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THE LADDER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER, 1972

\$1.25

EDITORIAL

by Gene Damon

This is the last issue of THE LADDER. After 16 complete continuous years of publication, there are to be no more issues. Many women reading this editorial will be upset, many will be sorry. None of you will be as sorry as we are to have to take this step.

To those of you who have supported us by word, deed and money, as well as by writing for these pages, we simply wish the best in the future. For those of you who have casually read us through the years, indeed sometimes intending to subscribe, but not ever quite getting around to it, we wish you whatever you deserve and leave it to your own consciences to decide just what that might be.

Elsewhere in this issue we discuss the sale of back issues and the impending index of all back issues. Both of these things will continue. We will continue to supply back issues of THE LADDER to all interested parties as long as our supply lasts, and we will be publishing the complete index of all 16 years of THE LADDER. (See notices elsewhere and order NOW.)

The bibliography, THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE, is still available and will continue to be sold.

Writers who have sent material that has not been used or previously returned are invited to write at once, sending stamped self-addressed envelopes for return of manuscripts on hand. All unused material on hand not asked for will be destroyed December 1, 1972.

SISTERS

By and for Lesbians - Vol. 3, #9
September 1972

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THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

by

Rita Mae Brown

If you love women then you are in revolt against male supremacy. The world which men have built hates women. Women, according to male supremacy, exist to serve the male. A woman who loves women then defies the basic building block of male supremacy: woman hatred. Women who love women are Lesbians. Men, because they can only think of women in sexual terms, define Lesbian as sex between women. However, Lesbians know that it is far more than that, it is a different way of life. It is a life determined by a woman for her own benefit and the benefit of other women. It is a life that draws its strength, support and direction from women. About two years ago this concept was given the name woman-identified woman. That's not a bad name, it is just a fancy way of saying that you love yourself and other women. You refuse to limit yourself by the male definitions of women. You free yourself from male concepts of "feminine" behavior.

Lesbianism, politically organized, is the greatest threat that exists to male supremacy. How can men remain supreme, how can they oppress women if women reject them and fight the entire world men have built to contain us? The beginning rejection is to put women first in your life, put yourself first. If you do that then you begin to understand that the only way you can lead the life you would like to lead is by smashing male.

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supremacy -- and its offshoot oppressions, class and race supremacy.

Any oppressed person who gives in to her oppression insures that others will remain oppressed and she exposes her sisters who are fighting that oppression. The emerging political Lesbians, or women-identified women, realize the scope of male supremacy and are changing their lives to fight it. Women who remain silent leave these outspoken women to face the common oppressor. Committing yourself to women is the first concrete step toward ending that common oppression. If you cannot find it in yourself to love another woman, and that includes physical love, then how can you truly say you care about women's liberation? If you don't feel other women are worthy of your total commitment -- love, energy, sex, all of it -- then aren't you really saying that women aren't worth fighting for? If you reserve those "special" commitments for men then you are telling other women they aren't worth those commitments, they aren't important. You don't also understand or else you avoid recognizing that individual relationships -- your "personal" life -- is political. Relationships between men and women involve power, dominance, role play and oppression. A man has the entire system of male privilege to back him up. Another woman has nothing but her own self. Which relationship is better for you? It's obvious.

If women still give primary commitment and energy to the oppressors how can we build a strong movement to free ourselves? Did the Chinese love and support the capitalists? Do the Viet Cong cook supper for the Yankees? Are Blacks supposed to disperse their communities and each live in a white home? The answer, again, is obvious. Only if women give their time to women, to a women's movement, will they be free. You do not free yourselves by polishing your chains, yet that is what heterosexual women do.

Lesbians who have tried to pull women into a supportive women's community are often attacked by these heterosexual women who hang onto the privileges they

get from their men. These Lesbian-haters are not always vicious women. Most of them don't understand how heterosexuality maintains male supremacy. They also don't want to understand because if they did then they would have to change their lives and lose the scant privileges men have given them. The facts are simple: Heterosexuality keeps women separated from each other. Heterosexuality ties each woman to a man. Heterosexuality exhausts women because they struggle with their man -- to get him to stop oppressing them -- leaving them little energy for anything else. For this destruction of women's communities, for this betrayal of other women, women indeed get privileges from men: legitimacy (you are a real woman if you are with a man -- a sexual definition again), prestige, money, social acceptance, and in some token cases political acceptance.

If you are a Lesbian who has come out then you cut yourself off from those privileges. You have ended your stake in maintaining the heterosexual world. You are in total revolt against male supremacy. How can women liberate themselves if they are still tied to that male-supremacist world? How can a woman tied to men through heterosexuality keep from betraying her sisters? When push comes to shove, she will choose her man over other women; heterosexuality demands that she make that choice. How can you build a serious political movement when women do this to each other? You can't. Lesbianism is a necessary step in the struggle for liberation.

