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### About BTWOF

Books To Watch Out For publishes monthly e-letters celebrating books on various topics. Each issue includes new book announcements, brief reviews, commentary, news and, yes, good book gossip.

### The Lesbian Edition

covers both lesbian books and the whole range of books lesbians like to read. It covers news of both the women in print movement and mainstream publishing. Written and compiled by Suzanne Corson.

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### The Gay Men's Edition

announces and reviews new books by and about gay men as well as other books of interest and gay publishing news. Written and compiled by Richard Labonte.

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### More Books for Women

covers the finest in thinking women's reading, plus mysteries, non-sexist

## The Lesbian Edition

Volume 3 Number 8

The exploration of our lives, past and present, seems to be the theme of this issue. Two long-awaited histories were recently published, one on gay Los Angeles and the other on the founding of the Daughters of Bilitis. In addition, there's William Mann's excellent biography of Katharine Hepburn, S. Bear Bergman's **Butch is a Noun** - the best book about butches I've read, and Patricia Nell Warren on lesbians and gays throughout the history of sport. And that's just the nonfiction!

We hope you enjoy this (slightly tardy) issue and find some good ideas for your winter reading.

Suzanne Corson

### Another Look at Kate

I'm still not finished with the more than six hundred pages in William Mann's **Kate**, but I don't want to wait until the next issue to tell you about it. It's big, meaty, and very tasty for lovers of biography and of course, Katharine Hepburn.

Unlike James Robert Parish's *Katharine Hepburn: The Untold Story*, reviewed by Carol Seajay in [TLE #21](#), *Kate* is not full of innuendo - rather, Mann's book is well researched, carefully constructed, and meticulously documented. (And unlike Parish, Mann is not at all squeamish about using the f-word.) Any speculations or assumptions he makes about his subject are labeled as such, and he explains the conclusions he draws. Most responsibly, he not only examines her life in the context of the time she lived but through her lens as much as possible.

One example of how he does so is in his discussions of her sexuality. "...I attempt to understand Hepburn's sexuality the way I attempt to understand everything else about her, as part of the larger narrative of her life and legend." Mann continues: "Yet, it's also time to take off the blinders. That Hepburn loved other women, that she made her life with women, is a defining aspect of her story." He does discuss Hepburn's relationships with various women and her awareness of lesbianism - vis a vis her "aunts," Bertha Rembaugh and Mary Towle, other friends of Hepburn's feminist mother, and Hepburn's tenure at Bryn Mawr, including a trip to see the lesbian-themed play, *The Captive*, on Broadway. But he also spends a great deal of time exploring Hepburn's own expression of her gender. This statement from the preface sums it up well:

"Taking her at her own word is far more useful than attempting to pin her with a modern-day label. 'When you come right down to it,' she said, 'I haven't lived life as a woman at all. I've lived life as a man.' She said this, or variants thereof, numerous times. Significantly, she saw herself as 'the man who cleaned the furnace,' not the 'woman,' not the 'person.' ... The sort of fame and power that, in her day, came much more commonly to men than to women made it possible for her to make her own choices and do as she pleased. Yet there's possibly more meaning in her words. Katharine Hepburn, who shaved her head and renamed herself 'Jimmy' at the age of ten, lived life as a man - a heterosexual man - not just in terms of a man's privilege but in the way a man sees, perceives, and interacts with his world.



children's books, and news from women's publishing. Written by the owners and staff at Women & Children First, and friends.

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**Q.** How does BTWOF define "a lesbian book?"

**A.** We think that any book that belongs to a lesbian is a lesbian book, just as any bike that belongs to a girl is "a girl's bike."

#### **BTWOF: The Lesbian Edition**

covers a wide range of books likely to be of interest to our readers as well as books with lesbian content and books by lesbian writers.



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 San Francisco, CA 94188.

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She often spoke of herself as distinct from other women, as a completely different creature."

Mann surmises that this can help illuminate why Hepburn was often at odds with feminists in the seventies, famously saying that women "cannot have it all" on TV in 1973.

His main focus is the "legend" of Katharine Hepburn - how the actor, her agent, her friends, and others in her inner circle constructed, maintained, and manipulated Katharine's back story as well as media coverage of her personal relationships. Mann takes oft-told stories about Hepburn, shows how they were played out in the media, how the players in the stories themselves discussed the events back in the day, and then Mann re-examines the events based on later conversations with the folks involved, after Hepburn's death, as well as by placing them alongside other elements of Hepburn's life, to point out incongruities. Hepburn's relationship with Spencer Tracy, among others, is carefully dissected in this manner.

*Publishers Weekly* said of Mann's book, "This will surely be the definitive version of Hepburn's life for decades to come, as it is an outstanding example of painstaking research matched with splendid writing." Agreed. And it definitely deserved *PW's* ranking of it as one of the best biographies of 2006. I do wonder, however, what a feminist scholar would do with the kinds of material Mann has collected - and with the intricacies involved in navigating both sexual orientation and gender expression - and I hope we don't have to wait decades to find out. Henry Holt & Company, \$30, 9780805076257.

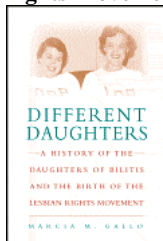
New in paper:

*Warrior Poet: A Biography of Audre Lorde*, Alexis De Veaux, W.W. Norton, \$17.95, 9780393329353.



#### **Our History**

The book I'd been most anticipating this Fall was Marcia M. Gallo's **Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Birth of the Lesbian Rights Movement**, and I was not disappointed. My knowledge of the DOB prior to this was largely legend - I knew Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon were two of the founders, of course, that *The Ladder* was its widely passed around newsletter (in which Lorraine Hansberry had once written) and that there were chapters across the country, but I didn't know much about what the group's purpose was, what they *did*, and what they stood for. One reason for that might have been that those items were debated within the group itself as Gallo's book respectfully examines. Even from the beginning, in 1955 with the four founding couples, the naming of the group was "the first - and only - unanimous decision the four founding members would make."



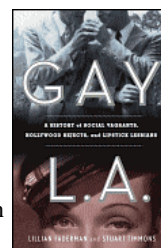
There were disagreements about whether DOB should be primarily a social group - and should those social activities be private or open to the public? - or an activism-based one, about whether or not DOB should affiliate itself with other organizations - and if so, which ones, and once it spread nationally, how much autonomy, or not, the local chapters should have from the national organization.

