



Lesbian Perspective

Lesbian Organization of Toronto

342 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ont.

960-3249

March 1980

Tuesday and Friday Evenings

OPEN LETTER TO THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

It is with an enormous sigh of relief that I sit here at the typewriter knowing that this is my last time to work as a member of the Newsletter Collective. It is just over a year and a half ago that I started working as part of the collective and for the past year and more have put more energy into this aspect of LOOT than any other. Because I was not employed most of the time, I managed never to be too discouraged when we didn't have enough help and often little commitment. However, this too has passed. The proverbial burnout about which I have been warned many times, by seeing it happen to others over and over again, has finally taken its toll with me.

Thus, as of this issue, I am resigning from the Collective. I do so with no regrets. I need time for myself for various reasons (sanity for one) and I am going back to school again for an intensive year of retraining in electronics which necessarily

means a lot of studying. Third priority at this time is with Atthis Theatre. Truly I need a very long leave of absence from all LOOT commitments.

I also have no regrets that I did commit myself because there are naturally a great many rewards doing something for our community. Being involved with this particular area has perhaps made me learn

faster and more thoroughly about lesbian feminism and our special sisterhood because it is necessary to try to keep in touch with everything that is happening. I have enjoyed working with Val in the past, Maureen and Pat more recently and wish mainly that there had been enough of us to prevent burnout situations for anyone.

I do hope that women will consider the Newsletter important enough to revitalize it with numbers and therefore the kind of energy to keep it going, experiment with it, improve on it. I would still like to try to do some decent writing again, something which I haven't felt unpressured enough to do for many months. I will not disappear completely. It has been great to have a forum for lesbians to communicate as we do in the LOOT Newsletter. It continues to have great potential so let's not deny it womyn power.

In sisterhood,
Karen Henderson

DO YOU WANT A NEWSLETTER?

Lesbian Perspective, the LOOT Newsletter, is desperately in need of womyn power in every area of the paper. If not, it may be forced to fold. It is the only lesbian publication we know of in Canada. Do you want to keep it going? If you are concerned, meet with the women still with the collective on TUESDAY, MARCH 18th, 7:30 pm to see which way you may become involved. Things taken for granted eventually disappear.

INCEST

A Nice Name for Daughter-rape

From infancy to early adolescence, I was sexually violated by my "father", the prick my mother thought she had to live with. As an adult, I have become aware of how prevalent this experience is for women-children. In the last five years, many women have studied and written on this taboo subject. Many of us who have tried to bury our memories and feelings about it, who have tried to write it off as a "freak" occurrence, have, as a result of these new writings and discussions, stirred up a troublesome old brew. I am one who is struggling to put it in the context of my evolution as a separatist.

Rising anger and awareness around daughter-rape is generating a lot of energy amongst women. Some of this energy is being directed into "Survivors of Incest" groups across North America. Most groups have a leader who is some kind of professional, (social worker, sex therapist or whatever), and four to ten survivors. Many women who have never discussed their experiences are able to do so for the first time in such a group. Our "horrible, shameful secret" becomes, in such a supportive setting, a common experience about which we can share our insights and our feelings. Having been involved in two such groups in the last several weeks, I now feel compelled to grow beyond the limits that I experience there as a lesbian.

One of the goals of a survivors group is usually to help a woman to work on her self-image,

which is always very damaged by sexual victimization. The group can help a woman in this work, after they all know each other for a while, by noticing ways in which she manifests her low self-esteem, (usually from accounts of family dynamics), and encouraging her in a more self-affirmative attitude. This requires a degree of trust and mutual respect which I feel is possible amongst heterosexual women, or amongst lesbians, but not in a mixed group. I have never felt, and never will feel, affirmed by a woman who smiles so sincerely at me, and then turns back to her real life, where her primary loyalties are to men.

Some women in a group are there specifically to work on their sexual relationships with men. Since heterosexual reality is something that lesbians are forced to be aware of at all times, we can much more effectively role-play "supportiveness" to such a woman than she can to us. It is very idealistic but unrealistic to imagine that a straight woman can offer any support to a lesbian who is struggling with effects of incest on her lesbian self-image. It is an unknown world to them.

In a straight survivors group, there is a lot of focus on confrontation of the male rapist. There is supposed to be some kind of satisfaction or resolution involved in extracting a confession or apology from him. This is no doubt important for women whose most meaningful relationships are with men, and for whom daddy is the prototype. For

lesbians, it seems beside the point.

