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by and for Gay Women



SAN FRANCISCO DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

Statement of Purpose

...a women's organization to aid the Lesbian in discovering her place in society and to educate society to understand and accept her, without prejudice, and ...

1. To encourage and support the Lesbian in her search for her social, economic, personal, interpersonal and vocational identity within society by maintaining and building a library on the themes of homosexuality and women; by providing social functions where she can communicate with others and expand her social world outside the bar scene; and by providing an organized structure through which she can work to change society's limitations upon her lifestyles; by providing a forum for the interchange of ideas and constructive solutions to women's problems.

2. To educate the public to accept and understand the Lesbian as an individual, thereby leading to the breakdown of taboos, prejudices, and limitations on her lifestyle by sponsoring public discussions; by providing individuals as speakers and participants in various forums designed to educate the public; by disseminating educational and rational literature on the Lesbian.

3. To encourage, support and participate in responsible research dealing with homosexuality.

4. To investigate the penal code and to promote changes, in order to provide equitable handling of cases involving homosexuals, with due process of law and without prejudice.

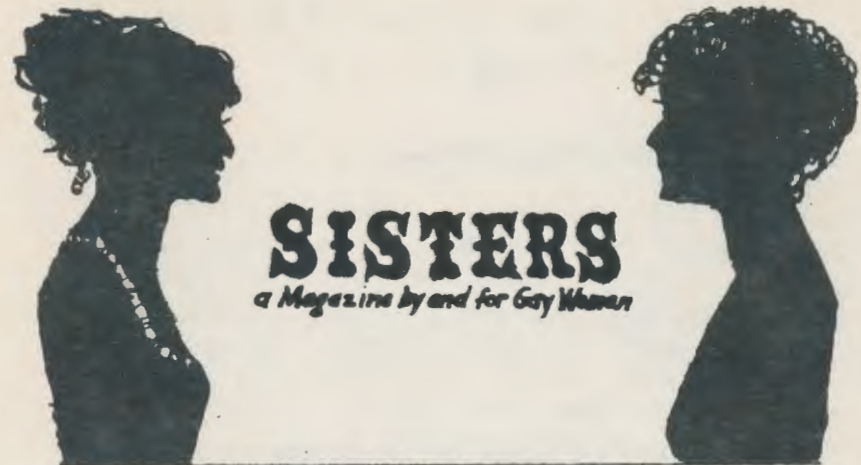
TO SAY AND BELIEVE THAT GAY IS GOOD

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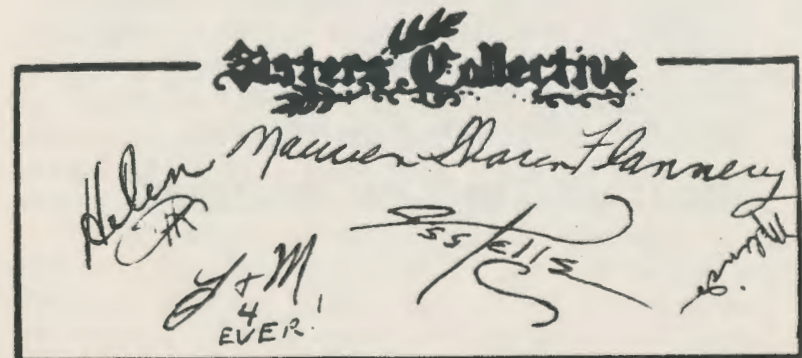
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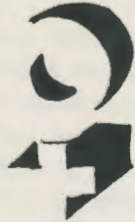


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TRAUMA IN THE HETEROSEXUAL ZONE

by

Jeanne Cordova

I was a late bloomer. I remember being scandalized in the summer of my 17th year when a friend used the word "shit!" I never heard the words "gay" or "non-Catholic" until I had become both. Until I was 22 it seemed I always found out about the important things - sex, bad words, alcohol, women, love - ipso facto, that is, after I had committed the fact.

Yes, I was a teen-age lesbian. But in honesty, I owe it all to my high school gym teacher, the Camp Fire Girls and the Convent.

It was an accident to begin with. My freshman year in high school I fell in love with my gym teacher. Unfortunately, she didn't return my adoration; actually, she didn't even notice it. She left me the following summer; actually, she got a better job somewhere else. Nevertheless, this was enough to throw me into a major depression for months. Coincidentally, I happened to be going steady, as they used to say, with the high school basketball star. When my gym teacher packed her volleyballs, baseballs and basketballs and split, I ripped Davie's little silver basketball pendant off my neck and threw it after her.

Anxious about my depression and confused by its source, my mother sent me to summer camp to get away from it all.