And then there were the milestones: the national DOB conferences, which were

the first large public gatherings of lesbians in the U.S; the 1958 *Ladder* readership "sociological survey," which was the first time lesbians studied lesbians; and the use of the word "lesbian" on the *Ladder*, the first time the word appeared on the cover of a national recurring publication.

I drank it all up - the dyke drama, the political discussions, the impact of the group, the history of the *Ladder*, and all the women whose words found their way to those pages, how DOB interacted with other organizations, and the impact of feminism and the late-sixties, early-seventies women's movement on DOB. Since DOB as a national organization was gone by the time I came out in the late eighties, I have no personal knowledge of the accuracy of Gallo's reportage, but I can say that her presentation of the material seems careful, respectful, and transparent. She explains who she was able to speak with and who she wasn't - and why. (The appendix includes a list of everyone she interviewed, along with a bibliography and extensive endnotes.) When opposing viewpoints exist, she gives each a voice. The former bookseller in me wishes that Gallo's book had a different title, so it won't be confused with the Louise Rafkin anthology on mothers and their lesbian daughters, but other than that, I found this book a great read and recommend it. Carroll and Graf, \$26.95, 9780786716340.

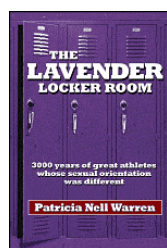
Another book I eagerly awaited was **Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians**, co-written by Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. I grew up near L.A., but as a late bloomer, I didn't come out until I moved away. It was very interesting to read about my hometown-area with a lavender lens.



Faderman and Timmons begin before there even was a city of angels, with the legend of Queen Califia and her masculine women subjects. Continuing on to the arrival of the Spanish missionaries, the authors relate how the different Indian tribes "had always recognized that some males, as well as some females, were different from conventional men and women" and that they "had given those who were different an honorable place in their communities."

Hollywood plays a large role in this book, which makes sense, as do the various real estate booms in the Southland. Organizations such as the Mattachine Society, ONE, and the Daughters of Bilitis are also discussed, as are the various nightspots, publications (such as the still-publishing *Lesbian News*), and businesses that catered to LGBT Angelinos. The authors also explore the many groups for queers of color, the founding of the Metropolitan Community Church, LGBT politicians, and the impact of AIDS.

*Gay L.A.* is a wonderful combination of history, socio-political commentary, and delightful dish. Thanks to Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons for shining the spotlight on the queerdom known as Los Angeles. Basic Books, \$27.50, 9780465022885.



Patricia Nell Warren bit off a larger timespan to chew - 3,000 years. Her new book is **The Lavender Locker Room: 3000 Years of Great Athletes Whose Sexual Orientation was Different**, a collection of her essays originally published on Outsports.com. Known predominantly for her fiction, such as the seminal novel *The Front Runner*, her extensive knowledge of queers in sports and her love of all things athletic are clear with this new text.

She begins with Achilles and Patroclus and her annoyance that Hollywood de-gayed "one of the great gay couples of all time" in the Brad Pitt movie *Troy*. Then she presents Joan of Arc as a sports icon with her jousting prowess. Men and women skilled in fencing, horse racing and hot-air ballooning are profiled along with expected subjects like tennis great Bill Tilden and all-around sportswoman Babe Didrikson Zaharias. Rodeo, ice skating, and track and field also get their due, as do swimmer Diana Nyad and, naturally, Martina Navratilova.

I wasn't fond of the mix of fictionalized scenarios and historical facts in some of the chapters, but I really enjoyed learning about Ana María Martínez Sagi from Spain and how the author discovered her story. And how fun to find Amelia Earhart in these pages, as "the odd girl of air racing." Apparently there are enough additional stories to fill a forthcoming sequel, but in the meantime, sports fans will enjoy this trip through history. Wildcat Press, \$24.95, 9781889135076.

*Erratum:* In [TLE #25](#), we reviewed William Lipsky's *Gay and Lesbian San Francisco*. Turns out this was *not* Arcadia Publishing's first LGBT-themed book. Arcadia has also published *Gay and Lesbian Philadelphia* (9780738510002), *Gay and Lesbian Washington, D.C.* (9780738517537), and *San Francisco's Castro* (9780738528663).

## Carol Seajay on Ann Aldrich's *We Walk Alone* and *We, Too, Must Love*

BTWOF publisher Carol Seajay returns to *The Lesbian Edition* to comment on the recent - and controversial - re-publication of Ann Aldrich's *We Walk Alone* and *We, Too, Must Love*. Read to the end for a brief update about what Carol's working on now.

I've been asking publishers to reprint the "Ann Aldrich" series about lesbian life in the fifties for years. And at last, someone has. The Feminist Press is publishing the first two books in December. "Ann Aldrich" was one of Marijane Meaker's many pen names. In 1952, she had just published the fabulously successful - and arguably first lesbian pulp novel - *Spring Fire* under the pen name Vin Packer. It sold one and a half million copies and Meaker's publisher (Dick Carroll at Gold Medal Books) wanted more.

Meaker, inspired by the books coming out on (male) homosexuality, and angered by their total lack of acknowledgement - much less inclusion - of lesbians, set out to remedy the situation with **We Walk Alone**, published in 1955. It sold so well that Gold Medal and Meaker published another (**We, Too, Must Love**) in 1958, followed by what may well be the first lesbian anthology, *Carol in a Thousand Cities* in 1960, *We Two Won't Last* in 1963, and then, almost a decade later, a cheerier, women's liberation movement influenced, *Take a Lesbian to Lunch* in 1972.

We like to think, in hindsight, that there was furor and controversy over the publication of the initial books. It was, after all, a mere thirty years after the huge *Well of Loneliness* censorship trials. (*Well* was eventually approved for sale in the USA after having been banned in England - although it was printed and published in France and thus somewhat available to the well-traveled. British authorities had hoped - indeed, had planned - to jail Radclyffe Hall and make an example of her (see [TLE #11](#)), as they had Oscar Wilde. She escaped that fate, primarily, because of the book's lack of salacious detail and its "sad" nature. I like to think of the enormous risks Hall took - jail, not to mention her literary career - in attempting to publish that book when I hear people complain about how sad and depressing the book is, or about how it isn't "sexy" enough, or how it discouraged women from becoming lesbians. I also like to think about Meaker - who had been a lesbian for half of those 30 years - and her times when she set out to write *We Walk Alone*. It's all about context.



