

I KNOW YOU KNOW

lesbian views & news

An International Monthly Magazine

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Women and the Land

DEBBIE FIER



See page 36 for interview.

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An International Monthly Magazine

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Join Us



as we travel throughout the United States

There is NO single state, city, town or county in the United States where our sisters can't be found — and now, at last, there is a magazine devoted to learning from the most interesting of them. A magazine written for lesbians by lesbians in their field. A magazine designed to meet lesbian needs not currently being filled by any one publication and to address the particular concerns of lesbians.

We called it *I KNOW YOU KNOW: lesbian views & news*. If you've been looking for good, solid newsstand-quality articles and features, I KNOW YOU KNOW is the logical magazine for you. One of the biggest parts of our job is to help you keep your career dreams and aspirations alive, to know there are those of us who share these dreams and have had them come true.

Our enthusiasm for the continuing quality of professional content, look and appeal goes well beyond that of any covert printed piece. I KNOW YOU KNOW is 'out' for you.



Many of us fashioned our grown lives in isolation without benefit of good, positive reinforcement of our beautiful lifestyle. I KNOW YOU KNOW reinforces the positive of 'youness' and alienates the offensive.

And we are networking throughout the United States to search out and present professional, high quality articles and features covering our past, present and future. I KNOW YOU KNOW (IKYK) is strictly a 'lifestyle' publication designed to help women get the most out of their lives.

I KNOW YOU KNOW

lesbian views & news

An International Monthly Magazine

March 1985

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I KNOW YOU KNOW

lesbian views & news



An International Monthly Magazine

Keeps you up to date by giving you . . .

- Food for thought to aid in the growth toward your full potential.
- Information pertinent to the multi-faceted lives and interests of Lesbians.
- Holistic approach to our lives.
- Articles spanning the spectrum of all the races, ages, religious backgrounds, economic levels and political philosophies found in Lesbian culture.

See page 45 for subscription blank.

Jernan Womyn,

Just a note to let you know your magazine is wonderful! I haven't read a publication cover-to-cover like this since the first year MS was published. It's informative, it's useful, and it's certainly a breath of fresh air in the lesbian community.

After nearly a decade of being 'PI' (or not being 'downwardly mobile'), it's great to hear women speak of positive self-expectancy and going for 131 pies! It's the only way we can sustain lesbian goals.

Lesbians need this information--especially how to get and deal with money. For those of use who don't come from families with money, that

information is not passed on and it's a complete mystery. And women who do come from money should definitely not feel guilty about it, but use it. We have to support ourselves, our communities, our old dykes' homes, and our young dykes' needs.

Re: the resort issue. I had no idea that there were such places for lesbians! My lover and I had just made reservations for a week in Jamaica, but now that we know we can vacation and support lesbian businesses, I'm sure we will.

You've definitely spotted a market. Keep up the good work. Your magazine will be a great gift idea for friends this year.

— IL

• LETTERS •

Dear IKYK:

Thank you for your wonderful magazine and the philosophy of bringing us all together! It can be lonely out here and I find myself filling those empty places as I read your pages. I am impressed with the quality you represent when you are just getting started. I know that you will grow and develop and expand.

The articles on financial planning and realizing our genuine right to have all we want and need are greatly needed in the women's community. We are so quick to feel guilty when we begin to have enough that we sabotage ourselves all too often. The message of our deserving abundance combined with real financial help in regard to planning can create a healthier future for us all. Your article on how to replace a worn out plug allowed me to give my savings account money instead of giving it to a vacuum cleaner store! And your articles on health and spirituality remind just how much I can do to really take care of myself.

Keep up the good work!

— CO

Dear Editor,

First, we would like to thank you for the informative article about Springhill Farm as well as other places like ours across the country. Obviously, your magazine is being read as we have received several inquiries and reservations due to the article. In addition, many of our regular guests have mentioned seeing the article.

We would like to order 2 subscriptions so that the most recent copies of the magazine may be placed in our cabins for our guests' enjoyment. This is a much classier publication than the local gay papers.

— OH

Dear Editor,

'I Know You Know' sounds great and we hope it will prove to be all we hope for.

We also appreciate that the magazine is mailed discreetly.

— PA

• OUR SELVES •

On Becoming

INTIMACY: TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT? Probably the single most significant of human possibilities is that of each one of us--of you and of me--to empower and acknowledge the other, to connect with another traveler on this journey at a very deep level.

Yet for a wide variety of reasons, intimacy eludes most of us most of the time. We experience intimacy as if it were an elusive, shy, yet exquisitely beautiful butterfly, catching glimpses of it as it flutters close and then is frightened away.

Almost daily, I hear someone say, "I feel so alone; I just want to be close to someone." Or, "I feel quite empty and isolated." Or, "I tried being close once, but I just ended up getting hurt."

What scares us about being intimate? What do you say to yourself? Take a moment and think about that. What do you know about how you stop yourself from being close to someone? You may say something like, "If you really knew me, you wouldn't like me," or, "Okay. I let you be close to me, but what happens if you leave me?" or, "It just hurts me too much to risk closeness," or, "I just don't know how to be close to someone." Sound familiar?

My belief is that you do know all you need to know about intimacy and that you have all you need in order to be intimate. But you may not know--or may not have named--*what* you know. Therefore, it's quite difficult to know how to go about the process of being close.

Let's begin by naming what we do know about intimacy. Take a moment now and let whatever words or images emerge for you when you say/hear the word intimacy. Close... private... risky... oneness... hurt... mutuality... trust... pain... sharing... together... separate... crying together... laughing together... connecting... fear... conflict... anger... love... giggles... tears.

As an exercise, try to share with a friend a particular experience (even a brief moment) when you felt intimacy

with someone--a spouse, partner, brother or sister, son or daughter, parent or friend. Perhaps you've experienced an intimate moment with yourself or with nature. As you tell your friend about this, be aware not only of the incident, but of how you felt at the time, and how you feel in the telling.

I remember a time when a friend, who was very confused, asked me to pray the Lord's Prayer with her. At first I was surprised and very shy. Praying is a very private experience for me. Then I felt quite self-conscious, but at the same time, deeply awed and respectful... and very close to my friend.

Now that you've named some of what you know about intimacy, let me share with you some of what I know. Most folks have great difficulty in establishing intimate relationships. We simply don't know how to get close, and then we don't know how to maintain that connection if it is made. Since few of us have had the good fortune to experience healthy modeling of intimate relationships, we have no guidelines and we fear that which we have not experienced.

Secondly, we fear losing the self in another. The myth of "two becoming one" fosters this fear, because we are told that oneness is the ultimate goal. In fact, separateness or individuality and intimacy are not mutually exclusive. Further, my belief is that being secure in one's self enhances and allows for intimacy.

Intimacy with another begins with an intimacy with one's self. Becoming intimate with one's self simply means attending to one's process: What do I feel? What do I want? How will I feel best about myself? What do I know? What is my body telling me?

A third point about intimacy is that there is a great deal of confusion between intimacy and sexuality, and it is vital that we are clear about this before we can hope to achieve intimacy--with another or with ourselves. It is important to know that we *can* have intimacy without being sexual. (And of course, we can be sexual without being intimate.)

This issue seems to be an especially difficult one for lesbians since the fear of the possibility of becoming sexual often prevents women from establishing close friendships. This will be the topic of a forthcoming article, for I frequently hear women struggling with how to be intimate with friends without having to wrestle with being sexual.

Finally the fear of rejection is an issue for many folks who avoid intimacy. While another person may not like or may in fact reject your behavior, she simply doesn't have the power to reject your personhood (unless, of course, you hand over the power to her). Be clear about the difference between having a behavior rejected and having one's self rejected. If you are respectful of your self, you won't allow that self to feel rejected.

Susan and Bobbie recently came to me because their relationship was in crisis. Susan had made the choice, following much searching and therapy, to leave the relationship. She felt a need to explore new areas in her life and felt constricted by the old patterns in the relationship. Actually, she wished to redefine their relationship from a committed, monogamous one to more of a friendship. She also wished to live alone. Bobbie, feeling deeply hurt, was struggling with her feelings of rejection. She felt confused when Susan continued to profess her love and concern for her. While Susan was, in fact, rejecting some of Bobbie's needs for monogamy and living together, she was not rejecting Bobbie as a person; she was making some choices *for herself, not against Bobbie*. This is a difficult issue to conceptualize, especially if we don't have a clear sense of our self as separate from the other. It is also difficult to understand in the midst of the grief process.

Intimacy is a process of two separate and whole persons connecting and sharing and moving toward a mutuality. The following are elements of

Continued page 9

Hygeia's Comments

REFLLECTIONS ON A PELVIC EXAM. Of all the procedures physicians insist on doing and patients submit themselves to, the pelvic exam appears to be the most unpopular. Injections, suturing, even enemas rate higher in general patient acceptance. I'd like to share some of my reflections on this basic gynecologic exam, having experienced it from both ends of the speculum.

What makes it so irksome from the patient's viewpoint? I believe it is a combination of a rather literal invasion of privacy, feeling a loss of control and, at times, actual pain.

There is, of course, a certain sense of privacy that everyone, female or male, may reasonably have about their genitals. In addition, young females are taught a cultural shame. We are given numerous injunctions, such as, "save yourself for your husband," "don't let anyone see you naked," "it's okay for boys to urinate outdoors or go skinny dipping, but certainly not for girls." Even the fact that most girls are raised without a name with which to refer to their "private parts" adds to this sense of shame.

I recall a female resident, who, though rather forthright in most regards, always said "down there" when discussing with her patients anything involving the labia, clitoris, or vagina. Even after a full medical education, she couldn't bring herself to say the words which would have clarified what she meant and helped break that cycle of shame.

Beyond the excessive modesty and cultural shame, there is still some humiliation in having a part of your body which you choose only to share with a lover, examined by a person who may have a very low regard for your half of the species, or even a voyeuristic interest in the exam. Some women certainly find going to a female physician for a pelvic exam helpful in dealing with these issues. Personally, I can't imagine ever subjecting myself to a pelvic exam by a male physician again. I have often seen patients who stated with a sigh of relief that, if they have to have a pelvic exam, at least a woman doctor

was performing the procedure. Occasionally though, I have overheard a woman remark that she would prefer a male gynecologist because it would be queer to have another woman examine her there.

An added embarrassment can be the number of people in the examining room. Generally the physician, a nurse, and, at a university hospital, one or two medical students are present. The nurse has an interesting role. While she assists with lab samples, she also serves as a witness to defend the physician, should the patient make allegations of molestation. Her presence also decreases the likelihood of sexual assault actually occurring.

A sense of loss of control is almost inevitable when you lie flat on your back, expose your bare bottom to other fully clad people and undergo an exam, the purpose of which you may only vaguely understand. Certainly the position that is assumed is a cultural matter, rather than

“ . . . each women must ultimately make a choice about her own gynecological health care . . . ”

nature's decree. A pelvic exam can be performed with the woman sitting half way up. For that matter, a woman could stand up on something high and the physician be seated on a low stool. It is interesting that male physicians have made it the norm to have men stand for hernia exams. These could be performed supine, just as pelvises are.

Women's self-help clinics often place the patient in a semi-upright position for the pelvic. They may take another major step by teaching the women to use a speculum herself, perform the exam herself, and look at her own vagina and cervix.

Compared to the indignity of it all, pain is generally a minor factor. A woman who has had sexual intercourse, given birth or otherwise suffi-

ciently stretched the hymen, and who does not have a vaginal or pelvic infection or severe menstrual cramps at the time, should find the exam essentially pain-free unless the urethra is carelessly pinched between the speculum and the arch of the pubic bone. However, during the bimanual exam, when the uterus, tubes, and ovaries are felt between the two fingers inserted in the vagina and the hand on the abdomen, some pain may be noted. Gonads, whether they be ovaries or testicles, are rather tender parts. The sensitivity of men's testicles to pain has simply been better publicized, possibly because of their more vulnerable location.

What is accomplished by this perennially unpopular exam? Commonly, the exam is given in association with a prescription for birth control, as a check for vaginal or pelvic infection, during prenatal care, as an evaluation of severe lower abdominal pain, or during a routine checkup and Pap smear.

It is quite apparent that a lesbian lifestyle results in much less frequent need for pelvic exams. The lesbian woman doesn't need to see her gynecologist for prescription for birth control pills, fitting of a diaphragm, placement of an IUD, or because of complications from using these methods—yeast infections with the pill, serious pelvic infections with the IUD, or unexpected pregnancies.

Lesbians will occasionally suffer the annoyance of a vaginal infection, though generally less frequently than their straight sisters. A serious pelvic infection, generally initially caused by the spread of a gonorrhea infection to the fallopian tubes, is essentially unheard of in women who have no sexual contact with men. Although some lesbians may choose to become pregnant and have children, the vast majority do not and therefore never need prenatal care. Certainly any woman who develops severe lower abdominal pain, which may be caused by an ovarian cyst, pelvic infection, or other gynecological problems, will need a pelvic exam regardless of her lifestyle.

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Parent's Viewpoint

A MOTHER COMES OUT. . . I've always been proud of Mary. Growing up, she was an achiever, a "little mother" to her four little brothers, at times a rascal and I guess a little stubborn (we called it "knowing her own mind"), full of fun, and in all respects a very typical little girl. She was enormously loved--by her immediate family, by the grandparents, and by that whole loving extended family who lived in our home town.

Through the years, she has given us many proud moments. There have been times when she has asked for advice and we've given it as well as we could. . . then there have been times when she has NOT asked for advice AND GOTTEN IT anyway. It's darn near impossible for parents to outgrow that need to give advice. And so it was a few years ago that I was about to do just that. . .

I headed to Indianapolis to "straighten Mary out." It was obvious that she was troubled, but there was no excuse for her to act so rebelliously and talk so coarsely. Somehow she was changing, and we weren't sure what was going on with her. The '60s were difficult years for kids to grow up in and horrendous years to be a serious guiding parent. We knew we had made mistakes with our kids, but somehow there was always the need to keep trying and hang on. In our marriage partnership, I am the one with the big mouth and so it falls to me to do the talking when it becomes apparent that something needs to be said. So off I went to do the job of straightening out Mary and getting her back on the right track.

