

Big Apple Dyke News



75¢

VOL. II, No. 6

JULY-AUGUST 1982

Lesbian Feminist Monthly
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

1982 Gay/Lesbian March

See CENTERFOLD



Metamorphosis by Myra Nissim

NICE JEWISH GIRLS... AND ME

by Chelsea Dreher

I have an aversion to the term "nice Jewish girl". So in my mind I trivialized the event at Womanbooks on June 20 - readings from "Nice Jewish Girls; a Lesbian Anthology". Another Sheila Levine...or something. So I went as a show of support for something, anything Jewish. After all, I reasoned, I support every (almost every) other event to which I feel it important to lend my support. I knew from previous experience that I would be hurt by the absence of non-Jews. Is anti-Semitism in the Movement only a concern of Jewish women? I hope not. I yearn for a coming together. I would settle for a show of interest/concern/curiosity/respect. I realize that the process is a lengthy and painful one. I am only expressing my hopes - Utopian as they may be. Well, two visibly non-Jewish women (I was counting) were present, as I had anticipated. But why focus on this alone? Is it even really important right now, even unrealistic, knowing the many attitudes and tensions thriving among us?

Why am I avoiding Nice Jewish Girls? Because I always have, that's why. It is a painful beginning of yet another search for more parts of this unending puzzle. I find, in writing this piece that my Lesbian Feminist writings flow. I don't worry about saying the politically incorrect thing. Twelve years of Movement work, much of it writing, gave me some dexterity with my L/F political thinking and writing. Now I feel on dangerous ground. More CR! I nearly said earlier that I was "counting noses" to see who showed up for the event. Is that an anti-Semitic thing to say? Horrors...here I am again - new girl in town! And I haven't told you a thing

cont. on p. 16

Grandma Was an Activist

A series of radio programs to be broadcast this fall over WBAI-FM, Grandma Was an Activist explores the role of rank and file women radicals in the social and political turbulence of the 30's through interviews, sound and narration.

cont. on p. 12

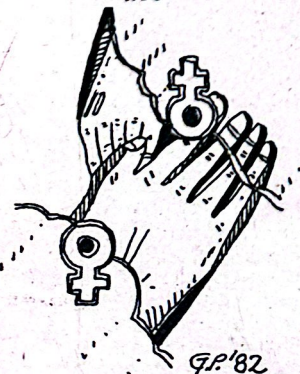


Dear B.A.D. News

HELLO HOORAY FOR MEG

DEAR B.A.D.,
I absolutely love Meg Christian and have been a fan for years. We used to play her albums constantly at the Women's Coffee House, that existed from 1974 to 1979. I was especially moved by the article appearing in April WomaNews, "Dying of Fright, Meg Christian Tells About Alcoholism." I personally suffered through the pre-movement bar daze in an alcoholic stupor. However, I am writing this letter because there was no mention last month about either her drinking problem, or her concert on May 7th at Queens College. It was attended by over 600 women. I am embarrassed to admit that I didn't go because one of my best friends, Karen, had her 30th birthday, and you know how heavy that is. I hope it gets a review by someone. I want you all to know that I have Meg's "Song to my Mama" on my answering machine. I managed to squeeze two of her Dykkest lines on a 30-second tape. You are all invited to call in and hear it. Please make a haircut appointment too, if you are as into women supporting other women as I am.

JOY SCORPIO
674-3187
NYC



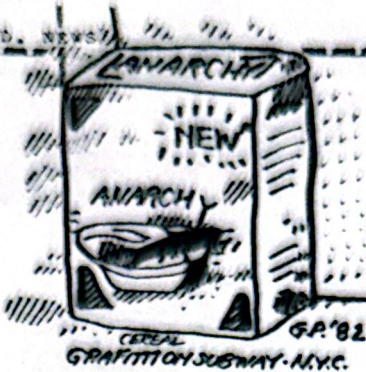
GP'82

Dear Mariela,

Thank you for your postcard, too bad you didn't make it into Quebec! But I am confident that next time you will.
At a friend's house last week I stumbled on a French-speaking Swiss lesbian newspaper: CLIT 007 - c/o Claire Segnieres, 22 rue des Peupliers, 1205 Geneve, Suisse. They had very nicely translated, it seemed, the CLIT manifesto that you published in B.A.D. News #7 in October, 1981. I would like to ask you if it is possible for you to send us that issue and all the other CLIT manifestos ever published. We would like to study them, if you could send two exemplaries of each and tell us how much money that would be.
We are on the process of finishing the work on our second issue of our magazine, Amazones D'Hier, Lesbiennes D'Aujourd'hui (Amazons Then, Lesbians Now), and also on working on the last detail of our video tour of the States. Unfortunately, we have not received any response from cities like Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Iowa City, San Francisco, and we wrote to them at least 3 times each. There is still a very short month before we start our tour and I hope some of them will answer us before we leave. But Bloomington, IN, Lawrence KA, Minneapolis MO, Lincoln NE, Denver Co, Eugene OR probably, Seattle WA have given us their support, and that feels good I have to say.

Keeping in touch,
Love,
Ariane Brunet
Video-Amazones
Boite 429
Succ., Stn. Victoria
Montreal, H3Z 2V8
Quebec, Canada

tel.: 514-489-8392



Dear Editor of B.A.D. News:

My name is Lois Witke. I am an inmate in an Idaho Prison. I recently wrote, along with another inmate, Gerry Howell, requesting subscriptions to your newsletter.
I have not received one yet. This week the Administration here posted a memo stating that: "The Big Apple Dyke Newspaper would not be allowed in this prison because it is a feminist Lesbian paper."
In this prison if a magazine or newsletter is not permitted that information must be given to the individual inmate in writing within 24 hours so that she has a right to appeal to higher authorities.
Discrimination like this and in many other areas is reality for us here. We are presently working to change these circumstances.
The purpose of this letter is to ask you if you did send me a newsletter. If so, please send me a letter stating that you had and the date it was mailed. Was it mailed to G. Howell? Was it returned to you?
Please respond. We are fighting for our rights and our lives.

Sincerely,
Lois Witke 18208
NICI Rt. 3
Box 147
Cottonwood, Idaho
83522

Note to Reader: B.A.D. News was sent to LOIS Witke for the last 3 months and to Gerry Howell. NICI never returned the issues, but never gave them to Lois or Gerry. B.A.D. is presently bringing suit.

Dear B.A.D. News:

Do you really believe Lesbian Pride started in 1969 as your banner headline in the last issue implied (13 Years of Lesbian Pride: 69-82)? For many of us, that year was a transformation of how our pride was made visible, not a birthdate. In fact, it was in some ways more a culmination than a starting point. Lesbian pride expressed in vice-versa, published in 1947, in organizations such as ECHO and DOB, in street and community life such as the Moody Garden Gang (see Lesbian Herstory Archives Newsletter #7), in the Black Lesbian community of Harlem through the years (see "Memories" by Jeanne Flash Gray in The Other Black Woman, Vol. 1) has had a long and complicated history which reflects the social changes surrounding it. 1969 marks an historical change and is an easy place for Lesbians of the seventies to begin their historical memories, but it is just one moment of history in a long, long story of resistance and cultural autonomy.



for longer memories,
Joan Nestle

Sisters,
Greetings! Picked up a copy of B.A.D. News while visiting a friend and jotted down the address to write for a subscription. The price was "whited out" so I don't know how much to send. My lover and I are considering a move to NY next year so we especially are looking forward to each issue of B.A.D. News. I'm enclosing a check for \$6. Please let us know if that is enough for a full sub.

Again, we really enjoyed the issue we did read. Thanks - and keep up the good work!

In Sisterhood,
Diane & Karen
Harrisburg, PA

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B.A.D. News

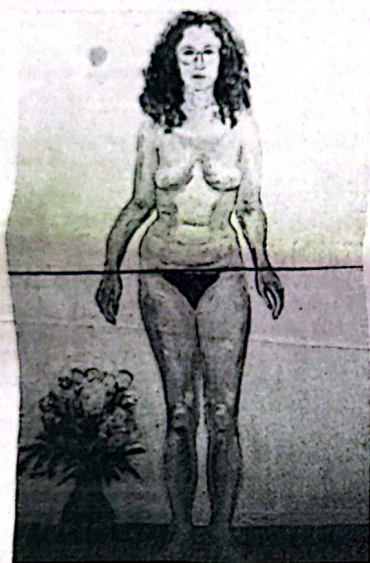
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"Self-Portrait with Peonies."

by *Janey Washburne*

Dear B.A.D. News

Hello Maricla,
 Thanks for your postcard-and we've put you on our exchange sub list. Hope you're liking OUTWRITE.

So please send us Big Apple Dyke News-don't think we've received any yet.

Anyhow-here the blasted 'war' has ended, the papers are screaming "We Have Won the War", and the Tories are patting themselves on the

back for skillful maneuvering. You said you are Argentine. Would you like to write something for us about your perceptions??

In sisterhood,
 Sheila
OUTWRITE
 Women's Newspaper
 c/o T.H.I.S.
 Oxford House
 Derbyshire St.
 London E.2
 England
 Tel:01-729-4575

cont. next column

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B.A.D. AD RATES: Classified ads, 20¢ a word.
 Display ads, \$10 per column inch.

E.R.A. R.9.P.

