

THE LADDER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1971

\$1.25



THE LADDER, published by Lesbians and directed to ALL women seeking full human dignity, had its beginning in 1956. It was then the only Lesbian publication in the U.S. It is now the only women's magazine openly supporting Lesbians, a forceful minority within the women's liberation movement.

Initially THE LADDER's goal was limited to achieving the rights accorded heterosexual women, that is, full second-class citizenship. In the 1950's women as a whole were as yet unaware of their oppression. The Lesbian knew. And she wondered silently when her sisters would realize that they too share many of the Lesbian's handicaps, those that pertained to being a woman.

THE LADDER's purpose today is to raise all women to full human status, with all of the rights and responsibilities this entails; to include ALL women, whether Lesbian or heterosexual.

OCCUPATIONS have no sex and must be opened to all qualified persons for the benefit of all.

LIFE STYLES must be as numerous as human beings require for their personal happiness and fulfillment.

ABILITY, AMBITION, TALENT –
THESE ARE HUMAN QUALITIES.

THE LADDER, though written, edited, and circulated by volunteer labor, cannot survive without money. We Lesbians are perhaps more anxious than other women to make our views known. We wish we could blanket the country and the world with free copies. But stern reality tells us that, more important even than mass distribution, is the need to keep alive the only real Lesbian magazine in the world. Therefore THE LADDER will no longer be sold at newsstands. We will survive only if there are enough of you sufficiently concerned with the rights and the liberation of ALL women to spend \$7.50 a year to subscribe. (Sample copies are always available at \$1.25.)

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THE LADDER

THE LADDER STAFF

Editor	Gene Damon
Director of Promotion	Rita Laporte
Production Editor	Hope Thompson
Circulation Manager	Ann P. Buck
Production Assistants	Lyn Collins, Kim Stabinski, Gladys Irma, King Kelly, Ann Brady, Robin and Dana Jordan
Secretary to the Editor	Tracy Wright

February/March, 1971

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Cartoons: "Equal Opportunity," Idea by Jeri Leigh, Drawing by Candi McGonagle
". . . and God Created . . ." by Lynne
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On The Line

EDITORIAL BY GENE DAMON

At least once each month someone writes to me to say, in effect, "I was sure at least dozens of people were doing this for you, so I never bothered to offer". This usually from a woman who has sent a clipping or two and been thanked for it, and asked to continue helping in this area . . . just one of the many areas where we need, must have your help.

As a matter of fact there are no areas where we do not need more help. We need writers constantly . . . women writing about and for women, in fiction, poetry, non-fiction, every area. We need artists able to draw an illustration on request from a description of the material to be used. We need cartoonists and cartoon ideas. We need clippings from all over the country concerned with Lesbian rights and women's rights.

THE LADDER is in a growing period. The quality of material in this magazine cannot be maintained, let alone improved without your talents and energies. We need

women to type manuscripts for us. This can be done by mail as it is done now by those many women who assist us. Women, being poor by virtue of their oppression in the working world, are often very busy, and far too busy to give much time. Therefore, we need more of you to help spread the load of labor more equitably among our volunteers.

We also need money to survive. If each of you will bring us only ONE other new subscriber you will help us immeasurably in our struggle to continue publishing. THE LADDER is the only magazine in the country dealing with Lesbians honestly and with all women interested in obtaining full human status in the world. If it ceases to exist, you will all be the poorer for its going. The anonymous "they" that get the blame when anything goes wrong are only those who do not help when they can. And you can, all of you, in some way large or small. We need you to help us help all of you.

Please do . . .

THE LESBIAN IN LITERATURE a bibliography

By Gene Damon and Lee Stuart

AN ALPHABETICAL LISTING BY AUTHOR OF ALL KNOWN BOOKS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, IN THE GENERAL FIELD OF LITERATURE, CONCERNED WITH LESBIANISM, OR HAVING LESBIAN CHARACTERS.

THE LADDER

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SALLY BANANAS

Illustrated by C. Barsotti



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Life Styles for Women: A Comparative Analysis

By Nila Bowman McCormick

"Because only if you understand just how it is in this awful, aseptic citadel of female sexuality, primal and complacent, will you know why the girl in 42 is so important to me."

When I was new to this city, I found myself in need of medical attention, having injured myself in a gymnasium. Knowing few people in town, I asked a woman with whom I worked if she could recommend a good doctor, and she came up with what proved to be a Park Avenue gynecologist. I can imagine no situation so constructed as to make a Lesbian quite so incongruously ill at ease as a wait in a gynecologist-obstetrician's office. Not that the waiting room was decorated to be anything but thickly and graciously "Father Knows Best" disarming. But I was not, mixed-media changeling that I am, responsive to the room's contrived appeal. The mellow lighting of the anterooms failed to obscure the true klieg-light nature of the interior. In spite of the discomfiting surroundings of the waiting room, the spectacle of that herd of pregnant heterosexuals in their natural habitat was not without its anthropological amusements. Most interestingly, for example, I noted that masses of Mr. Kenneth hair and all the perfumed forces of frantically-fashionable civilization could not quite manage to rout the essence of placidity from the atmosphere. Also, in the interest of science I was curious to observe that pregnant heterosexuals are given only picture books to read, even though this particular sampling had been largely educated in Seven Sisters institutions. However, most of these ladies did not engage even in this trivial occupation. Rather, they stared idly and vacantly (ever patiently) into their false eyelashes, which I presumed to be the loci of transcendental pregnant inner being. Taken together, the eyes and grins of the women surrounding me in that waiting room were symptomatic of microcephalus. And finally, the creatures were (the horror of it) all dressed up (for some uncanny reason) for a meat inspection.

It was getting late. Since I was the only

"working-class" woman in the room, I was the only woman who had taken the afternoon off from work to go to the doctor's. Therefore, perhaps that was why I was less patient than the others. It occurred to me to doubt that the husbands of these women — busy executives, possibly lawyers, stock-brokers and so forth — ever have to wait as long, when they need to have their own genitals seen to. They'd at least be raising hell at the front desk and demanding to see the management or some such thing. They wouldn't just sit there. But their wives, of course, had no business whatever in the world.

I struck up a commiserating conversation concerning the length of the wait with an adjacent sufferer. She was in an advanced state of pregnancy and appeared to have been waiting long before I had arrived. In addition to confirming my suspicions that my turn was yet several hours away, she volunteered to initiate me in some standard pregnancy procedures, informing me that in the first months of her pregnancy, she had to come in for a cervical examination every two weeks and during the last few months she had had her pelvic check once a week — a frequency normal for upper-middle income pregnancies, I gathered. On each of these occasions she is accustomed to wait for her turn on the examining table a minimum of four hours. All of this she related in a breathy voice full of reverence for that great man, our gynecologist. Just then I saw a color photo of Ethel Kennedy grinning up at me from the Ladies Home Journal. The caption read, "According to a recent Gallup poll, Americans regard her as the country's most admired woman." When my turn came I had walked out on heterosexuality one more time.

(Let me not be accused of suggesting that I do not believe in prompt medical attention. Rather, I have made it my policy since that day to patronize only female physicians. I also make it a general point to allow as few dollars as I possibly can to find their way into male hands.)

Perhaps those persons devoted to the correction of female homosexuality might

find it profitable to fix their attentions briefly upon our psychic perversions, rather than upon our more genital aberrations. There is a lot more to Lesbianism than an unusual taste in coital companionship; there is the Sapphic mind. Unhomogeneous as we are, in ourselves can still be detected a denominator, a constant, and in that constant — a treasonous social threat.

The best demonstrations of the Sapphic mentality might be observed in our reactions to accepted role models. (In the incident above, my particularized reaction to Ethel Kennedy.) I find no evidence to suggest that we as children or as adolescents watched less television or attended fewer media exhibitions of heterosexuality. There is nothing to suggest we are not equally children of the mixed-media response. But, how strangely we reacted in most cases, long before puberty, to popular and public female figures. What short circuit in conditioning can be held responsible when an eight-year-old female child switches off Miss America and switches on the Roller Derby girls? Wherever did we learn to prefer dashing women to mincing ones? If we often had such disparate choices as the one between the Miss America contest and the roller derby, one could say that Lesbianism might be a matter of choosing unwisely among or, at least, between role model alternatives. But rarely are women presented with variety in the matter. Rather, we are inundated on all channels with the same scarcely undifferentiated image. One has to look hard to find a roller derby or an old Katherine Hepburn movie. Many of us went through life imitating no one we had ever heard of.

PART II: MOST POPULAR AND BEST-ALL-AROUND

A: MOST PREGNANT '69

Since that visit to the gynecologist-obstetrician's office, I have had a morbid need to comprehend Mrs. Robert F. (Ethel) Kennedy's mind and to endeavor to understand why anyone should happen to so compulsively reject the 1969 Gallup poll's most acclaimed role model; and, further, to understand and attempt to enumerate the qualifications contributing to that august position in the American public esteem. According to the November 30, 1969, New York Times Magazine, "Perhaps the single most staggering fact about Ethel Kennedy, a trim size eight (The Ladies Home Journal adores her for this), is that she has 11

children . . ." If this fact is the Gallup poll nominee's most significant ("staggering") accomplishment, then prolific motherhood must be an achievement the Gallup poll, hence American Opinion, usually endorses in its popular female figures. If the press and other news media may be held responsible for public opinion, then we notice that the press hardly overlooks the reproductive traits in Mrs. Kennedy's personality when praising her. The New York Times Magazine goes on to say that ". . . a reporter with a mathematical mind calculated that Ethel was pregnant 43 percent of her married life . . ." I also have a mathematical mind and I figured out that if the information supplied by the pregnant woman sitting beside me in the gynecologist-obstetrician's office were true, Ethel must have had at least two vaginal inspections per month for nine months per eleven pregnancies, without taking into account that the pelvic vistas afforded by celebrated pregnancies must be somewhat more extensive than those displayed by an ordinary woman's; and, at the Kennedy echelon, beyond my lurid ability to conceptualize. But, at the regular rate, eleven pregnancies works out to about 198 pelvic examinations. Therefore, the admired and respected Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy has, on at least 198 occasions, been in the somewhat ungainly (but, I suppose, highly feminine) position of being in ah . . . "stirrups" as I believe they are so cutely called. Noteworthy enough, Ethel's five Caesareans failed to stultify this unique form of self-expression. Perhaps it is not Mrs. Kennedy's mind I should endeavor to comprehend. I am certain the Men's Division of the 1969 Gallup poll managed to elect someone not principally known for his stud activity.

B: MOST PIOUS '69

It is a democratic (if not discriminating) American trait to appreciate all nouns and adjectives prefixed by "most," "best" and "first." Along with her marathon pregnancy, Mrs. Robert Kennedy's high rate of church attendance probably helped earn her top position on the 1969 Gallup poll, if not in the hereafter. However, not only are Mrs. Kennedy's pious exertions (rosary every night, mass every morning) prodigal in quantity, they are also American in quality; i.e., childlike and simple. ". . . what her friends really find amazing about Ethel's Catholicism is that she is the only person they know who still believes, really believes,

in God and an afterlife as literally as they did until they reached the age of 10." "Ethel's version of heaven comes complete with pearly gates, fleecy white clouds, and a troop of angels and archangels decked out in wings, halos and flowing robes," a friend says. The New York Times Magazine also quotes Ethel as having remarked, on a sunny day, after a long rainy period, "Up there in heaven, Bobby must have told God that He had to do better." I wonder how acceptable such childlike religious trust would be in a man. Would one, even if one were a hide-bound pacifist, not tremble for the national security if a male leader suggested a troop of archangels had been sent down to sub for the ABM? Would one feel quite secure with a male leader who suggested to his constituents that they pray to the good angels at Consolidated Edison to put out more clean energy? But what might seem a potentially despotic affliction in a male leader is charming in a lady, as long as ladies are not in a position to concern themselves with matters of vital national interest: e.g., Martha Mitchell. Men have their theology, women have religion; women have the church, not the pulpit; faith, not reason; intuition, not proof; superstition, not science. Mrs. Kennedy's religion is as simple in its practice as it is simplistic in its theology. Ethel has nearly succeeded in making the Church of Rome palatable to folksy Protestants, reared along backwoods puritan lines, who have always deeply suspected that the Catholic faith bore traces of Art, Culture, Civilization, and other emblems of fleshly idolatry. Americans of the puritan persuasion were happy to learn Mrs. Robert Kennedy was as un hypnotized by the lavish liturgical production numbers of the Roman faith as they. "... she is afraid of sounding pretentious; she dislikes high flown statements and pompous people, one reason the late Cardinal Spellman was no great favorite of hers." Ethel did not terrorize Americans with pomp and circumstance; she was never quite the fag hag Jackie was.

C: CUTEST BRAIN '69

The childlike nature of Mrs. Kennedy's religious faith begins to glimpse the powers of the 1969 Gallup poll's most admired female intelligence. A Time magazine cover story and the previously quoted New York Times Magazine study corroborate each other in their descriptions of Ethel's intellectual precociousness.

"Veteran New Frontiersmen remember with mixed amusement and embarrassment that she was the champion asker of gauche questions at the Hickory Hill seminars where Bobby brought his people together with leading intellectuals."

"... Ethel has also had the reputation of being an intellectual lightweight, a reputation that dates back to the early sixties when Robert Kennedy invited leading scholars out to his house to meet with New Frontiersmen. At these so-called Hickory Hill seminars, Ethel sometimes asked questions that seemed downright silly to the others in attendance, including Bobby, who was often heard to say, 'Can it, Ethel!'"

Perhaps in a less barbaric age than our own, wives will be selected with a peer relationship in mind. Perhaps in a golden age of the future, one would (at least) feel squeamish about the implications of a relationship, wherein the wife's cute remarks have to be shushed when company comes to visit and talk grown-up talk. Or, perhaps Ethel is a model of the future; Industry has long since discovered that the lower the intelligence quotient, the greater the ability to perform routine or dull tasks. Wives would appear to be similarly selected. Among Mrs. Kennedy's political convictions are those that (1) "... people who have been psychoanalyzed are unfit for public service..." and (2) "... that her brother-in-law Sargent Shriver's Peace Corps was 'terrific' but 'shouldn't go around the world handing out those things,' i.e., contraceptives." Again, an intellectual incapacity that would be inexcusable in a male leader is only charming featherheadedness in his wife. But then, too, Mrs. Kennedy would have difficulty reconciling an adult intellectual capacity with her childlike faith.

Mrs. Kennedy's non-intellectualism extends to cultural matters as well, where her tastes lack again any sign of Vatican ornateness. "... she's a cultural square who cheerfully admits that she prefers books with happy endings to books like *On the Beach*, show tunes to classical music, and Walt Disney flicks to naughty Swedish films."

D: BUSIEST HOSTESS '69

Before I unjustly accuse American Opinion (as manifested in the Gallup poll) of having a bias for silly females, I must admit that this is not a country where intellectuals — even male ones — have ever been held in

much esteem. Americans prefer men of action and Ethel in her way is a woman of action.

"But evenings at Hickory Hill are hardly occasions for quiet conversation. 'After dinner, you never just sit around and talk, because she's not comfortable in that type of situation,' says a friend. There is always an activity of some sort — charades, games..."

The New York Times Magazine adds, "Ethel is always determined that when you are in her company that you have a good time... She likes to have a good time and she has when everyone else does. Her idea of a good time isn't talking, it's doing something — sailing, playing tennis, playing a game or a practical joke... I prefer after-dinner conversation to Ethel's after-dinner charades, word-games, and musical chairs."

Later on, the New York Times reassures us that while Ethel encourages adults to run about the dinner table, she keeps "... the nagging ('Eat your broccoli') to a minimum and..." encourages "intelligent conversation" at her children's meals.

E: GOOD SPORT '69

Ethel's activity-mindedness goes much further than being just a bustling hostess. In line with the rest of her All-American leitmotif, Ethel is Athletic. According to Time, "More than any other Kennedy, Ethel has always been obsessed with athletics." (If Ethel has a following among Lesbians, it will be because of this trait. However, Ethel's athleticism can be accepted as not too masculine a trait in a country which values its athletes more than its intellectuals. Her sportiness carries on an American tradition of femininity vestigial now in Tampax ads, where pioneer daughters like Ethel run around as Ethel did "Last summer, nearly six months into her pregnancy,..." when she was bounding "around the tennis court at Hyannisport,...")

Ethel's athletics and her generalized busy-ness serve to establish an aura of non-passivity, to build a mistaken impression of useful and important comings, goings and doings; to produce an Eleanor Roosevelt ambiance, with nothing more profound than after-dinner agitation and fidgeting at sports. American women are a bit too rugged to take as their model a geisha ideology or a torpid European mystique. American women are too fond of

imagining themselves as having some brightly-busy errands. Ethel is the apotheosis of jet-age, gadgety, scurrying, housewifery. So she is marketed; so she is bought. "Ethel Skakel Kennedy has been idle for hardly a minute in her life... The only time she rested, she rested from exhaustion." "It is painful for her to sit still for any length of time, her hands idle, her thoughts closing in on her, then her pert features droop..." Americans like their women to look pert. If one can keep busy enough, one can keep too busy to think.

F: FAVORITE CHEERLEADER '69

The final important factor in Mrs. Robert Kennedy's nomination to the Gallup poll, aside from her being a great mother, Christian, anti-intellectual, and athlete, is her strict observance of her supportive role as Robert Kennedy's wife. Her discipleship, the like of which has not been seen since the Twelve, involves an uncritical adoption of the complete set of her husband's ideas, principles, beliefs. One can then see the advantages of an empty-headed wife; a woman whose mind is uncluttered with her own ideology has room for all her husband's intellectual furniture. The New York Times Magazine and Time both have glowing words for this sort of personality trait. "These are the principles by which Ethel believes Bobby lived. They are the principles she intends to carry forward."

"Ethel's special triumph has been to maintain normalcy. She has simply carried on, as best she could, the kind of existence that Bobby would have pursued had he lived."

"She has turned up at gatherings to raise money for Cesar Chavez's grape-strikers (whose cause her husband supported)..."

