

The Ladder

75¢

ADULTS
ONLY

A LESBIAN REVIEW

February, 1967





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 Lesbian, enabling her to understand herself and to make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic, and economic implications - by establishing and maintaining a library of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public meetings on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by providing the Lesbian a forum for the interchange of ideas within her own group.
- ② Education of the public, developing an understanding and acceptance of the Lesbian as an individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices - by public discussion meetings and by dissemination of educational literature on the Lesbian theme.
- ③ Encouragement of and participation in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.
- ④ Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposing and promoting changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group through due process of law in the state legislatures.

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THE COVER - The photograph is by Kim S. -- typography by Sandy, and we hope that our Valentine to you will be a hope that LOVE may be enjoyed and celebrated by all people in dignity.

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The Basic Bias

by Dorothy Lyle

An enormous prejudice seriously affects the Lesbian today which has nothing to do with her sexual preferences. This is the automatic prejudice she faces each day because, first and foremost, she is a woman. It is a much more basic discrimination than any sexual bias is likely ever to be, and it radically reduces her status in economic and career opportunities.

In the United States, one woman out of every ten is the sole support of a household. Thus every woman today has a 10% chance of having to support a family in an economy which allows her only a one-half of one percent chance of earning more than \$10,000 per year to support that family.

For the Lesbian, it is true, there will usually not be children to support -- but there are elderly parents and it is to the "unmarried" child that the burden of the parents notoriously falls. Hidden behind the statistics, which do not account for the family status of homosexual couples, there are probably several thousand women, at least, who support a feminine mate. This last circumstance is a matter of choice rather than obligation. But it is equally true that one of the most often-used excuses for paying men better salaries than women who are employed in equal and identical posts is that the men have families to support. These men have, at least theoretically, chosen to support their families. (As an added burden, the Lesbian head of a household does not have the tax advantages, insurance benefits on all levels, etc., which automatically fall to the heterosexual head of a household. A future article will deal specifically with this unwarranted disadvantage.)

In recent years many articles have appeared emphasizing the need for the recruiting of college graduates for executive level business positions. For example, over 40% of the graduates of Harvard during the 1950's wanted business careers. Today only 4% want business careers-- a matter of some concern to our economy. There is a crying need for business executives; yet nowhere is the suggestion made that women might be ideally trained to fill this need -- even though business is a field where women dominate numerically.

The statistics from the field of Librarianship are fantastic. This is a profession where 90% of the practitioners are women.

Yet 84% of the head librarians of the largest college libraries are men. In the public library field where only 6% of the librarians are men, and these primarily concentrated in the large city systems, 5-1/2% are in supervisory positions, usually head librarians or heads of departments.

It becomes a vicious economic circle. Women are less subsidized in most families to help them obtain higher educational degrees--in turn, they earn less and hold less positions. On the other side of the box is the fact that if the head of any business or institution is male, he will probably choose male supervisors.

Even when women have equal positions they are paid less money. In 1963, a comparison showed that women received an average of only 59% of what men were paid on a full-time basis. For the last twenty years women have become increasingly, rather than less, concentrated in the lower-paid, less-skilled jobs. This bias gap is not growing smaller; it is getting bigger!

Any high school teacher of either sex will readily admit that more of the girls are good students than the boys. Why then should only 41% of the girls go on to college as against 56% of the boys?

There are many clerical and mechanical fields screaming for qualified workers-- all general business categories, drafting, computer programming and related lines, etc. There are also professional fields in literally desperate need: teaching, librarianship, engineering on all levels, and medical research (the actual list is endless-- and trades are not even being mentioned here). Without exception, these specified pay their male applicants far greater salaries. Sometimes the difference between qualified workers is as much as \$5000 in beginning wages.

In an impartial random analysis of 1900 large companies, one out of three were found to have dual pay scales in effect for identical jobs. Needless to add that in all cases the woman's scale was the lower one.

The reasons offered by male employers for their preferential treatment of male employees are quite uniform. A quick look at these reasons show a second bias for the single woman and the Lesbian. The major reason cited is that women cost more in "non-wage factors." These "non-wage factors" are impermanence (single women who marry and leave or married women who commit the unpardonable sin of getting pregnant), sickness, absenteeism, and turnover. Most of these reasons seem to hinge on the biological, personal patterns of the married woman and, since married women create most of these statistics simply because there are more of them, the onus falls on the single, widowed, divorced and Lesbian women as well.

In the United States, as a whole, on-the-job training expenditures are divided 1/10 for women workers and 9/10 for men workers, though women workers now constitute 1/3 of the work force.

The answer to these statistical horrors is the largest bias of all and the one most heard; a spoken and sometimes only implied statement that "women are less desirable employees in any executive capacity." Therefore, goes the reasoning--they deserve less training, lesser wages, generally second-rate handling.

However, in 1952, The National Federation of the Business and Professional Women's Clubs began a study which, when completed, showed an astonishing situation. They sent a simple career and family questionnaire to their entire membership. Fully 12% of the members replied -- 17,561 women.

There is room in this article to cite only a very few of the startling facts found -- but I recommend this study (see bibliography) to every one of you who considers herself a human being. You may be surprised to find just how short the end of the stick you are holding is -- in the world of career advancement and salary rewards.

50% of the 17,561 women had salaries under \$3000 per year. Yet 33% of these 17,561 women had college degrees. (Only 5% of the female population of the United States as a whole, has a college degree.) In 1950 more than 50% of all women workers in the United States earned less than \$2000 per year.

These 17,561 women clearly constituted a privileged group --with a much higher educational ratio than the general population, and 38.6% of these women held professional positions as compared to 23.2% of the nation's women workers as a whole. But only 1% of the 17,561 women reported a salary of \$10,000 per year or more. As a means of comparison, 9% of all of the employed males in the United States in the 1950 census earned \$10,000 or more per year, regardless of type of employment.

