

# L NEWS

BC's Premiere Lesbian Magazine

## What's Inside

### A Label Just for Us

An exploration of sex and gender identities and a review of Holly Devor's new book, *FTM: Female-to-Male Transsexuals in Society*

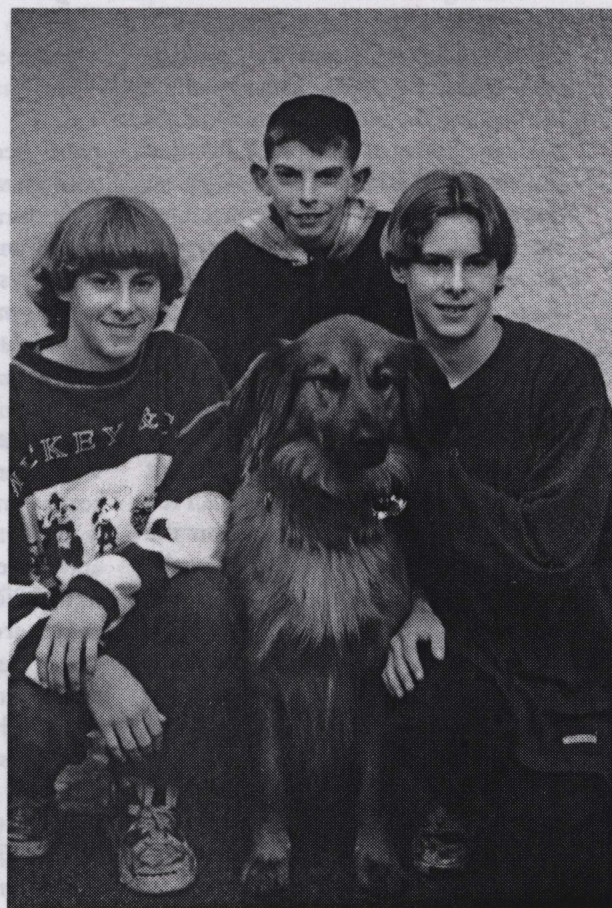
### Delighting in the Possibilities

An interview with a local poet, writer and activist

### Quotes & Queries

Ogling Canadian women's olympic hockey, suited lesbians marching to K.D. in Japan and the shocking news that many women's basketball fans are (gasp) women.

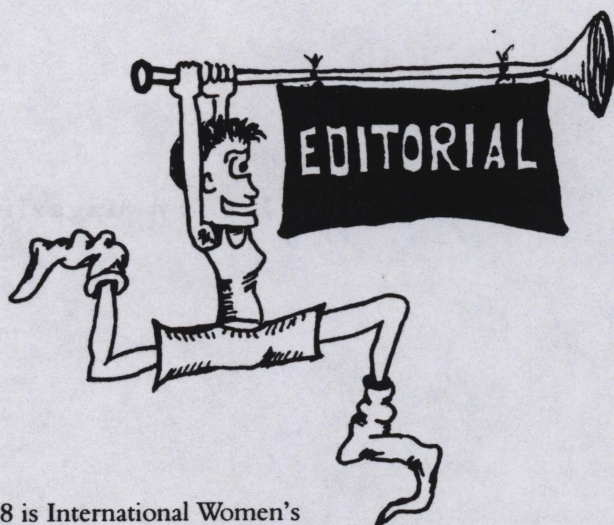
and much more ...



### The Dog holds it all together

Kids of the Lasovich family:  
Carter, Sarah, Lindsay & Bailey (the dog)





March 8 is International Women's Day. It is a long time since Emily Beecher Stowe began the suffrage movement in 1876. There's much been going on since we won the right to vote. Some of us even think that we've gained a lot. Well, in a way we have. But there is still a glass ceiling, we still earn less, we are still governed by men, and the backlash from the right, determined to weaken any gains made by women and women identifying as lesbian, is gaining strength. It's that strength I want us to be aware of when we dance, march, sing and celebrate throughout this March. This past issue of XTRA West featured Kari Simpson on the cover. Kari's days may be over but she still stands tall as symptomatic of the creeping right so determined to instill homophobia in as many areas of BC life as possible. EGALE has kept us informed of the fact that Focus on the Family has targeted BC. And why not? The current government is making waves that roll and roil in favour of lesbian and gay rights. To be sure, much of the NDP support comes in the guise of safety and welfare of the child, a good guise, I agree. it is far more palatable to the voter if equality is determined as a better move for the child. Yeah. I'm a cynic. I agree with our critic Melaney Black that *Stolen Moments* was a hard film to sit through. Unless one has been there when it was lonely to be gay or lesbian, it is hard to understand what is viewed by some as Barbara's paranoia. I'm not much different than, and

have been out longer than, the women we met in that film. I don't trust the police; I don't trust the system; I am not sure I want to be part of the system, and I am not sure how far I want equality to move beyond our right to earn a living and walk safely on the streets. The *Long Night Of The Knives* is not something I want to experience in a new guise. I want young lesbians and gay men to realize and recognize that a far right movement is dangerous to our health and if we are complacent we can be in trouble. The Christian Right's fear tactics are putting in peril any right many women have to seek an abortion; fear tactics are keeping books out of school libraries; fear tactics are moving some people to recall politicians for not towing a religious line; fear tactics are sending women home; fear tactics are motivating movements like Promise Keepers.

We need to stand on guard for us.  
BMcL

*Thank you to Betty Krawczyk for her letter to the editor in last month's issue. I typed in her response to Bram Goldwater's letter and inadvertently left her name off her thoughtful and powerful letter. Ooops!*

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While LNews is a lesbian publication it should not be assumed that all advertisers, contributors, letter-writers are lesbian. All may assumed to be lesbian-positive or allies.

LNews is a division of the Lesbian Community Connections Foundation. The LCC mandate is to provide a monthly written forum for lesbians and allies that celebrates all aspects of lesbian, bisexual, & transgendered lesbian lives, to promote a healthy, visible community by giving voice to and honoring diverse and common interests and to promote dialogue on such issues as class, culture, racial differences and disabilities.

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# Stolen Moments

Written and directed by Margaret Wescott,  
narrated by Kate Nelligan

Reviewed by Melaney Black

Predictably enough, this documentary focuses on Caucasian Western European and North American lesbian history. Audre Lorde was the lone prominently figured woman of colour. That fact also illustrated that this documentary had been in production for some time before its release. At any rate, there was a fair amount of footage shot in Amsterdam and environs, so those who are going to the Games this summer can check out the one public monument in Europe that honours the homosexual community. It's a series of terraced triangles along the shore of one of the canals in Amsterdam - sorry, I don't know which one. Someone will.

I really wish that my schedule didn't preclude Wednesday coffee at the G-Spot, because I could discuss the issues this film brought up for me for weeks. There was a lot that was uncomfortable; the tortures inflicted through the centuries on women who were caught passing as men; the Neo-Nazi attack on a present-day gay/lesbian soiree outside Berlin; the unsettling courage of Leslie Feinberg, a contemporary female-to-male transsexual.

There was also a lot that was warm and charming. Women from contemporary New York, Berlin, and Amsterdam were profiled. Nicole Brossard was also interviewed, as was Judy Grahn. Photos and old silent footage portrayed the times of the women of the Left Bank, and the cemetery in which many of them are interred. And, of course, there were stories of the inimitable American Natalie Barney. I loved the story where Natalie Barney once had herself delivered to a lover in a large box, surrounded by lilies. Where did that kind of stylish daring go in the lesbian community? I may be wrong, but individual creativity like that

seems lacking these days. I know Natalie Barney was a true original, but imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, after all.

As the film unfolded, I couldn't help thinking that European women remain much more connected to their social history than we do here. We tend to be a culture of an increasingly homogenized present, while Europeans are more constantly surrounded by, and reminded of, the material cultural idioms that framed their social evolution. Every house, every lane has some story, some infamy.

