

July 15, 1988

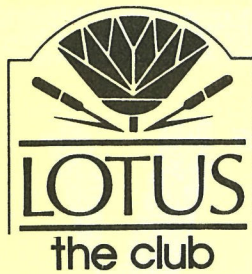
Vol 1, No 2

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DIVERSITY

The Lesbian Rag





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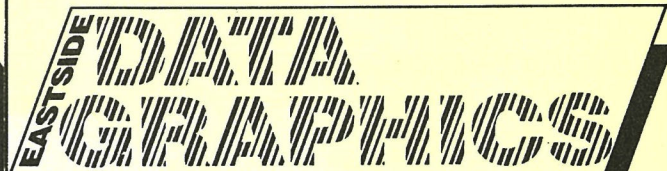
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Diversity: The Lesbian Rag

Rag: An extensive display of disorderly conduct, carried on in defiance of authority or discipline.
—Oxford English Dictionary

THE COLLECTIVE: Jennifer Catchpole, Sherry McCarnan, Evie Mandel, Barbara Pulling, Lori St. Valentine, Richelle Van Snellenberg, Marlene Wong

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Diversity is a rag by, for and about Lesbians. Our aim is to celebrate Lesbian diversity. We especially encourage submissions from Lesbians traditionally denied voice.

Submissions should be typed (or hand-written neatly) and double-spaced with your name, address and phone number attached. We will withhold your name at your request. Submission does not guarantee publication or that your material will be returned. Don't send us your only copy! Please do not send more than three items per submission. We reserve the right to edit material for length and clarity.

Deadlines: Submissions for the Sept. 17 issue must be received by Aug. 15. Ads must be booked no later than three weeks prior to publication. Camera-ready ad copy is due no later than three weeks prior to publication. Next production weekend will be Sept 10 and 11.

The Diversity collective does not necessarily share the views contained in any article, even if the byline belongs to a collective member. Views of the collective are expressed only in editorials and material signed by the collective. Publication of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by the collective.

Mailing address:
Diversity: The Lesbian Rag
PO Box 66106, Station F
Vancouver, BC V5N 5L4
Phone messages: (604) 254-8458



Nursing sisters at one of the Canadian General Hospitals in England.

SPOT THE LESBIANS IN THIS PHOTO

What did Lesbians look like in 1941? Many women came out during wartime. Write to us with your guess or send us a photo and we'll publish the most enlightening answer.

Send answers (before Aug. 15th) to: Any Woman Can... c/o The Rag, PO Box 66106 Stn F, Vancouver, BC V5N 5L4

For answers to last issue's Jelly Beans contest see page 6.

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Cover drawing by Sue Leibik

To our Readers

The Third International Feminist Bookfair was held in Montreal, June 12 to 19, and almost 300 publishers and booksellers, more than 200 authors, and some 10,000 members of the public attended.

The Rag was there too, as nervous as a baby dyke on her first night at the club.

On the first day we set up our table with T-shirts and magazines, and looked around in wonderment. We saw matriarchs of women's publishing, like Naiad Press and Virago, and exciting newcomers, including Kali For Women, from India, and Serita sa Secheba Publishers, the first Black women's press from South Africa. There were hundreds of examples of the variety and richness of women's publishing.

We were thrilled by this, but—would anybody notice us? Were we wearing the right clothes? And what, exactly, were we supposed to do here?

We took a deep breath and plunged in. We introduced ourselves, made deals, traded subscriptions, and met Lesbians from a dozen countries. We went to workshops. We traded publishing tips with Lesbian publishers and authors we have long admired, and we gratefully accepted congratulations on our first issue from them. We got the rights to translate and reprint some feminist comics from Mexico (watch for these in coming issues). We encouraged writers and cartoonists to send us their work, and collected a stack of exciting new books to review.

We learned a lot about publishing at the International Book Fair, but two things stand out.

The first is that The Rag is different. Of all the many Lesbian, gay and feminist periodicals that we saw at the fair, we are alone in our commitment to immediate personal writing that is not academic and not necessarily professional, but that comes directly from Lesbian daily experience of all kinds. No one else is publishing as many different kinds of Lesbian work in as many different voices and styles as we want to.

We want to be different in this way. To do that we need you to contribute. Don't wait to see what Diversity turns out to be—make it into what you want. Send us your work. Write down your thoughts and your experience. Do it now for the first time, or show us that you've done it before. If you've never seen anything published like

what you write or draw, what you're doing is what we want. And even if you think it's not special, we might. Lesbians long to see their lives in print, and every story counts. We want to be as genuinely diverse as we can and we invite you to help us do it.

The second thing we learned at the Book Fair is that we belong. The Rag is making a special place in publishing and going to Montreal was one way to claim that place. Our career is just beginning but this baby dyke magazine has a lot to look forward to.

The Diversity Collective

Send us your work typed and double-spaced. If you must handwrite it, please triple space and be as neat as possible. Don't send us your only copy! Include your name, address and phone number, and please say if you don't want your full name published. We may have to edit. Most of our articles are under 1500 words and news and reviews should be no more than 500. We give preference to writing on Lesbian subjects but will happily consider anything written, drawn or photographed by a Lesbian. Please do not send us more than three items (poems, stories, drawings, whatever) per submission. Deadlines are: Aug. 15, Oct. 15, Dec. 15, etc. for issues to appear one month after the deadline. For further information write to **Diversity: The Lesbian Rag**, PO Box 66106, Station F, Vancouver, BC, V5N 5L4, or leave a message at 254-8458. **Write for The Rag.**

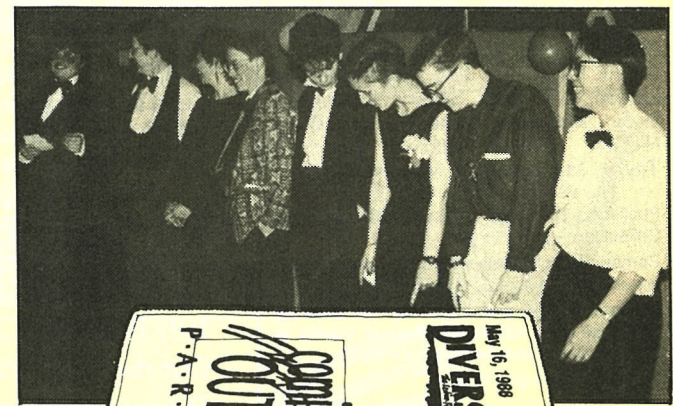
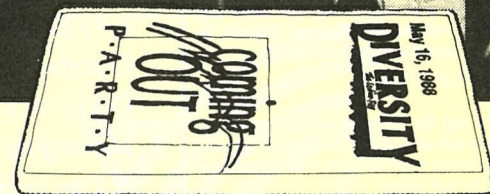
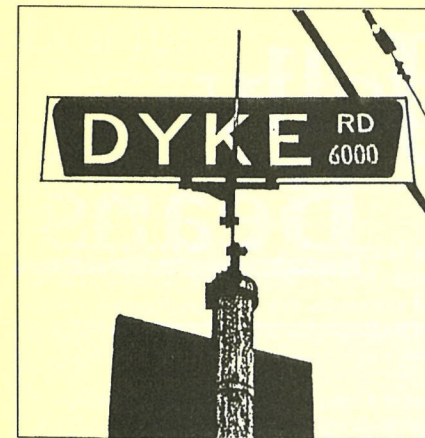


photo by Della McCreary



The Collective and the Cake
Collective members celebrate the launch of Diversity with 250 women, at Graceland, May 16, 1988. Cake decorated by Lorraine Nelson and Claire Murgatroyd.

AT LESBIAN SUMMER CAMP...



Dyke Road is a Letters to Everyone column. Use it to speak your mind. We invite thoughts, feelings, new ideas, humour or questions about whatever matters to you, and we welcome replies to what you read here. This is a place to make contact, to share experience, to argue passionately and to explore all sides.

Please keep your letters under 300 words and remember that we may have to edit for length and clarity. Include your name, address and phone number in case we need to get in touch with you. If you don't want your full name printed, be sure to say so. Send letters to: Dyke Road, c/o The Rag, Box 66106, Station F, Vancouver, B.C. V5N 5L4.

It Made Me Laugh

Dear Dykes,
Thanks for Diversity! It made me laugh, cry, feel sad, angry and acknowledged. In a culture that invalidates lesbians and as one who took a long time to come out, I do need validation, herstory, mirrors and images.

Love,
—Margaret Chisholm
Vancouver, B.C.

No Dogs or Lesbians

Dear Diversity:
NO DOGS OR LESBIANS. The words glared at me, scrawled on a Vancouver Folk Music Festival poster, as I sat waiting for my laundry at William's Coin Laundry.

My mind briefly flashed back in time. I could hear my father telling stories of what it was like growing up in Victoria. The racism. The signs in store windows that said NO DOGS OR CHINKS ALLOWED!

I suddenly felt unsafe and violated. Also pissed off that I may be using the same washer and dryer as a canine hater and homophobic person.

Staring at the poster, I tried to figure out what I should do. I wanted to remove it but was feeling paranoid. If I got up and removed it, the straight-looking woman beside me would know I'm a lesbian. Decided to go for a walk since I had twenty-five minutes to wait.

I walked down Commercial Drive checking bulletin boards to see if any other posters had been defaced. Got back to the laundromat a few minutes before my clothes were done in the washer. The coast was clear! All the customers were in the back. I removed the offending poster and carefully rolled it up.

What was I going to do with it? Should I keep it as a reminder that I live in a homophobic society? Should I start a collection of homophobic material? Should I give it to somebody? Should I write about it?

I decided I would make an attempt at writing something for Diversity, since I have been trying to convince other lesbians to write for the past few months. Well, here it is!

This incident interrupted my life for a couple of days, but life goes on. I shall be visible wearing my Diversity: The Lesbian Rag T-shirt at the Folk Festival (when I'm not on Security). See you there!

—Marlene Wong
Vancouver, B.C.

Lesbian Heaven

Dear Diversity:
As the woman who was mistaken for a man at that party (as described in last issue's Dyke Road) let me say, "no offense taken" to both Mary Doug and Ms. Ravendaughter. I've left Canada in any event. I am finding lots of fun with other Amazons in London—this has to be Lesbian heaven, despite the fascist government. Cheers!

—Gwyn Cathyl
London, England

Tennessee Fish Cop

Dear Diversity:
Congratulations on your newspaper. I have high hopes for it. I've had temptations to write to magazines before but I often felt that because I'm younger, what is new and fascinating to me might be boring and old hat to others. Your encouragement is just what I needed to get going. I'm a combination biologist/fish cop, spending two to three months at a time out at sea monitoring the foreign fleets in our coastal waters.

Reading is one of my favourite hobbies. I devour my books, reread the best parts and occasionally jot down my favourite lines and post them over my desk. And when I've finished with the book I wonder how I ever managed before, blindly stumbling along without this latest enlightenment. I also wonder what else I'm missing.

