

S I S T E R S

APRIL 1971

PRICE \$0



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR
THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER OF THE
DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

a woman's organization for the purposes of aiding the lesbian to discover her place in society and of educating society to understand and accept her, without prejudice, and

1. To encourage and support the lesbian in her search for her social, economic, personal, inter-personal and vocational identity within society by maintaining a growing library on the themes of homosexuality and of women in general; by providing social functions where she can communicate with others and expand her social world outside the bar scene; by providing an organized structure through which she can work to change society's limitations upon her life-style; by providing a forum for the interchange of ideas and problems within her own group.

2. To educate the public to accept and understand the lesbian as an individual, eventually leading to the breakdown of taboos, prejudices and limitations upon her life-style by sponsoring public discussions; by providing individuals as speakers and participants in various forums designed to educate the public; by dissemination of educational and rational literature on the lesbian.

3. To encourage and support and participate in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.

4. To investigate the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual and to promote changes, providing equitable handling of cases involving homosexuals, through due process of law, without prejudice.

a monthly publication
for all gay women by the
San Francisco Chapter of
The Daughters of Bilitis

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SISTERS WELCOMES ANY/ALL CONTRIBUTIONS
of poetry, prose, articles, typing skills,
time, distribution energies. DOB SF is
trying to make SISTERS as professional-
looking and reading a magazine as is possible.
We need your help. Thank you.

(SFDOB is proud to welcome Dr. Ruth McGuire as a permanent staff member of SISTERS. Watch for her monthly column on aging and the gay woman.)

Note: SISTERS has in the past wrongly referred to Dr. McGuire as a "psychologist". She tells us that "long ago my initial field of study was in clinical social work, and with decades of subsequent study and specialization in psychoanalysis." She is now a resident of San Francisco and is a licensed, practicing psychoanalyst/psychotherapist. Her office hours are expanded to include week-ends as well as week days. Call 626-2420 or 921-8131 to make an appointment, between 10 AM and 5 PM.

PROBLEMS OF THE AGING LESBIAN

In our society the problems of growing older are of prime importance, naturally, to that portion of our population which is fast becoming the majority--our Senior Citizenry. These problems which older people know so well are also becoming of importance and concern to the younger people who will have to help deal with them because they will be directly and very personally involved. Our culture deems it inadvisable (fortunately) to simply dispense with burdensome older people. We pride ourselves on "taking care of" our elderly citizens "adequately" through government assistance programs and some of the more realistic approaches of a selected few religious and educational help programs.

However, to the average older person, the problems of aging most difficult to solve are not those of food and housing but those psychological and social constraints which appear, inexorably, with advancing years. There is, as yet, not really much science can do to prevent or replace worn-out body parts. Physical, body functioning is usually one of the first constrictions to be duly noted and accommodated--grudgingly. This physical restriction can happen relatively early in an individual's life, when her chronological age is not in the Senior's group. Perhaps it is relevant at this point to discuss what is the age of "aging" and what is the age of "old."

Aging is a most difficult condition to define; we all know women who seem "old" in their early

teens. You have all heard the quip about the old woman of 90 going on 14. Men often refer to "my old woman" who, usually not their mothers but their wives or sweethearts, turns out to be 21! In our culture age tends more to be defined as an apparent emotional or psychological state. And within this frame of reference we will accept that some women seem "old" when actually young in years and other seem marvelously younger than springtime while cashing their old age pension checks. In short, there are extreme variations within the norm. We must define and limit our universe and establish a stable frame of reference for any discussion of aging women.

It seems reasonable to accept that puberty and adolescence are the years to call Juniors. Let us propose that the twenties into the forties can be called the Intermediates. Some mid-to-late thirties and early forties could be included, if they have not entered the menopause cycle. So, for the purposes of this discussion our Aging Lesbian is a woman who, generally speaking, is in or has passed this special growth period in her life. We know from medical research that the average healthy woman in our culture today begins her climateric around the middle to late forties and is usually finished with it by mid fifties. The change-of-life syndrome can, of course, present specific problems of irritations due to hormonal imbalance. Modern medical treatment can now successfully restore hormonal balance so the feverish flushings our grandmothers endured are seldom ours.