The cure was perfect. Two days after I arrived I fell in love with my counselor. She looked a lot like my high school gym teacher. Conveniently, I caught a quick, long-lasting cold and had to move my bunk into the tent where she slept. Conveniently, she had a bad back. Conveniently, we developed the ritual of nightly back rubs - hiking up and down the mountains can be very hard on the vertebrae.

One evening I was sitting on the edge of her cot sort of rubbing her back, sort of dozing off, feeling warm and happy. She turned her head and whispered, "I love you"; and my world fell apart

and came back together in the most beautiful way. I never remember hearing those words before the summer of my 16th year and I've never heard them again in quite the same way.

Catastrophe struck again as my 18th year, strong Catholic background and lack of heterosexual drive led me into the convent. Yes, a young, untouched Sister Mary Sappho. Suffice it to say, the convent was hell. It was a giant, mothball closet where all us moths kept bumping into each other because there was nothing else to do.

The phone rang one Sunday evening in Convent land. It was Mabel, a lay friend of Mother Superior. My fellow Sisters were in the dining room watching *Peyton Place*. The next thing I knew I was sitting on the couch in her apartment, she was handing me a Whiskey Sour and I was babbling out my life story with particular emphasis on the part about my gym teacher and camp counselor.

Many hours later we pulled back into the convent parking lot; I was drunk. As I opened the car door and turned to say something poignant and romantic to her, I fell out of the car and landed on the pavement. The whole evening had been a series of arriving at new points without planning to get there. *Ipso factos*. Like the point at which I found myself lying on her living room floor, and the point at which I felt like I was floating on her ceiling.

I broke the vow of Obedience seven months before I was supposed to take it. I never understood what Chastity meant until the morning after. Poverty, however, I can still say seven years later, is my true calling. I can't say I really understood Mabel-- she joined the convent the day I left it - I understood what we shared together.

When I was 23 and bought my first pair of prescription glasses, I remember being shocked at the clarity of the world. Trees and houses and letters on the freeway off ramps did not really slide into each other in a confusing blur. So it was with what Mabel taught me. The confusion of the past 10 years fell together. With my new Mabelized glasses of adulthood I saw clearly the beginning of who I was

and the end of trauma in the heterosexual zone.

Although I could see my way out of that zone, I had a great deal of trouble finding the lost continent of Lesbos. I wandered about the straight wastelands of California State University at Los Angeles for many months. I lived in one of those coed apartment buildings where every morning at 6 o'clock you'd look down the corridor and see all the boys tiptoeing back to their own apartments.

One night in the middle of this wasteland, Paul tiptoed into my apartment and stayed for six months. Now I can honestly say I loved Paul, still do. However, that had nothing to do with why I decided to have an affair with him. I am very analytical and take pride in weighing all the factors before making important decisions. So I weighed Paul. And it was fine and he was fine, but when his father died and he left for San Francisco, I failed to go into depressive withdrawal symptoms as is the case with me and lost love.

I decided to be more aggressive in my search for true sapphic love. In order to believe in the wholesome sincerity of my next move, one must understand that my naivete at the time was so acute as to approach insanity. I was 19. I grew up in a Chapel. I had never lived in a big city. I had never seen a dirty movie. I didn't know there was a war going on. I thought I was Chicano and blacks and whites were as good as me. I thought "Student Radicalism and Demonstrations" was a new sociology class. I didn't know what I was doing. I placed an ad in the *Free Press* - classified.

MY WHOLEY FAMILY

Like most people with a low boiling point, I hate shopping, especially Christmas shopping. I've been at it for 25 years, give or take a few of the first ones. You'd think a half grown-up family of 14 would make some sensible arrangement about alternating or drawing names out of a hat. Not mine.

Like most families, we have more tradition than sense. Ultimately I give in every year because I

never see most of them, and I'm afraid if I don't buy them each a present, they might forget about me. But they won't forget Christmas 1973.

I started out trying to be creative. My first stop was the local feminist bookstore where I thought I'd pick up some nonsexist reading material for the little ones. Here was my first problem. The little ones were 7 and 8 years old, but they're boys. Ordinarily this does not represent a problem. However, authors of nonsexist children's books are predominantly women. Most of their works are about young female children.

While buying a book about a little girl for my brothers *should* not prove a problem, I couldn't help feeling the transition from *Jack and the Beanstalk* to *Captain Jane the Astronaut* would be a little much. I was looking for something more subtle. I spotted a likely title, *William's Doll*. Reading the short story, I found William wanted a doll so he could practice taking care of a baby when he became a father. Second reflection assured me that my father would take one look at the title and throw it away.

Finally I settled for the record *Free To Be - You and Me*. I figured if Rosey Grier could sing (side 1) "It's all right to cry," it was O.K.