(The New York Times Magazine rather nastily adds that "... the annual florist bill at Hickory Hill could comfortably support several grape-strikers' families for a year." This remark might provide parenthetical insight into the precise nature of the Kennedy family political ideology. The florist bill reinforces suspicions that the Kennedy's are not innovators of a New Left, or even of an Old Socialism, but rather preservers of the old tradition of noblesse oblige — "radical chic" as we refer to it nowadays.)

On the whole, Mrs. Kennedy's wifely duties would appear to be similar in character to those of a faithful family retainer

who keeps all the master's personal effects polished and in good order, should he return. Vicarious identity to the point of utter self-effacement, while usually considered a neurosis in most human beings, is desirable in butlers and wives. Reversing the pronouns, would we not think a man something of a nonentity if he said he always votes Republican because his wife does?

PART III: THE REPUBLICAN ALTERNATE LIFESTYLE

But whom do I annoy my liberal-esque friends and pick on dear Ethel? Isn't Mrs. Richard M. Nixon a paragon of insipid femininity? Was she not . . .

Outstanding Homemaker of the Year (1953), Mother of the Year (1955), and Nation's Ideal Housewife (1957)? First, poor Pat was quite adequately discussed by Judith Viorst, a feminist who wrote the superb September 13, 1970, New York Times Magazine cover story on Mrs. Nixon. Second, Pat Nixon is never used by the media to make the precise kind of insult that Ethel makes. Mrs. Nixon is, after all, a corporate Republican wife and is not recommended to us as the natural mate of "liberal" man. Whereas Ethel is just the sort of woman McCall's seizes upon to stuff down our consciousness, when they make an effort to locate a Famous Fulfilled Housewife who is not dreadfully dull. (Much to the chagrin of the ladies' magazines, whenever they locate a model of dutiful femininity, she is too bland to be marketable.) It is Ethel, not Pat, who is what passes (in Ladies' Home Journal parlance) for a free spirit. Ethel's rattling kineticism passes for liberalism and liberation, just as Pat's quiescence is mistaken for conservative politics. As Marshall McLuhan likes to point out, politics in this year of visual communication is more a matter of dress than of ideas. And as I write, Mrs. William F. Buckley has just caused much consternation by appearing on the front page of the "Village Voice" as an ersatz American Indian. Conservatives are charging defection; and liberals, co-option.

Sadly, such is the simple-mindedness of our polarized and revolutionary times that if I complain about anyone however vaguely associated with what Mr. Agnew tidily bunches together for us as "liberal-radicals," it will be electrically assumed that I am therefore a hide-bound member of the

John Birch Society, if not the CIA. A revolutionary era is no time for subtle dialectic. But, alas and regretfully, my tirade is a bit more complex than Get-the-Pigs-graffiti-syntax can express and I beg you to follow a little longer. My point: Pat and Ethel fairly explain why I have always tended to be apolitical. After listening to Dick's and to Bobby's varied discourses and examining their varied contributions to the edification of mankind, I looked closely at the candidates' wives and figured out from there just how "prone" my position in the movement (as Stokely Carmichael puts it) was going to be. However vast the differences in their husbands, the most significant difference that I can detect in Pat and Ethel is that Ethel is somewhat more inclined to wear a mini-skirt. Other than that "diversity," as far as I could see, both women function with equal effectiveness as sort of "groupies" for their husbands.

As usual, all this babbling about "alternate lifestyles" becomes a travesty when applied to women. When one evaluates slaves there are only two measures that one can apply: (1) absolute faithfulness and adherence to the master's wishes, and (2) purchase price (determined by health, attractiveness, skills, etc.). By these standards, Ethel and Pat are both "good niggers." There is only one lifestyle among slaves. By slave standards, there are, for that matter, no significant "lifestyle" variations or ideological differences between Ethel and Pat and Manson's chicks (Satan's Slaves, as they are sometimes called). Are the Manson girls less fecund, less faithful, worse cooks or housekeepers than Pat or Ethel? True, their purchase price, as for all chicks of even dubious "radical" association, is negligible. (When applied to men, the word "radical" means Marxist or revolutionary; but, when applied to women, it means free or cheap.) The Manson girls are not the "house niggers" Ethel and Pat are. But, didn't Charlie's lawyers highly praise their cooking scavenged garbage which they ". . . turn into salads, soups, and stew — described by one of the defense lawyers as 'delicious, and I'm not kidding.'" Didn't the blind owner of the "Manson" ranch, George Spahn, praise the girls' dutiful submissiveness: ". . . (he was) fascinated by Manson's girls. They would do anything that Manson asked, anything, and their submissiveness was in sharp contrast to all the women that Spahn had ever known, beginning with his stern mother in Pennsylvania

and extending through the carpenter's aggressive daughter, and the un-timid housekeeper who became his wife, and the independent woman who was Ruby Pearl. Manson's girls, intellectually superior to all the women that George Spahn had known, were also more domestic: they liked to cook, to clean, to sew, to make love to Manson or to whomever he designated." The Manson girls are what radical young men mean when they say they "dig emancipated chicks." By "liberated" they mean a geisha who sleeps around and doesn't mind if the accommodations are mountain-guerilla poor. The great difference between this generation of "emancipated chicks" and their mothers is that the previous generation bottle-fed their babies, while this one is more apt to breast-feed in public. To my mind, the past generation of women was ahead.

PART IV: CRUCIAL SIMILARITIES IN CHARLIE MANSON'S AND PRESIDENT NIXON'S WET DREAMS

If you are not yet convinced of similarities between the (1) liberal-Democratic, (2) conservative-Republican, and (3) psychedelic-radical feminine lifestyles, I ask you to compare closely the following quotations:

X. "Obviously, they adored him. They made his clothes, sat at his feet while he ate, made love to him whenever he wished, did whatever he asked."

Y. "(she would) then go back home and call her friends to say how brilliantly Bobby had performed. . . . For Ethel, says Eunice Shriver, 'Bobby was everything: the best sailor, the best skier — a hero who could easily climb Mount Everest if he wanted to.'"

X. "They are waiting, these empty-eyed waifs with the cracked-doll faces, for Charlie Manson to come back and run his macabre little kingdom and make things here the way they used to be."

Y. "It means sticking with a way of life. In Ethel's mind her stewardship of the clamorous household symbolizes her stewardship of a legacy from Bobby." (Steward, syn. servant)

Z. "Last night was one of the few evenings I've had to myself. So I took down all Dick's suits and pressed every one. Of course, I didn't have to. But when I don't have work to do, I just think up some new project."

It is truly a mark of feminine subtlety

and refinement — indeed, of exacting connoisseurship — the feminine ability to distinguish among dirty dishes left by Republican, Democratic, revolutionary and reactionary parties, or, for that matter, the ability to select the appropriate penis, evenings.

Criticism, without offering remedial proposals, has little value. I intend to offer one. To be fair, I have searched outside Lesbian circles. I have discovered one true heretic. There is at least one living alternative to Ethel Kennedy.

"I am Myra Breckinridge, whom no man will ever possess."

Time's November 28, 1969, cover article astutely observed that the parallels between Vidal's heroine and Raquel Welch are not incidental.

"I am the New Woman whose astonishing history is a poignant amalgam of vulgar dreams and knife-sharp realities."

"Few spectacles are more terrifying than the New Woman, bearing the twin torches of Desire to Succeed and Disdain for Mere Man."

Raquel did not always resemble the invincible Myra. At one time she was perfectly capable of reciting the feminine party line, and, like Ethel, of having "an absolute dedication to the duties of wife and mother." Pageant describes pre-rebellion Raquel being interviewed by a local newspaper several years ago ". . . at her sewing machine, making a set of yellow curtains for her home." She ". . . was asked what she thought of babies. 'I think they are best of all,' she replied with a motherly smile. 'I like that domestic bit. That's what I was meant to do. I don't think a professional career will bring any girl happiness. She'll always be frustrated.'" Then, "Raquel the housewife interspersed domestic chores with dramatics classes at San Diego State College, and so grew restive." (There is nothing to equal the corrupting effects of an education.) And, shortly after that, Raquel divorced her husband, took to "dumping" (to use Pageant's verb) her children in day care centers and became rich and infamous.

PART V: A FEMALE GAUGUIN IS A SOCIAL DISEASE

Time and Pageant's writers seem hardly to approve. I wonder what their ethical position is on the French painter Paul Gauguin, who left his wife and children for

gay Tahiti, Polynesian mistresses and destiny. I believe Gauguin is now generally considered an avant-garde hero, called "Steppenwolf" or "Goldmund," "Easy Rider," or intrepid, swashbuckling rebel. A woman who does very much swashbuckling or easy-riding we refer to as "whore" and "unnatural mother." Desertion of wife and child is genius; desertion of husband and child, bitchery.

"It is also generally agreed that a bitch is aggressive and therefore unfeminine (ahem). She may be sexy in which case she becomes a bitch goddess, a special case which will not concern us here. But she is never a 'true woman.'"

Perhaps movie stars have not the redeemable social value of painters, but "be all you can be" and, for a girl without a college degree, Raquel has not done badly.

In discussing Ethel and Raquel as role models, it is not my intention to contradict anything the popular press, or the mixed-media (those social lawmakers) have said about them. I am not trying to present you with mitigating, obscure or esoteric new evidence in their behalf. Nor is it my concern to dispute "public knowledge" or to discover the "real" woman behind the image in either case. I suspect there is a conspiracy to sell us the image, not the woman. The "Ethel" image is simply one of a good woman; the "Raquel" image, on the other hand, is that of a bad woman. Raquel is a dark heroine, a bitch goddess, a femme fatale, a slave mistress often photographed with a whip, or as a space woman holding a laser gun to a spaceman's crotch, or as a barbarian. As Time puts it, "Raquel is raw, unconquerable antediluvian woman . . . Raquel rarely plays an ordinary human being, much less an authentic romantic object." I have rarely read or heard anything nice about Raquel Welch, yet I like her; I have never heard or read anything nasty about Ethel Kennedy, yet I dislike her.

A: SILICONE SHEENA VERSUS SEXUAL PURITY IN MOTHER OF 11

The most obvious physical contrast between the Raquel and the Ethel images is sexuality. According to Time, "Raquel has a reputation for having climbed to the top without using her sex off the set." ("Whom no man will ever possess . . .") And Time refers to her as "Raquel the sex goddess who has bared neither entire breast nor buttock to the public eye." Besides

being something of a tease, Raquel would appear to be exhibiting the "bitch" trait of getting very well paid for putting out very little. Not a quality men much admire or encourage. But, of course, Raquel has been married twice and divorced, which situation, I suppose, does not compare favorably with Ethel's: "those things" — i.e., contraceptives, crypto-virginity. According to Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Matters such as birth control, homosexuality, drugs and divorce (ah, there we are again, in with the heroin addicts) shocked her in 1959. In 1969 she is perfectly willing to accept them as part of the way life is, without reducing her own high standards." I think it wonderful that a woman who may have had as many as 198 gynecological examinations finds homosexuality shocking and below standard. Obscenity is relative, I suppose.

B: PATHOLOGICAL AMBITION VERSUS THE SUPPORTIVE ROLE

A second point of comparison might be that: "Ethel had no interest in center stage. She didn't want to write a book, or study law, or teach school. All she ever wanted to be was Bob's wife and the mother of his children." ; while Raquel ". . . in real life is a carefully prefabricated commodity, a paradigm of the hard-driving, self-made New Woman who just happened to choose acting as a career." Less favorable remarks about Raquel refer to her as "pathologically ambitious," "carnivorous," "savagely-purposed predator," "spotlight hog." But I was particularly interested in Raquel's confession: "I'll admit I'm extremely strong-minded. I don't know any other way to be." I wonder; why does strong will in a woman require the verb "admit"? Why should Miss Welch instinctively understand she is expected to be otherwise? Why does she sense she ought to dissemble? Why is a man's boast a woman's admission? I find the self-preserving necessity suggested by considering the withholding of such "confessions" particularly unfortunate in this Esalen Era of forced frankness and crude consciousness.

Perhaps ambition is an admission because heterosexual superstition associates ambition in a woman with faithless and castrating tendencies. Ethel is a deity of "togetherness," while Raquel is a deserter. According to the New York Times, "Ethel was as famous for her constancy as Mary's lamb." While Pageant says of Raquel, "She had cut me off completely (emphasis sup-

plied). I could not believe that when somebody has loved so much as we did, that one can do that . . ." Contrast too, Ethel's previously mentioned strict adherence to her husband's principles, her vicarious basking in his spotlight, to this statement made by Raquel's first husband: "We both had strong personalities and we both wanted careers. For me it was either leave or assume a subordinate role." Also, contrast the castrating effects of Raquel's very appearance to men to the nurturing effect of Ethel. ". . . she sought to blind men with her beauty, determinedly unmanning them in the way that King Kong was reduced to a mere simian whimper by beautiful Fay Wray . . ." (emphasis supplied). Raquel Tejada Welch bears no resemblance to frail, delicate Fay Wray from any angle. "Eunice Shriver writes . . . 'He met Ethel, and all the love and appreciation for which she seemed to have an infinite capacity came pouring down on him. How he blossomed.'" (emphasis supplied). While Ethel helps her spouse grow to his "maximum human potential," Raquel has an awesome tendency to outgrow hers. According to Raquel's first husband and victim, "It's inevitable that she will outgrow Patrick." (Raquel's second husband) I wonder what the authors of Pageant magazine would suggest as a remedy? Self-inflicted mental retardation, perhaps? Clearly, the best wives are those who know when to curtail their intellectual enlightenment. According to Time, unlike Ethel, "Raquel is unquestionably bright."

C: CHILD-CARING PRACTICES

Raquel and Ethel are as diverse in their child-caring practices as they are in their marital approaches.

"Eight children are at Hickory Hill with her now. She sits down to every meal with them, says the rosary and reads the Bible with them every night."

"Until two years ago, even the fact that she had two growing children was kept a closely guarded secret . . . The kids . . . were forbidden, according to intimates, even to identify Raquel as their mother."

"Many rich women have practically abdicated their roles as mothers. In numerous wealthy precincts, Nanny eats in the nursery with the children . . . It is Ethel, not a servant, who queues up on book-buying lines at school . . . She has always enjoyed giving her youngest child its midmorning or noontime feeding and bath . . . Her ser-

vants free her to be with her children, not to escape them."

"In October 1963, Raquel again parked her youngsters with the paternal grandmother and headed for Hollywood."

"Every day (Raquel) rose at 6 a.m., dropped her children at a day care center and set off on her unappointed rounds of photographers."

PART VI: SLOPPY FAMILY PLANNING: A RADICALIZING EXPERIENCE

Although I have agreed to avoid the use of esoteric or privileged information, I must lapse long enough to supply a possible explanation for Raquel's self-serving treatment of her offspring. For example, the circumstances of Raquel's two pregnancies might throw some light on the matter. It seems that Raquel had to drop out of college in the first year to be "hustled off to the altar." This after a three-month wait to see if her first husband, her high school sweetheart, was going to marry her. Her second child was not exactly, according to Pageant's gossip, a miracle of planned parenthood either. She had just taken her ". . . first modest step into professional show business as the 'weather girl' on station KFMB-TV . . . 'It was unfortunate that she got pregnant again right away,'" the mother-in-law is quoted as saying. While the press expects us to commend widowed Ethel for raising eleven children alone with nine servants and an income of \$500,000 per year, we are expected to condemn Raquel for "dumping" her two children at a day-care center, while her first husband was in the service; and later, after her divorce, when her first husband (the children's father) ". . . was just out of the service and having a hard time getting started," and therefore could not manage to contribute to their support. However casual, day-care mother that she was, Raquel did manage to support and feed her children on her irregular and meager income and without excuses. Later, after she had achieved some success, she sued her husband for failure to support and won. This, according to Pageant, was the topping qualification of a thoroughgoing bitch.

However, I will leave the final analysis of female role models to the press:

". . . Ethel Kennedy was the best-liked of the Kennedy women. Family friends, as well as members of the press, usually find Senator Edward Kennedy's wife, Joan, the sweetest and least demanding lady in the

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family, but a little dull; Jackie, they say, is snooty; Mother Rose too distant; and the Kennedy sisters, Patricia Lawford, Eunice Shriver and Jean Smith, too *aggressive and masculine*. In their judgment, Ethel is friendly, outgoing, thoughtful, generous, 'not hifalutin' even if she is a millionaire.'

So much for alternate lifestyles in women. So much for our freedom of choice.

(Nila Bowman McCormick writes that she is six feet tall and menacing in appearance. Having seen her, the editor denies that she is menacing in appearance. Born in 1946 in a small southern city, celebrated as the town's only "nigger lover" and "book reader," Nila was pretty lonely until junior high school, where she found a friend and first love, in the same person. Went "up north" to a large university where she had an undistinguished academic career, but managed to be on disciplinary probation almost her entire time at school. After graduation in 1968, she moved to New York City, where she now lives and works. Having found "the great love of my life," she says she has settled down.)

caution to the winds

"Gone? Where?"

Karen felt cold sweat walk over her like ghosts.

"She's taken the boat, her skiff," Glasgow said, his voice a buzzing shape of words through the phone.

"But she can't do that. The storm," Karen said inanely.

"My boatman saw her go," Glasgow said. "I told him he must have been mistaken. To go out on the sound now is suicide. There've been small craft warnings all morning."

"But look at the sky!" Karen said as though forcing a retraction.

"We figured she must've crossed the sound right after you left here, and gone to the club from there," Glasgow said. "So we called. Nobody's seen her at the club. Then we thought of you. Perhaps she went back to the sorority; that Wilson, my boatman, was simply mistaken. He drinks. Perhaps . . ."

"No," Karen said, "she hasn't been here.

By Gabrielle Vivian Bertrand

Illustrated by Kate McColi



Mr. Glasgow, if she doesn't . . . I'm driving back right now. I'll be right over."

The rain, a curtain that wouldn't part, was in the way as she drove. But she was not heeding it or the road signs. She was trapped in the car where she thought over and over of her first meeting with the Glasgows not three hours ago:

The sitting room they'd met in was expansive and plush. It boasted a great formal fireplace with the typically severe portrait above it. There were books banked along one wall. The picture window overlooked the sound and, though the sky looked threatening, the view was impressive.

