I didn’t expect to be writing a column for this issue, what with my personal life having turned belly-up and my small modicum of remaining judgement telling me that there wasn’t a story in it that any of us wanted to dwell on. So told Ms. Molloy, the noted newspaper publisher and Cappuccino puller, that I hadn’t a decent whim of an idea I could crank on about, and she handed me a weighty file on the Animal Rights Movement.

The Animal Rights issue, mind you, is something I’ve gone to great lengths to avoid hearing about. I can’t even tolerate zoos. When I was 3, the story goes, my parents took me and my little trio into the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. When we got to the middle of the zoo I started to scream and began parading the exit so fast 5 adults couldn’t catch me. And I still don’t want to know. But Marti Kheel is bound to speak up about the subject at Mama Bears on June 12th, and Ms. Molloy does have her ways. And I’m afflicted with this concept that I can find an angle in anything and stay cool, so I took the file and thus committed myself, at least, to opening it.

The first thing to grab me was two paragraphs from a reprinted article by Genoveffa Corea titled ‘Dominence and Control’, as follows:

‘When I attended the animal protection/rights/liberation conference in Montclair, New Jersey last summer, it became clear to me that my way of knowing is different from that of many men in the animal movement. From conversations with other women there, I suspect they share my way of knowing. My knowledge springs from something less parochial—than reason-by-itself. It emerges from reason intimately intertwined with felt experiences of other lifeforms. Even being sucked into awareness as I was, and now perhaps you too, I felt the issue —me a stretch of consciousness in my perspective on the whole subject of oppression and its emotional roots. It also has some good feeling to it, that it’s a struggle with a possibility of winning. Maybe it’s the soft-underbelly of the Multi-National Boys’ Club found at last!’

Of course almost anything would be more interesting than my personal life, at the moment, but I did find one last bit of frosting on the credentials of the issue. The world headquarters for FAR (Feminists for Animal Rights) is right here in East Bay, USA, and everybody knows, this is where it’s happening, if it’s happening at all.

Some BS from BS
ANIMAL RIGHTS
A FEMINIST ISSUE

Simple research scientists be-leaguered by emotional diatribes from umbrella-waving, elderly spinsters, reading Ms. Kheel’s article was a very quick head-opener. Ms. Kheel convinced me of several very basic facts.

First, that man’s treatment of animals, from his eager hunting, which some describe as a religious experience, to his careless destruction of the environment, to the atrocities of vivisection, is an ample and complete reflection of the basic disease running rampant on patriarchal earth.

Second, and something I’ve never wanted to believe, much of this experimentation on animals is needlessly horrible and scientifically useless. “The rational for exploiting animals has remained intractable for all the experiments undertaken merely so some cloq can watch how horrible and toxic substances destroy tissue. I wonder how many research scientists grew up from being those little boys who delighted in spinning cats by their tails.

Ms. Kheel says that it isn’t true that it is possible to generalize from animals to humans, anyway. She gives as an example the drug giving me a ‘stretch of consciousness’ for all the experiments undertaken merely so some cloq can watch bow horrible and toxic substances destroy tissue. I wonder how many research scientists grew up from being those little boys who delighted in spinning cats by their tails.

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**THE SWASHBUCKLER, BY LEE LYNCH (NAID, $7.95), IS HOT!**

From the beginning to the end this book tells a tale of courage, growth, and change. From the weekend bars on through the everyday life of The Swashbuckler, Frenchy, it is a story of love and pain, and a portrait of a decade of the lives of the characters... It shows the turmoil of many of us who have lived through to come to where we are today. A definite must for this summer's reading. I couldn't put it down—I feel it's her best novel yet.

--Alana Orme

**Later The Same Day, by Grace Paley. Farrar Straus, $13.95.**

Here are short stories by this fine craftsman and political activist. (Catch Pat Bond on Ms Paley at Mama Bears Saturday, June 15.)

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**ASTRO-LOGIC**

by Elaine Blake

Ex-Nuns and the Gemini Vocation. Healing (becoming whole, learning to walk in balance) takes place through embracing what is missing—in astrology symbolized by the opposite sign. Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence (eds. Rosemary Curb and Nancy Manahan, Naiad Press, $9.95) provides many examples of the healing power of Gemini for the “negative” Sagittarian experience.

Sagittarius is popularly understood as the sign of travel, philosophy, religion, education. These themes (opportunity for foreign missionary service, living the spiritual life, getting a college education and a teaching job) run through the book as motives for entering convent life.

But Sagittarius is also about being different, being a stranger, an observer, removed from ordinary life, alienated, having no language to describe the experiences of ordinary people, if and when such experiences become conscious. As the stories in this book develop, these themes become apparent, too.

The new purpose of Sagittarius is the search for truth and meaning—something fully realizable only through the healing integration of its reflecting opposite.

Sagittarian silence represents a move toward Gemini—the sign of becoming conscious, finding words, talking, writing—and through dialogue with others, learning to fit in, to be ordinary, discovering that we have experiences in common. So, too, through Gemini, these women become the Messenger (ruled by Mercur/Hermes), giving voice to the understanding (Sagittarian) acquired in their journey: that the spirit is alive in secular life, that everything, including ourselves and our sexual energy, is sacred.