Lesbian survivors have the potential to develop a political perspective of daughter-rape that is more productive for us than the liberal-feminist head-space of a mixed group. I would also hope that we could offer each other more emotional support in a lesbian-only space than in a group where we do not want to share certain feelings with straight women. Some areas we might consider are:

- self-image as individual
- self-image as lesbian
- involvement of mothers actively or by complicity, and how this damages our feelings for women
- daughter-rape as an effective patriarchal strategy to degrade and demoralize young women
- prevalence of daughter-rape in heterosexual households
- what we can do to prevent daughter rape, and the price we will have to pay to do so.

Any woman wanting to participate in a lesbian survivors group, please call me at 421-1084.

Mary Syrett

The Newsletter Collective: Karen Henderson, Pat Leslie, Heather-Anne St. James and Mary Syrett.

The Deadline for the April Newsletter is March 30. To submit a classified ad (please enclose \$2) announcements or articles, leave it in the LOOT office. Do consider giving your energy to the newsletter in any area.

GENERAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 10TH

Twelve wimmin attended this meeting and highlights include:

Newsletter Collective: Maureen resigned today from the Newsletter. LOOT regrets her decision. Heather-Anne was confirmed as her replacement for the general meeting notes. We have also been asked to investigate whether we have paid the printing bills for the last 3 issues.

Phone Line Collective: It was decided that LOOT will begin playing a 3 minute recorded message of information and events. This service is to be tried for 3 months. Also, Jean will contact 923-GAYS and inform them that we no longer will be using that service.

Also, a high school womyn doing a project on lesbianism (apparently the call was on the level) phoned to ask for information. After a general discussion, Libby said she would call the womyn back.

Money: Beth successfully contacted the lawyer who has now received LOOT's January cheque, and she is attempting to contact the owner to discuss the history of the house and its state of repairs. The city building inspector was here, but found the door locked. Beth will report back further progress.

Karen send a note saying that Mama Quilla II plans to pay over to LOOT some money after their upcoming benefit.

Brunch Committee: Reports it has turned its seed money over to the Treasurer. Also arrangements have begun with Lisa to reclaim some LOOT tables and chairs left at St. Paul's Centre.

Movies: Discussion of the movies *Windows* and *Cruising* including the anti-rape demonstration on February 9 against *Windows*. It was decided that more picketing could encourage people to attend. Also that the bad reviews would discourage them. It was agreed that the best film on rape presently playing is *Scream from Silence*.

Proposed Police By-Law: There was some discussion of a proposed by-law amendment that will give the Toronto police the power to declare a state of emergency at any specific location (with suspension to the right to privacy or need for a search warrant, etc.) when the police deem subversive activities maybe occurring. Darlene is to report back further details.

Date of General Meetings: Nine wimmin attended this meeting. The highlights included: a discussion and unanimous decision to move the month's first General Meeting to 7:30 pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. This decision was made after completion of a three-month trial period of having the two General Meetings on the 2nd and last Sundays on the month. It was felt that a move to Tuesday night would free up one more full weekend a month for the wimmin.

Newsletter: We were informed of Karen Henderson's resignation from the Newsletter, effective right after the March issue. She feels she is burned out. A serious discussion followed about what to do, and Pat Leslie and Heather-Anne St. James,

Rape Crisis Letter: Heather-Anne reported back a draft endorsement to be sent to the Provincial Council for funds urgently needed by the Ontario Rape Crisis Coalition. The letter was carried.

Toike Oike: Sue has drafted and will send a letter to the Knights of Columbus asked them to protest to the U of T Engineering Society about their annual slave auction, and also asking the K of C, if necessary, not to accept funds raised by humiliating wimmin. Sue has further volunteered to send a letter to every *toike* advertiser outlining the offensive nature of that rag's treatment of wimmin.

FEBRUARY 24th

the members of the Collective present, said that the Newsletter desperately needs more wimmin to be involved. It was the feeling of the General Meeting that not just the nine wimmin in attendance need to help resolve the problem. If the wimmin who receive and read **Lesbian Perspectives** wish to see it continue as it has, *everyone* has a responsibility to help out.

