

# THE LADDER



FEBRUARY—MARCH  
1969

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# Daughters of **BILITIS**

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

- ① Education of the Lesbian, enabling her to understand herself and to make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic, and economic implications - by establishing and maintaining a library of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public meetings on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by providing the Lesbian a forum for the interchange of ideas within her own group.
- ② Education of the public, developing an understanding and acceptance of the Lesbian as an individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices - by public discussion meetings and by dissemination of educational literature on the Lesbian theme.
- ③ Encouragement of and participation in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.
- ④ Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposing and promoting changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group through due process of law in the state legislatures.

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# THE LADDER

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# SEX ROLES: A GLANCE AT FOUR CULTURES

by Alice Lawrence

For a number of years there has appeared to be increasing psychological and social disturbance in American culture. At present, attention is focussed on the Vietnam war and on racial injustice as among the primary causes for such disturbance. However, there are many other things that may have an effect upon the mental health of a society. This paper discusses one of these factors: the relationship of sex-role differentiation and personality stability or instability.

That sex-role definitions in American life are converging has been pointed out by a number of writers. Brown, for example, said that

Despite the fact that boys, much more than girls, show a concern for behaving along sex-appropriate lines, there has been considerable change in the direction of both masculine and feminine roles becoming broader, less rigidly defined, less sex-typed, and more overlapping with each other (1, p.238-239).

Brown went on to list indications of the trend toward increasing similarity of sex roles in the United States, pointing out the similar educational experiences of girls and boys from kindergarten through high school, the fact that husbands increasingly carry out domestic tasks historically considered exclusively the duties of women, the growing number of wives holding down jobs, many of which have been traditionally masculine, and the more colorful, soft, and delicate features of male clothing along with female adoption of all kinds of "masculine" clothing and hair styles.

As to the relationship with maladjustment in our society, some theoretical formulations have emphasized the role-conflict resulting from this increased role similarity. This paper will represent a different approach, which, it is hoped, could lead to greater understanding and perhaps, even, the discovery of additional relevant data.

In discussing the Menomini Indians of Wisconsin, the cultural anthropologist George D. Spindler pointed out that a positive psychological integration to new condi-

tions of life can occur only when people who are in the process of adaptation are accepted within the framework of those conditions (3, p.452; 4, p.127). If we generalize this finding to the topic of the increasing overlapping of sex-roles in western civilization, it would seem logical that when conditions make it possible for members of one sex to adopt some of the values traditionally assigned to the other, their personality integration will suffer *unless* they are able to achieve success and *become acceptable* within that value system.

In order to investigate the tenability of the foregoing proposition, it would be necessary to validate it cross-culturally. The proposition may be stated in cultural terms, in two essential parts:

1. When a person who internalizes values usually associated with the opposite sex is afforded the opportunity to participate within that value-structure on a non-prejudicial basis, he or she will suffer less maladjustment or personality disturbance than if the society's sex-role boundaries are flexible and overlapping *without* complete acceptance or total lack of prejudice.

2. Among societies or cultures which cannot or do not give total acceptance to an individual adopting most of the values of the opposite sex, less personality disturbance and social maladjustment will be found in societies with clearcut and rigid sex-role definitions.

Particular attention must be given to the meaning of the term "maladjustment." Even within our own society the definitions of "maladjustment," "psychological disturbance," "mental health," "mental illness," and similar terms vary from one investigator to another. Wegrocki discussed the concept of abnormality, and the problem of defining it in such a way that differing incidence in various societies may be adequately judged. He presented the following definition: "... we could state the quintessence of abnormality as *the tendency to choose a type of reaction which represents an escape from a conflict-producing situation instead*

*of a facing of the problem.*" He went on to point out that "It is not the mechanism that is abnormal; it is its function which determines its abnormality. It is precisely for this reason that the institutionalized "abnormal" traits in various cultures are not properly called 'abnormal' entities. . . ." (5, p. 560-561).

It would be interesting to do an extensive investigation of these hypotheses because a glance at four cultures has suggested that support for the hypotheses could be found.

The Human Relations Area Files\* provided material on the cultures studied. These cultures were: the Andamans, natives of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal; the Lepcha, members of a Tibetan stock of Sikkim, India; the Trobriand, natives of the Trobriand Islands east of New Guinea; and the Chukchee people of northeastern Siberia.

The Lepcha were found to have relatively flexible sex role boundaries. The Lepcha do not recognize any inherent temperamental differences between the sexes. Members of both sexes work in the fields, and there is no hard-and-fast division of work between them. There is practically no such thing as "man's work" and "woman's work" and a man may frequently do the cooking or nurse the baby. Evidence suggests that psychological maladjustment does in fact exist among the Lepcha. All the Lepchas, including the children, drink far too much, and it appears to be impossible for them to drink in moderation. Suicide and attempted suicide are frequent. Malicious gossip and scandal reach such a degree that people worry a great deal about what others say about them behind their backs.

Among the Andamans there is a clearcut division between the activities deemed suitable for each sex. Certain kinds of dwellings are built only by men, while other types are erected only by women. Men hunt, fish, and make the implements they need for these pursuits, but will rarely, and only under extreme necessity, procure either wood or water for their families. Migrations are planned by men without any consultation with women, but on the march it is the women's duty to carry the heaviest loads. Maladjustment appears to be rare within this culture, if indeed it occurs at all. No psychotics have ever been observed among them, they do not appear to be subject to trances, suicide is unknown, and the crimes of abduction, rape, seduction, and so on appear never to have been committed.

Although there is much social equality among the Trobriands, there is also a definite division between the activities of the two sexes. A woman may exercise no power, own no land, have no place at tribal gatherings, and have no voice in public deliberations relating to hunting, fishing, festivities, gardening, and the like. A very important distinction is found in gardening; a woman never gardens in her own right, but must always have a man for whom and with whom she works, and the praise for good gardening must always go to the man and not to the woman. The man has an extreme dread of doing something which is intrinsically the attribute of the opposite sex. As among the Andamans, psychological disturbance appears to be minor within the Trobriand culture. Anthropologists have not observed any instances of neurotic traits such as hysteria, nervous tics, compulsive actions, or obsessive ideas. Although suicide, which is an indication of disturbance in American culture, is comparatively frequent among the Trobriands, it is committed in accordance with the custom and ideal of personal honor. It is committed when a person has been publicly accused of misdeeds or is insulted, whether or not the accused was actually guilty of misdeeds. Suicide in this society, therefore, does not satisfy Wegrocki's conditions quoted earlier. Since suicide is a matter of personal honor, it is an institutionalized "abnormality," and therefore would not properly be called an "abnormality" or a "maladjustive act" within this culture.

Among the Chukchee it is not at all unusual for a man to be "transformed" into a woman. He drops all male pursuits, takes up female clothing and activities and may even take a husband. Similarly, a woman may be "transformed" into a man, marry, and have children by her wife through a bond of mutual marriage with another (male-female) couple. In the Chukchee society these children are considered the transformed husband's own lawful children. In this society, then, an individual can take on all the values and attributes usually associated with the opposite sex, and can, in addition, be completely accepted within that value-structure on a non-prejudicial basis. As to maladjustment within the culture, it seems that instances were not frequent. Arctic hysteria, which is widespread among other groups in the general geographical area, is very rare among the Chukchee. Although suicides occasionally occur, it seems that this is almost

always a matter of pride, and takes the form of the individual requesting to be killed. The death is inflicted by a friend or relative. The Chukchee regard such death by violence as preferable to death by disease or old age. Voluntary death is considered praiseworthy, and it is believed that those who die this way are given one of the best dwelling places in the "other world." As with the Trobriands, suicide is institutionalized, and is not, therefore, a symptom of maladjustment.

This survey is a very limited one, both in the number of cultures studied and in the restricted range of materials consulted. Nevertheless, the foregoing evidence suggests the possibility that a number of societies could be found on which ethnographic material would contain adequate descriptions of the variables, permitting relationships to be determined. If, after a thorough study, both hypotheses were to be supported, this would have implications for American culture.

Within our society, with its converging sex roles, there is great opportunity for each sex to adopt many values and activities predominantly attributed to the opposite sex. Americans are not, however, able to become completely acceptable within the opposite sex's value structure. This is most obvious in the case of women who enter traditionally masculine fields of work, where they are often discriminated against on the basis of sex. Men, too, find that in traditionally feminine occupations they are often at a disadvantage. A glaring example of this formerly existed in the Navy, a traditionally masculine organization within which is a traditionally feminine component, the Nurse Corps. Until relatively recently, a male nurse, upon entering the Navy, became an enlisted man in the Hospital Corps, while a female nurse received an officer's commission when she joined the Navy.

To many, the solution of complications brought about by overlapping sex roles would be to re-define sex roles more rigidly. However, as Margaret Mead points out, this would be going backwards and would be a great loss to society of social inventions which might otherwise be contributed. A better way to resolve a complex situation would be for our society to accept fully the special gifts of all citizens without regard to sex, but as members of a common humanity.

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\*The Human Relations Area Files consist of extensive cross-cultural indexing of primary sources on more than 200 cultures. It is located at Human Relations Area Files Inc., Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut and at member and subscribing universities throughout the country.

"Alice Lawrence" is the pseudonym of a practicing psychologist. She obtained her undergraduate degrees and her doctorate at a large West Coast university. She has written articles in the field of counseling school age children, and has presented papers before various professional groups.

## RAIN

—Maura McCullough

Rain as we meet  
 Long silver streaks of rain splashing  
 on our words  
 With your face next to mine  
 And the umbrella slipping forgotten  
 from my hand  
 Odd to be this happy in a gray wet world



# THE HOMOPHILE AND INCOME TAX INEQUITIES

by Val Vanderwood

The sobering, numbing, or raging hours spent in filling out a federal income tax return—whether managed independently or with the assistance of a tax consultant—are painful ones for most citizens, but particularly for the homophile. Income tax time is painful not only because of the money demanded by the government, but because of the knowledge that the unmarried segment of the adult population, including the homophile, is required to pay MORE than a fair share of the tax burden. Why should this be so? Why is it true that those who are not married and procreating must pay higher income taxes, even though they require fewer governmental services, than married couples with or without children?

In tax year 1967, for example, a citizen filing a tax return on \$7,999 would have paid \$1,630 tax as a single taxpayer whereas on the same earnings a married couple filing a joint return would have paid merely \$1,000. The single person pays 63% more! Even if a single person could qualify for head of a household status, he would have paid \$1,500 in tax, or 50% more than the married couple. This flagrant preference for the married couple over a widowed, divorced, or single person with a dependent indicates the inferior status assigned those who are not wed.

This preferential tax treatment is also extended to couples with large numbers of children. Thus, a single person earning \$4,999 per annum would pay \$667 tax while a married couple with five children would pay no tax at all! Even though the family demands on services would very likely exceed the single person's by 600%. Assuredly a married man with five children needs more money to raise a family of this size than a single person would require, but with the frightening prospect of overpopulation, does an urban society want large families? And should it encourage large families by allowing sizable tax reductions?

The spirit of our present tax laws encourages arbitrary reproduction of offspring and portends a horrendous future for man-

kind if the present birthrate of two percent is maintained. In only thirty years the world population will double, unleashing problems too frightening to contemplate. Will the world death rate from starvation—presently at 10,000 persons per day—also double? Will mankind commit international suicide by allowing population to outstrip the earth's natural resources?

If anything, the tax rates in an urban society where 70% of the populace has jammed itself into fifty major centers should favor single persons and couples with small families. Future tax rates should negate "Cheaper-by-the-Dozen" family planning as well as the religious concept of sex simply for purposes of procreation. The creation of huge families necessary to the agrarian way of life and the scattered population of rural America demands thoughtful evaluation during the urgencies of the 20th Century, unless we are intent on genocide.

Beyond the matter of man's annihilation, via over-breeding, the subject of tax equity must be considered. How is tax equity defined? In the Ways & Means & Finance committee rooms in Washington, D.C. is a sampler stating: EQUITY IS THE PRIVILEGE OF PAYING AS LITTLE AS SOMEBODY ELSE. Essentially, this is what the homophile asks in terms of government tax rates—the privilege of paying as little as married persons do. This equity is desired not only for the homophile but for all unmarried heterosexuals—the single, divorced, and widowed. 10% of adults between ages 30 and 50 are not married, and a third of the adult population are single, divorced, or widowed sometime during the course of adulthood. By whose authority are these citizens fleeced?

In determining the exact tax inequity suffered by homophiles it would be helpful to know how many there are among the adult population. While estimates from sexologists abound, it is doubtful whether an accurate figure can ever be determined. If one considers the Kinsey studies with its 11.2% of adult males over twenty years of age—dwinding to 6.9% for males in the

overthirty bracket—considered homosexual, the figure is startling for there would be a possible 8 million male homosexuals. Cory believes that gay men outnumber women 3 or 4 to 1, and if this estimate is reasonable, there could be nearly 2 million lesbians in the U.S. In any case, there are surely several million American homosexuals who are forced to pay a highly discriminatory tax because they are not heterosexually married and producing progeny.

And what of the so-called single adult who is, in actuality, a homosexual marriage partner? He certainly is not given the same rights and privileges in tax matters which are extended to other married couples. This inequity is most severe when one partner of the marriage is the sole, or major, wage earner. Contrary to the heterosexually married couple, the homosexual partner may not claim a married taxpayer filing a joint return status which we have seen saves as much as \$630 per annum on an income of \$7,999. Over a thirty year period, of course, that \$630 balloons into a dreadful total of \$18,900!!—A shocking penalty! Even for marriage relationships which are not permanent but last three or four years, the sum of \$630, multiplied by the numbers of years of the relationship, adds up to an impressive amount.

Also denied the married homophile is the head of a household status. While the difference in tax savings is slight compared to what could be realized as a married couple, \$130 per year is better than nothing . . . \$130 being the difference in tax between the \$1,630 paid by a single taxpayer earning \$7,999 and the \$1,500 paid by a head of a household. Since the law only permits children and close relatives to be claimed as members of the household, homosexuals normally could not claim their marriage partners as dependents. This category, head of a household, is a highly restrictive one even for single heterosexuals with dependents and should be broadened to include any person being supported by another, regardless of blood ties. With the backing of many single persons who favor change in this category, this tax inequity seems the most likely one to receive consideration by Congress and the Internal Revenue Service. It is not realistic to suppose that tax discrimination against all single citizens will evaporate painlessly, however. Homophiles must oppose the tax inequities, in combined strength with all single citizens, or the unmarried minority of American taxpayers will

continue to pay exorbitant penalties for sexual deviancy!

Groups with whom, and through whom, the homophile community can work to obtain improved tax laws are the usual ones utilized for legislative action. Help from unions, business and professional groups, church, educational, and social organizations should not be overlooked. Individual letters to congressional representatives are particularly important. Vital, also, is support from the various homophile organizations and from national groups such as N.O.W. (National Organization of Women), A.C.L.U., and others dedicated to obtaining civil rights. A stamped self-addressed envelope sent to Dorothy Shinder, 1692-A Green Street, San Francisco, California 94123 along with a request for free information on "Single Persons Tax Reform" should bring pertinent data from an organization dedicated to eradicating tax discrimination against single persons.

In defense of Congress and the Internal Revenue Service, it must be acknowledged that the task of apportioning 200 BILLION dollars to meet the needs of 200 million people is almost beyond comprehension, especially if that apportionment is equitable for all segments of the population, individuals and corporations alike. Our admiration abounds for those who labor to a just conclusion, in fact. Nevertheless, the basis by which it is decided who pays what is open to scrutiny. In fiscal year 1968, for example, only 20% of the federal budget was financed by corporate taxes, whereas 50% of the budget was paid by the individual citizen . . . 42% of this figure being direct income tax and 8% being excise tax. It is important to note that the 42% direct income tax was not spread among the entire adult population. Only 55% of the total income tax returns were payments; 45% were requests for refunds. Just over half of the adult taxpayers are really paying into the government treasury while nearly as many receive services for which they make no monetary contribution.