This material comes out now, during several significant outer transits: Uranus in Sagittarius (spiritual experimentation, independence); Neptune in Capricorn (hidden awareness, especially tribal/mystical, becoming manifest); Pluto in Scorpio (transformation through crisis).

The tremendous response to this book is due partly to the fact that on some level many people identify with these stories. Pluto's long entrance into Scorpio (the last 1/4 years) has forced many of us to examine our own relationship to poverty, chastity, and obedience (read money, sex, and power issues—all Scopri). The records of these women's journeys into their own underworld to reclaim themselves makes valuable reading.

In this light, do you know that the Full Moon is always in the sign opposite the current Sun Sign? (Look at it in the sky: that's why it's full! Think about it.) It's a time of greater awareness through opposites, through reflection. The June 2 Full Moon is in Sagittarius (Sun in Gemini); the July 2, in Capricorn (Sun in Cancer).

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June 21 marks the entrance of the Sun into Cancer, the Summer Solstice, the time of greatest light, the time when we can feel the greatest support from the Mother. Accept, Ill Lesbian/Gay Freedom celebrations take place yearly during the Sun's time in Cancer (June 30 in San Francisco, June 23 in East Bay), emphasizing our need to take care of ourselves and each other—we're family. I'm to be in touch with our cultural roots for strength and support (read Judy Grahn's Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Words now! Beacon Press, $19.95).

On July 27 Mercury turns retrograde, appearing to move backward through the zodiac for 3 weeks. The intuition is far more reliable than the rational mind during this time (some of us who were born with Mercury retrograde could make this a lifetime observation). If you find Mercury-ruled things like mail, directions, appointments and other communications and arrangement getting screwed up, try relying on your right brain instead. (It's not the best time for signing contracts, etc., where you really have to THINK.)

By the way, I've noticed this effect has been developing for several days before and after the official retrograde period, while Mercury's movement is very slow. Best approach—don't get attached.
EROTIC IN NATURE

On April 23, at the Cotati Cabaret, Tigress Productions produced the "World Premiere of Erotic in Nature," a sensuous, explicit video, written, directed, produced, and acted by lesbians. The word "produced" is employed intentionally because Greater Downtown Cotati, to everyone up there affectionately calls it, has rarely seen such class. It was indeed a gala event. The Cabaret was easy to find; in front there was a great searchlight reaching to the sky, just like the Hollywood film. We entered the theatre section under an arch made of hundreds of red, black, and silver balloons. Three screens were set up: a large movie screen flanked by 2 T.V. monitors. The color was much brighter on the 2 T.V.'s, but the details were more visible on the large screen. My favorite scene was the inadvertent fourth screen made up full-length mirrors which walled the room, reflecting the screens, lending a dreamlike quality. The room was full by the time the first of the 8 shows began. In all, close to 600 women and a few well-behaved men participated in the celebration, locals and travelers from afar. The audience was receptive and attentive, laughing at the intentional comedy as well as the unintentional. And here and there during the very explicit-as-promised lovescenes, someone would laugh alone and nervously. Informed that the previous existence of the Cabaret was as a Women's Club—the bridge and canasta kind—with pleasure I invoked the Helen Hokinson ladies, sprinkling them amongst the appreciative audience. The film ended with applause, and the film maker appeared on stage, inviting the cast, crew, and musicians to join her wearing red, black, silver and white; there were speeches, acknowledgments, and thank you's, followed by a drawing for prizes, including a copy of the video, and delighting all, a red garden hose. The doors to the cabaret section opened and all flowed into rooms filled with flowers, and more balloons floating to the ceilings, dangling long silver ribbons inviting the hand. A booth offered nicely packaged video copies, posters, and piles of T-shirts in red, black, and hot pink emblazoned with the Tigress logo. Someone wandered around dispensing 2 different button readings, "Tigress" and "Erotic in Nature"—I discovered the next evening I had worn mine on my jacket to work. Several large tables supported a sumptuous banquet including 1,000 cookies baked especially by Louis, and an enormous bowl of strawberries—nothing was allowed to run out, and everything, I was told, was organic and natural. As if we were surrounded by or living in the film itself, we all sat, drank, discussed the film or saw it again, and this elegant and gracious party lasted well into the night (a Monday!)

The film begins with Kit, a slender young woman in the Tigress logo. Someone wandered around dis­appointing the Tigress logo. Someone wandered around discovering 2 different button readings, "Tigress" and "Erotic in Nature"—I discovered the next evening I had worn mine on my jacket to work. Several large tables supported a sumptuous banquet including 1,000 cookies baked especially by Louis, and an enormous bowl of strawberries—nothing was allowed to run out, and everything, I was told, was organic and natural. As if we were surrounded by or living in the film itself, we all sat, drank, discussed the film or saw it again, and this elegant and gracious party lasted well into the night (a Monday!)

