

AKHÉ

SPRING 1993
VOL. 5, NO. 1
\$4

A JOURNAL FOR LESBIANS OF AFRICAN DESCENT

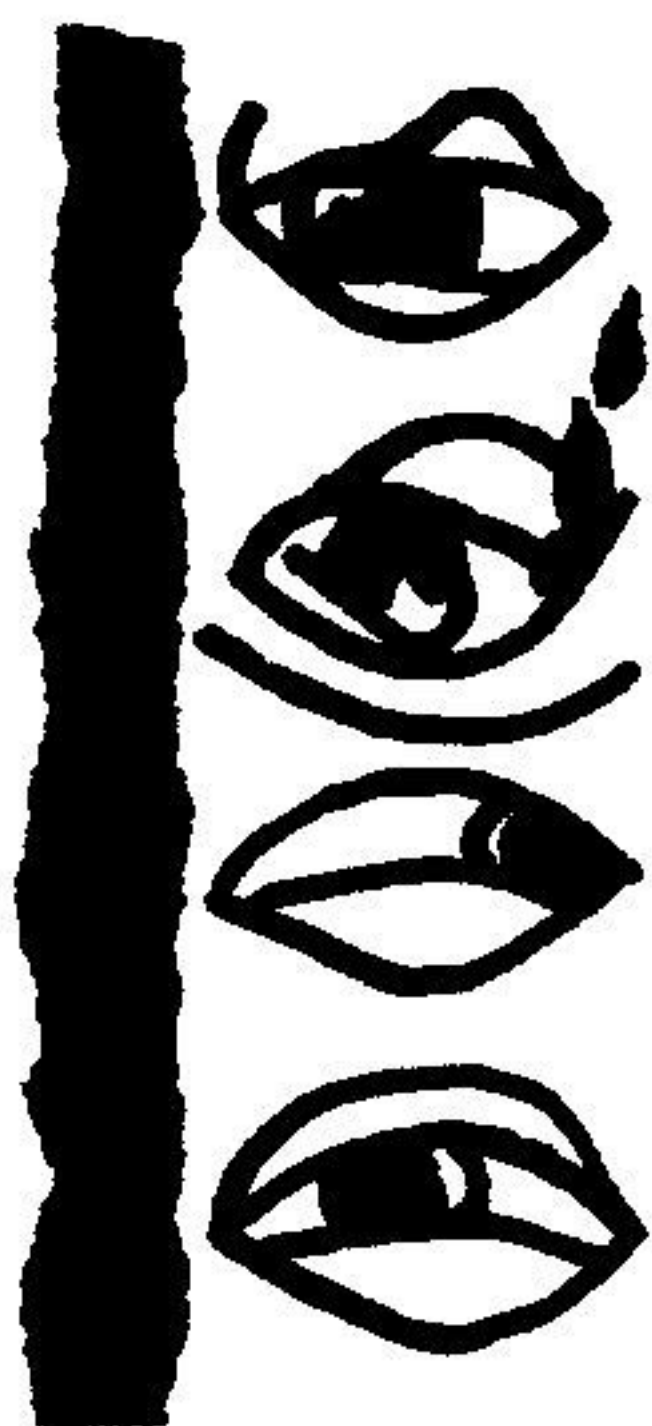


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SPRING 1993
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ACHÉ EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Aché is a quarterly publication by lesbians of African descent for the benefit of all black women. The journal serves to reflect and celebrate the wide spectrum of our experiences. We are committed to open and critical dialogue about the issues affecting our lives, but Aché will not print anything that is oppressive or demeaning to us as lesbians of African descent. We especially encourage submissions from women who have never been published. The editors will work with all contributors to ensure that the final published text has been mutually agreed upon.

The appearance of names or images in this publication does not indicate the sexual orientation of the person or persons.

ACHÉ SUBMISSION POLICY

The deadline for submissions is the first Monday two months prior to publication. Neatly handwritten, typed materials, and 3.5" Macintosh disks using MacWrite, or Microsoft Word are accepted. Include name, address and phone number on all submissions as well as a biographical statement no longer than 20 words. Please specify if you would not like your full name reproduced in Aché. Please do not submit originals, we do not have the resources to return them.

ACHÉ PROJECT PAGE

FROM THE 1993 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We made it!! The Board of Directors has just completed its first year. Even though we are in need of development; many successful activities occurred despite our obstacles. There's a new board in place for 1993 and our focus is the same...we must survive!

Our goal to become more visible as lesbians of African descent, is becoming reality right before our eyes. The journal is widely distributed to major universities such as Harvard and Cornell; and we recently received a letter from the Stonewall Library & Archives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, informing us that copies of Aché are on display and have been added to their permanent collection on gay and lesbian history.

We realize that a lot is expected from Aché and we want to meet those expectations. So, we're doing a lot of trouble shooting in the next few months. If you have had problems with your subscription (regardless of how long ago) or you need to air out your frustrations, or tell us thank you then PLEASE call us and we GUARANTEE a return call within 24 hours. Hearing from our supporters as often as possible is important to us; so this year we are dedicated to responding to you quickly.

Another resolution for Aché is to make the office space more functional and cost effective. To meet that goal, the upstairs office is available for rent at \$200 including utilities. What a deal, especially since we only use the office two to three times a month. Also, the downstairs office space is available for meetings, small conferences, discussion groups, and receptions at a low, reasonable rate.

Finally, we are embarking on a major subscription and donation campaign. Donations are funds given to us as gifts and are used for general operating costs such as rent, utilities, postage for correspondence, etc. Subscription fees, \$15-25 a year, are used to defray the costs of designing, printing and mailing the journal. Please designate the funds you send to us as donation or subscription. Hope to hear from you.

THE ACHÉ
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ACHÉ WISH LIST

file cabinets ♦ laserprinter ♦ fax machine ♦ copy machine

We're looking for sisters to volunteer a few hours a month to help fill the following positions: Desktop publisher ♦ Event organizer ♦ Fundraiser ♦ Grant Writer ♦ Graphic Artist ♦ Office Manager ♦ Publicist/PR

AUDRE LORDE



Photo by Jean Weisinger

1934-1992

By Barbara Smith

The first thing is the writing. That was what mattered to her most. Audre was one of the most gifted writers of our generation, not just in this country, but the world. Since childhood she'd worked to hone her craft to a point of absolute precision, to create a uniquely beautiful and always identifiable voice. She succeeded. The woman could really write.

The despicable irony is that because she also always insisted upon telling the truth with her words, to reveal, as she would say, the texture of what it meant to be a "Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, woman," Audre's writing, for all the honors it received, never got the full recognition it deserved.

We had a lifetime conversation about the ostracism that she and all Black lesbians and gay men face when we have the courage to come out and to name homophobia as the political issue it is. Those con-

versations were always angry, often sardonic, and sometimes the tears were just beneath the surface. Here was a woman who was born and raised in Harlem, who incorporated African cultures into her life and art long before the term Afrocentric even existed, and who challenged racism *wherever* she found it, who was still a "sister outsider" in relationship to the Black cultural and political establishment because she had the integrity to say out loud and in print that she loved women.

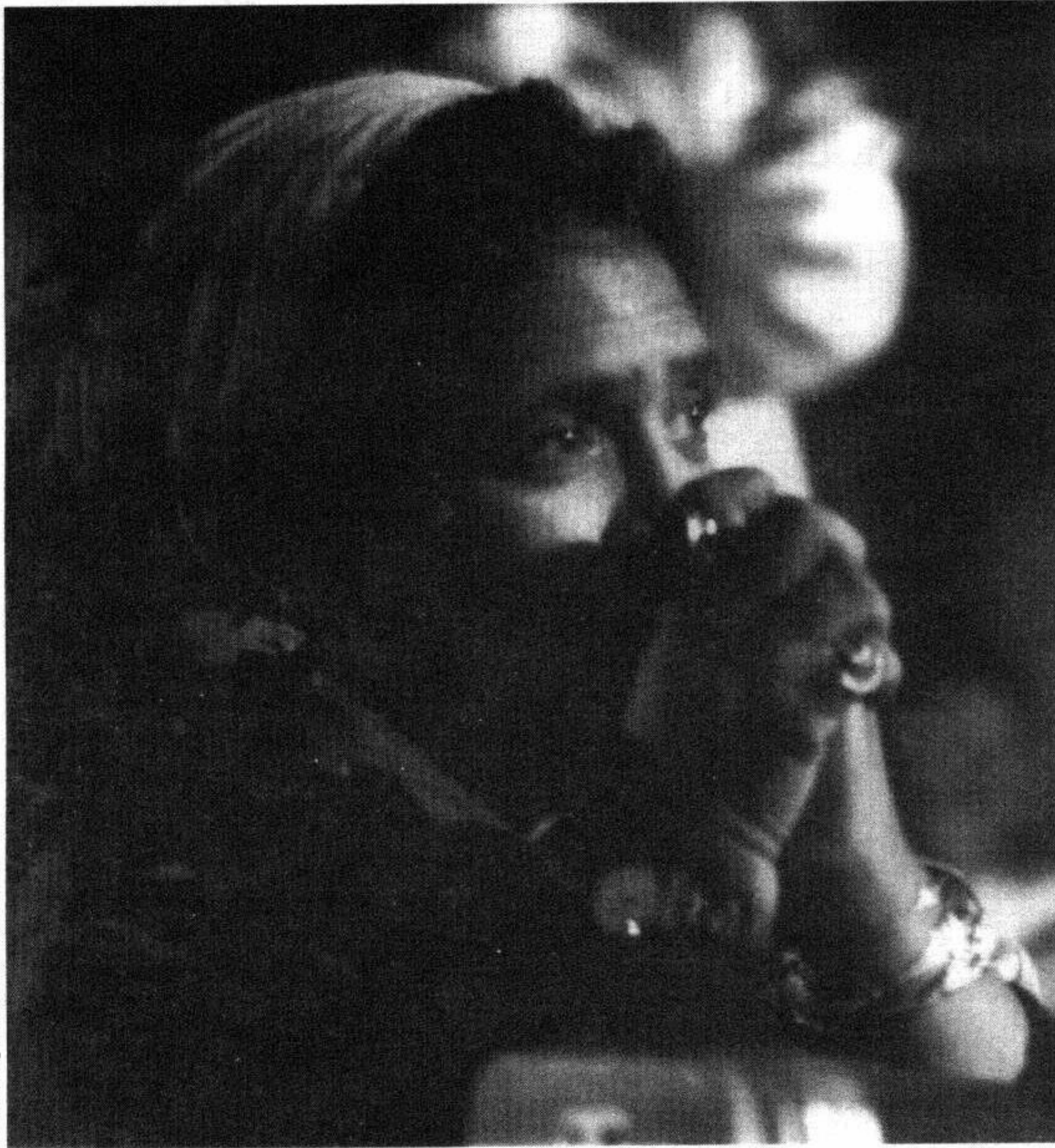


Photo by Jean Weisinger

Audre was the author of ten books of poetry and four books of prose. *A Burst of Light* won an American Book Award in 1989. *From a Land Where Other People Live* was nominated for a National Book Award in 1973, and in 1991 she was chosen the New York State Poet. Trained as a librarian, she began teaching at John Jay College in the 1960's and then held the Thomas Hunter Chair at Hunter College from 1981-1986.

Audre was never satisfied merely to build a brilliant career, however, because in tandem with her art she was equally committed to freedom. Audre understood that in order for her work as an African American woman, a lesbian, a feminist, to make any sense at all she had to do something to alter the actual political context in which that writing would be read. This was the understanding that led her to co-

found SISA: Sisterhood in Support of Sisters in South Africa and *Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press*. This was what motivated her, even when she was in Berlin this summer to get alternative cancer treatment, to write a letter to Helmut Kohl protesting racist violence against "immigrants" who happen to be people of color. She was the kind of artist, of which there are fewer and fewer, who took political responsibility for using her gifts to bring about revolutionary change.

Meeting Audre in 1976 undoubtedly changed my life. As a graduate student who was teaching myself Black literature, who was trying to carve out a space for Black women writers, who named myself a Black feminist when the term was considered an anathema, and who had recently come out as a Black lesbian, which insured parish status even more certainly that it

does today, meeting Audre changed my life.

One of Audre's gifts to me was what she wrote and said about feelings, how essential it is to explore, acknowledge, and use not only emotions, but intuition, and spiritual insights to create art, a movement, a world so different from anything that white/male constructs have been able to conceive. She knew that a politic that only addressed issues from the neck up, no matter how theoretically "correct," would never work to liberate women of color, the world's majority.

Undoubtedly it was her ability to name her feelings, to nurture and reveal her soul which helped her to survive and flourish for so long. She battled breast cancer for fourteen years. She dealt with it like every other challenge in her life: wrote about it, made herself an expert on it, and used it to expand not just her own, but many other's understandings. She beat back death so many times that we sometimes thought she'd outsmarted it once and for all. Now that she's gone we have her words:

I trace the curve of your jaw
with a lover's finger
knowing the hardest battle
is only the first
how to do what we need for our
living
with honor and in love
we have chosen each other
and the edge of each other's bat-
tles
the war is the same
if we lose
someday women's blood will congeal
upon a dead planet
if we win
there is no telling

From "Outlines," *Our Dead Behind Us*, New York: W.W. Norton, c. 1986, p. 13.

Barbara Smith is a co-founder and publisher of Kitchen Table Press; the only Women of Color press in North America. She is also co-founder of Revolutionary Sisters of Color, which is a multi-racial, anti-racism progressive activist group.

With Audre's passing, memorials were held in Boston, New York and San Francisco and all across the country women and men gathered to celebrate her life and work. However, Audre's reach extended far beyond the U.S. Yvonne Kettels and Yara-Colette Lemke Muñiz de Faria, who were able to attend the memorial held November 29th at Modern Times Bookstore in San Francisco, brought with them a eulogy for Audre from our Afro-German sisters.

A EULOGY FOR AUDRE LORDE FROM AFRO-GERMAN WOMEN

YARA: It is an honor for me to be here tonight, to celebrate the life and work of Audre Lorde; and I am especially

happy that this memorial is, among others, organized by Aché.

The first time I met Audre was some years ago after one of her powerful speeches in Berlin. We were seated opposite each other in a restaurant, sharing a big plate of fish, talking about Yemanha and cowry shells.

It was then that she told me about Aché and her dream of it coming together with its German sistah-journal, Afrekete; her dream of a coming together of Black Americans and [Black] Germans. Though her dream has not yet come true, a start has been made, otherwise we would not all be here together tonight, to honor and celebrate Audre Lorde.

YVONNE: I recall the first time I met you—about five years ago—in Berlin at a breakfast gathering for sisters and brothers. We were so few.

Back then I wasn't able to speak to you because my English wasn't developed enough. I guess I was too shy. But we communicated anyway with our hands and feet, connecting as sisters. I wonder how many of you here in the U.S. realize what a great influence Audre had on us, the Afro-German women/lesbians and brothers. Did you know that there were strong connections between Audre and Germany?

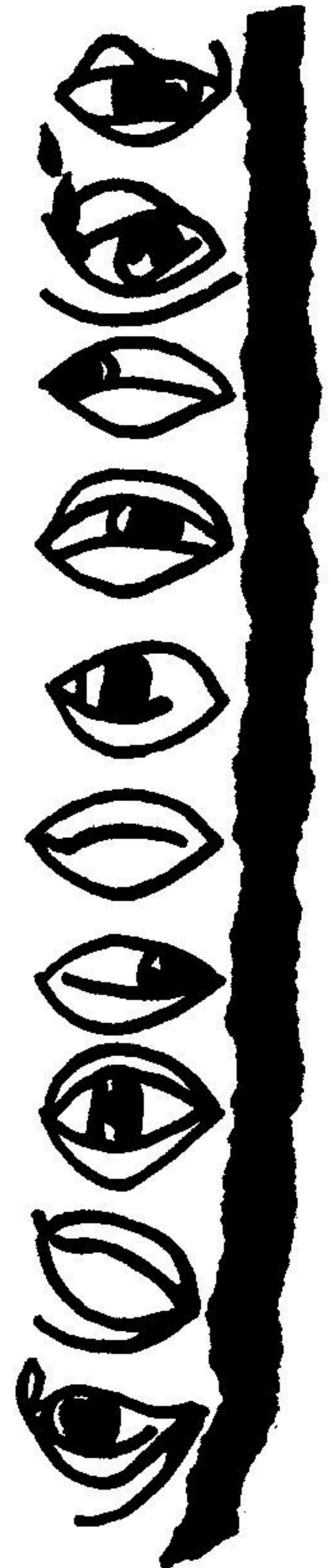
She was the light in our eyes, rising like the sun, giving warmth and love, sharing her world, her experience, her knowledge, incomparable, unforgettable, strong.

Audre Lorde, the great Black poet and feminist, is dead. Her death hit us hard, even though we knew about her health situation. It is difficult to describe in words what Audre meant for us, Afro-German, Black women/lesbians....And what she will mean to us way beyond her death.

She was our sister, mother, companion in

struggle. She brought us on our way. With her inspiring power and love she gave us faith and courage to move out of our isolation, to come together and fight against racism, sexism, and homophobia.

She led us toward our self-confidence, taught us to use our own experiences and skills to make change happen. Her engagement for Black women worldwide and her encour-



agement to write and publish a book about ourselves, which turned out to be *Farbe Bekennen (Showing Our Colours)*, changed our lives. Audre Lorde brought us Afro-German, Black women/lesbians and men together. She helped us to articulate our oppression so we could fight it.

Audre believed in our growing power, in the power of formerly silent Afro-German women and men, young and old, to create and unite change countrywide. In our power to bring about international change with other Afro-Europeans, Afro-Asians and Afro-Americans—all the people the world didn't hear much of. Her life's work is a bequest to us.

Some of us met Audre at events or in private conversations. Her strong personality and voice gave us the power to demand our rights and dignity in this society. Her death is a great loss. But especially in these times of increasingly violent racism in Germany, she will continue to give us courage and faith to move on.

To honor Audre Lorde and her life's work, the Afro-German women in Munich will name their community center after her biomythography, *Zami*.

We also want, at this time, to acknowledge her friend, companion and lover, Gloria I. Joseph who was also very important within the Black German movement, and Audre's children Beth and Jonathan. We want to thank them for their support, because they had to do without Audre a lot when she was with us.

With all the things Audre left for us we will continue fighting along with all people, who want to create a future together. We want to end with the words Audre gave us in her preface of *Farbe bekennen (Showing Our Colours)*:

"Women of minorities, companions in struggle.... We are greeting you!"

May Ayim, Katharina Oguntoye, Ajoke Sobanjo, Guy St. Luis, Kim Everett, Ina Roder, Peggy, Peppa Gabriel, Aberna Adomako, Muna El-Khawad, Elisabeth Abraham, Elke Jank, Eva V. Pirch, Ria Cheato, Judy Gummich, Jasmin, Gabriela Willbold, Tina Camp, Ika Huegel, Helga Emde, Marion Kraft, Katja Kinder, Zariama Harat, Patricia Saad, Nicola Laure Al-Samarai, Farida Corinna, Mariam Gottbrath, Sarah Schmier, Natalie Asfaha, Yvonne Kettels, and Yara-Colette Lemke Muñiz de Faria.

Showing Our Colours: Afro-German Women Speak Out, edited by Mary Opitz, Katharina Oguntoye and Dagmar Schultz, translated by Anne V. Adams. Foreword by Audre Lorde. \$13.95 pb, University of Massachusetts Press, 0-87023-760-8.

