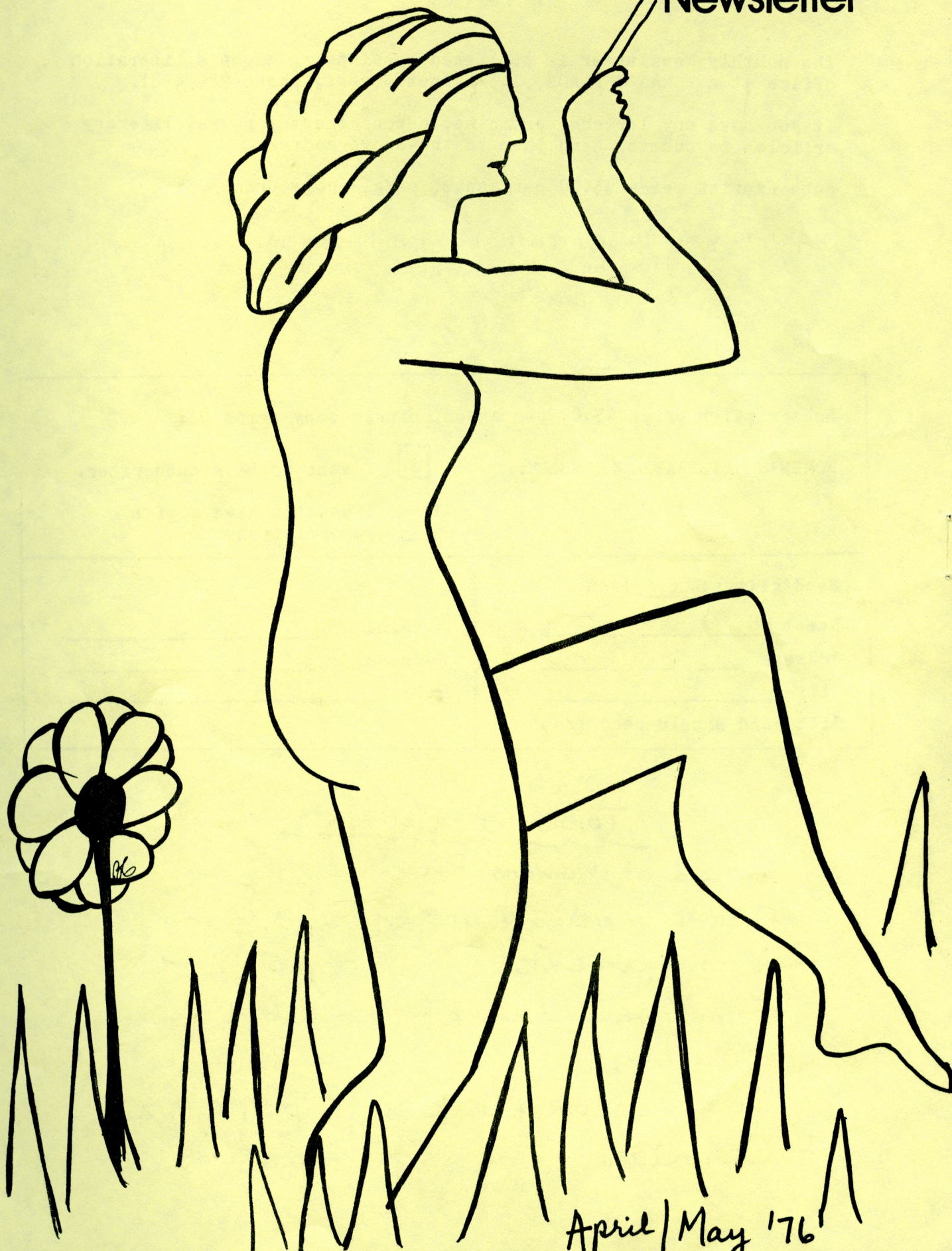


Winnipeg Women's Liberation
Newsletter



April / May '76

The Monthly Newsletter is published by Winnipeg Women's Liberation office at a WOMAN'S PLACE, 143 Walnut Street, phone 786-4581.

If you have any letters, articles, announcements, poems, literary articles to submit, send them to the above address.