The day arrived. . . we were sitting at her dining room table and I was trying to find the right words--delicate, so as not to hurt her feelings and end up estranged, but strong enough to be effective. She beat me to it. She was bent on straightening ME out. No pussy-footing around with her. No sir, she was direct. . . to the point. . . BLUNT! "I'm gay."

I can recall the feeling that came over me when she first said that. A numbness. . . disbelief. . . shock. What am I hearing? Numbness! What actually came to my mind I do not remember. I also do not remember what we talked about or said that next minute. . . or next hour. . . or next day. . . or all weekend. But talk we did! Not a day has passed since that I have not thanked God for the help I received at that very moment, for it truly was divine help that kept me from exploding, haranguing, threatening, or whatever could have happened and which would have been typical behavior from me. (This might be as good a time as any to include that I also feel Mary had some divine strength given to her to help her tell me. I'm sure that took guts!) I like to feel she had confidence in me to react well--she sure was taking a chance and I'm so grateful she did.

"I'm gay," she said. The air was punched out of me. She said it with such a happy attitude. I do believe she had a sense of peace and relief after saying it. And I do remember she was smiling. What the next words were I cannot say, but for a weekend we talked. . . and we talked. . . and we talked. However, what is much better than talking--we HEARD EACH OTHER. Maybe for the first time in years, or possibly ever, we were hearing the other. I don't claim to have UNDERSTOOD at that time; the only important thing was to be a part of Mary's life. I also cannot admit to any acceptance of these new ideas which were so foreign to me. At that time, I was full of misconceptions about homosexuality and lesbianism. I am still learning--with Mary's help and with the help of her friends.

What a weekend it was! When I left to come home, I remember our giving each other the biggest hug ever. We had had lunch in a little restaurant, and in the parking lot by our cars, we were two crazy women, mother and child, hugging each other like everything and saying good-bye.

And I cried all the way home. . . but that's another story.

— M.K.B.

On Becoming (Continued)

intimacy that may serve as a checklist as you move toward a healthy, intimate relationship. Remember that all of these must be present and shared, and that the level of intimacy is determined by the level of honest sharing--by how much each is willing to give and receive.

1. Consideration: Am I mindful of the other's thoughts and feelings, needs and wants--as well as my own? It is important to be attuned to and

considerate of my own, in order that resentment not become a block to closeness.

2. Concern/caring: Am I genuinely concerned about those issues that matter to the other? Do I feel compassion for the other?

3. Vulnerability: How willing am I to let down my defenses? To allow the other to take care of me occasionally? Receiving love is often

more difficult than giving love, since we're more in control as the giver and more vulnerable as the receiver.

4. Empathy: To what degree do I allow myself to feel what the other feels, without judging or evaluating, or without trying to "fix it." To be empathic means to walk in another's shoes without displacing her/him.

5. Respect: Do I treat the other

Continued page 33

• DOLLARS AND SENSE •

Financial

IN THE LAST INSTALLMENT of "Dollars & Sense," Jane Doe had asked if it was legal, moral and ethical to use the "Planned Purchases Formula" in looking for a roommate. The Formula as described in the second of this series of articles revolved around getting exactly what you want and curtailing your expenses at the same time. Although the Formula was not specifically designed for obtaining roommates in order to help decrease monthly expenses, Jane meticulously composed a list of "roommate qualifications." She then used alphabetical symbols to indicate those qualifications that she felt were most important or, in some cases, those that the person **MUST** have in order to co-exist in a mutually agreeable environment. Her list (reproduced here in her words) had some surprising features:

NEW ROOMMATE WILL BE/HAVE/LIKE:

1. Soft rock music, country music, women's music
2. Like to cook
3. Not be too messy
4. Not mind my messiness
5. Accept my life style
6. Not want to know where I am every minute
7. May want to do things with me periodically
8. Not be so dependent on me that she wants to do everything with me
9. Has a life of her own
10. Accepts (current lover) in the house/in my bedroom on weekends
11. Does her share of cleaning/washing dishes
12. Is fully capable of paying 1/2 of rent and utilities
13. Has own car, OR does not depend on my driving anywhere
14. Smells good
15. Likes (or at least does not hate) Timotha (Timotha is Jane's 12-year-old cat.)

Jane added items, prioritized items

and finally scratched some items off the list altogether, ending up with 37 items on the final list. The one that had the highest priority was that the prospective roommate **HAD** to get along with Timotha. Secondly, Ms. X would have to be someone that the current lover would not veto in a fit of jealousy.

Jane fussed and fumed that she would never be able to find anyone with all these crazy qualifications and, at the same time, she attempted to be positive in her thinking. She went through extreme mood changes during this period. At first, she was depressed over the hopelessness of both attempting to find this perfect roommate *and* her financial situation. Then, she would swing into a purified optimism about everything. Finally, she received a call from Aunt Fannie, a family friend who wasn't really related, but who had been her most loving and nurturing supporter during her youth. Aunt Fannie had just received terrible news. The apartment house in which she had lived for 13 years had been sold to "a bunch of crooks out of New York." These "crooks" had notified all the tenants that the apartments were to be sold to owner-occupants as condominiums. The renters could either purchase the apartment in which they were now living, purchase another condominium within the complex, or move.

Jane explained her desire for a roommate and why it was so important to her to have just the perfect person. Aunt Fannie dearly loved Timotha, Jane, and all that Jane loved, and moved into Jane's apartment.

What Jane had just witnessed was in fact a miracle. When things happen, they happen for the good of ALL concerned--that is the spiritual law of prosperity. There is only good and love in the spiritual realm, if we will just appreciate its reality.

Jane's financial situation went from haltingly hopeful to "Hey, it's terrific!" With the arrival of Aunt Fannie on February 15th, Jane's total payments for rent and utilities were

75% of what she had projected. In addition, Aunt Fannie made snacks for Jane to eat in her car between her afternoon and evening appointments, so Jane's eating-out expenditures decreased. Jane also found that Aunt Fannie was a genius at making delicious meals out of a hodge-podge of inexpensive groceries. And, best of all, Aunt Fannie was capable of teaching these tricks to Jane.

Jane was so elated with having spent only \$635.74 for the month of February that she wanted to go out for a night on the town and "blow the bars apart." She had received an additional \$125 from her parents in February to pay for her license plates and it was burning a hole in her pocket.

After some discussion and thoughtful introspection, she finally agreed that she was far from being out of the woods financially, and that the most prudent thing she could do with her extra money was to tackle the outstanding debts--NOW. Jane began payments to her creditors the last of February. She listed the balances due on her outstanding loans on the Budget/Actual account sheet (see *Figure 1*, opposite), and began the slow but necessary climb out of indebtedness.

In March, Jane received another surprise. The company for which she worked started a bonus incentive plan. The new plan paid Jane an additional \$123.46 in March and has increased almost steadily every month since.

As Jane took control of her financial situation, it improved through the most interesting and unpredictable circumstances. That to which we direct our loving and optimistic attention and faith *does* improve. You'll never be able to predict how, but it will improve.

— ESTHER FULLER

Esther has an M.A. in Business Administration and has been a financial consultant to women and small businesses for over ten years.

• DOLLARS AND SENSE •

JANE DOE'S MONTH-BY-MONTH BUDGET — ACTUAL

	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Rent	220.00	220.00	220.00	165.00	110.00	
Utilities	70.00	67.00	70.00	51.00	35.00	
Phone	50.00	76.00	12.50	12.50	12.50	
Groceries	100.00	73.00	70.00	47.73	70.00	
Car Payment	130.00	130.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
Gas	65.00	100.00	100.00	103.69	100.00	
Car Insurance					130.00	
Car Plates	125.00	—	125.00	125.00	—	
Clothing	—	—	—	—	—	
Eating Out	} 40.00	} 22.00	24.00	18.60	24.00	
Entertainment			16.00	12.22	16.00	
Gifts	—		—	5.00	—	
Savings	—		—	5.00	—	
Charge Card A	Balance 689.00	—	—	Balance 674.00	15.00	4.90
Charge Card B	786.00	—	—	771.00	15.00	4.90
Charge Card C	431.00	—	—	416.00	15.00	4.90
Charge Card D	1,007.00	—	—	992.00	15.00	4.90
Charge Card E	205.00	—	—	190.00	15.00	4.90
Loan - X-L	2,608.00	—	—	2,593.00	15.00	4.90
Loan - Mom & Dad	1,741.00	—	—	1,726.00	15.00	
Total	800.00	688.00	737.50	750.74	631.80	

Figure 1

• THE ARENA •

Political

WOMEN'S RIGHTS THREATENED IN CLINIC VIOLENCE. March 8 is once again International Women's Day—a holiday celebrated worldwide to honor the rights and the struggles of women. Worldwide, that is, except in the United States, the country that actually gave us International Women's Day. IWD was started in the early part of this century as a commemoration of women in Massachusetts, who took to the streets in the 19th century to protest the terrible working conditions of women in the factories there. Year after year, IWD has commemorated the struggles of those and succeeding generations of women to build a world in which women could have "bread and roses"—a world where women's basic needs and strivings could be met.

Yet, it is no wonder that here in the U.S. we do not celebrate this day, especially this year, 1985. For we are faced with a political and social agenda that is intrinsically inimical to women's rights. Nowhere is this clearer than in the current controversy over reproductive rights.

On January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in its landmark decision of *Roe v. Wade*, stated that a woman's right to choose to have an abortion was protected by the right to privacy and was a decision to be made by the woman, and not by the state or by those who view themselves as the adjudicators of community morality. Prior to that decision, thousands, even millions of women, had been forced by circumstances to use back-alley abortionists. Many died. Today, the so-called "right-to-life" movement claims to be concerned with the life of the fetus, but nowhere do we hear any concern about the life of the woman involved, or about the many lives lost because abortion was illegal for so long.

Today, there is a startling and terrifying new dimension to lack of concern for the lives and rights of women. This is the dramatic increase in violence and terrorism against abortion clinics and the women who use them. Over the last year, some 30 clinics have been bombed by "right-to-life" terrorists. Patients at those clinics have been harassed, often facing threats from those so "concerned about life." Providers, too, face harassment and verbal and physical violence.

Such sweeping violence directed at a major segment of the population is the gravest terrorist threat in the U.S. today—far surpassing the threat posed by any ultra-left group of years past. But where is the Reagan administration in all this—the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the Justice Department or any other arm of the government that is supposed to be concerned with the protection of life and liberty? They are nowhere to be found. The administration, which so outspokenly opposes terrorism abroad, keeps its mouth shut when it comes to terrorism at home. It was not until December of 1984, that Ronald Reagan even spoke out on the

issue. And, still, the government does nothing to counteract this violence.

Reagan is the author of an essay entitled, "Abortion and the Conscience of a Nation." He is the first President to write so dramatically on this issue, and the first to raise it in a State of the Union address. The fact that he is so willing to support the efforts of the "right-to-lifers" adds fuel to the fires that are being lit around the country by the clinic bombings. This administration has set a tone and supported a policy that makes not only women's rights but women's lives secondary and inconsequential.

The court has said that the government has no business in the private decisions a woman makes regarding her own body. Today's administration wants to change that. While it refuses to let government regulate business in a way that would prevent discrimination against women, blacks, gays and others, it is eager to have government regulate women.

"...the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that a woman's right to choose to have an abortion was protected by the right to privacy and was a decision to be made by the woman..."

Two countries give us examples of what such government intrusion into women's lives may lead to. The best know of these is the case of China, where government policy forbids women from having more than one child. Investigations have shown that one effect of this policy is that, should a woman have a female child, the child may be killed so that the family can make a second try for a boy.

In Romania, the government is concerned about the low birth rate and wants women to have four children. Women are subject to monthly pregnancy tests. If they remain non-pregnant for too long, they may lose their jobs. If a pregnancy found one month is missing the next, they may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Both of these countries, as the Reagan administration, are trying to force women to use their bodies to carry out the policies of the state. All are intruding on women's private lives. Until women are recognized as human beings, as having the full rights that all people should have, the terrorism will continue. So will the struggle for women's liberation.

— CHRISTINE R. RIDDIOUGH

Christine is Director of Lesbian Rights for the National Organization for Women.



Women and the Land

**Exodus
WomanShare**

**Enterprise
Structuring**



*“...already made
the move out of
the city. . .*



**This Land
is
Our Land**



*and
onto
the
land.”*



“ . . .this is our dream come true.”





“ . . . many women had envisioned raising animals

. . . growing their own food and



sharing their land with other women.”



Photograph by BELVA CARYL

Shannon -- WomanShare Wood Run -- Oregon.

Exodus

THE MASS EXIT FROM SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL LIFE by young lesbians has traditionally been a necessity prompted by the desire to discard the pressures of family and friends to fit in--to have a boyfriend, get married and have children. This pressure pushes young women to the urban centers and the freedom to be themselves, to explore and grow, and to find others who are like them. Large cities provide an anonymous haven to safely reach out to other women of like mind. They find each other, settle in, develop networks of support, find employment, and, slowly but surely, feel comfortable with their new nest, their new home.

As comfortability stabilizes, a dream surfaces--a dream to take this new self-sufficiency, this firm base within, and transport their lives back out of the urban masses. A wish for quiet, calm, peace and health emerges, a dream to seek isolation, to leave the craziness and get on with their lives outside of the view of society.

IKYK, recognizing this phenomenon, surveyed women who have already made the move out of the city and onto the land. Our basic goal for this survey was to discover the feasibility of this choice, of this dream. We asked these women about their decision to move to the land and the methods they used to actualize their dream. For the women who seek the choice of living on the land, this information may empower your dream.

The vast majority of our respondents own and live on their land. Although the number of residents ranged from 1 to 8, most of the property had two women living on it. Most of them came from large urban areas. Many of them had envisioned raising animals and growing their own food; half had dreamed of sharing their land with other women; twenty-five percent had visualized a lesbian community.