On June 30, 1982, the Equal Rights Amendment expired, or should we say, was murdered by the rightwing backlash led by Phyllis Schlafly, strategic Russian bomber-analyst for the US Defense Intelligence establishment (the Pentagon), who suddenly became Miss Housewife leading the special corporate interests that profit from unequal wages between the sexes.

The effort to pass the Equal Rights Amendment dates back to 1923 when legislation was first introduced in Congress. In 1972, the E.R.A. Amendment passed the US House of Representatives by a wide margin of 354 to 24 and the Senate by 84 to 8. It was a one-sentence amendment: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied by the United States or any state on account of sex."

In two hours after the ERA cleared Congress in 1972, the amendment had been ratified by Hawaii. In the months that followed, it won approval in a number of other state legislatures. But by the spring of 1973, opponents had mounted a strong campaign, arguing that the ERA would result in forced military service for women; a dilution of existing laws protecting women in the workplace; homosexual marriages; and unisex public toilets.

A bipartisan group of at least 38 senators, led by Sen. Bob Packwood (R) of Oregon and Sen. Paul E. Tsongas

(D) of Massachusetts will introduce new legislation in Congress on July 14, 1982, calling again for a constitutional amendment that would have to be ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures. Back to square one. Score a big one for the right, Miz Schlafly.

Eleanor Smeal, president of the National Organization for Women (N.O.W.) said, after admitting defeat of the E.R.A. on June 24, that that donations to N.O.W. average more than \$1 million a month now: "We're raising more money than the Democratic Party. If our opponents think it's all over, someone should tell them we've just begun to fight. The real opposition, behind the visible political opposition, has been the special corporate interests that profit from sex discrimination."

She said N.O.W.'s war chest will be used to elect more women to public office and remove men who voted against the E.R.A. and to boycott and sue corporations that discriminate against women.

Between 1972 and 1982, 35 states ratified the E.R.A. It fell short of passage by three states.

The states that did not ratify the E.R.A. were: Illinois, Florida, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Utah and Virginia.

The bad news is we may have lost a battle, but we will win the war.

B.A.D. News

Dear B.A.D. News:
Minister Wisdom will be producing an issue on North American Indian women. The editor will be Mohawk writer Beth Brant (Dagonwadonti), who will have sole responsibility for this project.

We are looking for all forms of expression: short stories, graphics, essays, poetry, letters to and from women, photographs, excerpts from diaries, reviews of books, translations, oral histories and narrations, legends, and myths, just to name a few examples.

The compilation of our words and pictures into a single issue will reflect our many diversities, such as: our differing lifestyles; our age spectrum; how we feel about the issues of health; traditional images of Indian women; our class divisions (urban vs. reservation Indians); our varied and multiple bloods, Indian/Black, Indian/Asian, Indian/Latina; the blending of the spiritual with our physical daily lives; our concern for our children, our grandchildren, our Elders; how our activism is reflected in our communities; the fun and strength we get from our traditions (Pow Wows, Midwinters, dances, etc.).

All Indian women are encouraged to participate in this project. The number of educational degrees, or lack of them, is immaterial. We are looking for words and pictures from the heart; from our experience as Indian women.

Please type manuscripts double-spaced, and send with a stamped and self-addressed envelope. Send all submissions by Jan. 15, 1983.

Beth Brant
 18890 Reed St.
 Melvindale, MI
 48122

Dear B.A.D. News,
 Thank you for the quick sending of the April-May issue to the wilds of PA. Enjoy reading it, p. 3 and all the rest. Susan Cavin's "Psych war" is heavy politicking, thereby widening our horizon, on a big pages she lays it on us, it's amazing. How masses of people are manipulated by the powers over us. Many are susceptible, few of us are immune to demagogery and "Non-news" masquerading as news. Merci beaucoup, guilty ones. Thanks for nothing.

Meanwhile some of our sisters fasted in Springfield, ILLINOIS led by excommunicated Mormon Sonia Johnson; pressing the Illinois verification of our E.R.A. How long, oh Goddess, must this fight be waged to be won by us? We must carry on regardless of setbacks. Politicians would like to forget the whole thing, but we will NEVER let them do that. Those lazy no good BUMS, hypocrites. I send more stamps as contribution to the sacred cause we share. Soon I'll come back to the city to help B.A.D. celebrate Gay Pride week. Au Revoir you all! Have a Happy summer.

Amy



Mary Beth Eddison



Sheila Levraut de Bretteville

Dear B.A.D. News,

This letter is about a radically different, long overdue vehicle for the distribution of art and literature; the Judy Chicago Word & Image Network (JC/WIN). The idea is as simple as a mail order catalog. The catalog and the network of artists and writers represented will enable you to survey, select, and buy art and literature not ordinarily available to the general public.

As simple and old-fashioned as the mechanics of JC/WIN are, the idea is revolutionary. And while it didn't originate with The Dinner Party, that work provided the necessary momentum.

The Dinner Party is a statement about and a tribute to women. As its originator, I have witnessed its impact across the country as hundreds of thousands of people flocked to see it. Had it been left to established museums and galleries, however, most of you would never have seen The Dinner Party. In spite of a highly acclaimed opening in San Francisco, one museum after another refused to show the exhibit or cancelled scheduled showings. It took a coalition of dedicated individuals around the country - both women and men - to ensure that The Dinner Party would be seen.

One woman in particular worked overtime to keep it before the public: Mary Ross Taylor, businesswoman, writer and supporter of the arts. As owner of "The Bookstore" in Houston, she has seen the audience for feminist literature grow rapidly in recent years without a corresponding development in the publishing distribution system. I have seen the same thing happening in art.

cont. next column

In sharing our parallel experiences, we came to this conclusion: women everywhere would like to have art and literature that authentically reflect women's lives. But they have no means of coming in contact with the rich array of existing work.

...Mary Ross and I organized JC/WIN. As the first alternative distribution system for art and literature that affirms and empowers women....The range of materials is comprehensive and affordable and includes posters, slides and slide sets, illustrated poetry, books, postcards, cassettes, discussion kits, pamphlets, and reading lists, as well as a complete line of materials from The Dinner Party. Proceeds from All Dinner Party items will be donated to Through the Flower, the nonprofit corporation which circulates the exhibition.

Beginning in the fall of this year, JC/WIN will make this work available anywhere there is a mailing address. From the JC/WIN catalog, you will be able to buy art and literature for yourself, for your daughters and friends. With our material you can study women's art, begin a literary discussion group, and bring feminist artists and writers to your home town.

People deprived of the opportunity to see their experience symbolized in words and images are also deprived of the chance to see the importance of their lives. This is what has happened to women -- but it will not happen any more. We have a wealth of symbols; we have only to reach out and make them part of our lives.

Sincerely,

Judy Chicago JC/WIN
 1728 Bissonnet
 Houston, Texas 77005



Judy Chicago

WOMMIN for WOMYN

by SARAH SCHULMAN

Wommin for Womyn is a new activist group of lesbian-feminists fighting for women's liberation. We got started when lesbians and heterosexual feminists who had been working in CARASA (Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse) left that organization because of anti-feminism and homophobia which were running rampant. Now that we have a place where we can work to protect women without having to subsume our lesbian sensibilities; it's like being let loose in a candy store. We have an opportunity to try new ideas for organizing women around issues related

to their own experience. Right now, our major project is to work towards what we hope will be the largest abortion rights demonstration in American history. It will be held this July 17 at Cherry Hill, New Jersey to correspond with the National Right to Life Convention taking place there. In Womyn for Wommin we are trying to reach unorganized women to go to Cherry Hill because we are tired of seeing the same people time and time again at these events. We feel that the narrow scope of women participating in the abortion rights movement in particular and the reproductive rights movement (abortion, sterilization abuse, childcare, les-

bian liberation) is partially a result of a reluctance to do real organizing to women who are different than the white, middleclass heterosexual women that compose the membership of many abortion rights organization. We have rented five buses that will be leaving from the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Every weekend we are out in those neighborhoods talking to women and selling bus tickets. The response has been very affirming to me as an activist because all kinds of women sign our petitions. Asian, Black, Hispanic, elderly women and teenagers have signed. Women coming out of church with crosses around their necks sign

our petitions and say things like "Quick, let me sign before my boyfriend sees me".

If you would like to purchase a bus ticket to go to Cherry Hill leaving from your borough or if you would like to ride in the women-only bus leaving from Union Square in Manhattan please send a check for whatever amount you can afford and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Wommin for Womyn, 1742 2nd Ave., #117, New York, N.Y. 10028 and if you want to do serious organizing with a sense of humor - call us at 490-0077. Wommin for Womyn is opened to all women willing to work in an explicitly lesbian-feminist organization.

SOREL in LOVE

by BARBARA SOREL

Excerpt from a novel "Sorel in Love," a work in progress.

I come in through the back door of the apartment. It is summer time in California. The sound of the screen door slamming behind me triggers a fantasy in my mind and animated by the spirit of it I toss my things lyrically, idealistically onto the kitchen table. "Lisa, I'm home" my voice rings out in liltingly, cracking boyishly just at the peak of the phrase, "Liii-aa...".

The sound of a screen door slamming stirs up all sorts of nostalgic feelings and memories in me, causing a succession of emotional states both remembered and imagined take possession of me. First it brings back a feeling of the summers of my childhood on Long Island, a feeling intimately bound up with a memory of the particular quality of sun light in my backyard on summer afternoons, of the heat and the dust and the flies, and of running in and out of the house through the back door of our house letting the screen door slam behind me, hearing my mother yell at me about the noise and about letting too many flies into the house with these continual comings and goings of mine.