Heterosexual women experience the menopause with varying degrees of equanimity, from profound to none at all. For many it is the time of release from child-bearing, and even a plausible haven of refuge from undesired sexual activity. Some women experience heightened fear that this is the time their husbands will wander off and leave them for younger women. Wrinkles and detested hirsute adornments appear and the bloom is most definitely off the flower of womanhood. If the heterosexual woman is widowed or for other reasons alone, the problems of fading

attractiveness can be paramount. Still she may have compensations that Lesbian women often do not have and she must be grouped with the more "advantaged" members in the category of aging women.

Lesbians experience many of the same problems as their heterosexual sisters during and after the menopause cycle. For many it signals a time of loss, not only of personal attractiveness, but loss of relationships that were--or might have been. Aging Lesbians often are overwhelmed at this time of "separation" with devastating regrets of what "might have been" that never was. This is in contrast to the heterosexual woman who mourns a loss and separation from what was once had, experienced and remembered--though now gone.

The aging Lesbian undeniably is prone to more wide-spread and more devastating trauma than the aging heterosexual woman and in the next issue of this magazine, a specific delineation of these factors will be presented and discussed.

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Note: Letters of comment or inquiry are welcome from our readers, of whatever age. We of SISTERS feel that age is an important problem to all of us from 20 to 90, and have therefore asked Dr. McGuire to write an article each month from her view point in hopes that many women will learn, and grow.

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To appear in SISTERS next month: Graphology:
just what and how is it?

Letters to the Editor

(This letter from one of our members now living in Denver who has been corresponding with us about forming new chapters of DOB relates a small miracle in Memphis which we felt should be shared. ed.)

Dear SFDOB,

Forgive me for not keeping in touch. I went to Memphis from Dec. 30 until just last week, and got so involved in everything that I've ignored everyone. But I haven't forgotten DOB, believe me. Just before I left Denver, I was on the phone to a friend there, and she happened to be at the bar where I used to work. The woman who owns it (an alcoholic) got on the line when she found out it was me, and asked me to work for her there as long as I was going to be in town. So upon arriving I began two weeks of 12 hour days at The Fox until I got the other kid I used to work with to help me. Now, Joan Smith (the owner) is sure of one thing...she has lost money on that place since she opened it, simply because girls don't have the money or won't spend it to support a bar like guys will. But she keeps it open, scraping enough out to eat on because there isn't any other place for girls to go in "Morbid Memphis" as I fondly refer to it.

The scene used to be different there. As young as I am, I did get in on the tail-end of things before the fall. It seems (and one reason I wanted to work in a gay bar was to see just what these owner people were like) that two very greedy and vicious older girls began to buy out everything and up prices and the like. They had some help, in fact a great deal of it from some friends in the mafia. But where there's a buck to be made in anything that the general public describes as "of a darker nature"--which must include us queers, there are always the men who willingly lend their capital for a sizeable cut. Anyhow, the good people turned into home-bodies and soft-ball players, until Joan came along. The first effort (a bar) burned to the ground at a \$12,000 loss in building, equipment and interior decorations. Very mysterious was all that the boys in blue could come up with, even though two gasoline cans, complete with finger prints, were recovered. I imagine they thought it all very funny--a gang war between the queers. But Joan sank her last funds into The Fox, a small but worthy venture (of a meager 29 seating capacity) and soon those good people came back out. I came to Denver and forgot it. When these two (greedy women) saw she was just going to do it anyway, they left her alone. Physically, that is. Threatening calls, repeated calls to shut down or pick a plot are not my idea of being left alone. But Joan's tough. All it does is aggravate her already bad problem with the booze. If she's real enough to put up with all of that for those girls who don't even realize it all (and who wouldn't care if they did), then she's a sister--really--and hell, yes, I'll work for her, pay or no pay, and did.

I immediately found myself with this bar again. And I decided that since I was running it alone, I'd just change it a little. First, no fights. Anyone who fights doesn't come back. I called together some friends who always come around, and enlisted the aid of one 5'9" fellow peace-lover--and we had no more fights. Next I started rapping about the DOB and what a good thing it could be, a group of people to get things done and all--and when the City Beautiful Commission sent a letter about the litter and cans in the parking lot, a group of girls went out and cleaned it up--every single gum