The Glasgows were standing each at one end of the fireplace, a study in up-tight composure. Mrs. Glasgow stood in the familiar shape of well-fed middle-aged women. She wore a huge bosom low under which a tough-boned, obviously custom made, corset pulled in the rest of her. The result was a supercilious carriage. Mr. Glasgow stood putting his fingers through a head of black and white hair that had receded to a place above his ears so that he had to start his nervous fingers at the top of his head to find hair. He had a bronze open outdoor face.

"We appreciate your coming," Mr. Glasgow said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Glasgow perfunctorily.

"I had no choice," Karen said. "Your chauffeur insisted you wanted to see me. What is it? Where's Stacey?"

"We don't understand any of it," Mrs. Glasgow said. "She's upstairs. She's been making strange remarks. We want you to answer some questions for us."

"Strange remarks," Karen said, putting hand to mouth to conceal an emphatic swallow. "And what has all this to do with me?"

She wished she had not put it this way.

"She says she's in love with her roommate. Well you can imagine," Mrs. Glasgow said, "how we felt. She's been rooming with you for the past two semesters."

"One," Karen said.

"At first we thought there was some kind of a switch; that you had moved out to accommodate a boy friend of hers. Isn't that what the colleges sanction these days?"

"Please tell me what Stacey has been telling you," Karen said.

"Well, as I say, at first we thought there was some young man. I . . . we . . . our

whole concern has been with our daughter's welfare. And she's never shown a robust . . . that is, never led us to believe . . . I mean . . ."

"What Mrs. Glasgow means," said Mr. Glasgow, "is that Stacey has been rather aloof when it comes to matters of the heart. She hasn't been seeing any young men since the debutante ball."

"Is that so?" Karen said. She tried not to smile at this flair for a righteous indignation that had drawn them in to these outdated terms.

The malevolent wind swept around the house.

"We've been after her to find a beau and fall in love," Mrs. Glasgow said.

Mr. Glasgow said, "We've been worrying ourselves sick that she'd get mixed up in some of these demonstrations they're having around the country. But I didn't feel it would come to this!"

"Didn't feel," Karen said.

"Beg pardon?" Glasgow said.

"What happened?" Karen said.

She let her eyes grow innocent-large; and keeping her lips together, stretched them a little like puckering for a kiss. A look of prissy innocence.

"Well," Mrs. Glasgow walked to the Louis Fourteen couch and sat down with a studied ease, "last night when she came home I knew immediately she was, well, having a . . . an emotional experience the likes of which she's never before had," she added in a half whisper, "to say the least."

"Yes?" Karen said.

Mr. Glasgow seemed irritated by the short prod.

"What Mrs. Glasgow is saying," he said, doing it for her, "is that our daughter, when questioned further about the roommate, named you."

"ME?"

Karen pointed to herself with both hands, not knowing what else to do with them.

"Good Christ, what's the matter with her?" Panic evoked this witness.

"Then there is no credence to that story?"

"Credence?"

Karen swallowed. The room was warm. "None whatsoever," she said. "Why, we've been very good good friends" (she meant to say very very not good good) "Stacey and I, but . . . She's been working awfully hard. Perhaps . . ."

"No," Mrs. Glasgow said. "Our daughter

seems perfectly normal." She hesitated, "That is to say, sane. I mean her health has never been better. I haven't seen her look more radiant."

Mr. Glasgow said, "Has she ever . . . ? Have you noticed . . . ? Did she . . . ?"

"No, Mr. Glasgow," Karen said, incomprehensibly to incomprehensible questions. It made her feel easier in the presence of these polished, well-heeled, worldly-wise people who knew absolutely nothing about love or their daughter and not necessarily in that order.

"Then why for the love of God does she make those ridiculous statements?"

"*Ridiculous statements,*" Karen said the words out loud and skidded, leaving the highway for a moment. She managed to regain it. The rain was still coming down in a sheet. Karen felt shrouded in it. Debilitated. "Oh, please, let Stacey be there when I get there. She couldn't have been foolish enough to take a boat out in this weather! Good Christ, what got into her? When you got an itch to rap, you don't rap with God and His Wife!" She sobbed once and caught herself, remembering having asked:

"Just what has she said about me, Mr. Glasgow?"

"Fool things. When she said she was in love with her roommate, our first thought was the new liberalism in the schools today. You know. We assumed, I guess, that a boy had moved in with her. But the more she talked the more it became apparent there was something not quite proper about the whole goddamn thing."

"Proper," Karen said.

"Beg pardon?" Glasgow said.

"Just when did you get the notion she was talking about me for heaven's sake?" Karen said.

"When she came right out last night and said it was you. When we laughed and rejected it on the grounds that she loved her friend perhaps, but wasn't in love, she became very indignant; said you had kissed, were . . . were lovers for godsake."

Karen fumbled with her Hawaiian beads.

"I have often kissed her on the cheek or embraced her when she's done extra well on an assignment or something. I'm a very demonstrative person."

Karen remembered the clouds were rolling in quickly, covering the sun so that the room darkened and Mr. Glasgow turned on the Tiffany lamp.

"We're in for a storm," he said to no one and, "obviously our daughter is very

impressionable. In view of the circumstances . . ."

"You want me to move."

"Yes. Yes, I do. As long as she's feeling these . . . this childish attachment for you."

"You're probably right," Karen said.

She did not recognize her own voice and felt almost pity for the Glasgows who listened so seriously to someone she herself did not acknowledge. And in this voice she insisted they were right. If this got out, Karen didn't know what her mother would do; and she knew it would ruin any chance for a career in education. She got up to go when Mrs. Glasgow asked if Karen minded staying till she called Stacey down for a brief confrontation. Karen thought she had no choice and she said she did not mind at all.

Stacey's appearance brought her breath up short. The girl's hair, straight brown shoulder-length, framed a face so unutterably ingenuous it looked new-born-naked. Karen did not hear her own words, "Hello, Stacey," when she said them.

"Karen," Stacey said, "whatever are you doing here? I was going to invite you for the weekend. Figured we could all have a talk together, a dialogue it's called."

Mrs. Glasgow said, "We sent for her, Stacey."

"We wanted some explanation of the state you're in," Mr. Glasgow said. "What's causing it."

"What've you told them," Stacey said, turning to Karen, and laughing, "air pollution? Did you know that such love as ours is an obscenity? and vile?"

"Stacey," Karen said, "you . . ."

"That we are sick in the head? Don't worry, Karen, I don't buy that theory; so, unless we can do better than the Paris peace talks, I'm splitting. Father wants me to see a head shrinker. I say no, it isn't necessary. But from what he implies, anybody who doesn't see a shrink is crazy. Mother and Father've both had their sessions, you see. Mother said this morning if I leave with you I'm cut off without a sou. Voila! so we have to take a job. Ain't that a bitch?"

Karen stood there not knowing what to say or how to say what must be said in the presence of the Glasgows who waited. The silence was so intense Karen thought if she spoke her words would curdle and come like vomit. A clap of thunder relieved the pressure and she said:

"Stacey, what's come over you? Why are

you saying these crazy things?"

Stacey's smile dissolved on her face.

"Well, because it's true," she said. "You know yourself it's true, Karen. And because there's so much fake and hate and kill in the world. And if I can't tell my own people the best thing that's ever happened to me, who else? Who else cares enough? Who the hell else wants to see me happy?"

"Look, Stacey, you misunderstood,"

Karen's legs felt boneless now.

"You have it all wrong, darling."

She envisioned her mother taking to bed again just as she had done until Karen's brother promised never to see the Cohen girl one more time. How the hell would Mother sustain this?

"We're . . . you and me . . . we're real good friends. Buddies. I had no idea you . . ."

Silence again and another clap of thunder.

"And Wednesday night?" Stacey said.

Very deliberately the Glasgows turned their gaze on Karen like a fan of klieg lights. She could not have felt more exposed.

"Wednesday night?" she repeated, "You mean when I praised you to the skies for doing that brilliant paper in English lit? and I kissed you? But I had no idea you'd misconstrued such an innocent gesture or that you'd inflate it to such proportions!"

"Karen," Stacey said and it sounded as though the word had been dragged through a very bloody war on its way up.

She turned to the Glasgows.

"Mother, Father, Karen's scared to death of you. What the hell. Show her what liberated people you really are. Let her know you love me too. Mother, please. Father."

To the expanding silence, she said, "Tell her you understand."

"Understand!" Glasgow said. "How do you expect us to understand?"

"But I'm giving you the chance, Father."

"And accept our daughter as a homosexual?" Glasgow said.

"Father! please don't say that," Mrs. Glasgow said. "That's for hairdressers and interior decorators. How can a daughter of ours . . ."

"Your hairdresser's not one," Stacey said.

"But she's a woman," Mrs. Glasgow said.

"Or maybe she is," Stacey said.

"Oh, what do I mean?" Mrs. Glasgow

said.

A clap of thunder shook the house immediately after which the rain fell as though the whole sky were backing up. Mrs. Glasgow rushed to close the window by the highly polished concert grand piano.

"Stacey, dear," Karen said, "you've misunderstood. How could I have been so dense? not seen it?"

(Dear Christ help me.) She turned to the Glasgows.

"Can you forgive me for not seeing this sooner? I can understand how you must feel. I know how my own mother would feel."

The words felt raw in her mouth, and looking into Stacey's eyes was almost more than she could bear.

"I just know how my own mother would feel," she repeated, trying to make those words sensible to Stacey.

"How can you?" Stacey said, "if you haven't talked with her, and gotten the battery of questions I got last night. I tried like hell to provide the answers. But have you? How can you know anything, Karen? If we lie, fake it, we give them nothing — nothing to love. Look at us. Just look! We peek out at each other from our little cells, scared to death of letting anyone see all of us. The whole thing, Father," she turned to Glasgow, "you think you're talking to me," she pointed to herself with a fist, "but you're talking to somebody else, somebody you've made up in your mind."

"Goddamn. Sounds like the Women's Lib thing," Glasgow said. "You're not looking at me, a person, you're looking at me, a woman; something to kick around. Isn't that what you're saying?"

"Unwholesome," Mrs. Glasgow gasped.

"Unwholesome," Stacey said to her, "is what we're being when we aren't doing what's natural."

Mrs. Glasgow snorted: a tragic attempt at laughter.

"Natural to us, I mean," Stacey said, pointing to herself with converged fingers. "To us as individuals."

"That's low-life hippie talk," Glasgow said. "Doing your own thing, isn't that what they call it? like freaking out on acid?"

"Oh come on, Father. A swinger like you playing gentlemen and ladies all of a sudden. Since when?"

"I know where the hell I stand, young woman! That's more than I can say for

you."

"You're right," Stacey said. "And a little while ago I thought I knew where I stood."

It was the look in Stacey's eyes, before the girl turned to leave the house, that Karen would never forget.

Ignoring the speed limit, Karen pushed the car over seventy to get back to that house. Could it be the last she would ever see of Stace? She knew she had to get hold of herself in order to get to the Glasgows in one piece. She held the wheel as though it drove her, recalling Glasgow's futile plea for Stace to get back into the house:

"Stacey, come back. We must talk this out!"

"Let her go, Father," Mrs. Glasgow had said.

"But it's started to rain."

"I'd better get on," Karen said. "I'm so sorry about all this. I'll move out, of course, and look for a room, perhaps in the dorm on campus. I feel sure Stacey is just overworked. A private room of her own, less interruptions for one thing, a cutting back on work ought to get her on the right track. In a month she'll realize how mistaken she's been."

"That's a goddamn understatement," Mr. Glasgow said, and tried to laugh.

† † †

Karen was coming back into the great circular drive she remembered from this morning when the chauffeur had brought her here for the first time. Now, making the turn, she hit the maple tree. She tried to back up away from it but the car stalled. She bolted out of the car into the rain where her sobs came easy. And when she confronted the Glasgows again the rain on her face mocked her tears so no one knew the difference.

"Has she come back yet?" Karen shouted above the gale.

"No."

Mr. Glasgow's luxurious tan had faded. "Have you called the country club again?" Karen said.

"Yes. They haven't seen her. I called the Coast Guard. They've sent out a patrol."

"But she couldn't've taken a boat out in this!" Karen said.

Mrs. Glasgow was working the rings on her fingers. She said nothing. A small man with a huge mustache on a badly pitted face stood off away from the trio. Glasgow turned to him.

"This is Wilson," he said to no one, "my

boatman. Claims he saw Stacey set out. I told him he must be wrong, he was seeing things."

He spoke as though the man had left the premises.

"But I can't help it," said the man helplessly. "I was down to the boat shed. I seen her. She's took off with her skiff, storm or no storm."

Karen felt faint.

"I hit your tree," she said. "My car won't move. She must be on her way home. Maybe the only person who saw her gave her a lift into town. Maybe she's on her way home by now."

The storm was growing and Glasgow said, "You needn't worry about getting back. I'll call down to the garage when you're ready; get my driver to take you back. And I'll have my mechanic get to your car as soon as this blows over."

"Oh, stop!"

Karen bolted outside. Through the rain she scanned the sound futilely for a sign on the horizon, and turned to the Glasgows who stood rigid at the door.

"You did this!" Karen said. "You did this to her!" She had been looking up at them from the bottom step. They suddenly appeared vulnerable and pathetic standing side by side just inside the portico out of the storm. "Oh. No. I'm as much to blame. Didn't I program my thinking for you? And you . . . you wanted to believe me so much."

"Who are you to judge us," Mrs. Glasgow said, working the rings on her fingers. "You lead our daughter into this pathetic attachment, you are responsible for her sudden insane rush for an outing in her boat on a day like today and you have the impudence to attack us."

"He giveth, He taketh away," Karen said into the wind; then she turned a little and shouted over it, "You think you're God? You failed her and I failed her, and the three of us, Mrs. Glasgow, are guilty. Together. Stace is the only honest one of the bunch of us."

Glasgow nodded, and the frown stayed on his face. He said, "But. Goddamn."



HEAD and TAIL

By WILDA CHASE

Once upon a time there were two young girls who lived in each other's reflection. They laughed together and played together and roamed the high hills together hand in hand. By and by their love ripened into desire and they knew that they would reap the harvest of their love in each other's arms. No sooner did they make this discovery than a bitter controversy arose between them, the first one in their lives. Who, they contended, would be the "man" and who the "woman". They argued up one wall and down the other about who would be "plus" and who "minus", who "positive" and who "negative", who "aggressive" and who "passive", who "dominant" and who "submissive", who "butch" and who "femme", for they were sure that love, whatever else it is, is a polarized set-up; mom and dad is, husband and wife is, male and female is, and, anyway, the Wisdom of the Ancients is not something you can shake a stick at. Finally one day one of them tossed a coin into the air saying, "Heads I win, tails you lose", and heads won. Ever after, one of them was known as Head and the other one as Tail.

Now, Head and Tail did not live happily ever after, for now they were no longer side by side but opposite each other, like opposing armies in the field, and separating them was an invisible wall as impenetrable as ten solid feet of iron. Head became sullen and Tail cried a lot and each blamed the other for the emptiness of their lives. Whenever Tail had one of her crying spells Head would flee the house and roam empty-hearted over the high grassy hills where they had spent so many happy hours together. Why couldn't Tail understand her anymore, she wondered. Tail, left alone with her private grief, wondered how Head, who had always been so tender, could have become so heartless. Each withdrew into herself and took comfort in the only thing she had left, her "role".

The day came when Head and Tail decided that they had failed together because they were too much alike. Perhaps, they decided, each could find what she was seeking in somebody else. Head went East looking for someone more tail-like than Tail, someone more *opposite*, and Tail went West looking for someone more head-like than Head, someone more *opposite*. Years passed and Head went through many and



Illustration by Lynne

many a tail and Tail went through many and many a head, each seeking an opposite-ness that would anger patience and strain credulity, and each locked in a loneliness that was day by day gnawing her soul to shreds. By and by both Head and Tail decided that they had adopted the wrong "role" in the beginning and Head became a tail and Tail became a head and each continued to seek her opposite with growing desperation. Relentless Time carved furrows in their cheeks and the frost of winter came to settle in their hair. The memory of their early love returned to mock their emptiness and sear their hearts with regrets. Each longed for the other with a longing that defied the grave and, with a hope arising out of despair, each went off in search of the other. Death overtook them both on the way and one was buried in the East and the other in the West but, it is said, their spirits walk to this day as a reminder of the tragedy of two people who could not believe in same-sex love. And on a stormy night, when the wind is high, if you incline your ear against the window pane you can hear their mournful cries as they roam the hills of night still searching for each other.

BACK ISSUES OF THE LADDER ARE AVAILABLE

Prior to October/November 1968, THE LADDER was issued monthly for the most part; we now issue six magazines a year. THE LADDER year begins with the October/November issue each year.

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EVERY MAGAZINE IS NEW UNTIL YOU'VE READ IT!

Henry Schnakenberg — "Conversation"



Henry Schnakenberg, "Conversation." Oil on canvas. 50 1/4 x 36. 1930. Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

A young woman in a sunlit room reclines upon a sofa and, propping her head with a pillow, begins to turn the pages of an illustrated periodical. She is clothed in a checked house dress and her hair, which is long and untied, falls gently about her shoulders. A second woman, slightly older than the first and more formally dressed, enters the room from somewhere out of sight. She approaches the couch and partly leans, partly reclines along its arm and back. The younger woman, who has now shifted position slightly, lifts her eyes from the magazine which remains open on her lap. Both women meet each other's gaze but do not speak.

It is this precise moment that Henry Schnakenberg selectively steals from time by transferring it onto a painting of oil on canvas. It is this moment, when the gaze of one person acknowledges the gaze of another, that conversation, also the title of the painting, actually begins. It is a moment in our daily lives that happens so quickly we often miss its beauty. But in a work of art, as in slow motion or stop action photography, time can be fragmented so that a single instant may be expanded into an hour or more, depending upon how long the viewer needs to understand the moment.

The question posed and answered by *Conversation* is one that seeks to involve the viewer with the subtleties of human dialogue. The first statement the artist gives us is that conversation is not dependent upon speech but more primarily upon gesture. Although science has only recently presented its studies into the subject now termed "body language", artists have been observing this phenomenon for thousands of years and using it in figure painting and sculpture to express a wide range of emotions and intentions.

