

# Grapevine

NEWSLETTER OF THE LESBIAN MOTHERS' DEFENCE FUND  
Toronto, Calgary & Montreal, Canada

FALL 1983

## Toronto LMDF reaches out!

The Gay Community Appeal (see page 2 for more on the GCA) has given the Toronto Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund a grant to fund a speaking tour through Ontario this fall and winter.

We hope to visit as many as a dozen towns in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the province, to begin establishing a network of resources for lesbian mothers.

The LMDF is contacting women and women's groups throughout Ontario to ask for their help in setting up workshops, public meetings, media interviews, informal meetings with lesbian mothers and with progressive lawyers in their area. We want to share our five years' experience in helping lesbian mothers secure custody and visiting rights, as well as gain insight from our sisters outside Toronto.

During our two- to four-day visits in different cities, we would like to carry out as many of the activities outlined here as possible:

- hold a public meeting, preferably for women only (perhaps in a library, YWCA or women's centre) to discuss custody cases and lesbian motherhood
- publicize both the LMDF's work and the public meeting through interviews with local media — radio, TV and newspapers. Many of us in Toronto first learned about the LMDF by reading a story on the Fund in the *Toronto Star* or seeing someone talk about it on TV. We hope the media outside Toronto will be as receptive.
- meet informally with lesbian mothers
- begin discussion with women's groups or community information workers who may be interested in equipping themselves with some of the most valuable resource materials we've found on lesbian custody. Then, when women write to us from regions of the province where we can't ordinarily go, we'll be able to refer them to this centre or organization's stock of borrowable literature and on-the-spot moral support.
- contact local lawyers who would be willing to take on



lesbian custody cases and keep us informed of their clients' progress and court settlements. Our first priority when we hear from lesbian mothers outside Toronto is helping them find sympathetic lawyers. We hope to finish this tour with a long legal referral list!

- speak to women's studies, sociology, social work, family law and/or psychology classes at community colleges and universities

We receive calls regularly from new lesbian mothers in or near Toronto — some still living with their husbands — who through newspaper articles or friends of friends have learned of our group for the first time. It's such a relief to realize that you're not alone.

This is the purpose of our tour. We want to provide all the information and the support we can to those women in communities outside Toronto who do not have access to the resources and help that we do in a city this size. The existence of a network of support that extends further than our own city will build our confidence in the future, too.

Excitement is rising in the LMDF as our plans for these trips take shape. The letters that we sent about the tour to women's groups and individuals are beginning to yield replies which we're now busy sorting through. This support for our goals (and dreams) has been great!

Over the next few weeks we'll be going to Hamilton, Ottawa and Niagara Falls — and this is just the beginning!

If we missed contacting you or your group in our initial mailing campaign, and you would like to help us organize any or all of the work outlined here, give us a call or drop us a line. We'd love to hear from you so that we can include your community in our winter scheduling. Thanks to the Gay Community Appeal, we're looking forward to meeting a lot of new friends!

*Jeanne and Mary, for the LMDF*

The (Toronto) Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund was set up five years ago to provide assistance to mothers who are fighting for child custody or visiting rights, and as a peer support group for all lesbian mothers. We can offer:

- Pre-legal advice and info on successful cases
- Referrals to sympathetic, expert lawyers
- Financial help in building a strong court case
- Personal and emotional support

# Reports from Canada's LMDFs: Calgary

*Shattering the Myths*, Calgary's first-ever lesbian conference, sponsored by the LMDF, was held at the Alberta Vocational Centre on May 13 and 14. About 100 women from as far as Winnipeg attended the weekend's activities.

Robin Tyler, the feminist comic, started the whole thing off with two well-attended shows on the first evening. Many women chose to attend the early show in order to go to the Womyn's Dance that night, co-sponsored by the LMDF and the Womyn's Collective. The LMDF's own "Drink Dyke" was present, sporting a low-cut opalescent jumpsuit and blue hair.