Sun.	Mon.	Tues	Wed.	Thurs	Fri.	Sat.
				1	2 OFFICE OPEN 9-11 am	3
4	5 OFFICE OPEN 9-11 am	6 OFFICE Open 7-9 pm.	7 RAP-OFFICE "DOB Leaders- what are they?"	8 OFFICE OPEN 7-9 pm	9 OFFICE OPEN 9am-1pm	10
11	12 OFFICE OPEN 9-11 am	13 OFFICE OPEN 7-9 pm	14 Open Rap 7-9 pm. OFFICE	15 OFFICE OPEN 7-9 pm	16 OFFICE OPEN 9am-1pm	17 ★ Business Mtg. - 8pm. Office - Pres. Nominations
18 Softball + Beach Party 2pm - 9 - Practice -	19 9-11 am	20 SISTERS Deadline 7-9 pm	21 RAP-OFFICE 7-9 pm "SISTERS" Directions	22 7-9 pm	23 9am-1pm	24
25 Ruth McGuire and POT LUCK 2pm \$1.50	26 9-11 am	27 7-9 pm	28 OPEN Rap OFFICE 7-9 pm	29 7-9 pm	30 9am-1 pm	

APRIL 1971 - EVENTS

- Apr. 7 and 21- Rays on DOB directions: where are we + where shall we go? Leadership changes.
- Apr. 18----- Softball + beach party, Laurel Hill, Euclid/Collins, 2 pm. Robin thinks we ought to challenge the bars' teams. Come out and practice + bring food to roast on the beach. DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED !!
- Apr. 25----- Dr. Ruth McGuire returns to us to discuss the problems of growing older, relationships, honesty and openness between gay women. Pot luck dinner again-- Bring Food. (call 921-4158 before coming - Dr. McGuire may be ill and unable to conduct the discussion. Call First.) PLACE-- 940 Baker St. (at Turk), #4 Time--- 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. - FOOD, FOOD, FOOD: Non-members - \$1.50. If you missed her once, don't miss her again!

wrapper! But slow and easy does it. Only a small group of six were needed for a one day overhaul of the place on the inside. We cleaned, defrosted, tossed out unmentionable tons of junk and rearranged the whole place to a capacity of 36 with plenty of aisle space and serving room, made it darker, switched draft beers, postered Joplin up on the wall, attacked the juke box full of Merle Haggard and Charlie Pride, added a few flowers and candles--and WHEW opened up for business. Packed--every night of the week. Joan made money, and even sobered up in her amazement to watch the activities, began to work again, and smiled a lot more. Now it was ready--and I pushed. A talent show just for fun, I suggested. She got a stage built somewhere and I went running around borrowing amps and mikes and lights of all kinds. We told everyone, made signs, worked like hell until the night came and people were sitting at tables, standing everywhere they couldn't sit and all over the floor to boot! I let it go late a respectable ten minutes to build the anxious mood I felt in their eyes. Nobody had ever seen such a thing in Memphis, Tenn. And finally in just the right silence, I led my feet to the mike, flipped on a black light and a red spot (J, the ham, was loving it, of course), and began to tell them about Miss Smith's contribution, about all of them sitting in those chairs, getting truly together for one of the first times in the history of gay Memphis, about people being able to have that sort of thing if they just help each other with what they can do, big or small--and about pride in being gay. Because they had something to be proud of that night. And then I asked them to help me with a dream--not just my dream, but all of ours--a chapter, one more, for the DOE. I got enough response and enlisted the help of a good enough person there to work on it from Denver. And that night nine different people--amateur, scared people got up on that stage and sang, played, read poems, told jokes until we had to close. We taped it, and it is a joy to hear, now, because I miss many of them and know I will not see them again in all probability.

The second show was on Valentine's Eve--twice I saw it happen in a town full of people who are full of hate and bitterness for the most part. And I guess it will all go back now to "normal"--but I've a feeling I left a few of them dreaming too. We shall see.

Mary in Denver

(Sisters in Denver, Mary needs your help. If you are into forming a DOB chapter, and we need them, write San Francisco and we will send you Mary's address or whatever. This goes for you all in Tennessee, too. And from all of us here in SF, thank you, Mary, for being so beautiful. ed.)

SISTERS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA! There is a DOB chapter forming NOW. Write or call Ann for information: 1620 Pollywood Rd., N.W., apt. 3A. Or call 404 792-9370. DON'T MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP THE CAUSE. SUPPORT THIS BRAVE VENTURE. ANN HAS DOB APPROVAL FOR THIS CHAPTER. IT IS NEARLY AN OFFICIAL ONE. FINALLY, ANOTHER BREAKTHROUGH IN THE SOUTH. LOVE AND LUCK TO ATLANTA DOB.