Why would any heterosexual woman give up the privileges men grant her for being heterosexual? Most often she will only give them up if she sees there is something better than the crumbs thrown to her from men. What can Lesbianism offer? It offers double oppression. It offers the threat of getting fired from your job, estranged from your family and old straight friends, it offers getting your throat slit by straight women in the service of men, it offers constant struggle against an inhumane and diseased world where violence is the key to power and love is a word found in poetry but not on the streets. Why take on those burdens?

Because Lesbianism also offers you the freedom to be yourself. It offers you potential equal relationships with your sisters. It offers escape from the silly, stupid, harmful games that men and women play, having the nerve to call them a "relationship." It offers change. You will change yourself by discovering your woman-identified self, by discovering other women. No one, not even another Lesbian, can tell you who that self is. It is your individual challenge, your life. You will be on unfamiliar ground with no old patterns to guide you. As you change yourself you will begin to change your society also. A free, strong self cannot live in the muck that men have made. You will make mistakes and suffer from them. You will hurt and be hurt trying to find new ways. But you will learn and push on. You will discover the thousand subtle ways that heterosexuality destroyed your true power; you will discover how male supremacy destroys all women and eventually the creators of it, men. You will find once your consciousness is raised it cannot be unraised. Once you have a vision of the new world you can no longer accept the old one. You will become a fighter. You will find love and that you are beautiful, strong and that you care. You will build communities with other women from all classes and races, those communities will change the material parts of our lives. You will share what you have with others and they with you. You will revolt against this whole filthy world that tried to cover you and your beauty under a ton of male supremacist slime. That is what Lesbianism offers you.

[Co-editor's note: This is Part I of an article by Rita Mae Brown. Part II will appear in the October issue of Sisters. In Part II, Ms. Brown presents her ideas of where the woman-identified woman goes from here and what she can do to fight male supremacy and oppression.]

*"Oh won't you stay
We'll put on the day"*

A tiny insect flew against the window near my chair, lost indoors, beating his filigreed brown wings uselessly against the outdoors he could not reach. I moved my hand to whisk him gently to the edge of the window and freedom, misjudged his hardiness and smashed his too-fragile body against the glass.

It unnerved me.

The phone rang while I stared at the remains on the window. *For a moment I hoped it was you.*

It was mother. We had one of our when-are-you-coming-down-for-a-visit conversations.

"I hate to take the Opel onto the highway, Mother. The rear tires are bald." It was the same excuse I'd been using since Christmas. "Why don't you and Daddy come up here?" I said, knowing there would be some reason why that would be impossible.

"You know how your father is," she said.

That was the ultimate excuse: I had lived in Berkeley five years; Mother had been to visit me one time; my Father has never been to Berkeley. "Well, I said, "I'll be down one of these weekends. I want to come down before it's too late to swim."

"Yes," she said, and I could see her thinking from her tone. "Do you shave yet?" she said.

"No, Mother. The hairy legs are here to stay."

I could see her fumbling with words -- she started to speak and held back, then bumbled forward: "You know," she said, in her motherly tone, "If you end up an old maid, it won't be anyone's

fault but your own."

All because I did not shave my legs. "Yes, Mother, I know."

There was another long pause -- the sort we have become used to. "Well, why don't you come down for your birthday? That'll be here before you know it."

And I thought about you and my last birthday.

"I don't know," I said.

"Sometimes I think you just don't care about us, anymore." She was whining.

"Don't be silly, Mother." She was hurt and I was not in the mood. "I'll be down one of these weekends," I said finally, patiently.

"You could bring a friend," she said. "You know your father and I like your friends."

I remembered you winning my father over by your ability at pinochle and your capacity for B&B. And, later, after hours of playing the hard-drinking but very sober and innocent young thing, it had all hit you and you fell drunk and giggling into my arms.

"I'll try, Mother. Everyone's pretty busy these days."

"We miss you."

"I miss you, too," I said.

I put the phone away, turned on the stereo, and took half a dozen tokens of hash. Went into the kitchen for a coke, and Jessica -- the cat who is too aristocratic to play -- got playful and leapt at my foot, biting the ankle gently enough not to draw blood.

Dragging my foot and Jessica to the refrigerator, I got a coke and moved my foot the way I imagined Jessica wanted it moved. She started at the movement, attacked and ferociously gummed the

other ankle and then raced into the dining room after a fly that buzzed against the window. I thought of the lacy remains on the window in the living room. *And then I thought of you.*

Turning to go, turning back, turning to go.

I smoked more hash, waited until I could see through the windows the leaves on trees begin to dance in sun and shade in time to Joni Mitchell.

And I thought of you.

- Norma Montgomery



RAPE CONFERENCE

The Anti-Rape Conference of July 29, 1972 is over and we are wondering what happened. We attended; we had expected what had been scheduled and publicized: workshops on legal measures, preventive measures, and retaliatory measures. We came hoping to participate in these workshops, with the idea some program of action could evolve from them.

