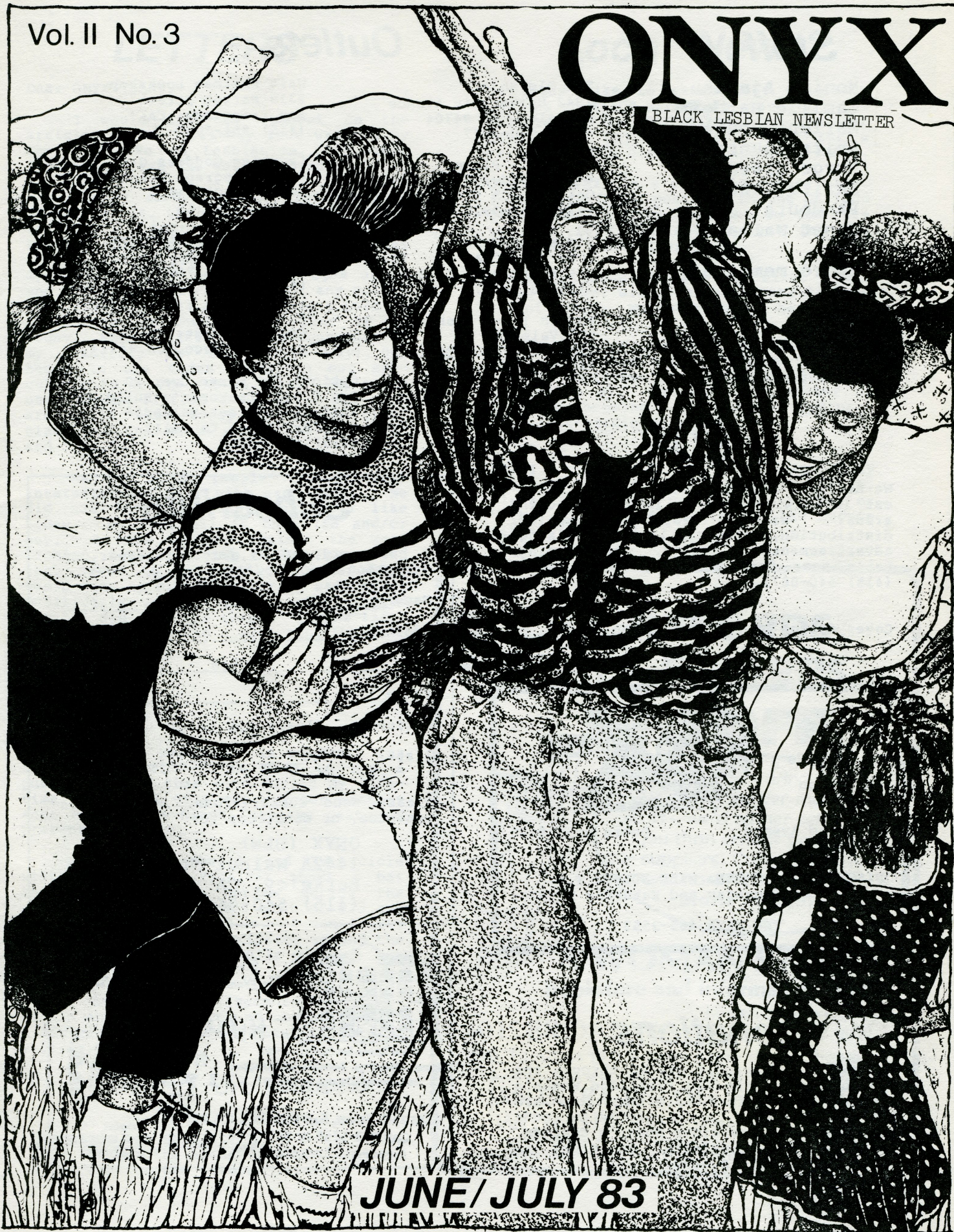


Vol. II No. 3

ONYX

BLACK LESBIAN NEWSLETTER

JUNE/JULY 83



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SPECIAL THANKS

Audre Lorde
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The Old Mole
1942 Universtiy Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704
(415) 540-6077

A Woman's Place
4015 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94609
(415) 547-9920

Old Wives Tales
1009 Valencia
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 821-4679

Modern Times Bookstore
968 Valencia
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 282-9246

Outlets

Walt Whitman Bookshop
2319 Market Street
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Laughing Goddess Grotto
4118 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, CA 94609
(415) 653-4169

Oakland Natural Foods
2710 Park Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94606
(415) 839-8074.

