the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., a non-profit corporation, 1232 Market Street, Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California. Telephone: UNderhill 3 - 8196.

NATIONAL OFFICERS, DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC.

President—Cleo Glenn
Recording Secretary—Margaret Heinz
Corresponding Secretary—Barbara Gittings
Public Relations Director—Meredith Grey
Treasurer—Ev Howe

THE LADDER STAFF

Editor—Barbara Gittings
Fiction and Poetry Editor—Agatha Mathys

Production—Joan Oliver, V. Pigrom
Circulation Manager—Cleo Glenn

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 Problem of Homosexuality in Modern Society - Book Review by Florence Conrad.....	4
DOB Convention Bulletin.....	8
The Very Vast Wasteland - by Marilyn Barrow.....	9
Cross-currents.....	11
On the Other Side of the Fence - a story by Ruth M. Friedman.....	12
Scholarships - For Women Only.....	16
Lesbiana - by Gene Damon.....	17
Notes from Abroad: The Hot Rod Line - by Esme Langley.....	20
Devotion - a book review by Gene Damon.....	22
Readers Respond.....	23

Cover: "GIRL IN A RAINCOAT" - By courtesy of Tylden W. Streett, sculptor, and the National Sculpture Society.

Copyright 1964 by Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., San Francisco, California

The Problem of Homosexuality in Modern Society

AN ANTHOLOGY EDITED BY HENDRIK M. RUITENBECK

DUTTON (ALSO DUTTON PAPERBACK), 1963

"TOO MUCH NON-PROFESSIONAL WRITING ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY HAS CATERED TO PREVALENT LOW LEVELS OF INFORMATION AND TASTE. . . THIS ANTHOLOGY OFFERS THE LAY READER SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF SOME ASPECTS OF HOMOSEXUALITY WHICH MANY CURRENT PRESENTATIONS TEND TO SLIGHT." THIS EXCERPT IS FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO WHAT IS BY FAR THE BEST BUY I HAVE YET SEEN ON THE SUBJECT FOR THE SERIOUS READER - A COLLECTION OF SIXTEEN REPRINTED ARTICLES, RANGING FROM FREUD TO DR. EVELYN HOOKER, FROM ROBERT LINDNER TO SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR.

HENDRIK RUITENBECK, THE HOLLAND-BORN AND EDUCATED EDITOR, IS A PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY AND A PRACTICING PSYCHOANALYST. HIS DISCRIMINATION IN SELECTING ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION MAY BE GAUGED BY THIS FURTHER QUOTE FROM THE PREFACE: "THE OMISSION OF ANY ESSAY BY EDMUND BERGLER IS QUITE DELIBERATE. HIS OBSERVATIONS ON HOMOSEXUALITY ARE SO CLOSE TO PSYCHOANALYTIC NONSENSE THAT THEIR INCLUSION WOULD VIOLATE THE EDITOR'S CRITERIA OF RESPONSIBLE SCHOLARSHIP."

BUT DO NOT EXPECT THIS COLLECTION TO MERELY FLATTER THE SELF-ESTEEM OF HOMOSEXUALS. NONE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS DOES THAT, AND THE INCLUSION OF ESSAYS BY ABRAM KARDINER, LIONEL OVESEY, AND ALBERT ELLIS - TO NAME ONLY THREE - GUARANTEES AGAINST IT. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT RESPONSIBLE SCHOLARS ARE SAYING ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY, DON'T READ IT. BUT IF YOU DO, YOU WILL FIND THAT THERE IS MUCH COMMON SENSE, MANY SIGNS OF BREAKING AWAY FROM THE OLD STEREOTYPES, ALONG WITH THE MORE USUAL MEDICAL APPROACH, AND THAT NOT ALL SERIOUS STUDENTS ACCEPT THE "ILLNESS" LABEL. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE CONTRIBUTORS DO SEE HOMOSEXUALITY AS A NEGATIVE ADAPTATION TO LIVING, OR AT LEAST NOT THE PREFERRED ADAPTATION, THERE ARE NUMEROUS OBSERVATIONS OF A KIND WHICH MAY BEST BE

ILLUSTRATED BY THIS ONE FROM THE LATE CLARA THOMPSON, NOTED WOMAN PSYCHIATRIST: "AN OVERT HOMOSEXUAL WAY OF LIFE CAN PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE OR DESTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE PERSONALITY. IT MAY BE THE BEST TYPE OF HUMAN RELATION OF WHICH A PERSON IS CAPABLE, AND AS SUCH IS BETTER THAN ISOLATION."

ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTORS ADVOCATE LAW REFORM. SANDOR RADO, WHO SEES HOMOSEXUALITY AS ONE OF MANY "REPARATIVE PATTERNS" WHICH MAY APPEAR WHEN THE "STANDARD" TYPE OF BEHAVIOR IS INHIBITED, SAYS: "THESE (REPARATIVE) PATTERNS MAY ENABLE THE INDIVIDUAL TO RECAPTURE HIS LOSSES IN FUNCTION, PRIDE, AND SOCIAL USEFULNESS. HOWEVER, WESTERN CIVILIZATION HAS NOT YET RECOGNIZED THIS MEDICAL FACT. OUR NORMATIVE CODES, AS DID THE LAWS OF MEDIEVAL TIMES, STILL PROHIBIT THESE REPARATIVE PATTERNS. FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF HIS HEALTH, THE INDIVIDUAL THUS MUST PAY THE PRICE OF GUILTY FEAR, IF NOT LEGAL PUNISHMENT. SINCE, ON A WILLING PARTNER, THESE REPARATIVE PATTERNS INFLICT NO MORE HARM THAN DOES THE STANDARD PATTERN, THE BENEFIT SOCIETY DERIVES FROM THESE PENAL PROVISIONS IS NIL. . . IT IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION TO LIFT THE FOG OF ANCIENT SUPERSTITION SO THAT THE LIGHT OF REASON MAY PREVAIL."

OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO WOMEN READERS WILL BE THE SELECTION FROM SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S THE SECOND SEX. DESPITE THE DAMP RECEPTION THIS BOOK GOT WHEN IT APPEARED IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION SOME YEARS AGO, MISS DE BEAUVOIR'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ACTIVE WOMEN, BOTH HOMOSEXUAL AND HETEROSEXUAL, SEEMS TO ME TO BE UNSURPASSED. ALSO OF INTEREST TO WOMEN WILL BE CLARA THOMPSON'S EXCELLENT EARLY ARTICLE "CHANGING CONCEPTS OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN PSYCHOANALYSIS"; AND - IN A THOROUGHLY CHILLING WAY, GEORGE DEVEREUX'S ACCOUNT OF THE TRAGEDY OF A MOHAVE WOMAN DEVIATE, IN HIS ARTICLE "INSTITUTIONALISED HOMOSEXUALITY OF THE MOHAVE INDIANS." THOSE WHO CANNOT STOMACH THE MODERN MEDICAL PSYCHIATRIC APPROACH, APPLIED FULL STRENGTH TO AN INDIAN CULTURE, WILL DO BETTER TO SKIP THIS CASE HISTORY.

