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HAG RAG

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LESBIAN SEX ISSUE

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ART/LOGO CREDITS:

COVER ART: By Liberty Bradshaw, Vancouver Island country woman, artist/painter, witch, amazon, political activist. Living and growing on 14 acres of women's land. Currently building my own house and studio. I call it my wooden sculpture. Women are welcome to visit. My art speaks to me of our energy and spirit as women. Inward journeys and glimpses of transcendent moments in our everyday struggles. A way of reminding ourselves of the vision and dream: our world transformed and our efforts transforming our lives and that world. Blessed Be!

LOGO: Our beautiful logo was created by Rennie Laing (Maieutic), of Milwaukee.

SKETCH that appear in this issue were submitted by Zana, of Adobeland, AZ. You may have seen her work in other publications!

HAG RAG'S MAILING LIST

The Hag Rag mailing list never leaves Hag staff hands. Any mailings to members by other groups are done by Hag staffers. We do not sell or lend our list.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Hag Rag, Wisconsin's Lesbian-Feminist Press, announces the following themes for upcoming issues, and copy due dates (publication is the first of the following month):

NOTE: Effective with the September-October issue, our deadlines will change to the first of the month prior to the publication month.

Topic	Due Date
Fighting Back	October 1, 1988
Control	December 1, 1988
The Closet	February 1, 1989

Writers are invited to submit thought-provoking, theoretical, possibly humorous, and ground-breaking treatments of these topics or other issues relevant to lesbians. We also welcome drawings/photos by visual artists. Please include a short autobiography with your submission.

Articles should be no longer than 1000-1500 words (four to six double-spaced typed pages). Longer articles may need to be published in segments.

If we feel editing is necessary, we will contact you. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want your materials returned. Hag Rag pays in contributor's copies. For more information, please write Hag Rag, P.O. Box 93243, Milwaukee, WI 53203, or call Mary (Milwaukee) at 414/372-3330, or Lance (Madison) at 608/255-1227.

COMPUTER USERS TAKE NOTE!

Writers with access to Wordstar or Wordperfect should feel free to submit their articles in disk form. We can accept submissions on 5-1/4" disks or 3-1/2" disks (780K/regular density only on the latter). We will gladly return your disks if you'll help us cut down on the retyping of articles!!

ATTENTION WRITERS:

Lots of events in Wisconsin don't get covered because the staff can't do it all. If you like to listen to records, don't mind seeing the same film three or four times, participate in any political, social and/or cultural groups, or read books, AND want to write for us, please call Lance at 608/244-4370 after 5 pm weekdays, or anytime weekends.

ATTENTION MADISON-AREA WRITERS:

The new phone number for the Hag Madison contact is 608/244-4370. The next Madison writer's meeting is Wednesday, September 21. Call for details.



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Sex Talk, Blaming, "The Facts", and S/M: Add Water and Stir...

Some Lesbians have a tendency to make statements of opinion sound like fact. Some of us are pretty good at presenting our "facts" so that lesbians who might disagree with us have two choices: silence (which lets us assume we won the argument), or debate (which only makes those of us with "the facts" dig in). In lesbian feminist circles, those without the "facts" are called "politically incorrect" -- when we're being gracious. When the subject is sex, however, lesbians who disagree with those of us with the "facts" are called "lesbian sex mafia," "fascists," "prudes," or "reactionaries," depending on the persuasion of the fact-holder. I cite the following example only because it points out our tendency to say that what we know or think about how WE feel MUST be right for ALL lesbians. It comes from an untitled article by Kris Drumm, [*Lesbian Ethics*, Vol 2 #3, the SEX issue, pp. 58-60], a lesbian who has "the facts" about SM, dildos, and violence against wimmin.

She starts out by talking about power, the power to make things happen by visualising them, the power to create positive images, the power to control what goes out into the cosmos and thus what comes back at us. A fine concept. Underlying it, however, I think, is that old "blame the victim" rap. Let's pretend this is a conversation with two voices:

HER VOICE: "We know the power of visualization and how every act vibrates the entire web of life. As lesbian feminists, womyn-loving-womyn committed to empowering ourselves and healing the Earth, we are responsible for our every action, thought and mental image. Who we make love with and how we make love are important social/political/spiritual acts. We have the power to choose exactly how to vibrate the web."

HER VOICE: "When my lesbian feminist awareness dawned, many of my sexual fantasies became unacceptable to me. I realized that if I was masturbating while fantasizing about a woman who did not know it, I was intruding upon her psychic space. That if I imaged bondage or domination, I was feeding the actuality of those things. So I interrupted those fantasies and created new ones...."

MY LITTLE VOICE: in other words, we must be pc (we know how easy it is to agree on a definition of "PC"....) in everything we do in bed or the world will suffer; in other words, we again are responsible for mothering the entire planet, and guilty if we don't???? WHERE did we get all this power????

HER VOICE: "Using prick-like objects like dildos sends images of more pricks out into the world. Practising sado-masochism, acting out bondage or violence of any sort sends those pictures out into the world, reinforcing and strengthening the heteropatriarchal views of womyn and sex."

MY VOICE: Just like that -- again we are responsible for the violence done against us. Blame the victim? Isn't

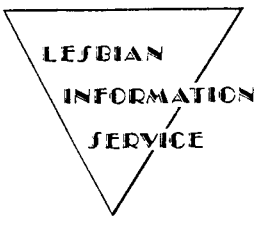
this taking 'you create your own reality' a little too far????

HER VOICE: "I am currently involved in a very painful dialogue with a lesbian I was lovers with for years who is now into S&M, particularly whipping and bondage. She is a lesbian 'feminist' who worked in the anti-porn and anti-violence-against-womyn movements for years. In exploring my hurt and rage I find I feel betrayed because I had known her to be an ally in our struggle for safety and freedom for all womyn. Now I feel mistrustful of her. I don't want to be intimate with and share my energies with one who is using a whip on another lesbian...who sends that image into the world. Whips symbolize domination, control, and violence. I do not understand how a lesbian who has seen so much violence against womyn can participate in an act which pantomimes that same violence. I am infuriated by what I see as her (and other sado-masochists') lack of responsibility for the pictures projected by her (their) acts."

HER VOICE: responsibility as lesbian feminists is to create and act out our sexuality in the most womyn loving, life affirming ways possible. To affirm our connection with the vulvas present everywhere in nature and take our cues from the Mother. Our bodies and our love making are power sources we can use to vibrate the web and transform our lives and Earth."

MY VOICE: In other words, yes, she is blaming the victims, and now it's not just that we dressed like we did or we were walking where we were walking, but that we THOUGHT something "violent" or did something in bed and thus not only brought it on ourselves but into the lives of other women as well. How CAN we live with ourselves???

*Wooden Shoe (like to know),
Somewhere in the USA*



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LISN (Lesbian Information Service Newsletter) is a Lesbian Feminist publication for Women-only. It is the only **British** monthly Lesbian Newsletter containing news about what's going on in Britain and internationally with Letters, Listings, Books Health, Features, Law, Articles, Lesbian Tales, Reviews.

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Beginning With "S"

Take an erotic little trip through the "S" words with me:

Sacred (as in: her sacred places)
 Safe (as in: safe within her arms)
 Salacious (as in: fond of leaping, lusting)
 Salient (as in: leaping, bounding, jumping)
 Saliva (as in: her lips meet your lips)
 Salome (as in: the dancer she)
 Salty (as in: her skin on a hot summer night; as in: agreeably provocative)
 Samba (as in: soft music and swaying hips)
 Sample (as in: her wares)
 Sanctity (as of: her bed, the temple)
 Sanctuary (ditto)
 Sandwich (as in: being in the middle)
 Sappho, Sapphic (as in: you know...)
 Sassy (as in: her tongue)
 Satiated (as in: with her presence, her love, her everything)
 Satin (as in: her sheets, her skin)
 Saucy (see Sassy)
 Saunter (as in: her walk)
 Scandalous (as in: what lesbians do)
 Scanty (as in: her negligee)
 Scarf (as in: over her eyes)
 Scenario (as in: theatre of the boudoir)
 Schmaltz (as in: that music...)
 Scratch (as in: fingernails)
 Scrub (as in: what we do in the shower)
 Sea maid (as in: mermaid, goddess, sea nymph)
 Seclusion (as in: the pine forest, or a room with a door)
 Second (as in: orgasm)
 Second coming (see above)



Secret (as in: her creases, crevasses, hidden places)
 Secretions (as in: wet)
 Seduce, seduction, seductive, seductress (as in: "Come into my web...")
 Seeing (as in: believing)
 Seize (as in: the moment)
 Semi circle (as in: with my tongue)
 Send (as in: "You send me.")
 Sensation, sense, sensitive (as in: yes)
 Sensual, sensuous (as in: she)
 Sentimental (as in: sloppy love songs)
 Sequestered (see Seclusion)
 Serenade (as in: on her guitar)
 Serene (as in: her face, afterwards)
 Seventh Heaven (as in: you've been there)
 Sex (see Sizzling)
 She (as in: you know her)
 Sheepish (as in: the first time)
 Sheer (see Scanty)
 Shirt (as in: open to the waist)
 Show (as in: "You show me yours, I'll show you mine...")
 Shower (as in: licking the water droplets from her skin)
 Shriek (as in: chasing and catching)
 Shudder (as in: her whole body shuddered)
 Shy (see Sheepish)
 Sidle (as in: sideways up to me)
 Siesta (as in: afterwards)
 Silk (see Satin)

BEGINNING WITH "S", cont.

Silly (as in: you've been there, too)
 Sin (as in: NO, it's not)
 Sing (see Serenade)
 Sixty-nine (see Spinning)
 Sizzle, sizzling (as in: "temperature's rising...")
 Sketch (as in: labia majora and minora)
 Skilled, skillful (as in: yes, she is)
 Skin (as in: ahhh.....)
 Skirt (as in: lifted)
 Skivvies (as in: undies)
 Sleazy (as in: Margie Adam)
 Slip (see Skirt)
 Smack (as in: lips)
 Small (as of: her back)



Smegma (see Secretions)
 Smooch (as in: dropping her off at work)
 Sniff (as in: under her breasts, in all her crevasses)
 Soft (see Skin)
 Soiree (as in: "Let's Soiree together.")
 Sojourn (as in: into her deepest caverns)
 Spank, spanking (as in: "You naughty thing, you.")
 Spark (as in: Court and Spark)
 Spasm (as in: vaginal)

Special (as in: yes, she is)
 Spectator (as in: not for long)
 Speechless (as in: sometimes afterwards)
 Spell (as in: she's got me under one)
 Spent (see Speechless)
 Spinning (as in: circles and circles)
 Spread (as in: legs, lips, arms, across the bed)
 Squirm (as in: whispering in her ear in a very public place)
 Stay (as in: "No, Don't go.")
 Steamy (see Sizzling)
 Stomach (as in: kissing, licking, and laying my head upon it)
 Straddle (as in: kneeling over my face)
 Strip (as in: all her clothes, slowly, or some of her clothes, quickly)
 Stroke (as in: hands or tongue on skin)
 Sublime (as in: awesome)
 Subside (as in: when the waves finally subside)
 Suck (as in: her earlobes, her tongue, her nether lips, her nipples)
 Suggestive (as in: dances, poses, and looks)
 Supine (as in: on her back)

I'm sure there are other "S" words in there, but I turned myself on, and have to wait until the secretions and spasms subside before I continue...

*Loose and Lascivious,
 Somewhere in the Midwest*

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[I presented this paper, in slightly different form, earlier this summer at the Midcontinent Region conference of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex (SSSS) -- Lance]

THE DISCUSSION OF SEX IN THE LESBIAN PRESS

I started this search for material by thinking back to my two years on the staff of the Amazon, a small monthly/bi-monthly feminist newspaper that was, for the most part, produced by some very hard-working lesbians who rarely felt comfortable identifying the paper as a lesbian newspaper, trying instead to appeal to "all women." I recalled, and my memory was reinforced as I reread the old papers, that we hardly ever dealt with our lesbianism in the paper, and therefore could hardly be expected to address the topic of lesbian sex. I wondered if that would be the case with many of the papers I read. That was the case. Even clearly identified lesbian newspapers and journals (with the exception of Lesbian Connection and those lesbian newspapers specifically devoted to sexuality) focused on analysis and discussion of the latest, hottest political topics (racism, poverty, transsexuals, butch/femme roles, boy children, separatism, etc.), rather than our sometimes-hot, sometimes-not sex lives.