Surprisingly, only 19 women showed up. We find it hard to believe that so few Bay Area women, much less San Francisco women (nine), are concerned that women are being attacked, raped and murdered. These are not attacks on individual women -- they are attacks on individuals because they are women.

Where is the women's consciousness in this city? We're all aware of the lack of mobility in our lives because of fear of rape, harrassment, and just plain hassle. But are we so immobilized that we cannot take control of our own lives? Will we continue to allow ourselves to be unconcerned about our own survival? About the survival of our sisters? Do we have to experience physical rape to identify with this problem? We worry about walking down the streets. We live in fear, we live in mental harrassment every day. No ideology will stop rape. But not even the women who are constantly spouting rhetoric showed up.

If you care at least about yourself, call the women's switchboard for place and time of the next meeting. 771-8212. Ask for the Anti-Rape action group.

- Diane, Beth, Sheri, Germaine

BOOK REVIEW

The Descent of Woman is a valuable set of new ideas from old facts on anthropology and evolution. Elaine Morgan reaches far into the past to grasp some crucial factors in human development and the impact these factors still have on human affairs.

Ms. Morgan re-interprets history from a feminist perspective. She points out that andro-centric (male-centered) thinking has caused enormous amounts of energy to be channeled into buttressing male-domination -- energy which could be put into finding truths necessary to the growth of human-kind.

There are many areas of anthropology where Ms. Morgan finds much "arrant and demonstrable nonsense" about women. Two of the myths she tackles and lays to rest are that males are the sole creators of our cultural heritage and that monogamy is an instinctive pattern in human beings (both male-created myths).

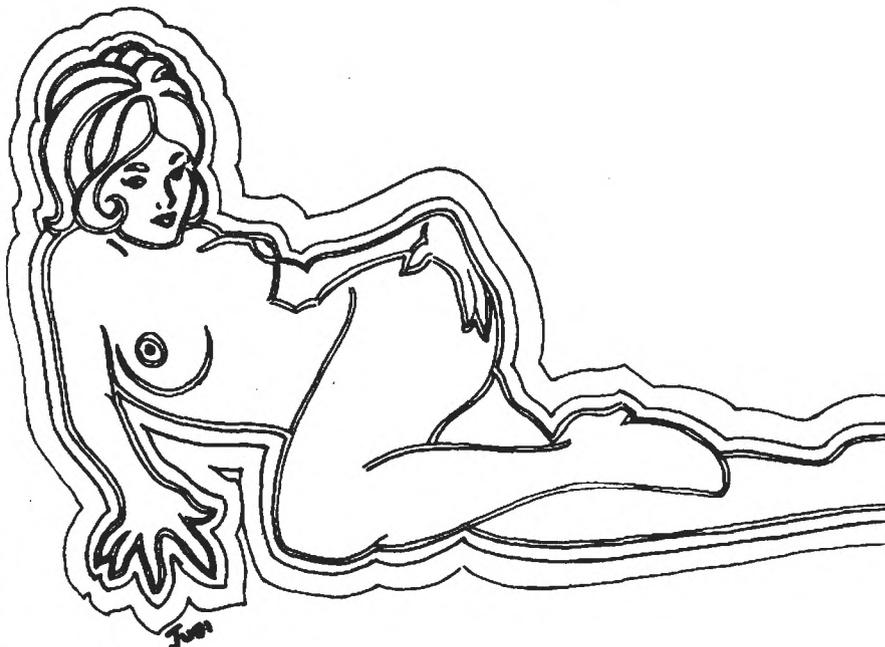
Ms. Morgan also points out that andro-thinking has created "Tarzan-complexes" in many anthropologists. Much scientific thought considers females to have "imitated" male development.

"Most of the books forget about the female for most of the time. They drag her on-stage rather suddenly for the obligatory chapter on Sex and Reproduction, and then say: 'All right, love, you can go now,' while they get on with the real meaty stuff about the Mighty Hunter with his lovely new weapons and his lovely new straight legs racing across the Pleistocene plains."

In the chapter entitled "What Women Want," Ms. Morgan presents her ideas on the situation of contemporary woman. Some of her thoughts reiterate those of other feminists; other ideas seem conservative compared with some feminist views. No one can doubt Ms. Morgan's desire for the improvement of woman's condition, but there is much room for discussion of her priorities. One is left with the impression that, at times, her reading audience is, or should be, heterosexual.

The Descent of Woman presents some theories that will hopefully shake up a few heads in professional and lay circles. Her ideas are carefully thought out for the most part and her book is full of the kind of humor that makes the reader laugh and take a second look at some of our most strongly ingrained assumptions about the nature of woman-kind.

