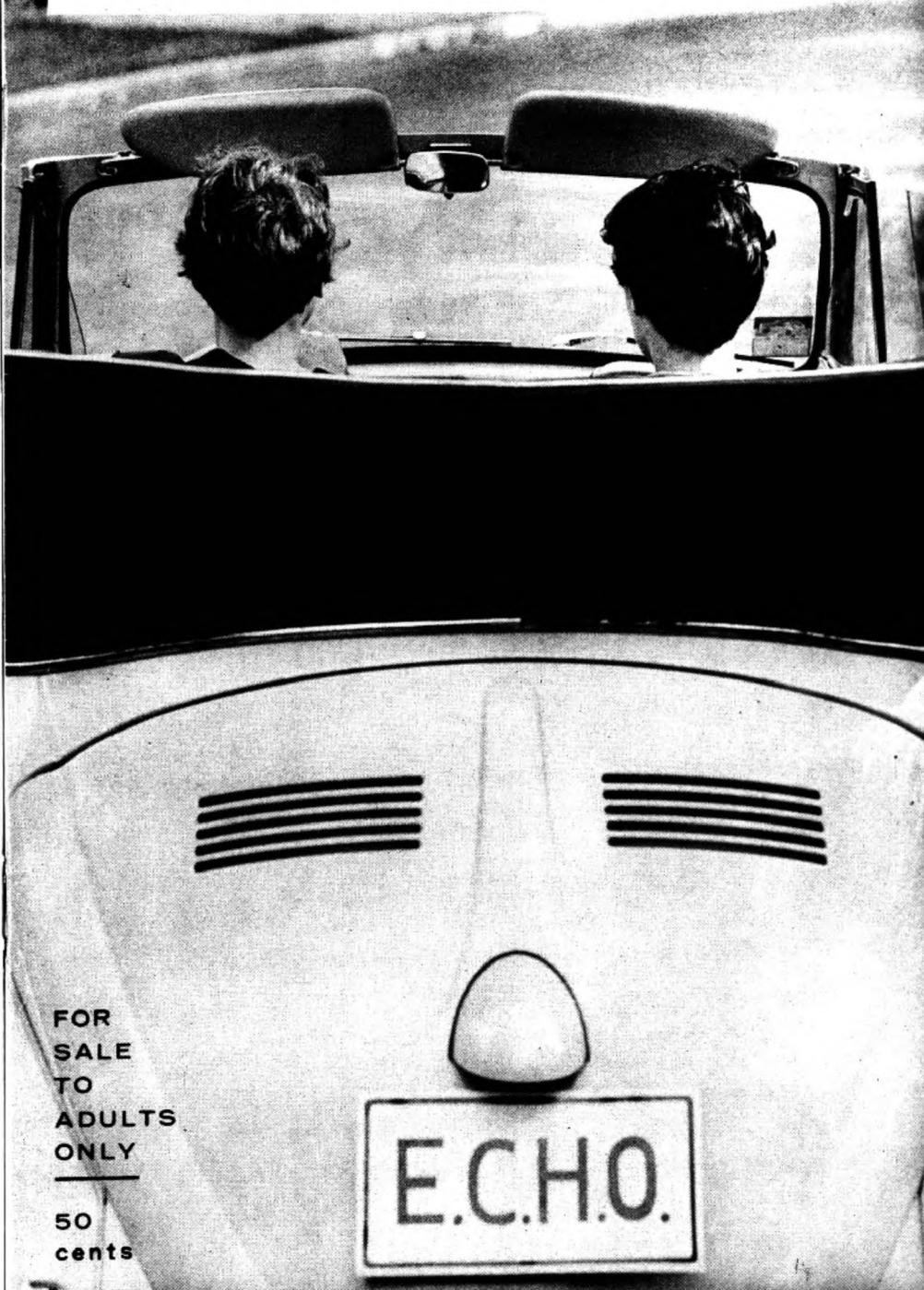


The Ladder

JULY-AUGUST
1965

A Lesbian review



purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING
THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

- ① Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.
- ② Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.
- ③ Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.
- ④ Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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CONTENTS

OUTSIDERS: STUDIES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANC	— by Howard S. Becker. Book Review by Professor Val Clear.....	4
Why I Became a Lesbian	— by E. N.....	9
Lesbiana	— by Gene Damon.....	13
Research Is Here to Stay	— by Florence Conrad.....	15
Youth-Romance	— by Ger.....	22
Homosexuals Picket in Nation's Capital	23
Readers Respond	25

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Outsiders

OUTSIDERS: STUDIES IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANCE

by Howard S. Becker

(The Free Press (Macmillan), 1963. \$5.00)

The cover of this book sets the tone. No other decoration or even name appears - just a square peg and a round hole adorn the cover.

Howard S. Becker is a reputable sociologist and writer at Stanford University who was apparently persuaded to pull together two studies that he had published previously and to add introductory and concluding chapters. Hence the core (and half the bulk) of his book OUTSIDERS consists of analytical studies of marihuana users and dance musicians - four articles reprinted from professional journals. Readers of THE LADDER will wish Becker had given more direct attention to other kinds of outsiders. But implications for the thoughtful reader are there throughout the book, and at several points Becker brings up homosexuality specifically though briefly.

At first reading, I reacted negatively to Becker's definition of an outsider. He says, "All social groups make rules... When a rule is enforced, the person who is supposed to have broken it may be seen as a special kind of person, one who cannot be trusted to live by the rules agreed on by the group. He is regarded as an outsider." (p. 1) Becker maintains that outsiders exist only when rules are created and then applied to particular people who are thus labeled as outsiders. "From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'." (p. 9)

Is it true that "outsiderness" is a state that does not exist until someone draws a line creating it? Further thought forced me back to Becker's view. The drawing of the line is not necessarily done in a formal and explicit act. It can be done subtly by the unfolding of the mores.

Becker indirectly illustrates that rules are not necessarily explicit and formal when he points out (in another context) that in our society, rules are in many respects made by white people for Negroes; by men for women; by adults for adolescents; by the middle class for the lower class; by Protestant Anglo-Saxons for other groups.

The chapter entitled "Moral Entrepreneurs" contains two of the best sections of the book: a discussion of rule-creators and

a discussion of rule-enforcers. I found these especially insightful. Here Becker shows some of the dynamics associated with society's creation of rules.

