

# THE LADDER

Adults Only .50  
Dec. 1965

## A LESBIAN REVIEW





**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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Cover photo by Werner Neumeister. Cancers Vera Zorina and Carmen de Lavallade in ballet "Les Chansons de Bilitis," choreography by John Butler, to music by Debussy. Photo by courtesy of John Butler. (See page 10.)

Back cover sketch by M. G.

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# A Homosexual Ghetto ? \_\_\_\_\_ by LEO EBREO

When I was younger - about sixteen - I was an active Zionist. I believed that the best thing for American Jews, in fact all Jews, to do would be to go to Isreal and live in a kibbutz (collective). I belonged to a Zionist "movement" and tried to get the Jews I knew to join. I expected of course that few would want to emigrate, but I thought that most would be interested in helping Isreal and the Zionist movement.

This was not the case. I was met, very often, by an extraordinary hostility. It was not until years later, reading works on Jewish self-hatred, Negro self-hatred, that I could realize that I had frightened some already-frightened people.

For this fright I have still no cure. The rational arguments which I gave my Jewish friends then, I would give them now.

These arguments (both the ones they gave me and my replies) came back to me recently when I began working in the homophile movement and speaking to homosexual friends about it. When I attempted to draw some parallel between the Jew's struggle for his rights and the homosexual's struggle for his, I was often stopped short with the explanation that there could be no parallel because one was a "religious problem" and the other a "sexual problem." I tried, without success, to show how much the Negro's struggle paralleled that of the Jew, even though the Negro "problem" was a "race problem" and not a "religious problem."

As I have said, I have no rational arguments against the surrender to fear, and the rejection of self that lies behind it. This essay is not written for those who have surrendered to fear, but for the others, the fighters.

I think we need to constantly reaffirm our perspective in the fight for homophile rights, to realize that we are part of a broad, general movement towards a better, freer, happier world.

This struggle of ours for complete acceptance will probably continue throughout our lifetime, as will the struggle of the Negro and the Jew. Oceans of hatred, unreason, rejection, craven fear will continue to come from the "other" world (of the white, the gentile, the heterosexual), will continue to infect many individuals within these oppressed minorities.

And in this light, I think my parallel Zionist experience will show us both the currents of the Opposition from within our own ranks, and the answers which we must make. The objections my Jewish friends raised were as follows:

(1) "I'm not that Jewish! Being Jewish isn't that important to me." (2) "I don't want to go to Isreal." (3) "You are making the situation bad for us. There isn't any great problem. Discretion is the password. You are being offensive. You are putting us in a GHETTO, or would if we allowed you."

The answers I gave then come back to me now:

1. "I'm not that Jewish." What does "that" mean? Orthodoxy? Many Zionist are not that orthodox. To be Jewish does not mean a series of outward observances. It means being part of a people, recognizing their history, trying to find within that historical experience your lesson, your place.

2. "I don't want to go to Isreal." Perhaps not. Perhaps not now when conditions for Jewish life are good in the United States (as they were once in Germany). But don't you want Isreal to exist? Some place which will represent the Jews, to which they can go if oppressed? What other nation would try Eichmann? And if an Isreal had existed in the time of Nazi Germany, could not the Jews have gone there? And, with an Isreal to represent them, might there not have been some action taken to prevent the extermination of the Jews in Europe?

3. "You are making the situation bad for us...You are putting us in a ghetto." Nonsense. Isreal is not a ghetto. It is a place where the Jew is, if anything, more normal than in other countries, a place where he is a farmer, seaman, shepherd, rather than furrier and candy store owner.

Of course, the Jews who offered me these arguments were not convinced by my replies. They had a certain picture in their minds of what being "Jewish" was - a curious, narrow, ill-informed vision defined by an old man (always old) with a long white beard and a yamulka and a long black coat, a Yiddish accent, the boredom of prayer mumbled and half-heard on certain holy days in a synagogue. The reality of Jewish existence, history, aspirations was unknown to them. Small wonder then that they could not imagine the reality of Isreal, its youth, vitality, the variety of its peoples.

So they hung back - often, too often, proud of not being "too Jewish," changing their names to less Jewish-sounding ones, the girls having their noses shortened surgically.

And yet, as the years passed, I saw them grow more confident, less apologetic of their Judaism, because, in spite of themselves, they were proud of Isreal, that nation whose growth they had at first resented.

And so, I think, it will be with those homosexual friends of mine who are now fearful, even resentful, of the homophile organizations. Their reactions now parallel, almost word for word, those of the Jews:

1. "I'm not that homosexual." Here too, the image the outside world pictures is used by those raising this objection. One doesn't have to fit the stereotype to be that homosexual.

(Yet to a certain extent we must work with the outside world's definition of the homosexual.) The German Jews were the most assimilated, often not knowing Yiddish, often not religious, often converted to Christianity. Still they were exterminated. Similarly, too often the one who suffers from persecution of homosexuals is the respectable married man, like Jenkins, who makes a single slip. No one trying to defend Jenkins (and there were few who did, to our eternal shame) noted that he wasn't that homosexual.

2. "I don't want to be a member of a homophile organization." My full sympathies. Neither do I. But I do belong, just as I belong to the UJA, to the NAACP. Being in the Zionist movement, like being in the homophile movement, was to some extent a burden to me. It is a trial to pay dues, to attend meetings, to hear lectures, and - most of all - to have to deal with so many people and with their many, many faults. (St. Theresa, the Jewess of Avila, said that people were a great trial to her. That was the 16th century, and people are still a great trial.) But don't you want the homophile movement to exist? Don't you want to see some organization represent homosexuals, stand up for their rights?

Fighting though I was for the state of Isreal, I was still - and am still - a confirmed internationalist. But to arrive at that place in history, these intermediate steps are necessary. It is not a certain good - an absolute good - that there be a state of Isreal, with borders, army, taxes, ministries. But until there are no French, German, Russian, American nationalities, I think it unwise to eliminate the Jewish nationality, which all these nations have at times acknowledged (before its official creation) by discriminating against it.