Being young and having realized I was gay only a couple of years ago, I know I've missed many wonderful books. But I'm not the only one. (Believe it or not, even my roommate hadn't heard of *Rubyfruit Jungle* until she saw my copy.)

So I thought a newspaper like Diversity might be able to carry personal reviews of new books. One way it could work would be to ask readers for a short synopsis of their favourite books, relating to a certain predetermined topic for the next issue. Suggested themes could be: lesbian novels, coming-out books, biographies of famous women, history of the gay movement, gay rights, gender issues, poetry, etc. Diversity could then print up some of the most popular. In this way, each woman wouldn't have to start from the very beginning. We could all spend less time catching up and more moving ahead.

—Lisa Plourde
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Diversity does invite personal reviews of new books from all our readers. See Diversions, page 18, for details.—Eds.

Diversity Perversity?

Dear Diversity:
My partner handed me your first issue and I was shocked by the front cover. I know—if you read through the index, you discover at the bottom of the page that it is a photograph of a natural rock formation. I can appreciate the "wonder of nature" in this photograph, however, I don't believe it belongs on the front page of a lesbian newspaper—especially when you have to search for the explanation. As producers of a lesbian newspaper you should keep in mind that you have a responsibility. Any member of society (other than a lesbian who knows better), who happens to see this newspaper will assume its contents display typical attitudes, beliefs, and interests of the whole lesbian community. Dare I say homophobes of this world would jump at the chance to flash such a front page around and yell, "Ya see! I told ya all they're interested in is sex!"

continued on next page

continued from previous page

And then, after fighting the automatic urge to throw the whole paper in the garbage as probably just filled with more of the same, I decided to give it a chance and see if there was anything worthwhile inside. I came to the artwork on page 11—again you reduce lesbianism to a pornographic state.

I find myself offended and angered as a lesbian and as a woman. Apparently you have chosen to live up to a definition of "rag" other than the one you quote from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, more like the one that reads "a waste piece of cloth." Actually, the latter is what most people equate with the word "rag," so you might want to consider removing that word from the title. Unless of course you plan to continue with your pornographic artwork. In that case, by all means, do leave it in!

Ladies, you have an opportunity with your newspaper to do something really worthwhile. I implore you—don't abuse it, use it!

—Sandra L. James
Port Moody, B.C.

Co-op Radio Responds

Diversity:

I am writing in response to the letter in your first issue from the anonymous, self-named CRUD (Christian Radical Urban Dyke). I was pissed off when I read the allegation that CRUDs are not heard from on Co-op Radio. In fact back in early February of this year, there was a whole hour set aside for Christian dykes on "The Lesbian Show"...it was publicized in the *Radio Waves* magazine just like every other planned show, but the hour had to be mostly filled with music because the women didn't want to be interviewed. Therefore, there wasn't much of a show. The Christian dykes had complete control over the format and contents of the show, with only suggestions from the women who regularly work on "The Lesbian Show."

I would like to take this opportunity to say that any Lesbians, groups or individuals can offer comments or suggestions to Co-op Radio's "Lesbian Show" or to "Women Do This Every Day," and we would be glad to hear from you.

"The Lesbian Show" is aired Thursdays from 8:30 - 9:30 pm and "Women Do This Every Day" on Mondays from 7:30 - 8:30 pm, on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM.

—Elaine, a member of the "Women Do This Every Day" collective

Brook Takes a Break

Diversity:

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

I just finished reading *The Rag* while taking a break from a building project in my back yard. But before I get back to the cedar dust and chain saw, I just had to tell you how delighted I was with your publication.

Finally something that I can relate to. *Diversity* has a little bit of everything. Definitely a fun kind of magazine, with a very special formula for content. This is really exciting. Congratulations. This one is really going to fly!!

Warmest regards from a friend in the country,

—Brook
Saltspring Island, B.C.

Womanist

Dear Sisters,

Thank you for the wonderfully diverting first issue. It's good to hear from other women here in town about their experiences. I have only recently acknowledged the diversity of my sexual orientation and consequently, Lesbian lives are my current favourite topic of conversation/investigation/contemplation. The past year has included an increase in my appreciation for literature by and about women loving women.

I would like to suggest that an article outlining the many diverse approaches to what constitutes a lesbian, lesbian experience and lesbianism, would be much appreciated. My personal favourite would be synonymous with Alice Walker's definition of "womanist": "A woman who loves other women sexually and/or non-sexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength," and also, "From womanish (opp. of 'girlish,' i.e.: frivolous, irresponsible, not serious)...usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or wilful behaviour. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered good for one."—Alice Walker, *In Search of our Mothers' Gardens*, 1983.

—Chantal Phillips
Vancouver, B.C.

Jelly Beans

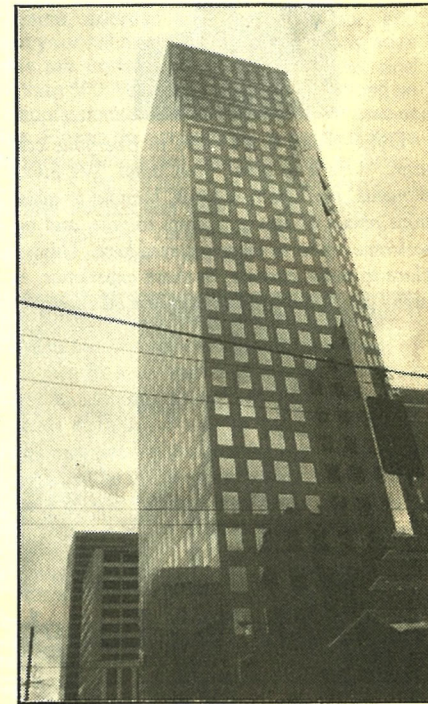


photo by Sherry

Last issue we asked readers to guess how many Lesbians worked in this building. For this issue's contest see page 3.

Dear Jelly Beans,

After many hours of deliberation, I have taken a scientific approach to solving the question, "How many Lesbians work in this building?"

Hypothesis #1: There must be as many lesbians working in the building as there are jelly beans in a one-litre jar. Case study showed, however, that jelly beans (yummy) and logic don't mix.

Hypothesis #2: Take a wild guess!!! Therefore, my answer is 59.

—Lori

Dear Jelly Beans,

Q: How many Lesbians work in the building?

A: It depends on how many closets are in the building!

—Kathy J. Trinity, San Clemente, CA
more Jelly Beans next page

Dear JB:

Although the number of lesbians working in that attractive office tower in downtown Vancouver may not be one of the most pressing concerns of the day, I must admit that I have given your question some consideration.

First, I decided to try a methodical approach. I asked myself how I could obtain such information. That was where my fun began. I'd walked straight into my first obstacle.

Backing up a few steps, I asked myself whether or not such information is obtainable. How can anyone ascertain the number of lesbians working there or anywhere else? Are you talking only about "out" lesbians? And how do you categorize lesbians who have not yet come out to themselves? Or those who are out to themselves but not their co-workers? Then we have women who identify as gay or dykes rather than as lesbians. Where do we draw the line?

It soon became obvious to me that not even the contest organizers could truly know how many lesbians worked in that building (by the way, does the building have a name?). Nevertheless, I still wondered how one might go about obtaining this information. I reckoned I would need to be on-site, so I immediately hopped a bus downtown and while riding gave my mission some further thought.

If I were to take the elevator to the top floor and gradually work my way down, I could stop in at every office and ask how many lesbians are currently employed there. Oh sure, that'll be easy! If I'm not thrown or laughed out of the place, the likelihood of any manager or receptionist knowing how many dykes (er, lesbians) are on the staff is, I imagine, rather slim. It's not the sort of thing that mainstream society, or even its more progressive elements, keeps tabs on. Imagine the reaction I might receive if I carried out my survey. "Well, let's see, I'm sure Lenore and Jane in Marketing are lesbian, and Sylvia in Purchasing is. Hmmm, I'm not sure about Marion. Let me check for you."

Time to put my next plan into action. I'd always prided myself on being able to spot dykes at a distance. Maybe I could look around and see how many I could make out. This would be a very hit and miss operation, however, as one could never be sure to have thoroughly covered the building. One must also consider the margin of error involved in "spotting." Moreover, I cannot forget that the building in question is an office tower and so many of my subjects will be incognito. Should I try to spot leg hairs poking through nylons?

Sweet Esmeralda

Sweet Esmeralda is a wise Lesbian who has many years of experience under her skirts. Have a problem? Chances are, she has been through it too. She can answer all your questions, serious or frivolous, and if she doesn't know, she'll find out. Cry on her shoulder, wail and moan, tell her your secrets—she's used to it, and she LOVES to help! Send questions to Sweet Esmeralda, c/o The Rag, PO Box 66106, Station F, Vancouver BC V5N 5L4.

Dear Es:

Although I'm still in my twenties, I get hot flashes from dykes who are going through hot flashes. My friends tell me to find a woman more my own age but they don't have the same appeal. Do you think I should listen to my friends?

(signed) To Flash or Not To Flash

Dear Flash:

If loving older women is what YOU love to do, more power to you! That's your choice, and no one else can make it for you. Incidentally, I happen to be unattached at the moment...

Dear Esmeralda:

For the past two years I've lusted madly after this woman who I know would make me miserable. She has drug and alcohol

problems (I don't) and I've seen how she treats her lovers—rotten! But I just can't seem to get over this feeling, and lately she's been after me, too. I've managed to hold her at arm's length so far, but I don't know how much longer I can keep this up. What should I do?

(signed) Help!

Dear Help:

Don't be a fool. You know better already! Avoid her like poison, which she is, and above all don't let her get you alone. There are lots of wonderful women out there; you can find one who will be nice to you. If you just can't resist, you may have a serious problem. I suggest you get some counselling—or write to Ann Landers. Good luck!

Since it was unlikely that I could determine the exact number of lesbians employed in the aforementioned skyscraper, I considered my remaining options. I could either take a wild guess based on, say, 10% of the female personnel in the building, or I could save myself the trouble and just give up this futile exercise. Wisely, I chose the latter.

Having gone to great lengths to uncover the truth and (perhaps) win the contest, I was a little disgruntled to realize that I never would know the answer, nor would anyone else. Your contest is a sham. You've tricked me into wasting valuable time, and enticed people to buy your second issue in hopes of finding the answer there. I challenge you to publish a "correct response" to "How many Lesbians work in the building?" Unlike the jellybeans contest where the candies can be counted in order to determine one correct answer, the Lesbians contest leaves too much room for dissent (or diversity?).

Despite the frustration involved in my search, I gained some valuable insight from my efforts. First, the diversity of lesbians' lives was reaffirmed for me. It is difficult to define who is lesbian; every woman has her own understanding of her sexuality. Because we identify differently, we cannot always be recognized, even by each other.