The final argument against these women would be marital status--the bias previously cited -- yet of the 17,561 women, 44% were single, 33% were married, and 23% were widowed, divorced or separated. Thus 67% of them could not possibly have deserved the general onus described previously as "nonwage factors." (it is interesting to note, too, that most of these women were older women, and these are less likely to be marrying and getting pregnant.)

Some of the statistics in this article will come as a shock to those of you cushioned by our reasonably comfortable standards--particularly to those of you who have jumped the statistical barrier to find positions where you are fairly paid for your services. It is hard to believe that the minority most sinned against economically is actually an enormous majority ---- well over half of the human race is, after all, female.

Many otherwise intelligent and informed women have for years adopted the ostrich-in-the-sand attitude that once the suffragists did their work and we won the vote, that nothing remained

to be done. It is not so --there really are miles to go to reach even adequate fair wage and employment standards for all women.

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Her Infinite Variety

by Del Martin

A REVIEW OF A REVIEW

The complicated role of woman in our modern society has, at long last, been brought under more and more scrutiny. An honest effort to understand and evaluate women as individuals, as persons (not withstanding the traditional roles of wife and mother and the demeaning occupation of housewife) has been demonstrated in literature by such authors as Morton Hunt, Betty Freidan, Marya Mannes and Ashley Montague, in staging such symposia as "The Potential of Women" by such learned institutions as the University of California Medical School, and in the appointment of Commissions of the Status of Women by the government both at the federal and state level.

Offered as an alternate selection by the Book-of-the-Month Club, Her Infinite Variety by Morton M. Hunt presents the thesis "that when woman envisions herself as a whole person and harmoniously combines all the roles needful to her in modern life, she has the best chance of being enduringly feminine in a civilized, sophisticated sense, functioning well as a homemaker and as a mother to her children, proving a good mistress and friend to her husband, and being not only a valuable asset to her society, but a reasonably happy, fulfilled, and self-approving human being."

But, interestingly enough, reviewer Clifton Fadiman points out, "Whether it can be reduced to practice is another matter, and whether males, that obtuse sex, are willing to and able to cooperate is still a third matter. Many all-purpose women have tried to follow Mr. Hunt's recipe and broken down under the strain. Yet, quite properly, they are not content to retrogress to the one-purpose condition, to simplify themselves into the 'mere housewife.' The complicated life is doubtless better than the traditional narrow one--but perhaps only a (rich) superwoman can lead it successfully."

Himself a male, Mr. Fadiman takes Hunt to task for his traditional masculine viewpoint, "Like most males, Mr. Hunt of course assumes that woman's function is determined by biology--that most women must in the course of nature become wives and mothers. At no time does he entertain the possibility, perhaps a fanciful one, that wifehood and motherhood are only apparently, and by accident of our transitory societal structure, the inevitable functions of women. Perhaps they are really specialties, to be practiced only by a superior minority. Many men, if you can get them drunk enough, will confess that fatherhood, and even husbandhood, requires an expertise that they do not command, or at least only sporadically. It is a curious fact that a man has to pass an examination before he can become an electrician, whereas almost anyone is presumed capable of marriage."

As a woman who has spent forty-five years in search of her identity in this modern world and who has in the process attempted to act out the many roles Mr. Hunt describes, I would certainly like to see Mr. Fadiman pursue his "fancy." Life's experience clearly shows that there are many women biologically capable of bearing children who have no bent or talent for raising them; ironically there are many other women physically incapable of having their own children who have all the attributes required of motherhood. But in our society any woman who has children is automatically considered to be the epitome of motherhood, and the barren woman who wishes to adopt a child finds the exacting requirements of the adoption agencies to be prohibitive. And all the while we continue to voice a crying need for foster homes!

Any psychiatrist will certainly admit that fertility and productivity has nothing to do with motherhood (rearing and care of, that is)--witness the allusions to the overbearing, dominant mother theme expounded relative to the causation of homosexuality in their offspring. On the other hand, all of the good doctor's efforts will nonetheless be expended in trying to get the reluctant woman to accept her role in life as wife and mother. Otherwise the poor dear will be "unfulfilled" and her femininity denied.

I agree with Mr. Hunt that woman must envision herself as a whole person, and I further agree with Mr. Fadiman that there is a possibility (a very strong possibility and not a fanciful one) that wifehood and motherhood is not the inevitable function of women.

It is indeed time that woman not only envisioned herself as a whole person, but that she be regarded in our society as a human being and not just a slot machine composed of a vagina, uterus and breasts to be pumped and pulled first by a male operator and nine months later by the jack pot that drops from the slot.

Perhaps this is a strongly worded description of the reproductive process, and I will no doubt be assailed as a lesbian who is showing her "fear of and aversion to men, hostility towards her mother (or is it the father?) and penis envy," but the fact remains that very often in our society, despite lip service to the contrary, woman is so regarded. And she comes to feel like a utility and not a person.

To the theses of Mr. Hunt and Mr. Fadiman I would add my own: Woman must be freed from the bondage of her biological organs in order to become the whole person that she is. And to this premise I would also add: Man must be freed from the bondage of his genitalia in order to become the whole person that he is.

We live in a sick society that glorifies sexuality while repressing it, that conditions its citizens to fixed roles based upon arbitrary standards of what is masculine and feminine, atrophying the creative potential of human beings by forcing them into molds they do not fit.

