

# FOCUS

A JOURNAL FOR  
GAY WOMEN



JUNE '73

\$.50

*Geri*



LETTERS TO FOCUS

Dear Friends,

Little more than a year ago the Boston Women's Collective committed itself to an affirmative community action project providing information and service to the women of Massachusetts. . . . The need for a comprehensive resource manual, presenting the "how" and "why" of assistance became obvious. It was natural, then, that the Collective should publish and distribute the Women's Yellow Pages. . . .

Consistent with our expanded community service goals, the establishment of a visible and central referral center and an expanded publication of the Women's Yellow Pages are now our priority concerns. . . .

By focusing on the practical day to day needs of women living in the city the Collective has won the endorsement of nearly a score of Massachusetts' most respected community programs including Action for Boston Community Development, the Boston Family Planning Project, Catholic Charitable Bureau of Boston, National Organization for Women, Opportunities Industrialization Center and Sanctuary. . . .

The task ahead is great; the financial need is great. Pursuing our goal of serving the widest possible spectrum of women's needs, and under the pressure of matching foundation grants, we are asking concerned men and women to participate in this innovative program by contributing to our 1973 fund drive.

Donors are encouraged to contribute according to their means. . . . For your contribution, you will receive a complimentary copy of the Women's Yellow Pages. For further information, please

feel free to contact us at 547-9104.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Carol F. Edry  
President  
Boston Women's Collective  
651 Concord Avenue  
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

Dear D.O.B.,

H.A.L.P stands for Homophile Assistance League of Provincetown. We were put together three seasons ago when a bunch of locals got it into their heads to beat up "fags" for spring sport.

Right now we do counselling and housing work through the "P" town Drop-In Center and generally help out gay people who seek us out.

We have a doctor on call, a psychologist and offer legal counsel in emergencies.

Aside from that we have a ball living in the most free gay community in America.

Bill Damon  
Box 674  
P town 02657

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DOB BUSINESS MEETING MAY 23,'73

Voted:  
To approve the use of the name Daughters of Bilitis by the New Hampshire group.

- That keys to the D.O.B. office and front door be given only to officers and persons who answer the phone.
- That up to \$80 be spent on an answer-phone machine.
- That Bonnie join Lois on the mailing committee.

BOSTON DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS  
CALENDAR  
June 1973

TUESDAYS 7:30 pm RAP SESSIONS ON BEING GAY, FOR WOMEN. Share feelings about being gay, meet people, newcomers especially welcome. Thru June 12 at the usual location in Cambridge (call office); after that at the D.O.B. office.

THURSDAYS 9-10 pm GAY WAY RADIO PROGRAM, WBUR-FM, 90.9 on dial.

SATURDAYS 8-9 pm GAY POETRY READINGS, Gallery Coffee House, Charles Street Meeting House, 70 Charles St., Boston (see particular dates below).

SUNDAYS 1 pm GAY WOMEN'S SOFTBALL, Magazine Beach, Cambridge (across the Charles River from Cadillac-Olds and along Memorial Drive west of the Boston University Bridge.) Bring glove, bat, ball, if you have them.

June 2, SATURDAY GAY POETRY READING: John LaPorta (see location above).

June 3, SUNDAY 10 pm LAVENDER HOUR, WECN-FM 104.1 radio.

June 9, SATURDAY GAY POETRY READING: Mary Damon

June 10, SUNDAY D.O.B. PICNIC at COCHITUATE STATE PARK, NATICK. There will be someone there grabbing tables starting at 10 am; there will be a small sign on a tree or table showing the location in the picnic table area. Bring softball stuff and your own food (or there is a concession). Entrance to the park is \$1/car. If you need a ride be at the D.O.B. office at 10:30 am. To drive there take the Turnpike west to exit 13, go Route 30 east 1½ miles. The park is on the right. If you can give a ride call the office weekday eves.

June 11, MONDAY 1pm DEBATE IN MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES on H. 3313 which would repeal the sodomy, etc. laws. For last minute change of time call Barney Frank 727-3974.

June 16, SATURDAY 1pm BOSTON/NEW ENGLAND GAY PRIDE WEEK STARTS WITH A MARCH leaving from Copley Square Plaza. Rally at end in Boston Common. THAT NIGHT AT 9pm, dance to the WITCH women's band at the Charles Street Meeting House.

8pm GAY POETRY READING: Allison Mitchell

NEW HAMPSHIRE D.O.B. PICNIC/SWIM Saturday and Sunday. Bring food, tent if you want to camp over. Children invited. For place write Occupant, Box 137, Northwood, N.H.

