

Rubyfruit BOX 949 FELTON, CA Reader



A LESBIAN COMMUNIQUE

JUNE 1977 ISSUE II

...AND
SHE THINKS
GAYS
ARE
SCARY...



JUNE EVENTS

JUNE 4 - Womyn's Coffeehouse @ Mother Right. Music, Goddesses, Muses with Ebony (formerly Natasha) 7:30-10:30. donations.

JUNE 6 - Womyn's Radio Collective - "Death and Dying" with Anne and Maggie. 7-11 pm. KZSC 88.1 FM.

- "Emotional and Physiological Aspects of Menopause" Julie Siskin, nurse practitioner, will facilitate a forum on the effects of menopause on women's self-images and sexuality. Sponsored by the S C Women's Health Center, 250 Locust. 7:30.

JUNE 11 - Womyn's Coffeehouse @ Mother Right. Body Images Workshop. 7:30-10:30 (see page 11)

JUNE 13 - Womyn's Radio Collective - "Parthenogenesis" with Laurie and Luita. 7-11 pm. KZSC 88.1 FM.

JUNE 18 - Celebration of Gay Pride Week. There are plans for daytime workshops for lesbians and gay men and also a nighttime gathering (potluck and sing-along) for lesbians at the Womyn's Coffeehouse. If you want to help organize these events, contribute to workshops/speeches. or just get more info call 426-DYKE or 423-0219.

JUNE 19 - Celebration of Gay Pride Week. There are plans for a picnic with speeches and merriment. Lesbians, gay men, friends and supporters all welcome. (see June 18)

- "Natural Healing for Women." Members of the S C W♀'s Health Center will offer a forum on the most commonly known herbal and natural remedies for gynecological health. To be held at the center, 250 Locust. For more info call 427-3500.

JUNE 20 - Womyn's Radio Collective - "Bessie Smith" with Helen and Allison. 7-11 pm. KZSC 88.1 FM.

JUNE 26 - "Herpes." Forum on the most recent developments in the transmission and treatments of herpes and how to cope with it. S C W♀'s Health Center, 250 Locust. 7:30pm.

JUNE 27 - Womyn's Radio Collective - "Welfare Rights" with Helen and Karen. 7-11 pm. KZSC 88.1 FM.

ANITA BRYANT - McCARTHY IN DRAG 3

by kathy mc crae and frog and nomad

SOME HISTORY OF THE GAY RIGHTS CONTROVERSY IN MIAMI

Summer 1976: A gay political action group called Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays was formed. Fall 1976: The candidates backed by the Dade County Coalition were remarkably successful in the local elections.

January 1977: The coalition decided to take politicians up on their campaign promises, and the Dade County Commission passed a Gay Rights Ordinance, which included gay people in equal access to housing, employment and services. Anita Bryant was there too, but failed to stop the bill from passing.

The gay community rejoiced at this long overdue victory. People were so supportive that even a talk show host was inspired to come out on his program. However, Anita Bryant, former Miss Oklahoma, orange juice queen, and right wing Christian, had a gap in her \$500,000 career (reportedly \$100,000 from the Florida Citrus Commission, a state commission). With time and money on her hands, within a few weeks she publicly stated that she had a vision or a calling from God to wipe out Gay Rights and that she had organized a massive campaign to do so. Already connected with Phyllis Schlafley to march against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) at the state capitol, they joined forces with anti-abortion crusaders, a fundamentalist Baptist preacher, some local Republicans, some orthodox Jews, and the Catholic archbishop. (The ERA lost as a direct result of the homosexual scare tactics.) At this point the media picked up the story and ran with it. Anita got prime time television, spoke on radio talk shows (at least one was heard in L.A.), got coverage of her hate rallies, and ran full page ads in the Miami Herald. She gathered 60,000 signatures on a petition to force a vote on the subject. The resulting publicity generated support from some governors, Ronald Reagan and other leftovers from the Nixon political machine. Joseph (Beer) Coors (who as chancellor of a university in Colorado, said that women shouldn't have sex education because they shouldn't know about it, that,

male homosexuals should be castrated, and who also reportedly said that female homosexuals should also be castrated) sent \$50,000 to Anita's hate campaign. (reportedly about 5-10¢ from every can)

The pro-rights commissioners were under almost unbearable pressure to reverse the Gay Rights law they had passed. Critics claimed that the \$400,000 it would take to put it on the ballot was a waste of taxpayers money. Therefore, the gay community took it upon themselves to raise the money with help from across the country to pay for the referendum, fearing the law would be totally lost otherwise.

The gay community and other human rights advocates rose to the challenge courageously. They spoke out, risking jobs and even lives. There have been two suicides, firebombings of homes and cars, and vicious verbal backlash. One man, as leader of a local Gay Latino group, had spoken out on the city's major Spanish speaking station (apparently the first Latino to do so) and was so despondent over the resulting clash with his parents and community that he chose suicide as the way out.

Gay communities (mostly male) across the country held benefits, raised money and spread the word to support Dade County struggles and to boycott all Florida citrus products (frozen, pasteurized and concentrated orange and other citrus juices).

Women across the country did not play an active role at first, due to lack of information, media focus on men, and the sexism of the men's methods (such as hot-selling t-shirts saying "Anita, dear, Cram it!"). This is too bad, because the publicity, laws and paranoias developed affect all lesbians and will extend to all minorities who are being more shut out every day. Some women in mixed gay groups began exposing the fact that calling for sexual assault as a political tactic is a form of woman-hating that must be loudly and strongly wiped out.

In periods of economic crisis, right-wing groups have always tried to set up minorities as scapegoats, to take people's →

minds off the real issues, like inflation and unemployment. We must remember that the oppression coming down on gay people from Anita is only one part of a world-wide system that oppresses. Gay white men have been oppressed, but they also have the privileges that come from being white and male in a society built upon the oppression of non-white people and women.



Lesbians and gay men are the only minority without civil rights on the books, and therefore are the most vulnerable to this kind of vicious national attack (with a scare title like "SAVE OUR CHILDREN, INC. (FROM HOMOSEXUALS)"). We are the biggest threat to the nuclear family, which is the core of and the earliest training ground for values which build the patriarchal structure. "We don't want our children to →

have a role model flaunted before them advocating an alternative to marriage and the family unit as we know it in America. This lifestyle leads to nothing but unhappiness and is the abomination of God. OUR LAWS WERE NEVER MEANT FOR THE ABNORMALS AND WERE MADE FOR THE MAJORITY." (Anita Bryant, Daily Sun Reporter, 3/5/77**emphasis added)(Actually, this "majority" of undivorced nuclear families is 12% of the U.S. population.)