The question you must ask yourself is not whether you "like" to join or at least support a homophile organization (or a civil rights organization), but whether it is needed. And the homophile movement is needed, as Isreal is needed, at this point in history.

3. "Your homophile organizations make our situation worse.... Discretion is the password. You are being offensive. You are putting homosexuals in a ghetto." Here again we are dealing often with homosexual fear and self-hatred and self-rejection.

This very word - GHETTO - has been used to me by homosexuals outside the movement. The homosexual who says this has accepted the negative picture of the homosexual drawn by the outside world. And, just as the American Jew may imagine a nation of candy store keepers with Yiddish accents and skull-caps, so the "assimilated" homosexual, from his troglodyte perspective, may imagine an assembly of campy ballet dancers and hair dressers.

There is already something of a ghetto pattern for homosexuals, because of the pressures put on them to confine themselves to certain vocations where they are "expected" and to isolate themselves.

But the aim of the homophile organizations, like that of the NAACP, the UJA, is not for further ghettoization but for integration, for equality.

However, there is a radical difference between the situation of the homosexual and that of the Negro and Jew in relation to their organizations. The Negro can rarely "pass." The Jew might be able to, but he is under many pressures, especially family upbringing and sometimes family presence, not to. The homosexual, on the other hand, can usually "pass" easily and does not have the family pressure as an inducement to declare himself. If anything, there is another pressure, to "pass" for the sake of family appearances.

Thus the individual homosexual may claim that membership in a homophile organization, rather than enabling him to normalize his situation, might endanger the assimilation, the equality he can achieve with just a bit of "discretion" and silence. This argument has a certain cogency. Its limitation is that it is a solution for the individual homosexual.

It is the "solution" (or, to be charitable, the "path") taken by the average homosexual, especially the one outside a major city, or who is not in touch with the gay community. And this is not a solution, a path, which is to be avoided. For certain people, in positions in the government, in schools, there may be no choice but secrecy at this time.

But the price can be a terrible one. It is, as I have said, an individual solution. Often, too often, it results in an isolation for the individual, sometimes a world of pathetic furtive sexuality or public lavatory sex - shameful, inadequate, ridiculous, dangerous. Even when the hidden homosexual has a mate, the union still has a peculiar isolate character, being secret, disguised. Thus the homosexual who "passes" is often in a ghetto composed of one person, sometimes of two. An individual solution perhaps, but hardly a permanent one, or a good one.

Those of us who are active in the homophile movement feel ourselves working for those outside and fearful of joining. We are working for a day when our organizations will be strong enough, active enough, to protect the rights of those in public employment (such as teachers), in the armed services, in government. The homosexual who is accepted as a homosexual will be a fuller, better person than the furtive imitation-heterosexual who has found his individual "solution."

The aim of the homophile organizations is not to draw a small circle and place the homosexual within it. The very term "homosexual" (only 68 years old if we are to believe the Oxford English Dictionary) may not be used with such frequency in the Larger Society which we are working to create. We are drawing a circle - but a LARGE circle, to draw the large society of which we are a part, in. We are asking to be accepted. This acceptance which the homosexual minority needs, wants, can only be gotten when it is asked for - if need be, DEMONSTRATED for through groups like ECHO and their picket lines.

The drive to eliminate discrimination against homosexuals (sex fascism) is a direct parallel to the drive to eliminate discrimination against Negroes (race fascism). These minority movements are not attempts to overthrow the white race, or to destroy the institution of the family, but to allow a fuller growth of human potential, breaking down the barriers against a strange race or sexuality. When the Negro, the Jew, the homosexual, is known and a neighbor, he will cease to be a bogey.

We are working towards that world in which there will be respect for, enjoyment of, the differences in nationality, race, sexuality, when the homosexual impulse is seen as part of the continuum of love which leads some persons to be husbands and wives, others to be parents, others to be lovers of their fellow men and women, and still others to be celibate and devote themselves to humanity or deity.

In that world there will also be greater variety. Our stratified ideas of masculinity and femininity will long have been altered. (Have you noticed that men's greeting cards have either a gun and mallard ducks, or a fishing rod and trout?)

It is this world, where the barriers of nation, sex, race have been broken, this larger, non-ghettoized world, that minority groups are organizing to work toward. And it is this picture of the larger world of the future that we must hold up when we are accused, by the very existence of homophile organizations at this point in history, of wanting to ghettoize homosexuals.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

---

Emily white witch of Amherst  
 The shy white witch of Amherst  
 Killed her teachers  
 with her love  
 I'll rather mine entomb  
 my mind  
 Or best that soft grey dove.

- Elise Cowen

There droops a sleeping princess in my heart  
 Pallid as lily-lips upon a pond  
 White as a wing of winter in the dawn  
 She waits

Too in this chamber dwells the prince (dwell I)  
 He is as beautiful as I can bear  
 Being the core of dream within her dream  
 I wait.

- Blanche Small

## RED OWL

Little Owl,  
 you have made my heart  
 your nest;  
 Red Owl,  
 my love-wise Owl,  
 I will be  
 in sun-struck day  
 when love  
 wing-folded, rests,  
 or night, storm-black,  
 your strong,  
 your rooted tree.

Fly far,  
 but not too far; your wings  
 unclipped,  
 might lift you,  
 waft you  
 to the frozen moon.  
 But know: sky-winds  
 are mean, are icy-lipped.  
 Red Owl,  
 my little Owl,  
 it's warm at home.

- Elsa Gidlow

## REPRISAL

If a stranger's  
 Asked to share  
 In the fire  
 At my hearth,  
 Jealousy  
 My motive be--  
 Not warmth!

- Elizabeth Tudor

## INELEGANCE

Why cannot I sing thee this song?  
 It runs its course within my soul;  
 Hour by hour it drops into soundless wastes,  
 Running mad through all the caverns  
 Where the still pools lay so long in silence.  
 The blackness turns to crystalline,  
 Its mirrored calm now shattered into mirlitons.  
 Dancing lights catch fire from each to each,  
 Sending a ringing dance around, and up, and out.  
 But when the bubbling laughter of its harmony  
 Comes close upon my tongue, It falters into prosody,  
 And marches out  
 In rhyming couplets  
 Best designed for wrapping fish in.