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This morning I want to go through the program we use for the Gathering and explain the different elements that are in it and where they come from.

Mediation. I don't know where the practice originates, but I figure it should do it just to get us all here - bring energies in from outside and get centered.

I know that those of you who come frequently have noticed that the meditation period is more often a sitting around and talking and having breakfast and drinking tea and coffee and juice period, which I think is the exactly appropriate way for women to meditate. (laughter) The only way that I think is even better for women to meditate is doing the dishes and cooking something! (laughter)! [participant: “doing things!”] (laughter!) doing things! That’s true. All right.

And then the candle lighting. There are 7 candles lit: one for each of the 4 directions plus the above, the below, and the center—that’s Native American. I can’t build 7 fires in here because the police department and Mama Bears wouldn’t think much of it. (laughter!) So, of course, we use candles instead. But, it’s an old, old, old tradition— in Native American and, also, in Mesopotamia in the Mediterranean, Turkey, all over women’s places—for there to be fires and on sacred occasions, for there to be 7 fires.

And that’s connected to the 7 chakras, that’s connected to the 7 diakon lights the candles when we say the Mayan Peace prayer. And I chose that prayer because I think that they say, each person comes into being with. When you’re born, you have 7 spirits around you, like, envelopement, there’s 7 in that’s what’s going on. And if you don’t have all of 7, you’ll die in infancy or there will be something dreadfully wrong with you. But, by and large, people come in and they have 7 spirits. And so the Cherokee have 7 fires, and those 7 fires are always tended by elder women. They’re always lit by the women.

They’re always tended by the women. And you should think about that because fire is still a woman’s province, you know, because women still own the wood and because... And that’s all that’s left to us, you know, is electric and gas fires—but still we tend them. And anyway, that’s what the candles symbolize. They symbolize a number of things, some of them very practical and pragmatic and some of them very elevated and, quite, “spiritual,” though there’s not that big a distinction in my mind between the spiritual and the practical because, like most Native Americans, I think they’re the same thing. So, then, of the diakons lights the candles when we say the Mayan Peace prayer. And I chose that prayer because it’s Mayan, because Maya is our mother, because it is one of the oldest, extant, gynocratic civilizations on this continent, and because it belongs to this hemisphere. It’s a beautiful—oldest, extant, gynocratic civilizations on this continent, and at the river’s edge, to be with one another. The well’s granjmas are absolutely essential to the continued health of a civilization. And a civilization that can’t use the water, the springs, the deep water places of the earth have connected with them a female spirit or a sprite. She lives there, and our ancestors went to her and asked for healing and asked for comfort and asked for nourishment, which is why the women always congregated near water, because water, particularly that form of water, is female spirit power infused. I grew up with one of those in a place in New Mexico. The place is called Portales—it was right up on the Seboyeta land grant, and my father had been raised there—anyway, the chicano people there had sort of build up what was a natural alter in a big sandstone grove. Health and fertility of the land there was a statue of Mary with Bernadette at her knees—think about Lourdes and think about what happened at Lourdes. Think about the healing waters of Lourdes and you’ll see what they were honoring there. Well, I grew up there, and I was a little sprit at her feet, and it’s still there. And that spring is powerfully healing.

And long before the people who are Catholics came and put a statue of the Madonna and Bernadette there, there was a female spirit who were the Indian people knew about and to whom they also came for healing. She can heal paralysis, deformity, disfigurement, and a number of other kinds of ailments. Nor is that healing power peculiar to that spring—I thought it was as I was growing up, but as I talked to people around the world and read a lot, I discovered that such springs are everywhere and that they always have a female being connected with them. So, that’s why I pass the healing bowl, because we don’t have a statue here, but we have a spider. (laughter!) We should honor the water wherever it is and however we get it, because it’s Her life, it’s Her blood, it’s Her being, as it is ours. And it’s important to us as a way to stay connected with our female power self. Speaking of that, and I know that what the Christians do is they baptize. And if you follow what I’m saying, you will understand why they baptize. There’s a couple of reasons: one is that when you’re an infant, an embryo, a fetus, you’re surrounded by the waters of life, are you not? In the mother. In the mother, you’re born in water. So, when they wish for you to be reborn, they put you in water, and then you are born again. I mean, anybody who’s undergone any kind of psychotherapeutic treatment understands what’s going on here. You get a new birth into a new consciousness. But to make it work, it’s the best for the body that it reinitialize the physical experience of Earth birth. The water is a symbol. But you can see that this is not a procedure owned by the patriarchs or owned by the Christians, because it is not. These are ancient, ancient women’s rights. They are underground, but it well out and everybody else has to have them, to continue in the descent about the source of them. They can use them as they wish, I’m not stopping them. But just because they coopted them doesn’t make them theirs. And many, many, many people—rightly recognizing that they are ours, and they are female. Honoring the moon. Among the Native American people, there was, there used to be, quite a lot of honor given to the women. After the coming of the White man, that got very mixed up with ideas of uncleanliness and evilness. But prior to the coming of the Whites, tribal people thought that women’s blood power was the source of all sacred power—you know, occult power. That women’s blood is magic things. And so they honored women because they understood, and recognized the kind of power women embody—hold in our bodies, autogenically, all the time, every month, all the times that we are having our periods. So they honored that. They also were honoring the source of the people’s life—not only their physical life, but their psychic and spiritual well-being as well. And so I’ve put that into the ceremony—recognized that they are ours, and they are female.
and sometimes - we had Lynx once play the saxophone, and she played "Stella by Starlight," and it was so cool. And we had an Arab belly dancing. And we've had other kinds of women's dancing. We've had Sufi dancing. And we've had people sitting around clapping their hands and singing on. And, so, the last meditation incorporates a variety of elements.