"Homosexuals cannot reproduce so to freshen their ranks they must recruit the youth of America." (Anita Bryant, S.F. Chronicle, 2/12/77) Anita says exposing her children to homosexuality is "like feeding them garbage." WE MUST EXPOSE THE REAL ENEMIES OF CHILDREN. Every day little girls are being destroyed by male supremacy inside and outside the school system. They are taught to defer to men and that their only purpose in life is to get married and have children. They are taught not to develop their minds and their strengths. The white racist school system teaches children lies about history, television teaches lies about life, tracking systems lead working class children to low paying and dead-end jobs, courts tear children away from their mothers.

Anti-gay laws are used most viciously on third world gays, lesbians, economically poor gays such as gay prisoners who are denied access to parole and probation, gays on welfare or those who can't get welfare, effeminate men, and lesbian mothers who spend endless time, money and heartache trying to keep their children.

LOCAL AND BAY AREA DEVELOPMENTS

**Recently a meeting was held in San Francisco sponsored by the Miami Gay Support Committee. Over 200 people listened to some powerful perspectives and solidarity messages voiced by spokespersons from about 30 groups, including Disabled Lesbians (from the 505 Coalition), Black Teacher's Caucus, a Gay Latina organization, a Third World gay group, local Teamsters, local Culinary Workers Union #22, local politicians, and a national child abuse organization. On the other front a woman present had posters connecting busing with children who could not avoid reading gay announcements while waiting →

on street corners. She stated that this exposure was as lethal as city pollution. Nonetheless, a high-spirited solidarity permeated the gathering.

**There is a new Bay Area group called HUMANS UNDER ATTACK COMMITTEE (HUAC). It was formed by women to counter straight media coverage and the gay male-oriented emphasis of the struggle so far. HUAC is asking all Bay Area COOP members and customers to join their campaign against hatemongers backed by the Florida Citrus Commission by refusing to buy any Florida orange juice products. HUAC has organized bi-weekly informational pickets and petitioning with truly inspiring lesbian feminist participation. HUAC also delivered a free speech message on TV Channel 2 (which anyone can do). They are encouraging and developing more strategies and actions.

**A national Christian marathon TV show from North Carolina is preaching pro-family/anti-"homosexual and perversion."

**At least one store in Santa Cruz has an anti-gay petition, saying something about homosexuals "desecrating" the "beloved" Iwo Jima war monument in Arlington, Virginia.

STAYING OUT TOGETHER...

Our enemies are corporations, the media, governmental powers. These people are organized, financially independent, interested in our oppression, and in their own supremacy. THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE PUSHED BACK INTO THE CLOSETS, but for the utilization of the skills and strengths that we have cultivated in our struggles.

"Our love is sacred in a world that is profane. The overriding cynicism of our age frustrates us to painful awareness of how little we think we deserve. Love is →



hard when you are scared, hungry or homeless. LIES ARE MORE CREDIBLE TO A TIRED MIND. They want to keep us fighting and tired. They want to tire our wills." But our will is strong. We must develop a communication and support system that is strong and life-affirming. We must do this with each other, with other community groups, with press releases to straight and other media, and with our individual families and co-workers.

We must continue to deal honestly with our differences, but it is imperative that we be fiercely protective and strengthening of each other. This stuff is tough and highly personal and not something to go through in isolation.

Those of us with housing and jobs must continue to assert our contributions and our right to them. We all need to affirm each of our values and our right to basic survival tools: useful skills; jobs; housing; and the right to our personal lives.

SOME ADDRESSES AND IDEAS:

HUAC: 491 65th Street, Oakland, Ca. 94609; 415/654-0101. HUAC would be willing to serve as an umbrella group for others, such as a similar Santa Cruz group. They could use money for Bay Area campaign costs. They would love to have more energy support too!

MIAMI GAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE: 330 Grove Street, San Francisco, Ca., 94102; 415/431-1522. This is a group of mainly men, in touch with Miami, and they could really use new energy as they've been working like mad.

***Ask, request, demand that your local coop or food store remove Florida citrus products from their shelves; don't buy them yourself, and tell your friends not to, too.

***Deliver a 90 word free speech message on Channel 2 TV.

***Call and write to newspapers and TV including commending them for their fair coverage and criticizing them for the lack thereof.

***Write your congressperson or Carter in support of HR 2998, a bill that includes gays in the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Many Women Have Beards... 9

I have a beard. I want to stand on the rooftops and shout it. I want to stop every person on the street and tell them. I want to take the hands of all women in mine and rub them on the soft stubble of my chin. Instead, alone in my room, I take a mirror and tweezers, I prop the mirror up near the window where the

light is good, and I pull my hairs out, one by one.

I'm plucking my beard again. I'm angry and I'm bitter because my only other choices are to live in a closed community where my beard is accepted or to face the constant, exhausting pressure of public scrutiny.

For one year I didn't hide. For one year I let my beard grow and proudly--sometimes defiantly I walked down the streets and when people would look at it I would think, "Yes, look at me, I'm an ordinary woman and I have a beard." But when they looked at me they didn't see an ordinary woman. They saw a freak, they saw a wierdo.

I explained to women and children who allowed themselves to be caught looking:

"Yes, many women have beards."

"I'm growing it cause I'm tired of hiding it."

"I just wanted to see what it looked like after all these years of plucking it."

"Maybe if other women saw mine they wouldn't think they are the only ones with chin hairs."

"I let all my other hair →



grow and show. Now it's time to liberate my beard."

And they would explain to me:

"It's nothing, it's just an imbalance of hormones."

"My friend has electrolysis done."

"But you could be such an attractive woman."

"But why do you want it to show?"

"Actually, it's quite attractive."

"To tell you the truth, it isn't very attractive."

"Freedom, that's all very well, but don't you want to get married?"

"Are you a boy or a girl?", asked a young girl child.

"I'm a woman," I answered.

"You are a man-woman." And she was satisfied with her own explanation.

But I'm not a man-woman. And it's not a hormone imbalance. The research I've done in dermatology textbooks indicates that in most cases no "endocrinologic abnormality" exists, and that the range of normal hirsutism (hairiness) is very great. Most instances of "terminal facial hair" among women is hereditary and many of those women are of Latin origin from the Mediterranean countries or Jews

(who are historically Mediterranean in origin).

But the thing that makes me most bitter is the conspiracy of silence surrounding the issue. The relatively large numbers of women who have some obvious facial hair is belied by the lack of public discussion and information available.