Some citizens should be exempt. The truly impoverished, the handiapped, and some elderly persons represent a valid exclusion. There are others who could, and should, pay but who do not pay due to loopholes and favoritism laws created by Congress and the Internal Revenue Service. These special loopholes affect both individual and corporate tax payments and cost the "average" taxpayer an estimated 40

BILLION dollars a year. This sum represents a figure so mammoth that if the loopholes were plugged, the April 15th tab of the "average" citizen who actually pays taxes could be cut by a third, or possibly even half! Until this subversive drain is repealed, the non-favored will continue to pay for the favored. It is imperative, therefore, that every taxpayer write his U.S. Representative in support of legislation to end this unjust favoritism. Although many such bills have been introduced, and many Congressmen favor their passage, the bills are always defeated somewhere along the not-so-primrose-path. Increased support for plugging tax inequities is obligatory if change is to be achieved.

As American citizens, then, we have a two-fold responsibility. We must fight to have laws governing the single taxpayer—such as dependency allowances and head of a household status—improved. We must also demand to have unfair loopholes in individual and corporate taxes plugged up once and for all, lest the tax rate spiral higher and higher for the 55% who actually pay America's bills. We are naturally required to support present laws until they are changed, and to pay the stipulated fees, but ignorance of tax law provisions can mean higher taxes if approved deductions are overlooked. When filing income tax returns be certain that the government is not getting more than it requires.

How is it possible to avoid overpayment of income taxes?

1. Get free help from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service office nearest your community. Agents will clarify and answer any questions you may have regarding proper forms, tax laws, etc., either by phone or in person.

2. If you are not close to an Internal Revenue Service branch, consider buying inexpensive publications which explain federal tax laws. A fifty cent pamphlet entitled "Your Federal Income Tax, 196-" is available annually from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Other publications in the \$1.50-2.00 range are available from the local newstand, or from your public library. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service also provides free pamphlets on specialized aspects of filing a federal income tax return. Titles such

as Business Expenses, Repairs and Improvements, Partnerships, and If Your Return is Examined are available from your local I.R.S. office.

3. Hire a reputable tax consultant if the income tax filing procedures are confusing or if unusual monetary circumstances have arisen since the previous tax year.

4. If you fill out the return yourself, have another knowledgeable person—family member or friend—check it over for errors.

5. If eligible for a tax refund, file early in January.

6. Always keep required proof such as receipts, cancelled checks, etc., for all expenditures claimed on the tax return. Do not destroy these until seven years have passed. If your return is chosen for audit, have such records available for inspection. Most tax consultants will accompany their clients to an audit hearing.

7. Pay the income tax on time to avoid a 6% interest penalty.

8. Should you make an error in the tax return and not discover it until the form has been mailed, a *corrected* return may be filed prior to April 15th. After that date an *amended* return can be filed.

9. Keep a carbon copy of the tax return in a safe place so it can be referred to the following year. Many keep the tax return carbon copy and proof of expenditures together.

In conclusion, William H. Borah reminds us that "The marvel of all history is the patience with which men and women submit to burdens unnecessarily laid upon them by their governments." Let us submit graciously to our tax burdens while we strive to obtain tax equity for all unmarried adult citizens.

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Val Vanderwood is the pseudonym of a college librarian who has been a high school teacher, a university professor, and a former president of the Los Angeles chapter of DOB.

## THE CATHERINE WHEEL

by Melinda Zeilinger

Anne Fitzgerald was sitting in a wicker lawn chair by the parsley bed, watching her mother weed the garden.

"I think this lilac bush is dying," sighed Mrs. Fitzgerald, getting to her feet standing with her hands on her hips. "What a pity, after all these years." She went on muttering to herself about lime content in the soil and watering schedules, while Anne thought: Catherine, with a sprig of lilac behind each ear, dancing through the garden at midnight in a white chemise.

"Lime content in the soul," said Anne aloud, but Mrs. Fitzgerald was back on her hands and knees under the lilac bush and didn't hear her daughter.

"Poor old bush," said Mrs. Fitzgerald to the lilac, "we'll save you yet," and with a violet jerk she pulled out a clump of crab grass.

"The bush is dead," said Anne flatly, "so how can you hope to save it?" She got up from the wicker chair and walked down to the rose garden at the far end of the yard. When does a rose die, she wondered as she stared at the blossoms. When it wilts? When the petals fall? When there is nothing left of it on the bush but a dried-up seed pod? No, she decided, roses never die unless they're separated from the bush, and she plucked a spray of pink roses angrily, watching the petals tumble to the grass at her feet. A tiny white butterfly flew past her and settled on a zinnia; Anne transferred the butterfly to the tip of her nose, tried to touch it with her tongue, then walked gently to and fro in front of the roses, taking care not to jar the butterfly.

"What on earth are you doing?" asked Mrs. Fitzgerald, coming up so quietly behind Anne that Anne hadn't heard her. "You look idiotic."

"It's the butterfly," Anne said, "and

don't ever sneak up on me again." She turned her head, shielding the butterfly from her mother's eyes.

"What butterfly?" said Mrs. Fitzgerald blankly. "I swear, Anne, it's impossible to understand you these days." She knelt down by the roses. "Bring me the clippers, will you? They're on the back porch by the hot water heater. And hurry; I can't wait forever."

With a flurry of white wings the butterfly flew away. "Waiting is easy," said Anne, and walked to the house, smiling at the clippers as she passed through the screened-in porch and entered the kitchen. She realized she was hungry, but when she opened the refrigerator she could see no food at all, only cool white surfaces that reminded her of an icy grave in the Arctic. Anne leaned her head against the open refrigerator door and stared at what should have been shelves filled with produce and leftovers. Odd, she thought, a drowsiness enveloping her, that the refrigerator door would feel so much like Catherine's cheek.

Catherine's cheek? She stood up and backed away. Nonsense. Catherine wasn't here; she was sleeping in Pine Valley with her parents. Anne seized a partially-eaten Rock Cornish game hen that sprang suddenly into view on the bottom shelf, and went upstairs to her bedroom.

But what if Catherine were not in Pine Valley? Anne paced around her room, tearing at the tender Cornish hen white meat with her fingers. Catherine deserved a proper burial, deserved to be at peace. Anne looked down at the skeleton of the Cornish hen in her hands, shuddered, and threw the remains in the wastebasket, unable to eat any more.

Tremaine was a Cornish name, wasn't it? Cornish name, Cornish hen, and Cornish girl, tall and slender with long dark hair and

gray eyes. "I prefer being thought of," Catherine had said once, "as a romantic heroine from a Victorian novel," and she had pirouetted across Anne's bedroom, falling in a warm heap on Anne's lap.

There must have been a funeral, though; Anne felt certain of it. The accident had occurred on June 2, Whit-sunday, so the funeral would have been during Whitsuntide. A funeral at Whitsuntide, with peonies and long-stemmed poppies and lilies beginning to bloom—Catherine would have been glad she'd chosen the loveliest time of the year to die. There had been a funeral, hadn't there?

Anne lay down on the bed and squinted at the ceiling. She could recall no funeral. How then could Catherine have been buried? How could Catherine have been seen safely into the earth if she, Anne, had not been present? Perhaps she should call the caretaker at Pine Valley.

No. With a shattering burst of images Anne remembered Catherine's funeral. A frozen space of time it had been, with the sunlight hot on her shoulders and the minister reciting the service in a garbled monotone, all his words flowing together so that Anne couldn't distinguish a single phrase. First had come Mr. and Mrs. Tremaine's caskets, heavy and ornate, while a woman near Anne sobbed into a handkerchief. Then came Catherine's casket, made of wood the color of her hair, and there was a terrible silence in the cemetery as the minister stood over Catherine.

Catherine, who had walked so often, through the hills near the cemetery, now slept in Pine Valley; but would she enjoy being there alone? Anne could imagine Catherine clenching her fists and moaning in her sleep, wanting to escape the nightmare. She shouldn't be alone out there, Anne thought; Irma and Jack Tremaine were no company for her, and Catherine should have someone she loved with her. Catherine should never have to be alone.

Anne reached automatically across the bed to touch Catherine's hand but grasped only air. No, not just air. For a moment it had felt like a hand, a slender hand with graceful fingers and polished nails, warm as Catherine's hands had always been. There in the air was Catherine's hand, unseen and invisible, but still pulsing with life. If Anne closed her eyes and concentrated, maybe the hand would return.

Anne ate her dinner on a tray in her bedroom, refusing as she had for over a month

to eat downstairs with her parents. Tedious, these tray meals, with all the food tasting alike. She lit the dark green candle on the bedside table and stared into the flame. There. That added a certain mystery, a certain allure; why hadn't she thought of candles before now?

There were candles that first night. Anne could remember Catherine's eyes; a million candle flames seemed to be reflected in them until the gray turned to gold. And afterwards; Catherine curled up beside Anne on the bed, saying in a low voice, "Never one before you; never another after you; only you always."

But why did the flame on the green candle flicker so? Anne's eyes hurt from staring at it, yet she could not turn her eyes away. "Almost," she said aloud in the empty room, "as if it were that first night again, with Catherine drawing me to her through her eyes, moth to flame." The candlelight flickered, seemed to go out, then blazed more brightly than before.

A strange girl, Catherine Tremaine. Everyone had said so. Anne heard all about Catherine Tremaine long before the two girls met. That was the summer Anne was sixteen; she had been in bed for over a month recovering from a late spring cold that had turned to pneumonia, and her school friends would visit her, telling her about the new girl who had moved to town. Such tales they told Anne about Catherine and the Tremaine family; later Catherine and Anne had laughed together, recalling those tales. "The way they described you," Anne said to Catherine, "I figured you were a witch, or a visitor from Venus, or a princess in disguise. No one in Fall River understands a girl who walks alone by the banks of the river at night, certainly not a girl who wears a fur-lined cape in the middle of summer."

"A princess in disguise," Catherine said slowly. "I might be one, for all you know. How would you be sure? You have only my word that I'm not."

"I could ask your mother," Anne replied, turning back to the picnic hamper in search of another chicken leg. That was the day they took a basket of lunch and went for a walk across the countryside. "She would know."

"Irma Tremaine doesn't understand me," Catherine said scornfully. "No one named Irma could understand me. I'm understood only by girls named Anne with green eyes and brown hair."

"I do want to be your friend," Anne said,

surprised at her boldness. "I want to be your special friend."

"Good heavens, Anne Fitzgerald," Catherine told her, "don't you realize? You are my special friend."

Oh yes, a very strange girl, Catherine Tremaine. While the school friends chattered on and on about the newcomer, Anne tossed in her bed, wondering about Catherine and wishing she could meet her. At night Anne would dream of Catherine, imagining her to be a ten-foot-tall Amazon in a hooded cloak, striding along the banks of an endless river. Then one day Mrs. Tremaine, accompanied by Catherine, came to visit Anne's mother, and Catherine appeared suddenly in Anne's bedroom with a bouquet of marigolds and a clear smile like none other in the world. "I'm Catherine," she said, poking her head around Anne's half-open bedroom door, "and I daresay you've heard all about me, yes?"

Anne could think of nothing to say; her usual shyness with strangers swept over her and she accepted the flowers without a word.

"So you've been sick," said Catherine, sitting down at the end of Anne's bed and stretching out her long legs in front of her. "But illness agrees with you. You should wear a scarlet bedjacket and a rose in your hair, then there would be no one lovelier in all the world."

"Will you have a chocolate?" Anne whispered, passing the box of candy to Catherine.

"No orchid petals?" Catherine remarked, running her fingers across the edges of the frilled cups in which the chocolates sat. "Not even a candied violet? Oh my, such terribly mortal sweets these are. I prefer something more eternal, more romantic." And she closed the box and returned it to Anne.

"We're in the same class at school, I believe," Anne said faintly. "You're a junior, aren't you?"

"A junior, a tempest, a waterlily in a scented pond," said Catherine, tracing invisible circles on Anne's bedspread with one of the marigolds. "We were born on the same date in the same year, did you know? I learned of it from your mother."

"Really?" said Anne. "What fun! I've never known anyone who shared my birthday. That makes us twins, in a way."

"We shall be tortured with flames and with flowers for the coincidence, but our sorrows will be exquisite. May I teach you to play whist? It's for four people, but

I've discovered a way for two to play." She pulled a deck of cards from her straw purse, shuffled them, and began to deal them out two at a time.

From downstairs came a woman's voice. "Catherine! I'm leaving now."

"That's Irma Tremaine," said Catherine, rounding up the cards and returning them to her purse, "which means that I must depart. But I'll return, if you'll allow me to visit you again. Of course you will."

"Please do come back," said Anne, sitting up in bed and pulling the covers around her. "I'll be out of bed in a few days and then I'll be a better hostess."

"No hostess, no guest," said Catherine. Catherine returned the next afternoon, and continued to visit Anne each day until Anne was well again. Then had come their walk and picnic lunch, after which Catherine spent the night with Anne. That was the first night.

But Anne couldn't bear to think about it any longer. She carried her dinner tray to the table by the door, then sat back down on her bed and stared into the candle flame. Odd, very odd, that the candle would remind her so much of Catherine, almost as though Catherine were there in the bedroom with her, putting thoughts into her head. No—as though Catherine were in the candle flame itself, drawing Anne into the flame too. Flame: very much like Catherine.

One Fourth of July Catherine and Anne decided not to go to the fireworks display down at the city square. Instead they spent the evening on the patio behind the sprawling house which the Tremaines were renting in Fall River. There, with Japanese lanterns flickering and crickets chirping from the shrubbery, the world seemed motionless and hushed; Catherine and Anne sat on chaise longues staring up into the starless sky. Then suddenly fireworks and sky rockets began to explode in ever-changing patterns far above them.

"It's beginning!" cried Anne, reaching for Catherine's hand, but Catherine wriggled free and ran laughing into the center of the lawn.

"Anne, love," Catherine said, "you don't need fireworks. You have me, your own Catherine wheel of flame." There on the damp grass she turned carwheel after cartwheel, moving so rapidly that Anne could see only the blur of Catherine's yellow dress. Yes, flame.

How old were they that summer? They must have been seventeen, Anne decided,

because last July they were at the lake. And this summer Anne spent the Fourth of July locked in her bedroom, listening to her mother pound on the door while she begged Anne to go with her parents to the Patterson's picnic supper. A week ago, that was. "Mother never gives up," muttered Anne, blew out the candle, and went to sleep.

"I've been meaning to talk to you about Catherine," said Mrs. Fitzgerald the next morning at breakfast.

Anne glanced briefly at her mother and continued to spread jelly on her toast. "Catherine is dead," she said. "What is there to discuss?"

"I'm aware that she's dead," said Mrs. Fitzgerald, her hands fluttering from her coffee cup to the rumpled newspaper and on to her English muffins. "There was no question of that."

"Well then?" Anne drank down her cup of tea at one gulp and leaned back in her chair, pretending to be a slab of rock. An enormous granite boulder. No, marble, that's what she would be, a slab of pink marble. How lovely to be a rock; one didn't have to eat or sleep or get up in the morning; one had no friends or relatives; one didn't even have to breathe. Anne held her breath for a moment, then exhaled slowly in tiny hisses like a snake.

"Have you been listening?" asked Mrs. Fitzgerald. "I don't think you heard a word I've said."

"Probably not," said Anne, definitely she was a rock.

"This is just what I was speaking of. Really, Anne, you've behaved so peculiarly since Catherine died. I know she was a friend of yours, but life must go on." Mrs. Fitzgerald looked over at her daughter, who was staring straight ahead and seemed to be holding her breath again. "Oh heavens, why do I bother to talk to you?"

"Talk is out of style this year," said Anne. "We're both too old to bother with conversation. Talk, at our age? Ludicrous." She glanced into her lap and there sat the white butterfly. How surprising that it would come into the house, for the Fitzgerald home was screened off from the world at every turn. It was even more surprising that the butterfly had landed in her lap without her having seen it until now.

"Please, Anne," said Mrs. Fitzgerald, crumpling up one corner of the newspaper in her hand, "this kind of foolishness gets us nowhere. You're nineteen; act your age.