I originally assumed that even though the dominant society identifies us as sexual deviants, defines us in terms of our sexuality (actually defines us in terms of a non-"standard" i.e. not-het sexuality), we actually spend little time and press talking about sex. My assumption was correct. And it's not because we're too busy "doing it" to talk about it. As several lesbians have pointed out in print, we *NEED* to talk about our sexuality, our sexual behaviors and practices. We don't talk about sex *ENOUGH* for some (although we talk about it too much for others...), and, other than arguing on a theoretical level the political correctness (or political incorrect-ness) of S/M, and other than the S/M workshops which actually show sex practices, we do little frank discussion on the practical side to lesbian sexuality.

Little wonder. As lesbians in a patriarchal, womon-hating and womon-killing world, as lesbians in a nation heavily invested in *NOT* practicing what it preaches, as lesbians and wimmin who have had their female sexuality sedated by the church, our "families," our schools, the media, and the state, we start off from a heavily restrained, repressed position: we don't even know what our sexuality would be like if we didn't fear rape, institutionalization, murder, harassment, loss of jobs, loss of nuclear family support, loss of social status because of the anti-womon, anti-lesbian environment we live in.

LET'S BE FRANK

In spite of all the negative encouragement, however, we still manage to write poems about "it," stories and novels about it, argue and theorize about it, and do it. Here is just a sampling of what we talked about--

1. Pre-orgasmic and non-orgasmic lesbians, and the pressures on both partners (You've seen the film, "One

comes, the other doesn't"???); the ego of the one who comes but whose lover can't/doesn't/hasn't come, the psychological and physiological tension of the lover who doesn't come; the sexual insecurities of each woman; the very assumptions that "sex leading to orgasms is the best sex" (criticized by Sidney Spinster in Lesbian Inciter) and that "all lesbians have orgasms" (Bertha Harris, in The Joy of Lesbian Sex).

2. Threesomes (why threes are fun and fine, and why we should "never mess with a couple.").

3. Vibrators and other sex toys (again, why they're fun and fine, and why they're disliked, politically incorrect, personally repulsive).

4. The technical aspects (oral sex, fingers, rubbing two bodies together to start a fire, anal sex, the "G" spot -- more appropriately termed "our spot" by one lesbian).

5. The concept of vaginal sex itself. Whereas Joann Loulan (author of Lesbian Sex and Lesbian Passion) assumes it's "normal" and that lesbians who either don't want or can't have objects in their vaginas "may have to mourn this loss," other lesbians say, "What loss?" and demand that the assumption that vaginal sex is normal, good and necessary, be rethought.

6. Lesbian "bed death" (or what I call the "terrible twos" -- "Did you say you've been lovers for two years? Are you still doing it? No? Oh....");

7. Affairs (why they're good, why they're not good, balancing the temporary fling against the long-term relationship, weighing the costs of weighing the costs....).

8. The emphasis on sex -- is it "natural"? Is it necessary? Is it over-emphasized? (Is it a stereotypical female response in any long-term relationship to hope that the sex fades away but that the "love" and the "relationship" remains?)

9. Orgasms -- the kinds, the magnitudes, the multitudes. Who has them and who doesn't? Why do we care? How important to mental and emotional and physical health are they anyway? Who says? Why do we sometimes have lapses in orgasmability? What else is going on in the relationship?

10. The impact of child (or adult) sexual abuse on female and lesbian sexuality. How deep does the damage go? What can lovers of sexual abuse survivors do for themselves and for their lovers when the psychological and sexual fallout surfaces?

11. Power-over in sexual relationships between wimmin. How do lesbians (who are also wimmin) end up in relationships with abusive lesbians? What is the appropriate individual response; what is the appropriate community response?

12. SM -- the debate has been raging for years. Why are we arguing about it? Why are some lesbians trying to make a political movement out of it? Why are lesbians doing it? Why lesbians shouldn't be doing it.

13. Celibacy, that is, chosen celibacy. (Or confusing having no lover not by choice with not having a lover by choice.)

14. Lesbians, sexuality, and disabilities. (Some papers periodically dedicate issues to lesbians and disabilities, incorporating some discussion of sexuality with and among physically challenged lesbians. Usually the topic doesn't surface again until another paper does a special issue on disabilities.)

"MYSTICAL UNIONING,"

(OR LACK THEREOF)

One of the most challenging articles was on "Mystical Unioning" by "Dicey Yates." [Lesbian Ethics, Vol 2 #3, pp. 3-32] In it, Yates put forth her theory of Mystical Unioning, and analysed lesbian knowledge of this phenomenon and our resistance to it. According to Yates, Mystical Unioning can occur during great sex, when one or both wimmin experiences a blending of consciousness of the two into one. "Our bodies retained their separateness while all else of us -- our minds, emotions, awarenesses, inclinations, and more -- became the constituents of one being, not two." Respondents to Yates' survey indicated that Mystical Unioning also occurs between lesbians and other naturally occurring life forms, including music, the seashore, lightning, and sunsets.

Yates asks why, when Mystical Unioning is possible, when lesbians have admitted experiencing it, why then lesbians resist it, deny it, are afraid of it. Her analysis explores men's "colonization" of mysticism, and patriarchal religion's handy dandy mental, sexual and spiritual terrorism. (See if you recognize it, it goes something like this: If I like something or someone, something bad will happen or something will take it/them away from me....) Lesbians reported their recurring fear of the fragmentation or annihilation of the self as a reason why they fear or resist Mystical Unioning. Some lesbians reported a loosening of "vast feelings of grief buried inside." My question is, Why the grief? Could it be because the most transcendent feeling we've experienced comes so rarely, is so fleeting, and leaves us grieving/craving for more?

To Yates' list of reasons for resisting/fearing Mystical Unioning, I add my own hypothesis: "If I have this experience it could be addictive; this state of Mystical Unioning could be so attractive and so pleasurable that I would realize the pettiness of patriarchal existence, that life is too short to get sidetracked by war, capitalism, religious and racial bigotry. I should spend as much time as possible in Mystical Union, even to the point of forsaking my job, my political work, the real world. I would want all my friends and sisters to have this experience too, and then the entire global economic and political house of cards would collapse." Have any of you, in the throes of a new, hot relationship, had a similar thought sequence go through your heads?

Yates examined reports of mystical experiences and "ecstatic encounters" and found that they share some common characteristics, including: "the subject person comprehends the presence of -- and the self's unity with and sameness as -- an all-encompassing Mind or Life or Spirit which is perceived to be the cause of all which exists," and "Enlightenment of the mind occurs."

One of her conclusions is that "Obviously there are abundant patriarchal reasons why one Lesbian in bed with another could not be having a mystical experience." I would add that there are abundant patriarchal reasons why one Lesbian in bed with another *SHOULD* not be having a mystical experience because if she/they *WERE* having a mystical experience that would disrobe and destroy the male control of spirituality and sexuality, and we just can't have that now, can we?

She also concludes that wimmin's sexuality, "our instinct, our drive to real-ize our oneness-of-essence is so powerful that men cannot control it; but I think they have coerced us into controlling it, ourselves." I think she's right. And I think that lesbians *CAN* peel away the superficial layers from the issue of sex and sexuality, once we get beyond the "why do you do what do you do in bed?" arguments. So what else can we talk about?

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

In Lesbian Connection, several lesbians suggested possible discussion/dialog topics to be explored, including:

GAMES LESBIANS PLAY: which ones hurt and which ones don't? How do we flirt? How do we tease? How do we reject or accept advances? **SEXUAL ATTRACTION:** What's it like and what do you do when you feel attracted to a womyn? Are you shy, scared, forward, anxious, hopeful, depressed, all of the above, and more? **RELATIONSHIPS:** Is sex reciprocal between you and your lover? If not, why not? Is oral sex always a turn-on for you? What gives you great enjoyment? The G-spot. **MONOGAMY AND NON-MONOGAMY:** What works for you? How have you been hurt by either? Jealousy. Exclusivity. **CELIBACY:** Why choose it? How is it helpful? **THE BAR SCENE:** Alcoholism and sexual anxiety. **RELATIONSHIPS COUNSELING:** Are there dykes in your city who are doing it? What are the results? **BUSINESSES:** Like the Wishing Well and New Dawn (penpal clubs) -- are they disasters feeding off the loneliness and anxiety many of us feel from time to time in not having a lover when we want one? Have they worked? How? For whom? **LESBIAN HERSTORY:** Butch-Fem relationships as seen through the eyes of the womyn in them. Older lesbians and sexuality. Teenage lesbians and sexuality. **LESBIANS WITH DAUGHTERS ENTERING PUBERTY:** How do we deal with our daughters if they're straight, lesbian or bi? How do we help keep them from being hurt? **CREATING A NEW AND MORE APPLICABLE LANGUAGE** by Lesbians about our sexuality. This list is by no means inclusive.

In addition, I would like to see us grapple with the the issues facing those of us in long-term relationships, including, but not limited to, the following:

*Why do we stay in relationships long after the sexuality is dead, and all other forms of honest communication has stopped? Is our female conditioning so complete that we willingly settle for an asexual non-verbal existence rather than risk the single life, rejection, or the possibility of a lusty, intellectually stimulating relationship or relationships? What makes some lesbians get up and leave, and others stay until they are left?

*How can we keep our long-term relationships from getting to that deadend in the first place? Do we have to separate periodically, or bring other lovers into the picture? Go to "Marriage Encounters" for lesbians? WHAT?

*Is there an alternative to that "honeymoon" period, where you can't keep your hands off each other, and you forget sleep, your friends, your job, until you have consumed each other? Is there a better way to go about your passion? Can you have passion and lust that lasts for more than three months? Should we ration it? Meter it? Dole it out? Is that too restrictive? Is "bed death" inescapable? You can't tell me the hets don't have this problem. I remember Marilyn Monroe in, "The seven-year itch"....

While we're on the subject of couples, Mary Lee Sargent suggested that we need to deal with "ethics among lesbians regarding ongoing intimate relationships and how we out to behave towards them." In the April, 1988 issue of off our backs, she said that lesbians have no strongly felt and clearly articulated ethic about respecting those ongoing intimate relationships. I can say from my own experience as an extremely politically correct lesbian that in the late seventies it seemed like it was a political imperative to break up lesbian couples.

*How can we train ourselves to be direct about our sexual wants, desires, dislikes? How can we break the cycle of female conditioning that makes us choose passive-aggressive behavior over honest confrontation in our relationships? Do we need speech therapy? (Probably more effective than each of us trotting off to our individual therapists.) I think I am talking about a gender-wide resocialization here. Sexual honesty in verbal communication seems like a foreign language to us.

*What can the lesbian community do for single dykes? The coupleism debates of the late 70's have died away. How do we share sexuality with our friends? Can we? If lesbians can have sex with wimmin with whom they have no ongoing intimacy, can lesbians have sexual intimacy with friends without the passion? Is there such a thing as the lesbian sexual resource redistribution? A sex welcome wagon? "Hi, we heard you were new in the neighborhood and might need some TLC." ???

*What kind of ethical community action can we take when we know that lesbians are sexually or physically abusing other lesbians, when we know that lesbian therapists are following the male model of therapy and becoming sexually involved with their patients? What are our responsibilities to ourselves and each other to

define inappropriate behavior and then decide how we are going to take action against inappropriate behavior?

*What is the power dynamic doing in orgasm anyway? If you come when I make love to you, but I don't come when you make love to me, what does that do to your ego? And my guilt feelings? And what does guilt do to sexual freedom and mystical unioning? How can I believe you when you say it's okay if I masturbate with you next to me?