A prototype of the rule-creator is the crusading reformer who is convinced that existing rules (which may or may not be formal laws) are not adequate to cope with the evil he feels must be corrected. He is an absolutist. He sees things only in black and white, and he is willing to make whatever personal sacrifice is necessary to set things right. Though he may be operating from wholesome motives, his judgment may suffer from singleness of mind. And his training is usually limited, so when he has achieved his goal of arousing the populace to the dangers he sees, he must look for an expert to formulate his crusade into specific legal proposals.

Thus, says Becker, the crusade may fall afoul of experts in other fields, who because of their particular orientation twist the drive for reform into channels reflecting their own specialized interests and competencies. Prime offenders traditionally have been lawyers. But in recent years psychiatrists increasingly have captured movements in this manner. Becker notes that "those who draft legislation for crusaders have their own interests which may affect the legislation they prepare. It is likely that the sexual psychopath laws drawn by psychiatrists contain many features never intended by the citizens who spearheaded drives to 'do something about sex crimes,' features which do however reflect the professional interests of organized psychiatry." (p. 152)

Going on to discuss rule-enforcers, Becker points out that an unavoidable outcome of the successful moral crusade is a police force. When rules are created, outsiders are created and policemen are needed to police them. This is in some respects better than leaving enforcement to the rule-creators, because the policeman tends to have a more detached view of his job. He tends not to have the crusader's zeal and personal involvement; he merely apprehends where the law requires it.

But he is faced with practical problems. He must show that he is needed. He must produce enough rule-breakers in court to justify his continuing employment as rule-enforcer. At the same time, his resources and time are limited, so he develops a system of priorities for his work. Thus he enforces rules in a selective way. Whether the person who commits a deviant act gets caught, and thereby gets publicly labeled as deviant, often depends on factors extraneous to his actual behavior, including such factors as the rule-enforcer's set of priorities, whether the enforcer is making a special show of doing his job, and whether the rule-breaker has shown proper deference to the enforcer.

Becker says many interesting things about research. He calls attention to the fact that what little research has been done on deviance is limited almost entirely to studies of rule-breakers. Very little has been done to study scientifically rule-enforcers, or rule-creators (other than studies of the prophet as a sociological type). Furthermore, only certain

kinds of rule-breakers have been studied. Becker says, for example, that "an area of deviance of utmost importance for sociological theorists has hardly been studied at all. This is the area of professional misconduct. ...for all the wealth of sociological descriptions of professional behavior and culture, we have few if any studies of unethical behavior by professionals." (p. 167)

One formidable obstacle to research into deviance comes from the fact that researchers are generally outsiders to the subculture of deviation that they are trying to study. Kinsey's studies have been questioned - very validly, it seems to me - on grounds that the kinds of information he sought just are not imparted in our culture to strangers. The satyr may exaggerate his exploits to a sympathetic listener or conceal his aberration from a stranger whose integrity he feels he cannot trust. To be sure of securing perfectly accurate information about "normal" sexual behavior in our society is extremely difficult; to do so about behavior society labels as abnormal is almost impossible using the Kinsey techniques of direct interviewing of masses of people.

In particular, says Becker, "the student of deviance must convince those he studies that he will not be dangerous to them, that they will not suffer for what they reveal to him. The researcher, therefore, must participate intensely and continuously with the deviants he wants to study so that they will get to know him well enough to be able to make some assessment of whether his activities will adversely affect theirs." (p. 168)

Although Becker mentions having seen MATTACHINE REVIEW and ONE Magazine, he apparently was not aware of some of the research projects involving homophile organizations. If a reputable homophile organization assures respondents that anonymity will be zealously guarded, some of the source of error in research might be reduced if not eliminated. And this is happening.

However, there is another major problem. Most unsubsidized research of this kind now being done in our society is for doctoral dissertations, and the best method for much social research is the participant observer. The ideal combination would be a mature and stable Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago who was himself a homosexual active in the homophile movement. But to identify himself publicly as a homosexual in our present stage of society would be to jeopardize his degree; just one intemperate faculty member on the committee could nullify six years of the candidate's graduate study. It would be an unusual person who could weather the pressures of such a situation.

In explaining how insufficient descriptive research on social phenomena can lead to faulty theorizing, Becker gives this example: "...our theories are likely to be quite inadequate if we believe that all homosexuals are more or less confirmed members of homosexual subcultures. A recent study reveals an important group of participants in homosexual relations who are not in the least confirmed homosexuals. Reiss has shown that many juvenile delinquents 'hustle queers' as a relatively

safe way of picking up money. They do not regard themselves as homosexuals and when they reach an age to participate in more aggressive and profitable kinds of delinquency they drop the practice. How many other varieties of homosexual behavior await discovery and description? And what effect would their discovery and description have on our theories?" (pp. 167-8)

My first reaction to Becker's point here was puzzlement that he would refer to juvenile delinquents who "hustle queers" as homosexuals. But perhaps my confusion serves to document his assertion that broader research is greatly needed. I am sure the statistics on incidence of homosexuality include a number of such juveniles despite the fact they are not in any real sense homosexual in their orientation to life.

In a brief attempt to develop a typology of deviance, Becker begins a promising excursion that he ends too abruptly. Perhaps some day he will push it further. As he correctly points out, this is an exercise that should be done before further research is attempted, because different types of deviant behavior can be confusing and can invalidate results if they are not distinguished in the research process. Of relevance to the homophile movement is his helpful distinction between the "pure deviant" and the "secret deviant." I believe that any research in the field would throw more light on homosexuality if data were sought separately for these two groups. More thought and pilot research projects are needed at this point.

This book partakes of the weakness of most books consisting of articles written for other purposes and occasions. It is not well integrated on all aspects of Becker's theory - such as the idea that outsiderness does not exist until someone draws a line creating it. For instance, in his chapters on the jazz musicians' subculture, Becker comes close to spelling out this idea that deviance exists only after a rule is created, but he does not do so as explicitly as it warrants. To avoid putting words into Becker's mouth, let me label the following as my own reaction, triggered by some of the things Becker says.

Like the nouveau-riche taking culture lessons, who was amazed to learn that he had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it, some deviants are surprised to find that they fit into a category different from other people. Prior to this realization, they may have been only vaguely aware of a lack of commonality with the rest of the world at some points. But they have no significant insight into this until suddenly they become aware of a rule which they have violated. The "rule" is not necessarily written law; it may be part of established mores, violation of which is considered serious by society.

In this sudden awareness comes outsiderness. The "coming out" experience so dramatically described in current literature illustrates this. Has the person changed as a result of his first homosexual experience? I believe he has in most cases.