ALBERT ELLIS REPORTS ON HIS THERAPEUTIC RESULTS WITH A GROUP OF 40 HOMOSEXUALS, MOST OF WHOM WISHED TO ACHIEVE A HETEROSEXUAL ORIENTATION. HE ALSO USES HIS RESULTS TO BOLSTER SOME SPECULATIONS HE MAKES ABOUT LESBIANS, BUT CONSIDERING THAT HE HAD ONLY 12 FEMALE CASES, THE BOLSTERING IS NOT VERY PERSUASIVE.

THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THIS EXCELLENT ANTHOLOGY RUNS ONE PERSISTENT FAULT: HOMOSEXUALITY IS EVERYWHERE PRESUMED TO BE ON THE INCREASE; AND THIS PRESUMED INCREASE IS THEN PRESUMED TO BE A PROBLEM (SEE THE TITLE ITSELF). NOWHERE DOES A WRITER CRITICALLY EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE FOR INCREASE, NOR SYSTEMATICALLY EXPLAIN THE NATURE OF THE RESULTING PROBLEM. ABRAM KARDINER QUOTES FIGURES APLENTY - BUT THEY ARE FIGURES SHOWING POLICE ARRESTS IN ENGLAND! HE IS THE WORST OFFENDER IN ACCEPTING STATISTICS SUCH AS THESE WITHOUT INQUIRING INTO THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, AND IN LEAPING FROM PRESUMPTION TO ACCEPTED FACT, AND THEN ON TO "ALARM" - AN EMOTION WHICH HE EXPRESSES FREQUENTLY IN THIS ARTICLE. THE ROOTS OF THIS ALARM ARE EXPOSED AT THE END OF HIS ARTICLE, WHEN HE REFERS TO THE "SERIOUS SOCIAL IMPAIRMENT" WHICH HE BELIEVES TO BE THE RESULT OF THE "SEPARATION OF ORGASTIC PLEASURE FROM PROCREATIVE ENDS." HIS SWEEPING GENERALISATIONS, TYING IN HOMOSEXUALITY WITH "UNIVERSAL ANXIETY" AND THE "FEAR OF ANNIHILATION," ARE UNCONVINCING TO THIS READER, DESPITE KARDINER'S DISTINGUISHED REPUTATION. WHEN HE SAYS "THE COMMON JUDGMENT THAT HOMOSEXUALITY IS A FORM OF ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITY IS NOT ALTOGETHER UNWARRANTED," IT DOES NOT COME AS A SURPRISE. WHEN HE LISTS AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO HOMOSEXUALITY THE "PREDOMINANCE OF THE INSTRUMENTAL USE OF HUMAN BEINGS SO THAT THE TENDER AND AFFECTIONATE EMOTIONS ARE NOT DECISIVE" - ONE WON- DERS HOW MANY AND WHAT KIND OF HOMOSEXUALS HE HAS KNOWN.

EDITOR RUITENBECK DOES BETTER WHEN HE NOTES THAT THERE IS A RISING AWARENESS OF HOMOSEXUALITY, AND AT LEAST POSES THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THERE ARE PROPORTIONATELY MORE HOMOSEXUALS THAN THERE USED TO BE. YET EVEN HE LAPSES INTO AN ACCEPTANCE OF THE CLAIMS OF UNSPECIFIED OTHERS THAT THE INCIDENCE HAS ACTUALLY IN- CREASED. DO NOT SKIP HIS CONTRIBUTION FOR THIS REASON, THOUGH; IT IS EXCELLENT IN OTHER RESPECTS.

THIS REVIEWER WOULD SUGGEST, AS A HYPOTHESIS FOR INVESTIGATION, THAT WHILE THERE MAY INDEED BE MORE OVERT EXPRESSION GIVEN THESE DAYS TO HOMOSEXUAL (AS WELL AS TO HETEROSEXUAL) INCLINATIONS, THAT YET THE IRON-CLAD SUPPRESSIONS AND REPRESSIONS OF AN OLDER DAY WERE LIKELY TO BE FAR MORE CRIPPLING TO THE HUMAN PERSONALITY THAN ANYTHING THAT IS HAPPENING NOW. LET THE HIGH PRICE OF YES- TERYEAR'S "MORALITY" NOT BE FORGOTTEN BY THOSE WHO VIEW PRESENT TENDENCIES WITH ALARM. THEY CANNOT KNOW WHAT HUMAN POTENTIAL WAS KILLED OFF AND LOST FOREVER IN OBSERVANCE OF A RIGID CODE.

IT MAY BE ASKED: EVEN IF IT IS OVERT HOMOSEXUAL EXPRESSION, RATHER THAN HOMOSEXUAL TENDENCIES, WHICH IS INCREASING, IS THIS NOT ITSELF A PROBLEM? NOBODY IN THIS VOLUME PROVIDES REAL EVI- DENCE FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE; SEVERAL ASSUME THE ANSWER TO BE "YES", OR ARGUE BY IMPLICATION. KARDINER'S STATEMENT THAT "IT IS SAFE TO SAY NO CULTURE COULD LONG ENDURE IF THE MAJORITY OF ITS MALES EN- TERED INTO SUCH (HOMOSEXUAL) RELATIONSHIPS" IS A KIND OF REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM OF HIS ALARM - IN AN AGE WHEN HETEROSEXUAL MATING, WITH AND WITHOUT PROCREATION, IS SO WIDESPREAD THAT FEARS ARE EX- PRESSED ON EVERY HAND AS TO THE CONSEQUENCES!

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG'S CONTRIBUTION SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED. THOROUGHLY SYSTEMATIC IN HIS APPROACH, HE DEMONSTRATES WITH RIGOR- OUS LOGIC THAT CULTURAL RESTRICTIONS AGAINST HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR (ALWAYS EXCEPTING THAT WHICH INVOLVES FORCE, DECEPTION, SEDUCTION OF MINORS, ETC.) ARE UNNECESSARY, UNDESIRABLE, AND USELESS.

I CANNOT FAIL TO MENTION ROBERT LINDNER'S HARSHLY REALISTIC (THOUGH SYMPATHETIC) COMMENT ON THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT. "I AM PERSONALLY CONVINCED THAT IT IS DOOMED TO FAILURE, ALTHOUGH I CAN- NOT HELP BUT ADMIRE THE COURAGE OF THOSE INVOLVED." HE THEN GIVES REASONS. IT IS NOT CHEERING - BUT IT NEED NOT AND WILL NOT DIS- COURAGE THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY COMMITTED.

- REVIEWED BY FLORENCE CONRAD
(CHAIRMAN, DOB RESEARCH COMMITTEE)

HOUR OF LOVE

THIS IS A GARDEN WHERE WE REST. RINGED ABOUT BY SKYSCRAPERS
WE LIE ON VIOLET-DOTTED GRASS AND LISTEN TO THE SPLASHING
OF LIVING WATERS.
A SMALL BIRD CHIRPS IN THE BRANCHES ABOVE OUR HEADS.

NONE CAN CARRY AWAY FROM THIS PLACE
ONE SPRIG OF ROSEMARY.
BUT YOUR FRAGRANCE CLINGS TO MY PALMS AS I RUN
OVER CONCRETE TO THE SUBWAY.