For a few, no time at all elapsed between conception of their dream and making the decision to pursue it. For another few, it took twelve to fifteen years. But most of our respondents made their decision between one and eight years of first conceiving their dream. The time between making this decision and realizing the dream was

universally shorter, with most of the respondents actually purchasing their land within one to two years of deciding to do it.

Why did they decide to pursue this dream? Nearly all the respondents cited outdoor beauty, getting away from the city, clean air, isolation, solitude, supplying their own food, self-sufficiency and space as primary motives. Approximately fifty percent mentioned seeking a spiritual environment, a women's community, collective living and getting away from men as motivators. A few sought either a financial investment or a haven for older women.

One woman wrote, "(My dream was) to buy land and build a healing, spiritual women's community, offering a place where women can go and become within themselves and the land. Also it would become a source of financial security for me--both as investment in the land and by the possibilities of renting the structures to fulfill women's needs."

Another simply said, "The most important factor was the freedom for my lover and me to feel comfortable to touch outside."

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Exodus (Continued)

The number of acres dreamed of ranged from two to 100+. One-third of the respondents reported more acres actually purchased, one-sixth reported less, and the rest bought the same size land as they had projected. Nearly half had no idea of the cost of land while they were in the planning stages.

One woman reported, "(I wanted) as many (acres) as my money would buy, but at least five." Another said, "(I) had a specific region in mind, but was swayed financially to a different location because I could buy more acres with the money I had." Another woman echoed this, writing, "(My) land was larger (than my dream) only because I was willing to go to a different location for more acres." "I have always wanted to own my own home," reports another. "My first home became possible when I relocated from the Northeast to the Southeast. Homes were cheaper." And finally, one respondent wrote exuberantly, "The dream came first, then we investigated costs, although I did have some idea that land in Maine was relatively cheap. The land that we finally bought was large enough, but I would have liked thousands of acres—the whole state of Maine as a Lesbian Nation. It's cheap enough. We could do it!"

Financial structures were varied, and included one women's corporation, one women's land trust, one women's collective, one five-woman partnership and one four-woman partnership. More than half of the responses cited a two-woman partnership; one-third reported a one-woman sole ownership. "I co-own a place in the mountains of Pennsylvania," writes one woman, "which my first lover and I bought in 1970. We still own it. . . . Our relationship ended after 10 years, but we are still friends and partners." Another reports, "(Our structure) is collective in spirit, but sole ownership legally, due to tax refund laws."

The land of our respondents was found through a variety of means including newspaper ads, realtors and purchasing from friends and family. Prices ranged from \$160/acre to \$1200/acre. Twelve states were represented, with Maine appearing to have the best buys in land, and Ohio, Oregon and Minnesota running second. Some

financed the purchase with savings, some with standard mortgages and contracts, some with down payment loans from family, and some with equity from previous homes.

Only one respondent generates income by selling parcels of land, and all but one works at an off-land job. Half reported income from products generated on and by the land. Approximately one-third offer camping, hold conferences and workshops, rent retreat or meeting space, or rent cabins or inn rooms.

Nearly all of the women grow vegetables, herbs, and have fruit trees. Approximately one-half also cultivate wild fruit and hay. A few grow corn, beans and timber, two cultivate Christmas trees, and one gathers maple syrup. One-half of the respondents reported chickens, one-third have ducks and horses, one-sixth reported bees, pigs and goats. Other farm animals are raised by a few respondents, and one mentioned peafowl. Seventy-five percent of the women supply some or all of their food needs from the land and animals they own.

Over fifty percent of these women bought land with a house already on it. An additional one-third built their own house after purchase of the land. The rest plan to build a house in the future.

"This move was done in stages," one woman writes. "In 1980, we put \$10,000 down on the land. Then we started saving again and came up with \$10,000 to build our home." Another respondent observes, "Building is very stressful on a relationship;

problems expand it incredibly or precipitate its dissolution."

Nearly all of the houses have indoor plumbing and wood-burning stoves. Three compost toilets were reported, as well as two solar showers, two solar hot-water heaters, and one total solar heat system.

In summary, although there were some common threads among the answers IKYK received, it is clear that the lesbians who choose living on the land are as varied, complex and individual as those in any other location. One message was very clear: Living on the land takes dedication and hard work. One of our respondents writes, "I'm a rancher and a lesbian. My adult life has been spent in the country in one way or another, so there was no 'back-to-the-land' type politics that so many urban lesbians seem to express. In fact, I have trouble with the phrase, 'living on the land,' as those I've met who use it seem to think it means, 'kicking back in the country.' They are surprised, if not horrified, by the work that is involved in making some thing real and not just politically correct."

And another says succinctly, "I never dreamed how much work and knowledge was needed to live in the country!"

But the rewards seem to be just as intense—and often just as surprising. (See "WomanShare, page 19.) As one woman wrote, "Country living is the only way to fly for me—peace, serenity and beauty."

— IKYK





Photograph by BELVA CARYL

Jo and Germaine--WomanShare Wood Run--Oregon.



Photograph by BELVA CARYL

Brigitte--WomanShare Wood Run--Oregon.

WomanShare

WOMANSHARE has been home to more than 30 women for lengths of time from 3 months to 11 years. We have provided a safe resting place for more than 800 women from the U.S., Canada, Europe, Japan, Puerto Rico, and Australia. We have created workshops on country skills, sexuality, healing, music, art, and politics for more than 1,000 women. WomanShare has produced cultural events for poets, musicians, and artists, and we have celebrated more than 50 holidays, both traditional and women-created.

In 1976 we wrote a book called COUNTRY LESBIANS, The Story of The WomanShare Collective. This article is the continuing story of our growth and changes. This is also a shortened version of a chapter in the forthcoming book, LESBIANS ON LAND, edited by Joyce Cheney.

We began in 1974 as a group of five women hoping we would be together on our land in southern Oregon forever. It didn't work out that way! The land is still the same, more beautiful and cared-for than ever. But the women are not the original five, though all of us still feel connected and come back to visit or live for short periods of time in the midst of our new directions. The collective process has continued, expanded, and contracted.

We are eight women now. We focus more on land work--gardening, carpentry, raising chickens--and less on holding workshops for city women.

I am still here. It's been more than ten years now...hard to believe. I have been here through so much and yet I stay. Sometimes I don't know why. I see more and more women leaving the land in southern Oregon. Maybe it is not fashionable or exciting to live in the country any more. Maybe some of us think that going to the country is nothing more than an escape. But I am still here. Right now I am satisfied. I am doing the work I love, living with women I care about. I feel connected to the women here, some of whom I've known for years.

From the window of this studio where I sit, I can look down the hill and see our garden. This is the same view I had eleven years ago when we first moved in. Only then, it was a view from my bedroom window in the house that was here then. That house burned down on an August night eight years ago. The view I remember from this window is a dark night, our first night on the land, so dark, with only one light from a house miles away. I was afraid, a city woman suddenly transported to another world of dark nights and strange sounds, the scary

lurking possibilities of night. I think I was physically afraid of the country and all the space. I was also hopeful about the future, but very idealistic and really quite ignorant of all the work and change and growth that lay ahead.

I look out from this studio, Kionna, built originally as a kids' house for Elena, a child who lived here. Every morning for three years, Elena walked down the driveway in the near-darkness of winter mornings and endless rainy mornings to catch the school bus on the highway, and came back up the drive in the afternoons carrying her umbrella or her books or an art project. She always seemed to be tired on her way home. I remember the mornings as cold and rainy winter and the afternoons as dusty hot fall or spring. Now Elena is gone with her mother Jay to Seattle to live. Now she is a city kid.

Summer at WomanShare this year was so typical--women coming through, liking the place, wanting to live here. And we wanted new women to live here, wanted their promise to stay the winter. Now winter is here, and with it the big test of commitment, friendship, and power. There was so much rain, so many days with no new faces and short days with the

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WomanShare (Continued)

hardest work of all-inward work, searching work, individual creative work needing self-discipline.

For many reasons, it has been difficult for new women to feel that WomanShare is their place, their home. A lot of women who have lived here came feeling that they were equals with the women already here, equally powerful. Eventually they begin to feel the weight of all the years that some of us have lived here. Often a new woman feels overwhelmed, that she could never make WomanShare hers. Often she gets discouraged, angry, resentful. It is hard to come into a place that is already going, with a history and many traditions. One woman said that she couldn't continue to live at WomanShare because she felt so powerless, a feeling shared by many who have joined an established group.

Sometimes it feels very isolated living here in the woods, miles from friends and community. The nature of the land and the quiet grayness of winter can make us forget at times that we are indeed a part of a larger women's community. Being so isolated, we are encouraged and supported by the responses we get from outside our small circle. Recently a friend from Seattle wrote to tell us how important one of our workshops had been in helping her to go back home and do all the things she wanted to do in her life. Women have told us that they see WomanShare as an example of commitment, struggle, and friendship. They see that we are learning to organize ourselves, create rules and live by them, share problems, and analyze situations. We hope we understand that our reality is shaped by the culture we grew up in as well as the world we live in now. We try to see our group struggles less personally, to stand back and understand why we do the things we do.

I wonder why WomanShare is still here after eleven years. What has made it possible for us to stay on the land, separated from many of our friends and the women's community?

One reason is money. It has never cost us so much money to live here at WomanShare that we had to consume our energy getting the land payment together each month. Gardening and eating simply have also kept

our needs reasonable. Lots of new women visiting give us support, help with work, contact with the world, stimulation of new ideas. Electricity and running water have made our life fairly comfortable--a hot shower and feeling clean has helped us many times to feel revived and less tense.

During our years here in the country, there have been those of us who looked down on "conveniences," but not having to struggle with hygiene and the lack of electricity has helped us to be able to carry on for a longer time. On the other hand, our use of non-electric power for heat (woodstove) and light (kerosene) in our cabins has given us a sense of our strength and satisfaction at not being dependent on the nuclear/electric system, and has helped us to live economically.

Keeping our goals realistic has also helped, even though we spent much time talking of our dreams and visions.

We have gradually built cabins, only spending small amounts of money on them (from \$300 in 1975 for the Hexagon to \$2,000 in 1982 for Kionna). WomanShare has never received funding from anyone, so we have not been directly hurt by funding cutoffs. And, we have always kept in tune with our limitations. We want to be as open as possible to visitors, so we always ask women to call or write before arriving, so we can handle them with our fullest energy. Sometimes we have realized that we were going through personal struggles and couldn't handle new energy for a short time. By setting WomanShare limits, we have been able to push our personal limits and be open to many strangers passing through our collective home.

One of our houses burned down. We learned to build and created four cabins. We lived with a mother and girl child for five years. We made a

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Photograph by BELVA CARYL

Jo cutting carrots. WomanShare/Oregon.



Photography by BELVA CARYL

Germaine putting the garden to bed. WomanShare/Oregon

WomanShare (Continued)

new garden in a sunny, flat location and learned to produce and preserve large quantities of food. We have learned vital skills for self-sufficiency and employment—carpentry, plumbing, gardening, pump repair, basic electricity, and auto maintenance.

We learned how to feel strong physically and emotionally, and then we had to learn how to deal with having more power than the next woman who moved in. We worked on the process of living in a group and became very efficient at organizing a smooth-running collective household. And we continue to struggle with many familiar issues—competition, jealousy, class differences, power dynamics, racism. We have become more accepting of women's needs and desires, and not quite so idealistic and judgmental about "women's land," "women's culture," and "women's work." Along with this came a variety of women to live at WomanShare—more working class women, more women of color. Beverly, a woman who use to live here,

says that what she values most about WomanShare is the willingness to keep going no matter how hard things get, the willingness to keep trying to find a way to live together. She says that she hasn't found that in her life since she left here.

WomanShare is the land, the reason we all came here. It's the abundance of a new garden, green grass in the brown heat of summer, flowers and beauty encouraged, paths cleared, the wind in the fir trees, incredible starry nights, the whirr of the chainsaw, the sounds of insects every minute of every summer day and the screech-owl at night, the creek raging through winter and trickling through summer. And the endless stacking, piling, moving things from place to place—clothes, wood, furniture, garbage, manure, laundry, food. It's the accumulations of group living and never having enough storage space. It's sitting in the living room at sunset, watching the day end with a cat friend curled up on your lap. There are some days of boredom, of

not enough friends, of isolation. And there are many good days—dinner waiting when we come home, someone to joke with about our love life, a feeling that our work does count for something, that we have helped create a way of life that is needed.

— BILLIE MIRACLE

COUNTRY LESBIANS may be ordered for \$6.00 plus 75¢ for postage from:
 WomanShare Books
 P.O. Box 681
 Grants Pass, OR 97526

Women wanting information about visiting WomanShare are welcome, and encouraged to send a SASE to WomanShare, P.O. Box 681, Grants Pass, OR 97526, or call 503-862-2807.

Billie is a founding member of the WomanShare collective. She has lived at WomanShare for the past 11 years, and works as a graphic artist and illustrator.

Enterprise

LESBIAN BEES. Last spring I visited a lesbian beekeeper in Northern California. I spent several days with her, helping move her hives and learning from her a lot I didn't know before about bees.

For example, I found out that a field bee makes just $\frac{1}{12}$ teaspoon of honey in her whole life. That fact made me think that maybe honey should be regarded as a holy substance, reserved for ritual purposes only.

The more I learned about the little winged creatures, the more I became convinced that bees are the Ultimate Lesbians. They live in a matriarchal society. Their queen is Mother Goddess to them. All the workers are females. And because they all come from the same queen, all are sisters.

Though most authors of bee books typically persist in calling all bees "he," only a small minority of the hive's population are actually male. These are called drones--and they do no work. Drones are so helpless they can't even feed themselves. Their only function in life is to mate once with the queen--if they're skillful enough to connect with her while flying 50 feet above the ground. Upon completion of this feat, the drone's penis breaks off with a snap audible on the ground, and he falls to earth and dies.

The surplus drones that never get to achieve that dramatic end are unceremoniously pushed out of the hive by the workers before cold weather sets in. The hard-earned winter provisions are too valuable to share with non-producers.

Each colony seems to share a common group consciousness which is based on its queen. If she's mellow, all her offspring will be mellow; if she's mean and ornery, so will be all her daughters.

