AMAZON QUARTERLY
SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE
in which
THE EDITORS
TRaverse
THE CONTINENT
INTERVIEWING
OUR READERS

PLUS

volume 1 #4

STUPENDOUS
WOMEN'S RESOURCE DIRECTORY

$1.50

volume 2 #1

LESBIAN LIFESTYLES 1973
ABOUT THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF AMAZON QUARTERLY

DURING THE SUMMER, WITH OUR READERS’ HELP, WE HAVE REALIZED THE FANTASY WE DESCRIBED IN ISSUE 3 -- WE SPENT JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST TRAVELLING OVER 12,000 MILES MEETING AND INTERVIEWING OUR READERS IN THE U.S. AND CANADA. THIS SPECIAL DOUBLE-SIZED ISSUE IS DEVOTED TO THE LIFE STORIES OF THE WOMEN WE MET. STARTING ON P. 18, I’VE TRIED TO HIGHLIGHT SOME OF MY STRONGEST IMPRESSIONS FROM THE TRIP.

ALSO, ON P. 30 A COMPOSITE VIEW OF THE WOMEN WE INTERVIEWED. DEBORAH WOLF, A SAN FRANCISCO ANTHROPOLOGIST, SPENT THE SUMMER TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYZING THE TAPES WE RECORDED. HER REPORT IS A PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF OUR FINDINGS. IT IS NECESSARILY INCOMPLETE -- BUT WE WILL PRINT UPDATED FINDINGS AS OUR WORK ON THIS PROGRESSES.

IN THE LAST PAGES OF THIS ISSUE YOU WILL FIND THE WOMEN’S RESOURCES WE DISCOVERED ON THIS TRIP -- PROJECTS, BOOKSTORES, PERIODICALS, WOMEN’S CENTERS, BARS, FILMS, PRESSES, ARTISTS’ AND MUSICIANS’ GROUPS, ETC. IT IS BY NO MEANS A COMPLETE DIRECTORY OF THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT, BUT IT IS A START. ALL ENTRIES ARE UP-TO-DATE AND HAVE BEEN CHECKED OUT BY THE EDITORS. WE WANT TO DO AN ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE RESOURCE LIST AND WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD SEND US INFORMATION ON RESOURCES YOU KNOW OF IN YOUR AREA.

Laurel

IT’S MISS Q’S BIRTHDAY! SHE IS ONE YEAR OLD.
AMAZON QUARTERLY

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CONNECTIONS

If you would like to contact women who share your interests we will try to help. Send us a brief description of yourself, your name, address, phone number, and your age (we can not accept anyone under legal age). Let us know if you want to meet women in your area, women anywhere living in communes, women with children, etc.—make up your own categories.

Include $1.00 plus a self-addressed stamped envelope. We'll send you the names and addresses of other sisters with similar wishes. (Allow time for us to gather them.)


Names and some details of place and time have been changed in the interviews.
Flo is small and thin with very quick gestures, her talk punctuated by laughter. She's been a one-woman lesbian/feminist movement in this Southern city for four years—in itself quite a feat. It's how she formed this urgent vision that moved us and has stayed with us as a great inspiration. Since we arrived at Flo's in the afternoon and we didn't do the tape until the next morning, some of the important stories had already been told. The most important one, the event that changed Flo's life and catalyzed her feminist consciousness, was too painful for me to ask her to repeat: Flo's mother and Flo's lover (the three of them lived together) were driving ten miles to go Christmas shopping when they both were killed in a car accident. Flo stayed in a kind of mourning for two years, and emerged without personal hope but with a rare love for all women.

MY MAMA

She had twingly eyes
And there was a joy about her. And she always let me be just what I was.

Not too long before she died in an accident, she told my niece that she finally understood what I had been talking about all my life. Which was about her relationship with daddy alot. Because I was always critical about it. And I'm sure Flo was enemies.

The whole thing about my being a lesbian happened—she didn't understand that, but she told me she valued me no matter what. And when I was with my lover, Jeanne, she said whatever made me happy, that was The Guardian with a Red Egg. I never did like him, I was glad when he died. He used to beat me rather severely when I was stubborn, but I don't think that caused me to dislike him. I disliked him before he did that. When he was hitting me, he'd lose control and keep on hitting me. He was just a nasty man! And he wasn't very unusual. (laughs) But all my life I didn't know I was right until now, that I was doing the right thing. But somehow I knew it then. But I wasn't sure, and I didn't have anybody else. Just me against him.

G: When do you first remember masturbating?
F: I remember masturbating (laughs) on my momma's knee—I know that I was real small, about four, and she told me to quit. But I remember having an orgasm when I was little and I can't understand that. I can't understand it psychologically.

G: Was masturbating something your mother didn't want?
F: Yeah. Unhuh. (laughs) Well, on her knee she didn't want it. (laughs) It was kind of an awkward situation for her! I was her lower, you know, all my life. It was a constant thing, but she never could respond. I wish she had, I really wish she had. She would have been alot happier with me! And I was really trying to think of a, you know, a kind of a man for her, who was feminine, if she really had to have a man. Rather than someone like Dad. Somebody she could talk to, at least. And would listen to her and think of her as a person, which Daddy never did. But I thought it would be better (laughs) than anybody else. But she just couldn't do that. Momma rejected me so much I just knew that we never would be able to—that she never would be able to overcome the whole, you know, incest, as well as the taboo against lesbianism.

G: How early was it that you really thought of it that way? That you were in love with your mother?
F: Yeah. I sure did. In fact, when I first began having my menstrual period, you know, what I thought was—I didn't know what was happening because nobody told me. It was blood that started coming. And what I thought—I knew parts and I had to put them together myself—and what I figured out was that I was both male and female. I thought I was a, you know, hermaphrodite, and I thought I had sperm in me as well as egg. I learned that from people at school—that makes babies. And what I thought I was having was a miscarriage! Because of masturbating. I thought that had activated the sperm and the egg and that I was having like a virgin birth.

G: You had never told you anything about it?
F: No, she had that shyness about her, actually, I guess, in regard to me. Maybe if I had acted like your average obedient
child and confused as I went along growing up, she probably wouldn't have been as shy about it. I think she probably would have explained those things to me. But she felt just a little bit threatened by my... G: When you were a kid and you felt different from other people, how did you explain that to yourself?
F: Well, that same thing. I just knew that--I don't know--it just seemed that I was more active than the other girls. And other girls--when I was little—well, I was never interested in things that you're supposed to be interested in. I was going against that everytime they tried to push something on me--about dolls and things. Mom would give me a doll--she loved dolls--and I'd just operate on them! (laughs)

The things that other people tried to put on me, I just couldn't accept. The games I was willing to play were like, scientist, and doctor, things like that. And they'd always try to get me to be a nurse, the housewife... G: Can you think of any circumstances which were important to your becoming a lesbian?
F: It seems like--I can't remember when I wasn't interested in boys. I don't ever remember being heterosexual to change to being a lesbian. Starting when I was really little. If anything, it was her influence, just letting me develop freely.

G: How old were you when you first attracted to girls sexually?
F: (laughs) I guess I was thirteen. With a woman other than my Mom. But I had it all together. So I could help Jeanne with it, too. Jeanne was all I needed to know it was right. And then I had thought it out, all the angles of it. Enough to hit anybody who went against it.

G: In what ways was that relationship important for you? You already said that that was what made you feel positive. What else?
F: Jeanne. Twenty.
G: G: How old were you when that happened?
F: Twenty. Tweeny.
G: In what ways was that relationship important for you? You already said that that was what made you feel positive. What else?
F: Everything—it's hard to begin. It's the best relationship I've known. We didn't disagree about alot. We shared the same assumptions and from there we didn't differ very much about anything. We learned from each other. It was just the best thing that ever happened! (laughs) Possibly ever will. Because I haven't found anybody that is even comparable.

G: How was Jeanne unusual?
F: For some reason, Jeanne was able to share herself with me and most people are unable to. I think that there are other women who I think are as whole a person as Jeanne is. I never have been able to develop a relationship with them, the way that I did with Jeanne. And the lesbian—the whole problem—I don't know, it's different too, because Jeanne never said to Jeanne 'I'm lesbian' like I do now. I get all the time different reactions from people. That just happened by itself; now that I'm saying to women I'm lesbian, they move away just the slightest bit. The slightest bit of rigidity and I can feel it. It's either that or they flirt with me and things like that. I don't like that either. That is still not it, it's not the way a relationship should develop. Of its own intelligence it should develop without trying to force it into this or that way of being. It's not that I don't think that other women aren't as good as Jeanne or that she was the best person that
ever existed, it’s the best relationship that ever existed for me, so far.

G: How important was sex in that relationship?
F: It wasn’t the entire relationship, but the eroticism we felt was generalized in every aspect of it. The sexual relationship was very satisfying to both of us and we didn’t have a male–female role at all, inasmuch as it varied.

I Believe

In the commitment of one woman to another.

G: What have your relationships been like since Jeanne?
F: Well, there was a long time, in fact about two years—I really think that we don’t get over a close relationship with another woman easily. I really do think that we’re more—that it’s harder for us than for heterosexual couples to get away from each other. I think it takes longer for us to get over a close relationship with a woman. I don’t think we do. So it was about two years before I even came out of—that I was sane again. She died, and then it was just... anything that wanted to come home with me. I made love to women just because—me. I made love to women just because— it was just sex. It’s not. Totally. Maybe men really do—can just do

ever existed, it’s the best relationship that
was so interconnected, Jeanne and I
were so interconnected in satisfaction of
needs and interwoven that no one person
could replace her. And too, I was mad that
other people were alive and that Jeanne
wasn’t. I just resented anybody, it didn’t
matter who. Just because they weren’t her.
Here they were, going day and
day and just talking about things that didn’t have
any kind of matter in the whole world. Looking
through magazines and everybody was bored,
And I’d come up and say ‘What do you think
you’re doing? We’re going to die! They’d just
totally not care. They could do,
(laughs) Well, I just quit doing that eventually
but you know, I wasn’t really sane then,
I don’t think. The angry I was wasn’t
came. I still feel that way, but I’m not gonna
threaten people with it. I just try to do it
another way.
G: So you still feel really aware of death?
F: Yeah, yeah. Until just knowing that
when you leave a person you might just never
see them again... that whole feeling.
G: How has that changed, and I feel real
good about being lesbian. I think that
we somehow—that lesbians have an integrity
that other people don’t have. I think that
for some reason we’re autonomous. For
some reason we’ve been able—we’ve had
to deprive ourselves of the world’s approval in
order to grow. I think that it’s a good thing,
and to be too conscientious about doing my work
right, whereas I think, of being different, which
should be doing is messing up at work.
Messing up things. Businesses are oppressive,
and they are oppressive toward women.
G: How do you feel being a lesbian is re-
lated to feminism?
F: (laughs) Oh golly. I think lesbianism is
an expression of feminism—the two are so
interwoven that no one person can be
heterosexual and still be a
feminist. That’s what bothers me about that
question, because I don’t know yet. It seems
natural result of feminism would be, you
know, lesbianism—if they truly felt it.
G: About how many lesbians do you know?
F: About 150, between 150 and 200.
G: You know that many people?
F: Unhuh. Not well.
G: Of your close friends, how many are lesbians?
F: About eight.
G: Would you say there's any kind of separate community here? Of lesbians?
F: Fear comes into it so much that—there's a sense of community as long as we're not exposed to the heterosexual world. But immediately upon us being together in the heterosexual world, fear comes in there and we lose our solidarity.

There's a mutual recognition of each other, but the fear is just so strong. I know what they're afraid of... and I almost respect it. I think I've got to destroy it. It can't be. I'm in sympathy with it but I can't allow it to be, because it hurts all of us.

G: Are the bars the only place where there's a fleeting sense of community?
F: No, in homes. In the privacy of their different homes, there's a real good feeling. But they won't back me publicly. None of them want anybody else to know. And I respect that, as well, inasmuch as it seems to me that other lesbians should be able to decide themselves when they're gonna let other people know it. So we have a code of secrecy that I hold to, though I don't approve of it. But I feel I would be hurting them if I didn't. When they're not ready for it.

G: How many of the lesbians you know are lower class and about how many in the other classes?
F: I'll tell you about a group we tried to get up—Society for Individual Rights. This was mostly gay men—in fact, I was the only gay woman that was in it.

G: You put yourself in the lower class?
F: Yeah.
G: What groups have you been involved in that you would consider political?
F: I'll tell you about a group we tried to get up—Society for Individual Rights. This was mostly gay men—in fact, I was the only gay woman that was in it.

G: Have you felt oppression coming from gay men?
F: Yes. Definitely.
G: Can you talk a little about that?
F: It's just the way that they trivialize everything I do. And they expect me to do everything. And, too, the gay men, like in the bars—the drag shows and like that—they do frequently criticize women and put down women. It's just a derogatory thing, and that affects me all the time. And they say they respect me, because they think of me as a man! I have to go against that every time they say it.

G: Do you think you'll keep working with them?
F: Oh yeah, as long as I'm around them. When they say things like that, I have to go against them. And I do the same thing with heterosexual men. Working with them really means opposing them, inasmuch as they don't have a feminine consciousness.

G: If there were women doing things besides yourself here, do you think you'd still be working with gay men?
F: No, I wouldn't even—Well, I don't fool with the gay men too much now. We have a sense of connection just because we're both homosexual, and I can sympathize with them, to some extent, about their oppression. I can sympathize with them because they are oppressed to the extent that they're women, to the extent that they're feminine as well as male.

If I had a group of lesbians who thought the way I do, that's what I would be concerned with. I wouldn't be involved with the men.

G: Can you imagine at all what you'll be doing five years from now?
F: I don't know that I'll be alive in five years. I don't plan that far ahead, I go a week at a time. I hope, in five years—oh god, I can't even think about five years from now. I can only concentrate on what's happening now. Does that mean that would I feel would be the best thing that would happen in five years?
G: Yeah.
F: I think I'm going to be a whole lot—that I'm becoming stronger. I don't know if I'll be able to go against as much as I feel it's necessary to go against, and survive with a job...

G: Do you have something specific in mind when you say you may not be alive five years from now?
F: I'm not afraid of death... and if it seems like to me that it's going to be too hard for me to keep going, I will kill myself as an act, it would be, of self-affirmation. Just because I think that the world of male power structure has hurt female individuals so much it's almost made it impossible to live and have a conscience at the same time. And I'm not going to require of myself that I go through more than I can stand. I always have an out, and suicide's it. I would take that out, just out of love of myself. Not to have to go through all I'm having to go through. Not to have to fight with people because of what I think is wrong.

G: Have you ever come to a point where you've considered that already?
F: Suicide? (quietly) Yeah. Every day. (sighs) Because I always know that whatever situation I'm in, I can get out of it and it won't be hard to. And I don't think that death is a bad thing. I think it's just a total lack of consciousness. I don't think that there's anything after that. All I'd have to do is just go to sleep and not wake up and that would be it. I wouldn't kill myself by violence at all, because I don't want to hurt myself.

It's so painful for me just because of the evil in the world. But I feel like everybody has to share my consciousness before it can get better. And that's hard for me because it means that I've got to inflict pain... that I have to conflict with them and I've got to say 'You've got to change—you're not good enough the way you are.' Otherwise the world is not going to be better, is not going to be livable... for us lesbians in particular, I think lesbians epitomize the type of problem. I don't think it's going to be any better unless everybody has the same consciousness that I have.
What You Can Do

AMAZON QUARTERLY NEEDS MORE THAN YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS

The trees AMAZON QUARTERLY is printed on are now coming from Canada—the cheapest source since the U.S. is running out of trees. And still the cost of paper has almost doubled since our last issue. If we can raise $400 extra per issue, we can print A.Q. on recycled paper—it costs that much more because "the processes haven't been refined yet." i.e. it's still cheaper to log our trees than to "refine" the recycling process. Obviously we must eventually change this. But for now, can anyone help us save Canada's trees?

To Help Miss Q.

TO STAY ALIVE AND HEALTHY.

WAYS THAT YOU CAN HELP FINANCIALLY:

---The most immediate need is for subsistence wages to women who do envelope stuffing, typing, and other "drudgery" for A.Q.

---Payment to women whose writing and artwork we use in AMAZON QUARTERLY—we'd like to begin at least token payment for material we print.

---An IBM Typewriter—we'll save money if we can buy a typewriter (for $500) rather than continue to rent one.

---Postage rates are rising steadily—if some of you can offset those costs we'll be able to avoid a corresponding rise in A.Q.'s price.

Mark your donation for the area that matters most to you:
WORKERS,
AUTHORS,
TYPEWRITER,
POSTAGE,
TREES,

or create your own category. This is one way you can influence our priorities.

FOR LARGE DONATIONS, WRITE TO US IN ADVANCE—WE CAN ARRANGE FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP THAT DON'T INVOLVE MONEY:

---If you live in the Bay Area we welcome your help with distribution and office work.

---If you live in the Bay Area AND you are an accountant, we need your talents desperately.

---If you have access to an IBM Selectric you can arrange with us to type and proofread copy for A.Q.

---If you are a lawyer—we need help making a second attempt for tax-exempt non-profit status for AMAZON QUARTERLY. Our first application was denied because our readership is not "the public" as defined by the I.R.S.

---You can introduce your local libraries and bookstores to AMAZON QUARTERLY—or devise your own ways to let people know of us.

---And especially, we need your stories, pictures, ideas, articles, photographs, and visions, so that AMAZON QUARTERLY can continue to explore the richest possibilities before us as women-loving-women.
When you were a child did you feel that you were different from the people around you?
S: Yeah, but in a positive way.
L: How did you feel you were different?
S: I felt more intelligent. I'm sure I didn't define it as 'together' but I felt really together and good as a kid. People seemed to be strange and I seemed to be the norm.
L: Do you remember how old you were when you first felt different?
S: I always did.
L: Looking back on it, do you still think that you were different?
S: Yeah.
L: How about now?
S: Now I feel even more apart. I'm an ego maniac, I guess. I see myself as the nucleus you were different?
L: You know I am! I've had nothing but positive experiences with women. I'd never go along with what I was interested in. So I was always thrown someplace else with what was stirred up by the women. I was thrown to the men and boys for the sex, just because the girls wouldn't and I didn't know how to pursue it.
L: Did you feel guilty at all the time?
S: No. I really don't think I did. How can I feel guilty, when nothing's happening?
L: Just for your desire?
S: No.
L: Are you glad you're a lesbian?
S: Yes.
L: About how many women have you been lovers with?
S: Genital lovers, two.
L: Could you compare the two—what changes do you see as a pattern developing in the kind of sexual or emotional relationship you've had between the two women?
S: The present relationship is much less satisfactory emotionally, but 1000 percent more satisfactory sexually. What else?
L: Could you go into why it's not satisfying emotionally?
S: It's not that it's not, but we don't have eighteen years of courtship. It's developing but it hasn't developed. Lack of time, and there's a big difference in the two personalites.
L: Do you have any thoughts about why this relationship is better sexually?
S: I have definite information as to why it is because Martha was absolutely unable to lay a hand on me. It was all me towards her. My orgasms were just out of sheer—eight hours spent making love to her, so I came just out of tenacity. She never laid a hand on me. She could not.
L: Why?
S: Why? I don't know why. As I say, I think because she's a straight woman. There was always initial reluctance to make love, and then we'd get started, and continue on for hours, really at snail's pace, me breaking down her reluctance, but never—never did she reciprocate. She had an orgasm with me once, the first time, and that's all. God! I don't know why, but she just could not after that. She was super—quilty about the whole thing, and had a big cry. It was all really hair-tearing.
L: Could you tell me some of the ways that relating to women, that you've been more masculine or more feminine?
S: Humm, that's loaded—mostly I feel feminine, as I define it. As society defines it, I feel feminine too, I suppose, but then I don't want to give the connotation of passive. I'm really not that much of a butch, either. I'm just me.
L: In your present relationship do you feel that there's any difference between you in aggressiveness, or any of the generally thought of masculine qualities?
S: In aggressiveness, no. As I was saying I seem to be stuck with household chores and all. But despite appearances, no. She doesn't railroad me and I don't railroad her. We're actually pretty equal.
L: About how many women have you been lovers with?
As it turned out, a woman's hand is nice. It's just a man's hand that's a bore.

And a woman's mouth is nice, but a man's—it's dumb, ignorant. I don't see any drawbacks really. I thought I would, but I didn't.

L: Could you tell me the primary factors leading to your divorce?
S: The inability to continue to lead a double life. To love a woman and to have to go through the motions with this man that I was working with.

L: Was that the primary reason then?
S: Yeah, I just couldn't take the split in me anymore.

L: Do you think that there are any problems you're having with your children specifically because you're a lesbian?
S: The seven-year-old doesn't know anything. The older ones know and it doesn't seem to be any problem for them at all.

L: Are they having any problems outside the home that relate to you being a lesbian?
S: I don't think they're having any problems outside the home. Period.

L: Would you want your daughter to be a lesbian?
S: I would hope.

L: About your sons—do you have any feeling about whether you'd like them to be homosexual or not?
S: That's kind of a different thing, because I would love to see all women turn to each other. I would hate for my sons to burden any of these women with themselves. But then I love my boys, and I think relationships between two men are generally pretty shitty. So I just don't know where they're going to go for a good relationship. They'll have to work that out themselves.

L: Could you tell me about the legal problems you had with your children around the divorce?
S: They were just threats, really. As long as I obeyed, I didn't really have any problems.

L: Did he bring out in the trial that you're a lesbian?
S: What he did was he decided the grounds for the divorce, what I would get, child custody—the whole thing. He and his lawyer drew it up. If I showed up at the hearing to object in any way, then his lawyer was just going to throw it to the Judge and I wouldn't even get so much as the crumbs he threw at me to begin with. I had three attorneys, and they all said "You don't have a chance in this court. The best you can hope for is to you to walk out of him as much as you can and keep shut about it.

L: So the final decision was your custody of two children?
S: Well, the older two boys could make a choice and they chose neither. Deborah could make a choice and she chose me. Joe had no choice and if I objected, well not only was he going to throw stuff up in court—because the last week I lived there with his gun on his hip, and Joe and Deborah both heard him click the hammer back one drunken night, and right in the middle of this, I have a cooked dinner and I called Bev called! (laughs) And he knew what was going on between us.

L: This was to prevent you from taking the children?
S: Joe (seven-year-old).

L: Could you describe basically what you like about yourself now?
S: I like more things about myself now—

L: Do you think that since you've become a lesbian that this has catalyzed other changes in you?
S: Well, when I was married I couldn't change. I couldn't grow, I couldn't even know for sure who I was. Not until I left him, until I became mine. And part of being my own person has to do with caring for women.

L: How do you feel that being a lesbian is related to feminism?
S: I don't see how you can be a feminist without being a lesbian. You can be a feminist and be a celibate if you have minimal sexual drive. But I don't see how you can love women and put a physical wall between you and your women if you love them— I could say 'sick' but well, it seems to be. You're affectionate physically with your children, and I think we should be affectionate physically with each other.
During June, July and August Gina and I met several hundred of our readers on a twelve thousand mile journey around the continent. What I learned is many-layered and complex, but I'm going to try to write out some overall impressions.

The purpose of our trip was to examine the myths about lesbians (both those held by the straight world and the ones we hold about ourselves) and to draw a new map of the reality of lesbian life in 1973 in the U.S. and Canada. My initial motivation for all of this came from my anger while reading Arno Karlen's chapters on lesbianism in Sexuality and Homosexuality. The women who invited us to stay with them ranged from 21 to 62 years old, from welfare mothers to millionaires, from conventionally religious to women who have just decided that they are lesbians. Researchers, shrink, take note! Odd as it seems, that is still the predominant theme in the psychological sociological literature and in the vacuous public mind. The women we met did not want to be men, to look like men, act like them, or to in any way treat another woman as a man would.

And another blow to the mythology: None of the women we talked with and interviewed regret that they are lesbians. The response was overwhelming to our question of how do you feel about being a lesbian. "I love it." "It's more than I ever was." "I feel sorry for all the women who haven't realized their own potential love for women." Despite having to struggle against universal approbation, in many instances, threats of losing jobs and children and friends, women are glad they are lesbians.

And I'm going to try to write out some overall impressions.

One of my strongest impressions is of the beauty of the women we met. They seemed to become more conscious, to think carefully, and to discover connections of good conversation that we discovered. We brought back 52 hours to two hours of sharing their lives with us—even allowing us to help other sisters out of isolation. Many women who have everything to lose are coming out of the closet, starting rape crisis centers, setting up lines of communication to help other sisters out of isolation. Many more women than we expected are open about their love for women—and their children, their children's children, their employees, and their friends. The women who are not there yet are weighing their schizophrenia very carefully against their survival. And almost all of them see it as a matter of time—just a matter of time—before they will close the closet door softly behind them.

One of my strongest impressions is of the prevalence of what I'll call ALCHEMY—the ability we saw in so many women to change the negative into the positive—to take the pain and sorrow and others' hostility and to turn it into growth and change and increased consciousness. I think all of the interviews we have printed in this issue are clearly the stories of women who have had to struggle: a woman in jail for five years, a woman who lost both her mother and her lover a few days before Christmas, a woman who was one of eight welfare children struggling out of heroin addiction, a woman who was married to a man who stabbed her in the back because she was fended by her religion—their stories speak for themselves. The beauty of the women we met is not that they have always been happy, healthy, strong women, but that is what they are becoming. It seems like all this trial, pain and suffering produces a heartier breed in the end—a woman who can meet each struggle as a challenge—one more way she can grow.

But what was it really like? you say. Travelling for three months, meeting new people every day, seeing the whole continent. Exciting! Exhilarating! The adventure of a lifetime! Yes, yes, and still it was the hardest thing either of us have ever done. We were frightened, anxious, tense about all that driving and a car that just kept breaking down—and the exposure to sudden death for three whole months. We worked and thought we could not meet another new person and have to go through the same exact opening conversation again. We tried hard to find ways to cut through the bullshit, to get beyond the kind of trivia that strangers exchange with each other. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't. Most of the time, we were amazed by the trust and warmth shown us. Imagine over two hundred hours of reading and discussing the lives of these women and sharing their lives with us—even allowing us to tape their life stories—and they'd never laid eyes on us before! We recorded the tape, and it seemed to be the very best catalyst of good conversation that we discovered. For some reason women simply were not paralyzed by having their stories recorded. They seemed to become more conscious, to think carefully, and to discover connections as they talked. We were amazed by the way they remembered incidents in their lives for the first time, and very often we cried with them as they went through the pains once again. We brought back 52 hours to two hours of

...
and I saw the fruit of what we had just learned. We had been locked in a dead and cold conversation in a Chicago apartment house, getting no deeper than the particulars of local women's groups. So the women disappeared together for ten minutes or so and then they came to us terrified but determined to go ahead and risk telling us "what was wrong." "What was wrong" was that they had been afraid to tell us that they hadn't had their first sexual experience with a woman yet... and they were so afraid we'd be mad... They wanted to meet us... they hoped we wouldn't feel they'd lied by not telling us... You never saw four women so moved and tearful and laughing and hugging all at once after that, I wouldn't have missed that experience for anything. Yes, one woman still sleeps with a man. Yes, one woman has not succeeded yet in finding the woman she wants to love... but what? Sisterhood is stronger than those categories that divide us. I love those women and I can only wish for them the joy I've found in loving Gina. And I can't help but think that our acceptance of where they are now, our love for them as women, can only bring them closer to loving women... closes these distinctions just isn't as big as we think.

Finally, I want to thank all the women who invited us to share their lives. We didn't get to meet everyone who wrote to us (3 months was just a short time) but thanks to every one of you for caring enough to want us.

And thank you all who contributed to make this journey and this issue of the magazine possible. Your faith in us keeps us going and growing. Please send us your feelings about this issue, your new articles, stories, art work, etc. Let's try to make the next issue even better.
A: I was very close to my mother. She was overprotective. One of the reasons was that I was adopted. I had a good relationship with my mother. She was the disciplinarian. Whenever any real problems or any real heavy discussions went on, it was always between my mother and I, not my father and I.

L: How do you feel about her now?
A: Very comfortable. In my younger years I had a real inability to communicate with my parents, or with anybody, for that matter. But now I feel like we have a fantastic relationship. My mother does not—my mother really doesn't know that I'm a lesbian in the sense that I have told her. I told her about six years ago but she sort of swept it under the rug and she thinks that it was a phase I was going through and that I'm out of it. But now she knows that I live with another woman. I'm sure she knows it, but we just don't talk about it. We do talk about feminism, we talk about my work, and I feel she really listens... she really hears what I'm saying. I feel like we have a very good relationship.

L: How about your father?
A: My father doesn't talk very much and my father's also very religious—a devout Catholic, very conservative. He tries to be understanding, but in terms of my father and I doing any real talking, getting into depth about anything, we really don't do that.

L: Do you think your parents had a good relationship when you were a child?
A: Yes.

L: Do you think your parents ever wished that you had been a boy?
A: (laughs) Well, whether or not they wished I was a boy, there were many, many times in my younger years I wished I were a boy—in terms of doing dishes and the little girl things I had to live up to because of my sex.

L: Did you feel when you were a child that you were different from other people in any special way?
A: Yes! (laughs) I knew I was a homosexual! It was very difficult for me to deal with that. I didn't dare tell anybody—also I felt I was different in terms of being adopted. I went through an incredible identity crisis at one point in my life, which I'm over now, of course. It was very important to me at one time to know who my blood relatives were.

L: Did you find out anything?
A: Umm, yeah, I found out some things about my mother which made quite an impression on me. It left me at that point very disappointed. I found out that she had been to jail and that she had been a prostitute and she had several illegitimate children. I found out when I was about fifteen years old. It was upsetting to me at that particular time because I didn't have the full capacity to understand what was happening. And why it really was okay. It wasn't okay in terms of her pain and suffering but, you know, whatever she was into was okay.

L: How did you find this out?
A: Department of Vital Statistics. I searched the records and I talked to a town clerk who plugged me into some people who knew her.

L: Your parents knew and didn't tell you?
A: No, my parents didn't really know and my mother made an effort to find out.

L: You said it was hard for you to deal with your lesbianism when you were a teenager and you didn't tell anyone?
A: Except for my lover.

L: Where did the two of you look for support and information?
A: Umm, well, we went to libraries and every time we went to a school library every-
I'd never started feeling good about it until I went to prison and I saw it was practically all lesbians there.

thing we wanted to find out was listed under 'persecution' or 'sexual deviance,' so it made us feel even more guilty. We went through a lot of intense hassles about what we're doing is really wrong and feeling very guilty about it.

I: How do you relate to other girls? A: Very comfortably, because we were both very strong personalities, good athletes. We did very well in school. We were getting into a lot of the 'status symbols' at that time, like drinking or smoking grass, we were involved. So I was doing both and I was cool and accepted by my peers.
I: Are you glad now that you're a lesbian? A: I love it! Yes.
I: When did that change? You felt guilty for awhile. A: Yeah, I did. I did six years in prison, I got arrested in 1965. I was into, very definitely, being a lesbian for quite some time before, but I'd never seriously been involved. I saw that it was actually all lesbians there. I must say that I had turned completely around and it was no longer a thing. I was a butch. So when I got out of prison, I still wasn't feeling all that good about my sexuality because I saw it in a situation where my mother and father did not advocate that. I began to entertain ideas of getting out of the system, of not going back to prison, so why not throw that off along with it? Because it had kind of been a negative thing in many ways in my earlier life. And then I met my lover and she really helped me. I was very honest with her and therefore we built a very high degree of trust with each other. I was very definite in telling her that I was into roles and I certainly didn't have to tell her that I was chauvinistic because (laughs) she knew! And she really helped me change that. We could pull ourselves together, I'm not saying roles are negative for everybody, but they're very negative for me. And I think for her. And for other people. And it's my opinion that when people are into roles they're just not meeting on equal footing. So I saw it was discriminative against my lover. Terribly so, and so I had to deal with that.
I: Why were you in prison? A: I was up for possession of heroin and burglarly. Now, I got convicted on those two charges, I originally had 54 charges on me. When I went to court I was convicted on those two charges and was given six years, with the stipulation of parole, and also that I would do that time flat. I went through the six years, doing three in solitary confinement. And that sounds pretty horrible and it was pretty horrible, but the only thing I can say is that the body and the mind had an incredible ability to adjust. To adjust to your environment and whatever situation you're in. I guess some people aren't quite so strong.

Luckily I was strong and maintained my sanity and I am here and alive. But in the meantime, while I was doing time in solitary confinement, I had very little interest in anything that would have helped me. I went over to the dentist—of course any time you needed dental or medical care you went over to the men's side because they were the ones that had had them done in a righteous manner. I happened to be talking to the dentist and he told me that he had just gotten his master's degree through an extension correspondence course, so I was very excited about that. I'd been doing lots of reading and I thought gee, I'm doing all this self-education, if I get my father to send some money I can take this extension course. Super-fantastic! It might have even given me some motivation to feel good enough about myself to get out of that cell I was in and go out into the population and be half-way productive. Very difficult for me. I was definitely influenced when I saw I could snap my fingers and have people just use my title for me. I was a butch. So when I got out of prison, I still wasn't feeling all that good about my sexuality because I saw it in a situation where my mother and father did not advocate that. I began to entertain ideas of getting out of the system, of not going back to prison, so why not throw that off along with it? Because it had kind of been a negative thing in many ways in my earlier life. And then I met my lover and she really helped me. I was very honest with her and therefore we built a very high degree of trust with each other. I was very definite in telling her that I was into roles and I certainly didn't have to tell her that I was chauvinistic because (laughs) she knew! And she really helped me change that. We could pull ourselves together, I'm not saying roles are negative for everybody, but they're very negative for me. And I think for her. And for other people. And it's my opinion that when people are into roles they're just not meeting on equal footing. So I saw it was discriminative against my lover. Terribly so, and so I had to deal with that.
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I: How was getting out of roles? A: Very, very difficult, I certainly found my head still in that place. It's really hard. It was kind of hard to get into in the first place. I was wearing halter or completely shave, wearing men's or boy's clothes and I kind of got into it because I was recognized for being cool. My attitudes, of course, went up and down. I was very definitely influenced when I saw I could snap my fingers and have people just run quickly doing things for me, because I was a butch. So when I got out of prison, I still wasn't feeling all that good about my sexuality because I saw it in a situation where my mother and father did not advocate that. I began to entertain ideas of getting out of the system, of not going back to prison, so why not throw that off along with it? Because it had kind of been a negative thing in many ways in my earlier life. And then I met my lover and she really helped me. I was very honest with her and therefore we built a very high degree of trust with each other. I was very certain in telling her that I was into roles and I certainly didn't have to tell her that I was chauvinistic because (laughs) she knew! And she really helped me change that. We could pull ourselves together, I'm not saying roles are negative for everybody, but they're very negative for me. And I think for her. And for other people. And it's my opinion that when people are into roles they're just not meeting on equal footing. So I saw it was discriminative against my lover. Terribly so, and so I had to deal with that.
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My therapy is just living, and loving people, and feeling responsibility for my sisters.

L: How did you get the job you have now?

A: I came back here, where my parents live, and I was terrified about my background. I felt that people were going to dump on me because I was an ex-offender and an ex-heroin addict and so immediately I would say 'hey, right back at you.' The reason I would say this is that I didn't want people to find out later, after I had already begun to care about them, and then have them dump on me. So I was very outward with my background. And people would ask me about it and I'd start telling them some of the stuff I'd been through and people would get very impressed and I couldn't figure why. And what I came to realize was that they were not by any means, the people here that had my experience. (Adrienne went on to do social work with women in a professional capacity. I had been doing this now for several years.)

L: How did you get off drugs? You said that you were on them in prison and off when you left.

A: I didn't get off them by choice. While I was in the solitary confinement situation, the woman I was on got busted—so my supply was cut off. It's very difficult. When you're dealing in drugs you don't think about trust or responsibility or anything else, you don't care. And when it was cut off I felt I'd been there for two and a half, three years, somebody touched me—just on the shoulder—it was an old woman, a black woman. A very beautiful woman, was coming up here and put her hand on my shoulder and told me—what was my experience. She came and stood behind me, put her hand on my shoulder and told me—"you're real, you've got something. I feel like I'm a person! And a woman! And I have some worth. And if they like me, who don't I like me? And maybe I should start thinking about that; I really sort of gave me alot of hope. It started giving me some confidence in myself. And that's exactly what happened when I came here. All these women said go for a job, and they started giving me confidence in myself and helping me to believe in myself. And I feel like I'm very sure of myself and very assertive and I feel like I'm very strong. I don't have to shout it off the rooftops, but within myself I know that.

L: Could you talk a little about your present relationship?

A: (laughs) Heaven! Like I died and went to heaven. It's a fantastic relationship.

L: Tell me the best things about your relationship.

A: Okay. Incredibly amount of honesty with each other, incredible amount of trust, which took a year—at least a year. And then a year after a this chauvinistic attitude, I feel very, very, very, very, very rich in that. I have somebody that I'm in love with and I have somebody who's in love with me, and I feel that there is a great deal of depth to our relationship.

L: Besides the conflict over the fact that you had Jackie get past roles, what other conflicts did you have?

A: Adjusting to each other...each other's needs and each other's idiosyncrasies or faults.

L: Has monogamy ever come up as a problem between you?

A: Yeah. We went through a thing about five months ago, well, Jackie thought that it was okay for her to go to bed with somebody, but I didn't. I think like it was okay for me but not for her! So we did a role-play situation. I had a situation come up where a woman whom I work with, who is a lesbian, a very fine and beautiful woman, was coming up here and I was going to be working with her for a week...and Jackie got past-stopped. She really didn't want to hear the idea that I might go to bed with her. I knew she was concerned about it so we did a role-reversal. And out of that particular technique we learned something. We learned that--I learned that I was not ready to go to bed with someone else, but that it was okay for Jackie to do it if she wanted to. And Jackie learned that she really didn't want to go to bed with anybody because she hasn't had enough of me. We sort of mu-
A: Yes, now. It's sort of like it was all a very, very negative thing at one time, and what I've somehow been able to do is to sort of redirect that into a positive direction and utilize it constructively.
L: Could you talk a little bit about the writing you are doing?
A: Oh yeah. That's incredible. I brought home thirty-three notebooks from prison with me. I took out forty-three but they confiscated ten books because they said they were absolutely too radical and too political. What the writing consisted of was my observations of some of the internal things that were happening in terms of the administration, the inmates and so forth. And they just took them. They wouldn't let me have them. Of course, I tried to recapture it later. I probably won't have the book completed for another ten years. It's going to be a complete autobiography.
L: What would you like to be doing in five years?
A: Ohhhh! Um, I would like to be doing some kind of social work. I would also like to have a certain time of year—a couple of months even—to devote my total time to writing. And I don't write well—I don't feel I do—so, it's gonna take some time. And I hope that I'm still with Jackie.

L: Is sex a very important part of your relationship?
A: Yes.
L: Has it been good?
A: Super!
L: Who usually initiates it?
A: Jackie! It sounds like a whole reversal. I used to think that I was the aggressor when I really wasn't. It was sort of passive-aggressive behavior that I was into. I was making like I was aggressive, but really, deep down, I was going after someone so they, in turn, would come back after me and then I could be passive. I hate to use those words but it's the only way.

L: Could you tell me what you like best about yourself now?
A: Oh! I like my strength, my profession, and my ability to love—my ability to really care, and not only care but carry it one step further to the point that I make a commitment to get involved in terms of helping other people. It's always two-fold. I feel that when I help others, I help myself.
L: Do you feel good about what happened to you in prison?
The following material is based on the research of Deborah Wolf, who has compiled the following preliminary report from the materials gathered during our summer visits with members of the Amazon Quarterly from all over the U.S. and Canada. Charlotte Wolff, in her book Love Between Women, finds a significantly higher percent of lesbians than her control group who were only or oldest children (p. 154), but in this sample only 9 out of 52 are only children, 18 have only one sibling, 9 have 2, and 12 have more than 2. Of the women who have more than 2 siblings, 19 are the oldest, 6 are middle children, and 15 are youngest. Since 19 of the women have only one brother or sister, the number who are middle children is not significant. What is important is that there are so many youngest children, belying Wolff's supposition. We can assume that birth order is not necessarily an important factor in determining sexuality.

Religious training is an area of concern for some women in coming to terms with their lesbianism. Of the women interviewed, 25 had been raised as Protestants (including Fundamentalist sects), 9 were Catholic, 7 were Jewish, 3 agnostic, 2 Quakers, 1 Greek Orthodox, 1 Mormon. This represents a smaller percentage of Catholics (18% versus 24%) than are in the general population of the U.S., and a larger percentage of Jews (14% as opposed to 3% in the general population).

Belying the stereotype that lesbians turn to loving women because they are unsuccessful in attracting men, 1/3 (17 out of 50) of the women interviewed had been married to men. Of these, 16 married before or during their college years, one married in her late twenties. The range of jobs presently or previously held was wide. Sixty-one different jobs were mentioned, including factory assembly, foreign service, repair jobs, military service, group marriage, college teaching, truck-driving and being an artist. For present sources of income, 41 different sources were mentioned, including, 'independently wealthy,' handycrafts, teacher, welfare recipient, psychologist, women's movement worker, alimony recipient, secretary and farm laborer.

In the families of 20 of the women only the fathers worked, while 13 had one and 10 had two working parents. Only 14 fathers were still living, and 7 were deceased, or whose sources of income were not indicated.

Among the rest, 10 lived with their lover or both. Three lived with friends, one lived with her parents, and one lived with her husband. Thirty-six, or about 30% of the sample, have never been able to attract a man. Among the rest, 13 are not sure if they are straight or not. Of the rest, 3 have found a woman to love, of whom 2 have had no legal problems. Among the rest, 10 have had some legal problems, mostly in child custody cases, 2 had experienced physical abuse, and 2 had been unable to adopt children, 17 have been with someone of the same sex for a long time, while 13 do not. Of these 13, 5 were not in any sexual relationship at the time of the interview. Generally, then, in examining the results of the questionnaires, one can say that this is an educated population with fairly stable backgrounds, employed in a wide range of jobs, but not fully employed according to the level of their training, many of whom have been married and had children, and who are usually living with a lover.

One young woman who lived alone, 10 who lived with their lovers, 4 more who lived with their lover and other friends, 14 who lived with their lover and either their own children or their lover's or both. Thirty-six, or about 30% of the sample, have never been able to attract a man. Among the rest, 10 have had some legal problems, mostly in child custody cases, 2 had experienced physical abuse, and 2 had been unable to adopt children, 17 have been with someone of the same sex for a long time, while 13 do not. Of these 13, 5 were not in any sexual relationship at the time of the interview. Generally, then, in examining the results of the questionnaires, one can say that this is an educated population with fairly stable backgrounds, employed in a wide range of jobs, but not fully employed according to the level of their training, many of whom have been married and had children, and who are usually living with a lover.
the other parent, theories of fixation at some
they have had the chance to test it against
by reading literature which puts lesbianism
that most lesbians had their first sexual
the traditionally held beliefs about factors
bles to engage in homosexual activity. In
into a deviant, negative framework, before
lesbianism and its development should be
some of the more prevalent stereotypes about
of female histories. " (447) He does postu­
homosexuality if her reaction to social con­
are; fear of pregnancy or venereal disease.
The most glaring problem with Caprlo is
of her sample were only or oldest children than
while 4 felt that they had experienced a bad,
their parents' relationship was bad. Two
sample almost all lesbians had been tomboys
she also postulates that only
children, tending to be overprotected, grow
up to be frightened of men and therefore turn
women to lesbianism so it's almost evenly divided.
The breakdown of ages at first sexual experience was: 6 between 5-9,
9 between 11-15, none between 16-19, and 6 in their 20's.
3) All 21 women were asked about the age
they had their first relationship with a woman.
For 4 of them it was between 1 and 5, for 4 others between 6-10, for 8 between 11-15, for 2 between 16-20, for 2 others between 21-29, and for 1 in her thirties.
 Four at the time of their first experience with a
woman fell into 6 categories: 8 felt glad, 3 felt bad, 2 felt they had to be secretive, 2 felt bad and 2 felt guilty.
Parts of the AQ interview were designed to
test the extent to which some of these theo­
were born out or contradicted by the
which "were interesting. Parts of the AQ interview were designed to
test the extent to which some of these theo­
that he puts lesbianism into a category of
"arrested development", i.e. he sees it only
that it has been transcribed) open-ended taped interviews co­
ered roughly 7 areas of concern; 1) the
letters, and 7) the future.
her thirties. The question "when you first
learned you liked girls, did it occur to you to
model yourself after boys?" had to do with
questions addressed that it had not occurred to
them. Five felt it just happened to them, 6
felt it was a mixture in that the feelings might have been there, but it was a choice to act
on it. Two others said it was a choice they made.
Sixteen women answered the related ques­
tion of whether being a lesbian was a con­
scious choice or something that happened to
them. Five felt it just happened to them, 6
felt it was a mixture in that the feelings might have been there, but it was a choice to act
on it. Two others said it was a choice they made.
11 experienced their first relationship with
women to lesbianism held up in terms of the women's
"towards emotionalism, 6) self-image, and 7) the future.
women's feelings about their family
rized as leading to lesbianism. Of the 17
women, 15, 1 between 16 and 21, 2 in their
relationship with a woman was answered by all
21 women. Of them, 4 were between 11-15,
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not. To the question of whether the women felt they were generally more masculine or feminine than their lovers only 2 said yes, and 2 said sometimes.

When asked about the best things and the sources of conflict in their relationships, several different qualities were mentioned. Some of the best things were: the lover was easy to live with, she was independent, joyous, they were able to relate to each other while maintaining their own identities, their relationship was mutually supportive and conducive to growth, they shared interests, there was honesty and trust, they supplemented each other, there was mutual caring, it was good sexually, and for one couple, a good thing was that they shared a strong feminist commitment.

Some sources of conflict were: personal idiosyncracies, trying to find ways to grow together as a couple while maintaining independence, problems of children and lover's adjustment to them, jealousy, finding enough time to be together, and for one, a need for personal reassurance.

A series of questions concerning relationships with men were answered by 20 women. Of these, 17 had experienced sexual relationships with men, while 3 had not. Of the 13 who were asked if they would relate to men in the future, 10 replied they would, while 3 had not. Of 18 women who were asked if they ever had been raped or forced to men in the future, 10 replied they would, while 3 said they might under certain circumstances. Of 18 women who were asked if they would relate to men in the future, 10 replied they would, while 3 had not. Of 20 women asked if they were in any feminist groups, 17 are presently or have been, while only 3 have not. Again, this may reflect the selection of the sample, and not necessarily the general lesbian population.

When asked what the important issues were in their lives, survival was mentioned by one, personal relationships by 5, personal growth by 5, commitment to the feminist movement by 4, security for oneself or one's children by 4, meeting women by 2, legal problems connected with lesbianism by 1, and 1 woman was completely satisfied. (Several women mentioned more than one issue.)

When asked how they would like their relationships with men to have changed five years from now, again several categories were mentioned. These included: personal growth, more freedom, being in a relationship, having a child, having more time for personal expression, doing significant work, having more security or a better job, and strengthening feminist commitments.

It should be remembered that this is a preliminary overview based on 52 written questionnaires and 21 taped interviews. No conclusions should really be drawn until the results of the complete study can be presented. Future issues will extend this work — but we thought you'd want to see our work in progress.
My Mother and I never got along. I never liked her at all. Most of the time she kept telling me how much she hated my guts. 'Why don't you leave?' So I did.

L: How old were you when you left?
T: I was eighteen.
L: Presently what's your relationship with your mother?
T: I haven't seen her in six years.
L: Do you talk to her?
T: No.

L: Which child was your parents' favorite?
T: There were no -- it wasn't--I mean, you're thinking about a family in a family-type way. This was not. It was like we all lived in the same place, but wasn't a family. It was just...scrabbling. Everybody trying to get the best they could out of it. There wasn't any 'favoritism.' There wasn't any anything. I can't explain it to you.
L: Yes you can.
T: Wasn't anything. We were all just there together, and just happened to be related, that's all.
L: Did your mother ever indicate to you--or your stepfather--that they wished you'd been a boy?
T: My mother used to tell me constantly that she'd wished her first child had been a son.
L: Oh.
T: I don't know why people are hung up on that first-born bit.
L: What kind of restrictions did your mother put on you about what you could and couldn't do sexually?
T: My brother and I got caught experimenting with each other, looking at each other, when we were little kids. And we almost got...
the...living hell beat out of us. It was very restrictive. I mean, my mother was not the type of person who would restrict her own sex life. As far as my life or my brother's— I mean she was alot freer with my brother. My brother didn't remember much of it or something.

T: He was a boy. But if I stayed out late or something, I had to go through the inquisition: 'Where were you?'

L: And before that you hadn't masturbated or felt sexual?

T: No, I don't remember anything before that. Before this whole episode with my stepfather. We went through the whole thing, I don't remember much before that. Strange. I can't say that it was my stepfather's attacking me that—my mother blamed that for me being homosexual. I can't say, because I had homosexual tendencies when I was eight years old, before this ever happened. I can't 'blame' my stepfather for it.

L: What was the thing with your teacher?

T: (bendely) Well, I really loved her. And one time she was helping me up on the rings or something and she touched me and I felt like I was going to fall. I was real dizzy and stuff. I didn't think what was happening at the time, but I thought I was (laughs) dying or something. But, she was just very attractive to me.

L: Would you say that the feelings you had for your gym teacher were sexual?

T: Definitely!

L: When did you realize that what you were feeling, other people would call lesbianism?

T: When did I realize it or when did I admit it to myself?

L: Either.

T: The realizing came long before the admitting. I was under the impression for a long, long time and I think it was just a very natural feeling. I've felt that, in a way it's a choice, but in a way it's not. I haven't thought about it enough to give you a good answer.

L: Can you think of any circumstances or events that were important for your becoming a lesbian?...or is it just that it happened?

T: I think I was already a lesbian, but I could have made a choice to be straight if I'd wanted to. I did try. I was married and I have a son. I gave him up when I had him, but I went through the whole thing. The whole straight scene, and I really was straight for a long time. It's just that lately, more and more, I'm really resentlying the things that are happening to me. What men are doing, even indirectly, I resent it. And I don't feel that I should be required to repress my feelings for women. I resent it, and I'm a very stubborn person. The more people impose their values on me, the more I resist. And it's always been there, but I'm not going to make any effort anymore to be straight.

L: When you first discovered that you were a lesbian, were you afraid to tell anyone about it, where did you look for help? For support?

T: There wasn't anyone to look. There wasn't anybody at all. All my girlfriends were straight and all into this whole scene 'well, it's time to get married.' One girl I had was the type that just liked to kiss and liked pet but she wouldn't go any further. She was not 'that type of person.'

L: Strange, that's all. It's confused, but I'm trying to learn more, that's all I can say. I want to know that you liked girls, did you attempt to model yourself after boys?

T: Yeah, I did.

L: Did you want to be a boy?

T: Always.

L: Do you still?

T: No.

L: How long ago did that change happen?

T: Not until very recently. Not until about two or three years did I stop wanting to be a male because—I mean—men have everything. Male privilege is really male privilege. I grew up with my brother thirteen months younger than me and I was just boys together. I was always a boy when I grew up, I was rough, played boys' games, and played with boys and never went with the girls. What can I tell you? I just feel that men have it better.

L: Do you have one long term relationship with a woman, is that right?

T: No, I had two long relationships.

L: Generally, in those relationships do you feel that you've been more masculine or more feminine than the other two women?

T: I feel that I've been the leader. In both relationships the women have gotten married. The first woman was a couple of years younger than me and I really gave her the impression that that was the hell was going on. And I felt that sort of led her—seduced her. I did. I mean it was her first experience and she was twelve years older than me, and (laughs) it was also her first experience. In effect, I seduced her. But I feel that I'm sort of the role of the seducer so strongly because of the age difference. But I've always been what you call the aggressor. And I'm not aggressive, I don't feel I am anyway. As far as that goes, (smiles) somebody's got to...
think of. I just loved her whatever. Sometimes we fought and sometimes I didn't like her but I still loved her. I still do, I guess.

L: What do you think are the conflicts that terminated the relationship? What happened at the end?

T: She had pressure from her parents. She lived with her parents and her sister. You know, an Italian Catholic family, the pressure on her to marry and conform. She never really admitted the fact that she could be homosexual. There was just alot of pressure on her to marry—the whole role thing. So she did.

L: Was she dating while she was living with you?

T: No. She didn't date because she was—she also had had a weight problem and she had lost a lot of weight. She really lost a lot of weight. She came down from 300 pounds—this was before I met her—down to about a size fourteen. She was in her early thirties and never really dated. I think when she did meet me, it didn't start out to be anything but it just happened. I don't know, I think I was alot more involved than she had supposed, I mean as I look back, he must have become too excited to wait and just did whatever you want to call it. But I've never been able to with just the man's penis in me. Ugh. That's not where it's at, at all!

L: Could you tell me a little more about what happened when your stepfather raped you? What happened after that?

T: I just remember basically, I must have been asleep and I woke up in his bed. He must have come in my bedroom and carried me in there. I remember he had his t-shirt on, and nothing else. And I remember him taking my clothes off. He didn't just jump on me and force his penis in me, it was like gradual. He tried to set me at ease first, and I remember I was just terrified. I couldn't even move. Finally, he just—I mean as I look back, he must have become too excited to wait and just did it. He just pushed in me and--I mean really, it was very painful. I don't think I'll ever forget that. I had to go to the hospital for stitches.

L: Oh god. Well, didn't he have to face up to that?

T: Yeah, I told my mother. She would not--I went to a Catholic hospital, and she just refused to tell the doctors what happened. So they treated me and I went home and then, as I said, she beat me a lot to make me say I lied. And I said: 'How could I lie? There's the evidence. I went to the hospital. Right?' I think he did it to hurt her, I really do. They weren't getting along, and he knew I wasn't his. Somehow that must have played a part in it, because he didn't bother any of the rest of the kids. I think that must have been it. He was trying to hurt her! He was trying to hurt me, too. And so he just did it the best way he could. He really did a good job.

L: Legally wasn't the hospital responsible to find out what happened?

T: I don't--there wasn't a thing with the lawyers, and my mother was going to press charges and then she made me tell them I lied, so they dropped everything. I don't remember the whole thing. There was a big hassle...that was the first time I ever heard the word 'rape.'

L: You said you were married and had a child. You were married for six months?

T: No, I didn't have a child by him. It was before.

L: What happened with that?

T: It was during the time I was floating around—I was doing meth and speed and I was just going around on the streets. This guy picked me up—a black guy—and I went home with him. I didn't even stay—I remember getting up and leaving—and I never thought to tell about it again. That was in May. And then I came back and around July I found out I was pregnant. I really tried to find an abortionist and I just didn't have the money, people wanted $500 for the cheapest one and I just couldn't do it. So I had the baby.

L: Was having the child free?

T: Yeah, the hospitals won't turn you away if you don't have anything. I had this idea that I wanted to keep the kid, and they kept me in such a fog with thorazine and stuff, I was out of it. I don't remember signing anything...I don't remember. I guess I did it though. I signed him away.

L: How do you feel about that now?

T: It's always bothered me. I wanted that baby. Typical mother role, right?

L: Would you consider having a child again?

T: No. Not again. It was too much the first time. I wouldn't have done it on purpose. Have you ever had a baby? It's not fun. I didn't like it. I didn't have anybody to help me, and I just went through the whole thing myself.

L: Are you kind of glad, or how do you feel in retrospect?

T: It's nebbyish. I'm glad that I don't have the responsibility of this child, and I'm not because I really--I dream of it—and I wake up and feel like I'm going through it over and over again. Always at night. I work in
the daytime and it keeps me busy but at night there's nothing you can do. You have to be alone with yourself and you have to be quiet. There's nobody around you so you have to think. It's always the worst time. I wait for someone to come to me. It doesn't happen that way. I wish I just felt more at ease with myself, as far as speaking or anything else. I just am not aggressive at all.

L: These questions are in a different area. Could you describe basically what you like about yourself?

T: I feel I'm fairly bright. And I like my music and I like the things I'm doing. I like the things I'm reading and I like the things I'm learning. And I have a long way to go.

L: What do you see as the issues in your life at present--the things you're struggling with?

T: I want to learn about myself and other women. I want to learn and I want to help--us, you know. I want to get out from under men! In every way. I'm learning. And I have a long way to go.

L: What don't you like about yourself and what kinds of things would you like to change?

T: Well, I'd like to learn more. I'd like to know more. I'd like to stop being so nervous with people. I feel like I'm too shy in some ways. I don't go out to meet people, I wait for someone to come to me. It doesn't happen that way. I wish I just felt more at ease with myself, as far as speaking or anything else. I just am not aggressive at all.

L: How do you feel about the ways you're spending your time?

T: I feel like I'm just passing through this time in my life on the way to something else. Except for my music I'm not doing anything. I'm waiting for something. I guess that's the way a lot of us are going to die, waiting for something.

L: How has the way you're feeling about your lesbian feelings been in your life?

T: They were very important, the point of my existence for many, many moons.

L: Briefly, what happened with your drug experience?

T: Well, I had always smoked grass. My brother turned me on when I was twelve... it was always in the house. My mother's friends smoked grass--my mother turned me on. I snorted meth, and did psilocybin, mescaline and acid and then I went out to school and snorted heroin and speed. I started skin-popping heroin, and then I started mainlining because the skin-popping wasn't getting there fast enough. My friend, who I was going with then, was a black woman and a very big reputation on campus. She had more women than any man ever thought about! (laughs) And she was just a very destructive person. Her whole thing was how many women she could get it. It was a very male thing. She did heroin, so I started doing it. What do I know? I didn't realize--it was the pregnancy thing--it never dawned on me I would get pregnant.

I'm not gonna hide anymore! What can they do, burn me at the stake, kill me?

I wish they would. Rather than not be free, I would rather die.

L: Your job is the only thing?

T: If they fire me, they'll have to find some other excuse and have a very destructive person. Her whole thing was how many women she could get it. It was a very male thing. She did heroin, so I started doing it. What do I know? I didn't realize--it was the pregnancy thing--it never dawned on me I would get pregnant.

It never dawned on me that I would get addicted. I never thought about it. I just did it. I liked it. I just kept doing it and then I tried to stop once, I tried to stop and I really got sick. And then it dawned on me that I needed it.

L: How long were you actually on it?

T: For almost two years I was addicted to it.

L: How did you get the money to maintain it?

T: I worked in the cafeteria. I stole. I sold all my books, everything. And my friend knew a lot of people and she brought it home. Out there I had about a thirty or forty dollar a day habit...the shit was cut down so...I don't think there was enough heroin to get you off, really, but it was enough to get you hooked. It was enough to make it very uncomfortable when you stopped.

L: How did you happen to end that?

T: I knew I wanted off it, and I knew that I wanted help, and I went to the clinic at school and they said that they didn't have any facilities to help me. So they wanted me to go to a therapist and I said that I couldn't use a therapist now. I wanted to get off the stuff. They committed me to the state hospital...and I went cold turkey.
To get to where I just really didn't want it there after you were able to be with people? they treat you. They keep you sedated to and then I was shaky for about two weeks. I was really bad sick for two or three days, trying to keep everybody from killing each other. And then I was in a hospital for awhile, and when I came back, she was with another man. And then I cut my wrists, and then I was back in a private hospital for awhile. 

I: How long did that take? 
T: I was sick, getting off it? I think I was really sick for two or three days, and then I was shaky for about two weeks. To get to where I just really didn't want it anymore took about a month. 

L: And you stayed there all that time? 
T: I was committed, I couldn't get out. I stayed there for six months. 

I: What happened during your experience there after you were able to be with people? 
T: You're not ever 'with' anybody in a state hospital... they're all really sick there, just like a bunch of animals, and that's the way they treat you. They keep you sedated to the point where you can't even see or talk or walk or anything. The nurses are just trying to keep everybody from killing each other. 

L: After this happened you couldn't go back to college? 
T: I did go back. I went back to Joanne, and when I came back it was with another woman. And then I cut my wrists, and then I was back in a private hospital for awhile, and evidently Mr. Rockefeller (her scholar­ship) paid for that too. I guess that's what I did out. And then I left. Don't ask me why—it was not the fact that she was with another woman when I came back, because I think I could have lived without her. It was the fact that I had stopped wanting to live, I was tired of the hassle. I felt that all my life was one hassle, it never ended, it just kept getting worse. And as soon as I came back they were offering me fixes, and dope, and I felt, 'My god, I just went through this shit, and here they are, trying to give it to me,' and I just didn't think I could resist it, and I didn't want to be alive. 

L: Then you left college—
T: I had to. It was my survival. (laughs) If I'd stayed there I would have been dead one way or the other—either physically or emotionally. I don't know which is worse. 

L: The drug thing didn't persist after you left? 
T: I haven't done smack at all. I didn't touch it, but I still smoke. I feel that is tame compared to what I've been through. Mostly now I drink and a little hash and a little grass... 

L: Do you have friends now who are men? 
T: I have one friend who's a man. He's gay. I don't like his—what do you call it?—his mate. 

L: Does the fact that they're gay make it better? 
T: Yeah. It doesn't alter the fact that they're men, and I don't like that. But I do like John because he's a very sensitive person. He seems not to be such a pig. And I can talk to him a little bit. But he needs me too much so I have to stay away from him, because he drains me... Emotionally he just wants so much. He wants to talk about what happened, and that's just about all the strength, they have everything. And I'll be damned, after that last episode I had with that guy, punching on me, I'm just not going to get into any situation where I'll be battling with a man physically. 

L: What happened? 
T: Well, this friend of mine, this woman— 

And it was a matter... But as far as I'm concerned, I don't have any. I don't like men. 

L: Have you ever been in any kind of feminist group? 
T: No. 

L: People use different words -- 'lesbian,' 'dyke,' 'gay.' Do those have different meanings for you? 
T: Yeah. 'Gay' to me is not me. It's not lesbian, it's the most stupid word to me. I use it because I'm used to it. And 'dyke' means butch. It's like real tough. I don't think that's my lesson. If you wonder why I'm an isolate­nist, here's one example, that experience. 

L: I had to. It was a matter of survival. I used to have a patient. And I was able to use it to me. And 'dyke' means butch. It's like real tough. I don't think that's my lesson. "Lesbian" is just the word that it is, that's all. 

L: How committed do you feel to participating in any kind of action in the women's movement? 
T: Very committed. I feel that I need to learn a lot more now. I feel like I'm very ignorant and I wish there were available a book list, to educate yourself, really seriously. Things that you need to learn. Because it's really a battle. We have to learn to fight with our minds. We have to learn more about ourselves so we can fight this. Because we certainly can't fight men physically. Mostly now I drink and a little hash and a little grass... 

L: Do you have friends now who are men? 
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L: Does the fact that they're gay make it better? 
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L: What happened? 
T: Well, this friend of mine, this woman-- 

I was just talking to her and he—he--as I said, everyone knows I'm a lesbian—and he accused me of trying to seduce his wife! There was nothing like that involved, I just like to talk to her. We weren't attracted to each other in that way. I was not. She is straight. She's been doing it in one night, drunk, with any other man friends, I don't have any. I don't like men. 

L: Have you ever been in any kind of feminist group? 
T: No. 

L: People use different words -- 'lesbian,' 'dyke,' 'gay.' Do those have different meanings for you? 
T: Yeah. 'Gay' to me is not me. It's not lesbian, it's the most stupid word to me. I use it because I'm used to it. And 'dyke' means butch. It's like real tough. I don't think that's my lesson. If you wonder why I'm an isolate­nist, here's one example, that experience. 

L: Was there a special problem involved in your relationship with Joanne because she was black? 
T: Yeah. I think she really was pushing it, really heavy laying on it, because also at that time there was this whole separatist movement with the black dawn, and Martin...
Luther King, and it was a big thing. You weren't allowed in the black dorm, and they didn't associate with white people. Except I was from a black neighborhood and I was on a scholarship with all black people except four Indians, and I didn't know anything about these rich white people. The people I could relate to were the black people, but they weren't relating to me at all because I was white. I really feel she loved me, you know. I really cared for her but I couldn't put the world 'love' to it. But she was torn between that and this black thing.

L: Would you consider having a relationship with a black woman now?
T: Certainly. If I loved her, or if I cared about her, why not? (laughs) It's no difference to me. People who make the difference, it's in their own heads.

L: Would you consider relating to a woman who's in a very different age group?
T: Yep.

L: How about to a woman who's not a feminist?
T: That would be hard. I spoke to a woman in the library the other day—I took out Djuna Barnes' book and I had just put back Phyllis Chesler's book—she asked me how it was and I said: 'Oh, it's beautiful. It really has some things to say. You should read it if you're curious to find out something about the woman's movement.' She said: 'Oh, I don't want to know about that.' And it turns me off! If you don't even want to learn anything about it, that's a pitiful shape to be in.

L: How would you like your life to be changed five years from now? What would you like to be doing?
T: I don't know. I hope to be happy. I hope to be with someone I love by then. I'll be thirty years old. I hope some changes will be made. I hope to be further along with my music and I hope to be in a different place. And I hope to have learned a lot. Maybe you will think about publishing a good book list to educate women.

September 4, 1973

Dear Laurel and Gina,

Received your letter today. I'm glad you wrote as I was concerned about whether you would make it back safely. It already seems like years since we talked. I liked you both very much and, even though you were here such a short time, I missed you when you left. There was a lot I would have liked to talk about with you.

I went into NYC to the Women's Center on West 20th St. to hear Lavender Jane. Lavender Jane is (are?) two women who sing, play music together and generally celebrate being women and lesbians. It was very crowded but it seemed much more real to me than the last trip. Maybe my head was a little more together too. Everything seems super intense to me, possibly because of my relative isolation. I've gotten so used to being alone that it's almost hard for me to be with anyone. Somehow I have acquired the reputation of being aloof when the truth is I'm usually just afraid to make the first move because I'm afraid of being rejected. I realize this is the way most women have been trained to be and the only way I can ever overcome it is by realizing who did this to me and why and then, directing my anger toward removing the source of my oppression. When I can allow myself to really let go and be as angry as I want and need to be—it burns the poison from my mind and I am that much closer to being a free human being. I think that's probably exactly why women have been trained from infancy on to always be patient and never lose their temper (even when they do it is almost always an anger that is turned inward and destructive to themselves or to other women). Men have always belittled us and our attempts to express anger as craziness or outbursts of childishness. Men would never want us to learn how powerful and healthy real anger can be, or how strong it can make us.

I recently started taking Karate lessons. I am determined never to be physically hurt again. I don't think I would ever hurt another woman but I would certainly do my best to lay some terrible hurt on any man who ever tries anything with me or anyone I care for again. The only way they can get rid of me is to shoot me (I'd better not say that too loud). I'd better end this book soon. I'm really looking forward to the next A.Q. and maybe I'll even get up enough nerve soon to send you some of my work.

Love,
Terry
We gave many answers.

...Amazon Quarterly because it needed to be... We could imagine, publishing from a lesbian feminist perspective—even The Ladder was done. There was no magazine of the quality that bordered on hysteria. After two months of folding.

We had no money—so Laurel sent a total of fourteen letters about our planned magazine to Ladder subscribers. By the time we printed announcements of Amazon Quarterly to former Ladder readers. At times we've felt our identities totally submerged in A.Q.—an unresolved problem, since we do use almost all our time working on the magazine, and who we feel ourselves to be depends largely on what we do. In order to keep working without feeling that by keeping on we are becoming less than we could be, we've had to broaden our definitions of Amazon Quarterly.

Before the first issue was printed, someone pointed out that the cover of the magazine was the worst thing that I simply want my reality to correspond with my highest dreams. I was looking for synergy—though I didn't know the word then—and Amazon Quarterly, as we imagined her, had more possibilities for synergy than any structure I had seen.

Because we were looking for something that has become reality, an explanation of HOW A.Q. began:

We had no money—so Laurel sent a total of fourteen letters about our planned magazine to lesbians and feminists who were working out of a sensibility similar to our own definitions and patterns are, and what our emphasis was on the act of exploration, that we are based in change.

Our experience was that “We simply want the best of communication from lesbians and especially Laurel in ways that made us all stronger, etc., I simply wanted my reality to correspond with my highest dreams, I was looking for synergy—though I didn’t know the word then—and Amazon Quarterly, as we imagined her, had more possibilities for synergy than any structure I had seen.

After a little deeper—in August 1972 we had just returned to Oakland after a two month pursuit of “art” in the “peaceful solitude” of “the country.” We brought back piles of manuscripts and drawings and a boredom that bordered on hysteria. After two months of speaking to no one but each other, we found that in the city we were really just as isolated—Where were the artists and writers who were working out of a sensibility similar to ours? In other words, where were the lesbian feminist writers and artists? Amazon Quarterly was in a way a fish-hook, as Laurel would put it. We knew that out there in the world there must be other women who, like us, were trying to create new ways of living based on their woman-identified perceptions. And we guessed that many of these women were as isolated as we were. We

would spread the tantalizing bait of Amazon Quarterly across the waters, and see who came to nibble.
I started doing things for myself and the men began to leave my life.

L: I had my first affair in college, a very intense affair. And I was highly mortified and insulted when somebody suggested a lesbian relationship was going on between this other woman and I. Of course it developed into that, but I was very indifferent when somebody suggested it was. I was very sensitive of it and very afraid of it.

G: When that's what was going on?
L: Yeah. We hadn't slept together but we were inseparable—and then we did sleep together and it became something else.

G: How did you feel when it first happened?
L: Well, I was wondering, should I make a move, should I hold her at all—and I finally said what the hell I'll just do it and she was in my arms in a minute and it was so thrilling and exciting, but then it turned into a power pounding just lying there. It was wonderful thing with her. She used that against me and I was quite heterosexual. At this point I tried to convince this lesbian friend of mine that she should go straight—to my great humiliation. She stuck it out.

G: Why did you finally get married?
L: I didn't think I had anywhere else to go. I was supporting myself by singing folk music, travelling around. I had done it for three years, coffee houses and stuff, and I couldn't see anything else. I assumed I would have to get married, it was just something that I would do. So I did it. Also, I had a very good relationship with this man. We had a very strong sexual tie. We had terrific sex together. He asked me to marry him the first time we went out, and I finally capitulated.

G: Do you think you'd consider a relationship with a man in the future?
L: No. Everything is possible, but I can't imagine having a relationship with a man. The less involved with men I am the happier I am. And that was not a political decision at first. That happened because I started doing things for myself and the men began to leave my life. I just didn't have time for them.

G: How long had you been married when you separated?
L: Oh I guess five years. We separated after that summer. I lived there for two months and I realized that there was another way to live, so we separated after that summer.

G: And now you're divorced?
L: I'm still in the process.

G: Has there been any problem about child custody?
L: No, because when we separated I told him he could see Lisa for as long as he wanted as much as he wanted. I was really loaded with responsibility for this kid and I would have been delighted if he had taken her more. But he was in very bad shape and he's just gotten himself together recently so that he sees her regularly now. My problem with him has been for him to take her more than he does, so he can't use that against me. She's now almost three. She knows her own mind and she's very independent, so the only worry I would have about her spending any length of time with him is that she would be out of Elaine's and my influence, out of our family situation, that of our whole lesbian lifestyle which I feel is an incredibly healthy way for her to grow up. I wouldn't want her to get fucked up by heterosexual atmosphere too much. But I think she's just at the age now where she can make her own judgements more or less. I trust her.

G: Do you want her to be a lesbian?
L: Well, I want her to be happy (laughter)—you know the old story, I can't imagine how she would be happy with a man, but then I
respect the gap between where my head is at and my parents' heads are at—so I have to stay away from that. In other words, whatever she decides—that's her life. Yes of course I want her to be a lesbian, but I would respect any decision she made about it.

G: Can we talk a little bit about your relationship with Elaine?

L: Yeah.

G: First of all, how long has that been going on?

L: A year and five months.

G: What are some of the ways that you feel this relationship is good?

L: I can't think of anything which isn't really good about this relationship. One of the main things that's really good about it is the difference between this relationship and the relationship with Fred or with any man. In a relationship with a man, the woman takes care of the man, and in this relationship I take care of myself and she takes care of herself. That's primary, and I can't imagine that to be the case in a heterosexual relationship. There are so many good things, so many wonderful things. Sleeping with her didn't get tiresome every time I get in bed because it's so nice, you know, to do that.

G: Have there been conflicts between you?

L: Yeah, there've been tense times, but we've learned each other's cycles pretty well, so that when she goes on one of her down trips, when I write in to her in certain ways, I remember when that's happened before, and it's a lot less serious. And the same thing with me, when I'm not relating to her, I let each other alone and we don't get very scared.

G: What are the main things those conflicts centered around?

L: Well Lisa has been a big adjustment. That's been a big source of conflict because Elaine and I both want the same thing and getting involved with a child. She didn't fall in love with Lisa, she fell in love with me. Living with a Two-year-old! That's a very demanding thing and it's been difficult. We're just beginning to work out definitions now. The demand on my time makes it very difficult. You know what I'm talking about?

G: What are the things you're working towards?

L: That's how I picture it. I feel that way about Lisa too. It will be a whole relationship to stay away from that. In other words, whatever she decides—that's her life. Yes of course I want her to be a lesbian, but I would respect any decision she made about it.

G: Can we talk a little bit about your relationship with Elaine?

L: Yeah.

G: Have you ever wanted to change that? Either one of you?

L: No, not in any real sense. But we've talked about it. We both understand that it's not realistic, and it's most likely not going to continue forever, and we both look forward to the day when we can be free enough so that we don't have a monogamous relationship as far as sexually and physically and so on. But it's very scary, and we're not ready to just cut it off and have this relationship is right away. My feeling is and Elaine's too, that this is the primary relationship no matter who else. She's the one I want to spend the rest of my life with. She's not the only one I want to be involved with, but I want to stay with her. We have a certain history and investment with each other and nobody can interfere with that.

G: What important would you say sex is in your relationship? How does it relate to other parts of your lives?

L: I see it as a kind of spectrum, with a sexual one and a usual one. Now the living situation is just as usual and sexual. It's hard to talk about that. I'd really miss sex if it wasn't there, but everything else is so good, having us together, the good relationship in so many other ways, that it takes its place.

G: Has there been any point in the relationship where you've had problems around sex?

L: Now the living situation is just as usual and sexual. It's hard to talk about that. I'd really miss sex if it wasn't there, but everything else is so good, having us together, the good relationship in so many other ways, that it takes its place.

G: What would you like to change about your relationship?

L: . . . I am really very involved in my work. I'm involved in my music, in singing, and I would like very much to transmit what I feel to women. I think to me are an incredible untapped power source—I know that all women have this quality in their voices, a certain energy.

G: It's not in men's voices?

L: I don't know, I think it's peculiar to women. That's my feeling. Men may be able to develop that, but I don't think that's the case. I think it's quite satisfactory. Although I'd like to play music with women more. G: Has the way you feel about yourself changed since you started identifying yourself as a lesbian?

L: Oh, it's an unbelievable improvement. I feel like I'm becoming myself. So I like being used to be such self-hated for me. My feelings around women were so heavy that when I did come out it was completely and I just left all those repressions behind. I no longer think of it as something worse in a way, than being a lesbian—that was my ultimate self-hate—so everything I did seem okay.

G: Does your family know you're a lesbian?

L: Yes.

G: Do you ever have fantasies connected with sex?

L: No, I quit having fantasies the first night we slept together. That was when I stopped having sexual fantasies, and I used to have them a lot before then.

G: What are the things you most like about yourself?

L: I like my persistence. I feel that I'm willing to face conflicts and not avoid difficult situations. I like that I'm developing a directness in dealing with problems.

G: What would you like to change about yourself?

L: . . . I am really very involved in my work. I'm involved in my music, in singing, and I would like very much to transmit what I feel to women. I think to me are an incredible untapped power source— I know that all women have this quality in their voices, a certain energy. I like that I'm developing a directness in dealing with problems.

G: What would you like to change about yourself?

L: . . .
A: Are there people you know who don't know you're a lesbian?
L: Not if I can help it. I've lost some people who thought would be friends, but that's all right. I've made a lot of new ones too.

G: How many of your friends now are lesbians?
L: I'd say 90%.

G: How many of them would you say are working class, or middle class or upper class?
L: I'd say most are middle class.

G: Are class distinctions at all important for you? Do you think about them?
L: No, I was a communist when I was seventeen, and I went through a whole political socialist marxist leninist trip then. I went to study groups and lecture groups—I did the whole thing—but it seems to me now to be a very male trip and a very divisive trip. I feel the only way it's going to work out for me and for women is with an independent women's community that doesn't go through men. That's where you're going to end up without classes, not by fighting the imperialist class or the ruling class. That's not where it's at for me, that to me is a red herring.

G: Very briefly can you say what you feel to be the relationship between lesbianism and feminism?
L: It's the logical end of it. Lesbianism is where feminism goes if it stays on the track, I think.

G: If you had three wishes what would you wish for?
L: I would wish for a communications network among women, where I could get my music distributed, records, publications, everything, get to each women's community without going through men. I wish for a big parcel of land with different women with skills who could be independent and self-sufficient. What's my third wish? My third wish is to be in a singing group with Ethel Rae and Joe Mae. I can't imagine what else I'd want after that.

Louise Fishman's angry paintings which here begin and will conclude this article are the current crest of work by an artist whose art and personal exploration are coordinated in an almost perfect rhythm. I first met Louise about three years ago when I visited her studio in New York. Her work at that time was in a transitional state and it was difficult to determine where she had been artistically or where she was going. And yet, the visit was revolutionary! I left her studio with a sense of defeat, purge, anger, fatigue, relief and exhilaration. Louise had an unusual and uncanny ability to strike home, to open my words like two halves of a clam shell and expose the center portion of what I meant within what I had said. I have talked with Louise on many occasions since and watched her work develop at the same time. I have come to realize that her art in unity with her conversation affords that same sudden opening of the clam shell. Social politesse has simply been cast aside. That which remains is raw and crude because of its honesty but if we will embrace this we are welcome to the fruits of self dis-
After our first meeting, I did not see Louise for several months; when I did visit her again, I was amazed by the change in her art. Tacked and hung about the studio were several small wall-hanging sculptures made of canvas strips which related directly and consciously to organs. Intimate and tactile, I felt encouraged to respond to them by actual touch. Loose threads frayed wildly at the edges like unshaven hair, unraveled and uncensored. Layers of material overlapped one another echoing at once memories of the vulva and a shifting mesh of overlapped one another. The idea of using three-dimensional ideas, the idea of being in touch with oneself. If one's mirror was an open gate, the memory of physical self examination was done without the barrier of awe and refinement. Protected by barriers of awe and refinement, the approachability, the touchability of Fishman's new wall-hangings was readily apparent. Here was a literal translation of the idea of being in touch with oneself. If the mirror of physical self examination was too forbidding, Louise was offering a bridge. At least these works might be cupped in one's hands without fear of self or social reedness. And if one's mirror was an open gate, the memories and fantasies of being a woman (or loving a woman) might be enriched and enlightened by these sculptures just as the viewing of a landscape painting will add to the luxury of remembering some familiar town or place. Louise explained: "The reason I started to change my work was because I wanted to examine what part of it really had to do with being a woman and what part was just something I had accepted. When I started thinking of the idea of using three-dimensional ideas, the immediate thing I thought of was women's genitalia. I was trying to consciously change the audience for my art so that women, not just artists, would be able to respond to it." Moreover, the fact that Louise's "vulva" images were abstract and not exact genital representations demanded a sensitivity on the part of the viewer which precluded any sort of male pornographic reaction. To understand them, it was necessary to know what I meant to physically be a woman, by experience and not just by hearsay. And this was exactly what was so exciting about the wall-hanging pieces. The imagery had within it a uniqueness that pertained to the direct knowledge of womanhood that only women can have of themselves.

The evolution of Louise's art continued to press deeper through many more changes and many different media toward an expanded realization of her female self. She began to essentialize the processes of a woman's internal workings. By example, Fishman's small plaster relief sculpture is a convolution of fingersize curves which push and probe and beg to be interpreted as vaginal, menstrual, or birth canals. The relief is a labyrinth of hollow receiving funnels, channels of germination, and so is Djuna and so is Judy and so is every other woman who looks at these works and is willing to expose the conflicts within her. Each step of Louise Fishman's development has been to confront herself artistically and to confront the confrontations she feels as a woman. The wall-hangings and plaster relief encourage that we touch ourselves and look anew at our physical being as women, at those things which make us biologically female. The angry paintings speak out to our joint emotions as women, to our frustrations and also to our self-challenges. Each time I have visited Louise's studio, I have felt a new sense of revelation. And I wait excitedly to see what else she will paint, her art will open just as I await and again the opening of myself and the wonderful opening of the women around me. The angry paintings are conceived as a means of confrontation between the artist and herself and we are asked to respond to these paintings by joining in and confronting our own anger. Each letter which is written on these paintings are not calmly and indifferently printed there. The letters not only spell anger they are anger and like the graffiti on the toilet room wall, they are written out of anger. It is impossible to sidestep it or transform the word into a more acceptable or expedient feeling. Louise really is angry and so is Jane.
RESOURCES

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS

Listed in this section are women's centers, projects, organizations, services and individual contacts, in alphabetical order by country and state or province. Most colleges and universities now have women's centers or women's studies programs; for that reason we have not listed many individually.

CANADA

ALBERTA:
--Women's Center
11812 95th St., Edmonton

BRITISH COLUMBIA:
--Women's Center
804 Richards St., Vancouver
--Women's Resource Center
Box 521, Nelson
--Women's Center
2961 272nd St., Aldergrove

VICTORIA:
1029 Douglas St., #414

NEW BRUNSWICK:

NEWFOUNDLAND:
--Women's Place
204 Water St., St. John's

ONTARIO:
--Women's Center
306 Berkimer St., Hamilton
--Women's Resource Center
283 Dufferin, London
--Women's Center
136 Lewis St. (rear)

QUEBEC:
--Centre de Femmes
3419 St. Denis, Montreal 131
--Centre d'information & de reference pour femmes
3595 St. Urbain, Montreal 131
--Women's Center
3764 St. Laurent, Montreal

SASKATCHEWAN:
--Women's Center
1 Anqus, Regina
--Women's Center
147 2nd Ave. S., Saskatoon

ONTARIO:
--Women's Liberation
--Women's Center
366 Water St. (rear)
--Women's Place
31 Dupont St., Toronto
--Women's Collective
300 EBB St., Waterloo
--The Women's Place
968 University Ave. W. Windsor

NORTH WEST TERRITORIES:
--/c/o Nellie Counoyea

NOVA SCOTIA:
--Women's Bureau
Box 3596, Halifax
--Women's Center
1813 Quinpool Rd., Halifax
--Women's Place
3764 St. Laurent, Montreal

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND:
--Women's Center
1029 Douglas St., #414

NEW BRUNSWICK:
--/c/o Linda Gow, W.W.C.A.
27 Wellington St., St. John

NEWFOUNDLAND:
--Women's Place
204 Water St., St. John's

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA:
--(for Info.) Freddie Creed
1517 S. 17th St.
Birmingham 35205

ARIZONA:
--Tempe Women's Center
Lutheran Peace Center
829 N. 5th Ave.
Tempe
--Women's Collective
829 N. 5th Ave.
Tucson 85705
--Women's Collective
2661 S. Pasadena Ave., Goleta, 93017

CALIFORNIA:
--Bay Area Women Against Rape
405-451-0370, 24 hrs.
--Berkeley Women's Refuge
2134 Allston (upstairs), Berkeley 94704
--Berkeley Women's Refugee Center
2134 Allston (downstairs), Berkeley 94704
--Berkeley Women's Center
24 hr. emergency shelter with two meals a day, counseling and referrals
--Berkeley Women's Center
Berkeley 94704 415-548-4343
Open 1 to 7 p.m., Mon., Thurs., Switchboard, information, counseling, referrals
--Bananans: organizers of play groups in the Bay Area, in Berkeley Women's Center
--Berkeley Feminist Counseling Collective
--/c/o Berkeley Women's Center

COLORADO:
--/c/o Nellie Coumoyea

CONNECTICUT:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

FLORIDA:
--Women's Center
204 Water St., St. John's

GEORGIA:
--Women's Place
Box 1300, Garden Grove 92642
--Isla Vista Women's Center
5604 Parrall Rd., Suite 80
Goleta, 93107
--Chicana Center
2661 S. Pasanada Ave., Lincoln Heights, Los Angeles 90031

HAWAII:

IOWA:

LOUISIANA:

MASSACHUSETTS:

MARYLAND:

MASSACHUSETTS:

MINNESOTA:

MISSOURI:

NEVADA:

NEW JERSEY:

NEW MEXICO:

NEW YORK:

OHIO:

OKLAHOMA:

OREGON:

PENNSYLVANIA:

RHODE ISLAND:

SOUTH CAROLINA:

SOUTH DAKOTA:

TENNESSEE:

TEXAS:

UTAH:

VERMONT:

WASHINGTON:

WEST VIRGINIA:

WISCONSIN:

Wyoming:

LISTED IN THIS SECTION ARE WOMEN'S CENTERS, PROJECTS, ORGANIZATIONS, SERVICES AND INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY COUNTRY AND STATE OR PROVINCE. MOST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES NOW HAVE WOMEN'S CENTERS OR WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAMS; FOR THAT REASON WE HAVE NOT LISTED MANY INDIVIDUALLY.

Permission is hereby granted for any all women's group or publication to reprint this directory in part or in full on condition that the reprinting is not for profit and that the following information be included:

This list was compiled by the editors of Amazon Quarterly, 554 Valle Vista, Oakland, Ca., 94610. All entries were correct as of September 1, 1973. Additions and corrections are welcomed and will be included in next year's directory.

60
Open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily
Information on housing, legal & health, events, & women's groups in S.F.
Women's Center & emergencies housing, YWCA
1618 Mission, San Raphael
San Rafael 457-1736
Women's Center
429 Sycamore, Santa Ana
92708 714-836-1213
Women's Center
218 W. Venice Blvd., Venice
90291 213-823-4774
COLORADO:
Women's Center
1530 Euclid
Boulder, 80302
Gay Women's Group
c/o 6504 Pardall Rd.,
West Side Women's Center
218 W. Venice Blvd., Venice
90291 213-823-4774
MISSISSIPPI:
Women's Counseling Service
3800 McGee, Kansas City 64111
Women's Counseling & Educational Projects, Anne de Bary, Mississippi Gay Alliance, Box 4470, Miss., State U. 39762
MISSOURI:
Women's Center
501 E. Rollins, Columbia 65201
Women's Liberation Union
3800 McGee, Kansas City 64111
NEW HAMPSHIRE:
Concord Women's Center
130 N. Main St.
Concord 30103
Women's Center
19 S. Main St., Hanover 03755
Women's Action Movement
130 N. Main St.
Concord 03301
Women's Center
19 S. Main St., Hanover 03755
Women's Action Movement
130 N. Main St.
Concord 03301
Women's Center
19 S. Main St., Hanover 03755
Women's Action Movement
130 N. Main St.
Concord 03301
NEW MEXICO: 
University of New Mexico 
1824 Las Lomas Rd. N.E. 
Albuquerque 87106 
505-277-3716 
Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. 
Library, referrals, legal 
clinic, free store. 
Rape Center: 277-3393 

NEW YORK: 
--Women's Studies College 
108 Win spe ar, Buffalo 14214 
--Women's Liberation Center 
of Nassau County 
14 W. Columbia St. 
Hempstead 11511 
212-255-9802 or 691-3396 
243 W. 20th St. 
Barnard College, New York 
--The Women's Center 
New York City 10011 
549 W. 52nd St. 
New York City 10027 
--Women's Inter-Arts Center 
New York City 10019 
212-246-6570 
549 W. 52nd St. 
New York City 10019 
212-246-6570 

NORTH CAROLINA: 
--Female Liberation 
Box 954, Chapel Hill 27514 
Newsletter, c-r groups, 
theatre. 
--Women's Health Clinic 
2800 Avent Ferry, #303 
Raleigh 27606 919-851-5655 
2156 Hagwood Ave. 
Charleston 29405 
373 N. Western Ave., Rm. 202 
Los Angeles, CA 90034 
$7/year (bi-monthly) 

PENNSYLVANIA: 
--Women's Center 
4634 Chester Ave. 
Philadelphia 19104 
215-729-2001 
Abortion Counseling: 483-4632 
--Swarthmore Gay Liberation 
c/o Christina Crosby 
Swarthmore College 
Swarthmore 19081 
--Women in Transition 
Milwaukee 414-562-2505 

RHODE ISLAND: 
--Kingston Women's Liberation 
Memorial Union, U. of R.I. 
Kingston 02881 
--Women's Liberation Union 
of Rhode Island 
Box 2302, East Side Sta. 
Providence 02906 

SOUTH CAROLINA: 
--Women's Center 

TENNESSEE: 
--Knoxville Lesbian Collective 
2911 Jersey Ave. 
Knoxville 37919 

TEXAS: 
--Women's Liberation 
1106 W. 22nd St. , Austin 
78705 
--Daughters of Billits 
Box 5944, Dallas 75222 
--Women for Change Center 
2011 Bryan Tower, Suite 290 
Dallas 75201 214-741-2391 

VERMONT: 
--Women's Center 
217 N. Winooski 
Burlington 05404 
--Vermont Women's Health 
Center 
Rte. 2 , 7, Colchester 05446 
Mail: Box 29, Burlington 
--Goddard Women's Center 
Goddard College, King 
Base ment, Plainfield 
05667 

WASHINGTON: 
--Earth Station Seven 
402 15th Ave., Seattle 
98104 206-329-8300 
Abortion Counseling: 483-4632 
--Swathmore Gay Liberation 
c/o Christina Crosby 
Swarthmore College 
Swarthmore 19081 
--Women in Transition 
Milwaukee 414-562-2505 

WISCONSIN: 
--Women's Coalition 
2802 Arizona Ave. 
Madison 53705 
373 N. Western Ave., Rm. 202 
Los Angeles, CA 90034 
$7.50/year (monthly) 

PUBLICATIONS 
Listed here are all the femi­nist periodicals we know of being published as of 9/7/73. For our recommendations see page 72. 

COUNTRY WOMEN 
Box 51 
Albion, CA 95410 
$7/year 

DYKES AND GORGONS 
Box 840 

BERKELEY, CA 94704 
50¢ 

LIBERA 
Eshelman Hall 
University of California 
Berkeley, CA 94704 
$1 

UNION W.A.G.E. 
Union Women's Alliance 
to Gain Equality 

2137 Oregon St. 
Berkeley, CA 94705 
25¢ $2/year $5/inst. 

THE LESBIAN TIDE 
Tide Collective 
373 N. Western Ave., Rm. 202 
Los Angeles, CA 90034 
$7.50/year (monthly) 

WOMANSPACE JOURNAL 
Newspaper: women's art from 
San Francisco D.O.B. 
20009 202-333-RAPE 

AMAZON QUARTERLY 
554 Valle Vista 
Oakland, CA 94610 
4/year $6/inst. 
$5/plain wrapper or out of U.S.

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT 
News paper 
Box 3092 
San Diego, CA 92103 

MOTHER LODE 
Newspaper 
Box 40213 
San Francisco, CA 94140 

SAPPHIRE 
Lesbian magazine 
310 Irving St., San Francisco 
94112 (bi-monthly) 

SISTERS 
from S.F. D.O.B. 
1005 Market St., Suite 402 
San Francisco, CA 94103 
$5/year (monthly) 

MARIN WOMEN'S 
NEWS JOURNAL 
Box 1412 
San Rafael, CA 94902 
$4/year (monthly) 

WOMEN AND FILM 
2802 Arizona Ave. 
Santa Monica, CA 90404 
$3/year (3 issues) $5.50/inst. 

SISTER 
c/o Westside Women's Center 
218 S. Venice Blvd. 
Venice, CA 90291 
$3/year (monthly) 

MOMMA 
Newspaper/magazine for 
single mothers 
Box 567 
Venice, CA 90291 
$5/year $7/inst. (monthly) 

LIBERATED SPACE 
for Women of the Haight 
c/o Haight Switchboard 
1797 Haight 
San Francisco, CA 94117 
publication free
WOMEN'S VOICE of Greater Hartford
Women's Liberation Center
11 Amity St.
Hartford, CT 06106
US
Florida feminist's monthly
4213 W. Bay Ave.
Tampa, FL 33616
$7/year
CRES FROM CASSANDRA (formerly Amazon Nation Newsletter)
c/o Amazon Nation
2916 N. Burling
River Forest, IL 60305
$5/year
BLACK MARIA
Box 230
River Forest, IL 60305
$3.50/year (quarterly)
LAVENDER WOMAN
Lesbian Newspaper
Box 60206
1723 W. Devon
Chicago, IL 60660
$3/year $6/inst.
THE SPOKESWOMAN
Monthly newsletter
5464 S. Shore Dr.
Chicago, IL 60615
$7/year $12/inst.
WOMANKIND
Chicago Women's Liberation Union
852 W. Belmont
Chicago, IL 60657
$4/year $12/inst. (monthly)
AIN'T I A WOMAN? Newspaper published by a lesbian collective
Box 1165
Iowa City, IA 52240
$5/year $20/inst.
DISTAFF
New Orleans monthly feminist forum
Box 15639
New Orleans, LA 70115
$3/year
UVA URSI
funky lesbian journal
RFD, Robbinston, ME 04671
$5/year (6 issues)
A COLD DAY IN AUGUST
Monthly newsletter
Baltimore Women's Center
101 E. 25th St., Apt.B-2
Baltimore, MD 21218
396
WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION
3028 Greenmount Ave.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
$4/year $5/Canada
$10/inst. (quarterly)
FOCUS
Journal from Boston D.O.B.
Rm. 415, 419 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116
$5/year (monthly)
THE SECOND WAVE
Box 303, Kenmore Sq. Sta.
Boston, MA 02215
$3/year (monthly)
NO MORE FUN AND GAMES
Cell 16
2 Brewer St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
$1.50/issue
HER-SELF
Community Women's Paper
225 E. Liberty, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
$4/year (monthly)
SO'S YOUR OLD LADY
710 W., 22nd St.
Minneapolis, MN 55405
$4.50/year (bi-monthly)
SANTA FE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY MAGAZINE
S20 Jose St., #5
Santa Fe, NM 87501
FEMINIST ART JOURNAL
41 Montgomery Pl.
Brooklyn, NY 11215
$4/year $5/inst. (quarterly)
APHRA
Box 273, Village Sta.
New York, NY 10014
$4.50/year $5/Canada
COWRIE
Community of Women
359 E. 68th St.
New York, NY 10021
FEMINIST STUDIES
47 Riverside Dr.
New York, NY 10025
MAJORITY REPORT
Feminist newspaper
74 Grove St.
New York, NY 10014
$3/month (monthly)
NOTES
Box AA
New York, NY 10011
$1.50/issue (yearly)
SOJOURNER
Women's Interart Center
549 W. 52nd St.
New York, NY
TRIPLE JEEPDRY
Newspaper
346 W. 20th St.
New York, NY 10011
WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER
The Feminist Press
Box 334
Old Westbury, NY 11568
$5/year (monthly)
FEMINIST STUDIES ABSTRACTS
Box 1
Rush, NY 14543
$7.50/year $6/student
$10/inst. (quarterly)
FEMINIST NEWSLETTER
Box 954
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
$4/year (bi-weekly)
THE CLEVELAND FEMINIST
10206 Clifton
Cleveland, OH 44102
$5/year $10/student
$25/year $50/school
MS.
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$3/year $5/Canada & Mex.
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Women's Penitentiary Paper
2041 Drill St., #5
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Toronto, Ont.
$3/year
THE OTHER WOMAN
Box 928, Station Q
Toronto 7, Ont.
$2/year $3/U.S. (bi-monthly)
WINDSOR WOMAN
76 University Ave., W.
Rm. 603
Windsor, Ont.
FEMINIST COMMUNICATION COLLECTIVE
Box 455
Montreal 215, P.Q.
LONG TIME COMING
Lesbian Newspaper
Box 161, Station E
Montreal 151, P.Q.
$3/year (monthly)
QUEBECOISES DEBOUTTE
Windsor Woman
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Madison, WI 53715
$2/year
THE PEDESTAL
c/o 2803 Wall St.
Chicago, IL 60614
$2/year
THE PEDESTAL
Women's Interart Center
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New York, NY
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Box 597, Station A
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Box 515
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Box 515
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Piccadilly, London
SW1Y 4HE
SAPPHO
BCM/Petrel
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76 University Ave., W.
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Montreal 215, P.Q.
MUSIC:
--EYES (Post Women's Liberation Rock Band)
Box 11056, Oakland, CA 94611
415-652-0593
--NEW HAVEN WOMEN'S LIBERATION ROCK BAND
c/o Jennifer Abod, Genny Blake dell, 1504 Boulevard, New Haven, CT 06511
203-389-1971
--FERTILE WOMAN (Lesbian Feminist Band)
919 N. Westport, Chicago, IL 60657
312-462-5700
--CHICAGO WOMEN'S LIBERATION ROCK BAND
c/o Chicago Women's Liberation Union, 852 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657
--WOMEN'S NIGHTSHADE (Rock Band) Apple Valley Rd., Box 90475, Milwaukee, WI 53202 (write to add or receive information)

THEATRE:
--WOMANSONG THEATRE
--LESBIAN FEMINIST THEATER
c/o Jody Lynch, 4815 N. Wolcott, Chicago, IL 60640
--EARTH ORION WOMEN'S THEATRE, 1932 Park Rd., NW Washington, D.C. 20004

PRESSES
WOLLSTONECRAFT PRESS
6399 Wilsphere Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048
213-653-1745

WOMEN'S PRESS COLLECTIVE
5251 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94610

Eating Artichokes by Willyce Kim, $1.
Edward the Duke, by Judy Grahn, $1.25
Child of Myself, by Pat Parker
Pat Parker.
Poster: Child of Myself, by Wendy Cadden, $1.
The Common Woman, by Jenny Glass, $1.50
The Elephant Poem Coloring Book, 85¢.
Woman to Woman, Poetry Anthology, $1.50
BLACK WIDOW PUBLICATIONS
Box 3562, Berkeley, CA 94703

THE FEMINIST PRESS
Editorial office: Box 334, Old Westbury, NY 11568
Distribution office: 10920 Battersea Ln., Columbia, MD 21044

Catalog Available
LOLLIPOP POWER
Box 1171, Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919-929-5057

IMPORTANT RESOURCES
--Gay Liberation Book Service
Box 40397, San Francisco, CA 94140. Free Catalog.

--Women's Yellow Pages, Boston Women's Collective, 651 Concord Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138

07882: feminist and lesbian material (as well as other subjects)—write for catalog.

HELP: A Resource Booklet for Women
2nd edition Sep. 1973; $1, from Women's Center, Barnard College, New York, NY 10027—info on continuing education & vocational guidance, family planning, daycare, women's groups, legal services, feminist reading.

--Feminist Book Mart
162-11 9th Ave., Whitestone, NY 11357 Free Catalog.

--National Directory of Publishers
From National Association of College Stores, Oberlin, OH 44074, 25¢

--Women's Survival Manual
A feminist handbook on separation and divorce from Women in Transition, 4634 Chester Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143

--Know, Inc., Box 86031, Pittsburgh, PA 15221; They publish yearly directories of women's centers, feminist studies programs, etc.—write for complete information.

--First Things First, (fe-mail order house)
c/o Sue Sjojger, 337 7th St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003 202-546-4951

Stones, by Daisy Aldan, $3.
A Peaceful Intent, by Rochelle Holt, $2.50

VIOLET PRESS
Box 398, New York, NY 10009

Looking at Women, by Fran Winant, $1.
We Are All Lesbians, Poetry Anthology, $2.

ROCK BARS

These are lesbian bars recommended by women we met. Please check with women's centers in your area to find out about alternatives to the bars (dances, open houses, etc.).

--Maud's, 537 Cole St., San Francisco, CA
--Scott's Pit, 10 Sanchez, San Francisco, CA
--Kelly's Saloon, 3480 29th St., San Francisco, CA
--The Cafe Lib, 132 New Park Ave., Hartford, CT
--The Village Grille, 341 Main & Allen St, Buffalo, NY
--The Porthole, 4213 20th, Miami, FL
--The Beer Garden, 3743 W. Fullerton, Chicago, IL
--Phase One, 2000 St, Evanston, IL
--Sophie's Parlor, (at the Women's Center), 1736 R St. NW, Washington, D.C.
--The Bears' Choice, 422 W. 17th St. NW, Washington, D.C.
--The Bear Garden, 3743 W. Ullet, Milwaukee, WI

T H E W O M E N S P R E S S C O L L E C T I V E
212-473-9304

RAGNAROK PRESS
311 Memphis St., Holly Springs, MS 38635
A Ballet of Oscillations, by Rochelle Holt, $2.50
Children of the Moon, Poetry Anthology, $3.

STAMPED FROM WOMEN'S PRESS COLLECTIVE
142 W. 25th St., New York, NY 10010

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AMAZON QUARTERLY RECOMMENDS:

JOURNALS
APHRA—One of the oldest and best of the arts journals. My opinion dropped last issue, however, after they printed a chapter from Marge Piercy’s new book, Small Changes. Quite often prints plays which I find erudite and boring.

COUNTRY WOMEN—Often has excellent practical advice for women living independently in the country as well as art and poetry.

FEMINIST ARTS JOURNAL—Chock-full of women’s art and articles on women’s art history. Often, though, it has featured only the slick NY art scene.

NOTES—These once-a-year collections are always inspiring and make good texts for women’s studies, CR groups, etc.

THE SECOND WAVE—The best general women’s journal. Some major women’s movement articles have appeared here first.

WOMEN AND FILM—Impressive, huge issues devoted to women’s films and women in film history.

WOMEN’S STUDIES ABSTRACTS—A way to find out the kinds of articles being written about and by women (books and these too!). Indexed by subject. Too few small women’s magazines are indexed—but let’s try to get them to change this.

NEWSPAPERS

MAJORITY REPORT—Focus on NYC, but a good source of national news too.

OFF OUR BACKS—The best national newspaper in that it carries a good balance of newsy news, reflection, and women’s culture.

WICCE—A new lesbian-feminist newspaper coming out of Philadelphia. We can recommend this strongly on the basis of the fine women who are putting it together. Several good interviews in the October issue—one with AQ’s editors.

(We can not at this time recommend that you spend your money on any of the other lesbian magazines or newspapers.)

WOMEN’S PRESS—My vote for the best West Coast paper. It focuses on Oregon, but has some other news. Little on lesbians though.

Please send us your writing and art work. We are especially in need of good fiction and visual art. Photographs are acceptable as well as photographs of larger works. We guarantee return only when your work is accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please allow three months for return as we are a quarterly. Also we’re planning a large section for letters in our next issue. Let us know what you think about this special issue...future ones, etc.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING

PLEASE TRY TO THINK OF SOMEONE SPECIAL WHO YOU WOULD LIKE TO REMEMBER. WHY NOT GIVE HER A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION TO A.Q.? WE WILL INCLUDE A CARD WITH YOUR NAME IN HER FIRST ISSUE. ORDER NOW AS THE MAILS ARE SLOW AT HOLIDAY TIME.
There is no mockery between women.

One lies down at peace as on one's own breast.
AMAZON QUARTERLY

Volume 1, Fall

Editors: Gina and Laurel

Title page quote from House of Incest by Anais Nin.

We'd like to give special thanks to Subie Baker, Kit Bakke (typesetter), Gene Damon and The Ladder staff, Robin Morgan, Students of Berkeley, Inc., Bev Von Dohre, and all those with enough trust in us to subscribe sight unseen, for making this first issue of Amazon Quarterly a reality.

1 year subscription within the U.S. $4.00
Plain Brown Wrapper and out of U.S. 5.00
All subscriptions will start with Issue I unless otherwise requested.


Manuscripts and subscriptions:
Amazon Quarterly
554 Valle Vista
Oakland, Ca. 94610

All rights reserved to individual authors. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written consent of author or artist.
We want to explore through the pages of Amazon Quarterly just what might be the female sensibility in the arts. Freed from male identification, lesbians are obviously in a very good position to be the ones to cross the frontier Doris Lessing has told us the "free woman" stands at.

Though we define this as a lesbian-feminist magazine we aren't interested solely in stories that tell of lesbian love, the problems of being a lesbian, or the joys. Most of us who read this magazine are quite familiar with all that on the personal front. This is also a place for lesbians to explore whatever else is on their minds: it may be a theme generically of interest to lesbians or something which might interest almost anyone. The important factor is that it be in some way a launching out from all that we as women have been before into something new and uncharted...a voyage into the depths of your mind or a new connection you've discovered between something in your anthropology class and a book you were reading in herstory. Even science is not verboten.

We are calling this an arts journal in the sense that art is communication. The standard we want to maintain is not arbitrary: we simply want the best of communication from lesbians who are consciously exploring new patterns in their lives. We hope you'll help us make it even more than we can imagine.

Send us your fiction, poetry, plays, essays, reviews, drawings, etc. and include a stamped self-addressed envelope if you want them back. (Since we are a quarterly you should allow at least three months for their return.) Amazon Quarterly will be only as good as you help to make it. Risk something, sisters. Set down that thought you had in words. Let that story out of your desk drawer. Release the poem you've been harboring. Help us make Amazon Quarterly an exciting adventure.

And another way to help Amazon Quarterly is to interest a friend in a subscription (or order one yourself if you bought this issue at a bookstore).

Subscriptions in the U.S. are four dollars per year. Outside the U.S. subs and plain brown wrapper subs are five dollars. The Ladder folded because of a money crisis; please, don't let herstory repeat itself.

As we go to press we are receiving more and more letters, letters from around the country, the ones that touch me most are from my Southern sisters. I endured my first Twenty-five years there. May you have the courage to change it.

Laurel
As I look back on my life I see that what I have desired and looked for more than anything else is good conversation. I have not had many. Only a handful, and those are indelible memories now.

In search of good conversation I emerged from the sludge of Southern small town ignorance and made my way to a university. I did not find it there. I stayed on for graduate school thinking surely this was another level of seriousness, a place where others would have the same hunger as I. I did not find it there.

Finally, I decided I must leave the South to find what I wanted. I came to Berkeley four years ago. I have found it occasionally, but still I am in contact at this moment with only a very few people who have any interest in conversation.

In the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries before the Romantic idealization of the inarticulate set (when in order to be “felt” something need necessarily be inexpressible), people used to have conversations. Yes, the rich, the leisure class—but what other art form is so accessible to the mass of humankind? It requires no material, no equipment—nothing besides two partakers (or more) and in this day and age the absence of television.

Sometimes it’s hard to envision just what people did before Marconi. They talked. And if the human race then was at least as intolerant to boredom as we are today we know that they must have taken some pains to make their talk interesting—at least as interesting as T.V. or they should have all gone mad blathering in the drawing room every night, each other’s sole entertainment.

I am sure good conversation is still possible despite McLuhan, despite television, and despite the general anti-egghead sensibility which all of us in America have been nurtured on. I operate on that hope. And it is largely that hope which was behind my starting this magazine.

What in the world has all this to do with lesbians or for that matter feminism? A lot. In all my endeavors to find conversation, until the last three years, I looked only to men—unconsciously of course—but most definitely I supposed them more interested in such things than women. A fatal assumption on my part because as I have come to define conversation it is all but impossible between a man and a woman—that is be-
Beka Lundberg came to Sarah Lawrence with a ready-made reputation. She was a poet; she’d already published poems in four magazines by the time she was eighteen. She was also a thief, though that might be putting it a little strongly. She just kept on getting caught (and laughing), while all the rest of us managed to shoplift with impunity. I asked one of the graduates of her Very Proper School for Young Ladies, if Beka had more than just anticipated her inevitable comparison with Genet. I suggested that on some dark and otherwise nameless night, little Beka, alone in the school chapel perhaps, had plotted her poems and plotted her thefts, eager to sacrifice social propriety for a leap ahead of other aspiring young writers. The graduate, disinterested in people’s motives, never answered my question, but told me instead that Beka had been too drunk to walk up the aisle during the school’s commencement exercises.

To me at first, Beka was no more than a tiny jab, a small irritant. No one compared me to Genet, possibly because I was careful never to be caught. I was a junior by the time she entered Sarah Lawrence with her reputation. My daily life had fallen into a routine: one day I spent studying, and that evening I’d drink from sundown til I passed out. The second day, I recovered from a blinding hangover, doing errands that weren’t too taxing. I would write on the third day in this series, closeting myself in my room with Diet-Rite Colas and packs of cigarettes. The next day, I started the sequence again. It was a pattern that suited me.

I only allowed myself one luxury. My comfort was my fantasy woman lover, Mary. When I’d entered Sarah Lawrence, two years earlier, bereft of any kind of reputation, I’d meant to leave Mary back at my parents’ house, curled up in my pillow, where she stayed when I wasn’t around. But two months later, I gave in, and she flew out to New York and joined me in my tiny room. My room now was a little bigger, and I shared a bathroom with one girl instead of sixteen. Mary didn’t care about my rise in status; all she wanted was to be with me, wherever I was. But my fantasy lover was no clinging violet. She had her own friends, and she painted brilliant hard-edge canvases in desert oranges and browns. Because she was imaginary, she was an ideal lover, there when I needed her, painting when I wanted to be alone. Childish games, I would say to myself in strong and repressive moments, but Mary would return, later that evening or the next day, and I would be comforted while I waited for her flesh and blood embodiment to step into my life.

The morning of one of my hungover days was when I first spied this clever operator, Beka Lundberg. I was at a table in the old Oak Cafeteria, sipping coffee to perk me up, and gulping milk to calm me down, while my stomach bulged out like a tormented boil. Beka, tall and slender, her short hair a dark, curly cap, strode to the coffee machine like a gladiator about to fight. A cigarette hung from her lower lip, and I could see her teeth
flash in the morning gloom. I watched as she flipped the lever for black coffee. She waited impatiently for the cup to fill, like she had someplace to go, or more important things to do. I averted my eyes when she looked around for a table, but I watched her again as she crossed the dining room to join a group of freshmen. She walked like a panther, her weight controlled and forward, her shoulders back. I watched her breasts move under her white tee-shirt.

My stomach brought me back to my own table, where I discovered I didn’t want to be. I pushed out of my chair and climbed back to the dorm, but her strong face climbed with me, a face as rough and as supple as her body. She excited me, her teeth, her impassive eyes, her black hair, and that hard face signalling caresses. I thought I would be scared to talk to her. I was closer the next time I saw her, and I concentrated on her hands, at once rough and red and clenched, and then suddenly splayed open, saying, forgive me, it’s just the way I see it, but really saying, fuck you, don’t ask me to see anything any other way than I want to see it. When she exposed that pale palm skin, she grinned, self-deprecating but giving up nothing. No one could argue with her; we were all stopped by her hands and her white grin. I watched her as she walked, a jungle beast purring in an African sun, and once again when she read a poem, changing into a rock cleaved open to the fire within. I was still too scared to talk to her.

For awhile, I tried not to think of her at all, especially when alone in my room, for I might offend Mary. I had no wish to make Mary jealous. She had stuck by me through trying times, junior and senior high school, and I considered her feelings enough to suppress my rebel thoughts and schemes. In her wrath, she might magically prevent me from finding my life-long lover, my Mary in the flesh. Many women at Sarah Lawrence waited for their Prince Charmings to ride up to the gate on a white charger and carry them away. I had no such illusions about my fantasy lover: Mary was my ideal, my yardstick, but I could not simply wait passively for her to appear. So I searched for her everywhere, in all the bars, at all the mixers, in the Cafeteria, in movie theatres. A few times, I thought I saw her, but the woman would speak and break up Mary’s face, or she’d move and shatter the lines of Mary’s lithe smooth body. People must have known I was looking, for every once in a while, I’d get a note in my mailbox, or a Valentine’s Day card under my door. I’d find out the sender, and watch her move, watch her talk, and each time, I knew I’d have to wait longer for Mary to appear. For Mary to consent to appear to me at all, I must not succumb to these brief attractions. My first woman lover had to be my last for I knew she would only come once in my lifetime.

Beka was different. She was a steamroller, not like the others, quiet and frightened, clutching their double-message notes and cards. She plummeted past my careful schemes, shoved herself into my thoughts full-blown, and for me to compare her with anyone, even my cherished image of seven years, was impossible. But she was so unlike Mary, so different, and I could see she would be tied to no one. Tired of trying not to think, I began spending less time in my room, actually going to classes, then drinking every other day, rather than every third. I sensed Beka looking at me sometimes, her grey eyes settling on my face in crowds at the auditorium, her rough-red hand almost
touching mine as a mob of us stumbled laughing through the snow.

One dark night, in the dead of winter, I stood looking through my open window at the drifts of white, and at the flakes steadily pelting down past the dark fence. It was my drinking night, and it was almost a blizzard, and the bar was a mile away. I couldn’t stay in my room; Beka had smiled at me the day before, and each time I relaxed, her face and her teeth were in my mind. I could have joined my friends, I even heard them laughing down the hall, but I didn’t want to be with people. I could be alone at the bar, no matter how many bodies it housed during those noisy evening hours. I cut through the parking lot, shivering in my heavy jacket, my hands pressed close to my sides. Cars hissed by me like escaping steam, and my feet squeaked and slid in the packed snow.

I pushed open the bar door, my eyes downcast, unwilling to acknowledge there were others here, outside of edging past them to the counter. A moment later, a bottle of beer in my hand, I chanced raising my head, and found myself looking directly into Beka’s impassive eyes. She smiled and patted the empty seat beside her. I crossed to her booth fuzzy-headed, a shocked fish reeled in by a skillful angler. She smiled again when I sat down next to her. “You come here often?” I nodded, drinking at the same time, so I could see her out of the corner of my eye. “I’ll get a pitcher,” she said. “it’s cheaper.” Her voice was like a husky, tortured river. I stood to let her by, and then squeezed back into the corner, glad for a wall behind me.

Beka set the pitcher down and grinned at me crookedly, like Mary does when she wants something. I got wet and shivered. We drank, while she told me in a self-effacing monotone all the stories I already knew about her. I bought another pitcher and told her about the fights I’d had in junior high school. The bartender, maybe sensing something, bought our third pitcher. When it was half-gone, Beka reached under the table and clasped my hand firm between her soft, pale palms. I floated there, my teeth exposed, looking around at all the people for the first time, strong myself, secure that my hand was as powerful as hers, with hers under that table, a statement too intimate and enormous to be wasted on fools in this small-town bar.

We left and bought a bottle of cheap wine at a liquor store, drunk now and laughing, pushing each other into great hunks of snow, yelling and running and falling, yelling louder when an enraged Bronxville resident switched on her porch lights and screamed at us. It took us forever to climb the long hill back to the school, but I felt like it would never take long enough. I could see the low, dark buildings looming through the night even then, and sobering, I unscrewed the top of the wine bottle, and we drank long gulps in the snowy silence.

