

THE LADDER

lesbian review october 1967



(for sale to adults only) .50



purpose of the

Daughters of **BILITIS**

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

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

the Ladder

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The Lesbian in America

by Donald Webster Cory
Citadel Press, 1964. 288 pages. \$5.95.

Cory's book on the lesbian is now out, dedicated "to the courageous women of the Daughters of Bilitis." A reviewer writing in a publication of the same Daughters of Bilitis must make a special effort to be objective in her consideration of such a book, especially in view of the great debt the homophile movement already owes to Donald Webster Cory. Such objectivity will be the aim here.

Cory writes a special brand of book on homosexuality. Like his path-breaking *HOMOSEXUAL IN AMERICA*, this one is neither pure journalism nor a scholarly work; rather it combines personal impressions, interviews, surveys of what others have had to say on the subject, with his own thoughts and conclusions. But this book is lighter in weight (in both senses) than his original book on male homosexuals; it has much more eye-catching dialogue, and it inevitably lacks the drive and sense of urgency of the first book on men. What saves it from mere journalism, what elevates it above the Jess Stearn level (it will undoubtedly be compared with *THE GRAPEVINE*) is that (1) Cory has had a far longer and of course deeper acquaintance with his subject than Stearn, (2) Cory has a theoretical background, and (3) Cory has applied gray matter to the subject. Furthermore, when he offers opinions he is direct - he does not resort to innuendo. His book, unlike Stearn's, has a bibliography - a small but significant detail. Like the Stearn book, Cory's (as suggested by his dedication) is sympathetic to the D.O.B. organization and its leaders; unlike Stearn, Cory has sympathy also for the mass of individuals in or out of the organization.

These things having been said, it must be noted that the book will not offer a great deal that is new to those who either know the gay world or have been following the activities of homophile organizations. The book's formula appears a little stale (no doubt due in part to Cory's previous writings), and there is much that is trite and dull. Here are some chapter titles: "A Glance Through the Ages," "Why Am I Gay?" "Butch and Femme," "The Bisexual Woman," "The Mirror of Literature," "At the Bar."

On the other hand, there is a good, though short, chapter on "Undesirable Discharges and Security Risks" which is neither trite nor dull. There is also a good expose of the pulp "paperback original" - a form of "literature" on the lesbian which helps only to perpetuate stereotypes. (I disagree only with Cory's impression that it is not bought by women.) As

Cory says, "The existence of this literature, portraying a portion of American life in so distorted a fashion, seems to have diminished the demand for the honest and intelligent portrayal of this life by serious men and women of letters and by students of the social scene. Hence, by filling a gap, albeit very badly, this semi-pornography deludes people into not seeing the gap." The damage is still greater, he continues, when the same low level of content and characterization is featured in books taken more seriously by readers and critics, such as Dorothy Baker's *TRIO*.

But all this is relatively incidental. What most requires discussion about Cory's book is what seems to this reviewer to be a certain lack of consistency, or is it a lack of clarity as to his major objective?

I do not refer here primarily to his viewpoint on "cure," to which he devotes a chapter in which he asks why so many homosexuals resent the idea that change may be possible. On the contrary, I agree thoroughly with Cory that it is, or should be, possible (in Cory's words) to "admit the possibility of change, on the one hand, and still to conduct a struggle for the human and personal and civil rights and dignity of those who do not undergo this change." There is no real reason why lesbians cannot recognize the possibility of change for some, and still preserve their own liberty to decide whether or not they personally wish to attempt the process. There may of course be a sense of social pressure, if change is shown to be at all possible. But a lesbian who, after conscientious consideration, has decided against trying to change, needs to fortify herself against this sense. It takes a great deal more than the mere possibility of change to justify pressure on anyone to undergo psychiatric treatment with this goal. What it takes is a clearcut demonstration that the individual in question (not just a mythical average lesbian) is a menace or a burden to society. If this cannot be shown, then even though some people may consider her a burden to herself, the decision is, must be, up to her. I believe Cory would agree.

What does bother me is Cory's use of words such as "cure," "disturbance," and "sickness" without clear and consistent meanings. I do not know, furthermore, whether he intends to use the last two terms as equivalent in meaning or not; they are sometimes used interchangeably, sometimes not. The clearest, and to me most acceptable statement of what Cory means by "sick" appears on pages 233-4, where he writes:

"For those who are in a state of distress, who are unable to function, who are deeply despondent over their life, whose lesbianism is linked with and is merely one symptom of a wider neurotic pattern, or whose lesbianism has resulted in general debilitation and despondency, one must not hesitate to describe them as sick. These people require therapy, and whether the therapy should try to change their sexual orientation, or make them accept this orientation, is something that must be worked out between patient and therapist, and cannot be imposed from without."

Precise enough. But immediately before, appears this quite inconsistent statement: "Sickness is a culturally defined term, and if the culture accepts a state of being as a way of life, rather than as a disease, then for that society, and for those people who can accept that definition, it is indeed a way of life." Presumably, then, if a culture defines a condition as disease, it should be considered indeed as disease, even though the individual in that condition may not be in a state of serious distress, is able to function, is not deeply despondent, etc., etc.? The inconsistency is there, providing one admits that social deviants can sometimes function satisfactorily despite their deviance. I assume Cory would not wish to deny this possibility.

Cory refers on page 147 to lesbians as "disturbed and unusual women," the context being such that he seems to mean all lesbians. On page 256 (and elsewhere) he speaks of the lesbian as a "woman in conflict." A few sentences later, though, he points out that "it is indeed a condition of human existence that each person is, to some degree, in conflict with some aspect of society; the tragedy of so many lesbians is not so much that the conflict exists, but that society imposes conditions that make it difficult to resolve with understanding." Again, "if she (the lesbian) is disturbed in a manner that has led her to homosexuality, the society that condemns her so vigorously and treats her so shabbily is not the less disturbed. There is probably a two-way sickness..."