- Hyrum Fox

# Songs of Bilitis

Editor's note: To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Daughters of Bilitis, which was founded in 1955, we are here reprinting five of Pierre Louys's "Songs of Bilitis." These are from the translation by Mitchell S. Buck in THE COLLECTED WORKS OF PIERRE LOUYS (New York, Liveright, 1926).

Our cover photo this month (by Werner Neumeister) was taken at the Spoleto, Italy premiere of John Butler's ballet "Les Chansons de Bilitis" ("Songs of Bilitis"), set to Debussy's music. The dancers are Vera Zorina and Carmen de Lavallade. We are grateful to Mr. Butler for the photo and permission to use it.

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## LIV The Past Which Survives

I will leave the bed as she has left it, unmade and rumpled, the covers tangled, so that the form of her body may remain impressed beside mine.

Until tomorrow, I will not go to the bath, I will not wear any garments, I will not comb my hair, for fear lest I efface her caresses.

This morning, I will not eat, nor this evening; and upon my lips I will place neither rouge nor powder, in order that her kiss may remain.

I will leave the shutters closed and I will not open the door, for fear lest the remembrance which she has left might fly out upon the wind.

## LXIV The Sleeper

She sleeps in her unbound hair, her hands joined behind her neck. Does she dream? Her mouth is open; she breathes gently.

With a bit of white swan's-down, I wipe away the perspiration of her arms, the fever of her cheeks, but without awakening her. Her closed eyelids are two blue flowers.

Very softly, I will arise; I will go draw water, milk the cow and ask fire of the neighbors. I would arrange my hair and dress before she opens her eyes.

Sleep, dwell for long between her fair, curved eyelids, and continue the happy night with a dream of good augury.

## LXI Tendernesses

Close thine arms, gently, like a girdle about me. O touch, touch my skin thus! Neither water nor the breeze of noontide are so soft as thy hand.

Today, cherish me, little sister; it is thy turn. Remember thou the tendernesses which I taught thee in the night past, and kneel thou near me, silently, for I am weary.

Thy lips descend upon my lips. All thine unbound hair follows them like a caress after a kiss. It glides over my left breast, it hides thine eyes from me.

Give me thy hand; it is hot. Press mine; hold it always. Hands better than mouths unite, and their passion is equaled by nothing.

## LXIX Words in the Night

We rest, our eyes closed; the silence is deep about our couch. Ineffable nights of summer! But she, believing me asleep, lays her warm hand upon my arm.

She murmurs: "Bilitis, thou sleepest?" My heart throbs, but, without response, I respire regularly like a woman couched in dreams. Then she begins to speak:

"Because thou hearest me not," she says, "Ah! How I love thee." And she repeats my name: "Bilitis...Bilitis...." And she touches me with the tips of her trembling fingers.

"It is mine, this mouth! Mine alone! Is there another so beautiful in the world? Ah! My happiness, my happiness! Mine are these naked arms, this neck, this hair...."

## LXXVI Evening Near the Fire

The winter is hard, Mnasiidika. All is frozen except our bed. But arise and come with me, for I have lit a great fire with dead branches and broken wood.

We will warm ourselves, crouching quite naked, our hair over our backs, and we will drink milk from the same cup and we will eat cakes with honey.

How gay and noisy the flame is! Are thou not too near? Thy skin reddens. Let me kiss it wherever the fire has burned it.

Amidst the ardent firebrands, I will heat the iron and I will dress thy hair here. With a dead ember I will write thy name upon the wall.

# Cross-Currents

Do many Americans believe that homosexuals are harmful to the American way of life? Unfortunately a big majority do, if we are to believe the Harris Survey published in the Washington Post on September 27. 70% of those polled said they think homosexuals are more harmful than helpful to the nation, while only 1% think the reverse. The other 29% feel that homosexuals don't help or harm things much one way or another.

In this survey to determine how much tolerance there is for deviant viewpoints and behavior, homosexuals were listed along with other non-conformists such as civil rights demonstrators, people who don't believe in God, young men with beards and long hair, and college professors active in unpopular causes - all of which types rated disapproval from a majority of those polled. Pollster Louis Harris writes: "As could be expected, an overwhelming majority of Americans regard Communists, homosexuals, and prostitutes as harmful to the Nation, although three out of every ten Americans think homosexuals and prostitutes are not a matter of serious concern. ...Eighty-two per cent of the men think homosexuals are harmful to the Nation while only 58 per cent of the women think so."

Boston's Beacon Hill (where, it used to be claimed, "the Lowells speak only to the Cabots, and the Cabots speak only to God") now has a monthly newssheet. The September Beacon Hill News published, among several letters-to-the-editor regarding problems on the Hill, this neighborly opinion: "The only people I would consider as being so-called undesirable elements are the 'immature set'... The so-called odd-balls, beatniks, and homosexuals give the Hill the charm it has today, along with the elderly ladies and gentlemen who have been living in this area for so long.

"It is amazing how the rich, poor, the young, old, the students, beatniks, and homosexuals can be so compatible within this little community in the heart of Boston. Eliminate the immature, who are included in all types, and you have the most prejudice-free community, where everyone minds his own business and lives side by side in almost complete harmony. This is an example of the way all communities should be in America. This is Beacon Hill. This is America."

At an auction in London in July, reported the New York Times (July 8, 1965), a letter from George Bernard Shaw on the subject of forming a trade union for prostitutes, was sold for \$108.00. In the letter, written to actress-producer Florence Farr in 1907, Shaw said that the union's secretary should be "a very energetic, muscular and violent woman, with the devotion of a saint and the arbitrariness and executive power of a prize-fighter (because of the hypocrisy of those socially powerful people who denounce prostitutes while going to them).