I took another risk. I have a set of sisters who were 11 and 13. When I saw the colorful picture book *Where Do Babies Come From?* I remember standing in the living room with my 16-year-old sister (I was 15). We figured the conspiracy had gone on long enough, so we asked, "Mom, where the hell do babies come from?" Imagine telling your kid about the "mystery of life" in one sentence. It went something like - "Well. . . it's . . . when you. . . to begin with. . . sometimes. . . You take a man and you take a woman, you stick them together at night, you get a baby." Sometimes the fine details are really important. I found her explanation unromantic. I bought the book.

Next, going in chronological order, comes another set of boys, young - at the time - high school men, to put it loosely. Fortunately, some

feminist male and female writers have recognized that half the problem with women is men and have written books to that effect. Fortunately, I still retained some hope of salvageability for my 15- and 16-year-old brothers.

Male and Female Under 18, that sounded good. The authors had compiled an anthology of quotes, stories and poems from young high school boys and girls who were sorting out their identities. I wasn't quite sure of my younger brother but hoped this book would send him off in the right direction.

On the back cover of a book entitled *The American Male* was a preamble which began, "What are the reasons for the War between the sexes?" Ah ha, this would be appropriate for the older one. He responds well to wars.

Next came the middle kingdom - 3 young women, then 18, 20, 22. The younger and older were not so difficult. The 18-year-old was a freshman in college. I bought her a "Wonder Woman" T-shirt and hoped her classmates would think she was kidding. Actually, she has political aspirations, and I know she is going to have to be some kind of superwoman to get half of what she dreams about. I got the older one, also a budding Republican politico, *The Liberated Woman's Appointment Calendar for 1974*. I had hopes she might casually open it in front of RONALD the following spring. He would need it.

But the middle sister was the biggest problem. She's married. Newly married. Furthermore, she likes it! Now it's not for me to question the lifestyle of my sisters, I mean, "to each her own." But damn, I really didn't think I could find anything in this particular store which would suit her needs. I walked up to the woman at the counter and asked, "Do you have anything for a young married woman?"

"Married to a man?" People are always asking about my politics.

"Yes." What could I say?

"How about *Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen*? She was married."

"I don't think that would be appropriate. This particular sister is still into being a prom queen. It's one of her unfulfilled fantasies, she only

made princess."

"Oh, I see. All of our books about married women end up with them leaving their husbands, I'm afraid."

"No, no. That won't do. Don't want to rock the family boat, you know. Isn't there anything that just talks about marriage?"

"How about *Diary of a Mad Housewife*?"

I took her suggestion, but somehow I still had an uneasy feeling about this one.

Next I went to something safe. My oldest sister was a brilliant student of astrophysics, who couldn't get her Volkswagon up a hill. What could be more appropriate than *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive, a Manual of Step by Step Procedures for the Complete Idiot*. Actually, she is very adroit, and I'm a firm believer in the self-sufficient women. Hoping she was, I moved on.

Dad. Now there's a problem. I decided to sneak around potential difficulties and appeal to his sense of humor. I bought him three posters to hang

up at his office. In order to catch the real flavor here, it is necessary to understand that there are a number of women who work for my father and that he entertains clients from the expensive and, shall we say, somewhat unliberated business world. But, "You never can tell what makes a customer happy," he always used to say. I hoped if Mr. Landon from Universal looked up and saw "If You Want I Done Right, Hire a Woman" and "Women Work Here, Too," he would appreciate my efforts. The third poster depicts a large portrait of Golda Meir. Underneath it reads, "Yes, But Can She Type?" Actually, my father has a poor way with secretaries.

I wrapped up my long day's journey into trouble with my mother and oldest (24) brother. *The Feminist Papers*, a long overview of the first and second Women's Liberation Movements, seemed . . . solid? . . . for Mom. She has a fine sense of history: I bought the expensive hard-cover edition just to give it the fine touches.

I was running out of titles when it came to the 24-year-old. He is part of "the big three" (oldest three) and as such deserved special consideration. He is also an unadulterated m.c.p. and as such deserved no consideration. However, it was Christmas. I passed up two works, *Male Chauvinism and How It Works* and *What's Wrong with Male Chauvinism?* People tend to get turned off if you hit them over the head with their political sins. I reread the back cover of *The American Male*

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and saw it also spoke to the question, "What is the Sexual Revolution all about?" Need I say more.

People say we all give parts of ourselves with every gift - even the ones we don't think about. I'm sure that's why I get stationery (with little blue butterflies on the top right corner) from my 'dull great-great-grandfathers. I'm sure that's why I give blue bathroom towels (same butterflies) to my great-great-grandmothers.

But I had thought about these gifts and gave parts of myself and my world to the people I want in my world.

This selection you have just read was taken from Ms. Cordova's book, SEXISM-

IT'S A NASTY AFFAIR with the writer's permission.

Ms. Cordova will be giving a rap at DOB on the 18th of November.

