

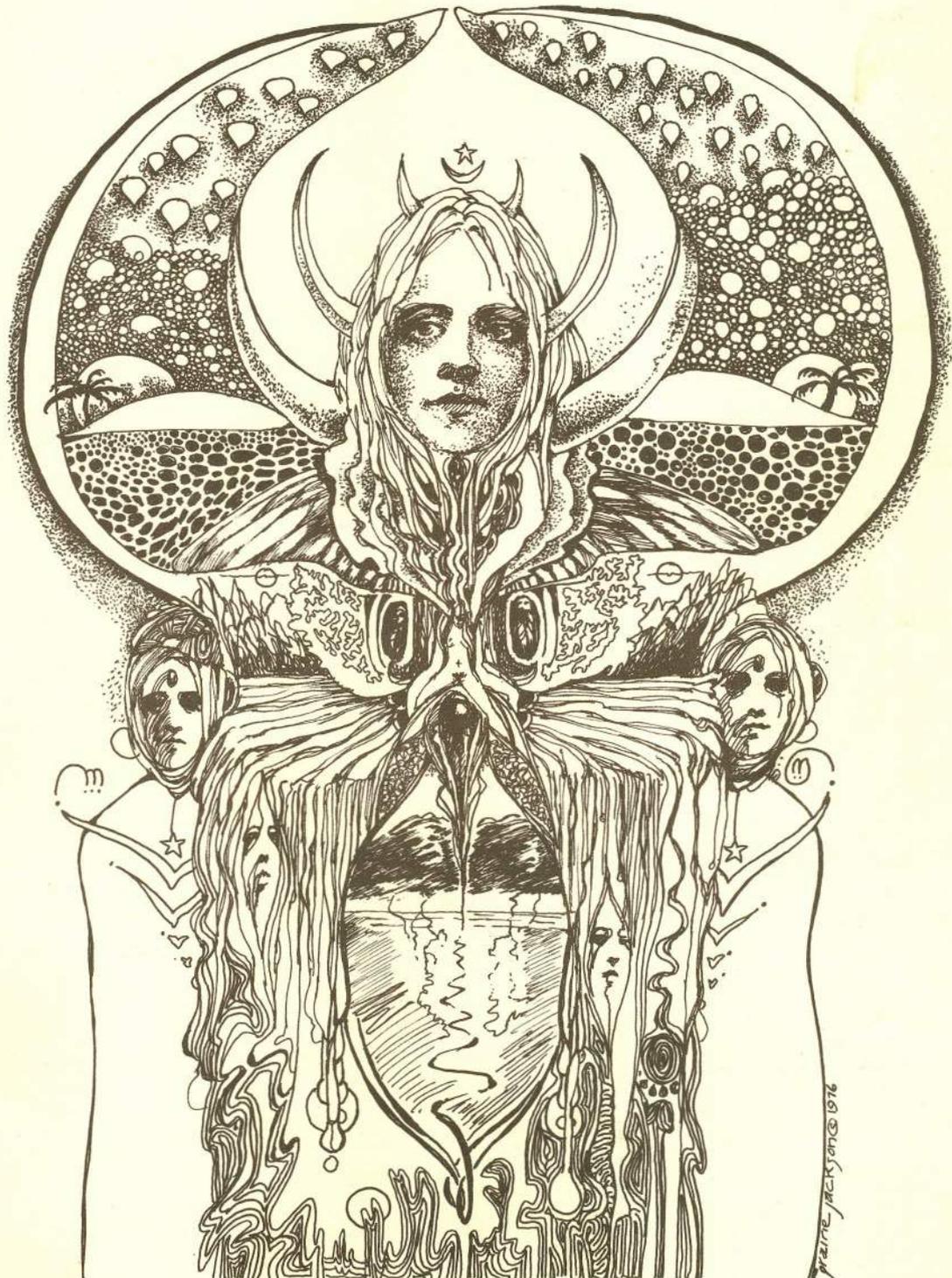


pointblank times

a lesbian/feminist publication houston, texas

50¢

vol. II no. 7 december 1976



But We're Saying It Again Anyway

Hello, hello! It's good to be back in your warm hands again. We missed you, and we thank all of you who expressed concern about where the hell we were. Since we last published, *PBT* has gotten some energetic new staff members, some new ideas, and a home (a garage that only leaks a little bit).

In this issue we are focusing on relationships, and it seems an appropriate time to think about our relationship to one another.

