

Sisters



JUDI

AUGUST-1972

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

...a woman's organization for the purpose 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, interpersonal and vocational identity within society by maintaining and building a library on the themes of homosexuality and on women; 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 lifestyle; 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 lifestyle by sponsoring public discussions; by providing individuals as speakers and participants in various forms 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.

TO SAY AND BELIEVE THAT GAY IS GOOD.



SISTERS MAGAZINE is published monthly by the San Francisco Chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.

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THIS ISSUE OF SISTERS MAGAZINE IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO OUR TREASURER **DIANE** WHO IS RETIRING AFTER FOUR YEARS OF KEEPING SFD0B FINANCIALLY TOGETHER. WE WILL MISS YOU AND BEST OF LUCK IN SCHOOL.

YOUNGER LESBIANS START GROUP

The idea for a group specifically for underage gay women came to me in the middle of a phone call from Linda. I was living in Livermore at the time, still in school, still pretty much in the closet. I've known for sure that I'm gay for about three months now. But all through high school the question of whether or not I was really one of *THEM*, I pretty much ignored. And then, last April, some women from DOB came to Livermore to speak. Listening to them, I found it very hard to ignore the question of my own identity, and after a week of sheer panic which ended with an afternoon spent with Linda, drinking beer and listening to myself beat around the bush, I knew I was gay and everything was beautiful. Except that I was still living with my parents and going to school, and all the gay women I knew (all three of them) lived in San Francisco, and none of them were anywhere near my age.

A couple of weeks later, Linda called to ask if I would help out a gay sister, who, incidentally, was 15. That's when the idea hit me: why not get together a group for underage gay women? We can't join DOB until we're 21. We can't go to the bars and meet other gay women. Most of us are just coming out and don't know what's going on in the gay women's movement. And most of us, as I found out later, have a hard time relating to women ten years older than us.

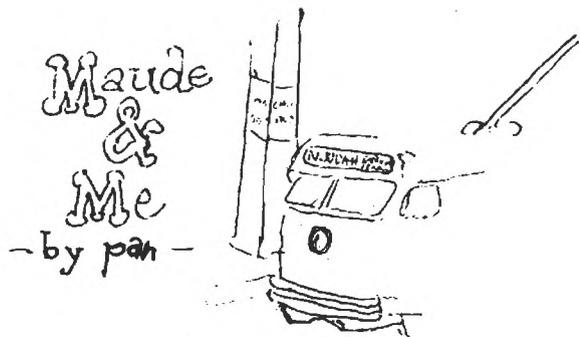
So when I moved to San Francisco a month ago, I started looking around to make this idea a reality. I ran around asking for advice and opinions from everyone (which I'm still doing) and also found a woman, Dee Dee, who wanted to work with me. We did some advertising, and got together a rap, and it looks like we've actually got a group going. We've called ourselves Slightly Younger Lesbians, following

the example of Slightly Older Lesbians.

The basic purpose of SYL is not yet clearly defined. So far we have no real sense of organization, no money, and only about ten members. But I do see a real need. I know what I need, and talking to other women my age (I'm 17) I'm finding out that their needs are very similar to mine. So many of us are still sitting in high schools, living with parents, and hiding in closets because we believe we are the only gay women in town, if not in the world. Most of us know absolutely nothing about the gay women's movement (I'd certainly never heard of DOB) or the women's movement (I'd heard all women's libbers were dykes, which, now that I think of it, could have been meant as encouragement). Most of us have no idea what is going on, most of us have only been out a couple of months. What we need is a group run by underage gay women for underage gay women that will be a resource to the gay community. A group that will be able to contact other gay women, and help get them out of the closet. A group that will be able to define where we fit into the adult gay world, which, legally speaking, is supposed to ignore us (thank god they don't!), and a straight society that states that one is not sexual until one is of age, and then that that sexuality must be hetero. A group where we can meet women our own age, and have a good time, and, above all, a group that will not fold after a couple of meetings.