Subscription price \$3.00 per annum; single copy price 25¢

Brought to you this month by Barbara, Linda, Roz, Ellen, Sue, Heather, Marilyn, Pat, Heather

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Women's Place Closes

Well, not yet, but at least I've got your attention. Keep reading. Womens Place closing is a real possibility.

Womens Place began about four years ago as an outgrowth of a strong and active womens liberation group. It was hoped it could be a centre for organizing women to fight against our oppression, a place of our own where we could be comfortable and open and grow strong and united. Sometimes it has been that. But not lately.

We havent had a major government grant for almost two years, and amazingly we have survived on your donations. It costs about \$400.00 a month to operate. And you, you approx. 400 people who subscribe to this newsletter have kept Womens Place alive. BUT WHY?

For about the last six months, when the phone rings with a young woman desperate for an abortion, or a working class woman who needs day care, or another just needing another woman to talk to, no one answers. Sometimes someone even gets the nerve and energy to ring the doorbell, but no one is here. The place is mostly empty.

A few women have put in a lot of time, and I'm sure all of us are grateful, but its tiring and disallusoning to work in isolation and thats what it has been. A thankless job in many ways. Like a lot of other jobs, only worse. And for no money.

And yet you have supported W. Place with your money. Do we really need it? Has it outgrown its usefulness? What purpose does it serve? None of us believe women have achieved liberation. We all know its a long struggle. We havent given up, have we?

Womens Place is YOUR place. It doesnt belong to some small clique although it sometimes must seem that way. It belongs to you, each and every one of you who cares. Maybe even in trust for all those women who cant get involved because they are too poor, or too isolated, or too burdened with children and jobs and survival, or too demoralized. Whatever, it is not the private property of a few women.

You readers. You must be strong and determined and courageous women. After all you subscribe and contribute to this communist lesbian manhating rag, You must have ideas about what is going on and what could or should be done. Put them into action. Have your own group

meet here. Start a new group- political action, consciousness raising, study, work related, whatever. Volunteer- bring a friend - answer some of our overwhelming supply of mail- clean up- plan a social or a party or a picnic. Start a drop in centre for women. Work on the newsletter, produce some art, some booklets - get other members to talk about their work, or share their experiences, share knowledge of so called professional work, medicine, law, counselling, plan a demonstration. You have more ideas than I do. Bring them and share them.

We seem to have annual crisis meetings, and I guess its time for Crisis 76. We have to make some decisions.

Lets talk about it, on ~~W~~ Wednesday May 5, 1976, 8:00. Don't come expecting some one else to implement your ideas. If you want a meeting, come prepared to set it up. We could have this house operating every day of the year if each of you said YES I'll commit myself to 8 hours at womens place for the next year. Imagine, hundreds of women, with a little effort from each of you we could have a really exciting and dynamic Womens place.

!!!!!!!

Mon., May 5, 8:00

Crisis Meeting

!!!!!!!

CARAL MEETING

CARAL is holding an open meeting - for education and organization:

TUESDAY, APRIL 20

8:00 P.M.

ROOM 106A, 447 WEBB PLACE (Y.W.C.A.)

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT! Join us to help organize around this issue

JOIN CARAL!



Canadian Association for Repeal of the Abortion Law



"The purpose of CARAL is to ensure that no woman in Canada is denied access to safe, legal abortion.
"Our aim is the repeal of all sections of the Criminal Code dealing with abortion, and the establishment of comprehensive contraceptive and abortion services, including appropriate counselling, across the country.
"We regard the right to safe, legal abortion as a fundamental human right".

I WANT TO JOIN CARAL! Date.....

NAME (Print).....Phone.....

ADDRESS.....Street.....City.....Province.....

OCCUPATION.....

Name of Federal Riding or Member.....

Enclosed is my annual financial contribution of \$.....

Individual - \$10.00; Family - \$15.00; Limited Income - \$2.00;
Affiliated Group - \$25.00; Sponsor - \$100.00 & Over;
Sustaining - \$25.00 to \$100.00.

MONTHLY POST-DATED CHEQUES ARE WELCOME

I AGREE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF CARAL. Signature.....

Please return application & cheque to: CARAL, 40 251 GARFIELD ST
WINNIPEG, R3B 2M1

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Speak 1. Write Letters 2. Telephone 3. Riding or Co-ordinator 4. Give Money 5. Canvas 6. Other 7.