C. H. Cooley, a pioneer social psychologist, developed the concept of the "looking-glass self." The central fact of personality, said Cooley, is our tendency to react to the way we

think others perceive us. This happens in three parts: imagination of the way we appear to the other person, imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling like pride or mortification.

I assert that the experience whereby a person comes to see himself in his looking-glass as a homosexual is likely to be an experience so traumatic (I search in vain for a better adjective) that he is to a significant degree a different person afterward. He is both outsider and insider: outsider to the straight world of his family, friends and business associates; insider to a new world of persons homosexually oriented. And he has migrated across a border as definitely as if he had moved from Michigan to Ontario.

I think Becker has done a service to the homophile movement, particularly by developing concepts of deviance and by calling for research on those who create and enforce rules as well as those who break them. He notes that "If we are to achieve a full understanding of deviant behavior, we must get these two possible foci of inquiry into balance." (p. 163) He explains the importance - and the difficulty - of trying to capture the different perspectives of both sides.

Furthermore, Becker defines the rule-creating process as a political one, in which all groups may participate. Society's rules are not, he points out, "universally agreed to. Instead, they are the object of conflict and disagreement, part of the political process of society." (p. 18) Those on the nether side of any of society's rules should find OUTSIDERS interesting and insightful, and creative readers will be able to make specific applications of its content to their own worlds.

- Reviewed by Val Clear

(Professor Clear is Chairman of the Department of Sociology at Anderson College in Indiana)

The Church and the Homosexual

DOB Book Service announces a new booklet called THE CHURCH AND THE HOMOSEXUAL, prepared by Rev. Donald Kuhn of Glide Urban Center in San Francisco. It features comprehensive reports on the 4-day consultation between clergymen and homosexuals which was held in San Francisco in 1964 and which led to formation there of The Council on Religion and the Homosexual. The booklet also includes an extensive list of source materials.

Write today for your copy of THE CHURCH AND THE HOMOSEXUAL! Cost is \$1.10 for this attractive 6 x 9 booklet of 44 pages. Get extra copies for your minister, your friends, your family. Send order and payment to: DOB Book Service, 1232 Market St., Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California 94102.

Why I Became a Lesbian

I often read books and magazine articles about lesbianism by so-called experts and I laugh and laugh. Most of them are so far from my personal experience or that of any lesbian I ever met. I have lived as a lesbian for almost 20 years. I have undergone intensive psychotherapy. I am now in my late thirties and feel that I am well qualified to evaluate my experience and measure it against what is commonly presented as fact.

First I would like to dispel a few common misconceptions about the "typical" lesbian.

I did not become a lesbian because I was raped in childhood or adolescence or because I was cruelly treated by any man.

I did not become a lesbian because I had a drunken or tyrannical father who mistreated me or my mother, or because any individual soured me on the male sex.

I did not become a lesbian because I am physically mannish. (At age 14 I started drawing wolf whistles from the truck drivers and I still do.)

I did not become a lesbian because I was seduced by a "butch" girl.

A small number of lesbians have had experiences of the kind listed above, but this explains little. Many heterosexual women have had such experiences.

As for my own background, I come from a close-knit middle-class family. My parents were deeply devoted to one another and to their children. My sister and brothers are happily married and are raising average American families.

What went "wrong" with me? From my point of view, nothing. When I was 19 and a college student, I met a girl nearly my own age with whom I developed an intense friendship. We were happy only when we were together and miserable when we were

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think others perceive us. This happens in three parts: imagination of the way we appear to the other person, imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling like pride or mortification.

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apart. As soon as we were able to earn our own livings we went to live together and enjoyed our first serious physical contacts. We have loved one another ever since.

Does this sound a little too pretty and simple? It is. We have experienced great anguish and turbulence. Yet we are together despite circumstances that would have wrecked most heterosexual marriages.

Let me start at the beginning. I was never a tomboy. I was a bookish child who avoided rough games. From earliest childhood I had a strong dislike of domestic life. Tending a home and babies seemed dull and repulsive to me. I had no interest in dolls and never imagined myself becoming a mother.

Like many girls I dreamed of becoming an actress. When I grew older it became evident that my talents lay in another direction - art. I started to dream of being a great artist and working in my studio all day and coming home to a loving husband (also an artist) at night. My dream made no provision for the execution of domestic chores.

When I first began to develop physically I took pride in my budding femininity. But pride turned to shame when I realized that suddenly my looks were everything, my accomplishments nothing. I remember my fury when a well-meaning relative turned away from one of my pictures and said, "With your looks you don't need talent."

A frightful war then began within me. I had the adolescent's instinctive desire to be like everyone else, but I refused to wear make-up or to flirt. I hated everything that suggested that a girl must make herself physically desirable and then wait for the right man to choose her. I had more to do with my life than that! Naturally, my teen years were very lonely.

At college I experienced a new burst of joy in life. I was accepted at a good women's college. My artistic abilities were encouraged - and I met my friend.

Lynn was a girl much like myself - fiercely ambitious and contemptuous of what she considered feminine subservience. Unlike me she was clear-minded about her future. She would never marry. I still daydreamed about finding the perfect male partner, a man who would not expect me to live a woman's life with its domestic and maternal responsibilities.

But Lynn and I were in accord on other subjects. She was in the social sciences, but had a strong appreciation of art. We stimulated one another to read more, to see more in the world around us. Despite the seriousness of our interests, we constantly laughed and joked and seemed to find humor everywhere.

This pure happiness was cut off one day when one of my friends took me aside, and after a few dark hints about "unhealthy relationships," told me that all the girls were saying Lynn and I were lesbians. I was able to deny this in all honesty, yet a sickening dread took hold of me when I recognized the

germ of truth in what was said. I was never able to enjoy our relationship with the same abandon after that.

Then my parents got wind of the rumors about us. Again that frightening word "unhealthy" arose. I considered myself an adult, independent young woman, but my parents' attitude affected me deeply. I felt guilty, although I was in fact innocent of anything except an uncontrollable need to be my own master and find love suited to my temperament.

When the pressures became unendurable, I left home. Lynn and I set up housekeeping in a dismal furnished room - the best we could afford. At last we were free to express in physical terms the tenderness and passion that had been growing beneath the surface for nearly 3 years. Neither of us seduced the other. We literally fell into one another's arms.

I would like to say that we were ecstatically happy in our new life. We weren't. There were moments of supreme happiness, of course, but there was also gnawing misery. My family was in an uproar and this depressed me deeply. Guilt and shame made me hide from my old friends and withdraw from the people with whom I worked. We could not even enjoy the company of other homosexuals because I didn't want to ally myself with them. But the idea of separation from Lynn filled me with horror.

