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**FOCUS**

a journal for

**GAY**  
**WOMEN**

50¢

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Boston D.O.B. Officers: Treasurer.....Geri Bidwell Recording Secretary.....Lois H. Corresponding Secty...Laura Robin

Articles in FOCUS reflect the views of the individual authors, and may not represent D.O.B. as an organization.

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ABOUT BOSTON D.O.B.

Because of prejudices and fears passed down for centuries, our society has treated homosexuals as lepers, perverts, and fools. Both women and men with homosexual feelings have been made to feel worthless.

Kinsey reported that 13% of women have had some homosexual experience by age 45. Boston D.O.B. is one of many gay groups formed in the last few years to give gay women a chance to talk with one another, support

one another, and help create a better life for all gay people.

Women of all ages and political persuasions participate in Boston D.O.B. Because many gay women are not in a position to make their gayness known publically, D.O.B. provides safeguards for those wishing to work quietly within the organization, planning the social program, writing, typing, organizing the library, and so on. For those able to be more open, there is political activism, etc.



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

... ON BEING GAY, where all women are invited to share feelings about being gay. HOLMES HALL (first floor lounge), a Harvard Law School dormitory, beside parking garage which is on corner of Everett St. and Massachusetts Ave. in Cambridge (several blocks north of Harvard Square).

Thursdays 9-9:30 p.m. GAY WAY Radio Show for the gay community. WBUR-FM, 90.9 on dial.

Sundays 7 p.m. Boston Metropolitan Community Church (gay) discussion and worship, Arlington St. Church, Hunnewell Chapel, Arlington & Boylston Sts., Boston. (for info call 723-3418. The Boston church has received mission status from the national MCC).

Oct. 27, Friday at 7 p.m. D.O.B. Bowling, big balls, at Turnpike Bowladrome, 195 Concord Turnpike (Route 2) Cambridge.

Nov. 5, Sunday at 6:30 p.m., POTLUCK SUPPER - bring your food speciality or \$1. 7:30 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING at St. John's Church, 33 Bowdoin St., Boston.

Nov. 8 Wednesday at 7 p.m. Female Liberation is having a meeting on lesbianism. 552 Massachusetts Av. (Central Square), Cambridge. 491-1071.

Nov. 10, Friday at 7 p.m. More bowling - see above. Check with office to be sure.

Nov. 15, Wednesday at 7 p.m. - Female Liberation Meeting on Medical Self-Help.

Nov. 19 Sunday, 5:30 p.m. THANKSGIVING SUPPER free for D.O.B. members, St. John's Church. Please be on time. See menu on p. 6

#####BUY FOCI#####BUY FOCI#####READ FOCI#####READ FOCI#####

D.O.B. MOVES DOWN THE HALL

The Homophile Community Health Service needed to expand into D.O.B.'s rooms 406 and 407 at 419 Boylston St., and asked us to move. So, we went around the corner to rooms 414 and 415 (turn left after getting off the elevator).

The rooms are sunny and the same size and rent as before. In addition we have a sweeping view of Boylston St. and can put a big "D.O.B." in our windows to let people know we're here.

#####



FOLLOWING MY PARTNER'S LEAD  
by Kay Silk

3

We were having our first slow dance at the place Carol had described in the car as "wall to wall girls." After the hours on the road, this was how we came together, nose to ear among other couples. In Carol's arms now, following her lead, I moved on a light steady current of pleasure.

Carol danced well, as she did well in all physical things. I was glad I could match her at least in this way. To yield willingly to another person was new for me, something I was still testing out for comfort. I was strangely contented to let Carol take the lead in dancing, as in other things. Yet my contentment still surprised me. So my pleasure just then had a number of strands: that we were together, that Carol was leading me, that I accepted and enjoyed following. It was hard to explain. In answer to Carol's question---what was I smiling at?--I could only say that I was thinking of when I'd first learned to dance.

Twenty years ago, when the suburb I grew up in was still a small town, my classmates and I attended Miss Marian Keeney's dancing classes every week for the three years before we entered high school. To prevent one of the social catastrophes, a surplus of females, Miss Keeney first invited the boys' parents to enroll their sons. Only when the boys had been signed and delivered did she approach an equal number of girls' parents. In this way she reached a balance between the sexes, but it was up to our parents to see that we came to class regularly. So it was that Miss Keeney played every week to a full, if captive, house. Nothing less than a hundred-degree fever or a broken leg could excuse us from dancing school.

