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Curve

TM  September 1997 Vol 7 #4 THE BEST-SELLING LESBIAN MAGAZINE



INDIGO GIRLS



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MUSIC ISSUE

The New Era In Lesbian Music

Interviews • Reviews • Future Favorites





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Frankly Speaking . . .



BARRY MUNIZ

• First Annual Music Issue

Music unites us. Imagine pride day, the Michigan or National Womyn's Festivals or your favorite dance club without music. In many ways, our community revolves around music. It defines eras, creates memories, gives rise to role models. It inspires us to dance, sing and rejoice. That's what makes this issue of CURVE so incredible — music and all it means to us.

The Indigo Girls and k.d. lang are just the tip of our coverage. Our goal was to profile a variety of types of music and musicians. After all, our musical tastes range from rap to folk to punk to top 40. In some instances, we had a difficult time locating lesbian artists. Let's face it — there are not a lot of openly gay women rappers. In other categories, we had a slew of talent to choose from. It has been one of the most difficult yet exciting issues I've worked on.

Women's music is definitely changing. Only a few years ago, music insiders told Sarah McLachlan she was crazy to have Paula Cole open for her. Two-woman lineup? It'll never work, they said.

But the naysayers were dead wrong. Not only were Sarah and Paula a hit from the beginning, but now McLachlan has gone on to make history by creating the Lilith Fair — a concert tour that many compare to an all-women Lollapalooza, featuring both lesbian and straight artists. Some musicians perform in a few cities, others are on for the entire tour. Since Lilith has more than one stage, newcomers are given the chance of a lifetime.

Yes, music has come a long way and we recount some of those changes as Gretchen Phillips talks to your favorite Jewish lesbian folk singer, Phranc, about then and now, a look back on just how far women's music has come. Talking about the past, I'd like to thank the women of *Hot Wire*, a magazine completely dedicated to women's music and culture. Thanks for paving the way. We miss you.

Oh, and if you're wondering about mommy Melissa, one of our favorite lesbian artists, she is concentrating on her personal life at the moment. We'll be waiting for her to grace our cover again.

The future is bright, so grab your shades and check out up-and-coming new arrivals in "Sound Scoop" and the "Scene Report." You'll read about the hottest new performers across the United States and Canada.

The music won't stop with this issue. We remain dedicated to keeping you on the pulse.

Enjoy and continue to send us your thoughts and ideas.

In Sisterhood,

Franco

Curve

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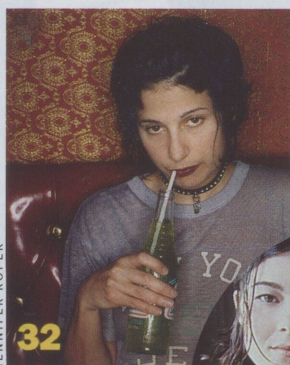
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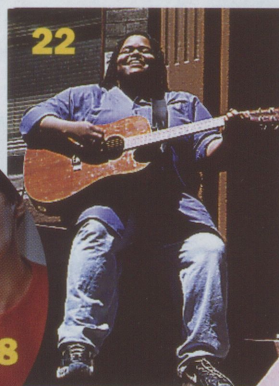
September 1997 Volume 7 #4



JENNIFER ROPER



ALISON DYER



DINA ALFANO

FEATURES

21 INDIGO GIRLS REVIEW: SHAMING OF THE SUN

by Amy RaNae Wilson

The Girls' sixth album, with its blending of hip-hop samplings, eclectic instrument mixes and their earlier earthy sounds, might be their most ambitious one yet! *Shaming of the Sun* has arrived with a fervor.

22 ROCKED WITH KINDNESS by Maya Lara

Sweet Honey In The Rock may be where she started, but Toshi Reagon has come into her own to secure her position in the women's music scene. Her new album, *Kindness*, brings us a passionate mix of folk, blues, ballads and funk that is not to be missed.

24 FROM PUNK TO FOLK AND BACK AGAIN

Listen in as musicians Gretchen Phillips and Phranc discuss music past and present and give their views on the state of the lesbian nation.

26 FUMBLING TOWARDS SARAH by Amy Ranae Wilson

Sarah McLachlan, brain child of the wildly popular Lilith Fair concert tour, showed the grunge boys where they could put their all-male festival billings. In an exclusive interview, the Canadian artist gets honest with CURVE.

28 SOUND SCOOP: NEW SOUNDS ON THE SCENE

You might not know them now but you will. Be among the first to discover future favorites The Murmurs, Kinnie Starr, Lourdes Pérez, Carla Bozulich and Ana Egge. These are the musicians to watch out for!

33 SCENE REPORT

New estrogen rock right in your own backyard? You bet! Get the low-down on babes in bands from across the United States and Canada.



