

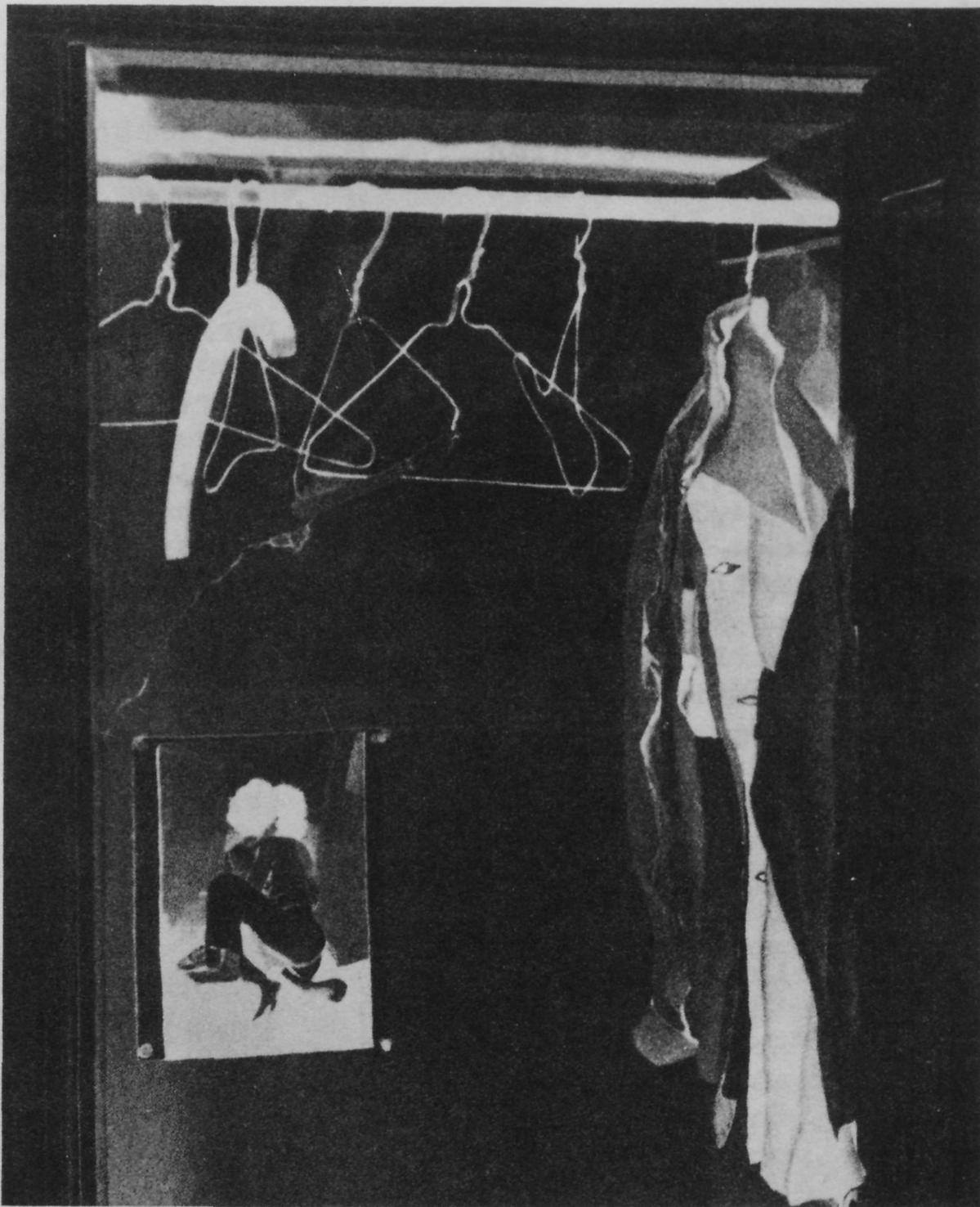
# TRIBAD

*a lesbian separatist newsjournal*

VOL. II, NO. 5

MARCH-APRIL 1979

NEW YORK CITY



IN THE CLOSET by Paula Gottlieb

BIMONTHLY

TO BE SOLD TO AND SHARED BY LESBIANS ONLY

50¢

More if you can  
less if you can't



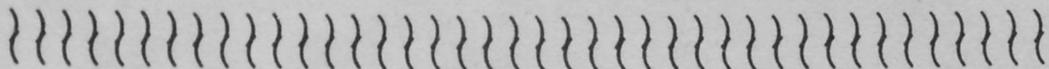
Done at Come! Unity Press (13 E 17 Street, NYC 10003 (212) 675-3043), a cooperative where we learned to do this printing. The press does not demand \$ from us or other movement people who print materials that provide equal access to the poor. The press needs the broad support of many donations: monthly pledges of \$2, \$5, \$7, energy, food, skills, joint benefits, etc. to continue movement access to printing facilities. Don't let this be the last month! YOUR MOVE!ment.

copyright © 1979 Tribad  
a Lesbian Separatist Newsjournal.  
All rights reserved. Published 6  
times a year by Tribad, 192 Spring  
St. #15, New York, N.Y. 10012.

Subscription rates: \$3 per year  
to lesbians and movement centers;  
more if you can, less if you can't.  
\$15 to university funded centers;  
\$50 to institutions, free to women  
prisoners.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to the Gay Academic Union  
by Adrienne Rich.....p.1  
Old Boy Number Games: Senate Bill  
One Equals S.1437 aka H.R.6869 by  
Maricla Moyano.....p.4  
National March on Washington for  
Lesbian Rights October 14,1979..  
.....p.5  
First International Lesbian  
Separatist Swim on Washington  
Changed to October 14,1979,..p.6  
Women, Housework, and Society  
Part II by Rhonda Gottlieb...p.7  
Patriarchy as a Mass Paranoid  