AUDRE

I will miss your physical body,
though I have never seen you in person.
Just knowing that you were somewhere sharing
the lull of
humming bees on lazy
summer afternoons,
or watching sunsets and moon risings
with me
was comfort.

Your strong voice
will no longer be raised
in auditoriums to eager ears
but your words
continue to ring loud and pregnant
in lecture halls, at dinner, among friends
and enemies alike.

I miss you.

You always tottered on precipices
thin as wire,
threatening to slice you



LORDE

into pieces,
wanting to cut your tongue,
shut you up,
but you stood fast
and learned to balance your weight,
carry some of mine.

You knew
I needed your help.
You told me to break my silences,
confront my perpetrators,
to look at my beautiful self
and feel who I am
You said, "I feel, therefore I am."
I am, Audre. I am.

You told me that Poetry is Not a Luxury
that my poems are stories that must be
told,
testimonies to the living,
marked by those who are already dead,
weapons on the front lines,
necessary as daily bread.

You taught me
not to be quiet,
to expel my rage
not to betray myself
for I would not survive,
was not meant to.
You taught me to trust myself,
Risk loving who I am.
This is frightening,
Yet, in my vulnerability I am
strengthened to
Face "eye to eye" myself and fear
that would make my tongue mute and
my pen silent
in this struggle against dehumanization,
erasure.
Even in your death,
You speak truth.

You did your work.
Black woman, poet, teacher, mother,
lesbian,
and invited me to do mine.
I will follow your example,
take the baton
and pass it on.

—Ekua Omosupe

Establishing Fund in the Memory of Audre Lorde

Feminist publishers and bookstores are invited to establish a memorial scholarship fund in the name of feminist-lesbian, Afro-Caribbean writer, Audre Lorde. Lorde, whose recent death demands a memorial to her legacy of activism, participation, commitment, and courage, was determined to empower any sister she could with a personal word, a letter, a poem, and through her appearances, speeches, and books. Her poetry, prose, and fiction speak to the potency of the written word, and the necessity for encouragement and support of the women writers she left to continue the work. The award will honor her memory and her commitment to the above effort.

Prospective Contributors to Fund

Each publisher or bookstore interested in participating is asked to contact Dr. SDiane Bogus at Woman in the Moon Publications who will coordinate the effort, and to suggest guidelines for the funding. It is hoped that each publisher and bookstore will be willing to give \$25-\$100 annually, beginning January 1993 toward the establishment and maintenance of a Memorial Writing Fund for feminist-lesbian writers, especially those of color or of invisible ethnicity. Funds would be deposited with an established funding organization (to be named later) in the name of Audre Lorde, and this organization would receive the funds from the participants.

Fund as Resource to Lesbian-Feminist Writers

Ideally, writers needing assistance for a given writing project would be able to apply for a scholarship to the limit of the available funds each year. It is suggested that application restrictions be limited, applications be simplified, and grants be accessible during a period that includes Lorde's birth or transition day. Details can be worked out between the Woman in the Moon, participating publishers, and the granting agency under whose auspices the fund will reside.



For further information contact Woman in the Moon Publications, 10203 Parkwood Drive #7, Cupertino, CA. 95014-1466, (408) 253-3329 FAX (408) 257-5683.

To My Sister Readers of ACHÉ

This letter is in response to all of you who wrote, visualized, lit candles, cooked kallaloo, danced, sang, worked, and prayed — sending me light, energy, love, and other contributions by air, sea, phone, moon, wind, and elevator — during my recent battle with the cancer in my liver. To each one of you I send my heartfelt thanks for the help and support that has been so meaningful to me and to my healing. Although each one of our lives is unalterably our own and each one of us is ultimately responsible for that life. I sometimes feel as if my survival is a corporate effort. We are, each one of us, intricately woven into the others' existence.

It is gratifying to remember that there are still ways available to us by which we can make our most intense desires and good wishes tangibly felt.

In the dim of a hospital on the east side of Manhattan I felt you, from Dakar, Detroit, Elmira, Sandusky, Oakland, Minneapolis, Boston, and Dubuque; from Lubbock, Wolf Creek, Newark, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Grand Rapids and Berlin; from Fredriksted and Peter's Rest, from Portland, Calistoga, Haverhill, Hamtramck, East Patterson, and Winona; Stroudsburg, Odesa, Brooklyn, Wakima, Newburgh,

St. Johnsbury, Great Neck and Oswego—
as well as all the other places
from which messages arrived—
I heard you.

It is deeply reassuring to know the work is being used. "The group we started is still working in our schools," you write. And I know it is your tongue, your muscle, your determination to make what you believe felt, that makes — not only healing words — but the vision, also, come alive in classrooms, factories, churches, kitchens, offices. It is your determination to become who you most wish to be that makes us all stronger.

The advent and growth of ACHÉ, and the determi-

nation and hard work of the women who keep it in being, represent a telling example.

No matter where or how we choose to work, we can inform the product with who we are and with what we truly believe.

This is not a simple time, nor a time for simple words. As a species we have conducted ourselves in such a way that the very air we breathe and the sun which warms us threatens to turn against us. The streets of every city in this country are cobbled with this society's errors, with throw-away human beings, with despised and ignored children. When a country we are part of still spends more per minute on armaments than to feed starving children (yet we are supposed to be at peace), it is easy to be overwhelmed by the power of the forces aligned against what is most human. It is easy for those of us who are truly open to the state of the world around us to give in to despair. But that is like accepting death as a solution, rather than a stage.

What does it mean to be a survivor? How do we put the lessons learned through our survival into practice in our lives? Right now, I know I must continue to fight specific battles, personal, physical, political, spiritual, and I also know those battles are worthwhile. Those battles did not begin with me, nor will they end with me, but what I do, and my piece in them, is essential. If every woman who wished for my well-being takes that passion and energy and love into the struggle for clean air, better schools, decent health care, the right to die, to bear or not bear—if each one takes into her daily work for survival and change, then our children's future will be that much more possible. Not guaranteed, but so so much more assured.

For the last 8 years I have been committed to the use of homeopathic immunosupportive therapy to keep the metastasized breast cancer in my liver under control. When my liver failed in May, I made the decision for chemotherapy. I believe that decision, along with my previous 8 years of immunosupportive treatment saved my life.

Each one of us within our lives must take whatever is useful and use it for energy and survival, letting the rest go, schooling ourselves through scrutiny to recognize the difference.

Again, I thank you for your light and for your good work.

Audre Lorde

St. Croix, August 20, 1991



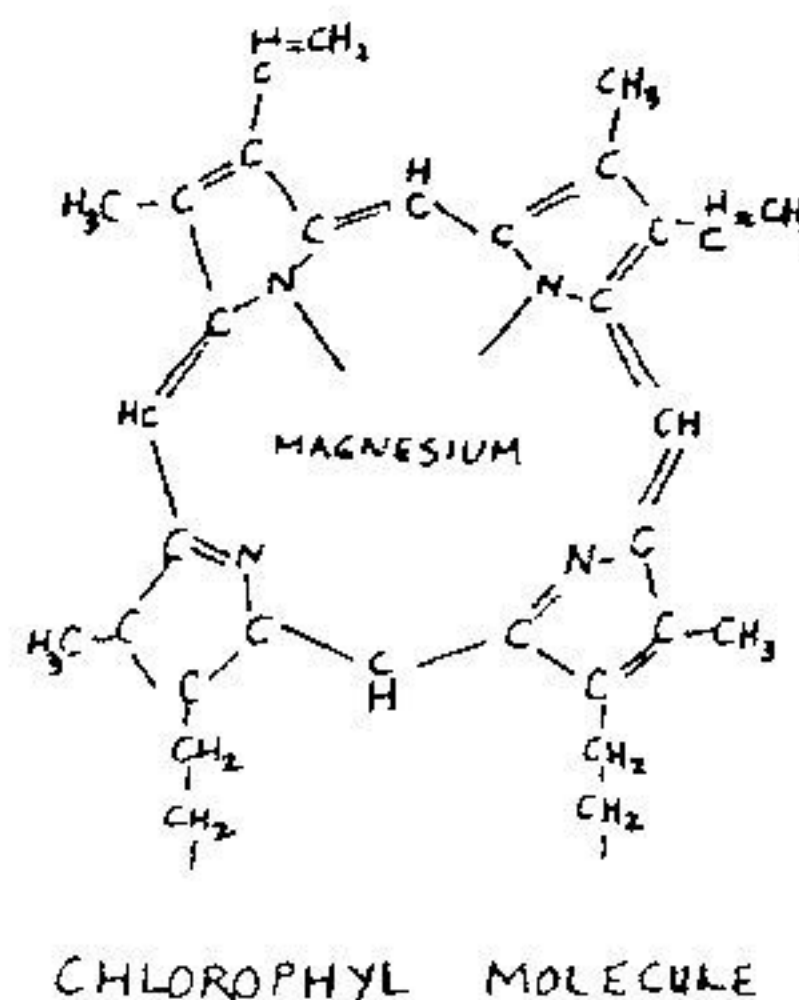
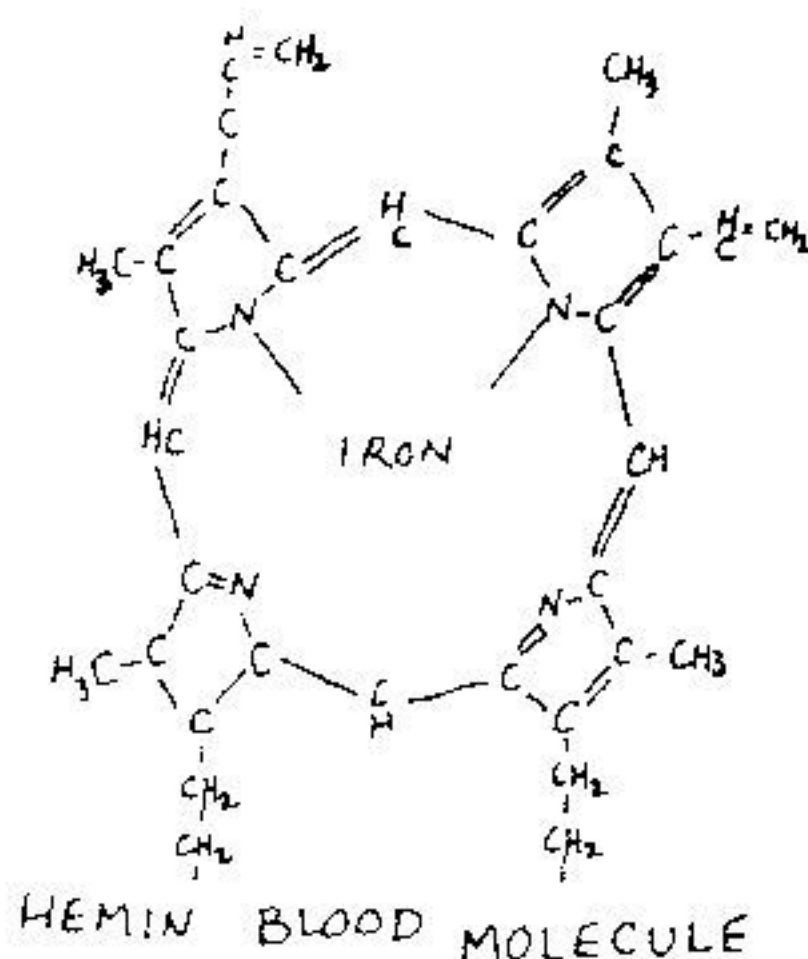
Wheatgrass

My hope is that my last sidebar about wheatgrass sparked your curiosity or skepticism and you have read Ann Wigmore's, *The Wheatgrass Book*. It excites me more to think that some of you have added the "green juice" to your wellness maintenance. In any event, let's get down to the roots about wheatgrass.

We all know what wheat is. It is used to make breads, crackers, etc. Wheat begins as a wheatberry. With proper care the berries become grass. It is the chlorophyll rich, first seven to ten inches of this grassy growth that will continue to redefine our views on healing, rejuvenation and health. Peak nutritional value of grass is reached on the day the first

joint begins to form. If a grass culm—a monocotyledonous stem—is not cut before this first joint forms, it will grow up again and again if . By the way, what appears to be a stem is really several leaves rolled together.

Chlorophyll is the green—sometimes purple—pigment in plants. Sunlight exposure is the key. Plant leaves convert solar energy to energy stored as green fiber and juice. Think of it as the "blood" of the plant. In fact, chlorophyll and hemoglobin—blood cell pigment—have molecular similarities. A chlorophyll molecule has magnesium as its central atom. Hemoglobin has iron as its central atom. That is where the differences end. The structure of these two molecules is virtually the same:



Studies involving anemia conclude that *raw* or unrefined chlorophyll is capable of converting to hemoglobin and more importantly, it is non toxic even in large doses. Even if you are not anemic, an increase of red blood cells improves circulation, cell oxygenation and repair, body cleansing and improved immunity to illnesses. Curative victories of

chlorophyll include: peritonitis, pyorrhea, ulcerated varicose veins, osteomyelitis, Vincent's angina, tuberculosis, cardiac disease, arteriosclerosis, topic ulcer, pilondal cyst and mental depression. These are but a few of the diseases or disorders successfully cured with chlorophyll based treatments. Researching laboratory studies and personal testimonies is very

awakening. Sources of such reading will follow.

Granted, chlorophyll juice may be extracted from many green plants. What makes "wheatgrass" so special? Let's look at some of our choices: barley (bitter), rye (dry), alfalfa grass (takes a long time to grow and has very long roots), rice (little juice), comfrey

(difficult to juice), spinach (high in oxalic acid), and celery (low in enzymes and chlorophyll). Wheatgrass has been chosen over other greens because it has all the desirable characteristics: it is a high chlorophyll, high vitamin, high enzyme, low protein, low mineral, and no starch food. Over one hundred elements, including all the known minerals, and aminos have been found in wheatgrass and is labeled a "super food."

Fifteen pounds of fresh wheatgrass is equivalent in nutritional value to 350 pounds of the choicest vegetables. In three days of sprouting, wheatberries double in weight. Much of the starch has converted to natural sugars, making it less mucus-forming. In four days of sprouting the Vitamin E content 300% and some to the B-complex increases from 20% to 600%.

V.E. Irons & Co., manufac-

turers of Green Life, offered a \$10,000 reward for any laboratory which could isolate a vitamin or any other nutrient essential to health, which is not found in fresh organic grass. That was 32 years ago and the reward is still available.

More on wheatgrass in the future. How should you take it—as juice, an implant, or enema? Can you grow your own? How about hydroponically.

Facts on cold and flu

It seems that this flu has touched just about everybody. Here's some healthful information:

Do you have a cold or flu? Here are the differences

Colds and flu are distinct and separate upper respiratory infections, triggered by different viruses. (Outdoor environment drafts, wetness, temperature changes, etc. do not cause either of these illnesses.) The flu is more serious, because it can spread to the lungs, and cause severe bronchitis or pneumonia. In the beginning stages the symptoms can be very similar. Both colds and flu begin when viruses - (that unlike bacteria, cannot reproduce outside the cells) - penetrate the body's protective barriers. Nose, eyes and mouth are usually the sites of invasion from cold viruses. The most likely target for the flu virus is the respiratory tract. Colds and flu respond to different treatments. The following symptomatic chart can help identify your particular condition and allow you to deal with it better.

A COLD PROFILE LOOKS LIKE THIS:

- Slow onset.
- No prostration.
- Rarely accompanied by fever and headache.
- Localized symptoms such as runny nose and sneezing.
- Mild fatigue and weakness as a result of body cleansing.
- Mild to moderate chest discomfort, usually with a hacking cough.
- Sore throat common.

A FLU PROFILE LOOKS LIKE THIS:

- Swift and severe onset.
- Early and prominent prostration with flushed, hot, moist skin.
- Usually accompanied by high (102°-104°) fever, headache and sore eyes.
- General symptoms like chills, depression and body aches.
- Extreme fatigue, sometimes lasting 2-3 weeks.
- Acute chest discomfort, with severe hacking cough.
- Sore throat occasionally.

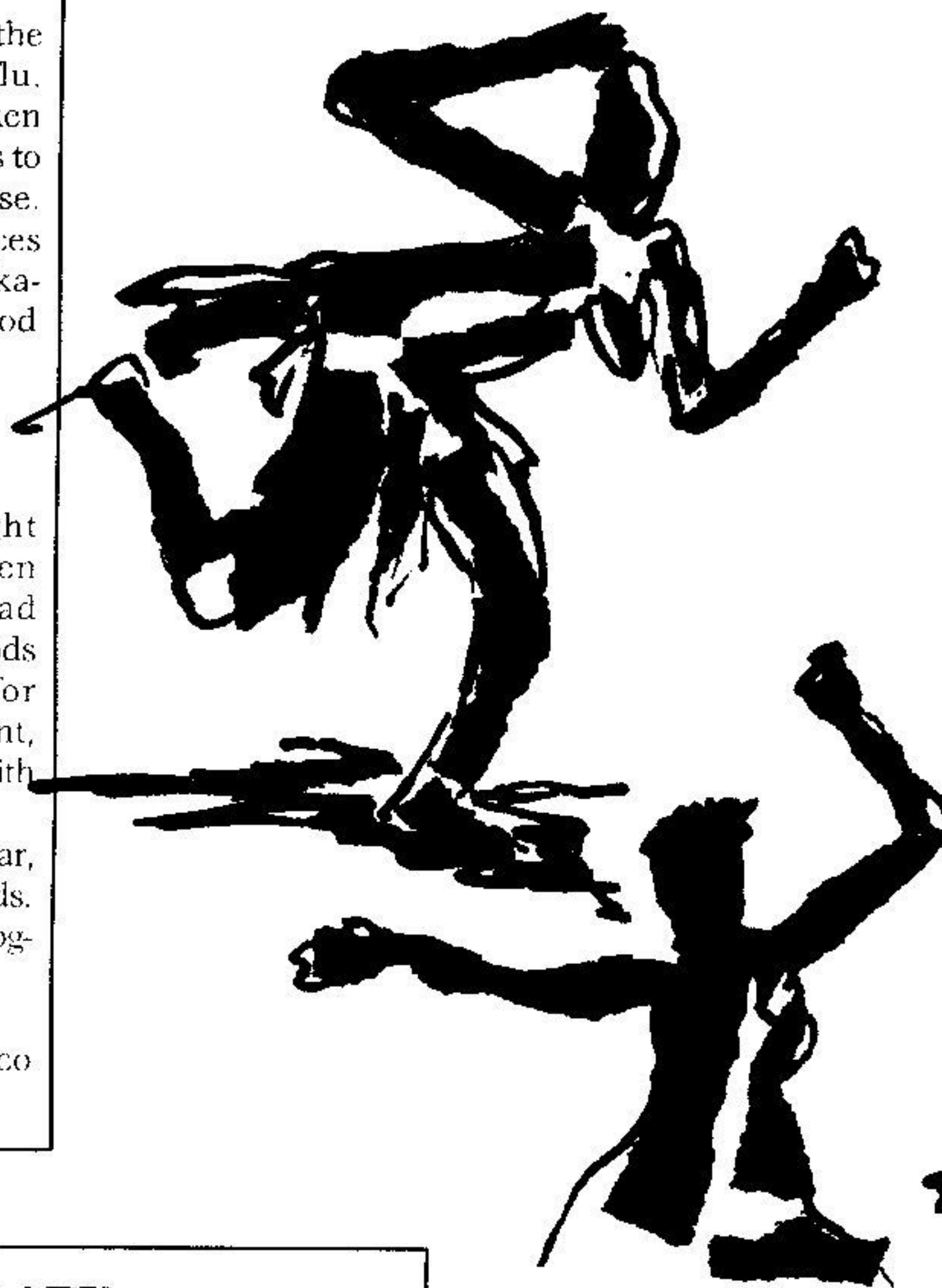
Flu and Viral Infection

FOOD THERAPY

Take only liquids for the first, acute stages of flu. Plenty of hot, steamy chicken soup, hot tonics and broths to stimulate mucous release. Plenty of vegetable juices and green drinks to alkalinize and rebuild the blood and immune system.

