

# Rubyfruit BOX 949 FELTON, CA Reader

A. LESBIAN COMMUNIQUE

NOV. 1976 VOL 1, ISH 9



-JILL HOY '76

Poetry, News, Events  
Lez-be-in Health, more...

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# MOTHER RIGHT OPENS

In late October the newest womyn-owned business in Santa Cruz will open. Mother Right Feminist Bookstore and Culture Center will include a book store, child care area, display area for womyn's crafts and artwork (which they may sell through the store), a womyn's library (for which they need book donations), and long awaited space for a womyn's center. Rhonda Norstegaard and Jill Fields, seeing the store as an "idea" that could happen now, began looking for space this summer, and found a spacious, airy building at 538 Seabright (near Murray), and are now completing bookshelves and stocking books, getting ready for an opening party, tentatively planned for October 30.

Both womyn, recent graduates in womyn's studies from UCSC, consider themselves socialists and feminists. When discussing their understanding of owning a store in this society, Jill explained it this way: "We would need to work to earn wages. Usually we would work for someone else. We see it as an advance to work for ourselves and not for a corporation. We are also opposed to womyn volunteering time - long enough we have been not paid or underpaid. So we plan to pay ourselves wages and then put the profits back into the womyn's community, as a source of income for feminist projects, as seed money for feminist businesses, toward feminist theatre, etc. We feel responsible to the womyn's community."

They desire community input about what's in the store, way of booklists and constructive criticisms of the stock they have already selected. Their beginning stock will be small, but if womyn have money they would like to loan to help it grow, Jill and Rhonda will be happy to discuss this with them. They also need a logo, from some woman artist's design, and need a sign for the store painted, (artistas- are you there?) and would like interested womyn to call them about those needs.

As part of their accountability to the community, financial records of the store will be open to the public. If they

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## thoughts on the long-term womyn's

### community

A community reflects the evolutionary process of its members, held together by some cohesiveness in each of their individual lifestyles. Our womyn's community has passed through several evolutionary cycles in the five years that i've been aware of my part in it: i think it has in some ways reflected my own personal growth, as it has in some ways for each of the womyn i've known, and grown & changed with.

Mostly there was a sense of outward-reaching, of "The Group" being the basis from which all growth sprang. There were "CR groups", "rap groups", political collectives living collectives, study groups, life-support groups.

More and more there has been a turn towards reaching inward, not so much rejecting the groups as realizing that the group does not meet all of an individual's needs. i have seen in myself the need to discover my own personal source of strength and to use that as my basis for growth. i have begun to explore my spirituality, my creativity, my woman-roots, and i've seen some similar processes taking place in o-

ther womyn. These newer, more personal explorations are, at least for me, necessary and beautiful, a step towards integrating my political beliefs and the rest of me into a more wholistic sense of my self.

And now i feel that another cycle is ending & beginning again: it's time to become cognizant of how change affects the shared sense of community, to discuss how we & our community have evolved, to remember the individual & collective needs that "The Group" does meet. i want to be able to bring back to the group all that i'm learning, and try to reach some place where it's natural to be both outward- and inward-reaching, recognizing the vitality of each. To do collective work and not sacrifice my music, to give support to womyn and take care of my own needs, too.

What i suggest is this year's version of a lesbian co-exploration or whatever for womyn to talk about what we've done in the last year, where we are now, and where we can go in the future. Communica-

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## womyn write

The women's collective is alive and growing in Berkeley after 7 years. They need our support. "We print what we believe, without compromising our ideas, our feelings and our esthetics for the sake of sales...The American tax and capitalist structure is designed to drive us out. And we won't be driven...We all agree on the importance of collecting, printing and distributing material that women have written, are writing, and will continue to write. "Help them make it by sending for their catalog, asking your local bookstore to carry their books, buying them, telling your friends, and waiting the collective about the books: what you like, what you don't like, and what you want to see in print.

THE WOMEN'S PRESS COLLECTIVE  
5251 BROADWAY  
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA  
94618

## BODY AWARENESS

Lauren Crux and Sybil Meyer of "Playworks" are presenting a movement workshop called Body Awareness: Moving Toward Wholeness on Saturday, Nov. 6 from 9:30 am to 4:00pm in the Foot-hill College Main Dining Room. Lauren, who specializes in Clinical Philosophy, and Sybil, who does Dance Therapy, describe the event as a "one day experimental seminar for women interested in exploring their body images, expanding their range of movement possibilities, identifying their personal body language and learning to play without words." If you want to come, wear casual clothing and bring sleeping bags for mats. The \$10 fee includes lunch. For more information call 426-9515.

