

LESBIAN- NOT AN ISM but AN IS

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"But what do Lesbians do?" If you are a Lesbian, look back on how many times straight friends have, at last, gotten down to what they consider the nitty-gritty. If you are "not a Lesbian" - a condition I do not admit the existence of; if you feel like a Lesbian, I think you are one - maybe you wonder, too.

What Lesbians do is very simple. They love one another out loud.

As is usual with the straight world - and if you are still hovering, you are yet in the clutches of this straight, and oh so alien world - the question is clumsily posed. The real question is "what do Lesbians feel?"

The straight world is not too interested in this aspect; here, as is so often true of heterosexuals (whatever that means) they do not feel, they grope. That little tell-tale subterranean stir; that uncatchable inner mosquito bite of curiosity; that "I know I'm not, but..." yeah, but meanwhile the palms are sweaty - what does it all mean? Many possibilities: they are seeking sexual techniques; they are understandably curious, as were the Romans watching the Christians dying in the arenas, so to what driving force sends these people to struggle against society; or that they are lonely voyeurs, noses pressed against the glass of the Forbidden Fruit Store. Or none of the above - we don't care how much about them.

The straights have managed by their numbers - swelled, as they are, by fearful latents - to put homosexual love into a realm of erotic dreams. "unnatural" practices, dirty-book-mail-order devices, late-night masturbation in the company of taboo thoughts. And all this by simply fuzzing the issue "what do they do?" as opposed to "how do they feel." One could cry real tears for the thousands (even millions?) who have died without ever having lived because of that rhetoric, because of fear: I love her, but what should I do... how is it done... what do Lesbians do?

How to draw a map having been there? How to write a guide book, having seen and known it all? When all love is essentially the progress of a stranger in a strange land, how can I help a lover the world has named completely alien and who has accepted the label of alien?

I have been twenty years a Lesbian and, but a few weeks ago, learned that I didn't know it all. Don't ask "what should I do," as this sexist, sexbook world has taught you - ask instead "what do I feel?" Then reach that asking hand toward your loved one. Believe me, it will be guided.

Peg Bear

the FURIES

LESBIAN/FEMINIST NEWSPAPER

COMING OUT MONTHLY
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the FURIES

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columbus day

is

central park

I'll always be glad I found you in October
come what may

October aches to be shared. Not for a lifetime's
peace would I trade one single, queuing day.
Or even a moment. Today, all brisk and blue;
I went out to take photographs of you—
Hoping, oh,
I don't know—

Hoping, perhaps that you will see
Faint-etched traces.

Of me...

Glimmers of my life through glimpses of my
Favorite places.

Sibelius notes were pouring like sunlight from
my radio—

And sunlight was pouring like Sibelius notes
among the blowing, whirling leaves, gliding
the already golden, seething fire to the already
flaming, patterning the air, falling in wasteful
splendor to the earth below...

And suddenly, I realized you! She is real!

Somewhere,

Out there,

Out there in all this October, she exists!

I have not dreamed her, nor invented her—
Have not schemed her up, created her feelings,
dictated a being as my will insists!

She is there,

Somewhere—she thinks, she walks—perhaps through
leaves, she feels!

At this very moment, she could be thinking on me!

At this very moment, she could—even be fond of me!

Inside, an impression of joy-to-be-alive, from toes

in wind-tossed hair ends, an explosion of

sunlight, blazing leaves and Sibelius, that

you are you, somewhere out in this Fall...

I guess that's all.

By Marc

Memorial Day in Central Park

The dove returns to her nest—

She finds it torn and bleeding straw

her pale egg broken.

In the Park in the gathering dark

She sits on the shoulder

of Ludwig van Beethoven

And moans in his ear softly.

But Ludwig van Beethoven is deaf.

[The voice of the dove is the voice of my love

When she says will it always be like this?]

I say no and she says prove it—

I say let us go to the Park and he hesitates

leave the rest unspoken,

In the Park in the gathering dark

I see a dove on the shoulder

of Ludwig van Beethoven

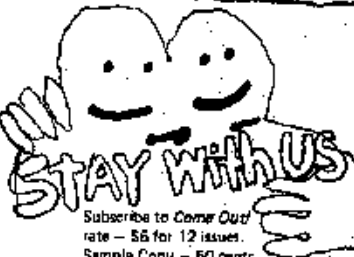
It nodders in his ear softly.

I say look. She says Beethoven was deaf.

I say I'm not. I hear my dear.

Come step into his shadow. Let us kiss.