Secondly, we find the question amusing because we are invisible. We *assume* that lesbians working there are going to be closeted. Indeed, the contest works as humour precisely for this reason. We understand that the number of us working in that office tower is unknowable since we remain closeted to ourselves, each other and to the rest of society.

There you have it: my response to your contest. I will decline a numerical guess for reasons already stated in this letter. I thank you for providing me with an evening's entertainment.

—Rhonda Wagner

**WRITE
FOR
THE RAG**

Out the Door without Fairy Dust

by Jan Thomson

The surprising, or not-so-surprising, reality about researching the subject of women (and/or Lesbians), mental illness and sexual abuse was the poverty of information in North American nursing journals. I know that the psychiatric establishment has little to say, seeing as they have refused to even utter the word "incest" in my hearing. I was able to scare up three 1985 articles from *Canadian Nurse*, all feminist articles from Quebec on women and mental illness. The librarian from the Registered Nurses Association of B.C. library and myself were unable to find anything in the cumulative indexes under "sexual abuse" except in the context of children. On Lesbians? Help me, Hannah!

I have a wealth of my own nightmare experiences, witnessing women on psychiatric wards being abused by psychiatrists. In my case, I identify as an incest victim now, but was until recently a schizophrenic, "catatonic" and manic-depressive. My own dramas include being dangerously overdosed in Ottawa by a Chilean psychiatrist who told me, along with my frequently vomiting roommate, that the toxic effects helped to teach us "poor women how to avoid the institutions in the future." As recently as two weeks ago, my family called the Vancouver police from Ottawa to have me hauled off to Vancouver General Hospital. Most convinced of my insanity is my father, my incest perpetrator, "concerned parent," medication-conscious M.D. of the family. At the emergency psych ward at VGH, I guess I was deemed an "aggressive, uncooperative" woman because several men came to herd me into the "quiet" room and forcefully pinned me down. I was surprised, having only said bravely, "No, I'll keep my earrings and necklace on." No surprise, however, at the aggressive, psych ward style of these men as they pulled at my jewelry and one man's hand half-suffocated my mouth. A true climax to my psych history.

I am an incest victim. As a woman, a Lesbian and a nurse, I am outraged at a psychiatric system that treats twice as many women as men. These women also consume more drugs, and in higher dosages, than men do. Behold a Montreal study of 300 nurses. Fifty percent of the women who responded admitted to using "anti-depressants." One-third of this group took Valium on prescription from a doctor to cope with unmanageable life stresses. If so many nurses admit to seeking help for life's problems, then how many Lesbians admit to succumbing to prescriptions and medical services in order to cope with overwhelming pressures?

Overwhelming odds, indeed. Little has changed for women over the last fifteen years. The pressures for women continue to climb as we deal with our low socio-economic status, the budget cuts that take away daycare or women's education or rape relief, and our absence from political agendas. These pressures continue to keep women as big "consumers" of medical services with no real control over their bodies from menstruation to menopause.

The keynote speaker at the recent Oxfam Primary Health Care Conference held in Vancouver spoke emphatically of women as the key to the health of a society. The survival rate of children is directly proportional to the level of education and awareness of the women in a community. It is a fact long known to governments around the world, including our own.

If the primary health care concern for Third World countries is malnutrition, then here we must acknowledge sexual abuse and women abused by our psychiatric system as our primary health concern. The key here, as in the rest of the world, is the health or awareness of the women. As Lesbians, we have a high number of sexual abuse victims as members of our community. We are also big targets of the psychiatric system.

As an example, the Vancouver Lesbian Connection contacted eight women who

described themselves as ex-psych patients. All were on medication, all had primary diagnoses of some form of mental illness. It was gradually discovered that most of us had been sexually abused. We all had bad memories of being Lesbians in the psychiatric system. None of us had ever had our abuse problems dealt with in the hospitals. Incest is an "iceberg" issue, only dealt with in the media. However, rape is known to be the only criminal act on the increase.

If we continue to be big "consumers" of the psychiatric system, then we live with straitjackets that do not loosen with time. Two Montreal nurses outline a long-term plan to free women from this system. They describe a twelve-week women's group, starting with subjects such as sexuality, socialization, leisure, loss, assertiveness training, and how to obtain the information and answers we need to be proper consumers. The combination of nurturing, encouragement and education releases women, and creates a larger network of women promoting change and social action. Two ingredients are essential—significant supportive relationships and commitment to long-term positive change within the community.

We can leave the revolving doors of medication clinics and create a network of healthy women coping on our own with life's stresses and losses by making this a community goal. In a primary health care model, a problem is identified by the community at large, then each member participates to make a permanent change. I propose that, as a Lesbian community, we identify as our first-priority health problem our current status as "no satisfaction" consumers of the psychiatric system. We need a positive change in our own health care. That would truly be a climax in my psych history.

Jan Thomson is an RN on a possibly permanent vacation from the patriarchy. She is at home with Peter Pan dealing with incest this summer. Blessed be.

The Third Annual Lesbian Softball Tournament Dykes 'n' Dogs at the Diamond

concept by Marlene Wong



photos by Marina Dobis

a
day
in
the
life

DYKE MUM

by Jennifer Catchpole

I have two children, ages five and almost seven, and I am presently on welfare. This is written specifically for those of you who have no contact with dyke mums and may have very little idea of what our lives are like.

Tuesday, June 7th

7:30 a.m.—Up. Shower, dress, get kids up. Feed them, get their clothes, help them dress, brush teeth and hair, etc. Make Max's lunch for school, all the while gulping tea and chain-smoking.

8:45—Leave to take Max to school. No time or money to stop for coffee and muffin today. Drag Lucy home screaming because she is "too tired" to walk. Five minutes' discussion does not resolve it, and she is too heavy to carry. Lucy is a special needs child and tantrums very easily. I have tried every parenting technique in the books, talked to her workers about it, etc. only to find that this is to be expected from her because of her disability, i.e., I just have to put up with it. I cope by distancing myself as much as possible and comforting her (love and hugs) as soon as she calms down enough to accept it. Home, more tea and food. Lucy is fine by now.

10:30—Get picked up by friend in a car to go to the food bank. I switched to the west side one because I can get a ride and the other one is so dingy and depressing I can hardly stand it. I need the stuff, though. I don't see a single dyke at either one. I feel out of place and get some "looks" because I look quite dykey. My ride is nice and has a wonderful baby. We don't stay for coffee, just get in and out QUICK. Got cookies this week, big treat.

12:00 p.m.—Lunch, then take Lucy to preschool. Now is MY time. Today I just nap. Sometimes I do housework, Diversity work, visit with friends, run errands, appointments, etc. But I nap when I need to. I've been sick and still get wiped out sometimes. It is a luxury, though.

2:45—Go pick kids up. Mad rush to get from one school to the other in time. Sometimes Max is late finishing his schoolwork, then I am late to pick up Lucy—teachers

MOVING

for Barbara Williams (Peter)

When I was moving away from our 8 years moving from your breasts when I was folding towels & sheets into tired cartons when I was rolling up the rug under our bed pulling out strands of your hair from the nap when my new lover a replacement part helped to load the rented yellow van when I sat in the back to keep the plants from falling over this avocado I grew from seed of a long distant salad we shared in our beginning taller than I now I wasn't afraid of the dark claustrophobic as our furniture now mine rocked & tipped on my backbone I belonged black I was smiling My new lover was plenty of food I wasn't hungry for your cooking Balancing our avocado between firm feet no one stronger than I Lost didn't say so Moved across town from our tender pine tree mornings into the Mission Miracle Mile which is no miracle which is a hard bus stop corner liquor joint pussy magazine shop gypsy whore house store front church Didn't I love our crooked nest marriage as I fought you fiercely When you left that morning your lips red & swollen with her didn't I fall off didn't I want you back bone ribs spine mucus sleepy pillow stained sheets Don't I obscurely miss washing your clothes folding you clean-smelling & dear into my fingers Don't I shiver moving across town Back to our old street only once Another new lover lived there I broke it off Couldn't bear to look at that street sign without wanting to live under your thumb wing smile disdain your familiarity cool & soothing as fog I was never warm in our Chinese landscape home of dark bark silvery mist mourning doves tidy & quiet people Moving away from our rooms sunlight across parquet floors old fights in the walls moving from a hummingbird window leaving a porch full of sunflowers bamboo geraniums birds Moving from our breath into a basement apartment apart from you into cold alley garbage entrance splintered back steps windows overlooking walls leaking roof shorted electricity steel door of over I didn't write then I moved learned to pay & pay my own way my new lovers a bandage excuse spent a year devouring so I could ignore your departure Weren't we going to live in one another's bellies until there was no food left Well you left me the furniture left me many sticks called tables chairs books I built a new life moving away from our deep skins Today we rode together

very understanding at both ends. Go to park on the way home, all play together, chase each other around, go on swings, have a really nice time together. I don't send them to the park across the street from home anymore; Max came home proudly bearing a hypodermic needle a few weeks ago, and sometimes there are drunks hanging around. I bargained with the almighty Ministry for coupons for them for summer programs. I don't want them loitering around all summer, and I don't have the money or energy to be lugging them on the bus everywhere to keep them busy (bored kids are horrible!). I'll just keep them the odd day to go and do special stuff together. In their programs they keep busy and happy, go on lots of field trips, and have safe, supervised social contact with other kids. It gives me a bit of a holiday, too. I'm not sure how I'm going to finance it, but a friend and I are going to the Michigan Women's Music Festival in August. The kids' dad has agreed to

take them. I've never been away from them for more than two days before!

I have had relationships with kid-free women...they resented my kids' demands.

5:00—Cook dinner, eat, pop the kids in the tub, clean up a bit. Their dad arrives as I have a Diversity meeting tonight. My kidcare situation is atypical of most dyke (not-in-a-couple) mums. Their dad is really involved with the kids. He is not working, and they live with me, so he spends his time with them at my convenience. I have tons of meetings, two yoga classes a week, and I do like to go out and see my lover sometimes! It's wonderful; I can have my life with my kids and my adult life, too. This situation may not last; he may get a job. Two years ago he left town for the winter. I

MOVING

in the car I helped pay for yours now You're moving to the Sierras with your new lover holding in my hand the shard mirror when I was as important to you as she is now I smile at you both Everyone amazed I'm not Doing it the same way I lived with you An art to be open good-hearted forgiving Born of necessity still surviving one jump ahead of my bitter back I seem to have moving ripped open I'm fine I'm fine these tears sentimental liars We're still friends because I haven't moved away from needing you & I'm careful not to remind you too often I moved I write We're not Words are simpletons maniacs exhausted roots feathers crushed in sand Don't move not a place now we're empty Having discarded all my new lovers as poor imitations of us I say: I'm alone I've moved here as though I owned this unpacking still moving no matter how wide our distance I'm still sprung from the place where we wanted to be one I live inside your old discarded turtle-necks old neglect demands tenderness I was your sunshine all that Bliss wind rainbows Time to get up leave this place move on In this chair I've seen you still knotted in my grain unraveling losing Get up stand up let go MOVE I am moved by your absence I've been moved to another place Changed landscapes streets excuses You'll live with your new lover in a green birdsong I want I'll rarely see you We will No You will have finally moved from me broken our eyes meeting familiar comfort of our understanding the curve of your pear-shaped ass tucked into my belly when you are gone no more tears no dark night voices you've packed up your pillow gone to the cleaner's you're a woman on your way to becoming a stranger to me

Chrystos

Chrystos is a Native American political activist, artist and writer. She lives on Bainbridge Island in the Pacific Northwest. Her first book, Not Vanishing, was published by Press Gang in July 1988.

was absolutely stuck at home; it was terrible. I was working full-time anyway, I got exhausted and got very ill, which is why I'm a welfare "bum" (HAH!) now.