- VALERIE TAYLOR

DOB Convention Bulletin

FEMININITY - WHAT IS IT? No mystery is more perplexing! Has any woman found an answer she can tell - and if so, would she? Mrs. Lee Steiner, marriage counselor, psychologist, and moderator of the radio program **PSYCHOLOGICALLY SPEAKING**, will guide a provocative panel discussion on the concept of femininity, at the third biennial convention of the Daughters of Bilitis, in New York City on June 20, 1964. The panel of outspoken women will consider some problems of the Lesbian which are not far removed from the problems all women face.

What does the Daughters of Bilitis hope to accomplish through the open discussion of highly personal topics which much of the public believes should be hidden? This exploration will help both the public and the Lesbian in better understanding and acceptance of the variant woman.

This convention will be the first national convention of the Daughters ever held on the eastern seaboard. Public sessions, open to all persons over 21, will also include panels and lectures featuring such eminent leaders of science and religious thought as Dr. Wardell Pomeroy of Kinsey-research fame, Dr. Ernest van den Haag, sociologist, and Dr. Gerald Sabath, psychologist (both of the New School for Social Research), Rev. C. Edward Egan, Jr., Rev. Robert W. Wood, and attorney Robert Veit Sherwin.

RESERVATIONS FOR ENTIRE PROGRAM, INCLUDING BANQUET - \$17.00!

CONVENTION BARGAIN! A special bonus is offered for **LADDER** readers who plan to attend the 1964 DOB convention on June 20th in New York City. A two-dollar admission ticket to the spectacular World's Fair will be available at half price to the first twenty persons whose pre-convention reservations are received at the San Francisco headquarters of Daughters of Bilitis, Inc. This discount will not be obtainable through the New York Chapter or at the convention itself. When you place your reservation, be sure to mention **THE LADDER's** bonus package: \$18.00 includes the entire day of convention activities and one admission ticket to the World's Fair.

Calling Canada....

Reduced-rate travel fares will be available to Canadians who want to attend the DOB national convention on June 20th! All interested in joining a group traveling from Toronto to New York at convention time are invited to contact DOB national headquarters in San Francisco.

THE VERY VAST WASTELAND:

the Celibate, the Passer, & the Nun

by Marilyn Barrow

Most of the guessers, trained and otherwise, believe that there are more male homosexuals than female. Possibly they are right. Men by their natures usually have a definite sexual outlet, a delineated sex life. Women often do not.

It is generally known that many women can live sexless lives without apparent harm. Also commonly accepted is the vague outlet for women: love for a child, a dog or cat, a hobby, a cause. Among the legion of women without definite sex lives are three kinds of Lesbians, whom I will call: the celibate, the passer, and the nun. They are cruel to themselves and useless to their own minority group. At the same time they are more acceptable socially to heterosexuals than the overt Lesbian.

Let's look first at the celibates. They know they are homosexual and to some degree they understand the implications and responsibilities - and they reject them. (Sometimes this type has had a youthful homosexual experience which did not work out well.) You've known some of these women. They are single, live sexless lives, usually hold high positions and are successful. They range from very feminine to quite masculine. If they have an emotional outlet at all, it is likely to be a pet. They are not the "vinegar old maid" type but get along well with men. They are not especially disdainful of the overt female homosexual; an overt Lesbian could work for them if discreet and otherwise qualified. They may or may not have close male homosexual friends. Members of this sub-group are generally intelligent and fairly attractive women. They are the deliberately asexual Lesbians, and there are thousands of them.

The largest sub-group is that of the passer - the woman who is falsely termed bisexual. This sub-group is created in two ways. The girl who knows she is gay but is afraid of the homosexual life, often marries for safety, for social approval, and sometimes for children. On the other hand there is the girl who isn't sure she is gay or thinks she can break away, who marries and has children and wakes up one morning in love with the wife next door.

The passers - many, oh many of them - write their sad stories to **THE LADDER's** staff every year. They are really

trapped. For them there is little happiness. Most of these women will not desert a family. But for them life is a kind of hell, a drudgery unrelieved by the normal compensation of love. With better sex education, the young Lesbian would not have to go to hell before she gets a view of an unreachable heaven.

For the last group there is usually no pity, though perhaps there should be. She is the nun of life. How many teachers, office workers, librarians, social workers have you known who are in this group? They represent another hideous crippling caused by inadequate sex education. They are the girls who grow up utterly unsexed. Most of them are potential Lesbians. As teenagers they are outsiders, and in college too they feel apart. They reject heterosexuality out of shyness or insecurity - and see no other choice. They do become the "vinegar old maids," the violets on yesterday's wallpaper - living and dying without giving love or getting love. They are a waste, leaving literally no "footprints on the sands of time."

How much more lovingness there would be in the world if the deliberate celibate did not choose to deny her natural homosexuality. How many fewer unhappy children might there be if many Lesbians did not feel compelled to play wife and mothers. Especially tragic are the really sexless ones, the nuns who do not even know they are casting no shadow. The solution is, of course, the same as for most homosexual dilemmas: better sex education, less prejudice.

Homosexual expression would not guarantee happiness to all in this very vast wasteland. But what a loss when any person is denied a chance to love, even when the denial is self-imposed! No one is a whole person alone. Every human being needs an adequate sex life - or else a substitute of heroic proportions - as a base from which to grow. There are few natural celibates. There are no substitutes for reciprocal human love.

Like children's balloons
one rising
one sinking

We met for a moment
in bright midair.

Hope wafted one high -
the other hung, weighted with care.

The two will not touch again
ever, in bright midair.

- Blanche Small

Cross-currents

The Pacific Foundation, whose FM radio stations have pioneered in airing homosexuality and other controversial topics, has been vindicated of obscenity as well as Communist affiliations. The Federal Communications Commission in January renewed or restored operating licenses of the Foundation's several stations. One of the complaints at issue referred to the broadcast "Live and Let Live" in which 8 homosexuals discuss their problems and attitudes. The FCC stated that if persons offended by provocative programs could prevent their airing through FCC's licensing power, then "only the wholly inoffensive, the bland, could gain access to the radio microphone or TV camera." This opinion by a government regulatory agency is being applauded as vital support for freedom of expression.

* * * * *

The venerable ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA has up-dated its prudish policy. A critic of outmoded and inaccurate references in the BRITANNICA concedes that the encyclopedia no longer neglects to mention sexual aberrations.

* * * * *

A scoop for Canada! With one-tenth the U. S. population, Canada has one-upped the Yanks with the first major publicity on homosexuality in general in a mass-circulation publication. MACLEAN'S - "Canada's national magazine" - has featured a two-part article by Sidney Katz in its issues of February 22 and March 7, 1964.

The author notes that Canada's criminal code imposes 5 years' imprisonment on anyone who "commits an act of gross indecency with another person" and that homosexual acts are interpreted as gross indecency. He reports on a cross-section of homosexual individuals, to show that the majority of homosexuals are like other people in all but their choice of love object. He objectively presents conflicting beliefs about the cause of homosexuality. Most significant, he counters public attitudes of disgust, fear, and hostility again and again in the calm fairness of his writing. Sidney Katz's articles are particularly advanced in their refusal to adopt typical psychiatric theories about homosexuality.