SUSAN ALZNER

20

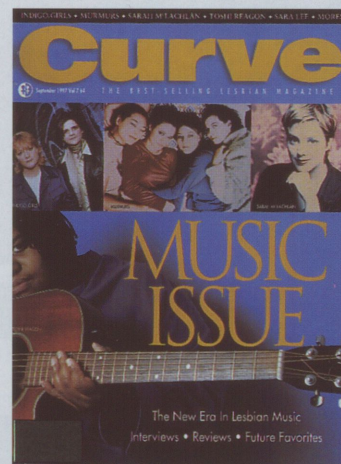
SARA LEE: A FUNK PHENOMENON

by Shirley Liu

What do the Indigo Girls and Ani DiFranco have in common? Renowned bassist Sara Lee, of course. She's jammin' in a traditionally man's land and she's at the top of the heap. What's it like to collaborate with some of the biggest lesbian music icons? Sara Lee gives us the scoop and hints about a release of her own.

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 OUT IN FRONT
- 8 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
- 12 CURVATURES
- 14 HEY!BABY
- 16 **NEW!** ASK FAIRY BUTCH
- 17 DYKE DELIGHTS
- 18 SAPPHIC SCREEN
- 34 BROWNWORTH
- 35 IN THE STACKS
- 36 MUSIC WATCH
- 37 HEALTH MATTERS
- 38 DYKE DRAMA
- 40 LESBOFILE
- 48 PHOTOPLAY



ON THE COVER

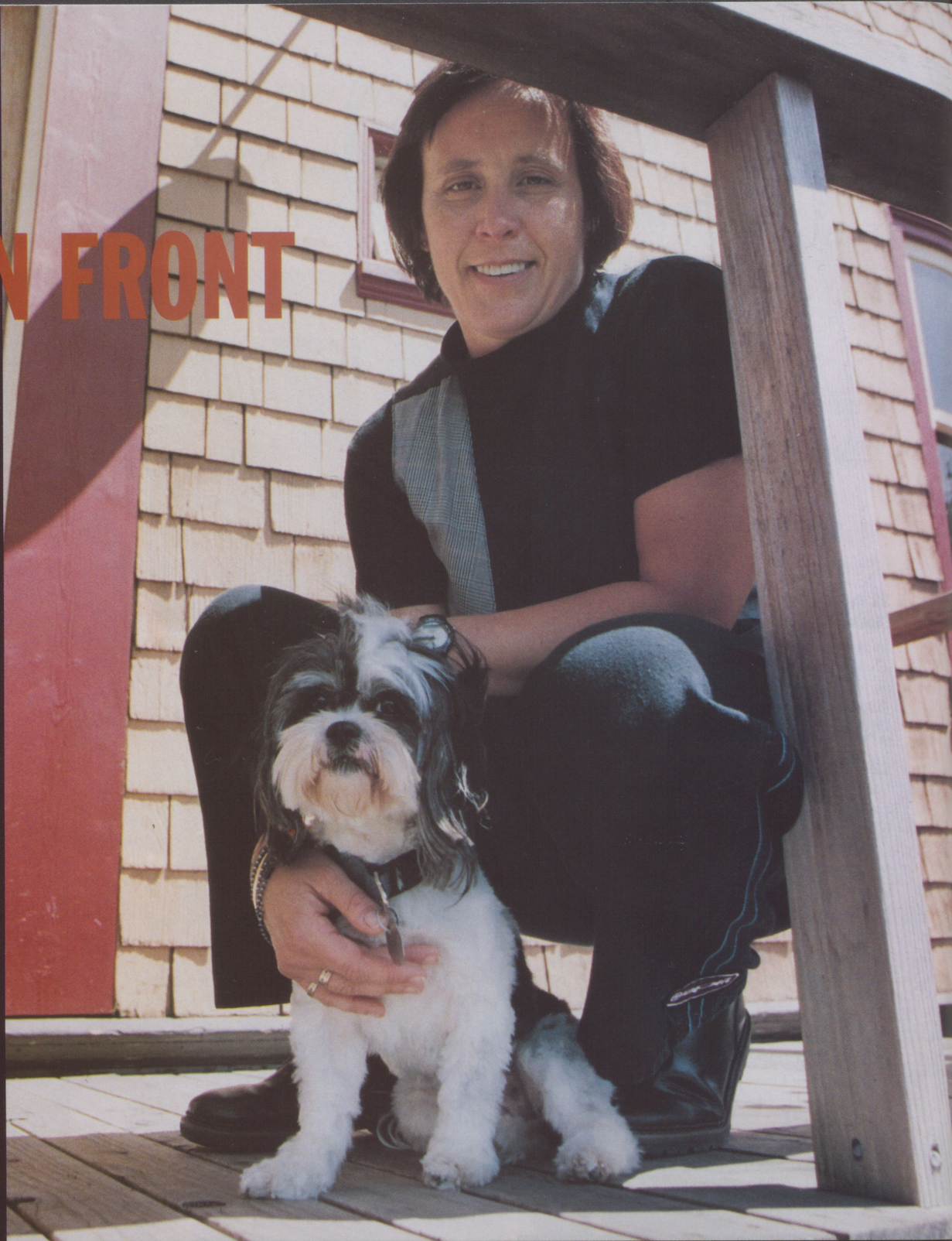
WOMEN MUSICIANS ROCK!

