



WOMONSPACE NEWS

our voice in the lesbian community

Inside

Lesbian Daughter Homosexual Queer
Friend **BROTHER** Mother
Lesbo Neice Spouse Lover Bisexual
Uncle Bent Sister Butch Nephew
Faggot Femme Child Mom

**A Family
of Pride**

H o m o
Partner
K i d
A U N T

Lesbian Daughter
Homosexual Son
Queer Friend
Brother
Mother
Neice
B I

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1993 PRIDE WEEK - JUNE 18 - 27

May / June, 1993

Editorial — Plus

Just when I make up my mind that I am going to take a holiday from "politics" and spend at least a month in the never-never land of nice sexy lesbian novels and not think about anything more serious than what's for supper ... along comes another issue that gets me boiling, and presents another puzzle to be worked out. Actually there are several issues but they all come under a general heading of Lesbian Health. As a columnist in the May, 1993 issue of Quota Magazine asked, "when was the last time you went to a benefit concert for breast cancer?" Sound irrelevant? Not true. Over this past year, breast cancer has been in the news and we've been reading about the 1 woman in 8 statistic, that sounds a major alarm. In the February-March (1993) issue of OUT, Dr. Suzanne Haynes from the National Cancer Institute (USA) reported that the statistic for lesbians is 1 in 3. Her work is the first to examine the incidence and risk factors specifically for lesbians. Quota Magazine, April 1993, featured an interview with Dr. Haynes that gives us a clearer picture of how this research was done and where that 1 in 3 number came from. I recommend that all lesbians read both articles, AND the column in the April Quota, "Political action needed on lesbian health issues".

My second topic under the general heading Health, concerns the latest "ism" to strike me (following on the heels of sexism and heterosexism) ... that is agism. As some kindly put it, I am in mid-life. If I only get three score and 10 (70 years), then I am way beyond the half way point. True, my knees don't climb stairs like they used to, and I'll not be on the ski slopes again in this lifetime, but I am not brain dead yet, nor a sexual has-been. In fact ... no, we won't go into that here! My complaint isn't that I am growing old, this is normal and the whole process is quite interesting; the problem is that I, along with many other lesbians at this life stage, am growing invisible. As I see this happening to me, I look around the "community" and realize that I am not seeing any "old" (65 plus) lesbians to serve as role models for my aging lesbian self, nor am I reading much in the lesbian press about the aging process and what it means for lesbians. An exception recently (and not in the lesbian press) is an article in the newsletter "A Friend Indeed", on Lesbians and the Menopause. We do this aging process a little differently for some of the same reasons that we are at greater risk for breast cancer.

And the last, for now at least, issue that has stirred me up is the lesbians and AIDS literature (dare I say, debate). What are the statistics for lesbians who do not share needles, sleep with men or have several concurrent partners? How much of our energy is going into a problem that mainly affects heterosexual women/men and gay men; while some obvious problems definitely associated with being lesbian, are ignored. Historically, lesbians have been "invisible", but at this moment in time, that invisibility may be more dangerous, than it is inconvenient. Part of the "rights" that we are seeking, should be the "right" to have information about our health issues, from research that is specific to lesbians.

On a more cheery note, we sure did have a marvelous Winter of lesbian culture here in Edmonton ... seminars, films, concerts, newspaper articles, T.V. shows (groan!), and demonstrations at the Leg. My favorite, "Thank God I'm A Lesbian", see this film for sure. And it keeps on happening ... in May, Maureen and I, plus a few other queer types, are off to the Queer Sites Conference at the University of Toronto. Then it's June and as you'll read in this issue, one heck of a Pride Month/Week.

It was a rather bleak Winter in terms of lesbian and gay politics and our provincial government. This may be having an effect contrary to what that "body" would wish. More people are speaking out, coming out vocally for the first time, more of us are willing to take some risks. I would like to recognize this by dedicating this issue to the courage and determination of: Latitude 53, members of Gays and Lesbians on Campus (GALOC), Lesbian and Gay Grad Students Coalition, the NFB Theatre, Woman to Woman Books Collective, members of Gay and Lesbian Awareness Society (GALA), Pride Week '93 Committee, the Vocal Minority, Womonspace, and all those who individually or collectively have spoken out in the media to tell the citizens of Edmonton that discrimination based on sexual orientation is NOT going to stop us from being a vital part of the culture of this Province.

Sheryl

NEXT ISSUE

July/August - "Lesbians in Community".
All articles, etc. in by June 15th!

Cover Artwork: PAT WARREN



WOMONSPACE NEWS is a publication of WOMONSPACE, an organization for lesbians in the Edmonton area. The opinions expressed in any issue of WOMONSPACE NEWS do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Directors or the Editorial Collective. Articles or letters to the Editor may be sent to Newsletter/Womonspace, Basement, 9930 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1C7. All material submitted becomes the property of Womonspace, and the Editorial Committee reserves the right to edit for length and content.

Graphics courtesy Women's Newsletters and local artists.

Lovesick? Girlfriend Problems?

Womonspace Presents . . .

Loretta Love has completed a B.A. and is currently working in the field of social services.