From here the fantasy spreads out across my brain to become a more general evocation of summertime in America, a fantasy in which I am cast in the role of an American. It becomes an American fantasy, something which is in the nature of a foreign locale for me, gleaned from Norman Rockwell pictures and the works of other typically American illustrators, is Images, a feeling of tow-headed American youth comes over me, barefooted, apple-cheeked lads, gathered around a damned up stream, the proverbial 'ole swimming hole, country lads wearing slightly but charmingly soiled and frayed oversized white shirts and tight blue pants of homespun cloth rolled up to just below the knee. 'Britches' stretched tightly over their firm, healthy, young American buttocks which communicated a sense of strength and virility, vigor, a sort of spermy american aggressiveness and burgeoning self-confidence, an image somehow related to the notion of good old American ingenuity and know-how. Its pictures of country lads swinging from old tires suspended from thick branches of venerable old oak trees jutting out over the water, or else their charmingly tattered clothes strewn over the bank, these living emblems of Americana would be swimming naked in the stream with only a charming and fleeting glimpse of the tip of a shoulder or a wholesome, solid and infinitely appealing calf or thigh showing above the water line.

I created this fantasy out of these images plus memories of various cross-country trips by car I've taken various summers - memories of driving up to some small, somewhat seedy, shabby old country restaurant out in the middle of nowhere, somewhere in the heartland of America, places which always seem alien and frightening to me. I remember how we would cruise up to the place quietly, cautiously approaching the rundown, white clapboard building, the only place in the area open at that hour of night. Our headlights illuminated only the small patch of space directly in front of us. But that small patch was enough for us to perceive, with sinking hearts and spirits, the filthy sordidness of the place. The rapid deceleration moving from

the superhighway we had been travelling on to the small country road leading to the place, plus the quiet and the still palpably intense heat which still weighed down upon us, even at that hour so long after the sun's descent from the sky, all combined to give our approach a dreamy, ghost-like quality. Moving in seemingly slow motion along the dirt driveway, raising clouds or dust as we went, the silence and stillness of the country night was broken by the occasional, eerie, metallic screams and scraping sounds of insects, an earthly and horrible, and totally alien to our city dwellers' ears. The intermittent but regular galumphing and croaking sounds of frogs and toads was somehow more organic and reassuring. And everywhere was the dust, voluminous, inescapable clouds of dust choking us. It permeated the dirt driveways and parking lots adjacent to the place, a dismal stretch of dried up earth with never a single stick of grass, with only a few paltry, pathetic dust-covered weeds clinging to the earth, barely managing to survive in those stark, seemingly uninhabitable conditions. The enveloping clouds of dust plus the intensity of the heat added greatly to the sense of weirdness and alienation of the situation.

I remember particularly the harsh electric buzz of the single glaring light bulb inevitably hung over the doorway, rudely breaking in on the peaceful silence of the country night. They seemed to me like odious, electronic frogs with incomprehensible and invincible powers, their tongues regularly zapping the moths and other insects helplessly caught up in a slowly whirling mass in the wake of the bulb's light, like so many lost souls endlessly turning about in the circles of Dante's hell. The incessant rasp of the light bulbs was punctuated at regular intervals by the thwack and pinging sound of insects, who crashed into the bulb and were instantly vaporized and destroyed by its heat. The moths and the june



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S O R E L I N L O V E cont.

bugs were drawn to the light and everywhere else there were the flies. A thick carpet of flies, beastly black creatures covered everything. A thick mass of flies coated the fine mesh of the screens. And then, inside, we entered to the sound of the screen door slamming behind us, we found flies everywhere here too, sticking to the slightly greasy, grimy counters and walls and floating languidly about in the tepid soup of foul air in the place. In one corner there would be a single stand-up electric fan futilely pushing the hot, heavy currents of air about the room.

The flies clustered together in ugly black masses, their spindly black legs sticking to the dried patches and greasy spots of spilled soda and foodstuffs not completely cleaned off the dull, worn formica counters whose endless years of service are recorded in countless knicks and chips in its surface. Still in somewhat of a dream state, we sipped our warm lemonade or slightly flat coca cola out of plastic straws from thick, clunky, utilitarian glasses of a style popular in the early fifties, glasses whose dull finish gave cause for doubt about their cleanliness. We tried to push such thoughts as these out of our minds as we drank our drinks. We glanced about the room guardedly, and somewhat fearfully at the alien and retarded looking people, staff and patrons, who inhabited the place.

Out of these impressions and memories my mind created a feeling of summertime in America which took possession of me, inhabiting my limbs and body, animating my movements and coloring the contents of my consciousness. It comes over me like a dream, suffusing my being as a drop of pigment slowly diffuses through the clear water of a jar into which it spilled, taking complete possession of it with its color. It is a fantasy of an America, mainstream America, the real America which is not New York, seen as a foreign country and for those few moments when I am in the grip of it I feel I am playing the part of an American. I am cast in the role of an American just as I might play an Italian or an Englishman and I develop this part I play out of these various impressions and memories I have described. Though I was born and raised here, and lived here all my life, still, I've never really felt like an American. I've always felt estranged from this culture, that I didn't belong, I've always felt like a foreigner. And yet, I don't feel like a native of any other country - I don't feel like a European, for example, the place and culture I most identify with, the people I would most like to resemble. But I've known and been friends with Europeans and I know I'm not like them. I'm not a European but, still I'm not really an American either. I feel like I'm not really from anywhere. I've always felt like some kind of an alien in my own land.

That summer in Berkeley with Lisa I used to come home to our ground-floor apartment in the late afternoons, coming in through the screen door at the back of the building which was always unlocked, something the confirmed New Yorker in me could never get used to, and every time I heard the door slamming behind me, some variation of this American fantasy would come over me, if only for just a moment. I would feel myself assuming the persona of an idealistic young man, a

young American husband coming home to his blushing bride. I push through the door eagerly, in stride boldly in on my long with expectation. I come striding of a forthright legs, the good whole-right and honest, sincere young man, a forth-Gary Cooper as the idealistic young editor of a small country newspaper, struggling against adverse odds, dedicated to the truth and battling the good fight and win, confident that I can fight anything as long as I have the love and support of my beautiful, young bride Lisa. The sleeves of my white shirt are rolled up, ink stains on my hands and cuffs, I loosen my tie as I sweep through the door. My radiant chestnut brown hair with its red highlights spills charmingly over my noble and intelligent young brow.

The sound of the screen door slamming behind me invariably and instantly triggers the fantasy with such a force of necessity that it seems a foregone conclusion. As soon as I hear the sound of the door I feel the shape of forthrightness and honesty, a good strong, handsome American bone structure spreads across my forehead. It is a distinctly physical feeling, a physical sense of a hardworking, upright American wholesomeness which extends to a trustworthy, comforting solidity of a good square American jaw. A wiry, purposeful manliness that was not without a certain gracefulness animates my form as I come briskly into the house, completely imbued with this sense of being a young husband coming home to his late afternoon snack and his beautiful wife.

The pleasure I derive from this fantasy is contingent upon my imagining myself as a man, as a young husband. My heart swells with love and pride at the thought of Lisa as my beautiful, young bride. It is the pride of possession contingent upon the notion of my being a young husband. The use of such endearments as dear and honey support the illusion, enhancing the feeling of familiar, ongoing domesticity that makes up a good portion of this sense of being an idealistic, devoted, young husband.

"Lisa...?"

Nothing. No answer. I walk through the small hallway which opens on the entrance to the apartment, leading to the narrow kitchen, at right angles to the living room, into which I go to find her. As soon as I see her the poetry drops away from me and I become myself again, simply a woman who loves Lisa, another woman.

As soon as I see her my features involuntarily decompose into a big, foolish grin. I am completely disarmed by the sight of her. Whenever I come face to face with her after a period of abstinence, however brief, it was impossible for me to repress a feeling of delight and intense joy which breaks out across my face. Whenever I saw her I felt as if my insides were suddenly lit up by a ray of sunshine which sent delightful rivulets of warmth and happiness radiating through me.

I found her sitting in a chair by the window smacking her lips over a cup of tea which by some uncommon piece of good luck she had managed to fix just right, for once. Making her external surroundings conform to the dictates of some inner tastes or reality, a dimension of reality extending to the minute details and considerations of her external life, was a major preoccupation for Lisa - things like making a perfect cup of tea or adjusting the lamps in the room so the lighting was just right, arranging the things in the room

cont. next page

exactly the way she wanted them were major concerns for Lisa. Before I met her, I had no idea how important these details could be, how much time and care were required to attend to them. The making of the tea for example, one would think it a fairly simple matter to prepare a cup of tea the way one liked it. But no, it seems there are all sorts of difficulties and considerations, hurdles which stand in the way of the successful completion of this task, the production of a perfect cup of tea. First of all, the temperature of the water must be just right, neither too hot nor too cold, the usual failing being that it is insufficiently hot. Similarly, the strength of the tea must be neither too weak nor too strong and one must take extreme care to use just the right number of drops of lemon. But primary concern for Lisa was the honey. The business of the honey was most important, having to be measured in the right quantity, of course, but more than this, it must be of the proper quality. I've never met anyone with such a discerning palette when it came to honey. Before I met her, I wasn't even aware of the vast gradations of the quality of honey. To me honey was just honey; it's sweet and good, I like it and that's all there is to it. But that was all wrong. Honey was a singular passion with Lisa. She even went so far as to use it as a medium for forming opinions of the people she met. If their honey was of good quality, then so in her mind, were they. And, God forbid, if they should serve her sugar with her tea, they were instantly dashed down against the rocks of her contempt. Lisa wouldn't touch sugar, though not for reasons of health for which so many people abstain from it. For her it solely was a matter of taste. As anyone with the least amount of common sense knows, it's completely impossible to make a decent cup of tea sweetened with sugar.

