

The Ladder

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DECEMBER—JANUARY 1968/9





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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HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH

by REV. ROBERT W. WOOD

An address originally delivered to the Mattachine Society, Inc., of New York, April 16, 1964, at one of their monthly public forums. Only eight paragraphs were rewritten by the author for this issue of THE LADDER in order to bridge the intervening 4½ years, testifying to the speech's original scope and timelessness plus the continued inactivity of the Church. The Rev. Mr. Wood was a combat veteran of World War II; received his B.S. in Economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; and his B.D. degree from the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology. He is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, having served congregations in Manhattan, New York City; Spring Valley, New York; and currently in Newark, New Jersey. He is the author of CHRIST AND THE HOMOSEXUAL, 1960, the first book in this country to establish a dialogue between Church and homosexual from a liberal Protestant position. It received two Awards-of-Merit. He has been a frequent contributor to national homophile publications and was an early recipient of DOB's SOB award.

The Church in America is acting as though the racial issue, with its many ramifications, is the only major problem facing our country and world today. I sometimes think the Church is stressing racial justice so strongly now in an effort to atone for its lack of leadership in other areas of human concern which, based on the numbers involved and the lasting ramifications, are of greater impact than the racial one. Yet the great Body of Christ which is the Church gives evidence of being able to deal with only one crisis at a time, or, having toolled up all its facilities, does not want to be distracted by acknowledging there might be other problems currently confronting its members.

I would place the racial issue in America today no higher than fifth place among the great personal-social concerns challenging our people and our nation tonight. Certainly in first place, by sheer magnitude of numbers involved and scope of impact, is the question of what we are going to do with atomic power. The signing of the test ban treaty has tended to lull us into a false sense of thinking, "Well, that problem is solved." The Church is no

longer giving leadership in this area; yet it affects all mankind far more deeply than any other issue. The last session of Congress failed to approve the nonproliferation treaty and the churches never raised an eyebrow; so involved are they with the crises in the nation that they failed to see a crisis in the world over the use or misuse of atomic power.

Immediately in second place, again on the ground of numbers involved, is the human population explosion. The fuse of the atomic bomb has not yet been lit but the fuse of the population bomb has been. The ramifications raised by ever-multiplying human beings on this limited earth are of far greater consequence than the racial issue; indeed, it only compounds the racial issue by the creation of more lives to be involved.

In third place is the giant problem of organized crime. I am not speaking of private crime and unorganized crime but of the national and international crime syndicates which today reach into legitimate businesses, small communities, state and federal governments. Its multi-billion dollar business each year makes a mockery of our vaunted FBI. Its traffic in gambling, bribery, robbery, murder, human corruption, drugs, corporate stealing, blackmail, and slavery goes unchallenged by the Church. Yet its implications are far more disastrous for individual, Church, and country than is the racial matter. How long since there has been any concerted effort by any portion of the Church leadership to do battle here, except to echo the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal?"

In fourth place as a major social issue today is the readjustment of the entire moral structure of our country, its individuals and institutions. This is reflected in part in the preceding one, but it has many ramifications from open sex on the campus to immoral business practices by reputable corporations, breakdown of family units, the invasion of privacy, and the willingness of society to let public opinion polls decide their moral level for them. Increasingly people are standing by and watching while hoodlums attack or rob a third party. Cheating in professional examinations, price fixing by competitive companies, false packaging, planned obsolescence, union mismanagement, and illegal

police action are all on the increase. Yet, here again, the Church remains strangely silent.

Then perhaps in fifth place we can put the many complexities of the racial integration issue. Certainly it cannot supersede any of the first four; indeed, numbers two and four are reflected in number five. More attention to them would help improve the last.

I want to focus our thinking on number four, the shifting of our moral structure, with some reference to number two, the population increase. It is long past time when the Church ought to know that such a realigning is taking place whether it approves or not, whether it understands or not, whether it is keeping pace or not. And one of the most significant segments of this moral realignment now in rapid progress is the relation of homosexuality, overt homosexual expression, and the whole homophile movement to the moral standards of our society. If the Church will not come forward and give leadership here, then it is abdicating its historic role as the keeper of the nation's morals. While the Church rushes to hold the door on its racial concerns, it fails to realize that other pressing issues are coming in the windows. One of these is the Church's position toward homosexuality and the homosexual.

Twenty-five years ago in his "On Being a Real Person," Fosdick called attention to the poor preparation of the clergy in dealing with homosexuality. More recently at the 1960 mid-winter meeting of my own denomination, the United Church of Christ, Dr. Herman Reissig raised the question as to how the Church might extend its ministry to the homosexual. But prolonged silence follows on the part of the Church.

Once upon a time, in the 17th century of the Christian era, there lived a Lutheran priest by the name of Benedict Carpozov who was professor both of Church law and criminal law. In his treatise "Practica Rerum Criminalium" he lists the results of homosexual expression: "earthquakes" (Alaska), "famine" (China), "pestilence, Saracens" (the Saracen women will be surprised to hear about this), "floods" (Ohio River Valley), "and very fat voracious field mice." One could laugh in the face of the professor if it were not such a small step from his ignorance and anti-Christian position on homosexuality to the Penitentials and early New England church-state action. But at that he had made some progress since the days of that enlightened law giver, Justinian, when homosexuality was punished by mutilation and castration, and the dying body dragged

through the streets. We no longer so punish the homosexual or hear him accused of causing natural upheavals. But we do hear from Church folk equally biased and false and unchristian ideas as: homosexuality is spread by seduction; all homosexuals are predatory; all homosexuals are sick; all homosexuals are security risks; all homosexual expression is immoral; all homosexuals ought to be sent to a psychiatrist; all homosexuals ought to be in confinement; no homosexuals should be ordained. We may no longer see the shadow of Justinian though one wonders at times about police entrapment and third-degree methods used on homosexuals; but the shadow of the Lutheran professor stretches from the 17th century right into most departments and instrumentalities of the Church today.

The upholding of ancient sex standards has been done through a startling insensitivity to immediate human needs. By blackening sex in an effort to control it, the Church has forced its members to wear a mask in regard to their sexual expression and has whetted the appetite for sex to a degree equaled only by modern advertisers. While Church moralists and bureaucratic executives wonder about Church doctrine and the dangers of moving too fast, individual homosexuals are facing blackmail, the status of second-class citizenship, perhaps suicide—not to mention the requirement that they live a life of hypocrisy as far as their sexual orientation is concerned.

Those who are concerned with the redemptive and healing forces possessed by the Church are saddened, if not shocked, to see these put aside while the Church continues to inculcate a sense of guilt and inner psychological conflict because of its historic position concerning human sexual expression. Anglican Bishop John Robinson, author of HONEST TO GOD, is now calling the Church to task on just this point in his book CHRISTIAN MORALS. Fundamentally we must recognize, whether the official position of the Church does or not, that human sexual expression is morally neutral and that it involves more than the physical relationship.

If the Church were just another organization I would not be so concerned, because we could say, "Well, if it doesn't meet the need it will soon be out of business." But the Church is immortal yet it often becomes very emaciated by lack of courage and leadership of its members. Yet even here we could reason that such a sick Church could be ignored as we go on to search for help elsewhere. But

the tragedy and the beatitude of it all is that this often sickly-looking Church is the one and only source for the ultimate solution of any moral problem. The Church has been entrusted with the answers by God through Jesus Christ, yet it so often fails to fulfill its sacred trust. And people go off looking for answers elsewhere and find only partial fulfillment. The Body of Christ, which is the Church, can minister in the area of homosexuality in a redemptive way; it can bring light and understanding and salvation to both homosexual and heterosexual involved here, yet it does not. It prefers to put all its ministry right now in the basket marked "racial issues" and to play both deaf and dumb in the face of the challenge to rethink its ministry to the homosexual, his parents, his employer, his military commander, his government.

Basically, all that I am saying revolves around the words "dialogue" and "communication." We cannot say the dialogue has broken down for it has never been established. Church leaders are as full of stereotype and prejudice in regard to homosexuals as any other cross segment. Some time ago one of the top men in my denomination told me he knew all about homosexuals because he had once served on a parole board. More recently the number two man in one of our national instrumentalities when confronted to show concern in this area replied, "That's a very hot subject," and ended the conversation. So far the homosexual and the Church have been speaking *at* each other; seldom have they been speaking *with* each other. What I am trying to do in this address is to establish mutual respect and mutual trust between homosexual and Church. Yet mistrust continues to jeopardize any communication: homosexuals who mistrust themselves and the Church, and those within the Church who mistrust the homosexual and the Church's message of reconciliation.

Since the publication of my book I have urged six different departments within my own denomination and one within the New York State Council of Churches to consider a ministry to the homosexual. In each case the decision was to do nothing and in each case there was not a single homosexual on the committee that made the decision nor were any consulted prior to the decision. In seven cases heterosexuals decided there is nothing the Church can do for the homosexual. Shame, thrice shame! These same committees pride themselves on being interracial and in no ways would think of con-

sidering a racial question with a committee composed of all white or all Negroes. Yet in seven instances of which I am aware a committee of all heterosexuals felt morally secure in deciding on matters affecting the homosexual. Where is the communication?

In this gap of mistrust and no dialogue between homosexual and Church, some profound and fatal misunderstandings are at work. The homosexuals wait to be shown that the Church takes *their* concerns seriously. In its relationship to the homosexual, the Church today stands about where it did in the 1930's with the Negro in this country. This was the position of four recent articles on homosexuality in four Protestant publications: they recognize that there are homosexuals; they take an attitude of paternalism; and they admit that something ought to be done but then stop short of any specifics. Likewise with the more recent meeting of some of the Episcopal clergy in the New York metropolitan area which, incidentally, did not even invite its most knowledgeable member on the subject to participate.

Since homosexuality is first of all a moral problem and only secondly a psychological and social one, it is time the Church stops pushing its responsibility off on the psychologist and the courts. Let the dialogue begin right now. Here are twelve moral areas needing the confrontation of the Church—its people and leaders, its resources and spirit—right now, not after the racial crises have been solved or when all members are ready for it.

No. 1. From time to time individual states seek to revise and update their penal laws and criminal codes along the patterns proposed by the American Law Institute. When this is underway in a particular state there is the opportunity for the Church to urge the adoption of the recommendations of the Wolfenden Report as related to homosexuality and as adopted by the State of Illinois in 1961, and in force in Switzerland for many years; i.e., that homosexual expression among consenting adults in private no longer be considered illegal. In 1951, the Swedish Protestant bishops circulated a pastoral letter in which, among other things, they insisted that a criminal prosecution of homosexual relations between adults is out of the question since this is a matter of ethics and not law. Are the churches in this country, seventeen years later, ready to exert such leadership? Where is the National Council of Churches' voice which has been heard in so many other areas of human concern? In

1964, when the New York State laws were being rewritten, the Roman Catholic Church took a strong stand against such proposed revision and carried the day. Only the Episcopal denomination dared to express itself in favor of the proposed changes. All other church groups, including state and local councils of churches, remained silent.

In addition to working for passage of such law reform in individual states the Church ought right now to be educating its people to accept the change. Heretofore it has been the law which has worked to keep such sexual expression in check. In the absence of such law it is up to the churches to supply the motive of self-control and sensitized consciences. Will the churches of our states meet this challenge of changing attitudes toward overt homosexual expression, or will they remain silent, inactive, afraid? The Council on Religion and the Homosexual in California is seeking to break the silence and ignorance barriers, but it has few counterparts anywhere else in the country.

No. 2. Another area where the specter of homosexuality is in immediate confrontation with the Church is in the ministry of our military chaplains. I have for some time been receiving reports from homosexuals in military service who have failed to find positive help from their chaplains—chaplains who ought to be engaged in the creative redemptive task of helping the homosexual G.I. fill his differentness with meaning instead of blight and fear. This is most acute when charges of court-martial are being filed against one accused of homosexual expression, sometimes by an unidentified informer. It is my experience that most military chaplains either do not know what to do or are reluctant to do anything. It is all too convenient to hide themselves behind G.I. regulations.

Such silence by men who are ordained to a prophetic priesthood which calls for them to lay down their lives if necessary in the service of truth is a surrender to the ignorance and prejudice of military minds and the sacrificing of a human personality on the altar of the status quo. Yet a number of these same chaplains are all too happy to have the personal assistance in chapel services of organists and choir directors who are homosexual.

To my knowledge no denomination is giving its chaplains special training in this ministry nor are the armed forces desirous of making any changes in their long-standing feud with homosexuals. The entire immoral procedure of inducting a draftee who had de-

clared himself a homosexual and then later giving him a less-than-honorable discharge and thus blighting his career must be stopped forthwith and our military chaplains, at the risk of their commissions, must speak out against it! Likewise, the continual indoctrination that all homosexuals are security risks. Any knowledgeable chaplain, whether on land or sea, knows this to be an outright falsehood, yet how many will dare contradict their military superiors on this point? To label all homosexuals a security risk is as defaming as to say that all Negroes are lazy. Yet where is the voice of the chaplains and their denominations to challenge the established might of the military?

In the past four years the whole matter of military service has been overshadowed by the word "Vietnam." Homosexuality has been used by heterosexuals as a means of escaping induction, and more homosexuals seem to be declaring themselves to their draft boards. Yet a three day conference on counseling the draftee held by the United Church of Christ March 14-16, 1968, failed to include this item on its agenda. How convenient for those who do not want to empathize with the thousands of homosexually-oriented draftees! The topic continues to be a major point among many of the young men and a few of the women who come to me for counseling concerning their homosexuality, their patriotism, and their religious faith. The mentality of the military establishment in this country is open to question when it continues to call for more draftees and reactivation of Reserve units on one hand and cuts its man power on the other hand by removing homosexuals and alleged homosexuals from its ranks. The average homosexual is as ready to serve his country in military duty as the average heterosexual, and he has the moral right to expect that the military complex, including his chaplain, will honor his integrity as an individual and treat him on an equal basis with the heterosexual who also wears the uniform of his country.

No. 3. It is time for the different departments of our churches to be holding seminars, study conferences, pastors' retreats, and weekend work sessions on the numerous related aspects of this entire dialogue. Eight years ago in my book I called for such workshops. A few have since been held including the one which gave birth to the Council on Religion and the Homosexual in California. This one stands in sharp contrast to the one sponsored by the Christian Education Department of the National Council of Churches, October

26-28, 1966, at White Plains, New York, and from which there has been no follow-up, not even a list of those who attended. While the number of such conferences by church-related groups is still small, a pattern seems to be developing: invite a couple of articulate homosexuals regardless of whether they have a church background or not (keep it two-sided); take a field trip to the local gay bars (shock the clergy); have a paper by a psychiatrist (make it scientific); have a tight time schedule so only items on the agenda can be considered (the straight and narrow path, no deviation); and put the planning of such a meeting in the hands of a johnny-come-lately who has only recently discovered such things exist (no research needed). There has yet to be held in this country a meeting of those church-related folk who over the past decade have been at work in this vast area and who now need to know of each other's efforts and to coordinate future endeavors.

It needs to be said that national homophile groups as well as individual homosexuals have, on the whole, been most cooperative when such conferences have been held, and certainly have gone more than half way in seeking dialogue with the Church. When the Church leaders are willing to do the same we shall begin to see some positive creative results for all concerned. But not all expressed concern for the homosexual is helpful just because it comes from some segment of the Church. Denominations and Individual clergy can be as biased and as misinformed on the subject of homosexuality as anyone else even though their motives may be honorable. Such was the address by the Rev. Ralph Weltge on "Homosexuality as a Christian Ethical Problem" to Philadelphia pastors September 20, 1965, sponsored by the Young Adult Committee of the Philadelphia Council of Churches. No other position on the subject was permitted to be presented to a group supposedly seeking the truth that is in Jesus Christ. Likewise, harm is being done by such evangelistic efforts as Teen Challenge and other fundamentalist Protestant sects seeking to scare Hell out of the homosexual and get him or her into heterosexuality or at least celibacy.

Let a pastors' conference react to this statement from the Wolfenden Report: "Many of them (i.e. homosexuals) are valuable and capable members of society; thus they by no means correspond with the common prejudice that a homosexual must necessarily or with considerable probability be vicious, criminally debilitated, or morally

corrupt" (p. 9). Or this from TOWARD A QUAKER VIEW OF SEX: (for homosexuals) "... homosexuality is natural; persecution will make them feel inhibited, mad or suicidal, but it will not make heterosexuality any more natural for them or increase the attractiveness of those who try to force them into it." (p. 21).