But now, fifty years after the initial publication, there's something of a controversy about reprinting these historic novels (see Gloria Weiner's "Not the Last Word" in the Fall 2006 issue of *Lambda Book Report*, v.14, #3). The concerns, as best I understand them, are that the books say that lesbians are sick, disturbed, demented, psychologically immature, and incapable of full and complete relationships, etc., and that these ideas will be frightening to women who pick up the books without realizing the historic context and/or that the extreme right will use the books to make a case against lesbians, against gay marriage, et al.

And, of course the books *do* say all of that: Meaker cited all of the best information and the friendliest "authorities" available in the early fifties, and it wasn't a lesbian-friendly culture. What I loved about the books - when I first read them, and rereading them now - was the way Meaker put forth the beliefs of the day and then tore them apart. She offered her experience or others' experiences as evidence to the contrary, and then left the reader with other conclusions. (Regarding therapy and being "cured" of lesbianism, she first suggests and then states that most lesbians wouldn't want to be "cured" while continuing to argue for sympathetic help for lesbians dealing with depression, regret, familial alienation, and the like.) In many ways Meaker modeled many of the initiatives of the early women's liberation movement (WLM), and the writing and publishing movements that grew out of it. I want someone to go back and find the early movers and shakers of the WLM and women-in-print movement, and find out how many of them had read these books somewhere during their pre-feminist days. That may be impossible to find out at this point. But one thing is clear to me: without access to these books, we will never be able to fully understand the fifties, to reclaim our foremothers from the model wife-and-mother June Cleaver stereotype, to understand the pre-feminism history of lesbians, the power of the written word in lesbian hands, or the importance of making a place for women in the world.

I am so glad to see these books coming out again. I want all my friends to read them and remember, or read them and reflect. And I want the historians (and the filmmakers) to go to town with them!

Rereading them was a trip down memory lane: I first read *We, Too, Must Love* at 15 (in early 1966), when a sister Girl Scout snatched it off an older (16?) Scout's bookshelf. I read *We Walk Alone* and *Carol in a Thousand Cities* a few years later, after having become lovers with an older lesbian who had copies of some of the

pulps. I bought a copy of *Take a Lesbian to Lunch* five years later, at Labyris Books when I was in New York City to see the abortion clinics a group of feminists were recommending to local women looking for safe abortions.

I was alternately stunned by the books' naiveté ("the war years resulted in the final emancipation of women," p. 7), by how much has changed (may the Freudian model and psychoanalysis be gone forever!), and by how much has stayed the same - or



come around again: the use of the word "queer" rather than "gay," the invisibility of lesbians whenever the word "homosexual" is invoked by both straight people and gay men, by women's discomfort with the word "lesbian," the focus on butch/femme relationships, and - get crackin' with your history, bois - the strength and power of transvestites and the transvestite identity - and by how "embarrassed" some lesbians feel/felt by the whole phenomena. I'm always amazed by how much subversive information Meaker managed to cram into these short books: sex education (surely that was the first place I found the word

"clitoris"), cultural history, social analysis and criticism (fighting words about how McCarthyism promoted blackmail), history (dildoes in ancient India, who knew?!), references to lesbian music circuits, the state of the law, the risk of alcoholism, the likelihood of being "cured," and literary education. (What was the first thing my girlfriend and I did on reading *We, Too, Must Love*? Sex? Of course not. We went to the local newsstand and ordered every book Aldrich had referenced.) Not to mention the practical information: How to find a lesbian bar (ask the cab drivers), what to wear, what lesbian life looked like to different groups of women of different ages, priorities, and class identities and aspirations.

Were the books scary? Were they terrifying? Yes, of course they were for some women. Or rather, the times they described were. It was more than terrifying for many women, my girlfriend at the time included, to have all of society's prejudices against you and the life you wanted laid out before you in black and white. But I think it was the prejudices, not the books themselves, that scared that woman I so loved into a closet she has yet to escape. But me, I found the books to be exhilarating. They named possibilities and options. I knew I could wear gray flannel trousers and get by. They offered me a map to a future I wanted. And I took it. And I'm still grateful to Marijane Meaker for handing it to me.

And I'm grateful to the Feminist Press for reprinting them fifty years later. And I want the remaining three books as soon as possible. The first two come with new introductions by Marijane Meaker, and academic afterwords by Stephanie Foote - I hope that the next three will also include information from the day: reviews, perhaps letters from readers, reprint histories, sales venues, and anything else that would give readers more of a context for the books.

This is my history and perhaps yours. No one gets to take it away from us, hide it, be embarrassed by it, or make it go away. Are there other versions and other realities and other stories? You bet there are, and I want them all. If these books don't tell your story, then write yours down, and get it into print. Give us the full and complex picture of the times. But in the meantime, use these books as mirrors. Look how far we've come in fifty short years. And look at how very much has remained the same. *We Walk Alone*: Feminist Press, \$14.95, 9781558615250. *We, Too, Must Love*: Feminist Press, \$15.95, 9781558615274.

Yours in spreading the words,  
Carol Seajay

P.S. In my new *Mslexia*-British publisher identity, we've just published the fourth *Mslexia Writer's Diary*, a wonderful week-at-a glance calendar for women writers. Its features range from a submissions log to a menstrual calendar and include articles on keeping a writer's journal, on starting a reading and writing group, and a wonderful collection of resources for writers. Lots of quotes from writers on writing, and also on suggested reading. Don't look for Canadian or U.S. holidays, but if you can work around that, it's a great resource for writers (and readers). More details at [www.mslexia.co.uk/menu/stop\\_press/diary.html](http://www.mslexia.co.uk/menu/stop_press/diary.html).



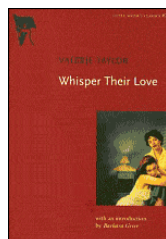
### More Pulp Classics Back in Print

Cleis Press, who recently published new editions of Ann Bannon's work and other lesbian pulp fiction writers, now brings us a classic from France. First published in 1952, **The Illusionist** by Françoise Mallet-Joris tells the story of fifteen-year-old Hélène and her affair with her father's thirty-five-year-old mistress, Tamara. Terry Castle, in her introduction to this edition, does an excellent job of placing this novel in context with both the time and place in which it was published and with similar works in the lesbian canon. One



interesting note is that the author was only nineteen when she wrote *The Illusionist*, her first of more than twenty books.