Robin was also the keynote speaker at the conference the next morning. Her talk focussed on the history of radical comedy. Following that were two slide show presentations, *Leaping Lesbians* and interviews with children of lesbian mothers. Then came the famous (infamous?) Lesbian Fashion Show, featuring the dress of 'typical' lesbians.

After lunch, *In the Best Interest of the Children*, a US film about lesbian mothers and their children was screened. This was followed by a panel including a lawyer and a psychiatrist. The lawyer was well received; she presented a lot of useful information for lesbian mothers. The psychiatrist proved, once again, that being gay-positive doesn't make someone either radical or non-sexist. The conference ended with a lesbian-only workshop on lesbian sexuality, attended by more than 80 women. After a hesitant start (how many of us aren't hesitant about discussing sex publicly?), the discussion took off, with howls of laughter and recognition. The workshop ended too early — when the security guards started closing up the building.

We received \$1500 through the Department of the Secretary of State to help put on the Lesbian Conference. To our knowledge this is the first open lesbian group that's ever received funding through Sec State for a project. It's a real step forward for all gays.

Now we're gearing up for the new year after a slowed-down summer. We'll be having more dances, sponsoring workshops, and one night of the International Women's Day speakers' series in January '84.

We're actively involved as a coalition partner in IWD and the Women Reclaim the Night March. Three of our members are part of the gay/police liaison committee here, and several participate in the Lesbian Information Line. We help to financially support LIL, as well.

In addition, there are two funding applications that we're awaiting decisions on, that might enable us to pay staff salaries.

We're full of energy and ideas — and looking forward to a year of meeting new mothers and friends who want to be part of the Alberta LMDF!

*Lynn Fraser, and Karen*

## Vancouver

The Vancouver LMDF has had a serious shortage of woman-power since Mary launched the organization in

1982. Now, with her one steady helper no longer on the scene, the decision to de-activate the LMDF — for now — was unavoidable. Mary will continue to lead workshops on the issue of lesbian mothers and child custody, and has found a home for the LMDF's library of resource materials at the Status of Women office (400A W. 5th Avenue, Vancouver V5Y 1J8; 604/873-1427) where they'll be accessible to mothers, lawyers and future activists.

## Montreal

L'association des mères lesbiennes de Québec has given birth to a French-speaking lesbian mothers bowling league! And we carry on with discussions and outreach.

On October 1st an information booth stocked with our materials at an English-language Concordia University event attracted lots of lesbians who either have or want to have children.

More on our group, nicknamed *Croissante*, in the next issue of the *Grapevine*!

*Carolle*

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In eastern Canada, contact:  
**Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund**  
**PO Box 38, Station E**  
**Toronto M6H 4E1 Ontario**  
**416/465-6822**

**L'association des mères lesbiennes de Québec**  
**CP 222, Succ. De Lorimier**  
**Montréal H2H 2N6 Québec**  
**514/524-1040 (Monday evenings)**

In western Canada:  
**Alberta Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund**  
**#124, 320-5 Avenue S.E.**  
**Calgary T2G 0E5 Alberta**  
**403/264-6328**

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## Appealing

Toronto's Gay Community Appeal is at it again! For the fourth year in a row, the Appeal is raising money for projects of benefit to lesbians and gay men in our community.

Campaign '83 will be a mere 10 weeks long, from October 1 to December 15. During this period, the Appeal will raise \$50,000 through a series of Supporting Our Selves (S.O.S.) get-togethers in the homes of lesbians and gay men. At these gatherings, the hosts and their invited guests hear about the Gay Community Appeal and view this year's slide show. At the end of the showing everyone is asked to make a donation.

In 1982, the Appeal raised \$42,000 through S.O.S. evenings and an additional \$13,000 from Fruit Cocktail, a huge entertainment attended by over 2,500 people.