- Charleen Pyron



REPORT FROM MIAMI

The Democratic Party voted down a gay liberation plank offered for its 1972 platform at the Miami Beach convention. After two gays had spoken in support of it, a delegate from Ohio spoke in opposition. Cathy Welch stated that gay liberation should not be supported because it would encourage child molesters, prostitution, pandering, pimping, and would force a repeal of the Mann Act. While gays in the convention hall shouted "No" with clenched fists, the plank was voted down in a voice vote.

I arrived in Miami a couple of days later and went immediately to Miami Beach, just in time for a gay power demonstration held in front of the convention hall. There were differences of opinion. A black unfurled a sheet on the stage which read, "McGovern sucks -- don't vote for McGovern," and he was confronted about that. Many gays, including the Miami Gay Activists Alliance, were there.

Allen Ginsberg was there, singing and chanting. I asked him what he thought about the rip-off of gay lib by the Democrats and he said that gays should continue organizing and will win eventually. At Flamingo Park, though, I recall spending a great deal of time hassling with straight radicals who seemed to have nothing else to do but bug gays -- it went on continuously and got pretty sticky at times.

Raps were held at the Flamingo Park campsite and hundreds of straights came to find out about gay liberation. A really together gay woman led the consciousness raising, which went on for hours.

The response from Miami Beach residents was surprisingly nice and friendly. Several of the local gay bars provided us with food and drink and emergency meeting space, and we held a few meetings to discuss the situation. During one of them we formed a number of committees and proposed, among other things, that 1) the Republican Convention should be confronted by gay power, 2) that the headquarters of the National Coalition of Gay Organizations be moved from Washington to Miami.

Interestingly, a strange alliance between Cuban exiles and gay liberationists is developing in Miami. Many Cuban exile machos hung around the gay lib tents but nothing happened. Three pages on gay liberation were published in Replica, a Cuban exile magazine.

The underground press in Miami has given coverage to the gay issues and presence of gays at the convention. GAA Miami is a very together group, quite unlike the GAA in San Francisco. As far as I know, there isn't a gay women's group here and, if anything, gay women are involved in either GAA or the feminist groups.

At present gays in the area are trying to get it together for the Republican Convention but things are pretty intangible.

- Angela Keyes Douglas

SEPTEMBER IS ELECTION MONTH.....BRING YOUR VOTES TO THE SEPTEMBER 8 BUSINESS MEETING. YOU MAY ALSO VOTE BY MAIL.

To vote by mail, send your choices for ALL OFFICES to DOB, 2005 Market, S.F. 94203 in a sealed envelope marked "ELECTION". Name your choices and SIGN your ballot. MEMBERS ONLY may vote.

The following statements are from candidates nominated at the last business meeting. For other candidates' statements, see SISTERS, August, 1972.

PRESIDENT

Sharon Crase: If reelected, I will continue to do my best for DOB. I would like to take advantage of this space to comment on how sad it is that the DOB officers have to carry the load of the whole organization. DOB is an organization for women. Where is the energy of these women? We NEED YOUR HELP. Please give it.

Vice President nominee MARLEY has chosen to run for this office rather than for President.

TREASURER

Jackie has withdrawn her name from nomination. In her place, retiring Treasurer Diane has nominated ALISON.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Liane Esstelle: I've always been involved with people. Now with the Women's movement, I've been able to channel my energies and specialize in that part of humanity which has been greatly over-looked. This position for which I have been nominated will help me focus my energies even further. I'll always be involved with the movement—the title only signifies recognition.

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SEPTEMBER



SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
					1	2
Softball 3	4	5	RAP 7 PM 6	7	BUS. MTG. 8 PM 8	BIKE RIDE 9
PSYCHIC ART READ-IN 10	11	12	RAP 7 PM 13	14	Board Mtd. 15	16
HOBBIT PICNIC 17	18	19	RAP 7 PM 20	21	22	S.O.L. Party 23
Flea Markt 24	25	26	RAP 7 PM 27	28	29	30

Sept. 3 - Softball at Julius Kahn Park, on west Pacific Ave. at Spruce, 2 PM. (Geary bus to Spruce.)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT RAPS: 6th - Paula, "Period"; 13th - Linda, "Masturbation"; 20th - Charleen, "Women's Consciousness"; 27th - Marley, "Space Communication".

Please be informed: Wednesday night raps will cost \$1.00 -- Refreshments will be served. 50¢ to members of DOB. REASONS: SFDOB is to hold the 1973 DOB convention. The expense of this will be handled by YOUR donations of \$1.00. One half of this will go to HOUSE FUND, the other to Conv. Fund

Sept. 8 - BUSINESS MEETING, ELECTIONS. 8 PM SHARP. DOB Office, 1005 Market, SF 861-8689.

Sept. 9 - Bike ride at Golden Gate Park. Meet at DOB office at 10 AM. Bring bike or rent for \$1.00/hr., \$5 dep

Sept. 10 - PSYCHIC ARTS READ-IN. 2 or more locally known professional S.F. psychic readers (Sue Handley for one) will do FREE readings on first come, first served basis. \$1.00 donation. 2 PM at 1743 8th Avenue, S.F. COME EARLY.