Does Cory mean that all lesbians (and society too) are disturbed, or sick, or only those who don't "function" satisfactorily? Now it seems one way, now another. I wish fervently that Cory had made a try at defining and/or distinguishing the terms "sickness" and "disturbance," and had then stuck consistently to his definitions. It is no easy job, and he is certainly not the only offender in this regard. In this reviewer's opinion there is no single thing that would contribute more to a resolution of the often aimless and bitter controversy over the appropriate attitude society should take toward the homosexual than a general agreement as to precisely how these troublesome words should be defined and used.

Cory is apparently trying to steer a middle course between those who see nothing but "sickness" in homosexuals and those who deny any element of disturbance in any homosexuals. On any reasonable definition of either term, these two extreme positions are untenable. But I do not think Cory is successful, and I think the failure is largely a semantic failure. It is important, for example, to clear up the matter of whether "disturbance" in the sexual area of behavior necessarily also involves disturbance in other areas. Does it, for instance, necessarily interfere with satisfactory performance as a citizen, as an employee, as a friend? Anyone with even a little knowledge of homosexuals beyond the stereotyped picture knows that the answer to the last question is "no, not necessarily - it depends on the person." Cory knows this too - and he should have made this much clearer. Otherwise, he is inconsistent and unconvincing in labeling

lesbians as basically disturbed (or sick?), as he does part of the time, and at the same time advocating an end to discrimination against them in government service, in the armed forces, and in society generally..

Finally, I come to what was to me the strangest thing about this book - something Cory himself did not write. I refer to the introduction, written by Albert Ellis, Ph.D. Ellis has been writing introductions for Cory books for some time; and while no writer should be responsible for everything his introducer has to say, and no introducer need agree with his "introducee" - in fact the opposite has advantages - still, there are limits! In this introduction, Ellis states, "I probably believe more strongly than does Cory that lesbians are psychophysiologically predisposed to be mentally aberrant." And elsewhere: "An objective study of full-fledged lesbians (as well as of fixed male homosexuals) would show that many or most of them are not only merely neurotic, but are actually borderline or outright psychotics. Almost all homophiles yell murder and call me the vilest of names when I make this statement; but this does not prove my statement to be untrue." Dr. Sam Nelken, Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Univ. of California School of Medicine in San Francisco, practicing psychiatrist, and participant in a recent TV panel discussion of homosexuality in the San Francisco area, says of the paragraph containing the latter Ellis statement, and I quote with Dr. Nelken's permission:

The mere fact that a statement cannot be disproved does not make it worthy of belief. Ellis is evidently aware that the term "psychotic" is being taken as a condemnation rather than a diagnosis without moral significance, but does not (in this quotation, at least) clear up the mistake. If such a prevalence of psychosis among lesbians could be established (and so far as I know it has not been), the evidence for its being to some degree inheritable or organic would remain very shaky, to say the least. (Reviewer's underlining)

Does Ellis's "objective study" refer to an actual study, or to a hypothetical one? Is "many" the same as "most"? Could he possibly have been referring to his own study, "The Effectiveness of Psychotherapy with Individuals Who Have Severe Homosexual Problems," based on exactly 12 female cases? Let us hope not. Cory deserves better than this!

- Reviewed by F. Conrad

coming soon...

- A report on the Mattachine Society's 11th Annual Conference in San Francisco. Topic: "Invasion of Privacy"
- Good news from our Indonesian correspondent! A sequel to "Isolation in Indonesia" in the June issue of THE LADDER.
- Note: The article by Paula Christian, scheduled for this October issue, has been delayed.

EYES BEFORE

Eyes
before
the
thought...
the mirror
that can, that may
reflect.

- Vera Traff

IRONY

These chains I chose
Hang limp and silent now.
I wonder will they rust
As the sweat dries?
Ha! Corrosion!
I never thought of that!
Maybe they will rot away -
Release by rottenness!
'Figures, actually.

You thrust and wrest,
You scream and cry,
You wrench the sinewy will of youth
Against the fused links of steel:
A tot's tantrum exhausts itself
In its own squirming struggle.

Martyrdom compensates defeat,
Surrender brings relief,
You adjust to phthisis,
And then -
THE ADAMANT SHACKLES DECAY FROM DISUSE!
'Figures, actually.

- Carol Orr

There is a harvest yet to come
but when it be, I cannot say.

My heart feels the seeds
push up with impatience.

I sit in quiet anticipation
awaiting the bloom of the fruit.

Pray God, it may not be bitter.

- Joan C. James

SPECIAL REPORT

"OFF THE CUFF"

Homosexuality was the topic discussed on the unrehearsed TV panel show "Off the Cuff" moderated by Norman Ross and broadcast by Chicago's station WBKB-TV on April 4, 1964. The five panelists for that evening's show offered substantially these comments during the lively two-hour exchange:

FATHER JAMES G. JONES, Director of Development of Episcopal Charities in Chicago: I'm terribly proud of my Archbishop (the Archbishop of Canterbury) for his paper on prostitution and homosexuality published in 1954, especially for its drawing the distinction between the state of being and the state of doing. We should not condemn the state of being homosexual, in which there is no sin, but only the state of doing. I agree with my Archbishop that practicing sexual behavior between consenting adults should be made a moral not a legal problem. Sex should be purposeful within the framework of marriage. Many problems come from not being in cooperation with our nature, and these problems should be worked through. In homosexual culture I find a real block toward God. There are levels of love. If homosexuality is good, why doesn't it more often expand into a higher love relationship with God? If your (homophile) position is true, then maybe you'd better start acting on some higher level with God; if it isn't true, then you'd better give up your (homophile) position and move on to another. Regarding the homophile demand for rights, we've got enough troubles now here in Chicago without equating the Negro problem with the homosexual problem!