While lesbianism is mentioned only incidentally, DOB is listed along with ONE and the Mattachine Society. For the 15¢ price of a MACLEAN'S magazine, Canada's public has learned about the American homophile organizations. Such fair exposure is yet to be made available to the mass-circulation reader in the United States.

On the Other Side of the Fence

A Story by Ruth M. Friedman

The room gave the impression of sterility, as the inside of a bank does or the sanctuary of a church. One of the women had been saying: "She associates. Fred or me can't read her LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD but what she associates." The counselor nodded. The mothers nodded. One of them suggested switching to SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS.

The woman who had spoken pushed her tongue against the inside of her top teeth and pulled a thread of air through a broken tooth. It made a squeak, and the group knew she was thinking. They'd known each other since the school had been instituted six months before.

Natalie stood smallest among the women. Her hair, immaculate around her face, touched the jaw lightly. When she talked she often flicked the curlie under her earlobe with her thumb and forefinger, as a man might do with a finely waxed mustache. Her skin was pale and her eyes were dark and she was the only one of the women who had been divorced. She had two children, a boy and a girl. They never smiled.

Laura said she entered her sons in the school because both boys had become "unmanageable." One of the boys had locked the neighbor girl in the storage room for hours. His brother killed a mother cat with the ball peen of a machinist's hammer. Laura was tall, and her darting black eyes belonged with the blonde hair even as bullets with guns. Her shyness was easily contracted by those with whom she became acquainted; consequently, people often avoided her. But little by little the propinquity of these women brought them to accept her. Yet only Natalie actually felt comfortable with Laura. Laura sensed it and liked her.

For the first time in their lives these women seemed to find refuge in their neuroses. There was an esprit, a togetherness among them. Did they not, after all, share the fact that their children were disturbed? Others - neighbors and friends - though well-meaning, all too often referred to the school as "that special school for disordered children." This unintended insult brought the tiny group of women even closer together.

Rosemary would have been the last to believe this. She liked everybody and she didn't need unintended insults to bring her together with anyone. She believed the true difficulty behind her child's problem lay with her husband, who hadn't wanted the girl in the first place. He had had an unfortunate first marriage. "Fact of the matter is," Rosemary prefaced cryptically for effect, and paused, repeating, "fact of the matter is, he married one of them lesbians. I think that just soured him on females."

"If he's sour on females, how come he married again?" one mother asked.

"I guess he knew what kind of woman that kind of woman is," she answered inadequately and inappropriately to the question, "so he just steered clear of the type. You know, big knuckles kind of, and a lumbering walk, and an all around queer look about them."

"My God," Laura said quietly, "and your little girl suffers for it now."

* * *

When Laura's book of poems appeared, it surprised everyone; and it surprised them doubly to learn that the thin little volume had been dedicated to "Rosemary's Little Girl."

All but Natalie seemed happy about it. The complimentary copy Natalie received was left on the chair where she had been sitting, listening to Rosemary express the delights of having a book dedicated to one's child. Natalie turned, wild, on Rosemary and told her she had no business taking Laura's friendship away. And she left the room having stripped it down to silence.

By the next day Natalie's outburst had had more than enough repercussions. The story had been told and retold, and no one knew any more about it at the latest telling than they had at the first.

Laura asked Natalie if she might like to go to the library with her. She wanted, she said, to return some books. On the library grounds the two women sat on the warm grass, feeling it stick to the calves of their legs. Laura yawned unnecessarily, a self-conscious yawn, putting her fingers to her mouth. Withdrawing the fingers, she wiped the lipstick off them, and watched her fingers carefully as she said, "Natalie, what was the matter yesterday? Why did you go at Rosemary that way?"

"I don't know what was the matter exactly," Natalie said. "You know, I've told the counselor that I think," she said without the slightest movement, "I think I'm homosexual."

Laura had been pulling grass at her ankles. She stopped promptly, still looking at her fist bearded with grass between her knuckles. The silence was an audible darkness. "Why that's crazy," Laura said, as though to cast a light. "That's a crazy way to talk."

"That's just what the counselor says," Natalie said. "I guess it is crazy all right. It's just that. . . I get to liking certain people. A lot. An awful lot. Laura. . . I. . . you know I. . . oh, why can't I express myself?" She pulled at the grass and smashed her fist back down onto the bare spot she made.

"Because," Laura said, using levity, "if it were simpler to communicate, the teacher'd have less trouble in producing top scholars, and probably every Sunday the preacher'd boast a record attendance. And who'd need to keep an eye out to caution the kids? In fact, who'd need this school?"

Natalie laughed, a polite laugh meant to say that she had heard, that she had been listening.

Laura shifted her position, pulling her skirt out from under her. "You remind me of my son," she said, "my youngest. We took a cottage in the desert last autumn. When the sun would set, the mountain facing the cottage looked pink. When he took a handful of the dirt from that mountain he was crushed to find it wasn't pink at all. We're often fooled like that," she said, adding quickly, "people. Sometimes we fool ourselves. If we just remember," Laura talked to the plaque under the statue near the entrance to the library, "if we just remember that the grass is not always greener on the other side of the fence, or that the mountain is not really pink at all."

"Yes," Natalie said, watching Laura who addressed the statue. "And I take it out on the kids, I guess. But since this school they're doing better. Yes. They're doing a whole lot better."

"What'd the counselor say," Laura asked, "what'd he say?"

"Well, the kids're still not smiling much yet, but he thinks they're improving."

"No, I mean about you. I mean about what you said to him you thought you were."

"Oh. He said I wasn't one degree homosexual. He said I was just confused. That, on account of my being a divorcee and hating the man I married, I just got into a frustrated state of. . ."

"There you are," Laura said, and pulled her breath in deep, "that's all there is to it. Why, you have a couple

of children. You're a normal mother. Isn't it proof enough you're not abnormal?" She left nothing to think between the adjectives.

"Of course," Natalie said, "that's just what I say. Naturally."

* * *

Next day Natalie had not yet arrived. The lobby was cool; a low hum came from the blowers at the ceiling. Rosemary had been talking to one of the mothers. "Whatever in the world is wrong with Natalie?" She turned to Laura who sat on a yellow camp chair. "Do you know?"

Laura smiled, letting the horizontal creases on her forehead deepen like those lines her children drew for oceans. "I just think she's lonely," she said.

"Yeh," Rosemary said, "I suppose. The poor woman's got but nobody to turn to."

When Natalie came in with her two children, everybody greeted them enthusiastically. One of the mothers told Natalie that what she needed along about now was a new husband.

"And a couple kids more," Rosemary added to show that she harbored no ill feelings.

"The more the merrier," said another.

Natalie smiled. "Yes, I suppose so," she said, urging her children toward their classroom.

Laura smiled broadly at the children as they passed through. But they did not smile back. And Natalie flicked the curlicue under her earlobe with a thumb and forefinger as a man might do with a finely waxed mustache.

TOUCHE'

The wind grows cold since you are gone,
The sky gathers in tears
And blends its weeping with the birds' song...
In a serenade of loneliness.
Time passes in a shapeless glass,
Encompassing a nothingness of the dead,
Strange...that I wonder of so short a past...
A moment's pause it was, no more...
Yet that moment strikes profoundly,
Shattering, staggering my heart.