Your questions and letters are welcome! Loretta will try to answer as many letters as possible. Please submit your mail to Loretta Love, c/o Womonspace, 9930 - 106 St. Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1C7

Dear Loretta,

What the hell is wrong with the lesbians of today? I came out thirty years ago, and I've seen it all; I was born at a time when no one would dream of using the "L-word" in public. Lesbians were silenced by their invisibility; my own social life was reclusive. I saw only very small groups of very close friends. My real self had nothing to do with the outside world, and society let me know I had chosen that isolation when I chose to be a lesbian, thus choosing to become a non-entity in their eyes. But things change. Homosexuality is now discussed openly; some of us are fighting publicly for our rights; we have made ourselves known in ways we never could before; and in my opinion we've come a long way. So why is it there's no feeling of solidarity in the lesbian community? It seems that

most women just don't give a shit about their sisters - quick to judge, and very slow to lend a hand outside their own clique. There have always been these little elitist groups (outsiders NOT welcome), and I understand how they work, having survived a few myself; but why are people so afraid to give an inch? I know that the boundaries of cliques are less circumscribed today. We are not as dependent upon role-playing, so naturally there is more middle ground. Why doesn't this contribute to more acceptance and a feeling of closeness in the community? It should, but it doesn't. EXAMPLE: I have been at the Roost and asked women to dance (because I was under the impression that was the socially acceptable thing to do) and I've been looked at like I have three heads. Often there is not even a semblance of politeness in their rejections (and I have seen my friends experience the same thing). Wake up, girls! Not everyone who is seemingly "below" you think you are the be-all & end-all; nor is anyone perishing for a scrap of attention from you. Maybe we just want to dance. Maybe we just want to get along with everyone else, and help put an end to the bullshit.

V.P.

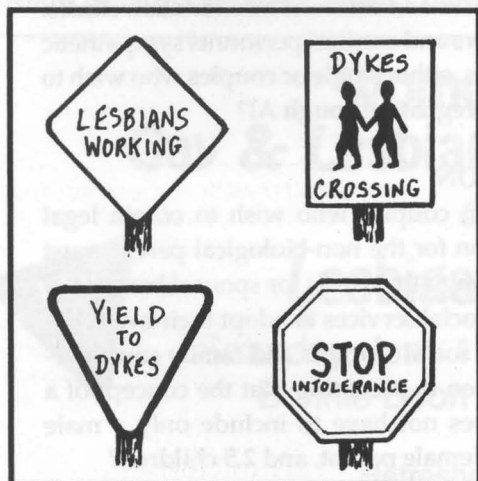
Dear V.P.,

Thanks for your letter. I agree that lesbians have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. We expect tolerance and acceptance from the rest of society, yet some of us can't seem to extend the same tolerance to the members of our own community. For some people, arrogance and the exclusion of others are ways to help them feel better about themselves. I can understand your frustration and anger, but don't let those emotions stop you from continuing to interact with the women around you. The bottom line is, you can't change anyone's attitude but your own.

Loretta

The Queer Side

D.M.S.



Road signs we'd all love to see!

UNITY '94

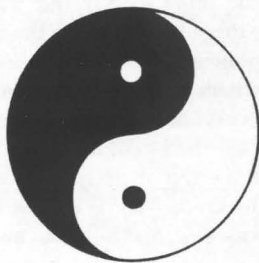
It's About Pride

Organizers anticipate over 10,000 athletes and 5,000 cultural participants from the USA and more than 35 foreign countries. During 1994, gay and lesbian communities around the world will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City, the birth of the gay rights movement.

History

Dr. Tom Waddell conceived and promoted the idea of a "Gay Olympics" in 1980. The first games were held in San Francisco in 1982 with 1300 athletes.

In 1986, Gay Games II (Triumph '86) was held again in San Francisco with 3,500 participants. Most recently, in 1990, Vancouver B.C. hosted Gay Games III (Celebration '90) with 7,500 athletes, 1,200 cultural participants and 20,000 spectators.



Custom Art Framing

465-0534

6150 - 90 Ave., Ottewill Shopping Centre, Edmonton, Alta. T6B 0P2

Child Custody and the Rights of Lesbian Mothers

(Topic for the September-October issue send in your lesbian mothering story by Aug. 15)

The Issues ...

DIVORCE

Lesbian mothers' rights have entered the public eye ever more frequently over the past few years. Increasingly, the courts are recognizing the rights of lesbians to have custody of their children after a divorce. However, there is always the concern that the custody arrangement may be challenged at a later date and at that time, the lesbian's lifestyle may come into question. Are all judges and family court personnel treating lesbians fairly?

REPRODUCTION

Lesbians who wish to become mothers are caught in the same bind as other single women who wish to take advantage of publicly funded sperm banks and artificial insemination clinics. Are doctors and medical personnel sympathetic to lesbians, either single or couples who wish to become pregnant through AI?

ADOPTION

Lesbian couples who wish to obtain legal recognition for the non-biological parent must work through the courts for spousal benefits or through social services to adopt their own children. Are social workers and family court personnel open to accepting that the concept of a family does not have to include only a male parent, a female parent, and 2.5 children?