DR. FRANKLIN E. KAMENY, physicist and astronomer in private industry, founder and President of the Mattachine Society of Washington, D. C.: I see nothing wrong with homosexuality, nothing to be ashamed of. It is not a disease, a pathology, a sickness, a malfunction, or a disorder of any sort. Underlying all these theories is the subtle suggestion that it is somehow undesirable. Psychiatrists are a biased group. A person should be able to live AS a homosexual, AS a Catholic, AS a Jew - in short, to be a member of his minority - without pressure to change to the position of the majority. Homosexual acts on the part of consenting adults are moral in a positive sense, and are good and are right for the individual and for society. Too much is made of the origins of homosexuality. It's here, and we have to build a society involving it. Homosexuals are entitled to their rights - promptly! Regarding the question of promiscuity, I see nothing necessarily wrong with it. If two people seek to enjoy themselves with each other and if there are no untoward consequences, why shouldn't they do it? This is the attitude most homosexuals take, and reasonably so. The main problem of the homosexual is heterosexual intolerance of him. The prime pressure point on most homosexuals is an economic one. The exclusion of known homosexuals from virtually all sorts of employment is complete and absolute to a degree undreamed of by

the Negro in his worst nightmares. The only thing that prevents the nation from having close to 15,000,000 unemployed homosexuals is the fact that they are not known to be such. Homosexuals are excluded from civil service on the ground that homosexuality is immoral. The idea that homosexuals are security risks is not true in general, and the government is largely responsible for the very situation it is trying to correct. The Washington Mattachine Society wants to secure for the homosexual the right as a human being to develop and achieve his full potential and dignity, and the right as a citizen to make his maximum contribution to his society.

DR. JORDAN SCHER, Director of the Chicago Psychiatric Foundation and Ontoanalytic Institute, Director of Psychiatric Services for the Chicago Board of Health, and Editor of "The Journal of Existential Psychiatry": Homosexuality is not in-born, and there is little tendency for a genetic explanation. We are getting away from the disease concept, but there is a greater chance that the homosexual will show instability because of the added pressures on him. We must be interested in the origins of homosexuality. Ill-adjusted parents - if we listen to this kind of comment - create everything! My view is that the critical experiences which determine homosexuality are not those with a negative, destructive, or ill-adjusted parent. Rather, the critical experiences are early experiences in heterosexual competition where the developing individual is not able to stand up. Henceforth, that person will have a terror of having his effectiveness, his identity tested in a heterosexual encounter. He doesn't have the system. He feels empty and threatened and lost with persons of the opposite sex, and he just can't take it. Conversely, a person of the same sex supports his sense of identity. The lesbian gets a reinforcement to her femininity from another woman. Most homosexuals are stopped at an adolescent level. They have all kinds of bizarre, distorted notions of what heterosexuality is. It's possible for homosexuals to move in the opposite direction if they can get a few reassuring experiences of a heterosexual order. There is greater fulfillment in heterosexual relations. The heterosexual situation is one that is not just accidentally there. The question is: can you fit the frame of reference of the real world? The real world is heterosexual. Lesbianism is probably increasing because of male ineffectuality. Most males have a very limited view of how to conduct sex. The female would be more corrigible if men would learn to perform better. I certainly have no bias against homosexuals. I think there is a great danger that we are multiplying the possibility of a deviant society, and we have enough deviant societies. There should be a firm stand. There should not be discrimination against homosexuals, but there should not be an official sanction of this as a way of life. It's legal enough - really!

DEL SHEARER, President of the Chicago Chapter of Daughters of Bilitis: Yes, it is possible to be a happy homosexual! Environment determines the sexual inclination of the individual and any child may be subject to becoming homosexual. Scientific research is framed by a heterosexual framework. Yet

more can be determined by looking into a person to see who he is and what he is, than by comparing him with others. The notion that many homosexuals act and dress differently is a fallacy. Sometimes a homosexual has a difficult time relating to people who are heterosexual simply because he is confronted with their heterosexuality. It stops him! So much public life has this heterosexual overtone, so much heterosexuality surrounds homosexuals. If they are going to move in society and be a part of it, they have to be able to withstand the pressures of this heterosexual atmosphere. Legislation does not stop homosexuality but only serves to drive it underground. The view that homophile groups want to see homosexuals predominate in society is completely fallacious. Organizations like Daughters of Bilitis want to see the homosexual move out of his cubbyhole and join the rest of society as a responsible person. Also, they want to get society to accept the homosexual as a person. The problem is two-sided.

RANDOLFE WICKER, free lance writer, member of the Mattachine Society Inc. of New York: Hardly 5% of the total homosexual population can be recognized as such. Change or cure should be up to the individual. Much of the research on Homosexuality is contradictory. There is too much bogus authority, too many pat cures, too many charlatans in this area. Doctors who are incompetent promise quick, easy cures to disturbed parents or to a very mixed up person, and it really boils down to one of the most vicious forms of quackery. Much more needs to be learned through legitimate research. Nevertheless, the same as the Negro or any other minority group member, I want my rights! I want to be judged as an individual. Discrimination in hiring and promoting should be abolished. Homosexuality is not based on a fear of the sex organs of the opposite sex, is not a question of physiology. Homosexuality is an emotional way of relating, and an intellectual orientation to members of your own sex. Promiscuity among homosexuals stems from the fact there are virtually no social pressures and buttresses keeping a couple together. Many homosexuals live a ghettoized and fearful existence.. They are rejected by the churches, except the most liberal ones, and they live in fear of losing their jobs. Homosexuals are torn up psychologically because of the unenlightened, illiberal social attitudes that they find in their homes, their jobs, everywhere. And that is what the homophile movement is trying to change. The whole area of sex is filled with terrors and counter-terrors. We should all relax and relate as people, and not worry about our masculinity and our femininity.