Like other lesbian-themed novels of the fifties, this story is not a happy one. Tamara is abusive, treating H el ene with contempt, disregard, and disdain in addition to the affection and fondness she sometimes demonstrates. H el ene competes with her father and Tamara's other suitors for her lover's attention and rejects her friendships with others due to her focus on Tamara. Women in general do not come off well in this novel. H el ene also learns hard lessons about class, politics, and social strata - her father is a local politician, and his relationship with divorced Tamara raises many eyebrows. Yet its story of a schoolgirl involved with an adult is not an unfamiliar or unusual one, and *The Illusionist* can be read as an erotic yet disturbing cautionary tale about the impact of such relationships. Cleis Press, \$14.95, 9781573442534.



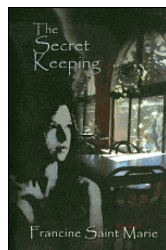
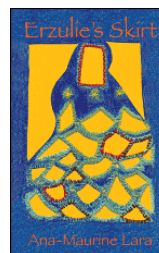
As we mentioned in [TLE #15](#), Arsenal Pulp's imprint Little Sister's Classics has been reissuing both lesbian and gay classics, such as *The Young in One Another's Arms* by Jane Rule, *Patience & Sarah* by Isabel Miller, and *Empathy* by Sarah Schulman. Number seven in the series is Valerie Taylor's **Whisper Their Love**, her first novel, originally published in 1957. It sold more than two million copies.

The Arsenal Pulp edition includes a new introduction by Barbara Grier (whose Naiad Press had published some of Taylor's later work, such as the novel *Rice and Beans*, 1989) and several appendices: the transcript of an interview with Valerie Taylor from 1995, eight poems by Taylor (from *Two Women Revisited: The Poetry of Jeannette Foster and Valerie Taylor*), and Kate Brandt's piece on Taylor from Brandt's *Happy Endings: Lesbian Writers Talk About Their Lives and Work*. Arsenal Pulp, \$15.95, 9781551522104.



## Fiction

The Dominican Republic is the setting for **Erzulie's Skirt** by Ana-Maurine Lara. Miriam and Micaela come from different rural villages and spiritual traditions, eventually meeting each other in Santo Domingo. Their strength, fortitude, and resilience swim throughout this mystical book, peppered with the traditions of Vodoun (Vud u). Think magic realism with an African Diaspora flavor, mixed with a heavy dose of survivor instinct and the desire to not accept the status quo. These women face tradition, prejudice, deceit, and abuse head on while on their path to fulfilling their dream - which brings them round circle, though not exactly back home. I strongly suggest that you read the author's reference notes and glossary in the back as an overview before beginning the novel itself, and mark these sections for easy retrieval during your read. It's a much richer experience having some fore-knowledge before opening the spirit-full pages. Redbone Press, \$15, 9780978625108.



I find the age-old bookseller question "what section do I file this book in" rearing its head as I write this review. Is it a romance? Is it fiction? Is it a mystery? **The Secret Keeping** by Francine Saint Marie does not strictly follow the formula for any particular genre, though there is the girl-wants-girl tension and some high-profile intrigue thrown in for additional spice. But the first part of the book is so quietly elegant and lovely, I placed the review here in the fiction section.

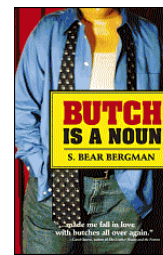
As much as I wanted to discover the secrets in "Part One: The Waiter," I also didn't want the suspense to end. Lydia has drinks with her friends each week at a restaurant near her office. She exchanges glances with a woman seated alone at another table with a book. Lydia is curious about this stranger and inexplicably drawn to her. The pace of this section is slow but not at all in a tedious way nor in a manipulative way. It's understated, deliberate, sensual, and compels the reader to continue.

I enjoyed learning about the mystery woman in the second section, but the rest of the book, including the machinations involving blackmail, the press, and lawyers didn't quite hold the charm of the beginning of the book. Still, it was interesting, and that beginning is so good, it's worth picking up *The Secret Keeping*. Spinsters, \$14.95, 9781883523770.



## Expanding Gender

I wish I could distribute "I Know What Butch Is," the first chapter of S. Bear Bergman's **Butch is a Noun**, to everyone: those who don't "believe" in butches and butch/femme, those who don't understand it, those who think it's only about fashion, those who think it's mimicking the patriarchy, *and* those who get it, embrace it, love it, struggle with it, and are turned on by it. Here are a few bits from "I Know What Butch Is":



"(B)utches are monosyllabic, until you get to know them, which they will not allow but want, or will allow and want, or will allow but don't want, or won't allow and don't want, so you may or may not get to know them but you should try, or not... Butches are not beginner FTMs, except that sometimes they are, but it's not a continuum except when it is... Butches who do those sorts of things either are Real Butches or are Not Real Butches, depending on who you ask. There, that should be perfectly clear."

This book is illuminating, emotional, thought-provoking, and respectful. Chapters on gender-neutral pronouns (ze - pronounced *zee* - in place of she or he, and hir - pronounced *here* - instead of her, him, or his), manners, dating, body image, hair, butch brotherhood, relationships with parents, dealing with femmes, online flirting, shopping, and mentorship explore the many facets of butch as a noun, adjective, and verb. Naming a favorite is impossible for me; it changes each time I flip through the book. Favorites include Taxonomy ("We need to know about gender so we can know about language") and Foie d' Butch, where ze wishes for an organ that takes in both the difficult and nourishing parts of being a butch "and then processes and balances and filters them until we are healthy enough to go on."

But I think the one I'm most impressed by is Border Wars, in which ze tackles some of the scary questions in the dyke community about butches and FTMs - who has the right to what terminology? Does "butch flight" exist? What are the generational differences? From that chapter:

"When people speak admiringly of a butch, what I see is someone who has taken on the best gendered characteristics of both woman and man, left a lot of the stuff born of misogyny and heterosexism behind, and walked forward into the world like that without apology..."

"And they (butches) are grieving, some of them, that after being thrown out of the women's movement for being too male-identified they are now being ridiculed or having their identities questioned for being not male-identified enough."

There's a lot of *there* there in this book. The author's not afraid to roll up hir sleeves and get in the muck of it all: the fear, the anger, the passion, the loss, the delight, the benefits, the grief, the discovery, the confusion, and the certainty. This is the book that had me crying, laughing, and reading aloud to friends and my lover this month. Check it out. Suspect Thoughts Press, \$16.95, 9780977158256.

Hanne Blank interviews author S. Bear Bergman about *Butch Is a Noun*:

[www.suspectthoughts.com/bergman1.htm](http://www.suspectthoughts.com/bergman1.htm).