Enforcing the social institution of marriage has its drawbacks which are more readily seen when viewed in another culture where the pressures take an extreme form. A Reuters dispatch from Algeria reported that girls are protesting the traditional practice of marriages being arranged by the parents without the consent of the young people. Many girls deeply resent being forced into loveless marriages and feel that this custom exemplifies women's inequality with men in their country. The report noted that during 1964, in the city of Algiers alone, 175 young women had attempted suicide because they were being forced into unwanted marriages. An unknown number of other girls succeeded in killing themselves for the same reason.

"...if the rationalization for homosexuality is far-fetched, the treatment against it is almost incredible," says THE REALIST, a satire magazine, in its October issue. Under the headline "The Ordeal of Faggotry," editor Paul Krassner tells how a new mechanistic treatment developed by English psychologists is used to recondition homosexuals into heterosexuals. In this medieval-style "aversion-relief therapy," the deviate has to read out words related to his unwanted behavior pattern as they are projected in front of him. He is administered an electric shock when he reads out - or fails to read out - a word like "sodomy," while he gets no shock (relief) for a word like "heterosexual." Krassner reports the success of this way of changing unpopular kinds of behavior such as homosexuality and transvestism. His punch line neatly shifts the frame of reference: "All right, Lyndon, now say 'escalation'...."

After several years of Garbo-ish seclusion, the young French high-fashion designer Yves St. Laurent has come out into Paris nightlife and has been traveling to Salzburg, Venice, and New York, and doing the Watusi and the Frug. He is constantly part of a foursome made up of his friend Pierre Berge and two girls, Clara Saint and Marielle de Lesseps, both under 25. The girls are credited with helping Yves become "dechaine" and "jeune" in his dress designs, which used to be very staid.

Women's Wear Daily describes the lovely flat the two girls share in the rue de Rivoli, overlooking Les Tuileries. The girls are "inseparable friends," WWD reports. "They could be sisters: Same thin, feminine silhouette, same coiffure, same

light in their eyes. They think in the same direction. One can feel a great complicity running between the two." The photograph accompanying the article shows them sitting close to each other. The girls "read Proust, listen to Strauss's Salome or the Beatles, with the same enthusiasm. They spend a night at Regine (popular Parisian discotheque) without any artificial help like whisky...and enjoy themselves as well."

"They are 'saines' (healthy) and right and, unfortunately, rare," concludes the reporter.

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The Religious Affairs Committee of the New York Chapter of DOB now has an Advisory Board of four professionals involved in church work, mostly administrative or educational. They and the DOB members will work to draw in others from the religious community, especially pastoral clergymen - and including, it is hoped, representatives of all the major faiths - in order to explain to them some of the problems homosexuals face and enlist their participation in DOB's efforts to solve them. The committee chairman said that so far, "the main desire on both sides, interestingly enough, seems to be for acceptance." She added that in the first meeting with the Advisory Board, the DOB members got an opportunity to correct the misconception that pederasty and homosexuality are synonymous or that there is any high correlation between the two.

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In his new book THE BETTER HALF (Harper and Row), a history of the American feminist movement, Andrew Sinclair notes that Susan B. Anthony, a great leader in the movement, called her companion Anna Dickinson "Dicky Darling Anna" and "Dear Chick a dee dee," and asked Anna to promise "not to marry a man." (In Gertrude Stein's great opera, "The Mother of Us All," in which Susan B. is the central figure, the relationship between Susan and Anna is a clear reflection of the Stein-Toklas one.)

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"The Heretics" is the title of a platform-for-unconventional-ideas series launched by the weekly tabloid National Insider. Oct. 17's "heretic" turns out to be none other than Richard Inman, president of the Mattachine Society of Florida (P. O. Box 301, Miami, Florida, 33101). Mr. Inman has a provocative message for that subway strap-hanger reader as he tells in specific terms about the homophile movement in the U. S., why it is needed, what it does. He says that "it is in every respect a part of that which has become known as the civil rights movement" and that "if the rights of homosexuals are ignored, it will become necessary for homosexuals to develop effective political action organizations."

## SEND CURRENT NEWS

# who is a HOMOSEXUAL?

Lecture delivered by Dr. C. A. Tripp at the Continuing Education in Medicine Symposium, University of California Medical Center, in March 1965. Basic material abstracted from forthcoming book on male and female homosexuality by C. A. Tripp, Ph. D., and Lewis Coopersmith

The answer to the question, "Who is a homosexual?", depends somewhat on who is asking and who is choosing to say.

Before the advent of the Kinsey Research, the whole question was extremely easy. It was always a person who chose to make his or her sexual contacts with members of the same sex. And there were few such persons.

Not only that, it was also implied that such a person must be suffering from some sort of neurosis, or at the very least, that such a person had become "fixed" at some so-called immature level of development.

Now along with this assumption, several other ideas prevailed. There was the idea that under normal conditions, heterosexuality would be the spontaneous result of a healthy environment - that homosexual experiments might be par for the course at very young ages, but not at later ages.

There was also the idea that the selection of a sexual partner of one's own sex was a kind of choice by default - a second-best bargain after a fractured heterosexuality, or the result of some other bizarre etiology. Consequently, homosexuality was seen as rare - an entity or thing in sharp contrast to the heterosexual norm. The homosexual was someone very specific, and out of the ordinary.

The very first data supplied by the Kinsey Research challenged all of these ideas. In the first place, the sheer frequency of sexual variations thought to be rare threw great doubt upon the stability and dependability of heterosexual development.

Specifically, homosexuality was shown to be very commonplace, not only in childhood, but at every age, at every social level, among persons in each and every profession - in big cities, in small towns, and in rural communities.

Such findings would have been surprising enough had they merely shown that some 4 per cent of males, and about a third this many females, turn out to be exclusively homosexual during their entire lives. But the data go further. They indicate

that more than twice this many persons - some 10 per cent of the whole male population is exclusively homosexual for at least 3 years, and that not less than 1/4 of all males have more than incidental homosexual practice for such a period.