RUBY

Lady bugs have blood in them.  
They don't have a cunt, tho,  
They only have a body.  
Poco-Jaime '76

WOMYN'S COMMUNITY (CONT.)  
tion is essential.....it is how we create a vision of a womon-identified community that we can all believe in. i have no concrete plan or structure, i just wanted to offer my thoughts and would like to hear from you: what you think, whether you want to discuss further & possibly co-organize this event....or just offer your own thoughts. If anything happens soon, Ruby will let you know....so let me & her know your response.

love, brenda

The Reader is published monthly (usually) by a collective of 8786 womyn. Not all of us necessarily agree with all that is printed herein but we are attempting to maintain our status as a forum for the lesbian community. The reader is supported by your response! We need your donations: monetary, literary, feedback, news. If you want womyn to know about it tell us. Send all correspondence to:  
P.O. Box 949  
Felton, Calif. 95018

OR CALL 426-DYKE

Who helped w/ production this month? Clytia, Kater, Noelle Cathryn, Lynne, Pat. That's who.

## RUBY'S RAPS<sup>5</sup>

Did anyone miss us last month? We hope so. We are happy to be back after the unexpected vacation. Actually, the reason why we didn't hit the stands in Oct. comes down to you, our unwriting readers. We just had too little to print. Besides that there are few of us left to print it so all we can say is it's all up to you in the end. We need new members now & we always need writers & artists. However, finances are looking up. Some of you have really come through & we appreciate it. This issue we'd especially like to thank Definitely Biased, Lauren Crux, Wendy Bolker, & OOPS, last time we meant to thank W.A.R. All your donations have really helped.

WANNA SEE YOURSELF ON PAPER?  
send it in to the Reader..  
hand written poems, drawings,  
cartoons, jokes...help us fill  
those awkward empty spaces.  
measure MARGINS for size. we  
don't shrink. Thanks \*Ruby

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# SEPARATISM

"This column does not in any way necessarily reflect the opinion of the rest of the Rubies". But being a separatist at heart, I've been thinking maybe there are some other separatists out there. ARE you out there? I've also been running across some good separatist comments, lately. So, being a loyal Reader writer, I thought, aha. I should write a separatist column. In mentioning this to my friends, they heartily suggested I try to define what separatism means to me. Apparently it can mean different things to different people. I see it as ignoring, and not allowing myself to be influenced by, male energy, as much as possible. "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". (The Lesbian Reader) So anyway...

There is an album out by Alix Dobkin I have recently come to appreciate. Alix says, "Living With Lesbians was written to locate myself in the process of lesbian evolution through a particular point in time. I hope it will serve to clarify my life for

all you Dykes w/ the impression that separatism means being able to avoid all contact w/ non-lesbians....Separatism is a technique which offers a frame of reference for any woman w/ the determination to live as a Lesbian without intrusion. It is a method of sorting and identifying, and for developing a special consciousness. It keeps us in touch with what is really affecting us and our lives. It is a thinking skill." When I first heard this album on my crummy stereo all that came thru was loud, raucous noise. But the other night I listened to it on our new house stereo, listened to the words and really heard the music and decided that I like it..... This'll probably offend someone...but have you ever likened men to the dogshit that pollutes our streets? (As Marquette, Lesbian Connection) "Offensive as these turds are I would not devote my life to getting rid of them. Instead I avoid them as much as possible, and think about them as little as possible. I've learned that everytime I kick a turd, all I get is shit on my foot." I especially like that last line. - Emerald.

# Living With Lesbians

Dear Sue-

One thing I didn't tell you about my new living situation. The 3 other women I live with are lesbians. I knew I wanted to live with politically conscious women, but...I didn't think I'd ever live with a whole house full of gay women. I guess the thought of it scared me.

I must say I gave it quite a bit of thought before moving in. I liked the other women, but the lesbian stuff was definitely a confront. It's always been so charged. After I decided to move in I started wondering - what in hell am I doing? Am I crazy? Is this a statement of who I am? What will my friends think? What will their friends think? and on and on and on. I think the worst was OH NO- what if I really am gay?

I wondered too if I would feel wierd being in the straight minority....or if there'd be any pressure to be gay (although deep down I knew if I felt any it would be from me- not them). I

guess it's all stuff I've talked about- but deciding to live here brought it right up front real quick! (And I wouldn't have moved in if I thought it was too much a problem so....).