No one came out when we stumbled down the hall to my room: everyone had grown used to my falling. They slept through it like I slept through the screaming bad acid trips across the hall, and the sobbing of the girl next door. My room was unlocked and we stole in like burglars, suddenly quiet. I was dizzy. I crossed to the bathroom, leaving Beka by herself, and I threw cold water on my face. I rinsed out my mouth and looked up at Beka in the mirror, watching her grey eyes narrow, and the skin across her throat grow taut. I turned quickly, avoiding her question, and drank more wine while I set a stack of records on the machine. Beka shrugged off her jacket and pried her boots off. I
wished I’d worn matching socks until I saw her curling brown and yellow feet.

She lay on the bed, her arms in back of her head, as I restlessly moved around the room, hanging up my clothes, putting shoes away, shoving records back into their cases. “You want some wine?” she asked finally, her voice even huskier. Relieved, I sat down next to her on the bed and up-tilted the bottle, noticing her elbow punching into the pillow. I shivered, and she smiled at me, her tongue stained wine-red, and her teeth that glistening white. I thought: does she really want to? does she really want to?, even as she caressed my knee and rubbed her long leg against me. I thought: does she really want to? does she really want to?, but growing bold enough to take the plunge anyway. When she turned over, her arms outstretched, I fell on top of her, shook but tender, my hands suddenly under her shirt on her breasts, her hands coursing through my hair, our tongues twisting across each other. We made love so fast, it was over in a minute, and I couldn’t stop smiling, I was so proud of myself. The next time, we slowed down, quiet and tender, and when we’d finished, we shared a cigarette, lying there in the dark, the snow falling softly behind our heads.

I whispered: “Was that...that your first...”

“Yes. You?” I nodded, forgetting she couldn’t see, but maybe she felt my movement, because she didn’t ask again.

“Let’s go to sleep,” she finally mumbled, half-asleep already. I felt like shouting instead, waking up everyone I knew, shouting at them that I’m me and I’m happy, running and singing and touching the tops of trees. But I didn’t want to move my head from her shoulder, or take my hand from her breast, so I stayed motionless, the falling snow whispering songs to me. I hummed along with the snow until the wine overtook me, and I fell asleep.

When I woke, Beka was in the bathroom, and I cursed myself for sleeping through the sweetness of her lying next to me, for she might not crawl back into my bed and cradle me against her long body. When she stepped back into the room, she was dressed, and she splayed up those palms at my hurt face. She flipped her jacket over her shoulder and smiled at me. “You can keep the wine,” she said, and then she strode out the hall door.

We sat opposite each other in a writing class all the next year, and she never spoke to me, though she grinned a lot at the blonde sophomore who read poems about cocaine in a sugary Southern accent.

As we waited for the teacher to arrive one that winter, the blonde came up to me and allowed that didn’t I feel Beka wrote poems just like a man? I said I didn’t know, I had no basis for comparison, I never read poetry, because I was afraid it would wreck my style. She laughed, silver notes floating across the big round table, and said, how lovely, how romantic, what a precious, romantic thought. But, she continued, grasping me hard by the wrist, her nails digging into my skin, didn’t I think that Beka was ever so handsome? I shrugged, red by now, feeling Beka’s mocking slate eyes boring into my cheeks. I waited until the blonde had paced around the table and settled into her chair

before I gathered my books together and left the classroom. I walked back to my room through the snow, so numb I almost fell once.

Letting myself in with the key, I sat down on my bed and lit a cigarette, looking around at the things that were mine. A stack of notebooks resting against the wall, and the empty gin bottle on the bureau painted a grey shadow the length of the dark empty floor. Now that Mary was gone, my room always seemed grey. She had left me that winter night nearly a year ago.

MAXINE

Her eyes are butterflies
in slow flight
her cheekbones hollow
with the weariness of
the day
zephyr hands
pour milk
cut bread
feed tokens of her
life
to those who care

by BEATRICE SUSSMAN
Sunday morning: I finished reading The Novel Of The Future. It is time to start working on the article. Have written 23 pages of notes; hope they'll be useful.

Sunday night: Spent most of the day typing notes. Also, I wrote the introduction:

"In The Novel Of The Future, Anais Nin writes about what's necessary for creating literature that moves: a way of being which makes words grow, happen as naturally as a dream.

The genesis of Nin's novels and diaries are a map which charts the course of artistic development. She shares with us the evolution of her five volume, continuous novel Cities Of The Interior, how she chooses and evokes character, sources of imagery and symbol, how, as a young writer, she 'learnt the passageways.' Her art has already shown us that a 'deeply personal relation to all things reaches far beyond the personal into the general'; now The Novel Of The Future illuminates why this is true.

The novelist of the future is an explorer of the inner life as well as the external world. She trusts the accident, the free-association, knows that if she listens to herself, a pattern of meaning will emerge. What compels can be transformed into poetic symbol, uniting and revealing the levels of reality in which we simultaneously exist.

The artist plays with the mathematics of feeling: emotions are like discs of an abacus, rosary beads, notations of composition. Write about what you love, hate, or are possessed by, and looking for meaning will be as unnecessary as looking for the sun on a hot day."
now, with me the way she was last night in the dream, what would her advice be? Or, if I use *The Novel Of The Future* as if it were the *I Ching*, ask the question and throw the coins, pretend that what the book tells me is a hexagram:

"To write without feeling is to miss the one element which animates every line with life. Translate how you actually feel and experience my book: vitality will come from the tension between your potential and fulfillment. The reality of *The Novel Of The Future* will be communicated if you describe your relationship to it.

My book is about the difference between conventional and revolutionary writing. Don't attempt, as the traditionalist's do, to depict our relationship as a unity, complete and already formed. We are mutable, in constant process: describe us as such and trust that form will come naturally, created by meaning. Never create an artificial climax, or include a detail which isn't necessary to reveal what you feel for me. The external story is what I consider unreal.

The dichotomy you struggle with between fragmentation and wholeness is misconceived, stemming from the outmoded conception of artificial unity you were taught. Objectivity is not detachment, but emotional honesty and self-knowledge. The truest objectivity of all is to be able to see what others see, and feel what others feel. You will achieve a synthesis which can include fluctuation, oscillation, reaction. The fragments will become part of an organic living structure.

The closer you keep to the emotional reality, the more alive your writing will be. There is no neat end to life, and in writing there is never a final synthesis. Climaxes in writing are new steps in awareness, new stages of growth."

Tuesday night: I had dinner with Tom tonight, and I showed him what I've been writing. He read it slowly, then said: "It just doesn't work. You're writing a letter to your mother, not an article anyone will want to publish. I—the reader—is completely excluded; this is between you and Nin, it has nothing to do with anyone else. Besides, you must use that metaphor about your room at least fifty times."

He's gone now. I'm sitting at the typewriter: my arms are shaking. I feel like my world's been torn apart. The words in my head won't stop: "You're not a writer, you can't write, stop trying, give up, you'll never be any good, you're a failure, failure.

Somehow, I must force myself to write, even if nothing but the dumbest inanities come out.

We heard you, Anais, but can't yet completely believe. Other writers say men are deliberately excluded from your novels, that Jung said everything you write about before, and more lucidly, that your characters are esoteric, only extensions of yourself. Because, you, in your art, are public and accessible to me, I am becoming an artist. Because you use your dreams and feelings as source in a bolder, different way, because you lived with people fully, and because, finally, your experience cannot be separated from what you write, I find a source of faith to keep me from returning to and getting recognition for the kind of writing I once did easily and well. The echoes of your voice bring me back to this typewriter on a winter night, and I work, sweat, my fingers tremble, and I struggle to create a world, capture a feeling, a moment, a life. This continent I'm giving birth to is more precious to me than anything outside this room. I carry it with me wherever I go: while I am driving, at work, when I read books, see friends, I'm listening to a voice which is my own now, and speaks about a new way of hearing and a purer kind of listening. A whole new appreciation of language and the way it can be used. Now I'm trying to do things with words I've never done before, engaged in catching a new image as if I were a fisherman catching a sacred fish, and I can play with stars, fog, eclipses, illusion. All parts and places of this and any world I care to travel in are open to me: I am connected to all the rivers, streams and oceans of this earth. No longer a passive intellectual, buying, filling, retaining; I am finding the strength to use my voice, make my chants, describe the journey that consumes my blood and muscles and vision. Because I discovered and internalized your image, Anais Nin, I know that I have the power and ability to transform life, to translate all the hideous passion of being alive, and I struggle to create, from my own life and experience, a universe others can live in too.

Wednesday morning: Today, this morning, I remember these quotations from your first, third and fourth diaries.

"I am aware of being in a beautiful prison, from which I can only escape by writing."

"Did I see enough, learn enough, love enough, did I listen attentively, did I appreciate, did I sustain the life?"

"We are never trapped unless we choose to be."
LESBIAN/WOMAN: A REVIEW

by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon
Glide Publications (hardcover), $7.95
Bantam Books (paperback, just issued Nov. 72), $1.95

Lesbian Woman has a message. The message is that Lesbians are people. This news will come as no surprise to the readers of Amazon Quarterly, but it may to the straight reading public to whom much of the book is addressed.

Lesbian Woman is the work of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, two women who have spent most of their adult lives as lovers working for the right of gay women simply to be themselves. As founders in 1955 of the now internationally known Daughters of Bilitis, Del and Phyllis write from their own experience. This experience and that of the many women they have known and worked with over the years add up to the richest sense of Lesbian reality to be captured so far in a nonfiction book.

The whole spectrum of concerns that touch the Lesbian are here, shown as individual women have confronted them. Del, married and a mother, discovered she was gay in her mid-20's when she met and fell in love with the now divorced Del. "When we first started living together as a couple we knew practically nothing about female homosexuality. We only know that we loved each other and wanted to be together. Somehow that tagged us as Lesbians and bound us to some mysterious underground 'gay' society of which we were only barely aware."

Finding out what this new existence was all about brought Del and Phyllis up against the issues that define the commonalities of Lesbian life. Is Lesbianism a sickness or a viable alternative life style? Is it natural for Lesbian relationships to have a dominant and a subordinate partner, a butch and a femme? Is it strong or suicidal to be open with parents, co-workers, and friends? Where is the line between realistic fear of loss and a crippling paranoia?

Monogamy imitates the nuclear family of straight society. Is couplehood good? Or does monogamy need to be redefined for the Lesbian? What about the Lesbian mother? What about the church's sin-and-guilt syndrome? What about the law? And especially for today—what about the time-and-energy priority conflicts for the individual woman faced with the separate pulls of the homophile movement, the women's movement, and the various liberating movements of the Third World? Not to mention the personal and career interests she may have to sacrifice to express her convictions through any of these movements.

Starting DOB in the shadow of the McCarthy era, Del, Phyllis, and the other original members came together in search of their common identity as Lesbians. But conflict soon developed over the direction the organization was to take. Del and Phyllis rejected the idea that DOB should play it safe by remaining a secret Lesbian social club. Several members, fearing exposure, dropped out, and the organization evolved toward "educating the public to accept the Lesbian as an individual and eliminate the prejudice which places oppressive limitations on her life style..."

It began to sponsor public forums, provide speakers, and publish educational literature on the Lesbian. Public belief that Lesbians were women with malformed sex organs, that they were super-sexed, that they were child molesters—or, on the other hand, that they were simply heterosexual women who had settled for "second best" because they couldn't get a man—these were only a few of the myths that DOB set itself to combat.

Del and Phyllis plunged into working within a predictably hostile system. Writing today, they make it clear that by now "No halfway measures will do...We want equal rights and full citizenship—be it in relation to marriage, joint income tax returns, inheritance, property, adoption of children, job opportunity, education or security clearances." Lesbian/Woman emerges from their continuing commitment to the goal of full and open participation for the Lesbian in the mainstream of American life.
by LAUREL

PRIAPUS PARESIS

"I'm impotent with most women. I have to trust a woman, know her as a person, you know."
It'll break a woman's heart every time. Sets up a challenge number 1 to get up the stick and number 2 appeals to her undernourished "person," heretofore unnoticed by all those grass sex-first boudoir athletes. The fact that the old buggers is 63 and his scraggly scrotum might well have trouble pumping up the stuff—well, that's not the point is it?

One of our self-made local millionaires, Mark Barton, the old devil in question, sitting now lugubriously sipping his pre-dinner drink, perched atop the very highest hill in Berkeley enjoying the view out the 18 panes of glass that enclose his living room. Already he's opened up, made me feel right at home, plunging into the heart of the matter—can't get up the stick, poor man. He spends his leisure throwing pots and has written three serious works—much too good to have ever been published—with crazy Latin names and mixed myths to appeal to the Joyce in all our natures. Especially to the young demoiselles lured into the Lion's den of accumulated literary acquaintances.

"Oh, Henry told me he wouldn't write a preface for Anais's fiction—not her best work you know—didn't want to encourage laziness in a girl with so much potential—you know."

Well, I do know. I know how you're sucking the life, the sweet youth, out of my friend Leah, and graciously giving her in exchange the use of your elegant Berkeley hills house, your gourmet foods, literary friends, and your insecure prick that needs all her attention, all Mama's love and devotion to do its best. Uh huh. Behind every great man is a woman. Leah. A young but well used thirty. Been the hard licks road with her first husband—exciting up and coming writer, alcoholic, benny-popping, maniac. Tied her down one night and had his best friend rape her. Then he sent her off to the hospital for her hysteria.
pened."

Well coming from that and two months in the loony bin anything looks good. Even that wilted prick, hog jowls, and a torso like a cypress stump. Christ, he is 63 years old!

What could she possibly see in him. But of course.

Aldous Huxley. Now there’s a conversation stopper. Across the flickering candlelight shimmering over our soup I ask him coyly, hoping to bring out a lack in his attempt at cosmic consciousness, “Mark, have you ever taken acid?”

Oh, yes, Aldous and I were taking it back in 61. Pure chemical stuff straight out of the best clinics in Europe. Not like this stuff around now you know. But of course he really preferred peyote.

Well blow me down. Didn’t that nice! Anybody who trips with Aldous, boy, he’s gotta be o.k. Stamp of approval, vintage 1961.

Leah looks up approvingly, “Have some more soup Mark? Did you get enough meat?”

Me too damn it.

“You, Rima, how about you?” Leah remembers to throw in.

We tell each other stories to bide the time. They all sort of start with “My parents were so fucked up they…” and the idea is to top the atrocity that has just gone before.

So I pull up one of my very best. When I was thirteen and deeply in love with a willowy mysterious girl—thirteen and already a passionate artist, Morgan was her name—my father found our letters… explicit in every detail I’m afraid. He came into my room wielding an axe and chopped to tiny bits a 6 foot miraculously life-like self-portrait she had painted for me. Then he beat me with his belt and threatened to kill me if I ever spoke to that pervert again.

Not bad. Poor me, my father could have stepped right out of Faulkner, silent dumb Southern type, given to violence and religious self-righteousness.

But lo, with a tiny bathroom parable Leah betters me in a single blow. “Last time I was home, a couple of years ago…” (the candles dim appropriately as she speaks) “I finally made a major breakthrough with my mother. All our childhood my sister and I weren’t allowed to hang our wet underwear in the bathroom to dry. That was my mother’s privilege. Her bras, and slips, panties, and nylons reigned supreme, unchallenged by the underling females’ unmentionables. Her domain. Our underwear dripped into our shoes in our closets strung across under our clothes.”

“Why not the clothesline?” I ask.

She pales. “Oh no, never. We were really quite orthodox and sort of rich you know. Never outside for all the neighbors to see. (Come on Leah, you’re as lower class as me!) Well, I thought, that takes it. I mean with that tiny detail she’d opened up ten or fifteen good solid neuroses, unsurpassed by a comparatively well-deserved taste for violence in my father, over his certainly understandable regrets about his daughter’s being a lesbian at thirteen.

But it’s Mark’s turn and we wait expectantly. “Well,” he begins, “as you know my aunt was Isadora Duncan.”

“Have some more salad Mark. “Even Leah couldn’t bare another one of those. Pump

some wine through his veins. Maybe that’ll soften up the rigor mortis set in thirty years ago during his involvement with the “cultured.”

“But, you know all about me,” he graciously picks up the hint. Of course, Mark, you’re chronicled in every famous autobiography east of the Yellow River…” “So tell me about yourself, Rima.” Leah tells me you were once a Mormon.

Now we’re getting somewhere. With a few crummy details he’ll be able to use this somewhere in another great work. Sweet girl, Southern, a lesbian but not like the usual you know, a Mormon too. She, her old man, and her lover all baptized in the same tank one night. Not bad, converted so they could see each other night and day right under the old man’s nose. Every morning seminary at five a.m. and then meetings all night and all day Saturdays and Sundays.

But then comes the gory part. The purloined letters and the bishop’s inquisition.

“Alright, how many of you have been touched by that girl?” And it turns out that just about the whole youth group had been doing some touching to one poor boy who threw himself off a bridge over his unrequited love for the bishop.

But not bad huh Mark? How’d that sit with your friends from the fifties sitting around the Village playing poor, smoking reebers, steeping in jazz and pornography? I’d be a hit you know. You drug in something different: this time, not your usual disenchanted seven sister school dropout. Nope. Not a bad member of your collection sweetness at it.

Leah, to bring in the warm human touch, turns to Mark: “Rima’s been working for Kelly Girl to get some money.”

“That’s good,” approves Mark the self-made god. “I sold potato-peeler door to door when I first started to write” he concedes, the unspecked point being—and look at me now. And Mark’s so generous he wants to help everyone be self-made—even Leah who he only partially supports; gives her a feeling of self-sufficiency you know. She works weekends in an after hours bar down in the flatlands. Wonder if he’s been so considerate of all his wives and mistresses? Wouldn’t want his million to spoil them you know. Bad enough to live atop the highest hill in Berkeley in a wall to wall wrap-around-view glass mansion.

So we stretch a bit and take in some—Bay Bridge, Golden Gate, Richmond Bridge, San Mateo, Dumbarton. Christ! Now that’s a view. Five bridges—the very limit. A five star view.

“There, there, and way out there…” Mark does the grand old tour. Bay Area at your feet. Starting with the campanile in the foreground and ending up with believe it or not an outdoor elevator in the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. “Look you can see it going up and down.” He’s right of course, you can almost see the people. Here’s the church and here’s the steeples. Pulls on my sympathy somehow—poor old guy—like some old codger showing off his coin collection.

Just about now the doorbell rings. Enter the Lion’s literati. Cocktails all around and Mark turns on four speaker Mahler. Another good ice-breaker cause of course Mark knew him when… and we’re off.

Leonard, Missy and Doyle. Leah has tact enough not to stress that this is Leonard Steinmaitz, “published and author” five novels and two or three dozen short stories, nor the most important data about Missy, that she’s his part time mistress, nor that Doyle, under pseudonym just published his first novel (about homosexuals in the fifties) but of
course purely fictional or so he tells his wife.)

Lovely, all writers, each hoping for some little tidbit he or she can fit in somewhere—a particularly spicy snatch of dialogue, a well-wrought anecdote—something to make the night worthwhile at least... unless, but well, that’s not likely.

So politely to deny it they all ask me what I’m writing. And of course I trot out my shocker—a novel about lesbian love. A bit early, maybe Mark was hoping to save it till later, but everybody’s put away a couple by now. So we get right to the core of it.

“Autobiographical?” asks Doyle hoping to nail me in a word.

“Of course, isn’t yours?” Touche!

He lit a cigarette and leveled his gaze at me slowly. “Well not really. I’m far too busy selling real estate to live a double life.”

Leonard jumps in as I let Doyle’s line curl through the room on the smoke rings. “Rima’s quite outspokenly lesbian, Doyle, by choice apparently, converted at twenty-four. Except for an early adolescent affair she’s been with men for the most part.”

Leonard flashes a smile. “Might even appeal to a publisher right now... you picked the right time my girl.”

Yup, my boy, no time like the present.

“Latest Kinsey study, done right here in the Bay Area a couple of years ago, shows about 50 percent of women and about 70 percent of men have tried it,” Mark throws in.

“Of course, isn’t yours?” Doyle giggles. “Really Doyle, how would you know?”

C'mon—there’s a mother Ugly—but Leah’s too far gone to bridge the gap. Now’s my chance.

He nods a bit, “Your sauna working Mark?” I toss in with a grin.

“Mark! Now Mark, don’t take the credit. I met Rima in a writer’s group, Leah puts in from the kitchen.”

“Goddamn, afraid the men will put the make on you huh? Might be right. Met Missy at a writers group couple years ago... she hasn’t written two words since.”

“Mark, don’t take the credit. I met Rima in a writer’s group,” Leah puts in from the kitchen.

“All women Leonard—how’s that strike you?” Mark rejoins.

“Christ! Never occurred to me. Not here for god’s sake...”

“I don’t know. Might be kind of exciting—especially if we could watch.” Doyle, the kinky bastard, getting drunker by the second.

But Leonard is still cool and sophisticated. “Really it wouldn’t bother me at all, if that’s what Missy wants. I don’t have time these days to really satisfy her. Little on the side wouldn’t hurt... not much to worry about... she’d get tired of it soon enough.”

“P’tween them. Let alone Rima who I know is hot for the spoils. Better to see them run off with young Sappho. Might not be so amusing you know.”

“O.k. but we’ve got to do this right” Leah commands shuttling the troops into the dressing room. “Put on a robe” she orders “so it will look like we’ve been in the sauna.”

Wonder what they’re thinking to let their women run off with a lesbian—let’s find out.

We crawl out into the night—light everywhere—city below and stars above. Mark’s elysium. Crouched over on all fours we thread our way through the ferns and giant snake plants remembering, remembering our lesson from Deerslayer—think Indian and watch out for dried twigs. What a sight! Three trey bedecked white fanny’s proceeding through the jungle in the moonlight.

Watts of conversation begin to drift through the foliage and we find a peep hole. “Christ! Never occurred to me. Not here for god’s sake...”

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o.k. I should just keep her side of the bed warm and wait 'til she's had her thrills and comes dragging home."

Doyle cautiously stumbles over to the bar for another drink. "You guys crack me up. Best porno movies on Broadway got two cute chicks feeling each other up. Gets me hot as hell. Chris, here's your chance."

"Yea, right Doyle," croaks Mark, "but you forget we haven't been invited. Those three could be in there acting out scenes from Satyricon while we're in here getting more incapacitated every minute."

Poor Mark, worried about that again. Like heading into battle with a dull sword.

"Goddamn it. I tell you we ought to do something about this," he yells. "Those girls don't know what they're getting into. That Rima—she'll fight dirty. Cheap little bitch. Goddamn it I wouldn't take this from a man. She acts like a man goddamn it she's gonna get treated like one."

We can almost see Doyle and Leonard lighting up with the prospects of a good scene.

Drunk as they are, they'll be lucky to remember it though.

"Well shit," Doyle says, "'stead of talkin' why don't we go have a look."

Doyle and Leonard reach for the bottle to take with them, collide and make a speedy descent back onto the couch. "It seems, it uh" Leonard stammers "looks like we've had a bit to drink."

Mark grasps the arms of his chair and gives it a try. Plop! He just sits there lead-bottomed, looking surprised.

We crack up hushing each other and then dissolve into more spasms of laughter.

Missy's still drunk enough to do a really good imitation of Mark. She squats her shoulders, spreads her feet for a wider girth, lowers her head so her eyes peer out from under her eyebrows and growls "Gonna get em! Goddamn it! Gonna get them perverts!" Then she staggers and falls against the wall convulsed with laughter.

Time to steer the troops inside before we're discovered. Leah and I grab Missy by the elbows and grope our way back through the bushes to the sauna room. Clothes on, soberer, we march back into the house to survey the damage.

I tell you it's a disappointment. What kind of ending can I make out of this? They're too stewed to even put up a good fight. Leonard and Doyle a clump in the middle of the couch and Mark a zombie staring dazedly out the windows muttering quietly to himself. My only worry that Leah's going to want to mother them. It's a weakness, the old Irish mother bit, but fortunately Mark rouses himself enough to kill her pity.

"Leah Leah goddamn it!" He grinds his fists into his eyes straightening out the picture, (Oops that wasn't Leah) he finds her finally, "goddamn it what do you think you're doing?"

It's a classic switch, I swear. Leah puts on her sweet wounded bunny rabbit voice (even a little Southern accent thrown in) lowers her eyes and cocks her head to one side and coos "Mark darling, us girls are just going over to Rima's for a minute. Won't be long sugar. Maybe you better help Doyle and Leonard into the guest room."

Left him there with his mouth hanging open staring at his five star view. Poor old codger. Not even a consolation prize Mark old boy. I got a copyright on this one.
Here, the sea strains to climb up on the land
and the wind blows dust in a single direction.
The trees bend themselves all one way
and volcanoes explode often.
Why is this? Many years back
a woman of strong purpose
passed through this section
and everything else tried to follow.
I've been reading a book on witchcraft which begins with this paragraph:

"The circle of firelight which we are pleased to call an enlightened, scientific civilization, we usually feel secure in the knowledge that most of our worst childhood terrors and nightmares were merely fantasy. But if and when the firelight happens to dim, at those times when the unknown presses hard against us, in the presence of death or insanity or insurmountable calamity...we once again experience the old childhood terrors."
Witchcraft is a study of these "outer regions of night" of which most people are so afraid. I like this passage because it describes with such evocative power, the human image of the unknown or strange.

Ability to deal with the strange (the unknown, the new) is an important faculty for a species to develop—it is essential to evolutionary potential. The dinosaurs are a classic example. When the Ice Age came they completely failed to deal with their changed environment, to adapt to new conditions—or respond to the new information about changing conditions that must have been all around them. In an evolutionary sense, ability to deal with the strange is ability to adapt. Our own species' development of this faculty has been severely thwarted by the male supremacist social organization we acquired thousands of years ago.

Our ability to adapt to the strange determines how successfully we can adapt to a changing environment. This capacity involves the ability to see the strange (to see new information and changing conditions) and the ability to make the strange familiar—to assimilate the new experience (and information) into our organism.

A cycle of Familiar—Strange and Strange—Familiar

Good adaptation is creative responsiveness to the environment. So it is not surprising that the Family-Strange-Familiar cycle is a good description of creative process in any area.

The basic project of the artist is to reveal a new angle that makes everything look different.

Example: You are middle aged and conservative and your daughter becomes a hippy or a lesbian or a到这里...

This capacity involves the ability to see the strange (to see new information and changing conditions) and the ability to make the strange familiar—to assimilate the new experience (and information) into our organism.

Another way to describe making the strange familiar is "bringing it down to earth"—or giving it a form, organizing it. The basic political question in any situation is—who determines how we incorporate the strange? And how do they do it?

Suggestion, Myth Perception, Archetypes

Our psychic development and socialization is essentially a process of being molded by suggestion. Our consciousness, as restricted to hypnotic trance-suggestions is, in fact, a powerful influence on the human psyche at all times. As a matter of fact, unless we give ourselves strong suggestions, we end up being controlled and molded by the strongest suggestions made to us—from "society" or from members of our kinship group. This process continues throughout our entire lives. Suggestions can determine how we incorporate the strange. The most effective suggestions are indirect. Deep in the human psyche there is a being who perceives mythologically. (Others may be more conscious of this being as a "layer." This being also generates myth. Getting in touch with this mythical-symbolic level through dope or insanity is a very intense experience. We are generally unconscious of how much this layer affects us.

The most powerful kind of suggestion is a mythical image (or archetype). According to Levi-Strauss, myth is essentially indirect. The mythological cycles of various cultures that he studied seemed trivial at face value. So he postulated that behind the manifest sense of the stories, there must be another non-sense—a message in code. He also says that the myth is a medium through which the collectivity of the senior members of a society unconsciously transmit to the junior members of society a basic message. The basic message from the collectivity of elders is about the rules of each person's role. First—the sex role, and then the kinship relations (roles such as daughter, wife, mother, father, brother etc.). The mythological network of a society determines the character archetypes—the collective images of its universal roles.

The archetypal characters in our culture (or the basic structure of kinship relations) would include: Male, Female, Father, Mother, Son, Daughter, Child, Aunt, Uncle, Sister, Brother, Cousin, etc. The archetype is the most general version on the role. For instance, the archetypal Mother is an image based on the experience of Mother common to the greatest number of people. (If we took a random sample of maybe 1000 people from our culture and found the elements in each's experience of Mother held in common, we would have a fairly good picture of what the archetype of Mother is in that culture.) Knowledge of the rules that go into playing your set of roles (your mask) is transferred mythically (through messages in code, suggestion) from generation to generation. This process is unconscious for the most part (the parts that are conscious are like the top of an iceberg) and a lot of the communication is on a non-verbal level.

And there are multiple layers of roles—some masks are more generalized, some more specific. My image of the process is of a slot machine with a hundred panels instead of the usual three. When the machine stops spinning, you get a particular line-up of panels—each is a mask. The most general masks are those universal in human culture, then those of your own kinship network, and then those of your subculture. The most specific are the masks unique to your individual family. (As in R.D. Laing's description of how parents will unconsciously mold a child to be like a specific uncle or grandparent.) It is in terms of archetypes that Mother represents the familiar and that Father represents the

have no grids at all but to have grids that are uniquely yours and which are extremely flexible. The grids are tools—devices by which we make the strange familiar. What we call mind is a principal one of these tools, so universal in human culture, then those of your own kinship network, and then those of your subculture. The most specific are the masks unique to your individual family. (As in R.D. Laing's description of how parents will unconsciously mold a child to be like a specific uncle or grandparent.) It is in terms of archetypes that Mother represents the familiar and that Father represents the
strange and that Father is the authoritarian figure in the family. Many specific families may deviate from the norm with the personal Father embodying some of the Mother archetype and vice versa. In neurosis, these early archetypal patterns continue to determine an individual’s experience-behavior. (And remember, human civilization is neurotic.) A measure of health is how much you relate to individual personalities vs. archetypes. The most neurotic live completely in a world of archetypes.

“Normal” Socialization — Archetypal Process

The first experience all of us had was living inside a womb where we felt completely secure and where our surroundings were perfectly familiar. Birth is our first exposure to the strange—we find ourselves expelled into a new and unfamiliar realm. Yet there is one familiar landmark—the body of our Mother crystallizing the heartbeats we heard, the smell of breasts we sucked at. Our surroundings were perfectly familiar. Birth is our first exposure to the strange. We are expelled into a new and unfamiliar realm. Yet there is one familiar landmark—the body of our Mother that we know by heart. In our early lives in the strange, Father is the authoritarian figure in the family. Many specific families may deviate from the norm with the personal Father embodying some of the Mother archetype and vice versa. In neurosis, these early archetypal patterns continue to determine an individual’s experience-behavior. (And remember, human civilization is neurotic.) A measure of health is how much you relate to individual personalities vs. archetypes. The most neurotic live completely in a world of archetypes.

socialization that the little girl is taught her basic psychic structure appropriate to her role and the boy the one appropriate to him. Both are frightened of the strange and Father and must be pried away from clinging to the Moth—er—and impelled to admit Father into their universes. Each must learn the heterosexual role appropriate to her-his sex.

The basic difference:

- The boy, in preparation for his adult role, must overcome his fear of the strange—from this point on he is encouraged to deal with the strange (to become like Father), to deal with the public realm—ultimately as an explorer. To support him in this project he is given the security that when he grows up he will have a wife (just as Father has Mother) to fuck and to maintain the familiar for him like Mama. The promise of a woman of his own in the future enables most boys to come to terms with their rivalry with Father.

- When the little girl is pried away from Mama, she is pried away for good. The society does not have a wife waiting for her in adulthood. Thus her rivalry with Father has a far more humiliating outcome than the “normal” little boy’s. In addition, she is continually discouraged from dealing with the strange (because her adult role will be to have a man face the strange for her). Thus her desperate clinging onto Mother is of a greater intensity than the little boy’s. And to top it all off, to fulfill her adult heterosexual role she will have to tangle her physical and emotional attachment from Mama onto someone on the model of her rival and tormentor—Daddy. She is forced into a pattern of eroticizing her oppressor.

Neither sex can really deal with the strange. The man is not afraid of exploring it, but is underdeveloped in his capacity to transmute it back to the familiar. He depends on women for that. The woman is terrified of the strange as well as coerced into “loving” it and men on the Daddy-model. Her role is to maintain the familiar—and to transform the strange (which she is in contact with through the mediation of her men) into the familiar for men. The familiar-strange, strange-familiar process is split into a sexual division of labor. Given the institution of the family, and a male supremacist social structure, this whole process is self-perpetuating from generation to generation.

The Material Base

In male supremacist society, the basic economic role of women is to “have children and turn things into people privately at home.” (Rubin, Gerlick, and Anderson) The basic economic role of men is to “produce labor” to assure the natural and social world and in consuming objects produced by mothers, sisters and wives, producing things which have to be connected again through household labor into people.

There are two distinct economic realms in this society—the male public realm and the female private realm.

The private realm—the Familiar

The public realm—the Strange

In adulthood, women are essentially confined to the private realm. If she is to fulfill the primary female economic role under male supremacy, to be responsible for the feeding and maintenance of a man and the children she bears, a woman must be effectively confined to this sphere. The confinement of a man is actually built into the structure of her personality in childhood. (She has been made terrified of the strange and incapable of dealing with it directly). In addition, men have made the public realm a brutal place—so she has even more immediate reason to stay within the protection of the private realm. Women are confined to the familiar while men explore the strange and have the women confine them.

The economic relation between the male public sphere and the female private sphere is always defined as reciprocal, but is, in fact, exploitative of women.
This economic relationship between men and women is exploitative (though always socially defined as reciprocal) in almost exactly the same way as the relationship between the proletarian and the capitalist in our society though the measures are totally different. That is to say that both the woman in the household and the workers in the factory produce the use value necessary for their own existence and then in addition produce a surplus—but in both cases the surplus is not directly realizable at all by its producer. The surplus labor of the worker in the form of commodities is realizable to the capitalist when it can be converted into money on the market, while the worker is paid money enough to buy the commodities necessary (for his wife) to reproduce his existence (and to produce children). The surplus labor of the woman is embodied in the very lives and well being of her sons, brothers, husbands, daughters etc. and is realizable in the case of daughters in labor for other men and in the case of men, in labor time socially applied, usually outside the home.

The time men do not have to spend maintaining their own existence (i.e.—bringing things down to earth, maintaining the familiar) is spent in social labor, in ritual, in travelling (i.e.—exploring the Strange, in the public realm). The men then have an enormous opportunity to organize themselves to produce the social world by realizing the surplus private labor of their women. [Radin]

Separateness, Subjectivity, Language

Language is the key to dealing with becoming separate, to learning how to deal with the Strange. Even if people weren't being fucked over through the Oedipal triangle, we would still have to resolve being separated from our mothers. (But the reason we are so frightened is that separation from Mother for us was equivalent to brutalization by the strange).

The way we resolve separation is by acquiring subjectivity. And from the experience of subjectivity (the appropriation of language) we are able to reach out to others and experience a unity like the one we knew before being separated from Mother. But unlike it too, the new unity is a dialectic of separation and unity.

The unity I can achieve in social relations through language, if it is to be healthy, never means suppression of my separateness—my existence as an autonomous subject.

Most people are so desperate in their search for unity that they try to return to the pre-ego unity. Dissolving one's ego in social relations (into a "group") means clinging to the group=clinging to forms=clinging to roles. This involves being an object rather than a subject. The false unity achieved by dissolving, losing your subjectivity, involves a particular relation between self and language—i.e. failure to appropriate language from the other for yourself (and since Daddy is the other, this is a political act). The child and the child has to give up its "private language." (Which could have become social if the child had been allowed to develop its own language—i.e. when two individuals who are dealing with the strange directly meet each other, if they want to communicate, they can share their "private" languages. They begin to generate a new language together. This is communication without one person mediating between the other and the strange.)

A grid-language is healthy when it is a good tool for creativity—when it is flexible, open to the strange. Having grids imposed on you is neurotic. Imposing your grids on others is neurotic.

As children, before our creativity is suppressed, we generate our own language (create our own grids). At some point the public language (in the family—the language of the Father) is imposed on the child and the child has to give up its "private language." (Which could have become social if the child had been allowed to develop its own language—i.e. when two individuals who are dealing with the strange directly meet each other, if they want to communicate, they can share their "private" languages. They begin to generate a new language together. This is communication without one person mediating between the other and the strange.)

A contemporary psychoanalyst and linguist, Jacques Lacan, sees the Oedipal Father as the public language. In his system, the neurotic is someone with a private language. Successful "adjustment" means accepting the public language—vicarious dealing with the strange.

But Daddy is the most neurotic of all! Although people who have private languages are usually neurotic, I believe that what psychoanalysis sees as "private language" is a basically healthy function. Having a private language means that you haven't completely given up dealing with the strange directly. You have never really accepted Daddy (and the public language). Not having a private language means that your dealings with the strange are completely vicarious.

However, people with private languages are generally very paranoid and defensive. They know that they are deviating from the group norm—that their private languages may at any point be crushed by the public language (i.e. the language of me and the others). They are the predicaments of subjectivity (the appropriation of language) we are able to reach others and experience a unity like the one we knew before being separated from Mother. But unlike it too, the new unity is a dialectic of separation and unity.

The new form of subjectivity described involves everyone being a subject. Every person is a center. There is no one center. (Just as every point is the center of the universe.) Thus there is no one set of grids (language) that is authoritative—everyone must create their own grids through which they will perceive the strange.

Some sets of categories (languages) are healthier than others. (What I'm saying is not that everything is relative—there are certain standards for sanity.) However, my definition of health is radically different from the prevailing one.

Grids are a tool. They are a healthy tool when they are flexible, open to the strange. Having grids imposed on you is neurotic. Imposing your grids on others is neurotic.

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But what deviants (people with private languages) really need is not psychiatrists, but other deviants with whom they can form a group...a group in which public language grows out of a synthesis of private languages vs. the suppression of private languages.

The Authoritarian Love Object

Every culture has a unique set of archetypal characters and dramas (the basic slots in the kinsip network). Some archetypes are universal in the history of human culture. I have been studying the archetypes of power—the evil Father archetype (Daddy) and the evil Mother archetype (black widow) which are universal in male supremacist culture. The basic archetypal drama of power is Father beating Child (although the overall story is different for male and female children), of strong egos dominating weaker egos.

Ego strengthability to deal directly with the strange. The stronger deal with the strange more directly than the weaker. The weaker introject the words of the stronger. To introject is to swallow down chunks of experience without digesting them yourself (i.e.—vicarious dealing with the strange). The introject dominates you, sucks your energy and blocks your growth. Egos grow like bodies—through digestion of the food made available—experience-information. The introject is a result of hardened digestion. When you are burdened with introjects, your ego remains weak (in the infantile stage); it does not get the energy it needs to grow.

Here is a description of the introjection process from Gestalt Therapy:

"When one looks upon the introject as an item of unfinished business its genesis is readily traced to a situation of interrupted excitement. Every introject is the precipitate of a conflict given up before it was resolved. One of the contestants, usually the impulse to act in a given manner, has left the field, replacing it, so as to constitute some kind of integration (although a false and inorganic one) is the corresponding wish of the coercing authority. The self has been conquered. In giving up it settles for a secondary integrity—a means of surviving, though beaten, by identifying with the conqueror and turning against itself. It takes over the coercer's role by conquering itself, retroreflecting the hostility previously directed outward against the coercer."

Identifying with the conqueror—or the Oedipal Father, means that Daddy ends up inside of you. And this inside is continually projected onto the outside. The weak ego is continually paranoid—Daddy is lurking everywhere. (And so is the black widow—the devouring Mother.) The weak ego feels guilty all the time. Daddy beating the child is the archetypal model of guilt...punishment for desire.

The weak ego hates itself. When it encounters hostility from others, it shrivels up—writhe in a vision of horrible images of itself.

Powerlessness has been psychically built in. It is relatively simple for anyone who wants to dominate a weak ego to reactivate the beating Father—and thus push it into terrified passivity.

In addition to a paranoid self-image, a weak ego has an ideal ego image (the Daddy within) that persecutes it constantly. The ideal ego image-persecutor is an authoritarian love object. This structure—of weak ego, introjection, persecution by ideal ego image, is analogous to and interlocked with the female heterosexual role.

The female heterosexual role, for a girl, means displacement of affections from Mother to Father—Daddy, the authoritarian love object, the strange she must love but never understand (for the man she loves will mediate between her and the strange). It means the eroticization of the oppressor. The relationship to the authoritarian love object also determines the relationship of individual ego to group. Two's company. Three's a crowd. The child-Mother original love relation was two. When Daddy comes into the picture you have to deal with the existence of three—the basic group.

Because Daddy is an oppressor whom we eroticize, our basic relation to groups becomes passive—a striving to get into in-groups (to get at the energy at the top of the hierarchy)—upward mobility. The
desired crowd collectively becomes an authoritarian love object. Yearning to be part of that crowd corresponds to sexual yearning for Father and the same guilt. The crowd will punish me for wanting to belong—Father beats me for wanting Mother and him sexually.

Charge

Some people are authority figures to us and others not. The authority figures have been "charged"—by our projecting an archetype of power (Daddy or the Black Widow) onto them. And charge and sexual attraction are linked.

I am not saying that charge is what causes power relationships, nor do I mean that there can be a purely psychological revolution—that power relations will automatically crumble when people stop projecting power archetypes onto others. There are two kinds of domination—although the two are interrelated—that by charge and that by material conditions (when someone is in the position of being able to withdraw something you need). A slave who is oppressed only by material conditions can still plan how to fight back, how to rebel. Oppression by charge paralyzes this activity. However, slaves oppressed by material conditions usually end up charging their masters. (i.e.—in relationships with men which began on a non-charged, egalitarian basis, we've experienced the invasion of material conditions—the formation over time of a power relationship in which the man would dominate, the invasion of the hierarchy of men over women which is reinforced everywhere in this society.)

Keeping this in mind, these are the possibilities for non-power-oriented relationships between the following combinations:

1. If a woman charges her male lovers, in a heterosexual relationship, she will be dominated by material conditions and by charge.
2. If a woman does not charge other women, even as lovers, there will be a minimal basis for power relations between them—it will not be reinforced by material conditions or charge.
3. If a woman does charge other women, she still has a good chance of developing non-power relationships with other women (as lovers too)—if she struggles with her tendency to charge—because there is no material base for power (unless there is a significant class difference between the two women—which is unusual considering the economic position of most unattached women).
4. If a woman does not charge men, she will be pressured to charge them, particularly in a heterosexual relationship, by material conditions. She might possibly be successful in struggling against this tendency and maintaining an egalitarian relationship, but it isn't likely.

Deviance

Deviance is essentially refusal to conform to normal Oedipal socialization. To remain in rebellion against Daddy. Most people succumb to Daddy. Their growth is paralyzed at the very early stage—their egos are weak. They follow the rules, they believe in "authority." For those who struggle to grow there is a dialectic between complete rebellion and incomplete rebellion—between times when you are not determined by Daddy, free and creative, and times when you are caught in reacting to him (on the defensive vs. the offensive).

The Oedipal Father is the archetype with many meanings—it is not only the Father in the family who separates Mother and child, violating both, but also the Public language, and the strange, and the public realm and imposed social rules.

Rebellion against Daddy takes many forms. On a sexual and emotional level, I see devianism as a necessary (yet total) rebellion. The gay woman has refused to displace her attachment to Mother into Father.

Another rebellion involves refusal to give up one's private language (Daddy as Public language). or, for a woman, rebellion from the private realm (insistence of a life outside the home).

Deviants are people who are in varying degrees independent of the public language—(have developed private languages—i.e. dealing with the strange directly). In the case of a woman, it means she does not have a man mediating between her and the strange (even if he is a deviant himself). What I call a dyke, is a woman who deals with the strange directly—a woman who is exploring the social-economic-public male realm—or the up-to-now male realms of concepts and images (interior exploration).

The Mass, Group Rules, Cultural Conservatism

Most people sacrificed their autonomy and subjectivity long ago. They passively accept Daddy—the public language, group rules and group expectations of them. They are directed entirely from the outside—in the complete control of their society's leaders and authorities. They are dead objects. Their outside identities are subsumed in a group because their egos are so weak. Their lives are controlled by the rules and ideal ego images of the groups they are in. To the extent that they have not become entirely numb, they feel humiliated and guilty most of the time. They are pitifully submissive.

The mass is by its very nature rigid and conservative. For those on this level, a threat to group rules is a threat to self. Since the group is their whole identity, they resist change in its organization. They are the enemies of the strange and are compulsively dependent on those who mediate between it and them. They compulsively cling to cultural conservatism—i.e. conformity, peer pressure to maintain this tension between images—i.e. get sucked into the public language again (vicarious dealing with the strange).

The Isolated Deviant

Deviants are punished by the Father with ostracism and isolation. Which is a powerful threat to keep most people in line. Further, deviants are made into group scapegoats and are taught to hate themselves. This is the threat to group rules the mass is by its very nature rigid and conservative. For those on this level, a threat to group rules is a threat to self. Since the group is their whole identity, they resist change in its organization. They are the enemies of the strange and are compulsively dependent on those who mediate between it and them. They compulsively cling to cultural conservatism—i.e. conformity, peer pressure to maintain this tension between images—i.e. get sucked into the public language again (vicarious dealing with the strange).

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A deviant group is formed when deviants share their private languages. When they are able to coordinate their individual symbol-systems without one dominating the others, they become a class force.

We must however, beware the tendency in our deviant communities to merely impose a new public language, a new hierarchy. We must avoid creating a new ideal ego image to persecute people.

The Lesbian Community

I have been struck by the enormous evolutionary potential of the lesbian community. Because it is all women unattached to men, there is little reinforcement for hierarchy within the group from material conditions (in contrast to heterosexual deviant groups, or women's groups where women's attachment to men higher and lower on the hierarchy creates a huge class gulf between women).

Also, there is much less of a tendency to become "culturally conservative," to institutionalize forms. Deep down (in her primary sexual-emotional orientation) every lesbian is a rebel against Daddy—a woman asserting subjectivity—who has refused to eroticize Daddy. Any lesbian, no matter how into role playing or power games, is an incredible deviant in this society.

To sustain group criticism, she must be highly developed at maintaining tension between two images. She must have a sense of individual identity separate from group identity, to de-charge and de-legitimize power relationships, to refuse introjection, and to remain in a state of rebellion against "group rules."

DADDY DADDY I'M THROUGH!!!
from the depths of your being.

Flags and the Ideal Ego Image

Once I had a conversation with a friend of mine in Berkeley about what we say "Gay Women's Liberation" is. The essence of it was something like this: "It's like a flag that we are putting up...GAY WOMEN'S LIBERATION. The people who are attracted to the flag will all get together and these will be people with a certain state of mind in common—Then they can begin to coordinate things together."

I have a sense of a certain history of flags that I've been involved with. For awhile I lived in a community (of sorts) that had gotten together around the flag of "freak." Then I was in groups where the flag was "Women's Liberation." Now I'm in groups where the flag is "Gay Women's Liberation." I think these flags can serve a good function—but that in all these cases the function was perverted. A lot of it has to do with who creates the flags. For instance, there is a flag floating around now called "Women's Lib" that was actually created by TV and the big newspapers and magazines.

The public knows all about "Women's Lib" and "Fem Lib." These creatures appear in situation comedies and comic strips. This "Women's Lib" flag is very different from the "Women's Liberation" flag that I was attracted to 3 years ago. The basic difference is that the "Women's Liberation" flag was created by a group of women as an expression of a new consciousness in their lives. But the "Women's Libber" is a fantasy created by the mass media. However—maybe at this point (the women's libber image has been around for about two years) she does exist—that is, there are women who were attracted to the mass media created flag and who now identify with it? If they exist, they certainly are not connected with the women who were part of women's liberation two years ago.

I no longer consider "Women's Liberation" as part of my identity. This flag isn't worth anything because of the distortions it has been put through by that media created flag—"Women's Lib."

At a certain point flags can begin to dominate people. For instance, women are oppressed by the flag of the "freak feminist dye. There are all kinds of rules, shoulds and shoulnd'ts, in this community that result because of the image's power.

The problem goes something like this: even a flag created by a grass roots movement (vs. a media creation) does not erase the idea of a new flag being the movement (or community). Ideal ego images have their place—as fantasies, myths through which we extend ourselves when we live through our imaginations. But in an authoritarian culture, ideal ego images can become persecutors. People who are closest to the image are on top of the community hierarchy—those farthest away are low on the hierarchy. You are humiliated to the extent that you don't fit the image.

This is a dynamic that practically every group falls into, and when it happens it means that the movement (which may previously have had a lot of revolutionary potential) has just become another institution or rigidified structure. It's very important that women in this community resist and struggle against the ascension of the Image as controller. We have to watch ourselves carefully to see how we and others relate to group ideal ego images.

Do we attempt to live up to them, to embody the ideal? Humiliated when we fail? Hating ourselves for not fulfilling them?

The better way to resist the power of a group ideal ego image is to invent my own. But you can be persecuted by your own ideal ego image too unless you are careful. Essentially, we have to separate ourselves from all these images—to the point where we can use them as tools, not worship them as masters.

Ideal ego image as persecutor grows out of clinging to form. What this means to me, practically, is that it is important to have an identity that encompasses several communities. If your identity is completely tied in to one community, then when it is criticized you're being criticized, and you get defensive. The rules of the community become part of your identity. Thus you become more authoritarian—more concerned with clinging to form, the present order of things in the community—than with seeing the community change for the better. If your identity includes a number of communities, it is separate from the rules of any one of them. You are able to minimize your defensiveness and to break out of the inertia that rigidifies most people and their communities.

The key is to create your own flags and use them as tools. People who create similar flags and put them out, find each other. New flags are produced by synthesizing the experiences of a number of communities (another reason why it's not good to restrict yourself to one).

Our goal as I see it might be to constantly be open to new language, new ways of making the strange familiar, new ego images, and new ways of synthesizing our private languages with each other. Our success will be in direct proportion to our ability to say no to Daddy, to resist the rigidly enforced male language (way of perceiving the strange), and our ability to prevent ourselves from, like Daddy, imposiong our private language on each other.

If we can become clear on how our conditioning impedes us, if we can understand how certain grids and archetypes (modes of perceiving) keep us locked in, and we work to overcome this, the evolutionary potential of lesbianism should be unlimited.

We are standing on the frontier of woman's experience. Let us hope we can find the strength to forge ahead.

Sources:

Rubin, Gail, and Arlene Gorelick and Tom Anderson. "Workers Paid Off In Thing Called 'Love.'" (an unpublished thesis.)
"Investigation Of A Citizen Above Suspicion." (A film about the freak out of a police official very high on the hierarchy worried that there may be no Daddy between himself and the strange—since he himself is "daddy" to so many people.)
Long before the rise of Rome, or Athens or Sumeria, the rule of women in matriarchies and queenoms was solidified and spread across the continents. Wherever the Amazons roamed, wherever the great queens or sacred priestesses of the Great Goddess went, the labrys (or labyris), the curved double-axe, came with them, aiding in their conquests.

In brush-covered lands, the labrys was a tool for clearing the land. In mountain-covered Greece and Russia, the labrys was a tool for clearing away angry patriarchs. In Crete, where priestesses ruled in the name of the Goddess for over 1500 years, the labrys became a symbol of the Goddess in her aspects as moon-deity, protectress of women, and giver of life and death. Through time, the Cretan labrys came to represent even more; the double-axe became the symbol of divinely-sanctioned leadership, the repository of female physical and philosophical might. The great palace at Knossos was named the Labyrinth, the Place of the Double-Axe, and the Cretan symbols for woman came to include the labrys as axe and as butterfly, as deadly weapon and as psychological symbol of life-amid-death.

A flint double-axe was used in ceremonies to bring rain, to sacrifice victims to the chief deity, to break sod, and to reap grain. Some Amazon groups used the labrys as a major weapon in hard-fought battles against vicious male enemies in Thrace, Attic Greece, and in Asia Minor, in the areas near the rivers Thermodon and Iris. The double-axe has been found painted on temple walls in Crete and in Catal Huyuk (Anatolian Turkey), carved on walls in pre-Celtic Stonehenge, and laid in the graves of "Paleolithic" European women. The labrys has been a symbol of gynocracy (rule by women) among the Lycians, the Lydians, the Etruscans, the Attic Greeks, the Gauls, the Druids, and the Scandinavians (Thor's hammer and Zeus' thunderbolt both used to be the double-axe), as well as among the Aegean peoples, the Thermodontine Amazons, and the male-oriented Romans.

Sources:
Elizabeth Gould Davis, *The First Sex*, (Penguin paperback, 1971)
Ann Forfreedom, "The Matriarchies and Their Fall," in *Women Out of History; A Herstory Anthology* (available from Ann Forfreedom, P.O. Box 25514, Los Angeles, Ca. 90025, price $3.50)
EMILY CARR

I'm sorry that expenses prevent us from printing reproductions of Emily Carr's paintings—they can be seen only in the Vancouver Art Gallery or in Emily's published journals, HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS. But Emily Carr's writings, which you can sample here, is as vibrant and profound as her paintings with the same startling depth and power modestly cloaked in homespun language and everyday images.

In a painting called "Houses Below Mountain," Emily evoked all the vast wild immensity of untamed Western Canada, and at the same time miraculously contained it in a simple mound shape that keeps a tenuous balance with the cluster of houses below—a breathtaking visual interpretation of the precarious relationship between people and nature in the land Emily loved.

Most of her paintings don't show such traces of civilization, but record Emily's direct experiences with the forests and land of Western Canada. She painted trees, undergrowth, sky, roots, with a combination of simple boldness and infinite subtlety that could come only from a lifetime of rapport with them on canvas and in life. British Columbia during Emily's time (1871-1945) may have been an inspiring natural environment, but culturally it was a wasteland. To continue working as an artist in Emily's situation, isolated completely from the support and influence of other artists, was a task that had to be reckoned with every day. To be besides, a woman artist living without a man, in a society where a woman engaged in any activity besides marriage was considered to be a superfluous freak—it took a strength matching that of the Canadian forests.

Emily Carr developed her courage and independence early. She wrote in GROWING PAINS, her autobiography, of her first rebellion against the rule of her Victorian Father:

"I heard a lady say to Mother, "Isn't it difficult, Mrs. Carr, to discipline our babies when their fathers spoil them so?"

Mother replied, "My husband takes no notice of mine till they are old enough to run round after him. He then recognizes them as human beings and as his children, accepts their adoration. You know how little tots worship big, strong men!"

EMILY CARR

The other mother nodded and my mother continued, "Each of my children in turn my husband makes his special favorite when they come to this man-adoring age. When this child shows signs of having a will of its own he returns it to the nursery and raises the next youngest to favour. This one," she put her hand on me, "has overdrawn her share of favouritism because there was no little sister to step into her shoes. Our small son is much younger and very delicate. His father accuses me of coddling him, but he is the only boy I have left—I lost three."

Father kept sturdy me as his pet for a long time.

"Ah," he would say, "this one should have been the boy."

Father insisted that I be at his heels every moment that he was at home. I helped him in the garden, popping the bulbs into holes that he dug, holding strips of cloth and the tacks while he trained Isabella (his grapevine). I walked nearly all the way to town with him every morning. He let me snuggle under his arm and sleep during the long Presbyterian sermons. I held his hand during the walk to and from church. This all seemed to me fine until I began to think for myself—then I saw that I was being used as a soother for Father's tantrums; like a bone to a dog, I was being flung to quiet Father's temper. When he was extra cranky I was taken into town by my big sister and left at Father's wholesale warehouse to walk home with him because my chatter disturbed him.

I resented this and began to question why Father should act as if he was God. Why should people dance after him and let him think he was I decided disciplining would be good for Father and I made up my mind to cross his will sometimes. At first he laughed, trying to coax the waywardness out of me, but when he saw I was serious his fury rose against me. He turned and was harder on me than on any of the others. His soul was so bitter that he was even sometimes cruel to me.

"Mother," I begged, "need I be sent to town any more to walk home with Father?"

Mother looked at me hard. "Child," she cried, "what aile you? You have always loved to be with your father. He adores you. What is the matter?"

"He is cross, he thinks he is as important as God."

Mother was supremely shocked; she had brought her family up under the English tradition that the men of a woman's family were created to be worshipped. My insurrection pained her. She was as troubled as a hen that has hatched a duck.

Emily's mother died when she was twelve years old and her father died two years later, leaving her in the care of an older sister (there were three more sisters and a brother besides) who imposed a discipline every bit as harsh as her father's had been. After years of enduring this unhappy home life—finding solace only in the forests and fields which would later become most important for her work as a painter—Emily found a way out. She went to the man who had been appointed guardian of the Carr children by her father and persuaded him to arrange for her education at the San Francisco School of Art (now the San Francisco Art Institute). So began a new phase of Emily's life.

It was in San Francisco that Emily experienced two of the three thwarted love relationships she would in later years remember as "deadly blows" to her young psyche. Of
the three (all of them women) the friendship with Ishbel Dane takes precedence in Emily Carr's autobiography as the deepest and most dramatic, and the one which hurt her most. Emily and Ishbel were roomers at the same boarding house as well as classmates at The School of Art, and both the boarding house ladies and Emily's school friends expressed disapproval of the relationship, though it is never made very clear why. Here is Emily's account of her feelings for Ishbel, and what became of their friendship:

(The two young women belonged to a banjo and guitar club.)

I had to go to the music studio for some music. The Club leader was giving a lesson. He shut his pupil into the studio with her tinkling mandolin, followed me out onto the landing. As I took the roll of music from him he caught me round the wrists.

"Little girl," he said, "be good to Ishbel, you are her only woman friend and she loves you. God bless you!" His door banged.

I was a woman's friend! Suddenly I felt grown up. Mysteriously Ishbel was my trust. I went down stairs slowly, each tread seemed to stretch me, as if my head had remained on the landing while my feet and legs elongated me. On reaching the pavement I was grown up, a woman with a trust. I did not quite know how or why Ishbel needed me. I only knew she did and was proud.

While I was out a letter had come. I opened it. My guardian thought I had "played at Art" long enough. I was to come home and start Life in earnest. Ishbel clung to me. "Funny little mother-girl," she said, kissing me. "I am going to miss you!"

A man's head was just appearing over the banister rail. She poked something under my arm, pushed me gently towards my own room. A great lump was in my throat. Ishbel was the only one of them all who hadn't wanted to change some part of me—the only one who had. Under my arm she had pushed a portrait of herself.

Two weeks later, back in Canada, Emily received this news:

From the boarding house one of the grandmothers absolutely sniffed in writing, "Ishbel Dane died in the 'Good Samaritan' hospital on Christmas Eve. Under the circumstances, my dear, perhaps it was best."

...I carried my crying into the snowy woods. The weather was bitter, my tears were too.

Similarly moving events that Emily Carr recounts in Growing Pains are far too numerous to skip over briefly here. Both the autobiography and the journals are scarce—maybe to be found in a chance library here and there. They're worth looking for. The following selections from Hundreds and Thousands start with a mature Emily Carr, settled in British Columbia and working steadily at her painting and writing.
November 23rd, 1930

Yesterday I went to town and bought this book to enter scraps in, not a diary of statistics and dates and decency of spelling and happenings but just to jot me down in, unvarnished me, old me at fifty-eight—old, old, old, in most ways and in others just a baby with so much to learn and not much time left here but maybe somewhere else. It seems to me it helps to write things and thoughts down. It makes the unworthy ones look more shamefaced and helps to place the better ones for sure in our minds. It sorts out jumbled up thoughts and helps to clarify them, and I want my thoughts clear and straight for my work.

I used to write diaries when I was young but if I put anything down under the skin I was in terror that someone would read it and ridicule me, so I always burnt them up before long. Once my sister found and read something I wrote at the midnight of a new year. I was sorry about the old year, I had seemed to have failed so, and I had hopes for the new. But when she hurled my written thoughts at me I was angry and humbled and hurt and I burst smarting into the New Year and broke all my resolutions and didn't care. I burnt the diary and buried the thoughts and felt the world was a mean, sneaking place. I wonder why we are always sort of ashamed of our best parts and try to hide them. We don't mind ridicule of our "silliness" but of our "sores," ok! Indians are the same, and even dogs. They'll enjoy a joke with you, but ridicule of their "reals" is torment.

A picture does not want to be a design no matter how lovely. A picture is an expressed thought for the soul. A design is a pleasing arrangement of form and colour for the eye.

July 16th, 1933

I wonder will death be much lonelier than life. Life's an awfully lonesome affair. You can live close against other people yet your lives never touch. You come into the world alone and you go out of the world alone yet it seems to me you are more alone while living than even going and coming. Your mother loves you like the deuce while you are living than even going and coming. Your mother loves you like the deuce while you are

August 31st, 1933

A wet day in camp. The rain pattered on the top of the Elephant all night. Mrs. "Pop Shop" and I went for our nightly dip in the river. It was cold and took courage and much squealing and knee-shaking. Neither of us has the pluck to exhibit the bulges of our fat before the youngsters, so we "mermaid" after dark. I dare not run back, the footing among the cedars is ribbed with big roots. One's feet must pick and one's eyes must pierce through the dim obscurity of the great cedars and maples. Once inside the Elephant, scrubbed down with a hard brush and cuddled up to a hot bottle, I thought I loved the whole world, I felt so good. But last night as I stood in my nightie and cap, a male voice made a howl and a male head thrust into the van. Well, all the love and charity fled from my soul. I was red hot and demanded his answer. Finally I caught, "Can I get any bread?" "No," I replied tartly, "The shop is shut out there." He disappeared in the night and then I felt a beast and ran to the door to offer him what I had in camp but he had vanished, swallowed up in the black night. I might have been more tolerant, but I hate my privacy being torn up by the roots. I thought of that one word "bread" every time I awoke.

September 8th, 1933

I made two poor sketches today. Every single condition was good for work, but there you are—cussedness! What a lot I'd give tonight for a real companionable pal, male or female, a soul pal one wasn't afraid to speak to or listen to. Pete never had one like that. I expect it is my own fault. If I was nice right through I'd attract that kind to me. I do not give confidences. Now look at Mother "Pop Shop." There she is in her tiny shop doling out gingerpop, cones, confidences and smiles to all comers. Let any old time-waster hitch up to her counter and she will entertain him and listen to him as long as his wind lasts. Tonight one was there a full hour and a half. She has nothing to sit on at the counter. She's awfully fat and heavy but she lolls with this bit of fat on a candy box and that bit on a pop bottle and another bit on the cream jars and the counter supports her tummy while she waggles her permanent wave and manifold chins and gib tongue till the sun sinks behind the hill and her son whimpers for supper and the man has paid his last nickel and compliment. Then she rolls over to the cook stove complaining at the shortness of the day. Does she get more out of life by that sort of myself with shanties for sketching outings, cabins, tents, log huts, houseboats, tool sheds, lighthouses—many strange quarters. Then one day, plop! into my very mouth, like a great sugar-plum for sweetness, dropped the caravan.

There it sat, grey and lumbering like an elephant, by the roadside—"For sale." I looked her over, made an offer, and she is mine. Greater even than the surprise of finding her was the fact that nobody opposed the idea but rather backed it up. We towed her home in the dark and I sneaked out of bed at 5 o'clock the next morning to make sure she was really true and not just a grey dream.
stuff than I do with my sort of stuff? I wouldn't change—but who is the wiser woman? Who lives fullest and collects the biggest bag full of life? I dunno...

September 14th, 1933
I have found winter grazing for the Elephant after much tramping. It has settled in to pour. Mrs. Hooper supped in my camp and by the fire we sat long, talking. There is a straight-from-the-shoulderarness about her I like. She does what comes to her hand to stuff than I do with my sort of stuff? I wouldn't change—but who is the wiser woman? Through her conversation (not boastfully) ran a thread of kindness and real usefulness. I feel wormy when I see what others do for people and I doing so little. I try to work honestly at my job of painting but I don't see that it does anyone any good. If I could only feel that my painting lifted someone or gave them joy, but I don't feel that. I enjoy my striving to express. Another drinks because he enjoys drinking or eats because he enjoys eating. It's all selfish.

Emily Carr, born Dec. 13, 1871 at Victoria, B.C., 4 a.m. in a deep snow storm, tomorrow will be sixty-two. It is not all bad, this getting old, ripening. After the fruit has got its growth it should juice up and mellow. God forbid I should live long enough to ferment and rot and fall to the ground in a squash.

April 6th
The old longing will come. Oh, if there was only a really kindred spirit to share it with, that we might keep each other warm in spirit, keep step and tramp uphill together. I'm a bit ashamed of being a little depressed again. Perhaps it is recog the dogs and the monkey and the rat. I loafed all day. Next week I must step on the gas.

May 14th, 1934
Now let's see if I am kidding myself about being too tired to work or if it's just laziness about assembling my stuff and setting out. How life does tear us this way and that—what you ought to do and what you want to do; when you ought to force and when you ought to sit! There's danger in forcing but there is also danger in sitting. Now hens know just when they ought to sit. Hens are very wise.

June 16th
There is no right and wrong way to paint except honestly or dishonestly. Honestly is trying for the bigger thing. Dishonestly is bluffing and getting through a smattering of surface representation with no meaning, made into a design to please the eye. Well, that is all right for those who just want eye work. It seems to satisfy most people, doers and lookers. It's the same with most things—the puppies, for instance. People go into schemes of delight over them—their innocent quiet look, their fluff and cuddle, but when the needs of the little creatures are taken into consideration they are "filthy little beasts" and a nuisance. The love and attraction goes no deeper than the skin. You've got to love things right through.

August 12th
I haven't found one friend of my own age and generation. I wish I had. I don't know if it's my own fault. I haven't a single thing in common with them. They're all snarled up in grandchildren or W.A. or church teas or bridge or society. None of them like painting and they particularly dislike my kind of painting. It's awkward, this oil and water mixing. I have lots more in common with the young generation, but there you are.

The old longing will come. Oh, if there was only a really kindred spirit to share it with, that we might keep each other warm in spirit, keep step and tramp uphill together. I'm a bit ashamed of being a little depressed again. Perhaps it is recog the dogs and the monkey and the rat. I loafed all day. Next week I must step on the gas.

June 30th, 1935
The wind is roaring and it is cold. I revolted against wrestling with the campfire and shivering over breakfast in the open field, so I breakfast in the van. It is a day to cuddle down. Even the monkey pleaded to come back to her sleeping box, tuck her shawls about her and watch me.

I did two sketches, large interiors, trying to unify the thought of the whole wood in the bit I was depicting. I did not make a good first of it but I feel connections more than ever before. Only three more days of this absolute freedom and then I have to pack up and get back to the old routine, though it will be nice to get back to those two dear sisters who plod on, year in and year out, with never a break or pause in their monotonous lives. But it would not give them a spacious joy to sit at a little homemade table writing, with three sleeping pups on the bunk beside me, a monk at my shoulder and the zip and roar of the wind lifting the canvas and shivering the van so that you feel you are part and parcel of the storming yourself. That's living! You'd never get that feel in a solid house shut away securely from the living elements by a barricade!

December 24th
We just had our present-giving at Alice's, just we three old girls. Alice's house was full of the smell of new bread. The loaves were piled on the kitchen table, the dining-room table was piled with parcels, things changing hands. This is our system and works well: we agree on a stated amount—it is small because our big giving is birthdays. Each
of us buys something for ourselves or to our own liking, goods amounting to the stated sums. We bring them along and Christmas Eve, with the usual greetings and thankings, accept the presents from each one-homely, practical little wants, torch batteries, hearth brooms, coffee strainers, iron handles, etc. It’s lots of fun. We lit four red candles in the window and drank ginger ale and ate Christmas cake and new bread and joked and discussed today and tomorrow and yesterday and compared tirednesses and rheumatics and rejoiced that Christmas came only once per year. We loved each other, we three; with all our differences we are very close.

Christmas Day

Two would-be art critics came to the studio. They were “pose-y,” waved their paws describing sweeps and motions in my pictures, screwed their eyes, made monocles of their fists, discoursed on aesthetics, asked prices, and expounded on technique. One paints a little and teaches a lot, the other “aesthetics” with I do not quite know what aim. Both think women and their works beneath contempt but ask to come to the studio on every occasion. Why?

February 9th,

... Lovers' letters I destroyed years back; no other eye should see those. But there was a note, written forty years and more after the man had been my sweetheart and he loved me still. He married as he told me he should. He demanded more than I could have given; he demanded worship. He thought I made a great mistake in not marrying him. He ought to be glad I did not; he'd have found me a bitter mouthful and very indigestible, and he would have bored me till my spirit died.

April 16th, 1937

I have been thinking that I am a shirker. I have dodged publicity, hated write-ups and all that splutter. Well, that's all selfish conceit that embarrassed me. I have been forgetting Canada and forgetting women painters. It's them I ought to be upholding, nothing to do with puny me at all. Perhaps what brought it home was the last two lines of a crit in a Toronto paper: “Miss Carr is essentially Canadian, not by reason of her subject matter alone, but by her approach to it.” I am glad of that. I am also glad that I am showing these men that women can hold up their end. The men resent a woman who is generous with love to them? My love had those three deadly blows. Did it ever fully recover from those three dreadful hurts? Perhaps it sprouts from the earth again, but those first vigorous shoots of the young plant were the best, the most vital. I have loved three souls passionately. I have known friendship, jealousy and dreadful hurt.

December 13th, 1940

Sixty-six years ago tonight I was hardly me. I was just a pink bundle snuggled in a blanket close to Mother. The north wind was bellowing round, tearing at everything. The snow was all drifted up on the little balcony outside Mother's window. The night before had been a disturbed one for everybody. Everything was quietened down tonight. The two-year Alice was deposed from her baby throne. The bigger girls were sprouting motherisms, all-outer delighted with the new toy. Mother hardly realized yet that I was me and had set up an entity of my own. I wonder what Father felt. I can't imagine him being half as interested as Mother. More to Father's taste was a nice juicy steak served piping on the great pewter hotwater dish. That made his eyes twinkle. I wonder if he ever cosseted Mother up with a tender word or two after she'd been through a birth or whether he was as rigid as ever, waiting for her to buck up and wait on him. He ignored new babies until they were old enough to admire, old enough to have wills to break.

January 9th, 1938

You forget how much some of the friends of the past loved you till you read again some loving letters. Some men and lots of women loved me fiercely when I was young. I wonder when I read the old letters from friends not given to talk and flattery, was I as generous with love to them? My love had those three deadly blows. Did it ever fully recover from those three dreadful hurts? Perhaps it sprouts from the earth again, but those first vigorous shoots of the young plant were the best, the most vital. I have loved three souls passionately. I have known friendship, jealousy and dreadful hurt.

March 5th

The world is horrid right straight through and so am I. I lay awake for three hours in the night and today as a result I am tired and ratty even though the sun is as nice as can be. I want to whack everyone on earth. I've a cough and a temper and every bit of me is tired. I'm old and ugly, stupid and ungracious. I don't even want to be nice. I want to grouse and sulk and rip and snort. I am a pail of milk that has gone sour. Now, perhaps, having written it all down, the hatredness will melt off to where the mist goes when the sun gets up. Perhaps the nastiness in me has scooted right down my right arm and through my fingers into the pencil and lies spilled openly on the paper to shame me. Writing is a splendid sorter of your good and bad feelings, better even than that paint.
to get time and money to push further into art, not the art of making pictures and becoming a great artist, but art to use as a means of expressing myself, putting into visibility what gripped me in nature.

Why call this manuscript Hundreds and Thousands? Because it is made up of scraps of nothing which, put together, made the trimming and furnished the sweetness for what might otherwise have been a drab life sucked away without crunch. Hundreds and Thousands are minute candies made in England—round sweetresses, all colours and so small that separately they are not worth eating. But to eat them as we ate them in childhood was a different matter. Father would take the big fat bottle off the shelf in his office and say, "Hold out your hands," Father tipped and poured, and down bobbed our three hands and out came our three tongues and licked in the Hundreds and Thousands, and lapped them up, lovely and sweet and crunchy.

It was these tiny things that, collectively, taught me how to live. Too insignificant to have been considered individually, but like the Hundreds and Thousands lapped up and sticking to our moist tongues, the little scraps and nothingnesses of my life have made a definite pattern. Only now, when the river has nearly reached the sea and small eddies gush up into the river's mouth and repulse the sluggish onflow, have they made a pattern in the mud flats, before gurgling out into the sea. Thank you, tiny Hundreds and Thousands. Thanks, before you merge into the great waters.

Sources:
living alone near Cannes, France, which is to the best of my knowledge where she, in her eighties now, still lives. There are no other sources of information worth mentioning about her except for a section in Ladies Bountiful (W.G. Rogers, 1968). She, perhaps for obvious reasons, didn't make it into Notable American Women or Who's Who, or even the Dictionary of National Biography—she is a forgotten great. Her only other works are some unpublished lesbian novels which we would dearly love to see. Hope you like the tidbits to follow:

Margaret Anderson is another proof of the theory that determined passionate artists are more often the products of artistically, intellectually vacuous parents than of geniuses. Margaret detested her family life with a passion, and it was this passion that drove her to be something different—something at least more interesting—and to lead "a life which was to be beautiful as no life had ever been."

The Andersons were rich but uncultured: her mother discouraged her reading, her piano playing, and indulging her craving for music. Nearly every unwed girl was expected to, and, second to do you don't want to do, and, first to do what you want to do."

She escaped more by chance than by plan. Clara Laughlin, an editor for Good Housekeeping, in response to Margaret's long letter describing her family and her desire to escape and her question as to whether this was crazy, wrote to Margaret to assure her that she wasn't crazy at all. And further, she said that Margaret's letter was the most interesting she had ever received. Miss Laughlin was so taken by Margaret that she invited her to come see her in Chicago.

Margaret, of course, plowed her way through the family's objections and went to Chicago. There she was intoxicated by Clara Laughlin's world: the talented artists and writers—people who had something to say when they talked.

And apparently, Clara was intoxicated by Margaret. The day after she returned home the family received a special delivery letter from Clara who said Margaret was a very "unusual girl" who should be "given an opportunity." She promised to take her under her wing, provide her with a job, and a home.

After an onslaught of Margaret's arguments (she passed out the more complicated ones in carbon copied pages to her mother, her father, and her sisters) they finally let her go.

As soon as she got there she began indulging her craving for music. Nearly every day she went to concerts. She absorbed Chicago's "culture" like a sponge. Clara arranged a job for her reviewing books (fifty a week for which she received only the amount of money she could sell the books for.) But she met people and she learned from what she read. From this she went on to work as a clerk in Brownes Bookstore in the Fine Arts Building, the literary oasis of Chicago, and then to being the literary editor of the Continent.

Again, repression brought out the best in Margaret. Chafing under the narrow morality of the Continent and their preference for "taste" over merit she was besieged one night by a brainstorm.

"I was now twenty-one. And I felt it was time to confer upon life that inspiration without which life is meaningless..."

I had been curiously depressed all day. In the night I wakened. First precise thought: I know why I'm depressed—nothing inspired is going on. Second: I demand that life be inspired every moment. Third: the only way to guarantee this is to have inspired conversation every moment. Fourth: most people get so far as conversation; they haven't the stamina, and there is no time. Fifth: if I had a magazine I could spend my time filling it up with the best conversation the world has to offer. Sixth: marvelous idea—salvation. Seventh: decision to do it. Deep sleep.

In the morning I thought no more about it. I didn't need to think. To me it was already an accomplished fact. I began announcing to everyone that I was about to publish the most interesting magazine that had ever been launched."

And that is exactly what Margaret Anderson did.

Despite wise discouragement from those in the know about the feasibility of such an enterprise she went on with it. She demanded contributions, she railroaded people into subscribing, and she solicited material from the very best writers of the day.

And they loved her. What was good (as ever) was not popular, and most of them were happy to have her publish their work (though she didn't (couldn't) pay them a dime. (Needless to say her parents had "cut her off" by now.)

The first issue of The Little Review was a launching out into impossibility. Margaret betrayed her passionate (if somewhat naively romantic) fever for the arts on every page. Her tone was poetic, inspiring, almost religious when she talked of her hopes for the magazine:

"If you've ever read poetry with a feeling that it was your religion, if you've ever come suddenly upon the whiteness of a Venus in a dim, deep room, if, in the early morning, you've watched a bird with great white wings fly straight up into the rose-colored sun...If these things have happened to you and continue to happen until you're left quite speechless with the wonder of it all, then you will understand our hope to bring them nearer to the common experience of the people who read us."

The feeling of awe, reverent wonder, which Margaret evoked in this passage was the keynote of the magazine, that and her unflagging courage in exploring the new. The list of her contributors is impressive in its scope: Sherwood Anderson, Richard Aldington, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Vachel Lindsay, Emma
Goldman, Carl Sandburg, Ford Madox Ford, Amy Lowell, Hemingway, Marianne Moore, James Joyce, Yeats, Apollinaire, T.S. Eliot, etc. (Mostly men, yes, but there was an article on some element of feminism in almost every issue—a unpopular stand at the time.)

At twenty-one, then, she began what was to become the apotheosis of the avant-garde—"the world's best literary magazine." The going was anything but easy. There was never enough money. The people with money tended to only be interested in making more and Chicago wasn't really the cultural capital it had seemed to her at first.

But Margaret was enterprising. When she and her sister and her sister's three children found themselves without money to pay the rent on the house they were living in, Margaret managed to convince them to move onto a deserted shore of Lake Michigan. For seven months (from May to November) she and the family and the volunteer "office boy," camped illegally on the beach near Braeside.

Each morning she dressed in her one suit and her one blouse (drip-dry fortunately) and went into The Little Review office in Chicago by train. It rained coming and going. It poured, it lightninged, it thundered. But she made the best of it:

"I would squeeze a few buckets of water from my suit, pat it gently into shape, hang it on a cord in my tent and go downtown the next day looking immaculate."

In November, just as the first snows had begun to powder their tents and they thought they all would freeze, a man offered them a house in Chicago rent-free because he believed in The Little Review. This was the first of a string of such offers throughout Margaret Anderson's life. She never had money for rent, but she managed to live in some of the most beautiful houses in the world.

That winter, "the most interesting thing that happened to The Little Review (and to Margaret) took place. Jane Heap appeared."

In Jane, Margaret found what she had always been looking for: a conversationalist.

"Jane Heap is the world's best talker. It isn't a question of words, facility, style. It isn't a question of erudition. It isn't even a question of truth. (Who knows whether what she says is true?) It is entirely a question of ideas. No one can find such interesting things to say on any subject. I have often thought I should like to give my life over to talk-racing, with my money on Jane. No one else would ever win—"you can't win against magic. What it is exactly—"this making of ideas—I don't know. Jane herself doesn't know. Things become known to me, she says."

Jane was to become Margaret's lifetime friend and the first of her three major love relationships. The story of their intimate life together is too good to be excerpted. But here are a few choice tidbits:

"...Our talk began with luncheon, reached a climax at tea, and by dinner we were staggering with it. By five o'clock in the morning we were unconscious but still talking. Chiefly we talked ART—not "aesthetically" (no talk is so callow) but humanely. We talked of the human being behind the art...In other words we talked psychology...My mind was inflamed by Jane's ideas because of her uncanny knowledge of the human composition, her unfailing clairvoyance about human motivation. This was what I had been waiting for, searching for, all my life."

Tired of city life and hungering for a haven where they could have uninterrupted "conversation" they uprooted and moved to Mill Valley, California Little Review and all. They had the time of their lives in a ranch house which belonged to the local sheriff: playing piano, riding horses, eating exquisitely, and of course "conversing."

"By early autumn our conversations on the ranch had attained such proportions that our physical lives had to be completely readjusted to them. There was such a spell upon us when our talk went well that it was difficult—it was destroying—to break it up by saying good-night, going to bed, and calling out from one room to the other our final intellectualization. It seemed to me that this shock could be avoided with a little ingenuity. So I moved our beds (divans) into the living room, placing them on the floor at each side of and at right angles to the fireplace. Between them I put a low table and we dined in pajamas in order to avoid the brutality of breaking up the conversation to undress. There was nothing to do after dinner but push the table away, light another cigarette, and when we could talk no more fall off to sleep under the impression that we hadn't stopped."

Their stay in California was not all sweetness and light—their temperaments not entirely compatible—but they and The Little Review hung together (they were co-editors by now) and moved back to Chicago when California's rainy season got too much for them. They arrived there penniless as usual, then a "kind-hearted woman" offered them a mansion.

Ever restless, they soon moved on to New York. There, the artists and writers flocked around them seeking entry to The Little Review. Rich in culture, but utterly poor, they one day realized they had nothing left but a sack of potatoes. "For three days we ate nothing but potatoes, arranged in every possible way to which the potato will lend itself."

And that in a way is the secret of their charming life together. Penniless wherever they went, they managed to arrange what they had into a semblance of elegance. They were interior decorators, they were carpenters, plasterers, floor layers, gardeners. Wherever they lived they were transformed by their talents. Whatever they set their minds to do they did, despite lack of materials, money and know-how.

One of the most impressive accomplishments was the publishing of James Joyce's Ulysses. Beginning in March, 1918, The Little Review ran Ulysses serially month after month for three years. Joyce (after seven years of work on the novel) had been unable to find a publisher anywhere. He had exhausted all possibilities when Ezra Pound sent the first chapter of the manuscript to Margaret.

She immediately decided to print it which caused her the scorn of just about every critic, every reviewer, alive at the time. They were accused of being pur-
veyors of filth by the critics, the United States Post Office burned all the copies mailed of four separate issues for obscenity, and finally Margaret and Jane were arrested, brought to trial and fined a hundred dollars for "obscenity." (A friend paid their fine.)

Only after they had championed Joyce and endured this kind of harassment for years did the literary establishment begin to take Joyce seriously.

After ten years of struggling with *The Little Review* Margaret felt it was time for her to do something else. "Ten years of one's life is enough to devote to one idea" she said, "unless one has no other ideas." Jane could not have disagreed more. Always "at swordpoints over our ideas of human development," Jane saw no reason at all to suddenly dissolve *The Little Review*.

Margaret decided that what she really wanted to do was to go to Europe and meet some of the people she had always wanted to know.

She "gave" *The Little Review* to Jane, but then at the last minute Jane decided to go to Europe too and so *The Little Review* took up residence in Paris.

It was Paris in the Twenties—Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Hemingway, Cocteau, Gide—and Margaret was in the thick of it. Jane apparently was not. She moved *The Little Review* back to New York and during 1924-27 she made it "the American mouthpiece" for modern art: German expressionists, Russian constructivists, French surrealists.

Finally, in 1929 Margaret and Jane agreed that *The Little Review* should be brought to a close—but of course with a bang not a whimper.

For their final extraordinary issue she and Jane decided to send out a list of essential questions to "fifty of the foremost men and women of the arts." The responses were amazing (see *The Little Review Anthology*), but perhaps not as good as the questions themselves.

I reprint them here in hopes, dear reader, that they may evoke from you some thoughts of your own, and possibly new material for *Amazon Quarterly*. We'll continue the saga of Margaret and Georgette LeBlanc et al. next issue.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. What should you most like to do, to know, to be? (in case you are not satisfied.)
2. Why wouldn't you change places with any other human being?
3. What do you look forward to?
4. What do you fear most from the future?
5. What has been the happiest moment of your life? The unhappiest? (If you care to tell.)
6. What do you consider your weakest characteristics? Your strongest? What do you like most about yourself? Dislike most?
7. What things do you really like? Dislike? (Nature, people, ideas, objects, etc. Answer in a phrase or a page, as you will.)
8. What is your attitude toward art today?
9. What is your world view? (Are you a reasonable being in a reasonable scheme?)
10. Why do you go on living?
Miller, Isabelle
   Patience and Sarah (McGraw-Hill)
Morgan, Claire
   The Price of Salt (Bantam)
Murdoch, Iris
   The Unicorn (Avon)
   An Unofficial Rose (Viking)
   The Italian Girl (Avon)
   An Accidental Man
Nin, Anais
   A Spy in the House of Love (Swallow)
   Children of the Albatross (Swallow)
   Ladders to Fire (Swallow)
Olivia (Dorothy Bussey)
   Olivia (Berkeley)
Renault, Mary
   The Middle Mist
   Promise of Love These 2 books are virtually unavailable.
Rochefort, Christiane
   Warrior's Rest (Fawcett)
   Stanzas to Sophie
Rule, Jane
   Desert of the Heart (London, Secker and Warburg)
   Against the Season
   This is Not for You
Sackville-West, Victoria
   The Dark Island (Doubleday)
Sarrazin, Albertine
   Astragal
   The Runaway
Slead, Christina
   Dark Places of the Heart (Holt, Rhinehard, Winston)
Stein, Gertrude
   3 Lives
   Lacy Church Amiably
Torres, Tereska
   Women's Barracks (Fawcett)
Weirauch, Anna
   The Outcast
   The Scorpion (Avon, Fawcett)
Wittig, Monique
   The Opopanax (Simon & Schuster)
   Les Guerilleres (Viking)
Woolf, Virginia
   Orlando (Signet)
   Mrs. Dalloway (Harvest)
   To the Lighthouse (Harvest)
Woolstonecraft, Mary
   Mary, A Fiction (London, Johnson, 1788)

NON-FICTION: ESSAYS, DIARIES, ETC.

Abbot, Sydne,
   and Love, Barbara
   Sappho Was a Right-On Woman (Stein & Day)
Barnes, Dju
   Ladies Almanac (Paris, 1923)
deBeauvoir, Simone
   The Second Sex (Bantam)
Brooks, Romaine
   No Pleasant Memories
Colette
   Earthly Paradise (NY, Farrar)
   The Pure and the Impure (NY, Farrar)
Damon Gene
   and Stuart, Lee
   The Lesbian in Literature, available by sending $2.25 to The
   Ladder, Box 5025 Washington Station, Reno, Nevada, 89503.
Davis, Elizabeth Gould
   The First Sex (G.P. Putnam's Sons)
Diner, Helen
   Mothers and Amazons (Julian Press)
Foster, Jeanette
   Sex Variant Women in Literature
Goldsmith, Margaret Leland
   Christina of Sweden (Doubleday)
Martin, Del
   and Phyllis Lyon
Mavor, Elizabeth
   Lesbian/Woman (Glide)
Nin, Anais
   The Ladies of Llangollen (London, Michael Joseph)
Solanas, Valerie
   The Diary of Anais Nin, I, II, III, IV, (Harvest)
S.C.U.M. Manifesto
   S.C.U.M. Manifesto (Olympia)
Stein, Gertrude
   Selected Writings (Vintage)
   World Is Round (Camelot)
   Fernhurst, QED, and Other Early Writings
   Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas
Troubridge, Lady Una
   The Life and Death of Radclyffe Hall (NY, Citadel)
Barney, Natalie Clifford
   Souvenirs Indiscrets
   Pensees d'une Amazone
Beka Lundberg came to Sarah Lawrence with a ready-made reputation. She was a poet; she’d already published poems in four magazines by the time she was eighteen. She was also a thief, though that might be putting it a little strongly. She just kept on getting caught (and laughing), while all the rest of us managed to shoplift with impunity. I asked one of the graduates of her Very Proper School for Young Ladies, if Beka had more than just anticipated her inevitable comparison with Genet. I suggested that on some dark and otherwise nameless night, little Beka, alone in the school chapel perhaps, had plotted her poems and plotted her thefts, eager to sacrifice social propriety for a leap ahead of other aspiring young writers. The graduate, disinterested in people’s motives, never answered my question, but told me instead that Beka had been too drunk to walk up the aisle during the school’s commencement exercises.

To me at first, Beka was no more than a tiny jab, a small irritant. No one compared me to Genet, possibly because I was careful never to be caught. I was a junior by the time she entered Sarah Lawrence with her reputation. My daily life had fallen into a routine: one day I spent studying, and that evening I’d drink from sundown till I passed out. The second day, I recovered from a blinding hangover, doing errands that weren’t too taxing. I would write on the third day in this series, closeting myself in my room with Diet-Rite Colas and packs of cigarettes. The next day, I started the sequence again. It was a pattern that suited me.

I only allowed myself one luxury. My comfort was my fantasy woman lover, Mary. When I’d entered Sarah Lawrence, two years earlier, bereft of any kind of reputation, I’d meant to leave Mary back at my parents’ house, curled up in my pillow, where she stayed when I wasn’t around. But two months later, I gave in, and she flew out to New York and joined me in my tiny room. My room now was a little bigger, and I shared a bathroom with one girl instead of sixteen. Mary didn’t care about my rise in status; all she wanted was to be with me, wherever I was. But my fantasy lover was no clinging violet. She had her own friends, and she painted brilliant hard-edge canvases in desert oranges and browns. Because she was imaginary, she was an ideal lover, there when I needed her, painting when I wanted to be alone. Childish games, I would say to myself in strong and repressive moments, but Mary would return, later that evening or the next day, and I would be comforted while I waited for her flesh and blood embodiment to step into my life.

The morning of one of my hungover days was when I first spied this clever operator, Beka Lundberg. I was at a table in the old Oak Cafeteria, sipping coffee to perk me up, and gulping milk to calm me down, while my stomach bulged out like a troubled boil. Beka, tall and slender, her short hair a dark, curly cap, strode to the coffee machine like a gladiator about to fight. A cigarette hung from her lower lip, and I could see her teeth
CONVERSATION

As I look back on my life I see that what I have desired and looked for more than anything else is good conversation. I have not had many. Only a handful, and those are indelible memories now.

In search of good conversation I emerged from the sludge of Southern small town ignorance and made my way to a university. I did not find it there. I stayed on for graduate school thinking surely this was another level of seriousness, a place where others would have the same hunger as I. I did not find it there.

Finally, I decided I must leave the South to find what I wanted. I came to Berkeley four years ago. I have found it occasionally, but still I am in contact at this moment with only a very few people who have any interest in conversation.

In the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries before the Romantic idealization of the inarticulate set (when in order to be "felt" something need necessarily be inexpressible), people used to have conversations. Yes, the rich, the leisure class—but what other art form is so accessible to the mass of humankind? It requires no material, no equipment—nothing besides two partakers (or more) and in this day and age the absence of television.

Sometimes it's hard to envision just what people did before Marconi. They talked. And if the human race then was at least as intolerant to boredom as we are today we know that they must have taken some pains to make their talk interesting—at least as interesting as t.v. or they should have all gone mad blathering in the drawing room every night, each other's sole entertainment.

I am sure good conversation is still possible despite McLuhan, despite television, and despite the general anti-egghead sensibility which all of us in America have been nurtured on. I operate on that hope. And it is largely that hope which was behind my starting this magazine.

What in the world has all this to do with lesbians or for that matter feminism? A lot. In all my endeavors to find conversation, until the last three years, I looked only to men—unconsciously of course—but most definitely I supposed them more interested in such things than women. A fatal assumption on my part because as I have come to define conversation it is all but impossible between a man and a woman—that is be-
tween two people who do not have equal self-images. A man, even the most radical exception to chauvinism on earth—a pure lamb—can be matched with a woman and unless she is free of every vestige of her old inferior self-image the discourse will be unequal and the energy impeded. The above situation would be close to ideal compared to the more usual situation where self-image does not even have a chance to enter in—where the male’s image of the woman is so negative that the woman’s self-image really makes no difference.

So, the first criteria it seems to me for a good conversation is that the people have equal self-images. Neither feels intimidated by the other and neither feels the other to be less stimulating, less intelligent, less experienced, etc. than herself.

We’ve all had days when we’ve talked to several people in succession and noticed that some exchanges were completely and hopelessly awkward making us feel like real dolts and then others left us amazed at the ease and the fruitfulness of the talk. But usually we don’t stop to compare them and to try to figure out what the dynamic is behind a good conversation. I want to do that—to try to understand what the factors are in a good conversation so that, hopefully, I’ll be able to have more of them.

The self-image criteria is very important, I think. Even between women—between lesbians—it could get in the way. Lots of things bespeak our self-image; many of them in body language. The way we hold our head, whether or not we look directly into the other person’s eyes, how we use our hands and the rest of our body when we talk.

Submission gestures are not limited to the interaction between men and women. Many women I know, lesbians even who think of themselves as real “tough tits,” come on just like their straight sisters: smiling constantly even though what they say is not humorous or even pleasant, their head cocked to one side, their glance averted or their eyes cast down at the floor. Research with primates (monkeys, chimpanzees, apes) has surfaced a whole battery of submission gestures which distinguish the female from the male among monkeys. These gestures are the key signals in maintaining their hierarchical culture. I’m not aware of similarly detailed studies of submission gestures among humans, but certainly we should be able to translate the findings. Of course, women do not corner the market on this. Many men who have failed in a sexist culture to bare the cross of masculinity also project submission gestures—sometimes even to females. And there are vestiges of submission gestures even in lesbians.

This may seem a digression, but I think this factor of body language plays a very significant part in determining the course of a conversation. Many of our cues to how we will speak and how we will listen we pick up from nonverbal signals. If my partner is chewing her nails to the quick, looking at the ceiling between each sentence and tapping the floor with a fury I do not look forward to a good conversation. If my partner’s eyes seem to loom at me from the ceiling, her voice is twice too loud, and her gestures look like boxing exercises I am too intimidated to even think about conversation.

Leaving the physical, there are also verbal cues that tell us (even if subconsciously) that the conversation is doomed to be very shallow or very awkward because the two people do not have equal self-images. If a person couches every remark with a barrage
of self-doubting qualifiers ("I think, perhaps I'm wrong but, it seems to me, etc.") or if she cannot seem to use any but the vocabulary of the hippy handbook ("Far out, with it, together, out of sight") or some equally role-ridden language I give up quickly. This is not a person but a role that I'm encountering.

I am talking, you might say though, about being articulate. Recently there has been much discussion of that word because of an upsurge of interest in class among lesbians. In Berkeley several class workshops have formed to discuss how lesbians of the middle class oppress working class lesbians. One primary outcome of this has been the assertion that middle class women are more "articulate" and therefore oppress working class women by "outtalking" them. *The Furies* has been driving this point home now (with hardly any variation) every issue since the paper started. They take it so seriously it seems that every writer on the paper has decided to write and talk inarticulately. The paper is now a mess of shoddy journalism and consciously dull writing. (Lest you think I'm suspect, my father was a barber, my mother a "housewife," and I only pay $1.00 for my food stamps.)

The way to handle this problem of unequal articulacy is not to hush the women who for some reason (and I'm not sure class is necessarily the reason) can speak their thoughts directly, but to come to a better understanding of why some women cannot and how they begin to break down their barriers.

That, I suppose, is the province of psychology, but conversation as I think of it is the province of art. Once two people feel themselves to be equal and that they have some common interest to talk about, real conversation as opposed to communication becomes possible (not likely, but possible).

I think of conversation as an art directly related to but even more exciting and demanding than writing. I have not said better. Certainly the written word is much better for communicating a lot of things than the spoken word. But the timing, the immediacy of a conversation, is to me usually more exciting than my interplay with my typewriter. It is thinking on my feet which excites me—the fact that sometimes when I open my mouth in reply I do not know what will come out. I love being surprised—learning from my mind what I could not have predicted it would say. And I love the glow on the other person's face that tells me she too is thinking and discovering as she speaks. It is this mutual act of discovery which I would abandon an icecream cone midway for or even, I suppose, rise from the conjugal bed. Gina tells me it is only my satiety on this front which allows me to make such a glib remark, but I'm not sure. I'm really not sure. I love great conversation (as little as I've had of it) nearly, I think, above all else in life.

I love it so much that I have gone to some length to try to figure out just what the circumstances are that produce the fever in my cheeks and the rising adrenalin in my system that tells me I'm having a good conversation.

First of all, I think, good conversation must be about something—something which is equally important to the conversers. This presupposes a certain amount of "common ground"—a common field of experience of knowledge from which to draw. This need
not be a narrow range however: Sally whose interest is in Chinese culture may find many fertile cross-currents with Nancy who has a passion for Classical Greece. The generalizations they draw from their exchange of information may take them far beyond what either of them suspected—off as far as their own fantasies—perhaps even beyond the conscious mind. The starting points appear mundane, but with equal risk-taking the conversation may soar far beyond the topic.

Equal risk-taking. I think that's very important. That means that Sally will risk being wrong knowing that Nancy has no objection at all to her trying out theories on her and then maybe later erasing them if they prove to be wrong. Saying only what you are sure of—sticking to the facts—is not conversation—it is recitation. The beauty of the dance between you is that you are not confined to the box step. You can go anywhere discovering potential in yourselves you had never dreamed of. Look for new patterns. Put your thoughts together and see what generalizations you can draw.

A meaningful conversation for me is one in which each person contributes her experience in order to increase the range of perceptions available from which to draw conclusions about how to live. That's a mouthful that sounds something like a textbook definition or rules on the lid of a game. But the important part is that this conversation may have the effect of changing the way I live. In order for any real excitement to build I have to think there is potentially some way that this conversation will change my life. If I smugly assume that this will have no effect on me it may have the effect of changing the way I live. In order for any real excitement to build I have to think there is potentially some way that this conversation will change my life. If I smugly assume that this will have no effect on me—it won't.

So far I've been talking about preliminaries—attitudes that are necessary before the act. Equality, some common ground, a willingness to risk being wrong or even absurd, and an openness to the changes the conversation may precipitate.

Assuming all those things are in good order what about the conversation itself. How should it develop? There is of course no "should" but I do think there must be short cuts and pitfalls which are predictable.

First, it seems to me, each contribution to the conversation should develop the previous one in some way. It might show exceptions to what has been said, alternate means of perceiving the same material, add a confirming example from another range of experience, or question in further detail what was meant. The conversation is not really a set of questions or statements which are to be answered but a dance between two minds. It might not resemble a game at all. The important part of the dance is the music. The music may be classical or jazz or in some earlier style, but it is music and not a set of definitions or rules on the lid of a game. But the important part is that this conversation may have the effect of changing the way I live. In order for any real excitement to build I have to think there is potentially some way that this conversation will change my life. If I smugly assume that this will have no effect on me it may have the effect of changing the way I live. In order for any real excitement to build I have to think there is potentially some way that this conversation will change my life. If I smugly assume that this will have no effect on me—it won't.

Good conversations for me tend to end with a hug—at least some physical expression of the joy at having grown together through the exchange. And of course, there is really no need to wait 'til the end. Physical communication during a conversation even if it's only squeezing a hand to emphasize important points makes verbal communication a lot more forceful.

You may wonder at this rambling on so about conversation, but for me it is preliminary to love. It is the creation of a spark between me and another which may allow us to open our lives to one another and then our arms. It is (good conversation) saying we to open our lives to one another and then our arms. It is (good conversation) saying

(And that's another chapter my hardies, defining that "love" will have to wait. Would someone out there like to try her hand at it?)
CONTRIBUTORS

ANN FORFREEDOM
Los Angeles feminist and editor of Women Out of History: A Herstory Anthology.

BARBARA FREEMAN
When called on at 7:15 on the night of November 2 by the editors of Amazon Quarterly to give two sentences of autobiographical copy, Barbara Freeman said, "I think autobiographical information is bullshit."

CARSON BYERS
Makes etchings and water color paintings and goes to California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, California.

ERIKA
I am an intermediate Lesbian, having come out too late to be an "old" Lesbian and slightly too soon to be a fully certified "new" one. I am an editor and I live in San Francisco.

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LAUREL
Spending half my life on Amazon Quarterly at present—writing some and loving.

LINNEA DUE
I graduated from Sarah Lawrence in 1970 and I've been trying ever since to write full time.

PEGGY ALLEGRO
This article, composed 1 1/2 years ago under the influence of hashish, was my last written statement to the world. After all, what else was there to say. I now channel my abilities for creative expression into playing guitar in a rock and roll band.
herself welcomes members of the community to contribute to all areas of production and journalism!

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Amazon Quarterly is published four times a year by Amazon Press of Oakland, California. This is the February 1973 issue. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at Oakland Post Office, Oakland, California.
Who are you, Amazon Quarterly readers? What is it about A.Q. that excites you? What about Her don't you like? What bores you? What inspires you? We want Amazon Quarterly to become a real communication among women wherever the magazine reaches -- both the communication and the "wherever the magazine reaches" are in large part up to you.

We've received a handful of thoughtful, critical, but most often simply jubilant letters from readers of the first issue -- response that encourages us and lets us know in what areas we are most effectively communicating. But we need more feedback -- write to us (and please enclose a stamped return envelope if you want a reply). We'll start publishing a selection of letters in A.Q. if your responses are meaty and many. So, tell us when you write if it's O.K. to print your letter.

And now from the intellectual to the physical aspects of Miss Q.: we want to keep you informed about A.Q.'s current financial state of health so that you can better help us keep Her alive and going.

We printed 1000 copies of the first issue, and ran out with bookstore and subscription orders still coming in. Since the issue was so good that we don't want anyone to miss it, we've printed 500 copies more. So, tell your friends who might want complete collections to order a subscription now.

We think A.Q. is doing well for a lady who's just come out, but we want to zealously guard her condition to avoid the fate of The Ladder which folded in debt with 3500 subscribers. We need help. We don't have the money or means for extensive advertising -- but we do have over 500 subscribers spread out through the U.S. and Canada. We know that A.Q. will survive and grow on Her own merits if enough people are simply introduced to Her. So share this issue with friends and encourage them to subscribe; give gift subscriptions if you can. And especially important, go to your local public library and urge them to subscribe, or talk to the librarian at any college near you.

We also want to encourage you to send us your writing and your visual art. This issue, we think our scope is wider than issue ones' -- and we'd like you to help us expand even further in issue 3. We want to continue our series of lives of little known feminist artists and writers. If you have some suggestions about rare journals or autobiographies please let us know.
Rita Mae Brown has written the first outrageously funny lesbian novel. What follows are two of the most delightful episodes in the early part of our heroine's life. Ruby Fruit Jungle will be published in its entirety soon we hope... a much needed addition to lesbian fiction.

Ruby Fruit Jungle
by RITA MAE BROWN

VIOLET HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Leota B. Bisland sat next to me that year in sixth grade, and Leroy sat behind. Leota was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. She was tall and slender with creamy skin and deep, green eyes. She was quiet and shy so I spent most of sixth grade concentrating on making Leota laugh. Miss Potter wasn't too pleased with my performance in the first row but she was a sweet old soul and only made me stand in the hall once. That didn't work out because I kept returning to the door-way to dance when Miss Potter's head was turned. I also made the finger at Leroy. Right when I was in the middle of shooting the bird, Miss Potter turns from the blackboard, "Molly since you enjoy performing so much I'm going to make you the star of the Christmas play this year." Leroy asked whether the play was going to be The Creature from the Black Lagoon. Naturally everybody screamed. Miss Potter said no, it was a play about the nativity of Jesus and I was to be Virgin Mary. Cheryl Spiegelglass got so mad she jumped up and said, "But Miss Potter, the Virgin Mary was the mother of little Lord Jesus and she was the most perfect woman on earth. Virgin Mary has to be played by a good girl and Molly isn't good. Yesterday she stuck a wad of bubble gum in Audrey's hair." Cheryl was bucking to be Virgin Mary, that was clear. Miss Potter said that we had to consider dramatic talent not just whether a person was good or not. Besides, maybe if I played Virgin Mary some of her goodness would rub off.

Leota was a lady of Bethlehem so she was in the play too. And Cheryl was Joseph. Miss Potter said this would be a great challenge to Cheryl. She was also in charge of costumes, probably because her father would donate them. Anyway she got her name in the program twice in big letters.

Leroy was a Wise Man, and he wore a long beard with Little Lulu curls on it. We all had to stay after school every day to remember our lines and rehearse. Miss Potter was right? I was so busy trying to get everything perfect that I didn't have time to think about anything else except Leota. I began to wonder if girls could marry girls, because I was sure I wanted to marry Leota and look in her green eyes forever. But I would only marry her if I didn't have to do the housework. I was certain of that. But if Leota really didn't want to do it either, I guessed I'd do it. I'd do anything for Leota.

Leroy began to get mad that I was paying so much attention to a mere village inhabitant and he was a Wise Man. He forgot it as soon as I gave him my penknife with the naked lady on it that I clipped from Earl Stambach.

The Christmas pageant was an enormous production. All the mothers came, and it was so important that the fathers even took off work and Cheryl's was sitting right in the front row in the seat of honor. Carrie and Florence showed up to marvel at me being Virgin Mary and at Leroy in robes. Leroy and I were so excited we could barely stand it, and we got to wear makeup, rouge and red lipstick. Getting painted was so much fun that Leroy confessed he liked it too, although boys aren't supposed to, of course. I told him not to worry about it, because he had a beard and if you had a beard, it must be all right to wear lipstick if you wanted to because everyone will know you're a man. He thought that sounded reasonable and we made a pact to run away as soon...
as we were old enough and go be famous actors. Then we could wear pretty clothes all the time, never pick potato bugs and wear lipstick. We vowed to be so wonderful in this show that our fame would spread to the people who run theaters.

Cheryl overheard our plans and sneered, "You can do all you please, but everyone is going to look at me because I have the most beautiful Lipstick in the whole show."

"Nobody's gonna know it's you because you're playing Joseph and that'll throw them off. Ha," Leroy gloated.

"That's just why they'll all notice me, because I'll have to be specially skilled to be a good Joseph. Anyway, who is going to notice Virgin Mary, all she does is sit by the crib and rock Baby Jesus. She doesn't say much. Anybody can be Virgin Mary as long as you have to do is put a halo over her head. It takes real talent to be Joseph, especially when you're a girl."

The conversation didn't get finished because Miss Potter bustled back-stage. "Hush children, curtain's almost ready to go up. Molly, Cheryl get in your places."

When the curtain was raised there was a rustle of anticipation in the maternal audience. Megaphone Mouth said above all the whispers, "Isn't she dear up there?"

And dear I was. I looked at Baby Jesus with the tenderest looks I could manufacture and all the while my antagonist, Cheryl, had her hand on my shoulder digging me with her fingernails and a staff in her right hand. A record went on the phonograph and "Noel" began to play. The audience on the floor. So I decided two can play this game. I leaned over the doll and said in my most gentle voice, "0 dearest babe, I hope you have not hurt yourself. Come, let Mother put you back to bed." Well, Leroy was as surprised as I was. "It's a good thing she ain't mad but cut him off with, "Don't worry, Mary, babies fall out of the cradle all the time." That wasn't enough for greedy-guts, she then goes on about how she was a carpenter in a foreign land and how we had to travel many miles just so I could have my baby. She rattled on and on. All that time she spent in Sunday school was paying off because she had one story after another. I couldn't stand it any longer so I blurted out in the middle of her tale about the tax collectors, "Joseph, you shut up or you'll wake the baby." Miss Potter was aghast in the wings, and the shepherds didn't know what to do because they were back there waiting to come on. As soon as I told Joseph to shut up, Miss Potter pushed the shepherds on the stage. "We saw a star from afar," Robert Prather was already chattering. "And we came to worship the newborn Prince." Just then Barry Aldridge, another shepherd, peeped right there on the stage he was so scared. Joseph saw her chance and said in an imperious voice, "You can't pee in front of little Lord Jesus, go back to the hills." That made me mad. "He can pee where he wants to, this is a stable, ain't it?" Joseph stretched to her full height and began to push Barry off the stage with her staff. I jumped out of my chair and wrenched the staff out of her hand. She grabbed it back, "Go sit down, you're supposed to watch out for the baby. What kind of mother are you?"

"I ain't sittin nowhere until you button your fat lip and do this right." We struggled and pushed each other until I caught her off balance and she tripped on her long cloak. As she started to fall, I gave her a shove and she sailed off the stage into the audience. Miss Potter flew out on the stage, took my hand and said in a calm voice, "Now ladies and gentlemen, let's sing songs appropriate to the season."

"Now Molly, Cheryl did wrong to talk out of turn, but you shouldn't have shoved her off the stage." Then she let me go, not even a little slap. Leroy was as surprised as I was. "It's a good thing she ain't mad but wait until Aunt Carrie and Florence get a hold of you."

True enough, Carrie nearly lost her liver with rage and I had to stay in the house for a solid week and all that time I had to do the chores: dishes, ironing, wash, even cooking. That made me give up the idea of marrying Leota B. Bisland if she wouldn't do the chores or at least half of them. I had to figure out a way to find out what Leota would agree to.

That week I thought of how to ask Leota to marry me. I'd die in front of her and ask her in my last breath. If she said yes, I'd miraculously recover. I'd send her a note on colored paper with a white dove. I'd ride over to her house on Barry Aldridge's horse, sing her a song like in the movies, then she'd get on the back of the horse and we'd ride off into the sunset. None of them seemed right so I decided to come straight out and ask.

Next Monday after school Leroy, Leota and I were walking home. I gave Leroy a dime and told him to go on ahead to Mrs. Hershener's for an ice cream. He offered no resistance as his stomach always came first.

"Leota, you thought about getting married?"

"Yeah, I'll get married and have six children and wear an apron like my mother. Only my husband will be handsome."
"Who you gonna marry?"
"I don't know yet."
"Why don't you marry me. I'm not handsome but I'm pretty."
"Girls can't get married."
"Says who?"
"It's a rule."
"It's a dumb rule. Anyway, you like me better than anybody don't you? I like you better than anybody."
"I like you best but I still think girls can't get married."
"Look, if we want to get married we can get married. It don't matter what anybody says. Besides Leroy and I are running away to be famous actors. We'll have lots of money and clothes and we can do what we want. Nobody dares tell you what to do if you're famous. Now ain't that a lot better than sitting around here with an apron on?"
"Yes."
"Good. Then let's kiss like in the movies and we'll be engaged."
We threw our arms around each other and kissed. My stomach felt funny.
"Does your stomach feel strange?"
"Kinda."
"Let's do it again."
We kissed again and my stomach felt worse. After that, Leota and I went off by ourselves each day after school. Somehow we knew enough not to go around kissing in front of everyone, so we went into the woods and kissed until it was time to go home. Leroy was beside himself because he hedged, "I don't want to kiss girls."
"Kiss the cows then, Leroy. There's nothin else to kiss. It feels good. You're sure missing some fun!"
He began to weaken, "Do I have to close my eyes if I kiss you?"
"Yes. You can't kiss and keep your eyes open, they'll cross forever."
"I don't want to close my eyes."
"All right then, stupid, keep your eyes open. What do I care if you got cross-eyes? It's not my problem if you don't want to do it right."
"Who do I kiss first?"
"Whoever you want."
"I'll kiss you first since I know you better."
Leroy puckered up and gave me a kiss like Florence gives at night.
"Leroy, that ain't right. You got your mouth all screwed up. Don't smush it together like that."
Leota was laughing and she reached out to Leroy with a long arm, drew him to her and gave him a fat kiss. Leroy began to get the idea.
"Watch us," Leota advised. We finished a kiss then I gave Leroy another one. He was getting a little better at it although he was still stiff.
"How's your stomach feel?"
"Hungry, why?"
"Don't your stomach feel funny at all?" Leota asked.
"No."
"Maybe it's different for boys," she said.
After that the three of us went off after school. It was ok having Leroy around but he never did get to be an accomplished kisser. There were times when I felt kissing Leota wasn't enough, but I wasn't sure what the next step would be. So until I knew, I settled for kissing. I knew about fucking and getting stuck together like dogs and I didn't want to get stuck like that. It was very confusing. Leota was full of ideas. Once she laid down on top of me to give me a kiss and I knew that was a step in the right direction, until Leroy piled on and my lungs near caved in. I thought maybe we'd do it again when Leroy wasn't around.
Leroy convinced me not to tell anyone that we were kissing and all going to be famous. He figured it was another one of those rules and the grown-ups would keep us from running away to act. And the grown-ups did keep us three from running away together, but not because we were kissing in the woods.
One bitter night in February with the oven on and the gas heaters going, all the adults asked us into the kitchen. They told us we were moving to Florida as soon as school was over. There'd be warm weather all year round, and you could pick oranges right off the trees. I didn't believe it, of course. It can't be warm all year round. Another trick, but I didn't say anything. Carrie assured us we'd like it because we could swim in the ocean, and jobs were easier to find so there'd be something for everybody. Then they put us all to bed. Going to Florida wasn't so bad. They didn't have to tell lies to get me to go, I just didn't want to leave Leota, that's all.
The next day I told Leota the news and she didn't like it anymore than I did, but there seemed to be nothing we could do about it. We promised to write each other and to keep going out into the woods until the very last day.
Spring came late that year and the roads were muddy. Carrie and Florence had already gone through the house, throwing things out, packing things we didn't need for everyday use. By May everything was
ready to go save for a few kitchen utensils, the clothes we wore and a few pieces of furniture in the living room. Every day I felt a little worse. Even Leroy started to feel the pinch, and he didn't care about Leota or kissing quite the way I did. It seemed like if I was going to leave I ought to leave knowing more than kissing. Leota wasn't far from the same conclusion. One week before school ended she asked me to spend the night with her. She had a bedroom all to herself so we wouldn't have to share it with her little sister, and her mother said it was fine. This was one time things worked in my favor. There was no question that Leroy could be asked to spend the night. If Carrie wouldn't let me sleep in Leroy's room, it was a sure bet that nobody was going to let Leroy spend the night at Leota's. Leroy didn't care much anyway. Sleep was sleep to Leroy.

I put my toothbrush, pajamas and comb in a paper bag and walked down the road to the Bislands. You could see their house from far away because they had a tv aerial on it. We stayed up and watched the Milton Berle Show. He kept getting pies in the face and everyone thought that was so funny. I didn't think it was so funny. They should have eaten the pies instead of throwing them at each other. If they were mad why didn't they just knock the crap out of each other? It made no sense to me but it was fun to watch. I didn't care if Milton Berle didn't know better. After the show, we got into bed and pulled up the sheets. Leota's mother closed the door and shut off the lights because they were still watching TV. That was fine with us. Soon as the door was shut we started kissing. We must have kissed for hours but I couldn't really tell because I didn't think about anything except kissing. We did hear her parents turn off the TV and go to bed. Then Leota decided we'd try lying on top of one another. We did that but it made my stomach feel terrible.

"Molly, let's take our pajamas off and do that."
"Ok, but we got to remember to put them back on before morning."

It was much better without the pajamas. I could feel her cool skin all over my body. That really was a lot better. Leota started kissing me with her mouth open. Now my stomach was going to fall out on the floor. Great, I am found dead in the Bisland home with my stomach hanging out of my mouth. "Leota that makes my stomach hurt a lot more but it's kinda good too."

"Mine too."

We kept on. If we were going to die from stomach trouble we were resolved to die together. She began to touch me all over and I knew I was really going to die. Leota was bold. She wasn't afraid to touch anything and where her knowledge came from was a secret but she knew what she was after. And I soon found out.

The next morning we went to school like any two sixth-grade girls. I fell asleep during fractions. Leroy gave me a poke and snickered. Leota looked at me with those dreamy eyes and I hurt all over again. We couldn't move to Florida, we just couldn't.

But we did.
with them but they were so tragically transparent that we forgave them their arrogance.