I don't know if it can be done. I'm finding out that getting together a group is a lot harder than I anticipated, and that keeping it going is going to be even harder. But I do have hope. Our first few meetings have been good (one woman came all the way from San Jose for a meeting -- I just about flipped!); we have a dance planned for September, and raps every Friday. What we will need to keep us going, however, is women; our group is open to any woman under 21, and there is no longer a need for any sister to be in the closet.

- Lyndall Cowan



ILLUSTRATIONS
by Tom Elliott

In New York City you have to be super cool when in a gay bar; in San Francisco you strive to be mellow. Saturday night I drop by Maud's Study to watch pool, hoping to find a trusty friend. After hanging my big apple and coat on a nail in the wall by the cigarette machine, I hang myself on the back of a chair at a table near the pool in the back of the room, slanting my Tracy profile with the lowered table light projecting me on the wall like cheap floodlights on a grade B movie set. There I hang watching a parade of women milling around the pool, poised to dive, but not plunging in.

Well, I think about the estimated 10,000 hours that I must have put in doing shit like this. Everyone in the place is cruising too. Tipping a glass, aiming a billiard shot, mixing a drink, selecting a song, drinking a drink. I am truly



tired. My head hurts. My back aches. I'm as empty as the glass in front of me. Turning the glass upside down, I raise it, tilt it, and follow the motion of a solitary drop of beer rolling toward me. On the juke box, a black man is singing, "I'm so tired...." I bet he is.



I have never met a trusty friend in a bar. What am I doing? I have become so angry that it is a character trait: hostility haloing out in all directions from my beautiful pout pose. Nobody is going to approach a sphinx. But two sisters finally break the silence among women. "What's wrong with you?" one asks another. "It's a disaster for me to be in a room full of butches," she answers.

That's it, is it? I check out the two butches rapping, count the gross of butches surrounding me, and, feeling uneasy, go back to the bar for another. I look in the mirror and see a quirror. "Hello, butch," I greet myself, pay for the drink, and return to my table to watch the game.



BOOK REVIEWS

by Wells

Lesbian/Woman, Glide Publications, 1972, by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon.

If I can believe the response I have seen to this book, it must be the most eagerly read book in the Lesbian community. I can believe it. It is the first major book on the subject by Lesbians about themselves, although I'm aware that others are on their way.

I can hardly express the delight I experienced in reading about Del and Phyl and the hundreds of Lesbians they encountered in the 17 years of their experience in forming, nurturing and finally weaning the Daughters of Bilitis. Contrary to my own expectations of the book, most chapters are devoted not to the political growth of the Lesbian but to the personal struggles of the individual Lesbians Del and Phyl have met. The book seems to be directed to the straight community, the emphasis being to indicate the great diversity among Lesbians. The women of whom they speak are and are not stereotypical, they are and are not happy, are and are not adjusted to and accepting of themselves. In other words, the women Del and Phyl chose to describe are human beings, with the problems inherent in so being, but with the added difficulty of being women and Lesbians. This kind of focus is, as I see it, of ultimate importance to the straight community who tend to see us as Sister George or Childie at best. The women described here will confirm some of the beliefs that "they" (the outsiders) have of us, because there are women who fit "their" patterns. Other women will blow the image all to hell. This book is honest, real, personal, straight (gay)-forward and non-compromising. Which is the way we are.

I found particular joy in reading this history because of my own commitment to alleviate, somehow, Lesbian isolation. As Del and Phyl note, and quite honestly, they had been the focal point for all

