

FOCUS

a journal for gay women



summer 1972

50c

Boston DOB

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The Gay Speakers Bureau reaches out to more people

by LAURA McMURRY

Two or three times a week these days, speakers from the Boston Gay Speakers' Bureau are sallying forth into college classes, church groups, and hot lines to talk with the people about being gay.

What is the Gay Speakers' Bureau all about? What happens at speaking engagements? Do they do any good? I want to give you what I see as the highlights about some of these things.

GSB is a group of 25 to 30 gay women and men from the Boston area. It was formed last fall when individual gay groups found it difficult to find enough speakers of both sexes to handle requests. The speakers are affiliated with different groups and some are independents. Three people, including myself, co-ordinate speaking engagements and keep track of money.

So far it has been all we can do to keep abreast of the requests which have come in unsolicited. For example, in March, 1972, there were eleven engagements involving 22 different speakers, both women and men.

Where do we speak? In March, for example, we went to a church youth group in Chelmsford, a class on sexuality at Cardinal Cushing High School in South Boston, a faculty group at Newbury Junior College in Boston, several college classes at Boston University and the University of Massachusetts, an evening forum on sexuality at Graham Junior College in Kenmore Square, several Unitarian church courses on sexuality, and a hot line in Wellesley.

Over the two years or so that I have been speaking, there has been a change in my attitude towards the goals of speaking. I used to hope that by the end of two hours, everyone would be convinced by my winning ways that gay was O.K. I now realize this is far too much to expect. If it takes months for personal straight friends to accept ones homosexuality (if they ever do), what can one expect from strangers? How are strangers going to know your

life is as normal as you claim it is, when they don't see you from day to day?

Another mistake a lot of us used to make was to suppose that everyone in the audience was straight. We talked about "you straights" and "we gays." But we were doing the very thing we complained that "society" was doing: acting as though gay people didn't exist!

One of the main points now in going out to speak is to reach the gay or the maybe-gay people. We mention in passing that some people there may have gay feelings. We give every individual a sheet listing the Boston area gay groups and a short bibliography.

The next reason for going is to improve attitudes a notch or two, even if we can't get to complete acceptance and understanding. I think most people are affected for the better by our presence and that they do carry something good away with them.

How do we go about our speaking?

We've experimented with different techniques, and continue to do so. In general, the smaller the group is, the better. We try to get the other people involved and, if possible, talking to one another as well as to us. In the beginning, we usually give a short talk to relax them and to give them a sense for us as individuals.

People are usually interested in our personal lives rather than in generalities, although to be polite they will often ask about the latter. Instead of asking, "Do you have a partner and if so are you into butch and femme?", they may ask, "In homosexual relationships, is one the man and one the woman?"

Other things they want to know are: How did you discover you were homosexual? How did you feel about it? Did you tell your parents, your friends? Do you have feelings for the opposite sex? If you could take a magic pill to turn straight, would you (I always ask

(Please turn page)

GAY SPEAKERS

about the side effects)? Would you like to have children? Do you think gay couples should raise children? What about promiscuity? Is there homosexuality in animals?

No one has asked me about my sex life, and very rarely has anyone asked about sex directly.

People are generally polite, rarely hostile. At first this seemed nice. We thought we were doing well. But we began to realize this was actually one of our problems—and still is. It makes speaking less scary for us, but it makes it harder to deal with real feelings.

People are also reluctant to talk about any gay feelings they may have. How can they in a group of peers or others with whom they will have to contend after the speakers are gone. Would you?

So, people don't say they hate homosexuals, or that they think we are abnormal. They often say, "I believe everyone should do his or her own thing..." But when it starts to get down to the nitty gritty, biases do, indeed, begin to show.

"What caused you to be this way?"

This implies: "I think it's abnormal, and abnormal things have causes." It also implies: "What went wrong?"

One lady in particular was very determined about this. "Can you think of what in your life caused you to be homosexual?" she asked.

"It's really a question of what in our backgrounds led to your being heterosexual (assuming you are) and my being homosexual. It is a similar question to 'what causes someone to be a musician and someone else to be a scientist?'. No doubt it has to do with both genes and upbringing."