Courtesy of Calgary Status of Women

WOMONSPACE MUSICAL COFFEE H

Saturday, May 8th, 8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Riverdale Hall, 9231 - 100 Avenue

Featuring music by:

COLLEEN LAZORUK & LORELEI LOVERID

A variety of non-alcoholic beverage served • All women welco

Womonspace Member - \$2.00 — Non-members - \$4.00

Lesbian Wins Rights Case

Globe & Mail - March 2, 1993

TORONTO - In a ruling that the Ontario Human Rights Commission called the first of its kind in the province, an insurance company has been ordered to compensate a lesbian employee who said she was fired because of her sexual orientation. In 1987, Jan Waterman was hired temporarily by National Life Assurance of Toronto, but an offer of permanent employment a year later was withdrawn after her relationship with a fellow employee became an issue. Company

vice-president Vince Tonna told the tribunal he dismissed Ms. Waterman because she was confrontational. The tribunal concluded that the real reason for the dismissal was her openness about her sexuality made the company uncomfortable." Ms. Waterman was awarded \$23,390.00, and Mr. Tonna and president Ross Johnson were ordered to pay \$1000.00.

Womonspace and Gay & Lesbian Community Centre

Co-Sponsor

Lesbigay Pride Dance

Saturday, June 19th, 8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Bonnie Doon Hall, 9420 - 93 Street

Refreshments & Cash Bar

Members - \$5.00 — Non-members - \$8.00 (Membership cards re



LIVING HISTORY

Marika and Halaine (not their real names) have been together for thirty-six years this April. I had the pleasure of meeting and talking with them over tea. We discussed lesbian history and their history; a synopsis of their lives together. Although it is impossible to describe all the minute details of the conversation, I have tried, in the interview that follows, to capture the essence of the topics we spoke about.

COCO: I understand you lived in Toronto for awhile. When was that and where did "gay" people meet.

MARIKA: That was about 16 years ago. We were in Toronto from 1964 (Coco: the year after I was born), to 1977.

HALAINE: In Toronto there was the Continental Bar (featured in the film FORBIDDEN LOVE). It was a run down hotel that gay women frequented. It was also a haven for junkies and prostitutes.

MARIKA: We mostly went to house parties because that was the safest for working people.

COCO: How did you find out about the house parties.

HALAINE: Well, we would get to know people at the bar and would learn about these parties. Also there was a woman where I worked, who you would not expect to be gay, who approached us. Social contracts increased through her.

COCO: How did the two of you meet?

MARIKA: We met at the YWCA in Calgary in 1957.

HALAINE: I had come from Europe and Marika had come from Edmonton; actually she had run away from an abusive family situation. We were staying at the Y because it was cheap. Also, there were lots of women around and that was comfortable.

MARIKA: At the time you could only stay at the Y for a maximum of two weeks. When Halaine arrived I was almost finished the second week, and I was looking for another place to stay.

HALAINE: Marika approached me and asked if I wanted to share living space with her. I agreed and we

moved into a large house keeping room with a sofa bed.

MARIKA: To me this was luxury. Prior to that I had lived with my family in 2 room living quarters.

COCO: Were you working at the time?

MARIKA: Yes, we both did secretarial type work, and unlike now, it was pretty easy to get a job, especially if you had secretarial skills. The economy was quite good, if you could type, you could get a job. In 1958 we moved to Vancouver. I worked in a bank and Halaine worked at CP Telecom.

COCO: What was the gay community like in Vancouver? (see historical note at end of interview)

HALAINE: Well, we were not involved in the community. We spent most of our spare time together and stayed away from gay people. Our relationship was new, and we just wanted to be together, even dressed alike. We worked all week, then Friday night we went pubbing with the people from work. After a week of being with people all the time, we wanted to be by ourselves. We had the two days for each other.

COCO: Did anyone ever question you about your sexuality or the amount of time you spent together?

MARIKA: Not really. But you could get away with that when you were young. It was OK for two young women to hang out with each other alot. When you get older, it is a different story, although there was the expectation that on weekends you would be out at the dance halls looking for men.

COCO: So, when and why did you decide to move to Toronto?

HALAINE: It was a round about route. First we moved back to Calgary. We spent five years there, then decided to spend some time in Europe in 1964. We were planning on moving to London, but found it too dreary. We did, however, spend three months in Europe. We travelled on a Eurorail pass.

MARIKA: When we got back we settled in Toronto to be away from family and problems.

COCO: What was life like there?

HALAINE: We both got jobs right away. I worked for CP and Marika worked for a bank. Later she switched to bookkeeping. We started going to a few clubs. There was a bar on Yonge Street in the Park Plaza Hotel. There were a few clubs that had female impersonators. It was usually a dark room that had a small dance floor. The clientele was mixed ... men and women ... and they served beer and wine. We went quite a bit. There was also the Hallowe'en parade down Yonge Street. That was something to see!

MARIKA: But in 1972 we bought a condo together out in Willowdale. Then we didn't go out to the bars much. It was a 2 hour drive to town, so, once in Willowdale, we lived a pretty suburban lifestyle.

COCO: What brought you out to Edmonton in 1977?