This situation continued for several years. At last I went to a psychiatrist. For years the doctor and I poked and prodded my psyche at several sessions a week. I accepted his diagnosis completely. I, like all men and women, was basically bisexual. I, like all homosexuals, chose one of my own sex to love because I was unconsciously afraid of intercourse with men.

The reasons for this fear were never established. In any case, the doctor said, I had formed my ambitions and my ideas about life essentially as a defense against experiencing heterosexual sex.

I set out to overcome my fears. I began to date men and to have physical relations with them. My first sex experience with a man was far from satisfactory, but gradually I came to fully enjoy heterosexual love-making and I was twice on the verge of marriage.

Throughout the period of my analysis, however, I continued to see Lynn and to depend upon her companionship. Only when I was with her did I feel fully myself. I didn't have to pretend to be interested in things that bored me, to act coy, to laugh at bad jokes or subtly flatter her. We respected one another and were completely honest with one another. This was not true of my relations with men. I felt bored and burdened by the apparent necessity to turn myself into the kind of object that aroused their sexual interest.

At last, after having spent thousands of dollars plus an enormous investment of time and suffering, I realized quite simply

that I did not want to live with a man, that I did not want children or a conventional family-oriented household, that I wanted to be me - an ambitious, creative woman who needed a love that would not force her to distort her personality.

Lynn and I are together again and our life is much improved. Interestingly enough, our sex life is better than it has ever been because I am no longer torn by guilt and misgivings. Through a homophile organization, the Daughters of Bilitis, we have found congenial friends. My own freedom from guilt and shame has helped my family to accept my way of life. Lynn and I have finally achieved some serenity and have unlimited freedom to enjoy the things we care about - books, art, music, travel.

Despite the many problems involved in being a homosexual in a heterosexual world, I feel that my life is happier and fuller than it would have been had I forced myself into a mold never made for me.

I have been asked whether we are "typical" lesbians. I can only answer that I have never met a typical lesbian any more than I have ever met a typical heterosexual. The lesbian who is easily identified by the general public is one of a tiny fraction of homosexual women.

The lesbians I have known run the gamut in physical appearance, mental capability and style of life. They are found on every level of society and are engaged in every conceivable kind of occupation. Many have been married and have children and grandchildren. Some live wild, promiscuous lives and others live stable, fulfilled lives.

- E. N.

(E. N. is an artist and teacher living in a large city.)

CONTEMPLATION

Are you the one, my subtle muse,
with the enchanted flame?
Can you light a hidden fuse
forgotten long ago?
Or with your bow, my huntress,
can you hit this moving target?
Or with your harp, musician,
can you play forbidden melody?
Or with your brush, my artist,
can you paint a real me?

Your eyes say yes
(I want to guess)
Or do I dream alone?

- Carolyn Surface

Lesbiana by Gene Damon

312. BEWARE AU PAIR - by Liselotte Durand. London, Heinemann, 1965.

Swiss girl Liselotte runs into a variety of types during her two years as an "au pair" girl in England, while she works to improve her English. Among these are a married lesbian (who does not make a pass at her) and two lovely gay boys who treat Liselotte the best of all her English employers. Light, funny summer reading fare.

313. THE JEALOUS GOD - by John Braine. Houghton Mifflin, 1964, 1965.

Vincent, an Irish Catholic, loves Laura but cannot reconcile his beliefs with her Protestantism and her divorced status. Laura had been married to a homosexual, who later becomes the catalytic victim of the story, since he conveniently commits suicide and his death dissolves the marriage in the eyes of the Catholic Church. Laura's roommate, Ruth, is a lesbian and is in love with Laura, though in vain.

314. TILL THE BOYS COME HOME - by Hannah Lees. Harper, 1944.

A novel about women in wartime and the emotional upsets caused by the absence of their husbands and lovers. Some of the women fall into the arms of other men. The heroine Sophie and her best friend Milla experience a single incandescent, sensual day together. It is clearly understood that both women are basically heterosexual. Excellent handling and penetrating analysis.

315. SCHOOLGIRL - by Carman Barnes. N. Y., Liveright, 1929.

Remarkable novel by a teen-age girl about an exclusive girls' school. Despite the naivete of her writing, the author was quite worldly for 15 years of life in 1929. There are several variant attachments in the story. Heroine Naomi has an ardent affair with her roommate Janet. When jealous Celia spreads the news, Janet backs out. Rejected but resilient, Naomi goes out with a fast boy for an inevitable, distasteful experiment with sex. Worth searching out.

316. THE LATE BREAKFASTERS - by Robert Aickman. London, Gollancz, 1964.

Griselda slept and dreamed of a "strange perfect love." She awoke to find Louise, in a mist-covered, haunted world. After one perfect night, Louise is gone - literally snatched away mysteriously. All Griselda's life thereafter is taken up with the search for Louise. The real world is juxtaposed with the

almost-horror world. Highly recommended to those who appreciated Shirley Jackson's HANGSAMAN or HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE.

317. BE ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED - by Viscount Churchill.
Coward-McCann, 1965.

These are the fuzzy memoirs of 75-year-old Victor Alexander Spencer Churchill, 2nd Viscount, a cousin of the late Sir Winston Churchill - and the black sheep of the family. His mother, divorced from his father, had at least two lesbian attachments. In one case, she forced her son to marry her lady love, in order to stem the rumors about the women's relationship. But since the friend was 20 years older than Viscount Churchill, it was a poor subterfuge and the gossip just increased. The book is mildly entertaining.

The Homosexual Citizen In The Great Society

is the upbeat theme of the 1965 conference of East Coast Homophile Organizations. This, the third annual conference of the ECHO affiliation, will be held at the Hotel Biltmore in New York City on September 25 and 26, 1965. Speakers who have to date accepted invitations are:

James Collier, author of THE HYPOCRITICAL AMERICAN (reviewed in THE LADDER, June 1964)
John Lassoe, Director of Christian Social Relations, Episcopal Diocese of New York
Dr. Isadore Rubin, Managing Editor, SEXOLOGY Magazine
Dr. Hendrik Ruitenbeek, sociologist, psychoanalyst, author of THE PROBLEM OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN MODERN SOCIETY (reviewed in THE LADDER, April 1964) and the just-published HOMOSEXUALITY AND CREATIVE GENIUS (Ivan Obolensky, 1965)
Dr. Ernest van den Haag, psychoanalyst, Adjunct Professor of Social Philosophy at New York University

More information about the program will be given in the August issue of THE LADDER. ECHO conference sessions are open to the public. Total cost for both Saturday and Sunday sessions will be approximately \$20. For reservations contact: East Coast Homophile Organizations, 1133 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10010. Phone (212) WA 4-7743. The ECHO affiliate organizations are:

Daughters of Bilitis - (see inside back cover of THE LADDER)
Mattachine Society Inc. of New York - 1133 Broadway, New York 10, New York 10010
Mattachine Society of Philadelphia - P. O. Box 804, Philadelphia 5, Penna. 19105
Mattachine Society of Washington - P. O. Box 1032, Washington 13, D. C. 20013

Research Is Here to Stay

Dr. Franklin Kameny's broadside attack on research and related matters (May LADDER) needs to be answered.