Another way of looking at the issue is in terms of people's sexual responses - irrespective of the degree to which they choose to carry these responses into action. Viewed from this angle, about 1/2 of the male population has some homosexual response, although a portion of these males never carry their arousal into overt practice. However, 1/3 of American males do have some overt homosexual experience.

Now it is clear that within the 1/2 of males who do have some sexual response to members of their own sex, there are great variations in the significance which this has for them - whether this significance arises from practice, or purely from fantasy. In terms of practice, these individuals vary all the way from those who are entirely homosexual, to those whose contacts are very infrequent. Between these two extremes are persons who vary through every shading from primarily homosexual to primarily heterosexual.

However, the extent of a person's sexual practice does not necessarily parallel the emotional importance which that practice may have for the individual. The person whose homosexual contacts are infrequent may derive more psychological satisfaction from them than the individual with very many such contacts. Partial homosexuality may be merely casual to a person - or it may be crucial to him. And two individuals with the same frequency of homosexual contacts may derive very different levels of meaning from such experience.

The situation is clearly parallel to the varieties of experience seen in heterosexuality - where people do what they do for very different reasons and with very different kinds of reward which have little to do with the overt frequency of sexual expression. Although there are many individuals who can be called heterosexuals, and others who can be called homosexuals, largely because the particular categories of sexual practice are clearly predominant, it should be remembered that there are millions of Americans whose sex lives simply do not fit neatly into either single category. In fact, the majority of all persons who engage in any homosexual practice whatsoever are primarily heterosexual in terms of their total sexual behavior.

At this point, I should like to take up the question of what lies behind sexual choices and sexual reactions of any kind - for it is in such underlying concepts that the key to any useful attitudes may be found. It is definitely true that most animals and most humans prefer heterosexual coitus to any other form of sexual expression. This is certainly not because of the existence of some so-called instinct. Nor can a general planfulness of nature be cited without encompassing errors that have a distinctly 19th century ring. But I shall avoid the temptation at this point of exploring the fascinating subject of what has become of the whole purposive concept of

sex, or of what has happened to the Darwinian concept of adaptation, and other antique notions of what used to be called instincts before the development of modern biology.

Instead, I shall assume that you either already know something of this material, or that a few observations and conclusions will suffice here.

Among animals much lower on the evolutionary scale than man, the whole process of mate selection is under relatively tight physiologic control. For instance, specific scent glands emit odors that are excitatory to the opposite sex, or internal secretions of other sorts may stimulate muscle groups, or may stimulate still other parts of the neurologic substrate, in ways which lead to behavior that appears highly directional in character. So profound are these effects that individual lower mammals, raised in total isolation and then later placed with receptive mates, immediately have what might be called the "know-how" to proceed with faultless sexual performances. However, as we ascend the evolutionary scale, behavior that had appeared to be automatic and directional either disappears, or begins to lose its orderly specificity. By the time we reach the primates, individuals raised in isolation may show instant arousal when stimulated by another animal, but may require months or even years of trial and error before learning exactly what fits where, and just how to proceed sexually.

A centrally important evolutionary change in all this is that the cerebral cortex - so necessary to learning and conditioning processes - has been slowly increasing in size and in its ratio to the rest of the brain. It comprises about 25 per cent of the brain in lower mammals, more than 50 per cent of the brain in anthropoids, and over 90 per cent of the volume of the human brain.

From this point of view, it is not surprising that man not only can learn as much as he does, but that lacking the tight physiologic controls that are so apparent in his lower relatives, he must learn all of his behavioral techniques in that huge period of time that his maturity requires. Under a variety of circumstances, he can learn homosexual preferences quite as easily as heterosexual ones.

Of course, the particular culture in which a man lives takes over the major job of directing and suggesting his behavior. No doubt it is the essential nature of man's flexibility that permits his cultures to take the unending variety they have assumed. And yet there are certain near universals: Sexual activity between members of the opposite sex is generally, but not always, preferred to other sexual expressions. Heterosexuality certainly seems the most workable, considering the physical structures involved. Furthermore, some of the loudest psychological characteristics of each sex tend to be best tolerated at close range by individuals who are different in their behavioral emphasis. For instance, in man, as in other animals, the particular kind of aggressiveness displayed by males is generally easier for females than for other males to tolerate. And when females reject a sexual approach, their

ways of doing so tend to be less hostile and retaliatory than the kinds of rebuffs that males tend to use. All of this, and much more, seems to have led to a preference for heterosexuality by the majority of persons in each culture. And there is nothing so pattern-setting as the pressure of group mores.

At any rate, since a culture like our own clearly expects, advertises and approves only of sexual practices between members of opposite sex, where does all that homosexuality come from? Why doesn't the cultural conditioning work better than it does? And when the heterosexual conditioning does work, why is the lure of homosexuality still often very robust? I assure you that you will not find the answers to these questions very satisfactorily set forth in theories of psychosexual mix-up, nor in theories that describe homosexuality as some sickness. Such theories assume that human heterosexuality is under a specific directional control. In reality, such controls are simply lacking in the human species.

Dr. Kinsey used to say that in the search for the sources of any sexual expression, one shows his maturity by recognizing a great variety of origins and contributing factors to any single piece of behavior. I don't know about the maturity, but I should like to call your attention to a few of the factors which appear with special frequency in the histories of individuals whose sexual conditioning has turned out to be something other than in perfect alignment with our heterosexual expectations.

Far more than half of the entire American population, for instance, has pre-pubertal sex play. A large portion of this includes sexual experiments between members of the same sex. A portion of this involves elements of excitement or even of affection which may give these experiences a lasting appeal in the sexual repertoire of some individuals.

Sometimes early sex experiments between opposite sexes prove unsatisfactory, painfully embarrassing in some way, or otherwise unattractive - placing the future of heterosexual appeal in doubt, or opening a door to homosexual practice that may prove far more rewarding. There are still other ways in which early heterosexual fears or aversions disenfranchise the appeal of opposite sexes and increase the potential appeal of members of the same sex.