- Billie Tallmij

Scholarships-for Women Only

Money is available - for women only.

May 15 is the deadline for receiving applications for the three 1964-65 scholarships, each in the amount of \$90.00, to be awarded this summer by the Daughters of Bilitis from the Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Any woman over 21 years of age who is attending or planning to attend an accredited college or university as either a graduate or undergraduate full-time student, is eligible to apply. It is also required that the applicant have a B average and be majoring in one of the following fields: anthropology, education, journalism, law, medicine, political science, psychology, social welfare, or sociology.

There is a second type of scholarship for any Lesbian who wishes to further her business career or increase her earning power by additional vocational training such as business school, art school, etc.

As a result of publicity in the student newspapers at the University of California and San Francisco State College, a number of requests for applications have already been received by the San Francisco Chapter, reports Del Martin, chairman of the scholarship committee.

"Awards will be based on consideration of scholastic attainment, financial need, ability and promise," she said.

Applications may be obtained from the following chapters of the Daughters of Bilitis: San Francisco - 1232 Market Street, Suite 108; Chicago - 409 Armitage Avenue; New York - Postal Box 3629, Grand Central Station. Please specify the type of scholarship desired. Applications will, of course, be kept confidential.

Towards a Quaker View of Sex

Now available from the DOB Book Service! (Reviewed in THE LADDER in October 1963.) This extraordinary essay, by a group of Friends in professional positions, calls for a new morality which values loving relationships rather than a traditional code of behavior. Sexual facts and feelings are discussed plainly. The long chapter on homosexuality is unusually informative and understanding. Send one dollar to DOB Book Service, 1232 Market St., Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California.

Lesbiana by Gene Damon

263. THE UNICORN BY IRIS MURDOCH. VIKING, 1963.

AS ONE EXPECTS FROM MISS MURDOCH, THE CAST OF THIS NOVEL IS STRAIGHT OUT OF A PHYSICIAN'S SCRAPBOOK OF UNUSUAL PATIENTS. BEGINNING WITH A GOVERNESS IN A FORBIDDING ATMOSPHERE, THE BOOK RAPIDLY BECOMES A RECOUNTING OF ALL THE SEXUAL SECRETS OF THE CHARACTERS. ADD A MURDER, A SUICIDE, AN ATTEMPTED MURDER, AND A SUSPECTED RAPE TO THE HOMOSEXUAL LIAISONS, AND IT SOUNDS LIKE PULP FICTION. OF COURSE IT ISN'T. MISS MURDOCH IS ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ENGLISH WRITERS TODAY.

264. RETURN TO LESBOS BY VALERIE TAYLOR. MIDWOOD TOWER, 1963.

MISS TAYLOR'S THIRD BOOK, STRANGER ON LESBOS, WAS LIKED DESPITE ITS CRUEL ENDING OF A LOVELY AFFAIR. NOW SHE HAS REDEEMED THIS WITH A SEQUEL, RETURN TO LESBOS, WHICH CARRIES THE HEROINE OF THE EARLIER NOVEL, FRANCES, TO AN INEVITABLE AND MUCH HAPPIER RESOLUTION.

FRANCES, AFTER TRYING TO STAY WITH HER HUSBAND WHOM SHE CANNOT LOVE, AGAIN SEEKS AND FINDS A WOMAN. HER AFFAIR WITH ERIKA IS A LONG BATTLE AGAINST THE EVILS OF ERIKA'S PAST AND HER OWN PROBLEMS IN ENDING HER MARRIAGE. SURELY THIS IS VALERIE TAYLOR'S FINEST BOOK. IT IS ESPECIALLY WELCOME SINCE IT LACKS ALTOGETHER THE TOUCH OF SLICKNESS WHICH MARRED THE AUTHOR'S VERY RECENT TITLE, UNLIKE OTHERS.

265. THE NO-ROAD BY JESSAMY MORRISON. LONDON, W. H. ALLEN, 1963.

GERALD MILTON IS A MAN OF HIGH MORAL INTEGRITY, AT LEAST IN FRONT OF HIS MIRROR. WE HAVE HIS OWN WORD THAT HE IS ON THE SIDE OF SOCIETY, IS CLEAN, CLEAN, AND PURE, PURE. GERALD NARRATES HIS PAST LIFE WITH HIS WIFE CLARISSA AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN. ON A HOLIDAY ABROAD, CLARISSA IS SEDUCED BY A LESBIAN NAMED DIANA. GERALD, OF COURSE, DOES NOT REALIZE THAT DIANA HAS DESIGNS ON HIS WIFE. WHEN HE DOES SEE THE SITUATION, THE BOOK BECOMES HILARIOUS.

WRITTEN BY A WOMAN WHOLLY SYMPATHETIC TO LESBIANISM, THIS NOVEL DEVELOPS INTO POSSIBLY THE FUNNIEST LESBIAN STORY YET WRITTEN. NEITHER RONALD FIRBANK NOR COMPTON MACKENZIE REACHED THE COMIC HEIGHTS THIS BOOK REACHES. CLARISSA'S AFFAIR WITH DIANA IS ENDED BY GERALD IN AN UPROARIOUS SCENE. THEN, IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP CLARISSA AT HOME, GERALD GETS RID OF THEIR HOUSEKEEPER. LATER HE RELENTS AND HIRES A MOUSY TYPE HOUSEKEEPER, JILL. THIS IS HIS WELL-DESERVED DOWNFALL. JILL AND CLARISSA FALL IN LOVE AND RUN AWAY TOGETHER.

NOT CONTENT WITH TAKING GERALD'S WIFE AWAY FROM HIM, MISS MORRISON GOES ON TO LOSE HIS JOB FOR HIM AND GENERALLY SET HIM ON THE SKIDS. THROUGHOUT, GERALD MOUTHS VILIFICATION OF THE LESBIANS IN TONES SO SLYLY FUNNY THAT MY SIDES ACHED FROM LAUGHING. THIS IS A WONDERFUL BOOK, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. IT IS HOPED THAT IT WILL SOON BE PUBLISHED HERE IN THE U. S.

266. A CROWN OF WILD MYRTLE BY H. E. BATES. LONDON, MICHAEL JOSEPH. NEW YORK, FARRAR, STRAUS, 1963.

THIS IS A MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT. H. E. BATES IS AN UNUSUALLY GOOD WRITER AND THIS BOOK IS VERY POOR. A MALE WRITER ON VACATION RESCUES A "POOR BEWILDERED GIRL" FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE MOST FIENDISH LESBIAN YET ENCOUNTERED OUTSIDE PULP MAGAZINE FICTION. THE WOMEN WEAR WEDDING RINGS, AND THE GIRL HAS NO COMPUNCTIONS ABOUT BLABBING ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP. THEY ARE ADOPTING A CHILD, HAVE LONG LIVED TOGETHER, YET PHYSICAL INTIMACY IS DENIED. THE OLDER WOMAN GOES BERSERK, TRIES TO SHOOT THE MAN, THEN KILLS HERSELF. REALLY!