June 17, SUNDAY 3pm RELIGION WORKSHOP at C.S.M.H. \*(PART OF GAY PRIDE WK)

7pm GAY CRUISE OF BOSTON HARBOR aboard the new M.V. "Provincetown". Bring your own lunch and booze if you wish. Women will have their own stateroom. Music of George Graham's orchestra. \$5.00 (D.O.B. gets \$1 of this). Loads 7:15 pm at 20 Long Wharf, Boston. Get tickets from Sheri or write D.O.B.

June 18, MONDAY 8pm HOLD HANDS WORKSHOP, a discussion of stereotypes and prejudices within the gay community. C.S.M.H.

\*C.S.M.H. = Charles Street Meeting House, 70 Charles St., Boston.

over!

BOSTON DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS  
CALENDAR  
p. 2

- June 19, TUESDAY 8pm WOMEN'S WORKSHOP C.S.M.H. There will also be a separate MEN'S WORKSHOP AT THE SAME PLACE in another room.
- June 20, WEDNESDAY 7pm YOUTH WORKSHOP, for those 19 and younger.C.S.M.H.  
7pm RELATIONSHIP WORKSHOP, discussion of life and love, C.S.M.H.  
8:30pm THE PLAY COMING OUT will be performed,C.S.M.H.
- June 21, THURSDAY 8pm LAW AND POLITICS WORKSHOP, future plans--where do gays strike next? C.S.M.H.
- June 22, FRIDAY 10 am ART FESTIVAL AND TEA, place to be announced  
6-10 pm A NIGHT OF ART AND ENTERTAINMENT at the Gallery Coffee House in the C.S.M.H.  
9pm DANCE C.S.M.H.
- June 23, SATURDAY ART FESTIVAL, TEA ON THE LAWN,place to be announced.  
8pm GAY POETRY READING:GAY PRIDE WEEK GROUP READING C.S.M.H.  
9 pm-1am DANCE C.S.M.H.
- June 24, SUNDAY CHRISTOPHER STREET LIBERATION DAY MARCH IN NEW YORK CITY. Assembles at 11 am at Central Park West and 59th Street. The march will go south and end with a Gay Pride Gala from 4-6 pm in Washington Square North. There will be a bus from Boston. Call H.U.B. at 536-6197 evenings.
- ALL DURING GAY PRIDE WEEK JUNE 16--23 the GALLERY COFFEE HOUSE, 70 Charles St. in the Charles Street Meeting House, will be open from noon to midnight.
- June 29, FRIDAY D.O.B. POTLUCK SUPPER/ BUSINESS MEETING. The supper is at 6pm, the meeting at 7:30 pm. Come to either or both. Business meetings are for the general membership (visitors welcome also). Bring a dish to the supper, or something to drink, etc. Bring whatever utensils you might need. Place: 12 Remington Street, Cambridge, Apt. 106. That's about 4 blocks from Harvard Square south along Mass. Av., 1 block from where Putnam Av. intersects Mass. Av, 2 blocks from the Orson Welles Cinema. Remington goes between Harvard St. and Mass. Av. and has a unfinished 13 story apartment bldg. on the corner at Mass. Av.
- June 30, SATURDAY 8 pm GAY POETRY READING: David Eberly. C.S.M.H.
- NOTE: IF YOU WANT TO READ YOUR POETRY AT THE GAY POETRY READINGS call Mary Damon 864-1954 or Charles Shively 536-9826.

BOSTON DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS  
419 Boylston St., Rm. 415  
Boston, Mass. 02116  
phone 617-262-1592

HOURS: Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri. evenings  
Tues 3pm-7pm; Wed. 11am-4pm.

By S. Regal

For a long time, lesbians have had trouble with identity. We never had a chance to define ourselves; it was already done for us. We were women who had sex with women.

This purely sexual definition pigeonholed any woman who had ever had a homosexual experience, when many of these women weren't actually lesbians. If you went to bed once with a woman, you were "labelled" for life.

The meaning of the word "lesbian" got more and more confusing, even for lesbians themselves, until recently, when some of our spokeswomen, gay liberationist leaders, were finally heard. These sisters insisted we steer away from Manglish dictionaries, and start concentrating on ourselves. They began to emphasize that we are not solely sexual persons, but we are women who get our emotional support, encouragement, and inspiration from women.

This seems to clear up a lot of the "dictionary confusion: a lesbian is a woman who counts on, has faith in, and whose main emotional ties are with women.

