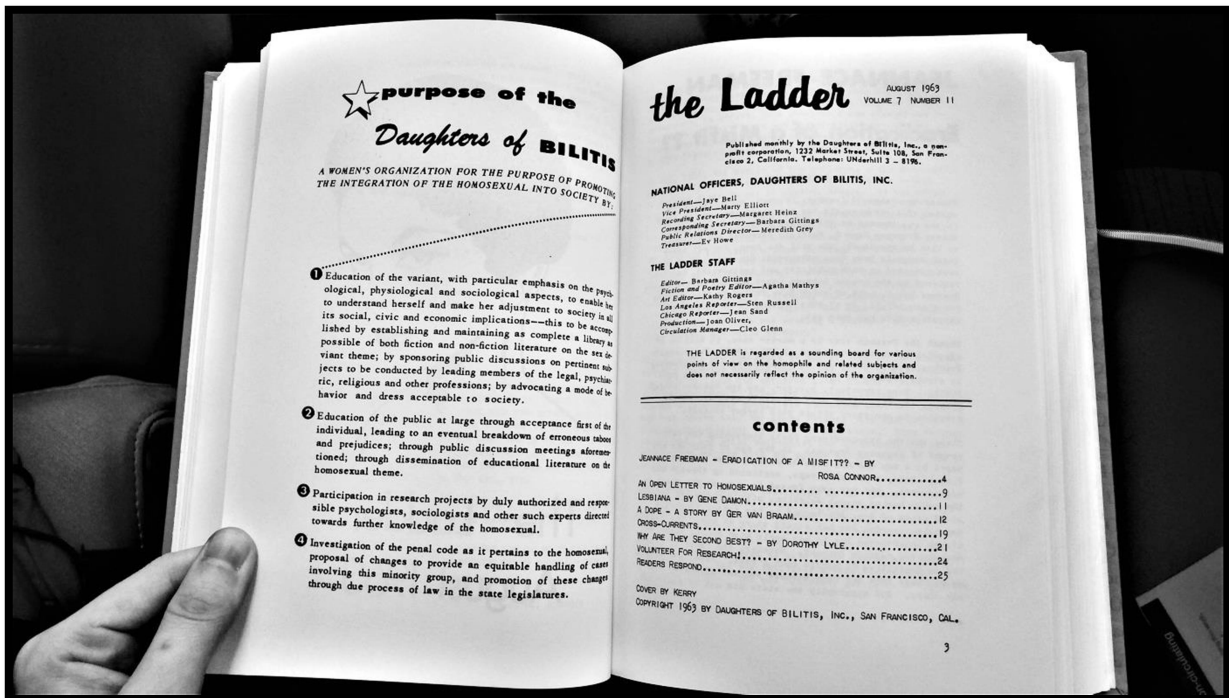




BACHELOR THESIS ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Reign of the Editor: Change in the lesbian content of *The Ladder* during the editorship of Barbara Gittings between 1963 and 1966.



Diede Sars

English Language and Culture

Supervisor: Dr. Usha Wilbers

Second reader: Prof. Dr. Odin Dekkers

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ABSTRACT

The Ladder is a lesbian magazine which was distributed monthly from 1956 until 1970 and every other month between 1970 and 1971. It was founded by *The Daughters of Bilitis* in 1954, which was the first lesbian civil and political rights organization in the United States. It consisted of personal essays, editorials, fiction stories, reports of research on homosexuality, lists of books, publications about homosexuality and letters to the editor. In 1963, Barbara Gittings became its new editor which coincided with a change in the lesbian position of women in the United States. This research aims to investigate the lesbian content of *The Ladder* during Barbara Gittings' editorship and looks into how the content changed under her influence. This thesis will answer the research question: How does the content of *The Ladder* change during the editorship of Barbara Gittings between 1963 and 1966, with a specific focus on the way lesbianism is portrayed? This research aims to contribute to the field of magazine and periodical research, specifically focusing on the research on lesbian magazines.

There is a clear line of change in the content of the magazine. The subjects became more controversial and the tone of the articles was increasingly stronger and more opinionated. The subjects of the 1963 issue are mainly general articles, such as a lectures and reviews of articles and magazines. The 1966 issue has dissimilar articles, with subjects that include strong opinions of authors, or advice that was very controversial. The main differences are found between the 1963 issue and 1966 issue, however, the 1965 issue shows the first change in subjects and articles. This thesis shows that *The Ladder* indeed became more progressive and militant under the editorship of Barbara Gittings.

Keywords: *The Ladder*, Barbara Gittings, lesbian magazines, periodicals, periodical studies, magazine research, American magazines, queer studies.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ladder is a lesbian magazine which was distributed monthly from 1956 until 1970 and every other month between 1970 and 1971. It was founded by *The Daughters of Bilitis* in 1954 (which will be abbreviated to *The DOB* throughout the rest of this thesis). *The DOB* was the first lesbian civil and political rights organization in the United States, and they decided to publish a lesbian magazine to be able to discuss homosexuals and lesbian issues.¹ From 1963 until 1966, Barbara Gittings was *The Ladder*'s editor, making decisions regarding its appearance and content. The main focus of this research is the changes that were made by the editor of *The Ladder*. The research hereby contributes to a recent development in the expanding field of periodical studies, because '[r]ecent conferences and special issues of journals have focused increasingly on so-called "backroom issues", shedding light on the production of journals and the historically marginalized actors involved in the processes of periodical production.'² The focus on the editor in this thesis connects to the development of looking into the production of journals.

Research into magazines is a fairly young discipline.³ Angela McRobbie observes that 'in media and cultural studies, scholarship on magazines has occupied a less central and prestigious place than scholarship on other media.'⁴ In other words, magazine research is new but simultaneously less prestigious. An example is the Dutch literary historian Nop Maas. In 1975, he wanted to conduct research into a magazine, but his supervisors explicitly discouraged him to do that. Apparently, it was an inferior subject to choose.⁵ The study into magazines is also a growing discipline, which only started in the second half of the twentieth century. Scholars started to specialize in other topics than the previous historical and biographical views on magazines, according to periodical scholar Usha Wilbers.⁶ Periodicals were previously used as sources for research, instead of being studied as research objects in

¹ Lynn Witt, Sherry Thomas and Eric Marcus, "Daughters of Bilitis," *Out in All Directions: A Treasury of Gay and Lesbian America*. (New York: Warner Books, 1995), 200-201.

² Usha Wilbers, "The Invisible Hand of the Editor: The Making of the Paris Review Interview", *Interférences littéraires/Littéraire interreferenties*, (2016): 217-232, accessed February 24, 2018, <http://interferenceslitteraires.be/sites/drupal.arts.kuleuven.be.interferences/files/illi18wilbers.pdf>

³ Usha Wilbers, "Periodical Studies avant la lettre: On Nicholas Joost's Contribution to Neophilologus", in *Tracing Paradigms: One Hundred Years of Neophilologus*, eds: Bremmer Jr R., Porck T., Ruiters F., Wilbers U. (Switzerland: Springer, 2016).

⁴ Angela McRobbie, "More! New sexualities in girls' and women's magazines," *Back to Reality?: Social Experience and Cultural Studies* (New York and Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 192.

⁵ Nop Maas, "Tijdschriftonderzoek: ervaringen, problemen en wensen," *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies*, (1997): 4-8, accessed February 24, 2018, <https://www.tijdschriftstudies.nl/articles/abstract/10.18352/ts.63/>

⁶ Usha Wilbers, "Periodical Studies avant la lettre: On Nicholas Joost's Contribution to Neophilologus", in *Tracing Paradigms: One Hundred Years of Neophilologus*, eds: Bremmer Jr R., Porck T., Ruiters F., Wilbers U. (Switzerland: Springer, 2016).

their own right. Recently, scholars decided to unite and to form research groups, which eventually led to a more systematic way of studying periodicals and magazines.⁷

The Ladder was read by numerous lesbian women in the United States and was used by its readers to learn more about lesbian issues.⁸ Women could buy the magazine and read about subjects regarding research, lectures or reader's responses to the magazine, submitted by other women. The magazine hereby contributed to the start of a large network of lesbian women, which made lesbian women in America feel connected, as is described in the following quote:

For women who came across a copy in the early days, *The Ladder* was a lifeline. It was a means of expressing and sharing otherwise private thoughts and feelings, of connecting across miles and disparate daily lives, of breaking through isolation and fear.⁹

A magazine like *The Ladder* was important in a time where homosexuality was still seen as a disease and considered illegal. It gave form to lesbian identity and was a source of pleasure, education and information.

The main reason to look into the period between 1963 and 1966 is the directional change that the new editor took, because '[t]he changing cover and content of *The Ladder* illustrate the lesbian movement's evolution.'¹⁰ *The Ladder* was published during the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) movement in the United States while Barbara Gittings became its editor. This marks a change in the magazine, which is explained by Elyse Vigiletti in the following quote:

It is not until Martin's resignation in 1963 that *The Ladder* flags a substantive shift in its direction and suggests a forthcoming revision to its mission and values, as indeed, Streitmatter traces the magazine's ability to "adapt to the changing times" directly to the more activist-minded Barbara Gittings's interim takeover as editor in 1963. (...) The post-1963 LADDER was more radical and more explicitly feminist than its early iteration, in response to evolutions in the American political landscape.¹¹

⁷ Usha Wilbers, "Periodical Studies avant la lettre: On Nicholas Joost's Contribution to Neophilologus", in *Tracing Paradigms: One Hundred Years of Neophilologus*, eds: Bremmer Jr R., Porck T., Ruiters F., Wilbers U. (Switzerland: Springer, 2016), 276, accessed February 24, 2018.

⁸ Redactie, T. S., "Een paar woorden ter introductie van TS-Tijdschrift voor tijdschriftstudies", *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudie* (2012): 2-3, accessed February 25, 2018, <https://dSPACE.library.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/1874/255347/62-239-1-PB.pdf?sequence=2>

⁹ Marcia Gallo, "Celebrating the Years of The Ladder," *Of Our Backs*. Vol. 35, Iss 5/6, (2005): 34, , accessed on February 25, 2018, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20838374?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

¹⁰ Marcia M. Gallo, "History of Sexuality," *OAH Magazine of History*. March 2006, 28, accessed on February 25, 2018, <https://academic.oup.com/maghis/article-abstract/20/2/27/988448>

¹¹ Elyse Vigiletti, "Normalizing the "Variant" in *The Ladder*, America's Second Lesbian Magazine, 1956–1963," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, vol 36, no 2 (2015): 49, accessed on February 25, 2018, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/589413/pdf>

Even though it is repeatedly argued that Barbara Gittings took a different approach for the magazine, there has not yet been a research into the change in the lesbian content of *The Ladder* between 1963 and 1966. This is the main reason this thesis and its research question came into existence.

This thesis will answer the research question: How does the content of *The Ladder* change during the editorship of Barbara Gittings between 1963 and 1966, with a specific focus on the way lesbianism is portrayed? The expectation is that the issues of *The Ladder*'s will contain controversial subjects as the issues progress, but that its language will remain general and aloof. There will be slight differences, but the main differences will be found between subjects and content of the 1963 and 1966 issues. Furthermore, the tone of the articles is expected to be gentle and emphatic, since *The Ladder* had to be careful what they published regarding lesbianism.

To answer the research question *The Ladder* will be studied as a research object in its own right by doing a close reading of the magazine's content. This method has proven to be useful and provides a way to deal with the sheer mass of material that is involved in magazine research. One issue of a magazine only makes sense as part of a field of a cultural and political context.¹² This research aims to look at the content of *The Ladder*, while taking into account that magazines have a rather complex nature, because of their position at an intersection between these fields. The subjects of articles, tone and use of language will be analysed and the content will be placed in the socio-historical and political context of the United States of the 1960s.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one will include the historical context of *The Ladder*, Barbara Gittings and the position of homosexuals in the United States, because these are the three main components of this thesis. The research question of chapter one is: What is the historical context of *The Ladder* and the position of homosexuals in the United States? And who was Barbara Gittings? The answer will provide background information to understand how *The Ladder* came into existence and how homosexuals were portrayed in the American society. It will also provide information about Barbara Gittings and how she felt about *The Ladder*. The socio-historical context is necessary to demonstrate how different Barbara Gittings' approach was and to construct a coherent image of *The Ladder*.

Chapter two, three, four and five will focus on the March editions of the years 1963,

¹² Margaret Beetham, "Methodology", *A Magazine of Her Own?: Domesticity and Desire in the Women's Magazine 1800 – 1914*. (New York: Routledge, 1996): 5.

1964, 1965 and 1966. The March issues are chosen because March 1963 was the first contribution of Barbara Gittings. Looking into March of each year provides the possibility to see what Barbara Gittings did as the editor of *The Ladder* with an interval of one year. Chapter two, three, four and five will include an analysis of the March issues. The research question of all chapters is: What kind of content does this issue of *The Ladder* have and what do these articles imply about *The Ladder* as a magazine? There will be a short conclusion of the findings at the end of each chapter. The final chapter of this thesis will be a conclusion, which will answer the research question.

Throughout this entire thesis, the British English spelling will be used, except for the quotes that are copied from *The Ladder* which is written in American English.

CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON *THE LADDER*

The first chapter will show the background of *The Ladder* and Barbara Gittings. It will also look into the position of homosexuals in the United States. The research question of this chapter is: What is the historical context of *The Ladder* and the position of homosexuals in the United States? And who was Barbara Gittings? Chapter one will show that *The DOB* was quite conservative, which logically followed from the way homosexuals were seen. Barbara Gittings reacted on this by stating that she had to educate society and became a well-known lesbian activist.

1.1 THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

The DOB was founded by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin in 1955 and set a precedent for other organisations for both bisexual and lesbian women. The following quote explains how *The DOB* came into existence:

The Daughters of Bilitis began when lesbian couple Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin started meeting with several other female couples to discuss lesbian issues. Their group's name came from 'Songs of Bilitis', a lesbian-themed song cycle by French poet Pierre Louÿs, which described Bilitis as a resident of the Isle of Lesbos alongside Sappho. The founders believed that the name Daughters of Bilitis was both subtle and communicative. Knowledgeable lesbians would glean its meaning, but the general public would not.¹³

Lyon and Martin already revealed what kind of readers they wanted to address, by choosing a name that they believed would only appeal to the knowledgeable lesbian. *The DOB* hosted public forums on general issues regarding homosexuality and offered support to isolated, married and mothering lesbians. They also participated in research activities and set up the magazine *The Ladder*.¹⁴

The magazine was first published in San Francisco in October 1956 and started small, with 17 paid subscribers and a mailing list of 200 professionals, such as ministers, physicians, psychologists and psychiatrists.¹⁵ During their early years, the organisations often had difficulty persuading readers to subscribe, because '[r]ecruitment was impeded by the stigma

¹³ Lynn Witt, Sherry Thomas and Eric Marcus, "Daughters of Bilitis," *Out in All Directions: A Treasury of Gay and Lesbian America*. (New York: Warner Books, 1995), 200-201.

¹⁴ Theresa Theophano, "Daughters of Bilitis", *GLBTQ*. (2004): 1, accessed February 28, 2018, http://www.glbtqarchive.com/ssh/daughters_bilitis_S.pdf

¹⁵ Kristin G Esterberg, "From Illness to Action: Conceptions of Homosexuality in *The Ladder*. 1956-1965," *The Journal of Sex Research*. Vol. 27, No. 1, (1990): 66, accessed March 2, 2018, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224499009551542>

attached to homosexuality and by the harsh penalties exacted for homosexual behaviour.’¹⁶
 The editors avoided everything that was sexual in content and even tried to convince women to conform to heterosexual fashion norms, in an attempt to protect them.¹⁷

1.2 THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The conservative tone was fitting for the time in which the magazine was developed. In the 1950s, plenty of negative events occurred politically regarding lesbianism. Some American historians call the time after World War Two an “age of anxiety”, which was mostly experienced by homosexual Americans because being a homosexual was seen as a disease.¹⁸ President Eisenhower, for example, banned gay men and lesbians from working for any agency of the federal government, by passing Executive Order 10450 in 1953.¹⁹ This fear of homosexuals and their influence in the government is called “The Lavender Scare”,²⁰ which in all probability made the editor(s) of *The Ladder* more aware of their content. Lyon and Martin shied away from political or militant material and discouraged women to cross-dress or have butch-femme identities.²¹ *The Ladder* therefore mainly consisted of personal essays, editorials, fiction stories, reports of research on homosexuality, lists of books, publications about homosexuality and letters to the editor. The magazine tried to emphasise the need for the focus on lesbian women and their interests, but it was not until the movement of the mid-1960s that it actually changed into a stronger feminist magazine. This is explained in the next quote:

Before 1960, they tell us, such meager treatments of lesbianism as existed in the literature were based on medical, psychiatric, or psychoanalytic expertise, and depicted lesbians as pathological: sick, perverted, inverted, fixated, deviant,

¹⁶ Kristin G Esterberg, “From Accommodation to Liberation: A Social Movement Analysis of Lesbians in the Homophile Movement,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1994): 429, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/089124394008003008>

¹⁷ Marlinda Lo, “Back in the Day: THE LADDER, America’s First National Lesbian Magazine,” *Afterellen.com*. Last modified November, 1, (2005), accessed March 2, 2018, <https://archive.is/5t6q#selection-829.0-837.242>

¹⁸ Craig, M Loftin, “Unacceptable Mannerisms: Gender Anxieties, Homosexual Activism, and Swish in the United States, 1945-1965,” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 40, No. 3, (2007): 577, accessed March 2, 2018, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/212748/summary>

¹⁹ “Executive Order 10450--Security requirements for Government employment,” *Executive Orders*, April 27, (1953), accessed March 2, 2018, <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/10450.html>

²⁰ Jessica Toops, “The Lavender Scare: Persecution of Lesbianism During the Cold War,” *Western Illinois Historical Review* Vol. V, (2013), accessed March 2, 2018, <http://143.43.221.130/cas/history/wihr/pdfs/Toops-LavenderScareVol5.pdf>

²¹ Theresa Theophano, “Daughters of Bilitis,” *GLBTQ*. (2004): 1, accessed February 28, 2018, http://www.glbtqarchive.com/ssh/daughters_bilitis_S.pdf

narcissistic, masochistic, and possibly biologically mutated, at best the daughters of hostile mothers and embarrassingly unassertive fathers.²²

These views of medical and psychiatric professionals had an important, but negative effect on the conceptions lesbian women had of their sexual identity.²³ However, research from the early and mid-1960s shed new light on lesbianism. The evidence suggested that being a lesbian was not a sexual or social disease, but a lifestyle choice that was connected to identity. *The Ladder* itself showed evidence of changes in lesbians' acceptance of negative conceptions of homosexuality during the 1950s and 1960s. These changes attributed to the increasing militancy of the homophile movement during the 1960s. After a time in which doctors saw homosexuality as an illness that needed to be cured, researcher Alfred Kinsey reported in 1948 for men and in 1953 for women, that homosexuality was a natural variation on sexuality and far more prevalent than previously considered.²⁴ The view on lesbians shifted and the results of these studies were first published in *The Ladder*. Rita Laporte and Barbara Grier then had the opportunity to take a more radical lesbian-feminist approach and when Barbara Gittings became its editor in 1963, she made the magazine even more militant.²⁵ This thesis will include the issues of 1963, 1964, 1965 and 1966. There will be specific examples of articles that show how the magazine changed under Gittings' influence and that it indeed took a more militant approach.