7:00 p.m.—Diversity meeting. I find working on this paper fun, challenging, hard work, rewarding.

10:45—Drop in to my lover's on the way home, no overnight kidcare tonight so I only stay half an hour. She has a four-year-old son. Sometimes she brings him to my place, or I can get away overnight. Occasionally we even both get a night off to go out or just be ALONE together. It takes a lot of planning. We also do lots of stuff with the kids together. It's really five of us having a relationship! Very complicated. It is such a relief to be with another mum. I have had relationships with kid-free women. They either found my kids/life/poverty too much or they resented my kids' demands on my time and energy and my lack of flexibility

(can't go out on a moment's notice). I came out after I had the kids. I don't know any other way.

11:15—Home...I need a little quiet time before I go to sleep. I put some records on, have a hot bath, read in bed for five minutes, and then blessed sleep.

Jennifer Catchpole is a 32-year-old lesbian feminist mother.

Diversity invites submissions of all kinds. Why not write about a day in your life? See page 4 for submission guidelines.

Celebration 90 Gay Games III and Cultural Festival

by Donna Dyke

August 4th, 1990—just a date in the vague and distant future? It was to me until I dropped by a Celebration '90 volunteer orientation meeting, held the first Tuesday of every month at the Gay & Lesbian Centre. Now I know better. This date marks the start of the Gay Games III and Cultural Festival which will run for eight days in August 1990, right here in Vancouver. Considering the scale of this event, I've also realized that 1990 is *fast* approaching. Thanks to a slick and upbeat video presentation, which had the heart of even this devoted non-jock beating faster, I learned some facts about the Games that may surprise you.

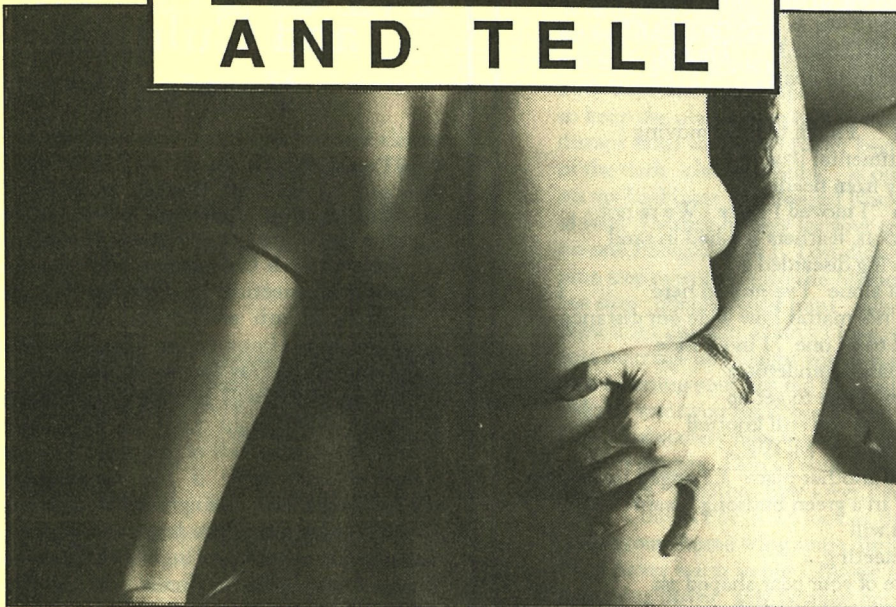
First, we're talking BIG. The first Gay Games, held in San Francisco in 1982, drew 1300 participants. Gay Games II, held in that city in 1986, drew 3482 athletes from 17 countries. In 1990, an estimated 5000 athletes are expected to converge on Vancouver—that's *three times* as many as competed in the Calgary Winter Olympics. Think about it. This is the largest international amateur sporting event in the world...and we're hosting it!

Another striking feature of the Gay Games is that they're built on the principle of inclusion. In the words of their founder, the late Dr. Tom Waddell, "Participation and doing one's personal best are more important than winning." Every event is open to any person of any age, race, sex or ability who wishes to experience the thrill of international competition. There are no regional eliminations; everyone participates in the main event, and, wherever possible, men and women compete together.

So far, 20 sports events have been announced, and they range from team sports such as soccer and softball to the individual challenge of the triathlon. There's virtually something for everyone, even bowling and billiards for those of us more inclined to the great indoors. The sports committees are organizing now, with male and female co-

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KISS AND TELL



Women in Focus, Vancouver's women's gallery, will be staging a multi-media series this summer on women's sexuality. Included are three performance evenings and an interactive photo-event called Drawing the Line.

Drawing the Line is a production of Kiss & Tell, a collaboration of three local artists. It consists of a series of photographs depicting a range of lesbian sexualities, from the "tame" to the "scandalous." Women attending the show will be able to respond to the question, "Where do you draw the line?" by marking directly on the wall to express their limits regarding lesbian sexual imagery.

Members of Kiss & Tell say the purpose of the piece is twofold. They hope it will be seen in the context of the ongoing debate about pornography and censorship. And they are also trying to create sensuous images of lesbian sex. "We know that we cannot possibly begin to represent all lesbian sexuality—we don't even have room to represent all the images we have thought of. But we hope women can find images at some place in the range that turn them on. At the same time, it is a chance for women to look at their process of deciding what images are alright for them, in a place where their opinions can be heard. We expect the lines to be fuzzy."

Kiss & Tell is: Persimmon Blackbridge (sculptor), Susan Stewart (photographer),

and Emma Stonebridge (graphic designer). Drawing the Line will be at Women in Focus from August 10 to September 3. Women in Focus is at 204 - 456 West Broadway in Vancouver. Photos will be for sale on a sliding scale.

Also at Women in Focus, performances will be held at the opening and closing of the Summer Sex Show (August 20 and September 3). The shows will be explorations by a variety of women into the meaning of the erotic. In fact, the shows will be totally concerned with SEX.

Women who would like to perform can contact the Production Committee at WIF—872-2250—or call Lorna at 253-6792. So far, we have talked with interested performance poets, storytellers, musicians, a stripper, comedienne, and film/video artists. Women who have written erotic stories can submit their work, and either read it themselves or have a reader provided by us. Writers may remain anonymous if preferred. The deadline for submissions is July 4 (flexible). All writers and performers will be paid.

All women, regardless of sexual orientation, are encouraged to submit work. The first show will be for women only, and the second will be mixed. Come to the shows, and celebrate the sexual power, diversity, depth and subtlety of women.

Butter

by Claudia Parkfield

I wanted my lover to do things with me she'd never done before, never thought of doing. One day I carved the end of a quarter-pound stick of butter to a blunt point, like an oversized crayon. After we'd been rolling around on the bed for a while, kissing and licking each other's mouths, hands caressing and rubbing our breasts and bellies, I sat up and pulled off her jeans, pulled off her pants. She started to reach for me, but I pulled out of her range. I rubbed my hand over the outside of her cunt, loving as always the warmth of it, the sense of absolute warmth and softness.

I put my fingers in her, wanting to know she was aroused and wet for me before going any further. For a while, I forgot all about the butter, just got lost in the folds of her cunt. I stretched out beside her, slowed my hand way down, touched her so lightly with my fingers as we kissed and rubbed our bodies together. Her tongue made little circles around mine. Her hand followed the trail of my backbone from my neck to my buttocks, up and down. For a while, a long luscious while, we floated in a river of arousal.

"What's that?"

"Butter."

"What are you doing?"

"Wait a sec, you'll see."

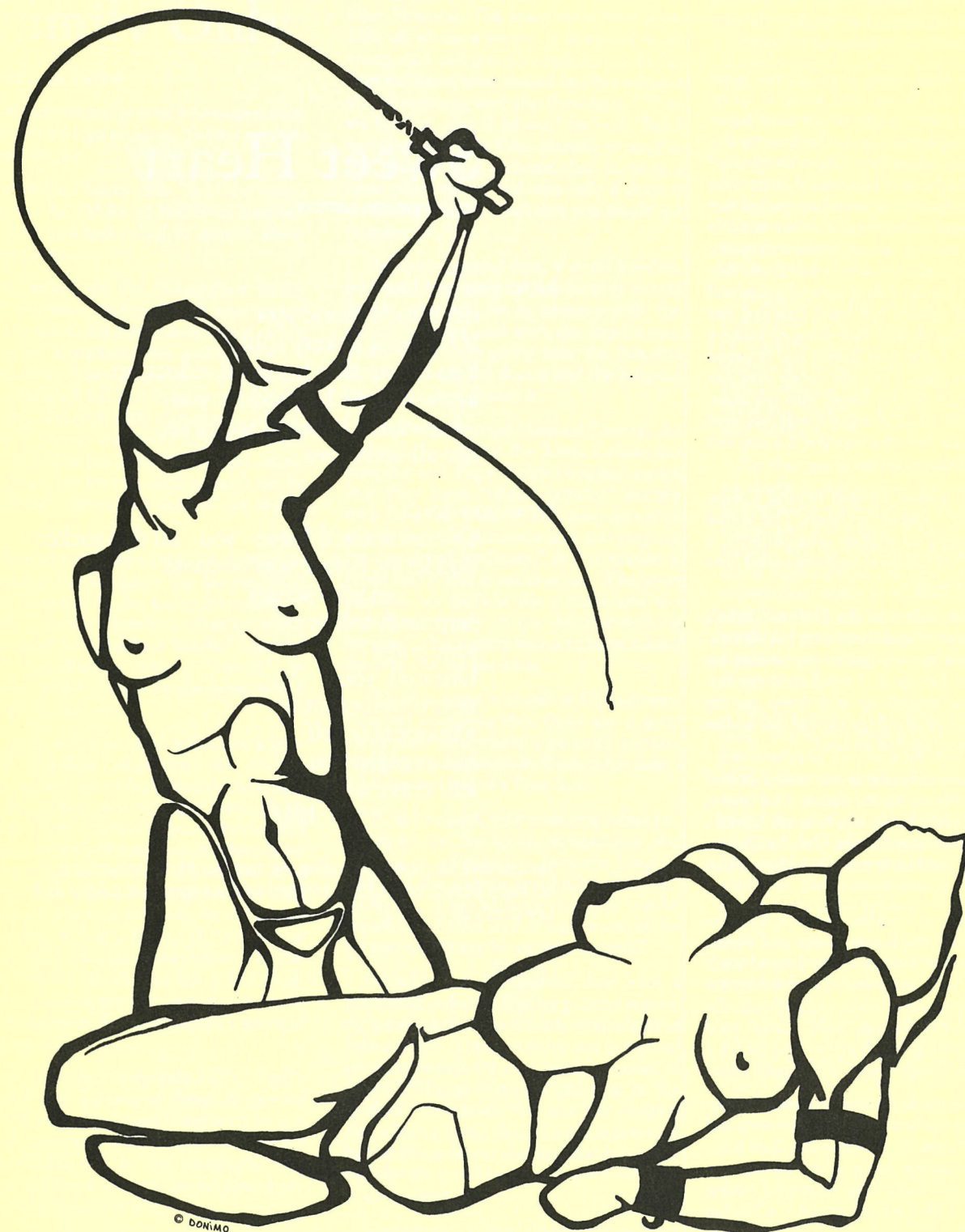
"Hey, it'll get all messy."