Many times when we were out, visiting people or at restaurants, I would see a crestfallen look come over her face, disturbing the beautiful harmony of her features after her first disappointing sip of the tea that was served to her. But she would rarely say anything about it out of politeness when it was the case of friends and from knowing the futility of it at restaurants and coffee houses. But traces of the disconcerted look remained on her throughout the evening, no matter how hard she tried to suppress it. (At this stage of her life she already knew, since it was of such great concern to her, which coffee houses and restaurants were capable of producing an acceptable cup of tea, which brands and kinds of honey were good and so forth. But sometimes even the most reliable brands failed her, failed to come up to standard, which was most disturbing to a psyche such as hers. I've seen Lisa throw away a whole, huge jar of honey because it wasn't good enough. I couldn't understand this terrible quest for perfection in things; I had absolutely no conception of it. And worse than that, Lisa had contempt for me because, not only were these concerns of little importance to me, I couldn't even distinguish between that which was acceptable and good and that which was not...

Bring the external world into harmony with her internal sensibilities, making her surroundings conform as much as possible to some inner dictates of a refined taste was everything, was The Good for Lisa. For me, The Good simply was Lisa.

She sat in the chair by the window sipping her tea. The blinds were still drawn against the heat of the sun even though it was long past its peak hour now. As she drank her tea, she peered out at the street through a small chink in the blinds. She looked up and focused her eyes on me for just a minute, slowly and deliberately drawing her attention to this new being who had come into the room, sitting up straight in her chair to study me carefully. She held her tea tensely upright in one hand. The muscles of her face and her body were similarly drawn up and actively engaged as she focused her attention on me. The tip of her tongue moved across her lips from one corner of her mouth to the other as she fixed on me a gaze that was both absent and searching, as if she were trying to remember who I was. Then she relaxed and abruptly turned back to her window without saying anything. I sank down into the couch opposite the windows to enjoy the sight of her profile with its prominent cheekbones, elegantly shaped nose, and skin burnished by the summer sun to a beautiful rich honey brown.



The summer was almost over and the days were already becoming noticeably shorter. The sun had left the sky in a blaze of red which was already beginning to fade, turning to darker more somber hues, deep violets and blues and finally black as we sat there, Lisa with her tea and I with my eyes full of her.

Darkness began to settle over the room and still she sat watching the street, watching the day end and the people scurrying to and fro to their homes. The house was quiet. Finally, she said without turning from the window, "There's more tea in the pot." I got up and went into the kitchen as if commanded to get myself some. As I moved towards the kitchen her voice followed me: "I made bread", she said with a slight tentative note which probably only I could have perceived. I knew it was an expression of anxiety about the quality of the bread. How I lived for those tiny moments of vulnerability I perceived in her. They made up for all the coldness and disdain of her usual manner towards me. Seeing this small waver of self doubt pass through her, this tiny expression

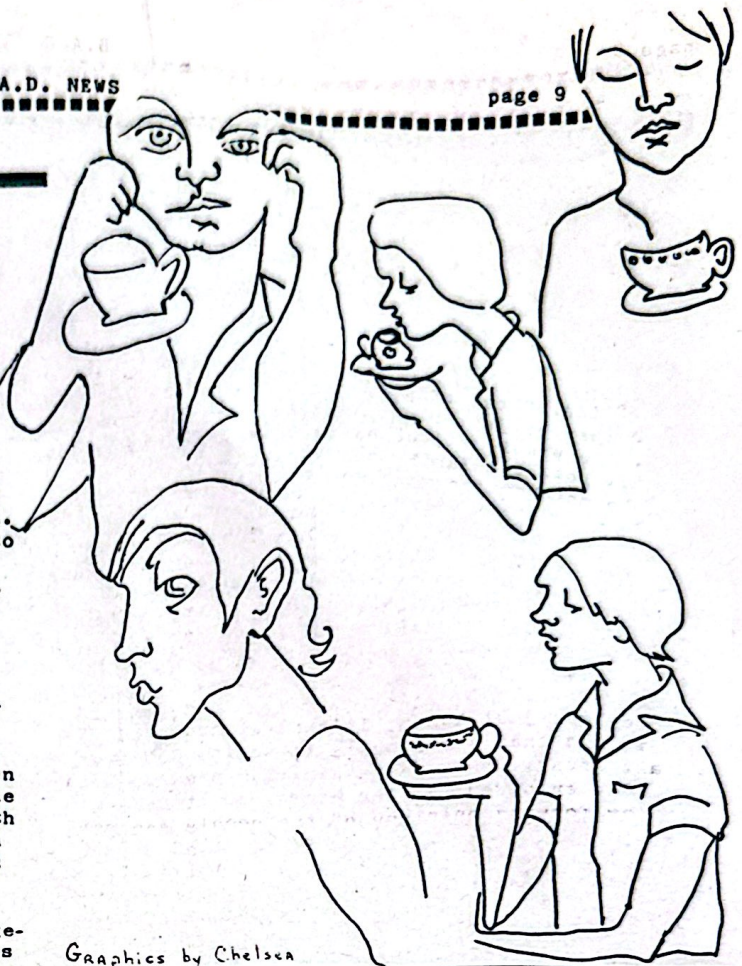
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s o r e l i n l o v e c o n t .

of insecurity, I felt my heart turn over with love. I felt as if my love for her flowed in through these small cracks in the armor of her self-assuredness, the way water seeks out and finds the tiniest chinks and flaws of a wall or facade impeding its progress, it slipped through and entered, filled her taking complete possession of her, making her mine for just those few moments. In reality, it was only my own heart and breast which swelled and filled with feeling.

I saw the bread just as I heard her voice announcing its existence. It was apricot bread. Apricot Bread! What a surprise and a delight to behold. For up to that moment not only had I never heard of, but was incapable even of conceiving of such a culinary wonder as apricot bread, a rich nutty whole wheat bread with a delicious, an almost miraculous sweet fruit center of apricot. And who would have thought Lisa would know how to make such a thing. Looking into the kitchen from the door frame, a beautiful sight met my eyes. It was one of Lisa's perfect arrangements. On the long wooden counter which ran almost the length of one side of the narrow kitchen, the ceramic teapot, with its muted light chocolate colored glaze sat on a woven blond straw mat. Next to it was Lisa's beautiful ebony cutting board with its inlaid wood pattern which held the wholesome brown homemade loaf as if on an ebony throne. A wedge-shaped opening was cut into it where a generous portion had been removed revealing the rich, whole wheat texture of the bread which was set off by the exquisite, disarmingly pale hue of the apricot filling. It was an aesthetic of natural and organic elements, rich textures, a harmony of earthy browns and tans as against the straw blond of the mat and the finely grained blond wood of the counter and added to all this the startling, unexpected beauty of the apricot. The perfect beauty of the scene was heightened by the pleasing arrangement of these objects across the counter, deployed with perfect proportion and grace, but having at the same time, the charming air of having been strewn across the counter with a blissful unconscious ease and haphazardness. A sharp cutting knife with its gleaming, metal blade and elaborately carved bone handle lay poised on the cutting board near the bread and further down on the counter, towards the far end of the room, there was a ceramic vase filled with other kitchen utensils. Still others were spread across the counter in a pleasing manner. The beauty of the scene was enhanced by the last rays of the setting sun which streamed through the window bathing everything in its majestic glow making of the scene something unreal, giving it the aura of a work of art. Even the incidental crumbs of bread here and there about the counter seemed artfully and purposefully placed, which made them appealing, giving them the aesthetic charm of being exactly in the place they were meant to be.

Lisa followed after me, moving towards the kitchen with that nervous, spikey gait she always adopted when she was insecure and uptight about something. In spite of her desire to appear cool and unconcerned about the thing, she was unable to forgo observing at close hand my first taste of her bread. "It's not very good," she said quickly planting



Graphics by Chelsea

herself in the kitchen doorway, lurking over it, leaning forward with arms outstretched supporting herself against its frame. She watched me carefully from this vantage point as I carefully poured myself a cup of tea and cut out a healthy slice of bread. It was still warm. The bread was delicious.

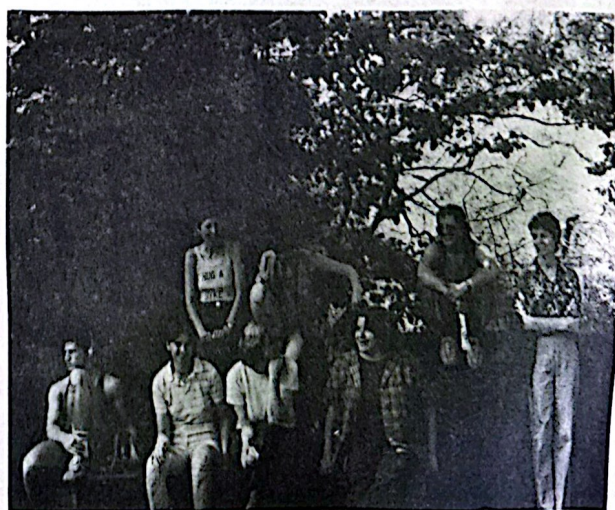
"Lisa, this is really good", I said quietly in a voice almost devoid of expression so as to underline by understatement the sincerity of my remark. "I didn't know you could make anything this good," I said with slightly more enthusiasm. I sat down to eat.