"Well, did you have an unhappy family life?"

"Like I said, I'm sure family life has to do with determination of what you are, including sexuality. But why suppose a bad family life would lead to homosexuality? You suppose that because you think homosexuality is bad and must have had bad origins."

The lady then decided for herself

from other things said that one of the speakers had very loving parents. "Well, it can't have been due to your parents, then."

She was still looking only for bad things! Any good things or neutral things could, by her decree, have had no bearing on his homosexuality. We never did get across to this lady.

Prejudices come out in other ways. Straight people—adults—are usually the most transparent when it comes to allowing teenagers an exposure to gay life and people. Listen to a class of school teachers:

"Teenagers are too confused and impressionable....if a girl has no dates, she might join a lesbian group as a cop-out... kids need to be older with more experience before they know what is right for them....if my kid were hanging around with a gay group, I'd get him to the priest immediately, then to a psychiatrist, to some people who are recognized authorities..."

We reply, "The overwhelming pressure in this society is to be heterosexual. Why do you feel that a homosexual lifestyle merely needs to be mentioned and everyone will flock to it? Isn't it more reasonable to suppose that those to whom it is unappealing will not be interested? Kids do need experience to find themselves—part of that very experience is to be able to talk with gay people if they wish, to consider that alternative for themselves.....If a girl has no dates with men, maybe it is because she is a lesbian and doesn't want any; or maybe it is something else; but she wouldn't turn to a gay group as a cop-out....gay relationships are no easier to come by and maintain than heterosexual ones; in fact, they have pressures working against them.... and who says psychiatrists know more about homosexuality than homosexuals? Most shrinks are as biased as anyone else."

In some cases a better discussion occurs after the speakers have left! I talked with the teacher of a class of high school girls.

(Continued on page 14)

MUL intensifies anti-gay crusade

by KIM STABINSKI

An all-out crusade against homosexuality is apparently under way by the Manchester Union Leader, which is, sadly, N.H.'s only major daily. This is the same MUL that crucified Muskie (and wife) along with most other presidential hopefuls, only to sue the Boston Globe for some \$5,000,000 or so when the Globe counter-criticized the MUL.

It all started with the MUL lead story on Jan. 13. A reprint from the Village Voice, the story merely revealed that Senators Kennedy and McCarthy felt homosexuals should have equal job opportunities. Both senators had been quizzed on other points, but neither would comment on any rights other than employment. The MUL headline was therefore a misstatement to begin with: "Gay Lib: Gene and Ted Say OK."

Editorial comment preceding this story called this view (employment rights only, remember) "disgraceful" and implied that the MUL would withhold support for either of these potential candidates as a result.

Andy Cox and I immediately sent protest letters to the MUL and requested in the Jan./Feb. FOCUS that others join us.

Our letters, and some of yours, were published. They inspired a number of attack letters and an editorial in the MUL Feb. 19. This second editorial swipe was a severe denunciation of the Baptists for putting information in one of their bulletins telling how to obtain the American Library Association's homosexuality bibliography. It was entitled "Sad, Not Gay" and was reprinted in the March/April FOCUS with another plea from Andy and me for your help in zapping the MUL.

February through May saw the homosexuality "debate" via the MUL's "Letters to the Editor" pages grow. The attacks continued Archie-Bunker style, blind bigotry with few facts. The defense letters, which by April began to come in even from heterosexuals, more generally gave factual information (complete with reference sources).

A number of attack letters pointed out

our "shame" since all the defense letters were signed merely "Name and address submitted." The MUL editors didn't clarify their hand in this, of course; but they did finally publish a letter from two earlier writers who stated they had requested their names and address to be printed but that the MUL had deleted them without permission. To this letter the editors did add an editorial comment stating that they refused to identify authors of homosexuality defense letters for fear of our getting together to organize a gay liberation movement in New Hampshire!