When acute stage has passed, stay with a vegetarian, light "green" diet til flu has been overcome. Have a salad every day, fermented foods like yogurt and kefir for friendly flora replacement, and steamed vegetables with brown rice for strength. Avoid all refined foods, sugar, and pasteurized dairy foods. These increase mucus clogging.

Avoid alcohol/tobacco as immune suppressors.



9/92
YK

VITAMINS/MINERALS

Homopathic remedies are excellent against flu, because they can be so specific to a symptom.

Ester C or ascorbic acid crystals: 1/4t. every half hour to bowel tolerance to flush the body and neutralize toxins.

Zinc Lozenges dissolved under the tongue, to deactivate virus activity in the throat.

Raw Thymus tincture to build cell immunity.

Germanium 100Mg. and Beta carotene 100,000 IU as anti-infectives.

FROM HEALTHY HEALING, AN Alternative Healing Reference, Ninth Edition, Linda G. Rector-Page, Healthy Healing Publications.

HERBAL THERAPY

INFLUA FORCE DROPS AND TABLETS, ANTI-VI EXTRACT as needed several times daily during acute stages til improvement is noticed. Effective extracts:

- Echinacea angustifolia
- St. John's Wort
- Lomatium

ENERGY GREEN DRINK MIX to return body vitality and rebuild healthy blood, or MIN-ZYME-MINOS DRINK to alkalinize the body and add concentrated food source minerals.

Sun CHLORELLA TABS or GRANULES, KYO-GREEN, or BARLEY GREEN MAGMA.

Calendula tea 4 cups daily

BODYWORK

Gargle with a few drops of tea tree oil in water for sore throat.

Get plenty of bed rest, so the body can concentrate on overcoming the virus.

DRAWING & SWEATING HERBAL WRAP to quickly release toxins through the skin.

CRISIS CAPS to raise body temperature and reduce virus multiplication.

Use overheating therapy. Take a hot sauna, spa, or bath to help raise body temperature and circulation, to throw off virus quicker. Heat deactivates viruses.

She dreamed me. Lying in her bed, flesh melting away from her bones while the expansion within her belly pulled tight at her skin, her mind drifted heavenward, asked what road her feet should take on this earth, and she dreamed me.

The voice on the machine was faint. It held none of the strength I was used to. "Yo, Ernestine, what's up?"

"Well, I've been a little ill, nothing serious, just that my abdomen is swollen and I was wondering if you could come out and have a look at me."

"It's Tuesday...I won't be done with patients until about 5:30...I'd like to wait until after rush hour is over and then I'll come out there tonite."

Brushing aside her protests that there

weary from battle, a child swollen with fear, Death waiting quietly in the background, Spirit ready for release.

I couldn't take it all in so I pulled out my "nurse" personality and went to work. "The first thing we need to do is get you out of this wet bed and into something warm and dry". There was a flurry of changing sheets and warm water sponge bath, lighting candles and incense, finding soothing music for the box to complete the atmosphere. That done, the "doctor" entered the room. "Okay, tell me from the beginning, what happened? When did it start, what has changed along the way, how long have you been unable to walk?"

Even being propped up, the tale unfolded amidst deep gasps for air, every word was labored. In August she learned that she was

to be laid off from her job, and there was nothing that could be done to change that. Being the woman that she was, she accepted and trusted that God would present the next plan when it

was time for it. Not one to be idle, she continued to check out leads and go inside herself to see what she felt was the next best step. In September, the pain came. Sharp; wrenching; bringing her to her knees. She was a woman laid off, there was no health insurance, county hospital was not an option. It's just a pain, and it will eventually go away. She'd had a reading recently and wondered could this be some manner of psychic attack because the two seemed to be somewhat coincidental. The women from the A.R.E. group that she'd become involved with suggested castor oil packs. They seemed to work. In about 3 weeks' time, the pain moved on. The swelling moved in. As if pregnant with a child in a hurry to get here, her belly swelled rapidly and began to affect her ability to breathe. The expansion pulled the flesh from her bones and sucked out her strength. By mid-December she was unable to walk. A neighbor, by chance, saw her struggling from the car to the front door and took on the task of bringing her orange juice and milk when she could no longer leave her bed.

The doctor spoke in her best mild-mannered professional voice. "Orange juice and milk? That's what you've been living on?"

Unexpected Journey

By
Francesca
Jackson

really wasn't any hurry, I began to hypothesize as to why this woman, taller and stronger than myself, sounded so weak and would I be able to do anything about it.

The road to Richmond was clear by the time I got on it. A cold and clear January night, my mind swirling with thoughts of this quantum leap year and the myriad of projects that I was about to embark on. Her instructions were impeccable; I was drawn there like a homing pigeon, why then, was the house dark and I could hear no answer from the door? I went all around the house, trying all the sliding doors, calling out her name as loud as I dared, (it being a condo complex and not wanting to disturb the other residents). After about 15 minutes, I heard the faint voice straining - "it's open; you just have to push harder". I pushed and entered. Everything was dark except for down the hall, there was a room with an eerie blue light. I walked in; I looked into the face of Death.

Death returned my open gaze then quietly receded. Training is a welcome crutch when faced with horror. I approached the skeleton with the distended belly with my warmest smile. The eyes, large and ever beautiful, reflected the shadow of a woman resigned to her circumstances, the warrior in stance



Why?" After being unable to walk and getting weaker and unable to even make it to the bathroom, the oj seemed to bring nourishment while the milk created a constipation of sorts so that the need to eliminate was less frequent. "Okay, well let's take a look at that abdomen now and see what we've got here." The frightened child exposed her belly, denial fled from the room and reality came sweeping down as the doctor's hand touched the flesh. From the umbilicus down there

was hard, immobile mass; above there was fluid retention; the skin was stretched tight trying to restrain the mass that fought to burst through. There was no flesh on the bones, bedsores open and oozing, grey pallor and cachexia. You couldn't miss this diagnosis even if you tried.

The doctor stepped back. I looked around the room now under glow of candlelight. The walls were covered with Realized Beings - Jesus, Muktananda, Sai Baba, Gurumayi,

Satchinanda, angels. "Have you talked to any of these people? Have you asked them for help? What do you think is going on here?"

Well, she explained, it's surely a spiritual test of some kind. All the great beings have had to go through that at some point before they reached enlightenment. If they could do it, surely it should be no problem for her. "I don't exactly know what it is, but I have a lot of things to do yet and so I'm sure that I can overcome this."

I remembered walks together in Muir woods, talking about Spirit and Truth and what was enlightenment anyway. Anger popped through. "What do you think you're doing here by yourself? When Muktananda had his heart attack, do you think he stayed in some dark room alone? He had every saint and person on the path come to be with him, if not in person, at least in Spirit. Give me the names and phone numbers of ten of your friends and let's set up a hotline and we'll..."

The Taurean I'd always known looked me straight in the eye. "I have to be quite firm on this. I called you because I was told to but I really don't want other people involved in this. As you know I'm a very private person, always have been and it's just not necessary to have others in on this."

It wasn't worth the fight. The doctor broke through. "Do you have health insurance? Good, good." I came back and said, "okay, listen to me. I'm setting up this table here with some veggie broth that I made. I want you to continually sip it, as much as you can, and it'll help to get your strength back. I'm going to let you stay here tonight but tomorrow we're going to the hospital. No, this is not a choice you get to make. You've called me - I'm on your team - in fact I'm the captain and I get to make this decision. I will walk this journey with you. I will not

abandon you and I will not let you do this alone. I'll call you tomorrow a few times during the day to see how you're doing and tomorrow night we'll go. And you see all these people on the walls? Well, they're going to go with us so talk to them tonight and tell them what you want done."

Indeed they paved the way. A quiet night in the ER - unheard of - yet there was nobody there except all the staff and us. We got the royal treatment. As they went through their usual protocol and the different nurses came in to do their part, they would look at me with that look in their eyes - "are you aware of what is going on here?" - I would signal back and we became partners in a conspiracy. From 8:00 p.m. there were the forms to fill out, the tests to take. I spoke with the M.D. assigned to her case; he confirmed my thoughts; I wondered at how to tell her.

At 2:00 a.m. as she was finally settled into her bed, I set up a little altar for her and lit a candle. Her eyes, ever large and beautiful looked into mine. "You know," she said, "in my heart of hearts I just feel that it can't be a tumor. You've been talking to them. . . what do they think it is?" My heart shattered, my knees gave way and I lied. "Well, there are still some more tests to take so nothing is really definite. In the morning your doctor will come in and finish the tests and talk to you about what he thinks is going on. I just want you to rest now. There are people here to take care of you and you no longer have to worry. I'll be back later in the afternoon and we can talk about what to do from there, okay? I leave my Spirit here with you, I hold a space in the Light for you, I'll be back tomorrow."

The journey was long. Somehow she didn't hear or comprehend when the M.D. told her it was cancer and the nurses couldn't understand why she didn't know

what was wrong with her. So I called in my Guides because I was too afraid that I'd blow it if I did it alone and we talked about it for a long time. We wondered how it could be that since she had been vegetarian for so many years, didn't drink, never smoked or did drugs, and had been on a spiritual path for so long, that this could be happening. What would the plan of action be? Well, she wanted to try the medical protocol first since she was there, and we could maybe try herbs and/or homeopathy later. If it came down to it, there was to be no long, drawn out painful process, no life support or any such thing. I read her articles of women who had overcome cancer in its severe stages and gone on to live full and productive lives. She told me of the astrological reading she'd had years ago where it was predicted that she would die at age 94 and that meant some 40 odd years left for her to go. We clung to those visions. I asked on a daily basis weren't there people who were wondering where she was and how she was doing and didn't she want me to call them? She ignored me. I sat and crocheted lace while she slept, held her hand while they drew fluid out of her belly and her lungs, interpreted the med speak into language she could understand to help her decide what she wanted to do. The tumor was as stubborn as she was - it continued to grow.

I was in a relicensing seminar one weekend and rather than listening to what was being said there. I was reading Stephen Levine's book on working with people who are dying. He pointed out that you might want the angels to sound their trumpets and herald you into your last breath and, the person who's actually dying might not want that. I left early and drove to the hospital. She was sitting up with her feet over the edge, leaning onto the nightstand to facilitate her breathing. She looked up and her frightened child met

mine. I told her I was really sorry that I'd been pushing her to give me phone numbers and to do all these other things, that I knew she was doing the hard part and I hope I hadn't imposed too much of what I would want onto her. She said that I had always said things that she needed to hear and that she admitted I was right and she would tell me where the phone book was. We held each other and cried together for the first time. I left the hospital to go to her house and clean it up in preparation for her coming home. That was her great desire, to be at home and die there if that was what was going to happen, and I fervently promised her that I'd see to it that it happened that way. In the hours from 5:00 til midnight while I scrubbed, washed and disinfected, the truth settled over me. I was preparing a death bed but she would not be coming there to lie in it.

The days' passing accelerated. Though still in the background, Death moved in closer and would show her face more frequently. I arranged for my close friend CAE the channel, to come and do a reading. It was late afternoon, the warmth of the sun filled the room and there was a golden haze present. CAE went into trance and the Teachers came forth. She wanted to know why it was that she had called me, from among all the people she knew. They spoke of another time and place, when she had been the strength for me in a similar circumstance and it was really the return of a favor as it were. She asked what was next? They took us to the other side, where the door of the Christ Light was open wide and there was only love and radiance available and waiting. The energy in the room was thick and the pull from Spirit was very strong, very appealing. She sighed, she thanked them, she laid back and began the dance.

The dance between the Vital Force, the Will and the Soul is

intriguing. The Soul looks toward sweet release, shedding the body and merging with Spirit. The Vital Force is fierce in its determination to maintain life. The Will might refuse to let go, refuse to give up. Morphine coursed through her veins, robbed her of lucidity and entertained me with scattered patches of bizarre dreams. Two friends who had come to be with me left after several hours and I continued to sit and wait. She woke up clear and asked where her favorite nurse was. I went and got her; they spoke for a while. She lapsed back into a morphine fog and the nurse and I sat in the next room, held each other and cried.

At 3:00 a.m. she woke up and looked

of the journey with you. I leave you with my love. I'll see you on the other side." She'd sent me away from her bedside - I drove my heavy heart home.

When I called the nurse's station at 6:00 a.m. there had been no change. I gave them the number where I'd be all day and continued to call periodically. At one call they told me she had woken up and asked where I was. I told them to tell her I'd be there before the sun went down. I walked in, sat at her bedside and began to read *Healing Into Life and Death* out loud. She opened her eyes, looked me and said, "I didn't think I'd see you again. Why can't I let go? What do I need to do?" "That's why I'm here. You don't have to 'do' anything, you just have to 'be'. These words are magical and powerful and they'll help carry your Spirit across. Just listen, drift off. . . let go . . ."

I read for 4 hours; she drifted in and out. The next morning she had drifted into a coma and they moved her up to the terminal ward. At the end of my work day I drove out to say good-bye for the last time. She was in the room alone, her breaths were deep and spaced far apart. I talked to her for a long time; apologized for not getting her home. "I know how important it was for you and I'm really sorry that I couldn't do that. I hope you can forgive me for that. I really did the best I could; I'm so sorry it wasn't enough, I'm sorry I couldn't save you." I read *Healing Into Death* for an hour. . . it was near midnight. . . I kissed her and said good-bye. I drove my heavy heart home. When the phone rang at 1:30 a.m. the nurse told me she had expired at 1:15. I called a friend on the phone and wept. When I had calmed down, I put on Voicestra to sing the 23rd Psalm to me - "even though I walk through a dark and dreary land, there is nothing that can shake me, She has said, She won't forsake me, I'm in Her hand. . ." - lit my candles and pulled out my power cards to read for her. The deck brought forth Harmony - Release - Transformation. I went out on my back landing and looked up into the clear sky. The big dipper was pouring down onto my head. I heard a train passing in the distance and then a mockingbird began to sing. She is gone. The journey has ended. I slept.

The dance between the Vital Force, the Will and the Soul is intriguing. The Soul looks toward sweet release, shedding the body and merging with Spirit. The Vital Force is fierce in its determination to maintain life. The Will might refuse to let go, refuse to give up.

directly at me. "You look tired." "Well, I've been sitting here all night, so I guess I am. How are you?" "I really want to be able to let go but I seem to be having a hard time. I think the only way it's going to work is if I'm alone." "Are you saying you want me to leave?" "Well, I think you'd talk about it but I don't think you'd really be able to do it." "Listen, for these past 2 months, I have been here, I have done what you asked, and have, in the best way I knew how, done it the way you wanted it done. If that's what you need, I'll be on my way." "You know that I'll see you on the other side. I want to really thank you for everything you did for me. No one could've done it better, you know that, don't you?" "I know that. I'm honored that you allowed me to walk this part

FACE

Inside the face of a lesbian,
 there lies the same tears, the same joys,
 the same breath of life,
 as any other human being.
 Within the eyes lies a spirit of love, of
 anger, of joy,
 of humanness.
 About the chin are certainties and
 unsureness.
 And we listen.
 But around the mouth we are silent.
 We are quiet,
 So quiet you wouldn't even know,
 a face was there.

THE END

Earthlyn Manuel



FOR PORTIA

Sister - my twin
 Flush those drugs
 not your dinner
 Down the toilet
 Instead of sucking on that
 vodka bottle
 Gaze into the mirror and
 Drink in
 the dark beauty of your eyes
 Be reminded of
 Our Ancestors
 Black and Strong under the
 African sun.

We shared the womb of
 A White woman
 (You know Daddy wanted the lightest
 he could get)
 But no matter what
 Chemicals they used
 My hair always curled right back up
 thick and rich
 And no matter
 How thin
 You try to get

Your full round breasts
 Won't be diminished

You can't vomit up your
 Soul
 You can't drink away
 Your Past
 Self-induced anemia won't rid
 Your Blood of its Blackness

Feed your body and soul
 Love who you are
 See your beauty
 Find your strength
 So we can fly together
 In Love and Pride
 like we used to.

Carla Poindexter

Carla Poindexter is a 25 year old lesbian, a twin, of biracial parentage, "who spent too much time on the streets of New York." She is studying to be a midwife. She loves living in Oakland.

GOT IT MADE

A woman, white, and meaning well
remarked to me as to how
"black women sure do have it made
these days"
as if opportunity were a garment,
custom-tailored to fit my well-
stocked hips.
For the black woman, the world is
just chock full of Goodwill.

A man, just as white and meaning
just as well
exclaimed that this is such a won-
derful time to be black and
female.
Yet divinity is still white, devil's
food still black
and Poverty, your name is still
Woman.
I ask you both: would you want to
be me?

Got it made, got it made
made in the shade, like cool
lemonade.
So where are these lucky sistas
who've got it oh so made?
Which one were you referring to
anyway?

Did you mean the black woman
who historically has earned less
than the
whiteman/blackman/white-
woman
even in these enlightened times?

Or the one who is raped and brutal-
ized by white and black men
alike,
that lewd, licentious, lusty, big-tittie
ho' of rap legend
who the homeboys said had it
coming anyway?
(Funny, the Senate Judiciary boys
said the exact same thing)

Perhaps you meant the ones
plagued by fibroids,
which the sistas seem to get in
record numbers and nobody can
tell us why

Is cancer the "it" that we got oh so
made?

Did you mean the one who pushes
white children
up and down manicured suburban
lanes
While her own babies bleed to death
in drive-by gangways?

Maybe you were referring to the
hype
hawking her love like fruit
for another hit off that pipe
The one who will later die of AIDS
'cause her lover likes his with the
works.

Got it made. Hot damn! Got it
made.
Which ones?
Where they at?

You must mean all those teenage
girls at the welfare office
with their hands and bellies poking
out
to whom "daddy" is but an abstract
concept.

Or are you thinking about the little
ones
who'll beg their mamas to douse
their kitchens with lye and
ammonia
to get that bouncin' and behavin'
TCB Bone Straight
Jhermack bounce-back
look of Radiance
like Malibu Barbie's?

Or the nameless screaming tykes
who will later perch on some thera-
pist's couch somewhere
trying to get a grip on self-esteem
that doesn't come in a bottle.
Puzzling over what their
daddy/uncle/brother saw
in their unformed girl flesh.

Got it made, got it oh so made.
I know!

By golly, by gum, you must mean
those educated sistas.

The ones who walked through the
valley of the shadow of the frat
The ones who jump through hoops
and and try their damndest
not to be quite
so...threateningly...African
Whizzed through Andover and
Harvard and IBM
only to find still more drunken frat
boys and fewer role models
just to end up, once again, at the
back door.

Surely you've seen the ones who
come home, work-whipped and
weary
Praying oh Lordgimmestrength to
get through please just one more
day

Tell me, why dontcha?
Who got who got who got
got it made?
Is it Latoya, the poor little rich girl
who cut off her nose to spite her
face?

Perhaps you mean Desiree?
Or Anita?
could it be Tawanna?
Maybe it's Sapphire, or Beulah
or Aunt Esther or Florida.