267. V BY THOMAS PYNCHON. LIPPINCOTT, 1963.

THIS 500-PAGE ALLEGORY OF THE DESCENT OF CIVILIZATION FROM PERSONALIZATION TO AUTOMATION MAY DETER MANY READERS. HOWEVER, IT IS WORTH STRUGGLING THROUGH FOR THE WRITING ALONE, WHICH RANGES FROM LYRICAL TO COARSE DYNAMIC PROSE. "V" IS OUR CIVILIZATION IN FEMALE FORM. THE ONLY SENSUAL CHAPTER CONCERNS THE LOVE OF V, AS AN ADULT FEMALE, FOR THE 15-YEAR-OLD NARCISSISTIC DANCER MELANIE L'HEUREMAUDIT. MELANIE IS AN OBSCURE FETISH FOR V AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP IS MYSTERIOUS AND APPARENTLY HAPPY. WHEN IT FALLS, MELANIE DIES IN PUBLIC SPLENDOR. OFFBEAT AND INTRIGUING.

changeling child
barely begun budding into being
breathing tenuously
in tense and tender leaf
the clear cool air
the filtered light
the shallow warmth of early spring
singing to the wind
strong enough to stand
clinging to a stone
this annual assault
of morning madness
changeling child
of pale-petaled
fragile upturned face
mouth like mist and springtimes shadow
eyes speaking to silence
as green as April rain
white violet
spilling sweetness
small and still within
too delicate
to dream so desperately

- nfk

ROMAN SPRING

In magenta and patrician purple,
with nimble porcelain feet
clad in silver sandals
My doe-eyed, brown-eyed love
sparkled to me
across the new-cut greenery.

- Kris Carson

ON SEEING ONE TINY TEAR

After a season's drought
We come to greening.
After great thirst your very eye
Is awash with our love's meaning.

When our two deserts meet and hold,
A storm begins its pell mell weathers
And rains away an arid year.
After a dry time longing,
I am come to green
In the small oasis of your tear.

- R. A. Lorence

Notes from Abroad

Fashion Notes from London, England

The Hot Rod Line

Even my dearest friends, besotted with mindless devotion all these years, have never yet had cause to accuse me of sartorial elegance.

"My goodness, love," they are prone to remark, eyeing me fiercely, "whatever have you got on now? Are you really intending to go out in the public street dressed like - listen! Don't you CARE about looking Dishy, and being in the Fashion, and all that stuff? Don't you WANT people's heads turning in the street to take another long lingering look?"

I remind them, courteously, that people have been doing just that all my life, thank you. Why, back in Paris in 1938, didn't I overhear Parisians remarking to one another as I passed by: "Mais, c'est formidable! Quel type bizarre!" This type bizarre was me, I'd have you know, in my new trousers. Twenty years ahead of the fashion, that was me, in 1938.

I have been trend-setting ever since I can remember. Why, I have been inventing the fashions ever since I was in gym kit at school. I remember it well, sitting here with my glass of liquid sunshine (island-bottled) and harking back to the summer day when I was rising 14 and sick of riding my bike in skirts that blew up around my crew cut.

"Mother, I have to have a pair of trousers, like Mr. Banning who mows the lawn for us. Grey flannel, they have to be. And pockets to put my spanners in, and a place at the back for my library tickets and school dinner money. And bicycle clips round the ankles to keep the wind out when I am doing fifty down that steep hill in Lancaster."

A simple enough request, you'd suppose, today. But in those days. . . absolutely out of this world. Nobody, but nobody, wore slacks. No outfitter in the country stocked slacks for women. "Okay," I said, undaunted. And I got a cast-off pair of the lovely things from Mrs. Banning, a great sympathiser with female emancipation. And thanks to Mrs. Banning I have never looked back—although today, of course, I have slacks tailored for me by the finest trouser makers in the country, up in Yorkshire.

So why should I lose any sleep over this fashion lark? I don't follow fashions. I set them.

All right then, you may be saying, with a curl of the lip. So what else did I invent, years before it hit the big-time fashion parade? Ever since 1945 I have been, off and on, wearing: tall boots, leather jackets, thick-roll-tcp sweaters, Wolsey socks, a skid-lid labeled "Women's International Motorcycle Association" at the back and "Dragon Rally" in front. So what is the fashion craze over here in 1964? Of course!

Well, what's to be the next dramatic fashion to hit the headlines? M-mm. Let's see now. Ah yes. Nobody, but nobody (I am speaking of girls, women, and ladies, naturally) would ever dream of wearing String Vests. They are worn only by athletes, tough he-men with bulging sun-browned muscles, and motorcyclists. Look out, then, for String Vests to hit the Paris salons (as worn by me in the early 1960's) within the next half-decade. No doubt they'll be woven of super-twisted-seamless-leaflight-100 denier-terybrinyln at 15 dollars apiece. But basically they'll be just the little old string vests I buy from the local government surplus stores for a dollar: cosy in winter, cool-cool-cool in summer, needing no ironing or darning or patching. (I mean, since they're nothing but holes held together with cotton yarn, who'd notice an extra hole or two anyway?)

Early in the winter I went to a male outfitters' and bought myself a nice sheepskin hat. I have been wearing it around town ever since: warm, waterproof, and saucy. And what happens? One female colleague after another rushes up wanting to know where I got it, and how much, and have they sold out yet? A trend-setter, you see.

I should worry about sartorial elegance. When Christian Dior runs out of notions, I daresay he'll be cabling me to help him out!

- Esme Langley

Note: Miss Langley is the editor of ARENA THREE, the first British magazine to feature fact and fiction from the "misty, unmapped world" of Lesbianism. This publication, just being launched, is sponsored by the Hampstead Minorities Research Group, in which Miss Langley also serves as Secretary. The Group's aims: research into, and dissemination of, the truth about female homosexuality. ARENA THREE is supplied free to those who donate to the Minorities Research Group to support its work; minimum donation is \$3.75. Contributions should be sent in bank draft or postal money order payable in England.

For further information about the magazine, the Research Group—or Miss Langley's outfitters!—write to: Esme Langley, 47-A Broadhurst Gardens, London N. W. 6, England.

DEVOTION

Review of the novel "Surplus" by Sylvia Stevenson
(New York, D. Appleton, 1924)

Sally Wraith, the heroine, is a former World War I ambulance driver, a career-minded girl with a love for cars. She is resolutely against marriage for herself and does not feel that child-bearing is all a woman can do.

In the opening chapters of "Surplus," Sally meets lovely Averil Kennion and falls in love with her almost at sight. For Averil this meeting is the beginning of a long, close friendship - but for Sally it is the beginning of a lifetime. The two women take up life together in a home of their own, Sally running a taxi service and Averil painting. For two years their intimacy grows, though falling short of consummation. Then Averil, who is nearly 30 and who wants children, decides to marry a close friend. Sally is left in a state near melancholia and comes close to withdrawing from life altogether. A young man acquaintance gradually renews her interest in living and she settles into a comfortable friendship with him. After much urging on his part she agrees to marry him. But a chance glimpse of Averil shows her she still loves Averil, far too much to marry anyone, so she goes off alone.