We have already begun to challenge the myth that women are hairless. We can now end the silence and mystery surrounding women's beards and moustaches, chest and belly hairs. Let us educate ourselves about the medical, social and commercial aspects of this issue. Let's share our experiences and opinions. Women with facial hair need support from our sisters if we are really to gain the freedom to control our own bodies. ...Forest Hope..

(from Bread and Roses, Leeds, England)

That article was written two years ago. I've been through many changes about my beard since then, including a warning from my "professional organization" that I could not be a member if I continue to wear my beard on my face. "We have a public image to project ...we must sacrifice our own→

beards... cont.

desires..." And a lover who could not, would not get used to her lover, me, "looking like a man."

Well, I'm wearing my beard again. And somehow this time it isn't nearly as painful. Perhaps cause I'm in Santa Cruz and anything is acceptable here...perhaps cause I'm getting so much support from my friends.

The research I've been doing tells me that 25% of American women have some obvious hair on their faces. Well, in my house this very night there are 7 women and only one has none. That's a lot more than 25%. And we all like our hair. And we like each other's hair. And we'd like yours, too, if you showed it to us.

There's a myth that women are hairless. In fact, we have hair on our arms and legs and backs and butts and bellies and a few other places as well. Haven't we? We sure have.

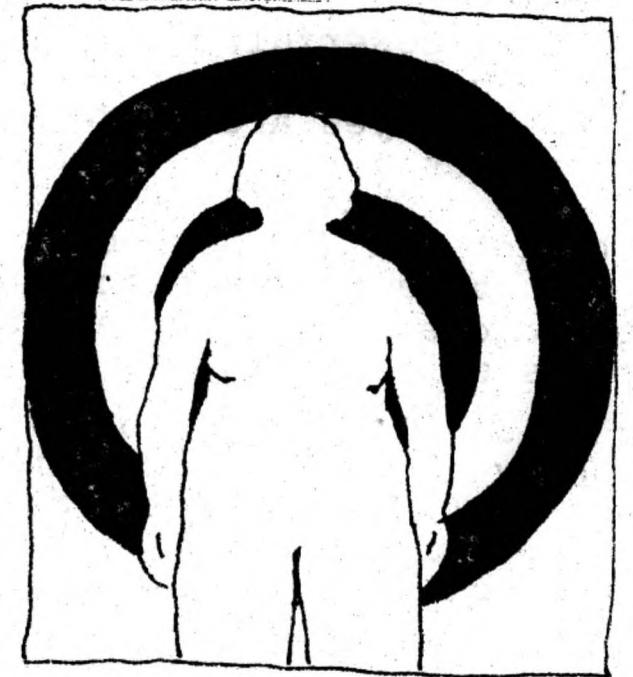
Yea HAIR!!! Forest Hope
May 20, 1977

✱ OLDER WOMEN are in the process of developing a rural community and wish to be in contact with other women seeking a change in lifestyle. We now have a newsletter for the purpose of sharing ideas with women who aspire to live in the country or are already doing so. FOR MORE INFORMATION write to Elana/Elizabeth, 3502 Coyote Creek Road, Wolf Creek, Oregon, 97497.

images

On Saturday, June 11th, at the Womyn's Coffeehouse, several womyn are doing a workshop on Body Images. Presentations and discussion on the following subjects will take place: Looksism, Fat Liberation, Body Hair (including facial hair), Physical Limitations (including disabilities).

We encourage all womyn to attend and explore their feelings around these oppressions.



Sketches of Her

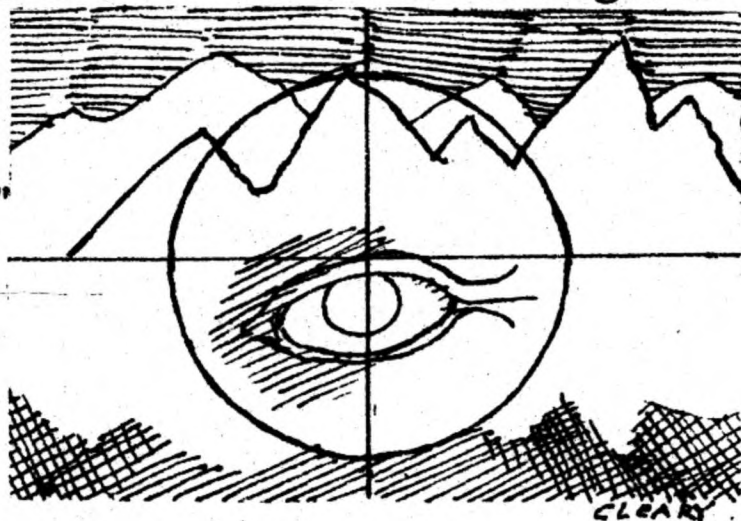
by Cleary Wilder

Jane sitting with her feet up: she disposes her legs as a man does: entirely without self-consciousness. She hooks the toe of her tennis shoe neatly under the opposite ankle and lets her knees fall where they will. The inseam of her jeans makes a comfortable rhomboid, running from ankle to ankle. (Damn! I do not want to spend the rest of my life worrying about how my knees and ankles fall. But I cannot be like her.)

Jane's face. She used to ask me if I would think she was good-looking if I didn't love her. It is such a strong face that I could not want it any other way. Her nose is short and strong and all the space between her wide cheekbones and her jaw is fleshed to insulate against great cold, in the asiatic style. I do not know where she got her mouth; heavy, sensitive, powerful. It is a mouth as sensitive as a hand. The fine corners of her mouth are as quick as eyes. The hollows of her eyes are perfectly oval. Once she turned and the light struck sideways through her iris and took my breath away as the sight of a mountain lake did once, pure and so light-shot that it seemed to be the sky. When her hair grows out, it has a square dutchboy look. ("Dutchwoman," she said) It is colored like California grass on the hills in August. There is so much gold in her.

Jane said, "I'm going to listen to my album one more time to see if I can like it." She listened sourly. "It's no use." and she put on another and began to boogie with the headphones on, making loud toneless remarks like a deaf person, saying "HUH? HUHHHH?" when I addressed her. I waved my hand never mind.

