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# LESBIAN NEWS

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VANCOUVER ISLAND'S MONTHLY LESBIAN FEMINIST NEWSLETTER

VOL.3 ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 1991

THE GREAT  
LESBIAN  
CLOSET ORGANIZER.

"Capitalist DYKE:"  
Suits Silk Stockings  
Hats  
Briefcases + Purses

"Femme"  
Section:  
highheels  
dresses  
silk blouses



You can custom design your  
OWN SEXUALITY!

discover the joy  
of being able to have a place  
for everything and everything  
in its place

"JOCK SECTION:"  
pullovers Tshirts  
Jeans  
flannel shirts

WHAT  
DOES  
YOUR  
CLOSET  
LOOK  
LIKE  
?  
?  
?

RWH



## EDITORIAL

BY KAREY PERKS

This being the coming-out issue, I think it's a fitting occasion for my coming out as an editor. Ah, I had the odd flirtation in high school and then again in college - who hasn't? A couple of innocent student anthologies; nothing serious HAPPENED. Now its LNews business calls on the phone at work. If they overhear something, I tell myself, it'll be goos for them. But I still avoid the busy times.

Sharing our stories in print is also a coming-out. It's part of the process, like kissing your lover in front of the house and talking on the office phone. It takes courage which we sometimes think we haven't got. But courage is like a bicep; it strengthens with use. Each time one of us comes out, even a little, she makes the world bigger for all of us. So for anyone who ever came out in any way, shape or form: thank you. And for those still waiting: Come on out, the water's fine!

Speaking of coming out in print... NOVEMBER. Raising our Children: their art, their stories (borrow one if you don't have your own). DECEMBER. Creative Holidays (What would Ground Hog Carols like?). JANUARY. Religion (Do you have one? Did you lose one? Would you like one of mine?) Write Something. Send it to LNews (See "Submissions"). Oh please?

## LETTERS

Dear Editor:

It is with reluctance that I write this letter but I feel that my concerns should be shared.

Upon entering the women's

community, with a vengeance, after several years absence, I have made the following observations which have to say the least, disturbed and disappointed me. Especially after bragging to my Hetero friends and relatives that our community was past all this.

- 1) I am single and am excluded physically and by attitude from various functions. (Oh no, another threat to a perhaps already shaky relationship)
- 2) AGEISM - Not considered a "catch", being 50 in a basically young community. (By the way, where DO all the Old Dykes Go?)
- 3) I am also not "marketable" because I am an overweight "couch potato." (I'm built for comfort not for speed-honeys)
- 4) I am also (Horrors!) a Christian. How unpopular and not quite with-it in a women's religion-oriented community.

As a matter of fact, not only am I a Christian but I am the pastor of Victory Metropolitan Community Church - The Gay Church (and boy if the women aren't turned off yet, this knowledge usually does it)

But seriously, our small non-patriarchal church (small congregation but world wide organization) has an outreach to all oppressed people and all minorities. Our church is a healing place where people (women and men) can be themselves and be accepted. And all they are asked is that they take this unconditional love out to our brothers and sisters who need it so badly.

Aren't we oppressed enough without oppressing each other?  
Feedback is invited.

Sincerely,  
Steph Ozard

WHO ARE WE?

Editor: *Karey Perks*

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*Sue Denyme*

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*Karey Perks*

LESBIANNEWS IS PUBLISHED BY, FOR AND ABOUT LESBIAN FEMINISTS AND ALLIES. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIMIT SUBSCRIPTIONS ACCORDINGLY.

### LESBIANNEWS

is published by Debby Gregory, PO Box 5339, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4.

**Subscriptions** are \$18/year, cheque or money order payable to D. Gregory at the above address.

**Individual copies** sell for \$2 at Everywomans Books in Victoria, The Rare Find in Ganges, Salt-spring Island, and Vancouver Women's Books in downtown Vancouver.