It is important that lesbians support each other in every way possible. Everything that we have gained to date has been won through the risk, hard work, and self-sacrifice of a minority of lesbians. It is that minority group who is giving us a lesbian culture to identify with and to claim as our own. It is their energy and dedication that sustains the rest of us. But unless we give our encouragement and support in return, we are in danger of losing all we have gained. None of us should take our very young and fragile lesbian culture for granted.

Being on the dark side of 30, I can remember how lonely and displaced I felt while growing up. In those days there were no lesbians producing music or writing books and poetry for me-- or none that I could find. There was nothing or no one that I could identify with. There was no Ann Lavender to write to and discuss those bewildering feelings in me that made me different from the other girls I knew.

I can't adequately describe the loneliness, that sense of being completely out of touch with the world. But the remembered feeling of isolation makes me grateful for the lesbian culture that has been born within the past few years and that is growing in strength and substance with each passing month. It is a gift I don't take lightly, for I know it can vanish as quickly as it came into being.

We can keep our lesbian culture and aid its growth through our support and encouragement of one another. We must value the women who are working such long and difficult hours to bring

Continued on back cover

We publish *Pointblank Times* as often as possible. Under optimum conditions that would be monthly. We exist to be a communications vehicle for lesbians and feminists, especially in Houston and in Texas.

Send us your stuff, including letters, features, reviews, poetry, announcements, graphics and photographs. Please tell us how you want your name to appear, and whether you want your material returned to you.

Staff: Claire Noonan, Gaye, Jadene, Liz Brimm, Phyllis Yarnold, Pokey Anderson, Prairie

Mailing Address: *Pointblank Times*, P.O. Box 14643, Houston, Texas 77021

Women's Films

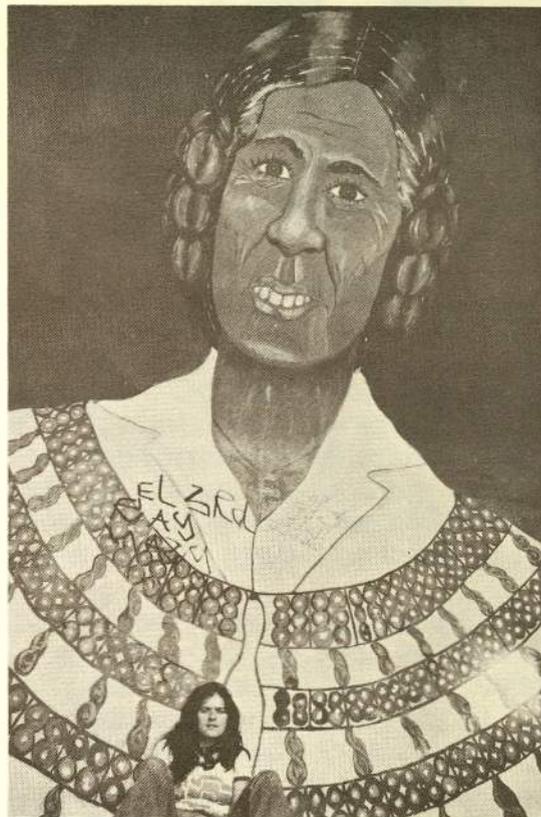
Gemini Productions is presenting the second in a series of women-made films. "Our purpose," say Beth Kendrick and Helen Duran, "is to provide a forum for the perspective of the woman filmmaker. At Gemini we are starting to define who we are as women. We want to control our images whether they be in real life or on film. Our first film, Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts, was received so well we are excited to bring to you Woman To Woman by Donna Deitch."

It is a documentary about hookers, housewives and other mothers. Starting from a montage of women in the work force over the past 75 years, the film unfolds the lives of women to link two professions, prostitutes and housewives--a juxtaposition one is not likely to see at a local cinema. Included in the film are interviews with psychologists, artists, prisoners, housewives and prostitutes, the most notable of which is with Margo St. James, founder of Coyote.

The Lesbian Tide states, "Donna Deitch has put together a movie that speaks to and includes all women, women who are sometimes discounted in the movement."

In addition to the feature film, Mosori Monica by Chick Strand will be shown. The encounter of two cultures in Venezuela is depicted through two women's eyes, an old Warao Indian and a Catholic nun. Mosori Monica capitivatingly shows the complex changes in values which have indelibly altered the Warao vision of life.