Yet somehow I feel that this new definition is still lacking, for if we are talking about a woman who loves women, we are not restricting the lesbian's affections to any particular category of women. The definition as it stands also allows the lesbian to love (count on, bank on, and put her trust and faith in) heterosexual women (whom I call male-oriented women).

I do not want to "put down" these male-oriented women (or even begin to discuss bisexuals, whom I do not include in this category because they do have a love commitment to their own sex, at least part of the time), but I do want to discuss the kind of love arrangement between the lesbian woman and the male-oriented woman.

This kind of relationship is what I call the "self-exploding" couple. It simply cannot work.

No matter what wonderful points the couple has, such as complete honesty, shared interests, hobbies, etc., the gay sister is constantly being hampered and "put down" because she and her straight lover don't agree on one thing--themselves. If you and your lover (lovers, spouse(s)) don't agree on your "gayness", i.e. yourselves, the relationship that you have, then you have nothing.

In other words, if you are having a relationship with a woman who claims she is heterosexual (male-oriented), by her mere admission of this, she is saying that gayness is unimportant to her, and that you, gay sister, are helping her merely pass the time until her "Prince Charming" comes along.

Waiting is a part of the game. You will be waiting a long time, perhaps a lifetime, for her to "stand by you" and support lesbianism and, particularly, your right to love her.

Also, her desire to cling to the word "heterosexual" may be an excuse for her to avoid admitting to herself that she is "one of those people," and thus she cuts herself off from the negative connotations of the gay world. Inevitably, this is a put down on the gay sister. When you point out to her that you are gay, and you aren't a horrible, violent, criminal person, she hits you with, "Well, you're different, you're not like them."

Perhaps this seems believable for a while. After all, it is rather difficult to throw off society's images and indoctrinations as to what a lesbian is like immediately, even if a woman has come out several years before. Eventually though, a gay woman makes an attempt to meet other gay women, out of curiosity if for no other reason. She begins to wonder about her own identity, and "Just who are these gay homosexual people?" And so she goes out and tries to find answers to these questions, but always alone. Her straight lover won't attend any gay social activities (she refuses to call herself gay, and she

6 is really afraid to give up her heterosexual privileges, or be associated with these "down and outs"). A funny thing happens to the gay sister after she begins attending gay meetings or gay dances: she starts to realize that the women she meets are actually like her, and that there's nothing wrong or horrid about them (in time, the consciousness phases out this word and substitutes us).

The straight lover will not be dragged to a gay meeting or a gay dance. She will not be found in a gay bar. And the woman who loves her knows that the only thing to do is to talk over the problem with her partner.

The couple begins to argue again. The male-oriented woman might say that as a Christian she loves everyone alike; she doesn't need to be in a gay bar to love her sisters. But the point is that she doesn't love her partner as she would love a man, if she intends to "throw you away" as soon as a man comes along. (Somehow a relationship with a male would be a permanent one; a lesbian one, a passing fancy.) She is using you.

Furthermore, if this type of woman loved everyone alike, she would agree to make a commitment to the lesbian. But she won't do any such thing. The same church that tells her to love everyone somehow frowns on same-sex marriages, or any sort of sanction for gay people.

What is happening here is the disintegration of a relationship. The women in this situation must make a number of choices. The gay sister seems to realize the inequality in the relationship, and that her energies are not being returned to her, and are being wasted on men. She has before her a number of choices: 1) she can be a "man" to the woman she loves (butch-femme), and then she can deal with her as she was taught to deal with men; 2) she can become her "girlfriend," and begin restraining her affection (no love poems, no anniversary presents, no kissing, no sex, etc.); or 3) she can back out of the relationship.

Why can't she make it last? Well, she

might hold out for a while, but eventually the closet life that her lover makes her lead, the little nasty cracks and the queer jokes will get to her. The gay sister will become so tired fighting with her lover that she will finally have to leave this woman.

There is little else to do. This male-oriented woman is not going to suddenly learn so much about lesbians that she will "awaken" and one day understand and agree. Her partner cannot teach her, or coerce her. Besides, isn't this what gay people have been fighting all along, brainwashing people into a sexual orientation they don't want??

Respect her, woman to woman. Give her credit for knowing what she wants. Stop seeing her, and break off the relationship.

She will no longer be hassling you about touching her in public, and you won't have to listen to queer jokes. You won't have to struggle along trying to justify yourself to her and your right to love her.