*And why use such an ugly word "masturbate" when the pleasure is so beautiful? Who's got a better word? And, as Sidney Spinster declared, let's throw out the question, "Didja come?" She suggested replacing it with "How did that feel for you?" or "Were you satisfied?" I'd say let's replace it with "Would you do it again just like that, or different? I'm open to suggestions."

THE HIGH PRICE OF PATRIARCHY

I could go on forever. That's just the point. WE could go on forever talking about sex, really talking about what we need, want, enjoy, where lesbian sexuality could go in the cosmic future, what we need while we're getting there. Let's get the sex talk out of the closet.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I believe that the lesbian press IS a proper place -- and there are others -- for us to discuss our sexuality. When a topic is too politically hot to handle in our small communities, the national and international press offer a larger audience, varied feedback, and an objectivity and safety that arguing this stuff face-to-face does not.

Secondly, I believe that lesbians, being the ornery critters that many of us are, are in a position to challenge all the patriarchal definitions and constructions of sexuality, and not just lesbian sexuality. Because we are wimmin, our searching and struggling impacts on the female gender as well as on the lesbian nation. I think that lesbians have seen through the lies and the conditioning females receive every day, every hour, every moment from the lesbian-hating, womon-killing patriarchy we find ourselves in. I believe that because we see through those lies, we can construct our own sexuality in our own images.

This construction will not be easy. I believe that our split personality around sexuality is a learned response to seeing and experiencing real violence directed towards females who attempt to connect with our female sexuality without men's permission, and outside of male-imposed boundaries or definitions. This reluctance to engage our full faculties in the exploration of our sexual powers and abilities comes from a real fear and knowledge of what males do with the information (or disinformation) about female sexuality. What has happened to lesbians who attempted the free exercise of our sexuality? Do you see their images carved in Mount Rushmore? Hardly. Do we have collections of poetry and song dedicated to their brilliance and resistance and power? (We have shreds of Sappho's songs and poems written for those very wimmin. But you notice I said "shreds." The hands which captured Sappho's poems taught Oliver North something about destroying evidence....)

I also assume here that our failure to freely and energetically discuss and debate lesbian sexuality may have something to do with the conditioning females receive about our sexuality from other females -- our mothers, our teachers, our silent-female figures everywhere -- who most certainly know of the effects, if not the specifics of male disinformation campaigns about female sexuality. Deprived of the active voice, the active sexuality, how ARE we to learn how to speak, to use words that don't exist to describe feelings and actions we're not supposed to know about or experience? Denied the right to represent our own female sexuality, we stumble through our lives accepting that what males have constructed for us is the WAY IT IS for females. We spend so much time defending ourselves against rape (a male sexual invention that stifles and punishes females for being sexual), and defending ourselves against charges of "frigidity" (another male sexual invention that coerces wimmin into meeting male sexual demands rather than proposing our own), it is a wonder we have come as far as we have....

The lesbian-feminist newspaper is not the only place the lesbian nation needs to discuss lesbian sexuality. But it certainly will be a NEWSWORTHY subject when we break these chains on our minds and bodies. We have books out exploring the various aspects, theoretical and practical, of lesbian sexuality. Whatever the medium, we will argue about the content, the style, the tone, the message, and the political correctness of it, just like we argue about everything. We still have an ambivalence towards TALKING about our sexuality, an ambivalence that goes very deep, that goes to an irrational place in our often-times abused sexual cores.

Despite the ambivalence, however, I detect a willingness to boldly go where no lesbians, no wimmin, no humans have gone before in questioning the so-called "nature" of female sexuality, of sexuality itself. There are some very brave explorers among us. Some of our more prolific lesbian ethicists and theorists are breaking new ground everyday, examining the very definitions of female, of lesbianism under patriarchy, of sex, of pleasure, of the political nature of lesbian sexuality, of the power of the erotic in our lives, of the damage done to lesbian psyches and hearts and minds and lives by a repressed sexuality, of the possible face of future lesbian sexuality if we break free of the chains on our sexuality, and therefore on our power. We have four or five lesbian sex magazines, and we have the Lesbian Connection, a place where Anonymous EveryDyke can write in her most private feelings and explorations and concerns, opinions and theories about S-E-X.

Yes, we do talk about sex. And thanks to lesbian artist/photographer Tee Corinne and others, we have begun to experiment with female sexual imagery in a very lesbian/womon-identified way. Thanks to lesbian cartoonist Alison Bechdel, we even get to laugh at our interpersonal and lesbian sexual foibles and fears. Thanks to lesbian theorists and writers and publishers, we have begun to explore previously hidden or uncharted territories of lesbian (and female) sexuality. Between the art, the humor, and the analysis, we may very well free ourselves from this patriarchally imposed female sexual impoverishment. We will have ended

male colonization of female sexuality, and we no longer will suppress, ignore, or deny our sexuality.

Lance, Madison

[Lance has been on the planet thirty-six years this time around, and has been in love with Justice Fire for many years. This is our third time around in thirteen years, and we've been together again for seven years. And yes, we're still doing IT. Are there any others out there like us????]

[I would like to thank all the lesbians who write about lesbian sexuality, and all the publishers who provide us with a forum for discussion. If any lesbians are interested in the citations for this paper, drop me a note, c/o HAG RAG, with a self-addressed stamped envelope.] Newspapers and journals used in gathering material for this paper:

Amazon, Bad Attitude, Country Women

Gossip (LONDON), Lesbian Connection

Lesbian Contradiction, Lesbian Ethics

Lesbian Inciter/Insighter/Insider

Lesbian Network (AUSTRALIA)

off our backs, On Our Backs, Signs, Trivia

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Lesbians: Are We At Risk?

I've been putting off completing this article for the **Hag Rag** because the information following is complicated and seems to be flooding the media within the last year or two. Please hear me out. This is a desperate plea for the lesbians of the Milwaukee community and others to sit up and take notice of our risk for acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and especially HIV infection (the virus that causes AIDS).

We have been told that we are at little or no risk for these infections which may complicate our lives and compromise our health, not to mention may kill us! "Why?" you ask. Because not one agency; government or other, has even used us in their statistics or asked us if we knew if we were at risk.

I have recently been hired by a governmental program to counsel and educate those infected with HIV and those who have developed AIDS or ARC (AIDS Related Complex). I have found no mention anywhere of lesbian risk or place on any form to identify lesbian risk. Without those statistics there will be no funding or help or anything directed at lesbians. (It took several weeks, but we now have a lesbian category--confidential of course--on our new forms).

Are We Really At Risk?

If a lesbian engages in high risk behavior or has had a blood product transfusion between 1979 and 1985, she may be at some risk for acquiring HIV.

Specifically, if a lesbian:

1. Uses needles.
2. Has used needles in the past.
3. Has sex with needle users or past needle users.
4. Has had blood transfusion or products between 1979 and 1985 (all blood is now tested for HIV).
5. Has sex with men (yes, there are wimmin who claim to be lesbians, but have sex with men).
6. Has had sex in the past five years with men who have high risk behaviors.
7. Has used semen for donor insemination from a donor whose HIV status was unknown.

If you are not at high risk for infection, great! Stay that way. Practice safer sex.

If you are at risk, get an anonymous, free antibody test at a counseling and testing site. For locations call 273-AIDS. If you think you've recently been exposed get one test now and another in three to six months. The antibodies to HIV do not always show up immediately, but within six months most wimmin would be able to see positive or negative results that were fairly accurate.

If you already have HIV infection or AIDS or ARC there is financial, legal and medical help through the Milwaukee AIDS Project. Ask to speak with a lesbian.



Liberty BRADSHAW

Safer Sex for Lesbians

The first step is to decide what your own guidelines are. Decide on sex behaviors you will engage in, those you are negotiable about, and those sex behaviors you will not engage in. List them on paper in separate columns. Remember, this list will change from time to time. If you are already in a relationship, have your partner write her own list and then exchange them and engage in (excuse the pun) a lively discussion. If you are not in a relationship, do it now, so you will be prepared when you are ready to have sex with someone. Remember to always discuss this list in a nonsexual and nonromantic setting to keep your emotions from getting in the way. Be flexible and honest about what you will or will not engage in. It's your health.

Suggestions for Safer Sex

- Massage
- Kissing
- Body-to-body rubbing
- Fantasy
- Voyeurism
- Exhibitionism

ARE WE AT RISK?, cont.

- Masturbation
- Vibrators and other sex toys
- Other activities that do not involve exchange of blood, urine, feces and body fluid
- Erotic movies

Possibly Safer Sex Practices

- Oral-genital contact
- Hand/finger-to-genital contact
- Vaginal or anal penetration using finger
- Cots or disposable latex gloves
- External urine contact
- Anal-oral contact with latex rubber barrier

Unsafe Sex Practices

- Skin piercing with needles
- Any activity which causes bleeding
- Urine or feces in mouth or vagina
- Unprotected oral-anal contact
- Fisting (hand in rectum/vagina)
- Sharing of sex toys that have contact with body fluids

These suggestions will also reduce your risk for contracting or transmitting other STDs. Lesbians are more likely to transmit yeast and trichomoniasis infections, genital herpes, and HPV (venereal warts) if they do not use safer sex. Use of dental dams is primarily for those at risk of transmitting HPV, genital herpes, and HIV.

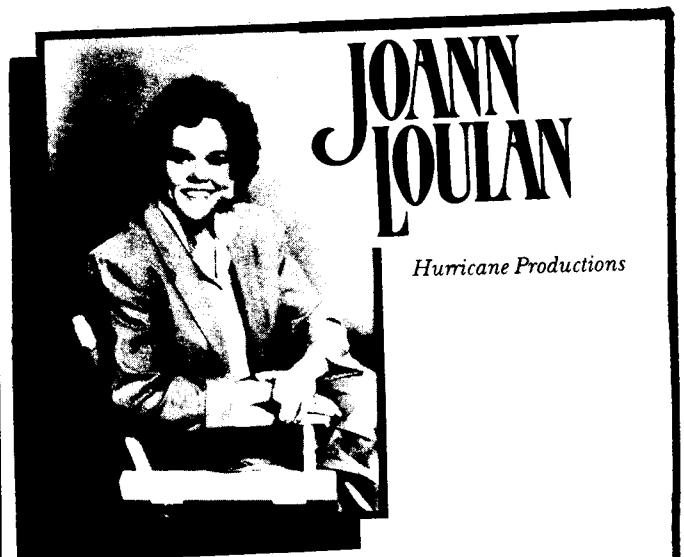
Anytime your partner has a rash, bumps, sores, blisters or an abnormal discharge in the genitals, do not have sex with her until you find out if it is contagious. The Women's Alternative Health Clinic, 1240 E. Brady Street, is a confidential safe health resource for wimmin. Call there Saturday mornings for appointment or referral.

Free "risk reduction" kits will be given to lesbian at the Gay and Lesbian Health Community Health Education Council booth at MAPFEST on Labor Day. The kit includes a latex dam, ky creme and a safer sex handout.

Let's open up and start talking about safer sex with each other. Is anyone interested in attending a free safer sex educational and fun seminar? Discussion topics will include finding your "G" spot; erotic movies; safer sex; where to purchase sex toys, finger cots and latex dams; and how to discuss safer sex with sex partners.

For confidential information, call Juana at 414/226-8620, ext. 342 (work) or 414/265-1339 (home).

Juana Sabatino, Milwaukee

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WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT LESBIAN SEX?