University of Minnesota Press has just published an excellent addition to the growing literature by and about "individuals whose gender identity or expression does not conform to the social expectations for their assigned sex at birth" with **Transgender Rights**, edited by Paisley Currah, Richard M. Juang, and Shannon Price Minter. The volume is divided into three parts: the law, history, and politics. Writers include experts on gender, like Judith Butler, and the law, such as Ruthann Robson. Everything from community building and health issues to workplace discrimination and trans inclusion in gay and lesbian organizations is addressed.

There are thought-provoking articles about civil rights, human rights, and legal rights coupled with treatises on biology and sociology. Overall, an excellent collection. I especially recommend Julie A. Greenberg's piece, "The Roads Less Traveled: The Problem with Binary Sex Categories." University of Minnesota Press, \$19.95 paper, 9780816643127.

## More Nonfiction

Much has been written in mainstream media about the "lucrative gay market," with, "they" say, many dual-income-no-children households, i.e., more disposable income, and individuals with a propensity to travel more and spend more on entertainment than their heterosexual counterparts. Robert Witeck and Wesley Combs, marketing communication and public relations consultants, have written a guide on how to tap into that market with **Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Customers**. They take a research-based approach, looking at census data and market research, rather than repeating the broad-stroke assumptions made in those mainstream media articles. And they have an additional agenda: openly gay businessmen themselves, they want to help corporate America not only understand but "celebrate the many hidden yet essential contributions gay men, lesbians, bisexual men and women, and transgender people (GLBT) make to America's economy and to our public life." Their book includes discussion of explicit targeted ads vs. those that are "gay vague," profiles of existing ad campaigns that target our community, and how to handle any backlash that might occur as a result of reaching out to gay consumers. Kaplan Publishing, \$25, 9781419505201.

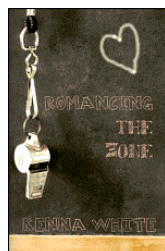
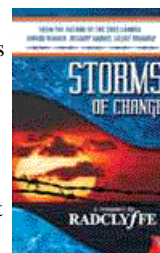


In **The New Gay Teenager**, author Ritch C. Savin-Williams argues that the category of people who have traditionally been called "gay youth" no longer exists as such, rather that many kids today resist labeling themselves in accordance with their sexuality and that their sexualities are more fluid than ever. He examines the differences between "sexual orientation," "sexual behavior," and "sexual identity," as well as what youth themselves consider "sex." Savin-Williams, who prefers the term same-sex attracted, says these kids are healthier, less suicidal, and better adjusted than has been previously recorded. While I found his arguments thought-provoking and found his look at how the study of same-sex-attracted adolescents has changed through the years interesting, I find it a bit irresponsible that there isn't more concrete statistical information to back up his conclusions - nor does there appear to be much consideration about what may be different/similar for kids of different class, racial, or religious backgrounds, or from different geographic areas. Interesting theories, but more documentation is needed to support them. Harvard University Press, \$16.95, 9780674022560.



## Friday Night Reads

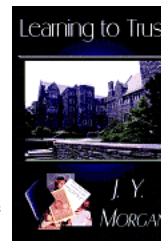
Prolific author Radclyffe returns to her Provincetown Tales series with **Storms of Change**. If you haven't read the others in the series (*Safe Harbor*, *Beyond the Breakwater*, and *Distant Shores, Silent Thunder*) fear not - Radclyffe provides enough back story in each that they can all be enjoyed independently. In *Storms of Change*, Reese, Tory, and their now nine-month-old daughter, Reggie, are back, along with Bri and Caroline, Kate and Jean, and KT and Pia. They are joined by new P-towners Rica Grechi, owner of a new art gallery in town, and attorney Carter Wayne. Drama ensues when Reese's Marine Corps Reserve unit is called up for active duty in Iraq, and intrigue is provided by Rica's family - her father is known to be a high-level leader in organized crime in Boston. Family connections of all kinds loom large in this book, as do the relationships between the main players. Time spent in P-town with these folks is entertaining, heartwarming, and scintillating, and *Storms of Change* ably continues the tradition. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 9781933110578.



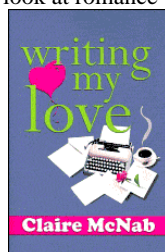
Kenna White's latest book, **Romancing the Zone**, shows her growing strength as a writer, with a carefully crafted story about a woman in her late thirties who returns to college and her collegiate basketball career. Her previous books, *Beneath the Willow* and *Shared Winds* were fine stories, but *Romancing the Zone* ups the ante, even with its slightly implausible plot. Liz Elliott owns a successful restaurant in her small town and revels in watching her nineteen-year-old daughter, Becca, as she becomes an adult. When Becca challenges Liz to return to college to finish her degree - and her final year of basketball eligibility - Liz is skeptical but

ultimately agrees. Newly appointed head coach Sheridan Ross wants to motivate her team and get them on a winning track; she doesn't want to be slowed down by an out-of-practice former basketball star. The many threads of the story are dealt with well, as is the horrible secret which Liz has kept to herself for much too long. Bella Books, \$13.95, 9781594930607.

A college campus south of Boston is the setting for **Learning to Trust** by J.Y. Morgan. Jace is the director of the Achievement Center there, and Taryn is her new graduate assistant. They are alike in many ways yet get off on the wrong foot right away at work. Both keep their thoughts and feelings deep inside, to the detriment of their personal relationships. They share in common their fondness for Anne, Jace's long-time coworker and Taryn's aunt. Even when things are tense between Jace and Taryn, they are constantly thrown together, both professionally and personally. In spite of the boundary-crossing problems with their relationship, I liked how the author developed these characters and allowed them to grow over the course of the book. Their changes were realistically bumpy, scary, and ultimately, fulfilling, and J.Y. Morgan did a fine job of both bringing them together and bringing them more to themselves. Regal Crest, \$17.95 paper, 9781932300598.