"It's okay, but it could have been better," she said. "It didn't come out the way I wanted it to." She sat down in the chair next to mine and, leaning on one elbow, resting her face in her hand she studied my face carefully as I wolfed down the bread, trying to gauge the truth of my appreciative comments. She frowned as she watched me but I knew she was pleased. She tried to hide the pleasure she derived from watching me eat her bread-making by keeping her features rigid and impassive but I could see her struggling to suppress a delighted grin and she could not hide the glow of pleasure shining from her eyes. My memory of the incident is rendered still more pleasing by the fact that the bread really was good. I quickly devoured the piece I had cut for myself, then stood up, pushing the chair away from me with the backs of my legs as I tilted my head back to drain the remainder of my tea. I set the glass down sharply on the counter and wiped my mouth off with the back of one hand as something of the feeling of being a young husband with his bride came over me again for just a moment. I went into the bedroom and stretched myself out comfortably on Lisa's big bed.



March for Disarmament, June 12, 1982 New York
Photos by myra nissim





Lesbian Pride Christopher Street
June 27 Liberation Day March

Photos by Stacy Jaine

N.Y.C. Elderly Women

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B.A.D. NEWS

JULY-AUGUST 1982



GRANDMA WAS AN ACTIVIST

In recent months, oral historians Jon Bloom, Bea Lemisch and Ruth Prago have recorded interviews with some of the women who helped make the decade following the Crash of '29 a time of struggle in adversity, a time of protest: the voices of Louise Thompson Patterson and Queen Mother Moore recall the Renaissance and the riots in Harlem and beyond; in Harlem and beyond; Rose Kryszak on the tactics of tenant organizers, stuffing furniture with rocks to retort evictions; Loretta Szeliga, "the Red Rose of Sheridan Square," on being busted-- these and many others tell us what it was like to be a woman of radical conscience against a backdrop which includes the Great Depression, the rise of Fascism, the emergence of Stalinism and, finally, the outbreak of war.

Grandma Was an Activist will also make use of the considerable archives of the Oral History of the American Left at New York University's Tamiment Institute Library, and is directed by historians Paul and Mari Jo Buhle.

Teaming up to create the radio series are producers Beth Friend and Charles Potter (Radio Arts Inc.). The series will feature music (including selections from the program of the 1938 concert From Socialism to Swing) and period actuality.

What Grandma... appears to tell us is that there is a tradition of radicalism in America, and that today's movements, be they anti-war, pro-labor, pro-women or pro-Black, all of these have their roots in past struggle -- and women were fighting on all of these fronts in the '30's."

Radio Arts Inc., 838 West End Ave. (6-D), NY, NY 10025. (212) 866-1123.)

"The elderly population of New York City is largely female and largely poor, and it is neglected by government, the medical profession, social agencies and news organizations, according to a report issued in June by the City Council's Subcommittee on the Status of Women.

The report, based on hearings over the last nine months, concluded that sex discrimination, age discrimination and, in the case of minority women, racism, all combined to create a bleak existence for the majority of elderly women. "...The most severe problem faced by older women is poverty," the report stated.

Women represent 60% of the 1.2 million residents of New York 60 and over, and nearly half of all women over 65 have incomes below the poverty level, according to the report. The median income for women 65 and over is \$4,226, only \$176-above the official poverty level, and the poverty rate for older women is double that for elderly men.

"If women have been single and supported themselves by working, their retirement income is likely to be low because they have not held well-paying jobs," the report said.

"If they have not worked and relied on their husband's retirement benefits, upon widowhood their income is reduced. As they become older, inflation erodes all income except Social Security, and it is likely that most women receive only the minimum Social Security benefit, which is well below the poverty level."....

(Reprinted from the NY Times, June 23, 1982, p. B1. Written by Leslie Bennetts.)

Animal Liberation

THE SILENT NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST

From Bikini Island in the North Pacific to the Air Force Radiobiology Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, countless numbers of animals have suffered and died as part of our government's preparation for nuclear war. The U.S. military has conducted numerous experiments with various species of animals, including monkeys, burros, pigs, mice, rabbits, guinea pigs, cats, dogs, sheep, steers, and goats. Subjected to large doses of radiation, these animals die in terrible agony. Notwithstanding the nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, loss of hair, and massive internal hemorrhaging they experience as a result of this research, Lt. Colonel William J. McGee, a spokesperson for the Defense Nuclear Agency stated: "To the best of our knowledge, the animals experience no pain from radiation experiments." (Time, 2/6/78 p. 50)

People who have written to protest the use of primates for research at the School of Aerospace Medicine, Brooks Air Force Base (San Antonio, Texas) have received a form letter from Major Salvatore Giammo who handles PR for the school, Major Giammo states that these experiments are "vital to national defense"-- that they demonstrate how we can survive in a "modern warfare environment." We have a better way to survive: END THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE NOW!

Moreover, if we are to maintain a lasting peaceful environment, it is not enough to limit ourselves to the support of human rights issue, such as racism and sexism; we must put an end to speciesism as well.

We are all victims of the on-going nuclear weapons tests conducted with non-human animals. Who will speak up?

For free information, write: June 12th Coalition for Animal Rights, Box 190, Bronx, NY 10471.



WOMEN RABBIS

For many centuries, rabbis had always been men by tradition. Ten years ago the Jewish Reform movement in this country ordained its first woman to the rabbinate. By late 1976 the movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations was predicting that within three years one of every three newly ordained Reform rabbis would be a woman.

There were then three in the rabbinate, and the group's Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion had 35 women among its 215 rabbinic students.

The prediction appears to have been moderate. Today there are 49 women among the 1,200 Reform rabbis in the country, and the rabbinic school counts 75 women among its 216 students. Forty percent of the 48 entering students this year are women.

(Reprinted from the NY Times, June 20, 1982).



SOBRE EL ASUNTO DE DARSE A CONOCER* COMO HOMOSEXUAL

"National Gay Task Force"

COMING OUT IN SPANISH !
NGTF PUBLISHES SPANISH
TRANSLATION OF "ABOUT
COMING OUT"

The National Gay Task Force has published a Spanish translation of its pamphlet "About Coming Out." It discusses why gays often want to acknowledge their gay identities to others, suggestions for how to approach coming out to parents, relatives, friends, and work associates.

Lucia Valeska, Executive Director of NGTF, said, "This publication begins to address a serious need in the gay and lesbian community--the need for educational material in languages other than English. We intend to continue the translation of NGTF materials into other languages to meet this need."

Copies are available for \$1 from NGTF, Suite 1601, 80 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10011. Call Lucia Valeska, (212) 741-5800.



Playwright Harvey Fierstein (right) congratulates fellow award winner and playwright Jane Chambers at the Fifth Annual Fund for Human Dignity Award Dinner, May 10, 1982, St. Regis Hotel. Also pictured are Beth Allen (far left), Jane's lover, and Dan J. Bradley (far right), former President of the Legal Services Corporation, Washington, D.C.

Jane Chambers Benefit

THE PIED PIPER
193 Commercial Street

July 11, 1982, 3 P.M.

Jane Chambers, author-playwright (Last Summer at Bluefish Cove, My Blue Heaven, A Late Snow, Burning, Kudzu, Chasing Jason, etc.), became a victim of brain cancer in November, 1981, at the age of 44. Though partially paralyzed, she's still writing, thanks to her life-partner, Beth Allen (Horen/Allen Management, NYC) and a wonderful support group.

Provincetown is joining the Fund for Human Dignity and The National Gay Task Force in honoring and helping Jane. Their Award of Merit was presented to her on May 10, 1982 "...for her contribution to the education of the American public about the lives of lesbians and gay men".

We in Provincetown want to help her financially so that she will be able to afford all the physical and support therapy she needs to complete her life in the happiest way possible. For Jane that means doing what she loves best - writing. Through her writing she helps us all. Now we want to help her.

1. Come to the giant auction, smart buffet and star-studded show at the Pied Piper sponsored by Pam Genevino, Linda Gerard, and Diane Marchal. The food for the buffet will be donated by our local restaurants, bakeries, delis - all for a \$5 donation.

2. If you can't be here, send contributions for the auction or checks made out to Jane Chambers Remembrances of Things Past, 376 Commercial St., Provincetown, MA 02657. For a contribution of \$50 or more we'll send you an autographed copy of either... Bluefish Cove or My Blue Heaven, both published by J.H. Press and available at Womencrafts in Provincetown.

Provincetown sponsors and supporters: The Pied Piper, The Everbreeze Restaurant, Tumbleweed Jewelry, Womencrafts, Baulah's, Pucci's Harborside, The Cape Ender Deli, Dodie's, Alice's, The Ellen Harris Gallery, Shankpainter Printing, Remembrances of Things Past and In NYC, Jane's publisher, JH Press, Village Station, NYC 10014.