The General Meeting also has asked Karen Henderson to set aside one specific night to talk to prospective members of the Newsletter Collective and how it functions. She will explain what jobs need doing, and what skills are necessary for each. The turnout will be taken as a sign of the readers' interest.

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Film says

"Men Rape, Lesbians Watch"

On Saturday, February 9, at 6:30 pm, about 40 protesters turned out at the Imperial Six Theatre to demonstrate against *Windows*, a new United Artists movie. *Windows* glamourises rape, and is an anti-lesbian flick. It has now also been panned in the straight press.

The approximately 35 wimmin on the picket line, including LOOT and WAVAW wimmin, were joined by 5 men who had attended the Roberta Hamilton Capitalism & Patriarchy lecture the night before. At that meeting, Pat, one of our LOOT wimmin, had announced the demon-

stration, and word-of-mouth spread spontaneously.

The demonstration was peaceful. It lasted a full 90 minutes, and it appeared to be doing some good in turning away some hesitant customers. Signs read "Close Windows/Open Closets." Leaflets explained why the movie was degrading to wimmin were also being handed out to many passersby, some of whom seemed genuinely interested.

The picketing included wimmin holding hands and some walking arm-in-arm. Choruses of "Stop rape!" "Close Windows!" filled the cold night air.

Two police cruisers parked, and the cops got out to check out the scene. But we weren't hassled, and the picketing proceeded peacefully.

by Heather-Anne

LOOT Coffeehouse

A Womanly Experience

These are my impressions before and during the coffeehouse held on Saturday, February 23rd, which I thought I would share.

Earlier in the evening, I went ahead and attended a dinner, towards which I was aware I was having resistant feelings about attending. Through culture shock, but going through the motions of being there, I found it to be heterosexual and more patriarchal than usual.

When finally the last course was served, I was aware of feeling mercifully pulled to the LOOT coffeehouse performance scheduled for 9:30 pm. It was 9:40 when I left to be present at LOOT. Immediately on entering, I stood just inside the door

in deep appreciation, and an immediate sense of relaxation on hearing Marianne's voice and guitar and I gradually walked down the hall stopping to pay admission.

I want to express my thankfulness at the results of the work through the atmosphere created by the set; the red lighting effect on the red cafe curtains; the sound effect; and the softly-lit room; and the general hard work involved in arranging the space.

The uniquely pleasant experience of meeting someone I had met over three years ago was an added and unexpected touch to an overall great evening.

by R.A. Holmes

Prying Out of th

Seven months ago, a group of gay men and lesbians founded an organization they called the Gay Community Appeal with the purpose of providing funding for projects of interest and of benefit to the gay and lesbian communities.

The organization is an alternative to the type of government funding which gay and lesbian projects would not have a chance of obtaining.

Besides, The GCA is not only giving out funds but doing so with the idea of gay pride and of enriching our communities and our cultures. It is a chance for us to recognize our needs and to assist one another.

The GCA consists of a Board made up of five lesbians and four gays and they decide which proposals are accepted. They are assisted in their work by the Audio-Visual committee and the Management committee.

Audio-Visual is made up of writers and photographers who prepare or develop a two minute presentation for each proposal. Generally 10-12 proposals are worked into a package or show of about 25 minutes. These shows are given at what are termed "support ourselves evenings", to get together in the homes of gays and lesbians which are designed not just to get people to donate money but to be a social evening as well. These evenings are the way in which the money is raised for the various proposals. An individual may donate up to half the

Money e Closets

amount one wished to donate to any one cause but the other half one donates goes to a general fund which acts as an equalizer.

As a rule, gays have more money than lesbians and the idea of a general fund helps to fairly and equally distribute to all causes. Once a proposal obtains the money it needs, it is replaced with a new proposal and is incorporated into the show.

Some of the lesbian proposals accepted were: to raise money so *Fireweed* could put out a lesbian edition; to a woman who wished to collect and organize lesbian poetry and short stories into an anthology; and if LOOT survives, an answering machine.

The GCA would like to see participation from more people — a wide range of skills is needed and ideas, as well as proposals, are welcome. Even hosting an evening, and being responsible for friends to come, is important — crucial to the GCA's success.

The group is hoping to begin showing their presentation by the beginning of March and will have been incorporated as a non-profit organization by the end of this month.

Let's give them the support they need. If interested in working in audiovisual, contact Carolyn Walters: 364-0217.