Talk with your gay sisters. I think you will discover that, in spite of everything you had going for you in your relationship, you actually have more in common, more communication, and more understanding with gay women.

I realize how terribly difficult this is to do, but I do believe that this is a necessary step if we lesbians are really going to try to define ourselves.

To avoid a lot of heartaches caused by this kind of gay-straight relationship. I suggest we define ourselves as women who love women who love women. In this manner, we will be directed toward ourselves. We will define ourselves, and by doing so we will have a better idea who we are, and how to explain ourselves to others.

DISCRIMINATION BILLS DEFEATED IN MASSACHUSETTS

7

The Massachusetts Senate on May 7 voted 29 to 6 against two bills which would have banned discrimination in employment, housing, insurance, mortgages, and public accommodations on the basis of sexual preference. This vote killed the two bills, H.3218 and H.3220, which would have amended existing state discrimination laws.

"I am advocating the principle of tolerance," said Senator Robert Hall (Lunenburg), leading off in a short floor debate. "They have to make a living," added Senator Allan McKinnon (Weymouth). Both Senators are members of the joint Committee on Commerce and Labor which had heard the testimony on the bills February 1 and had been impressed by the need for protective laws. McKinnon is chairman of that committee. Hall is one of only seven Republicans in a 39-person Senate.

"We can't vote for these bills unless we are going to scrap all traditional values of unity and the family," said Senator David Locke (Wellesley). "Homosexuals have been getting along fine for hundreds of years Only now when they become public do they get any discrimination," he continued.

The roll call vote showed that most agreed with Locke. Those who voted in favor of the gay bills were, besides Hall and McKinnon, Jack Backman, Irving Fishman, Edward Burke, and John Olver, most known as liberals.

The bills had originally received a favorable report on March 21 and had been sent to the Senate. They were returned to committee with a note that they be sent to the House instead, since a House member, Representative Barney Frank, had introduced them. The Senate did not want to deal with the House's

hot issues.

Ultimately it was discovered that according to rules, the bills had to be dealt with by the Senate. The second report out of committee was unfavorable. The vote in the Senate on May 7 was actually on whether to uphold the negative report of the committee.

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BILL TO REPEAL SODOMY LAW TO BE HEARD BY HOUSE JUNE 11

H. 3313, which would repeal laws against adultery, fornication, crime against nature (sodomy), unnatural acts, and lewd cohabitation, was given an unfavorable report by the Judiciary Committee and will go onto the Massachusetts floor Monday, June 11 (unless there is a last minute change), for debate. The session starts at 1 p.m. Visitors can sit in the gallery. If your representative is on the right side, give him or her a ring to remind them to be there to vote for us.

H. 3312, an equal rights amendment to the state constitution, received an adverse report by the Judiciary Committee on May 9 and was "placed on file" (in the dead box).

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ACTIC JUDGMENT

The book review in the last issue of FCCUS was written by Ada Bello from the Homophile Action League, in Philadelphia.



A group of men and women have formed a Gay Media Watch which is trying to keep track of radio, television, and press presentations of homosexuality, and in general to push for fair and accurate portrayal.

The WCVB-TV (Channel 5) series "Homosexuals in Boston," March 26-30, started it all. Gay viewers had looked forward to this first regional documentary, but when they saw it, many felt something had to be done.

"Complete lack of coverage on female homosexuals...limited selection of homosexuals interviewed...narrow range of emotional attachments portrayed...the entire concept of gay love was left unexplored...failure to show the correlation between those qualities of the gay lifestyle perceived as negative and the societal pressures responsible for creating them..." wrote the quickly formed group in a letter to the broadcasters.

A meeting with station officials resulted in opening communication between gay people and the station, and gave the latter many contacts. Program director Larry Pickard said they were particularly interested in news coverage.

The media group has been approaching other stations, etc., and keeps its eyes open for coverage. It meets Sunday nights at 7:00 P.M. at the Charles Street Meeting House in Boston. For information or to report a piece of coverage, call 277-0687 or 868-5729.

Summer is here once again, and the vacation problem of where to spend a week or two. Have you tried Provincetown at the tip of Cape Cod? There are three very nice clubs that I would recommend that you visit while you are there. 1) The Pied Piper on Commercial Street. 2) The MS at the Crown & Anchor. 3) The Back Room which features Arthur Blake's all-male revue from 4 to 7. Cocktails, dancing, sun decks, pool playing and other entertainment are available at all the clubs. During the day you can take your girl or go alone to Herring Cove Beach and there you'll meet all the people you saw at the clubs the night before. While visiting the Cape make it a must to have dinner at the Provincetown Inn. This is a straight Inn but you will never see anything like it on the Cape, so be sure to make it.