REPEAL THE ABORTION LAW - WRITE A LETTER !

On September 29, 1975, the federal government appointed the Committee on the Operation of the Abortion Law, chaired by R. J. Badgley. This committee is winding up its national fact-finding work and it is very likely to be submitting its study to the government very soon. It is possible that the inequitable law will be reviewed by the government this year. We know that the October '74 Gallop Poll found that 62% of Canadians believe that abortion should be a private matter between a woman and her doctor. However, politicians hear most from compulsory pregnancy supporters. It is imperative that MP's be made aware that most Canadians want this unjust law repealed. Please sit down tonight and send a letter to your own M.P. to voice your concern on this issue, and demand that she/he press the government to release the report immediately, and proceed to present a bill to repeal Sec. 251 of the Criminal Code. As well as your own M.P., you can write to the Prime Minister; Minister of Justice, Ron Basford; Minister of Health and Welfare, Marc Lalonde. Here is a sample letter:

REMEMBER - repeal of this law is not inevitable. This government does not act automatically to redress injustice, it reacts to political pressure. YOU must help to put on the pressure.

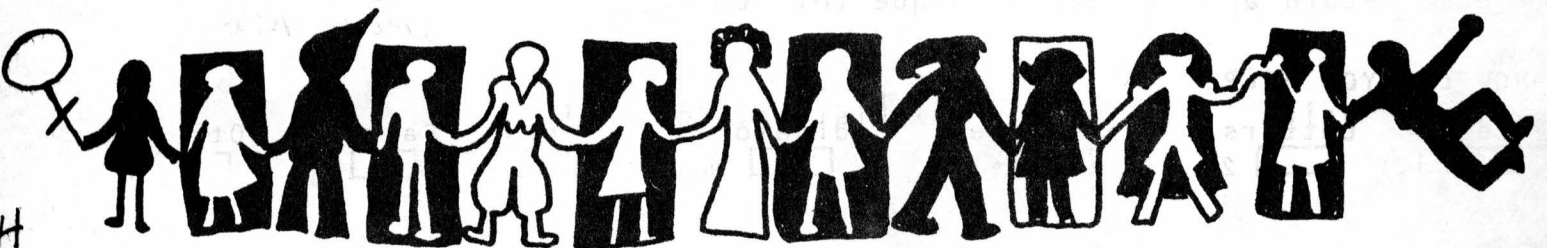
WRITE TODAY!

(Sample)

Address to : _____, M.P.
PARLIAMENT BLDGS., OTTAWA. (no stamp req'd.)

Dear _____,

The Federal Law Reform Commission has just recommended many changes in the Criminal Code, one of those being the repeal of Section 251. I firmly believe that abortion must be removed from the Criminal Code so that this subject be a private matter between a woman and her doctor. It is also important that the government begin to increase



funds for public education on contraception, family life courses in schools, and the establishment of adequate pregnancy counselling services across Canada. The availability of safe legal abortions when needed is a necessity for good and comprehensive health care, and the right of every Canadian woman. I urge you to support absolut repeal of Section 251 of the Criminal Code.

Anybody interested in Writing?
especially plays, skits

We want to start putting together some material
for Women's Theatre (for starters)

Come to Women's Place

Wednesday April 28th 8:00 A.M.

or call Heather at 942-6612



~~.....~~

Women's Place is available for

Consciousness Raising Groups

+ people are available to advise, sit in, unlock
the door, buy donuts, make tea, whatever . . .

Call Heather Henderson at 942-6612

or call Women's Place 786-4581

+ leave your name + number.

FAMILY LAWS CHANGE

Family laws MAY be reformed soon. Not revolutionized, but reformed. The proposals submitted to the government are definately a step forward. They include:

Equal sharing of all assets acquired by either spouse (in the event of separation or divorce, excluding gifts, inheritance etc.)

A recognition that a women who works in the home (housewife) has made a full and equal contribution to the economic position of the family,

During marriage, each spouse is entiled to personal spending money , and there must be full disclosure to the other spouse of all income and debts.

The marital home will be jointly owned regardless of whose name is on the deed.

Womens Liberation is working with other women to agree upon the specific recommendations we will push for, as well as forming an ongoing lobbying group. While the position of W. Liberation presented to the hearings has not been adopted, it is definately an improvement on existing law.