These films will be shown Friday, December 3, at First Unitarian Church, 5210 Fannin, 7:30 p.m. A donation of \$2.50 is asked to cover expenses and to be recycled into further feminist cultural events. For further information, call 523-0368 or 528-3461.



Artist Judy Baca, interviewed in film Woman to Woman

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- First Unitarian Church at 5210 Fannin has a diverse women's group which meets every Sunday morning at 10 am. They generally schedule a speaker one Sunday, then a follow-up discussion the next.

Consciousness raising groups are being formed by some of the women in the group. They will meet on week nights. If you are interested contact the church or Claire Noonan, 524-0342.

- Houston's Women's Center is closing in November due to increased rent, maintenance problems and decreased utilization. The current residents, Houston Area NOW, Harris County Women's Political Caucus, and the Rape Crisis Coalition are making alternate arrangements for meeting places. Women's Advocate Nikki Van Hightower is investigating sources of funds for a new comprehensive women's center.

- The world's largest professional organization of English teachers, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) will be meeting in Chicago over Thanksgiving. Among the events will be a Gay Caucus and a panel discussing "A Healthy Gay Presence in Textbooks and Classrooms in Secondary Schools and Colleges."

Among the panelists will be Dr. Julia Stanley of Univ. of Nebraska discussing "The Lesbian Perspective." Dr. Stanley is noted as a linguistics expert, as a dynamic lesbian organizer, and, in certain circles, as a fair touch football player.

- The Houston Area Feminist Federal Credit Union has declared a 2% annual dividend for its first year of operation. Individual statements for the fourth quarter will reflect the amount of the dividend payment. As HAFFCU continues to grow and share deposits increase, so will the annual dividend.

Negotiations have been going on since May with the National Credit Union Administration for HAFFCU to add 11 affiliates to its charter. Final approval would more than double the number of HAFFCU's affiliate organizations.

PBT wishes HAFFCU a very happy first birthday, with many returns.

- Some of our favorite local women sports will be out courting and kicking as follows in coming weeks:

BASKETBALL

(All games to be played at Pershing Jr. High, 7000 Braes Blvd., on Tuesday nights.)

Dec. 7	6:30	Ducks vs. Stra-go Petr.
Dec. 14	7:30	Ducks vs. Rookies
Jan. 4	7:30	Ducks vs. Big Blue Crew
Jan. 11	7:30	Ducks vs. Stra-go Petr.
Jan. 18	6:30	Ducks vs. Rookies

SOCCER

(All games to be played on Sundays.)

Dec. 5	1:30	United vs. Public Health*
Dec. 5	3:30	Memorial vs. Westbury*
Dec. 12	1:30	Memorial vs. Westbury*
Dec. 12	3:15	United vs. Clear Lake#

* at Bayland Park, on Bissonnet at Hillcroft
 # at St. Thomas More

Memorial soccer team practices Mon. and Wed. at 6 pm and Sat. at 10 am at the Memorial Park soccer field.

Plains Talk

Does Jimmy Carter support gay rights?

He says he does. On NBC he said, "I favor the end of harassment or abuse or discrimination against homosexuals."

HOWEVER, the actions of his staff at the National Democratic Convention did not exactly back up those words. Jean O'Leary, the first openly gay delegate to be elected to the convention, was extremely agitated about the way Carter's people effectively blocked even the *consideration* of mildly controversial pro-gay or pro-women planks in the Democratic platform. Jean said gays had gone into the platform considerations trying for a paragraph on gay rights; they pared that goal down to one sentence, then down to two words. In the end gays got not one word of mention in the platform.

On the plus side, Carter has named to his 51.3% National Advisory Committee three out-front and outstanding lesbians, Jean O'Leary, Rep. Elaine Noble, and Jo Daly, gay community liaison to the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. The 51.3% Committee is charged with advising Carter on the appointment of women to Federal positions. O'Leary commented, "The appointment of three open lesbians to a campaign committee for a major presidential candidate is a history-making event."

HOWEVER, in Jean's judgment, Carter made the appointments only in response to concerted lobbying efforts by lesbians.

On the plus side, Jimmy Carter Presidential Campaign Headquarters sent a news release on the lesbian appointments to the 51.3% Committee to . . . yes, our very own *Pointblank Times*. It is very unusual that the staff of a major presidential candidate would take the trouble to find out about a small circulation lesbian publication such as ours.