1.3 BARBARA GITTINGS

Barbara Gittings (July 31, 1932 – February 18, 2007) was a lesbian activist for over five decades, who mainly used her endless energy and persistence to fight for what she believed in. Barbara Gittings and her partner Kay Tobin Lahusen are often seen as the most significant and longest serving lesbian activists.²⁶ Barbara Gittings decided to deviate from the original plan Martin and Lyon had, which the next quote explains:

[...] [F]rom the beginning, Gittings was bothered by *The Daughters of Bilitis*' conservative goal to 'educate' the lesbian to 'adjust' to society, as though the lesbian

²² Susan Krieger, "Lesbian Identity and Community: Recent Social Science Literature," *Signs*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1982): 93-94, accessed March 2, 2018,

<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/493944?journalCode=signs>

²³ Kristin, G. Esterberg, "From Illness to Action: Conceptions of Homosexuality in *The Ladder*. 1956-1965, *The Journal of Sex Research*. Vol. 27, No. 1, (1990): 65, accessed March 2, 2018,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224499009551542>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Theresa Theophano, "Daughters of Bilitis," *GLBTQ*. (2004): 1, accessed February 28, 2018,

http://www.glbtqarchive.com/ssh/daughters_bilitis_S.pdf

²⁶ Tracy Baim, "Introduction," *Barbara Gittings: Gay Pioneer*. (Chicago: Prairie Avenue Productions, 2015): 11, <https://www.amazon.com/Barbara-Gittings-Pioneer-Tracy-Baim/dp/1512019747>

were an unruly child who needed correction - a 'scolding-teacher approach', she thought. Much more to the point, Gittings insisted, was to find a way to educate society – to confront its unreasoning prejudices about homosexuals with intelligent argument and dogged persistence.²⁷

Barbara Gittings gained extensive power in the magazine by being its editor, as she was now the main person to make decisions regarding its appearance and content. These changes are again mentioned in the following quote:

The magazine initially featured pen-and-ink drawings of women but in 1964, under the editorship of Barbara Gittings, *The Ladder* began showcasing photos of lesbians taken by Kay Lahusen. Gittings also added the words "A Lesbian Review" in boldface type to the front of the magazine. The content was always lesbian-centered yet eclectic.²⁸

Gittings put "*A Lesbian Review*" under the photos, adding the word "lesbian" on purpose to show that it was no longer unspeakable and changed the conservative manner in which *The DOB* started the magazine.²⁹ She did not only write for *The Ladder*, she also published articles in various journals in which she strongly expressed her opinion on homosexuality and the position of gay people in society. Examples of articles are: *Gays in Library Land: The Gay and Lesbian Task Force of the American Library Association: The First Sixteen Years* and *Show and Tell*.³⁰ Her reason to write in *The Ladder* and publish other articles is explained in an interview in 1970, Gittings said:

We looked for 'sympathetic' psychiatrists and lawyers and clergy men who would say things that would make us feel a bit better about ourselves. In retrospect, I think this was a very necessary stage to go through. The movement we have today could not have developed if there hadn't been this earlier effort to get over the really severe feelings of inadequacy about being gay that most of our people had.³¹

Gittings also actively participated in the strife for LGBT acceptance. During her editorship, she had to continuously face challenges that came with the militant movement of the

²⁷ Lilian Faderman, "Foreword," *Barbara Gittings: Gay Pioneer*. (Chicago: Prairie Avenue Productions, 2015): 7, <https://www.amazon.com/Barbara-Gittings-Pioneer-Tracy-Baim/dp/1512019747>

²⁸ Marcia. M. Gallo, "Different Daughters," *OAH Magazine of History*, (March 2006): 28, accessed March 9, 2018, <https://academic.oup.com/maghis/article-abstract/20/2/27/988448>

²⁹ Marlinde Lo, "Back in the Day: THE LADDER, America's First National Lesbian Magazine," *Afterellen.com*. Last modified November, 1, (2005), accessed March 2, 2018, <https://archive.is/5t6q#selection-829.0-837.242>

³⁰ Barbara Gittings, "Gays in Library Land: The Gay and Lesbian Task Force of the American Library Association: The First Sixteen Years" *Daring to Find Our Names: The Search for Lesbian and Gay Library History*. (1998): 81-83, accessed March 2, 2018; Barbara Gittings, "Show and Tell," *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*. 11 Oct., (2008): 289 – 295, accessed March 2, 2018.

³¹ Kay Tobin and Randy Wicker, *The Gay Crusader*. (New York: Paperback Library, 1972): 21.

magazine. In 1964, she wrote an editorial in which she criticized the report of The New York Academy of Medicine Public Health Committee. She wrote:

The shoddy work behind this report is a discredit to a professional group in a scientific field. It is also a disservice to the “confused” public whom the report presumes to inform on what homosexuality is and “what can be done about it.” The Committee has clothed itself with authority – but its bibliography is a meager [sic], its research cursory, and its written report an uncritical grab-bag. [...] The special shame of this report is that it discusses homosexuals as though they were curious specimens. They are crassly diagnosed and charted. There is no evidence that the Committee ever examined a homosexual person. The Committee has failed to learn that homosexuality is a wide span of behaviors and feelings, rich in qualitative differences. That tidy clinical story is not about humans.³²

This reaction is typical for the way Gittings expressed her opinion and the way she felt about the place of the homosexual community in society. Barbara Gittings was the editor for *The Ladder* until 1966, when the board removed her from her position as editor.³³ She continued to be an activist for gay rights after her editorship and was rewarded with several awards for her work. On February 18th 2007 she passed away after a long fight with breast cancer.³⁴

1.4 THE LADDER AFTER GITTINGS

In September 1966, Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin became the editors of *The Ladder* again after there appeared to be disagreements between Gittings and the board of *The DOB*, who removed Gittings from her position as editor.³⁵ The magazine had a few more editors whose stay was relatively short, until Gene Damon (whose name is actually Barbara Grier, but worked under a few pseudonyms under which Gene Damon) became its final editor and issued her first plea for both financial and editorial support. In December and January of 1970-71 Damon wrote that *The Ladder* would no longer be sold at newsstands because of the financial situation. In order to be able to keep publishing the magazine and cover its printing costs, the magazine needed subscribers who had to pay \$7.50 a year. Gene Damon repeatedly asked the public to subscribe to the magazine and again asked for help in the issue of April/May 1971, ending it with ‘(...) We are also at the point where we can be forced to stop

³² Barbara Gittings, “Editorial,” *The Ladder*. August, 1964, p. 4

³³ Kristin G. Esterberg, “From Accommodation to Liberation: A Social Movement Analysis of Lesbians in the Homophile Movement,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1994): 434. accessed March 2, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/089124394008003008>

³⁴ Tracy Baim, *Barbara Gittings: Gay Pioneer*. (California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015: 1, accessed March 5, 2018.

³⁵ Kristin G. Esterberg, “From Accommodation to Liberation: A Social Movement Analysis of Lesbians in the Homophile Movement,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1994): 434, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/089124394008003008>

existing at all.’³⁶ In the final issue of *The Ladder* in August/September of 1971, Damon included a message:

After 16 complete continuous years of publication, there are to be no more issues. Many women reading this editorial will be upset, many will be sorry. None of you will be as sorry as we are to have to take this step. To those of you who have supported us... We simply wish the best in the future. For those of you who have casually read us through the years, indeed sometimes intending to subscribe, but not ever quite getting around to it, we wish you whatever you deserve and leave it to your own conscience to decide just what that might be.³⁷

By the time *The Ladder* was forced to end its productions, it was no longer ‘a small chapter newsletter but a slick 44-page publication, and sent to approximately 3,800 people in seven countries.’³⁸

³⁶ Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck, “*The Ladder*,” *Women's Periodicals in the United States: Social and Political Issues*, (Connecticut: Greenwood publishing group, 1996): 161.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Kristin G. Esterberg, “From Accommodation to Liberation: A Social Movement Analysis of Lesbians in the Homophile Movement,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1994): 434, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/089124394008003008>

CHAPTER 2: ANALYSIS 1963

Chapter two will include an analysis of the March issue of 1963. March 1963 was Barbara Gittings' first issue filling the role of editor, so the issue of 1963 was her first opportunity to change aspects of the magazine regarding appearance and content.

The research question of chapter two is: What kind of content does this issue of *The Ladder* have and what do these articles imply about *The Ladder* as a magazine?

To be able to answer the research question, the content that will be discussed had to go through selection criteria. The selection criteria are:

- Does the item include information on how *The Ladder* portrays lesbianism?
- Is the opinion of *The DOB* and *The Ladder* clearly visible?

This March issue of *The Ladder* has 26 pages. The cover has a drawn image of two cats and *The Ladder* in the left corner. Beneath the title is the month and year written: March 1963.

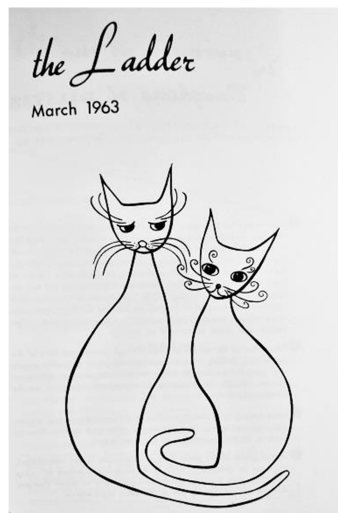


Figure 1: Rogers, Kathy, *The Ladder*, March 1963: 1.

The first two pages after the cover have the same format as all first pages in *The Ladder*. On the first page 'Purpose of *The Daughters of Bilitis*' is written, with 'daughters of' written in another font. Under that is a capitalised text that says: 'A women's organization for the purpose of promoting the integration of the homosexual in society by:' followed by a list of four points that explain *The DOB*'s perspective:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustments to society in all its social, civic and economic implications - - this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature of the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public

discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown or erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of education literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.³⁹

The top left corner of the next page shows *The Ladder* written with the date, year, volume and number information next to it. Underneath is a small paragraph with publishing information which says: ‘Published monthly by *The DOB*, Inc., a non-profit corporation, 1232 Market Street, Suite 108, San Francisco 2, California, Telephone: UNDERhill 3 – 8196.’⁴⁰

Below the publishing information is a list of the ‘National Officers, *The DOB*, inc.’ and right below that the list of *The Ladder* staff, starting with the editor: Barbara Gittings.⁴¹ Underneath the staff list, is another small paragraph: ‘*The Ladder* is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.’⁴² Even though *The Ladder* states that the articles do not necessarily reflect their opinion, it could be argued that the articles in *The Ladder* were probably supported by the organisation and its members. They decided whether or not an article was published. It might not always have been the case, but evidence in this research suggests that *The DOB* stood resolutely behind their content.

This is followed by a double line, under which *The Ladder*’s content is displayed.

The issue of March 1963 has the following content:

1. *Editorial: Double Tribute – By President Jaye Bell*
2. *The Homosexual Minority in America – Report on a lecture by Donald Webster Cory*
3. *Book Review: The Feminine Mystique - By Betty Friedan*
4. *Cartoon – By Cody*
5. *Male Impersonation On The Stage – A Brief Survey of Its Past – By Robert Lichti. Part Two of Two Parts*
6. *Cross Currents*

³⁹ Barbara Gittings, *The Ladder*, March 1963, 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 2.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

7. *Magazine Review: The Furtive Fraternity – By Gaeton Fonzi*
8. *Take A Good Look – A Story By Nola*
9. *The Heterosexual Component in The Homosexual*
10. *Preview of An Insight Into Homosexuality*
11. *Readers respond*

The last lines of the first page include the name of Kathy Rogers who made the cover, and the copyright. The entire March 1963 issue is included in this thesis as an example. It can be found in the appendix on page 56.

The March 1963 issue was written in the mid-1960s, a time in which research on homosexuality was increasingly carried out. *The Ladder* took the opportunity to go to lectures on homosexuality and provided an insight into the outcome of the research. The first article in the March 1963 issue is *The Homosexual Minority in America – Report on a lecture by Donald Webster Cory*. This was a lecture from a researcher who looked into homosexuals as a minority group. This is an example of an article that was quite unusual to publish in a magazine that was distributed throughout the country in mid-1960 America, because homosexuality was not accepted at all, let alone giving attention to a group that was seen as a minority.⁴³ Simultaneously, the article is quite innocent, because it is a report on a lecture and not a strong opinionated article.

The content of the 1963 issue will now be analysed in detail and some of it will be placed in the socio-historical or political context of the United States.

2.1 EDITORIAL: DOUBLE TRIBUTE

The March edition of *The Ladder* starts with an editorial, which includes Del Martin's decision to withdraw as editor. The text, though short, reveals how *The DOB* felt about lesbian identity. Del Martin's aim in working for the magazine is described in her final contribution, March 1963: 'Del Martin spent seven years working to put dreams of the homosexual into action – dreams of a life with rights to live in happiness, without fear from prejudice and ignorance. [...] To speak in total of her work would be to recapitulate the history of *The DOB*.'⁴⁴ It is explained how important Del Martin was for the magazine, and how her work was crucial for *The DOB*'s organisation as a whole. Del Martin's aim was to put the

⁴³ Jessica Toops, "The Lavender Scare: Persecution of Lesbianism During the Cold War," *Western Illinois Historical Review*, Vol. V, (2013): 1, accessed March 5, 2018,

<http://143.43.221.130/cas/history/wihr/pdfs/Toops-LavenderScareVol5.pdf>

⁴⁴ Jade Bell, "Double Tribute," *The Ladder*, March 1963, 4.

dream of homosexuals into action, and she did so by providing a platform for lesbians to let their voices be heard: *The Ladder*.

In that same excerpt, the magazine's aim is presented, emphasising its role in society – and its necessity, because: '(...) *The Ladder* reflects for at least a decade society's negative view of lesbianism (or what was long described in its pages as "deviance").'⁴⁵ By reflecting on society's negative view on lesbianism, *The Ladder* had the opportunity to show how incorrect that view was. They could provide counter-arguments to support their idea of the lesbian identity, which is visible in the next part of the editorial:

We feel this project will do a great deal to bring about a better understanding of the lesbian as a real person, in contrast to the fictitious character she is now portrayed to be. For it is our premise that when she is seen as a real person, instead of a fictitious character, she can and will become, to the whole of society, a human being worthy of rights.⁴⁶

As *The DOB* described, they wanted to respond to the negative view on lesbians by creating a platform that provided these counter-reactions. By educating people about lesbians and their identity, *The DOB* attempted to bring a better understanding as well as a reaction towards the negative views on lesbians.

Barbara Gittings is introduced in the second part of the editorial. She is described as one of the original members of the New York chapter of *The DOB*. She was a chapter officer and was the National Corresponding Secretary for the organisation in 1963. Interestingly, Gittings volunteered to only be a temporary editor for the magazine, so *The Ladder's* voice could continue.⁴⁷ As is known by now, Barbara Gittings changed the magazine extensively, such as its cover and more militant content, so the fact that she volunteered to only be a temporary editor raises questions. There might have been a discrepancy in the way she felt about the magazine by the time she made the decision to become its temporary editor and the moment she actually was and had the opportunity to make changes.

2.2 THE HOMOSEXUAL MINORITY IN AMERICA – REPORT ON A LECTURE

The first article in the March 1963 issue is written by Barbara Gittings and is a report of a lecture by Donald Webster Cory, a researcher who talked about minority groups. The main argument appeared to be that the homophile movement was crucial, because of the way

⁴⁵ Elly Bulkin, "A Whole New Poetry Beginning Here": Teaching Lesbian Poetry," *College English*, Vol. 40, No. 8, (1979): 887, accessed March 5, 2018, <https://www-jstor-org.ru.idm.oclc.org/stable/pdf/376524.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A55f9e85111f53950886d51fa81b59de7>

⁴⁶ Jade Bell, "Double Tribute," *The Ladder*, March 1963, 4.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

homosexuals were viewed in 1963. Homosexuality was still seen as a disease, and psychiatrists still treated homosexuals for this disease.⁴⁸ The movement contributed to a more positive view on lesbianism. Cory emphasised that organisations, such as *The DOB*, ‘are conducting a movement which is healthy for this country.’⁴⁹ Homosexuals identified themselves as being part of a group which had an inferior position and were given attributes of a negative nature. They had to conceal their identity from society, which took a tremendous toll on them because of the alienation from other people. This article is typical for *The Ladder* because ‘[a]s one woman's story after another was shared and validated within the safety of the small group, *The DOB* members realized that it was not just their own sense of self-esteem but society’s attitudes and politics that needed to change.’⁵⁰ The article contributed to the change because it explained how homosexuals were a minority group and what it meant for a person to be seen as being part of that group. *The DOB* therefore did not only want to increase their own self-esteem and change the way they felt about being lesbians by publishing articles about minority groups, but also wanted to change the way they were seen by society. This type of article was used to support the opinions of *The DOB* and *The Ladder*, by which they tried to show that the negative attitudes regarding homosexuals needed to change. Being a member of a minority group was forcedly part of the identity of homosexuals – but not necessarily a position homosexuals wanted to be in.

The article continues by claiming that the image of the minority group was forced on its individuals, as well as ‘the cruelty of making them believe that their cause is an unworthy one.’⁵¹ Gittings even adds that homosexuals think poorly of themselves, which is a reflection of how society makes minority groups believe in their own supposedly inferior, unworthy self. Homosexual identity is not only visible in being a part of a minority group, but also a general negative feeling towards one’s self.⁵² Gittings effectively used the opinion of a researcher in this article to emphasise how homosexuals were suppressed in 1963 American society. The researcher, Cory, is sometimes quoted, for example when he expressed his concern about the people ‘who after sacrifice and travail leave therapy feeling rejected and

⁴⁸ Susan Krieger, “Lesbian Identity and Community: Recent Social Science Literature,” *Signs*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1982): 93-94, accessed March 9, 2018,

<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/493944?journalCode=signs>

⁴⁹ Barbara Gittings, “The Homosexual Minority in America,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 5.