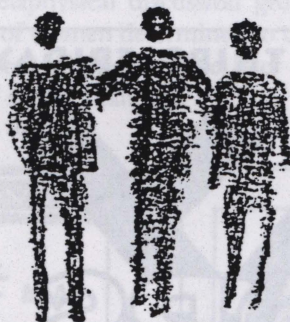
Throughout the documentary, the director used some engaging techniques to outline notions of lesbian community over time. She dressed the sets in manners appropriate to the different centuries or decades being profiled, but used the same actors on each set to create a sense of ongoing community. Then, in a scene with women on an ocean cruise, (no free plugs for Olivia allowed) the director intercut a casual on-deck conversation

between two women with scenes of very detailed oral sex between the same two women. Meanwhile, Kate Nelligan's voice chatted on about lesbian identity. Definitely kept your attention. However, I couldn't help thinking about the straight guy sitting behind me, watching with his girlfriend. I mean, I was glad they were there and willing to learn something, but....

Anyway, within its Eurocentric boundaries, the filmmakers of *Stolen Moments* attempted to profile women of different ages, economic means, and social identities. It combined theatrical elements with informative narrative and moving personal testimony - all signature Donna Read techniques. It was at its least informative and entertaining, and at its best both uncomfortably challenging and enlightening. Somebody should tell Pic-A-Flic to get it.

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# ..... Interviewing

by Nikki Tate Stratton

*"As never before, we are free to create families of our own design - to choose the bonds that tie us into the fabric of society."*

I sip the concoction Simone (not her real name) has prepared with leaves taken from dried bundles hanging from the walls of her studio workshop. There's mint and something sharper—a

**By her early thirties, Simone's work in feminist theory and literary criticism had led to numerous additional publications and made her a popular speaker.**

suggestion of licorice, laced with dark honey. A huge vase filled with daffodils is an explosion of colour perfectly placed just off centre on a low, round table.

We settle ourselves on cushions that tumble across the wood floor, and I pore over the photographs she has spread across the table. There she is, a child on a windblown beach on a Greek Island, a tall, attractive girl with dark eyes and a mane of wild curls. In another, she and her parents ride an old-fashioned carousel; in another her adult self stands behind a lectern before large group of

women assembled to hear her speak at an international women's conference in Washington, DC.

It's not easy to know where to start...I ask, about the importance of family in her life. A soft smile warms her face. She pushes an errant strand of dark brown hair, streaked through with grey, behind her ear and says, "Family is everything to me. Where are we without our connections to others? Who are we without those tight, beyond-words bonds we often don't think about—until something happens."

She stares at me. "My mother died of breast cancer when I was seventeen. My father slipped off a cliff and fell to his death six years after that. Who would have thought that a woman of 23 could feel like such an orphan?"

She asks this question with gentleness devoid of 'blaming'. There is no outrage in a voice that deepens as she continues; it's as if she draws strength from that difficult time.

"I must admit that after that, I turned away from people for a while. It wasn't easy. I was a young writer living in Paris."

She broke off her engagement to an Italian engineering student and immersed herself in her work. "It was a black time of immense discovery," she says of a period steeped in port wine and lonely conversations with herself. It was also the time during which she created her first collection of poems, published shortly after.

"Many people read those poems and see endings—I see genesis." In the long pause that follows, her tabby cat, Miguel, hops onto the table and sprawls across the photos. He settles into the strip of sunshine that falls from the skylight above us.

"Self-discovery sometimes happens through the exploration of someone else. That volume of poems—yes, it opened doors for me—both literally and figuratively. I no longer had to deny my essential self—that of a poet. It was a bizarre and exciting transition—but, not half as extraordinary as the transition I experienced when I fell in love with Hélène."

The intensity of Simone's first experience with a woman caught her by surprise. "I had spent a lot of energy protecting myself. I had learned to build strength from within, to ignore the temptation of love—which, understandably, translated directly as loss. And then, against my will, I found myself in a situation where my own existence was suddenly fused with the existence of another person. I could no longer conceive of two separate futures. The flavour of my work changed entirely."

A novel and another collection of poems followed. By her early thirties, Simone's work in feminist theory and literary criticism had led to numerous additional publications and made her a popular speaker. She and Hélène traveled everywhere together.

"I may have been deconstructing the patriarchy, but I was very intent on constructing something else—Elucidation of the Core Principles of Community—that became my passion"

Sitting across the table from this bright, articulate woman, I am struck by how much she conveys non-verbally

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# Simone .....

through her lively yet sensual gestures and expressions, and dismayed at how much of our encounter will be lost in the telling. Not only that, but I struggle to find a way to separate the woman from the work which has defined her. Simone freely admits that part of her self-imposed exile in the Gulf Islands is a result of a desire to rediscover herself apart from the work she has created.

"Impossible!" I complain. She laughs. "In a sense," she smiles, leaning back in a smooth, leisurely stretch, "I have created a certain presence just for the benefit of this interview. If you can't quite capture the me you believe me to be, then, make something up!"

She has said this to reassure me, but her permission to "cheat" is like a terrible challenge. To accept would be to admit defeat. I try to steer the conversation back to family, community, feminism—any safe territory. Instead, she asks me a question.

"How much are you bound by your determination to be linear?" I feel a little bewildered. My "planned" questions suddenly seem rather trivial. "And, what about Hélène?"

This, second question is loaded. I know that much. My pre-interview research had revealed a rather sudden end to all mention of Hélène in Simone's published journals. But there is no hint from Simone whether or not it would be prudent to proceed with this line of inquiry.

I cannot tell whether Simone is baiting

me, or trying to teach me something. In truth, I am dying to find out what happened to Hélène.

"The point, again, is not how it came to be that Hélène and I parted company, but, rather, the ways in which we continue to exist for each other."

The love of family can never be extinguished, she claims. But it can change. And it is the nature of such change that drives Simone's current work.

"Here, in this lovely place," she gestures breezily towards her Gulf Island view, framed surreally by the graceful arc of two madronas against the blue sky, "I nurture my connections." She tells me how a small group of women meet regularly to discuss everything from what books they are reading to global economics and politics. But these women share something else.

"Certainly, we are all members of the human family. In the microcosm, we have built our own extended family, here on the island. But, as a group, we are also exploring our place within the natural order of things—or natural disorder. It's hard to tell, sometimes, the directionality of cause and effect."

I expect her to tell me about some esoteric metaphysical discussion group, an enclave of women determined to unravel the secrets of the universe over herbal teas and scented candles.

"The greatest discoveries we have made about ourselves and our existence within the greater scheme ... these we have made in our gardens."

My mind leaps sideways. Gardens?

"What cannot be learned from the soil, the germination of a seed, the bearing of fruit—is not worth knowing."

Appropriately enough, we finish the interview with a stroll through Simone's garden, just beginning to awaken after the winter.

"You must come back," she says, "when there is more to see."

I pass through the garden gate and

**The love of family can never  
be extinguished, she claims.**

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then turn to watch her moving back towards her secluded cabin. She stops part way and bends over to examine something at the side of the path.

From where I stand, I see nothing but an empty bed, still blanketed with a heavy layer of straw mulch. I suspect that Simone is not seeing the spaces, but is delighting in all the possibilities that fill them.