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Workshop at The Counseling Center of Milwaukee

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P.O. Box 200 Milw. WI 53201

For More Information Call:

The Counseling Center
(Sue B.) 271-2565
Women's Crisis Line
937-5452

OPEN LETTER

Dear Valerie,

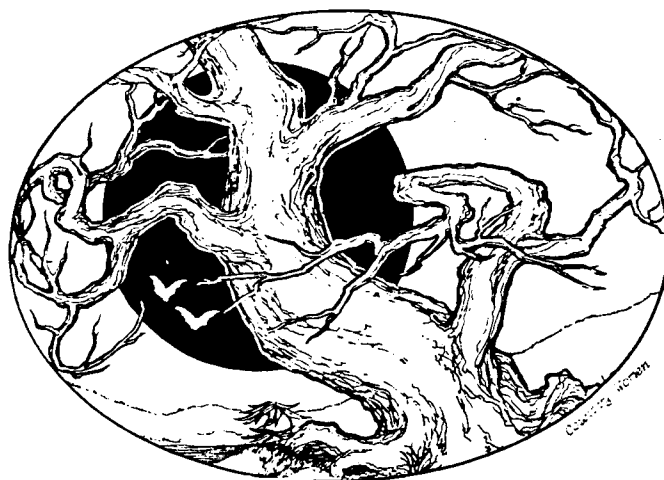
I'm writing to respond to your letter about the way I, Mari and Doreen described ourselves in the autobiographies of our articles on Separatism [*Hag Rag*, Vol. 2 #6]. I have several issues to discuss; some of my ideas are half-formed, are glimpses of how I want Seps and other wimmin to respond to each other. I absolutely mean this to be the start of a dialogue about responsible criticism, about disagreeing without trashing. These are ideas I had jotted down for an article on community I hadn't yet written, so, in many ways, this is a good opportunity for me. I, too, have decided to respond in an open letter....

I'm not interested in spending much space defending myself, since my article on Separatism says almost everything I would say now. The way Mari and I chose to describe ourselves was a political choice. It grew out of something Ntozake Shange had said at a reading you and I went to together, about how absurd and ethnocentric it is for white wimmin to call ourselves "Majority" and wimmin of color "Minority" when wimmin of color are the majority of wimmin in this world. I thought about this a long time, talked to my friends about it. It seems to me that there are also many more working-class (or poor, whatever label we use) wimmin in the world than middle-class wimmin, and, in western culture, more wimmin who would be considered fat than wimmin who would be considered thin (I don't know if this is true for the world.) I thought about what it would feel like to think of myself as "minority" instead of the easy assumptions I have in this country about who is like me and who isn't. And I thought about how strong I feel when Women's Transit sends out invitations to "Lesbians and other wimmin", putting my reality first, validating it, praising it, just for the space of one postcard.

The autobiographies grew out of talking about these things and wanting to experiment with new ways of thinking about power and privilege in my life. For two sentences I constructed a world where fat, working-class women of color were the admired and measured-against majority, and saw how I felt fitting myself into that. I felt good being fat and working-class, had to think a lot about my skin color being defined only as not the norm. I wouldn't say this is the way we should all describe ourselves; I wouldn't say I would use it again. But I didn't and don't feel white guilt or "not very positive," the only thing I was avoiding was unthinkingly repeating the same old patterns over and over again. I don't play the "more politically correct than you" game, and, in fact, think the label PC is yet another way of belittling and trashing the work I and other Seps are trying to do.

I'm really not sure how we can better describe ourselves. Most of the time I just describe myself and expect other wimmin to do the same, but simply listing who we are seems innocent and naive; in a world where white and thin and monied carry so much privilege, pretending like my saying I am white and another woman

saying she is black is just difference and not a power hierarchy is refusing to name the reality around us. My method in the Sep article is not ideal, either, for it is still on the norm/difference model. As with so many other issues, I am at a loss for words. As you say, we do need to talk about this as a community. A point you made in a phone conversation we had was very good; I wish you had written about it as well. You said that you have problems with the term "womon of color" because it lumps all wimmin who aren't caucasian together and tries to pretend they are the same. I agree with that, and I don't know how to describe it in better words yet.



That's my explanation. Now beyond that, to what I really want to talk about, which also means getting into the hard stuff, the reason I almost wrote this about your response instead of to you. I was upset by your letter. Not by your concern, not by your willingness to speak out in behalf of wimmin (I admire the ways you do these), but by the way you chose to deal with me. You didn't speak to me first, which could have led to a letter saying something like "I know why Elliott tried this but I still have problems with how she said it." Having talked with me would help me take your criticism much more seriously because I would know that you take me seriously as a woman, that you respect me enough to let me know you feel something I said might sound racist and that you could disagree with me without writing me off as "irritating and pretentious (...) racist and avoidant." Talking to me, letting me see the letter before it went to *Hag* would also have been treating me as a dyke in your community, as a friend, and not as a stranger. This community, all of our communities, are so small that we can't deal with each other as if we will never meet face to face and, by doing so, have to be immediately accountable for our words. I think a lot of the brutal trashing of Feminists, Lesbians and Separatists happens when speakers feel they are describing an "other" they will never meet, talk with, or take seriously. We, as members of these communities, have to break these patterns, if not for the types of ethical considerations we Seps are talking about then at least to keep enough spaces open for us to talk at all.

OPEN LETTER, cont.

Keeping communication spaces open is my next point. Your letter felt much like Sep trashing. So many Seps won't even talk to non-Seps anymore because we are so tired of this type of reaction, of having one thing we say pulled out of context, ripped apart and used to silence everything else we have said or will say. You never mentioned any point I made in my article; did you even read it? How did my discussion of integrity, risk-taking, dedication to breaking down hierarchies, and passionate love for wimmin become your sense that I was just trying to sound politically correct at the cost of insulting wimmin's lives? To have you not mention anything I wrote makes me feel like I've not been heard. Separatists on the whole are risk-takers; we say outrageous things, think even more outrageous things, break down walls and leap hurdles. We are, in Mary Daly's words, Boundary-Bounders.

Sometimes we do go too far, sometimes we speak quickly without thinking through all of the implications of our words, sometimes we say things that are hurtful. But very often we say things that are challenging, new, vital, important, funny and absolutely necessary to discovering ways to be, in a vision anchored in woman-loving. We seem to have an incredible ability to do all of these things at once. While we frequently need to be challenged and are sometimes dead wrong, we also need to be listened to carefully and seriously.

I'm not saying that Separatists already treat each other in these affirming ways and that it is non-Seps who don't, that we have the answers and just aren't telling. I believe learning to deal with each other across differences is one of the most important things for Seps to do now (and other wimmin, too, although I am less committed to helping them learn). I think wimmin in feminist communities deal with conflict poorly. We write off wimmin with whom we disagree over large and small issues. I feel strongly enough about some things that I would avoid many types of relationships with wimmin who disagree with me, but even these rifts shouldn't lead to the trashing and silencing that often occur. I'm not sure exactly how to do this. I know we can not stop talking, can not just walk away from each other when something gets difficult. We may have to disagree and let it go. During any conversation each of us may have to be willing to say, "I was wrong, I was confused, I really need to think about this more." We might decide that the disagreement is so serious that we will no longer choose to be close or to work together. As long as we do this without trashing, without reducing one another to old arguments, this seems a perfectly good choice too. Or we might all listen and think and have some beliefs rewritten and some enforced and be closer and stronger as individuals and as a community.

A bit of honesty -- I don't have a track record of doing conflict well, but am building a vocabulary of words and ideas and practices around doing it better. I've started using a model sentence, saying about wimmin I have fundamental problems with, "I disagree with her about _____, and this is important, but she has done these other things and I do respect her in such and such

ways." I try to name the problem areas, not give vague hints of doom and woman-hating so common in these situations. This isn't a perfect or very thorough response. It's a start, a way to begin the conversations and debates that get us to new places. My friend Lance calls the way we have been going "Dispose-A-Dyke", writing off wimmin we disagree with and at the same time assuming we can just find new wimmin to associate with. Whatever we call it, we as a community need to acknowledge the ways we don't hear and silence each other and start talking and hearing better.¹

I suppose you, Val, and everyone else reading this, are just waiting for me to explain how we go about having the conversations and making the decisions that will build community in the ways I'm dreaming. I don't have the answer (as if the answer could ever exist). I do have some thoughts:

1. We need safe spaces to write and talk. In these spaces we would each feel enough respect from others to be willing to take risks and enough self-respect to be willing to take responsible criticism. Without safe spaces we retreat behind defense walls and stop hearing.

2. We need to stop saying anything about a woman or her ideas we wouldn't say to her, no matter how "true" it may feel; the means are the ends.

3. In situations where we can't speak face-to-face because of distance, or where we want to speak to more wimmin about an idea or a problem, I think we must (if we are to communicate ethically) write as if we were speaking to a woman personally; write subject to subject and not subject about object. This is a revolutionary act, since writing and thinking objectively (that is, to write and to think about objects) has been forced upon us by western (un-) culture and (mis-) education.

4. I absolutely believe we have to break out of monogamy as the main (sometimes the only) model of bonding and communication. The monogamy mind-set that keeps us relating one woman at a time is as harmful to the community as therapy (which I see as a paid monogamous relationship).

5. We have to find a balance between naming as a strong way to shape our reality and labeling as a way to stop hearing new information, to categorically shut out certain wimmin.

6. We also need to stop arguing about the same old things, and we have to take ourselves seriously enough to stop being threatened by conflict or disagreement. For wimmin, especially for wimmin coming out of abusive families, this won't be easy, because we have a healthy fear of what happens when arguments start, but doing things like setting up safe spaces can help.

7. In a conversation last night a friend reminded me of the distinction between making judgements and being judgemental. That's a good one -- we should keep that distinction. I myself want to stop putting some

OPEN LETTER, cont.

dykes on pedestals and then being certain I could have nothing of interest to say to them.

I'm sure every other dyke I know has her own things to start trying.

I want to say once more, clearly, that I'm not angry with you for having spoken or unwilling to speak with you, or with anyone, about what I say. I'm looking forward to sharing these ideas with you, to hearing your thoughts on ethics and community and taking wimmin seriously.

Respectfully,

Elliott, Mankato, MN

P.S. These words are my own, written by me at a nice friendly dyke computer terminal. A lot of the ideas grew out of conversations, and I want to credit them as well, because I don't think many of the ideas we have come from isolation. Some of the wimmin I talked to are: Mari, Mary, Maggie, Lance, Amber, Martha, Kaet. I, however, am accountable for these words and saying they talked to me is in no way saying they hold these same thoughts or would ever say them in the same ways.

Footnotes

1. I'm not describing the humanistic, liberal, new age "everyone and every action is equal and ok" non-thinking. I want to hear other Seps and radical wimmin, not Shirley McClaine or republocrat puds.

2. A good example of using "objective" writing to put down and write-off other wimmin is Barbara Smith's letter, printed in Sojourner, about the two Separatists attacked at Sisterfire last summer. In the letter she repeatedly uses only their last names ("Daniels and Fougere"), an academic, male way of writing. To me, it felt like she was purposefully avoiding their first names so she could write about them as objects, as examples, and wouldn't have to treat them as wimmin, as her equals. What would her letter have sounded like if she had been addressing them directly? Could she have so easily dismissed their story?

Tampon Applicators

We're sure many of you have heard about the medical garbage floating up on East Coast beaches this summer. Well, used syringes aren't the only kinds of trash making the beaches unsafe this hot summer. The following release, by Stephen Sautner of "Clean Ocean Action," appeared in the July/August 1988 issue of Environmental Action. As dykes concerned with our environment, we hope you'll take note!

They're used as cannons on sand castles, finger puppets on a child's hand, and even as toy "beach whistles." Beach combers have collected over 700 in two hours off a half-mile stretch of beach at Sandy Hook, NJ.

Some environmental groups, such as Clean Ocean Action, use plastic tampon applicators as indicators of water quality, what we call "the tampon index." If a beach is laced with enough tampon applicators, rest assured that the area has recently been exposed to raw or poorly treated sewage.

Tampon applicators may pose a threat to sea life because they resemble small fish in the water. They also raise health concerns. But so far no data exists on either risk.

The plastic tampon applicator symbolizes our dependence on plastic disposables, even when perfectly adequate biodegradable tampon alternatives exist. Currently, legislation has been introduced in New Jersey and Massachusetts to ban plastic applicators.

Clean Ocean Action is a grassroots coalition of 100 organizations whose primary goal is to improve the degraded water quality off the New York-New Jersey coast.



Dykes to Watch Out For



FERRON TAKES MADISON BY STORM

Ferron played to a full house of enthusiastic women (and a few men) on July 9th, 1988 at the Barrymore Theatre in Madison.