Miss Keeney taught more than ballroom dancing; she taught the social graces as well. The classes were held, appropriately, at that local center of propriety, the Women's Club. When we entered the "common room," the first social grace we practiced was passing along a receiving line. The girls shook hands and curtsied, the boys shook hands and bowed their way along the row of parents who acted as chaperones, all the way to Miss Keeney herself. Her dresses were always cut low; the boys tended to take longer bowing to Miss Keeney than to the rest of the ladies in the line.

Miss Keeney seemed to belong to a different breed from the women we knew. It wasn't only her necklines. She wore the dark lipstick and the elaborate curls that were popular in those days, although not with mothers. Her taste in clothes and cosmetics, combined with her thin, straight dancer's body, set her apart as a woman at once more exotic and more austere than our mothers or the teachers we had in school. To command our attention, she would click the pair of castanets she always held, and then demonstrate the waltz or the foxtrot while we sat around the edge of the room, straight in our folding chairs.

But there was nothing exotic about what Miss Keeney taught us, with the blessing of all our parents. Her lessons nourished the attitudes that lived in their purest form in ballroom dancing: the boy led, the girl followed, and, unless it was decreed otherwise, it was the boys who chose their partners. I didn't mind the



actual dancing, which grounded some of my energy, and Miss Keeney I found rather fascinating (I'd sneaked a few looks down her decolletage, myself), but there was a general feeling, which I privately shared, that my attitude was not the proper one. I remember that in my first year at Miss Keeney's, two boys appeared in front of my chair at the same moment to ask me to dance. In my best spirit of fairness, I told them to go to the other side of the room and race back toward me, and I promised to dance with whichever one reached me first.

Hardest of all to accept was the idea of following my partner's lead. I resented the rule that as the girl, I was expected to adjust to the boy's style of dancing. Most of my partners, then and later, were either oafish or weak..The first kind I fought, and the second kind I usurped the lead from without thinking twice. The whole system seemed to be off the mark somehow; I couldn't see the point of struggling around in someone's arms when I might be sitting and talking to him.

Of course we were dressed suitably. We wore our "good" dresses, tight in the bodice and supported by the feminine harness of the fifties: garterbelt, stockings, crinoline petticoats. Since we were still considered too young for high heels, our shoes were thin flats, skimpy across the toes and loose at the heel, which scraped the Achilles' tendon with every step. All of us, boys and girls alike, wore white cotton gloves. Our costumes, and the boys' dark suits, belonged to the time and the place, parts in the social machinery that formed us into pairs: boy-girl, boy-girl.

---So I'm smiling, I said to Carol, because I'm here with you right now.

In reply she held me closer, and we moved on together, easy in our polo shirts and bellbottoms. And because it was a new experience, I felt even more sharply how much I was enjoying what I had always resisted before, although in a way that Miss Marian Keeney could not have foreseen.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### THE LESBIAN TIDE

A Voice of the Lesbian/ Feminist  
Community

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\*\*\*\*\*

There is a cold, long in my heart,  
hard enough to carve.

(Hard enough to etch,  
with the fine lines,  
of a rare kind of  
beauty).

---

Like a rose between two pages,  
I have held to love too long,  
the colour all but faded,  
the scent, a coffin one.

---

And all the rest is candles,  
windows full of rain,  
and clocks alot.

---

There are no simple words now,  
or maybe there are suddenly none but  
simple words,  
and all with the simplest of meanings,  
I love you.

B.E. ROGERS



## AROUND BOSTON

New England Gay Conference. Saturday, October 7, despite heavy morning rains, participants did travel to Holyoke, Mass. for a meeting of the New England Gay Conference. Persons from Kalos (Conn.), DOB, SHL at Amherst, and New Hampshire gay women's group met and expressed a desire to cooperate and create a regional organization and better communications. Five persons from Boston DOB attended. The second meeting of the NEGC will be December 9, 10 am--6 pm, third floor, Valley Women's Center, 200 Main St., Northampton, Mass. Following the Conference will be a dance at 8pm in Farley Lodge, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Overnight space can be arranged if needed. If you want to go, contact DOB.

Homophile Union of Boston and Metropolitan Community Church move to 419 Boylston. HUB has room 509 and MCC has 408.

30 copies of Lesbian/Woman sold. That's right, during DOB's special 30% off offer. All books were mailed by October 24 to purchasers.

Representatives from the Gay Speakers' Bureau, Homophile Community Health Service, Gay Community Center, Gay Rights Alliance, and Homophile Union of Boston spoke at a DOB meeting Sunday October 8. Both the speakers and the DOB people seemed pleased to see and talk with one another. Some women signed up with the community center and the speakers' bureau.