She arranged herself over two chairs, opened the textbook and set it upright on the two jutting bones of her pelvis. She put on her silver wireframes. They glinted a little a→

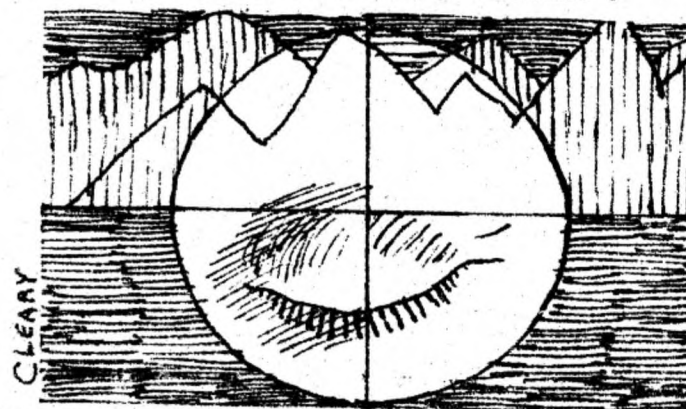


Sketches...cont.

gainst her hair in the lamplight. They made her look serious and detached, contemplative. She reached behind her over the top of the chair, fished for the lamp on the table to adjust it, damned it heartily when she couldn't get it. She climbed vigorously out of her seat, gave that lamp what for, and settled down again. Unfortunately it was now shining in my eyes like a spotlight.

I told her she looked intellectual with her round glasses and her biology book. She smiled a brief flattered smile.

As I was writing hard, she slid out of the chair and came over quietly as a cat. There were smooth hands on my face and a warm mouth. Every kiss is a shock. She waits till I'm deep in my letter; but if I interrupt her, she looks interrupted.



Sometimes when our faces touch, I feel as though I touch my reflection in a mirror. I simultaneously feel the inside of my face and the inside of the reflection face. I am both myself and an other.

She assures me that everything is as it was before, nothing is changed, nothing is changed, now she is stronger and more sure of what she wants, now that she knows the alternative. She is delighted to know that she can have sexual intercourse with a man without fear or hatred. Now she knows for sure that she wants me because she loves me, not for the wrong reasons, not because she is afraid of men. That man is the dearest man in the world. Now she has a brother as well as a sister. Nothing is changed. Everything is all right. It's back to good old monogamy again. She's so much more sure of herself now. Everything is fine. Everything is right. Now, am I glad it happened? (Are you crazy?)

"JANE! HOW'S IT GOING?" shrieks a friend who sees us across the street. "Hey, Barbara. I'm okay." says my lover, who →

thinks nobody knows. "HEY JANE! YOU AND SCOTTY STILL BEDROOM BUDDIES? HAH HAH HAH." Jane grins, moves her shoulders, embarrasses, pleased as punch. "No, we're just friends," she says smugly.

Jane doesn't come around today. I am supposed to meet her for dinner but I screw up my schedule and won't get to the cafeteria until after seven. Jane starves if she has to wait a minute after six, and she waits for no one. She also hates to sit at a meal table if she is not eating. She eats in ten minutes flat. If she is still there, she will be dull and grouchy. I walk through the parking lot towards the cafeteria and the student union. I walk quickly in the night. The stars are like holes knocked in the sky by angel fists. I'm cold. I look carefully for her car before I go inside. There it is, sky blue astre. She's around here somewhere.

The cafeteria seats about four hundred people. I position myself where I can get a look at her gang's table without getting close. I scan the table head by head, but none of them is blonde with hunched shoulders and a gesturing fork. I get some food and decide to eat with her friends anyway. As I wander through the crowd

by the tea machine, a friend of mine asks cheerfully if I am a lost little girl. "Yeah".

Outside, her car is still there, so she's in the union. The problem is, she's in there without me. Now I'm taking a risk. I push the glass doors and march in like a soldier into enemy territory. Quick. She isn't in the snackbar. The bookstore is closed. She isn't downstairs with the TV. Therefore she is at the movie. Number one: she never goes to a movie by herself. As I round the corner into the corridor where tonight's movie announcement will be posted, I can hear it starting already. I have missed her.

But she comes up and stops me as I head for the exit. She was in the bathroom, where I should have looked first; it is a joke with us that her bladder won't hold more than ten cubic centimeters. "WILDER!" "Hi." "Watcha doing?" "Looking for you." "Did you pass your council?" "Yeah, I sure did! And they were real nice to me." She smiles hugely, opens her arms and →

sketches... cont.

hugs me in a public place, for the third time in the eight months I've known her.

"What time's your meeting?" she wants to know, turning her wrist so that her watch slides out of the cuff. "In fifteen minutes." And I intend to be late to it. "Well, I'm going to the movie." Oh. I missed you at dinner so tough luck, huh? The memory of herself gripped in my arms, not as just now but as when we were saying goodnight, last night: me sitting on the bed with my arms around her waist and my knees tight around her legs, my face in her jacket. My face pressed into her precious middle. Now she's telling me about how long she's been meaning to see The Maltese Falcon. I wonder if I'm just selfish. She has a right not to spend time with me. I want to put my face in her jacket. Number one: she never ever goes to a movie just to see a movie. Number two: we have always spent every single free moment out of every weekend, together, ever since the beginning, eight months ago (Except for the time she took two hours of a Sunday to tack up crepe paper stream-

ers for a friend's birthday 15 party).

Jane's face, a few days ago. She sits in the dark, feet on my bedspread, knees up, elbows on them. She folds her knuckles together and taps the hands slowly against her pant leg. This is her form of hand-wringing. She stares straight ahead and says nothing except, "CLEARLY I DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT!". Her face is as old as her mother's.

She's going to the movie. She meant to see The Maltese Falcon a long time ago and never did. She sticks her hands in her pockets and turns the toe of her shoe out. It is not all right. It is never going to be all right again. There is a small sick feeling up under my chest ribs. I wish I could put my face into her jacket, catch her middle in the crook of my arms so she couldn't go. I want her to come over and see me after the movie, but I am afraid to ask.