One revealing back-and-forth of the discussion went thus:

DR. SCHER: In the homosexual there is real terror of heterosexuality...of the confrontation in the foreign realm of heterosexuality. It is a terrifying and terrified situation.

MISS SHEARER: One comment on terror. Isn't it also possible that the satisfaction is so great in homosexuality that the homosexual does not care about heterosexuality? It's not necessarily terror.

DR. SCHER: As I tried to point out before, a lesbian gets a reinforcement to her femininity from a female contact... The male homosexual has also a reinforcement of self from a homosexual contact.

DR. KAMENY: Well fine! Why shouldn't he?

DR. SCHER: Because there is something rather bizarre in this kind of establishment of self... This is fine when you are age nine to fifteen... But when you pass into more adult life you must find some new kind of fulfillment for the sexual urge and separate it from the friendship urge.

- W. Mitchell

E.C.H.O. news!

Minority problems have frequently provided the spark for re-defining and expanding our concepts of civil liberty. Attorney David Carliner, Chairman of the Civil Liberties Union in the National Capitol area, will consider some of the legal questions raised by members of what has been called "America's second largest minority" - the homosexual. In a debate, "Legislation or Education?", Dr. Franklin Kameny will challenge, and Dr. Kurt Konietzko will defend, the rationale of a predominantly education/information approach to problems related to the homosexual in the community. A panel of representatives of several faiths will discuss homosexuality in relation to religion and morality. Many other facets of the theme HOMOSEXUALITY - CIVIL LIBERTIES AND SOCIAL RIGHTS will be featured at the Second Annual Conference of the affiliation of East Coast Homophile Organizations, to be held on October 10 and 11, 1964 in Washington, D. C. Co-sponsors of the conference are the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., the Mattachine Society of Washington, D. C., the Janus Society, and the Mattachine Society Inc. of New York.

Admission to the entire two-day public conference is \$17.50. Tickets to individual sessions are also available. For more information contact ECHO, Box 6038, Mid City Station, Washington, D. C., or phone 202-EMerson 2-2211 after 6 p.m.

D.O.B. MEETING IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

Marjorie McCann, National Corresponding Secretary of the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.; Barbara Gittings, Editor of THE LADDER; Shirley Willer, President of the New York Chapter of D.O.B.; and Meredith Grey, past Public Relations Director of D.O.B., will be present at a meeting of women interested in the organization, to be held following the ECHO Brunch on Sunday, October 11, in Washington, D.C. Women over 21 who want to find out more about D.O.B. are urged to attend.

Lesbiana by Gene Damon

285. TRAP FOR CINDERELLA - by Sebastien Japrisot. Simon and Schuster, 1964.

Living in a resort house at Cap Cadet are two girls and the governess of one. There is a fire, one of the girls dies - but which one? Did Mickey die? Or did Do die? Which was Jeanne's lover, or were both? This remarkable mystery won a top literary prize in France and should live on its literary merit as a classic suspense novel. Highly recommended.

286 MORE DEATHS THAN ONE - by Stuart Engstrand. Messner, 1955; Signet, 1957.

A study of the strange attachment of a young woman to her mother. The woman is unaware of her dependency until a crisis is triggered by an act of violence. Her upset causes her to phantasize that she is her own father, wooing her mother. Weird but compelling. The author, noted for unusual and disquieting novels, committed suicide not long after this one.

287. THE HOUSEGUEST - by Kimberly Kemp. Midwood Tower, 1964.

This book would have to be considered tripe by most criteria. However, it covers an experience seldom touched on in lesbian fiction but not uncommon in real life: the intense, hopeless love of an older woman for a much younger one. Martha, widowed early, has raised Anne, who at the time of the story is 18 - 19. Anne brings Hilary, her orphaned roommate, home for the holidays and Martha falls in love with Hilary. The book is oversexed, but the poignancy of the situation is telling.

288. RINGS OF GLASS - by Luise Rinser. Henry Regnery, 1958.

A slow-moving novel of a girl's development from age 5 to 19. The narcissistic undertones and the strong Catholicism may put off some readers, but the outlining of the girl's growth into lesbianism is excellent. A serious study.

289. BREEZE ANSTEY - by H. E. Bates. Short story in THE BEST OF H. E. Bates. Little, Brown, 1963.

Similar to D. H. Lawrence's story THE FOX in that it concerns two women who run a farm together. Breeze Anstey gradually discovers her love for the other woman. The appearance of a boyfriend from the girl's past life upsets Breeze without her realizing why. His cruelty, and her final realization of the nature of her love, end the story. Unlike Lawrence, Bates is sympathetic and leaves the reader believing that Breeze will be happy someday. (Libraries will have this collection.)

290. **MALIGNANT STARS** - by Jerome Barry. Doubleday, 1960.

Signe Ericson is found dead, and the note beside her body seems to be a love letter written to her by her roommate Lyn Trainor. Things are not always what they seem to be, as this delightful mystery proves.

291. **ASYLUM PIECE No. 8** - by Anna Kavan. Short story in **ASYLUM PIECE**. Doubleday, 1946.

Esoteric short story. Tall, well-bred Englishwoman, full of depressions and fears, is very attached to a young, child-like married woman. Both are inmates in an asylum. When the nervous and very proper husband comes to visit, he upsets his wife so much that he feels she is uncured and he leaves her there. The older woman triumphantly folds the younger into her arms. This is not a pretty story, but it's a good one.

292. **THE LOVELY DAY** - by Dorothy Evelyn Smith. Dutton, 1957.

This popular novel contains an excellent, subtle portrait of a lesbian who lives in a small English village. The interesting aspect is the complete acceptance and general lack of notoriety the woman enjoys. The story tells of a day's picnic outing attended by many of the village people. On the surface it is light and entertaining, as it should be for the intended audience, but beneath the surface there is an extra story for the sophisticated reader to enjoy.