She is currently active as co-chairperson of UCLA Gay Studies Program and teaching a class, "The Lesbian Experience", and working on her first novel, PORTRAIT OF A DYKE. She is a columnist for the LA Free Press, a free lance writer, founder and an editor on THE LESBIAN TIDE.

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GOOD DEEDS

Over the hills and far away
Are the lands where the elves and fairies play;
They play and play from morn till night,
And then they sleep until it's light.
The beautiful things they do by day,
The children dream them, so they say,
When fairies plant some little seeds,
The children change them to good deeds.

---Helen Brakenridge Till

The poem, "GOOD DEEDS" was taken from the book, "AMERICAN WOMEN POETS 1937".

I'd like to take a bath
and oil my skin
with perfume,
and brush my hair
silky smooth and shiny.

But I can't spend so much love
on my body,
when you aren't spending any.

---Heather

POETIC ELLIPSIS

She came at that precise junction in a life
When the past is unbearable
And the future uncertain.

---Rita Mae Brown

Chains
melting in white
heat of passion
ears sucking in sensuous sound,
verbs knocking
on mind's edge
Reflections
seducing
hues
of
light.
Walls fortressing,
scarred emotions
Nostril screaming orations of love.
Orgasm flooding on virgin sheets,
bodies pivoting you and me together.
It is now I live forgetting destiny
yesterday is today's seeded dream.
Tomorrow waits patiently
outside these moods.

---Germaine Johnson

I do pray for some terrific shock to startle the
women of this nation into a self-respect which will
compel them to see the abject degradation of their
present position; which will force them to break
their yoke of bondage, and give them faith in them-
selves; which will make them proclaim their allegiance
to women first; which will enable them to see that
man can no more feel, speak or act for woman than
could the old slaveholder for his slave. The fact is,
women are in chains, and their servitude is all the
more debasing because they do not realize it. O, to
compel them to see and feel, and to give them the
courage and conscience to speak and act for their
own freedom, though they face the scorn and contempt
of all the world for doing it.

---Susan B. Anthony
(taken from a
letter to a
friend, summer
of 1870)

A WOMAN WRONGED

She's a lonesome woman
For I've seen her weep
There in harbor mists
A useless token
She keeps a desecrated flame
Yet holds it high
For in her iron crowned head
There lingers metallic a hollow ring
Which only the young can hear-
Thousands of ragged, shuffling feet:
"Give me your poor, your tired, your huddled masses
Longing to be free."



---Rita Mae Brown

We live our lives
Sterile and sanitary
Imprisoned in cubicles
of
Don't touch.

We sit
looking out at
each other
wondering what would happen
if . . .
what would I say
what would I feel
what would I do
if . . .
you touched me

---Audrey

A Moment

hung suspended
in my mind
then framed
later to be gift-wrapped,
The last time I saw her.

---Barbara Starkey
Stephanie Mines
& Liane Esstelle



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SFSI Sexual ignorance is not bliss
SAN FRANCISCO SEX INFORMATION

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THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



November 1974



1 CRIS
WILLIAMSON
at Full Moon
8pm

2 WOMEN'S DANCE
at Q's Skill Cen.
51 Waller St.
9pm
\$1.50 Door
Charge

<p>Q's Writers Workshop at Full Moon starts 3pm with Stephanie Mines Open to All Q & is held EVERY SUNDAY</p>	<p>4 "Are you up-front on your job?" Phyllis 7pm *DOB RAPS now every Monday & some Thursdays</p>	<p>5 IN FOCUS meets every Tues. 8pm 10 Laguna St. for info. call Karen or Sue at 567-0526</p>	<p>6 Jill will be at DOB to do Counseling 5-6pm for lesbian couples or single & on Wed. 20th</p>	<p>7 Paula & Helen will play their acoustical music at Full Moon 8pm</p>	<p>THE OTHER SIDE a Marin County lesbian group meets 2 Fidays every month see page #31</p>	<p>9 W.O.E. Conference see p. 31</p>
<p>10 DEADLINE for SISTERS Meeting at 7pm</p>	<p>11 Q Artists talk about Art with Nikki Jeanne & Ellen 7pm at DOB</p>		<p>Meet Allyne your Q Muni Driver & find out how? 7pm at DOB --THURSDAY--</p>	<p>14 Indy will play her music at Full Moon 9pm</p>	<p>15 S.O.L. Party (Slightly Older Lesbians 30+) see page #31</p>	<p>16 SWEET CHARIOT Q's Benefit Concert +childcare by reservation see page 31</p>
<p>*DOB's phone no. is (415) 861-8689</p>	<p>18 JEANNE CORDOVA see page 10</p>	<p>20 Winifred S. will read poetry at Full Moon -WEDNESDAY- 8:30pm --Wednesday--</p>	<p>21 DRINKING PROBLEMS? Let's talk about it with Wendy and Barbara at DOB 7pm --Thursday--</p>	<p>22 LESBIAN THEATER at Full Moon 8:30pm call for more info. 864-9274 --Friday--</p>	<p>Wild Side West 720 Broadway near Stockton has all women's bands every Fri. & Sat. nite info. 391-0460</p>	
	<p>25 "Coming Out Rap" for women new to the lesbian life-style with L&M</p>		<p>27 Donna Lane will read her poetry at Full Moon 8:30pm</p>			<p>30 JONIE BECKER music at Full Moon 9pm</p>