Look behind the scenes at the women making waves and changing the definitions of music today. *Clockwise from top left: The Indigo Girls, The Murmurs, Sarah McLachlan, Toshi Reagon.*

Photography by Mary Ellen Mark, Alison Dyer, Mark Van S and Dina Alfano

OUT IN FRONT

LISA VOGEL



was only nineteen when she came up with the idea for the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. Tired of traveling all over the country to hear a variety of sounds, Vogel decided to bring all of what was just coming to be called "women's music" into one arena. Now, twenty-two years later, Vogel's dream is a thriving entity. With around seven thousand participants, the annual festival is a tremendous opportunity for beginning artists, as well as for old pros. "We have always been committed to presenting new artists on all the stages, often as much as half the bill," explains Vogel. "That's risky sometimes, but ultimately there's more risk in less diversity." Though Vogel is undoubtedly one of the most influential women on the music scene today, she is quick to give credit where it is due. "The vision that keeps [the Festival] moving forward has been ever changing for the last twenty years, stimulated by each festival and the womyn who work on it and come to it." — Maggie Bittel

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JACKIE GRATZ

Untitled.

LIVING PROOF

I would like to thank Rachel Pepper for her mention of *A Crystal Diary* and of me as a new writer to watch for (In The Stacks, July). And I would *very* much like to thank Victoria Brownworth for her excellent piece in the same issue ("Lesbian Books: Publish or Perish?").

Had it not been for Nancy Bereano of Firebrand Books, *A Crystal Diary* — admittedly a tad controversial — might never have hit the bookstore shelves; certainly no major house would have

touched it, or if one had, it would have been promoted for all the wrong reasons.

Brownworth is all too right. As writers, as readers, as lesbians, we need lesbian publishers and bookstores to stay in business, and without our support, they can't.

Lillian Faderman has said, "We are beginning to tell our own stories at last!" What a shame it would be to lose that heritage for our daughters and our daughters' daughters!

Frankie Hucklenbroich
via Internet

BABY BOOM ARTICLE A BUST?

As mothers of one, with another on the way, we were taken aback by the title and final tone of the article "Baby Boom or Bust" (May). Sanborn writes, "one may wonder what is driving this baby boom" and "are we...even creating [families] because of opposition from the far right?" Sorry, flipping off Jesse Helms was not uppermost in our minds as we traipsed to the fertility clinic for nearly two years and went through the incredibly inconvenient and expensive procedure of getting pregnant — not to mention birth itself.

Where in the article were the words "technology" and "new legal parenting arrangements?" They have more to do with the "gayby" boom than an absurd image of starstruck lesbians jumping onto a bandwagon — an image called up by the article's title.

The final tone of Sanborn's article is one of examination of the latest fad in lesbian fashion, as if we were all giddily raising our hemlines because stars do it or because we want to taunt Jerry Falwell. Only the media are treating it as a fad. Give your sisters some credit — those of us changing diapers are in it for the long haul.

Maria and Karin Kaj
Oakland, CA

Thanks for the great article, "Baby Boom or Bust." Our organization is an international nonprofit that provides services, both social and support, for sons and daughters of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender parents.

Keep up the great coverage of our families!

Hope Berry
Children of Lesbians and
Gays Everywhere
San Francisco

THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT...

I realize that Victoria Brownworth's "Stalked by Terror" (May) was written to present the rash of violent attacks against lesbians that have occurred across the nation. But even a minimum amount of research into the crimes committed would have produced facts and not the sensationalized, graphic, erroneous misinformation that appeared.

Julie Williams and Lollie Winans both died from a single slit to the throat. They were not mutilated, stabbed, or by most theories, sexually assaulted.

The article sensationalized tragedy and perpetuated fear, which ultimately paralyzes us.

Rosemary Miricco
Stanley, VA

LEGALIZE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

I've been a United States Navy sailor on active duty since 1989. I joined the service for its great opportunities, such as job experience, travel, and leadership training. I love my job and I'm proud of what I do.

I'm writing to put a message out to our gay/lesbian/bi communities about why it's so important for us to have legal marriage rights. A lot of people don't care about getting married or don't see why it has to be legal, but I want to explain how it affects those of us in the military.

See, hetero-married couples get extra money for being married and are eligible for special allowances for their depen-

dents. So they can afford to take their loved ones with them overseas or on long-term duty. Lesbian and gay people in the service, however, a lot of times can't even afford to take our dependents with us to different states when we are transferred. Some of us really love being in the armed forces, but we're silently forced out because we can't handle the thought of being separated from the ones we love most for three to five years.

So my request out to our gay/lesbian/bi communities is to keep writing your congressmen, governors, and the President to get same-sex marriage recognized by the law.

Name Withheld by Request

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WHAT A DRAG!

I would like to ask how did you come about choosing the grand prize photo for your Lesbian Life Photo Contest? (January). Why give your readers the idea that drag is the essence of lesbianism when really it just glorifies the heterosexist attitude that lesbians want to be men.

As CURVE's next photo contest deadline is upon us, let's hope you choose the winner more wisely.

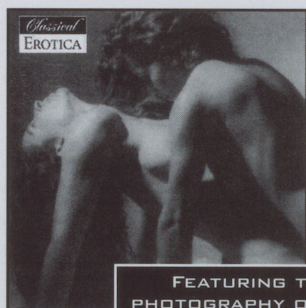
Phoebe C. Fabricius
Auckland, New Zealand

A TRUE HERO

Thank you for giving a full page to Dr. Poscher (Out in Front, May). I believe lesbian women professionals in HIV and AIDS medicine are truly the "stars" of this age. I am also an HIV clinician and find it hard to relate my experiences to other lesbians. Dr. Poscher serves as an example of a woman who has empowered herself. Thank you for giving her the space she deserves.