This I know
That elusive black woman who's got
it oh so made
Whoever she is
She sho' the hell ain't me.

Juarez Hawkins

*Juarez Hawkins is a self described
"woman loving artist of African American
descent." Most of her work is visual,
but she likes to write periodically.*



RAPED

We have been raped
by our fathers and brothers
cousins and friends.

Raped by blood of our blood
raped by our flesh
our genes
our heritage.

Raped by those who are
supposed to love, sustain,
and protect us.

Raped by our men.

We have been raped
every day
every night
there is no sacred time
when we can walk free
and without fear.

Raped and violated
our bodies bleed the blood
with the cycles of the moon
joining us in our
suffering
as every month we
pay homage to the
eternal sacrifice
of our wombs.

We rape each other
in our blinded state
we rape and maul
apply force that is not needed
when love would do instead.

Each day we are cut into
mined, exploited
raped
taken and raped
laid down and raped
loved and raped
hated and raped.

Raped as Mother Earth
is raped
day in, day out
and we are covered in her blood
live forever in her screams.

Ayiah Johan

*Ayiah Johan lives in London, England.
She sends her warm regards to "the
Aché posse," and she looks forward to
receiving her back copies of Aché.*

THE WEDDING

I often wondered about my wedding
dress,
And who would stand beside me,
while I vowed to love forever.

White lace and satin over,
just passing over my high hips.
A veil just slightly hanging over my
eyes,
leaving my lips free and a path for a
sigh to flow out,
and deep.

Wondering who would stand beside me
while I vowed my love.

Never knowing I would be loving over
and over,
Without the lace, without the satin.

I would marry with my heart,
with my mind, with my life,
without the veil over my eyes.

The isle I walk down is life itself.
The love, an accumulation of feel-
ings.

But when I face the mirror,
in an image of white lace;
And as it fades before me,
I am still comfortable with the saying,
"I do take thee".

THE END

Earthlyn Manuel



Class & Culture

By Sauda Burch

Class is about access, expectations, values, relationship to money, amount of money, how we spend our money and how and if we save it.

Class is about constructing our primary belief systems. Class seeps into our ways of looking at each other, and informs the complexities with which we view our world.

Class is about what we do with our free time, how much free time we have, where we take vacations, or even if we take vacations.

Class is about access to education and health (and access to a bunch of other stuff) and impacts on personal, educational and health care decisions.

Class is about the way

we view the government, the police, and the social worker. Class is about how we get jobs and how we keep them.

Class is about how we act in private and in public.

Class is about what we expect from others, what we aspire to do and to be. Class is about what we ask for and whom we ask; it is about feeling entitled or worthless or somewhere in between.

Class is about how we choose our friends and who we hang out with; it is about our intimate relationships and how we function within them.

Class is about what we eat and don't eat and why; it is about what we read, whether we have time to read, or whether we can read.

Class is culture.

I see now that I had the pleasure to grow

up in poverty. Pleasure, not in the trappings of "never enough," but in the witnessing of a culture that in its impoverishment overflowed with possibilities, strength and color. The single mothers who made up our community of women and their children made careers of creatively making do. I learned from them that you had to work hard, and that making it "under fire" was the least that was expected of you, and that women could be strong alone. I learned about independence and about magic—making something from seemingly nothing.

I watched my mother raise five children and be strong, creative, smart and genuine and still in the end not "make it." I watched her struggle under the weight of poverty and I witnessed as well her meanness and bitterness and belittling.

In that environment my intellect blossomed as a world of contradictions and hypocrisies swirled around me. I began to question the world order. My mother, through her actions and inactions, triggered my taste for debate and philosophy. Her life work and choices compelled me to think deeply about polarities: rich and poor, Black and white, men and

women. Most powerfully, she gave me the tools to view things the way they were rather than being seduced by the way they seemed.

It would take me years to reclaim that part of my culture. It took even more to accept that the culture of poverty wasn't something that I could shed like worn snake skin and leave useless and abandoned on the side of seldom travelled road. I am learning that I, the snake, can not slither away in new skin free of my arduous past. My beginnings, imprinted beneath my skin, are permanently etched and informs who I become at each bend in my life journey.

I have a need to talk about class with Black lesbians. I know that classism is destructive, both internalized and externalized. I am also stifled by the inadequacy of the language to address the particularities of classism in the African American experience. To profoundly talk about class amongst ourselves, we have to

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CLASS & CULTURE ...

Continued from page 21

talk about race and our history as African Americans. We must talk about race and our history as African Americans. We must talk about oppressiveness within our communities. We must reveal who we are and where we come from. Layered upon that we must add our lesbian culture. I am not surprised that we have found it easier to leave the issue alone.

Discussion of classism might be seen as polarizing. Strengthening community bonds by focusing on our similarities has meant that concerns or realities that would threaten these bonds are reluctantly, if ever, integrated into our community consciousness. During the 60's the Black Power and Civil Rights Movements gave scant notice to women's rights and the contemporary African American community struggles with the issue of homosexuality. The ignorance of sexism on lives of Black women within and without the community has had resounding effects on the liberation of African peoples. The very public community support of Clarence Thomas and Mike Tyson underscored the need for work within the community to deal with violence against Black women. Additionally, the invisibility of lesbians and gay men and our contributions to the Black community adds to the further isolation of vital energies towards liberation.

Accordingly, the ignorance of classism and its effects upon the lives of lesbians within the Black lesbian community serve to undermine our relationships with one another and to keep lesbians from poor and working class backgrounds outside of the "mainstream" Black lesbian community. This is not to imply that there aren't lesbians from poor and working class back-



grounds in the "mainstream," but more to indicate that there are thousands more who find the environment "too threatening" or feel alienated by the current Black lesbian "politic." No Black lesbian should ever have to apologize for not being poor or for having "enough." However, acknowledgement of class privilege is necessary.

Leaving the issue of class to other racial communities doesn't erase the dynamic that occur between people of different classes

within the Black community. Ignoring class doesn't strengthen our alliances amongst ourselves. We can no longer afford to view classism as somebody else's disease to which we are immune.

Confronting classism, dissecting it, owning our part in it, throwing out the detriment and building upon the useful and then putting the pieces back together as a recognizable, dynamic and healthy whole is a worthwhile endeavor towards liberation.

By Heather Flewelling

Some people look at anniversaries as a welcome passage of time which means there's less trouble to look forward to in the future: two down, three to go! But most people look at anniversaries as events which are important to them as reminders that their time and energy have been put into a fruitful relationship of sorts, with the anniversary celebrating their efforts. Aché has listened to/spoken for/been utilized by the lesbian community of African descent for three full years. This anniversary is a symbol of overcoming the invisibility of our voices and lives, and reminding us with persistent presence that we are here and have lots to say.

The lifestyles section has tried to represent the every day impressive nature of people in our community. It has tried to remind us that each one of us is working for our survival. Each one of us is a reminder that we live exciting ordinary lives.

We are also reminded through Aché and the few other journals which have come and gone through the years that we will perish as symbols of the community without support and input from you. Lifestyles cannot be a vehicle for a very few women to try and describe all of your voices, nor should it even try. We need your time and energy to push us forward to the next anniversary. Each woman should consider it her own personal responsibility to the community and to herself to share something with the other sisters out there.

We all know that any type of relationship takes hard work, time, and utilization of the resources which one has at her hands to create the anniversaries which so many of us say we need as examples of our beauty

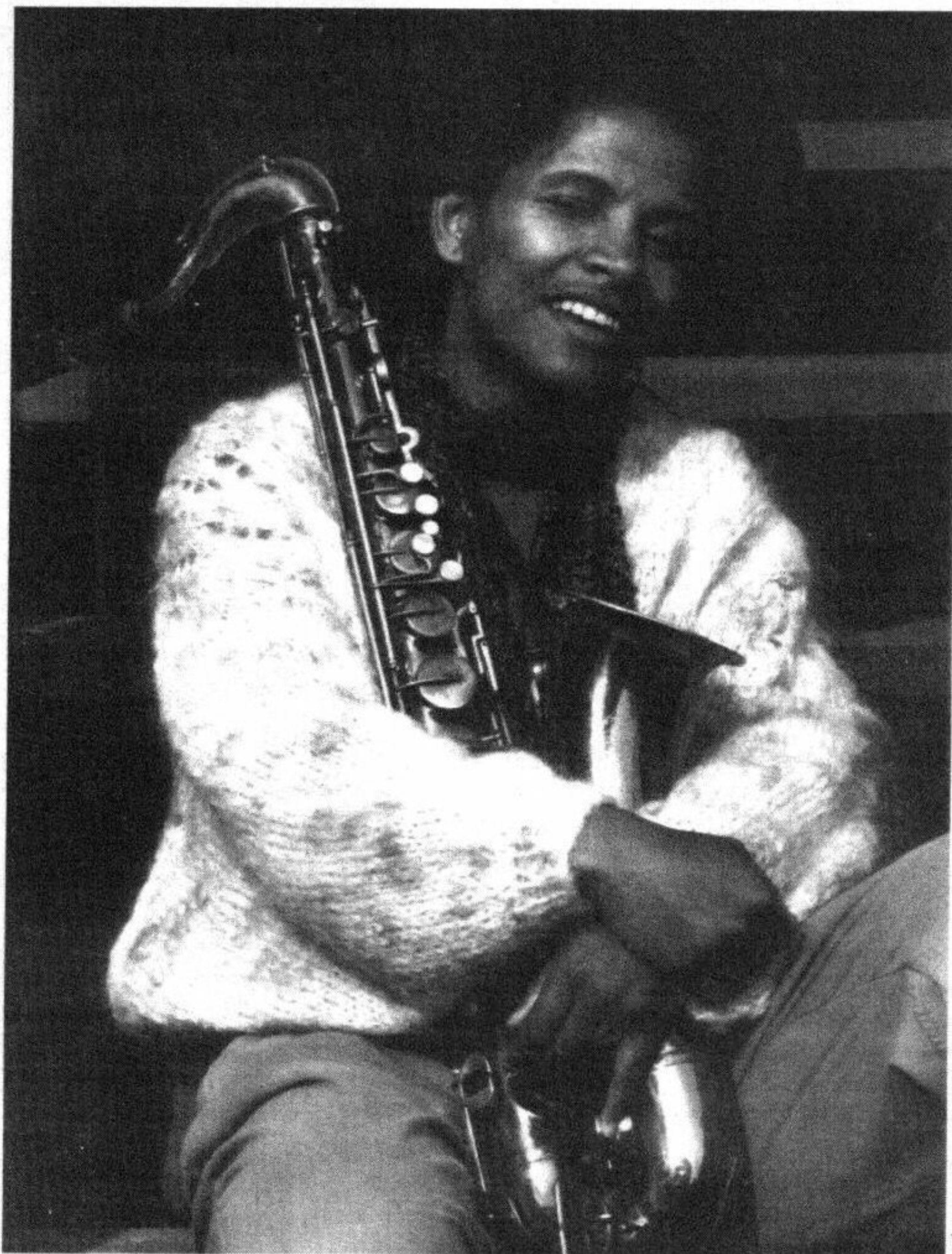


Photo: Jean Weisinger

Joy Gamble was born in Israel and raised in England. She relocated to the U.S. fourteen years ago and has been living in the Bay Area. Joy currently works as a psychotherapist, plays saxophone and is 1/8 of the way through writing a science fiction novel. Her three passions in life are healing, art and people.

and talent. I've heard so many lesbians speak of their frustration that there are so few examples of long term intimate relationships which they can turn to for support and guidance for their own relationships. The lack of visibility is increased when we look at the community of color, and look for our sisters who have created relationships which have sustained themselves and grown over the years. Aché is no different. Aché should be the reminder that we deserve longevity and prosperity, but it—like all of us in our individual lives—needs the support of each and every one of you to continue to breathe and grow.

Audre Lorde was an example to all of us of how to stay open to and critical of life and be more than a survivor of the struggle faced at every turn. She is an example of a sister taking responsibility for her own growth, but also being the nurturing mother/teacher/friend and giving herself to her children and community. She reminds us that there is much beauty and many lessons to make us richer when we look to the world and her children as teachers and partners rather than enemies. Our souls grow richer when we share our love, and Audre spent her life reaching out to say, "I love your strength and spirit," to each and every one of us. She made it her responsibility and her joy to take us under her warm breast and sing to us of history and creative power.

When you question how influential one woman's life can be to someone, please remember those sisters from whom you have learned how to love. Audre was the first sisterlesbian I met. I came out in a very white place, and was searching desperately for a sign that I was not the only black lesbian ever to be cast out of her brown mother's womb. I struggled with how to love my rich coffee skin as other women taught me to love the wetness between my brown thighs under my oh so clearly brown woman's bootay. And then I met Zami. She told me I



Photo: Jean Weisinger

Pell is the owner and manager of WomanCrafts West, a ten-year-old international woman's arts and crafts gallery representing over 600 women artists. Recently inducted into her high school sports Hall of Fame (a four-letter girl!), Pell is a native of New Bedford, Mass. living in the Bay Area for 16 years with her third toy poodle, Hannah Perkins. Pell's hobbies include collecting early African-American art and writings, and being co-family historian.



Photo: Jean Weisinger

Angela was born and raised in the jazz tradition in Kansas. She has been living in the Bay Area for eight years freelancing and playing with local and visiting musicians. Angela co-leads the 11-piece all women ensemble Living on the Edge with India Cooke.

Angela currently works as an California Arts Council Artist in Residence at Cole Visual Performing Arts Magnet School, where she teaches children ages 9-11 how to play music from a jazz perspective. She has been invited as a guest soloist to the International Women and Brass Conference in St. Louis, Missouri in May 1993.

was far from alone— I was a sister of Africa following other sister lovers of the same honeybronze heat. Zami brought me home.

I constantly try to remember to send out praises to those women like Audre/Zami, when I still feel alone. Aché too has become a companion and a teacher to me that brown woman shades are loving brown woman shades. Audre, Aché, Nia and others have continuously reminded me that I must love myself, and with that love I can reach another and teach her how to love.

We all must remember/learn: one woman's stories do matter. We must remember that one woman's story is our own, and don't anyone tell me my story doesn't matter. One woman's stories can be the difference between a newly out sister feeling she can survive in the world, and her taking her life— symbolically through self-hate, or literally through a gun to the temple. Sharing the stories can also give you the distance from yourself to read your own story anew, and see the power and the softness in your own life.

We are blessed that we already have the space to share our lessons with each other. Aché exists now, and we do not have to take on the arduous task of birthing a whole new space for our lives. But we do have to take the time to put in our little bit. Give a little to others, and then go on and continue to find new challenges.

This is my last issue as Lifestyles editor for Aché. I have other challenges out there which call me, and I have taken the power from Aché and your support as tools to face these next steps. If any of you want to put your energy in for a year and reach out to other sisters, let us know at the journal. I thank you all— each of your lives has given me strength of number.

Aché!
Heather Flewelling

In Memory of



E. Kitch Childs, Ph.D., was born April 11, 1937, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Kitch is believed to have been the last surviving member of her family. She died on January 10, 1993, at age 55 in Amsterdam, Holland where she had been living since 1991. Dr. Childs died in her sleep of natural causes, presumably complicated by hypertension.

Kitch attended the University of Pittsburgh, graduating with a BS. in chemistry. She received her Masters and went on in 1972, to become one of the first African American women to receive a Ph.D. in Human Development from the University of Chicago. She was a founding member of the Association for Women in Psychology in 1969. She was a psychologist and psychotherapist in Oakland from 1972 to 1990. She never turned away a person in need simply because s/he had no money. She lived modestly so that she could always accommodate her community.

Kitch was a distinguished feminist, a clinical psychologist, and above all a brilliant and articulate lesbian of color. She was acutely aware of issues affecting minority women and worked for years in Oakland with those who needed her most: people with AIDS, battered women, survivors of sexual abuse, and others who have been disenfranchised by our culture. As an activist, Kitch walked the long hallway between the feminist movement and the needs of women of color. Her network of friends and professional colleagues both within and outside of what she called the Community of Color extended beyond Oakland and the Bay Area to Chicago, Paris and Amsterdam. For many years Kitch was involved

with prostitutes through, COYOTE: she was a strong supporter and sometimes spokeswoman for the rights of prostitutes internationally.

Her most recent publication was a chapter on Therapy, Feminist Ethics and the Community of Color with Particular Emphasis on the Treatment of Black Women, appeared in *Feminist Ethics in Psychotherapy* by Springer Publishing Company in 1990.

A memorial to E. Kitch Childs will be held on March 27th at the

West branch of the Berkeley Public Library, 1125 University Avenue (near San Pablo) from Noon to 2:30pm. Additional memorials have been or will be held in Amsterdam, Chicago, and Paris as well as at the annual meeting of the Association of Women in Psychology in Atlanta.

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The first time I spoke to Audre Lorde was at the "I Am Your Sister" Teleconference in Boston, in 1990. As I approached the front of the auditorium where Audre was greeting friends, old and new, I was so nervous at the prospect of meeting her that I almost turned around and bolted. The sea of people behind me, coupled with fate's intervention are the only factors to which I can attribute the most significant meeting of my life. It was my turn. She extended her hand. What came out of my mouth next was largely unintelligible, but I did manage to clearly state my name. She said, "Stephanie Smith? So you're Stephanie Smith. I was just reading Aché on the plane over. I showed your Dreadlock piece to Gloria... You are quite a gifted writer." For this young, Black/Jewish, Lesbian writer, it doesn't get much better than that.

The last time I spoke with Audre Lorde was two days later, on the campus of M.I.T. It was a perfect New England fall day. The conference attendees were milling around the quad. Spontaneous outbursts of music, dance and poetry were occurring everywhere. Some of the California contingent had formed a circle and were reading our work to one another. As we broke

up, we began dancing to the drums that were being played nearby. I saw Jean Weisinger talking to Audre, and she motioned me over. Audre picked up the thread of our earlier conversation, and said, "You (meaning those of us who were similarly inspired to put pen to paper by her work) are my legacy, keep writing, do not ever stop writing. I am available to you. Use me as a resource..." She continued on about the importance of writing our lives. Jean snapped a photo of us together. I turned, walking roughly six feet above the grass, to rejoin my friends. After a few steps, I heard Audre's regal voice call after me, "Stephanie!" As I looked over my shoulder she said, "And you can dance too." I was wrong, it could get better.

That weekend and the words of Audre Lorde have shaped my commitment to writing, my community and most significantly, to Aché. We are a unique and powerful creation. We are the legacy of Audre Lorde, Pat Parker and many other Black lesbians whom we never knew. I honor that gift. More importantly, however, I accept the responsibility. Aché.

Stephanie J. Smith
Fiction Editor

Mud Pies

by Michelle B.

Hair burnt straight. Air cake-y with chalk dust. Cool rain water splashing against the outside of the single window pane. Suggestion congestion. Doesn't anybody know? Can't anyone give an answer?

Myra can. Myra knows. Rational roots theorem regarding polynomial equations, this time. Limp, dry, and color frosted away. Dark flesh packed tightly into white jeans and panty hose. Eyes cast downward. Are they looking? Myra is silent. Breathing, barely. Softly, quietly; almost not there.

Desperately stagnant. Deodorant nearing toxic level. Her mind is drifting. Red skirt. Smooth, tanned legs to the right. Amy's legs. One has a small scarab-shaped scab, Myra observes. Dreaming. Dreaming of her own Amy, fantasy Amy.