Finally, when the defense letters were so obviously making more sense than the attack letters, the MUL announced their new policy on May 20: they will publish all letters received except those in defense of homosexuality, those from known Communists, those that are obscene or libelous, and those regarding their legal suit against the Boston Globe. Publisher William Loeb stated, among other choice morsels, "Homosexuality is a disgusting abnormality, and history reveals that the widespread practice of this aberration has led to the downfall of a number of nations." His newspaper, he said, "has no intention of helping in any way to spread the disease of homosexuality."

And now that retaliation letters will not be printed, the bigots (led by the MUL editors) are going wild. Letters to the editor are promptly published if they mass-condemn all homosexuals, giving incorrect information and using those well-known stereotypes to apply to us all.

And there are more editorials now. On June 13 one explained the need for the Byrd bill recently introduced in Washington—because a federal judge ordered security status restored for "an avowed homosexual." The editorial called this "insane," stating "Homosexuals are always open to blackmail, and history is filled with stories of homosexuals spying for the enemy." The editorial overlooked the fact that a known homosexual can scarcely be blackmailed and that history is also filled with heterosexual spies.

(Please turn page)

A June 27 editorial, "No Room for Disloyalty," was aimed at servicemen at Williams Air Force Base who demonstrated against the war. They should receive immediate dishonorable discharges, the editorial cries, just as surely as should "homosexuals or saboteurs in uniform."

June 28's editorial is reprinted here in its entirety:

HOMOSEXUALITY—COMMUNICABLE

In a June 13th front page editorial, Publisher William Loeb cited expert opinion to the effect that drug addicts should be isolated from the rest of the community because addiction has to be treated as a "contagious disease." Obviously "contagion" in this sense is not bacteriological but it has been estimated that one drug addict is apt to "infect" as many as 20 others with the drug habit. "In some cases, as many as 50 individuals," he pointed out, "have been introduced to drugs by one addict."

There is another malady going the rounds in our society which is similarly "communicable"—homosexuality.

Whereas it may be true that some persons suffer a biological imbalance which tends to misdirect life drives, there is no question but that many among the perverts now parading themselves in Gay Lib demonstrations have been "recruited"—lured, enticed—at some particularly ambivalent stage of their development.

One may feel sympathy for these men and women entrapped in perversion—without being in any way willing to capitulate to their increasingly aggressive efforts to establish themselves as a socially legitimate minority.

Whereas the kind of strict isolation suggested for the drug addict is in many cases not possible or even desirable for the homosexual, it is nevertheless important for society to resolutely protect its members from being victimized. Thus, it is unthinkable that these people occupy person-to-person positions (teaching, for example) where pervasive pressures can so easily be exerted; from those sensitive posts in the public domain where weakness might be the key to national disaster.

It is June 28 as I write this. The MUL editorial columns have zapped us the past two days, and we cannot counter with protest letters since the MUL refuses to print the other side of the story (despite the large "There is nothing so powerful as truth" on their masthead every day). They are printing gross exaggerations, outright lies, about us, and refusing rebuttal letters.

Other than the token protest or discontinuing our subscription, can you think of anything else we can do to help squelch the MUL's anti-gay crusade? Any suggestions will be appreciated!

Lesbian information service formed

A new national Lesbian service group has been formed in San Francisco by Lesbian writers and professionals.

The new non-profit group, the National Lesbian Information Service (NLIS), is publishing a monthly 8-page newsletter with a round-up of national Lesbian news. There are lists of resource groups and materials and articles on Lesbianism.

"There are several million Lesbians in the United States, and yet they represent one of the most invisible and oppressed minorities in the country," said Sarah Lewis, spokeswoman for the group.

"Unfortunately, too often people in counselling or similar situations who want to help Lesbians the most, cause the most harm through out-of-date and misinformation," Ms. Lewis continued.

"The NLIS Newsletter is an attempt

to provide a source of accurate information on Lesbians and Lesbianism to concerned parents, educators, professionals and individuals.

"We hope that readers of the newsletter will be able to use it as a useful source of reliable, unprejudiced insight into Lesbianism as well as a means of contacting other resources," Ms. Lewis concluded.

In addition to the Newsletter, several informational monographs are available from the group on topics such as "What is Lesbianism," "Counseling the Lesbian Student," and "Lesbians as Mothers."