⁵⁰ Marcia. M. Gallo, “Different Daughters,” *OAH Magazine of History*, (March 2006): 29, accessed March 9, 2018, <https://academic.oup.com/maghis/article-abstract/20/2/27/988448>

⁵¹ Barbara Gittings, “The Homosexual Minority in America,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 5.

⁵² Ibid.

defeated' and sometimes Gittings paraphrases the words Cory said.⁵³ One example of this is when she writes that 'Cory contended it is harmful to democracy for all groups to melt into one unity of all-alikeness. Ideally, minorities can retain their individual identity without being discriminated against socially.'⁵⁴ Gittings' opinion is hereby expressed as well. She combined Cory's exact words, the paraphrased words and her opinion in one article. Her view hereby looked more trustworthy and reliable, as it was supported by a researcher. Her opinion also manifested itself in the form of a highly political message, which was not done in the other articles, let alone before Gittings was the editor of *The Ladder*.

2.3 BOOK REVIEW: THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

The Feminine Mystique was reviewed by Nola. There is no access to information on who Nola is, or why there is little information known about her. One possibility could be that she wanted to be anonymous because of personal reasons. She could either be a lesbian who was not yet open about it or a woman whose name is unknown. The book was written by Betty Friedan in February 1963, who was a 'psychologist, suburban housewife and mother.'⁵⁵ Nola mentions that '*The Feminine Mystique* is a book that will interest every thoughtful woman – regardless of sexual predilections. It may be of special interest to the homosexual woman who has considered the question of what constitutes feminine identity.'⁵⁶

By addressing both heterosexual and lesbian women under one term, Nola presumably tried to narrow the bridge between the two groups of women. She did not consider the book to be written for either heterosexual or lesbian women, but for 'every thoughtful woman.'⁵⁷ The reason why the book was of interest to both groups of women is described in the review:

Mrs. Friedan supports MME. De Beauvoir's contention that it is not man's penis woman envies, but his power. She believes that a woman should be able to love a man, bear children and yet fully function as a self-motivated, self-realized human being. Yet, she shows how under present conditions, with all of society (educators included) committed [sic] to a spurious image of femininity, it is almost impossible. Only the more gifted women are able to break through the "mystique."⁵⁸

⁵³ Barbara Gittings, "The Homosexual Minority in America," *The Ladder*. March 1963, 5.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Nola, "Book Review: The Feminine Mystique," *The Ladder*. March 1963, 9.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 10.

The Ladder did not only focus on lesbian women but also talked about general feminism issues. This potentially made *The Ladder* interesting to people other than solely the target group. Nola expressed her opinion, but *The Ladder* was known for its subjective reviews:

The Ladder, which sought to politicize and inform the members of the first mainstream lesbian organization, had a much more long-term impact on the lesbian community. It too ran book reviews in its issues. The reviews were not objective; from the start they developed a critical vocabulary about lesbian literature, focusing on aesthetic elements as well as historical value.⁵⁹

Nola focused extensively on the feminine identity and her subjective review style is visible in one of her remarks: ‘The question Mrs. Friedan does not raise, but which will arise in the kinds of many lesbians, is whether or not female homosexuality may rise from social as well as psychic causes.’⁶⁰ By assuming what lesbians think, Nola showed that she was the voice for the lesbian community and that she kept the other women in mind while writing these book reviews. In one other quote she stated:

Most women are confronted with an ugly choice today: Accept the trap of the false image of femininity or battle fiercely against it. The battle wastes a woman’s best years and may end in other traps – rejection of sexual fulfilment of an irresolute and therefore unsatisfactory lesbianism. [...] The question for the future is whether or not women will be able to throw off the new shackles they have accepted during the past two or three decades. If they do, what a difference it may make to society and to the lives of so many!⁶¹

The homosexual identity on this page of *The Ladder* is not clearly visible, but the feminine identity was presumably just as important to (lesbian) women. It also clearly expressed the opinion of the person who wrote it, which shows its significance for this thesis. The book review looked at the suppression of women and how these women felt about it. It could have provided support and a sense of validation for the women who read the magazine.

2.4 MAGAZINE REVIEW: GREATER PHILADELPHIA – THE FURTIVE FRATERNITY

The Ladder did not only publish articles about lectures or book reviews but also wrote reports on articles in other magazines. The *Furtive Fraternity* was an article that was published in the December issue of the *Greater Philadelphia*. It was analysed by Jody Shotwell, who started

⁵⁹ Stephanie Foote, “Deviant Classics: Pulp and the Making of Lesbian Print Culture,” *Signs*. (2005): 175, accessed March 9, 2018, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/432742?journalCode=signs>

⁶⁰ Nola, “Book Review: The Feminine Mystique,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 10.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

the review by criticising the author's choice of words. Even though Shotwell was relieved because the article was more sympathetic than she had expected, she remained critical:

[...] 'Homosexuals are sick', Mr. Fonzi concludes, deftly and all-too-tritely replacing the sin concept with the sick concept. 'Very few of them deny it,' he goes on. Since no figures are available on the percentage of homosexuals who consider themselves sick, we feel this is a completely debatable statement. [...] Certainly many homosexuals are emotionally ill. But so are many heterosexuals. What Mr. Fonzi seems to have missed altogether is the idea that "sickness" does not have so much to do with the sexual orientation as it does with the failure to adjust to it.⁶²

Shotwell stood up for the homosexual community by emphasising that even though Fonzi made a few statements, he did not add reliable percentages. Shotwell even reacted to the article by adding that not only homosexuals were emotionally ill; heterosexuals were too. She turned it into a problem concerning the entire society – not only homosexuals.

Shotwell felt some people are too uneducated and new to the complex subject of homosexuality, but she was also pleased by the fact that people were interested and sympathised with the homosexual community. Shotwell defended the homosexual community through *The Ladder*. The magazine was hereby not only used to express opinions, but also to defend and protect homosexuals.

2.5 ARTICLE: THE HETEROSEXUAL COMPONENT IN THE HOMOSEXUAL

This article was written by Veronica Cas and expressed homosexual and/or lesbian identity thoroughly. She attended a lecture by Dr. Harold Greenwald on 9 January 1963.

Dr. Greenwald centered his lecture around his theory that some homosexual men are actually strongly attracted to women. He suggested that the sexual impulse may have been so strong at an early age in these men that they became fearful of their own sex needs. Thus a fear of women could be established, leading a boy at an early age on his journey towards homosexuality.⁶³

At the bottom of the page, there is an editor's note that says: 'See reporter's letter under *Reader's Respond*.' Veronica Cas wrote a letter to this specific researcher in which she challenges his ideas. She understood his idea, but also saw the possibility for a completely opposite idea of sexual impulse, which was being weak and without structure. She wondered whether more masculine characteristics actually indicated an early and strong homosexual need to be close to men. Veronica Cas ended her letter with: '[...] I could not help recalling

⁶² Jody Shotwell, "Magazine Review: The Furtive Fraternity," *The Ladder*, March 1963, 18.

⁶³ Veronica Cas, "The Heterosexual Component in the Homosexual," *The Ladder*. March 1963, 22.

how often I've heard the more masculine lesbians say, 'when I was young I was one of the boys. Even now I get along better with men. Men and I seem to have something in common.'"⁶⁴ Cas did not only react to the lecture but also expressed her opinion on lesbianism by providing arguments that go against the researcher's opinion.

2.6 RESULTS

The DOB created a platform to respond to the negative view on lesbians by educating people about lesbians and their identity in their magazine *The Ladder*. Barbara Gittings' opinion manifested itself in the form of a highly political message in the first article she published as *The Ladder's* editor, something which had not been done before. *The Ladder* addressed lesbian themes as well as general themes regarding feminism. The book review that discussed the suppression of women could have provided support and a sense of validation for the women who read the magazine. The viewpoints of the authors of the various articles are visible, but the subjects remain general. There were no extreme articles that explained the examples of discrimination or taboo subjects. The magazine was used to express opinions, but mainly to defend and protect homosexuals. They did this in a quite conservative and careful manner, by using valid numbers or outcomes of studies to back them up.

⁶⁴ Veronica Cas, "Reader's Respond," *The Ladder*. March 1963, 24.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS 1964

Chapter three will include an analysis of the March issue of 1964. The research question of is: What kind of content does this issue of *The Ladder* have and what do these articles imply about *The Ladder* as a magazine? To be able to answer the research question, the content that will be discussed had to go through selection criteria., which are:

- Does the item include information on how *The Ladder* portrays lesbianism?
- Is the opinion of *The DOB* and *The Ladder* clearly visible?
- Is there relevant information that shows a difference between the 1963 and 1964?

In 1964, *The Ladder* did not have an extremely different stance when being compared to 1963, though its articles were a bit less conservative. The first article in the 1964 issue, for example, discussed a research into a transgender woman who lived through life as a man for over 40 years. This is not very common under *The Ladder*'s readership, which implies that the articles in the 1964 issue discussed more possible taboo subjects.

The issue of 1964 contains 26 pages. On its cover is a portrait of a woman named James Miranda Barry, who lived most of her life as a man.⁶⁵ *The Ladder* is written in capitals at the top of the page, with March 1964 next to it. Under these letters one reads *A Lesbian Review*, which was not on the cover before. Barbara Gittings added the word "lesbian" on purpose to show that it was a term that was no longer unspeakable.⁶⁶ Right under that is a small quote that says: For Sale To Adults Only, which was not on the cover of 1963. At the bottom of the page is a text that says: 'In This Issue: Dr. James Barry, The First Woman Doctor in Britain.'



Figure 2: Unkown 19th century portrait artist, *The Ladder*, March 1964: 1.

⁶⁵ Vern Niven, "The First Woman Doctor in Britain: Dr. James Barry," *The Ladder*. March 1964, 4.

⁶⁶ Marlinde Lo, "Back in the Day: THE LADDER, America's First National Lesbian Magazine," Afterellen.com. Last modified November, 1, (2005), accessed March 2, 2018, <https://archive.is/5t6q#selection-829.0-837.242>

The next two pages are more or less identical to the one in 1963. The only differences are the names in the National Officers list, the Staff list, the date and the content of the magazine.

The other texts are exactly the same.

The content of the 1964 is:

1. *The First Woman Doctor in Britain: Dr. James Barry – By Vern Niven*
2. *In The Dark – a short story by Ruth Saylow*
3. *The DOB Convention Bulletin*
4. *Lesbiana – by Gene Damon*
5. *Stage Two of Research*
6. *Champagne for Breakfast – a short story by Anastasia Briton*
7. *Applicants Wanted!*
8. *Cross-currents*
9. *Lesbianism Around the World – by R. Leighton Hasselrodt – Book review by Gene Damon*
10. *Readers Respond*

The content of the 1964 issue consists mainly of short stories and advertisements for research. Unfortunately, these publications do not meet the requirements set for the research in this thesis. They are therefore excluded from this research.

3.1 THE COVER

James Miranda Barry was known to be the first female doctor in Britain, and the magazine devoted an article to her, which was written by Vern Niven (one of Barbara Grier's pseudonyms). She wrote that 'James Miranda Barry, an Irish-English woman, was born in approximately 1795. She made history while living most of her life as a man. For over 40 years she was an officer and surgeon in the Britain Army and enjoyed a highly distinguished career.'⁶⁷

It became clear from military and medical memoirs that Barry was both a lesbian and transgender, which was particularly interesting for *The Ladder*.⁶⁸ She lived more than 150 years before *The Ladder* was published, so it was presumably interesting to see that issues on lesbianism and transgenderism have been around for a while. The information that Barry was not born as a man was only discovered after she died. Niven pointed out how important it was to 'segregate 'facts' about him which were recorded before the discovery of his real sex because these are likely to be more reliable than the questionable statements made after his

⁶⁷ Vern Niven, "The First Woman Doctor in Britain: Dr. James Barry," *The Ladder*. March 1964, 4.

⁶⁸ *The Ladder* uses the term 'transvestite', which was common in 1964, but is not used anymore. It has changed into "transgender".

death.⁶⁹ She hereby emphasised how important it is for *The Ladder* to be reliable, as she only wanted to publish relevant and accurate information to swing public opinion in their favour.

The Ladder mainly focuses on how Barry behaved, probably because they tried to educate women about other people who went through the same struggle:

[...] She was drawn to tall and pretty women and was described in so many places as a flirt that she must have been outrageously so. On the other hand, she is supposed to have been ‘a perfect gentleman who did not swear in the presence of women. [...]’ There is evidence of an affair between Dr. Barry and a Mrs. Fenton (a young married woman with a two-month-old child) which resulted in Dr. Barry’s only really “unmilitary” action – she went A.W.O.L. (*Absent without official Leave*) to accompany the woman to England.⁷⁰

Being a transgender was quite new to that time, so the fact that *The Ladder* produced an article about the subject showed that the tone of the 1964 issue was less conservative. Being editor provided the opportunity for Gittings to publish these articles which shows that she wanted to take a different approach and publish articles on various subjects.

3.2 THE DOB CONVENTION BULLETIN

The DOB Convention was an event held at June 20 – 21 1964 in New York, meant for opinion makers, spokesmen and leaders of professional, civic and community groups. There were lectures and discussion panels on various topics such as femininity, sexual morality and the law.⁷¹ Even though the Convention Bulletin contained information about the event, its purpose and its location, there is a small part that expressed the view of the magazine on the lesbian identity that is portrayed during the convention:

Although no longer taboo, the subject of female homosexuality is still intensely personal to women, embarrassing to some and mystifying to many. This convention is unusual in that it proposes to feature the opinions of women – outstanding and outspoken leaders from many professions.⁷²

The DOB described homosexuality as personal, embarrassing, and mystifying, which shows the variety of associations people had with homosexuality in the 1960s. The views of medical and psychiatric professionals had a negative effect on the conceptions lesbian women had of

⁶⁹ *The Ladder* repeatedly used “her” instead of him and his, because it was uncommon to see transgender men or women as their identified sex. Therefore the pronouns in this quote have been changed to the identified sex. Vern Niven, “The First Woman Doctor in Britain: Dr. James Barry,” *The Ladder*. March 1964, 5.

⁷⁰ Vern Niven, “The First Woman Doctor in Britain: Dr. James Barry,” *The Ladder*. March 1964, 5.

⁷¹ Barbara Gittings, “Daughters of Bilitis Convention Bulletin,” *The Ladder*, March 1964, 13.

⁷² Ibid.

their sexual identity.⁷³ Even though new research proved that homosexuality was not a disease, the subjective opinion of American citizens was presumably still felt by lesbian women. It usually takes a while for changes in the scientific field to be accepted by the average citizen of a country, as is explained in the following research by Stuart Albert and John Sabini:

A major characteristic of real world settings is the rate at which they change, and the societal and policy implications attached to that rate (...) A war may end too quickly for the hero bent on collecting decorations, but too slowly for the C.O. to whom war itself is morally reprehensible.⁷⁴

It could be that the lesbian women in American society still felt the negativity regarding lesbianism and homosexuality, even though research had already proven that homosexuality was not a disease. *The Ladder* organised and participated in these conventions to positively support the views on lesbianism and show that they stood behind lesbian women in American society. *The Ladder* also functioned as a resource for connection and provided the opportunity for women to meet each other at, for example, a convention.

3.3 BOOK REVIEW: LESBIANISM AROUND THE WORLD

This non-fiction book purported to be a study of sexual preferences of lesbians throughout the centuries. According to Gene Damon, the author had access to extensive knowledge on lesbianism.⁷⁵ But, as can be seen in the following quote, Damon was quite disappointed with the way the author claimed to know everything about lesbianism:

In 11 years of reading almost everything available in English on Lesbianism, I have yet to find support for dozens of things this author states in his book as cold, incontrovertible fact. For example, he attributes to Lesbians widespread use of dildoes [sic], and claims a high incidence of anilingus [sic] among Lesbians. Both these practices are said, by virtually every student in the field, to be rare – so rare the statistics are almost negligible.⁷⁶

This made the text, according to Damon, not just inaccurate but also unreliable. Its value also decreased because of the various assumptions the author made without having the actual data to prove his point. The facts stated in the book are unknown to Damon, who concluded the text with:

⁷³ Kristin, G. Esterberg, “From Illness to Action: Conceptions of Homosexuality in *The Ladder*. 1956-1965,” *The Journal of Sex Research*. Vol. 27, No. 1, (1990): 65, accessed March 2, 2018, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224499009551542>

⁷⁴ Stuart Albert and John Sabini, “Attributions About Systems in Slow Vs, Rapid Change”, *Proceedings of the Division of Personality and Society Psychology*, (1974): 91, accessed March 10, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/014616727400100131>

⁷⁵ Gene Damon, “Lesbianism Around the World,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 21.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

It is unfortunate that this title, aimed at the “masturbation-minded male”, will probably be a hit at the local newsstand and disseminate more erroneous information on a subject about which too few serious studies have been written.⁷⁷

Damon responded to the problem of the (negative) attention regarding lesbianism: This author wrote a book without having the resources needed to base his conclusions on. She hereby emphasised how important it was to have precise and recent research on lesbianism, because without factual numbers, the conclusions that are drawn about lesbians are not entirely true. This could eventually lead to an unrealistic – and probably more negative – image of lesbian, which Damon tried to prevent. It is now known that there were indeed false conclusions in the 1950s about homosexuality being a disease. This is possibly the reason for Damon’s (justified) concerns.

3.4 READERS RESPOND

Every issue of *The Ladder* had a *Readers Respond* section. In this section, readers could react to articles of previous issues, or they could write general responses to subjects regarding lesbianism. One of the responses to the 1964 issue was from ‘D. P.’ and ‘S.W.’ – abbreviations for their real names. This quote is particularly interesting for this thesis for two reasons. The first is that ‘[t]he study of readers’ responses to literature can help to make public the voices of bicultural children and young adults who experience life from a diversity of perspectives.’⁷⁸ *The Ladder* gave readers the opportunity to express their point of view, with which they simultaneously showed that they were indeed a platform for all (lesbian) women – regardless of background, opinion or ethnicity. The second reason this quote is significant for this thesis is because it shows that readers did not always have to agree with *The Ladder*:

My friends and I have strong opinions about the articles on second-best society (July and August issues). I can’t see how the author can group us in such distinct groups. For us here in Western Canada, the so-called fringe society (that is, ballfield and bar oriented) is really an honest way of life. [...] Besides, Canadian women in general seem to go in more for active sports than American women.⁷⁹

The DOB decided to publish a reader’s response that did not completely agree with the content or authors of *The Ladder*. They hereby provided the opportunity for people to react to the magazine. It is unclear whether *The Ladder* filtered the incoming reader responses, but

⁷⁷ Gene Damon, “Lesbianism Around the World,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 21.