Lesbians in this country (and others) to rally around. Their commitment and the commitment of others has made "Lesbian Liberation" a real thing, instead of an ideal dream in some woman's head. Their relationship of 19 years, of which they speak very openly in their book, has been and still is (even though they won't admit it now) an inspiration to those of us who have grown up with the stereotypical idea that "those relationships don't last." Their untiring (albeit difficult to maintain) efforts to change the structures in this society which oppress us have been and will continue to be an inspiration to me, personally. Their book, some 280 pages, is a document of the struggles many Lesbians have had to endure and win. It is a triumph to read and experience. In itself, it is a release from the sense of isolation we all feel -- there are and have been many, many in our shoes. If you have ever spoken to these two women, your feelings may well appear in the book, under a false name, of course. I found myself described there. The feeling that what you say about your own liberation has been captured in this history is a good one. You know that somehow you have contributed, no matter in how small a way, to the whole liberation movement. It is our pride here they speak of and our agony, but above all things it is us, by us, for us. It is a high point in our liberation, probably the highest, in that Lesbians are finally telling our story. Sisterhood is powerful and is a full blast of sunshine in our lives. Here is our story and we should BASK.

LESBIAN/WOMAN is available from DOB
for \$8.40 (with tax).
Order from DOB, 1005 Market #208, S.F. 94103
Make checks payable to DOB.

In the great morass of "Lesbian literature" in the SFDQB library, one occasionally happens upon a winner. And I mean a winner.....No, it is not a porny novel. The author Charles Eric Maine is a British science fiction writer, and the book purports to be just that.

Here is the basic plot. It's the year 5000. The world is basically united under one government. It is pleasant, there are no worries, all are taken care of. It's Utopia. No illnesses, taxes, hassles, or, it seems, child-bearing. This sounds very like a really awful sci-fi. Hang in there.. There are no men in this world. It belongs to women. Which is interesting, but certainly not earth-shattering. Unless we read further and follow the turn of events which allowed this strange quirk of nature to happen.

It seems that there were men some thousands of years ago. There was also a new birth-control pill called Sterilin. One pill stopped conception for six months. (There are such pills being researched now, if not actually being used.) The women grabbed at Sterilin with real gusto. (Doubtless they had not thought of Lesbianism as the ultimate birth control.) After a number of years of Sterilin and enjoyable sex without fear of pregnancy, a funny thing began to happen. Nature, seeing that fewer and fewer humans were being born, decided that what was needed was MORE WOMEN to bear the children. Nature figured that somehow the women who were born already weren't doing their thing properly and therefore must be replaced with more women. The birth ratio of women to men began to rise dramatically in women's favor. Fewer men were born, much to their chagrin. Eventually, women had to take things over completely in order to keep society running. They had to capture the remaining males and keep them locked up for artificial insemination purposes--after all, birth was necessary. Eventually, the men were all gone. Nature seems to have provided for this through a process known as parthenogenesis, that is, by women splitting the ovum themselves, without sperm intrusion, and creating female children. (When the female chromosome splits, there is no Y chromosome, women having only X's. Hence, only female children. Hmmm.)

Thus the book begins. The author, of course, suggests that this state of affairs is "unnatural", and that, were the women not so "programmed" into Lesbianism, they would not be neurotic and would actively seek or make a male. Of course, one woman does this. She starts with a frozen

male body and creates an embryo (male) from the tissue. She runs off to find other "rebel" women and they begin it all over again by blowing up the biggest city of their society.

The extraordinary thing about this novel is the possibility that such a society could eventually evolve. Think: birth control is widely used. If indeed nature becomes disturbed when the population growth drops drastically, will she IN FACT seek to produce more women to carry children? What will happen to the males? Either women who take over all endeavors of society will create babies in test tubes (both male and female), or they will learn the fundamental process of splitting the female ovum to create only females. There are rumors of virgin births. (Was Jesus a female?) Is Elizabeth Davis in the FIRST SEX correct when she suggests that males are mutants anyway? Is Ashley Montagu way off when he suggests that males are not very physically strong anyway?

This absurd science fiction novel inadvertently leads me to some radical thoughts about the possibility of such an all woman Lesbian society. I doubt that Mr. Maine would agree that his novel has truth to it, but the idea is not so far-fetched after all.

THE LADDER



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FOR LESBIANS AND FOR ALL WOMEN
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....IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN.....