The concert started late and the doors did not open until nearly 8 p.m. The resulting line stretched all the way around the corner -- it must have been over a block long. Most of us didn't mind waiting; it became quite a social event. Women walked down the line handing out free reading material -- leaflets. One woman walked down the line selling the latest issue of *Hag Rag*. I could sense that this was a very important special occasion.

Eventually we all got inside the theatre and the mood of the crowd seemed near euphoric. It felt like a hot air balloon about to rise. Then Ferron walked onstage.

"Surprised you, didn't I?" was her introduction. She was off-hand and self-deprecating. She told stories about her trip and how her guitar was stolen. She had to use a rental guitar. Later, after flubbing the lyrics to a song, she claimed she was also using a rent-a-brain. Ferron was pretty funny, but a few heretics like myself wished she had sung more and talked less.

Ferron seemed to have a little trouble remembering songs. When she goofed on "Ain't Life a Brook," she got a volunteer from the audience to sing it onstage with her. The volunteer was jumping up and down like she wished she could leap to the ceiling. She did a good Ferron imitation. It was a high point in the show. The audience was full-out euphoric at this point.

Another high point for me was Ferron's rendition of "Belly Bowl." It was very intense.

Most of the songs were slower. Ferron joked about her songs being depressing. Judging from what I saw, a lot of people found her songs more romantic than sad. Just from my seat I saw several couples necking.

This was not a solo show. Ferron was accompanied by Novi, who plays the viola. Novi only had a couple of solos, which was too bad; she is very good. She and Ferron seemed to be having a lot of fun horsing around together on stage.

Ferron ended the show in nearly as low-key a fashion as she had started it. But she did get called back for several encores.

Then we all went out to find it pouring rain. It was a glorious finish to the evening.

Hannah the Hag, Madison

Please send your calendar events listings to *Hag Rag*, PO Box 93243, Milwaukee, WI, 53203, by October 1, for inclusion in the November-December issue.

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Dykes to Watch Out For



One Day in the Life of Yvonne Denisovich

The alarm goes off, as usual, at 5 a.m. and I stretch luxuriously for this is the best time of the day: I can feel myself dampening with anticipation.

As I wait for the two hacks (guards) to come around doing 5 o'clock count, I lay out my plans for the day. Bonnie has a supply of sanitary napkins and will give me a package if I do her windows, so #1 is pinch some Windex at work.

The unit is out of toilet tissue--again--so I need to persuade Karen to liberate some from her unit. She always wants envelopes so I need to get some from Tee who owes me cigs but would be delighted at the substitution....

"Jesus H. Christ!"

I leap from bed at the simultaneous sound of Mr. Ward's voice and body alarm. An awed crowd is already forming at the john door. Linda is sitting against the wall and there is blood flowing down her hands, on the floor, on the walls, on the sink...

The P/A (medic) forces his way through the throng followed by Lt. Smith. The dazed girl is swathed in gauze, cuffed, slammed into a wheelchair and taken off to seg (the "hole"). Attempted suicide is not only self-mutilation it is also mis-use of government property. She will certainly get a "shot" (incident report) and may lose good days or pull new charges.

Despite the harrying of the hacks, we slowly drift back to our rooms. Despair to the point of death, like escape, has drifted through all our minds. We ache for our sister and ourselves because she has touched our vulnerability.

Smith and Ward do the count and they are both white and shaken. Violence like this is a common denominator that hits hard at both captor and captive.

Count over, Patty slips into my bed bringing her blanket and her raincoat. The familiar folds and curves of her body settle comfortably against mine and I feel desire churning and flowing through me. We kiss hungrily and our lovemaking is frantic and frenzied.

We aren't afraid of being caught (although we automatically listen for keys); the hack is too tired to prowl around at 5:30 a.m. Rather, being realists, we know this piercing sweetness won't last. At any time, we can be moved to different units or to different prisons in the federal system.

And even if we manage to keep our relationship viable in here against all odds, once we hit the streets the pressures of our disparate lives will pull us apart. Prison romances, straight and gay, are notoriously short-lived despite the most ardent protestations of undying love.

All too soon, I am coming and she is following; but with satiation there is no real sense of completeness. I hate

groping furtively in the dark, listening for keys; it makes me feel like a rutting animal. It lays a coat of shame over something that is natural and beautiful.

We are so warm and snug in the little bunk that I am reluctant to stir; but the shower line is forming. So...I don my khaki undershorts (stolen from Textile) and my tee shirt (stolen from the laundry as they're only issued to men)--which is all I have to sleep in--add my raincoat (no bathrobe), my steel-toed shoes (no slippers) and join the crowd in the john.

Shit! No hot water! I flit in and out of the icy spray and hop back into bed to thaw. As I lay shivering, I conduct my morning clinic. Medical care in this "medical facility" is almost non-existent so we inmates basically care for each other.

I dispense such meds as I have garnered by hook and crook and send Rosalia--two weeks overdue, cramping and spotting--to the hack with instructions to tell him she is in labor. I draw the line at delivering children.

At 6:30, we are released for breakfast. Patty and I scurry to B- Building to the chow hall. Automatically, I grab two cold cereals knowing full well that the hot dish will range from scarcely palatable to totally inedible.



In the dining room, Patty grabs a table while I rinse our glasses and silverware--a necessary precaution or one suffers the agonies of the Lexington Two-Step (rampant diarrhea).

We eat the cereal, passing up the gummy potato pancake, scorched potato chunks swimming in grease, and underdone turkey sausage. Potatoes and/or rice are served every meal so that we all tend to waddle around like the Pillsbury doughboy.

YVONNE DENISOVICH, cont.

After dumping our trays, we head for the basement corridor. With any luck, we can mill about there until our bosses come through and we can get into our workplaces.

Hell's bells! Neal Bowen is on duty and we are all driven out into the sleet to stamp about cursing and shivering. I warm myself with thoughts of slowly peeling this obnoxious creep like a grape.

Finally, the ADP bosses arrive and I get back into welcome warmth. The temperature in this building is kept quite comfortable--for the computers! I make myself a strong cup of coffee, light up my 10th cig, con Sandy out of half her Twinkie, and settle down to keying.

At 8:30, Donna comes back to mop our floor and I scoot up to her supply closet and pinch some Windex. Tee has agreed to provide the envelopes in lieu of the cigs, and Karen has agreed to bring the old TP so all is going well....

In the joint, when all is going too well, watch out! Sure enough, at 10 o'clock, Cara suddenly leaps up and begins to stab Delia with her inkpen. She is absolutely tripping and the two male bosses can barely restrain her. The goon squad arrives--after 15 terrifying minutes--and carts her off.

What triggered this madness? Most of us are a little crazy from fear, stress, dehumanizing treatment, faltering nutrition, or illicit drugs brought in by the hacks...we all make our guesses, but who knows?

We drift back to work again uneasy at being touched once more by something that hangs like a shadow over us. We all have a breaking point beyond which we'll go off on the hacks, each other, or ourselves, and we know it.

As 10:30 approaches, we get ready to terminate out of our CRTs and go to lunch. The phone rings and we sit poised for flight. Mr. Sands hangs up looking decidedly displeased.

"The electricity is out in Food Service so they're sending over sack lunches."

Goddamnit! Moldy bread, stringy lettuce, and green (yes green) bologna!

The "food" arrives and we dump the sandwiches en masse. The skim milk is warm but not spoiled (a novelty) and we have apples and what we can beg or borrow--so we all manage to more or less dine sufficiently.

At 2 o'clock break, Kathy comes up from Cable grim and livid with rage.

"The sons of bitches aren't going to let us have our Xmas boxes!"

We are stunned. We've been looking forward to those goodies for months. Those fortunate enough to receive parcels share with the needy so that everyone feasts.

"They're going to sell us some shit from Swiss Colony," she adds bitterly.

Well, Uncle Sam is no fool. We're already forced to buy all our stamps, grooming and laundry aids, cigs, and snacks from the commissary at exorbitant prices--nothing can be sent in--but Jesus! Buying our holiday treats? No fucking mercy!

Many have already sent money home to their families. What are they to do? Reluctantly, sullenly, we return to work, furious at this latest bit of perfidy.

Three o'clock and there is a frantic rapping on our glass door. Miss Eberling opens it and I stare aghast at Patty. She is sobbing uncontrollably and clutching the stiff body of one of our beloved cats.

"The bastards. The rotten bastards."

Finally, I get the story out of her. The Institution decided the innocent creatures were a health hazard and strychnined them.

Jesus, God, and Mary! We are overrun by rats, mice, bats, and bugs, and everything in between that slithers, slinks, or soars and they're poisoning cats?

I stand numb with fury and totally overwhelmed by the insanity of the system that has us in its clutches.



Fuck the 409 ("unauthorized physical contact") shot; I hold her close and stroke her snow-wet hair.

It's 4 o'clock and Patty and I slide (literally) into the unit. Girls are standing about everywhere talking angrily. Carla comes stomping over.

"Rosalia had her baby at 11 this morning; it died a few minutes ago in her arms."

I burst into helpless tears. I watched her struggle through her pregnancy, puffy, bloated, and hypertensive. I watched her go past her date, with little concern on the part of the medical staff. (Female inmates, even pregnant ones, are viewed as malingerers and hysterics). And now? Oh God!

I walk to my room feeling bruised and battered. Still no peace. Jo Ellen is waiting for me. Her Rule 35 has come back. She must do a full five years before she can even be considered for parole.

YVONNE DENISOVICH, cont.

I draw upon some unsuspected depth of strength and somehow find something comforting to say. Then I sink down on my bed, completely drained. That's it! I have no more to give! I pretend to sleep till count has cleared then I trudge out to mail call.

A few people drift over to show me Xmas cards and I can only nod. Fuck Xmas, fuck this Institution, and fuck the B.O.P. (Bureau of Prisons).

Chow is announced and Pat and I hurry to B-Building; there, a hack stops us. Now what?

Two outside ambulance attendants come out wheeling a stretcher. It's Miss Molly. She's already done 21 years and has suffered two strokes. She's been reduced to shrivelled, drooling idiocy. The Feds would cut her loose, but she has nowhere to go. So...she vegetates here. If there's a merciful God--and I have my doubts-- maybe He'll take her this time.

In chow hall, I snap at Patty and she stalks off in a huff. I eat on alone, hating her, myself, this prison, life....

"P-s-s-t!" I glance up. It's Mr. Hall, one of the Food Service officers.

"Cheer up, Kiddo. You only have 29 more months." He winks and gives me a carefully-wrapped brownie. His smile is so infectious that I grin back. I drop the treat in my bra to save it from the pat-down as I leave Food Service.

I carefully open the door to my room, framing words of love and apology. I stop dead; there is a tiny Xmas tree on my bed! it's lovely, but it smells--strange. I look at it more closely. The "branches" are made of Kleenex dyed green with Aqua-Fresh (hence the peculiar odor). The tiny candy cane ornaments are cigarette foil; and the "snow" at the base? My God! Sanitary napkins!

Pat and four or five other girls spill into the room and we sing carols and share Xmas memories. I carefully parcel out the luscious brownie and we lick our numbed fingers clean.

Later, warm and drowsy, I hear the hack doing 12 o'clock count. "H-m-m," I think. "Only 28 months and 29 days to go."

Anonymous

(I am a 46 year old W.M.L.M. [white, middle-class, lesbian, mick]. I have been incarcerated for 21 months on a charge of interstate transportation of securities. I am a poet, playwright, and composer of smutty greeting cards [no artistic thrill, but they do sell!]. If this article has made just one of you think seriously about inhumanity towards prisoners, then it's the finest thing I've ever written.)



UPDATE ON GAY BASHING

Reprinted from the July-August, 1988 issue of The Glead Bulletin (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation):

KELLOGG'S GAY BASHING:
IT AIN'T "NUTTIN,' HONEY"

Despite hundreds of written complaints, the Kellogg Company refused to withdraw or modify its homophobic Nut and Honey Crunch commercial, in which a bunch of cowboys ask the wagon train's cook, "Hey Cookie, what's for breakfast? When he answers "Nuttin,' Honey," the cowboys respond by scowling and pointing their guns in this face. The message: any hint of affection between two men is reason for violence.