Delusion; The Bomb Will Blow  
Your Mind by Susan Cavin.....p.12  
Lesbian Space Zap June 25, noon  
City Hall Steps; The Lesbian  
Struggle for Space in NYC....p.13



While signed articles express the  
opinions of the author and not ne-  
cessarily those of each collective  
member, TRIBAD accepts responsibi-  
lity for choosing to print whatever  
appears on these pages. Collective  
consensus is reflected only in Fort  
Dyke Statements.

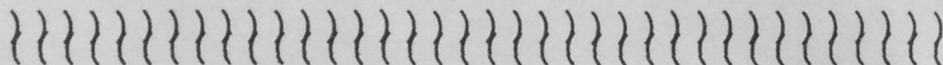
Please mark "For Publication" or  
"Not for Publication" on any letters  
you send to TRIBAD.

Only Dyke Separatist publications  
are free to reprint Tribad material,  
if they will send us a copy.

TRIBAD LIVES BUT IT'S

FORT DYKE'S FINAL STATEMENT

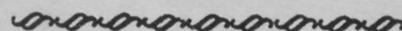
Fort Dyke, the first and  
thus far only lesbian separatist  
space in New York City, began in  
March 1977 and closed in April  
1979 at 49-51 Prince Street, due  
to lack of finance. However,  
TRIBAD is still solvent, and ex-  
panding its circulation.



TRIBAD: A LESBIAN SEPARATIST  
NEWSJOURNAL  
IS  
A

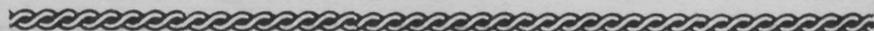
forum for lesbian separatist  
theory, strategy to overthrow  
patriarchy and women's oppres-  
sions. The articles focus on  
lesbian issues as well as  
women's oppressions and libera-  
tions: locally, nationally, and  
internationally. We do not ac-  
cept letters from men or straights.  
TRIBAD is for lesbians only.

TRIBAD invites all lesbian  
separatists to submit graphics  
(black india ink), articles, news,  
art, photographs, poetry, and short  
stories for possible publication.