*(Ed note: I met Simone at a party given by "straight" friends. She agreed to this interview and to write for LNews provided we keep her ID secret.)*

**Rowena Hunnisett M.A.**

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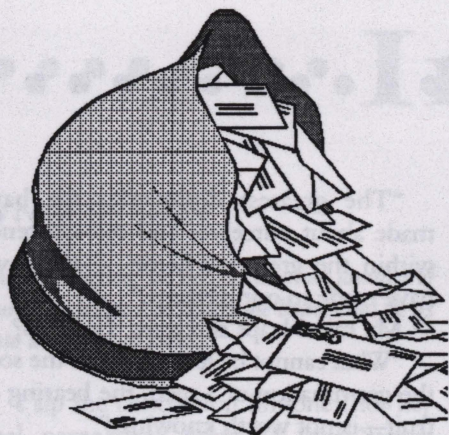
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## Letters to the Editor

### Inadequate Language

#### Barbara:

I spent some time thinking about the flag and mixing concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity. Then I saw a brief in Saturday's (Feb. 21) *Globe & Mail*. It was from the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a session on the human genome project.

"...a researcher referred to the 0.1 per cent genetic difference between humans. What did this mean, asked Dean Hamer,

one of the US National Institutes of Health researchers whose work on the possibility of a gay gene made headlines a couple of years back.

"Answer: It means that every 1,000 of the base pairs that make up a gene are different, although the difference doesn't necessarily affect the gene's operation. Since there are up to 50,000 base pairs in a human gene, he estimated there was roughly on a 50-per cent likelihood that any one gene is the same as another. And when you added in all the gene-mutilation possibilities and multiplied them by the 70,000 or so human genes, it turns out that the 0.1 per cent difference was actually an expression of how unlikely it is that any two people—identical twins excepted—would be exactly alike. "The total possible number of human beings is larger than the number of people who have existed...and larger than all the humans who ever will exist," Dr. Hamer said.

This isn't news to a Witch, or anyone else whose universe first level of perspective is Self and the Web; but it's nice that the scientists are finally finding words to explain it.

However, the article reminded me that my comments about the flag are more serious than humour.

Zorya Alexander  
Plaskin

*editor's note: Zorya refers to a conversation we had regarding the purpose of LNews which you will find on the editorial page. Specifically, the phrase "transgendered lesbian".*

### Good Minutes! Good for the Spot!

#### Hey Barb girl!!!!

I finally got my email back in action again, and, since I saw your address in LNews, decided to drop you a line (or 3). The G-spot meeting was last night...it was far greater than anyone anticipated!! There were about 36 people present...armed with fresh ideas, hope, and Su Hallat's Lez Butchio wide grin. With such a good, positive turnout, there is no doubt that the G-Spot (Woman's Creative Network) or a woman's space in general, is wanted, needed and embraced by many women, most of whom were ready and willing to volunteer whatever of themselves is needed to not only keep the G-Spot alive and kicking, but also to make it a self sufficient, strong, in your face we ain't going nowhere society/social/lesbian headquarters/woman's clubhouse/learning/workshop/healing/growing/nurturing/empowering

Center!!! (hold on while I catch my breath....Anyway girlfriend....I would call the meeting a resounding success....committees were formed, and a board was elected....next is balancing the books (look Lee & Lisa)

Later 'gator...Wendy

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From March 19-29 Victorians will be able to catch some of Canada's and the US' finest solo performers. Produced by our able Fringe women Ros Smith and executive director Janet Munsill, the Uno Festival is presented at Open Space and Kaleidoscope Playhouse. For show info and passes call 383-2663.

An irresistible force for me, is a solo performance by a self described "twisted sister" a.k.a. Kevin Kent from Seattle, who offers *Sister Windy—My Life As Art*. Theatre SKAM, Victoria's top alternative theatre company splits off in several directions for solo performances under the title, *Sin City*. We'll on a guided tour for this one. And, who would want to miss *Bard Chick Tells All in Shakespeare's Women* performed by Berni Stapleton of St. John's Newfoundland. The Comedienne sensation of the Rock and start of CBC Newfoundland's comedy programs. If I miss this one I'll shoot myself. She presents for our "left coast" a healthy dollop of Newfoundlanderese not to mention her own take on Romeo and Juliette.

Nanaimo's Holly Bright brings us *Out of Stillness/A Gathering of Blue*, two short dance pieces choreographed by Cheryl Prophet. This show was a hit at the ROMP Festival and explores the

internal dialogues that occur within moments of tranquility—the songs of emotion, the dynamics of tension and resolution. Whew!

Tickets are \$48 for a flexpass which is

valid for any combination of four \$9 tickets and two \$12 tickets. Or you can get a Festival Superpass for \$100. A darn good deal. See you there!

## The Belfry Hosts a Great New Festival 98

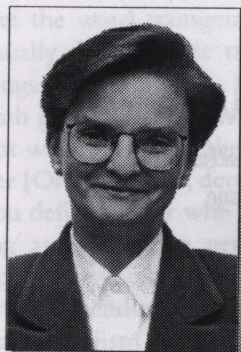
Through March and April The Belfry presents three of the hottest shows currently touring the country opening with *High Life* by Lee MacDougall. This one is an edgy, explosive dark comedy about drug addiction and the criminal life it engenders. Despite its premise it is described as both "very real" and "very funny and a rocket ride from start to finish." March 17-28.

The gay boys take over in *The Wines of Tuscany* by Conrad Alexandrowicz. A last trip to the hiss of Tuscany is recreated in this remarkable theatre dance piece from Vancouver. Two lovers explore memory, pleasure, loss, food, sex and opera as the search for the ultimate red wine experience. Filled with

humour, too.

One of the most original talents on the island, the incredible, Jan Derbyshire performs her own *The Opposite of Everything Is True*. Our answer to Lily Tomlin, Jan presents a comic tour de force about Tiffany, a blond, a former flight attendant who quit her job when she lost faith in the principles of aerodynamics. Chase is a creatively challenged brunette who dreams of being a writer. Gotta see this wonderful world of bizarre characters who playfully collide and intersect with funny and surreal results.

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# Surviving the Power Struggle

by Rowena Hunnisett

Relationships go through stages. So what's new about that? you say. Most people are aware of the honeymoon stage, the one where, as Joann Loulan says, lesbians :”fuck like bunnies”. Too many lesbians experience the “lesbian bed death” stage and don't know what to do about it. I will put these stages in a larger perspective, hopefully making it easier to live through them.

We repeat the same relationship stages throughout our lives, whether it is with a mother or with friends or lovers. Let's look at mothers and babies first. A baby and primary caregiver bond and enjoy each other's company: this is often called symbiosis, meaning the baby needs the parent in order to survive; the parent wants the baby as part of her fulfillment.

Once the baby starts to be interested in the world beyond Mom, the two get more of a sense of each other as individual people. There may be aspects of each other they react to negatively; behaviour patterns are established accordingly. The mother may feel overwhelmed by the child's demands, the child may get frustrated with the limits she is given, so Mom withdraws, Baby cries for attention.

As in babyhood, so in adulthood. Eventually toddlers enter the terrible twos, teenagers hit adolescent rebellion, friends and lovers experience power struggles. It is then common for people to think that their relationship is doomed (especially since this is when irritations escalate), while communication skills and attitudes deteriorate. The power struggle is actually a normal and necessary stage of

human relating. Its function is to develop or strengthen selfhood while learning to sustain mutual connection. If a couple is over-dependent, somebody is likely to get fed up and want more space; if a partner wants closeness when the other needs space, the result is the power struggle dance. Conflict is upsetting but it teaches both people about who

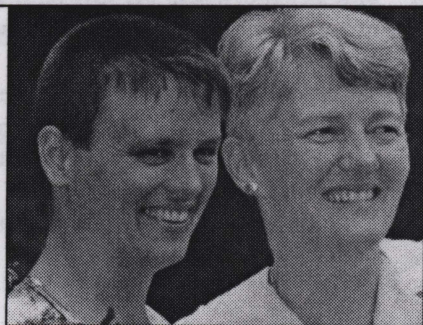
they really are. Possible outcomes are many; one is learning respect and love for differences.