HOWEVER, Carter's people didn't take the trouble to spell Elaine Noble's name correctly. Also, the press release happened to be timed about two weeks before the election.

Although he has said he feels personally uncomfortable about homosexuality, Carter apparently didn't feel too queasy about accepting votes from homosexuals. In the next four years we'll see whether his actions can be encouraged to mesh more comfortably with his words.

- Pokey Anderson

Definition of a lesbian, from the *Lesbian Front*: If all the men in the world suddenly disappeared, the lesbian is the woman who notices it last.

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Relationships

Monogamy

- Phyllis Yarnold

Any opinions I have about monogamy are based only on my own personal experiences. I came out while I was in college, and shortly thereafter I moved to New York and lived in Greenwich Village. I was young and far removed from my family and straight friends I grew up with. I got a job in an art gallery owned by two male homosexuals. For the first time in my life I was free to live openly as a lesbian.

And I enjoyed my freedom to the hilt. At that time there were many lesbian bars in the Village, and I made the rounds several times a week. In the summertime I frequented the gay beaches. I made many friends and had a number of lovers during this period of my life. But I only shared an apartment with a lover once, and that was because a fire had destroyed my own apartment.

I cherished my independence and did not want to be tied down to just one woman. I allowed my desires to lead me into both meaningful and frustrating relationships. I was constantly "in love," and in the in-between periods, I looked for someone to be "in love" with.

This went on for several years. None of my relationships lasted for any great length of time. The longest was two years. When the new wore off, and the fire burned itself out, I drifted off to another stimulating woman adventure.

Actually, I took none of these loves lightly. I poured myself completely into each relationship, loving intensely--being wildly happy in the beginning and often full of pain when it ended. I did not view myself as promiscuous, for each love affair was entered into with deep feelings. I simply did not know how to continue a relationship after the flame of passion had burned low. My friends had the same problem. Though we all looked for that permanent relationship we had been conditioned to expect, none of us were able to sustain it.

Then I fell in love with a woman who did have this wisdom. To make a long (15-year) story short, she taught me what real love was all about. The romantic love, so filled with physical desire, was only a prelude to the deep love which we built together. That romantic love was selfish, self-centered. Though it was an emotional high, it could not compare to the selfless giving, sharing, caring love that we created.

We entered into a state of monogamy. As I think now about the 15 years we have shared, I am finally beginning to understand what monogamy is all about. I have wondered on occasion whether the tie that binds us is not a combination of love, need, and habit. And I guess it is. But it's more than that, it's an investment of ourselves and our time.

In my youth, I could let go of relationships, because I had really invested very little of me in them. But after 15 years with someone, the investment of me is tremendous. I could not easily let her go, because now there is so much of me in her and so much of her in me. All the sharing and caring, the time spent relating

to one another and in building a home and life together, have combined into a vast reservoir of mutual strength and love. Even though we are free to be our individual selves, we are still jointly entwined by the mutual investment we have made in our relationship.

I don't know what monogamy means to others, or even if it works for others, but for me it has opened the door to a deeper, more satisfying love than I had ever known. It enabled me to grow from a self-centered little girl into a generous woman. It brought me outside of myself into the life of another; from a surface-level way of relating to a total intimacy of sharing.

There are hazards in monogamous relationships. There is the danger of losing one's own identity, the temptation of too much dependency, the erosion caused by boredom. But lesbian women possess the strength and independence necessary to avoid these traps. It is these very qualities that led us into lesbianism.

Though I suspect that monogamy was created out of male necessity, the unequal status of the male and female often make monogamy a cage for women in straight life. Between lesbians--women of equal stature--monogamy can provide that warm space of love, and the security of knowing we are loved, that every lonely person yearns for.

Remembering a younger time
When girls gathered in the night
To hug and talk and giggle
Until the morning light.