Support your Local Lesbian Organization, D.O.B. - the oldest Up-Front lesbian organization. Come rap with us, we are here to serve you.

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PRESS RELEASE

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Conrad Hunter & Associate, Inc. is proud to announce the formation of the HUNTER FINE ARTS SOCIETY, the first fine arts club for the homo-phile community, with top items of original art, sculptures, jewelry, posters and authorized re-productions not available anywhere else, plus gay records, tapes and books.

The society offers to its subscription members, through a full color monthly catalog, the latest and finest, in gay orientated and gay produced art, graphics, jewelry, literature and music.

The world's top gay artists and talented new artists deserving recognition will be featured in each issue.

Original posters and authorized reproductions of gay art from throughout history will also be offered.

Conrad Hunter & Associates, Inc. is a gay owned and operated company. The Hunter Fine Arts Society has been established for the purpose of providing a service to the gay community that in our opinion is much needed. There is a marvelous world of gay culture and we want to make gay people aware of it, help them learn to appreciate it and enable them to obtain the items they want.

It is our opinion that there is much more to being gay, than just what we do in bed. Gay is also a state of mind. Being gay is beautiful, and we want to help to make it even more beautiful.

The Hunter Fine Arts Society is a business that is part of the gay community and wants to work with the gay community.

The society is interested in discovering new gay talent that deserves recognition. We are interested in finding gay artists for original art, sculptures, jewelry, as well as gay posters.

Please disseminate this information. It is news. For further information contact: Dan Frederick Schramm, Vice President, Conrad Hunter & Associates, Inc. P.O. Box 1274, Milwaukee, WI. 53201

WALLS

by

Amanda L. Aikman

APRIL

A girl in class. Silent, yet possessed of a slow, infinitely sad smile. A deep, deep gaze from dark eyes. The girl is a mystery, terrifying. She frightens me and I can't run away. I see her twice a week. She is never absent. Neither am I.

I stumble over my words. My limbs grow to gigantic proportions in her presence; I can find no resting-place for my awkward hands and feet. I hide my suddenly grotesque face with my hand. Her eyes penetrate me, know me, judge me, but she says nothing.

Who is she? Nobody knows her name. I make discreet inquiries. She lives in someone's dorm but nobody knows who she is.

She's a dance major, someone tells me. That narrows it down.

What is happening to me? Whenever she's not looking, I'm staring at her, fascinated. Her skin is as white as a prisoner's.

I see her lunch sometimes. I gaze at her. The others think I am looking at a boy. They don't know that I am looking at the ghost of all dreams.

I summon my courage. I ask her about her paper. I tremble as she speaks, softly, in a reed-thin, desastrously charming voice. I despair. What is your name, I ask. She tells me. I rejoice. I know the name! But we say nothing more. It's better this

way. She cannot suspect.

Who is she? I follow her with my eyes. I follow her circumspectly across the grass. She enters a building. The door shuts. I walk away, grateful that I am invisible to her.

MAY

The school year is almost over. There is a showing of student movies. The dancer's name is in the program; she is in one of the films; my soul leaps and flutters. I scan the darkened room. Is she here, alone, like me? Or has she already departed for the summer? The movie starts before I know.

A mass of dancers swishes across the screen. A flash of her, a glimpse of leotards and bound--back hair. Just a flash. The movie ends. I walk out and hide among the crowd, watching the exiting people. Is that her? No. Not even a glimpse this time. She has gone. I hold her memory to me in silence, under the wistful stars. A flash is enough. It must be enough, for there will never be anything more.

SEPTEMBER

She has not returned to school. I ask a dancer about her. He says that she has gone up north; she hated the city. What was she like, I ask. No-one really knew her very well, says the dancer. She met someone during the summer and they went up north together. I hope he was a nice man, I say. The dancer looks away. It was another woman, actually, he says.

I refuse to curse myself, for my silence is a weapon, a defense against a perilous world. I must not hate my silence, even now.

