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Daughter no. 1 was for Daddy. Mommy had always been

her daddy's daughter, so why should she expect it to be any different this time around? She waited her turn. Daughter no. 2 could be hers. She would call her Emily Rubin, after her own fiery and stubborn maternal grandmother.

Daughter no. 2 was born two and a half years later. "We were so worried you would be a boy, that we'd have to love you anyway of course. but we wanted a girl so much. The sister that I never had." What wasn't mentioned was that Daddy's two brothers had been taken from him, one by death in adolescence, the other, mentally retarded, left as a responsibility but never as a companion. I kind of knew that Daddy had wished for a real live brother. It never occurred to me that he had missed having a sister. Mommy's brothers had treated her bad, I guess brothers don't want sisters. So there I was born to be Julia's sister. And Mommy's.

I dig Mommy. We talk about a lot of things, I really like being with her. We've always done stuff together, and shared our reactions to those experiences. I'd still rather talk to her about some things than to anyone else, with anyone else it would take so long to come to any kind of shared language. "We talk in shorthand," she tells her friends or relatives who overhear and can't understand. We have a lot of private conversations in public. Sure we have hassles, like she wants me to dress up better, but I've always felt less entangled than daughter no. 1 with Daddy. I said to myself at age fourteen, "Daddy sure fucked up Julie, He aint gettin' a chance to come near I'm more able to know exactly what's hurting and I believe in my right to have my own values.

Like today we were talking and she wet her pinkies and smoothed my eyebrows. She's been doing this all my life. She picked it up from her mother, who's been doing it all my life. I've hated it all my life. I have my father's eyebrows. They're the bushiest eyebrows I've ever seen on a woman-- They grow completely together over my nose. When I was in junior school, I used to tweeze away the center part and also all stray hairs underneath. to keep them in order I had to tweeze them every night, They're so full and scattered. Actually, Julie tweezed them for me the first time. She asked Mommy's permission first. "Yes, but only the center, not underneath." Julie has always liked Grandma smothering her eyebrows. She digs it as expression of affection.

So today I got angry when Mommy went at my eyebrows, She pulled back before I could explain, with "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know you didn't like it." I kept wanting to explain to explain why it made me so angry, how it's telling me that I should't be who I am. But she didn't want to hear it. She kept saying "I've Said I'm sorry, you don't have to get angry, I agree that you should have the right not to be touched."

But she also kept saying that she had a right to her feeling of wanting me to look a certain way, but that she'd not impose it on me Physically. As if that physical grooming could be half as powerful as her silent longing for me to be more feminine. The whole rest of the time we were together she had her arm around me. Because she wanted to be with me. I wanted to be with her too. More than I wanted to be with my sister, who was there too. Who I don't get so much from when we talk. I always feel worn out from talking to my sister, I always end up being there for her, which sometimes makes me feel good, but I can't remember a time when she helped me with insight into my needs. Of course she was never encouraged to. I was conceived as her sister, not vice versa. Mommy does help me with insight into my needs.

There's only one subject that Mommy and I can't talk about. Me being a lesbian is taboo.

She began to suspect when I cut my hair off. From her comments, I thought she knew, I was really surprised when she acted so shocked when I finally stopped hedging and answered yes to one of her questions. She assumed it was only in my imagination, and that I was only doing what was fashionable at the time. That was a familiar accusation, doing something because my friends were. Funny, how the accusation never helped me get any closer to knowing what I really wanted, only farther away.

I answered her question that yes I do make love with women, And asked her if she ever had. She said she didn't want to answer that one on the phone, she wanted to talk to me in person. For months after that we avoided making a date to talk. We'd see each other with the rest of the family, or go to dance concerts together (we've always done that) but stay away from talking about IT. Finally she pressed me, we made a date for dinner. Instead, I was really there for her, how hard it is for her with my father sick. And other stuff too.

Then she came up to my apartment, We finally outed with it, My homosexuality, and hers. Me, proud, and basically unaffected by her reactions, because I've heard them all before, thought every one of them through, and rejected each.