Certainly lesbians are conditioned -- a sort of conditioning in reverse. The conditioning towards heterosexuality which we all receive from birth just didn't take. The roles that were foisted upon us as little girls from the time a doll was first placed in our arms we have rejected. We may not have known where we were headed, but we did have some pretty definite ideas of what we did not want to become. The superficial young thing that Madison Avenue and Hollywood have ballyhooed is just that--shallow, false, empty. The devious female who works her wiles upon the unsuspecting male in order to achieve her own ends--dishonest, untrue to herself. The nagging wife, the demanding shrew--frustrated, degraded, devoid of self worth. The dominant, overbearing mother burying her disappointment and frustration in hopes for the future generation she is destroying--the perpetual treadmill. The all-purpose housewife and mother -- superwoman without a soul of her own.

These are not woman. Woman is a state of consciousness, not a mold or a role. Woman is mind, emotion, feeling, beingness, -- soul, if you will. Allowed to be free, to grow and to expand her consciousness beyond the limitations of her biological reproductive capacity, there is no telling what heights she may reach, what deeds she may accomplish to the benefit of herself, her family and the society in which she lives.

Mindful of the dangers of a population explosion, science fiction writers have long been envisioning a society which limits reproduction of the human species and leaves the direction of the ma-

turation process of the offspring to those who have the training and talent for it. This, too, may not be so fanciful a thesis. At least it is one suggestion by which we may free woman to find her identity as a whole person -- as herself.

The Lyon Lived up to Her Name

by Lennox Strong

Emma Lyon, daughter of a blacksmith and cook, was born about 1761. Her widowed mother worked for the Earl and Countess of Halifax until Emma was fourteen, when her mother decided to move to London.

A servant's child, Emma became a servant herself, and her early life was far from pleasant. Her very remarkable beauty, which early attracted scores of males, did not in any sense ease her burdens. On the other hand, it is no doubt that her beauty was the primary reason for her rise from servant to world-famous inspiration of artists, mistress and wife of men of noble family, ambassadress, idol of Lord Nelson, the most celebrated man of his time, and favorite of Maria Caroline, Queen of Naples.

Emma's first important step up in the world was her marriage, cleverly handled by her, to Sir William Hamilton on the 6th of September, 1791. Hamilton was ambassador at the court of Ferdinand and Maria Caroline. For two years before the marriage Emma tried in vain to meet Queen Maria Caroline. Ironically, just after her marriage, Emma first met Marie Antoinette (also noted for her Lesbian tendencies) the powerful sister of Maria Caroline. Marie Antoinette was so taken with Lady Hamilton that she provided her with a letter of introduction to Queen Maria Caroline. Thus the Queen of France produced the second step up in the world for our social climbing subject by getting her into the presence of Caroline, who was to be Emma's only known feminine lover.

Maria Caroline was instantly enchanted with Emma -- to the point of obvious, almost silly, infatuation. Maria Caroline had been extremely sheltered, as would be normal in her social position, whereas Emma was little more than a high-class courtesan. Emma, had started her life as a child of the streets, and through her tales, Caroline saw a life she hadn't known really existed. At

second hand a rough and often dirty life seems exciting. The two women spent a great deal of time together and the court gossips made much of it.

Hamilton knew of his wife's relationship with the Queen, but being a professional court diplomat, he wisely turned a blind eye to it. In fact, he used Emma to find out information from Maria Caroline which might not otherwise have been obtainable-- and he forwarded it to the English Court.

The enormity of the political events of the time, the French Revolution (which concerned her personally, as well as politically) upset Maria Caroline very much and in her distress she turned more and more to the company of Lady Hamilton. Emma began to spend most of her nights with the queen, and this really added to the gossip, since common people do not normally visit royal beds. Rather, when such visitations occur, gossip results, and it really had a racy air under these circumstances.

As is often true, where lovers are part of a larger destiny, these women were separated by forces they could not control. In 1800 Emma went to London. The parting was tragic -- as one biographer put it: "They embraced long, as if to encompass in one last kiss all those they had exchanged for seven years."

Emma Hamilton went on to make notorious history as Lord Nelson's mistress, bearing him a child, and though they planned to marry, this was never accomplished. She died years later in Calais, France, completely destitute and forgotten. Historians, interested in her connection with Nelson and with Queen Caroline resurrected her memory and many biographies have been written about this servant who rose from the gutter, only to return to it.

The later years of Maria Caroline were less interesting, despite her regal position. She died in 1814, one year before Emma died penniless. Only one small item in Maria's later history proves interesting. In 1802, just two years after the forced separation from Emma Hamilton, Maria Caroline had a fascinating visitor, Lady Hester Stanhope, the handsome six-foot world adventuring and travelling Lesbian. The two became "easy allies" to quote one biographer; and somehow, this is easily believable.

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3 POEMS by STORMY

BAR MEETING

gray looks; soft shy
cat looks
across the
noise and the
Others.

Protocol.
("You with Anybody?")

the beer
sloshes
down the glass
to your coiled
fingers.

("No!")

and--therefore--
your fingers are
damp
as they
lift the
glass
to your
lips
again.

*eyes the color of cool
seas
have blood
beneath,
and sleepless ache makes
them
crack and
show their
angry
vulnerability.*

*a finger-nail paring, blood tinged
littered on
my*

*sky.
not the soiled plate of
yesterday, but
like excrescency;
like disregard.
like the refuse
of god's
fastidiousness.*

On the Rejection of the Status Quo

by Irene Fiske

The homosexual public is often guilty of the same prejudices, in reverse, that they meet from heterosexuals. Thus the lesbian who tells everyone how much she hates men, and the male homosexual who will blanch in disgust at being forced into the company of a woman for a few moments. Others adopt a tone of protective coloration which goes something like this: "I feel we should reject homophile marriage because marriage is just imitating heterosexuals and it doesn't work very well for them, either," or like this: "We should reject _____ because it is outmoded and based on our Judeo-Christian heritage." That blank space is deliberate, and can be filled in with any number of items, whatever the speaker has found socially uncomfortable personally.