Almost \$100,000 in grants has been distributed by the

## Appealing (con't)

Gay Community Appeal in its three previous campaigns. These funds have been approximately equally divided into four categories: Social-Cultural, Legal-Political, Social Services-Health, and Research-Education. The GCA is accepting applications for projects until November 15, 1983. Any individual or group with a proposal is welcome to submit a funding request which will be evaluated by the Projects Development Committee.

The Toronto Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund received a grant of \$2825 from the 1982 campaign. These funds are to finance outreach in two ways: the first, a speaking tour to other cities in Ontario (see front page); and the second, this issue of the **Grapevine**. Each time the **Grapevine** is published it costs about \$1,000, and the LMDF through its own efforts raises enough money to put out two issues per year, but wants to do three. The Appeal recognized the need for the LMDF's outreach plans.

Your help is needed for the Gay Community Appeal to continue giving grants to groups like the LMDF with a worthwhile project but insufficient funds to carry it out.

Get involved! Host an S.O.S. get-together, join an organizing committee, make your donation. For more information call or write: 416/869-3036; GCA, PO Box 2212, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T2.



Helen

## SUPPORTING OUR SELVES

**T**he Gay Community Appeal of Toronto has been raising money for projects of benefit to men and women since 1980. Our goal this year is to raise \$50,000 — and you can help!

The 1983 S.O.S. Campaign starts in October and runs through December. Attend an S.O.S. get-together or host one yourself. See our brand new slide show — and, of course, make a donation!

Proposals for funding are being considered concurrently with the S.O.S. Campaign. Applications will be accepted until November 15, 1983.

For more details about S.O.S. get-togethers or to obtain an application for funding, please write or phone:

The Gay Community Appeal of Toronto, P.O. Box 2212, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T2. Telephone 869-3036.



GAY COMMUNITY APPEAL OF TORONTO

## U.S. Custody News Detroit, Michigan

In 1981, Pamela Meir's husband, Jeffrey, was awarded custody of their son, Eric. This year the Michigan Court of Appeals decided that the lower court had erred in removing Eric from his mother's care.

However, Eric may not end up living with his mother after all. The court has ordered an investigation to see whether the 10-year-old has settled into a "custodial environment" during the two years he's lived with his father. If the court decides that is the case, a move will be unlikely.

Eric has maintained throughout the struggle that he wants to live with his mother.

## Oakland, California

A dispute between two lesbians over child visitation rights is putting a new twist on the lesbian custody issue. Mary Flournoy has denied visitation of Sparkle, 4, to her ex-lover Linda Loffin.

The two entered into an oral contract to have a child and Loffin's brother provided the sperm to artificially inseminate Flournoy. The two women and Sparkle lived together as a family unit for two years.

Since their break-up, Flournoy has resisted Loffin's visiting, though Loffin has been paying child support to Flournoy for Sparkle's care.

The matter has been sent into mediation and if the two cannot settle out of court, the case will be tried later this year.

## Sanford, Florida

A Florida lesbian activist has filed a suit charging that her husband has violated the terms of their divorce agreement. Ronnie Sanlo has seen her children once a week or not at all for over two years, even though her 1979 divorce granted her unlimited visitation with a minimum of two days per week.

Sanlo's husband, John Sauls, Jr., has countered with a suit of his own charging that Sanlo's outspokenness as a gay rights activist is "confusing to the children" and "taints [her] fitness ... to exercise parental responsibility."

Sauls has imposed strict limitations on Sanlo's visitation with her 7-year-old son and 10-year-old daughter and he now wants the court to approve his restrictions.

Sauls is telling the children that they should not touch, hug or kiss their mother because all lesbians and gays spread diseases like AIDS. The children live with Sauls and his parents, the founders of a fundamentalist church.

The case is expected to go to trial in October, before Judge Salfi who is an outspoken defender of the right of children to maintain contact with both parents. However, Judge Salfi is an elected judge in a redneck area that goes to the polls this fall.

Sanlo feels that she has a good chance of winning her case since she has resources and is not closeted or isolated.