Bees naturally build from the center outward, and in a rounded shape. Each cell is hexagonal, the strongest of structures.

Sound ecology is practiced by bees. They are very neat and clean. In freezing weather they may hold their bowels for months, waiting for a sunny day to go outside. They will also thoughtfully go outside to die, if

at all possible, so no one has to clean up after them. Bees won't overwork an area of blooms, but will move somewhere else if there's already enough harvesting going on in one place.

The various tasks of the hive rotate among groups of workers, based on age level. The first work shift the young ones do is cleaning the cells (garbage detail). In time, the entire peer group moves on to other job categories, including Wax Producers (the builders--masons and carpenters of the hive), Nurse Bees (childcare), Queen's Attendants (massage and nurturing for the Mother Of All), Guard Bees (security), and Field Bees (kitchen duty).

Guard Bees patrol the area around the hive, stinging anything that threatens it. They fight to the death. If an invader should get past the guards and into the hive, *all* the workers become little Amazonian Warriors, defending their home.

There's also the role of Executioner Bee whose job it is to kick out all the remaining drones in Autumn. If a drone tries to come back into the hive, the Executioners surround him and pull off his legs before shoving him outside again.

The last job of a worker's life is that of a Field Bee. She collects pollen, nectar, propolis--sometimes as far as

eight miles away from her hive! The first time a novice Field Bee returns from a foraging trip, the other Workers gather to greet her at the hive's entrance and make a big deal over the pollen she's gathered. Even though it's usually only a fraction of the large loads the more experienced field bees can bring in, she gets much admiration and encouragement for her beginner's efforts.

After a season of foraging, the Worker Bees' wings are worn out completely, and they die. Their younger sisters are left behind to carry on their work.

I think bees have some things to teach us. If we thoughtfully observe their ways, we may be able to apply what we learn from their collective society to our own developing women's culture.

Myself--I'm drawing up plans to build a hexagonal cabin someday. Meanwhile, I'm wintering in an all-female cooperative. We rotate work shifts. And we'll be sharing among us the provisions we harvested and stored up together.

— JENNIFER WESTON

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Structuring

P EOPLE WHO KNOW ME now find it hard to believe I haven't always lived in the country. I truly seem to have found my home.

I started dreaming of country living in my twenties. I did not know I was a lesbian then. I didn't act on my dream until I was 30 and had just learned of my preference for women. My new lover and I thought we were the only lesbians in the world, and we were seeking a place in nature where we would be free to sit together and touch each other outdoors.

My divorce left me with only a VW Bug that wouldn't start and a 12½ acre wooded piece of land with an old trailer on it for camping. We affectionately referred to this old trailer as the "Palace." My parents originally bought it for my Grampa,

but he didn't want it. They sold and repossessed it three times before I inherited it, and in spite of its ragged condition, it was great for camping.

At first, my lover and I enjoyed camping there on weekends. Then, during the week, we would decide to drive to the country on the spur of the moment rather than go home to the apartment. Sometimes we would trade clothes so we wouldn't show up at work with the same outfit two days in a row. This hunger for the country became more and more frequent, until finally we knew we wanted to live there.

My family lived close to this land and my brother was just building his own log house. We started talking with him about building, and the more we talked, the more real the

possibilities seemed. We started planning the site and started drawing sketches and floor plans. I started seeing this house in my mind, and I could feel how great it would be for us to have our own home in the woods. I could actually see us sitting together on a porch swing, enjoying the cool summer breeze and the sweet smells of the woods.

When we were planning the size of the house, it made sense to plan small since we had no money. One of my friends suggested we plan exactly what we wanted, and if that was too expensive, then we could cut out the frills. If your going to dream, dream Big. My dream home was over 3,000 square feet and had skylights and stained glass windows. So does the

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Structuring (Continued)

one I built.

The reality was that once I visualized this dream home it was mine. I had just a few details, i.e., money, to work out before I could physically take possession of it. My part in making this dream become a reality was to define what I needed to get it. Basically all I had was a piece of land, a steady job, good credit and a very strong desire to have this home. I had no money and I knew nothing about construction, but I knew I wanted my own home.

There had been rumors of this land having no water on it, so before we went any further, we decided to drill a well. If there was no water, we would abandon the idea. I know now the decision to build our dream home was already made. I just didn't yet believe it was possible for us to have it. After all, if I couldn't afford my dream home when I was married to a well-paid husband, how on earth would I manage to pay for it now?

We drilled the well and got plenty of water. This was the biggest of the "Do-It-Yourself projects" I was ever involved in. We had a well driller drill a well and set the pump. We rented a trencher and ran the pipe underground to the Palace.

With running water, the Palace took on a whole new personality. We decided to put in a temporary septic system and live in the Palace while we saved down payment money. Up to this time all our dreaming was

done with empty pocketbooks. By living in the Palace, we could save apartment rent and utilities. So we started an austerity program. We spent no money that was not necessary, and would deliberate for a week before spending \$1.00 for a movie matinee. We rode to work together and grew most of our vegetables, so our cash expenses were minimal. We loved living in the woods and learned to hate the Palace, but it served its purpose for eighteen months. During the first 12 months we paid for the well—approximately \$3,000—and

“. . . some women on the land have expressed their commitment by building a house. . . .”

saved \$6,000 cash. This was the down payment for the house.

During the time we were in the Palace, we talked with everyone we could who knew anything about building, and visited every open house we could find, especially log homes. We gathered all sorts of technical information and literature about everything from stress factors of #2 boards to plumbing fixtures. We learned about building codes and perk tests. Finally, the time came to get down to serious business, to go to the bank and get a loan. We were two

lesbian women wanting to build our own log house. My only credit references were for a used car and a charge card. We wanted to build this house and borrow this money in the county that boasted the strongest membership of the KKK in the region. The redeeming factors were that I had a steady job, the land was paid for, and my credit history was good.

I sent letters to all the banks in the area letting them know I was looking for a construction loan to build this house. We felt \$6,000 was a sizeable down payment since we thought the home would cost a total of \$36,000. Some banks turned me down, but I did not get the hassle I expected about being female. I contacted the banks that didn't turn me down flat and got the loan in the closest town.

I've been living in my dream home now for over five years. It turned out to cost about twice what I had anticipated, but somehow the money always showed up in time. I sit on the porch swing, just as I did in my dream, and admire the workmanship in the house. I'm learning more and more how important it is for me to live in the woods, to enjoy the summer breeze and the smell of the woods. It's as if the trees are my friends, and I need to experience the quiet and the smells and the feel of the woods for my own well-being. I truly have found Home.

— LINDA SHIPP



This Land Is Our Land

IN THE FALL OF 1976, forty or so women from Madison and Milwaukee began meeting with the idea of buying land together—for themselves and any other women who wanted what rural women space could offer.

The land was to be a campground, a farm, a wildlife refuge, women's refuge—a place where women could learn rural survival skills from other women, land that would be held in trust, forever, for women. More meetings were held, money for a down payment was pledged, a beautiful piece of land was found, and, in the spring of 1977, Wisconsin Womyn's Land Co-operative was born. The cost of the 80 acres with its house and barn was \$37,500. The \$15,000 down payment was raised from donations. Continuing support to pay off the 20-year mortgage and maintain the land and organization comes from membership and camping fees, benefits, donations, pledges, rent from the resident workers, and the sale of co-op products.

The land, called DOE Farm, which stands for Daughters of Earth, is owned and maintained by Wisconsin Womyn's Land Co-operative (W.W.L.C.) members. A "co-ordinating council" and any other interested women meet monthly and conduct the business of the co-op. Women also meet for weekends of working and playing together on the land, for benefits in the cities, and to serve on various committees. All decisions are made by consensus. Regardless of degree of involvement, every woman who becomes a member of W.W.L.C. plays an important part in insuring the continued existence and vitality of DOE Farm.

The land is rolling and secluded. About 25 acres of it is tillable and produces organic cash crops of hay, red raspberries, and asparagus. An orchard, nut trees, grapes and other edible perennials, as well as many flower gardens, have been and continue to be planted and cared for over the years. The domestic animal population varies, but usually includes dairy goats, chickens, cats and dogs. A small collective of resident workers caretakes the land.

Much of the land is woods and wild meadows. There is a campground area with tent and van campsites, an open-sided shelter, drinking water, outhouses, a rain barrel shower, and a wood heated sauna. In 1980 part of the campground and all communal spaces were designated chemical-free, supportive spaces for women struggling with alcohol and drug dependencies and for women who choose not to be around chemicals. We are also working to make the land as physically accessible to differently-abled women as possible.

Marked hiking trails highlight scenic views of the land and surrounding hilly countryside, and also provide excellent opportunities to pick berries, hunt mushrooms, watch birds, and be alone with nature. The more inaccessible parts of the land have been set aside as a people-free wildlife refuge. Nearby, the winding Kickapoo River, Mill Bluff State Park swimming

area and the Sparta-Elroy Bike Trail offer other recreation. The closest town is about ten miles away. Loving ourselves and the land is what makes DOE Farm special.

Lesbian celebration of Aging On Womyn's Land—July 4-7, 1985. A celebration of aging for lesbians over 40 and our friends is being planned for July 4-7 at the Wisconsin Womyn's Land Co-operative campground, otherwise known as DOE farm. The more structured activities are planned for Friday and Saturday, leaving Thursday and Sunday for travel time, informal group sessions, and just plain enjoying the peace and beauty of this land.

The emphasis will be on a chemically free outdoor environment in which we can express our concerns, build networks, and form friendships. Semi-primitive camping, sheltered sleeping space if necessary, and limited special accommodations for differently-abled women are available. A base fee of \$14 covers land use and trial membership. An additional workshop fee will be on a sliding scale with scholarships available.

If you want to head a workshop or you have special needs, write us now. Limited space. W.W.L.C., Rt. 2, Box 42, Norwalk, WI 54648. (608) 269-5301.



Photography by L. Jan Hunt

(Back to Basics)
"NOW WE CAN GET KATE and ALLIE!"



• LEISURE •

Sports

CCROSS COUNTRY SKIING—An Option For Outdoor Winter Activity. Is anyone out there looking for a new winter activity? Why not cross country skiing? Even though it is March, winter is still not over and there's always next year to consider. Now is the perfect time to purchase your own equipment at reduced prices and get in a little practice before next season. Please note that this article is being written with the basic beginner in mind. I do not write about activities I have not attempted, so I will try to share some of my experiences with this fun sport as well as offer some helpful hints.

Normally, people think of cross country skiing as something terribly rugged where you're racing across mountains. This may be true for the expert racer, but to me, cross country skiing is just skiing around your local terrain, countryside, park or golf course. A great thing about the sport is that it is for all ages. I started three years ago at the age of 39 and met people from 6 to 70 years out on the various trails. It has been stated that if you can walk you can cross country ski; although it is not quite *that* simple, it is a sport where you see progress instantly. Becoming proficient takes additional practice. Cross country skiing is a terrific winter activity not only for the obvious benefit of physical exercise, but also for gaining an appreciation of the quiet beauty of the woods. When you're out there gliding along, the stresses of the job and everyday problems seem far away and not quite as important. And, though I was sure cross country skiing would never compare to downhill, I discovered this was not true.

Equipment

How does one begin? My recommendation is to try rental equipment first (if available) to see if you're going to like this sport. Shops that rent equipment at the location where you're going to ski often provide a beginning lesson for a nominal fee. When I started, our local parks department

offered both rental equipment and the beginning lesson. Then I was given a map of the trails and left on my own to explore them. After renting equipment twice, I decided to buy my own. I opted to purchase the basic *no-wax* skis for beginners, and found these worked great.

Equipment dealers will help you with ski length, etc. Ski boots should be tried on with both lightweight socks and a heavier pair. The boots should fit as comfortably as street shoes. A loose fit at the heel will cause blisters, and if boots are too short, your toes will jam into the front of the boot and you could lose toenails. The ski shop will set the bindings on your skis to fit your boot. Skis, poles and boots will cost approximately \$100.

A couple of friends, who were also beginners, purchased skis that required waxing and it was a disaster.

“. . . looking for a new winter activity? Why not try cross country skiing?”

Different temperatures and types of snow require different wax; as a result, their first trip out was very difficult. The wax wasn't correct, so their skis constantly slipped and they couldn't get traction. It took them twice the effort to make forward progress.

Actual Technique

The best place to learn and practice is an area where tracks have already been set in the snow and you can just follow them. If this is not possible, then you must make your own tracks, which can be fun in itself. When I first started, I established my own ski trail around the small farm where I lived. I started by just ski-walking a path around the yard, a sloping pasture, a ten-acre field and a woods. Once the trail was established, I could ski around it.

The basic movement on skis is the "kick and glide"—pushing off with one ski and gliding on the other. This requires a weight shift and the key point is to shift the entire weight from one ski to the other. Following someone who has mastered this technique and imitating their motion will help you develop this skill.

Here are a few hints that should help your movement on the skis:

1. Move arms straight down the track, *not* from side to side.
2. Bend knee over the lead ski just enough to support your weight comfortably.
3. Establish a rhythm to the kick and glide.
4. Keep arms swinging naturally in a relaxed motion.
5. When you plant your pole for push, it should be angled to the rear so the basket comes in right beside your feet. Release and let it extend to the rear with your arm movement.
6. Practice falling and getting up.

Conditioning

Before beginning any physical activity, it is important to warm up the body. Prepare for cross country skiing by walking, jogging or swimming. Include a variety of regular stretching exercises. Weight training is also helpful, since cross country skiing works practically every muscle group in the body.

Being out on the trail is a great experience, and there's nothing like a hot bowl of chili and a warm drink by the fireplace when you're finished. Get started yourself and introduce your friends to this vigorous activity. It's never too late to add a different activity to your life.

— BETH PATRICK

Beth is an athletic administrator and volleyball coach with over twenty years experience. She is well known as a clinician, speaker, tournament director and administrator.