The Church and her pastors are sidestepping their responsibility when they send the homosexual off to the psychiatrist, for, as Helmut Thielicke in his *THE ETHICS OF SEX* recognizes, and as Mattachine and other homophile groups are coming more and more to realize, "... constitutional homosexuality ... is largely unsuceptible to medical or psychotherapeutic treatment, at least so far as achieving the desired goal of a fundamental conversion to normality is concerned. Thus it becomes properly a theological and ethical problem" (pp. 283-84).

Recognizing that this condition is incurable must cause a change in the Church's attitude toward its existence. Just as the homosexual involved must first admit to himself that he is a homosexual before any constructive adjustment can take place, so too the Church must admit that homosexuality not only exists but is a glorious gift of God and that it is basically an irreversible situation, if the Church is to progress beyond the state of Leviticus 20:13. The question to be dealt with in such proposed seminars is how the overt homosexual can be helped to live on a spiritually high level with his psychosexual orientation. The Church can no more ask him to reverse his orientation than it could ask a heterosexual person to reverse his. Thus we begin to see that this is primarily a pastoral and theological problem, and not one for police, courts, and state and federal investigating committees.

No. 4. The Church has a God-given responsibility to serve as a watch dog wherever the human dignity and civil liberties of homosexuals are encroached upon. The Church's silence in the field of court-ordered lobotomies for imprisoned homosexuals is a disgrace to its Lord. The silence of the churches in Florida during purges of homosexuals in academic institutions is as disgraceful as the Southern churches' silence in the matter of integration. And where were the churches of Boise, Idaho, during the anti-homosexual witch hunt there in 1955?

Books come on the market, calling our attention to the constant incursion of our privacy. More often than we are aware it is homosexual expression that is being sought

out by lie detectors, psychological job interviewing, and character references. Dossiers are constantly being compiled on more and more people, and the FBI is ever collecting data on individuals. I have publicly said from my pulpit that I will no longer supply information to the FBI on any of my parishioners or colleagues, for it is a gross breach of individual freedom. Likewise I have campaigned against the compilation of confidential dossiers on our clergy which I consider a personal threat to the prophetic spirit and freedom of the pulpit. But such trends continue at an alarming rate, and both homosexual and heterosexual are losing precious freedoms by attrition.

The Church, which is supposed to be concerned about individuals first and not governments or status quo's or business efficiency, by keeping silent and even abetting such practice, is doing the homosexual a disservice. In these days when "Law and Order" has been reduced to a shibboleth by politicians on all levels of government, the Church again is challenged to see that God's law and God's order are advocated before man's, and that justice and love are ever-present. The Law and Order boys can so easily walk with their hobnail boots over the inalienable rights of the homosexual, if the Church is not eternally vigilant. When the homosexuals' rights go, the heterosexual dissidents' rights will be next.

No. 5. Some denominations, an increasing number I understand, are making a definite effort to screen out homosexuals and potential homosexuals from students applying for admission to our Protestant seminaries and later for Ordination. Not only is this further evidence of the Church's invasion of one's privacy, but it is an act of shortsighted prejudice. I know the Church is conditioned to think within what might be called heterosexuality morality—the morality of marriage and family—and though believing in it with conviction, the Church may be defensive and can certainly be insensitive.

The Church will lose some of its best leadership if it succeeds in preventing homosexuals from joining the ranks of its ordained clergy. Has the leadership of the Church no idea of the contributions of homosexual saints, hymn writers, preachers, missionaries, artisans, and lay workers of past generations?

I cannot in clear conscience recruit young men and women for the ministry when I must say to them, "Of course this is only for heterosexuals." The Church's anti-homosexual position but reflects the distorted thinking

of contemporary society and is an area where our church leaders must do serious re-thinking if they would reflect the spirit of the Master and the over-all well-being of both Church and homosexual. Maybe this is the place to pause and say to the Church that homosexuality is not contagious, it is not going to spread through the seminary dormitory because one or two boys there happen to be so oriented. Let the Church recognize that homosexuality, per se, is as morally neutral as, say, left-handedness. Like one who is left-handed, so the homosexual can live a moral or immoral life, participate in exactly the same degree of sin but also in forgiveness and beatitude. Likewise, the homosexual is no more sick because of his homosexuality than is the left-handed person, nor is he any more a criminal.

There are too few candidates for full-time Christian service now to lose a further number through ignorance of homosexuality. Plus the fact that we might lose some of the best if we screen out the homosexual. If one is called to serve Christ through the ordained ministry, then no screening committee should dare say otherwise on the sole ground that the young man or woman is a homosexual, lest the committee be playing the anti-Christ.

No. 6. We hear a good deal in these days of racial integration about discrimination in employment policy. But what else does the Church practice where the homosexual is concerned? Are the various boards and offices, schools and parishes of the Church willing to hire a homosexual man or woman who is as qualified as the other candidates? I am not saying that one ought to be given preference because he is a homosexual, but I am saying that he ought not to be given any less consideration than the others just because his or her bed partner happens to be of the same gender.

I appreciate that this requires a considerable amount of education among our Church leaders and particularly in the local parish. But isn't it high time such education was begun? The Church now recognizes the validity of giving those of minority racial status equal employment opportunities and has already learned how it benefits from such practices. Now I am calling on the churches to extend such fair employment practices to those trained and qualified homosexuals who present themselves for employment.

"What can the Church do to help the homosexual?" is a question I sometimes hear. Here is one thing it can do right within its own ranks. And I would encourage more homo-

sexuals to consider full-time church work whether in missions, social action, communications, education, or the ordained clergy. The Church needs the homosexual even if it isn't yet aware of its need.

By discriminating against the homosexual in hiring practices, the Church is destroying his "personhood"; demanding he be something which he is not, demanding he wear a mask, which in itself goes against New Testament teaching. Such open harassment by the Church is another goad upon the humanity of those who are already wrestling with their psycho-sexual disposition.

No. 7. Recently the idea of denominations and individual churches with invested funds examining the employment practices of the corporations they own an interest in has come under study. Our own denomination, for instance, has gone on record as saying it will no longer invest its millions of dollars in any corporation which discriminates against minority racial groups. I applaud such action. But how long before the Church will extend such a declaration to include discrimination against homosexuals in hiring and advancement policies?

I suppose it would shock the personnel branch of AT&T or IBM to receive a questionnaire from the Methodists or Presbyterians or the United Church of Christ asking: "What is your policy toward the employment of homosexuals?" But it is a question which those with invested funds ought to be asking. For it is as legitimate a question as asking their policy toward hiring Negroes, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, foreigners, or the physically handicapped.

It is to be observed that homosexuals who have funds to invest ought also to see that they are not part-owners of companies which discriminate against their fellow homosexuals. Several homosexuals in this country today are major owners of great corporations which have an anti-homosexual policy. And these owners remain silent, doing nothing to change such practices. This is to their lasting shame. If you have invested funds I trust you know the company's policy toward homosexuals. Or are you just interested in making a good return on your investment regardless of the homosexuals' right to fair and equal treatment?

No. 8. The local parish will find that a homosexual can be as constructive a lay member as the heterosexual. To block the doorway of the church to the homosexual is as immoral and as unchristian as to block it to a Negro or anyone else who comes sincerely

seeking the Lord Jesus and the Light of Life he brings to all sinners.

I would say to the homosexual that this matter of churchmanship must be a two-way process. The Church needs you but you need it even more. You need to make Jesus Christ your personal Redeemer just as much as any heterosexual. He waits to be your Savior and to guide you into the life everlasting. God through Christ loves you as much as any other of His children, even though some Church leaders may imply otherwise. You need the sacraments, you need regular worship in the Lord's House, you need the words of Scripture and the opportunities of corporate spiritual action as much as any other sinner. You need to be bringing a portion of your income as a good steward and to be acknowledging your thanksgiving and dependence to Him just as much as any heterosexual. And once a member you can work from within to expand the Church's ministry and welcome to other homosexuals. Christmas is a good time to begin such commitment if you have not already done so. Remember, this holy event began with an angel saying to Mary, "Do not be afraid" (Luke 1:30 RSV), and to the shepherds "Be not afraid" (Luke 2:10 RSV).

I am not saying that the homosexual must become a heterosexual first before he can be eligible for Church membership, or even that he cease overt homosexual expression. For most homosexuals this is neither possible nor desirable, and there is nothing in New Testament Scripture that says it is necessary. The First Jerusalem Council decided that one did not have first to be a Jew before he could be a Christian. Likewise, one does not have to be a heterosexual before he can be a Christian in the full, dynamic, sacred meaning of that word.

Under this topic of the homosexual in the local parish comes the Church's recognition of the homosexual marriage—another area challenging our moral theologians. The contemporary German theologian Helmut Thielicke has now opened the doors to the moral validity of such marriages in his book *THE ETHICS OF SEX*. In referring to such a relationship he says that such is "very certainly a search for the totality of the other human being. He who says otherwise has not yet observed the possible human depths of a homoerotic-colored friendship." (p. 271). Along the same line is this statement in *TOWARDS A QUAKER VIEW OF SEX*: "It is the nature and quality of a relationship that matters: one must not judge it by its outward appearance but by its inner worth.

Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse" (p. 36).

A homosexual marriage can be as sacramental as a heterosexual marriage and as such becomes moral for it becomes a means of divine grace. Again from the Quaker pamphlet: "The sacramental quality of a sexual relationship depends upon the spirit and intention of the persons concerned, not upon any atmosphere or circumstance provided from outside" (pp. 8, 9). It will be of only limited progress for the Church to recognize the homosexual and his rights, and then deny him the opportunity of a homosexual marriage. This would be to condemn him to a life of either celibacy or promiscuity. Once the Church begins to honor the position of the homosexual with equal treatment then it must honor his marriage vows too.

No. 9. The Church's position toward the homosexual and homosexual marriages could be on stronger moral ground if it would ever make up its mind about the morality of childless couples. As long as the Church clings to the hoary doctrine that the sole validity of marriage is for the propagation of more Church members it will be forced to keep childless couples and the homosexuals in a secondary status of churchmanship.

Yet every pastor knows that many of his most devout members are childless couples. The same can also be said of homosexual couples if the Church could only be aware of it. When the Church begins to appreciate what St. Paul was saying in I Corinthians 13, that the greatest of these is love, and not procreation, then it will recognize love as the primary reason for two people marrying, and not for the purpose of adding to the cradle roll.

Fortunately the Church, including the Roman Catholic part of it, is now beginning to realize that it has been on the wrong track in its position to marriage, and we are now seeing love being more and more recognized as the primary motive for the Church's sanction of marriage. Such a trend will help advance the homosexuals' position if the Church will but be consistent. Here homosexual couples can help make a constructive witness by the strength of their marriages, living and working within the membership of a local congregation. Just as a local parish is strengthened by the presence of heterosexual couples who radiate love for one another, so a local parish can be strengthened by the presence of homosexual couples who radiate

love through their marriage and home life.

No. 10. In its re-examination of the morality of the childless couple, the Church has been motivated in part by the pressure of too many human beings on the earth today. This same ever-mounting pressure is now forcing the Church and others to look at homosexuality in a new light as a built-in safety valve on the demographic explosion.

When I addressed the Janus Society, a speech later reprinted in full in *THE LADDER*, I cited statistics as to the dangerous situation the world now faces due to the impact of over-population. It is not my purpose to repeat those data here, but we might note that *TOO MANY AMERICANS* by Lincoln and Alice Day, published by Houghton Mifflin, calls our attention to this pending disaster.

Even if our scientists can find enough food to feed our doubling population, it cannot provide the living space. Parks and woodlands, hunting fields and wildflowers are now being plowed under for more schools, homes, and highways. Watersheds are being polluted and fresh air is becoming scarce. Unemployment and school dropouts and crime and poverty and regimentation and depersonalization are on the increase because of too many people. Civil wars and territorial acts of aggression in a dozen spots on the globe at this moment are motivated by the needs for more living space. When Egypt's Aswan Dam is completed it will have lost its impact on the standard of living of its people because of the millions born while it was under construction. American foreign aid is flushed down the drain in the face of ever-mounting supplies of babies, many unwanted, unless you happen to be in the baby food or textbook business.

But let us think only about this country's problems. By the year 2000, just 32 years hence and within the life time of many readers, the American population will have doubled. Some experts now say it will increase 2½ times. Can we comprehend what this means in living conditions, employment, education, and supply of raw materials? Most alarming to anyone with a conscience is the fact that right now we in the USA are consuming 50% of the earth's wealth while we represent only 6¼% of the population. We let the other 93¾% of the people have the other 50% of the natural and manufactured resources. Certainly this must be morally offensive to the mind of God, who loves all His human children. It is certainly unjust and corrupt. Just because we are so

rich that we can afford to pay more than anyone else in the world for the things of life, we outbid them, we pile up in storage bins, we waste and luxuriate while most of the rest of the world lives near or below the subsistence level. Shame, thrice shame on our greed! Yet we continue to multiply and continue to deprive the rest of the world's people of their fair share of the earth's bounty. Then we wonder why America is so hated in many places today.

The Church, even the Roman part of it, has begun to awaken to the perils of population and to the inequity of America's position as a rich consumer. As the Church recognizes the magnitude of the problem and promotes various forms of birth control, let it recognize the moral validity of homosexuality as a most effective way of reducing the human population and much less painful than war, famine, pestilence or strontium 90, and certainly more moral than infanticide, fratricide, matricide, homicide, genocide, suicide—and now a new one, pesticides—not to mention cannibalism and sterilization.

This is an entire area where the Church must do serious thinking on the moral implications involved. As I stated at the outset, this is the greatest problem facing mankind today, second only to how he will use atomic power. Its presence compounds every other human situation.

I do not think a Protestant pastor has the right to tell his members how many children they should have. But when a couple asks me I tell them "zero." I suggest they adopt children already born, preferably Oriental ones since they are in such over-supply; but to bring no more children into this planet which will shortly have a Standing Room Only catastrophe on its hands. Let us show love to those already born rather than complicate the problem for all by introducing more. We can have either quantity or quality, but not both. A bus driver knows that when his bus is full he must pass up some people standing on the curb for the sake of serving those already aboard. Likewise with the propagation of the human animal.

I do not appreciate having my own living space, my privacy, my security, my food supply jeopardized by a couple who have a baby every year. Even if the parents can afford a large family (and many certainly cannot) even then they have no moral right to overcrowd a planet in which one-half of those now living are constantly hungry. Yet our federal income tax policy benefits large

families and penalizes those with no children. In addition such a one as Pitrim Sorokin inveighs against childless unions.

When the Church and the government take the demographic catastrophe seriously enough to realize that every measure of birth control must be employed, then it will see the homosexual in a new light.

No. 11. Not being closely associated with the contemporary college scene in America I am not qualified to comment upon what is happening there. But I venture to say that in the midst of experiments with drugs, psychedelic kicks, protest movements, and serious academic studies that students are still concerned about sex. The ever-greater permissiveness in human relationships, student clothing styles, new films and plays, underground newspapers, increased nudity, all give evidence to this. While individual college chaplains are doing redemptive work in this area, as a whole the Church has been pretty much out of the picture. The generation gap is very evident here.

I am suggesting that all this preoccupation with sex on the campuses isn't limited just to normal and abnormal heterosexual discussion and expression. If statistics have any validity, a significant percentage of talk and action revolves around homosexuality. If the Church is doing little for the college student in the heterosexual area, it is doing even less in the homosexual area. I know of no pamphlet, for instance, prepared by any denomination in this country directed to this very personal and very disturbing psychosexual-moral problem which might be put in the hands of an inquiring college student. Fortunately there are now several Christian-oriented sex education books which do recognize the existence of homosexuality and are beginning to take a more enlightened approach.

The whole area of homosexuality on campus, often including the high school campus, is one in which the organized Church has been almost totally silent. Yet because of the ever-increasing numbers going to college, the rise of gay teenage clubs, and homophile chapters on some major campuses, it constitutes one of the largest and most disturbing areas of human concern. It is the very age when many a young life will turn either to heterosexuality or homosexuality, but the Church is most often not stepping into the void to give moral guidance.