Many couples resolve the power struggle by buying into peace at any price or by breaking up. If they can hang in through the power struggle, without losing individual integrity and can still work through the relationship challenges, they will discover inter-dependency. Inter-dependency allows for both individuation and healthy dependency. It includes:

- ☐ having your own life and enjoying closeness and a shared life,
- ☐ not trying to change her any more (what? you say, I thought my mission was to renovate her personality. Not!),
- ☐ accepting your partner for who she is,
- ☐ accepting the limitations of your relationship,
- ☐ being willing to be responsible for your own needs,
- ☐ having the ability to relate as adults, or be playful - and the wisdom to know when to change channels.

There's a saying, “I love you because I need you”; that belief produces fighting, apathy or break-up. The converse: “I need you because I love you” is the willingness to grow because you love, and is a necessary motivation for inter-dependency.

*Rowena Hunnisett is a therapist in private practice in Victoria.*



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# Transition Definition or Definition Transitions?

By Zorya Alexandra Plaskin

There's a cliché about not being able to tell the players without a program. When it comes to who/what we are, sometimes you can't read the program without a program. And that program, unfortunately, hasn't been agreed upon.

It seems a good idea to mean the same thing when we use the same words. It's especially important when we're talking about things like community, relationships, sex, etcetera. It's especially challenging when we insist on labeling one another. And it's especially difficult when we can't agree on the labeling.

Unfortunately, words mean nothing anymore. Or, perhaps the problem is that they mean anything. The increasing outness of trannies doesn't help, either. We can't even label ourselves. That depends upon how we all define gender, sex, woman, lesbian, man, gay, queer...

The word tranny has little currency in the world at large. It hasn't made it into the mainstream, so it doesn't have a fixed definition. What it means depends upon who uses the word, and how. And maybe where. It's not the same thing at all, but for some trannies it parallels using the N-word in places like, say, South L.A., connoting recognition, or rebellion, or... Some of us use the word to describe anyone who is trans anything, even if they wouldn't label themselves a tranny. Sometimes it's a generic label, sometimes...

Some transsexuals are trannies. Some don't like the word, because it might include transvestites [depending on how you define tranny]. Most of them don't like the word transgendered, because it usually does include transvestites. Drag kings. Drag queens. People who play with gender roles even though they may not want to change their perceived gender [Or is that sex?, depending upon how you define...]. Or who know they're living as the wrong gender [Depending upon how you define...], but are stuck in drag [depending upon...] Consider that transsexualism might not have anything to do with sex, since it's part of a disease called *gender dysphoria*. Or, it might be

entirely about sex, if you essentially define sex as gender, and gender...

Oxford's (Concise) transsexual is, first and foremost, an adjective, "having the physical characteristics of one sex and the supposed psychological characteristics of the other." And as a noun, "1 a transsexual person. 2 a person whose sex has been changed by surgery." Oxford doesn't elaborate concisely on the second definition of the noun. Has surgery changed your sex? What is sex? What is your sex? What is your kind of sex? What kind of sex are you? What sex are you? How do you define sex? Any kind of surgery? How much of a change?

Thanks largely to the information revolution, trannies are increasingly discovering that we are trannies, or more accurately that there's a label just for us. Although it might not be the label we'd pick. The official labels are picked for us by a usually straight group of medical professionals, who rarely suffer themselves from gender dysphoria. Sometimes they decide a tranny qualifies for sex reassignment surgery. Although some clinics call it gender reassignment surgery. Many surgeons consider it cosmetic surgery. We're not officially transsexual without this cosmetic surgery, and we can't have it unless we've already lived as "the opposite sex [gender?]" for at least one year. Two in some places. And female-to-male trannies can't have chest

wall reconstruction to help them through the trial period until after they and their breasts have lived through the trial.

Sometimes the people who tell trannies what label we get won't agree with us about who we are. Sometimes telling them what they want to hear is more important than

truth. "Transsexuality is the only condition for which the therapy is to lie," Kate Bornstein wrote in *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*.

Did I mention that not all transsexuals like being called trannies? Did I mention that not all trannies like being called transsexuals? Especially if they define sex and gender differently. Some trannies

**Unfortunately, words mean nothing anymore. Or, perhaps the problem is that they mean anything.**

don't like being called transgendered, either. The medical community calls trannies who want surgery, but can't get it, transgendered. If the doctors would approve surgery, which would make you an official transsexual, but you don't want it, then you're not really a transsexual - officially, you're transgendered. Outside the medical community, transgendered also includes some people who like their gender just fine, thanks. And their sex, too. In *Cassell's Encyclopedia of Queer Myth, Symbol and Spirit*, transgendered is "also referred to as 'androgynous,' 'third gender,' 'gender variant,' and 'two-spirit,' to reflect a diversity of views." Bornstein says the whole label thing "is like trying to apply the laws of solids to the state of fluids."

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# FTM: Female-to-Male

*Reviewed by Zorya Alexandra Plaskin*

As a journalist, I found it uncanny how often the lead came from the end of a document, from lowly news releases to Royal Commission reports. Not only does this technique fail with *FTM: Female-to-Male Transsexuals in Society*, it contributes to the enigma.

After 600 pages of text, Holly Devor calls for "a future in which multiplicity of genders, sexes, and sexualities might be safely imagined and easily enacted by those persons who feel so inclined. ...It is time that we learn to count higher than two, that

**The book is unquestionably  
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relative to the theories of  
other academics and clinicians.**

we learn to multiply and divide, and that we endeavour to expand our options exponentially."

I couldn't have said it better. However, I don't see how Devor arrives at this conclusion, because most of her own text is not headed in that direction. The contradiction, though, is fitting, since she regularly contradicts herself, and the men she interviewed.

Devor, a UVic sociology professor considered an expert on female-to-male gender bending, collected data from 45 transnies, 37 of whom were living as men at the time of their last interviews. Her book observes, among other things, the multi-

ple past and present social aspects of their individual universes, and minimizes the common focus on the question, Why are transnies? The subsequent volume of information is overwhelming, and may be misleading. It's difficult to piece any one individual's story together from the interview segments. But the story excerpts are sliced and diced into an experiential smorgasbord that suggests an even worse nightmare than most transnies experience individually.

Devor says they are not "a statistically representative sample" of the tranny population. She "used their stories to ground and give life to [her] theoretical conjectures." It's a challenge, thus, to determine how significant any one factor in this statistical kaleidoscope is. For example, there are many stories about abuse, sexual and otherwise. Yet only 20 per cent "had already had sexual experiences imposed on them by older males by the time they reached their teens." Childhood illness is another theme: 29.5 per cent experienced a major illness in their youth. And so on. (My life threatening illnesses were at ages three and eleven; but then, I'm not an FtM.)

The book is unquestionably a powerful manifestation of an immense amount of work, and the results are reasonably enlightened - in a relative sort of way; relative to the theories of other academics and clinicians. *FTM* will undoubtedly influence academic and clinical attitudes about transnies. I presume the academic community will be its most fertile market. If I weren't a tranny, I might give this book high marks. Although, if I weren't a tranny, I might not be so tolerant and I might think Devor is a little too liberal.

But my personal reality is that, among other labels, I am a tranny. And *FTM* pushes a lot of buttons. Collectively, these involve being judged by non-transnies who believe they control who and what we are. We have to fit their mind-sets, accept their Truth. It's difficult dealing with work like this, when I don't recognize the validity of the roots.

As enlightened as she may be, Devor is unquestionably part of the socio-medical industry. Perhaps her powers of observation and conclusion - except, of course, that final, book-ending conclusion - are influenced by an unwillingness to rock the boat too much. Perhaps that's why her bibliography includes many industry-recognized tomes, but not Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw* or Leslie Feinberg's *Gender Warrior*. In fairness, Feinberg's book may have missed Devor's deadline, since it was only published last year; his 1980 book, *Journal of a Transsexual*, written when he was Diane Leslie Feinberg, did make the bibliography. Individual complaints? Well, a big one is the assumption that we're all sick. Just as the socio-medical industry was once unable to deal with lesbians and gays without prejudging us to be ill, transsexuals are presumed to be suffering from "gender dysphoria," and we get no respect unless/until we accept that

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# Transsexuals in Society

by Holly Devor  
Indiana University Press

we have this syndrome, and that it's treatable according to the industry's guidelines.