Now for motels, well there are two very nice ones I've stayed at and would recommend highly. 1) The Moors and 2) The Boat Slip. Call for reservations early as they will be full during July and August. You will be surprised at the people you will meet at Provincetown. They will be from all over New England and Canada. Let us know how you liked the Cape and if you were not satisfied, you weren't with the right person.

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WINNER OF LIMERICK CONTEST

The winner is Linda Lachman, who gets her choice of a subscription to FOCUS or two tickets to the next D.O.B. dance.

The D.O.B. dances are fine  
and Focus is right up my line,  
but best of all things  
is the memory that springs  
of the Tuesday rap that helped  
my mind.

A limerick has a strange ring.  
Its rhythm can suddenly cling.  
And once you've begun  
your mind is undone  
when trying to stop the whole thing!

~~~~~  
BOSTON  
GAY PRIDE WEEK  
JUNE 16--23!!!  
COME!!  
~~~~~

9

THE BIRTH OF  
BOSTON FEMINISTS FOR LESBIAN LIBERATION

by Wendy

At a DOB rap several months ago, a proposal to form small rap groups was presented. Reactions to this idea were almost non-existent. However, a few women did keep the idea in mind, and on April 10, two friends approached me about starting a CR (consciousness raising) group. The month before I had unsuccessfully tried to start one through Female Liberation, so I was eager to get involved in this one. I immediately shared the news of the group with another friend. Her reaction was also positive. Now all we had to do was to find more women. The next Sunday at softball, I happened to mention the group to two other women. Their enthusiasm was overwhelming, and thus we had the raw material for our new experience.

On Monday, April 23, we had our first official meeting. Some of us did not know each other, so we structured the meeting as a discussion of the various purposes we each saw for the group. After that we proceeded with a general introduction of ourselves, our personal histories, and our feelings about being gay. At the close of the meeting we all felt confident about the group and its goals.

On Sunday, April 29, we had our second meeting. Basically, we started from where we had left off at the first meeting. We defined as best we could where our heads were right then, and from there we got into a discussion of personal and political material, from which emerged an agreement that we all defined ourselves as lesbian feminists.

We could not meet the following week, so we resumed our group on Monday, May 14, our third meeting. We were feeling frustrated about talking about what was happening (Rev. W. Alberts being thrown out of his church for marrying two homosexuals, the seeming disintegration of Ms. Magazine into another Ladies' Home Journal, the difficulty of deciding what directions and tactics would best be used for the Gay Movement). We decided it was time for action.

In the course of a lengthy discussion about feminist versus gay issues, a consensus emerged that: 1) lesbianism is definitely a valid feminist issue (the right of every woman to fulfill her human and sexual potential in whatever way she chooses being a necessary element in women's liberation), and 2) the women's movement can and should provide a forum for the airing of gay issues and work toward ending the oppression of gay women. We therefore decided to form a small core group which would have as its major goals the improvement of gay - straight relations within the women's movement and enlisting the support of women's groups for gay issues.

As one of our first actions, we have written a letter to the editorial board of Ms. Magazine protesting their lack of coverage of anything gay. There has not been a single mention of lesbianism in Ms. since September of 1972 (see Kay Silk's article on Ms. in last month's FOCUS), and we feel strongly that this omission contradicts the stated policy of Ms., which is to speak to and for all women. In our letter we offered to write articles about gay women's issues for Ms., and suggested several specific ways in which the magazine could improve its coverage in this area.

Besides writing to Ms., we have written to other women's groups and plan to participate in the Women's Workshop at Gay Pride Week. We are all working toward the same goal -- to combat oppression. If we cannot be supportive of each other, can any of us succeed? We need an honest and open flow of communication between women's groups. We need a means to work together and a way to recognize differing needs between groups, both gay and straight.

We hope and believe that we and DOB can work together to produce some means to healthy and positive ends. We encourage any support, help, information and ideas you may have and welcome you to work with us toward our goals.

CONTACT: Mimi, Holly, Andrea, Lois, Margo or Wendy

OR WRITE: Boston Feminists for Lesbian Liberation, P.O. Box 408, W. Somerville, Mas

FOCUS

Furor in New Hampshire

A newly-approved student gay group at the University of New Hampshire at Durham has encountered objections on the part of state officials, fueled by an article in the Manchester Union Leader on May 20. According to a member of the gay group, the Union Leader called them "pansies" and "fairies", and the Governor of the state found the University's approval "repulsive."