WANTED



WANTED

REWARD

WANTED: INFORMATION ON THE SCENE FOR GAY WOMEN DOWN MEXICO WAY. NAMES AND ADDRESSES OR BARS, CLUBS, ETC. PLEASE. REWARD: A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THE GIRLS'S GUIDE--1975 SEND ALL INFO TO:

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Radical Therapy
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IRT 25, Special Issue (part one) on Wilhelm Reich, orgonomy, bioenergetics, neo-Reichian therapy, body work, and other related approaches dealing with the politics and oppression of the human body. Attacks on women's Orgasm, Reclaiming Our Bodies, Reich: A Critique, and more.

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Begin my subscription with IRT No. 7 (Volume 2, No. 3). Also enclosed is \$1.00 for IRT No. 3, \$1.00 for IRT No. 4, \$1.00 for IRT No. 5, and/or \$1.00 for IRT No. 6. I also enclose \$_____ as a contribution.

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OCTOBER

I have met a man. He is kind and I need someone. We make love sometimes. But in the night when he is gone, I am not alone. I lie awake and dream of the dancer and in the phantom world we embrace, laughing and there is no silence between us.

NOVEMBER

The man has gone; I sent him away. I feel free and empty; the winter wind whistles bleakly through my silent soul.

After the holiday, I am on a crowded train headed back into the city. There is a seat half free; I ask the woman sitting there if it is taken. She looks at me through sunglasses and shakes her head. I sit down. Between us is a wooden box with two cats in it. One of them sticks out a paw and pokes me. We laugh and she takes off her glasses.

We talk for the rest of the journey and I find myself thawing, stretching out my frozen limbs to be warmed by this human flame. She is lovely and yet lonely; her eyes are as guarded and fearful as mine must be. But the walls she has erected cannot hide the warmth that glows from within her.

As we get off the train, I with my suitcase, she with her cats, we find we are going to different places. We stop and look at each other, not seeing the men who rush noisily past us. For a moment we stand, tense, on a quiet island in the midst of the human stream. Wordlessly, she pulls out a pad and pencil, writes, and thrusts a piece of paper into my hand. Then she is gone.

DECEMBER

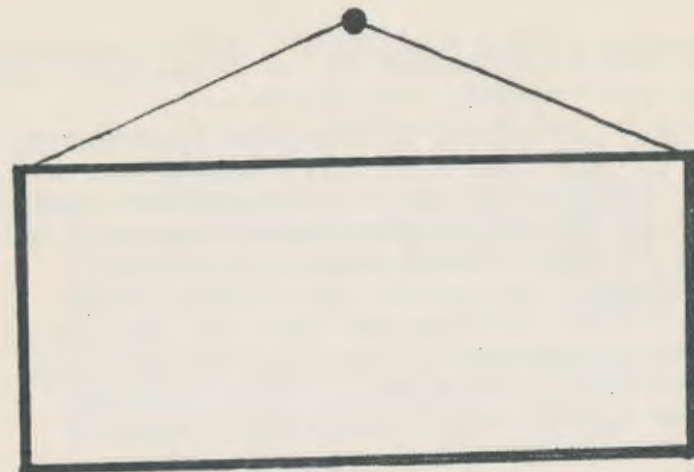
I sit restlessly at my desk, my gaze drawn again and again to the piece of paper taped on the wall. On it is nothing but a telephone number, a silent testimony to my cowardice. I have wanted so many times to call the number, just to speak to her again, but never have I found the courage.

Now the time is growing short; I will be far away in three days. My hand strays to the telephone but I do not pick it up. I clench my hand around the receiver, so hard that I expect blood to pour from under my nails. but I cannot move. The walls I have built so carefully are too strong to be broken now.

I stare at the snow spiralling down outside the window and begin to cry, silently. . .

LAVENDER JANE LOVES WOMEN This is a rave review, written not with the mistaken notion that few know about this album, but rather it's a crime for any lesbian to miss! Lavender Jane is composed of veteran musicians who tried their hands in the music (male) establishment and emerged unscathed to produce this remarkable labor of love. This record is a celebration of women & music, our "great Dyke heritage" as the album notes put it. The range and variety of the cuts is unusual. They include traditional folk ballads chosen for their applicability to the lesbian-feminist perspective as well as for their purely aesthetic value. Particularly notable are "Talking Lesbian" & "View from Gay Head". The first is a potent proselytizing song based on Pete Seeger's "Talking Union" but with a lesbian content. The other is *only* great--should be the Lesbian National Anthem; highly singable, moving and appropriate for belting out at campfires & baseball games.

Taken from *LESBIAN CONNECTION*



THE INVISIBLE MINORITY

I chose this topic, not just because I am a lesbian, but because I am invisible. Can you hear me sisters? Can you see me? Well, then I sure as hell am invisible! And besides, I've built a wall to keep you out. Actually, I'm a burrower rather than a builder, but it wouldn't sound nice if I just came out and said, "I dig holes". Anyway, back to the wall. Mine began with care, at an early age, as I was growing up in a small town, just south of the Mason-Dixon Line. A town, where if you weren't born there, you were nothing and if you were born there, you grew up there, fornicated there, got married there because you "had to", and (after much local gossip) received heavens greatest reward and died there.