NLIS may be contacted at P.O. Box 15368, San Francisco, Ca. 94115. Subscription to the newsletter is \$12 per year or \$20 per two years. Sample copies are 50¢.

"The sun came out..."

by PAT ROBERTS

"God loves us - the sun came out of its closet!" Everyone roared. What a way to celebrate my coming out.

The Boston contingent of gays arrived sopping wet in the Village on the day of the Christopher Street parade. Getting off the bus we felt stranded, not knowing which way to go to get dry. The gay bars hadn't opened yet.

Then someone called out, "If you need shelter, follow me!" It was a brother from the Mattachine Society office. Inside there was coffee which we all appreciated. A sister gave me some dry clothes. And Dr. Spock was there. He autographed my press card and someone took a photo of us. That was just one of the big thrills to come that day.

The fifty of us who came by bus, came by cars, and one by plane, were somewhat weary from a week - long Gay Pride celebration of films, workshops, raps, parties, dances, and a march from Copley Square to the Boston Common, where we had a rally in front of the State House ("Straight House" as John called it...), while Sylvia Sydney cheered us on. There were speeches, singing and poetry readings, one from Gertrude Stein reciting "we are regular and gay, because we are regularly gay, because we are gay regularly, etc..."

Our week of celebration was only a prelude to

the Biggie in New York. The highlight of our own group was Sister Catherine Jim attired in his nun's habit. Sisters and brothers genuflected and kissed his cross, I did, too, and thanked him for his miracle...the sun coming out of its closet.

I wore jeans, yellow jacket, and to my own surprise - a red, white, and blue necktie covered with gay love buttons. In the Park St. subway (Boston) I had bought a freaky flower and while marching I plucked bits of its lavender petals and sprinkled them on the spectators, saying, "have some gay dust." That went over big. The flower did look like a magic wand.

Sharon, our new D'O'B' president, was there; a professor from the college I attend; two blind girls supported our march; one sister had her foot in a cast and it split after an hour of walking; another girl I'd met several years ago in Straitsville yelled out, "P.J. I didn't know you were gay!" When did YOU come out!" We embraced each other, laughing and crying out, "Sister, sister!" It was truly a happy day. The scene was uplifting to my soul. There were many newcomers like myself. I wasn't alone. All these people were my kin. I needed them and they needed me. Like afterimages, the chanting still rings in my ears.

The spectators seemed to enjoy our "parade". But I hope they realize that it wasn't just a parade with clowns and carrings-on. That it was, rather, a March for Freedom, with Gay Pride as our message.





Gay Pride March



Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

Thanks for having the courage to print your observations re the lack of pride, dignity and maturity. As I spend 99 44/100% of my life in the straight community, I can agree with you all the way. Such conduct as you mentioned really does turn off people who otherwise might be open, tolerant and even understanding if we could command their respect.

Also, I want to mention that I was delighted to read "Over the Fence" by Diane O'Keefe. I really missed that feature during the past months.

Best wishes for continued success in the ever-improving production of FOCUS.

Sincerely,
Loretta F.

Dear members,

Believing wholeheartedly in your organization and wishing to do my part in assisting those who lack proper finances to support a merited vacation, I am offering my cottage free again this year to those desirous of relaxing in a pine-scented atmosphere.

I was an honorary member of DOB San Francisco, having made numerous monetary donations to that chapter's support.

My cottage is located in the Lakewood Theatre Colony of Maine, and I have room for at least 6 members who wish to accept my offer. Those accepting will at no time be under any obligation. If I can make any member happy, it will be a complete satisfaction to me.

This offer is open after the 7th of August until October 15.

Sincerely yours,
Paulette

(Ed. Note: Anyone interested may contact Boston DOB)

Dear sisters,

As you can see by the letterhead, I'm a sister living forcefully under the regime of the pigs.

But though I'm not by myself in here, I'm never the less lonely. I have no correspondence, due to having been in prison for over 10 years and losing contact with whatever female lovers I had in the past.