Nominations for SFDOB office were taken at the last Business meeting. Following is a list of nominees and statements from most of them. Nominations are still open. They will be taken at Aug.'s meeting. Voting will be at the Sept. business meeting.

Librarian:	Assistant secretary:
Linda M. Wesley	Diane Richardson
Social Chairwoman:	Public Relations:
Debbie "Aries" Barrows	Liane Estelle

A new co-editor for SISTERS MAGAZINE was appointed and approved: NORMA MONTGOMERY

SECRETARY	TREASURER	VICE PRESIDENT
Charleen Pyron	Jackie	Beth Elliott Marley
	PRESIDENT	
	Sharon Crase Marley	

STATEMENTS:

Linda Wesley: I'm compulsive and cannot stand the library as it stands. I resent the idea of women having a run-around trying to find honest Lesbian literature. I'd like to see a reading-lending library without rip-offs.

Diane Richardson: The pathway to better understanding is accurate and up to date information. Thus the lines of communication will always be open. I shall endeavor to try to fulfill this expectation.

Debbie Barrows: As someone who enjoys enjoying herself, I'd like to be in a position to help organize social activities where we can be together to discover each other.

Liane Esstelle: No statement available yet.

STATEMENTS

Jackie: no statement available, but is recommended by our retiring treasurer, Diane.

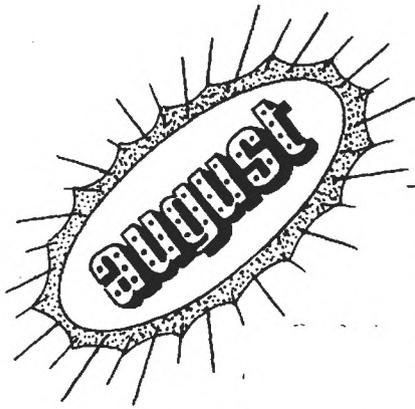
Charleen Pyron: I have had a year of work and growing through DOB. I believe I have also contributed something to DOB's growth. I would like to continue in my capacity as secretary.

Beth Elliott: I consider it a privilege to have served you as vice-president for the past year. If you wish to retain me as V.P., I promise to keep DOB an active force effectively working for you and for all sisters.

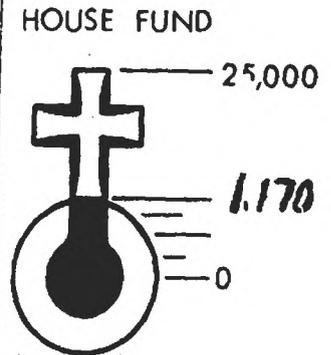
Marley: (Her statement will serve for both offices for which she has been nominated.)
DOB is rapidly becoming acknowledged as a very important factor in the thriving women's movement in this country. I see many women really working together, really striving for meaningful goals for women and DOB. I believe I can be a catalyst in this wonderful, growing blooming women's movement and I humbly accept the nomination for V.P. and President of SFDOB. I have many ideas for expanding DOB's growth which I will be glad to discuss with anyone who is interested.

Sharon Crase: Sharon has served as SFDOB president this past year. No statement is available at this time.

NOMINATIONS FOR ALL OFFICES ARE STILL OPEN. BRING YOURS TO THE AUGUST BUSINESS MEETING, 8 PM, DOB OFFICE.



M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	RAP 7 PM	2	3	5
		RAP 7 PM		4	
6	7	8	9	10	12
		RAP 7 PM		11	
13	14	15	16	17	19
		RAP 7 PM		18	
SOL					DINNER 5:00
KPFA Radio	20	21	22	23	26
				24	
Brunch & Tape. 1 PM	27	28	29	30	
		RAP 7 PM			



WED. NITES: 2nd: Diane - "Getting in Touch with yourself"; 9th: Marley: "Feeling good;"
16th: Jam session; 23rd: Beth - "FEMALE INDETIFIED METAPHYSICS"; 30th: Guest.