No. 12. Finally, one area of dialogue between homosexuality and the Church in which leaders and lay members could begin

work immediately is in the field of Bible study. This is one of the prime topics to be included in any proposed seminar on the subject. But it can be done on an individual study basis too. We are in a time of enlightened Bible study; let us extend it to the area of homosexual expression. The Sodom story, the cult prostitutes, the five direct references, and the several border-line possibilities need to be explored in the light of latest biblical exegesis. An understanding of what the Bible does and DOES NOT say on the matter will go a long way to opening minds and establishing a moral theology toward homosexuality. Let such Bible study begin without further delay by both heterosexual and homosexual, Church member and non-member.

In closing let it be noted that the Church of Christ is able to minister to the homosexual; now let the word go forth that it is willing to do so. To do so may bring more adverse reaction than its ministry in the racial issue, but the cause is no less pressing and the human factors no less real. A step was made in this direction just a year ago when the December 1967 issue of SOCIAL ACTION, published by the United Church of Christ, and the November/December issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS by the United Presbyterian Church USA did a joint effort on the subject with a constructive and enlightened approach. While both issues sold out and had to be reprinted there has been little if any noticeable followup within the respective denominations.

We have been conditioned to look upon the text of John 10:16 as applying to foreign missions, or to racial and ethnic groups. But these words by the beloved disciple apply with equal validity to the homosexual and any other whose sexual orientation may differ from our own: "And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd." It doesn't say one Church, nor does it say one form of sexual expression. But "one flock and one shepherd." This is a call to the Church to extend that invitation to the homosexual, and a call to the homosexual to respond.

One cannot expect a preacher to lecture without his resorting to some texts. Let me leave this one with the Church. Galatians 6:1,2: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

To the homosexuals I would leave this text, words of Jesus recorded in John's gospel 6:37b: "... and him who comes to me I will not cast out." And to both sides of this evening's dialogue I leave this text from St. Paul, Romans 8:38, 39: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHRISTIANITY TODAY, June 8, 1962, Rev. Dr. Stuart Bergsma.

ETERNITY, October 1963, Dr. Lars Granberg.

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY, September 11, 1963, Winfred Overholser, M.D.

CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, October 1963, Dr. Tom Driver.

Both THE LADDER and DOB are mentioned.

HADLEY

by VICKI DANIELS

It was very cold that December, unusually cold for the Southwest, and we were very poor. We ate one of the last cans of spaghetti, smashed our papier-mache pig to round up all the available coins, and decided to buy a Christmas tree. "An extravagance, true," said Gerry as she sat at the kitchen table stacking up the dimes and nickels, "but what kind of Christmas would it be without a tree?" And we wanted a real Christmas tree, not one of your three-branched grotesques that sit on a sheet-draped end table, sagging from the weight of four ornaments. No, a brush-the-ceiling tree for us, heavy with pine needles, still chilly and sticky-fresh from the forest, one that would fill the house with scent.

"Aha," said Gerry, "I've found some quarters. I do believe we have enough money." She grabbed my hands and we danced triumphantly through the kitchen and living room, fell upon our coats, and rushed to the car.

We drove through the city, past all the tree lots we could remember having seen that month, in search of the perfect tree. But the lots were half empty; all the large trees had been sold and now, four days before Christmas, only the small ones were left.

"Sorry, girls," the men at all the tree lots told us, "you shoulda come last week," and we would drift back to the car, gloomier than we could ever remember having been.

Then we passed a last lot, one we had forgotten about. There in a huge bare field near a shopping center were hundreds of trees, some stacked on the ground and others leaning against wooden sawhorses. In the center of the lot near an old house trailer was a campfire. "That's it," I said to Gerry, "that's the place," and she turned into the parking lot.

An enormous figure in denims and muddy boots rose from beside the fire to greet us when we got out of the car. "Hello," it said, pulling on wool-lined leather gloves, "colder than blazes out here, don't you think?" It was a girl.

"We want a Christmas tree," said Gerry. Surprised to see a girl working there, all I could think of to say was, "This sure is hard work for a girl, especially in such cold weather," and as soon as the words were out of my mouth I was embarrassed at having said them.



"I need the money," said the girl as she strode along beside us toward a pile of trees. "And the work isn't hard for me. Last summer I was a wrangler on a ranch in Montana."

"Montana's a beautiful state," I said. "All those rolling hills, and everything so green that it doesn't look real."

"Yep," she said. "I liked it. The work didn't hold out as long as I expected, though, so I had to leave. Got this offer from some folks in Montana to sell their trees down here, so I took them up on it." Deftly she reached one-handed into the stack of trees and pulled out a small pine. "How about this?"

We stood back and eyed the tree. "No," I said finally when Gerry shook her head. "It's not big enough. We want a big tree, very green and full of branches."

The girl walked over to another stack of trees and rummaged through them. "Don't know if I can find much for you. We're out of big ones, unless you want something like this." She held out a tall scraggly spruce that had five or six limp branches on it.

"No, no, not like that," said Gerry. We must have looked very discouraged, because the girl studied our faces for a moment and turned toward still another group of trees.

"Well," she said at last. "I'll give you a special deal on this tree. You two girls deserve a nice one." She held out a tree, the perfect tree, eight feet tall and so full of branches that we couldn't see the trunk. "This is the best I've got, a Norwegian pine. I'll let you have it for five dollars."

"Sold," said Gerry immediately, and we both laughed. "You do like it, don't you?" she asked me. "I should have let you say something first."

"I'm the forgotten woman," I sighed. "but lady, you've got yourself a great little old tree there."

We paid the girl, counting out the coins into her gloved hand, and she loaded the tree into the trunk of our car. "You two girls school teachers?" she asked us when Gerry and I were about to leave.

"Oh no," said Gerry. "We're both social caseworkers, would you believe it? But we're as poor as school teachers."

"I'll be darned," said the girl. "Never met a social caseworker before. Funny, you two sure look like school teachers."

"My friend here is also a writer," said Gerry.

"You?" said the girl, looking at me. I was very cold, and I nodded as I pulled my coat

collar closer to my ears. "Never met a real live writer before, either." She was stamping her feet and rubbing her gloved hands together.

"Once in a while I'm allowed to break out of my cage," I told her.

"Hey," said the girl. "I have an idea. Come into the trailer and we'll have coffee together. If you've got time, that is."

"That sounds good," said Gerry. "I'm freezing."

"Great," said the girl. "I don't see many people, no one to talk to, that's for sure. She grinned down at us from her great height, a marvelous grin that spread across her face and made us smile too.

"Do you live here in the trailer?" I asked her as we three walked across the lot to the tiny trailer, its paint peeling off in long strips and the back window covered with dirt.

"Yep. The folks who own the trees own the trailer too. I came down here in it. They told me to stay here and keep an eye on the trees at night. I haven't been off the lot since I arrived two weeks ago, except to use the john at the filling station across the street." She opened the trailer door and we all filed in.

There wasn't room inside for all of us to stand up at the same time. When Gerry and I entered we sat at the table at one end of the trailer. Beside me along the wall were some cupboards and a hot plate, and at the far end was a double bed littered with clothes and blankets. I looked around, curious. "How can you stand it here, all alone and never able to leave?"

"I had a dog for a while," the girl said, removing her denim jacket and peeling off a couple of layers of sweatshirts. She stood in the middle of the trailer, blinking in the light, and didn't seem as tall as she had outside. "It wasn't so bad while the dog was here. But the dog died. I guess I'm used to being alone. Hey, my name is Hadley. I didn't tell you that, did I?"

We introduced ourselves, and she pushed her dark blond hair behind her ears and peered down at us, smoothing her hands across her shirt. "Coffee?" she asked, turning toward the hot plate. Then she paused, biting her lip. "No, I can't give you any; I ran out last week. Living alone I don't always notice when I'm out of food."

"No matter," said Gerry. "I'm not in the mood for coffee anyway. Want a cigarette?" She held out a rumpled pack to Hadley, and the three of us smoked in silence for a while.

"My dog died; did I tell you before? She was run over by some customers three days after I got down here. I went out late one night into the desert and buried her. Sometime I want to find some rocks to mark the spot." Hadley shuffled her feet restlessly on the floor of the trailer and looked at us, the corners of her mouth tightening. "It's odd to have people to talk to. I've been alone so long that I've forgotten how to make conversation. I used to talk to the dog, but now she's gone. Maybe I'm talking too much."

"No, you don't talk too much," said Gerry. "We enjoy meeting someone new."

"You're sure quiet," Hadley said to me. "You've hardly said a thing. The girl I used to live with was quiet. She had a Master's in psychology, and when she did talk it hurt us both." Hadley held out her hands palms up, and frowned down at them. "That was long ago. Would you guess I'm only thirty-two? Living alone ages a person."

My own hands felt empty; I mashed out my cigarette and reached for another one, unable to find any words to reply.

"You two girls," Hadley began, then stopped, her mouth open as she stared at a spot behind my left shoulder. "I'm glad you could come in for a few minutes. It's lonely here without the dog." Her broad shoulders slumped, and she looked quite old.

"It's terrible to be lonely," I said. "I've been lonely too."

"Make that three of us," said Gerry, and she glanced down at her watch. "Oh Lord but it's late. Hadley, we've got to go, but we'll be back soon if you'll have us. No one should be alone at Christmas time, not you, not us either. Gosh, it was nice of you to ask us in."

"Sure," said Hadley, pulling on her denim jacket and opening the trailer door for us. "You know where to find me, and I won't be going anywhere until this job ends on the 24th." She kicked the campfire when we passed it, then knelt down to pile more logs on it. We said goodbye, but she didn't answer, and when we pulled out of the parking lot she was still crouched by the fire with her hair falling in her eyes and her denim jacket open to the wind.

We stopped by late in the afternoon the next day. It was warmer and Hadley was sitting in the doorway of her trailer. "Hey, you did come back," she said with surprise when she saw us. "Can you come in for a minute?" She stood up, turning first to Gerry then to me then to the trailer, looking tall and awkward and very pleased.

"I wish we could," I said, "but we just got off work and we're on our way to a meeting. We wanted to stop by to say hello."

"And we thought we'd give you this," Gerry said, pulling a gift from behind her back where she'd been hiding it. She handed it to Hadley. "Merry Christmas!"

"Open it now," I said.

"A gift," said Hadley slowly, "for me?" Gee, girls, you shouldn't have done it."

"It's a selfish gift," Gerry said. "Open it and you'll see what I mean. We hope we'll be able to use it too."

Hadley tore off the wrapping paper and ribbon. Inside the box she found the three coffee mugs and the jar of instant coffee. "Mugs," she said with delight, "and coffee too!" She bundled them all into her arms. "Well gosh," she said, her voice hoarser than ever, "Merry Christmas to you both."

"Come over tomorrow night when your job ends—the address is on the wrapping paper," said Gerry. "You can't spend Christmas Eve alone. Besides, you've got to see the tree. It's partly yours."

Hadley nodded, and then Gerry and I drove off to our meeting. Until we turned the corner and the tree lot was out of sight, Hadley continued to wave goodbye to us.

That night we trimmed the tree. Gerry, better at such things than I was, had fitted the tree into the stand, and we arranged the

(continued on page 45)

THE LESBIAN'S OTHER IDENTITY

by Dorothy L. Martin

In speaking to public audiences about the Lesbian, DOB spokeswomen have often alluded to the fact that she is first a human being, a woman second, and incidentally a Lesbian. DOB's program over the years, however, has lent itself almost exclusively to the Lesbian role—the problems these women face in employment, for instance, as Lesbians. But don't they also face employment discrimination just on the basis of being women. And wouldn't it also serve the purpose of DOB to join with other women's organizations in fighting against sex discrimination as it relates to women?

The National Organization for Women has launched an active campaign throughout the country to combat some of these in-

equities. Candidates for political office have been queried on their stand in relation to the equal rights amendment for women to the U.S. Constitution, proper enforcement of prohibitions against sex discrimination in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the fundamental human right of a woman to control her own reproductive life with the repeal of laws penalizing abortion as violating that right, and a Bill of Rights for Women ensuring equal opportunity to participate in employment and government without conflict with motherhood.

NOW has called for a nationwide boycott against the Colgate-Palmolive Company to protest that company's long-standing job discrimination against female employees. For years, Colgate has maintained a separate list of jobs that women may work at—at less pay. The company's system of seniority lists also is discriminating, since women may not "bump" a man with less seniority to win one of the men-only jobs. This has resulted in the layoff of women with 20 to 25 years seniority.

Would it not serve DOB's membership to join NOW in exerting pressure through boycotting all Colgate products? If the one in 10 estimate for the incidence of homosexuality is applied, certainly many Lesbians are affected by such discriminating company policies. The products involved are Ajax cleansers, Baggies, Colgate and Palmolive toiletries, Dermassage lotion, Fab, Halo shampoo, Handi-Wipes, Sterno, Vel soaps, Lustre-Creme, Wildroot and 007 men's toiletries.

NOW has also been fighting for an end to the air lines' discrimination against stewardesses because of age and marital status. And more recently NOW has taken on the United Air Lines for their "Executive Flight—For Men Only." In New York a suit has been brought against a hotel for refusing to serve women at the bar.

Volunteer, "spare time" attorneys for NOW have also brought suit against various companies to test state "protective" laws which in effect bar women from certain jobs and promotions because of restrictions on hours and lifting. NOW maintains that protective legislation should apply equally to men and women employees.

Because of an all-out campaign including a nationwide demonstration last December, NOW can take much of the credit for the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission's recent decision to enforce the de-

segregation of help wanted ads, thereby forcing the newspapers to list jobs alphabetically, by category only. This should be of help to Lesbians who are qualified in what has heretofore been considered men's jobs such as engineers, draftsmen, machinists, truck drivers, etc. While it will not immediately put a stop to all sex discrimination in jobs, it will put employers on the spot and force them to reevaluate their positions.

Some of NOW's chapters are also working for equalization of housing and curfew regulations at colleges; against discrimination in press clubs, city golf courses and church administration; for paid maternity leave, income tax deduction for child care expenses, and for child care centers on the same basis as parks, libraries and public schools. The latter would most certainly be of benefit to the working mother who also happens to be a Lesbian.

"For women, as for black people, self determination cannot be real without economic and political power. As long as women face the barriers of sex discrimination in employment and are restricted to the menial, lowest paying jobs in industry, as long as women are subtly discouraged or explicitly barred from the education and training that would enable them to achieve a decision-making role in society, as long as no major politician or political party takes women seriously enough to give attention to 51% of

the voters in terms of concrete legislative programs, and not just token appointments and lip service, 'woman power' is a put-down slogan," says Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique* and national president of NOW, in reply to "a recent silly suggestion by a major women's magazine" for "woman power" as a means of ending violence in this country.

By the same token let us not forget that discrimination exists in the homophile movement—in those organizations who claim to be "open" to both men and women, but whose activities and public relations emphasis are clearly male dominated and male oriented. DOB has fought long and hard for "equality" in the homophile community and its movement.

DOB needs to maintain its alliance with other organizations in the homophile movement—and properly so. But DOB also needs to broaden its identity and make another alliance treaty with such women's organizations as NOW.

The National Organization for Women's national headquarters is located at 1424 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. National membership is \$7.50 per year for individuals and \$10 for couples. One Lesbian couple has already been accepted under the "couple" rate...

(Dorothy L. Martin is presently Secretary of the San Francisco Chapter of N.O.W.)

THE INTAKE INTERVIEW (CONCLUSION)

by DR. RUTH M. McGUIRE, Ph. D.

A worried and anxious woman has come to the office of the therapist to discuss her daughter, "Didi," who has recently told her mother that she is a Lesbian. During a bitter and raging quarrel, Mrs. A. has told Didi to get out of her home and that she never wanted to see her again until she "came to her senses" and got "cured." Didi promptly went to live with her friend Jo, from whom she has been "inseparable" for the past four years, since they met as freshmen in college.

Mrs. A. gives the impression of a somewhat paranoid personality. She is also attractive, well-groomed, obviously intelligent, and almost at once becomes "baiting" and "competitive" with the therapist. However, she has courage and the ability to face herself, and can be led to question and probe

her own attitudes and behavior. In the first three of a series of interviews which comprise an extended "Intake" or on-going initial interview, Mrs. A. has given some personal history. She has told that she was an only child of a love match between her mother and father, that the father died early in her infancy, and that she and her mother were "closer than any mother and daughter ever were." The mother died suddenly when Mrs. A. was twenty-two, and she immediately married a man she did not love. She had twin sons within nine months, and infers "the boys" belonged to her husband and were of no "use" to her. Ten years later she bore her daughter Didi, who was "the sunrise and sunset for her . . . and Didi was hers, alone."