I want to say that the body and blood that we share in the guise of wine is very deliberately stolen from the Christians, because they never belonged to them to begin with; because in the Mass, what the men do is they take bread that they are required to transform to make it sacred, healing, powerful. But you see, our mother the earth gives us that corn and that wheat and that rice, and they don't have to be transformed, you see, they are her body, and are, in their essence, sacred. They are what she gives us. And, by the same token, the priest has to transform the wine into the blood of Christ. But we have water, and we have juice, and they are the blood of the mother. And they don't need to be transformed to be sacred, life-giving. We don't have to have a magical ritual here, because she gives us freely of her sacred being, of her body. And her body is sacred. And it also means that, therefore, we should have a good time and be together when we're doing what is sacred, because the highest point of the sacred is when we're bonding with other people and having a good time — or crying, or feeling a great deal of anguish, or feeling kind of spaced out and not really with it, or whatever it is that we are and that we do and that we be. Because what is sacred about life is you know. (laughter.)

So I wanted all of you to know what the service is exactly about so that you would know that a certain amount of it is very deliberately paralleling Christian traditions. I must say that this church is not hierarchical in any sense — it's authoritarian. I'm the mother. (laughter!) I derive my authority from no one — not the pope, nor Jesus, nor the congregation. I just happen to be here. And I will be here as long as I can or as long as you want me to be, and perhaps both things will end at the same time, one never knows. The point that if this was a Protestant church, you would own me, because that's how they work. The congregation gets together through the elected elders or appointed elders, and they hire a minister, and then they tell the minister who to be and what to do. And they pay the minister to do those things. And the ministers answer to that — not really to the congregation so much as to the group of people who have the money to pay their salary. That's how that works. In Catholicism, you have to be ordained and that ordainment must come from a bishop. And that bishop must have been, himself, empowered by the pope. So, you see, that's what a hierarchical religious structure actually is. This isn't that. This is more like: as long as you want to participate and I want to participate, then we'll do it. And when you don't and/or I don't, then we won't do it anymore. My son said to me about the Gathering. "Oh, that's a matriarchy, right?"

And I said, "Right, I mean that."

The main reason that I'm bringing all of this up today is because the letter these women wrote will be sent to Plexus. Normally I would just deal with it quietly or not at all and let it go as that. But this issues of importance is real importance. I don't feel that this is about me. I do feel that it's a seriously racist attack. And I've made a commitment to myself that I simply will not allow racist assaults to go unchallenged any longer.

The Native American people are objects of continual and chronic racism in this country. Things are done to us that are simply not done to Black people because Black people fight back. Those who indulge in racist assaults usually remember to sound anti-racist. They say the Politically Correct thing when they must, in order to appear politically aware. Their assaults are insidious, subtle, and usually go unnoticed. These are constant attacks. It's dreadfully important that we as feminists or as lesbian-feminists, that we, as people who are on the spiritual path — and I presume you're here because you see yourself as being on a spiritual path — as people who hope to be adults who are attempting to develop a world within which people can live in some kind of harmony, as some kind of creative beauty, and some kind of delight and community, that we address these attacks even though doing so is painful. Spirituality isn't only about what is pretty or fun, you know; it's also about a lot of trial and a lot of trouble and a lot of struggle. We must teach destructive forces — racism, anti-life oppressive attacks — with reason, facts, and the kind of tough love that refuses to allow deceit and falsification of facts to divide us from our sources, each other, or ourselves.

The letter sent to Mama Bears states that tortillas are served as substitutes for the waver, "body of Christ," that is used in Christian services. That's both anti-Hispanic-Chicano, and anti-Native American. I don't think these women noticed what they were doing when they did that. But since we use popcorn, a lot, (laughter!) and we've used tortilla twice, one has to wonder why tortillas are singled out for censure. But the choice of tortillas is a signal that's sent to all of us who have unconscious racism going on. It's one of those subtle signals that is sent out, which, for some reason, reminds me of another one that I've been thinking about. I watch a lot of T.V. This example is not racist, it's sexist. It's a Vanish commercial — you know, Vanish that you put in the toilet. And there's 5 toilets, and they have female voices. (laughter.) And they come up — 2 of them say, "Gee, you know, my people just clean me and then forget about me, and I just never really feel quite clean." And the other toilet with the female voice (laughter!) says, "Yes, I know what you mean. My people are the same way. Oh, here comes Beth. She always looks so bright and spiffy. Beth, how do you do it?" "Oh, my people give me Vanish." And if you're not paying close attention, you don't notice that you are being told that women are toilets! (laughter) they have to be cleaned and they should vanish. (laughter!)