Anyway...Here I am! and it's working out fine. It's pretty amazing to be with women who are living it and not just talking about it. Women who are utilizing their strength and who feel good being strong in who they are. There's none of the "I feel crummy and empty and incomplete without a man" GARBAGE- and I love it that way. Intellectually I knew I didn't need to live in any one particular way but in my heart I still felt incomplete (ah that old feeling- you're not o.k. the way you are). So living here without the man stuff, the pressure of society to do it with a man is going! And that's far-out! It lets me be me and feel good about it.

Something I noticed today is how nice it is not to have any male energy around. Even

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# reading at the village gate

by MARTHA SHELLEY

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 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 then 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.

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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.

(This is a postscript to Anne and Ronnie's letter  
printed in the last issue.)

## LIVING WITH LESBIANS (CONT.)

though we all do a hundred  
things the energy doesn't  
seem to scatter and go crazy  
at home. It, and I, seem to  
retain a certain softness.

I guess what makes me really  
feel good about being here is  
the fact that I get that how  
I am is o.k. with them- and  
that's probably because they  
get that they're o.k. They  
love women and it's good;  
it's not all that sick stuff  
society puts out. It's a  
place for me to really learn  
from women to get support

from women and to share with  
women. They've taken a step  
past society's rules to live  
sanely and humanly and I'm  
glad to be here, living and  
working.

I feel like now I have a  
chance. All I can think is  
to thank them- Kater and Cly-  
tia and Sue for living- I AM.

That's all I can sort out  
right now- I'm sure there  
will be more.