On the morning of the fourth session, Mrs. A. comes in very angry. She feels she revealed too many painful intimacies the last session, and she tries to blame the therapist for this.

Mrs. A. has come to keep her fourth appointment with the therapist. She has arrived much ahead of her appointment time, and is sitting in the waiting room as far away from the office door as she can. She arises purposefully and begins speaking halfway across the waiting room.

I'm mad all over again. I guess you can see that. You seem to be able to see everything. (When one is angry inside, it usually shows rather clearly outside.) How? (You sat as far from my door as you could. Other times you've waited near the door. Your face is flushed, you got up out of the chair with considerable thrust, you almost ran in here, and you have avoided looking at me.) Well, you've got the picture, all right. I felt a little better yesterday after I left here and then during dinner last night, and after retiring, I began to go over all the things we talked about. First I felt frightened and anxious—and then I got furious again. (Tell me about it: first, what thoughts frightened you?)

I went over and over in my mind all the things I told you, then I began to feel like a fool. (A fool?) Yes, I realized I'd let you wheedle things out of me I never have talked about before. And never wanted to talk about, either. (Are you quite sure about that?) Absolutely! Some things should remain locked within oneself forever. They're nobody's business but one's own. (Are they joyful or precious things you husband, for yourself alone?) Certainly not. They're painful and shameful things. Except for one thing. (Which was that?) The thought I'd always held that the love Mother and I had for each other was a beautiful and rare thing. (And you are sorry now that you admitted some mixed feelings about your interdependence on each other?) Yes. That memory isn't so shining pure now. You've tarnished it. You threw doubt in my mind that it was all that beautiful. I feel like a traitor to her memory and to the lovely thing we had. (Are you perhaps saying that when you faced the *reality* of your situation with your mother here, something happened to the fantasy you'd built around her and around the feelings you had for each other?) It was no fantasy! It was true! (Was it also

true, what you told me, about how disappointed you felt when her little illnesses kept you from weekends with the gang, or going to a dance, or never being able to please her with any boy you brought home, or the enormous disappointment and even bitterness you felt when you couldn't accept that scholarship and go to college?) Well . . . maybe I said it a little too strong. (Did you really?) I shouldn't have said it at all! (Why not?) One should never speak ill of the dead. (But you're very much alive—and you *did* experience a kind of relief after telling me things as they were—and not as you wished they were, and that you have tried to preserve a rosy fantasy concerning.) Well. The relief didn't last. If it was all that good to reveal the truth, why didn't my "free" feeling last?

(A perfectly natural phenomenon. We call it ambivalence. I'm not at all surprised you experienced it. You did certainly share with me a lot of things you probably thought never to reveal to anyone in the world.) You're right. When I realized all the things I told you—then is when I got frightened and very anxious. I just knew I'd told you too much. I felt you somehow wheedled it out of me. I hated you for it. (Yes, I'm sure it seemed that way to you in thinking over all the things we talked about. But I am also sure of the enormous relief you felt, once you had aired or ventilated the thoughts that have trapped you too long.) Yes, I must admit it was a "free" feeling. But then why do I feel so guilty and ashamed now, about mother? (You have just gone through the experience of de-sanctifying her. You had built a false set of values around her memory, after her sudden death when you were relatively young. Her death left you so absolutely alone. I suggest you may have had unconscious hostile thoughts against her for leaving you in that way. Those hostile thoughts, in turn, made you feel guilty. And to assuage the guilty feelings, you elevated her to the status of a diety. And as of yesterday and today, particularly, you have undeified her.) I feel awful. Poor mother. (Maybe you mean "poor you"—you're the one in torment. Your mother isn't.) I guess maybe I am feeling sorry for myself; I feel I've lost something precious. (All you have lost is a faulty and useless defense.) Defense? Against what? (Against the welling-up into consciousness of your repressed and denied *real* appraisal and feelings about how your mother *really* was, and the thoughts and feelings you

really had about her.) Oh, I feel so disloyal. (No, you're not disloyal. In fact, I think you're about to be very honest with yourself and with me, as you have shown yourself capable of being, right from the beginning of our work together. I would agree with you on one thing—your recognition of your tendency to be self-pitying: this is something you perhaps indulge more than is good for you or any of your loved ones. We shall work on this in the future. But right now I want to suggest to you that you do the memory of your mother a tremendous dis-service with your insistence on making her a saint, a veritable god in her lifetime. You make it sound like I'm some kind of monster. What do you mean, a "dis-service"?)

(Just that. By your insistent perpetuation of this myth of her total goodness, you make her unreal. Someone not quite human. Nobody can be as totally good as you have insisted she was. Conversely, by the way, nobody is totally bad. People are a mixture of both: we would like to think we are usually pretty good, but everyone of us is also sometimes not quite so good. That's what human nature and human behavior is composed of—a combination of good and bad. Furthermore, I doubt if your mother would even have *wanted* you to keep up this myth of her unique goodness—if you did this to her during her lifetime, I would think it made her very uncomfortable. Nobody can stand being on a pedestal; it's a precarious perch and damned uncomfortable.) Well, no, I didn't do that to her when she was alive. In fact we had plenty of disagreements, even a few pretty unpleasant quarrels. (Of course, everyone has; any two people living closely together are bound to have differences and disagreements. It's *all right* to differ. The important thing is *how* you do it.) Do you do it? (Certainly. I'm just a regular run-of-the-mill human like everybody else. But I hope, with a little difference.) What's that? (I try to ventilate my feelings at once. I try to speak right out about whatever is bothering me, *before* I get to the boiling point. The immediate expression of feelings is the greatest safety valve in the world.) How is that? (I try not to give myself time to build up inner pressures from anger that would eventually frighten me with the force of their explosiveness. Too much anger building up inside is a dangerous corrosive thing. If you speak out at once and don't brood or pout over something, your feelings are expressed less violently and less destructively. Saves a lot of wear and tear on one's adrenals.)

Sounds like a good trick, if you can do it. (You can do it. All you need is practice—which you are getting here.) I've never been able to do that. I've often wished I could, when angry words were on the tip of my tongue, but . . . I guess I brooded and pouted instead. (What would you say the effect of this kind of behavior from you was, on your family?) Well, Mother would try to appease me, cater to me, and would eventually give in. (And your present family?) My husband just ignores me unless he wants sex. And the twins just laugh at me. (And your daughter Didi?) She says I am blackmailing her. Can you imagine that? (Are you?) Oh, I see what you mean. Maybe in a funny kind of sense, I am. (You barter giving up your brooding and pouting for what?) Her coming around, behaving decently. (Decently?) Yes, doing what I want. (And what do you want?) For her to spend a little time with *me*—and not so damned much with that woman, her Jo! (How has it worked out?) Not at all to my liking. Didi says she is in love with Jo and is going to be with her every minute she can. I haven't even seen Didi since I told her she could get out of my house if she didn't come to her senses. (No contact at all?) Well . . . she has phoned a few times. (What for?) Just to ask if I'm okay. (How does she sound?) All right, I suppose. (You suppose?) Well, she's polite and not fresh or antagonistic. (And you?) Oh, I guess I'm a little sarcastic and cold. I tell her she'll live to rue the day she left me. (Even though you told her to get out?) I never dreamed she would; that was my rage talking. The last thing I wanted was for her to go. (In a sense you sound like an abandoned woman, a rejected lover.) Why! That's just what Didi says!

Mrs. A. arrived today for her fifth appointment, precisely on time, and was about to seat herself near my office door when I greeted her in the waiting room. She appeared to be much calmer, and none of the truculent mood or baiting attitude was evident. She looked me squarely in the face and managed a trace of a smile.

Good morning, Doctor. Oh, I'm not supposed to observe the amenities, am I? (Do you feel like saying good morning?) Yes I do. I've come in here too often sour, with a chip on my shoulder. I don't feel so much that way today. (By all means, say what you feel; it's as important to ventilate positive feelings as it is to air the negative ones. Your

good feelings are just as important to a therapist as your bad ones. It helps me very much to know how you react to things that please you, or things that make you feel good. What gave you this lift?)

It suddenly dawned on me yesterday when I was on one of my long long walks after our meeting, that with all the things I've told you about my feelings and behavior, you never blamed me. (Indeed not. Why in the world should I blame you?) You easily could have. I gave you enough ammunition to make mincemeat of me. (Making mincemeat out of anyone is anathema to me; I'm repelled by the very idea.) Well, I'm not stupid, you know. I think I protested that to you once before. Which, in itself, was stupid, I guess. (Not stupid, just an attempt to "save face" or recover a bit of control.) Well, then you're different from most therapists I've heard about; I've heard they can really let you have it when you've revealed your shortcomings. (I doubt the majority of therapists are like that. Some, maybe, inevitably, but most of us are interested in rebuilding, growth, reconstruction—not retaliatory destruction. And anyway, *blame* is scarcely to be placed on anyone for the less-than-perfect things they do. Especially in your kind of situation, where close interpersonal relationships have become burdensome and unrewarding.) That's true. The people I should be closest to, I'm not. The rare times I'm truly honest with myself, I wonder why my husband has stayed with me. Maybe it's the twins; he's crazy about them. I know he's had lots of other women, but I know nothing has lasted—he's never wanted to stay with any of them. But my deepest regret is what has happened to me and Didi. I just can't reconcile myself to our rift. I thought and thought about what you said at the end, yesterday—that I sounded like a rejected lover—and an abandoned woman. I didn't get mad again, either, because it's true. If I'm going to take on this "absolutely honest" kick, I'd better start admitting some very painful things. (Like what?)

That I *feel* like a rejected lover. I despise that word "lover" the way it's used today. The connotation is phony and ugly to me. I was never Didi's "lover" yet I loved her totally. Too much, I guess. My sun rose and set in her. I didn't feel alive any day until I heard her voice, saw her smile at me, got a hug and a kiss, and knew she was mine! (That sounds very much like someone in love, a "lover" in fact. How long did this

idyllic phase last?) Oh, for years, all during her infancy and growing-up years. (What did it change?) When Didi was about eleven. She began getting those silly crushes on her teachers and later, other younger girls. (Always females?) Yes. I wonder why that was? I wasn't that way! (What about you, junior high teacher?) Oh. Well, he was a *man*. That was normal, wasn't it? (I believe you said you loved him because he was kind and gentle, thought highly of you, and encouraged you to extend yourself—push yourself, best harder and harder, and gave you a dream to reach for.) That's all true. But he was a *man* and that's *normal*.

(Did you ever ask Didi why she got these crushes?) Of course. That's when our quarrels began. I resented her gaga-foolishness over them. I told her I couldn't see what possessed her, what she ever saw in those women. (What did she say?) Hmmm, she said they were good and kind and gentle and encouraged her to try to do better than her best. (Well, Where have I heard that before?) From me, I guess. That's what I told you attracted me so to my old teacher—just those qualities. (Perhaps it isn't the gender of the other person that matters so much, but rather the qualities in them that meet certain of our deep and unfulfilled needs. I would suggest your old teacher met some basic needs in you and enriched you in a way no one else had been able to do.) That's true; neither my mother nor anyone else ever gave me as much for my pride or my ego, or whatever you call it, as he did. (Why do you suppose your mother didn't give you this kind of encouragement?)

Why, I never thought about that before. . . . Perhaps she might have been afraid I'd leave her if she encouraged me too much. (And would you have?) I don't know. I just don't know. Maybe I would. (I think perhaps you would. Now, can you see any parallels or similarities between your relationship with your mother and what you have tried to hold on to with Didi?) Oh, I think I see what you're driving at. Maybe it's like a pattern repeating itself? (It begins to look that way. Do you think it possible that your mother, in her time and her life situation, had somewhat the same un-met needs that you in turn developed?) Well, it could be. (How might it be?) I guess my mother didn't have much loving encouragement in her life, either. She never spoke of being close to her father, but she did adore her mother and was very close to her. Then her husband, my father, died so soon after they

were married, and she had little of him. Then there was only me. I guess I can begin to see why she clung to me so desperately. I was the only one she had left. (Only one she had left?) Yes, the only living manifestation of her one love in life. (And how was it with you and Didi?) . . . I've been quiet a long time again, haven't I? . . . I don't feel like making any crack again about being silent at your prices. I just feel sick inside. About how it was with me and Didi—I guess you'd say the times, the characters, and the setting are different, but basically the script is the same. (How?) Well, my mother was a simple woman, not educated and not sophisticated in the least. She left a good-enough home and a mother she loved, for a man I think she very much loved too. The few times she spoke of my father it was with very real deep feeling. And now that I think of it, I believe she unconsciously resented him for leaving her so soon. Now that I know about how one can have "mixed feelings," I'd say she was ambivalent about my father. You see, she never had anyone to enrich or fulfill her, either. (Either?)

Like I didn't. Mother couldn't give me what she didn't have to give. (What was that?) Why, any joy of life, or hope, or dreams, or a belief she could do something extraordinary. I guess she sort of gave up when my father died, and settled down to "waiting it out" with me for companionship. (And you, with Didi?) Well, I was a little different; maybe the times had changed—I *did* like to be out in the world, with people, and doing things. Of course, I had more education than mother. (And a teacher who gave you the okay to widen your horizons—the okay to be free.) True, and I'm sure Mother didn't have any such boost as I got. You know, I find it very hard to really blame her for the way she raised me. (I'm glad to hear you say that. Again, as I've explained before, it is futile and wrong to "blame" people for doing the only things they *can* do.) What do you mean? (I am convinced that most people do the best they can, especially in close relationships with other people, at any given time and under the particular circumstances of their own life situation.) I'm not sure I know what you mean. Surely Mother could have done better with me, as I'm sure I could have done better with Didi.

(I truly doubt it. Think a minute; your mother brought to her position of motherhood to you the sum total of her life experiences. You say she came from a "good-

enough" home, but hadn't had the enrichment or fulfillment she should have had. She married a man she loved, your father, and lost him quickly. What inner resources did she have to help her continue to grow as a person? Probably few, as you've indicated. But she did have you, the living breathing manifestation of her love. It is not surprising that she looked to you to give her whatever support or sense of security she could find. I think she quite unconsciously "used" you to take your father's place.) Unconsciously, you say? (Completely unconsciously. I'm sure she did not sit up nights plotting and planning how to keep you close and, in a sense, trapped into the position of a virtual mate. Millions of parents, tragically, respond to their unconscious needs and use their children to gratify them. Seldom, if ever, do parents consciously *plan* to make their children miserable.)

I know I surely didn't, with Didi. I wanted only the best for her, always. (On the conscious level, I'm sure that is correct. But what of your unconscious hungers?) Well, if they were or are unconscious, how can I be aware of them consciously? (You're hedging, Mrs. A. By now I know you can be receptive and perceptive, and by now I also have the feeling you are about to be "in touch" with your unconscious and able to "read" a bit of what is going on there. If you haven't already begun to do so.) You are a devil! I won't say if you're wrong or right. But there are still *some* things I won't reveal. (That is entirely up to you. I'm sure wild horses couldn't drag anything out of you that you didn't want to have dragged out. But it is unfortunate, in this therapeutic situation, that you withhold vital information. You can't expect me to be as effective for you with only a portion of the facts.) Well, that has to be my decision. I'll think it over. If I want another appointment, I'll phone you. (Of course, you must take things at your own pace. The door is always open, if you want to continue.)

Mrs. A. phoned later in the day of her last, our fifth, meeting, to ask if her regular morning hour was still open, and if so, to save it for her. Upon her arrival the following morning, she appeared to be quite subdued and thoughtful. There were no half-jollities or quips. She walked slowly to her chair and seated herself with a little sigh.