If management, organizing, or planning or writing letters is your forte, contact Karen Prins at the Women's Bookstore.

Montréal Feminist Speaks On Patriarchy

The Roberta Hamilton lecture at OISE on February 8 (co-sponsored by The International Women's Day Committee) was both mentally challenging and well attended. She briefly defined patriarchy as the structuring of sex roles and relations to result in men dominating wimmin. This is too simple a definition because patriarchy, in reality, entails a disease resolved to destroy wimmin's radical consciousness of intent to create our own institutions and destiny in a self-determined future which does not include political/economic/familial domination by males over females. Then Ms. Hamilton defined capitalism as a form of economy in which labour does not own the means of production, and, she said, patriarchy supports capitalism.

Ms. Hamilton builds her case on three bases: an analysis of historical materialism in various psychoanalytic studies, and on her own historical Marxist theory. Unfortunately, many people found her far too abstract. However, we must appreciate our wimmin intellectuals, because they give us concepts with which to integrate our own life experiences meaningfully.

In the speech the work and familial relations between men and wimmin of 20th century patriarchal capitalism are traced back to feudalism, and the patriarchal and Catholic and Protesant religions with their male chauvinist ideologies. In feudal times when the peasants lived at near-subsistence level, the men were fed first and the children came second, and the wimmin came last. The western

religions also helped oppress us by opposing sex not aimed at reproduction. That means their ideology, which is tied to biology *is* destiny and reproduction, naturally opposes lesbianism. The biological inferiority and impurity of females was not doubted by the men in the church.

To further explain wimmin's place in patriarchy, Ms. Hamilton then ventured into accepting Freud's and Horowitz's theory on how, under social pressure, young males learn contempt for wimmin to repudiate their own inherent bisexuality. I doubt this is sound, as a boy's bisexuality is a male phenomenon by definition so he is gay and not a woman. Prof. Hamilton is correct that men do learn contempt for wimmin, but the true cause is to reverse their frustration that they are not wimmin themselves. Prof. Hamilton then discussed the patriarchal perversion of wimmin who are self-hating and instead accept male hegemony. Some even sink to emulating men.

Having now established how male-dominated religions and social pressures define a womyn as worthless, it is easy for Ms. Hamilton to help us realise that it is capitalism which devalues wimmin; we may either work at unconsciously low wages to us (but not to the president of Bell Canada) or are equally trapped into marriages and economic dependency on a male to provide for us which translates male privilege to rule us. Consequently, Ms. Hamilton soundly condemns the patriarchal institutions of both marriage and the nuclear family structure. **continued on page 6**

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Phone Line Collective: Libby reported that she had contacted the high school womyn wishing information, and plans to speak with her once more.

A womyn from Burlington wrote to ask about lesbian clubs we might know of in the Burlington-Hamilton area, and across the US. Darlene will answer her.

It was also decided that LOOT would continue to retain the basic free listing in the NYC Gay Yellow Pages.

International Women's Day: It was unanimously decided by the General Meeting that we will endorse the IWD Program. There will be a City Hall rally at 11:00 am on March 8, followed by a march up Yonge Street (Bring a bell to ring as we pass Bell Canada). The march will end at the King Edward School at Bathurst and College Streets, where there will be a fair. It was decided that LOOT will have a booth there and sell cookies, lesbian buttons, and also answer enquiries from wimmin at the rally about LOOT and lesbian perspectives. A wimmin-only space has been set aside. Also, there will be a Rape Crisis Centre benefit dance (wimmin only) at 8:00 pm at 519 Church Street.

Sexual Harassment: We received a letter from wimmin at the University of Waterloo concerning sexual harassment by professors and students at the university. A similar letter was received only a few months ago from another university, so it is a general concern. They also said there was no womyn-space in Waterloo. As the main issue dealt with sexual assaults, Darlene will send the letter onto the Toronto Rape Crisis centre.

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The speaker honestly admitted that Marxist theory does not have all the answers to feminist concerns. Unfortunately, the oppression of wimmin is considered (by Marxists) as subordinate to class revolution. If we buy into this, we will once again find we are being co-opted to put wimmin energy into another male trap. It is absolutely vital that we maintain our separate identity. Womyn concerns come first to us. Patriarchy is found nearly everywhere on earth right now; other forms of patriarchy must be critiqued too. As lesbian feminists, we should seriously consider Anarchism as being most consistent with non-oppression for wimmin.