We also want to suggest some changes in the proposed reform.

Women now rarely get the maintainance ordered by the court. In addition they have to track down their offending ex-husband. The reforms dont alter this much. We want a new agency set up to get the maintainance and give it out, Track down and prosecute those who dont pay, and guarantee women security of payment, through public funds if necessary. This would really help low income single parents.

We believe if a ~~woman~~ man dies without a will that his wife should get all of his assets. They suggest raising the 30% she now gets to 50%. It isnt enough for most women, especially if they have small children and no saleable skills. It also suggests that women are incompetent or will run out on their children (who get the rest when they are 21).

PHONE YOUR MLA and tell them these reforms are long overdue.

WRITE THE PREMIER OR MLA and indicate your support for the reforms.

Help us lobby. If you want to get involved in a more fundamental way call Linda at 4754777.

Come to the public meeting on May 3, and state your case. This legislation MAY be introduced soon. If we bring pressure ourselves the chances are much greater than these proposals will become law. A phone call only takes a few minutes, but it might help thousands of women get a little bit of justice in a basically unjust system.

PANEL DISCUSSION

on

FAMILY LAW REFORM

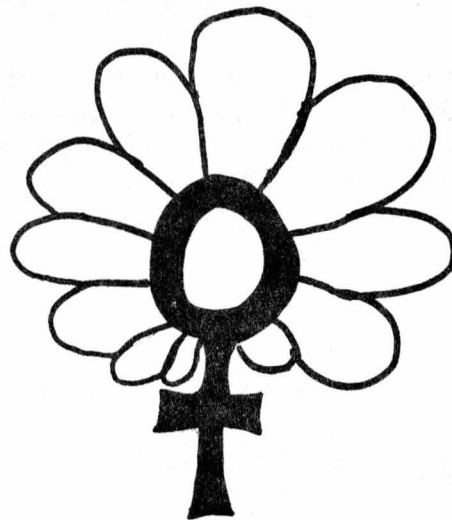
8:00, May 3, Monday - Westminster Church, Maryland &
Westminster

Panel members include Howard Paulley,
attny.gen, Myrna Bowman, Law Reform
Commission member, etc.

MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN! MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN!

LESBIAN COUNSELLING PHONELINE

A phone line has been established by some of the lesbian women in the community to provide a counselling and contact service. It has been advertised in the local papers and is operating out of A Woman's Place. 786-4581 on Wednesday from 7:00 to 10:00 P.M.



THE HISTORY OF MAY DAY

May Day originated in the U.S.A. in the 1880's in the course of labor's struggles for the 8-hour day. Eight-hour day leagues sprang up in many cities and numerous strikes took place in support of their demand.

The 1885 convention of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labour Unions of the U.S.A. and Canada (later known as the American Federation of Labour) set May 1, 1886 as the day of a national walk-out by labour in support of the 8-hour day.

It proved to be the most effective demonstration of labour solidarity experienced by the U.S. labour movement.

However, the enemies of labour did not remain idle. On May 4, 1886 a peaceful demonstration of workers at Haymarket Square in Chicago was attacked by the police. A bomb was thrown into the crowd and in the ensuing fighting 7 policemen and 4 workers were killed. The leaders of the 8-hour day movement were arrested. 4 of them were subsequently hanged and many others imprisoned.

But the movement for the 8-hour day continued and in December, 1888 the A.F. of L. convention held in St. Louis, set May 1, 1890 as the day for continuing labour demonstrations. It also appealed to the meeting of the International Workingmen's Congress held in Paris the next year for support. The Congress agreed and set May 1st as the day of international labour demonstrations.