In a just-released report on the growing wave of anti-gay violence in America, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force declared that these Kellogg's ads "trivialize, legitimize and encourage anti-gay violence" by suggesting that violence against gay men, or men perceived to be gay, is acceptable (even comical, although certainly not to gay-bashing victims).

Network policy prohibits the broadcasting of commercials that are tasteless or offensive. We encourage you to tell the networks that ads that treat anti-gay violence as a source of humor are no joke, and Kellogg's Nut & Honey Crunch spot should be immediately pulled from the air.

Send a letter or postcard to Kathleen Henderson, Director Advertising Standards, NBC-TV, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112 and Harvey Dzodin, Vice President, Commercial Clearance, Capital Cities/ABC Inc., 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 and Matthew Margo, Vice President, Program Practices, CBS-TV, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019.

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Books About Lesbian Sex

The Nature and Evolution of Female Sexuality, by Mary Jane Sherfey, MD. Vintage Books, New York, 1972.

Our Right to Love, Ginny Vida, ed. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1978.

"Reflections of a Sexual Life, Revelations of a Celibate Time," in Lesbian Ethics, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 23-36.

Sapphistry, the Book of Lesbian Sexuality, by Pat Califia. Naiad Press, Tallahassee, Florida, 1980.

Sappho, Poems and Fragments, translated by Josephine Balmer. Meadowland Books, New Jersey, 1988. [For lesbians, poets, and lovers. This book of Sappho's poetry is a treasure -- ed.]

Uses of the Erotic: the Erotic as Power, by Audre Lorde. Out and Out Books, New York, 1978.

Women's Sexuality: Myth and Reality, by Kass Teeters. UP Press, Palo Alto, California, 1977.

A Restricted Country, by Joan Nestle. Firebrand Books, New York, 1987.

Coming to Power, by Samois. UP Press, Palo Alto, California, 1981.

Cunt Coloring Book, by Tee Corinne. Pearlchild Productions, San Francisco, California, 1975.

Heresies #12, the Sex Issue. Vol. 3 #4. Heresies Collective, New York, 1981.

The Joy of Lesbian Sex, by Dr. Emily L. Sisley and Bertha Harris. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1977.

Lesbian Health Matters! by Santa Cruz Women's Health Collective. Santa Cruz, California, 1979.

Lesbian Passion, by JoAnn Loulan,

Lesbian Sex, by JoAnn Loulan. Spinsters/Aunt Lute, San Francisco, 1984.

Love, Politics and 'Rescue' in Lesbian Relationships, essay by Diana Rabenold, HerBooks, Santa Cruz, California, 1987.

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whisper
she throws her head back laughing
her gold teeth catch the glittery light
laughter bounces off the cut glass ball above our heads
splits into a thousand zillion pieces and
covers us like diamonds on black velvet

your face is the blue black of a starless sky
our lovemaking liquid
we are tigers in vaseline
pouncing, gliding, tumbling
i run my tongue along the inside of your thigh
and think the night will never end

it comes down to this..
i see you on the street
i cross to the other side
you change your locks
i change my phone number
you return every single thing i've given you
i lie in bed till my body
turns
to
stone.

Deborah Parks, Minneapolis



A Voice for the Amazon Nation

"Bottomfish Blues"

The most serious analysis of racism, classism, the military-industrial complex, and white women's (including lesbians) contributions to all of the above comes out of Bottomfish Blues, an extremely underground newspaper. It appeared in feminist and radical bookstores around the county mysteriously, anonymously, early in 1987. There are no wimmin's names on the editorial page, there are no subscription coupons, no calls for articles, no return address. Nothing but hard-hitting, tie-it-all-together radical analysis.

Bottomfish Blues. The paper is subtitled, "Amazon nation or Aryan Nation," and it puts white dykes on notice that we are participants in a racist, genocidal system, consciously or unconsciously.

The third issue was a barn-burner. (Not that the first two weren't.) Titled "Kill the Kids first, the Coming of Black Genocide," it laid out white wimmin's struggle for equality with "Dick" (white man) and its cost, in particular, to blacks. Dick's plan, that is, genocide against "the New Afrikan Nation and its communities," is implemented by the white (straight) women, doing Dick's thing for him, according to Bottomfish. In order to kill 40,000,000 Blacks, Dick needs help, and since white women "are more white than they are women," Dick polices white women (by threat of rape, etc.) and white women police Blacks.

Bottomfish Blues connects the rise of Nazi terrorism against Jews, with the rise in terrorism against Blacks, and points to a common tool in both terrorisms: white women. In Germany, German women (feminists included); in Amerikkka, white women (N.O.W. middleclass feminists included). Reproductions of German women supervising the extermination of German Jewish women are juxtaposed with recent photos from the New York Times of a white heterosexual couple charged with burning down a Queens house that was to be turned into a foster home for Black infants. Proposals to include a police station in all new homeless shelters further reveal the racist, apartheid-like conditions taking shape in US cities. Bottomfish Blues ties the threads together. It traces the destruction of the Black population in Amerikkka much like Chancellor Williams traced the destruction of Black civilization in his book of the same name. From the 1967 riots, to Daniel Moynihan (the infamous Moynihan report), to the Kerner Commission's "Spatial De-concentration" plan; from the bombed out projects in Newark to the regentrification of Harlem, the threads are the same. The threat is the same: extinguish the Black race (and

all other troublesome folk). Drugs, police harassment and assassination, alcohol, woman-abuse, Black babies imprisoned in hospitals and left to die, prostitution, Black-on-Black violence, unemployment, and piss-poor education all contribute to the plan.

Sound too gruesome to read? Too much for our little white consciousnesses to handle? How'd you like to be living it, not just reading about it?

For those of us who wonder why white lesbians should be working in coalition with other movements for civil rights, for the right to live without looking down a gun or subjected to terminal poverty, crime, and system-wide abuse your whole life, pick up a copy of Bottomfish Blues. It gets mailed to People's Books in Milwaukee, and People's Bookstore in Madison. Room of One's Own gets one or two. It comes out irregularly, but watch for it. Read it. Talk to your white sisters about it. It's a 50-cent awakening.

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Marine Imprisoned for Lesbian Sex

July 14, 1988--for immediate release by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1517 U Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20009, 202/332-6483.

Parris Island, SC--A woman Marine corporal was convicted on charges of having sex with another woman and has been sentenced to a year in prison. Marine Cpl. Barbara Baum, 23, was convicted of sodomy, obstruction of justice, and committing indecent acts with women and was sentenced on June 10, 1988 at the Parris Island Marine Corps Recruit Training Depot.

Baum's conviction is part of an ongoing investigation of lesbianism at the Parris Island facility, but she was the first woman to have been court-martialed on sex charges. Of the four other women investigated in the Marine Corps witchhunt against lesbian Marines, one has been discharged in lieu of court-martial and three others have been discharged.

Major David Beck, the Marine prosecutor, had asked the jury to sentence Baum "for a large number of years" in order to send "a message, if you will, because a message is going to go out from your sentence to other Marines in similar situations...that as a Marine of any rank, such conduct will not be tolerated."

Apparently, the Marine Corps witchhunt was prompted by a report published last fall which mentioned lesbianism among Marine Corps women. The

report was issued by Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service.

The NGLTF urges lesbians and gay men to protest this latest example of military homophobia. "The military in general and the Marine Corps in particular seem obsessed with identifying gay people in the ranks and driving them out simply because they are gay or lesbian," said NGLTF Privacy Project Director Sue Hyde. "No effort was made to evaluate Barbara Baum's service record. She was charged and found guilty of private, consensual sex with another woman. The gay and lesbian community of this country should send its own message to the Marine Corps: get out of our bedrooms and stop the attacks on gay people in uniform."

Cpl. Baum's case will be reviewed by the Parris Island base commander, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hoar. Hoar can either reduce Baum's prison sentence or let it stand, but cannot increase it. After Hoar's review, Baum's case is automatically reviewed by the Navy and Marine Court of Military Review in Washington. Letters urging that Baum's conviction be overturned and her sentence waived should be mailed to: Maj. Gen. Joseph P. Hoar, Marine Corps Recruits Dept, Parris Island, SC 29905 and The Honorable Frank Carlucci, Department of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301.



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National Lesbian and Gay Health Conference

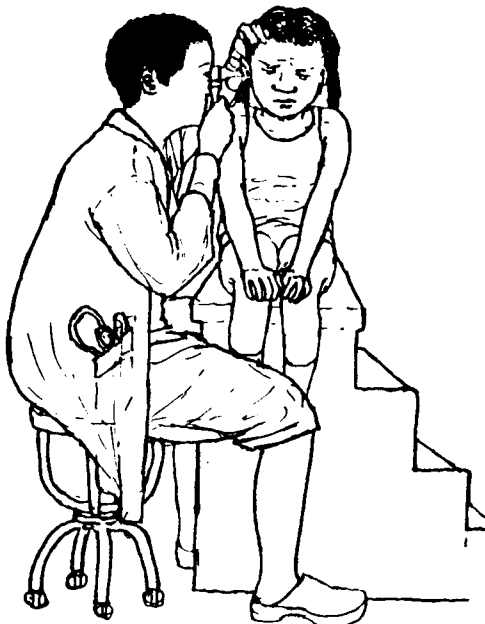
The Second International Lesbian and Gay Health Conference and AIDS Forum was held in Boston July 20-26th. I came home with about 50 added pounds in my luggage, including the many books, newspapers, reports and leaflets available at the conference. With literally hundreds of workshops, videos and speakers over a seven day period, a comprehensive report is impossible, so I'm going to report on one of the most significant events, the release of the National Lesbian Health Care Survey, and then review a few other events and impressions.

NATIONAL LESBIAN HEALTH CARE SURVEY

The Final Report of the National Lesbian Health Care Survey, a groundbreaking study of lesbian lifestyles and health issues, was unveiled at the conference. Almost five years in development, the survey tallies the responses of 1,925 lesbians from all of the 50 states on a wide range of general health, mental health and lifestyle issues.

The survey's authors, Judith Bradford and Caitlin Ryan, felt that if lesbians themselves did not define their own health care needs they would continue to be ignored by the medical establishment. Their goals for the study were "to identify and define service needs for lesbians and to provide the data to begin to make the system accountable for meeting those needs.

With data analysis funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the survey represents the first lesbian research ever funded by the US Public Health Service. An earlier abstract, National Lesbian Health Care Survey: Mental Health Implications, published by the US Department of Health and Human Services, is also the first government sponsored publication on any lesbian topic.



Jewels Graphics/Sarita Johnson

THE SAMPLE

The survey is a significant documentation of lesbian life and health in the US in the 1980s. All geographic areas of the US are represented in the sample. The 1,925 lesbians surveyed ranged in age from 17 to 80 with the vast majority, 81%, between 25 and 44. (The authors note that the sample was much less diverse than the general population, where women 25-44 comprise only 29% of the total female population.)

Eighty-eight percent of those surveyed were White, 6% Black, 4% Latina, with small numbers of Asian and Native American lesbians rounding out the sample. Sixty percent of the respondents were currently in a primary relationship with a woman, 19% were single and uninvolved, 18% were single and "somewhat" involved, while 2% were legally married to men. Although more than 91% had been raised within a religious affiliation, more than 66% claimed to be unaffiliated at the time of the survey.

A high percentage, 69%, had had some college or an undergraduate or graduate degree. Despite this educational attainment however, 64% of those surveyed earned less than \$20,000 per year. Anxieties related to poor financial position are a consistent thread throughout the report, contributing to stress related illnesses and lack of access to health care service.



THE FINDINGS

The most common health problem experienced by lesbians in the past had been a long period of depression or sadness. In fact, the survey indicates that mental health problems and stress related illnesses are what most distinguishes lesbian health from that of the female population as a whole. It also suggests that these problems are largely societally induced.

A full 75% of respondents relied on some form of therapy or counseling either in the past or at the time the survey was completed. Eighty-nine percent preferred to see a woman counselor. The top three mental health concerns revolved around money matters, relationships and job worries.