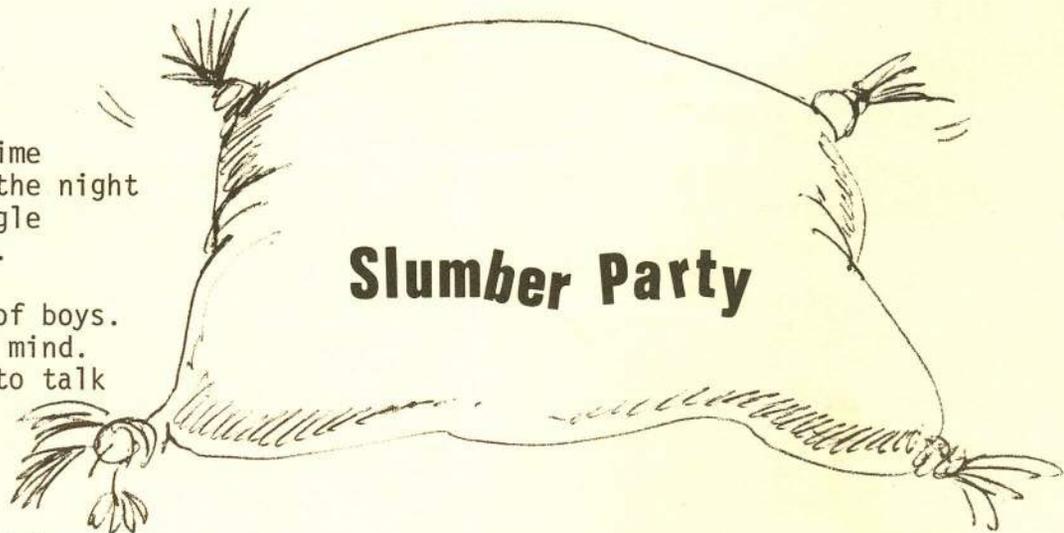
Invariably they talked of boys.
I listened with half my mind.
I would have preferred to talk
Of gentle womankind.

While they spoke of
dates and kisses,
I drew near to my best friend,
And hidden by the darkness
I boldly held her hand.

The room, it whirled and bounced a bit,
And jostled me right out of it,
Because she turned, and suddenly,
Her soft body was next to me.

I couldn't speak; I couldn't breathe
So aware I was of her.
And all the conversation
Flowed past me like a river.

She brought my spinning thoughts up short
With a casual word or two,
When, just like the other girls,
She spoke of her crush on Lou.



I could hardly believe my ears;
She said she admired him so.
She sounded just like Juliet
After her Romeo.

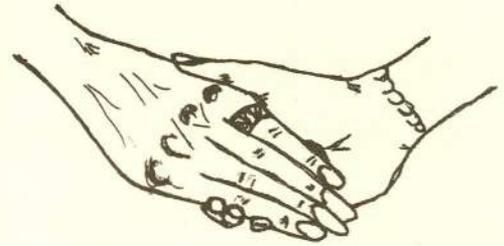
The room, it whirled and bounced a bit
And jostled me right out of it.
I couldn't speak; I couldn't cry;
I couldn't even up and die.

But with the wisdom of the young
I saw that it had to be.
Boys was a phase she'd pass through,
And then come back to me.

- Phyllis Yarnold

TV review

The War Widow



Homosexuality is bursting out all over the TV screen. For the most part, the image being presented is a positive one for gays. Best of all, no stereotypes.

But it's still a man's world. TV remains a barren wasteland for the lesbian--except for the refreshing oasis of a program entitled "The War Widow" which aired October 28 and 30 on Channel 8's Visions. The show was produced by Barbara Schultz, and it was excellent.

It is the story of Amy, a lovely young woman whose husband is away fighting in Europe during World War I. She has a daughter named Beth and they live with Amy's mother.

Amy is unhappy, drifting without purpose, lonely, isolated from life. Then she meets Jenny, a professional photographer, and they become friends. From that point, the story becomes a natural unfolding of love between the two women.

I won't describe the plot for I don't want to spoil it for you in the event it is re-run again in the future.

But the story of Amy and Jenny is beautifully warm and tender. I watched as their love grew, and felt such a sense of familiarity, for it was the kind of love I could identify with. I was especially moved when Jenny tells Amy she loves and wants her. I understood Amy's struggle to acknowledge to herself her own deep love for Jenny, and I applauded her when she tells her mother: "I love Jenny. I love her tenderness; I love her body next to mine." I deplored the unfair and ugly reality that forces Amy to choose between her daughter and the woman she loves. As Amy says to Jenny in the final scene: "None of it is ever easy, is it?"

But Jenny finds the strength to love Amy without pressuring her, and Amy finds the courage to claim her happiness.

I thought the story and characterizations were very true to life. Amy, who appears initially as a delicate upper-class housewife, comes to realize through her growing intimacy with Jenny that it is with Jenny that she can be a whole person. "I don't want to live life through someone else," she declares. I was pleasantly surprised that the author refrained from the stereotyped roles we have grown accustomed to on the screen.