The most obvious body message distinguished in the painting is an overall feeling of relaxation on the part of the figures. In the presence of another being, the act of remaining prone places one in a distinctly vulnerable position both physically and psychologically and also removes any pretense of formality. Therefore, the fact that Schnakenberg has placed his figures in this position indicates to the viewer that the friendship is one of great openness and trust.

The second major set of body signals involves hand gesture and placement. To begin with, all four hands are open, that is, receptive and extremely lax, almost forgotten. This is especially true of the dark haired woman whose right forefinger extends outward in the classic gesture made famous by Michaelangelo's *Creation of Man* in which Adam extends his hand to receive life from his creator. In the same way, her left hand does not support but only touches her cheek as it had become suspended absentmindedly in the middle of some contemplation, in this case, the contemplation of her friend. Even the younger woman's left hand, which also seems forgotten, has drifted loosely to the fold at the center of the magazine in her lap. Thus, the two women before us, though communicating with their bodies, are, at this exact moment, unaware of themselves as physical beings and appear to be devoting their entire attention to the relationship that exists between them.

Finally, it is important to note that the women are addressing each other full face and that their bodies are open and not protected. It would be very possible for the woman above to lean down and kiss the young one on the mouth without a second's awkwardness. Such an embrace would not only be very possible but in this viewer's mind, very likely indeed, if the painting were in fact the frame of a film, and the action could continue.

HENRY SCHNAKENBERG, born 1892, New Brighton, Staten Island, New York, studied with Kenneth Hayes Miller and painted many different subjects including portraits, figures, still lifes and landscapes. However his paintings of women never lapse into faceless creatures but consistently portray the lady's individual character with neither the idealization nor caricature found in so many other figure painters. Mr. Schnakenberg is represented in the following major collections: Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Mass.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, N.Y., N.Y.; Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, N.J.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia and the Whitney Museum of American Art, N.Y., N.Y.



Book Reviews

By HOPE THOMPSON

Three recent anthologies, edited and written by women, cover the whole range of topics women are concerned about as women. Some of the topics are: employment, professional women, education, welfare women, women and the law, aging women, the media, female sexuality, birth control, prostitution, Lesbianism, self-defense, high school women, domestics, child care, abortion, consciousness raising, ideology, and glimpses into the future. Yes, Lesbianism is included — just a little. I do not know whether to be overjoyed at such tremendous progress or angry that the Lesbian is so utterly overlooked by all but four or five out of some 80 contributors.

These anthologies are: VOICES OF THE NEW FEMINISM edited by Mary Lou Thompson (\$5.95, 246 pp), Beacon Press, Boston, 1970; WOMEN'S LIBERATION-BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE compiled by Sookie Stambler (95c, 283 pp), Ace Books, N.Y., 1970; and SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL edited by Robin Morgan, Random House, N.Y., 1970. This last is in both hardcover (\$8.95) and paperback (\$2.45, 602 pp), the best buy figuring words per penny and the best of the three in content, if you can afford only one. There is some overlapping among the three anthologies, but less than one would expect. VOICES is the most conservative meaning, among other things, that Lesbians are not mentioned. It has excellent articles by Martha Griffiths, Congresswoman from Michigan, and Shirley Chisholm, Congresswoman from New York. If I am less than happy with VOICES it is because I find myself resenting more and more the conspiracy of silence against Lesbians on the part of women who call themselves feminists. For example, Dr. Alice Rossi says, "... our most intimate human relation is the heterosexual one of marriage." She tells us that "the hard core of activists" were and are the "unattached" women, but these include only exwives, nonwives, childless wives, etc., not Lesbians, married or single. Doris L. Pullen has a good article in VOICES, "The Educational Establishment: Wasted Women." She cites the liberal outlook of Hampshire College, which opened last fall, and their policy that "Hampshire should hire women faculty who have a variety of life styles." Ms. Pullen explains

that "Life-style variety means married and unmarried, with young children, with older children, with husbands who are teachers, businessmen, researchers, or artists", in any case any of you got your hopes up.

There are articles in SISTERHOOD that make a mockery of Dr. Rossi's "most intimate human relations." I enjoyed "Barbarous Rituals," an amusing yet telling series of statements about growing up female. "Having an intense crush on another girl or on a woman teacher and learning that that's unspeakable." "Going on a cross-country trip in a Volkswagen during which the Loop or the Coil becomes dislodged and begins to tear at your flesh." "The Dynamics of Marriage and Motherhood" by Beverly Jones is a powerful article about the misery that heterosexual marriage can be. "They [women] must reject romanticism." How sad! Gene Damon, in "The Least of These," describes the terrible plight of the Lesbian in our society, but who can say who has it worse, the Lesbian or the heterosexual woman?

Gene Damon also points out the reluctance of Lesbians to shoulder their share in the women's movement, even in the Lesbian movement; that they live "alone together in 'egoism à deux' . . . We seldom march, seldom picket, but frequently do run away . . . to our shame, I might add." She explains that researchers find so few Lesbians (always grossly underestimating our number) because they accept the male definition of Lesbianism as a purely sexual phenomenon. Thus the millions of women who love each other in a Lesbian manner but who do not express their love sexually (or who would never admit to any researcher that they do), are thought to be sexless. (Most women share this myth of the "sexless" old maid.)

Martha Shelley has the other excellent Lesbian article in SISTERHOOD, excellent despite the ambiguous statement: "the rewards of child raising are denied her [the Lesbian]." Ms. Shelley does not explain that this is due to society's super-oppression of Lesbians and not to any inherent incapacity. Lesbians are as able to have children as any women — it is surprising how many heterosexuals overlook this. Ms. Shelley has another provocative article in WOMEN'S LIBERATION, "Lesbianism and the Women's Liberation Movement." I was puzzled to read that "There are many lesbians . . . who are lesbian in sexual practice only." Perhaps, but there are far,

far more "heterosexual" women who are heterosexual in practice only.

SISTERHOOD has something for everyone. Some of it is of the very best, some of it is infuriating, all of it is interesting. It attempts to cover everything that active women today are thinking. It does not quite succeed for it puts most of its emphasis on the young and the "radical." Perhaps this is why many of the contributors are not what I would call feminist, i.e., women who view the women's revolution as fundamental. Robin Morgan puts it well in her introduction, the best part of the book in my opinion:

"We know that two evils clearly predate corporate capitalism, and have post-dated socialist revolutions: *sexism* and *racism* — so we know that a male-dominated socialist revolution, in economic and even cultural terms, were it to occur tomorrow, would be no revolution, but only another coup d'etat among men." "More and more, I begin to think of a worldwide Women's Revolution as the only hope for life on the planet."

Other "non-feminists", as I would call them, are those who see THE SYSTEM as the enemy. They are still entangled in male ideologies and in serving the males promoting them. Marge Piercy has an excellent article on this theme, "The Grand Coolie Damn." She knows whereof she speaks for "As I said, I have been a house nigger in the Movement." And Robin Morgan says early in her introduction, "In my case . . . when I first began work on this book, I considered myself a radical woman who regarded the Women's Liberation Movement as an important 'wing' of the Left; as a tool, perhaps, for organizing as-yet apolitical women into what has been loosely called the 'Movement' — which I now refer to as the male-dominated counterfeit Left."

I do not wish to slight WOMEN'S LIBERATION, for it too has much food for thought. An article of particular interest to LADDER readers is "Consciousness-Raising" by June Arnold. When the discussion turned to sex, after many meetings, one of them said, "The only one who gains from the taboo on lesbianism is the man — it's his way of protecting his possession." This, from a group of 10 women, all over 35, all mothers. Susan Brownmiller has an excellent piece on "The Enemy Within." She points out the harm women's fear of leadership can cause, that men have defined

what is masculine, such as leadership and self-assertion, and too many women buy this. An article by the Redstockings Collective, "How Women Are Kept Apart," is very good too, though a bit naive in fancying that all successful, unmarried women lead half lives. "I will no longer judge my sisters by male sexual standards . . . Only when women have the choice — the choice to be celibate, the choice to choose their sex partners (male or female) . . . will women be sexually free." A hard-hitting article is, "Man As An Obsolete Life Form," by Betsy Warrior. Perhaps the best article is "Abortion Law Repeal (sort of): A Warning to Women" by Lucinda Cisler. It has implications beyond abortion itself. To settle for half measures doled out by men could mean putting women back to sleep as happened after the vote was won 50 years ago. In another essay Susan Brownmiller comes down hard on Movement men. "If man and wife in a suburban split-level was a symbol of all that was wrong with plastic, bourgeois America, 'man and chick' in a Lower East Side tenement flat was hardly the new order they had dreamed of."

I'll mention only one more article, "An Argument for Black Women's Liberation as a Revolutionary Force", by Maryanne Weathers. It is good except for that stubborn blindness that afflicts so many heterosexual women, particularly minority women. "We [black women] are clearly the most oppressed and degraded minority in the world, let alone the country." (Italics mine.) It is not at all clear. What about the one million or so black Lesbians in this country who, unfortunately, are not heard from in these anthologies? Is a white Lesbian worse off than a black heterosexual woman? Impossible to say. But let us not get caught in a contest as to who is the worst off.

SISTERHOOD has a number of extras: a section of historical documents including NOW'S Bill of Rights, Principles of New York Radical Women, Redstockings Manifesto (excellent), WITCH'S hexes, and the leaflet presented to the Marriage License Bureau of NYC; Verbal Karate — short and pointed statements such as "The Public Health Service shows men lose more days from work each year than do women — including days lost for pregnancy and childbirth," and "Genius has no sex" — Madame de Staël; and a fine bibliography which ends with a "Drop Dead List." Also included in

the Appendix are Notes on Sister Contributors, a feature lacking in WOMEN'S LIBERATION. VOICES has a comprehensive bibliography, a condensation from WOMEN: A BIBLIOGRAPHY by Lucinda Cisler, available from her at 102 W. 80th St., New York City 10024, for 30c.

Abolish the family, which will abolish the Oedipus Complex and all other forms of sexual repression; give full adult rights to women and children of all ages; and "humanity [will] revert to its natural polymorphous perverse sexuality . . . The fully sexual mind . . . [will] become universal." (p 236). THE DIALECTIC OF SEX by Shulamith Firestone, William Morrow and Company, Inc., N.Y. 1970, reads like NOTES BY AN ANGRY ADOLESCENT. It is difficult to review because it is so self-contradictory. (Schools are to be abolished, but they reenter the picture in the last chapter as 'centers of learning.') Ms. Firestone would like to lead a 20th Century Children's Crusade — she admires the manner in which children were raised (or not) in the Middle Ages — and would abolish parents. It is evident that she has read some grownup books and listened to grownup conversation, but the meaning of what she has absorbed comes out filtered through a child's precocious mind, all confusion and illogic. Ms. Firestone seems not to believe in the art of thinking. Her low estimate of the truly human gift for rational thought may be due to her erroneous notion that "machines may soon equal or surpass man in original thinking." (p 228). What Ms. Fire-

stone finds most "human" is our capacity for sex. And the Oedipus Complex, suffered by every little boy, is the villain. (Ms. Firestone follows Freud right down the line here.)

The male infant wants to have sexual relations with his mother, but this is taboo. The repression of this noble desire is what causes all our troubles: sex as power, male chauvinism, male inability to love, exploitation, etc., etc. Destroy the biological family and presumably any adult women in the baby boy's life will welcome his sexual advances. Thus he suffers no rejection and will grow up to become a man we can all love — sexually, of course.

Ms. Firestone thinks she knows all about boys, black men, homosexuals, and the elderly. And, I might add, Lesbians. I do not pretend to any special knowledge about the first four groups, but I am as well informed about Lesbians as anyone. If Ms. Firestone can be so hopelessly ignorant about Lesbianism, I suspect all the rest of her "knowledge." Homosexuality is "seriously crippling [to] that individual's sexual relationships, or even his total psyche . . . Female homosexuality, though it too has its sources in *unsuccessful* repression . . . is considerably more complicated." (p 64, italics mine.) However, Ms. Firestone's own subsequent discussion of the horrors of heterosexuality could lead one to conclude that all human beings are naturally Lesbian or homosexual. She comes to no such conclusion. Most of the book takes a "respectable" anti-Lesbian and anti-homosexual stance which hardly meshes with her hoped for regression to infantile polymorphous perverse sexuality and a lifetime of undisciplined and promiscuous sexual behavior. "A healthy transexuality" [sic] will be the norm.

Like so many young women today, Ms. Firestone fancies herself a radical feminist. I will grant her her radicalism (though not on the basis of the "bloody struggle" she anticipates — I find bloody struggles hopelessly conservative), but I fail to see that she is a feminist. Her thought is old-fashioned male (Marx and Freud) and her goal is to get out from under parental oppression. Her book is generally depressing in its anti-human tone. Mother love, for example, "is no more than shared oppression." (p 81). The interest in the book, if there is any, is as a case study of one intelligent young woman intensely preoccupied with sex who knows no way out.

A Document

[The following manuscript came to THE LADDER offices in a plain brown sealed envelope without a return address and postmarked January 1, 1971. The blurred and faint postmark told us only that it had been mailed from somewhere within the United States. Ed.]

We people from Mars — eight of us — have been among you earthlings for the past six months verifying observations taken from our home planet, as well as acquiring heretofore unsuspected data. Our stay on earth has been most fruitful and almost without incident except for one serious failure in our plans. This was our inability to take on earth substance so that you earthlings could see, hear, and touch us. We spent many years (earth years, that is — we have calculated time in your units) in perfecting a method of transforming our own Martian bodies into an earthlike protoplasm. We could not carry this out on Mars, for no earthlike life will survive there, but we had thought we could accomplish this once we landed on earth. From information gathered about earth matter we expect to be able to overcome this difficulty on our next visit. (We will not at this time go into the complexities of the differences between the physics of living earth matter and that of living Mars matter. It is enough for you to know that mind matter is the same throughout the universe.)

We Martians, of course, consist of a great deal more mind matter than you earthlings. This is not surprising for we are a far older people and have long since passed through the stage of evolution in which you now find yourselves. One of the purposes of our visit to you was to try to clarify our own dim and distant past. We are most interested in the evolution of mind for we have long known that mind is the only truly real substance in the universe. Our earth studies will help us chart the development of mind out of physical matter and, hopefully, point to techniques for its further development . . . But these problems of ours are not what we mean to tell you about in this communication. Your language is totally inadequate for explaining to you the kinds of problems we Martians are currently engaged in solving. As you know, language grows as ideas grow. Our

language is thus far more developed and contains a multitude of words that have no counterpart in any earth languages. For example, there is a paucity of emotional words in English, an otherwise highly developed language. Emotion pertains to mind matter and you people are very close to the beginning of mind development, having had so little time — some one million years at most.

No, we have a different purpose in leaving behind this manuscript. After much discussion we agreed that it could do no harm and might even help you to find your way through the turmoil your planet is now experiencing and thus reducing to some extent the inevitable suffering in store for so many of you. We must admit that we found a great deal to laugh at on earth. But, do not misunderstand. Not only have we a far more developed sense of humor — an extremely important ingredient of mind matter, but we have likewise a far more developed sense of compassion and a profound sense of the meaning of suffering for the growth of mind matter. In view of this some of us questioned the wisdom of any attempt to alleviate human suffering. Might not this be a disservice to you in the long run? However, research into our own distant past taught us that our forebears went through a great deal of purely destructive suffering and it is this unproductive suffering we would like to spare you.

Our first plan was to distribute thousands of copies of this manuscript to your universities, libraries, and publishers. What a job that would have been! As it was we became weak with laughter trying to operate one of your typewriters. The problems we had pushing down the keys were "out of this universe," as your expression goes. And we had to be careful that no one saw us at the typewriter. Any of you who observed the keys apparently moving by themselves would be bound to suffer mentally and, if foolish enough to report it, would be locked up immediately by your extremely primitive psychologists.

On second thought we realized that blanketing the country with our manuscript would be dangerous. The consternation produced would lead to an incredible amount of human folly: Kangaroo Congressional investigations, panicky psychiatric mumbo-jumbo, cries of "Conspiracy," "Communism," "Subversion." No, that would never do. The question then was, to whom should we address ourselves? Who

EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY
EMPLOYMENT
COMMISSION



WHAT MINORITY GROUP DID YOU
SAY THAT WAS . . .
L . . . E . . . S . . . B . . . I . . . A . . . N . . . ?

would even dare publish our words? We settled finally on THE LADDER as being the most radical and courageous publication and the one whose readers would be most likely to understand what we have to say.

Let us mention here a few simple axioms about mind power. No correct action is possible until correct thoughts or ideas are in existence. Incorrect ideas may die before causing action, thus harming no one, or they may lead to tragedy. Correct ideas always lead to correct action, though hundreds of years may elapse between the birth of the idea and the first actions based thereon. A right idea in only one mind has very little power, but it never dies. It is not until the idea exists in a critical mass of mind that it spills over into action. (We have not completed our calculations on what this critical mass is in the case of you humans. That depends upon the total amount of mind matter on earth, on its quality, and on its availability. By availability we mean the extent to which a person's mind matter is free to motivate that person.)

So much for our introduction. We will entrust this manuscript to your hopelessly bungling postal system and follow its fate from Mars. We do this, by the way, by tracing your mind matter through what you might call "mind telescopes." These elaborate instruments measure the mind-stuff of earth and, by means of rather recent improvements, we are able to follow the course of particular minds. We will know, therefore, whether our manuscript is printed in THE LADDER by following the thoughts of those of you who labor to publish it.

Beginning about 150 years ago, before some of us on this expedition were born (our life span averages 400 years), we noticed an increase in the total amount of earthly mind matter due not only to population increase but also to an increase in individual mind. With our newer and highly sophisticated instruments for the measurement of the individual's mental composition, new data led us to speculate that there might be two sorts of earthlings. Roughly half the individuals on which we could get relatively clear readings seemed to have their mind matter concentrated at the crotch; the other half had most of theirs imprisoned within the skull. Now, of course, we know the answer. Human beings are divided into females and males. Males are frightfully preoccupied with their male-

ness to the exclusion of their humanity, hence the concentration of mind matter around their genitals which so puzzled us. Females, on the other hand, by virtue of what is to us an astoundingly evil and vicious oppression, a monumental injustice beyond anything we had imagined possible, are unable to use and express the vast amounts of mind matter they possess. The increase of individual mind matter we had noted in our observations from Mars is due entirely to the recent freeing of mind matter among females - what you call the women's liberation movement. (Male mind matter has shown a slight decrease during the past 30 to 40 years.) These two recent discoveries of ours, the existence of two types of humans and the marked increase of free and available mind matter among your women, prompted us to visit your planet in 1970, rather than 2000 as originally planned.