When Amy turned to retrieve her well-sharpened No. 2 pencil and politely

said, "thank you," Myra was only able to mutter some queer combination of "You're welcomed," "Sure, no bother," and "I do it myself sometimes," as she placed the pointed wooden instrument in Amy's open hand and nodded her head. A head that refused to even glance at the other girl's politely thankful face.

Just before the pencil bounced onto the floor and rolled irretrievably under the legs of her chair, Myra had been about to touch fantasy Amy's lips with her own. What would happen? So far, fantasy Amy had tenderly teased her with touches and caresses. Bare touches to the dirt-colored thigh, the stinky women's things, the nappy-rooted oily hair—which caused her to consider herself lucky if she could wash it at least once a week without more than a fist-full falling out. Maybe they were on a large quilt in the middle of a field; or perhaps reclining on a silk-sheeted queen-sized

bed set in a richly clad sleeping room. Wherever it was, it was warm and comfortable; with no wandering, prying eyes to devastatingly judge.

Myra felt her insides burn viciously. She felt embarrassed, tense and self-conscious. She knew how her every joint was posed, the angle of each bent knuckle, how one leg sat over the other, precariously balanced by a heel. Her legs seemed swollen, as they stuck out in the aisle, cumbersome even. The pale man instructing Math 1A was lazily commanding attention. He was explaining about factoring out only the common term "p" on the left-hand side of the equation. Myra's breath was nearly inaudible. However, such seemed like a gorilla's roar in her ears. She limited her air intake to a bare minimum, which her body would still strain against.

Amy had resumed her note-taking. Myra could hear the scribbling as she ducked from the TA's beating glare begging audience participation. She held herself in, trying very hard to be inconspicuous.

What Myra remembered most about kindergarten was kids' teasing. "Because your butt stinks, or was it the other thing? Boys each taking turns sniffing at that seat. She told her Mom, "I think those tater-tots give me gas." Myra refused to eat anything made with potatoes from that point on. Carrying a secret hatred for her mother for making her eat the tots anyway that morning.

Just that week, they had decided to sniff her chair. Any other week Myra was sure there would be no unpleasant smell. The stigma stuck. Some of the girls were, of course, flattered by their showing off, future men daring to sniff at the chair of Myra Johnson. Of Math 1A, she would remember most pulling in, tightly, bowing her head, clenching her arms against her ribs, pressing her thighs in close.

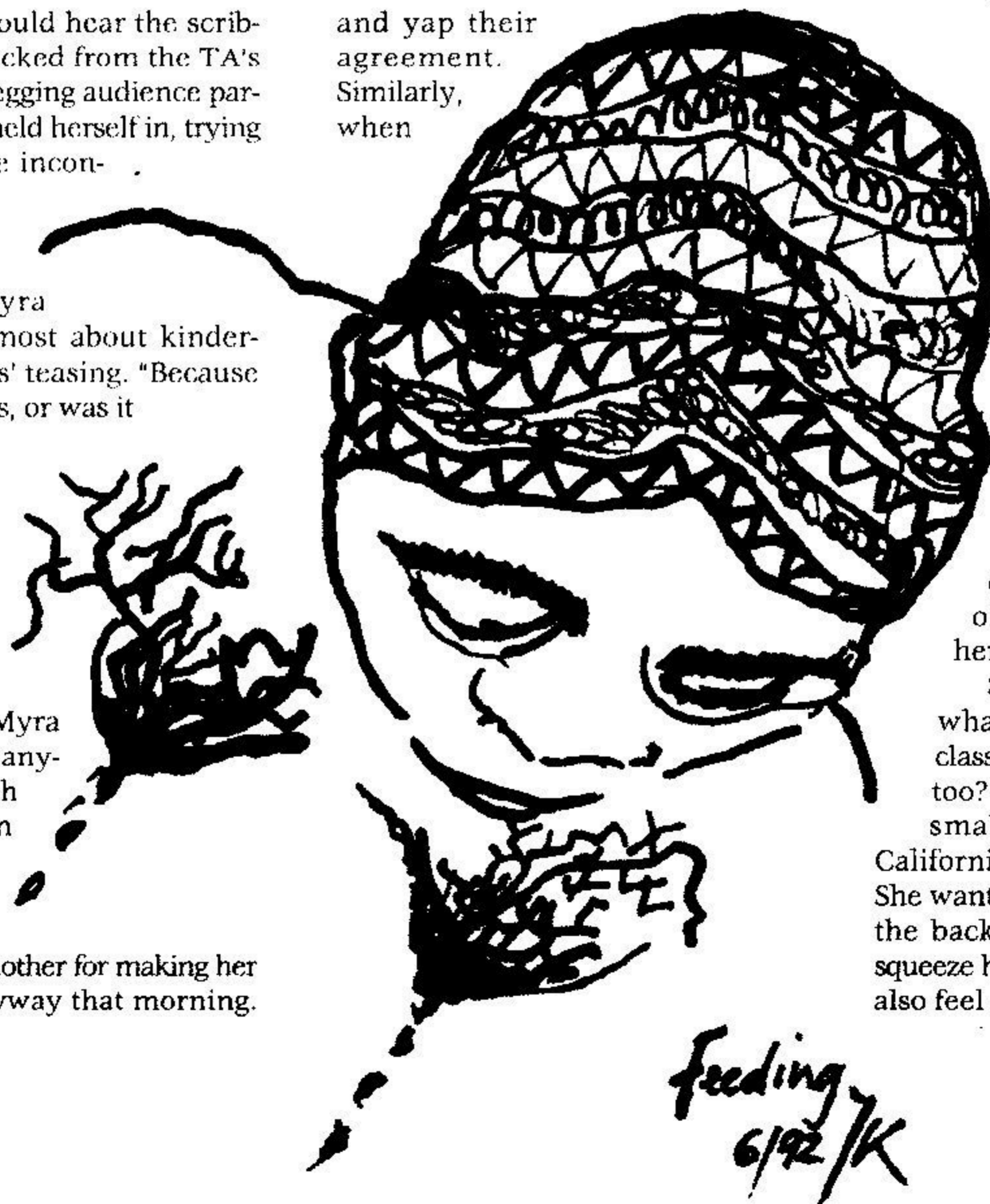
Such incidents would occur over and over again in Myra's life. Almost always in the Haag Elementary School elevator, something seemed to suddenly "smell" when she stepped on. "Oh God! What's that smell in here?!" WillyWantToHurtWhenICanGetAwayWithIt, DannyDaddySaysI'mBetterJustCausel'mWhite, or JohnnyJustWantToFitIn would exclaim, grabbing at his nose, squeezing. Their appreciative peers would emulate them and yap their agreement. Similarly, when

Myra rode the junior high school bus, no one seemed to be able to sit next to her without making some kind of gesture indicating foul air. Often, they made particular reference to the more "vulgar" aspects of her femininity. Then, again, in her freshman dorm, although they never quite said anything directly, the boys in the room across from hers would find some excuse to leave when she came around. They could have been just coincidentally busy, but Myra knew better.

By burying her head in her notes, aside from her own huge-seeming too-tightly hugged legs, all Myra could see was a peripheral view of her. Cute legs, gently twitching as she wrote down the conjugate roots theorem. Amy was a normal-looking girl, not glamorous, not homely. She wasn't quite white, but her skin did

not share Myra's deep brown pigmentation. Her hair was straightened. Amy dropped her pencil near Myra for the second time. On purpose? If only Myra could make some connection. Anything. She had once studied Amy's features at length by peaking over her course text while waiting for class to begin. What Myra couldn't recall, she constructed for herself, the curve of her ears, the slant of her nose, the shape of her arms.

She wanted to ask Amy what she thought about the class. Did she live in the dorms too? Was her family large or small? Was she also from California? Myra wanted to know. She wanted to be able to pat her on the back, touch her hair, lightly squeeze her shoulder "hello." Did she also feel out of place being a racial



Continued on next page

ODE TO MY SWEETHEART ZAH, or Signed a Crack Dealer's Girlfriend

By Paula Austin

Love I

I'm floating, wet and dreaming. She has just called me. Soft and deep-spoken, I decide I am too awake to be dreaming. She says, "When I am away from you..." pause. Always there

is some interruption, my ever-ready tears begin to well. I can see her face, soft brown and smooth, her hazel eyes bewitching me, the lids half closed, flashing. "Think of me, think of what I just said...I'll call you back, love you." Click. I am screaming as I hang up. I remember screaming before, hanging up with another beautiful her.. (This is how I know.)

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

minority? Myra wanted to find out. Instead, she wandered into her fantasy. Which Amy had now interrupted.

"Amy, you're welcomed," she tried to correct herself. However, all that came out were incomprehensible, anxious whispers. Urgent. Her tongue, sabotaging her words. Her mouth bit apart the whispery hospitality. Did she remember to deodorize? Myra couldn't recall. Nervous sweat is the worst. Lung defying. White chalk. Tremors of worry shook loose loud gulps of air that barreled out in tearful jerks. The smell of her breath exposed.

She tried again, awkwardly reaching to pat Amy's forearm, "It's ok," or was it some odd gesture asking plentiful harvest? You smell. Trying to recoil her arm, imperatively. Papers toppled onto the floor loudly. So did Myra. "Your butt

stanks", or is it the other thing. Feet, underarms, thighs, buttocks, burnt-nappy hair everywhere. Legs flailed apart, open. Not vulnerable. Her vagina seemed almost predatory with the odor that Myra imagined must be seeping from her moist, blood-soaked, musty-woman-reeking Kotex adornment. She futilely pulled herself in once again. Suddenly, Myra was no longer there.

Rain dripping out of the sky, drenching them. Slipping, so messy, dirty. Finally, Myra plopped down into the mud. Reveled in it. Making mud pies. Loving the feel of it between her fingers and pantyhosed toes. Letting the dirty water splash up into her clean stockings. Letting it dirty and loosen her jeans, chill her nipples until they were unconstrainable. Hair—"going back" in the rain. Amy came and sat down

beside her. Together, squishing it between their toes, reveling in it. All of them—Latina/, Persian, American Indian, the X, the Y, p/q. They all did, with "stinky", "fish-smelling" twats, reveling in life-giving, mother earth.

This piece is to remind and encourage my sisters and I to honor our physical selves. Our shapes, colors and smells are all beautiful. This is part of the work I do to continue to dispell the misinformation that our life-giving vaginas and ever sensually puckered anuses are anything but beautiful, or any less profound than a white penis. Sisters, have confidence and pride in your bodies always—you have nothing to be ashamed of. Yours is like a blooming flower in the wet spring.

—Michelle B.

So I sit here waiting for the old black phone to ring with her. Noise behind her, traffic, men who obey her, her dogs and the open white BMW sitting across the street. (Drug money bought me lunch the other day.)

I have given myself over early this time. Wanting her, I have told her to take me. Risk it all, sooner rather than later. What's to lose? My sanity long since lost with the last beautiful butch. Zah's beauty seems crystallized to me, frozen, a new thing unlike the last, a progression of loving, moving on a plane. The faces, the bodies, texture of hair all different among the 4 to whom I have risked it all. Is this how it goes? The Beamer drove up. She bowed her head, a crown of locks that I now long to touch as the time passes and the phone sleeps.

We have never had a full night, of loving, talking, holding, of us. But our conversations run deep through the wires, whispers that reverberate and come to me later in anxious sleep. In every waking moment I am calling her. I don't mean beeping her since she never calls me back. I mean my mind rests on her, imagining her with me, for me, but mostly me for her. My eyes bug, wanting to stay awake, to wait for the call that will soothe my heart and bones to sleep.

I wake with the thought, will I see her today? The pining grows? or am I just premenstrual? Ring, damn it, goddamn it ring!! I imagine I know her schedule, but I don't know a thing. She gives me what she wants and calls it her all. I don't trust it, any

of it. Something shady. My hand sits on the phone.

Questions and doubts still keep me safe. I can always say "Fuck her", if I want to, right? Yet, I'm all lip-sticked-up for her, all push-up bra-ed and high heeled for her. Anything to get some time. Yeah sure, but mostly I love it. The hot that I am when she is hot for me. The how much I ooze with a deep feeling when she speaks. The I miss you and I love you that I save for just the right moment to make her pause and hold her breath for a minute, thinking of me?

My body shifts to a horizontal position in my queen sized bed, curving to make a fortress around the phone. I am full of, full of, full of, well I am full. Finally I am asleep, a restless rolling around, a waiting slumber, hoping to be awakened by the phone...

So, just as I thought: tough girl, dear and tender and small, a crying child inside, bruised and neglected. (Yeah, just my type...) I think of the last beautiful tough girl, sitting in the park, her head resting on my chest, she was forever miserable. All my devotion and staying power worn down, spark doused first with gasoline into a blaze, then finally with enough water so that maybe it would never dry out and be able to burn again.

Crazy beauty - Zah's son stands like a short twin to her. His locks long and brown, his face wide and smiling, sniffing the markers, and demanding attention. He is truly like a little man, and yet... My heart is open and I am no longer afraid, belonging completely to him and his mother (even after she has told me the truth, even after I admit how possessive I can be...) they own me. Question: what is it that I love? Her Beauty Sweetness Strong-hand Strength Desire Body Swagger Smell Locks Touch Femininity Love Son. And she is Butch! I touch myself to make sure I am intact...so often I have lost-myself to a beautiful Butch's touch and the struggle back becomes my life's work. I will give her the all of who I am, the what it means to be me: the Loud Bitch, the Sweet Femme, the Woman: Wet and Wanting, the Child:

Meek and Crying, the Politically Incorrect Lesbian Writer of Color; and hope.

Do you remember that Bee Gees song[~] How Deep Is Your Love? It plays inadvertently in my head, I'm sorry to say. I think of that first night, the night she says, was "Fucked up". Yet, in my mind it is the most beautiful night in my memory of us...

We sit in the car. You are smoking, some big blunt, somewhere on Eastern Parkway. I think about addiction, drugs, my association and work with both; my pain and struggle against Cocaine...but I want you. You ask me what I want to do now. I have had a Stout, that's all. No Champagne, no wine, no vodka; I am not drunk. I say "to kiss you." No response, I feel like a fool, an overly sexual woman, a slut... I apologize, I say I am inappropriate, rude, without tact, class, whatever insult I can find to clear my reputation with you. I look away and you lean close to me and we kiss, not very deep but I feel it everywhere, my neck bent back, your lips full and powerful on mine. I continue to want you. You ask me again what I want to do. You know the answer. "I want to go home, will you come with me "I want you real bad now, I won't let you leave. And strangely enough, there comes a feeling I have not had since the last time I screamed. A feeling not just about my cunt, not just about being wet for you, a feeling in the pit of my stomach and my aching heart; a spiritual thing maybe; a feeling of goose bumps when I look at the black sky. Oh god, I want you to make love to me, and I won't let you leave until you do, and maybe not even then. Yes, I am willing to beg, and no I don't know you. We're home, and suddenly, I have sobered up (but I wasn't drunk...). I still want you, and oh yes, your hands are big and strong, and passionate on me. I smile to know you want me too. We move from my living room to the bedroom, two women making love as only two women can. Like never before... and... then you want to leave. I am so angry. Feeling used and

hating you... and you say you want to come back. I say no and let you.

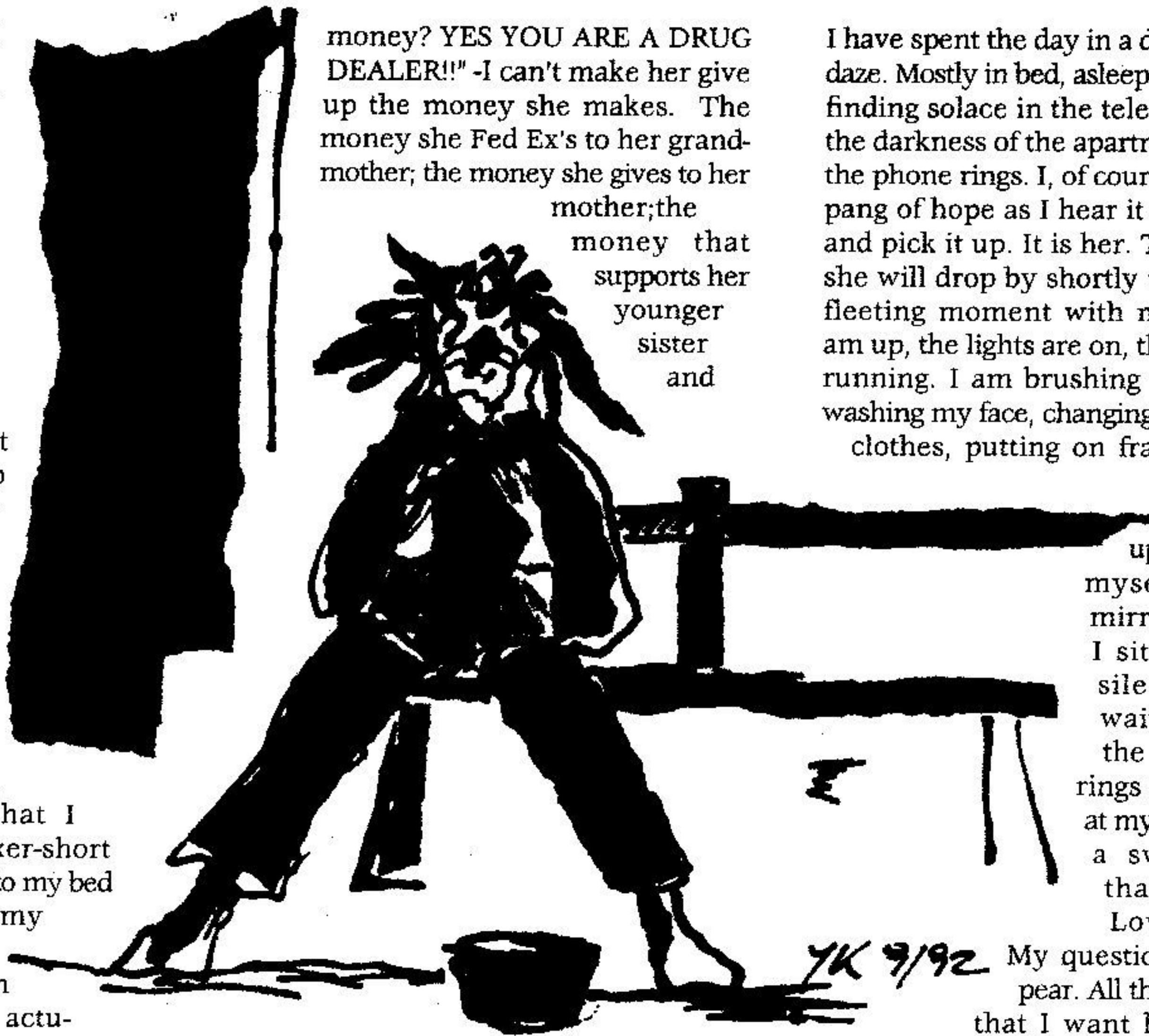
Finally, The Conflict

October 5, 1992

What was it that started it all up again...? In all my self-righteousness and "health", I ask her not to call me again. I have made a decision. I cannot date her. And I certainly can not fall in love with her. Yet, after that I remember the boxer-short night... Climbing onto my bed and making love, my first dildo experience - (Jan Clausen once said to me - actually, it was the last time I spoke to her - she asked me why I always write about relationships? When she asked me that i was really offended, mostly because I began to think I was obsessed and that ultimately my life must have very little substance, and ...always would as long as I continued to only write about relationships.)