"Moods of Eros"

by
Elsa Gidlow

There will be few poetry reviews in SISTERS, the reason being that there are few published poets worth writing about. Of the booklets I have seen, however, Elsa Gidlow's "Moods of Eros" is one of the best, and certainly the most professional example of modern poetry for sale. Elsa's style combines the technique of the modern poet and the romanticism of the Dickinson-teasdale era. The poems come across as powerful, yet extremely sensitive comments

It is readily apparent that Elsa and sensitivity have been friends for many years; they converse to and fro with no difficulty. It is evident in each poem written here, and the author's subtlety only serves to accentuate it:

"Of a Certain Friendship"

Odd how you entered my house quietly;
Quietly left again.
While you stayed, you ate at my table;
Slept in my bed.
There was such sweetness,
Yet little was done, little said.
After you left, there was pain.
Now there is no more pain.

But the door of a certain room in my house
Will always be shut.
Your fork, your plate, the glass you drank from
The music you played,
Are in that room
With the pillow where last your head was laid.

And there is one place in my garden
Where it's best that I set no foot.

Her sensitivity is equally evident in angry epithets. Elsa States in the beginning of her booklet that poets "...are apt to be uncomfortable people." And when poets become uncomfortable, or angry, they either find satisfaction in throwing large objects through closed windows, or in writing. Elsa chooses the latter:

"Region of No Birds"

Where earth groans with earthquake
I know you.
Where the waters boil black
And the dragons are,
You are immersed in me.
Beyond pleasure, where terror is kissed
And the small I's die,
In that region of no birds,
One does not speak prettily of love.

"Eyes"

My mother said
Of her mother:
Her eyes are
Gold-brown;
Like bee's backs.

My mother's eyes
Speckled pebbles
In swift-running
Water.

At the mirror
Observing my own;
Just eyes.

Wondering
What my daughter
Would have seen
If I had had one.

Elsa's skills are taken for granted after the first few poems. Then one has the opportunity to sit back and appreciate. Metaphors and similes come forth to touch with originality. The words beckon you inside; they want you to identify. The above poems touched off a whispered "oh yes" or two and I identified so readily that I'm sure there is a bit of all readers in her writing.

999 copies of "Moods" were printed. Mostly for distribution to friends. It may not be too late to invest the \$2.00 and meet this woman through "Moods." I suggest the meeting should not be missed.

Review by Terry Ryan

Ads

FOR RENT

House in Woodacre, 3 bdrm, 2 bath, completly furn., w/stereo and view. \$500.00/mon. Will negotiate price. Leaving country. Call 456-1065.

Need place to stay? Need rent sharer. Not too straight, easy-going. One cat OK. \$70. Call 861-6854 evenings.

FOR SALE: call 864-2857 evenings. All we have, for good prices: AMPEX AM/FM radio/stereo cassette tape with demagnetizer and pre-rec. tapes; Olivetti electric typewriter; furniture; expensive silver serving dishes. Prices can be negotiated, you won't believe it all. Donations of rugged clothes/shoes accepted.

FOR SALE: Call 687-4282 - Olivetti Add. Mach., Manual model, credit balance figuring, w/inst. sheet, and 5 yr. guarantee. \$70.00.

PERSONALS

Couple, bi Gemini chick and straight male seek pretty bi or gay chick to share 2 bdrm. apt. in Bernal Hts. Own phone. Must have own transp. \$75.00/mo. Must meet you 1st. Call 826-0995.

Yng. woman, 23, artist, seeks gay feminine companion, 18-35. Write Lorraine Wong, Lone Mtn. Collg., 2500 Turk, S.F., Ca.

24, black, femme wants southeastern - S.F. companions. Write Ann, 1620 Hollywood Rd, N.W., apt. 3A, Atlanta, Ga. 30318 or call 404-792-9270. (This is also Atlanta DOB's address.)

Older woman wants letter friends, write: Marian, 1552 W. Miracle Mile, Tucson, Ariz. 85705.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Anyone interested in informal discussion of problems of lesbian community of BALTIMORE, call Sandy after 6 at 444-7879 (Balt. no.)

Discussion and encounter (leaderless) every Wed. nite for women at Anne's, Oakland. Meets 7:30 - 10 PM. Call 444-1460.