Well, I walked and walked again yesterday, and did a different kind of thinking from other times. (Different?) Yes, I tried being brutally honest with myself every step of the way. I finally had to admit that I actually liked what you did to me—and for me—at the very end of yesterday. You caught me up short, firmly and not unkindly, when I started being “smart-aleck” about not being aware of my unconscious at all. You were right, I was—even before yesterday—getting more than just faint glimmerings from that mysterious region you call my unconscious. And I haven’t told you anything about this yet, but I’ve been having dreams like I never had in my life before! You wouldn’t believe them! (Indeed I would. This, too, usually happens when one begins therapy and is quickly becoming really involved and committed to the process.) I wondered about that: I’ve listened to more wild dreams and stories about therapy than most women. I’ll bet. (Where?) Almost everywhere I go—the bridge club, the beauty parlor, my garden club. When the girls get together, the talk often is a blow-by-blow description of their last therapy session. In fact, that is the source of my impression that therapists can be punitive and scolding when their patients reveal foolish or unwise behavior.

(Do you like to listen to this kind of talk?) Well, sometimes it’s interesting, but I’m not always sure the girls aren’t slanting things a little bit in their favor or making a bid for sympathy. I haven’t had any desire to talk about our sessions here. (Do you think you might, in the future?) I might, but not to the whole group. Maybe to one or two of the girls I’m really close to. Why, isn’t it a good idea? (It’s not only *not* a good idea, it’s a very dangerous thing to do, and it is one of the cardinal rules of therapy that the patient must not talk about sessions and the material discussed in sessions with *anyone* outside.) Why in the world is that? (Because in repeating to another person the substance, or part of it, of our sessions, you—anyone—is relinquishing the responsibility of keeping this a one-to-one relationship. No one outside can possibly know what has gone on between us; you are bound to relate only a part of the whole. Then when you get opinions and disagreements from your friends, you forget you have given them something—out of context and you may spend much uncomfortable time and effort in trying to “weigh” who is right about something—your friends, or you and me,

Should you and I go on working together, you would have to agree to keep this tenet of our contract inviolate. There are other clauses in the contract too, but we can go into them later, if we both decide to work further into your very valid problems.)

All right. But I want to tell you now that yesterday, suddenly, it dawned on me that you were doing for me, in a sense, what my teacher had done. You were not letting me get away with doing less than my best. I used to think he could see right through me and read my mind, like I’ve thought you could. Then I remembered how much I really liked this: I used to feel so *safe* with him. It was like he knew all about me—and still liked me. Maybe he even loved me. I began to think about this “love” business . . . and what *is* love, really. I think I realized that love is something you feel when you know all about a person, all the faults and shortcomings, as well as the good things, and you still go on giving them *your* best—and demanding their best, or better than their best, from them.

(Demanding?) Oh, not nastily or threateningly, but letting them know you expect their best or better, and also—maybe most important—getting it across to them that you know they have it in them to grow, and do even more. In a warm and encouraging way, you know. And never to knock them down or denigrate what they *have* done. (Mrs. A., that is one of the best descriptions of love I’ve ever heard. I’m proud of you.)

Hmmm. It’s been a long time since anyone said they were proud of me, or that I felt proud of myself. Until yesterday, that is, and now again today. (Oh?) I did something I never dreamed I’d do; I went to visit Didi and Jo. I thought it was the least I could do. (Maybe it was the most you could do.) No. Don’t give me too much credit. I still hate their relationship, and Didi being so infatuated with Jo. And Didi insisting she is a Lesbian, *if* she is. I just don’t understand it, and it still scares me. Anyway, I tried to be friendly and calm. (How did the girls receive you?) Didi was happy I came. She was warm and seemed at ease. She said, she was proud of me, when I left. (And Jo?) She was gracious and matter-of-fact; she came in much later—she had to work overtime in the lab—she’s a medical student. Doctor, I just can’t pretend I like that girl. She’s so mannish in her ways. She struts and stalks around just like a man. (Think for a moment, Mrs. A.; do you know any women, in any of your clubs or groups, who dresses

or moves around in what you call a mannish fashion?) Er, ye-e-es, I suppose I do, two or three. But they’re married and have children. They’re normal! (Are they also what you might call aggressive and dominating?) I’ll say they are; they really take over sometimes, and run things. I guess maybe even I, from time to time, have been pretty determined; some of the girls have said I can be dictatorial too. Isn’t that a laugh? (Is it?) We-e-ell . . .

(So once again, perhaps human behavior is not a matter of individual gender after all. Perhaps it is the psychological make-up of the person and his responses to unconscious drives, that make for aggressive or passive behavior.) There’s that damned unconscious again. (You’re right; it *is* a “damned” thing. Most humans are slaves to it. They seem to *have* to do its bidding, blindly, unquestioningly. Controls or rational behavior seem impossible, and most of us are helpless to deal with it. The language of the unconscious is sheer gobbledygook to most of us.) Does one ever get a clue, or the key to translate it? (Yes indeed, this happens in a successful analysis. It is one of the miraculous benefits of the process. When you are “in touch” with your unconscious and can “read” the messages from its drives and hungers, you can be totally in charge of yourself, your feelings, and your behavioral responses, and all on a conscious rational level.)

Can people really change? (Indeed they

can—if “changing” is for the better for *them* and if the individual really and truly *wants* to change from an unrewarding lifestyle to a more enriching one.) Do you think Didi could change? (Does she want to?) Probably not. She seems quite happy as she is. (It is you who want her to change? Why?) I want her to be normal and happy. (Are those two things synonymous?) Why . . . I never thought about that. (You consider yourself normal, I’m sure—has this made you happy?) Well . . . not very, really, until Didi came along. Doctor, I want to get her back! (Back?) Yes, to being friends with me, loving me. (To be your “property” again? You want to feel you “own” her?) No, not that anymore. But she *is* my only real love in life. (Or, should we say, the only living manifestation of the *oly* real love in your life?) What do you mean! (I think you know what I mean. You have mentioned liking to get out in the world, see things, travel. I’m wondering if you didn’t take a trip or a cruise or something, some twenty-two or three years ago . . .) Good God! What are you driving at? (When did you last see your old friend, your teacher?) I guess I knew this was coming. (In fact, you’ve given me several clues about it.) I suppose I did . . . well, I’d like to keep this hour indefinitely. I want to come some more, I guess, but I’ve never been sorry one minute about Didi. (Of course you haven’t; no need to be, when genuine love is involved.)

HOUSE GUEST

by Jane Rule

Kate and Sarah did not know Mackie Benson. Kate in Los Angeles on business had had a drink in the same room with her six months ago but could not really remember what she looked like. “Sandy coloring? Plump? I’m not sure,” Kate said, trying to recall. “An old friend—or a good friend—of Carol’s.” With a sad story of some sort—but Kate did not say that to Sarah since Carol had just written to ask them if they’d give Mackie dinner and a bed for the night on her way north.

“No reason not to, I suppose,” Sarah said, characteristically unenthusiastic about strangers in the house but resigned, over the years, to Kate’s persistent hospitality,

offered not only to relatives and friends, but to strangers like Mackie Benson.

“It shouldn’t be all that much trouble,” Kate said.

“A time limit anyway,” Sarah said.

Their last guest, a friend of Kate’s brother, had come for the week-end and stayed two weeks because his orders were delayed. He was a nice enough kid, but precisely a kid, used to being a child rather than a guest. Sarah did not know how to ignore him at the times when he should have had sense enough to get out of the way, talking at her in the kitchen while she tried to cook, sprawled on the floor in her study listening to records when she wanted to get on with

her work, even chatting with her through the closed bathroom door. Kate was good at drawing him off, but she had work of her own to do and couldn't be with him every evening. He had to talk, nervous about going overseas, but it was a long two weeks, the longer because Sarah felt guilty about wishing his orders would come.

"I'm really inhuman," she said on one of the few nights Kate had been willing to leave him to his own devices as early as ten o'clock. "I can't see why the government can't hurry up and send that nice boy off to be shot at so that we can go to bed at a reasonable hour."

"No, you're not," Kate said. "It would be better for him, too. Waiting around is just giving him the jitters."

"And since it's too late for you to talk him into being a pacifist," Sarah said, yawning. "I guess I'll stop feeling quite so guilty."

Mackie Benson was on her way to a job in Seattle; therefore, barring car trouble or flu or a failure of courage, she would have no reason not to leave in the morning.

"I wish I could remember what she looked like," Kate said, "but, since she'll make her own way to the door, I don't suppose it matters."

"It would be just our luck to ask a Jehovah's Witness in by mistake," Sarah said.

"Or the Revlon representative," Kate suggested.

"I'd rather lipstick than the *Watch Tower*."

Easy, unreal choices. Kate watched Sarah as she got up to start their dinner. It seemed to her remarkable that, in the ten years they had lived together, she had not become less obsessive in her need of people or Sarah more casually interested in them. The only change—and it had been a very gradual one—was that they had stopped arguing about people. The difference mattered less than it used to. Like the awkward counter that ran down the center of their kitchen, they'd learned, after a number of bruising, to walk around it with skill and respect.

Mackie Benson—even the kind of name that put Sarah off. And what was the sad story? Something to do with the service, was it? Or a particularly bad love affair? Both, probably. It didn't matter. She'd only be here for the night. Kate turned to the financial page and reached for a pencil. If she was honest about it, she liked their uninterrupted ritual as much as Sarah did. But so lucky and sweet a peace had to be shared oc-

asionally, not so much out of an appetite for company—though sometimes it was as simple as that—as out of a sense of requirement: a looney, guilty notion about community that in practice more often illuminated the motives for murder than for love. Still, if there was enough food in the house, if there was an unused bed that someone needed or wanted, Late still offered. "Why not?" to Sarah's "Why?" And Sarah had the grace not to answer.

They did not discuss Mackie Benson again until the day before she was to arrive when Sarah asked, "Is Mackie Benson 'company'?" to which Kate replied firmly, "Yes, she is." That meant that Kate did the cooking. It was not a bargain to pacify Sarah. Simply, for all Sarah's reluctance about people, she was better with them than Kate for the first hour; so Sarah always coped with the initial shock of the invasion as if it were exactly what she wanted to do while Kate observed briefly from behind a drinker, in front of the fire, when small talk turned to silence or confession or urgent argument, Sarah refilled coffee cups or brought in drinks, lingering in the kitchen to tidy, and, if the guests were spending the night, she quite often gradually disappeared altogether, not to be seen until breakfast the next morning, less innocent of the griefs of the night before than she could pretend in order to reassure everyone that it was, indeed, a new day.

As it happened, Sarah and Kate arrived home from work at the moment Mackie Benson also found herself at the house. There was an awkward hurry of getting out of cars, Kate fumbling an introduction which Mackie and Sarah both talked through, all three coming to the ends of their sentences together. But Sarah collected them all into the possibility of going inside where there were ordinary and comfortable things to do.

"Plump!" Sarah said out of the side of her mouth after she had shown Mackie to the ground floor guest room and was passing Kate in the hall on the way to the kitchen.

Kate shrugged, but she was puzzled. Surely she would have remembered that shape if she had seen it before because it was extraordinary. From the back, which was their first view of Mackie as she got out of the car, she was fairly broad-shouldered, trim-hipped with slight but pleasant legs. When she turned around, she was like nothing so much as a primitive fertility symbol, all

breast and belly. But her hair was sandy and soft, brows and lashes fading into her face, which was faintly familiar to Kate—an earnest face with that expression about the mouth of people who have had their teeth straightened. Odd, Kate paused in front of the open refrigerator door to try to think what she was supposed to be doing.

"Can I help?" Mackie asked from the doorway.

"Oh—no thanks. I'll be in with drinks in a minute. What do you like?"

"I've bought some gin," Mackie said, offering a paper bag which had in it not only a bottle of gin but a bottle of whiskey as well.

Kate minded that at the same time that it pleased her. It was the sort of mistake she was apt to make herself when she was a guest, nervous to do more than was necessary. She knew in her own generosity the fear of being indebted, but she'd rather greet it in someone else than the mindless dependence she expected and felt required by.

Sarah and Mackie had settled to pleasantries about Carol, southern California, freeway driving, topics about which Kate could never think of a thing to say unless she could ask questions more personal than were appropriate or introduce political issues into what were offered as weather reports. But she sat down with her drink for the ten minutes she considered polite, watching Sarah with the mixture of wonder and relief she always had at Sarah's ease and kindness. Just before Kate was about to get up to check things on the stove, Mackie stood up, went quickly to the front door and out of the house without a word of explanation.

"Did she leave her cigarettes in the car?" Sarah asked, surprised.

"I don't know."

They both sat for a moment, looking at each other. Then Kate got up and walked to the window. Mackie was standing on the

front lawn, her back to the house.

"What is it?" Sarah asked.

"She's just standing there."

"Did I say something?"

"I can't imagine that you did," Kate answered, watching Mackie. "You'd better turn on the back burner. I'll see what's the matter."

"She seemed perfectly all right, didn't she?" Sarah asked.

"Yes," Kate agreed, still watching. Then she turned away from the window and went to the front door.

Mackie did not turn around, though she must have heard Kate coming toward her. When Kate put a tentative hand on her arm, she flinched slightly.

"Is there anything wrong, Mackie?"

"No, no—nothing's wrong. It's just such a lovely evening . . . so cool," Mackie said, still turned away from Kate.

"Do you want to stay out here? There're chairs in the back."

"Oh, no thanks. I'll be in a minute," Mackie answered, her voice ridiculously cheerful. "In just a minute."

Kate waited briefly, then turned and went back into the house.

"What is it?" Sarah asked.

"I don't know. She said it was such a lovely evening. I asked her if she wanted to sit in the garden, but she said no, she'd be in a minute."

"What's the matter with her?" Sarah asked, half concerned, half impatient.

"The vapors," Kate said. "I think she'll be all right, left alone for a minute. Here, I'll do that now."

"What am I supposed to do?"

"Go back to the living room. Read the paper. When she comes in, offer her the funnies."

"Are you joking?" Sarah asked.

"No. I think she's just nervous or upset about something. Give her something to hide behind."

"I can't do that," Sarah said. "You read the paper."

"All right. I'm sorry, darling."

"It's hardly your fault," Sarah said. "If I want to be irritated, I'll be irritated with Carol."

Kate sat down in her chair and reached for the financial page. She was half way down the mutual funds when the front door opened and closed and Mackie came back into the room.

"Funnies?" Kate asked. "Front page?"

"I always like the want ads," Mackie said, "in a different city."

Kate found them for her, and they read together until Kate got up to make another drink.

"Is Sarah cooking?" Mackie asked. "I thought you did."

"Well, we both do," Kate said. "It just depends . . ."

"That's nice," Mackie said, the paper firmly in front of her. "I don't like roles," and as Kate was leaving the room she added, "but I would have thought until I saw you in the kitchen that Sarah did all the

cooking."

"Is she reading the funnies?" Sarah asked.

"No, the want ads."

"I don't even know how to make this sauce," Sarah said.

"You don't need that much milk," Kate said. "Drink up and I'll give you a refill."

At the dinner table, Sarah asked Mackie about the job she was going to.

"I think it's going to be very good," Mackie said, still with a strained cheerfulness. "I've lived an awfully marginal life financially since I got out of the service—part-time jobs and that sort of thing. It wasn't easy to decide to move, but there isn't anything like this job for me in Los Angeles. Anyway, it was time for me to get out. You know what it's like: if you live alone, whether you've got friends or not, the phone never rings. In Seattle it's going to be different, a whole new life. I'm going to have money so that I can live in an apartment, maybe even a house. No more rented rooms. I'm going to love the job. And eventually I'm going to find somebody to live with, even if I have to bar cruise to do it. I hear the bars in Seattle aren't bad. . ."

Mackie looked from Kate to Sarah as if they might know.

"It sounds marvelous," Sarah said, her own voice slightly strained in politeness.

"Yes, well, I hope it will be," Mackie said, the energy going out of her voice.

"I'm sure it will," Kate said.

"I wonder if rents are higher," Mackie said. "What would your rent be for a place like this?"

"I don't really know," Kate said.

"You own this house?" Mackie asked. "Well, that's different, of course. I'd never be able to do that. All those years I didn't really make any money at all. And I'm bad with it. I do funny things with it—like, for instance, I save it around the house, not just quarters and things like that, but twenty dollar bills; so I'm never really sure how much I've got. I just have to rummage around and hope it will add up to rent or whatever else I've got to pay. Still, I did buy a car, and, if you knew how little I made, you'd be impressed with that. Maybe I'll be better about money when I have some. Do you suppose people change like that? I don't remember being so bad in the service, but I was really just a kid then, and they take care of nearly everything for you anyway. . . and again the energy of voice failed.

"I think people do change," Sarah said. "Having enough money makes a lot of difference," Kate said.