Also, in spite of her final sentences, Devor works in the context of a bipolar gender system. This even though she notes 32 per cent of interview participants "would have preferred some other gender options." Luther's take on the question: "This gender stuff is outrageous. Why must it be? Why must it really be? There are some of us, like myself, who are going to have to make that change, but some people are being forced into the change because no one has a place for them. They just can't be."

The industry mindset blends concepts of sex and gender, reassuring society that they are in fact the same thing. Devor defines the terms separately and then proceeds to use them synonymously. Sex is the "physiological status of persons as female, male, or intersexed," while gender refers "only to the social statuses of persons as women (girls), men (boys), or variously transgendered, regardless of their sex statuses."

Elsewhere Devor notes that, "In view of the fact that all sexualities are gendered, I reserve the terms heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual to refer to the sexes of persons involved in particular sexual patterns of fantasy, desire or practice. Bearing in mind that I conceptually separate sex and gender, I reserve the terms straight, lesbian, gay and bi to refer to the genders of persons involved in similar sexual patterns of fantasy, desire, or practice."

Does this mean lesbian, bi and gay are genders? Are bisexual women and bisexual men the same gender? If sex is physiological, what's the specific physiology of a bisexual? How's a bi body different from a homo or het body? Is this why the industry's approach to trannies is that if you suffer from gender dysphoria you must pick a sex, and if it's not the one you were born with, then you need to mutilate your body until it looks like a close approximation of your "desired" sex, even though in your mind it's gender that's the challenge?

Devor has some difficulties dealing with this herself, as evidenced by her use of pronouns, perhaps the simplest of labels. "In parts of sentences referring to the persons doing the talking, I have used masculine pronouns, whereas in parts of sentences which refer to times when persons who were the subject of stories were living as girls or women, I have used feminine pronouns. For example, 'He remembered that as a girl she had been a tomboy.' This may seem confusing at first..." Actually, not as confusing as: "He later deserted [from the army] but was apprehended and escaped death only by disclosing her femaleness." Or, "He claimed that her sex change gave him great spiritual powers..."

Speaking of spirituality, Devor doesn't. Except to note that in pre-European cultures trannies were held "in high regard." This might be a moot point, since most of the trannies I know are too busy/stressed in these times dealing with the socio-medical industry to put much energy into spirituality. Nevertheless,

it's an important factor and I'd like to know what these trannies have to say about it. Perhaps if Judy Grahn's *Another Mother Tongue* had made the bibliography I might not have this complaint.

The text repeatedly suggests transsexualism is a choice, and that trannies come to it largely because of social and economic factors. The trannies tell a different story. How did Walter "acquire" his gender choice? "As soon as I was old enough to talk I was telling people that I should have been a boy. That this was a mistake, that God made a mistake."

Actually, I liked a lot of this book - mostly, but not only, the trannies' stories. I partially liked, for example, Devor's suggestion: "Each participant who had lived first as a woman and later as a man could claim a kind of double vision unavailable to any but transsexual men and a very few hermaphroditic individuals."

I agree trannies have a kind of double vision: that's part of why some cultures held trannies "in high regard." But I don't think it's restricted to FtMs and hermaphrodites. MtFs also have a double vision, even if we cross the fence going in the other direction. It's still the same fence. Of course there are differences between FtMs and MtFs. But the similarities and parallels are greater than the differences.

Maybe you have to have crossed the fence to get it. Maybe that's why Devor's so close yet still missing the mark. It's only an intellectual exercise for her.

There's a clichéd metaphor which comes to mind, about walking a mile in another person's shoes. But that gets into spiritual stuff, and there's no spirituality here.

## URL if UR Ready

from Jeanne Rioux

Here are a couple of URLs that I thought might be of interest.

One is the profile of a Victoria Telecommunity Network user and volunteer co-ordinator of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Special Interest Group on the VTN, Iris Gray: <http://victoria.tc.ca/~wy236/Profile.html> Make sure you use a capital P for Profile. Some interesting links on this page.

Here's one you can get from Iris' page as well. Lots of links from here, too: <http://www.bc1.com/user/faust/queerb/htm>

And finally, <http://www.tantra.org/lesbian.htm>



# We Care About Each Other

by Nikki Tate-Stratton

It may not have been the most typical Christmas gift request, but what Lindsay, then 7 years old, wanted more than anything else, was a tuxedo. To Lindsay, that's what Mom and her friends wore when they went out to fancy events. Why couldn't she have one?

Homophobia is a baffling concept to the Lasovich children, Carter 14 and the twins, Lindsay and Sarah, 13. The kids don't remember a time when their family didn't overlap and fuse with the wider lesbian community. Are you saying somebody could hate you who doesn't even know you? Mary remembers the complete incomprehension the day she tried to explain that some folks in society were less than favourably disposed towards lesbians and gays.

For Mary, defining 'family' is an exercise in change and flexibility. Mary, Carter, Lindsay and Sarah are the core members of the Lasovich clan. Bailey, the twins' affable dog, is never far from the action. Nora, Mary's sister (also a lesbian) lives in Sooke. The girls (who both want to be vets) spend most weekends with their aunt, enjoying a break from the city and doing volunteer work at a vet clinic. Carter spends some weekends in the country, and some in Victoria. He feels there is "way more to do" within city limits.

A family dinner may just as easily see one or two of Mary's closest friends at the table, or Grandpa, or some of Mary's siblings who also live in Victoria. When Mary was involved with another woman who has two children, the basic family unit swelled to seven members. Though they never all lived under the same roof, the children came to see themselves as siblings. After three years, the mothers'

relationship ended, but Carter remains fast friends with his step-brother.

As in most families, each member has a particular role to play. The kids insist they don't want Aunt Nora to be like their mother, 'the heavy.' The title 'Mom' is synonymous with rules and responsibilities. Nora, on the other hand, is fun.

With four hectic schedules to juggle (work, school, baseball, soccer, swim-



ming lessons, volunteer work and busy social lives...) day-to-day time management is quite a challenge.

"The kids are really good," Mary says, pointing out how well-organized and responsible they all are. The children obviously got to be that way with a little help. When the children were very young, Mary worked full-time and Nora provided full-time childcare. Even with such tremendous family support, Mary felt drained when, at the end of a long day at the office, she had to rush out to do the grocery shopping and put the last load of laundry in at 10 PM.

Her focus shifted away from her career and towards a greater participation in parenting.

Moving to Victoria from Charlottetown in 1991 coincided with taking the plunge and beginning to work as a government contractor. Being self-employed allowed her more time to be closely involved with her children, a situation she feels has paid tremendous dividends.

Despite Mary's insistence that she has

talked over all sorts of lesbian-related 'stuff' with her children, the three Grade 8 students are remarkably blasé about the matter.

"I don't think any of our friends know," says one of the twins.

"All of my friends know," says Carter.

The tone of voice is indistinguishable. Apparently, it just doesn't matter much.

Mary has a couple of theories. "They are at an age where they think of their mother as wallpaper." She adds, a little wistfully, that not too long ago, her kids thought she was pretty cool.

She believes part of the indifference to all things lesbian is that her kids have been completely desensitized. When Mary first moved to Victoria, she couldn't see a highly visible lesbian community. So, she decided to create something. Sunday brunches at her place developed into the collective known as *Lesbiantics*, a group that put on fashion shows, workshops, dances... It wasn't unusual to have costume fittings going on in the basement and a steady stream of lesbians wandering in and out of the house.