Very amusing, to be a slab of pink marble

with a butterfly crawling across her lap. Pink marble was doubtlessly quite ticklish. Anne could feel the tiny butterfly legs creeping up her chest then moving down one arm. If she weren't pink marble, she would have been forced to laugh.

"I'm not one to speak ill of the dead," said Mrs. Fitzgerald, "but it's my opinion that Catherine had a very bad effect on you. I never liked her, and I could never understand why a sensible girl like you would want to spend so much time with someone as foolish as Catherine Tremaine. Yet the two of you were inseparable. Why on earth did you allow her to influence you to such an extent? Thank heavens, your sister Evelyn was never like this."

Evelyn would never turn into pink marble. Evelyn would always be a blob of matronly flesh, propelling her two ill-mannered babes through the world while her husband Richard trailed along behind, weary and vague. Evelyn would never know the delights of having a butterfly skimming lightly down her arm, its antennae brushing her fingers. Could rocks have arms and fingers? Surely they did; Catherine had arms and fingers, lovely arms that floated bonelessly through the moonlight to come to rest around Anne's neck. Catherine, pink marble maiden. "I'm only a cheap imitation," said Anne aloud, realizing that she could never equal Catherine.

"A cheap imitation of Evelyn?" said Mrs. Fitzgerald. "What a ridiculous comment; the two of you are nothing alike." She frowned at Anne. "What is so humorous? I didn't realize I'd said anything amusing."

"It's the butterfly," said Anne, shifting around in her chair and laughing quietly. "It tickles."

"A butterfly? Here?" Mrs. Fitzgerald peered around the dining room. "Come now, a butterfly wouldn't be in the house. I don't see a thing. You were chattering about a butterfly yesterday afternoon, too. What is this, some sort of joke? I don't find it funny."

The butterfly disappeared and Anne, blinking in surprise, ran out of the dining room to see if it might be in the yard. Behind her, Mrs. Fitzgerald was saying, "You haven't touched your eggs," but Anne rushed through the door and into the garden, deaf to her mother's voice.

She sat down finally by the petunias. There was no sign of the butterfly outside; perhaps she'd driven the poor thing away forever. Really it was her mother's fault if the butterfly refused to return; her mother

should be more hospitable. Anne could remember lying on Catherine's fourposter bed, hidden by the lace and organdy hangings, while Catherine locked the bedroom door from the inside and said, "Let me offer you the hospitality of my home." And then a year later when they were freshmen in college and shared a dorm room, Catherine had locked that door too, saying, "Let me offer you the hospitality of our home." Such a flutter of pleasure she had felt, hearing those words; at last she and Catherine had a room that was theirs alone.

She had lost Catherine; and now she had lost the butterfly, just as she was beginning to learn how dear it was to her. But when had the butterfly first appeared? Could it have been only yesterday? It must have been; before that, Anne had stayed in her bedroom, her mind quite blank as she let her thoughts drift away, unnoticed and unsensed. She had felt like a parachutist who had jumped from too high an altitude, a parachutist who had frozen into a block of ice as he fell. Then yesterday she began to thaw. Standing by her bedroom window she had seen the butterfly in the parsley bed; she ran outside to befriend it, but the butterfly had vanished. Not until Anne had gone over to the rose bushes did the butterfly reappear.

Why had she allowed herself to thaw? The frozen free-fall had been much easier to bear than the pain of melting. Frozen: like the ice on the pond that winter when she and Catherine had gone skating together. What fun that had been! Anne plucked a rose-colored petunia and smiled, remembering how they had fallen on top of each other on the ice, then had sat in a snowdrift drinking hot chocolate from Anne's thermos. "You should have a nosegay of violets," Anne had told Catherine, "because they would match your eyes. Why are your gray eyes so violet today?"

Catherine had laughed. "Out of love, I daresay. And you should have a wreath of daisies in your hair, white daisies with yellow centers. You would look exotic against the snow."

But where was Catherine now? And why had Catherine left her? Anne recalled that last moment she spent with Catherine in the dorm as they waited for their parents to arrive at the end of spring semester; Catherine, shrugging on her favorite silk blouse, had said, "But we'll see each other as soon as we get back to Fall River. Don't say goodbye, for I'll never leave you. I'll be with you, tucked into a corner of your

parents' car where no one but you can see me." So Anne, without uttering a word, had let Catherine depart; she had watched from the dormitory steps as the long Tremaine automobile passed through the college gates and turned the corner. Then, ignoring her father's grumbling and her mother's chatter, she had flung her suitcases into the car trunk. It was no more than an hour later that Anne had seen the crumpled black car ahead of them on the road leading into Fall River, the Tremaine car, wound around a giant oak tree at the side of the highway. And then—but Anne could not remember what had happened next.

Why had the butterfly left her? Anne wished it were still here so that she might talk to it. Infinitely better, if Catherine herself were here to explain why she had accompanied Irma and Jack Tremaine with such apparent willingness to Pine Valley. If Catherine were here she could erase the last six weeks from Anne's mind, just as Catherine had erased that terrible quarrel the evening of high school graduation. What a silly argument that had been, all because Catherine didn't want to attend the commencement exercises. But she had gone after all, tossing her long hair angrily and refusing to look at Anne during the ceremony. Afterwards Catherine had apologized in a rush of words and gave Anne a tiny jade bracelet. It was upstairs in Anne's bedroom now, wrapped in cotton gauze in the jewelry case.

Perhaps the butterfly was there too; it might have flown in to be near the jade bracelet. Anne raced across the yard and into the house, past Mrs. Fitzgerald who was still sitting, head in hands, at the dining room table. Anne ignored her mother and streaked up the stairs to her bedroom, slamming the door behind her.

But there was no sign of the butterfly in the jewelry case; Anne saw only the jade bracelet, still wrapped in its cotton gauze. "Then I am truly alone," said Anne, and she lay down on her bed, pulling the faded blue quilt over her until it completely enveloped her. What would it be like, Anne wondered, to live forever under the blue quilt? An endless serenity, in all likelihood; she would name this place the Azure Grotto, and she would be the Recluse of the Azure Grotto. No one else would be allowed to enter, certainly no butterflies or winged creatures; Anne would sit on a low stone ledge watching the tide ripple in and eddy around her feet as she listened to sea shell

melodies. She pulled the quilt closer to her and waited for the tide; perhaps she would drown.

"Don't say goodbye, for I'll never leave you," said a voice beside Anne's left ear. It was as if Catherine herself had spoken, and Anne tossed the quilt to the floor, staring around the room with wide startled eyes. "Catherine?" she called, "Catherine, is that you?"

There was no reply. Anne sat up and leaned against the headboard. "Catherine," she whispered urgently, "I want so much for it to be you," and she closed her eyes, reaching through the air for Catherine's slender body, for Catherine's hands. "Please, where are you?" she said. "I know you're here."

Something slipped into her hand then; Anne felt a warmth in her palm and a pressure against her fingertips. She smiled and lay down again. "Remember your promise," she said sleepily. "Don't leave me."

When she awoke she still held Catherine's hand, yet she could see nothing. Anne tried to be content; she sat for hours on the bed, not daring to move as she clung to the warmth in her palm. Then late that evening she had a glimpse of long dark hair, an image in the corner of her eye that faded away before she had seen it clearly. This was most frustrating. "Catherine," said Anne with some irritation, "must it take you such a long time? I think you're only teasing me."

But by morning Catherine had appeared and Anne could easily see her; it was a shadowy Catherine, to be sure, but familiar and unchanged. Anne sat in silence at the head of her bed and smiled at Catherine who sat opposite her, wearing the favorite silk blouse and a pair of khaki jodhpurs. There was no need for words; they were together again.

"Anne," called Mrs. Fitzgerald from the upstairs hallway as she pounded on Anne's bedroom door the following evening, "unlock this door and come out immediately. For three days you've been shut up in your room, not eating, not even moving around. I insist you come out."

Anne did not reply; instead she smiled at Catherine and whispered, "You're still wearing that perfume I like so much. It fills the room and makes me think we're sitting in a field of lilies of the valley."

"Anne!" cried Mrs. Fitzgerald at the door, pounding harder than before, "are you all right? Come out of there, or I'll send for the

doctor."

"I don't understand how you were able to return," Anne said to Catherine, "but that's no matter. You're here."

"Very well," said Mrs. Fitzgerald with resignation, "if you refuse to answer me, why should I waste my words on you? But I'm warning you; your father and I expect you to join us for dinner tonight or there will be trouble." Her footsteps echoed down the stairs and disappeared.

"That bitch," said Catherine in a matter-of-fact voice. "Why do you allow her to speak to you in such a way?"

"Catherine, you're able to talk!" cried Anne, her brown hair tumbling in curls around her cheeks. "But why have you been silent until now?"

"You are lovelier than ever, and I enjoy looking at you," said Catherine, "so there seemed to be no reason to speak. But really, love, that woman is impossible."

"Yes," said Anne, "she frightened away my butterfly. Do you think I should go downstairs for dinner this evening?"

"Do you want to?" asked Catherine, rummaging through her purse for the deck of cards.

"No. Not at all, now that you're here. Oh Catherine, the last six weeks have been unbearable. If you planned to return to me, why didn't you return sooner?"

"Then don't go downstairs," said Catherine, ignoring Anne's question. "Stay here with me and play two-handed whist." She shuffled the cards and began dealing them out. Do you know where I can find my cape, or my yellow dress?"

Anne shook her head. "After the accident some men came to your house. They carted everything away in trunks and wouldn't let me have a thing."

"But you have the jade bracelet," said Catherine, "and the book of poems."

"And the silver ring, and the sweater you gave me last Christmas, and the deck of hand-painted tarot cards," said Anne.

"We're rich," said Catherine, flinging her cards into the air and rolling across the bed to lie beside Anne. "We're very rich."

Dr. Murphy came the next afternoon after a locksmith had opened Anne's bedroom door. "This foolishness is going to end," said Mrs. Fitzgerald as she entered the bedroom with the doctor. "I asked Dr. Murphy to examine you. I assume you are ill; why else would you stay up here alone with the door locked?" The doctor, a short trim man with graying hair, set down his

medical bag beside the bed and smiled at Anne, his hands in his pockets.

Anne looked over in fright to Catherine, who was sitting on the windowsill gazing out at the garden. "Don't worry, love," said Catherine, swinging her legs merrily back and forth, "they can't see me. Soon they'll leave and we will be alone again."

"The last time I saw you," said Dr. Murphy to Anne, "you had a strep throat. How have you been feeling since then?"

"I have nothing to say," said Anne. "A person has a perfect right to stay in her own room."

"I agree," said Dr. Murphy, "but it doesn't hurt to have a checkup. Tell me, where could I wash my hands?"

"Anne's bathroom is through there," said Mrs. Fitzgerald, pointing to a door on the far wall. Dr. Murphy left the room and Anne glared at her mother.

"First my butterfly disappears, thanks to your cruelty, and now you bring this doctor into my bedroom. When will you stop interfering with my life?"

"There was no butterfly," Mrs. Fitzgerald rubbed her forehead wearily. "I don't understand you. Maybe Dr. Murphy will be able to."

"Don't listen to her," said Catherine. "She couldn't see the butterfly because she is dead inside. But you and I are different, love."

"You're dead inside," Anne said to her mother, and Mrs. Fitzgerald gasped.

"What a thing to say. I shall speak to your father, Anne." Mrs. Fitzgerald turned

to the dressing table, her hands trembling, and began shifting Anne's silver comb and brush set from one corner to another. "Your father will be very angry when he hears how you have talked to me."

"Anne, love," said Catherine, "there's something you can do to put a stop to this. Not to mention that I certainly don't have to listen to it any longer." She hopped down from the windowsill and ran lightly across the room, passing Mrs. Fitzgerald without a glance. "I'll wait for you at the old elm tree," said Catherine from the doorway. "Come to me. Think about it, love, and you'll realize what to do."

"I hope you're pleased, Mother," muttered Anne after Catherine had gone, and she lay back down on the bed just as Dr. Murphy entered the room.

When the doctor had finished and had gone downstairs with Mrs. Fitzgerald, Anne walked over to her dressing table and sat down, looking at herself in the mirror. "Light brown hair," she said aloud to the reflection, "and green eyes, and a well-shaped nose. I must remember how I looked at this moment. Ah yes, Catherine, I'll meet you at the elm." She tiptoed down the stairs, hurried past the study where her mother and Dr. Murphy were talking, and opened the screen door on the back porch. "You'll never know," she called softly, "and you'll never understand, and you'll never be able to find a trace of me, for I'll be with Catherine." Then she left, running across the dark green grass without once looking back.

## THE LIFE STYLE OF THE HOMOSEXUAL A SYMPOSIUM

### REPORTS ON A HAPPENING

Following are two reports on the Symposium on The Life Style of the Homosexual held by The Council on Religion and the Homosexual in San Francisco October 24-27, 1968. The first is an overview and was written by Del Martin, member of the Board of CRH.

The second is a more subjective impression written by Joan Granucci, president of Nova, a new Lesbian organization centered in the East Bay

(P.O. Box 6184, Albany, CA 94716).

Another Symposium is being planned for the latter part of April, 1969. For information, write The Council on Religion and the Homosexual, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

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First of all, we want to make it quite clear that this symposium has not been approved by the Regents of the University of California. Nor is it likely that Ronald Reagan and Max Rafferty will approve it for University credit. Though

interestingly enough, most of the panelists, whom you will be meeting over the next three days, have been guest speakers not only at U.C., but also at the Universities of Santa Clara and Stanford as well as various Bay Area state colleges, city colleges, junior colleges and high schools. They have also spoken at various seminars and before many church groups.

Their particular expertise qualifies them as best able to speak to the subject which we are addressing ourselves to this week end, "The Life Style of the Homosexual," because of their academic degrees—L.B. and Ph.D. (Bachelor of Lesbianism and Doctor of Practicing Homosexuality). These degrees were awarded by the Liberal Arts Division of the School of Experience in the Homophile Community.

This symposium is unique to the homophile movement. It represents a marked departure from the usual format of calling upon outside experts in the law, psychology, sociology, etc. to authenticate the homosexual. This time we are calling upon "inside" experts to delineate the problems they encounter as a homosexual minority in communicating with the heterosexual majority.

This morning's panel in "Telling It Like It Is" will not concern itself with the etiology of homosexuality except to say briefly that the causes of homosexuality are not clearly defined, that the academic theorists are in utter conflict about it (as evidenced by the literature)—and to remind you that no matter how else you may look upon the subject there is no getting around the fact that all homosexuals are products of heterosexuality. So perhaps we can at least agree that the root cause of homosexuality is heterosexual intercourse.

Most researchers and moralists have concerned themselves almost wholly with the "why" of homosexuality. We feel that the question should more properly be phrased, "Why not?" For purposes of better understanding and getting the most out of this symposium, we ask you to consider as a basic premise the Kinsey theory that all human beings are born sexual and that there are many variations of sexual expression, one of which is homosexuality.

The second assumption we ask you to accept if we are to be able to communi-

cate at all during this conference is that the homosexual is a human being—a person—and that his homosexuality is only one facet of his whole being. The prepossessing, almost morbid, concern on the part of heterosexuals with the purely sexual aspect of the homosexual's life is something they would not tolerate when examining the phenomenon of heterosexuality.

You cannot judge the heterosexual purely on the basis of the sex act, we are told. You must think in terms of relationships, situational ethics, love, aesthetics, creativity and productivity. You cannot judge all heterosexuals by the rapists, the sadists, the adulterers or the child molesters. Well, if this is true in evaluating the life style of the heterosexual, it is equally true for the homosexual.

This is an age of revolution—of protest against dehumanization and the double standard. It applies to youth, to race, to politics—to sex. If we are to solve the problems of today's world we must somehow break the communications barrier. This symposium is an attempt to do just that.