(Information on all the above cases is condensed from *Gay Community News*, Boston MA)

Helen





# Some of us

In the last *Grapevine* we decided to introduce some of the women who are involved with the Toronto LMDF. Here are a few lines on some of our other members. In the next issue Some of us will include bio's of Calgary and Montreal LMDFers, too.

**Mary** lives with her 8-year-old son in a house which they share with a huge dog, a budgie and a hamster (Hammie) who keeps Mary busy taking cupboards apart to get him back in his cage. Last spring she finished a technical course and now works with a colour graphics firm.

**Helen** is the LMDF's treasurer and this year's president of the Gay Community Appeal. And she holds down a full-time social service job, and raises her son Trevor. Nobody seems to know how she does it!

**Connie** has just moved into a house with her 2½-year-old son, Kathleen and her two children, and a dog named Sappho! In between unpacking and watching her son, Connie does a lot of work with the Lesbian Archives and the LMDF.

**Randi** has three young children, and has just moved from Niagara Falls to Toronto. She's come a long way from "being lost in the big city" to living, working and partying here with the LMDF.

**Eileen** works really long hours at her job; at our evening meetings we often get to see Eileen in her "corporately correct" suits come roaring in with her 3-year-old son tucked under her arm.

**Shelley & Deborah** are non-mothers in our group though they really are "honorary aunts." They share a house with Jeanne and her two daughters. Jeanne's daughter says, "It's like having three mothers. That's sorta nice but there is always someone there who sees what you're doing."

*Jeanne*

Womynly  
Way  
Productions  
presents



**Kay  
Gardner**  
In concert

Trinity United Church  
427 Bloor St. W.  
(just west of Spadina)

**November 4 8 p.m.**

\$7.50 advance  
\$8.50 door

Tickets available at: SCM Books, 333 Bloor St. W., D.E.C., 427 Bloor St. W., and the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 296 Brunswick Ave. Interpreted for the hearing impaired, wheelchair accessible and free childcare. For further information call 925-6568.

BRANCHING OUT presents  
Lesbian Culture Resource Centre

## a Debutante Ball

\*\*\*\*\* THE EVENT OF THE SEASON \*\*\*\*\*



Saturday November 5 — 8:30 p.m.

"Make your formal entrance  
into Lesbian Society at  
the Debutante Ball"

— Dance Cards provided at the door

OCA Auditorium  
100 McCaul St.  
(just south of Dundas)

Tickets at the Door  
\$4.50  
Women Only

Formal Dress Optional

# CITY LIMITS BOOKSTORE

503-22nd Avenue S.W. Calgary, Alta. T2S 0H5  
Phone (403) 290-1889

Calgary's largest selection of  
feminist, women's, lesbian fiction  
and studies.



toronto rape crisis centre

Come to our Open House

Wednesday, November 9, '83 4-9pm

All women welcome • slide show • refreshments

**CRISIS LINE**  
**964-8080**

**BUSINESS LINE**  
**964-7477**

24 hours daily

Mon. - Fri.  
9:30 - 5:30

# Local mothers' custody struggles

## Three women nearing victory describe their cases

### Hope

*In 1975, a month before I married Paul, I met Sandy in church. From then on, all the years of our marriages, she and I were very good friends. Sandy helped me paint my son's crib before he was born ... she would drop in for four-hour chats at midnight ... I was happy to see her any time, but she always made me a little uncomfortable, and I never knew why!*

Hope's 8½-year marriage to an evangelical minister was collapsing when she met Jane at a church conference and began a relationship with her that led to Hope's moving to Toronto from London, Ontario in 1981. "I left the kids with Paul — Bobby was 5, and Ruth 4 — because I thought it would be better for them. I visited all the time, but couldn't stand not having them with me, so nine months later I moved back in, in April 1982.