HALAINE: There was a boom in the economy. Marika missed her relatives and she wanted to work out some things with them.

COCO: What was the gay community like in Edmonton in 1977?

HALAINE: We did not know any gay people. We kept to ourselves. We didn't expect that there would be any clubs or any sort of gay community. But, we were pleasantly surprised.

(Editor's note: In the next issue Coco will be looking at the gay and lesbian community in Edmonton and how it has changed over the years, by interviewing women who have "come out" at various times over the past 30 years. If you have a story to tell ... contact Coco through the Lesbian Life Line, 425-0511).

Coco

HISTORICAL NOTE:

The 1950's were a tense time for gay men and lesbians as the McCarthy hearings in the USA made the atmosphere unsafe for public admissions of sexuality. However, there were clubs, bars and steam baths and a few homophile organizations did begin: Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. The most significant organization in that period in Canada was the Association for Social Knowledge (ASK) that formed in Vancouver in 1964. Lesbians did play an important role. ASK was a serious organization dedicated to educating both "sex variants" and the public about sexual variation. Terms like sexual orientation were not used at that time. (Source: The Regulation of Desire, Sexuality in Canada, Gary Kinsman).

Sonnet for S.

*you, who walk in alleyways of darkness
and clutch and claw and hold fast to the night the sun
beyond just aggravates your anger
as your reluctant hand carves out your death, in ice
still luminous, your lava ice will harden
interlock, snow puzzle built up stone by stone bound
with mortar of mistrust, your wall gets higher
as I, your sister, watch you disappear, alone.
false hope! I once believed that I could save you!
I saw bright stripes of sun dance on your skin! but
with the dusk you summoned back to soothe you
came sheets of shrapnel, and I drew away again.*

farewell this final time, love,

the sunlight beckons clear

I can no longer linger in the shadow of your fear.

Lisa Ashley



EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

EDMONTON



A Family of Pride

***Come and Celebrate
With Us!***

June 18 - 27, 1993

GAY & LESBIAN PRIDE '93

A Family of Pride

JUNE 18th - 27th, 1993

FRIDAY, JUNE 18 - PRIDE WEEK KICKOFF

- Drawing the line, lesbian photography exhibit at Latitude 53, 10137-104 St., time TBA.
- Northern Chaps-Meet 'n Greet, for Mr. Northern Alberta Drummer contestants and spectators at 10242-106 St., time TBA.

SATURDAY, JUNE 19

- Pride-a-thon. Walk, run, cycle, to raise money for Edmonton's team participating in the Gay Games-Unity '94 - in New York, time & location TBA. Sponsored by Pink Triangle Youth Group & Frontrunners of Edmonton.
- Mr. Northern Alberta Drummer Contest, Phoenix Theatre, 9638-101A Ave., 7:30 pm, adv. tickets: \$12.
- *Gay & Lesbian Dance, Bonnie Doon Community League, 9240-93 St., 9 pm, hosted by Womonspace and GLCCE.*

SUNDAY, JUNE 20

- Unitarian Church of Edmonton, morning service, 12530-110 Ave., 10:30 am, hosted by VISION.
- Mr. Northern Alberta Drummer Brunch, location and time TBA, Advance tickets: \$8.
- LesBiGay Business Fair, Inn on 7th, 10001-107 St., 11 am - 5 pm

MONDAY, JUNE 21 TO WED., JUNE 23

- Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, sponsored by GLCCE, opening on June 21, Zeidler Hall, 9828-101A Ave., time 7 pm.
- June 22-23, two films per evening at Colin Lowe Theatre, NFB in Canada Place, 9700 Jasper Ave., times 7 & 9 pm.

THURSDAY, JUNE 24

- *Womonspace Event -TBA*

FRIDAY, JUNE 25

- An Evening Out Dance, Gay & Lesbian dance at the Dance Factory, 10147-104 St., 10 pm.

SATURDAY, JUNE 26

- Gay and Lesbian Pride Day Parade and Rally, time and location TBA. Sponsored by GALA.
- Pride Day Picnic, hosted by PFLAG, time & location TBA.
- Pride Day Concert, hosted by Vocal Minority, Convocation Hall, University of Alberta, time TBA.

SUNDAY, JUNE 27

- Gay and Lesbian Pride Week Wrap-Up Party, Boots and Saddles, at 10242-106 St., time TBA.

For more Information call the GLCCE Information Line: (403) 491-7515 or Lesbian Life Line 425-0511.

WELL! IT'S A START

Fall 1993 - First Term English 403 - University of Alberta

GAY MALE LITERATURE SINCE STONEWALL

May not be lesbian, but we can still be pleased that a course is being offered that is a "Gay/Lesbian Studies" beginning. Contact Department of English for information.

Latitude 53 Society of Artists

Kiss and Tell - Drawing the Line

Latitude 53 presents an exhibition of the Vancouver collective Kiss and Tell. Opening June 3 (8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.) with a talk by two of the artists at 9:00 p.m.

Drawing the Line is an interactive photography exhibit exploring issues of censorship and sexuality. 100 black and white photographs of lesbian sexuality form a series, ranging from least to most controversial. The viewer is asked to comment on the images and draw the line (by writing directly on the wall) where they put their limits regarding sexual imagery.