Boston Metropolitan Community Church, for gay people particularly, has a new woman co-pastor (see Letters to Focus).

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McGovern & Gay Rights, cont.

tell you that I don't believe in discrimination against people on grounds of sex and that's as far as I'm going to carry the issue," said McGovern, as reported in a press release from the FOUNTAIN, a reputable gay paper.

## AROUND THE COUNTRY

National Student Association. As part of a quota system for minorities, 2 gay positions out of 28 on the Supervisory Board of the National Student Association were voted at the association's annual convention this summer. One woman and one man were elected. The NSA is an association of college and university student groups. The National Gay Student Center, 2115 "S" Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008 has more info.

The Seattle, Washington gay community center was closed September 30 because the landlord did not renew the lease.

Gays in Portland, Oregon are trying to get the city to pass an anti-discrimination law for city employment.

The June 22 AWAKE magazine (Jehovah's Witnesses) reportedly has an article suggesting gays be put to death; we haven't seen it but would welcome a copy.

McGovern workers in New York City found one of their campaign buttons making a big hit in Greenwich Village. The buttons said, "Queens for McGovern".

McGovern denies gay rights statement. At an October 13 press conference in Portland; Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern disavowed the 7-point homosexual civil rights statement issued by his campaign offices in New York and California to the gay press. The statement included federally-related employment, immigration, housing, and insurance. It originated out of the Northern California office on Feb. 2, 1972, and was sent to New York Gay Activists Alliance, with an accompanying letter signed by McGovern, saying "...this statement represents my position". Boston DOB received a copy of the statement from a group of Gays for McGovern.

\*Portland, Oregon!

At the October 13 press conference, a reporter for the Portland FOUNTAIN, a gay paper, asked McGovern about his position on the statement, since at various times it had been both affirmed and denied by his staff. "We've never put out any statement...that was cleared by me, and I'm not going to take responsibility for...those statements...I can





THANKSGIVING SUPPER

FREE FOR D.O.B. MEMBERS

Membership in Boston D.O.B. isn't all trials and tribulations! Members are being treated to a Thanksgiving supper with all the trimmings, and it's all free!

We hope particularly to draw a lot of those members who have rarely appeared at other D.O.B. events. Let's get acquainted!

Although this is mainly a supper for members, since it is Thanksgiving, non-members accompanied by members may also come for \$2 apiece.

THE MENU

Roast tom turkey  
Dressing and gravy  
Buttered peas  
Niblet corn  
Mashed potatoes

Rolls and butter  
Cranberry sauce  
Relish tray

Pumpkin pie  
Mince pie  
After dinner mints

Coffee, tea, and milk

PLEASE BE ON TIME!!!

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 19 at 5:30 pm. St. John the Evangelist Church, 33 Bowdoin Street, Boston. Near government center off Cambridge St.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON SEX BEHAVIOR. The New York chapter of the National Organization for Women is asking women to fill out a questionnaire about their sexual activities. The main point seems to be that "statistics show that (heterosexual?) women are having orgasms only a small percentage of the time during sex...this study has been undertaken to find out what women's real (but often unspoken) preferences are in sex, and to publicise them so that they can become a widely known and accepted part of sex life". The questionnaire seems to be directed primarily at women engaged in sex with men, though there are some questions about sex with women. If you want to fill out one, DOB has some, or write to N.O.W., 28 East 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022. Answers are anonymous.

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&  
& CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS  
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&

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& Decatur, Ga. 30032.



## THE MORNINGS OF MEN

"I want to be remembered....,....or  
in the mornings of men."

Jorge Luis Borges

on a mountain once when walking,  
Garbo saw a woman with a mustache  
and went back and told everybody,  
commenting, "She's the most  
beautiful woman in the world."

& another time, when on the mountain, walking,  
Garbo came upon a man who came at her  
with his cane upraised.  
obviously, the women know Garbo  
wanted to be let alone,  
but men didn't.

& Bojanglos, after a year on the mountain, came down,  
his mind clear at last,  
and walked by all the trees  
without noticing them,  
but, then, Bobby Kennedy had been  
assasinated two years before,  
& Bojanglos had forgotten where  
California was  
even though he was the center  
of it.

but, then,

Gloria Steinem is a member of Women's Liberation  
& is probably the most beautiful member  
but only because she governs the mountain so well  
under the M in the sky that Rilke put there  
right after the youth with a lover's lament.