FRI. NITES: Meetings/raps for Lesbians and other women under 21 are held at Alternative Futures
at 7:30 PM every Friday night. Contact Lyndall at 861-8689 for more information.

Aug. 11 - BUSINESS MEETING, all women welcome. Further nominations for SFDOB officers will be taken.
Aug. 12 - D A N C E ! Another HOUSE FUND raiser. \$1.00, beer for 50¢. At Alternative Futures,
2012 Pine, S.F. Music & basketball?????

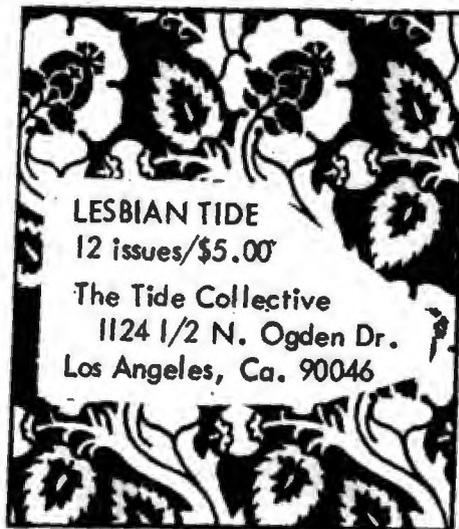
Aug. 20 - SOL Sisters take off for the woods. Call S.F. 921-4158 for info. Hiking, swimming near-by.
If you are over 35, here is the place for you. DOB is also on the air at 6PM, KPFA FM.

Aug. 26 - Pot Luck dinner at the Gambier St. House. Call 861-8689 for information. Rummage sale, too

Aug. 27 - Brunch and tape "Alternative Family Lifestyles" from the Midwest Lesbian conference of 1972.
At Germaines, 1274 Sacramento, S.F. Donations.

WOMEN! How's your car? I can tune anything and do other work, if needed (brakes, overhauling, etc.) CALL KAREN: 863-7407, after 6 PM or call DOB for appointment.

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POETRY

La Belle Dame

Welcoming hours, days,
floats half-aware
to caverned moments
in the slow life-stream.

this is the trident,
where pale and loitering
knights
are often captured
in the swift
free-fall of despair.

Bowen Street Cemetery

Remembered leaves
and feel
of place, you held me,
shadowed mist-form,
silhouetted
against grey sky,
as the wind
tears along the leaves,
ripping the paths
to root-stumped
oldness and decay.

there was a day
we walked here:
now, no more in
the quiet daylight
shadows,
will I hear your
laughter.

--Alison J. Laurie

My Songbird Woman

my semi-artificial woman keeps her plastic
 flowers watered as they grow within a self-
 made transparent unstrung guitar
 she sings the harmony of a dusty road as
 she plays the gypsy poetess searching
 with the moon for a place to glow
 an actress without a stage she seems to
 passing vehicles going to the unseen
 foreign city of certain nightlife and
 not-so-straight pleasure
 my nightingale would mouth the city lyric
 of desolation with brass band and pear-
 shaped tone but she knows her own way
 is the best
 her blues are real not showbiz
 my semi-fraudulent gal of the man-made
 bed of love where she expresses her most
 valuable gift;
 her love
 yes, my real woman steals my senses showing
 me the kind of girl i'm not but the kind of
 girl i love

My Interrupted Suicide

i felt the weight of my body when i cried
 for easy death
 i was out of place, with no home
 wanting to become as the earth of the
 graveyard
 i needed to be still;
 silent as the slumber of my first baby
 i wanted to die quickly so to hide my
 being from myself
 i grasped the blade of violence and in an
 instant, you surrounded me with a wrestler's
 strength
 and in that moment, i realized my breath's
 meaning
 as i melted quietly in your confident embrace
 i felt the weight of your womanly body
 as i remember crying i love you

--Mona

Copenhagen 1966

Huddled in april doorway
 copenhagen night
 I saw the danish dawn
 with an old woman
 who had hoped to seduce me
 from a club.
 She bought coffee in the rain
 and we walked
 a confused circle of streets
 cold, lost and irritated
 to my hotel.
 We spoke,
 each in our own language,
 and endeavored
 in this hybrid conversation
 (I had been in denmark
 three days)
 to find communication.
 I understood only
 that her man
 was in a summerhouse
 and he performed.
 Later I was to learn
 that he played pianos
 in downtown Kobenhavn
 and was not angry.