Carolyn decided, again with her relentless logic, that if we won the football game against Stranahan, she'd do it with Larry. We creamed them. Carolyn's face walking off the field of honor was not the usual bright cherry red from screaming her lungs out but an ashen and drawn white. Connie and I went over to her to bolster her. Then the three of us went back to the locker room to wait for our dates, all Princeton haircuts, Weejun shoes and Gold Cup socks. Clark came out with a gash on his cheek and wanted sympathy. I told him he was a football hero, which he was, having made two touchdowns. Connie's Douglas lumbered out, right tackles tend to grow large, and she told him he was a football hero. Larry stumbled coming out of the door he was in such a rush to see Carolyn. She didn't have time to tell him he was a football hero because he gave her a bone crushing kiss which was a rerun of an Errol Flynn movie and picked her up bodily, placing her in his Sting Ray convertible. Carolyn nervously waved goodbye and we all waved back. Then the four of us climbed into Doug's car and headed for Wolfie's for endless tackle about this missed tackle and that fine block interspersed with bananas and hot fudge sundaes.

The next morning the phone rang around 9:00. It was Carolyn, "I have to talk to you right now. Are you awake?" I guess I am if I answered the phone.

"I'm coming over and we can have breakfast at the Forum, ok?"

"Ok."

Fifteen minutes later Carolyn arrived looking paler than usual. As I slid in the front seat of the car I asked, "How is Ft. Lauderdale High's newest harlot?"

She grimaced, "I'm all right, but I have to ask you some questions so I know I did it right."

Over eggs that looked as though the chickens rejected them she began, "Is it always such a mess? You know, when I stood up all this stuff ran down my leg. Larry said it was sperm. It was so disgusting I near barfed."

"You get used to it."

"Yech. And another thing -- what am I supposed to do during all this, lie there? I mean, what do you really do? There they are on top of you sweating and grunting and it's not at all like I thought."

"Like I said, you get used to it. It isn't very mystical if that's what you're waiting for. I'm not an expert or anything but different people are different. Larry may not be the hottest lay in the world, so don't base your judgement on his one performance. Anyway, they're supposed to get technically better as they grow older. We hit them at that awkward age, I guess."

"That's not what the medical book says. It says they reach their prime at 18 and we reach ours at 35. How's that for timing? It's all so ridiculous. You and Connie must think I'm a real spastic."

"No, you take it too seriously, that's all."

"Well I am serious."

"No it isn't. It's a big dumb game and it doesn't mean anything at all unless you get pregnant, of course. Then it means you're screwed."

"I'll try. Hey, you want to go drinking Friday?"

"Sure. What about Connie?"

"She has to go to some journalism conference in Miami for the weekend."

"Ok, so it will be the two of us."

Friday night we went to the children's playground at Holiday Park. No one came there late at night and the police patrols were too busy beating the bushes and their own meat to harass the playground. I didn't really like drinking so I took a few swigs to make it look good but Carolyn got blasted. She slid down the fireman's pole, played on the swings and discarded various pieces of her clothing at each go round. When she got down to her underwear she made a beeline for the blue jet and crawled in the open tail to the fuselage. She stayed in there making airplane sounds and showed no sign of giving up her piloting. I crawled in after her. It was a tiny, narrow space so I had to lay down next to her. "Carolyn, maybe you should join the Air Force when you graduate. You've got the sound effects down pat."

"Whoosh." Then she leaned up on one elbow and asked in a coy voice, "How does Clark kiss you?"

"On the lips, where else? What do you mean how does he kiss me. What a dumb question."

"Want me to show you how Larry kisses?"

Without waiting for my sober answer she grabbed me and laid the biggest kiss on my face since Leota B. Bisland.

"I doubt he kisses that way."

She laughed and kissed me again. "Carolyn, do you know what you're doing?"

"Yes, I'm giving you kissing lessons."

"I'm very grateful but we'd better stop. We'd better stop because one more kiss and you're going to get more than you bargained for, lady. Or maybe that's what you are bargaining for?"

"Ha." She dropped another one on me this time with her entire body pressed against mine. That did it. I ran my hands along her side, up to her breast, and returned her kiss with a vengeance. She encouraged this action and added a few novelties of her own like nibbling my sensitive ears. By this time I began to worry about being in the tail end of a grounded blue jet in the middle of the children's playground in Holiday
Park. Carolyn had no such worries and threw off what was left of her clothing. Then she started taking mine off and tossed them up in the cockpit. If I was worried I got over it. All I could think about was making love with Carolyn Simpson, head cheerleader and second-year chaplain for Ft. Lauderdale High School -- and a cinch for prom queen. We were in that plane half the night coming in the wild blue yonder. I know we broke the sound barrier. Eventually the sky began to lighten and the air became chilly. I thought it was time to go. "Let's get out of here."
"I don't want to get out, I want to stay in here for ten years and play with your breasts."
"Come on." I reached up and got her underwear and my clothes. Then I backed out of the plane and collected her dew-covered bermuda shorts, Villager blouse, and white, worn-out sneakers. Shivering, we ran to the car.
"Are you hungry?" I asked.
"For you."
"Carolyn, you are so goddamned corny. Let's go to the Egg and You and get something good."
I ordered two breakfasts for all the energy I burned up, and Carolyn had bacon and eggs.
"Molly, you won't tell will you? I mean we could really get in trouble."
"No, I'm not telling but I hate lying. It seems pretty impossible that anyone would ask such a thing, so the coast is clear."
"I hate to lie too, but people will say we're Lesbians."
"Aren't we?"
"No, no, we just love each other, that's all. Lesbians look like men and are ugly. We're not like that."
"We don't look like men, but when women make love it's commonly labeled Lesbianism so you'd better learn not to cringe when you hear the word."
"Have you ever done that before?"
"When I was in sixth grade but that was about seven centuries ago. Did you?"
"At camp this summer. I thought I'd die from the fright but she was so terrific, this other counselor. I never thought of her as a Lesbian, you know. We spent all our time together and one night she kissed me, and we did it. I didn't stop to think about it at the time, it felt too good."
"Do you write her?"
"Sure. We'll try to go to the same college. Molly, do you think you can love more than one person at a time? I mean, I love you and I love Susan."
"I guess so. I'm not jealous, if that's what you're after."
"Kinda. You want to know something else? It's a lot better than doing it with Larry. I mean there's no comparison, you know?"
"That I know." We laughed and ordered two hot fudge sundaes at 6:00 in the morning.
Like A Woman

I really don't want to argue about hating men. I want to feel it through, open, or as open as I can be, given my own fierce defenses. Some fine, lively women come into my living room saying things like "men are pigs," "lots of women are human beings, only one man in a million makes it," "any woman in the establishment is a pseudo man," "men own the world," "no woman can have a good relationship with a man, it has to be sexist." Years ago I got to a comfortable, intolerant place about people who made ugly generalizations about Kikes and Niggers. I knew it was just fine to tell them to shut up or get out. I never really have, though. Not like that, because the worst tangles have been with people I cared about, like Uncle Walt and Granny, and loving somebody, for me, makes all that good moral intolerance impossible. I don't mean I shut up. I do argue with Uncle Walt. I say, "How can you possibly still be worried about one of them loving your granddaughter when what you should be worried about is seeing your granddaughter murdered in the street? It's such a crazy, gentle fantasy, your fear." And I said to Granny, "Don't you get in the way of my joy, my love, with your silly envy and bigotry. I'm telling you these poems, written by a woman who is a Jew, are good poems, and there's not enough goodness like that for you to spoil it." She's dead now, that fierce, bigoted old woman, whom I loved and fought with. And she'd listen to any man, no matter how blatantly stupid, as if he'd just had a special report on the crops or the next election from God. She always said she didn't reckon to raise any fools, but she was one, along with being a lot else—big, for instance, a survivor, for instance, someone I took all kinds of crazy measures from. I'll never finally write her out of my system, I don't even want to. So, if I've got it figured out what I do when people make remarks about Kikes and Niggers, and that's never really worked, mostly because of all that tangled love, I'm the more baffled about people who call men pigs. Men may be a statistical minority, just, but unlike Jews and Blacks and, yes, women, they're really big enough to take care of themselves, aren't they? Then I think of the number of boy-kids in this house over the last couple of years, trying to figure out how to get out of going to war. We know six million Jews were put into those ovens. I have no idea how many 19 year olds of whatever color or persuasion or nationality have been slaughtered simply because they were men, and on Remembrance Day their mothers keep getting awards because, of course, the best thing in the world to do to show your loyalty is to kill your kid or get him killed. Even God did it, so that lousy story goes. "Men are pigs." "Men are goats." Men are sacrificial animals we heave into the world out of our own bodies, and, if they're dead before they're twenty, we get gold stars for them. Where does that rhetoric come from? I don't have a son. My brother married a woman I was half in love with myself, and she did have a son. That marriage didn't work, and the boy has spent a lot of time with Helen and me. When he was twelve, he got hit in the head with a rock. He was at a friendship camp which specialized in teaching boys cooperation instead of competition. The kids were having a rock fight. I was the one who was there at four in the morning in a Seattle hospital, listening to the surgeon say the brain damage might be permanent. I was the one who sat in the waiting room staring at LIFE and TIME, wondering if he'd live, thinking, "and next it will be football, and after that it will be the bloody war." Angry and frightened and grieving. He's here in Vancouver now, going to the university, dreaming about law school and, yes, owning the world. He gets a lot of women's lib flack around here, of course. He cheerfully calls himself our super-masculine mensal as he hauls in the wood or does the heavy gardening or cooks everybody lunch or clears the table. He understands about women loving women. It's part of his very ordinary world. Is he sexist? Sometimes. He's far too fond of the muscles I'm so often grateful he has, and he's too ready with his fists or a knife, would be with a gun, too, I imagine. Things make him angry, like being hassled by cops, like being told what to think by "experts," like being called a jock because he can play football. And he takes up a lot of space, even just sitting in a chair reading the paper, never mind when he and his girl are having a wrestling match on the floor. He has a funny habit of just being around suddenly when I need him. It's always as if it's an accident. He was just in the neighborhood. All the time Helen was in the hospital last Christmas for cancer, he came over here to study because the heat in his own house was off, he said. He did study, sprawled out all over the living room.
winter days. obstacle course, boy as landscape, in this living room, during those dark days.

"Harry, Eddie, Alan, John, and Phil, all boys who have lived with Helen and me through their university years, with various sexist hang ups, sure, making some bad, ugly mistakes with us as well as with other women, but more essentially human beings we have lived with and cared about not only through accidents and grief but in high, lanky nonsense of snowball fights in the middle of the night, wine making, running the printing press."

I call them boys. I'm aware of that. I don't think it's to put them down. It's a way of protecting them from being in the category of men. But then, that's every one. Slaughter age. I can't think of them as cattle, or pigs, or goats, though the world seems to.

"My father, who went to Anapolis and served in the second world war, sends his social security check every month for me to use for feeding draft dodgers. When the Viet Cong invaded California to come home. My father once thought he ought to own the world, but it just got too expensive, boils on the inside of his mouth, open sores running down his arms and back, not for a couple of months, for years. Job learned something about capitalism in the same way, painfully. It's a lot easier for him to deal with women loving women than with men loving women, when it comes to his daughters anyway. Yeah, he's an old stag, as well as a scarred veteran of the world's games. Probably because he's a big man, good at things, he never thought I shouldn't learn to fish or hunt or climb cliffs. It was harder for him to let me use my head because he thought I might be smarter about people than he was, and how could he go on being my father if he couldn't go on being better at everything? But there was something else about being a father that was more important to him: loving his kids, letting them be, letting them grow. He wasn't always good at it. He still isn't, sometimes, but in the best sense he's at least as good a father as I am a daughter. And he has far less need to be, given his cultural power. A pig? Not a human being?

Those are the easy parts to explore, to feel through, easy to turn into argument, too, but hardly even necessary. These boys, these men, may be somebody else's enemies. They aren't mine. Not one of them shouts dyke at me. Not one of them gets in the way of who I am. I'm nervous about saying that. It's not quite true. I am not afraid of the person of my father or my nephew or any of the others. And I can rest in their strength without sapping my own. But I have been afraid of the other half of my identity until we were five and six, and school taught him that he had to cut himself free of his smaller self, that scorned thing, the girl creature. The Christmas after that, we were given a set of telephones that could be set up between our rooms, but Dad burned the instructions with the wrappings, and, though the phones were in our rooms, they didn't work. I had long, long conversations on that phone, telling my brother how it felt to be no longer part of him, or more correctly part of us, how bitter it was for me to discover what being a girl meant, not to me, but to him. I don't think he ever had his own conversations, or, if he did, they weren't directed at me. We fought. We made untrucefuls. We ignored each other. He bribed me to stay away. I bribed him to let me tag along. Sometimes he threatened to kill me. Once he told me he didn't have time to come into the train compartment at that moment. I couldn't understand then why he hated me as he did, why I seemed to threaten his life. I didn't really understand either why I kept risking my own in order to stay in his world. But, of course, school had taught me the same thing it was teaching him: girls are inferior, and only by identifying with him could I keep clear of that damming. He was, as a child, in nature gentler, more cautious, more introspective than I was, and, since those were all designated as feminine traits, he had to cut them out of himself, cut me out of himself to survive. We grew tall together, for him a good thing, for me a shame. We grew bright together, for him a proud weapon, for me something I should hide. It wasn't as simple as that. His height also made him vulnerable, a target for more aggressive boys, and he hated to fight. My height, whatever the social disgrace, gave me a power I wanted. His intelligence was of a sort easily measured in high IQ's, which made people expect more of him than his dreaming nature would produce. Mine was divergent, quirky by which I could build defenses.

"And I wanted to be a football player," he was taunting, "but you got built like the tank. The blood had only a couple of days before begun to leak out of my huge child's body, and instead of the fierce, ugly torture I could usually muster, I found myself leaking tears as well. My father took my brother aside that evening. He has never made a rude remark to me since, except in moments of heavy drinking, and even then it is rare. For all the codes he rejected, fought off, he accepted that one.

20
"Girls bled," my father must have said to him, and with awe and final relief our own war was over.

Gradually, over the great gulf of sex which did separate us, we developed some courting games. By the time I was fifteen, our social worlds came back together. Not exactly. Mine interested him. His did not interest me. We were both too proud to be girl crazy, too shy as well, but I think, without our knowing exactly what it was we were up to, we helped as well as covertly competed with each other.

I knew I loved him. I had never got over that. I encouraged the brother-sister game we played, dancing well together, being always agreeable to each other, giving each other some margin of distance, protection from an audience which is horrible for everyone. But I knew it was phony, just as I knew all the other courtliness was phony. Strip that agreeable mask off his face and he would be as ready to kill me as he had been in that train compartment years ago. Once he said, amably, "You can run all your life. I'll always be ahead of you." Sometimes I wondered if his hatred of me was what kept him alive, allowed him to survive our brutal education. He did manage a discharge from the army before he was to be sent to Korea to kill people or be killed. He got out of a marriage before he destroyed his wife or his child or himself. He tried finally to drink and drug himself to death. When that didn't work, he ran into a couple of horses with a jeep somewhere in Mexico, killed them and nearly killed himself. He lives quietly now, with a second wife. He won't have more children. He drinks just enough to manage the day. Sometimes he shoots birds to eat them. And he raises vegetables in his back yard. I see him once every two or three years. We still play the brother-sister act. The phones are still disconnected.

I haven't told a hundredth of it with him. And I feel weary with beginning to tell what it was like for me with male lovers, a crazily inaccurate word for what that experience was for me.

I have a sister, very much younger. Sisterhood doesn't catch in my word. I don't want to be a hater at all. I don't want to have to endure the same social forces that turned my brother into a person I have been frightened of. I certainly don't want to be a pseudo man.

I do hate the idea "man;" it is associated for me with all that is brutal and stupid, as for some people the word "American" calls up all that is ugly about power. I feel oppressed by the concept, which is real not only in the Dick and Jane readers but in the Arthur and Jane particulars of my childhood.

I back off that agreeable mask. If I strip it off my father's face, I find my beloved and loving father. If I strip it off my nephew's face, there is the person I love and learn to count on. Off my brother's face? Off my male lover's face? As I was butchered out of that child's heart so that he could survive first grade, as Eve was butchered out of Adam, I expect to be that bleeding piece of inferior flesh, whether to think so is sane or not.

I don't accept that. I never have. But it is still there, whether I accept it or not. The gentlest young man in my fiction class will have to write at least one righteous rape story before the year is over, and some will never write anything else. Women are virgins or whores, ball crushers; men in relation to them are masters or pimps: really just adult versions of the Dick and Jane readers. I hate the mythology in their heads, but it is there.

Have I come out, but to hate them as well?

What I have done instead is back off, out of intimate rage. (I meant to write "range.") I've declared truce in a battle I never thought I could win and didn't want to be killed by.

When I hear a woman talk as if heterosexual relationship is not only possible but good, I want to believe it. I haven't any investment in denying it. I was raised by parents who loved each other. I do not think that heterosexual relationship is inately better than lesbian relationship. I suspect, given the present state of our culture, it is usually worse, but the costs are different for different people. That is, I find the social pressure against being a lesbian easier to bear than the social pressure to be an acceptable heterosexual, but that's who I am. Conformity of most sorts never even seemed to me much of a possibility. As I think we have to live materially in a more egalitarian world, I also think we have to live politically in a more egalitarian world, and I believe that that's what that's going to make it happen. I know I can't live in those front lines, or, if I am part of it, my contribution will have to be only my own insistence on equality.

As I am part of those lively women, turns me into a white, middle class, pseudo man. Perhaps, in that sense I am, owning my own house, publishing my work internationally, taking professional jobs only at a respectable salary, taking political responsibility within the system, continuing to believe in reason and love even when I can't use either. I don't "take like a woman," and I don't "ache like a woman," and I sure as hell don't "break like a little girl." Do I have to hate like a woman? Is there no way out of that? I understand. Hating tells a kind of truth about the prison we've grown up in, the defeating mythology. But I desperately want to find another way to get out of it, to make like a woman, to love like a woman, and not to break or be broken at all.
Against The Season (a review) by GINA

What I require from a work of fiction:
1) characters portrayed with both realism and compassion
2) characters who become people and who involve me so much that I can't put the book down unread and I'm sorry when I finish
3) people who learn through the course of the book how to live humanly (how can I learn about living from a book unless the author and her characters do?)
4) a few good cries.

Of course I read many more novels that don't fill these needs than ones that do. In fact Jane Rule's latest, Against the Season (McCall Publishing Co.), is the only one in years. (Some public libraries have it -- I urge you to demand.)

I've thought of describing her characters -- but they are so many and varied that I'll just say that -- many and varied and all presented with compassion. And the plot -- but there is no simple "plot" -- rather as many plots as there are intricate relationships between people, as many different ways as these very different people find to cope with their lives, to change and learn and love.

But for those of you who aren't excited by generalizations -- The setting: a small and dwindling coastal town (New England? British Columbia?). A few plots: an old crippled woman learning to face her coming death in the company of an unmarried pregnant girl waiting for her baby and an uncertain twenty year old boy waiting for directions in how to live -- all of them learning unlikely lessons from each other; a painfully anxious and delicately balanced lesbian relationship; the hopeful courtship of a couple in their seventies; an awkward friendship/affair between a refreshingly prudish middle-aged man and woman.

I mention these characters to point out that they are people of every age and background, with great differences in life style, perspectives, worries -- and here they are learning from each other, communicating with an openness and understanding I have yet to see in "real" life.

This is the greatest value of Against the Season. I read intensely through a whole winter night watching intimate connections come about very naturally between an old and innocent small-town woman and a woman one fourth her age but already pregnant and jaded. Or between a Greek lesbian saving her virginity for a never-to-be marriage, and a middle-aged professional woman caught in upper class reserve.

Unlikely intimacies. But every one of them is constructed with such simplicity and empathy that I must believe. The range of possibilities, here, in my life, is opened up by my exposure to Jane Rule's fictional world. Expose yourself.

SWEET BETSY THE DYKE (a song to the tune of Sweet Betsy From Pike)

by Les B. Friends

Oh do you remember Sweet Betsy the Dyke Who came from New Jersey on her motorbike And riding beside her was her lover Anne, A sister, a friend, and a far out woman. (Chorus) Singing "Dykes come together, we can change this land!"

They rode across the country Sweet Betsy and Anne And said to all women,"YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN!" So leave all your men folk and come on with us. If you don't have a cycle, we'll charter a bus." (chorus)

First it was one bus and then it was eight. Before they were finished they had their own state. They built their own houses and fixed their own bikes Fulfilling our dream of a nation of dykes. (chorus)

Oh do you recall how Sweet Betsy met Anne? She was driving through Texas in an old Chevy van. She picked her up hitching on the Rio Grande And she knew from the start by the cigar in her hand. (chorus)

Sweet Betsy was forward and Anne was polite But they got it together the very first night. With hugging and kissing and a bit too much noise They really were tired when they hit Illinois. (chorus)

They kept it a secret for many a night Till Annie said "Betsy this just isn't right. There are so many women who are so alone, Let's get them together and build us a home." (chorus)

So that is the story of Betsy the Dyke Who came from New Jersey on her motorbike And riding beside her was her lover Anne, A sister, a friend, and a first rate woman, SINGING "DYKES COME TOGETHER, WE WILL CHANGE THIS LAND!!"
Distinctions: The Circle Game

Distinctions is a new variant of that old game "Lefter Than Thou" in which the players compete to become part of the circle of the elite which they must constantly declare to one another that they abhor. It is an old game really, one that has been played in every social movement, revolutionary or conservative, since time began. The unexpressed purpose of the game is for each player to show that he or she is different, and not only different, but better.

We all seem to want to feel different on some basis, beyond our inherent differences of sex, age, color, etc. In order to define who we are we usually define who we are not. We set up distinctions for this job. We decide what we like and what we don't, or in more current jargon, what we can "relate to" and what we cannot.

Everyone makes these distinctions...at any one time in our lives we have a set of them from which to act. Given a situation where any choice is required we consult our distinctions just as the Greeks consulted the Sibyl. To not have these "grids" through which to perceive the external reality would be to float hopelessly in chaos unable to act at all.

They are helpful and necessary, but there is a danger of their rigidifying and imprisoning us. I see this as a very real and prominent danger to individual women now and to "the women's movement" as a whole.

THE FEMINIST DISTINCTION

Women, so long dependent on men for their self-images, mirroring their selves in the eyes of men, at first (whether as a child, or as a result of the women's movement, or whatever) could feel singular and very special when they began to reject Daddy's, or the Boss's, or the Lover's, the Husband's, etc. picture of them. At first, (say even three years ago) for many women to be a "feminist" was a sufficiently different reality from the herd to be a satisfying identity -- and it provided a whole new set of "distinctions" on which to base one's behavior.

Naturally though, many of us quickly saw through this as too simplistic -- that hanging our identity on any one peg, whether it be "feminist," "socialist," "anarchist," etc. is not enough. It doesn't help us make all our life choices to know that we are "feminists." We need further distinctions to act intelligently. (Unfortunately, some women did not see this and are still trying to run their lives solely through their identity as "professional feminists.")

And then too, there seemed a need for further distinctions because the herd was constantly on our heels. The media rapidly made being a "feminist" almost as acceptable and innocuous as being a member of the League of Women Voters. The final bastions of fluff and femininity, the women's magazines, finally gave over and now there is something feminist in nearly every issue of Mc Calls, The Ladies Home Journal, Redbook, etc. TV, radio, the movies -- even advertising -- is catching onto the trend toward the "woman-identified-woman."

THE LESBIAN DISTINCTION

So meanwhile, many women, whatever their reasons, made a further distinction. They will relate only to women and some, even more specifically, have decided that their sexual relations (if any) will be only with other women.

Now that's far enough to hold out against the herd for a while... although lesbianism broke into TV this year and Redbook. Still it's safe to say that only a small percentage of women have chosen this as "their" distinction.

But within the subculture of which these "new lesbians" became a part, where women had been loving women for years, "gay pride," "gay identity," etc. must have looked like the rather simple-minded new convert's enthusiasm. New distinctions became necessary -- not only externally -- how to act in this new subculture of deviants? -- but how to define oneself as different from this new herd?

The array of possible distinctions seems to have been somewhat similar around the country. The new lesbian (especially those who did not find a lover for some time) had a number of possible sub-group deviants to identify with -- the lesbian hip crowd still soft and flowing and into dope, the monogamous couples, the anti-monogamy forces, the "socialist lesbians," the anarchists, the bar lesbians, the straight DOB set, the extreme man-hater dykes, the black lesbians, the green lesbians -- whatever. There would have to be another choice and this choice it seemed necessitated drawing ones' circle tighter around oneself.

VERBOTINS

The first verbotin (commonly shared distinction in this subculture) that the new lesbians originated was that women must not relate to men. And next of course, that women should not relate to men's women --
i.e. straight women. Since I more or less share these distinctions I'd like to pause here for a minute to examine them. First of all, for me, they are not hard and fast. And I think they are based on some degree of reason...or experience. In the first case, there aren't many men I come across who I feel have much to offer me — at least not until they've broken through their barriers of sex-role conditioning and the crippling results of being a male (successful or unsuccessful) in this culture.

The decision (really not so hard and fast as that word implies) not to relate to straight women evolved slowly, painfully, as I sat through countless evenings with straight women in small groups listening to them talking about their hopeless lives with their men only to see that the evening recharged them enough to go live with them (endure them) for another week. My energy, my time, my sisterly love was indirectly useful to the male for keeping his woman content. And secondly, I decided not to relate to straight women because they already had made a choice which did not include me — that is all of me.

They had chosen to relate to my "mental" self, possibly my "emotional" self, but not my sexual self. The best conversations, the warmest interchanges between me and them, were destined to end on the nonphysical plane. They were saving their bodies for their men.

I question this distinction constantly. My experiences are always calling it into question, but generally it is proving "useful," conserving of time and energy, and releasing me to grow, to expand, to learn more than I would have without it.

The problem is though that once a woman gets into the "distinction game" it becomes all too easy, especially if she is somewhat insecure and is not "into" anything of her own, to gather distinctions around her and to create a completely externally defined personality. Instead of being helped to act by her distinctions, she begins to be ruled by them. She cannot, will not, let new experience in if her whole personality depends on maintaining her distinctions. Instead, she must have distinctions (as many as possible) to support her, and a peer group who share them. Any threat to her distinctions is a threat to "her." Friends, potential lovers, everyone, must meet her test -- match her distinctions or you're out.

THE CLASS DISTINCTION

One of the currently in vogue distinctions among the new lesbian community which I am highly suspicious of is the "class distinction." First of all I question how deciding that one is a "working class" lesbian aids growth. Class is not an inherent, irremediable differ-
The dyke distinction

It used to be enough to hide your dresses at the back of the closet with your heels and your nylons on the off-chance that you'd be starved into being a secretary again someday, to carry yourself a bit more self-assuredly, to look people straight in the eye, and to associate only with women to win the coveted distinction of lesbian.

That was maybe only a year or so ago. Now there is a whole New-Leban-Chain-of-Being. At the very bottom of this totemic structure is the "Gay woman.'

Unaware of this nouveau-distinction I put up an ad at the local woman's bookstore asking for a gay woman to share a house with me and others. Next time I saw it the "gay woman" was crossed out and "Dyke" written above it in an angry purple scrawl.

There is, all be it ridiculous, a new meaning to the old term 'dyke' -- the usual meaning being the opposite of 'femme.' The new dyke dresses different, talks different, and associates with different people than your common ordinary lesbian or gay woman. As it has since been explained to me, a "gay woman" just digs women for sex, a "lesbian" is a woman-identified-woman with feminist consciousness who loves women, and a "dyke" -- well, that's not so easily defined. It's a mystique that defies categories. Perhaps a composite description of the "dykes" I know:

Working from the outside in, the first thing I notice about them is their clothes. The usual bellbottoms (but only slightly) for some, but most of them choose their bottoms very carefully from the local thrift store collection of fancy throughs from the Forties and Fifties -- pin-stripes and baggy grey flannels being the innest of all. And then the tops -- usually a button-down cuffed and collared shirt topped off with a vest -- the kind preferably that used to go under some guy's tuxedo.

The ultimate touch is the tie -- worn only by "dykes" to be sure and then the hat -- hopefully a kind of mafia fedora or an offhand beret to get the continental look over their well-cropped hair. In short, the new dykes are visually almost indistinguishable from the "old dykes" who used to haunt the bars before feminism made it clear that a woman who wants a "man" wants a "man" and that roles are definitely not good. So there must, of course, be further than visual distinctions.

The proper politics -- man-hating, castrating, and killing

As of this writing it is no longer enough to be feminist, lower class, and funkily male dressed -- in order to be a 'dyke' it is necessary to hate men with a passion beyond any other and to want above all else to kill them.

The devoted new dykes are buying guns -- to protect women from harassment they say. And they are taking on the accompanying paranoia.

Their phones are tapped, people follow them, they don't sleep well for fear of "the man" climbing in their bedroom window. They even face with the seriousness of all this the other night at the local bar. It was women's night -- Tuesday of each week lesbians seek refuge in what is ordinarily a gay men's bar to dance and of course play pool. Since I'm not one of the pool playing set, I was there to dance. Not immodestly I hope, I assessed the people dancing (not too coherently as I was a bit drunk I admit) and just seemed to end up dancing with the person who was moving most imaginatively. As it turns out this person was a gay man -- a black gay man. The music was good, for once in my life I was really enjoying letting my body go completely to the music and picking up some of my partner's cues about new movements and ways to interpret the music -- when suddenly I was surrounded by five angry women ("dykes") who drug me off the floor, put me in the middle of a football huddle scene, and proceeded to tell me that this was war at this bar and I a traitor to the lesbian cause. "Any woman who would dance with a man...blah,blah,blah." Their faces looked like maybe I'd just kicked them in the belly. I laughed. The man in question laughed and friends, I haven't heard the end of that for weeks. The nerve -- laughing at a "dyke." I am now reduced I suppose to the leprous state of being a "gay woman" -- or god perhaps even a "bi." And apparently this is not an isolated incident. The phenomena is spreading and in some places man-killing dykes are organizing. In Chicago, for example, there is a new women's paper entitled The Killer Dyke, put out by the "Killer Dykes" in care of "The Flippies."

As ridiculous as it all sounds, and as little as I want to lend any seriousness at all to it, I do think we should be aware of the dangers these women are courting, dangers both to themselves and other women.

First, as Naomi Weisstein so cleverly put it, "It's dangerous to pretend to be a Marine when you haven't got the training." Unless women

have thoroughly educated themselves in self-defense they will be ill-prepared when somebody calls their bluff. And second, as Naomi went on to point out, the killer dyke phenomena is politically dangerous because it can't work. It assumes that the feminist revolution has already been accomplished... that a broader swagger and a gun are all it takes.

There's no denying that violence (a sex war) may at some time be the only means of ending sexism. But women must prepare for it, patiently strengthening their bodies and thier ties with one another.

As Phyllis Chesler says in *Women and Madness*, karate isn't even much against the A bomb, germ warfare, napalm... A pistol is going to look a bit outdated when what we're ultimately confronting is "defense" technology financed in this country by 75 billion dollars a year.

We simply aren't "there" yet... and hopefully (although history disputes this) it won't take violence to end sexism. But in any case, women as a force are nowhere near being ready for armed struggle. Looking back on the last decade and checking out Nixonia now, it should be clear that SDSers, and Weathermen/women, and Black Separatists were bluffing -- "the people" they all claimed to speak for were in their own heads. It's going to take study, thought and hard work, and women who can look clearly at this problem of drawing distinctions before we can go about the business of "seizing the means of production and reproduction" which Phyllis Chesler says will be the necessary precursor to female equality.

Killing men, even by the hundreds or by the thousands, simply will not work. And worse, while accomplishing next to nothing it may bring on a backlash that will get a lot of innocent women killed. What if men take the killer dyke seriously? What if they use just one millionth of their technology to put her down?

**THE MALE-IDENTIFIED MAN-HATING, MAN-KILLING "DYKE"**

I'm beginning to see these new dyke distinctions as a circle game -- that is, if you go far enough you end up where you began -- and isolated to boot. Man-hating as a full time activity seems to me no more admirable than man-loving as a full time activity. A woman defining herself in terms of how much she hates and wants to kill men is no more "liberated" to me than one talking about how much she wants to love and fuck them.

This "new dyke" is drawing a circle around herself that is precious small. Her distinctions may be very comforting for now -- she is the inner self in -- but she might eventually find it pretty lonely toting her gun and screaming for Dyke Revolution when even women expose her bluff.

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**A LITTLE PERSPECTIVE**

Distinctions have a way of becoming outdated. Man-hating may look as ridiculous with the perspective of a few years as our sisters' insistence on prohibition during the suffragist movement does to us. And one can't help but think there won't be much comfort in it as the old "new dykes" go out to pasture. Can you imagine them fifty years from now sitting around the old folks home in their rocking chairs counting off the men they killed?

If they live that long. If there are by then feminist, lesbian, dyke old folks homes. If...

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HOW TO MAKE LOVE TO A WOMAN IF YOU'RE A WOMAN

Think of yourself
and what you like
then do that.

Ask her
what she wants
then please her.

Imagine the most delicate
care you have ever known
and give it to her
everywhere, slowly.

Speak her name
into the openings
of her body
and listen
to her answer.

Remember
the fierceness and power
of all our great grandmothers
who rode horses
and plowed fields
and bore children
in anguish

and share that with her.

Love her in daylight.
Treasure what you learn.
The Diary of Nelly Ptaschkina is a phenomenal book, far better than any of the well-known adolescent diaries. In it, Nelly records the events of her times (she lived during the Russian Revolution), but mostly she used her diary to explore her own feelings.

Nelly wrote almost nightly from the time she was ten. Parts of the diary were lost as she and her family fled the Bolsheviks, but several copy books which covered her fourteenth and fifteenth years were saved by her mother and published in Nelly's memory.

On October 20, 1918 Nelly wrote of having a presentiment of her death. She pictured herself falling over a precipice "plunging headlong into the chasm." July 2, 1920 Nelly fell from an enormous height on Mont Blanc into a rushing torrent. Later her body washed ashore downstream and she was buried in Paris.

January 23, 1918

...What is my diary? It is a record of my thoughts and feelings. It was the wish to write them down that gave me the idea of this diary; and this same wish came to me under the influence of Marie Raschkirtsev and Raya (a friend).

It is curious to note that generally speaking they are young people who write diaries, because their inability to concentrate on themselves, the strength of their sensations, their confidence in the beliefs, which they have not yet lost, make them seek an outlet for their emotions. The old, although they may receive vivid impressions, probably regard them in a colder way than we young people, who are only entering upon life. Youth does not know how to concentrate, and, on the other hand, does not want to confide in others. Hence the diary. The old work out everything in themselves.

January 25

...The situation is really terrible! The decisive days for Russia are at hand, "to be or not to be." My vision is too restricted to be able to picture the whole situation clearly. My home life shelters me and I see reality as something very, very distant...

...I am mentally short-sighted because, after all, I am but a child: this is the first and more important reason, if not the only one. All the same, at odd moments I clearly realize the full horror of the position in which our
country is placed.

February 18

...A passionate joy comes over me when I look into the distance; there, beyond all the houses, the towns, the people, all is radiant, all is full of sunshine.

...Then it dawns upon me that my life will be different from that of the others...bright, interesting...

Then I see young girls, such as I shall become in three or four years' time. They live, like every one else from day to day, waiting for something. They live, drab, dull lives. Probably they too bad visions of a bright, happy future, and gazed into the golden distance...But now...where is that golden distance? Did they not reach it? Can one ever reach it? Does it exist really, or only in our dreams?

For, surely, I am not the only dreamer. Are they not dreamers too? Shall I live on as they do, following the pattern woven by routine on the canvas of life? Waiting for some one?

There will be nothing...No, no, not that! I am frightened. Give me my golden horizon. Let me live a full life, with all the strength of my soul.

February 23

How much I wanted to write yesterday! How I longed for my diary! But I could not write. Today there is no one at home and therefore I can put my time to good use. When I am excited or sad nothing soothes me like my diary. If I am very happy my joy calms down, subsides whilst I write. My diary has become indispensable to me.

March 3

: Sometimes my inner peace again gives place to the customary tension and then I want to cry. To cry because I am lonely; that I want Mummie. But in reality because my light-heartedness is leaving me. Yes, life ages, breaks one.

Take Raya (a friend), she is light-hearted, she lives normally but I am cut adrift. The times have too great a hold upon me, my own life is broken on the wheel.

At such moments I yearn to live as I used to do at home. I want to live as I lived formerly: I want to be free and careless: not to feel this everlasting strain. I am only fourteen! I have the right to be still a child for a little while, to be careless, happy, untroubled.

How strange it is that in the huge machine of life, past, present, and future, there should be a fourteen-year-old girl who is sitting and writing all kinds of stupid things about her small soul, which to her seems something immense, and that she occupies herself so seriously with something which is really so small and of no consequence...But to her it seems all important and

she wholly surrenders herself to it. How strange is this absence of any strange the isolation of my little life in comparison with that other which is so immeasurably big.

March 5

...I have decided to fight against this feeling of apathy, which takes possession of me at such moments of depression. I do not want to allow them. But in order to attain this result, I must not permit my private life to be affected by external conditions.

How shall I do this? I shall drive away my thoughts as soon as they touch upon dangerous ground.

I...I shall deceive myself. Yes, one must confess that in the end it will be only self-deception. But what matter. It will hurt no one, and for me it will be better, it will do me good.

One must tell oneself that things are not so bad as they seem. This is what I want to do and I hope that I shall be able to accomplish it. I shall not surrender to this inner voice which faint-heartedly whispers to me that our life is inextricably tied up with this epoch, and moreover united in such a way that it can never be adjusted; that therefore everything is at an end and that nothing will come out of it. No, I do not want this. I shall obstinately tell myself that -- how can I say it most tenderly? -- that with Mummie's arrival all will be well. I shall not allow myself to be influenced by the newspapers, which bring sad news. I shall not brood over the fact that news is worse again, and that in consequence our position is all the more deplorable. In four or five years, all must settle down -- and I will leave it at that.

March 11

...The world has existed so far; it will outlive this catastrophe, after having outlived so many others...Time will pass...Just the same thing will pass, peace will reign again, till there comes a new eruption. And for this reason, --and the words are not mine, but it is impossible to find anything that fits the case better -- the question does not lie with what will happen in the future, but how we ourselves are to outlive this nightmare, harpered with such narrow vision as is ours...If only we could hold out! But the world will survive...We do not know what the future contains, but we can say with certainty that there will be "Something." But maybe we shall never know, for we may die before this miraculous epic has run its course.

October 1

...In my dreams, however strange it may sound, I dream at the same time of children and of an independent life, which should be both comfortable and beautiful. The question of woman's fate interests me tremendously. This interest
lives in me somehow fundamentally; it is called forth neither by writing nor conversation, but has taken root in me of its own accord.

Is it necessary to add that I believe with all my heart and mind that women have absolutely equal rights with men, because I consider them in no wise their intellectual inferior?

This year I have added to the books on social subjects, some that are concerned with the feminist question, and I shall read them with great enjoyment.

Of course, comparatively speaking, women have not asserted themselves up to now as capable individuals. There are many empty coquettes as well as spiritual nonentities among them, but, all the same, it is of note that now in all professions women appear who work on a level with men.

Are there also any empty-headed men? Oh, many! Do not men themselves encourage the defects of women by considering them only as amusing playthings? I speak, of course, in general. There are exceptions but, taken on an average, they are in the minority.

Does the education of woman prepare her for the serious tasks of life? The evil of this education is rooted far back in the centuries. Give women scope and opportunity, and they will be no worse than men.

I notice that these thoughts remind me of a book I once read, but all the same it seems to me that they come straight out of my soul.

Well! The one does no harm to the other.

Yes, woman must have all the rights, and in time she can earn them fully. As presently we have still many women who are satisfied with their empty lives, but if we raise the standard, and improve the social conditions of life, which are connected with her, woman will also rise. Even now there are many among them who would be capable of leading a conscious existence successfully, if only they had the courage to give them that possibility. When people criticise a woman in my presence, I never feel at ease, and I realise that I am wrong, but I have not the courage to dispute with them: I lack arguments and only mentally say to myself, "Wait!"

October 14

. . . I shall arrange it, so as not to depend on love, let alone wait for it as so many girls do. I shall live. If love comes I shall take it; and if not, I shall regret it, wildly regret it, but I shall live all the same.

I see in my imagination a small flat, furnished with exquisite comfort. . . . Beauty everywhere, softness, cosiness. And I am the mistress of it -- a woman and a personality at the same time. I live an interesting life: writers, artists, painters forgeter at my house, a really interesting circle, a close friendly community. I know no picture more attractive than this. I am free, independent.

In these surroundings, in which there is even no place for it, I shall not regret love. Life is full without it. It is only the dawn of love which I should miss. . . . There is something else that is strange. I see children in my imagination and think with joy about them. The husband is a figure that has never appeared in my fancies, quite a stranger in fact; I have never once thought about him.

On one side I see my little home -- on the other I think with delight of my children.

October 20

. . . I love to stand at the edge of an abyss, at the very edge, so that a single movement, and . . . today, stepping close to the brink of a precipice, although not so deep as I should have wished, the thought came into my mind that some day I should die thus, crashing headlong into the chasm. . . .

My walk today has evoked this premonition. . . . But I feel it more now, after the walk, than during it. . . .

October 25

. . . Marriage is slavery, it prevents one from surrendering oneself to that supreme happiness which the initiated call love -- and so I think it is. Human personality must develop quite freely. Marriage impedes this development; even more than that, it often drives one to "sexual crimes," not only because forbidden fruit is sweet, but because the new love, which could be perfectly legitimized, becomes a crime. Would man and woman be less happy if they lived together without being married, simply as lovers? . . . possibly not even in the same house, but meeting every day; in short, leading the life of a regularly married couple. If they love one another, what can hinder them from settling down together? I should like to talk this over with Aunt Aniunta. . . . I must think about it.

November 5

. . . Sometimes I reflect with horror that when I am grown up I shall be just like the young girl, with a simple, grey little life, so that in the end there won't be any difference between me and other people: that all my dreams and feelings are only the ferment of youth. Deep pain comes over me and something tightens in my heart. "Am I really but one of the crowd?" I ask myself despairing. "Just that" is the sad answer. No, I do not want that, it must not be.

. . . I consider myself a Socialist, and hope that when I grow up, I shall really become one. In the meantime. . . of what does my Socialism consist? In my views on the form of government, the situation of the working classes, on the question of political equality. Yes, of course, the Socialists are in the right. There is no doubt in my mind as regards this.

There must not be the abyss which exists at present between
the rich and the poor. All must possess sufficient material independence to be able to have their share of higher spiritual pleasures. Is the poverty of the workers, the starvation of their children and the revolting dependence of one class upon the other not horrible, when all have received from nature an equal right to existence and the enjoyment of the gifts of life?

December 27

...In Saratoff I received letters addressed to "Nelly Pschtschinka"; Mummie never opened them; she did not insist on reading them and if she had asked me and I had refused, she would have been grieved, but would have understood this and not lost her temper; each of us has in one's heart a secret recess, where nobody else is admitted. Father does not recognise my rights as an individual. He is my father; perhaps for him I am still a child, but in any case he considers his full right to deal with my correspondence and my "private copy-books." I don't know whether it will be the same thing later when I am grown up... If so, the struggle which is ahead will be more serious than it is today.

January 4, 1919

...I have already written somewhere of the Beauty that is attendant upon wealth and would be abolished by Socialism. Today I have been to the cinema; the picture was presented in a marvel-lous setting and while admiring the sumptuous drawing-rooms and the beautiful parks one had to think of poor tenement-houses with their pitiful miserable inmates. Can one hesitate in choosing between them? Not a single moment. It is the same in life....

A few days ago I behaved horrifyingly, disgracefully. I bought sweets for a hundred roubles! How many children could have been fed on that money at Christmas!

January 9

...Is sexual attraction natural, or must it be suppressed? A most interesting question for study.

...What is physical attraction? I know that the majority, if not all, will say: "It is natural." Tolstoy will remain alone in his opinion. But for me this is no proof that he is wrong.

I see life without sexual love. I do not know whether this can be, but I should incline to think that it is possible. It is simpler and more comprehensible; however, not knowing where truth is, I dare not affirm this, but want to think that it is the truth.

The feeling exists. And at present it expresses itself in un-couth and misshapen forms. New ones must take their place. That is what I think.

May 22

...The farther we go the stronger we feel the influence of our epoch in more senses than one. It is very positive; it has made me reflect on many important questions, like Socialism and others; it has shown me the real object of life and has widened my horizon; it has made me more "practical," more "positive," for everyday life, and has prepared me better for its different emergencies.

Between the former "Miss Nelly" and the present pupil of the carpenter Ivan Ivanitch there is a great difference, especially spiritually.

All this is good, and I am grateful to time for the way it has helped my development. But it has also done something else: all that belonged to the sphere of dreams and visions, the world of poetry -- and there was a great deal of it -- has hidden itself in the depths of my soul.

July 9

...I should like to weave stories, many stories, about what I see around me: and to tell them in such a way that people who read these words will see everything vividly before their eyes; tell them in such a way that the consonance of dead words should come to life from under my pen.

Oh how I want to create, to possess that precious gift of writing. I must have talent for this. I have a few gifts in this direction... only they are but matter without the spirit. Talent, talent, that is what I want!

August 30

...About six I took some books and went into the Botanical Gardens opposite. It was pleasant to sit there. No one near. The sun, which was already sinking in the west, gave out a gentle warmth through the green foliage, carelessly and timidly as in autumn. Here and there red-brown leaves made splotches of colour. The breath of golden autumn lay over everything, and the life of nature continued undisturbed at the time when history was bringing something new to man. ...

The thunder of guns and the reverberation must it be ecstasies to my ears in a shrill dissonance, and it was something great to that the boom of the guns of one revolution, I should be reading the history of another that was past. I had Theirs in my hands. The book was living. ...

Suddenly a roar...a whizzing. I fell down. ...probably from the concussion, and remembering from instinct that one must lie prone to save oneself from the shells I try to make myself as small as I can, to gather myself into a ball, and with a faint "Mummie" wait for its bursting over my head and then...all will be over. I was on a hillyock. Holding my book with one hand, and still waiting for death, I rolled downwards... When I reached the footpath below, I realised that death -- whether it had been impending or not--had spared me.
NEW INK by GINA

ROOT OF BITTERNESS
Documents of the Social History of American Women
Edited, and with an introduction, by Nancy F. Cott
E.P. Dutton and Co. (paperback), $4.95

Unlike some similar anthologies published during the last year, Root of Bitterness is well researched; much of the information included (especially of the earlier historical periods) is virtually unobtainable elsewhere. The study moves from colonial America through the early twentieth century, using songs, transcripts from witch trials, letters, diaries, legal documents, and sometimes published articles and stories. Includes an excellent introductory essay by Ms. Cott, and an extensive list for further reading.

AMERICAN WOMEN IN SPORTS
by Phyllis Hollander
Grosset and Dunlap (hardcover), $4.95

Written especially for adolescent girls to provide models of strong and spirited women, this short survey outlines the careers of 52 past and present heroines of the American sports scene. Special emphasis is given to discrimination against women in athletics.

THE DAY WE WERE MOSTLY BUTTERFLIES
and
THE VELOCIPED HANDICAP
by Louise W. King
both from Curtis Books (paperback), $.75

Those of you who have searched the libraries in vain for these lesbian novels, as I have, will be glad to hear they are now available in paperback. Good 75¢ entertainments.

MARGARET SANGER
An Autobiography
Dover Publications (paperback), $3.95

First published in 1938, this voluminous account (504 pages) by the champion of birth control (she even invented the term) is still a rich and lively document. Interesting glimpses of a strong woman who worked all her life to make it possible for women to gain control over the means of reproduction.

ELLA PRICE'S JOURNAL
by Dorothy Bryant
J.B. Lippincott Co. (hardcover), $5.95

Definitely the best of the fed-up-wife fiction thus far to emerge from the women's liberation movement. Ella Price is a conservative working-class housewife taking courses at the local junior college now that her daughter is a teenager. The story is very believably told as a journal assignment for Ella's English class. Unlike the protagonists of every other novel of this genre, Ella learns that she won't find her identity through any man. As the book ends, Ella, with the help of a female friend, is beginning to create her own life. I strongly recommend this one -- if you can't get the book, a shortened version appeared in the September 1972 issue of Redbook magazine.

THE HOUSE ON HENRY STREET
by Lillian D. Wald
Dover Publications (paperback), $3.50

Lillian Wald's account of the founding and early life of the Henry Street Settlement House, a pioneering venture in community-based social work in New York City's Lower East Side. Ms. Wald served as director of the settlement from 1893 to 1933. The book is reprinted (with a new introduction by Helen Hall, current director) from the 1915 edition.

THE FEMININE FIX-IT HANDBOOK
by Kay B. Ward
Grosset and Dunlap (hardcover), $5.95

Despite its humorously patronizing tone ("Yes, this is for you, you helpless feminine bit of fluff") and its emphasis on home decorating, this book should be useful to women and men who want to keep their homes in good repair without really learning the carpentry trade or otherwise bothering much about it. The author (a woman) includes charts about paints, lumber sizes, adhesives, etc., as well as hundreds of excellent line drawings.

THE MANIPULATED MAN
by Esther Vilar
Farrar, Strauss and Giroux (hardcover), $5.95

The most radically illogical and hateful of the recent books published as anti-feminist backlash (a backlash that seems to exist only in the hopeful dollar-signs of publishers' imaginations). What can be said of a woman who still uses the tactic of expressing hatred for women in order to gain success? (With a straight face Vilar describes women as "lumps of stuffed human skin pretending to be thinking human beings.") What can be said for a publisher who would print an entire book of such anti-human, not to mention sexist, garbage? And yes it's a best-seller, in Europe as well as America.
Eat Rice

I see you getting knowledge and having friends I don't have
I see you already stronger than me
and I don't see you coming back
to help me
I imagine myself getting old
I imagine I will have to go away
when I'm too old to fight my way
down the streets
my friends getting younger and younger
women my age hidden in corners
in the establishment
or curled up with a few friends
isolated at home
or in the madhouse
getting their last shot of
motivation to compete
or grinding out position papers
in the movement
like old grannies
waiting to be swept away
by the revolution
or in a hospital
dying of complications
nurse or nun
lesbian in clean clothes
reaching out a hand to me
scientists have found
touching is necessary
and the drive to speak our needs
is basic as breath
but there isn't time
none of my needs has been met
and although I'm often comfortable
this situation is painful
slowly we begin
giving back what was taken away
our right to the control of our bodies
knowledge of how to fight and build
food that nourishes
medicine that heals
songs that remind us of ourselves
and make us want to keep on with
what matters to us
lets come out again
joining women coming out
for the first time
knowing this love makes a
a good difference in us
affirming a continuing life with women
we must be lovers doctors soldiers
artists mechanics farmers
all our lives
waves of women
triumphing with love and anger
singing we must rage
kissing, turn and
break the old society
without becoming the names it praises
the minds it pays
eat rice have faith in women
what I don't know now
I can still learn
slowly slowly
if I learn I can teach others
if others learn first
I must believe
they will come back and teach me
they will not go away
to the country with their knowledge
and send me a letter sometime
we must study all our lives
women coming from women going to women
trying to do all we can with words
then trying to work with tools
or with our bodies
trying to stand the time it takes
reading books when there are no teachers
or they are too far away
teaching ourselves
imagining others struggling
I must believe we will be together
and build enough concern
so when I have to fight alone
there will be sisters who
would help if they knew
sisters who will come
to support me later
women demanding loyalty
each with our needs

our whole lives torn by
the old society
never given the love or work
or strength or safety or information
we could use
never helped by the institutions
that imprison us
so when we need medical care
we are butchered
when we need police
we are insulted ignored
when we need parents
we find robots
trained to keep us in our places
when we need work we are told
to become part of
the system that destroys us
when we need friends
other women tell us
I have to be selfish
you'll have to forgive me
but there's only so much time
energy money concern
to go around
I have to think of myself
because who else will...
I have to save things for myself
because I'm not sure you could save me
if our places were reversed
because I suspect
you won't even be around
to save me when I need you
alone on the streets
at 5 in the morning
I'm alone cooking my rice

by FRAN WINANT
This issue I want to try to convey the spirit behind Margaret Anderson's second book, The Fiery Fountains. My Thirty Years War which I dealt with last issue was a very different kind of book -- much easier to excerpt because it was the story of Margaret's youth and full of exciting adventures, her contagious ambition, cooking, and all that.

The Fiery Fountains is a world and time removed from all this. It is the story of Margaret's more spiritual existence after she had quit The Little Review and become lovers with Georgette Leblanc. It is essentially about two sides of the spiritual: perfect love as she experienced it for over twenty years with Georgette and perfect understanding as Margaret and Georgette experienced it with Gurdjieff. I am choosing the first of these understandings to explore here -- the story of a great love.

The book opens with Georgette and Margaret and their devoted friend Monique living in a lighthouse in Normandy, France where:

"...we spent our eternal summers...in a kind of incredulous delight, loving France above all other countries and loving each other above all others.

Margaret had come from the very busy existence of being a magazine editor in America and Georgette from a marriage with Maeterlinck and years of singing in concerts all over the world (all of which she describes in her book, Souvenirs), but the connections between the women in love with France and each other and their pasts is never really made. Although we know that Margaret and Georgette met in America, we aren't really told how Georgette and Margaret became lovers, how they made their way to the lighthouse, etc. Perhaps this would have detracted from her relationship to Georgette. Margaret doesn't include many events in this book, it is after all a much quieter life away from the bustle of America, a life of the eternal summers...in a kind of incredulous delight, human communication.

Our lighthouse was no ivory tower -- it had a more attractive isolation than that. We were in a balloon, in space, looking down at the life on earth as we floated by, but finding our own the most perfect kingdom.

And for some reason I always thought of myself as the happiest person in the world...

We accomplished the great interdiction -- that of ignoring the world for our world -- with full consciousness of what we were doing and much confidence that we were not merely producing a lovely disaster. France allowed us to live our secret formulas. It is an impersonal country where everyone is free to establish his personal heaven on earth.

It wasn't all birdsong and kisses though. There were times when Georgette and Margaret unable to find fifty francs for the rent on their lighthouse "speculated that suicide would be our best solution." Still Margaret held onto her "confidence in universal protection" and all her life considered herself one of the happiest of humans.

"...I have never been able to move about the planet with freedom, as I should love to have never perfected any natural gift, I have never acquired knowledge I should love to have; I have never become what I would wish to be. But the impression persisted: 'I am so happy, I have always been no desperately happy.'"

Her happiness, her sure-footedness despite her poverty was due in part to a conviction that nothing "happened" to her that she could not alter:

"As I look at the human story I see two stories. They run parallel and never meet. One is of people who live, as they can or must, the events that are arising; the other is of people who live, as they intend, the events they create. The first category would have been impossible for me."

She had the capacity always "to make something out of nothing," "to have her cake and eat it too," and a beautiful, enduring "entente" with Georgette:

"My basic happiness was founded on this fact -- this unmatchable fact; that one sometimes finds a human being with whom one can have a true and immitual human communication. The words for this blessing are 'love,' or 'understanding,' or the exact word the French have for it -- an 'entente.'"

This is the first of the two real events I spoke of; the second is even more about whom I felt at once--as if a prophecy were being made to me--"There is a great love in her soul." For twenty-one years I never saw Georgette Leblanc do anything, never heard her say anything, that did not spring from this perfection. It is a quality, I think, that arises in the creative mind. Putting my trust in this quality, I felt that whatever I might be, the best of me (or even the worst) would never be misunderstood by Georgette. It never was. She always made me feel that there was something perfect in me. I could never be grateful enough for this distinction. Since she believed in it, it must be so. As long as she lived, I felt that I was always smiling..."

This was the entente in which I lived and breathed; this was the harmonic scale in which I felt that all things of life and art and mind were period of calm and quiet, time to look over my life and see what it was about.

To do this she and Georgette created their own world. A world within a world:

Our lighthouse was no ivory tower -- it had a more attractive isolation than that. We were in a balloon, in space, looking down at the life on earth as we floated by, but finding our own the most perfect kingdom.

And for some reason I always thought of myself as the happiest person in the world..."
understood. Take everything else from me, I used to say, but leave me this one communion and I will have a total life. I always wanted it more than anything else. I found it; I never found a flaw in it, I never stopped being grateful for it.

Margaret and Georgette scarcely noticed that this perfect love would not have been thought so by many:

Another thing I easily forgot is that there are people who divide love into categories, who respect certain categories and condemn others. Of course, when I remember to remember, I realize that such people exist somewhere, but my separation from them is geographical; they can't exist in my climate and landscape. I used to know all kinds of people with all kinds of ideas. I fought with them, but that was long ago. Now I know only useful people. I can't imagine any of them commenting on romantic love except to say "Ah!"

Perhaps this accounts for Margaret's complete lack of self-consciousness in describing the most intimate details of her life with Georgette. So powerful and mature was the current of their love stream together that it was carried completely inside their world almost as though I were reading a novel, the close of which brought the blackout to take Georgette to the hospital in Paris.

Under the thought of Georgette's death she began to write this book as a testament of their love and a source of courage to face life without her.

The operation was performed but the wound did not heal; the cancer came back and Margaret was told Georgette's days were numbered. As she adjusted herself to the end, she understood that this perfection would not have been possible in "real life." Margaret and Georgette scarcely noticed that this perfect love would not have been possible in "real life." Perhaps this accounts for Margaret's complete lack of self-consciousness in describing the most intimate details of her life with Georgette.

"It is as if Georgette had lived a picture of life—a formalization. With her you can sit in a room as if no one else were there. Why can you never do this with other people? Because they are in the habit of saying something at all times. You too fall into the habit; you begin to say words in order not to appear strange, you make the expected smiles, false sounds. You make grimaces, smiling at nothing like a fool—horrible —you can't stop, words come out of you as exclamations, empty as the voice that speaks them. This is communal life—it is terrifying; you can never let yourself drop into yourself, you can never get a feeling of what you are. That sometimes fills the world. You can never count on a sustained state for more than a minute. Even an hour at a time is not enough—"

it must be a state that can be entered at any time. But to be interrupted, frittered, dispersed, shattered—this is considered normal. To ask for release from it is considered selfish, demanding, ivory-tower, escapist. Why? No one ever knows how many important emotions he will forget, or never have, if he lives this dispersion. I consider it vulgar for people to clamor at me, wearing me down, eating me alive. Why don't they just remain silent in my silences? Why are they always sneaking up on my vibrations? Why don't they just 'sit down in a chair and exist'? I never get any rest except with Georgette. She 'exists' alone; this allows me to exist alone. Her life begins where all conventional life ends. It is based on extremes: real talk or absence of talk; interest in all that you do, or oblivion to all that you do—as you prefer, you have only to ask. What am I saying? You need never ask, it is always known. Her ways are the ways of wisdom and they produce the solace of freedom of mind.

Georgette, too, wrote about the perfect "benediction" she had found with Margaret:

Understanding is not the product of dreams. It does not accompany young love or its deceptions, its shallowness, its empty spaces, its emptiness of life. My search for it was long and tireless—later I saw why it is not easy to come upon. I had hoped to match myself with another's existence when I, myself, did not yet exist. At twenty I confused understanding with love. . . But the understanding that comes from being in love is only a chemical understanding. When it ends, it leaves behind it only sweetness or pain.

Understanding is a sort of love that does not end, because it desires the existence of the loved one as much as its own. I believe it is the only human understanding that cannot content simply to feed upon its own emotion. It accepts all that can be accepted only if one's eyes are closed, and all that is 'imure. In understanding, to lie would be senseless; there are no persuasions, no arguments to impose. Understanding is the only thing worth toleration and tests. It is a bond which would not be if it were not perfect. One can have understanding without a double knowledge—one must know oneself and the other person . . . I know, for example, that I will never be understood by the 'material-world' category. I have nothing in common with those who find in friendship what maintain themselves on the every-day plane I abhor. They have something a little more like a business associate—their strength is doubled but they are not concerned with the personality of their relationship. Of what value is a friendship which does not help you to understand more of yourself, of the other, and of all others? . . .

Can't name any number of tendencies which preclude a relationship of understanding. A vice can prevent it—especially a vice like avarice or indelicacy; a too-spherical egotism, a slackening of alms, an aging of the cells, a lack of good faith, a lack of distinction, or a lack of that serious lightness which is so rewarding in human relationships. Heavy human vibrations can prevent it; an empty quieted mind; a ponderous frivolity; people who sap the quality of their life into quietness; people of absurdity whose words clatter like hail against a window, intelligent people whose vibrations are impressive but who never speak a word of truth—they approach...
everything so indirectly that one wonders how they manage to get through a doorway; talkers with impetuous emanations who push aside everything in their path to make way for their monologues; people who have no presence at all— their emanations have been clipped off close to their bodies, like shorn sheep; the chronometer people who regulate everything and everyone; and those who strike, who bite, who scratch, who sting, who lie, who eject their venom wherever their anger falls, while their emanations claw and their mouths are pulled into a bitter twist. When I was very young I wrote in my diary: 'Great ideas are treated like objets d'art; they are not used, I shall use them.' I have kept my word. The great concept contained in 'understanding' is what I have always sought, what I have tried to be worthy of, what I have finally found—in the benefaction of a true communication with another human being. Ah, if we could only continue to live it for a thousand years!

When I was very young I wrote in my diary: 'Great ideas are treated like objets d'art, they are not used. I shall use them.' I have kept my word. The great concept contained in 'understanding' is what I have always sought, what I have tried to be worthy of, what I have finally found—in the benefaction of a true communication with another human being. Ah, if we could only continue to live it for a thousand years!

At the end of October, 1940, Georgette moved from the benediction of life to that of death. By degrees, she departed into herself, absorbed in "finding the core of her being." Margaret and Monique attended her, quiet, reserved— realizing the importance of the spiritual journey Georgette had begun.

She had always shown us how to live; now she was showing us how to die. This was all I could think about in those last days. And I knew I would never stop thinking about it.

Long before, Georgette had said to Margaret:

. . . La jour de ma mort, il ne faut pas être triste, car ce sera un jour de fête pour mon âme. [The day of my death, you needn't be sad, for it will be the birthday of my soul.]

The final pages of the book bring me to tears every time I read them:

. . . We reached her bed and held her to us. Her eyes were closing, she could not see. Her breathing was so soft and untroubled that we could scarcely hear it, but we knew at last that she was dying. Then, with no perceptible sign or sound or movement, she was dead. It was like a flower dying, or a leaf—as she wrote in her farewell to the Muet: 'in a slow spiral, returning gently to the earth.'

. . . It was half past eight and Georgette was dead.

I sat beside her until dawn. I held her right hand. I hadn't known whether death would be natural or terrifying. It was natural. I thought: I have never known anything that is strong until now nothing that I can do will ever make Georgette smile again. Dawn came. I thought: thank you for your existence.

The book is an intensely emotional experience—a spiritual journey hard to convey in these few pages. Next issue I'll go on to Margaret's last volume of autobiography, The Strange Necessity.
"You know, I wonder if they're headed in the same direction as us."

"God, yeah, wouldn't that be something."

"They're probably on exactly the same trip. Because look at the way they're turning out shit. And more and more, man, the shit is getting really good. Here we just make trash, but over there, man, it's really good shit."

"I wonder if they can take the thing we're doing, you know, and do that but do it right."

"It's very, very possible, man. I mean, they're really together over there. It's not like here at all. There's the same idea, you know, but the people here aren't united like they are over there. Over there everybody is really tight, even the family is together, and everybody is working toward the same goal. They know what they're doing. They're just going to keep on going quietly along, you know, unobtrusive, and one day they're going to be miles ahead of everybody else. One day everybody is going to turn around and say, 'Look at that.'"

"Too much."

"But, of course they could always blow it too."

"Yeah, they could still end up like us."

"Oh well, it doesn't matter anyway."

"I know."

---

**WOMEN & MADNESS**

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**a review:**

by LAUREL

---

I struggled for days to get a grasp on just what I wanted to say about *Women and Madness*. Was I thick-headed? Or my head as consequence of being out of my field? Why couldn't I find on second reading of the book, the exciting ideas which on first reading had seemed to make this book the apotheosis of feminist literature? Why couldn't I find the passages, the facts and figures which had kindled such a fire in me that I recommended to everyone I knew that without fail they should find the $9.00 (sell their blood if they must) to buy this book?

It occurs to me now that initially I devoured Phyllis Chesler's book, absolutely starved for new lesbian-feminist theory. I was terribly impressed by the charts, graphs, the innumerable footnotes and references. And I was exhilarated by what seemed to be the thesis of the book -- become a lesbian and "gain control of the means of production and reproduction" in order to return to our former happy state prior to patriarchy -- the glorious, heroic, (although technologically under-developed) state of our mythic Amazon mothers.

Of course, outrageous harpies have said this before, but Phyllis Chesler, Ph.d., Professor of psychology, documented her case. Or did she?

As I reread the book I noticed that the heavy documentation, the actual new information that Phyllis has to offer is not about lesbians or Amazons, but rather about women who have had sex with their (male) therapists. Where the opening chapters seem to prepare us for an up-to-the-minute report and new logistics for the struggle to end patriarchy the real fact-work of the book is in documenting the percentage of women who are fucked over (literally) in therapy and mental institutions. The thrust of the book is in showing that psychotherapy is the institution second only to marriage which most oppresses women. And Phyllis makes this point extremely well.

But what we are offered in her chapter on lesbianism are some whitewashed (carefully selected) quotes from Charlotte Wolff's book, *Love Between Women*, and a handful of lesbians talking about how their therapists had misunderstood and mistreated them.

The key to the problem with this chapter lies in Chesler's one sentence statement after quoting extensively from Charlotte Wolff's book:

*I have no more basic theory to offer.*

Now that's a shame. Not only does Phyllis Chesler not have any new theory about lesbians, she has no new facts. She rather lamely says "There are probably more male homosexuals than there are lesbians" on the basis of the Kinsey
Report done twenty years ago. Certainly if Phyllis had wanted to seriously deal with lesbianism she should have done some sampling of the current lesbian population.

With nothing more than Charlotte Woolf's study of 108 extremely repressed lesbians in England to go on, (and it had taken Dr. Woolf three years to 'gather' this many even though she assured them total anonymity) I think Phyllis undercuts her own case. Charlotte Woolf's lesbians are an ocean and a time removed. They might fit into a 1950 DOB meeting, but they certainly aren't representative of the lesbians I know.

The chapter is, then, a patchwork of Charlotte Woolf and a few (how chosen?) lesbians telling about how they got fucked over by psychiatrists. It is definitely the weakest chapter in the book—and it should have been the best. Phyllis's whole theory leads up to her final loaded questions:

...given our conditioning as women can we ever become feminist revolutionaries (or human beings) without becoming lesbians? As women, can we wage any sort of revolution if we are psychosexually bound to men or marriage or full-time child care?

The answer she continually poses throughout the book is no, women must turn to each other for nurturance and "seize the means of production and reproduction." Why then doesn't she offer a few examples of women who already are on this path? Why do we only hear from women who have had a tremendous problem "accepting" their lesbianism? And why are we still dependent on the Kinsey Report on female sexuality which has fucked women's minds about their own bodies for twenty years? It seems to me that Phyllis published her book too soon -- she documents and makes her case in the first half of the book -- but she definitely slips up in her handling of lesbians. We need more than to know that "there are probably more male homosexuals than lesbians."

And not unrelated, Phyllis intimates throughout her book that no one in her right mind could possibly not be a lesbian, she tells us she had affairs with girls in elementary school subsequent to her love affair with her mother, but she doesn't really come out. Now there would have been a source of information about lesbianism I would have been interested in -- her own personal experience and her observations of the lesbian community she is a part of.

I have zeroed in, perhaps unmercifully, on this chapter and probably left the impression that the book is not worth buying. Not so! Despite its flaws (and there are more than I've mentioned) it is still the meatiest new book around and the only book so far to boldly insist that women must turn to each other for love and self determination. It is a big step above the other sensational sellers of the season, Descent of Woman and The First Sex, and well worth talking your librarian into buying.

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PLEASE HELP US KEEP AMAZON QUARTERLY ALIVE.
Technology is a way of making things that did not exist before. To create something new, however, requires some sort of model that guides the form of the new product. This article is about western technology and the model that lies at the origin of our way of making.

To discover the origins of technology we must go far beyond the 18th century back to ancient history. For it was then, just at the beginnings of western civilization, that the Father replaced the Mother as the primary model of creation. This historical defeat of the Mother is reflected in the early myths that depict the creation of woman by the Father gods. Analysis of the (re)making of woman will reveal the patriarchal model of technological production that has continued through to the modern era.

As phallic technology destroys our relationship to the earth, so man's first technological act was the overthrow of the Earth Goddess herself. This overthrow of the Mother and her recreation into the submissive wife was the primal technological act that set the model of making that has guided the progress of our civilization.

Before the Father gods Zeus and Jehovah took over, fertility goddesses were worshipped in Greece and throughout the Mediterranean. Each small district was under the care of its own goddess, who was worshipped under the many names of Demeter, Astarte, Eve, Artemis, Cybele, Pandora, Athena, Isis and so on. The Mother was experienced as the source of all blessings on earth, of fertility, nourishment and birth. Besides the gifts of the earth, she was the changing phases of the growing and dying moon; thus she measured out and governed the times of planting and harvesting, religious festivals, and finally the times of birth and death. Men, jealous of the woman's and the goddesses' womb and her measured power of creation, defeated her, disarmed her and remade her according to the patriarch's conception of woman as submissive and evil.

Eve, who is called Mother and whose name literally means life, was technologically reconstructed and made over into patriarchal woman. The Father took Adam's rib, that primordial tool, and made Eve. As the Father overturned the law of the Mother by insisting upon the supremacy of his phallus over her womb, so too Eve was created out of Adam's rib, a displaced phallus. Man's technological constructions, which are based on the denial of the earth and the Earth Mother, are, however, ultimately destructive of man as well. No longer the Mother, the giver of gifts, the blooming and fertile trees of life and death and of all knowledge, Eve now brings forth evil and death. Herself paradise, Eve is now in the eyes of man responsible for their expulsion from paradise. Man's phallic reconstruction of Eve makes of her the source of evil rather than of good. Earth now becomes a giver of fruits only by way of painful labor.

The story of Pandora's creation is even more revealing. Like Eve, Pandora originally was the Earth Mother. Her name, meaning 'all gifts' or 'all giving,' refers to the Mother as the source of the blessings of life. Pandora was the creator of life, until, in the hands of the Olympian gods, she became the source of all evil. The transformation of Pandora from giver of blessings to the gift of evil was the punishment for man's desire to master the earth and subject it to his control. Pandora is Zeus's revenge on man for Prometheus' theft of fire. (Likewise, Eve as the source of evil is connected to man's desire to eat of the tree of knowledge.)

Hesiod, the author of the Olympian Theogony (the birth of the Greek gods) describes how Father Zeus gave his family instructions for the construction of Pandora. All the Olympian gods have their technical specialities. Zeus orders Hephaistos, the divine blacksmith and craftsman, to plaster earth with water and make a woman with a human voice, a face like a goddess and the features of a girl. Zeus instructs Athena to teach Pandora her skills, especially weaving, and he orders Aphrodite to give her cruel desire. But Hermes, the god of tricks and deceit, was ordered to put in Pandora the mind of a hussy, a treacherous nature, lies and wheedling words.

The Greek patriarchal gods constructed Pandora like Eve was constructed, to be submissive to man and ultimately destructive of his happiness. Hermes presents Pandora to Epimetheus, the first husband. When Epimetheus consummates the prototypic marriage he releases all the evils contained in Pandora into the world. The technological reconstruction of Pandora from Mother to Wife destroys happiness on earth and makes the source of goodness into evil. Her reconstruction created the primal

*Hesiod, Works and Days, lines 6-100.
hierarchy of exploitation. The male elevated himself over the woman by denying her her own creativity.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES: REPRESSION AND THE DREAM OF FEMININITY

A look into the psychological technique of the phallic construction of woman is necessary. This technique, called repression by Freud, begins with denial, in this case, the denial of woman. Woman as creative M(other) was denied because man was envious and afraid of her powers and her knowledge. (Christian man projected this envy onto Eve.) In order to assert his masculinity as the technological-phallic power to mold and control life, man had to deny woman's power. Once denied her ancient identity, woman had to be reconstructed. She became man's first artificial product, the first matter (from mater or mother) that could be technologically reconstructed in his image, according to his dream.

Man created woman his Mother into his Wife. He made her "feminine" with features of a girl goddess, golden tresses and necklaces, but with the mind of a hussy, one who lies and uses deceit to get what she wants. He created her along the lines of his infant dream, a wife who like the perfect mother would serve him like a slave, who would care for his every need and bear his children. However, like all neurotic symptoms that are grounded in denial, the "feminine" woman is aiming at man's destruction. Eve and Pandora, or, more generally, patriarchal femininity, is the very prototype of a neurotic symptom. Femininity is man's nightmare, his dream-girl become a bitch.

PATRIARCHY AND PHALLIC WORSHIP

The Mother's recreating body reflects the swelling and dying phases of the moon and the cyclic seasons of the earth. The Father, by denying the body its wisdom, had to develop a biological theory to support him - and a new religion, the phallic worship of his paternal ancestor-gods. Underlying the patriarchal worship of the male as creator is the Father's assertion that the phallus, not the womb, is the primal source of life. This logic of male creation is founded in a negation, the denial of the Mother. Aeschylus puts the magic bio-religious formula in the mouth of Apollo, the Greek god of rationality and light. Apollo says: The mother is no parent of that which is called her child, but only nurse of the new-planted seed that grows. The parent is he who mounts. (Eumenides, line 660)

Apollo justifies Orestes' murder of his mother Clytemnestra by saying that Orestes' responsibility for his life goes to his father, not to his mother. Orestes' murder of his mother thus justified lays the ground for the new justice, the patriarchal justice of father-right, which is founded on the death of the mother. Consequently, the Furies, previously mother goddesses of fertility, scream that "the hard hands of the gods and their teachers have taken my old rights away." (Eumenides, line 880)

Freud, the patriarch two thousand years later, received and helped create/cure myriads of uprooted, upper-class women. His words ring back two millennium to the origins of patriarchal supremacy. He also expresses most explicitly the dis-ease at the heart of the patriarchal terror of women. Women, Freud says, suffer from lack of a penis. Since the little girl instantly recognizes her "organic inferiority" as a state of "castration," in Freud's eyes she directs her sexuality into a bleak and threatening envy of the male's "superior organ." Because of this predominance of envy in their lives, according to Freud, women are less moral, more prone to resentment, less able to sublimate.* Like Eve. Like Pandora. In order to become truly "feminine," that is, a submissive mother, Freud, like Zeus before him, carefully instructs women to give up their desire to become a male (i.e. to assert themselves at all) and compensate for their frustration by giving birth to a son. For Freud, the son then becomes the mother's substitute penis. Pity the son, the phallic compensation for his mother's empty life. Woman became the source of evil for man when man denied her her own life, her own sexuality, her own wisdom. All male neurosis is traceable, says Freud, to castration anxiety. Female neurosis (femininity) is traceable to her "castrated" state.

PATRIARCHAL WOMAN AS THE MODEL OF MACHINES AND SLAVES

These biological and psychological techniques (that the phallus is the creator-god and that woman is a castrated man) consist of the denial and the reconstruction of woman as a tool-extension of man. They formulate woman as the primal machine. She is reconstructed as an empty vessel in need of activation, at which time an "automatic" process begins which results in birth. Passive reproduction, machine production, is her defining function in life, which she neither initiates nor controls. Like all machines she is conceived as an extension of man's powers. As his wife and domestic (his familiaris, which is Latin for slave) and as the womb for his children, woman is the prototype of alienated labor, the reduction of one human being to a means of the other.

Even man's oppression of other men is modeled after his oppression of woman, who is the primordial Other. The worst thing one man can do to another is treat him like a woman, that is, require him to work as his menial (from menses). To treat a man like a woman means to refuse him his rights to his own life and his own work.

*See the chapter on femininity in Freud's New Introductory Lectures
Just as men oppress other men by reducing them to "women," to a mere means of (re)production, so too man has tried to conquer the earth itself by reducing it to a means of producing those things he most desires. But first he had to free himself of natural necessity, which is essentially symbolized by his birth from the Mother. In the process of this ancient liberation western man developed a way of understanding and making, rationality, which he has used to harness the other, whether it be woman, other men, or the earth, to his needs.

NEW LIGHT ON THE THEORY OF PHALLIC CAUSALITY

By rational thought man liberated himself from his natural birth and death. He conceived, rationally, an immortal soul that originated necessarily in spirit, that is, in his Father, and not in the body of his Mother the Earth. The rational logic of the dominance of man over woman, of the superiority of soul over body, of spiritual control over the functioning of the earth, required first that thinking abstract itself from the immediacy of natural phenomena and hunt for their cause. Only a rational theory about the cause of this or that or even of all phenomena, based upon the denial of earthly things, could give man the power to control the things of the earth and the earth itself according to his own needs and his will.

Consequently in philosophy as later in science, causality, motivated by denial of the earth and the will to control, has long been the critical category of thinking. Man understands things by disconnecting them from the immediacy of their earthly context and reconnecting them together by means of (phallic) cause and effect. Knowledge of causality, of how things operate, gives man the power of manipulation that is limited only by his own destruction. In order for man to recreate the earth, woman and his own body, he had to deny these "things" their own inner motions, rhythms and motivations. Deprived of its own inner being, the woman-earth-body triad was reduced to mere matter, atoms, passive flesh that existed only to receive its form and meaning from the rational male creator god.

The abstraction of man from the earth by way of his knowledge of causality is like all things grounded in his personal life, in his relationship to his own body, and, deeper yet, in his relationship to women. A discussion of the paradigm of creation, procreation, will give us a hold on the technique of man's abstraction from woman, on the way in which she was deprived of her own motivations and reduced to a means of her husband's productivity.

In the beginning there was not, as Freud fantasized, a primal horde led by a jealous and authoritarian Father. There was, rather, as the many early goddesses of fertility demonstrate, a 'matriarchy!' in which the earth mother was worshipped as the source and measure of life. The divine over-emphasis on the phallus, the assertion that only the male semen and not the female womb was the holy source of creation, was the result of the prototypic (pattern-setting) act of abstraction. Man separated himself from the natural necessity of the Mother, from the immediacy of female birth, by thinking back in time to the event of sexual intercourse. This remembering connected semen with pregnancy and birth. Memory became causal-phallic logic when man denied the woman her due and posited the male seed as the sole divine cause of birth and all creation. This method of abstract thinking laid the ground of spirit, for the phallic seed was conceived of as the spiritual essence of human life, while the mother, reduced to mere body herself, simply clothed the soul in flesh. Men shall give their bodies, evil and woken of female flesh, back to earth, but the Father, who gave them their souls - and their names - will receive their spirits in eternity, if that is, like good boys, they led rational lives.

Rational-phallic thinking consists of the following phases: a) denial of woman as creator, b) abstraction from the wisdom of her birth and her death, c) recollection of the "only true" spiritual cause, the immortal semen, and d) the assertion that everything female and of the earth is false, evil and forever changing. This phallic way of understanding allowed man to deify himself as the creator god and to manipulate and exploit the other to satisfy his own particular needs. Man's dream was to give birth out of his head to a new earth, denied and reconstructed according to his desires and his will to power. His basic technological tool of reconstruction as well as of reproduction is his phallic rationality.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE ARTIFICIAL WOMAN

The Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries merely extended to everything and everybody a way of making and thinking that originated in the ancient defeat of the Mother Goddess. Aristocratic women had been defined as Pandora-Eve since ancient times. Their "true" femininity was symbolized by their uselessness, their vanity and their deceitfulness; and they were defined as a means of their husbands' reproduction and immortality. Industrialization, by accelerating the destruction of agricultural life, extended to all women this ancient technological definition of femininity.

While man appropriated and subjected the outer world with his rationality, woman, finally emptied of her life-sustaining activities by industrialization, reached the apex of her femininity as man's artificial product. If ancient technology (phallic rationality) lay the groundwork for her patriarchal body as machine-womb, American technology is now completing the work of remaking woman, of making the artificial woman. In order to sell...
(to be made saleable in) our consumer economy, her body is now almost to­
tally reconstructed by technology. Made-up, false haired, false eye-
lashed, deodorized everywhere, girdled, nyloned, barely able to walk or
breathe, she is the rational extension of Pandora, man's dream girl. Thus
the Olympians, Zeus and his specialized children, find their final expres­
sion in the consumer executive and his technical specialists.

Patriarchal woman is man's model product; thus technological products
as they are developed and utilized in a patriarchal society are "feminine." Women used to wash clothes by rubbing them against rocks in the creek.
Now a machine does that. However, the private washer-dryer functions in
our society to "liberate" woman to her true "femininity," which is ab­
solute uselessness. In our patriarchal society the machine washes
women's construction of man is externalization. His basic features are
strength, coldness, hardness. He has no emotions, except aggression and
frustration and perhaps the joys of dominance. At the most he may clench
his jaw to let us know he is feeling anything. How does this technological
construction of man take place?

One clue lies in the etymology of technology itself. Besides deriving
from the Greek tekton, a builder, technology is derived from the Latin
texere, to weave. Athena, it will be remembered, is the only Olympian
to give Pandora useful skills; in particular, Hesiod mentions that she
taught Pandora to weave. But Pandora remade is the source of evil. Her
weaving skill enables her to weave the flesh of man, his outer coverings,
(testology also comes from the Latin tegere, to cover) to make him into
an outer covering.

Akin to texere, to weave and textus, something woven, is the Latin testa,
which means a clay vessel, hence a shell, an outer covering. Women
also invented the skill of pottery. Woman may have taken revenge on man
for depriving her of her source by solidifying the woven garments, his

flesh, into baked clay. He became a shell of a man. Hard, superhuman,
able to feel anything or show emotion. From testa comes test, a hard
outer shell and testum, a skull. Man became a clay vessel, a shell, an
immortal skull. But he still had testes, related to testaceous, literally
made of baked earth. The revenge of denied Earth.

WOMAN-IDENTIFIED WOMAN AND THE OVERTHROW OF THE MADE-UP WOMAN

A revolution in the essential relationship between the sexes would
occur, western technology as the phallic way of making things at the ex­

tense of the other, would also change. Phallic technology could no
longer remake the other into a passive slave-womb, whether the other be
women, blacks or the lower classes. A change in our concepts of sexual
identity could serve as a beginning point for the non-sexist construc­
tion of a new society.

The stranglehold of the Patriarchal Father and Mother on our sexuality
must first be broken. The Father identifies his masculinity as master and
controller, while the Mother finds her femininity in her role as slave
and martyr to her husband and children. These two heterosexual defini­
tions of the maker and his object lie at the very base of our exploi­
tative technology, our way of making our world, our children and our
selves.

One path towards liberation from the Father and the Mother is to identify
ourselves as women in relationship to our love of other women. Patri­
archal woman in her entire technological make-up is the product of male
fears and desires. If we reject this identity by way of loving-identifying
with other women, we will develop a totally new concept of womanhood,
as well as new ways of living together, raising children and working
together. Most important, women who are defining their womanhood in love
of other women are making a new world based on a new mode of (non-
phallic) intercourse with the earth.
WE THANK THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS FOR PRINTING OUR ANNOUNCEMENTS OF

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GINA
I'm dreaming bigger dreams and learning to believe in them.

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JEANNE GALLICK
I am trying to make a body and a space for myself where I can breathe deeply and enjoy myself and work some.

LAUREL
I'm in love with Miss Q. and working hard to make her beautiful.

LES B. FRIENDS
Les B. Friends is a group of Thespian Lesbians affiliated with the C.I.A. (Consciousness In Action), living, surviving and thriving in the armpit of the nation -- Binghamton, New York. We don't have a lot of sun here, but a heck of a lot of daughters.

RITA MAE BROWN
Rita Mae is remembered for her part in "liberating" New York City's N.O.W. She published a book of poetry in 1972, The Hand That Cradles The Rock, and another will be released soon. Look for Ruby Fruit Jungle to come out in about a year.
I love the way they look
in the morning, these women
my friends.

Their eyes are puffy, their
curls are wild and knotted, their
cowlicks are up. They smell of
blankets, their mouths taste of
sleep. They are slow
in kitchens in bathrooms
waking up, rubbing their skin
like animals.

Her, waiting for water to boil,
or her, lying still in bed, with no
meetings or children to pull at her,
on her side in her brass bed, like
smooth rolling grey hills
in that nightgown.

by Jennie Orvino
AMAZON QUARTERLY
Volume 1
Issue 3

A.
LESBIAN-
FEMINIST
ARTS
JOURNAL

ROBIN MORGAN'S
KEYNOTE SPEECH
AT THE
WEST COAST
LESBIAN/FEMINIST
CONFERENCE
COMPLETE
IN THIS ISSUE
love letters

What a fine magazine you're putting out! -- Country Women

...more humanist and in that way more mature than any Lesbian publication I have seen. -- Sarah Whitworth (New Jersey)

One approaches the magazine with respect because of the care and dignity of its presentation. -- Elsa Gidlow (Marin County, Ca.)

There is nothing else of quality since The Ladder died. It is such a damned good magazine. -- Robin Morgan (New York City)

I read lots of magazines, feminist, dyke and otherwise, but AQ is the best I've seen in ages.... I loved every story, poem and essay and drawing. That's never happened to me before, usually one or two pieces turn me on and the rest I think are mediocre or crap, but I loved everything in AQ. -- Liza (New York City)

I want to congratulate you on your magazine. Already it's had an impact--and the attention paid to quality can only help us all in the movement take ourselves and our sisters more seriously. Cheers! Rita Mae Brown (Washington D.C.)

I was wrestling with the possibility that I might be a lesbian when I read your first issue. I felt a tug in my heart and tears in my eyes when I recognized my own feelings about women and life in Emily Carr's journals, in Gina's drawings, in "Priapus Paresis," in "The Disappearance," I felt proud and happy, bewildered and cursed. I look back on the women I have known and loved without daring to say it, without daring to even think of expressing that love. Your magazine helps me to imagine a full, rich, challenging, loving life as a lesbian. -- Jan (Washington)

I received Ms and AQ at the same time. Read AQ first -- that's faith, and well rewarded. Congratulations on a fine issue.

Gloria (New Mexico)
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WHAT'S WHAT?

This is going to be a big potpourri of what's what with Amazon Quarterly:

First of all, we would like to remind those of you who were our charter subscribers to please, please renew your subscriptions as soon as you can. Almost 500 subscriptions will "run out" next issue, and if there is to be a Volume Two, they must be renewed.

Next, we want to take this opportunity to come out of what a few readers thought was a "closet." It never occurred to us that not using our last (patristic) names could be construed as hiding anything; we simply didn't want to give any special credit to the men whose names are attached to ours. But for the record: it's Gina Roberson and Laurel Holliday (father) Akers (ex-husband). Living in the Berkeley area has made us almost forget the problems of "coming out" -- it really hasn't been an issue for us here.

Next we want to unveil a marvelous dream we have -- a dream you can help come true: We want to do a very special fourth issue devoted to our readers, about our readers, and with you. We know from our mail and local reaction that Miss Q's followers are a richly diverse group of people -- just how diverse we would like to find out. How? By meeting you, talking, sharing some time together, What??

Well, it's hard to explain how we can be so impractical (foolhardy really), but we have this fantasy that if our 61 VW bug can make it we can spend a couple of months this summer touring the U.S. and Canada visiting readers who wouldn't mind getting to know us.

Then, we'll put together a "Lesbians around the country" section in the fourth issue with the latest word on what it's like being the only lesbian in Yoknapatowa, Mississippi, or living in a commune in Oregon, or with the multifarious possibilities of NYC. We think we've all got some pretty funny myths about "the lesbian nation" which Amazon Quarterly could help to clarify. What are the


We want to share stories of self-discovery, coming out, being lesbians in extremely different surroundings. We'll talk to older women, middle-aged women, and the very young from California, to N.Y., from Texas, to Canada about their work, play, relationships... with parents, friends, lovers, etc. We hope to talk with married lesbians, lesbian mothers... Black, white, green and purple lesbians ---- it's all up to you.

If you like our fantasy and you'd like to help make it come true write and invite us to visit. See our fantasy map below -- if you live in any of the states bordering the oceans, we'll be passing through your neighborhood with fresh tales of California and lots of news we've accumulated along the way. (Of course we want to assure anyone who wants it total anonymity. We are scrupulously scrupulous about this and always will be.) We'll be leaving sometime in June, so please write now to allow us to plan ahead.

We know this is ambitious -- far beyond our means -- (can you believe we're both unemployed and on food stamps?) but we think such a cumulative picture of lesbians has never been attempted and it's high time we got to know one another. If you can spare it, please won't you send us a contribution earmarked for the "Lesbians Around the Country" special issue. If we get enough for gas and car repairs we'll be on our way.

So, if you can, please invite us to tea in your parlor, lemonade on your veranda, or beer in your garret -- it's sure to be a good time.
Dear Miss Quarterly,

I am writing in regard to the pictures in Amazon Quarterly. Though I realize that the pictures were not meant to be offensive, this was their effect on me. I am not questioning your artist's talent. It is what she draws that I find offensive.

The majority of straight people are still walking around under the assumption that we Lesbians have fish heads, six toes, and four eyes. Yes, that is quite an exaggeration, but for those of us who have "straight arrow" parents, or have encountered the many "normal" people with antediluvian thinking, it is an exaggeration easily related to. In effect, what I am trying to say is that I feel very hurt when my own gay sisters depict themselves and myself as freaks. I cannot relate to a picture of a creature.

I am very proud that I am a Lesbian. Being that I am so proud, I would like very much to show my only Lesbian literature to my straight friends. As it is, I feel ashamed, because the pictures are not of women, but of creatures. I cannot honestly say, "That is what I am so proud to be." Do you realize that to adopt that kind of thinking would be inviting the outmoded straights to laugh at us for finally accepting what they have always thought us to be?

--Sincerely, Marilyn Kay

I want to commend two drawings that especially reached me: the dot drawing and accompanying text just inside Vol. 1, Issue 1 and Gina's drawing, pg. 4 same issue. Of all the art in the two issues I've seen, these were the only two I could get any aesthetic reaction from. I don't understand these pictures of ladies as frogs and things: I mean, I guess I really missed out somewhere in my learning about art: they must be symbolism that I can't read because, boy --they sort of repulse me.

--Ginger Lox (Oklahoma)

I was nearly asphyxiated by my own gasp of incredulous joy upon seeing my favorite reptiles playing my favorite game on the first page of my favorite mag. Gina, are you sure you haven't been eavesdropping on my fantasies?

--Rachel (Pennsylvania)

AQ - 2 is here and I was pleased to see some familiar names--Jane Rule and Rita Mae Brown. And I laugh everytime I open the book to the first page. Gina's sense of humor is worth the whole book. The frogs are something special.... Living here away from the urban multitudes, I get the idea that Community does exist in some places. I think it would be great to participate in it. But not the kind of communities you write of in "Distinctions." Is it city living that has made people so desperate and different from people I know? I find it appalling to imagine a group of women rallying to the dyke image. It bothers me to see you write (p. 32) that violence may at some time be the only means of ending sexism. (Yes, I see the "but"). Otherwise, I appreciate that your article is anti-separatist. There can't be any way in this world that somebody can make her own way better (permanently)) by putting down somebody else. Or at least that's the myth to which I like to (idealistically?) subscribe. --Martha (Virginia)

Your magazine is really great--a breath of fresh human-ness amongst the torrents of impersonal rhetoric. It gave me so much energy that I'm giving a subscription as a gift to a friend. I had thought before I read the magazine that I was sick of reading lesbian literature because it was so repetitious, and only spoke to me as a lesbian feminist in the narrowest way. I absolutely loved the article about the strange and the familiar--my lover and I were up half the night talking about it. --Roberta (New York)

Wow, I just read your first issue and I thought it was fantastic. I'm glad the Amazon Quarterly exists--I'm so glad I don't have to read a magazine that was sick of reading lesbian literature because it was so repetitious, and only spoke to me as a lesbian feminist in the narrowest way. I absolutely loved the article about the strange and the familiar--my lover and I were up half the night talking about it. --Roberta (New York)

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If the getting better rate of issue 3 is as high as 2 over 1 then A.Q. is shooting for the stars, might get uppity and fire her loyal editors. --Jennie (Oregon)
Very Dear Sisters:

It seems important to begin by affirming who, how, and why, we are. We all know the male mass media stereotype of the Women's Movement: “If you've seen one Women's Libber, you've seen 'em all—they each have two heads, a pair of horns, and are fire-spouting, man-hating, neurotic, crazy, frigid, castrating-bitch, aggressive, Lesbian, broom-riding Witches.” So I want to start by saying that this shocking stereotype is absolutely true. The days of women asking politely for a crumb of human dignity are over. Most men say, "But you've become so hostile," to which one good retort is a quote from a nineteenth century Feminist who said, "First men put us in chains, and then, when we writhe in agony, they deplore our not behaving prettily." Well, enough of that. We are the women that men have warned us about.

That settled, I want to talk about a number of difficult and dangerous themes relating to what others have variously called "The Lesbian-Straight Split," "Lesbian Separatism from Straight Women," and even "The Lesbian-Feminist Split." This is the first speech, talk, what-have-you, that I have ever written down and then read—and it may be the last. I have done so because the content can so easily be misunderstood or wilfully distorted, because misquoting is a common occurrence, because the risks I will take today are too vital for me to chance such misrepresentation. If there are disagreements with what I have to say, at least let them be based on what I do say, and not on some people's out-of-context mis-memory of what they thought I meant. So, for the record, one copy of this talk is lodged at the offices of The Lesbian Tide, another with sisters from Amazon Quarterly, and still another in a secret safe-deposit box.
guarded night and day by the spirits of Stanton and Anthony, Joan and Haivette, and a full collective of Labyris-wielding Amazons. I also want to add that the lack of a question-discussion scene when I finish was decided upon not by me and why I am here. As far back as a month ago, I began hearing a few rumbles of confusion or criticism about my "keynoting" this conference—all from predictable people, and none, of course, expressed directly to my face. "Is she or isn't she?" was their main thrust. "Know anyone who's been to bed with her lately? Well, if we can't prove she's a Lesbian, then what right has she to address a Lesbian-Feminist Conference?" Now, such charges hardly devastate me, having been heard before. So, it is credential time once again. I am a woman. I am a Feminist, a radical feminist, yes, a militant feminist. I am a Witch. I identify as a Lesbian because I love the People of Women and certain individual women with my life's blood. Yes, I live with a man. Yes, I am a Mother—and I am also a Monster--and I am proud. Now all of the above credentials qualify me, I feel, to speak from concrete experience on: Feminism, Lesbianism, Motherhood, "Gay Male Movements" versus Faggot-Effeminst consciousness about women, Tactics for the Women's Revolution, and a Vision of the Female Cosmos. I am an expert with the scars to prove it, and indeed of women, one might say, a good deal. As you can see, the above credentials further qualify me for being an excellent target, available not only to the male rulers but also to any woman just dying to practice—even on a sister.

But, finally, to the subject. In order to talk intelligently about the so-called Split, it is necessary to recap history a little. In the early days of the current Women's Movement, many of us were a bit schizoid. The very first consciousness-raising session I ever went to, for example, gave me the warning. We were talking about sexuality, and I described myself as a bisexual (this was even before the birth of the first Gay Liberation Front, and long before bisexual became a naughty or cop-out word—besides, it did seem an accurate way of describing my situation). Every woman in the room moved, almost in perfect synchrony: "Don't you dare call yourself a Lesbian—you live with a man and have a child.""Now, while I might (defensively) argue the low-consciousness logic of this, since statistically most Lesbians are married to men and have children, I had nonetheless learned one important thing from all my previous years in the Left: So all my knee-jerk reflexes went into overdrive, and I—obeyed. Six months later, another group of Radicalesbians confronted me. "We notice you've stopped calling yourself a Lesbian," they said, "What's the matter—you gone back in the closet? You afraid?" Meanwhile, the monosexual straight women were still inching away from my presence. Now, I thought, repeatedly.

The lines began to be drawn, thick, heavy. Friedan trained her cannon on "the Lesbian Menace." (In a show of consistent terror and hatred of Lesbians, and indeed of women, one might say, a very recent in the New York Times that the Lesbians and radical feminists in the Movement were CIA infiltrators. We met her attack with a firm political counterattack in the press, many times, by Lesbians. In the face of thislevel of organized concerted effort—cat-fight which they were trying to foment.) In 1970, backlash began, starting in NOW and infecting radical feminist groups as well. The bigotry was intense and wore many faces: outright hatred and revulsion of Lesbian women; "experiments"—using a Lesbian for an interesting experiment and then dumping her afterward: curiosity about the freaks, dismissal of another woman's particular pain if it did not fall within the "common" experience, and many other examples.

Meanwhile, Lesbians, reeling from the hatred expressed by the gay male movement and the fear expressed by the Women's Liberation Movement, began to organize separately. Of course, a great many Lesbians had been in the Women's Movement since its beginning—a great many had, in fact, begun it. These included women who were active in Daughters of Bilitis under other names, not only to keep jobs and homes and custody of their children, but also so not to "embarrass" NOW, which they had built. In addition, a great many formerly heterosexual, bisexual, asexual, and celibate women who were discovering their sexual identity in N O W  and infecting radical feminist groups as well. The bigotry was intense and wore many faces: outright hatred and revulsion of Lesbian women; "experiments"—using a Lesbian for an interesting experiment and then dumping her afterward: curiosity about the freaks, dismissal of another woman's particular pain if it did not fall within the "common" experience, and many other examples.

The pressure came mostly from confusion, contradictions, and most of all, by Lesbians. The pressure came mostly from confusion, contradictions, and the Man exploited into warring factions; he was aided, of course, by the internecine hostility of any oppressed people—tearing at each other is painful, but it is after all safer than tearing at the real enemy. Oh, people did struggle sincerely, hour upon hour of struggle to understand and relate—but the flaw still widened to a crack and then to a split, created by our collective false consciousness. We are now teetering on the brink of an abyss, but one very different from what we have been led to expect.

At present, there are supposedly two factions. On one side, those labeled heterosexual, bisexual, asexual, and celibate women. On the other, those labeled Lesbians. Not that the latter group is monolithic—far from it, although monosexual straight women can, in their fear, try to hide their bigotry behind such a belief. No, there are some Lesbians who work politically with gay men;
some work politically with straight men; some work politically with other Lesbians; some work politically with only certain other Lesbians (age, race, class distinctions); some work politically with all Feminists (Lesbians, heterosexuals, etc.,); and some, of course, don't work politically at all. As Laurel has pointed out in an incisive and witty article in The Ladder Quarterly, there are sub-divisions, between gay women, Lesbians, Lesbian-Feminists, dykes, dyke-feminists, dyke-separatists, Old Dykes, butch dykes, bar dykes, and killer dykes. In New York, there were divisions between Political Lesbians and Real Lesbians and Nouveau Lesbians. Here help the woman who is unaware of these fine political distinctions and who wanders into a meeting for the first time, thinking she may have a right to be there because she likes women.

Still, the same energy which created The Ladder almost twenty years ago (and we mourn its demise last year and the loss for all hope of its resuscitation this summer)—that same energy is evident in the dynamism of The Lesbian Tide, the dedication to the fine points of struggle and contradiction in Ain't I A Woman?, in the analytical attempts of The Furies, and in the aesthetic energy of a major underground gay male publication, The New Masses. It is evident in any serious political proclamations of the now-banned proceedings of the annual Amazon Assembly, in the torture of hiding and working under false pretenses for so long, in the beautiful and organized anger of groups like Lesbian Mothers (begun in San Francisco and now spreading elsewhere), that's All There Is! as a farewell to the male gay movement soon after—and said it all again. We were both touching naively if we thought that sufficient.

Because there is now upon us yet another massive wave of male interference, and it is coming, this time, from both gay men and their straight brothers.

Boys will be boys, the old saying goes—and boys will indulge in that little thing called male bonding—and all boys in a patriarchal culture have more options and power than do any women. Gay men first, since they were the ones we all thought were incipient allies with women, because of their own oppression under sexism. I won't go into the facts or the manners of the male-dominated Gay Liberation Movement, since Del did all that superbly and since most women have left the "Gay Movement" a long time ago. But I will, for the sake of those sisters still locked into indoctrinated servitude there, run through a few more recent examples of the "new changing consciousness about male supremacy" among gay organizations and gay male heavyies. Are we to forgive and forget the Gay Activist Alliance dances only a few months ago (with, as usual, a token ten percent attendance by women), at which New York GAA showed stag movies of nude men raping nude women? Are we to forgive and forget the remark of gay leader and "martyr" Jim Fouratt, who told Susan Silverwoman, a founder of New York GLF, that she could not re-present GLF at a press conference because she saw herself too much as a woman, as a Feminist? Are we to forgive the editors of the gay male issue of Motive magazine for deliberately setting women against women, deliberately attempting to divide and conquer—are we to forgive the following:

Once, when I was telling one of the Motive editors, you Roy Eddy, about the estimated nine million Wicca (witches) who were burned to death during the Middle Ages—something that appeared to be news to you—you paused for a moment, and then asked me, "But how many of those nine million women were ac-
tually lesbians?" For a moment, I missed your meaning completely as a variety of sick jokes raced through my mind: How many of the six million Jews were Zionists; how many of the napelmed Indochinese children could be said to have lived outside the nuclear family? How many of the slave-owning and anti-feminist men had actually expressed a particle of your intense hatred for all women by asking how many of the nine million were lesbians, so that you would know how many of these victims to mourn, because YOU DIDN'T OBJECT TO WHAT WAS DONE TO THE OTHER WOMEN! This is as close as I have ever heard a man come to saying in so many words that he didn't object to men torturing and incinerating millions of women (provided only that they met his standards for feminability).

This is a quote from the second issue of Double-F, A Magazine of Effeminism, in which the Male effeminists declare their Declaration of Independence from Gay Liberation and all other Male Ideologies.

And or we, out of the compassion in which we have been positively forced to drown as women, aren't we, yet again going to defend the male supremacist yes-sense into our organizations, even men who deliberately re-emphasize gender senility of male transvestitism? How many of us will try to explain away—or per­

No? Then is it "merely" our mothers, and their mothers, who had no other choice, who were hobbling dresses and torture-stiletto-heels to survive, to keep jobs, or to keep husbands because they themselves could get no jobs. No, I will not call a male "she"; thirty-two years of suffering in this androcentric society, and of surviving, have earned me the name "woman"; one walk down the street by a male transvestite, five minutes of his being hassled (which he may enjoy), and then he dares, he dares to think he understands our pain? No, in our mothers' names and our own, we must not call him sister. We know what's at work when whites wear blackface; the same thing is at work when men wear drag.

And what of the straight men, the rulers, the rapists, the right-on radicals? What of the male members of the Socialist Workers' Party, for example, who a short two years ago refused membership to all homosexual people on the grounds that homosexuality was a decadent sickness, an evil of capitalism, a perversion that must be rooted out in all "correct socialist thinking"—who now, upon opportunistically seeing a large movement out there with a lot of bodies to organize like pawns into their community, speedily change their official line (but not their central-committee attitude on homosexuality), and send "their" women out to teach these poor sheep some real politics? Are we to forgive, forget, ignore, endlessly through precious energy-robbing hours with these women, because they are after all women, sisters, even if they're collaborating with a politics and a party based on straight white male rules? We must save our struggle for ourselves, for our women, for our own, and not for the male transvestite who chooses to wear women's dresses and make­up, but sneer at the female who is still forced not to buy him in.

What is happening when "Street Fighting Woman," a New York all-woman bar band, dresses in black leather and motorcycle chains, and sings and plays a lot of the Rolling Stones, including the high priest of sadistic cock-rock Jagger's racist, sexist song "Brown Sugar"—with lines like, "Old slave knows he's doi­n' all right/ hear him whip the women just about midnight/ Hey, Brown Sugar, how come you taste so good?" What is happening when, in a mid-west city with a strong Lesbian-Feminist community, men raped a woman in the university dining room, and murdered her by the repeated slapping of a hand-door into her vagina until she died of massive internal hemorrhage—and the Lesbian activists there can't relate to taking any political action pertaining to the crime be­cause, according to the theory of the "war of all the sexes," they're not real women, they can't relate to the crime?

But the same community can, at a women's dance less than a week later, proudly play Jagger's recorded voice singing "Midnight Rambler"—a song which glorifies the Boston Strangler?

What has happened when women, in escaping the patriarchially enforced role of monstrous "femininity" adopt instead the patriarch's own style, to get drunk and swaggering just like one of the boys, to write of tits and ass as if a sister were no more than a collection of chicken parts, to spit at the lifetime com­mitment of other Lesbian couples, and refer to the Lesbian community contemptuously as "menopausal" for the record, the anti-monogamy line originated with men, Leftist men, Weathermen in particular, in order to guilt-trip the women in their "alternative cul­ture" into being more available victims of a dominance-based gang-rape sexual­ity. And from there it is but a short leap to the real Male Left, who have been identified with the obsession to anti-intellectualism and downward mobility? Genuinely poor people see no romanticism in their poverty; those really forced into il­literacy hardly glorify their condition. The oppressed want out of that condition—and it is contemptuous of real people's real pain to parasitically imi­tate it, and hypocritical to play the more-oppressed-than-thou game instead of ordering our lives so as to try and meet our basic and just needs, so that we can get on with the more important but often forgotten business of making a Feminist Revolution.

What about the lifestyle cop-out? The one invented by two straight white young males, Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, for the benefit of other unoppressed straight young males? What about the elite isolation, the incestuous pre­occupation with one's own clique or group or commune, one's own bar/dance/trip­ping, which led one Lesbian to announce that the revolution has already been won, that she isn't compelled, like the rest of us, to live in a man's world anymore? Ann North, in her pamphlet Cordova has written in the Lesbian community these politics is Jill Johnston's calling for tribes of women capable of sus­taining themselves independent of the male species. How very beautiful! Truth, justice, and the womanly way! How very unreal," And Cordova is right in point­ing out that this is the "personal solution" error—the deadly trap into which fact, always been a source of pride to the Lesbian community, even in its great­est suffering. That the emphasis on genital sexuality, objectification, prom­iscuity, and low emotional involvement, and tough invulnerability, was the male style, and that we, as women, placed greater trust in love, sensuality, humor, tenderness, strength, commitment, Then what but male style is happening when we think it hit the male transvestite who chooses to wear women's dresses and make­up, but sneer at the female who is still forced not to buy him in.

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so many heterosexual women have fallen. It should be obvious how painfully
much everyone wants even a little happiness, peace, joy, in her life and
she should have that right. But to remain convinced that our own personal mirage
is a chance that sandstorm is rising in the desert is both selfish and
suicidal. There is a war going on, sisters. Women are being killed. And
the rapist doesn't stop to ask whether his victim is straight or Lesbian.

But the epidemic of male style among women doesn't stop there. No, it is
driving its reformist wedge through our ranks as well: women breaking their
backs working for McGovern (only to have him laugh in the ir faces); women in
the Lesbian community especially breaking their backs to elect almost invari-
bly male gay legislators, or lobbying to pass bills which will, in practice, primarily profit men. Myself, I have never been able to get excited over To-
kenism, whether it was Margaret Chase Smith in the Senate or Bernadine Dohrn
in the Weather Underground, which women want to give OAA (women, by the way, are finally getting wise to and leaving), or to serve
as periodic good niggers for the cheap pom reportage of The Advocate, Gay, Gay
Shine, and the like.

Susan Silverwoman, a New York-based Lesbian Feminist active for years in the
Women's Movement and at one time in GLF, has written a moving and courageous
paper called "Finding Allies: The Lesbian Dilemma" which is available for 25¢
by writing to Labyris Books, 33 Barrow Street, New York City 10014. In it she
writes, "Men have traditionally maintained power over women by keeping us separ-
gated, gay men capitalist on the split between feminists and lesbians by sug-

There is a war going on. And people get damaged in a war, badly damaged. Our
casualties are rising. To say that any woman has escaped—or can escape—damage
in this round of the war is to march under the satisfied flags of smug
false consciousness. And get gunned down anyway for her pains.

Personally, I detest "vanguarditis." I never liked it in the Left, and I
find it especially distasteful weaving its way into the Women's Movement. I
think that if anything like a "vanguard" exists at all, it continually shifts and changes from group to group within a movement, depending on the spe-
cific strategies and contradictions that arise at given times, and on which
groups are best equipped and placed to deal with them—and if called for by the movement as a whole. The responsibility of a "vanguard,
by the way, is to speak from, for, and to all of us. Lesbian Nation cannot be the Feminist solution, much less a vanguard, when it ignores these facts. And it won't do to blame the straight women who wouldn't cooperate--after all, they got us to give OAA (women, by the way, are finally getting wise to and leaving), or to serve
as periodic good niggers for the cheap pom reportage of The Advocate, Gay, Gay
Shine, and the like.

There is a new smell of fear in the Women's Movement. It is in the air when
figures calling themselves killer-dyke-separatists trash Lesbian Feminists who
weren't there, and anathema, straight women—trash these Lesbian Feminists as "pawns,
dupes, and suckers-up to the enemy." It is in the air when Peggy Allegro writes in
Amazon Quarterly that "at a certain point, flags can begin to dominate people.
For instance, women are oppressed by the flag of the freak feminist dyke.
Those are all kinds of rules, shoulds and shouldn'ts, in this community, that result because of the image's power. We must beware the tendency to merely im-
pose a new hierarchy...a new ideal ego image to persecute people." It is in
the air when an ultra-egalitarianism usurps organic collectivity, and when one wo-
man is genuinely scared to confront another about the latter's use of "chick-
thous games. I don't like credentials games, intimidation-between-women games,
or "you are who you sleep with" games. I don't like people being judged by
their class background, their sexual preference, their race, choice of religion,
marital status, motherhood or rejection of it, or any other vicious standard
of categorization. I hate such judgements in the male power system, and I hate
them in the Women's Movement. If there must be judgments at all, let them be
not on where a woman is coming from, but on what she is moving toward; let them
be based on her seriousness, her level of risk, her commitment, her endurance.

And by those standards, yes, there could be a Lesbian "vanguard". I think it
would be women like Barbara Grier and Phyllis Lyons and Del Martin and Sten
Russell, with others like they who stand up and form a Lesbian civil-rights movement, and whose courage, com-
mitment, and staying power are ignored by the vulgar minds of certain younger
women, newly Lesbian from two months or two years back, who presume to dismiss
such brave women as "oldies" or "life-style straights" or, again, "hopeless mo-

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record from the phonograph at a woman's dance, and when I was accused of being up-tight, a bring-down, puritanical, draggy, and of course, doubtless, a hung-record from the phonograph at a women's dance, and when I was accused of man-hating "straight" of faith that our own shared and potentially ecstatic womanhood will bind a-cross all criticism—and that a lot more feminists in the Lesbian Movement will come out of their closets today.

Because polarization does exist. Already. And when I first thought about this talk, I wanted to call for unity. But I cannot. I am struck dumb before the dead body of a broomhandle-raped and murdered woman, and anyway, my voice wouldn't dent the rape-sound of the Rolling Stones. So instead, my purpose in this talk here today is to call for further polarization, but on different grounds.

Not the Lesbian-Straight Split, nor the Lesbian-Feminist Split, but the Feminist-Collaborator Split.

The war outside, between men and male power, is getting murderous; they are trying to kill us literally, spiritually, infiltratively. It is time, past time, we drew new lines and knew which women were serious, which women were really committed to loving women (whether that included sexual credentials or not), and, on the other side, which women thought Feminism meant pure fun, or a chance to bring back a body count to their male Trot party leaders, or those who saw Feminist Revolution as any particular life-style, correct class line, pacifist-change-your-head-love-daisy-chain, or easy lay. We know that the personal is political. The political is socially personal, then those of us at the barricades will be in big trouble. And if a woman isn't there when the crunch comes—and it is coming—then for one won't give a damn whether she is at home in bed with a woman, a man, or her own wise fingers. If she's in bed at all at that moment, others of us are in our coffins. I'd appreciate the polarization now instead of then.

I am talking about the rise of attempted gynocide. I am talking about sur-

vival. Susan Stein, a Lesbian Feminist with a genius for coining aphorisms, has said, "Lesbianism is in danger of being co-opted by Lesbians." Lesbians are a minority. Women are a majority. And since it is awfully hard to be a Lesbian without being a woman first, the choice seems pretty clear to me.

There are a lot of women involved in that war out there, most of them not even active in the Women's Movement yet. They include the hundreds of thousands of housewives who created and sustained the meat boycott in the most formidable show of women's strength in recent years. Those women, Feminists or not, were moving because of Feminism--such a nationwide women's action would have been thought impossible five years ago. They are mostly housewives, and mothers, and heterosexuals. There are asexual and celibate women out there, too, who are tired of being told that they are sick. Because this society has said that everybody should fuck a lot, and too many people in this women's Movement have equated, "Yeah, fuck with women or even with men, but for god's sake fuck or you're really perverted." And there are also genuine functioning bisexuals out there. I'm not referring to people who have used the word as a coward's way to avoid dealing honestly with homosexuality, or to avoid commit-

ment. We all know that ploy. I agree with Kate Millett when she says that she "believes that all people are inherently bisexual"--and I also know that to fight for a system one must dare to identify with the vulnerable aspect of one's oppression--and women are put in prison for being women, not bisexuals or heterosexuals per se. As I have--in the same year in 1968 and here today. Although the Man will probably want to get me for hating men before he gets me for loving women.

We have enough trouble on our hands. Isn't it way past time that we stopped settling for blaming each other, stopped blaming heterosexual women and middle-class women and married women and Lesbian women and white women and any women for the structure of sexism, racism, classism, and ageism, that no woman is to blame for because we have none of us had the power to create those structures. They are patriarchal creations, not ours. And if we are collaborating with any of them for any reason, we must begin to stop. The time is short, and the self-indulgence is getting dangerous. We must stop settling for anything less than we deserve.

All women have a right to each other as women. All women have a right to our sisters as ourselves. Everyone. All women have a right to love with whom we choose when we choose. We have a right to bear and raise our own children if we choose, and not to if we don't. We have a right to freedom and yes, power. Power to change our entire species into something that might for the first time approach being human. We have a right, each of us, to a Great Love.

And this is the final risk I will take here today. By the right to a great love I don't mean romanticism in the Hollywood sense, and I don't mean a cheap joke or cynical satire. I mean a great love—a committed, secure, nurturing, sensual, aesthetic, revolutionary, holy, ecstatic love. That need, that right, is at the heart of our revolution. It is in the heart of the woman stereotyped by others as being a butch bar dyke who cruises for a cute piece, hopeless much she herself might laugh at the lesbian couple who have lived toget-

her for years, in whose hearts, their heart, is in the heart of the woman who jet-sets from one desperate heterosexual affair to another. It is in the heart of a woman who wants to find—or stay with—a man she can love and be loved by in what she has a right to demand are non-oppressive ways. It is in the heart of every woman here today, if we dare admit it to ourselves and recognize it in each other, and in all women. It is in the heart of the Amazon Nation—let alone any false State of equality—but a real Feminist Re-

voluntion, a proud gynocratic setting. To deny it is to speak with the words of the real enemy.