My Zah is, above all else, a woman who is very much a product and a victim of New York City and the United States as it presently exists. She is a Crack dealer. I am an educated AfricanCaribbean woman, a feminist femme writer with a social consciousness that never rests. Never! She is a single mother, a woman desperately seeking a way to survive without having to work for the White Man (and thinks she has found that, when in reality we all know she is doing just that from which she believes she has escaped...). I can't make her see that - screaming at her in the car, driving along the FDR - "Yes you are - who gets most of the

money? YES YOU ARE A DRUG DEALER!!" -I can't make her give up the money she makes. The money she Fed Ex's to her grandmother; the money she gives to her mother; the money that supports her younger sister and



sends her son to private school (the money she has left for me on top of the side table those times when I didn't have enough...)

In therapy: I wonder why I must be with her - and I must. I wonder and cry at what it is that I really and truly feel for her. I mean, am I all just a jumble of codependency issues? Can I only be with women, or want to be with women who will subsequently dis me? Or, and still worse, am I really in love with her, despite the fact that she sells Crack (to her own people, not to rich white boys as I have chosen to believe, at times, in my denial)? The question stands: what should I do? She tells me I am the only woman who is not interested in her for her money, and I have told her that is because it is drug money, but I have never refused: a meal, a ride, small change. (Like much of my class, race, and generation, I am in debt. The creditors call me every morning, I disguise my voice.

10:56pm Saturday night: she calls.

I have spent the day in a despondent daze. Mostly in bed, asleep. I am now finding solace in the television and the darkness of the apartment when the phone rings. I, of course, feel the pang of hope as I hear it ring twice and pick it up. It is her. Telling me she will drop by shortly to spend a fleeting moment with me. Now I am up, the lights are on, the water is running. I am brushing my teeth, washing my face, changing into clean clothes, putting on fragrant oils

and make-up, checking myself in the mirror. Then, I sit down in silence and wait. Shortly the door bell rings and she is at my door with a sweet gift that says "I Love You."

My questions disappear. All that is left is that I want her and I want her to want me. All that is left is the longing for the feeling of her body on mine, her lips on mine, her hands on my face, her face between my breasts. All that is left is the need to tell her I have missed her, which I do. And, that I have bought some crayons for her son.

Behind it all is the myth/reality of the glamour of money and flash of cars and fire power. (For her and for me.) Zah is convinced she is living the American Dream, and yet is completely in contradiction of it. That she is a self-made woman entrepreneur (there's something feminist about this?) Her eyes are glued to the television, waiting for the news story of the cop who was shot in the head. I believe she takes pleasure in it. (I believe I do too.)

ASIDE: My sister, Chrys, will do anything so that she does not have to admit she is of African descent (clinging with her lifeforce to the word "mixed" to describe herself; thinking only of the skin color and hair texture of her future children

when choosing a husband; feeling positive about herself only when a white person compliments her.)

I am not pleading Zah's case, as a "victimized survivor of Black womanhood", I am pleading my own. I am groping in a dark place for an answer, for an objective (hah) critique and deconstruction of my desire. My white academic lesbian friend, fetching for her Ph.d in California with her same significant other, upon hearing of my latest love interest asks me: why don't I "just work in a women's prison". What?! Her disrespect for me and my people was apparent.

Still I don't know what to do with it all. Drug dealing, gangs, guns, cars: portrayed as so tragic and sexy at the same time, glamorized and tear-stained. Ask any young Black girl with gold slung on every inch of her body and her hair sculpted as only we can, fantasizing of sitting in the back of the jeep, system pumping, her "man" driving, toting and displaying his manhood in every form - cash, jewelry, vehicle, firearm, clothes. It is his identity.

Through him and as his possession, she gains access to her identity, her "self", she gains access to Power. Do I subscribe to this theory? Surely I must, affected daily by and enjoying the by-products of hip-hop culture. (I mean, I want big gold earrings, and a Cross Colors jacket...what keeps me from acting towards that end is ME ... and a lack of funds, of course.)

Can I be a thinking "Mafia Wife"? I look at the roses which she has brought, which sit in front of me. I almost always lose sight of my questioning and think only of when next I will see her. There's the possibility of "trouble"; of the ruination of the life of her son; of her own life; of mine in connection to her. The danger of it all is both exhilarating and increasingly frightening. Can I live my life of struggle, thinking

and writing and teaching for social consciousness and change, and spend my private time with a woman perpetuating a system of oppression of herself, me, her son and the rest of our people? The complexity of the situation overwhelms me at every possible moment and I am convinced that there is no middle ground on which I can stand. But I can do neither of the options at hand, nor can I single-handedly raise her consciousness. My only choice is to desperately seek or create the medium that will allow me to love a Crack Dealer.

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Workorder

By VLB

I called the office to complain about the leak under my kitchen sink. Steve, the office aide said that he would put in a work order immediately. Tisha, the new building maintenance supervisor, took over 6 months ago. It was the first time that a woman held such a position in my apartment complex. I had noticed her from the first day she started. She had that athletic build, tight high riding black-butt, long strong legs, that V-shaped chest and those muscular arms. How I dreamed about those arms! Her work attire consists of tight bluejeans, light blue buttonshirt—usually unbuttoned—showing her pastel undershirt, steel-toe workboots and black baseball cap, worn backwards.

About ten minutes had passed since my phone call to the office when suddenly there was a heavy knock at my door. I asked, "who is it?" "Tisha!" I wasn't expecting her to come so soon. I was only adorned in my sleepshirt, which barely covers my butt. Oh, well. We're both


girls. So, I let her in dressed as I was. Tisha flashed a welcoming smile. It was just what I needed to go with my morning coffee. Tisha wheeled her toolbox to the kitchen, got down on her knees and proceeded to find the leak. From the dining table, I took notice of how inviting her butt looked. Her position was perfect for a rear entry probe.

I came into the kitchen to get a closer look and asked, "do you need me to move anything from under the sink?" Tisha didn't move a muscle she just said "no". I poured myself another cup of coffee and thought about how to get Tisha's able hands on my willing body. The subtle approach was not working, I needed more eye contact. I left the kitchen and went into the bedroom. I slid on some pants and made a phone call. I figured I would give Tisha working room while I plotted my next move. My phone call took a couple of minutes. Tisha called me into the kitchen. She proceeded to tell me that my leak was from a washer that needed replacing. I asked if it would take long. "No, I have a replacement washer here in my toolbox." "Good," I said.

So what other tools do you have in that big box of yours," I asked. "Are they adjustable? Would you show me how they work when you finish replacing the washer?" Tisha looked puzzled. She asked, "Why all the interest in my tools? Do you need something else repaired?" "Not repaired but, I need something looked at, if you don't mind?" Tisha replied, "sure no problem." I returned to the bedroom to prepare myself for events to come. I impatiently waited for Tisha to finish in the kitchen. My breathing quickened when Tisha came to my bedroom door and said, "OK what's next?" I gazed at her muscled body. It sent shivers down my spine and an ache to my loins. I thought, I've got to have this woman in my arms now! I gathered my thoughts and began telling Tisha that when I get in the bed the mattress seems to shift, are my platform bed screws loose? Do they need tightening? Or is it the mattress? Tisha sat on the bed to assess the situation. "I see what you mean, I'll tighten the screws to see if that helps." I smiled and thought, here's my chance to get that woman next to me. The anticipation was almost too much to bear. I wondered what Tisha's reaction would be when she would lift up the mattress and see my leather restraints attached to the bed. Would I be able to put those restraints on her or maybe, allow her the treat of restraining me. Just then, Tisha let out a moan. One of those, you-just-hit-the-right-spot, I-wanna'-get-fucked, kinda' moans. I had her just where I wanted her.

The eye contact was fierce! I suggested that she put the mattress back down on the platform, come

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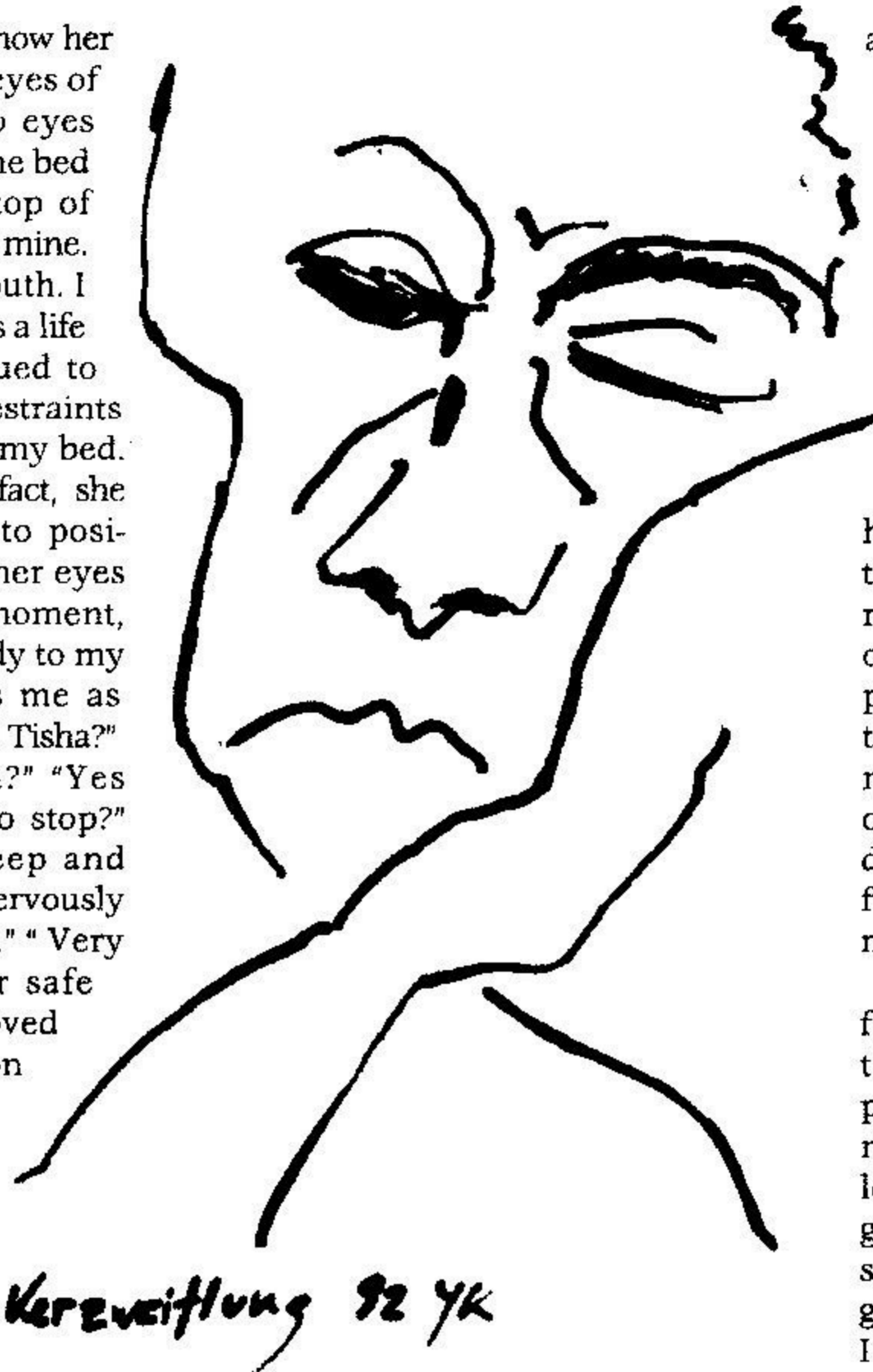


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over to me and allow me to show her the tools of my trade. Her eyes of surprise quickly turned to eyes of desire. I pushed her on the bed and placed my body on top of hers. Tisha's body molded to mine. I kissed her hard on the mouth. I sucked her tongue like it was a life giving force. As I continued to kiss her I reached for the restraints and attached her wrists to my bed. She offered no resistance. In fact, she moaned and squirmed into position. I looked deeply into her eyes and told her; "as of this moment, surrender your will and body to my control. You will address me as Mistress. Do you understand Tisha?" "Yes... mistress." "Tisha?" "Yes Mistress," "Do you want to stop?" Tisha's breathing was deep and heavy, she licked her lips nervously and answered "no mistress." "Very good Tisha, what is your safe word?" "Pink, mistress." I loved the fact that Tisha caught on quickly to my commands. It was going to make her time with me very enjoyable.

"Pink," and "mistress" are the only words I will respond to during our time together. You will do what I ask quickly and quietly. Is that clear Tisha?" "Yes Mistress." I began by removing Tisha's workboots and pants. Tisha had on red "jockey for her" panties. I could see a wet spot as I spread her legs apart. I traced my finger along the inside of her thigh down to her ankle. She shivered and gasped. I yanked her leg and applied the restraint to her left ankle and then her the right ankle. As I removed her shirt I noticed her chocolate chip nipples harden with each breath she took.

I positioned myself so she could see me undress. I removed my panties and placed the crotch directly on her face. Tisha inhaled deeply and moaned again. I proceeded to my toy box and removed my dildos, condoms, black leather harness, nipple clamps, ostrich feather, vibrator, latex gloves, lube and blindfold. I took



Kerzeiflung 92 YK

my panties from her face and straddled my legs across her face, my pussy just inches from her eyes and nose. "Do you like what you see?" "Yes Mistress." "Do you want to stroke my cunt, maybe even fuck me?"

Tisha squirmed, her face flushed, she gulped and managed to squeak out "yes mistress." Still straddled across her face, I continued my assault on her senses; I began stroking my slippery clit. I placed three fingers inside myself and felt my vagina expand and contract. My fingers were covered with my sweet pussy juice. I took my fingers out and smeared my wetness above Tisha's top lip.

I told her if she sucked my fingers good enough, I would let her earn more goodies. I placed a latex glove on my hand and placed my gloved fingers in her mouth. With great

abandon, Tisha hungrily licked and sucked my fingers. Her lips were soft, full and plenty experienced in the sucking department. From her hot mouth and her lustful stare, I knew Tisha was not only a willing partner but, would teach me a few things too. I removed my hand from her mouth and reached for the blindfold. Tisha raised her head on cue. I placed the blindfold over her eyes, got off the bed and left the room. As quietly as I could, I removed a few items from Tisha's tool cart and returned to the bedroom. I placed the items alongside the other toys and proceeded to put on my harness and dildo. I put on a clean set of gloves and placed a condom my dildo. I wanted to ditch the scene and fuck her now. However, time was on my side.

I topped her and gently glided the feather around her neck, up her thigh, ever so slowly around her pubic mound and, finally up to her nipples; alternating back and forth, left to right. Tisha's hips began to gyrate. I pulled off her panties and saw a wonderful patch of dark curls glistening with her pussy's wetness. I shoved two fingers; into her tight hole. Her back arched. "Is that what you want mistress to do?" "Yes, Yes, Please!!!" "Please what?" I asked in a voice of displeasure. "Mistress, yes, please finger fuck me." "Why should I finger fuck you?" "Mistress because it pleases you, all I desire is your pleasure mistress." I decided to test her limits. I licked her nipple gently and then clamped down hard with my teeth and simultaneously shoved three fingers into her anxious twat. Tisha cried out, "mistress it is so good, do- what you want with me I'm yours, please take me." That was my cue, I removed her ankle restraints and commanded her to get on her knees.

I grabbed that exceptional ass and slid my dildo inside her. I slowly moved in and out; then just put the tip of the dildo in. As I teased her with the tip, my fingers found her clit. I rubbed her clit and then fucked her

snatch doggie style. My fingers went back and forth from her clit to her nipples to inside her mouth. Tisha moaned, screamed, cried and begged me to let her cum. "Not yet my sweetness. I'm just getting warmed up." I slowed the pace down and turned Tisha on her back. I sat next to her and said, "You'll cum when I say you can. Now suck my cock!"

I guided her head to my cock. "Oh yes, that's right, suck it good baby, make me want to fuck you more. "Tisha sucked and licked my cock, I loved watching her work me. We were locked in complete passion. I had to enter her again. I placed her legs on my shoulders and pumped her pussy until I heard that slapping sound. I could no longer hold out, our body rhythms, moans and breathing synchronized. "Oh, Oh, Ooooh, un huh, yes baby. I ripped the blindfold off her face and looked deeply into her eyes and said, "Does this pussy belong to me?" "Yes mistress, it's your pussy, take it, Mistress!" I pulled

my cock out of her dripping hole and grabbed the adjustable C-clamp, I had taken from her toolbox.

Tisha's facial expression turned from passion to curiosity. I placed the clamp directly on her labia and then placed nipple clamps on each tit. Slowly I adjusted each device and watched Tisha's body respond. Her head moved from side to side and her deep breathing turned to panting. Tisha moaned and squealed. The wrist restraints were barely holding her. I draped my body in a chair next to the bed and enjoyed watching her writhe in pleasure/pain. My fingers proceeded to my aching snatch. I removed the dildo from the harness and put a clean rubber on and began fucking myself. I plunged deep, hard and fast, while my fingers rubbed my clit. Tisha's eyes were riveted on mine. Each stroke I gave myself, her body matched. I was reaching the point of no return when I heard "PINK MISTRESS!"

Unable to stop the rising tide of

orgasm I told Tisha, "cum with me baby, cum for your Mistress.. That's it, ride it with me, Yeah! Oh baby, Oh, baby, yeah! un huh, OOOOH, Ahhhh" Tisha yelled "I'm cumming, I'm cumming, I'm cumming for you MISTRESS. We both erupted with ear splitting screams which I am sure the whole complex heard. As I regained my strength, I joined Tisha on the bed.

Kissing her forehead, cheeks and lips I told her "You pleased Mistress well, you shall be rewarded." I removed the clamps, and restraints, placed the harness and my larger dildo back on. With my hips wrapped around hers, I fucked Tisha gently missionary style until she could cum no more and cried for me to stop. Tisha was a delightful play partner, she thanked me for introducing her to Mistress. I knew as long as I needed repairs, we would have more lust filled workorders to come.