⁷⁸ Cynthia Leung, “Readers Respond to Jean Fritz’s Homesick,” *Canadian Modern Language Review*. (2003): 1, accessed March 10, 2018, <https://www.utpjournals.press/doi/abs/10.3138/cmlr.60.1.227>

⁷⁹ D, P and S, D, “Reader respond,” *The Ladder*. March 1963, 23.

whether or not they did, the voices of women are heard via the 'reader's respond' section. It contributes greatly to the lesbian identity to give lesbians the opportunity to speak their mind about themes that concern them.

3.5 RESULTS

The 1964 issue of *The Ladder* does not have extremely deviating articles compared to the 1963 issue, but there are a few changes visible in the content. *The Ladder* produced an article about transgenderism, which was a taboo subject. This shows that the tone of the 1964 issue is less conservative and could indicate that Gittings wanted to take a different approach. Furthermore, *The Ladder* organised and participated in conventions to contribute positively to society's views on lesbianism by which the magazine functioned as a resource for connecting lesbian women. The issue of 1964 also emphasises how important it is to have reliable research on lesbianism, because conclusions that are falsely drawn about lesbians could eventually lead to an unrealistic – and probably more negative – image of lesbian. The *Readers Respond* section of *The Ladder* shows that they wanted to give all (lesbian) women, regardless of background, opinion or ethnicity, the opportunity to express themselves.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS 1965

Chapter four will include an analysis of the March issue of 1965. The research question of is: What kind of content does this issue of *The Ladder* have and what do these articles imply about *The Ladder* as a magazine? To be able to answer the research question, the content that will be discussed had to go through selection criteria. The selection criteria are:

- Does the item include information on how *The Ladder* portrays lesbianism?
- Is the opinion of *The DOB* and *The Ladder* clearly visible?
- Is there relevant information that shows a difference between the 1963 – 1964 and 1965?

In 1965, the February and March issue were combined. The issue has 26 pages and the cover states '*The Ladder*' with 'a lesbian review' under it, in capitals. It is followed by a photo of two hands intertwined. On the left side at the bottom of the page it says '.50, 'for sale to adults only' and 'February – March 1965' in capitals.

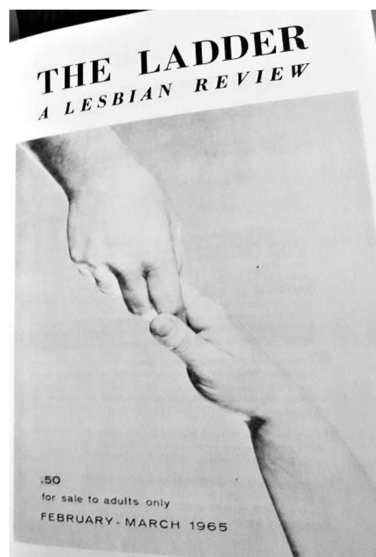


Figure 3: Kim S, modelled by Midge Brown and P. D. S. *The Ladder*, March 1965: 1.

The first page is an exact copy of the 1963 and 1964 one, but the second page is slightly different. Even though the information at the top is the same and the national officers list and the design of the page look alike, the staff-list is shorter. There used to be a list of more than seven names, but in the 1965, there are only four names, Gittings included. There are reasons to believe that this had to do with the tension between the headquarters in San Francisco and the East Coast. These tensions came from a debate between Franklin Kameny, of the Mattachine-Washington, and Florence Conrad, who was research director of *The DOB*. The Mattachine Society was one of the other LGBT organisations of the 1950s. A small part of that organisation split off and was called ONE and helped *The Ladder* to be launched as a

magazine. The Mattachine Society and *The DOB* worked together in many projects, but there were still tensions between the groups. This was problematic for *The Ladder*, and especially for Gittings, because she wanted to take a more militant approach. The following quote explains what happened and what the consequence was:

Although some *The DOB* members in the San Francisco chapter and elsewhere began to get involved in local politics during this period, the increased militancy of *The Ladder* during the mid-1960s was a source of considerable tensions between the national headquarters in San Francisco and the East Coast chapter. [...] The tensions did not take a prominent place in *The Ladder*. Not unexpectedly, almost all of the letters printed in the “Readers Respond” column heartily praised the new emphasis on militant homophile action and the improved quality of *The Ladder* under Gittings’ editorship; however, the divisions between more- and less-militant segments of *The DOB* were manifest in a debate between Franklin Kameny, of the more militant Mattachine-Washington, and Florence Conrad, research director of *The DOB*. [...] The exchange centered around the radical notion, put forwards by the more militant faction, that homosexuality was not an illness but an orientation or preference equivalent to heterosexuality. Homosexuals themselves – not researchers – were experts on their own lives. Conrad argued vigorously that homosexuals needed to work with researchers and professionals and that only those with a “solid background in the literature” should discuss the questions of illness. [...] the alliance of *The Ladder* with the militant arm of the homophile movement did not last long. In summer 1966 the board removed Barbara Gittings from her position as editor.⁸⁰

As the quote describes, the increasing militant movement of *The Ladder* caused tensions between the headquarters and East Coast chapter. Even though *The Ladder* was praised for its improvements by its readers, it eventually led to the forced withdrawal of Barbara Gittings. The articles that are published in the 1965 and 1966 issue will indeed show the changes in content, which confirm that *The Ladder* took an extremer approach.

The content of the 1965 magazine is:

1. *After the Ball*
2. *New Study Under Way*
3. *I Hate Women – A Diatribe by an Unreconstructed Feminist*
4. *East Cost Homophile Organizations – Report ’64 Part Four: “Act or Teach?”*
5. *“Expert Challenged”*
6. *Lesbian Literature in 1964 – by Gene Damon*
7. *To Tell or Not To Tell – by Vern Niven*
8. *Readers Respond*

⁸⁰ Kristin G Esterberg, “From Accommodation to Liberation: A Social Movement Analysis of Lesbians in the Homophile Movement,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1994): 434, accessed March 9, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/089124394008003008>

Since there are two issues being combined, the content is less than expected. Yet, the issue of *The Ladder* still has 26 pages, just like the 1963 and 1964 copies. The issue of March 1963 had eleven topics, and the issue of March 1964 had ten, but this March and February 1965 issue only has eight. It could be that the tensions between the different members of *The DOB* led to a shorter list of staff, and therefore also a shorter list of authors. It could also be that the individual topics take up more pages, so there was no room for extra topics. The reason for combining two issues is described on page six of *The Ladder* under the “special notices” section. It is said that there was a delay in *The Ladder*’s publication schedule. This could also explain the few topics, but this is not specifically mentioned.

4.1 ARTICLE: AFTER THE BALL

The first article in *The Ladder* of 1965 was written by Kay Tobin, who was Barbara Gittings’ partner. The short list of staff and the fewer articles than usual might explain Tobin’s contribution, as she was closely connected to Gittings. It could be that Gittings asked her to help her during the problems with the Mattachine Society. Again, there is no evidence that this is the reason, so there can only be speculated about the real cause.

The main subject of the article was the police’s behaviour during the Mardi Gras New Year’s Ball, which was a well-known event in San Francisco that supported the LGBT community. It is now known that San Francisco played an important role during the LGBT movement. The 1965 New Year’s Ball contributed greatly to this movement, but it is often overlooked: ‘[The] event brought attention to the police discriminating against homosexuals, it challenged the imaged and experienced landscape of homosexuals at the time and it represented the beginning of new political influence exercised by homosexuals.’⁸¹ Apparently, the police acted against the homosexual community by ‘invading a benefit costume ball organized by the Council on Religion and the Homosexual.’⁸² The event was organised to provide an opportunity for a dialogue between the church and the group of homosexuals. There were six homophile organisations and six ministers of Christian organisations. The police showed up and took photos of most of the 600 guests, and arrested four people: a housewife and three attorneys, who were charged with obstructing police officers because

⁸¹ Amanda Harbrecht, A, “New Year’s Eve Jan. 1 1965: A Night for Gay Rights,” *Historical Essay*. nd, accessed May 23, 2018,

http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=New_Year%27s_Eve_Jan._1_1965:_A_Night_for_Gay_Rights

⁸² Kay Tobin, “After the Ball,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 4.

they said that the police needed either a warrant or other information that a crime was being committed.⁸³

Minister Robert Warren Cromey (1931) was there the evening the police invaded the event. In one of his blogs he described his experience during the New Year's Benefit Ball. Cromey claimed that when the police found out about the event, they tried to force the owners of the hall to cancel it. After that, Cromey was part of the group of ministers who decided to officially inform the police about the New Year's Ball. They were also assured by policemen that guests (even those 'in costume'), would not be arrested.⁸⁴ Eventually, during the festivities, they demanded entry into the hall, which three present lawyers denied. The lawyers explained that the party was private and got arrested for obstructing an officer. He then explains how '[w]hen the police invaded the hall several of the clergy, including Cecil Williams and I, tried to block the police from entering. We were brushed aside and they went into a private party. The police did not want to be seen arresting clergy; we were seen as more respectable than'⁸⁵.

While the clergy was seen as more respectable, as Cromey described, the homosexuals were clearly not. The reason the police were there in the first place had a lot to do with the fact that the event was organised for homosexuals. Del Martin, who was *The DOB's* Treasurer, commented that:

This is the type of police activity that homosexuals know well, but heretofore the police had never played their hand before Mr. Average Citizen... It was always the testimony of the police officer versus the homosexual, and the homosexual, fearing publicity and knowing the odds were against him, succumbed. But in this instance the police overplayed their part.⁸⁶

Tobin continued by saying that the police presumably arrested two people to show that they did not invade the gathering without having a reason for it.⁸⁷

The article shows that the violence against homosexuals in 1965 did not only come from fellow citizens, but also from the police, who should, in fact, protect all American citizens. *The Ladder* effectively described a problematic situation for homosexuals by writing articles about occurrences, such as the New Year's Ball. They did not only criticise the police, but also criticises the government, since police is the civil force of a government. It can be

⁸³ Kay Tobin, "After the Ball," *The Ladder*, March 1965, 4.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 4-5.

⁸⁵ Robert Cromey, "New Year's Benefit Ball in San Francisco," *Cromey Online* (blog). July 14, 2010, accessed May 23 2018, <http://cromey.blogspot.nl/2010/07/new-years-benefit-ball-in-san-francisco.html>

⁸⁶ Kay Tobin, "After the Ball," *The Ladder*, March 1965, 5.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

seen as both an informative text, by which they almost functioned as an opinionated newspaper, and their political standpoint, as they disagreed with the behaviour of police and demanded that they should protect all American citizens.

4.2 I HATE WOMEN – A DIATRIBE BY AN UNRECONSTRUCTED FEMINIST

This anonymous article was published under the title “I Hate Women”. It focused not only on lesbian women, but on women in general. The author did not look kindly on women, and especially ‘the current model of American femininity, trussed into the Feminine Role of Wife and Mother, with a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval stamped across her Maidenform-upholstered bosom.’⁸⁸ The tone of this article can be described as misogynistic, which deviates greatly when it is being compared to the previous written articles in *The Ladder*. The reason *The Ladder* decided to publish an article that was so negative about women is unclear. Perhaps they tried to get a reaction from their readers, or wanted to underline that they took a more militant approach by publishing negative and provocative articles.

The 1960s are now known as a time of rapid moral change in The United States of America.⁸⁹ The female role the author discussed in this article might have still felt accurate to her, but it was rapidly changing. Ruth Feldstein, author of *Motherhood in Black and White: Race and Sex in American Liberalism, 1930-1965*, began her book with associations her students had with the 1950s: ‘Conservative, suburban, apathic [...] Stay-at-home mothers in aprons, fathers coming home from work, teenage girls in poodle skirts at high school dances.’⁹⁰ There are also students that associate the period with the early civil rights movement. They use adjectives like rebellious, courageous and dignified.⁹¹ Perhaps these characteristics were simultaneously felt in the 1960s by American citizens, which could account for the reasoning behind writing such a negative article. The author certainly believed women were indeed conservative, stay-at-home mothers. She described:

I should be attracted in a general way to many women around me, for their femininity. Instead, I find the particular brand of femininity they represent quite repulsive,

⁸⁸ *The Ladder*, “I Hate Women,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 7.

⁸⁹ Alan Petigny, “Introduction,” *The Permissive Society. America 1941-1965*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), http://assets.cambridge.org/9780521757225/frontmatter/9780521757225_frontmatter.pdf

⁹⁰ Ruth Feldstein, “Introduction,” *Motherhood in Black and White: Race and Sex in American Liberalism, 1930-1965*. (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000)

https://books.google.nl/books?id=ASpFqWWCX1QC&pg=PA1&hl=nl&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false

⁹¹ Ibid.

because it represents extinction of themselves as persons in their own right, to play a role society has thrust on them.⁹²

Whether or not the role of women in 1965 American society was decided by society, the author of the article remained negative towards the women she described. Her main reason was that the elements that make someone attractive were vitality, intelligence, individuality and self-propelled quality. These were the exact characteristics the 1965 model American woman hid, according to the author.⁹³

The author focused less on the lesbian woman, but more on women in general. She emphasised how much women were suppressed. She claimed that:

Gone out of mind in America is the strong, self-propelled single woman who was a dedicated teacher, doctor, writer, or social crusader. Even the strong pioneer woman, though married, has probably been bypassed in school textbooks. Girls are taught to be passive, compliant and “feminine,” to give up their individuality and concentrate on making themselves mantraps to snare a boy into early marriage and parenthood.⁹⁴

This criticising article in *The Ladder* flags a shift in the tone of articles, because it deviated from previous content. The disclaimer on the first page states that the articles did not necessarily had to reflect *The DOB*'s opinion, but since it was their decision to publish something, it could be argued that *The DOB*'s members at least sympathised with the anonymous author's opinion. They published the article in their magazine and gave its author the opportunity to express herself. It is unknown who the author was, so it could have been one of the members of *The DOB*, but nonetheless, this article and *The Ladder* as a magazine were connected; they cannot be viewed as separate elements. *The Ladder* provided a platform for this author who is strongly opinionated, which implied that (part of) *The DOB* wanted to address this subject. Even though readers could have disagreed with *The DOB*, *The Ladder*, its members, or their content, *The Ladder* kept publishing articles that they supported.

The author shifted the subject to lesbian women, but was mild to them and described them as ‘practically the only people who cop out of this farce.’⁹⁵ This is one of the two only brief mentions of lesbians. The second time lesbians, or homosexuals, were mentioned is at the end of the article. The author, then, claimed that she believed that it eventually shall become difficult to tell straight and gay women apart, but that it also might be unnecessary.

⁹² *The Ladder*, “I Hate Women,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 7.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁵ With “this farce”, the author meant the way women were treated, and how they accepted it. The author simultaneously described women who were expressing feminism in an extreme and almost self-destructive way. *Ibid.*, 10.

This could have been both a prediction, as well as a hope for the future. She ended the article with her view on the future and the consequence for how women were seen. She saw it more positively than the situation in 1965 and believed that:

[The new era] is very close at hand. Not by virtue of anybody's strength or rebellion, but because the "population explosion," like a fireball from an atomic blast, is rolling towards us at a suddenly accelerated pace. [...] The "woman of the year" will be a childless astronaut or deep-sea diver. Since early marriage is a big culprit in exploding populations, girls will be encouraged, even paid, to prolong their school years and postpone or bypass marriage. [...] [Women] will also become doctors and politicians and anything else they want to be, since they will not have to interrupt their work for childbearing.⁹⁶

This prediction also deviated from earlier content. The author stated in *The Ladder* that women could one day become anything they wanted to be; a claim that is not found in the 1963 and 1964 issues and shows increasing space for more militant content.

4.3 'EXPERT' CHANGELLED

In a quite short excerpt by Kay Tobin is described how a woman and three men attended a lecture entitled *Homosexuality, a Disease* on December 2, 1964. Dr. Paul R. Dince was the speaker. The men and woman held up signs that said 'WE REQUEST 10 MINUTES REBUTTAL TIME', which was eventually accepted by the forum's chairman. One of the men got the opportunity to speak for ten minutes and talked about how the speaker and others in the field often contradicted themselves. He claimed that there are various theories against homosexuality, which all concluded something else. Furthermore, research on homosexuality was usually done with 'ill-adjusted homosexuals who were patients undergoing therapy.'⁹⁷ They also usually assumed that homosexuality was a disease, so it was not surprising that their outcome supported this view. The applause for the challenger was louder than the lecturer's applause, who seemed surprised by this reaction.⁹⁸ Adding this note, shows that *The Ladder* supported what the challenger had to say, because they understood why he got the applause. They also added irony by saying that the lecturer 'seemed surprised', which shows that they did not understand that he was surprised; they believed it was a logical consequence from what the lecturer told the audience.

The last note on this story is an editor's note which says: 'Meet The Challenger – on our back cover!', *The Ladder* hereby provided the opportunity for their readers to see the

⁹⁶ *The Ladder*, "I Hate Women," *The Ladder*, March 1965, 11.

⁹⁷ Kay Tobin, "Expert Challenged," *The Ladder*, March, 1965, 18.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

person who was brave enough to stand up against the lecturer. That shows that they supported him and what he had to say.

4.4 TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL

Vern Niven (one of the pseudonyms of Barbara Grier) wrote an article on whether or not a man or woman should tell their parents that they are homosexuals. She believed that ‘with few exceptions, homosexuals can get acceptance and understanding from their parents.’⁹⁹ This is statement that could falsely lead to hopes of being accepted. There is little information known on the reaction of parents in 1965, but there are studies into the acceptance of homosexuality in families that are more recent. These studies actually show that ‘LGB adolescents’ relationships with their parents are often challenged, particularly around the time of disclosure of sexual identity or ‘coming out’ (...) or when parents learn that their children are LGBT.’¹⁰⁰ It is unclear whether or not parents had a challenging relationship with their children in 1965, but given the place of homosexuality in society, it is unlikely that they reacted more positively than parents in the twenty-first century. For Niven to start her article with a statement that could give the readers of *The Ladder* the confidence to come out to their parents could have been problematic. Niven might not have considered the possible consequence of publishing this article, as it could lead to serious issues for the individuals who felt supported by her to come out to their parents. The reactions of their families could be negative, hateful or even extremely unaccepting.