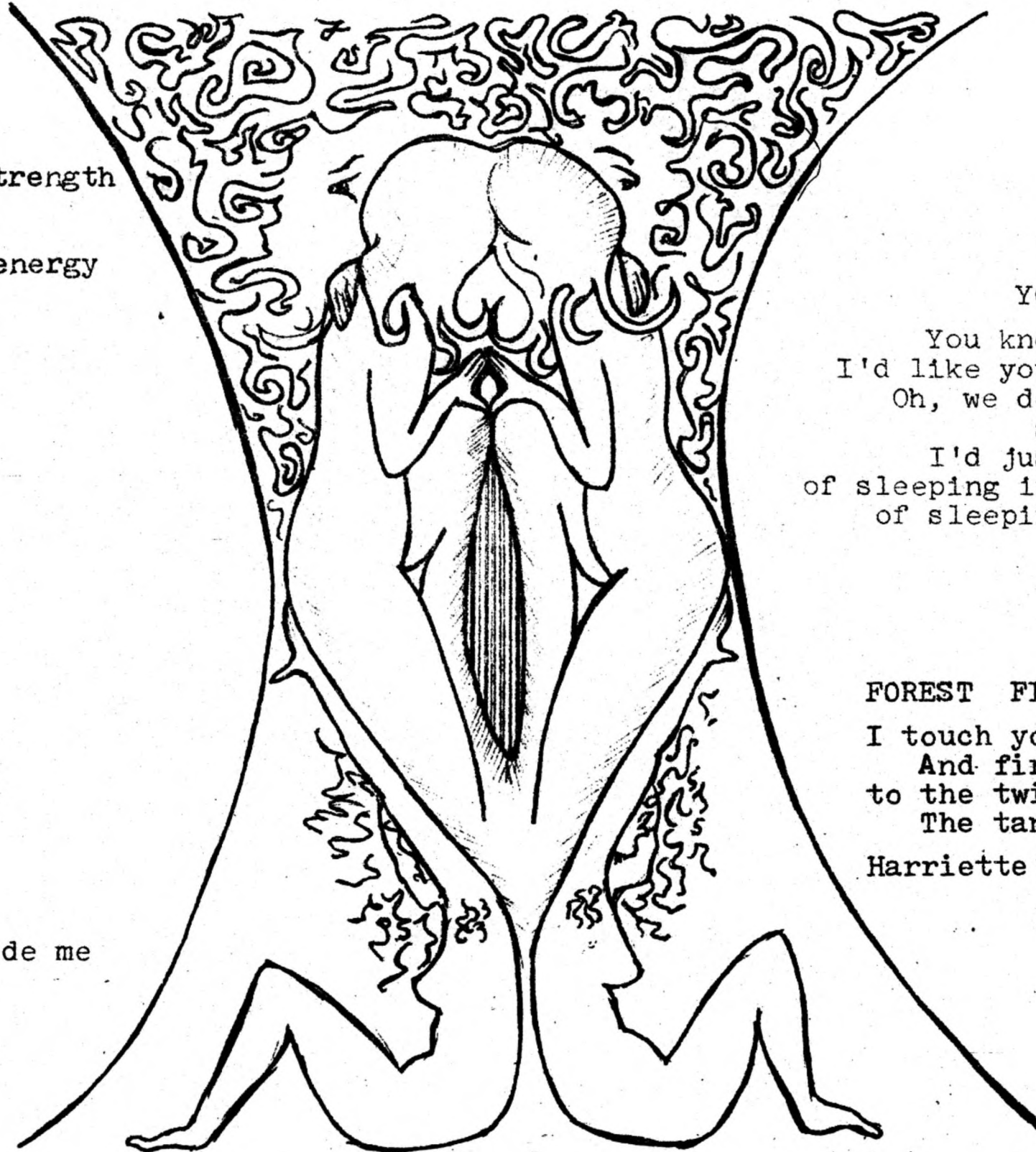


Jo anna
 Reaching out for you
 I touch your hands first
 We revolve around each other
 And I experience your arm
 Going around the curves of your strength
 and the joining to your body
 The holiness of your being
 And the senuousness of your woman energy
 You are a woman
 I reach for you
 You are my sister
 I long for you
 You are special
 Magical medicine woman
 Healing energy flows in your veins
 I feel it
 as we merge with each other
 falling together
 so gently
 so softly
 so slowly
 Jo anna I love you
 soft, soft lips
 Our faces softly
 Caressing each other
 Slowly, loving realness in my soul
 Questing into the unknown realms
 Of my love for you

--FAWN

Curled inside you curled inside me
 my body finally rests
 Feeling your back your belly
 softly deeply in mine
 Your mouth is fresher than
 any spring day.

--Coyote



i want to
 take touching
 as deep
 into sharing
 as between women can be
 Pat Jackson

YOU KNOW WHAT I'D LIKE?

You know what I'd like?
 I'd like you to sleep with me tonight
 Oh, we don't have to be
 sexual
 I'd just like to feel the comfort
 of sleeping in your arms
 of sleeping in the arms of a woman I love
 -- Coyote

FOREST FIRE

I touch you and your eyelids glow
 And fire spills down from both your eyes
 to the twin lips I kiss, below
 The tangled forest at your thighs.

Harriette Frances

i love the woman
 whose hair drips down her neck
 drips down her neck
 and whose hair grows long
 grows long upon her legs
 Helle

Book Review:

18

For a long time I have been intrigued by the title of a German book Madchen in Uniform--I was told it was a good one--but not much good to me in German, well Surprise! A gay friend of mine here in Brugge last week handed over her collection of English Agatha Christies and Women's Barracks. The book was actually translated--as an off colour best seller and seems to be original in French (though I can't find the French title). Dominique actually got it from her mother who got it as a bonus for buying 10 other 'sex' books!

It is autobiographical/biographical the "story of what happens when scores of young girls(17-50, my brackets) live intimately together in a French military barracks". Written in 1950 by Tereska Torres, now happily married, it was definitely written in part to be sensational. All the action centers on sex and love. Still it is surprisingly mild and unoffensive and there are moments of illumination. I confess I cried at the end. You follow the lives of a group of eight womyn thru four years of war. Though they never leave the barracks of the Free French Army in London, the war is always present.

Tereska makes few judgements--she is sympathetic to all the womyn though she remains obscure, chaste and romantic. Her view of lesbians is simple--there are womyn who are made like that. She questions what they are but not their right to be; that is assumed. Her sympathy (though no political analysis) is rightly directed to the lives of the womyn--"...Seated facing Petit, I kept thinking how sad her life must be, how sad must be the life of Ann, of Lee, of all these women. Their mournful eyes never laughed, even when their lips laughed. They lived separately from the rest of the world, cloistered among themselves; going out together, going to Lesbian night clubs together, living together, and the only men with whom they had anything to do were pederasts." She is right, lesbian women were isolated, lonely and afraid. Their lives, jobs, lovers had to be jealously coveted. Ann, however, is extremely popular and respected. She is seen as strong, reliable, good natured and even good looking. All →

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madchen ... cont.

three womyn are sympathetic, attractive and liked. And there are several other lesbians mentioned in the book.