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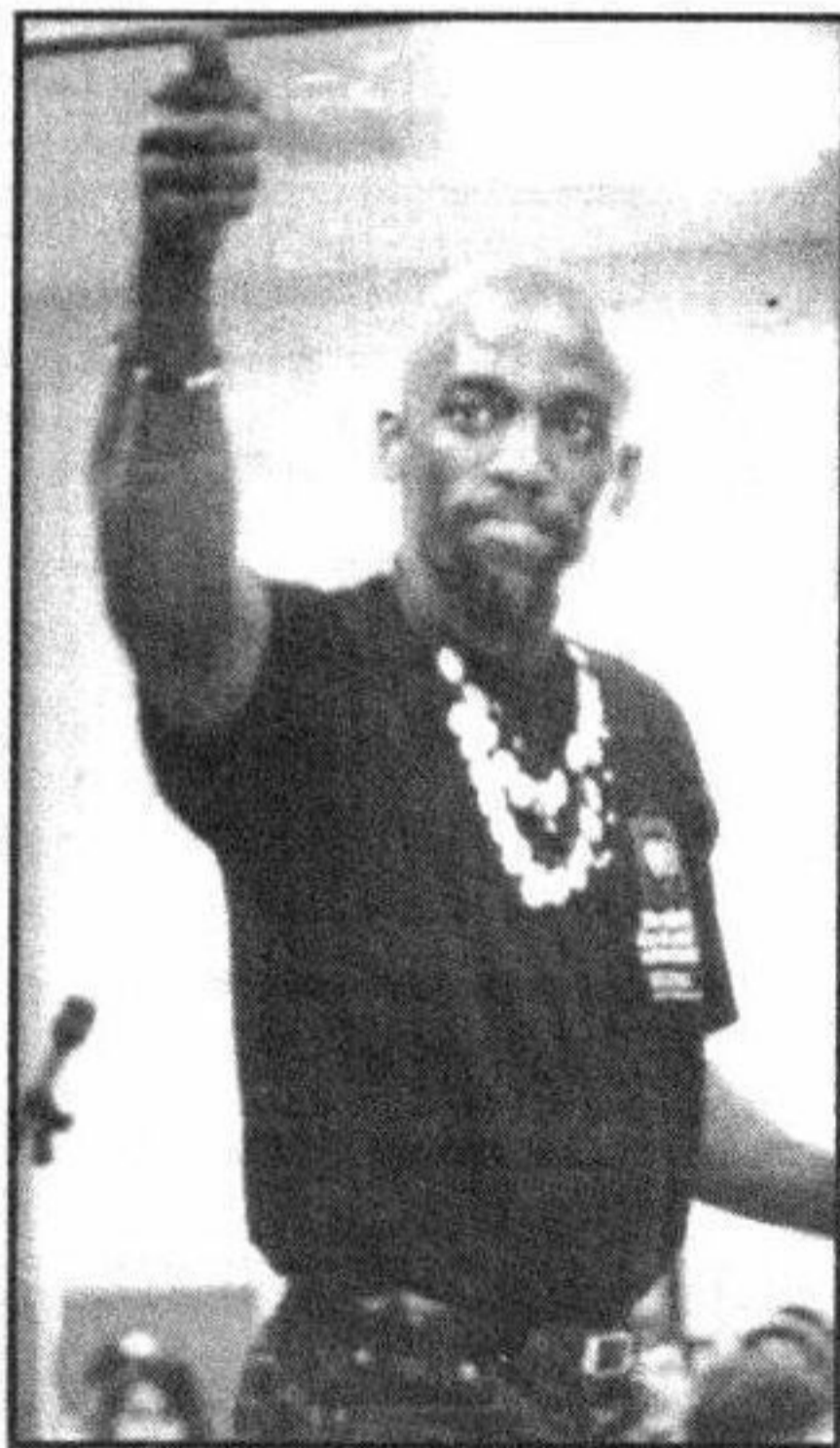
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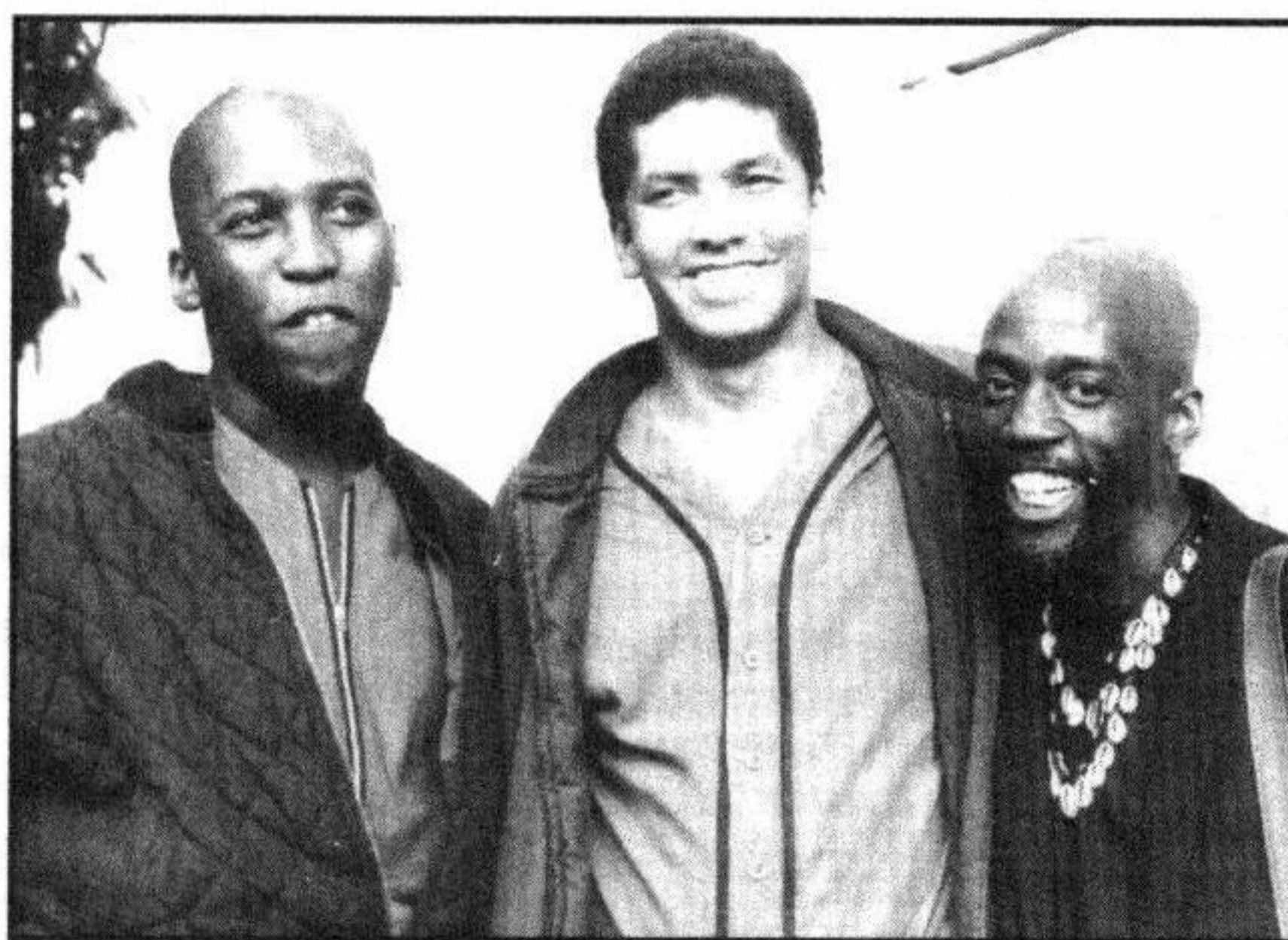
Essex Hemphill Reading

June 13, 1992 — The Women's Building, San Francisco

This Aché fundraiser, produced by Alan Miller, featured readings by Essex Hemphill, Stephanie Henderson, Dawn Rudd, and Marvin White.



Essex Hemphill



Marvin White,
Alan Miller,
Essex Hemphill



Stephanie
Henderson, Marvin
White, Dawn Rudd,
Essex Hemphill

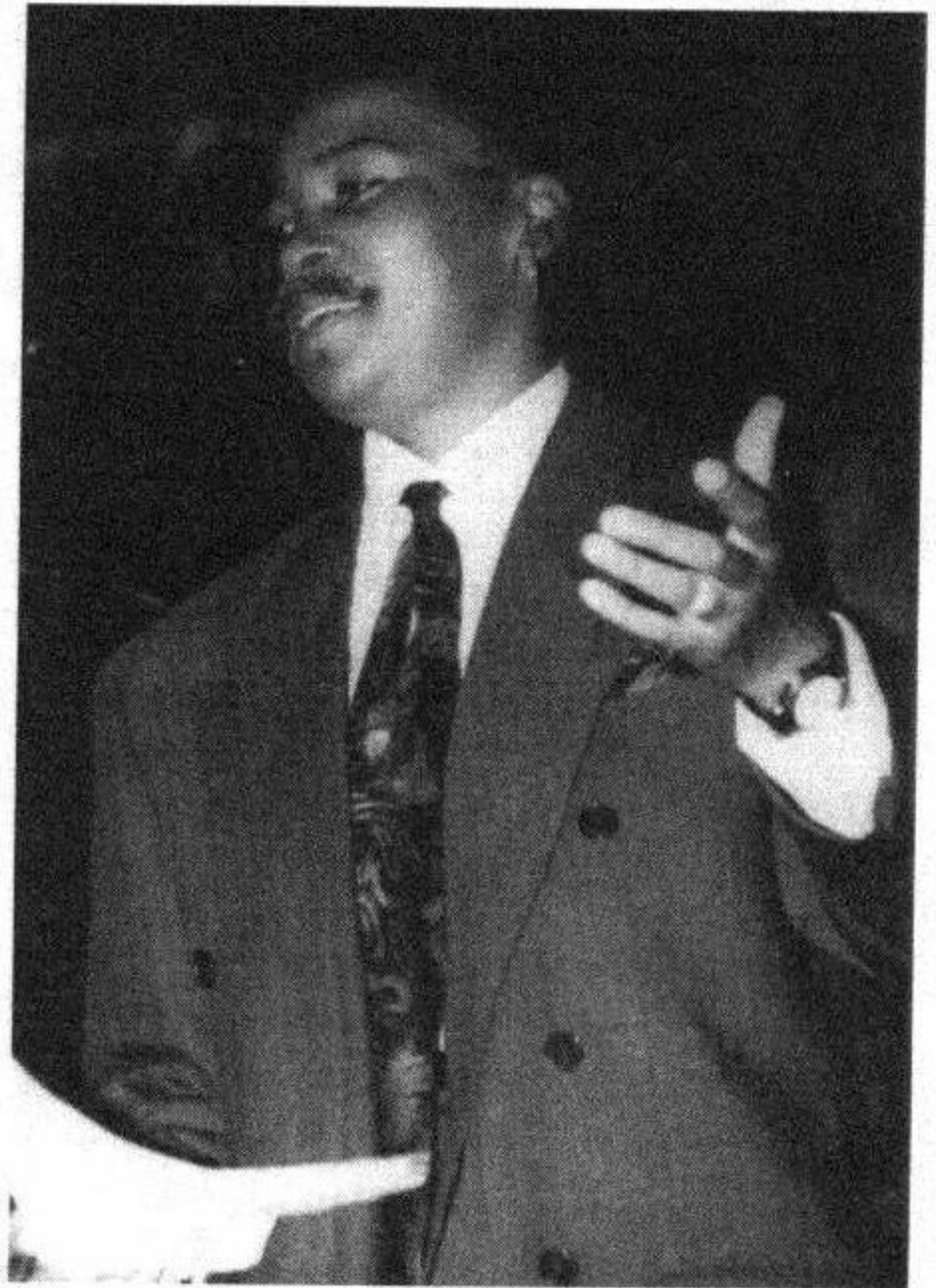
Photos by
Jane Cleland

"A Drag King Thang"

October 29th, 1992, La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley



"THE CROWNING OF THE DRAG KING"
C.J. & Colee
Credit: H. Len Keller



Belinda
Credit: H. Len Keller



Boa
Credit: H. Len Keller



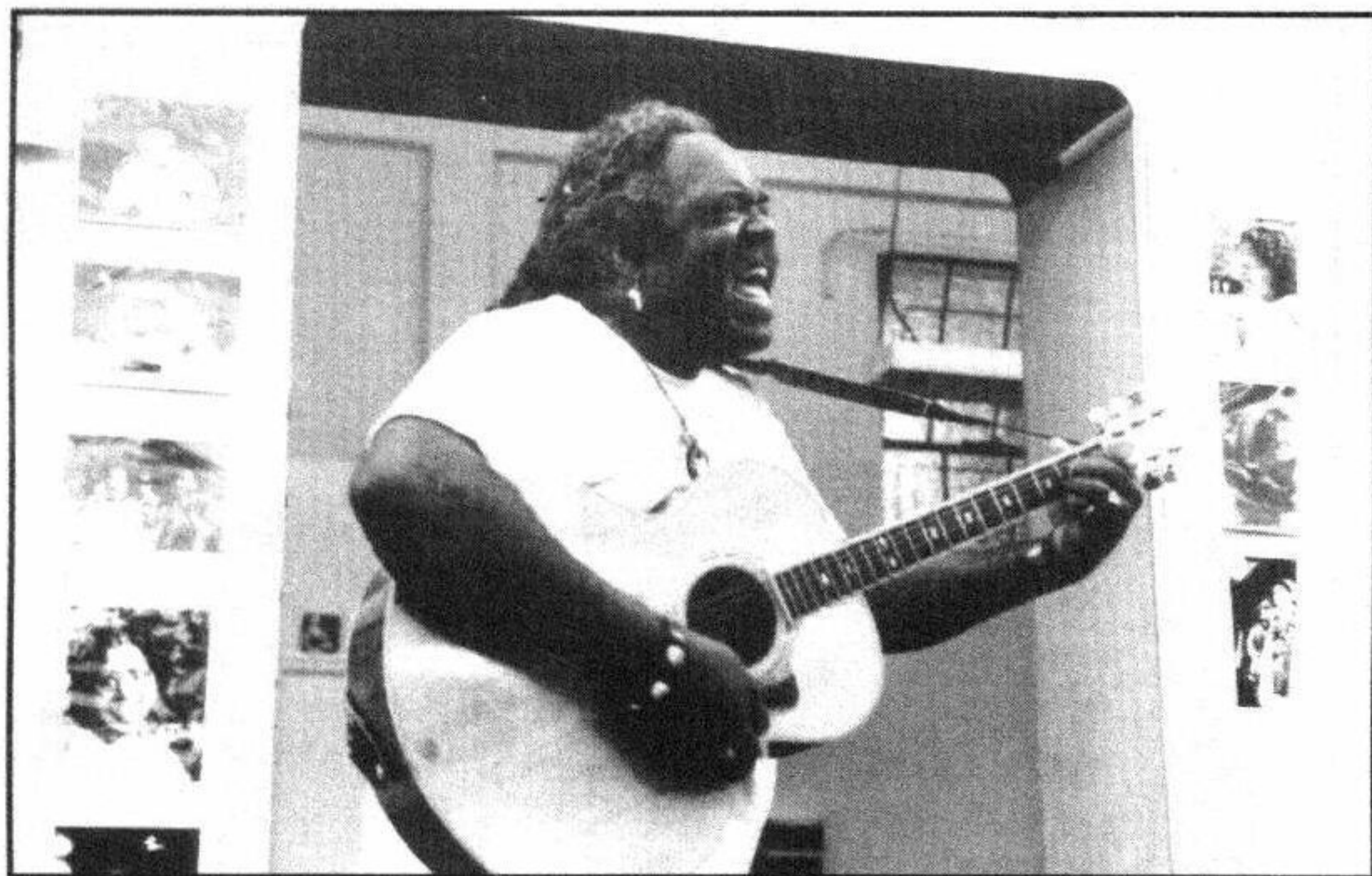
Pippa & Colee
Credit: Alicia Brite



Maria Medina
Credit: H. Len Keller

"A Celebration of the

November 29th, 1992 —

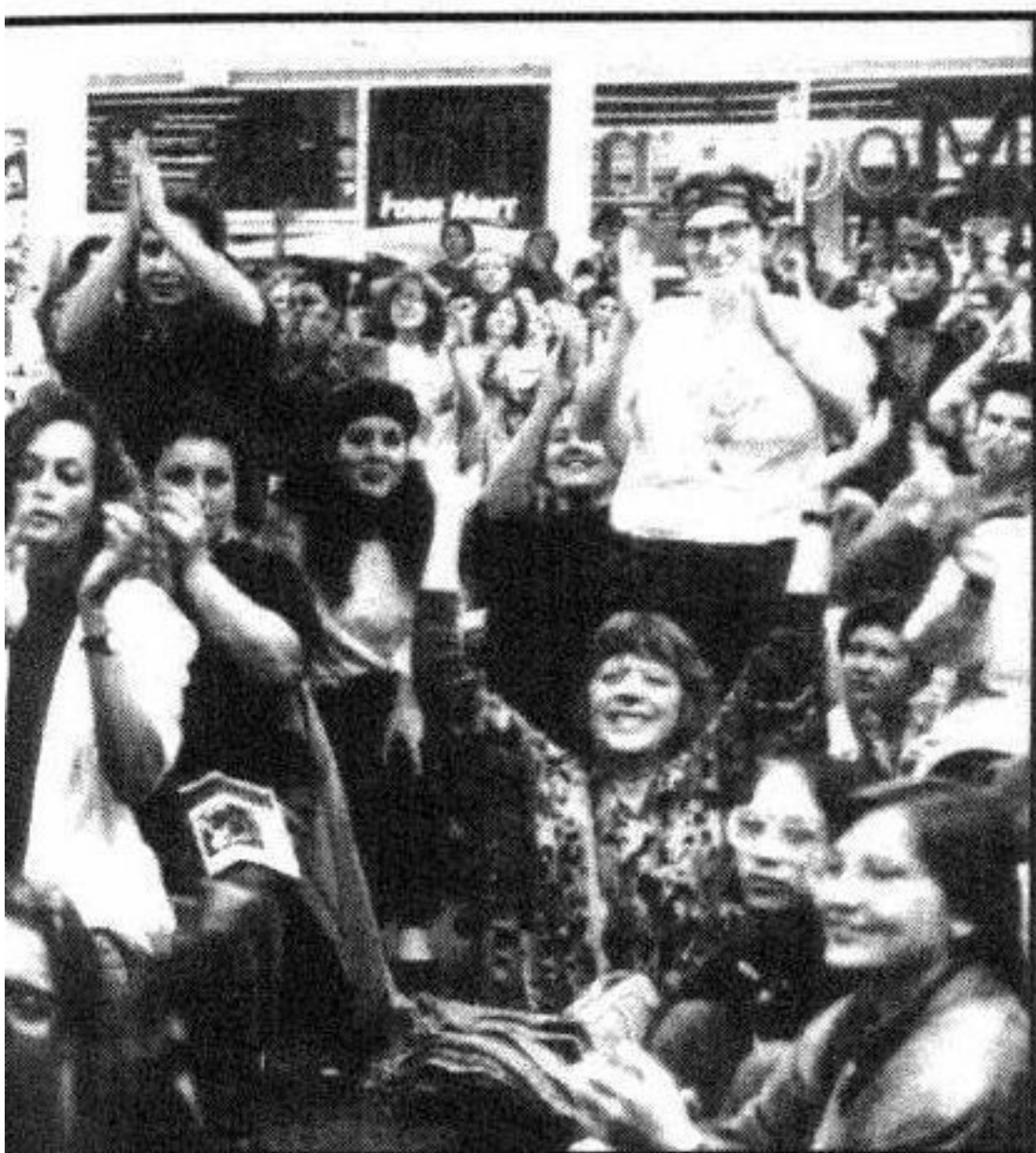


- "Rivers of Babylon" sung by Andrea Canaan
- "A Litany for Survival" from Black Unicorn read by Jean Weisinger
- "An open letter to Audre" read by Merle Woo
- "Love" written & performed by Blackberri
- "Call" from Our Dead Behind Us read by Cherrie Moraga
- From our sisters in Germany — Yvonne Kettels, Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria
- Nellie Wong
- "Movement in Black" written by Pat Parker, read by Gwen Avery, Alberta



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Jane Philomen Cleland



SUPPORT GROUPS

Black Lesbian Support Group for women in multicultural relationships. Meets 1st Sunday of month in Oakland. Info: (510) 839-3302/653-5732

Black Woman's Support Group for Rape and Incest Survivors: Give and get validation; share feelings and similar experiences; understand how the hurt still affects you; develop sisterhood. Led by Derethia C. Dual, MFCC with 15 years experience as an individual and couples therapist. Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30; Future Worlds Foundation Center, 4171 Piedmont Ave, Oakland (across from Piedmont Theatre). For more info call (510) 652-9918.