With that encouragement, Mackie started up again, faded out again, took strength from more encouragement, went on—or went round, for she said essentially the same things over and over again: the new job was going to be ideal; she'd find someone to live with; it was not good to live alone; she was bad about money.

"Living alone does things to you, and nobody wants to hear about that. You can't just call up a friend and say you're going crazy, can you? People say, 'Why don't you go out?' You can't explain that you've been alone so long you're afraid of people. That sounds like a contradiction, but it isn't. For instance, for a little while after I got here, I thought, 'It's just no good, Mackie. You can't stay here. You can't dump yourself on people you don't even know.' I'm over it now, of course. I'm perfectly comfortable now. But when you're alone, you know you're an imposition. People are terrified of being alone. I think it's harder for people to go and see somebody alone than it is for them to see somebody in the hospital. You know, I got so I didn't go out for a week at a time. That's no good. Carol would phone and say there was this girl she wanted me to meet, but I couldn't just go over there and meet some girl. Some people can, but I'm not the kind of person that can just go to bed with somebody. I'm not attracted to that many people."

"Shall we have coffee in the living room?" Kate asked.

"I'll get it," Sarah said, quickly on her feet.

"Don't you want to do the dishes first?" Mackie suggested. "I'll do the dishes."

"We just stick them in the dishwasher," Kate said.

"A dishwasher."

"Let's have some brandy, too," Kate said, following Sarah into the kitchen.

"Isn't it awful?" Sarah whispered. "What are we going to do?"

"You're going to your study with work that has to be done. I'll cope," Kate said.

"Can you stand to?"

"Yes, love," Kate said, smiling at her, "I can stand to."

Kate took a moment's rest, however, starting down at the brandy tray. She knew that, in order to listen to hours more of this nearly unforgivably lonely woman, she'd have to get quietly drunk. Sarah would have pro-

tested, in the early years, "What's the point? What good does it do?" Kate didn't know. She resented the emotional blackmail as much as Sarah did, the self pity and envy intended to make other people feel guilty. But, if you were asked to care, somehow you had to try to push down the resentment, to refuse the guilt, to understand the pain and be at least some temporary comfort. It usually didn't do any real good. As Sarah used to point out, it could do real harm. "It's just that I feel, there but for the grace of you go I," Kate thought to Sarah, and she also thought Sarah's answer, "Rubbish!" Kate picked up the tray and went into the living room where Sarah was already pouring coffee.

"Carol's put on twenty pounds in the last six months," Mackie was saying. "It's all the beer she drinks. I've put on weight, too, but it's just that I don't bother to eat the right things. You don't when you live by yourself. In Seattle I'm going to take it off. I bet you didn't recognize me," she said, turning to Kate who made a vague protesting gesture. "Carol says I'm too choosy about people. She's not choosy enough. I just couldn't do what she does, live with this one for a few months, then with that one, and even for those few months she's got to have week-end flings. She keeps talking about being realistic about sexual boredom, but, when I love somebody, it seems to me that's too important to mess about with it. I don't understand how some people are so casual. I'm just not like that. I've had affairs, of course, but there's no point in that for me. It doesn't mean anything. You and Carol went to college together, didn't you?"

"Yes," Kate said.

"Was she like that then?"

"I don't really know," Kate said. "She always liked beer. Sarah, darling, hadn't you better get to your desk?"

"I really must," Sarah said. "I've got work for tomorrow. Would you excuse me. . ."

"Look, neither one of you needs to sit around with me," Mackie said. "I'm perfectly used to entertaining myself. And I'm going to get off early in the morning; so you needn't worry about me. I'll just let myself out."

"I haven't got any work to do," Kate said. "Don't you want to keep me company for a brandy or two?"

"Well, for a little while," Mackie said. "But I should go to bed early."

"If I don't see you in the morning," Sa-

rah said, offering her hand, "have a good tip and lots of luck with your job."

"She's a beautiful person," Mackie said, after Sarah had left the room. "So quiet and kind. Just to look at her, you'd think she was straight as they come, wouldn't you?" I suppose I look straight, too. Men are always wanting to go to bed with me. That's the thing about living alone. They think they can just walk in and do you a favor. I hate that. I bet Sarah isn't all up tight about being queer either, is she?"

"I don't suppose she thinks about it much," Kate answered, forcing the coldness out of her voice, for, though, it was a vocabulary she hated and an attitude she found both embarrassing and degrading, there was a person in her living-room who required her courtesy and attention.

"I didn't mean to be personal. I think you're both very lucky and very nice, that's all."

Sarah, in her study, could not hear what was being said in the living-room, but she could follow the long rhythms of Mackie's voice, the occasional, brief, familiar tones of Kate's. Poor, darling Kate. She'd never, as long as she lived, give up suffering other people's life stories. And people like Mackie could always spot the victim in Kate. She might as well have a sign around her neck that said, "I try harder." Mackie would go off untouched by, or a little the worse, for Kate's kindness; and Kate would carry Mackie's misery around for days without knowing it wasn't her own. In retrospect, two weeks with a restless boy seemed a holiday compared to this. Being yelled at through the bathroom door was one kind of invasion of privacy. Being inspected as an object of sexual curiosity was another, much, much worse. Sarah really did care whether or not that boy was shot at. She was not sure, given the opportunity, that she wouldn't take a shot at Mackie herself. Well, she wasn't generous-spirited. She did have work to do. And she had to get enough rest to be patient with Kate's hungover despair in the morning. Also she'd have to remember to buy some brandy because George and Ann were coming for dinner on Friday; and George was as fond of brandy as Kate was.

"I cracked up," Mackie was saying. "I got a medical discharge. I was really just a kid. I was eighteen when I went in; and I didn't know anything. I was always falling in love with other girls; but they were straight. The strongest word I knew was 'crush'. What they did, they put everyone

they suspected into one barracks; and then they planted a couple of people. It was six months before anything happened. I know it sounds unbelievable; but I was absolutely unaware that anything was going on. I suppose I didn't want to know. I never liked dykes anyway; they scared me. There were forty of us. All of a sudden we were all on barracks' arrest; and then we were interviewed, one by one. I went before the investigation without knowing anything. Four men questioned me for seven hours. I didn't know what they were talking about. One of them kept saying, You've been sixty-nining with your girl friend right in the barracks. When I told him I didn't know what he meant, he drew me a picture. Then I began to cry . . .

It was an old story for Mackie, told a number of times, lots of fixed phrases; but it was new to Kate, and she suffered the outrage of it newly.

"They didn't have any real evidence on me. There wasn't any. A lot of the kids were court-marshalled. It took me a year to crack up. You see, I felt so guilty even though I hadn't done anything. It's such a lousy way to find out what you would really like to do. Most people—they meet someone they at least like. I got the pictures drawn for me by a bunch of foul-minded, middle-aged men. Do you know how old I was before I did go to bed with someone? Twenty-four."

Kate poured them both more brandy. She could think of nothing to say; but Mackie had had enough to drink so that she no longer needed occasional encouragement.

"But that's over now. It's been over for a long time," Mackie said, a tough pride coming into her voice. "And the lousy relationships are over, too, the punishing kind you get involved with because you feel guilty, because you think you deserve abuse. For the last four years, I've been in love with a woman you wouldn't believe . . ."

Listening, Kate wished she didn't believe, but it was too familiar a story not to. Why were people persecuted into this kind of guilt, then made ugly by it, cruel to each other? And who, relatively sane and relatively loving, would have either the patience or the need to do anything to help?

"I don't need that any more," Mackie said. "This new job . . . I'm going to have an apartment or maybe even a house, and I'm going to find someone . . ."

Kate wanted to shout, "You don't just go out and find someone as if you were shopping for a car," but there was no point in

shouting. Mackie was only trying to reassure herself, to sound to herself as if her life were, at last, going to be all right.

"I'm going to lose twenty pounds . . ."

Kate, drunk herself by now, looked at the heavy breasts, the round belly, and wanted to say, "You're lovely right now, the simple shape of desire," but she didn't. She sat very still and listened to Mackie retell the ugly past and then make hopeful swings into the future, only to come back to doubt.

"The trouble is sex with most people just doesn't matter to me. I've only been really attracted to two or three people in my life. The rest is just role playing. I lived with one kid who wanted to call me 'Dad'. I was never so embarrassed . . ."

Kate laughed. She couldn't help it, and Mackie laughed, too. Her mouth, so earnest with straightened teeth, was very appealing in laughter.

"I can't imagine that," Kate said. "I can't imagine you . . ."

"But it's true. Isn't that awful?"

"It's hilarious," Kate said, the word slurring in her mouth.

"But I don't like Dykes, either."

"But I don't like words like that," Kate said, feeling very drunk.

"It's bar talk, I guess. I don't usually get drunk in somebody's living-room."

"I don't mean that," Kate said. "I just don't like them."

"But you're not . . . you're lovely—to look at, I mean. Carol said she always had a thing about you in college, but you never seemed interested. When I saw you at her place, I thought why are people like you always already taken; and then I wondered if it was a good idea to come here . . ."

"The world's full of lovely people," Kate said.

"No—not the world I know, not people like you. You don't even know."

"I know."

"Do you?"

It began as a clumsy embrace, but they were too drunk to hesitate, embarrassed. Then they were lying together on the couch in a long kissing, for Kate so sweet a relief that she wanted nothing but to go on and on kissing into opening desire, the longing of body for body there was finally an answer for, brief but absolute, against all ugly and grieving loneliness. But Mackie suddenly turned her face away.

"It's never any different, is it?" she said. "What if I were Sarah?"

"You'd be in bed asleep," Kate said, de-

sire growing as heavy in her as grief.

"And sure enough that I don't matter to you so that she can sleep? This doesn't matter to you."

"It matters very much," Kate said.

"But not the way it matters to me."

"True," Kate said, and she sat up slowly.

"You're just a little bored, as Carol puts it."

"I'm sorry," Kate said.

"It's not your fault. I have no business being here. Single people are nothing but trouble. I started it. You didn't."

"Oh, shut up, love," Kate said, and she kissed Mackie on the cheek as she might have kissed a child. "Do shut up."

"You're drunk."

"Very," said, leaning over Mackie now to rest her head on the back of the couch.

"It's not that I don't find you attractive . . ."

"We're all attractive, love, every damned one of us."

"Not to me . . ." Mackie said, and she reached up to touch Kate's throat. "Sarah's very lucky."

Oh, lucky woman, beloved Sarah, how the hell do I get into situations like this? And how do I get out?

"You'd better fall asleep where you belong," Mackie said, suddenly businesslike. "I'm going to sit here for a while. I'll turn out the lights. No, don't say anything. Just go, I'm fine. Don't worry."

"Can I . . ." Kate began, trying to think of something to offer.

"Just go."

Kate went, not believing that she would be allowed to go so simply, but the drunken weariness left her as she climbed the stairs. She undressed in the dark, got into bed quietly, and lay still, wide awake, bitter, ashamed, bewildered.

"Darling?"

"Go back to sleep," Kate said.

"Was it awful?"

"What can you do?" Kate asked in the darkness. "What is there to do?"

"Has she gone to bed?"

"No. She's sitting down there. What am I doing here?"

"Do you want to go back down?"

"I don't know," Kate said.

"Go," Sarah said quietly. "Don't worry about it. I'm part Eskimo."

"She's so lonely," Kate said.

"And 'plump'."

"Oh, Sarah!"

"You don't have to get mad. Go."

Kate got out of bed, put on a robe and stepped out into the hall. The downstairs hall light had been turned out. She stood at the top of the stairs, furious with Sarah, furious with Mackie, furious with herself. Plump! Somebody Mackie had lived with had called her 'Dad'. Kate was suddenly fighting laughter. Sarah wouldn't even think it was funny. It wasn't. But Kate was trembling with laughter, there in the dark hall.

"Darling?" Sarah said quietly, standing at the door of the bedroom. "For heaven's sake, come to bed. You're too drunk to get back down the stairs."

"Somebody Mackie lived with . . ." Kate began but she couldn't finish. She was laughing again.

"Shhh . . ." Sarah said. "Shhh . . ."

Sarah held Kate, letting her cry, irritated at her drunken silliness, troubled by the real sorrow somewhere in it, wondering why Kate never would learn that the Mackies of this world have to save themselves or stay lost, wondering, too, why Kate never could admit simple desire but had to have such elaborate and painful excuses. Maybe it was just as well. God knows how many people it would be if Kate didn't have to find excuses.

"You're so silly," she said softly, turning Kate to her. "You're going to have a terrible hangover."

"She reads the want ads," Kate said.

"So do you . . . and want to answer every ad."

"Maybe somebody who can will. Maybe somebody relatively sane and relatively loving . . ."

"And relatively good-looking and relatively attractive . . ."

"And relatively free . . ."

"Which you're not," Sarah said, enclosing Kate, taking for herself and for Kate what was theirs, only saying a moment later, "Quietly, darling, quietly."

In the morning, Sarah found a note addressed to them both which said simply, "Thanks and you're welcome. Love, Dad." Why 'Dad'? Why 'you're welcome'? Sarcastic? Maybe not. It was hard for Sarah to agree that she had anything to thank Mackie for; but, now that she had left, perhaps Sarah could try. A tumbler of orange juice for Kate was at the moment more important. That was all she could really do, love and tend the fragments of other people that lodged in Kate.

"She's gone?" Kate asked, dressed and



Don't Look In the Yellow Pages ... Yet

by Del Martin

San Francisco homophile organizations are waging a battle for special recognition in the yellow pages of the telephone directory.

Denied a request for a separate heading as "Homophile Organizations" by the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company, four groups filed a complaint with the Public Utilities Commission of California. A three-day hearing was held before Examiner Jarvis in the State Building in San Francisco, September 11-13, 1968.

The organizations filing the joint complaint were the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, Daughters of Bilitis, Society for Individual Rights, and the Tavern Guild of San Francisco. During the hearing William E. Beardemphl, director of the National Legal Defense Fund, testified that his organization and others in the community (like the Mattachine Society) would take advantage of the opportunity to list under the heading "Homophile Organizations," if given the opportunity.

The complainants maintained that the new heading in the phone directory would be in the interest and to the convenience of the Pacific Telephone Company's patrons, employees and the public at large and that denial on the part of the phone company was unjust, unreasonable and discriminatory in nature.

The telephone company in its reply had alleged that under the tariff, approved by the PUC, the company was given the discretion

ready for work, remarkably cleared for the circumstance.

"Yes," Sarah answered, handing her the note. "Why 'Dad'?"

"A sort of joke," Kate said.

"Why 'you're welcome'? Is she being sarcastic?"

"I don't think so," Kate said. She didn't want to say anything more, and Sarah understood that she didn't.

"Have your orange juice," Sarah said.

to "establish or to refuse to establish any heading in the classified telephone directory" and that in its refusal the company was acting in compliance with the provisions of the tariff. The phone company also maintained that the present listings were sufficient and already stood the test of time. (CRH is currently listed under "Church Organizations," while DOB, SIR and Tavern Guild come under "Associations.") The phone company further contended that the term "homophile" was not widely and generally enough known to serve as a ready reference and that the request was "designed solely for the purposes of using the directory as a vehicle to create publicity for the complainants." The phone company added that granting such a request actually "would be a disservice to the public."

Unfortunately an article appearing in the September 6 edition of the *Wall Street Journal* quoted an unidentified spokesman from SIR as "conceding that the action was brought in the hopes of obtaining some publicity." This was promptly denied by representatives of all the organizations concerned under oath on the stand at the hearing. The seriousness of the issue was made evident by the parade of witnesses for the complainants. Besides representatives of the organizations involved (Rev. Charles Lewis, CRH; Phyllis Lyon, DOB; Larry Littlejohn, SIR; and Bill Plath, Tavern Guild), witnesses included such people from the San Francisco community as Attorney Herbert Donaldson, Chief Counsel of the Central City Office of the Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation; Officers Elliot Blackstone and Richard Hongisto, of the Community Relations

Unit of the San Francisco Police Department; Ron Lee, psychiatric social worker for the Center for Special Problems, a division of the Mental Health Department of the City and County of San Francisco; Don Lucas, director of the Central City office of the

Economic Opportunities Commission; Evander Smith, an attorney in private practice; Rev. A. Cecil Williams, pastor of Glide Memorial Methodist Church and chairman of Citizens Alert; Kenneth Englander, of the San Francisco Switchboard, a community referral service not connected with the telephone company; and Dr. William Dresser, a psychiatrist and former assistant superintendent of Atascadero State Hospital.