293. **DOCTOR'S WEEKEND** - Hubert Bagster. Simon and Schuster, 1960.

Memoirs of an English country doctor. One tale concerns the strange happenings at a famous girls' school. The headmistress has migraine headaches over the mysterious playmate who gambols secretly with the school's most beautiful girl. Who could this playmate be? Might even be Miss Bell the art mistress. Truly a delightful story.

JONATHAN TO GIDE

THE HOMOSEXUAL IN HISTORY

by Noel I. Garde. Vantage Press, 1964.

Homosexuals have always existed. Every culture has some mention of them, and at least one magnificent culture was based on bisexuality. If one includes bisexuals in the count, then it is safe to say that we are an enormous minority.

Since shame has often been associated with homosexuality, much effort has been made by many well-meaning and misguided

writers and historians to obliterate all traces of homosexual behavior in the lives of famous people. Despite this deliberate censorship, history is filled with homosexuals and bisexuals who helped to shape our world.

The black-out on homosexuality in biographical records led to a situation every librarian dreads - the absence of reference tools in a given subject area. In recent years, several bibliographic tools in the field of homosexual literature have been produced, and sporadic attempts have been made to provide biographical reference works devoted to homosexuality. But these biographical surveys are few, are often very incomplete, and in some cases are not available in English.

Now, in Noel Garde's compilation entitled **JONATHAN TO GIDE - THE HOMOSEXUAL IN HISTORY**, we have that much needed book, a quick reference survey of the lives of 300 famous men. Mr. Garde does not claim homosexual orientation for them. They are all men who have been cited in other works as homosexual or bisexual in orientation. Perhaps 5% of his sources are questionable; however, the pure biographical sources (especially encyclopedias) are irreproachable.

In his own introduction, Mr. Garde says that the best working title of the book would be: "Short Biographies of 300 Men, of Sufficient Importance in Politics and Culture in the Last 3000 Years to Merit Articles in the Best of Encyclopedias, Who Have Been Referred to in Responsible Printed Works as Being Homosexual, or of Homoerotic Temperament, or of Having Had Homosexual Relations on Occasion." Many hundreds of homosexuals have been deliberately omitted as not sufficiently important historically; among these are dozens of authors, statesmen, military men, minor aristocrats, etc. Mr. Garde explains that the living and recently deceased have been left out for obvious reasons. Quite incidentally, there are many references to historically important lesbian figures who were connected with the various male homosexual subjects.

The book includes a chronological index, an alphabetical index, a bibliography of all major works that include citations of the 300 subjects as homosexuals or bisexuals, an index by nationality, and an index by professions or occupations. The bibliography is not comprehensive, since a person such as Oscar Wilde has been cited in so many works as a homosexual that it would be unrealistic to try to list them all. Then necessary sources are included.

Mr. Garde's admirable labor and dedication have provided us with a ground-breaking reference work which is also fascinating to read. The book is of immense value to students of homosexuality, especially those interested in the historical and biographical aspects. For the casual reader it presents a wealth of data for a new outlook on our past. Any homosexual who is ashamed of being homosexual should have to read this book.

- Reviewed by Vern Niven

A GENTLE KISS—by Ingrid Race

The house resembled other houses on the street, though something did make it less obtrusive. It might have been the hedge around the front yard, or the pointed evergreens that guarded the steps to the porch. Ren had noticed the absence of flowers in the beds where only sturdy green shrubs grew, hiding small tufts of weeds.

She rang the bell. An old lady with dry, frizzled white hair poked her face through the opening in the curtains to look out. She opened the door and Ren asked her about Michele.

"Yes, she lived here, but in the basement. I don't think she's come in yet."

"Oh. Do you know what time she'll be home?"

"Is she expecting you?" the old lady inquired, inspecting Ren's suitcase.

"No, not exactly. I have just come in from out of town."

"Well now, she might be home any time now. She usually gets home by four."

Ren turned to go. "Thank you. I'll come back."

"Miss? Why don't you wait just a minute? I'll let you in. She's left a key here somewhere." The wrinkled old face smiled cautiously. "I suppose it will be all right if I let you in." She wobbled off and came back with her hand stuck deep into her dress pocket. "Come on with me."

As they walked around the side of the house, the old lady chatted steadily as old ladies often do when they are forced to impress important matters upon the unsuspecting. "Have you come very far?"

"From Michigan."

"Oh, you're from Michigan. Are you from her school?"

"Yes."

"Well now, isn't that wonderful? She's told me all about that school. I think she's always homesick for it. You didn't go to school together, did you?"

"No."

"I didn't think so. You're a little older than she is." The old lady unlocked the door, went inside and turned on a lamp.

"I'm a teacher there. I was a... I was one of her teachers."

"Then you must be Dr. Rennon."

"Yes, I am."

"Oh, Michele's told me all about you. Why I feel almost as if I've known you."

Ren was surprised - and pleased - by the revelation. She tried not to smile.

"My husband was on the faculty at the school here. That's one of the reasons I rent this apartment to professors. Michele's one of the nicest ones I've had. She's such a quiet person. You just make yourself at home. I have to get back upstairs. She should be home in a few minutes. Yes, she's very nice, never complains about anything. Once in a while she comes upstairs just to visit. Last winter she even shoveled the walks for me." She chuckled. "Most professors, especially the young men, seem to think they're above shoveling snow. She's always been very thoughtful. Well, you sit down and be comfortable." The old lady scrutinized the room and, as if she were satisfied, hurried to the door.

"That girl must read all the time. I never saw so many books except in a library."

Ren, without taking off her coat, sat down in a large green upholstered chair.

"She should be home shortly. Do you teach science, too?"

"Oh, no. I'm in the theology department."

"Theology. Now that's a fine field for a woman. My husband used to joke about the divinity students. He taught history. He always said there had to be twice as much devilment in a divinity student, since they all knew how upright they'd have to be when they got out of school. I don't suppose they're much different than the rest though, only they think about God more."