P. O. Plus
584 Castro Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

Options for Women Over 40
San Francisco Women's Building
3543 18th Street/Valencia
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 431-6405

HELP!

We need new members with skills or interest in working with us in the following areas: writing, editing, graphics, distribution, outreach, law, fundraising, advertisements, typing, bookkeeping. Let's hear from you now! Call us at (415) 540-0671.

Cover design by Sarita Johnson.

Subscribe!

I have enclosed \$5 for a one-year subscription to ONYX (BLN).

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Optional: Please put me on the mailing list: YES _____ NO _____

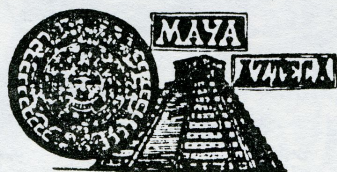
Please send subscriptions, ads, correspondence, or donations to:

ONYX (BLN)
1442A Walnut St., #307
Berkeley, CA 94709
(415) 540-0671

EVE

presents

for women
at nite



59 Grand Avenue
Oakland

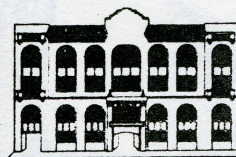
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DISCO, VIDEO GAMES, WIDE SCREEN T.V.
Every Thursday and Saturday Nite

THE MAYA 465-3553

Donations

We now have nonprofit status through the sponsorship of the San Francisco Women's Centers. Therefore, all donations are tax deductible. Checks should be made out to the San Francisco Women's Centers/Black Lesbian Newsletter in order to benefit from this status.



San Francisco Women's Centers
The Women's Building of the Bay Area

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LETTERS

Dear ONYX (BLN),

I would like to comment on the article in the April-May issue written by Cheryl Clarke on Lesbianism. I would like to address the word Lesbian.

When I arrived in San Francisco in August of '74, the word "Lesbian" was new to me. I have been a social/sexual Lesbian for 34 years and a political Lesbian for 27 years. The early part of my Lesbian years between the ages of 14 and 19, I was not conscious of any political ramifications around being a Lesbian in Boston in the fifties like it is today. When society made me conscious of my sexuality (in a negative way), we began to use codes words in our subculture to denote who we were. The terms used in the fifties and sixties and what are still used today among the older black men and women were, "In the life" and "Gay."

We as black people (homosexuals) interacted socially with each other. We did not have separate identities like today. We were all in the life and/or gay. I have nothing against the word Lesbian, because living in San Francisco, that seems to be the word some white women came up with to identify each other politically and socially. But I must admit I did like the terms, "In the life" and "Gay." They had a nice ring to them.

Midgett

Dear ONYX (BLN),

I have a warm spot in my heart for the Newsletter. I am glad to see a publication of this kind during my lifetime. It will give our younger sisters some history on Black Lesbians past and present.

For example, when I read the article written by Joyce Penalver about a bar called Tubbies in Harlem during the sixties, it brought back a lot of old and wonderful memories for me. I can relate so well to Joyce's description around the good feeling one got while hanging out there.

I had my advertisement under personals and through this ad connected with a sister, and we became Saturday morning walking partners.

continued on page 6

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION

July 7th for the August issue;
Sept. 6th for the October issue.

Local News

We would like to extend our congratulations to **ALICE WALKER** for receiving the Pulitzer Prize for literature for her novel, *The Color Purple*. Look for a review of this book in an upcoming issue.

CASSIE LOPEZ, in a very close race, lost in her bid for a position on the Oakland City Council. She promises to continue to work for political changes for her grassroots constituency.

DARLENE LAWSON became the first black woman to ever win election to the Oakland School Board. We congratulate her!