In Reviewed by Sandra Pianin

More idle curiosity did not draw this writer to make a reservation for the production, IN, which appeared at the West 3rd Street Theatre, June 8, 10, 12, 16, 20. The real draw was the cover article of B.A.D. News, June 1982 issue.

The setting for IN is a women's prison. A guard is killed as three inmates attempt a break. The authorities cannot determine which of the three women they can indict for trial. They hire an informer to capture the inmates' confidence. The informer slowly becomes entwined in the lives of Constance, Randy, and Jamie. She becomes a victim of the system which employed her.

While the program denotes passage of time as "scene" changes, a better term might be "phases". It is continuous action that forces your attention---you are riveted to the seat. The composition and form of IN is so fluidly cohesive and structurally sound that it proceeds smoothly and flawlessly. This is a production of total unity---all elements of set, sound, music, and acting are in perfect harmony. Yet the stark reality of prison life is cast in a most believable attitude. Actresses Amy Brentano, Valerie English, Carol Graham, Shanna Leonard, Neon Weis, Donna Yates are all singularly effective.

If one of the ultimate motivations for the arts is instruction, part of what is the ultimate responsibility of the artist is to make their work a vehicle for social change. Our prison inmates, particularly the women, are among the forgotten of this world. To Nikki Appino, writer/director, and an excellently attuned and coordinated cast and crew must go kudos, toasts, and our unabashed appreciation. Their production of IN was an intensely commanding, vital and stirring experience.

April Is The Cruellest Month

by MARICLA MOYANO

From a forthcoming book of fiction, BURNING BRIGHT

Note to reader: "April Is The Cruellest Month" is a long, short story which Big Apple Dyke News is running in several issues. The first segment appeared in VOL. II, No. 5 (June 1982). This is the second segment, and it will be continued next month as well.

Because my grandparents had lost their only son, Duncan, to suicide, Aunt Calvert had tried to substitute Mike, and they had even lived at Lower Brems for a few years, taking care of the old people, the house, and Mike supervising the farm and its finances. Mike had been miserable, drinking too much Bourbon alone on the third floor and longing for his own farm where he had his cattle trained so that they responded to their names and where he only had to put in three hours work a day. There, he and Aunt Calvert had survived on an income of five thousand dollars a year. Most of the time he like to read: Racine and Montaigne and other French classics in French, Cervantes and the great Spaniards and Latin Americans in Spanish, and, of course, the English and American classics. I would ship him and Aunt Calvert crates of more modern books, James Baldwin, Malcolm X's Autobiography, George Orwell's Homage to Catalonia. Once I had written Aunt Calvert, "I'm going to drag you and Mike into the Twentieth Century if it kills me." She had coolly responded, "I've been in the Twentieth Century longer than you have, darling."

At night, Mike had trouble sleeping and therefore had his own bedroom downstairs at their farmhouse. There, he spent the night reading and writing letters to magazines, newspaper, to me and a few other correspondents. He had written me a letter or two a week for almost fifteen years. Except for his racist theories, which were so at variance with practice of infallible courtesy to every human being, they were beautiful letters: erudite, wise, full of love, with deep compassion for my youthful struggles. Aunt Calvert wrote shorter letters, and her advice was mostly religious: "The kingdom of God is within you" was one of her favorite maxims. But my heart always quickened at the happy sight of her beautiful handwriting, and as my grandmother said, "Nobody can get as much on a card as Calvert." Her last one had read:

Darling Calvert;

Your Valentine is a precious gem; how you do spoil us! First with a visit, and an armful of presents (chrysanthemums still in bloom, bells from Sarna still tinkle on the stairs, etc.) and now this beautiful book which I love. Thank you again and again, dearest girl! Come again,

darling namesake! Love to Sydney and again a heartfelt of thanks for W.B. Yeats who has me presently intoxicated with him.

Devotedly yours,

Aunt Calvert

When I had called her once this last winter from New York, she had said, "When are you coming down to see me in the desert?" She was drinking too much, like Mike. I remembered six years ago, in 1962, when I had gone down with my then husband, Juan, to visit her and Mike and my grandparents. She and Mike were then living at Lower Brems. She and I had been chopping vegetables for dinner in the kitchen. All the while she had been sipping Bourbon and water and must have had at least three drinks. At twenty-three, it was the first time I had felt grown-up, equal to her, as controlled as she, more controlled and more aware, since I'd had nothing to drink, watching her get flushed with the liquor, watching how she needed the liquor, how she had hidden the drinks from my grandmother. I'd never seen Aunt Calvert lose control and there had been something frightening about that possibility.

I had felt something wrong between her and Mike when she didn't dash to the third floor after him, as usual, once dinner was over, wanting to stay and talk to me. Juan had gone upstairs too, and my grandparents. But Aunt Calvert had said, "Here's our prize for washing the dishes," and had offered me a Bourbon and water. And we had gone into the little parlour and had sat there by the fire, talking, while I had been conscious that Juan probably wanted me upstairs. Aunt Calvert had been full of strange, racist theories inherited from Mike, really insane theories about the decline of civilization through interbreeding, etc. They hadn't been worth arguing about, so I had let her ramble on. Like Mike, she was courtesy and peacemaker incarnate with my grandmother's Black servants and with the Black neighbors whose farm bordered theirs. They were both sweeter to Sydney, who was Jewish, than I was. Aunt Calvert's first husband, Stuart, the father of her only child, had been descended from an old Southern family of converted Jews. And she had had a Muslim, Persian lover for two years in Europe, a man named Bhaktiar, Mother had told me. When I had written my grandmother

april is the cruellest month

a long, enthusiastic letter about Martin Luther King, I had found it saved for posterity by Aunt Calvert, filed away, dated, and marked in her handwriting, "Calvert's Martin Luther King Letter." She and Mike's theory and practice were totally split and schizophrenic, their minds in complete ideological confusion, I thought. But I had been shocked at her intoxicated racist ramblings that night. She was usually quite discreet in her racial comments, knowing exactly how I felt. My mother always said that Aunt Calvert changed her ideas according to what man she was with at the time.

We had finally stood up to go upstairs and as we stood there in the little parlour by the fire, she had suddenly taken my face in her hands, all in a glow, and had said, "What a beautiful face you have! Everybody talks about your body, but don't know what kind of a face you have, so I have to tell you," holding my head in an intense way, fixed, passionate almost, so that I had blushed red as blood, to the roots, and had mumbled something. Still, she wouldn't let go of my face, looking at me, so that finally I had leaned forward and kissed her on the cheek. "Somebody has to tell you," she had said. And then she had let me go.



TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

Classifieds

Intergay, GPO Box 3387, Brooklyn, NY 11202. Syndicated gay radio on WBAI, WRSU, and WUSB.

Order Places of Interest
To Women USA & Canada, 1983 from Ferrari Publications, POB 16326, Phoenix, Arizona 85011. \$5.25 (USA); \$6.50 (Canada). Women's Guide. (602)264-5811.

JULY 30-AUGUST 1 at Columbia University "A National Conference to Link Up the Fight for Peace with Jobs & Equality" sponsored by: Federation For Progress, 242 Lafayette St., NYC 10012. (212)966-7743. A Natural Follow-up to June 12 Disarmament March and Rally.

TAKE THE BUS TO THE 7TH MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL!! FESTIVE JOURNEY 2 leaves NYC Wed., Aug. 11, 6pm; returns Mon., Aug. 16, 6pm. \$95. round trip. Work exchange available for half-fare. All womyn encouraged to participate!! TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION: (212)866-8094, MARSHA OR PAM.

Lesbian publication from Brazil: "Boletim Do G.G.B." Caixa Postal 2552, 40.000 Salvador, Bahia Brasil.

WOMEN ONLY SOFTBALL: 75th & Riverside Park near Boat Basin, 1 pm every Sunday; also at 5 pm every Sunday on West 62nd & Central Park West.

National Gay Task Force

80 Fifth Avenue • New York, New York 10011 (212)741-6800



B.A.D. News at the Lesbian Pride March photographed by Stacy Jaine.

news

STREET CONVERSATION

Phyllis Schlafly:
"The atomic bomb is a marvelous gift that was given to our country by a wise God."

Overheard Street Conversation: "What do you get when you crown Billie Jean King with Bo Derek?" "A DG-10."

nice Jewish girls cont

about this event yet. Not about the book, the women, the feelings evoked. Perhaps I have told you more than the surface - who read what, etc.

The "Nice Jewish Girls" turned out to be informed, angry, patient, unsettling, beautiful, diverse Jewish Lesbians who put together an anthology of their experiences as children, Movement women, mothers, teachers...Jews, which had such impact that I am not certain that this event has been digested by me sufficiently to write a coherent article. To add to the other confusions in me, and as it turns out other women I have since polled, we don't know how it fits with Lesbian Separatism-Feminism, etc. I don't know. We have a long ways to go. At some point in the evening I realized that the absence of non-Jewish women was not important to me. The women in the room were more than enough. The issues brought up were more than enough. To have dialogue at this point with other women would, I believe, be premature since most of us have yet to fully feel and understand Jewishness, anti-Semitism, and who we are in relation to these issues and ourselves as Lesbians and Feminists.