All my love

Am X

~~~~~  
Do you need a Lesbian Conn-  
ection? There is just such a  
publication available coming  
out of Lansing, Michigan.  
It's free to lesbians, altho  
they too always need money.  
Write to request a copy to:  
Lesbain Connection  
P.O. Box 811  
East Lansing, MI. 48823

## ATTENTION: ARTISTS

I'm doing a project on womyn  
artists in Santa Cruz, but  
I need help finding them. I  
would like to take some color  
slides as well as black and  
whites. If you are someone  
who is interested or know of  
someone, call me at 426-3953  
--Clytia--



# INSIDE/OUTSIDE

In February, 1976, a group of women in California organized a statewide tour of women's music. Produced by Women on Wheels, the concerts were seen by over 10,000 people in a two-week period.

In conjunction with the concerts, a series of workshops were held throughout the state to discuss the relationship of culture and politics and to focus on the particular experience of women in prison.

Together with the concerts and workshops, a campaign was conducted to collect donated instruments, records, songbooks and money to start a music project with women imprisoned in the California Institution for Women.

In March 1976, 1,000 women attended a political/cultural rally at the California state capitol building to test the implementation of a repressive behavior modification program at the prison.

"Inside/Outside," a pamphlet describing and analyzing the process and outcome of these events, is now available. Copies can be ordered (donation \$1.50 each) from:

Karlene Faith  
P.O. Box 26059  
Los Angeles, Ca. 90026

oooooooooooooooooooo

LESBIAN MOVEMENT-an introductory 5 week group w/ Sybil Meyer & Lauren Crux.

\*want to play, dance, fight, chase, follow, lead, explore, contact, laugh, & sweat with like-minded, able-bodied women? There will be group sharing and discussion in response to the physical movement. We will do activities that are specifically designed as opportunities to experiment w/ different ways to be flexible, strong, centered, and receptive woman-identified women.

The group will meet Thur. pm 7:30-9:30 starting Nov. 11 w/ the 1st night at Gault School. Contact Sybil Meyer at Phoenix Counseling Services, Santa Cruz Community Counseling Ctr 423-2003

--donations based on income--

celebrate  
♀ ♀  
w/ myns music

# book review

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I was warned by good friends that Rita Mae Brown's latest book, In Her Day (Daughters, Inc. 1976), was hardly a match for Rubyfruit Jungle (1973). But due to the general lack of hot-off-the-press lesbian novels, well, I just couldn't pass it up. The first part is so boring I had to read it in 1/2-hour segments. The characters are primarily flat, stereotyped, rhetoric-mouthing puppets who present the pros and cons of women's movement groups, feminism, "the revolution", ageism, professionalism, art, and Marx. But about a third of the way through the book, there is a surprisingly captivating passage where Carole flashes back nearly 20 years to her sister's death.

At first I wasn't sure how to pin-point exactly what this vignette contained that was missing in the rest of the book. Ms. Brown provided the key when on page 114 Ilse says, "I know somewhere I'm beginning to doubt emotion. How can we fully trust our responses, you know? For all we know compassion could be a conditioned response and one that continues to keep us oppressed by putting other people's troubles ahead of our own..." True, in this case she is talking about the over-emphasis of emotion (at the expense of the intellect) in women's groups--probably a valid criticism.

Suddenly, however, I realized what the characters lack. They are essentially devoid of emotion, at least until the end of the book. Emotion can be used inappropriately. But Art (including fiction) without emotion is not art and cannot speak to the soul. The flashback section is deeply emotional; I sense that it comes from a very basic part of the author's experience. It feels humanly real.

When Ms. Brown ends the book with her exciting dyketactics fantasy, the characters burst forth in glorious anger. I wonder how women who feel their anger so deeply could be otherwise passionless. OR is there only one "politically correct" feeling? Be REAL, Rita Mae!

--Kater--



# 12 LEZ-BE-IN HEALTH

BY PRISCILLA PARAMEDIC

A rumor occasionally heard in various dyke communities is that lesbians don't need pap smears. Now it is true that most of us do avoid certain things that can increase the risk of cervical or uterine cancer; there is some evidence to indicate that male semen is carcinogenic (cancer causing), while synthetic estrogen (contained in birth control pills, among other drugs) is daily becoming more clearly linked with cancer of the breast, uterus, cervix, and vagina.

However, even without these added irritants, all women are subject to a small percentage chance (which can be increased by a genetic tendency) of developing cervical cancer. And many of us have had exposure both to semen and to synthetic estrogen, in birth control pills, the "morning-after" pill, DES given to our mothers while carrying us, or in menopausal drugs. A yearly pap smear is important to test for pre-cancerous cells, since treatment in these early stages is nearly always successful.

But many of my lesbian friends, even knowing this, have put off that visit to the doctor for years. (Straight women are usually forced to return for birth control, but lesbians have no such immediate need.) Part of the problem is cost, and part is not wanting to be examined by a male doctor. In Santa Cruz, there are a variety of ways of dealing with one or both of those problems.

A possible scam for getting a free pap test and pelvic exam (if your income is under \$500./mo.) is to request a method of birth control (probably pills or diaphragm) at either the County Family Planning Clinic on Emeline or the Planned Parenthood Clinic on Ocean. (Both have government funding to help keep the world free of those poverty-level babies.) At Planned Parenthood you are free to see Gail Michaelis, who is the Nurse Practitioner (NP) rather than the male doctor if you choose.