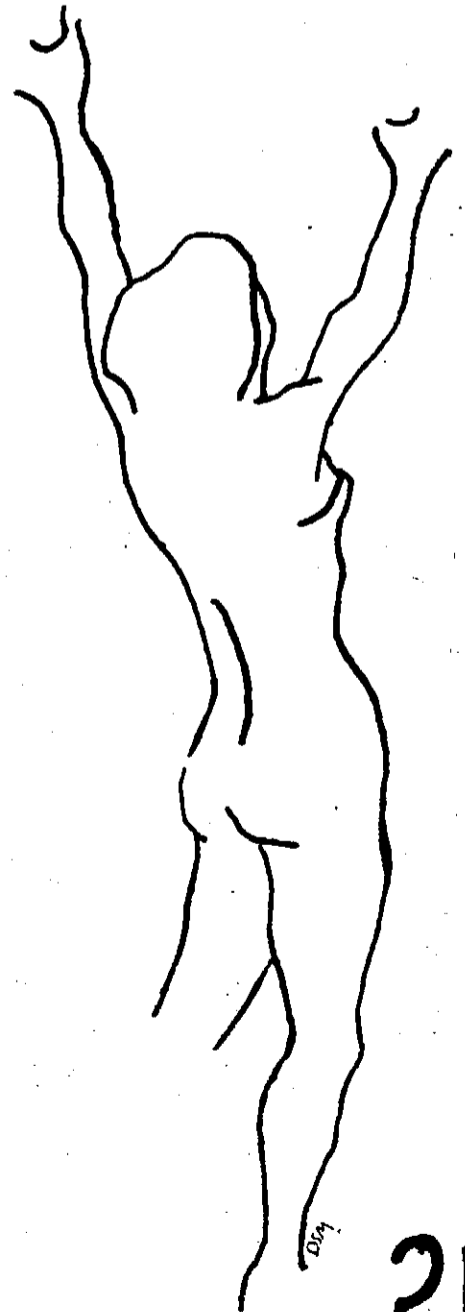
She despairs that I'm gay. Despair is her words. And feels guilty that it's her "fault". Whereas I feel thankful that I'm gay and that she let me be open to a woman, her. She begged me not to tell my father, and I haven't yet.

When my sister mention a man's name, my parents tune in expectation to share her joy. When I mention a woman's name, my mother freaks. As if every one of them was my lover. I wish that were more true than it is.

What I'm reminded of in our relationship is the classic dyke-and-straight-lady couple, where the straight lady insists that She's not a lesbian, they just make love. implying that a lesbian is an awful thing to be. And the lesbian stays because she likes the affection and sex, she's getting and she tries not to think about what she isn't getting.

Her homosexuality: "I've been there and I was licky enough to escape." She had a lover at age thirteen, and she says both of them were relieved when the girl's family moved away, thankful for help in ending something they weren't able to end for themselves. Later, "questioning her sexuality," she joined a predominantly gay theatre troupe, but never had sex with another woman. She said she talked to other women in the group who were also there in order to experiment with what they were. Wow, I can just see them all wanting to be seduced, but not getting it together to desire and make love to each other. Too much. Torture. I know the place, I've been there. During World War II, she joined the army, "to drive a truck," I've always heard her say. They never let her. Is she conscious of all the gay community stereotypes she was acting out Does she know I'm seeing it. I doubt it, she both wants it known and wants it hidden. While she was in the army she and my father became lovers and got married. In her parents house, by a judge not a rabbi, very rushed--on leave, in her dress uniform. Has there ever been a more butch bridal gown.

emily rubin weiner



LESBIAN- NOT AN ISM but AN IS

LESBIAN-not an ism but an is

"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 unscratchable 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, as 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 too 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

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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, gilding
the already golden, setting 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 implosion of joy-to-be-alive, from toes
to 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.

Peg Hari

Memorial Day in Central Park

The dove returns to her nest—

She finds it torn and bleeding straw
her pale eggs broken.

In the Park in the gathering dark
She sits on the shoulder
of Ludwig van Beethoven
And mourns in his ear softly.

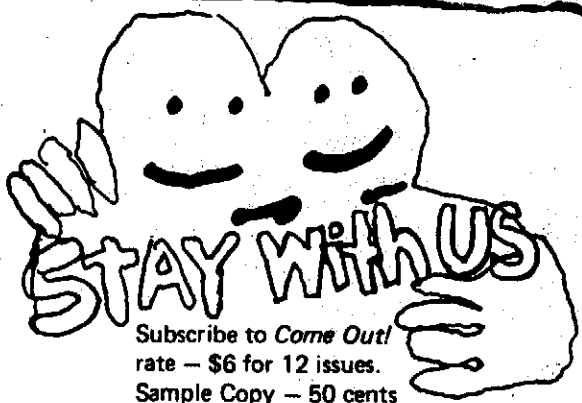
But Ludwig van Beethoven is deaf.
The voice of the dove is the voice of my love
When she says will it always be like this?

I say no and she says prove it—
I say let us go to the Park and be healed
leave the rest unspoken.

In the Park in the gathering dark
I see a dove on the shoulder
of Ludwig van Beethoven
It mourns 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 Hari



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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 gayness. 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 & Mikki

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. tal, *Come Out!* Box 233, Times Sq. Sta., New York, NY 10036.