Roberta Hamilton has, nevertheless, made a real contribution through this first step towards this needed dialogue on how capitalism and patriarchy feed each other, largely at wimmin's expense.

by Heather-Anne

Cora: The Women's Bookmobile project funded several years ago. A letter sent for Cora to our address by a group of Brazilian wimmin living in Paris is asking for names of titles of books on wimmin that they should sell when they return soon to Brazil. Darlene will contact the Women's Book Store about this.

Letter from Pakistan: Two lesbians asked what information we could provide concerning facilitating immigration into Canada, and about what life would likely be like for Asian lesbians. Beth will investigate aspects about immigration, and report back on her progress.

A BAR CATERING TO WOMEN

FEATURING: pool table, munchies, dance floor, big TV screen, backgammon.

ENTERTAINMENT: Saturday matinee — 3:30 - 7:00.

Available now: good food at reasonable prices. Noon to closing.

OPEN: Mon. to Sat.: noon to 1 a.m.

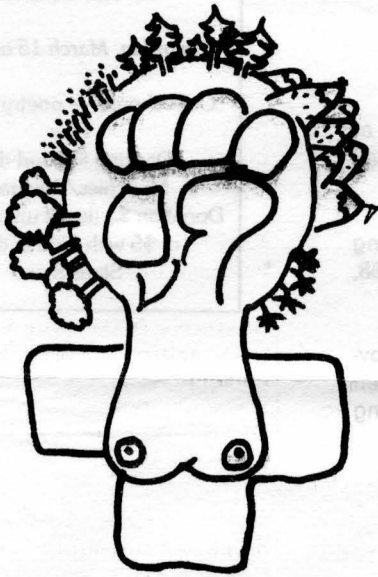
On George just above Dundas in Stage 212 Hotel (enter off George St.)

books for, by and about women
non-sexist children's books
women's records, posters, buttons

TORONTO WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE

85 Harbord Street
west of Spadina
922-8744

Amazons, by Jay Salmonson, \$2.50.
Vida, by Marge Piercy — \$15.25
The Phone Book, Working at the Bell — \$5.95
Ryder, by Djuna Barnes — \$12.82.



Born free;
Imprisoned
By the laws of men
We struggle to
regain peace

AND OUR STRUGGLE
SHALL NOT BE IN
VAIN!

by Carolyn Syrett © 1980

Posters available from Carolyn at 421-1084

The LOOT General Meeting and the Newsletter Collective jointly are asking for more wimmin to offer whatever energy they have in order to continue to produce the quality LOOT Newsletter to which we've grown accustomed.

We have just been informed of the resignations of Karen Henderson and Maureen McReavy, as well as Pat Leslie,

from the Newsletter Collective. The wimmin of LOOT wish to thank Karen Henderson for her great dedication to LOOT, and especially to the Newsletter, and also to thank Maureen McReavy and Pat Leslie for their help. The Collective presently is down to two new Collective members — Mary and Heather-Anne.

DELI-OUT

INTRODUCES
YOUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD
DELI. WITH
THOSE
FRIENDLY
HOME-COOKED
GOODIES...

964-1931

7 Walker Avenue
(across from the Ports)

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PRECISION Style Haircuts at reasonable rates by Erving. Call 463-4322.

PROFESSIONAL Hair Styling done by Karen \$5. Call 961-1768, a 24-hour answering service.

WOMEN VAN available for moving, etc. at good rates. Call Karen at 961-1768, a 24-hour answering service.

BENEFIT FOR GAYLE BEZAIRE

Saturday, March 15 at LOOT

Coffeehouse — poetry & music
Plus
Dancing to good discs
Munchies/Beverages
Donation \$3 (less if unemployed)
or \$5 with food & drink
Starts 8 pm

MARCH/APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16	17	18 Newsletter Mtg. - 7:30 * Drop-in*	19	20 Phone-Line mtg. 8:00*	21 Drop-in*	22
23	24	25 Drop-in*	26	27	28 Drop-in*	29
30 * GENERAL MTG 2 PM	31	1 Drop-in*	2	3	4 Drop-in*	5
6	7	8 Gen. Mtg. 7:30 Drop-in*	9	10	11 Drop-in*	12
13	14	15 Drop-in*	16	17 Phone-line Mtg. 8:00*	18 Drop-in*	19