PAULA ROSS, a frequent contributor to ONYX (BLN), has had her first piece of fiction published in the current issue of *Conditions* #9. Paula is the editor of the forthcoming anthology, *Ordinary Women/Extraordinary Lives*.

HELP! The staff of ONYX desperately needs a typewriter and a file cabinet. Please call us if you can donate one or both. Your donation will be tax deductible. 540-0671.

selected

BOOKS, RECORDS, T-SHIRTS, POSTERS

30% OFF!



We're clearing out lots of slower-moving stuff—we'd rather sell it to you than send it back to our suppliers! Current, unusual, and hard-to-find titles! Starts June 10!

A WOMAN'S PLACE

bookstore and information center

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**AN EXTRA 10% OFF SALE ITEMS
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After the Disappointment

-by Yasmin A. Sayyed

What happens, I recently pondered, when one realizes that she's given away more of herself than she had intended to in a romantic relationship? What happens after the disappointment and the anger (with both) finally subside? I, at best, began to think about restructuring the relationship, of maintaining respect and a less intensified degree of love between us; at worst to think about terminating the relationship and working single-mindedly towards reoccupying my "alone" space.

Since I have a proclivity to catastrophize and immediately run for my supposed emotional survival, I only later began processing around the reformatting of the relationship's pattern. For weeks, I, aided by a cracked knee cap, sat around being meditative, rereading old journal notations, entering new ones, and pondering my direction.

There are precious few models for those of us who wish neither to continue within the existing framework of a partnership, nor to terminate it. As lesbians, we do not have any culturally defined constructs, no traditionally delineated limits on the scope of our relationships. What we do have is a unique opportunity to create structures that respect our individuation. If we operate with honor, compassion, and integrity, I believe we can develop diversified formats that are conjointly self-respecting. We can define and refine the parameter of our partnerships to accommodate our differentiated needs at specific times in our lives. I'd like to share with you a journal entry about reclamation, taken from a November dream.

The density of the woods thickened, my feet bare and unaccustomed to the rocks and downed twigs, are scratched, pained, and bleeding; my lungs, unaccustomed to the ever-darkening forest, cry for the light of guidance.

Yet, the heart knows no fatigue, knows no discomfort, yearns only to forge on beckoning illumination of the vision that lies within.

Within, I am full.

Satiated.

My skin stretched taut. My belly is full with child

Heaviness of body, and lightness of soul.

Confluent consciousness forging on. Weariness to the point of exhaustion.

I stop. Wrap my arms backwards around a small tree as I support my arched back.

The Krisna blue of the sky peeks through the light-to-dark green leaves of the trees.

The trillium, patches of Douglas irises, oxalis, and yellow violets dot the dampened ground.

It's a far cry from Southern Boulevard, the El trains that vibrated my bedroom at clockable intervals;

The vacant lots filled with broken glass

That dubbed as playgrounds.

It's another reality out here,

Would I still be me, I mused to myself,

If I had stayed in the South Bronx?

Would I still have connected so profoundly with

This reality of interconnected consciousness,

Would I have lost my dreams and myself

In the labyrinth of horizontal hostility and internalized rage.

The energy tugs at my mind again. My thoughts broken, and again my tired legs move. The spiralled path weaves a pattern familiar to some inner mechanism that my conscious mind could not readily recollect.

I move, walk, run, stumble, climb upward, around over, meandering with deliberation, driven by gentle tugs and guided through the eye of my mind that sees/senses in inarticulate ways.

I follow, trust, as trust I must, for but to follow I have little choice.

The leaves swell and touch one another.

Their gynomorphic forms lean, sway sensuously backwards, allowing greater amounts of light to shine through the tops of the skylight effects of the encirclement. The slowly descending, ascending, and redescending hues of lavender, moss green, Persian blue, and glowing gold of the sky and leaves enters my innards.

I clear a space. Scratch out a shallow opening with a digging stick. I lay my bare body upon the cool, damp earth and evoke the energies to help gingerly spew forth the fullness within me, to expel itself, to unite with reality, to meet the place where I rest my inner universe and to join the spirit and illusion of my being.