Sept. 17 - Hobbit Picnic at Mount Tam. Meet at DOB office at 10 AM.

Sept. 23 - SOL (Slightly Older Lesbians), 35 +, chronological age. 8 PM to ?. At 546 5th Ave., S.F. again. Social encounter(s), PARTY, refreshments supplied or bring your choice. Please call Betty at 221-9278.

Sept. 24 - FLEA MARKET TIME AGAIN. Bring all your goodies to DOB office, or call office for someone to pick them up for you. OFF TUNNEL ROAD NEAR LEANARDA'S.

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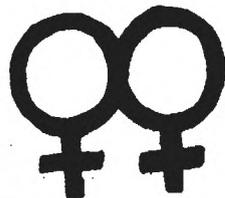
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community

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THE FOLLOWING WOMEN HAVE BEEN NOMINATED FOR THESE OFFICES:

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Librarian: LINDA M. WESLEY
Assistant Secretary: DIANE RICHARDSON
Social Chairwoman: DEBBIE BARROWS
Treasurer: ALISON
Secretary: CHARLEEN PYRON
Vice President: BETH ELLIOTT, MARLEY
President: SHARON CRASE

KAREN WELLS received a vote of confidence to continue the Editorship of SISTERS MAGAZINE. She nominated NORMA MONTGOMERY to fill the position of Co-editor and this was accepted by SFDOB Membership.

[In the three years I have been associated with SFDOB, I have never seen officers opt for reelection. I think that the three women running again for office are a rare kind of woman, as are the ones running for other offices and the major ones. If I may be permitted this observation, I can think of no better group of women forming a core of a better women's group. May I here appeal to ALL OF YOU OUT THERE to vote? May I also appeal to YOU to PLEASE HELP US MAKE DOB A STRONGER AND MORE POWERFUL ORGANIZATION.

I am sure that the notice from THE LADDER did not particularly affect you. That another Lesbian publication "went under" I'm sure doesn't matter to too many women. But, since THE LADDER is as old as our Lesbian movement, since it has been the highest quality statement of our talent and dedication, and since such quality will be very difficult to meet, I APPEAL TO YOU to NOT let this kind of financial disaster carry SISTERS under, or LESBIAN TIDE, or FOCUS, or FURIES. If we are to make any kind of wave in this male-dominated world, we will have to give all of what we can to those Lesbian organizations and publications now existing. Do not fool yourself--if any more Lesbian expressions die, WE ALL WILL DIE, rotting in our own apathy. Please, support your local Lesbian. by Wells]

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! COME ONE!
COME ALL!

All literary artists who enjoy reading and writing put your talents to use by corresponding with gay Women here, there, and everywhere.

Send your name and address, including ZIP code to:

MS. PAULA McCORKEL
Pen Friend
1005 Market St. #208
San Francisco, Ca. 94103

Please indicate if you desire your pen friend to be located as close to your city as possible. Also indicate how many pen friends you would like to have and we will do our best.

Let us know if you would prefer your pen friend's name and address sent to you via post card or plain envelope.

Please send \$1.00 with your request to help pay for expenses. This dollar will put you on our mailing list for as long as you like.

Here it is, the first pen pal attempt we have made. DOB cannot accept responsibility for who writes to you or what is said. We can only find correspondents for you.



Following is the text of a speech delivered at activities following Dallas' first Gay Pride Parade. The speaker is Rob Shivers.

The late Robert Kennedy said, "Each time a man stands up for an ideal he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope." Today, here in Dallas, we made waves!

There was a time when I held up my head enough to look around and say, "I'm not ashamed, just afraid." That was after we started the MCC here. Today, after marching with you down Main Street, I can truthfully say I'm neither ashamed nor afraid. I never felt prouder than when I stepped out into the street and began marching.

The most insidious slavery is that imposed by fear. Fear is destructive. This has been an historic day in the history of the Southwest. The conservative heart of the conservative midwest has stood up to be counted....

We too were born to be free. We're tired of running and being shoved. We've taken a stand and marched forward to claim what's rightfully ours -- DIGNITY and EQUALITY.

You today have been the vanguard of a mighty force. You marched before people with predetermined ideas. We changed some of those ideas today.

We've thrown off the cockroach syndrome -- coming from out of the woodwork to be ourselves on weekends at the bars -- we've paid the price for freedom, both for ourselves and for those still enslaved and cringing in their closets. They said it couldn't be done in Dallas -- but YOU DID IT! The taste of freedom is sweet.

We have served notice. No longer will we be

contained in enforced schizophrenic life styles.
We will be ourselves from this day forward.

Today we stand tall and proud as American citizens, claiming our rights -- not privileges -- the rights which straight Americans take for granted.

We too are part of the human race. No longer will fear dominate our lives and thinking.