And that's what I mean by "sulble." Like the commercial, the letter sent to Mama Bears is subtle. It's masquerading as feminism, but it's not feminism. It's oppression. It's the voice of patriarch — telling women what to wear, when and where to congregate, what to talk with each other about, what to eat and when and how to worship, where and when they may do any of these things.

It is oppressive because it does not simply express an opinion, but it threatens punishment of women who do not follow its dictates. It threatens economic reprisal and public humiliation of those it perceives as offenders — that is, of the women who own and staff Mama Bears, on the trumped-up grounds of failure to meet the needs of all women. It is oppressive because it purports to state the facts about the Gatherings but it takes phrases out of context, ignores the Native American, Jewish, gynocentric, African, Mayan and Lesbian content that characterizes the form and content of every Gathering.

The letter is the verifiying voice of colonial imperialism to my Indian ears — for it tries, convicts and sentences me without ever addressing me directly. It tells me, and mine, under threat of being? (once again, for the millionth time over the past 500 years) that we do not exist. That we are so invisible, so beneath notice, so without significance, that we need not be addressed in matters that concern our spirituality, our vision, or our work. We can be consigned to the trash heap while white fights white over our invisible bodies, hearts and minds.

Essentially the writers of the letter have informed Mama Bears that visible leadership by a woman of color is intolerable to them.

My position of leadership in the white women's community is so enraging to them — a position that makes my haggles and services a topic of general conversation and major item in Mama Bears News and Notes — that they find it necessary to "girlcott" Mama Bears and write a public letter of outrage. I hear the letter as saying "Indian, get back in your place." And most of all the letter is oppressive because it attacks a growing spiritual bonding among women; it attempts to turn women against one another; it demands that some part of the community see another part as bad, wrong, inadequate, failing in some way to take care of everyone — aren't these the exact demands the patriarchy has imposed on women for 5,000 years?

I did not create the Gynosophic Gathering for all women. There are many alternatives by which women in the Bay Area can meet their spiritual needs, and each is valuable to some women. The Gathering is designed for those who want a localized, somewhat structured, familiar worship service that is devoted to the practice and study of women's, and especially lesbian women's, spirituality. I gather from the testimony of those who regularly attend the Gathering — and from the testimony of their others themselves — that I and the diakons and other women, including Mama Bears women who contribute energy, time, thought, love, and joy to the Gatherings are meeting that need very well indeed.
Saturdays June 1

**DEBBIE SAUNDERS IN CONCERT.** 8:30 pm Women only. $5.00. To reserve seats, contact Mama Bears.

**SATURDAY June 15**

**AFTERNOON**

ASTROLOGY READINGS BY ELAINE BLAKE, ASTROLOGER, 1-5 pm.

To reserve a time, contact Mama Bears.

**EVENING**

PREMIERE - OPENING NIGHT OF "PAT BOND'S SECRET PASSION" Pat Bond on Colette, iris Murdoch, endora Welty, and grace paley...anecdotes, love letters, and "passion, passion, passion," because that's what I feel about them," says Pat. 8:30 pm. Women only, $6.00. To reserve seats, contact Mama Bears.

**SATURDAY June 22**

**LINDA MOAKES, KAREN RIPLEY, THE MOTHERPLUCKERS**

8:30 pm. Women only, $6.00.

To reserve seats, contact Mama Bears.

**Tuesdays June 8**

**OPEN MIKE CABARET**

Writers, musicians, comedians, dancers...all are welcome...but please sign up in advance. $2.00. Women only. 8:30 pm.

**TUESDAY June 18**

**WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE GEMINI PERSONALITY.**

A talk by Elaine Blake, astrologer. 7:30 pm. Women only. $3.00.

**Sundays June 16**

**LESBIAN ETHICS: TOWARD A NEW VALUE.**

A presentation by sarah hoagland, on her forthcoming book. 7:30 pm. Women only. $3.00.

**Tuesdays June 18**

**THE MOTHERPLUCKERS COUNTRY JAM AND OPEN HOUSE AFTER EAST BAY GAY DAY IN PARK, 4-7 pm**

**FRIDAYS June 14**

**MIMI FOX AND SILVIA KOHAN IN CONCERT.** 8:30 pm. Women only. $5.00. To reserve seats, contact Mama Bears.

**EVENING OPEN MIKE VIDEO NIGHT.**

Women videoists are invited to bring their women-oriented or experimental videos. (Please contact Mama Bears in advance.) 8:30 pm. Women only. $2.00

**FRIDAYS June 21**

**SUZANNE SUNSTONE DISCUSSES CRYSTALS AND COLOR HEALING.** 8 pm. Women only, $3.00.

**SATURDAYS June 29**

**THE MOTHERTONGUE "LOVING WOMEN" SCRIPT**

A benefit for The Pirates, women's wheelchair basketball team. 8 pm. Women only, $5-8, sliding scale.