If we can open ourselves to ourselves and each other, as women, only then can we begin to fight for and create, in fact reclaim, not Lesbian Nation or Amazon Nation—let alone some false State of equality—but a real Feminist Re-

volution, a proud gynocratic world that runs on the power of love. Not the female sense of power, but in the sense of a power plant—producing energy. And to each, that longing for, the right to, great love, filled in reality, for all women, for women as women, and men and animals and trees and water and all life. An exquisite diversity in unity. That world breathed and exulted on this planet some twelve thousand years ago, before the patriarchy arose to crush it.
If we risk this task then, our pride, our history, our culture, our past, our future, all vibrate before us. Let those who will dare, begin.

In the spirit of that task, I want to end this talk in a strange and new, although time-out-of-mind-ancient manner. Earlier, I "came out" in this talk as a Witch, and I did not mean that as a solely political affiliation. I affirm the past and the present spirit of the Wicca (the anglo-saxon word for witch, or wise woman), affirm it not only in the smoke of our nine million martyrs, but also in the thread of real woman-power and real Goddess-worship dating back beyond Crete to the dawn of the planet. In the ruling male culture, they have degraded our ritual by beginning conferences and conventions with a black-coated male, sometimes in full priestly drag, nasally droning his stultifying pronouncements to the assemblage. Let us reclaim our own for ourselves, then, and in that process, also extend an embrace to those Lesbians who, because they go to church, are held in disrepute by counterculture Lesbians. And to those women of whatever sexual identification who kneel in novenas or murmur in quiet moments to, oh irony, a male god for alleviation of the agony caused by male supremacy.

The short passage I am about to read is from The Charge of the Goddess, still used reverently in living Wiccan Covens, usually spoken by the High Priestess at the initiation of a new member. I ask that each woman join hands with those next to her.

I ask your respect for the oldest faith known to human beings, and for the ecstatic vision of freedom that lies hidden in each of your own precious, miraculous brains.

Listen to the words of the Great Mother. She says:

"Whenever ye have need of anything, once in the month, and better it be when the moon is full, then shall ye assemble in some secret place... to these I will teach things that are yet unknown. AND YE SHALL BE FREE FROM ALL SLAVERY... Keep pure your highest ideal; strive ever toward it. LET NAUGHT STOP YOU NOR TURN YOU ASIDE... Mine is the cup of the wine of life and the caldron of Ceridwen... I am the Mother of all living, and my love is poured out upon the Earth... I am the beauty of the Green Earth, and the White Moon among the stars, and the Mystery of the Waters, AND THE DESIRE IN THE HEART OF WOMAN... Before my face, let thine innermost self be enfolded in the raptures of the Infinite... Know the Mystery, that if that which thou seest thou findest not within thee, thou wilt never find it without thee... for behold, I HAVE BEEN WITH THEE FROM THE BEGINNING. And I await you now."

Dear Sisters,

As we in the Craft say, Blessed Be.

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Robin wrote a short addition to her speech the night before she addressed the conference. It was not available to us at press time.

This fifth year's November
I drive through vineyards and Redwoods
chasing flickering memories of you
up Highway One Oh One
recalling how you sang Christopher Robin songs
while this old Pooh Bear
skated one excellent VW
down
over the Donner Pass
knowing all the while
that one day
inevitably
like Piglet --
the more and more I
looked
the more and more
you wouldn't
be
here.

by Pat Pomerleau

Quentin Bell is the younger son (born 1910) of Virginia Woolf's sister Vanessa, who had married the art critic Clive Bell. He was, thereby, privileged to have known Virginia from his cradle until her suicide, a span of 31 years. In addition, a multitude of mutual friends and relatives have contributed facts and their views of her life.

One of Bell's best sources is the New York Public Library's Berg Collection, which contains the bulk of her personal writings: 27 manuscript volumes of her diaries from 1915-1941; eight early notebook diaries; and four series of letter from Virginia Stephen Woolf to Vanessa Bell, Violet Dickinson, Victoria Sackville-West, and Ethel Smyth. The biography is very well documented and contains a most helpful family tree, many fine photographs, and a short bibliography.

This is a detailed chronology of Virginia Woolf's life, giving the who's, what's, when's and where's of her existence -- but shying away from the why's and the wherefore's. Bell extensively quotes but sometimes warily speculates. As a result, she never quite takes on a full, lifelike dimension. She remains shadowy and enigmatic. To the degree that her writing is immediate and vivid, her life as presented in Bell's biography is distant and pallid. She emerges from these pages as an introverted, often insane eunuch, whose artful gossip entertained the Bloomsbury "harem."

At times there are odd juxtapositions of facts. For example, Bell describes Katherine Mansfield's death in one paragraph and immediately follows it with: "Berta Ruck was also dead. She had been killed in Jacob's Room." Berta Ruck? The lady, it turns out, greatly resented the fact that Virginia Woolf had written of her demise in *Jacob's Room* when she was actually very much alive. Indeed, she was writing such fiction as *Lad with Wings, Sir or Madam*, and *The Dancing Star*. (Who was Berta Ruck? These titles sound distinctly gay!)

Bell warms most to his task when describing his mother, Vanessa Bell. This leads one to speculate that perhaps the biography should better have been titled *Virginia Woolf: Sister of Vanessa Bell*.

Another factor that detracts from the overall quality of his biography is Bell's desire to protect the living by deleting certain references to the past. This is in the manner of Leonard Woolf, who edited Virginia Woolf's diaries (published in 1953) with such a heavy hand. Toward the latter part of Volume Two (p. 210), for example, Bell writes: "Virginia wrote one of the gayest and one of the most hilarious of her letters to Vanessa at the height of the Munich crisis. Unfortunately it is not a letter which can, at present, be published."

To his credit, there are extensive references to the pervasive homosexuality of the Bloomsbury group that would have been considered too damaging to publish a few years ago. Polysexual activities abounded and are treated with frankness and, at times, humor.

There are four components of Virginia Woolf's life and art that I find of particular interest, and I shall comment on Quentin Bell's treatment of them in his biography: a critical view of her writing; her involvement in feminist activities; her insanity; and her sexual character.

**Literary Criticism**

Bell states in his foreword that the purpose of his biography "is purely historical; and although I hope that I may assist those who attempt to explain and to assess the writing of Virginia Woolf, I can do so only by presenting facts which hitherto have not been generally known and by providing what will, I hope, be a clear and truthful account of the character and personal development of my subject. In no other way can I contribute to literary criticism."

*So much for that!* For readers who are especially interested

**Feminist Activities**

Most important of Virginia Woolf's essays and books written from a feminist viewpoint are *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* (the latter nearly being published as *On Being Despised*). These books are as relevant today as when she wrote them and nicely express what men apparently won't understand: why women aren't satisfied with what they've got and how they can go about changing the situation.

*A Room of One's Own* is based upon two lectures Virginia Woolf gave at Cambridge University in October 1928, concerned with women and fiction. It argues that woman is handicapped economically and socially and therefore lacks the freedom and independence of her brothers. "The lack of this economic freedom breeds resentment, the noisy assertive resentment of the male, who insists on claiming his superiority, and the shrill nagging resentment of the female who clamours for her rights. Both produce bad literature -- fiction that is --demands a comprehensive sympathy which transcends and comprehends the feelings of both sexes. The great artist is Androgynous." (Vol. 2, p. 144)

In addition to books and essays championing woman's rights, she devoted much of her time to the Richmond Branch of the Women's Cooperative Guild in England. She presided over monthly meetings held in her home over a period of four years and was responsible for providing a speaker for these meetings. Her diary entry of April 18, 1918, records that "They wish me to get them a speaker on Sex Education, Mrs. Hiscock telling us that she had had to get a friend to explain the period to her daughter, and she still feels shy if the daughter is in the room when sexual subjects are discussed. She's 23 years old." (Vol. 2, p. 36)

Yet Mrs. Woolf was also skittish about discussing "periods," let alone of mentioning her menopause, which she refers to as the "T of L" (for Time of Life). In this, as in many of her approaches to things physical, she was Victorian. The one taboo she thoroughly enjoyed flaunting was discussing "buggery" in mixed company. This was a guaranteed shocker in those times, as it is today in some circles.

Bell believes that Virginia Woolf's involvement with the feminist cause was ridiculous, especially so during the 1930's, when Hitler's threat to England was ominously growing. He writes, "To me the wonderful thing is not that she was the object of criticism, but that these criticisms were for the most part so mild and so limited. For her manner of writing was not one to arouse the enthusiasms of young people in the thirties. To many she must have ap-

...
Insanity

Bell describes Virginia Woolf's bouts of madness and her slow recoveries in good detail. He attributes several of her early breakdowns to the shock of family tragedies -- the death of her mother when she was 13; of her father, four years later; and of her brother Thoby two years after that. A second and more frequent cause was the extreme mental and emotional exhaustion that followed her high-pitched bursts of creativity. Immediately before and after writing a book, she was left totally drained of energy and was emotionally a wreck.

These mental and physical breakdowns forced her to refrain from writing and social activities. Her doctors recommended that she get plenty of rest, fresh air, and milk; and she took long walks in the country, especially in her beloved Cornwall. But what if more precise, skilled psychiatrists had treated her? What if, as a result of newly acquired Freudian analysis as therapy, she could have been cured of her hellish visions and voices?

In Recollections of Virginia Woolf by Her Contemporaries, edited by Joan Russell Noble; Wm. Morrow & Co., Inc.; New York; 1972, p. 117, Alix Strachey, a psychoanalyst and friend of Virginia's, writes, "Virginia's imagination, apart from her artistic creativeness, was so interwoven with her fantasies -- and indeed with her madness -- that if you had stopped the madness you might have stopped the creativeness too. It seems to me quite a reasonable judgment for Leonard (Woolf) to have made, if he did so. (Not to submit Virginia to psychoanalysis.) It may be preferable to be mad and be creative than to be treated by analysis and become ordinary. Virginia's breakdowns were brought on partly by exhaustion after finishing a novel, but largely by the fact that she had intensified her fantasies while writing it, to such an extent that they had probably become uncontrollable. It is likely that this tendency was born in her and, the more she concentrated on her work, the more exaggerated it became."

What of Virginia Woolf's own description of her insanity? She created a fictional counterpart of herself in Mrs. Dalloway by portraying Septimus Warren Smith as an insane (shell-shocked) ex-soldier who commits suicide rather than allowing himself to be committed to an asylum. Smith's doctor, Sir William Bradshaw, is characterized as a pompous ass whose professional ineptitude has resulted in the suicide.

It took extraordinary courage to delve into her madness for the Smith-Bradshaw portions of Mrs. Dalloway. Of this harrowing task, she writes in her diary of June 19, 1923, ". . . the mad part tries me so much, makes my mind squint so badly that I can hardly face spending the next weeks on it." This theme of madness and death reveals Virginia's growing belief that suicide was probably the only "solution" for her insanity. Just prior to her suicide, she wrote that she was once again hearing voices and that she believed she could never recover from this madness. On March 28, 1941, she walked to the River Ouse, determined to drown herself. Bell records, ". . . she forced a large stone into the pocket of her coat. Then she went to her death, 'the one experience,' as she had said to Vita, 'I shall never describe.'" (Vol. 2, p. 226)

Her Sexual Character

In Virginia Woolf's suicide note to her husband, Leonard, she wrote, "What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that -- everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer. I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been."

Well, yes, Leonard was nearly always patient and good, a very taciturn male nurse who tried ineffectually to protect her from over-exhaustion when it became apparent she was heading for a breakdown. But this function could have been performed by anyone familiar with her mental and physical health. Leonard apparently failed to supply (if indeed it was wanted) the sexual component one usually associates with a husband. Bell relates that Virginia was frigid in her relations with Leonard. In addition, they had early agreed that having children was out of the question because of Virginia's precarious health. Apparently marital sexual activities were ruled out by mutual agreement.

Into this sexual vacuum appeared Mrs. Harold Nicolson, Victoria ("Vita") Sackville-West. This blue-blooded, rather masculine woman appealed to Virginia's snobbery and romanticism. Vita was to become
the hero-heroine Orlando, in Virginia's book of that name. On December 21, 1925, Virginia wrote to her sister Vanessa (whom she greatly envied for her lusty sexual adventures and maternity), "Vita is now arriving to spend 2 nights alone with me . . . the June nights are long and warm; the roses flowering; and the garden full of lust and bees, mingling on the asparagus beds." Bell speculates that "there may have been -- on balance I think there probably was -- some caressing, some bedding together." (Vol. 2, P. 119) He describes Vita as "a frank and unequivocal Sapphist," and he acknowledges that Vita was the most important person -- apart from Leonard and Vanessa -- in Virginia's life.

"What should or does one imply if one quite boldly says: 'Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West had a love affair between, shall we say, 1925 and 1929'? Vita was very much in love with Virginia and being, I suspect, of an ardent temperament, loved her as a man might have loved her, with a masculine impatience for some kind of physical satisfaction -- even though Virginia was in her forties (Vita was in her thirties) and, although extremely beautiful, without the charm of her youth, and even though Vita herself was a little in awe of her. . . Virginia felt as a lover feels -- she responded when she fancied herself neglected, despaired when Vita was away, waited anxiously for her letters, needed Vita's company and lived in that strange mixture of elation and despair, which lovers -- and one could have supposed only lovers -- can experience. All this she had done and felt for Katherine (Mansfield), but she never refers to Katherine, never writes of her as she does of Vita." (Vol. 2, pp. 116-117)

Vita, of course, had absolutely no doubt of her feelings toward Virginia. She wrote Clive Bell, after meeting Virginia, "I would go to the ends of the earth for your sister-in-law." (Vol. 2, p. 117, note) Later, both women journeyed to France together, without Leonard's oppressive company. Of this idyl Bell writes, "Virginia had . . . identified herself with the cause of homosexuality by spending a week in France along with Vita," (Vol. 2, p. 139) He adds, "the husbands took it all with admirable calm."

But by the end of 1934, their close relationship had come to a close. "Virginia realised that their passionate friendship was over. There had been no quarrel, no outward sign of coolness, no bitterness, but the love affair -- or whatever we are to call it -- had for some time been quietly evaporating, and that particular ex-citement had gone out of her life, leaving a blankness, a dullness." (Vol. 2, p. 183)

Bell's biography also chronicles Virginia Woolf's fond, perhaps even Lesbian, relationships at various times of her life with Madge Symonds (''Sally'' in Mrs. Dalloway), Violet Dickinson and Katherine Mansfield. He includes a comic/sad account of Ethel Smyth's loudly proclaimed infatuation with Virginia, which began when Miss Smyth was 71 and Virginia, a mere 48! Virginia records in her diary entry of May 14, 1930, "It is at once hideous and horrid and melancholy-sad. It is like being caught by a giant crab."

She adroitly side-stepped this entanglement and concentrated instead on finishing her masterpiece, The Waves. On February 7, 1931, she completed this very difficult book and wrote, "Here in the few minutes that remain, I must record, heaven be praised, the end of The Waves. I wrote 0 Death fifteen minutes ago, having reeled across the last ten pages with some moments of such intensity and intoxication that I seemed only to stumble after my own voice, or almost, after some sort of speaker (as when I was mad). I was almost afraid, remembering the voices that used to fly ahead. Anyhow, it is done; and I have been sitting these 15 minutes in a state of glory, and calm, and some tears, thinking of Thoby, and I suppose not. (She didn't.) How physical the sense of triumph and relief is!" (Vol. 2, p. 157)

A little more than ten years later, on March 28, 1941, the voices pursued her for the last time to the banks of the River Ouse. Distraught beyond fear or pain, she stepped into the icy water, weighed heavy with stone.

"The waves broke on the shore."
Much of this going on about art is devoted to music. I recommend the music section highly to anyone who is in revolt against the intellectualization of the critics. Margaret elucidates her tastes thoroughly here, even providing a complete menu for a record concert. That is, she gives a long list of just the right records to play in the right order to enthral your friends.

The portions of the book entitled "The Art of Life" and "The Art of Love" are really much more interesting, although they repeat a few of the episodes covered in the first two volumes of the autobiography. It is not a continuous story of the last part of Margaret's life, but instead, small sketches to illustrate the many ways that hers has been "a life of perfection."

I especially like the parts where she discusses the elements of good conversation, great friendships, and love:

In a perfect friendship, conversations don't go on too long. Each friend has learned something about quintessence, and this assures quality. It's like the difference between good writing and great literature: an extra element -- something rare, unimagined by anyone else -- enters the situation: the element of art.

Great friendships don't happen every day. They happened to me five times in fifty years. The first time, the friend I found was in advance of me, and it took me a long time to catch up (if I ever have). (No, I haven't.) The third time we were equal. The fourth time I was ahead and she caught up. The other two times we were delicately balanced; sometimes one was ahead, sometimes the other.

If you ask me what I consider the supreme reward in friendship-love, I will answer: its absence of conflict. It may contain challenge, criticism, controversy, the exhilaration of disagreement, but between friends conflict is senseless. It may be all right between the sexes; it is all wrong between friends. Those rages and reconciliations on which lovers seem to thrive are abomination to me.

I know today that even if I live twenty years longer, the chances are that I won't find a new (a great) friend. Why? Because I know too much about the long, long time necessary to build such a relationship -- unless it happens that the two natures are of the same emotional age. Otherwise you must have years in front of you to bring about this miracle of communication. But if the miracle happens, it will be all perfection. As Georgette said, "If it were not perfect, it would not be."

One of the qualities that Margaret valued most in her relationship with Georgette was freedom. She devotes a chapter to it:

Once upon a time, long ago, I lived for a few years without freedom. I made one effort during those years to adjust to a way of life that wasn't my own. You do this because you love someone, because you want your friend to be happy. You are willing to do it for months, not for years. And you always hope that sooner or later you can make the person you love understand your need of freedom -- and, you hope, hers.
Don't hope. If freedom isn't there in the beginning it will never be there. No one ever understands the idea, the need, or the feel, of freedom who doesn't start with the need as ultimate.

I never talk of freedom as a demand to have one's own way. No one can have his own way. No one can escape adjustments, concessions, the welcomed responsibilities of love. But if you can feel free, even while you adjust and concede, you are saved... Georgette and I did feel free, and we felt it in spite of differing temperaments and idiosyncrasies. And neither of us ever found it in relation to anyone else.

After a few days of communal living, I must have a rest from it. I can no longer be a unit with anyone; I am myself, separate; I must again become the master of my own impulses. If not, I begin to disintegrate.

Freedom is the only bond that could ever utterly bind me to another human being.

The really new information in this volume is about Margaret's relationship with Dorothy Caruso. (Enrico Caruso had formerly been her husband.) Dorothy and Margaret first met on a boat enroute to America. They lived together from this time on 'till Dorothy's death at age 62 in 1955. She died in the room where Georgette had died in the Chalet Rose, and of the same cause, cancer.

Part Two of the book begins here then, when Margaret has buried her last great love and turns to happily remembering the past in solitude. She isn't bitter, nor dispirited:

How I long not to die -- to continue in an endlessness of days I have already lived. What is it that so allures me? What is it that I do when I do nothing? I wait, I expect to be exalted. I take a walk, I stand in a window, I look at a view. I should by now be "growing old," but I don't believe in it; I am still looking and feeling and thinking with an endless energy that is like an exercise in delight.

Margaret thinks of all she has been and how, of course, she might have been different. She has been accused of being egotistical -- but she protests, no, she really wasn't enough of an "egoist":

Yes, I have been an egoist. My shortcoming is that I've never become a great egoist. A great egoist is a person who refuses to be eaten alive; and who also arranges not to eat others. I have often yielded to being eaten rather than to eat others, but I don't believe in such submission. I disapprove of cannibalism in all its forms.

Mostly, Margaret remembers a great life and ends her book with a profound gratitude to her friends and to her chosen country, France. The last section is a eulogy "To France, with love":

How I love this country where I have found such a deep and active peace. Spaceships surround the earth, but I sit in a room where I am surrounded by tuberoses; their white and perfumed life vibrates in the air. I have a fire, I have a cup of coffee, I am conscious of living a minute at a time -- minute after minute of lighting a cigarette, of holding out my hands to the fire. Minute by minute, by these small acts, I push aside for an hour those recurrent thoughts of destruction and death that are now much with me.

If I have more years to live, I hope they will be lived in this place. And so I say:

To France, with love. With gratitude for all that has happened to me here; for all that I may still be allowed to feel, to think, to remember and to celebrate in what remains for me of a life on earth.

Le Cannoet, Alpes Maritimes, France
Don't hope. If freedom isn't there in the beginning it will never be there. No one ever understands the idea, the need, or the feel, of freedom who doesn't start with the need as ultimate.

I never talk of freedom as a demand to have one's own way. No one can have his own way. No one can escape adjustments, concessions, the welcomed responsibilities of love. But if you can feel free, even while you adjust and concede, you are saved.... Georgette and I did feel free, and we felt it in spite of differing temperaments and idiosyncrasies. And neither of us ever found it in relation to anyone else.

After a few days of communal living, I must have a rest from it. I can no longer be a unit with anyone; I am myself, separate; I must again become the master of my own impulses. If not, I begin to disintegrate.

Freedom is the only bond that could ever utterly bind me to another human being.

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by Michele
THE WOMAN WHO LOVED THE TRUTH

Once there was a woman who taught Latin. Her work suited her, because she cared about accuracy and order. And above all, arching over her other concerns and drawing them together, she had what was almost a passion for the truth. More than one of her friends had remarked that she was never satisfied until she understood a thing for what it was, or at least knew that it was not as it seemed. Because she had no husband and few relatives, and those few far away, the woman's friends took the place of family in her life. She was fortunate in having as many close friends as a person could expect to have, as well as many others who were not so close, but good company no less. Her days were full.

One November afternoon, she was at lunch with somebody she had known about half a year, an easygoing woman who raised collies and outdoors. The woman who loved the truth felt comfortable with her; she grew tired, sometimes, of her own exactness. In time, she felt, they might become close. She was not one to rush these things.

The easygoing woman proposed a camping trip. "Say, in a couple of weeks. It's fun camping in the winter," and she beamed all over her pink face. "We can work out the details later on." The woman pulled out her appointment book and wrote "camping?" in the space marked out for the weekend after next. The question mark did not stand only for her friend's "say" and her comment about working out the details. One day during the summer, not long after they had first met, the easygoing woman had said, "Let's go camping in a couple of weeks." And the woman who loved the truth took her at her word and saved the weekend in question, although it meant refusing one or two invitations she would have liked to accept. The weekend came and went, but she heard nothing more about the subject of camping. Nor did it come up the next time they met. It was as if the easygoing woman had never had the idea, much less suggested it. The woman who loved the truth decided that she must have misunderstood her new friend, mistaking a passing thought, spoken aloud, for a definite invitation. On this afternoon, then, when she reserved the space in her appointment book for the weekend after next, she added a cautionary question mark.

The conversation turned to other things. The woman who loved the truth had a piece of news: her sister, who lived three states away, had a new baby, and she wanted her to come and see him before he grew any older. They began to speak of their own childhoods, and of their school days.

The easygoing woman said, "I was bored most of the time." "But you liked Latin," said the woman who loved the truth, recalling an earlier conversation.

"I never studied Latin," said her friend. "That's a pity. I thought you did." The woman remembered that detail from the first time they'd met, with the clarity that comes when first impressions are being made and received. Besides, it stayed in her mind, because it was something that happened to her now and then: people would tell her about their own experiences with Latin, once they found out what she did for a living.

"Not me," said the other. "All I had was two years of French."

The woman who loved the truth gave her an odd look, but she kept it very short. She cared for other people's feelings almost as much as she cared for the truth, having learned early in life that she would have to respect both, or else neither, if she was to live in this world. So she changed the subject. It was only a slight change, in fact merely a shift, and not likely to be obvious to anyone who was not extremely close to her. After all, now that the truth was out, there was no need to announce its presence with a fanfare of trumpets. Instead, she told about the cab driver in Chicago who nearly made her miss her plane, complaining about the year of Latin he'd been made to endure in high school. The woman had told the story before, and had developed the funny side of the incident. In a few minutes they were laughing and trading stories again.

But when she returned home that evening, the woman who loved the truth picked up the telephone and called her sister, three states away. Then she opened her appointment book. From a certain page, she erased the word "camping?", and in the newly cleared space, wrote her sister's name.
Renee Vivien, Romaine Brooks, to a great extent due to her merits were the lesbian writer, and especially apparent to her entertainments were the lesbian writers and artists, including Renee Vivien, Romaine Brooks, Radclyffe Hall, Wanda Landowska, Marie Laurencin,lane de Pougy, Elizabeth de Gramont, Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas.

Miss Barney herself was only incidentally a writer, preferring to live artfully and extravagantly rather than write about life — as a friend of hers said, "Natalie gives rather more to her friends than she gives to her readers."

Barney's notoriety was to a great extent due to her outspoken lesbianism. She suggested that her epitaph read, "She was the friend of men and the lover of women," adding that "It isn't because I don't think of men that I don't love them but because I do think of them."

Barney was by no means a feminist. The conspicuous wealth of her family enabled her to be open about her lesbian sexuality without fear of censure, and enabled her also to think of herself as having a freedom and power that usually unavailable to men. She was in some ways sexist. But her uncompromising pride in her sexual identification (and the incidents it led to, such as her famous for-women-only parties) make her worth remembering.

In a future issue we'll take a longer look at Natalie Barney's life. Here, she describes herself: N. belongs to a category of beings of which the species will become, perhaps, less rare when the dead earthly couple, definitively discredited, will permit to each one to keep or to rediscover his entity.

At that moment of human evolution, there will be no more marriages, but only associations of tender and pleasant--a companion of love, a variety of her kind, variable to the infinite -- from the most invertebrate homosexual to the angelic pair of wings. What she wishes for, while awaiting celestial joys, are those of an Intractable metal. Socially, these comings and goings will shake the surface, vibrant with authorities. These comings and goings will shake space.

The cessation of fidelity, that dead point of union, will be replaced by a perpetual becoming. While awaiting this victory of the whole being, the "thirds" hang between the two extremes: "Being neither alone, nor together."

From never succeeding at forming a couple they bear, however, a very real anguish: from their state of isolated, of intermediary. Having enough traits in common with "their similars who are not their same" to find themselves in them but not enough to identify with them, lose themselves in them and abide.

To reassure about N., this third who has nothing of the fiction, one must know that from all other points of view, she is more than human.

But the couple will always be her enemy, as much that couple of which she forms part as that from which she is excluded -- for the enemy, is it not that one who is necessary to us and is contrary to us?

This odd, this singular, works the destruction of the couple, and the couple toward the destruction of the odd, the singular. This third does not seek a companion, a conjoint, but a similar -- a companion of love, a variety of her kind, variable to the infinite -- from the most invertebrate homosexual to the angelic pair of wings!

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humility, taste for notoriety
that her laziness prevents her
from pursuing. Few beings or
things are sacred to her. She
tramples underfoot the maladroit;
this treatment in the manner of
a slave-trader renders them still
more awkward. Without convic­
tions, her point of view varies
according to what she finds in
it. She values rectitude less
in herself than as a rule of the
game. Versatile and sophisti­
cated, she scorns justice as much
as do those who make a profession
of it. Her judgement is a sign
of vengeance. She takes pleasure
in dominating and tires quickly
of that which she dominates.

Nature of a prey, but who
seeks no advantage. People have
believed her a miser, taking for
avarice the faculty of managing
her affairs or the affairs of
others, without reflecting on them
further. One finds her in case
of need, but one finds her shrewd.
She spends her ingenuity rather
than her money -- in this com­
merce, both augment.

The balance of her in-common
characteristics would be able to
appear on one of those leaflets,
too green, too blue or too yel­
low, that a beggar's parakeet,
in the Gardens of the Tuileries,
used to distribute in olden days
by way of instructions to those
curious about themselves. But
does one not recognize oneself
in that which is distinctive ra­
ther than similar? Useless to
enumerate that this third per­
sonage can be unjust, jealous and
petty more than no-matter who.
Disinterested and without hind­
thought, then apprehensive and
distrustful of everything --
except of that which ought to hap­
pen. Her intelligence is merely
a precision instrument which ap­
pies itself abstractly and with­
out effectiveness in human com­
merce.

Dealings wherein good faith
is well the worst kind of faith
-- for there where all the world
cheats, dishonesty consists in
playing fair. Sharpened, how­
ever, by the defects that her
conquests have proved worth to
her, it aims itself at another
ideal out of reach.

A brain which gallops and de­
votes, not taking account of
contingencies, finds no brake
to its activity because it exer­
cises itself in some imaginary
region -- and that until the
least reality arrives to thwart
it. After this excitement, too
often for nothing, when the
heart beats to no purpose, it
reaps -- in slow motion -- that
which it has lived, and lingers
there where there is no more
fruit in the orchard.

Exceptional among events
which never happen to resemble
it, it collides with strange
acts and participates in a novel
which never seems to be its own.
Sufficient that it seeks a
being so that this other being,
put in motion by warm well­
being, seeks again, for its part,
soon or late, its complement and
its home elsewhere -- and finishes
by rejecting as a quantity un­
known or suspect, this "womb out­
side" as the Normans oay of one
who appears to wish to remain
with them.

They feel, the others, that
this third is not of themselves,
and that according to Shelley:

"....it will never make itself
part of any sect.... Their home
closes about itself and each de­
lights in the choice of a friend
and condemns to oblivion all o­
ther beautiful and wise."

This third, this odd, this
singular, this isolated, this
unmatched, this unpaired, this
solitary in the midst of the ma­
ted, this locked outside is
generally represented as a Se­
ducer and not as the victim of
her free state -- that which, by
nature rather than inclination,
obliges her to differentiate
herself from others without being
able to free herself.

And is it not due to her con­
tacts, which are only an instant
of joy and of understanding or of
mistake, all of a life turned
aside out of the way where it
expiates in solitude its taste
for strange familiaris? For such
beings it seems less hazardous
to produce rather than to repro­
duce.

by Willyce Kim

Look,
I am huddled
on your door-step.
The gloves that cover
my hands pretend
to keep my fingers warm.
The coat that I am wearing
has failed
to keep the rain
off my skin.
The scarf that is wound
around my neck
feels like a thick rope;
a hangman's bad joke.
I am trapped -
lashed in by the grimness of this day.

When you open the door
I will fix myself
some coffee
pretending that this is
all I want
this is all I came for.

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THE LESBIAN LOVE ETHIC

"For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (I Cor. 13:12)
Thus does St. Paul formulate one of the conditions of perfect happiness: to be known fully. Each of us suffers from the abyss between a self-perceived richness and the various grids imposed by the external eye. Among them, probably the most rigid and universal of categories is that imposed by sex. In no human society is it better to be female than male, but our's is among the most repressive in terms of female courting behavior and sexual expression. Even for the lesbian, while flouting society's "sacred" heterosexual norm, these expectations continue to exercise profound and often negative effects.

In the beginning everything seems beautiful. The fledgling lesbian embarks on her new life with an exhilarating expectation of freedom - the freedom to be herself! No longer has she to exchange in a basic kind of barter - acceptance by the boyfriend in exchange for sexual privileges from her. Nor is she any longer locked into the expectation of marriage as the only truly valid justification of intercourse. Indeed, the young lesbian can now, she feels, respond to another emotionally, sexually, and in every way as an equal, society having made no rules for two women as it has for the male/female couple.

Now she can dress more with an eye to comfort than to male standards of decorativeness, much of which includes teasing revelations of the more seductive parts of the anatomy. Now she can function as an active human being, rather than a helpless mannequin required to remain in passive attendance while doors are opened for her, cigarettes lighted for her, and meals ordered for her. And she can refuse a sexual overture more easily, being able to more honestly
state her reasons, whether due to mood, emotional disinclination, or physical indisposition. Mind you, everyone likes attention, likes to be waited on, and in addition, likes the feeling of worth which sexual pursuit implies; even the most feminine of us have to - there is some kind of a fact that old one that sexual advances short of rape. But human nature being as plastic as it is, no one welcomes a rigid role of any kind - least of all one of passivity, which in our culture is generally equated with powerlessness. If she chooses, the lesbian, unlike almost all "respectable women" can now assume an active role: can open doors for another, order drinks, ask someone to dance, and even - this can be a wildly wonderful feeling - make sexual overtures to someone else.

But it is in just this sexual arena, where the budding lesbian most keenly feels her heady new freedom, that it is most subject to subversion. The snake in the garden, ironically, derives from her very rejection of the degrading aura of male/female sex and its replacement with a highly idealistic code - a "lesbian love ethic," so to speak. In the game of sex all women find themselves on the defensive in reaction to the axiomatic offensive position of the male. It is the man who calls the shots in the dating-marriage game - makes the rules, has the tactical advantages - the female who makes the sacrifices as best she can. In fact, most women with little prodding can be brought to admit their resentment at their tactical concessions made for gains - acceptance and, hopefully, marriage - in a game whose winner, nonetheless, is recognized by both as preordained. For the latent lesbian the game becomes a battle whose cause compels her not at all: she neither most feminine of us have to - there is some kind of accolade involved in most advantages - and the woman who competes as best she can. In fact, most women with concessions made for gains - acceptance and, hopefully, marriage - in a game whose winner, nonetheless, is recognized by both as preordained.

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In addition, in trying to ensure her allegiance to this goal, society acculturates her so intensively in this direction that she is far less likely than her male counterpart to explore other possibilities - whether vocational or "sexual." But if she is not confused with a lofty idealism unmirched by the wheeling and dealing which sees a legal contract as the ultimate goal. Central to all this, utilitarian, guilt-tainted sex will be replaced by sex freely entered into and, most importantly, engaged in as only a natural outgrowth of love. Charlotte Wolff in her book, Love Between Women, attests on the part of lesbians by making a strong case for seeing "homoeomotionality" rather than "homosexuality" at the core of women's love for one another. The sex act is, however, always secondary with them. It is only a manifestation of their emotional love, but for this very reason they attach so much importance to it. Sexual embraces symbolize for lesbians a kind of enjoyment which is not to be realized in any other way.

What the lesbian fails to note, and sadly this applies as generally to the novice as to the veteran, is that while jettisoning some of the distorted preliminary conditions to mature mating, she has held onto one which gravely threatens the felicity of her projective paradise. And like all really serious temptations, this one assumes a noble guise and is thus all the more dangerous. What in fact the lesbian is all too commonly prone to in relating to another woman is appropriating the society's insistent equation of sex and permanence, applied, of course, with most thoroughness to the female of the species. As we shall see, its rigorous appropriation by a majority of lesbians, especially those over thirty, frequently backfires on them.

The fact of the matter is that sex is a far more casual matter for male/female than female/female couples in the courting situation. It is of course the male's more casual attitude toward sex which makes for that difference. For the heterosexual couple, his greater readiness for sex divorced from emotion - in short, gets them off the moral hook so that, in part, they can feel free to satisfy their sexual needs. But the lesbian boxes herself into a situation which rules out any such exploratory and casual sex. Partly in reaction to the tawdri ness of male/female sex - other women, not true for the male homosexual, the potential lesbian goes along with the heterosexual mating game. Understandably, she incurs thereby far more injuries to her sensibilities than do her straight sisters. Their guilt is for her compounded manifold because her compliance feels her heady new freedom, that it is most subject to subversion. The snake in the garden, irony, derives from her very rejection of the degrading aura of male/female sex and its replacement with a highly idealistic code - a "lesbian love ethic," so to speak. In the game of sex all women find themselves on the defensive in reaction to the axiomatic offensive position of the male. It is the man who calls the shots in the dating-marriage game - makes the rules, has the tactical advantages - the female who makes the sacrifices as best she can. In fact, most women with little prodding can be brought to admit their resentment at their tactical concessions made for gains - acceptance and, hopefully, marriage - in a game whose winner, nonetheless, is recognized by both as preordained. For the latent lesbian the game becomes a battle whose cause compels her not at all: she neither most feminine of us have to - there is some kind of accolade involved in most advantages - and the woman who competes as best she can. In fact, most women with concessions made for gains - acceptance and, hopefully, marriage - in a game whose winner, nonetheless, is recognized by both as preordained.

The upshot of all this for pairing in the lesbian world is this. Disappointed if not disgusted, with her past performance with male partners, resolved never again to engage in such sordid and devious tactics, the lesbian upon coming out resolves to create a brave new world for herself. Not only will her relationships be blessedly free of caste decreed privileges, they will in addition be infused with a lofty idealism unmirched by the wheeling and dealing which sees a legal contract as the ultimate goal. Central to all this, utilitarian, guilt-tainted sex will be replaced by sex freely entered into and, most importantly, engaged in as only a natural outgrowth of love. Charlotte Wolff in her book, Love Between Women, attests on the part of lesbians by making a strong case for seeing "homoeomotionality" rather than "homosexuality" at the core of women's love for one another.

Ironically, this ideal militates in the lesbian in its frequent function as an excuse for sexual activity. Those of us who have been able to gain some perspective in these matters realize that we are attracted to various people in various ways, as well as differently to the same person at different times. Gut-level sex, one gets it by attraction, and let's not kid ourselves, women experience this just as men do. But more commonly, women are drawn to someone when emotion enters the picture, and this of course implies some familiarity with the total person of the other. Lastly, love, however defined, may miraculously happen to a couple. It implies commitment, though the two can realize it isn't something they can resolve upon; experimentally, it means a
large interpenetration of selves, something that involves empathy, sharing, toler-
ance - all of which usually emerges out of a long, close relationship. The
lesbian, however, has come to realize that for herself this never common condition between
people as the condition for sexual involvement. She must convince herself that two people as the practical consequences LOVE
that LOVE exists, or at least an intensity of emotion that gives rise to the desire for each other's
as its fruition, before allowing herself the delicious delights of bedding down
with someone. For the woman coming together, but a holy word
experience, love is not a long-term-growing-together, but a holy word
which can be appropriated for the frothy ecstasy of sexual/emotional excite-
ment. In reality, more often than not, that term 'love' is really only a use-
ful rationalization for that burning drive for bodily contact.

In short, there is a strong tendency for lesbians when subject to the sexual
 imperative, to give themselves permission to yield to gazing over the reality and remaining at LOVE. Naturally, this propensity for gazing at the
reality and remaining at LOVE, stars while stumbling in the ditch is not unique to the lesbian. Alas, it
all too common among all manner of men, regardless of class or background.

For the single lesbian who has lived a life of sexual/emotional excite-
ment, managed to get away with placing the major burden for strict fidelity
on the female. As guaranty, when he didn't condemn sex outright (as St. Paul
just barely escapes doing), he loaded it with great symbolic meaning. It is
either a holy act cementing the bond between the husband and wife, analogous
to that of Christ and the Church; or, in a non-religious context, it is the ec-
static culminating intimacy of a lengthy, increasingly close relationship (as
propounded in the classic sex manuals). Traditionally then, because of her in-
ferior status, the female has pretty generally subscribed to both the doctrine
and its noble aura, while its fabricator (and her oppressor), the male, has op-
erated far more independently of it.

In swallowing this line, most people have failed to observe that human be-
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erated far more independently of it.
or has even just read about some, its priority in terms of total human satisfaction is, I think, undeniable. The blending of erotic passion and devoted friendship is such a phenomenon unto itself that those who live in a society in which they do not exist feel deprived of something that they instinctively know is a part of the human condition. The absence of such an experience is felt very acutely, regardless of whether one has or has not been in love with another person. The longing for such fulfillment is the male homosexual pattern; the female pattern is implied in giving one's body to another. Naturally, as an average, well-indoctrinated female, but also as a fairly put-together, all around human being, I see such mutual surrender as an extension of prior friendship and knowledge. Indeed it is one gateway, but an important one, to the new entity created from two people engaged in the dynamics of revealing each to the other and thereby also discovering new layers and pockets of themselves. And because it is of such a rapid revealer of self, it may occasionally happen that the real relationship is lost in a mutual surrender that is markedly different from the social creature. Women emerging from this descent to the depths so sadly enlightened are surely justified in a decision to separate at this point, but their brief experience should not be confused with an encounter which from the beginning was intended as only a short sexual fling. This matter of intent, I feel, is the crucial ingredient which distinguishes most short term lesbian affairs from their male homosexual counterparts.

Now I'm keenly sensitive to the barriers to honesty about real feelings between any two women who almost surely have been brainwashed into the conviction that the price of sex is nothing less than undying devotion. And, I'm well aware that in almost all relationships, one is more involved than the other, and that therefore there is always the prospect of one of the women emerging from this passionate stage somewhat scathed. But as adults we must realize that regardless of the nature of the relationship, where the emotions - or should she, on the other hand, opt for the equally desicating pattern of having entered into a goodly number of relationships and pledged himself to permanent and excessively charged relationships.

Like many of my sisters, inspired by emotional/sexual hurricanes, I too have plunged into a totally number of relationships and pledged myself to permanence. But after the passion passed, and I was beached on the dry land of sober assessment I found myself, nonetheless, very often desiring and indeed cultivating the friendships of former lovers. Simply because the ecstasy couldn't be sustained didn't, in my mind, mean that the ecstasy was not real. Indirectly but effectively I discovered that sex, though not a substitute for love, is a very important ingredient in the latter. Because of this I devoted much of my life to discovering what sex means in real life  is that regardless of the consequences, Frequently the charge between two people increases to such a voltage that unless they break off relations completely, sexual contact is virtually unavoidable. In other words, it is a stage that simply must be lived through. This sounds perhaps like a significant capitulation to sexual desire (in Biblical parlance I would say myself, finally unfettered from this life-denying association, I would counter that, on the contrary, it can function as a most rewarding outreach to another. When entered into with moderate honesty on the part of both, it ministers to many needs, not the least of which is the communication engendered by the trust implied in giving one's body to another. Naturally, as an average, well-indoctrinated female, but also as a fairly put-together, all around human being, I see such mutual surrender as an extension of prior friendship and knowledge. Indeed it is one gateway, but an important one, to the new entity created from two people engaged in the dynamics of revealing each to the other and thereby also discovering new layers and pockets of themselves. And because it is of such a rapid revealer of self, it may occasionally happen that the real relationship is lost in a mutual surrender that is markedly different from the social creature. Women emerging from this descent to the depths so sadly enlightened are surely justified in a decision to separate at this point, but their brief experience should not be confused with an encounter which from the beginning was intended as only a short sexual fling. This matter of intent, I feel, is the crucial ingredient which distinguishes most short term lesbian affairs from their male homosexual counterparts.

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For, far more than their gay brothers, they are inclined to the belief that sex is not only more responsible, but more fulfilling and fun, when linked with some of the other aspects of the whole human being. In my opinion, and that of most of my lesbian friends, focusing on the oversize cock and well-muscled torso is like scraping off the frosting, but ignoring the large remainder of a luscious cake. I think most compassionate lesbians must feel rather sad about this prevalent pattern among gay men - and their heterosexual brothers - who are either so uninterested in or frightened by the prospects of intimacy that they become largely dominated by their penises. For though the adventure in intimacy always entails great risks, it is, as every woman instinctively knows, one of the most potentially rewarding of life's riches. Indeed, it is probably the fundamental one since, in so totally engaging the self in interpenetration with another, it thereby lends meaning to the whole of one's life. It provides a kind of home base of belonging and satisfaction which energises all of one's other ventures into life. Here then is a great opportunity for lesbians - not to utterly reject that larger society which has so shamefully rejected them, but to appropriate its best ideals of honesty and consideration for others in the pursuit of meaningful, though not necessarily permanent and perfect relationships.
Ella stood behind the last pew for a moment while her eyes adjusted to the darkness of the chapel. Another world it seemed to her: vaulted ceilings, black velvet drapes framing the stained glass, and the thick wine carpet muffling her steps. Only a moment before as she sloshed through the mud on the sidewalks, the noises of the city had surrounded her. It's nice she thought... if it just weren't a church it would be very nice.

She took a deep breath of the cleaner air slightly fragrant with incense and started down the aisle touching the back of each pew as she had when she was a child forced to go to church every Sunday. Would it make her lucky if she touched each one? Slowly, slowly. It was important to appear collected, organized, not too desperate. Look around, notice things she warned herself. The stained glass windows seemed to tell a story. Starting at the back they moved through Old Testament stories... Abraham and Isaac on the mountain, Joseph with his coat of many colors, Moses opening the Red Sea and the Israelites walking across. Would she make it across?

She was almost to the altar when they came in from behind the choir loft. Were they religious? Had they chosen this place on purpose, she wondered.

We watched her come to us. Down the aisle with perhaps too much of a lilt to her gait. She's a young one we thought. But we might be wrong.

She was nervous. They all would be, but some will show it openly and others will cover it. This one pretended.

They hovered there waiting for her, not smiling, no not really welcoming her; they gestured for her to sit between them on the first pew. She ran her fingers through her hair and tried to shake it free of the clinging damp. "It's pouring outside" she said. "But it's very nice in here. Have you lived here long?"

They said yes, together in one voice. "Oh yes, a very long time."

But they aren't so old really she assured herself. Not really. It's the atmosphere. They'd look different outside on the street.

There was a tiger chasing her... even after we had sat quietly for a while the noise of the busses and planes, the jackhammers drilling into the pavement, the subway look, did not leave her face.

We could not let her in. She would bring it with her. We will let you know we said, but it was only a small lie to protect her. A week from now she will have forgotten her eagerness and perhaps she will have found somewhere else to live.

We have tried harder since. We have patiently and in great detail explained our situation. She has not lied. There is a nightmare you must not bring with you we said. That is our only requirement.

Benjamin tried to roll a cigarette sitting with them on the front pew. It was awkward... too dark to even see if he spilled any tobacco. Christ, he thought, all this just to find a lousy place to live. Give them what they want -- that's all he could do -- try to figure out what they wanted and be agreeable. His fingers shook as he lifted the wrinkly cigarette to his lips.

We had never thought of a man. No, that had never occurred to us. We tried harder than before. Clearly we told him how we must take in a roomer to help us with the rent. The Church had fewer and fewer contributors... they had to raise our rent on the tower to meet the expenses of the chapel. All this we told him, but we knew from the beginning that a man would never be the one.

The days passed. The outside came closer. One by one they came to the chapel bringing it in on their coat sleeves, breathing it into our air. We had been careful to keep them in the chapel; not one had come upstairs to see the room itself. First, we said, first we must know about you.

Some left at that. Some, weary from searching, stayed and tried to please us. Was it wrong we wondered to not tell them at the beginning that their faces had already told us all we needed to know?

When we had almost given up hope a young one with a quiet face came in the evening. She didn't begin by explaining why she had come. She said, "There are two women who live here who I would like to know very much."

"We live here" we said, but perhaps she did not hear us. Her smile never changed nor the look in her eyes -- as though she expected a miracle and nothing must cause her to miss it.
Laura had seen their paintings first in a Mexican restaurant hung in a dismal row at the back like wash on a line. She had imagined then that children with sticky jelly fingers and drunks with oily hair would touch them. Or that they were waifs, like a batch of kittens at the SPCA who she had promised never to tell anyone but my delivery boy. But it is not necessary for her, she had thought. These were not really there to welcome her. A little spoor of biffyness, the tightness of his face.

She insisted that she had seen their paintings. She paid what he asked and carried them home with her balanced safely on the wall that a ll the meager light from the smog and the garish neon of the alley. She told her that they had no such lengths. Not really there to welcome her. She was like the others. As she turned first to one of us and then the other, she was letting go words she had sung to herself like gently flinging the snide tone in the tightness of his face.

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As we led her up the stairs to see the rest of our work we held each other's eyes for a moment confirming, yes, she is the one, but she hadn't come for that.

She flowed from room to room absorbing them, almost as though she were memorizing every detail of the paintings, the furnishings, the very form of our lives. We followed her seeing our memories: a pillow here, a vase, the piano -- all of them momentos of our love. Was she seeing that too? Could she feel which things we cherished? Would she understand without the sullying, deadening explanations we had dreaded?

We are two women who love each other we had planned to say. Neither of us has found anything in the world to cherish but our painting and each other. We had rehearsed these speeches in our night thoughts. Said them to ourselves trying to blunt the pain of their intrusion into our lives. There is a nightmare you must not bring with you. It will show in the lines of your face, the rhythm of your step. We have built a world without it.

We could not imagine the person who could live in such rarified air. Who would live in our tower of silence without reminders of the world below? Laura was the one. As she moved deliberately absorbing our lives we knew that such a one could live with us. Her eyes held back at first, there was some uncertainty clouding their blue, but we knew she would come to us. She said "I will let you know," as though there were a question, but the next evening she appeared in the chapel with white muslin draped paintings, one tucked under each ar.

"I have brought them home" she smiled. "They will be happier now." She told us how sad she had been when she thought they were stolen ... that someone who had loved them as she did might have lost them. With the tenderness of a little child she unwrapped each one and gave them to us to hang. It was a miracle we thought like Christ multiplying the fish and the loaves. They would gladly exchange places with her -- she who had protected and loved into our hands. It was a nightmare, because none of the noises of the city had reached her. They said that the noises were the worst -- the tone in people's voices, the screech of tires, the wail of the sirens -- that even in one's house one couldn't escape them. Sights, smells, all of these could be disguised ... but the sounds of the city . . . the sounds were the most dangerous. And even though she missed lovely things, the gurgle of a stream or the cry of the wind in a storm, Laura felt such a joy. For the first time in her life a hope moved in her, life stirred: she was about to be born, she thought. Their studio was a crystal palace and she a lady who could abandon herself to a world apart from the daytime. At night she took off her false smile she must wear all day, her adder's robe. She threw them in a heap with her clothes and went to bed.

Laura felt such a joy. For the first time in her life a hope moved in her, life stirred: she was about to be born, she thought. Their studio was a crystal palace and she a lady who could abandon herself to a world apart from the daytime. At night she took off her false smile she must wear all day, her adder's robe, her typewriter. She threw them in a heap with her clothes and went to bed.

Then, after supper, she watched them paint. For hours she could lie immersed in the colors, the dance of their lines going down simultaneously onto the canvas. Without her even realizing, she was still enough to be their model. They painted her with their easels back to back, not looking at one another's work, sometimes going on for hours, even after she had stilled off to bed.

The next morning as she got ready for work she would find the paintings, reminders of her night time self she could not take with her outside the tower. The paintings were often remarkably alike, but other times they interpreted her differently; it was almost as if there were a split in her and each of them saw a different side.

She had to rush off to work, a lady of disguises pretending to hear the voices when she could only see the moving lips, pretending a cheerfulness, an efficiency to smooth over her difference. The beat of her heels on the sidewalk as she left the chapel each morning seemed to signal her descent into a vacuous netherworld. With each step she moved further from herself. She drew her coat around her and tightened her scarf against the damp fall winds, hurrying to catch the bus uptown.

When she got on the bus, going or coming home from work, it was as though she were on a grotesque ferry crossing the river Styx. The faces were distorted with fear and pain, people shoved and pushed as if their very lives depended on getting a seat. Men rubbed against her, children clung to her legs thinking she was the mother they had lost. It was the most frightening time of the day.

She came home very tired, as though the day had eaten her energy, but then the night times would restore it ... she didn't really awaken until she got home. The ritual of their meal together seemed to lead her back into the passageways of herself. She was renewed each evening and able to do the things she had never thought she could. She drew countless pictures of the two of them painting at their easels or bent over sitting on the floor working on her beautiful robe.

She was happier than she had ever been. At last she had a home -- a place where she needn't pretend to be anything she was not ... a place where her difference seemed to only make her the more special in their eyes. They said they thought that she was beautiful, that her face was light and free of the difference seemed to only make her the more special in their eyes. They said that the noises were the worst -- the tone in people's voices, the screech of tires, the wail of the sirens -- that even in one's house one couldn't escape them. Sights, smells, all of these could be disguised ... but the sounds of the city . . . the sounds were the most dangerous. And even though she missed lovely things, the gurgle of a stream or the cry of the wind in a storm, or music -- that they would gladly exchange places with her -- she who had never known the horror of the noise.

One night, the night they finished the robe, they painted to music, music she could not hear; but they touched her wrist and tapped out the rhythm explaining that this was passionate music capable of inspiring them to paint all night. She fell asleep as they painted, still wrapped in the folds of her beautiful robe.
robe. She awakened when they lowered her into their bed. They said that she had become all beauty as she slept, that they could hardly paint for wanting to touch her, to caress her as she lay draped in the satin robe. They lit a candle in the bedroom so she could see the words on their lips. But she didn't need to. Their touch on her face, her shoulders, their whispered breath against her neck told her like the dampness in the air before rain.

She felt herself open...open to a terrible fear and a terrible love. They drew her close and covered her. They covered her lips with theirs, they threw a mantle around her fear and beckoned her on.

She touched first one, then the other, questioning their flesh with her fingers. She must know. She must understand. Before she had known only the gropings of men, men who had taken her in lust and tossed her back into the ugliness. What did they mean--these fingers which traced delicate lines of fire through her body? Could they love her? Could she love them both?

The next morning they got up early to have breakfast with her. She had expected the veil of morning penitence: she had thought they would lower their heads against the glare of the new day, but instead they brought the night with them. They held her with their words of reassurance, they caressed her with their reflections on the night.

They said it was a beautiful first night, a renewal of their own first night together. Seeing her uncertainty they made bridges for her, little poems to quell her fear. It was like the promise of a rainbow they said, a rainbow after a terrifying storm. They too must risk, they too must struggle to open their arms so long locked about each other. But it would be impossible to turn back now. They must all reach into their strength and help one another to float above the fear.

They said that fears were like stepping stones. Each fear if we come to know it, to name it rightly, leads us onto another. One risk, and then another, and then...then we are stronger knowing we can navigate through them. She was late leaving, too late to catch her bus...and late to work. But she didn't care. She wore their love like a cloak against the time. She pulled it around her to make the world invisible: the bus, the ugly buildings, the office. She smelled the scent of their hair, the warmth of them, and she hugged it to her like a talisman.

Never had we seen our happiness, the intensity of our joy in the face of another. It was a miracle, we thought, that one could come to us out of the belly of the city, one who had to reenter it daily, and yet that she should be so free of its horror. As we stroked her hair, touched her face we looked for clues to explain how she had done it. Did she know some secret passages--could she move from the outer to the inner with a grace we had not found?

by Gina
When she came to us each evening she was wholly ours. Not a shadow of the city clung to her. In her satin robe she was a pure novice beginning the vows of her love. As we taught her the delights of her body she carried us into a purity we had found only with each other. Her love was the simplicity of a child's smile, the wisdom of a saint.

Riding on the bus, walking home under the grey autumn skies, a cypher in the five o'clock crowd, she thought that she wanted to give them something: she wanted to work on something for a long time as they had on her robe and then surprise them with it. Her robe, the remnants of the clothes they had made for each other over the years, was like a composite of their lives together -- like a map. She wanted somehow to make a record of the time and the change since she had moved into the tower and to give it to them to show them her love.

At first she could only make rough sketches -- there seemed to be too much to fit into one painting. She wanted the feeling of their breakfasts together, the intimacy of their evenings, and the excitement of the night. Part of her wanted hearts and flowers and patterned wallpaper with the glow of copper kitchenware and chintz curtains and then another part of her wanted to echo the feeling of the satin robe, the luxurious, the exotic part of their lives. And she wanted to show how it had changed her. She wanted to show her metamorphosis like a cross-section of the earth: her before she knew them, the children at the deaf school, college -- but was there anything that was really her?

The first drawing was a series of white empty boxes overlapping at peculiar tiny spokes that seemed to be her with many arms reaching out for help. She laughed when she thought of giving this to anyone. How ridiculous! But it was the closest she could come to who she had been.

Night after night she closed herself off in her room after dinner and worked on the drawings. The astersk's metamorphosis was gradual, painful -- come -- but then the next day she would shrivel, pull her coat around her, tighten her scarf and enter the daytime. She would have to start all over again.

Only at night after she had stopped drawing and gone in to be with them did she stroke her hair and think of how much she had changed. As their arms twined around one another, as tiny asterisk swelling and bursting open to a world, a dark black world where there were stars like pinpoint jewels in a kaleidoscope, her skin on colored glass falling through the blackness.

Next day she would enter the world as a tiny astersk once again. She sat behind the typewriter being a good machine, but ever so often she would amuse herself typing a whole page of asterisks. It wasn't much of a rebellion. Why did she go on with this day after day? It wasn't really just a helium balloon.

They had quit long ago. They had as little to do with the world as possible -- and now that she was there it could be less than ever. They never had to grudgingly get up in the morning and think of the garish smog light -- only the sounds, as they said, could reach them.

When she received a letter from the deaf school she had gone to, saying that they would like her to consider a position they had available, Laura felt the chasm opening wide.

She had begun to know that she could not with impunity continue to cross the River Styx each day. There was a price she paid for the love she had found ... it had awakened her to wanting more ... more from her days than a typewriter and a hole for her knee.

The deaf school had terrified her as a child; but now from the perspective of the city, the green rolling hills, the few cars ambling down the red clay roads, and the lumbering old house all looked like a dream. It would be a job she could feel good about ... teaching children to hear with their eyes, questions she hadn't yet ask herself. Could she be happy there? Could she live without the love she had only just found, now for the first time in her life? Did she have the strength to go away without them?

She flew a week to decide ... to listen to her fears and her own desires and to see the path they might show her. This, like her drawings for them, was something she didn't want to share. It was her decision ... she
must reach into herself for the strength it would take.
She went on to work as usual, came back into their arms at night, but she felt like an observer... from a position outside she watched the tiny asterisk heaving, tossed back and forth... only a key on her typewriter by day and then a cartwheeling jewel at night.

The day the rent was due they asked her to take more of their paintings back to the Mexican cafe. This time she should ask him for money. He should know by now that the paintings would sell... she should ask for the equivalent of three months of meals.
She carried their paintings on the bus with her, she protected them from the cracked grey elbows of school girls, the sharp corners of the briefcases... she kept the small children from clutching at the muslin covers. She put them in the knee hole of her desk where she could feel them against her legs--a comfort--an assurance of the other world... and the letter too... tucked inside her coat.

When the lunch bell rang and the hundred desks on her floor had emptied she put the paintings under her arms and took the service elevator alone down to the street. She felt important. It was like when she had carried her sister's flute for her and a few people at least, a few people who didn't know them, must have thought that she could play it--that she could at least hear what it played.

She was almost sorry to reach the cafe. Someone else would buy these, not her this time, and they would be lost.
The Mexican was at the back of the bar wiping glasses. She was early. The rest of the lunch crowd hadn't gotten there yet. She squared herself for his reaction to her. Snide, suspicious, he probably would think she had come to return the painting she had bought from him a few months before. "No deal lady," he would say. "No exchanges, no returns. You bought 'em, you keep 'em." She had a lot to explain.

He began to speak before he turned to face her. But when she could see him, he was smiling and saying how glad he was to see her. "Where's your partner?" he beamed. "You ladies are going to make me a fortune. Didn't have your last ones in here two days before some broad came in and bought them all. How many you got, sweetheart? You girls should start a factory."

She couldn't think where to begin. Her hands trembling, she began to tug at the strings loosening the covers on the paintings.

"Oh--I don't have to see them to like them" he crooned. "I know you two got quality goods by now."

Finally she looked him in the eye. "But I'm not them" she said, "I'm just bringing them in for them."

He tossed his head back and held the rolls of his belly laughing. "You girls are a scream. What you hiding up there in that tower, lady? You think I don't recognize you?"
And we have healed . . . we have moved through our pain and our sorrow just as we have moved through fear . . . free to risk, free to grow.

Carol came toward us with a liltin g step, childlike, touching the back of each pew as she swung down the aisle. She was smiling nervously, uncertain if she were in the right place. We said yes she was.

"Have you lived here long?" she asked.
"Yes," we said and she seemed to be reassured.
"Would you like to see the room?" we asked.
"Uh, yes," she sighed, "I'm sure I'll like it."
"Yes," we said, "we hope you will."

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Donna Martin
I have a strong academic background in both the medical sciences and English literature; am currently a science and business librarian at Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Public Library.

Gabrielle

Gina
Just graduated from California College of Arts and Crafts and I'm not feeling any different.

Jane Alden
A former government employee (GS-11), I came out late. . . . I write/edit publications for a retail chain in Virginia and N. Carolina.

Karen Feinberg
Lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she teaches Greek and Latin at an all-male Catholic seminary.

Laurel
I'm burrowing into fiction enough now that my endings surprise even me. This is my most recently written story.

Michele
My photographs tell my own evolution.

Patricia Tobacco Forrester
Earned degrees from Smith College and Yale University: she received a Guggenheim Fellowship in printmaking in 1967. She exhibits nationally.

Robin Morgan
Editor of Sisterhood Is Powerful and author of a new book of poetry, Monster.

Willyce Kim
Willyce Kim has written a book of poems entitled Eating Artichokes which has been printed by the Women's Press Collective in Oakland.
and more letters...

Congratulations on your existence!!! I am absolutely ecstatic to have discovered you, lying on a desk in the Female Liberation office waiting to be reviewed by the Second Wave. I just read your first issue cover-to-cover, which I almost never do, and have been raving about you to everybody I know....

What particularly impresses me is not only the high quality of your literature and graphics, but the political-personal orientation of Amazon Quarterly.... I'm also really glad to see the lesbian-feminist perspective articulated clearly in a publication. I have been really frustrated by the token recognition of lesbianism as a viable political perspective/life-style within predominantly non-gay organizations and the lack of substantial analysis of it; also, by the limitations of the totally personal approach to lesbianism that I see in many lesbian publications. --Joan (Boston)

I am impressed. I have just read your first issue, Fall 1972, and find the quality of writing excellent. The subject matter is so full of life I am tingling. Found Laurel's "Conversation" one of the best articles I have ever read anywhere, and Emily Carr's diary just made me move deeper into all that is important about human beings.

It seems to me that no one is pushing anything--the articles are both personal and more than personal. No defences, no "aren't we wonderful because we're lesbians," just a giving, and a making use of where people are. --Ann (New Hampshire)

Amazon Quarterly?!
Such vibes I've hardly felt less for.
After all,
I've never known a bow I'd give a breast for.

But,
Under whatever name --
I wish you success
And achievements of fame.
I send you four dollars
Anticipating the works of your scholars;
And --from my "closet" --
Smirking here in the arms of my lover --
One dollar
For that plain, brown cover. (Virginia)
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Many thanks to those of you who already have sent extra money with
your renewals, and our special thanks to those of you who've offered
your time and skills to help AQ. Among these are a woman in Oklahoma
who helped with typing this issue, and a woman in the East who is
computerizing our subscription files (which by the way will remain
completely confidential).
A WOMAN IS TALKING TO DEATH

by JUDY GRAHN

One

Testimony in trials that never got heard

my lovers teeth are white geese flying above me
my lovers muscles are rope ladders under my hands

we were driving home slow
my lover and I, across the long Bay Bridge,
one February midnight, when midway
over in the far left lane, I saw a strange scene:

one small young man standing by the rail,
and in the lane itself, parked straight across
as if it could stop anything, a large young
man upon a stalled motorcycle, perfectly
relaxed as if he'd stopped at a hamburger stand;
he was wearing a peacoat and levis, and
he had his head back, roaring, you
could almost hear the laugh, it
was so real.

"Look at that fool," I said, "in the
middle of the bridge like that," a very
womanly remark.

Then we heard the meaning of the noise
of metal on a concrete bridge at 50
miles an hour, and the far left lane
filled up with a big car that had a
motorcycle jammed on its front bumper, like
the whole thing would explode, the friction
sparks shot up bright orange for many feet
into the air, and the racket still sets
my teeth on edge.

When the car stopped we stopped parallel
and Wendy headed for the call box while I
ducked across those 6 lanes like a mouse
in the bowling alley. "Are you hurt?" I said,
the middle-aged driver had the greyest black face,
"I couldn't stop, I couldn't stop, what happened?"

Then I remembered. "Somebody," I said, "was on
the motorcycle." I ran back,
one block? two blocks? the space for walking
on the bridge is maybe 18 inches, whoever
engineered this arrogance. In the dark
stiff wind it seemed I would
be pushed over the rail, would fall down
screaming onto the hard surface of
the bay, but I did not, I found the tall young man
who thought he owned the bridge, now lying on
his stomach, head cradled in his broken arm.

He had glasses on, but somewhere he had lost
most of his levis, where were they?
and his shoes. Two short cuts on his buttocks,
that was the only mark except his thin white
semenal tubes were all strung out behind; no
child left in him; and he looked asleep.

I plucked wildly at his wrist, then put it
down; there were two long haired women
holding back the traffic just behind me
with their bare hands, the machines came
down like mad bulls, I was scared, much
more than usual, I felt easily squished
like the earthworms crawling on a busy
sidewalk after the rain; I wanted to
leave. And met the driver, walking back.

"The guy is dead." I gripped his hand,
the wind was going to blow us off the bridge.

"Oh my God," he said, "haven't I had enough
trouble in my life?" He raised his head,
and for a second was enraged and yelling,
at the top of the bridge--"I was just driving
home!" His head fell down. "My God, and
now I've killed somebody."

I looked down at my own peacoat and levis,
then over at the dead man's friend, who
was bawling and blubbering, what they would
call hysteria in a woman. "It isn't possible"
he wailed, but it was possible, it was
indeed, accomplished and unfeeling, snoring
in its peacoat, and without its levis on.

He died laughing: that's a fact.

I had a woman waiting for me,
in her car and in the middle of the bridge,
I'm frightened, I said.
I'm afraid, he said, stay with me,
please don't go, stay with me, be
my witness--"No," I said, "I'll be your
witness--later," and I took his name
and number, "but I can't stay with you,
I'm too frightened of the bridge, besides
I have a woman waiting
and no license--
and no tail lights--"
So I left--
as I have left so many of my lovers.

we drove home
shaking, Wendy's face, greyer
than any white person's I have ever seen.
maybe he beat his wife, maybe he once
drove taxi, and raped a lover
of mine--how to know these things?
we do each other in, that's a fact.

who will be my witness?
death wastes our time with drunkenness
and depression
death, who keeps us from our
lovers.
he had a woman waiting for him,
I found out when I called the number
days later

"Where is he" she said, "he's disappeared."
"He'll be all right" I said, "we could
have hit the guy as easy as anybody, it
wasn't anybody's fault, they'll know that,"
women so often say dumb things like that,
you teach us to be sweet and reassuring,
and say ignorant things, because we don't invent
the crime, the punishment, the bridges

that same week I looked into the mirror
and nobody was there to testify;
how clear, an unemployed queer woman
makes no witness at all,
obody at all was there for
those two questions: what does
she do, and who is she married to?

I am the woman who stopped on the bridge
and this is the man who was there
our lovers teeth are white geese flying
above us, but we ourselves are
easily squished.

keep the women small and weak
and off the street, and off the
bridges, that's the way, brother
one day I will leave you there,
as I have left you there before,
working for death.

we found out later
what we left him to.
Six big policemen answered the call,
all white, and no child in them.
you put the driver up against his car
and beat the hell out of him.
What did you kill that poor kid for?
you motherfucking nigger.
that's a fact.

Death only uses violence
when there is any kind of resistance,
the rest of the time a slow
weardown will do.
They took him to 4 different hospitals
til they got a drunk test report to fit their
case, and held him five days in jail
without a phone call.
how many lovers have we left.

there are as many contradictions to the game,
as there are players.
a woman is talking to death,
though talk is cheap, and life takes a long time
to make right. He got a cheesy lawyer
who had him cop a plea, 15 to 20
instead of life
Did I say life?

the arrogant young man who thought he
owned the bridge, and fell asleep on it
he died laughing: that's a fact.
the driver sits out his time
off the street somewhere,
does he have the most vacant of
eyes, will he die laughing?

Two
They don't have to lynch the women anymore

death sits on my doorstep
cleaning his revolver
defeat cripples my feet and sends me out
to wait for the bus alone,
then comes driving by in a taxi.

the woman on our block with 6 young children
has the most vacant of eyes
defeat sits in her bedroom, loading
his revolver

they don't have to lynch the women
very often anymore, although
they used to--the lord and his men

went through the villages at night, beating and
killing every woman caught
outdoors.
the European witch trials took away
the independent people; two different villages
--after the trials were through that year--
had left in them, each--
one living woman:
one.

What were those other women up to? had they
run over someone? stopped on the wrong bridge?
did they have teeth like any kind
any kind of geese, or children
in them?

Three
This woman is a lesbian be careful

In the military hospital where I worked
as a nurse's aide, the walls of the halls
were lined with howling women
waiting to deliver
or to have some parts removed.
One of the big private rooms contained
the general's wife, who needed
a wart taken off her nose.
we were instructed to give her special attention
not because of her wart or her nose
but because of her husband, the general.
as many women as men die, and that's a fact.

At work there was one friendly patient, already
claimed, a young woman burnt apart with X-ray,
she had long white tubes instead of openings;
rectum, bladder, vagina--I combed her hair, it
was my job, but she took care of me as if
nobody's touch could spoil her.

ho ho death, ho death
have you seen the twinkle in the dead woman's eye?
when you are a nurse's aide
someone suddenly notices you
and yells about the patient's bed,
and tears the sheets apart so you
can do it over, and over
while the patient waits
doubled over in her pain
for you to make the bed again
and no one ever looks at you, 
only at what you do not do

Here, general, hold this soldier's bed pan
for a moment, hold it for a year--
then we'll promote you to making his bed.
we believe you wouldn't make such messes
if you had to clean up after them.

that's a fantasy.
this woman is a lesbian, be careful.

When I was arrested and being thrown out
of the military, the order went out: don't anybody
speak to this woman, and for those three
long months, almost nobody did; the dayroom, when
I entered it, fell silent til I had gone; they
were afraid, they knew the wind would blow
them over the rail, the cops would come,
the water would run into their lungs.
Everything I touched
was spoiled. They were my lovers, those
women, but nobody had taught us to swim.
I drowned, I took 3 or 4 others down
when I signed the confession of what we
had done together.

No one will ever speak to me again.

I read this somewhere; I wasn't there:
in WW II the US army had invented some floating
amphibian tanks, and took them over to
the coast of Europe to unload them,
the landing ships all drawn up in a fleet,
and everybody watching. Each tank had a
crew of 6 and there were 25 tanks.

The first went down the landing planks
and sank, the second, the third, the
fourth, the fifth, the sixth went down
and sank. They weren't supposed
to sink, the engineers had
made a mistake. The crews looked around
wildly for the order to quit,
but none came, and in the sight of
thousands of men, each 6 crews
saluted his officers, batted down
his hatch in turn and drove into the
sea, and drowned, until all 25 tanks
were gone. did they have vacant
eyes, die laughing, or what? what
did they talk about, those men,
as the water came in?

was the general their lover?

Four
A Mock Interrogation

Have you ever held hands with a woman?

Yes, many times—women about to deliver, women about to have
breasts removed, wombs removed, miscarriages, women having
epileptic fits, having asthma, cancer, women having breast
bone marrow sucked out of them by nervous or indifferent
interns, women with heart condition, who were vomiting, over­
dosed, depressed, drunk, lonely to the point of extinction:
women who had been run over, beaten up, deserted. starved.
women who had been bitten by rats; and women who were
happy, who were celebrating, who were dancing with me in
large circles or alone, women who were climbing mountains
or up and down walls, or trucks or roofs and needed a boost
up, or I did; women who simply wanted to hold my hand because
they liked me, some women who wanted to hold my hand because
they liked me better than anyone.

These were many women?

Yes. Many.
What about kissing? Have you kissed any women?
I have kissed many women.

When was the first woman you kissed with serious feeling?
The first woman ever I kissed was Josie, who I had loved at such a distance for months. Josie was not only beautiful, she was tough and handsome too. Josie had black hair and white teeth and strong brown muscles. Then she dropped out of school unexplained. When she came back she came back for only one day, to finish the term, and there was a child in her. She was all shame, pain, and defiance. Her eyes were dark as the water under a bridge and no one would talk to her, they laughed and threw things at her. In the afternoon I walked across the front of the class and looked deep into Josie's eyes and I picked up her chin with my hand, because I loved her, because nothing like her trouble would ever happen to me, because I hated it that she was pregnant and unhappy, and an outcast. We were thirteen.

You didn't kiss her?
How does it feel to be thirteen and having a baby?
You didn't actually kiss her?
Not in fact.

You have kissed other women?
Yes, many, some of the finest women I know, I have kissed. Women who were lonely, women I didn't know and didn't want to, but kissed because that was a way to say yes we are still alive and loveable, though separate, women who recognized a loneliness in me, women who were hurt, I confess to kissing the top of a 55 year old woman's head in the snow in Boston, who was hurt more deeply than I have ever been hurt, and I wanted her as a very few people have wanted me--I wanted her and me to own and control and run the city we lived in, to staff the hospital I knew would mistreat her, to drive the transportation system that had betrayed her, to patrol the streets controlling the men who would murder or disfigure or disrupt us, not accidentally with machines, but on purpose, because we are not allowed out on the street alone--

Have you ever committed any indecent acts with women?
Yes, many. I am guilty of allowing suicidal women to die before my eyes or in my ears or under my hands because I thought I could do nothing. I am guilty of leaving a prostitute who held a knife to my friend's throat to keep us from leaving, because we would not sleep with her, we thought she was old and fat and ugly; I am guilty of not loving her who needed me; I regret all the women I have not slept with or comforted, who pulled themselves away from me for lack of something I had not the courage to fight for, for us, our life, our planet, our city, our meat and potatoes, our love. These are indecent acts, lacking courage, lacking a certain fire behind the eyes, which is the symbol, the raised fist, the sharing of resources, the resistance that tells death he will starve for lack of the fat of us, our extra. Yes I have committed acts of indecency with women and most of them were acts of omission. I regret them bitterly.

Five
Bless this day oh cat our house

"I was allowed to go 3 places, growing up," she said--
"3 places, no more. there was a straight line from my house to school, a straight line from my house to church, a straight line from my house to the corner store." her parents thought something might happen to her, but nothing ever did.

my lovers teeth are white geese flying above me
my lovers muscles are rope ladders under my hands
we are the river of life and the fat of the land
death, do you tell me I cannot touch this woman?
if we use each other up on each other
that's a little bit less for you
a little bit less for you, ho death, ho ho death.
Bless this day oh cat our house
help me be not such a mouse
death tells the woman to stay home
and then breaks in the window.

I read this somewhere, I wasn't there:
In feudal Europe, if a woman committed adultery
her husband would sometimes tie her
down, catch a mouse and trap it
under a cup on her bare belly, until
it gnawed itself out, now are you
afraid of mice?

Six

Dressed as I am, a young man once called
me names in Spanish
a woman who talks to death
is a dirty traitor
inside a hamburger joint and
dressed as I am, a young man once called me
names in Spanish
then he called me queer and slugged me.
first I thought the ceiling had fallen down
but there was the counterman making a ham
sandwich, and there was I spread out on his
counter.

For God's sake I said when
I could talk, this guy is beating me up
can't you call the police or something,
can't you stop him? he looked up from
working on his sandwich, which was my
sandwich, I had ordered it. He liked
the way I looked. "There's a pay phone
right across the street" he said.

I couldn't listen to the Spanish language
for weeks afterward, without feeling the
most murderous of urges, the simple
association of one thing to another,
so damned simple.

The next day I went to the police station
to become an outraged citizen
Six big policemen stood in the hall,
all white and dressed as they do
they were well pleased with my story, pleased
at what had gotten beat out of me, so
I left them laughing, went home fast
and locked my door.
For several nights I fantasized the scene
again, this time grabbing a chair
and smashing it over the bastard's head,
killing him. I called him a spic, and
killed him. my face healed. his didn't.
no child in me.

now when I remember I think:
maybe he was Josie's baby.
all the chickens come home to roost,
all of them.

Seven

Death and disfiguration

One Christmas eve my lovers and I
we left the bar, driving home slow
there was a woman lying in the snow
by the side of the road. She was wearing
a bathrobe and no shoes, where were
her shoes? she had turned the snow
pink, under her feet. she was an Asian
woman, didn't speak much English, but
she said a taxi driver beat her up
and raped her, throwing her out of his
car.
what on earth was she doing there
on a street she helped to pay for
but doesn't own?
doesn't she know to stay home?

I am a pervert, therefore I've learned
to keep my hands to myself in public
but I was so drunk that night,
I actually did something loving
I took her in my arms, this woman,
until she could breathe right, and
my friends who are perverts too
they touched her too
we all touched her.
"You're going to be all right"
we lied. She started to cry
"I'm 55 years old" she said
and that said everything.
Six big policemen answered the call
no child in them.
they seemed afraid to touch her,
then grabbed her like a corpse and heaved her
on their metal stretcher into the van,
crashing and clumsy.
She was more frightened than before.
't don't leave me' she said.
'she'll be all right' they said.
we left, as we have left all of our lovers
as all lovers leave all lovers
much too soon to get the real loving done.

Eight

a mock interrogation

Why did you get into the cab with him, dressed as you are?
I wanted to go somewhere.
Did you know what the cab driver might do
if you got into the cab with him?
I just wanted to go somewhere.
How many times did you
get into the cab with him?
I don't remember.

If you don't remember, how do you know it happened to you?

Nine

Hey you death
ho and ho poor death
our lovers teeth are white geese flying above us
our lovers muscles are rope ladders under our hands
even though no women yet go down to the sea in ships
except in their dreams.
only the arrogant invent a quick and meaningful end
for themselves, of their own choosing.
 Everyone else knows how very slow it happens
how the woman's existence bleeds out her years,
how the child shoots up at ten and is arrested and old
how the man carries a murderous shell within him
and passes it on.
we are the fat of the land, and
we all have our list of casualties
to my lovers I bequeath
the rest of my life
I want nothing left of me for you, ho death
except some fertilizer
for the next batch of us
who do not hold hands with you
who do not embrace you
who try not to work for you
or sacrifice themselves or trust
or believe you, ho ignorant
death, how do you know
we happened to you?
wherever our meat hangs on our own bones
for our own use
your pot is so empty
death, ho death
you shall be poor


In the last decade women have moved further and faster than at any
point in history away from the male definitions and institutions which
have enslaved us. Many of us are elated with a sense of having broken
out of prison—a prison whose walls had been all but invisible to us
a few years ago.

But, after the most obvious bars of the patriarchal prison have been
filed away, even after we are seemingly free, there remains only a patri­
archal culture to be free in. I hardly know where to begin in describing
that "culture" for it is at once the visible reality of the UGLINESS of
most everything that is man-made and the extension of that ugliness into
the landscape of the mind: philosophy, psychology, literature, visual
art, to name a few. Even women who have been so fortunate as to have
extracted themselves from their own personal prisons, whether they be
the nuclear family, the church, marriage, male economic sanctions, etc.,
cannot be free except as Sartre would put it, "condemned to be free" in
a male-created hell.

I think the volume of feminist analysis which has rolled off the pres­
ses in the last decade (and long before that, of course) has obviated
any necessity to list and describe here the institutions of the patri­
archy. Rather, I want to concentrate on the subtler results of
phallocentrism in male "culture" and to try to extract the male world­
view, hold it up and ultimately expose it for the nothing that it is.
The male sensibility which extends from and beyond their institutions
is affecting us far more than we know. I think we'd be safe in saying
that the institutions are something like the tip of the proverbial
iceberg—we can't see so easily is by far the more dangerous
element.

I'm not going to argue that it has more effect than all of the institu­
tions of the male heirarchy, but that the reach of male-dominated
"culture" is further. That is, even if we leave the men, never have kids,
excommunicate the church, quit our jobs, drop out of school, and inherit
enough money so we never have to endure the sight of a man again—we
ARE STILL STUCK WITH MALE CULTURE UNTIL IT IS EXORCISED AND WE CREATE
OUR OWN.

Even if we could dismiss the constant visual, aural, and olfactory
assault of the patriarchal machine (not to mention the real physical
exponents like rape and murder) we could not avoid the mental and spiri­
tual pollution of a patriarchal culture. Even if we could tune out the
constant drone of the freeways and the jets, not see the dead fishes and
birds on the beaches, not hurt for the bent backs and pained faces of the
ones on the bottom who are supporting those on the top, not hear the
news of constant war, political, economic and ecological havoc, not read
the labels on our food telling us the choice of poisons we have available to
us, not see the demeaned position of women and racial minorities reflected
everywhere—even if our eyes had a Midas touch to make all that men have
created more tolerable; our ears programmed with sweet music to drown
out the cock rock, the jackhammers, the gunshots in the night; and our
nostrils filled with perfume to cover the scent of pollution—we
COULD NOT BE FREE OF PATRIARCHAL CULTURE.

Even if we never spoke to another man for the rest of our lives. Even
even if every male took a vow of silence and became invisible. There is enough
of patriarchal culture to last until doomsday unless we expose it piece
by piece, idea by idea, and replace it with our own.

The "culture" is bigger than men themselves. It is the centuries old
accumulation of male misperception packaged as "human knowledge" in art,
literature, philosophy, etc. which unfortunately is not all out there,
institutionalized, and easy-to-see and conquer with legislation and
child care centers. "Equal pay for equal work" has got to be the weak­
est battle cry ever heard in a war with such stakes as ours. That we
should even think for a minute that this is a significant and and all-en­
compassing goal is clear indication of the way the patriarchy is not out
there, but is instead the foggy spectacles through which we are viewing the world. Our sisters asked for the vote—we ask for equal pay, a bigger hunk of the American pie. So we can consume more of the shit men are there, was going to make a bit of difference.

back yard when everyone knew when IT came no little hole in the ground country retreats, communes, little getaway islands in the sun. And we the world. Our sisters asked for the vote—we ask for equal pay, a big machine. I think we have for too long dwelled solely on the visible institutions and "equalize" them. We cannot stop short of a thorough knowledge of the extensions of the patriarchy, how and why it works, and ultimately a dismantling of the entire continent? So we can save and assure our survival buying land for to watch the rape of our sister earth from coast to coast? From continent to continent? So we can save and assure our survival buying land for country retreats, communes, little getaway islands in the sun. And we laughed at our parents who freaked out and built fallout shelters in the back yard when everyone knew when IT came no little hole in the ground was going to make a bit of difference.

Just as with THE BOM B where nothing short of a complete solution, the dismantling of the entire international "defense" machine, is enough to insure that even one person will be alive tomorrow, so with the patriarchy we cannot just tackle the most visible institutions and "equalize" them. We cannot stop short of a thorough knowledge of the extensions of the patriarchy, how and why it works, and ultimately a dismantling of the entire machine. I think we have for too long dwelled solely on the visible institutions of the patriarchy to the exclusion of exploring its less visible extensions, the Weltanschaung which they have produced. We have neglected a thorough examination of Man's values (and lack of them) which he documents in literature, philosophy and the arts and we have been sucked into thinking that the 'Human Condition' described therein is equally ours. It is time we take a closer look.

Oddly enough, Sartre, one of the loudest doomcriers of Culture, had this to say about it:

Culture ... it's a product of man: he projects himself into it, he recognizes himself in it; that critical mirror alone offers him his image. 1

Djuna Barnes put essentially the same message in the form of a very pointed metaphor:

No one will be much or little except in someone else's mind, so be careful of the minds you get into, and remember Lady Macbeth who had her mind in her hand. We can't all be as safe as that. 2

The point I'm making here is that the interpretation of all our experience is dependent on our cultural mirror. Anais Nin holds the writer ultimately responsible:

The writer acts upon his environment by his selection of the material he wishes to highlight. He is, ultimately, responsible for our image of the world, and our relation to others. 3

Just as a woman looking in a mirror might find her undulent belly and ample ass embarrassingly ugly today, only a short hundred years ago she could have prided herself on matching up to the standard of beauty reflect ed in the art of the times. How we interpret our bodies, our experience--the very quality of our lives--depends on what is valued in the culture. In our case, the cultural mirror has been created largely by males. That males have controlled the definitions of art and philosophy--the touchstones of human values--cannot fail to affect women long after they have fought (and perhaps slipped out from under) the institutional pillars of the patriarchy unless we consciously exorcise them and replace them with our own developing VISION.

What is reflected in our cultural mirror? What are the touchstones of our age in philosophy and the arts? If a 22nd Century woman were able to visit our world via time machine, how would she describe the spirit of the age? What would be her overall impression?

If we may assume that experimental art and literature act as early warning signs, as prophetic mirrors of the culture at large--what would she make of, say, tomato soup can sculpture in the museums, concerts played by Moog synthesizers and composed by computers, or of a rock concert where the performance is capped off by the lead guitarist smashing his guitar as he jerks off into the audience?

If our lady visited the capitals of culture in this country in order to find the new, the experimental, she would find the museums overflowing with garbage can sculpture, blank canvases, and rotting fruit. The avant garde theatre might offer her some black comedy as the "actors" insult and/or assault her to raise her "involvement." At the movies she might find the bestseller of the season to be Deep Throat.

Should she tire of public amusements and settle in with the "best" books she would find that the age is very much under the sway still of the Despair and Absurdity Zeitgeist which is now almost a century old. She could not help noticing that the "Great Artists" (MEN) are describing a very unendearing world. In poetry, in literature, in philosophy she will be led to expect a life of frustration, meaninglessness, despair--NOTHINGNESS. Where there is no life and degrading sex, there is a bleak abstraction--waiting for Godot, or the BOMB, for the fall of the government, or simply one's own death.

The list of those male writers and artists in this century with an essentially negative world view reads like a list of who's who in arts and letters. It would include the "Great" (male) prose writers like Joyce, Dreiser, Fitzgerald, Sartre, Camus, Genet, Henry Miller, Hemingway (some later works mitigate this), Mailer, Faulkner, Graham Greene(with some exceptions), Burroughs, Albee, Styron, Malamud, Salinger, Burroughs, John Hawkes, John Barth, Donald Barthelme, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Stanley Elkin, Thomas Pynchon, etc.
Anais Nin in *The Novel of the Future* explored the effects of a writer's negative vision:

> Callousness in a writer creates the equivalent of cataracts in the eyes. It not only clouds or deforms his vision but may end in total blindness. Callousness is not operable. It breeds callousness.  
> What makes us human is empathy, sympathy. The novels born of revulsion, repulsion, hatred are those I consider war novels. They encourage war among human beings, and, consequently, universal war.

The cult of ugliness is distinct from the acceptance that there is ugliness, just as taking pleasure in cruelty is distinct from the acceptance that there is cruelty in the world. But an obsession with ugliness lies ultimately in the writer's vision of the world, and when the writer loses his perspective and balance, he adds to the ugliness.

In poetry the negativity is even more pervasive as evidenced by the works of Eliot, Pound, Auden, Kenneth Patchen, John Berryman, Robert Greely (with some mitigating exceptions), W.S. Merwin, Phillip Levine, James Wright, etc. Your average modern poetry anthology reads like a Doomsday Book.

Kenneth Patchen strikes me as one of the most defiantly and violently negative. This from *The Journal of Albion Moonlight*:

> I am sick  
> as a buggered pig  
> with all this  
> mess. I can't  
> go on with the farce. "Quality"--I hope some  
> smart fool tears  
> this book apart  
> and throws it  
> in the toilet and  
> then does his little function even as you and I

Here the outward negativity has turned in on him ... but it is really the same thing. Inner and outer loathing are as inextricably united as a moebius strip. Another good example of the writer caught up in his own negative cultural mirror:

> Man's heart is the rotten yolk of a black snake egg  
> Corroding, as it is just born, in a pile of dead Horse dung.  
> I have no use for the human creature.  
> He subtly extracts pain awake in his own kind.  
> I am born one, out of an accidental lump of chemistry  
> I have no use

James Wright

Ugly as this is, it doesn't even have the virtue of shock appeal since the Dadaists had already gone as far in this direction as it is possible to go. James Wright still, apparently, sees some worth in writing his poems--at least he is still publishing them. The Dadaists sought to destroy everything: the establishment, their audience, art, even Dada itself. As Louis Aragon put it in a manifesto read at the second Dada manifestation in 1920:

> No more painters, no more writers, no more musicians, no more sculptors, no more religious, no more republicans, no more royalists, no more imperialists, no more anarchists, no more socialists, no more Bolsheviks, no more politicians, no more proletarians, no more democrats, no more armies, no more police, no more nations, no more of these idiocies, no more, no more, NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING.

"All writing is garbage" proclaimed Artaud, the playwright. Jacques Vache was one of several Dadaists who acted on these nihilistic convictions. He had begun to view all life as black humor so that nothing had any more value than anything else. Violence, death, torture--a great cosmic joke. This passage about Vache from *The Savage God* by A. Alvarez comes close to describing the ultimate possible male piggery perpetrated in the name of art:

> "I object to being killed in the war," he had written from the front [in World War I], "...I shall die when I want to die, and then I shall die with somebody else. To die alone is boring; I should prefer to die with one of my best friends." He did precisely that. In 1919, when he was twenty-three years old, he took an overdose of opium; at the same time, he administered the same lethal dose to two friends who had come along merely for the trip and had no suicidal intentions. It was the supreme Dada gesture, the ultimate psychopathic joke: suicide and double murder.

The tangible results of Dada were almost nil. In 1917, Marcel Duchamp presented as his sole work at the Exhibition of Independent Painters in
New York a signed urinal. If a Dadaist actually made something he took great pains to destroy it—or more cleverly yet, many of the sculptures of this time were designed so they would self-destruct. We could, with tongue in cheek, at least credit them with humility. Humility has been one of the most notoriously lacking elements, it seems to me, in visual art since then. Following his masculine territorial imperative, the avant-garde male in sculpture and painting has in the last century had one thing in common: whatever his ugly contribution it is BIG. One can't avoid the towering, sprawling mass of it.

Tony Smith's junk metal monstrosities are a case in point and his work since the Twenties has been widely imitated. That these fellows actually sell these hulks of corroding iron and sheet metal is testimony to the whole Emperor's new clothes syndrome where anything if touted loudly enough as GREAT ART is accepted as such. And of course in painting, there's the action painters like Jackson Pollock whose metaphor of spurting all over the canvas could not be clearer. That the resulting product could have been created by any itinerant ape is beside the point—and that it is UGLY we are told is beside the point. The point is never to ask what the point is.

Then there's the whole pop-op phenomena with Warhol selling his tomato soup cans for as much as $17,000, gigantic sexist cartoon murals, whole bowling alleys and service stations reproduced in the museums, etc. to truly insure that we never, not even in the art museums, get away from the perversity of the American supermarket culture. True, the boys are satirizing—but how many years of one's life must one spend proving that advertising and tomato soup cans are ugly? The sad fact is that pop art is much more of a testament to the passivity of its creators than effective social criticism as Anais Nin has said:

> When we decided to believe only what was visible, we lost the faculty for apprehending what might be. Out of such a distorted view of what is came the monstrosities of pop art. Accepting what is (a complete service station in a museum, Campbell's soup cartons and billboards in our living rooms) is an act of passivity, an act of resignation, of impotence, lack of invention and transformation, also an inability to discard what is and create what might be.... The artist has surrendered. The mad-man who went about tearing down the billboards for their ugliness was closer to being a hero than the pop artist. He might have become the hero-artist if he had redesigned them. 12

More recently, the galleries are filling up with the giant canvases of neo-realism with its concentration on tract houses, cars, ugly city-scapes, service stations, etc. Satire? No, they tell us that this is a serious
exploration of things-as-they-are and for accuracy's sake many of them paint from a slide projected onto the canvas.

All this seems mild compared to the newest in male art. Last year Lucas Samaras took over a gallery and built a solid platform three or four feet above the floor. When the crowds came and strolled up the ramp into the empty room they would hear moanings and groanings underneath them as Samaras crawled about jerking off under their feet. This was dubbed "body art" and there are sure to be plenty of followers.

And there's Christo, the curtain-hanger who, in one of the grossest assertions of the phallic territorial imperative and alienation from nature ever, encased a canyon in a curtain of plastic which cost $750,000 to hang. He spent $1/3 of a million dollars on this one project alone, and he's done quite a few others.

The ultimate male art hype is called earth works. Dennis Oppenheimer and a score of others have actually talked millionaires out of tons of money in order to tear up the desert. They hire bulldozers, make a few wriggly ditches, and then the millionaire can fly over the area in his private plane to look at his very own "work of art." There's a whole magazine called *Avalanche* devoted to such as this.

As long ago as 1967, Valerie Solanas had this to say about "Great Art":

"...the male "artist", being totally sexual, unable to relate to anything beyond his own physical sensations, having nothing to express beyond the insight that for the male life is meaningless and absurd, cannot be an artist. How can he who is not capable of life tell us what life is all about? A "male artist" is a contradiction in terms. A degenerate can only produce degenerate "art." The true artist is every self-confident, healthy female, and in a female society the only ART, the only Culture, will be conceived, kooky, funky females grooving on each other and on everything else in the universe."

Ugliness: Being totally sexual, incapable of cerebral or aesthetic responses, totally materialistic and greedy, the male, besides inflicting on the world "Great Art", has decorated his unlandscaped cities with ugly buildings (both inside and out), ugly decors, billboards, highways, cars, garbage trucks and, most notably, his own putrid self.

If our sister visiting with the time machine tried to sum it all up to her sisters in the 22nd Century upon her return, I think she could safely say that the touchstones of literature, art, and philosophy proclaim that this is the Age of Absurdity and Despair (which many, many historians and critics have already declared). With the perspective her time machine would afford her, she might see the turning point into this age along about
the end of the French Revolution or about the time of Whitman's death in America, or the end of the Age of Romanticism. It was about then that the cockiness over man's discovery that there was no God (or ordained social order) began to wear off. Man was free. Free to do what? The old sense of universal order had vanished and he had to make up the rules and the goals as he went along. If there was no god, no god-ordained social order, then he must look elsewhere.

At first there was a "cocky" kind of joy in the new god-defiance with the roustabout antics of the Fin d'Siecle boys and the Surrealists (in art and literature) which wound down eventually into a frantic quest for Meaning. Some tried to fuck their way into it, some sought it by joining up with THE CAUSE of whatever persuasion, and some simply stared at their own navels. But whenever the men really stopped for reflection (and of course few did) they were faced with the EMPTINESS. Man felt the "contingency." Cut off from the supreme license that the belief in the patriarchal god had once afforded him to act in His image in superiority over all nature's creatures, Man cast about here and there trying to justify his own paltry existence. And he felt ABSURD. Out of relation. Cut off. Sartre wrote a cartload of books about it, but in this passage from his autobiography he lays out his own life as example:

My retrospective illusions are all in pieces. Martyrdom, salvation, immortality: all are crumbling; the building is falling in ruins. I have caught the Holy Ghost in the cellars and flung him out of them. Atheism is a cruel, long-term business: I believe I have gone through it to the end. I see clearly, I am free from illusions ... for about ten years, I have been a man who is waking up, cured of a long, bitter-sweet madness, who cannot recall his old ways without laughing, and who no longer has any idea what to do with his life. I have become once again the traveller without a ticket ...  15

Valerie Solanas with chilling accuracy put it this way:

Most men, utterly cowardly, project their inherent weaknesses onto women, label them female weaknesses and believe themselves to have female strengths; most philosophers, not quite so cowardly, face the fact that male lacks exist in men, but still can't face the fact that they exist in men only. So they label the male condition the Human Condition, pose their nothingness problem, which horrifies them, as a philosophical dilemma, thereby giving stature to their animalism, grandiloquently label their nothingness their "Identity Problem", and proceed to prattle on pompously about the "Crisis of the Individual", the "Essence of Being", "Existence preceding Essence", "Existential Modes of Being", etc., etc. 16

... The male's inability to relate to anybody or anything makes his life pointless and meaningless (the ultimate male insight is that life is absurd) ...  17

Though it is certainly true that Man can look out on the state of affairs he has created in the world and rightly proclaim it absurd, and although when he looks inward he may indeed be truthful in reporting Nothingness, the lie is in the acceptance that it must always be so. It would be possible to write of Ugliness and Despair in a way that would not perpetuate them, but the caricature that men resorted to (from a lack of connection with their own emotions, each other, and nature) has accelerated the plunge into meaninglessness. Caricature with its own logic destroys itself and those who create it.

Were this male vision of himself and the world not the prevailing one in our culture we could attempt to dismiss it. Unfortunately none of us are objectively outside its bounds. In the next section I want to show what I think has been the effect of this negative vision on a few women writers who have struggled with their reflection in the cultural mirror, and finally, in the last section, women's success in creating our own culture and a vision of hope and promise.
Joan Didion, and Doris Lessing (though she is very different from the first two).

Susan Sontag moved into the ranks of seriously regarded art critics and philosophers when she was in her late twenties. In 1963 and 1967 she published The Benefactor and Death Kit, both of which had strong veins of feminism running through them, but more to the point, they were long testimonials to the resilience of the male mirror. The nightmare vision of amorality and gratuitous violence in Susan Sontag's two books was not mitigated by an alternate vision, not transposed. What we have is an addition to the UGLINESS, not a hope of changing it. Both of these novels really tugged in very cozily beside all the male documents of the Age of Despair and Anxiety.

In the last five years Susan Sontag has reexplored her terrain in the new light of the international women's movement and she has reassessed the values (or lack of them) she once had. She has become a very dynamic and articulate theoretician of women's culture and politics. (See her article in The Partisan Review Volume XL, Number 2.)

Joan Didion has not made this transition, and even though she writes about women who are perfect examples of the need for feminist understanding, the major thrust of her work is once again the depiction of an amoral, meaningless existence. Really, of course, we'd be hard put to find an argument with her view of the man-made world as a wreck. It is only that she can't see anything else. In Slouching Toward Bethlehem, a book of essays so named for the Yeats poem describing the dissolution of all values that he foresaw, Joan Didion tells us that she has been unable to write for long stretches of time because of the "conviction that writing was an irrelevant act." 16

Joan Didion does not seem aware of her repetition of the Dadaist sentiment, but somehow seems to think that this nightmare vision of modern life in Los Angeles is peculiarly her own. She primarily talks about amorality and the effect of a loss of values:

There has always been an amoral vacuum out there just beyond the eye's range, and making promises matter against that vacuum has never been easy for anyone. Making anything at all matter has never been easy.

I have trouble maintaining the basic notion that keeping promises matters in a world where everything I was taught seems beside the point. The point itself seems increasingly obscure.... 19

The vocabulary of Joan Didion's work is an old saw retuned. The grand finale of Play It As It Lays, the quintessential enlightenment following the sturm and drang of failed relationship and suicide is this:

One thing in my defense, not that it matters: I know something Carter never knew, or Helene or maybe you. I know what "nothing" means, and keep on playing.

Why, BZ would say.

Why not, I say. 20

Joan Didion has lost (or never had) faith in anyone it seems -- not in others, not in herself, and she is careful to warn us away from misplacing our faith in her: "One last thing to remember: writers are always selling somebody out," she tells us in her introduction to Slouching Toward Bethlehem. Her much discussed article on "what's wrong with the women's movement" in the New York Times Review of Books seems comical in light of this statement.

Margaret Atwood, like Joan Didion, is loathe to make an official connection between the women's movement and her work, but she has very definitely profited from it as an alternate vision to the bleak alienation and despair which is what her main character in Surfacing must surface from. Near the end of the novel the main character-narrator sums up the illumination of the book:

The word games, the winning and losing games are finished; at the moment there are no others but they will have to be invented, withdrawing is no longer possible and the alternative is death. 21

That new ways will have to be invented and that this is possible is, after all, the moving force behind the women's movement. Feminists are not blind to the seemingly hopeless mess men have made of things -- we are not saccharine-hearted easy-answer optimists, but most of us believe that change is possible and that, in fact, without the demolition of the patriarchal non-values and culture it may just be the end of life on this planet. So what have we got to lose?

(As F. Scott Fitzgerald said, in an unusual moment of revelatory power during a nervous breakdown, the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time. As his example he noted the capacity "to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise."22)

Doris Lessing has always been one of the writers most important to me and probably the most read contemporary woman writer in the world. Many of us have looked to her almost as a sibyl who can foresee the course of women. Doris Lessing, however, does not believe that women have the power to change what 3000 years of patriarchy have wrought. In the introduction to her new English edition of The Golden Notebook she says that she "of course" supports the women's movement but:
The last decade has marked a turning point in the history of women and of our sister, the earth -- perhaps the point of no return. There is no more time for waiting, withdrawing, remaining underground. With agreement far beyond coincidence, women writers are spinning out the vision of our resurrection like latter-day sibyls. In this section we'll hear from just three of them: Robin Morgan, Mary Daly and Adrienne Rich. Each, in her own way, is writing out of a vision--a womanvision--they and many women share--of the awakening of women with anyone else who shares them, it's no wonder that her characters are driven back into the fold. What if Linda and Martha and Anna and Kate had all spent some time together? What if they were a consciousness-raising group? Wouldn't the odds have been better that Kate wouldn't have gone creeping back into a stifling marriage, or that Martha wouldn't have had to take a completely ridiculous job as a marriage counselor? What if Lessing had provided a lesbian alternative to the oppressive sexual relationships with men?

And too, of course, another problem is that Doris Lessing's analysis stops short of a real picture of the phallocentric value system. In many ways she has bought the "human nature" label without inspecting to see who is meant. The male mirror, once again, is taken to be the "objective" truth.

Although, in fact, the world is in a very sorry state, we can no longer withdraw as Margaret Atwood says, "new ways must be invented, the alternative is death." Smashing the male mirror, inventing these new ways and creating a womanvision of our own is not just possible--it is essential. The earth will not continue to be pillaged and raped by men. Her statement is clear, as clear as our statement to men--NO MORE! It is no coincidence that acute ecological concern and the push for women's liberation developed simultaneously in the last decade--they are inextricably connected. The earth's revenge may very well be one of our strongest weapons in smashing the institutions of the patriarchy, for when there is no oil, no gas, to run the monolith and no secretary to run the office; when the minerals which the U.S. has been using at the rate of 30% of total world usage each year run out--and the housewife at home runs out too--things are going to come unglued! Watergate will look like upset the fruit basket by comparison! In short, there is hope of rapid change, and many women are awakening to this.

In the next section I'll move on to discussing this awakening and the creation of a female vision and culture.

**SURFACING**

The ages of masculism are now drawing to a close. Their dying days are lit up by a final flare of universal violence and despair such as the world has seldom before seen...Any and all social reforms superimposed upon the sick civilization call all of them mere illusion...There is no more time for waiting, withdrawing, remaining underground. The earth's revenge may very well be one of our strongest weapons in smashing the institutions of the patriarchy, for when there is no oil, no gas, to run the monolith and no secretary to run the office; when the minerals which the U.S. has been using at the rate of 30% of total world usage each year run out--and the housewife at home runs out too--things are going to come unglued! Watergate will look like upset the fruit basket by comparison! In short, there is hope of rapid change, and many women are awakening to this.

In the next section I'll move on to discussing this awakening and the creation of a female vision and culture.

**SURFACING**

I don't think Women's Liberation will change much -- not because there is anything wrong with their [sic] aims, but because it is already clear that the whole world is being shaken into a new pattern by the cataclysms we are living through: probably by the time we get through, if we get through at all, the aims of Women's Liberation will look very small and quaint. 23 Is it possible that she, too, will be overwhelmed by the male mirror and stand horror-struck before it unable to do more than confirm and perpetuate its images? Is it possible that Doris Lessing, the woman who in fiction, at least, has drawn probably the fullest portraits ever of the inner life of Woman, does not see that women's liberation may be the only way through?

This kind of millenial sky-is-falling talk is not a scare tactic to increase feminists' sense of mission. Even Buckminster Fuller suggested on a TV show in 1968 that the last hope for mankind [sic] might be that the earth's revenge may very well be one of our strongest weapons in smashing the institutions of the patriarchy, for when there is no oil, no gas, to run the monolith and no secretary to run the office; when the minerals which the U.S. has been using at the rate of 30% of total world usage each year run out--and the housewife at home runs out too--things are going to come unglued? Watergate will look like upset the fruit basket by comparison? In short, there is hope of rapid change, and many women are awakening to this. In the next section I'll move on to discussing this awakening and the creation of a female vision and culture.

**SURFACING**

The last decade has marked a turning point in the history of women and of our sister, the earth -- perhaps the point of no return. There is no more time for waiting, withdrawing, remaining underground. With agreement far beyond coincidence, women writers are spinning out the vision of our resurrection like latter-day sibyls. In this section we'll hear from just three of them: Robin Morgan, Mary Daly and Adrienne Rich. Each, in her own way, is writing out of a vision--a womanvision--they and many women share--of the awakening of women
and the salvaging of the earth. Rather than trying to skip across all that women-identified-women are doing to create our own VISION in visual arts, history, philosophy, medicine, performing arts, science, psychology, music, etc. and doing justice to none, I'm going to focus on these three writers in hopes that they will convey the spirit of all our awakenings. All three have come to female consciousness in the course of their creative work, so their journeys from underground read like maps of the labyrinthian course of any woman who would arise. In the passages which follow, all echo the theme NO MORE:

I suddenly see the world as no longer viable: 26

Adrienne Rich

A man's world. But finished.
They themselves have sold it to the machines.
I walk the unconscious forest,
a woman dressed in old army fatigues
that have shrunk to fit her, I am lost
at moments, I feel dazed
by the sun pawing between the trees,
cold in the bog and lichen of the thicket
Nothing will save this. I am alone,
kicking the last rotting logs
with their strange smell of life, not death,

As a aliens in a man's world who are now rising up to name—that is, to create—our own world, women are beginning to recognize that the value system that has been thrust upon us by the various cultural institutions of patriarchy has amounted to a kind of gang rape of minds as well as bodies. 30

This Great Refusal of raping clearly means refusal to rape earth, air, fire, water, that is refusal to objectify and abuse their power. 31

...the cosmic covenant of sisterhood has the potential to transform the extraordinary relation of the poet to nature into ordinary and "normal" relation, changing our environment from a culture of raping into herbal poisons to secretaries' spilling coffee on the files to housewives' passive resistance in front of their soap opera screens to housemaid's accidentally breaking china to mothers' teaching their children to love them a little bit better than their fathers. And more.

Our revolutions, like the Turkish harem revolts, have been (as was Nat Turner's) frequent, brave, isolated one from the other, bloody—and buried, both in reality and in the history books.

Each time we went into the exile of our women's lives again, changed our faces and bodies and voices (that's called Fashion), and passed.

Each time we went back to whispering and waiting. Each time social change broke across men, we called out, only to get back each time a reply

rape, beatings, murder, desertion, ridicule, or loving concern

that, in essence, women should be seen and not heard.

At last, when the man has all but destroyed Our species, Our sister earth, Our children that we made

in our own holy bodies, at last we are beginning to shrill as banshees and to act.

To be heard and not seen?

There is no ancient Chinese proverb, long long before

Mao's Quotations, that says

A man should be careful not to arouse the anger of a woman, for he has to sleep sometime—and with both eyes closed. 29

Robin Morgan

as aliens in a man's world who are now rising up to name—that is, to create—our own world, women are beginning to recognize that the value system that has been thrust upon us by the various cultural institutions of patriarchy has amounted to a kind of gang rape of minds as well as bodies.

This Great Refusal of raping clearly means refusal to rape earth, air, fire, water, that is refusal to objectify and abuse their power.
to a culture of reciprocity with the beauty of the earth, the other planets, the stars. 32 Mary Daly

COURAGE

"Excuses for not moving are myriad" Robin Morgan warns in Monster. Even when we've begun to awaken, when we can no longer deny the urgency of acting, it still calls for a leap of faith to leave all that we have known and plunge into an uncreated future. We must expect to be continually tested: some of us will become disheartened and withdraw, some of us will fall victim to tokenism, some will settle too early and jump on some human liberation bandwagon or try once again for that evasive individual solution in "personal growth," and some will mistakenly turn our rage against each other. And as men realize the import of our secession, we must expect repression to increase on every front -- both in the visible and the invisible institutions of the patriarchy. What is called for is a degree of courage few of us ever thought we had and are only now discovering in the course of creating and acting as Mary Daly says in Beyond God the Father:

...the ethic emerging in the women's movement is...one whose dominant theme is existential courage. This is the courage to see and to be in the face of the nameless anxieties that surface when a woman begins to see through the masks of sexist society and to confront the horrifying fact of her own alienation from her authentic self. 33

Those who are alienated from their own deepest identity do receive a kind of security in return for accepting very limited and undifferentiated identities. The woman who single-mindedly accepts the role of "housewife," for example, may to some extent avoid the experience of nothingness but she also avoids a fuller participation in being, which would be her only real security and source of community. Submerged in such a role, she cannot achieve a breakthrough in activity. Many strong women are worn out in the struggle to break out of these limits before reaching the higher levels of intellectual discovery or of creativity.

The beginning of a breakthrough means a realization that there is an existential conflict between the self and structures that have given such crippling security. This requires confronting the shock of nonbeing with the courage to be. It means facing the nameless anxieties of fate, which become concretized in loss of jobs, friends, social approval, health, and even life itself. Also involved is anxiety of guilt over refusing to do what society demands, a guilt which can hold one in its grip long after it has been recognized as false.

Finally, there is the anxiety of meaninglessness, which can be overwhelming at times when the old simple meanings, role definitions, and life expectations have been rooted out and rejected openly and one emerges into a world without models.

This confrontation with the anxiety of nonbeing is revelatory, making possible the relativization of structures that are seen as human products, and therefore not absolute and ultimate. It drives consciousness beyond fixation upon "things as they are." Courage to be is the key to the revelatory power of the feminist revolution. 34

...Excuses for moving, on the other hand, are singular:

it is fear phoenix in paranoia;

it is despair sharpening itself toward boredom;

it is activity in the process of discovering energy. 35

Robin Morgan

Nothing can be done but by inches. I write out my life hour by hour, word by word gazing into the anger of old women on the bus numbering the striations of air inside the ice cube imagining the existence of something uncreated this poem our lives 36 Adrienne Rich

...yet never have we been closer to the truth of the lies we were living, listen to me: the faithfulness I can imagine would be a weed flowering in tar, a blue energy piercing the massed atoms of a bedrock disbelief. 37 Adrienne Rich

We may become confused, lonely, despairing, or mad, but we cannot really "forget." This is because our revolution means life against death. It is not "losing oneself" for a cause, but living for oneself and therefore also living a cause. 38 Mary Daly
The first time I met Robin Morgan, I asked her how she could be both a poet and a revolutionary feminist activist. How could the woman who wrote the poems in Monster be the same woman who travels from coast to coast spreading the revolution. She smiled. "It's the same thing," she said.

In many ways, I think the overcoming of the dichotomies they taught us in English class (Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Society, Man vs. God, Man vs. Himself) and further, realizing the unity between art and life, individual freedom and social interaction, has been and is one of the most revolutionary outcomes of the women's movement. We have not imitated the structure of any group in history who has banded together for "a cause": rather we have talked in small groups, come to consensus agreements, and discouraged any action for "the cause" which does not come from personal experience and conviction. Our scrupulous attention to means, not ends, our continual awareness of process not product, and our rejection of the objectification of each other, children, classes, races, and the earth is developing into a most sensitive ethic -- one characterized by synergy.

By this I mean our understanding that women need not be encouraged to fit some ideal of WOMAN or REVOLUTIONARY FEMINIST but rather come to consciousness about where they are and act from their center and the women's movement cannot help but grow. Our faith is that the combined actions of women who are really in touch with themselves and each other cannot help but contribute to the welfare of their sisters. We who have depended on small groups (and their larger organic outgrowths) for the growth of the women's movement have evidenced an immense unspoken faith in the underground springs of feminist consciousness. This faith and our ability to hold in our minds what we've always been taught as opposites and see them as the same thing-- taken together, this is the start of a revolutionary new value system -- not a female mirror, but a female process ethic.

It is not without it's pitfalls like any other. Along the way to the feminist revolution women will be tempted by tolerance, by the security of a well ordered, by the urge to escape confrontation, etc. My belief, however, is that no matter how many side roads a woman takes, once she has tapped her own female consciousness, she cannot turn back -- "the alternative is death."

For the first time in recorded history a mass movement demands no diminishment of self for the good of the mass. As Mary Daly says:

I am suggesting that the vision of human becoming as a process of integration and transformation, as this vision is emerging in the women's revolution, potentially includes both the individualistic ontological dimension of depth and revolutionary participation in history. It does this precisely because it strikes at the externalized structures and internalized images of patriarchy that have cut us off from realizing psychic wholeness in ourselves and consequently have cut down our capacity for genuine participation in history.

I suggest that such courage makes creative, communal, revolutionary hope possible to the extent that the courage is expressed in confrontation with earthly powers and principalities that embody non-being in our patriarchal culture. It is this dimension of confrontation that makes courage give rise to creative hope.39

HOPE

That women in the last decade have replaced a number of previously patriarchal institutions with our own cannot be denied. Focusing first on a life support system, women have created an incredible national network of communication, education, health care, child care, rape assistance, legal assistance, etc. See The New Woman's Survival Catalogue (reviewed on p. 49, this issue) for the overwhelming picture of the alternate system we have created already (or look back at the resource directory from the last issue of Amazon Quarterly.

That we are also, concurrently, creating a female VISION, a new and ever-expanding value system, to replace the nonvalues of the phallocentric culture is the dream we are all helping to come true. Not that we will replace the male mirror with a female one, but that we are developing an ethic of organic process and change. It is a vision some of us are willing to die for -- that some of us will die for. In order to bring it into being the back of the patriarchy must be broken, an old order must crumble, and we must leap out from all that we have known as secure and "reasonable" into the uncreated future of the species. It will be an ongoing struggle in each of us to birth this vision. We will doubt, lose hope, despair, yet we cannot turn back.

In the Sixties we almost always spoke of youth and culture in one breath -- the youth-culture -- but we will see that the developing woman-culture's visionary challenge to the dominant culture will be far more extensive, as Mary Daly says:

...The becoming of women in sisterhood is the countercultural phenomenon par excellence which can indicate the future course of human spiritual evolution... Women are not merely "rethinking" philosophy and theology but are participating in new creation. The process implies beautiful, self-actualizing anger, love, and hope.40
The creation of female culture is as pervasive a process as we can imagine, for it is participation in a VISION which is continually unfolding everywhere from our talks with friends, to meat boycotts, to taking over storefronts for child care centers, to making love with a sister. It is revelatory, undefinable, except as a process of change. Women's culture is all of us exorcising, naming, creating toward the vision of harmony with ourselves, each other, and our sister earth. In the last ten years our having come faster and closer than ever before in the history of the patriarchy to overturning its power and creating our own is cause for exhilarant hope -- wild, contagious, un conquerable, crazy hope! -- a hope that grows larger every day -- a hope that so far overshadows male snivelling about Alienation and Despair and Nothingness as to allow us the virtue once we have power over our own lives and environment, of taking pity and stopping short of demolishing the poor creatures completely. I have some hope that someday we can and will drag men kicking and screaming into consciousness as Robin Morgan says:

I hate not men but what it is men do in this culture, or how the system of sexism, power dominance, and competition is the enemy—not people, but how men, still, created that system and preserve it and reap concrete benefits from it. Words and rhetoric that merely gush from my arteries when grazed by the razor edge of humanistic love. Enough.