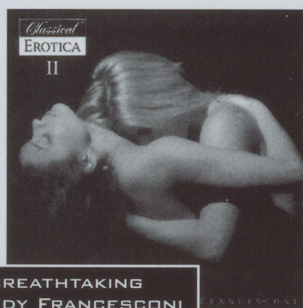
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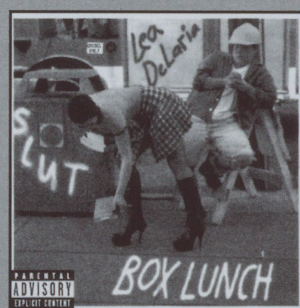
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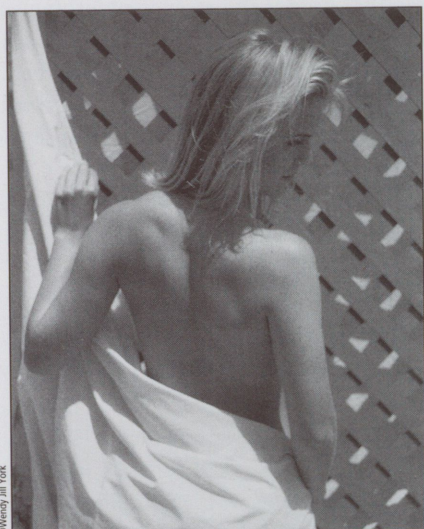
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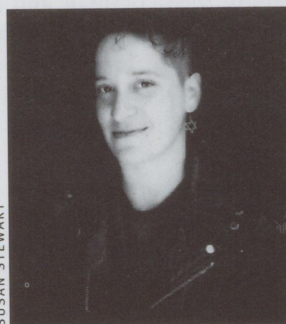
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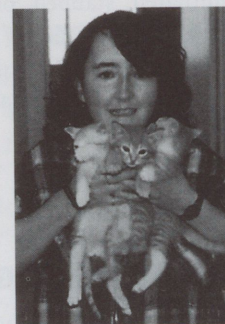
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Pamela Green



Sara Sutler-Cohen

Karen X. Tulchinsky, author of *In Her Nature*, co-editor of *Tangled Sheets: Stories & Poems of Lesbian Lust* and co-editor of *Queer View Mirror: Lesbian & Gay Short Short Fiction*. Her first novel, *Love Ruins Everything* will be out in 1998.

Denise Sheppard has chosen to avoid the obvious, girl-getting sultry shot. Instead, she has opted to show the world her love for pussies. She also loves writing for *Details*, *Rolling Stone*, *Raygun* and *Pulse*.

Pamela Green is a freelance writer who just left the East Village for Brooklyn and isn't too happy about it. She writes about queer and feminist issues for a variety of publications.

Kate X. Messer is the features editor for *The Austin Chronicle*.

Sara Sutler-Cohen is the managing editor of *Fabula* magazine as well as a freelance writer for various publications. She lives in Oakland, Calif., with her three-year-old son, Devin.

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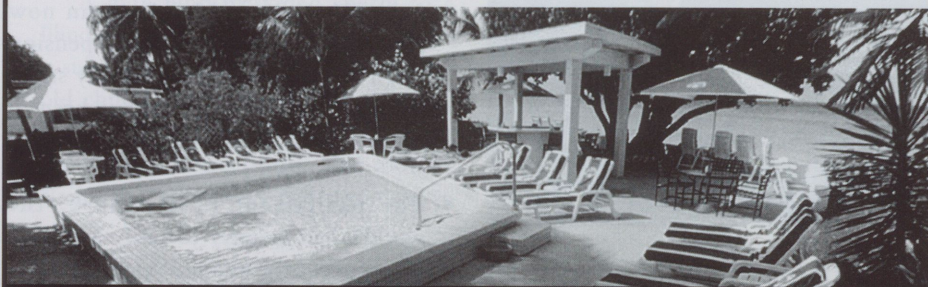
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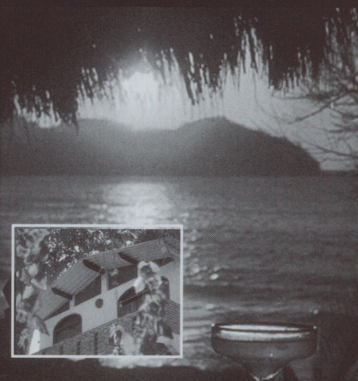
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HOW TO SPEND YOUR LAST TEN DOLLARS

You probably won't see this next to your parents' *Hits from the Big Band Era*, but now dykes can boast our very own compilation, *Women Like Us: Lesbian Favorites*. This new CD, due out in October from Rhino Records, fills the void left by all those dance music compilations that supposedly targeted the "gay community" but always appealed more to the boys than the girls. Complete with every woman from k.d. to Ani, Sandra Bernhardt to Phranc, *Women Like Us* traces twenty years of lesbian musical herstory.