Events being held in conjunction with Drawing the Line:

- Artist talk June 3rd at 9:00 p.m.
- A two day workshop for womyn who wish to explore 'Creating Lesbian Sexual Imagery in the Photographic Medium' June 5th and 6th.
- A reception June 18th from 8 to 10 p.m. at the gallery to kick off Lesbian and Gay Pride week.
- A panel discussion 'Censorship and Sexual Imagery' June 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Gallery.

Exhibits run from June 3 through July 16.

OPENING RECEPTION ON JUNE 3 AT 8:00 P.M.

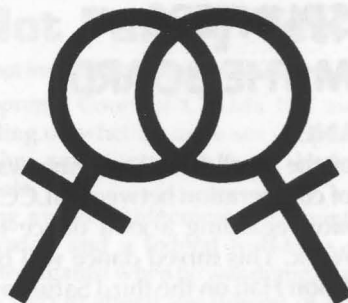
Lecture by Susan Stewart and Persimmon Blackbridge at 9:00 p.m.

**EVERYONE
WELCOME.**

Latitude 53 is located at 10137 - 104 Street, Edmonton. Gallery hours are :

Monday - Friday,
10:00 - 5:00
Saturday 11:00 - 5:00.

Admission is free.



Historical Notes

The word "Lesbian" comes from the Greek word LESBIOS, meaning "one from the Island of Lesbos" home of Sappho. Sappho was a well known Greek poet who lived in the 3rd Century BC. She set up a sexually segregated community of women on Lesbos. Through her teaching and poetry, she stirred women's imaginations to a high awareness of their sexuality and a high degree of sexual self-esteem as women. Her poetry was a part of the public tradition of Greek poetry and often quoted. Much of her work, that has survived, is in fragments. It has often been mis-read to remove or hide her emphasis on the potential for female strength in being woman-identified.

However, the use of "lesbian: to identify women in relationship with other women, was coined by a male sexologist in the late 19th century. Prior to that women in passionate relationships with other women did not identify themselves as a particular type of woman as we do today. Lesbian has only been used as an identity since about the 1920's (Vita Sackville West does use the word to describe herself, but capitalizes it). It wasn't used often in the media, or as a form of description for a community of women, until the 1970's in conjunction with feminism/women's movement. (Source: various articles/book chapters, Martha Vicinus, Judy Grahn.)

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

LESBIGAY DANCE

The highlight of the April Board meeting was the cementing of co-operation between GLCCE and Womonspace regarding a joint dance to kick off Pride Week. This mixed dance will be held at Bonnie Doon Hall on the third Saturday of June, in place of the usual women-only dance.

SPEAKING OF GAY PRIDE WEEK

We do not have a definite event planned yet for Thursday, June 24, but Womonspace will be hosting an event. Keep your eyes peeled for posters, or call the Lesbian Life Line (425-0511) for details (in the first week of June).

A fantastic looking WOMONSPACE parade banner has been unearthed from the murky depths of one filing cabinet. If you would like to actively participate in the PRIDE RALLY AND MARCH, consider carrying our banner with other queer sisters. Just leave a message with the Lesbian Life Line.

THE VOLUNTEER PLEA

Are you still paying to get into dances? What a fool! For just two hours of volunteer time during the dance, or sticking around to clean up, you can get in absolutely free of charge. One hour of service gets you in for half price. Call the Lesbian Life Line and listen for a number to call to volunteer. If dances are not your thing, Womonspace has other volunteer activities, especially as it gears up for more activities.

THE MEMBERSHIP PLEA

Think about it. Make a commitment. Slap \$15.00 down and proudly call yourself a member of this great lesbian organization. Strictest confidentiality is assured. (For example, only two women see the membership list, the one who receives the mail and the one who makes the labels and puts them on the envelopes.)

OUR WORLD

In place of magazines and newsletters, this issue features a list of some of the books to read for LESBIAN HISTORY.

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Disorderly Conduct | C. Smith-Rosenberg |
| The Spinster and Her Enemies | S. Jeffreys |
| Hidden From History/Reclaiming the Gay & Lesbian Past | M. Duberman et al. |
| Lesbian Texts and Contexts | Jay & Glasgow |
| What Lesbians Do In Books | Hobby & White |
| Woman Plus Woman | Klaitch |
| Sex Variant Women in Literature | Foster |
| Surpassing The Love of Men | Faderman |
| Odd Firls and Twilight Lovers | Faderman |
| Lesbian Images | Jane Rule |
| The Highest Apple | Judy Grahn |
| Another Mother Tongue | Judy Grahn |
| Christianity, Social Tolerance, Homosexuality | Boswell |

The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement

M. Cruikshank

The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement

B. Adam

Lesbian Studies

M. Cruikshank

Making Trouble

J. D'Emilio

Gay and Lesbian Studies

H. Minton

The Regulation of Desire

G. Kinsman

For Lesbians Only

Hoagland and Penelope

The Persistent Desire

J. Nestle

Most of these books are available from the Public Library, St. Stephen's College Library, Women's Resource Centre, Rutherford (HSS) under 306.7 or HQ76.5 ... also several can be ordered from Woman to Woman Books.