But before we go too far in bearing down on various kinds of fears which have, after all, received such overemphasis from the Freudians, it is well to remember that a great number of positive inducements to homosexuality can occur. For instance, a glorification of the values of maleness, and exceedingly high expectations of masculine power which a boy may come to expect of himself - quite without any neurosis being present, by the way - can lead to an idealization of male characteristics, a disparagement of female virtues, or both. Erotic feelings can certainly develop around what is idealized.

There are a number of obvious physical disadvantages which any primarily heterosexual person can see in homosexual matchings.

But it is less often realized that a number of distinct advantages operate in homosexuality too. Some of these are highly facilitating in the early sexual histories of people. For instance, members of the same sex intuitively know what feels good and what doesn't. And on a psychological level, the shared interests and easy rapport of members of the same sex can facilitate compatibility. Furthermore, the association of opposite sexes tends to be chaperoned at early ages, or curtailed by a variety of other factors - while the most intimate contacts between members of the same sex are easily made and are naively thought to be sexually bland.

As a matter of fact, overt homosexual contacts are so frequent before and shortly after puberty, that the question is not how the homosexual conditioning develops, but why it doesn't develop even more often than it does. The general answer, of course, is that various social pressures and expectations work toward the development of heterosexual standards and tastes, and toward the eradication of any and all behavior which appears contrary to the mainstream. But there is more to it than that.

For any sexual experience to become sharply meaningful to an individual, it must have the support of a personal value system. Such a value system can develop in essentially two ways: Early sexual experiences can lead to a set of values built around various characteristics of persons who have proved highly rewarding sexually. Or secondly, without any early sexual experience, a personal value-system can be built up from the value-structure suggested by the culture and by the individual's personal needs. In that case, the expected heterosexual behavior will quite smoothly and reliably develop - and will be additionally reinforced and validated by gratifying sexual experiences. But inconsistencies and delays in the ultimate establishment of heterosexual values, or protests against them, or the generation of competing value systems - any and all of these can lead to the development of individually discovered alternatives such as homosexuality. Specifically, then, the best evidence indicates that the partial or even total conditioning for homosexuality proceeds along essentially the same lines as for heterosexuality - that is, with the development of a set of values that either precedes or follows gratifying sexual experience.

Now there are many instances of homosexual practice - particularly the highly motivated ones - that are most accurately described by one or more of the factors mentioned so far. But there are many other, more casual, instances in which such factors, while not contradicted, are simply irrelevant. There are many instances in which individuals go along with homosexual opportunities because of immediate stimuli that may be present in a situation. They may find excitement and gratification in another person's reactions. Or, they may respond well to members of their own sex because they themselves need a sexual release at a time when physical distance, or a temporary aversion, isolates them from members of the opposite sex. There are still other situations in which arousal attained at one place is expressed at another. For instance, in the

sexual orgy, an individual may obtain the arousal of his whole sexual substrate from heterosexual sources - and when he is at this point suddenly presented with a homosexual opportunity, he may accept it with enthusiasm.

Consequently, it may be said that the human sexual response can be stimulated by the most superficial opportunities, or it may await the most profound and personally meaningful associations of which the individual is capable. In terms of anything basic in the organism, the physical and psychological differences between different kinds of sexual behavior seem strictly trivial. People simply respond sexually in ways in which they have learned to respond and toward objects which, for the moment, for a longer time, or for a lifetime, have taken on sexual meaning for them. And conversely, people fail to respond sexually to other persons when, and only when, they have arrived at an aversion. In fact, every sexually responsive person could respond to every other sexually responsive individual if it weren't for aversion reactions.

Sometimes individuals arrive at particular aversions through powerful direct conditioning, such as a bitter experience with a kind of person, or a kind of situation. But otherwise, aversions seem to arise quite automatically toward characteristics that stand in contrast to ones that are highly valued. Though in most cases, sexual conditioning, once developed, remains stable for life, in some cases conditioned preferences and aversions are subject to change. We know, for instance, that by 16 years of age, some 90 per cent of males have attained the preferences which will dominate their sexual patterns for the rest of their lives. Shifts in sexual preferences, when they do occur, result from reconditioning that stems from either sexual or non-sexual sources, or from changes in a person's particular values and needs.

It is unfortunate for man's understanding of himself that one of the effects of any long-term conditioning is that its results appear always to have existed - and never to have developed. It is extremely difficult for people to envision their long-standing preferences of any sort as having been learned. It seems to require the very highest levels of sophistication in these matters to realize that one's own tastes, like the waters of a river, follow the slight indentations of casual experience until they have cut deep channels in a landscape that originally offered innumerable possibilities.

Notions that homosexuality is unnatural and sick - and that its so-called cure would always be desirable, are still held by some professionals, and the lay public in general. Issues of sickness are made seemingly more valid in the eyes of clinicians by the fact that they so consistently see a sample of the population where homosexual tendencies are associated with severe guilt, conflict, or other neurotic disturbances. It certainly seems fair to say that sexual conflicts are far more frequent in the person who sees himself as part of a disapproved minority, than in the person who believes himself to be quite ordinary. In fact, neuroses of various kinds have so often been observed in persons showing degrees of homosexual

response as to suggest to early observers that neurosis leads to homosexuality, or vice versa. Today, it is more generally realized - at least by sophisticated clinicians - that no action which a person takes and enjoys can ever lead to neurosis unless he or she feels guilty about it.

Now suppose this is exactly the case - that a patient comes to you in a state of disturbance or conflict over his homosexual responsivity. Regardless of the nature of the presenting complaint - that is, whether he suffers from guilt feelings, or whether he is in local trouble in a particular situation, or whether he has already analyzed his own case as hopeless without a basic change in his sex life - all these possible attitudes of the patient tend to share the same underlying idea: namely, that there is an intimate connection between one's sex life and the problems which he feels. Here the therapist must do what the patient is not doing. He must distinguish between the sexual and social natures of the patient's complaints. No patient is really complaining about his sex interest per se, which is, after all, usually quite rewarding. Rather, he is complaining about the possible social problems he sees, or some inner conflict.