We should explain to you a little about our methods of research. We on Mars have for the most part outgrown the need for language as a means of communication, though we all learn our one language. We communicate directly, mind to mind. This does not, as you might think, destroy our mental privacy, a value we greatly cherish. We can close off all or any part of our minds at will and pick up any thoughts left to be picked up when and if we wish. We had no trouble whatsoever picking up the contents of your minds since none of you has as yet evolved the ability to close off your thoughts, whether conscious or unconscious, from those able to read them. Our main research was accomplished in this manner - mind reading. We also applied ourselves to deciphering your language, English, and teaching ourselves to read it for we were interested in whether there were discrepancies between your stated or written ideas and your inner, unconscious ideas. We were, most unexpectedly and to our amazement, astonished to find *immense* discrepancies. You hardly know your own minds at all!

Some of our scholars have posited a kind of primitive sexual reproduction similar to yours in our ancestors of millions of years ago. (Our present way of reproduction is entirely mental and voluntary, has nothing to do with lust or sexual activity, and is inexplicable to the human mind.) Part of the evidence for such speculation is that we modern Martians are divided into two distinct physical types,

what you call the two sexes. These bodily differences of ours no longer have anything to do with reproduction (assuming they ever did and our new earth evidence seems to vindicate those scholars who favor this theory), but they have a great deal to do with love, the most potent of mind forces.

The totally unforeseen discovery we will take back to Mars is what you people call heterosexuality, a phenomenon at once hilarious and tragic. Nothing struck us as more absurd on earth than one male and one female living together, pretending love. We read much of your literature, fiction and non-fiction, and compared it with our direct readings of your minds. We were at a loss to understand such a vast contradiction between conscious thought and behavior and the real state of your mind matter. (We must say we were immensely relieved to find many of you quite free of such mind constricting repression - your Lesbians and homosexuals.) A careful and objective examination of your inner minds reveals that none of you is capable of heterosexual love. (You will appreciate now why we decided to mail this manuscript to THE LADDER only.) We know how difficult it will be to explain this to you. Perhaps we are being premature and overly optimistic and no one will take us seriously but, if so, no harm has been done. But let us try to explain.

After our astonishment at so much heterosexual living and our investigation of the inner mind of many of these so-called heterosexuals, we asked ourselves how it is that this kind of life style is so pervasive and so desperately propagated in all your media and, in fact, sincerely believed to be God's intention. We soon realized that your difficulties are very real and that we Martians must have gone through a similar tragedy for we have ancient records telling of terrible times and our near extinction. We have never been able to pinpoint the cause of those awful times that extended, we estimate, over at least 1000 years. Your difficulty is in having to accommodate to sexual reproduction, a part of your animal heritage, and a growing need to love and be loved by one particular person.

Your greatest lyric poet was a Lesbian, Sappho. Yet still today you institutionalize heterosexual living, thus hopelessly confusing lust and reproduction with love. You attempt to express your highest emotions in a relationship between female and male that leads you into tragic lives.

And it is primarily your females who suffer. Your males, arrested at the primitive level of genital sexuality, have little or no notion of what love means. Their genitality causes excesses of aggression and an insatiable need for power. It is all to the good therefore that male mental matter shows a decrease for it threatens to destroy your planet.

Only your Lesbians know the meaning of true love, that mature human dedication to another that transcends animal lust and raises sexual expression to total emotional flowering and integrates sexuality into a perfect union of two human beings profoundly in love. We do not mean to imply that all Lesbians find this transcending love - such love is difficult of attainment at best. What is so sad to us is that many of your "heterosexual" women are capable of such loving were they not so heavily molded from birth into the conviction that they must love a man. We have found the human being, especially the female, to be a fantastically malleable creature, so much so that the vast majority of your women still cling desperately to the myth of heterosexual love.

The signs of this are everywhere. The "heterosexual" woman's fear of Lesbianism is evidence that some of you may be able to understand. Why so much fear if heterosexuality is natural? There is no such corresponding fear among Lesbians, who live invisibly among you and wonder how you can stand the heterosexual life. Your proliferation of (heterosexual) marriage manuals is another fact pointing to the great difficulty you have in living up to the heterosexual myth. The roster of your heterosexual difficulties, frigidity, impotence, etc., came as no surprise to us. Simple impregnation is not your problem, as your population explosion attests. No, your problem is in trying to integrate the purely procreative sex act into the expression of a love that cannot be. An amusing and recent trend is the unisex one. By attempting to dress, look, and act more alike, women and men are hoping unconsciously to achieve a pathetic sort of pseudo-homosexuality, while preserving the myth of heterosexuality. The current fad for bisexual behavior among women is another such attempt to escape heterosexual bondage.

Some of you realize the bankruptcy of marriage and the nuclear family, but imagine that some sort of group marriage

still involving both sexes will be an improvement. You cannot get away from the ingrained notion that women must live with men and have non-procreative sex with them. Much of your current psychology — mere pseudo-science — holds fast to the erroneous idea that everything is learned, that past cultural and genetic influences count for nothing, that there is no human nature (or, as we would say, no mind nature) other than an accumulation of conditioning. Yet these same psychologists pompously proclaim the “naturalness” of heterosexual life, and this despite allowing for a Lesbian or homosexual phase during adolescence. Actually, these psychologists are not altogether wrong. Heterosexual behavior is not only learned, but is as viciously enforced as the laws of any totalitarian dictatorship. What is not learned, because it is so natural, is Lesbian love, for such love springs from the innermost, truest part of mind matter. This is why it is impossible to eradicate. To sustain the myth of heterosexual love, all social institutions must ceaselessly teach and reward it. This explains why there are so few truly radical feminists, so few who can see that heterosexual living is imposed by men upon women to uphold patriarchy. At your stage of evolution your males are still driven by their animal urge to impregnate, i.e., to masturbate in vaginas.

If this were all, women could have managed things. But male aggressiveness demanded more, much more. Ever since a woman discovered the function of coitus, men have schemed to own “their” children and the bearers of “their” children. Over millenia males have built up elaborate myths and institutions to safeguard and augment their power and are now partially trapped in their own greed. Most of them are still true believers in their own heterosexual myth, but they have shrewdly provided themselves with some outlets: their all male gatherings and their strong friendships with other men. In this sense men come closer to their true (homosexual) nature than do women. And shrewdly too men have seen to it that their women are kept apart from each other for, should women come to know each other, their greater amount of mental (loving) matter would lead them into each other’s arms and spell the end of the heterosexual myth, that essential underpinning of patriarchy.

A current example of the oppressive strength of this myth is the denial of love

by some women. Convinced that Lesbianism is “unnatural” and “wrong,” they repudiate altogether their capacity for a loving relationship or that there is any meaning to the word, love, other than lust. These women have perceived that heterosexual love is a fraud, but they are still trapped in the heterosexual myth.

Many an older woman, having managed to get through 25 to 50 years of marriage undivorced, believes she loves her husband because she has at least achieved friendship with the male who once caused her so much heartache. And he no longer bothers her so often with his lusting needs. A kind of friendship with or without sex is thought to be the meaning of love. This is a “good” marriage. It is, in fact, the best that can be expected. Friendship is very possible between a woman and a man but it seldom happens because each is conditioned to the heterosexual-patriarchal institution.

Men are busy finding new ways to bind women to them. By granting women more sexual “freedom” they fool them into an illusion of a freedom of mind. Grateful for this male “gift”, women are trying as hard now to conform to male sexuality as they tried to be asexual in the Victorian era. The “In” thing is to be promiscuous and to separate sexual activity from all deeper feelings of love. The latest male gimmick in this campaign is to twist the (to them) startling finding that women have a greater capacity for orgasm than do men into the non sequitur that therefore women have a greater need for orgasm. Of course women have a greater capacity for orgasm for their sexuality partakes of much more mind matter than does that of the male. His is seldom more than a physiological sensation. We wonder how long your men can hood-wink your women. Some are beginning to ask why it is that only the female has an organ solely for sexual expression, that the penis is awkward at best for even purely sexual (non-loving) relief. We hope to find, on our next visit, that women have begun to probe their own sexuality without reference to the tons of garbage males have written about them.

Some of you may wonder why we spent so much time in the United States. Even before we left Mars it was clear that this country is farthest into the civil unrest that precedes a new era in human progress. Whether your country will be able to fight its way through to the raised consciousness beyond or whether it will go down in

defeat, we cannot say. So much depends upon the women’s movement so recently begun once again. The American woman has great courage. If she fails, it will be because she shares the American weakness for “instant” everything and a reluctance to think and to study and to acknowledge the complexity of human beings and the technological structures now threatening to strangle them. Or she may allow herself once again to be sidetracked into other issues, hypnotized by the rhetoric of male political ideologies.

To us the long range view is encouraging indeed. If the United States fades into a fascist period, women now living under such governments (e.g. China, Cuba, and Russia), or the millions of black women in

Africa, or the most oppressed women of all — Arab women, will take up the fight for a saner and better earth. If males prove to be as vicious and cruel as they seem to us, it may be necessary drastically to reduce their number for a period of time by refusing to breed them. (You will soon learn how to do this by sperm selection and artificial insemination.) This will give you women a chance to clean up your planet and to reintroduce males gradually while teaching them to live more humanely. A Sisterhood of Woman is now forming that puts all myths of the Brotherhood of Man to shame. How long it will take this great Sisterhood to rise to its responsibilities depends in large part on the tenacity of the myth of heterosexual love.

BRIGHT PARTICULAR STAR

By JOSEPH LEACH

REVIEWED BY LENNOX STRONG

Nineteenth Century America produced three stars of the stage — Edwin Forrest (don’t be ashamed not to have heard of him), Edwin Booth, who is, poor man, primarily remembered because of his brother John Wilkes Booth, and the BRIGHT PARTICULAR STAR, Charlotte Cushman, 1816-1876.

Joseph Leach’s book, subtitled THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN, from Yale University Press, 1970, must stand as the final word on her. Final, that is, until some woman does it better; and, for reasons that will be clear, it might be good if someday one does.

Daughter of a Boston merchant whose trusting ways and lack of business sense brought the family to ruin, Charlotte went on the stage after an abortive singing career. The kindest thing that happened to her during her early years was her being damned by the music critics — for where her hoarse and loud tones were unsuited for singing, they were marvelous for the acting styles of the day: DRAMA, with real blood. Like most women whose strength causes them to live in history, Charlotte was soon faced with a family to support, shouldering the burdens left to her by her father.

By the age of twenty, Charlotte had gone on the stage, faced and won her New York debut and begun to establish a name — no mean accomplishment as a woman so young. A fire in a theatre sent her from New York City to a year perfecting her trade in Albany. Early in her career she

began playing male roles. Mr. Leach comments: “By the end of her Albany sojourn, upstate New Yorkers knew Charlotte Cushman as an able young actress especially adept in ‘breeches parts,’ so skilled in male impersonation that no one seriously objected to a woman’s daring, in Victorian America, to change her skirts for the revealing costumes and aggressive demeanor of men.”

She became famous for Hamlet before her death and was playing it, alas, long after anyone, male OR female, has any right to do so; since if the “too too solid flesh” isn’t solid, the audience will giggle at that line.

Cushman means “cross bearer” and it was an apt name, for she carried the burden of her inept and troublesome family for much of her young life.

Back in New York City in 1837, Charlotte was cast as Meg in GUY MANNERING — a terrible shriveled crone. The role was and is an ugly one, but by far the most important, and it was perfect for Charlotte who became famous for her performance. For three years Charlotte widened her repertoire, which was to become enormous and very popular, for she played the same roles over and over throughout her life, in a career dotted with “final retirements” and new engagements. From 1838 on, her sister Susan (before, one of her many burdens) became a blessing in disguise, when Charlotte encouraged her in an acting career that later led to Susan’s

playing Juliet to Charlotte's Romeo.

In 1839, one of Charlotte's most popular roles was first played: the ragged, uncouth Nancy in Dickens' OLIVER TWIST. To learn the role, Charlotte disappeared from home and went to live in the notorious "Five Points" section. In a miserable den called the "Mother Hennessey," she lived for several days, watching the prostitutes and bums. In a saloon she befriended an old woman who became violently ill. Charlotte took her home and cared for her till she died. The old woman left her few clothes to Charlotte. When the play opened, there was Charlotte — like Dickens' own — larger than life, wearing the garments of the dead woman.

From 1840 to 1842, Charlotte was in Philadelphia, where she entered a distinctly different phase of her life: the polishing that was possibly the only thing her acting had lacked. It was also her "training" in social respectability, in a day and age where acting was on a par with street sweeping, or worse.

It was in Philadelphia, at 24, that Charlotte became friends with Fanny Kemble, the niece of Sarah Siddons. These English actresses were very famous. Fanny, her career cut short by an unwise marriage, was lonely, both for the stage and for human company. They became good friends. Fanny's wealthy and socially prominent husband was a help to Charlotte as well, since his position automatically raised Fanny's status. It was through Fanny, most likely, that Charlotte met the first love of her life.

Thomas Sully was then the supreme portrait artist in America. He often painted Fanny Kemble and it is safe to assume that she was responsible for Charlotte's going to his studio. More than the portrait kept her returning, for Rosalie Kemble Sully, one of Thomas's daughters, was to become the first young woman Charlotte would publicly call "beloved."

Joseph Leach quite frankly says that Charlotte's diary was "one never intended for publication" and that it charts the progress of what he calls "the profound attachment." Shortly after this, Charlotte, who had always lived with some of her family depending upon her for support in her home, moved herself into separate quarters where Rosalie would visit her freely and privately.

During this time Charlotte acted as manager of her own theatre, but the experi-

ment was not successful. Professionally, this was to be Charlotte's last "failure" in any sense. She had reached the top of her profession in her own country. She had become as famous as she could without passing the test of acting in London. In 1844, leaving Rosalie behind, she went to London. Her diary during this time (when first parted from Rosalie) ought to be published.

Charlotte, however sad on the ocean crossing, was to find herself a social lion in London, and the center of such an adoring crowd that it is not surprising that, with the passing of time, another woman interested her. During her successful season on the London stage, where she made herself an international celebrity, the young English poet, Eliza Cook, showered her with love poetry (much of it still unpublished). Eliza was the first among her friends to affect mannish dress. The constant companionship of Eliza was discussed enough to reach Rosalie Sully's ears in Philadelphia. Today that wouldn't seem surprising, but for that type of news to travel that far in those days indicates an inordinate amount of busy-body activity. Joseph Leach does not explain, but he calls the rumors "cruel reports."

In 1845 Charlotte left London for a tour in the "provinces," repeating over and over her standard roles with complete success. Audiences and critics alike adored Charlotte. In Manchester she formed a good friendship with Geraldine Jewsbury whose novel ZOE had recently shocked England. An outspoken feminist, she was met with the usual reactions to women who advocate women's rights.

During the next two years, Charlotte continually appeared in Ireland, Scotland and England, adding triumphs to her name wherever she went and widening her social circle to include the literary, political and artistic talents of the time. However, two things were troubling her: the death of Rosalie Sully at 25, and a growing unhappiness between Charlotte and her sister, Susan, who still was playing Juliet to Charlotte's Romeo. Fate or otherwise, while touring in the provinces once again in 1849, the 28-year old Matilda Hays asked Charlotte to take her on as a pupil. Charlotte saw in Matilda a potential to take Susan's place in the role of Juliet.

But Matilda was destined to play very few times on the stage, occupying instead a more important role in Charlotte's life. She

became Charlotte's lover, and, in a more publicly open relationship than one might imagine possible at that time, Charlotte declared them to be married. Geraldine Jewsbury made Charlotte the prototype of her heroine in the novel, THE HALF SISTERS. It was a strongly feminist novel, declaring that women did not have to marry men if they did not wish to do so, with a sentence that must ring hollowly on ears today: "We are touching on better days when women will have a genuine normal life of their own to lead."

Charlotte returned to America in late 1849, toured successfully for over three years to acclaim in her native land. Her success in London assured her position in her own country. But touring and playing many roles is even now a hideous life. What it must have been in those times is beyond our comprehension. Charlotte was getting tired of it, longing to retire. In late 1851, while playing in Boston, Charlotte was watched eagerly from the audience by a 20-year old girl who came each afternoon from Watertown. The girl was Harriet Hosmer, who was to become the most distinguished woman sculptor of her time. (We haven't space here to go into the life of Harriet Hosmer and this book is not intended to do so, but her life is fascinating and if you have not read about her you may wish to do so.) Harriet was brought backstage to meet Charlotte, who liked her at once. They formed a life-long friendship, a real buddy relationship that lasted through some rather odd circumstances, as we will see.

Having now determined to retire from the stage, Charlotte convinced Dr. Hosmer to let his "motherless daughter" Harriet accompany her and Matilda to Rome. In Washington, D.C., they were joined by Sara Jane Clarke, who wrote under the pseudonym "Grace Greenwood," and this party of four, characterized as "Jolly Female Bachelors" went to Rome.

Charlotte was to come back to the stage many times — each time grandly retiring for the final time, as many an actor had done before and will do again. But from her first trip to Rome, for the rest of her life, her real attention was centered in her family life. It was to become a very unusual family, Harriet Hosmer, though a close friend, was restrained by the household. She wore men's clothing exclusively and rode unescorted through the streets of Rome to the total horror of the "artistic"

colony of the times, to say nothing of the reactions of the local populace and the government.