"I'll clean it up. Don't worry, you'll like it."

I opened her lips, opened her cunt, pushed the butter a little way inside. I liked the way the butter disappeared inside her. I pulled it out a little, pushed it back in. And again. At first her body was all tense. We had never "used" anything before. She was doing what we referred to as "making a little effort" and going along with it, hoping things would pick up or change. We both do that sometimes, when one of us is more in the mood than the other.

I made slow, deliberate circles with the butter, pulling her cunt around and around. Now her body relaxed; she began pushing as I pulled. She circled her hips around, pushing against the butter, pushing hard against my hand. I smushed the butter into her clitoris, fingered the melting yellow mass around the outside of her, all over her clit, rubbed and rubbed. The butter was melting

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Drawing by DONiMO

inside her, too. I imagined how it was melting and filling her up inside, how it would stick to the wet surfaces of her, how she'd be able to feel it all over her insides. My own cunt throbbed and contracted violently.

Time to slow down. I pulled out what was left of the butter and slung it away, having had the foresight to put some paper towels and a plastic bag on the floor by the bed. I rubbed butter from Claire's vagina all over her thighs and buttocks. I bent over her, licked the butter from her, pulled her apart and sucked butter out of her cunt. It reminded me of escargot bourguignon, sharp and buttery tastes combined. My tongue and hands sloshed around inside and out, rubbed against her hard, caressed her softly. My hands and face dripped buttery cunt juices. I dreamily licked and fingered her swollen cunt. I ran my hands over her buttocks, plunged my finger into her anus, slowly pulled it out, plunged inside, scooped around inside her, the way you'd scoop out ice cream from a carton.

Then I moved around behind Claire, reached over, spread her open. The sexual mood changed to slightly tense hilarity, a result of what Claire sometimes called "too much not enough."

I rubbed, collected the folds of Claire's cunt lips and rubbed them over her clitoris. Claire's back moved against my breasts, my face was in her neck. I quickened my fingers. Claire moved up and down on my fingers. Waves of energy carried our bodies up and down, up and around.

Now total concentration, itself a form of oblivion. More, more, more, and more, aaaah and ohhhh, oh, oh, la la, oh la, ooh, ooh la...Claire says I'm the Ooh La Queen. The sound just bursts out of my chest when I come.

I wanted to cuddle, but was too distracted by all the butter, come and sweat. We ran a hot bubble bath, soaped each other, lay back and nestled in the fragrant water, clasped ourselves to each other in the deep bone-comforting bath. Later we'd make something lovely to eat and go for a walk in the Sunday peace of our quiet town.

I have a longstanding interest in women's sexuality and in erotica which is both sexy and politically "correct"—in particular, I am interested in producing stories which women can masturbate to without being ashamed of reading stuff which violates our self respect.—Claudia.

The Diversity editorial group regrets that a small portion of this story was removed because we could not come to a consensus about the risks and values of printing it.

Sweet Heart

by Jacqueline Larson

Now you see her
red hots, almond jots
It happens lickety split
You eat up that honeyed seduction
know it can't be good for you
her candy kisses so seditious,
her all-sorts love

Now you don't
Of course she'd leave you all day sucker
Suddenly, before you've come
to your senses
surprised, solitary
sour grape
Unsated you
return, reluctant to
a reasonable self
but at night you
still crave sugar
baby

Jacqueline Larson is spending the summer in the mountains, 60 miles from a post office, trapped with a typewriter whose shift key won't do its thing.



Immediate Family Only

by Ruth Lea Taylor

This article presents general information only. For a specific legal problem, you are urged to see your lawyer.

"Immediate family only," said the hospital voice. An old friend had been hospitalized, and Lisa had called to inquire about visiting hours.

She mused on the "immediate family only" response, and reviewed who in her own life would fall into this category. What was more important, she realized with a shock, were those people in her own life who would not fall into this category. If she were stricken with a life-threatening illness, the only person she would especially want to see would be her lover. By hospital definition, Mary, her lover, would probably not be considered "immediate family"...or would she?

When someone asked me this question at a meeting, I didn't know the answer. How would hospitals in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia handle a situation when the patient's "immediate family," "next of kin," "significant other," "lover," or "spouse" was a person of the same sex? I decided to find out.

A good deal of hospital procedure is governed by policy rather than law. So the place to start was with the individual hospitals. My letter, sent to eight hospitals in January 1986, first asked about what kind of access to visits and information a homosexual partner would have. I then went on to ask: "In the event that your policy is strict as to spouses and near relatives, would a legal document such as a Power of Attorney or Nomination of Committee under *The Patients Property Act* change the policy to allow for information and visits to the attorney or nominee, the homosexual partner of the patient?"

Five hospitals responded—St. Paul's Hospital was not one of them. Responses varied from a three-page letter with an enclosed patients' guide from Vancouver General Hospital, to one paragraph. The longer responses showed careful consideration of the issues raised.

Burnaby Hospital advised that they do not have a written policy, but suggested that patients should talk to their physicians about their wishes in this regard. "A patient also would identify, on admission, the person who should be notified in such a situ-

ation." However, this presumes a conscious state in the patient.

This problem was considered by Lions Gate Hospital. The issues are a little more difficult where a person is admitted in an emergency and is in no condition to let the hospital know who should be the recipient of information, said the President. "Then we have to play it by ear," he said, "but I would suggest that if you identify yourself to the hospital and indicate that there is a close relationship, and especially if there is no family nearby, I feel that you would get cooperation."

He also suggested that, if at all possible, people in a homosexual relationship should decide who will be in contact with the patient's doctor and with the head nurse. Then the person going into the hospital should let both the doctor and the hospital know who that person is.

The Fraser-Burrard Hospital Society, the umbrella society for the Royal Columbian Hospital and Eagle Ridge Hospital, stated that they have "liberal policies" dealing with hospital visitors. The next sentence simply said, "In circumstances that may not be considered 'ordinary,' each situation is given individual consideration. Whenever possible, we include the patient and the immediate family in the decision-making process." This society seems to have missed the point of my question.

The physicians and staff at Shaughnessy Hospital recognize that there are a great many situations where a patient's primary support comes from individuals other than a legal spouse, said the President.

"If, as I suspect, your concerns relate primarily to the day-to-day interactions and sharing of information between hospital staff and the patient and his/her partner," he wrote, "I would hope that you can be reassured that the lack of legal status of the partner would not be an impediment."

He said that the hospital does have a number of rather restrictive policies regarding confidentiality and the formal release of information. These policies are governed partly by legislation and partly by codes of ethics. (The governing legislation is the *Medical Practitioners Act* and the *Hospital Act*, which provide that all records prepared by the physician or the hospital belong to the physician and hospital respectively, not to the patient.)

Vancouver General Hospital's policies about patients' visitors cover only the number of persons visiting at one time, visiting hours, and smoking regulations. The hospital also attempts to exclude any visitors a patient doesn't want to see, and any visitors

whose behaviour is disturbing to other patients.

VGH's Vice-President of Medicine said that these are their only restrictions. "We do not believe that the personal relationships between a patient and his or her visitors are any business of ours."

However, the release of information is a more complex matter, he said. Although the medical records are the property of the hospital, VGH takes the position that the information belongs to the patient. Where the patient is legally competent, information is released to the patient or any other individual designated by the patient.

However, if the patient is not legally competent to designate who the recipient of information should be, VGH normally follows the recognized hierarchy of next-of-kin. (I assume this would be legal spouse, children, parents, and collaterals [sisters and brothers].)

"In the case of verbal information, I have no doubt that common-law spouses of the opposite sex are frequently included in this hierarchy," the Vice-President of Medicine wrote. "We do not have any policy to exclude homosexual partners, and I would expect that, if the homosexual partner was also clearly the closest and only friend, we would be prepared to give some verbal information even without authorization from the patient."

But in the case of written information, he said, "We would have to apply the next-of-kin hierarchy very strictly, and under these circumstances I doubt that we would give information even to common-law spouses of the opposite sex unless there was a Power of Attorney or Nomination of Committee." He noted that he wrote with "some hesitation" as the circumstances have never arisen as far as he knows.

While the letter from VGH initially appeared positive, the closing paragraph gave me some concern.

"To summarize," the doctor said, "we would treat the homosexual partner of a patient in exactly the same way that we would treat a very close friend in the absence of a legal spouse or other next-of-kin" (my emphasis). In other words, we are back to the beginning—"immediate family only."

A review of the responses I received points to the wisdom of practicing some "preventative law" by preparing something in writing authorizing your lover to obtain information in the event of a medical crisis.

Ruth Lea Taylor is a lawyer practicing in Vancouver.

LESBIANS BITE BACK

by Carol Nielsen

A court challenge is currently being planned that, if successful, will mean that lesbians and gay men can no longer be legally discriminated against because of our sexual orientation. The case is a simple example of discrimination, but one that is made complex by the legal process itself and by the ignorance and homophobia that affects us all as we organize for our rights. We are being supported by the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, Vancouver Lesbian Connection, and other community organizations.

The case addresses the issue of the right of same sex partners (spouses) and their dependents to obtain benefits through medical health insurance schemes. In March of last year, I enrolled in a dental benefit plan through my employer at the time and included my partner and our children. The application was accepted and premiums were paid, but when claims were made for my partner and child, they were disallowed. The insurance company rejected the claim because my partner is the same sex as myself, and because our child is not related to me by blood or marriage. In short, I have been discriminated against because homosexual families are not legally recognized. It does not seem to matter that we have lived together as partners for four years, share responsibility for our children, own a home together, and share our dreams.