• HEART TO HEART •

Her-Stories

TWENTY YEARS AGO, you might have walked into a lesbian bar somewhere and seen a female leprechaun. Her two-carat diamond pinky ring may have been dancing an Irish jig as she inhaled a deep drag from her Gold Label Dino cigar. You may have noticed that she smoked it more dramatically than any man, and dangled it in the air for all to see. Behind the smoke circles that she blew, you may have seen laughing Irish eyes circling the table. She would linger longer when she saw an attractive woman. You may have recognized, just as Webster says, that this leprechaun had her own hidden treasure.

This is a true story about such a leprechaun woman. In the 1960s, she was impressively attired in a tailored slack suit. (She would tell you that she was wearing such suits in the forties, when "nice" women did not dare don a pair of slacks.) Her oxfords were expensive black mirrors. She was a tough and gentle woman, and was called a "Butch."

She had as many "wives" as Mickey Rooney. As a dominant spouse, she wanted her "woman" to look feminine, bought her "woman's" clothes, ordered food for the two of them, planned all the vacations, chose the furniture and drove the car. She called herself the "King of the Butches," and so did we. She was a full-blooded Irishwoman and drove a Cadillac Coupe De Ville. Her home was in the suburbs, and was furnished well. She hosted lavish parties. She loved and laughed, and we acted the same way when we were around her. She was a strong role model to those of us that had less to laugh about. We never seemed to tire of the repeated stories about her escapades and her blatant disregard about what others might think about her lesbianism. If some called her "flaunting," more of us called her "proud." There was very little pride in those days, and less pride about being lesbians.

"Did I tell you about the time . . ." she would begin. If we had already

heard her story, we pretended that we had not. We wanted to hear it again.

"Well, her husband came home unexpectedly, and I crawled bare naked through the wood chute! I crawled five hundred feet around six-foot snow drifts. I did not have a stitch of clothes on!" Later, another story: "I met a prostitute who liked me. We checked into the Hilton Hotel, and drank wine on the outside terrace until we passed out! The water sprinkler came on early in the morning and hit the terrace. Our clothes got soaked! We checked out of the Hilton dripping wet, because we didn't have any other clothes!"

Bawdy, humor-filled stories about King's living daringly, when some of us were barely brave enough to talk with a new woman in a lesbian bar. We listened to King tell stories about encountering women from all walks of life. And this during a time when we could have been jailed or institutionalized for revealing ourselves to the wrong person. No wonder that we willingly called her "The King."

King was a rounder, a self-admitted "chaser." Most of her "wives" knew this. But, there was more than this to the King's story. In the early seventies she organized the "Pussy Posse." The posse was a group of nine women motorcyclists, seven of them over fifty years old. They drove their Hondas around town, wearing look-alike jackets with Pussy Posse patches and had a great time. King was a founding member of her city's first homosexual outreach, and her home was the first public place that they met in. At fifty-two, she began dating a woman that was half her age. Somehow, she taught us to laugh at the establishment, and to be proud.

Talking to her recently, I found myself facing a much quieter, more open woman, who still had vestiges of the old King's personality. She is sixty-one now and retired. She lives alone, and her health is poor. She rarely visits lesbian meeting places.

"The meetings are full of such

younger women," she says, "and it is such a different life now." She knows that the younger lesbians generally relate on a more mutual basis, and that the "butch" role is mostly passing away. "I had no one to show me how to act in a relationship. How was I to know what was right?" she asks.

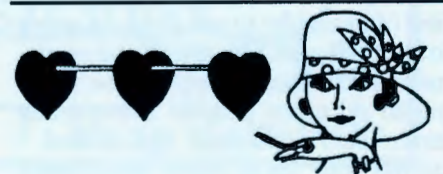
When questioned about her pioneering frankness, she says, "I had an advantage that most of you did not have. My mother accepted my lesbianism, and told me to be a "good" lesbian. And I tried to do that." Her mother's support may have been what helped her to be such a strong role model. Her mother's acceptance may have helped her to be more trusting, and more independent.

Now getting older, King seems lonely. She is mellower than I have ever known her to be. She is closely attached to her own relatives, and finds the same acceptance from them that her mother gave. She has three "ex-wives" who are long-time friends. Too, she has good relationships with the young adults that she once helped to raise, who are children of her ex-lovers. Some of these adult children are male. All are heterosexual. King is hoping for a significant relationship to share with someone special in her retirement years. She is happy with the changes made in the lesbian world, yet seems somewhat confused by it. Perhaps she may feel abandoned, as many pioneers often do.

When I started to leave, King's eyes began to twinkle. She said, "The Irish love to tell good stories. . . don't believe everything that I have told you."

She is lesbian history, past and present. She is a tough and gentle woman.

— "THE OLD SALT"



Mother dislikes lover

DEAR BUTCH: My mother and I have discussed my sexual preference on an on-going basis since I came out to her seven years ago. She's very ok with me and my lesbianism and I feel a great amount of support from her. My problem? She definitely dislikes my lover. — *Nothing's Simple*

DEAR SIMPLE: Try to spend some time with your mother alone. Let her know you are willing to share yourself with her singularly part of the time, but that you would like her, in turn, to make the best of the situation when the three of you are together. Try to find out what it is that your mother dislikes about your partner. It could be that she really doesn't dislike the person, but rather the situation. She might be very accepting of you, but not your actual relationship with another woman. If in fact there is a specific dislike, discuss this with your partner and see if she is willing to discontinue or ease up on her behavior when in your mother's company. In other words, it should be up to all parties concerned to be sensitive to all others and strive for the positive. Each person must be willing to give, if they love and respect you, to make an unpleasant situation one of pleasure for all.

★

DEAR READERS: I received a letter from a sister in San Francisco, in graphic language, decrying my answer to why I choose the name "Butch." (See *Heart to Heart*, *IKYK*, December 1984.) Here is my reply.

DEAR BUTCH FOR 40 YEARS AND CHANGING:

I celebrate your right to your opinion, and I proudly claim the same right.

One of the goals of this magazine is to show that lesbians are not all one type of person. We are not all artisans, not all truck drivers; not all fat, not all thin; not all union members, not all corporate executives; not all promiscuous, not all celibate; not all conservatives, not all liberals; not all active, not all passive. We are Every-

woman--all the wondrous, infinite varieties and combinations that can be packed into the glorious female body and mind.

The staff of this magazine has expended a lot of effort to present writers from a broad spectrum of lesbian culture--all ages, backgrounds, races, beliefs. As our readers, you are not asked to agree with everything our various pages present. But we do hope you'll accept the sharing in the spirit in which it is given.

One thing is very clear--There Is Room For Us All! And those among us who insist on polarization, who want to split us into "good lesbians" and "bad lesbians" do nothing but harm our culture. We need to unite the Sisterhood once and for all, to embrace all of us as lesbians and as human beings, to allow for and learn

from the varieties of ideas and ideals among us. As long as we insist on mocking, castigating or betraying some of our sisters, we will never have the energy, the time or the heart to present a united front to the rest of the world.

In the February 1985 issue of *IKYK*, our columnist, Christine Riddiough, Director of Lesbian Rights for NOW, quoted Benjamin Franklin, "We must all hang together or we will all hang separately." Christine went on to say: "First of all, people need to agree to talk with each other and to at least agree to disagree if necessary. We're never all going to be in total agreement about goals or issues or strategy, but we should be able to work together on those issues and in those ways where we do agree."

— BUTCH

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• HEART TO HEART •

Your-Stories

My mother and I have been friends since I was little. She always believed in me. It didn't matter to her if I had trouble learning in school, so long as I was trying. It didn't matter that I preferred scouting over dancing. All that mattered was that I was trying, and that I enjoyed life. She just didn't want to see me sitting around not growing, learning or exploring. So I went to dance classes, I had dates for every function, I did their things. But I also did mine. I fixed and painted my bike at seventeen. I belonged to girl scouts and was planning a camp out at the same time I was picking out my junior prom dress. Some still called me the class queer because I happened to have worn pink and green on Thursday, but my life was full and I was basically content. And then the label reappeared in full strength.

It was our Junior prom, and we all were lovely with full length gowns, beauty shop hair, white gloves, and heels. The boys had gone to get drinks. There were eight at our table, and three tables of eight close at hand. One of those lovely ladies said, "Look at that hunk of a man on the dance floor." Not only did all eight heads at our table look, but the twenty-four other heads at the close-by tables looked. Out of my mouth, as innocent and honest as one could be, and in a loud, clear voice, I said, "Who cares about him. Look at the girl--now that's good looking." Thirty-one heads turned and looked at me. Finally, one girl said, "Didn't you know that girls look at boys, and

boys at girls--NOT girls at girls." Everyone laughed, spreading the word that I was not just queer, but *queer*.

I still look at girls with fondness. And, I have a partner now. In fact, we intend to spend our whole lives together. There have been good times and bad, and there are times that the labels still hurt, but I can tell you I am happy that I am what I am. I am also glad that my peers helped me to evolve and discover the real me, even if they didn't mean to.

I have happiness, I have love, and I hope that as times change, coming out might not be as painful for my other sisters. But no pain would be worse than not coming out and living life as it was meant to be for us.

— MN-GA

My lover and I never got into roles of I'm the butch and she's the fem type of thing. We take each other as women. We share the housework as well as the outside work. Playing roles was never an issue for us.

— ANONYMOUS

Religion? Well, speaking for both of us, we believe in God but we're really not religious people. We never go to church (of any kind) but our belief in God is solid.

— ANONYMOUS

My dad knew about Donna and me for sometime but he never said a word to me about it. You have to understand that dad is a little hesitant about talking about things but sometimes his actions speak louder than words ever could.

My brother was getting married and of course I asked my lover to come with me. We were sitting at the reception watching the straight couples dancing wishing that we could dance with each other when my father came over and asked my lover to dance, which she did.

Dad didn't ask anyone else to dance that day. Not my mother, the bride or me. Just my lover! It was his way of welcoming here into the family and accepting her as the one I loved.

— ANONYMOUS

★

“FARM LIFE THROUGH THE EYES OF A CITY GIRL.” I would never had thought that I would be writing an article about women on the farm. For a lesbian publication, no less! Well, we all live and learn don't we? I'm what you may call a city girl. The closest I had come to farm animals was at the zoo. Girl, can one's life change quick. I'm now living on a 38-acre farm with a friend.

There are so many different and wonderful things to do on a farm. We have goats, horses, chickens, pigs, dogs and several cats. Last fall I got to see a baby goat born. This summer was the first time I put out a garden. It's wonderful to plant something from a seed and watch it grow, see it grow into something you can share with family and friends.

There is another side to living on a farm, of course. Getting up at 5:30 a.m. to do the chores. Doing this almost seven days a week, rain or shine, hot or cold. The animals getting sick. The vet bills. The feed bills. Getting hay and straw even when you don't feel like it. Knowing the animals depend on you for all their needs.

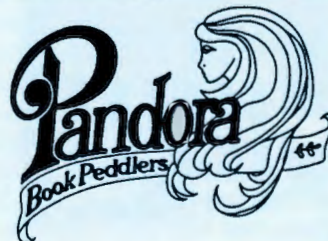
Yet, I feel the good outweighs the bad. It's so nice to go outside where all you can hear is country. Quiet. Birds singing, frogs croaking. Seeing blue clear skies, trees, the land. In summer or winter, the country is just magnificent. Walking in the woods, hearing a small creek make its way over the rocks. Feeling free. Floating. I think this was the way God meant life to be. There is an old saying about "heaven here on earth."

— D. DAY

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• HOW TO DO IT •

Replace A Broken Window

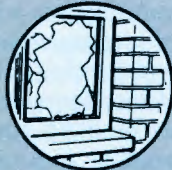
Your Problem:

- A window is broken.
- Heat is lost around window panes where putty is missing or dried out.

What you need:

- Window glass--correct size
- Putty or glazing compound
- Putty knife
- Hammer
- Pliers
- Wood chisel
- Glazier points

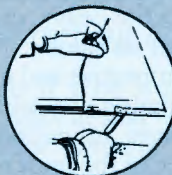
HOW-TO:



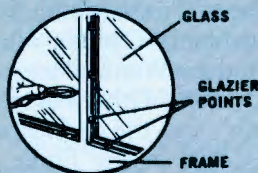
Step 1
Work from the outside of the frame.



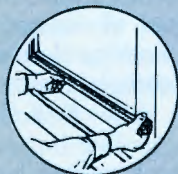
Step 2
Remove the broken glass with pliers to avoid cutting your fingers.



Step 3
Use a wood chisel to pry up the old glazing compound out of the groove or rabbeted area.



Step 4
Use pliers to remove old glazier points (small metal pieces) which hold in the pane.



Step 5
Determine the size of pane needed by measuring the cleaned-out opening. Subtract $\frac{1}{16}$ inch from each dimension for glass panes, and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch for acrylic panes.



Step 6
Apply a thin layer of putty or glazing compound to the rabbeted area of the frame where the new pane will rest.



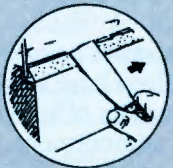
Step 7
Place the glass pane firmly against the putty.



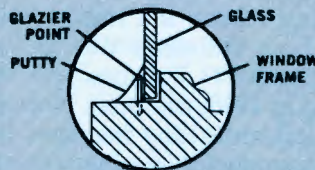
Step 8
Insert glazier points near the corners first, and then every 4 to 6 inches along the glass. Press in carefully with putty knife to prevent breaking the glass.



Step 9
Roll some glazing compound into a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch rope and press it firmly around the sash.



Step 10
Bevel the compound with a putty knife held at a 30- to 40- degree angle.



Step 11
The putty should cover the glazier points and form a smooth seal. Allow the compound to dry thoroughly for a week, then paint, overlapping the glass about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch. Don't clean the window until the paint has cured. (At least one week.)

Your Reward:

- Rain, cold, dust and insects are kept out.
 - The house looks better.
 - You have saved money by doing the job yourself.
- JOY BLAIR

Joy began her career in construction at an early age working with her father and brothers. She graduated from Purdue with a degree in art education. In 1979 she began her own construction company and is currently involved with historical restoration on Victorian period houses as well as framing for residential contractors.