Therefore, I would appreciate it if someone would write to me. Let me know something about the movements going on out there that concern people like me.

I will gladly write to anyone that will write to me. All letters will be answered the day received. It is awful lonely in here. Please aid me.

Yours in gay love,
Bernice

(Ed. Note: Persons wishing to correspond with Bernice should send first letter c/o DOB to be forwarded to her.)

Dear Sisters,

I've been looking over our files and groups for gay women seem pretty sparse.

Since I'm sure it is only our files that are incomplete in listing established organizations in America, names and addresses and phone numbers of women willing to talk to gay women travelers and give counselling, I would appreciate any help your organization or FOCUS readers can give us in bringing our files up to date.

In pride and love,
Susan Lashley
Co-ordinator, National
Gay Student Center

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Boston DOB is a chapter of a national lesbian organization. It provides a place for lesbians to talk, socialize, and work for change in society. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS
419 Boylston St., Room 406
Boston, Mass. 02116 262-1592

HURRAH!



July 23
Boston
Globe
\$60 worth

Hands across the dollar gap

by MARTHA SHELLEY

This message is urgent: seven women were arrested last month in Chicago, each charged with three counts of abortion and three counts of conspiracy to commit abortion. They face a total of 60 years each in prison. The rumor which reached me was that these women had been part of a collective and had performed over 3,000 safe abortions, although none of them was a licensed physician. Such rumors should be squelched at the source, since (a) they could land innocent sisters in jail and (b) it should be obvious that a woman could not possibly perform a safe abortion unless she was licensed by the state and the American Medical Association. It has been further stated that these women were actually doing free abortions for ghetto women. This is also patently untrue, since anyone who was crazy enough to work for free could not be trusted to do a good job.

These seven women need your help. Send checks to Abortion Defense Fund, c/o Bizar and Pildes, 127 North Dearborn, Chicago, Illinois 60602.

I seem to be facing a crisis of trust here in New York. We move so slowly in the Movement. Sometimes I and we get mixed up, and I can't separate my problems from the problems of the Feminist Movement. This is either advanced political thinking or advanced schizophrenia. Recently I started to see a shrink, a gay radical therapist who works on the pay-what-you-can-afford system. She keeps trying to focus me on my peculiar problems as a writer, while I am trying to save the world single-handedly--but rather ineffectually, I must admit.

I'm still not clear about my own right to be an individual versus individualism, and if we can move collectively as women. My shrink has made some speeches for the Movement, so we've had similar experiences and common goals--and similar problems with stardom. I see women around me who are burdened with children and who will

never make it to the top--and women who feel the best thing they can do for the Movement is to make it big within the system. Meanwhile, according to the New York Times of the last few months, reports issued by the Department of Labor indicate the number of job opportunities for women is shrinking rather than expanding--and has been for the last ten years. We are still the marginal workers, the last hired and the first fired. And yet so many of us are working separately, trying to make it in a system which is slowly, inexorably squeezing us out.

A few are making it--yet I am not about to fight for women's capitalism, for the right of a few to succeed over the failed lives of the many. Nor am I happy with the notion that I can be pacified with a book contract, or a job teaching college, or a few more speaking engagements.

Speaking of college teachers, my friend Joan threw a party last week. She and her lover teach college, so they aren't exactly starving, but neither has tenure. They bought some food for twenty expected guests. One of the guests, who was unaware that she had been invited to a private party, invited all the patrons at Bonnie and Clyde's. This Lesbian bar was filled with students, welfare recipients and the unemployed, each nursing her beer and waiting for the free buffet which arrives every Sunday afternoon. The hungry horde descended on my friends' apartment and quickly reduced their offering to crumbs and cigarette butts.

Later, Joan complained to me that she wasn't in the business of feeding all the "welfare chiselers" on the Lower East Side. "They never bring anything to a party--they are always mooching." As I sometimes am a recipient of welfare and unemployment, I took offense; but she explained that she didn't mean me--that I'd never mooched off her. And this is true, because I don't see her as the enemy. I think the "welfare chiselers" she is referring to see any

(Please turn page)

woman with a middle class income as an immensely rich person who is fair game.