"No, I don't suppose so," Ren agreed to be polite.

"Well, I'd best get upstairs."

"Thank you for your trouble."

"Oh, it's no trouble at all. I'm glad Michele's having some company for a change. My goodness, I hope my potatoes aren't burning. It's been very nice meeting you, Dr. Rennon."

"Thank you, and thank you for letting me in."

"You're very welcome." She left then, closing the door behind her.

Ren glanced around the room, noticing the way it was decorated. Her eyes rested on the books nearest where she sat. She read the authors' names where they were visible in the dim light. Thomas Paine, Aristotle, John Stuart Mill, Einstein, Rabelais, Emily Dickinson, St. Thomas Aquinas. She lit a cigarette and got up to find an ashtray. After she had found one, she took off her coat, folding it in half, and laid it on top of her worn imitation-leather suitcase. The light filtered by the lamp shade made little criss-crosses of shadow over the carpet.

Sitting down, she decided not to sit too erectly, and slid down into the comfort of the chair. She didn't want to look stuffy. Most people considered her to be stuffy. It had never mattered much, for she had decided what a woman professor was supposed to be like, and look like, and act like. Even as a young woman starting college, she had believed that people would not be so apt to offend her if her propriety did not allow it. Very few knew why she was so conscious of her bearing. Michele was an exception.

She heard the key turning in the lock. Though she had been waiting for it, the sound startled her and Michele was inside before she had time to think of standing up.

"Ren?" The voice had not had sound enough to falter.

"Yes." Immediately she stood up in a manner that suggested a fear of intruding yet at once asked that she not be thought of as an intruder. The things she had told herself she would say, suddenly were not adequate or appropriate.

"It has been a long time," Michele said uncertainly.

"You don't mind that I've come, do you?"

The younger woman hesitated before she answered, studying Ren's face intently without quite understanding why. "No. I'm just surprised, that's all."

Ren felt the doubt before she saw it in Michele's eyes. "Is it too long?" She knew that she would have to speak then before any further silence grew between them. Nothing had ever been so difficult to say; never had she had such a desire to say anything as much. Apology, confession, revelation, prayer, they were all the same. The question she saw on Michele's face hurt. It reflected hurt.

"Four years is a long time, Michele."

"Yes, a long time."

"Your letters...we've never talked about it since that day."

"No."

"I had to come now."

"I know; it's just that I thought you wouldn't." A single tear overflowed from beneath a lowered lid of Michele's eye. Ren watched it zig-zag down her cheek and stop above her upper lip.

"Has it changed? I mean..."

"No."

"I wouldn't blame you, if there were someone else."

"There is no one else."

Among Ren's memories was the recollection of a kiss she had turned away from, the gentle kiss of a tender young woman, a woman who had had a strange power to understand what she had not understood. The memory had filled her mind many times. Now the same woman, no longer young, stood facing her, waiting, waiting for her decision, waiting after a long time of waiting.

"I've been very foolish."

Ren felt the warmth of a hand touching but not caressing her cheek. They kissed, and the queer unhappiness that had lived with her so long was suddenly gone.

She would never turn away again, not for God Himself. She didn't believe He would ever ask her to.

THIS IS WOMAN

Fearfully and long-withdrawn,
the wonder of woman within you
reached for the kernel of me--
timidly.

Tender
and suddenly--
with knowing
with brawn.

This has no equal for man--
this is of woman
for woman

No idle shoal in a shallow sea
But the deep deeps stirring
In you
In me.

Blanche Small

AN INVITATION

TO READERS OF THE LADDER

We are convinced that somewhere in your progressive readership, there is creative writing talent going to waste. We, the publishers of both TOWER and MIDWOOD BOOKS, therefore invite authors, whether established or aspiring, to submit original manuscripts that deal in realistic and mature fashion with lesbianism.

The length should be approximately 40,000 words and the manuscript typing double-spaced. Every submittal stemming from this invitation will receive prompt and special attention. Contracts can be issued on the basis of a partial presentation if supplemented by an outline of the planned subsequent action, and advances against royalties will be made upon acceptance.

Please address all manuscripts and/or letters of inquiry to:

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
TOWER PUBLICATIONS, INC.
505 EIGHTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 18, NEW YORK

Cross-currents

A bold experiment in entertainment - "the first of its kind in the country" - has ended sadly. The HAIGHT THEATER opened July 17 in San Francisco as a "fine art theater for the gay set." Movies with gay elements such as "A Taste of Honey" and "The Mark" were being shown, and drag contests were being held on the stage. A nightly radio show, "The Gay Hour," which featured interviews from the theater lobby, was cut off after many complaints to the station. Furor in the Haight neighborhood brought pickets to the theater. The president of the Neighborhood Council declared flatly that "any form of deviation, sexual or freeway, is not good for this neighborhood!" The theater owners maintained that the theater was doing a brisk business, despite reports that patrons were being harassed by juveniles and watched by the police. Then, a little more than 30 days after the theater opened, both co-owners reportedly blew town, leaving behind unpaid debts and a bench warrant for the arrest of one of them.

Columnist ANN LANDERS usually offers fairly sensible advice to those who are confronted by homosexuality. One person recently wrote to her describing a seemingly lesbian two-some in an office situation. "Should these women be fired?" the person asked. Miss Landers's reply: "No. If they are competent, if they mind their own business...it would be cruel and senseless to deprive them of employment."

ANITA LOOS, famous for her "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" first done in the '20s, said that she could never do "Blondes" today. "The sex balance has so changed," says Miss Loos, "that today it would have to be called 'Gentlemen Prefer Gentlemen'." Or, we hasten to add, "Blondes Prefer Blondes."