Congratulations! ... to Maureen Irwin

Maureen has been awarded a Canada Volunteer Medal ... in part ... for 10 years of work toward "rights" for lesbians and gay men in Alberta.

She will be transported to Ottawa for the presentation ceremony on June 16. Her lover, sexer, partner, "companion" (the WS editor) will probably go with her!

Question: Do we do this as "butch - femme", "butch - butch" or "femme - femme"?

A very important issue for a couple who only owns one dress between them!

Do you really count?

Canada Census is at the door. How do I answer their questions? Oh, sure I'm divorced but that is not how I want the government to record me. I want the government to know how many persons are living in same-sex relationships in this country. The ads for the census said "count me in". So count me in as **"who I am!"**. I am a lesbian living in a committed relationship with a same sex partner and most of the questions asked did not apply to me. Did they apply to you? If not, you have a chance to change that. Statistics Canada has started consultations on the 1996 Census content topics. It is important for all of us to write to: Census Content Determination Project, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

HISTORICAL NOTES

There is a great temptation to take life as we live it today and try and read it back into history. We read about a woman who lived with another woman, and think AHA, a lesbian. These women may, or may not, have been sexually involved, and that sexuality may, or may not have been genital sex as we think of it. Some women of independent means, or who had platonic relationships with the men they had married, or perhaps were free to have relationships outside of a marriage, could act on their need to be with another woman. For most women, up until the late 19th Century, in the middle and upper class, and much later for the working class, it was not possible to live outside of marriage or their father's home. It was not until women in large numbers were able to work and live away from family, that a "lesbian" couple lifestyle was possible. Feminist historians, reading history and literature from a different point of view than men, have found evidence of passionate involvement between women, sometimes lasting over a lifetime of letters and occasional meetings. Because so few women were literate (could read and write), most of this evidence concerns women of the nobility or religious orders. We'll never know how, or if, women of the peasant and working classes, lived out their passion for women. Stories of women "passing" as men, may be a hint.

Not Family Yet!

...Except from Edmonton Journal Feb. 26, 1993

The Supreme Court of Canada has avoided a definite ruling on whether same sex couples should receive the same employment benefits as heterosexuals.

In a long awaited judgement, the country's top court Thursday said a federal translator was not discriminated against when he was denied a paid day of leave in 1985 to attend the funeral of his homosexual lover's father.

In a 4-3 ruling, the Supreme Court said gay and lesbian couples do not constitute a family under the Canadian Human Rights Act as it stood at the time. Brian Mossop began his legal fight.

Chief Justice Antonio Lamer said Parliament didn't intend to protect gay couples when it amended the human rights law in 1983 to prohibit discrimination based on family status.

But Lamer said his interpretation of the term family status "might have been entirely different" if Parliament had added sexual orientation to the law's list of prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Three dissenting Supreme Court justices said the scope of family status was "sufficiently broad" to include same-sex partners and a human rights tribunal was within its right to decide Mossop was discriminated against.

"While it is arguable that the 'traditional family' has an ideological stronghold, it is clear that a large number of Canadians do not live within traditional families," wrote Madam Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dube.

"Given the range of human preferences and possibilities, it is not unreasonable to conclude that families may take many forms."

Gay & Lesbian Ride 1993 June 18 ~ 27



... Pat Warren

Books



Books

Hallowed Murder

Ellen Hart. Seal Press, 1989.

Jane Lawless is a warm, sympathetic restaurateur moved to action when a young woman's suspicious death is deemed to be suicide. The fact that Jane is neither a private detective, nor a police officer, is a refreshing change from most lesbian murder mysteries. The pacing is good in this story, with enough twists and red herrings to keep the reader guessing. The major theme is the clash between Christian fundamentalist views and homosexuality. There's nothing too heavy here, though, and it's an enjoyable read.

This novel was a finalist in the Lambda Literary Awards for Best Lesbian Mystery. Jane Lawless is featured once again in Ellen Hart's 1991 work, Vital Lies, which is also available at the Edmonton Public Library.

Fascination ... and Other Bar Stories

Jackie Manthorne. Gynergy Books, Charlottetown, 1991.

The thirteen short stories are all set in whole or in part in a lesbian bar in Montreal. If the dialogue was better, I would give this collection more than a lukewarm recommendation. The stories are told in first person, each from a different woman's point of view. Unfortunately, they all sound like the same woman, and this spoils what could be a nice effect of getting to know this group frequently the bar.

The only story that I really enjoyed was the one that was not about having sex. It's worth borrowing this book from the library just to read "The Ties That Bind". (And since lesbian erotica is pretty scarce, why not read the rest of the book, too?)

After Delores

Sarah Schulman. Dutton, NY, 1988.

I thought this book was great. My partner hated it.

If you get depressed reading about people who are down in their luck, stay away. On the other hand, if you enjoy reading about emotion, you'll find plenty here among the working class poor of lower east side New York. This is a side of lesbian life not often seen in fiction. It is written with warmth and acute perception.