The Birthing Project: A nine month program for prospective lesbian, gay and bisexual parents of color. The Birthing Project is conceptually based on a woman's pregnancy. This program is aimed at serving lesbian, gay, and bisexual people of color regardless of economic background. Offering educational workshops, opportunities to explore in depth issues around creating families, panels comprised of gay parents of color sharing their experiences and advice as well as access to Lyon Martin's services. For further information and to register contact Cynthia Chan at the Parenting Program at Lyon Martin Health Services 415-565-7674. This program begins October 13th.

SISTAH SISTAH: A lesbian/bisexual women of color support/social/rap group at UC Berkeley. Meets weekly. For more info call the Women's Resource Center at (510) 642-4786.

Lesbians of Color/Third World Lesbian Support Group: meets Thursdays, 6:30-8pm; \$3 donation (no one turned away); Pacific Center, Telegraph and Derby, Berk. For info call Camille Barber, (510) 548-8283.

Multi-Cultural Bisexual Lesbian Gay Alliance: UC Berkeley. Women's social group every Thurs. 8-10pm. Women's Resource Center Library (Golden Bear Bldg, 2nd floor). All women invited for film nights, conversation, community sensuality, debates, play, and more....

ORGANIZATIONS

The NIA collective will welcome prospective new members at our may meeting. Many women who attended the 1992 gathering expressed an interest in working on future gatherings. This is your opportunity. We welcome you to bring your questions, energy and enthusiasm to this meeting. For details regarding time, date and location, please call: (510) 763-3969.

All listings with the exception of **SERVICE and JOB LISTINGS** are free of charge to lesbians of African descent.

SERVICE & JOB LISTINGS—25 words or less costs \$20 per issue. Any message over 25 words will cost an additional \$20. Listings should not exceed 50 words.

FLYER INSERTS: To insert a flyer for mailing with the Aché journal, \$25-100 donation to help cover postage. For more information contact Adalia at (510) 601-6844 between 6-8pm.

LGADDA, Lesbians and Gays of African Descent for Democratic Action is a new independent organization dedicated to the political empowerment of African American lesbians and gays. Annual membership \$20/\$10 fixed income. Our general membership meetings are held from 7:30-9pm on every third Thursday of the month at 507B Divisadero St. in San Francisco. Come join us for some serious discussions and lively debates!! For more information contact: LGADDA, 584 Castro St., Suite 130, San Francisco, CA 94114-2588.

BAYBLAG (Bay Area Black Lesbians and Gays) meet to network, socialize, educate, do political work, have fun. Info: Midgett (415) 648-3658

The Clearinghouse on Femicide is seeking to expand its newly formed steering committee. Great opportunity to meet brilliant, energetic women and contribute your skills and expertise. Attend monthly meetings, familiarize yourself with our many projects. Young women and women of color encouraged to call. Chris, 845-7005 or BJ, 527-4582.

Gay & Lesbian Sierra Club — We carpool to easy day hikes, brunches, camping, bike riding, tide pooling, moonlight walks, ski trips, some are women-only, all are friendly. Call recording at (510) 653-5012 or send \$12 for a year membership of six newsletters. GLS/Bay Chapter, 5237 College Ave., Oakland, CA 94618.

NOTICES

We are a mostly lesbian of color percussion band playing Afro-Caribbean, Brazilian music. We've played at Gay Pride, Pro-Choice and anti-war events. We're committed to unlearning racism work. We're looking for new members, if you're interested call Kay, (510) 654-3360 or Adalia (510) 601-6844

between 6-8pm. Deadline October 5th, 1992.

For Colored Girls Who Dare To Create Drama! Sapphire Theatre Co. is offering acting workshops (for beginners especially.) The classes are designed to create a firm foundation of acting skills, improvisation, voice, and physical skills will be developed. Workshops are \$5 each. For information call (510) 653-4945 and leave your name and number.

Producers Wanted!!! Aché is looking for black women with experience in producing events who are interested in working on Aché fundraising events. If you'd like to get involved please send your name, phone number, and production interests/experience to Events, Aché, P.O. Box 6071, Albany, CA 94706.

Brainy, Artsy Gals - A monthly art salon for lesbians only. Come share a light potluck, socializing, and the sharing and appreciation of art by Bay Area lesbians. Anyone interested in participating, please contact Leslie at (415) 824-4401.

Beginners Insight Meditation Group forming for Women of Color. Instruction, group meditation, discussion and support. Free. Please call Vega at (415) 821-2180.

Sisters!! Join the Bay Area's only women of color martial arts class at the Hand-To-Hand Community Arts Center, taught by Winn Gilmore. Fridays: 6-7:30pm, Sundays: 11-12:30pm. Hand-To-Hand C.A.C., 5680 San Pablo Ave., Oakland. Childcare, and carpooling can be arranged. For more information call Yvonne, (510) 874-4940.

The 2nd Annual West Coast Lesbian's Women Music Festival will be held Friday, May 28th thru Monday May 31st, 1993 in Santa Barbara, CA. The tickets range from \$115-\$215. Performers include Gwen Avery, Melanie DeMore, Rashida Oji, and Matu & Fuego Borincuba. Lesbians of Color who are interested in doing workshops at the festival contact Dawn Rudd at (510) 428-2848. For more information on the festival call (904) 826-0410.

2nd Annual Bay Area Women and Cancer Walk- May 22, 1993. Looking for folks to help—a little or a lot—in planning/organizing this year's benefit walk. Next meeting is February 24, 1993. Please call Mary Schroeder for details, at 415-469-0320.

PUBLICATIONS

BLK: a national black lesbian and gay news-magazine featuring profiles & interviews, excellent coverage of current events, and a comprehensive media watch. Single issue: \$2.

Subscription: \$18/yr./\$30/2 yrs. BLK, Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA 90083-0912. Phone: (213) 410-0808.

Black Lace, an erotic quarterly from BLK publications. Crossing over the threshold of the politically correct to another, more intimate kind of sisterhood. "Let's celebrate," says editor Alycee Lane. "Let us share our fantasies frankly, honestly even brutally...to hell with what we've taught ourselves to think. Pledge allegiance to your entire black woman selves." Single copy: \$6. Subscription: \$20 yr./\$36-2 yrs. Black Lace, Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA 90083-0912. Phone: (213) 410-0808/fax (213) 410-9250.

KUUMBA is a new literary magazine for lesbians and gay African Americans. The quarterly features poetry from across the country and from Africa as well. It's name comes from one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, meaning "creativity." Single issue: \$4.50. Subscription: \$15 yr./\$28-2 yrs. KUUMBA, Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA 90083-0912.

ULOAH — A Publication of United Lesbians of African Heritage. To become a member of ULOAH and receive the quarterly newsletter mail your name and address with check/money order for \$10 annual membership payable to ULOAH, 1626 No. Wilcox Ave. #190, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

SERVICES

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Saundra Leiby, MSW, psychotherapist—interested in working with clients of color. Micaela Lovett, supervisor. License MFC 23665. Sliding Scale. (510) 534-5006

Counseling For Women — "Let's break the bonds of the emotions of oppression and fly with the sun in our hearts" Simbwala, (510) 531-5103.

SUBMISSIONS WANTED

SHOCK, SCANDAL, HIGH DRAMA!! Aché needs your submissions for the Aché **CONTROVERSY** issue. We are looking for strong opinions on such issues as: **S & M, Bisexuality, Interracial Relationships**, or any other hot and/or controversial topics in our community. We would like to hear from as many of our readers as possible, not just women who identify themselves as writers. We all talk behind closed doors, we argue with lovers and friends, so let's get some dialogue going out in the open!!

Multi-cultural Lesbian Relationships Anthology. First-person writings, cassettes of dialogues O.K. Can request interview. Some topics of interest: racism within and outside relationship; having/raising children; socializing/friendships; language differences, etc. Contact: Rene Dawson & Terri Jewell, co-editors, P.O. Box 23154, Lansing, MI 48909. SASE required with all correspondence.

At The Crossroads is a brand new visual, performing and literary arts journal for women artists of African descent! Arising from the virtual absence of documentation of Black Canadian women's art, and the apparent need for a cultural and political magazine encompassing a wide range of issues, ATC aims to become a creative outlet for artists here and abroad.

Manuscripts of poetry, short stories, journal entries, experimental writing, radio plays, theatre, interviews, screen plays, transcribed performance pieces, and all other forms of creative writing are welcome. Also welcome are submissions of visual art—line drawings, mixed media, painting, quilts, sculpture, beadwork, photographs, etc. Accompany your work with a brief bio and any other relevant info. Please send photographs or photocopies of art work—no originals. All work not sent with SASE will not be returned. All photographs will be returned. Send to: At the Crossroads: A Journal for Women of African Descent c/o Karen Augustine, PO Box 317, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S8, Canada

Black Lesbian Culture Book being compiled. Seeking past and present photographs, names, organizations, anecdotes and rumors, song titles and lyrics, publications, notes on personal style, lovemaking tips, recipes, black and white artwork, references, herstory and sheroes, conferences, ANYTHING by, about, for Black Lesbians. Also need fund-raising ideas! Contact Terri Jewell, PO Box 23154, Lansing, MI 48909, or call (517) 485-3500 anytime.

Calling All Bisexual Women— a call for written and visual work for the first anthology published in Canada by and about bisexual women. At least half of this anthology will be written and produced by women of color. We are excited and honored that it will be published by SISTER VISION PRESS, a Black Women and Women of Colour Press. Send a SASE to Bisexual Women's Anthology, c/o Sister Vision Press, P.O. Box No. 217, Stn. E, Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E2.

Mixed-race/ Light Skinned? Autobiographical contributions, text and visuals, for book by mixed-race/ light skinned Black lesbians. For further info contact: SS, c/o BM 4390, London WC1N 3XX, England.

TOUGH DOVE BOOKS is looking for lesbian adventure stories for an anthology: stories about wild women, eccentric characters, sexual exploits, travel, sci-fi, true life experience, everyday tales, exciting events, fiction and nonfiction. Enclose SASE.

Previously unpublished writers encouraged. Manuscripts must be double spaced and will not be returned. ASCII (DOS text) file format on IBM PC compatible OK. Send to: Mikaya, 11101 Eastside Road, Ukiah, CA 95482.

Women in the Moon has changed the submission dates and fees for the Pat Parker Memorial Poetry Award, for the Woman in the Moon Poetry Prize and for regular seasonal submissions to the company. Submission dates for the Pat Parker Memorial Poetry Award will be accepted from May 1 to July 31 of each year. The submission fee is \$10.00. Poems will be accepted for the Woman in the Moon Poetry contest from January 1 to March 31. The submission fee will be \$5.00. Manuscript submissions to Woman in the Moon will be accepted beginning January 1 and ending on April 30. The submission fee is \$7.00. Woman in the Moon accepts the work of gay people, women, prisoners, African Americans, and those people who find it difficult to place their work. Work should focus on any experience of enlightenment, hope, peace, joy, and trust. Woman in the Moon gives full editorial reports on all poetry submissions. For further information or to request a free catalog phone or write: Woman in the Moon 2215-R Market Street, Box 137 San Francisco, CA 94114 (408) 253-3329

7th New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Festival, September 9-12 and 16-19, 1993. A call for Guest Curators. A structure of guest curators has proven an effective way to include new audiences and makers in the Festival. The majority of this year's programs will again focus on those organized by guest curators. Each curator will be paid an honorarium. In addition to film and video work, we strongly encourage the submission of multimedia, installations, interactive projects, audiovisual projects, film and video performances and any other non-traditional explorations of the moving image. Works by first time medi-makers are welcome. Deadline for Program Proposals is March 12, 1993. Send a concise written proposal of a program that you'd like to curate. As much as possible, include titles and brief descriptions of particular works. If you cannot name specific works, please explain as clearly as possible the unifying idea, theme, regional approach or other consideration by which you will organize your program, explaining some of the aesthetic choices you might make as well as a strategy for obtaining the work. Also explain your plans for publicising the program. For further information contact NYGLEFF c/o Festival Committee, 503 Broadway, Suite 503, New York, NY 10012. (212) 925-5883

Anthology of Bearded Women... Requests submissions on the topic of women and facial/body hair. Poetry, short stories, personal accounts, photographs, comic strips and fiction welcome. Deadline for submissions: May 31, 1993. Send to: Rivka Mason 2325 B Carleson Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.

PERSONAL AD

Single, Black Lesbian, looking to connect with other positive single GBF's nationwide especially NY/Tri-State area who are interested in friendship and who enjoy traveling etc. Lesbian only, please, no bisexuals. For information, please write: Travel 'N' Style, P.O. Box 524150 Stadium, Bronx, N.Y. 10452

PRESS RELEASE

As a fundraiser for the **National Gay & Lesbian Task Force** in celebration of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay & BI Equality and Liberation, ROMANOVSKY & PHILLIPS, KAREN WILLIAMS, & MARGIE ADAM, will be appearing in concert on SATURDAY, APRIL 24, in Washington D.C. The concert will be at 8:00PM at the University of the District of Columbia Auditorium, 4200 Connecticut Ave. NW, D.C. at the Van Ness Metro Stop. Tickets will be available at Lammas and Lambda Rising Bookstores in D.C. and through the mail by sending check or money order to NGLTF, 1734 14th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009. Tickets are \$18.00, general admission. The concert will be sign language interpreted, and wheelchair accessible. There will be a reception, with the artists, following the concert. For further information call NGLTF (202) 332-6483

The Lesbians Festivals! Theatre, Music, Comedy, Writers, & Lesbians Everywhere: The West Coast Lesbians' Festival, Memorial Day Weekend in Santa Barbara. The East Coast Lesbians' Festival on Labor Day Weekend, in the mountains, 2 1/2 hours north of NYC, and Hawaii Fest, Thanksgiving Weekend on Oahu. Particular

Productions, 279 Lester Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606 (904) 826-0410

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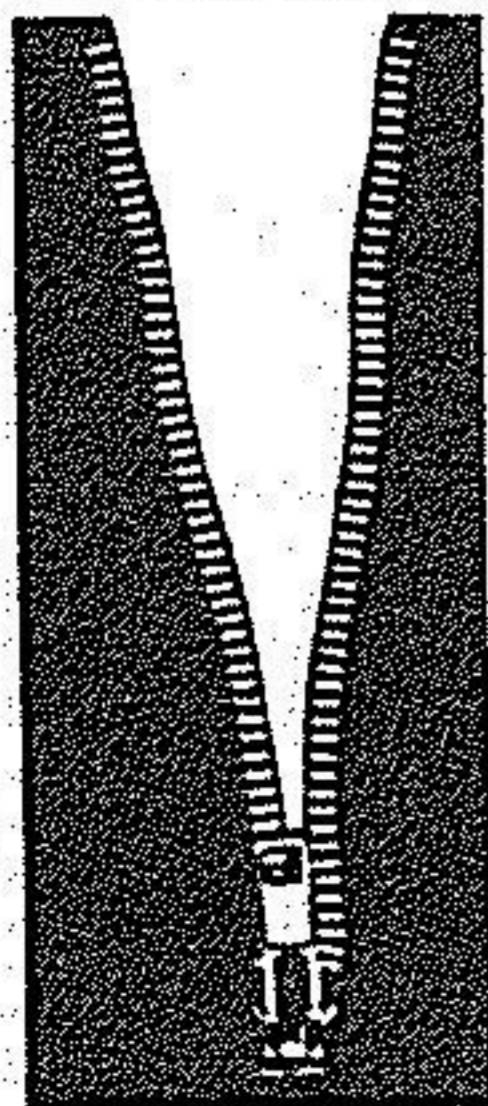
Lesbian/Gay Rights Group seeks responsible, motivated part-time worker. Responsibilities include: clerical, phones, data entry, volunteer coordination, special projects. 15-20 hours/week (flexible); \$8.00/hour. Contact: S. Taravella, AAPHR, 273 Church Street, San Francisco, CA, 94114. Women of color strongly encouraged to apply.

The National Center For Lesbian Rights is currently accepting applications for the position of: Coordinator, Lesbian of Color Program. **Position:** This half-time coordinator will be responsible for continuing the development of the Lesbian of Color Program, locally and nationally. The coordinator would be expected to act as a community organizer to bring the voices and concerns of lesbians of color to the organization; to establish an agenda for the project; to coordinate the Spanish language newsletter, and to combat within the lesbian and gay community the history of invisibility and insensitivity to racial cultural and ethnic definition. **Salary:** \$24k-28k, FTE plus excellent benefits at a pro-rated basis.

Requirements:

Minimum 3-5 years experience working with an ethnically diverse community and/or of community achievements within a specific racial, cultural or ethnic community. Familiarity with and demonstrated commitment to lesbian, gay, women's and civil rights issues. Excellent oral and written communication skills. Send resume, including three references to: **Abby Abinanti, Legal Director, Director, Lesbian of Color Project, National Center for Lesbian Rights, 1663 Mission St., Suite 550, San Francisco, CA 94103.**

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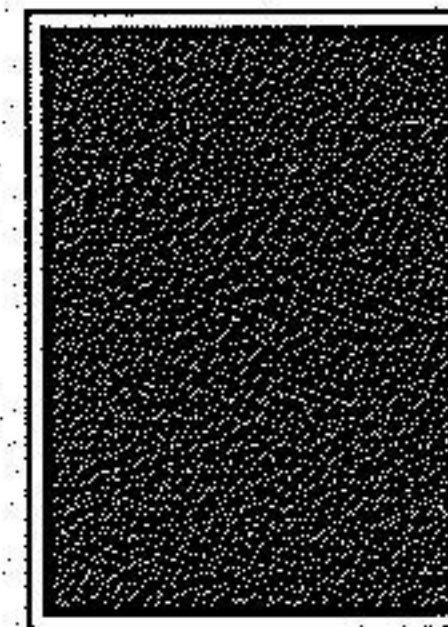
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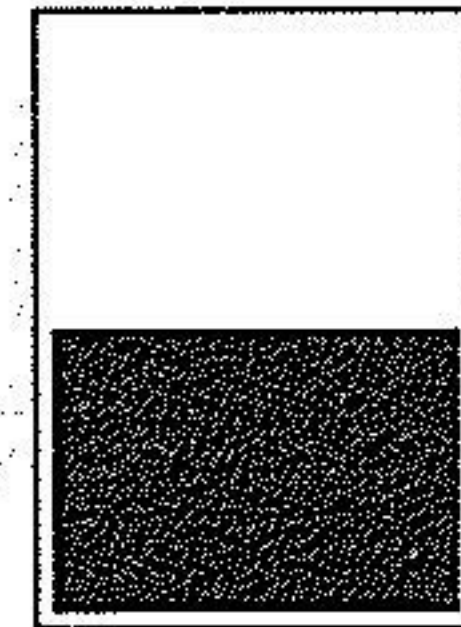
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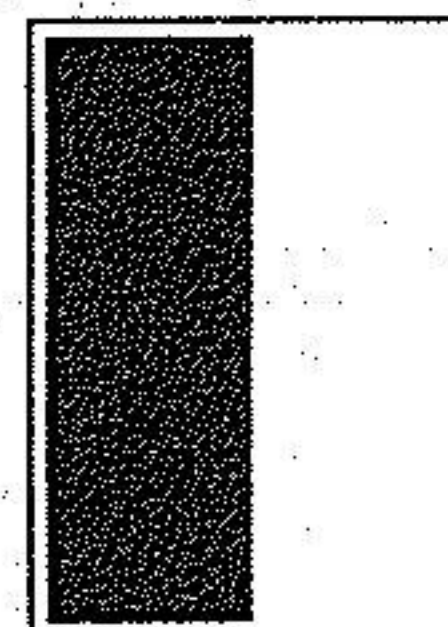


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