Securing artists for the compilation was complicated by industry licensing procedures and attempts to please everyone. But the result makes it look easy, and

Andrea Kinloch, the marketing whiz at Rhino who conceived of the project, should be proud.

Don't forget to check out the liner notes, penned by CURVE's own Gretchen Phillips!



HAWAII UPDATE

This summer, Hawaii lawmakers gave the stamp of approval to a bill granting gay and lesbian couples the right to apply for "reciprocal beneficiary" status with the state. Under the new legislation, gay and lesbian couples will be eligible to receive a host of new benefits, including family and funeral leave, domestic violence protection, and hospital visitation rights. The "reciprocal beneficiary" certificate costs only eight dollars and will be available to any couple in co-habitation for at least one year.

Unfortunately, the sixty benefits included in the "reciprocal beneficiary" bill still come up painfully short when compared with the three hundred and forty state-sanctioned benefits enjoyed by heterosexual couples in Hawaii. Even more disheartening is that the "reciprocal beneficiary" bill only scraped by the legislature on the condition that Hawaii's November 1998 ballot include a proposal for a state

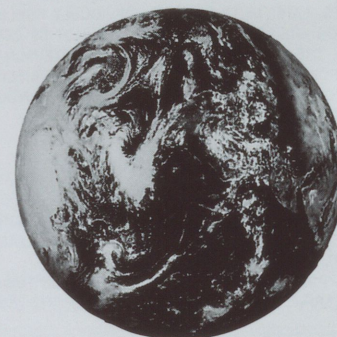
constitutional amendment restricting legal marriage to heterosexual couples.

These sobering facts help to paint a clearer picture of the marriage-rights battle that continues to rage in Hawaii. While the attitude on the mainland seems to be that lesbian/gay marriage in Hawaii is inevitable, the reality is that the state's more conservative legislators have been planting effective roadblocks in the path of lesbian/gay activists ever since the Hawaii Supreme Court first declared a ban on same-sex marriage to be unconstitutional back in 1993. Piecemeal concessions such as the "reciprocal beneficiaries" bill are designed to appease moderate lawmakers and ultimately may slow the process of achieving full and equal recognition under the law.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Marriage Project-Hawaii, send your contribution to: P.O. Box 11690, Honolulu, HI 96828.

WHAT IN THE WORLD

- Two British lesbians face a reduction in welfare benefits after refusing to tell authorities who donated the sperm for their pregnancies. The Child Support Agency maintains that British law requires them to seek support from fathers when mothers are on the dole unless conception took place in a formal medical setting via an anonymous donor. A British family-values group has denounced the women for turning themselves "into farm animals."
- Argentine gays and lesbians can now claim a widow or widower's pension when their partners die. The only stipulation? The couple must have been in co-habitation for at least five years.
- The parliament of Denmark, the world's first country to ratify gay marriage, recently banned lesbians from obtaining artificial insemination in state-run or private clinics. Only heterosexual women in committed, long-term heterosexual relationships will be eligible for the procedure. Looks like it's back to the ol' turkey baster.
- The state police of Australia's New South Wales have placed several ads in gay and lesbian publications in hope of recruiting more queer officers. One such ad reads: "Join the NSW Police. We guarantee you'll get sensible shoes."
- The second annual African Gay Games, which took place in South Africa in late June, featured such events as ballroom dancing, Hollywood Lookalike, korfbal and rugby.



NATURE OR NURTURE?

A Montana sheep researcher asserts that about ten percent of rams appear to be homosexual. "In sheep we clearly have homosexuality that's determined by brain structure," says researcher Anne Perkins, who has studied sexual behavior in sheep at the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station in Idaho for the past decade. Her research has established a



link between same-sex preference and brain structures regulating some hormones. She hopes that eventually she will be able to develop a blood or genetic test that will effectively measure the hormonal variation.

SPERM DONOR SUES LESBIAN MOTHER

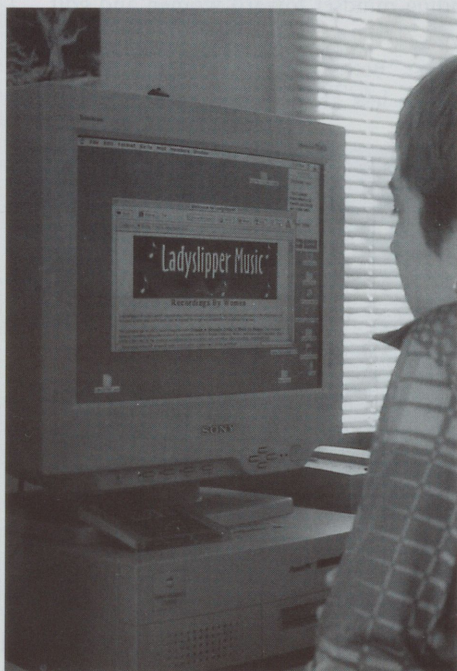
A man who provided sperm to a Illinois woman for artificial insemination is suing for joint custody of the one-year-old child, despite the fact that he had wanted nothing to do with fatherhood at the time of conception. The mother claims that the donor had promised to

allow her and her girlfriend to adopt the child. As a sperm donor, she argues, he has no legal right to be involved in the child's upbringing.