We decided to fight the case because this discrimination cannot continue to occur. It will take a long time, will be difficult, and will require a great deal of support from the lesbian, gay, human rights, and women's communities. Hopefully, our efforts will be rewarded by a ruling for protection under the law against sexual orientation discrimination.

For more information, contact VLC at 254-8458 and stay tuned for ongoing updates.

**SUBSCRIBE
to the Rag**

EVERYBODY Goes to the York Hotel

by Sherry McCarnan

"Oh, it's you," she groaned, standing in the doorway. We had been driving two hours in a blizzard to surprise her. Was this all the greeting we got?

"We came to take you out for a beer. This is Bill."

"Well, I guess you might as well come in," she conceded. "Hi, Bill."

He said hi to her but he was looking at me. He was clearly wondering why I liked her so much when it appeared that she barely tolerated me. I was embarrassed that he was seeing how poorly she treated me.

"No, get your coat and come out with us. We'll get some food and a few beers." She thought about it for a moment and agreed. Drinking beer was one of her favourite pastimes. I liked her better after she'd had a few drinks. She was usually such a cold fish but when she was drinking she laughed and joked. Sometimes she even touched me.

Bill and I stood in the doorway while she got her coat.

"Where shall we go?" I called down the hall.

With her coat half on she appeared from behind the door. "Everybody goes to the York Hotel. Beer's a dollar fifty a pitcher until ten o'clock."

As we drove through the blinding snow, Bill and Elizabeth chatted about school and exams and the hassles of university residence life. I sat beside her silently gazing at her lips and imagining them against mine.

The York was quite full when we arrived. The only free table was in a corner. Before we even sat down, a waitress was there to take our order.

"Five to ten," she said in some strange code.

Elizabeth understood and responded with "Three."

By the time we had our coats off, three pitchers of beer had appeared on the table.

"Holy fuck," I thought as Bill and Elizabeth dove in. "Three pitchers, not three glasses."

Two hours later the third pitcher was almost half empty. When Bill returned from his sixth trip to the washroom, he was smirking.

"I'm too drunk to drive you home," he slurred, dropping a key on the table. "We'll have to stay here." Elizabeth didn't seem too concerned about staying over in the York Hotel. Since she didn't care, I didn't care.

The room was plain. A dresser, a chair, a double bed and a private bathroom. One bed. I didn't click in. While Elizabeth was in the bathroom, Bill winked at me from the middle of the bed.

"Do you think she'll freak out?"

All of a sudden Bill's plan became perfectly clear. He had set up this whole situation. He knew I wanted her and so he'd arranged it. What a friend! If I hadn't been so busy panicking I would have killed him.

I dove over him to the far side of the bed as the bathroom door opened.

Elizabeth surveyed the room slowly. She was very drunk. I watched her as she noted the dresser, the chair and the one bed. Bill pulled back the covers and patted the bed beside him. My heart stopped. Elizabeth and I had shared a bed many times but never with a man in it. We both knew that having a man in your bed meant sex.

Elizabeth got in bed beside him and pulled the blanket up to her chin. What happened next is pretty hazy. Bill slid his arm under my neck and pulled me close. That was okay. He'd done that before. Then he slipped his other arm under Elizabeth's neck and pulled her towards him, too.

"Smooth," I thought. "He's done this before. That bastard!" Then he kissed her.

Like the true socialist that he was, everything Bill did to me, he did to her. He moved himself down our bodies in turn leaving a space between us. Years of wanting had been reduced to a few inches. We met in the middle.

What I remember about the next part is completely glazed over by the relief of having finally touched her. All of her!

Bill passed out on the floor while Elizabeth and I mashed around on the bed. Somewhere in the excitement, she accidentally scratched me.

I cherished that scratch and when it healed, I resolved to find myself a real Lesbian.

Sherry McCarnan is an East Van dyke who has been in hibernation since she left "The Lesbian Show" in 1982.

for Laticia

by Irene Neufeld

I want your arms around me
constantly
like I want sunshine in the morning
like I want rainbows in the sky
like I want love without lies

I want my tears on your shoulder
my mouth on your mouth
your voice in my ear

I want to rock you like my baby
my lips on your cheek
like I want a new day dawning

I want your body near my body
my hand on your breast

I want to protect you
from raindrops in the morning

*"I was born, but then, everybody was..."
Irene is author of the book Isis, available
at Little Sisters Bookstore for \$6.95.*

THE GAY AND LESBIAN CENTRE

1170 Bute at Davie, 684-7122

Invites dykes, fags, lesbians, queers etc. to visit our centre.

Hours of operation:

Mon. - Fri. 10am - 5pm and 7 - 10pm • Sat. - Sun. 4pm - 10pm
Library: Sun. - Fri. 7:30 - 10pm

Upcoming Events:

July 31 — Gay Pride Sports Day Picnic - Sight TBA, in conjunction with VLC and GPA

Aug. 6 — "Wine and Music" Lesbian and Gay Entertainment, chamber music, yummy snacks, at 1242 Robson St.

Sept. 10 — "Birthday Bash" — party at Charlie's Lounge

Come out and celebrate with the Lesbian and Gay Community!

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chairs needed for each. Other vital committees such as membership, marketing and administration are already in high gear and welcome your input and participation.

The final attention-grabber of the information session involved the Cultural Festival component of Celebration '90. The clear message was that in Vancouver the arts will receive as much emphasis as athletics. The cultural committee invites all artists, curators and general enthusiasts to share their vision of a world class arts festival. In keeping with the inclusive nature of the Games, the Festival will present local and international talent, professional and amateur alike. Plans so far include visual arts of every medium; theatre, dance, literature, and a gay and lesbian film festival. Again, now's the time to get in on the ground floor with your suggestions and creativity.

Call the Celebration '90 office at 684-3303 or write to: Metropolitan Vancouver Athletic & Arts Association, 1170 Bute St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1Z6 for more information or to "join the team." Remember, our community's collective strength, diversity and pride will welcome the world in 1990. Let's get together and reach for the sky!

Donna Dyke is a 28-year-old suburban refugee whose current hobbies include dirty dancing, transcending categories, and learning to type.

☆ visual artists

Della is a Vancouver dyke who loves to photograph other Vancouver dykes (and dykes from elsewhere, too!)

DONiMO: i'm new to S/M and sexgraphics: this is part of my coming out, part of my coming...thought i'd try my hand at it.

Sue draws inspiration from graffiti and other artists anonymous.

Etta works as a graphic artist while she continues to search for someone who will pay her just to draw cartoons.

Marina has lived here for 6 years. She intends to move to Italy to pursue a career in fashion photography. Her other interest is film.

DIVERSIONS

The Rag wants to know what you like. Please send us short opinions (no more than 100 words) of books, movies, theatre, art, concerts and records. Include complete information on what you are reviewing (title, author, publisher and price for books; title, artist and recording company for records, etc.) and your name, address and phone number. We will try to print as many short reviews as we receive.

The Rag also welcomes longer reviews but we may have to edit for length and clarity. Send reviews to: Diversion, c/o The Rag, Box 66106, Station F, Vancouver, B.C. V5N 5L4.

Guide to Gracious Lesbian Living

Lilith Publications, 1988. \$9.95

by Donna Kaye

"There is no crying the blues in *The Guide to Gracious Lesbian Living*. There is only celebration, a dalliance with a dance of life, with, of course, a touch of class."—A. Franz, publisher

We're supposed to have fun with this first

edition of *The Guide*, a collection of twelve short contributions as varied as their authors. It's a versatile book which you can read by yourself, but I think the material lends itself more to sharing with a friend, your honey or, better yet, at a party. A piece such as "Here in da Country" by Sunshine Goldstream, about country customs and courtesies on the islands of B.C., begs to be read out loud, and is, at the very least, required reading before holidaying on Hornby. I am sure that "On Being Celibate" by K. Linda Kim will encourage knowing grins or sighs, whatever your current situation. This reviewer, who seems to be at the "REAL resignation" stage (no clues—read

the book!) can graciously admit that it's my personal favourite. Not all the essays are memorable, but then, I don't think each one is intended for every lesbian to nod knowingly over—our diversity is recognized and encouraged. And, of course, there are experiences missing. That's where the reader comes in. Submissions are welcome for the next edition. Guidelines can be found at the back of the book or from Lilith Publications, 2191 Clifton Ave, Montreal, Quebec H4A 2N5.

RECORD REVIEWS

by Sherry

Cris Williamson, WOLF MOON, Olivia 1987

I must start by stating that I am a Cris Williamson fan. I have been since 1975 when Olivia Records first released *The Changer and the Changed*. Her latest album, *Wolf Moon*, sounds much like her first except for a few subtle changes. The music sounds the same. The vocal arrangements and instrumentation are undoubtedly Cris Williamson; it's the lyrics that disappoint me. She used to sing about "you've got me burnin' with the sweet love heat" ("Dream

Child," *The Changer and the Changed*). Now it's "we all spoke of how much you moved us" ("The Run of the Wolf," *Wolf Moon*). The first few times I listened to this L.P. I was bored, but like all my other Cris Williamson records, it started to grow on me. So she's mellowed over the years. Haven't we all?

Deidre McCalla, WITH A LITTLE LUCK, Olivia 1987

A new record album from Olivia Records! There's something for everybody on this L.P.: a Phoebe Snowish "Too Few and Far Between"; a bouncy, danceable "All Day Always"; a country "Mama's Little Baby Girl" and a jazzy and very funny "The Cat Song."

On the up side, McCalla's voice is a clear pleasure and it is nicely backed-up by vocals from Teresa Trull, Annie Stocking, Linda Tillery and Laurie Lewis.

On the down side, only one song implies that she's a dyke. If she is, then let's hear about it in the music. If she's not, then I would like to know that too. The other down thing about this album is that most of the musicians are men. Generally I wouldn't care about this but from Olivia Records I expect women. Especially since the record company was formed to help women performers. Unless there's a new fad in Oakland, Jim, Don, Benny, etc. are not women. Am I being too picky? You decide for yourself.

feminist rap tune. This is the first time Alix will play to a mixed audience in Vancouver. Expect a strong image of Lesbian roots from this radical trooper in women's music.

Phranc is another "girl with a guitar" performer. Add a dash of punk and you have what may be the hit of the Festival this year—a sort of Michelle Shocked in haircut and enigmatism meets L.A.'s punk-art underground. A definite Lesbian entourage is expected. Don't drool too much!

Also watch for Faith Nolan, a young black Canadian songwriter/guitarist from Toronto. With her first album recently released, and this being her first time in front of a Vancouver audience, support and interest should be strong.