Earlier I pointed out that many of the panelists have been guest lecturers or have participated in orientations or confrontation groups before in an effort to bring about better understanding of homosexuality. This is not necessarily true, however, for the enablers—the resource persons from the homophile community who are in your task groups. For many of them this is a very new experience—just as it is for you. Some will be admitting for the first time in public the words, "I am a homosexual."

These enablers are your communicators. They are here to answer questions and to speak from their own particular life experience. They represent a variety of age groups, occupations, family backgrounds, educational and economic levels—even life styles. All homosexuals do not act or think alike any more than do heterosexuals. What we offer you this week end is a variety of expression and experience. Some of our people may turn you on. Others may turn you off. But each type of personality has something to contribute to the overall picture of homosexuality as we consider his self image, how he manages the conflicts he encounters, his relationship to the homosexual subculture and his involvement

and concerns in the larger community.

However, in order for the panelists and the enablers to speak to you, to come across in any way, we must all face a very serious question: How can the homosexual communicate if he is caught up in the cycle of being illegal, immoral and sick, and when he tries to respond, is charged with being defensive, an apologist or injustice collector? Stop and think about that one! It's a helluva communication problem!

Admittedly, the homosexual is going to speak from a subjective viewpoint. But in your response and your evaluation isn't it also true that what he says will be filtered through your own preconceptions and biases? And won't your reaction be subjective no matter how objective you may try to be? Will you still allow the homosexual's sexual object choice to dominate and control your imagery of him, as you have in the past? Will you perhaps—God forbid—change your attitude from one of derision and contempt to one of pity and sympathy? Or will you grant the homosexual his personhood, his individuality, recognizing his own particular beingness?

All that is derogatory has already been said and written about the homosexual. In recent years, however, there has been a shift in emphasis from the rhetoric of sin and crime to the rhetoric of mental health in considering homosexuality. And it may very well be that the homophile community has indeed contributed to its own undoing. I am reminded of the Lesbian who many years ago wrote to the editor of *THE LADDER* decrying the efforts of the homophile organizations to bring about homosexual law reform. "I'd a lot rather go to the big house than the bug house," she warned.

As it turned out, her fears were well founded. In the name of mental health homosexuals have been subjected to brainwashing techniques which red-blooded, patriotic Americans deplore when applied by the Chinese Communists to our war prisoners. With the single minded purpose of changing the homosexual's sexual object choice, the criterion of mental health thus becomes his ability to perform the heterosexual sex act. This without relevance to or concern for the well being of his future heterosexual partners or possible offspring.

Ordinarily, in considering the mental

health of an individual such questions are raised, as: Is the individual self supporting? Does he have adequate sources of social support? How does he interact with others in the community? Does he accept himself? When the heterosexual meets the minimal definitions of mental health, he is cleared—given a clean bill of health. But the homosexual, no matter how good his adjustment in non-sexual areas of life, remains suspect.

It is interesting to note, too, that those forbidden, illegal, immoral and sick sex acts which society's institutions are so exercised about are practiced by heterosexuals and homosexuals alike—though the sanctions are enforced against the homosexual, while the marriage counsellors recommend variations in technique to save many a heterosexual marriage.

There are so many myths about homosexuality. They are difficult to dispel because of reprisals homosexuals experience from their families and friends, from their employers—from their government. Yet the only way that the homosexual can make himself understood is by coming out into the open and identifying himself, by participating in confrontations such as this symposium. The risks are very real. But so are the people who are taking them.

So often people look at couples and wonder what they see in each other. That "certain something" just isn't discernible at first glance in most cases. Judgments are made on the basis of stereotypes, people labeled and pigeon-holed, on surface qualities. There just isn't time to investigate further, to get to know someone better.

Ninety people took the time, however, for a period of four nights and three days the weekend of October 24-27 during the Symposium on The Life Style of the Homosexual. In a face-to-face confrontation between professional or semi-professional counselors and homosexuals, between heterosexuals and homosexuals, a very unique experience transpired. Barriers to communication were dropped. Mythological concepts were dissolved. Professional identity gave way to personal identity. Sexual identity was seen to be only one facet of

*Continued on Page 24*

## POEMS by CARLA

### Bent Twig

All I am I owe to my angel  
who, even if she was from Tennessee,  
was an understanding mother.

We saw eye to eye for perhaps four and one-half months  
when I was around the age of twelve years  
and growing fast.

My mother told me that some girls love other girls  
more than they ever love men.

She herself was a lover of women,  
though not as I am.

My mother loved me just a little less than she loved God  
and a little more than she loved my father.

### On the Positive Side

I do not understand  
a world where one's tastes  
Are objects  
for another's judgment.  
When the heart is open,  
love falls out on everything.

### Bibliotechnical Education

My mother took me to the public library  
when I was seven years old.  
The first book I checked out was *Snow White*.  
I read it myself.  
The next thing I read was *The Three Musketeers*.  
When I was ten years old  
I learned about male genitals  
in a medical encyclopedia,  
and at twelve years I studied  
*Jeremy Taylor's Holy Dying* and wept  
for myself.  
The library had high windows and many dark walls of books.  
I kissed Sylvia on the lips when I was thirteen  
in the library.

### Total Conformity

I have recently conducted a private inventory  
and am pleased to report that out of forty-eight London Lesbians,  
forty-eight have ten fingers and ten toes each  
and one navel.

# THE BEE

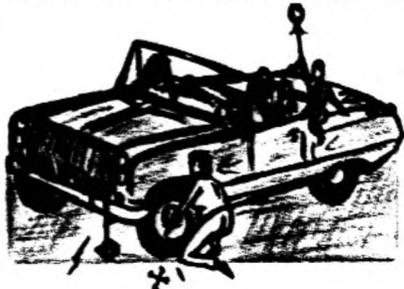
by James Colton



For a terrible minute. Lily thought it was Grace—the big, wide-hipped figure in rumpled shirt and chinos coming up the two-rut road between the avocado groves. The sun was fierce. Lily stood, in a tall straw hat with a turn-down brim and a blue denim dress with white cotton rope trim, stood in the blunt isosceles of shadow cast by the noon house and watered the wisteria that climbed a neat redwood trellis out of neat redwood tubs.

She was pleased about the wisteria, had for a life-time longed for it to climb to the low roof edge and soften the tart little cabin's lines with its feathery leaves and drooping pale lavender flowers. She'd tried to make it grow before, but the heat had always got it because she'd not had time enough to look after it in the days of Grace and Harold.

In the days of Grace and Harold she'd had time for them alone. And the problems of getting the place started, the trees fruiting, the old, second-hand irrigation system to a level of reliability, wholesalers to a like point, the seasons themselves which, like the human seasons un-



der the leaky house roof, had been uncertain, trustable only in their untrustworthiness.

The weather within walls had been hectic, filled with contest, contention, the rough rubbing against each other of human wills, three of them, never wanting the same thing at the same time, and each contemptuous of, or, at best, indifferent to, the others. In those days, their wills (or their indifference)—Harold's, Grace's, had gone against her growing flowers. Not until they'd gone—Grace to San Francisco and, later, charred Harold to his grave—had she been free to summon loveliness, and now the house was forever surrounded by it, from crysanthemums in November to roses in June to . . .

Lily shaded her eyes, blinking. Could it be Grace? That lumpish walk, the untidy male clothes. She seemed to smell again the smells of Grace—horse and dog smells, smells of automobile engines, beer, Mexican cigarettes. Lily dropped the hose in a sudden panic, darted for the tap, wrenched the water off, and hurried out of sight around the house corner. A heavy bee was butting at the back screen door. She brushed it aside with her white canvas gardening gloves and slipped quietly into the kitchen.

From the window there, with its blue-checked cottage curtains hung in neat scallops off their bright brass rings she watched with ticking heart the gross figure come on. It loomed large, then edged out of the window-frame. Shoes thumped on the front stoop. The buzzer sounded over Lily's head—as if that bee had got inside, inside her very ear. She came to herself and moved then, pulling off her gloves—moved

out of the sparkling kitchen, through the small knotty-pine parlor with its braided rug and spooled maple furniture, to open the door. For it was not Grace. It was simply a young woman like her, dark face flushed and sweaty, without a trace of make-up.

"Excuse me, don't like to bother you, but I blew a tire out by your gate. Fixing it's kind of slow going. And I've got a car full of kids." Wry apologetic smile. "You know how they are. You get to the driest place on the map, they're thirsty. If you just had an old pail or something—" Her hair was cropped short, mannish. She jerked her head in the direction of the house corner where the hose Lily had thrown down leaked Arabic script on the dust. "—I could fill it there."

"You have a glass yourself first." Lily pushed the screendoor and the heavy young woman came in. Lily led her to the kitchen. The drinking-glass with its stencilled buttercups looked fragile in the grubby, raw-knuckled fist. "Then I'll fix some lemonade and bring it out. I'll bet they're hungry too, knowing children. I'll make sandwiches."

The young woman gulped the water, wiped her mouth with the back of her hand. "Thanks. But I don't like to put you to a lot of trouble."

"It's no trouble," Lily heard herself say with wonder, and began prying cans out of the deep frost in the top compartment of the refrigerator. "You tell them I'm coming."

She got busy with the can-opener. What possessed her she couldn't imagine. But she even hummed, pushing the lemonade concentrate out of the little cylinders into a big thermos jug half filled with ice-

cubes. This young woman was passing—she and her children. They'd never come again. And the young woman was not Grace. Fat and rough and mannish, she smelled, yes—but not of horses and Mexican cigarettes. A stranger. And it felt good again to get to do for people.

It was good, if you could do it when you chose. Day in, day out—that was something else. Of that she'd had her fill, and of its ingratitude. Harold's unfailing grumbles about his breakfast—too cold or too hot, too raw or too well-done, too little or too much. Grace fighting the pretty dresses Lily bought her, deliberately musing them, tearing them; Grace filling her room with sickly kittens and their fleas, and the discarded clothes she never, not once in seventeen years, picked up without Lily's having had to nag her. Harold swearing by those cold outdoor showers of his that, of course, never cleaned him and which, snorting, shuddering, slapping his hairy hide, he always took in the mornings, so that he came to her in bed stinking of the long day's grimy work . . .

Ah, when it was past, as now it was long past, how easily—guilty, and even, perversely, lonely too sometimes—still how easily, with what relief, Lily had begun to breathe. She frowned slightly now, screwing down the thick red plastic cap of the thermos jug and lifting the jug aside. She glanced through the screen door, where the bee still dully bumped and buzzed—glanced up the rock-garden slope with its begonias, toward the tool-shed, which, on the afternoon when Harold and Grace had fought there, had been naked-board-ugly, but over which now climbed fire-bright

bougainvillea.

She'd heard their voices raised out there, while she stood here preparing supper. She'd paid little attention; they often quarrelled when their paths crossed. She'd merely sighed. But she'd been wrong. This was different. This was final. For this time Grace picked up a hatchet and swung it at her father. And hit him with it. Not on the head, as she'd apparently intended, but on the forearm, which he'd instinctively thrown up to ward off the blow. She had left him howling and bleeding in the dirt, left him at a lumpish, thudding run.

The sound of her running had alerted Lily—Grace running, panting, under these windows, a kind of sobbing in her throat. Lily had gone out to see. She had fixed a tourniquet on Harold's arm and—she, who hadn't touched the controls of an automobile since 1935—driven him in the old pickup truck, rattling, jouncing, at panic speed, to the doctor's house on the far side of the valley, Harold cursing and damning Grace all the way.

The fight had been about some girl Harold had seen Grace drinking beer with, late at night, in the Tackroom Tavern in town—a girl with long blond hair and too much paint and too few clothes—whom Harold called a whore. Lily had smiled then, in the clattering pickup, driving into sunset, and she smiled thinly now. Harold most likely knew. Whether on her account or Grace's, he'd taken to spending less and less time at home those nights. But if whoring was all right for him, it was another thing entirely for Grace.

Now, buttering bread, Lily shook her head wistfully. Poor Harold.

How he'd wanted a dainty, soft, delicate little girl. With what puzzlement and ultimate disgust he had rejected what he'd been sent instead—Grace, with her coarse language and loud laugh, her sulky slouch of a walk, never a frilly frock to her back nor a high heeled slipper to her foot. Sweat-shirts, Levi's, cowboy boots and, latterly, a brown Mexican cigarette forever dangling from the corner of her mouth. He'd lost the fight against that. But he'd won the fight about the whore. For Grace had left—not home, only, but the valley too.

One letter had come, a month afterward, not asking after her father—had she killed him?—but only for her Social Security card. And then, years of silence. When Harold died, Lily had written to her, but no answer had come. Yet she had surely received Lily's letter since it hadn't been returned . . . . Harold had been killed by an exploding oil stove in the citrus groves of Hal Peterson down the road, on a sleepless night of fruit-killing frost in February, 1958—eleven years ago. How peaceful life had abruptly become. Empty, yes. But Lily had soon filled the minutes, hours, days, months, years with making of the place what she had dreamed, desperately, desolately, hopelessly, of its one day becoming. Pretty. Yes, pretty. Feminine and neat and shiny. And it had, it was, she had made it so. All the time dreading at the back of her mind, in the guilty dark cellar of her heart, that Grace might return.

Sandwiches finished, neatly cut from corner to corner, and each one wrapped in wax-paper, she laid them, together with paper napkins and flower-printed wax-paper

cups, in a carton. She put on her hat again, tucked the carton under one arm, picked up the thermos jug and with a quick, bird glance at her safe little nest—still safe from Grace—pushed out the screen door and set off down the two-rut road, smiling, humming to herself.

Beyond her neat, strong, white-rail gate, a car stood on its jack, at an angle like a beached boat, while the fat young woman, shoulder muscles bulging, wrestled with a wrench at a disabled wheel with a tattered tire. The car was some sort of foreign one, not very big, not very new, the red paint dull, a fender dented. It had once possessed a cloth top. This was folded back in gray rags and streamers. Soiled cotton wadding poked out of the false leather of the seat upholstery. Three tow-headed youngsters—the hot sun reflecting haloes off their hair—were in the back seat. Ages perhaps four, five, six. In the front seat sat a very blond girl in an armless cotton print dress extremely tight over lovely, upright young breasts. She wore immense dark glasses and a sulk. Her voice was shrill as a shrike's cry.

"Oh, for Christ sake, Dutch, get the damn thing fixed. If you'd stuck to the Coast Highway there'd have been a filling station. I know you're too proud to let a man fix it. But I'm tired. I want to get home. You and your scenic drives. We could die out here." Then she saw Lily and rearranged her mouth in a smile. The children in the back were squabbling. She turned her head. "Hey, quiet. This nice lady's brought you something to eat."

"We're thirsty!" the oldest one said. He had a pink bandaid on his forehead.

Lily held up the jug. "There's lemonade too."

"Gee, thanks," the blond girl said. But she didn't budge from the car, just held out her hands for Lily to put the box of sandwiches in them. At the same moment, the fat young woman got up off her knees, smearing dirt across her forehead as she tried to mop the sweat out of her eyes. The blond girl said, "Aw, you're not stopping? Jesus, we'll never get out of this hell-hole."

The big girl sighed good-naturedly and showed Lily a half smile. "Just for a short break. Then I'll tackle it with renewed vigor."

"Renewed vigor," the blond girl sniffed, and began handing out the sandwiches. The youngsters grabbed at them like caged things. Each took a bite. Paused. Faces twisted. Filled mouths opened. "We want hamburgers," they yelled.

"I'm sorry," Lily said.

The blond girl jerked around in the seat and the back of her hand went across their faces like a stick along the slats of a picket fence—slap-slap-slap. "You shut up and eat what you get." She smiled at Lily shame-facedly. "Dutch spoils them," she said.

The fat young woman—Dutch?—had set out the waxpaper cups along the car's hood, hefted the heavy thermos, and poured each cup full. She doled the cups out, then held one out to Lily.

Lily shooed her head. "I must go back. It's too hot for me out here at my age."

Dutch breathed a small, ironic laugh. Her eyes went for a moment to the car full of tear-streaked, mouth-stuffed brats and the glum girl looking sour and fed-up, holding her cup of lemonade. Dutch

said, "Yeah, too hot is right." She crouched again at the tire. "I'll bring your stuff back."