Joan doesn't know any of these welfare chisellers personally, but she is offended by the way they come stomping into a party in patched dungarees with outrageous mottoes stenciled on their army jackets and with imitation afros. She assumed that none of the attire, including the hair, has recently seen soap and water. When Jill Johnston comes into a party in crazily embroidered jeans and flying hair, no one complains. People assume she is sanitary. If she makes a few "male chauvinist" remarks, gets roaring drunk and dances riotously, Joan defends her as a lesbian who has really been oppressed by straight women and men--in particular the straights who send obscene letters about her to the Village Voice.

Jill used to live on welfare. After the collapse of her marriage, when her kids were taken away from her and she was hospitalized in the looney bin, she came out determined to make it as a writer. She obtained welfare and lived on it for two years while learning the writing profession. Nobody dares say a word against Jill in Joan's presence--or in mine.

Now who are the welfare chisellers on the Lower East Side? My friends forgive me for taking unemployment while I write these articles because I'm contributing something to the Movement, but everyone is sure that the Lower East Side Dykes, as they call themselves, are lazy dropouts from Scarsdale who do nothing but smoke dope and figure out schemes for ripping off the middle class.

Three of these women are acquaintances of mine--I don't know the others except by sight. One was orphaned at an early age. Her grandmother committed her to the looney bin for being truant and unmanageable, but she managed to convince the Chief Psychiatrist that she was sane and not in need of electroshock therapy (which had been ordered for her). He sent her home, and she ran away to the East Village, found an "old man" to take her in, and progressed from LSD to speed to

heroin.

After she kicked drugs, without the benefit of "therapy," she went home, obtained a high school diploma, attended college for a while, then left her grandmother again for her own apartment in the East Village. She helped found the Queens Women's Center, writes poetry, and works on the Come Out newspaper collective.

Another welfare chiseller of my acquaintance was raised by a bitter and violently puritanical mother. She too left home, after getting a clerk's job. She worked for several years in the same office, coding cards and mailing form letters. When she was laid off, she managed to get the New York State Employment Service to assign her to a work-study program in electronics. She was the first woman admitted, and is strikingly attractive. Consequently, she was hassled by the male students all the time. She quit that school. I don't know much about what she's doing now, except that she has worked on the Lesbian Food Conspiracy and put in quite a number of hours keeping the Women's Liberation Center open. None of her services to the Movement are paid for. She doesn't write articles or make speeches, so her name isn't known outside her collective.

The third woman recently left home. She puts in day after day answering the phones and doing general office work in the Women's Liberation Center, which is the only real home she ever had. I don't know much about her background except that when her mother found out she was gay, she forced this young woman to have a nose job, or else leave home and quit school. Presumably the theory was that a cute "Christian" nose would make her so attractive to men that she would lose her interest in women. The psychological effects of such mutilation must have been devastating. My friend submitted because she wanted to finish the school year. She didn't want to be a dropout--but eventually she found that the home atmosphere was too detrimental to her survival, that she couldn't concentrate on her studies anyway.

These aren't "Scarsdale hippies."

I don't know the other women in this group of Lower East Side Dykes--but I do know that they come into parties together, they make noise, they are not always sanitized and deodorized, they don't always bring a bottle, and they don't wear bras. They wear torn dungarees, and crazily patched jackets and construction boots. They look like ragged versions of Jill Johnston. They are angry at the churches and schools and families that have rejected them, and they scrawl epithets on walls.

Finally, this is a response to the FOCUS editorial of last month, which put down the unkempt women with "breasts hanging at waist level" who "sprayed paint all over public buildings" on the International Women's Day March. I don't know who your drop-outs are up in Boston, but they are my sisters and I defend them against the churches that burned us at the stake and still condemn women to butcher-

job abortions. My sisters' lives, however ruined and scarred with needle marks, are far more sacred than your historical monuments. Their scrawls contain more truths than any number of Sunday sermons. I ask you not to judge each other by appearance--neither by construction boots nor vinyl platform boots--just as you don't want to be judged by the size of your breasts and the shape of your legs, and the encroachment of grey hairs. If someone's appearance seems to be deliberately offensive, perhaps she is offended by your "respectability."