There are passages of unusual beauty in this novel: when Sally first meets Averil and reflects, "But it was impossible to say to a perfect stranger, without any notice, 'I believe you're the person I've been looking for all these long, dreary years, till I'd given up hope - only I find you're a girl, instead of a man.'"; then again at the close of the book when Sally offers this philosophy for the different person: "She knew that she would never again feel quite the same crushing loneliness. There went with her all those others who have been turned back from the gates of paradise on earth, because their passports are made out in a strange, unknown language... All the dreamers who prize their dream above reality, and follow their flickering will-o'-the-wisp away from the broad, steady arc of the light of reason. And the rebels who would rather go on kicking against the pricks to the bitter end - went the same way as the girl who refused to marry because her deepest love had been given to another girl."

This book is not too hard to locate in second-hand shops. It is a lovely story and one of the finer undiscovered fiction treatments of variant women.

- Gene Damon

READERS RESPOND

"I HAVE JUST READ THE GRAPEVINE BY JESS STEARN. MY FEELINGS ARE MIXED ABOUT WHAT EFFECT I THINK THE BOOK MAY HAVE. MR. STEARN DID NOT DO AN HONEST JOB OF REPORTING. IF HE HAD, HE WOULD NOT HAVE THROWN THE CONTENT OF THE BOOK COMPLETELY OUT OF BALANCE BY GIVING THE LION'S SHARE OF ATTENTION TO COUPLES WHO ARE OBVIOUSLY PSYCHO-NEUROTIC AND MAKING A MESS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP. HOWEVER, A GREAT MANY LESBIANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WILL FIND OUT ABOUT DOB AND THE LADDER VIA THIS BOOK. YOU MAY GET A BOOST IN CIRCULATION!"

- R. D., NEW YORK

* * * * *

"LESBIAN LISTENERS TO PAT BURNS' CONTROVERSIAL 'HOT LINE' ON RADIO STATION CJOR IN VANCOUVER, B. C., WERE DELIGHTED TO HEAR ONE OF THEIR OWN TAKE ON THE GLIB AND KNOWLEDGEABLE MR. BURNS ONE NIGHT.

"THERE HAVE BEEN REMARKS ON HOMOSEXUALITY IN GENERAL FROM TIME TO TIME ON THE 'HOT LINE' - BOTH PRO AND CON - BUT MR. BURNS NOTED THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST LESBIAN TO CALL. AND KUDOS TO HER! WITH A LISTENING AUDIENCE OF MANY THOUSANDS SHE MADE HER POSITION CLEAR AND ANSWERED A BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS FREELY AND WITH DIGNITY. IN FACT, IT SOUNDED LIKE JESS STEARN INTERVIEWING FOR THE GRAPEVINE: THE SAME STRAIGHTFORWARD BASIC QUESTIONS AND THE SAME FRANK ANSWERS. AND THERE'S A CONTRAST HERE: ONLY THOSE INTERESTED WILL READ THE GRAPEVINE, BUT COUNTLESS PEOPLE LISTENED SPELLBOUND TO OUR ARTICULATE SISTER SPEAK OPENLY OF SOMETHING THEY WOULD OTHERWISE AVOID.

"CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YOUNG PROFESSIONAL WOMAN WITH THE COURAGE TO VOICE HER CONVICTIONS. IT WAS A DRAMATIC YET ANONYMOUS WAY TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED, AND OF INESTIMABLE VALUE TO THE HOMOPHILE CAUSE."

- M. W., BRITISH COLUMBIA

"PERHAPS THE LADDER HAS GROWN IN LENGTH, BUT NOT IN STATURE. THE 'MESSAGES' ARE NEVER CONSISTENT. YOUR WORDS ARE FREQUENTLY CONTRADICTORY—OR CONTRADICTORIAL—CERTAINLY NOT AS PRESENTED ON EACH COVER UNDER 'PURPOSES OF D.O.B.' NO WONDER ANN ALDRICH SHOTS YOU DOWN IN ALMOST EVERY BOOK!

"CONCERNING YOUR PLEA FOR MORE WRITTEN MATERIAL—'GOOD' MATERIAL, AS YOU PUT IT. WHAT YOUR LITERARY STAFF CONSIDERS IN SELECTION ESCAPES THIS WRITER—BUT IT'S PRETTY BAD. FOR MYSELF AND SEVERAL OTHER VIEWS, WE'VE READ APPROXIMATELY 10 GOOD POEMS AND POSSIBLY 3 OR 4 SHORT STORIES OF MERIT THIS PAST YEAR! GRANTED, PUBLISHERS CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE—BUT WHEN YOU PEOPLE REQUEST GOOD MATERIAL DO YOU EXPECT SUBMISSIONS FROM ESTABLISHED AUTHORS SUCH AS BANNON, HASTINGS, ALDRICH, ETC.?

"YOUR CONSTANT LAMENT FOR MORE MONEY TO BUY EQUIPMENT IS GETTING TO BE—~~AAA~~, OSTENTATIOUS?? I'M FAMILIAR WITH PRODUCTION METHODS AND COSTS OF STAPLING MACHINES AND SUCH; IT'S HARDLY CONCEIVABLE THAT IN ALL THESE YEARS THE ORGANIZATION HAS NOT PROCURED (THROUGH LACK OF FUNDS) THIS EQUIPMENT.

"ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MAGAZINE BRINGS HOPE AND JOY TO THE YOUNG-UNS IN FAR AWAY PLACES, AND THEY SHALL BE FUTURE SUBSCRIBERS AND CANNOT BE DENIED. LET THE FUTURE OF THE LADDER BE IN THEIR HANDS...AND YOURS, OF COURSE. AFTER THESE MANY YEARS, I SHALL NOT RENEW MY SUBSCRIPTION."

- S. M., CALIFORNIA

* * * * *

"I READ THE FEBRUARY LADDER WITH GREAT DELIGHT. CONGRATULATIONS ON THE SOPHISTICATED COVER!

"IRENE FISKE'S ARTICLE NEATLY SUMMARIZES THE LESBIAN'S PROBLEMS OF POOR PUBLICITY AND WORSE COMMUNICATION WITH NON-INSIDERS. (HOWEVER, AS THE LETTER FROM MICHIGAN POINTS OUT, PART OF THE GUILT IS SHARED BY GREEDY AUTHORS AND SENSATIONALIST PUBLISHERS.) BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY FLAMBOYANT AND IRRESPONSIBLE YOUNG LESBIANS (I WASN'T ALWAYS THE WISEST MYSELF) THE BURDEN IS FAR HEAVIER FOR THOSE WHO DO CARE ABOUT OUR PUBLIC IMAGE.