First, what is actually being attacked? Not as much as appears at first glance! Kameny is not against "research for its own sake in order to provide additional knowledge", and he admits that research results can be extremely useful to the homophile movement. Then what is he against? Boiled down, apparently this:

a. the homophile movement taking "weak, wishy-washy compromise positions" in general; being "intellectual" instead of "militant"; and in particular failing to take a "firm stand" on the concept of homosexuality as disease;

b. the homophile movement "wasting" its time and energy talking about research, and supporting "insignificant" research.

The first complaint is supposedly based on tactical or strategic grounds: "strong" "no-nonsense" positions are more effective than "weak, wishy-washy" ones. But the truth is that the real strength of a position does not derive from the use of "fighting language" in its support - EVEN, and ESPECIALLY, when you are dealing with a hostile, uninformed, and prejudiced public. These will be the last ones to be convinced by militant and unsupported assertions whose truth is far from self-evident to them, on matters regarding which they do NOT consider the homophile movement as experts. Thus the Washington Mattachine Society's motion on homosexuality as "disease" (1) was tactically NOT strong, despite its "firmness"; it was on the contrary, in my opinion, a very foolish one, whether considered from the standpoint of substance or of tactics.

As to the second target, the "waste of time" on research, this is largely a straw man, and to the extent that it isn't, it is based in my view on a mistaken conception of the reasons the homophile movement should support research.

(1) Resolution adopted in March 1965: "The Mattachine Society of Washington takes the position that in the absence of valid evidence to the contrary, homosexuality is not a sickness, disturbance, or other pathology in any sense, but is merely a preference, orientation, or propensity, on par with, and not different in kind from, heterosexuality."

But before coming to closer grips with these issues, it is necessary to take up a crucial matter that is implicit as well as explicit in Kameny's article: the question of whether the homophile movement is in any important way dependent on research findings.

I. IS THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT DEPENDENT ON THE FINDINGS OF RESEARCH?

As preliminary, I would ask where the Negro civil rights movement would be today, militant or not, if research into racial differences had not long ago supported the Negro's claim to equality of treatment? And where would WE be today without Kinsey's two classic volumes on sexual behavior? Ours is a science-oriented society, and scientists are God to most people. In the long run, I do not think it can be seriously doubted that what science says will be important for the success of the homophile movement.

Nevertheless I do not intend to argue that the homophile movement must await research findings before working for fair treatment for homosexuals. In this I agree with Dr. Kameny, though not for his reasons. Efforts to win changes in the law, civil liberties, employment rights, etc., CAN and SHOULD proceed independently of research results. Why? Not because much past research has been poor - which is doubtless true, but not at all sufficient to prove the point.

The real reason why the homophile movement should proceed to work for equal treatment now is that STATISTICAL FINDINGS FOR LARGE AGGREGATES ARE NOT PREDICTIVE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL. Regardless of whether homosexuals as a group, or Negroes, or females, or any other group you care to name, rate higher or lower on any psychological test than heterosexuals, Caucasians, males, etc., discrimination against John Doe's with regard to a particular job is wrong - because John Doe is not an Average! It is known that the RANGE of differences between individuals within a single racial group is far greater than that between the AVERAGE for one racial group and the average for another. Thus many Negroes, though not most, may be better suited to a particular job than many whites. The same is true for differences between men and women. Common sense suggests that the very same is likely to be true for differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals. At least I would think that every homophile organization might well use that as a working hypothesis until solid research evidence is brought forward. (A good example of the possible uses of research, by the way.)

The use of this argument - that is, the IMPERATIVE to judge each person as an individual - Kameny calls "impractical, unrealistic, ivory tower", because people are prejudiced against the "sick", and the "sick" label is applied to all homosexuals. True, people are thus prejudiced, and the label often is so applied. But to ask - or demand, if that word is preferred - that people be judged as individuals and not as stereotypes,

is to appeal to a central and recognized principle of our society. It is far MORE realistic and likely to succeed than is the expectation that the public will take Washington Mattachine Society's word against that of the doctors on the question of "sickness".

So we come inevitably to the question of what attitude the homophile movement should take to the "sick" label. (Note by the way that "sickness" is not, as Kameny correctly points out, a research finding. Although some attempts have been made to experimentally validate hypotheses of various forms of disorder, conclusions are anything but clearcut, so far as I am aware. It is more accurate to say, as Kameny does, that "sickness" is largely a research assumption or definition. The homophile movement may in the short run be more dependent on research terminology than on research findings.)

II. SHOULD THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT TAKE A STAND ON WHETHER HOMOSEXUALITY IS A "SICKNESS"?

This has already been done by one segment of that movement, unfortunately. The Washington Mattachine motion was, it is true, carefully enough worded so as to deny "sickness" IN THE ABSENCE OF VALID EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY. (My emphasis.) And it is, I think, quite appropriate to try to place the burden of proof on those who claim the "sick" label is right. But this motion is not likely to achieve that effect. It will be interpreted by any who read it as a simple declaration that homosexuals "are not sick". And as such I think it will be quite ineffective, to say the least. Let me make clear the grounds for my position. It is not because I agree that homosexuals should be labelled "sick". It is because the question of whether or not they are or should be considered "sick" is not a question capable of being decided by vote; nor will vote on such a matter impress anyone other than those who voted and those who already agree.

It will certainly not impress the literate citizen who reads a few books and respects the scientific Establishment, nor of course will it impress doctors or social scientists, except in a negative way. Then whom will it impress? Kameny points out that "most people operate not rationally but emotionally on questions of sex in general, and homosexuality in particular". Correct! Are these the people who will be convinced by Mattachine's motion? I leave the reader to answer this for himself.