To reserve seats, contact Mama Bears
**FRIDAY EVENINGS**

**JUNE:** SEE CALENDAR FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS

**JULY:** WOMEN-ONLY SOCIALIZING EVENINGS TIL 11 PM.

**EXCEPT**

**THIRD FRIDAY FUN - SEE CALENDAR ENTRY FOR FRIDAY JULY 19.**

**SATURDAY EVENINGS**

**SEE CALENDAR**

**SUNDAY MORNINGS**

**GYNOSOPHIC GATHERING**

10:30 AM.

"This is a woman's worship service celebrating the bond of womanness among ourselves and in connection with our sisters on every continent, island, sea, and in the sky." — Paula Gunn Allen

Spirituality, feasting and gossiping—miming in the marketplace, Mama Bears—as they did in past woman-centered cultures.

Woman-Centered Worship Services con-women only.

**CLASSES**

**RAINBOW BRIDGE URBAN WOMEN WARRIORS CLASS.**

This class, taught by Dr. Paula Gunn Allen, starts Tuesday July 9, and runs for 7 Tuesdays (July 9, 16, 23, 30, and August 6, 13, 20). This course is a pre-requisite for Ms. Allen’s other classes. 7-10 pm, $115-150.00 sliding scale. To register, or for more information, call Ms. Allen at 223-4353.

**SATURDAY July 6**

OPEN MIKE CABARET NIGHT Writers, musicians, comedians, dancers—all are welcome—but please sign up in advance. $2.00. Women only. 8:30 pm.

**TUESDAY July 9**

RAINBOW BRIDGE URBAN WOMEN WARRIORS CLASS. 7:00 pm. (See Classes for details.)

**WEDNESDAY July 10**

**THIRD FRIDAY FUN**

KAREN RIPLEY’S IMPROVISATIONAL CLASS WILL DO THEIR STUFF - EVERY THIRD FRIDAY - DROP-IN IMPROVERS OR COMICS ALSO WELCOME. 8:30 pm. Women only. $2.00

**SATURDAY July 20**

AFTERNOON ASTROLOGY READINGS BY ELAINE BLAKE, ASTROLOGER, 1-5 pm.

To reserve a time, contact Mama Bears.

**SATURDAY July 27**

**EVENING**

MELANIE GOES SYNTHESIZER! MELANIE MONSOUR, VOCALIST. 8:30 pm. Women only $3.00.

**SUNDAY July 28**

**COUNTRY-FOLK-WESTERN JAM WITH THE MOTHERPLUCKERS**

Every 4th Sunday afternoon the Motherpluckers come and jam with their friends, and warmly invite you to jam along with them...or come and listen. 3-6 pm. $2.00 (donation)
Dear Mama Bears,

We were all so excited when you opened Mama Bears: a place that supported women-only space, and one that we would feel comfortable going to at any time.

However, we are dismayed about the Gynosophic gatherings that are now being held at Mama Bears. We feel these gatherings are just a guise for Christian-oriented services. It is no mere coincidence that:

1) They are all held on Sunday morning, the traditional day of Christian worship.
2) Terminology like Pasture and Diakon are used. These are simply replacements for the traditional Christian authoritarian roles of Pastor and Deacon.
3) A tortilla is substituted for the host and Deacon— the birth of Christ—and “after Jesus to Jesus, and includes comments on a Haggle, which consistently refers to Jesus and Christian services.
4) There is a weekly sermon, called “Mama Bears’ space available for all Lesbians.”
5) The women attending these services are all held on Sunday morning; the traditional day of Christian-oriented services.

We feel these gatherings are just a guise for Christian-oriented services. All week long, services are a frequent topic of conversation in the coffee house. Can’t you see how all of this alienates lesbians who don’t want to participate in patriarchal religions or their trappings?

We no longer feel comfortable at Mama Bears — any day of the week—and are reluctant to shop, hang out, or attend functions. We hope you will consider having these services meet elsewhere, so Mama Bears can again become a place for all Lesbians.

Rose Schwartz, Irene Hill, Carla Duke Rhona Lishinsky

cc: PLEXUS

Dear Rose, Irene, Carla, and Rhona:

I’m sorry you feel compelled to stay away from Mama Bears because of the Sunday morning services. We need your love and support, but do have to say from the get-go that we will continue to make Mama Bears’ space available for these gatherings until such time as there are too many women participating for us to accommodate or the interest level drops and we no longer put on “their Sunday best” and come out and join us.

I’m going to leave the Jesus stuff and tortillas to Paula for response and just talk here about Mama Bears and the use of the space.

As for making it a place for all women, or even for “all Lesbians,” I don’t think we could do this if we worked on it through our next recreation! We learned long ago that there is no way to please everyone.