Tereska makes a big distinction between "lesbians" and womyn who have relationships with women. The relationship between Claude and Ursula is explored in more depth than any other. At times there is the same disgust for bisexuality that lesbians feel today (I wonder where she picked that up). Claude, an aging femme fatale--promiscuous, bisexual and motherly explains physical love between womyn in one of the nicest passages in the book--

"In every woman, Claude had told Mickey, there is a need rarely satisfied by men, a need for simply caressing, and she had described how one of her women friends loved to caress the "neutral parts" of her body for hours at a time. The neutral parts were the shoulders, the arms, the throat, the back, the parts that men seemed to forget. The insatiable desire for tenderness was felt most strongly in these neutral parts which were so rarely caressed. Men made love each in his fashion, more or less expertly according to Claude, and they were especially fond of those things in women that were different from their own bodies. When women made love with men, it was quite often with joy and passion, yet there was almost always a feeling of deception. It was perhaps the neutral parts that were disappointed, Claude had instructed Mickey. The very body of woman seemed to complain, I want your love over me, aside from sex, aside from physical desire. I want the feel of your hand filled with a fraternal affection, forgetting my sexuality, just resting with pure friendliness on my arm."

I don't know if it is possible to get this book. It is of course out of print and in Belgium at least only comes with buying ten hetero-porno paperbacks first. But if you find a copy treat it as a treasure. --Charlotte

PS. the movie "Madchen in Uniform" which is also about lesbians, is a different story altogether.

TRANSEXUALISM BY RISA

I don't have time to write the kind of article that I want to write, but I feel that it is very important to get out information and personal/political statements on this now. The subject is transsexualism. This has recently become an issue (again) in the California women's and lesbian community because of the "discovery" that the engineer for Olivia Records is a postoperative male-to-female lesbian-identified transsexual.

There have also been other times when the issue or the person of a transsexual has actually split important women's and lesbian events into opposing factions. In the process, people have gotten very hurt, women have polarized and goals of unity have been obscured. This divisiveness is going to continue to happen until women take the issue seriously before it comes down to real people with feelings within our own communities and gatherings and begin to seek out education and discussion on the topic.

This dialogue has begun in Santa Cruz. Karlene Faith raised the issue when she spoke to a university-based class on feminism about a month or so ago. It was also raised at the Lesbian Workshop which Kater and myself facilitated at the Coconut Grove, and hopefully in discussions in people's living rooms.

In talking to women in Santa Cruz about this issue, I hear a lot of women saying that they are ignorant on the subject, and therefore decline to take a stand at this time. I respect the intelligence of this position. However, I think it is a starting point and that this issue needs to become a priority in this town now, lest we have any repeats here of the ugly events that have led to divisiveness in many other places. People often react rigidly when confronted with a situation for which they are not prepared. Hasty decisions and opinions are sometimes formed that might later be regretted, but in the process damage is done.


Unfortunately, one of the main ways that people get information on transsexuals is from the establishment media's presentations. Women have pointed to some of these examples to say that transsexuals seem to reinforce sex-role stereotypes→

and therefore cannot be accepted within a feminist community or ideology. I would like to point out that establishment media coverage of lesbianism also tries to present us in the way that is to their advantage and not to ours. This largely contributes to our oppression, because it is the main source of information about us that many straight people have.

What I'm saying is that transsexualism is a complex subject. People tend to respond to it very emotionally. It stretches one's concepts about sexuality, about gender identification, about body image and its connection with gender identification, about the source and origin of the above mentioned things, which may even get into issues of death and rebirth, and the boundaries or lack of perimeters of one's spirit.

I think it would be inefficient, to say the least, to wait for the resolution of the above mentioned factors to everybody's satisfaction before people take a stand on transsexualism.

I count among one of my close friends a postoperative, male-to-female transsexual who is an active feminist and in no way reinforces sex-role stereotypes. This issue became of primary importance to me after I became friends with her, because I had no trouble in relating to her woman-to-woman before she told me she was a transsexual. Because I had come to care about her very deeply, and because I too am a sexual minority, I felt a lot of pain in hearing of her struggles and oppression within the dominant society and within the women's community. I also know a few other transsexuals who consider themselves to be lesbian/feminists and who act in a manner consistent with this.

I am mentioning these people in order to bring in examples of transsexuals who counteract the media image. In a way it feels embarrassing to do this, much the same as a straight person saying to another, "I have a friend who's a Lesbian and she's not at all like that." But after all, I think it is through meaningful contact with real people and real situations that people take things seriously and are willing to put energy into expanding their awareness and ideas. I have personally and politically aligned myself with supporting transsexuals within the women's movement and community. I would be happy to talk with anyone about this. 

A Letter From Olivia

Recently a leaflet has been circulated concerning Olivia's relationship with Sandy Stone, who since spring of 1976 has worked with Olivia as a recording engineer. Sandy is a transsexual, and Olivia is being criticized for not making that fact widely known on beginning to work with Sandy. It is further being said that we are ripping off women by calling ourselves a women's recording company while working with a transsexual engineer. In the following paragraphs we would like to explain, for those who may not know, what a transsexual is; to recount our process in hiring Sandy Stone; to clarify our politics around working with Sandy; and to answer specific criticisms that have been brought forward.

A transsexual is a person who, from an early age (perhaps from birth), identifies as the opposite gender from her or his genetic sex. In the case of Sandy Stone, this means a person who grew up outwardly as a male, but who inwardly experienced being essentially female. In many

cases this includes a feminist identification, which, because of imposed stereotypes, as well as the intolerable position of being female inside a male body, results in an extremely painful life situation. For many women, evolving a consciousness of class and sex oppression involves uncertainty, anger, and the turmoil which accompanies any major life process. For transsexuals, who are simultaneously evolving through confronting their true sexual identity, these processes are doubly difficult.

Medical technology has recently provided, for those with the means to afford it and the guts to withstand it, a way to surgically transform the genitals from those of birth to those of the opposite gender. Persons like Sandy, who have undergone sex reassignment surgery, are technically known as male-to-female postoperative transsexuals and live lives no different from other women. However, although a great deal of attention is usually focused on the surgery itself,

it is not generally understood that the process of sex reassignment is a long, grueling and painful one, requiring years of hard work prior to surgery, and that this too-well publicized step is merely the confirmation of a process that has already gone to near completion by that time. The impression fostered by the media, that sex reassignment is effected by a single operation, simplifies and distorts an extremely complex and subtle process to which the preoperative transsexual must address most of her life for years prior to genital reassignment.

Sandy Stone was referred to us as an excellent woman engineer, perhaps even the Goddess-sent engineering wizard we had so long sought. In our second meeting, when Sandy told us about her transsexuality, we had to reassess our commitment to her, and hers to us. We did this, as we do everything at Olivia, collectively and from the point of view of our politics. In our first reaction to the situation, we had these reservations: Should we validate a process (sex reassignment) that, seemingly, only the privileged have access to? Should we hire someone who

had male privilege? Could we accept and trust Sandy as a woman?