• BOOKS IN REVIEW •

Literally Speaking: New Titles



Gail Wilhelm

SINCE WRITING BY lesbians has often been obscured in part because many publishers have allowed our books to go out of print, a number of lesbian and/or feminist presses have a strong commitment to preserving "classic" works of lesbian writing. Naiad Press, for instance, has previously demonstrated this commitment by publishing a number of lesbian pulp romances of the 50s and 60s by writers such as Ann Bannon and Valorie Taylor. Naiad's latest reprint is a real literary coup. By making available Gale Wilhelm's *We Too Are Drifting* (Naiad Press, P.O. Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302, \$6.95), first published in 1935, this press has secured a significant piece of lesbian literary history for present-day readers. In an introductory profile of the author, Naiad publisher Barbara Grier shares what scant biographical material is available and asks readers to take part in the search for lesbian foremothers such as Gale Wilhelm who have been lost to us through time.

While reading *We Too Are Drifting*, it is necessary to remember the risk involved in writing about lesbian relationships in the Depression-torn America of the mid 1930s. Having become accustomed to the confessional straight-forwardness of contemporary lesbian writers, the consciously structured, highly formalized and demanding style of this novel is a bit of a shock. However, once inside the passionate world of Jan Morale, this unfamiliar formality is forgotten as the reader watches Jan shake off the desperate clinging love of her married lover Madeline so that she is free to love

the delicate young Victoria. The lovers must not only deal with Madeline's shrew-like tendencies, but cope with Victoria's beloved family and the death of Jan's much-loved best friend and fellow artist, Kletkin. The dramatic manner in which the book is written gives it a distanced quality that is frustrating at first, but well worth the reader's effort. Naiad also plans to reprint Wilhelm's third novel *Torchlight to Valhalla* in its continued dedication to preserving milestones of lesbian culture.

First published by Persephone Press in 1980, *Choices* by Nancy Toder (Alyson Publications Inc., Boston, MA, \$6.95) does not live up to its claim as "a classic lesbian love story." *Choices* is a complex novel that begins with Sandy and Jenny, college roommates who become lovers. After much denial and pain, Jenny ends the relationship, refusing to let the social stigma of lesbianism limit her choices. The novel begins to fall apart when the two women meet years later at a psychology conference. Despite the fact that Jenny's dissatisfaction with her marriage has led her into a string of loveless affairs with many men, she cannot comprehend Sandy's relatively secure relationship with a woman. Considering that Jenny is a psychologist herself, as is her husband, their lack of factual knowledge on homosexuality is totally unbelievable. Jenny and Sandy stumble toward each through a series of coincidences without credible motivation, and the story breaks down under the weight of the seemingly endless monologues filled with shallow ponderings. Granted, *Choices* may have been considered a "classic" for its bravery in dealing with the details of sexual love between women and for its honesty in speaking of the fear and confusion of the realization of same-sex erotic feelings, but the heavy, undirected style of the novel hides much of its value.

Judy Grahn is one of the most innovative and exciting contemporary lesbian poets. Her daring way with language allows her to reveal the lives of ordinary lesbians/women and has made her one of the most respected writers of our culture. *The Work of A Common Woman*, first published by Diana Press and re-issued by St. Martin's Press is now part of The Crossing Press Feminist Series (The Crossing Press, Trumansburg, NY 14886, \$6.95). This collection contains Grahn's often quoted (and misquoted) "The Common Woman" poems, plus "She Who," "Edward the Dyke and Other Poems," "A Woman Is Talking To Death" and the unfinished set, "Confrontations With the Devil in the Form of Love." Grahn's seemingly simple style is infused with the power that comes from telling truth long hidden. *The Work of A Common Woman* demonstrates the skill and originality of this visionary poet whose name has become synonymous with lesbian working class poetry. No collection of lesbian writing is complete without it.

— JOY PARKS

Joy is a writer whose poetry and book reviews have appeared in many lesbian/feminist journals, literary magazines and newspapers.

Old, Rare & Out of Print

CASSANDRA AT THE WEDDING by Dorothy Baker, written in 1962, is a fascinating book. It has a Grier rating of A C***, meaning it contains major lesbian characters and/or action, and latent, repressed lesbianism or characters who can be so interpreted. The story tells of the intense relationship between Cassandra and her twin sister, Judith. Cassandra believes that she and Judith are part of a whole. Without Judith she never feels complete. Most of her self-worth and identity comes from the fact that she is a twin. Cass narrates the first half of the novel, explaining her reaction on hearing her twin is going to separate from her and marry. Cass is devastated, feeling life is not worth living without her significant-other. She wishes she and Judith could continue to live the life together which feels so right to her. Cass consults a therapist to help her cope with the separation.

The middle of the book is told by Judith and comes as quite a shock, because Judith feels quite differently about their special relationship.

The reader is swept up into the relationship quickly. Baker's literary style is excellent, and her language flows smoothly and convincingly. The book's climax is surprising and, at the same time, the only way it could end. Dorothy Baker tells a realistic story that helps to better explain the close relationship between these special family members.

The interaction of family members is also the theme of Jo Sinclair's (Ruth Seid) *Wasteland*, written in 1946. It has a Grier rating B*** (A?). The novel is told by Jake during his psychiatry sessions. Jake is somewhat a

loner, hating everyone in his Jewish family except his lesbian sister, Debbie. With his doctor's help and direction, he comes to understand and empathize with each family member. He evolves from hating his Russian Jewish parents through sympathizing with them and pitying them and eventually to loving them.

The interaction between Jake and Debbie is engrossing. As Jake's weakness progresses, it is up to Debbie to pick up the gauntlet and hold the family together. She is the central hope for the family and they all see their salvation from their empty lives, their wasteland coming through her. As Jake sees this happening, he is more and more uncomfortable with her lesbianism. The final acceptance of the two is moving and beautifully told.

The book is filled with Jewish custom and beliefs. The traditions are told with feeling and much emotion. Sinclair weaves a wonderful psychological tale in the portrayal of this unfortunate family. Their failures are real and heartfelt. Jake comes to an understanding that their lives do not have to be a wasteland, and this changes each family member from a two-dimensional cardboard figure into a caring individual. It is no wonder that Jo Sinclair received the Harper award for 1946.

— KATHLEEN S. KOCH

Kathleen is the owner of Independent Woman Books, a mail-order lesbian and feminist out-of-print book business. Her catalog can be ordered by sending your request with \$2.00 to Independent Woman Books, 74 Grove Avenue, Groton. CT 06340.

On Becoming (Continued)

person as if s/he is of deep value—being mindful that s/he, too, is a child of the universe? Am I respectful of my own process?

6. Trust: To what degree and on what levels am I willing to let the other know me? We cannot really trust another until we trust ourselves. Let yourself know what you want/need in order to trust.

7. Acceptance: Am I O.K. with myself the way I am now, this moment? Is the other? I may not understand but still can accept!

8. Honesty: Is the relationship based on truth or do we play games? Again, it is imperative to start with being honest with the self—with thoughts and feelings.

9. Communication: Do we talk openly and freely about issues that

are important to the relationship? Are we able/willing to do so clearly, constructively, without projecting, blaming, attacking?

10. Conflict resolution: To what degree am I willing to express my anger, deal with conflict, and stay with it to resolution? Conflict and the expression of anger are not bad—they are often necessary! In fact, it is often the resolution of conflict that develops and deepens intimacy.

11. Compatibility: To what degree do we like/dislike the same things? How much room is there in the relationship for differentness? for sameness?

12. Personal integrity: To what degree am I willing/able to maintain myself, my values, my individuality—while offering to the other?

A regular reassessment of these guidelines is recommended. Assess, don't judge. Be aware of which of

these issues need tending and improving. As you move from level to level in your relationships with friends, family and other intimates, you'll want to notice where you are in your process of knowing intimacy.

Intimacy is all a matter of the meeting. The process of healing and growth is quickened and enhanced when the gift of another's belief is freely given. As Jean Houston so eloquently says in her book, *The Possible Human*, "This gift can be as simple as 'Hot Dog! Thou art!' Or it can be as total as 'I know you. You are God in hiding!' Or it can be a look that goes straight to the soul and charges it with meaning."

—NANCY VAN ARSDALL JONES

Nancy is a feminist therapist in private practice, trained in Gestalt and process therapy and is a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

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• ENTERTAINMENT •

Art



— MARY F. ZRINY



Interview with Debbie Fier

PIANIST, composer, vocalist, and percussionist, Debbie Fier has created a powerful blend of spicy jazz, blues and folk. Although unique in her own style, Fier's strong musical background in classical and orchestral work is evident.

She's a woman with a calling, a hard worker who has stomped a lonely trail across the country to take her music to women. Through this self-driven push, she's gaining experience, fine-tuning her skills and polishing her performance.

IKYK: *You were a student of Mary Lou Williams.*

Debbie: I started with her in the summer of 1981, and it was incredible. She thought you could read 150 books, go to every music school in the world, but until you got on the instrument, you weren't really doing any learning. She would play and have me watch her hands. She was a pure jazz musician, and much of what I got from her was her presence. She was a black woman instrumentalist, who for sixty years was pushing to get her music out. She performed around the country for 55 years, since the age of 15, and she was still having to work to get her music out until she died. People who know old jazz have heard of Duke Ellington and Esther Peterson. Mary Lou Williams is far less known. She was a woman who played blues, ragtime, and bebop. It was a wonderful experience on a whole other level than musical. She had a certain boldness.

IKYK: *Do you think she gave you that push?*

Debbie: I know it was a turning point in my music. Not only musically, but internally. I think I gained a lot of strength from her, just

seeing what she had to go through. It takes a lot of self-motivation and perseverance. That's the way a lot of people get weeded out. It's not only that you need to be a good musician, but you have got to have a good business sense too. You have to be willing to travel around and do whatever it takes for the first few years to do promotions. It takes a lot of pushing and a little bit of compulsive behavior helps.

IKYK: *Can you give us an example?*

Debbie: My album, for instance. I'd written the songs when Suzanne Schaumbaum was at school in Boston. She said, "Once you've got the music you can get the people to play." It took maybe nine or ten months while I lined up loans for the album and the musicians. It was setting the goal and focusing in on it and then doing it. I've heard people saying, "I've got to wait till I get better." But it's all part of the growth.

IKYK: *Did you ever attempt to find a record company? Or did you just decide from the beginning that you wanted to produce your own?*

Debbie: At first, I attempted to find a record company. With no luck. I made the master tape and sent it to about seven or eight record companies, all of whom were not interested.

IKYK: *At a solo concert, you say, "envision the trumpets over there and the congas over here." When you do an album, do you do the arrangements?*

Debbie: I did some of the arranging on my album, *In Your Hands*, and Schambaum did some. I would give her

a general idea of what I wanted, where, and what instrumentation. I'm starting to get into that more with some of the recent music I've written.

IKYK: *You're traveling around the country by yourself, producing your record, booking yourself. If these are the means, what is the end? What are you working toward?*

Debbie: To continue getting out and meeting people and being able to play my music. And to have people be moved in some way--just feel, respond, enjoy themselves, relax, open up, laugh. I feel as if there are certain messages in my music and that's my purpose in doing all of this. My hope is that my audience keeps growing. I have my health and sanity as number one priorities and I'm continuing my music with those in mind. I opened a show for Holly (Near) and Ronnie (Gilbert) and for Ferron. I'm doing Linda Tillery in Boston, so I feel as if I'm starting to get a lot more exposure.

IKYK: *Last summer you were in the showcase at the National Women's Music Festival in Bloomington. You had an audience of producers there--what effect did that have?*

Debbie: That was big, a turning point. It was my first national performance. I had done open mike at Michigan, but that's an outdoor festival, which means people are scattered and sometimes don't listen. At Bloomington, my music got out to a lot of people who hadn't ever heard it. That fall (1984) was the first time I went on national tour in

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Interview (Continued)

the South and West. I feel it was the start of a new chapter. I think the festivals are great because you can hear such different music. There are a lot of new artists, especially in Bloomington; producers are there, bookers and other performers. The beauty of being indoors is that there's more of a focus. People are paying more attention.

IKYK: *Kay Gardner's new album is just out and you were production assistant. How do you land a job like that?*

Debbie: It's the first album Lady-slipper produced, which I think is exciting. They know who I am, what I do, and the work I have done on my own album. I gave them information on all kinds of details from studios to engineers. Some of my job was performer liaison, some was listening. I'm a piano tuner and technician, so I made sure things were in tune. There were times when the harp was going out of tune and by being in the sound room I could say "Stop, retune, do it again." I loved doing it. It was completely different than my album because it is classical. Kay had all the scores written out, everything to the last bell. I met a few women that I hope will be on my next album, a couple of cellists and a violinist.

IKYK: *When you get home from a tour like this, what do you do?*

Debbie: Well, this time is going to be a little crazy because I'm going to be home for only 10 days, during which time I have at least three rehearsals. Plus I'll be doing the opening for Tillery. Then I turn around and come back

out again. Sometimes it takes a little while to settle back in after touring. When I'm traveling I love it, but then I'm ready to get home. I'm really a homebody when I'm there. I enjoy living in the country, and spend a lot of time gardening. So, I'm usually thrilled to get home, but then in a couple of days I start looking around and say, "Aren't I going...?"

Debbie Fier's album, *In Your Hands*, can be purchased at most women's bookstores or can be ordered from Freedom Music, Box 63, Wendell, MA 01379.

— MARY BYRNE



Film Review

THE BOSTONIANS. Whether or not *The Bostonians* belongs in a column on lesbian films depends on whether you view the relationship between Olive Chancellor, a middle-aged Boston suffragist, and Verena Tarrant, a young voice of the movement, as sexual. If the possibility for sexuality were left so ambiguous in a heterosexual relationship, generations of film students would have material to write about. But, given the homophobia or heterosexism of most critics and viewers, the question of lesbianism is left virtually untouched.

Homophobic response to *The Bostonians* catches lesbianism coming and going. Many who interpreted the relationship between Olive (Vanessa Redgrave) and Verena (Madeline Potter) as sexual condemned the filmmakers for breaking faith with the Henry James novel. In 1885, James didn't imply the two women were lesbian. That's not surprising. The seriously homophobic accuse lesbians of projecting their sexuality onto the relationship for sexual gratification or lifestyle validation, which is a strictly heterosexual prerogative. Both reactions treat lesbianism as perverse and pathetic.