Moving toward the house again, trying to keep within the narrow, ragged shadow of the trees, and stumbling sometimes on the loose, weedy clods of plowed earth that margined the grove, Lily continued to hear, though fortunately fading, the shrill nag of the blond girl's voice.

"Anyway, if you had a halfway decent car instead of this old wreck, the wheels wouldn't be all rusted up. A new car. A good American car that runs. With a top, for a change. If you could earn a living. You were supposed to be the man of the family, remember? You were going to look after us. Never have to worry again in my life . . ."

Dutch came sweating, an hour later, with the thermos and the carton full of crumpled paper wrappers, cups, napkins. Grubbier than ever, and with a blood-crust cut

across the back of one hand. She wouldn't accept first aid or a wash-up. Lily felt certain she'd like a can of beer. Grace had loved beer. But Lily had no beer to offer. Only water, which was gratefully received.

Watching the heavy, bunched figure diminish down the two-rut road, Lily was moved. She closed the door, found the green metal box in which she kept insurance policies, bankbook, a few produce stock certificates, and took from it the yellowed envelope with the San Francisco return address that had been Grace's. Seated at the kitchen table, while the bee still buzzed drowsily outside the screen, she copied the address in ballpoint on a fresh envelope imprinted with tiny blue flowers. Then she wrote a check, put the check into the envelope, sealed it, stamped it. Tomorrow morning she would wait out at the RFD box and hand the envelope to Mr. Curry, the mailman, when he drove by.

groups throughout. Purpose of the Symposium was to view the homosexual in the context of his total life style, not limiting his identity as a person to the label placed upon him because of his sexual object choice.

Among the registrants to the Symposium were psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, sociologists, teachers, marriage counselors, job counselors, clergy, seminarians, college professors and students.

Not everyone would report the results of the Symposium in the same way. There were a few holdouts and dropouts. But for those who saw this comprehensive program and confrontation through without missing any of the sessions, a spirit of oneness took hold in a very human exchange. Participants, heterosexual and homosexual alike, were reluctant to part. And finally, The Rev. Charles Lewis, president of CRH, broke the silence, "Hey, there's a whole world out there! Let's go and challenge it."

\* \* \*

*What About That Little Matter of . . .*

#### **BEING TOUCHED**

" . . . I was born without a skin . . . and then I was told to walk, to live, to run . . . every tiny cell and pore active and breathing and trembling and enjoying. I shrieked with pain. I ran. And as I ran the wind lashed me, and then the voices of people like whips on me. Being touched! Do you know what it is to be touched by a human being! . . ."

The date is Sunday, October 27, 1968. The time, approximately 5 p.m. I am seated, along with some hundred other persons, in a well-lighted auditorium—Fellowship Hall, Glide Foundation, San Francisco. This is to be the end—the final meeting—of "A Symposium ON THE LIFE STYLE OF THE HOMOSEXUAL" which has been going on since Thursday, October 24. At this final session, all that has been asked of us is a brief report on our response to, and evaluation of, this pilot symposium. The "us" referred to consists of a majority of heterosexual and a minority of homosexual participants.

I am tired . . . the better word is exhausted. And I am aware of the exhaustion of others. We have been together now since Thursday afternoon. We have left one another late each evening and come back together early each morning. We have sat through lengthy panel discussions, have asked and answered innumerable questions, have huddled together in small rooms in small groups exposing our personal lives, unveiling hidden experiences and feelings, baring some of our most guarded emotions before others . . . and witnessing in others the painful baring of their own emotions . . . we are drained and exhausted.

A young man stands up to give his particular Task Group report (there were some 12 Task Groups, each composed of 1 homosexual male, 1 homosexual female, and from 4 to 6 heterosexual persons). He begins his report along rather common and expected lines, offering criticisms and suggestions to be applied to future symposia.

But then something happens.

He looks away from his notes out over the audience and suddenly he is himself and he is speaking openly, freely and with intense feeling, his voice at times

shaking, and he is saying things like:

I always thought of homosexual and heterosexual . . . we discovered in our group how shaky all of our sex identities are, like were we really homosexual or heterosexual . . . we discovered how basically sexual we all are as human beings . . . we ended up feeling we knew nothing at all about human sexuality, about our own identities, let alone those of others . . . we're all epeople, human beings, and we've all got sex hangups, sexual problems, questions. After the sex films last night, all of us in our group admitted disgust, and erotic reactions, and all kinds of weird things those films brought to the surface in us . . . we all admitted feeling terribly alone during those films, alienated, and wanting desperately just to touch the person next to us, but none of us did, because we were afraid to, because they might think it was sexual when it wasn't . . . we were all shook up . . . we ended up talking about how no one touches anyone anymore . . . you know, a hand on the shoulder, around the waist, a kiss . . . how we're all so afraid of touching in our society without it being sexual . . . we wanted to touch one another . . . we moved the table out of our way and we pulled our chairs closer and closer together until our knees were touching, the sides of our legs were touching, and we talked about this problem . . . we don't know what happened in other groups, but we were wishing the same thing could have happened . . . we didn't want to leave one another . . . we wondered about it . . .

I have been on the edge of my chair listening to my own feelings coming out of his mouth. Now, as he falteringly sits down, I slump back in relief. He has said all that I myself wanted to say, and has said it so well. The room is quiet. All others in the room are so quiet. No one else rises to give a report, not even when requested to do so. At last a voice from somewhere in the crowd says, "I know he spoke for every group here." And another voice adds, "We wondered about the same thing, if any other group was going through the same thing as ours, as what he was talking about. I guess they did. We're so glad they did."

And the room returns to silence.

" . . . we are brothers, I said. The speed of our vertigos is the same. We arrived at the same place at the same

*Continued from Page 18*

the whole person. A rapport was established which grew into a deep-felt bond. And by the closing session Sunday evening a "love-in" took place in the Fellowship Hall of San Francisco's Glide Methodist Church.

The format of the Symposium included formal presentations of factual information to the whole assembly by a homophile faculty of "experts," with discussions and field trips in small task groups led by homosexual enablers. Sunday worship service at Glide (A New Word and World for the Homosexual) and the Tavern Guild's annual Halloween Beaux Arts Ball, were included in the package as were dinners at gay restaurants and bars, visits to homophile homes, and a multi-media montage on the whole spectrum of human sexuality. The program was devised as a "total experience" for participants who were expected to stay with their small task

moment, which is not so with other people's thoughts. The language of nerves which we both use makes us

brothers..."  
\*Both indented quotations taken from House of Incest by Anais Nin.

## SOMERVILLE AND ROSS, a Biography

SOMERVILLE AND ROSS: a Biography. By Maurice Collis. London, Faber and Faber, 1968

When a reviewer who know nothing of Ireland, abhors blood sports, and loves cats, is fascinated by a biography as Irish as the shamrock, one of whose two subjects worships dogs, is mad-keen on fox-hunting, and served five or more years as MFH to a small hunt in County Cork—you may be sure the book is interesting. When one learns that its subjects are a pair of unmarried women who enjoyed many years of successful literary collaboration, two parallel cases spring at once to mind: the late-18th century Ladies of Llangollen, Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby (who though they lived in Wales were born in Ireland), and the late-Victorian Englishwomen Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper who wrote as Michael Field.

Actually, on close examination as many points of contrast as of similarity come to light among these notable pairs. Butler and Ponsonby were virtually exiled because their relatives objected so violently to their passionate friendship. Bradley was Cooper's young aunt (only fourteen years separated them) and practically her mother until her late teens when they became what they thought of as a married couple. Thus the two earlier pairs enjoyed their own independent households for most of their lives. Somerville and Ross, on the other hand, were members of huge clans so close-knit (they had a great-grandfather in common) that they had difficulty in escaping family responsibilities even for the trips they shared to fertilize their literary inspiration. And finally, while the Llangollen ladies enjoyed the friendly interest of many literary and artistic notables of their day, and 'Michael Field' knew many of those in their later generation, Somerville and Ross had almost no contact with the Gaelic Revival, from which Yeats, Synge, 'AE,' Lady Gregory and the Abbey Theatre are familiar to most students of literature.

One reason for this absence of literary fraternizing was that Somerville and Ross were landed gentry and quite out of sympathy with the Home Rule wave which later would break into such bitter civil strife.

Probably another cogent reason was that the keynote of their literary output was a humorous realism about Irish life, while their contemporary literati were committed to a romantic seriousness. ('G.B.S.'—Shaw—was the only exception, and of course he wrote nothing about Ireland). Our ladies' works comprise travel sketches describing the various trips they managed together, plus a series of novels and short stories, mostly featuring an amusing 'R.M.'—Resident Magistrate—an office surviving only in northern Ireland. What is considered best among their fiction is 'The Real Charlotte,' published in 1894. Its heroine is a girl "of the Dublin middle class, not the sort of heroine selected by any Irish writer hitherto," who is taken up by the class socially above her—their own. This novel enjoyed considerable popular success and was published also in America.

An interesting facet of their collaboration, as Collis emphasizes, is the difficulty of distinguishing the hand of the separate authors, although he insists that Ross had the greater literary gift. This unity of style is particularly significant when one reads of Somerville's output after the death of Ross, whom she outlived by more than three decades. This introduces another characteristic of the pair: the spiritualism which was very much the mode at the turn of the century, and which of course is particularly congenial to the Irish temperament with its easy belief in all things supernatural. Both women had experienced communion with departed spirits before Ross's death, and afterward for the remainder of Somerville's life she believed she was in constant communication with Ross and went on profiting from the latter's collaboration. (She was also sure of the continued existence 'on the other side' of all relatives who died and even of her adored dogs.) This devout spiritualism brought her eventually into contact with Dame Ethel Smyth, the English composer, who became passionately attached to her and remained so until after Somerville's death.

This brings us to a final point of comparison with the two earlier devoted pairs mentioned above. Of the Llangollen ladies' relationship we have no incontrovertible evi-

dence, but Colette's long analysis in 'The Pure and the Impure' indicates her belief that it was overtly lesbian. Concerning Michael Field, Sturge Moore's 'Works and Days' makes it clear that though their relationship was passionate and not without expression, the latter was kept within bounds acceptable to the Catholic Church which both women joined in middle to later life. Of Edith Somerville, Collis tells us early that before meeting Ross she had been passionately attached to a distant cousin whose death left her ill for a short time. She was equally drawn to Ross, but the latter objected to the 'grosser' aspects of such a love. (Ross is said to have known a mild attraction to a confirmed bachelor, whose description suggests he may well have been potentially homosexual.) Somerville proclaimed herself revolted by all males and avoided attending weddings; but that she was converted to Ross's abstention from overt expression is evidenced by her refusal to yield to Dame Ethel Smyth's pleas for complete intimacy. The latter was by her own confession far from lacking in lesbian experience. But though she took her beloved's continence hard, it did not mar their long friendship, and Dame Ethel came, via spiritualistic encounters, even to love the departed Ross. (She later fell madly in love with Virginia Woolf.)

A final word as to Ross's name. She was born Violet Florence Martin, but among her and Edith's swarm of relatives there were other Violets and Florences, and to avoid

confusion—along, doubtless, with a masculine preference for surnames—Edith took at once to calling her beloved *Martin*. When later it became necessary for her co-author to have a full name, Violet adopted 'Ross' from one of the several family estates where she spent part of her life. The pseudonym especially pleased her mother, who found the somewhat earthy realism of the first Somerville and Ross volumes not to her liking.

Because, as Collis says, the greater part of their work reflects a way of life long vanished (and always of somewhat localized interest), our authors are virtually forgotten today. Here again they resemble their predecessors: of Butler and Ponsonby's few literary efforts nothing whatever is now extant except Butler's daily journal; and the plays and poems of 'Michael Field' are read only by those with an interest in their lives. Similarly, the Irish women's works never made any great quantity of money. In this respect they stand midway between their predecessors; the Llangollen ladies were always 'poor as church mice,' while with 'Michael Field,' both partners had sufficient private means to publish their never very popular output privately. Whatever income Somerville and Ross enjoyed did come, hard won, through commercial publishing houses. Whatever their literary stature, may their memory live as one more evidence of lasting love between women.

REVIEWED BY  
JEANNETTE H. FOSTER, Ph.D.

## THE COUNSELLOR'S CORNER

by Ruth M. McGuire, Ph.D.

(THE COUNSELLOR'S CORNER column consists of your letters on your problems with answers provided by Dr. McGuire. Letters submitted for use in this column should not be over 1000 words in length and should not be signed except by some "code" name chosen by you. However, all letters should be accompanied by a cover note containing your correct name and address. SEND ALL LETTERS TO GENE DAMON, EDITOR, THE LADDER, and not to Dr. McGuire, since this only delays them and might

cause them to be lost. No personal replies can be made by mail. Letters not suitable for use in the column will be destroyed.)

Dear Dr. McGuire:

Would you please talk about fidelity, sexual fidelity, its pros and cons in a Lesbian relationship? Do the same rules apply as to heterosexual marriage in a Lesbian marriage? If so, why? Or, are all the rules wrong? Is it possible there should be some way of making other sexual outlets perfectly ok with both and all marriage partners?

"More Curious Than Concerned"

To "More Curious Than Concerned"

Fidelity, or the quality of faithfulness is such a purely individual matter that is virtually useless to discuss it in a single, isolated situation. The circumstances surrounding the wish to be, or the need to be, faithful, can be as varied as the individual concerned about it. There are probably as many different kinds, or conceptions, of fidelity as there are people who would like to think they are. An entire, enormous group of people, the United States Marine Corps, has as its motto, "Semper Fidelis"—always faithful. But for the usual individual who espouses a close, one-to-one relationship with another, as in homosexual or heterosexual union, the concept of fidelity is another matter entirely. The 'pros and cons' of attempting sexual fidelity in a Lesbian relationship are precisely those in any other love relationship. If one's individual value system contains the belief that fidelity is 'good' and 'honest' and absolutely essential, then that person will find it more rewarding to be faithful than otherwise. On the other hand, there are many persons who apparently simply cannot, nor do they wish to, control their responses to the stimulus of attractive persons other than their avowed love partners. I am not aware of any "rules" or a particular party line that pertains in heterosexual marriage other than those laid down by religion and the laws, and in any event these laws would not apply in a homosexual union. I have heard countless rationales from guilt-ridden and defensive individuals who protest that if and when they are sexually 'unfaithful' to their partners, it means nothing at all, really, except a momentary fun-kind-of-thing or a toss in the hay, and that they have not taken any real 'love' from their partners.

As to whether or not it is possible to make it perfectly okay for all marriage partners to enjoy other sexual outlets is not within my realm of competence to say, nor within the limits of these pages to discuss. Though I would like to, as the idea is challenging; perhaps later.

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Dr. McGuire:

Would you please speak on the issue of women "changing their sex"—how it is done, what the results are and are not and more particularly, would you please recommend the names and addresses, if possible and ethically correct and proper to do so, of doctors who would perform such treatment as is necessary for a young girl to become,

much more masculine than she is at present. These doctors would, hopefully, be in the United States but, if necessary, could be abroad.

"Where its at!"

To "Where It's At"

Trans-sexual surgical procedures are, as you undoubtedly know, a relatively recent development in the medical field. The phenomena was first given world-wide publicity with the successful surgery performed on Christine Jorgensen in Denmark a few years ago. Since then, considerable success has been achieved by skilled plastic surgeons in many countries of the world in changing the congenital male into the highly reasonable facsimile of the human female. I am advised by an eminent gynecologist in my city that instances of surgical procedures changing the female into the male are, as yet, much fewer. This is apparently due to the facts that there is less request from women to be changed into men, and, to the extremely stringent psychiatric evaluations that comprise the initial stages that any female must undergo who wishes the change. The thorough psychiatric studies pertain to men as well as women who request these surgical procedures. A recent book that may help to enlighten you is *THE TRANS-SEXUAL PHENOMENON* by Harry Benjamin, M. D.