The next paragraph of the article focused on how the reader should put aside the feelings of guilt, because ‘[f]ace it, there is no disgrace in being a lesbian!’¹⁰¹ Even though Niven could potentially be right about there not being “disgrace” in being a lesbian, opinions vary on this matter. Certainly back in 1965, when homosexuality was still considered to be a disease, the discrepancy between homosexuals and heterosexuals was large. Niven did not advise homosexuals that they should tell their family, she was extremely opinionated on the way they should do it. She wrote that: ‘Then, if you are not ashamed of your way of life and you way of love, you can present a convincing case to those near and dear to you for

⁹⁹ Vern Niven, “To Tell or Not To Tell,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 24.

¹⁰⁰ Caitlin Ryan, Stephen T. Russell, David Huebner, Rafael Diaz and Jorge Sanchez, “Family Acceptance in Adolescence and the Health of LGBT Young Adults,” *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, November 2010, 1, accessed May 23, 2018, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1744-6171.2010.00246.x>

¹⁰¹ Vern Niven, “To Tell or Not To Tell,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 24.

acceptance of your orientation.’¹⁰² It could be a negative experience for someone to come out to their parents after reading this article, as they might not have been prepared for a potentially negative reaction of a close family member. Niven, however, briefly pointed out that it could happen that someone reacts negatively towards a coming out, as she said that:

On the other hand, perhaps you have reason to think that your parents could not possibly understand. Nevertheless, you can tell them by exemple [sic]. Take your friend “home” with you on holidays, mention the time you spend with her family, refer to her in your phone conversations with you parents, until they gradually feel that this person is an essential part of your life. They may not comprehend why she means so much to you. But they will realize this is the case, and for the most part, I believe, they will accept it.¹⁰³

This statement is both dangerous and probably untrue, as there is no prediction on how parents will react. *The Ladder* published this article by which *The DOB* seemed to support this view on whether or not one should admit their homosexuality to their parents.

At one hand *The Ladder* seems to be ahead of its time, by providing a platform for lesbian women to express themselves. They also take a stronger approach, which was controversial in 1965. At the same time, advice like this is considered to be biased and unrealistic in the twenty-first century, because it is widely known that homosexuality is still not accepted everywhere. As later research shows, homosexuality was not at all accepted in the 1950s and 1960s; not by parents, nor by society:

We conjecture that by the 1950s and 1960s the norm of heterosexuality operated by maintaining a symbolic and social separation between a ‘pure’ heterosexuality and a ‘polluted’ homosexuality. Enforcing this social division involved the exclusion of homosexuality from public life. A series of repressive strategies – from censorship to civic disenfranchisement and violence – were deployed.¹⁰⁴

It must have been hard for parents to accept that one’s child was a homosexual, given the consequence for the person’s life and the exclusion of homosexuals in society. Accepting it could have been extremely difficult, which contradicts with the positive tone of Niven’s article. However, it is becoming clear that *The Ladder* as a magazine was taking a more militant stance and moved towards being a stronger opinionated magazine. This article is an example of a subject that is not found in the 1963 or 1964 edition, since the tone of the magazine was more conservative then.

¹⁰² Vern Niven, “To Tell or Not To Tell,” *The Ladder*, March 1965, 24.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Steven Seidman, Chat Meeks and Francie Traschen, “Beyond the Closet? The Changing Social Meaning of Homosexuality in the United States,” *Sexualities*, (1999): 18, accessed May 23, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/136346099002001002>

4.5 READERS RESPOND

As is mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, *The Ladder's* more militant stance was applauded by its readers. The first submission showed this clearly:

Let me add my voice to the many others who have complimented you on the improved LADDER. No matter what else I have to do, the minute a copy arrives in the mail, I seize upon it and read it through from one end to the other. You are doing a fine job!
- F. I. B., California¹⁰⁵

It is clear that the readers were fully supportive of the change of the magazine's content.

Another reader's respond is:

I compliment you on the very high quality of *The Ladder*. It is an excellent example of responsible journalism in a field that could very well fall into maudlin sentiment or to the other extreme of sensationalism, either of which would defeat the purpose for which the periodical was established.
- Professor V. C., Indiana¹⁰⁶

This last submission emphasised Barbara Gittings' role as editor. She made decisions regarding content, and created the opportunity for the magazine to develop itself. The fact that the board removed her from her position, said either something about the board, or about the organisation as a whole. The militant movement of Barbara Gittings was clearly not accepted.

4.6 RESULTS

In the 1965 issue, *The Ladder* effectively describes problematic situations for homosexuals by writing articles about discriminating occurrences, such as the New Year's Ball. They hereby functioned as an opinionated newspaper in which they express their political standpoint, as they disagreed with the behaviour of police and demanded that they should protect all American citizens. The articles in the 1965 issue also become more criticising and show an increased space for more militant content, which flags a shift in *The Ladder*. "*Expert*" *Challenged* even had some irony in the text and *The Ladder* showed support for someone who stood up against a lecturer who talked about homosexuality being a disease. *The Ladder* provided a platform for homosexuals to express themselves and took a stronger approach, which was controversial in 1965. However, *To Tell or Not To Tell* gives advice that is considered to be biased and unrealistic in the twenty-first century, because it is widely known that homosexuality is still not accepted everywhere. These articles were not found in the 1963

¹⁰⁵ *The Ladder*, "Readers Respond," *The Ladder*, March 1965, 25.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 26.

or 1964 edition, so *The Ladder*'s content was visibly changing. Even though the readers of *The Ladder* applauded this militant movement of Barbara Gittings, it was not accepted by the board.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS 1966

Chapter five will include an analysis of the March issue of 1966. The research question of is: What kind of content does this issue of *The Ladder* have and what do these articles imply about *The Ladder* as a magazine? To be able to answer the research question, the content that will be discussed had to go through selection criteria. The selection criteria are:

- Does the item include information on how *The Ladder* portrays lesbian?
- Is the opinion of *The DOB* and *The Ladder* clearly visible?
- Is there relevant information that shows a difference between the 1963 – 1964 – 1965 and 1966 issue?

The issue of March 1966 has 26 pages. The front page says *The Ladder* with Adults Only and Mar. 1966 next to it. *A Lesbian Review* is written in capital letters and placed under Mar. 1966. The rest of the cover is taken up by a very large photograph of a sculptured head of a woman.



Figure 4: Chaim Gross. *The Ladder*, March 1966: 1.

The first page is again identical to the pages in 1963, 1964 and 1965. The second page also has the exact same lay-out as the other issues, though the people of the national officers and staff list changed. Kay Tobin, who was Barbara Gittings' partner, is now assistant editor.

The content of the 1966 magazine includes:

1. *ECHO 1965: The Homosexual Citizen in the Great Society* – by Erika Hastings
2. *Creeping Heterosexuality – America's Number One Social Problem* – by Judith Rascoe
3. *Cross-Currents*
4. *Security Clearances for Homosexuals*
5. *The Family and Money Injustice* – by Dorothy Lyle
6. *Lesbian Literature in 1965* – by Gene Damon (Part I)
7. *The DOB Scholarships for Women*

The first topic is ECHO 1965. It is a complete report of the public conference of the East Coast Homophile Organization. Unfortunately, the report says that ‘several speakers gave opinions of the picketing demonstrations conducted by some homophile organization during 1965. These opinions have been omitted from these reports, but will appear in a forthcoming issue along with opinions from other persons.’¹⁰⁷ Without opinions from people, including people who wrote *The Ladder*, the article is not of relevance for this thesis, which is why it will be excluded.

5.1 CREEPING HETEROSEXUALITY; AMERICA’S NUMBER ONE SOCIAL PROBLEM

The article of Creeping Heterosexuality by Judith Rascoe was reprinted with permission from the December 1965 issue of *GRUMP*.¹⁰⁸ It appears to be a rather ironic article about ‘the heterosexual’ and how ‘he’ is exercising influence in business, professions and even in the arts.¹⁰⁹ The heterosexual is described as the way homosexuals are usually described. The article hereby seems to sarcastically emphasise how remarkable it is that homosexuals are treated the way they are. Heterosexuality was seen as a natural identity choice, but homosexuality, clearly, was not. The acerbic tone of the article is visible in some of its quotes:

‘There are all sorts of rumors and half-truths told about us’, says one prominent heterosexual who refuses to let his name be published. ‘Most people have the idea of this big, hairy, masculine-acting guy. They say they can tell us by the way we walk or dress. But listen, for every heterosexual who fits the stereotype, I can point out a dozen whom you’d never suspect. Some of them are dress designers, playwrights, actors and even hairdressers.’¹¹⁰

The first sentence refers to the wish of homosexuals to remain anonymous because of the consequences it has to be open about homosexuality. The second part of the paragraph refers to the stereotypes that were thrust upon homosexuals. Stereotypes and stereotypical reactions are a big element in the lives of homosexuals. This is mentioned in *The Changing Social Meaning of Homosexuality in the United States*: ‘Individuals withhold information about their homosexuality because it is defined as personal, because disclosure would involuntarily ‘out’ others (e.g. parents or friends), or because they wish to minimize a stereotypical reaction.’¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Erika Hastings, “ECHO 1965: The Homosexual Citizen in the Great Society,” *The Ladder*. March 1966, 4.

¹⁰⁸ Judith Rascoe, “Creeping Heterosexuality,” *The Ladder*, March 1966, 14

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Steven Seidman, Chat Meeks and Francie Traschen. “Beyond the Closet? The Changing Social Meaning of Homosexuality in the United States,” *Sexualities*, (1999): 18, accessed May 23, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/136346099002001002>

The survey was 30 years later than the time this article was written, but it is a fact that if it was a problem in 1999, it was almost certainly a problem in the 1960s. It is not uncommon for homosexuals to get the blame for attributes that are placed on the entire group, which was also mentioned in *The Homosexual Minority in America – Report on a lecture by Donald Webster Cory* from 1963, so stereotypes and stereotypical reactions are a prominent issue.

The article has a clear style. Its main purpose seems to be ridiculing the way homosexuals are approached, though it may also try to educate people about the consequences for this approach. It discusses the entire community and all its pros and cons. Psychologists and psychiatrists are also discussed:

‘They can’t live like that all the time’, says a well-known New York psychiatrist who has treated many heterosexuals. ‘They realize that our society is against them. It has laws and social patterns, and it has the means of enforcing these. Sooner or later men ask themselves, ‘Why am I like this? How did this happen?’ and they want help. (...) According to modern psychoanalytic theory, a man becomes a heterosexual because his development isn’t arrested in time.’¹¹²

Especially the part about ‘treating homosexuals’ is crucial, because it shows how odd it is to treat healthy people for their ‘heterosexuality.’ However, homosexuals were still treated by psychologists and psychiatrists in the 1960s, because studies into homosexuality that proved homosexuality was not disease were clearly not yet believed.

The Ladder copied the article from another magazine called *Grump*. There were two quotes on the front page of *Grump*. The first was: ‘for people who are against all the DUMB THINGS that are going.’¹¹³ The second was: ‘the publication for people who are nervous but not angry.’¹¹⁴ Roger Price, who was known to be humorous and critical, published the magazine in 1965. It had 16 pages in two colours, without advertisements. A lot of women contributed to the magazine, and the writers were in general more satirical than Price.¹¹⁵ *The Ladder* started way before *Grump*, but still saw the opportunity to copy the article, as it touches on an important subject for the homosexual community. The prejudices about homosexuality are prominently present in 1960s society, which is why articles like these were necessary. *The Ladder* shows that not only their magazine, but other magazines focused on the issue of homosexuality as well. This specific article proves that *The Ladder* and other homosexual organisations were not the only ones who did not believe homosexuality was a

¹¹² Judith Rascoe, “Creeping Heterosexuality,” *The Ladder*, March 1966, 14.

¹¹³ Ullage Group, “Memorable Magazines,” *The Ullage Group*. (2016): 1, accessed May 27, 2018, <http://ullagegroup.com/2016/08/24/memorable-magazines-6-Grump/>

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

disease. They increase their credibility by collaborating with other magazines, because the more organisations agree with their viewpoint, the more they can prove it is the truth.

5.2 SECURITY CLEARANCES FOR HOMOSEXUALS

The Security Clearances for Homosexuals was a news article about the protection of homosexuals. The ‘decentralization of the Federal Government’s security program, under which there seemed to be no one place in the Government (...) to negotiate’ made it hard to get security clearances.¹¹⁶ An unexpected correspondence between the Mattachine Society and the Vice-President of the United States provided an opportunity to contact the Justice Department for the clearances. However, correspondence was slow because of ‘the Justice Department’s unfortunate habit of waiting precisely thirty days before answering a letter’, according to *The Ladder*.¹¹⁷ *The Ladder* mainly criticised the way the government handles the situation of security possibilities for homosexuals.

The main points were that homosexuality was not proper ground for denial of protection; every American citizen should have the right to be secured; not protecting someone is ‘un-American’; and that the government would create a problem by denying clearances. The next part of the article reveals the opinion of *The Ladder*, as it said that:

Unfortunately, the 90-minute conference was inconclusive, and the basic issues were not explored – although it was indicated that the Justice Department is aware of all of the Society’s letters to government officials, has seen all of its literature, and knew of its picketing demonstrations in Washington.¹¹⁸

There is a clear disappointing tone in the paragraph, which indicates that the author of this article was not pleased with the outcome. Furthermore, this article again highlighted how strongly opinionated these articles were compared to the 1963 and 1964 ones. In 1965, they criticised the police, and in 1966, they criticised the law. *The Ladder* clearly took a stronger and more militant approach.

The article was written in 1966. As is known by now, ‘Federal policies denied security clearances to lesbians and gay men until the 1980s and subjected gay applicants to intrusive questioning about their sex lives until the 1990s.’¹¹⁹ *The New York Times* devoted an article to

¹¹⁶ *The Ladder*, “Security Clearances for Homosexuals,” *The Ladder*, March 1966, 20.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Gregory B. Lewis, “Barriers to Security Clearances for Gay Men and Lesbians: Fear of Blackmail or Fear of Homosexuals?” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*. (2001): 1, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3525722?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

the security clearances in 1995. President Clinton signed the executive order, which barred the Federal Government from denying security clearances to homosexuals on the basis of sexual orientation in 1995.¹²⁰ That article specifically said: ‘[it was] a move long sought by gay rights groups.’¹²¹ *The Ladder* wrote about the issue in 1966 and it took until 1995, a little less than 30 years later, until there security clearances for lesbians were implemented.

5.3 THE FAMILY AND MONEY INJUSTICE

The Family and Money Injustice article, written by Dorothy Lyle, is the second article that discussed the inequalities between heterosexuals and homosexuals. The article starts with the situation in 1966 and the fact that:

[T]he lesbian couple faces such disadvantages as unequal property rights, taxation out of proportion, unequal insurance privileges. But in addition, each half of a lesbian couple may be tacitly expected to function as a single person from the family-and-money standpoint – that is, she is expected to carry the load traditionally dumped on the unmarried offspring, even though she is not actually “single”.¹²²

The article talked about how the unmarried offspring in a family usually paid for, for example, a widowed mother, or one or both aged parents.¹²³ Lesbian women, who were together but not married, because it was illegal, were seen as single. Later in the article, Lyle mentions a specific example of this:

(...) But at one point when I was speaking to my lesbian sister about the soon-to-be time when the three of us would have to provide Mother’s support beyond her social security, this sister answered that she and I alone would have to do it. When I asked why just the two of us and not our youngest sister also, she replied: ‘Well, Sue says that when she is married to Bob she won’t feel like asking him to help support mother, and I can see her point. Marriage is different.’ (...) I protested: ‘Different, hell. Why? Aren’t you taking from Donna to help Mother now? And aren’t I in effect taking from Jerri? So Sue won’t be able to ask Bob for help? Why not?’ (...) Her immediate contention was that since our lesbian unions are not legally sanctioned, it was alright for us to be specially penalized this way – in effect, to be penalized as the single members of a family generally are. The rest of our family dispute doesn’t matter, but the questions it raises do matter, to all homosexuals.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Todd S. Purdum, “Clinton Ends Ban on Security Clearance for Gay Workers,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY). Aug. 5, 1995.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Dorothy Lyle. “The Family And Money Injustice,” *The Ladder*, March 1966, 21.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

So, the discrepancy between a married man and woman, compared to two women in a relationship, is big. There are official rules, but also unwritten social rules that one has to follow. Lesbians were seen as single women and were almost forced to contribute to the family, while simultaneously taking care of their own family. Lyle asked questions about this, and also expressed her opinion:

This is a ridiculous injustice – to either an unmarried offspring, or a homosexual one whose commitment to a partner is being ignored (...) That a person grows up heterosexual, and then gets married, doesn't relieve her or him of responsibility toward parents, even if there are "single" persons in the family. Personally, I won't stand for this injustice!¹²⁵

The Ladder used to write articles to inform lesbians about the homosexual community, explain what *The DOB* did for homosexual rights and educate people about homosexuality, but the 1966 articles also address more political issues. Authors expressed their opinions about not only legal injustice, but also socially unwritten rules, as Lyle described in her article: 'There are battlegrounds for us on every level of our daily life.'¹²⁶ These levels are, for example, the law, unwritten rules and socially accepted behaviours.

5.4 THE DOB SCHOLARSHIPS FOR WOMEN

The last article in this issue of *The Ladder* is about the opportunity for women to get the annual Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarships. There were three scholarships of \$200,00 each for the year 1966-1967. They were rewarded by *The DOB*'s three chapters and open to every women over 21 who wanted to attend a trade school, business school, university or college, full or part-time. The deadline was May 15, 1966.¹²⁷

There is no Readers Respond section in the March 1966 issue and *The DOB Scholarship for women* is the last article. After going through the other issues, it turned out that also the May and July issue missed the Readers Respond section. There could be various reasons, such as lack of responses, not enough room for the section or issues in the organisation. It is, however, unclear why there is no Readers Respond section in the March, May and July issue, as it is not mentioned anywhere in the March 1966 edition.

¹²⁵ Dorothy Lyle. "The Family And Money Injustice," *The Ladder*, March 1966, 21.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ *The Ladder*. "Daughters of Bilitis Scholarships for Women," *The Ladder*. March 1966, 26.