Obtaining the social, legal and religious rights which homosexuals are now denied, may take one hundred years more---but we do not individually aid our own cause by side-stepping every issue of responsibility as individuals. More, even if some aspect of accepting responsible behavior is unpalatable, we do not have to broadcast our individual failures. From time to time the homophile press is guilty of doing this---presenting a small part of homosexual behavior in such a way that it appears, to the uninitiated reader, to reflect the behavior of the ENTIRE GROUP.

The man-hater and the misogynic male homosexual have every right to their opinion or personal feelings, but they have no right to broadcast them publically where it can damage the overall group. The same goes for the well-worded anti-marriage speakers. What they are really saying is that they prefer to "sleep around" and that they don't want any strings attached. Fine again, do as you please by all means, but keep your mouth shut, particularly in print. No, I am not advocating censorship---just common sense.

Casually reading the total press effort by homosexuals in the past ten years, would easily lead an outsider to believe that almost all homosexuals reject stable relationships, "marriages." Yet we know that this is simply not the case. Almost all lesbians desire permanent relationships and a far larger proportion of male homosexuals look for permanence than is generally realized. The reasons for this are quite simple, the rewards are far greater. Our Judeo-Christian moral law background has no-

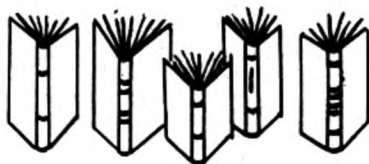
thing to do with this. Any casual glance at anthropology shows that some form of marriage exists in even the most primitive societies. Heterosexuals do not marry to have children; that is one of the least likely reasons for marriage. People, whether homosexual or heterosexual, marry because of the multitude of purely selfish benefits. People live longer, sleep easier, eat better, enjoy generally better physical health, etc. in pairs. This can be easily statistically documented.

Every group has its nay-sayers, and they are usually the noisiest of the lot. The well-adjusted square homosexual is likely to sit back and say nothing, being far too busy simply being happy in this world. But it is up to the well-adjusted to do a little quiet yelling, lest we give, as a group, a totally erroneous view to the world outside.

We are sometimes in danger of forgetting that the majority of us are indistinguishable from the heterosexuals around us. It is dangerous to forget this because it is this one point which will someday bring us the legislative, moral climate, and social changes we must have to function fully and equally in the world.

Lesbiana

by Gene Damon



For years people have kidded me about my fascination with gay literature. So I offer you an opportunity to have a good laugh at my expense. Last September I read a notice about a forthcoming mystery called BEWARE OF THE BOUQUET, by Joan Aiken, about a gay gal. Turns out that this is a book rated good for "young adult" readers and concerns a mild mystery centering around a cosmetic firm called "Gay Gal Cosmetics Company".....You can't win them all.

The youngsters won't go for THE BELFAST FRIENDS, by Janet McNeill, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1966, but those of you who have been around a little longer will enjoy this story of a group of friends, from childhood, who stay in touch with one another through the years. The leader of the ladies, and the novel's strongest character, is 52 year old Sarah Vincent, a Latin teacher known as "Daddy" Vincent to her female pupils. Sarah's is an unfulfilled life, marred by her lifelong unspoken love for another of the group, Helen, a divorcee, who feels the wrinkles of age settling on her and thus turns more and more to Sarah for the compliments which feed her sagging ego. Pleasant reading, slightly old-fashioned in tone.

A little plug for Mary Renault's latest novel, THE MASK OF APOLLO, N. Y., Pantheon, 1966. Again this is a dip into classical homosexuality, and the slight Lesbian reference is too minor to record--but the book is magnificent and for all readers, though dealing, of course, with male homosexuals.

FAST START, FAST FINISH, by Stephen Birmingham, N.Y., New American Library, 1966, is another in the endless chain of suburbia novels. It is entertaining enough, though the author's inability to draw convincing characters shows up far too often. There are a variety of male homosexuals in minor roles and one Genny McCarthy, a repressed Lesbian with a major part to play in the novel's action. She is not well drawn, but it is another good example of the havoc wreaked on the repressed personality. Genny raises hell with the whole neighborhood and it is painfully apparent that all she needs to cut down that smouldering tension is a girl.

A minor English novelist, Jane Duncan, has been doing a loosely connected series of novels designed (supposedly) for a genteel female audience. One of these, MY FRIEND COUSIN EMMIE, N.Y., St. Martin's Press, 1964, 1965, turns out to be a real surprise. I won't tell you the plot, but do read it -- that light, airy tone will fool you, at first.

Few of the non-fiction treatments of Lesbianism seem to me to offer much constructive information. One of the exceptions to this is THE ALCOHOLIC WOMAN, by Dr. Benjamin Karpman, which first appeared in 1948 from Linacre Press. It has been reprinted as a paperback by Lancer, 1966. It is not happy reading, dealing primarily with women who have fought their homosexual leanings in rather weird ways. The author has much to say about self-acceptance, and he is very sympathetic.

Previous mention was made in THE LADDER of the English play, THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE, by Frank Marcus. At that time it was available only in an English magazine. It has been reprinted in its entirety in the November, 1966 issue of ESQUIRE MAGAZINE. It is must reading, a black comedy, but good, and in my opinion, sympathetic and moving.

The legal attacks on Radclyffe Hall over THE WELL OF LONELINESS provoked a rash of parodies of the book. A humorous and generally harmless one was recently brought to my attention. It is called THE WELL OF SLEEVELESSNESS: A TALE FOR THE LEAST OF THESE LITTLE ONES, and was written by P. R. Stephensen and published in London by the Scholartis Press, 1929. As the title indicates it is patterned on the children's stories of the day, and it has clever, though not particularly original, verses and illustrations.