At the County VD clinic on Emeline (also free) you will be given a gonorrhea test (painless), a syphilis blood test, and a pap smear if you ask for it-but no pelvic exam, only a vag-

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## LEZ-BE-IN HEALTH (CONT)

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inal exam. There you will be seen by a female nurse. However, this can be a lot of hassle if you haven't been exposed to VD. You will be asked to name recent sexual contacts although you can decline- it may be best to remain in the closet there.

Clearly both these methods are troublesome for someone who wants only a pap smear, but they are free. For UCSC students the Health Center there will provide one for only the cost of the lab fee, \$3.00. If you can pay or have Medi-Cal and want to see a woman, you can make an appointment with Donna Lyke, the NP in Dr. D'Amico's office. In fact, several doctor's offices may have NP's in the near future.

Speaking of the future, two near ideal situations may be opening up in the next several months. Planned Parenthood will be opening a cancer-screening-only clinic this month if the insurance works out. They hope to offer a pap smear and breast check with their NP on a sliding fee scale from \$12 to free. And the Women's Health Collective is working on opening a series of gynecology clinics including a monthly lesbian clinic.

For more details on any of these places to get your pap, call the agency directly or call the Women's Health Collective to check their referrals.

### SWINE FLU:

This government-backed inoculation program continues despite numerous deaths and serious questions as to whether the vaccine works, or even whether an outbreak of swine flu is at all likely to occur. It seems that the drug industry benefits more than anyone by this "shot in the arm".

### SCABIES:

Several cases of scabies have been noted in Santa Cruz this fall, so be forewarned--scabies season is here! So far the disease has not reached epidemic proportions, but it tends to spread like wildfire. If anyone gets it, she, her household and her lovers, should select a treatment day and all Kwell at once. And let's all keep our fingers crossed...

### GONORRHEA:

There is some controversy as to whether or how lesbians can get this form of V.D. If you are a lesbian and ever got gonorrhea from another lesbian, and would be willing to share details, please contact the Reader and leave your name and a way to reach you. Resulting information will be printed anonymously.



# HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN

## LOVE-MAKING

### WITH A WOMAN ?

#### Graphic?

i licked through the curls of her hair  
 i sucked between the thighs of her soft legs  
 the satin thickness fell in my mouth-all over my face  
 my fingers moved far til' flesh closed around  
 her breasts filled my mouth -soft fluid skin  
 melt in me-melt in me  
 shaking -i come with one touch of her finger.

#### Romantic?

no words echo in gentle woman's moon  
 we reach with eyes that move us closer  
 my belly is dancing as you touch my hand  
 you carry me down-we fall quietly  
 we burst with breathless love-strong and gentle  
 we kiss slow  
 to walk along the sands our breasts full to the woman's moon.

#### Humorous?

it happened in the produce section at albertson's  
 we glanced at each other i dropped my hamburger buns  
 you brushed my shoulder  
 i got a little bolder  
 hey sister would you like to come over?  
 we dashed out the store - pranced through the clover  
 fell into bed-our clothes thrown on the floor  
 oh passion! oh lust!-i want more- i want more  
 so if life is getting you down try a trip to the local store

#### Sad?

oh woman-my heart is in pain  
 i need you to lift my eyes  
 we make love  
 tears come to my eyes  
 you are leaving  
 won't you please stay tonight?  
 i shall crawl into a shell  
 you are leaving-our love has it meant nothing more  
 than a passing fancy  
 i ache -how can my life be fulfilled knowing  
 you are leaving

#### Political?

we sing our beliefs together  
 our minds meet the same ends  
 two strong woman are we  
 separate together -each equally free  
 to be who we are-you and me  
 you can love me tonight-lovers we'll be  
 tomorrow who knows? we just have to see  
 that the needs can't be met by one unit forever  
 if we realize that-we can probably stay together  
 talk out our differences-through stormy weather  
 we appreciate one another and work to grow and change  
 we will struggle  
 we will snuggle  
 try to work it out  
 that's what new relationships are all about  
 yes some pain -even tears  
 but we can do it -we've lasted all these years  
 yet, if you've got to go or i've got to leave  
 that's the way we understand each other  
 time and change can blister  
 but remember if that happens we've always got to be a sister  
 a friend of one another  
 or maybe again a lover

*Love is 40% Malt34*  
*Wine*





# raising male children

## PART II

by Noelle

My son. Sun, son, warmth, bright, nurturance. This is what he has meant to me--an anchor in the storm, a loving friend and companion, the affection I never received elsewhere. Sometimes I have felt I was the child and he the parent. When I was down and losing he was always there to comfort, love me, and dry my eyes. I protected him; stubbornly vowed "they" (the world outside our home/friends) would not get to him, not make him into some macho I couldn't relate to. Time will tell, but I think he's going to be a fine and unusual human being.

My son has spent a lot of time listening to me and my friends trash men when we were hurt and angry, rejecting male energy. He says he understands. This has not affected his self esteem, I know he likes himself a lot. He gets tiffed at me sometimes and says I am being "off the wall" -- like, "Mom, you make it sound like women invented everything, don't you think maybe some men invented just a few things too".