5.5 RESULTS

Prejudices about homosexuality were prominently present in 1960s society, which is why articles that showed how odd it was to see homosexuality as a disease were necessary. *The Ladder* increased their credibility by collaborating with other magazines, such as *Grump*, because the more organisations agree with their viewpoint, the more they could prove homosexuality was not a disease. Furthermore, the articles in 1966 (and 1965) were more strongly opinionated compared to the 1963 and 1964 ones. *The Ladder* clearly took a stronger and more militant approach and also addressed more political issues. Authors expressed their opinions about not only legal injustice, but also socially unwritten rules.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion includes a comparison of the 1963, 1964, 1965 and 1966 issues to see how *The Ladder* changed under the influence of Barbara Gittings. All issues have been studied thoroughly, and the results of the chapters are compared. The research question was: How does the content of *The Ladder* change during the editorship of Barbara Gittings between 1963 and 1966, with a specific focus on the way lesbianism is portrayed?

The expectation was that *The Ladder*'s subjects would be more controversial as the issues progress, but that its language will remain general and aloof. It was also hypothesised that there would be differences between the issues, but the main differences would be found between subjects and content of the 1963 issue and the 1966 issue. The tone of the articles was expected to be gentle and emphatic, since *The Ladder* had to be careful with what they published regarding lesbianism.

The results of the research will now be discussed and compared to the expectations of this thesis. The conclusions will be based on the outcome of this comparison. In 1963, the viewpoints of the authors of the various articles were visible, but the subjects remained general and the language was academic and formal. This is in line with this thesis' prediction, as it shows that *The Ladder* used to be very conservative. The magazine was mainly used to defend and protect homosexuals in 1963. *The DOB* did this in a conservative and careful manner. This is also in line with the expectations of this thesis, because the subjects are not innovatory in any way.

In 1964, the articles are a little less conservative. *The Ladder* published an article about a transgender woman, which used to be a taboo topic thus makes the article controversial. The prediction was indeed that there would be more controversial articles, but the article in 1964 is more extreme than expected, because transgenderism was a taboo subject. Publishing this article highlights Gittings' militant movement and highlights a change in *The Ladder*'s content. The previous editors shied away from political or militant material, but Barbara Gittings clearly did not.

In 1965, the political agenda of *The Ladder* is visible when they discuss the police's behaviour. The tone of the article is more direct than in other articles, but also more political because police represent the civil authority of government. The strong criticism on women in the second article was also unusual compared to the previous issues of *The Ladder*, especially since all women issues used to be discussed and supported. The article about the coming out of homosexuals gives advice that is considered to be biased and unrealistic in the twenty-first

century, which shows that the articles were stronger opinionated and indicates Gittings' militant movement. The choice of subjects is indeed, as predicted, more controversial, but the tone and language deviate from the expectation. *The Ladder* expresses strong criticism on police, women and even on homosexuals when they discuss the coming out. This shows that the militant movement of Gittings was not only visible in content, but also in tone and language.

The 1966 issue of *The Ladder* is comparable to the 1965 issue and focuses on rejecting the view that homosexuality was a disease. Even news articles, which previously were very objective, contain a very strong opinion from the authors in the 1966 issue of *The Ladder*. Reasons for the forceful tone in writing could be traced back to the fact that researcher Alfred Kinsey and other well-known researchers found that homosexuality was not a disease, but a lifestyle choice. The subjective, average American citizen could still have been very opinionated, but evidence presumably gave the authors of *The Ladder* more confidence which led to a more militant tone. This is in line with the prediction of this thesis, but again the tone and language were not expected.

The biggest change in content is seen between 1964 and 1965. A reason for this could be the tension between the headquarters in San Francisco and the East Coast, but this is unclear. Further research should be carried out to confirm or refuse this theory. This is, however, only one of the many studies that can be done with regards to *The Ladder*. There is yet little known about the magazine, its authors and *The DOB*. It would be interesting to learn more about a magazine that reflects the opinion of lesbian women, and also shows the reaction of society on homosexuals.

It can be concluded that the subjects indeed became more controversial, but the language did not remain general and aloof. In the 1965 and 1966 issues, the authors used terms and made claims that were more assertive than in the 1963 and 1964 issues. The main differences were indeed found between the 1963 issue and 1966 issue, however, the 1965 issue shows the first change in subjects and articles. The tone of the articles is also less gentle and emphatic than expected. Especially the articles in the 1966 issue have an intense and strongly opinionated tone. *The Ladder* was expected to be careful because of society's negative view regarding lesbianism, but they were not as cautious as hypothesised. They published articles that criticised the police, the government and academics, which shows that *The Ladder* became indeed more progressive and militant under the editorship of Barbara Gittings.

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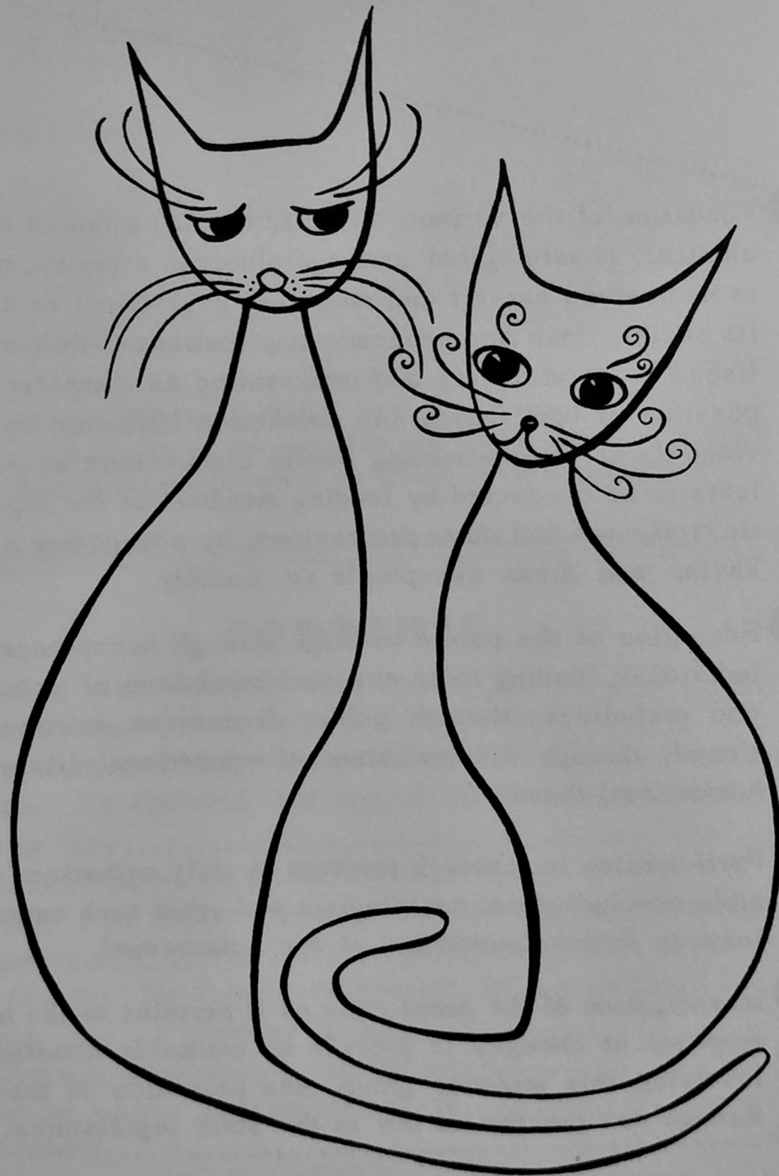
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APPENDIX

the Ladder

March 1963



the Ladder

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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Double Tribute

DEL MARTIN

BARBARA GITTINGS

"GOOD THOUGHTS ARE NO BETTER THAN GOOD DREAMS, UNLESS THEY BE EXECUTED!" - EMERSON

DEL MARTIN SPENT SEVEN YEARS WORKING TO PUT DREAMS OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO ACTION - DREAMS OF A LIFE WITH RIGHTS TO LIVE IN HAPPINESS, WITHOUT FEAR FROM PREJUDICE AND IGNORANCE.

ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF DOB, MANY TIMES PRESIDENT, AND FOR THE LAST TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS EDITOR OF THE LADDER, DEL SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS WORKING TO MAKE THIS DREAM A REALITY. TO SPEAK IN TOTAL OF HER WORK WOULD BE TO RECAPITULATE THE HISTORY OF DOB.

MUCH OF HER LABOR IS BEARING FRUIT MOST PEOPLE THOUGHT WOULD NOT MATURE IN OUR LIFETIME. IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE WILL BE ASKING YOU TO CO-OPERATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT DEL HELPED TO INSTIGATE. WE FEEL THIS PROJECT WILL DO A GREAT DEAL TO BRING ABOUT A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LESBIAN AS A REAL PERSON, IN CONTRAST TO THE FICTITIOUS CHARACTER SHE IS NOW PORTRAYED TO BE. FOR IT IS OUR PREMISE THAT WHEN SHE IS SEEN AS A REAL PERSON, INSTEAD OF A FICTITIOUS CHARACTER, SHE CAN AND WILL BECOME, TO THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY, A HUMAN BEING WORTHY OF RIGHTS.

BARBARA GITTINGS, ONE OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF DOB, MANY TIMES A CHAPTER OFFICER, AND NOW THE NATIONAL CORRESPONDING SECRETARY FOR THE ORGANIZATION, HAS VOLUNTEERED TO BE TEMPORARY EDITOR FOR THE MAGAZINE, SO ITS VOICE CAN CONTINUE. THE FEBRUARY EDITION WAS BARBARA'S FIRST CONTRIBUTION.

TO DEL MARTIN AND BARBARA GITTINGS, WE ALL OWE A TRIBUTE. BUT LET US GIVE MORE THAN "GOOD DREAMS." THOSE WORKING IN THE ORGANIZATION ARE GIVING THEM THE TRIBUTE OF ACTION. THOSE OF YOU NOT DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE ORGANIZATION CAN ALSO GIVE A TRIBUTE TO THESE TWO AND TO ALL THOSE WORKING TO MAKE YOUR DREAMS A REALITY. SUPPORT YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH CONTRIBUTIONS OF LETTERS, ARTICLES, STORIES, POEMS, NEWS - AND THE ALWAYS-NEEDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT. JOIN US IN A TRIBUTE OF ACTION!

JAYE BELL, NATIONAL PRESIDENT

The Homosexual Minority in America

Why doesn't the homosexual minority act like other minority groups? Donald Webster Cory, author of several books on homosexuality, tackled this question in a scholarly analysis of homophile progress in the past few decades. His lecture, sponsored by The Janus Society, drew an audience of over 100 persons (despite a local transit strike) to a downtown Philadelphia hotel on January 25th.

A minority group is not necessarily a numerical minority, explained Cory. For example, doctors are few in relation to the whole population but they are not treated as a minority group. Rather, a minority is a group of people who are considered, or who consider themselves, to have a trait in common. They are placed in a special type of inferior position, viz., the individual himself is blamed and punished for attributes that rightly or wrongly are placed on the entire group, and the group as a whole is blamed or punished for the transgressions of individuals. A minority group, according to this definition, is never praised or glorified, but given only attributes of a negative nature.

Thus the homosexual, in his contacts with society, must not only take responsibility for his whole minority group, but must usually conceal his identity with it from society. The ease of concealment—a seeming protection—takes tremendous toll of the homosexual in other ways. For by this self-defeating mechanism the individual human is compelled to dissociate himself from others like him. There is also forced upon him society's ugly image of his group. Most homosexuals are relatively disinterested in the homophile movement; they are perhaps victims of the "cruelty of making them believe that their cause is an unworthy one." They don't believe in the propriety of their own struggle—thereby only confessing how poorly they think of themselves and their group. This reflects how society makes a minority group believe in its own inferior, unworthy self. Often, homosexuals are even apologists for the hostility of the society they are dealing with. So the homosexual situation is partly aggravated by the unwillingness of individuals involved

to plead a cause, to express the needs of a minority group. Cory noted that the most capable and intelligent homosexuals in American society do not wish to identify themselves with the group. This refusal of the elite to be spokesmen, he called unique in the history of the surge of minority groups. The same situation makes it even harder for the majority group to come forward, with no one exciting or leading them in this direction.

Yet a new liberalization is evident in American society's view of homosexuality. Typical is the reaction to a statement by Bishop Pike that there are probably homosexuals in the Episcopal ministry. This statement was not jumped on or attacked. The change is meaningful in the context of what is happening to minority groups in general. Some 50 years ago, a president of the U. S. came close to being impeached because he invited a Negro to a White House breakfast. Today, appointment of a Negro to the president's Cabinet met only a slight delaying action. "It is intellectually disrespectful not to champion the rights of minority groups." In fact it's considered right and proper to further minority causes. Behind this, Cory claimed, is the truth that in every confrontation between majority and minority, the minority "inherently and intrinsically is in the right."

Cory recognized a major cleavage separating the homosexual minority group from all others. It is impossible for members of the group to confront society "except by confronting an unjust mountain of hostility." What happens when the group comes forward and meets such prejudice? The very people who are champions of the underdog are so personally hostile. But at least the recognition that homosexuals constitute a minority is now almost universally accepted in American society. In discussing homosexuality, opprobrium is no longer necessary to avert suspicion. The hostile point of view becomes leaderless, soon intellectually disrespectful. How does this affect the man in the street? By the process of cultural lag—the gap between stages of development more and less advanced, between intellectuals and followers, between teachers and students. The very repeal of a law, for example, is "both a reflection of the change of scene and a reinforcement of the change of scene."

While the homosexual cause is gaining recognition in an atmosphere of society's readiness to listen, another change needed is for each homosexual person to see a fine image of himself, not a degraded one—an image of integrity, not of pretending to be. The therapist does not have the answer. Cory referred to Bieber and others who claim a large percentage of homosexual patients changing to heterosexual orientation; Cory emphasized that he is much more concerned about the remaining percentage "who after sacrifice and travail leave therapy feeling rejected and defeated." A statistic means a young man or woman with a problem, unable to work it out as others would like it worked out. A statistic is still a human life that must be made worth living. Cory's compassion is for the many homosexual individuals who are not going to be changed, and the millions more who are not even going to the therapist's office.

In conclusion, Cory expressed his belief that the social climate is fortunate both for the homophile movement and for society. The U. S. is being compelled to listen to and grant rights to all minority groups; it cannot by any definition exclude any group under any conditions. The homophile organizations, infinitely small though they be, "are conducting a movement which is healthy for this country." Cory contended it is harmful to democracy for all groups to melt into one unity of all-alikemess. Ideally, minorities can retain their individual identity without being discriminated against socially. Cory predicted that the homosexual minority will be caught up in the struggle to preserve variety of human expression and that it will be happy in the struggle.

- Barbara Gittings

* * * * *

WEIGHTLESS

I was...
 As light as the smoke
 spreading its wan beauty
 on the city, pulsing with life...not caring...
 For Me.

- JC

ONLY TO HER

Halo tips and tinselled snow
 and the earthy strength from which flowers grow,
 Pink balloons and orange ice
 and finger-waves to make the sea look nice.
 They're yours my love.

Sherry wine and pale white moons
 and a music box to play Christmas tunes,
 Chocolate robins and ice cream trees
 and chiffon tissues should you care to sneeze.
 All yours my love.

Perfumed Springs and fluffy kittens
 and new lambs wool for warm warm mittens,
 Chinese bells and Parisian skies
 and amethysts for your blue blue eyes.
 These too my love.

Just smile at me, hold tight my hand
 we'll roam together the happy land,
 All I have is all I'll give
 our lives long, ere long we live,
 My love.

- Alisan

HARBINGERS OF PARRICIDE

Dark thoughts thundered with matricide,
 Trembling in the spastic embrace of guilt.
 My birth set the time clock of death,
 Yet for me there was no autonomy
 Till the final hour of dissolution
 Broke the seal of my shadowed life.

Though my heart knows and holds its terror,
 I try to avoid your eyes,
 Harbingers of parricide.

- J. Lorna Strayer

book review:

The Feminine Mystique

BY BETTY FRIEDAN. W. W. NORTON, FEBRUARY 1963

"THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE" IS A BOOK THAT WILL INTEREST EVERY THOUGHTFUL WOMAN - REGARDLESS OF SEXUAL PREDILECTIONS. IT MAY BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE HOMOSEXUAL WOMAN WHO HAS CONSIDERED THE QUESTION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES FEMININE IDENTITY.

MRS. FRIEDAN (A PSYCHOLOGIST, SUBURBAN HOUSEWIFE AND MOTHER) EXPLODES THE MYTH THAT MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD IN THEMSELVES CONSTITUTE FULFILLMENT FOR WOMEN.

IN A WORK THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED AN UP-TO-THE-MINUTE AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT TO SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S "THE SECOND SEX," MRS. FRIEDAN OFFERS IMPRESSIVE EVIDENCE OF HER CONTENTION THAT DESPAIR AND MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL BREAKDOWN ARE RAMPANT AMONG SUBURBAN HOUSEWIVES WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO CONFORM TO THE POPULAR IMAGE OF FEMININITY.

THE AUTHOR ACCUSES PSYCHIATRISTS, EDUCATORS AND THE MASS MAGAZINES OF CREATING THE MODERN WOMAN'S TRAP. IT IS THEY, SHE MAINTAINS, WHO FOSTERED THE IDEA THAT AMBITION AND MEANINGFUL WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME DEFEMINIZE A WOMAN. SHE ACCUSES THE MAGAZINES AND ADVERTISERS OF AN ACTUAL CONSPIRACY TO USE THE "FEMININE MYSTIQUE" TO KEEP THE WOMAN IN THE HOME TO BUY MORE PRODUCTS.

MRS. FRIEDAN BELIEVES THAT IT IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT DESIRABLE FOR THE MARRIED, CHILD-BEARING WOMAN TO HAVE AN IMPORTANT GOAL OUTSIDE THE HOME. SHE SHOWS WHY HOBBIES AND CLUB WORK DO NOT AND CANNOT SUBSTITUTE FOR WORK VALUED BY SOCIETY. SHE POINTS OUT THAT THE FRUSTRATION OF THE ABLE, VIGOROUS WOMAN'S VOCATIONAL DRIVES HAS LED TO THE CREATION OF SEX-OBSSESSED WIVES WHOSE DEMANDS CANNOT BE FULFILLED BY THEIR HUSBANDS. SHE TRACES THE GROWTH OF SERIOUS CHILDHOOD NEUROSES TO MOTHERS WHO HAVE GIVEN UP "PERSONAL IDENTITY" TO LIVE VICARIOUSLY THROUGH THEIR CHILDREN.