Twenty-one percent had thought about suicide and 18% had actually attempted it at some time in their lives. These figures are comparable to suicide rates among physicians, long recognized as one of the most high stress groups in society.

NATIONAL HEALTH CONFERENCE, cont.

The statistics on physical and sexual abuse and discrimination are very disturbing and provide a clearer understanding of the mental health findings. Thirty-seven percent of lesbians surveyed reported being harshly beaten or physically abused at some time in their lives. As children, 21% had been raped or sexually attacked; as adults, 15% had been similarly abused. Virtually all the perpetrators were male. Only one third of those sexually assaulted ever sought help.

Nineteen percent of the sample were not "out" to anyone in their families, and 29% remained in the closet to all of their co-workers, figures I thought seemed quite low. Anti-lesbian discrimination had been experienced by many in the sample. More than 50% had been verbally attacked, 8% had been physically attacked, and 13% had lost jobs due to their sexual preference.

OB/GYN FINDINGS

In terms of OB/GYN care, the most common problem was bad cramps. At least 18% were coping with premenstrual syndrome, and 4-8% reported symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases. In an apparent revelation to the Boston Globe, which headlined its story "Lesbian Survey Finds Strong Parental Urge," what is common knowledge in the lesbian community was confirmed by the study: 16% of the sample were mothers and an additional 30% expressed the desire to become mothers. Some of the most popular workshops at the conference were those on artificial insemination.

While the first choice for health care was a doctor in private practice, more younger women made use of community clinics and women's health centers.

There were numerous problems associated with health providers, however. They included: the provider's assumption of the patient's heterosexuality (11% had birth control forced on them!), the patient's discomfort with coming out to the provider, the provider's being hard to talk to or not listening, the provider's failure to share treatment plans, and rough or unnecessary treatment.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SURVEY

The roles of minority status, social marginality and stress on the mental health of lesbians are emphasized in the authors' conclusions: "Key research implications relate to the effects of discrimination, physical and sexual abuse and substance abuse, and the interactions among them, on the need for mental health services and the training of providers; the impact of outness/closetedness on mental health and access to non-discriminatory and informed services; and the positive effects of acceptance and integration of lesbian identity." The survey calls for greater education and understanding of lesbianism among health care providers and is, itself, a valuable contribution to that effort.

The National Lesbian Health Care Survey is much more detailed than this short review can cover. Additional findings on substance abuse, eating disorders, AIDS and social life are also included. Especially interesting are the distinctions in answers when race, income, age and education are separated out.

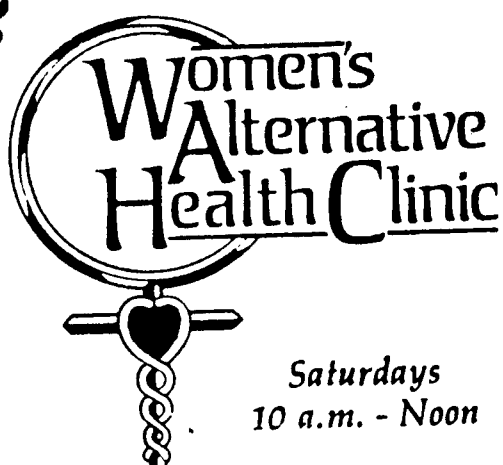
The sheer volume of data in the survey will provide researchers with many different avenues for further investigation. The lesbian community owes a debt of gratitude to Bradford and Ryan for their commitment in seeing the project through to completion despite difficult odds.

Delays in the survey were caused in part by gaps in funding, but even more distressing, by the reluctance of data entry companies to tally the results. After earlier disappointments, the third firm contracted for data entry services breached its contract, claiming that keypunchers walked off the job for fear they would contract AIDS from the questionnaires!

On a brighter note, the report salutes the late Wisconsin Governor's Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues for staff support and assistance in distributing the questionnaires. The Council did much valuable work during its short tenure in the Earl administration.

Copies of the 131-page Final Report of the National Lesbian Health Care Survey can be obtained from the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation, PO Box 65472, Washington, D.C. 20035.

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Lesbian Sex and Lesbian Passion:

Laugh a Little and Improve Your Sex Life

Lesbians don't have enough sex, don't have enough variety in our sex, don't know how to talk about sex, don't know how to ask for sex, don't even know how to ask a woman out for a date, and don't know what to do about it.

Why? "For women, sex in our society is colored by sexism, homophobia and sexual trauma. We are not able to come to sexual experience freely, openly, and without fear," according to JoAnn Loulan, a psychotherapist, sex educator and author specializing in the sexual and emotional concerns of lesbians.

Called "the Dr. Ruth of dykedom," she has sponsored "Sex Camp" weekends in San Francisco, and has lectured to thousands of lesbians across the country.

Loulan is coming to Milwaukee to present an evening of informative comedy, "What's So Funny About Lesbian Sex?" on October 1, an a community workshop, "Creating the Sex Lives We Want," on October 2. Her visit is sponsored by Hurricane Productions, The Counseling Center of Milwaukee, and the Women's Crisis Line.

Among other publications, Loulan has produced two books, Lesbian Sex (Spinsters Ink, 1984) and Lesbian Passion, Loving Ourselves and Each Other (Spinsters/Aunt Lute Book Company, 1987).

Lesbian Sex is the more serious book, with an emphasis on loving yourself and learning about sex. It even has homework exercises.

Lesbian Passion continues the emphasis on self-esteem and includes the results of a written survey answered by 1566 lesbians from the U.S. and Canada.

Both books are friendly and gentle, but Lesbian Passion has more of the humor of Loulan's lectures.

For example, in one chapter she describes the difficulties with lesbian dates. Women traditionally never ask men--let alone women--for dates, so we don't know how.

So when Mareet wants to ask Sally out, she says, "Well, um, ever thought about like, I don't know, like, maybe, I don't know, going to, I don't know, a movie with me?"

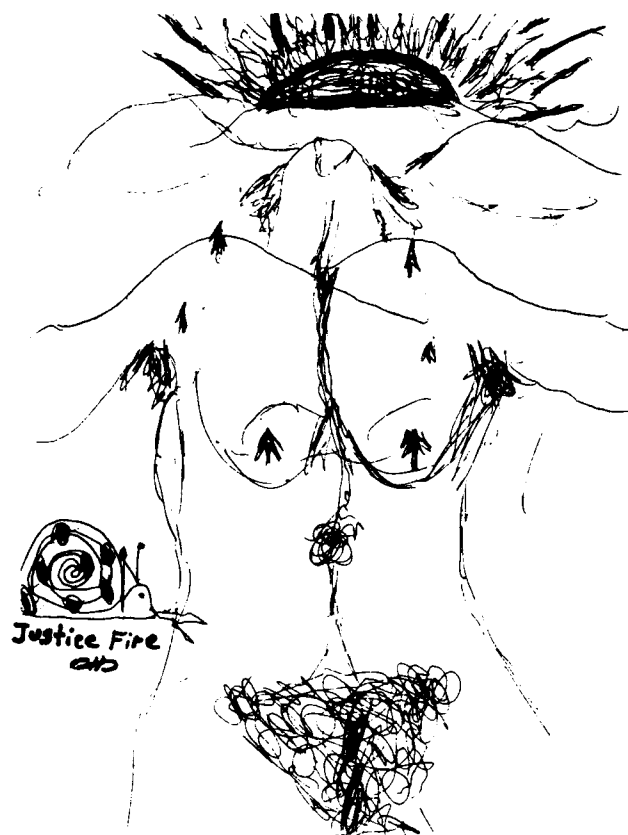
When they do, Loulan writes, "Neither of them see the movie, because they're both sitting there thinking, 'I wonder if she's going to have sex with me?'...Mareet finally gets Sally to come over to her house, and they try to talk about the movie, which is difficult because neither one noticed it. They drink tea until the wee hours of the morning."

Since it's late, Sally stays over and they lie in bed like two- by-fours in their underwear. "Then Mareet rolls over, sort of pretending she's asleep, and flings her arm around, hoping it will land in a fortuitous place....Finally, they get to have sex. Dawn comes and they're still

having sex."

Loulan also offers an alternative version of this date with the added complication of safe sex worries.

In either case, because nice lesbians don't sleep around, "when Mareet and Sally finally get out of bed on Monday, they are no longer dating. Now they are in a relationship. Now they make their first therapy appointment."



We date this way, Loulan says, in large part because we share our culture's discomfort with sex.

Loulan is willing to make some strong statements. "Those who want to have casual sex may have a very difficult time finding partners," she writes in Lesbian Sex. "There are no areas where we can go knowing that another woman with the same intent will be there. Adding casual sex as a possibility to our community's sexual repertoire will require that many of us withhold the judgments we are so accustomed to making."

In another chapter, she writes of the "tyranny of orgasm" and says, "Our preoccupation with this particular muscle spasm echoes our general approach in a consumer-oriented society: striving for a goal, while disregarding the pleasure (or lack thereof) that we experience in the process."

LESBIAN SEX/PASSION, cont.

She writes about sex in context with the life of the lesbian, and issues like disability, fat, motherhood, sobriety, incest survivors, aging, and youth.

The homework exercises range from "making a list of our subpersonalities" to better understand who may be talking with your voice, to "having another woman enter your vagina," which may be difficult for a survivor of sexual abuse.

Lesbian Passion continues the dual emphasis on practical ways to use our bodies and our sexuality better, and practical ways to use our bodies and our sexuality better.

The book ends with the results of her sex survey. While there are flaws with the research, which she acknowledges, the results are still interesting:

38% of the respondents had been sexually abused as children, and 12% were unsure. 37% were abused several times, and 35% were abused by their fathers.

49% were verbally sexually abused as adults, and 16% were raped. 13% of the physical abuse was by a female lover or friend, and 4% by a female mate.

62% were coupled, and 69% of those had been coupled for fewer than three years. 78% had been celibate at some time. 89% masturbate, and 38% of them masturbate two to five times a month.



14% are completely satisfied with their current sex life, and 21% of those dissatisfied are dissatisfied over relationship problems.

71% give oral sex to their partner, and 67% get oral sex from their partner.

Satisfaction with the respondents' sex lives declined with the length of time in the relationship, and the frequency of sex fell from about 11 times per month during the first year of a relationship to less than six for those in one to three years in a relationship. Frequency dropped to four times per month after four to five years.

but age, disability, previous sexual abuse did not affect satisfaction with the respondents' sex lives, and although younger lesbians have sex or masturbate a little more often than older lesbians, lesbians with disabilities or previous sexual abuse have sex as often as other lesbians.

Sue Burke, Milwaukee

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Classifieds

SURVEY

(Germany) Help with exciting doctoral dissertation about lesbians in the military by completing a short (written) survey. I'll pay the postage to mail our survey and will provide a stamped envelope for its return to me. Your assistance is much appreciated. All info is confidential and no name lists will be kept. Write for your survey form (please put two 25-cent stamps on the envelope):

RBJ
Post Box 90-1401
6450 Hanau 9, West Germany

If you are an older woman for whom lesbianism may be an affectional or sexual preference

EVENTS

WATCH FOR THE START OF SILVER SPACE

(Milwaukee) Drop in the third Sunday of each month...enjoy meeting others who share our interests and sense of humor...discuss our issues...and help share the direction of Silver Space so we can grow together.

First event will be "Identifying the Interests and Concerns of Older Lesbians," Sunday, September 18, 1988, 6-8 p.m. at The Counseling Center of Milwaukee, 2038 N. Bartlett, \$2 donation. Organized by older lesbians as an outgrowth of Our Space, which is part of the Support Group Program at The Counseling Center.

For more info, call Sue Bronson at 414/271-2565 or drop in on the third Sunday of every month beginning September 18.