**Display Ads** are \$5/month for business card size and \$5/month for each additional chunk of business card-size space. Send camera-ready copy with your cheque to our PO Box address. Deadline is the 15th of each month for the following month.

**Classified Ads** are \$5/month for up to 25 words and 50c for each word thereafter. If you want us to hold and forward replies to Personals, add \$2. We reserve the right to refuse any ad that might create legal difficulties or that offends our highly developed sensibilities (see note below). Ads and payment must be received by the 15th of each month for inclusion the following month.

**Submissions** are welcome from all lesbians and allies: This is an open community newsletter. Send your letters, questions, comments, stories, poems, articles, ideas, cartoons, drawings, news items, calendar items, and dreams of the week to the PO Box address, typed double spaced, very neatly written, or on IBM-compatible disk. We edit for space and clarity. We'll print it as long as it's not sexist-racist-homophobic-antisemitic-ageist-classist-ablebodyist-personal attackist or boringist.



# Victoria's Third Annual Women's Radiothon

**Monday, October 21, 1991**

**6 a.m. to midnight**

**CFUV FM 102**



## **CFUV Presents a Women's Dance**

**Saturday, October 19, 1991**

**8:30 to 1 a.m.**

**University of Victoria  
Student Union Building  
Upper Lounge**

**Tickets available at:**

**SUB General Office**

**&**

**Everywomans Books**



# Coming Into Our Own

BY CATHY McCALLUM

We had been friends for about a year, but it was becoming apparent that what had started as friendship was to become more. There was, though, the base of a feeling in each of us that it was unacceptable in our society for a woman to kiss another woman. It didn't matter. Kissing felt too beautiful not to do. We actually attempted to stop; that lasted for about 2 weeks. When we decided to kiss again, there was nothing that could keep our lips apart. Exploratory pecks in socially approved places (the brow, the forehead, the cheeks)

led to deep fervent lovers' kisses involving lips, tongues, teeth and hearts. We kissed for a long time before advancing to other lovers' sports. I bathe in the memory of long afternoons spent learning about each other with simple physical closeness.

Our relationship has been advancing for nine years, and continues to move forward. Neither of us had any previous experience with the love of women - we came out together. However, there is something about our early days spent kissing that I will always remember. The innocent passion.



Teresa Stern

## How Many Times Can I Come Out?

BY REVA HUTKIN

I first came out when I was twenty-two in 1958. "Wow", you're thinking, "that was a long time ago!" Yes, and there were no support groups, coffee houses, bookstores or C.R. groups to facilitate my process. Feminism had not yet come out.

Because I had no frame of reference I came in and out like the proverbial yoyo. In 1966 I came out as a single mother. This was not a popular activity at the

time. Abortion had not yet come out and single parenting had not yet come out.

In 1974 I stumbled onto the feminist wave and came out again, this time as a feminist lesbian. I was so drunk with coming out I was out to my neighbourhood, out to my daughter, out to my family, out to the world. I was recklessly out, joyfully out, out for the sake of being out and I loved it!

Most recently I've come out as a

crone. In 1990 I turned fifty-five and celebrated this birthday with a croning celebration. I have 55+ banking, am considered a senior in some circles and certainly wear the mantle of crone in my community with pride.

There is more to come out. I feel ready to step through looking glasses, ready for new adventures. Watch for me as I come out again. I have a wonderful young lover. One day, when she is ready, we will come out together.



**W**HEN I FIRST DECIDED to come out to my mother I gave very little thought to her possible reactions or the "best way" to do it. My lover and I had frequent contact with her mother who lived in the area. Our invisibility to her and need to curb the expression of affection in her presence left me feeling uncomfortable. I felt compelled to come out to my mother if I were going to request my lover to do so with hers. Since my mother lives in Winnipeg and no visits were scheduled, I picked up the telephone and greeted her with the statement "I have some news to share that may be difficult for you to hear". I then proceeded to share that I was in love. Before I could say another word she said, "that's wonderful dear". Wanting to show her open attitude she went on to add "I know you're going to tell me you're living with him but aren't going to get married. A lot of young people seem to do that these days". When I told her that was not the part I thought she might find difficult but rather that I was in love with a woman, her response caught me completely by surprise "I wonder if that could

ever happen to me?". She quickly added "I don't understand it, but I have to accept it".