Not so ugly, really, but just plain dull, are the lives of the bohemian characters in London's Portobello Road area as shown by Cressida Lindsay, in her novel, NO, JOHN, NO, London, Anthony Blond, 1966. There is Terry, the butchy Lesbian, who seems to

be the only honestly employed member of the cast. She loses the novel's protagonist, Kate, because Kate is an uncommitted and uncollected drifter. There is Rose, a likeable slut, hung up on a no-good guitar playing bum, etc. And lastly, for Kate, there is Anne, the young American girl, who loves her and wants the love to last. But for Kate, love is a way station on an endless journey. The book ends, as it begins, drifting. You forget it when you turn the last page -- sad, considering the labor that goes into to any book, even a poor one. Miss Lindsay has a talent, but needs direction as do her characters.

The Lesbian role in Margaret Laurence's latest and most successful novel, *A JEST OF GOD*, N.Y., Knopf, 1966 is relatively minor. Story concerns a frustrated 34 year old school teacher, Rachel, who has an affair, falsely believes herself pregnant, and uses the confidence gained from the experience to break away from a dominating mother. She leaves her dead-end job as well, and heads, presumably, toward a better life. One of Rachel's teacher friends, Calla, is in love with her, and tries to help her through the rough spots. Calla's portrait is not an unkind one--though one might object to the showing of her as less than physically clean (unlikely in a group which has virtually nothing in common except almost fanatical cleanliness). The novel is very well written and holds your interest, even though Miss Laurence has not yet overcome a tendency to write using cold, distant tones.

The unwashed and unlovely have seldom been less happily treated than in Jennifer Dawson's scathing novel, *THE COLD COUNTRY*, London, Anthony Blond, 1966. About Dick, a hapless English bastard, and his affair with Zay, a beat type grubby female child. Zay lives with Mabel, a bus conductress, and has been, in the past, Mabel's property. Mabel, ham-handed and heavy-footed though she is, is the most prepossessing member of the worthless cast. Ugly stuff ... one wonders about the presumed audience.

For those readers who cannot stand a steady diet of fiction, the fields of biography and autobiography offer welcome change. As time permits searching them out, I hope to be able to report on a fairly large number of these titles in the coming months. The 1940 autobiography of novelist I.A.R. Wylie, *MY LIFE WITH GEORGE* (Random House), is subtitled, "An Unconventional Autobiography," and in many ways it is, particularly for the times in which it is written. There was an age of sophistication crossed with innocence in this country from the end of the First World War to the beginning of the Second World War, and this book shows this dual influence. Miss Wylie never married, and spent the majority of her adult life living with several older women. She refers to these women as "mothers." The entire book is of interest, but the section from page 282 to 288 which begins, "I have always liked women better than men," is of major importance.

Cross Currents and miscellany

"A WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY"

During a talk at UCLA recently, Mary Dublin Keyserling said that she would like to explode a myth. Miss Keyserling is director of the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor.

"It distresses me that so many people think it is a waste of time and money to educate women for careers. It is a myth that they are not worth training because their work life expectancy is so short."

She cited statistics which show that single working women in their mid-thirties will work longer than the average of all men. The married woman without children will work for 25 years and the married woman with children has a work life expectancy of 24-1/2 years.

"I just don't think there is any such thing as sex among brains," she said. "The need for brains is so overpowering that the distinction between men's work and women's work will be broken down."

Mrs. Keyserling offered that "the ladder is there" but many women need a push to get up on the rungs.

She praised Title IV of the Civil Rights Act which bars discrimination in employment as a "step forward in opening jobs to all people," but said that she would like to see it strengthened.

CONVENTION SEQUEL or *The Way of Politics*. . . .

Robert A. Gonzales, president of the San Francisco Chapter of the Mexican-American Political Association and the first political candidate to receive widespread backing from the homophile community in his 1965 bid for a seat on the city's Board of Supervisors, was elected vice president of the statewide MAPA at their convention in San Francisco August 20. Mr. Gonzales had been scheduled to speak at the DOB Convention, but regretfully was unable to make an appearance because of conflicting dates and interests.

More recently Mr. Gonzales was appointed by Mayor John F. Shelley to the Human Rights Commission, although he is still a strong contender for appointment to the vacancy left on the Board by the elevation of Supervisor George R. Moscone to the State Senate in the recent election. Gonzales has backing from a large number of

groups representing a wide cross-section of the city's citizens (including the Negro, Spanish speaking, Indian, Chinatown and Homophile communities).

Names of the two women speakers at the DOB Convention, Supervisor Dorothy von Beroldingen and Assistant District Attorney Janet Aitken, were submitted to Governor Edmund G. Brown as candidates for the municipal court judiciary when Judge Lenore Underwood announced she would resign her post at age 77. However, the retiring Governor declared that he was breaking with a 35-year San Francisco tradition and would not be appointing a woman to fill the vacancy because of "prior commitments." Both of these women were eminently qualified, and DOB joins other women of San Francisco in suggesting that Brown relinquish his heritage as native son and continue to look for residence and employment in southern California! Judge Underwood, in the meantime postponed her retirement until Feb. 28, 1967 in hopes that Governor Reagan may be persuaded to appoint a woman to the San Francisco Bench.

Douglas Corbin, senior attorney for the Public Defender's office, and the speech he delivered at the DOB Convention concerning legal problems of the homosexual has been very much in demand. Encores, at the request of the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, have been offered by this able, affable and witty spokesman at seminars set up for the California Episcopal Diocesan Council in September and again in December for fifteen Bay Area clergymen of the Pacific Southwest Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. The latter session was also attended by the Rev. Robert Herhold of the Synod's Social Ministry Committee, and by Mr. George McDonald, Western Regional Director of the Commission on Evangelism.