Role models -- good goddess, what has he had? He's been with strict, authoritarian men who frightened him or loose, hippy men without any morals who thought with their crotches, and there was one man who he loved like a precious pearl who broke promises and hearts. I think men have a hard time valuing children; now he's turned off, he's seen me hurt and has been hurt too, now determined to be different.

The tragic part of raising male children in the Womyn's movement is that you bring up a child (7 of his 12 years) alone. You take children to womyn's happenings. We live with womyn, he is loving friends with many of my friends, yet at 11 years old he is told he is too "big" to go to a woman's dance. He loves to dance--he cried a lot. Some of the womyn in the house wanted him to go but some of the others had already hurt him -- he wouldn't go. He knows he is excluded by some and those few people make the difference. He does not look at his friends in a sexual way, they are in some cases part of our family. He is 12 now and has almost stopped going

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## MALE CHILDREN (CONT.)

to womyn's happenings, he thinks he isn't welcome, and sometimes he's not by some people. So separation occurs--separation between Michelle and I and him. I take my daughter everywhere but he does not want to go and sometimes I don't even ask.

Just what are we to do with our male children when they reach 12 or 13??? We cannot reject them, do we push them on the womyn's community or do we stay home? Sometimes those are the alternatives because I cannot, for time space, do both. My social life is broadening but my life/time/words/hugs/kisses/confidences are becoming less and less. There are choices I have to make soon or I will lose the closeness I have with him. I wish those choices were easier.

A woman I respect and care for told me last week that she, as a lesbian, was afraid to have a male child (if she ever had a child) until she met Jeff. He changed her mind. It felt so good to hear that.

I'm not anywhere near the perfect mother, but I'm trying. I support my sisters and think that separatism is a valid lifestyle which I do not have the option to choose because I am living with an almost--man. Combating sex-role behavior (yes, you do feel like you are in combat) with both my children has been and will be a full-time project. Sometimes I feel it is all useless and futile and sometimes I get high thinking of what a good job I've done.



ON YOUR FM DIAL...

See page 19 for schedule

Mon 7-12 pm.

**TWO SISTERS**  
**RESTAURANT**

Open 8-11 daily (except  
thursdays)

... corner 41st & portola







## "EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK"

Recently I've been reminded of this cliché struggle again. Maybe it's the raging unemployment or maybe just a reminder. I held a temporary position as a clerk I in our own county election office. Our position was open to womyn and men while the postion mail clerk which paid 20¢ more an hour was, you guessed it, open to only males. The situation is pending affirmative actions. So I've watched more closely. Check your neighborhood businesses for example I noticed that Sun Garden Produce only has male employees. We asked one (who had worked there a year & 1/2) why. He explained that they used to hire womyn too but it's "just easier" to employ men (something about boxes). Another day we asked the manager why no womyn worked there. The conversation followed: "I guess I'm a segragationist ha ha. I don't know, it just happened that way."--So it's a coincidence?--"More or less"--More, or less?--"More or less." Is this reason to shop elsewhere? If you have experienced or witnessed discrimination in your neighborhood report it to the Reader. Lets make these illegal practices public.

## WOMAN DREAMS

think i'll call her  
got cramps in my fingers  
the summer is whispering in my ear  
think i'll see her  
got cramps in my legs  
inside-tick on my breast-desire  
summer carries me easy  
spit charm-rushes down my side like a wet rag  
hold on-my dances come slow  
think i'll write her  
can't find a pen

Love-to-you  
Maria Mallozzi

## CLASS: A LESBIAN PERSPECTIVE

"Class," in the Marxist sense, refers to a person's relationship to the "means of production." Take a shoe factory, for example. The people who work on the factory line are working-class. That's pretty obvious. They have no control over the production of shoes, they just do the work. The person who owns the factory is upper-class. S/he controls the means of producing shoes. The people who work in the factory office are middle-class because they're in the middle, a step removed from both the laborers and the controller.

We haven't always been divided into classes. Class is a male invention. It is the foundation of the patriarchy (i.e. rule by men; what we have now). And the first, most fundamental class division men created was between themselves and womyn. This creation of the class of womyn happened in what is known as "pre-historical" times. It was the overthrow of the matriarchy.

Under the matriarchy, womyn had controlled the means of production. The primary means of production was, of course, reproduction: bear-

ing children. We womyn also created and developed agriculture, housebuilding, pottery, weaving, and all the other arts of "civilization." Men at that time were semi-nomadic hunters (meat was not then a staple) who lived as parasites on the womyn. When womyn produced a surplus of goods, men took it and used it to begin developing their own "arts:" trading, theft, wealth, war. In order to accumulate more wealth, men eventually took over the means of production--womyn. The main institution they developed for gaining control was marriage: private ownership of a woman (the means of production, the working-class). From then on, womyn were identified not as people in their own right but as adjuncts to men--as property.

The other class divisions we have now were developed later, by men to use against other men. By fostering the separation of less powerful men into different classes, the upper-class men were protecting themselves against a unified assault on their position. Womyn had no part in these later class divisions.