She was disturbed
 when I took her to my room.
 I rang the taxa
 and sent her home:
 my friend lay sleeping
 in her American
 wholesomeness,
 and I crawled under "dune"
 and waited for "i mor'n".

--Alison J. Laurie

THE MATCHMAKER

Leslie was a fine person, and her concern for my singleness was sweet. The two of us were rather casual friends, but since we did work in the same office, there was abundant time to chat about this and that. Her naivete was such that I was never particularly compelled to discuss my gayness with her and I listened, smiling, to her "We've just got to find some nice guy for you" sort of comment -- which came regularly. Came, in fact, every time she began talking about her Ted.

I think, really, that she wanted nothing more than someone to compare boyfriends with, and until I had one I was not really doing my part. I did occasionally make references to the women I did date, sporadically, turning Jeanne into Gene and Carol into Carl to protect Leslie's tender ears from the awful truth. It was not good enough for Leslie, though, and she set out to remedy the situation by match-making.

The first attempt was really dreadful and pitted me against a first-class clod who was all for making me on the living room floor (Leslie's living room floor, at that) after an evening of dinner and conversation and too much wine. I spurned his advances and the entire scene embarrassed Leslie and made Ted uneasy. It also shattered the ego of the clod, which bothered me not at all.

Leslie does not give up, and the next weekend I was invited over for a poker game. This time she had done a better job of selecting, and Brian was my potential husband. To make for a less awkward evening, Leslie had invited a couple of other friends of hers -- Susan and Richard.

My interest in Brian, although he was a fine talker and a witty person, was fairly nil since he was of the wrong sex, and I was beginning to think I would eventually have to overcome my fear of

stunning Leslie and take her aside and break to her the news of my sexual preferences to avoid further such evenings. I didn't mind that she wanted me to be happily paired off, but it seemed that she was going to a lot of trouble for nothing.

It was midway through the evening when things began to happen. Susan was sitting beside me at the table, and to make her occasional comments even more pointed than she was able to do verbally, she would lay a hand on my shoulder or touch my arm. As it happened, she and I were doing all the winning, and our stacks of chips kept growing as we bluffed the other four time and again. I, of course, was delighted by the indication that the two of us could play poker better than, especially, the three men, and Susan too seemed pleased by our abilities.

Susan was about my age but looked younger (which surprised me in that I pride myself on my ability to still get carded in bars even though I've been eligible for the privilege of consuming alcoholic beverages for, lo, these many years now). And she was pleasing to my eye, although I wasn't really giving her much attention. She had, after all, arrived with Richard.

The first thing that penetrated my Missourian skull was that Susan was apparently oblivious to Richard. They had hardly exchanged two words since the evening began. They were not ignoring each other: it was merely as though they had decided to go their separate ways for the evening. And then Susan began the physical point-making and I became super-sensitive to her touches on my sweatshirted sleeve. I liked it.

And I was confused by it. I was already about three beers gone and everything was going undigested, so to speak, through my mind. At one point I was attempting to bluff Susan with my pair of threes, and she would not be bluffed. We stared at each other without expression as she raised and I raised until everyone else had dropped out and sat watching us.

My poker face comes from having spent a lifetime pretending to not have emotions which I did have -- and I wondered where she got hers. Wherever it came from, it was stronger than mine and she took the pot with what I assumed were a pair of deuces from the grin she gave me when I folded.