Batya Bauman, who introduced the evening, was visibly moved practically at the very existence of the book. I shared her feelings after I got the gist of what was going on. No trivial book this! No nice Jewish girls as I had envisioned. These women had taken the term used so often in all of our childhoods and turned it around. Nice Jewish girls are not aspiring grade-school teachers who will marry dentists and live in Spring Valley and not work in full-time jobs. ("Maybe a little teaching" as my mother told me. "The hours are good. You can be home in time for the kids." Especially, "Go to college a few years so a 'professional' would want you as a wife and not be ashamed." More especially "Stay with your own kind. Life is hard enough.") Oh ma, if only you had not tried so hard - and failed. It was not your failure. You had a lot of help. It was not your fault that I did none of the above. In fact, you were probably giving lip service to "them" - the ever present "them". "What will they say?" Familiar? If you could have had a book like Nice Jewish Girls plus the Women's Movement, perhaps your life and all the lives of the women in your generation would have been different. I guess it's futile to theorize.

As the women read, there were so many sorrows dredged up. So much recognition. So much pain and joy now that we have been forced to face the facts of our collective experiences. For the first time in my hectic life of attempted denial and avoidance I saw it possible for nice Jewish girls to be ANYTHING. Maybe you think that what I said about dentists and Spring Valley, etc. was incorrect. Maybe anti-Semitic. Well, I lost my first nice Jewish girlfriend to a dentist and when they married they moved to Spring Valley. Helen, I am writing this for you, I now realize. The rules have changed. Please, all you Helens who were NJG's by their definition, read this book. Your story is in there somewhere. It will make a difference.

This book/event is part of the beginning of a process. What will happen? This morning I woke out of a nightmare of a woman being beaten with a chain. I began to write this article. The event at Womanbooks frightened, elated and sad-

dened me. Just as becoming enlightened as a woman and a Lesbian meant change, which goes hand-in-hand with fear, so does becoming enlightened as a Jew. Combining those three aspects of myself should be quite something. I thought I was aware as a Jew. I found out through the readings from Nice Jewish Girls that I am sitting on a keg of dynamite. I have apologized for my Jewishness. I have lost friends in arguments over Israel, Jewish money, and who had it worse. I have suffered the Holocaust through my parents and didn't feel it right to mention it in "more oppressed" company. Yes, me too.

One of the women said it in words to this effect. Until we stop fighting one another we cannot successfully fight the patriarchy. I agree. I go further. We cannot fight anyone while we are fighting our own battles in silence and choking on the tears, the fears.

You may not think this a proper review of the event. Well, it's my way of reviewing it. The impact on me, and the consequences (if you are Jewish there have to be consequences - right?) are too great to sum it up in some slick and easy style.

A telling occurrence: at the break, Evelyn Torton Beck, the editor and one of the NJG's who read, suggested singing as a way of relaxing. Some Hebrew song was started, and I knew this song. I moved my lips and I was embarrassed. And heard around me a very tentative and similar response. Some women tried to pick it up, but it continued to sound like the first faltering words of a baby. The room seemed filled with shame, fear, and something I cannot name.

After a lifetime of living in a non-Jewish world with an identity that seems to be made up of bits and pieces of that world, of what others thought I ought to be, I must end on a note of confusion and hope. After all, Lesbian Feminism gave me strengths that had previously been withheld. Perhaps this new Jewish identity will serve to enhance these strengths further. What I do know for sure is that we have finally broken a silence.

I am grateful to Evelyn Torton Beck, Irena Klepfisz, Gloria Z. Greenfield, Bernice Mennis, and Melanie Kaye for having spoken out. I am grateful to me for having gone to see some very Nice Jewish Girls.

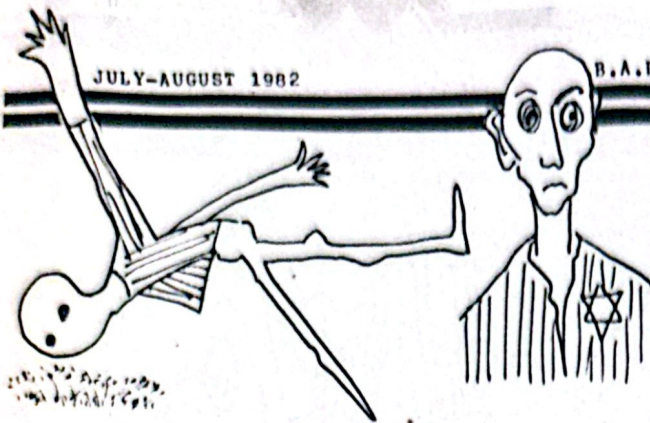
"If I am not for myself who will be? If I am only for myself what am I? And if not now when?"

I realize that many Lesbian Feminists have trouble putting together the ideas of Jewishness and radical feminism. I need to hear a lot more to reconcile myself to the idea that I can be a Lesbian, a Feminist, and a Jew. I am all three, and yet they keep uneasy company. Yes, we Jews are being threatened as Women, Lesbians, Spinsters, Jews, I know the arguments. There is still an uneasy truce in me.

My relatives who were murdered may have been Feminists. They may, some of them, have been lesbians. They were Jews. That is what determined their deaths. So all of my thinking as a Radical Feminist would be erased at the whim of a Jew-hater. We need to talk, and study and talk to gain some clarity of thought.

Above all, we must know that as any oppressed group, we must stick together and fight. All of us - we must fight each other's battles or we shall surely be lost.

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"In Germany they first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me--and by that time, no one was left to speak up."

Pastor Martin Niemöller

A WALL BLACK WITH BLOOD

by SUSAN CAVIN

I am not Jewish, but the Holocaust came to my house too...at night. My father, an American soldier during World War II, helped liberate three camps in Germany and was tormented nightly for the next thirty years by his memories of those concentration camps. After the war, he became a night-time alcoholic who spoke every night of my childhood about the grisly war. My memory of him, tortured and obsessed by what he had seen, is the deepest pain of my life and it makes me cry every time it all comes back to me. Until now, I have made it a policy of my adult life to try to forget those nights. But now, after reading in the media the current attempt of rightist groups such as the Liberty Lobby to charge that the Holocaust is a delusion made up by Jews, I feel compelled to set down the truth as I know it from the point of view of a child of a liberator.

My father, retired Army Lt. Colonel John Charles Cavin, commander of the 48th Tank Battalion of the 14th Armored Division of Patton's Third Army, won two Silver Stars and two Bronze Stars for valor in battle. (The Silver Star is second to the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Bronze Star is third.) In official U.S. military history of World War II, the 14th Armored Division was called "The Liberators" because they liberated more concentration camps than any other American ground force in the European theatre. Rising by battlefield promotion from a college ROTC 2nd Lt. in the Army Reserves to become the youngest Army Colonel in the European Theatre at 27 in one and one half years (1944-45), he made tactical military history by becoming the only commander of a U.S. landforce to capture a jet wing of the German Luftwaffe (air force) without destroying the planes or the airfield. My father was personally involved in the liberation of three camps: a death camp that was the northern branch of Dachau, Flossenbürg, and a small unnamed camp that was simply called "Stalag" with a number. I might add that he never received a medal for liberating any camps. Dachau proper was south of Munich, but he commanded the liberation of a small death camp branch of Dachau that was north of Munich deep in a forest heavily camouflaged by air.

Engraved in my memory for life is the story of my father leading his tank battalion through a forest north of Munich. Having been briefed by his superiors that he was in the vicinity of concentration camps and to expect to come across them, he saw a man in black and white prison stripes running toward him in the woods. The man was a French Jew who had been sent by the inmates to find the Americans; he had escaped from the camp

in the confusion as the Nazis were on the run from the Allies and about to abandon the camp. The man was very brave and wanted to take the Americans back to the camp to liberate it. My father told him that the Americans had the Nazis surrounded and on the run and that they were free, but the man insisted that my father go into the camp to tell the inmates that they were free because they were afraid to leave for fear that the Nazis would come back for them. So my father took a small force of two light artillery tanks and three Jeeps filled with soldiers and machine guns and he rode with the French Jew in the lead Jeep that had an air artillery radio connected to air support toward the camp. They were practically on top of the camp and he hadn't even seen it. It was camouflaged by air the color of the forest so that no airplane could spot it. They practically ran across the camp before they knew what they had found. They were twenty feet from the camp before he could see the gates which were double gates with barbed wire at the top with dogs in between the two gates "so that if you got over one, the dogs would eat you alive before you could make it over the second gate."

He took the camp with minimum resistance from the few remaining Nazis, who my father said were anxious to surrender to the Americans rather than the Russians. Then all of the "skin and bones people" who could walk came out to the gate of the camp and cheered the small American force. The Jewish prisoners took pictures of everyone with my father and his men. My father had orders to liberate the camps but to press on and rout the Nazis, so he was ready to leave after he told the assembly that they were free and that he was leaving one of his soldiers behind in charge of relief, and after the picture-taking ceremony, with my helmeted father standing by a woman holding a baby who was born that day, was over. But the woman insisted that he, as the highest ranking American officer there and as the commander of the liberation of the camp, tour the buildings and grounds of the concentration camp for the official record. He yielded to her wishes, later to his regret, because of the nightmarish memories he would have for the rest of his life, and accompanied her on an official tour of the camp which the inmates told him was a northern branch of Dachau, a death camp for Dachau. He was so horrified by what he saw that he wanted to get out of there as fast as possible, but stayed for her sake.

cont. next page

A Wall...cont.