## 22 CLASS (cont.)

As property we were/are simply assigned to the class of the man who "owns" us---father, husband, brother, etc. Dividing up womyn according to the class of their male owners is another protection for the upper-class since it insures that womyn won't unite as a class against the patriarchy. (Also, since womyn form a lower sub-class within each class, a lower-class man always has someone to look down on, which makes him feel superior and therefore less likely to rebel.)

Here's a review of my 3 main points so far: 1) class is a male invention; 2) the only class womyn belong to as people, rather than as the property of men, is the class of womyn; 3) the upper-class has divided womyn (as property) into (male) classes to protect themselves against the power of womyn's unity.

Lesbians have a special relationship to the male class system because we are womon-identified, not male-identified. We are no man's property. We are born into our father's class, but once we come out as lesbians and reject dependency on (ownership by) men, we are in a sense "classless."

And yet there are class divisions among lesbians.

Why? Because we are not really totally womon-identified. We still cling to a certain kind of male identity: our identification with our position in the male class system. Maybe "cling" is the wrong word to use. Class identification is a damn hard thing to get rid of. I am "middle-class" because my father was middle-class. I grew up with the economic security, the education, and the protected ego that are the privileges of the middle-class. As a result, I learned to act, talk, and think middle-class.

Now I'm on my own. As a  
(cont. p. 23)

•THE•  
**DRAGON**  
**MOON**  
**DISCO**

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\*\*\*

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\*every night...

8 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Top beer is only  
15¢ a glass!!  
\*\*\*

**DANCING**  
**TOO!**



## CLASS (cont.)

lesbian, I am consciously womon identified. But until I root out my middle-class attitudes and stop relying on my middle-class privileges, I am still subconsciously male identified. And as long as I am male-identified, I am upholding the patriarchy and denying my commitment to the sisterhood of the class of womyn.

One of the advantages of lesbianism is that it makes it easier to see the class system for what it is: a male invention which works to separate and weaken us. Lesbians should have no part in it. The privileges those of us who are middle- or upper-class get from the class system are bribes given to us by men to keep us from joining with our working- and lower-class sisters against the patriarchy. When we disown our man-made class identifications, we can take those bribes---those privileges---and share them with our sisters in the struggle.

by Janey, from Out and About,  
Seattle Lesbian Community  
Newsletter

the small  
of my back  
grows huge  
missing you  
Marty Kearns

## W.A.R.

23

We are a collective of women based in Santa Cruz who work around the issue of rape. We have a 24-hour phone line, and offer women who have been raped or assaulted whatever support they may need in dealing with the resultant emotional, legal or medical problems. As socialist-feminists it is important to us to find alternatives to the criminal justice system and to educate the community with the long range goal of ending rape and sexism, not just offering our services to women. To do this we need women with energy and time for our activities. These include the phone line, speaking engagements, and other work with people in the community against rape, sexism, and racism. We are open to women of all backgrounds and cultures. Though we want to remain a fairly small collective we would like to add up to five new members. We are planning a meeting with all interested women. If you are interested in working with us, or if you have any questions call Santa Cruz Women Against Rape at 426RAPE for more information.



# the picture of RAPE

A bunch of posters appeared all over the San Lorenzo Valley the other morning. They have RAPIST printed across the top and have not only a written description but a sketch of this man as well. His name is John Spahn and he is a young heavy-set white male who is legally blind and has his eyes partly closed most of the time. He (with friends helping him) has violently raped several young women, that he knew. Although he has been in court several times and once admitted raping a woman, he has been released after very short sentences and goes back to rape more women. Although a longer prison term would keep him away from women longer, he would obviously not learn any other behavior, as seen by rapists who are convicted again and again and just learn better ways to rape in prison so they continue on the outside.

I really like and support the idea of making the identity of a rapist public knowledge, because I think most rapists are on a power trip in their imagined security that the woman will be too ashamed to tell anyone. So when women begin realizing where the responsibility rests (with the rapist) and confront him (either verbally or with publicity) then maybe they'll realize that they won't get away with it any longer. Also people who know this man may demand that he start changing. I think ultimately it is this pressure from others in the community that makes men actually have to take responsibility for their actions. When he has no support (either actual or unspoken) then it won't be to his advantage to keep the rapist behavior.

In addition to this, these posters will let other women know to stay away from him. This method of women warning other women is the first step in defending ourselves and each other. This is only a partial solution to a prison system that at best is ineffective and at worst harmful.