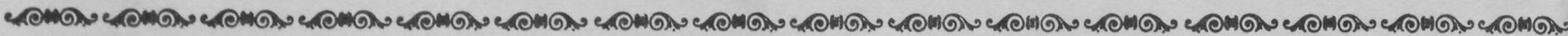
CHANGE OF TRIBAD ADDRESS TO:

192 SPRING STREET #15  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10012



CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME!

DYKE DEVOLUTION NOW!



TRIBAD Editors: Maricla Moyano, Rhonda Gottlieb, Susan Cavin, Joy Scorpio.

~~~~~

# LETTER TO THE GAY ACADEMIC UNION

ADRIENNE RICH

Dear Alice Bloch and all my lesbian sisters in the Gay Academic Union:

It is deeply important to me that you understand, whether or not you approve, my decision to refuse the 1978 GAU Award for Literature. I would also like to think that my reasons for refusing it will be clear to those men in the GAU who have a vision of something more far-reaching than "gay rights" within academe. This letter is written in the attempt to clarify what is, for me, not a simple political or personal act. I hope you will receive it as an expression of my own necessity, and not as a judgment of you and of the work you are doing.

Your telegram was handed to me during a session of the First National Conference on Feminist Perspectives on Pornography, held in San Francisco November 17-19. During the exhaustive and sometimes unnerving slide-shows, panels and workshops of this just-past weekend, two topics were touched upon but never wholly addressed: pornography as the out-front, legitimized expression of institutionalized heterosexuality; and child pornography, not just as a male heterosexual but a male homosexual commodity. (Pornography: the depiction of sensation without feeling, of violence against women as pleasurable; images of sexual exploitation of women and children; images of dominance and submission, of sadism and victimization, images of cruelty passing for eroticism, of power equated with the infliction of pain.) This context did not determine my decision to refuse the GAU's award, but certainly it deepened my understanding of why, as a lesbian/feminist, I cannot identify with -- and thus accept an award from -- the "gay community" -- if such a community really exists.

As a lesbian/feminist I am concerned not simply with equality and civil rights but with the transformation of power relationships and consequently of society itself. I find myself constantly forced to re-define, for myself and with my sisters, what that transformation might consist of. I am, as a lesbian, not interested in seeing lesbians replicate male patterns of behavior, as has often happened in the past (largely because women who love women have suffered from the belief that if we were not stereotypical "feminine" women we had to be imitation men, imitate male-determined patterns of role-playing, echo in our "deviant" lives the patriarchal motifs of power, lust, promiscuity, and the masculine equation of sexuality and death.) Our suicides have been legion, our survival often bought at the price of distorting our lives.

For the first time in history, in our century, a strong feminist movement has converged with a creative and activist lesbian movement to create the phenomenon of lesbian/feminism. We are coming to understand the dimensions, the potential, of lesbian/feminism (named by Mary Daly "Spinsterhood", "Haggardness" or "Crone-ology") as lesbians who are also feminists develop for ourselves the nature and power of our politics, even as we learn to discard what Virginia Woolf - the true political mother of us all - called "false loyalties". In attempting to define my own politics, I have had to understand that my false loyalties have been extended not only to heterosexual patriarchal power, but also to the male homosexual or "gay" community. I have had to recognize that a commonality of sexual stigma -- the fact that lesbians, homosexual men, transvestites, transsexuals, sado-masochists, pedophiles, pornographers are all to some extent officially labelled as sinful, deviant or criminal -- does not by any means mean a community of political vision. (I urge you to read Julia P. Stanley's "Are You One Too? -- Sexist Slang and the Gay Community" for one documentation of this.)

Women are always being argued out of the clear statement and resistance of our own oppression. It can come in the form of mystifying discussions of the First Amendment vis-a-vis the "rights" of pornographers to "free speech" -- as if they were a dissident group instead of a four billion dollar industry; as if woman-hating were anything but the staple of the establishment, the constantly-purveyed, daily coin of the status quo. It can also come as a call to false identification, in this case to us as lesbians, with "gay" men, as if our relative power in this society were the same as theirs, as if our love of women were identical with their woman-hating and their compulsive search for sex without feeling, as if our lives -- the lives of lesbian mothers, of lesbian/feminists struggling toward a collective female vision, our female sexuality itself, were the same as theirs, were not often mocked and travestied by theirs. The "gay" movement, where lesbians are concerned, seems to me an obvious example of what Mary Daly, our best lexicographer, has named "false inclusion" of women, though certainly lesbians have endowed it with their energy as activists, artists and intellectuals.