Peg Bear



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GAY POSITION PAPER

At this point this paper seems to be a *Gay Position Paper*. We just thought we'd let you know our "bias", and this is coming from a "real lesbian" and a "political lesbian".

The negative meaning "political lesbian" has taken on partially comes from the fear that the Political Lesbian will have a "lesbian experience" and then return to "her man" (straight culture values) - that there is no emotional/political commitment from the Political Lesbian to other women. This attitude assumes that the women who is labeled "Political Lesbian" has no strength to choose her life style. Secondly, it implies that she would prefer to relate to a man. This definition makes her a sub-person. Believing in the definitions of Gay /Straight, Political Lesbian/Real Lesbian, Butch/Femmes absolutes of behavior implies that you must conform to the limits of the category you're assigned to. Believing (internalizing) you are a category (straight, lesbian, etc.) makes you unable to communicate with the category you are supposedly opposite of. When you are categorized, you may begin to believe in society's myths concerning your category as well as not examining the realities of your life style.

Straight women fear Lesbians because they cannot and/or will not (if they can) conceive of themselves as Lesbians. Lesbian exists as a thing - not person (sister). Games are played, myths played on (subtle flirtation) directed at gay women. Meanwhile, lesbians are afraid of opening up (honesty); you might be rejected and as often happens, your love for women will not really be accepted as positive. "Yeah, it's all right to be gay, but I'm not so I don't really want to hear it." Gay women say - alright, I don't want to put up with that shit (from straight women) - all communication ends there.

We think in levels. Whose revolutionary thought is more advanced than whose. Lesbianism is the revolution, is it? It is one way of getting away from having to defend your right to live as an independent woman. Lesbianism is one of the ways to live as an independent woman. To love other women is a beginning of loving yourself. But party lines we don't need (witness SWP-YSA) - party lines deny self-determination. Everywoman must come to terms with her life - how she will live. We all must recognize our autonomy. But using the line "Everywoman Must Be Gay" forces a response which must happen naturally. This party lineism creates only tension and hostility.

We are often afraid to say what we feel; we may be rejected as not vanguard enough. Or laughed at for feelings we have been conditioned to feel are invalid. We are afraid to be exposed as false, stupid or not politically correct. To be politically correct implies standards, involved norms, and demands certain behavior. We must be careful in our structures - too much of these systems are negative carry-overs from straight society.

The one demand we must make of everywoman (including us) is that each woman have a firm commitment to each other woman. The first commitment is trust, support, communication, and understanding will come out of trust.

A Feminist Revolution will be a reality when heterosexuality and homosexuality lose their meanings and we are no longer channeled or manipulated by these definitions - when we are free to love who we choose regardless of sex.

Jane & Nikki

Come Out! provides speakers of the topic of Gay Liberation to any group that requests them. Many speakers on our staff as well as other people in the Movement are available for speaking engagements. Since we don't have the bread we would appreciate travel expenses. A contribution to keep this paper going will not be turned down. *Come Out!* is probably the poorest Liberation newspaper around. tel. *Come Out!* Box 233, Times Sq. Sta., New York, NY 10036.

WOMANLOVER

At night your arms are cool
As wineskins in a running stream
Restore my soul.

By day I walk the valley
That consumes your gifts,
Valley devoid of the shadow
Of a rock, or tree.

Unlike one bound in chains,
Spreadeagled to the sky,
I entered
The sisterhood of flame.

To break the pintons of my mind,
To free you with the energy
Your hands pour into me
Throughout the night.

The energy that swells my lips, desire
to press my swollen hands
to women, everywhere;
To shore the fire

That melts my knees,
Then let these
Solid bones be burns,
And burn these blistered feet:

Burn all but the bird
Inside me, and let free
The fire of legend, torn from the sun,
The fire men stole from me.

Martha Shelley

17TH STREET 1

what else
but a genius of sexuality claims me:
intellectual nights of your own making, love
on a mattress springs failures to life,

(afterwards you applaud my mouth at the door)

you astound me being
in London & away
from me
so far,

(I I so plain
can't fondle

your extremities.

Leslie Wolff

A wet November night,
Smear'd on the street, I see
leaves from a maple tree,
Like newspaper strips in paste
waiting to be a mask

Halloween is past, November mist,
And what June will I wear
This year, what Christmas mask?
Where will I sleep on Christmas night?

Martha Shelley

A woman enters my life
Quietly,
Like walking through a door,
No fanfare,
Or hearatroph;
She just walks in
And is.

I'm stunned
By the simplicity.