U. S. WOMEN AND THE MACHINE

Modern mechanized society may unintentionally have made American women the loneliest, hardest-working, most isolated women who have ever lived, according to Dr. Roger Revelle, director of Harvard's center for population studies. A modern "trap-effect" is that technology often makes it possible and necessary for a woman to run her own household alone, thus trapping her in the necessity of doing all the work and having no company but that of small children. (Ed. note: We have not been bothered with this problem. We have all the technological doo-dads to make housework simple except the one that turns on the motivation and the one that provides the time.)

LESBOS WAS NEVER LIKE THIS !

The Greeks have a "sex-swap" holiday! In the village of Monoklisia, January 8 is the annual male-female swap-day.

A foreign news service says that the Greeks city-fathers and the

fun-loving citizenry wish to make their dreary winter more "gay" and the observance of this holiday may spread far and wide.

It goes like this: Starting at dawn, the husbands get up and begin the household chores. They cook breakfast, do the morning clean-up, mess up the laundry and do all the baby things like feeding, diapering, burping, etc. Meanwhile, the women go about "men's business." (Whatever that may be.)

Any man who leaves the house and shows his face on the street on this day is doused with water by all females who spot him. Of course, a few brave ones don women's clothes and try to sneak out to the local stag tavern, but they usually get caught and doused before they have any time to get soused.

It is reported that the cafeneion, a sanctum sanctorum of male supremacy, is desecrated by girlish chatter; card games and backgammon go on in every corner, if with less skill, with much more gusto than usual.

On the 9th, a weary, dreary bunch of men return to their usual tasks with their wives, nursing hangovers, try to undo whatever damage their spouses have caused in the home.

(We wonder why this is an annual affair. It would seem that one time in one generation would be enough.)

IS LOVE A 4-LETTER WORD?

We pose this question on the cover this month. We were recently advised of a most unpleasant New Year's Eve in Los Angeles. Real "police-brutality" in raids on gay bars...mostly men, but certainly persons. We are always happy to print the good news out of San Francisco, but we don't seem to get any from other cities and we hope that this is the fault of our informants rather than the true picture, but we really know better.

This month we celebrate St. Valentine's Day and, presumably this is some sort of a holy day in the service of Love.

We hope that just about any sane thing done in the service of Love should be, might be given some consideration -- not just quickly condemned if it does not seem to conform to that which is "in the establishment's book."

THE LADDER salutes LOVE. Maybe if we work real hard this year, we can find enough benign 4-letter words to mess up the concept of the words that have made a slum of human emotion. HAPPY ST. VALENTINE'S DAY!!!!

The New York Chapter of DOB announced a "FIRST ART EXHIBITION AND SALE" for last December. In the announcement it was said that "appropriate refreshments will be served." We wonder about this and hope to get further information as to the success of this effort. We also hope to learn what sort of art

fits refreshments appropriately. Out here in Los Angeles where our supervisors watch over art most carefully, hemlock might be appropriate....they actually air-brushed the penis off the Christ Child on "The Holy Family with St. Elizabeth, the Infant St. John and Two Shepherds" by Bonifazio di Pitati (Veronese). This castration was performed for the reading and "looking" public in our local press. The original painting hangs in our County Museum of Art. It was the gift from a man well known to the offended (and offending) press -- William Randolph Hearst.

CAN YOU SPARE A THOU?

Not everybody knows about SIECUS. (Sex Information and Education Council of the U. S.)

Maybe the reason a lot of us don't know about it is that they address their appeal to the heavy donor. They say "a gift of \$1000 will enable us to help set up a program....."

But -- don't let this levity sway you. We think that it is a good thing that there is an organization such as SIECUS in operation. They tell us that in the U.S. today, one in every six brides goes to the altar pregnant. When one partner is a teenager, it is one in three; when both are teenagers it is one in two. Rightly they say that "these statistics are shocking from both the standpoint of human health and happiness and the public welfare."

They profess to be concerned with frank discussion and constructive action. We will write and ask them about how frank and knowledgeable they may be on homosexuality. Then, we may, indeed fit into that inner circle of heavy donors --- if their answer makes sense.

HEY! LIKE HELP! ALREADY

We moved into a new area of publishing the LADDER with the January issue. We are supposed to have "billboard, provocative type covers." Your Editor has been just about as provoked as possible and as to billboard -- the "bill" part seems to stop the creative impulse. All of you wonderful artists and photographers out in "reader-land" can help a lot by sending us your material for our consideration. The reason for the new cover idea is that we are now on many news stands throughout the country. We have a very good monopoly on this particular type of magazine, but our distributor thinks we need to give some sort of semi-shocking appearance. Since your editor is a semi-archaic old fuddyduddy who practically knits her own book-covers (how else can you hide those titles at work?) we need assistance. Help? !

Try to protect all of your dates this year. They are getting increasingly fragile and time is getting less elastic.

POETIC INCIDENTS BY Phyllis M. Rogers.

*day mingles with the hour
on a jobless thursday quiet
afternoon and forsythia
in a tall vased glass*

L. 11.

well

the world is in my eyes

*I reach to up and break
a fingernail
on slanted wall or is
it sloping ceiling*

sloping

*what clock is it to time
or time to clock
dimensions four*

*the lamb of march roars forth
a lion with forsythia sprig
in naked decoration
on thursday
quiet*

hello.

on glass

wings

starlings

bushfull

a stone in

my palm frees

itself

flashily crashing

?what is this splinter

sticking out

of my soul

*the shadow of reality
fades into shadow and impermanence
is the key -- and only in
impermanence is there*

reality --

and only the shadow is real --

Readers Respond

Ed. Note: It is no longer the policy of THE LADDER to print the letters which praise us. We feel that those which condemn are more useful for the stirring of interest in our problems and our efforts for improvement. However, The Editor appreciates your kindest comments and to those many who have written to comment on the content of recent issues, kindly refraining from fully expected exhortation on the technical quality, we say THANK YOU -- thank you very much. There are many evenings when we get all this together and send it off to the printer (?) and then sit down to read the pleasant mail. It helps a lot. Hopefully we will iron out our technical problems soon and then we will have both content and appearance to offer for your approval. Thank you all for whatever you submit -- we want your arrows and your roses -- whatever motivates you to respond to us makes us know that we are fulfilling our primary purpose -- TO COMMUNICATE WITH WOMEN.