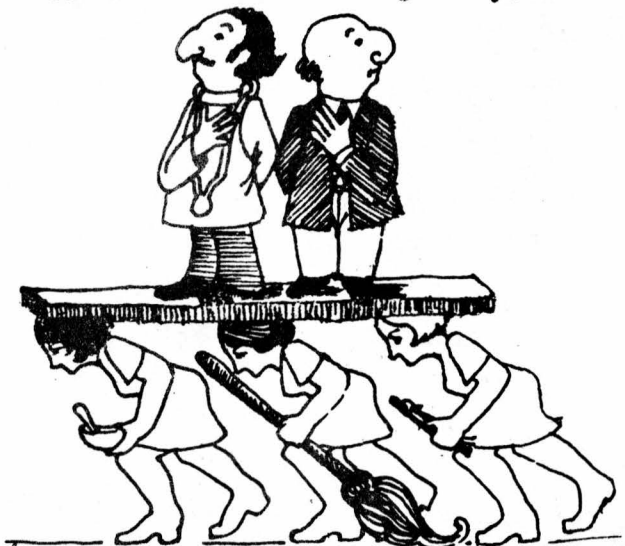
During the following years May Day became the day of demonstrating labour solidarity in many European countries as well as on the North American continent. In the words of the great American labour leader, Eugene V. Debs, April 27, 1907: "This is the first and only International Labour Day. It belongs to the working class."

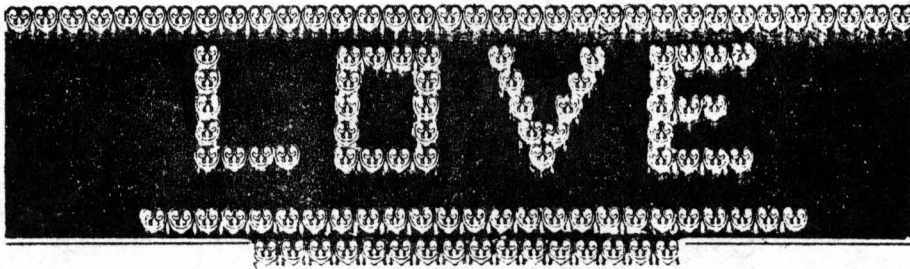
While in the U.S.A., the A.F. of L. later allowed the tradition of May Day to die out, it is still observed by large sections of labour throughout the world. And in recent years there has been a revival of May Day meetings and demonstrations in Canada in which trade unions and labour councils of Vancouver, Regina, Toronto and Hamilton have participated.

With attacks on workers' living standards through spiralling inflation on the increase, the growing strike movements across the country and the threats by governments to take away labour's right to strike -- the lessons and traditions of May Day as a day of labour solidarity and struggle assume new meaning today.

Watch for Info. on
May Day Rally
against Wage + Price
Controls

Betty Medsgar, Women at work





& DR. KINSEY

BY LINNEA DUE

I wake up in that soft cotton world cluttered with warm shadows. Julie snores lightly next to me, and it's a moment before I hear the rain pecking at the window pane. I turn on my side and wriggle up against her curved back. She reaches behind to stroke my thigh. "It's raining," I say. I want to share it with her. Now I can hear the wind whipping through the lemon tree.

"Mmmm..." She turns around and burrows her head between my breasts. I make a tent of the blankets with my hand so she can breathe. My chin rests snugly on her head. She slips back asleep, but I lie awake, listening to the rain, loving her.

I heard her steps on the walk in front of the house, and I had the door open before she'd rung the bell. I dealt with her coat, with her umbrella. I was nervous, wondering why I'd ever volunteered for this. "My name's Nancy," she said. I finally looked at her. She was older, maybe in her forties, and I was younger then, just twenty-one. "I want to tell you right at the beginning that I'm straight," she said. "I thought you should know. So there wouldn't be any misunderstandings."

"Oh," I said. I wasn't sure what she meant by misunderstandings. "Doesn't Kinsey hire gay interviewers?"

"We have a few gay people advising us," she said. "On this particular project on homosexuality. Only in this area." She said 'gay' like it stuck in her throat on the way up.

I nodded politely. "Would you like some wine?"

"No thanks. But go ahead. Please do. It's so much easier to conduct an interview when the subject is relaxed."

I got the wine out and poured myself a glass. She ran through some preliminaries, socio-economic class, what year college I was in, other kids in the family. It was easy. I was relieved. Then she sighed and said: "All right. Down to business. Now don't be embarrassed. I've heard absolutely everything."

"Well, I won't be very interesting, I'm afraid. I mean, I don't do anything exotic."

"All right," she said. "What do you do?"

It stopped me. I stammered a few times, and she looked impatient. "Well, I can see I'll have to help you out. Do you employ cunnilingus? That's--"

"I know what it is. Yes. Sometimes."

"How often? Every time? Every other time?"

"I don't know. Maybe, uh, I don't know. Every fourth time, say."