While Mary may have thought she was teaching her children about egalitarian societies, when she leaves the room, her children give me a slightly different list of things they have learned from their mother.

"Not to smoke," Lindsay says bluntly from where she is sprawled on the beanbag chair with the dog. "Mom does and it smells disgusting."

Carter adds, "It doesn't matter what other people think and you should never be ashamed of who you are."

"Do your homework," is Sarah's contribution the list of most important lessons taught by Mom. Throughout the interview, she has never left the dining room table where she has been diligently working on an assignment.

For a family to work well, the kids tell me, they should never fight, put each other down or yell at the dog.

When it comes right down to it, the secret of this family's success is pretty simple. Carter sums it up when he says, "Everyone cares about each other."



# Notes from Kelowna: Lesbians and Feminism

by Sharon Dale Stone

A while ago, I noticed a new book called *Cross Purposes: Lesbians, Feminists, and the Limits of Alliance*, a collection of articles edited by Dana Heller (Indiana University Press, 1997). The title intrigued me and I couldn't resist buying it. I have to say, though, that I think the sub-title's promise of looking at the limits of alliances between lesbians and feminists is misleading, and most of the articles are far too academic for my taste. I was hoping for writings about political activism, but this book is mostly about theory — which is not to say that I didn't find the book interesting or valuable. Actually, I thought that overall it's refreshingly accessible, and the bits and pieces about how other lesbians see themselves in relation to the grassroots feminist movement kept me turning the pages.

I mention this book, not because I want to review it, but because it got me thinking about theory, and what I see as a disturbing trend towards lesbians and feminists writing abstract theory that bears little obvious relation to our everyday lives. Theory, it seems to me, is actually quite important for offering a way to look at and explain things, but it's not very useful if it doesn't lead to a workable politics.

I hunger for theory that we can put into practice, not theory that's so convoluted, esoteric and inaccessible that only a small number of people can decipher it, let alone understand how it might be relevant to their lives, and not theory that, however fascinating it may be, does little to inspire action. Lillian Faderman makes much the same argument in her article in *Cross Purposes*, when she says that "somewhere down the line theory needs to move into practice, or nothing gets improved."

Feminist theory used to do that: in the 1960s and 70s feminist theory motivated hundreds of thousands of women to make the personal political, rearrange

their lives, and work to change the world. Lesbian feminist theory did that too, only more so. Back in 1970, for example, when almost everyone equated lesbianism with mental illness, the Radicalesbians defined lesbianism as political (at the time, a novel and extremely radical idea) in their classic statement "The Woman Identified Woman." A few years later, the lesbian separatist collective The Furies furthered this work and began to analyze heterosexuality as both institution and ideology designed to buttress male supremacy. In

those heady days, theory was being created by activists from the ground up. The lesbians were writing from personal experiences, and they were not writing for the sake of impressing academics. They were writing to urge others into action (does anyone remember Charlotte Bunch's wonderful piece, *Not For Lesbians Only?*)

In the 70s, lesbian feminist theory gave us terms such as "compulsory heterosexuality" and allowed us to analyze not just the ways in which we are punished for not being heterosexual, but also the ways in which each of us is subtly and not so subtly encouraged to be heterosexual. A lot of people think that Adrienne Rich was the first to do this when she wrote about compulsory heterosexuality for an academic journal in 1980, but it seems to me that the ideas in Rich's article bear a striking similarity to those of the grassroots activists of the 70s. The earlier work wasn't really academically respectable. Rich's was.

Somewhere along the line, Women's Studies became semi-respectable in the universities and lesbians began writing theory for academics to read. Fine, I have

no quarrel with theory. I can even see a place for abstract theory, and I think it's great that non-lesbian academics just might be exposed to what lesbians are writing, but we also need theory that is not divorced from practice and actual lived reality. What alarms me is that these days, there is precious little of the latter. Instead, as Carolyn Dever points out in

**In those heady days, theory was being created by activists from the ground up. These lesbians were writing from personal experiences, and they were not writing for the sake of impressing academics.**

*Cross Purposes*, "academic work is increasingly valorized as a primary form of feminist activist intervention ... while in the larger society women cannot call themselves feminist."

I know, from personal experience, that working as a lesbian feminist activist within the confines of the ivory tower can be exhilarating. But I also know that universities are very exclusive places to which relatively few gain access. The place has little relevance to the lives of most people, including most lesbians. So I am uneasy that at precisely the point when most women stop calling themselves feminists, and even most lesbians are disavowing the politics of lesbian feminism as passé, so many lesbians seem to be concentrating on impressing other academics at the expense of writing to help their non-academic sisters make sense of and change their lives. In the academy, male-identified "queer theory" along with "discourse analysis" is what's hot, and feminism is being left behind. It's not cool anymore to join lesbianism with feminism. What happened?



# Quotes & Queries: News & views from

Dykes involved with elite sports, as players, coaches, and fans, have been a hot media topic for the past several months—and even if you hadn't the slightest interest in the rules of the contest, the Olympics offered a golden opportunity for watching gifted and hard-working women excel in all kinds of ways. Even curling, the wallpaper event of the games, hooked me with a story of sisterhood: four best friends from Saskatchewan, all juggling babies and jobs and the travel demands of international competition, three-time world champions heading into Nagano—and now, an Olympic gold. But first, voices from other arenas of lesboland....

**Shabana Azmi**, who plays Radha in *Fire*, the excellent lesbian film by Canadian-Indian writer and director Deepa Mehta, has an impressive record as a human rights and anti-poverty activist to go along with more than 100 films in her 20-year career. In an interview with *Go Fish* star Guinevere Turner (*The Advocate*, Jan. 20/98), the lifelong Bombay resident talks about her apprehensions when she read the script—at first, she turned it down, then “felt miserable”—and about playing an erotic lesbian love scene. India has produced only a few short films on being queer, and *Fire* marks the first time lesbianism has been at the heart of a feature film. “I thought the film would be used against me, because there are so many men saying that you mustn't listen to someone like me,” she explained. “I was worried that it would be used to destabilize me on issues that are very dear to me politically [in her role as a member of Parliament in India]... *Fire* is an important film, not because it deals with the taboo topic of lesbianism but because it says that when people make choices that are different from the choices we make, instead of condemning them, we should empathize—not tolerate, but

empathize—with them.” Well-spoken, passionate and married.... As for being filmed making love with Nandita Das, who plays Sita, Azmi said: “Well, firstly, I loved her the minute I saw her. Her face is so open and so beautiful and Deepa just threw us into bed, literally, on the first day. We giggled like little schoolgirls, and Deepa said, ‘OK, giggle, but you can't keep giggling forever.’” *Fire* is set to open in Indian's theatres this spring. In January 1997 it sparked rage among a mob of men, who shouted death threats at the director after the film premiered at the Indian International Film Festival.

**Mariana Cetiner**, a Romanian lesbian who is serving a three-year prison sentence for showing her affection for another woman, is still awaiting the pardon that has been reportedly promised by the nation's President. Amnesty International has taken up the cause, and is appealing for letters to Mariana to help focus the Romanian authorities' attention on her case. Your letter can be very short, simply letting her know that she is not forgotten—and that many human rights activists are working on her behalf. Address your letter or postcard to: Mariana Cetiner, Penitenciarul Aiud, JUDE-TUL ALBA, Romania.