This publicity of the rapist will also warn other men that they won't be protected by anonymity any longer. I hope they wonder if maybe it might be their picture up the next time they try to hassle a woman. I hope this kind of confrontation with reality will happen to all rapists. All it takes is some paper, ink, and time, and probably anyone of us could do the same. ---Janet



# Save Our Children

Early last month Ginny Yaseen, a lesbian living in Denver, went to court in Illinois to fight for the right to keep her 6-year-old daughter, Rachele.

Ginny has had custody of Rachele since her divorce four years ago. Pam Keeley, Ginny's lover, has lived with them since then. A few months after Ginny, Pam and Rachele moved from Illinois to Denver, Ginny's ex-husband obtained a temporary custody order and refused to let Rachele come home after an extended summer visit with him.

Ginny, unaware of the temporary custody ruling, went to Illinois to reclaim Rachele. After she returned home, she was informed that a final custody hearing would be held in a week's time. When she appeared in an Illinois court to ask for more time to prepare a case, she was jailed for having taken Rachele back.

She was released on bond only after she proved that she hadn't known about the temporary custody order when she reclaimed Rachele. The final custody hearing was set for a month hence.

For the next month Ginny and Pam worked frantically at preparing their case. Although the court date was to be a hearing, and not a trial, Ginny expected to face accusations that she is an unfit mother because she is a lesbian.

At the first hearing, Ginny's ex-husband David had ten witnesses lined up, prepared to support his claim to custody. In the four weeks before the final hearing, Pam and Ginny had to come up with witnesses of their own.

Because they need an Illinois lawyer, all their legal strategy had to be discussed by telephone, long-distance. And money had to be raised, to cover legal expenses as well as phone bills and travelling costs for themselves and their witnesses.

CONT. P. 26



Early in September Pam, Ginny, Rachele and their witnesses from various parts of the country flew to Illinois for the hearing. The court had obviously not expected quite such a turnout on both sides, and it soon became clear that the one day allotted for the hearing wouldn't be enough.

During that time, however, David's line of attack took shape. Although lesbianism was never openly mentioned, it appeared, thinly disguised, throughout David's lawyer's questioning. Ginny was asked if she has a roommate, whether they share a bedroom and whether they have a double bed.

Another piece of evidence at the hearing was a report by a psychologist hired by David to test Rachele. The psychologist whom the court recognizes as an "expert witness", testified that Rachele has "sexual identity problems." These, in his opinion, would disappear if she lived in a normal man-woman environment."

The psychologist also gave the judge a report on Rachele's history which included a statement from David's wife that Ginny is a lesbian. Several other references were made during the hearing to Ginny's "lifestyle" and "unnatural living situation." *CONT. P. 27*

## WAR: self defense

Santa Cruz Women Against Rape is sponsoring another free women's self-defense class, which will meet at Mission Hill Junior High, on Friday evenings from Oct. 29th to Dec. 10th. The first class meeting is at 6:00 pm. on Oct. 29th, in the mini-gym at Mission Hill. Free childcare is available, but let us know if you will need it. For info about this or other self-defense classes, please call 426-RAPE between 1 and 8 pm.


have you  
Been...

• Raped?  
• hassled?  
• Assaulted?  
haven't we all?

You can talk to a sister by  
calling... **426-RAPE**

**WOMEN AGAINST RAPE**  
P.O. BOX 711 SANTA CRUZ

CALL FOR INFO RE: **FREE**  
**SELF DEFENSE CLASSES**



After a brief appearance the next day, the hearing was continued to November, which meant that Ginny and Pam then had another two months to further prepare their case.

It also meant two more months of long-distance phone bills and lawyer's fees, and another round of plane fares for Ginny's witnesses as well as for herself, Rachele and Pam. Both women are working fulltime and borrowing heavily to meet their expenses.

The Rachele Yaseen Defense Fund, established when Ginny's custody was first threatened, raised enough money to cover expenses incurred by the September hearing. All that money has now been spent, though, and the Defense Fund must start from scratch to pay for these two months' activities and the final hearing in November.

Donations should be made to the Rachele Yaseen Defense Fund, P.O. Box 18628, Denver, Colorado 80218. For tax deductions, make checks payable to Aton Foundation, earmarked for the Rachele Yaseen Defense Fund and mailed to the same address.

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## SC WOMYN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

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Lesbian Counselors Available

Self-help Workshop monthly - CALL

\* Ruby Fruit distribution pt.

OPEN 10-4 M-F; also 7-9pm. Wed.  
24-hour phone line!

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If you are a lesbian interested  
in joining our collective, please  
call and ask for Kate or Shelley.





# HELP!

The Rubyfruit is going broke... This is a FREE COMMUNIQUE BUT we CAN'T go forever on No money!!! So... AS A FAVOR

to OUR FANS & ourselves, we ARE having A SUBSCRIPTION drive... \$3 for 6 months (Just think folks & the FANTASTIC Rubyfruit Reader delivered to yer front door & such a deal!!!) ... or... if yer into picking one up @ yer FAVORITE EATS PLACE (Two Sisters) or dance place (DRAGON MOON), please, please, drop A donation in the RR can... AND we thank you!!!

**Also:** we in the collective would like to thank all our CONTRIBUTORS (Anyone sending in articles, information, donations etc. &) we really appreciate your good vibes & your continuing support!!!

CLIP IT OUT  
FILL IT OUT...



AND  
Send it in!!!

## Rubyfruit Reader

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