When the phallocentric system has been undermined, when the male mirror lies buried in mounds like the shards of a long lost civilization, then in full humanhood we will be able to reach out to brothers too. For now my vision is a womanvision, my art and action women culture, my love for women alone.

And when I need it, I think of that weed that Adrienne describes in her poem (which I'll quote again in closing). In the course of writing all this, I heard Judy Grahn read aloud one night, "A Woman is Talking to Death," the extraordinary poem we've opened this issue of Amazon Quarterly with, and I saw a small blue flower not long after that growing up through the very freeway she describes. The hope, the winning of life over death, despair and meaninglessness is everywhere I look now -- like talismen of the faith in WOMANVISION:

...never have we been closer to the truth of the lies we were living, listen to me: the faithfulness I can imagine would be a weed flowering in tar, a blue energy piercing the massed atoms of a bedrock disbelief.

NOTES

5. Ibid., p. 72.
6. Ibid., p. 165.
14. Ibid., p. 34.
17. Ibid., p. 21.
18. Joan Didion, Slouching Toward Bethlehem (New York: Dell, 1968),
Barbara came to Japan with her husband Bill and their child, Lance, to learn macrobiotic cooking. Two years later, she's waiting for a ticket home to Minnesota.

In between she gave birth to two babies. Bill read several books before the first and insisted he knew how. But the baby died. Now, the children have bronchitis; she has asthma; Bill studies Akido and says her cooking's still not right.

When Beverly and I arrive with a watermelon and a yellow gladiola, Barbara hands the flower back, saying, "You arrange it. You're good at that."

I'm sick of all you Japanese women, obeying your husbands, indulging your sons.

You're a lousy example.

I'm sick of all you American women, trying to be like them, feminine and yin, you're making a mistake.

Macrobiotics, you're a no-good teacher.

Women, do you know what the qualities of yin really are?

Japan's a nice place and all that, but it's not for us. You're an oaf if you laugh open-mouth. You're a dyke if you take big steps. You're a very bad girl, if you're not Japanese.

Go home Barbara, leave the raw fish and the Tokyo smog, the hot water heater that's not paid off, your husband, his Akido, astrology, and acupuncture.

Go back to Minnesota and toast an English muffin, drive a cab, eat in restaurants, do the turkey trot; dig for sand crabs with your babies, kiss your mother, run for mayor.

You arrange it.
At five o'clock the carpenter found the cook on the back porch. Na was playing a game of chess with a child named Nicky, a skinny child with eyes so bright they looked wet and a pointed face like an elf— the cook's second child, the one na had called a son of a bitch.

Nicky looked up and grinned at the carpenter. "I always win," na said. The carpenter's own children, now almost grown, had been raised mostly by others. "Are you that good?"

"I'm the best!"

The carpenter waited until the game was over. "I won, I won!" Nicky threw the words at the carpenter's face like the peas of yesterday. "I told you I always win!" Na ran into the yard to tell the other children.

"Does na always win?" The carpenter tried to remove the disapproval from nan voice.

"Na can't bear to lose," the cook explained to the disapproval nevertheless. "I know because once I won and na cried and screamed for an hour."

"Shouldn't na learn that na can't always win?"

"I don't know. I learned that the price of my winning was to deal with a tantrum for an hour."

"But the older children—do they treat na like that?"

"Well, at first they beat na, they would win of course. But then when na cried they didn't do it again. They learned not to."

"So Nicky is learning to cry to get nan own way."

"Na is learning that if something upsets you so much that you have to cry and you let your friend know that, the friend will be able to understand and comfort you. Na is learning to communicate."

The carpenter was polarized into silence and felt one-directional and simple as an adult; the cook was child, knew child, created naself the mind which the child did not know it had.

Two years ago na had seen the cook at a school fair in New York City and that first impression, like a footprint on the mind, remained over the carpenter's eyes as a frame through which all subsequent encounters with the cook were seen.

At the fair was a "night club"—the science room decorated with an astronaut motif and adult alcohol—and the carpenter had retreated there to recover from the dual torment of being a parent and social conversation. The group at the table next to na dominated the room—their laughterdefined laughter and rendered tin the noise and vague touchings at other tables. Dominating the table itself, carrying its rhythm, was the cook.

At first the carpenter saw only wild dark hair and the kind of arresting face rarely seen except on a baby animal, which unlike the baby animal's moved and shifted through so many circles of joy that the carpenter felt kaleidoscopically hypnotized. Na sat and stared, cold and blond as if na wore the armor of the northern church.

Suddenly the cook stood up and began moving to the tame music of the science room as if na were on a mountain. The rest of the parents turned to watch and the hired combo—three father-like figures—limped their instruments, watched and picked up then with a new rhythm being conducted by the dancer.

It was a dance of the body in moonlight, awkward sweeping into a leap of grace, heaviness failing to soar turning into a spin of air and back to earth, a dance that said, I the dancer deny that I am dancing do not laugh my body is struggling to evaporate. The carpenter's mind detached itself and broke free to be swayed and tossed as it floated over the dancer.

Flushed and abruptly finished, the cook sat down and looked suddenly like a forty-year-old inhabitant of New York, cynic repudiating the gypsy.

The image that remained in the carpenter's mind, although fixed in detail, was principally one of motion as if the skin itself were fluid and the whole so unstable that the eye had to catch it like the pattern of a cloud. The carpenter's own face—chiselled, patrician, frozen in middle-age—stared back from any mirror like a fact.

Suddenly now under the wide outgoing Texas sky at the immense hour of five-fifteen, the carpenter felt something rusty and threaten to explode inside na; it was the urge to throw naself, the fact, into the maelstrom of the cook's heaving ocean and bob there, in the most extended position possible for a fact, until na was shredded loose.

Na reached for the cook and hugged, holding gently as a delicately-balanced beach ball, holding the need to touch, dizzy and barely breathing with nan eyes closed into that dark spray of hair. Na felt the cook's hand press against the back of nan head. The carpenter said, at last, after two years, "I love you."
REVIEWS BY ANN AND GINA

Amazon Quarterly wishes to congratulate Daughters, Inc., publishers of books by women, on their first crop. Their books (all reviewed here) can be ordered directly from: Daughters, Inc., Plainfield, VT 05667. Please add 35¢ per title (up to $1) for postage and handling.

Feminist Press books may be ordered directly from them: The Feminist Press, 10920 Battersea Ln., Columbia, MD 21044. Please include 40¢ extra for first two books, and 10¢ for each additional book.

All the books reviewed in AQ, and any other books by women, can be ordered from FIRST THINGS FIRST, femail order house. Send the titles (and author, publisher, and price info.) you want, along with your check (or cash or money order) to First Things First, 23 Seventh St. SE, Washington, DC 20003. Please add postage and handling fee of 10% of the total price (minimum 35¢ and maximum 75¢ fee per mailing). Free catalog available too.

THE COOK AND THE CARPENTER
a novel by the carpenter

I hope the carpenter won't mind my giving away his secret of neutrality--or is it--gender--but I must say that here for the first time is a lesbian feminist novel that delves into every vital issue of the women's movement on all levels from political theory to bed partners to personal growth (and is it?) and the delving is done with empathy for all viewpoints, with rich imagination, and above all with a finely tuned sense of humour)--AND the novel emerges from all this delving as more than an exploration of the women's movement (worthy objective though that may be)--it emerges as a fine work of art, art being that irrational creative process whereby 1+1=3.

Many of you will find The Cook and the Carpenter difficult reading at first (I assume this because it was so for me) because of the carpenter's use of a neuter pronoun. A prefatory statement says "Since the differences between men and women are so obvious to all, so impossible to confuse whether we are speaking of learned behavior or inherent characteristics, ordinary conversation or furious passion, work or intimate relationships, the author understands that it is no longer necessary to distinguish between men and women in this novel. I have therefore used one pronoun for both, trusting the reader to know which is which." This may sound gimmicky. It may even seem to be the main point of the novel, if you stop reading after the first few pages. I urge you to read on the "na" is an obvious device, but it does make a valuable point, and in any case the book by no means depends on it for its strength.

The Cook and the Carpenter's plot involves a commune in Texas, newly settled by Eastern city-dwellers intent on changing old patterns in their lives. Exploration of those changes--in family structures, children's roles, race relations, attitudes about class differences, sexuality, political tactics and many more issues too subtle or complicated to classify--makes the substance of the book, all spun in rich and surprising language.

My one grievance is that the story slithers away instead of ending in a fashion I'm used to. Even though I realize that real stories don't really end, there's an emotional satisfaction in a well-planned ending that I miss in this book.

Faults considered, The Cook and the Carpenter is for me the most encouraging sign to appear in a long while that a distinct female sensibility (or women's culture--this amorphous process has many names) is emerging from the slowly crumbling rubble of male "culture"--a sensibility that moves rather than names, that includes all experience and makes relationship rather than isolation the mode for understanding the world.

EARLY LOSSES
Pat Burch
Daughters, Inc. (paper) $3. 211 pp.

This novel follows Freda Zax, a working-class Philadelphia teenager, and her mother, also named Freda, through adolescent and college years as young Freda loses weight, religion, virginity, unquestioning belief in her mother, etc. As historical or biographical information it all comes across as true and valuable--the language throughout the book, though, is so simple and one-directional that I found it hard to keep plodding through. I wouldn't recommend Early Losses as art or as any but the simplest entertainment.

THE TREASURE
Selma Lagerlof
Daughters, Inc. (paper) $3. 159 pp.

This is a reprint of the very formal, very feminist fable that won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1909 and has been out of print ever since.
RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE
Rita Mae Brown
Daughters, Inc. (paper) $3. 217 pp.
Many of you have been eager to pounce on this book ever since reading excerpts in AQ (Vol.1 #2)--I'm glad to be able to say Here 'tis. Rita Mae has managed to create from the events of her life a biting and funny tale of growing up lesbian and poor in the South. Rubyfruit Jungle is an important step in the transition from traditional "fiction" (where the myth of impersonal storytelling operates in the same way as the myth of "objectivity" in the sciences) to a literature that validates the experiences of our lives. The hazard in this process that weakens the impact of Rubyfruit Jungle is that as the events get closer to Rita Mae's present, more unresolved conflicts appear in her life and of course in the book. Rita Mae manages very well the difficult task of finishing the book with few loose dilemmas and a satisfying conclusion; what she doesn't manage as well is keeping her humorous tone when the events get closer to the present and therefore more emotionally charged.

NERVES
Blanche M. Boyd
Daughters, Inc. (paper) $3. 169 pp.
This novel tells two distinct stories, which though woven together and dependent on each other, reach very different conclusions. One is a painfully classic story of middle-class women in their disintegrating marriages, women desperately trying to make themselves into whole people, and in the end failing. Along the way to inevitable failure Blanche Boyd gives the clearest account I've read of how women come to experience pain as pleasure in heterosexual relationships. The other story in Nerves revolves around the teen-age daughter of one unhappy wife--and it is her intensity and naive vision that bring the book into focus and give it a hope and positive purpose rarely found in this "fed-up-housewife" genre of fiction.

THESE DAYS
Lee Lally
Poems that begin from a lesbian feminist perspective--very uneven quality but some sincere and moving illuminations here and there.

WE ARE ALL LESBIANS -- a Poetry Anthology
Violet Press, Box 398, New York, NY 10009 (paper) $2.
Good, mediocre (and worse) poetry confused by a sloppy format and aesthetically crude drawings. The efforts of so many women deserve a more careful presentation.

THE WOMAN'S EYE
Edited and with an introduction by Anne Tucker
Alfred A. Knopf (paper) $6.95 170 pp.
Selected photographs from the work of ten 20th century American women: Gertrude Kasebier, Frances Benjamin Johnston, Margaret Bourke-White, Dorothea Lange, Berenice Abbott, Barbara Morgan, Diane Arbus, Alisa Wells, Judy Dater, Bea Nettles. Anne Tucker has written an excellent biography of each photographer, as well as a rambling introduction exploring each one's imagery in relation to questions about female sensibility. The ten examples of each woman's work printed here are often not enough to give much feeling of each one's work as a whole, but the book is an interesting introduction.

GETTING CLEAR-- Body Work for Women
Anne Kent Rush
Random House--Book Works (paper) $4.95 290 pp.
Anne Kent Rush interviewed a dozen Bay Area women working in different areas of the "Growth Movement" (as these prolific California offshoots of psychology are called), added her own experiences and her knowledge of massage, and put together (she designed the book too) a useful resource for women, especially for groups of women. Getting Clear provides a lively hodgepodge of tools, from Breath Awareness to Gestalt techniques to Food to Belly Dancing--specific exercises are suggested in each area, along with the interviews, personal examples from Anne, and fine photographs. I especially recommend this book for consciousness-raising groups and for women who are just beginning to explore the possible extent of their feelings for other women.

THE NEW WOMAN'S SURVIVAL CATALOG
Edited by Kirsten Grinstad and Susan Rennie
Coward, McCann and Geoghagen, Inc./Berkley Publishing Corp. (paper) $5. 223 pp.
This "Whole Earth Catalog" style book is the most complete directory of the women's movement yet assembled. I urge you to look through it if you're near an amenable bookstore just for the sense of community it offers. Susan and Kirsten travelled the 12,000 mile continental loop collecting information and then assembled it in record time--all the listings are current as of July 1973. The catalog concentrates on the U.S. but has some information for Canada, and it has lots of photos of women and their projects. My only reservation is the thought of profits from this vital sort of information going to a male-controlled, undoubtedly sexist company--may the catalog help increase our communication and numbers so that by next year there will be a women's press large enough to print a sequel.
The yellow wallpaper
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, with an afterward by Elaine R. Hedges
The Feminist Press, (paper) $1.25
Known mainly as a feminist lecturer and as the author of Women and Economics, Charlotte Perkins Gilman offered another side in this powerful story—an intensely personal view of a woman's descent into madness as the only escape from a patronizing husband (and world). A beautifully written (in 1892), horrifying and illuminating tale.

Approaching Simone
A Play by Megan Terry, with an introduction by Phyllis Jane Wagner
The Feminist Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, NY 11568 (paper) $1.50
This play, based on the life of Simone Weil, is meant to present to women a hero to emulate—an objective I find both tiresome and dangerous, since Weil (in the play at least) is yet another woman who responds to oppressive conditions by suffering passively (eventually to the point of deliberately starving to death).

Knowing Woman
Irene Claremont de Castillejo
G. P. Putnam's Sons (for the C. G. Jung Foundation of Analytical Psychology) (hardcover)
Reviewed by Ann Stokes:
I have met my first juiceless Jungian orange. While reading the concise placement of words and ideas, the short paragraphs injected with moral insights, I came to the loud and clear conclusion that books written for the edification of the layman and the laywoman are to be burned, braised, banned, boraxed and banished. Oh anti-literature, anti-flow, anti-life! How infinitely more one knows and loves because Mrs. Dalloway existed, than the abstract woman of Irene C. de C. How exciting and painful are Doris Lessing's and M. C. Richard's experiences in comparison to the theoretical insights of Ms. C. de C. These women are not writing for us, they are sharing their personal lives with us. Knowing Woman is written by a Jungian analyst (who is no longer alive). She is trying to make C. G. Jung understandable to women, essentially. Possibly another writer could do that, but after reading this book, I would suggest heading for the source itself.

Her material includes a grand sprinkling of important matters: the bringing of the unconscious into consciousness, the misuse of power, the relation of woman to man, dreams, love, the failings of society, etc. etc. The chapter entitled "Animus—friend or foe?" is her strongest, for she remains focused on the subject matter long enough to make clear her ideas of where Man and Woman basically differ, or should I say inherently differ. To give one example: men find it natural to focus, to make visible, to take action upon that focus. Women find it natural to be in touch with the source, the motivating energy, the invisible strength (which makes the focus possible). This does not mean that men are all focus, women inspiration: both elements are possible and workable in both sexes. The point is that men have to work harder at accepting the emotional invisible forces, and women spend more energy and effort learning to focus.

Intertwoven among these inherent differences are tools and beliefs as to how women can work through emotional chaos. Ms. C. de C.'s writing stayed tight in this chapter also, and I sensed she had done a great deal of personal searching in these two overlapping areas.

My tenderness for the author, dormant throughout the book, was suddenly released, sending pangs of guilt and remorse through me as I read her final two paragraphs. I will end with them:
"This paper, inadequate as it must inevitably be, is my first attempt to get this distressed feminine figure out into the light of day where she can be acknowledged and accepted. I cannot possibly succeed alone.

My paper, more than anything else, is an appeal to all those of you who feel the task worthwhile, to help lift this figure, which I believe to be the image of the feminine soul of woman, right up into the sunshine and lay her upon the green, growing grass of conscious reality."

Wicce: a lesbian feminist newspaper
Box 15633, Philadelphia, PA 19103
$3.50/year ($1 extra for plain wrapper) 35¢/single issue
Wicce's first issue is out and it's a fine and promising start. Included are an article on Wicce (wise women) by Judith Faulkner; an inspiring article/anthology (by Rachel Rubin) with Jan Welch, lesbian president of Philadelphia N.O.W.; an interview with the editors of AQ; "Horizontal Hostility" by Rose Weber (about divisions within the women's movement); an analysis of Billie Jean King's much-publicized victory, by Laurel Marshfield; articles on Philadelphia-area projects—the Lesbian Hotline and Women Organized Against Rape; book reviews; a practical guide to floor-sanding; a few bits of news from Philadelphia and other parts of the East. News coverage is the one area where this first issue falls short—understandably, since the paper is new and unknown. The Wicce staff will welcome news from all over of events, new projects, etc. of interest to women.

Wicce's over-all tone seems to be one of inclusion, encouragement of diversity, and positive support—a tone reflected in each article as well as in the range of material covered this issue. You won't find stale rhetoric or more-radical-than-thou political line-ism in Wicce—just attempts at real communication between women and useful information-giving, and a feeling of celebration about our slow process of creating a life-affirming women's culture.
BEYOND GOD THE FATHER -- Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation
Mary Daly
Beacon Press (hardcover) $8.95 225 pp.
Mary Daly's new book stretches your mind and, for sure, your vocabulary. It is a very hopeful exploration of a feminist philosophical/psychological perspective which has evolved in the women's movement. It has been heavily hung up on Christianity, you may find boring and beside the point. The Second Wave (Vol.3 #1) has just published a fine selection from the book which covers the main points. (Also see quotes in this AQ in "Toward a Womanvision.") By all means get your library to order this... $9 for a slim 200 pages is too much to encourage individual purchase.

ISSUES IN RADICAL THERAPY
Box 23544, Oakland, CA 94623
$4/year (4 issues), $5/year overseas, $10/year institutions, $1/sample
A little over a year old now, ISSUES IN RADICAL THERAPY, is an excellent newspaper with continual coverage of women's and particularly lesbian issues from the personal/political perspective of radical therapy. Hoggie Wyckoff has written a number of relevant pieces: "In Behalf of Bisexuality," "Amazon Power," "Equalizing Power in Problem-Solving Groups," etc. The newspaper as a whole is a much-needed anecdote to traditional psychology and its oppressive role in maintaining the patriarchy.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT
Eleanor Flexner
Penguin (paper) $2.50
A slightly tedious but thorough and well-documented biography of the pioneering 18th century feminist.

ELYSIAN FIELDS, BOOKSELLERS offers a large selection of hard-to-find and out-of-print books by, for, and about lesbians. Send them your requests and they will make a search or order a catalog from them at: 81-13 Broadway, Elmhurst, NY 11373.
J: I see the two as being connected. I mean, I see myself as a lesbian filmmaker. I think "Home Movie" is really successful because of its subject matter, and if I had made a film about donuts or something, well, I just don't have as much feeling about donuts as I do about my lesbianism. Of course, I could make lesbian movies for the rest of my life and never catch up to one year's output from MGM. That's an interesting thing about being a lesbian filmmaker. People feel that if you're a filmmaker, you should make films about everything, and that somehow you're not really a filmmaker if you keep on making these lesbian movies.

A: You mean in the heads of the Establishment filmmakers?

J: Even in the heads of a lot of lesbians... even in my head sometimes. It's a hard thing. It's analogous to the whole issue of being male-identified, the issue of wanting to make it in the "real world," the real world being the male world. Part of me does want my films to be shown at Film-Ex or the New York Film Festival, to win an award. But the direction I'm going in is different. I'm not making films like the comedy I'm working on now: it's low-budget, about $500, and it's called "A Comedy in Five Unnatural Acts." Now, this film is not an educational film. It's not for the general public. It's really entertainment for the lesbian community. As far as I'm concerned, it's not being made for other people to see. It's not being made to enter in film festivals or to show when I apply for a job... The "Comedy in Five Unnatural Acts" should be finished in February. It's going to be very short, five little vignettes on the theme of various types of lesbians. It's sort of a loving, satirical look at the stereotypes. I think it's pretty funny. People can start ordering it from me around March.

A: What are you planning after that?

J: My next film will be a full-length documentary. The form is what I call a personal documentary, which means that I as the filmmaker am a member of the community I'm documenting, the lesbian community. Most people make documentaries by trying to be as objective as they can. Well, I'm not trying to be objective about the lesbian community, but I feel that this film will be very true. The truth of the film will come from love of the community, not from objectivity.

A: Could you say more about the content of the personal documentary?

J: It'll have two themes running through it. One theme will be the lesbian identity. I'm going to do a lot about what it was like to be a lesbian before there was any kind of movement, before there was any public support. The majority of my own life has been lived under those conditions, and I'm only 25, and I know that women who are older lived a lot more years like that. I feel a real commitment to expressing that experience, not only in terms of the pain involved, the ostracism, but also in terms of what it means for a woman to go against all the proscriptions of the whole history of society. It's really an amazing thing, what it is about loving another woman that would allow a woman to be that courageous, to live the way she wants to live, regardless. I think that the process of making this film, I'm going to discover a lot about this.

A: That's just one part of the theme of lesbian identity, right?

J: Yes, there will be the part I just described, and then I'm going to do a section about lesbian's relationships with our parents. The ideology behind that is that parents are sort of archetypal members of the traditional sex roles, mother and father, so that on a symbolic level, telling your parents that you're a lesbian is kind of an intermediate step between yourself and the whole society. Also, on a very real level, it's just a hassle that all lesbians go through. Part of this section will be an interview with my own parents. And then there's going to be a whole section about the lesbian community. I've been filming a lot of different events: the West Coast Lesbian Conference, the Lesbian Art Show at Womanspace in Los Angeles, the Southwest Feminist Conference in Tucson, softball games, picnics. I want to travel to other cities too. I'm going to do a whole montage, with footage from all these different events, and voice over, sync-sound, music. The film is going to be very political, but not in the sense of speeches or anything like that. In fact, part of that montage sequence about the lesbian community is going to be to on our politics, which is basically going to come out as a satire, I think. The theme of the film is not "Lesbians are people too." The film will look at lesbians as a people, will explore the lesbian experience. In other words, the whole approach to the film is political.

A: What about the second theme of the film?

J: The second theme is lesbian relationships. For that I'm going to film a few of my friends in a cinema-verite style, sort of like "An American Family," like the anti-version of "An American Family." It will show women relating to their friends and lovers... and I'm not using "relating" as a euphemism for making love. What I'm talking about is lesbians in their day-to-day lives, dealing with issues like monogamy, jealousy, role-playing, and just funky down-home transactions.

A: Do you have any source for funds right now?

J: I've raised some money from individuals, about $1,000. It's clear to me at this point that a lot of support for this film is going to have to come from the women's community. ["Home Movie" is available from Jan Oxenberg for rent at $25 or for purchase at $200. The Women's Film Co-op (see their address on pg. 71) also rents the film. Jan welcomes contributions for her documentary and can arrange for large donations to be tax-deductible. Write to her at 54 Rose Ave., Venice, CA 90291.]
Dear Friends, Dear Sisters, Dear AQ—

What a good book the double issue is. Good strong women's voices, loud and clear. If you believe (as I do) that all things are political, then AQ is political. Just existing as what we are is a political act, and enjoying it compounds the crime. AQ's political line (hooray for you) is not a party line but a life line.

Hooray for the fun in it (the book) as well as the pain and anger. Hooray for the graphics, and the lovely good sense of the design. California sunshine to my New England winter. -- Laura, New York

Thank you for risking to publish a top quality literary magazine that this artsy lesbian can be proud of. I hope the coming year brings success to Miss Q. -- Laura, Indiana

I especially enjoyed the interviews with women across the U.S. Your magazine is a great morale booster when things are down and I believe is helping a lot of women find themselves when they see they aren't alone. -- Pat, Georgia

It is good to hear so many joyous testimonies from strong, happy women who have found themselves and each other. Many of the women who talked to you are different from me in lifestyles, backgrounds, or goals, but none of it matters much in the NOITAN RAISSEL in our heads.

We are very interested in your questionnaire and results. There certainly are advantages to the kind of in-depth interviews you conducted, but we would like to respond by mail if you would send us your questions. Maybe a lot of AQ's readers feel the same way. So often all we find about lesbianism is condemnatory or condescending, and filed under abnormal psychology, that we'd love a chance to speak about how positively we feel about ourselves, and our lives, and our sexual choices. That glow experienced when communicating ourselves to our sisters shines out of the pages of AQ, particularly when readers and interviewees speak of their personal experiences and their commitment to WOMAN. -- Vermont

[We're at work now preparing a long written questionnaire to be printed in a future issue of AQ. Thanks to all of you who've expressed interest in participating. -- Gina and Laurel]

Dear Wonder Women, -- Georgia

I am full of admiration and gratitude to you for your foresight and perception in talking with lesbians and sharing your experiences. It gives us a wonderful reality in which each of the rest of us can see our own lives reflected. What a relief for lesbians to gather information from other lesbians about what it means to be a lesbian! (Rather than a male voyeur "objective" observer.)

Your interviews are excellent--a fine example of sympathetic, in-depth conversations from which one can form a subtle and interesting picture of the women you interviewed. Deborah Wolf's analysis of the figures that have been compiled so far is very useful and straightforward. We really need this kind of concrete information! -- Elizabeth, New York

I couldn't help but be surprised, confused, and finally angry on reading the AQ recommendation regarding lesbian publications. You state (or AQ states), "We cannot at this time recommend that you spend your money on any of the other lesbian magazines or newspapers." Can you be seriously "recommending" that all lesbian publications with the exception of Wicce (and I assume AQ) are so valueless as to not deserve the monetary support of other women?

Direct constructive analysis and criticism of individual periodicals is in my opinion necessary and helpful in exchanging views and experiences. A sweeping generalization with no explanation for its consequent conclusion (as I consider yours) does not allow for any basis upon which to share. Needless to say, I'm deeply disappointed.

I do hope you'll share your objections to all the other lesbian newspapers and magazines in the next issue. I also hope my true caring is discernible through the criticism and anger. -- Cindy, Minnesota

[After looking carefully through the existing lesbian publications last issue we decided it would be kinder and more unifying not to state our criticisms of each one, but instead to simply not recommend any. Obviously many of these publications are of value to the immediate communities they grow from--The Lesbian Tide in Los Angeles, Lavendar Woman in Chicago, Sisters for San Francisco D.O.B. members, etc. --still, we don't recommend them to a national audience. -- Gina and Laurel]

Goddess, what a fine magazine you put together! AQ is the only feminist rag I do read with delight and regularly--too often I choke on the rhetoric in other publications. No rhetoric behind AQ, just womanly humanity. -- Vera, Washington

Dear Amazon People!
Dear Editors et al.

I have to write this letter to you instantly because I have just been reading the special double issue and I was HORRIFIED about your summer Toronto experience with the gnashing Canadian nationalists....

Personally I have been recently torn between my dear friends, women who are working their hearts and guts out for the women's movement everywhere, and my friends who are sure that Canada is the last stronghold for resources, a "fertile land" in its nationhood AND especially its womanhood. My friends who fear rape on its broadest scale from both men and women south of the border. These women find it difficult to differentiate between their politics and their personal lives, and the tension which this state of mind creates is sometimes forced onto an unsuspecting newly arrived American.

Dear Editors,

I have just read Laurel's "Impressions" in the last AQ. Not all Canadians, or Americans now living in Canada, are anti-American. I've been here two years now, and like Canada, but I'm not anti-American yet! Neither are most of the Canadians I know.

Unfortunately there are people who can only see two sides to any question—or should I say they have an oversimplified view of any subject. Thus, they equate being pro-Canadian with being anti-American, being pro-woman with being anti-man, and so on. They are the people who want everyone to throw off one set of chains and put on another set designed by themselves. Freedom to choose—freedom to be yourself and to be respected as a person regardless of choice—is not an alternative in most radical thinking.

I pick up our old copies of AQ every now and then, and I'm amazed that they come through to me even through all my changes—I don't outgrow them, they just say different things at different times—and that is a measure of real worth... And I wanted to say especially that I never liked or understood the froggy pictures, until last week, when I looked at my lover's skin one morning and that's what it was! Gently, lovingly, specially perceived. I went to find AQ to look at the pictures again, and there it was. Now I know. I like them.

I carried the last issue of AQ around with me until it looks like a porn book: All dog-eared and smudged, with dirty finger prints all over "Naked, in T-shirts..." and "Ruby Fruit Jungle," until I had to go get another copy to show people, not wanting them to get the wrong impression. They always take it off and I don't see that copy again for weeks—and then it's all dog-eared.

-- Jean, Oregon

I just bought the May issue at the Women's Bookstore, and now that I have devoured it, I find my faith and active confidence in the validity of Lesbian literature experiencing a rebirth on many levels—after a whole lot of abortive (narrow, crude, shallow, boring) disappointments that have seemed to be the rule in such attempts, lately.

Thank you. Aside from the wonderful timing and personal effect on my own frail self-balance, I just feel much better knowing you're around.

-- Judi, Vancouver

Here in Cincinnati some Lesbian feminists are finally trying to get something together. There's a woman with a printing press and maybe Cincy will have a lesbian paper soon!!? There are plenty of lesbians in Ohio, believe me, but we're so isolated.

Your Double Issue about your summer travels is excellent! It made a depressing day joyous! Especially nice is your personal attitude about all of us "out here." You know, we are everywhere, and reading all those interviews just reinforced the fact tremendously.

-- Karen, Cincinnati

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-- Mary, Ontario

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-- Karen, Cincinnati

A year ago when AQ first started coming out so did I. I don't normally buy lots of women's magazines or newspapers because of very limited finances... but I always buy AQ. If I were asked to recommend any one Lesbian-Feminist magazine to someone coming out, I'd wholeheartedly recommend AQ. It helps to alleviate the pain of coming out and makes me feel so happy I'm a lesbian.

-- Karen, California

I can't tell you how much I enjoyed the latest issue. Being new here, I was feeling rather lonely and isolated, and the warmth and openness that was evident, not only in the interviews, but throughout the whole magazine, made me feel part of a community of sisters who genuinely cared about one another—something I hadn't felt since leaving my friends in the small university town where I had previously taught... I think it's not even so much a matter of what goes in the journal; it's got more to do with your eagerness to share a real dialogue with your readers. And that's what comes through. (For example, I've never been moved to write a letter to an editor before.)

It'll be good to read more interviews in coming issues—it gives us all a chance to see what other woman-identified-women are into and maybe open up our own lives more.

-- Marcia, Missouri

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-- Karen, Cincinnati
I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento. I am presently working on my masters thesis on Lesbian Mothers. Many Lesbian mothers are now engaged in court cases to gain custody of their children and are in dire need of support from many levels. My hope for this thesis is that it can be used to strengthen the arguments and dispel the negative stereotypes of Lesbian motherhood, as well as increase society's awareness and acceptance of Lesbians and Lesbian child-raising.

I have developed a questionnaire in conjunction with Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon and other members of the Lesbian community, which is now ready for distribution. My population of subjects can include any woman who considers herself to be a Lesbian and who is raising or has raised a child whether or not they are now living together.

All replies will be held strictly confidential and responses will be anonymous and in no way connected to the names or addresses of respondents. For questionnaires write: Barbara Bryant, School of Social Work, Calif. State University, Sacramento, CA 95819

AQ reminds me of the innocence and sunlight of my first Lesbian glimmerings--Please start my subscription with the fall issue. And--out of ideology--keep the wrapper. We mustn't consume unnecessarily.

-- Sue, Minnesota

I brought the first three issues of AMAZON QUARTERLY up to the country with me a couple of weeks ago, for a few days alone in an old house where I have spent some extraordinary times. When I came up I was looking for peace and silence but thinking too of the echoes of talk the house is full of. The first evening I started reading the Quarterly, it became apparent that although the physical silence was there as I wanted it, there were conversations going on, of a quality and excitement I have rarely met in print. The writers in AMmON QUARTERLY are thinking more humanely and searchingly than any I have read at one time in one magazine. I'm impressed by the range of concerns, the excellence of the writing, the sense that work is being done in areas which are essential to us all, lesbian-identified or not.

In a very real sense you are vindicating the history of those many lesbian writers and artists who struggled without political community, whose works were buried or misread or who could not fully engage their talents because of imposed reticences. But your range is truly feminist and I can imagine no thinking, feeling, self-aware woman who would not identify with the spirit and impulsion behind the magazine. -- Adrienne Rich, New York
G: Did you have fantasies that were sexual?
M: I used to have dreams at night—in one that I liked best we were playing musical chairs in speech class, and when the music stopped Lucy and I sat in the same chair and we embraced each other and started necking. That was a nice dream.
G: Did your friendship with Lucy get beyond passing notes in halls?
M: The night after the musical chairs dream I decided that something must be done about this, so that day at school we kissed against the lockers. I was scared shitless that she would be cold, but she wasn't, she was just great, we just responded together. And we started having pajama parties thereafter.
G: Did you have any feeling that you should hide what you were doing from other people?
M: Yes, I felt very secretive.
G: Did you try to find information about anything you were doing?
M: I didn't seek out information specifically. For one thing I was sort of trapped—the only information I had was the high school and public library, and in those places there was nothing. However, I did learn from a James Baldwin novel that I really liked, Giovanni's Room. It made me feel better because I realized that there were other people in the world who happened to love people of the same sex.
G: Did you feel guilty?
M: Yeah, I definitely felt guilty. I wasn't exactly a practicing Catholic by that time but I still knew all about guilt.
G: How have your feelings changed since back then?
M: I don't feel guilty. I realized that guilt does not get you anywhere, so I don't feel guilty anymore.
G: How did that change come about?
M: It just happened. The pressure of other people's opinions doesn't upset me like it did when I was younger.
G: Back in high school when you and Lucy were carrying on, did one of you think that you had to be like a boy and one like a girl? Did you have any feelings that you should have that pattern?
M: No. I don't think we had that kind of pattern, though it was apparent to me at the time that I was more aggressive in bed than she was. I just assumed she liked the way she was being and I liked the way I was being. It did strike me at the time that in actual, uh, daylight, at school for instance, she was a more aggressive person than I was. She was more aggressive verbally, and I was more aggressive physically.
G: Did you ever have feelings that you wished you were a boy?
M: When I was a Catholic girl I wanted so bad to be an altar boy. I had a dream one night that I was an altar boy, only I was a girl in disguise and the terror of the dream was that somebody out there in the Mass would know. Instead of having the traditional black and white uniform I had on Mary's colors, blue and white, and I had long hair and everything, but no—
Giovanni's Room. It made me feel better because I realized that there were other people in the world who happened to love people of the same sex.
G: Did you feel guilty?
M: Yeah. I learned all kinds of things. I learned that you are responsible not just for yourself, but for the person you relate to in that way. I learned to be secretive and guilty, but I learned other things too. That's the first time I turned on to my body and her body in a sexual way, so I learned about my body.
G: Sexually was that a satisfying thing for you?
M: The genital part of it seemed to be the high point. It was very, very important. I would go out of my way to be with her as much as I could. I would ford rivers, literally—because we were separated by a river and to get to her I had to ford the river on my little white pony and go through a forest.
G: Learned also that I was capable of being cruel. I suddenly and abruptly left Lucy and didn't write, call or go and see her for six months and that was definitely mean.
G: How long had you been together?
M: A year.
G: Were you still in high school then?
M: A year. The last year I was in high school we were together and then I left. The pressure was just too much for me. I wasn't very strong. I graduated the year before her, and we were going to get an apartment and live together when we both were out of high school, but I just couldn't handle all that.
G: What did you do then? You went to college?
M: Well, the guilt must have been horribly tremendous because I thought if there was really a heaven and hell I knew where I was going, and I had to save myself from this. So I decided to enter a convent. I went away to a Catholic school run by an order of nuns, thinking that I would get to know the nuns in the convent and the life they led, and make up my mind for sure. And that's what I did.
G: How did you make up your mind?
M: Well, there was a certain kind of joke that went around at the school. They said that the nuns had friendships with each other, and they said friendships in such a way that I knew there were lesbian relationships. So I was able to see that a lot of things are bullshit, and that people just have to have each other—even if they run away to convents they seem to know the nuns in the convent and the life they led, and make up my mind for sure. And that's what I did.
M: We've always kept in touch—and we're together now.
G: How would you describe your relationship with Lucy now?
M: Very relaxed. I don't feel so ambitious or so worried about the future as I used to, but I feel like trying harder at anything I do, than I used to. When I wash the dishes, I try to make the dish a little bit cleaner. I don't understand this but I think a life full of comfort and leisure isn't what I'm looking for. At the same time, though, there's something in me that wants Lucy to have an easy life. Do you feel this is a relationship you'll be in for a long time?
M: I see no reason why it can't be.
G: Do you want to be monogamous?
M: Yeah, I like monogamy; I feel comfortable. I see no reason for adding more complications.
G: Is that something you've come to after some conflict?
M: No, I haven't given it a whole lot of thought. I just know what feels comfortable to me. It seems to me that I work from the body to the brain instead of vice versa and so what feels comfortable for my body, my brain will accept.
G: In the times when you haven't been with Lucy did you have other relationships with women?
M: Yes, several—and they were helpful in that they made me realize all the more that I really loved Lucy.
G: What do you think are some of the best things about your relationship with Lucy?
M: Oh wow, she makes me laugh a lot. She makes me happy and I don't know of anybody who can make me happy like she does.
G: Have you had relationships with men?
M: Yeah, I have.
G: Do you think you ever will again?
M: No, I don't really think I ever will except that I might get raped.
G: Have you ever been raped?
M: Yeah.
G: When was that?
M: I was a sophomore in college. Do you want the details? Okay, the gory details: I used to eat a lot in the cafeteria and I met a man there who really fascinated me. He was from Kenya and he was educated at Oxford, just an interesting man. Every once in a while we'd sit down together and talk. We weren't even very close friends, but one night he came over to my apartment. I had the flu, and when I told him I was really sick he said "Great, then we'll have to go get some hot chocolate to soothe you down," and I went through the protest bit—"I think I'd best just go to bed right away," and he went into this insistence that hot chocolate would make everything better and new again. Just being nice more than anything, I got in his car. I lived right next to the river and before I knew it we were taking the bridge over the river. I knew he lived on the other side of the river someplace and I said "Where are you going?" He said "We're going to my place." At that time I just became a little bit more tense in the car, and I thought "What an obnoxious forceful bastard." We went over to his apartment and he locked the doors and became slightly berserk. He started ripping off my clothes, and became very threatening. Anyway, he raped me, and strangely enough then he brought me home. He became completely nutty, and then he regained his composure and took me home at about 5 in the morning. I talked to a policeman, he got some facts, had me go to the station. They said "Do you want to make a case out of it? You could have him deported from the country." Now what changed my mind about bringing it to court was when I walked into the detective's office, a big fat ugly cop started lambasting me about two things—one, was I one of those stupid college students and two, did I make a habit of running around with black boys. And I didn't want to do it. I thought, the guy's an asshole but this man here is an asshole too and wants to Lynch him, and I said forget it and walked out before the detective came back.
G: Did that have any long-range effect on you? Did it change the way you felt about men?
M: If it has it had any long-range effect I'm not aware of it. I saw him around the school almost every day after that, and we silently passed each other in the hall, nodded, and looked the other way, I suppose I was saying "You Bastard," and he was saying "You're just a girl."
G: Have you had other sexual relationships with men, right?
M: Yes.
G: Can you talk a little about the differences between the relationships you've had with men and with women?
M: With women I seemed to know what I was doing and why I was doing it and at least part of my relationships with men have been out of social duty. I used to believe in this very strongly—I didn't like women who did not have sex with men, but who still took things from them. A lot of women go out with men, go to movies and to dinner and enjoy the material treat of the boyfriends but they don't give anything to them in return sexually, and I figured out at some point that food and movies are to women as sex is to men, and there should be some kind of exchange going on. I felt that it was fair right, just and proper to make love with the man who showered material gifts on you, and so I did. Then I went through a stage, I guess it's quite common, where I felt I had a soft spot in my heart for all horny, frustrated men, especially old men, and I made love with several old, decrepit, horny, frustrated ridiculous men.
G: Did you ever have orgasms with men?
M: I've made love with one man who gave me orgasms with his tongue, but never from fucking.

G: How do you feel generally about men's bodies?

M: I don't have any great feelings about men's bodies.

G: Do you have any particular feelings about penises?

M: Well, they're incredibly bold for being so ugly. I mean they're such proud little things for being so ugly. I had a dream once when I was about eighteen, in which I had a machete and I was cutting off cocks in my dream, with my machete, in the way that you sickle grass.

G: What would you like to change about the ways you spend your time?

M: I would like to spend less time with surviving, less time just trying to get the bread and the rent and paying the bills. Less time on those basic things, that would be nice.

G: In five years from now how would you like your life to have changed?

M: I would like to have more free time from the basic necessities. I would like to be able to build things, work with tools, build furniture, and I'd like to have enough time to spend a half hour a day keeping up a journal. Now I spend about fifteen minutes every three days writing in the journal--there just doesn't seem to be enough time.

G: If you had three wishes what would you want?

M: Oh boy. Well just yesterday Lucy and I went over the three wishes and she said the third wish would be three more wishes so to begin with, I'd wish I thought that at the end of the road there's always another way to go, there's always something around the next corner, so I won't become too depressed and apathetic. Also, that my parents and I could somehow or another patch things up. I would just like to see some kind of happiness between us rather than hostility and fears. I would like to make Lucy's life easier and more relaxed. I don't think she's ever really had a secure base.

G: If you could have any kind of living situation you wanted and you could spend your time however you wanted, what would you want it to be like?

M: I would like to live in this town and have it as it was ten years ago, in terms of the physical things in the city. And to have money, and I would live with Lucy in a house. The house would have to be something--ideally it would be a house I built myself, and something I can sort of play with and remain in all my life. Because the house is built and it's there doesn't mean you can't keep working on it, and the house would just change. It would have to have a yard and have chickens, animals.

G: What would you do all day?

M: I would do anything I could do. I would study some of every day, build things, clean up messes, and prepare food, and go on walks, and write in journals and read, and work at a place away from home, do a certain kind of work that's related to the community. That might be cleaning up some building after people have used it for the day, it might be a number of things.

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 Tradition has it that the unicorn comes willingly only to a virgin, evading with contemptuous ease all other methods of entrapment. So it is that every unicorn trap in history and legend was baited with a young woman who had yet to experience the full measure of physical love.

But the authors of this tradition altered the truth, whether to make the telling easier, or to nourish the hopes of those who would catch unicorns, or even—it has been suggested lately—to provide a certain kind of man with a pretext for testing his lady's virtue.

The truth is this. To attract a unicorn requires something far more complex than the virginity of the body. It demands a particular purity of the will, for which the virgin's celebrated purity is only a metaphor. In fact, whoever would lay a hand on a unicorn must be absolutely free of the desire to do so. For this reason, nobody has ever captured a unicorn.

Even to think of the creature as quarry, as a prize of the chase, is to drive it away. The unicorn presents itself only to those who are not seeking it.

This purity is difficult to obtain, because it is nearly impossible to cast out willfully any thought that has once entered the mind. Even to disavow a thing is to think of it, however briefly. And there is another obstacle, which is the very nature of desire. Desire for the unicorn, or for any other thing, being a reflection of what is desired, becomes desirable in itself. The shadow serves in the absence of the reality. So if there have been few genuine meetings between humans and unicorns, it is not because of a prohibitive scarcity of virgins—a virgin can always be found, even in the most improbable surroundings—but because the mind is reluctant to be cleansed of the desire that occupies it.

Most of the meetings, then, involve persons whose wills were virginal not by deliberate effort, but incidentally or by accident. Circumstances had never allowed them to be seduced by the idea of the unicorn. It was these few, unlikely and surely undeserving by some standards, who were the beneficiaries of chance. They included:

a four year old child who lived in a remote corner of the country. The unicorn came to him as he played at the edge of the field in which his mother was working. The description he gave her afterward was at once too fantastic and too familiar to be an invention;

a woman who inhabited the underside of a great city. She had never heard of the unicorn, although her slum neighborhood bordered a noble center of learning;

totally ungovernable youth on whom no teaching had ever taken hold. After the unicorn had rested its muzzle in his palm, it is written that he ripened into the most peaceable of men;

and here and there, the astronomer, the artisan, the musician so absorbed in their own pursuits that they could imagine no others.

We have found only one case in which someone first accepted and then deliberately cast away the seductive notion of the unicorn. Certainly, others must have existed—such strength of will, though rare, is not unique—but only this account has survived.

It concerns a widow of middle age, a midwife and a healer, for whom the greatest source of pain lay in the gap between what was real and what was not. Because her capacity for this pain did not diminish, but rather increased, with the passage of time, she schooled herself at last to believe only in what she could grasp with her senses or her powers of reasoning. She reserved for herself only the cares and pleasures of the bone newly set, the herbs bruised under the pestle, the infant's head emerging into her hands, the diagnosis, the recipe, the cure. All else, all dreams, desires, or visions for which no fulfillment could be foreseen, she banished from her mind. She even denied herself the small indulgence of imagining, before she slept, that a lover lay at her side. She shut the unicorn out of her thoughts as well; for whenever she admitted a vision of this creature, she found that she could not endure the shadow of the bright traces that the vision left upon her days. By renouncing her dreams, then, she restored to its pristine condition a mind violated by dreams.

It was to this self-restored virgin that the unicorn came one morning, as she knelt in her garden among the herbs she was gathering. When she felt its breath upon her cheek, she turned at once, forbidding the play of her imagination, and looked the reality full in the face. And it is written that this woman, in whose mind a taut membrane had grown against the intrusion of pain, felt the membrane break within her; and that, initiated once again, she wept like a young girl.
CONTRIBUTORS

ANN STOKES: Separating myself from home money name in order to accept myself as a stray person—to walk upright and with eagerness as a stray person.

THE CARPENTER: Also known as June Arnold, she is one of the founders of Daughters, Inc., publishers of books by women.

ELLEN BASS: I co-edited, with Florence Howe, an anthology of poems by women, titled No More Masks!, recently published by Doubleday in paperback. My first volume of poetry, I'm Not Your Laughing Daughter, will be published by the University of Massachusetts Press in the fall (1973).

GINA: I've spent the last few months steadying, taking a long breath (while reading lots and doing AQ's day-to-day tasks), and now I'm ready to dive again into what I don't know.

JUDY GRAHN: Works with the Women's Press Collective in Oakland, Ca., which will have "A Woman Is Talking To Death" with drawings by Karen Sjoholm printed in book form and ready to order by March, 1974, from: 5251 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94618. Write for a catalog.

KAREN FEINBERG: Lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she teaches Greek and Latin at an all-male Catholic seminary.

KAYMARION: A lesbian feminist currently staffing at a women's center and cleaning a rooming house. The prints were done pre-Movement involvement in a university printmaking class, where they silenced students and professors alike, the only comments to be heard were about technique, and then very courteously made. I identify the prints with a period in my life when I was affirming my body in the move from dyke to Woman.

LAUREL: Nervously, I'm printing this essay/exploration knowing that the bigger the subject I'm writing about, the broader the generalizations, the more I'm likely to be misunderstood. I have faith in women though to have faith in my changes.

SUZANNE FREEDMAN: A San Francisco artist.

THE WOMEN'S FILM CO-OP: A distributor of films by and for women. To order a catalog write to them at: 200 Main St., Northampton, MA 01060.
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jennie orving
adrienne rich

how to make a magazine
THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO TREES
and printed on recycled paper.
This issue, we are happy to say, is printed on recycled paper thanks to a Canadian sister whose contribution made this possible.


The cover picture is from a batik by Gina.
Ever since I read an article called "Cloning" in The Furies (May, 1972), I've been interested in the possibilities open to us for "seizing the means of reproduction," which Phyllis Chesler has said will be crucial to a women's revolution. On a purely personal level, I'm not at all sure I want kids, no matter how free of men their conception might be, but I want to know all I can about the latest developments in artificial insemination, gynogenesis, parthenogenesis, cloning, etc., because, to be sure, that knowledge if it remains entirely in the hands of men will be used against us. I have yet to read one study on test tube babies of new techniques for selecting the sex of the unborn written by a man which has not started from the premise that if and when all of us know how to determine the sex of our offspring, we all will prefer male children. The cover of the January, 1974 Science News is a perfect example: close-up photos of sperm captioned "Sorting sperm . . . to make boy babies." The article inside is entitled cutely "Babymaking: Dress Them in Blue." Fortunately the next issue of Science News has a red hot response from a sister who questions their chauvinistic presumption and points out the scientific errors contained in the article.

A similar chauvinism has interfered with progress in the field of parthenogenesis. Because only female babies would result, and because "males would be biologically completely superfluous under such a system," men have (understandably?) not put much of their energy into experimenting in this field. They are, however, extremely interested in the artificial womb which has been the topic of many articles of late such as "The Obsolescent Mother" in The Atlantic (May, 1971). Full page color spreads of the glass and steel (so far unsuccessful) wombs were featured in Life, (September 10 and 17, 1965; July 29, 1966; July 25, 1969).

So, whether or not we are personally interested in having children, we can't afford to remain ignorant of the tools men (primarily) are developing in the field of reproduction. My interests in this article are 1) to present the currently available techniques for conceiving girl babies and to talk about ones which are just on the verge of being perfected, and 2) to present up-to-date information on the advances being made so that we will be able eventually to have our daughters entirely without recourse to men or their sperm.

In writing this, I am assuming that you remember as little about genetics and cell division as I did from biology, so I'll stop quite often to give definitions. Five sections will follow: 1) techniques to be passed on to straight sisters who want daughters, 2) selective artificial insemination, 3) gynogenesis, 4) parthenogenesis, and 5) cloning.

Number 1 is as simple as baking a cake, but the rest will require some brushing up and concentrated study. The single most useful source for this study has been Utopian Motherhood by Robert T. Francoeur. Though there have been some discoveries since this book came out in 1970, it is still the best overview of the field. A list of other valuable resources is included at the end.

1) Techniques for Our Heterosexual Sisters

One of the most important and efficient of all techniques for having girl babies via coitus was discovered by a sister, Dr. Sophia Kleegman. She found in her research at New York University, that if a woman fucks thirty-six to forty-eight hours before her egg is released from the ovary there is about an 80% chance that she will conceive a girl. This method calls, obviously, for charting one's monthly cycle for several months and taking one's temperature daily. Our temperatures rise one degree on the day we ovulate. If a woman fucks on the day that she ovulates or soon after, chances are four to one that she will have a boy.

There are two kinds of sperm: female producing and male producing. Though there is much information to indicate that the female's egg enables one or the other to enter our ovary there is about an 80% chance that she will conceive a girl. This method calls, obviously, for charting one's monthly cycle for several months and taking one's temperature daily. Our temperatures rise one degree on the day we ovulate. If a woman fucks on the day that she ovulates or soon after, chances are four to one that she will have a boy.

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These two kinds of sperm behave differently and look different under the microscope. Female producing sperm (X bearing...
or gynogenic) have oval-shaped heads and are heavier and slower swimmers than Y bearing (male producing or androgenic) sperm. They react differently to different chemical states in the vagina and the uterus. Dr. Landrum B. Shettles and David Rorvik co-authored a Look article in 1970 which outlined the uses of our knowledge of these two kinds of sperm's differences. Using their simple procedure, a girl baby can be produced 8 or 9 times out of 10.

Some of the data they base their recipe on are: 1) that the gynogenic (girl-producing) sperm are much slower swimmers and outlive the faster swimming Y sperm by two or three times, 2) that the gynogenic sperm are much less inhibited by the acidic environment of the vagina, and 3) that the gynogenic sperm are more inhibited by an alkaline environment in the cervix, uterus, and fallopian tubes.

So, to make a girl baby, they suggest preceding each coitus immediately with an acidic douche of two tablespoons of white vinegar in a quart of water, avoidance of orgasm (no problem!), shallow penetration of the prick, and the use of the face-to-face missionary position. (The alkalinity of the uterus is greatly increased by orgasm--isn't that a doozy--if you enjoy it, you're going to add to your chances of having a boy!) If you really want to be absolutely certain that you have conceived a girl baby, there is a technique which has been discovered but not yet marketed for identifying the sex of the unborn child at as early an embryonic age as three weeks. This is done by obtaining through a syringe fluids from foetal membranes, culturing cells from them, and using a special stain developed by M.L. Barr in Canada (1949). So-named for their discoverer, Barr bodies are present only in the female ovum and with his special stain it is possible to sort the sexes. The Barr body is really an inactivated X chromosome -- should it not show up under the stain, some mothers might want to consider an abortion.

2) Selective Artificial Insemination

Up 't il now, artificial insemination has not been widespread even though there are sperm banks coast to coast and many doctors anxious to perform the service for stiff fees. Sperm is readily available in the sperm banks because men are being payed a minimum of $25 for each time they jerk off and contribute to them (The Atlantic, May, 1971). Usually couples seek this service because the male has undergone tests and proven to be impotent (a low number of sperm per tablespoon of semen, say). Last year some 20,000 babies were born in this country as a result of artificial insemination as compared to 3½ million (approx.) born as a result of straight fucking.

As usual, the mystique of the medical profession has kept women from taking this tool into their own hands. Why would we want it? Because the female-producing X sperm are now readily identifiable and we could inseminate ourselves with just these sperm. Two advantages: 1) the chances of a girl would be 100% certain and 2) no fucking required. Now since there are thousands of sperm in every male ejaculation, we sure can't count and sort them under the microscope. It would take a lifetime to separate them and, of course, they don't live long on the microscope slide. So, what is needed is a sperm sorter -- and wouldn't you know it! -- a male has developed one and has received a patent from the U.S. Patent Office for his invention. Think what this means! It's like patenting the cure for cancer. According to The New York Times (September 2, 1972) a California scientist, Gustaaf van den Bovenkamp received patent no. 3,687,806 in the name of "Bio Controls" of San Francisco and Boston for his method of controlling the sex of mammalian offspring, including human babies. Of course, he isn't spilling the details, but it is reported that his technique has something to do with having isolated the antibodies that the egg cell produces to enable fertilization by a Y-producing or an X-producing sperm. With his ability to produce these antibodies, he can introject them into the female before she fucks to produce the desired effects, or he can mix them up with the donor's semen in the event of artificial insemination. But don't despair ... there is another technique on the way which any sister with access to a university lab should be able to help us out with. Dr. R.T. Ericsson and colleagues working at the A.G. Schering Co. in Berlin reported in the British journal Nature that they had centrifuged sperm, separated out the Y-bearing sperm, and produced live male rabbits. The centrifuge is like a super automatic washer on the spin dry cycle. The lighter and skinnier Y-producing sperm slip through the holes (this is an admittedly simplified metaphor) easier than the fatter and genetically richer X-bearing sperm. Once Ericsson and comrades had separated out what they thought to be primarily Y-bearing sperms, they put them in a hard-to-swim-in liquid inside a test tube. They waited a bit and then simply decanted the ones at the bottom of the tube reasoning that only the fast swimmers would have made it that soon. So far their conception of male mice by this method which van den Bovenkamp patented, will be perfected to 100% effectiveness.

A woman at Cornell University, Dr. Dorothea Bennett, and a male colleague, Dr. Edward Boyse, have reduced the conception of male mice by 8% according to an article in Newsweek (January 7, 1974) by another method which relies on the use of antibodies. They extracted blood from females who had recently had a skin graft from male mice and dipped the sperm into it before pumping it into the female's vaginas. The blood carried antibodies resulting from the attempted skin grafts which, for some reason, discriminated against Y-bearing sperm. Obviously, this
technique has a long way to go, but the more we can learn about our little army of antibodies which will keep that Y-bearing sperm out, the better.

Everyone predicts that within a few years, sperm, which now have been proven to be active three years after freezing, will be able to be frozen for indefinite periods of time ... perhaps centuries. Enough sperm could be collected now quite easily to tide us over until that not so distant time when it will be unnecessary to conception and men will be for all practical purposes rendered unnecessary. The availability of sperm is no problem since men seem anxious to contribute (it seems to do something for their egos as well as their wallets), and additionally, the semen can be diluted many times and still have enough sperm for selective artificial insemination. (If you want to experiment with artificial insemination, remember that daylight irreparably damages the sperm and that it must be used very soon after collecting unless you are able to store it via a sophisticated method of freezing.)

3) Gynogenesis -- The sperm's last chance to be useful

What male scientists are now labeling gynogenesis will be an interim measure before we achieve complete control with parthenogenesis. Gyno (female) genesis (generation) still relies on the presence of the male's sperm ... but with a very important difference ... the sperm are genetically impotent.

Before we can go any further, it will be necessary to brush up on what happens to our egg from the time just before it leaves our ovary until it becomes a zygote and attaches itself to the uterine wall. Unfamiliar terms will be highlighted in larger print and defined.

The immature cell in our ovary which will develop into the egg is called the OOGONIUM. The oogonium has a large nucleus which contains the CHROMOSOMES--in this case, more than the egg will be able to use. Chromosomes you'll remember are the strands which bear the genes which determines color of hair, eyes, skin--essentially everything about the yet to be born baby. The genes (specific coded messages for, say, curly hair) are infinitesimally small points on the chromosomes composed of DNA.

Now, every cell in your body has a full complement of chromosomes -- 46 of them. They, the chromosomes, are the same whether the cell has specialized into being a part of your intestine or your finger. Each cell in your body still carries, then, the basic recipe of all the other cells -- the information contained in the 46 strands of genes -- the chromosomes.

The only time any cell in a woman's body does not contain the full number of chromosomes is when her egg cell has undergone MEIOSIS in preparation for receiving the male's half of the genetic information--his 23 chromosomes. The process of meiosis occurs in both male and female sex cells. When the male cell undergoes meiosis four independent sperm are produced, each carrying only 23 chromosomes, half the number necessary to make a baby. The process of meiosis in the female sex cell is pictured below. The oogonium (which had 46 chromosomes to start with) undergoes what is called the FIRST MATURATION DIVISION. The egg cell itself does not split apart, but the chromosomes duplicate themselves and at this point the egg cell has 46 + 46 = 92 chromosomes.

Since only 23 maternal chromosomes can be contributed to the zygote, 3/4 of these 92 chromosomes have got to go if there is going to be room for the sperm's chromosomes. This process of shucking off the extra chromosomes is accomplished through what is called the EXTRUSION OF THE POLAR BODIES. The 92 chromosomes form a TETRAD (two pairs, each containing 46 chromosomes). Before the egg cell has left the ovary, one of these two pairs "drops off" -- this is called the EXTRUSION OF THE FIRST POLAR BODY. This part of the oogonium aborts and plays no further part in reproduction.

Now, the egg cell still has 46 chromosomes and needs to get rid of 23 more in order to accomodate the sperm's chromosomes. The egg, at this point called the SECONDARY OOCYTE, now leaves the ovary--ovulation occurs. The secondary oocyte has yet to undergo the last meiotic division called the SECOND MATURATION DIVISION. Research on humans indicates that this division does not occur until the time when the sperm "pricks" the egg cell's outer membrane, knocking to be let in, if you will. At this point, the egg cell takes the hint and extrudes the SECOND POLAR BODY. This material also aborts and leaves the egg cell with only 23 chromosomes, but they will quickly be complemented by the 23 chromosomes that the sperm is waiting to contribute. With the full
number of chromosomes, the fertilized egg will begin MITOSIS, the cell division process whereby the zygote will grow from a single-celled creature, to two-celled, to four-celled, etc. O.K. Now we can talk about gynogenesis. In gynogenesis the sperm performs only one of its two usual functions on the SECONDARY OOCYTE. The sperm is used to "prick" the egg cell and to begin its process of mitosis, but, the sperm contributes no genetic information because it has been either chemically or radiologically altered. The result is that all of the resulting zygote's genetic information will be from the mother and that it will have no biological similarity at all to the father. And, of course, it will be a girl.

How do these "altered" sperm work? Several methods have been used to "alter" them, but all result in destroying the male's 23 chromosomes without disrupting the sperm's ability to swim and to seek out and "prick" the egg and activate it. So, in gynogenesis the sperm's function is pretty much limited to being a "prick." Yeah!

How are the sperm altered? As early as 1939, researchers were using X-rays to deactivate the genes of male frog sperm. Obviously, it took a lot of playing around to find just the right dose of X-rays which would incapacitate the genes, but not interfere with the sperm's other abilities like swimming and pricking. So much for frog eggs—what about mammals—what about humans?

Most, male frog embryos seem to have a talent which "higher" animals like us have not yet developed. That is, live seemingly normal leopard frogs have resulted from gynogenesis as described above even though the baby frogs have only half their normal number of chromosomes. These frogs are called HAPLOID (having only half a set of chromosomes) as opposed to normal frogs which are DIPOLOID (having a full set of chromosomes).

Gynogenesis has been tried with other species, mice and rabbits in particular. While eggs have been recovered from mice uteri that have begun the process of mitosis due to the "prick" and which do not carry any of the male's genetic information, no live mice have ever been produced this way. Similarly, gynogenetically stimulated rabbit eggs have begun to grow, but they always abort before the zygote reaches the BLASTOCYST stage where it attaches itself to the uterine wall.

So, it would appear that gynogenesis is not going to work for anybody but a few frogs and toads and maybe lizards. The "higher" species just can't make it on only one set (half the normal number) of chromosomes. But what if the female were able to contribute all of the necessary chromosomes (46 in humans)? Is there any way that this could happen?

Yes. It does happen naturally now that some babies are born with more than a full set of chromosomes. There has been much publicity of late about people who are born with a genetic makeup different from most women who are XX or men who are XY: There are people who are born XXY or XXY or even as far out as XXXY. These people are POLYPLOID as opposed to DIPOLOID (which is the normal state of affairs when each parent contributes the normal number of chromosomes). The fact that these people exist is an indication that sometimes the egg cell contributes more that its share of chromosomes (and, of course, that sometimes the sperm does too). It is estimated that one out of every 250 births involves a chromosome count greater than the usual 46.

No one knows why this happens, but many scientists agree about how it can happen. Some XXY babies have 46 chromosomes contributed by the mother and 23 by the father. What is thought to happen is that the mother's egg cell at the secondary oocyte stage does not undergo the second meiotic division and thus does not shuck off the second polar body. For some reason the sperm's "prick" does not activate the egg to cast off the last of its extra chromosomes. The sperm enters the egg which still has 46 chromosomes and contributes 23 more.

Now, what if we could learn how to stop that message to cast off the second polar body? What if we could suppress the extrusion of the second polar body? What if when the sperm came to our lady gamete's door and knocked she said "Thanks for waking me up, now get lost. I'm very together and I don't need your help!!" That is, what if she refused to shuck off her extra 23 chromosomes and just went on to make the baby all on her own. If only she could figure out a way not to lose her head (her second polar body in this case) then she'd have it made and gynogenesis would be an accomplished fact (barring complications further along in the pregnancy).

So, sister scientists, I hope some of you will take on the challenge and investigate the possibilities for the suppressing of the second polar body. For if it will not be possible soon to produce live human females through gynogenesis, the scientists aren't rushing to make this announcement. In fact, in 1972, the American Medical Association called
for a world-wide moratorium on all further research with "test-tube babies" and genetic engineering of any type. It is very likely that the best research is now going on in Russia, but this, of course, is no more available to women than anywhere else.

4) Parthenogenesis

Ultimately, the most desirable of all reproductive possibilities is parthenogenesis. Once we understand gynogenesis, parthenogenesis is much easier to picture. Remember that in gynogenesis the "prick" afforded by the sperm was still the thing that triggered the growth of the egg cell, and even though the sperm contributed nothing to the makeup of the resulting offspring, (when it was irradiated or chemically treated) it still was necessary for that "prick." In parthenogenesis the egg cell needs absolutely no assistance from sperm.

Parthenogenesis does occur naturally in many species. The frequency of naturally occurring parthenogenetic eggs in humans has been estimated to be about one to three percent of all human eggs. Virgin births are thought to occur in about the same frequency as fraternal twins and twice as often as identical twins occur among white Americans. (American Blacks have a higher rate of both types of twins than Caucasians in North America). Of course, the reported number of "virgin" births is much lower than this because women having relations with men would have absolutely no reason to suspect that their egg was not fertilized by a male sex cell. And too, this has been one of the surest ways to get yourself put into the looney bin--to declare you've conceived without male assistance--so not a great number of women have come forward.

However, in 1955, one woman who must have been a very tough crusader indeed, Dr. Helen Spurway of London's University College, proclaimed that parthenogenetic births occurred once in every 1.6 million pregnancies. The world population then was approximately 3.5 billion, which indicated that there should be a good number of women right in England who had reproduced by parthenogenesis. A newspaper called The Manchester Guardian challenged Dr. Spurway's assertion and sponsored a public scientific test. Of the 19 women who came forward and said they thought they had conceived and had virgin births, 18 were eventually disqualified either because blood tests proved the genetic make-up of their child not to be close enough to their own, or simply because they had misunderstood what was meant by "virgin birth", thinking their intact hymen made them still virgins even though they had had coitus. One woman was not disqualified on any grounds. She passed all the tests the scientists came up with. But get this--just like a man--the fact that they weren't able to disqualify her claim, the male scientists said, did not prove that her claim was scientifically true. They would have had to witness the egg cell's development in the uterus to establish scientific proof, so many scientists still hang a lot on that technicality and insist that no cases of human parthenogenesis have been proven.

No one denies that spontaneous parthenogenesis is widespread in other species. So far the following creatures (plus many more too numerous to mention) have been discovered to reproduce frequently by parthenogenesis: lizards, frogs, toads, bees, turkeys, etc. Spontaneous parthenogenesis in mammals, though, would certainly appear to be too infrequent an occurrence to warrant interest if it weren't for the discoveries made in the last century about induced parthenogenesis.

Doris Lessing was ahead of her time when she wrote in 1962:

'Did you know that a woman can now have children without a man? ... You can apply ice to a woman's ovaries, for instance. She can have a child. Men are no longer necessary to humanity.' (Golden Notebook)

But research in induced parthenogenesis, almost a century of it, has brought us very close to the day when men will be biologically unnecessary. The import of this has not been lost on male scientists and social scientists. Dr. Roderic Gorney in his book, The Human Agenda (1972), unabashedly revealed the anxiety and defensiveness men exhibit when faced with the prospect of induced parthenogenesis:

While offhand it may not seem likely to appeal to many women, this technique has a prefabricated clientele waiting for it to reach The Reader's Digest. Such a woman somehow avoids getting into that kind of proximity to a man which might lead to an ordinary pregnancy, either because she doesn't like or is afraid of males, or both. Think what it could mean if women could decide to have children on their own, without fathers even of the anonymous donor variety, and be certain that the offspring would all be girls ... The emotional consequences alone are cause enough for concern. What happens to the already flagging self-esteem of men when they are further deflated by also being made genetically superfluous? Then there is the question whether women so born and raised would establish relationships with men when they grew up. In the past it didn't much affect the community if some women elected to avoid men. Traditional reproductive arrangements saw to it that each generation of women (and men) who didn't relate to the opposite sex at least enough to somehow bring a viable sperm and egg together were left without progeny. But through parthenogenesis women with this makeup would be quite able to reproduce and pass on to their daughters an ever-mounting disdain for men that in several generations could lead
to establishment of matriarchy, with eventual demand for separate statehood.™

Who can top that recipe for a women's revolution! A bloodless one and one not even requiring any energy to defeat the oppressors. But still we've a long way to go with the laboratory nitty-gritty before Dr. Gorney's paranoia will really be justified.

The first breakthrough in inducing parthenogenesis came in 1896 when Oskar Hertwig and his wife (I'd tell you her name if history had included it) found that if they added a little strychnine or chloroform to seawater containing sea-urchin eggs they began to develop without any contact with sperm. A Frenchman, Jacques Loeb, extended this experiment, and with almost no equipment, anyone can duplicate his work today. Here's how to make a crop of sister sea urchins:

Place a female sea urchin upside down over a glass dish and either give her a mild shock using a six-volt dry cell battery or inject her with a mild potassium chloride salt solution. This will cause her to spill her eggs into the glass dish. Transfer the eggs to as many different containers as possible, each containing sea water. Now comes the tricky part. You'll have to experiment to find just the right amount of magnesium chloride to add to the seawater containing the eggs—try different proportions in each of the different containers. With some concentrated effort you should be able to produce normal live larval sea urchins.

A man with a sense of humor, Dr. A.D. Peacock, in his report to an Irish scientific gathering, pointed out how easy inducing parthenogenesis is by detailing 371 different ways he had produced sea urchins without a daddy.™ But sea urchins were just the beginning. Frog eggs proved just as easy to induce parthenogenesis in, but they require a different technique. To parthenogenetically midwife a sister frog, you inject her with the blood of any pregnant mammal. This will cause her to drop several thousand eggs so you'll have lots of room for error. Then you very gently roll some of the eggs on blotting paper to remove the three layers of jelly which protect the egg. Next you spread the blood of a nonovulating frog (try several different ones, one is bound to work) over the exposed eggs and carefully prick the surface of each egg with a very fine glass needle. With any luck at all 5 to 10 per cent of the eggs so treated will begin to cleave and develop without the intrusion of any male sperm.

The eggs will begin to develop, but only a small percentage will make it to the tadpole stage, and odds are that very few if any will make it all the way to becoming full-fledged frogs. Why? Because of the same problem we found in gynogenesis—the frog egg has only half enough chromosomes. The "prick" which the sperm normally provides to start the egg cell developing can easily be replaced with the glass needle, but still the egg will have only half enough chromosomes. Just as with gynogenesis, discussed earlier, the problem is to learn how to suppress the extrusion of the second polar body so that the developing zygote will have a full set of chromosomes.

Now we come to what Doris Lessing was referring to when she talked about applying ice to a woman's ovaries. Although she really was extrapolating too far from what has till now been accomplished, the application of ice to the fallopian tubes of the rabbit has worked in suppressing the extrusion of the second polar body, and normal rabbits with the full complement of chromosomes have been born without a father.

In 1940, Pincus and Shapiro succeeded in bringing the first rabbit parthenogene to full term by cooling the fallopian tubes just after ovulation. One live rabbit was born out of 200 chilled eggs.™ Another method was tried by Thibault.™ He caused the female rabbit to superovulate with a hormone injection, and then removed the eggs from the fallopian tubes surgically. He cooled the eggs in vitro for 24 hours at 10 degrees Centigrade and found that he could suppress the extrusion of the second polar body 96-97% of the time. Heating of the unfertilized rabbit eggs has also worked to produce live rabbits.

It should be noted that the heating and/or cooling techniques seem to both perform the "pricking" function and to insure that the second polar body is not extruded--so, if this method is perfected, gynogenesis as described before will be obsolete since the sperm will not be needed for the "pricking" function.

It may be a long step from the rabbit to humans -- or it may be shorter than we think, as Doris Lessing indicates. Certainly much remains to be done, but can we be sure that the scientists are working full speed ahead on a discovery which may be personally very threatening to them? My research indicates that there has been a pronounced slow down in parthenogenesis research. The (male) scientists are much more interested now in another method of artificial reproduction, one which has the "benefit" of producing male as well as female offspring.
5) Cloning

Recent articles in almost every popular magazine have made the cloning method of reproduction the most widely known and discussed of all the alternatives to male-female sexual reproduction. The mass imagination has been titillated with headlines like "Cloning a Full Team of Joe Namaths" or "Raquel Welches by the Thousands." Although the discovery of cloning techniques which would work with humans would allow more flexibility in the traits a potential mother would like her child to have than does parthenogenesis, the interest in cloning is really being generated by men who see it as their last chance to perpetuate themselves if women really stop fucking.

So, although women should know everything possible about the advances in this field, unless we are able to patent the secret ourselves on this one, we might better hope that parthenogenesis is the method of artificial reproduction which will work with humans and not cloning.

So far, the highest creatures to be successfully cloned with live offspring resulting are grass frogs and African clawed frogs (as far as we know from what has been reported). As was mentioned earlier, the American Medical Association called for a moratorium on this kind of research in 1972, and not much new has been publicly announced since then.

Basically, this is how cloning works with the frog: First, the frog egg is pricked with a clean glass needle. In a few minutes the nucleus will rotate into position underneath the prick. The nucleus can then be removed from the egg by inserting a glass needle under it and lifting it out of the egg. Now the enucleated egg (what's left after the nucleus is removed) has its triple jelly coat removed, as in induced parthenogenesis, either chemically or by gentle rubbing on blotting paper, and it is placed in a petri dish containing a special culture medium. Already in the culture medium is a one or two day old frog embryo which has developed via the normal route of sexual fertilization. A microscope is used now to operate on this donor embryo in order to remove one of its cells. Two very slender glass needles are used like chopsticks to lift the cell out. The next step is very difficult and needs a steady hand. The cell is drawn up into a micro-pipette with a diameter slightly smaller than that of the cell itself. The smaller diameter is used so that a very small tear will occur when the cell is drawn up into the pipette -- if it is too large a nucleus will remain isolated from the host egg's cytoplasm and the transplant will fail. So, a just right size hole is made in the cell membrane by drawing it into the micropipette and then, finally, the micropipette with the cell at its tip is pushed deep into the enucleated egg and deposited there. In this method, if it is done right, is almost 99% effective in producing live tadpoles.

Cloning of humans by this same method would be extremely difficult since the human egg is only about 1/10 the size of the frog egg, and there is hardly any chance of getting it into a micropipette (even if one could be made that small) without damaging it. Recently, however, there have been some new techniques developed in cell-fusion which may make this easier. Also, it appears that the nucleus of the recipient egg need not be surgically removed, but can just be deactivated by either a laser beam or a tiny beam of ultraviolet light. So, theoretically, as the pulp magazines never tire of reminding us, it will be possible to produce a thousand little Einsteins, if enough "mothers" could be found who wouldn't mind incubating them in their own bodies for nine months, and, if Einstein were alive today or had left his stored cells, they would be as alike as identical twins and, of course, have no part of "the mother" in them.

As the magazines never do seem to remember to point out, too, women could have a child together via this method. That is, if the donor mother's cell could be fused with the carrier mother's egg cell so there would be 46 chromosomes. Or one woman could simply reproduce herself, as many times as she wanted to, by having one of her own body cells introduced into her enucleated egg. (The intestinal cell will be the most likely to work as it is the least differentiated in the body and can "forget" its old role in the donor's body and "learn" its new role in making a baby better than any other kind of cell.)

Of course, men are not blind to the fact that even via this process the egg cell is still required, and hence these are subject to a woman's allowing them to remove her eggs. So, the latest efforts are in the direction of cloning any two cells (not sex cells) who would "forget" their old role and begin to create a new organism. Success, so far reported, has been limited to a carrot.

The cloning method of reproduction would, of course, be a graphic depiction of the way men have always seen women -- as vessels to stick it in and vessels to carry their children in. Men might well expect women to refuse this dubious honor of allowing men to use them as xerox machines for reproducing themselves. Just in case, they are fast at work on artificial wombs. So far these glass and steel contraptions have not been able to "carry" any kind of animal to full term. No one has figured out how to duplicate the marvelous life support system that is the placenta, but a lot of money is going into this. Check the splashy full color photo essays on artificial wombs in Life (see resources below).

Of course, all of these advances could be very useful in the hands of men. Some men might very much like to turn-over the cumbersome business of carrying a fetus around for nine months to a machine. Indeed, the artificial womb could release women from the last vestige of biological inequality as Shulamith Firestone pointed out in The Dialectic
of Sex. Although in this article I have shown the alternatives to fucking and having to use male chromosomes to birth the future generation, Shulamith stresses that we need an alternative to pregnancy itself which she says is "barbaric." As she reminds us, birth is not the earth mother bliss Lamazeists crack it up to be, but "like shitting a pumpkin."

PAINFUL: If women were able to control the use of the artificial womb, it might turn out to be one of the most important contributions to the freedom of women ever. And similarly, if women were in control of cloning, many women would be very excited about their new ability to have a child together -- especially since there would be a 100% certainty of having a daughter. But how likely is it that the knowledge and tools will be in the hands of women? Our reproductive lives are now in the hands of men almost entirely -- from the males who make the birth control devices to the male doctor who delivers the baby -- or does the abortion. What are the chances that women will be able to take control of their own reproductive lives and that they will want to control these new, and perhaps frightening, alternative methods of reproduction?

Whatever our feelings, whether we are morally repelled by this kind of tampering with nature, or sure we never want children anyway, or content to have them by the usual method, none of us can afford to ignore the potential (for good and/or evil) which is developing in the scientific laboratories. We can only hope that women will see that this is a new but crucial political battleground -- one we can't afford to walk away from.

Notes

5. Ibid.
9. Ibid.

Special thanks to Cheri Brown, Zoologist, for her advice on this article.

Resources not noted above


Research in Reproduction. Although difficult to find, all issues of this bi-monthly journal would be valuable to anyone seriously interested in the field. It is edited by Dr. R.G. Edwards, Cambridge, England.


ADDENDA

A few days before we went to press with this issue, I found a new book by a woman with exciting relevant information. Maya Pines has just published a book called The Brain Changers in which the following information about altering gender appears:

...it is already possible to alter sex during a critical period right after birth by an injection of hormones that act on the infant rat's brain.

Maya Pines says, "in the beginning all brains are female," and then goes on to quote Dr. Seymour Levine of Stanford University as saying:

It is an additive process. The proper male hormones must act upon the brain at the proper time for the brain to send patterns of male-ness throughout the system. If the brain is not triggered in time, the fetus remains female. It is a struggle to become a male.

Depriving a newborn rat of male hormones for 24 hours has been found to cause a male rat to become functionally female. Ms. Pines casually remarks that if one were dealing with human beings, the injections would have to take place before birth.
The 4:40 sent a sharp blast through the thick fog and a great grey caterpillar dragged its belly clackety clackety through town. Me and that train, the only signs of life in this town. The top light reflected off the fog.

JOHN'S TAXI 843-4400. I thought of Emily. As I drove through the damp silent streets I thought of fat Emily. I had loved her with her sausage fingers and fat breasts; her mouth that laughed in whispers and her ruthless razor tongue. As I turned right onto Forest I heard the tires grab the pavement. I pulled into an all night diner.

"Coffee," I told the pale waitress behind the counter. Her hair was messed up and a pimple threatened to erupt on her chin. She set my coffee down with thin freckled hands and her eyes showed red around the pale blue center. She looked tired and I wanted to tell her it was all right she could go to sleep now everyone was taken care of. But I didn't. I shoved two dimes across the crumbs.

"Any business this time in the morning?" she yawned. "Not much." I answered, lighting a cigarette.

"Coffee?" I asked.

"They do here, too." She stood there in the empty diner, leaned up against that milkshake machine, chewing her fingers and erupting pimples and putting in her time. Maybe I'll go back there sometime, I thought. Maybe she needs me. Maybe Emily's name kept knocking at my brain as I slowly circled town. That great empty hole she left when she picked up everything else welled up inside of me. I bit my tongue. Why I loved her, that crazy woman, I guess I'll never know. She was devastating. I shook my head. Just let yourself in for it, didn't you Gail? Friar Gail. I pushed the accelerator hard onto the floor. A blue light flashed in the rear view. I pulled over. Mr. Cop slammed up to my window. I rolled it down and looked up at him innocently.

"Hi, Gail," he said with a sigh. "What's the idea?" He sounded very tired of the whole thing and we had just gotten started. "You were doing sixty. Do you know you were doing sixty?"

"Yes officer, I mean no officer. I know I had my foot on the floor but I had no idea this piece of junk would do sixty." "Have your license on you?"

"Right here, Paul," I pulled my taxi license out of my back pocket. "I got to sight you."
"Yeah, I know." I watched as he wrote out the ticket. All business. What the hell. He didn't just lose Emily. What does he know. What do I care? I shoved the ticket into my pocket and waved as he drove off. Bastard. Goddamn insensitive bastard.

I decided to drive past Emily's. Just to see the old place. My heart pounded in my throat as I turned toward the outskirts. The sun showed red on the horizon and burned off the low fog. Two dogs heisted their legs on a lampost. There it is I screamed in my head, my ears burning. There's where fat Emily told me to split. For no good reason. Three long months of beautiful union. How could she do that? I sighed. And after all we had done together. Like the silverware we picked out down to Goodwill. We got the rose pattern. She wanted the rose ones. We were lucky to get a whole set. Some of them don't exactly match up. Some of them have a different kind of rose, like a climber. But basically they're pretty much the same. Four knives and six forks and ten spoons we got. Before we just used plastic because I didn't have anything and neither did she. But then we got that silverware and it was ours.

There was the rings, too. I got her one as a symbol. The night we met down at the anchor. God I remember it so well. Me, just sitting there spinning my beer and looking around. Hardly anyone was there except Freddie and Joyce. Then in walks Emily. She laughed those little whispers and she was alone. Her teeth were like fragile hope that crumbles when you touch it. Her mouth, a dream that tortures your sleep. And her breasts. Her fat warm breasts. Like everchanging clouds in a high wind. She noticed me right off. I asked her to my place. That's when I gave her the ring. It had an aquamarine in the middle. Her birthstone but I think hers is something like it. Anyway, she liked it. I said, "Keep it as a symbol." Two days later she bought me one almost like it. I still wear it. She took hers off but I still wear mine.

My radio was silent. I yawned and stretched at the next light; figured I'd go park and wait it out. Only fifteen minutes. Emily waited with me. Goddamn woman hangs around my head like bums around lampposts. She didn't want me to anymore, I thought. I've thought about it a lot. Me, with my crazy dreams and Emily so practical. Maybe she just couldn't stand that. Jesus, we could have had a life together. We could have gone back down to Goodwill and got some more dishes. Some rugs maybe. I would buy them for her. She knew I would. But she didn't want me to anymore. I guess that's the way it goes. One of you in love and the other one just doesn't care. But it's a crying shame. It really is. Just a crying shame.

6:00 and time to turn in my car. I figured I might just drive back by that diner when I got off. Maybe the waitress needs a ride home or something. I could give her that.
two articles by Jill Johnston (one reprinted from her Village Voice column and the other from Ms.), and an article by Bertha Harris on lesbian society in Paris in the 1920's.

Also included are a feminist parable and an article on sexual abuse of children, by Florence Rush, an article on man-hating by Joanna Russ, one on Emily Dickinson by Rebecca Patterson, a personal account of adolescent "madness" by Esther Newton, and documentation of a woman's attempt, in the 1870's, to set up a matriarchal community in rural Massachusetts.

IN LOVE AND TROUBLE -- Stories of Black Women
Alice Walker

These are spirited, moving stories of southern Black women, written with a sense of humour that never overlooks the tragic.

BY A WOMAN WRITT -- Literature from Six Centuries By and About Women
Edited by Joan Goulianos

The most thoroughly researched and unflinchingly feminist of the anthologies I've seen, by a Woman writt includes letters, diaries, autobiographies, poetry and fiction by twenty women whose work has until now remained obscure and often out of print.

I'M NOT YOUR LAUGHING DAUGHTER
Ellen Bass
University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst (hardcover) $7. 84 pp.

In her first book of poetry Ellen Bass traces memories of her girlhood and of a period of time spent in Japan, with gentle imagery and a use of understatement that allows for a finely tuned sense of ambiguity but sometimes trails off into meaninglessness. The "Japanese Notebooks" section gives a fine complex account of two women-friends who are trying to ignore their sexual feelings for each other. (My one outstanding complaint is that this book was printed as a $7 hardback when it could have been produced and sold for 1/5 the cost with a paper cover. It's time for feminist authors to take some responsibility for making their work available to all women who want access to it.)

PIT STOP
Pat Parker
The Women's Press Collective, 5251 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94618 $1. 44 pp.

Pat Parker's second book of poems explores in simple and honest language the ever-narrowing options available to Black lesbian feminists --

Who do you trust? -- and comes up with a sensibility and vision too complex and feeling to be expressed by political rhetoric of any color or sex.

A WOMAN IS TALKING TO DEATH
Judy Grahn; with pictures by Karen Sjoholm
The Women's Press Collective $1.25

This poem is one of the most moving deep and true experiences I've ever had in reading anything. Karen Sjoholm's pictures are a powerful counterpoint to the words, and include a beautiful full-color painting that is (among other kinds of wonder) a technical wonder of an achievement for the Women's Press Collective. If you didn't read A Woman Is Talking To Death in Volume 2 #2 of Amazon Quarterly by all means order the book from the Press Collective. Or if you did read it, consider a gift for a friend or yourself.

WOMEN AND LITERATURE -- An Annotated Bibliography of Women Writers
The Sense and Sensibility Collective, 57 Ellery St., Cambridge, MA 02138

An excellent sourcebook with critical summaries of each of the 400 works included -- fiction only. (Copies can be ordered directly from the Sense and Sensibility Collective; bulk rates too.)

WOMEN AND THEIR SEXUALITY IN THE NEW FILM
Joan Mollen
Horizon Press (paper) $4.95 255 pp.

This book is a series of essays about female characters in major American and European films of the last several years. In a chapter on lesbianism in films, Joan Mollen dissects every film with lesbian content and finds all the usual male fantasies and cultural (male) stereotypes, which she denounces as clearly untrue presentations of lesbianism and film. She doesn't quite know where to go from there, though; lesbianism is never really incorporated into the feminist ideas she uses in the rest of the book.

THE LESBIAN MYTH -- Insights and Conversations
Bettie Wysor
Random House (hardcover) $8.95 438 pp.

This is a major new non-fiction book about lesbianism, by a woman who speaks positively of us, with conviction, and obviously from her own experience, yet does not say she's a lesbian -- a concession she may have made thinking it would validate her words as an "objective observer," but one which actually invalidates much of what she says, and shows that
she really doesn't think her readers will believe her statements about
the health and normality of lesbians -- a paranoia that may be justified,
as the book seems meant for a "general" (non-lesbian) audience. I must
confess that I haven't actually read through the book yet, as the price
is high and the publisher didn't send a review copy, so I can't make
sweeping generalizations or even recommend or not recommend. I can de-
scribe: the first half of the book explores the myths about homosexu-
ality perpetrated through theology, science, and literature. At some
points, mostly in discussing literature, Bettie Wysor separates lesbians
from male homosexuals, but in most of her arguments she refers to homo-
sexuality in general. Her perspective is feminist to an extent but she
seems to have deeper ties to the "gay" movement.

The second half of The Lesbian Myth consists of transcripts of four
taped group discussions with lesbians on topics ranging from Lesbian
Mothers to Gay Activists. The discussion titled "Lesbian Lifestyles" is
held with a group of white upper-middle-class professional women, all of
whom hold doctorate or post-doctorate degrees. As you may guess, they
present a narrow range of lesbian lifestyles, and tend to be extremely
concerned with maintaining their social positions, hiding evidence of
their lesbianism, etc.

The book as a whole is a very positive statement considering the cul-
ture in which it was written. It may, depending on where you're at,
either bring you support and encouragement in affirming your lesbian
identity and struggling free of patriarchal stereotypes, or make you de-
pressingly aware of how far we have to go.

LAVENDER JANE LOVES WOMEN
(Women's Wax Works A001)
Alix Dobkin (vocals and guitar), Kay Gardner (Flute), Jody Vogel (cello),
Patches Atton (bass), Marilyn Reese (engineering), the Great Matriarchal
Reunion and assorted other sisters and daughters
Women's Music Network, Inc., 215 W. 92nd St., New York, NY 10025 $5.35

For all the women who've listened diligently to female musicians for
traces of lesbianism, or even sisterhood, in record albums, and have
had to find encouragement and identification in the most obtuse hints
or by changing strategic "he's" to "she's" -- here is the first up-front
lesbian feminist album. Lavender Jane Loves Women is musically as well
as politically a very fine and loving production, an energizing and in-
spiring sign of our emerging women's culture. On the next page are the
words for one song from the record -- Hearts and Struggles Music hopes
to publish a songbook with words and music for all the songs by Fall
1974. The record can be ordered directly from the Women's Music Net-
work (bulk rates are available).

A WOMAN'S LOVE

Because she's a woman
I didn't think I loved her
So unexpected;
We just stood and smiled
And I felt so fine
And it was so right inside, but
How could I know I loved her
Because she's a woman?

Because she's a woman
Confusion hid my feelings
I tried to name it
Everything but love (but)
Like a magic dream
It would not be turned aside, but
softly and warmly it held me
Because she's a woman

Because she's a woman
She doesn't try to change me
She knows and understands
A woman's ways
And I feel so free
To be what she sees in me, it's so
Easy to be her lover
Because she's a woman

I realize a woman's place is in my home, and I know
We've always been in love, and so it shall be
For Liza and me

Because I'm a woman
A way was laid out for me
I always thought I'd need
A man to love
(and) While the men I've known were as
Loving as they could be there's
No one can match her beauty
Because she's a woman, and she
Feels so much the
Sweet touch of a
Woman's love.
"Oh, they'll love me, all right. It will take time, but they'll love me."

Toni Morrison. Black. Woman. Poet. Flowing in and out of those words are fire and ice.

Sula Peace is another planet in the universe of Black girls/women inhabited by the blasted Pecola, a young Black girl whose waste is pictured in The Bluest Eye, Morrison's first novel.

Sula opens with mad Shadrack proclaiming National Suicide Day in the Bottom, a hilltop section relegated to Blacks in the small Ohio town of Medallion. It closes with the keening voice of one Black woman's sorrow. These two events are separated by the growth, maturity and/or death of many inhabitants of the Bottom, as well as other crystalline indicatives of change within Medallion itself, between 1919 and 1965. But both events are attempts to touch something which is human and redemptive -- self -- lying at the core of a painful and inhuman world.

The heart of this book is the friendship between two Black girls who grow into Black women in the Ohio town of Medallion. Sula Peace and Nel Wright meet at twelve, when they are both "Wishbone thin and dreaming of princes." Black and female, they are primed to fight an ancient battle, using each other as weapon and adversary.

As children, they mirror each other's thoughts and share each other's pain. This was the time when, in Sula's later thoughts, "we were two throats and one eye and we had no price." But after a ten year separation, they come together again as young women. And Sula, who left the Bottom and returned, becomes for Nel, who married and remained, at first a vicarious taste of freedom returned, and then a threat to everything Nel must now accept as the fabric of her living.

As such, the plot line is familiar, although seldom dealt with as a reality in the lives of Black women. But this struggle is only one distortion of living superimposed, throughout the book, upon a primary and most deadly other distortion: that one of growing into womanhood. Black, in a white man's world. It is this distortion which once led Sula's grandmother, Eva, to place her leg across a train track, hoping to buy a future for her children with the insurance payments. It is this distortion which Ha, Nel's mother, to crucify her young daughter on a cross of endless hot combs to straighten her crispy hair, and end-
She is as real to me as the dark Sister sitting beside me in a streetcar who, when I told her she was beautiful, got up and changed her seat to sit beside a white man. When one part of yourself leaves another part behind, the pain of stretching can be almost beyond endurance -- especially when you do not break.

Morrison captures this gut pain with vigorous and evocative language which sings out like the legends beneath our skin. With little insistence but much clarity, she lays out the permutations that can occur in the lives of Black women. She presents them in vignette-like relationships for all of us to learn from, who will.

In the end, because hatred seems a more powerful distortion than corrupting and weakening love, Nel must accuse Sula of the same cruelty which she so patiently accepts from her husband, Jude. For her own sanity, Nel must believe that it is Sula who "had twisted her love (Nel's) for her own children into something so thick and monstrous she was afraid to show it lest it break loose and smother them with its heavy paw." In other words, Nel must blame Sula for the wasting emptiness of Nel's life. After all, who else? Hadn't she learned the difficult lesson that she tells the dying Sula? "You can't do it all. You a woman and a colored woman at that. You can't act like a man. You can't be walking around all independent-like, doing whatever you like, taking what you want, leaving what you don't."

But when Sula dies, taking her reasons with her, Nel and the other Black folk of the Bottom learn their real need of her. For even though in an unlovely world it is easier to be pushed by hatred than to deal with the many faces of love, Nel leaves Sula's grave with a dawning sense of her own real loss.

If the character of Sula becomes shadowy toward the end of the book, it is because the people of the Bottom, including Nel, need to deal with her in those terms only; they can only understand Sula Peace through her shadows.

The author has taken the particular experience of her characters and used that experience to stir within us some piece of each woman's truth; sharp and unforgettable as a stomach cramp. And because Morrison does not lie in Sula, nor shrink from fingerling those bonds, destructive and redemptive, which exist between Black women as well as between them and Black men, her book may make some women enemies, skin-deep. But the women in Sula will eventually speak out to each of us, through those experiences which separate us, to those feelings which connect us.

"Oh, they'll love me, all right. It will take time, but they'll love me."
"The question, simply, is: How can one be a saint without God?"
--Albert Camus

I just got up. Incredible. I just got up
and lurched downstairs to put on water for tea
and wait for it to boil.
But I am the one who is simmering
already, and my god, I just got up.

What a cosmic error,
to have decided to sit at the kitchen table
and wait for the water to boil.

Look at the cockroach egg laid precisely
in the crack between the table leaves.
Another member of the colony is crawling up one chairleg,
having heard, no doubt, about the crumbheaps
left in the tufts of the chair cushions
whenever the four-year-old passes through.
Lower-east-side ninety-five-degree Manhattan July
lies flat in the rooms, not even air enough to stir
the coy dustballs nestled in corners,
under the furniture, in the crotch of each stairstep.
No Saint Elmo's Fire here,
but fith enough to cause Saint Jerome
nine mystical orgasms.

I try looking up, away--another mistaken assumption, embodying
only the ceiling. Low anyway as the New York smog,
it chuggles cracked plaster, peeling paint,
discolorations, across my gaze.
To say nothing of the moon craters,
holes the size of my clenched fist
left there from the last time we tore down a wall.
It was to give the illusion of greater space;
time being what it is, the holes remain,
now and then belching little chunklets of plaster
or an exposed beam's offspring splinter down,
like mini-inverted volcanoes, extinct we imagine,
reminding us of their presence
in the blank, skun face of heaven.

There are holes in the face of hell too, of course:
jagged chasms yawning between the antique floorboards,
gorges which have been patched and filled so many times,
only to warp again at the slightest weight.
Cockroaches crawl amically up through them, and lately
violent water beetles--they're a treat only Saint Francis could love.
I start to meditate on whether the downstairs cockroaches
have met their brothers upstairs, whether each has some intimation
that there are comrades near, or not.
I wonder if it would be kind
to bring one of these from the table to meet a sister by the sink,
or to transport three or four--a small collective--
to parley with the batch upstairs. But which batch? Elitist of me to choose.

After all, there are roaches in the child's room, reeling like science-fiction monsters through the doll-house doors; intellectual roaches who patrol the chessboard, music lovers who jostle the wires and wheels of the phonograph (which is of course unplayable and a cast-of-thousands production to get fixed, dear Jude, patron of hopeless projects). There are the roaches who make insectual advances to my sleeping body, on those memorable nights when I bound out of bed, sweating, to shudder them off--factual visitations more ingenious than my nightmares. Is this the phallic of their lord, Theresa? When I light the oven, infrequently in summer, roaches run from all the burners like Albigensians scurrying, singed, from the fire. I wish their reproductive habits were as chaste. There was one frozen to death on the lowest refrigerator shelf, next to something left uncovered, rotting. No wonder you hunger-struck, Ms. Weil. There was one in a glass of wine I had stupidly left standing for half an hour, floating feet up like a happy, dead Li Po. Meanwhile, my frenzied spraying merely mutates their species, poisons our lungs.

Not that I want to be obsessed with roaches. They are, after all, only one familiar symptom of the malaise I sicken and die of, this one-dimensional city summer of 1973, everything flat as a bad painting. The money-worries, for instance, which make me feel that poor, desperate Iscariot was royally had. Or the door on the downstairs cabinet which falls on your foot when you unforgettingly swing it open, or the clutter of errands undone: shoes that need gluing, the faucet oozing rust over an intrepidly stained tub, the grit on the windowsills, the windowframes that stick and slant like a Dr. Caligari set or a vision of Saint Dymphna's.

Small comfort, that I vow the next time anyone pontificates a correct line on poverty and privilege to me they will get smashed on their downwardly mobile nose.

What about the windows, the panes themselves, given up on, given over to dirt, all but opaque with grime, except where streaked by pigeon crap, or my small son's hieroglyphic alphabet? What good would it do to wash them and look through? I have been there, I know what is there: the whores shaking like saplings under a winter wind in the blast of July, for a fix? The pimps modeling patent leather and white linen? The human shit on the sidewalk, pillowing the drunk who speaks his dreams aloud in gape-noughted mumbles?

Last week, in the bus, I was preoccupied with feet. So many were in sandals, almost squatting at a height they rarely see. One woman's toes, grotesque contortions cramped beneath a brave facade of purple polish--I missed my stop, with staring. Who could heal such feet?

To say nothing of Mao Tse-Tung's alarm that Watergate is hurting Nixon's reputation. Or of my ill and aging mother now having to pay the interest of her last years caring for a husband, a terminal cancer patient, and a cranky obnoxious old prick, even when well. Smile enigmatically at that, Saint Anne. France tested a brand-new nuclear "device" last week, drought boils the sub-Sahara, and India's Untouchables are being massacred anew for their salvation.

Where do I begin, this time? To break the inertia, find the motor, churn the woman and the man and even the child into cheerful and frenetic action? And if we repaired the dangling cables, patched up the holes in roof and floor, whirled like dishes in a holy delirium of paint, wax, polish, soap, spray, and took to the shoemakers, cleaners, repairshop, and then picked up from the shoemakers, cleaners, repairshop,
Martha, what then? Give me some helpful hints on what revolutionary cleaning agent could make the women on the corner put forth leaves again, rinse the bum’s mouth with rosewater, straighten and anoint those gnarled, nailpolished claws? What can dust off my mother’s life or scrub the air shiny again? How many locusts would feed the sub-Saharan? What can scour the old men and teach the new ones to pick up after themselves? What scarf is large enough, Veronica, to take the imprint of so many Untouched faces? What can recycle them?

To say nothing of having contempt for my own self-pity, drawn into the Cabrini whirlpool of others’ pain. To say nothing of being detested or trumpeted politically, but not understood.

To say nothing.

I have utterly lost the energy they sing at me about. My energy, my energy, how I give it to them in waves, rays, bursts, like sunlight. Hallelujah, how they bask in it. The sun is dying, they forget, a star in some addict’s blind eye rapidly burning itself out. What should I fix up this time, and watch decay?

The water is almost boiling. I can’t believe it, I just got up. Already my ribcage is cast in bronze, the congestion in my chest literal, as if I had swallowed a lump of sponge. The exterminator is due around noon, but it’s early yet. The house is waking into morning sounds, tightening around me. Doors slamming open, bureaus yawning their drawer jaws in protest, a toilet flushing more waste toward the rivers. A man’s footsteps overhead, a small boy’s voice, complaining. Maria, deposed and co-opted, look how my child is growing to schools which will rob him of whatever grace and curiosity he still wears like the nimbus encircling your blissful infant Horus plumped on his momma Isis’ lap.
FROM
AN
OLD
HOUSE
IN
AMERICA

by Adrienne Rich

1.
Deliberately, long ago
the carcasses
of old bugs crumbled
into the rut of the window
and we started sleeping here
Fresh June bugs batter this June's
screens, June-lightning batters
the spiderweb
I sweep the wood-dust
from the wood-box
the snout of the vacuum cleaner
sucks the past away

2.
Other lives were lived here:
mostly un-articulate
yet someone left her creamy signature
in the trail of rusticated
narcissus straggling up
through meadowgrass and vetch
Families breathed close
boxed-in from the cold
hard times, short growing season
the old rainwater cistern
huinks in the cellar

3.
Like turning through the contents of a drawer:
these rusted screws, this empty vial
useless, this box of water-color paints
dried to insolubility -
but this -
this pack of cards with no card missing
still playable
and three good fuses
and this toy: a little truck
scarred red, yet all its wheels still turn
The humble tenacity of things
waiting for people, waiting for months, for years

4.
Often rebuked, yet always back returning
I place my hand on the hand
of the dead, invisible palm-print
on the doorframe
spiked with daylilies, green leaves
catching in the screen door
or I read the backs of old postcards
curling from thumbtacks, winter and summer
fading through cobweb-tinted panes -
white church in Norway
Dutch hyacinths bleeding azure
red beach on Corsica
set-pieces of the world
stuck to this house of plank
I flash on wife and husband
embattled, in the years
that dried, dim ink was wet
those signatures

5.
If they call me man-hater, you
would have known it for a lie
but the you I want to speak to
has become your death
If I dream of you in these days
I know my dreams are mine and not of you
yet something hangs between us
older and stranger than ourselves
like a translucent curtain, a sheet of water
a dusty window
the irreducible, incomplete connection

between the dead and living
or between man and woman in this
savagely fathered and unmothered world

6.
The other side of a translucent
curtain, a sheet of water
a dusty window, Non-being
utters its flat tones
the speech of an actor learning his lines
phonetically
the final autistic statement
of the self-destroyer
All my energy reaches out tonight
to comprehend a miracle beyond
raising the dead: the undead to watch
back on the road of birth

7.
I am an American woman:
I turn that over
like a leaf pressed in a book
I stop and look up from
into the coals of the stove
or the black square of the window
Foot-slogging through the Bering Strait
jumping from the Arbella to my death
chained to the corpse beside me
I feel my pains begin
I am washed up on this continent
shipped here to be fruitful
my body a hollow ship
bearing sons to the wilderness
sons who ride away
on horseback, daughters
whose juices drain like mine
into the arroyo of stillbirths, massacres
Hanged as witches, sold as breeding-wenches
my sisters leave me
I am not the wheatfield
nor the virgin forest
I never chose this place
yet I am of it now
In my decent collar, in the daguerrotype
I pierce its legend with my look
my hands wringe the necks of prairie chickens
I am used to blood
When the men hit the hobo track
I stay on with the children
my power is brief and local
but I know my power
I have lived in isolation
from other women, so much
in the mining camps, the first cities
the Great Plains winters
Most of the time, in my sex, I was alone

8.
Tonight in this northeast kingdom

striated iris stand in a jar with daisies
the porcupine knaws in the shed
fireflies beat and simmer
caterpillars begin again
their long, innocent climb
the length of leaves of burdock
or webbing of a garden chair
plain and ordinary things
speak softly
the light square on old wallpaper
where a poster has fallen down
Robert Indiana's LOVE
leftover of a decade

9.
I do not want to simplify
Or: I would simplify
by naming the complexity
It was made over-simple all along
the separation of powers
the allotment of sufferings
her spine cracking in labor
his plow driving across the Indian graves
her hand unconscious on the cradle, her mind
with the wild geese
his mother-hatred driving him
into exile from the earth
the refugee couple with their cardboard luggage
standing on the ramshackle landing-stage
he with fingers frozen around his Law
she with her down quilt sewn through iron nights
- the weight of the old world, plucked
drags after them, a random feather-bed

10.
Her children dead of diptheria, she
set herself on fire with kerosene

(O Lord I was unworthy
Thou didst find me out)
she left the kitchen scrubbed
down to the marrow of its boards

"The penalty for barreness
is emptiness
my punishment is my crime
what I have failed to do, is me..."

- Another month without a show
and this the seventh year

O Father let this thing pass out of me
I swear to You
I will live for the others, asking nothing
I will ask nothing, ever, for myself

11.
Out back of this old house
datura tangles with a gentler weed
its spiked pods smelling
of bad dreams and death

I reach through the dark, groping
past spines of nightmare
to brush the leaves of sensuality

A dream of tenderness
wrestles with all I know of history
I cannot now lie down
with a man who fears my power
or reaches for me as for death
or with a lover who imagines
we are not in danger

12.
If it was lust that had defined us -
their lust and fear of our deep places
we have done our time
as faceless torsos licked by fire
we are in the open, on our way -
our counterparts
the pinyon jay, the small
gilt-winged insect
the Cessna throbbing level
the raven floating in the gorge
the rose and violet vulva of the earth
filling with darkness
yet deep within a single sparkle
of red, a human fire
and near and yet above the western planet
calmly biding her time

13.
They were the distractions, lust and fear
but are
themselves a key
Everything that can be used, will be:
the fathers in their ceremonies
the genital contests
the cleansing of blood from pubic hair
the placenta buried and guarded
their terror of blinding
by the look of her who bore them
If you do not believe
that fear and hatred
read the lesson again
in the old dialect

14.
But can't you see me as a human being
he said
What is a human being
she said
I try to understand
he said
what will you undertake
she said
will you punish me for history
he said
what will you undertake
she said
do you believe in collective guilt
he said
let me look in your eyes
she said

15.
Who is here. The Erinyes.
One to sit in judgement.
One to speak tenderness.
One to inscribe the verdict on the canyon wall.
If you have not confessed
the damage
if you have not recognized
the Mother of reparations
if you have not come to terms
with the women in the mirror
if you have not come to terms
with the inscription
the terms of the ordeal
the discipline
the verdict
if still you are on your way
still She awaits your coming

16.
"Such women are dangerous
to the order of things"
and yes, we will be dangerous
to ourselves
groping through spines of nightmare
(datura tangling with a simpler herb)
because the line dividing
lucidity from darkness
is yet to be marked out
Isolation, the dream
of the frontier woman
levelling her rifle along the
the homestead fence
still snare snare our pride
- a suicidal leaf
laid under the burning-glass
in the sun's eye
Any woman's death diminishes me

CONNECTIONS

If you would like to contact women who share your interests we will try to help. Send us a brief description of yourself, your name, address, and your age (we can not accept anyone under legal age). Let us know if you want to meet women in your area, women anywhere living in communes, women in the arts, women with children, women just coming out, etc. -- make up your own categories.

Include $1 plus a self-addressed stamped envelope. The first issue of Connections was mailed out to a hundred women in February. We'll be doing another issue around July 1st, so try to get your letter to us by mid-June.

Correction: Mail for DOB in New Hampshire should be addressed to
Occupant, Box 137, Northwood, N.H. 03261. Daughters of Bilitis should not be used in the address.

FRANCES ROONEY

If I could wish for anything tonight, it would be to be a poet, for poetry is the usual vehicle for feelings like these. But I am too content to want to be anything but what I am, and since prose is my medium, I will use it.

I am keeping a vigil. I am watching over your sleep. Not because you are ill or because there is any danger, but simply because I must. I write beside you in bed. You will not wake--I hardly move and the shadow of my body protects your face from the one small light. That face, so proud and sensual and innocent, so much like your body, really, a body never bowed under the savageries of men, never torn by children, a body kept eager and supple by twenty years of cavorting with women. I compare it to my own, ten years younger, but scarred and misshapen, tired and desensitized, purposely made ugly in a vain attempt to lessen the pushing and pulling and poking and joking of the husband I thought I had to have. Even now, even with you, my body sometimes refuses to give up its deepest fears of pain and humiliation, refuses to feel everything, to become eager and vital again. How can you stand to touch me? I marvel that you can. You can even kiss me--all of me--with that incredible mouth of yours. Have you ever noticed how few lesbians have those tense, pursed, thin lips that are almost universal among married women? Your mouth, usually closed, is open a little, while your eyes, the eyes of the thousand expressions, are now, of course, closed. Funny, I don't even know what color they are--I never notice the color of people's eyes--I just know how much I need to see them wide and shining, how I reach out to their sadness, how I am compelled to obey their desire or command. How fully we trust each other to be able to submit so happily to each other's tyrannies!

But these are all things of any night. Tonight is different, and it is that difference that makes me keep my vigil.

We had made love during our periods before, but I at least had always tried to ignore, or at best to accept, the fact of the blood. Like every-
body else (?), I had always accepted womanblood as a sign of weakness, a source of shame. The fact that I had always rather enjoyed my own periods—felt a sense of pride in a heavy flow, of disappointment in a too light one, enjoyed the warmth, the smell and the deep red color—had only served to intensify my feelings of strangeness, of separation from normality and from other women. Tonight, as I knelt between your now relaxed and curved legs, I was afraid. You laughed, and then, serious and firm and gentle, you said, "Drink." I dipped my hands into you, wondering for the thousandth time how anatomy so similar to mine could be so full of awesome sights and sounds. When I withdrew them, you said, "Hold them up. See it." And I did see: blood given, not shed; blood as strength, not weakness; blood the sign of wholeness, not mutilation. Beautiful blood. Womanblood. And what I have always known, so deep in my soul that I had hardly ever admitted it to myself, let alone to anyone else, came out and expanded to include all women. This blood is part of us, not something we do, it is real and strong and good—like us. And then I did drink. I drank until there was no more. And I cried. And we laughed. And by then there was more, so I drank again.

After a while you moaned, tensed, and then relaxed. I covered you and gave you my breast. And when the sucking had stopped I pulled away, rearranged the blankets around your proud and adventurous body, and began my vigil. And here we are.

Womanblood. My body understands it. My soul understands it, but my head is having trouble. I don't want to think of the positiveness and independence of womanness in man-language, but our own language was stolen from us so long ago that not a trace remains to help me express the womanthings I am learning. The only verbal language I know makes menstrual blood and good/joy/strength/pride contradictions in terms. Men fear and despise this bleeding. No wonder: we do so regularly and (relatively) effortlessly and for days and days each time what not one of them has ever been able to do. For us blood is part of living, to them it is a sign of weakness, the companion of death. No wonder they exult in their ability to impregnate, that stops this effortless bleeding and translates the place of the bleeding into something they can understand: a place of fear and pain and wounding, a source of power over us. I cannot, even if I would be inhuman enough to want to, pervert the bleeding into something to give me power over you. We can work to free each other of the brain-washing that labels it ugly and weak. We can explore to find other things that are good womanthings and that have been labelled bad or silly or petty and free ourselves of those man-definations too. What I want to do first, though, is listen to what my womanness says about this bleeding and accept it so that, in a week or two, when I bleed, I can be eager and unafraid, can spread my legs to you and say, "Drink."

from a heaviness like my father's arms strapped around my back and hips, dull ache in the summer morning waking with a lover who didn't touch me; from eight days' head pain and blemished skin, the clamp is broken I'm bleeding.

the tears and the blood—salt sisters—flow together in great clots. the one brought on the other, the one stopped the other's release as I held the dark red inside me by clutchings and ravings.

I fill my pen with my womb's blood I could write with it today I could write my name over and over to remember my self as a bronzed warrior with hair curling under my arms and down my sturdy calves as a mother-goddess stroking her earth daughters as a singer of poems who lies down with a woman and finds sustenance as from her own breast.
JOANNE/AN INTERVIEW

This interview is another of the conversations recorded last summer with lesbians around the continent (for a full report of the editors' journey and more interviews see AQ Vol.1 #4/Vol.2 #1, the Special Double issue). Joanne lives with her lover, Patty, in Boston, where she works as a secretary by day and goes to women's liberation meetings by night.

Gina: Can you say briefly what your mother was like when you were a child?

Joanne: My mother and I were very close and still are very close. I still feel able to communicate with my mother, still feel able to tell her everything. My mother's very femme, you know, her big thing has always been her sensitivity and she really is sensitive and creative, and she put all her creative energy into raising children. She always tried to push femininity on me, I guess because she really believed that the way to make it was to be beautiful and to be feminine in the traditional way--you could get any man you wanted and do whatever you wanted. So to be valued, according to my mother, was to be able to make your way with as many men as possible as effectively as possible.

G: Did she tell you these things very overtly?
J: Well she didn't use those words but she did things--like no price was too high for beauty, I could spend any amount of money to get my hair fixed, because in those days curly hair was ugly. She was always giving me things of hers. She would give me her underpants to wear. Lots of black lace underwear.

G: When you were how old?
J: Fifteen, sixteen. I had every padded bra you can imagine. Any time a man would hassle us on the street her whole attitude was that we should be flattered. So I got into a super femme trip, way before puberty I was worried about my femininity. I was convinced I wasn't feminine so I was determined to act as feminine as possible. I wasn't delicate, you know.

G: What was your father like?
J: Well she didn't use those words but she did things--like no price was too high for beauty, I could spend any amount of money to get my hair fixed, because in those days curly hair was ugly. She was always giving me things of hers. She would give me her underpants to wear. Lots of black lace underwear.

G: When you were how old?
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G: What was your father like?
J: Both of them were perfect role models. My mother was feminine, and my father was strong. He used to keep a placard in the dining room that said, "The Captain's Word Is Law." He's a doctor. He didn't have any discipline, but he was the decision-maker. He knew everything about the finances. Nobody knew anything but him. And he maintained his power by fostering and encouraging dependency in all of us. He was strong, he was infallible and he was also never around. He was always working. He worked himself into a heart attack. And he's going to die of a heart attack. I was afraid of him. I was angry at him. I was uncomfortable. I didn't know what to say to him--I didn't have anything to say to him.

G: He made most of the decisions about what was going to happen in your family?
J: Yeah, he made the decisions but he explained everything to my mother. He was a martyr, and he always made it very clear what he wanted and after he'd made it clear he'd do whatever mother wanted, and then the reason, he made it clear, that he was doing what my mother wanted, was because she was weak and he was strong and could handle not doing his thing, but my mother would just fall apart emotionally. So he was always making sacrifices for her and for us.

G: Do you think he was controlling that or was your mother planning it that way?
J: They were both contributing to making a fucked up process. She could have spoken out more than she did too.

G: How did you perceive your parents when you were a child?
J: Perfect. It couldn't have been better. He was handsome, she was beautiful. He was masculine, she was feminine. It was the ideal relationship.

G: When did you start seeing flaws in it?
J: When I was fifteen I tried to commit suicide for one thing, and I decided it was time for me not to be a virgin anymore. I snuck out of the house and walked the streets until I got raped by a bunch of cannibals. And what happened was after I had taken the phenobarbitol my parents tried to wake me up and I started screaming at my father--I had never before known that I was hostile to him, but I said to him, "Bullshit Daddy Doctor!" We had a dog whose name was George, I said "I'm not like George, you can't do this to me." They sent me to a shrink and that was when I first realized that I had some things to work out.