My informant advises me that the procedures for changing the female into the male begins with, as described above, thorough psychiatric evaluation. If this results in approval of this change for the female, then follows a hysterectomy and a radical mastectomy—which is surgical removal of the uterus, ovaries, etc., and both breasts. Hormone treatment then gradually induces male secondary sexual characteristics to form, such as increased hirsutism (hairyness) deepened voice tone, etc. Finally, a penis is developed from the clitoris, but this remains non-functional. The entire procedure requires a considerable length of time, money, and individual endurance. For further detailed information, you may wish to write to John Hopkins University School of Medicine, Division of Psychiatry and Plastic Surgery, Baltimore, Maryland. Trans-sexual surgical research is being conducted there.

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Dear Dr. McGuire:

My friend and I (we have been together for 3½ years) have a real problem. She has been offered a very good job in another city. I have aging parents in this location and a

very good job. Her job here is perfectly adequate for her needs and our mutual needs, though it is true that the new job is a better job. The new job is also a temporary job and she says that a two year separation is no problem, but she would prefer that I quit my job, leave my parents and go with her. I feel we should stay here. There is no financial reason or possible advancement reason for making the move. The alternate suggestion, a two year separation, seems to me ridiculous. Since I am the major breadwinner, I feel it is my decision. I am certain that in a heterosexual marriage there would be no other possible decision. What do you think?

"Breadwinner"

To "Breadwinner"

The problem of separation, even though only relatively temporary, for two people who love each other and enjoy sharing living together, can be painful and frightening. The old saw about 'absence makes the heart grow fonder' too often turns out to mean 'fonder' of someone else. I'm wondering if this element might not be your real concern? You seem to place the major emphasis on the financial factors in the situation. You mention no concern for your partner's pos-

sible growth and personal enrichment through the new, although distant, work opportunity. For many this would be the only real concern. When you say that a "two year separation is ridiculous" it strikes me that you really think it is anything *but* ridiculous—in fact—highly dangerous. Could it be that the relationship is so shaky and unstable that you pretty well know that a two-year separation would wreck it? I think it quite possible that you feel obligated to remain near your elderly parents, you feel secure in your own good job, and so why rock the boat through risking the separation? Your 'sword-rattling' about being the major breadwinner smacks of a controlling and dictatorial attitude that you probably don't actually have at all, but in your anxiety about losing your friend, you are clutching at straws, which, if you will really think about it, and honestly probe your deepest motivations, you may discover are pretty flimsy and even downright unattractive. The separation or remaining together should be a mutual, two-way accepted decision. And never forget, the only truly precious thing any human being has is the right to opportunities that will allow him the ultimate in personal growth and development.

## LESBIANA

by Gene Damon

Nat Markal, aging but powerful executive producer, is *THE MOVIE MAKER* in Herbert Kastle's larger than life novel, published by Bernard Geis, 1968. There is a lot less sex in this than most of the Bernard Geis titles, but Herbert Kastle more than makes up for this by using that good old American standby, violence. The novel is as populous as the cast intended for Nat's crowning epic, to be called "The Eternal Joneses." There are the bitter insights, the starry-eyed New York writers getting their beatings, the sexy ingenues getting laid, the plots and counterplots. The homosexual elements are substantial, but nothing to get excited about. Mr. Kastle has always had it in for the male homosexuals and his treatment here is a little less cruel in keeping with the times, but he makes his primary



male homosexual protagonist a thorough-going son of a bitch, even though he spares him the bloody ending handed out to about half of the cast. The Lesbian, a washed-up Marilyn Monroe, through a series of peculiar incidents, loses (she thinks) the woman she loves and commits suicide. Despite all the blood and problems it is fun to read; he knows how to plot, and isn't too bad with his cardboard figures, and he can write good dialogue. You'll enjoy it, but you'll forget it fast. It would make a good movie, faint, damning praise.

There is a very important reprint, but one so out of line monetarily that many won't be able to take advantage of it. In 1951,

those stalwart friends of the short story and novella forms, Whit and Hallie Burnett, edited the collection, *SEXTET*, published in N.Y. by David McKay. Included in this collection of six novellas, was *NADIA DEVEREAUX*, by John Eichrodt. It is an essential part of any relatively complete collection of Lesbian literature, both from its own essential value, and its inspirational source, because *NADIA DEVEREAUX* is a female version of Thomas Mann's classic novella, *DEATH IN VENICE*. The collection, *SEXTET*, has long since become a collector's item, and is very hard to find and very expensive. It is nice that the famous reprint firm, Kraus Reprints, has now published it again, but it is not nice that it has a \$10 price tag. However, watch your nearest large public library and any and all university and college libraries, for it may turn up. It is also possible to get the original collection through inter-library loan.

And some reprint items with far less expensive pricetags. Thomas Pynchon's almost incomprehensible novel, *V*, has been reprinted by Bantam 1968, first time since 1964. *AN HONORABLE ESTATE*, by Lane Kauffman, is out from Avon, 1968, first time since 1965. 1967's sensational, but not very, *THE EXHIBITIONIST*, by Henry Sutton, has been brought out by Fawcett, Crest, 1968, and the almost good, but not quite good enough, novel *THE SHORT YEAR*, by Barbra Ward, is out from Signet, 1968. One very good, not to be missed, though it isn't a major study, *CAUGHT IN THAT MUSIC*, by Seymour Epstein, Pocket Books, 1968. The latter is beautifully written, a joy to read. Quite a bumper crop of 1967's titles all out in recent months, *THE EXPERIMENT*, by Patrick Skene Catling, Pocket Books, 1969; *CALL ME BRICK*, by Munroe Howard, Dell, 1968; *ANYTHING GOES*, by Bine Strange Petersen, a quality paperback reprint, Evergreen Black Cat, Grove, 1968, and last, and most important, the very warm and welcome *KATIE MULHOLLAND*, by Catherine Cookson, Bantam, 1969. This last is a romantic family chronicle sort of thing, with very major Lesbian roles involved. Nice, and we don't see much of that in current fiction. *A GIRL CALLED JULES*, by Milena Milani, out from Dell, in October, 1968 is a reprint of special interest primarily because of the rarity of the book in this country. This is a 1967 title which was published in hardback in London by Hutchinson. It has never been published in the

United States in hardback. It's another in the seemingly endless novels about adolescents, which, possibly due to this reviewer's increasing age, seem more endless and less entertaining with each passing year. This is not a bad one, however, and worth paperback cost certainly.

To correct an error of omission in the October/November, 1968 column, I want to let you know that the book, *COMMON-SENSE SEX*, by Ronald Michael Mazur, Boston, Beacon Press, 1968, contains (in the suggested reading section) specific references to an article which appeared in the January, 1968 issue of *THE LADDER*, and gives information on reaching *DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS*, including correct address and supplemental data . . . Good . . .

The Bloomsbury apartment house presided over by *THE MARCHIONESS* (London, MacDonald, 1968) is a seedy place, and its inhabitants reflect this sad state of affairs. When the working tenants come home in the evening, the Marchioness waits furiously for the sign of their return, the use of the terrible and noisy plumbing. With each assault, she raises her umbrella in a gesture of unnecessary but hilarious defiance. Since she lives mentally in the time of General Gordon and Khartoum, it is not surprising that she feels the tenants are barbarian hordes. They are, in fact, more to be pitied than censored. There is Jimmy and his mother, Mrs. Jimmy, tied too closely. The death of Mrs. Jimmy precipitates most of the book's rather pedestrian activity. Claire, aging Lesbian who has the misfortune of being stuck with a girl, Margaret, who at near middle-age has not quite made up her mind yet about what she is . . . an old familiar and always very unpleasant scene. There are the Abbotts, a sex and food oriented couple, who always follow every meal with a quick romp. Mutual caring for Jimmy, who falls rather badly to pieces as expected, is the only contact the inhabitants have, and as they all gather to meet a common emergency, becoming in the doing more real, less isolated, the Marchioness drifts more and more away into her fey and fantastic shadow world. James Broomlyne's novel is very well written, but very limited in appeal, since there is almost no humor in the telling though the opportunity was certainly there.

As this column is being written, I have not yet received a review copy of John O'Hara's latest collection of short stories, entitled *AND OTHER STORIES*, pub-

lished as always, by N.Y., Random House, 1968. The longest story in this collection, actually a 45,000 word novella, *A FEW TRIPS AND SOME POETRY*, is said to be of major Lesbian interest and promises not to be at all unsympathetic or dishonest. Several other stories will very likely have homosexual content judging from Mr. O'Hara's track record in recent years. The April/May issue will be the yearly report on Lesbian literature, and it is already too late to include Mr. O'Hara's contribution in those statistics, since I have no way of determining how many stories will be pertinent, nor their titles. If I get this in time, I'll try to include it as a separate item in the next issue. Random House is being remarkably recalcitrant about supplying review copies of pertinent titles to a Lesbian publication. This is a short-sighted idiocy on their part, and another form of payment for being a non-militant minority. You may be very certain that if they published a collection of short stories with several of concern to the black population, they would not consider refusing a review copy to any of the black publications. In fairness, it must be added that, to date, every other major U.S. and most minor U.S. publishers have been eager to please, and anxious to provide review copies for this column. (Fair enough, too, for until this last calendar year, I purchased personally all of the hundreds of books that have been reviewed in the pages of *THE LADDER* under my byline.)

Another title which will be reviewed in a coming issue, and which is also too late for inclusion in the statistics for 1968, is *THE SLEEP OF REASON*, by C. P. Snow . . . *DO NOT BUY* this, wait for the review. It is an astonishing and vicious bit of mud slinging from a novelist of sufficient importance, unfortunately, to do us severe damage. And worse, it is obviously intentional slander.

*PALACE OF ICE*, by Tarjei Vesaas, N.Y., Morrow, 1968 (published as *THE ICE PALACE*, London, Peter Owen, 1966), is not statistically pertinent since it concerns children. However, most readers of this column will enjoy this account of the love between 11 year old Siss and 11 year old Unn. Mr. Vesaas is very famous in his own country, though little known here. In using the poignant loss of a child to symbolize faith in ideals in a world torn by a general sense of loss, Vesaas has seemingly unwittingly provided an account of one of childhood's common and real tragedies (though

seldom so spectacular or as final as that provided by death)—the end of an intense and passionate (though celibate) friendship.

Jacklove, a ghost town in Montana, becomes the temporary home of a small group of pseudo-hippies, in Peter Menegas's overdone, *THE JACKLOVE AFFAIR*, N.Y., Coward-McCann, 1968. Chief Basho (nee John Carl Goetz, Jr.) leads his 20 love people and their eight offspring onto the free property offered by big-hearted, hungry, rich Orilla Tortini. There they have the use of the empty saloon, the livery stable, the Baptist church and each other. It gets pretty thick at times, though young Mr. Menegas is a good writer. After a few months of charity life and too little labor, tempers get short, grass gives out, and the inevitable flight begins. The reader is not likely to stay in Jacklove as long as its inhabitants do. There are a couple of Lesbians, and a witty male homosexual, stock figures in a familiar play in an unusual setting.

Jane Kogan, a frequent cover artist for *THE LADDER*, recently shared with me her discovery of a hitherto unknown poetry title, *ITALICS FOR LIFE*, by Antoinette Quinby Scudder, N.Y., Exposition Press, 1947. This is, as some of you will know, a vanity press, meaning simply that the author paid for the publication, and since this is a collection of nearly 600 pages of poetry, she paid dearly. Actually, though dreadfully uneven, she is not without talent. Some of her work is quite good, and it is not too unlikely that the major reasons for her failure to achieve legitimate press publication are her old-fashioned style coupled with her rather predominant subject matter. Internal evidence in the volume indicates that she also published in various years before this collected volume through the vanity press, Dorrance and Co., headquartered in Philadelphia, and appeared to some extent in *THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR*, and a few other newspapers, as well as in a volume called *NEW JERSEY POETS*, published by Henry Harrison of New York (I do not believe that was a vanity press). In any case, the volume is very predominantly feministic in tone, and there are a dozen overt Lesbian poems, and some thirty or so that must be considered variant, in addition to dozens that are written from the viewpoint of a male narrator. One section is similar to the work of Edgar Lee Masters, another imitates Japanese poetry. One very long section, "The Amazons In Attica," which occupies over 130 pages of the book,

is quite pertinent. Half a dozen poems deal with Jeanne d'Arc, including one that quite specifically treats her as Lesbian. I am sorry to have to add that because it is a vanity publication, it is rare, and won't be easy to find second-hand. Inter-library loan won't be of help either in this case. Your best bet, if you are sufficiently interested, is to have a second-hand dealer advertise for it. Those of you in the Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York area have the best chance at it, since this is the author's home area, and most of the poems that are not historical in nature, are laid in these vicinities. I haven't checked, but it is very possible that the Newark, New Jersey public library will have this . . .

THE LAST OF THE GREEKS, by Olivia Davis, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1968, is a light and charming, pseudo-artistic novel about London society in the 1960's. It is written in a style best described as the chitch at school. The patient reader with a good classical background will enjoy it, and there is enough soap opera for those who read for entertainment. One major character, Jean Alexandre, an artist who is bisexual, is almost certainly fashioned on Jean Cocteau, thought not very accurately. There are a pair of Lesbians, who do little to advance the story, but Humphrey Cooke and Clunn Mortimer will be recognized as figures of not unpleasant stereotype origins. The plot is built around the reaction very traditional artist, Mark Prentiss, has when thrown in to contact with his former wife, and the man who stole her away, Jean Alexandre. Foolish, foppish, family fun and games.

James Colton's KNOWN HOMOSEXUAL, Brandon House, 1968, really loads the action and the scales against his Negro male homosexual protagonist. Steve is married to a white girl, has a white boyfriend, impossible parents, and several hangups. When Coy, his lover, is found dead, all the evidence points to Steve. In getting out of this corner, we get a complete playback on Steve, and it is a full life. Steve's tramp type wife leaves him to live with a photographer, Bernie, who is a rather forceful Lesbian. Bernie's role is minor, but she is accurately if not sympathetically drawn. Mr. Colton is a very good writer. It is a shame he is more or less restricted to the tripe paperback market by subject matter and forthright approach. The last third of this is as taut a mystery as any you'll read, though the book's cover billing will attract only those interested in homosexuality.

Evelyn Berckman is out of her depth in A CASE IN NULLITY, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1967, 1968. A greater collection of unbelievably naive folk has hardly ever been assembled between covers (books and beds alike). Auriol is in her late 20's and is grieving over the death of her perfect diance, Giles, when she meets glowering, repressed homosexual, Ivor Hailes, and marries him. Her best friend, Maggie, is, to use her own description, perfectly cast "as papa in a Lesbian relationship." However, late in the book she professes mad affection for men. Ivor, having inexplicably married, is, of course, wholly unsuitable as a husband. Furthermore, he is a mental sadist. After as much melodrama as is possible to mount considering there are no wind-swept castles in this one, Auriol sees a lawyer, and finds that the best grounds she has for a divorce is nullity, unconsummated marriage. However, since Ivor is a "human being" she cannot accept these grounds, at first. Thereafter, Miss Berckman (in a late effort, I suspect, to save her book) gets into what she does best, the building of suspense. Ivor skulks about making midnight telephone calls to the terrified Auriol, and, well, you see the picture. At last goodness triumphs and Pollyanna decides she will use the nullity grounds and divorces Ivor. There are some scenes appended in a hapless effort to lend psychological credence to the incredible tale. We don't really know, at the end, just what will happen to Auriol. What is more, we don't really care.

A serious and foolish error was made by me in the December/January column. Author Tana De Gamez's book reviewed was shown as LIKE A RIVER OF LIONS. The book actually being reviewed was THE YOKE AND THE STAR. The earlier novel, LIKE A RIVER OF LIONS, by Tana De Gamez, was a very major Lesbian novel, and was published in 1962, in New York, by Graphic Society. It was issued as a paperback by Paperback Library in 1963 and again by them in 1967. LIKE A RIVER OF LIONS was reviewed by me in the May 1964 issue of THE LADDER. The bibliographic data for THE YOKE AND THE STAR is correct in the December/January column published by Bobbs-Merrill, 1966 and issued in paperback by Belmont Books, 1968. LIKE A RIVER OF LIONS is, unfortunately, out of print. Best bet for obtaining it would be your second hand paperback stores in larger cities.