We reasoned that while it requires some material means to undergo the sex reassignment process, a person does not gain privilege by doing it--quite the contrary (a few well-publicized transsexuals aside.) Because Sandy decided to give up completely and permanently her male identity and live as a woman and a lesbian, she is now faced with the same kinds of oppression that other women and lesbians face. She must also cope with the ostracism that all of society imposes on a transsexual.

In evaluating whom we will trust as a close ally, we take a person's history into consideration, but our focus as political lesbians is on what her actions are now. If she is a person who comes from privilege, has she renounced that which is oppressive in her privilege, and is she sharing with other women that which is useful? Is she aware of her own oppression? Is she open to struggle around class, race, and other aspects of lesbian feminist politics? These were our yardsticks in deciding whether to work with a woman→

who grew up with male privilege. We felt that Sandy met those same criteria that we apply to any woman with whom we plan to work closely.

Because of our politics, and despite our initial feelings of strangeness around the situation (feelings which, alas, it seems many women must go through when confronted with a transsexual woman), we were able to begin working with Sandy. Our daily political and personal interactions with her have confirmed for each of us that she is a woman we can relate to with comfort and with trust.

As to why we did not immediately bring this issue to the attention of the national women's community, we have to say that to us, Sandy Stone is a person, not an issue. Our judgement was that her transsexualism was a fact that might be a concern to any woman who would work closely with her (such as the women Olivia would record.) We felt fine about telling those women, because there was a context for it, and because we have a struggle relationship with them. Beyond that, we saw no way to communicate the situation to the greater women's community

without Sandy being objectified. And if Sandy were to become the focus of controversy, we all felt we needed a period of time in which to develop a foundation of mutual trust and support and a solid working relationship, to help us withstand that turmoil. We see transsexualism as a state of transition, and we feel that to continue to define a person primarily by that condition is to stigmatize her at the expense of her growth process as a woman. One unfortunate consequence of this decision has been that we did not demystify to the community at large how Sandy was able to acquire her skills, and we regret this.

Our hopes for sharing skills and providing women access to work are much closer to fulfillment because of, not in spite of, Sandy Stone. The women in our technical department are thrilled that Sandy has joined them. She has contributed to our group not only her many technical skills, but also a vision of ways to share them that goes beyond what we were able to imagine. For example, besides training women in sound engineering, she will actually be building our recording →

studio and will be apprenticing other women in the techniques of designing and building electronic equipment. She is also in the process of writing a book for women which will be a step-by-step explanation of the recording process.

Almost a year has passed since we started working with Sandy, during which she has been our colleague in hard work, struggle, wonderful accomplishments and even finer plans. All of us are looking forward to the day when work can begin on our studio and Sandy can start training other women. As we do of each other, we ask everything of Sandy, and she gives it. She has chosen to make her life with us, and we expect to grow old together working and sharing.

(reprinted from Out and About, May, 1977)

*** Psychic Class for Feminists ***
- to promote change by applying the powers of our inner selves
- to learn practical techniques to consciously use our psychic abilities in everyday living
- next class begins June 9 2-5 pm.
- sliding scale fees
- for info: Marlane or Flora
335-7458

MOTHER RIGHT feminist bookstore open:

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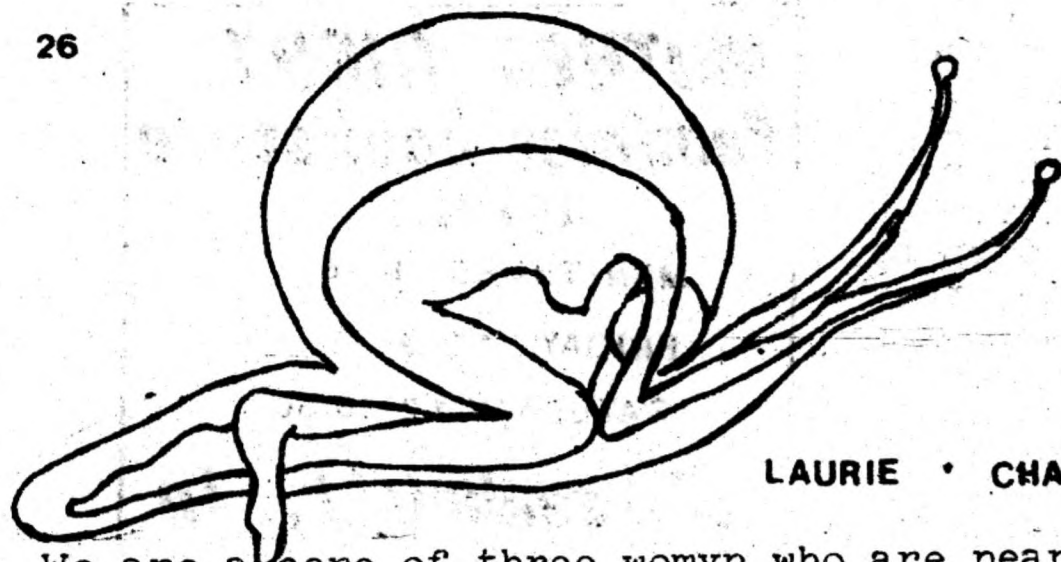
SATURDAY 12-10:30

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janice 427-3776



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We are a core of three womyn who are near to realizing our dream of a lesbian press in Santa Cruz. We have been working (separately and together) on equipment and learning skills for the past two years. A lot of our energy has gone into scrounging materials for, and literally rebuilding the shop herself. We need, and we feel that the community needs us to be printing NOW. To do that we must have your support.

- * money
- * equipment (where we can find it)
- * feedback
- * womyn who do carpentry, electrical work or construction, etc.,
- * building materials
- who will share skills and energy.

For information or input call 426-6791.

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! WOMYN AWARE !

Two/three white men (mid-20's to 30's) have been raping womyn after either pulling them into their car or picking them up hitch-hiking. They operate in Santa Cruz, Half Moon Bay, and Daly City and drive a light, possibly white, mid-60's Dodge Polara-style car with a blue interior. Names they have used so far include Tom, Frank, and Jerry. We don't want this to stop us from living our daily lives, but be especially alert! →



political action group



The political action group of the Lesbian Umbrella Organization has divided into task forces. One group is hoping to work with other lesbian groups in Calif. to have lesbians chosen to go to the Houston International Women's Year Conference. They want to present statements to the conference on lesbian issues such as decriminalization on a national level of sexual acts between consenting adults, lesbian custody rights, rights of minors to qualified counseling--particularly gay minors to gay counseling, etc. If you are interested in this group contact Lauren at 426-9515.