I think you were to a great extent discussing all of this on the conversations going on in Mama Bears, you’d find anything and everything being discussed, probably mostly food. A common thread does seem to run through most of the conversations, though, and that’s ethics. This is where the haggle comes in. Women are trying to figure out how to be gentle in a violent society, how to be kind and generous, forgiving and egalitarian while surrounded by cruel, selfish, avaricious, power-tripping people. We will continue to do whatever we can to make this a better world, and we hope that the Sunday morning service furthers our goal. As Gandhi said, “Nothing you do will make much difference, but you must do it.”

Your letter sounds as though you attended only one service (we usually serve popcorn and apples) and made up your minds from there, but I’m glad you were writing to Mam a Bears regarding the issue. This implies a lack of interest in understanding both the reason for the services and the ceremony they involve. This type of action is also quite patriarchal. Yet in your letter you ask, “Can’t you see how, all of this alienates lesbians who don’t want to participate in patriarchal religions or their trappings?”

It would have been wise to ask yourselves about patriarchal actions before going public with your letter, not having discussed the issue with the women involved. If you are truly interested in

Tina
Dear Mama Bears,

This is a letter I am sending to Plexus.

Dear Plexus,

Please consider this letter for publication in the Forum of your June issue. It is in regards to the "girlcott" of Mama Bears taking place on the 24th of June.

I believe the services can only stand to benefit from input. While I insist on the right of women to protest oppression, I believe this "girlcott" is most unfortunate. Its entire basis is unfounded.

In struggle,

Andrea Damsky
Oakland
A Journey to Wholeness

Is your self-esteem at its low point? Do you feel so small and insignificant? Do you feel lost and without purpose? Do you feel confused or out of control? Do you want to express yourself in a healthy way? If you answered yes, then this is the workshop for you! This workshop will help you to explore your feelings and emotions, and to develop a positive self-image and a strong sense of self-esteem.

M.A. McCullom, M.A.

All sessions are subject to change. Please call ahead to confirm the schedule.

Sliding Scale.

For information call 512-545-5999.
WASHINGTON

A four-week workshop on writing erotic and writing sex into fiction, focusing on the rhythm and language, semiotics, and the components of believable scenes, focus on character development, use of detail, and the many ways to incorporate eroticism. Six hours per week with exercises and critique. Call for rates and info, Zahn 654-8765.

MISCELLANEOUS

NEWSPAPER CLASSIFIED AD RATES

Classified Ad Rates:

Circulation; We reserve the right to reject any ad.

over 2600 women.

Deadline for our next issue is July 10, 1985. We reserve the right to edit or reject any ad.

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Circle Oak, CA 92540 (714) 798-1764

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April Cottage: Charming, secluded, in a misty redwood forest near Mendocino. $25 for two includes continental breakfast. Pepperell (707) 437-0030. Box 464, Alba, CA 95410.

MAINTENANCE


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Interior/exterior. Messy precautions by skilled professionals guarantee a quality job in your home or office. Extensive references. Free estimate in East Bay. Call Barbara 763-1264.

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For quality construction of clothing, cushions & other projects. Call Silke 563-9094.

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EMPLOY-EASE

Employment services offering access to jobs and jobs seeking free assistance to employers. A service of the DAVID INFORMATION NETWORK (415) 861-6329, 4033 18th St., S.F.

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Facilitator for Therapists, Workshop and groups with Adults. 531-6267.

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TEA FOR TWO SHIRTS

New, Polyester/Cotton blend. Price $6.95

-now in our PERMANENT COLLECTION-

Wear a shirt of Women’s Culture in a custom designed, high quality shirt, hand-crafted.

You'll not only look good - YOU WILL FEEL GOOD.

Come and get your shirt today.

Sega Stamping House - 2129 Divina

CLEANING SERVICE

On June 30, 1985, after the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade, there will be a cleaner, sober dance for women and lesbians in the commons of the San Francisco State University for a tea meeting from 3-4 pm. Hungarian Hall, 1403 (between Polk and Van Ness). $4-7 SL advance, $5-6 SL at door. Volunteers needed, call Kathleen at 636-8919 or Larry at 631-6295.

DYKES & THEIR DOGS

You are invited to a reception and Buffalo Dance on June 30th at Mama Bears for Ann Meredith’s “Dykes and Their Dogs” photo exhibit, on display at Mama Bears June 30 to June 30.

The Great American Music Hall will be closed during the weekend of June 29-30 as part of the fabulous Dyketones with a special guest appearance by Tom Ammiano on Thursday, June 27, 8-11 pm. Featuring comedy, rock ‘n roll and dancing. Kid-friendly.

The Lesbian Gay Pride Parade weekend with The Dyketones and Tom Ammiano. Make Reservations EARLY - be there or be square! $8.00

WOMEN WHO WANT TO BE A PASSIVE GIRL

FREE ESTIMATES • 1070

Wear an image of the Feminine. June 1, 7-8:30 pm at Portero Hill Middle School, 655 De Haro Place, S.F.

MARRIAGE: pooled

Marianne’s Enterprises. 652-2593.