**Rita Mae Brown**, renowned author of the classic lesbian coming-of-age novel, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, and a catalyst for the gay-straight split that shook up the U.S. feminist movement in the late '60s is the subject of an engaging profile in *Out* (Dec/Jan 1998). Brown caused a furor at her first NOW meeting (and prompted Betty Friedan's infamous “lavender menace” declaration) when she introduced herself “as your local neighbourhood lesbian”. Interviewed at her 430-acre Virginia farm, where she lives with former golf pro Elizabeth Putnam Sinsel, Brown has found peace in her writing and

working the land ever since she announced back in 1984, at her 40th birthday party, that she was “resigning” from being a “professional” lesbian. But the recent release of her tell-all autobiography, *Rita Will: Memoir of a Literary Rabble-Rouser*, leaves no doubt that she's still a straight shooter—lucky for ex-lover Martina Navratilova, whose departure is recounted in *Rita Will*: The two women got into a heated argument while Martina was packing her bags, carelessly leaving her .38-caliber on the bathroom sink. Brown picked it up and asked Martina to get rid of the gun. But the sight of an armed Rita Mae sent Martina fleeing in panic to her BMW. As she drove away, Brown fired and blew out the rear window. Did she aim badly that day? “No,” reports *Out*. “I know you would love me to say that, but it's not true. You have to remember I grew up with guns.”

**Maria Miho Hiramatsu**, a member of the organizing group for Japan's first march in support of lesbian rights and lesbian pride, told *The Age* magazine, of Melbourne, Australia, that a boisterous march through a Tokyo shopping district last October was the first step in a campaign to address lesbian invisibility: “I have told my boss that I am a lesbian and I have not received any reaction from him. I think this is because he probably doesn't understand what it means.” About 300 women and children draped in rainbow flags, some dressed in dark blue “salary man” suits, marched at midday to the music of k.d. lang.

**Shannon Miller**, the oh so intense coach of our national women's hockey team and—like who's surprised?—the target of malicious rumours in the press about an “improper relationship” with one of her players, tackled the issue head on at Nagano, as did Canadian Hockey official Bob



# the lesbian & gay press, and queer cyberspace

Nicholson who told reporters that the allegation had been investigated and dismissed as having "no substance". He added: "We took it one step further. We met with the team and talked about it, and talked with each individual player.... From where we stand, it's not important whether they're straight or gay or whatever. We want to make sure that they can play hockey." As for Miller, the only woman head coach of the six teams at the Olympics — didn't she look fabulous behind the bench in black, head to toe? — the *San Francisco Examiner* reported that she "does not discuss her own sexual orientation," considering it a private matter. But Miller acknowledged that the allegation was upsetting, at first, and now "we just kill ourselves laughing about it.... This is so far from the truth, but those who don't know [the player] or me, don't know that." Interviewed after the team's heartbreaking loss in the gold medal game, she said: "Are there some gay women on our hockey team? Yes, there are. Do the straight women care? No, they don't. Is it an issue on our team? No, it's not. Our team is really open and really honest...and we're better and stronger because of it."

**Pat Griffin**, author of the forthcoming book *Strong Women, Deep Closets: Lesbians and Homophobia in Sports*, doesn't see that kind of openness coming to the Women's National Basketball Association, where the halftime Forum

Club at the Los Angeles home court of the LA Sparks is like any other smoky lesbian bar. Lesbians are everywhere—in the stands and on the court—at WNBA games, and throughout the American Basketball League (which debuted women's professional basketball in October 1996 but lost its marketing niche the next year when the boys backed the WNBA with big money). But dykes don't fit the star-driven image of the WNBA, where the message is: you can be straight and feminine and a great basketball player. "It's much more OK to be a woman athlete now but no more OK to be a lesbian publicly," Griffin told *The Advocate* (Dec. 9/97). "Heterosexual women athletes now talk about how they won't be intimidated by homophobia, but you don't hear from the lesbian players." The good news, however, is that ads are appearing in lesbian publications, promoting ABL teams, and the league's newest entry, the Long Beach StingRays, is actively courting dyke fans. "When I'm describing fans I say they are kids and women," the StingRays' general manager, Bill McGillis, told *Curve* (January/98). "I think a lot of women with children are a big part of it. I think lesbians are a big part of it. We've found a lot of lesbian women are women's basketball fans, and we recognize and appreciate that." Both articles are recommended, if you're want to know more about what *Curve* dubs as the tradition of "dolling up" women athletes.

**Ellen**—what would a column be without Ellen? Now, really, what was she thinking when Vanity Fair came to call (November/97 full page photo)? Those stockings! That cigarette!? Perhaps Ellen needs a holiday. In any case, she's about to get one. Still no word from ABC on whether the show will be canceled or renewed, but the sitcom is scheduled for a six-week hiatus (starting March 11th) so the network can run a new comedy—try not to gag—called *Two Guys, A Girl and A Pizza Place*.

- BY MARY LASOVICH

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## LITTLE LEZZIE FLASHES

Reading the Vancouver Sun in the bath can be hazardous to one's health, but good for what ails yah. Consider the story re the early legislative years when reporters covered more than question period: Socred **Agnes Kripps** tried to persuade the government to ban the word "sex" from the B.C. lexicon. As astounded MLAs gasped slack-jawed, reports the Sun, Kripps proposed a new term for the procreational act: BOLT. The word, she explained, was an acronym for Biology of Living for Today. I'm bolt upright just listening to you," shouted a New Democrat. "It's okay for the bolts, but what about the nuts?" cried a Socred. As the house erupted in laughter, a red-faced Kripps shouted over the

cat calls: "Mr. Speaker won't you please bang that thing of yours on the table?" Thanks to the Sun for sending me down the plug hole. On a more upbeat note, despite the fact that the legislature holds about as much interest for me as pig farming, **Helen Durie** sent me this note: Did you hear the news that the BC Family Relations Act was amended to provide same-sex couples with the same rights as het couples? Well, I didn't... This business of men and women and men vs women. hit This Hour has 22 Minutes. **Cathy Jones** as a lesbian suggested we keep the best of men in the freezer until we need them. There is definitely something in the ethers here... hummmm... On a lighter note, **Anne Richmond** made my Valentine's Day. We were taking a breath after dancing with our respective partners (dance partners, that is) at Musaic's totally wonderful concert and dance, when Anne asked me to feel her thigh. Well, ask me twice! Seems Anne has been training for the ½ marathon (she's been accepted, too) in the Gay Games in Amsterdam. She runs 10Ks three times a week, has lost ½ an inch of body fat and feels marvelous. I can prove it!... As usual, the best line of the evening has to be **Lee Porteous'** who remarked during the tango demo danced by **Lillianna Kleiner** and **Deborah Cook**, "I don't want to dance like that, I want to look like that dancing"... joined **Nikki Tate-Stratton** and daughter **Dani** and some other

glorious women for a mask workshop at La Run Theatre. To finish my mask I added hair and a thin moustache made from **Basil** the poodle's clippings. When I expressed gratitude to Basil, she remarked: "Our entire household is devoted to the arts." So if you were ever wondering about the state of the arts...?... Staying with art and our most oft published writer (in the active lesbian community) **Nikki's** third book is off to the printer, reports publisher **Diane Morriss** who heads up Sono Nis. Diane and marketing expert **Chris Joy** are celebrating a release schedule of eight new books and a reprint of three others. So if you here much singing from the Blanshard Street offices.... We'll do more on this venture next issue... **Emma Joy Crone** turned 70 in January. No weather to celebrate in, she avers, so she is having a party to celebrate April 25/26. The two-day event on Hornby Island is open to all. Bring poetry, musical instruments and be ready to share. Or just enjoy. Call her (250)335-0753 or write to RR1 Hornby island. The new address will be sent back. BMcL

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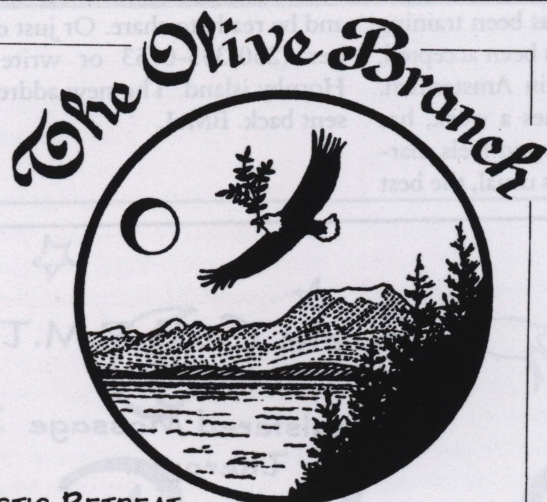
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADS AND SER-

Please mail items to us at P.O. Box 5339, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4. Or Call Barbara 598-6490. Deadline for submissions is the **first** of month prior to publication. Classified ads are \$5. first 25 words and .50/word thereafter. Community notes etc. no charge unless money for service involved.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR RENT:** Lesbian to share three-bedroom n/s house with two other dykes on quiet dead-end street. Own room for \$395. Avail immed. Call Jennie, 479-3423.