Dag Hammarskjöld warned, "Never for the sake of peace and quiet deny your own experience or convictions." We've heeded those words today and taken action.

The Hub of the Nation has stood up and demanded equality for gays. We're not candidates for second class citizenry -- we are gay, proud and healthy. Today has been the midwest's declaration of independence.

We won't stop there! I challenge you! Keep actively on until every brother and sister can be as proud and free as they want to be!

DALLAS GAY PRIDE PARADE

They said it couldn't be done, but like the bumble bee, Dallas went ahead and did it, spear-headed by Chris McKee, a very up-front Lesbian. Dallas' first Gay Pride Parade drew the largest crowd since the nationally-publicized Cotton Bowl Parade, with approximately 300 marchers and 17 gaily decorated cars and floats.

Even the Dallas bars didn't believe a gay parade was possible in the conservative heart of the conservative Southwest and many gays treated the whole idea with derision or as a joke. In truth, although sponsored by the Circle of Friends, a political and educational homophile organization of Dallas, no one but Chris really believed in it. For months she worked and struggled alone to get things off the ground.

Others gradually caught her determination, if not her vision, and began to work with her to bring the miracle to pass. When the parade permit was granted without a hitch, the bars began cooperating. They allowed 2,000 flyers to be personally handed to patrons announcing the parade and picnic, and posters were displayed.

A million details had to be organized and executed: lodging for out-of-towners, the sound system and taping of march music, preparation of marching signs for participants, public interviews and a press conference held in Dallas' plush Press Club, to list but a few. All were managed and lead by Dallas' women, with some help along the way from a few of their gay brothers. It was Chris whose face appeared on television and whose

name was used on all official communications.

The phone was tapped, the house was kept under surveillance. Rumors flew. Diversities and lack of unity throughout the community had to be combatted, as gays expressed their own fears and hangups. Many made promises and then copped out; apathy and negligence threw the burden of labor and leadership onto the shoulders of four or five. Chris fought on.

Then the opposition began to unite. Some bars refused to cooperate in any way. One women's bar actively opposed the parade and scheduled its own hayride at \$2 a head for the same day. Another women's bar cooperated only under pressure of bad publicity. Now Chris was standing up against her own, but the parade was gaining momentum and nothing could stop it.

The Dallas City Council tried. They called an emergency closed-door meeting to rescind the parade permit, but the district attorney informed them there was no way they could deny the right of free expression to our community. The resulting publicity on hourly newscasts was gratifying!

Published news articles included a threat of shooting. A few more decided to stay home and avoid trouble. Others determined it was now or never and joined the efforts. Friday night out-of-towners began to arrive. Chris organized and directed activities most of the night while the Houston and Dallas floats were being readied in her back yard. In the morning cars began to arrive to have signs put on them...and then it was time.

Marching signs were distributed to a fast-growing contingent of volunteer marchers (others brought their own), cars and floats were directed

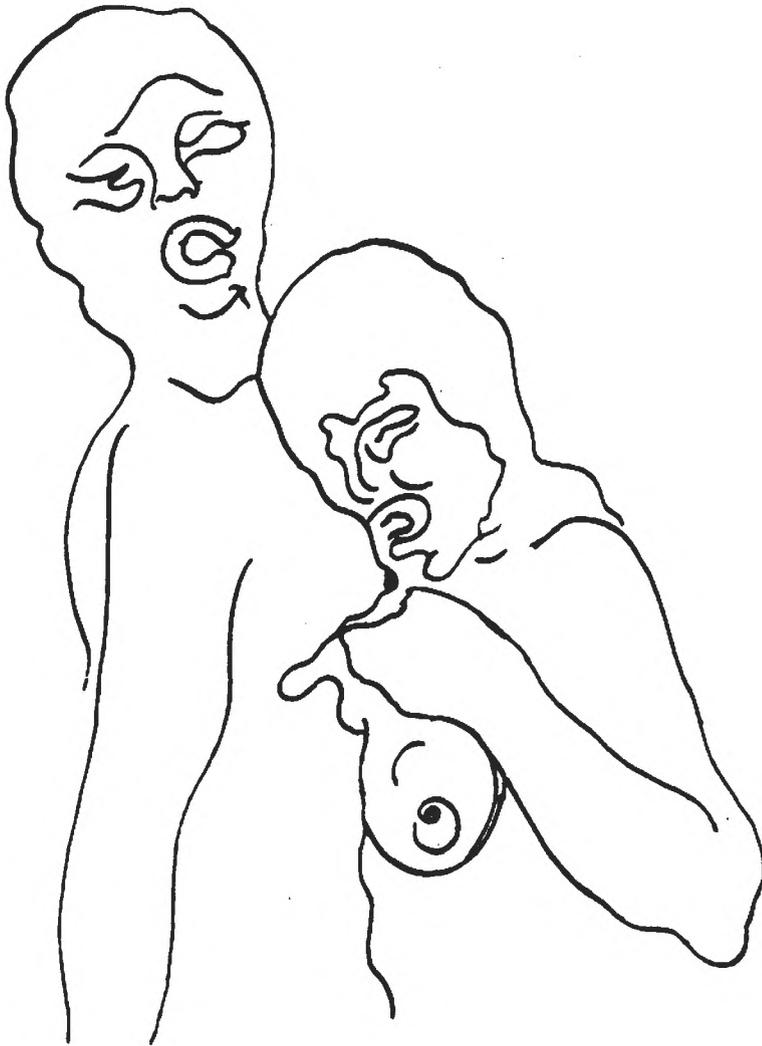
to position. The sound system played "United We Stand, Divided We Fall," and rousing march music. The police escort was flabbergasted (an organized group and more than 50 weirdos they had NOT expected!) Cameras clicked, the lead banner -- GAY PRIDE PARADE...Straights and Gays Together for Human Dignity & Equality -- stepped out and the parade was on the move. Straights marched shoulder to shoulder with their gay friends. They marched proudly, chanting, smiling, waving. Others stepped off the sidewalks and joined them. For two blocks they stretched, a dream come true because one woman persevered. The final banner, "Daughters of Bilitis -- Nation-Wide" was carried by Chris and her lover, a member of the San Francisco chapter.