The ATHENEUM REVIEW is a journal to be watched. Originating in Florida, it is to be published monthly (beginning August '64) by the ATHENEUM SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INCORPORATED, P. O. Box 2278, Miami, Florida, 33101. Subscription is \$5 a year. Their promotion letter states: "Our subjects are TABOO, something to be swept under the rug by most people. We frankly discuss such matters as homosexuality, gambling, narcotics addiction, alcoholism, pornography, prostitution, and many other subjects. We discuss the shakedowns, graft, bribery, blackmail, and other corruptions that accompany and are a result of these matters... We believe that homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private should not be a criminal offense... We believe that many laws are archaic and inequitable... We are a non-profit organization, dedicated to the discussion of the social and criminal problems of today that are increasing in spite of all measures being taken to curb them. Perhaps these matters need new thinking,

a new approach." The ambition of the group is reflected in the quote from Thomas Jefferson that appears on its stationery: "Bigotry is the disease of ignorance, of morbid minds. Education and free discussion are the antidotes of both."

"In order to promote a continuing dialogue between the church and the homosexual, and in an endeavor to better understand human sexuality, and to promote understanding of the broad varieties and manifestations within the spectrum of human sexuality," the COUNCIL ON RELIGION AND THE HOMOSEXUAL was formed this summer in San Francisco. The Council is an outgrowth of the "Consultation on the Church and the Homosexual" held in the San Francisco Bay Area in June (see report in our September issue). It is a loosely organized committee which includes representatives from various homophile organizations as well as clergymen of various faiths. Homophile groups represented are Daughters of Bilitis, Mattachine Society, Society for Individual Rights, Citizens News, and Tavern Guild. Clergymen now represent the Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, American Friends, United Church, and Baptist faiths. To continue the dialogue begun in June between the church and the homosexual, the Council has planned meetings to be held in the homes of participating clergymen, with the host inviting several other churchmen to meet and talk with male and female homosexuals. Clergymen will also participate in meetings held by the homophile organizations. In the future, lay church groups may be invited to participate in the dialogue.

Indignant citizens in CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY have vowed an all-out war to drive homosexuals out of their resort town. One irate businessman said the type of homosexual frequenting his town is often "wealthy, successful, and influential," and often wears a bikini. He said the town's strategy would be a prolonged harassment of homosexuals by strict enforcement of various ordinances. Alarm over the increase in homosexuals in Cape May may be exceeded only by alarm over the drop in local profits after they have left, if precedent holds.

Those of you who enjoyed MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY's article in the September LADDER may be interested in this tip. A giant cumulative checklist, similar to but far more comprehensive than checklists in the past, is in the works and will be released soon. Compilers, as before, are Marion Zimmer Bradley and Gene Damon. It will supersede all known lists of both male and female literature on the homophile theme.

DOCTORS NEWS CONFERENCE, shown on KTVU in Oakland, Calif., tackled the subject of homosexuality on July 27. Panelists were Rev. Carl Howie, Dr. Sam Nelken, and Dr. Gerald Feigen. Rev. Howie felt that homosexuality has a deteriorating effect on society and that we must "do everything possible to clarify the roles of boys and girls in our society." Dr. Feigen focused on VD among male homosexuals. Dr. Nelken felt that homosexuality was an illness to be treated by a psychotherapist - not by a psychoanalyst or minister. He allowed that "the great majority (of homosexuals) want to keep their jobs, to live in and with society." We've known it all along!

READERS' RESPONSE

I should like to congratulate DOB not only on the fine gathering in New York, but on the quality of the reports of that convention that appeared in THE LADDER. With some dismay, I read reports of the same meeting in other homophile publications. If the quality of reporting that marks these issues of THE LADDER can be extended to the entire homophile press, we will be able to make considerable progress.

The above does not mean that the reports in THE LADDER were above criticism, merely that they were accurate, impartial, and well-written except for one phrase. When the reporter mentions that I made an accusation against ONE Inc., and then adds that this was made "without substantiation," this is a type of editorializing that has no place in accurate reporting. She might just as well have stated that no one asked for substantiation.

It was a very nice convention, but I think the time has come for a different type of meeting. The next one ought to be an internal conference for all groups doing work in this area - DOB, Mattachine, ONE, Janus, etc. It should be a broad internal meeting to discuss program, policies, and tactics, and not to hear talks from lawyers and psychiatrists.

- Donald Webster Cory

+ + + + +

I loved your review (August '64) of Eve Merriam's AFTER NORA SLAMMED THE DOOR. The bit about the parasol is sheer genius. Kindly tell reviewer Nola for me that she is terrific.

In the same issue, Donald Webster Cory predicts that those in England who think adoption of the Wolfenden recommendations will turn the tide, are doomed to disappointment. I'd give him no awards for common sense there. The point is that male homosexuals in England have quite enough to cope with without having the legal dice loaded against them as well. To reform the law would remove at least one sizeable burden from their backs. In England, this is certainly a major problem, because until the law is reformed, so that male homosexuals can meet together without charges of "procurator" being levelled against social agencies, psychiatrists, etc. who act as introducers, how on earth can they start solving their other problems? So long as our present law prohibits "group-therapeutic" benefit for men, Cory's opinion that legal reform is "not a major problem" is absolutely fatuous. Still, when did one ever expect common sense from a man?

- Esme Langley, Editor, ARENA THREE

I am writing this letter for two reasons. The first is to compliment the editor and reporters on the convention issues of THE LADDER. The reporting on the various talks at the DOB convention was superb. The second is to acknowledge my membership in S. O. B. (Sons of Bilitis) and the membership card.

- Wardell B. Pomeroy, Psychotherapist

+ + + + +

Your September issue review of Dr. Szasz's LAW, LIBERTY, AND PSYCHIATRY was galvanizing. I bought the book immediately, though I had to wait while my dealer ordered it. It has made me realize not only that therapy is no panacea for all problems of human living, but also that therapy can be used to discredit people as rational and responsible beings and thus to deprive them of both self-respect and respect from others. The assumption seems to be that no rational, "healthy" person could really want to go against the dictates of his society.