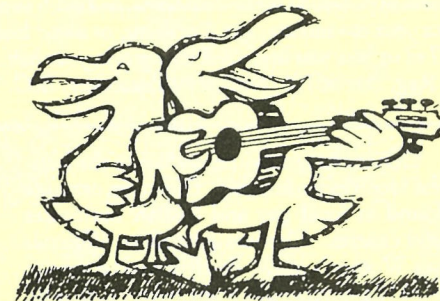
A quick mention of other performers of special interest to women should include Heartbeats, a women's bluegrass group from Philadelphia, political singer/songwriter

Eileen McGann from Toronto, and Patty Larkin and Christine Lavin, both from New York's Greenwich Village folk scene. Nancy White will introduce us to some new songs about motherhood and Darcia Deaville, a flat-picking guitarist extraordinaire, this year picks up the fiddle. Pay particular attention to these last performers; their herstory and strength will carry us all.

Also of international note are: Esther Berjano, survivor of Auschwitz Women's Orchestra; Sabia, a five woman contemporary Latin American group; and The Vusizwe Players, a three-woman theatre group from South Africa whose play entitled "You Strike the Woman, You Strike the Rock" commemorates the demonstration in 1956 against apartheid by 20,000 black women. Rounding out our lineup is Hawaiian group Hannani Apuliana who will entertain us with songs about women's lives from their recently released cassette.

All in all, you can expect a weekend full of music, sun and entertainment. I'll leave you now with some advice: don't forget your Birkenstocks, and please don't spend all your hard-earned Lesbian money at Jericho. Remember the First Annual Vancouver Women's Music Festival, August 27th at New Brighton Park. See you there!

Nadine Davenport is founder of the Vancouver Women in Music Network Society, coordinator of the First Vancouver Women's Music Festival and singer-songwriter and guitarist who has been a pioneer in the Vancouver Women's Music scene.



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All proceeds go to keeping
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The 11th Annual Folk Music Festival

preview by Nadine Davenport

Every July, greeted by the ancient Mother Sun, we look forward to the annual Vancouver Folk Music Festival at Jericho Beach. This year expect a blissful weekend of non-stop music and a gathering of Lesbians of every description. With the largest following of Lesbian support of any mixed North American Folk Music Festival, Vancouver's Festival will always be a common ground to many of us.

This year's pure Lesbian concentrate offers a selection of familiar faces as well as a few newcomers. Strong and empowering images from Canada and around the world are sure to keep us entertained. Here are some names to look out for:

Lesbian folk performer Alix Dobkin is branching out musically and socially, surprising her faithful with an attempt at a

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- EMBROIDERY LESSONS

Brought to you by the Separatist Gathering

Reprinted from *Lesbian Ethics*, Vol. 2, No. 3



Olivia Records, the world's oldest and largest independent label specializing in women artists, celebrated its 15th anniversary January 21, 1988.

In the past 15 years, Olivia has released 31 albums and sold over 1 million albums. Throughout its history, Olivia has released albums which speak to the lives of women, especially lesbians. "It is through the music that Olivia has helped thousands of women come out of the closet and be proud of their identity. If we accomplish nothing else we have done more than we could have ever dreamed back in 1973."

During its 15th anniversary year, Olivia will release an album with rock/blues belter Dianne Davidson on Second Wave, a subsidiary label. Other plans include the release of Cris Williamson's "The Changer and the Changed" on compact disc and the recording of Canadian Lucie Blue Tremblay's second Olivia album.

To receive the Olivia catalog and tour information, please write to Olivia Records, 4400 Market St. Oakland, Ca. U.S.A. 94608 or call 415-655-0364.

Custody Battle

Your support is desperately needed for a custody battle. Who is the better parent for a five-year-old girl, her Lesbian mother or her father who sexually assaulted her? While the courts decide this, costs are piling up. Please send your donations to: Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund, 9930-106 St., Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 1C7.

Women's Music Festival

The Vancouver Women in Music Society presents a one-day multi-cultural festival (as part of the first Vancouver Women's Music Festival, August 26-28, New Brighton Park, Vancouver) featuring women performers from B.C., Washington

and across Canada. You can expect to enjoy both amateur and professional performers who offer music, dance and storytelling. Included on site will be a main stage, children's stage area, an open mike and great food booths. Tickets for the weekend are \$12 before August 6th and \$15 after.

Individual event tickets: Friday- Coffee House \$2-4; Saturday- Festival \$10-12; Sunday- Dance \$2-4.

Volunteers are needed to assist in the operation of this event. In return for two hours of labour, you will get a 50% discount on your admission. Committees are now being formed and space is limited. Call 681-3617 to volunteer.

brush cuts

The Rag wants news from anywhere a Lesbian calls home, and that's everywhere. Please send us short clips about your community, group or event, or about local happenings as they affect Lesbians. Tell us how you live...and who gets in your hair. Send news to: Brush Cuts, c/o The Rag, Box 66106, Station F, Vancouver, B.C. V5N 5L4.

Donations are also needed since the festival receives no funding. Donation cans are found at local gay and lesbian businesses and centres. Cheques payable to Vancouver Women's Music Festival can be sent to #1-1325 Barclay St., Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1H6.

First Lesbian Film Festival

The Lesbian Network and Pacific Cinemathèque are co-sponsoring the First Vancouver Lesbian Film Festival to take place in October 1988. The festival will include 12 programs of Lesbian narratives, shorts, documentaries, features and experimental films, and probably videos, too. This is a unique chance to see rarely shown Lesbian work.

Some of the films to look forward to are:

- *She Must Be Seeing Things* by Sheila McLaughlin, USA 1987
- *Ten Cents a Dance* by Midi Onodera, Can. 1985
- *Susana* by Susana Muñoz Velarde, USA/Argentina 1980
- *Domestic Bliss* by Joy Chamberlain, USA 1984
- *Damned If You Don't* by Su Friedrich, USA 1987

Also shown will be some of the latest films from the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Festival runs October 19, 21, 26, 28 and 29th.

Admission will be \$2 to \$6 per program, plus a one time membership fee of 50¢ to \$1. As the festival has no institutional funding, its success depends on attendance. Donations and suggestions are welcome—write to The First Lesbian Film Festival, c/o The Lesbian Network, VLC, 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V5L 3W6.

Push the Government

In October 1985, an all-party Parliamentary committee unanimously recommended "...that the Canadian Human Rights Act be amended to add sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination..." The government of Prime Minister Mulroney has not yet done this. It is now clear that the government needs to be pushed. It's simple and it's urgent. Write a letter to your Member of Parliament and to the P.M., House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6 expressing your support for the equality rights amendment regarding sexual orientation.

S.W.O.G.L.

S.W.O.G.L. or "Stop War on Gays and Lesbians" is a newly formed group in Vancouver fighting CLAUSE 29 in Britain. This clause would prohibit any local authority in Britain from "intentionally promoting homosexuality." This bill, if passed, would condone discrimination against gay and lesbian people in England and severely restrict their rights to have government funded centres, licenced pubs, access to gay-positive books in libraries, ad infinitum. S.W.O.G.L. feels that we must stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in England and that the Vander Zalm government may follow Thatcher's example. For more information or to get involved, contact S.W.O.G.L. through the VLC, 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V5L 3W6 254-8458.

New Lesbian Group

The National Lesbian Forum (NLF), a new Lesbian group formed in November 1987 at a CRIAW (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women) conference, is looking for new members.

The NLF's goals are to work with national women's organizations to make Lesbians and Lesbian issues visible, and to gain support for Lesbian actions. The NLF also

wishes to build connections among Lesbians across Canada, and to prepare articles and deliver workshops on Lesbian issues.

Lesbians who wish to join the NLF can send their name and address and \$3 for mailing costs to: NLF, Box 8973, Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 7E7.

Pension Challenge

James Egan and John Nesbit are a gay couple celebrating their 40th anniversary next August. Health and Welfare Canada has refused Jim's application for a spouse's allowance for John under the Old Age Security Act because they are the same sex. This is discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, as heterosexual common-law couples have this right. They are applying to the Court Challenges Committee to fund a challenge to the Act so that the court will rule that this violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Letters of support from groups and individuals would be greatly appreciated and should go to: Court Challenges Program, Box 3505, Station C, Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 4G1 with a copy to: Vickers and Palmer, Suite 200, 506 Fort St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1E6.

Cunt Coloring Book

Tee Corinne's *Cunt Coloring Book* will be reissued by Last Gasp in July in an expanded edition containing all of the original drawings, Martha Shelley's poetic introduction, many new images, and text in English, French, Spanish and German. A diagram labelled in all four languages is included and there are forty-eight colorable pages.

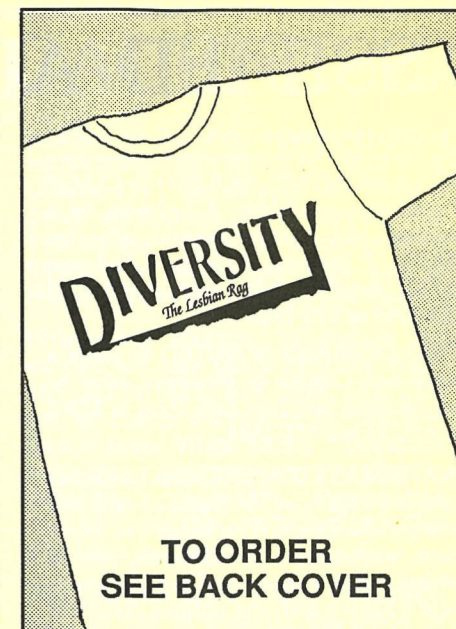
This sex education classic sold 6000 copies between 1975 and 1981 before it was reprinted as *Labiaflowers*. Corinne, in her foreword, discusses the return to the book's original controversial title and the disastrous effects of choosing a more moderate title for the second edition.

WE COULD KICK OURSELVES!

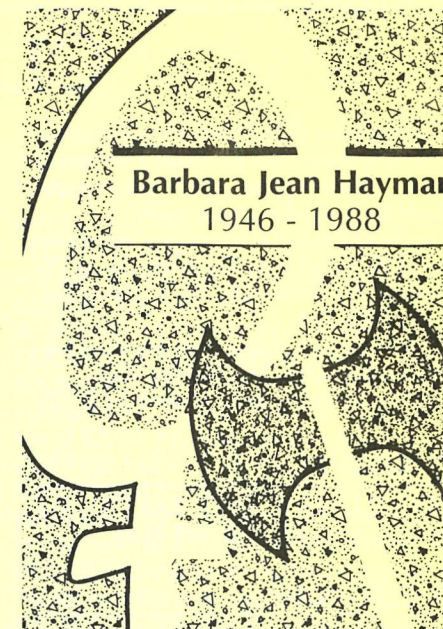
We are sorry that in our last issue we did not credit the Gay and Lesbian Centre for their work in creating the pamphlet that formed the basis of the article "Stop Violence."