"Tribadism?"

"What?"

"That's rubbing your bodies together so your clitorises are stimulated."

I tried to imagine how that would work. "No," I said finally.

"Digital manipulation?"

"Yes."

"And how often do you do that?"

"All the rest of the time, I guess. When we don't go down on each other, I mean."

"You guess? Don't you know?"

"Well, sure I know. Yes, all the rest of the time."

"So your preferred mode is mutual masturbation, is that correct?"

"Mutual masturbation?"

"Yes, that's what we call it. Digital manipulation. It's called mutual masturbation."

"But why masturbation? I mean, well, I call it making love. How can you call that masturbation?"

"There's no onus put on masturbation, I assure you. You masturbate her, she masturbates you. That's all."

"She makes love to me, I make love to her," I said stubbornly. We glared at each other.

A little later, I hear her murmuring. "What is it?" I ask. My hands caress her shoulders.

"Is it still raining?"

"Umhmmmm."

She trails her tongue up the underside of my breast. I let out the breath I've been holding when her mouth fastens around my nipple. She sighs and I run my hands along her hips and sides. She moves with them, and I can feel warmth start inside me.

I started to feel weird being the only one drinking, so I pressed wine on her. "I'm uncomfortable," I explained.

"Oh, all right," she snapped. "Anything to make the subjects comfortable. Now let's go on. What is your favorite body type?"

"Body type?" I echoed.

"Yes, what kind of body do you like?"

"Well, I don't know. I never really thought about it."

"Oh come on. You must have an image in your mind. Everyone does."

"I don't," I insisted.

She waited, her pencil poised in the air. I finally dredged up a description of a woman I'd slept with last year. "Well, lithe," I said. "Slender, graceful, ephemeral, taller than me, long hair."

"Taller than you? I thought you told me earlier you weren't into butch-femme roles."

"I'm not."

"Well, then why taller than you? Isn't that pretty butch? Slender and taller than you?"

"No. You asked me for a body type, I gave you a body type. I can't help it if that's what I like."

"Is that what your present lover looks like?"

"No, no, as a matter of fact she doesn't. Not at all."

"Well," she said.

I draw her head up level with mine and kiss her closed eyelids. She turns her face back and forth, tilting different ways for soft kisses. She twists beside me, and her breasts draw my mouth. I kiss down to her fullness, letting my touch guide me. She's soft, but her nipples are taut warriors battling with my tongue. I worry at her with my lips and brush my teeth across her. Her breathing becomes almost strangled, and she grabs my hand, pulling it down jerkily. I follow her, part her lips, and sink into her. She moans when I touch her, and I wrap my arm around her shoulders. As she turns against me, I move up to cradle her face on my neck. She bites me gently, her breath shallow, and then she stops breathing, and she moans clear deep from her stomach. I hold her falling, and she melts mercury into my hand.

"Now," she said. "How about breasts?"

"What about breasts?" I countered.

"What kind of breasts do you like?"

"Oh come on. Body type is silly enough. How should I know what kind of breasts I like? It depends on who's wearing them." I smile, but she doesn't. She waits. "Look," I said. "I can't separate breasts as though they get good and bad ratings. It's ridiculous. I don't know what kind of breasts I like."

"You must!" she insisted. "Do you like huge, pendulous breasts that hang down to the waist? Do you like boyish breasts with tiny nipples? Or medium breasts with large nipples?" She was shouting.

"I don't know! I can't answer that question!"

And before I could believe what she was doing, she had torn open her blouse and pulled down her bra. "Well," she challenged. "Do you like mine?"

I wasn't looking at her. I'd turned away the moment I'd seen them, two obscene bags dangling on her chest.

"Shall I just describe my own?" Her voice was mocking.

I turned to her, and her blouse was buttoned back up.

"Just put smallish firm breasts," I answered. "With medium-sized nipples. And no, my present lover doesn't have breasts like that."

"Thank you," she said smugly.