What happened when it began to happen was that we ran out of beer. Being liberated people, it was not assumed that the men would walk the three blocks to the liquor store for more. Nobody really wanted to go, and for a few minutes we waited for someone to leap up and volunteer.

And then Susan looked at me and said, "I'll go. Want to come along and protect me?" And she smiled and I flashed that she was gay. Just like that. The flash came and went and that was all. I am notoriously poor at guessing the sexuality of other women. I know this and compensate for it by assuming I am always wrong. I continue to make assumptions, I just also continue to assume I'm wrong.

"Sure," I said, and went for my coat.

It was dark outside. Clouds had swept in over the Bay and obliterated the stars and what there had been of the moon. We walked out the door and through Leslie's garden, out onto the sidewalk, and down the street. Was it my imagination now or was she intentionally bumping into me every second or third step? Imagination, I thought, as she bumped against me once more. Perhaps it was merely that she could not quite walk a straight line. Or maybe she enjoyed encountering my tender little body....

Talking about the poker game, about Leslie, about Brian (very briefly), and nothing substantial beyond that, we made our way to the liquor store, bought the essentials, and started back. She was still walking close enough to bring our bodies into collision with a nice degree of regularity, and I was still wondering

to what extent I was imagining things. I had decided that it was a fine thing that she bumped me and even managed to bump her a time or two.

All the while this little scene was happening, my mind continued to race drunkenly along with the question of intent. Did she mean it? Was she gay? What was happening?

We stopped in the garden on the way back. As though we had discussed it and decided to just stop our walk there. For a few seconds neither of us spoke, and then she said, "Well?"

"Look," I said, and stopped.

In the dark I could barely see her, but her teeth showed that she was grinning broadly. Which caused me to do the same.

"Well?" she said again, and I could hear the smile in her voice.

It was, of course, impossible for me to say anything at all.

"What do you think of Brian?" she said, finally, as though changing the subject, although I couldn't really tell if that was what she was doing.

"Eh," I said and the shrug was in my voice.

"Do you know why we came tonight?" she said, and I didn't answer, not knowing.

"Well," she said, "mainly because Richard has a mad crush on Brian and thinks he's gay." And she left it hanging there.

"Look," I said, but again could not quite muster words beyond that.

"Can I call you tomorrow?" she asked.

My poker face comes from having spent a lifetime pretending to not have emotions which I did have -- and I wondered where she got hers. Wherever it came from, it was stronger than mine and she took the pot with what I assumed were a pair of deuces from the grin she gave me when I folded.

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And then Susan looked at me and said, "I'll go. Want to come along and protect me?" And she smiled and I flashed that she was gay. Just like that. The flash came and went and that was all. I am notoriously poor at guessing the sexuality of other women. I know this and compensate for it by assuming I am always wrong. I continue to make assumptions, I just also continue to assume I'm wrong.

"Sure," I said, and went for my coat.

It was dark outside. Clouds had swept in over the Bay and obliterated the stars and what there had been of the moon. We walked out the door and through Leslie's garden, out onto the sidewalk, and down the street. Was it my imagination now or was she intentionally bumping into me every second or third step? Imagination, I thought, as she bumped against me once more. Perhaps it was merely that she could not quite walk a straight line. Or maybe she enjoyed encountering my tender little body....

Talking about the poker game, about Leslie, about Brian (very briefly), and nothing substantial beyond that, we made our way to the liquor store, bought the essentials, and started back. She was still walking close enough to bring our bodies into collision with a nice degree of regularity, and I was still wondering

to what extent I was imagining things. I had decided that it was a fine thing that she bumped me and even managed to bump her a time or two.

All the while this little scene was happening, my mind continued to race drunkenly along with the question of intent. Did she mean it? Was she gay? What was happening?

We stopped in the garden on the way back. As though we had discussed it and decided to just stop our walk there. For a few seconds neither of us spoke, and then she said, "Well?"

"Look," I said, and stopped.

In the dark I could barely see her, but her teeth showed that she was grinning broadly. Which caused me to do the same.