The love between Amy and Jenny develops naturally. The physical expression of love is limited to tender touching and holding--no screen kisses on the mouth. However, Amy's love-making to Jenny's hand during a fireplace scene the evening after Jenny's declaration of love is symbolic of the intimacy they share.

"The War Widow" makes statements about women's oppression, women's isolation, and women's place in society as well as dealing with the obstacles that confront lesbian women. It's a story of pain and joy, sleep and awakening, apathy and action, acceptance and overcoming. It's how we live daily.

- Phyllis Yarnold

Noble Gets Prize

Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, Inc. has honored Representative Elaine Noble of the Massachusetts State Legislature with its first annual award, given in recognition of a significant contribution to securing the civil rights of homosexuals.

Lambda is a tax-exempt group providing legal services in gay civil rights cases, including rights of gays to be parents, serve in the military, and to become U. S. citizens.

Elaine was the first openly gay person to be elected to a state legislature. (Some of us in Texas got a chance to meet her this summer in San Antonio when she won our hearts with a rousing keynote address at Texas Gay Conference III. We in turn won her stomach by taking her to eat Mexican food--had there been a National Enchilada Eat-Off Award, Elaine would have easily won that too.)

Organizing Campus Gays

"How to Infiltrate Your Own University: Organizing University and Para-University Gay Groups" has recently been compiled by the Gay Academic Union, South Central Region.

The work is a practical guide to those brave souls involved in the process of forming or maintaining a university-based gay group. Substantiated by both personal experience and expert American Civil Liberties Union advice, the booklet includes sections on initial organization, legal rights, legal precedents, and a listing of gay students groups in the GAU South Central Region.

Ten pages, offset press printed. Available for \$1.25 from GAU, P. O. Box 1922, Denton TX 76201. Information on joining GAU is available from the same address.

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Music Review

Living With Lesbians

Alix
Dobkin

What I like best about Alix Dobkin and her music is that both are so openly and honestly lesbian. As she says in the liner notes on her newest album, Living with Lesbians, "Total connection with my music requires a lesbian ear, mind, body and everyday lesbian experience."

Living with Lesbians is notable for its variety in tempo, lyrical mood, and musical accompaniment. The tune of Hearts and Struggles, a coming out story, is lovely. The vocal backup and flamenco guitar is especially fine. I also like the jazz effect the sax gives to The Lesbian Power Authority. Alix sings two acapella songs, Balkan and Macedonian.

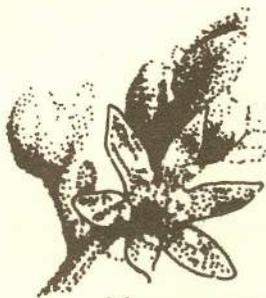
Alix has a lot to say and she says it well through her music. Song topics range from coming out, to separatism, to rape. Five of the songs were recorded live at the Women's Coffeehouse in New York City, which adds to the quality of informality and spontaneity.

Though I can't get too turned on by the vocal exercises included in the album, they do give some insight into the hard work involved in producing music. And every song that Alix sings exhibits their effectiveness in increasing voice control and range.

In Living with Lesbians, Alix shares a bit of herself and her life with us, and above all, she celebrates the lesbian woman.

Living with Lesbians and Lavender Jane Loves Women are available from Project No. 1, Preston Hollow, New York 12469. Price is \$6.00 each.

- Phyllis Yarnold



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Beth Kendrick
523-0368
10 dollars/trades

Women's Concert, Anyone?

Since the Meg Christian concern in May there has been a lot of clamoring for another concert of women's music. "When is Cris Williamson coming?" was one of the refrains. Having diligently tried to book Cris since March, *PBT* now has an answer . . . sort of. Cris is spending this year in transition, building a trio with Jackie Robbins and June Millington. This involves abundant doses of work, improving their equipment and sound crew, not to mention developing new music with each other. So Cris is doing no tours until they can get it all together. But when they do, she is interested in coming to the Southwest. So, can you wait?

In the meantime, is there anyone special you'd like *PBT* to bring to town? (Besides Amelia Earhart, you turkeys!) Margie Adam, Be Be K'roche, and Casse Culver all will have new albums out by the end of the year, so you'll have a chance to become familiar with their music. Or, anybody else? Let us know, and we'll try to bring her.