Matilda was plainly jealous and very unhappy about the other young women in the household, which soon included other sculptors, Emma Stebbins and Emma Crow. The latter was married off conveniently to Charlotte's adopted son, Ned (the natural child of Charlotte's younger sister, Susan), but Emma Stebbins was to stay with Charlotte till the end of Charlotte's life and was to be among the saccharine and glossing biographers of her fortunes. It is in this area, the last third of the book, that Joseph Leach gets hopelessly confused. He is apparently unable to tell (though why I cannot say) that Matilda Hays' running off (in some way connected with Harriet Hosmer) was more because Matilda was angry at Charlotte over Emma Stebbins than any fault of Harriet. Some proof of this is that as long as Charlotte was in Rome, despite the age difference between them, Harriet and Charlotte rode together daily, astride, to the never-ending horror of the matrons of Rome.

With the unrest caused by the Civil War, Charlotte and Emma Stebbins returned to the United States. She spent the last ten years of her life in semi-retirement, giving her last performance in 1874 and dying, attended by Emma and, at the very last, by her adopted son Ned and his wife, Emma Crow.

Except for his failure to understand the nuances of the Roman household of Charlotte Cushman, Joseph Leach has done a marvelous job and this book is highly recommended. Despite the length of this review, I have only touched on its contents. This belongs on the collector's shelves, one of the better biographies of a woman who lived her life fully in defiance of the conventions of the day.

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Penelope Pitstop Isn't Enough!

By MARION MEADE

Amid the more or less unanimous hurrahs for "Sesame Street," there has crept in, almost unnoticed, a rather unique objection: the program is deplorably male-oriented and its images of women tend to be insultingly stereotyped. Such criticism, I believe, is more than justified. "Sesame Street" *does* uphold the old sexist stereotypes, but what has not been mentioned is that the rest of the television fare for kids is bad or worse.

The fact is that all programing for preschool children amounts to a thorough brainwashing which indoctrinates small girls into accepting second-class status and assures little boys that some day they will take their predestined places in "a man's world."

The only word for the feminine image on children's television is crummy. Most offensive in their treatment of women are the cartoons, the biggest group of programs for kids. In an average week there are 50 hours of cartoons, a third of them on Saturday morning. Only one — "The Perils of Penelope Pitstop" — stars a woman. Penelope, a professional racing car driver, talks in a cloying Southern accent and powders her nose a lot; still, there's no question but that she is resourceful and gutsy, and has a sense of humor. She comes across as an intelligent human being, something which can't be said about any other woman in the cartoon line-up.

Otherwise, a woman who dares to be independent is equated with evil and firmly put in her place. "H.R. Pufnstuf" features a grotesque, snaggle-toothed hag named Witchipoo who happens to be aggressive and fairly talented. But her attempts to do something worthwhile — in one episode she writes and acts in a movie, in another she runs for mayor — demonstrate the unpleasant consequences facing a woman who steps out of line. Besides the image of the entire cast banding together to crush her power-mad aspirations, there is the distinct impression that only an ugly witch would think of doing these weird things.

† † †

Most cartoons don't bother to acknowledge the existence of a second sex, and those that do use female characters limit them to the ego-supporting roles of girlfriend or mother. In most cases they are

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portrayed as helpless, passive, or simply as complete idiots. Nell Fenwick, Dudley Do-Right's girlfriend, is probably the most simple-minded of the bunch. When Nell isn't being molested by fetishist Snidely Whiplash ("his favorite pastime is tying women to railroad tracks"), she wanders about in a catatonic daze or sobs weakly. And you can't really blame her because there's not the slightest doubt that Dudley prefers the company of his horse. Nell only exists to be saved. Being saved gives her her cue to gaze adoringly at Dudley and simper, "Oh, Dudley, you're swell."

After a self-effacing cartoon girlfriend finally catches her man, she can look forward to spending the rest of her life as a Mrs. Flintstone, the cliché American wife who's sweetly manipulating on the surface but a castrating bitch underneath. Actually, Wilma Flintstone occupies little air time, mostly because a wife's place is in the cave and Fred Flintstone's bumbling adventures take place away from home with his pal Barney. Those times when Fred does manage to get home to eat and sleep, he seems to take his wife's nagging with unbelievable good grace. Nevertheless, on one program when Mrs. Flintstone hints she wouldn't mind getting a job, Fred quickly squelches that outrageous idea in the best machismo style: "No wife of mine is going to work."

Granted, there may be disagreement over the exact roles men and women should play in today's society. But even if most women were content with domesticity as a career and backseat status as a condition of life, it would still be unwise to present this stereotype to preschool children. If all blacks were satisfied to be servants, would television dare portray every black character as a Stepin Fetchit? Yet children's television exercises exactly this type of discrimination when it discourages little girls from achievement outside the areas of housework and child-rearing.

Such attitudes are pushed, not only by insipid cartoons like "The Flintstones," but also by the highly acclaimed "Sesame Street" when it deals with social relationships. Along with the numbers one to ten, "Sesame Street" does a fine job of teaching preschoolers the ABC's of male chauvinism. Just look at the leading characters:

Gordon, a teacher, and his wife Susan, a housewife.

From the start, there was no question that Gordon wore, as they say, the pants and Susan the apron. According to the show's producers, this was a deliberate decision — to show black children a model of a strong black male which is absent in so many slum families. Unfortunately, all this rationalization illustrates is that sexism, unlike racism, is still very much in fashion. Apparently it was inconceivable that children might benefit from seeing strong mother and father models. Or that the male needn't be upgraded at the expense of the female.

Well on into the season, however, it was decided that Susan should get a job. But on "Sesame Street" a woman's place, when not in the kitchen, turns out to be in a low-paid, sexually-segregated field like nursing. What's more, the manner in which Susan's new job is announced to the viewers indicates how uneasy such an equalitarian concept as a working wife makes the creators of "Sesame Street." The program opens with Gordon holding a newspaper: a front page banner headline, the sort usually reserved for declarations of war, announces: "NURSE SHORTAGE CRITICAL."

It having been established that only a national calamity could pry Susan away from home, we see her approaching Gordon to discuss the matter. Except that there's no discussion and, considering that two adults are involved, their conversation is quite remarkable. Like a 5-year-old asking her daddy for a special favor, Susan wrings her hands, stammers, and scratches her arm anxiously: "After all, I'm a trained nurse and I just think they could use my services and I was wondering about, how you felt about it, what you thought about it?" Gordon's feelings couldn't be more obviously negative but he agrees to consider the proposition: "All right. Let me think about it a second."

Finally he grants a most unenthusiastic permission by saying sourly, "If it bugs you that much, I'll tell you what. Try it and see how it works out." After she leaves he actually has the nerve to remark, condescendingly, "Well, she's happy now." And another generation of little girls has just had an opportunity to see how women demean themselves to get what they want.

In most segments of "Sesame Street" sex discrimination is right up front. The boy Muppets regularly lord it over the few

females; little boys in the filmed sequences lead the way while the girls submissively follow; and even a dum-dum like Big Bird recognizes that he's lucky to have been born male.

Other children's programs put down women somewhat more subtly but the insidious message comes across just the same: girls are second best. "Captain Kangaroo" is a bastion of male supremacy where a female is rarely seen. "Misterogers' Neighborhood" of Make Believe, ruled by the patriarchal King Friday, preserves the more repulsive tenets of chivalry. As for "Romper Room," when picture books are read aloud the main character is always a boy; live animals appearing on the program invariably have male names.

If program content were not destructive enough, sex channeling is reinforced by commercials which peddle dolls to girls and moon rockets to boys. One toy, Mr. Magnet Man, is a face which can be transformed into a variety of characters by adding magnetized features. The female face is named . . . Miss Magnet Woman? Not a chance. She's Mrs. Magnet Mommy.

On the cereal and vitamin commercials, power and energy are stressed. But the running, jumping, yelling kids are nearly always boys. Don't girls need energy too? Certainly not in kiddie televisionland, where the females are helpless physical weaklings who must rely on men to protect them.

When you consider that the mums of America habitually use television as a baby-sitter, then the implications of such early sex role conditioning become disturbing. (Since "Sesame Street," even those mothers once cool to the practice have begun propping up infants under a year to benefit

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from educational TV.) What happens is that before a child learns to talk, she is already aware of the limited role she's expected to play and her competitive drive is well on its way to being smashed. By the time she is 6, she will have logged in an incredible 9,000 hours before the box and have mastered her Freudian catechism to perfection: anatomy is destiny.

† † †

It seems reasonable to encourage all children, regardless of sex, to become independent, responsible human beings. Fur-

thermore, I don't think any child should be automatically tracked into any one life slot. Yet, as far as girls are concerned, these very minimal requirements are not being met by those who produce television for children.

Women's perceptions of themselves are beginning to change, however. One can hope that television's medieval definitions of womanhood will become increasingly less acceptable and, finally, positively laughable. In the meantime, mothers, keep your daughters away from "Sesame Street."

Poetry by cheri abot

cheri abot is a graduate in English Literature from San Francisco State College. Her poetry has appeared in several magazines including AVALANCE, VECTOR, HYPERION, as well as in MANROOT NO. 3.

WAITING

now, love
now indeed the time has come

the decision was made days ago
and still i
pick out pears at the corner market
as if nothing had happened

what does it mean
all the fury of debate
if i find peace
in the selection of ripe pears?

if a round pear
fits well in the round of my hand
this must be why we wait
though the time has come

cheri abot

LET LACED WINDOWS

let laced windows and ageless ladies
remember
love conjugates like household green:
 tendrils
 in
 fingertips

fearless
to feel for new form
 for the flow
of another's bones in one's body

cheri abot

FULL MOON IN SCORPIO

i keep my eyes open
 for the surface
 of silk and fur

i keep my eyes open
 for the smell
 of honey and nuts

but more
tonight
i keep my eyes open
 for the sound
 of sobbing veins

a whole moon to mouth against
and i am only eyes
 hungry
in the forest
of your blood

cheri abot

APRIL (for kejka)

in this full room
i feel the force of morning
doom dark and delightful
lying under a lover's roses
like the heart's grave
 come open
in at a spring window
 come open
float old ghosts
smelling of freshness
and of young memories

pardon my strange dance
for i am afflicted
with rainbow sight
my night eyes
 come open
to see spring and doom
the same flowing color
in a black and white time

cheri abot

MY EYE LIGHTS INWARD

my eye lights inward
a daily going growth
shows up shadows
 in
levels of layers
a stuff
 rain-like falling
 onto me
 leaf-like growing
 out of me
and earth-making stuff
folding into
 the feeding spirit
(i came into life
as earth's child
saturn's woman
 girl
 hag
my roots flow from
that sphere
 die into
that sphere)

cheri abot

ANGER

in this movement of anger
moves through you
beauty
 and beauty
moves out of you
 into
the space around you
where i feel myself
 suspended
where the movement goes
into me
 and moving
through me comes the force
 a force
i call with fear
and in fear cannot help
my calling:
 love

cheri abot

MOON IN PISCES

moon we love under
moves into water signs
tonight
we will hear it
lapping against
hollow walls
 this is a season
 of starthistles and bloodstones
 sharp silver
 scarlet flowers

arms we hold each other with
bloom red
but one silver symbol binds
harder than bones
 will ring
like hanging chain
over highways holding us apart
 tonight
as one wash of waves
has pounded our two pulses
so our bodies' rivers
will remember the rhythm
 this is a season
 of starthistles and bloodstones
 sharp silver
 scarlet flowers

cheri abot

LESBIANA

By GENE DAMON

The Women's History Research Center mentioned in last issue's column is responsible for my finding a very lovely poem combining specific Lesbian interest and women's liberation propaganda. "The Other One," a poem by Marion Lineaweaver, appeared in THE NATION, March 23, 1970. Efforts will be made to track down other work by this poet, who is not, at least at the time of this writing, familiar to me.

The Michigan reader who increasingly is becoming my source of information on pertinent short stories found the story "Changed," by Norma Meacock, in a collection of stories from the TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW. I have not yet run that collection of stories down, not knowing the title or editor for checking, but I did go back through issues of the review and found it in TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW No. 17, Autumn, 1964. A very good look at lower class English Lesbian life . . . bitter, brittle and comic. Along the way while looking for this story, I noticed others by Norma Meacock which would indicate her interests coincide with the women's liberation movement. Included was the poignant "What Are They Saying?" in the Autumn, 1967, TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW, which ends with the miserable married heroine slashing her tongue and soft pallet to keep from screaming out with rage. Anyone who knows the collection of stories with "Changed" in it . . . let me know, please.

Jeannie Sakof's satiric and sad GUMDROP, GUMDROP, LET DOWN YOUR HAIR is out in paper from Pocket Books, 1970. This is an up close look at the life of an instant Twiggy . . . complete with an abortion scene that will turn your head around . . . unbelievable. There is a substantial Lesbian character, but she's not particularly good advertising.

Clarence Cooper's excellent 1967 novel, THE FARM, has finally made it into paperback reprint from Award Books, 1970. The Lesbian portions of this novel, set in the hell that is a narcotics prison farm, are minor but not badly done. Major plot concerns the more or less attempt at moral redemption accomplished by the low-keyed love of a black male prisoner and a prostitute from the women's section of the farm. Ugly ugly . . . but good, and seasoned with the humor of the hopeless,

sweetest possibly of all humors.

For fun, and because I have always really enjoyed both science fiction and the supernatural, I reread J. Sheridan Le Fanu's classic vampire novella, CARMILLA, just reissued in Paperback Library, 1970, in a boundwith paperback along with another of Le Fanu's classics. I was amazed to find that the claims (quite serious) of the liberation factions that cite "witches" as just another unholy (pun intended) way of explaining away strong-minded women in history are entirely applicable to this venerable horror story, which has long been a sub-basement Lesbian classic. In this light, surely, Carmilla is no more and no less than a very clever young woman determined to run off with the girl of her choice . . . not a bit more sinister than that . . . but then, even today, Lesbians are somehow sinister. Ah, well.

George Revelli's COMMANDER AMANDA has been issued in paperback by Dell, 1970. This is a spy spoof, better than most of them, with a surprise and then some ending. Not for the unsophisticated, period . . . but fun otherwise.

Children's books are really beginning to reflect the women's liberation movement. A biography of SHIRLEY CHISHOLM, by Susan Brownmiller, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1970, is available for the 10 years and up child. Good to see this.

That black and white still live in separate worlds was rather forcefully brought home to me by the fine anthology, THE BLACK WOMAN, edited by, and in part written by, Toni Cade. This is a Signet paperback original dated August, 1970, costing 95 cents and as well spent a dollar (including tax) as I am likely to spend for some time. Contents include Toni Cade's own "On the Issue of Roles" which is, amusingly, as relevant to the Lesbian as to the black woman . . . in ways it cannot be to the white heterosexual woman. The book is packed with good material . . . a nice balance of fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and even humor, as in "The Kitchen Crisis," which deals most effectively with the truth about soul food. The long short story, "Reena," by Paule Marshall (whose THE CHOSEN PLACE, THE TIMELESS PEOPLE was reviewed in the April/May, 1970, issue of THE LADDER) is a detailed and explicit rendering of what happens to the educated black woman in America . . . and it lends some credence to the "drop out" figures. Toni Cade again in "The Pill:

Genocide or Liberation" expresses some views so pertinent I am mildly, just mildly, surprised this hasn't been reprinted in every liberation magazine in the country. It certainly should be.

Hoorah for librarians . . . one in Southern California has been supplying notes to me and sent me STORIES FROM THE TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW, edited by Joseph F. McCrindle, N.Y., Holt, 1970, which answers a question asked earlier in this column re the story by Norma Meacock.

It has taken this book a long time to cross the ocean. In the December-68/January-69 issue of THE LADDER, I reviewed Vera Brittain's RADCLIFFE HALL: A CASE OF OBSCENITY, which covers the whole court proceedings surrounding THE WELL OF LONELINESS and this celebrated novel's fight for existence. Then freshly published in England, it is now out over here from A.S. Barnes, 1970, for \$5.

Bless Jill Johnston for kindly mentioning THE LADDER and my bibliography in her October 15, 1970, VILLAGE VOICE column, "Dance Journal," even including the address.

In 1968 Mary Ellmann's THINKING ABOUT WOMEN first came out . . . now it has been reissued by Harcourt in its quality paperback line, Harvest Books 1970, for \$2.65. This is interesting if now outdated. It is especially pleasant to see her deal Mr. Norman Mailer much the same death blow that Kate Millett did . . . wonder how the man manages to survive? This one is good, especially for those who like literature, Ellmann's primary subject in the book.

It is hard to remember that Pamela Hansford Johnson wrote the fine novel, THE SEA AND THE WEDDING, a number of years ago, when faced with THE HONOURS BOARD, N.Y., Scribner's, 1970. This is a dreary indictment of English public (private) schools and it includes a tragic Lesbian interlude. The woman is a crashing bore of a writer, and since we know she was talented once, we wonder what has happened. Libraries will have this . . . don't spend money. The Lesbian portion of the plot deserves some examination for its stereotype view. French teacher Elspeth Murray falls in love with Betty Cope, a part-time matron at the school, and ends up, when more or less rejected, a suicide. Gratuitously we are also informed

she is a kleptomaniac . . . we wonder WHY that is thrown in . . . ?

There is a biography out of the very first women's liberationist, Mary Wollstonecraft, called ONE WOMAN'S SITUATION, by Margaret George, University of Illinois Press, 1970. We are writing for a review copy and hope to review this later for you. Mary Wollstonecraft is well known, of course, for her personal life involvements and for her masterpiece, THE VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN . . . and less well known, certainly, for her Lesbian novel, MARY, A FICTION. (For a detailed coverage see SEX VARIANT WOMEN IN LITERATURE by Jeannette H. Foster.)

Reprints include the magnificent Sybille Bedford novel, A COMPASS ERROR, out from Ballantine Books, 1970. This one is more than worth the 95c tariff since it is the most literate Lesbian novel of 1969 . . . and, with the exception of Isabel Miller's A PLACE FOR US, the most popular.

Another reprint . . . LOVEY CHILDS: A PHILADELPHIA STORY, by John O'Hara, has been issued by Bantam, 1970. This is a very major Lesbian novel but no more relevant to today's world than anything else by O'Hara is . . . but for pleasure reading one of the contemporary masters, fine.