With *three* mystery series to keep her busy, Claire McNab doesn't have too much time for writing romance. **Writing My Love** joins *Under the Southern Cross* and *Silent Heart* as her contributions to this genre - and does so with a tongue-in-cheek look at romance writers and publishing itself. Vonny Smith publishes romances under the name Victoria Vanderveer. She is one of her publisher's best selling authors. The object of Vonny's affection is her editor at Crimson Loon, Diana Broswell. Too nervous to approach Diana directly, Vonny uses her work-in-progress, *Desire's Desperate Drumbeat*, to woo her oblivious editor. With main characters named Velda and Davina and their working relationship a mirror to Diana and Vonny's, Vonny hopes that Diana will get the point - and act on it. Office politics, ex-lovers, and deadlines humorously disrupt the path of true love. This short (185 pages) but entertaining book features over-the-top characters, clever references to the queer publishing world, and a glimpse at the ever-working mind of one best-selling romance writer. Bella Books, \$13.95, 9781594930638.

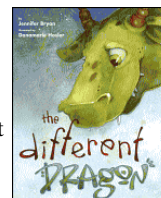


Back in print:  
*Of Drag Kings & the Wheel of Fate*, Susan Smith, Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 9781933110516.



### For the Kids

Kids love bedtime stories, both those bound between two covers and those told by a parent. **The Different Dragon** by Jennifer Bryan combines the two. Noah asks one of his two moms to tell him a story, which she does, ably assisted by Noah himself. In the story-within-a-story, Noah and his cat Diva are sailing one moonlit night when they meet a dragon who doesn't want to be the kind of dragon he's expected to be. Sailor Noah tells him he can be the kind of dragon who could join him for "badminton and then have some ice cream." *The Different Dragon* is a very sweet book with illustrations by Danamarie Hosler. Two Lives Publishing, \$10.95 paper, 9780967446868.



Children whose mothers are in choruses, or who are in choruses themselves, will love Becky Thacker's **The Chorus Kids' Memorial Day Parade**. When the City Women's Chorus gathers at their director's house to practice for the Memorial Day concert, their children of various ages entertain themselves in the backyard. They decide to have a parade, complete with kazoos, rainbow flags, and costumes. The backyard seems much too small for such an elaborate production, so they go out to the sidewalk, the older children being careful to attend to the younger. But when Officer Janet tells them they can't have a parade without a permit, their parade comes to a halt... until one of the chorus members comes to the rescue and applies for a permit downtown. Though not specifically lesbian, this is a delightfully spirited book, suitable for kids 3-6, with illustrations by the author. Seeds and Toads Press, \$10.95 paper, 9780978627614. Order from [www.m2print.com](http://www.m2print.com).

Middle-school children can read "both sides of an issue" in the Hot Topics series published by Lucent Books. In addition to *Overweight America*, *Students' Rights*, and *Biological Warfare*, now they can learn about issues such as gay marriage, parenting, and workplace issues in **Gay Rights** by Tina Kafka. This thin textbook-type volume is colorful and eye-catching, with cartoons, photographs, and sidebars



breaking up the text which presents the viewpoints of both proponents and opponents on these issues. And the author *does* present divergent viewpoints, while also pointing out what data does - and does not - support these viewpoints. Kafka did a fine job of clearly presenting the issues involved, explaining the arguments, and, with the study questions in the back, encouraging the readers to come to their own conclusions based on the information presented. Pricey for a casual read, this would make a great donation to your local school's or public library. Lucent/Thomson/Gale, \$31.20 hardcover, 9781590186374.



## Calendars and Datebooks

At Boadecia's, our bestselling datebook each year was *We'Moon* by Mother Tongue Ink. Colorful, inspirational, convenient, and packed with useful information, we sometimes had trouble keeping them in stock. This year the theme for **We'Moon '07: Gaia Rhythms for Womyn** is "On Purpose." The datebook, again available in layflat, spiral bound, and unbound (so you can use it in your DayRunner-type binder) formats, features full-color art, inspiring poems and prose, sun and moon signs and transits, a planetary ephemeris, and much more. The 12"x12" wall calendar has larger versions of twelve of the beautiful art pieces and shows the phase of the moon each day. The 5.25"x8" datebooks are each \$17.95 (layflat: 189093139X, spiral: 1890931381, unbound: 1890931403), and *We'Moon on the Wall* is \$13.95 (1890931411).

Luna Press also returns with their '07 *Lunar Calendar: Dedicated to the Goddess in Her Many Guises*. Their pages show the moon's phases in a unique spiral format - beautiful, but not much room for writing, so it is best viewed as a piece of art rather than a place to jot down appointments. In addition to full astronomical and astrological data, it also includes an excellent bibliography. \$23, 1877920177.

The *Women Artists Datebook* from Syracuse Cultural Workers is also back, featuring art and poetry by Susan Davitti Darling, Ellen Bass, and Rachel Guido deVries, among others. Spiral bound in a 5"x7" size, it also includes a menstrual calendar, the lunar cycles, and a list of women's resources. \$13.95, 0935155597.

Pomegranate again presents its *Reading Woman Calendar* and hardcover engagement calendar, each with reproductions of paintings showing women with a book and featuring quotations by women about reading. The engagement book contains both weekly and monthly grids. Engagement calendar: 6 5/8" x 8", \$14.95, 076493564X. Wall calendar: 12"x13", \$13.99, 0764935682.

For those wanting explicit lesbian imagery in their calendars, photographer Judy Francesconi has printed a limited run of *On the Lips 2007*, which features sensual black and white photographs of couples. For more information: [www.judyfrancesconi.com/bookstore/calendars.php](http://www.judyfrancesconi.com/bookstore/calendars.php).

10% Productions has one women's calendar this year, *Sirens 2007*, with photographs of solo women by Torben Raun (\$14.95). They've also published a calendar called *History of Gay America: From the Beginning of a Nation to the Debate on Gay Marriage* (\$14.95). See [www.10percent.com](http://www.10percent.com) for more about both of these wall calendars.



## Interview with Angela Brown about *Subterraneans: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Writing*

Angela Brown, former editor in chief at Alyson Books, has just launched a new web-based venue for lesbian and gay writing and photography. The first issue, online now at [www.subterraneansonline.com](http://www.subterraneansonline.com), features work by Lisa E. Davis (*Under the Mink*), Bett Williams (*The Wrestling Party*, *Girl Walking Backwards*) and Bridget Bufford (*Minus One*), among others. We recently spoke to Angela about her new venture:

### **BTWOF: What prompted your decision to start an online lesbian and gay journal?**

**Angela Brown:** Honestly, it kind of happened by accident. I was looking for a web designer for my freelance editing company, and a friend suggested I invest in iWeb, a web-design program for Mac users. I bought it and was wowed by how easy it is to use - especially for someone like me who had never designed a website. Then I thought, *What else can I do with this? I know! An online lesbian and gay literary journal.* There are some really terrific online venues for lesbian and gay fiction writers out there - including *Blithe House Quarterly*, which I absolutely love - but I wanted to create a site that also included nonfiction, poetry, artwork, and photography.