Who in hell did the Founder of your churches associate with?

And as for my friend Joan, who seems to have borne the brunt of my rage today, don't you dare say a word against her either. She teaches, writes, lives and breathes feminism, and she has one overriding virtue: she listens to the other side.

Millay--and a bit on Sappho

PRAYER TO PERSEPHONE

*Be to her, Persephone,
All the things I might not be.
Hold her head upon your knee,
She who was so proud and wild
Flippant, arrogant and free,
She who had no need of me
Is a little lonely child
Lost in Hell, Persephone.
Hold her head upon your knee,
Say to her, my dear, my dear,
It is not so dreadful here.*

—Edna St. Vincent Millay

Regardless of what Edna St. Vincent Millay's intentions might have been when she penned "Prayer to Persephone," what she did accomplish was leaving a poem which Lesbians would forever hold dear.

In contrast, Millay's suggestive title of another poem, "Sappho Crosses

the Dark River into Hades," leaves us disappointed. This poem deals with Sappho's love (?) for the ferryman Phaon, a love for which one of the Sappho myths would have us believe she committed suicide. But we must remember that in an attempt to justify her classification as one of the greatest ancient lyrical poets, a straight "defense movement" has for years projected Sappho as everything from a devoted wife and mother of highest moral standing through a prostitute--anything but a Lesbian (in the literal as well as geographic sense).

A prostitute can be classed as one of the greats, they seem to think, but God forbid that a Lesbian could rate the same classification!

Do you have a particular favorite from one of the known poets such as Millay? Share it--send it to FOCUS.

GAY SPEAKERS

"We had a more stimulating discussion afterwards among ourselves than we have had about any other topic. Even people who usually said nothing chimed in. People said they had been afraid to seem too interested. They were afraid the speakers could see right into them (see their gay feelings, maybe?). Several admitted that, although they knew it was silly, they had been afraid of being attacked. They were very impressed that homosexuals would be open about it, and that there was more to a gay person than his or her sex life. The students still felt ambivalent. They felt more accepting, yet if it came right down to it they would be afraid to talk to a homosexual one-to-one. They would probably not stand up in front of their peers and defend a gay person."

Yet this encounter had accomplished quite a bit. It got the students to begin to think of homosexuals as persons. Maybe homosexuality was not the evil they had thought.

People in the "audiences" have mentioned over and over the importance of just listening to and talking with an openly gay person. Some long-held misconceptions can be removed just by our being there.

Occasionally groups open up. Just recently at a closely-knit hotline group one of the staff asked, "How many people here have had a homosexual episode in his/her life?" When 5 hands went up, including his own, we went on from there. Once we talked about problems in relationships between two people--the gays and straights found that they had much

in common! People also occasionally ask about going to one of the gay groups.

We usually inquire about a donation from groups where we speak and get one about a third of the time. Sometimes these are substantial, like \$50. GSB keeps 20% for transportation, phone calls, printing leaflets, etc.; 5% goes to the gay group which referred the engagement to GSB; the rest is split evenly among gay groups as designated by the speakers at the engagement.

What of the future?

We need to reach out to more people, to develop better ways of getting through (perhaps films, slide shows...), to write literature.....to reach more people who "shape our social and legal environment," such as legislators, psychiatrists, social workers, teachers.....to educate ourselves more, update ourselves....and we need more speakers.

WHY YOU SHOULD WORK WITH THE SPEAKERS' BUREAU...

1. You are the expert. You know more about homosexuality than most people do, since most people are straight!
2. It gets you out of the house.
3. We have many references to books and articles, we talk with each other, we welcome newcomers to attend engagements as observers.
4. You are needed.

CONTACT GAY SPEAKERS' BUREAU
C/O DOB OFFICE

Classifieds

Windy, there are too many alternatives well within your interests and capabilities to let what's happened sink you. It's something I come closer to every day. Come to Boston. Won't print phone number, address here. Write Box 241, Winchester, Mass. Do this Brett, please. Gwyn.