BE A POSITIVE AND EFFECTIVE TEAM TOGETHER

MISCELLANEOUS

Hazardous housecleaning and the non-toxic alternative will be the focus of a bilingual forum to be held on June 22, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 1856 Fallon St., S.F., Hear Debra Lynn, author of Nontoxic & Natural and Kathleen Karz of The American Lung Association. Ladies Against Wielding will entertain with their causical comments and Deenie Boer will sing “Single Working Mothers.” Enter fee from $10 to $15 includes lunch. Information call 474-8433, 157 working women. Right will be a non-profit, tax deductible organization.

WOMEN’S VOLLEYBALL

Every Monday, 6:30 pm, Hayward. Directions to call Carol 581-0132 or Julie 895-2194.

Mama Bears - June/July 11

PERSONALS

To a certain Ms. S/M. Your teacher learned a lot.

WANTED!

5’4” Greek Goddess. Must have Mount Olympus address, a greek temple and 40’ yacht. No demi-goddesses needed apply. Applicants may manifest themselves Mi-Fri, 9 am - 4 pm. at my home. Bee.

EVERY MONDAY, 6:30 pm, Hayward, For directions call Carol 581-0132 or Julie 895-2194.

SAGE GREEN DOGgin Training Center

Train your pet for safety and trust. Be an effective team together.

- Non-Violent
- Lesbian Owned - Private and Group Classes

GARDENING

Small specializing in mini gardens (studio and 1-2 bedroom apartments) and cleaning hauling. Call Kathie 547-1327.

EROTIC IN NATURE

The river scene and the montage in Erotic in Nature indicated the possibilities of the direction. One of the working definitions of pornography versus erotica that emerged out of the 60's and 70's was that erotica contains 'art', whatever that is. As one crew member also remarked, "Art, it ain’t;" but neither is the film pornography as that definition emerges from Susan Griffin's Pornography and Silence. One might argue that erotica contains the elements of the obscene vision standard to pornography: degradation of women, humiliation, violence, and S&M attitude. In conversation, Susan stated, "the challenge to pornography will be when real erotic material is developed showing the real power of Eros." Clearly, the intent of the film is to integrate Eros and Nature: it is set in a real presence of trees, flowers, and the river, and the bodies are lit by sun. A celebration of the body and sexual love presented with charm and humor. In the subsequent films planned by Tigress may they be encouraged to seek new forms in which to present the image of women's Eros.

BOOK BLURBS

Two new titles from Cleis Press (it means Sappho's daughter) are:

With the Power of Each Breath: Disabled Women's Anthology, editors Debbie Connors, Nanci Stern, and Susan Brownlee, $7.95.

Long Way Home, the Odyssey of a Lesbian Mother and Her Children, by Jean Louise, $8.95.

Mama Bears will be holding book signing parties for these two books in August-September. (See our next issue) Remember Jean Louise? Her fight to regain custody of her children was intensely supported by this community when it was happening several years ago.

If you're doing any traveling this summer, pick up Gala's Guide International For Traveling Women, $5.95, and/or Places of Interest to Women 1986, which covers Canada, Caribbean, and USA, $6.00. Each contains entries for the states do have--both are life-saving.


A history, with lots of pictures, of women performance artists--about 3 dozen. This is a relatively new art form, one in which women are quite active.

Another new release by a Native American woman is Love Medicine, by Louise Erdrich, Holt Rinehart, $13.95 hardback. This book won the American Book Critics Award for Fiction. These are both very powerful, gripping reading.


Color as you go-learn while spacing out. What more could one ask? I did the first page and loved it. Recommended especially for those of us who have to get into computers, like it or not.

The deep hard places we must examine if our spiritual, feminist visions are to come to be. There is a description of a woman turning to stone that may be the most powerful example of transferring information to a reader. I've read this. It is the very best kind of science fiction. We are also carrying the second book of this trilogy, Bluesong (Berkeley, $2.75) and the third book just arrived (Star'silk, Berkeley, $5.95) for those of us who are familiar with the book. It is a beautiful, inspiring book.

VISIONARY LOVE--A SPIRIT BOOK OF GAY MYTHOLOGY, by Mirandol Walker and Friends (Tree Roots, $6.25). Over the past several years, a gay man's spiritual movement, has developed and the authors of this book take us on a journey, to this dyke-separatist it is more meaningful than anything any men have done in the past 15 years.

All generals.

"But general, what do you think.

PI I tell you general. Generals generally run into anarchy to work.

General every one can generalize, that is genera.

"I'm telling you general. Generals generally run into each other in the kitchen.

in the living room, so called.

"General, what do you think.

I'll tell you general. Generals generally run into each other in the kitchen.

in the living room, so called.

"Generals generally run into each other in the kitchen.

in the living room, so called.

"General, what do you think.

I'll tell you general. Generals generally run into each other in the kitchen.

in the living room, so called."

Taking a view from the non-control-freak side is DEEP ECOLOGY, Living As If Nature Mattered, by Bill Devall & George Sessions (Sierra Smith, $15.95, hardback). An excellent thoughtfully put together presentation of a world view we are coming to share. Recommended for classes as well as for those of us who are familiar with the book. It is a beautiful, inspiring book.