& who's to know if it's requited  
the mustache she wears  
hides so well the involuntary acknowledgement  
that would be so revealing

or, maybe, simply, like in Marisol, the "wry" laugh in the center  
of the mountain,  
the left and right sides crouching down,  
afraid of her hands,  
but being in love  
is like going outside,  
like Creeley said,  
& being outside of anything,  
Marisol is inside in her hands,  
or her voice which is mostly silence,  
but is as eloquent as Gloria Steinem  
when she talks,  
especially when she says,  
"We exchange sexual excessibilities  
for housework or, say, hcostossing",  
putting her head  
in the center of your ego  
& beautifully where it is easiest to kiss.





## THE MORNINGS OF MEN (cont.)

&, then, Robin Morgan said, "Which mornings",  
 & in my lover's arms,  
 I laughed a bit and smiled lightly along her breast,  
 & she pulled me closer to her, murmuring,  
 & I thought of her then in the mornings of men,  
 them wondering who she spends her nights with,  
 wondering, too, why Garbo never married,  
 & wondering if Gloria Steinem's body  
 is as beautiful nude  
 as it is fully clothed  
 & wondering why Marisol looked so perturbed,  
 so sullenly bitchy  
 in that photograph in the Sunday New York Times  
 that they took of her at the Venice Biennale

& I got up then,  
 & called them all up,  
 said, Yes,  
 this poem is about them,  
 the evenings of women,  
 where I want to be remembered  
 & I heard her then in her bare feet  
padding across the floor,  
 yes, to get back to me,  
 but not before I heard on the other end of the phone,  
 evening becoming lonelier, a murmuring,  
 this poem,  
longing.

M. TRAP

#####

This ring speaks to me no more  
 I've listened many times  
 Believing I was deaf;  
 But it was a trick  
 To confuse me, to, perhaps, astound me,  
 For this ring speaks to me no more.  
 Metal molded in a symbol of eternity.  
 Pure gold depressed by a black stone.  
 A sounding-board for humanity.  
 O, animated symbol of love, speak!  
 But it listens no more.  
 What can one say to a ring that doesn't listen?  
 Why should one wait for an answer  
 From a ring that speaks no more?

MONA MARIE



## LETTERS TO FOCUS

Greetings to all my sisters from the new Metropolitan Community Church of Boston!

I feel very fortunate to be living in this time in history. Obviously it is a revolutionary time in the history of women and of gay people; but, it is also a revolutionary time for the church. It is the time in history when the church must decide that it is inclusive and not exclusive; it is the time when the church must begin to embrace as equals women, gay persons, and all oppressed people, or perish. It is that time in history when the church must awaken to the realities of the 20th century or become a fossil.

The Metropolitan Community Church is not a building (we are too poor), nor is it another gay organization. It is these people who gather together to commit themselves to the spirit movement of the 20th century, who decide to take their own history and the history of the world into their hands, who want to re-humanize the globe.

There are many ways in which gay people, and gay women in particular, have been dehumanized--We are all familiar with that process and have suffered from it. One of the ways in which dehumanization is accomplished is by removing or denying human structures, institutions and celebrations to certain people. One of the goals of the Metropolitan Community Church is to re-create those structures and celebrations which symbolize our unique humanness.

An example of this is our intention to re-discover the "covenant" relationship. We want to provide several ways for lovers to express the beauty and fullness of their relationship: ways to express commitment, and ways to share this commitment with others. It is not "marriage" per se; Rather, it tries to self-consciously recover the best that marriage is without falling into the routinization and habituation that the institution of marriage is often reduced to in our culture. A covenant is a mutual

promise that a couple make for, say, one year. During that year, this couple will meet with other couples to share the problems and joys such a relationship affords. At the end of that year, the couple may decide to renew the covenant or to dissolve it; or, if they are so inclined, they may decide to enter into "Holy Union", which assumes a long-term relationship. If we are to be full human beings, as God intends for us, we have the responsibility of rediscovering the covenant dimension of our lives. Our capacity for covenant (formal or informal) is our capacity for making promises and agreements with people we love and respect; gay people must reclaim their right to covenant.

Our church is ecumenical, it is concerned with your needs and your talents. Is it possible for there to be an assembly of gay men and women which is not male dominated? It may be possible with a woman co-pastor; it will not be possible if that woman co-pastor (myself) does not have the active, concerned support of other women. I need you!

I am presently a seminarian at B.U.. School of Theology, and am thrilled at the opportunity to begin the adventure of MCC with many of you. If you have any questions about our church, call me at 266-0651 (Boston). Services are at 7p.m. Sunday eves. at the Hunnewell Chapel of Arlington St. Church--Join us!

