

# 6

## Many a Young Dyke ...

by Deborah VanSlet

DYKES ON MYKES

Monday, 7 - 8 pm

Hosts: Deborah VanSlet  
& Elana Wright



I've been doing DYKES ON MYKES for 5 years. I love doing the show. There is an appealing performative element about it and I have talked to many interesting women.

Radio is a wonderful medium. It's not about the visual, it's about the voice; the timbre, the intonation, the expressions, the accent, the language. It's the transmission of information reduced to something fairly simple. The radio can be listened to almost anywhere, and it can be as public or as private as you want it to be. For queers, and just-coming-out queers in particular, a radio show like DYKES ON MYKES is vital.

The truly gratifying thing for me over the years has been the feedback we get. Many a young dyke has told me about how our show was an integral part of her coming out. One young woman spoke of tuning in week after week, not entirely sure why she was tuning in; if she gave it any thought at all, she figured it was because of the music. It took a good six months before she really started to piece it together. Another woman spoke of feeling really isolated out on the West Island until she discovered our show. Then she was hooked but when she went to her parents' country house the only place she could receive CKUT was on the roof. So there she was every Monday night sitting on the roof of the house in the Laurentians listening to DYKES ON MYKES.

There are lots of stories like that, so I know how important our show is. The isolation and loneliness are common enough, but amongst gay and lesbian youth those feelings can be particularly sharp. Our show tries to take the mystery out of being a lesbian; we interview all kinds of women: filmmakers, plumbers, hockey players, activists, business women, comedians, authors, lesbians getting married, dykes having babies, dancers, painters,

political movers and shakers. The focus is mainly on local women, but we also interview the occasional 'celebrity dyke' who breezes through town (Annie Sprinkle, Patricia Rozema.) That's always a thrill.

We also do a show exchange with "The Lesbian Show" on Co-op Radio in Vancouver: We send them a couple of shows on cassette and they send us some of their favourites. It's quite successful, and we are trying to set up another exchange with a show out east. There is no question that our show has the best name of all the lesbian shows in Canada, possibly North America.

It is during the funding drive that we really get a sense of the support we have from our community of communities; over and above the pledges we receive during the drive, the amount of calls that we get in an hour is amazing! This acknowledgement is important because we need to get something back in order to keep going. Doing radio can be an isolating experience too; we sit in the studio talking into what sometimes feels like a vacuum. Feedback and acknowledgement creates a reciprocal relationship between broadcaster and listener.

DYKES ON MYKES is one of CKUT's longest running shows. It is about giving a voice to dykes who are doing their thing, and our listeners are those who need to hear that. ▲

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