Rolls of thunder, soft kettle drum rolls initiated deep within the base of my spinal cord emanate towards the gamut of colours before me. Rolling hills, thunder, kettle drums - potent powers being gingerly called forth. Increase their energy, their speed, their message. The power mounts, bursts in my release. I lie there beside my shell, my housing, my illusion. I prepare to help.

Breathe
Breathe with this form that moves; is full of pressure and life. Breathe with it, into it, for it. My breath quickens, becomes shallow. I push; it pushes; we push harder with deliberation, with pain of separation, the delight of individuation.

Another separation.
A head; the shoulders
The rest of the emission is with ease.
I stare.
The baby is me.
The body is mine
The spirit mine
I birthed myself
of myself
I reconnect with SELF.

When I am deeply involved in a relationship(s) it is particularly important that I both remember to be there for that relationship, and be mindful of my self-nurturing internal mechanisms. When it occurred to me that I was not being very respectful of my internal messages, I wanted to throw the relationship out, and emerge myself in much needed solitude. (I'm prone to be dramatic). The task at hand now is to keep my heart open and to take care of my own needs.

Once during an out of body experience, I was told, "Yasmin, Be" by my grandfather. It was a simple message: to be who I am and to trust in my self.

I had given up myself, to love another, the issue, the wrestling was within me, was one of self-reclamation, of self-integration. I gave up my self, then used the resultant pain as an excuse to advertently calcify my heartspace.

I couldn't live with myself and not breathe through the rose of my heart with pedals (perceptors/receptors) arching outwards - giving and receiving warmth and gifts so inexplicably precious as only open hearts have the ability to dare to perceive.

I have "to be:
and
"be"
with me.

letter continued from p. 3

The Newsletter for February was great!!! I really enjoyed reading it. The articles seemed more newsy. The poems, reviews, personal articles were all noteworthy.

The April-May issue was "Out of Sight"! I mean to say you sisters are taking care of business in the true sense of the word. The article entitled "Occupation: Ornament" written by Sarita Johnson, and the article written by Storme Webber both touched on issues of racism and how racism affects us both in a subtle and blatant manner. These articles have forced me to take a second look at my white counterparts' patterns of behavior when I am in their presence.

The articles on the Ollie's and Amelia's affairs are important for Black women to read. I seldom go to Ollie's, but I will on occasion go to Amelia's. Because of the articles in the Newsletter, I will discontinue going until the demands are met.

Womin, one of the ways we can support each other's struggles is through the Newsletter, but only if womin continue to write, so "write on." Send in your articles. I want to know you.

Delcina

OLLIE'S BOYCOTT UPDATE

In our April-May issue of ONYX, we called for a boycott of Ollie's, a women's bar in Oakland, CA. Last November, six black women were subjected to clearly racist treatment. Demands were made by the women involved, many of whom are part of the ONYX staff.

Most of these women met with Ollie and presented her with a list of demands. At that November meeting, Ollie agreed to meet all of these demands.

The boycott came about due to Ollie's failure to carry out the demands that were agreed upon back in November. Several times during the month of April, informational pickets were present in front of Ollie's to discourage potential customers from patronizing the bar and educating them around what the issues were that created this current stand.

The status of the boycott at press time is as follows. ONYX is attempting to negotiate a settlement with the owners of Ollie's with the assistance of two Pacific Center personnel who are acting as mediators. The Pacific Center in Berkeley is a gay mental health agency. We will do our best to keep you updated. We thank you for your interest and support of the boycott.

A WOMAN'S PLACE BOOKSTORE AND INFORMATION CENTER

From the Woman's Place collective:

I.C.I.--A Woman's Place, a feminist bookstore and information center in Oakland, California, has been through a seven month long dispute over ownership and control of the bookstore and the conduct of the collective members. We're glad to announce that this dispute has been resolved as of April 15, 1983, by a decision of three women arbitrators.