Old West minister in trouble

On April 7 the Rev. William Alberts of Old West Methodist Church on Cambridge St. in Boston performed a marriage ceremony for two of his parishioners, Bob Jones and Harry Freeman. On April 30 Bishop Edward G. Carroll told Alberts: "You are not appointable in June. You are sick and will be put on disability leave."

The two men and Alberts had spoken with the Bishop before the wedding and knew that he was opposed to the ceremony. At that time, according to Alberts, there was no mention that he might not be re-appointed at Old West. The matter is now in the hands of the Board of Ministries, which is supposed to give a recommendation.

The annual meeting of the Southern New England Conference convenes June 7 in South Hadley, Mass. The conference, composed of two delegates from each parish, could take a stand and would have the final say, except for a possible appeal to the National Judicial Council of the Methodist Church.

The controversy has received much Boston press coverage. At time of FOCUS printing, an article by Alberts was scheduled for the Boston Globe Magazine on June 2.

Gay Pride Week in Boston

Don't miss it -- see the calendar.

Gay center burns

The new gay center in Buffalo, New York was burned out on March 23. The cause was probably faulty wiring. The loss represented several thousands of dollars. One person was seriously burned. (ADVOCATE, April 25, 1973)

Presbyterian and Methodist groups fund Gays. The Lesbian Resource Center in Minneapolis has received \$2500 for operating expenses from the Presbyterians' Women in Leadership Project and \$1800 from the United Methodist Voluntary Services. (ADVOCATE, April 25 and June 6)

Presbyterian magazine features on homosexuality. The July/August issue of TRENDS Magazine, published by the United Presbyterian Church, will be about "Homosexuality: Neither Sin Nor Sickness. For a copy send \$1.00 to Room 723, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, Penna. 19107.

American Psychiatric Association

The A.P.A. made no change in its classification of homosexuality as an illness in its annual convention in Honolulu in May. (ADVOCATE, June 6, 1973)

Women's History Archive in Berkeley lost its meager funding early in May. They are in desperate need of money and help. The library maintains a collection of hundreds of women's periodicals and other publications, including FOCUS. If you want to help, the address is on the front page of FOCUS.

Philadelphia

Two new services for gay women: Lesbian Hotline 6:00 P.M.--2:00 A.M. Sat. through Tuesday, 215-SA9-2001; Gay Women's Open House Saturday nights at 8:00 P.M., Women's Center, 4634 Chester Ave., Philadelphia, Penna. 19143.

England

A FOCUS reader has told us that the English magazine ARENA THREE has become GAY PUBLICATIONS, which you can get for 35 p from Gay Publications, P.O. Box 20, Newbury, Berkshire, England

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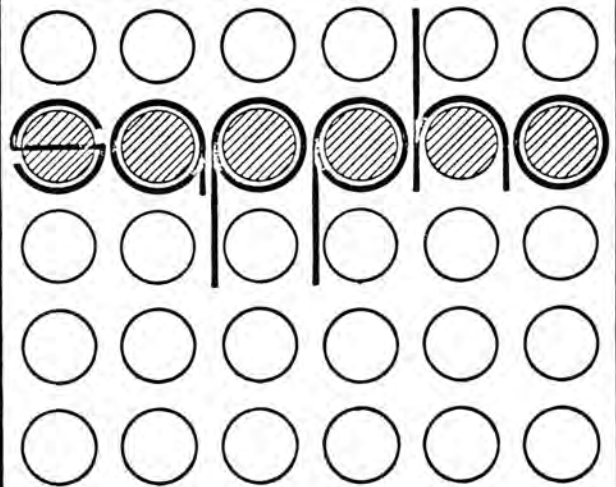
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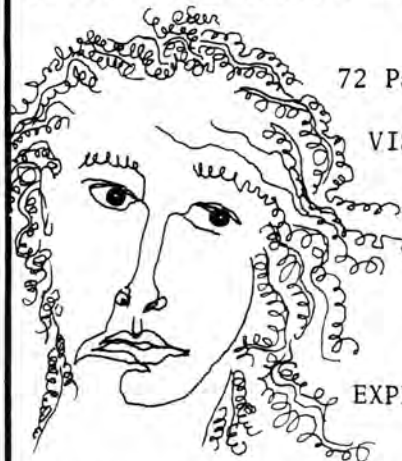
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