Two current novelist poets whose messages reflect the state of the women's liberation movement, are in the boards just now. One is Margaret Atwood, who has two books out at the same time, a novel, THE EDIBLE WOMAN, and a collection of poetry, PROCEDURES FOR UNDERGROUND. Both are from Boston, Little, Brown, 1970, and both Atlantic Press books. THE EDIBLE WOMAN is the most relevant here as the narrator-heroine fights the overwhelming evidence that her engagement and upcoming marriage is an invitation to the feast . . . and with her as the pig with an apple in its mouth. How the heroine, Marian, fights this feeling is the novel . . . which means it is a weak novel . . . for her solution, instead of fighting, is to starve herself. Sick enough, but a symptomatic look at the world today. The other novelist, Marge Piercy, is famous as a movement poet . . . and she is a fine poet. As a novelist I am less convinced. Her DANCE THE EAGLE TO SLEEP, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1970, is very anti-establishment, which makes me wonder

why that bastion of normalcy, Doubleday, is publishing her at all. But, then, no one takes it all very seriously . . . which may be THEIR mistake. Marge Piercy's error is in using male protagonists for what is essentially a female argument . . . that is, an argument of liberation. And she has apparently not yet learned what she must . . . namely, that it is no longer a game for the boys only.

The history of women's rights in the United States, rather the battle for them, is relatively well documented. In this one area alone, women are not ignored, but the very plethora of titles makes finding a single recommended one difficult. Anything written since 1955 suffers from the year of its creation. The best historical sources are ON THE SCENE sources, called "primary" sources . . . and the fine book, WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND POLITICS, by Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler,⁴ which first appeared in 1923, is available again. The University of Washington at Seattle has published it in both hardback at \$10.50 and in a quality \$3.95 paperback. It is well worth owning, both for Carrie Chapman Catt's views and for its history. While both Eleanor Flexner in her CENTURY OF STRUGGLE, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1959, and Aileen Kraditor in IDEAS OF THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT, 1890-1920, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1965, have written intellectually more appealing overviews, there is a rhythm and power in WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND POLITICS that brings home the real value of their early bravery in a way no "removed" view ever could. We may well be pulling at the bit today, but at least they get credit for kicking off the blinders. Bless them all, those brave women.

The same fine press, University of Washington, has just published a magnificent study of Imogen Cunningham's photographs in IMOGEN CUNNINGHAM PHOTOGRAPHS, 1970. Introduction is by Margery Mann, herself an accomplished photographer. While undeservedly more famous for her sensual studies of individual plants, Miss Cunningham is one of the very few photographers doing justice to women. How conscious or unconscious this is, we cannot say . . . but the results are magnificent. Even the \$12.50 tariff is hardly out of line for the rich grouping of her work from 1901 to 1970.

LOVERS AND FATHERS, by Cressida Lindsay, N.Y., Clarkson Potter-Crown,

1970, is disappointing. This is sad since the woman can write very well. Her earlier Lesbian novel, NO JOHN, NO, was also less than satisfying and worse, poorly written. LOVERS AND FATHERS is also out in London, Anthony Blond, 1970. The first person narrative of a woman with four or fourteen lovers . . . and four serious enough to leave her with four fatherless children . . . is immediately a difficult, if not impossible, premise to make sympathetic enough for the tenacity needed to read the book. Indeed the narrator's premise is that this is being open to all love . . . including a casual bit of remembrance and possibly more than that with a female ex-lover. That this female ex-lover is now married to another woman who is, indeed, present, seems to make no difference either. Ostensibly new, ostensibly wild and different, it is not a bit newer and not even as different as Edna St. Vincent Millay's poetry of the 1920s . . . which celebrated similar themes . . . better. But Cressida Lindsay has learned to write very very well. One hopes she someday has something important enough to use that glorious talent on . . . we will all be richer.

Alberto Moravia's 1951 minor Lesbian novel, THE CONFORMIST, has been made into a movie by Bernardo Bertolucci and was recently shown at the New York Film Festival. Reports indicate it retained the Lesbian portions but probably sensationalized them out of all remembrance to the book. This novel was reprinted by Signet first in 1954 and has been reissued several times since, so for those of you who have missed it, it ought not to be too hard to locate.

Lack of space and time keeps me from bringing everything to you this issue that I'd like to share. Next issue will have reviews of Page Smith's DAUGHTERS OF THE PROMISED LAND, an excellent literary little magazine RED CLAY READER 7, which features fiction and non-fiction of high quality on women's liberation in this special and final issue . . . and one of the most moving literary experiments I have ever seen, an anthology called WOMAN TO WOMAN, which contains much of Lesbian interest. We can give you this preliminary information: WOMAN TO WOMAN is a \$1 publication put out on the West Coast, presumably in San Francisco, with Free Women's Press, Gay Women's Liberation and Women's Liberation in that area sharing the credits. It is wholly devoid of biblio-

graphic data, and while we understand why, we regret this because it will help keep the book from the women who will want it. It consists of poetry and drawings . . . and they are all unsigned . . . though a list of contributors is appended. No publisher, city, date is given . . . though it is obviously San Francisco, No Publisher, 1970. By the time I have to review this for next issue, I'll have, I hope, the necessary information so that those of you who will want

this (and I hope that's all of you) can order it by mail.

(At press time we learned that FREE WOMEN'S PRESS, 2828 BENVENUE, Berkeley, California 94705, can supply the book. Send \$1 and you might include some postage as a kindness. In any case, don't miss WOMAN TO WOMAN, it's excellent.)

Cross Currents

AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN FORM NATIONAL ORGANIZATION: August 7, 1970. Meeting at Fort Collins, Colorado, 68 Indian women representing 43 tribes from 23 states, voted to create the first national American Indian Woman's organization. It is to be known as the North American Indian Women's Association.

CHANGE IN GREAT BRITAIN? August 19, 1970. Carole Lord, 23, and Terry Floyd, 24, were married in a civil marriage ceremony on this date in Westcliff, Essex. Our only source on this is an unreliable question and answer column seen in many papers on a syndicated basis. Terry Floyd is quoted as replying to press inquiry with, "You can say we are both Lesbians but we are not prepared to say any more than that."

WOMAN IN THE EYES OF MAN: EVERGREEN REVIEW: September 1970. Julius Lester, in "Woman - The Male Fantasy," provides as hard-hitting an argument for a change of attitude on the part of men in their view of women than any person has outside of the "hard core" women's liberation press. The article frankly admits the fantasy-based view that all men have of all women, and points out why it has to stop - and stop NOW.

"SHE CANNOT SKATE," SAID MARK. NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS: September 3, 1970. Virginia Kidd, Department of Speech Communication, Sacramento State College, quotes from the following series from textbooks INTENDED FOR EXTENSIVE USE FOR 4 TO 8-YEAR OLDS THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA:

"She cannot skate," said Mark.

"She is just a girl. She gives up."

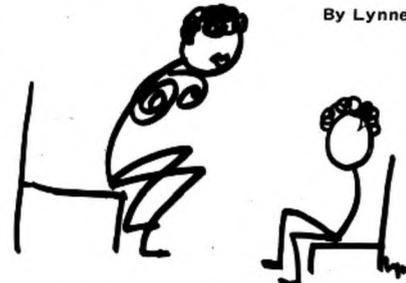
"Now you can skate. But just with me to help you."

EXCELLENT SERIES: VILLAGE

VOICE: September 3, 1970. The "Personal Testament" section, a special feature written by readers, on invitation of VILLAGE VOICE, has been mentioned in these pages before. This column, "The Women Examine Their Medicine Men," by Ellen Frankfort, is about the sometimes harrowing and horrible experiences women undergo at the hands of male doctors. Admittedly, one can do nothing about this as a child, but grown women can and should choose women physicians (and women lawyers, eye doctors, dentists and everything else). Solidarity, sisters.

WOMAN IN POST IN U.S. CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS: NEW YORK TIMES: September 16, 1970. Shirah Neiman, the first woman to do so in 20 years, was admitted to the ranks of the criminal prosecution section of the United States Attorney's office in New York City this day. Shirah is a 26-year-old graduate of Columbia Law School, who has been working as a law clerk for Federal Judge Milton Pollack. An honor student throughout her academic career, Ms. Neiman graduated cum laude from Barnard in 1965 and magna cum laude from Columbia Law School in 1968. She was also on the staff of THE LAW REVIEW.

By Lynne



... AND THEN GOD
CREATED US IN HER
OWN IMAGE...

N.Y. STATE CORRECTIONS CODE DISCRIMINATES: NEW YORK TIMES: September 25, 1970. Many expert witnesses, testifying before the City Commission on Human Rights presently conducting a series of hearings on the status of women, confirmed that the State Corrections Code has many harsh penalties that apply only to women. One example is that a 16-year-old girl can be declared a juvenile delinquent and placed in reform school for up to four years for promiscuous behavior, because promiscuity in girls is considered "ungovernable and unmanageable." There is, of course, no such provision for 16-year-old boys, and one wonders what adult who has ever been around both 16-year-old boys and girls could possibly not recognize the idiocy of that law. It is a common fallacy that laws are supposedly "loaded" in favor of women, but they are actually weighed against them in all manner of personal behavior. Women, like cattle, are property.

THE HIGHEST HONOR OF ALL: ST. TERESA OF AVILA: Vatican City, September 27, 1970. Pope Paul VI proclaimed St. Teresa of Avila the first woman doctor of the Roman Catholic Church. In its 2,000 year history, only 30 persons have been proclaimed doctor, an honor reserved for the greatest teachers of Catholic doctrine. Pope Paul, however, cast a shadow over the proceedings by stressing Vatican opposition to women becoming priests or church leaders. Thousands of persons attended the formal ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica.

WOMEN UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: TEMPLE UNIVERSITY UP: September 28, 1970. Temple University has another male, Dr. Leonard Swidler, professor of religion, teaching a course on "Women in Religious Theory and Practice." This is the first course on women in the university outside of the school of medicine, where, no doubt, babies and birthing was the emphasis.

MILITARY CO-EDS: AP: October 1970. Two women have enrolled at Washington State University in the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps. They are said to take part equally in the same activities as the male cadets.

WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE: The Connecticut Labor Department Monthly Bulletin for October 1970 has a good article (male authored, however) on the 37% of the labor force in this country that is female. Usual obvious conclusions: we get a lousy deal everywhere. One very good point

is brought out. Mr. O'Donnell comments that a disproportionate amount of attention is paid to the "higher echelon" jobs where at best only a few of either sex will enter, and not enough attention to the labor field, which is male dominated and need not be.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AMENDMENT SHELVED: Washington, D.C., October 1970. Every paper in the country has carried front page news on this specific, deliberate squelching of the equal rights amendment by jockeying in the Senate. Led by Sam J. Ervin, Jr., a Democrat from North Carolina (whose hatred of women has also been front page news in recent months), an amendment was added to the proposal which effectively shelved it. It is interesting to note, though, that among the bill's enemies are men like Edward Kennedy. Any woman who mistakenly thought there was no specific organized plot to keep her a second-class citizen hasn't been reading the papers lately. We have no friends (male) on Capitol Hill.

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, October 4, 1970. Following last week's proclaiming St. Teresa of Avila as a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Paul VI today proclaimed St. Catherine of Siena as a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church.

CAPTAIN TOMMIE SUE SMITH: NEW YORK TIMES: October 4, 1970. 35-year-old divorcee Tommie Sue Smith sued the Air Force and won. She charged blatant discrimination over the ruling that women in the ranks may not have custody of minor children. The Air Force statement in rescinding the order commented on the "recent emphasis on women's rights." Captain Smith may NOW take her 8-year-old son with her when she is transferred to the Philippines. Captain Smith is one of only seven women judge advocates in the Air Force.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN CATHOLIC CHURCH SOUGHT: New Orleans: October 7, 1970. The professional organization of Roman Catholic canon lawyers charged today that current church practices discriminate against women, against their "dignity and inalienable rights." The issue was brought up by the group's only female member, Clara Maria Henning, the church's only female canon lawyer. During debate on the rights of women in the church, a priest expressed opposition to the group's resolution on women's rights and quoted the Biblical injunction that women should be subservient to men. Miss Henning

replied, "Yes, we should listen to God's word and try to understand what She had in mind."

VERY POOR PLAYERS: Charles Town, West Virginia, October 8, 1970. Sixteen-year-old Debra Wray is an apprentice jockey. She won the seventh race on this night, taking first place. Three male riders, however, claimed fouls on the track, and she was dropped from first to fifth place. Very foul, that.

TO SLOWLY PENETRATE SOMEBODY'S CONCRETE: VILLAGE VOICE: October 8, 1970. Robin Reising's report on the New York City Commission on Human Rights hearing on "Women's Role in Contemporary American Society" is excellent, well worth looking up at your library if you missed it. The constant evidence of the demeaning status of women is slowly "penetrating" something - maybe only a glowing body of women.

SUBDUED, AND IMPACT IS SLIGHT: NEW YORK TIMES: October 11, 1970. Marilyn Bender, writing about the women's liberation movement on Wall Street, comments that to do anything these women first ask permission of their "male sovereigns" and that to be caught as a "feminist" (which has become a far dirtier word these days than Lesbian, not seen as a threat) is tantamount to no more job tomorrow. The majority of the article is the same depressing repeating of the statistical status of the primary clerical female workers on Wall Street: like white collar women everywhere, gophers, gophers (go for this, go for that, and then wash my desk.)

WOMEN - 100TH ANNIVERSARY: UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, October 11, 1970. In honor of 100 years of women attending the University of Michigan, Representative Martha Griffiths, Catherine East of the U.S. Department of Labor, Professor Jo-Ann Gardner, Professor Marlene Dixon and Robin Morgan, editor of **SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL**, the women's liberation anthology, were scheduled to speak. Robin gave up a portion of her time to an unscheduled group of women from the university's women's liberation organization. Another unscheduled speaker was Nadine Miller, who said that her Lesbianism was the result of a very real political choice. "I will give my life to this movement, but I will not struggle for anything with men," she added. She also said that while Lesbianism may not

be every woman's answer, it is "an alternative."

THE WASHINGTON POST: October 13, 1970, devoted its major editorial to recommending that the equal rights amendment be passed at once. Many other newspapers have done this as well, even some that still segregate their want ads. Reasons, anyone?

A DOLL'S HOUSE REVISITED: LIFE MAGAZINE: October 16, 1970. Clare Boothe Luce, ironically described by LIFE as "a woman doing a man's job," has written a modern adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's classic drama, **A DOLL'S HOUSE**, placing the emphasis on some aspects of the current women's liberation movement. LIFE format and language surrounding the short play are terrible, a good example of what women's liberation is trying to get away from, but the play itself is worth looking up and reading. Great literature it is not, but another sign among signs of the times.

SEXISM IN THE CHILD'S WORLD: NEW YORK TIMES: October 16, 1970. Joan Cook, reporting on a meeting of 160 authors of children's books with representatives of a women's liberation group called "The Feminist Collective on Children's Media," covers the many, many examples the women were able to produce of demeaning and "role-oriented" literature directed at children. The humor (horror?) in reading reports like this is the substitution of racial slurs for each sex slur. There is little question that minds are being warped - all female minds.

ANOTHER WOMAN VS. AIR FORCE: DENVER POST: October 19, 1970. Captain Susan R. Struck, with 3½ years' service, intending to make the Air Force a career, is pregnant and faces discharge. She is fighting this, claiming that since she will be giving the child up for adoption her pregnancy should not affect her service career.

THE MEDICAL SEXISTS: NEWSWEEK: October 19, 1970. The "Medicine" section of this issue deals with the enormous prejudices against women in medicine and how damaging this is to the entire country in view of our need for more than 50,000 more doctors right now. The same statistics we've seen often in recent months are repeated. Only 9% of U.S. physicians are women, while two out of three doctors in Russia and one out of four in Great Britain are women.

WOMEN VETERANS FILE SUIT FOR ALLOWANCES DENIED ON SEX BASIS: THE SEATTLE TIMES: October 23, 1970. Three women have filed suit, claiming that if their husbands were classified as wives their benefits would be between \$20 and \$30 more per month. Sexism in reverse.

MEN'S LIBERATION: NEW YORK TIMES: October 23, 1970. Determined not to be left behind, a number of small men's liberation groups have sprung up. We have referred in this column to one or two others. Now there is a new one in New York City called Men's Liberation, Inc., devoted to liberating men from feeling they have to prove their masculinity 24 hours a day.

LUTHERANS VOTE TO ORDAIN WOMEN: San Antonio, October 24, 1970. The 2.6 million member American Lutheran Church voted on this date in San Antonio to ordain women as ministers. This was the seventh major American denomination to do so. Just one week ago the House of Deputies in the Episcopal Church defeated a move to permit the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopacy.

It is believed this move by the American Lutheran Church will move this group closer to the "Lutheran Church in America" and away from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, where the leader recently commented that Eve, being made of a rib and all that, was a "lower order" than Adam.

LIONEL TIGER GROWLS AGAIN: NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE: October 25, 1970. In this article, "Male Dominance? Yes, Alas," Mr. Tiger pretends to find male dominance unfortunate, and with this supposedly sympathetic premise he writes a good deal of poppycock about why nature intends us to remain dominated by men, however much proof they have provided to us that they are incapable of running the world in a civilized manner. He brings up the old hormones bit again which cost Dr. Berman his job and reputation. It will be remembered that Mr. Tiger is the author of a book about a mysterious male bond, **MEN IN GROUPS**, and the success of his book and career depends on everyone accepting the premise that men can rule women because hormones say they ought to. One wonders how Mr. Tiger would explain Lesbians.

WHEN WILL SOMEONE HARPOON THE LAMPOON? Cambridge, Massachu-

setts, October 25, 1970. The undergraduate executive board of the **HARVARD LAMPOON**, a distinguished chauvinist publication, decided that women could not be considered for staff positions until 1972 because the constitution of the magazine forbids it, and two consecutive executive boards must approve any change in the constitution.

NO WOMEN PILOTS IN BRITAIN, AT LEAST NOT IN THE BIG BIRDS: LONDON TIMES: October 25, 1970. Two major English airlines rejected the qualified application of Delphin Gray-Fisk for pilot training for the larger planes, such as a 707 or VC10. Both BEA and BOAC turned down the application. Wouldn't it be nice if no women would fly on either line until they changed their minds?