Normally (whatever that is) we solicit for the Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarship Fund in our DOB Chapters. However, it is a fact that this year in our very affluent society we are quite short on funds. We have given scholarships from this fund since its inception and we will continue to do so. These scholarships are not limited to "Lesbians." They are for women. Should any of our readers be interested in contributing to this fund or if more information is desired on this most important and worthy project, write to the Daughters of Bilitis, Del Martin, Treas., 3470 Mission Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94110.

Dr. Baker was a psychiatrist in the San Francisco Area for many years. In the formative years of the DOB she spoke many times for our groups and she published much material that was pioneering in the field of acceptance of the homophile as other than a "sick" person. Her supportive therapy and her willingness to express the unpopular opinion in those early days made her greatly beloved by the homophile community. Accordingly, when the DOB reached a point where they felt that it was possible to "cut up their very small pie," we chose to give scholarships to some worthy woman in each community where there is a DOB Chapter. We believe that this is our greatest possible tribute to "Doc" for she so fervently performed the "truth." And truth is sometimes available through education.

This is the Editor's letter to you. Thank you for your attention. Now on to what you have to say to us.

Madame Editor:

I was very interested in the letter signed "Anne, Virginia", which appeared in the December, 1966 issue of THE LADDER. I agree with her that we must emphasize our status as women rather than our status as Lesbians and I sympathize with her feeling that we need more about the girls and less about the boys in THE LADDER. However, many of the problems she wishes would be discussed (as you point out in your Editor's note)...The problem involving discovery of Lesbianism (by others) was covered lengthily in the "Living Propaganda" series of articles run during 1963 and 1964 in many issues. Both views of this issue were covered, by writers in favor of hiding under bushels and others who favored judicious education of those around them to further better understanding and freer personal lives with less fear. A variety of articles have appeared about the means of telling one's family about one's personal life, among them, "To Tell or Not to Tell," by Vern Niven, in THE LADDER for February, March 1965. There have also been a multitude of articles about the relationship between homosexual women (or men) and the organized churches (of whatever denomination).

Most of all, we do need to hear less and less about meetings and gatherings and more and more about people. What they do and say and feel and fear and love and want. In a sense the magazine, THE LADDER, has always been the most humanized of the magazines in the entire homophile movement. We need to emphasize this position, strengthen it, not lessen it, ever.

On the other hand, we cannot wholly abdicate all sense of responsibility to a universal position of generally better living conditions. The primary reason to favor legalized Lesbian marriage is NOT to tie the Lesbian to a "stuffy" ritual which emphasized child-bearing, but to make it possible for the Lesbian to have the legal, tax, property rights, inheritance and insurance benefits which automatically fall to every heterosexual couple the instant they legally marry.

One item in the letter from "Anne" truly requires answering. It is true that a male reviewer, Leo Ebreo, has appeared in the magazine several times, but if she is referring to the reviews by Gene Damon, she should be assured that Gene Damon is not a man. I think I can safely say I am the authority on THAT question.

-Gene Damon-

Editor:

My friend and I thank you very much for running the speech, "What Concrete Steps Can Be Taken to Further the Homophile Movement," by D. O. B.'s new president, Shirley Willer, in the November issue of THE LADDER. It is refreshing to hear someone talk about common sense instead of Utopia. It all boils down to work -- and more work. Now what we need are workers. Any volunteers.....?

B. G. & H. B.

PRE-POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS
OF A SPLENDID CAT . . .

There probably is no sense at all to the theory that for every cat there is a Lesbian. (I can't recall the source of that wisdom...possibly it was a genetic memory from some educated ancestor of mine.) Probably some perfectly deserving feline is living in a heterosexual home today because I am the result of the quick action, the remarkable taste and the excessive devotion to the seemingly helpless resolved in not one but four Lesbians!

Being naturally born with closed eyes -- a very sensible arrangement if one is to get any rest at all ---- I was not aware of the festive surroundings on my initial birthday. I was later told that national flags were flying, parades were held in obscure parts of town and department stores held special sales. It was a National Semi-Holiday -- June 14th. (For any dogs who might be reading -- and dogs are notoriously lacking in patriotic fervor, being pretty much attached to one-to-one relationships without any sensible regard for politics, June 14th is Flag Day in the greater part of the United States. I have heard that they have a different flag in the Southern part of the country, but since it was fairly obvious from the beginning that I would be a combination of the best of black and white, I studiously avoid any discussions of color. Race and creed, I shall be happy to discuss lengthily as we go along.)

It is so easy to digress, I must be very careful to punctuate. You see, Lesbians are all persons and no one is more sure of that than they, so that having four of them babbling over me, I was forced at an unmercifully early age to listen and think along several channels of concern at one and the same time. This isn't too easy when one's ears are still recessive.