This was more than astounding and I happily told her I was more than pleased at her acceptance and would do what I could to enable her to understand.

The next week a letter arrived with a response more like what I had been accustomed to "I'd rather lose my right arm. I've had migraine headaches, I can't tell the doctor, there's nothing he can do to help".

I am certain my mother has forgotten our first conversation and would vehemently deny it now. Perhaps it was being so unprepared and caught off guard that allowed a momentary lapse in her critical, guilt-inducing stance. However, I have always been grateful to have heard those words. They have given me the strength to withstand her many indirect and direct attempts to get me to make a different choice and the compassion for some small voice within her not yet able to "come out".

## Coming Out to My Mother

BY SARA JOY DAVID



# B • R • A • I • N F • E • V • E • R

BY KAREY PERKS

When I was seventeen I discovered Lesbianism in a paperback which I found in a garbage can in a back alley of the California town where I went to High School. The book was by Frank Caprio, and I didn't know it but in those days it was just about the only book that had anything at all to say about homosexuals and lesbians.

There was certainly no mention of lesbianism in the books I found in all the usual places - home, school, the municipal library. Places where they thought books like that might give people ideas.

They were right. That Frank Caprio book gave me ideas about Jennie Hill. Jennie was intelligent and angular. Her class was ahead of mine, so I never expected her to talk to me. When she tried to make friends, if that was what she was doing, I mean more than just being polite, I couldn't believe it. She scared me to death. Then she graduated.

That Frank Caprio book told me what I was. Sick. But at least I didn't have a religious upbringing, because then I could have been Damned too, so I considered myself lucky just to be Sick. I hid my Sickness from everyone, including myself, although not so well I couldn't find it again if I needed a reason to feel guilty. I disguised myself as a marriage and moved to the bush.

I remember when I came out to myself, the exact moment I came out of hiding.

The baby and I were on the way to a particular laundromat, one that had a large play area at the back with a fence across it so I could be reasonably sure the

dryers were free of children. It also had a continually rotating stock of magazines. It also had lesbians.

At least I was pretty sure they were, the first time I saw them. I thought I could tell by the way they talked about their laundry. They packed all their clean clothes together in the same laundry bag and stuck it between themselves on the back of a motorcycle. I thought, lesbians for sure.

The next time I saw them at the laundromat I offered to give them a lift in my pick-up, in case they had too much laundry for the bike. They invited me in for a glass of wine. We seemed to have a lot to talk about, for strangers. We talked until our glasses got dry and had to be filled up again. On my way to make room for the second glass of wine, I passed the bedroom, the only bedroom, and then I knew for sure.

The following week I had to go to the laundromat again. I gathered up all the diapers, and the shirts with railroad trains and bunny rabbits on them, and the overalls that looked as if they'd been smuggled into the house inside a cake, and I packed them into

the laundry bag. I climbed into the cab and shifted into reverse, and when I twisted in the seat so I could see where I was backing up, I suddenly felt as if I was looking at myself over my own shoulder. I saw the old truck, the lumberjack shirt, the crumpled fishing hat, everything my new lesbian friends saw, and I was surprised as they were to find out I was straight and married.

I looked at myself and I said, "It's obvious. You're a lesbian."

## *When I was seventeen I discovered Lesbianism in a paperback*





## She'll Be Coming Out The Mountain When She Comes...

BY KELEVELYN HURLEY

Coming out is gradual, cumulative, multi-leveled, a charged zigzag process of delighted discovery, the misery of an illicit love's failure borne of secrecy, the sheer tempestuousness of a woman's passion aroused, the courage to face that in ourselves and in others which would shame us back into the closet.