STILL AVAILABLE: Moods Of Eros, Elsa Glidow, \$2.00; Various Recipes, Terry Ryan, \$1.00; sets of Ladders, \$25.00, singles for \$1.00; SAPPHE '71; Gene Damon's Bibliography, \$2.00; "What is DOB?", pamphlet, .15 each.

Playboy's April issue has an interview with experts on the subject of homosexuality. Among those interviewed is our own Phyllis Lyon. Response to Playboy from our community would be helpful.

Film of a lesbian relationship, in the art film category, is now available from Glid Church, \$35 rental. Well worth it. Call 771-6300 for information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DOB now offers the services of several religious and psychological counselors. Two women, a psychologist and a psychiatrist are available through DOB. A Catholic, a Unitarian, a Methodist will do counseling. Call 864-2857 evenings or the DOB office for phone numbers. Also marriages can be arranged through these ministers.

BE SURE TO ATTEND THE APRIL BUSINESS MEETING, APRIL 17, 8 PM, DOB office. NOMINATIONS FOR THE ALL-IMPORTANT OFFICE OF PRESIDENT WILL BE THEN TAKEN. RUTH M. SUDUL WILL BE VACATING THIS OFFICE IN JUNE. ATTEND THE RAP SESSIONS ON DOB LEADERSHIP. Remember, you are voting for your representation in the community. DOB president is DOB. Be sure to bring nominations to the meeting.

SFDOB is proud to announce that JACKIE has been elected VP in a close election. Jackie has been one of the good folk who have devotedly spent hours mimeographing SISTERS and getting SISTERS into the bars. Congratulations and good luck.

Four bars are now carrying SISTERS: Scott's Pit, Maud's, Kelly's Tavern, and Leonarda's. Thanks from us go to these bars. Keep up the good work. And thanks to the women there for their support. We hope SISTERS gets better and better with your help.

* * * *

* Do you have a business that you would like to advertise to other gay people? SISTERS reaches four bars and over 200 women throughout the Bay Area. Plans are being made to send SISTERS to Los Angeles, Denver and New York. If you have a service you want to advertise, our rates are reasonable: \$2.00 places a personal ad, a for rent ad, or a for sale ad. \$4.00 will buy a half page ad. \$8.00 will buy a full page ad, and for the back cover. \$15.00 will advertise your service clearly for all to see, as SISTERS sits in its rack in the bars. SISTERS' printing process is photographic, in black and white. This means you may include photographs or designs or cards as your ad. Anything that will photograph is fine. Call 861-8689 for full information. SUPPORT YOU GAY COMMUNITY AND REACH A LARGER CLIENTEL THROUGH ADVERTISING IN GAY MAGAZINES.

* * * *

SISTERS needs all your artistic and poetic efforts. To submit a drawing for the cover of SISTERS, simply draw your design on an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper in black and white and mail it to our offices BEFORE THE 20th OF EACH MONTH. Poetry must be either typed or printed legibly. If a copyright is desired for your design or literary effort, please so indicate on your copy that you send to us. SISTERS stands or falls with the quality of its material. Here is your chance to contribute to the gay front-- your chance to let others see the various talents of we gay folk.

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

DOB San Francisco: 1005 Market, Suite 208,
San Francisco, Ca. 94103

DOB Los Angeles: 1910 S. Vermont Ave., Los
Angeles, Ca. 90007

DOB New York: 141 Prince St., N.Y., N.Y. 10012

DOB Boston: Box 221, Prudential Center Sta.,
Boston, Mass. 02199

DOB New England: P.O. Box 243 Mattapan Sta.,
Mattapan, Mass. 02126

DOB Detroit: 5415 Mayfair, Dearborne Hts., Mich.

DOB Atlanta: 1620 Hollywood Rd., N.W., #3A,
Atlanta, Ga. 30318.

MEMBERSHIPS in SFDOB will be limited to those
21 years or older:

An ASSOCIATE membership will cost \$4.00 per year
and will include: library privileges, 1/2
price to social functions, an events sheet.

An ACTIVE membership for single individuals will
cost \$7.00 per year and will include: lib-
rary privileges, 1/2 price to social functions,
SISTERS for one year.

An ACTIVE membership for couples will cost \$10.00
per year and will include: library privil-
eges, 1/2 price to social functions for both,
SISTERS (one subscription) for both, for one
year.

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Bilitis.