G: Were you close with your mother then?
J: Oh yes. I always felt when my father walked into a room that he was catching us. I didn't know what we were doing wrong but I knew something was wrong. I always felt guilty about it. I always went to a progressive school and learned Freud and found out that little girls are supposed to be closer to their fathers than their mothers, and I wasn't. I had nothing to say to my father and had a really intense relationship with my mother. I never wanted my father around. I was never comfortable when he was around and I used to worry about that.

It was threatening to my sexual identity.

G: When you were how old?
J: I have entries in my diary from when I was thirteen, saying there was some boy who came over to my house and forced me to kiss him—I had this whole entry in blue, because I wrote in blue when I was unhappy—and red ink when I was happy—and I was talking about how disgusting it was when he kissed me and how gross that was, and in it I said, "I don't know what's going to happen to me, I'm sure this is going to ruin my life, I'm going to be frigid and I'm going to be a lesbian." And that's exactly what happened, I became a lesbian. I called it right. I didn't know when I wrote it, that I'd be pinpointing it so accurately.

G: What's the earliest thing you can remember that has a sexual connotation, when you felt something sexual?

J: I remember toilet training. What I remember is some strange man walking into my room and asking me if I was going to wet my diapers that night and thinking to myself, "I don't know if I'm going to wet my fucking diaper or not, when you're asleep you don't know what you're going to do." I knew I wasn't supposed to, and I remember being really scared that I wasn't going to be able to succeed, and that strange man I figured out later was my father. I was walking around naked in my room, leaving me half naked and terrified on my bed. It wasn't until several years later that I figured out that what had probably happened was that I had broken my hymen, but I felt very guilty. I felt like I had done something wrong but didn't understand what I'd done wrong and why it was wrong. I knew whatever it was, it was something dirty.

My father pushed birth control pills on me when I was seventeen. He sent me for a diaphragm when I was twenty—that was really terrible. I couldn't figure how to work the fucking thing and I didn't know how to get it in right—I was in his office and his office was in our house where I grew up and lived all my life. I finally asked "How do you use it?" and he got up and started to walk out of the office. "Well," he said, "don't forget to take your new toy with you." So that was my sexual relationship with my father. Very hostile.

G: Was there one point where you learned to cross him?

J: When I took thirty sleeping pills, and called him Bullshit Daddy Doctor, that was the first time.

G: How is your parents' sexual relationship with each other, did you have much idea of that?

J: My father told me a lot about it. He told me grudgingly, he didn't tell me as much as it was. He also told my sister—his was Lila his assistant. Oh I know what it was—because I never had orgasms with men and I thought maybe that said something, and he was a doctor, I figured he
knew about those things. He started telling me about his relationship with my mother which I really didn't want to hear about. He went into this whole song and dance about how she was romantic and unrealistic and she wanted to be wooed all the time, and then he talked about how the only way she got off was if he bit her clitoris and how he did it. But I always got the impression that he thought it shouldn't have to be that way. She should get off on his penis, and a woman who couldn't get off on a penis wasn't quite a woman. He sounded very grudging about her clitoris, I don't think he liked it—but he did it because it kept him from having to deal with conflicts in their marriage. Kept everything going smoother.

G: Was masturbating important to you when you were little?
J: Yeah, masturbating. Yeah. I think you're asking such good questions. Yeah, I figured out how to masturbate when I was about ten. My parents had a vibrator which my mother always told me my father used to rub her back with—I swallowed that because I didn't know. And I discovered how to use it.

G: Just accidentally?
J: Yeah, it felt good. I tried it on different parts of my body. I was interested in my cunt. I was curious about it, and I was curious about what the vibrator would feel like on my cunt. I tried it on my head and my feet, but when I tried it on my cunt it was different from the other places. I didn't know what was happening. I'd never heard of orgasms or anything. I thought it was really neat and I also sensed that that feeling I was getting had to have an ultimate conclusion. I didn't know exactly where it would end, but I knew that it had to reach some kind of a peak and stop at some point. One day I decided I was going to see this thing through to the end and figure out what it was all about. And then I figured out how to do it with the water in the bathtub. A couple of years later, once there's no water, there's no vibrator. I figured out scientifically what the water did and what the vibrator did, and figured I could probably do the same thing with my hand. We had a group when I was about twelve called the Cozy Four, a bunch of girls who used to meet together. We never touched each other, but we knew about what felt good down there in that dirty place. We never touched because it was very straight community I grew up in, but we eventually got into trading secrets about masturbation—not the word masturbation, but we knew about what felt good down there in that dirty place. We felt guilty about it, and thought it was dirty, but we talked about it anyway. I felt horrible about masturbating. I felt sure the reason I couldn't come with men was that I'd masturbated. I asked my shrink once about it, because I was feeling like a yo-yo with this guy I was going with, and he was feeling strung out about the fact that I wasn't coming. I asked my shrink if he thought it was maybe because I masturbated. That was a real admission. I felt terrible about masturbating because boys do it, but girls don't, you know. And I was sure that any girl who masturbated must be masculine and all fucked up. He told me that it was alright to masturbate, but that perhaps I would have to re-educate my genitals if I wanted to come with a man.

G: You had to re-educate your genitals?
J: I had to re-educate my genitals. Yes. I had no idea how. I thought maybe if I stopped masturbating and started thinking "vagina" I could do it. But I wasn't able to. I tried for a long time. I tried so hard to be straight. You couldn't believe how I tried. I had two abortions. I slept with every guy that came along. Anything as long as it would prove that I was heterosexual. I was so scared, because in my family the most important thing in the world was to be a successful woman, which meant being sexy and beautiful and having lots of men and loving them all. I never liked men. I hated them all, I never even saw them as the same species as myself. But I figured I might as well get used to it because I just assumed that I'd have to get married and have children.

G: When did you start realizing that you were attracted to women?
J: Well I was always vaguely uncomfortable about that. I always had really nice relationships with women. I had a best girlfriend who I was going with by age thirteen—I remember one time we were babysitting together and she said to me, "Gee, if you were a boy I'd really want to kiss you right now." I said, "Gee, Judy, if I was a boy I'd want to kiss you right now too." And we looked at each other and got really embarrassed and said, "What are we, a couple of Lezzies?" Then we dropped the subject and didn't talk about it anymore.

By the time I got to be about fifteen I was into being a beatnik and figured that lesbianism was something that I ought to try, as a life experience—and I suppressed it, and suppressed it, until I was about twenty. Then I began to get in touch with a lot of hostility, because by that time at least fifty men had fucked me over, and I was pretty pissed. I knew I hated men but I still wasn't ready to accept the fact that I was a lesbian. I was beginning to be uncomfortable about rubbing women's backs—I was afraid that I was being sexual. I guess that was because I was feeling sexual, but I found it very hard to touch women during that time. When I was twenty-two I got pregnant on purpose... I was seeing a shrink then and that was the time when all of my hostility towards men came to the surface. It's a heavy thing to be pregnant.

J: Why did you get pregnant?
G: To prove to myself that I was a woman. G: And then how did you feel about it?
J: I had been doing a lot of self-destructive things since I was thirteen—I dived into heterosexuality and I did it angrily and was contemptuous of any man I ever fucked. I somehow thought that fucking them would get back at them for everything, and somehow I thought that de-
basing myself would do something. So I got pregnant, which was very heavy 'cause at the time I thought I wanted to have kids. I really believed that there was a living person in me--my whole body was freaking out. They say you can't feel it, but I felt that energy, and I knew there was something alive in me--even if it was no more than a string- bean I thought it was still something alive, it was something that I was going to stop from being alive, but I figured I would rather do that. First of all I knew if I had a boy I'd drown it, and even if it was a girl I knew it had 23 genes I hated--and I didn't know what had made me pregnant. All of my hostility came to the surface, I was blind with fury and it all came out. I couldn't sit in the same room with one without wanting to murder him, literally. I couldn't listen to Beethoven, I couldn't read Dylan Thomas. Lots of great male artists who were important to me I just couldn't...no male... I couldn't deal with any male, I hated them. After I calmed down about that it became very clear to me that I loved women, and I always had loved women, and that I had never had good relationships with men. I had always had good relationships with women. I had never been attracted to men, had always been attracted to women, and I realized that I was just going to have to get used to the fact that I was a lesbian.

G: You had an abortion then?
J: Yes. I had two abortions...That was the first one. I dropped out of school--I was in theater school at the time and theater is really a sexist profession. I wanted to direct but I...you know women directors--lot of trouble being a woman director, and I enjoyed acting but the roles that were available to women are hideous in the way people relate to women and I couldn't deal with that. So I dropped out of school and plunged right into feminism. It was obvious to me even at the time that the main reason I was there was because I wanted to come out. I wanted to come out so bad--I just wanted to do it and get it over with, you know, and just be comfortable in my identity as a lesbian. I had been avoiding the women's movement for years because I really can't relate to your penis at all. There's no attraction to me even if you were just going to stick that thing in me, might just as well forget about it. So they started following me home. I was horny and I didn't have any lesbians knocking at my door, and I knew how to manipulate men so I figured fuck it, I'll give them one more chance--so I started fucking a couple of guys. I told them, "Look, I hate men. I'm a lesbian, I haven't come out yet, but I promise you I'm a lesbian." So I fucked them. And they said that time I had an IUD which I had gotten after my first abortion, which they had promised me would be very effective. I got pregnant again, six months after my first abortion. My second abortion was really nice. I went to a really nice clinic and it was very clear to me, never again, never again. It's over. There was a really nice woman who was my counselor and I was awake for the abortion. She was holding my hand and while the fetus was being taken out of my body I was holding her hand saying to her, "Never again," and she said, "Oh, you're going to come out?" I said, "Yes," and she said, "Far out," and she called across the room to another woman who was a counselor, and said,"Hey, this woman's coming out." It was so nice, so supportive, she's holding my hand, a woman, and I was telling her that I was a lesbian. She was telling me that that was great, and they were taking that goddamn thing out of my uterus. It was almost worth being pregnant--it was such a nice abortion. I was so into her that I didn't feel any pain, it was annoying but all of a sudden it was over. It was really nice. I remember one time after that--with a guy I had known when I was a waitress--he was a really nice guy, I told him I hated men and I was a lesbian--and we tried to get something on sexually. We were making out and it got down to more basic things, and I said, "You know Mike, I'll tell you, I like you, I'm attracted to your mind, but I can't feel your penis." He wanted me to do things to it, but I said, "I'm sorry but you're just going to have to accept it that I really must be a lesbian because I really can't relate to your penis at all, you know." And that last time any man ever came near me.

G: Let's move to the present now--can you talk about your relationship with Patty? What do you feel best about?
J: I guess the thing I feel best about, first of all, is it's the first relationship where I haven't been in limbo sexually.

G: How do you think it's come about that your relationship is good sexually? Did it start out that way or has that been something that you've really worked at?

J: The way it started out was I didn't have any complaints. It wasn't my fantasy, it wasn't everything I'd always dreamed of, but right from the beginning it was absolutely adequate. And it's grown really smoothly, none of this encounter group shit, do you know what I mean?

G: Yeah, you were talking about limbo.

J: Uh huh.

G: Where you have encounter groups in the middle of love making.

J: Yeah, right. It's the sort of thing where I don't feel we have to sit down and spell it all out, but somehow the longer we're together the more comfortable we feel about each other. We're sensitive and we're able to let each other know what we feel.

G: Do you think you've gotten more sensitive to each other's needs than you were at first?

J: Oh sure. It's gotten to the point where we can say things like "I have this need," or "That feels really good," without it being a heavy analysis of what's wrong with our sexual relationship.

G: Was that hard at first?

J: It was hard but it was easier for me than it's ever been before. It's always hard to talk, and it's hard for somebody to tell you what to do. You should have thought of it yourself. It's just easier and easier for us 'cause it's no big deal. It's not like our relationship's going to fall apart if I don't add a little doohickey on the doohickey here. It's not going to fall apart if I don't do a special thing, but it's nice.

G: You think you're both trying equally?

J: Absolutely, yes, and I've never in my life felt so comfortable with my body before. I had a terrible body hang-up before being fat. I didn't think I was ever going to get over it. I used to think I was the most hung-up person in the world--I couldn't get undressed in front of my best girl friend, I couldn't get undressed in front of myself, I was so upset. I wouldn't go swimming in the summers because I thought my body was so ugly.

G: Now you're not fat at all--did you lose a lot of weight just recently or something?

J: I did lose some weight, although several years ago I really thought I was grotesque. If this was a couple of years ago I would have pictured myself as 400 pounds. But I have lost about twenty pounds, and I never could lose it when I was straight. I think the reason I lost it is I don't have a need anymore to cover my body. When I was straight I was afraid of my sexuality and I wanted to cover my body up so that men wouldn't be attracted to me. I didn't like men. Now I know that I don't have to fuck men ever again--I can afford to have a body and to be a sexual person without risking being assaulted by men. What I did was stay fat as a way of keeping men away. That was why when I came out I had to be butchy--I figured I won't be ugly anymore, I'll just be masculine. I had to do something to keep them away, because men were very scary to me. Now I'm gaining a lot of confidence and realize that I can keep them away any old way. Another thing about fatness--I think I'm getting over it because I just decided I don't give a shit. I'm just going to be who I am, and if that happens to be fat, then that's okay. If people can't deal with a little extra slush they don't understand about women. Men always want women to be skinny, and I think part of that has to do with their homosexual fantasies, because they want women to look like boys, with no breasts, no hips, no nothing. Those are male values and those are values I won't accept anymore. As soon as I gave up those values and realized that it was okay for me to be fat I realized I didn't have to be. And what's happening now is I'm getting in touch with what feels healthiest. I don't care what it looks like. I think that the better I feel the more I'm going to like myself, and I think attractive people are people who feel good. I know very few women who don't have a fat hang-up, and I think that comes from male values.

J: The conflicts we've had with each other have mainly come about as a result of hang-ups with ourselves. She finds it difficult to take criticism. I find it difficult to express anger. I find it particularly difficult to express anger to her because she's very sensitive about anger, so I get negative reinforcement. I wrap up all my courage and tell her, "You did this thing that made me angry," and I get slammed in the head for it. So I don't know what to do with my anger. She gets angry and then she feels guilty and then I suppress my anger because I hate hassles. I'd rather suppress it than confront her, so she senses that I'm suppressing it, and I deny it. She feels insecure, which makes me defensive--she knows I'm angry at her for not letting me express my anger, she picks up on my bitching and she thinks I hate her. This is the pattern we've gotten into a lot. Every major hassle that we've had over trivial shit, like keep the shirts in this drawer and that drawer, has been on that pattern. We put out incredible amounts of energy working on this, because we know that if we keep on in that pattern we're going to do irreparable damage to each other's psyches. People eat at each other for twenty years with that kind of shit and it's ugly and horrible and we don't want to get into it. So we put out an incredible amount of energy trying to understand what's going on, trying to figure out what we're feeling. 

G: What are some conflicts that you and Patty have with each other?

J: The conflicts we've had with each other have mainly come about as a result of hang-ups with ourselves. She finds it difficult to take criticism. I find it difficult to express anger. I find it particularly difficult to express anger to her because she's very sensitive about anger, so I get negative reinforcement. I wrap up all my courage and tell her, "You did this thing that made me angry," and I get slammed in the head for it. So I don't know what to do with my anger. She gets angry and then she feels guilty and then I suppress my anger because I hate hassles. I'd rather suppress it than confront her, so she senses that I'm suppressing it, and I deny it. She feels insecure, which makes me defensive--she knows I'm angry at her for not letting me express my anger, she picks up on my bitching and she thinks I hate her. This is the pattern we've gotten into a lot. Every major hassle that we've had over trivial shit, like keep the shirts in this drawer and that drawer, has been on that pattern. We put out incredible amounts of energy working on this, because we know that if we keep on in that pattern we're going to do irreparable damage to each other's psyches. People eat at each other for twenty years with that kind of shit and it's ugly and horrible and we don't want to get into it. So we put out an incredible amount of energy trying to understand what's going on, trying to figure out what we're feeling.
G: Do you see some improvement?
J: Yeah, I see some improvement. Patty seems to have a lot more
courage, to be stronger. And I feel, I think because she's stronger,
more able to express anger. We're working at it.

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AMAZON QUARTERLY IS OFFERING ONE $50
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Dear Readers,

It's layout finale night and we've saved some space to let you know how
we're doing. We're a little ripped on a fine California wine, cause to
be perfectly honest, proofreading and the final details of layout are
less than exciting. So s'excuse the errors and turn on your right brain
for the remainder.

We've got some news -- we and AQ are moving. Your next issue will be
mailed from Cambridge, MA where Gina and I will be teaching a course in
Contemporary Lesbian Culture at The Feminist Studies Program, Cambridge-
Goddard School for Social Change. AQ will continue, as ever, but possibly a little later than scheduled if we have difficulty finding a
printer. We would really appreciate hearing from sisters in the Boston
area who'd be interested in helping us and AQ make the transition.
Write to us care of Cambridge-Goddard, 5 Upland Rd., Cambridge, MA 02140.
All other correspondence should be sent to our California address.

As some of you may have noticed, we have a new poetry editor, Audre
Lorde. She is a Black lesbian-feminist poet in NYC -- read her review
of Sula in this issue. We're happy to welcome her to AQ.

We also welcome your manuscripts--especially essays and art work--
and hope you'll continue to support AQ in the coming year.

---Audre Lorde

I want to tell you that your
publication is by far the best one
of its kind that I've read. I
hope Miss Q has a long and pros-
perous life. Nothing - NOTHING
AT ALL - of the kind exists any-
where in England. It's appal-
ling. And moreover, very little
of the literature from the States
has found its way across the
Atlantic. There's an incredible
potential for political unity
among women here, and I think
that one of the major obstacles
to it is the lack of national
organs of information and lit-
erature.

---Sherry, England

There have been few things in my
life that have given me the joy
and courage that I have felt rea-
ding Amazon Quarterly. I feel
such great happiness and warmth
in the sisterhood that flows from
the pages of your work. I can
never remember not feeling the
excitement of loving another wo-
man but only recently I have come
to know myself as lesbian. Amazon
Quarterly has and does mean so
much to me in my struggle for
self-reclamation. "Thank you" are
such simple words, yet they carry
such gratitude and rejoicing.

Keep loving and exploring --
we are hearing!

---Margie, Oklahoma
Thank you, sisters, AQ feels like a friend and I love you for it. We all have a very real need for knowledge of each other and you are doing a fantastic job of providing a vehicle for communication. -- Gay, California

I found your interviews showing a cross section of lesbian experiences fascinating, even down to the variety of speech patterns. It's sad and ironic that most of us grew up lonely, afraid and convinced we were the only ones in the world who were gay, simply because there was no one around to tell us otherwise. May this never happen again to anyone!

In remembering the hell I went through just 10-15 years ago, I find the Gay Liberation Movement glorious and a little awe-inspiring. Perhaps due to my traumatic teenage years, I still have not found the courage to step out of my closet. I'm dedicated to the day when I can do just that. Until then, we think of you women as lives, giving us hope and pride in ourselves. -- Trudy and Marie

Please renew me! The efforts of you beautiful people have made me a new woman! When I am able to shed my "Post-Office Box Lesbian" title and come out, it will be for good and forever and you, sisters, have given me the courage to make such plans. I love you! -- Sherry

I've read every issue of the Quarterly, and each one for me is a resource for my thinking and feeling and strength. No other magazine has ever given me quite the same sense of the palpable presences of those of you who make it—and of all the women who are coming in touch with themselves, and of the buried strength and wisdom in women who have not yet allowed themselves (in the face of all that denies it) to know what they know.

I read Judy Grahm's amazing poem sitting in the library of Harvard when I teach, weeping and feeling my head expand with the truth and courage and insight of it—and then went on to read Laurel's article that explores and ramifies so much that I have lately felt and begun, myself, to articulate in my teaching of literature and fiction-writing. And I thought of all the years I have studied and taught in this patriarchal institution, where the "great literature of the ages" is read, and how bizarre it seemed in this setting to weep with the joy and pain of a poem—how antithetical to the spirit of the place. The male vision that shapes this institution is working overtime to ensure (through its ideals of "objectivity" and "reason") that such connections with our lives never be made. They must almost totally obliterate their own feeling lives in order to deny ours: because once women's emotional knowledge was taken seri-

ously as something other than hysteria or "mere" subjectivity, the whole patriarchal structure would blow sky high.

If your circulation isn't yet as large as Time, please know the nourishment and support you bring to those women who do read you.

—Cynthia Glauber, Massachusetts

I want to thank you for the range and variety of material that you make available to women in Berkeley and the rest of the country. The women who live in my house, and who are connected with it, have different attitudes about feminism, sexism and lesbianism. But we all find it a catalyst for thought, conversation and action.

—Wendy, California

The other morning I tuned into Zodiac News and discovered that the Lesbians on the Continent are/were organizing a movement to acquire the Greek island of Lesbos. A Lesbian homeland. A new society. A refuge.

And that idea fortified me. I suddenly felt that I could endure anything just knowing that there was a homeland.

We need it—just as we need the supportive network of the underground in this hostile society. I do not think that private groups of women on communes constitute a Lesbian Nation. National organization is necessary. Probably a corporation would have to be formed to acquire land and take care of legal hassles. But the Mormons did it—and the Amish—not to speak of the fighting Israelis.

I have faith that when we come together we will discover that we are farmers, mechanics, doctors (I am 3 yrs. away from my MD and know 2 other women who are also), teachers, carpenters, lawyers—and—that we are committed heart and gut to other women in general and to Lesbians with all our strength—and—that we can be mutually sustaining—and that we can build a new society.

My sisters—Next year in Lesbos! -- Sue, Minnesota
HOW TO MAKE A MAGAZINE

BY LAUREL

When we started Amazon Quarterly we knew almost nothing about what was involved in publishing a magazine, which was a good thing, since we assumed it was fun and easy and that helped make it so. We've just blundered through and learned from our mistakes...but often we've muttered "Why didn't somebody tell us!" as we realized we'd taken the long way around once again. We thought some of you might want to start a magazine, print a book of poetry or some of what we've picked up, whether you think you might want to start a newsletter, print a book of poetry or photographs, or just help out with the newsletter from your women's center.

Because of new advances in printing technology, small runs (less than 2,000 copies, say) can be printed for much less than it would cost to xerox the material—and, of course, the quality is much better. So, even if you have to pay a printer, it shouldn't be more than 36 cents per sheet (or 1 1/2 c per page since there are 2 pages per sheet), and the more copies you print the cheaper each one will be.

The first step is to typeset your copy. Professional typesetting on a machine that "justifies" the length of lines so that they come out even on the right hand side is very expensive. It could cost you as much or more than what you pay the printer. Even margins aren't all that important, so we decided to use an IBM Selectric and type the manuscripts ourselves, saving about $350 per issue. A Selectric can be rented for $30 per month or purchased for $490 new. It is preferable to other electrics because the style of type can easily be changed from this to this to this, but whatever electric typewriter you decide on, you should use a carbon ribbon which you type on only once and throw away.

What comes out of the typewriter will be exactly what the printed copy will look like unless you decide to have the printer reduce it when she/he prints it. We reduce everything by 10% in order to fit more into AO's pages. When we type the copy we set the margins so that what is typed will be 10% larger than we want it to be when it's printed.

After everything is typeset, you're ready to start puzzling over what will fit where. We use a chart like the one below to help us visualize what pages are opposite each other. If you'll open this issue up all the way and flatten it out, you'll find that its 72 pages are printed on 10 legal size sheets (8 1/2 x 14). There are 36 sides. Now except for the centerfold (pp. 36 and 37 in AQ) none of the consecutive pages are on the same sheet: page 1 and page 72 are on the same sheet, page 2 and page 71 are on the same sheet, etc. At first this was mind boggling, so we made up a dummy—that is, a mock-up with the number of pages we wanted (72) all numbered and stapled like the finished-product-to-be. This is a work-book for planning your layout. You'll undoubtedly need to reshuffle things, so use a pencil, and don't panic—everything is fixable.

O.K., when you know where all the copy will go and have measured carefully to insure it will really fit, you're ready to do layout, or paste up as some people say. Only DON'T USE PASTE and don't use that old standby rubber cement unless it's really an emergency. Paste will ruin your fine typing job with blisters and bubbles, and rubber cement is a pain in the ass.

One of the tools you really owe it to yourself to get is an Electro-Stik Hand waxer like the one pictured here.

This little gizmo rolls warm wax onto the back of your copy. It dries and hardens, but it will be sticky forever—no rush like with rubber cement, and you can peel up the copy 3 or 4 different times if you have to without ruining it. The waxer costs around $30 new, but we got ours for $10 used (good photo-supply stores carry them). The Electro-Stik wax costs around $2 per box, but it goes a long way.
After you've waxed your copy, you're ready to make your layout sheets. Some people use blue-lined commercial graph paper and some printers can furnish layout sheets to you free. We've never found just the right size, so we make our own using a T-square and a non-photographic light blue pencil.

You need a large flat surface to work on—we use an old door atop concrete blocks for a layout table. It should be smooth and have some reliable right angles (check with your T-square). If you make a "frame" for your layout sheets on the table with strips of tape, you won't have to keep measuring when you draw in your margins with the blue pencil. If you use the side of the table next to your tummy as the base of your frame, you'll just need to make two corners at the top with masking tape. Mark the margins on the table and then just use the T-square to blue pencil them onto the layout sheets as you go.

If you are starting with page 1, what you'll have in front of you will be page 1 and page 72. Even numbered pages are always on the left and odd numbered pages are always on the right. Our most common mistake was forgetting this and trying to put page two on the same layout sheet as page one, for example. So, remember, after you've laid down page one, you've got to get out another sheet and make page 2 and page 71.

Check the placement of each strip of copy you lay down both top to bottom and across with the T-square. The wax will allow you to slide things into place. A pair of tweezers will be helpful for placing small chunks—use the point of an X-acto knife to adjust things.

Tap the copy gently into place, now you're ready to roll it down.

For this you'll need another gizmo which you shouldn't try to do without—a porcelain hand roller. Roll from the center outward, like making a pie shell. Even after you've rolled down the copy, you should be able to pull it up if you've made a mistake, but unless you really work at it, the copy is permanently put.

Be careful not to get wax anywhere on the layout sheet—it picks up dirt like a magnet, and you'll have big blotsches on your printed copies. Use liquid paper typing correction fluid to cover incurred during layout. This will cover stray wax too.

Usually, at this point, we put down our headlines which we've saved room for at the beginning of each article. This is a slow and painstaking process unless you have access to a headliner machine. Most small magazines don't and, like us, they use press type lettering. This comes in alphabet sheets—as many as 50 or 60 different styles depending on the company. Many styles and sizes should be available at your local architectural supply store. Choose whatever you like, but keeping the mood of your articles in mind, you'll have some idea of what is most appropriate. For our splashy Double Issue layout we used outrageously baroque lettering. Last issue we wanted things quiet and understated—and we used completely different kinds of press type.

They'll probably try to sell you a stylus for rubbing on the press type, but all you really need is the rounded end of your X-acto knife. Don't be discouraged if letters tend to break apart and peel off at first. It takes a little practice. Be sure to line the letters up straight with your T-square and to make them equidistant. Note that some letters like "L" have lots of "open space" on one side and can be placed closer to the next letter than a letter like "H" which is
solid on both sides.

Once you think everything including the headlines is in the right place, you're ready for several proofreadings. Try to let people to proof who've never read the stuff before and who aren't immune to the errors. Each error should be circled with the blue pencil—the marks will not be picked up by the printer's camera, so you can make them as big and bad as you like. Make a list of the corrections that go on each page. Type them along with their page number, wax the correction sheet, and simply cut them out and stick them over the goofs. Use the T-square to help you keep things in line. Unless you've been a perfect typist, expect to spend some time on this proofing process. Make sure that you check to see a sentence which carries over from say p. 13 to p. 14 makes sense, and really read each paragraph to make sure you haven't accidentally left something out.

So far, I've been talking about only the typed copy. Next issue we'll pick up with graphics and half tones, show you how the printer photographs the copy, burns the metal plates, and runs the press. Drop us a note if you have any questions about the process so far.

SPRING/1974 AMAZON QUARTERLY AWARDS

The first quarterly $50 award will be divided and given to: Pat Emmerson for "Emily" and Frances Rooney for "Womanblood." A generous sister has given us a grant for the 1974 year so we can continue to offer this incentive to new writers and artists. We especially would like to encourage women to send us in-depth essays and visual art, as our need is greatest in these areas. See page 62 for details.

SAVING THE TREES

In the Fall 1973 Special Issue, we asked for women to help us with the extra cost of using recycled paper. We were especially concerned since the trees AQ is printed on are cut down in Canada for use in the U.S. A very kind sister from Canada has made this issue possible by sending the $300 extra necessary to buy recycled paper. We hope that her example will lead other women's publications to want to save the trees, and that you will want to send a contribution (however small) to:

TREES
Amazon Quarterly
554 Valle Vista
Oakland, CA 94610

CONTRIBUTORS


AUDRE LORDE: AQ's new poetry editor lives in New York where she writes (most recently, From a Land Where Other People Live, Broadside Press, 1973) and teaches classes at S.U.N.Y. on creative writing, and racism.

FRANCES ROONEY: I'm a writer, a Canadian-American (eighteen years in the States, the last ten in Canada), and somebody who's trying to figure out what this being a woman is all about.

GINA: I balanced at the edge of what I don't know, jumped, and found -- more of the same shit. Heaven (and the women's culture) don't come all at once.

JENNIE ORVINO: Is active in Milwaukee's lesbian community, where she works in video, writes for the Amazon, and takes care of her kids.

LAUREL: I'm looking forward to moving to the East coast, and at the same time aware of how far from the center the hassles will take us. Hoping all of you will bear with us and help us make the transition.

PAT EMMERSON: I'm 28; I write a lot to entertain myself and have the standard unpublished novel sitting on the shelf. My love is animals and I live with a kitten and my dog, Jolly.

ROBIN MORGAN: Is the author of Monster (Random House, 1973) and is now at work on a second book of poetry and two prose books. Of "The City of God" she says: 'The poem was written out of a despair which is as necessary to the vision as the vision itself. The exorcism of the despair is of course at the heart of the artistic process and the revolutionary process (as if those two were separate)."
AMAZON QUARTERLY IS VERY HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED A $1000 GRANT FOR WRITERS' AND ARTISTS' PAYMENTS FROM THE COORDINATING COUNCIL OF LITERARY MAGAZINES. EACH ISSUE WE WILL BE ABLE TO PAY $250 FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAGAZINE BY WOMEN ARTISTS AND WRITERS. WE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGE WOMEN WHO HAVE NOT PUBLISHED BEFORE TO SEND US YOUR WORK. ALL MANUSCRIPTS AND ART WORK MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE. PLEASE ALLOW THREE MONTHS FOR ACCEPTANCE OR RETURN.

AMAZON QUARTERLY
BOX 434, WEST SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02144
CONNECTIONS

If you would like to contact women who share your interests, we will try to help. Send a brief description of yourself, your name, address, and your age (we cannot accept anyone under legal age). Let us know if you want to meet women in your area, women anywhere living in communes, women in the arts, women with children, women just coming out, etc.—make up your own categories. Include $1 plus a long self-addressed envelope with two 10-cent stamps. We will send you the next issue of Connections listing at least 100 other women's descriptions and requests. Nearly 200 women have taken part in Connections so far. We hope those of you with a need for contacts with other women will participate in the next issue. Send your description—requests to us by September 1. Each issue is different, so some of you may want to insert your request several times.

Many thanks to Katie and Patsy for a fine job on Connections, to Mary and Paula for their photographs in this issue, and to the donor who matched our matching grant, and to all who have contributed money to Amazon Quarterly.
This issue of AQ is devoted to right-brain experiencing -- to realities other than the linear, logically predictable ones to which we ordinarily confine ourselves in order to act in our workaday world. The article beginning on p. 12, part 1 of a 2-part series on women and alternate codifications of reality by Gina, sets our course for Donna-Juana-Land. Many of the stories in this issue, too, bring us messages from beyond the limitations of left-brain logic. We hope you'll enjoy this journey and that some new possibilities will open for you along the way.

AQ is now embarking on her third year and we'd like to mark the occasion by remembering some of our original dreams for the magazine. In the first issue we said that AQ would be an exploration of female sensibility and we invited women to write not necessarily about lesbians, but about anything with a woman-loving-woman perspective. To quote, "The important factor is that it be in some way a launching out from all that we as women have been before into something new and uncharted ...a voyage into the depths of your mind or a new connection you've discovered between something in your anthropology class and a book you were reading in herstory. Even science is not verboten."

We said, then, that what we wanted was communication from lesbians who are consciously exploring new patterns in their lives. We called that first message from us "Frontiers", as we are pioneers, all of us, in learning to see and to act apart from the patriarchal patterning we've all been subject to.

For us, AQ has become much more than we could have imagined 2 years ago. We think all our dreams for it have been coming true and that the dream itself continues to expand. We would very much like to hear from women who've been reading AQ for some time now: has AQ opened up new frontiers for you? What have you especially liked (disliked)? What is your dream for the magazine? We'll print as many letters as will fit, next issue.

On to news. As forecast last issue, we have moved AQ to the Boston area. It was an incredible undertaking, but we are settled now and AQ (all her many boxes of supplies and equipment) is back together. We are sorry for this issue being late, and for our lag in answering correspondence. Thanks to all who've been patient on both counts.

We'd like to mention, too, that the reason we moved from the West Coast is to create what is undoubtedly the first accredited Masters Degree program in lesbian studies. In the Fall, we will be teaching a year-long ovular in Contemporary Lesbian Culture at Goddard-Cambridge, and we invite any of our readers who may be interested to write them for a catalogue and course description. It's free from: Goddard-Cambridge, 5 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA, 02140. Applications are being accepted through August for the year beginning September, 1974. There are also many other fine ovulars in the Feminist Studies Program such as Women and Literature, Women's History, Women and Psychology, etc. The result of any of these, including lesbian culture, would be a master's degree in Feminist Studies.

Also, another scoop. We've a friend in California who has just bought a 40-acre paradise of wooded hills about an hour north of San Francisco. She is looking for other women with money and/or skills to make her dream of a women's retreat come true. Women who wish to get actively involved can write to AQ and we'll pass on your letters. There are other similar opportunities listed in Connections -- please see p. 2 for information on how to participate.

We are happy to announce that AQ has received a $1000 grant for the next year's artists' and writers' awards. That's $250 for each issue -- five times what we have been able to offer. Our need is greatest for in-depth essays, researched articles, and visual art. Artists can send photos of their work instead of the originals. We also would like to receive women's record reviews in the hopes of establishing a column. Please understand that we won't have time for personal critiques on everyone's work. We read and appreciate all the art and writing which women send.

AQ is growing up to 5,000 copies per issue. This is a big leap and we ask all of you who possibly can to give a gift subscription or to interest a bookstore in ordering so we can actually distribute and pay for what we've printed. Be sure to see the information about FREE SUBSCRIPTIONS on p. 49. The big bite that inflation is taking out of our subscription price makes it essential to keep growing -- spread the word about AQ. And a warm heart-felt thank you to all of you who have loved and supported us through Amazon Quarterly's first two years.
"Once upon a time there was a wonderful bear, named Lucy. She lived in the deep magic forest, on the other side of Talking River. What made Lucy wonderful was not only how strong she was, not only how beautiful—all gold and orange colored in the early sun—but how kind she was, gentle with all the other animals in that forest no man has ever found. She never ate fish the way bears in the world do, she would sing duets with them instead as they swam along Talking River. She helped the bees scout for good clover, and had learned the secret bee dance, so she could tell them where it was. The bees rewarded her by giving her all the honey she needed, which she would eat along with all the other wonderful berries that grew all year long. But there weren't many other animals her size in that place, so she grew lonely and restless. One day the River noticed that she was singing fewer and fewer duets, and peering farther and farther over the River's edge.

"What are you looking for, Lucy?" the River asked.

"I'm looking for someone big enough to dance with me," she said. "I'm thinking of crossing to find others more like myself."

"Oh no, Lucy!" the River cried. "There are dangerous men on the other side, who will capture you and dress you in ridiculous skirts and charge a price for your dancing and make you eat flesh, and keep you locked up for their own amusement—either that, or they'll shoot you outright."

"But there must be another kind of people besides these men."

"There is. There is another kind that walks, called women, but they're mostly afraid—afraid of each other and the men and of what the men tell them. Among them there are some who aren't afraid, who are trying to know something different, but they are outlaws and in hiding. One, called Rainbo Woman, is heading this way alone. Wait for her to come." "Okay," said Lucy. So she waited, and began dancing the bee dance again, to pass the time."

"Will she have to wait a long time, for Rainbo Woman to come?" asked Inez, rubbing Abby's neck with her nose.

"I don't know yet. Stop that, it tickles, bum," Abby said. "And when Rainbo Woman comes, will she turn Lucy Bear into a beautiful woman, will they live happily ever after?"

"Well, now, kid, I don't rightly know. You're getting ahead of the story. Maybe Lucy Bear will turn Rainbo Woman into Rainbo Bear, and they'll spend the rest of their nights growing at each other, their stomachs full of blueberries."

Abby turns to look at Inez in the Colorado street light, in their first apartment, a two-room converted attic. Peggy Warren sleeps in the other room, which is also the kitchen. Inez is curled on her side, cuddled into the hollow of Abby's thin arm, looking up. They fit. Seventeen, eighteen, thin to fat, not self-conscious, pleased to be there, seam against seam. Their hands trace each other, begin to touch as leaves touch in first summer winds. Unbelievable. All the forces of civilization had worked against this, still it happened. They made love again that day, the last time before falling asleep. They had the freedom to touch while they were still children. No one had given them permission. They just made it all up, taking their freedom with their hands in front. There was nothing in either of them that was older than seven, except that they knew how to do it, finally, after five weeks they had figured one hold from another. There were no movements putting pressure on their consciences, only safety in being two together. There was only the fairy tale, being seventeen and sleeping in each other's arms in Colorado. These small protections they wove like nets, to keep away what they understood perfectly.

They understood perfectly about names and rumors, psychiatrists and angry father, perverts, rotten ungrateful selfish vain children, disgust and fear, more fear, self-hatred, confusion, no women will let us babysit for their children if they find out. They were beginning to learn to protect themselves by never touching or looking at each other in public. By waiting until they got into gas station restrooms when they wanted to kiss each other. By calling themselves roommates. By watching other people very carefully. By being children only together, in their first double-bed. Sometimes they were open with Peggy, who never told them until three years later that she was jealous, for wanting to join them.

Abby accepted it, because it was safe and at the same time exciting, a
little dangerous—she knew it felt good, and she wanted it. She was very stubborn about what she wanted, when she was positive that she wanted it. She had been stubborn with her parents for two years now about her independence. About not going to a Long Island suburban high school anymore after tenth grade. Her mother had screamed and cried, and her father had consoled her mother by sending Abby away to boarding school—first to an experimental school in the South which Abby had hated almost as much as the suburban one, and then to Highland Hills in Massachusetts, where she met Peggy and Inez. She was also stubborn with her parents about not taking any more money from them, except for school. She was stubborn to be on her own, to start really running, to build muscles at least eight ways. The plans for the octagonal cabin she was going to build in the wilderness were all drawn up, down to even which way the doors would slide. There would be room in her life to travel cross-country on horseback, and there would be room for horses to live inside her cabin in the cold mountain winters. She would take care of all the animals that would come to her, and she wouldn't bother with people. We let her be a tomboy, and she got a little willful. But she's young still, there's plenty of time for her to get married, like her sisters. Abby picked up worms so they wouldn't get run over in the middle of the street. She began to see Inez the same way she saw her cat, or the horses in her fantasies. To have that feeling about Inez, that she needed and still Abby wasn't sure. What is this sex and living together? What is going on here? She knew it wasn't wrong, it couldn't be wrong, to feel this. But what do the words mean anyway.

She knew that she would not let Inez hurt her, that no human being would get that close to her. She knew people wielded power over each other, seeing how her mother and father, good middle-class Jewish people, controlled each other with money, power to make each other miserable. She saw all people trying to get that edge, parents over children, teachers over students, bosses over workers, lovers over lovers. She didn't understand why it was, but she knew she did not want it. She would go alone into the mountains first, with her camera, and be with the animals. Inez heard Abby when she said, "I don't like people, I am better company for just myself, I'd rather be a hermit." But Inez knew that she could get Abby to follow her, just the same.

There were powers, there were ways, and Inez knew about them. Guiltily she extended a paw towards Abby, saying: I too am a creature, I am a wounded creature, nurture me. There was just enough attraction in their bodies and confusion in their heads to bind them.

A thousand fantasies multiply in that feeling—of marriages, weddings, houses hung with ribbons of safety. Abby was the first person who didn't hurt Inez—didn't make her feel freakish and clumsy. Inez knew what that meant, what the game was, how you had to hold on to it, opportunity only knocks once, she had read about it in books, she had read a lot of books, now it was her turn to play, to use her real body as a marker in the game. It would be good, it would be gentle, it would be so tender that they could make a movie, and get someone else to play her part (who wasn't quite so heavy). They could make a movie about Inez and Abby, so that people would see that lesbians are beautiful, there is nothing, nothing at all unnatural about them, they too can have weddings and be in the movies.

Some pornographic novel! Some novel! What's going on here anyway? Where's the sex, where's the action, the angst?

Let me try to make it clear. In 1967 we still wanted to repeat the same straight story. But we knew even then, in our careful duplications (toasters, laundry, feeding the cats, a whole inventory of living together), that we were pornographic because we were both women.

Nothing else—we were too modern already to believe that one of us was the man and the other was the woman. We felt like neither men nor women. We were females, we were queers ("but I'm not a lesbian," Abby said in Colora-
crime. She is an old friend of Abby and Inez. There are all the places where these stories touch each other and make the start of a common life, the beginning of an idea about community. There are all the places where the story falls apart and something else shows through—an isolation, a terror, a hunger to shape that isolation and terror into some kind of love for ourselves.

A hunger for each other, two hungers, three: one out of fear; one for metamorphosis (to be girls no longer, to be women, and serious); one for actual love, whatever it is. There is a first powerfulness in knowing what our hungers are, that they may not be taken from us and sold by Tampax or Pepsi-Cola.

When you’re talking about someone’s body, that’s about as close as you can get. This is how it worked in our bodies, how our hungers worked into our bones. There was authority at every pressure point, trying to direct us (for our own good). We fought back with fads that nearly killed us. And slowly in our bodies words grew, formed a strength against both the fads and the pressures of our mentors.

We thought we were very special then, we thought we were hot shit, for being perfectly existentially unique, reading all the books by men about ultimate aloneness and the isolation of mass man.

We were exactly like millions and millions of others in the sixties and seventies and long before and after, self-important with big words like alienation and technological elite. It’s the same story for every girl and boy adolescent who knuckled under waves of words they couldn’t own: sexual revolution and hard rock and LSD. We were scraped along the sharp stones of those, where the undertow dragged us.

But in being faceless unmentionable nameless lesbians, unapproved by Ann Landers or Jerry Rubin, in being unable to find catch words in newspapers or the books we read in our dormitories, for that, for what that meant, women loving women—in that we could have no fads. That was where some of us began our resistance, learned to change (acid on stone) who we thought we were doomed to be into who we are. Tough, strong, proud: free women.

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**SUMMER/1974 AMAZON QUARTERLY AWARDS**

Diane Derrick will receive $50 for her contributions to this issue in sculpture and fiction. $25 will go to Maud Haimson for her story, "Hands." Our five fine poets will receive $5 each as a token of our appreciation. Though we have just $100 for awards this issue, beginning with our next issue we will have $250. We hope this will be an incentive for new women artists and writers. We would especially like to encourage women to send us in-depth essays and visual art, as our need is greatest in these areas. See the inside front cover for details.

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here is the attic room
where i sat in my borrowed dress
winding my fingers round old bones

By Martha Courtot

here my skin first opened
drank the flowers dying on the wall
like a desert drinks the rain

here the coffin-closet
where my father's clothes hung
empty as eggshells

years after we left him
in the happy ground
his smell stayed on

---

By Martha Courtot

on summer nights the trains cried
my ears grew sounds only this room knows

i used to run my hand
along the window sill
look, i can still scrape the dirt from my fingers

i have made myself
out of pieces
no one else was using

a scrap here
a scrap there
sew sew

mother to myself
my own god
i blew life into found bones

between beats in the blood
the attic breathes and pauses
as if it knows the real me

it thinks someday i will come home

but i know this:
1'll never climb those stairs again

a piece here
a piece there
sew sew
ROSY RIGHTBRAIN'S EXORCISM/INVOCATION (part one)

The perceptions recorded here are paths I've been exploring the last two years. I started this writing wanting to share my feelings about the patriarchal art world and my alternative visions for the meanings and uses of art—but I'm finding even that large subject too narrow, I'm finding it impossible to separate art and life even for the sake of the conventions of essay-writing. For a compelling but as yet unknown-to-me reason, I've found myself going back before "history" to the first matriarchal cultures, reconstructing the time from then to now like a history book I've ever read.

Sometimes I think I'm a feminist historian, chronicling the inner events of the last 5,000 years. Sometimes I'm a mapmaker, rendering diagrams of states of consciousness and labeling the parts. Sometimes I feel I'm a brave and lonely pioneer at unknown frontiers—just as often I'm sure everything I may have to say is already perfectly obvious to the women I want to reach—or complete gibberish of no use to anyone but me.

Always though, I have a sense of the personal importance of this writing for me. I'm trying to give myself (and in the process other women) a positive valuable definition of art. My artist-self has been in limbo the last two years (with rare exceptions like the day before an issue of AE goes to the printer and she has no cover), because of the morass of lies and schemes called Art by the patriarchal cultures we live in all over the world. I know, and other women know, that art can be a real power for change. I know that art is not fame or status or precious objects or museums or galleries or even paint or paper or clay or a video camera. But when we women try to practice art as we know it, we work in the midst of the patriarchy's rot, and by not articulating our own definitions we fall into theirs.

In the coming women's culture, that fantasy of fantasies, when the left hand moves everywhere openly, when the full moon shines bright as the sun on our days, when every particle of white is right, male is good, black left female bad, that half-formed clay bowl has been burned out of all our genes by our growing insistence on a consciousness based on multiplicity (yes/and) rather than duplicity (either/or), when we as a planet live cooperatively without the patriarchal tools of war, monopoly, government, race, family and religious systems, etc., when each of us can live her life with as many options as we each can imagine—in that woman-centered culture there will be no art. We will say, as the Balinese did before the American tourist industry discovered their culture, "We have no art. We do everything the best we can." Our buildings will be designed not by architects in the service of land development corporations but by those who will use the buildings, who can integrate aesthetic, utilitarian and economic concerns according to their own needs. Our children will grow up in many different environments and will be free to choose those environments. We will all finally be in control of our own lives in a world of our own making—our lives will be our art, and time the medium for our constant individual and collective creation.

I spend whole days, when I can find them, and many nights, dreaming the world into a woman-place: I dismantle cities and remake them according to the maps of our body systems; I imagine what a thousand years of women's research in the healing arts could produce; I wonder at the meanings sexuality will take, freed from male influence. I live on this vision. I need this vision, in all its complexity and detail, just to get out of bed some mornings—yet I don't mean to imply that I see the new world-wide matriarchy around the corner, or even that I see it as inevitable. Just possible, if the boys don't manage to destroy the planet along the way. We need to shift sometimes to a several-thousand-year perspective to find such large-scale hope. Three thousand years from now the lives of all the earth's peoples may be changed so drastically that the reciting herstory will think in terms of a past "women's" revolution. Women may not be considered a separate group of people. Women may be the only people. The world transformation may be understood as: those who loved life grew strong and multiplied and squeezed out of existence, sometimes patiently and sometimes by force, those who love death and tried to spread it everywhere. That's 3,000 years in the future—for now, we women need to keep in mind who the death-lovers are. Since men's objectification and ownership of women set the precedent for all other forms of ownership, we must peel back and expose that first layer of deceit, at its most personal and most public level, to make any basic change in the world.

If we look back four or five thousand years we can see that although women were once only the "unartful" sex, it was the men who set the precedent of the world patriarchy. In the old matriarchal cultures, aesthetic, spiritual, sensual and practical ways of perceiving the world had not yet been separated and labeled, so it was possible for a visit to the community spring, for example, to be a daily chore, a social event, an aesthetic and sensual pleasure, and an experience of spiritual affirmation, all at once. (Think of doing these all at once: turning on the tap in your apartment, being baptised in a religious ceremony, looking at a public fountain, picnicking with friends at a beach or lake.) "Pre-historic" women were the first to use agriculture, weaving, pottery, architecture, all "art" forms more valued for the activity involved in their production and for their use in everyday life than for their existence as objects. If I slip inside the body of one of these ancient women, I notice immediately that I am aware of the earth beneath my feet and the clay in my hands as part of my body. Everything I come in contact with is alive, so my attention takes in every detail with respect and alertness—an alertness free, now, from fearfulness, because I feel strong familiar communication with the spirits of this place. Energy flows freely through my body, down my legs grounding me in the earth, and sparks out my fingertips making a dance with the half-formed clay bowl. My attention is unfocused, not fixed any
one place, so I can believe at once in the bowl as porridge container and as a tool for channeling spiritual power, and I'm open to whatever new meanings might become possible. I'm relaxed, calm, and whirling in the dance. I've described what I'll call this woman's body state—the organization of energies in her body as she molds the clay. Energy in her body is free more than blocked, and is being contained, channeled into her movements and intense attention-style, rather than being expressed as emotion. Other body states can be very different—energy could be caught in parts of her body, blocking certain movements and emotions and freeing others, as it would be if she were frightened. Or energy could flow more openly than it was when she made the bowl, as it would if she were making love with her sister caving—lots of free energy, being expressed in feelings and movements rather than contained.

Did the "pre-historic" woman don that particular body state in order to make a beautiful and useful clay bowl, or did she make the bowl to enable her to channe the pain that blocked certain movements and emotions? Did she make it possible for her to channe the pain that blocked certain movements and emotions? Did she make it possible for her to enter that enjoyable body state? Can you believe this question is repeated over and over again, these days, by artists and art patrons and art teachers and feminist artists? Product vs. process. Chicken vs. egg--the assumption that one or the other had to come first has created a lot of problems. The ideas of cause and effect and its uses—it built Western civilization* but, like that venture, it oversimplifies, separates, imposes hierarchy, where there should be connecting interdependent living networks. It's true that the creative process is the means for materializing the important part, the work of art. And it's true that the work of the art is simply an excuse for the artist to experiment with body states for the sake of her own transformations. A body state doesn't cause a work of art, or an organism, nor does the art or the organism cause a certain body state—they are equally cause and effect to each other, dancing together in simultaneous communication.

The Takeover:
I want to describe now how men came to hate women, and how they took over the world. As I separate men and women so quickly into air-tight boxes, I am aware it doesn't work exactly that way. I know there are racial, cultural, class differences and more, that allow for some women sometimes not to be oppressed by all men, nor does the art or the organism cause a certain body state—they are equally cause and effect to each other, dancing together in simultaneous communication.

I don't like the way I'm writing this. I'm bored. I apologize a lot, I get bogged down in peripheral explanations. Everything I want to say is if not factual, at least straightforward and pseudo-factual—so why this big bog, why can't I just state the primordial case, from point to point, and go on toward the twentieth century? Yes, why not? In my efforts not to distort through simplification (which I can see has happened anyway just by using language), I'm making a sticky mess of this essay. The usual way in writing this part is to lie in each new subject of inquiry as it's mentioned; it's like making a wall of building blocks, each one added, one at a time, to form part of the very solid whole. Instead I'm weaving an airy shawl, picking up some threads and letting others hang loose, making a pattern that won't be visible till the last thread, maybe not even then—and that in any case will let the wind blow through. The most crucial—and still inaccessible by way of fact—stage in our evolution was the development of female and male. Why those particular forms? Why such built-in assymetry and impossibility for equality? I'm assuming Eve and Adam did not spring fig-leaf-covered from the garden, that there is substance and truth in the older myths of gods birthing children part ethnogenically, that once we were all mothers. How we got to be two sexes I won't even guess, but by the time we were, the struggles of the next many millenia were outlined before us. The circle and the line imply differences in ways of perceiving—cyclical, inclusive, vs. aggressive, fragmenting—that reflect the history and future of women and men on the planet. On the concrete level of sexual relations between women and men, the same patterns hold—i.e. no matter how loving, sensitive and knowledgable a woman and man are as lovers, the woman still opens herself physically to the man in a way he can not be open to her, and he still comes into her in a way she can't reciprocate. And that's under the best conditions. What is more apparent in the lives of most women is that a woman's pleasure or even consent is not necessary to the hetero-sex act, while a man's pleasure defines the act. And then there's rape—a violation not only possible for a woman to commit, Violence and conquest are always basic components of male sexuality in patriarchal cultures.

In the same way that rape, man's model for action in the world, has a basis in anatomy, so the fact of women as bearers of children is a basis for man's sexual conquest of women and his attempts to control living creatures and processes by killing them. Women were the focus of the old patriarchal cultures because they were the ones who kept human life coming. Since women had this intimate connection with the birthing of all living beings, and since they were connected still further by their cycles of miraculously pain-
less bleeding to the moon, the tides, the earth's cycles of growth and rest, women knew what to do. They raised the children, planted and tended the crops, decided the cycles of the community, sang the prayers. Men did not create life and had no noticable cycles, except the daily one, synchronizing them with the sun's movements. (Researchers are only in the last few years beginning to wonder about men's biological cycles, and haven't yet found much.) Men hunted—killing was easier for them, distanced as they were from the processes of life.

The situation of men throughout the matrilarcal time was shaky, from the men's point of view. Women accepted men in the usually ambivalent but nevertheless real way a mother can accept a son—but men couldn't have a mother's perspective, and came to experience women as fundamentally different from themselves. Here was the beginning of womb-envy. Here was the start of the evolution into patriarchy. Men's separation of women into an "other" apart from themselves made ownership possible and murder justifiable, and set the precedent for the dualistic thinking that's become a basic assumption everywhere, even in me as I write this. At first women were probably "different" but not "inferior" in men's eyes—but after many hundreds of years and lots of male bonding (consciousness-raising groups, they may have called them), all the qualities men valued or wanted lined up under the heading "good," and women and all the men's fears were sorted over to "evil." Valerie Solanas has described this process as the incomplete male's attempt to become female (complete) "by claiming as his own all female characteristics—emotional strength and independence, assertiveness, courage, integrity, intensity, etc.—and projecting onto women all male traits—vanity, frivolity, triviality, weakness, etc."

I'm feeling better about the writing of this now, staying interested, but why is it that the two times (several days ago, and now) I've had anything to drink I haven't found a way to go on writing? It's all so very abstract and emotionless, so very left-brained. I want this article to include all of the process I go through in writing it—all the despair and ecstatic vision, the boredom blocking fears, the fears themselves and then the vision again behind the fears. And the frustration and wailing anger and screaming pain at being conscious, in this world, now. And my fumbling artist-self, so sensitive to criticism I want to apologize beforehand, and so sensitive, just so sensitive, I feel like I've never been touched and I'm not sure whether I want this to be a first invitation. And the wise lean Amazon I am who can say "This is how it was 5,000 years ago, I feel it in my blood and that is proof enough." I know that if I include all of what I will have included paragraphs of all of us, and what I say will be true. The times I lean toward the linear, the parts of this I try to "prove," are indications both of my own unfinished struggles with patriarchal values and my attempts to reach other trapped sisters halfway, with a pick and a flashlight for the tunnel.

The evolution of the white man's brain is one level at which it's possible to describe the ways of experiencing men developed and how they differ from women's ways. I can't guess at the timing of this evolution—whether men's brains were structured as they are now at the beginning of the patriarchal order, or whether men's ways of thinking, have only recently in the last 3,000 years, created neuro-physiological correlates. What matters is not cause and effect but the connection and interdependence of these evolving processes.

The cerebral cortex of the brain is divided into two hemispheres, left and right, which are joined by a thick bundle of nerve fibers called the corpus callosum. The left and right hemispheres, in white men more than anyone else, each deal with information in different ways, and specialize in certain functions. The left hemisphere processes information sequentially, as if moving along a straight line, one point at a time. It deals with "objective" facts—ordered lists, analytic thinking, objects that are one thing and therefore not another. In men, the left hemisphere is the only one to use language. The left side of the brain controls the right side of the body. The right hemisphere deals with experience in a diffuse non-sequential way, assimilating many different phenomena simultaneously, finding connections between separate bits of information and organizing them in loose, changeable ways. Awareness of our bodies, recognition of faces, understanding of art and music, dreams and "extra-sensory" perception all are based in the right hemisphere. The right hemisphere controls the left side of the body.

So dualism resides in the very brain. The ways of perceiving that came to be grouped in the left hemisphere are the tools men used to take control of the world. Linear, focused thinking, "objective" thinking, "bad" kinds of human or emotional considerations, enabled men to kill (people, animals, plants, natural processes) with free consciences. Propositional thinking enabled men to ignore the principles of morality inherent in all the earth's systems, and to set up instead their own version of right and wrong which they could believe as long as its logic was internally consistent. The initiation of hierarchy, a concept with its basis in analytic thinking, was a valuable tool in centralizing power and building up the new military states. All ways of perceiving that threatened the logical ways with other realities were grouped together on the other (right) side of the brain and labeled "bad."

The separation of "good" and "bad" qualities into left and right sides of the brain, and the universally constant valuation of qualities, can be seen in every patriarchal culture through its attitudes toward left and right-handedness—the left hand representing the right hemisphere and the right hand the left side of the cortex. In a semantic differential test given to American college freshmen and sophomores (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1957) the Left was strongly characterized as bad, dark, profane, female, unclean, night, west, curved, limp, homosexual, weak, mysterious, low, ugly, black,
associations hold for every culture. Women among the Bedouin Arabs live on all the opposite qualities—male, erect, heterosexual, white, etc. The same other times, the percentage of left-handers increases (from 5.7 between 1929 wars and depressions, when the patriarchy's power is less secure than at the custom of using the right hand to touch the body above the navel, the incorrect and deathly, while the Right was rated (by a different group) to be handers have the same pattern of specialization as right-handers; some show is a sign of the success of patriarchal enculturation, as genetically the is a sign of the success of patriarchal enculturation, as genetically the chances for either side to be dominant are equal (Hildreth 1949). During wars and depressions, when the patriarchy's power is less secure than at other times, the percentage of left-handers increases (from 5.7 between 1929 and 1931 to 17.64 for 1932, for example—New York Times, 1959).

Only right-handed people are used in studies of left-right specialization in the brain, because the results don't hold for left-handers. Some left-handers pattern of specialization; some show a complete reversal in brain function; and some don't show bilateral specialization at all, but use both hemispheres for music, both for language, etc.

Children don't develop brain specialization till they are around five years old—the age of accountability, of the separation of fact and intuition, the beginning of guilt. Women develop some specialization but retain the use of language in both hemispheres, and can switch to using the other hemisphere if tissue in one is destroyed. Much of the research on specialization of the hemispheres has been done with people who, because of accident or disease, have had tissue removed from one hemisphere or the other. Women messed up the statistics for many years (til someone thought to sort the results by sex) by relearning to speak after tissue was removed from the left hemisphere, or showing unimpaired aesthetic judgment after surgery involving the right hemisphere. Women have thicker corpus callosums than men—many more nerve fibers connecting the two hemispheres and thus more communication possible between them. Girls show positive correlation between their levels of artistic interest and competence on tests of verbal ability, whereas boys show no correlations between artistic and verbal areas. Black and other non-white men show brain patterns similar to all women's, with less specialization than white men and reader access to both hemispheres.

The possibility for overthrow of the patriarchal world lies in the fact that women (and children, Blacks, etc.) did not become the Man's image of them, though they/we were and are forced to masquerade as that image, and many. And when it's real in order to survive. As we break through or sneak around the social strictures against using our left hemisphere's ways of thinking we are able to become, not men, but complete beings—women--able to use the capabilities we've had all along but haven't been able to admit to.

Many men's worst fantasy about the women's movement is that women will gain power by becoming just like men, and will create a society in which men will be treated as women are now. This is as good an example as any of the infuriating egomaniac of left-hemisphere perceiving. The left hemisphere's ways typify the constricted ego, the insistent "I." All the patriarchy's religions have tried to dissolve in the cosmic sea, or merge with the Atman, or at least control and humanize with rules about helping one's neighbors (not that these regions in the patriarchy have not had more malevolent roles than this to play). Women have a basically different sense of self from men because even when we use left hemisphere ways of perceiving we are not balanced there, as men (with some variations) are—we balance in the movements from one state of consciousness to another, we balance when we glimpse more than one reality at once. We women can think in the ways men-in-the-patriarchy do, but we can't get stuck there—we are able to calculate the making of a hydrogen bomb, but can sense enough of the living world at the same time to decide not to.

When I started reading about the brain, I found the right-handed, adult white male brain pattern of extreme bilateral specialization always described as the universal human brain function pattern. In the beginning years, the research, neurological, biological, the right hemisphere to be something of a spare, or space-filler. They eventually had it used, and labeled it the "minor" hemisphere, the left being "major"—labels that are still used in a lot of writing about the brain.

I finally did find studies (or rather Laurel did—credit for finding all this brain information goes to her) that admitted to differences in brain function between men and women, White and Black people, etc. Every one of the studies concluded from its data that women were inferior to men, Blacks were inferior to whites. One commonly used test situation that I especially liked for its ridiculous Freudian humor was a dark empty room lit only by a fluorescent rod attached to an armature. Subjects were instructed to enter the room and grasp the rod, placing it vertically in front of them. Males generally caught on to this sooner than females—the males showed "better visuo-spatial ability than females" according to the test results. I.Q. tests designed to measure specialization of thought and white middle-class values, and at which Black children average lower scores than white children, are used as evidence that Black brains function in a way inferior to white brains. The rationale researchers use is that the white male's specialization permits him to concentrate on just one subject at a time, and thus give greater energy to it—women's and Black people's brains tend to expend electrical energy in several areas at once, and one area of energy detracts from another in the same hemisphere.

One assumption implicit here is that our brains have available a finite amount of energy for use at any one time. Another is that specialization is always best. The white male very specialized brain is the evolutionary latest, as is the newest ABM system and the DDT-resistant cockroach. The men running this world imagine an evolution ever onward, precise and straight ahead into the pure abstraction of death.

Patriarchal Body States:

The highly specialized and alienating pattern of brain function character-
THE PREOCCUPATION

by DIANE DERRICK

Initially she had considered it a spiritual boil, later a canker of the soul. Anyway, it had commenced as an irritation, a slight or some type of forgotten minor annoyance, a yellowing bruise, except that, obviously, it was far from minor or it could never have developed in that way. But, for all the glittering spoils of her later recall, the triggering cause lay buried under well-trod repressive layers. The spoils sufficed of themselves, rich in understanding and through understanding glimmered a superiority over the original petty quirk and later, transferred and spread to include almost the entire universe.

It had appeared early one evening after supper, as her bored, tired eyes buffeted about the vacuity of the room. It was there, hugging the corner. Unable to quite define it she approached, scuffed it with her toe, reached down, picked it up, scrutinized it carefully like a dust ball hiding a nest of roaches and dismissed the runty specimen as a trick of her fatigued vision. But the following evening it was again in the same corner, even though she was sure she had previously tossed it with the trash. However, on closer inspection, it appeared a degree larger than formerly and exuded a pitiful saddening quality. Deliberately she wrapped it in newspaper and buried it in the garbage.

On the third evening as she bent down to swat it with the broom, it turned doleful, pinched eyes upward as it reached out to cling at her ankles. The broom fell flat as she grabbed the soft claws and bringing it to eye level, gazed fully into its exposed docility—a penetrating moment for both. Instinctively she pressed the hard pit to the cleft between her breasts where it instantly fell asleep.

A sparkle glimpsed her eye and her lips unexpectedly cracked a modest smile as she settled into her maple rocker and timidly felt it all over and actually lost herself for hours that evening petting it until at last it ceased to fuss on awakening and lay snugly content nestled in her arms. She tickled part of it with her little finger and a drop of inky purple liquid spilled from a tiny crack. Gently, she wiped the stain with a tissue and stroked the area. Its transparent exterior gradually shaded an opaque mauve. In bed she held the tad close to her and by morning it had grown molded by her contours, squeezed upward through pliable folds toward her chin, spread wide underneath her cups according to the rolls of her belly. It conformed in such agreement that as she dressed for work she blushed with a shy pride enjoying such rare flattery.

It squirmed and wriggled on her pillow and she felt guilty leaving and
paced the room several times and attempted several more abortive starts before bolting the door behind her. And the day frayed raggedly with too many cups of coffee and too many traffic jams and a stale crumb bun, and an extraordinary lack of line at the bank, and a refused refund for either cash or merchandise, and a missed lunch, and a misplaced file, and too many errors, and too much noise and a constant draft down her back, and a water-main break and a subway delay, and a ticket for jay-walking, and the market just closed, and a broken heel on her own front stoop. But, as the tumbler turned in the lock, inside the door it readied itself for the leap into her arms and for the first time she could remember, the flushed rage drained from her pores as she bounced it light-heartedly and truly felt she was home. She frisked similarly and each day she anticipated returning home to cuddle and play with the fat, healthy nite. And its hide about the room while they inspected the philodendron and fern, fingered bureau tops for soot, tussled making the bed and half-tidying the dishes and then she rocked it, humming, softly singing until it fell asleep and then carefully she lay it on her pillow, covered it with a down comforter and tip-toed to the door where, with a shriek and a scramble, it would be crawling up her back to attach itself to her shoulders and burrow into her hair and stifle her thoughts. At last she would forcefully extricate herself to rush from the room, slam the door and as tears welled, scuttle blindly downstairs, dash to the subway, finally, to arrive late at the office and in a low mood.

The obsessive thoughts of her dear lonely waif dwindled her office efficiency so that Personnel found it expedient to rotate her to a less pressured desk, and her co-workers sprouted alarm. In the lavatory, they twined about her garbling the injustice of her transfer, the impersonality of Personnel and the need not to worry because a replacement had not yet been hired for her old job. However, they noticed the catastrophe did not appear to alarm her nor even, apparently, slightly faze her. So each one, unobtrusively, inspected her reflection in the mirror for some distress sign or subtler or rootier, anyway, she itched with an awareness of having been, at least, almost, Chosen. They could never comprehend it. It was inside and they were retreating beyond her span. So she looked through the window and answered not thinking of the words as they formed her explanation.

The Girls, who had assumed she held them all as confidants, were not happy and all prattled to each other how they were just trying to be understanding. And as she walked back to her desk They stayed at the basins and talked among themselves and from then on concentrated pointedly on her movements. She seemed oblivious. After two days they glowered hostility and when she failed to respond to that and continued to stare out into a void and refused to lunch with them on Friday, they knotted themselves into a tight welt of hate and procrastinated the time calculating her galloping downfall. And she sat in the midst of the conspiracy thinking of her own sweet love at home.

The day before her vacation not one of the Girls spoke or asked where she was going or wished her a good time, or even expressed a false sympathy over her final rotation to the typing pool. And she did not notice the slight, but arranged her new desk neatly and left the office at five o'clock without even a goodbye.

All this while her shadowing protege had fattened and toughened and spanned tiny configurations circumventing its entire hide: lavender spikes extended above its eyes and its underbelly jiggled encased by a dark waver- ing border of blue. At 5:36 as she turned the knob, it had already amassed its bulk before the entrance and squeezed about her warm and sticky sweet. She spread her arms wide to scoop up as much as possible, murmuring, "There, there, it's all right now," and began examining its new coils developed during the day.

For a week they frolicked in the park. Each morning, after toast and coffee she always wished her a good time, or even expressed a false sympathy. She seamed oblivious. After two days they glowered hostility and talked among themselves and from then on concentrated pointedly on her move- ment. And as she walked back to her desk They stayed at the basins and sligh ts, but arranged her new desk neatly and left the office at five o'clock without even a goodbye.
she would be unable to hold her head erect.

Nor did its growth subside, but energy particles coaxed others, reproducing their like with such rapidity that she could see that her room would soon no longer hold either of them. The floor boards creaked and bowed and tiny cascades of plaster periodically poured from deepening fissures. The filth and stench mounted as rapidly as her free space shrank. It would splurt a great slobber at her to be hugged and she, confined within its plasmodium, would meekly gasp for her strangling breath and wait for the wave to subside.

So, from inseminated shy vanity her attitude matured to an acceptance of her Cross. And she met this serious responsibility with a renewed activity and quiet enthusiasm: in reality it had become a terrific burden, carbuncled, gnawing, ever-demanding and if she failed to immediately satisfy its mean cravings, it would rear back its great hump and knock her chin and wrench her abdominal muscles by its fury as well as dislodge more stresses and gouge more holes through the composition walls. When she was not administering to its whims, she lay exhausted wherever a speck of room remained momentarily free from its encroaching blubber. She was semi-crippled, mentally feebling, growing weaker and weaker. Nor had she noticed that the two weeks vacation had long ago elapsed, nor had she attended to the jangling phone, nor was she aware that it rang more and more infrequently until, it perpetuated silence. She no longer called for deliveries but reflexively placed bits of stale crackers, debris or dust balls—whatever her nervous fingers contacted—to her mouth, swallowing the matter whole. It grew regardless of diet.

But it no longer seemed aware of her presence. It reared and groaned and pounded and thumped until she could hear downstairs' neighbors retaliate with broom handles prodding the ceiling. One day the landlord croaked through the key hole that she was evicted and whatever she was carrying on had better get out quick or the police would do it for her! In fright it backed against a window, shattering the pane into the street. The landlord’s boots resounded thumping downstairs and, it seemed to her, immediately returned duplicated and with the other, even coarser tone, brackishly chorus the demand to open up!

After a moment of hollow silence she heard the scratching pickings of a pass key in the lock.

She pulled at her useless legs, wedging herself between the walls and its ubiquitous block, never ceasing to massage its crusted welts, whispering and soothing it. And as she lay, a memory trickled through her dim brain of the freedom she had had when she had been alone, she sensed it like seeing through the transparent barriers of a carnival glass house. For a moment before crumbling, she felt the panicked impulse to bash her head through the mockery. The great lump belched an opaque film across her vision and she struggled against her weariness to comfort the hulk. It was her Cross, it was her Cross she inwardly echoed. She painfully released her right wrist from a roll of fibrous membrane and gently kissed a great festering throbbing wart.
This is a story about two women who love each other. The beginning of the story is not just one beginning but two. Women were born and lived each for twenty-eight years before they met, one wearing a beautiful pea coat, the other in a white neck brace. They were born and lived each for twenty-eight years before they met, one wearing a beautiful pea coat, the other in a white neck brace. Were born and lived each for twenty-eight years before they met, one wearing a beautiful pea coat, the other in a white neck brace. Writing poetry and reading it to everyone, the other writing poetry and folding it into a small square and putting it in her pocket. You could say that the one thought she loved the other more than the other loved her. You could say that the other thought she loved the other more, or rather who she wanted to be with. Or rather you could say that they loved each other equally, but one, or rather, both, did not believe the love was there. Or rather the one thought she was needed and so she served and believed that was why the other spoke of love. Or you could even say she never believed anyone loved her. And that might have been said about the other too, only she did know, because she felt happy at times, that there was love between the two. The question with her was more that she wanted all the love because she thought if the other gave away too much love in other places to other people there would not be enough left. And really, what she was sure she knew was that if the other ever got far enough away to love someone else she most certainly would prefer that other person, and then, she would go away. Well, anyway, in the midst of all this fear of the one and the indecision of the other, they became twenty-nine and then they became thirty and they still lived in the same house and they still loved each other but they did not make love. That is they did not touch each other on the breasts or the vagina but only slept near one another or curled up together or stroked their heads, or rubbed their backs, or held one another, or kissed goodbye and in the morning. These things they did but it was what they did not do that made the one upset. Upset and angry and hurt and all those feelings. And the other felt bad, bad for causing the hurt, and the other felt anyway that she was always causing hurt, just by existing, or by sitting down and putting her feet on the ottoman. For instance, the one who wore the neck brace would say to the caring one, "You should not feel guilty," and then later she would say, "Last night I was sick and you did not know." And she would also say, "I think you should not make love to me if you do not want to but I think you should make love to me." And she would also say, "You should not always do what you should but do what you want." As you can see the one was very confused. And the other, for her part, would say, "You should not be afraid that I will leave you because if you keep on acting afraid, I will leave you." And the other would also say, "You are always acting so fair; you are always acting so self-righteous." But if the one became then unfair, or angry, or even nasty, the other would also say, "You'll be sorry," and she would walk out the door. This went on and on in between what the one still remembers as tenderness and love and joy until one night the conversation repeated itself again and the one with the folded up poems left the house again. And she did not come back. And the truth is that she may never have come back because the truth is that the other was sick for a long while. And for instance, the caring one would say, to give an example which is very exaggerated but shows the point, "I am sorry that I cannot carry you up the stairs." And at first the other was very touched that the one would even want to carry her up the stairs but she said, "First, I am too heavy for you, and second, I can walk up the stairs myself." And this went on, this very conversation, for a while. But gradually the situation changed and it became like this, "Really, I can't carry you up the stairs, I'm so tired." And then the other would say, "I never asked you to." And finally the one who didn't ask began to believe she had asked and decided she had to prove that she had offered to carry the other up the stairs, or at least would if she could, only everyone knew she had a weak back. And there were other conversations of a different and of the same nature. And both women worked very hard to show that each was good herself, and each woman felt each herself that she herself was very selfish. But there was a truth apart from the feelings and that major problem was that the woman with the pea coat, though she did not carry the talkative poet up the stairs, did nearly everything else for her. And all the other could do was to say thank you or occasionally to loan the caring woman money. This she herself felt was very cheap since she knew there was no comparison between money and caring. And the one who had been sick felt guilty. And so, she tried to give love. And this was only partly accepted, not in the sense of making love, but in the sense of belief. And in addition, the sick woman could not really accept the caring woman's care. She would at first pretend she did not need the care, and then if she asked for the care, did so in a tone of voice implying that the caring woman did not want to give care. You can see that nothing in this story is simple. You can see that but you must also begin to be suspecting the outcome. More and more, as the sickness and the caring went on, the truth began to seep in. Finally, they gave each other as much pain as they did love. And the one who wore the neck brace would say to the caring one, "You should not feel guilty," and then later she would say, "Last night I was sick and you did not know." And she would also say, "I think you should not make love to me if you do not want to but I think you should make love to me." And she would also say, "You should not always do what you should but do what you want." As you can see the one was very confused. And the other, for her part, would say, "You should not be afraid that I will leave you because if you keep on acting afraid, I will leave you." And the other would also say, "You are always acting so fair; you are always acting so self-righteous." But if the one became then unfair, or angry, or even nasty, the other would also say, "You'll be sorry," and she would walk out the door. This went on and on in between what the one still remembers as tenderness and love and joy until one night the conversation repeated itself again and the one with the folded up poems left the house again. And she did not come back. And the truth is that she may never have come back because the truth is that she wanted to die. And by this, the other was frightened almost to death. And this then is the ending of one story about the two and also the beginning of two more stories, as only time will tell.
THE POET AS LIZZIE BORDEN

My mother,
whose ears are purely ornamental
thinks poets are something like
overgrown parakeets,
unfit to hunt their own dinners
too dainty to swallow anything
larger than a barleycorn
or stray syllable.

We who dance to these tuneless rhythms
are better informed.
A sentence can frag you,
each word, like splinters of a guava bomb,
can shatter a rib on entering
and tear off a shoulder on the other side.

My hands shake with the day's exertion.
They seem to be clean.
A lie. I can show you
castrated corpses,
blood-soaked towels burnt
under a wienie roast,
strangled babies
hastily crammed into dustbins,
raped men in prisons, women on highways,
aged gardeners shot down over cabbages,
strangers' bones and more:
the severed heads of family and friends.
My own breasts covered
with cigarette burns.

My gentleness is mere restraint.
I lock myself at home
and hide the whiskey and the knives
to keep from acting out a poem.

READING AT THE VILLAGE GATE

I said, as I walked to the ferry,
clutching a briefcase jammed up with papers,
I don't want to go to Manhattan.
I don't want to read my poetry tonight.
This one was written to shove in a shoebox,
and that one, for posthumous publication
on the back of a corn flakes box.
I wrote the other to recite on Ground Hog Day
at four a.m. in Battery Park.
The first row of the audience
will be filled with Medusas
who talk like Louise Day Hicks;
the twenty men seated behind them
resemble Lon Chaney
and work for the C.I.A.
The rest of the seats will be filled
with young men from the Bronx,
maybe the Savage Nomads, or the Skulls.
Finally, in the rear,
the single reporter assigned to review us:
an elderly fellow from the Ukrainian Daily,
whose English would improve
if he got a new hearing aid battery.

My lover has a black belt in karate.
She came along, she said, to wipe up tomato.
Gee thanks, I said,
as she rumpled me for luck.

The mob was worse than I thought.
The Gate was wall-to-wall with drunken dykes.
They booed some woman who sang a tender lyric
to her man
and cheered each time I said, "lesbian."
A world of words -- they wanted only one.

I was lousy in bed that night
because they smashed a dream,
a spark that someone tended
over twenty centuries of stake and ducking stool.
I wish they'd tried to smash my face instead.
The woman was walking along the shore, just walking while the waves beat half quietly and half unsure on the sand, catching up pieces of foam and taking them with them as they moved back. The sky sat there, not doing much of anything, maybe waiting for the sunset to come and do something. But the woman didn’t quite notice. She wasn’t much of one for noticing, unless maybe she got something in her foot, or else every once in a while she’d remember where she was and she’d notice. She noticed now when she came to a cave. She’d always had a thing about caves. She and caves really got along, at least in her head, as she’d never been in one. First she stood outside a while, listening to the wind and water sounds as they came and left, getting her surroundings organized in her mind so she might still remember directions once she was inside.

She went in. Although the cave started out natural, it turned into a strange cave. Dark and darker until, not being able to hold any light in her eyes, she was ready to turn back except then some strange colored light came. Red and green flashing lights as she moved forward, like the flashes on unfinished roads, if the colors had been right. The ending of the darkness kept her moving forward to see the light’s beginning. She forgot to notice that she wasn’t her normally frightened self. The light was in little pieces. Bits of rock blinked like Christmas tree lights, unconnected. She moved on to understand. She came to a smaller room, half lit by white rocks, and despite her habit of bumping into things because she’d forget where her body was, everything, the walls, the damp was so much where it belonged, that the woman also moved where she belonged. In the middle of the room stood a heating stove with dimly bright rocks on the top.

She waited a minute until this little woman came in. She wasn’t regular little, but smaller than that even. At first, the little woman didn’t pay attention to the other woman, instead she moved her looks toward the rocks as though they were a matter of now importance. The new-to-the-cave woman nodded and waited. The cave woman picked up a small rock, touched it all around and brought it to the older woman. The older outside woman took it, touched it and holding it asked the inside woman if she’d been outside.

The stone woman shook her head and taking a look at her stove picked up some rocks and put them in her many pocketed clothlike thing going to the ground, pockets in the back too with bulges from stones. She followed the other woman out.
The new-to-the-outside woman stood at the entrance and looked out. Her body changed as she watched the waves come in and out in the distance, not far from her as they had been inside. As she watched, her arms got longer and farther from her body. Her shoulders moved almost the whole way around her body. Between the motion of the new woman and the motion ever yet calm of the sea, the woman could almost hear the sun going down toward the sea, with the touch softening the sound of the waves. The moving woman would not leave the entrance of the cave. The sea, sky and air woman took the new-to-the-outside woman's hand and led her out toward the sea. As they walked the woman's hand grew longer and smaller in the other woman's steady hand. They walked. The sun floated down.

"You like it here?" the experienced woman asked.

"Yes, but I have to calm me down." She sat on the sand and her body slowed its unplace-moving motion. She touched her stones to make sure they had stayed in her pockets which had perhaps made sitting down uncomfortable. But they had to go, the taller, now standing-up woman decided, taking her hand once more. "Would you like to come back with me?" she asked.

"Can I bring my rocks?"

"Yes."

So they got in the dark car. The driving woman asked the other if she could make the rocks stop their light and the woman stopped the light, "except one."

"One's fine," the driving woman said, going slow because the woman new to a car kept getting bigger and smaller and moving her head all around the car so she could see out the windows.

"I don't go this way," she said.

"How do you do it?"

"I sit on my feet and they take me along."

They drove and the darkness seemed right. "..."

They started to live together. The woman who lived in the apartment discovered the new woman didn't eat. Instead, as she explained, she got energy from the sun and that was good for that was the only thing that got to every place she went. The woman asked her if she had been able to get much sun in the cave. The slowly-moving-in-place woman said, "I get too much sun when I travel and being exhausted I needed the dark." So, often the first woman would come home to find the second woman sitting at the window with her hands stretched far into the sky. She could only catch sun in her hands, she explained. One day she caught a balloon in her hands as it made its way upward. She didn't go out, though she had her own key that she always wore around her neck.

"You mean you can tell what people feel?"

"Most times."

"Me too?"

"Only when you want me to."

Even understand better her friend stayed inside. The in-and-out-of-the-house woman wondered if her friend wasn't bored. But the stone woman liked being home. She liked to sit at the window and look out, watching the motion of things and running herself. One night the woman who was tired from work awoke to find her friend watching the world, kneeling by the window and looking out ever so long. And now her body stood still, ever so still. The first woman slept.

It was good. The first woman, whose work was easier yet and as they was later.

The outside woman often brought her rocks and soon they started going to the beach together. And they learned to play together, digging tunnels in the sand until they met underneath, throwing each other into the water, though neither went out far. They stayed close. The one built castles while the other found rocks to decorate them with that she later took home with her. The taller woman hadn't gotten used to thinking herself away from her friend while the other collected rocks; then she would feel her friend's hand stretched out tapping on her shoulder, ignoring the distance to give her a rock.

The first woman felt bad leaving her for work every day, except she had to work. The other woman seemed quite happy at home baking rocks in the oven and hanging them on the wall. Or else, she put the baked rocks all over the house in special places for her friend to discover when she came home. And the working woman learnt specific distinctions about rocks so she didn't rediscover old rocks and hurt her friend's feelings by not having enough rock caring to know the new from the old.

The one who worked was becoming easier. Sometimes she'd arrive at work to find all of her morning typing done, so she'd read or call home, once she had taught the strange-to-the-phones woman not to be frightened of it. Though once she was used to it, she decided it was a kind of rock and the business woman returned home one day to discover the phone melted over the inside of the oven.

They started to go to movies together. It helped make things make sense to the new-to-the-planet woman. Though if a movie was sad she'd get little until her friend took her hand and she'd return to regular size. Which was still small and people would stare at her, but not so much as when she changed sizes.

After the first movie, they sat in the livingroom together under the glowing rocks. The new woman said, "It's better now. I can sort things out."

"What do you mean?"

"Before if I was with other people, all their feelings come into the center of the room, sit there and bump into one another. Too much. Now I can put the feelings back in the bodies."

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It was good. The first woman, whose work was easier yet and as they
never noticed her anyhow, being in a back room, spent more time at home with her friend. Except she was worried. The new woman started talking about other planets. How one planet was so small you could feel it turn under your feet. And there was another planet with soft rocks that bounced. But the best part was moving from one planet to another, sitting on one's feet as the space moved one along.

The first woman was nervous and worried and didn't know what to do. They went out more, but that didn't seem to help the working woman. The home-staying woman didn't know how to cheer up her friend. It was better for a while when the outside-coming woman returned home with something to show her friend. She took one of her friend's hot rocks out of the oven, put it in the sink and turned the cold water on it. The rock cracked. The rock woman was so happy she grew as tall as the other woman and bounced up and down though she stood still.

It was good for a while until the new woman told her friend about this great planet with sun and rocks that grew from trees in different colors, which changed when they were held in the hand. And if you found the special rock made for oneself you had only to hold onto it to fly. "But mostly it's the feeling between planets I like."

The little woman didn't know what to do about her depressed friend who had stopped looking for the new rocks and no matter how many rocks she cracked for her friend, her friend was still sad. One day after sunning her hands, she collected all the beautiful food in the house. She hadn't cooked for the working woman since the second week, since the eating woman broke her tooth on one of many rocks her friend had put in the casserole. But now she realized that the woman didn't like food rocks. She gathered all the beautiful food she could find: honey, green peppers, spinach, blueberries, pickles, strawberry jam, eggplant, marshmallows, chocolate and put it in a large pot. She added all the pretty spices and some food coloring, wine and some coke, and swirled the colors. Then putting her favorite stone on top she set the oven at 450 and put it in the oven to bake.

She served it to her tired friend. The food woman didn't know what to do. She looked at all the colors, and grey mixtures merging stickily together, hardened, crusted and stuck to the pan.

"It's beautiful," said the newly-arrived-home woman.
"Isn't it," said the proud creator.
"It's so beautiful I can't eat it. Maybe we can put it on the wall so we can always see it," she suggested.

The other woman started bouncing while sitting in her chair. The just-arrived woman kissed her friend's happy face and her friend touched her eyes with her hand. The new-to-the-planet woman learned touch and they slowly moved together and in the motion of it all they caught up each other's body. Later in the rests between, the new woman told her friend it was better than any other kind of motion.

by AUDRE LORDE

TO MARIE, IN FLIGHT

For women perspective is more easily maintained.
But something in my body teaches patience is no virtue every month renews its own destruction while my blood rages for proof or continuity.
Peering out of this pressured metal cabin I see our body patterns repeated on the earth I hear my blood breath beating through the dark green places between the mountains thrust, without judgment or decision a valley rhythm captures all.
LIME ALLEGORY Lime 25" by 9" by 4" 1973.

LIME ALLEGORY (other side)
FLYING -- Autobiographical
Kate Millett
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. (hardcover) $8.95 546 pp.

Kate Millett's new book, *Flying*, is a long journey into depression, fear, self-disgust, anger, distrust, boredom, excruciating pain, and, finally, passion and some moments of love. Kate records here the life as she lived it during the year following the enormous success of *Sexual Politics*. It is at once a journal and an autobiography, an attempt to capture everything she experienced (including the past) during a one year period. Like a tape recording, a film, but enriched by associations, connections, reflections on the events as they happen.

As Gene Damon (The Ladder) would say, this book is "highly relevant." A triple star. Probably no one unless it is Violet Leduc has ever printed so much of her lesbian experience. But it is by no means polemical. The travail Kate Millett associates with loving women far outweighs the joy of it through most of this book.

A single exception is so beautifully depicted that, coming in the last pages of the book as it does, it almost counterbalances the nihilism of her other sexual relationships. Kate's love for Claire and Claire's for her runs like a thread of hope through the book. The descriptions of their lovemaking are unqualified anywhere. Hating passionately, through most of the book, Kate loves equally passionately, and makes the finest poetry of the sexual explicit she reveals.

In general though, in bed and out, Kate's relations with women as she describes them are bitterly quarrelsome ego struggles. Though we can marvel at her honesty in recording her own self as Super-Bitch, showing us the ugliest sides of her jealous, dependent, dominating self in conflict with women, the resultant picture is very depressing and it is hard not to wish that she'd kept it to herself. She crushes at least 2/3 of the women she writes about in a way that will make you wonder how many are suing her right now for slander.

Despite this, it will be a very important book to the women's movement. Kate, while compounding the trouble by publishing yet another book, struggles throughout *Flying* with the perennial problem of her media image. This problem of stars, the media elite, has plagued the women's movement since the beginning. Media power can and does corrupt like any other, and Kate has courted, used, and abused that power. She is repeatedly called for this, obviously sometimes by women who would like her to give it up so they can move in, but also by women who sincerely question the hierarchy the media so unrelentingly insist upon.

The problem of Kate's fame and power is never resolved in this book, nor, to my knowledge, has she resolved it since the time span the book covers. She has been unscrupulous, self-serving, callous in her uses of fame and has often had to pay the price. Booed off the stage at the West Coast Lesbian Conference last year, and finally, purged by the largest university women's studies program in the country, Kate has not seen the end of the star's sturm and drang which she depicts in *Flying*.

However depressing in its lack of sisterhood, *Flying* is a marvel of a book, carrying the tradition of Violet Leduc on to new heights. Kate has very likely broken ground on a new form of as-it-happens journal writing which will be widely imitated, while adding a confirming voice to the lesbian bare-all tradition of Jill Johnston, Rita Mae Brown, Elana Nachman and others.

*Flying* is a classic you won't want to miss, but, be warned, Kate's mistaken certainty that New York City is a microcosm of the world and that the New York City women's movement is the microcosm of the women's movement, will sneak up on you and send you plummeting into her despair if you're not careful.

Kate's experience is not typical: not typical woman, writer, or lesbian. To hold her as somehow representative, as the media undoubtedly will, is cruel to her and damaging to our own diversity. Kate has tried, in this book, to elucidate on the woman she is beyond the media stereotypes--let us hope that she, by using the patriarchal press to plead her case, has not merely added fuel to their fires.

THE NEW FEMINIST MOVEMENT -- A Social History
Maren Lockwood Carden
The Russell Sage Foundation (Hardback) No price available 234 pp.

Dr. Carden sets out in this book to "record this particular piece of contemporary social history while its actors are available to re-tell their parts," but, wisely, admits that no single book can adequately describe the complexity of the women's movement. She divides the movement into Women's Rights organizations and Women's Liberation groups and makes no attempt to merge the two under one banner. Her experience has been primarily with the former, and so, many inaccuracies and omissions are obvious to women who've been in the women's movement for any length of time.

Particularly limited is her concept of lesbians' position in the women's movement, though we must certainly credit her for devoting a good amount of discussion to it. While Ms. Carden does justice to the lesbian position that "lesbianism is a logical alternative to a male partner's dominance," and approvingly describes women who have chosen to relate sexually to other women, she grossly underestimates lesbian participation and leadership in
the women's movement by saying that lesbians are still, primarily, working for acceptance of their lesbianism. Ms. Carden apparently has not heard that it is heterosexual women now who must most often beg acceptance for their particularly odious contradiction of sleeping with men. She errs in saying that the great majority of women in the movement are straight. A conservative estimate of the lesbian constituency would be 1/3.

Despite its shortcomings this is on the whole a good fact-filled coverage of the new women's movement, particularly the more conservative Women's Rights wing.

WOMAN PLUS WOMAN: Attitudes Toward Lesbianism
Dolores Klaich
Simon and Schuster (hardcover) $8.95 287 pp.

Dolores Klaich's treatment of lesbianism is more disappointing than Dr. Carden's because in devoting a whole book to it she calls attention to how little she really knows. This is a hodgepodge of everything from superfluous literary history of Sappho and Radclyffe Hall to the results of Ms. Klaich's painfully limited mail-order interviews.

The credentials she gives for publishing this book are most peculiar: She tells us two things she is not: 1) a member of the gay activist groups and 2) one of the line of social scientists who've fenced lesbians into their inaccurate studies. She, however, like every author of a book on lesbianism (except Del and Phyllis and Sidney and Barbara) does not admit her most singularly relevant credential, that she is a lesbian. It wasn't until I was researching some old Ladders that I discovered that Dolores Klaich, the quite removed from it editor on the Transatlantic Review who claims to have written this book because she is "interested and concerned" over the public misapprehension of lesbians, has written some very explicit lesbian stories and published them under her own name. When will we learn to ignore the patriarchy's valuing of "the objective outsider" and begin to proclaim that writing from within the movement is, certainly, one step closer to truth if not truth itself.

Dolores Klaich's book is meant as a general overview of lesbianism for "the layman", and as such, it can't really hurt. You might even learn something from her ramblings—women she interviewed did come up with some amazingly good responses—but try not to be depressed by her constant insistence that most of us are still locked in the closet.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST -- Biographical literary criticism
Michael Stevens
Charles Scribner's Sons (hardcover) $7.95 192 pp.

The newest contribution to the current V. Sackville-West revival is this quite scholarly biographical literary criticism. "Taking up where Portrait of a Marriage left off," Mr. Stevens has gained access to some manuscripts and other previously unpublished papers through the Nicholson family and uses them to fill in more details about Vita. Some very fine portraits are included as well as a detailed section listing where many minor works of Ms. Sackville-West were printed.

RIVERFINGER WOMEN -- A novel
Excerpt on pp. 6-10 this issue.
Elana Nachman
Daughters, Inc., Plainfield, VT 05667 (hardcover) $3.00 183 pp.

This novel, in the tradition of Rubyfruit Jungle, is a whirlwind picaresque psychedelic nostalgia piece about the author's often ill-fated adventures in the youth and lesbian cultures of the late 60's and 70's. Some early parts are tedious due to an overload of minor characters, but the book does wind all its disjointed episodes into a compelling ending. A breath of fresh air for lesbian literature, it's well worth a warm summer day's reading.

REFLECTION ON THE ATOMIC BOMB and HOW WRITING IS WRITTEN -- Two volumes of the previously unpublished work of Gertrude Stein, edited by Robert Bartlett Haas
Black Sparrow Press (paper) $4.00 164 pp. and 161 pp.

Since I honestly can't understand more than 10% of what Gertrude Stein has written, I won't attempt to recommend these for content, but only say that Black Sparrow Press has performed a remarkable service in publishing two volumes of Ms. Stein's previously uncollected writings, and presented them in particularly handsome editions.

GULLIBLES TRAVELS
Jill Johnston
Links Books (paper) $4.95 283 pp.

Not as pontificating as Lesbian Nation and more readable than Marmalade Me, this new book is definitely a treat from start to finish. Something to offend everyone, as usual, but Jill has gained a sense of humor that will assuage all but her most ardently jealous critics.

"A Life on a Cloud" in The New Yorker, June 3, 1974
Janet Flanner
A fine remembrance of Margaret Anderson by a longtime friend, Janet Flanner who writes for The New Yorker under the name Genet.

All the books reviewed in AQ and most other books by women can be ordered from FIRST THINGS FIRST, a e-mail order house. Send for their free catalogue and details about ordering the books you want: 23 Seventh St. SE, Washington, DC 20003. They would probably appreciate postage to cover sending the catalogue.
and offers especially good insights about lesbian motherhood. Marvelously eloquent about everything, many of her statements read like feminist aphorisms. For more interviews, see the Special Double Issue AQ (Fall, 1973) devoted to the women we met and interviewed on our 12,000 mile journey through the U.S. and Canada. We've also printed one interview per issue since then, and are working on a book to include them all.

Laurel: When did you first understand that you loved women? Jackie: About a year after I was married, I met a woman who took a lot of interest in me...very warm toward me in a very powerful way, and she acted as a therapist for me to dump a whole lot of guilt. I had a really puritanical background, and I sort of had to go through confession. She listened to me, she was very therapeutic, and I fell in love with her. It was an impossible situation. That's the first time I actually had a physical experience with a woman. It was dreadfully unsatisfactory, and I still wasn't thinking of the term 'homosexual'! I finally realized that that applied to me.

J: Another woman who I got to know and like pointed out to me that it was an unequal relationship, and I got over it gradually. I can't emphasize enough that she was a very powerful woman, with a strong personality. She actually influenced me in my thinking about roles. She was really into roles, so that kind of set the tone of my marriage...and so it was another couple of years before I could get away from her influence personally. It took the Women's Movement four years to counteract the ideas that I'd acquired. That wasn't a significant lesbian relationship, that was a kind of playing around. I guess we went to bed only three or four times. Though my husband said he loved me, I wasn't loved by him either, and there was something deep in me that said I had a right to be loved. When I did meet a woman once at a party, there was just an instant liking, and we had an affair for a year and a half while I was married, secretly. We really loved each other. It was wonderful. It was a very positive experience. But we didn't have a consciousness about what we were doing. She especially felt guilty. And we both assumed that this was just something that we were doing because we really loved each other, that our futures were really going to be with nice men. She was looking for a man, and I was struggling with a bad marriage...this was before the Women's Movement.

J: (laughs) That's really big! (They've been together three years.) We met at a Woman-Identified-Woman Workshop, and we were instantly attracted to each other, and got together. It was very happy, wonderful falling in love and getting to know each other. It was really exciting. Soon she left her husband and came here to live. I was already divorced, and after the divorce I went through a kind of sexual exploration with men, seeking satisfaction and had given up on that.

I was developing a gradual acceptance of preferring women. I was in therapy, with a woman after my divorce, because I needed support in order to do it. Even though she was straight, and she believed that homosexuality wasn't as satisfying as heterosexuality, she did give me a lot of support. I finally ended it when the relationship became equal. But I'm avoiding your question.

L: Could you tell me a little bit about your relationship now. What's important in it?

J: What do you think are the important reasons you're together?

L: This first woman you had a physical relationship with, why was it impossible?

J: She had a great deal of psychological power over me, and it was like a crush and she used it. She seduced me, but she never, ever loved me. It just wasn't equal and she wouldn't discuss it.

L: After this, how much time elapsed before you recovered and went on again?

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differences in our attitudes about things have often been sources of ir-

confrontation and stuff. We're basically nice to each other. And we

about them? L: Yes. J: Well, the problem for me is that I go through cycles of losing my iden-
tity. When I feel rotten about myself, I need her reassurance. Sometimes
I feel pretty dependent. It's like when I get close to her, well, for

stance, in making love, I find I am my true self. I get close to who I am and it's a really good feeling. And the other aspect of that is losing
myself. Sometimes I get a little shaky about having lost myself. You
know that she has the power to make me feel good. I know that I respect
her opinions so much that I really need reassurance from her sometimes. This
is coming out of many years of doubting myself, so...sometimes I feel like a
dependent. It comes out of my situation, too. I have more responsi-
bility for the kids than she does. She has work needs, she goes to work
every day. I don't so I have to struggle with that feeling of being a
housewife. We're dealing with the situation pretty well...

I guess the problem basically is that I feel inferior sometimes. I

't know if she knows that this is a kind of problem to me.

L: You see this pattern developing. How do you think you can change
things?

J: One thing I do sometimes is to start making demands on her. I de-
mand that she be sensitive to my emotional needs and that she reassure me,
even though she is engrossed in her work. I sometimes get my feelings hurt
because I'm feeling depressed and she's not letting me know. And I
know that she'd feel hurtful to the other person and we understand what wouldn't be. W e can't

help but realize that our actions might hurt the other. We have a good
understanding about this. It's hard to know how you'd really react. I'd be
hurt, and I'm not saying that my reasons are rational. I feel very irra-
tional about them.

Her reactions are practical. Like she doesn't want to feel that I might
have to pay attention to someone else when she needs me. Her feelings are
less possessive, but more that she needs me, and she wants to know if she
really has to be with me that I'll be there for her first. And she's also
said that if I made love with another woman that she knew and liked, it
wouldn't hurt her as much as someone she didn't know at all.

The way I feel -- God -- it would just hurt my feelings. I would feel
that I was inadequate. And I'd also feel -- I know that this is irrational
-- that something special, our total giving of each of us to each other
would change. I don't know how she could totally give herself to more
-- in fact, we agreed on this -- that we can't give ourselves to more than
one person. So it would be a passing sexual thing. If she explained to me, I would be open to hearing it, what it meant to her. The love is
depenening and growing and it's getting so it's just more important than any
passing attraction to another woman. We realize that that's a realistic
thing, that you're attracted to other women.

L: How do you feel about relating to men?

J: I don't want to have anything to do with them. I don't even like
them. You see I know too much about the psychological dynamics between a

man and a woman, and I don't like that.

I also know what I prefer aesthetically. I prefer women. I don't want
to submit myself to a male...it's a kind of pride I have. I want an inde-
pendent life. It's no great thing. It's just to be disappointing all over again.
And yet I feel at some basic level that I can't mean it is a disgusting thing, most of the time but (smiles) who knows?
L: Generally for you, what would you say the benefits of being a lesbian
are?

J: A very deep liberation of myself. I've gotten back in touch with my-
self, who I am, the core of my being. I've experienced this because I am
loved by a woman, unconditionally. And because I can be myself. So it's
like psychologically liberated territory.

L: What problems are you having with the children related to your being
a lesbian?

J: I can't think of any related to that.
L: Could you describe how you let them know or how they found out?
J: What actually transpired when we started going together? Well, you
see, they're innocent. They didn't take note of the fact that there was a
lesbian relationship going on. It was just my friend moved in -- I told
them she was going to. It's been a gradual process of their getting
to know her. There have been conflicts -- of course. I'm not as available
to them. She's kind of harsh with them sometimes. They resent that.

We discussed our relationship with them, in terms of sitting them down
and saying 'We love each other and this society doesn't think that's all
right. They're against women loving women and men loving men.' We never
told them 'Don't say anything.'

They have a pretty good awareness of the fact that we're different -- they
come home and make fun of the kids of the street, because they think tak­
ing clothes off is nasty. We have this kind of constant awareness of
differences of life styles between us and other people. They pick up on
that.

L: So it was fairly easy.

J: Yes, but I don't think it's finished! I don't know what will happen
when they get to the point of trying to discuss these ideas with other
people.

L: Do your parents know?

J: Mine do. I presume that my husband's parents can kind of tell. So
I think the problem may come when they have to make a choice about whether
to come out or not, in a classroom situation or with a friend making an
antihomosexual remark. That's when they'll need our support. And they'll
probably need to discuss this a lot more in the future. But now, they're get­
ing more of a consciousness about the fact that we are lesbians. And
we're using the word more. Before we were individuals and we love each
other and it's cool. But there's been a whole lot of company lately since
we're using the word more. Before we were individuals and we love each
other and it's cool. But there's been a whole lot of company lately since
the lesbian conference, you know, and we're really liking calling our­
selves dykes. They're pretty aware of some of the basic issues.

L: How would you feel if your daughter should choose to be a lesbian?

J: I hope she does.

L: Do you see any ways that you might influence this?

J: Well, I certainly know one way not to do it is to insist that she
do that. I couldn't help it, but when she starts getting, ugh, friends,
you know, getting into a sexual relationship, my attitude would reinforce
that. I'd appreciate the good feelings she has with another g i r l. I
would just feel like giving her a whole lot of understanding and support.

L: What about your son?

J: That's a harder question. I love him. If I could say what I want
for him, I'd want him to be open to both sexes. Because I think something
that happens with a person of your own sex must happen between men, except
that men have been socialized to be emotional cripples. I want my son
to have the benefits of an emotionally rich relationship. Now, it's up
to him, he's going to have to choose. I don't want him to oppress a woman.
Now that comes down to whether I believe fucking between a man and a woman
is -- oh, it's so confusing! (laughs) It always was!

J: The actual act of fucking, do you think it's possible for it not to
be oppressing?

L: The way it is now, that's all there is to it. But in the context of
a full relationship, an equal relationship, and one that's generalized
sensually and not just specific to a guy's penis, it has the possibility
of being equal! Now I'm saying this as I think about my son. Before, when
I think about a man relating to me, I just say no, I don't want that.

L: It's a difference in a generation.

J: Yes, that's true. I guess, though, as a parent, I'm really working
on not being so invested in what they do! I want a good relationship with
them, and I'll tell them my values and I'll guide them best I can. At
some point, they're just going to have to do their own thing. In fact, I'm
going to have to withdraw those wants to an extent so that they won't feel
oppressed by my wishes for them.

L: Was your lesbianism an issue in your divorce or custody? Did your
husband know?

J: He did. But he didn't want to take care of the kids. To him it
isn't a big moral issue. Actually it suits my ex-husband's psychology
just fine. Now he can say: 'My ex-wife is a lesbian, and she had to do
that.' And he doesn't have to feel that he was inadequate.

L: What about the grandparents? Are they concerned?

J: No, they just sort of assume that the mother gets the kids.

L: Do you ever feel that you have to be careful about the custody with
social workers or any kind of government ...

J: I never heard of agencies stepping in and taking children away
from a mother who's doing an okay job. My lawyer assured me that they'd
have to prove this. The period between the separation and going to court,
I got all kinds of advice, 'Be sure to keep my nose clean.' I'm not really
worried about that in my case, because there's no one else who wants to take
the kids full time. And my ex-husband's parents get to see the kids once
a week. So there isn't any problem for me, but there is for Sharon.

(As Gina was taping a separate interview with Sharon, I didn't go into
this.)

L: How many of your friends would you say are lesbians?

J: Most, most of my friends.

L: Do these women pretty much know each other too?

J: Not at all of them.

L: Is there a sense of community developing with the lesbians?

J: Well, there is, you know. It's really nice when you see somebody and
three days before you were drinking beer with them. That kind of thing.
But there isn't a sense of community that we really rely on. We certainly
don't feel that we can put our energies into this community, they have
almost no consciousness about kids. Our situation's different. Most of
them are kind of freewheeling independent and there aren't too many cou­
ples. There is a sense of community, it's starting to grow. I wish it
were more. I feel very isolated.

L: How do you see you and Sharon being different?

J: We're quite different from most of them, not some, in that I think
we're more lesbians. And we're dealing with economic reality...we have a
different situation. Having kids is really different. We feel how serious
this business of living is. Also we're older, that gives us a different
attitude. (Jackie is twenty-nine and Sharon is forty.) The ones who are
older tend to be the ones with similar interests, wanting to get together,
for instance, and talk about an article from Amazon Quarterly.

L: These younger women, what do they have that's different?
J: Oh, they have totally free schedules! They don't have any commit-
ments. Once in awhile they say: 'Aw, shit, I gotta go out and get a job.'
(laughs) It's weird!
L: How do they do it?
J: One of them's collecting unemployment...one sells flowers. They
don't need much to live. Some of them live together and that cuts down
the cost. But the children make the whole difference.
L: Do you ever feel put down because you've had children?
J: No. Just a lack of support.
L: Are they supportive of childcare, if you ask?
J: Yes, if we ask.
L: How do you feel lesbianism is related to feminism for you?
J: I really agree with Jill Johnston. It is the solution. So many
women who want to be independent are tied into men. It's called contradic-
tions. They need to be loved, of course. We all have a pretty big gain for that -- if they could just overcome their barriers to loving a woman,
so many of the problems they are having would be changed.
I think that it's important to be a lesbian, for your own psychological
freedom. I think it's at the core of the nature of human loving. That's
how I experience it. And I think it's a pity that some women will never
experience that. That's a big question!
L: Personally, how do you relate to straight women?
J: Well, I work with straight women at the Women's Center. There's a
staff of six or eight, and (smiles) I like them. Most of the time I don't
look at them as straight women, because they're feminists and I feel their
love for women. I can feel it the way they work. It hasn't been a very
deep split here. We had a gay/straight dialogue and some splits were
coming out in feelings in the room because they felt as if we were really
angry at them, and that we were saying that they oppressed us. Actually,
I don't feel that way, but some of the lesbians did feel that way, that
right across the boards, straight women are oppressing lesbians.
L: Doesn't Jill Johnston say that?
J: I understand what she says about that. That a straight woman is
channeling all her natural energies to a man. I think she's getting
ripped off. And I don't like that she's perpetuating his power position,
and supporting him emotionally, in his privileged position. And yet I
think I can certainly understand the mother situation.
L: How do you feel about the title, Lesbian Nation: The Feminist Solu-
tion?
J: It really hits a strong chord in my guts. It's not practical (smiles)
I mean, I'll support the feminist revolution. I'll have to think about this, okay? Even Jill says that her struggle is with women, so I don't
feel like she's just wipped out the possibility of working with straight
women. The question has come up recently whether our group should work
with the gay men and the gay social services or stay within the Women's
Center. And the predominant feeling, which is my feeling, is that we should
stay with the Women's Center, and in the Women's Movement. I really iden-
tify with the Women's Movement.
I was a straight woman once. And I understand how you get there, and I
understand how hard it is to get out, so I don't insist that they leave
their husbands right now.
I have a strong desire that women become free in their own individual
life, not just through a whole huge movement, and that women's rights be
recognized and that the female principle be raised in the world. But I
really wish that each individual woman could break away from her own per-
sonal oppressor. And I think straight women are oppressed, even by the
nicest guy.
L: Would you call them the enemy?
J: No, I don't believe that, that Man is the enemy and if you collaborate
-- I don't like to make that kind of distinction. The problem has to be
leaving their husbands. Nobody would share the responsibilities of raising
a child the way the man does. I really think that they all secretly want
to leave their husbands. I really feel that all women should be lesbians.
This seems to be basic to one's existence. It's arrogant almost, but I
feel that!
L: Is heterosexuality, then, inherently oppressive to women?
J: It seems to me that a man is equipped to oppress a woman sexually.
He can fuck her. He can rape her, and she doesn't have to enjoy it. But
she can't fuck him, she can't rape him, because he has to have an erection
for this to happen, and that means that he'll enjoy it. If he isn't en-
joying it he won't have an erection and she can't do it. So it seems to
me that there's something very disturbing about that act. Maybe because
it's Nature's demand that it happen, without any regard for an equal
relationship.
I used to think that there was a certain something that could happen
between men and women if the relationship wasn't oppressive. But now I
realize that as Sharon and I develop, that sexually we have experienced
a unity that has gone beyond what could even theoretically happen between
a man and a woman.

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THE COOKBOOK POEM
by PATRICIA HAMPL

The writers of cookbooks come out at night,
the phantom cooks and their phantom recipes:
"Think about food, listen to us."
The no-nonsense compendium,
reeling with utensils,
with too many ideas about hamburger,
knowing everything there is to know
about how not to curdle, handing out
lists of government regulations
on butterfat content, diagrams
of cows, pigs and sheep.

Then the gourmet cookbook
written by the fat man who says,
"Eating is a way of life."
The lists of unnatural unions
between chicken breasts and chocolate;
reasons why, ultimately, sirloin is more
economical than pot roast;
why every efficiency apartment should have
a copper salmon poacher.

The New England spinster who can tell
at 3 yards when you're going to die
has also written a cookbook:
the lady who says both Kennedy and Oswald
were "sangaku", the whites of their eyes
showing between the iris and the lower lid.
And think of the public officials with B vitamin deficiencies,
the mashed potatoes and the gravy consumed at state dinners,
the teenagers who, unnoticed by their mothers,
are gradually beginning to walk with their toes pointed
outward, victims of poor vitamin D assimilation.

Envy the lucky British!
All those teeth with all those open spaces
just because they had enough cod liver oil.
And the meat-eaters!
The eaters of muscles,
the silly old muscle-eaters--
there's scorn in that laugh.
"If you eat meat, let it be liver."
These are the people who say any child given brewer's yeast at an early age in a natural, simple manner, will grow to love it and will have no tolerance for Hershey bars and Coca-Cola. These are the anti-whipped cream people, the no pie, no cake group, the people who hate the fat man. They are serious. They are going to live longer than us.

The Quaker ladies have a cookbook too, embarrassed and full of casseroles. Recipes from Mabel Lockyer and Jeannette Coote, Brazil Nut Sensation from Evelyn Dane to go with Avocado-Chicken Surprise. The moral cookbook with paragraphs from A. J. Muste set between Baked Chicken with Orange Rind and Helen's Baked Lima Beans.

Literary cookbooks with meals constructed from scenes in War and Peace (Borodino Borscht) and A Farewell to Arms. The recipes by famous people: Stravinsky stew, an asparagus souffle Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis enjoys when dieting. Authentic recipes from countries that eat dumplings regularly, places whose whole interest lies in their kolatches, paella, Buddha's Delight. Earnest books that tell you not to be afraid to sprout your own beans, nervous books that never begin a recipe without telling you to wash something. Books against unbleached flour, books for. Books that think you're dumb: "Take an egg, break it." Books that say coriander and vanilla bean are staples. Books that bicker at each other, at their positions on butter and oleomargarine.

If you read long enough the books themselves disappear.

Just the food remains, brilliant as yarn samples. The harmony is amazing— you see wheat germ and whipped cream meeting on frozen desserts, mortars for mashing garlic, apricot tarts, carrots and roast beef together as if they were meant to be that way.

They pass majestically by; your eyes bulge. Listen! It's not the food, this is like traveling on the Continent. Suddenly you're humble; you want to memorize all the recipes for mayonnaise you can find. You want to do everything they tell you, never leaving out an herb or deriding instructions to "chop finely." You make rash promises to bake bread every week, to make your plates "picture pretty," to balance nutrients, color, texture, to grow your own parsley. You realize what a fool you've been.

It's hard to sleep on these nights after reading the cookbooks. Ambition almost chokes you, desserts especially. You fall asleep wanting to be perfect.
Symblonese women, you fingered frustration over and over like rosary...memorized pain.

Cameras pant over your incinerator, coverage personal like a home movie, they bring home truly they bring you home.

Your worst lullaby is over.

A billion blue ties walk our planet, careless and arrogant.

Make fists explode like birth anger is common everyday gritting of teeth...hot dude sucks at you from a stop light besides rape and murder it's the irate husband expecting dinner and all the dead trees.

Symblonese women fingered frustration over and over... water torture drips down on foreheads methodically: the little death in the supermarket, red muscles of animals quietly packaged snarol and black flag... each foot of concrete poured for a safeway floor claimed the home of insects weeds flowers birds roads cut the hearth of earth, the way i live is slaughter

by BOBBIE BISHOP

and i finger frustration over and over.

Symbionese women, your worst lullaby is over.

My father drove me to a friend’s. I belched in the car. he said, “that’s pretty bohemian, isn’t it?” i said, “i suppose so.” he said, “well, i’m not bohemian.” and i said “nobody’s asking you to be.” quietly i said, “nobody’s asking you to be.” and i finger frustration over and over, no woman remains unmade by man.

Chant blue teeth marks on our bodies all marks come down to each sister, no woman remains unmade by man.

Sing you songs, sisters sing you songs marks came down around as you fingered frustration burst on fire and bullet all around the murder bush they chased...

And we’ll scrape your bones and start again. Your worst lullaby is over.

by AUDRE LORDE

"It's the small deaths in the supermarket" she said trying to open my head with her meat white cleaver trying to tell me how her pain met mine halfway between the smoking ruins in a black neighborhood of Los Angeles and the bloody morning streets of childkilling New York.

Her poem reached like an arc across country and "i'm trying to hear you" i said roaring with my pain in a predawn city where it is open season on black children where my worst lullaby goes on over and over. "i'm not fighting you" i said but it's the small deaths in the gutter too that's unmaking us all and the white cop who shot down 10 year old clifford glover didn't fire because he saw a girl.

JET magazine, 6/27/74:

Last week, New York City policeman Thomas Shea was acquitted on charges of murdering 10-year-old Clifford Glover... Shea’s story was that he and his partner were out looking for two robbery sus­pects and came across Clifford and his father on their way to work. Despite the fact that the two suspects had been described to the cops as being around 24 years old, nearly 6 feet tall and weighing 180 and 155 pounds respectively, the cops decided to stop the under 5 feet tall, 90-pound Clifford and his 5 feet, six inches tall father for questioning. Shea said, “We were approach­ing them when they broke and ran. The smaller figure then turned and fired at us. I returned the fire, hitting the smaller figure.” Clifford was shot in the back... the gun he was supposed to have fired has never been found.