Another group is working on having local city councils and school boards include gay non-discrimination statements in their affirmative action policies. Also, they would

like to establish a support service for lesbians who are being hassled on their jobs. Women interested in this group can call Mary or Sharon at 423-9192.

A third group hopes to produce a slide show on lesbian history and what lesbians are doing now. For more information on this group, come to the next general meeting of the political action group.

General meetings of the political action group are held on a monthly basis, @ 7:30 on the Tues preceeding the Lesbian Umbrella meeting. The next general mtg will be June 7th, @ 7:30--call 423--9192 for place. If you are interested in these projects or in starting work on others, join us at this meeting or call us.

BE AWARE OF: ○○○○○○○○○○

- * Cars pulling up next to you or another woman
 - * Your immediate surroundings and resources (like your strengths voice other people and houses around you)
 - * Other ♀♀ who may need help
- FOR HELP OR INFO CALL 426-RAPE



LEGISLATION AFFECTING LESBIANS

Right now there are several bills in Congress and the State Legislature which, if passed, would extent to gays the rights most other people in this country take for granted.

A. HR 2998 -- the Koch Affirmative Action Bill--to guarantee non-discrimination in employment, housing, and public accomodation.

B. The Fair Employment Practices Bill sponsored by Calif. Sen. Alan Cranston--aimed specifically at enforcing equal employment opportunities and job security, to assure the full rights and equal protection under law to all citizens regardless of sexual and affectional preferences.

C. A State Assembly bill was just approved by the Labor, Employment and Consumer Affairs Committee which would outlaw employment discrimination based on the "existence or manifestation of asexuality or of a sexual preference."

I know it is often hard to sit down and write our state or national representatives, but with Anita Bryant and her friends organizing against us, it is important for us to organize and let them know how we feel. Senators, Representatives, etc. do pay attention to brief, personal notes stating how they should or should not vote for a particular bill. Personal letters are best--below is an example of what you might say:

"Homosexuals are the only minority still denied their rights by law. Not only does this violate our national commitment to civil rights, our respect for privacy, and the explicit wording of the Constitution (the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness); it significantly restricts the full and varied contributions of this group to the labor force.

I support the right of all workers to employment opportunity and job security without respect to sexual orientation.

I encourage your support of the Fair Employment Practices Bill(or HR2998 or the assembly bill) and I urge you→

to support other proposed legislation which would assure 29 full rights and equal protection under law to all citizens, regardless of sexual or affectional preference."

Addresses:


Assemblyman Henry Mello
Calif. State Assembly
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

State Senator Robert Nimo
Calif State Senate
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Rep. Leon Panetta
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Alan Cranston
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator S.I.Hayakawa
Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

 Being a Lesbian in this Society is painful, belittling, & scary. Being with each other to heal could help. **RISE WOMYN THERAPY** Groups meet once a week. Psychic workshops, bodywork, individual therapy, & meditations also available. 426-9547.

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Dr. Referrals / Medical Library
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427-3500

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* Rubyfruit distribution point *

have you
BEEN...

• Raped?
• hassled?
• Assaulted?

haven't we all?

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

WOMEN AGAINST RAPE
PO BOX 711 SANTA CRUZ

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

Dear Friends,

We are a group of women from the University of California at Santa Cruz in a Lesbian section of a "Female Physiology & Gynecology" class. Our primary function is to collect as much information on Lesbian health care as we can. As we all know, Lesbian health care is an area that needs attention and development -- there is so little available information.

We would appreciate any info: bibliographies, pamphlets you have written or know of, newsletters, etc., you have on Lesbian health care. Our ultimate goal is either to compile an annotated bibliography or write a pamphlet ourselves based on the information we receive. If you would like a donation for any material you send, please notify us. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

s/ Amy M. Guy

you can write us: c/o Mare, S.C. Women's Health Collective
250 Locust St., Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060

* There had been an accident The woman stood a moment *
* and a woman moved through and watched the man fuss a- *
* the crowd and started to round, then tapped him on *
* kneel by the victim, only to the shoulder and said, "When *
* be pushed aside by a man who you get to the part about *
* said, "Step back--I've had a calling a doctor, I'm here." *
* course in First Aid." (from PG&E Newsletter, May, 77) *

I am buying a house and need
/want other feminist lesbians
to share in my home and com-
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Support, privacy, aesthetics,
womyn energy, music, clean-
liness (no smokers, please)
and struggle are important
to me.

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women
7-11
p.m.

ON YOUR F.M. DIAL...

Dear Ruby Readers,

We have been thinking about printing Ruby and we need your input. It would mean that we could do a lot of nice things with color and photography; basically look a lot more together and print more material. But it would also mean about twice as much money to get her out. We need to know if you are willing to support us (new subs, donations, or paying for copies) and put up with frantic pleas for help when our funds give out. The questionnaire is mostly about this decision but we'd like to know how you feel about the other stuff too. (please fill in, clip out, and send to RUBY! thanks!)

How important (good, necessary) to you is/are:

FORMAT

Clearer type
Smaller type
Photographs
Being aesthetically pleasing
Having narrow columns
Having full page type
Poetry or articles in
separate sections
Everything mixed together

CONTENT

News--local
national
international
political analysis
poetry
graphics
crossword or other puzzle
Ruby page

How much are you willing to pay per issue

0 .25 .50 .75 1.00

Are you interested in being our ad manager or doing any
kind of fund raising for us? yes no

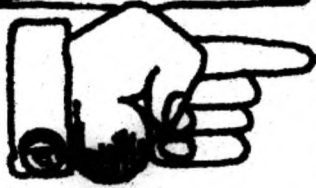
If yes, name phone what



Ruby is 25¢ or free if you don't have it. We need the \$\$ - just think of your Ruby as being as important as a Polar Bear! Besides, 15% of any SUBSCRIPTION MONEY received before June 7 will go to the Dade County Coalition to help fight Anita Bryant's anti-gay campaign.

~~~~~  
 Workers on this issue: Catherine, Charlotte, Cleary, Clytia, Fawn, Kater. Ruby meetings are Fridays, call 426-DYKE for time & place. We are open to new skills, energy, etc. ~ Thanks to Susan Carlin for cover & sketch of Forest.

CLIP IT OUT  
 FILL IT OUT...



AND  
 Send it in !!!

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