Coming out is forever. Once you are out to one friend, one boss, one parent or sibling, you have several hundred more people,

risks, liberations yet to surmount.

Coming out is natural. Mother bear comes out of her den, out come the sun and moon and stars, whales breach and spray, fledglings plummet from their nests, new buds twist out into the spring rain, the newborn colt emerges in blood and triumph.

Coming out is struggle. It takes courage to be lesbian, feminist, artist, single mother, unwed woman, maverick.. Therefore, ideally, coming out is safe. By one's own choice. No nasty

repercussions. And not carved in stone either.

Like a nautilus in its spiral shell, coming out is a patters or continual revision, expansion adaptation. And just as the spiral spins both ways, part of coming out is going in again for awhile - taking the time and space to ponder, renew, reconsider. Fecundity, celibacy, ambiguity, the imagination and identity reforming into new configurations.



# COMING OUT OF HIDING

## *An Encounter With Serendipity*

BY BEVERLEY A. CHRISTIE

Following a marriage of ten years, my former husband and I divorced amicably in 1979. Frank and I had shared a home with my former female partner, Irmgard during the last three of those ten years. A threesome was great in theory but the reality proved otherwise for us. That summer, I invited my younger sister Nora, to visit with Irmgard and I. Nora enthusiastically accepted and informed me that she would appreciate having her friend Ann accompany her. They both loved to play tennis and had won many tournaments together. I felt it would be wonderful for her to have a tennis partner during vacation.

Nora and I had never discussed our sexuality and I was feeling somewhat apprehensive of my lesbianism. I had found it rather challenging to come out owing to brutal comments regarding homosexuality by two members of my mother's family, as well as unkind remarks by some friends and acquaintances. In time however, I came to understand that hiding a vital part of my being was stifling me and depriving me of truly rich, rewarding relationships. I came to realize that if anyone in my family and circle of friends could not accept that beautiful loving and natural aspect of my beingness, it was surely their loss, never mine. If I conceal what is essentially me, my relationships are superficial and I am living a lie. I must always ask the question "Would she/he still appreciate my friendship if it were known that I am a lesbian?" I

would never really know how true that friendship is. With this in mind, I decided one lovely, warm evening to treat Nora and her friend to a stroll in picturesque High Park, and a row on the small pond. I chose that calm, serene setting to divulge my lesbian relationship to Nora. I had spoken to my partner beforehand and had expressed my nervousness, and Nora's possible negative reaction. As the four of us enjoyed the delights of the park, I discreetly asked Irmgard to entertain Ann while I took the opportunity to "reveal myself" to my sister.

As she and I meandered along the edge of the pond, I found myself commenting on the exquisite flowers, the sunset, the birds - avoiding what I set out to say to her. Finally, gulping and clearing my throat, I said boldly "Nora, I am in a lesbian relationship. I left Frank because I am lesbian and weary of hiding. Further more, I am proud to be lesbian and no-one on this planet will ever convince me that the love I have for my partner is perverted. I am following my heart and intend to continue doing so." WHEW!! Nora looked directly into my eyes and replied nonchalantly "I know - I have suspected for some time". She then paused, and with that familiar mischievous twinkle in her lovely, warm blue eyes, she added "Guess what? SO AM I!" She and Ann had been in a relationship for years. Need I relate the flow of emotions that ensued? With great excitement, I ran up the hill ahead, shouting jubilantly to Irmgard, "Hey - guess what?". That week was a

glorious week for all of us.

I have discovered that I not only shortchange myself by hiding, but that I shortchange all those who wish to have a truly significant friendship with me. I deprive them of the opportunity to know me as I am. Further, I prevent them from sharing with me whatever lies in their own hearts and from opening doors which would enable me to enjoy their essence.