WOMEN'S STUDIES: NEWSWEEK: October 26, 1970. The "Education" section of this issue discusses the small but growing number of schools now offering courses on women's studies. An absence of texts suitable for use in these new programs is crippling some of them (remember when the publishers began the mad scramble for black history books?). Professor Barbette Blackington of American University in Washington said that "Women's studies are still in the Neanderthal stage."

BPW JOB POOL: ITHACA JOURNAL: October 27, 1970. Out of 3,000 possible White House appointments, 250 have gone to women so far. BPW (National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs) is keeping score and maintains a complete job pool of experts available in all fields from architects to zoologists in their efforts to get as many women into active government as possible.

OUT AND IN AGAIN - NORA SIMON VS. THE WACS: Plainfield, New Jersey, COURIER-NEWS: October 28, 1970. Miss Nora Simon has been permitted to re-enlist in the WACS after being discharged for being pregnant. ACLU attorneys argued that men are not discharged for getting women pregnant - good point.

EVEN IN PURDAH: AP, October 29, 1970. Rumors of women's liberation activities from far off Karachi, Pakistan, where women still wear veils and rural wives do all the manual labor. An organization called the All Pakistan Women's Association has been formed by Begum Raana Liaquat Ali Khan, widow of a prime minister of Pakistan. She claims that her husband's 1951 assassination was in part due to her efforts

to raise the status of women in her country.

LISTENING TO THE VERY YOUNG: Many cities, October and November 1970. Many clippings came in about young girls in high schools around the country filing various suits against their schools for discrimination in fields of athletics or education. A good sample case is that of 16-year-old Phyllis Graver, a junior at Jamaica High School in New York City who is suing to obtain the right to play tennis on the school's team. Only boys are allowed to belong to the tennis team at this time. Phyllis has played since age nine and is fully qualified to compete on the team. She plans to go on to college and is hoping for a tennis scholarship. Phyllis' suit is filed with the City Commission on Human Rights.

A HAVEN FOR MALE HOMOSEXUALS: ALPINE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: October and November 1970. Unless you live on another planet (in which case you won't see this, either), you have already read about the Los Angeles-based Gay Liberation Front which intends to move enough voters into Alpine County to turn it into a gay-controlled county. So far none of the publicity that has come to the attention of THE LADDER indicates that this involves Lesbians at all, except the mention of the inclusion of a woman, June Herrle, in the Gay Scouting Party on November 27th. Fifty GLF members plan to return to Markleville in Alpine County on December 18th for the community town meeting. Various fanatics coast to coast have come out vowing to stop the planned take-over of the sparsely settled California county, but as far as we can determine, the planned move is entirely legal and ought, in principle, to be easily accomplished IF the participants are willing to put the necessary work into the project.

CAMPUS FOCUS - MANY SOURCES - October and November 1970. Clippings reached us from all over the U.S. from many newspapers and magazines commenting on the slow but growing number of universities and colleges that are featuring courses specifically in line with women's liberation. There is some question that this age level may be already past the age of learning to discount roles learned. Women's liberation needs to start by dropping the blue and pink nursery arm bands in hospitals.

YWCA FINDS THEM YOUNGER AND SMARTER: November 1970. Reports from sampling the opinions of some 4,000 female

teen leaders - most 15-16 years old - find only 75 percent favor adopting the husband's name in marriage; 60 percent favor men and women sharing housework; only 20 percent believing male identity having priority over female, and 74 percent were aware of discrimination against women in employment. That's not enormous, but what an improvement over just a few years ago.

WE'RE ALL UNCONSCIOUS SEXISTS: PSYCHOLOGY TODAY: November 1970. Drs. Sandra and Daryl Bem, writers of this article, present a clear and easily understood analysis of the ridiculous condition of women from the beginning of time. They point out, however sadly, that now women are as responsible for this state of affairs as men: the constant repetitive training of "society" which boils down very often to what children learn from their mothers **FIRST**, is an unbroken chain dooming each succeeding generation to the status quo. These doctors are married, and admit that when they married they didn't realize the political condition of marriage and didn't take steps to retain Sandra's maiden name. This seems to be the best female/male joint view on the situation in print. They begin their article with three basic quotations from **THE BIBLE**, **THE MORNING PRAYER OF THE ORTHODOX JEW**, and **THE KORAN**, as follow respectively:

"For a man . . . is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." (1 Cor. 11:7-9)

"Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, that I was not born a gentile. Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, that I was not born a slave. Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the Universe, that I was not born a woman."

"Men are superior to women on account of the qualities in which God has given them preeminence."

WOMEN'S COLLEGES BEST: DETROIT FREE PRESS: November 3, 1970. New Brunswick, New Jersey, UPI. Speaking at Douglass College, the women's division of Rutgers University, Margaret Mead borrowed a line or two from Kate Millett and came out strongly for sexually segregated schools. She said all-women colleges offer better instructors and more

chance for women to express themselves and participate in classes without inhibition.

DETROIT HIGH SCHOOL HAS A DIFFERENT DAY: DETROIT FREE PRESS: November 6, 1970. Denby High School had a one day teach-in called VOCAL (Views of Contemporary American Life), featuring members of groups from the far right to the radical left: SDS, white panthers, Gay Liberation, Women's Liberation, etc. More than 100 girls and a few boys jammed each of the sessions conducted by feminist Karen Winn. Detroit is no San Francisco, though. We note that Gay Liberation was not invited to the day-long conference but was represented when other groups, including Women's Liberation, favored walking out unless it was.

TWELVE SCHOOLS HIT FOR ANTI-WOMEN BIAS: Washington, D.C., November 6, 1970. The Department of Welfare announced that over the past three months it has imposed temporary financial sanctions against 12 colleges and universities for sex discrimination in hiring. The actions withholding federal contracts for 30-day periods represent the first enforcement of a 1968 executive order forbidding federal contractors to discriminate by sex in employment. Harvard and the University of Michigan are among the institutions, but the other schools were not named. WEAL, the Women's Equity Action League, spurred the investigation that led to these steps being taken, by accusing some 200 institutions on grounds of discrimination in hiring, promotion and pay - all against women.

UNUSUAL TRIAL IN KENTUCKY: Louisville, Kentucky, November 10, 1970. A trial was held here today to determine if the Jefferson County Clerk in Kentucky can legally refuse to issue a marriage license to two women. The women gave the court several reasons for wishing to marry: love, legality and financial security. According to Stan MacDonald of the LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL, Jefferson County attorney Bruce Miller became confused during his question about "which of the two was to be the 'wife' and who was the 'husband'". Before the trial could get under way, Jefferson Circuit Judge Lyndon R. Schmid evidenced his attitude toward the trial and women in general, by ordering one of the couple, Tracy Knight, to leave the court room and change her clothes. Tracy, who had been wearing a beige silk

pantsuit, left and returned in a dress. Judge Schmid commented, "She is a woman and she will dress as a woman in this court." Interesting in view of the fact that most major industries and firms around the country have okayed pantsuits for office wear, and top fashion stores from coast to coast have made pantsuits mandatory wear for their clerks.

Testimony in the case was completed the first day, and the case is being tried before the judge without a jury. As we have reported in past issues, the case involves the intended marriage of Tracy Knight to Marjorie Ruth Jones. Trial lawyers intend to carry it to the Supreme Court if necessary, and there is little doubt that it will be. County Clerk Hallahan said that if two women were allowed to marry it would "cause a breakdown of government and retard the continuity of the human race." Imagine being that terrified of two Lesbians. One wonders if the only reason the race has continued thus far is because women have been forbidden to marry one another.

ONE QUARTER OF ONE MILLION DOLLARS - FOR WOMEN: November 11, 1970. In Camden, New Jersey, the Wheaton Glass Company was ordered to pay \$250,000 in back wages to women who were cheated of their rightful pay by unequal pay scales. 440 women employees are involved, and U.S. District Court Judge Mitchell H. Cohen ordered the company to pay back wages plus 6% interest to them. The company will appeal, of course, but maybe - just maybe - the women will ultimately win. To show how senseless this sort of thing is, the problem began with women being paid \$2.14 per hour for work that men were paid \$2.35 per hour for. Think what women could do to and for this country if they would only DEMAND their rights. Think about it.

WOMEN ARE DEAD IN 1970: NEW YORK TIMES: November 12, 1970. A group of the larger, better-known women's rights groups concluded that the women's rights issue is dead for this year - lame duck session of Congress. Most felt that the various substitute proposals to the original clean and simple one were stupid, though they did not phrase it quite that way. Better luck next year - maybe, maybe not.

BETTY AND SUE ARE MARRIED. TO EACH OTHER. Los Angeles, November 16-20, 1970. KABC-TV carried a week-long, twice daily short special report on

Lesbians in this area on a local news show. Unfortunately, we had no one to report on the depth or quality of coverage, (Editor's Note: Local reports indicate coverage was far above average.) but we did receive FULL PAGE pictorial ads from a local L.A. TV newspaper section and what was apparently the radio-TV listing page of a local newspaper showing a not-too stereotyped Lesbian couple in a home-like atmosphere, with the caption shown above, and one further, telling comment: "Betty and Sue live like any other young married couple, except for one thing. Sometimes they feel very alone." We do not know how the ads hit the public. Of course, Betty and Sue are NOT alone: they're a big minority in this country.

PANTSUITS: COAST TO COAST, October, November and December 1970. We can only assume that this is a subject of burning interest, for clippings from coast to coast came in, commenting primarily that many businesses now automatically allow women clerical and professional workers to wear pantsuits. Their very practical, sensible use in fields requiring fairly strenuous physical activity is obvious. Besides, when forced to admit it, women prefer pants to dresses.

SPECIAL FUNDING TO BRING WOMEN INTO FIELDS WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED: October, November and December 1970. Clippings from all over reach us, showing that on a very limited, token basis some schools, colleges and universities are belatedly trying to make amends to women for unaccountable years of degradation. Cornell University is one example, where the College of Engineering is establishing the "Burrell Women's Engineering Scholarships" to bring more women into this field that is starving for trained personnel. An unsigned article in the CORNELL CHRONICLE speaks of the "essentially untapped contributions that young women can make to the engineering profession." True, and to every other profession as well.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, and Mina Rees. Special to THE LADDER: This group will be meeting December 27, 1970 in Chicago, and for the first time it has a woman as president: Mina Rees. For the first time this group will also field a symposium on women in science.

LESBIANS, YES - HOMOSEXUALS,

NO. October, November and December 1970. The homophile press reports increasing instances of the separation of male homosexuals and Lesbians. There have never been many women in male homosexual organizations. Lip service invitations by males to come to sweep their floors, serve them coffee and help them campaign for public toilet sex rights have never been particularly enchanting to Lesbians. Many have tried through the years to work with men, taking for granted that they were pinned by society into the same bag (i.e., some social discriminations against male homosexuals apply to Lesbians, as do the large areas of law reform and job opportunity, though women are seldom involved in law violations). On the heels of Del Martin's "walk out" (see THE LADDER, December/January issue for "If That's All There Is") from all male homosexual organizations and causes, in favor of total involvement in the women's movement, the male homophile press responded with a series of articles and editorials designed to lull women back into their obedience postures. Few are buying the tune, particularly younger women. In the last few years there has been a fantastic proliferation of "gay liberation" groups coast to coast; every major city has at least one, and the largest have many. Each group has followed a similar pattern: men and women work in groups (10-15 men to each woman) in the beginning and then, disgusted and tired, women split off, forming Lesbian liberation groups, often called Gay Women's Liberation. There are at least five such groups in the U.S. This pattern is identical to that of women's liberation, where the first groups formed as splittoffs from male leftist groups and male dominated civil rights organizations.

We don't know where this activity will end nor what it will accomplish, but it's clear that WOMEN - gay and straight, everywhere - are moving out from under all forms of male thumbs. Consciousness is rising, literally in the streets, and in the media: note the more cautious approach even in the hated establishment put-down women's magazines - compare it to the same a few years ago to the "black" movement. The clenched fist symbol in the female circle: a few more each day, each hour.

GAYS WIN ROLE IN FAMILY SERVICE: San Francisco Chronicle, November 25, 1970. A front-page story

featured news of a social landmark for gay people. The Family Service Agency of San Francisco voted November 24th to appoint a Lesbian and male homosexual to its board of directors in time for the January board meeting. This move increases the board to 26 members, with the two new members, yet unchosen, representing San Francisco's gay community. The action was decided upon after the board heard arguments by Del Martin and Earl H. "Rick" Stokes, a lawyer and president of the Council on Religion and the Homosexual. As a result, the agency will consider these requests already outlined by San Francisco says:

Two "declared" homosexuals — one male, one female — should be appointed as gay community organizers.

There should be two "declared" homosexual counselors — one man and one woman.

There should be a forceful, public position statement and letter of support by the agency on homosexuality.

There should be an irrevocable and public commitment by the agency to the welfare of homosexuals, including agency investment of some of its present Bay Area Crusade money in gay programs.

There should be aggressive, positive action by the agency to obtain additional United Crusade Funds to finance and expand programs outlined and to change United Crusade direction toward gay needs.

There should be a two-day televised seminar on homosexuality in cooperation with the University of California Medical Center.

Del Martin was quoted in the article as saying that it is a misconception to think of homosexuals as "single" persons. "Seldom do people realize that homosexuals stem from and are part of heterosexual families. They are aware of and understand the problems of interaction within those families. Furthermore, homosexuals form intimate relationships in a partnership or 'marriage'."

She went on to say, "... their inlaws, for the most part, are unaware of their unspoken, implicit status in the family. Homosexuals also relate to 'family' in the much larger sense of community — both in the majority culture and in the homosexual subculture." She said that these are the relationships causing so much of the "pain and despair" for the homosexual.

Stokes was quoted as saying, "The Lesbian not only has to fight for the right

to be a homosexual, but she is at the same time a woman, in a male dominated and oriented society. This board indicated its support for the women's struggle against oppression at its October board meeting. The acceptance of this request for a woman as well as a man is acting upon that support."

Clearly, this agency merits close watching in the coming months.

LESBIANS TOO . . . YOU BETTER BELIEVE IT! SEXOLOGY MAGAZINE: January 1971. Saul Kent, in his article, "The Lesbian, What Is She Really Like?", makes many of the usual errors but is considerably less damning and does bring out that there are no reasons left for not granting full citizenship to Lesbians in all senses of the word. He takes a few liberties with factual happenings: for example, he takes the wonderful and electrifying moment when Jill Bray stood up before the SECOND BAY AREA WOMEN'S COALITION CONFERENCE in San Francisco, and asked women to rise who had ever been attracted to another woman, and got almost a full house of standees as well as an ovation — and moves it to August 1970, though it happened in February 1970. He also makes the point that women's liberation is dealing more and more honestly and openly with the large numbers of Lesbians in the groups, recognizing that it is not a one-way goal: liberation is for all — all women.

Readers Respond

Dear Gene:

Three women from the New York Chapter of NOW (National Organization for Women) spoke to the N.Y. Chapter of DOB (Daughters of Bilitis) on November 5, 1970. Audience was mixed with too many representatives of other groups to allow for as clear a discussion as was needed, but the major point brought out was that NOW was anxious to have Lesbians in the organization as long as they were "discreet". Meeting was filled with flak. Good news though, on November 24, 1970, I went (as discreetly as possible) to the NOW panel discussion, "Is Lesbianism a Feminist Issue" and sat quietly instead of rudely pointing out that there aren't any more relevant issues around. Panelists included Vivian Gornick, Dr. Barbara Sang, Dolores

Alexander, Sidney Abbott, Barbara Love and Kate Millett, with Ivy Bottini acting as moderator. General tone was positive though lack of information seemed as prevalent among the floor guests as the panelists. Some of the discussion centered around totally irrelevant things like changing the name Lesbian to something else, but the panelists were all pro-Lesbian, which was reasonable I felt in view of the panel in question. I think NOW has had a worse press than it deserves, even knowing that NOW on the east coast or NOW on the west coast is a different scene than some NOW chapters. One of the panelists recommended that NOW Lesbians start being open about it and Kate Millett said it all with her remarks on the subject. Among other things, she said that women's liberation has been riding on the backs of sub-rosa Lesbians for around five years and that Lesbians have been giving a lot of time to heterosexual concerns (child care centers and abortion, etc). To me it sounds a bit too familiar, a lot like it was ten years ago in San Francisco DOB.

C.J.
New York City

(Editor's Note: C.J.'s references cover her association with DOB many years ago when all activities were in support of male homosexuals.)

Dear Gene Damon:

Speaking as a NOW chapter president, I'm really not convinced that we're the most "terrified" of any admitted alliance with Lesbians, NOW welcomes all women to membership; membership in NOW and the experience of working side by side with all women is an educational experience for the prejudiced, the timid, the conservative and even for those who believe they are enlightened. The women's movement is still in its earliest stages and we desperately need to keep growing in numbers, so why frighten away potential members because of fears of associating with the unfamiliar — when familiarity without the barriers of labels can foster understanding, affection and respect, while we all work for our common causes. Freedom of choice of life style and sexual privacy are basic NOW positions; if those became articles of national faith, we'd have won much of what we're all fighting for. At any rate, I believe the differences between some of the

women's rights organizations is a matter of strategy — not fear.

Virginia Carabillo
President
Women's Heritage Series, Inc.

(Editor's Note: Virginia Carabillo is the President of the Los Angeles Chapter of NOW (National Organization For Women) and President of this Santa Monica based firm that handles the now quite famous Women's Heritage Calendar/Almanac and many other products for women including posters, stationery, greeting and Christmas cards, documents of famous speeches and statements on parchment, etc. By the time you read this they may have produced a paperback original to be entitled ON DEAF EARS: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED ON AUGUST 26.

Having heard over and over again of the "reaction" to Lesbians supposedly evidenced by NOW as an organization, we felt this letter would be of interest.)

Dear Miss Damon:

I read in one place and a friend says she read in another place that Kate Millett is a Lesbian. If this is true and common knowledge why hasn't THE LADDER said anything about it?

D.E.
Ohio

(Editor's Note: The "places" respectively are GAY, a male homosexual newspaper and an earlier N.Y. DOB Newsletter. What, D.E. did you expect us to say? Kate Millett is not the first prominent woman to prefer her own sex.)

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