Lawyers for both parties confirm that the case raises issues for which there is no precedent in the Illinois court system.

SONGS IN CYBERSPACE

Longtime followers of the women's music scene and new explorers alike will find something new in Ladyslipper's multimedia catalogs. Having published a music catalog since 1976, the resource guide and



independent record label now boasts a home in cyberspace. Consistent with Ladyslipper's primary goal of increasing public awareness about the achievements of female artists, the online catalog features fifteen hundred titles, including hundreds of sound clips and new releases not yet in the printed catalog. Found at <http://www.ladyslipper.org>, the site is an excellent resource, featuring thirty musical categories, as well as selections in comedy, videos and books. Although the site can take ten to twenty minutes to download, it's worth it to get all those free samples in the comfort of your home. The artist biographies and album synopses include humorous commentaries and in-depth musical descriptions.

Dykes without computer access can order a printed catalog at (800) 634-6044 and call Ladyslipper's Listener Line at (919) 644-1942. For the cost of a regular long-distance phone call, the Listener Line will give your ears immediate gratification. So support women's expression, check out some new tunes and plug in to the future of CD shopping.

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**HEY! BABY**

Twenty-year-old Shelly Pirroni is an insightful and brave queer activist. Raised in Belchertown, Mass., Pirroni is now a junior at the University of Vermont (UVM). Pirroni questioned her sexuality during high school and came out during college.

Pirroni's mother has had a hard time accepting her sexuality, which has caused some difficulty in their relationship. "My experience with my mother has been the fuel for my activism. It has been a source of pain, but also a source of motivation. Love between us is still strong, but there's some pain there." Although Pirroni's mother has not always been supportive of her sexuality, her father has been understanding. "My father has been an incredible source of love and support to me," Pirroni says.

Pirroni is president of the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Association (GLBA) at UVM. "The GLBA is the only resource for queer and questioning students on

campus. Right now our mission is to get a paid staff person to be a liaison between LGBTQ students and the administration. One of the problems with us being a student-run group is that in three or four years most of us will be gone, and new students will have to take over. If we had a staff person who could work for the LGBTQ students on campus, we'd be a lot better off." Pirroni fears that the only way the administrators will listen to the GLBA's request for a paid liaison is if something very drastic happens, like a suicide relating to a student's sexuality.

Pirroni feels that UVM could do more for queer students. "I can see the way UVM exploits our group — we're expected to do panels and are told they're wonderful, but, when we ask for money, all UVM can provide is pencils and coffee. I won't accept the fact that they don't have enough money,



because I believe it is an excuse. You can have a student club, which isn't much of a threat, but a paid staff person would pose a threat, and UVM doesn't want that."

Family is very important to Pirroni, and she has used her own experience to feed her activism. "I want to keep fighting until we can all come home to the dinner table and talk about our partners at the table regardless of their race or gender. I believe that heterosexism is different than a lot of other 'isms' because it separates people from their families. I was actually hesitant about doing this article, because of my mother. But every day that I deny who I am, a part of me dies. Maybe what I say and do will help another person not to have the same experience." — Gina DeVries

**LOOKS WHO'S TALKING**

"I'm not the least bit gay — but my girlfriend is."

—Dolly Parton to *Out!* magazine.

"By declaring her homosexuality, Jodie would be an inspiration to thousands and thousands of others like her. If Jodie is indeed a lesbian — and I assume she is — she should come out."

— Actress Jodie Foster's brother Buddy to *The National Enquirer*.

TITLEIST HAS MORE THAN BALLS

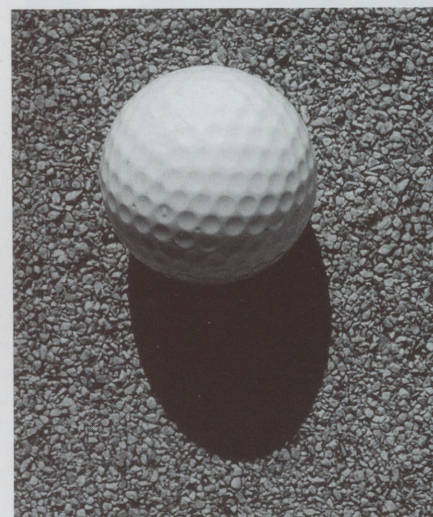
We weren't the only ones pissed off by the April *Sports Illustrated* article on the Dinah Shore Golf Tournament, held annually in Palm Springs, Calif.

Titleist, a golf equipment mega-corporation, pulled an estimated one million dollars of advertising from *Sports Illustrated* after the article appeared. According to a Titleist representative, the CEO no longer wished to support a magazine which had demonstrated such a "condescending mindset toward women and golf in general."

An excerpt from the feature reads as follows: "Better known as a lesbian spring break, the four-day [Dinah Shore] celebration is less about sports than babes — hordes of them, gaggles of them, giggling and groping and making out with abandon."