OF GREATEST INTEREST, HOWEVER, IS MRS. FRIEDAN'S DISCUSSION OF FREUD'S "PENIS ENVY" THEORY, POPULARIZED BY MARYNIA FARNHAM AND FERDINAND LUNDBERG IN "MODERN WOMAN: THE LOST SEX." THE STORY OF HOW A GENERATION OF WOMEN, STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD OF TOTAL EMANCIPATION, WAS BULLIED INTO A RETREAT BACK TO THE VICTORIAN IMAGE OF WOMAN AS MAN'S PASSIVE OBJECT, IS AS PAINFUL AS IT IS REVEALING.

THE QUESTION MRS. FRIEDAN DOES NOT RAISE, BUT WHICH WILL ARISE IN THE MINDS OF MANY LESBIANS, IS WHETHER OR NOT FEMALE HOMOSEXUALITY MAY RISE FROM SOCIAL AS WELL AS PSYCHIC CAUSES. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT SOME WOMEN TURN TO HOMOSEXUALITY AS AN ESCAPE FROM BEING CAST INTO A SOCIAL STEREOTYPE WHICH DEGRADES THEIR INDIVIDUALITY AND LIMITS THEIR ACTIVITY AT THE POINT WHERE IT MAY BEGIN TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON THE WORLD OUTSIDE THE HOME?

MRS. FRIEDAN SUPPORTS MME. DE BEAUVOIR'S CONTENTION THAT IT IS NOT MAN'S PENIS WOMEN ENVIES, BUT HIS POWER. SHE BELIEVES THAT A WOMAN SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOVE A MAN, BEAR CHILDREN AND YET FULLY FUNCTION AS A SELF-MOTIVATED, SELF-REALIZED HUMAN BEING. YET, SHE SHOWS HOW UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS, WITH ALL OF SOCIETY (EDUCATORS INCLUDED) COMMITTED TO A SPURIOUS IMAGE OF FEMININITY, IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. ONLY THE MOST GIFTED WOMEN ARE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH THE "MYSTIQUE."

MOST WOMEN ARE CONFRONTED WITH AN UGLY CHOICE TODAY: ACCEPT THE TRAP OF THE FALSE IMAGE OF FEMININITY OR BATTLE FIERCELY AGAINST IT. THE BATTLE WASTES A WOMAN'S BEST YEARS AND MAY END IN OTHER TRAPS - REJECTION OF SEXUAL FULFILLMENT OR AN IRRESOLUTE AND THEREFORE UNSATISFACTORY LESBIANISM.

THE QUESTION FOR THE FUTURE IS WHETHER OR NOT WOMEN WILL BE ABLE TO THROW OFF THE NEW SHACKLES THEY HAVE ACCEPTED DURING THE PAST TWO OR THREE DECADES. IF THEY DO, WHAT A DIFFERENCE IT MAY MAKE TO SOCIETY AND TO THE LIVES OF SO MANY!

- REVIEWED BY NOLA

IN LOS ANGELES, THE LADDER IS ON SALE AT ONE, INC., 2256 VENICE BLVD., OR CALL 735-5252 FOR THE NEAREST NEWSSTAND SELLING IT.



SAY, JEAN, HERE'S ONE THAT LOOKS
JUST LIKE DR. CARSON'S FACE WHEN
WE TOLD HIM WE'RE BUYING A
HOUSE TOGETHER!

Male Impersonation on the Stage

A Brief Survey of Its Past

by Robert Liechti

Conclusion - Part Two of two parts

A noted male impersonator, Charlotte Cushman, now almost forgotten, was one of the first great American actresses. She was a singer in her early days; when her voice failed in 1835, she turned to the drama and appeared with many of the noted Shakespearean actors of the time. While Miss Cushman would appear in the usual feminine parts, she would not hesitate to perform in male roles if the opportunity presented itself. Playing a variety of parts with Edwin Booth, Charles Kean, Macready and Forrest, Charlotte Cushman's male performances included those of Cardinal Wolsey in "Henry VIII", Romeo, Macbeth, Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons", Goneril in "King Lear", Oberon and a number of breeches parts in lesser plays, such as Henry in "Speed the Plough" and Falvoni in "Matteo Falcon". An extraordinary woman with a great love for her sister, Charlotte Cushman said she played male parts to enable her actress sister to star in the great roles. Her interpretation of Romeo was said by Stang to be so effective that many considered it the greatest Romeo they had ever seen. Charlotte Cushman's Cardinal Wolsey in New York in September 1857 was acclaimed as the only successful impersonation by a woman of the role. Of her contemporaries, such critics as William Winter and Henry Austin Clapp were her admirers. Lawrence Hutton praised both her Wolsey and the earnestness with which she played Claude Melnotte. A close resemblance was seen by Margaret Merington between Charlotte Cushman and Rosa Bonheur, the painter. Writing in a theater magazine, Merington found in both a definite masculinity tempered by endearing feminine qualities. Both England and America saw Charlotte Cushman on their stages. Her acting career lasted some forty years and in 1915 she was elected to the Hall of Fame, established by New York University to honor Americans for their achievements. A Charlotte Cushman Club exists in Philadelphia today to perpetuate her name and her profession.

As the interest in breeches parts waned and tastes of playwrights turned to more sober subjects, male impersonation languished, to be taken up by the music hall and vaudeville performers of England and America. In variety stage's long history there have been many male impersonators, but none greater than Vesta Tilley. A reigning star in both countries for forty years, she only left the stage at the insistence of her husband, Lord DeFrece. Miss Tilley was as much a perfectionist as Julian Eltinge was on the male side; she set fashions with her man-about-town clothes, and her characterizations of officers, sailors, and policemen varied not a bit from the originals. Her songs were written for her by her husband and other well-known English song writers; they were clever, satirical impressions of the people she impersonated. The dandy numbers were take-offs on the dudes who frequented Picadilly before World War I and who were also satirized by George Leybourne in his act of the Lions Comiques.

Vesta Tilley never came out to offend. Her sketches were warm, kindly, and nostalgic. They were close to the character and they were close to the audience. If she jibed at the sham swells of Leicester Square, there was a bit of tenderness in it too. She sang of "The Seaside Sulton, He's the Monarch of the Pier, On the Beach he is the Shah, On the Promenade the Czar, All the Ladies in his Company will lurk, It's an Awful Blow, When he has to go—Back to Work". There were songs about "Picadilly Johnny with the little glass eye" and a soldier in hospital blue who cried, "I'm treated like a long-lost son, When they bathe my brow with sponges, And feed me on Blank Monges, Then I'm glad I've got this bit of a Blighty One!" Or of the Midnight Son: "You needn't go trotting to Norway, You'll find him in every doorway, You'll see him in his glory, if you'll only take a run, Down the Strand, that's the land of the Midnight Son." There was a Burlington Bertie before Ella Shields' famous one, and a Bold Militiaman, and a soldier in the trenches who sighed, "I'd like to tickle a saucy lamb, But all I tickle is Tickler's jam, Oh, London, where are your girls tonight!" Vesta Tilley—who topped the bills wherever she played, who could come out in a pearl grey frock coat suit, cane, and silk hat, or imitate the martial strut of the soldier or the roll

of the sailor in other numbers—set the pattern for the male impersonator, for none who imitated her quite had her skill, her vitality, her charm. From 1878 to 1920 her career ran and it never really ended for it lived on in the hearts of those who saw and loved her.

And there were Ella Shields with her Burlington Bertie from Bow, Bessie Bonehill, and Bessie Bellwood—all contemporaries of "our Vesta" as she was known, and all music hall male impersonators. There were also Millie Hylton who sang "The Rowdy-Dowdy Boys" and Hetty King who cried "I'm Afraid to go Home in the Dark" and Jenny Hill, billed as "The Vital Spark", singing Harry and being Harry on stage. It was her hit number. Over here in the United States, we had Kathleen Clifford, revue and vaudeville star, singing "Put on Lots of Style"; Venita Gould with her impressions of the stars both male and female of the day; Kitty Doner, of Ted and Kitty Doner, one of the top acts in vaudeville, dancing and singing in top hat and tails; and Cissie Loftus, who wound up her career as a competent actress on the legitimate stage after years of trouping the two-a-day as an impressionist. And names like Ella Wesner, Kitty Bingham, Truly, and Della Fox stand out in a long list of American and English male impersonators of variety entertainment. They were all good male mimics in their own individual ways, some in top hats and canes, others in character studies and costumes, and a few who changed their voices for brief but telling caricatures.

With the end of vaudeville in America and the gradual decline of the music hall in England, the male impersonator, like the female impersonator, had no place to practice her art but in the night clubs, one-man shows, television performances and the occasional revue. The older performers retired, and except for the rare appearances of Ella Shields and Florrie La Vere in the night clubs of this country until their passing, the art of male impersonation as it was in its heyday had disappeared. What remains today of a continuing nature are the annual pantomime shows given at Christmastime in England, the chief roles of which are traditionally taken by women, appearing as men. The part of the Principal Boy is played by a well-known actress, and the female role of the Dame by a male actor, in a generally

rowdy comic style. These elaborate shows, for years the great delight of the young and the young at heart, a combination of fairy tale and revue, remain the last stronghold of male and female impersonation in the theater. With fewer such shows planned, men playing principal Boy roles, and many revues taking to the ice, one wonders how long before its end. Surely it will take another Bernhardt, another Garden, or a new Vesta Tilley to revive the art of male impersonation to its former glories. May that day come soon, to delight the public as it once did in such a full and flowing measure of joy in the realm of man's entertainments.

CROSS CURRENTS

WOMAN, THE EVER-ELUSIVE, WAS AMBITIOUSLY EXPLORED IN A 3-DAY SYMPOSIUM IN LATE JANUARY AT THE UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA'S MEDICAL CENTER IN SAN FRANCISCO. ENTITLED "MAN AND CIVILIZATION: THE POTENTIAL OF WOMAN," THE SYMPOSIUM DREW LEADERS IN THE ARTS, FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT, AS WELL AS EXPERTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY AND THE MEDICAL SCIENCES. ONE CENTRAL IDEA EMERGED FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS: THAT WOMEN'S POTENTIAL AS HUMAN BEINGS IS Demeaned AND LIMITED BY ARBITRARY ASSIGNMENT OF SOCIAL ROLES. SPACE PERMITS ONLY A FEW BRIEF QUOTES HERE:

...DR. ETHEL M. ALBERT, ANTHROPOLOGIST, DESCRIBED OTHER CULTURES' DIFFERING CONCEPTS OF MASCULINE AGGRESSIVENESS. "NOW I DO NOT KNOW WHICH VERSION IS 'BIOLOGICALLY' TRUE. PERHAPS SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS WORK ON NATURE'S ENDOWMENT, WHICH IS PROBABLY VARIABLE TO BEGIN WITH, SO THAT SOME GROW UP HOT, SOME GROW UP COLD, AND THOSE FARE BEST WHOSE BIOLOGY IS IN HARMONY WITH THE PREVAILING SOCIO-CULTURAL NOTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS NATURAL."

...MARYA MANNES, AUTHOR AND CRITIC: "THAT THE WORD 'SINGLE WOMAN' OR 'SPINSTER' SHOULD IMPLY INFERIOR WORTH OR USEFULNESS IS ONLY ONE OF THE DAMAGING BY-PRODUCTS OF OUR PRESENT CONSUMER-BASED, SECURITY-MAD DOMESTIC PATTERN."

...DR. EDMUND OVERSTREET, GYNECOLOGIST, COMMENTING ON THE DIFFICULTY OF DISTINGUISHING "INHERENT BIOLOGICAL MAKE-UP" FROM "IMPOSED SOCIAL CUSTOM": "FROM THE TIME OF THE FIRST HAIRCUT, OUR CULTURE PRODUCES AN APPARENT STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCE THE BETTER TO IDENTIFY THE POTENTIAL WOMAN AND THE POTENTIAL MAN."

...DR. ELEANOR MACOBY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, AFTER CITING STUDIES WHICH TEND TO SHOW THAT THE SO-CALLED MASCULINE QUALITY OF ANALYTIC ABILITY MAY BE RELATED LESS TO SEX THAN OVER-PROTECTION OF GIRLS IN CHILDHOOD: "COULD WE NOT ACCEPT AND ENCOURAGE THE ACTIVE, DOMINANT, INDEPENDENT QUALITIES OF THE INTELLECTUAL GIRL WITHOUT LABELING HER AS MASCULINE?"

...AND AGAIN AUTHOR MARYA MANNES: "IT TAKES COURAGE TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE--AND TO BE WHAT YOU ARE."

* * * *

AN ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL CAMPAIGN IS ON IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, SPURRED BY THE FATAL KNIFING EARLY IN JANUARY OF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF COMMERCE J. SHELDON NULTY. THIS MURDER, SURROUNDED WITH HOMOSEXUAL OVERTONES, IS A BONE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S THROAT. THOUGH NULTY WAS PRESUMABLY AN ADULT, GOV. RALPH PAIEWONSKY'S OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT SAID "THE PUBLIC INTEREST REQUIRED THAT OUR CHILDREN BE PROTECTED FROM THE SPREAD OF HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICES." THE ADMINISTRATION CLAIMS THE ENTIRE HOMOSEXUAL PROBLEM HAS BEEN CAUSED BY NEWCOMERS, YET AMONG THE SUSPECTS BEING HARRASSED UNDER THE NEW POLICY ARE MANY LONG-TERM RESIDENTS OF THE ISLANDS.

Magazine Review: THE FURTIVE FRATERNITY

Greater Philadelphia, "The Magazine for Executives," published in its December issue as a lead article, "The Furtive Fraternity"...an expose of the Philadelphia homosexual situation, dubbing it "a strange twilight life."

We use the word "expose" deliberately. Because even though Greater Philadelphia's publisher D. Herbert Lipson has written that such an article would necessarily have to be handled "with sensitivity and insight, devoid of sensationalism," the article does not wholly comply.

We do not complain of lack of sympathy. The piece is surely more sympathetic than we might have expected. It

is honest and courageous. As an expose it is fair and just in that it deals not only with the homosexual element in Philadelphia, but also with the attacking forces.

We accuse the article of sensationalism because of its blatant and unnecessary (we feel) publication of the names and addresses of gay bars and other gathering places in Philadelphia. The furor accompanying the appearance of this article is proof enough. The few newsdealers who handle this magazine (and it is primarily a subscription publication) sold out on the day of issue. One newsdealer told this reporter that he had had nearly one hundred requests in one day for this copy. Now we hear rumors of lawsuits pending against the magazine by some of the bars mentioned in the article. Lastly, we report that one of the young women interviewed by Mr. Fonzi for his article was subsequently rewarded with a punch in the nose by an employee of one of these bars. Thus the sensationalism cannot be denied.

Nevertheless, "Furtive Fraternity" gives an accurate picture of the more obvious aspects of Philadelphia's gay community. It endeavors to look at the facts from many angles. If it emphasizes the more overt element, this is only because this element is readily available for study. Mr. Fonzi grants that a large percentage of homosexuals live quiet and normal lives apart from public gathering places. We cannot criticize him for not looking further into this aspect, for even a homosexual's home is his castle. Now to the most positive aspect.

We commend the article for its courage in exposing the shocking police methods too often used against homosexuals. Mr. Fonzi describes in detail a clear case of entrapment by the police. Edwin (a pseudonym) is enticed by a plain-clothesman in a movie house. When he finally responds, he is placed under arrest. Thereafter, he is further victimized by the bondsman and lawyer who offer their "services" to him. We gratefully report the outcome of this actual case, as it has evolved since the appearance of the article. With the help of a member of The Janus Society of Philadelphia, a group dedicated to helping the homophile, Edwin was able to engage a second lawyer. He has subsequently been acquitted of the charge of soliciting.

By implication (but by implication only, alas) this case reminds the reader that sex is a private affair; it reminds the homosexual that he cannot be accused of immoral behavior if he refrains from sexual activity in public places; and it reminds the law-enforcement officer that any citizen has the right to be in any public place regardless of his sexual orientation.

But considering the extremely long length of the article, we cannot avoid the feeling that Mr. Fonzi has spun out this piece to the point of weariness. His account of an interview with members of 'The Janus Society is unnecessarily detailed. Somewhat superfluous too were the conversations with the bar habitues for the sake of color and authenticity.

"Homosexuals are sick," Mr. Fonzi concludes, deftly and all-too-tritely replacing the sin concept with the sick concept. "Very few of them deny it," he goes on. Since no figures are available on the percentage of homosexuals who consider themselves sick, we feel this is a completely debatable statement. The paragraphs that follow this judgement do little to clarify it. They contain details on group therapy sessions designed for sex criminals. The precise effect, or the hoped-for effect, of this group therapy on its homosexual participants is not made clear. But more important, we are left wondering exactly what forms of behavior by a homosexual will result in his being placed in group therapy for sex criminals. Where is the line drawn? This question goes unanswered.

Certainly many homosexuals are emotionally ill. But so are many heterosexuals. What Mr. Fonzi seems to have missed altogether is the idea that "sickness" does not have so much to do with the sexual orientation as it does with the failure to adjust to it.

As a report on homosexuality in Philadelphia, we would classify "The Furtive Fraternity" much in the same category with "The Sixth Man" by Jess Stearn. We are left with the feeling that both writers are interested and sympathetic, but far too unlearned and new to the complex subject on which they have chosen to write.

- Jody Shotwell

Take A Good Look

a story by NOLA

"Look in the mirror and see the baby!"

Yes, look at Baby Stevie...see those wondering black eyes and plump cheeks. Whose pale lips softly brush that pretty pink cheek?

Why it's Carol! Your Aunt Carol, whom you've never seen before and may never see again. See her large, strong hands hold you...oh, it's her nose you're after!

Yes, Baby, let's lose ourselves in this ugly gilt-framed mirror above the fake fireplace and shut out the awful cries and sobs we hear in this house. No tears for us! You only cry when you are uncomfortable - and Carol, Auntie Carol, has no tears left. She shed her last ones in this room six years ago.

Only death could have brought your Aunt Carol back to this room. Your Grandma is gone, Funny Face, and that's why I'm holding you. Oh, don't look too deeply into the mirror. Images from the past could be frozen in there.

Images from the past...do they stay locked inside there? Or do they simply fade from the silvered surface as though they had never been?

No - it's there. I can see it! Don't look, Stevie, it's too frightening! But it fascinates you, doesn't it? Yes, it's a man in a rage, shaking with fury. You don't recognize your Grandpa, do you my darling? How could you? Has he ever stood above you with both arms raised, fists clenched, face twisted with loathing?