Somewhere in those first few moments when I emerged from my mother's womb -- there was a messy length of cord, so I am forced to concede that this was not a metaphysical happening -- much nonsense occurred all about me. First, my mother simply split the scene and whatever was chasing her missed me. Being quite self-involved at the time of my birth, I held this action against my mother for a very long time. I felt that she had deserted me ...even though she had no chance whatever to come back and claim me, had it been her intention to. These two utterly mad females in leather, perfume, make-up, conflicting scents of all kinds and with all sorts of frightening reassurances about some other people who had theories about the only way to "get a cat:" They heard me crying...clear out to the street...Sunset Blvd., I believe it was, and they came and plucked me out of the weeds at the very center of a very vacant lot. It was just as well be-

cause the miserable dampness of my sparse coat was beginning to gel and I felt utter disaster to be impending. Somehow they managed to clean me up a bit with the roughest damned tongue I could imagine. They called it a terry towel and I was doomed to know that sort of fabric for months. They dipped their fingers in some manner of food and rubbed my mouth with them. It seemed like only the polite thing to do, so I licked appreciatively. It seemed like only the polite thing to do, so I licked appreciatively. It tasted simply awful, but my inward processes seemed somewhat the better for a time.

And then we went out on the town, I wrapped in the "terry" and they wrapped in all sorts of giggling, growling, ins-and-outs of conversation.

Do you know? They were absolutely right. In a few hours, just as I was becoming very much aware of some sort of emptiness, the two others appeared and they kept saying "it's the only way to get a cat." Whatever that meant, it became quite clear that I, the cat, had been got...or is that 'had'?

There was an awful lot of confusion for a time. Some sort of celebration took place and I assumed that it was in honor of my birth. Eventually, the second pair of women took me and left the multitude and we went for a long ride. After several naps, I was rudely awakened in what was to be my home, apparently, by one pair of hands holding me in an inoperative position -- on my back, of all the indignities imaginable!--while another set of busy fingers forced a glass instrument into my mouth and began to pump some sort of liquid into me. Will you believe that this sort of nonsense went on for months? Not only that, they recognized a certain reluctance on my part to defecate in the presence of ladies and insisted on managing this process with wet cotton balls! (I hate to admit it now -- I absolutely would not admit it then, but they were right in what they were doing). Pride is no good substitute for knowledge and experience and I had much to learn in my lonely cat-world for many weeks to come. People are very well meaning and the more of them you get in one room with one defenseless kitten, the more well-meanness you achieve. Any two, four, six, eight or in the more unpleasant cases, nine of them can exhibit fierce stroking, sadistic whisker pulling, and all of this accompanied by strange comments uttered in a language that seemed to have no other part in the culture. I later heard one of my staff refer to this as "cruddy baby-talk," and I suspect that she did not care much for it. A few days later she took me in the car to a very busy and fascinating place where she worked and apparently this activity was necessary to my well-being, for there seemed to be some complicated exchanges of paper and unkind words before we arrived at simple sustenance. There were some things uttered that I have not fully understood even here in my reflective years. Whatever do you suppose "up-your-bracket!" could mean? I think it had something to do with a holiday around

April 15th. Of course, there is no possible understanding of words like "butch," "femme," "ki-ki" and so on. They are still talking about these very things today (after all these years!) to new ears and possibly new and empty heads.

Oh, there I go off into levels and levels of time again and I haven't told you anything about my youth.

One of these perfectly nice, but utterly inane, women who had been assigned to me took the attitude that she should fill in for my mother and teach me such basic classes as Sand-Box I, Tree-Climbing 200-A and Do-As-I-Tell-You 1-2-3. It took me nearly a month to communicate to her that I, personally, did not need a mother for any purpose other than the acts of conception and birth. And, believe this or not, I have listened to enough of the conversation in this household -- especially when lots of girls are sitting around, all speaking simultaneously -- to determine in my trap-like, brilliant feline mind that Motherhood is an invention of humans and I can find no good reason for its continuation. Every living one of these gals is spending energy, time, money and spleen getting rid of their "mother-thing." With cats like me it's simple. Ma got rid of me before we became speaking acquaintances. I don't have any guilt going -- there wasn't any activity. I don't have any persecution going, because it's a good thing Ma got out of the way. No cat-house going could compare to this deal I've got in action. I've got these gals conned into just the proper combination of love, concern and possessiveness.

Other mother-qualities they possess is the opinion that they know how to "do" things. One of them actually tried to show me how to climb a tree! I assure you, I am much better equipped both mentally and physically to perform that feat. I wish you could have seen them -- perfectly toilet-trained as they are -- trying to show me how to use a sand-box. I hid my eyes behind my paw in embarrassment as I demonstrated my superior knowledge. It is hard to believe that such large creatures can have such small brains.

As for myself, my cranium is packed solid with the purest of intellectual gray matter. It used to be young and pink, but once I understood politics, I eliminated that. These girls are so liberal, I simply had to do away with anything questionable in my approach. Know you that now I, Ben, am pledged to the "Creative Society." I have several Tom Birch cells in the neighborhood and we are ready to take over when these sentimental creatures fail.

This is an introduction to my story -- sort of a cat(ch)-all of thought and opinion mixed with the sordid verities of nature. ... Sandy, the editor of this rag, says that as time and space permits she will allow me to continue with this most important saga.

Friends, encourage I can tell you the innermost secrets of

raising a cat in a deviant relationship. I can tell you what the neighbors said. I am no damned gossip, but I know things your own spouse would blush to tell you. Furthermore, in my own special and purrsonal time I interview other pets (as They like to call us) and this is going to be a might revealing tail (tale?) before we connect with the censors. (By myself, I don't think the law covers Cats! How nice!)

If you really want to have my staff write further on the intimate details of my (and their) life, please let the Editor know.

And you may write to Me in care of THE LADDER

- Ben Cat -

(Please do not confuse this name with the village in Viet Nam. I am a pacifist by nature except for the basic rite of defending property rights. I say Right is Rite, and risk your wrath.)

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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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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS and San Francisco Chapter:
3470 Mission St.
San Francisco, Calif. 94110

Los Angeles Chapter: P. O. Box 727
Manhattan Beach, Calif.

New York Chapter: P. O. Box 3629
Grand Central Station
New York 17, New York

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