### **BTWOF: Was the name inspired at all by the Jack Kerouac novel of the same name?**

**AB:** Yes! I'm a big fan of Kerouac's writing - and the work of the Beat writers in general, especially Allen Ginsberg. Most people consider Kerouac's *Subterraneans* to be a semi-fictional account of a love affair he had with a black woman in the 1950s. But others claim the novel is a cleaned-up account of the affair he had with Gore Vidal. For the site, I wanted to choose a name that reflects the current (and past) political and social climate surrounding being gay or lesbian. Even people who are out - myself included - make choices everyday about whether to reveal who they are. In effect, all of us live underground at some point in our lives.

### **BTWOF: How did you find such an eclectic group of contributors? How did you publicize your initial call for submissions?**

**AB:** I'm a member of several online gay and lesbian writers' groups, so that definitely helped. But I found most of the writers through ads I posted on Craigslist! Now that *Subterraneans* is live, people are really spreading the word, and my inbox has been flooded with submissions.

### **BTWOF: In the current letter from the editor on the site, you mention that the writing in the first issue changed you, and that was a surprise for you. Would you elaborate on how you were changed?**

**AB:** Except for some fiction anthologies I'd compiled and edited, I'd been away from gay and lesbian publishing for more than a year, and I missed it a lot; it's one of the reasons I started *Subterraneans*. So many of the essays, stories, and poems I received really moved me. And they reminded me of one of the great joys of being an editor: giving people a forum to tell their stories. I feel blessed to be able to do that, to create a place for that kind of exposing of the self. It's a very intimate action, and I'd almost forgotten what it felt like.

### **BTWOF: How is the site funded?**

**AB:** Solely through individual donations. Down the line, I hope to get some advertising for the site, but I want to be very selective about the number and kinds of ads that appear. No one wants to be bombarded with ads. There's more than enough of that on the web.

### **BTWOF: How often do you plan to offer new issues and will the old ones be archived?**

**AB:** A new issue of *Subterraneans* will appear every two months, and the next issue is due out in February 2007. All past issues will be archived on the site. I've put way too much work into designing and editing *Subterraneans* to let past issues disappear. [laughs]

Angela Brown has edited more than thirty anthologies, including *Mentsh: On Being Queer and Jewish* and is in the process of completing her first novel, *I Fall To Pieces: A Kit Gunning Mystery*. Check out the current issue of *Subterraneans: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Writing*, writers' guidelines, and information about making donations at [www.subterraneansonline.com](http://www.subterraneansonline.com).



### More Lesbian Literature Online

GLB Publishers have created a lesbian e-magazine to showcase short fiction. They want to provide a venue for novellas, which they define as fiction with 25,000 to 55,000 words. They explain that novellas are often hard to sell in book form, since their spines are so narrow and can't be seen well on a bookshelf in a bookstore, but they are well suited for downloading to individual computers. Go to [www.e-lesmag.com](http://www.e-lesmag.com) for more information.

Alicia Goranson interviewed her co-Project QueerLit winner Peggy Munson about Munson's novel *Origami Striptease* (reviewed in [TLE #24](#)): [www.suspectthoughts.com/munson.htm](http://www.suspectthoughts.com/munson.htm).

...and Peggy Munson interviewed Alicia Goranson about *Supervillainz* (reviewed in [TLE #25](#)): [www.suspectthoughts.com/goranson.htm](http://www.suspectthoughts.com/goranson.htm).



### Bloody Brits Press

Kelly Smith, Bywater Books publisher, has teamed up with best-selling mystery author Val McDermid to bring British mystery writers across the pond to North America. Bloody Brits Press, an imprint of Bywater Books, will also republish McDermid's Kate Brannigan series; they've also released *Star Struck*, the newest novel featuring Manchester P.I. Brannigan. For more information: [www.bloodybritspress.com](http://www.bloodybritspress.com).



### Books To Watch Out For

There hasn't been a new Lisa Alther (*Kinflicks*) book since 1995's *Five Minutes in Heaven*. So I'm pleased to share the news that 2007 will bring the publication of *Kinfolks: Falling Off the Family Tree, In Search of My Melungeon Ancestors*, a humorous travelogue memoir. For more information about Lisa, check out her website, [www.lisaalther.com](http://www.lisaalther.com).

Fans of folk singer Ronnie Gilbert will be happy to hear that she's written a new memoir, *Ronnie Gilbert: A Radical Life with Songs*, which will be published by University of California Press. In addition to the story of the Weavers, in which Ronnie was the only female member, the book will discuss the censorship she and the Weavers faced and the revived interest in their music. Gilbert is also the author of *Ronnie Gilbert on Mother Jones: Face to Face With the Most Dangerous Woman in America*, published by Conari Press in 1993.



### Passing

Former Charis Books co-owner Sherry Emory passed away in November. From the note Charis sent to the community: "Sherry was a warrior, living for over two years with stage 4 breast cancer. For many years, Sherry was at the heart of Charis Books, offering a warm smile along with insightful book guidance to so many people. She did so much for Charis, staffing almost all of the programs in the early years, doing all the bookkeeping, and doing her share of book-ordering and all the other things that it takes to not only keep a business going, but also to serve the community in unspoken ways day after day." After leaving Charis in 2001, she served as a librarian in a Jewish school and later moved to Florida, where her twin sister lives. An education fund has been set up for Sherry's 16-year-old daughter, Rivka, in Sherry's memory. Donation checks should be made payable to Sherry's sister, Susan Garlock, with "Rivka" on the subject line and mailed to 1737 NE 26th Dr., Wilton Manors, FL 33334.



## Briefly Noted

BookFinder.com recently released a list of the out-of-print books that are most sought out by their customers. Number one on the fiction list is Lynne Cheney's *Sisters*, which Carol discussed in [TLE #5](#).

Annie Leibovitz, whose most recent book is **A Photographer's Life: 1990-2005** (Random House, \$75, 9780375505096), discussed her relationship with "longtime soulmate" Susan Sontag on NPR recently. You can hear the show online at [www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061017\\_b\\_main.asp](http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061017_b_main.asp).

No surprise to any of us, but *Publishers Weekly* named Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* as one of the Best Graphic Novels of the year: [www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6388897.html?nid=2789](http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6388897.html?nid=2789).