In support of Szasz's claim that social and sexual deviates are often forced to have treatment and so may be "persuaded" to change their behavior, I quote the following from "The Furtive Fraternity," a famous article which appeared in the sophisticated magazine GREATER PHILADELPHIA (my underlining):

"There is in Philadelphia...a unique program which may blaze a path in reform. It's a psychiatric program of group therapy...run on a weekly basis at Philadelphia General Hospital. ... The members of the groups have all been convicted of a crime and in lieu of reporting to the Probation Office once a month - a form of therapy proven useless - they report one night a week to take part in a group therapy discussion. Each group is led by a qualified psychiatrist.

"...probation officer Anthony Crocce, the acting supervisor of the program...considers his main job (that) of establishing himself as a father-image to the 'boys'...

"Dr. Joseph Peters, the psychiatrist who heads the program, points out that... 'most of our sex offender groups consist almost entirely of homosexuals. We found that these people are very lonely and feel isolated, which is one of the reasons they go to public places to make solicitations and, as a result, get caught. Through the group we get a hold on him, a hold that gratifies his need to belong. From there we use the psychological concepts that help him to recognize his inner conflicts.'"

A few lines later in the same article, Dr. Nicholas Bash is quoted as telling a parolee in his Sex Offender Group: "I won't ever try to manipulate you." All this despite the fact that, in the words of THE LADDER's reviewer, "...whether he wants it or not, he gets the treatment for free."

- J. N., Pennsylvania

While reading your review of Thomas Szasz's LAW, LIBERTY, AND PSYCHIATRY (Sept. '64), I was reminded of an article I read in SATURDAY REVIEW of June 20, 1964. It described the attack on Professor Mulford Sibley, who teaches at the University of Minnesota, for the politically and socially unorthodox views he holds and for encouraging his students to challenge orthodoxies and test truths for themselves. Following denunciation from the American Legion and other groups, State Senator Wright called the professor an "academic deviate." A state investigation of the university was launched. Clearly, "deviate" has become one of society's most derogatory labels.

- P. W., Connecticut

+ + + + +

I very much like the September cover, but had to take time to determine the significance of giving the wheel dominance over the two figures. Then my friend reminded me that the wheel is the symbol of Life and of Navigation (but mostly of Life) originated by the ancients. In this respect the cover is excellent, and it looks highly professional. AND - as a side-light, I love those big, bold letters: A LESBIAN REVIEW.

Photos dignify a publication. Today your magazine has FACE, and this is important. The content is the same as earlier: lively, informative, controversial, sometimes humorous. But the face is improved 100 fold!

- M. G., California

+ + + + +

During the past year I have read THE LADDER with great interest, augmented by the fact that I am one of those "isolates" and it is good to feel, for at least one day each month, that I am not of a unique species. Of course there are gay boys and girls in my small town, and one of the local bars is the headquarters for the boys, at least. But my idea of nothing to do is to sit in a smoke-filled bar several nights a week hoping that someone interesting might come along.

I am heartily in accord with the participation of DOB in various public information and service projects that have come along, such as radio interviews, and especially the research being conducted by Dr. Gundlach. I appreciate the information supplied by THE LADDER in "Cross-currents" and the book reviews. Cheers for the gals who have been acting as "Living Propaganda" and doing their bit to show the world that we are human beings too. I have been doing my small bit in that direction, also - rather successfully, I like to think.

It is true, as a reader observed some issues ago, that some of the stories and poems leave something to be desired, but there have also been several that were well and touchingly written. There seems to have been a general improvement in these last few months.

A while ago a reader suggested that THE LADDER should adopt a forceful point of view of its own, and use this point of view in projecting the material it publishes. I, also, am in favor of this idea, for it will give the readers something to get their teeth into. Controversy? Certainly. Most of the world's great work has been accomplished amidst - and even perhaps because of - the controversy that someone's ideas stirred up. Speaking of controversy, have any of your staff been reading the "Philosophy" series that has been running in PLAYBOY Magazine? I refer especially to the April issue, which dealt with laws and mores pertaining to homosexuality. The chart of penalties for various sex offenses in all the states is most comprehensive - and horrifying. Editor Hugh Hefner says: "...our belief in a free, rational, and humane society demands a tolerance of those whose sexual inclinations are different from our own..."

I do want to let you know that I enjoy and appreciate the efforts you and your staff put forth in getting out THE LADDER. I'm looking forward to the next year with much interest!

- B. M., Iowa

+ + + + +

A very funny piece, "We Went Thataway" (June issue). I hope you get the writer to supply you with the sequel, panning for gold in summertime. If I can get into Miss Agronsky's gay mood, I will surely try a satirical bit for THE LADDER.

- Sidney Ravenswood

+ + + + +

It's a pleasure to observe your tolerance of Ann Aldrich and her "parrot" S. M. who wrote in your April issue. I suppose every organization has one like her - the brilliant outsider who is always ready to find fault but never available to help in a constructive way! Honestly, I don't like some of the poetry either, but maybe I'm just too old for it. Almost everything by Abigail Sanford and Blanche Small I do like. Your May cover was lovely, the nicest I've seen.

I also admire your review of that detestable book THE VELVET UNDERGROUND. The reviewer might have said one thing more: that a person capable of inviting and then betraying the confidences of those sick "sex-club" members (as does the valiant crusader Michael Leigh), is not setting a very high moral standard himself. Perhaps he can regard such treachery as innocent compared to the sins he exposed; I must regard it as being worse.

Keep up the good work, and as for Ann Aldrich, Nil Illegitima Carborundum! That means - "Don't let the bastard grind you down."

- S. N., New Jersey

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INCORPORATED

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.

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