The decision awards management of the bookstore to Keiko Kubo, Jesse Meredith, Darlene Pagano, and Elizabeth Summers, who are to immediately incorporate the business. These four will leave the corporation, two within one year and two within two years. Alice Malloy, Carol Wilson, and Natalie Lando are to immediately disassociate from the business and are awarded the equivalent of one month's pay. Each side is awarded \$2,000 towards legal expenses from the bookstore's assets. Copies of the decision are available at a Woman's Place.

We consider the arbitrator's award to the departing collective members to be minimal. We would like to make additional payment to them, but can make no concrete statement until we thoroughly evaluate the bookstore's financial condition.

We are relieved to put this dispute behind us, and are working to put the arbitrators' order into effect immediately. We are also focusing our energies on the survival of A Woman's Place as a fiscally sound, diverse, creative feminist bookstore and information center. We have dropped the "I.C.I." portion of our name because so many people found it confusing; the initials stood for "Information Center Incorporate," which we'll continue to be.

We're discussing plans for promotion and outreach, fundraising, renovating the premises, and expanding community involvement.

We need the support and energy and "matronage" of the bookstore community to make all this happen. We have a lot of work ahead of us. Please come see us, and help us continue and expand A Woman's Place as an asset of the women's community.

A Woman's Place collective:

Darlene Pagano
Elizabeth Summers
Jesse Meredith
Keiko Kubo

ATTENTION ARTISTS/PHOTOGRAPHERS

ONYX needs your black and white artwork and photographs. Call and leave a message for Marlene or Sarita at 540-0671.

June Calendar

Tuesdays

Black Lesbians Consciousness Raising Group. Learning to ask for what you want. Do I really seek pleasure in living? 7:30-9:00 p.m. Free. Call Linda, 431-5542 after 6:00 p.m.

Wednesdays

Women of Color Health Clinic in South Berkeley - for information, call 843-6204.

Fridays

Midgett's Place. Lesbians meeting lesbians--chemical free, refreshments, dancing, entertainment. 864-0876.

A support group for lesbian mothers of color will meet monthly. If interested, contact Marge, 782-3054; Windy, 532-1628; or Midgett, 867-0876.

Bay Area black lesbians and black gay men meet once eachmonth. For info., call Marlene, 540-0671.

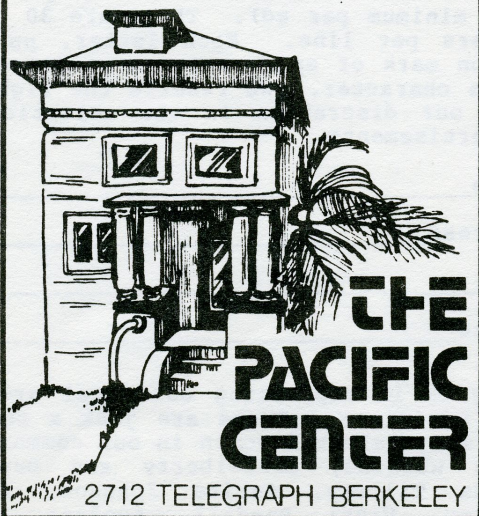
Saturday, June 11th

Take Back the Night March, 8:30 p.m. East end of panhandle (Oak and Baker), S.F. For info: Ann, 821-7884; Robyn, 337-0860; or WAVPM 554-2709.

Friday, June 17th

Casselberry-Dupree, Annette Aguilar, Debbie Saunders. 8:00 p.m., La Pena, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley.

- mental health services for lesbians & gay men
- special interest rap groups
- gay switchboard 841-6224



Saturday, June 18th/Sunday, June 19th

JUNETEENTH PARADE. 12:00 noon. Begins at Golden Gate Park entrance and panhandle, S.F. Parade ends at Eddy & Fillmore Streets. Fillmore Street will be lined with more than 125 booths, music, food, crafts, and more. Continues thru Sunday.

Saturday, June 18th

Casselberry-Dupree, Annette Aguilar, Mimi Fox. 2 shows, 8 & 10. Artemis Society, Valencia St., S.F.

Sunday, June 19th

Eastbay Lesbian and Gay Day. Parade begins from Willard Park (Telegraph & Derby) at 11:00 a.m., march to Provo Park (Grove & Center St., Berkeley), rally 1-6 p.m.