By hiding my lesbian side, I choke a part of my being that constantly cries out to be set free. In order to be whole, I cannot suffocate one part and expect the other parts not to be adversely affected. I have learned that it is futile to wait for others to 'get real' first before I decide to reveal my essence. I must take risks and be the one to reach out and to speak from my own heart. In that way, I invite others to reciprocate, to express who they truly are at depth. Most importantly, it has invariably been my experience thus far, that whenever I have informed a friend of my lesbianism, our relationship has been greatly enriched. However, should it ever occur that a potential friend proves to be homophobic and rejects my friendship, I know not to take it personally and to be hopeful that, in time, she/he may come to appreciate my honest and openness - perhaps even be inspired to examine her/his own fears. In truth, nothing is ever lost. On the contrary, there is much to gain, and one's life may be greatly enhanced.



## Dear Gertrude Gal -

Where you been ?

I have a delicate matter requiring your wise attention...

Short of abducting her cat (should she co-habit with one), how do I get the woman of my desires attention ? How do dykes flirt and entice ???

I've consulted Suzy Sexpert, however she deals with weightier matters beyond the subtlety and nuance of my current dilemma.

I've 'shaken my body' on the dance floor, discussed some philosophy, licked my lips (which are now terribly chapped)... Its all gone over like a ton of used kitty litter. Now it's possible I'll never move this gal, but I'm not ready to quit yet.

Perplexed in desire

J.J.

## Dear Perplexed in Desire:

It would seem that the subtle rituals of dancing, chatting and lip-licking haven't caught the flame of your desire. I'm not surprised - you don't seem to know a period from a comma ! So why not try the direct approach - tell her you think she's a real strudel (or whatever term you like that conveys your lust in a playful, tasteful and - if you're that kind of girl, politically correct kind of way), and see what she does. The Universe (just to get New Age for a minute) is a supply and demand kind of set-up: So if your gambit falls flat, I'm sure there are several hundred other gals who would be interested. Good Luck!

---

## THE CLEANSING

Shame , shame what's game  
I wear you like my middle name  
Shame of mother's crazy ways  
Shame in fathers' doubting gaze

Shame of being woman  
Shame of my child  
Shame of being lesbian

Oh to be a pansy whose colourful  
face  
Proudly greets the sun

## WATER SIDE

NATURE DANCES

She knows no other way  
When the wind comes the water  
Ripples

There is no shame

Amey Lariviere

## NEW DIRECTION? ABOUT TIME

"Instead of condemning homosexuals, Mormon Christians should seriously examine the ways in which they themselves may contribute to the suffering of their gay brothers and lesbian sisters." - from a transcript of a talk given by former bishop Robert A. Rees of the Church of Latter Day Saints, and published in New Direction, a magazine for gay and lesbian Mormons. For subscription information, write to: New Direction, 6520 Selma Avenue, Suite A-440, Los Angeles, CA 90028. Anyone wishing to view the complete article and review it for LNews can obtain same from LNews.

*Editor's Note: The theme for the January issue is religion.*



# ADS & NOTICES

## A NEW STORY OF THE EARTH

In the Union of ecology and feminism lies our hope for transformation. Discover the how we are co-creators with the Earth. Explore how science and myth connect to create a new vision for the future - an 8 week course, Oct. 17 - Dec. 5, Thursdays 7:00 - 9:30 p.m., location TBA. Pre-registration required. Group limited to 20 participants (women and men). Course alternatively offered as a weekend workshop, Nov. 22 - 24. Please call Ramona Scott at 474-5348 or Julia at 598 - 1709.



## COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR WOMEN

I am a feminist counsellor/therapist with extensive experience working with lesbian and heterosexual women on sexual abuse recovery, trust, intimacy, coming-out issues, eating disorders, sexuality. I use an eclectic approach including Gestalt, trance, body awareness and family of origin work. I have a particular interest in working with trauma issues. I do couple work and also work with partners of women who have sexually abused.