It seems necessary to me that those of us who think of ourselves as lesbian/feminists courageously and lucidly delineate our differences from and our consequent separation from the male "gay" movement (from which we have learned so much self-destructiveness and woman-hating) and to describe for ourselves the power and vision of woman-loving, which has never been an agenda of the male "gay" movement.

Because of our relative economic inequality as women, lesbians have often had to use the "gay" movement as an organization, as for example when the Gay Caucus of the Modern Language Association has provided an "umbrella" for lesbian/feminist events. Many of you have probably worked hard to make this kind of event possible, and your work has been of enormous value in providing a forum not otherwise

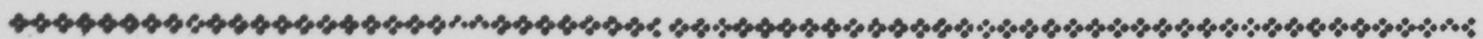










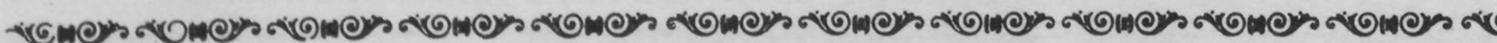


capitalists to maintain their profits and minimizing tension that would arise from female unemployment. Thirdly, the family serves a stabilizing function in capitalist society; the wages of one person (the man) pay for the labor of two people (his own plus his wife's). Lastly, the structure of the family is organized to encourage consumptionism. Women are particularly good consumers as their isolation in the home denies them personal autonomy and achievement in the outside world. They are, therefore, forced to sublimate their frustrations in a continual consumption of products related to the home.

Benston's solution to the inferior position of women in the home is twofold. Although under capitalism women should continue to fight for more adequate and less expensive daycare, convenience foods, home delivery of meals, etc., capitalized forms of production will not be sufficient to end women's oppression. The amount of unpaid labor performed by women is extremely profitable and capitalists will challenge any fundamental change in the housework system. Secondly, capitalism cannot create enough employment for all women to establish themselves as a normal part of the labor force. It is therefore necessary, according to Benston, to achieve socialism; then private home production can be converted into public industry (socialized). This combined with the expanded production under socialism will provide more jobs for women.

There are many unanswered questions in Benston's argument. She implies but never explicitly discusses the notion that women and men constitute different classes. She avoids a sex class conflict by omitting women from any analysis of social production. In addition, Benston does not outline women's role in the revolutionary process. The analysis she offers does not include strategy. The industrialization of housework is not inherent in socialism and Benston is aware of this. However, she is unable to define strategy which would insure that women are victors when the revolution comes. Lastly, Benston glamorizes family living and greatly exaggerates the husband's role in maintaining his wife and children. If the family serves as a stabilizing function, it does so for men at women's expense. I am more in agreement with both Dalla Costa and Silveira's analysis of the family as a stabilizing force. The woman becomes productive for capitalism because she absorbs the frustrations, rage, and anger of her working class husband. It is the wife who sacrifices her economic and emotional needs to her husband who is then able to go out and work more efficiently. This will lead us into a discussion of Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James' The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community. A general description of the Wages for Housework campaign will be included.

Dalla Costa and James utilize aspects of Benston's analysis but disagree with her view that women are simply involved in the production of use-values. They also expand Benston's definition of housework to include sexual service, the institutionalization of heterosexuality, sexual reproduction, and the reproduction of the labor force. In essence, Dalla Costa and James offer a perspective that is radically feminist in nature. However, in their desire to prove that women are part of the proletariat they distort certain economic terms.



---