Confronted with such complaints, you will have a choice of at least two basic postures toward the patient's problem. One of these is to side with the religious and social mores: namely, agree with that part of him which says he should not do what he wants to do sexually. In this case, you will be siding with the surface claims of the culture and treating him as though his problem is rare, as though homosexuality is extraordinary, or as though its practice is in some way injurious. Unfortunately, you will be locked in a struggle with the patient's whole personal value system. Whatever sense of isolation he may already have is likely to be increased by such treatment. He is apt to suffer renewed anxiety or depression, and you will find yourself in no position to be at all critical of other things, such as various parts of his social behavior. The motivation he has for therapy is likely to decline drastically. And he is now prone to get worse instead of better, if, indeed, he stays with you long enough to effect any change at all.

Or you can take an entirely different posture and side with the patient's right to be himself. You may choose to inform him that although he is outside the cultural recommendation, he is, in fact, within that considerable portion of the population which shares his homosexual practices. Such information may tend to ease or reduce the patient's guilt or anxiety in this area. In any case, you will be recognized as a friend of the most powerful part of him. And with this leverage, you need not tread softly; on the contrary, you will be free to be sharply critical of any part of his social behavior that seems to bring him into direct conflict with society, or with himself. A variety of techniques of this general kind are in use. They all try to help the patient toward a social adjustment which is acceptable, and which is in line with his already well-established pattern of sexual rewards. It is the primary interest of the individual to find his particular

sexual gratification with a minimum of social conflict. It is not the primary interest of the individual to significantly alter his sexual choices.

Of course, when you hold the posture that a patient should be able to exercise any harmless sexual proclivity without getting into direct conflict with contrasting mores, then several things occur. You will certainly find that a high level of motivation is maintained. But the patient may challenge such a liberal attitude, using the occasion to give you society's argument, while simultaneously hoping he will lose that argument. You may also get questions such as, Am I a homosexual? and, Who is a homosexual? In this event, you are faced, not with a simple question, but rather with a whole set of underlying assumptions - most of which are out of kilter with the basic biologic facts of human sexual behavior. Even for the person who is entirely conditioned to homosexual response, the label homosexual, applied as a noun, is likely to carry misleading connotations of peculiarity and bizarreness which do not actually belong to homosexuality per se. It is best to avoid such connotations in the patient's mind, and in your own, if you are going to exert real leverage against any derogatory attitude you may discover in him. When a patient who was previously inhibited and disturbed over homosexual problems comes to accept his preferences, and to feel that he is really an integral part of human society, he is often immediately free of conflict, and able to function at the highest levels of legitimate competition in his work.

Some clinicians believe there is a third alternative in the therapeutic position - a kind of neutral posture in which the therapist sides neither with the social mores nor with the patient's sexual proclivities. But this position, unlike the other two, contains certain inherent dishonesties which spell nothing but trouble. If the patient holds certain guilts, to be silent on these is to imply that he has cause to feel guilty. Furthermore, the neutral position pretends that the therapist has no axe to grind, which is never the case. After all, the therapist is human, and he most definitely holds some position on sexual issues. At bottom, he either believes something in the direction of the mores being sacred, and that nobody has the ability to be happy while going against those mores. Or, he believes that harmless and gratifying sexual experiences outside the mores are feasible, and do not necessarily involve displays that offend the sensibilities of other persons in society.

Now I hope, with all these various observations on the frequency and variety of homosexuality, that I have succeeded in suggesting some of its similarities to heterosexuality. Not the least of these are its origins in learning processes, and the tenacity with which it is capable of staying put against the moralistic opposition that has been brought against it from time to time. Perhaps you have wondered why I have so strongly implied that the homosexual component is easier to come to terms with than to eradicate. There are really two reasons. One has to do with practical necessity, and the other with the essential nature of human adjustment.

As for necessity, let me point out that I am well aware of numerous claims of treatment successes with the homosexual patient. Where success is marked in terms of greater personal efficiency and smoother social integration, the evidence is plentiful. But where basic changes in adult sexual responses are claimed as a result of therapy, we have to be very careful. Mere changes in overt practice do not constitute an adequate criterion. For instance, the Trappist monk who takes an oath of silence and abstinence has certainly changed neither his voice nor his basic sexual responsivity. As for psychotherapy, I know of not one single validated instance of any basic sexual change ever having been accomplished. Nor was the Kinsey Research ever able to find a single instance of any such change. Nor does the issue seem to be of the least importance. Even if there were treatment procedures for successfully revising an individual's whole personal value system, would we be ready to apply those procedures to a third of American males - or even to those millions of persons who are primarily homosexual for their entire lives?

And from the point of view of personal adjustment, it is highly questionable whether any sexual behavior exercised between consenting adults is of any real social importance. From a psychiatric point of view, the thing that counts seems to be the efficiency with which an individual functions in life - his usefulness, his enjoyment, and the success of his human interactions. If society has an interest here, it is certainly in the maintenance of high personal efficiency, and low neurotic effects. In terms of this ideal, the particular sexual responses of individuals hardly seem to be of any major concern.

Good afternoon.

## **DIARY OF ALICE JAMES**

THE DIARY OF ALICE JAMES  
Edited by Leon Edel  
(New York, Dodd, Mead, 1964)

Scholars have in recent years been raiding archives for manuscripts and, after a bit of editorial dusting-off, serving up odd items of dubious literary merit. Often these are the work of fringe writers known for their associations with greater writers, or people whose lives offer some unusual facet to spark interest in them, or people whose family name is famous.

The excuse for the publication of Alice James's rather dull diary is two-fold: Dr. Edel is the acknowledged authority on Alice's famous family, and Alice was one of the Victorian

era's apparently prevalent lesbians. There may be some value in producing a supplementary volume to the many works on the more illustrious members of the James family - Henry the novelist and William the psychologist - but the real reason (and only possible justification) for publication of this book is undoubtedly the long biographical section preceding the diary. This section was written by Dr. Edel, who clearly indicates Alice's sexual nature though he does not use the word Lesbian.