"The marriage was over, but I thought we might be able to co-exist. It was probably the lowest period of my life. I was slowly recovering from the end of my relationship with Jane, with no one to talk to about it — and living in an untenable situation, with very little reason to think things would ever work out so that I could live independently, with my children.

"I finally confided in Sandy, my best friend, and watched her amazement turn into reflection about herself. She had always thought she was born the wrong sex, because she wasn't happy in her marriage, enjoyed sports and life outdoors and felt drawn to women. We talked endlessly and circled closer and closer to beginning a relationship. In the fall of 1982 we managed a week away together. There's been no turning back for either of us since then."

Hope told Paul about her lesbianism in the summer of 1982, saying, 'I'll give you the grounds — I just can't stay. The kids are better off with you, especially if you re-marry.' She signed papers giving Paul custody in November, 1982.

"As soon as I signed them I knew I couldn't let the kids go like that. I began reading more about lesbian rights. I heard about the LMDF, came to my first pot-luck, found a good lawyer and went to work to undo my mistake. I knew all along that I couldn't do without the kids and that I'm the most important person in their lives. But I needed to know I would have some backup; this looked like a tremendous fight. I needed to know I wasn't the only lesbian mother in the world.

"I moved to Toronto in June 1983 and found work right away. Sandy moved here in August and we found an apartment in September. My first meeting with my lawyer, Ellen Murray, was in May. She informed Paul then that I wanted joint custody of the children, with primary care and control with me. Paul had been involved in more than a few adulterous relationships during our marriage and Ellen suggested to him that we were ready to use this information in court if he insisted on fighting. All along Paul has said that I'm a good mother, and that my lesbianism is the only negative factor for him.

"At first he agreed that I could have Ruth with me. I

went ahead and enrolled her in a Montessorri school, but at the last minute Paul decided to fight, saying his parents, now living with him, should look after her.

"At Paul's lawyer's recommendation, we and our lawyers met privately at the end of September. Ellen assured Paul that we were still ready to fight, even if it meant a long court process costing thousands of dollars. At that point, he decided to negotiate. We signed an agreement allowing Ruth to live with me starting in mid-October, as soon as there's been an evaluation of her situation with him. She'll stay with me until the end of December, during which time her situation with me will be assessed. Then we'll determine with whom she'll live permanently. I'm really confident that she'll be able to be with me from now on.

"Bobby has chosen to stay with his father for now. He told me he loves me but wants to stay where his friends are, as long as he can see me on weekends. I'm accepting that arrangement as long as he's content with it. He knows how much I love him, and that I really want him to be happy, no matter what.

"Sandy's three children are in London, living with her parents until we can get things here ready for them. It's terribly hard for her to be separated from them while she's at work here. Every Friday morning she drives to London and brings back all our kids until Sunday night, so we have them now almost half of every week. Still, neither of us can wait until our family is really together.

"At least now we feel we're on the right track. We've got a loving friendship with each other that's more than either of us ever expected for ourselves, and the prospect of a peaceful life with our children. After the pain of breaking with our church, and all the hopelessness and isolation we felt, I can't express how much brighter the future looks for us, whatever struggles we have to go through from now on."

### Val

I was with Wes for six years. We separated in 1979. Kevin is four now and little Wes is six.

Wes was in a bikers' club — he made his living from dealing drugs. From early on in our marriage he beat me. After we split up and I began pulling myself together, I never felt safe. Wes constantly threatened to take the kids and kill me or have me killed. I knew he was serious — I'd seen him in a rage too often not to know what he was capable of.

Now that I think back on my marriage and the years afterwards I think I had resigned myself to the violence and terror out of guilt. I was always attracted to women. I cried at my wedding, knowing I was making a terrible mistake, but I thought it was something wrong with me that I would just have to hide and never act on. When the violence started, I felt I deserved it because of my secret feelings. I really thought I'd brought the beatings on on myself, by not being "normal," even if no one knew it but me.