The homophile organizations were ably represented by Attorney David I. Clayton from the Central City office of the San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation. The Foundation, an anti-poverty agency, accepted the case on the basis that many of the residents of the Central City poverty area, which this office serves, are homosexuals and that this case would promote the interests and concerns of these individuals.

During the dispute over the term "homophile" the Rev. Mr. Lewis was asked by Robert E. Michalski, attorney for Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company, "It's a coined word, isn't it?"

"So is telephone, I suppose," the minister coolly replied.

Earl Stokes, a law student assisting Mr. Clayton, testified that as a part of his research in preparation for this case he called the directory assistance operator for Pacific Telephone and, assuming the role of a homosexual new to the San Francisco area, explained he was looking for homophile organizations. The operator stated she could find no such listing in the telephone directory, but, after a long pause, offered, "I know that over in Marin County there's something called Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Do you think they could help you?"

Miss Lyon, of DOB, states that there are many occasions of emergency when it would be helpful to people who know that homophile organizations do exist in San Francisco, but are unable to recall the specific names. She cited such emergencies as need for legal, job, or psychiatric referrals—even suicide prevention.

Dr. Dresser indicated that a separate sub-heading for "Homophile Organizations" under the existing general heading "Social Service and Welfare Organizations" would be helpful to him and other social service agencies in referring persons with homosexual problems.

The sole witness for Pacific Telephone Company was William Henderson, General Directory Sales Supervisor. He denied that there was any attempt on the part of the phone company to discriminate against homophile organizations and denied specifically that the company discriminated at any level, including hiring and firing, against homosexuals. (This bit of testimony is particularly interesting, since the Glide Church Task Force for Fair Employment for Homosexuals has in its files complaints from former employees of the phone company that they were asked to resign because of mere suspicion that they might be of homosexual orientation. This happened to one employee after 12 years of exemplary service to the phone company. These employees were also told that the phone company took the position that they "hire many young people and if it were known that there were homosexuals on the phone company's payroll, their parents wouldn't like it.")

Mr. Henderson stated that neither the availability of space nor costs to the telephone company had been a factor of determination in the denial of the yellow pages listing. He also said that there was no specific objection to the word "homophile," although "homosexual" might be a more appropriate heading. It was later agreed and stipulated by all the complaining homophile organizations that they would accept a listing as "Homosexual Organizations."

BUT Mr. Henderson went on to enumerate what he referred to frequently as the six basic principles on which the phone company relies to determine whether or not a new heading should be granted. Principle number 4 that "headings must not be too broad or too limited" led to the objection against the separate homophile listing. In the cross-examination it was pointed out to Mr. Henderson that there was a listing for "Bridge Clubs." When pressed for a distinction as to the manner in which homophile organizations were determined a more narrow classification than bridge clubs, he could only reiterate principle number 4 and state homophile organizations was too narrow and limited a category, whereas bridge clubs were not.

When vigorously pressed by the hearing officer Mr. Henderson admitted the listing would not be open under any circumstances to homophile organizations on the basis of being "controversial and objectionable."

He assured the hearing officer, however, that objectionableness and controversiality really had nothing to do with the rejection of the listing request, however. When asked to explain why the identical listing in one context would be controversial and objectionable, but not in another, he was unable to give a satisfactory explanation.

Mr. Henderson finally suggested that the phone company would not be in a position to refuse a request from each of the organizations individually that in the white pages of the directory after the name there be added "a Homophile Organization." He stated that this, in his opinion, would not be objectionable or controversial and that the company would have no right to refuse such a request. He also suggested that the phone company might possibly, in the green index to the yellow pages, set up a cross-reference that said "Homophile Organizations—See Associations." These, however, were the only concessions he was willing to suggest as possibilities.

Mr. Clayton in his closing argument pointed out that the mass media advertising campaign now being conducted by the Pacific Telephone Company to popularize the yellow pages would lead one to believe that any service he desired would be readily located in the yellow pages. In the case of homophile organizations, however, the only persons who might use the directory would have to know the names of the organizations already and would more than likely use the white pages.

"The only basis on which the present arrangement and classification in the yellow pages can be logically explained is that they are established on the basis of mood and whim, not of the subscriber, of course, but of the telephone company," Mr. Clayton declared. "I feel sincerely that if the action taken by the phone company in denying this request is not representation of bias, it at least represents a manifestation of fear and ignorance on the part of the phone company about an area with which they are at best unfamiliar."

In his closing arguments Mr. Clayton said in part, "Our mayor has openly called for enlightened treatment of the homosexual in San Francisco. If this is to become a reality, the homosexual must have full and ready access to every method of and avenue of communication. The telephone must be in truth a public utility which can be fully utilized by the homosexual and those interested in his cause in the same manner as it is made avail-

able to and utilized by heterosexuals."

The matter is now under submission. The hearing officer will go over the record and make his written recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission, which will ultimately decide whether or not the request of the complaining organizations should be granted.

Incidental to this story, of course, was the publicity accorded the case as a newsworthy item. Besides coverage in the local San Francisco newspapers, a story did go out on the national wire service. But it can hardly be said that the case, as brought out before the PUC, was not of serious intent to make adequate and proper use of the services of the yellow pages so widely advertised and espoused by the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company.

(Del Martin is one of the leading figures of the homophile movement. She is one of the founding Daughters of this organization, and through the years has held, at one time or another, virtually all of the available national offices and local offices of the San Francisco Chapter. She has been instrumental in the dialogue between church organizations and the homophile movement in the San Francisco area, has been prominent in politics in that community, and is known, and quite sincerely loved, throughout the movement. More importantly, she has individually motivated uncounted dozens of others to follow in this cause. It is, I think, in this last respect, that she is most to be loved and lauded. Gene Damon, Editor, THE LADDER.)

A LADDER FUND

As voted by the General Assembly in August, 1968 The Ladder is now a separate department within DOB, Inc. with separate books and separate bank accounts: in particular, a Ladder Savings Account for all donations earmarked for the magazine. DOB contracts with all donors who specify that their donations are for The Ladder, that these monies will be held in trust for The Ladder if not immediately used therefor. Such checks may be made payable to The Ladder.

Not only The Ladder Staff, but all of us in DOB will be most grateful for Ladder donations of every size from \$1 to \$1,000 to . . .

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

by Ben Cat

Do you know what Christmas is?

Christmas is a time when *people* go out and buy presents and get in debt for another year.

Christmas is a time when *people* buy and cook a lot of food that their stomachs are not accustomed to and they get indigestion.

Christmas is a time when *people* get mad at each other because they have over-lapping social commitments.

Christmas is a time when *people* buy gifts for each other which are not necessarily wanted.

Christmas, this year, is a time when on Friday night *people* will have office parties and if they are still alive they will have more parties on "the Day" and a lot of *people* will get killed.

Us cats take a different approach. We think that Christmas on Wednesday is a good thing. We expect to have the leftovers of a lot of dinners. People tend to fit their eating around the holidays. We will worry a lot about our girls. If they are not at home, we will be a bit nervous until they arrive. The radio will give out constant reports of death on the freeways. But we hope that because Christmas comes on Wednesday this year, the partying will be more spread out and the casualties will be less. We hope that our girls will all come home to us . . .

I, Ben Cat, am getting very settled in my ways. I like my new home. My girls have had quite a year. They have bought this house. They have had to buy another car. They had the rugs cleaned. They have had all the usual ailments that seem to go around. They went to Denver and came back. They have spent a lot of time at their typewriters. I have had a hard time getting my normal amount of love and attention.

A poodle has come to visit us a couple of times. I don't mind too much because it belongs to a woman who means a lot to my girls. I feel sorry for the thing. It needs so much attention.

My message to you this year is more simple than the last one. I hope that all of you will look into your hearts and find some sort of answer to what your real purpose may be. I

know that I have some dogs in San Francisco that are urging their girls to better things and I know that there are some cats in Kansas City that have a paw in all this and I want to put my paw right out to all of you and say that this year we all have a lot to do and let us get at it.

Little given as I am to Scripture, I shall deliver only this small part.

Matt.: 9/17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles and both are preserved.

This is a new world, my girls. Live in it well. Acknowledge its teachings and don't be afraid of its challenges.

According to my good Greek Bible, the Child shall be called Emmanuel, which being interpreted is *God with us*. I think God was a real swinger and if Jesus was his only begotten son, then that wasn't too bad. Because Jesus said a lot of good things. He had a mess of people around that interpreted his teachings, but we don't have to answer to that. Read your Red Letters and have a very merry and even pious Christmas!

Ben Cat



Christmas is a friendly kitten if it doesn't move in on you and take over!

LESBIANA

by Gene Damon



A movie has been made from Violette Leduc's *THERESE AND ISABELLE*. It is worse than the book, and it won't be reviewed in *THE LADDER*... see it if you must, but you have been warned. Another thing around these days is *THE LEGEND OF LYLAH CLARE*, with no redeeming features unless you simply enjoy looking at Kim Novak. It is a sick thing about a movie biography of a famous actress. There is a poorly done Lesbian part in it (writing for the role is terrible) played by Rossella Falk (who is very good given anything worth working at). Miss this one, too. Its time to get fussy about how much crowing we do over just having movies with homosexual themes, and start demanding that the Lesbians and homosexuals portrayed have some resemblance to the real item. (Example? *RACHEL, RACHEL*).

A very special book for the male audience, but one with certain social significance for Lesbians, is *THE GAY WORLD*, by Martin Hoffman, M.D., N.Y., Basic Books, 1968. The publisher name is fitting here, since this book may well become the basic book for male homosexual studies. It is unpretentious, as scientifically sound as is possible given the hundreds of conflicting theories around, and once and for all Dr. Hoffman lays the blame for any and all homosexual conflicts right where it belongs, in the lap of our social structure.

Dr. Hoffman bases his book on case studies of over 100 homosexuals. This is where its similarity to Dr. Irving Bieber's *HOMOSEXUALITY* begins and ends. Dr. Hoffman, in fact, dismisses Dr. Bieber's book as pseudo-science. Many of us have been waiting for someone with equal credentials to slap that one down, with its preconception approach.

After examining the various theories about what constitutes homosexuality, careful elimination of all the extraneous groups that society sometimes links with homosexuals, the public and private life of admitted homosexuals, the present legal situation, sexual identity, and the disease concept of homosexuality—and carefully allotting them their

necessary space, he gets to his basic thesis.

He offers both proof where possible, and reasonable conclusions where proof cannot be offered to support the idea that male homosexuals could not be nearly so promiscuous nor so unable to form lasting marriages if it were not for the social stigma. That the sex drive is strong enough to force the man (in many cases) to act out his sexual need, but that there is seldom sufficient reason for him to form a permanent attachment in the face of society's unrelenting hostility to such an alliance.

Dr. Hoffman makes the point several times that women can and do form lasting alliances, primarily he feels because it is simply not socially frowned upon. (He does not dismiss the difference in sex drive and so-called natural promiscuity caused by different reactions to sexual stimuli, but he does indicate that these differences are simply NOT sufficient to explain the extreme stability of Lesbian relationships compared to the almost total promiscuity of the males.)

It will be interesting to see how some of the leaders in the male homophile movement react to this statement by Dr. Hoffman: "... the reason that males who are homosexually inclined cannot form stable relations with each other is that society does not want them to."

His concluding recommendation is that which the homophile organizations have been talking about for years. Homosexuals must be treated as a minority, given full minority status, and must work toward overcoming altogether all forms of minority status prejudice. He likens this to going from our present state (social outcasts, totally) to the black stage (he refers to this as the "talk about giving 'civil rights' to others") and then, finally, to full rights and social privileges such as the relative lack today of prejudice against the Roman Catholics.

He admits that he doesn't even know if it is

possible for society to do this, but there may be some militants made by this book, particularly when he offers evidence that a person can be driven insane by social forces. Superficially, this is an obvious truism, but looked at in the form of a case history or two, you come up wondering why only black people march on Washington.

THE EXPEDITION, by Stanley Wolpert, Boston, Little, Brown, 1968, is a turgid tale of an expedition to the Himalayas in search of a Yeti (Abominable Snowman), to bring him back alive, ala Frank Buck. The group is organized by Hodge McNeill, a combination of every kind of failure, and he gathers a sad crew and commences the climb. This takes over half of the book, and you are mad before you get to the jumping off place. The cardboard characters die, one by one, through most of the expected accidents. The author has borrowed heavily from James Ramsey Ullman (but he does not write like him). Most everyone dies in the end, including the obligatory Lesbian who makes a verbal and subtle pass at a girl, who chooses to *FREEZE TO DEATH*, rather than submit to *A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH*... Are you wondering when this was written?? So am I.

Henry Treece's *THE GREEN MAN*, has been issued in paperback for the first time, by Paperback Library, 1968. This 1966 historical is a fanciful but interesting handling of the original source for Shakespeare's *HAMLET* (a 12th Century chronicle, *HISTORICA DANICA*, by Saxo Grammaticus) and it includes an overt relationship between Ophelia and Queen Gertrude. I wonder if this means that Shakespeare was bowdlerized before bowdler?

James Colton, well known in the male homosexual literature field, included a Lesbian story in his collection, *THE CORRUPTOR AND OTHER STORIES*, San Diego, Greenleaf Classics, 1968. (This is a paperback original.) In "Getting Rid Of Mr. Grainger," Olive Rowe, and her lover, Binnie Greenberg, have cause to lament Olive's lack of tact. The remainder of the collection is entirely male homosexual in emphasis, but as *TANGENTS* readers know (where, by the way, many of these stories originally appeared, a fact overlooked by the publisher of this book, a violation of all ethical procedures), James Colton is very entertaining, and certainly not limited to the male homosexual audience.

THINKING ABOUT WOMEN, by Mary Ellmann, N.Y., Harcourt, Brace and World,

1968, is a well intentioned brickbat thrown by yet another lady enraged by the sexual dichotomy of our society, wherein "there must always be two literatures like two public toilets, one for Men and one for Women." She rounds up all of the old irritations and spreads them out to examine again and again. There is an excellent commentary on phallic criticism (a woman if she is any good is said to "write like a man," and on the other hand, she can be called "a ladies magazine writer"). Mrs. Ellmann, however, sometimes gets so eager about her justifiable anger, that she engages in sweeping statements that cannot be handily proven... With this proviso, this should be read, so that when you next wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and wonder what it is that is wrong with you, it is only that you live in a culture where "femaleness is a congenital fault rather like eczema or Original Sin."

RADCLEFFE HALL: A CASE OF OBSCURITY, London, Femina, 1968, by Vera Brittain, carefully covers the history of the court trial of *THE WELL OF LONELINESS*, which was one of the silliest morals trials in history. It is pointed out, however, that this prosecution of the book is responsible almost wholly for the veritable flood of Lesbian material that followed its appearance. Had the book been ignored, it might well never have become very well known. Certainly it would not have occupied the position of being a steady best seller, first in hard covers and then in paperback for close to forty years. There is a certain nostalgic delight in this book, but only for those of you who still consider the "old chestnut" special, though it does a bit of name dropping and covers some parts of Radclyffe Hall's life with Lady Una from a different viewpoint.

The October, 1968 issue of *HARPER'S BAZAAR*, includes an excerpt from the forthcoming biography of Jean Cocteau's life, *AN IMPERSONATION OF ANGELS*, by Frederick Brown. This is due out from Viking Press, and should the book prove deserving (which looks likely) it will be reviewed in a later issue. This excerpt names a number of the homosexuals, male and female, that played a part in Cocteau's life, including, for example, Princess de Polignac, who keeps appearing in recent books about that period. She began life as Winnie Singer, and was heir to the Singer Sewing Machine fortune. I imagine the stockholders might have frowned upon her activities, but she was a great patron of the

arts. Cocteau, of course, made certain that he would deserve being known as a "notorious" homosexual, since it would not have suited his personality to be simply "a" homosexual. In all fairness it must be mentioned that everyone during this long historical period, 1850 to 1935, seem to be being presented somewhat out of proportion. These dozens of industrious and successful artists in so many fields could not possibly have spent every moment raising hell in view of their accomplishments. Too many were very creative, and creation takes time and hard work.