Heterosexists, largely the liberal and educated portion of the audience, let the possibility of lesbianism cross their minds, then dismiss it. Some point out the lack of graphic evidence, while others appear to consider the sexuality of the women irrelevant to the story and, consequently, not worth conjecturing about. Declaring lesbianism irrelevant denies that lesbian relationships have the depth and breadth of their heterosexual equivalents.

The relationship between Olive and Verena goes beyond the affection and concern of friendship. When Olive is threatened by a man's interest in Verena, she fights him, and, like any friend, she suffers for Verena because of the mistake she might make. But Olive's stake is so great that she also suffers for herself, for what will be her loss. Olive is jealous of her rival, and also possessive; even Verena, who takes nothing as hard as anyone else in the film, agonizes over

the choice she must make and delays it as long as possible. The two women don't relate to each other through men but rather as women. They're together *because* they are women. That's a lesbian relationship.

The Bostonians isn't about the relationship between Olive and Verena; the driving force of the action is the struggle between Olive and her distant cousin, Basil Ransom (Christopher Reeve), for Verena's loyalty

“ . . . Ransom and Olive are rivals for Verena's affection. Olive fights to save Verena from a marriage that will ruin her life.”

and affection. Although *The Bostonians* is an excellent adaptation of a good but cumbersome novel, and has an unapologetic feminist sensibility, the pace is consistently slow. Filmmakers Ivory and Jhabvala move unsparringly through the scenes, and while this evokes the viewer's impatience as Verena vacillates between Olive and Ransom, it also becomes dull. The tension that should be created by the tug of war is decreased once the viewer doesn't care who

Verena chooses, as long as she does it soon.

Ivory and Jhabvala devote more footage to the generally neglected and universally misunderstood subject of loving friendships between women than they give the Ransom-Verena relationship. The feeling that develops between Olive and Verena is depicted in a series of softly pretty scenes and montages. Their affection is romantic and attractive, as are the trade-offs they make between intellectual, emotional and spontaneous expression of their beliefs and feelings. Until Ransom interrupts, the two women withhold nothing from each other.

From the outside, Olive's life appears to be devoid of living. Although she can afford to be unconventional, she's regarded as an oddity. She's an educated and intelligent separatist in her mid-forties. Verena is inexperienced, the daughter of a “mesmeric healer,” and an eager-to-please young woman. Highly impressionable, Verena has little sense of her own identity. About the women's cause, Verena tells Olive “I wonder if I'd feel it so much if it weren't for you.” The film doesn't convincingly depict what compels the relationship. The viewer is asked to accept that Verena's willingness to do what others want her to is adequate explanation of her relationships with both Olive and Ransom. The only difference between Olive and other women of her age and era is that the feminists got to her first. Perhaps this fragile edge and the desire to strengthen it is what inspires Olive's interest.

Ransom is a privileged man who lost everything with the South's defeat. Bitter and reluctant, he comes north to start over. His first encounter with Olive establishes them as adversaries. She tells him, “Our fight is directed against the inferior status of women.” But Ransom, eternally unsympathetic, sees Olive's struggle as one to “turn out the men. . . Altogether a different kind of inequality.”

Ransom has experienced first hand the erosion of his supremacy.

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Record Review

Judy Small:
**MOTHER, DAUGHTERS,
 WIVES**

Redwood Records 3100
 1984

This new album recorded in Sydney by the Australian folk singer, her first on Redwood Records and her second to date, exhibits in fine style the talents of a woman who is the self-proclaimed sole full-time singer of women's music from that country.

Aided by singer Holly Near on harmony and an ensemble of gifted musicians, the album contains songs which illuminate the stories of many people, from a six-year old deaf child to an aging farm woman. "Alison," the first cut, is an assertion of "woman's right to choose," as Small talks about her friend who chose to marry and have children while she opted for spinsterhood. She turns a good phrase here: "Alison is much more than a mother and a wife/And I am more than just a song."

"The White Bay Paper Seller" is a woman in Sydney whose story, until now, was untold. Another woman, "Bridget Evans," from Britain, is the subject of the next song. Near provides harmony for Small's story of this woman who is fighting with others at Greenham Common against nuclear arms.

The title song of the album tells of the women who have had to deal with the pain of watching their husbands and sons go off to war while they were taught only to be "Mothers, Daughters, and Wives." The unintentionally ambiguous meaning of the title in "The Manly Ferry Song" is explained when the listener learns that Manly is a town in Australia where Small likes to go "for a day of fun" with a young girl named Cora, one of the special children with whom she works. "Just Another Crazy on the Street" is a "mad bag lady" who draws only strange looks from passers-by.

In the witty "They Promise You Diamonds . . .," uneven relationships are likened to a poker game, where "they promise you a Heart flush and then they wield a Club." Near pro-



"I love the women's music festivals in America" says Judy Small

vides harmony again on "Speaking Hands, Hearing Eyes," where the young and old deaf people that Small encounters prompt her to learn their "beautifully expressive and complex language." In "Much Too Much Trouble," Small asks whether society has done more with old people that enable them to live longer.

Those with "so much more to give" are the subject of "A Song for the Roly-Poly People," while those who were told to "Turn Right, Go Straight" --but decided against it--are heard next. The album closes with a tender, beautiful evocation to the Australian farm women who were present at all stages of the lives of their men "From the Lambing to the Wool," but whose stories were never told.

A gifted storyteller, Small writes songs which, like the women that she knows, are worth remembering.

The Righteous Mothers:
THE RIGHTEOUS MOTHERS
 Nexus Records
 1983

The Righteous Mothers is a group providing a new musical dimension in women's music through complex vocal harmonies. The ensemble, based in the state of Washington, strives for excellence in form, and

rarely misses. They project real strength in the unison of their five perfect voices. The group sings mostly folk-oriented songs, with sparse musical accompaniment by piano, guitar, bass, and violin.

The album fails, however, in the lyrical content of the songs themselves. The subject matter is nothing new--defense budgets, women's employment rights, pollution--but the lyrics are so weighty and contrived that they often drag the meaning down to irretrievably murky depths: "This evil game of warming with budget for the MX, Trident, ICBM, nerve gas and the Cruise/And so it's peace we choose." Sometimes, the words are downright silly: "Like the wheels of a bicycle turning/My heart is in full motion."

The songs were written by members of the group, with the exception of the Old Righteous Brothers classic, "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling." Although some may dislike their chosen arrangement of this song, it is clear that this group can excel musically with the right set of verses. Perhaps next time.

— LINDA D. WINNINGHAM

Linda is a freelance writer with enthusiasm for Women's Music and the Arts.

Fiction

THE RED HOUSE. I helped form a women's communal household. Not that I claim the end result with any pride. The property is in litigation, and the participants scattered halfway across the continent. But I was glad to have the experience. Once.

Having a lesbian-feminist house was Betty Lou's dream. She was a short, stocky woman who made lots of money, and thought that profiting from her skill was politically incorrect. So late in the summer of '79, she divided her savings between her lover Annie, her friend Sally, and herself. The money made them eligible to sign the mortgage, and they all set off to look for a home.

They found it in a Cleveland city neighborhood not far from downtown, close to Sally's job and convenient to the university where Annie was a law student. It was a huge, four-unit wooden structure, painted side-of-the-barn-red. As others in the block, it had seen better days--almost a century of them. But enthusiasm and elbow grease would go a long way. There was a supermarket around the corner, a good cheap Korean restaurant in the next block, and the neighborhood was racially mixed.

The college boys evicted from their cheap quarters by the sale were less enthusiastic than we were. They let us know about their displeasure quickly, and succinctly.

When Betty Lou and Annie stopped by the house an hour after signing the final papers, the front steps were a miniature waterfall. The basement was knee-deep in muddy water, and it took fifteen minutes--with only a pack of matches for light--to find the water cutoff.

The former tenants, armed with spray paint and an unlimited supply of malice, had moved through the house a few hours before. The wall decorations they left didn't fall into the category of artwork, although I must admit they had some inventive suggestions. What was really stunning was the damage they'd done to the Red House fixtures. Pipes had been twisted into shapes unintended by

any but the most deranged plumber. Half of the toilets had been ripped from their bases. The water faucets that the boys had left intact had been turned on full force, producing the flood. And there was surely no justice in the fact that they hadn't been electrocuted as they ripped live light fixtures from the walls.

In short, it was structural carnage. None of the neighbors had noticed anything unusual. The police weren't particularly interested since there hadn't been any casualties. The lawyers for both insurance companies sweetly assured us that the intricacies of the contracts precluded any help from that quarter.

I heard the whole sad story (several times, in fact) when I got back to town, and got a guided tour of the ravaged Red House. Despite the destruction, I was intrigued. And what red-blooded American dyke could resist the kind of call to political correctness that the Red House offered? Not me.

So I joined the house, filling the last apartment. We were now five women, two of them that I knew already. Sally was the only straight woman. She'd been my mother's best friend for years, and I had babysat for her two daughters. Betty Lou had been my Cadette Girl Scout leader.

Annie annoyed me, though I tried to get along with her in the interests of sisterhood. Every conversation with her included the information (unasked for) that Cleveland was awful and New York City (her hometown) was paradise, and they all ended with her assertion that she had "a right to her feelings." She did, but I sure got tired of hearing about them.

Laura was a slow-spoken, taciturn woman who had injured her hip in a motorcycle accident a few years before. Her feminism wasn't flashy, and she avoided the passionate political arguments the rest of us reveled in.

The basic structure of the house had already been set. Rules had been kept to a minimum, since Betty Lou, Annie and Sally considered themselves to be anarchists. Rent was set at one-fourth of each woman's in-

come, to insure that we didn't discriminate against low-income women. (Betty Lou paid three times what the rest of us did, but THAT wasn't discrimination.) It was to be a women-only household, no men allowed to live there. (We generously allowed that Sally could have men overnight from time to time. Goddess forbid we should oppress a woman because of her unfortunate sexual orientation!) We would rotate chores like sweeping the hallways and shoveling snow, and each woman would be responsible for her own apartment.

The apartment that I'd gotten, by dint of being the last to join, was the smallest in the house. It was filthy beyond hope, with a closet sized combined living room/bedroom. The bathroom was a close relative of a noxious Petri dish, and the kitchen had been vandalized beyond repair. But it was mine own, and along with the other four, I dug in with a will. It took the best part of a month to get the place sanitary enough to live in (though I wouldn't have invited my grandmother over for tea), and get the lights repaired. With little ceremony, all but Laura moved in. She was holding out for indoor plumbing.

We kept right on working, and in our spare time hung out in Sally's apartment. It was the largest and best heated (which wasn't saying much), and her toilet was connected to the drain pipes. We made tea with the bottled water we had delivered to the house, and huddled around her kitchen table goodnaturedly arguing points of political correctness far into the night. Laura would join us when she was through upstairs, and listen, amused.

It was like camping--an extended Michigan Women's Music Festival--but I have to say that I enjoy the rural kind more. Baths weren't too much of a problem; we heated water on Sally's electric range and poured it, pot by pot, into the tub. It did get us clean, even if the process was time-consuming.

But I prefer outhouses to what we women of the Red House went

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Fiction (Continued)

through to satisfy Nature's call. We would use the toilet as many times as we could (and definitions of THAT varied). Then we'd take a bucket of water that had been schlepped from the neighbor's outside faucet, and dump it into the bowl. Quickly. If you did it right, you got a flush. If not, you got a mess.

As one month stretched into another, Laura got impatient with the endless round of house meetings where we debated the politics of hiring a male plumber. (We couldn't find a woman.) "Are you planning to live like this forever?" she asked, exasperated. I heard her cheerful, tuneless whistling less and less often as she worked on the back apartment above mine. She came to see me one afternoon with the news that she wouldn't be moving in after all.

She tried to persuade me to leave too, pointing out that the women were far better at talking than at getting things fixed. And that the relationship between Sally and Annie was deteriorating; sometimes they barely spoke to each other. And that Sally, who boasted about having quit smoking, had actually replaced the tobacco puff for puff with dope. Laura grimly predicted that there would be fireworks aplenty in the Red House before too long.

I wasn't ready to take her advice, especially since her departure meant that I inherited her apartment. It was relatively clean and in good repair, had a sunny kitchen and a bathroom with a working tub, there was a separate bedroom, living room and even a dining room--spacious luxury! I patched the holes in the walls and painted, and I plastered in a new kitchen ceiling when the original began falling into my herb tea. I was justifiably proud of the place. Even with my dubious housekeeping, it was the nicest apartment in the Red House.

We finally found a woman who could repair the plumbing, and Sally's apartment ceased to be the focal point of the house. Annie's apartment was liveable (in her opinion--good thing she didn't ask me), and Betty Lou claimed her attic, sharing

Annie's kitchen and bathroom.

Then Sally's daughter Tammi moved in. With our new decentralization, it took us awhile to realize that she'd brought her boyfriend too (a carnival fire-eater with the unlikely name of Cricket). We three dykes made some noise about it, since the Red House was a women-only house. But Cricket was unobtrusive (he "knew his place," we agreed seriously, and "had good vibes") and was quick to put his odd-job skills to work around the house. Our protests subsided to an occasional mutter.

Unfortunately, Sally was quick to follow up on her daughter's example, and there was soon a second man living in the house. Unlike Cricket, the new guy had the same effect on our nerves as fingernails on a chalkboard. Screaming about rapists and broken promises, we called a house meeting.

It got vitriolic in short order. Sally was adamant about her right to have a man living with her, despite her earlier agreements. The final score was Hets, One; Dykes, Zero. The only concession we managed to get was that the males would confine themselves to the first floor.

The standoff lasted over a month. Betty Lou, Annie and I met frequently to commiserate over wine, brie and stoneground crackers. (Annie liked the good life, but one had to be politically correct about it. No Gallo.) I soon got bored with the grudge, and began to hope that the Red House occupants would kiss and make up. I even made an overture or two to Sally, but she wasn't interested. She even added fuel to the fire by turning her stereo to full volume whenever she heard Annie upstairs.