"Well?" she said again, and I could hear the smile in her voice.

It was, of course, impossible for me to say anything at all.

"What do you think of Brian?" she said, finally, as though changing the subject, although I couldn't really tell if that was what she was doing.

"Eh," I said and the shrug was in my voice.

"Do you know why we came tonight?" she said, and I didn't answer, not knowing.

"Well," she said, "mainly because Richard has a mad crush on Brian and thinks he's gay." And she left it hanging there.

"Look," I said, but again could not quite muster words beyond that.

"Can I call you tomorrow?" she asked.

"Of course," I said. "But what will Leslie think about this all? She really is trying, you know."

"I think she's done very well," Susan said, and in the dark I felt her fingers brush against my cheek. She grinned again, and followed me into the house.

- Anne Morgan



CAN YOU SPOT A LESBIAN?

It was a typical June 15th. I was an hour late for work and two hours early for lunch, so I bought a newspaper to pass the time. I sat at my desk leafing through the typographical errors, which make me feel so superior. Gaining inner confidence with each misspelling, I turned to the Question Man column in the blind knowledge that it would live up to its reputation of keeping banality alive in San Francisco.

The question of the day, however, was "Can You Spot A Lesbian?" Amazed at this sudden display of controversy, I checked to make sure the paper didn't come in a plain brown wrapper to warn the children and other immature readers. It didn't.

I began to read the answers given by 'the man in the street.' The first man acknowledged that yes indeed—he could—in fact—spot a lesbian: "It's a chick that projects masculinity. A really feminine woman can wear combat boots and a paratrooper's uniform and her femininity will still show through."

I thought to myself: so that's the trick, huh? Project masculinity! I ducked under my typewriter to feel for some sign of an impending moustache. Nothing. Hm--project masculinity. I furrowed my brows and curled my lip in an attempt to induce masculinity. Nothing. (Gee, maybe I'm not a lesbian after all). His statement that "a really feminine woman can wear combat boots and a paratrooper's uniform and her femininity will still show through" is priceless logic. I suppose it's also relevant that a real man can project masculinity even when wearing a pinafore and a girdle.

The next man answered in the affirmative also. "I can tell very easily. It's a very certain air about them. Strong feelings. They emit strong vibrations. It's not necessarily the way they dress. There are butches, the very masculine lesbians, and nellies, the feminine lesbians."

This guy, I thought to myself, has been to see "The Killing of Sister George" many many times;

with the butches and the nellies (fems?). What really stirred me was the 'certain air' and the 'strong feelings.' This man undoubtedly tried to assault a woman once and was kicked in the teeth by one of her 'strong vibrations.' Ever since reading this man's answer, I check my air daily to make sure it's ok.

A woman answered: "We were just talking about that. In Los Angeles, the gay girls are a lot more feminine looking. Here they're so butch. I don't think it should be that way. There's nothing wrong with it. It's just a sexual preference, that's all."

My first thought was to ask this woman for a date. Before I do that, however, I must move to Los Angeles and become more feminine. (I hear it happens automatically when you pass Bakersfield-- Poof! --and all your body hair crashes to the ground.)

Lastly, another man said: "Not always. A woman is more secluded. Quieter. A woman's whole trip is different. Males aren't as close. Girls kissing, you don't think much about it, but let two guys start kissing and they would draw a whole crowd of people."

Now, sir, let's be reasonable. I can't remember the last time I was locked in a romantic half-nelson with a woman in front of Macy's. I seem to recall the latent fear that I might be arrested. Oh, I might be tempted to try it at --say-- 3 AM on a \$50.00 bet, with one foot inside the door of a very fast armored car.

I am waiting patiently now for the sequel question to "Can You Spot A Lesbian?" -- Perhaps something timely and thought provoking; eg, "Can You Spot A Straight Person?" I will be ready with my answer: "Yes, they're the ones who think they can spot lesbians."

Terry Rayn

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