LIKE A RIVER OF LIONS, by Tana de Gamez, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1966. Belmont Books, 1968, is an adventure novel set in Cuba from 1953 through the trouble years, with brief glimpses of the past causes for the revolutionary state. It is a bloody book, with all of the usual sick scenes for fireside consumption. There are numerous male and female homosexual incidents, but none of great importance, since the conflict is the novel's major theme. The Lesbian incidents are quite well-handled, however.

Samantha Golden's PORTRAIT OF A LESBIAN, Brandon House, 1968, is a quite well done study of a compulsively destructive Lesbian. It has some very bad flaws, including a completely unbelievable boarding house scene, and some technical errors that are hard to believe, but the obligatory sex scenes are not as hideous as they usually are in this sort of book, and the writing puts the book into the class of evening waster rather than hard core pornography.

Another Brandon House original paperback: LESBIAN BLOW-UP, by Winston Smith, 1968, makes no attempt to be well-written, but it is a very funny book. It is about a female photographer who is put into a private detective situation, and as such it seems a deliberate parody. It has its sick moments, but it won't shock even the field mouse who lives in your garden. I suspect that the male hack writers who do this sort of thing for a living are sadder than their readers, and that should be a pleasing thing to all of us.

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To rise alone . . .
The sun rose warm and heavy
As golden breasts
The leaves tumescent flesh . . .
I was thirsty that morning;
I rose alone . . .

PHOTOGRAPHER

I know.
You take your camera to her,
Mark the change-of-season colors
of her flesh,
The plummet of her nose,
And the carven joints of her fingers.
Focus and flash,
The swirling hypo over nitrate film,
Prints impaled on the walls
Like moths blown open to your gaze.
Hunger though you may,
You can't impale the knowledge of her flesh,
Nor can you derive, from angles merging
in your eyes,
The memory that remains to be:
The throbbing of her veins,
That basso ostinato of my life.

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October 5, 1968 . . . In 1964, the Republic of Tanganyika and the Republic of Zanzibar (an island off the coast of Africa) joined to form the country, TANZANIA. The capital of Tanzania is Dar-es-Salaam, and a Reuters news release of the above date indicates that local councils in parts of Tanzania "where Lesbianism is a traditional practice" are being asked to bring in laws making it illegal. There are nearly 11,000,000 people in this country, presumably at least half of them women, so this could have some rather unsettling effects, particularly (as seems likely) if these practices are tribal rites. One imagines that the idea here is that to progress into this century, one must first go through the Victorian era, all over again!!!!!!

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made in Marin County, California, for further information, contact Miss Laporte. Anyone, anywhere, sincerely interested in beginning a new chapter, contact the National Office for details on how to get this rolling.

Readers Respond



To the editor:

Re: James Colton's "The Homosexual Identity" in the September issue of THE LADDER.

I, like most "silent" homosexuals, secretly applaud Mr. Colton's brave admittance of his homosexuality. Indeed, oftentimes we would like to shout to the world what we are and are understandably frustrated when we cannot. And we cannot, despite Mr. Colton's belief that we should assert ourselves as an important minority.

Let's be realistic. I'm a single woman working for the government. He is a noted author. The government controls my income and I could lose my job if my homosexual identity were discovered. Mr. Colton, as a writer, enjoys the liberties of a more relaxed vocation and doesn't suffer the pressures of an employee of big business or big government. I live with my lover and refer to her as my "roommate" to my "straight" friends. He seems to have some semblance of a family.

I don't mean to attack Mr. Colton personally. I only want to show that however earnestly we "silent" homosexuals want to declare our identity, it isn't practical to do so.

The social pressure he speaks of exists for homosexuals whether they admit their identity to family and friends or whether they hide it within themselves. By definition, homosexuals as a minority will suffer social pressure in forms of frustration, anger, guilt. But I prefer this to the blatant disgust and contempt that would come from most of my co-workers and "straight" friends.

But I can't ignore the fact that most persons believe homosexuals are liars, thieves, sex maniacs, rapists, nudists, insane, sick, nuts . . . I fight the battle another way than what Mr. Colton suggests. When in a group where homosexuality becomes a topic of conversation, I try to make it clear that I don't disrespect homosexuals. I don't advocate homosexuality but try to show that I believe a person's sexual preference is his own business. On several occasions I have helped

individuals understand the error of their logic:

Him: I think all homosexuals are sex maniacs. They rape women and seduce children.

Me: Why would a male homosexual rape women? Don't they prefer men?

Him: Well, they pick on children.

Me: How could a little child begin to satisfy a man?

This is not exactly the conversation but the arguments are there. I feel that by talking about homosexuality in sane terms, one accomplishes more than by keeping silent.

And I remember challenging the validity of *The Killing of Sister George* and calling for a realistic view of Lesbian life.

So, although I'd love to hold her hand in public, I can't afford it, financially or emotionally. Thus the pseudonym—

Sterling Monahan
Houston, Texas

To the editor:

Mr. Colton ("The Homosexual Identity," September, 1968) makes two statements that can bear repetition: that Lesbians and homosexuals are born that way and that, as a minority, we need to surface and work for our rights. I shall not say much about the first statement. It is still the minority view but will be out of style twenty years from now in the better psychological circles. Today's popular and leaden view is that we are born indistinguishable lumps of protoplasm and become merely the result of environmental forces, a view that stifles individual freedom and the sense of personal responsibility that goes with it. This in itself is reason enough for affluent, middle and upper class students to revolt. Behaviorism, that psychological theory that makes of us no more than conditionable machines and that proclaims the eventual total predictability of behavior, is naturally popular with the two great mass and conformist societies, the Russian and the American. We Americans are—perhaps

were is the better tense—ahead of the Russians who still must use crude, terroristic means to obtain conformity in America, at least until recently managed it primarily through education, by the application of pseudo-humane and subtle conditioning principles derived from dear old Pavlov and his unfortunate dogs.

I shall elaborate a step further Mr. Colton's idea of the Democratic Party as a coalition of minorities. We have had from the beginning one asset in this country that few have recognized as such—the Negro minority. And few countries, if any, are so blessed. This particular minority is not only large enough, but favored by extreme and unconcealable visibility. I say "favored" because otherwise this minority might never have been forced to rebel in sufficient numbers. Certainly we Lesbians have not; too many of us actually *pride* ourselves on "passing." Now that the Negroes, American citizens whom future generations will thank, are leading the way, all minorities, including that curious majority "minority," women, are beginning the long fight for their place in the sun.

The happy days of one last minority are numbered. Time is running out for white heterosexual males. This minority has been dubbed The Man (you will note, not The Woman). When The Man has experienced the full sting and pain of minority status, our present social upheavals will have come full circle. Then *all* will have suffered minority degradation. A new era will dawn. We will leave behind a world composed of tight masses isolated from each other by hatred. We will enter a time when all persons can reach out to all other persons with ease, each proud to belong to a minority of one, her (or his) own sacred person.

T. St. John

San Francisco, California
(Editor's Note: Mr. Colton's article has created enormous response. There will be further comments in the Feb-Mar Issue.)

Dear Miss Damon:

The article, "The Least of These," by Marilyn Barrow in the October-November issue of THE LADDER portrayed a particularly interesting lack of understanding of the minority problems.

The author seems to overlook the fact that the enormous backing of George Wallace for president makes the using of the term "nigger" very popular in suburbia and even in the large cities. We haven't noticed any true con-

servatives getting hit on the head by cops or being assassinated. Perhaps the author reads only that press which is liberal and concerned about the improvement and on-going of our nation. But if she were to drop into an "American Opinion" bookstore one day she might find some startling material on sale. If she listened to some of the "two-way talk shows" on radio, she might be treated to solid hours of anti-semitism.

Perhaps she has also overlooked some of the very subtle but accepting sort of humor about "queers" that is coming across in a great many TV shows and in the acts of many comedians.

A homosexual (or Lesbian) asks the privilege of society's acceptance and equality under the law. But it must at the same time require that we take our place in society to eradicate its ills and to stand up for other minorities and be counted among concerned citizens for justice on all levels.

The DOB has many members from other minority groups. We have Blacks and we have Mexican-Americans. How would you like to be a black, Lesbian, hare-lipped, uneducated woman? Would acknowledgement of your Lesbianism do you much good?

This is a diverse world and we may very well wish to propound the effectiveness of our diversity. But I think if we ever lose sight of the cause of other afflicted and repressed people, we will lose the humanity and the justification for our own plea.

Certainly in San Francisco it has been shown that a joining together of many minorities produces a voting bloc and a power that might not have been attained by any one of the minorities working alone.

A difference that is very apparent in the Black problem (just as one example) is that these young people have been black since birth and they have inherited the problem of their race. "Queers" do not have to live in certain areas. "Queers" do not have to fight so hard for their education. "Queers" can "pass" until they get money and power. "Queers" can and do make wills and property arrangements that will protect them . . . at least they can in California . . . I cannot speak for all states. I have seen Negroes with better credit ratings than mine turned down for some purchases. I know that the home in which I now reside and which is owned by me and my female spouse would not be available to a Negro couple or a single Negro, no matter how much money they might have or how much education or how much value to the community. It simply would not be

shown. And even if, by some freakish act of the Real Estate Moguls, they could buy the place they would never achieve the acceptance that we are receiving.

I fully accept the idea that homosexuals must keep on carrying the banner of freedom and that we must never stop in our efforts to achieve reasonable status in this society, but I don't think we can win our objectives at the exclusion of other minorities' battles. Just as we must fight for women's rights we must also fight for the application of Constitutional law for *all* people. If I could not work in the field of civil rights for all people, I could not, in an honorable fashion, work for the civil rights of the homosexual. That wonderful document, the Constitution, has to be proven right. It has to make sense. I cannot say to my Black sister that her problem is being homosexual. I have to say to her that I care about all of her problems. Homosexuality does not confine itself to the WASP society. It is everywhere.

In the days ahead of us we may expect rioting and disorder. We have already experienced this. But this is the result of frustration at the workability of our society. It is true that no homophile group has indulged in riot. But we *do* know of individual homosexuals who have become so out of sorts with our system that they have become arsonists, robbers, etc. Frustration and repression and personal misery is a common thing to all minorities. How they choose to react depends on the grouping. Homosexuals usually don't get involved in their problem until puberty or later. Black people know their problem much earlier. I know an eight-year-old who already knows his problem.

Let us, indeed, be as involved as we can be in the struggle for sexual rights, but let us not lose sight of our involvement with society and the total purpose of our means of government. I cannot imagine anything more horrible than to be a "free" Lesbian in society and find that my color still held me back from full and honorable participation in that society.

Please, Miss Barrow, understand that "niggers" and "queers" can be just as mutually inclusive as they can be exclusive. It is really all one great big fight . . . a fight for the true democracy and the joy of participation in that government that theoretically guarantees our rights as *citizens*.

I happen to be a Caucasian. But this is not my choice . . . it is a happenstance of nature. I am also a Lesbian. We aren't done fighting about why that circumstance prevails. I do

know that we are all here and we are here at a time in history that makes individual and human rights of primary importance. I hope that no homosexual, no Lesbian, will be so concerned with any *one* right that we will overlook the overall sense of our constitutional government.

Helen Sanders
Los Angeles, California

(Editor's note: Miss Barrow seems to be concerned primarily with the fact that so many Lesbians still refuse to accept any moral responsibility *even* in their own behalf.)

The Centipede's Poem . . .

I never asked the reason
some are yellow owls
and some howl
I never asked an accounting of legs
or heart chambers
we walked out of the sea
on whatever we had to walk on
and some stayed in
there is every kind of animal
that there is
and neither the moon nor the man nor
the mango tree
answers it
I never asked why mice in a woodpile
were not me
I eat whatever I
eat go where I go and
sit quite still
breathing

the harvest spider
flowers on my wall
ornately
legs stretched long and
easy as a young queen
in the park
he knows his trick
will come and meanwhile
he's not asking

if you lose your lover
rain hurt yom blackbirds
brood over the sky trees
burn down everywhere brown
rabbits run under
car wheels. should your
body cry? to feel such
blue and empty bed don't
bother. if you lose your
lover comb hair go here
or there get another.

by JUDY GRAHN

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A CHRISTMAS PACKAGE OF VERSE

FLIGHT

I caught
the bright swiftness of
an unending moment in
the flight of a gazelle.

Ringed horns curving backward,
eyes searching ahead,
she bounded beyond
the jaws of panthers
and the claws of lions
to the edge of my waterhole.

I watched
her dip briefly
for water, return my
gaze, then leap away to
grace the horizon and my mind
with new flight and
new moments to come.

Mary-Faith Albert

Now in the harbor
The sand has been buried
Beneath the rising spring tide;
The pounding is stronger
The waves cresting higher,
With you lying here at my side.

But summer will come
When the tide will turn,
And water retreat from the land.
In later years may you and I
Find seashells uncovered
Wherever we scuff in the sand.

Ann Haley

WELFARE WORKER

Dusk also falls on the Bronx,
Even on the sooty "Elevated,"
On me that night as I climbed to the train,
On Mrs. Sanchez, my client,
As I thought of her, as it grew dark;
Dark-eyed and deep bosomed,
Three kids and the man's gone.

Unthinking sad I passed the tattered posters,
(Like spotted cabbage leaves
Fallen beneath the vegetable stalls)
Screaming foods and Fords and flicks—
I stopped
Before a movie ad, a tailored woman,
Fashionable smile beneath a bowler hat.

And I turned away sharp,
Wincing at my own sad lust.
(Dust cannot hurt me, nor soot, nor slum,
Nor broken glass;
Only flowers burn my eyes and throat.)

Looking up at the sun-splattered sky,
Hills of white cloud, edged in gold,
Where once I dreamed to run;
I saw the pigeons, circling free,
Black, white, tan,
And nearly screamed in pain.

Martha Shelley

in the place where
her breasts come together
two thumbs' width of
channel ride my
eyes to anchor
hands to angle
in the place where
her legs come together
I said 'you smell like the
ocean' and lay down my tongue
beside the dark tooth edge
of sleeping
'swim' she told me and I
did, I did

Judy Grahn

DISSOLUTION

The fortress crumbles,
Lax sentries permitting
Spies and saboteurs to pass
Between the sensual walls . . .

April intruded, thrust in
By the hands of a girl, hyacinths.
An innocent gift . . .
The scent had nearly brought me to my knees
Before I repaired the breached garrison.

Scent can cut me down, or sound . . .
At the piano, the girl with bobbed hair
Took careful aim, catapulted
Pure tones into the donjon.
The turrets shook.
Sound blinded me; confused, I said,
"Silence—turning from song—is a dying."

And she said, "I garrisoned with thoughts
That no one cared about my music."
Thus moved, thus weakened,
Thus, in darkness, we were smitten.
The towers burned about our clashing hordes,
Armor on sprawled limbs reflected flames,
As we lay dying, as the dawn came.

Martha Shelley

one august morning
the mockingbird announced
that the night rains
had driven up a
thousand easy worms
and drowned all the cats
on earth

Judy Grahn



THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE a bibliography

By Gene Damon and Lee Stuart

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ornaments on it while we listened to Christ-
mas records on the stereo.

"This is an odd Christmas," I said. "I
don't feel the way I usually do at Christmas
time."

"We're not usually this broke," said Ger-
ry, attaching two red balls and a star, then
standing back to admire her work.

"If I hadn't been sick in November, we
would have more money. But it's not that."

"No?" she said. "Oh please, don't put
that candy cane over there. No one will be
able to see it."

I moved the candy cane to a more promi-
nent position. "It's because of Hadley, I
think. I've never spent Christmas Eve with a
stranger. Have you?" I reached for the box
of ornaments and rumpled Gerry's hair.
"Well, that first Christmas we were togeth-
er, we were practically strangers, but that
doesn't count."

"Listen," said Gerry, "if we discuss Had-
ley we're going to end up patting ourselves
on the back for being so nice to a poor
homeless waif, or else we'll talk ourselves
into being afraid she'll rob us blind when
she comes over tomorrow evening. We did
the right thing. Leave it at that." She draped
the last piece of tinsel on the tree. "And by
the way, what the hell did you mean when
you said we were practically strangers? I
felt awfully well acquainted with you on
that first Christmas of ours."

"Compared to now," I said, "I scarcely
knew you then." I pulled her by the hand
toward the center of the room. "Come with
me to the mistletoe." I said in my best Cas-
bah voice, "and I'll show you how much
better acquainted we are now."

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