1. THE GAY WORLD, Martin Hoffman M.D.—Significant study of homosexuality with up-to-date conclusions . . . . .	5 5.95
2. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS, Gertrude Stein—Life with Gertrude—genius Lesbian—as Alice might have told it . . . . .	1.45
3. MICRO COSM, Maureen Duffy—The Lesbian world of London—realistic and pertinent . . . . .	4.95
4. THE COLLECTED WORKS OF JANE BOWLES—includes TWO SERIOUS LADIES and CAMP CATARACT . . . . .	2.45
5. QUEEN CHRISTINA, Georgina Masson—"Gifted, erratic and eccentric, she was the object of much scandal" N.Y. Times . . . . .	7.95
6. SONGS OF BILITIS, Pierre Lovys . . . . .	1.25
7. SAPPHO—A NEW TRANSLATION, Mary Barnard—Love poetry by Sappho of Lesbos . . . . .	1.25
8. THE WATCHER AND THE WATCHED, Thomas Peachum—"Close to the edge of pornography . . . and well written" Gene Damon . . . . .	1.50
9. LULU PLAYS, Frank Wedekind—includes EARTH SPIRIT and PANDORA'S BOX . . . . .	.75
10. THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE, Frank Marcus—Hit play and newly released movie . . . . .	4.50
11. THE WELL OF LONELINESS, Radclyffe Hall . . . . .	.95
12. NIGHTWOOD, Djuna Barnes . . . . .	1.50
13. FIVE GIRLS, photographed by Sam Haskins . . . . .	1.45
14. UNLIKE OTHERS, Valerie Taylor . . . . .	.75
15. WAITING FOR WINTER, John O'Hara—Short Stories—eight pertain—two Lesbian in theme . . . . .	.95
15. ANYTHING GOES, Bine Strange Peterson—Well-written but depressing story of a Danish Lesbian . . . . .	.95
17. THE LESBIAN IN AMERICA, D. W. Lory . . . . .	.75
18. THE GRAPE VINE, Jess Stearn—Documentary . . . . .	.95
19. Three assorted "Trashies"—Bad but fun . . . . .	1.75
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# CROSS CURRENTS

SEPIA MAGAZINE, September, 1968, in an article entitled THE HOMOSEXUAL FIGHTS BACK, uses much of the material in Charles Alverson's now nearly famous July 17, 1968 WALL STREET JOURNAL report on the homophile community. LADDER readers need not look it up, because it ignores the Lesbian as usual. It is, however, a pat and not pan. National President, Rita Laporte, was featured in the November issue of SEPIA, which ran the following letter:

Dear Editor:

How encouraging to find so sympathetic and clear-headed an article as "The Homosexual Fights Back." As a Lesbian, I belong on the one hand to that oppressed minority that cuts across color, sex and ethnic groups, and on the other hand, to that oppressed majority that includes all women . . . .

Our organization, DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, is not really "militant" as the term is used today. But it IS persistent. We are one of the oldest homophile organizations, having been founded in 1955. Our magazine, THE LADDER, has been published continuously since 1956. Never underestimate the power of a Lesbian!

PLAYBOY MAGAZINE, November, 1968, features a letter from Michael Hannon, Los Angeles attorney, in which he describes his recent attempt to become district attorney in Los Angeles. He failed to make it, but considers his failure a victory, since he received 23% of the total vote cast, or nearly 500,000 votes. His platform was strongly based on sexual law reform, and drug law reform. As a candidate he promised that if elected he would simply stop all prosecutions in these areas, specifically "all sexual offenses between consenting adults: fornication, adultery, oral copulation, sodomy and homosexual acts." He also promised to spend more time fighting

real crime (crime that injures people and property).

SHOCK OF A HIDDEN WORLD, screams the headline for Richard Schickel's four page, ILLUSTRATED, article on Lesbian movies in LIFE MAGAZINE, November 1, 1968. It isn't a bad article, though Mr. Schickel obviously knows very little about Lesbians, though more about movies. Just to be sure everyone understands the term (I guess) they include four stills of women embracing, three of them about to embrace and a panoramic shot of London Lesbian nightclub "Gateways" including some of its members acting as movie extras in THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE. The first thing that comes to mind is that among the very attractive women in this picture, the only odd looking one is actress Beryl Reid in drag as Oliver Hardy of Laurel and Hardy. Sick . . . .

STILLWATER, OHLAHOA, November 20, 1968: Oklahoma State University students, 1000 strong, began a 3 day symposium on sex and morality, "Sexpo '68" on November 18, 1968. First major address was delivered by New York City psychotherapist, Dr. Albert Ellis. He told the students that any act is unethical and immoral "if you needlessly do yourself in—go against self interest—by doing this act, and second, if you needlessly do in another person." He pointed out that "sex acts may be unethical for exactly the same reasons, but not because sex is involved." He went on to strongly criticize laws against both homosexuality and prostitution, and he advocated legalizing abortion. Another speaker, Dr. Edward W. Hobbs, Professor of Theology at Berkeley, California, criticized the Roman Catholic Church ban on birth control pills. He pointed out that the reason always given for banning contraceptive devices and medications is that they interfere with natural processes. If

this is valid, then, he further mentioned, we would have to bann all modern medicine.

SPECIAL RELEASE TO THE LADDER FROM FLORENCE CONRAD: Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal political action organization founded in 1947, has spoken up for homosexual rights. In their annual review of the organization's national policy recommendations, entitled "A Program for Americans 1968-1969," under the heading "Civil Liberties" appears the following sentence:

"The sexual activity of consenting adults when conducted in private is not an appropriate matter for criminal or other governmental sanctions."

She goes on to share with us this quotation from Robert F. Kennedy, which also appears in the cited A.D.A. publication:

"Some believe there is nothing one man or woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man . . . .

Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events—and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped.

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope and, crossing each other from a million centers of energy and daring, these ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

NBC RADIO aired its usual Sunday night talk show, Second Sunday, titled from its appearance on the second Sunday of each month, on Sunday, November 10, 1968, with some differences. The show's title, "The Sexual Revolution" was a misnomer, as many of the guests on the show pointed out. It was a good look, though, at our increasing liberty to talk about sexuality publicly. Guests included Dr. Wardell Pomeroy, formerly of the Kinsey Institute and now chief of the National Society for the Study of Sex, Dr. Albert Ellis, Professor Charles Winick, author of THE NEW SEX (he is worried about boys with long hair and girls in jeans—where has he been for the last 30 years?), Dr. Paul Gebhart, present head of the Kinsey Foundation (as

it is now known) and Dick Leitsch, Executive Director of Mattachine Society of New York, representing the male homosexual viewpoint and our own Martha Shelley, President of the New York Chapter of DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, speaking up for the lesbian. It was a good presentation, with both Dick Leitsch and Martha Shelley cool and collected under what was clearly a pressure interview. This received national press coverage, wit accounts appearing in papers all over the United States.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS DISCUSSED IN THE UNITED NATIONS: Wednesday, November 6, 1968. Newspapers around the country carried a report on a Swedish governmental report to the United Nations on the status of women. From the sober tones expressed, one might imagine that war had broken out on the kitchen range. The solution suggested to the problem of freeing women for more productive work was to give men more time to be home carrying on the household chores. A ridiculous idea, however, and obviously a sneaky attempt by the male population to get more time for fishing, hunting, football and poker. Whatever men might decide to do with extra time off from their jobs, it is unlikely they'd devote it to babysitting and household chores. If they did stay home it would be only to manage to get under foot. Dr. Margaret Mead, eminent anthropologist, agrees that some means must be found to free women from the household handicaps, but that solution, she says "can't be found by merely giving husbands more time around the house."

BACK TO THE DARK AGES, would be a fitting title for the series of courses being presented for women only by the University of Nevada, at both its Reno and Las Vegas sites. Peg Ward, writing in the Nevada State Journal, Sunday, October 20, 1968, seems very pleased that the university has a "mini university" program for women, with the wonderful title "Today's Home Builds Tomorrow's World." The courses offered are almost as world-shaping in scope as that title: "New Fashions for You," "Kitchen Creativity," "Gardening with Year-Round Color," and "New Fabrics For Today and Tomorrow." BLEAH!!!!!!!!, as Lucy would say.

PANTS MUST GO!, says Harriet Van Horne, in an article in the New York Post, November 15, 1968. Same old cry, we are "blurring" the sexes, and Joe Namath is

wearing a mink coat, and boys are boys, and girls are girls, and she decorates this hilarious tirade with some of the choicest quotes I've seen in years: "light footed lads in the rag trade" and "They are also, in a terribly depressing way, unwholesome" and "This neutering of the sexes" (what have they got in those pants, knives?) "is a thoroughly revolting, nasty business," and, best of all, "This monstrous role-changing can only bode ill for our society." Really, I think Miss Van Horne bodes ill for our society. What this is all about is the more recent return to the popularity of pants for women, which is hardly new and has been running in cycles, not, as some think, from the time Marlene Dietrich wore pants, but from the time that Sarah Bernhardt had two piece slack suits made for her with side fasteners in 1869!!!

**PARTHOGENETIC BIRTH** experiments make interesting reading. It is surprising, however, to continually be reminded that many scientists are working feverishly to find some way of implementing this in human beings. **SCIENCE JUST MIGHT MAKE MEN SUPERFLUOUS**, says Washington Post writer, Claude Koprowski, in a feature article, November 24, 1968. Seems silly in a world where the birth of each child may be a moral crime against the already living.

**AS LONG AS THERE'S THE FOUR OF US**, this from **TIME MAGAZINE**, November 29, 1968. Seems that armadillos always produce four offspring at the same time and that they are always identical quadruplets (**BRAVE NEW WORLD** in the animal kingdom?). A scientist working to see if there were any differences in these identical animals found that, indeed, there were many such differences. Prior theories, however, have stated that there should be no differences at all. The article lamely concludes with "... we could also be completely ignorant about how the most fundamental characters are inherited in mammals." Yes, at least!

Certain commercials on television and in national magazines during the last half of 1968 have inspired a total of eleven letters to **THE LADDER**. This may simply prove that almost everyone watches TV some of the time. Certainly the dedicated trend spotting editors of **MAD MAGAZINE** have been watching, and in the December 1968 issue, they have a parody full page ad entitled "**AMERICA'S GOING DRAG!**". Fun, almost as much fun

as the commercials themselves.

**PERSPECTIVE**, a San Francisco talk show on Radio Station K.F.R.C., Sunday night, November 24, 1968, dealt with Lesbianism. Panelists included two representatives of the San Francisco group, NOVA, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon of DOB, and Dr. Ruth M. McGuire. Good, unbelievably honest reporting. More of the tell-it-like-it is that we need.

**OVERSEAS RELATIVES**. We are often asked if there is any other Lesbian magazine in existence besides **THE LADDER**. Yes, there is an English magazine called **ARENA THREE** which is published by Esme Langley and Co., 44 Platts Lane, London, N.W. 3, England. It is a monthly publication done by some sort of mimeograph or similar method, running to around 14 pages, measuring 10" high and 8" wide. This magazine was formerly published by **MINORITIES RESEARCH GROUP**, but has always been under the direct control of Esme Langley, current editor. **ARENA THREE** costs \$8.00 per year, and American subscriptions are handled by E. A. Carty, "Colaba," 4 West Road, Emsworth, Hants, England. In a recent letter to our National President, Rita Laporte, Esme Langley in speaking on the value of organizations and their publications, says: "But for **THE LADDER**, we over here would never know that DOB even existed, and we are just one corner of the world. A publication is a 'voice' that reaches across the world, as well as across the USA, and a minority, a group or a movement without a voice is a 'dumb' one in any sense of the word 'dumb.' By the time you read this column, **ARENA THREE** will be at least two issues into its sixth year of publication.

## THE OCCULTIST

She broke her looking-glass last night;  
She knew it was a warning;  
She thought about those seven years  
And shot herself this morning.

## SURFEIT

Quiet love that sits and sighs;  
Soaring love that roams the skies;  
Both are pleasant but, my dear,  
I've had my fill of love this year.

—Maura McCullough



To The Editor:

James Colton ("The Homosexual Identity"—September, 1968) may be a crack writer, and he may have all the right advice when it comes to social action for homosexuals.

But his arbitrary insistence on the genetic origin of homosexuality is preposterous and damaging to our cause. Had he merely reported the findings of Levine, Lisk, and Slater, he would have done his readers a service, and perhaps offered food for thought in an area of much uncertainty. But it is not helpful to speak of the Kallman studies as though they have not been heavily criticized; and it is ludicrous to round out each paragraph with the chanting non-sequitur "In other words homosexuals are born that way"—as illogical and offensive as a singing commercial. The undramatic truth is that the relative role of genetic and environmental factors in causing homosexuality is simply not fully known as yet.

I have never understood why the self-respect of homosexuals must depend upon believing that their condition is inborn. On the other hand, it is quite as ridiculous to claim, or imply, as some psychiatrists do, that if homosexuality is environmentally determined, then it follows that homosexuals are "to blame" for their condition, and should feel obligated to try to change it. Neither conclusion is valid. Let us assume first, for the sake of argument that homosexuality is inborn. Yet the manner of living his life may be such that a given homosexual would have no grounds for self-respect at all. Alternately, let us assume that homosexuality is the result of early development—that a given infant could go either way, depending upon the course of his childhood experiences. To conclude that the child who goes the homosexual way is "to blame" assumes (1) that the condition is in itself blameworthy, and (2) that the individual

child could have chosen to have different experiences. To state these assumptions is to expose their absurdity. As to the adult homosexual whose homosexual identity is deeply ingrained and felt, providing he is not causing damage to others, he is under no obligation whatsoever to change or attempt to change—even if he could. Self respect need have nothing to do with one's condition in life, nor with the origin thereof—but should spring rather from the manner in which one tries to live his life.

Florence Conrad  
San Francisco, California

Dear Gene Damon:

Since reading Mr. Colton's article, I have read various scientific studies on homosexuality, most of which disagree with the theory that it is an inborn condition, like lefthandedness.

For one thing, many people are able to enjoy both sexes. For another, nobody has found a chromosome which can be designated "sexual preference," and nobody has found a specific formation of the brain which can be linked with sexual preference. Until specific physical characteristics can be linked with homosexuality, I will continue to regard the "inborn" theory as unproven.

Suppose, however, that the theory is true? I doubt if American society would be any more compassionate than it has been in the past. We would be treated as genetic defects—who would want a homosexual child? Efforts would undoubtedly be made to rid the population of homosexuals through eugenics. Even before genetics became a science, the public was compassionate towards the physically handicapped, but recoiled in horror before the homosexual.

It would be easy to say "We were born that way," and avoid the possibility that we might have chosen homosexuality out of

irrational motives, or even rational ones, based on childhood experiences, as the psychologists would have it. But before we jump on the genetic bandwagon, let us remember that the public will not necessarily treat us with rationality or compassion just because we can prove that we are not responsible for our sexual orientation.

Alice M. Kobayashi  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Miss Damon:

It is unfortunate that James Colton's article in your September issue—which contained many worthwhile points—should have been marred by his dogmatic refrain that "homosexuals are born that way."

The scientific experiments he cites—all of them involving good research—do not prove that homosexual behavior is inborn. Some of them suggest that some individuals may have a congenital predisposition to being conditioned toward homosexual behavior, which is quite far from the unequivocal conclusion that they are "born that way." Kallman's study has been open to certain question and a number of later studies of identical twins have established cases where one twin became heterosexual while the other became homosexual.

Colton makes a serious error when he takes a study of the effects of hormones on the lower mammals and applies their results directly to humans, whose behavior is not mediated by hormones anywhere to the extent that the behavior of the lower mammals is. Animal research can never be more than suggestive of the direction that research on humans should take.