The Dalla Costa-James argument (the Wages for Housework argument) focuses on the notion that because housework reproduces the labor power that is exploited to produce the capitalist surplus, housework too is essential to the surplus and therefore constitutes labor exploited by the capitalist. Their analysis is certainly an extremely important one in terms of locating the housewife as the major source of labor in the reproduction of labor power. If this argument is considered valid, it also places housewives as direct members of the proletariat. As previously defined, productive labor is wage labor which has a direct relation to capital and produces surplus value. Housework does not meet these requirements as its relation to capital is not direct. Dalla Costa and James appear to be somewhat confused as to women's class position. On the one hand, women are exploited as direct members of the proletariat. On the other hand, "the woman is a slave of the wage slave."

The Dalla Costa and James argument states that the community is a center of hidden capitalist exploitation. The role of housewife has been considered the natural function of women rather than a social contract because it remains unwaged labor. For example, the wage the male laborer receives mystifies his oppression by making him believe he gets a fair deal, while in reality, the wage rather than paying for the work he does, hides all the unpaid work that goes into profit. In contrast, women are believed to be rendering a service out of love. Their wagelessness hides the fact that they work. It is essential that women wage a campaign for wages for housework. In doing so, women would challenge the notion that housework is an expression of their love. In addition, since this campaign would be waged against the state, it would undermine women's economic dependence on men. With more money women would be able to have more choices in determining their lives. Dalla Costa and James view wages for housework as a first step in the struggle. It is a strategy which places women in the revolutionary process and links female subordination and isolation to a material foundation-female exploitation. It is not a strategy to improve housewives' working conditions, but rather to make the nature of their work apparent so that they may choose to reject it.

Dalla Costa, James, and the Wages for Housework campaign are much more aware than Benston is that housework involves reproduction, sexual service, and tending to the male ego. These services cannot be fully industrialized but require a transformation in male/female relations and women's control of their own bodies. This view is apparent in the work of Silvia Federici and Francie Wyland, two Wages for Housework activists.

Capital depends on being able to tell us who we should sleep with and when, which of us should have children and who will be sterilized, how many children we should have, and under what conditions they will be brought up... But whatever our situation, we are fighting for the power to control our own sexuality and our reproductive capacities. The lesbian movement - which is massive and grow-



In addition, reproduction is crucial to any economy. In developing serious feminist analysis, a correlation can be made between the modes of production and the modes of reproduction. Specifically, what is the stage of reproductive technology in each historical period? Under what forces are the labor and means of reproduction determined? What are the specific conflicts within that system? Lastly, what is the relationship between that system and the means of production?

In conclusion, the demand for woman's control over her own body is a revolutionary demand that cannot be dismissed. In doing so, women are challenging their status as a colonized people in patriarchal society. Women are challenging economic, social, and technological domination of their reproductive and sexual capacities. Adrienne Rich eloquently describes this struggle in her book, Of Woman Born:

The repossession by women of our bodies will bring far more essential change to human society than the seizing of the means of production by workers. The female body has been both territory and machine, virgin wilderness to be exploited and assembly-line turning out life. We need to imagine a world in which every woman is the presiding genius of her own body. In such a world women will truly create new life, bringing forth not only children (if and as we choose) but the visions, and the thinking, necessary to sustain, console, and alter human existence -- a new relationship to the universe. Sexuality, politics, intelligence, power, motherhood, work, community, intimacy will develop new meanings; thinking itself will be transformed.

This is where we have to begin." ¶¶¶

#### INTERNATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Twelve Lesbian Separatists in Glasgow report that Glasgow slang for lesbian is "amazon." Interesting hystorical connection.

Simone de Beauvoir is reportedly writing an international feminist manifesto.