He saw the crematorium which had the stench of burnt human flesh still in the air from use the previous day. There was a railroad track leading from the crematorium to a wall that in the rain turned black from blood where the Nazis lined Jews up and shot them, then dumped their bodies in big black urns. On the railroad track between the crematorium and the bloody wall, there were big black urns the Nazis ran on railway carts back and forth from the crematorium to the wall. The inmates told him that sometimes the Nazis put alive people in the big, black urns and they were burned alive if the bullets had not killed them.

He toured the camp hospital where he found three to a bed, sometimes one live person in bed with two dead people; other beds had two live and one dead. While he was there, a woman in bed kept saying she was cold and the other inmates pulled a dead person out of her bed. The Nazi staff had made it policy to put the diseased in the same bed with the healthier, and the living in bed with the dead to speed up the contagion.

He was then taken by the woman into a room filled with hundreds of little black urns lining shelves. Each urn was labelled with the name of the deceased and date of death, giving him the eerie feeling that the Nazis kept macabre, meticulous records of the Holocaust. That is why today he cannot believe anyone is stupid enough to claim that the Holocaust never happened for two reasons: 1) two million American GI's walked through the camps to get to Germany, meaning there were millions of witnesses; and 2) the Nazis were the most meticulous chroniclers of the Holocaust. The Nazis photographed many of their atrocities. All photographic evidence of the Holocaust are Nazi films and still photographs. My father's mind was blown by the fact that the Nazis documented their own atrocities in great detail, since the Americans certainly didn't. One theory my father offered to explain why the Nazis would document their war crimes is that Hitler and his inner circle watched these films of their victims as necrophiliac pornography. This theory may not be so far-fetched, since my father participated in the capture of Berchtesgaden and personally entered Hitler's secret chamber underground while it was fresh with Hitler's possessions.

Then on to Flossenberg, a strange prison camp. Before the war, it had been a real German military prison like Fort Leavenworth in America. Flossenberg was where the Germans sent the Nazi Generals who attempted Hitler's assassination in 1944. When my father took Flossenberg in 1945, which was where the war ended for him, it had a mixture of a few Jews, resistance fighters, German army defectors, and four Nazi Generals. His last official military act at the end of the war was to be made Commandant of Flossenberg for two months after the American military converted Flossenberg into a POW prison camp for 7,000 SS troops, mostly officers. My father put the captured SS officers to making toys for children, which was an insult to the great German army. It was around Christmas time and there were thousands of displaced children throughout Europe and he had received orders that his troops were supposed to give out Hannukah and Christmas toys to the displaced children, mostly Jewish. Some of the SS officers refused to make toys for Jewish children, but most of them did it.



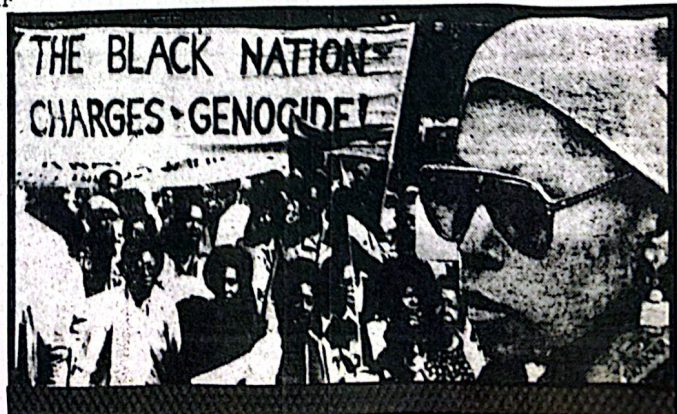
FBI Surveillance

Washington, D.C., June 24 (UPI) Guidelines restricting spying on domestic political organizations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation are about to be eased to let it keep an eye on "terrorist" groups, the Director, William H. Webster, told Congress today.

The guidelines, issued in 1976, have come under attack for preventing the bureau from infiltrating "subversive organizations."

...Senator Jeremiah Denton, an Alabama Republican, head of the subcommittee, cited, among others, the Socialist Workers Party, the Progressive Labor Party, the Weather Underground, and the May 19 Communist Organization as groups favor the overthrow of the United States by force and violence.

He also cited the National Lawyers Guild as an organization that "seeks to exploit the law in order to bring about revolutionary change."



art review

Woman Art Perspective

by Sandra Pianin

Flower Photographs
Hopoghan
92 Hudson St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030
Spring Show

Art gives us the opportunity to view things in multi-dimensional perspective. The show, FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHS, featured at Hopoghan, 92 Hudson St., Hoboken, N.J. this spring, brings together the art of contemporary photographers, Mariette Pathy Allen, Naomi Bushman, Harold Feinstein, Sally Devereux Grugan, Rita Nannini, and Agnes Zellin. Each has her own distinctively gratifying mode of approach to the ephemeral, fragile subject of flowers.

The artistry of Mariette Pathy Allen connects photography and painting. Particularly notable, is the syntax of her gracefully refined blend of light and shadow in FLOWERSCAPE #3.

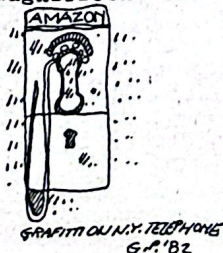
Naomi Bushman's SUNFLOWER, a study of crushed petals, is never awkward or grotesque, but merely a portrait in the temporal nature of her subject. GLADIOLA IN VASE is a positioned view of a traditional still-life subject. She says, "the micro-lens allowed me to come closer to the subject than I had before, seeing things I didn't know were there."

If color adds vivid vitality to the subject of flowers, Sally Devereux Grugan adds the elements of an impressionist painting. Her softly, muted variegated, ONE GERANIUM, approaches the superlative.

Delving into the stratification of the psychology of the individual flower is the special area of Rita Nannini. Her work is intense because it is ultimately scientific---she examines the very grain of a flower---evolving a finite analysis, far beyond the aesthetic, to fulfill a truly wondrous exploration and photographic commentary on the inner life of flowers and their environment.

Previously this writer has characterized the photography of Agnes Zellin and its consummate strength and artistic prowess. A second view (especially the photograph, which is the signature of the exhibit's poster) reveals monumental, scopie vision in almost simple, classic understatement. Agnes' camera is not the tool of the voyeur, but the vehicle that transports the viewer to a very lush, highly sensual climactic peak.

Six highly unique, masterful photographers investigating the gamut of varied perspectives produced this rare and truly magnificent exhibit.



JUDITH NELSON
Viridian Space, Inc.
52 West 57th St.
New York, N.Y.
(June 8-26, 1982)

SUSAN RODGERS
The Touchstone Gallery
29 West 57 St.
New York, N.Y.
(May 15-June 26)

In questioning the source of artistic inspiration, one must be prepared for an answer of endless, lovers, teachers, dawns, sunsets, buildings, other artists' work, perhaps, even a particular slant of light. For an artist to work, the circumstances, conditions are variable to work, the impulse, Muse, and, indeed, even to the extent of their curiosity. The quality of working space and degree of privacy are of consummate importance.

Contemporary women artists seem to be exploring basic symbols and using them as harmonizing and unifying elements. The current shows of Judith Nelson (Viridian Space, Inc.) and Susan Rodgers (The Touchstone Gallery, Inc.) while two variant forms of visual art, have a great deal in common. They both effectively and expressively state their feelings regarding geometric forms. They have achieved concord with a most impressive genius quality.

Judith Nelson's career is wide and varied. Educated at the Rhode Island School of Design, she did post-graduate work at Yale and the University of Hawaii. She has participated in legion group shows across the United States. Judith has had one-person exhibitions at the Razor Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design, Hopkins Art Center (Dartmouth College), and the Dover Creative Arts Center Gallery at Colgate University. She has been guest/visiting artist at Hampshire College, University of Iowa, Tamarind Institute of New Mexico, and the Cleveland Institute of Art.

Judith chooses to apply her paints through art screens onto canvases marked off by grided pencil lines. She implements a style very much faithful to the pointalist mode. Judith's canvases deal with harshness as well as the softness present in women's lives. She begins with raw unprimed canvas, which might indeed be our lives at birth. Her approach to texture, tone, and subject take root in subtle and aggressive use of light, shade, color, deviating composition.

Judith approaches her canvases in a very specific manner and the result is perfection in circles: perhaps, it is the immortality of the circle, which hides the secrets of women's lives.

Her CRYSTAL evokes images of celestial other worlds. Her CANDEZA PRIME is a very utilitarian piece. One might never grow tired of it. Judith's FALA is a particularly gentle and "easy on the senses" piece.

Susan Rodgers sculpture has been exhibited at locations in Massachusetts, but this is her first one-person show in N.Y.C. She has studied with Theodore Rozak at Columbia University and artist Peter Agostini.

Her varying combinations of circle and line form constantly mobile images that are specifically quite pleasing.

Susan's use of found objects is the way she unites us with her sculpture. She has taken items of our experience and transferred them into stimulating, imaginative, and thought-provoking pieces of sculpture.

Judith Nelson created coolly elegant and sophisticated canvases. Susan Rodgers constructs thoughtful sculpture. Together they continue the tradition of calm and strength women need these days.

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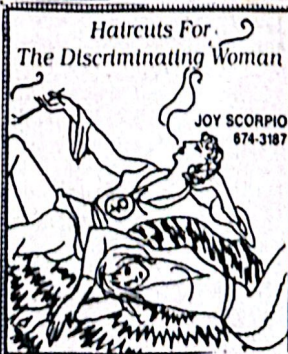
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