NEEDED: FRIENDS OF THE CHORUSES

(Milwaukee) Maiden Voyage, Mukwonago and Womynsong of Madison will present a joint concert in Milwaukee, Saturday, November 12. We need FRIENDS to help sell tickets, to buy/sell ads in our program book, to help with staffing the night of, or to provide housing for our Madison sisters. Anyone willing to join in the fun can call Julie at 414/962-6788, or write Maiden Voyage, 3903 N. Farwell, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

CHIMERA, SELF-DEFENSE FOR WOMEN

(Madison) CHIMERA self-defense teaches women that they have the right and ability to protect themselves. It explores the psychological willingness to use self-defense techniques, as well as teaching the physical components of fighting back. The Rape Crisis Center is offering public CHIMERA classes on Wednesday evenings, September 14-October 19 and all day on September 24-25. Classes for UW students will be offered on Tuesday/Thursday evenings, September 13-29, and all day on October 8-9 or October 15-22. Call CHIMERA at 608/255-0076 for more prices and more info.

DISABLED WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER

(Poughkeepsie) DWN wants submissions of poetry, artwork, stories and other writings by disabled women. Write about access, housing, sex, politics, madness, institutions, labels, networking, families, coming out, living in the country, living in the city, how we survive, who and what we love, how to manage financially, who are our allies, what is healing, how it feels, etc. Send submissions to: DWN, 2 Sun Lane, Poughkeepsie, NY 12061. This project is being formed in cooperation with WRY CRIPS Disabled Women Readers Theater of Berkeley.

PERSONALS

Virgo JJB--What's the story this time? I thought 4+3 meant friendship also???!! Nonetheless, happy 31st.

Happy Virgo Birthday, Carolyn of Madison. Let's go camping again soon. Your turn for a dyke-wash.--Doreen and Justice

Happy Libra Birthday, Ginny!--The Hags

Happy Birthday to Porter of Madison. Finally we meet!--Doreen

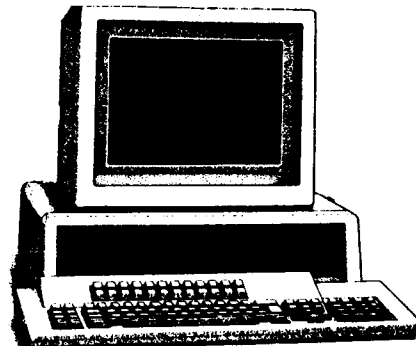
Happy Birthday--Happy Home, Darlene!--The Hags

Happy Birthday, Juana! Thanks for all your support--we think you're great too!--The Hags

Trude--Every so often I take a peek out of my closet to look at you!--

Hey "Marquette"...Sure miss seeing "u" walking the folks at Alexian--Good Luck!! -- Texas

WANTED!



Hag Rag is looking for dykes to help "type-set" the Hag Rag. Learn Ventura Publishing through hands-on experience. Minimal typing (keyboard) knowledge is necessary--but you don't have to be a whiz at speed typing. You must be available for several weeknights/weekends during the first three weeks of October and December. Call Mary at 372-3330 if interested.

TO SUBSCRIBE TO HAG RAG:

Send your name, address, city, state and zip code, along with a check for \$9.00 (\$15.00 sustaining, \$20.00 institutional) to: HAG RAG, PO Box 93243, Milwaukee, WI 53203. Make checks payable to Hag Rag. We always mail Hag Rag in sealed envelopes.

Calendar

MADISON

All events listed below are in Madison or vicinity. Area code is 608.

SEPTEMBER

- 2 10% Society Dance, UW Memorial Union, Great Hall, 8 pm; DJ, cash bar, \$2.
- 3 Sotavento (Latin American music), Barrymore Theatre, 2090 Atwood, 241-2345.
- 4 Ko Thi Dance Company, Barrymore, 2090 Atwood, \$10.50; \$12 door.
- 7 10% Society Kick-off Meeting, UW Memorial Union, 8 pm, check TITU.
- 8 Women's Transit Volunteer Training, UW Memorial Union, 5- 8:30 pm, check TITU.
- 9 Tret Fure, Novi, Carrie Barton concert, Barrymore, 2090 Atwood.
- 9 Madison Lesbian and Gay March (Spring '89) Organizational Meeting, Friends Meeting House, 1704 Roberts Ct. (off Monroe St.), 6:30 pm, 231-1598, 255-9131.
- 12 Women's Transit Business Benefit, Bahn Thai restaurants donate 10% of profits to WTA.
- 17 Raft the Wolf River with WING, camping, 233-1955.
- 18 Fundraiser Dance for Take Back the Night, at The Cardinal, 8 pm.
- 20 Women's Transit Volunteer Training, UW Memorial Union, 5- 8:30 pm, check TITU.
- 21 Hag Rag MADISON WRITERS' MEETING, call 244-4370.
- 22 Fallen Woman Third Annual Film Fest (focus on issues of adams, Apartheid Begins in the Home, "Susana," "Black and White Colored Pictures" (tentative), Third Annual Film Fest, Barrymore, 2090 Atwood, 7:30 pm, \$5 (tickets at Room, Barrymore, Quintessence, Whole Earth).
- 24 Casselberry and DuPree (with band), Barrymore, 2090 Atwood.

OCTOBER

- ??? Crisis Line Volunteer Training for Dane County Rape Crisis Center, volunteers needed in other areas too, call Denise at 251- 6061 for info and dates.
- 1 Sweet Honey in the Rock, Civic Center, 201 State St., 8 pm, joint production with Madison Urban League, tickets: \$15, 13, 11, \$30 matron/patron, proceeds to Urban League, tickets at Civic Center box office and Ticketron, 266-9055, TDD 267-2674, signed for hearing impaired by Shirley Childress Johnson.
- 4-5 San Francisco Mime Troupe, Barrymore, 2090 Atwood.
- 8 Take Back the Night.
- 9 Run Against Rape, 4-mile run, 1.5-mile walk to benefit Dane County Rape Crisis Center, call Mary at 255-0076 for info.
- 12 10% Society Election Forum, 262-7365.
- 19 10% Society Election Forum, 262-7365.
- 20 Women's Transit Authority 15th Birthday Party, raffle, drawing, 7:30 pm, Tripp Commons (UW Memorial Union), 1st prize: trip for two to Jamaica, 256-3710.
- 22 Canoe and camp on the Wisconsin River with WING (tentative), 233-1955.
- 26 10% Society Election Forum, 262-7365.

- 28 Ladysmith Black Mambazo at Civic Center, 201 State St.

NOVEMBER

- ??? Third Annual Lesbian Variety Show, see November-December Hag Rag for more details, don't miss it!
- 2 10% Society Election Forum, 262-7365.
- 4 Claudia Schmidt (tentative), Barrymore, 2090 Atwood.

MILWAUKEE

All events listed below are in Milwaukee or vicinity. Area code is 414.

SEPTEMBER

- 11 "Lesbians and Chemical Dependency," Our Space discussion, 6 pm, at The Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett, \$2.
- 14 Women's Crisis Line Training for Volunteers, need volunteers, call Suzanne at 937-5452 for info.
- 15 Milwaukee Lesbian and Gay Pride Celebration Week, Betty Boop cartoons and movies at the Paradise Theatre, benefit for the Cream City Foundation, 7 pm, \$5.
- 15 Grapevine Potluck, 2211 E. Kenwood Blvd, 6 pm, call 964-6117 for info.
- 16 Milwaukee Lesbian and Gay Pride Celebration Week, Roman, Ousky and Phillips Cabaret Act followed by a dance with Amethyst, at the Crystal Palace, 1925 W. National, 8 pm-1 am, \$8 adv/\$9 at door.
- 18 Silver Space, first meeting of group for older lesbians, 6 pm, 2038 N. Bartlett, 271-2565.
- 30- Grapevine Camp-Out at Point Beach, call Women's
Oct 2 Coalition, at 964-6117 for info.

OCTOBER

- 1 "What's So Funny About Lesbian Sex?," an evening of informative comedy with JoAnn Loulan, \$10 adv./\$12 at door, Kenwood Methodist Church, 2319 E. Kenwood Blvd., 8 pm.
- 2 "Creating the Sex Lives We Want," workshop with JoAnn Loulan, \$40 before 9-23/\$45 after 9-23, at The Counseling Center, 2038 N. Bartlett, 10 am-4 pm, call Sue at 271-2565 or Suzanne at 937-5452 for info/registration.
- 11 "National Coming Out Day" Watch for and/or organize local events, see October 11 under NATIONAL listings below for info.

NATIONAL OCTOBER

- 7-9 Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Biograph Theater, Washington, D.C., sponsored by Frameline and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).
- 7-10 National Lesbian Rights Conference, sponsored by NOW Foundation, San Diego, CA, call Nancy at 202/347-2279 (Washington, D.C.) for info.
- 7-10 Display of the AIDS Quilt in Washington, D.C., volunteers needed, sponsored by The Names Project, PO Box 14573, San Francisco, CA 94114, 415/863-5511.
- 11 "National Coming Out Day"!! commemorate this historic event in our lives--organize an event!! For info, contact National Gay Rights Advocates, 8380 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 202, West Hollywood, CA 90069.
- 12-15 "Trailblazers and Torchbearers: Women in the Civil Rights Movement--1941-65," First National Conference on Women and the Civil Rights Movement, sponsored by Georgia State U. and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Atlanta, GA, call Marymal Dryden at 404/651-3476 for info.

REGULAR EVENTS

Appleton

Gay and Lesbian AA and Al-Anon meetings, Thursdays and Saturdays, 8 pm, 724 E. South River.

Madison

The following events are all in Madison. The area code is 608.

"Her Turn" (women's news), Sundays, 11 am, WORT radio, 89.9FM, 256-2001.

Lesbian AA, Mondays, 6:30 pm, Madison Community Center, 112 N. Fairchild, basement "Crafts" room, non-smoking and closed.

Lesbian Al-Anon, Tuesdays, 7:30 pm, and Fridays, 6:30 pm, at Harmonia, 406 N. Pinckney.

Lesbian and Gay AA, Thursdays, 8 pm, 1609 University Ave.

Lesbian and Gay Teen Group, Saturdays, 1-3 pm, Memorial Union, call Jane, 271-0270.

"Nothing to Hide," Cable TV Channel 4, Wednesdays, 9:00 pm, 241-2500.

Take Back the Night planning meetings, Wednesdays, 7 pm, Memorial Union (see TITU).

Ten Percent (10%) Society, Wednesdays, 8 pm, see TITU.

"Two for the Road," (music by Jane Reynolds and Lynette), first Sunday every month at the Cardinal Bar, 418 E. Wilson St., 8 pm, \$2 cover.

Milwaukee

The following events are all in Milwaukee. The area code is 414.

All-Lesbian AA Meeting, Mondays, 7 pm, Galano Club, 1428 N. Farwell, 276-6936.

All-Lesbian ACOA, Tuesdays, 6 pm, and Saturdays, 10 am, Galano Club (see above).

Gay Community at UWM, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 5:30 pm, Union E341C, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., 229-6555. Free and open to the public.

Grapevine, Thursdays, 7 pm, Women's Coalition, 2211 E. Kenwood, 276-6935. (Third Thursday of every month is a potluck.)

Maiden Voyage, a Wom*n's Chorus, Tuesdays, 7-9 pm, Sherman Park Lutheran Church basement, 2700 N. Sherman, 344-6854 or 873-6284.

Mukwonago Feminist Singers and Eaters, Thursdays, 7-9 pm, 346 Maple St., Waukesha, 475-6612, all women welcome!

Our Space, second Sunday each month, 6 pm, 2038 N. Bartlett, 271-2565. Check Hag "Calendar" for topic.

Silver Space, third Sunday each month, 6 pm, 2038 N. Bartlett, 271-2565. Check Hag "Calendar" for topic.

Women's Alternative Health Clinic, Saturdays, 10 am-noon, 1240 E. Brady St., sliding scale, call 272-2144 during clinic hours for info.

Women's Music Radio, WMSE, 91.7FM, Sundays, 10:30-midnight through August; 11 pm-midnight starting in September, 799-1917 request line.

Please send listings for your "regular" events to Mary, at Hag Rag, PO Box 93243, Milwaukee, WI, 53203, by October 1, for inclusion in the next issue of Hag Rag.



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