Then what should be done, if anything, on the matter of "disease"? What is needed is an in-depth discussion - I believe the latest word is "dialogue" - on this subject with thoughtful laymen and with professionals. They, not we, carry weight with the majority on matters such as these. But while our role must be an auxiliary one, it can be a catalytic and useful one, if handled with good sense. THIS IMPLIES SERIOUS, SOLID DISCUSSION OF ISSUES, RATHER THAN EMPTY PROPAGANDA. To label the former, as Kameny does, as "woefully impractical" and "ivory tower" is to replace substance with "strategy".

Strategy has its place, but it does not work in a vacuum. The homophile movement is not like a new brand of toothpaste which may be "sold" to the public by superficial promotion techniques.

Basically, the difference between Kameny's approach and mine is a question of what audience we think we are (or should be) addressing. Obviously you don't discuss these matters in depth on a 15-minute TV show or in a 2-page leaflet. But you MUST discuss them with those who care about such things if you want to be taken seriously by the opinion-makers. It is totally unrealistic to assume that we can make opinion on our own, in flat contradiction to those who deal in psychological matters professionally. Our audience is not merely the un-thinking masses - we cannot influence them in any case on such a matter as this. But we could conceivably get some issues clarified with those whose opinions count with the public and who deal in ideas, the crucial role of which Kameny grossly underestimates.

The question of "sickness" cannot even be discussed without talking about meanings. This Kameny never once refers to - presumably it would be overly intellectual to do so. And yet without some definition of terms there is no sense at all to either debate or pronouncements. This is not only because different people use "sick" to mean different things, but because there are so many overtones and unspoken implications to the word, that precision is absolutely necessary, or there will be failure of communication - or worse. The plain fact is that EVEN WHEN the "experts" agree (and they don't always do that), the public is not told clearly just how the terms are delimited. This can and does have grave consequences for the homosexual. Here are some possible ways in which the word "sick" is used (and for "sick", "diseased" or "pathological" could be easily substituted):

1. "Sick" may be applied to a PARTICULAR homosexual AFTER individual clinical diagnosis has established that there is some generally recognized form of disturbance in his non-sexual areas of behavior.

2. "Sick" may be applied as a label to homosexuals in general, the implication being that this type of sexual adjustment always carries with it some form, mild or serious, of personality disorder or malfunctioning in nonsexual areas.

3. "Sick" may be applied as a label to homosexuality per se, by reason of the homosexual choice of love object, with no serious attempt to claim that disturbed behavior in other areas of the personality accompanies it.

4. "Sick" may be used in one of the above-mentioned ways by doctors, but the public may understand the term to mean that ALL homosexuals are likely to be unstable, or unreliable, or dangerous. (It should be added that a few doctors talk this way, too, or come very close to it, but they appear to be in the minority.)

We need have no objection whatever to point 1, in my view - though Dr. Thomas S. Szasz has some thought-provoking ideas on

even this (2). Point 2 is a controversial area just now, as I understand it, and should not be discussed by persons who do not have a solid background in the literature. But even if it should be indisputably determined (and as of now that is NOT the case) that a homosexual adjustment inevitably brings with it some handicap, some "neurosis" (3), involving other aspects of the personality - this still matters very little to our cause. Can there be very many persons in our society who escape "neurosis" completely? The real question is: does the "neurosis", if there is one, interfere with a given individual's effective performance, on a job for example? Does it threaten harm to other persons? If the answer is "no" - then there are no grounds for discrimination in matters of civil liberties, employment rights, etc. We are back to the principle of "individual treatment". "Neurosis" by itself is not grounds for departure from this principle.

As to the third point above, "sick" as a mere synonym for homosexuality: this is quite meaningless, and we should expose its meaninglessness whenever we find it used that way. To call homosexuals "sick" when there is no claim of other disturbance is merely to call them homosexuals. The added word adds nothing to anyone's understanding of the matter, and in fact interferes with understanding.

It is point four above which is especially important to us. Even the most orthodox psychiatric view, if I understand it at all, does not warrant the inference that all homosexuals are dangerous, or unstable, or unreliable (as of course they are not). Yet this inference is one easily drawn by an uninformed public, frightened by the indiscriminate and undefined use of words such as "pathological". HERE IS WHERE THE PROFESSIONALS CAN ACT MORE RESPONSIBLY IN THE FUTURE THAN THEY HAVE ACTED IN THE PAST, BY ATTEMPTING THEMSELVES TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC. HERE IS WHERE THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT CAN ACT RESPONSIBLY, BY OFFERING TO WORK WITH PROFESSIONALS TO THIS END.

We might also encourage those we know who are solidly grounded in psychology or psychiatry to enter into a serious discussion about the concepts of mental health and illness, in print if possible. Dr. Thomas Szasz has started this discussion at a high level (2). Others may follow. Even a survey of the literature on definitions of mental health, written for readers of homophile publications, would be useful. Once these matters are better understood, it may be easier for the homophile movement to take a stand against whatever cases there may be of "forced cures". I believe it is the fear of forced "cure" or attempts at cure that motivates most of the homosexual outcry about "sickness". It should be perfectly possible for the homophile movement to rightfully oppose forced "treatment" of

(2) See especially his books LAW, LIBERTY, AND PSYCHIATRY (Macmillan, 1963) and THE MYTH OF MENTAL ILLNESS (Harper, 1961)

(3) I do not believe any informed person can for a moment bring up psychosis in this context.

any kind where the "patient" is harming no one, without getting itself involved in unnecessary wrangling over which cubbyhole to place the homosexual condition in. I doubt that most reputable professionals would differ with us if we took such a stand.

Now I want to go back to the question of research and its place in the homophile movement.

III. DOES THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT WASTE ITS TIME IN TALK OR SUPPORT OF RESEARCH, OR OF "INSIGNIFICANT" RESEARCH?

First, about talk. I personally feel that time is wasted in criticizing research. But I doubt that the critics feel they are wasting THEIR time - and given the criticisms, I do not propose to save time by failing to answer. So much for talk.

Second, about support. How much time IS spent by homosexuals in supporting research, significant or otherwise? As far as the average member of a homophile organization is concerned, half an hour or so once or twice a year, at the very outside, in filling out a questionnaire or submitting to an interview. I very much doubt that that hour or half hour, it saved by the elimination of research activity, would be put to uses significant to the homophile movement. Those few who give more time are convinced of its value and would be unlikely to substitute other activities if research support were eliminated entirely from the program.