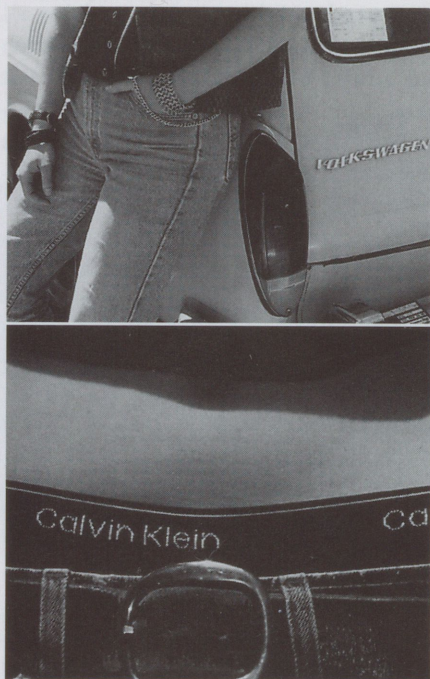
Gaggles of them? It doesn't stop there.

"Elegant silver-haired stockbrokers in designer pant suits puffing eight-dollar cigars sit next to tank-topped, bleached-out, self-described 'lipstick lesbians' downing shots of vodka." There's no doubt that the article is a reflection of *SI*'s homophobic and sexist editorial policy. After all, the magazine has never devoted a five-page feature to the "gaggles" of male SuperBowl or World Series partygoers, now have they?



DYKE DOLLARS ALERT

It is no secret that when *Ellen* came out, a handful of her regular advertisers went running. But there are those who stood by her. We've compiled a list of good guys and bad guys so you can put your dyke dollars where they count.



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- Volkswagen of America

BOO! HISS!

- Wendy's Fast Food
- Chrysler Corporation
- General Motors
- Johnson & Johnson
- JC Penney Company

And if boycotting these companies doesn't feel like enough, contact GLAAD for a complete list of CEOs and addresses (email: glaad@glaad.org, tel: (415) 861-2244). Pen your frustration and tell the suits how you feel!

Reported by Rebecca Jane-Alber, Maggie Bittel, Amanda Staab, Shannon Turner and Rex Wockner.

ON THE WEB

Spice, Spice, Baby

The editors of the slick British cybermag *Urban 75*, creators of the popular belt-a-conservative-politician series, have outdone themselves again. Check out their game Spice Girl at <http://194.112.40.4/Urban75/spice.html>, and "knock some sense into those Tory-lovin' grrrrls!" Go ahead, give Geri, Mel B., Emma, or any of the others a good whack. Extra points for managing to bean the "Original Spice Girl," good ol' Maggie Thatcher.

The Lesbitarian Nation

Launched in April as an AOL member site, the monthly humor mag *Lesbitarian* (<http://home.earthlink.net/~lesbitarian/>) has recently relocated to Earthlink, away from "the man breathing down our necks" as they so delicately put it. The move has obviously given the writers some room to explore their more creative impulses. Last we checked, the site included both a wistful ode to *The Waltons* and an Unsolved Lesbian Mystery, where editors looking for a lost staff member had posted a composite sketch that bore a suspicious resemblance to a lipstickked Unabomber.

Gender Euphoria

If you're a gal who routinely gets cruised by the gay boys, you're certain to find some humor in the Guess My Gender game (<http://www.race.com/dansworld/GMS/>). Onto the screen pops a series of photographs of people whose hair has been delicately removed via Photoshop. Players have to figure out whether each person is male or female. It may sound easy, dears, but it's not. We're a savvy lot and we only got six out of nine correct. CURVE highly recommends Guess My Gender as a break from the usual office grind. — Maria De La O

A SAD FAREWELL...

To an under-appreciated talent. Musician Laura Nyro, who authored hit songs for the likes of Barbra Streisand, Fifth Dimension and Blood, Sweat, and Tears, died recently of ovarian cancer at the age of forty-nine. Nyro is survived by her life partner, Maria Desiderio.

babe*

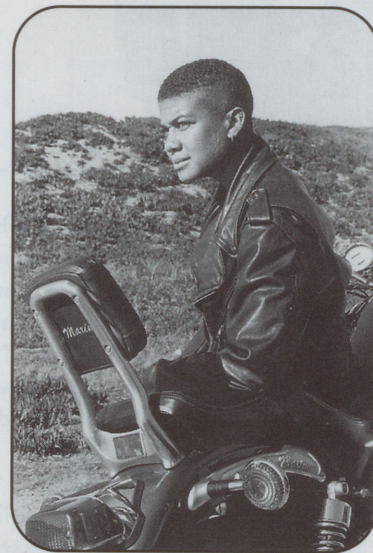
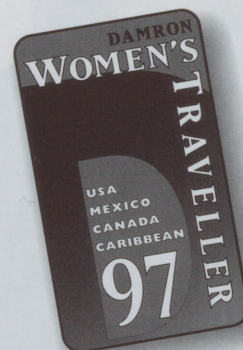
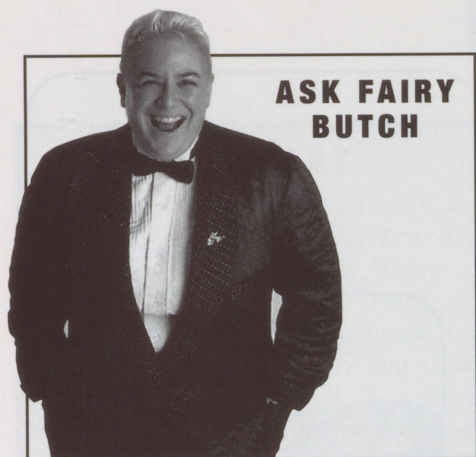


Photo by Phyllis Christopher

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ASK FAIRY BUTCH

CHLOE ATKINS

My lover and I are white women who are active in the lesbian feminist community. We recently decided to adopt a beautiful African-American baby boy, but are concerned about how to best instill a sense of cultural pride in our son since we are white and so are most of our friends. What do you recommend?