*Chroma: A Queer Literary Journal* announced that Sarah Waters will be one of the short story judges for their next writing competition. Entries should be mailed to Chroma Writing Competition, PO Box 44655, London N16 0WQ. Poems up to 50 lines, stories - 5,000 words. Entry fee is £5/\$10 per story/poem. Deadline is September 10, 2007. Chroma can be found online at [www.chromajournal.co.uk](http://www.chromajournal.co.uk).



## Calls for Submissions

Richard Labonté and Lawrence Schimel are seeking work for their forthcoming anthology *First Person Queer: Who We Are, Where We've Come From, Where We're Going*, for publication in Fall 2007 by Arsenal Pulp Press. They want "first person essays from across the spectrum of queer experience that depict the diversity, the complexity, and the excitement of contemporary GLBTQ life. We want to be surprised, and to surprise our readers, with intensely personal experiences from writers of diverse genders, ages, races, and orientations, informing us about unusual aspects of our lives." Under 1500 words, prose or graphic/comix narratives; no poetry. Deadline: Feb. 28, 2007. Submit your work by email, as an attachment in .doc format, with author's last name and story title in the file name: Surname-Title.doc, to Richard Labonté at: [fpqueer@gmail.com](mailto:fpqueer@gmail.com). Please include contact details and bio in the .doc file, not just in your email; submissions that are considered will be separated from the emails.

"Out in the World" is Haworth Press's new gay and lesbian travel literary series. Proposals for books can range from the erotic, to the literary to the academic, fiction or nonfiction, and can be anthologies or the work of one author. Proposals should be clearly presented, with a synopsis, marketing outline, a CV of previous works, and a bio. Guidebook proposals are not being considered at the moment. For more information, or questions on presenting a proposal, contact Series Editor Michael Luongo at [mtluongo@aol.com](mailto:mtluongo@aol.com) or [mtluongo@hotmail.com](mailto:mtluongo@hotmail.com).

Bruin Christopher Runyan is looking for nonfiction essays, up to 6,000 words for *Less Than Settled: Critical Perspectives on Travel and Privilege*. "This anthology seeks to address critical questions around western privilege and international travel. Specifically, how do activists, organizers, critical thinkers, radicals, progressives, and subversives bring or don't bring their politics with them when they travel to the third world/two-thirds world/global south." Also sought are pieces from "those who have decided not to travel and from those who travel but feel less than settled about it." Deadline: June 30, 2007. Send essays to: Less Than Settled, c/o Bruin Christopher Runyan, 1643 South King Street Seattle, WA 98144. Questions: email [bruinator@gmail.com](mailto:bruinator@gmail.com).

The deadline has been extended to Ash Wednesday, February 21, 2007, for the "Queer and Catholic" anthology to be edited by Amie M. Evans and Trebor Healey. From the call for submissions: "This anthology seeks to explore positively or negatively how being raised Catholic informs our queerness and how our queerness affects our Catholicism....We are really more interested in the culture of Catholicism rather than the dogma or letter of it." They're looking for previously unpublished personal essays, narrative prose, and creative nonfiction between 1,500-5,000 words. Email [pussywhippedproductions@hotmail.com](mailto:pussywhippedproductions@hotmail.com) or write them at 33 Campbell St., Woburn, MA 01801.

Also extended, until May 31, 2007, is the deadline for an anthology of coming-out-while-married stories by black lesbians. RedBone Press seeks well-written personal stories by black lesbians on the subject of coming out while married to a man and stories from women who are partnered with formerly married women, addressing their point of view surrounding these issues. Journal entries, personal essays, creative autobiographical fiction, poetry, or whatever way the words come. This book is intended to be a resource for black women coming out of marriage and for the women who love them. Contact RedBone for more details: [redbonepress@yahoo.com](mailto:redbonepress@yahoo.com) or write to P.O. Box 15571, Washington, DC 20003.



## Lesbian Literary Quiz

This October more than 3,000 lesbians gathered for the 2006 York Lesbian Arts Festival. We'll have a report from BTWOF publisher Carol Seajay, who was able to travel to York this year from her new home in Newcastle, in a future **Lesbian Edition**. In the meantime, we have a game to pass along. At the festival, literary quotations were placed about. We have the list below, thanks to the YLAF, so you can test your knowledge of lesbian literature through the ages by guessing the author of each quotation. Answers will appear in TLE #27.

Literary Quotes - Guess the Author of the Literary Quotes

© Robyn Vinten, 2006 for YLAF

1. The charming Musick of thy Tongue  
Does ever hear and everlong:  
That sees with more than human Grace  
Sweet smiles adorn thy Angel Face.
2. Fair lovely Maid, or if that Title be  
Too weak, too feminine for Noble thee,  
Permit a Name that more Approaches Truth  
And let me call thee, Lovely Charming Youth
3. The Manly Young Lady.  
This specimen is found mostly in those counties where there is good hunting and prefers north to south.
4. ...If any of your friends are going to Llangollen pray recommend them to the King's head or New Hotel.
5. When you are a mother you never know the minute that your child will go and do something downright peculiar.
6. 'This is a pleasant, lazy way of life, to be sure. But,' she thought giving her legs a kick, 'these skirts are plaguey things to have about one's heels.'
7. As a wife has a cow a love story
8. Next to my skin, her pearls
9. Among the dire results of my 'unnaturalness' I had been told I should go blind and mad.
10. As the air changes or the lightening comes without our blinking  
Change as our kisses are changing without our thinking
11. Aunty Em was the first woman who ever smoked a cigarette in Buffalo.
12. She was constantly giving things away... She was as if deciduous.  
It was as if her languorous body rejected anything that would give it a third dimension.
13. "We are not Queer. How can you say that? I'm very feminine, how can you call me Queer?"
14. You pearl, she says... Her voice broken. You pearl.
15. If I could not put Louise out of my mind I would drown myself in her.
16. Why is the measure of love loss?



That's it for this issue of **The Lesbian Edition**. We'll be back very soon with our annual survey of the Best Books of 2006 - and more great books to watch out for.

If you give gifts during the winter holiday season - or any time for that matter - please consider a gift subscription to one or more of the three editions of [Books To Watch Out For](#). Your friends who love to read will thank you for it!

Suzanne Corson  
[editor@bookstowatchoutfor.com](mailto:editor@bookstowatchoutfor.com)  
 for *Books To Watch Out For*  
 PO Box 882554, San Francisco, CA 94188  
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