As I grew up, I found that the molds others made were just as sure as the devil not made for me. So in order to cover up this oddness, this craving for a quest larger than that town (population 210), I became sort of a buffoon. When people laugh, far too few ever bother to look

deeper. And in that sense too we clowns - the me's in this world--truelly are invisible.

Due to family situations, some of them not too hot, I bounced around a bit from Mother to Aunt to Father; from East to West and back again. I hated it. So as soon as I was old enough, I quit school, joined a theatre group outside of Philadelphia. I took acting and speech classes, and in return, worked at all sorts of jobs: sets, costumes and eventually, as an electrician. As an actress, I was a dud. I stayed with the group for 2 years absorbing sponge-like all I could. During that time I realized that even those liberal thinkers considered their homosexuals a bit odd: talented, granted but still queer and how very bitter that small homophile minority became! Finally the day came when I was asked to leave. To go away and grow up. So at 19 I went to the big town, Broadway! Oh I'd show them, I'd wow the world! Needless to say I was scared shitless, so I stayed in my room for several days reading and re-reading the Well of Loneliness. When finally I ventured forth from that dump on West 76th Street to face one block at a time, I really wowed them. Why, in no more than 15 minutes flat I was propositioned. Run back to room, run again back to safety - back to the wall or wall of loneliness.

Starvation forces courage, so try to find a job. No skills, no finished education, nothing but honesty. Honesty was about as much damned good as a hill of beans - at least when you wanted a job. After puzzeling on this, I figured out that maybe it was because so many people just never learned how to handle truth.

Hide, must hide to survive but not alone! Can't live alone, so take first friend to the room; we spend all evening learning together what we feel and the many ways to express it. The next morning am asked to leave by the end of the week because, "we won't have your kind living here." *continued on page 28*

SISTERS' ADVERTISING COSTS

If you would like to make contact and meet other lesbians from your area, near or far-out especially if you're isolated and made to feel you are the only one in Bellflower, Indiana or whatever your situation may be, may we suggest: you put an ad in SISTERS.

If you have a business, are publishing a gay book, doing lesbian art, etc. . . you may also be interested in using space in SISTERS.

ALSO for those of you who have a Women's monthly publication, we would be interested in exchanging ads on a regular basis.

The outside dark, heavy line indicates the area of space which equals ONE FULL PAGE AD in SISTERS. ALL ads must be camera-ready, in black & white only and submitted before SISTERS' Deadline (see calendar) in order for it to go in the following month.

<u>size</u>	<u>cost</u>
FULL PAGE AD.\$30.00
1/2 PAGE AD\$15.00
1/4 PAGE AD\$7.50
one type-written line.\$1.00
two type-written lines\$2.00
and so forth. . .	

Hide deeper. Burrow deeper. Deny your individuality; if Mom ever finds out you're queering it up, why she'll stop taking her insulin. And if boss "thought you were a homosexual, she'd have you fired". Hide, keeping all sensitivity inside. Wear that "I don't give a damned" clown mask. Play different people's patterns and scream inside softly, silently suffer all the tortures of the oppressed.

Then turn to your "own kind" and have them tell you that you either have to be butch or femme and unless they know which you are they can't associate with you. And you don't fit in there either! Talk about oppression!

Finally, as I near forty - am going through the change of life, I've opened the door a crack and am told by my sisters, those 10 years my junior, "how nice to see you, but shouldn't you try to associate with those closer to your own age?" And I am filled with rage. This ancient, impotent, body-soul of mine can take no more torment, I can no longer sit here idle, I must shout out! I am sick to death of the sound of labels slap, slap, slapping on paper people. No, I shall not retire easily, go gracefully to the old folks home for elderly lesbians.

There are attitudes I must now fight: insensitivity, ignorance, inhumanity and intolerance. And I and the legion of me's in this land are as guilty of fostering these attitudes by our silence as you are now of perpetuating them by your seeming indifference.

Some said that this brief talk of mine should be educational . . . I am not sure it is. (At this point I stepped out from behind the wall or curtain and face the audience) The one thing I am sure of is that the only way I ever learn and learn deeply is by sharing.

I am Barbara Lou Starkey - right now I'm near shared out so I would like to read a poem that is an old friend of mine - a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay called:

SCRUB

If I grow bitterly,
like a gnarled and stunted tree,
Bearing harshly of my youth -
puckered fruit that sears the mouth,
If I make of my drawn boughs an inhospital
house,
out of which I never pry towards the water
and the sky,
Under which I stand and hide and hear the
day go by outside,
It is that a wind too strong bent my back
when I was young
It is that I fear the rain lest it blister
me again.