Reconciliation looked impossible once I began to notice things out of place in my apartment. Just little things, like my journal. And my letters. I admit to being far from reasonable about my privacy. In fact, a major attraction of the Red House had been "communal living" with considerable space of my own. And while there hadn't been any locks on the doors that opened into the central hallway, it hadn't ever been a

priority. After all, politically correct women respect each other's space.

I suspected the "boys" at first, but I trusted Tammi, and she told me that they had scrupulously kept the truce. Sally had the stiffest of necks, and wouldn't be caught dead in "Dyke territory." Betty Lou was the most tactless soul alive. If she wanted to read my journals, etc., she would've said so. (Though not above "borrowing" things without asking first, she was good about letting one know she had.)

That left Annie, who came trudging up the stairs as I tightened the screws in the lock I'd rushed out to buy. "What are you DOING!" she shrieked.

Looked pretty obvious to me, I patiently explained that my possessions had been pawed through more than once, and that I intended to put a stop to it. I tactfully refrained from mentioning that I thought she was the culprit.

She was less tactful. Her tirade began with screaming, and escalated to an ear-piercing screech. Her invective seemed limitless, but I'd begun to get bored with it all when she began, "I have a right to my feelings, and..."

I'd had enough. I pointed the screwdriver at her and screamed right back, "I have a right to my privacy!"

Annie turned and sprinted down the stairs, speechless, and I finished the lock, slammed the door and bolted it. When I heard the story from a friend the next day, it had grown to include the "fact" that I'd attacked Annie bodily with said screwdriver.

"Too bad," I growled, "I wasn't thinking that fast." And the fact that she'd gotten so upset had only confirmed my suspicions. My new isolation didn't bother me at all. I still wasn't interested in taking Laura's advice, not after all the work I'd put into the place. I won't give up without a fight, I told myself. Not counting the battles we'd already had.

The atmosphere in the house calmed as fall came, but Mother Nature picked up where we left off. The city

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Fiction (Continued)

was pummeled by storm after storm. I took a phone call at work one day to find my mother on the line. "Have you talked to Sally?" she asked. I reminded her, not very graciously, that Sally and I hadn't spoken in months. "You'd better call her now. A tree fell on the Red House."

Nothing like a catastrophe to bring women together, I thought, since Sally seemed more than willing to fill me in on the details. (I decided I was

only imagining the note of glee in her voice.) A huge tree in the backyard had been blown into the house, taking the power lines with it. It had hit the roof beam and fallen into Betty Lou's attic. No one had been hurt. They'd broken into my apartment to check it, but the only problem there was wet plaster.

Betty Lou grudgingly allowed me upstairs to the attic to inspect the damage. It was considerable. The top of the tree was resting on her floor, and filled the six foot hole in the roof

with greenery. And her clothes and books had been soaked by the rain. Betty Lou was wondering aloud if she could find a woman carpenter to repair the damage when I went downstairs to pack.

Laura came over to see, too, and then came downstairs to see me. She laughed when she saw me packing, but pitched in and helped. Best of all, she never once said, "I told you so..."

— KAREN S. IRELAND

Film Review (Continued)

In an article about slavery, he writes, "A true natural leader will not keep another man down, nor will he set him free." He's the white patriarchy that will benevolently care for those incapable of caring for themselves.

Ransom and Olive are rivals for Verena's affection, but their battle is political as well as personal. Olive fights to save Verena from a marriage that will, as the sensibility of the film insists, ruin her life. If Verena chooses Ransom, all she and Olive have achieved and exchanged will be lost, and her developing potential will never be tested. Dr. Franz, a female physician who doesn't sup-

port the women's movement, observes that the suffragists are more excited when a man joins them than when they win over another woman. No one in the film needs to articulate for Olive how much greater the loss of a woman is than the failure to win a man.

Ransom does find Verena "sweet" and "lovely," but he is a man who feels defeated and threatened, so she is equally important to him as proof of his beliefs about women's rights. He's certain she'll forget her convictions about equality and opportunity for women as soon as she realizes that the life and family he promises her are the natural fulfillment she'll never have with that "morbid old

maid." If Ransom wins Verena, he beats Olive at both the political and personal level.

That's where Ransom is wrong. The film has an unsatisfactory ending but it is a happy one. When forced into testing herself, Olive finds her strength.

The Bostonians, (1984) James Ivory, director; Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, screenplay. Starring Vanessa Redgrave, Madeline Potter and Christopher Reeve.

— JEANNE HENRY

Jeanne is a Cincinnati-based freelance writer who has studied film-making and film as literature.

Hygeia's Comments (Cont.)

Finally, we come to the issue of the traditionally recommended routine annual pelvic exam and Pap smear. The Pap smear involves a simple technique of swabbing the cells shed by the cervix and examining them for changes to detect cervical cancer at an early, treatable stage. Thousands of women in this country, many in their mid-thirties to mid-forties, used to die of cervical cancer. The Pap smear could have prevented nearly all of these deaths. Interestingly, cervical cancer is closely tied to sexual intercourse with men. The more male partners a woman has had, the greater the likelihood of her developing cervical cancer. Thus it is

common among prostitutes, and relatively rare among married women of certain religious groups. In older studies of cloistered nuns, cervical cancer was essentially absent. Although I am not aware of any such studies, cervical cancer would probably be a rarity in women whose sexual activity had always been exclusively lesbian. Thus the Pap smear is less important for some women. Those for whom it is important can bypass the annual exam by learning to perform their own Pap smear through a self-help clinic.

Still, there are other serious conditions that may be detected in a routine pelvic exam, such as an ovarian tumor at the curable stage. Recent official recommendations that

women with repeated negative Pap smears need only be examined every three years make early detection of various pelvic tumors less likely.

Each woman must ultimately make a choice about her own gynecological health care. It seems prudent to have some sort of routine pelvic exam on an annual or biannual basis, but it is reassuring that, in this respect, a lesbian lifestyle is healthier than most.

— DIANA SAGE, M.D.

Diana graduated from medical school in 1978, completed a residency and is board certified in Family Practice and has worked in Emergency Medicine for three years.

Recipe of the Month

Spinach Balls

These chewy and spicy spinach balls are a wonderful taste treat for that special night at home or an evening with friends. A definite plus is they are just as good reheated as the first time around, and it's possible to make them up in advance and pop them in the oven at the last minute!

Ingredients:

- 2 pk frozen chopped spinach
- 2 C Pepperidge Farm herb stuffing

- 6 beaten eggs
- 1 t onion salt
- 1 t black pepper
- 1 T Accent
- 1/2 t thyme
- 1 t garlic salt
- 1/2 C Parmesean Cheese, grated
- 3/4 C melted butter

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Cook spinach and drain very well (DRY). Mix all ingredients (mixture will be VERY mushy). Shape into balls. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

Enjoy!

— P.J. SCHULTZ

For Your Information:

The National Women's Music Festival is set for the weekend after Memorial weekend (May 31 to June 2, 1985), the Festival will again be held on the campus of Indiana University, utilizing the complete indoor facilities for workshops and concerts, and dormitories for housing.

Although music is a very strong and integrated aspect throughout the three days and evenings, the emphasis of this Festival is the broad spectrum of workshops, networking possibilities, seminars, and special conferences in which women can meet, talk, and learn from each other.

Women interested in giving workshops or leading networking sessions, performers interested in being considered for the Performer Showcase, craftswomen and artists interested in showing/selling their work, and women interested in attending should write to NWMF, P.O. Box 5217, Bloomington, IN 47402.

CORRECTION

In the Resort section of the January 1985 issue of IKYK, we published the incorrect phone number of the Springhouse in Pennsylvania. The correct number is 215-794-7718.

Our Apology...

IKYK accepted an ad from MOVIE MADNESS (ran in Dec., 1984 issue). It has come to our attention that they DO NOT sell or rent true lesbian movies--just hetero facsimile of porn. They have apologized for their error (they thought that what they carried was our kind of film.) IKYK will NOT run their ad again. We do thank them for responding to inquiries from our readership.

About the artist... Regina Serrambana works in the field of commercial art as well as freelance and enjoys observing the lighter side of humanity.



W YOU KNOW

in views & news

Volume 1 / Number 2



Section

TERNATIVE VACATIONS18

.....
 mix of lesbian and gay/lesbian resorts.
 here the freedom to be yourself, with your loved one, is the norm
 other than the exception. by Albright Communications
 Ellie's Nest... a self interview, with Judie one of the two owners of
 Ellie's Nest, dealing with the business of owning and managing a
 women only guest house in Key West, Florida. by Judie

Outdoor Adventure27

For those of you looking for a challenge - the call of the wild - or
 being one with the land.
 Talking With Woodswomen... "Woodswomen" is an outdoor
 adventure program for adult women; they teach canoeing, rockclimbing,
 skiing and backpacking. by Judith Niemi

Womentours29

Travel Agencies... Women owned and operated travel agencies
 that cater especially to women.
 The Way To Independent Travel for Women... "It may be
 circumstance, personal decision, or job obligation, but sooner or later
 you might find yourself having to travel independently."
 by Jacqui Aquilino

IKYK 5

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DEADLINE: Two months prior to publication.

TYPE OF PAPER: 8½ × 11 white paper; non-erasable 16 or 20 lb. bond. Neatness, correct spelling, punctuation and content is essential.

FILE COPIES: Keep a copy of your article. Send original to publisher.

TYPE CHARACTERS: Always double space in either elite or pica type rather than script or hard to read type.

PAGE FORMAT: List your real name, address and phone number and approximate word count on five single spaced lines in the upper left corner of your first page. On all succeeding pages type your real last name, a dash and the page number in the upper left corner (example: Smith-2). If using a pseudonym type name followed by pen name in parentheses then a dash and page number (example: Smith (Petersen-2)). Title optional. If a pseudonym is used it should be placed on the title page in the by line position (under story or article title); author's real name must always appear.

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VISUAL ARTISTS: Please send copies, photos or slides of your work. We cannot be responsible for originals. Also, note any special processing for reproduction.

POETS: Please submit maximum of four poems. Follow writer's guidelines.

CARTOONISTS: Please submit all works in black and white — NO SCREENS. If screens are necessary indicate area(s) to be screened and per cent of screen on a separate zerox copy. Make all lines thick as reduction will reduce thickness of all lines. Type copy for caption.

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LENGTH: 500-2500 words.

WHAT'S HAPPENING . . .

Calendar of Events: March 1985

Teresa Trull and Barbara Higby:*

- March 1: St. Louis, MO
2: Grand Forks, ND
3: Springfield, MO
5: Asheville, NC
6: Norfolk, VA
9: Charleston, WV
10: Hartford, CT

Toshi Reagon:**

- March 1: Seattle, WA
2: Eugene, OR
8: Corvallis, OR
9: Portland, OR
10: Stanford, CA
14: Berkeley, CA
15: San Jose, CA
20: Madison, WI
22: Chicago, IL
23: Chicago, IL
24: Chicago, IL

Ferron:**

- March 1: Santa Cruz, CA
2: Davis, CA
3: Berkeley, CA
8: Los Angeles, CA
9: San Diego, CA
23: Ann Arbor, MI
24: Columbus, OH
27: Lexington, KY
29: Indianapolis, IN
30: Denver, CO
31: Cotati, CA

Cris Williamson, Tret Fure, Teresa Trull and Barbara Higby:*

- March 15: Denver, CO
16: Los Angeles, CA
18: San Diego, CA
22: Portland, OR
23: Seattle, WA
24: Vancouver, BC
28: Steven's Point, WI
30: Berkeley, CA

Judy Grahn, feminist writer***

- March 16: Indianapolis

* For more information on these artists, call (415) 655-0364.

** For more information on these artists, call (415) 549-1075.

*** For more information, call 635-5669

To have concerts or events listed in "What's Happening," send information 2 months in advance to Jernan, Ltd., Inc., 5335 N. Tacoma Ave., Suite 14, Indpls., IN 46220.



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IKYK 1985 SPECIAL FEATURES CALENDAR

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>WRITERS DEADLINE</u>	<u>TOPICS AND ARTICLES</u>
APRIL	February 1	SPIRITUALITY AND/OR RELIGION The impacts of organized religions on women, culture; Women in gay religious organizations; The Goddess; Spiritual growth and journeys.
MAY	March 1	SPORTS AND SUMMER ACTIVITIES Cycling; local and cross country; Water sports; the phenomenon of women's softball; Enjoying camping; Outdoor cooking.
JUNE	April 1	WOMEN AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM/ GAY PRIDE WEEK Custody battles in different states; Sex discrimination cases; Women in the legal profession; Laws concerning, discriminating, or affecting lesbians; Tax; Marriage; Co-buying; Inheritance.
JULY	May 1	WOMEN IN THE MILITARY Women and the draft; Lesbian "witch hunts"; The pros and cons of enlisting; Coping with in and succeeding in that system.
AUGUST	June 1	WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS Getting ahead in the "good-old-boys" network; Women and computers; Two careers in the house; Women breaking into the skilled trades; Lesbian-owned businesses; Options for financing your own business; Fashion for upward mobility.
SEPTEMBER	July 1	WOMEN AND CHILDREN Lesbian couples raising children; Child custody battles; "Coming out" to your children; To have a baby or not-and how.
OCTOBER	August 1	WOMEN'S CULTURE Lesbian photographers - the need to capture and document our existence; Women authors and poets; The effects of women's music on lesbians; The growth/diversity of women's literature; Lesbian/women's fine arts; Dance; Theatre.
NOVEMBER	September 1	LESBIAN POLITICS Coping with the political system; 1 year after Reagan's re-election; P.C. vs P.I.
DECEMBER	October 1	LESBIAN LITERATURE Character development; The rise and fall of lesbian publishers; The growth in the selection; Reviews of books; Author interviews.

PHOTOS needed for Cover relating to Topics and Articles. Good color. Send photo and/or slide. Use 64 or 100 ASA low speed film. Prefer vertical format.

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