Kameny is setting up a straw man when he claims that no American homophile organizations have done any effective or meaningful research. Who ever said they did, or should? DOB's amateur survey of some years ago had the main purpose of spurring others to research; in that goal it succeeded, and further research by DOB itself is most unlikely. I do not know of any homophile organizations that designate themselves as "research organizations".

Next, the question of significance. It is quite arbitrary to claim, as Kameny does, that all research in which the organizations are or have been involved, with the sole exception of the Hooker studies, is insignificant. I wonder if Dr. Kameny is even aware of the studies now being carried on by Dr. V. Armon in the Los Angeles area, or by R. McGuire in California and New York, for instance? And by what special insight into the future can the Kinsey and Gundlach studies on lesbians, both still in process, be dismissed as insignificant? We do not know until the results are in; pre-judgement is certainly not in order.

But of course the issue of "significance" turns on what is meant by that term. To Dr. Kameny, no research is "significant" unless it investigates a question of immediate use to the homophile movement. Research that is merely of "academic, intellectual, or scientific interest" - such as research into the origin and causes of homosexuality - is not one of these. This is an extremely short-sighted view.

I admit that causation is probably NOT DIRECTLY of paramount significance to homosexuals, and I do not know of any who consider it so or who are "engrossed" in it. But other people are interested - specifically those who are doing and publishing research. They will investigate these questions whether we help them or not. Their results will be far more distorted if we do not cooperate than if we do.

Dr. Kameny finds it difficult to believe that all research into causation is not motivated by a desire to change homosexuals into heterosexuals. As a scientist he should know better. The major motivation of MOST social scientists is probably the same as that of MOST physical scientists - namely, plain curiosity, and a desire to advance in their profession by doing a competent, professional job. Yes, medically-oriented psychiatrists and a few others are taken with the idea of "curing" people. And there are shoddy workers and charlatans in every field. But it is a gross mistake to lump all researchers into the same category - and a mistake that hurts us if it denies others the opportunity to more fully explore the homosexual population than has been done by the Ellises and the Haddons.

Even research into causes can be specifically useful to us, by bringing researchers into informative personal contact with a broader cross-section of homosexuals than they could otherwise meet. The good that can come of this is not to be measured merely by the details of a particular study.

And of course more and more research is going beyond questions of causation, to investigate the "here and now" of homosexuals rather than the family histories only. This has great potential value for us which few would question. This being true, it behooves us to support reputable research IN WHATEVER AREA researchers wish to investigate. We will do no good to ourselves or to potentially helpful research, if we build the reputation of supporting only those projects we like or that we think will come out "favorably". Nothing could more quickly "kill" a research project than our help, if we ever did build such a reputation.

IN SUMMARY: Research has never played, and need not play, a primary role in the ACTIVITIES of the homophile organizations. Its importance to the ultimate attainment of our goals is however quite basic, always has been so, and will remain so as long as our society is science-oriented. There is no reason why we cannot support research and do other things at the same time, especially since the interests of persons in the homophile movement differ. No one has ever asked that we drop other activities to become research organizations; this would be ludicrous and disastrous. Strong support for the research of properly qualified persons and institutions should in no way diminish - and will in fact increase - the effectiveness of the homophile movement. Maintaining or increasing the barriers dividing us from the scientific community can work only to our disadvantage.

- Florence Conrad

Youth - Romance by GER

What does a girl answer when a boy proposes to her?

I said "Yes," with beating heart. "If I may borrow your trousers."

I was 8 years old; the boy was 9, and he generously granted my request. I was overjoyed, even though I realized bravely that our marriage lay in a faraway future. But the outlook was heavenly, and I dreamed about that future with the wildest imagination. All about those trousers.

The boy saw my radiant happiness and began to chaffer. "But not on Sundays, do you hear, for I must go to church." I promised readily, not on Sundays. I had still all the other days of the week.

The boy seemed dissatisfied and I peeped anxiously at his gloomy face. He kicked at pebbles in silence and then said, "But a girl doesn't wear trousers."

My heart stood still and I stumbled over my words. "She does! And when she is married she may do anything!" He peered suspiciously at my tense face and seemed to feel vaguely that he had been taken in, for suddenly he looked surly and he kicked angrily at the gravel.

"May I kiss you also?" he asked threateningly.

I swallowed and nodded miserably. The coin had turned its face and frightened my enthusiasm.

The boy sniffed contemptuously. "Liar!" he taunted. "You are always beating and kicking and you may NOT marry me and borrow my trousers!"

He trotted away and left me behind, brokenhearted and bitterly grieved at his stinginess and the painful loss of my heavenly dream.

About those trousers.

CONTRIBUTORS !

THE LADDER wants articles, book reviews, news clippings, stories, humor, poetry, and other pertinent materials. Send to Editor Barbara Gittings, c/o DOB National. All submissions will be acknowledged promptly.

Homosexuals Picket in Nation's Capital

IS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AN "EQUAL OPPORTUNITY" EMPLOYER?

"It is the established policy of the Civil Service Commission that homosexuals are not suitable for appointment to or retention in positions in the Federal Service." This statement is from a letter written in September 1962 by John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman of the United States Civil Service Commission. The policy of total and blanket exclusion fo homosexuals from Federal employment was confirmed in another letter in May 1965.

Homosexual and non-homosexual citizens who are active in Mattachine Society of Washington have tried over a long period of time to get the Civil Service Commission to discuss with them its discrimination against homosexuals. The Commission has repeatedly refused to meet with homosexual spokesmen. And just this past May, the commission reviewed and sustained its policy against employment of homosexuals - still without any consultation between homosexuals and Commission officials. Later letters to the Commission have brought more refusals of Mattachine's requests for a conference with Commission officials to discuss grievances and seek constructive solutions.

After all efforts to negotiate with the Commission had failed, the homosexuals decided to stage a public demonstration and call attention to the problem. On Saturday, June 26, 1965, twenty-five homosexuals and supporters of their cause picketed the Civil Service Commission building in Washington, D. C. The 18 men and 7 women who participated came from Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and elsewhere. All were conservatively dressed and presented a dignified appearance. Their neatly-lettered signs carried such messages as:

Government Should Combat Prejudice,
Not Submit to It and Promote It

Discrimination Against Homosexuals Is as Immoral
as Discrimination Against Negroes and Jews

Denial of Equality of Opportunity Is Immoral

Governor Wallace Met with Negroes;
Chairman Macy Won't Meet with Homosexuals

As a Matter of Right,
We Demand Meetings with the Civil Service Commission

We Want Federal Employment Based on Relevant Criteria

The American Way: Employment Based upon Competence,
Ability, Training - NOT upon Private Life

Sexual Preference Is Irrelevant to Federal Employment

Fair Employment Applies to Homosexuals, Too

Equal Opportunity for All; All Means ALL

Among other signs were those listing the names and addresses of the groups sponsoring and supporting the demonstration: Mattachine Society of Washington, ECHO (East Coast Homophile Organizations), Mattachine Society of Philadelphia, Mattachine Society Inc. of New York, and the newly-formed Mattachine Midwest (4753 N. Broadway, Chicago, Illinois 60640).