The continuing territorial disputes between China and Vietnam prove an old separatist point: that socialism has not theoretically or practically dealt with the problem of male aggression and territoriality.

According to Jane Goodfield's book, Playing God: Genetic Engineering and the Manipulation of Life (New York: Harper, 1977, p. 168), "...two brain surgeons in Britain recommended a brain operation to a psychotic's wife to help her cope." Typical male reasoning.

# PATRIARCHY as a MASS PARANOID DELUSION;

## THE BOMB WILL BLOW YOUR MIND

by SUSAN CAVIN

March 1979, the patriarchal media blasted hot and cold death messages. The necrophiliac NRC & necro-exhibitionist Carter regime urinated in public on the public again. This time the Northeast irradiated silently while dykes all over the world chanted "The boys in Harrisburg blew it." During the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, an NRC spokesman accused the "people of Pennsylvania" of being "paranoid" the same week that Met. Ed. of Pa. announced that the Pa. consumers would have to pay for the nuclear accident with a rate increase! These insightful stick-it-to-the-people remarks led me to conclude that as the 20th century digresses further into nuclear patriarchy, the US govnt. will increasingly accuse its population of paranoiac attacks as it continues to endanger the life of the entire population. For example, Pres.-Gen. Eisenhower sent out commands in the 50's to "keep the people confused about thermonuclear fission and fusion" meanwhile telling the inhabitants of St. Georges, Utah that there was no danger for them to watch 181 thermonuclear explosions. Guinea pigs.

Then there's the "Chicken Little the-sky-is-falling" paranoia problem. Somewhere between July 7-25, 1979, most likely July 16th, the massive Skylab space station is expected to plunge to earth on a path calculated to be about 100 miles wide and 4,000 miles long showering 50,000 pieces of metallic debris over 400,000 square miles. Several huge pieces may fall to earth intact; among these may be a section called the fixed air-lock shroud weighing 5,000 lbs.; a lead-lined vault weighing 4,000 lbs.; and 6 oxygen tanks weighing 2,700 lbs. each. These are NASA's calculations. Still, NASA maintains that "the chances of Skylab debris striking anyone were remote." Again, the same number is worked on the public: first, the US govnt. creates a dangerous problem for the public to survive which is real and causes people to fear for their lives; then the government lies and says there is no danger to people, and concludes that people who are afraid of this dangerous government are paranoid. The system of patriarchy itself appears as a paranoid delusion come true. In the 1960's, the US Army conducted biological & germ warfare experiments in the subways of NYC, acid experiments on unwitting victims some of whom lost their lives or minds (cf. James Thornwood story, the Black G.I. who was given acid unknowingly for 2 mos. by the CIA-Army and lost his mind for 17 yrs. before finding out what happened), not to mention the Agent Orange episode of American history.

ADJUSTMENT TO THE PROBLEM-is patriarchy's tactic, instead of trying to eliminate the problem. Take the problem of rape. All the money that goes into police anti-rape programs is used to get the victim to adjust to having been raped, rather than wiping out rapists. The same tactic is used in patriarchy to deal with exposure to carcinogens at the workplace, exposure to nuclear fallout, herbicides, toxic chemicals. As in rape, first the victim has to prove their victimization and that they did not solicit or expose themselves (cf. the Karen Silkwood case) on purpose; then, at best, the victim will be able to get a little disability \$\$ to help them adjust to their disease. However, 92% of soldiers exposed to Agent Orange &/or nuclear detonations have had their claims rejected in military court so far. Again, NASA's solution to the Skylab problem is to examine the individual claims of damage & once an individual proves she is hit by a piece of Skylab, she may be able to sue. Up against these massive, dangerous problems, a law suit for individual damage seems like a puny patriarchal solution, i.e., no solution, just adjustment to the problem. I wonder how many times this government can pull the same old number before people rise mass up and bring these US government criminals to a people's trial? The U.S. achieved 1984 in the late nineteen seventies, a few years early.





"Tribad." Tribad: A Lesbian Separationist NewsJournal, vol. 2, no. 5, March-April 1979. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/HQZBEJ778471876/AHSI?u=umuser&sid=bookmark-AHSI](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/HQZBEJ778471876/AHSI?u=umuser&sid=bookmark-AHSI). Accessed 28 Dec. 2023.