And who is the tall, dark girl who stands before him trembling, her own fists clenched at her sides? Why it's your Aunt Carol. You can tell by her large hands...too strong for a woman's, too soft for a man's....

Hands...you must be careful about hands, Baby...now you can reach for what you want, but later...be careful. Mine reached for a woman, in love. And that was very bad.

That is why your Grandpa stands above your Aunt Carol, shaking his fists, and your Grandma is crying and trying vainly to grab one of his arms. Grandma is angry at Carol too, but she doesn't want her to be hurt.

And look, Baby - look just past the hideous flowered wallpaper to where the bedroom door is open just a bit. See the girl peering out with wide, frightened eyes as black as yours. Why it's Jenny, your own Mommy, darling...sweet and pretty even with her hair in pin curls. But how frightened she is! She is only 14 and she doesn't understand.

Oh, how her mouth widens in horror and how she flings open the door and rushes into the room and throws herself against Grandpa, desperately trying to grab his other hand.

But the blow falls. Carol seems paralyzed. Perhaps she wants to die. She instinctively recoils a second before the blow gets her at the top of the head. She sways a moment...will she fall? Jenny rushes to her and grabs her and falls sobbing against her shoulder. It is Grandpa who collapses. He drops into his chair and covers his face and his shoulders heave.

You see, he is sorry. He isn't a bad man, Stevie. He is a good man trying to do what is right. He knows right and wrong. A woman's hand mustn't touch another woman in love. But if they do? Life is strange, you see....

And now you know a lot...look deeper into the mirror...look close, right into the black pupils of my eyes until you see another mirror in another room.

Does this room look poor and bare to you, Sweetheart? That's just because you are used to flowered wallpaper and knick-knacks all around the room. Here the pure white wall is broken only by the brown carving you see hanging to the left of the bed. It is a Spanish wood carving of St. Theresa of Avila. That, and the little

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blue bowl filled with golden jonquils on the table near the bed, are the only decorations you can see.

Who is that, who suddenly appears in this mirror? Not Carol...no, it's Marian. There she is, Stevie, your only chance to meet her - evil incarnate in a white tennis dress, swinging a tennis racket.

My how evil flourishes! See the sunshine glittering out of her hair as she runs the comb through it. How her strong, white teeth flash in the tanned face as she chatters and laughs!

And here comes Carol - all dressed for tennis too. She grabs Marian's face between her hands and brings her own close to it....

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Oh, my sweet little nephew, I wouldn't kid you. This may be our last meeting. Only the truth will do. It isn't all kisses and flowers and sunshine and tennis. What life can be that way? Only I wanted you to visit us and see us at our best, so that if you notice a funny look on their faces sometimes when they mention Aunt Carol you won't think of something black and ugly and frightening.

Enough of mirror-gazing! Here comes your Mommy to take care of you. Notice how she won't look straight into my eyes, unless it is with accusation. She thinks I am to blame for your Grandma's going away so soon. She is no longer 14, and now she too knows what is right and wrong. She thinks I am heartless because I have no more tears.

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Good-bye Stevie! I won't be seeing you at Christmas, but sometimes I may send you a present. Don't tell Mommy what we saw in the mirror - but remember it.

"Take him Jenny. My arms are tired."

**Every Magazine Is New
 Until You've READ It!**

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The Heterosexual Component in the Homosexual

DR. HAROLD GREENWALD, ADDRESSING THE NEW YORK MATTACHINE SOCIETY ON JANUARY 9, 1963, LECTURED ON "THE HETEROSEXUAL COMPONENT IN THE HOMOSEXUAL."

DR. GREENWALD CENTERED HIS LECTURE AROUND HIS THEORY THAT SOME HOMOSEXUAL MEN ARE ACTUALLY STRONGLY ATTRACTED TO WOMEN. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE SEXUAL IMPULSE MAY HAVE BEEN SO STRONG AT AN EARLY AGE IN THESE MEN THAT THEY BECAME FEARFUL OF THEIR OWN SEX NEEDS. THUS A FEAR OF WOMEN COULD BE ESTABLISHED, LEADING A BOY AT AN EARLY AGE ON HIS JOURNEY TOWARD HOMOSEXUALITY.

DR. GREENWALD POINTED OUT THAT ONE REASON WHY MANY WOMEN ARE ATTRACTED TO HOMOSEXUAL MEN IS THAT THESE MEN WANT TO BE ATTRACTIVE TO WOMEN. THEY HAVE SPENT MUCH TIME AND EFFORT LEARNING HOW TO BE GENTLE AND CONSIDERATE WITH WOMEN, AND ALSO HAVE LEARNED TO SHARE SIMILAR INTERESTS. HE SUGGESTED, TOO, THAT SOME EFFEMINATE MEN, AS A RESULT OF AN EARLY NEED TO BE CLOSER TO WOMEN, TRY TO BECOME "ONE OF THE GIRLS" IN ORDER TO INSURE A CLOSENESS. HE DECLARED THAT IF THERE IS ANY BIOLOGICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOMOSEXUALS AND HETEROSEXUALS, IT IS PROBABLY THAT HOMOSEXUALS ARE MORE SEXUAL.

THE LECTURER IMPRESSED UPON HIS AUDIENCE THE FACT THAT HE HAS NEITHER MET NOR TREATED ALL THE HOMOSEXUALS THAT EXIST; THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL IS UNIQUE; AND THAT PERHAPS THERE ARE AS MANY "CAUSES" OF HOMOSEXUALITY AS THERE ARE HOMOSEXUALS. HE EXPRESSED HIS AMAZEMENT AT THE STRENGTH OF THE SEXUAL IMPULSE AND ITS ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE TO SO MANY DIFFERENT SITUATIONS.

- VERONICA CAS

(EDITOR'S NOTE: SEE REPORTER'S LETTER UNDER "READERS RESPOND.")

BLANCHE M. BAKER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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PREVIEW OF AN INSIGHT INTO HOMOSEXUALITY-----

IF I WERE ASKED WHAT IS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE, DISCERNING, AND IN MY ESTIMATION ACCURATE INSIGHT INTO MALE HOMOSEXUALITY FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF A LAYMAN THAT I HAVE READ TO DATE, I WOULD HIGHLY COMMEND THE ARTICLE BY WILLIAM J. HELMER, "NEW YORK'S 'MIDDLE-CLASS' HOMOSEXUALS" AS APPEARS IN THE MARCH, 1963, ISSUE OF HARPER'S.

AT THIS TIME WE HAVE NOT HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO FORM A PERSONAL CRITICISM OF THIS ARTICLE, AND THEREFORE WILL TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OFFER OUR READERS PORTIONS OF A CRITIQUE OFFERED BY STUART HARRIS, PUBLICITY DIRECTOR OF HARPER'S, SO THAT THEY MAY HAVE AN INKLING OF THE CONTENTS THEREIN.

"BECAUSE THEY ARE MUCH CONCERNED WITH THEIR OWN POSITION IN THE COMMUNITY, THEY DRAW DISTINCTIONS AMONG THEMSELVES WHICH ARE TOO SUBTLE TO BE REFLECTED IN POLICE RECORDS OR PSYCHIATRIC STUDIES OF THE ISOLATED INDIVIDUAL."

"WHAT I SAW AND HEARD OF PARTY LIFE AND BAR LIFE LEFT WITH ME THE IMPRESSION HOMOSEXUALS, AT LEAST IN THOSE CIRCLES, ARE OFTEN QUITE LONELY PEOPLE WHO SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH FRIENDS AND STAY CONTINUALLY AMUSED. SOME HAVE VIRTUALLY NO HETEROSEXUAL FRIENDS, SERIOUS INTERESTS OR EVEN OUTSIDE DIVERSIONS, OR LONG-RANGE GOALS. THEY ARE CONTENT TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES THROUGH LOW-PAYING WHITE-COLLAR JOBS, AND OTHERWISE ARE PREOCCUPIED WITH THE INTRICACIES OF CLIQUISH, COMPETITIVE GAY SOCIETY."

"A COLORFUL - BUT NOT NECESSARILY SEXUAL - EVENT IN THE GAY WORLD IS THE 'DRAG PARTY' TO WHICH GUESTS MAY COME DRESSED AS WOMEN. UNLIKE GENUINE TRANSVESTITISM, HOWEVER, SUCH MASQUERADING IS OFTEN DONE AS A TITILLATING JOKE, THE IDEA BEING TO DRESS LIKE A RIDICULOUS PARODY OF THE FEMALE IN ORDER TO HUMOROUSLY EXAGGERATE ONE'S PERVERSION."

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE RELEASE AS OFFERED US BY MR. STUART HARRIS ON FEB. 28, AND SINCERELY HOPE THAT THE READERS OF THIS COLUMN WILL AVAIL THEMSELVES AS A RESULT OF THIS PREVIEW TO BUY THE MARCH ISSUE OF HARPER'S. IN OUR NEXT ISSUE WE WILL REVIEW FROM OUR VIEWPOINT IN HOPES THAT IT WILL MEET THE EYE OF ALL, REPEAT, ALL, OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

- JAYE BELL, NATIONAL PRESIDENT

READERS RESPOND

"I WISH TO CHALLENGE DR. GREENWALD'S IDEA (EDITOR'S NOTE: SEE REPORT ON PAGE 22) THAT THE SEX IMPULSE IS VERY STRONG AND CAN ACCOMMODATE ITSELF TO MANY SITUATIONS. I CAN BELIEVE IN HIS POINT OF VIEW, BUT I CAN ALSO BELIEVE IN ITS APPARENT OPPOSITE. I SUGGEST THAT THE SEXUAL IMPULSE IS WEAK AND STRUCTURELESS; THAT IT IS ONLY ONE OF MANY MECHANISMS RESORTED TO, DIRECTED BY, EVEN ALLOWED OR DISALLOWED BY MUCH STRONGER, MORE BASIC, MORE ESSENTIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS AND DESIRES.

"CONTINUING IN AWARENESS OF WHAT DR. GREENWALD HAS SAID, A QUESTION COMES TO MIND. IF IT IS SO THAT IN SOME MEN FEMININITY IS INDICATIVE OF AN EARLY AND STRONG HETEROSEXUAL NEED TO BE CLOSE TO WOMEN, THEN IS IT NOT ALSO TRUE THAT IN SOME MEN A GREAT AMOUNT OF MASCULINITY IS INDICATIVE OF AN EARLY AND STRONG HOMOSEXUAL NEED TO BE CLOSE TO MEN? HAVE SOME VERY MASCULINE MEN CHOSEN AND PRACTICED TO BE "ONE OF THE BOYS," BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT MANLY AT ALL?

"IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO NOTE THAT DR. GREENWALD DID NOT SPEAK OF LESBIANS. HOWEVER, DURING HIS LECTURE I COULD NOT HELP RECALLING HOW OFTEN I'VE HEARD THE MORE MASCULINE LESBIANS SAY, 'WHEN I WAS YOUNG I WAS ONE OF THE BOYS. EVEN NOW I GET ALONG BETTER WITH MEN. MEN AND I SEEM TO HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON.'"

- VERONICA CAS

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"HOW ABOUT SOME GAY-ETY IN THE LADDER? MOODS OF TRAGEDY, TENSE REFLECTION, OR ANGER IMBUE SO MUCH OF THE MATERIAL IN THE MAGAZINE. PROBABLY THE LITTLE HUMOR THE EDITOR RECEIVES IS WEAK OR BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF GOOD TASTE. A GOOD-NATURED LAUGH AT OURSELVES - OR EVEN A LIGHT TOUCH TO A SERIOUS SUBJECT - WOULD BE JOYOUSLY WELCOMED HERE AND NO DOUBT BY OTHER READERS. WE HOPE TO WORK SOMETIME ON A FLUFF-AND-NONSENSE SHORT STORY FOR YOU!"

- B. AND K., PENNSYLVANIA

WHO IS FOOLING WHOM? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE PAPER-BACK PUBLISHERS? ARE THEY PUTTING OUT SO-CALLED NOVELS THESE DAYS THAT ARE COMPLETE FICTION, OR DO THEY REALLY BELIEVE THAT THEY'RE PORTRAYING THE "OTHER" SEX HONESTLY WHEN THEY PUBLISH BOOKS OF SUPPOSED LESBIANA?

THE FIRST BOOKS I EVER READ WITH LESBIAN THEMES - LONG BEFORE I KNEW ANY LESBIANS MYSELF - WERE "THE PRICE OF SALT" AND "WELL OF LONELINESS." THEY, FROM MY LATER KNOWLEDGE, PROVED HONEST. BUT APART FROM THE SERIES OF PAPERBACKS BY ANN BANNON, ABOUT BEEBO BRINKER AND HER CROWD, HAVE ANY LESBIAN BOOKS REALLY PORTRAYED THE CROSS-SECTION OF AVERAGE LIVES SO MANY LESBIANS LEAD?

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME KIND OF AURA ABOUT THE MERE IMPLICATION THAT A BOOK HAS A LESBIAN THEME OR CHARACTER WHICH - TO SOME PUBLISHERS - GUARANTEES ITS ACCEPTANCE AND SALE. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IS TRUE. THE CURIOSITY OF THE LOWEST TYPE OF PORNOGRAPHIC MIND, AS WELL AS THE MOST IGNORANT, PLAYS RIGHT INTO THESE SALES ANGLES AND BRINGS OUT NOT ONLY A CONSTANT FLOW OF SO-CALLED LESBIANA, BUT ALSO A FLOW OF BOOKS IMPLYING LESBIANIC CONTENT ON THE COVER BLURB, BUT WITHOUT A TRACE OF IT IN THE BOOK ITSELF.

PERHAPS IT IS BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE WHO CALL THEMSELVES AUTHORS OF LESBIANA, WHO ACCEPT EXISTENCE IN THE LESBIAN WORLD ONLY TO DECRY IT AND POUR OUT THEIR PERSONAL DISAPPOINTMENTS IN SO-CALLED LITERATURE. THESE AUTHORS ARE THE TRAITORS TO THEIR OWN TWISTED LIVES, WHO MAKE OF LESBIAN EXISTENCE THE TORMENT THAT OTHER WRITERS BELIEVE IS THE COMMON OCCURRENCE.

I READ THE LADDER ALL THE TIME, AND I KNOW THE MOANINGS OF DISAPPOINTMENT OR FRUSTRATION NOT ONLY FROM ITS READERS AND MY FRIENDS, BUT FROM MY OWN PAST LIFE. BUT RATHER THAN DECRY LESBIANISM, I ADMIT THAT IT IS LIKE ANYTHING ELSE THAT COMES INTO YOUR LIFE - EITHER FOR YOU, OR NOT FOR YOU. BECAUSE YOU DO NOT LIKE OLIVES, DOES THAT MEAN THAT OTHERS CANNOT ENJOY THEM? AND BECAUSE YOU, AS A LESBIAN, MIGHT BE EMBITTERED, DOES THAT MEAN OTHER LESBIANS CANNOT BE HAPPY AND FULFILLED?

I AM TIRED OF READING BOOKS OF TRAGEDY ABOUT LESBIANISM. I AM TIRED OF PUBLISHERS WHO BELIEVE THEY CAN PUT OUT A BOOK FILLED WITH THE MOST PORNOGRAPHIC INTERLUDES BETWEEN TWO WOMEN, IF AT THE END OF THE BOOK THEY PROVE THAT THIS BROUGHT THEM BOTH INTO

HELL AND DAMNATION. AND MOST OF ALL, I AM TIRED OF LESBIAN THEMES - REAL OR IMPLIED - IN BOOKS. I AM NOT TIRED OF THEM IN REAL LIFE - IF THE PERSONS MAKING THEM REAL BELIEVE THIS IS THE ONLY WAY OF LIFE FOR THEM.

THERE IS ONLY ONE OTHER AUTHOR BESIDES ANN BANNON WHO HONESTLY PORTRAYS THE LESBIAN LIFE - WHEN SHE IS PERMITTED TO. THAT IS PAULA CHRISTIAN. BUT EVEN SHE HAS ERRED ON OCCASION BECAUSE OF AN EDITOR'S NEED FOR A FAST POT-BOILER TO PORTRAY THE LESBIAN VERSION OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT. THEN A HARD-COVER WRITER LIKE HAN SUYIN COMMITS THE (TO ME) UNPARDONABLE SIN OF PORTRAYING A LESBIAN RELATIONSHIP OF MISERY AND RECRIMINATION IN "TWO LOVES."

DON'T THE PEOPLE WHO READ ABOUT LESBIANS KNOW THAT EMOTIONS ARE THE SAME, THE STORIES THE SAME, WITH JUST THE CHARACTERS DIFFERENT? "AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY" BY DREISER COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN ABOUT TWO WOMEN, INSTEAD OF A MAN AND A WOMAN, AND THEN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED PORNOGRAPHY, THE STORY OF A DEGENERATE, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

WHO IS FOOLING WHOM BY PRETENDING THAT THE PUBLIC IS SO BROAD-MINDED THESE DAYS THAT IT WANTS AND ACCEPTS STORIES OF LESBIAN OR ANY OTHER FORM OF OFF-BEAT LOVE? THE PUBLIC IS NO MORE UNDERSTANDING THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN, BUT IT IS BECOMING BETTER INFORMED. I HAVE NEVER BEEN AS HUMILIATED IN MY LIFE AS WHEN A PUBLISHER CALLED ME FOR A REVIEW OF A LESBIAN BOOK (WHICH I REFUSED) AND ASKED ME TO TELL HIM "JUST BETWEEN US, OF COURSE" HOW A LESBIAN MAKES LOVE. I DON'T THINK HE LIKED MY ANSWER. "A LESBIAN MAKES LOVE WITH HER HEART!" - WHICH IS THE ONLY WAY ANYONE CAN MAKE LOVE. OF COURSE, IF HE MEANT - HOW DO LESBIANS GO TO BED WITH EACH OTHER, I COULD HAVE GIVEN HIM A DIFFERENT ANSWER - "CENSORED!" - AND THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN CORRECT, TOO.

THE DAY WILL COME WHEN THERE WILL BE NO BARRIERS TO ANSWERS. AND YET, NO ANSWER CAN SATISFY THE PORNOGRAPHER, OR THE SEX-HUNGRY. THEY ARE THE ONES FOR WHOM MOST LESBIAN BOOKS ARE WRITTEN. AND FOR THAT REASON, THESE BOOKS SHOULD BE STOPPED BEFORE ALL THE FREUDIAN ILLS ARE BLAMED - NOT ON COMIC BOOKS - BUT ON LESBIAN LITERATURE.

- NEVA MOORE