The orderly two-hour march was conducted according to rules carefully drawn up by MSW's Committee on Picketing and Other Lawful Demonstrations. Police had been informed in advance; this notification was not a request for police permission, since to demonstrate by picketing is a right, not a privilege.

A press release had gone out just before the picketing. One newspaper, the Washington Star, gave advance notice of the demonstration. (As this issue of THE LADDER goes to press, we have not yet had reports on publicity following the event.) During the demonstration, copies of a leaflet were given to interested passersby. Here are excerpts from this leaflet:

"Homosexuality...is not, and has never been demonstrated to be, reasonably relevant to employment. Homosexuality has not been shown to affect competence or quality of job performance in any way. A citizen has the right to conduct his private life in private, free of governmental intrusion. ...Nevertheless, without regard to their training, background, abilities, competence, deportment or demeanor, or any other relevant or possibly relevant factors, homosexual citizens are subjected by the U. S. Civil Service Commission to a total, blanket exclusion from Federal employment. ...The Civil Service Commission is not an Equal Opportunity Employer.

"The Commission attempts, feebly, to justify its exclusion by claiming that homosexuality is so repugnant to most people that the mere presence of a homosexual in a government office would be detrimental to morale and efficiency. We feel that this argument fails on two grounds: 1) The continuing presence of some quarter-million homosexuals in Federal Service (the inevitable result of the inherent ineffectiveness of any possible screening procedures) has resulted in no perceptible lowering of morale or efficiency. 2) The Commission's argument represents a supine submission to prejudice. The Commission does not refuse to place Negroes in an office staffed by segregationists, or Jews in one staffed by anti-Semites. Its policy toward homosexuals constitutes one of penalty to the victims of prejudice rather than to those who are prejudiced."

"We feel that in our democracy...when the members of a...group of American citizens feel that they have genuine grievances

against their government, or a branch or agency thereof, they are entitled to a hearing...entitled to confer with the appropriate officials...to participate in continuing efforts, made in good faith, to resolve their problems and to seek redress for their grievances. They are also entitled to participate in the establishment of official policies affecting them. These are matters of moral right, not ones of mere privilege."

After describing the Commission's refusals to meet with homosexual spokesmen, the leaflet poses the question: "What is there left to do, for a group of American citizens who feel that they have a genuine grievance, in order to get the constructive attention of their government?" Hence the picketing.

WHAT ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS IN RELATION TO THE U.S. ARMED SERVICES?

On May 29, a month before the picketing at the Civil Service Commission building, 10 men and 3 women picketed at the White House. This protest was directed in part against the military service policies about homosexuals: exclusion of homosexuals from the Armed Forces; the giving of less-than-fully-honorable discharges to homosexuals found in the service; offensively-worded military regulations on homosexuals.

This demonstration at the White House, sponsored and supported by ECHO and the Mattachine groups of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, got extensive publicity. It was covered by American and foreign newspapers and press services, including AP, UPI, Reuters, French News Agency, White House Press Corps. Reports are known to have appeared in the New York Times, New York News, Washington Star, Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel, Chicago Sun-Times. The demonstration was filmed at length by ABC-TV and a spokesman was interviewed. The TV film was seen in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle, Miami, Indiana, and Texas. All the coverage was reportedly favorable or factual.

Among the picket signs on that occasion were these: "Homosexuals Died for Their Country, Too" and "Honorable Discharges for Honorable Military Service; Homosexuality Is Not Dishonorable"

READERS? RESPOND



Franklin Kameny's article in the May issue was the best thing you've ever published! Perhaps it will help eliminate the psychological, psychiatric, introspective, self-analytic orientation which has been like an albatross around the neck of the homophile movement since its beginning.

- R. F., New York

To Susanna Valenti (May LADDER), from one who has both borne a child and plucked a beard: really, the beard is preferable.

- Lu Clarke

+ + + + + + + +

Recent LADDER issues have devoted much space to the winning of rights for homosexuals. When our rights have been nominally won, there will have to be a climate of public indifference to make them work - i. e., homosexuality must be so accepted that the public will pay no more attention to it than to any taken-for-granted human topic. The word SEX will always hop off the printed page, for the love-life of the species is of enduring interest. But there should (not necessarily will) come a day when the prefixes "hetero" or "homo" will make no difference.

The big fly in the ointment is the homosexual himself - and for shame, the lesbian in particular. The lesbian, less despised than the male homosexual, could be the leader in gaining our goals because she is freer than he is to speak out without risking social ostracism, loss of job, or legal reprisals.

So where are we all hiding? Just everywhere. I'll bet half the lesbians who have a permanent home with another woman, and the two act as a mated pair, don't even know they're gay. For now we'll have to excuse them as slow starters on a wet track.

This leaves a couple of million other women who KNOW they're homosexual. No doubt they all belong to DOB or Minorities Research Group. Not on you life they don't! Many would rather be dead than admit to the world even indirectly that they are homosexual. Many even feel that the homophile organizations are wasting time and money and energy. These women think that since they can look out for themselves, so can everyone else.

Several dozen women that I know personally have expressed such views - including a world-famous novelist, a corporate lawyer, a systems control designer who's an authority in the field, a doctor, and an editor of a major magazine. No doubt these examples could be mass-duplicated in the male homosexual world.

The homosexual cause needs to have at least the percentage of homosexuals working for it as the Negro cause has people from its own ranks working on its behalf. We're nowhere near this. "Each One Teach One" should be our motto. Each of us must proselytize as many of our gay acquaintances as possible to do whatever they can on behalf of the homophile groups.

It's sad that supporting the homosexual cause is distasteful to some of the most successful persons in the homosexual - and especially the lesbian - population. But we MUST try to get THEIR support too. Until we find a way to make the needs of the "little people" seem vital to those who do not suffer under the social system, all the talk in the world won't do a damn thing to help us!

- Marilyn Barrow

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(SEE PAGE 14)