Most of the research done on animals deals with the masculinizing or feminizing of their later behavior by prenatal injections of hormones. It does not even specifically relate to homosexual behavior. The most we can say at this stage about humans is that human homosexual behavior may depend on his prenatal hormonal make up, as is done by the scientists quoted by Colton. This is a far cry from the type of positive conclusion drawn by Colton. In fact, one is on safer ground if he says that so far there is no scientific evidence that homosexuality is caused by constitutional or inherited factors.

The case for establishing a homosexual identity and for doing away with the unjust legal and social penalties that make the homosexual a second-class citizen rests on very strong grounds—the fundamental rights of every person in a democracy. The kind

of special pleading which uses scientific research to come to unscientific conclusions surely does not help to strengthen such a case.

Isadore Rubin, Ph.D.  
Editor, SEXOLOGY MAGAZINE

To the Editor:

Mr. Colton makes quite a point of stating that "homosexuals are born that way." I am willing to accept the possibility that transsexuals could be born that way, indeed many transsexuals feel they are women who are locked inside a man's body; but I do not believe that homosexuality is physiologically determined. There are a few sex-linked genetic disorders where an extra X or Y chromosome is transmitted, but this is a rare phenomenon. When these disorders occur, they are frequently accompanied by mental retardation. People with disorders of this nature cannot be classified as homosexuals.

With very few exceptions we are all born either males or females, but we are not born knowing which role—masculine or feminine—we are to play. Cross-cultural studies leave little doubt that sex identification is learned. In some societies traits we have arbitrarily called masculine have been just as arbitrarily been called feminine, to the peoples of that culture.

None of the studies Mr. Colton cites clearly support his assumption that "homosexuals are born that way." For instance, he quotes E. Slater's study of "Birth Order and the Maternal Age of Homosexuals" as showing that the homosexuals "were generally born later in the life of the mother than would be theoretically expected." Mr. Colton goes on to say "In other words, homosexuals are born that way."

Slater's study does not offer any support whatsoever for that assumption. All Slater's study says is there is a correlation between the age of the mother and the incidence of homosexuality in the son. Correlations say only that there is a relationship between A and B. It says nothing about A causing B. It can just as easily be inferred from Slater's study that older mothers have more of a desire to keep their little boys passive and dependent, traits our society considers feminine.

Name Withheld by Request  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Editor:

You can't be delicate when you need money for a good cause. Enclosed check for

\$10.00 for THE LADDER. I will send \$5 monthly until further notice. Why don't you ask for monthly pledges from those interested in seeing THE LADDER continue?

J. P.  
Sacramento, California

(Editor's Note: Thank you, J.P., for asking for me.)

Dear Martha Shelley:

Your essay, "On Marriage," in the October/November issue, contains one glaring omission I feel compelled to point out: that of commitment. The union of two people of any sex needn't necessarily be a marriage, but it is a commitment, with its concomitant responsibilities, responsibilities for the other as well as for yourself, for the successes as well as the failures. It is a deep, mutual sharing that cannot occur in the type of relationship you advocate.

Are you aware that a "marriage" need not bind finances, friendships, or sexual activity? That such a binding can be a voluntary matter, undertaken because a person has already found what she considers to be the epitome of a friend, a sexual partner, a lover? You seem to be jumping from a horrible view of "marriage" to an opposite extreme, one devoid of responsibility, deep care, and, yes, love.

Hopefully, as each in a "marriage" grows, so will the other—together expanding, evolving, uniting first as one and then as two individuals. Growth in different directions isn't necessarily a cause for a rift. Sure, there are spats—some serious, some not—but on reconciliation, growth is usually evident, and each person can once again meet the other as a unique individual, one to be enjoyed anew. Why jump around when the myriad qualities of humanity can be found in one person—if you are willing to expend the effort?

A twosome is not necessarily the emulation of a marriage of any sort. What it should be is a real, total commitment to another human being. A declaration that this person is worth being responsible for, in financial ways and every other way possible.

L. B.  
Cleveland, Ohio

To the editor:

The declaration (in "The Least of These," by Marilyn Barrow—October/November, 1968) that we must have "absolute and

understood self-disclosure" is beautiful and should be a recognized goal of any responsible person, regardless of sexual affiliation. I agree that if we want to enjoy such honesty, one of the prerequisites is to regard ourselves, in private and in public, as completely and naturally acceptable.

Many of us appreciate the pioneering spirit of those who devote time and talents to our social acceptability, but wonder if we have much to contribute to this cause beyond our interest and thanks and reasonable public behavior. You tell us to get out of the sandhole, but if we do, where do we go? You are obviously not advocating making indiscriminate public announcements of our private interests, but only emphasizing the fact that there are times when we could help others by declaring ourselves. Fine. Tell us more about how we can be helpful. I'm seriously interested but lack the imagination to start my own crusade.

I'm particularly interested in your concern for legal equality, especially in the matter of property rights. You maintain that a Lesbian is particularly disadvantaged without "extremely good legal counsel." I'd like to add that in this complicated society anyone without good legal counsel is disadvantaged, anyone with as much as \$500.

You refer Jocelyn Hayward to the Counsellor's Corner for all personal and marital problems. Could you perhaps also provide an article on legal problems from some qualified person? I'd especially like to know:

1. How can one find out one's own state laws concerning homosexuals—short of consulting a lawyer?

2. How does one go about selecting a lawyer and how much should one tell a lawyer about personal situations?

3. How can two people who are unrelated become joint owners of property? Doesn't this vary from state to state? Are there any general rules applicable to most states?

(Editor's Note: Perhaps one of the lawyers reading this might volunteer a reply. It would be appreciated.)

Carla Suttin  
Virginia

(Editor's Note: Regarding helping with this work, Miss Suttin, have you tried getting every possible interested party of your acquaintance to subscribe to THE LADDER? That's one way.)

Dear Gene Damon:

After reading the October/November LADDER, I have to respond to some of the things said in Jocelyn Hayward's letter to the editor, and "The Least of These," by Marilyn Barrow.

It seems to me that there is too much emphasis on the many difficulties in a Lesbian's life. I view this attitude with suspicion. I cannot find these difficulties in my own life, and in the lives of many of my friends. Having lived the better part of two decades with my friend—openly, in suburbia, as professional people, I think I have some experience and a base for judgement. I find that most of the problems come from being, first, a single woman in our society, and second from non-sexual conduct unacceptable to the majority. I feel that the difficulties many Lesbians complain about have little to do with their sexual orientation per se.

Some of the difficulties with family, legal and inheritance problems, even job complications come from the ridiculous secrecy some Lesbians insist on. Two girls who are afraid to be seen in public together have a problem, and their Lesbianism has little to do with it. We are always together; we used to work together; now we spend every second of our non-working time together.

We are very much in the public eye, we own our own home, are active in our community, active in various professional societies. We are constantly together, publically, yet we have never had any kind of trouble. Of course, we are contributing members of our community and do not otherwise engage in conduct opposed to the generally accepted mores. I do not say that this is either right or wrong. I merely say that those Lesbians who run into trouble because they live generally non-circumspect lives, should not blame their troubles on their sexual orientation.

I hear so much about legal problems, especially if one of the partners dies. I cannot understand these problems. First of all, our families do not even know the state of our finances—what types of insurance, saving accounts, stocks and bonds, etc. We have a joint bank account, our insurance policies are made out to each other, our home is owned jointly. You don't need expert legal advice for this, just common sense. Of course, if there is much "free" property, a will is needed. Of course, too, if a couple is afraid to have things jointly, then all of this is not possible. In that case I feel they must sacrifice these things for the secrecy they feel is necessary—I feel it never is!

Julie  
New Jersey

## AFTERWARDS

Afterwards when you hear the wind blow  
you must leave your warm house,  
leave all and walk alone,  
for I shall live with the wind,  
keep company with breezes.

Do not seek me in flowers  
or in rivers rushing to the sea—  
you will not find me there;  
none of these would contain me;  
I shall rise beyond them into the wind.

Listen for me in darkness or sunlight  
and if I am absent, whistle for the wind,  
then I shall come,  
blowing you into my arms as you walk,  
into the arms of the wind.



## BUTTERFLIES

We watched them come,  
first singly, hesitating in the air,  
then more and more  
until the tree was filled with them,

filled with pale wings and silence,  
as they clung to the rotting apricots,  
swarms of butterflies  
like vultures with a corpse;

even the birds left our yard,  
and we stood watching by the window,  
unable to go outside to pick the fruit  
for fear of butterflies.

Melinda Brown

## Four Poems by Carla

### Bent Twig

All I am I owe to my angel  
who, even if she was from Tennessee,  
was an understanding mother.  
We saw eye to eye for perhaps four and one-half months  
when I was around the age of twelve years  
and growing fast.  
My mother told me that some girls love other girls  
more than they ever love men.  
She herself was a lover of women,  
though not as I am.  
My mother loved me just a little less than she loved God  
and a little more than she loved my father.

### On The Positive Side

I do not understand  
a world where one's tastes  
Are objects  
for another's judgment.  
When the heart is open,  
love falls out on everything.

### Bibliotechnical Education

My mother took me to the public library  
when I was seven years old.  
The first book I checked out was Snow White.  
I read it myself.  
The next thing I read was The Three Musketeers.  
When I was ten years old  
I learned about male genitals  
in a medical encyclopedia,  
and at twelve years I studied  
Jeremy Taylor's Holdy Dying and wept  
for myself.  
The library had high windows and many dark walls of books.  
I kissed Sylvia on the lips when I was thirteen  
in the library.

### Total Conformity

I have recently conducted a private inventory  
and am pleased to report that out of forty-eight London Lesbians,  
forty-eight have ten fingers and ten toes each  
and one navel.

poems by Maura McCullough

## THE CHINESE WATERCOLOUR

Plum-scented, with a rain-washed loveliness,  
the lady from the Chinese watercolour  
rushed into my heart last night  
on tiny feet,  
then paused, solemn and sloe-eyed,  
to gaze at me.  
"You!" I cried, "and how can you be here?"  
But she did not reply;  
she stood silent, unsmiling,  
her head tipped to one side  
while the gold-threaded kimono  
quivered and rustled.  
I trembled to see her,  
suggested jasmine tea or almond cakes  
and gestured to a chair,  
but she seemed not to hear;  
somewhere temple bells rang out  
in a slow echoing stream of sound.  
She disappeared; now I am left with  
only a watercolour  
and two dark eyes that follow me,  
fill me with an ache  
of hopelessness.  
Anguish it is, and more, to love  
someone  
who never makes reply.

## DIETER'S COUNTING-OUT RHYME

Madeleine never lets calories matter  
(Butterscotch sundaes and artichoke  
hearts);  
Eats as she pleases and never gets fatter  
(Country fried chicken and strawberry  
tarts).

Someone's new meal plan? I'm eager  
to try it  
(Saccharine in coffee and crackers  
today);  
Madeleine never has reason to diet  
(Breakfasts of whipped cream  
and chocolate soufflé).

Madeleine can't be allowed to continue  
(Arsenic on grapefruit and lye in her tea);  
Once she is gone maybe then I'll be thin too  
(Cherries with rat poison sauce Jubilee).

## THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE a bibliography

By Gene Damon and Lee Stuart

AN ALPHABETICAL LISTING BY AUTHOR OF ALL KNOWN BOOKS  
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## LET IT GO

don't hang on any longer  
we grow weaker not stronger  
we are not as we were  
in the beginning  
strangers/who met  
and because of a simple meeting  
became involved . . .  
now you won't/can't forget  
no matter how i try to explain/  
to let go gently—  
you pull all the more  
thinking that  
your strength will bond us as before  
it's only making it harder  
if that's possible—  
let it go  
let it go baby  
with/out the tears  
and the rest of the scene  
that goes along with splitting

we've talked of the others  
and you'll be talking  
of me soon  
telling the next  
what we had together  
let it go  
so the next time will come  
don't hang on any  
longer  
we grow weaker not stronger

L. D. Davis

## THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE

*Produced and Directed by Robert Aldrich  
Starring Beryl Reid as Sister George,  
Susannah York as Alice and Coral Browne  
as Mrs. Mercy Croft.*

There is a science fiction story about a time when the earth is a dead planet. A group of explorer-scientists come from another world and stir about in the ruins looking for something to help them recreate the inhabitants and understand their demise. They find a canister of film, and happily take it back to their home planet. Their scientists watch it for hours; but find it difficult to relate the frenetic happenings on the film with the traces of the civilization they have seen. Only at the end of the film, and the end of the story, is the reader told of the film's origin, the cartoon studios of Walt Disney.

THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE, movie version, has almost as much relationship to the life of the ordinary Lesbian, as Donald Duck has to the ordinary man.

This 1965 London hit play, written by Frank Marcus, began as a comic and sympathetic look at an aging radio actress, Sister George, losing both her personal life and her professional life. Finding her career doomed by increasing lack of popularity for her simple series, she takes her frustration out

on the empty-headed, childish Alice. Later, she loses Alice to a predatory and much more cruel woman. In the end, sitting alone in their flat, Sister George is a figure of pathetic reality. Reviews of the play as seen in London make it clear that Mr. Marcus's play was followed to the letter.

When Sister George came to the New York stage, however, the changes began. Now Sister George is simply sadistic, with no explanation. While it had a very successful run in New York, audiences and critics alike came away feeling mildly queasy.

Robert Aldrich, noted for his "humanistic" movies (WHAT-EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE and THE DIRTY DOZEN) has outdone himself with this one. The movie is garish, noisy, tinkles like tin cans in the trash, and purports to be a true picture of the Lesbian underworld. There is a seduction scene in it which is laughable and entirely the product of the movie version, no such scene exists in the play. Beryl Reid is a competent actress who, unfortunately, hasn't the slightest idea how to behave in her role. Susannah York is very good as Alice—the role involves looking sensual and stupid throughout. Coral Browne is suitably predatory.

THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE is an inevitable step in the progression of movies that appear to deal with Lesbians, seen entirely through the eyes of heterosexual males. It will be years before we have a movie that honestly presents homosexual women—except for an occasional bit part such as the Lesbian in RACHEL RACHEL. There are some gay bar scenes that might be interesting to some people.

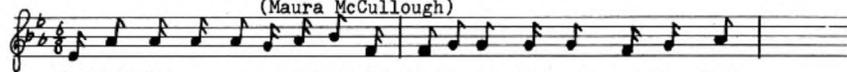
(Reviewed by Gene Damon. Reprinted from the February issue of the Los Angeles ADVOCATE, by permission of the editors.)

## SIDE EFFECTS

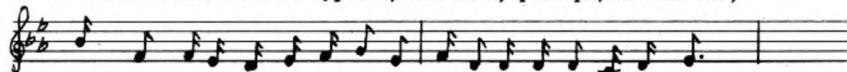
A reader like Maura McCullough's poem, "Memoirs of a Solitary Psychosomatic" (THE LADDER, May/June, 1968 so much that she has written a melody for it. The melody, by Jean, and Maura's words appear below. Westminster Audio Service, 1645 Hopkins Street, Berkeley, California, 94707, is reserving the right to record the song, and any girl in the Bay Area should contact them if she would like to try singing it.

### Memoirs of a Solitary Psychosomatic

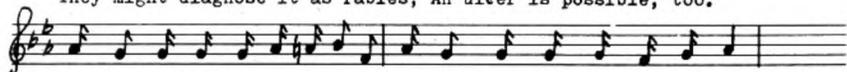
(Maura McCullough)



I think I have mono or typhoid, Leukemia, perhaps, or the flu;



They might diagnose it as rabies; An ulver is possible, too.



2. Or could I have encephalitis? I'm sure that I'm nearing the end.



Don't tell me I'm just feeling lonely; I couldn't admit that my friend.

melody by Jean *Jean*

1968

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**CONTRIBUTIONS** are gratefully accepted from anyone who wants to support our work. We are a non-profit corporation depending entirely on volunteer labor. While men may not become members of Daughters of Bilitis, many have expressed interest in our efforts and have made contributions to further our work.

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