- Heather

To Martha Wherever You Are

High school meant boy-chasing
And lonely nights we spent together
Longing for recognition
Smoking pot
Tripping
Your face would float in front of me
Your body
And the walls would close in
Lesbian = typhoid fever
Never
Boys come first - I went steady
Saw you in school
Talked on the phone, never kissed you
Fucked every night
Faked every night and
Thought of you, never touched you
Boys come first.
Now every once in a while I dream about you
Wake up wishing you were there:
How's married life treating you?
Better than having parents, I hope.
I dreamt I saw you and
You were so cold you started shivering.
"She knows I'm gay?" I thought and
You rubbed it in.
But weren't we closer, more honest, kinder
Less clinging, more giving, softer, more forgiving
Didn't you know me better
Than he ever did?
And didn't I need you more?
Wouldn't have thought so then,
But I know so now:
When the boys come first
The girls come last
I keep hoping I'll run into you
Or you'll write
In my last dream you lived in D.C.
I tried to kiss you hello and you
Backed away.
You were so tall, I had to crane my
Neck to see your face.
"Still seeing Bill?" I asked.
"Yes" you said with a sneer
"He's a beautiful guy."
These dreams are for that.
Why does the past keep popping up on me?
It's shaping my present.
I cannot forget a friend.

Cora

LESBIAN
POETRY

ESTRANGEMENT

Why is it when one wants
most to touch ...
One turns away?

Is there some perverse
desire to hurry
toward disaster?

Is there no way
to speak forthrightly:
"Damn the Guns ... Full Speed Ahead?"

I see our ship will founder
on that reef ...
but stand here,
hand paralyzed on the tiller,
sails full rigged,
and make no move to save us.

Can speaking ...
be more damaging than silence?

Can reaching out ... be filled
with more terror,
than sitting on my hands?

How does one recapture
that awareness ...
that needed so few words ... ?

There must be some flaw in me
that demands rejection.
For as surely as I turn away
my head ...
to avoid those things I'd
hoped never to see ...
I bring disaster down upon us.

If I could feel even a spark
of response ...
an awareness of even a momentary
openness ...

Then perhaps I could say ...
"Be with me ... don't muddle what
we've had in this tawdry way ...
there must be some flaw in me
which cannot fill your needs ...
but let me try" ... but pride
and prudity seal my lips ...
to share you with others
paralyzes my desire ...
I'll take my prick's first hand ...
... or NOT AT ALL.

FRIENDS CRY HAVOC ALL ABOUT US
BUT I MAKE NO MOVE
I only cry inside where none can see.
for my mind whispers incessantly ...
THEY ALL KNEW BEFORE ME

-Bara
1960



Photo by E Bedoz

come out!

25c

35¢ outside
NYC

A LIBERATION FORUM BY & FOR
the **lesbian community**

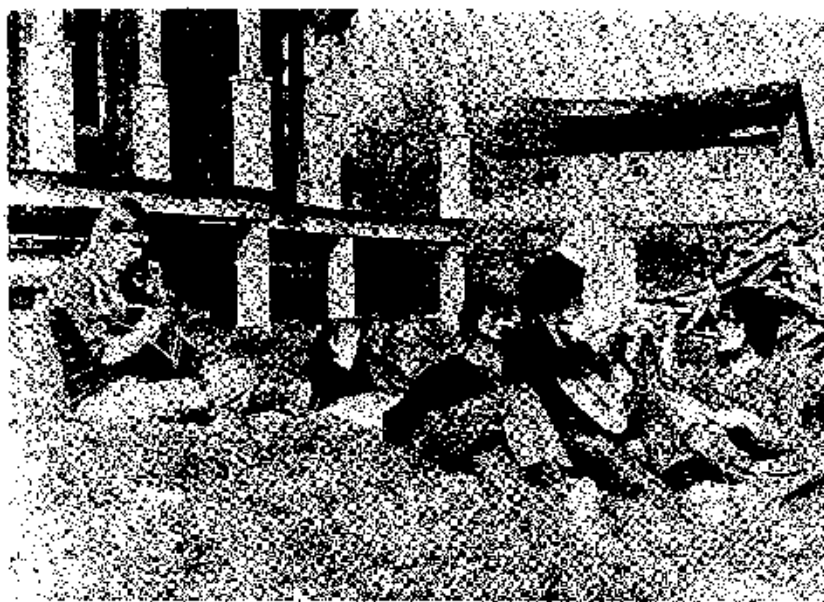


photo by B. Winstead

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love each other love ourselves

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