Since the parade, Chris has received a great deal of job pressure and was recently refused an apartment she wanted to rent, but her courageous spirit is undaunted. Plans are already underway for next year's parade (the City Council has said in print, "It will not happen again"), she is acting president of the Circle of Friends, makes speeches before various straight groups and has promised active participation in forming a Dallas DOB.

An active crusader wherever opportunity arises, Chris says, "Dallas is my home. Sure, it'd be easier to go somewhere more open, but this is where the fight has to be won. I'm going to stay here and help fight it!"

Chris is 29, studying to be a Library Technician at El Centro in Dallas (her last year). She was born in Waco. Her whole family knows she is gay and many marched in the parade with her. She has been married (straight), but has been out about three years. She's vice president of Circle of Friends, member of Women for Change (women's liberation) and helped at the American Library Con-

vention "Hug A Homosexual" booth and the "Gay, Proud and Healthy" American Psychiatric Association Convention booth (both held in Dallas). Future goals include forming an active DOB in Dallas, a gay club at El Centro, and visiting Dallas churches as a gay couple.



Danielle



A Familiar Girl

I knew her well, that girl with the seductive eye;
 she bent back her head once and let
 the interior of her heart
 be touched, but softly
 but briefly
 but too briefly
 and then she turned over and slept
 in the middle-age of emptiness.
 The sleep of blue resentment;
 the world crept inside
 through the wound made by a dream's hand,
 a tear, like a picture window, opened her
 bundled mind,
 She blinked reluctantly and saw
 the form of herself moving
 away from the net of need
 toward a distant openness
 beyond the standstill of gone moments
 the form of herself moving
 away from even the prison
 that she had weaved and worn like a shawl
 over her shoulders.
 Alone, she followed;
 Now she runs past you with her name
 and you are helpless to touch her
 except in the places where she has been.

--D.M.L.

LOVE POEM WRITTEN DURING THE YEAR OF GLF

leaving coming back
 and leaving
 we end
 where we are cut off
 awake
 where we are connected
 rest in rooms
 crowded with voices
 that lead us to
 half visible barricades
 fight
 only beginning to fight
 love in rooms
 crowded with memories
 leaving coming back
 and leaving
 colors and light
 have a texture only art promises
 yes I really like women
 we fuse breath
 in the streets
 tangle everywhere like roots
 hold hands kiss
 embarrass ourselves
 become notorious
 we exist
 we wont have our lives discounted
 sometimes fearing the men
 on the streets
 we wait for the end
 chilled and stiff
 a little out of our minds
 I tell myself
 you made us visible first
 I never would have done it
 still when we write
 our manifesto

for the revolution
 part of us will be left out
 part of us will escape
 into what we see
 no matter how loud we talk
 the neighbors will miss
 connecting phrases
 (please say
 happiness is possible)
 we are touch and silence
 in the dark

- Fran Winant

untitled

You didn't ask
 I would have
 told you
 I was
 still fragile

but

you
 didn't
 even
 ask.

- Norma Montgomery

Anticipations

The best of all
 perhaps
 is before it was
 or so it seems
 now that it is

- Terry Ryan

Letters

(Ed. Note: The following is a letter written to one of the Sisters editorial staff members who is planning a trip to London shortly.)