About a year and a half ago Wes was charged with the murder of a friend of his. Since then he's mostly been out

on bail awaiting trial. That helped me decide to move to Calgary with the kids. I have a sister there. But just before we could leave, I was served with two custody suits, one from Wes and the other from his parents. I was forced to stay in Toronto and fight. I called the LMDF and came to my first pot-luck just over a year ago.

My lawyer, Ellen Murray, filed a counter-suit in the Supreme Court of Ontario, whereupon the judge ordered a psychiatric evaluation of all the parties. Each of us had a short visit in the psychiatrist's office. I don't need to tell you I was tense, but I did try to be myself with the kids in front of her, not to put on an act. When Ellen and I got the report, we were dumbfounded; the psychiatrist had decided that the kids were in danger with me and recommended that they live with their grandparents. She felt they showed signs of abuse and that I was responsible.

We had to go back into court with that evaluation. Nevertheless, the judge left the boys with me temporarily.

In November 1982 the kids were visiting their father over a weekend. They were dropped off at my place on Sunday night already in their pajamas, so I put them into bed without undressing them. The next morning when I took Kevin's pajamas off I saw that he was a mass of bruises, from head to toe. He was too scared to tell me what had happened, but his brother said his father had beaten him because he'd made a mess in his pants. A three year old! He was in the hospital for two days. Wes was charged with child abuse, but the case was dismissed because of lack of evidence — apparently too much time had gone by before Kevin was hospitalized, and I couldn't prove that Wes had done it ...

When he was released from jail on that charge, the Children's Aid Society took both boys into care, to protect them from their father, until I could move to a new apartment where he couldn't find us. During that month I almost went crazy, not having them with me.

Since 1981 I've had both Wes and then Kevin, too, enrolled in a treatment centre called Stuthers, because I needed help in figuring out how to be with them and deal with their problems. All of us were traumatized by the violence in my marriage and the separation.



Both CAS and Stuthers went to court to say they felt strongly that the boys should be released from the foster home to my care. The court agreed and they've been with me ever since.

The judge ordered that until custody was finalized Wes was only to see the kids under CAS supervision. When that order expired this summer we went back to court to fight for its extension, and won, except now I do the supervising.

Wes and I weren't on speaking terms for a long time. Now things are calmer. We recently worked out terms and the final custody papers could be signed within days. He's dropping his suit; so are his parents. I've agreed to stay in Ontario, and not to press for child support until he's in a position to pay. If he goes to jail it might be a while.

While Wes didn't know about my lesbianism until a

few months ago, I did tell Stuthers early on, and they've said they can't see that it's having any negative effects on my kids. They say I'm doing a good job.

I'm studying social work now, and living as an open lesbian — out to my parents, my friends and people at school. I'm finally leading my own life, instead of the one I felt I was supposed to lead. When those papers are signed, and the custody battle is over, I'm going to feel like a million dollars!

*Hope's and Val's stories written by Francie Wyland from interviews.*

## Marilyn

Though he admitted to wishing we could continue to live together, my husband agreed that our two boys should remain with me when we discussed our separation after sixteen years of marriage. His acknowledgment of our relationship being limited to co-parenting, and his long term support of my work in the women's movement allowed me to believe that I could trust and be honest with him, and he left knowing that I was a lesbian.

For about four months we remained on good terms and Peter continued to see the boys, then 8 and 11, frequently. They adjusted to our separation from their father and became close to my lover and her daughter, understanding and accepting our relationship. Though I encouraged Peter to talk to a supportive man about his feelings and he at first agreed to, he soon began to deny that this was necessary and allowed himself to become extremely isolated. This self-imposed isolation fostered the anger he couldn't admit to, and the situation slowly began to change.

After those first months of relatively little difficulty, Peter completely stopped supporting us and began to visit the children less and less frequently. They were hurt and angry, and though I tried to reason with him, Peter no longer listened to me. I foolishly waited five months before having my lawyer prepare a maintenance order against him. When his lawyer responded with a reasonable offer, Peter fired him and decided to fight me for custody of the children.