Sunday, June 19th

Casselberry-Dupree appearing at the Santa Cruz Gay Freedom Day Festival.

Sunday, June 19th

Terry Garthwaite and Avotcja. A concert of music and poetry. Valencia Rose, 766 Valencia, S.F. For info., call 552-1445. 8:00 p.m., \$4.

Monday, June 20th

Lesbian-Gay Freedom Day Exhibition. Thirteen years of herstory and memorabilia, photos. West Lobby, City Hall, S.F. Continues thru June 26th.

Wednesday, June 22nd

Your donations have not yet been returned to the control of the Women's East Bay Building collective! Update on WEBB collective's struggle with Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW) to control WEBB's funds. Come plan for the future. 7:00 p.m. Women only. For free child care, call by 6/20.

Sunday, June 26th

Lesbian-Gay Freedom Day Parade. 12:00 noon. Begins on Embarcadero, up Market to Civic Center.

Thursday, June 30th

Audre Lorde reading from her work. 8:00 p.m., Oakes College, Rm. 150, U.C. Santa Cruz. Donation.

Saturday, July 9th

DYKE SEPARATIST GATHERING for separatists and lesbian allies only. Women-born lesbians only. 10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Women's Building. Info: (415) 482-0635. No childcare. ASL.

Classifieds

CONFERENCES

First National Conference on Black Women's Health Issues. Atlanta, GA. June 24-26, 1983. For info. call 843-6204 and ask for Julianne or Eileen.

1983 National Lesbian of Color Conference, "Sisters Bonding Together," Thurs.-Sun., Sept. 8-11, 1983. Advanced registration encouraged by July 12. Cost is \$75 and includes food, lodging; \$60 low income; \$35 children. Male Children 12 years and under. For info: Ntianu (213) 701-5697, Selket (213) 738-7078. Write: Lesbians of Color, P.O. Box 2344, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

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COUNSELING

Enjoy Your Present, Explore Your Past, Create Your Future: feminist therapy, ind., cpls., grps. Sliding scale. Miriam Smolover. 655-6394. MS, MFCC candidate. Seven years exp. Incest survivors especially welcome.

Pacific Center now has Third World counselors and groups available. Sliding scale. Call switchboard, 841-6224 for info. and appointments.

FOR INFORMATION regarding display or classified ads, contact Pandoura or Anita at (415) 540-0671.

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PERSONALS

Happy Birthday B.B., June 16, 1983. Happiest to you. P.C.

I'm very happy for you, DSB. I wish you many years of love and everything wonderful, you deserve it.
Your Buddie.

Dear J.A.
Much joy on your day. Love you, P.C.

Lesbian Introductions (Fridays). Midgett, 864-0876, res. & ans. svc.

Leo Lady sks prof/bus lady in whose air my flame can glow. Your sensual, spiritual, intellectual pleasures will flourish. Let's laugh, cry, come, TCB. Pls, no drugs. Box 164, Berkeley 94701.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to my everlovin' Nita Mae. Love, Lil Suga.

Black Lesbian mother seeking playmate for 16 month old daughter. Call Sarita, 540-0671.

Congratulations, Alexis. Keep steppin' on!

LESBIAN INTRODUCTIONS for womin of color only. Refreshments, discussions, cards, dominoes, dancing. Saturday evenings. Non-alcoholic, smoking in yard. Call Midgett, 864-0876, res, & ans. svc.

DEADLINES FOR CLASSIFIED ADS, DISPLAY ADS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

July 14th for the August issue;
September 12th for the October issue.

For classified ads, enclose \$1 per line (\$2 minimum per ad). There are 30 characters per line. Each letter, punctuation mark or space between words counts as a character. We reserve the right to use our discretion in the selection of advertisements.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

JOIN US in supporting our local artists and musicians. These are just a few of the many talented women in our community: Mary Watkins, Casselberry and Dupree, Linda Tillery, Sarita Johnson, Helen Keller, Vicki Randall, Avotcja, Gwen Avery.