[When questioned about how a 10-year-old boy could have looked like a 24-year-old man, the cop replied, “I didn’t notice the size, but the color was right.”]
Susan Rutledge had a gift from her mother's eldest sister, the gift of fashioning dreams and sending them to anyone she wished. It was within her power to visit a sleeping enemy with a nightmare, or, if she cared to do so, to show herself invitingly to the one she wanted as a lover. The gift was in the family; it passed to one woman in each generation.

Other powers, similar but not the same, descended through other families in that part of the country. There were households whose daughters could send their minds to travel for hours in the bodies of birds, or men, or bears, while their own bodies rested on their beds. There was rumor, too, of a family in which the women had the gift of planting thoughts. These women, it was said, could place a desire, an image, an intention, a recognition, a piece of knowledge in another person's mind, and make it seem as if that person had conceived it. But the Rutledge gift of sending dreams was neither so abstract, so much a spectator's affair, as that of the mind-travelers, nor so direct, so telepathic, as the act of planting thoughts. A dream, unlike a waking thought, might be disregarded or forgotten.

All who possessed these gifts, the senders of dreams and the others, used their powers sparingly and in secret. They first learned caution from the witch trials; in later times, they found themselves unwilling to incur the suspicion and the bad feeling of their neighbors. Susan's aunt recalled with pride that none of their ancestors had ever been suspected of witchcraft.

When Susan was sixteen, her aunt came to her in a dream and declared her the inheritor of the power. The older woman died soon afterward, leaving Susan to test the gift.

More from curiosity than from malice, she tried it first on somebody she despised mildly, a spoiled girl who shrank from all crawling things. On a camping expedition, Susan sent the girl a dream in which one, then two, then four grey spiders crossed and re-crossed a blank wall, multiplying until they filled the dreamer's vision. But as Susan lay in her sleeping bag, listening
to the screams and sobs, she had to brace herself against the awareness that suddenly descended upon her, like a cloak flung from above: she, and no other, had caused this chaos. She used her power again barely half a dozen times, and then only after careful consideration.

When Susan's father died, her mother sold their house and moved south; but Susan, who wished to stay near home, found work in the next town. She rented half a house in the remote town she worked in, far up in Vermont, nearer Montreal than Boston. Like others with certain powers, Susan wanted to live quietly. She had a garden; she watched birds; she kept to herself. People liked her well enough, but regarded her as rather colorless. Nobody paid much attention to her.

It was not that she was displeasing to see. A second look showed that she was slender and upright, that the bones of her face were faultless, that she had fine dark eyes in which there was nothing of the cow or the spaniel. She could have enticed men through their dreams, but none appealed to her. She had foreseen Susan's powers, and prophesied this indifference as a gift, and accepted it without question, having learned already to live with one unusual quality. She was not given to unnecessary brooding, once she had acknowledged something.

At the end of Susan's third year in the town, Louise Dulac finished her nurse's training in Connecticut and came home. She opened the family house, which had sat empty, awaiting her return. The rest of the Dulacs were scattered, or dead. Susan heard that Louise would be working at the local hospital. The word was that even though she was still very young, younger even than Susan herself, she preferred the country, that she had had enough of the city in her years as a student.

One morning, about a week after she returned, Louise came to Susan's office to see an old school friend of hers, the same woman in fact who had spread the news of her homecoming. The friend made introductions.

Susan noticed that Louise was only a little shorter than herself, rosy and round in the face, with a certain quickness of manner. She pushed aside her papers and said, "How is it, coming home after all this time?" From there the talk flowed easily enough. Susan, who kept secret even her secretiveness, was skilled in this kind of conversation.

She found that she was still thinking of Louise that evening, and the next day as well. The discovery surprised her, but she put it down to curiosity, the simple desire to see the other woman again. For fear of pushing herself forward, she decided to leave the next meeting to chance, even half-hoping, with sudden, unaccountable shyness, that the feeling would vanish and leave her in peace. But her curiosity, as she called it, grew daily, unrelied by any chance meeting. After, at last, a week. Susan yielded to an impulse and took an unfamiliar way from work, along a road that led past the Dulac house.

It was a rather small white frame house with green shutters, that stood daisy, full of daisies. As she drove past, not so slowly as to draw attention, Susan felt that the house somehow represented Louise, and that to enter the house would be to know Louise more completely. In this condition, she imagined the neighborhood was filled with Louise's presence, and that soon (with a leap inside) she might meet Louise herself. At the same time, she understood that this viewing was a private act, not to be mentioned.

The road, Susan discovered, opened onto the main highway that swung around that side of town. At the junction there stood a diner of glass and metal, a stop for those passing through, for truckers and carloads of hunters. Susan had never gone there; it was out of her way. But she wanted to stop driving now, to concentrate wholly on her thoughts.

She sat in a booth, ordered coffee from an inattentive waitress, and drank slowly. Her old belief was proved wrong: it was not her gift, but a leaning toward women, that left her indifferent to men. Next to the marvel of Louise herself, the greatest surprise was her lack of surprise at this revelation. It lay at ease in her mind, perfectly simple. Yet she suspected that this was the simplicity of a hinge, which would set her future life by a still-unknown angle to the past. She was gazing into her cup, and speculating, when Louise Dulac walked in, with a raincoat over her uniform.

As before, they spoke of neutral things; of New Haven, where Louise had trained; of Boston, where Susan had family; and again of Louise's return home.

"I'm making curtains for the house," said Louise.

"Well, how are you doing?" said Susan.

"I'm thinking of doing that next year," said Louise. "Tell me what it's like." She leaned back in her seat.

Afterward, Susan remembered very little of the conversation (was it beats or radishes that Louise liked best?), but she knew now that Louise's eyes were greenish brown, with a dark circle around each iris; not blue, as she had originally thought.

That night, she sent Louise a dream that was little more than a greeting: a glimpse of herself, smiling and waving across a room. Her dreams always fulfilled their purpose; she expected to see Louise again soon.

After several days had passed with no response, she caused Louise to dream that they walked together through the woods on the northern edge of town, beyond the Catholic cemetery. They were laughing; their faces, like daisies, caught the sunlight that came through the leaves. The silence continued. Susan became watchful, hoping to meet Louise wherever she went. She lost the pleasure of moving easily and disinterestedly through her surroundings, a pleasure not perceived till it had vanished.
She despaired; only her pride, or her shame, kept her from passing through the neighborhood of the hospital at a certain hour of the afternoon.

She sent a third dream, a dream filled with food and wine, in which they feasted throughout the night.

On the following morning, a Saturday, Susan met Louise Dulac in the grocery store. She greeted Louise with the right degree of cheerfulness, hoping to hide the jolt and flutter she felt upon seeing her. She imagined that Louise looked startled. They praised the weather; complained about the prices; Susan inquired after Louise's curtains; Louise admired Susan's sandals. Very pleasant, thought Susan afterward, replaying every word in her mind, but nothing that might not have passed between any two acquaintances. Uncertain of her position, Susan had shown restraint; but did Louise's geniality reflect, or mask, her true feelings? Susan's gift did not include the power of reading minds.

For two weeks she had no word or sign from Louise. Then one day at dusk, as she saw a pair of young girls walking along the street with their heads together in conversation, Susan was struck by the ambiguity in the relations between women, the existence of a spectrum, of which simple friendliness was only one extreme. A smile, a compliment, a confidence might have its place anywhere on this scale. She began to fear not that Louise ignored the three dreams she had sent, but that she misunderstood them. Women walked together, talked and laughed together, shared food and wine in waking life: acts full of meaning, or with no meaning beyond themselves.

She did not know whether Louise had the capacity to reach the other end of the spectrum. Susan struggled for some weeks longer against an urge to send another, stronger dream. At first she hesitated to invade Louise in this way, possibly to frighten or repel her. But alone one midnight, she acknowledged at last that any dream would appear to the dreamer as the product of her own mind; that there need be nothing, even in this dream, to reveal that it came from another source. The sender of the dream ran no risk of being identified, for even the notion of such a person was beyond those who knew nothing of gifts and powers. Susan then fashioned a dream that was not at all ambiguous.

They swam naked in a lake, in the middle of a forest, and let themselves be contained and stroked by the water. As they came to stand afterward in the shallows, they joined hands and ran up on the shore. There they embraced, though without kissing, each warmed by the other's body. Susan clasped Louise along the back, and held her by the shoulders, lightly, but with authority. (She trembled as she created this detail.)

At first, for lack of experience, she did not know how to end the embrace. Then, contemplating further the nature of dreams, which admit the random and the arbitrary, she decided to conclude the embrace, and the dream, with the vision of a small token, a dream-souvenir of the encounter. Arbitrarily she chose to display at the very last a small grey stone, hardly more than a pebble, that glinted beneath the surface.

On the day after Susan sent this dream, she went as usual to the diner,
and sat at her usual table.

Louise entered in the next minute, as if by design. Full of triumph, Susan waited for her to speak.

"Let's have some coffee," said Louise.

Susan looked over at the waitress, who was at the far end of the counter, her back toward them.

"I'll get her." Louise's face went perfectly still for a moment. The waitress turned rather quickly, came to the table, and took their order.

Sharply observant, attuned to cause and effect, Susan sank and dissolved with shock. She watched as cups were filled and brought to them, unsure what mask covered her confusion. Louise looked tranquil.

They drank.

"The dream you sent me last night," said Louise.

"That I sent?" In panic now, Susan thought of flight. She was exposed, and so broken; everything was finished. She would have to leave this place to bury her disgrace.

Louise reached into her coat pocket and brought out a small grey stone, hardly more than a pebble, that glinted beneath the surface. She studied it, turning it in her fingers, and finally looked up at Susan.

"I'm glad you said what you meant."

"What else was there to say?"

"It was so hard to reach you," Louise continued. "You resisted me for a long time. I was afraid..." At once the sense of reversal righted itself. In sudden relief, Susan felt herself swept into a dance, a moving pattern in which leader and follower constantly changed places. She could no longer separate will from response, the thought conceived from the thought implanted; and to do so no longer seemed necessary, or even important.

Louise looked calm again. Her moments of uncertainty, Susan sensed, would be rare and short-lived. "Come home with me," she said. "You haven't seen the inside of my house."

As Louise had intended, Susan heard the emphasis on the word "inside." Was there any action, however small, however private, outside the pattern? Still caught up in the dance, she rose and led the way to the door.

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**HOW TO MAKE A MAGAZINE**

**PART TWO**

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By Laurel

Last issue we covered the basics of typesetting and layout. Now we can go on to the mysteries of the print shop.

Depending on the number of copies you intend to run, the quality desired, and how much you can spend, you will choose either a paper/plastic plate process or a metal plate process. As there's nothing to the former, I'll concentrate here on metal plates. These must be used for any page you want to print with a half-tone photo.

**The Copy Camera**

Most commercial printers have a huge wall-model camera that takes pictures (later to be transferred onto metal plates) of both straight-line copy and half-toned graphics. This piece of equipment is at least a $2000 investment, so many people who have small presses go to big printers to use the camera and plate-making facilities.

The camera pictured here is a Brown 2000. There are many different kinds of copy cameras with various handy features, but, basically, it is just a very large model of your own hand camera. Half of the camera, where the controls are (shutter, lens focus, exposure timer, half-tone screen rack, etc), has to be in a darkroom and the other half should be outside, in another room.

The copy camera can reduce or enlarge what you've laid out. Generally we reduce by 10%-15% depending on how many good submissions we want to fit in. This issue is reduced to 85% of the original size.

**Graphics**

Reductions and enlargements are especially necessary for graphics since you rarely find a picture just the size you need. Your printer should give you a reduction wheel (or pick one up at a photo supply) which will make it easier to calculate how much a picture needs to be reduced or enlarged.

Once you've calculated the to-be-printed size of your graphic (to the nearest 16th of an inch), you make a "window" for it on the appropriate layout page.
The "window" is made with Rubilith, a red translucent film that can be cut with a cleaner edge than something like construction paper. It is very expensive, so we use red construction paper and border it with red lithographer's tape to get a clean edge. Your window material must be either red or black in order to leave a clear window on the negative produced by the copy camera.

Negatives -- Regular and Half-toned

The copy camera exposes film just like any other, but the objective is to make a negative only, not a print. The negatives will be used for the next step, burning the metal plates. Line negatives are shot where only words and line drawings are on the layout page, or a "window" for a to-be-reduced (or enlarged) photo. Half-tone negatives must be shot for any graphics with shading (all except line drawings). If you look at any magazine picture, you'll see that the image is made of tiny dots -- the larger the dots, the darker the image. (We like to use a very fine screen for most of our photos, so that the dots are less obvious.)

The copy camera is made so the operator can easily slip the screen (a glass panel with dots on it) inside the camera where the dots will be photographed over your photograph. They will be larger or smaller depending on how much light is being reflected off the photo you have on the easel.

Line negatives and half-tone negatives are essentially treated alike after this: they go into a developing bath, a stop bath, fixer, and a final wash. It definitely takes practice to do good half-tones though, as there is magic required in getting the right exposure, developing time, chemical strength, etc. The next step after the developed negatives have dried (they're just hung up with clothes pins to drip dry) is the opaquing and stripping process.

Making the Metal Plates

The next step in the process is burning the plates. The negatives are laid on top of what looks to be a sheet of heavy aluminum foil (the metal plate) and put into a vacuum suction glass compartment. The vacuum assures perfect contact of the negative with the metal plate (no air bubbles, slips or slides). The vacuum easel tilts to face an extremely powerful arc lamp which is some distance across the room. For me, visions of the electric chair and shock treatments accompany the extremely high voltage zap necessary to burn the metal plate. It's frightening at first. There's a timer which allows you to leave the room, or at least to turn away while the blinding light is on.

The Press

If you've ever used a mimeo machine you have a simplified but helpful picture of how the press works. The metal plate clamps on like a stencil and curves around a roller. Sections of the metal plate (depending on your image) are water soluble and others repel anything water-based. The water-based ink slides over the parts of the plate which are to be clear white space on your finished page, and sticks to the type and image area in photos. A really big offset press can print both sides of 8-10 of your pages at once. I don't want to get into the presses here--there's too much to learn --but, if possible, you should find a printer with the most economical press for your needs. The more press operator's time you can save, the better. We've been paying about $14 per hour, so it is an important consideration.

Another consideration will be ink color. Generally your inside print will be black. If you want a color ink on the cover you'll have to pay for a washup charge on the press. It takes a half hour or so to clean up the mess whenever the pressperson changes the ink color on a press.
Automatic Collator

Some large presses can run 2 or more colors at once, but, of course, this adds to your cost.

Before the presses start to roll, you must have decided the quality, color, and weight (thickness) of paper you want. Your printer usually can order in bulk, so unless you spot a super deal, it's best to order through them. Same with the cover stock. Choose your color and weight from the printer's samples. Coated stock is usually the most expensive, and it is also more difficult to fold if you're planning to do that part by hand.

Your book will roll off the press either on precut sheets or parent sheets which will later be folded into signatures and collated.

BINDING

There are many different ways of collating, stapling and trimming your books -- all of which, taken together, is called bindery.

We collated the first two issues of AQ by hand...an incredible thing to do, but our only financial choice at that time. We picked up the 18 separate bundles of pages and the printed cover from the printer and brought it home to a waiting band of women who licked their fingers and began the production-line strut. It took 6 women about 5 hours---30 women hours altogether--to collate 1000 copies. Then we had to staple, fold, and trim them.

When we began printing 3,000 copies we made an arrangement with the printer to let us use the print shop's automatic collator. With a little training and a lot of trial and error, we were able to collate 5,000 in 30 woman-hours. We stapled by hand for the first 4 issues --not really by hand, but one copy at a time on an electric saddle stitcher. Easy enough--but boring! Then we had to use real elbow grease to fold each issue. There is another kind of binding, perfect binding, which is much more expensive. This provides a "spine" on your book. The pages are cut and glued together instead of stapled.

AQ grew and the printer's facilities too. We learned how to use new machinery as it came, particularly the automatic stitcher and folder. Now, since moving to Boston and going up to 5,000 copies per issue, we are using a mammoth commercial printer and binder with automatic everything. It's expensive, but it's a relief to turn over at least part of making the magazine to someone else now. Their super machinery can collate, fold, and trim all in one graceful motion...an elegance we're willing to pay for.

After trimming off the uneven edges caused by folding, your books are ready to spread to your sisters. Next issue we'll finish up with some advice on distribution, the long finger of the IRS and the U.S. Post Office, applying for grants, etc.

(continued from pg. 19)

istic of white men throughout the patriarchal era, and the equation of sex with violence characteristic of all men, combine to form a classic patriarchal body state that has been (with variations according to culture, time period, even individual differences) the normal way of experiencing for men through all the centuries of the patriarchy (are you tired of that word?)

Here I am still talking about men. What happened to art? Seems it's always easier, and safer, to tear down than to build up--and tearing down as a way of life seems to be addicting. I really didn't set out to do what I've so far done. I didn't mean to attack the man with his own language—I want to write for women for whom I have nothing to prove. And most of all I didn't mean to box myself into categories so tight I can't live in them, yet I can't squeeze out or just forget them either. To describe the left brain I took on its language—to describe the dualism male thinking made possible, I divided the universe into good and bad, women and men. Another choice I made, the polarities, the dualism, the equation of sex or Gina who uses it to describe how bad it is? I'm so tired of this. I wanted to bring in brain specialization because it is a useful analogy and the same for body states, and after I'd briefly described them I could refer back as a shorthand.

I know though, why I go on writing facts and theories, generalities applicable to all men through all history—I've become my subject-matter, or more likely I started writing this because already I very often inhabited, I'll admit the "classic patriarchal body state." I KNOW the boxes I've been constructing all these pages don't work, because I myself don't fit them. I can't ignore that, can I? And yet neither can I ignore the sense the categories of class, sex, race, etc. make in my life. I catch myself thinking with all of my heart, as I generations before me, hitchhiking around California perfecting self in good and bad, women and men. Another choice I made, the polarities, the dualism, the equation of sex or Gina who uses it to describe how bad it is? I'm so tired of this. I wanted to bring in brain specialization because it is a useful analogy and the same for body states, and after I'd briefly described them I could refer back as a shorthand.

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point out that the patriarchy is not only murderous and horrible but ridicu-

lous, that it defines our lives in every way from art to brain structure, 

that for our survival we women need to stop looking for the exceptional male 

and start seeing men as the individual agents of the patriarchy they are, 

whether willing or not you see, I get carried into it, and by the time I 

finish I’m saying things I only believe on alternate Tuesdays. It’s much 

harder for me to write about the new-women’s-culture building process that 

may be possible. I know what I say about the culture—that is holds true, 

but I risk failure in writing vision, possible failure both of the vision 

to become reality and of my hopes to hold up in the meantime. Sometimes I 
can hardly stand to read those few rosy paragraphs at the start of this arti-
cle because I feel I must have lied if I don’t believe it always.

What I want most to write about, what motivated me to start weeks ago, 

was the possibility of re-defining art into the vital, powerful unifying process I sense that it can become, once taken out of the patriarchal con-
text. I’ve gone two years without working as an artist, except for occa-
sional bursts of activity that leave me feeling uncomfortable and ambivalent 
—ambivalent because I’m doing this work in the context of patriarchal “art,” 

with its definitions that don’t mesh with my perceptions in any way. In the 

context of this Culture, practicing art was effete and powerless for me, an 
empty privilege I could not afford. I want to define art as only women can 

imagine it, so that the written words can be encouragement and support for 

me to begin acting out an art process again, in a newly emerging context to 

which other women could add their experiences and dreams. The risk this in-
volves for me, after planning a year ago that I would write the exorcism/in-
vocation this particular summer, that then (now) I would be ready and articu-
late enough to not frustrate my attempts, that this writing would mark the 
beginning of a new fruitful cycle of art work for me—the risk tightens my 

spleen and I reread the words. I risk blowing my own mythology. I risk blowing my own mythology! I risk the 

possibility that the exorcism/invocation won’t work, and I’ll find myself a- 
drift in old ambivalence with no inspiration; the I-risk list could get very 

long but won’t. I feel that to exorcise the patriarchy from my body/mind enough to 

breathe a little around its cancer, I have to reject every detail, going 

back to the beginning of the patriarchy and the ways men’s brains and 

bodies work. I feel that every exaggeration I make is more than warranted, 

is helpful, as part of the process of restoring balance in the world. My 

experience has always been that I’ve needed to say no many times, to clear 

a space, before I could say yes—and so I’m doing with this. And there’s 

no more still to come.

Next issue I’ll continue with patriarchal body states and their connec-
tions with the role of art in the patriarchy. I’ll focus on art of the last 

1,000 years and especially the last 100 years, including the present femi-
nist art scenes—and wind on through ways we can use art now for spiritual 

survival and for building a new culture—eventually getting to possible evo-

lutionary paths into that new world. Sources for this first installment will 

be listed next time.

Letters

As Amazon Quarterly begins her third year in print, we would especially 

to have your views about her growth. Many of you send us love letters 

after each issue—support we cherish and need. But we would also like spe-
cific responses to articles, poems, graphics, etc. We’d like to know what 

new directions you would like to see AQ take. Also, we’d like to hear how

"Connections" has worked for those of you who’ve participated. Letters can 

be printed with or without names—just let us know. We do our best to per-

sonally answer all correspondence.

Really happy to see that AQ is be-
ing printed on recycled paper. I 

hope that other women send a little 
to help. (I’d send more, but I’m 

not working now.) 

And hear hear! on Laurel’s 
Radical Reproduction article. I’ve 
been wanting to see something with 
info on the subject published —
also made me realize that being 
sure of a female conceived isn’t 
so hard as I’d thought, right now. 

—Karen

The woman who wrote in issue 3 
(volume 2) that there was nothing 
like this in England was so right. 
I too am English and am returning 
there now after a year here in the 
States. We have so little good 
stuff to read there. Maybe I can 
spread the word of AQ to my friends 
back home.

—Alison, England

I am enclosing $5 to cover sub-
scription and "brown bagging" for 

AQ. I am now living in a small very 
straight/sexist town in Alabama 
and have had very little to do here 
but go to school and think. I’ve 
been here 3 months and 3 months 
worth of thinking has led me to a 
lot of realizations about myself as 

a woman. The most difficult thing 
for me to have become fully aware 
of was that I am a Lesbian. And 
the most difficult thing about this 
is I have no one to rap with about it. George Wallace, a cow or a 
chicken just won’t do! I’m finding 
it rough as hell to adjust and am 
looking forward to getting your 
journal.

If anyone would like to write to 
this sister or could tell her about 
Lesbian groups or individuals near 
Selma, Alabama, please contact us 
and we’ll put you in touch.
I was most impressed with the double issue—all about your travels and conversations. I was particularly moved by the account of your visit in Chicago where several women were afraid you would not like them because they had never slept with a woman, etc. That all made me think back on my experiences late last spring and early summer when I began to experience my love for women and all the accompanying joy and hope. I wish so badly that I could have read AQ then or an article (such as the one I mentioned).

It was a lonely struggle sometimes for me because there were many women who could not put any energy towards me because my awareness wasn't where theirs was. It seemed like being 29, married for 8 years, mother of 2 children, living in suburbania (complete with stationary wagon with baby seat in back) made me seem hard to believe. I certainly didn't seem to have the qualifying credentials. On the one hand, I was so happy when I was with women—becoming a new person rejoicing in this wonderful love, but very few women took me seriously. Almost a year later I am a month away from a divorce, I am beginning to live my life and my love for women grows more beautiful each day.

As I read the account of the Chicago visit, I could almost feel those women's relief and happiness at being accepted and cared for by you. They must have become stronger because of the experience. I can imagine that there are lots of women—like I was last spring—taking those first shaky steps. I hope they are reading AQ. Please keep the doors open—you are helping so many women.

--Diana, Indiana

Thanks so much for AQ—especially for your section on "How to Make A Magazine." About a year ago we went to having our newsletter printed, but there is so much we don't know. This particular series of articles should be very helpful to women throughout the country.

--Nancy, Missouri

Gay consciousness in Germany is not yet far enough to really produce its own culture. I translated Judy Grahn's poem, "A Woman Is Talking to Death," into German to be able to share it with some friends. Finally some poetry to identify with! I translated it one night after I found out that a friend of mine had just gotten raped. It was so angry that I had to put my hate into some work and thus turn it into something constructive. I am grateful to Judy Grahn for having given me such a constructive outlet to canalize my anger. It got such a good feeling from the poem.

--Barbara, West Germany

Adrienne Rich won the National Book Award for her book of poetry, Diving Into The Wreck. When she accepted the award (April 18, 1974) she read the following statement which she has asked us to print:

The statement I am going to read was prepared by three of the women nominated for the National Book Award for poetry, with the agreement that it would be read by whichever of us, if any, was chosen.

We, Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, and Alice Walker, together accept this award in the name of all women whose voices have gone and still go unheard in a patriarchal world, and in the name of those who, like us, have been tolerated as token women in this culture, often at great cost and in great pain. We believe that we can enrich ourselves more in supporting and giving to each other than by competing against each other; and that poetry—if it is poetry—exists in a realm beyond ranking and comparison. We symbolically join together here in refusing the terms of patriarchal competition and declaring that we will share this prize among us, to be used as best we can for women. We appreciate the good faith of the judges for this award, but none of us could accept this money for herself, nor could she let go unquestioned the terms on which poets are given or denied honor and livelihood in this world, especially when they are women. We dedicate this occasion to the struggle for self-determination of all women, of every color, identification, or derived class: the poet, the housewife, the lesbian, the mathematician, the mother, the dishwasher, the pregnant teenager, the teacher, the grandmother, the philosopher, the waitress, the women who will understand what we are doing here and those who will not understand yet; the silent women whose voices have been denied us, the articulate women who have given us strength to do our work.

SAVE THE TREES

In the Fall 1973 Special Issue, we asked for women to help us with the extra cost of using recycled paper. We were especially concerned since the trees AQ is printed on are cut down in Canada for use in the U.S. A very kind sister from Canada made it possible to print our last issue (vol. 2 #3) on recycled paper by sending the extra $300 dollars we needed. We hope that her example will lead other women's publications to want to save the trees, and that you will want to send a contribution (however small).
AUDRE LORDE: I live in Staten Island (the most southern part of NYC) and my new book, *New York Head Shop and Museum*, is coming out by Broadside Press in November. [In case that's not enough you can take your pick: I am Black, Woman, Poet, Mother, Teacher, Friend, Lover, Fighter, Sister, Worker, Student, Dreamer, Artisan, Digger of the earth, Secret; also Impatient, Beautiful, Uppity and Fat.] Additional references upon request.

BOBBIE BISHOP: I've recently been published in *Country Women* and *Mosaic's* woman issue (local poetry mag) and am faithfully and falteringly trying to print up my own book of poems this summer. Title: *Voice From an Unknown Woman*. Writing poetry is a lifeline into my spirit, and hopefully connects with other women's.

DIANE DERRICK: Has just returned from a small town in England where she's spent the last 2½ years sculpting. She's now on her way to West Coast adventures in her VW Van. Her sculptures are for sale: contact her through AQ.

ELANA NACHMAN: Lives in rural Massachusetts. Her first novel, *Riverfinger Woman*, will be available shortly from Daughters, Inc., Plainfield, VT.

GINA: I'm beginning to enjoy New England after several months of culture shock (I'd always lived in California)--looking forward to romping in the woods once this magazine's out.

KAREN FEINBERG: Lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, and has contributed stories to earlier issues of AQ. Of "The Sender of Dreams" she says, "This story is private fantasy, converted into fiction."

KAYMARION: I read somewhere that the dragon is the Celtic symbol of wisdom. Makes you wonder what St. George was up to.

LAUREL: I'm currently exhausted with all political categories, and looking for new light on the womanvision.

MARTHA COURTOT: Lives in New Jersey.

MARTHA SHELLEY: Lives in NYC where she does a radio program on WBAI. A book of her poetry will soon be published in Berkeley.

MAUD HAIMSON: I live in Oakland, California, and have been working on a novel for three years that I hope will be done by the Fall of 1975.

NICOLE: Just finished school and I'm ready to get going. Freelance right now, but have hopes of working for a women's magazine in the near future. (Would really like to get together with other women who are into photography and/or writing to work on ideas! P.O.Box 4863, San Jose, CA 95159.)

PATRICIA HAMPL: I co-edit *The Lamp in the Spine* (P.O. Box 3372, St. Paul, MN 55165), whose next issue will have excerpts from journals by women writers. I keep a journal myself and find it more and more a valuable companion when poems won't come or when journalism (which I do for a living) comes too much.

SUSAN GRIFFIN: Is 31 years old and lives in Berkeley with her five year old daughter. She teaches writing and literature at the University of California Extension. She has published two volumes of poetry, *Dear Sky* and *Let Them Be Said*. "A Story" will appear in her collection of short stories, *The Sink*, to appear from Shameless Hussy Press in the Fall of 1974. She has just completed a play in poetry for radio with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, in production at KPFA (Berkeley), and is presently at work on a cycle of poems called "The Tiredness Cycle."

SUBSCRIBERS: IF THE MESSAGE RENEW HAS BEEN STAMPED ON THE COVER OF YOUR MAGAZINE, THEN PLEASE DO--THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE OF AQ YOU'LL RECEIVE 'TIL YOU RESUBSCRIBE. AND IF YOU CAN, PLEASE SEND $25 OR MORE TO BECOME A SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBER.

If You Move THE POST OFFICE WILL NOT FORWARD AMAZON QUARTERLY, NOR WILL THEY RETURN UNDELIVERABLE COPIES TO US. THEY TEAR UP THE MAGAZINE AND CHARGE US 10 CENTS FOR THE INFORMATION THAT YOU HAVE MOVED. PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY OF CHANGES IN YOUR ADDRESS (and please include your old address, and note whether your subscription is a plain wrapper one.)
AMAZON QUARTERLY IS VERY HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED A $1000 GRANT FOR WRITERS' AND ARTISTS' PAYMENTS FROM THE COORDINATING COUNCIL OF LITERARY MAGAZINES. EACH ISSUE WE WILL DIVIDE $250 AS EQUITABLY AS POSSIBLE AMONG THE WOMEN ARTISTS AND WRITERS WHOSE WORK WE USE. WE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGE WOMEN WHO HAVE NOT PUBLISHED BEFORE TO SEND US YOUR WORK. ALL MANUSCRIPTS AND ART WORK MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE. PLEASE ALLOW THREE MONTHS FOR ACCEPTANCE OR RETURN.

BOX 434, WEST SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02144

All women who contributed to this issue (excepting the editors) will receive payment for their work. We have divided the money not necessarily according to merit, but according to length and our estimate of the time and effort that went into producing the work.

Barbara Starrett will receive $40 as will Irene Schram. All our poets will receive $15 each: Honor Moore, Frankie Hucklenbroich, Margaret Talbot, Judy Grahn, Joan Cofrancesco, and Joan Larkin. Sharon Behrends will receive $20 for her cover drawings. Valerie Wohlfeld will receive $10 for her artwork as will Joy Martin and Patricia Wright. Cynthia Carr will receive $20 for her story.
EXPLORATION

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FROM US:

As we move into AQ's third year, we'd like to focus on who and where our readers are, where we are as a movement of women, and in what directions we are growing. The eight pages of letters beginning on the next page show our great diversity and strength, the incongruous variety of our pasts and our surprising convergence of hopes and visions. The poetry this issue (selected and put in its present order by Audre) speaks of and from the same diversity, the same strength. A directory of the feminist press (pg.65) is included to give us a sense of the current state of the women's movement and to make wider communication possible. Barbara Starrrett makes pathways into a future that is our own, shows us directions in which we can consciously evolve, in "I Dream in Female: The Metaphors of Evolution" (pg.13). In an exploration of the same themes on a personal level, Irene Schram traces her own evolution from patriarchal wife to woman-loving-woman ("Woman Becoming," pg.46).

We've begun to trust ourselves and each other enough, to risk enough and care enough, to know some of what women can be, apart from male definitions and values. We've begun to find our own values, to listen to our own dreams—and what are those dreams? What would a women's world look like, feel like? In future issues of AQ we'd like to explore these possibilities—send us your visions, utopian schemes, descriptions, wishes, blueprints, maps—we want to explore both the "utopias" and the possible ways to get to them.

Which brings us to another area we think is of vital importance—just what is blocking the way to that women's world, and is there still time for us to move the world from here to there? Is it too late? If we do have a limited time in which to change the world, in a race against the destructive forces of the patriarchy, what are our most effective tactics? What do we have time for? We urgently need to share our insights in this area.

We'd like especially to hear from women who've had little opportunity to make dreams into realities, to control their lives or even to be heard—women in prison, young women under the control of parents, older women who've had to live out their lives without support for their women's ways, women too poor to feel articulate. We have much to learn from each other.

I'd like to point out here that the $250 we have available for authors and artists each issue will be divided up as equitably as possible among all contributors (except the editors) to each issue. There is no contest. We're sorry for any misunderstandings that have come up due to our not making this clear.

See pg.44 for information about free subscriptions available for anyone who induces a bookstore to order 5 or more copies of AQ. Thanks to all of you who've done this already.

Letters

I'm trapped in Biloxi, Mississippi, no culture anywhere in sight. Please send me your magazine... Enclosed is my last dollar.

--Deniz, Biloxi, MS

I am not knowledgeable, have not come out, so finding the Quarterly was an "accident" at a bookshop last night. The change in my attitude since I devoured articles, poems, letters this morning at the bus-stop and in moments between customers at my job is startling.

Suspicions have been popping into my brain that really, women are more attractive to me as friends, colleagues and lovers than men. Being (typically of women in general) willing to see my own needs and wants as indications of some emotional problem in need of "straightening out" I've tried to ignore the exaltation that physically and/or spiritually beautiful sisters give me. Frankly, I'm not quite sure how I rationalized away some very gratifying sexual fantasies involving other women—as lovers, not as O.K., rather titillating male substitutes.

Well, no more. No more thinking that I must want to ball with a man. No more turning off to attractive women. Soon, hopefully, no more living around what I want: to love, and be loved by a woman. Thank you so much for the radiance of yourselves through your words, one and all!

--Gene, Fullerton, CA

Amazon Quarterly has been especially important to me this year, since I had to leave college because I contracted multiple sclerosis and lost my eyesight. While I was recuperating in the hospital, a friend of mine recorded your publication on cassette tapes so I could "read" it. Now I have regained my eyesight, and am re-reading your publication for the first time since January!

--Susan, Indiana

I saw your ad in the September issue of Ms. Although I'm in the military, I have decided that I might as well give in to the urge to write to you and send in my subscription. Being in the military is really an experience and a strange one at that. I used to guard my ass real well, but I'm tired of the paranoia trip and figure that if they find out they find out.

--Mary, Georgia

A.Q. means how much to me you can't imagine. In my desert life it is oasis. In India til now not grown up of any movement for Women Liberation, Lesbianism or Feminism. Indian women want to get all opportunity from Masculine Society, that is why they cannot revolt against them. In India there are lesbians like other countries, but they are not organized. The Indian Ladies, who are rich and powerful, they do not want any movement. They are selfish. For sexual satisfaction very concealed way they maintain Lesbianism, but they do not want to admit to the society, because still Indian
women are very dependent on Masculine Society. Sometimes few rich
society women talk regarding feminist movement, but that is only a
fashion like so many other fashions. Even me, a strong-minded Les-
bian have to surrender to the Heterosexual Society's uncouth desire.
You cannot imagine how much pathetic is my life.

After death of my lover last three years I am leading a desert
widow's life. For two years I am trying again but in this middle
class area I could not find anybody--even I tried with my house-
maid, result is same. I can declare in the market place that I am
a Lesbian woman, I have that much guts.

A beautiful thing just happened to me, and I want to share it
with you and everybody:

I just, a few minutes ago, came out to my grandmother. Well,
I've been going around yelling "I'm gay!" at her for the last three
years, but it took me until now to get around to explaining what I
meant.

She asked me a few questions, such as which of my friends are al-
so gay, how could two women make enough money to live together, etc.

Then I said that it was scary sometimes because most people are
straight, and that was why Jonathan and I had gotten married, it
was a time when we were both scared. (I had been asked to resign
as a Girl Scout leader, and he had just broken up with his lover.)

She said, "Just because you're gay it's no reason to get scared."
I had to hug her. Then she said, "That woman across the street
lives by herself, maybe she's gay."

"Don't ask her," I said, and she smiled for the first time in
weeks. (She's seventy, very senile and getting progressively
worse in the ten years since my grandfather died.)

"Don't worry, I won't," she said in a voice I hadn't heard since
I was a child.

"This is the first time in years you've sounded like that girl
who was the first in the county to bob her hair and ran over a
mule with a Model T."

"Two mules," she corrected me.

--Martha, Memphis, Tennessee

For the past few months I have been after the Santa Monica Public
Library to obtain more Lesbian literature and periodicals. I o-
f ered to pay for a subscription to the Amazon Quarterly but they
said that the quality wasn't good and it just wasn't to "their"
taste. I don't intend to give up there and would like to ask your
help. Perhaps the larger project in the A.Q. and ask anyone living
in Santa Monica to contact me if they would like to help. The
Library Board stated that mine had been their only request so I
would like to change that.

--Nancy Clarke
2418 5th St. #6
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Vicky and I are asking all of you to become involved with "our"
struggle which is ultimately every woman's struggle. I am a thirty
year old Lesbian Mother with three beautiful children. Their ages
are ten, seven and five, and we all need all of you very much. I
am being taken into court at the end of September because their
father is complaining that "I am a Lesbian, that I openly admit my
Lesbianism, that I am a Public Lesbian, therefore making me an un-
fit, unwholesome and immoral woman and mother." Needless to say
we are going to fight but he refuses to pay support of any kind.

There is no group here for financial backing and I am unable to
earn a living because of a rare heart disorder. They are even try-
ing to use the heart disease in this court litigation. So we des-
perately need financial support, moral support, and any and all
information and connections any of you have.

--Laraine Townend
Vicky Dickinson
570 Harvey Ave., #2
Kent, Ohio 44240

I was doing some serious thinking the other night (about the im-
portant things in this life). One of my conclusions was: the price of
AQ should be raised--yes, raised. Let's face it, you work damn
hard producing AQ--that alone is worth the increase. Then consider
the current inflation trend, the paper situation, postal rates, and
the great etcetera. You have perfectly legitimate reason--let's
call it necessity--to increase AQ rates.

Consider this--they continue raising the price of Volkswagens,
and the public continues buying them. Why? For the quality. The
VW's aren't getting any bigger--their loyal supporters won't turn
away from them. And your loyal AQ supporters aren't about to turn
away AQ. I hope you see my logic.

--Sally, Erie, PA

[We'd like to thank AQ's sustaining subscribers, and all of you
who've been able to send extra money, for enabling us to keep our
price down so that more women can afford AQ. We offer free sub-
scriptions to women who are in prison or otherwise unable to pay,
and hope for continuing financial support to offset these costs.]

I was so grateful for your magazine and so hungry for words about
Lesbian women and their ways of life. As I negotiate a divorce I
find myself unsure and lonely in my familiar world of suburbia (yes,
the baby seat in the station wagon) and in the seemingly radical
lesbian culture.

I have a particularly strong response to "A Story" by Susan Grif-
fin, which embodies for me the gentleness and tentativeness and
doubt which I have known in my relationship. I especially identify
with the times when words refuse to carry the true wish and mean-
ing. I like the sense that nothing is simple and that in the com-
plexities and ambiguities and variation of personalities, richness
and reversals are possible and probable. I feel I have been both
of the characters in the story and wonder if the caring/sharing
relationship--minus the guilt and doubt--is not the most essential
one and the one connecting with our deepest wishes.

--G.B., New York
"Now, about the *Amazon Quarterly*...

...it's been given me strength. It's made me realize I've got Sisters out there who can really help me grow. We can all help each other and nourish each other... we aren't alone. The stories and essays have clarified my feelings and thoughts. Sometimes I thought I was experiencing something terribly unique, maybe because something was wrong with me; I don't know... and then when I'd read something by a Sister in your magazine it'd be a real release--like I'm not a failure I'm just struggling with some very real problems. Problems that probably would not exist if I didn't live in this Society. If I lived within a positive culture (a women's culture). In the last issue I especially liked the story "A Story" by Susan Griffin. Incredible. Reminds me of *Knots* by R. D. Laing but more relevant and more interesting. All the Insane misunderstanding...

--Carolyn, Susanville, CA

One day recently I wrote five poems--in between I was dancing around my apartment and rereading all my issues of *AQ*. I had never quite finished Peggy Allegro's fantastic article; I found Emily Carr's journal quite inspiring the second time through. Impressed by your growth, Laurel, in the two stories you have included in *AQ*--the second one is very impressive. Also enjoyed the feeling tone of Barbara's view of Anais Nin. In other words I got lost in *AQ* again as I do periodically. Almost every article bears rereading many times.

--Linda, San Diego, CA

I especially was wild about the article on parthenogenesis (vol. 2 #3). I read it on Easter Sunday. As a "fallen woman" Catholic I was delighted to conclude that either Mary, Mother of God, was not a virgin, or (and I prefer this one) that Jesus Christ was a woman.

--Eileen, Olympia, Washington

I treasure your article "Women Without Men" and am struck with the idea that "sperm cannot live in sunlight." Could we replace the birth-control pill with its high cost and dangerous side-effects with a bright light on a tube that is inserted into the vagina after rape or intercourse and left on for the required time to kill sperm? What do you think?

--Jean, New York City

We just got our latest issue of *AQ*. It was more of a literary magazine than ever before; and although I am a great fiction aficionado, I think I like the issues with more non-fiction best. My favorite remains the article on grids written by the stoned woman years before ("The Strangler and the Familiar: Potential of Lesbianism," by Peggy Allegro, Vol. 1 #1). Anyway, I found so many stories on the same theme to be boring. It also pointed out which ones were better in an embarrassing way. I liked the woman who could send dreams story the best--beautifully written and with a clarity that would appeal to a lot of different women. The preoccupation story and the rock-woman story were both inter­esting, but slinky in spots--the symbolism seemed too private at times. I still remember Laurel's story of the rain and the church and the two older women picking the younger one ("Asterisk," Vol. 1 #3)--that's what I look for.

--Elizabeth, Atlanta, GA

Karen Feinberg's "Sender of Dreams" jolted me. How wonderful to see my own fantasy in print. *AQ* manages always to confront me with another side of myself.

--Dawn, New Hampshire

Maud Haimson's "Hands," so beautifully, fancifully written, speaks more for the warm, highly textured potentials of a woman-loving-woman relationship than volumes written to explain, describe or diatribe on "the phenomena of lesbianism." "Sender of Dreams" giving voice to our ancient ever-present tools--let them try to legislate against telepathy! Now that makes me smile!

--Terra, Oakland, CA

Tremendously enjoyed *AQ*, as usual. We both liked "Hands"--for its subtlety, I suppose, or because it expresses an area of the mind, way of perceiving or a consciousness that we look for in women's fiction--hard to explain--I liked "The Sender of Dreams" too and the sculpture.

--Katie and Patsy, Florida

Praise to *AQ* for her high literary quality, supportive revolutionary Lesbian politics, and especially for articles on radical reproduction, right "vs." left brain thought, etc. Especially for these last because essays flowing from and embodying Lesbian con­sciousness and vision are even more rarely presented than *Amazon* Lesbian poetry, prose and reviews--and tend to be aimed at straight women (and men) as a repeated defense or proclamation.

My lover, Mary, and I have been buying *AQ* at Madwoman Lesbian/Feminist Bookstore here in Seattle. Each issue provokes thought and ideas, and gives both delighted moments and a general feeling of joy. It seems that the timing is always right; *AQ* helps to focus ideas (whole segments of consciousness, sometimes) that we're dealing with. Perhaps it's just that some ideas and issues are now essentially a part of Lesbian/feminist consciousness, and come up like waves.

--Jennifer, Seattle, WA

In June I received back from you two articles that I had submitted to *AQ*. You responded to "Lesbiens and 'The Art of Loving'" in a way that I find deeply disturbing from women whose ability, intelligence, and just plain humanity I had come to have much respect for. My most serious objection to your response derives from your statement, "There's a legitimization of hetero sex which won't work for *AQ*." I can only conclude that your stand in fact is opposition to the fact of all hetero sex regardless of quality. As I make quite clear in my article, hetero sex has indeed been generally characterized by relatively rigid roles which prove stultifying to both men and women, but especially to women. The idea is not solely related to the female role but equally is to the subservient position. But there is testimony that not all non-gay (or better, non Lesbian) sex is like this. I personally know some few straight couples who have marriages of real equality, and a number of the newer male/female sex books are premised on such equality (see especially a just-published book entitled *Male/Female Revival*).

It would seem that the ideal to be sought in a lesbian publication of quality is one which admits all variety of well-argued, well-articulated points of view. To impose ideological grids is
only to imitate many of the publications of the straight society we so justifiably oppose on many counts. If an idea is too objectionable or too heretical, let it be A's readers who make that judgment. For you to prevent the airing of reasonable minority (perhaps) opinions is a kind of thought control which I'm sure you're quick to criticize when it happens in Russia, in U.S. government pronouncements, or in a Time article on homosexuality which says little about lesbianism. --Donna, Milwaukee, WI

[Since there are more than fifty feminist publications (see directory on Page 65) we don't feel we have to be all things to all women. We have only two definite editorial rules: 1) we will never print work by men and 2) we won't print anything uncritical of heterosexuality. Since not all women's publications have these guidelines, we don't feel "censorship" is a possibility.]

Dear Rosey Rightbrain...

...You are amazing with your antediluvian theories. First the parthenogenesis and now the strange debate/analysis back and forth inside and out via the corpus callosum—and a good thing too, it is a lot tougher than the male's. I am not making fun. You are struggling to verbalize an analysis of something that has remained an opaque vision in, I suspect, many of us who have dreamed—perhaps—-the Jungian dream. I think of the search for the other half of the egg too. You've empathy eons long, long before this recent period of mitosis, though I seriously doubt this maze has any ending. But then, I also doubted television and was certainly convinced man would never reach the moon.

Anyway, your essay stirred up remembrance of a verse I'd laid aside years ago and have lifted off the burnt yellow and revised a bit for you. Humor is the great objectifier, darling, so please do not forget to laugh a little.

The specialized man with his specialized brain

Remarked on the progress of specialized gain:

"Oh Ho!" he was heard to have said on the train,
"I see that we're now to have specialized grain
From seeding the fog with our specialized rain!"

"Indeed!" cried his neighbor as equally clever
Who peered through the glass at the specialized weather,
"The dew that's upon us is hardly the same
For which we can thank our great masculine brain
That chopped up the earth for our special terrain."

And deep in the sot that had eaten the heather
They chortled and chanted and slapped backs together,
Then popped in their pills for the specialized weather... that ate up the iron and ate up the panes and ate up the tiles and then gobbled the brains that sat on the plush in the specialized trains.

--Loll, Bloomington, IN

Difficulties in speaking, difficulties in writing. Stripping the male-oriented patterns of thought right out my head, and out of all our women's heads: this is what I am after, this is I do believe necessary right now.

I like it so much that you speak of the woman-world. If you and I are thinking like this, then truly it is happening. We are women and indeed we may be the only people, because we can be now, biologically it is possible.

That is why I urge all women I talk with these days to relate truly and wholeheartedly to the necessity of creating a total strong womanworld. Lesbians, I prefer to call us, can be strong even if scattered around the world. Should there ever be some sort of political upheaval in this usa, we must be ready to handle those real possibilities that sword bristers may not want us around, so making a strong political reality in our own right is also part of what we are doing, in this process of defining and being ourselves newly all over again.

Getting into the habit of explaining ourselves (it should be one accepted joyfully and with relief, I'd think) from and within our own context of values, events, desires, etc., rather than in opposition to "what the men are doing" is not easy right off, but vital, and it is vital to begin it right now when you are thinking of it. I, for one, do not want to hear about my history, my future, my hopes, my fears, my loves in relationship to how it is in the male-dominated world. My past and my future life are mine, and are not right in the context of being a woman with women in the world. This is just a beginning. Now you've got me going, and I'll have to sit down and put this all down more concretely, for I think of this idea, this way of being as a philosophy or political theory. After all, I would run for President of the usa just to force women to look at themselves.

Perhaps we all should. Perhaps we should all quietly assume that we are living in a womanworld, and begin to conduct more and more of our lives and daily rituals with this attitude. (But how to be clear about this "attitude" is what is getting at all of us...)

--Janet, Portland, Maine

Circles around the lines, yes Gina. Your Exorcism/Invocation touched me on so many levels, hitting the chronicler, the explorer, the weaver, the scientist, the mystic, the Amazon, the visionary, the artist, the healer and mythmaker... triggering the accompanying hope, fear, confusion, joy, anger... so much easier to make friends of all these aspects when you realize they're shared, even down to the secret fears.

Defining, remembering where we have come from, separating that from what we have been told—So the No's... purge! But—-I am wildly curious how you will finally (?) "define art," as only women can define it. Yes, only women can define women's art, but, if define means a literal new Websterism, or some definition we all can feel comfortable with, and if you're expecting it to be some conclusive verbal catalyst, then of course it will be exclusive, like words always tend to be, somewhat empty, or too personal. What I mean is that art is its own definition, a million different definitions from a million different evolving selves. Art is a process not necessarily always involving a product. Having let go these ex-
pectations, I now consider myself my creation. I am creative process, conscious of itself being creative process. I am creating internal sanctuaries, oases of hope, islands of joy, rivers of love, wells of courage and strength, mountains for vision, rainbows for my soul, and in the great gallery of the Unknown, a comfortable seat at the edge of the blackness, a space where I can close my eyes and ears and rest my carpenter, my weaver, my visionary Amazon self and simply be—open, to the blackness, the unconscious, unfathomable mystery that sustains, is, the process I am.

You are an amazing artist, have never stopped being an artist, defining each moment, your life-style, your relationships... your Rosey Rightbrain, your left clavicle, an amazing special creation! I wonder how many cells between us we have brought into being as we have sat together over this? Well, I know you know this, and that you understand that it is OK to follow the tangents, illumine the corners... something to do with consciousness.

I guess my main message is: what have you (not) been doing for two years? Creating a healthy body and sipping in a cup of some amazing fluid that changed, yes transmuted from orange juice into blood all in the last few hours! And this one had a dream which led her whispering to a story and that one built a bookshelf, and that one wove a rug, this one a shawl, of words, or yarn or string or seaweed or pure wonder... I do not mean, please, to demean this verbal method, of course not... just want you to remember—transmutation is creation.

The most important creation is the one you are having to thought-form each morning, "whole days" when you can get them, "dreaming the world into a woman-place" with all the details. Is that not the most important task? Remember the AQ cover, three issues back, the river of life and death? Powerful magic. I believe in thought-forms... given enough shared energy there is no stopping their physical manifestation. No wonder you are not doing "art work." You are giving psychic, creative, emotional energy to the new world, the woman-vision. Stop giving energy to male sicknesses as soon as you possibly can—we all need to hear and share in the new world vision, because, damn it, if 200,000 women could thought-form it, share it, live and breathe life into it, alter and add, tender and grow, we may have a chance of making it a living experience before we die! If you and I can turn orange juice into blood, why can't we all make blueprints become a house, a dream a reality—same process, really. We don't have to understand it with our left brains, we haven't got time. We have enough clues, memories, experiences, to know the power of our thoughts, and the sooner we all begin concentrating, the better. I want to eliminate the possibilities of transmutation be made woman-public, given credibility. It is a great tool we have, as down-to-earth as breathing, and needs to be even further demystified, accessible. --Terra, Oakland, CA

We don't know (that is, we have not observed, objectively, in the male scientific way) much about evolution. We think it is the result of mutations which are triggered by the necessity to adapt to the environment. Aside from this cause-and-effect description, we really don't know how the evolutionary process operates or why it operates at all. Some species don't evolve. Members of the same species evolve at different rates and sometimes in different ways. We don't know why. We know that evolution proceeds in the direction of survival, of life. And it appears that evolution results in continuing differentiation, in specialization and in complexity, i.e. in new organs, limbs, and abilities, which enable the species to survive.

In other words, everything that rises does not converge but develops differences. Now imagine a species that has so evolved that its members begin to feel like another species, are aware of their differentness, and have developed a consciousness about themselves that is not explainable in contemporary symbols, forms, mindsets, language, art and culture.

Women are now at this point.

We have lived by our wits, as an oppressed and helpless people, for centuries. But we have not, despite massive and brutal conditioning, forsaken our Mother Nature; and she has not forsaken us. It took four hundred years to wipe out the last large concentration of evolved women (the witches, the wise women) but some of them survived the Burning Time and their genes have travelled through time to us. And we feel it; we know it. We are beginning to see into the past and into the future, to heal and create again, to become aware of our own strange abilities, to energize and communicate with each other in new ways.

We are even becoming aware that we can consciously evolve; that our new "organ" is something which enables us to will our own further evolution. The more aware we become of our own evolutionary process, the more we are empowered to will and direct that process: an incredible evolutionary leap, a macro-mutation on a level with (and having similar dynamics to) the development of language.

We should not be surprised. The psychics we know, the telepathic and palm readers, the healers and advisors and clairvoyants, aren't they nearly all women? Don't we all have what we call "intuition" and haven't we all read our friends minds? Haven't we all had hunches and dreams that have come true?

Long ago, women developed a special organ for the sole purpose of sexual pleasure. Men have no parallel organ. Indeed, male awareness of the purpose of the clitoris is so vague that they have largely ignored it, building an entire sexual mythology around the womb and the vagina. If a similar organ were to be developed by
men, we can be sure that women would not be allowed to ignore it. We have all been trained, educated and conditioned in male thought patterns in the same way we have been conditioned to accept the biological patterns: the "standards," the prescribed modes, are given, male-oriented and male-defined. For women they may well be counter-evolutionary, devolutionary. I want to digress for a minute now and talk about patterns. Patterns are non-verbal, non-pictorial, formless dynamics, deep, deep within our minds. Language, symbols, myths, cultures, dreams, social structures, thought modes, etc., are all expressions of patterns. (A close analogy for a pattern would be an archetype, but this analogy is limited because we have too many preconceived notions about archetypes and their meanings.) Patterns inform both the mind and the body. Patterns are natural and innate, or they are unnatural and imposed/conditioned. Patterns vary from individual to individual. They may vary a great deal from group to group. There are patterns which have informed society and culture for centuries. I will call them male patterns. There are new patterns emerging, female patterns. They are not the same. The other night on TV a prestigious male scientist announced that soon computers would be planning and running every phase of life on earth. More than that, he said that the computer was soon to be the manifestation of evolution on this planet, replacing, far surpassing, and perhaps eliminating human beings, to become the final evolved and self-evolving species. The computer is all form, all intellect, all systems and rules. No body, no emotions "hamper" its functioning. In other words, it is non-living. It is dead. But the computer is the direct result of male patterns. It is the final expression of the objectivity/logic/reason/scientific method mind-set, supremely emotionless and bodiless. There was a time when, perhaps, the human race needed these patterns to survive. But now they are counter-evolutionary and anti-life. The old, male patterns are death. Do you doubt this? The closest thing we know to a "living" computer is the idiot savant. These people are all male. They are all mathematicians. (There are no idiot poets or idiot philosophers.) Their minds compute, with inhuman swiftness and accuracy. In other kinds of mentation they are badly retarded. More and more of them keep cropping up, like the boys who get Ph.D.'s at sixteen. 

Male society has limited, devaluated and, I think, devolved its emotions to the point that only the emotions associated with aggressive and sexual activity (activities and emotions which overlap and are often the same thing) are given a positive value. Even these emotions are far inferior to the emotionless objectivity that is so esteemed and idolized. They are allowed, in a kind of pragmatic sense, but they are body-drives and therefore separated from the superior intellect. Nevertheless, emotions and body-drives must be expressed. Our society values, in practice, only the sexual/aggressive emotions for men (though it pays lip-service to other emotions). Combining these two sanctioned drives, objectifying them, and concentrating all the excess of feeling in them that is the result of emotional repression, the male society has made rape the prototypical expression of its patterns. Domination of the other by force: of nature and land and resources, of "inferior" nations and groups, of women, of money and markets and material goods. Domination by force exists in the intellectual (objective) or pain-inflicting (rape) euphemisms: rod (spare the rod...), tool, prick, thing. Female sexuality has been made to conform to male notions of beauty; the woman-child is natural, the woman-thing is envied, which can be sublimated in wifehood and motherhood but is always present. A woman who does anything is guilty of expressing her penis-envy, but not of retaining it. Freud declared that a "mature" (read invalidated and conditioned) woman had learned, also, to achieve orgasm, rather than the clitoral orgasm which was natural to her. Even now, some girls will not engage in sex with phallic objects (as in The Exorcist), and that Lesbians use dildos. Like Freud, they assume that women need penetration, body domination, for sexual fulfillment. And Freud named this necessary female quality: masochism. The highest form of female fulfillment (and redemption), as defined by men, is motherhood. The male projects himself, through a act of domination, in a child, which the female bears in pain and cares for in a lifetime of self-sacrifice. And she is expected to police her girl-children so well that they, too, emerge as masochists and victims of the death pattern. Victim that's an important word. It is the most descriptive noun we have to designate the role women (and homosexuals and the environment and nature and third world people, etc.) must play in order to act out the prevailing drama of the death pattern. For instance, a male transvestite (often and incorrectly thought to be a homosexual) knows how to become the ideal male projection of the woman, and l. appeals to other heterosexual men. It is the victim stance, not the sex of the victim, that really turns on the ordinary male. 

Counter-evolutionary specialization is concerned with narrowing, with blocking off and out, with learning to set up systems that have their own internal logic but may have no other referents: I remember how annoyed I was in school when my professors insisted I "narrow down" my topic, that I make one small, often inconsequential point and back it up for forty or more pages by a selective process of quoting as many "experts" as possible who agreed with me. One point, unrelated to anything else, repeated over and over in different words, is a scholarly, intellectual performance. This is called objectivity. The words and other symbols used to support/repeat the original point or proposition or hypothesis are called data, statistics, expert testimony: "facts." It should be clear that a fact is a function of the system it purports to validate. The psychiatric system, for instance, can produce volumes of "objective" facts, all of which validate the assumptions of that system but which have often invalidated our own individual and collective experience, emotions, thoughts, motives and acts. We all learn to operate within the confines of the self-perpetuating, self-validating fact-system. It isn't hard. But it is a boring, alienating, dishonest process, designed to kill off crea-
activity, imagination, emotion, experience, relationships and ideas. And in this process of uni-focusing we lose the opportunity (perhaps even the ability) to think in a multi-focus dynamic, to see, simultaneously, relationships and levels, to hold several or many thoughts, fantasies and concepts at one time. The end result of the fact-system is consistent. It has to be: it's all the same thing. But it is often meaningless and dead. Again the pattern is death.

Take a look at male institutions. There is no way to function as a person within them. You are either the victim or the oppressor (most often both) in a vertical and sado-masochistic system. The system, itself, absorbs the responsibility and the guilt. What we have left (besides bread) is whatever emotions are appropriate to sado-masochism, and an objective function.

If something bad keeps happening in a political machine (note the accepted idiom), in a hospital, or a church, every person in that particular institution can say, "I don't like it, personally, but that's the way it is (reality, realpolitik); that's life; that's the way things work; with all its faults it's the best we have; I'm working for change; we must accept these things, etc, etc." You know. But things continue to go wrong because the system is impersonal, a machine.

Women and men can do or condone or be associated with activities, as a part of their institutional function, which they would never think of doing personally. But one does not act as a person in an institution. The system usurps or neutralizes personal responsibility, absorbs guilt and consciousness, through the imposition of consistent, carefully defined roles and functions within its own boundaries. Value judgments, moral action, emotions and personal relationships are destroyed within the impersonal but internally consistent structure of the system's vertical lines of power.

In the same way, social structures (class, caste) also act as sets of hierarchical role definitions and functions. Conscience, emotions and personal responsibility are relegated to the individual's private life and are not allowed to interfere with the rules, functions and limits of the institutional machinery. Thus "business and friendship don't mix"; we can bomb people we don't know and who have never harmed us. Watergate is only a public example of institutional practices. The pattern is death, the death of human beings, human emotions, human sensitivity and human conscience.

Never underestimate the immersion of the art world in the murderous, inter-related, institutional web. The artist is not a solitary thinker/creator apart from society's structures. The woman artist may feel she is apart, since her existence-as-artist is usually peripheral, rarely or poorly acknowledged. She may feel she communicates directly with other people, with nature, with the cosmos. Once she decides to publish or exhibit, however, she is either rejected by or drawn into the vertical power lines, and they affect her art and her life. Critics, editors, publishers, exhibitors, media people, agents, advertisers, buyers and sellers of art, converge to enmesh her in the system. Worse, a set of "objective" standards and values for art already exists, into which she will have to fit herself and her work, perhaps unconsciously, and which can kill both art and the artist. It is understandable that so many female writers have been (and are) into alcohol, madness and suicide. The Romantics, who insisted on subjectivity and the extravagant expression of emotions, were notably attracted to drugs and tended to die young. The few women who have been accepted as semigreat by the art establishment, however patronizingly (cf. Robert Lowell's introduction to Arilé), are those women who have died in the process and those who were forced to live double or solitary lives.

Given standards of beauty are imposed on us and regulated for us. "Beauty" consists of a defined set of values: it is measurable.

Objective standards of aesthetic judgments are learned. They are defined and controlled for us and we learn them in the usual, authoritarian, mechanical, cause-and-effect ways. Look at the critical terms: "mastering" a technique or a style; balance; structural flaws or brilliance; internal consistency or unity. Aristotle, who invented the cause-and-effect mentality and the supreme aesthetic values, is still the primary arbiter of artistic and scientific standards of judgment.

I believe that art, as we know it, informed by the death pattern, expressed by imposed values and institutionalized, "objective" standards, is alien to and destructive of the evolutionary patterns, the patterns now emerging primarily from women.

Aesthetic values (judgments as to what is or is not beautiful) are measured, defined, and analyzed. Critics and English professors, who make their livings from this sort of activity, employ the objective, "scientific" method for their evaluations of art. Their judgments are derived from learned standards and they are expressed in emotional, logical, erudite, technical language. Critics of art, as well as all the other institutionalized professionals, constitute, through their knowledge of given standards and their technical language, an elitist group of "experts," who perpetuate those same standards by controlling and dominating the public expression and knowledge of art.

One of my graduate school English professors told a class that Dr. Strangelove was an example of the contemporary use of Jonson's humours, thereby separating the social and moral content of the film from its aesthetic considerations and neutralizing the emotional and extra-academic meanings.

One can design and make a beautiful quilt or tapestry if it is already outside the system and not, therefore, an artist's crisis. The name is given to works and genres created by the poor and the powerless, by those who are the victims of society. Crafts may be admirable but they are beneath the attention of critics and, thus, not art.

Artistic values are restricted, not only to specific genres, but also to what is structurally definable within each genre. A writer like Gertrude Stein has received little critical attention because critics can find nothing to say about her. Objective criticism requires handles: levers to manipulate the language of criticism, analytic tools, methods by which to apply the given standards to any work. Stein cannot be discussed in the context of the usual analytic-aesthetic measuring devices used by critics. Otherwise, women writers are most often dealt with in terms of their lives as victims or in relation to their male relatives and associations. When their work, itself, is actually discussed, we may be amazed
at how often the experts seem to miss the most obvious and most im-
portant aspects of their art. Whatever is not prior-defined, in
structure or in content, eludes critics. But then, think how long
it took the psychiatric establishment to discover that schizophre-
ic "word salad" had meaning, often profound and poetic.

Men learn to be centered in themselves. The forms, structures,
and definitions of the existing systems are their forms, struc-
tures and definitions. Men are comfortable in them because they
have projected them from their male patterns. Women, for centu-
ries, have been centered outside themselves, in husbands, children
and family, sacrificing their own needs and separated from the
knowledge of their own modes, their own patterns. With the advent
of the Women's Movement, many women have learned to re-center,
to express self-satisfactions, to realize that their needs are good and valid.
They have thrown off the roles and definitions given to them by
male social structures. Many women have entered, or tried to en-
ter, the male institutions: art, education, science, business, pol-
itics, etc. But these systems are essentially alien; they are
male-patterned. Some women, at least, have begun to feel increas-
ingly uncomfortable operating within male structures and, at the
same time, are becoming increasingly centered in and aware of them-
selves, their own patterns.

What happens is this: women function in male forms, which many
experience as alienating and depersonalizing. But female forms
and structures have not yet been created. Women have not yet dis-
covered and invented, on a large scale, our own patterns and the
appropriate expressions of them. So the alternative to male forms
is the experience of formlessness.

We have learned to react to formlessness with fear. The concept
of an objective, intellectual, fact-system of definitive and inter-
connecting parts and fixed limits has, as its opposite, the absence
of form and limits and definable parts. We are conditioned to fear
the unknown, the undefinable, the formless, with an overwhelming
panic and terror which is intended to draw us back into the safe,
existent forms: to "adjust." This fear can block our other emo-
tions and intensities, our creative processes, to the point of
apathy and withdrawal, or of doubting our rationality.

In these circumstances, a woman may develop a kind of schizo-
phrenic set. She may function efficiently in the male structures
and, at the same time, experience alienation toward those struc-
tures, as well as a disturbing and "irrational" yearning toward
other, as yet unknown, ways of thinking and doing and being. She
may feel guilty, as well as the old, learned conviction of inade-
quacy, as a result of these conflicts. If she does not come to
realize the reasons for her feelings and tensions, she may be im-
mobilized, or co-opted.

At this point in our evolution, we cannot avoid the male struc-
tures. We must still know how to operate within them and/or deal
with them in order to survive and subvert. Simultaneously, how-
ever, we must continue to evolve, consciously. We will continue
to live in a schizophrenic style, but one which is understood,
willed, and controlled by us.

We need to teach ourselves and each other to face the formless-
lessness, to explore and discover our own truths. Now. We must bear
the burdens of our conditioning: the guilt, the feelings of inade-
quacy and irrationality, understanding that, even as they exist
they are false and imposed. Above all, we must bear the burden of
chaos, of formlessness, and welcome it, despite the fear. We must
consciously evolve. It will be tricky. We will need each other's
love and support.

Our will to evolution will begin where many women already are. If
we look within ourselves, we can get in touch with our female,
evolutionary patterns. Each insight will give birth to other in-
sights, individually and collectively.

Male structures are dependent on the concept of duality. The
church, for instance, tells us that god is good and non-god is
evil; it tells us that we must always choose the good and shun the
evil; it then defines what is good and what is evil. The political
uses of the good-evil binary, as given, are more obvious than most.
If men are good, then women, non-men, are evil. Abortion (chosen
by women) is evil but war and capital punishment (chosen by men)
are often good. The internal logic of this kind of thinking is
consistent and predictable: mechanical.

We are sometimes told that dualism helps us to make distinctions
and clarify our thought. This is not so. Dualism always
poses an ethical choice, an either/or; one opposite is always pre-
ferrable to the other. There is no room for gradations and levels,
for complexities, for paradox, for multi-focusing. Dualities rein-
force linear, cause-and-effect, hierarchical thinking. Aristoteli-
an logic, for example, is a series of linear regressions of the
true false binary.

Rules are important in an understanding of counter-evolutionary
patterns and the dualities which express them. Since a mechanical,
internal logic is necessary to these patterns, limits and bound-
aries must frame both structure and content. Referents and rela-
tionships outside of and beyond those limits are excluded because
they can destroy consistency and break down the system. This is
why some of our sisters have gone from priest to priest, looking
for one who will allow them to practice birth control, instead of
claiming this decision for themselves. The rules may vary or
change, due to internal or external pressure, but that change or
variation must be included within the boundaries of the system
and be accompanied by a spectacular, the specific logic of that sys-
tem. The content of the rule is not, finally, what is at stake,
but the existence of the rule, qua rule, and the authority to im-
pose it. Reformism owes much to this concept. When we believe in
a system which is defined as good and true and we believe that its
binary opposite is evil and false, we try to change the rules with-in
the system. Outside the system is fear and formlessness.

Dualities have an ethical base. Each pair contains two oppo-
sites, one of which is "good" and the other "bad." Each pair is a
binary, containing, in itself, a value judgment. Each pair, then,
is basically the good/evil duality: white/black, day/night, man/
woman, beautiful/ugly, strong/weak, rational/irrational, mind/body,
sane/insane, true/false, intellect/emotions, reality/dreams, etc.

What is given is not only pairs of pre-defined concepts but also pre-determined value judgments. We always know which one is at least, preferable. Merely attaching one of the "good" words from a binary to a concept, an act or an attitude predisposes us to its acceptance.

Linguistic propaganda is based on this kind of word-association. Obviously, woman and all the words associated with woman are not on the preferred list.

In art, we are not only conditioned in the binary concept of beautiful/ugly. Symbols, too, have connotative and ethical meanings. Not just verbal symbols but visual symbols, too (color, proportion, geometric shapes, frames and boundaries), have their given values. There is also the art/life duality, which separates the two and, depending on the system which is defining them, pits them against each other in terms of the preferred. Therefore, not only the definitions but the very expressions of life and art are given and predetermined. The assumptions may often be unspoken. We may not be aware of them. For instance, when men say that women are "mysterious," or that orientals are "inscrutable," they are saying that women and orientals are associated with the unknown, the irrational, the "bad" half of the good/evil binary. They, themselves, are then associated with the logical, clear, luminous, systematic half of that same binary. The meaning, at least, is clear: women and orientals are, at best, lacking in form and not to be preferred. At worst, women and orientals are people who evoke fear and are associated with evil.

Women have the ability, despite our programming, to think in ways that negate dualities. This is partly due to our social status. We have not been expected to think rationally, like men, and have been conditioned to develop our own "inferior" or "inferiority," because they reinforce, through dualistic contrast, the "superior" male system. But perhaps our evolutionary adaptation to social-environmental imperatives has also allowed us to evolve, genetically, some of the very characteristics we have been forced to assume. We have always been accused of inconsistency, of vagueness, of the inability to focus, of flightiness (a marvelous word), of illogic and contradiction. Men claim to be unable to understand our thought processes. And rightly so. We have developed an ability to overlook value judgments (because we have weak super-egos, according to Freud), to move between and amid opposites, to feel gradations and complexities.

To feel. Emotional intensity is one of our greatest advantages. Our intellects and emotions do not always function separately, despite all the conditioning we undergo to convince us that the intellect can only be perverted or contaminated by emotions. For many (most) of us, an intellectual-emotional unity is natural. We can't help it.

We can. I have noticed, listen to Joplin sing "Little Girl Blues," knowing, intellectually, the sexist and massochistic content of the lyrics but responding, despite that, to the music, to something in *I find myself, more and more, using quotation marks to express irony. The thought occurs: as my consciousness level rises, will I finally put the entire world-as-it-is in quotes?

Joplin's voice, to her ability to convey feeling, to the strong emotion of grief that we hear. For me it is a grief, a mourning, for all the women who ever lived, for all our unused, misused beauty and power, for our centuries as victims, for our separation from ourselves and from each other. Considering, literally, the words of the song, my response is politically impure, and I know that. (Pure/impure.) But it would require a great deal of questionable effort for me to repudiate my response.

Emotions are one way we have to nullify dualities. When we allow our instinctive feelings to flow naturally, when we respect, welcome and are attentive to those feelings, we can often negate the static, polarized, predetermined values we have learned.

Women are gravitating toward art that has meaning, that is content-centered and women-centered, that evokes both intellectual and emotional responses. The enormous popularity of Feminist graphics, posters, poetry, crafts and sculpture indicates that women relate to art that touches the ideas and emotions already in them, though perhaps unexpressed, that evokes their own feelings and thoughts and extends them. Art for us is a two-way communication in which both (all) participants are active. Instead of a given, objective, mechanical set of criteria, human, personal responses have become the means of our relationship to art. We do not, then, view, analyze or interpret art as a thing out there, separate from us. We engage in, in a process of communicative responses, and we use it.

The distinction between art and life begins to fade. The acts and lives of women we know, women we read and hear about: don't we respond deeply to them? Haven't we found ourselves in a new-old relationship to nature, to which we respond in the same way? Aren't these relationships and processes art, too? We use art, our lives and our lives can become art. We participate in art, which participates in our lives.

Another characteristic of women is the tendency to deal in relationships, rather than with structures. Nearly every structure we know is a means, a function based on roles, rules and limits. It is not strange that we often hear men refer to their work, even their lives, as games or as scenarios. "That's how you play the game." A game is a system of rules played within structurally fixed boundaries. Each player's role is carefully defined. The possibility of chance or change can be mathematically predicted and occurs only within predetermined limits. In this sense, family, church, state, art, sex, interaction, etc. are now correctly defined as games. All we need to know are the rules and the limits. The rules follow an internal logic based on consistency and predictability: cause and effect. When I do this, that or that will happen.

Women, always unpredictable (bad), operate naturally in another way. Women are concerned with personal relationships, with the personal level, rather than with the functional, with the intellectual. We go beyond, around, the defined rules and roles, to express spontaneous, sympathetic attention directly on people, on nature. We do this because we allow our intuition and our emotions to interrupt and subvert the given, mechanical dictations of the system. Whether a woman loves a person, a plant or a deity, she establishes a direct personal relationship with the object of her love. She wants interaction, a participatory process of giving/receiving,
loving/being loved. Subject/object dualities disappear in an immediate dynamic of intersubjectivity; each becomes indistinguishable from the other.

Emotions and relationship-centeredness can also be a trap. Women have always been done in by our own compassion, by our emotional commitments. Personal relationships have been vehicles of our exploitation, of political oppression, of imposed self-sacrifice. But this is to deal directly in personal and emotional relationships is one of our greatest strengths. It can be used for us, as well as against us, especially when it is exercised beyond or despite the rules of the systems. We can't afford to lose this ability. It is the basis of our opposition to the computer mentality and of our potential to create new forms, new ways of communication, alternative ways of living, higher levels of consciousness.

At the same time, we must guard and protect ourselves, our lives, from exploitation. We cannot allow ourselves to be dominated, controlled, used or objectified. But we can let our compassion, our emotion, our capacities for direct and personal expression and relationships flourish in situations in which they will expand, rather than harm us. We can go to extremes of active intersubjectivity in such situations in order to compensate for the deliberate blocking of intersubjectivity when it is dangerous to us. And we must direct, first of all, our extremities toward ourselves. I am not suggesting that we indulge in self-pity or egotism, but in strong, direct, willed feelings of love and honoring and well-wishing and support, in a dialog of love with our selves. If we direct these feelings toward our selves and refuse to direct them outward except in ways that do not lessen or contradict or harm those self-directed feelings, we will generate more than enough positive energy to relate extravagantly to others and to nature. We know that we need a strong self-concept in order to relate meaningfully to other people. But self-concept is a rather static term, and the kind of direct intersubjectivity that implies an active process, a conscious and continuous generation and regeneration, is more than a self-concept.

The myths and symbols we relate to and our ways of using them can be of primary importance in opposing the computer mentality and for getting in touch with our own patterns, expressing them and extending them. Mary Shelley's Frankenstein is not a critical success. It has constantly been ridiculed as a "literary" work, as a work of art, by the "experts." Yet the story, the myth she created, has survived for nearly a century and a half. It expresses, reaches, a pattern deep within ourselves, a truth we already know, instinctively, to which we can't help responding, spontaneously. Mary Shelley's myth deals with the lethal danger of the contrary-evolutionary antagonism of the computing and the emotions, the exclusion of (perhaps the atrophy of) the feelings, of direct personal relationships, and of extra-rational thought processes. We respond because, despite our conditioning, we know she is right. She has uncovered our unconscious aversion to and fear of the death pattern. But it is up to us to relate her myth, to connect it with the conditions of our work. If we take our own reactions seriously, we will not only begin to understand the basic alienation and alarm aroused by her myth of the scientist and his "human" machine; we will also begin to seek our own alternatives and to express them.

Dualistic thinking and the value judgments it implies can be escaped through the discovery and expression of our own myths and symbols. Mary Shelley changed the ethical meaning of the intellect/emotions binary and the mind/body binary. Frankenstein, the embodiment of the scientific intellect, dramatizes the destructive-ness of that model and the necessity of human feelings. His "monster" dramatizes the horror of a mechanical man, the forerunner of the bodiless computer now envisioned by our modern Frankensteins.

The revival of interest in the Demeter-Kore myth, in the semi-mythical history of the Amazons, in witchcraft and the occult, are manifestations of our search for myths which will change or reverse the male-centered structures. Many of them concern the replacement, by the Mother, of the father and the associated images of the patriarchy. When this replacement occurs, within a patriarchal society, what results is not a matriarchy but a shifting of thought and emotions, and a redirection of our present values. The symbols and connotations of the Mother, as we have learned them, are opposite to and/or less preferable than the learned symbols and connotations of the father.

Our first reaction to the father/Mother binary and the other binaries associated with it (light/dark, conscious/unconscious, sun/moon, heaven/earth, active/passive, generator/nourisher, etc.) may be instinctive and the desire to claim the preferred (male) qualities for ourselves. This reaction is healthy, since the preferred qualities, as well as their (female) opposites are all part of the given system and therefore associated with formlessness and loss of control. But who really loses control? The medical establishment has no control over an herbalist or a psychic healer. Nor can a doctor, immersed in his own technical framework, understand the healer's information. Many women have, for centuries, communicated with plants. Now scientists have begun to hook up electronic equipment to plants and are astounded to learn that plants appear to be sensitive to music, emotions, etc., and react to these stimuli. Now that scientists can photograph auras, they take these seriously the people who see auras directly. But electronic equipment and photographs are inferior to direct perception. We must embrace the symbols of our evil and inferiority and by embracing, transform them into symbols of evolutionary advance-

*Interestingly, Frankenstein's monster appears to have more human feelings and sensitivity than does his maker.
ment, symbols of our creative and life processes. We need not relinquish their opposites. We will, in embracing the female symbols, incorporate within them the meanings of the male symbols, nullifying the binaries. When Black people proudly claimed the word "black," they kept many of the powerful old connotations of the word, but they also assumed the "good" and "beautiful" connotations of the binary opposite, "white." The meaning of black/white duality was changed. It could no longer oppress people. This was a political act of language.

When women replace the symbol of the father with that of the Mother, we, too, are committing a political act. The image of the Mother does not lose its old connotations of earth, intuition, nature, the body, the emotions, the unconscious, etc. But it also lays claim to many of the connotations previously attributed to the father: beauty, light, goodness, authority, activity, etc. The Mother symbol, when it is embraced, releases us from stereotypical role definitions, from attributes and attitudes of inferiority; and it reinforces our trust in ourselves, in our own processes and abilities. It can liberate us from the fear of formlessness we have learned, free us to find ourselves and another kind of world.

Not only the Mother, but many other given symbols of the female, can be claimed and transformed. The Daughter and the Sister have begun to take on new and preferred meanings. Intuition, subjectivity and extra-rational processes; our nourishing and sympathetic qualities; our personal and empathic relationship with the earth; our involvement in the processes of life: we must embrace, honor, exalt these attributes and their corresponding symbols, with joy, pride, and the courage of freedom.

We know we can reason. We know we can be active, strong, brave, aggressive, etc. We need not deny these qualities in ourselves, for they will be incorporated into our transformed female symbols. The good, the true and the beautiful are not male; they are attributed to male symbols because male symbols are preferred. When Blacks began to want, to prefer blackness, the word became charged with all the "superior" connotations which had been associated with white. When women prefer the Mother, the "superior" attributes of the Father are transferred to the Mother symbol. For Blacks, for women, the binary is destroyed because the symbol's ethical basis has been co-opted.

* * *

The process of choosing liberating symbols through the reversal or the transformation of binaries leads to other thoughts about dualistic, cause-and-effect thinking and possible ways to transcend it. The consciousness/unconsciousness duality, for instance, has an ethical base, though which is preferred depends on the system involved. In the west, Consciousness is generally associated with male objectivity, control, logic, reason, while the unconscious is generally feared and associated with darkness, instinctual drives, uncontrolled emotions, the female. Eastern thought (and western systems derived from it) posits the unconscious as a religious or philosophical goal in which rational consciousness and personality are lost, merged with a cosmic mind or soul. What is significant here is that the duality, no matter which opposite is preferred, gives us only two choices. We may choose the reasoning, observing, dominating ego; or we may choose the annihilation of the personality. But if we learn to think beyond that binary, beyond the given choices, we can honor, equally, the conscious and the unconscious mind. We need not believe that the only alternative to mind is its annihilation. Both of these choices express a death pattern.

In a sense, we are often forced to choose between individuality and community. But we can at least imagine the possibility that we can choose both alternatives, even the extremes of both. We can refuse to consider one half of the dualism better than the other half. We can refuse to make ethical choices of either/or when it is possible to choose both.* To hold opposite concepts in our heads, simultaneously and equally, is to generate the possibility of a process, and to emerge with new concepts, concepts which include the two parts but which are greater than the sum of those parts. Not only our intellects are working in this process, but our emotions, our instincts, our intuitive and extra-rational faculties.

The process works with symbols, as well. When the "good" connotations of the father have been transferred to the Mother, and the old connotations of the Mother retained, we have, actually, a third concept, a new symbol which includes both the old meanings and goes beyond those meanings. The symbols have evolved and they have expressed an evolution. For political reasons, we name this symbol the Mother, but it is not the same concept as the old Mother symbol. It is, instead, the symbol of an evolutionary consciousness, of the New Person.** Some day we will have to give Her a new name.

When we find and express our own symbols and myths and metaphors, we must be very careful not to allow ourselves to forget that we are participating in a process. We are beginning to rename ourselves and the universe, but the names we use now may be temporary. They must never harden into absolutes, never become systematized or institutionalized. If they do, they will lose their immediate, experiential relevance, their emotional value. They can even obstruct or halt the process. We must be able to welcome the replacement of concepts and symbols whenever new concepts and symbols aid and further the process. We don't have time for centuries of slow evolution. The specter of computer-rule is all too near. And women have waited long enough.

* * *

I want to conclude with a fantasy, with the beginnings of speculations about what art and life and women would be like in an evolved world based on our own full emotional/extra-rational/spiritual/intellectual capacities.

*Of course this too is a value judgment. But it is open-ended. And it is our own, not a system-given judgment.

**I am certainly not ruling out the possibility, however, that the new, evolutionary person will be a biological female, that only one sex will evolve as the human species.
I am an old gypsy woman with a deck of cards
A witch, an Amazon, a Gorgon
A seer, a clairvoyant, a poet.
I have visions of becoming and
I dream in female.
This is what I dream:

We are communicators, mind to mind.
The poles and devices once used by men
Stand here and there
Relics on the landscape.
We travel the earth and the stars
In our heads.
We are artists, all of us.
Whatever we do well, we do.
Whatever excites us
Whatever we wish to explore:
That is our art.
There is no division between
Our lives, our work, our art.
Each of us chooses
The ways she will challenge the limits:
That is our art, too.
Beauty is whatever we create
Whatever we create is beauty.
We cannot be contained.

We have no need for armies or police
We have no use for administrators
Nor for any other kind of regulators.
We have forgotten what rules were.
We seek those things beyond boundaries.
We do not fear violence.
If violence threatens us
We stop it with our heads.
We are all holy
We are each the mother and the daughter of each
We have no institutions
No mediators between ourselves and our
Experience our perceptions
We are all singers
We are all dancers
We are all lovers and thinkers
Painters and poets
We are all teachers all learners
The nourished and the nourishers
We are all healers
We are all builders and growers
We have no experts no professions
Whatever gives us the most pleasure
That is what we choose to do and be
We all benefit mutually
From the intensities of each

Barbara Starrett lives in Somerville, Massachusetts. She has just completed a book of poems, The Hanged Woman, and is looking for a publisher.

Our conflicts are not between people
They exist between each woman
And the walls she has chosen to transcend
They are positive
Creative
Like the tensions of ions
But tension is strongest in the risk
We don't know what it is we gain or lose
Or whether it may be the risk itself we seek
The immensity of becoming.

I am a gypsy a witch a seer
My vision is only the beginning of visions
A moment in the process of ourselves
I know this:
Whatever we can imagine is possible
Whatever we will to be will be
I know it is time to dream strong dreams
And then to abandon them for the dreams to come.

ARTISTS

The cover drawings for this issue are by Sharon Behrends: "Lesbian, Sapphist, Androgyne, Amazon--learning not only who I am but who we all are visually in the bottom of the mythpile."

Bara Brown: Her drawings are part of a series entitled, "Age 32: Four views of myself."

Patricia Wright: Writes poetry and takes photographs in Eugene, Oregon. She says of her work: "I was first conscious of how roundly erotic the earth is when I saw her stilled and stripped of color in my photographs."

This is the poem to say "Write poems, women!" because I want to read them, because for too long, we have had mostly men's lives or men's imaginations wandering through our lives, because even the women's lives we have details of come through a male approval desire filter which diffuses imagination, that most free part of ourselves.

One friend is so caught on the male-approval-desire hook she can't even write a letter. Ink on paper would be clear evidence of failure to be Sylvia Plath or Doris Lessing, or (in secret) William Butler Yeats.

Hilda Dolittle, the poet who hid behind "H. D.", splashed herself with ink just before writing to make her feel free, indifferent toward the mere means of writing. I would take ink baths if I'd be splashed free of male approval desire. This male-approval-desire filter and its attached hook, abbreviated M-A-D filter and hook, have driven many women mad, could drive me mad, won't because I see all the other women fighting the M Male Approval Desire, and I clench my fists to hold their hands, and I am not as alone as my grandmother who painted, was free and talented and who for some M-A-D reason married, had kids, went mad and stopped finishing her paintings at thirty-five. M-A-D is the filter through which we're pressed to see ourselves--if we don't, we won't get published, sold, or exhibited--I blame none of us for not challenging it except not challenging it may drive us mad. It is present in the bravest of us. It comes out in strange shapes, escapes like air through the tiniest hole in the strongest woman's self. It is a slaughterhouse waiting for the calf or lamb-sized art, for the sausage-ready little pig poems which never get to the supermarket: They are lost in the shuffle, or buried as ladies' poems have been in bureau drawers for years. Male Approval Desire is a cog in the Art Delivery Machine: It instructs by quiet magic women to sing proper pliant tunes for father, lover, piper who says he has the secret, but wants ours; it teaches us to wear cloaks labelled Guinevere, become damsels, objects in men's power joustings like her; lets us shimmer, disappear, promise to rise like a Lady of the Lake, but we drown--real, not phantom. The Art Delivery Machine is ninety-nine and forty-four hundredths percent pure male sensibility, part of a money system ninety-nine and forty-four hundredths percent pure white-male-power-structure controlled. So you may wonder why I write this poem and say "Write your own poems, women!" Won't we be crushed trying? No. We have more now, fifty-six hundredths percent of the Art Delivery Machine. We can't be stopped. So I write this polemic I call a poem, say "Write poems, women." I want to read them. I have seen you watching, holding on and watching, but I see your lips moving. You have stories to tell, strong stories: I want to hear your minds as well as hold your hands.

HONOR MOORE writes in New York City, where her new play on the survival of women, Mourning Pictures, opens at the Lyceum Theatre in November.
GENERATION GAP

BY FRANKIE HUCKLENBROICH

I am specimen. Survive in no halfway condition. It must be the all of everything or nothing--and from one side of humanity to another. The wheel-creatures spawned our thread; warped and woofed us with sterility. I can have no child born of my mating. That was unfair; allowing this detail to escape down the spokes of the wheels, beneath the rolling. I am old-young. The synonomous antonym. The self-serving brouhaha. (Lie down to wrestle with a mound of snakes, and call yourself 'charmer'.) If there is any answer, do I really need to know it? Sift your love slowly down on me. Cold me with warm, and then square off the breasts. The more immediate query: Papa, why wouldn't you let me walk with your seeding Polack legs? I would have given you all of the credit that you took, and trundled you around in a nifty, baby-boy blue wheelbarrow, always.

FRANKIE HUCKLENBROICH writes in Fresno, California, and has contributed poetry on the Ethnic Tradition to Speaking for Ourselves.

She was standing on one leg...

She was standing on one leg in her overalls intensely studying a book I had read last summer and cried about and learned from and we exchanged smiles across the bookshelves and she offered me a sip of V-8 juice knowing that we were both there for the same reasons Expanding our ideals changing, growing, struggling It was a warm, mellow, welcome feeling Knowing that our dreams corresponded She stooped to look at a book of feminist poetry by some obscure sister/poet and told me--spontaneously, suddenly that she too wrote poems Emptying her radical, feminist thoughtful ideals onto endless sheets of widerule notebook paper I responded breathlessly telling her that I too wrote poetry at night on the kitchen table in pools of lamplight Exploring my thoughts It was great to know that here was a woman who shared my feelings the little bell rang on the glass door as she pushed it open I hadn't yet learned her name but I was glad that our lives had touched.

Margaret Talbot: "I am a 12 year old radical feminist woman/poet."
PLAINSONG

Slowly:
a plainsong from an older woman to a younger woman
am I not olden olden olden
it is unwanted.
wanting, wanting
am I not broken stolen common
am I not crinkled cranky poison
am I not glinty-eyed and frozen
am I not aged shaky glazing
am I not hazy guarded craven
am I not only stingy little
am I not simple brittle spitting
was I not over over ridden?
it is a long story
will you be proud to be my version?

writing, writing
am I not ancient raging patient
am I not able charming stable
was I not building forming braving

was I not ruling guiding naming
was I not brazen crazy chosen
even the stones would do my bidding?
it is a long story
am I not proud to be your version?
it is unspoken.
speaking, speaking
am I not elder berry brandy
are you not wine before you find me in your own beaker?
do you not turn away your shoulder?
have I not shut my mouth against you?
are you not shamed to treat me meanly when you discover you become me?
are you not proud that you become me?
I will not shut my mouth against you.
do you not turn away your shoulder.
we who brew in the same bitters that boil us away
we both need stronger water.
we're touched by a similar nerve.
I am new like your daughter.
I am the will, and the riverbed made bolder by you--my oldest river--you are the way.
are we not olden, olden, olden?

JUDY GRAHN writes in San Francisco, and is a member of the Women's Press Collective, which published her latest book, A Woman Is Talking To Death. "Plainsong" will be included in She Who, to be printed soon by the Women's Press Collective.
Jill's fairy tale

tonight my MOTHER fell over the wall and cracked
the confused wax wings of the alarm CLOCK
turned toward the sun
and melted in their lust for power
what would we do without THEM!
i fell through a hole
alice told me to get lost
to find another hole
all the squinty-eyed queens protested
a kid put his wax finger in a dyke to prevent flooding.
she nearly killed him while blanketing
the idea that none could swim.
my belly soaked up the juices of an indigestable rabbit
when i stayed for dinner
alice protested
the queen offered herself as dessert
all the kings horses and men stayed home and wept
all the women advanced united carrying lifeboats
"we can swim but we don't want to"
"the rabbit died" said the cheshire cat "i wanted him"
then he led the crooked army of men bearing real guns
"there wouldn't be wars if it was up to us" i raved
they told me to get out of everybody's tales
so i took the fur foot
and lewis wished me better luck next time.

Joan Cofrancesco writes in Auburn, N. Y.

for the filmmaker Deborah Dickson

NOTATIONS—THE F TRAIN

Kool I
Bruce
Head 155
Steam One
Chino
Gonzo 22

What is scrawled on the subway walls
is a certain notion of strength.

there is also the strength of water
that flows (around the rock)
that flows (over the stone)
that carries with itself
leaf and leaf and leaf
the letters of green lives

The station at West 4th Street
smells of smoke; I notice it tonight.

It is 2 o'clock.

There are two women with dyed, worried faces
and hard hair, the color of dolls' wigs
standing together in coats that mimic fur.
They are the only other women
in this night station of men--
men lounging and watching, chewing gum,
reading their Sunday paper,
some with thumbs in their trousers,
with keys, with umbrellas
striding the platform.
One man stands by a post and vomits
and vomits and vomits.

No one seems to be taking
notice of anyone,
extcept a few whose eyes
let me see that I am alone here,
At this hour, women do not travel.

water
travels
without stopping
falls, both hitting the stone
and flowing over the stone
making the unstopped
music of water
its continuous going
over the earth and through it
wearing the rock
the rock the rock
softening
everything on earth that is hard
a certain notion of strength

I may not let my eyes meet
their eyes, on the train to Brooklyn.
That is a sort of invitation.

There is a joke the cops in my neighborhood
shared with certain women
during the most recent rape scare.
It was that the victims
had found the rapist desirable
and had asked for it anyway
by being out on the street at night.

Where were you going anyway?
they asked my sister,
who was—and this is a fact—
on her way to a meeting about the survival of earth,
but who, between 9 and 11,
was walked to the park at gunpoint,
raped,
then told to turn her back at the fence
where she clung, waiting
maybe to be murdered,
while the man who had just raped her
ran into the darkness.

water
runs
it is a certain notion of strength
a woman has revealed in a film
which she made by allowing the time
to look at water
moving
to listen to the sound of water
hour after hour after hour
keeping her eyes on the water
and holding it with her camera

They were asking my sister
the tour guide
Where can I find a woman?
My home, so far away,
I have need for a woman.
What are you doing tonight?
I have need, have need, have need.
Where can I find a woman?

On the subway wall, I see the sentence
I doin' it to death!
In a red-yellow rainbow of spray-paint.

I.
I.
I.
doin' it,
doin' it,
doin' it.

where death,
to death,
to death,
to death.

I am waiting for the F train
My womb throbs
when the train thunders.
The smoke-stench fills my nostrils.
I am on my way home from the city
late at night, in a station
where there is probably nothing
to be afraid of.

there is a notion of strength
that is without impact
energy that is still like water
energy that keeps going like water
energy that is sustained motion like water
turbulences and falls
flats deeps
and slow dark passages
go down to the water and look
go down to the water and look
go down to the water and look
go down to the water and look

JOAN LARKIN writes in New York City and has contributed poetry and
prose to Ms. magazine.
this space is
blank as a memorial
to women
who wrote poems
that were not heard
and ate them up
and died
within their poems.

by Sharon Behrends
Yesterday's Lessons
A REVIEW BY KATHY Hruby

YESTERDAY'S LESSONS, by Sharon Isabell. The Women's Press Collective, 5251 Broadway, Oakland, California 94618. $2.50

Yesterday's Lessons is a unique and magnificent life story. Sharon Isabell tells the story of her life in the non-self-conscious manner of the poor, uneducated woman who has remained poor and uneducated. There is little detachment here--the confusion is not cleared, the desperation has no answer, the isolation is not ended.

What amazes me is Sharon's integrity in a world where she has so little support. A tough mining town kid in a public school; abused by her drunk, crazy father; rebellious and lesbian in the army; overworked; witness to friends and relatives murdered and institutionalized; left and betrayed by her lovers and friends; she is continuously put down. Her life follows her mother's words: "Sharon, you are going to have to learn to have some guts! You are going to have to learn that this is a hard life, and no one gives a goddamn whether you sink or swim. You have to learn to stick up for yourself and not let people run over you."

With little more validation than this, Sharon does manage to endure and even to feel. Her empathy for crippled and abused people, her understated pain, her constant anger, her all too brief joy in love-making or freedom on her motorcycle overwhelmed me. I am comfortable with Sharon's direct style (grammar and spelling mistakes intact). She writes what people said, what they did and how she felt with the concreteness and earnestness of conversation. It is this urgency and immediacy which involves the reader, rather than constructed climax, theme, or resolution. The author has a natural sense of form and interest.

Yesterday's Lessons expands the definition of women's art, coming as directly as it does from our female experience. It is an expression that had no validity in male culture.

I see this book as a beginning because, if it is unassuming, it is also unsettling. It stirs up the unap-peased child and woman in me, the memories that demand action and telling. Sharon's self-affirmation reminds me that all our experiences and strengths are significant... I'm sure more women's stories will follow.

KATHY HRUBY: "Just ending my decade as a teenage lesbian, wanting a lot and getting much of it."

A LINEAR TRIP
A REVIEW BY BARBARA STARRETT

AMAZON ODYSSEY, by Ti-Grace Atkinson. Links Books, New York, $4.95

On March 4, 1970, Ti-Grace Atkinson delivered a lecture at the University of Rhode Island, which she began with an historical account of the Women's Movement, including the present "wave." She spoke of the President's Commission on the Status of Women; of the first meetings of New York N.O.W.; of the formation, in New York, of W.E.A.L.; of the Conference on New Politics in Chicago, which was quickly followed by the birth of the New York Radical Women; of the October 17th Movement and the Feminists, the Redstockings and W.I.T.C.H.

In March of 1970, I was living in a small, stone-age city in Pennsylvania. There were about eight of us in that city who were openly Feminist. We had worked together for about two years. Our number included Lesbians and married women, black and white women, poor and middle class women, socialist and reformist women, older and younger women. We had no name. We didn't right anyone ourselves. We couldn't afford to: we had an entire neanderthal population on our backs. We had no access to media, no money. We wrote, dittoed (secretly, at night, in offices to which one of us could get keys) and distributed (in beauty shops, laundromats, campuses) a newspaper which was as radical as anything then going. We called it "Up," and wrote under pseudonyms in order to avoid more threats and harassment than we were already getting. We were too small, too close for formal structures. Most of us couldn't afford the dues, so we never became members of N.O.W. By March, 1970, some of our straight women came out, and we discussed the personal and the political meaning of Lesbianism at length, with understanding, and without dissension. Some of us left our nuclear families at about the same time. We became locally infamous. In the following year, those of us who had jobs lost them. We could not appear in a public place without people stopping, staring, pointing. Clergy denounced us. We had no doubt at all about where the "front lines" were. And all over this country, hundreds of small, isolated and embattled groups fought the same fight against the same enemy and on the same front lines.

So what are we to make of such statements as: "Some of us split away to form our own organization, the October 17th Movement, named in honor of the day both of our departure from the rest of the Movement and our inception." The Movement was largely unaware of this departure. The Movement was busy surviving in Kentucky and Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Or: "Lesbianism became a full-blown facet of the consistency issue in 1972." In 1972, we didn't know what the "consistency issue" was, but we had been through the personal/political meaning of Lesbianism and had acted on our awareness early in 1970. What we learned in 1972 was that Lesbians and straight women were supposed to be at each others' throats. But by that time, retaliation...
against us was worse. In one week, for instance, four student women, identified as mildly Feminist and suspected of Lesbianism, were soon leaving their families, picketing the male institution that had been oppressing them, speaking earnestly to any other women who would listen. Some of them were even choosing to live with and love other women. And, like it or not, the start of all this coincided exactly with the publication of (yes) Betty Friedan’s book.

I don’t think flip-charts and conventional (male) analysis are a threat to the Women’s Movement. They are, too much, imitations of the massive and impersonal structures and institutions that rule our lives and condition our heads. At best, they are "handles" with which we try to define our Revolution in customary modes and terms. At worst, they are the ways we use to back off from personal action and commitment, to create the schizoid division that Atkinson is well aware of, between the personal and the political. I don’t think a lot of women relate any more to this style.

Very early in her Movement activities, Atkinson became a separatist, and she began to run down the political connection between...
Lesbianism and the Women's Movement. Her experience of Lesbians who have lacked a strong Feminist consciousness has been seriously distressing to her, as it certainly can be to all of us. Without overt violence, it hurts the man in his most vulnerable spot. It does away with a lot of class distinctions: what class is going to claim a bunch of Lesbian separatists? And it seems obvious that no male-run organization, left or right, is going to make Lesbian Feminist Separatism one of its top priority issues. Most importantly, the personal and the political (Atkinson's "consistency issue") are united, effectively, and a real geography of liberated territory becomes possible.

No Sister is due an automatic assent to her views, and all issues, methods and ideas should be discussed, defended and challenged, ardently, within the Movement, if our process is to continue. But first they must be heard. Ti-Grace Atkinson is due the respect and the hearing of any Feminist who is seriously, honestly, painfully, trying to live and to be the Revolution, in her own way and according to her own terms.

BOOKS NEW BOOKS NEW BOOKS NEW BOOKS NEW BOOKS NEW BOOKS NEW BOOKS

These are new books by women (published Fall 1974) that we feel may be of interest to our readers—we regret not having space to review more of them. Any of these books may be ordered directly from the publishers by pre-paid check (you can find the publishers' addresses at your local library).

FICTION:
--Brigid Brophy, THE ADVENTURES OF GOD IN HIS SEARCH FOR THE BLACK GIRL, Little, Brown, $7.95.
--Willa Cather, OBSCURE DESTINIES, Vintage, $1.95. Three stories.
--Alice Denham, AMO, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, $7.95.
--Zelda Fitzgerald (& F.P. Scott), BITS OF PARADISE, Scribner's, $8.
--Ella Leffland, LOVE OUT OF SEASON, Atheneum, $8.95.
--Alice Munro, SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TELL YOU, McGraw Hill, $6.95. Stories.
--Jean Rhys, QUARTET, Vintage, $1.65.
--Frieda Singer, ed., DAUGHTERS IN HIGH SCHOOL: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THEIR WORK, Daughters, Plainfield, Vermont, 05667, $3.80.
--Susan Sontag, BROTHEL CARL, Noonday Press, $4.95.
--Fay Weldon, FEMALE FRIENDS, St. Martin's Press, $7.95.
--Joan Winthrop, UNDERWATER, Putnam, $6.95.

BIOGRAPHY/AUTOBIOGRAPHY:
--Angela Davis, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Random House, $8.95.

We will give you a one-year subscription (or gift subscription for a friend) for every bookstore you can talk into ordering 5 or more copies of AQ. Show your copies of the magazine to the manager and tell him/her that the bulk order rate is 75¢ per copy. Drop us a card with your name and address and the name and address of the bookstore. When we receive their order we will enter the subscription in your name (or your friend's name). We can also extend your current subscription if you have one. There is no limit on the number of free subscriptions — why not spend an afternoon visiting some bookstores and win christmas presents for all of your friends?
Playing the recorder is something I do by myself. It is also one of the array of things I taught myself, including as well writing, typing, ping pong. I didn't go to graduate school. The tune I work best with is "Blue Skies." I didn't go to college either; will the feeling of inferiority over that ever leave me? I can do a five minute improvisation on "Blue Skies" that is highly musical. "Greensleeves" too, and even "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"--I do them simplistically, but sometimes something happens between me and the recorder. The other day on the radio a man used the word 'pianism': "His pianism is superb." Well, with me and the recorder something can happen too, sometimes, especially in solitude. When there is solitude and quiet--but that's very rare--I can make music. Slowly moving down into the different levels of myself, I can think, feel, create. I can, do fill the room with me, my sound transcribed onto recorder. I play music in the night this way, when it's late and quiet.

Then there's the way I've always rocked myself to sleep, too, and comforted myself: my hand on my crotch holding tight, palm pressing on my clitoris and finger inside my vagina, held warm and protected all around--my vagina nurturing my finger, my body nurturing me. "Goodnight," speaks my finger to my vagina. "Don't leave," the cervix, the walls reply, gripping tight. "Oh, I wasn't going to, I'm staying right here," waggles my finger back, "I came here to sleep with you and I love you." "I love you too, goodnight," murmurs my vagina to me sleepily, and we fall asleep smiling. My mouth curves in a smile and it longs for a kiss--so it gives one and gets one back, from anywhere on my skin is just fine, perhaps my upperarm is closest--but breasts are so lovely, and I can't reach them with my mouth, so I do with my hand, cupping them, my own creatures to be held.

I am a woman writing a song to a woman. The woman is myself. The woman is another woman. I'm no song writer but I am writing. I'm not so sure I'm talking about myself loving myself, or women loving women. Being a woman loving women...the lines blur. With great beauty though, like undulating lines of sun on the waves, in the middle of the ocean, half-way between one continent and the next, the lines of definition barely existing, at least always moving, never holding still, between being a woman loving yourself and being a woman loving women. Same breasts. Same warm skin. Same softness, and particularly female sense of life and joy, such laughter and nurturing possible. But there's a difference with a lover--I can fall asleep in her arms with my mouth around her breast. "...baby me," I said to her once, and she did, and in the morning I said, "That felt so good, you stroking me, babying me like that," and she answered, "I know it was babying to you, honey, but to me I was just loving you."

But it does make it nice falling asleep--and once, suddenly, waking from a terrible nightmare, I roused her and she said, from out of her sleep, "Oh, let me stroke your brain..."

I love the dark wood of my recorder. Somehow my fingers can find just the right places to touch and create the mellow soft sounds. I love music so, though I don't know the names of too many pieces, just their sounds. They always told me I couldn't sing, and I love to; now I know I can and I do, but I love making these little soft round notes too, these lesbian sounds, these woman sounds soft with my fingers and breath and recorder, and strong too, these notes are, fine and full and free.

I love lesbian. I roll the word in my mouth like candy, like sweet liqueur. I roll it from side to side over my tongue and teeth. Such a good taste. My tongue passes a tooth that needs filling. I make a note to call the woman dentist I finally found.

Walking home the other night, my arm around Laura, hers around me, her curly head on my shoulder, I suddenly see, coming down the street and nearly upon us, practically the entire P.T.A. of my children's school. The school is right across the street from my house, a meeting must have just ended. They know me well; for thirteen years I've been straight and married. Nancy Lesser leads them. As they reach me I see her, very quickly, take in lesbians; then she lets her eyes focus on our faces. Her first look wasn't slow enough to see any features, it was just to determine both...
women. Now she sees me and knows me, and I see the shock register, followed by the fast recovery, the friendly smile. But I know her too: matron, same age, more or less, as I, and I am so young, my life just begun. As a woman who did a CR rap on the radio program on coming out I took part in making said, followed by the fast recovery, the friendly smile. But I know her.

They're about sixty. They hold each other and dance. They look very happy. Women with neat grey hair. One is tall and one short. They're dressed in pastel-colored pants suits and both wear glasses. I'm so glad to see them here. Sometimes I look at old couples on the street, and see decades of bitterness in the lines on their faces. Then I'm a teenager again, listening to my mother crying from the thousandth unjustified berating she's just received from someone's unmentionable daughter who loves women. I feel furious remembering it, but at the time I felt mostly frustration.

"Oh, but Irene, I love him," she sobs pitifully.

"But how could you love him, the way he treats you all the time?" I feel furious remembering it, but at the time I think I felt mostly frustration.

"I know he treated me like that, but underneath he loves me. You don't know, you can't see it, but underneath he loves me very much. And he needs me."

"But what about you? He treats you like garbage!"

"Oh, you don't understand, I could never leave him." And she never did.

Early morning; the alarm just rung. Jennifer, six, creeps into bed and snuggles against me.

"Mommy," she whispers, "between me and Laura, who do you love best?"

"Who do you think?" I answer.

Practically inaudibly, she says, "I think Laura." I hug her. "No, honey. I love Laura a lot but I always love my children first."

"Oh." She pauses. Then, still very much whispering: "What would happen if you said that in front of her?"

"What would happen if Laura heard that I love you better than her?" I answer in a normally loud voice. She nods. "She'd say she knew that."

"Oh."

Laura opens her eyes and smiles at Jennifer. Jenny burrows under the covers.

Nicholas is twelve. I came out to him a month after his father and I separated. I did it because knowing, finally, what I was, and having been invisible to myself for so long, I couldn't be invisible in any way any longer. I had to be out, especially in my own home; and I thought it would be okay with him.

I asked him if he knew about homosexuality, and he said sure he did. Living on Christopher Street, it would be hard for him not to. It's mostly men he sees though, so I said could he tell me what it meant, and he said it meant men loving with other men, or women loving with other women, except that was called something else. Wasn't it, lesbian or something? I said right. Then I said I thought that's what it was.

The first thing he said, a good number of seconds later, was, "Oh, but you're not sure yet, right?" So I told him actually I was, that had just been a way of saying it. We talked about women loving women and then I gave him the lesbian section in Our Bodies Our Selves to read again—he'd read the whole book when I first got it, I'd forgotten that. He reread it and then I asked him if there was anything he didn't understand, and he said he didn't understand why some people thought it was sick, because people should be able to do what they want, other people shouldn't tell them what to do, he hates that. I said some people just listened to what other people told them, and tried to explain how the culture put that label of sickness on us. But I told him things were changing now, too, and that made him happier. And I said I'd needed to tell him because I couldn't be in the closet any more, because it felt terrible to be there, and he said that was right but he thought he would stay in a while himself...that threw me. But it turned out he meant he didn't think he was going to tell all his friends his mother was a lesbian right away.

Then he said he didn't like the idea of strange women coming to our house, maybe even living here, being close with me, because he doesn't want uncomfortable or strange women there. He said he'd get to know them, and besides, wouldn't that be the same if they were strange men? Then I told him my worry: he might think he'd get to know them, and besides, wouldn't that be the same if they were strange men? Then I told him my worry: he might think he didn't like him any more, because he was a male, and I wanted him to know that wasn't so. I said I didn't dislike men because they were men, but because they were sexist, but I wouldn't dislike men who weren't sexist, and that mainly I was a lesbian because I loved women. But that he, my son, would remain my son, and I'd continue to love him.

When I told Daniel, Nicholas' father, that I came out to Nick as a lesbian he said that was sick and perverse and I should not have laid such a heavy thing on an innocent child.

Nausea was almost one of the first things I began to find out about in therapy. Every time I'd really begin to talk, I'd experience nausea. Oh, not just any talking, but talking that had a lot of meaning and depth. Then the images of my father and mother, brother and grandmother and aunts and uncles all appeared like cut-out paper dolls, folded in the right places to sit on the hills of my brain, my father swinging his legs nonchalantly, his eyebrows raised, my brother standing growing taller and taller until I couldn't see his head any longer, my mother perched in there right in the middle of my forehead, looking down at me and laughing. Then the nausea would come, and I'd ask how I could ever rid myself of their spectres haunting me and never giving me anything.

Blend thoroughly in blender:

8 oz. Tomato Juice
20 Valium 5 mg.
Chill and serve.

Until then, forgive me to that. But thinking about dying, thinking of ways, everyone goes through that. I've been through fantasies of self-mutilation and of sleeping forever; it's only a part of everything there is to tell. It takes a long time to tell about everything, and frequently it's confusing to think at all because the threads are too many and intertwined and tangled, the thoughts and relationships, like white worms in your brain, your brain made of white worms, tangled and twisted around each other so tightly one never moves without moving another, and also they get hungry and eat their brothers and sisters, but they're so twisted around and look so exactly identical that they can't tell, when they try to fill their hunger, whether it's a sister they're biting or themselves, until they feel it and scream and stop, but then it's already too late. But they're so hungry...

The poster reads: I Am A Woman Giving Birth To Myself. Births are seldom easy.

Coming out is no single thing, just as, it seems to me, primal therapy is not one great all-releasing scream, but a long series of screamings, possibly exactly equivalent to the number of screams, rages, hurts and pains sustained and repressed throughout one's life. My coming out was, is a series of happenings threaded in different ways through time and space, a lot of time and a lot of space; a lot of happenings that are each exhilarating, each time make me feel I'm totally out—and there's always one more to go. I came from a place where the word homosexual, or any of the slang terms signifying it, were never pronounced. Not in my home, among my friends, or in any classes I ever attended. I don't think, in Queens at the time I grew up, kids were using the word 'queer' or 'fairy' or 'fag' the way they do now—and I don't think 'dyke' or 'butch' were even heard of. A friend of mine from Nebraska once told me she never knew there were any real live Jews until she grew up and left home. She'd thought they existed only in biblical times. That's how conversant I was with homosexuality.

I was born in 1941. In the fifties and early sixties, from when I was a teenager through my mid-twenties, there was no women's liberation, no gay liberation. Gays were all in the closets and women in the kitchens—and behind typewriters and sales counters and teacher's desks and a few other places, but still in essence in the kitchens.

I remember one single mention of homosexuality ever: when I was fifteen or sixteen and my father made a slight aside, half a sentence long, about a third cousin of mine who was a 'fairy.' Of course I knew what he meant, and I should have been curious to hear more. But the whole concept was so repressed that I can't recall experiencing any curiosity about it, either the cousin or the idea. I never thought of it.

So I had no exposure to homosexuality through my whole life; but a pull to it, so deep inside me I could only feel it, never grasp it with my mind enough to wonder what it was. A flushed anticipation when I'd be going to a girlfriend's house; that was all. And all the closeness I ever had with anyone with two or three friends, whom I know now I must have really loved. Then, it never crossed my mind that that was possible; it never occurred to me. Sex and love relationships were with boys. So there were only my close, pregnant friendships, and an occasional book: The Well of Loneliness. Reading them, the yearning that I had no way to recognize for what it was, but clinging to every word and loving the women loving the women in them. But only inside me. Don't mistake me. I didn't know then, only now.

I began dating boys. Starting at thirteen I tinkered: in movies, doorways, the back seats of cars, once on the grass at Forest Park with a boy I'd never seen before, for hours, me fighting but letting him kiss and kiss me, but resisting the whole time, until he gave up and there on the ground under the sky with the trees all around finally relaxed his tense body and just held me, not trying to reach, touch, or insert anything into me any more, but just held, and the moment he did I relaxed, and let myself be held. And another time, a boy convinced me to go with him, or else I might lose him. So I did, we did. What did I feel? Pain and disappointment; and confusion, I thought it was supposed to feel good. Days, weeks, later, still fucking, no more pain, still no feeling. Or rather, some—when he'd finish and drop down beside me and hold me. Then I got a little pleasure, the tiniest relief. But expecting something else. It wasn't sexual pleasure, but I figured it was all there was.

At nineteen I married, and at twenty-one I had a baby. At twenty-two I had a crush on a woman in the subway. I was coming home from work. She had shining red hair, combed straight back from her forehead, and her forehead was broad and white and perfectly smooth. Beneath it her eyes were warm brown, and I gazed into them and a wave of shock hit me—not that I knew what it was. I was only twenty-two, still ten years away from knowing. I saw her on the train for three weeks, almost every night. Short-ly she saw me staring. I don't know what she felt, but I'm sure what I felt was a little game. I gazed at her and she at me, all the way home, three or four times a week. I never knew her, or her so, and had no idea that I did. I'd get home and deal with my husband and son. I'd get home and deal with dinners and tempers and tense or tedious evenings, and at night perhaps I'd dream.

From then on, every year after that, I'd become friends with a new woman. The friendship would deepen; I'd feel such warmth for her. My cheeks would glow, I'd be so excited at seeing her, and thinking how pretty she was, even saying so to others... isn't Dawn pretty? Don't you love her hair, and her eyes? Sometimes there was playfulness close to flirtation in the time spent together, but I could list the women for you: Dawn, Maggie, Sara, Karen,
Jessie, I think I loved all of them—until I couldn't bear being with them any more, and found some reason to break off the friendships; and grew older and more entrenched in my marriage.