Delores leaves the central character abruptly for another woman, and this story is of the aftermath. We feel the intense grief, the longing for revenge and the love that refuses to die. We never learn the name of the woman who suffers and tells her tale, but we're intimate with her bewilderment, her pain, and her struggle to regain balance in her life. She gets caught up in thrilling events which carry the plot along quickly to a satisfactory end.

I'm looking forward to reading Sarah Schulman's newest book, Empathy, which is still on order at the Edmonton Public Library.

If you would like your own copies of these books, contact Woman to Woman Books.

Reviewed by Lindy Pratch

Woman To Woman Books

Feminist and Lesbian
mail-order book business
serving Western Canada.

#106, 12404 - 114 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5M 3M5
Telephone: (403) 454-8031

We will have lots of fiction & new
books at our table
... see us at Pride Week Events

Lesbian Sex

... Courtesy of X-Tra

The magazine *Bad Attitude* is obscene, an Ontario Court judge ruled February 16. And Glad Day Bookshop owner John Scythes says he's now going to have to censor the books he sells.

"I have to deal with this now," Scythes says. "I have to censor by store."

Justice C. H. Paris ruled that one article in an issue of *Bad Attitude*, seized during an April 30th police raid on Glad Day, is obscene. Titled "One Of My Fantasies," it depicts a woman stalking a stranger in a locker room. The stalker attacks the stranger in the shower, blindfolding and striking her, then engages in consensual sex.

Justice Paris based his decision on the Supreme Court's recent *Butler* ruling, which states that representations of explicit sex with violence and degrading and dehumanizing acts harm the community at large.

The judge said that if the female protagonist were replaced with a man, society would recognize his actions as harmful to the community. In his decision, the judge did not address the defence's expert testimony separating heterosexual from homosexual pornography.



Scythes and former book store manager Tom Ivison were both given absolute discharges for possessing and selling obscene materials (this means they will have no criminal records). The shop was fined \$200. "This is one title out of many

thousands," the judge said, "I can understand that this can escape scrutiny."

Scythes says he may throw in the towel. "If they charge me again I'm going to close the store," he says. "I didn't buy this business to be treated like a criminal. And if they win this, it's a clear signal that they can do what they choose. If they want, they can come in and find 20 reasons to charge me."

Defence lawyer Clare Barclay says it's unlikely there will be an appeal. "The judge didn't make a real error in law," she says.

In a related case, Glad Day is appealing the seizure of a shipment of books by Canada Customs in 1989. An Ontario Court justice ruled last summer that the 12 books and magazines were degrading and obscene, portraying sexual encounters "without any real meaningful human relationship."

WANT ADS

WANTED:

Roommate to share a house in Stony Plain. Non-smoker please. Call Candace at 963-7377.

Young gay couple with small child (2-1/2 years) would like to meet other women in similar family unit. To spend time with enjoying family activities, conversation and exposure for our children to our community.

Call Gail or Linda after 5 p.m. at 447-4776.

I'm a lesbian, non-smoker, looking for a furnished room in Edmonton from April 21 to the end of May for around \$100 - \$125/week. I can house-sit or take care of pets and plants if you're going away, and I get along well with children. What I need is a bedm privacy, access to kitchen facilities and reasonable quiet between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. I'll provide my own food (I'm on a special diet for food sensitivities) and do my own cooking.

Please call me at 762-4927 and I'll call you back to talk if you can help me out, or even if you just know someone else who may want to rent a room to me. Many thanks ...

Norah

Seeking submissions of poetry, letters, prose, etc. written to or for those who have died from AIDS (or HIV+) for a book to be published called

"I Never Said Goodbye to Nat"

Profits will go to AIDS organization. Please send submissions to:

Mary R. Sanders
The Nat Foundation
P.O. Box 308
Briarcliff, NY 10510

MEET ME IN THE MIDDLE

Edmonton, Calgary & Red Deer

Gay and Lesbian groups from Edmonton, Calgary and central Alberta met at Red Deer College on March 27 to discuss "Pride" and politics. The informal meeting was hosted by "Just People" and GALICA (Gays and Lesbian in Central Alberta).

Plans for Gay and Lesbian Pride 1993 were presented by members of Edmonton Pride '93 committee and Project Pride Calgary. Calgary is hosting many events June 20-27. The Calgary parade and rally is on June 20 and doesn't conflict with Edmonton's June 26 parade and rally. Sharing film costs for the Pride Gay and Lesbian film festivals planned by both cities was discussed. For information on Edmonton Pride '93 call Pat Warren at 488-8378 or David Hicks at 454-6914 or see the announcement in this issue of *Womonspace*.

Project Pride Team Calgary outlined its efforts to organize and raise funds for the Gay Games IV and Cultural Festival in New York. To subsidize travel and accommodation costs for New York, they are hosting dances and holding an art auction and exhibition.

Team Calgary and Calgary Pride week are both run by Project Pride Calgary. Calgary also presented its Unity Pages, a directory of businesses in Calgary and the surrounding areas which welcome business from the gay and lesbian community. This beautifully produced directory is available in Edmonton at Gay and Lesbian Community Centre (GLCCE).