Though to date we've made six court appearances, the custody issue will not be coming to trial until December. Our family has been assessed by the Official Guardian's Office, and because my kids are old enough to express a preference and the reasons for their anger at their father, it seems unlikely that I'll lose them.

I believe that the strengths of our case have been the children's ages and their stated desire to remain with me; my husband's awareness of my lesbianism and his willingness to leave the boys with me for nine months before challenging my custody; my access to information and the support of other lesbian mothers; and, my lawyer's willingness to both advise *and* take direction from me.

Dr. Paul, the Official Guardian's caseworker, has been difficult to deal with and has not yet issued her report. Because I did not immediately agree with her recommendation to obtain psychiatric help for my older son, there is a chance that her report will be very critical of me in spite of her verbal assurance that she believes my children should remain with me.

What's most frightening at this point, though, is the level of Peter's unresolved anger toward me and his readiness to hurt the children to express it. Cathy and I worry about the custody fight itself, but worry even more about Peter's reaction when and if he loses.



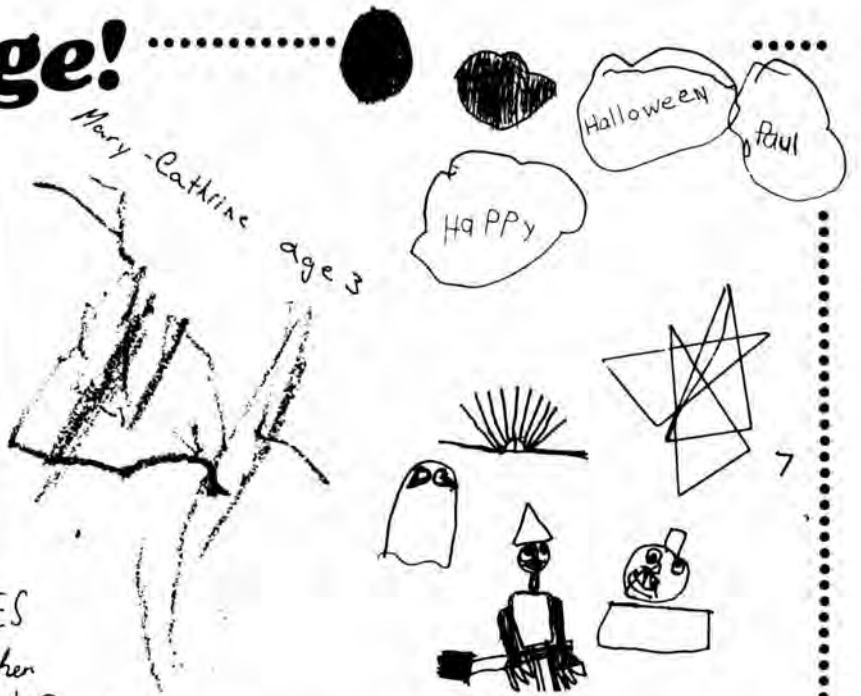
# The Kids' Page!

## Upcoming children's events

**October 23:** Hallowe'en party, 1:00 pm at Eileen's house. All hobos, ghosts, witches, spacepeople, etc. WELCOME — but BEWARE! For location call the LMDF at 416/465-6822.

**December 17:** Christmas/Hannuka party, 1-4:00 pm, at 736 Bathurst Street. Surprises galore ... will Santa be there?

**January:** outdoor ice skating with entertainment provided by two of our own — Martine and Caroline. Moms, why not join the fun! Hot chocolate by the fire at Jeanne's after. For meeting place, call the LMDF at 416/465-6822.