Grace and Peace  
Nancy Wilson

## D.O.B. REFERRALS (partial list)

LEGAL

- ROOK, Eoth, and Rubino, 7 Water St., Boston, 742-2243. Experience in cases particularly involving gay men.
- WOMEN'S Law Collective, 698 Mass. Av., Cambridge, 02139; 661-3850. Will discuss problems and refer.
- THE Law Commune, same address as Women's Law commune; 498-3900. Movement lawyers, fees on ability to pay.

MEDICAL

- Dr. Joanna Perlmutter, Beth Israel Hospital, 734-4400. Gynecologist.



LETTERS TO FOCUS  
(cont.)

Sisters:

It is always a pleasure for me to get FOCUS and I hope the change from offset to mimeo does not forecast a radical change in over-all publishing policy. I bear in mind the demise of The Ladder.

In the Summer issue of FOCUS there was an excellent item regarding Edna St. Vincent Millays poem on Sappho and Phaon. As stated by this writer the poetical allegation of Sappho's suicidal love for Phaon by Millay was fantasy which has been for a long time questioned, denied and preferably ignored by those who bear in mind Sappho's life style which led to the terms-"sapphism" and "lesbianism".

Millay has written other poems that must please those who are not too happy with the oft-quoted Sappho-Phaon myth. One of these poems is "Evening on Lesbos". Another, of great emotional impact, at least to me is "Interim". And there are others, like gems to be sought and uncovered.

I wish I could find among my packed-up effects the words of a well-known literary critic and friend of Millays who is quoted as saying sadly: she loved men but loved women more. I think Millay had the all-encompassing loving heart, not bound or stifled by the common, narrow conception of what love is or should be. She was a great one-and rare. There was no isolation in her on any level-she knew the pain and joy that comes from loving. Her double-lit candle may have given "a beautiful light" but the depth of feeling she wrote about diffuses a marvelous transcendental glow that will never fade.

Not long ago I was introduced to Swinburne, who devoted a fair number of his lyrics to Sappho..His ANACTORIA and SAPPHICS are quite beautiful I think. The metre he uses is not alien to the subject matter.

But thy bosom is warm for my face and  
profound as a manifold flower,  
Thy silence as music, thy voice as  
an odour that fades in a  
flame;  
Not a dream, not a dream is the kiss  
of thy mouth, and the bountiful  
hour  
That makes me forget what was sin, and  
would make me forget were it  
shame.

HESPERIA-Swinburne.

Right On!  
Stand Fast!

Toni Scott

\*\*\*\*\*

I've explored the hills and valleys  
The twists and turns  
The soft and warm  
The cold and dry  
The tender and the tense  
Of your body and your mind  
And still it seems after  
Wandering from Gethsemene to Utopia  
That a million miles I have yet to cover  
Rush forward  
Into the wilderness  
You lovestruck fool  
The fool I am  
A happy jester wiser men would wish  
to be

MONA MARIE

\*\*\*\*\*

D.O.B. office hours as of  
Oct. 26, 1972  
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

days: TUESDAYS  
WEDNESDAYS  
FRIDAYS  
eves: MONDAYS  
WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS  
FRIDAYS



.....

FOCUS

A small group of women are trying to organize a Homophile Organization for women here in N.H.

- writers
- artists
- reporters
- staplers

We are fortunate to have the promised assistance of Boston D.O.B. to help in our new endeavor.

WANTS

- advertising saleswomen
- story ideas

We have tentative plans for Rap sessions, talks, group functions, and a Qualified Speaking Bureau to provide the public with a better understanding of "Gay Life".

EVEN

- poets

If you are interested or would like to give your support send your inquiries to D.O.B., Box 137, Northwood, N.H.

We have some ideas for stories. We need people to do the reporting on these or their own projects. We need ads to go back to offset. We can use covers.

And, what do you think of Focus?

.....

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APPLICATION FOR D.O.B.

return this or a copy of it to the DOB office.

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the following:

Membership in Boston D.O.B. (\$10 per year for a single, \$15 for a couple (joint membership). Includes one FOCUS subscription and all voting privileges. Can be paid by \$5 down, the balance within 2 months. If the balance is not paid then, the \$5 becomes a donation to the organization.) Members receive calendars. Membership is open to all women 18 years old or over.

FOCUS subscription (\$5/12 issues). Anyone may subscribe.

Calendar subscription (\$1 for 6 months. Calendar of DOB events.) Anyone.

\*NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (MEMBERS) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Second NAME if joint membership \_\_\_\_\_

\*ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\*SIGNATURE (for members only) I am a woman 18 years of age or older

\_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

(second name if joint)

\*Send to: DOB, Room 414, 419 Boylston St., Boston, Mass. 02116

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