Team Edmonton Unity '94 is also fund raising to subsidize the team for the Gay Games IV. Team Edmonton is co-hosting a Pride '93 dance on Saturday June 19 with the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre and will work bingos for funds. Unity '94 t-shirts will be on sale during Pride '93 in an arrangement with Boystown Cafe.

What could be done in the short term to counteract the anti-gay Tory onslaught in Alberta before the next election was discussed. The idea that issues like gay and minority rights are being raised by the Klein government via the mouth-of-Diane Mirosh to detract voters from financial issues dangerous to Tory re-election was the consensus of the meeting.

The Calgary contingent spoke of working against Mirosh in her own riding. Edmonton usually votes NDP. The Tories are concentrating on the rural voters who can elect the next provincial government. Central Albertans spoke of the threats and harassment that come when trying to work publicly. A woman, not present at the meeting, had a cross burnt in her driveway. Another, who was present, complained of police harassment because she is an "out" lesbian.

An organization called "Albertans for Responsible Government", formed from this meeting, is preparing a fact sheet for distribution in rural areas to bring forward the real issues.

Members of *Womonspace* were present at the meeting along with members of Pride '93 and the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton. From Calgary members of Project Pride Calgary, Speak Sebastian radio and CLAGPAG (Calgary Lesbian and Gay Political Action Guild) were present.

DAWN

(DisAbled Women's Network) Canada, is conducting research on suicide and abuse issues for women with disabilities. Any woman is welcome to contact us to share her experience. Groups that can help distribute questionnaires or assist in publicizing the survey, call:

Shirly Masuda

10401 Finlayson Dr., Richmond, B.C. V6X 1W8
(604) 273-7239

"JUST PEOPLE"

live in Central Alberta

"Just People" is a new group in central Alberta who's gay, lesbian and gay / lesbian-positive members advocate equality for all Albertans. Anne Clarke was elected chairperson at the groups second meeting on April 6 in Innisfail and says they have already begun political lobbying. Jack O'Neill, newly appointed chief of Alberta Human Rights Commission will meet with the group in late April. The group has been writing letters and making phone calls. "I spent 40 minutes on the phone with Ken Mclean (Diane Mirosh's advisor)", said Clarke. Clarke also appeared on CKRD-TV and in The Red Deer Advocate newspaper reacting to the recent actions of the Klein Government. Clarke laughs, "We are making waves - tidal waves."

People joining "Just People" fill in a questionnaire. How "out" they can be, if they speak at schools, or if they want to work behind the scenes are covered on this survey.

If you want to contact "Just People" write Just People, PO Box: 1604, Lacombe, Alberta, T0C 1S0 or call Anne Clarke at 342-6823.

UNION GAY & LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

The Public Service Alliance of Canadian Lesbian and Gay Support Group of Alberta is an organization to provide support for lesbian and gay PSAC members who are confronted daily with discrimination in the workplace and within the union. Eliminating homophobia and achieving equality for lesbian and gay PSAC members are the aims of this group.

The PSAC master contract does contain a provision which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. However, same-sex couples are left out of some benefits because the master contract defines "spouse" in terms of "the opposite sex". Dental coverage and bereavement leave are affected by this wording. These are not special rights.

The Alberta branch of the PSAC Lesbian and Gay Support Group is looking for PSAC members to join them.

Write: PSAC LGSL Alberta c/o Suite 1090, 1520 - 4th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2R 1H5

COMING ISSUE

July/Aug. Issue: Material can be submitted at anytime up to June 5, 1993.
Theme: Lesbians in Community
Sept./Oct. Issue: Lesbian Mothers

MEMBERSHIP MEANS ...

- Discount Prices on Dances & Womonspace Events •
- Womonspace Newsletter • Library • Voting • A Community of Womyn •

Womonspace Activities

All Womonspace activities are open to members and non-members. Activities are free unless otherwise noted. All women are welcome. The Womyn's Building is located in the basement of 9930 - 106 Street.

Monthly Board Meeting:

First Sunday of the Month at 7:30 pm.
Library available to members.

Lesbian Drop-In:

Hostesses needed. Interested?
Leave name & phone # on 425-0511

Newsletter Meeting:

Sat., June 5, 1993 at 11:00 am.
Location: Boystown

Womonspace Dances:

May 15, 1993, 8:00 pm - 1:00 am
Bonnie Doon Hall (9420 - 93 Street)

June 19, 1993

Gay & Lesbian Mixed Pride Week Dance

Admission: Members \$5.00

Non-members \$8.00

Membership card required.

WOMONSPACE NEWS

Basement, 9930 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1C7 • Phone: 425-0511

CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE

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Clip & Send



WOMONSPACE 1993 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Basement, 9930 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1C7 • Phone: 425-0511
(Confidentiality Assured)

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____

PROV: _____ POSTAL: _____ PHONE: _____

Membership Fee: \$15.00 Cheque or Money Order payable to Womonspace (Low income available)

New Member _____ Renewal _____ I would like to be a volunteer ☐ Yes ☐ No

I would like my newsletter:

☐ Mailed to my home ☐ Pick up at dances/events Total Enclosed \$ _____