In our thank you ad we meant to thank Claire Murgatroyd not Claire Kujundzic for cake decorating.

Our correct postal code is :
V5N 5L4.



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Vancouver's first one-day outdoor multi-cultural Women's Music Festival from Celtic to Rock. A Celebration of women's talents in today's performing arts.

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Music • Comedy

Entertainment includes: Kathy Kidd, Sybil, Lovie Sizzle, Key Change, Rae Armour, Shannon Gunn, Judy Radul, The Dots, Katari Talko, and much more!

Tickets available at: Ariel Books, Women's Bookstore, Highlife Records, Octopus East, Black Swan Records, Little Sisters Books, and other community outlets. Or by mail or phone orders contact The Vancouver Women's Music Festival at #1-1325 Barclay Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6E 1H6 (604) 681-3617.

This event co-sponsored by: The Vancouver Women in Music Network Society and Vancouver Co-operative Radio, CFRO 102.7 FM, 337 Carrall Street, Vancouver.

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads are \$5.00 for the first 75 words or portion thereof and \$1.50 for each additional 25 words. Please indicate which category you would like your ad to appear under.

Classified ads should be sent no later than the last day of the month preceding publication to Diversity: PO Box 66106, Stn. F, Vancouver, B.C. V5N 5L4.

Please make your cheque or money order payable to Diversity: The Lesbian Rag. Confidential reply drawers available for \$2.00.

TRAVEL

TRAVELLING PLANET EARTH? For arrangements call Judith 669-9170.

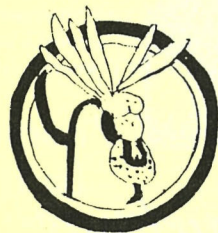
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TWO LESBIANS WANTED to share a house near Cambie & Broadway. Must be non-smokers and love cats. Rent is \$260/month. Phone 874-2484.

HOUSEMATE WANTED One Lesbian to complete a spacious 5 bedroom co-op house near Jericho Beach. The house has a fireplace, washer/dryer, 2 bathrooms, yard & garden and is a smoke and pet-free space. Rent is \$260/month plus utilities. Available Sept. 1, call 737-0910.

EMPLOYMENT WANTED

WOMAN GRADUATE of VVI Printing Production course seeks employment. Currently using Mac Plus with PageMaker 2.0, Microsoft Word and DMS. Part-time or full-time, flexible hours. Call Kathryn at 253-2109.

Women seeking employment may place ads free of charge.

PRISONER'S CONTACT

Ads are free of charge.

PERSONAL

ISOLATED LESBIAN, 33, interested in almost all outdoor activities, computers, and good times spiced with humour, would like to correspond with like-minded women. I'm literate, independent and enjoy a healthy outlook on life in general. Age no barrier—all responses answered. Reply to Box 102.

LA MER D'AMOUR! Splash! The sensation of the playful waves, the friendliness of

the smiling sun, the delicacy of the silky sand, the melody of the whispering breeze made summer the magical season for romance. If you are an intelligent, attractive, feminine, affectionate, artistic and seductive female under 25 (5'3" - 5'6"), you hold a unique invitation to create the ART OF LOVE with a beautiful, passionate, spontaneous, artistic, intellectual, slim, sensuous young Oriental female. Ready? Let's dive into the Sea of Love! Phone number required. Photo appreciated. Reply to Box 103.

MEMORIAL

INNES, NORMA M. at Delta Hospital on Wed. May 4, 1988 of cancer at age 46. Survived by Sandra, Doreen, Carla, Pat, Jo and friends. Also survived by her brothers and sisters. No service by request. If so desired Memorial Donations may be made to the Vancouver SPCA. Arrangements through the Memorial Society of B.C. and First Memorial Funeral Services at 602 Kingsway 876-5585.

WANTED

LESBIANS WITH MACS Diversity: The Lesbian Rag is looking for Macintosh (Plus or SE with hard disc) computers to use for a few days every two months for production. And we may want to buy a used one. Leave a message at 254-8458.

WANTED: Women interested in starting a Lesbian Theatre Group. We need women in all areas: acting, writing, directing and all aspects of production. Experience and/or enthusiasm required. Call Karen at 438-4486 to join Leaping Thespians.

SUBMISSIONS Diversity: The Lesbian Rag encourages Lesbians to tell us about their lives by submitting stories, photographs, letters, poetry, drawings, essays, etc. to: Diversity, PO Box 66106 Stn F, Vancouver, BC V5N 5L4.

The Rag invites individuals and groups to help keep our readers up-to-date on events of interest to Lesbians. We will accept written submissions for our Calendar of Events no later than the last day of the month before publication (next deadline is Aug. 31). Priority will be given to Lesbian events and will depend on space.

The Vancouver Women's Bookstore Celebrate their 15th birthday party, July 23, 1988 from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm. Refreshments and 15% off all books and records. 315 Cambie St., Vancouver, 684-0523.

Fundraising Dance and Concert presented by The Vancouver Women in Music Network Society for the First Vancouver Women's Music Festival. Come out for an evening of dance, food and door prizes. Dance to the music of the Country West and the Cajun South, Tue., July 26th at the Anza Club, #3 West 8th Ave. at Ontario. For more info and childcare call 681-3617. Volunteers needed, too.

Shan Carr Lesbian comedian and Ms. International Leather will do comedy on Thur. July 28, 9:00 pm at Ms. T's, 339 W. Pender, Vancouver. Tickets \$4 to 7.

Grassroots: Fifth International Gay and Lesbian People of Colour conference from July 28th to 31st, 1988 in Toronto, Ontario. For more info or to volunteer, donate or perform call Makeda Silvera at 416-532-9868 or write: The ILGPOCC Committee, Box 6597, Stn. A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1X4.

Pride Fest '88—July 29th to Aug. 7th. Including Mr. and Ms. Vancouver Leather contest, boat cruise, parade, women's dance, lifestyles exhibit, baseball, concerts, films and more. Watch for more information.

Women's Sexuality: Women in Focus 204-456 West Broadway, will stage a multimedia series from Aug. 10 to Sept. 3. Performances Aug. 20th and Sept. 3rd. For more info see p 12 this issue.

Totally Concerned with Sex!!! Performers wanted for the above-mentioned show. Call Lorna at 253-6792 or W.I.F. 872-2250.

The First Vancouver Women's Music Festival will take place Sat. Aug. 27th at New Brighton Park in Vancouver. In

CALENDAR

addition to the Sat. events, a coffee house will be open on the Fri. night at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Drive and a dance will happen on the Sun. night at Talk of the Town, 23 West Cordova Street. For more information turn to Brush Cuts in this issue of The Rag.

Unlearning Racism Workshop for women will take place from Fri. Sept. 16th at 7:00 pm to Sun. Sept. 18 at 3:00 pm at Camp Alexandra in Crescent Beach (near White Rock). Childcare subsidies and signers available. Wheelchair accessible. Registration August 1st to 15th—\$20 to \$150 Call 877-0514 or 738-5236.

The Lesbian Show needs new members to join in creating the voice of Vancouver's Lesbian community. Interested? Call Donna at 255-3023 for more information, or drop by the station (Co-op Radio, 337 Carrall St., Vancouver, 684-8494) Thursdays at 8:30 pm.

Mondays: The Drill Hall—Women's Night at Graceland. New, weekly, vibrant, stylish and friendly extravaganza. Plus the Venus Rising Go-Go-Ettes and D.J. playing house, soul and funk. (Men are admitted accompanied by women).

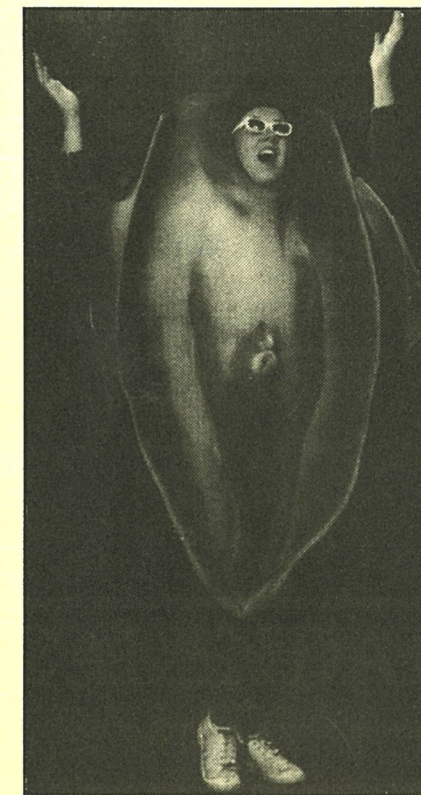


photo by Cyndra MacDowall

Events at the Vancouver Lesbian Centre, 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver:

SINGLES NIGHT: Tue. nights, meet at VLC to plan activities. Open to all Lesbians and their ideas. For more information call Terry 254-8458.

A YOUNG LESBIAN SUPPORT AND SOCIAL GROUP meets at the VLC on the 2nd and 4th Fri. of each month from 7:30 pm to 11:00 pm. There is a drop-in fee of \$2.00. For info call 254-8458.

COFFEE HOUSE at VLC on the 2nd Sun. of each month. Doors open at 8:00 pm. Watch for posters or call 254-8458 to find out the schedule of performers.

VLC LEGAL ADVICE CLINIC Ruth Lea Taylor is holding a legal advice clinic at the VLC on the last Saturday of each month between 9:00 am and noon. Any woman needing legal advice is welcome. This is a free service.

LIBRARY BOOKS: Now is the time to return all those VLC library books that totally slipped your mind. There will be NO PENALTY from now until July 31, 1988. Please put books through the mail slot or into the box just inside the door at 876 Commercial Drive. Thank you from VLC and the women waiting to read the books you return.

MACHINES: Any woman needing the use of a typewriter or xeroxing machine may drop by the VLC 11:00 am to 4:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The VANCOUVER LESBIAN CENTRE is open Mon. to Fri., 11:00 am to 4:00 pm and Tue. evening 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. They have a library, housing board, women's art exhibits, referrals, social and political events calendar. Drop in at 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, or call 254-8458 for more details.

Toronto performance artist Shawna Dempsey, pictured at left in costume for her large scale piece, "We're Talking Vulva," will soon be in Vancouver. She and collaborator Janice Fuller do comedy performance and dyke storytelling on issues as varied as non-monogamy, rape and weight obsession as well as assorted body parts. Catch her as part of the Summer Sex Show Sept. 3rd at Women in Focus AND at a special benefit performance for Diversity with different material and dancing to follow on Sunday, Sept. 4th at: Talk of the Town, 23 W. Cordova, door opens at 7 pm. Show at 8 pm, tickets at the door \$2-7 (sliding scale). For more information or booking, write Shawna Dempsey and Janice Fuller, 106 Harbord St., Toronto, Canada M5S 1G6.