- Pokey

When You Meet a Lesbian Person

Hints for the Heterosexual Woman

- Do not run screaming from the room. This is rude.
- If you must back away, do so slowly and with discretion.
- Do not assume she is attracted to you.
- Do not assume she is not attracted to you.
- Do not expect her to be as excited about meeting a heterosexual as you may be about meeting a lesbian. She was probably raised with them.
- Do not immediately start talking about your boyfriend or husband in order to make it clear that you are straight. She probably already knows.
- Do not tell her that it is sexist to prefer women, that people are people, and that she should be able to love everybody. Do not tell her that men are as oppressed by sexism as women and women should help men fight their oppression. These are common fallacies and should be understood as such.
- Do not invite her someplace where there will be men unless you tell her in advance. She may not want to be with them.
- Do not ask her how she got this way. Instead, ask yourself how you got that way.
- Do not assume that she is dying to talk about being a lesbian.
- Do not expect her to refrain from talking about being a lesbian.
- Do not trivialize her experience by assuming it is a bedroom issue only. She is a lesbian 24 hours a day.
- Do not assume that because she's a lesbian she wants to be treated like a man.
- Do not assume that her heart will leap with joy if you touch her arm (condescendingly?...flirtatiously?...power-testingly?). It makes her angry.
- If you are tempted to tell her she's taking the easy way out, THINK ABOUT THAT.

--Atlanta Lesbian Feminist
Alliance newsletter

Beginning with this issue, *PBT* will print non-commercial unclassifieds FREE! (Reasonably concise, please.) Commercial unclassifieds will stay at the irresistably cheap price of 10¢ a word. So send your ads on in to us at our PO box.

MASSAGE CLASSES STARTING SOON: Learn techniques in esalen, accupressure, reflexology and self-massage. To balance energy and release tensions. Classes for women. Six weeks--\$20. Individual appointments available also. For further information call: Beth, 523-0368.

INTERESTED IN JOINING with other women to celebrate our spirituality? We are women wanting to gather once or twice a month to celebrate our Herstory, the traditions of the matriarchies and the ancient Wicca, the Craft of the Wise. We are women giving each other strength and sustenance to transcend patriarchal culture. We are women creating our own culture. If you are interested call Praire, 862-7390.

THE HOUSTON ORGANIZATION AGAINST SEXISM in the Media is looking for women interested in working on projects dealing with violence against women. We are especially interested in getting some projects underway on the local level. If you have time to help in these efforts call Beth, 523-0368, or Helen, 528-3461.

Want to be listed in the first Directory of Women's Businesses in Houston? You qualify if your business is located in the Houston metropolitan area, and owned or managed by women. Women who are agents on commission (e.g. insurance, auto sales) are also eligible. Listings are free, ad rates will be reasonable, and the response so far has been great--around 500 listings already. To be listed (or to list a friend): send name of individual woman, type of business, and name, address and phone of business to: Pokey Anderson, 1531 Maryland, #4, Houston TX 77006.



Continued from page 2

us our own music, our own literature, our own films, our own art; those who are struggling to have the discriminatory laws changed, to have the doors of businesses and churches opened to us. We must support them with our money, our time, our applause, our caring. We must not let political differences divide us.

Support begins at the local level. You are aware of the difficult period *PBT* is going through. With this issue we are trying to stand up and walk again. But our legs are very unsteady. We need your help and support. We need material. Pass along your thoughts, feelings, problems, experiences so that we can all share them through *PBT*.

We need more subscribers--give a sub to a friend. We need leads on possible advertisers. We need more places where we can distribute *PBT*. We need amenities like comfortable chairs and a rug for our new garage. And, of course, we never turn down money.

Thanks, and with continuing support we'll be celebrating our second birthday in March.

- *PBT Staff*
(Phyllis is the one "on the dark side of 30.")

To help us financially while we build up our number of subscribers and advertisers, we would like to have a fun *PBT* event, happening, etc. We want your ideas. And we'll even bribe you for them.

You send us your creative, fun and lucrative idea for a *PBT* benefit by December 15. We'll choose the best one and one at random. If you win you'll get a one-year sub to *PBT*, and the Olivia record album of your choice. ALSO we'll print your idea and your picture (which we'll snap unless you decline) in our next issue.

Do it toot sweet. Send your hot little idea(s) to *PBT* Contest, P.O. Box 14643, Houston TX 77021.

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