



Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement

Marcia M. Gallo

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Nearly fifteen years before the birth of gay liberation, the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) was the world's first organization committed to lesbian visibility and empowerment. Like its predominantly gay male counterpart, the Mattachine Society, DOB was launched in response to the oppressive anti-homosexual climate of the McCarthy era, when lesbian and gay people were arrested, fired from jobs, and had their children taken away simply because of their sexual orientation. It was against this political backdrop that a circle of San Francisco lesbians formed a private club where lesbians could meet others in a safe, affirming setting. The small social group evolved over the next two decades into a national organization that counted more than a dozen chapters, and laid the foundation for today's lesbian rights movement.

Different Daughters chronicles this movement and the women who fought the church and state in order to change not only our nation's perception of homosexuality but how lesbians see themselves. Marcia Gallo has interviewed dozens of former DOB members, many of whom have never spoken on record. Through its leaders, magazine, and network of local chapters, DOB played a crucial role in creating lesbian identity, visibility, and political strategies in Cold War America.

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