She turns me on my back and looms over me in the dark, stroking my cheeks lightly with the back of her hand. I try to catch her fingers with my mouth, but she's too quick. She drops her mouth to one of my nipples, her hand to the other, and I lie back, gasping at the sweet sharpness of it, these tiny pecks and pinches that rocket down my body. My hands scour restlessly along her back, and I sink my head under one arm, licking at her soft skin. She hooks my leg on her foot and draws me open, vulnerable to her. The hand at my nipple traces a slow winding path over my stomach, around my hair, clenching at the muscles of my thighs. And then she touches me, and I tremble and relax, not moving at all. Each time my hips start to move I stop, wanting her to do it all, wanting to surrender myself to her. She pushes my feet further apart with her legs, and I suddenly think: God, what if I can't come, but I always think that, and right after, I know I will. I open myself up to her finger and nothing else exists, only me and her finger, and I can feel waves flowing between us as though we were part of each other, and I relax totally, knowing it's coming, knowing I'm coming. I slide over the line, and my body shakes uncontrollably, my stomach muscles dancing in mad spasms as current after current flings me head-long into a screaming flood.

"Have you ever had sexual relations with an animal?"

"No."

"Have you ever whipped anyone or been whipped by anyone?"

"No."

"Have you ever tied anyone up, or been tied up by anyone?"

"No."

"Are you sexually excited by leather or feathers?"

"No."

"Do you use dildoes?"

"No."

I tried to think of something interesting I had done. "I slept with two people once," I said.

"What did you do?"

"Well, the same old stuff, only there were two of us. Making love to one of us, I mean. You know."

She didn't answer and her pencil didn't move. "All right," she said. "This last is a fun one. You don't even have to answer it. If you could take a pill, and it would let you be straight, happily, that is, would you take the pill? First, do you want to answer?"

"Sure. No."

"No what?"

"No, I wouldn't take the pill."

She looked incredulous, and then suspicious, as though she was sure I was playing some trick on her. "I wouldn't be me if I was straight," I explained. "Would you take a pill that turned you gay?"

"Well, no! But that's a little different, now isn't it?"

"No," I said. "I don't see why it's any different at all."

She didn't answer me. She just packed up her things and left.

We lie under the blankets, curled into each other, our muscles and bodies content to stay put forever. I can't imagine a better feeling. I stroke her hair, and she kisses my shoulder gently. Her breathing changes as she falls asleep. It's warm, and my thoughts fade in and out. I stay awake a moment longer, listening to the rain streak down my window.

LINNEA DUE writes in Oakland, California.


VAGINA Sonnet

Is "vagina" suitable for use
in a sonnet? I don't suppose so.
A famous poet told me, "Vagina's ugly."
Meaning, of course, the sound of it. In poems.
Meanwhile, he inserts his penis frequently
into his verse, calling it, seriously, "My
Penis." It is short, I know, and dignified.
I mean of course the sound of it. In poems.
This whole thing is unfortunate, but petty,
like my hangup concerning English Dept. memos
headed "Mr./Mrs./Miss"--only a fishbone
in the throat of the revolution--
a waste of brains--to be concerned about
this minor issue of my cunt's good name.

JOAN LARKIN writes in Brooklyn, New York, and teaches at Brooklyn College.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

APRIL - MAY

APR 18	APR 19	APR 20	APR 21	APR 22	APR 23	APR 24
	WWSC 7:30	CARAL MEETING 800 ROOM 106A 447 WEBB PLACE	APR 21 ♀ FOR NONSEXIST EDUCATION 7:30 PM *			
APR 25	APR 26	APR 27	APR 28	APR 29	APR 30	MAY DAY 
	WWSC 7:30		GAY ♀ GROUP 7:30 PM WRITERS MEETING 8:00 PM			
MAY 2	MAY 3	MAY 4	MAY 5	MAY 6	MAY 7	MAY 8
	WWSC 7:30		♀ TIME CAUSIS MEETING 8:00 PM GAY ♀ GROUP 7:30			
MAY 9	MAY 10	MAY 11	MAY 12	MAY 13	MAY 14	MAY 15
	WWSC 7:30		GAY ♀ GROUP 7:30 PM			
MAY 16	MAY 17	MAY 18	MAY 19	MAY 20	MAY 21	MAY 22
	WWSC 7:30		GAY ♀ GROUP 7:30 PM			
MAY 23	MAY 24	MAY 25	MAY 26	MAY 27	MAY 28	MAY 29
	WWSC 7:30		GAY ♀ GROUP 7:30			

* FOR ADDITIONAL MEETINGS
CALL ROZ 284-1305