In the idea that I loved the man I was married to, because that's the way things were. I couldn't even break from that pattern enough to think about what I said I was feeling. I'd remember my mother and father; people stay married. I had no right to stop loving him for no reason. I had to love him, isn't that what women did? And as men went he wasn't bad, and he was my man, my possession, so that made it all right that I was his, and must be what I wanted. He was kind of cute, and sexually adequate, that's what you call a stiff prick battering at you all the time, isn't it? He had no trouble. I'm sure he appreciated my testimony of this, he never lacked for a big stiff prick, out of nowhere anytime to wield like the weapon it was against my body...entering openings it "belonged" in, trying to enter openings it did not belong in. Trying to convince me of openings it did belong in, while I cried no, no, for years— for thirteen years— cajoling, begging, seducing, and attempting to force entry. Forced entry, is that grand or petty larceny? Or neither. But against the law? But here's his affidavit: a sexually adequate man.

Really, I shouldn't go on so. I was supposed to love him, and I was sure I did. I left it at that, I dulled all but my most adverse reactions, dulled my senses and learned to accept.

But I was so cold. I was always alone. I felt I was inside a tunnel, way at the other end of a tunnel. No one could reach me, they could hardly see me there. I was all squinched up. I grew smaller and smaller at the end of the tunnel. The other end was the wide end, and I was so far down the small end there was no way for them to reach me, touch me, they could just see me. I couldn't feel anything, though I thought I could. I think what I felt was what I understood with my mind feeling was supposed to be like.

Then a friendship came that remained: Jeanne. We were friends for five years, warm and close, very mutually protective. Recently she said she thinks it was a symbiotic relationship. It was very loving and of course non-sexual. Then she became ill and spent a week in our house.

That week I actually felt my feelings for women out loud in my mind for the first time. I felt them for only a very little while before I safely buried them again, but for a day or two, beginning small but growing, the feelings were out. It began with just their edges, rising into my mind so I kept frowning and then smiling little amused smiles at myself and saying, "What are you thinking? My goodness," until finally they culminated. She was in the bathtub and asked me to bring her something, a book or soap or a washcloth, I forget what, but with it in my hand, I opened the door.

At the time we lived in a beautiful apartment consisting of one room and one lovely bathroom. The bathroom had the most exquisite green linoleum floor, smooth and cool under your bare feet and almost the color of those 16th century Bruegel paintings, a special 16th century green that artists can't really find any more. The bathroom big and square, the side of the tub covered with wood paneling, and Jeanne in the water, small, so small, and soft, her narrow shoulders and small beautiful breasts. She sat in the bathtub and I handed her, say it was a washcloth, and quickly went out and back into the living room. I remember her looking up, startled, when I came in. Maybe she expected me to just pass it in through the door. I didn't even see her that well, she was half-turned away from me, but I remember her small body and I think surprised face and I handed her the washcloth and went in the living room and sat down and said, "Whew! What am I feeling?" And from then on, through the rest of the day until I went to bed that night, my woman-feelings were more out than they had ever been before. All afternoon I thought only of her. Amorphous thoughts, though feverish, her body, her small face, her skin, she in the bathtub, our caring for each other— but no action thoughts, and no connective, sudden-comprehension type of thoughts at all— impressions.

When evening came and bedtime approached, the thoughts were still there, steadily growing stronger. Naturally she was sleeping on the couch. My feelings were so intense I couldn't sleep, and when they both did, he next to me, she across the room, I got up and grabbed a piece of paper and a pencil and very quickly scribbled a poem, not letting myself listen to what I was saying, just writing it, some eight or twelve lines of how I loved and desired her. I practically wrote it with my eyes closed. I couldn't face the fact that I was writing it. When I finished I really closed my eyes and held very still, even held my breath for a little time, then slowly opened my eyes and read the poem.

At first, when I saw what I had written, I didn't know how to react. I did the only self-defensive thing I could think of: quietly laughed at myself. When I stopped that I just smiled, letting myself continue to feel amused that I should think such thoughts, and, so protected, buffered by my amusement from the reality of it, allowed myself to read it over and over, maybe fifty
times. At last I couldn't stand it and took the page and tore it up, destroyed it totally and went to sleep. In the morning both the feelings and the poem were gone, and my only conscious dealing with my lesbianism so far in my life was over. I was 28.

Jeanne moved away, and I returned to my pattern of forming and breaking close relationships with women. There are many kinds of closets; this is the one I was in. Different from the lesbian who knows she's a lesbian but never acts on it; different from the lesbian who knows she is, and acts on it but keeps it secret from the rest of the world; but mine a closet too, and probably the deepest and darkest, so secret I could hide in it from myself.

All the feelings I'd thought I had for Daniel, and whatever their motivations--mostly my own needs--the feelings were gone. I resisted knowing it, pretending to myself and him that they were still there. I pretended for at least six years of the thirteen, perhaps even seven, eight, nine. But please understand I pretended successfully to myself too. For all but the last two years I had no idea it was pretense. But it was. Aside from finally understanding I'm a lesbian, I don't think I ever really loved him, and he didn't love me. I 'loved' him because he promised to fill my need, to be loved by myself, and he didn't: he loved a me that wasn't me, a new fabrication (and a nineteen year old one that he never wanted to see change) superceding the old fabrication my parents had said they'd love (be this way, be that way). And he loved my need to be loved. He saw my need when he loved a me that wasn't me, a new fabrication (and a nineteen year old one that he never wanted to see change) superceding the old way). And he loved my need to be loved. He saw my need when he loved a me that wasn't me, a new fabrication (and a nineteen year old one that he never wanted to see change) superceding the old way). And he loved my need to be loved. He saw my need when he loved a me that wasn't me, a new fabrication (and a nineteen year old one that he never wanted to see change) superceding the old way). And he loved my need to be loved. He saw my need when he loved a me that wasn't me, a new fabrication (and a nineteen year

And Jeanne was away; and I went on with my series of short intense relationships with women I couldn't let myself love. I remember how with one woman in particular my whole attention was focused on pretending not to care. When she had had sex that book I thought, with me it's cockroaches, and in that world I couldn't ever let anyone know because that's what they'd do to me. But I was wrong. It wouldn't be cockroaches at all, the threat of cockroaches seems insignificant before what Daniel used on me.

The children have just gone out the door; Laura has gone out the door. I'm alone. Waking this morning was so beautiful: she was singing to me, a funny song. Early, too early to be woken up. "What?" I mumbled, wanting to sleep more. "I'm sorry. I just felt like singing to you," she murmured, sleepy herself, and closing her eyes went right back to sleep, curly hair on my pillow, soft breath coming over me, and I knew it was going to be good when I got there.

I opened the door. He sat across the room, scowling down at a drawing on his lap, and didn't look up. I said hello. He still didn't look up, when he did, finally he did, with total fury and coldness. "Where the hell were you?"

"But the class ran late, I didn't want to leave before it was over."

"Oh, shit. The class ran late? What was I supposed to do, sit here twiddling my thumbs waiting for you?"

"No, you could, I mean what do you mean..."

I stopped, frozen into silence by the cold rejection on his face. For the rest of the evening he didn't speak to me, and I followed him around the room with my eyes, silently or with stumbling words pleading with him to speak to me, please not be angry any more, please relax his face and stop being that way to me.

But he didn't. Not that day, or the next or until the punishment was over. I remember it as going on for a long time, though I suppose it was only a day or two. It was his weapon: withdrawal of love. Some parents use it on their children, and he used it on me, an emotional child, the child I still in many ways am now, but then, I was nineteen but truly nineteen months old, and he punished me that way, though I had done nothing wrong, and all through our married life continued to whip me with this most effective weapon. I'm just remembering how the hero in 1984 is punished for his nonconforming behavior with the thing he fears most, which they know about because they know everything: they let rats at him until he learns how he should think. When I read that book I thought, with me it's cockroaches, and in that world I couldn't ever let anyone know because that's what they'd do to me. But I was wrong. It wouldn't be cockroaches at all, the threat of cockroaches seems insignificant before what Daniel used on me.
has a green cast to it and it's thick, so not quite enough air comes through, and I agree, but I love the green cast. I have it in the window with four plants lined up in front of it, a fuchsia, one with spotted green and white leaves, a ludicrous cactus with four small spiny cacti growing out of its very top, and a plant from a citrus seed, I forget which kind. The screen makes the light come through green and truly beautiful. A philodendron on my desk spreads its leaves everywhere. Before Daniel left this place was different. There was no space. When he left I made one thing: space. I dislike clutter. Possessions, things. When he left and took all his things and was gone suddenly there was space. My living room is space. It's a big room, and my bed, couch, and small low table to eat at are all that are in it. A green rug. Green is quiet. A Indian bedspread/curtain dividing this workroom from the kitchen. I write here: poems, stories, books. And I type to make my living. I think of it as manual labor. It is as right as living with the earth or baking bread:

I swear it to you
I swear on my common woman's head
The common woman is as common
As a common loaf of bread...
and will rise.*

When Daniel was here there was clutter. I am trying to tell you how it's different now. When I was married there was always clutter in my head. When I wanted to write he'd be here, making noise, wanting me, my attention, another child to deal with. There was the physical clutter he made, and also the clutter of him in my mind, his demands and expectations and the ocean of unsaid things. But things unsaid remain; they stayed in my head and didn't leave me alone. Free to say whatever I please, whatever I want to or must have now, my mind has the space my living room has. When I step in the living room my mind and the room greet each other as sisters.

While Jeanne was away we wrote letters frequently; we visited back and forth at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and in the summer; and instead of our friendship suffering because of the distance it became even closer, and we missed each other very much. Daniel began to balk and be upset at my letters to Jeanne, and sometimes hers to me, saying in disgust, "These almost sound like love letters!" I'd reply that was ridiculous—I thought it was—but at last our feelings began to seem, even to blind-deaf-dumb me, to be physically loving as well as loving in every other way. And maybe I let myself remember how I'd felt four years before when she'd stayed with us. Finally, just when she and the man she lived with were about to return to New York to live, I found myself maneuvering and arranging and seducing, writing letters and talking like mad, and ultimately convincing everybody that we should all make love together—I think this is the way it was, I didn't understand it this way then—still not ready to know that all I wanted was to be with Jeanne. The other three, Jeanne and her man and Daniel, all in their different ways resisted, but I finally won them over and there we were, in this very living room, ladies and gentlemen but oh most especially ladies, two at right and down the one step to the living room there we quite finally were, four of us, making love. Every one of us self-conscious; and then Jeanne leaned over and kissed me; and—I'm a writer. Naturally I put it in a story:

When she made love with Jeanne everything she knew about her own feelings changed. She felt so much stronger things than she'd ever experienced with Daniel or anyone else. Her cheeks began to burn the moment Jeanne touched her, lightly, with her small hands, looking into her eyes with such loving, seeing her, bringing her mouth close and starting to kiss....

It was so different it made her weep. After years of constriction, her feelings restrained by weights, hundred, thousand pound weights imprisoning them always, they only came out now and then, in no more than little spurts, their sudden soaring made her weep.

But then everything went wrong. The relationship with Jeanne didn't work; I had no understanding then of why, but now I'm sure it was because she certainly is bisexual, but she isn't a lesbian, and so she didn't feel the immense awakening I felt; instead, its immensity frightened her. And Jeanne didn't want me, so I gathered that great hurt and despair around me for my blanket and went back deep, deep in my closet. When I could think at all I thought I was bisexual too and just a very unhappy person. And by then I must have known I didn't want to be with Daniel, but I didn't know what to do about it, I didn't think I had the right to do anything. Spring came and found me sitting on my black couch up front in my apartment, near the windows, unable to move. For two months.

I moved to go to the bathroom. I wanted tea very badly but could hardly ever move to make myself cups of tea. I moved to feed the children and get them to school and let them in the door when they came home and feed them and get them to bed. The rest of the time I sat on the black couch and stared in front of me. I didn't talk or read or write, it was too much effort. I just wanted to sit and stare, and that's all I did.

Finally I began to feel a little better. Making my last effort to adjust to the life I was in and didn't think I could get out of, when early summer arrived I was on my feet again.

I wasn't there, because I wasn't a free woman yet, but Laura told me how at a women's march in 1972 a woman gave a speech about

*Judy Grahn, The Common Woman. (Oakland Women's Press Collective)
I'd have to find my way into the community of women and see if there were others I could love, in other words, if I wanted to be a, was I a, oh my, a lesbian? And when I finally did understand that I was, when at last that information really reached me, the strongest emotion I felt was surprise.

On the 10th through the 13th day of my confinement I did two things: stopped speaking to Daniel, and wrote a story. Well, I still spoke to him a little, but less as the days went on and the story grew, and only about the most necessary things; and meanwhile I wrote. I began with line one, and just kept going; I named it "Breaking." It was the story of me telling Daniel it was over.

It was a shock to him (in the story, as in reality); it had been clear on a non-verbal level for a long time, but not a word of it had been verbalized before. Now I was saying it. I went through it all, the initial scene, my fear, his shock, the following days, the fighting and hassling, his moving out. When I finished I read it over and saw what I'd said, and that's how I broke the pattern. The pit of my stomach disintegrated. My eyes ceased meeting his, and after a day of that, the last, 14th day of my confinement, he said this not talking to him was very bad, it was getting him very upset, I had to tell him what was wrong, and I did.

Shall I describe how he reacted? What followed? Why? It's not necessary. It was very painful; it's over. One thing though: I understand now that really for at least two and possibly as many as six years I'd wanted to leave him, but was so sure I didn't have the right to, because he wouldn't recover from it, I hadn't been able to even think it. But it wasn't true: he survived. Not only survived, he's probably happier now not with me. For months he'd been waiting for the other shoe to drop, for him to freak out, kill himself, or kill me, and he didn't. But he hadn't been able to end it any more than I had. We stayed together thirteen years. If we'd been honest or strong, or something we weren't, some better thing, it might have been six or seven. Or if really strong, maybe none at all.

But I wish to speak only for myself.

It took me so long; it didn't have to. He survived, I survived, and this is what I realized: I put the box around myself. To some degree at least, it was me who put me in a box. Now I wonder how much of that I did throughout my life, and try to guard that I never do it again.

IRENE SCHRAM lives in New York City and has worked with WBAI's Women's Department producing "Current Themes in Women's Literature: Masturbation" and "Lesbiana Way: Come Out, Come Out, Whoever You Are." Her novel, Ashes, Ashes, We All Fall Down, was published by Simon and Schuster in 1972.
"Rosey Rightbrain's Exorcism/Invocation" is continued this issue by some of the sisters who've responded to Part One (printed in the July issue)—their letters begin on page 10. Barbara Starrett's article, "I Dream in Female: the Metaphors of Evolution" (page 13), was also sent in response to Rosey Rightbrain. Though it was written last spring, before my article, it continues the exploration where I left off without missing a single footnote. I'm pleased and very encouraged that so many of us are dreaming the same world-changing dreams, and I'm excited and inspired by the many directions suggested by the responses printed in this issue.

And what about my own 'Part Two'? I can say this: that my writing has expanded beyond the limits of a magazine article, in scope and size, and will appear in its own form and time. Or I can say: I have not, these last few months, found the hope necessary for risking an exploration into the woman-vision and have found myself going further and further into the No's when I write. Either/both of these explanations present good reason for printing continuations of our collective vision by women who are energized by hope, now. Your responses to this issue's explorations will carry the cycle of communication/transmutation even further.

Here are the sources for last issue's Exorcism/Invocation:

--It Is Not My Baby (the last issue of It Ain't Me Babe, a Berkeley feminist newspaper, 1971--has a large section on left/right-brain thinking), available from A Woman's Place Bookstore, 5251 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94618.
--Lesbian Separatism: An Amazon Analysis, available from It's About Time Bookstore, 5502 University Way NE, Seattle, WN 98105.
"Once upon a fragrant and secret night..."

Hail, twigs, blossoms slapped the walls like timid strangers wanting shelter. But it was the wind. The cat pounced from his perch to stalk the sole, purring.

"I remember watching me eldest die," said the old woman. She was feeling the breath of that night again, its vision weighting her eyes like coins. She saw the clattering cart once again climbing slowly toward her secretful house, the driver just singing his way, while inside a child lay still in his winding-sheet.

"But...once upon a time...there lived a cobbler, MacLem," and he entered her mind and her story, limping. With the broken metallic face she still recalled. Sulphur in the hair. Quick-silver in the hand.

He spent all his time on alchemical manuscripts. He burnt up his whiskers with flaming elixirs. He was crooked, brown-coated, like a caw.

"I walked out o' mornin' then when sun be first lift up. I run like a scream to the coast o' day. I run to the blastin' cobbler's door. There he's thirstin' for gold an' he's findin' him none an' he's drowned an' he's cursin' the gods. Cobbler, I says, make a window in the shoe."

"Be tellin' your tale to the reeve, woman. He's for window-makin'."

"An' you're for shoes, hobbin' man. There's evil humours in the place an' they killed me own child. Can they out with no window now?"

The blotchy face turned away from her. The blue nose and red eyes and the pallor turned away. "I wouldn't do it for a paltry sum," the cobbler said.

She put a little pouch on the table and he spilled it out there into the leather scraps, the threads and cracked vials. The cobbler promised her then. He took the coins, and he swore by the clan of MacLem and the saints.

Then days and nights went by each other winking, for they passed so quickly.

And MacLem stacked unmended shoes beneath the table each day. They made a little wall of scuffed heels and broken toes, while he sat there with a single candle and tears of wax ran away from it. Brimstone, Salts of Ammon—they be right, aye, aye, he thought—and he made a new note on the mercury and looked up as a shadow stepped into the door. And the shadow put its hands on its hips...

"OD'S BODKIN, MAN!"

"An' what will ya want as the sun's sunk his head an' he won't peek out till the dawnin'?" He pushed the splotted papers together to hide their secrets.

"My window! window! window!" She pounded her fist on the table. "Ya swore by the bones of a hundred men and took coin."

"The morrow, then."

"Will ya?" She settled back, arms folded, and her lips pursed into a scowl. "If you aren't there...'od's BODKIN!"

"So have me by the screamin' neck."

On the next day it was autumn.

Trees dropped their leaves and feigned death, and everywhere frogs lay wedged in their boys. The woman pulled dead leaves from around the shoelaces and then she stood on the toe to keep watch.
And watch and watch. And wild silent children circled the shoe until dusk.

The old woman took up her shawl then and her switch and marched into the village and up a crooked street to the cobbler's door. It was open. He was gone. A twisted shoe lay on the floor. A fat baker with floury ears told her how the cobbler had left with a great pack early that morning and had walked like a man who would never turn back. He sought the Philosopher's Stone.

The old woman's eyes marched to the end of the yellow path to the hilltop where the path met the sky and then dropped down out of the world. She pictured him hobbling along it, and in her picture she saw him crippled, then crippled more.

And so it was that when she grew older than old, and lay beneath quilts, and thought of her story, she didn't know surely if he'd been a lame or a limping man.

And now she could but wish to be kilde with kindnesses, growing feeble there. She could not tell the story that she had to tell. Of how she thought she'd been trapped by her own pecu­liar goodnesses.

Death began to stir the images in her brain, to set them whirl­winding. She dreamt she'd slept in a common enough house... "Windows! One a penny!" To see all that passed. To see the beg­gars and the mountains...

As she died inside, the shoe walked away. It walked through grass thick as gods' hair. Through hills that whispered its tales in their dales. To a land that's never heard a footprint in the night.

"Do you die then, mum? Who calls you, mum?"

"When I die, a ghost is born."

"Do you die?"

"So many wings. Inside me."

Then the old woman raised her wrinkled eyelids to shriek with wonder at what she saw.

THE FEMINIST PRESS:

an annotated directory

This directory is current as of October 1974, and lists all the feminist periodicals we know of in the U.S., as well as some English-language periodicals from other countries. News­letters are not included unless they have a definitely more­than-local scope. We encourage feminist groups to reprint this directory, with credit given to AQ. If you know of additions or corrections, please tell us.

CYNTHIA CARR

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and interviews and/or articles pointing out directions the women's movement is taking.

CHOMO-URI 506 Goodell Hall, University of Mass., Amherst, MA 01002. $4/3 issues, $1.50/copy. --a new magazine of women's writing and visual art, published by the Feminist Arts Program of Everywoman's Center.

COUNTRY WOMEN Box 51, Albion, California 95410. $4/yr.(6 issues), $7/inst., 75¢/copy. Each issue of this fine magazine has articles, personal views and views, photographs and letters, organized around a theme (recent ones have been Older Women, Spirituality, Structures, The Women's Movement in the Country, Children's Liberation)--along with a large section of practical information (bee-keeping, barn-building, self-defense, tips on chicken feed and goats, etc.)

DESPERATE LIVING Box 7124, Baltimore, Maryland 21218. $3/6 issues in plain wrapper. --a newsletter published by Baltimore lesbians.

DETOUR WOMEN'S PRESS Box 27004, Detroit, Michigan 48227. $4/yr., 25¢/copy. --a monthly newspaper with sketchy news coverage, lots of personal views and reviews, and interesting interviews with community women (a recent issue had one interview with a local midwife and one with a Detroit woman wrestler). Lesbians don't seem to exist in this publication.

DISTAFF Box 15639, New Orleans, Louisiana 70175. $3/yr. Distaff is a monthly paper providing thorough coverage of women in Louisiana politics, women's health issues and information on the women's movement in the South. One article each issue is printed in Spanish.

FEMINIST ART JOURNAL 41 Montgomery Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215. $4/yr., $5/inst., $1/copy. The Feminist Art Journal is a valuable resource in bringing to print the lives of many unknown women artists--coverage of current events, though, tends to be reaction to the male art establishment more than attention to women's alternative structures.

FEMINIST STUDIES 417 Riverside Dr., New York City 10025. $6/yr. --a quarterly journal of academic papers relating to feminism.

FOCUS 419 Boylston St., Rm. 406, Boston, Massachusetts 02116. --news and poetry published monthly by Boston Daughters of Bilitis.

GRAVIDA Box 76, Hartsdale, New York 10530. $3/yr., $5/2 yrs. --a quarterly poetry magazine published by the Women's Poetry Collective of Westchester County, N.Y.

HER-SELF 225 E. Liberty St., Suite 200, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108. $5/yr., $10/inst. --a monthly newspaper for Ann Arbor area women.

LAVENDER WOMAN Box 60206, Chicago, Illinois 60660. $4/yr.(6 is-

LESBIAN CONNECTION c/o Ambitious Amazons, Box 811, E.Lansing, MI 48823. Free subscriptions. --a new continent-wide newsletter, for, by and about lesbians, Lesbian Connection promises to provide a great improvement to the grapevine--send your news and ideas.

THE LESBIAN TIDE 373 N. Western, Rm. 202, Los Angeles, CA 90004 $7.50/yr., $10/inst., 65¢/copy. --monthly magazine with news and views of lesbians in the Los Angeles area, and some national news as well--also poetry, occasional fiction, humor.

LESBIAN VISIONS c/o the Lesbian Collective, Box 8265, Stanford, California 94305. Free. --Palo Alto area lesbian newsletter.

LIBERA Eshleman Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. $1.50/copy--no subscriptions. --an irregularly published journal of women's writing and art.

MAJORITY REPORT 74 Grove St., New York City 10014. $5/yr., 25¢/copy. --a bi-weekly newspaper primarily covering events and news of interest to N.Y.C. area women.

MARIN WOMEN'S NEWS JOURNAL Box 1412, San Rafael, CA 94902. $4/yr. --a monthly offering of news, reviews, etc. by Marin County women--with a decidedly heterosexual emphasis.

MEDIA REPORT TO WOMEN 3306 Ross Pl. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. $10/yr., $15/inst. for men and inst. --a monthly newsletter of "what women are doing and thinking about the communications media"--focuses more often on women in male-controlled media than on women's alternatives.

MOMMA Box 567, Venice, California 90291. $3/yr., $4/inst. --a monthly newspaper for single mothers--heterosexual orientation.

OFF OUR BACKS 1724 20th St. NW., Washington, D.C. 20009. $6/yr., $7/Canada, $13/overseas, $15/inst., 45¢/copy. One of the oldest feminist newspapers still publishing, off our backs provides thorough and honest coverage of national feminist issues and events--a good example of the beginnings of a distinctly feminist journalism.

PAID MY DUES c/o Woman's Soul Publishing, Inc., Box 5476, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211. $4/yr. in U.S., $4.50/beyond. --a quarterly magazine of songs, musical herstory, news and articles on women in music.

PLEXUS Box 3119, S. Berkeley Station, Berkeley, CA 94703. $5/yr., $2.50/6 months, 50¢/copy. This Bay Area newspaper carries a fine
cultural-political blend of news, reviews, articles, poetry—gives an accurate and exciting sense of the many alternative structures—music, businesses, healing arts, etc.—that women in Northern California are developing.

**PRIME TIME** 232 E. 6th St., Apt. 5C, New York City 10003. $5/12 issues, 50¢/copy. --monthly newspaper by and for older women.

**QUEST** Box 8843, Washington, D.C. 20003. $7/yr., $12/inst., $8/Canda and Mexico, $10/overseas, $2/copy. --a new quarterly journal of political analysis; emphasizes the (questionable) value of building formal structures and hierarchies, and official ideological positions, within the women's movement.

**THE SECOND WAVE** Box 344, Cambridge A, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. $3/yr., add 50¢ outside U.S. and $4.50 airmail overseas, $1/copy. The Second Wave publishes consistently intriguing and informative topical articles, as well as fiction and poetry, for a national audience. It's an especially good magazine for women just coming to feminism as it gives an overview of general feminist issues.

**SISTERS** 1005 Market St., Suite 402, San Francisco, CA 94101. $5/yr., 50¢/copy. Sister newspaper is published monthly by the Los Angeles Women's Center, and includes national as well as local news of the women's movement, reviews and general articles, most written with awareness of lesbianism as an integral part of feminism.

**SO'S YOUR OLD LADY** c/o Lesbian Resource Center, 710 W. 22nd St., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405. $4.50/yr., 75¢/copy. --poetry and commentary by Minneapolis lesbians.

**THE SPOKESWOMAN** 5464 S. Shore Dr., Chicago, Illinois 60615. $7/yr., $12/inst. --monthly newsletter focused mainly on national legislative issues and opportunities for women in business.

**THE SPORTSWOMAN** Box 7771, Long Beach, California 90807. $3/yr. --quarterly magazine about women athletes.

**THIRTEENTH MOON** Writing Organization for Women, Rm. 152, Finley Hall, City College of N.Y., 138th St. and Convent Ave., New York City 10031. $2.50/yr., $3/foreign, $1.25/copy. "13th Moon is a women's literary magazine publishing work by women—whichever and whatever those women choose to be. We hope that by making conscious the special relationship women have to themselves and to the world we will discover literature that is unique, that is female, that is ours." --emissert, editor.

**TRIPLE JEOPARDY** from Third World Women's Alliance, 26 W. 20th St., New York City 10011. $3.50/yr., $8/inst., $2.50 additional out-
$5/12 issues, 50¢/copy. Each issue of this magazine has reviews, poems and articles around a theme (the August-September issue's was "Women and Religion") as well as lots of information for women in the Nashville area.

WOMEN'S PRESS Box 562, Eugene, Oregon 97401. $3/yr., $3.50/Canada, $4/other foreign, $7/inst., 25¢/copy. --news of women's e-events and concerns in Eugene and the Northwest, along with poetry, reviews, personal experiences, interviews, etc., every month. Momma, a novel by Alta, is carried in the paper serially (now in its 7th installment).

WOMEN STUDIES ABSTRACTS Box 1, Rush, N.Y. 14543. $7/yr., $12/inst., $3/copy. --a quarterly compilation of abstracts of articles about women from journals of history, psychology, sociology, etc. and an occasional feminist publication--a useful resource for libraries.

WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWSLETTER from The Feminist Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568. $5/yr. --quarterly newsletter of current developments in women's studies courses and programs.

WOMEN WRITING c/o Polly Joan, Dandelion Hill, Newfield, N.Y. 14867. Women Writing is a newsletter grown out of the 1st National Women's Poetry Festival held this spring in Amherst, Mass. Though still in planning now, the newsletter is meant to become a national "clear-house of support and information for women who are writing."


THE CIRCLE Box 427, Waterloo Quay, Wellington, New Zealand. $4/yr. --lesbian/feminist magazine.


REFRACTORY GIRL 25 Alberta St., Sydney, New South Wales 2001, Australia. $3.50/yr. overseas, $7/overseas air mail. --feminist quarterly.


VASHTI'S VOICE 16 Little La Trobe St., Melbourne 3000, Victoria, Australia. $2/yr. --bi-monthly newspaper.


HOW TO MAKE A MAGAZINE

PART THREE----------------------------------------BY LAUREL

In the first 2 parts of this article we've shown how to typeset, lay out, and print your own magazine, book, or newspaper. All that remains is how to distribute it. There are generally 5 major outlets: 1)subscriptions or single issues sent to individuals, 2)library and other institutional orders, 3) bookstores, 4) wholesale distributors, and 5) feminist distributors.

Subscriptions: To build up your subscription list you'll have to advertise either by exchanging free ads with other magazines and newspapers or by purchasing space. Off Our Backs, Majority Report, and, of course, Ms. reach a larger audience than the other women's publications and are usually the best places to advertise. As the subs roll in you'll want to set up an efficient system so you can tell when they have expired and track down change of addresses. Before we changed over to a computer system, we typed the subscription information on carbon set addressing labels (4 or 5 copy sets are available.) Usually it's best to say with what volume and what issue the sub expires (Vol.1, issue 4 for example) since you may get behind sometime and a date might be confusing. We clipped our sub labels to 3 x 5 cards and filed them under states, alphabetically by last name. Eventually, when you have enough, you'll want to file by zip code order (if you mail 2nd or 3rd class).

The post office will give you booklets on how to wrap, address, label, and bundle the books for mailing. Be sure to apply for 2nd class status--it may take a year for it to come through, but it saves tremendously on postage. Meanwhile, you can use either special 4th class book rate or 3rd class, depending on the weight of your publication. The PO is an ironclad bureaucracy. Save yourself a lot of grief by doing everything exactly as they specify...and remember the tolerance level of the gentry in your town when you design the cover. AQ has not been censored in Oakland or Boston, but you may have problems in a small town.

Library subscriptions are a substantial source of income because there are so many libraries and because they usually renew automatically. Try college and university libraries and major city's public libraries remembering to address your inquiry to serials or periodicals as the case may be. Most women's magazines charge an institutional rate higher than regular subscriptions.

Bookstores: Building a bookstore list takes time. Try to get listings of likely bookstores from other women's, gay, radical publications, and visit the stores in person whenever possible. Almost all our bookstores work on consignment, i.e. we send the books and wait till they're sold to get paid for them. The bookstores can return unsold copies for full credit. (We give a 25% discount, 75¢ to us and 25¢ to them, but some stores demand a 40% standard large-publisher discount.)

Non-payers will always crop up. Since most women's publications have similar bookstore outlets, we can work together to blacklist a store until it pays. At the moment we have only one definite candidate: we're asking that our sisters not buy anything at Oscar Wilde Bookstore in New York City until they've paid all the 71
women's publications they owe, and particularly the $155 they've owed us for almost a year.

Wholesale distributors usually aren't interested in small press ventures, but there are a few who are trying to be alternatives. Write women's publications around the country for the addresses. Our cut with these folks doesn't even break even (50¢ to them and 50¢ to us) but more women see the magazines and some may subscribe.

Feminist distributors: We long for the day when there will be a widespread women's distribution system. There is First Things First, a national mail order house, and there are a few local networks, but this fantastic opportunity to both create jobs for women and spread women's culture has not been explored very thoroughly to date. Anyone seriously interested in this should contact us for further details.

In addition to distribution there will be paper work similar to any small business. You'll have to buy city (county, state) licenses and set up your bookkeeping to meet IRS approval. Consult a feminist lawyer about the advantages of incorporation, non-profit status, and the best ways to get around fattening this country's "defense" budget. Get whatever pamphlets you can on starting a small business from the small business administration (or ask your librarian). Remember to check with other women's groups in your area: you may be able to "use" their non-profit status to funnel a grant or to pull off a mailing using their permit. Don't forget that N.O.W. and the more conservative women's rights organizations can be very helpful too since they may know more about "the system" than our more radical sisters.

We'll be happy to answer specific questions about publishing a women's magazine if you'll send us a stamped self-addressed envelope. Good luck, and let us know how your venture goes so we can include yours in our next directory of women's publications.
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Vol. 3 #2
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All women who contributed to this issue (excepting the editors) will receive payment for their work. We have divided the money not necessarily according to merit, but according to length and our estimate of the time and effort that went into producing the work. Each of the five fiction writers will receive $25, the poets will receive $10, and the visual artists $10.

by Carol Newhouse
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VOLUME THREE ISSUE TWO

Editors: Gina Covina
Laurel Galana
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and Katie Missett

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This issue we focus on sexuality. Whether you are new to loving women or have always loved women, we think this issue provides an opportunity to discover new possibilities for growing beyond your definition of sexuality. The writers included here range in age from 9 years old to almost 60. They live in Paris, New York, San Francisco, and points in between like Ohio and Arkansas. We hope their diversity will resonate with your own.

With this issue devoted to lesbian sexuality we would like to say goodbye to lesbianism as a focus for discussion or debate. We will continue to take a lesbian perspective for granted, but encourage our contributors to write about/create what passionately interests you. This could be in any area from poetry to physics. Since our first issue we have repeatedly said that Amazon Quarterly is not about lesbianism, that we take such a basic fact of our existence for granted.

From that we must go on to explore universal questions about how to live. In the tradition of Gertrude Stein, Margaret Anderson, Natalie Clifford Barney, Colette, Djuna Barnes, Alice B. Toklas, Violet Leduc, Renee Vivien, etc. we are writers, artists, human explorers first -- "lesbian" is a category in the mind of an outsider, he who would attempt to define and contain us.

Our next issue will be devoted to exploring ENERGY in all its many manifestations: psychic, spiritual, occult, electromagnetic, solar, atomic. Energy is energy. How do we create it, use it, share it in our own bodies, with our friends, our plants, the earth? How can we become more aware of it, use it to heal, to grow our food, or to expand our consciousness. ESP, biofeedback, hypnotism, orgone boxes, dreaming, dowsing, massage, yoga, dance, acupuncture, meditation -- how do we use and change energy? We welcome fiction, essays, art that explores ways of being more conscious through an understanding of energy. The deadline for the next issue will be May 15.

In our own attempts to gather and generate energy we are finding that living in a city is a definite liability. The next issue of Amazon Quarterly will come to you from the country, from wherever we chance to find a new home.

Special thanks to all of you who sent work for the sexuality issue. Many good poems have gone unpublished for lack of space. At this point, our poetry editor has asked that we declare a moratorium on poetry submissions until June 1 so that she can catch up with the backlog she has now. We are receiving about 500 poems a month. We hope this may be encouragement to some of you to try your hand at essays or fiction which we never receive enough of.

Jacqueline Lapidus writes in Paris, at present, and has contributed poems to Hanging Loose and other small magazines.
rolling in the mouth

First of all, everything is a sensual delight. This is the living room, the kitchen of our utopia and there is a continuous feeding, suckling, loving here, or often enough that it seems continuous, or there always is this red kitchen with wood smoke smell and jars of nuts and grains and apples and a variety of smells, jars of smells so that a favorite activity becomes standing in the kitchen and sorting out the smells, passing them from mouth to mouth, passing them from open hand to open hand, finding them in our tousled hair and behind our sleepy eyes in the morning. It is wonderful to cook and eat in this kitchen, alone with the jars and smells or laughing playing with each other so engrossed so much to be in each other that we laugh at the long mornings and evenings just around the kitchen—never getting too far from the source.

We roll the days around in our mouths and the living room is round and soft and wood, fluted wood flying around the high ceiling, indeed like inside a flute, the perfect round wood grain. We live inside a recorder you see. But soft so we can sit lie roll around with each other. It is the girl scout camp tent floor and we so delight in playing touching exploring each other in our three-year-old thirteen-year-old sensuality that other roles are long since forgotten. And do you see the bedtime stories at night?

Sometimes we follow each other into the bathroom where there’s a big sign saying I piss here and lots of pictures of naked women. We sit around watch each other piss and menstruate and shit and bathe or talk or well you see...

There is the space. I hope that what I am saying does not scare you because there is the space. We go for long walks alone and together and the woods the fields the mountains the stars the pools are still as we want them noisy and chirping as we want them solitary as we want them or full of animal and woman spirit playmates as we want them and create them.

There is the space in the house. Many rooms--at least one room that is us alone and I needn’t even describe these. And so many play rooms, music rooms, a room where you’re so big, a room where you’re so small, a color room, a room with big building blocks to move around. And lots of steps, nooks and crannies, long connecting corridors lots of places to play hide and seek so we play it sometimes. Or at anytime if you looked you could find Laurel in one room dreaming Gina in another making a pot Kathy building a jungle gym in the basement Wendy flying a kite from the roof.

We come in from our adventures hair tousled eyes bright cheeks red and slightly cold. And it is so clear so clear our eyes so clear our minds so clear our bodies so clear our heads up no pain no stomachaches ever no knots in our bodies or soon kneaded out. We feel enormous but no matter cause there is so much room.

This terrible urgency this terrible hunger relaxes goes to play with the wind. It doesn’t come from this anymore, this purpose, it comes from what we see and know and follow or don’t know and follow. All the necessities are still there clear but it doesn’t come from the same starvation, do you see?

Our concept of changes changes. The first week I run in and out from the mountains several times a day to make sure it’s still here because it’s so hard to believe. But soon we know it even our toes relax. This is sure cariable around inside us, but everyone comes back eventually. There is so much freedom in our relationships because we know we will see each other the rest of our lives. We move in and out of comfortable imaginative loves with each other cause we have so much time and whatever it is now it will be different in twenty years but it will be.

We become so fiercely beautiful. We evolve more and more beautiful, just as women are so recognizably more beautiful than men and lesbians so strikingly beautiful even on city streets. We become so fiercely beautiful that others without purity of purpose cannot look at us or come near us--it burns their eyes out. The tangible pulsating space around each of us becomes so large that our protective shields are so far away and so effective we don’t have to worry about them.

We spin out all-night dances continuous tales around fires healings purgings long birth dramas music created for the parts of our bodies song to ankle. We greet each other with any one of these extensions of ourselves how many ways can we greet each other? Nose first dreams first cashew nut first song first. We make up one million ways for this game so we are always excited.

Women visit cause they can see. Some stay. Those who cannot see do not see. And do you see the girl children, with their round bellies? And do you see the white-haired women with their spun chants and woven wisdom?

KATHY HRUBY: "I learned to make these stories as a child in brutal surroundings. This one was written the night my lover left me. I can't decide whether they are a dangerous habit or the sustaining wordflow of my bodylife."
The Woman Who
Walked In The Night

by Sandy Boucher

We begin at the doorway, cut flush with the ground in the white plaster wall; outside it is the packed dirt of the yard--inside, a large room. There is no furniture in the room except a heavy table. On the floor stand large wooden and plaster figures, and smaller pieces rest on the table. Their immobility catches the breath: each of the figures seems poised at the instant before falling or taking off, each seems balanced on the edge of disintegration.

In the center of the room, where the light falls from the window in the wall, stands Laura in a loose, faded smock. Her brown hands are at work, delicately, with mallet and chisel. With slow patience she chips at the piece of wood before her. Her light hair falls straight against her cheeks, and her face is absorbed, the eyes vibrant with attention as if it were they that touched and moulded the wood.

Finally she puts aside the mallet, and lays her hand flat on the surface, moving it slowly down the hollow she has made. Then she tenses, looks up.

In the doorway, a short, muscular form is leaning, one shoulder propped against the doorframe. Laura squints against the sunglare from outside, seeing first that the head is piled with black glossy curls, then that the creature has dark eyes of extraordinary brilliance in a golden brown face.

The visitor smiles and says in a young woman's voice, "I was just watching. From the road I heard the sounds you were making... came up."

Laura returns the smile. She is fascinated by the golden sun-glow of the rounded cheek, the eyes intense and alert as an animal's. How old--sixteen maybe? more?

"I'm into wood myself," says the visitor. "I'm a carpenter, among other things..."

Laura stares...

"...auto mechanic...organic gardener...and I make my living as a dental technician..."

Then, thinks Laura, she is clearly older than sixteen.

"You're American," she says.

"Ummmm."

"Not many Americans get this far across the island from Palma. Are you at the pension?"

"Yes."

The young woman holds her gaze, smiling, much longer than is comfortable for Laura. Gradually, to defend herself, in the silence, Laura goes back to her work. She turns from the doorway to look at the sculpture, and lets the contours of the wood fill her consciousness again. She knows there is someone there on the other side of her absorption, but the perception is not compelling and in a few moments it is gone, and she is again working.

The young woman watches her hand lift to touch the wood. She waits as Laura picks up the mallet and places the chisel. Warmly content, she breathes the wood smells, sees the light thick and golden in the room.

Finally she asks, "You've lived on Mallorca a long time?"

Laura pauses, her mind gradually hearing the words, letting them in. Without looking at the visitor, she answers, "Ten years now."

"You're American too. Where are you from?"

"The Midwest, how about you?"

"I've just come from a farm in Northern California, where we have the healthiest goats chickens dogs rabbits squash corn tomatoes and human beings you can imagine."

Laura emerges fully from her work in order to look at this creature who is grinning with pleasure at her own words. She is amused and intrigued, and suddenly back in the afternoon, feeling her body hot and slightly stiff from standing, seeing the blueness of sky framing the tumbled curls of the visitor's head.

"Well, if you're an example..." she says. And then, seeing that the young woman has become suddenly self-conscious, "What brings you here then?"

The visitor shrugs. "Travelin'."

And Laura experiences an unusual feeling--the swift tug of hunger for that place she left so long ago. It was going to be for a short while, for a year or two--but the time passed, it was possible to sell her sculptures here, it was possible for her husband to do his work. The people in the village became their friends. Life was comfortable. They stayed. Now she saw that thing raw open tough and kind, in this young woman, that speaks of the people among whom she grew up. It was a childhood whose poverty she thought she wanted never to remember, but now, suddenly, she is very lonely.

"Look," she says, laying down her tools, "my husband will be
back soon from Alcudia...if you'd like to stay and have coffee with us..."

The visitor pushes herself away from the doorframe and steps backward into the sun. "Thanks," she says, "but I've got to go." The hollows of her curls hold pools of blue and red sunlight.

She moves a few feet from the door and turns. "Your sculptures are beautiful," she says, and inclines her head, speaking this opinion as a blunt statement of fact. And then she turns and is walking toward the road, swinging along, happy in her own movement. Laura goes to the door and calls, "Come back again, if you like."

The visitor throws up her arm in acknowledgment of the invitation.

Laura watches her walking down the white road along the cliff. She wanders out of the house and herself takes the road to the cliff and stands looking out at the water growing light and misty toward the horizon. The wind lifts her hair, and she turns, glancing to her left. The young woman walks at the edge of the road, small with distance.

Laura has been troubled at night. At twilight she walks toward the sea. Her husband does not like to walk out at night; he stays in the lighted house, reading. If she looks back she can see the yellow rectangle of window crossed by black branches, and she knows that her life is inside, that her life is caught in each object. But when the sun sinks, the cold seeps deep within her. She wants to leave the house, then, and Ralph, listening to the sounds, and has forgotten, in longing, all she see the yellow rectangle of window crossed by black branches, and she tries to be offended and cannot manage it. Lowering her eyes, she holds her breath—and when she glances up again, the young woman walks at the edge of the road, small with distance.

During the day there is her work and the man with whom to speak pleasantly; there is the lightning of sun on her green smock, on the white outer wall of the house, light tangled in her lashes and caught in each object. But when the sun sinks, the cold seeps deep within her. She wants to leave the house, then, and Ralph, satisfied with his dinner, reading in the chair. She kisses his face, and he looks up at her. "Going for a walk?"

This being pulled out into the night is not new. Even as a girl she had been drawn out from each particular house in which her objects, her clothes, her people were. She fears the cliff above the sea, for she is sucked out into the blackness. For a short while she walks, far back from the cliff, and then stands listening to the sounds, and has forgotten, in longing, all she left in the house.

The moon is high, and Laura has walked up the road to where a cliff opens straight down to a white V of beach. She sees the squatted figure at the edge of the road, facing toward the sea, and she stops, peering at it, until the moon shows her the thick curls, the bare shiny skin of knees. "What are you doing?" she asks, feeling that her voice moves like a small furry thing in the dark.

She comes closer, wondering if the young woman has heard. The head lifts; there is a flash of teeth, and even of the whites of the enormous dark eyes. The voice is breathy, it seems to come from somewhere beside the figure, from the grass, from the earth: "You know, it's strange for me...being so separate from everything...I mean, there was always a job, or land to tend, or something to build, or repair...but this...it's like floating up somewhere between here and..." She lifts her hand to indicate the white roundness of moon.

Laura lowers herself to her knees, next to her. "How old are you?" Laura asks.

"Twenty-four."

They sit for a time, side by side, without speaking, and then the young woman says, "I've been so happy today. I had a dream this morning that I was hitchhiking in Oregon, and this beautiful middle-aged woman stopped to pick me up. We drove along, and we talked, and then she took me to her house and we made love. And when I woke up I was so happy, and I've felt so good all day that I don't even want to go to sleep tonight."

Laura turns to stare at her, seeing the face bright with moonlight. The smile is so gentle, and the gentleness so clearly meant for her, that Laura feels suddenly childlike. She wants to run away, but can't bring herself to scramble up from the ground; she tries to be offended and cannot manage it. Lowering her eyes, she holds her breath—and when she glances up again, the young woman is looking out over the sea.

When Laura returns to the house, it is unfamiliar to her. She had come from the night and has brought it into the room with her. Her husband sitting beneath the lamp is strange to her. He looks up and smiles. His big face with its flat cheekbones like slabs of stone, his kind eyes, the mole on his cheek--there is no face that she knows better, and yet she shivers with the strangeness of it, feeling that her presence threatens him.

She does not tell Ralph about the encounter on the road. There is no way to tell it. And in the next weeks, when he has met the young woman, whose name is Sage, and in his easy way become used to her being often at the house, Laura cannot tell him what is happening, for he does not understand the night; he does not listen to the sea. This that drew her into the night has become real in Sage, and Laura knows he would only be puzzled and hurt if she tried to tell him. She does not think of what his fear might do to her.

The man stands outside the house. His big frame bends forward as he listens. The sun stretches flat on the white walls, and through the open doorway he sees the unfinished sculpture, the brownish grain snaking laterally around it. Heavy stillness of afternoon, empty door-mouth opening in, white walls unanswered. He is alone and tense with pleasure, from somewhere in the room comes Laura's voice, singing. It is a Spanish song, which her round, low tones lilts softly. He follows the thread of her voice as it carries the words, piling them, then stringing them out.
"You are tall and thin
like your mother
dark and witty
like your mother..."

He is surprised, knowing she rarely sings, and her voice brings him her body, her face, thoughtfully wound in the melody, head tilted back. The contours of her body are so embedded in him that the song's shape runs over his chest and thighs like ice.

"How beautiful is the branch
that grows from the trunk
dark and witty
that comes from the trunk..."

Quietly he approaches the doorway, careful of the moment when he will disturb her. Then he sees her, seated on the table, her legs crossed at the ankles and her hands loosely open in the billowing of green smock before her. Sage leans next to her on the edge of the table. He sees the two women's heads bent slightly toward each other. Laura's light straight hair near the wild tumble of the young woman's black curls, and he is charmed. The lines of Laura's face are soft, her eyes dreaming.

He pauses at the doorway--and then he sees that Sage's hand lies loosely on Laura's brown ankle, the fingers cupped. The gesture has been forgotten by Sage, who is absorbed in listening, but Ralph is impaled on it for an instant, seeing only this casual gesture of possession--and he is puzzled.

Though he has not moved or made a sound, Laura slowly turns to him. She looks at him for a moment, abstracted, and her voice trails off. Then she smiles at him.

"Good...you're back..."

Both she and the young woman shift to face him. He grins at them, greets them...and his spine wonders at the gesture, obliterated, vanished into air now. The room is full of the three of them; the familiar slowly buries the grain of bewilderment embedded in his mind.

They lie on the bed in the room next to the studio. Flies buzz in the yellow light in which the sculptures are caught, but in here it is shadowed and cool. They are asleep. Laura lies curled against Sage's side, her head on the naked belly that is taut and brown and smells of sun. Her face, turned to the side, is still, with a deep peacefulness, the lips full and lightly closed. The lines of her jaw and cheeks, sometimes tense and sharp in waking, are blurred into a dark tranquility.

Sage lies at full length; her open mouth guls the cool still air, and her eyelids twitch.

So they have been sleeping for half an hour, secure in the man's leaving for Palma this morning, to return the next day. When Sage hears a sound, a scraping. Instantly her spread, sleeping mind draws in to a point, and she jerks her head up, the muscles in her neck straining. The doorway is black with a large body, is bloated with him. He grips the door frame, his arms locking him there, his head forward, and his face is gigantic, a chasm. He is speaking in a low, strangled voice, and she feels the lurching movement of Laura rising from her, turning. She sees the woman's back and beyond it the man's shoulders locked in the doorway, his face held there like a scream.

He is speaking still as he turns, but Sage cannot hear the words. In her head leaps a wild jangle of bells. Laura is up, and slipping the green smock over her body; she turns for an instant to Sage, holds out a clenched hand as if to touch her.

Then they are outside and the man takes giant strides toward the car, his legs jerking viciously forward. Laura runs to him, tries to take his arm, but his face is a giant black rock heavy on his neck. He tries to push her away. She claws at his arm. Then his body swells and grows over her and his heavy arm slants upward, comes down and whips back and forth, again and again, with the precision of an axe. Laura falls back against the hood of the car. Her head jerks at each blow. Then she is sliding down away from him, and her body rolls over the fender and drops, the head lolling against the tire.

Laura stirs in the bed, feeling Sage's body twitching beneath her. She raises her head and gasps, for Sage's face is contorted into an anguished mask. Laura lifts her arms and takes Sage's head in her hands. The young woman's eyes open, and her body goes rigid. She stares, her eyelids strained wide, her mouth open, and then her hands lift and she touches Laura's face, her fingers moving, seeking.

"What is it?" Laura asks, "What is it?"

"Oh my god!" Sage's eyes peer, fearful, out of a face drugged with sleep. She chokes as if she were strangling, chokes and turns and touches...until finally her fingers still, her hands drop, and then she pulls away from the woman and gets up.

Laura watches her smooth brown body move angrily about the room, watches her arms lift, her feet stamp the floor.

"Goddammit, a nightmare. How could my mind do that to me?!
How could it manufacture such an atrocity!! Dammit. Goddammit!!"

"Maybe I'm out of my league," she mutters.
Sage is happy. She is filled with warmth as she stands in the studio watching. The activity of working with another person or even just being near someone who is making something, brings Sage to a deep sure center in herself. This appreciation is so intense even just being near someone who is making something, brings Sage studio watching. The activity of working with another person or sometimes that it is like sexual desire.

Laura's hands—long-fingered, big-knuckled, defined—move with the certainty of a craft long-practised. Her lips are set in concentration. She smiles, and Laura, her face relaxing, let her lips curve into a grin.

"I'd love to be with you on the farm. There's a shed there that'd be perfect for you to work in. It would be great to have you there with us."

Laura turns to stare at the wood, her face troubled. Slowly she shakes her head.

But Sage goes on, "You'd like the others. They're wonderful women. I know they'd love you."

Laura's hands spread on the wood, Laura has turned and is gazing past Sage, out the window to the road leading to the sea.

They have come out into the moonless night and are walking slowly, side by side. Sage's feet scuff the stones of the road. In the open night, Laura feels the distance between herself and this young woman, and she uses it to shut herself more securely inside her mood. She has come from cooking dinner in the lighted house; they sat about the table under the lamp and the food soothed her, and she engaged with Ralph in a smooth, easy conversation, oiled by long familiarity. It slipped into the grooves of mind.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make fun of you. It's just that I can't do this tragic romantic thing with you. It just feels very...unnecessary."

Far beneath, the waves break on the rocks and roll back into the sea, leaving the jagged surfaces bare and wet, only to rise and crash again. Laura listens intently, trying to escape the sensation of utter nakedness, foolishness, confusion.

Sage steps away from her and stands looking at her steadily. "You've touched me...deeper than he could..."

The young woman looks with great gentleness at her. "So that's why I got the lecture on marital bliss."

Laura's mouth trembles. She turns her face away as if Sage has struck her.

"Oh no...oh no no..." and Sage's hands reach out to hold her shoulders, comfortably. Sage's lips touch her cheek, her forehead, "I mean, I didn't mean to make fun of you. It's just that I can't do this tragic romantic thing with you. It just feels very..."

Laura's eyes and she is sobbing. She blurts out "What now?" in a squeaky, choked voice, and leans over into the loud rough sounds of relief.

Then Sage is with her again, arms circling her back, holding her, rocking her. "Nothing now, nothing more than was, than really was. I mean, I love you. I do, that's all. It's no big thing, you know. It's all very ordinary."

At Sage's words, rage cloths and rises in Laura. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make fun of you. It's just that I can't do this tragic romantic thing with you. It just feels very..."

Sage watches her, eyes wide and startled.

"You don't have to explain all that to me. And your 'two halves of something that must meet'...oh that's really wonderful! But you're wasting all this on me, you know. I mean, the world has changed!"

She takes Laura's arms and smiles close into her face. "I'm proud and happy to be who I am!"

Laura feels like a fool. Cheated. Down below the sea murmurs under the wind that has begun to lash the cliff. She listens to it, feeling deserted—and in need.

Her voice is a whisper. "You've touched me...deeper than he could..."

feeling of warm enclosure, from the house, that still clings to her.

"He is the wall that has protected me all these years...from what?...from myself, perhaps. I think I could not have lived without him. I think I could not now live without him.

She had meant to go on but she stops, shocked, as she hears low burbling laughter erupting from Sage's dark form.

"Oh I love you so much," Sage says, struggling to control her voice. "Really, you're so amazing. You're so earnest. I mean, beautiful strong woman, why are you being so dramatic!"

She is laughing, touching Laura's hand. "You don't have to explain all this to me. And your 'two halves of something that must meet'...oh that's really wonderful! But you're wasting all this on me, you know. I mean, the world has changed!"

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Sage steps away from her and stands looking at her steadily. "You've touched me...deeper than he could..."
Simply that.

Sage is stopped by Laura's standing there rigid and clenched. She doesn't know how to enter Laura's anguish with her. "Yes," she mumbles, "well...okay...yes..."

And finally she turns away, starts toward the road.

But when she has reached the road and is stumbling along its rutted surface, she knows she does not want to walk away like this. She stops and leans over, her arms cradling her chest, thinking. Sage--her comfort, her security, is in her life with Ralph, and she is afraid to threaten that. Sage considers where her own security lies. She too has a place to be--with her lesbian friends. It is a life that is in many ways comfortable, as Laura's is. It is comprehensible to Sage. If Laura were to enter that life she would bring with her much that Sage has not experienced, and Sage realizes she is afraid of that in Laura. Finding the fear in herself, Sage is angry. In her life she has met many challenges; always before she trusted in her own courage. And at the thought of simply going away, leaving Laura there in the little house, there is a stab of grief. The loves Sage has known have been wonderful, but what she feels for Laura is different, deeper than the others. She recognizes that, as she stands in the road, unable to walk toward the pension.

Laura is seated on the ground, her arms clasped around her knees, her forehead resting on her arms, and there is nothing inside her but a space of numbness. Then she hears the sound of footsteps, and looks up, surprised, to see Sage approaching through the darkness. Dully she watches the young woman come near and squat close before her. Sage's face is grave, determined.

"Come back with me when I go."

Laura leans toward Sage, and something awakens shrieking within her. "Sage, I'm terrified!"

Sage shakes her head. "Think what it would be like if you stayed, now. Do you want that for the rest of your life?"

Laura cannot hold the young woman's gaze. She lowers her head to her knees, pondering, and hears the muffled sounds of the sea far below the cliff. She can feel Sage's presence, strong, encompassing her. Finally, without looking up, she asks in a low voice, "Are you my friend?"

"I want you to live your life. I want you to reach out and take what you need."

Laura lifts her head and looks at the face before her. Sometimes she sees--the steadiness of the eyes and mouth--makes her believe, for a few moments, but then she objects again, "My work..."

Sage interrupts her. "That's yours alone. Does it depend on him?"

Laura hears her own voice, querulous. "And what about my feelings for him? What about the hurt I would cause him?"

Sage does not answer her for a time, finally repeats slowly, "What would it be like if you stayed, now?"

"But I don't know how to live any other way!" and Laura's voice rises, whimpering. "You talk as if I had been out in the world. I've been here, here alone with him, for so long that I don't know... I don't know if there could be a place out there for me. I don't know any other women like you, or like me."

Sage says steadily, "I've told you there's a place--the farm--and a shed for you to work in. There are women like you, Laura--lots of them now--who've come out of marriages to love other women. You'll meet them when we go back. Believe me, you're not the only one."

She can see the struggle etched in the sharp lines of Laura's face, the eyes that are too intense, the hands gripped together so tightly that the knuckles stand out like knobs. And she searches in herself for the strength to give whatever is needed.

"Do you really care about me?" Laura asks.

"Yes, oh yes." Sage goes forward to rest on her knees, reaches to grip Laura's hands with one of her own, and with the other cradles Laura's head against her shoulder. She can feel the tension in the woman's body, the energy caught there, locking it. "Help me understand you.

Laura's voice comes muffled against her shoulder. "I'm terrified."

"You are very strong and beautiful."

They sit for a time, Sage holding her, and then Laura pulls away, turns her head to the side, and begins to talk in a low, toneless voice. "In the last few years sometimes I've felt that I loved no-one, not even Ralph, that there was a pane of glass separating me from everyone and everything...as if I were merely going through the motions of my life..."

Her face goes slack as she talks, an empty, despondent look in her eyes. "Sometimes I've felt I was going to die, and that it didn't matter, because everything I did was meaningless...even the work...just repeating myself..."

Laura stares for a time at the ground. Sage has drawn back from her and sits at a little distance watching her.

Then Laura looks up at Sage, and her face goes firm once again. Her eyes are alert, and she studies Sage. Finally, she says, "I never want to feel that way again."

They sit for a time in silence, separate from each other, and Sage sees Laura's glance move to the square of yellow light in the distance that is the window of her house. She sees the woman look with a kind of mourning at the house.

"It's going to be terrible--a lot of this is going to be so terrible for me. I know it. I've lived it in my imagination many times...that's why I didn't leave, before. Now there's someplace...you tell me so, and I believe you...and there's you, Sage...lover. But it's going to be...at first...the guilt at hurting him."

"I look at Sage for a time, troubled, and then asks, "Are you certain you want to help me?"

Sage leans forward. It is difficult to speak, her voice struggling past the habit in her of trying to appear sufficient, of pretending not to need or feel too much for anyone. And in the struggle she finds the beginning of understanding how strong it will make her to admit this caring.

"I'm afraid to tell you how much I love you now."
Some nights later, the man as usual sits alone in the house. He is reading in the bright warm circle of the lamp, his left hand spread on his belly.

He hears Laura enter, and his hand lifts to steady the book as he glances up. She looks odd, the sense in him that she is enclosed in silence. Should he speak to her? or is she merely thinking of her work?

"Good walk?" he asks.

"Yes." And she sits down across from him. He can feel the urgency in her, but when she has sat there for a time without speaking, he goes back to his reading.

Laura, who has been staring at her hands, looks up at him, watches him read. This is a human being, she thinks. He has always done the best he could. He needs me in order to live. And he watches him read. This is a human being, she thinks. He has always done the best he could. He needs me in order to live. And she experiences a hopeless surge of love that goes back more to what he had been when she first knew him than to the man sitting across from her.

But she knows he can take care of himself. He will find another person to live his comfortable life with him, she assures herself, knowing it is true.

And she knows he will not understand how this life that satisfies him was slowly suffocating her. He will not understand this other need—to own herself—to take responsibility for her own desires—to love a woman at last, openly, as she knows now she has always wanted to do. He is not the sort of man who could understand that.

She mourns this in him, before she begins to speak, knows the pain she will cause. This anguish in him and in herself is the price she will pay, she realizes, and regrets a world in which what we need must be gotten at so high a cost to ourselves and others. That this new life will be worth it does not lessen the difficulty of what she must do. But she has chosen, already, and she begins to tell him, as best she can, about the inner life which has brought about the choice in her, something in her that has always been there and was never allowed to exist in the comfortable little house.

On the patio of the pension, Sage sits staring out into the darkness of the garden. The trees there are black huddled monsters crouched to spring, the walks curl like pale streams back into dimness. Sage shakes her head, blinking against the insistence of her tightstrung nerves. She knows that at this moment Laura is talking to Ralph, and she admits to herself, as Laura had admitted that night on the cliff, that she is terrified. Her thoughts flash briefly to the dream she had, but she stops herself, will not let her imagination go there. She is familiar enough with Ralph now to know that there will be no physical violence. She believes that, must believe it.

But there is a long night ahead. Laura has said she will stay with him until morning. Then she will come here to the pension. As soon as her things can be gotten ready, she and Sage will leave for Palma to take the boat to Barcelona, and from there, a plane to the United States. How strange it will be, traveling with Laura. Sage thinks how, up to now, they have never been with each other for a whole night. And she is hungry for the long hours of lying together, hungry to know this woman, to be with her as she moves freely in the world, discovers herself.

A lamp flicks on in an upstairs window of the pension, and a little skirt of light changes the closest bushes from lumps of shadow into a confusion of leaves. Sage shivers. Other people, yes. There will be women back there who are Laura's age, who share her experience, who perhaps could satisfy her more than Sage can. Her mind jumps ahead. Maybe after Laura learns to trust herself, she will choose one of those women to love, will move on from Sage to someone more like herself. Yes, probably it will happen, Sage thinks, and suffers a flicker of panic in her stomach.

She returns to the days they spent together this last week--Laura examining her feelings, finding her strength. Before she could talk to Ralph, she had to be certain of herself. She talked for hours to Sage, telling it, telling her life--her becoming a young woman in the fifties, when it seemed that marriage was the only thing to do, her meeting Ralph, and what she had felt for him then; their poverty together, the fun they had, the problems--talking, moving through the span of years she had lived with him, sometimes sobbing with the pain of how much he had meant to her once, and the sorrow that it could not be the same now, accepting finally what she already knew—that she must break out. Experiencing this with Laura, Sage was taken into areas of herself that she would never have entered, and felt the admiration for this woman struggling to begin her life again.

Sage has forgotten the fear. She looks out into the garden where the trees are still and waiting, like herself. She knows sleep will be impossible, that all night she will be filled with the ripples of joy that run through her as she awaits the morning's certainty. Laura will come, probably exhausted, hurt surely, but ready to meet her and to move on.
Over a year ago we began publishing Connections, a quarterly compilation of women's requests. In that time hundreds of women have participated and found friends, help with specific projects, and, in some cases, lovers.

Last Spring, Katie Missett and Patsy Bass volunteered to take over the work of compiling and printing Connections. We forward all the women's requests which are mailed to AQ and Katie and Pat do the rest. Approximately every 3 months they mail out a new issue to the women who have requested it.

We would like to see Connections grow and be of service to more women. Any woman can describe herself, her project, her needs, what she is looking for in friends, a living situation, etc. and receive replies from women throughout the county. Additionally, she can read the descriptions other women have had printed--there are often uncanny matches between someone, say on page 1, looking for help on a lesbian goat farm and a woman on page 9 whose dream it is to herd goats and raise organic vegetables.

Quite often, women share their creative talents--almost everyone writes, paints, plays music, is into photography, pottery, theatre or has an interest that makes an easy natural bridge to friendship. Women exploring spiritual/occult possibilities, women involved in raising children, women in academia, women in the sciences--the connections are limitless.

Though we were warned not to get into this "computer dating" service, almost without exception, women have shown that they are looking for friendships which may/may not develop into love relationships and that they are not interested in sexually objectifying themselves or other women. Connections is loving, positive, and refreshingly free of any attempt at exploitation.

If you want to participate in the next issue, send your description of yourself and your present needs, your age (we cannot accept anyone under legal age), and your address along with $1 and a long self-addressed stamped envelope with two ten cent stamps to

Katie and Patsy have asked us to remind you that Connections comes out 4 times per year and that it might be as long as 3 months before you will receive your copy depending on when they receive your request. Each issue is different--you receive the issue that your request is in. If you want to participate in several issues, send $1 + 1 long self-addressed stamped envelope for each.

Also, though there is no limit on what you can have printed, please try to put your message as concisely as possible in the interest of conserving paper.

A new issue of Connections has just come out--if you want to participate in the next issue be sure to get your request + self-addressed stamped envelope to us by April 1.
1. My body opens over San Francisco like the daylight raining down each pore crying the change of light I am not with her I have been waking off and on all night to that pain not simply absense but the presence of the past destructive to living here and now Yet if I could instruct myself, if we could learn to learn from pain even as it grasps us if the mind, the mind that lives in this body could refuse to let itself be crushed in that grasp it would loosen Pain would have to stand off from me and listen its dark breath still on me but the mind could begin to speak to pain and pain would have to answer: We are older now we have met before these are my hands before your eyes my figure blotting out all that is not mine I am the pain of division creator of divisions it is I who blot your lover from you and not the time-zones nor the miles It is not separation calls me forth but I who am separation And remember I have no existence apart from you

2. I believe I am choosing something new I am choosing not to suffer yet still to feel Does the infant memorize the body of the mother

and create her in absense? or simply cry primordial loneliness? does the bed of the stream once diverted mourning remember wetness? But we, we live so much in these configurations of the past I choose to separate her from my past we have not shared I choose not to suffer yet to love her to detect primordial pain as it stalks toward me flashing its bleak torch in my eyes blotting out her particular being the details of her love I will not be divided from her or from myself by myths of separation though her mind and body in Manhattan are more with me than the smell of eucalyptus coolly burning on these hills

3. The world tells me I am its creature I am raked by eyes brushed by hands I want to crawl into her for refuge lay my head in the space between her breast and shoulder abnegating power for love as women have done or hiding from power in her love like a man I refuse these given the splitting between love and action I am choosing not to suffer uselessly and not to use her I choose to love this time for once with all my intelligence

YES

You wanted love - oh make me over -
your shining vagina offering me a home
offering me a cape the cape drags in the dust I'm
out walking as usual at this hour, watch the
horses clacking by the hood of the carriage the
damp inside and your belly shining

Oh make me over I wanted love from you
I wanted devotion. You spread your legs speaking
a different language whisper to me now whisper who
we are woman whisper who we are

I wanted to escape. I built a corral with wild
horses. I built a corral, the wild horses dance and
leap their tough necks gleam sweat now sweat in my
armpits you're wearing my sweater

and my sweat coming walking
toward me. but you can't believe I've built this
thing. I am not a thing to you I am an animal who
loves you - oh make me over make me love you
make me free make me over make me love love with me
oh you did it you spread your legs and opened me
up to your gleaming belly here where the night streams
in through the window and the motorcycle clashes and
cracks and it gleams your belly like love I asked
for you I asked for me I wanted us to ride like wild
horses

ELISE YOUNG writes in New York City and has published in Aphra.
the Snake

the snake is the clitoris
(make no mistake)
the snake insidious and elusive
tempting innocent adam through the woman
to deviate from one-pointed concentration
on the primitive male orgasm known as Jahweh

the snake surely is the clitoris upstart offensive interruption contrary to nature let's pretend we don't even see it

MARGI GUMPERT lives and writes on both coasts and elsewhere.

THE UNIVERSE IN YOU: suggestions for sexual syncopation

Last November, after reading about Elizabeth Gould Davis's use of a Ouija board as a source of inspiration and information for her yet-to-be-published book, THE FEMALE PRINCIPLE, we began our own experiments with the Ouija. At first we asked questions about issues in our lives, the meanings of our dreams, and such — we found the responses not only imaginative and very helpful, but imbued with an insight and authority we seldom give our conscious (or unconscious) minds credit for. Next we explored the process involved in the Ouija's translating our pre-conscious thought-forms into tangible letters, words and sentences. (We will present what we've learned about this process in our next issue, which will focus on ENERGIES.) After we had satisfied most of our curiosity about our own ongoing concerns, and understood a little about how the answers came to us, we decided to ask the Ouija to dictate a message for this issue on the interconnection of sexuality and spirituality. What you will read here was received in many one to three-hour sessions during January and February 1975. Each of the 2,000 words came through one at a time with no conscious control or editing on our part. We are pleased and amazed with the results, utterly different as they are from anything we would have written in our usual ways.

—Laurel Galana
—Gina Covina
This story is meant to be devoured slowly and seriously. Make a quiet private time and place for yourself and let each sentence sink through many layers of understanding before you go on to the next. Let your body as well as your mind digest these words by doing the suggested physical exercises as you come to them. Your intentions create the results you will find. May you hope for the universe and find it within and without you.

SPIRIT AND FLESH MADE EASY

Rigidity of beliefs does not hold you together. Beliefs may flow like water and you will remain. Do let beliefs change in their own rhythm according to your innermost, not usually outermost, feelings. Outermost feelings are often not your own.

Your thoughts make your body state. Look at both. Change what you want to change this way: Feel each muscle move and rest. Recall memories involving the particular muscle, i.e. injuries, compliments, habits. Each cell of you remembers and has its own vitality and personality. Your personality is the sum, or rather the multiplication, of the personalities of all your cells. The scale of cells is too small for you to examine their personalities without practice. Besides, they are many. So examine the larger personalities of your muscles — also your skin, hair, eyes, senses of taste, hearing and so on — but first the muscles.

Consider the reasons behind your muscle’s personality, both the traits you find good, i.e. strength or suppleness, and those you consider negative, i.e. weakness or flabbiness. Then consider that reasons are not reality but beliefs about reality. Let your muscles tell you what they want. You control their functioning with your beliefs. Let the innate joy and wisdom of your creaturehood infuse your mind and body.

Allowing your muscles the pleasure of simple desires met may necessitate large changes in your style of life as well as changes in content. Marriages may dissolve, jobs change, family ties disappear or reorganize. Most likely your friendships will need some rearranging to give your body its optimum environment. You may need to live in another part of the world.

You may think so many changes to be impossible for you because of your present condition — poverty, age, children, etc. Or you may think your body does not deserve so much attention. Examine your thoughts about what
you have read here so far, whatever those thoughts may be. Your thoughts are not reality but beliefs about reality. If you want to change the reality formed by your thoughts, you can change those thoughts and the reality will follow. This process of change will take forever. You’ll be surprised, though, at the dramatic and far-reaching changes that are possible in your life now, changes that will give you serenity and security in your creaturely self and a new communication between creature and conscious mind.

This might seem difficult work if you are not accustomed to willed change. It is indeed the most important work you can do, affecting far more than your individual well-being. It is not difficult, though. Listening to your body is easy. Living in harmony with your creaturehood will make your energies flow unobstructed. Spirit and flesh can move through your being together, as the one force they are intended to be.

MASS SEXUALITY DRESSED AS THE NATURAL CREATURE

There is considerable confusion, to put it very mildly, over sexuality in your world. We don’t need to explain the confusion here as it is obvious to each of you in one way or another. What makes the confusion hard to dispel is the fact that whatever beliefs about sexuality you hold, there is the basement belief underneath them that sexuality is the expression, maybe even the deepest expression, of your creaturehood. This belief makes the specific beliefs you hold about sexuality take even firmer hold in you as reality, because each of you has an intuitive and often not consciously recognized sense of the validity of the body’s perceptions. But do your beliefs about sexuality spring from the knowledge of your body? Most unlikely, given both the general distrust, if not loathing, of the body taught you, and the bombardment of overtly but not intrinsically sexual advertisements and such, showered on you constantly.

As you begin to listen to your body you will find that much you have been told is sexually exciting is not. You will find that your perceptions of yourself as a sexual being change drastically. In fact you will no longer find a basis for separating any part of your being from any other part. So that this sudden wholeness will not disengage your analytical abilities and cause you confusion or distress, the following sections will suggest gradual movements into
joyful creaturehood, which includes, of course, full sexual communication with yourself and your friends.

THE SMILE OF A NATURAL ANIMAL

Find yourself alone in a comfortable and private place with a mirror. Smile. Smile on, and think as you watch yourself smile of all the smiles you smile each day. How does that feel? Most likely terrible. This is not the expression of good will or pleasure, but of fear of one sort or another. Realize now that your beliefs about pleasure are most certainly distorted, are in fact distorted to the degree to which you felt terrible in the above exercise. Think on this for a moment. The margin of doubt you have just acquired will be very helpful to you in experiencing pleasure at the innocent and intense level of the natural animal.

Now, consider the amorphous environment around you, not the objects and feelings connected to them, but such important commonplaces as heat, constriction of clothing on your body, or the feel of the surface you sit or lie on. Imagine you are suspended in sea brine or a gravity-free chamber. Lie down. Take off your clothes or loosen them. Relax and imagine a waterfall flooding through you, taking with it all your tensions and unnecessary or insincere smiles. Watch the waterfall until you are empty of all thoughts and feelings, with only the awareness of your glistening body in the focus of that powerful water’s movement. Think on whatever aspect of your creatureliness you feel best about, not what any others value, such as the smoothness of skin or shapely elbows, but whatever brings you the fullest sense of health and bodily joy. Feel this joy and well-being spread to every cell of your body, to those parts that are ill or unloved by you in your usual day to day reality. Feel the one integral whole which is you in the body. Know that the spread of health and joy through every cell is not metaphor but solemn physical truth. Concentrate on the joyful song of your body until you can feel the singing in every part of you, until you are pulsating harmoniously. Then, without interrupting your awareness of the music, look again in your mirror. There — the smile of a natural animal.

ORGASMS OF THE BODY AND SOUL

What you think of as orgasm is one range of energy rebalancing picked up by your senses and interpreted in particular ways. Many cellular deaths occur in orgasm. Many elements transmute. Energy is released from your body to
contribute to weather patterns and planetary well-being, and your body’s energies are redistributed in ways that provide for your continuing health and free-flowing intellectual functioning.

These energy exchanges, or orgasms, take place in many ways that are not sexually focused. They must take place somehow, and very often, for the body to maintain its equilibrium. You choose the most appropriate release for your body’s needs and the situation, within the limits of your beliefs about what constitutes an appropriate release. Coughing, laughing, crying, sneezing, yawning – all are used often in necessary exchanges of energy between you and your environment. Sexual orgasm is meant to be a conscious form of energy exchange, one which allows you the opportunity to consciously understand the physical processes that make you and the world around you one. Sexual orgasm can provide you with a conscious experience of the death and metamorphosis of your cells, and so enable you to glimpse a sliver of the truth that unites death and life in the ongoing creation of the universe.

THE UNIVERSE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Arrange a place and time in which to marvel at your own energy balance processes. If masturbation, as it is so unendearingly called, is a common sexual practise for you, then forget your usual habits or preparations. Lie down and let the waterfall we’ve already mentioned flow through you, taking all your thoughts as it rushes past. When you are filled with perception of your body’s vitality and emptied of all else, let your awareness include the realization that the pulsating energy which fills your body is
sexual. There are no divisions of energy —
ergy is energy. But for now concentrate on
the energy's sexual aspect. Feel this sexual
energy through your whole body. Feel its
constant movement, especially out through your
fingertips. The energy channels in your fingers
are your most powerful, direct, and conscious
means for moving energy through your body,
and also out into your environment and to other
living creatures. Feel the lines of energy moving
down your arms and out your fingertips. Touch
one fingertip to your navel and feel energy flow
into the center of your body. Put all your
fingers on your belly. Notice that as energy
pours into your center, more energy moves
down your arms and out through your fingers.
Energy collects and concentrates in your center
and at the same time generates an ever greater
movement of energy throughout your body.
Understand how in touching your clitoris with
your fingers you are creating the most intense
energy circuit possible in your body, one which
gathers and generates energy at once. Orgasm
comes when your body has gathered as much
energy as its circuits at that time can contain,
and when the energy has not been redistributed
by any non-sexual forms of orgasm. Great
amounts of energy are released into the atmos-
phere by orgasm. The energy remaining in your
body is reorganized, taking stress off areas which
had been clogged with excess energy and giving
energy to hungry parts.

Back to your fingertips: forget for now
the ideas you've just read. Keep only the feeling
of limitless energy moving and gathering in your
body. Make complete and perfect circuits with
fingers and genitals. Follow the movements of
energy through to the moment when your
circuitry etches new patterns in the bridge connecting your body and the universe.

MAKING MUSIC WITH MANY INSTRUMENTS

Your sexual communication and pleasure will be greatly enhanced by your realization of your own multiplicity. In your daily life the illusion of a single unified self is often very useful to you. In intense energy reorganization patterns, orgasm for instance, this single self illusion is difficult to maintain and can keep you from having a good time. Remember, if you must, that your familiar unified self can re-emerge if and when that’s what you want. Do not be afraid to dissolve in your senses, to identify as you make love not with your personality but with the ever-changing flow of energy through your field of perception.

When you make love with a friend, there’s no need to perceive your bodies as separate. Energy flows freely between you, ignoring skin boundaries. Follow the energy instead of your two or three or however many personalities and you will find an exquisite instantaneous communication of delight taking place between you. You can feel the heat of her body being touched by you, or by another friend with you, as if it is your own body being touched. Indeed it is your own body – the divisions between you are merely conventions of your culture. When you and your friends make sexual music together you become an orchestra of sensual instruments with infinite possibilities for your mutual creation and enjoyment of creaturely symphonies. Feel free to play every instrument.

BEYOND SEXUALITY: POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS

After you learn to express your creaturely self in sexual ways freely and fully you may begin to wonder why you bother categorizing anything as sexual and anything else as not sexual. You may wonder why some natural energy rebalancing processes are considered better than others. (There are unnatural ways of reorganizing bodily energy and these are morally wrong and include any form of deliberate violence or objectification.) You may become, gradually of course, unable to make divisions between sexual and non-sexual. Congratulations. You are now much closer to experiencing the marvelous multiplicity and unity of the universe as expressed through your being. You are moving
beyond sexuality, not in any hierarchical sense, but beyond the definitions, beyond the act of defining, beyond the world in which categories are named, and out/in to the beyond of beyond, where you have been all along. O yes.

likeness

but with you, also, i would want it. forget what you learned, the sums of your arduous schooling. that is all labor, making something, the grass grow where it never grew before; that is capitalism, industry, hard pleasure consuming the planet, prodigious and admirable work.

this is love in the mirror. the light girdles the galaxies and falls right back. the dark star, kleptomaniac, absorbs. this is only the world's most natural act and though i know your body by my own i need to fit my disembodied hands around the difficult answers of your bones and want to float you always when i plunge all the way down to tongue you into darkly grieving waves, not of the sea-kind, but more resonant ones.

see, i can swim can dance can mourn can open my book my body my eyes for you under water.

JAN CLAUSEN lives and writes in New York City.

Two Mountains

I

Once you explained your eyes had gone lame from being gassed you have to tighten them against the light... but there is no sun in any of these rooms where we sit and talk and your look turns away from mine any sharp light here is remembered caught through some prism of your fear

II

When I hold you in the dark woman you shake down your hard tears your body goes hot and soft you change shape and I dream I have caught the witch at the river embraced her she is a lion a rabbit a fire a dove a bear if I hold her long enough you will come back I will wake fall into you closer closer your voice loosens rolls down in small pebbles a salt mountain in the rain

III

We make love We are two mountains I can see our bodies stretched over the plains breasts/bellies/thighs Earth quakes from my head to your feet miles and miles and where your tongue touches me like a blue flame we are one grain of light about to explode

MIKIAM DYAK writes in Brunswick, Maine, and has recently adopted the name of a Northeast Indian people for her new last name, as she hopes other women will, also. She was once known as Miriam Palmer.
With a late September sunset of lavendargold behind her and the smell of fish and seawater making her hungry all over, Su stepped into the inside of her love's house for the first time. The flat straw rug made the soles of her feet ache through sandals and long to be kissed. Mamie Carter kissed her on the cheek after the custom. Seizing that proximate cheek's smell with her nostrils, Su inhaled her reward and knew better than to kiss back.

They sat on the back porch and watched the sun set over Wrightsville Sound, on that old weathered porch of an old two-story beach house where Mamie Carter had spent her summers as a child, and subsequently her children and then her grandchildren, one of the few menopausal woman releasing her last few eggs, knowing that they were for form only, that the season was over but there was no hurry about slipping over into the next, it will come in its season and here, these my last are as worthy as my first.

Su felt ashamed that she had been afraid... of Mamie Carter who was as legal in all her tentacles as old Wilmington itself; of her own passion which, here on this clan-protected porch, could be sublimated into charm as if she were a real member of that impeccable clan.

Shaking her olive free from its gregarious ice, Su heard Mamie Carter's voice off her left ear asking her to fetch them each a refill, because she was alone, expecting no one but Su this evening. Su took each glass in a grip firm enough to break them—someone could still drop in, would come visit, seeing the lights, her car, could drop by for hours yet, this being the tradition of the beach, the gregariousness of ice and an island.

They talked of the town's recent rapes and the bizarre circumstances of the two rapists' being laid out, tied to a board, one on the steps of the old folks' home, one in the front yard of the councilman who pulled in the largest vote and was therefore mayor. Both rapists were white, short-haired, in their middle thirties, and were found nether-naked and tied outstretched to a piece of plywood in the shape of an x. Since the first rape had been of an eighty-year-old woman of color, it was thought that the first man's punishment was the work of a Black Klan group. The rapist had hysterically insisted that the old woman sent five old women spirits after him, but no one paid him any mind. The second rape victim had been a junior high school girl, forced at stranglehold to suck off her attacker; since she was white and since in this case too the rapist had babbled of five grannies who, though masked, had white hands, some of the townspeople wondered if there were witches still afoot.

"Posh," Mamie Carter said. "What kind of talk is that? Klans and witches. Next thing they'll be saying the freebooters are back haunting the Cape Fear."

"What do you think?" Su asked.

"I think the rapists are getting a big fuss made over them. They're not the victims."

"Do you think it was really...women who did it?"

"Old women?" Mamie Carter's black eyes glinted with laughter. She stood up. "You know, I can't wear flat-heeled shoes anymore," she said, looking at her medium-heeled sandals below white shark-skin slacks. "I wore high heels so long my Achilles' tendon is permanently shortened."

"Do you?" Su followed her strong slightly-humped back into the house.

"These slacks are from before the war. Would you feel bad if a real shark had given his skin for them?"

The inside of the house was dark after the bright twilight reflections of the porch. Mamie Carter led Su to the kitchen and flicked on the light.

"It's yellow!" Su remembered to speak loud. "Yellow is my favorite color."

"Mine too." Mamie Carter's smile was a caress. "Have you ever thought of wearing a bright yellow wig? Now don't try to talk to me while I'm fixing dinner. You know I can't hear you when my back is turned."

"Now that streak there," Mamie Carter said, nodding at a white swath across the middle of the dining room table, "was made by the yankees. They came to my grandmother's house and took everything they could. Since they didn't have any way to carry off the table, the yankee officer sent to the kitchen for some vinegar and poured it across there. It won't come off. Have some more shrimp, Su." Mamie Carter wiped her mouth delicately and smiled. "Old tables tell old tales."
leaning toward her through the candlelight. "I've never eaten such delicious shrimp."

"It wasn't too hot, was it?" Mamie Carter had cooked the tiny North Carolina shrimp with sour cream, wine, onions, mushrooms, and a lot of cayenne. "I don't taste anything without cayenne anymore. Besides, it's the only way I can keep my grandchildren from eating every meal with me."

"It made all other shrimp seem bland, diluted, incomplete, wan and colorless. Unworthy of notice." All unmarked tables, unlined faces, modern clothes, new napkins, streamlined wine glasses, all young or middle-aged things were thrown into a heap of watered inconsequentiality which, like herself, Su felt to be unfinished, unseasoned, green and smooth and callow. "I think I am in love with you, Mamie Carter."

The bright elfin face smiled broadly and did not answer. Had she heard? In this pocket of the past, within dark wood and the dark saltiness of a September tide coming in and the faint rust smell of old screens and occasional sound of wind flapping the awnings, Su felt herself suddenly dead. She doubted that she had spoken. She had been switched into afterlife where words did not need to be spoken. She had left her amorphous dully-young fifty-year-old body behind and drifted through the indefinite world of the dead, the epitomized grave, the capsule of self which carried in its concentrate all the love she had ever sought. Mamie Carter did not need to hear; she would know.

A spare hand marbled with a bulging network of veins reached for Su's. "I know."

"Of course you do," Su said, laughing within death, unable to move her own hand caught in a cave beneath that perfect antique one.

"I've known for a while."

"Of course you have!" Su's smile was as stiff as her body balanced off the touch of that hand. "I should have known you'd know."

"Mamie Carter?" She held that final face taut on a thread of sight. Her hand closed across the skin bones that were Mamie Carter's hand, curled upreaching on a free patch of sheet in the middle of a Queen Anne bed. Memory was already claiming the sight of her dimpled flesh, infinite dimples winking in their softness, skin so old it had lost all abrasives, rid itself of everything that can shield the body against the world; skin vulnerable, non-resistant, soft forever--Su's fingers had to resist the longing to take some of that flesh and mold it.

"Yes, perfect?"

Su sunk her face into the ageless curve of her love's shoulder and moaned a giggle. "There is one extraordinary thing about us that I have to say, even here on these romantic rainswept sheets, even at the risk of hearing your 'posh'...your silk is matched only by our exquisite ability to prolong swallowing, our mutual toothlessness allowing for such a long balance on the tip of flavor: I just never imagined that the delights of old age would include the fact of endlessly drawmout orgasms. Did you al-

ways know?"

"You like it, too?"

"Without leaving us with a mouthful of cotton wadding. Without wearing down flavor. Without the loss of nothing at all, in fact, except fear."

"I always thought, if old age could be beautiful, life would hold no more terrors. Now if you'll stop talking a minute, Su, I want to get up and put on my negligee."

Mamie Carter swung her out of sight, turned her beautiful back and slipped into a charcoal-red robe--really slipped, but then she had had sixty years' practice. Su saw in her mind her coveted breasts, bound flat to her chest when she was in her twenties to produce a flapper fashion, hanging now from the base of the breastbone like soft toys, too small to rest a head upon, fit for a hand to cuddle very gently like the floppy ears of a puppy.

Memory moved her hand to Mamie Carter's belly--skin white as milk, finely puckled like sugar-sprinkled clabber; memory dropped her hand to Mamie Carter's sparse hair curling like steel--there was strength between her legs and no dough there where the flesh was fluid enough to slip away from the bone and leave that tensed grain hard as granite and her upright violent part like an animal nose against Su's palm. The impact of memory bruised. Su said, to the back that could not hear, 'Don't you dare die, Mamie Carter Wilkerson.'

Now, as Su was feeling wicked lying in bed while Mamie Carter sat up in her little armchair with the rose-colored skirt, a flash began in a tiny pricking over her upper skin. Last night, just as she had reached to kiss Mamie Carter's bare breast, Su had said, "Why not now?" toward those lips as to a dandelion, she had felt this same beginning prickle and a tear had dropped down each cheek, prewetting the hot flash with despair.

"You're flashing, Su," Mamie Carter had said.

"Why not now?" Mamie Carter had said gently, laying Su back on the bed, circling her shoulder, stroking her cheek and neck and breasts. "Why not now?" she had said, kissing the shame from Su's flushed lips, sliding her cheek over the sweat of Su's doubly-wet cheek and slippery forehead. Her arm had reached through Su's legs and she had held her in an infant curve, whispering again, "Why not now?" as Su slipped down into the abandon of hotly wetting herself and the flash had raged, burst, and slowly subsided.

Now, lying wickedly in bed, Su slipped under the prickles and welcomed the flash as it centered her whole extraordinary body within this vivid fever of change.

"What about Bettina?" Mamie Carter said and Bettina's voice echoed in the room, her blue quilted robe accusing.

I'll always love you, Bettina had said twenty years ago, when always had been forever. Now, with always cut in half, it seemed she had exchanged her mobility for a foundation of quicksand which would suck the house in after it. But still Bettina had said it, and even now the words made her feel safe inside their sucking sound.

"I'll always love you, Su," Mamie Carter said with a small dry
laugh like a kick. "Now Bettina's old enough to know better than to compare her 'always' with mine...certainly old enough to know better than that and I naturally know exactly how old she is since her mother and I had our first babies the same month." Mamie Carter held Su's flailing head. "When I say always, perfect, it's an underbid." "Mamie," Su said, to feel the impertinence of using that bare name. "Did you really fall in love with me?"

"Now you sit among the yellow and read the paper. I'll fix breakfast," Su said, wishing Mamie Carter were fragile so she could perch her on the breakfast table in a vase. Her hand met an upper arm as muscular as her own.

"That's yesterday's paper."

"Well, I didn't read it. I was out all day. Doesn't news keep?"

"You didn't read the paper yesterday?"

Su put coffee on to perk and squeezed two glasses of orange juice as if this kitchen were her own. "Why, what's in the paper? How do you like your eggs?"

"Quietly in the icebox."

"What we were talking about last night. There."

"No. I just wanted to get you in bed where I could hear you."

"Now that's just damned nonsense, Su. We're not still fighting the War Between the States here. You know we'd already voted not to secede, but when they opened fire on our cousins, then we had to. South Carolina was family—we weren't even separated until 1729. I think Mr. Eagle has more to answer for than his misfortune of a birthplace. Hehehehehe. The Temple Gang."

-driving back across the causeway that separated land from land, Su threw her words wide so they could skip across the gray glass of Wightsville Sound: "Change of life by definition refers to the future: one life is finishing, therefore another life must be beginning. The menopausal armies mass on the brink of every city and suburb; everything that was is over and there is nothing left there to keep our sights lowered. See the rifles raised? This army doesn't travel on its uterus any more. Bettina, you must see that to stay back in that young section with you when I can reach out to age itself, just after a final different dry silken life and so much grace and elegance from all that knowledge of days...There is no more beautiful word in the language than withered."

JUNE ARNOLD is the author of The Cook and the Carpenter and is a co-founder of Daughters, Inc.
Aphrodite, then

Aphrodite, then
who controls the honey and the heart
Aphrodite
the yes or no
of all existence
mother and daughter
born from the foam
the dream of the father
the mother's mantle of glory
foam and silver
sprinkled
across life
Aphrodite
the fulfillment
nor child nor mother
can i truly be
i have nothing to do
with parentage
which is a gift of earth
i am of heaven
the heaven part of earth is mine
the taste on the edge of the peach
not the body
not the seed

MARGI GUMPERT lives and writes on both coasts and elsewhere.

by Carol Newhouse
I am bleeding
the blood seeps in red
circles on the white
white of my sheet,
my vagina
is opening, opening
closing and opening;
wet, wet,
my nipples turn rose and hard
my breasts swell against my arms
my arms float out
like anemones
my feet slide on the wooden
floor,
dancing, they are dancing, I sing,
my tongue slips from my mouth
and my mind
imagines a
clitoris
I am the woman
I am the woman
with her parts coming out
with her parts coming out.

The song of the woman with
the top of her head ripping off, with
the top of her head ripping off
and she flies out
and she flies out
and her flesh flies out
and her nose rubs against her ass,
and her eyes love ass
and her cunt
swells and sucks and waves,
and the words spring from her mind
like fourth of July rockets,
and the words too come out,
lesbian, lesbian, lesbian, pee, pee, pee, pee, cunt, vagina,
dyke, sex, sex, sex, sex, sweat, tongue, lick, suck, sweet,
sweet, sweet, suck
and other words march out too,
the words,
P's and Q's
the word

nice
the word
virginity,
the word
mother,
mother goodness mother nice good goodness good good should
should be good be mother be nice good
the word
pure
the word
lascivious
the word
modest
the word
no
the word
no
the word
no
and the woman
the woman
the woman
with her
parts coming out
never stopped
never stopped
even to
say yes,
but only
flew with
her words
with her words
with her words
with her parts
with her parts
coming
with her parts
coming
coming
coming
out.

SUSAN GRIFFIN has published two books of poetry, and
teaches Women's Studies at U. C. Berkeley.
THE WOMEN OF DAN DANCE WITH SWORDS IN THEIR HANDS
TO MARK THE TIME WHEN THEY WERE WARRIORS

I did not fall from the sky
I
nor descend like a plague of locusts
to drink colour and strength from the earth
and I do not come like rain
as a tribute or symbol for earth's becoming
I come as a woman
dark and open
some times I fall like night
softly
and terrible
only when I must die
in order to rise again.

I do not come like a secret warrior
with an unsheathed sword in my mouth
hidden behind my tongue
slicing my throat to ribbons
of service with a smile
while the blood runs
down and out
through holes in the two sacred mounds
on my chest.

I come like a woman
who I am
spreading out through nights
laughter and promise
a dark heat
warming whatever I touch
that is living
consuming
only
what is already dead.

AUDRE LORDE lives on Staten Island. Her most recent book of poetry is New York Head Shop and Museum, from Broadside Press.
HOW THE CLOCK WILL SOUND

One day in the quiet rain you will come to the table that is my graveyard after the others are gone with their singing and sighing and styled looks of mourning.

You will crush the flesh of these pages into a huge memory and hear the crazy things I say said again you will spirit your tongue into my ear sucking my titty upon the grinding course of passion.

You will wonder what I lived and suffered for and why the world is glad and you alone grieving because nothing like us could have been prevented.

fatisha is a Black woman born in the Year of the Dragon who writes in New York City.

DR. KINSEY

BY LINNEA DUE

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

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

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

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

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

I nodded politely. "Would you like some wine?"
"No thanks. But go ahead. Please do. It's so much easier to conduct an interview when the subject is relaxed."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Tribadism?"

"What?"

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

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

"Yes."

"And how often do you do that?"

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

"You guess? Don't you know?"

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

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

"Mutual masturbation?"

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

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

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

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

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

"Is it still raining?"

"Uhnhmm."

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

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

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

"Body type?" I echoed.

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

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

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

"I don't." I insisted.

She waited, her pencil poised in the air. I finally dredged up a description of a woman I'd slept with last year. "Well, lithe,"

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

"I'm not."

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

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

"Is that what your present lover looks like?"

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

"Well," she said.

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

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

"What about breasts?" I countered.

"What kind of breasts do you like?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Thank you," she said smugly.

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

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

"No."

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

"No."

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

"No."

"Are you sexually excited by leather or feathers?"

"No."

"Do you use dildoes?"

"No."

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

"What did you do?"

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

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

"Sure. No."

"No what?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

LINNEA DUE writes in Oakland, California.

"Vagina"

Sonnet

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

JOAN LARKIN writes in Brooklyn, New York, and teaches at Brooklyn College.
The first two books are edited by the National Sex Forum, a church-related group. They are designed to be positive "how-to" books that are "brief, explicit, direct and factual...for use by persons in the health professions."

Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon write clearly and warmly about lesbianism, covering definitions, myths, legislation, lovemaking techniques, lifestyles, homophobia, feminism, jobs, child custody, teenage lesbians, therapy and psychological studies. They stress the diversity of lesbians and their essential normality and similarity to heterosexuals. The book is addressed mainly to straight people, and lacks discussion on lesbian culture, community, creativity, sensibility, politics. Nonetheless, it is an excellent and non-threatening pamphlet to give to parents and other straights who need to be educated.


The many photographs are way ahead of the text and are exciting to me as a lesbian. The women show their caring joy and strength with each other, with their children, and their work. While I respect the desire to portray lesbians as much more than sexual creatures, I was disappointed that there was no explicit picture of women making love in what is, after all, a sex education pamphlet.

Getting in Touch is written by a collective of women, in simple language. They affirm one by one everything it is all right to do and describe a six-point plan complete with ground rules and exercises. I found the language repetitive and condescending, and I didn't like the structure of such statements: "Practice as often as you want, but at least three times a week." I would have preferred the photographs alone--of women bathing, exploring themselves, and experiencing ecstasy. The one photograph labeling the parts of a woman's genitals is the most informative I have ever seen. If words need to be added to this photographic essay they should be more personal, specific and creative.

Betty Dodson surely expresses the outrageous joy, vibrancy and humor which I miss in Getting in Touch. I am delighted with her presumptuousness: "I was furious. I called every woman I knew (including my mother)...She was sixty-eight, living alone, a widow of several years. I started right off with, 'Mother, are you masturbating to orgasm?' ...I suggested she start immediately...Having independent orgasms can lead to wondrous changes. In my case, I radically altered my kitchen, gave away all of my furniture, shaved my head, went into business and published this book." Betty gives the best reason for masturbating I've heard: "To become responsible for our own orgasms is a basic statement about independence and establishes us as people with something worth sharing."

Betty intimately reveals her own sexual/artistic breakthroughs. The sixteen drawings of cunts in the book imaginatively "create an aesthetic for female genitals." The most exciting parts of the book are the exercises in the chapters on masturbation as meditation and bodysex workshops. I hope that women will use her suggestions to start workshops that will open sexual communication and exploration beyond the lovers' bed. Let me know if you do.

The book proves to me that language needn't be simple and boring to be accessible to all women. I gave it to women in prison who were excited and vocal about it. Unfortunately, Betty's ignorance of lesbianism is not only offensive but a denial on her part. She continues to identify herself as heterosexual while engaging in her most creative sexual/artistic play with female "sexual buddies." I am turned off by the pricks sprinkled up among the words and pictures. I suspect that Betty Dodson's restricted focus on orgasm comes from mal-identification, and I sincerely hope that her next writings will be more woman-identified.

In the meantime, I sense a tremendous need for radical, cosmic, lesbian-controlled books on sexuality. Why are we not sharing our love-making celebrations more openly?
Lesbian love is womanlove—learning to know and love one's woman self, the better to know and love one's woman partner. The more aware a Lesbian is of what feels good to her own body, the better lover she is. The more in touch she is with her own woman's body, the more she will know how to bring pleasure to her woman lover.

Lesbian sexuality is the creative consciousness of womanpower and womanforce collectively expressed in womanlove. It is the holistic bringing together of womanmind, womanbody and womansoul. It is mutual inspiration, attraction, exploration, movement, sensation, rhythm and climax.

Lesbian sexuality is female sensuality blended into a collage of eyes, lips, legs, arms, hair, breasts, bellies and buttocks. It is fingers seeking, toes tensing, tongues searching, nipples blossoming, ear lobes tingling, bodies rubbing, juices flowing, backs arching, thighs questing, clitorises rising and cunts yawning.

Lesbian sexuality is womanlove—the melding of womanmind, womanbody and womansoul into tremendous womanenergy.

Here you'll find a little story written by my nine-year-old daughter. Maybe you'll be able to read between the lines.

A year and a half ago I was a typical married suburban wife with five children, etc. etc. My husband took me for granted, just like the furniture, car, lawn and all his other passions. Then I met Pat, and strong feelings came to the surface of my life. We fell in love and after many trials and heartaches we came together.

Now we are a family. My husband left and does not give me any support. I'm on welfare and Pat works. Believe me it's not an easy job in fact sometimes we feel like climbing the walls.

Well anyway when Jean gave this story to Pat I felt that maybe we'll make it. What do you think?

---Lisa Boer
To Girls That
Loved each other

By: Jean Boer
Illustrations: Jean Boer

Once upon a time lived a girl named Lisa and she had a girl friend, and her name was Pat, and this girl had five children and these names were Jean, Deanne, Jack, Min, and Rae and she had a bus trip. But they took up and she left and the girl named Pat lived with Pat Lisa and they still had the five children.

and they had lots of fun to gather and Pat loves the girl named Lisa and she will love her forever and ever and she also loves all the children all the same and my name is Jean and she still loves me just as I said and so this is the end.

Love,
Jean

We all love you
Still 00
My life edges in upon me in layers, appearing as it may have been, as I dreamed it, or as it seems to me now. I have grown since this story happened, and perhaps in growing I have learned too much.

But I wanted to tell someone, and I wanted to tell Cynthia, because I loved her and our times together were the most beautiful of my childhood. This was written partly for you and partly for her, in the hope that I could tell her what I didn't have words for then.

In Cynthia's third floor room, we could hear the rain beating hard on the roof, sluicing down the gutters and splashing on the porch steps below. I sat on her bed and looked out over the green fields to the pond and the makeshift diving board and the big black innertube moored to a pole in the middle.

"No riding today, I guess."

"We could always play in the barn," she said. "Maybe even work if you feel like it. Trigger's stall needs to be cleaned."

"Yeah," I said. "I'd rather play in the hay mow."

"So would I, but we've got school tomorrow. It doesn't matter--whatever you want."

"Let's not and say we did."

I went back to staring out the window, thinking ahead to a summer full of riding and swimming and exploring the woods—all the things Cynthia and I did together naturally. We'd pack a knapsack full of baloney sandwiches and chocolate bars, maybe find a canteen to take along and go off across the road to whoever's woods they were and build a fire and play jungle games. I'd take my new knife and she'd take her hatchet strung to her belt and we'd be like regular grownup explorers, finding caves, climbing enormous rocks, killing copperheads, discovering the skulls of decayed animals. Maybe this summer David would let me ride Star since I was bigger than last year and better able to handle her. Maybe this year he'd let me saddle her so I wouldn't fall off so easily. It was scary whenever she began to trot because my legs weren't long enough or strong enough to hold on around her belly, and I'd just bounce off that onto the ground like a large turd. I never wanted Cynthia to know how scared I was of riding bareback—she did it all the time. This summer too, we might get to sleep overnight in the woods if our mothers would agree, but I doubted if they would on second thought.

"Hey, Cynthia," I said, turning around. "I've got an idea."

She had her head buried in a horse book, as usual—the Horseman's Handbook or something, I forget. "Just a second," she said. "Hey! It says here you should dock a hackney's tail so he'll hold it higher when he trots." Only she said it "hackey."

"It's pronounced hackney, I said, "not hackey."

"It is not," she said. "The n is silent."

"It is not. Whoever heard of a silent n?"

"I've heard people say it--people who know about horses--and they say hackey."

"It's hackney," I said. "Look it up."

She got up and took the Webster's off the shelf and looked it up.

"It's hackney. You're right."

I smiled. I didn't know anything about horses called hackneys, but I'd heard my mother talk about hackneyed phrases and figured it must be pronounced the same.

"I've got an idea," I said again.

"Yeah, what?" Cynthia mumbled, still reading over the phonetics for a way out.

"Why don't we play hookey tomorrow and go hiking up at the pumping station?"

"You have to go home tonight."

"We could get your mother to call my mother and tell her I've decided to stay over. That way she won't have to come out to get me, and we'd have the whole day together. Do you think your mother'd mind?"

"No, I guess not, but I'll have to ask."

"That'd be fun. We could pack a lunch and spend the whole day exploring. We can go to the bus stop as usual and leave our stuff in the woods somewhere and pick it up later. We can change clothes in the woods too."

"Yes, the leaves aren't out yet, not enough. Besides, what happens when you don't show up at home after school? You'll have to come back here with me, and they'll know we didn't go."
"Yeah, I guess you're right. It won't work. I'm sick of being indoors all the time. I wish spring would come."

"Me too. Pretty soon. We'll be able to take Trigger and Star out for long rides. They need the exercise. You can ride Trigger."

"With a saddle?"

"If you want. He doesn't like it, though, and it tires him out quicker."

"I can ride bareback, I guess," I said. "Let's go out to the barn."

"I better call Bonnie, see if she wants to come over."

"Aw, do you have to?"

"My mother won't like it if I don't."

"She's such a pain. All we ever do is fight when she's around."

"She's not that bad."

"She never wants to do anything. Just sits around and whines and slows us down. She doesn't like to explore. Anyway, you see her almost every day after school when I'm not here."

"I know. But if I don't call her and invite her over, her mother will get mad at me and then Mother'll get mad at me. I'll go down and call her. Come down when you're ready."

Cynthia grabbed her jacket off the chair and went downstairs. I slid off the bed and reached for my sneakers. Bonnie was a pain in the neck. She lived only a mile or so from Cynthia in a fancy house in the woods. Her parents were rich and she had lots of nice things like a three-speed bike and a basketball court all to herself. Frail and white-skinned, she never got a tan in the summer and couldn't stay out in the sun, couldn't swim as well or as long as Cynthia and I could, couldn't keep up with us on long hikes, and she scared easily. She never participated in our rough group at church. He stepped on my feet."

"Why do people do it? What's the point of walking around a floor to music hanging on to somebody? My parents waltzed once in the living room, and I thought they looked dumb. My mother wanted me to try dancing with my father."

"Mothers are funny like that. My mother's been talking about this stupid dance all week."

"It's just Girl Scouts, isn't it?" I asked. "There won't be any boys there."

"Huh uh," she said, "just girls. We're going to learn some dancing. It's called to two-step or something."

"Is Bonnie going?"

"I don't think so. Her mother doesn't want to drive her."

"I kept quiet about the possibility that she could go along with Cynthia, hoping it wouldn't occur to her."

"She could go with us," Cynthia said, "but I don't think she wants to anyway."

"Don't blame her," I grumbled.

Cynthia was usually alone, even when she was with other people. She can't come. Her mother wants her to stay in on account of the rain."

"Goodbye," I said. "Let's go!" and we ran out the back door letting the storm door slam and made a mad dash for the barn, licking the rain from our lips as we ran.

"I itch," I said.

"Me too." The air was still dusky and full of microscopic chaff after our tumble in the hay, and it filled our nostrils and tickled them so that we snorted like horses. The barn was filled clear to its high rafters with the dry sweet hay smell. We breathed and snorted, whinying once in a while, talking a language we longed to appropriate. Perched high on a pile of hay bales, I sat beside Cynthia as we panted and snorted breathlessly at each other. Anywhere our skin had been it was red and full of tiny scratches, and our hair was wild like blond mustangs' manes. We were both ten and partly equine. We played horses, lived horses, dreamed horses, worshipped horses. Horses were all. Boys were nothing.

"Are you going to that stupid dance Wednesday night?" I asked when we'd gotten quiet.

"My mother's making me," Cynthia said. "Are you?"

"Yup."

"My question cast a pall on our mood. Girl Scouts was always a bore, making situpons and hotpads and baking cookies. Now they were getting us ready to be grownups."

"I never danced before," I said dully. "I don't think I want to learn, either."

"Me neither. I tried dancing with Jimmy Harvey once in youth group at church. He stepped on my feet."

"Why do people do it? What's the point of walking around a floor to music hanging on to somebody? My parents waltzed once in the living room, and I thought they looked dumb. My mother wanted me to try dancing with my father.

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"Don't blame her," I grumbled.

Cynthia was silent then, gone away into a world beyond the barn and the thick hay smell. Her yellow hair glowed even in the dim light, its tangled fall full of haystalks ending in a confused line of pageboy curls around her collar. Every night her mother rolled the ends up in makeshift curlers made of wire covered with fabric. They were farm curlers, not at all like my sister's store-bought rollers, and they set a tight kinky little ridge into her otherwise straight hair. I didn't like it that way, and whenever I saw her in the morning before the curl loosened out, I wanted to call her Leah, her middle name, because then she looked older.

"I like the rain," she said softly, almost to herself. "I like the drumming sound it makes on the roof when I'm up here. I can't really hear it from the first floor—it's just a muffled hum, like a train going by in the valley. Up here, I'm so close I can hear every drop if I listen hard enough. Sometime we should sleep out up here, maybe when it gets warmer" and her soliloquy drifted into silence.

"That would be fun," I said quietly.

Cynthia was usually alone, even when she was with other people.
She would slide into herself imperceptibly during our long walks in the woods, just slip away even as I moved in unison beside her, and I would watch her face intently to discover where she had gone. I wanted her to be fully there with me as I was with her, but it was an invasion of her privacy, I knew, to call her back. Now as we sat on the prickly haybales, I was impatient and restless, and I sought some way to break this reverie and resume our play. I jumped up suddenly.

"Watch this!" I said, and dived headfirst into the sea of loose hay at our feet. I continued to somersault across the mow, heading straight towards the hold that plunged to the concrete floor of the stall below.

"Watch out for the hole!" I heard her muffled call from upside down somewhere, and when I found myself upright again I stopped, not a foot from disaster.

"Bet you can't do that!" I called back over my shoulder.

"Bet I can!" She was up for my challenge. She stood up and plunged into the hay, rolling and laughing as she came. The churning ball of bluejeans and blond hair and flying hay came to a sudden stop beside me. She sat up, coughing and spitting the straws from her mouth.

"See?"

I snorted a loud horse snort, and she replied.

"Let's go get some lunch," she said.

I nodded up and down vigorously, shaking my forelock and blowing a horsey assent through my throat and over my tongue.

Why are we here? I dreamed last night that you had cut your hair very short and all the curls were gone and it hung straight and yellow close around your head. We were out riding in the woods, bareback, on horses that stood ten feet off the ground. I watched you gallop ahead, your blond hair flashing in the sun, your small brown legs wrapped around Trigger's belly, your fingers buried deep in his mane. You disappeared and appeared again from behind heavy oak scrub, now in shadow, now in bright sunlight. As you galloped farther and farther from me, I saw you getting smaller, until I could barely catch glimpses of gold and brown and Trigger's white rump being overtaken by foliage. And I called out to you—Leah! Wait up! But you kept on going deeper and deeper into the woods, bareback, on horses that stood ten feet off the ground. I heard was silence and a crow screeching in a nearby tree. Leah, Leah, where did you go? Leah, wait for me! Leah! But I got no answer.

Why did they bring us here, to this rancid little firehouse? To learn to dance? I don't remember, I only remember our being there, one warm night in April.

"Choose a partner," someone said. We hesitated. "It doesn't matter who. You're all girls anyway. Pick somebody."

We were obvious, natural. The same height, the same age, friends, and as I said, partly equine. They put some music on the record player, and two of the less inhibited among our mothers proceeded to show us how it was done—the two-step. One, two, one two, one two, easily around the floor. "When you dance with a boy," they said, "he will lead. That means he will take the steps. You follow him, follow his feet. So since you're all girls, trade off being the boy."

Giggles.

"We need to be silly about it. Just take turns leading. Only make sure you know who is doing what, so you don't end up all over each other's feet."

We approached each other awkwardly. Who hangs on where? Who's goin' to be the boy? No problem—didn't people always call me a tomboy? So I put my hand on your waist and you put yours on my shoulder, and we held the spare two together at the side. There was a good foot between us at the start, and we moved like puppets across the wooden floor. One two, one two, one two, one two, one two, one two. When I counted under our breath, concentrate, one two, one two, one two, one two, one two, this is stupid. "Don't stop now," someone said. "You're just getting the knack of it. Keep going, one two, one two, one two." My hands were clammy, my muscles so tight I could hardly move, and still my hand rested on your hip, barely touching you. We giggled, exchanged mumbled whinneys, and began the foolishness again. "I can think of things I'd rather be doing, even cleaning Trigger's stall," I said. "Me too," you said. One two, one two, one two one two one two.

By the time the first record was over, the foot between us had diminished to a few inches and we were getting around more gracefully, when someone said, "Okay, girls. Rest for a few minutes while we change the record." We quickly let go the dance hold and joined a group of girls who were giggling together in a corner of the hall. "It's so dumb," one of them was saying, "dancing with girls! When do we get to dance with boys?" Another said, "Mrs. Buch's troop invited the Boy Scout troop to their first dance. Why couldn't we?" "They probably be chicken," someone suggested. "Hey! Did you know that Gloria is in love with Teddy Miller! She's wearing his ring!" "Wow! She's lucky!" and the conversation turned to who was in love with whom. We drifted away to plan an expedition into the woods next week.

"Okay girls! Get your same partners and let's try it again" and the music started up. We sighed a small resigned sigh and resumed our position on the floor. "You want to lead this time?" I said. "Not particularly. You do it," you replied, and I put my hand a little more squarely on your hip and decided to enjoy this ordeal if I could. So we danced—more or less—through three records and at the end of the third, collapsed into wooden chairs set along the side. "Cynthia," I said, "do you think it's funny to dance with a girl?" You looked at me, puzzled, and said "No. Why should it be?" "Well, you heard what Jonelle said. She thinks it's dumb." "No, I don't think so. I'd rather dance with you than Jimmy Harvey. He's too big and clumsy." We sat for a minute in silence. "Do you think it's funny?" you asked. "No, I'm kind of beginning to like it. It's a neat feeling." "Yeah," you said and we were silent again.

Then the voice: "Okay girls! One more record, then we'll quit." We looked at each other and groaned, and heaved ourselves up for the last round. "Now this time, try to relax more. Get into the
feeling of the music. Let it carry you around the floor. Don't even think about where you're putting your feet; that should be coming naturally to you now."

All I remember, Cynthia, of that last dance is this: We began in our usual wooden way, moving stiffly and counting one two, one two, one two across the yellow floor. We danced closer then and our bodies touched and we could not break that contact. We forgot to count, forgot to take sweeping steps around the floor, but moved quietly in small circles. The yellow lights glared down on the yellow floor, your yellow hair like sunlight in my eyes, and surrounding us both as we danced an aura of golden light, just the two of us in a world no one could enter. Your head on my shoulder and mine on yours, our bodies fitting together sharing their warmth, the two of us moving silently and slowly around the floor in a golden world of our own. The music stopped and we kept on dancing alone together around the deserted floor. Our mothers came and called to us from very far off, "Come on, girls, it's time to go home. The dance is over," and I remember the tension in their voices like the shrill note in a horse's frightened whinny. But we said, "No, we want to keep dancing," and we did, long after the music had stopped and most of the others had gone. Danced and danced in our own silent world.

Easter Sunday that year was the first full day of spring. The sun was hot and the air cool and fresh and full of earthsmells. The leaves on all but the latest trees were unfolding slowly to the light and the mountains seemed clouded in greenish smoke. Cynthia stood on the fence and whistled to Trigger who was grazing down by the pond. In no mood to be ridden, he refused to come to her call, so she climbed the fence and walked down the long pasture toward him, calling softly as she approached. "Here Trigger, here boy. C'mon fellas...easy boy...c'mon." Trigger backed off casually, tearing at clumps of fresh grass and pretending not to notice her. They moved strategically around each other in the field in a tense minuet, till at last Cynthia was close enough to grab hold of the horse's halter. Then, her hand clutching his mane, she leaped on his back and they took off in a spirited gallop toward the barn.

I was home that day. We had just returned from church and I was helping my mother and sister prepare Easter dinner. Mother had promised to drive me out to Cynthia's farm later in the afternoon, and I was bursting with impatience to be off, to run in the fields, to ride through the blossoming woods. The phone rang, and my sister rushed to answer it. I paid little attention, until I realized that an enormous hush had fallen on her voice as she talked, a hush that filled the whole house. I didn't want to hear what was being said, and I retreated to wait at the top of the cellar steps until I could know what was wrong. I heard the receiver clunk quietly into its cradle and my sister's soft sobs in the kitchen. I waited. Maybe I knew. My sister came to me and in the half-light of the landing said, "Cynthia's dead. Trigger tried to rub her off on the fence. She fell under his hooves. It was an accident. He didn't mean to trample her." She sobbed. "I don't know what to say, Jeanie. I know you loved Cynthia. I did too." And she went away.

I howled then, a long anguished cry, and sank my forehead into the doorjamb and cried softly, almost without tears.

by Carol Newhouse