### My Mom!

I Love my mom.  
I think my mom is the best  
in the world. My mom is a  
lesbian mom and I still  
think she's the best.



by Martine

### CAPPY SERIES

By Jon-Paul Fletcher



~~The Beauty of Spring~~  
As the winter snow  
melts away,  
children come  
to play.  
Spring is a time for  
tulips and fun and  
for little boys and  
girls to run.  
As the clouds fly  
over the rainbow,  
flowers start to bloom.  
THE SPRING DOOR IS  
THE OPEN ONCE AGAIN!

### Sandwich Roll-ups

bread  
peanut butter  
or cheese whiz

1. Cut the crusts off of the bread
2. Roll the bread flat with a rolling pin.
3. Spread bread with peanut butter.
4. Roll the bread up.

Nathan L



Happy Halloween

by Caroline Cairns

age 10

### I've Got the Social Worker Blues

One night I was full of fright  
As Dr. Paul walked into my sight  
She came in and took a seat  
To see what problems she could beat  
"No problem's too big for me" she cried  
Then she heard mine and the bragging died  
She tried to make me believe she knew best  
That she'd worked on problems  
North East South and West  
She talked to me and then to my father  
It helped so little she shouldn't have bothered  
To me she's just another big pain  
She's the problem about which I complain  
None of her awards mean anything  
And she knows just that  
Not a thing!

Kelly Fletcher, 12

# Reviews

## *When Megan Went Away*

by Jane Siverance, illustrated by Tea Schock, Lollipop Power Inc., \$2.50

This book deals with the feelings of a young girl, Shannon, after her mother's lover, Megan, and her mother separate. Megan's absent possessions are a stark reminder that she is no longer a member of the household.

It's a really good book to read with your children to help them express their pain, guilt and thoughts when Mom & her lover separate. It's a positive book, with the message that even though the situation hurts everyone involved now, Shannon & her mother will soon feel better. It's a realistic book for lesbian mothers and their children.

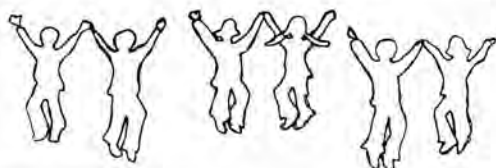
## *Lots of Mommies*

also by Jane Siverance, with illustrations by Jan Jones, Lollipop Power Inc., \$3.25.

Emily lives in a co-op house with several women who take care of her and do special things with her. This is a wonderful introduction to one of the new and alternative family structures that many lesbian moms are creating.

*Reviewed by Jeanne*

Lollipop publishes an extensive number of feminist books for children. For a free catalogue write to Lollipop Power Inc., P.O. Box 1171, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514 USA.



## *Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State: An Agenda for Theory*

Catharine A. MacKinnon, in *Signs*, 1982: 515

According to MacKinnon, feminism uses sexuality to make sense of reality. Sexuality is the primary social sphere of male power. Men have effectively defined women's sexuality. Heterosexuality is the institution which enforces this definition.

Each element of the female gender stereotype is sexual. A woman is vulnerable, i.e. gives the appearance or reality of easy access. A woman is passive, i.e. receptive and weak. She is soft, i.e. impregnable by something hard ... etc. Men have defined women in sexual terms. They have defined us in terms of how they can use us. According to MacKinnon, women have no other definition.

Women wishing to protest male definition are confronted with the fact that events we perceive as sexual — rape, prostitution, incest, harassment, pornography, even lesbianism — are explained by men in terms of religion, biology, morality and psychology. The feminist response has been to deny that these events are sexual, and to define them politically, in terms of power.

We have not come to terms with the fact that sex is political. Heterosexuality is the means men use to control women.

Because women's sexuality is defined in terms of its use by men, women can not distinguish what a woman is from how she is abused. Abuses of sex don't have to rely on force. Forms of enforcement have become sexualized. There is no necessity to eroticize violence because it is in those terms that men have defined women's eroticism.

... But I enjoy pornography. I enjoy "Coming to Power." I enjoy women's sexuality. What implications do MacKinnon's insights, if valid, have for women like me?

*Reviewed by Lynda*

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