BETH TROTTER. 381-1325

## LIGHTEN UP:

Stop wanting to achieve and maintain optimal weight. 6 week series designed to remove blocks, restore choice, at physical, emotional, mental, spiritual levels. SARA JOY DAVID, Psychologist, 383-8998.

## SHIATSU MASSAGE

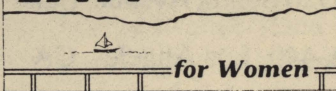
*for women*

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*Monica Kendel*

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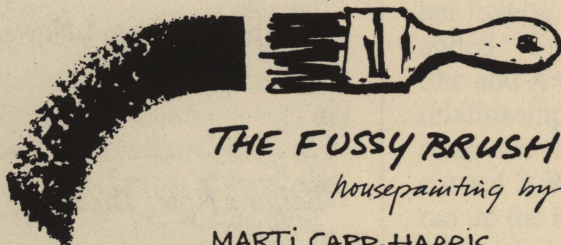
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Karen Partridge 592-1029.



# ADS & NOTICES

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Anglophone, Francophone, Allophone and Aboriginal women in Canada are invited to submit short fiction for a possible publication, to be entitled *Canadian Women and Patterns of Transcendence*.

The editors, Jo-Anne Elder and Colin O'Connell and Associate Editor Uta Doerr are looking for short stories ( 15 - 20 pp. or about 4000 words) related to the idea of spirituality, conceived in the broadest sense possible to the word, and including ( although not limited to ) Aboriginal spirituality, goddess-worship, mothering as empowerment, sisterhood and convent, lesbian experiences, ecofeminism, feminine symbolism and mythology, feminist theology, and alternative theories and practices of faith.

The anthology will have a multicultural orientation and the editors can provide translation from French, German, Spanish and possibly other languages.

We would prefer receiving your requests for further information, queries or submissions by October 31, 1991, but all queries sent by December 31 will be

carefully considered.

Contact Jo-Anne Elder, 180 Liverpool Street, Fredericton, New Brunswick, E3B - 4V5.

Los Angeles, CA 90028. Anyone wishing to view the complete article and review it for LNews can obtain same from LNews:

## I SAID ISSUES, NOT TISSUES

Got a place to stay in Vancouver? Then you can attend the free lecture series "Women: Issues of the 90's," Wednesday evenings 7:30 to 9:30 in the Students' Lounge at Capilano College. Topics include:

**October 9** - Equal Opportunities for Girls and Women in Physical Activity and Sport

**October 23** - Lesbians and Aging: Exploring the Issues - Sally Shamai

**November 6** - Aboriginal Women in the Legal Profession: Breaking New Ground

**November 20** - What B.C. Women Really Want in the '90's

## DORIS LESSING, *LITERATURE AS METAPHOR*

Wednesday, October 16th, 8pm, University Centre, University of Victoria

FREE TO THE PUBLIC

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- October 7 - Equal Opportunities for Girls and Women in Physical Activity and Sport
- October 23 - Lesbian and Gay: Exploring the Issues - Shelly Shuman
- November 9 - Aboriginal Women in the Social
- November 20 - Women & C. Women Really Want in the 90's

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P.O. Box 5339

Editor: Jo-Anne Eider and Colin O'Connell and  
Associate Editor: U.S. Doer and looking for short  
pieces (12 - 30 pp or about 5000 words) related to  
issues of gender, ethnicity, class, and the broadest sense  
of the word, and including, although not  
limited to: Aboriginal spirituality, goddess-worship,  
religiosity as empowerment, spirituality and content,  
feminist experiences, economic, feminist  
epistemology and methodology, feminist theory, and  
feminist theories and processes of their  
The anthology will have a multicultural orientation  
and the editors can provide translation from French,  
German, Spanish and possibly other languages.  
We would prefer receiving your responses for further  
discussion, queries or submission by October 31.  
But all queries sent by December 31 will be