Alice James was born in 1848 in New York City. To add to the trials of being the youngest in a primarily masculine family, with her father and four older brothers balanced only by her mother and her aunt Kate, Alice suffered from a lack of roots because the family traveled incessantly all over Europe at a time when she, unlike Henry and William, was too young to appreciate the benefits of travel.

Soon after the family settled in Newport at the outbreak of the Civil War, the 15-year-old Alice began to have attacks of "neuralgia" which intensified throughout her life. She also was often suicidal and depressed, wanting desperately to escape her world in an age when little or no escape was available for women. Dr. Edel speculates that the reason (or part of it) for Alice's recurring illness was Victorian restrictions on women's activity. This is probably true, yet it must be noted that both Henry and William suffered severe nervous breakdowns during the 1860's, which would suggest an unhappy home atmosphere.

Alice's life changed radically and happily in 1884, and she took the path which was to lead to the writing of the diary. To understand this we must go back to 1879 or 1880 when Alice first met Katharine Peabody Loring. Alice was drawn to Katharine and described her to a friend as having "all the mere brute superiority which distinguishes man from woman, combined with all the distinctively feminine virtues. There is nothing she cannot do from hewing wood and drawing water to driving runaway horses and educating all the women in North America."

The women spent as much time together as possible. Both Henry and William were impressed with their sister's beneficial relationship with Katharine, and favorable references to it appear in the brothers' letters to other members of the family. In 1884, when Katharine had to go to England for family reasons, Alice went with her rather than be separated. Alice's precarious health broke on this voyage. Never becoming strong enough again to re-cross the ocean to America, she lived out her life in England with Katharine at her side.

Henry James commented in letters to his mother on the relationship: he thought Miss Loring "the most perfect" companion Alice could have found, and he said that "Alice seems so extraordinarily fond of Miss Loring that a third person is rather a superfluous appendage." Later, when it was clear the two women were determined to remain together for life, Henry noted that there was "a kind of definite understanding between them" and that "there is about as much possibility of Alice's giving Katharine up as of giving her legs to be sawed off."

Alice began the diary in 1889 and continued it until her death in 1892. Much of her pain at being forced into unwanted passivity by her illness is displayed in the diary, but she also endows with humor the minutiae of her own limited world while offering sharp slaps at the wider British realm surrounding it. The diary is interesting but it would not stand on its own as literature even in the broadest use of the word. The vital parts of the diary are those which throw light on Alice's relationship with Katharine.

Despite some bitterness of tone when referring to always being managed by others (Katharine, and also to some extent brother Henry), Alice probably understood that her life with Katharine had been fulfillment in many ways. She wrote to her brother William, after learning that she had cancer and having received a consoling letter from him, "You must also remember that a woman, by nature, needs much less to feed upon than a man, a few emotions and she is satisfied; so when I am gone, pray don't think of me simply as a creature who might have been something else, had neurotic science been born. ... I have always had a significance for myself, and every chance to stumble along my straight and narrow little path..., and what more can a human soul ask for?"

But for the current surge of interest in lesbians and lesbianism, the diary would probably not have been published. Still, the reader here should find no fault with Dr. Edel for his labor, even though he had to work hard to make Alice sparkle.

- Reviewed by Lennox Strong

## **THE DANGEROUS SEX**

THE DANGEROUS SEX: THE MYTH OF FEMININE EVIL

by H. R. Hays  
(New York, Putnam, 1964)

There are not many books about women that make sense - not even those written by women, much less those written by men. Mr. Hays's book is therefore all the more of an exception, especially since he tries - and succeeds in - writing neither from the women's nor the man's point of view, but from that of a fair and objective observer who does not wish to take sides in the great "battle of the sexes."

For this is what the book is all about - the traditional hostility between men and women, with the women mostly on the receiving (masochistic) end of the deal and the men on the dish-ing out or sadistic end of it. One could hardly expect otherwise in cultures (such as ours) where men have traditionally been the dominant sex and women the second or submissive one.

It is sad to follow Mr. Hays's excellent investigations into the primitive sources of sexual prejudice. If one had found hope in the assumption that prejudice against women is characteristic only of our Judeo-Christian tradition, one is greatly mistaken: women are considered "the dangerous sex" by savages who have never heard the Bible story of how Eve was tempted by the snake and in turn seduced Adam. It seems that most cultures have developed anti-feminist and anti-sex myths of their own, without benefit of the Hebrew prophets or the Christian saints. Why this should be so is not quite clear, though Mr. Hays proposes and infers a number of likely reasons. But it would probably take a full-scale study in itself to get to the bottom of so complex and elusive a problem as man's almost universal fear of woman.

Where Mr. Hays is perhaps most lucid is in making the connection between anti-feminist attitudes, male homosexuality, and Sado-masochism. In so doing he reveals the hidden obscenity of war and violence in general. The implication is, and we fully agree, that we cannot expect a better world without a prior straightening out of basic emotional attitudes about sex and the relations between the sexes. But mankind seems to be a long way from adopting so rational an approach, and thus perpetuates both sexual misery and hostility on a large scale.

If these conclusions are all somewhat melancholy, it is neither our nor Mr. Hays's fault. But as long as sensible books like THE DANGEROUS SEX can be produced and widely read, there is hope. There is even hope that the women themselves will some day wake up and discover that they bought the propaganda of the male aggressors. Meanwhile, women, while clamoring for "equal rights," are defending the proposition of their own inferior status, just as not a few Jews in Nazi Germany agreed with the opinion of the aggressors about themselves.

May Mr. Hays's book hasten the day when women will of their own accord join the human race. And may that day be soon, for time is running out.

- Reviewed by Drs. Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen

The Drs. Kronhausen are psychotherapists and research psychologists. Their writings include PORNOGRAPHY AND THE LAW (Baltimore, 1959) and THE SEXUALLY RESPONSIVE WOMAN (Grove, 1964).

### CONTRIBUTORS!

THE LADDER wants articles, book reviews, news clippings, stories, humor, poetry, and other pertinent materials. Send to Editor Barbara Gittings, c/o DOB National. All submissions will be acknowledged promptly.

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