Your letter caused a flutter in the hencoop -- that Sappho should be in evidence so far afield. Marvelous arrangement your being in London on 4th September because we have our Sappho meeting on that evening. Upstairs room, Museum Tavern at Russell Street, London WC1. The pub is opposite the entrance to the British Museum on the corner of Museum and Great Russell Street, 7:30 p.m. Last meeting a woman from Belgium arrived at 5:30 p.m. in London and was at the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and has become a much loved sister for all the things she told us. So we would love you to give us an informal rap about working for Sisters and DOB and what the gay scene is like in San Fran. Some of our members may like to buy/subscribe to Sisters, so do bring some copies and we can work out the sterling equivalent! We have an exchange subscription with The Ladder and get the odd copy of Lesbian Tide in bookshops here -- otherwise we only know about Mother -- is it still going? Vector - Advocate - N.Y. Chapter of DOB newsletter occasionally. So you have a virgin field -- in a manner of speaking! We will be having an informal rap meeting - organizing our Maureen Duffy/Disco evening for far-flung subscribers on October 7th. So you will have plenty of opportunity to get all the info about gay places in London that evening. Do ask for Jackie (that's me, or Babe, my mate) -- we usually take turns being on the welcome door. No. We have absolutely nothing to do with Arena Three.

Jackie Forster
Editor, Sappho
BCM/Petrel
London WC1, England

Dear SISTERS,

Dallas isn't dead yet, even if it might have seemed so.

Tell me, what do we do to get sanctioned as a DOB Chapter? We'd like to have a Chapter name so we could do an educational project booth at a Texas State Fair. Also, could we submit material to you for a "Dallas Page"? We are distributing SISTERS as we can. Hope you get some response!

Love, Rob Shivers from Dallas

[Ed. note: To you in Dallas and in San Diego: To form your own DOB chapter, all that is necessary is for you to write to the Chapter presidents of Los Angeles DOB, Boston DOB, San Francisco DOB, New Jersey DOB and obtain written permission for you to use the name "DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS". That is all there is to it. Of course, it takes members at your end to work to keep the chapter alive.....]



COMMENT

You may notice that SISTERS does not look quite the same this month. The statement of purpose for S.F. DOB does not appear.

In place of that statement is a comment from Gene Damon, Editor of THE LADDER. I am not the only one appalled by the folding of this publication. Apparently, however, not enough of you are upset enough, were not upset enough to do something. SISTERS is a new magazine in comparison to THE LADDER and not a very close one in quality. I will not allow SISTERS to fold, if there is anything I personally can do. Unfortunately, Gene Damon has been saying this same thing for years. And to no obvious avail.

The LADDER is dead.

How long will it be before SISTERS too is dead?

This magazine, all Lesbian magazines, all Lesbian organizations, rest upon the slender shoulders of a few. WHY are you not among that few? WHY don't women subscribe to magazines like these?

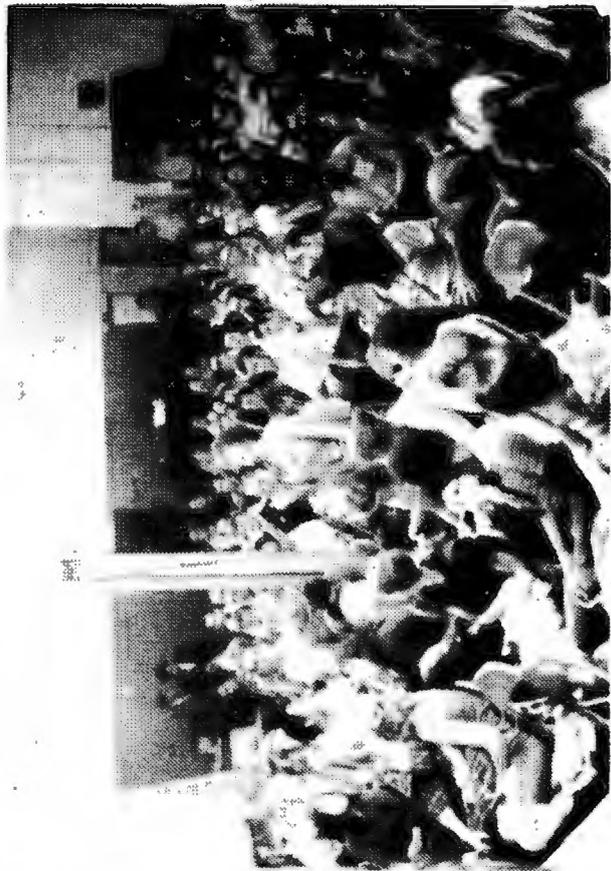
There is no excuse for NOT subscribing. There is no excuse for the death of a 16 year old Lesbian magazine.

Here is a death that YOU are directly responsible for. No one else can be blamed.

Let us not let this thing happen to our movement, our LIVES again.

Karen Wells

*This issue is dedicated
to The Ladder
and all the women
who made it
possible.*



some say there are but
nine muses. how wrong
they are! there is a
tenth — sappho of lesbos.

— aristotle

↑ PHOTO: J. INGE
↑ PHOTO: J. WRENN
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