Looking for an apartment to share with another mother. I have one child. He is two. Call 244-3952 between 9:30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Five female mongrel puppies free to good homes. They'll be ready to leave mom in August. Contact Julie c/o D.O.B.

WOMEN WANTED: *If you have traveled or lived outside the United States and have observed gay life where you have been and would like to share your experiences with other gay women, write FOCUS editor, 419 Boylston St., Room 406, Boston, Mass.*

D.O.B. Referrals

Legal

Rose Z. Smith, 803 Washington St., Hanover, 1-826-6600. Mrs. Smith has over 20 years legal experience, divorce and custody cases in particular.

Regge Healey, Legal Action for Women (L.A.W.), 492-5520. Ms. Healey only handles cases occurring in Cambridge and only for those women who are in a low-income bracket.

Rook, Roth, Rubino, 7 Water St., Boston, 742-2243. This is a team of male lawyers with extensive experience in handling cases of gay males.

Ruth Budde, 15 Court Square, Boston, 227-9122. Ms. Budde is a member of M.C.A.D. (Mass. Commission Against Discrimination).

Medical

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

Dr. Rita Kelly, Mass. General Hospital, 726-2000.

H.C.H.S. (Homophile Community Health Service) 419 Boylston St., Suite 403, Boston, 266-5477. Professional psychiatric counseling service.

Dr. Dorothea Hellman, Internist, 469-9550.

Religious

Roman Catholic: St. Clement's Church has initiated a dialogue with gay women and men. The priests listed below have made themselves available to counsel gay Catholics. Call 536-2376 and ask for Fr. Terrance Dougherty, Fr. Brian Hennigan, or Fr. Tom Mickey.

Unitarian: Rev. Barbara Hallerth, 862-8200.

Methodist: Dr. William Alberts, Old West Methodist Church, 277-5088. Rev. Ruth Robinson, 277-5088.

Gay Groups

High School Gays United, by and for ages 14-18. 354-1555 anytime; 282-9181 evenings.

Homophile Union of Boston, P. O. Box 217, Dorchester Station, Boston, phone 282-9181.

Daughters of Bilitis, 419 Boylston St., Suite 406, Boston, 262-1592.

Gay Male Liberation, c/o The Red Bookstore, 91 River St., Cambridge, 354-1555.

Gay Co-Op of Boston, 536-3233

Anyone interested in the idea of a United Gay Church at the University of Conn. this fall write: Sr. Cher, Box 38, Cromwell, Conn. 06416.

Student Homophile League, 288-8765 and 776-7454.

Lesbian Liberation, for information call the Women's Center, 354-8807..

Women's Groups

Female Liberation, 552 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, 491-1071.

National Organization for Women (NOW), 45 Newbury St., Boston, 267-6160.

Women's Center 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 354-8807. Will offer 15 courses, including "Lesbian Liberation."

HYPNOSIS

Patricia James, 825-5554.

Daughters of Bilitis
419 Boylston Street, Room 406
Boston, Mass. 02116
Telephone: 262-1592

- Newsletter subscription—\$5 year
- Single DOB membership—\$10 year
- Joint DOB membership—\$15 year

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PLEASE print the above information.
Make all checks payable to Boston DOB.

I am a woman 18 years of age or older.
(Only membership applications need be signed.)

Signature _____

2nd Sig. _____

THE LADDER

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Women's Library Full of Info'

After four years of acting as a clearinghouse for women's literature for this country, the Women's History Research Library, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, Calif. 94708 is making an appeal for donations (tax deductible). The library collects women's publications (we send FOCUS every month), songs, letters, bibliographies, information on women's studies courses-everything. They put the periodicals on microfilm and offer this to libraries across the country. Boston D.O.B. has received several inquiries about FOCUS because of the microfilms.

The women's library operates on a slender budget. Especially they need donations to demonstrate the public support needed to receive grants from funding agencies. Why not send them some \$\$\$. More information is available from them for a stamped envelope (and hopefully a small donation). We have some things in the D.O.B. office also.

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