

and that it must be vast, so that the people may find entertainment and nourishment, and so that the truly great works have a medium in which to be sustained. She pointed out that the role periodicals play is to develop the authors of that literature, by providing rich and varied collections of creations in many forms. Many lesbians who first appeared in *Common Lives/Lesbian Lives* now have published books, and surely many more will. When you pick up a lesbian book or anthology, just notice how many credit *CL/LL* as first publisher.

Still, this quarterly is for the common lesbian. That is why every manuscript and every copyable artwork submitted to *CL/LL* is copied and sent to the Lesbian Herstory Archives in New York City, where it is preserved in the *Common Lives/Lesbian Lives* Special Collection.

Fights and the Future

That last paragraph was supposed to be the end, but I haven't talked about a bunch of things—which is bound to be the case. Fights and the future seem to be the most glaring omissions. We didn't have a lot of fights, especially after we made a rule that lovers couldn't serve on the collective at the same time. Also, we learned that it's really important for a group to measure the energy it puts into dealing with detractors (as opposed to principled critics), because no matter what you do somebody isn't going to like it, which doesn't mean you shouldn't do it. Most of the times we were criticized we dealt with it in the magazine, apologizing as responsibly as we could for the errors we were bound to make.

As for the future, I've been away from the workings of *CL/LL* for three years, so I don't know the current collective's goals, other than what is always stated on the first page. But what I think is that it's *always* a miracle that our literature and art get published. Lesbian publishing is a fragile enterprise that a very small disaster could derail—especially because lesbians no longer own our own printing presses.²²

22. Though lesbian publishers may use the word Press in their names, they do not actually print books themselves, but hire printing companies to do so.