Well, what I ask you is wind, but the sting of words spoken without wisdom and rain is but wet water. Amazing how quickly they both die once you let the healing rays of sunlight in. Invisibles of all minorities, we ask of you only that you throw open those confounded airless closets. You are important, individual and as such are valuable. . . come on out. And if you walk, walk in peace. Carry forth the feelings you so desperately hoped to receive from others and call them shining names - call them understanding,

compassion, acceptance and love. And when you walk, walk straight - walk proud.

---Barbara L. Starkey

P.S.

My thanks to Phyllis Lyon & Del Martin for their faith, love and patience. Thanks to Sharon Crase for her professional assistance, but mostly for pushing, shoving and caring. Thanks to this panel for their trusting support of an unknown - I hope I've not failed them.

And a special thanks to Rita Mae Brown for "Rubyfruit Jungle". Well, Rita Mae, I know you can't hear me honey but my flavor's Tutty Fruitie! Thank you all for listening.

This was a speech given as part of the

Golden Gate Chapter of N.O.W.'s

panel discussion on May 22nd, 1974.

The majority of the speech--first 2 pages

was spoken from behind a curtain type

arrangement. As I've indicated,

I entered and completed

speaking.

-----MORE CALENDAR INFO-----

THE OTHER SIDE, a Marin County lesbian group, meets the 1st. & 3rd Friday of each month at the Marin Women's Center, 1618 Mission, San Rafael, at 7:30pm. For further information call 456-3014.

* * *

W.O.E., Women's Organization for Employment Conference "Nowhere to Go But Up" at First Unitarian Church, Franklin & Geary, 9:30am to 5pm, many workshops on employment related issues, \$3.50 at door or \$3. advance from WOE, 593 Market Rm. 223, info. 495-0924.

* * *

S.O.L. (30+) Party with dinner & dancing at Hans' 316th 14th Street, Oakland. The back room will be reserved for dinner. Identify S.O.L. and make reservations by November 10th. Dinners start at \$3.50. There is a bar & dancing upstairs where tables will be reserved for us after dinner. For further info. & directions call Hans at 893-6280 or Berni 483-5143.

* * *

Women's Benefit Concert with SWEET CHARIOT The S.F. Women's Center has gotten together with Berkely Women's Music Collective to do a combined benefit at 1st. Unitarian Church (Franklin & Geary) \$2.00, will provide childcare by reservation ONLY call at 431-1180 or 431-1414.

* * *

If you have any Calendar info. that you would like to see in DOB's calendar contact Liane by leaving her a message at DOB's Answering Service at 861-8689, be sure you leave your phone no. so she can call you back.

DO YOUR OWN D.O.B.

Whether we are just coming-out, came-out a year ago, or 20 years ago, we, as lesbians, all have the same basic need - the need for a sense of identity and community. Lesbians in San Francisco take for granted what lesbians in Carbondale, Ohio or even Tallahassee, Florida can only dream about - wide-spread communication and emotional support within a strong (not necessarily large) community of women-loving-women. The tremendous amount of letters we receive, constantly remind us of this need.

A lesbian organization, such as D.O.B., can be a vehicle through which to achieve this sense of community. So many women write us expressing enthusiasm and interest in participating in such an organization; but they are so isolated from each other and not necessarily in miles. It is our hope that this article will put them in contact with their sisters.

So if you're interested in organizing/participating in a new D.O.B. Chapter, fill out the form on the next page and send it to us; we'll put all the women who respond from any one area in touch with each other.

When you get together, you might want to put up notices in: any gay bars or gay groups (even if they're male ones), straight women's groups, colleges, "underground" newspapers etc. even bookstores, laundramats or supermarkets that have bulletin boards - any place in your area where lesbians could be contacted. You may also want to take out a P.O. Box for the responses. Then draw up a constitution based on San Francisco D.O.B.'s "Statement of Purpose" (see inside front cover) and send copies to all existing chapters (see inside back cover) asking permission to affiliate. We'll try to put you in touch with sympathetic organizations in your state for information on any further legal or quasi-legal requirements.

Do it please! Help build the foundation for a strong Lesbian Nation. In sisterly love,

Kathy + Lesia



Yes, I'd like to organize ___ (or) participate only ___
in a new D.O.B. Chapter in or near

(nearest big city(-ies) that would be convenient)

Name: _____

Street: _____

City + State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone? _____

I also know ___ other lesbians in my area who might
want to organize/participate.

----- clip and send to us -----



THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN SISTERS ARE THOSE OF
THE INDIVIDUAL WRITERS AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE
OF THE SISTERS COLLECTIVE OR THE S.F. DOB BOARD.