**SPINTSTERVALE IN COOMBS:** offers rustic cabins at \$7.50 per woman per nite, larger cabin sleeps 4 to 6. \$30 per weekend. Inquire about farm-hand position or work exchange. (3-hrs per day equals room and board. Call (250) 248-8809. E-mail Sunshine@macn.bc.ca

**HOUSE FOR RENT:** in Port Renfrew village West Coast of VI. Stones throw to the ocean. Available by day, week, or month. Reasonable. Call (250)382-6686.

**SKY RANCH:** Lesbian farmer on 140-acre ranch offers BC women guests "working" holidays. (not too much work). For company and help I offer free room and board. I have two guest rooms in comfortable old farmhouse. Sky Ranch is 100 km from Burns Lake, near the northern boundary of Tweedsmuir Park. Also seek land partners. Write Judith Quinlan, Sky Ranch, C4 S20 RR2, Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0. (250) 694-3738.

## COMMUNITY NOTES & HAPPENINGS

**READINGS:** Channeled through Ascended Masters. Relationships, personal growth, health matters, metaphysical subjects. In person or via mail. Quill (250) 658-3653. Mail to LNews.

**MAGICAL ART GROUP FOR WOMEN:** drawing class with a twist evenings or weekends at the G-Spot. Includes some outdoor, some art therapy. Eight to 10 lessons for \$100. Call the G-Spot for info and to register.

**TAROT READINGS:** Puzzled by

your girl's behaviour? Questioning your current job? Ask the cards and Melissa will translate at the G-Spot most Wednesday mornings at coffee time. Adds a new dimension to your morning coffee. \$10 To confirm she's there, call 598-6490.

**SAILING:** buddies & info re Pacific Rim Yachting Club. Wendy (250) 388-4317.

**OVER 60s:** New to town, or long-term resident and 50 or 60 plus? Come out and meet the community of older women for social contact. Phone Margaret (250) 384-6568.

**BALLROOM DANCE LESSONS:** 10, 11/2 hour lessons for \$50 Thursday nights. Max 20 students. Call Margaret 384-6568

**DANCE!:** Fairfield Community Place (behind James Douglas School) April 4 at 8 p.m. \$10. Fund Raiser for Seniors Care Society. Tickets at Munros, Sidney Scooters on Fort Street and committee members.

**FREE WORKSHOPS:** Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre offers regular workshops for female survivors of sexual violence. Workshops follow a psycho educational format, are facilitated by professional counselors and are two to 3 hours in length. March 16, 6-8 p.m. Anger; March 30, 2 to 4 p.m. Anger; April 20, 6 to 8 p.m. Personal Boundaries; May 4, 2 to 4 p.m. Personal Boundaries; May 25, 6 to 9 p.m. Dealing with Panic and Anxiety. Call 383-3232 for information and to register. Space limited.

**DYKE CAMPOUT:** Yeah! May 15-18 Ruckles,

Salt Spring Island. \$12 before end of April, \$15 after or on site. Sliding scale, some free ferry; children free. Call Margot to register (250) 480-5228.

**QUEER ART SHOW:** Victoria Lesbian Art Collective presents Queer Art '98, a visual art show held during Pride Week in July. Open to all queers of Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands. Deadline for submissions June 1, 1998. Registration forms and info at Martin Batchelor Gallery, 712 Cormorant St., Victoria, BC. Info Rebecca 386-2550, Margot 380-6617, Eva 385-3399.

**PGWSL:** Provincial Government Women's Softball League. Call for Players. Season starts soon. All women welcome. Contact your team or call Dor L. Gibson 381-5581.

**PGWSL STEELERS:** Call for Players. Hey, we're happening! Spring training starts real soon, so call now. Every woman welcome. Contact Chantal 388-5749 or Anne 382-2316.

**PGWSL STEELERS:** are looking for a team sponsor. We'll be proud to represent you. Contact Morag 388-4449.

**The Victoria Status of Women Action Group:** Services available include: free use of computers, an extensive resource library; lots of info on local events and organizations that work with and for women. VSWAG is here for

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all women Monday through Friday, 9:30 to 1:30. Call 383-7322. 130-645 Fort St. Victoria. (Yarrows Bldg). Email swag@pacificcoast.net Fax 388-0100

**WISEWOMAN:** Friendship group for women over 40 at G-Spot last Saturday every month 7 to 10 p.m. Call the Spot for details. 382-7768.

**PINKLINE VOLUNTERS:** Develop some helping skills and volunteer for a good cause. 920-6121.

## COMING OUT DISCUSSION

**GROUP:** Meet other women in similar situations to learn about ourselves, our sexuality and lesbian culture in a safe, supportive

## SERVICES ACTIVITIES CONTACTS

atmosphere. Call Tanya 382-5868 or Kathryn 592-9356.

**Dykes Bilingual:** Meet at the G-Spot. Jenn 652-7072.

**Dyke basketball:** Jahnnett 380-6617

**Dyke Dimensions Radio Show:** Mondays 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. FM CFUV 104.3 Cable FM 101.9

**Gay & Lesbian Parenting Group:** Natasha at 384-6252

**G-Spot Writing Group:** Nikki at 658-5448 email Nikki@fnamerica.com

**Lesbian Art Collective:** Rebecca 386-2550.

**Lesbian French Club:** Meets G-Spot. Call Jenn 652-7072. \$2 cover non-mbrs.

**LNews:** P.O. Box 5339, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4. Barbara 598-6490

**Musaic:** Lesbian & Gay Choir. Daphne 480-0024.

**Pink Line:** Gay & Lesbian Info and Peer Counseling, 920-6121 Tues-Sat. 7-10


**Pink Umbrella:** fax/phone 727-6669

**P-Flag:** Information, 642-5171.

**Some Very Nice Dykes:** Lesbian social club for newcomers. Mary 595-6997

**Writers Club** meets  
1st and 3rd  
Thursdays at G-Spot  
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## FOR THE CHILDREN OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND THE CHILDREN OUR SUBSCRIBERS LOVE

**Danielle Tate-Stratton and Kristen Hopper** have started a story-telling and poetry reading group which meets the first Friday of every month at La Run Theatre and Arts Club.

Children up to age 13 tell stories from books, stories they have memorized, or poems they have written or poems they have loved in books. We ask that there be no stories about ghosts, murders or yourself.

Parents are invited to listen. They must not tell.

**There is a membership fee of \$1 per child attending. Parents and children may have a family membership of \$5.**

Remember grownups are allowed to come and listen. But they must not tell.

The story telling **dates** are: April 3, May 1, June 5

**Time:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Please **call** Barbara McLauchlin 598-6490 to reserve a spot. Seating is limited.

**Place:** La Run Theatre 1983 Fairfield Road.

Roommate to share large 2 Bedroom Character House in Fairfield for May 1<sup>st</sup>. Includes washer dryer is cat friendly, non-smoking, garden, parking.  
Call 388-4449

Finally, Sue is looking for work. She'll check in with me. Available for cash jobs. House clean, cutting grass and whatever you have in mind. Call 598-6490 and I'll get the message to Sue.