"IN REGARD TO THE FEBRUARY 'LIVING PROPAGANDA,' I ADMIRE MISS BARROW'S 'DELIBERATE LACK OF SUBTERFUGE.' HOW OFTEN HAVE I BEEN EMBARRASSED BY THE QUESTION ABOUT BOYFRIENDS. I DON'T BEND OVER BACKWARD TO FIB MY WAY OUT, BUT I STILL FEEL OBLIGED TO EXAGGERATE THE IMPORTANCE OF MY MALE FRIENDS - IN ORDER TO KILL THE PRYING QUESTIONS OF NOSY PEOPLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, I TALK FREELY ABOUT MY GIRLFRIEND AND WHAT WE UNDERTAKE TOGETHER - OSTENSIBLY CLASSIFYING HER AS A ROOMMATE, BUT I DON'T THINK MY FELLOW WAITRESSES ARE DECEIVED. I DON'T WANT TO DECEIVE THEM, EITHER. I AM SURE THEY SUSPECT THE NATURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP. PERHAPS IT IS SILLY FOR ME TO RETAIN THIS THIN VEIL OF HYPOCRISY—WHICH COULD FOOL ONLY THE NAIVE. PERHAPS I SHALL DROP IT ONE OF THESE DAYS. OR MAYBE I AM ONLY BEING DISCREET. SOMEDAY I'LL KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

"THE POETRY IS BEAUTIFUL. I AM GLAD YOU HAVE SUCH EXCELLENT POETRY SOURCES, TO BE ABLE TO INCLUDE ONLY THE BEST. . . I MUST NOT FORGET 'OPTICAL ILLUSION,' THAT PIQUANT LITTLE TIDBIT. THANKS AGAIN FOR AN OUTSTANDING ISSUE!"

- M. V., DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

* * * * *

"RECENTLY I HEARD JESS STEARN (AUTHOR OF THE GRAPEVINE) INTERVIEWED ON THE LONG JOHN NEBEL RADIO SHOW IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. LONG JOHN WAS HAVING GREAT DIFFICULTY SAYING THE WORD LESBIAN, AND SOUNDED AS THOUGH HE WAS HAVING TROUBLE FORMULATING QUESTIONS. HE KEPT HANGING ON TO THE IDEA THAT IT'S SOMETHING PEOPLE SHOULD TALK ABOUT, EVEN THOUGH IT'S SO DISTASTEFUL, BECAUSE PARENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO WARN THEIR DAUGHTERS AGAINST IT.

"STEARNS SAID THERE'S A LOT OF IT AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION. LONG JOHN ASKED IF IT'S EXPERIMENTAL, OR DO THEY GET SEDUCED INTO THAT KIND OF LIFE. STEARNS SAID THEY OFTEN DO - YET GAVE AS AN EXAMPLE A GIRL WHO BEGAN BY CARRYING ON WITH SCHOOL CHUMS.

"STEARNS SAID THE SUBJECT IS SO HIDDEN THAT TWO WEEKS AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE GRAPEVINE, WITH SALES BIGGER THAN FOR ANY OF HIS OTHER BOOKS, HE HASN'T GOTTEN A SINGLE PIECE OF MAIL FROM THE PUBLIC! HE ADDED THAT HIS PREVIOUS BOOK ON THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL, THE SIXTH MAN, DREW HUNDREDS OF LETTERS A WEEK."

- S. N., NEW JERSEY

"I STUDIED THE LADDER FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF MY SUBSCRIPTION, TRYING TO DIVINE ITS EDITORIAL POLICY, AND THEN GAVE UP. IT HAD A DIFFUSED - NOT TO SAY CONFUSED - GIRLISH AIR OF URGENCY WITHOUT CONTENT. IT SEEMED TO BE SAYING, LOOK, WE'RE DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT ALL. BUT WHAT THEY WERE DOING, AND ABOUT WHAT, WAS UNFATHOMABLE.

"A SPECIALIZED LITTLE MAGAZINE MUST HAVE TWO THINGS TO MAKE IT WORTH PUBLISHING. IT SHOULD SERVE AS A MAGNET FOR ALL THE MATERIAL ON ITS SPECIAL SUBJECT, MATERIAL LYING ALL OVER THE PLACE AND NEVER BROUGHT TOGETHER SIGNIFICANTLY BEFORE; AND IT SHOULD HAVE A VIGOROUS POINT OF VIEW THAT PUTS THE MATERIAL IN FOCUS. THAT MAKES THE MAGAZINE LIVELY READING FOR PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO SUPPORT ITS POSITION. I DON'T MEAN THIS AS DESIRABLE FROM A CHEAP JOURNALISTIC POINT OF VIEW. WHEN YOU ARE CLEAR-CUT AND FORCEFUL, YOU STIMULATE PEOPLE TO THINK AROUND YOUR SUBJECT, ACTIVATING DORMANT AREAS OF THEIR CONSCIOUSNESS. YOU MAKE VISIBLE, ON YOUR TERMS, A SUBJECT THEY HID FROM VIEW UNTIL YOU SPURRED THEIR INTEREST. IT'S BETTER TO HAVE A WRONG-HEADED, IRRITATING, ECCENTRIC BIAS THAN TO MUSH FORMLESSLY IN ALL DIRECTIONS LIKE AN UNEVOLVED AMOEBA WITHOUT A BACKBONE.

"I BELIEVE AN INTELLIGENT LESBIAN MAGAZINE COULD DRAW A GOOD CIRCULATION AND GET ATTENTION FROM BOTH GAY AND STRAIGHT PEOPLE. WE LIVE IN A TIME WHEN MANY UNFINISHED REVOLUTIONS ARE COMING TO A HEAD AND THE OFFICIAL PRESS IS BUSY CREATING A SLICK, FALSE PICTURE OF THE WORLD, OUT OF FEAR OF CHANGE. SMALL PUBLICATIONS THAT BRING INTO THE OPEN THE FEELINGS THAT ARE RULED OUT OF THE OFFICIAL PICTURE HAVE A REAL FUNCTION, AND ARE DISCOVERED WITH GRATITUDE BY PEOPLE WHO FEEL THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE WAY THEY ARE AND THE WAY THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE.

"IN MY CHECKERED CAREER I HAVE EDITED SOME SMALL PUBLICATIONS, AND I AM THE WORLD'S MOST ECLECTIC READER OF OFFBEAT MAGAZINES.

"CHOOSE A POINT OF VIEW AND PROJECT IT FORCEFULLY! YOU CAN ONLY LEARN BY TRIAL AND ERROR, BUT A PUBLICATION WITH A LIVING PURPOSE WILL TAKE ON AN ORGANIC LIFE OF ITS OWN AND FIND ITS OWN DIRECTION. IT WILL BE FASCINATING TO WATCH THE LADDER GROW."

- R. R., NEW YORK

NOW AVAILABLE Complete Lesbiana Checklist

M.Z. BRADLEY and GENE DAMON

1960 Edition \$1.50 Each
20¢ HANDLING

1961 Supplement \$1.00 Each
10¢ HANDLING

1962 Supplement \$1.00 Each
10¢ HANDLING
TO BE AVAILABLE ABOUT JUNE 10

All Three FOR THE LOW PRICE OF JUST **\$3**
30¢ HANDLING

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE KEVAL"
(which we have for \$1.95 plus 20¢ Handling)

camel's **farewell** \$2.95
Dorian Vignette Series--2 BY Harry Otis
Plus 20¢ Handling

Harry Otis offers some more tales about "gay" people from other parts of the world. He is warmly humorous while poking fun at the foibles, hypocrisies and frustrations which are so much in evidence in our Western world.

In California add 4% sales tax

DOB Book Service

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO
DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

Suite 108
1232 Market St.
San Francisco 2,
California