Make new friends, Cupcake! That little cherub simply must see himself reflected back to him in ways that our culture considers significant, namely,

gender, and especially race. Why not work that queer angle to cultivate some African-American pals? Be forewarned though, Ma Chérie: absolutely no one wants to be tokenized or to be anthropologist fodder — find folks with whom you can share genuine interests and affection. Try cultivating African-American male friends by posting a notice with the local Black And White Men Together chapter, requesting a mentor for your son. It may be a bit soon for the gentleman to share his experiences with him, but it is prudent to cultivate relationships with mentor-minded Black men to share in your son's life.

On your way home from the queer community center, well, perhaps after a latte, drop by the neighborhood library and peruse its offerings on African-American culture, literature and history. While you're at it, pick up some pop culture mags like *Ebony* and *Essence*, and enroll in an African-American Studies course at the local community college. Though nothing will propel you from *Wonderbread* to *Roots* in one fell swoop,

gaining knowledge about African-American history is a first step in building a bridge to the culture of which you will soon be a part.

Though it is as unwise as it is unnecessary for you all to become members of an all-African-American community, you really must integrate your social circle. Join a racially-mixed house of worship, if you are religiously inclined, live in an integrated neighborhood, and by all means, surround your son with children and adults of all colors. Whatever it takes, tulip, begin to broaden your community now before the kid breaks through the primordial morass of infancy and wonders what's up. Though you face certain obstacles in parenting by virtue of both your lesbianism and your race, with education, community-building, and tons of unconditional love, I feel sure that the three of you can create a fabulous family.

Have questions for Fairy Butch? Send to: CURVE/Fairy Butch, One Haight Street, Suite B, San Francisco CA 94102.

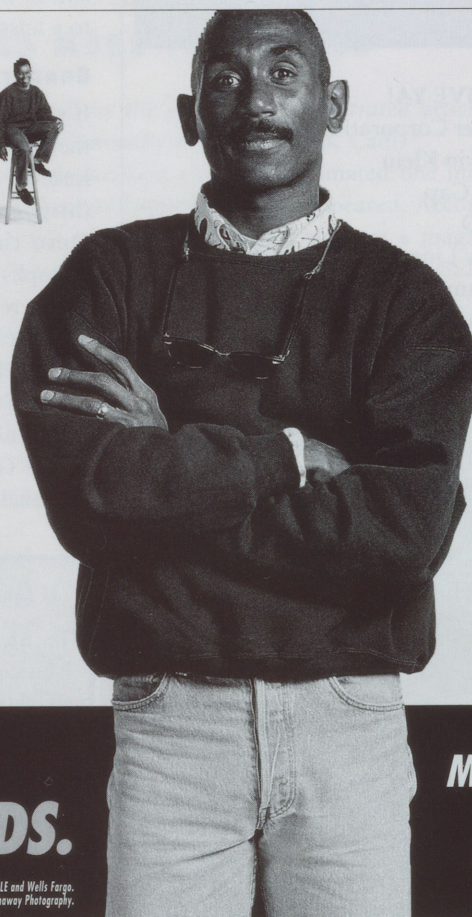


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dyke delights

Coyote Moon Music, owned and run by instrumentmaker Cynthia White, is a small business that specializes in custom designing and adapting instruments for differently-abled people. For a brochure and order information, call (508) 365-6335, or write Coyote Moon Music, P.O. Box 215, Lancaster MA 01523-0215.

Music Delights



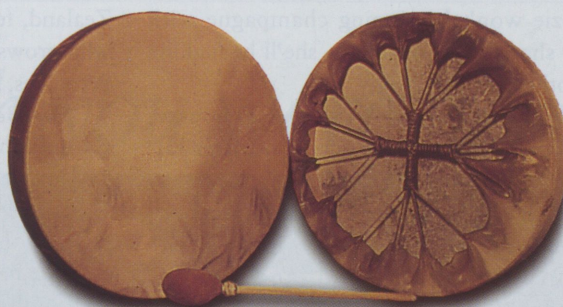
This flute is based on the Native American Block Flute. It is simple to learn and relaxing to play.

Another body part, another instrument. The Thumb Piano originated in Africa more than six hundred years ago. This small, hand-held instrument is easy to play and travels well, so you can bring your tunes all around the world.



The Tongue Drum, is based on the African and early Mayan Slit Drums. It is played by using mallets.

Artist and drummer Barbara Fosbrink custom makes each of her pieces specifically for women. Says Fosbrink, "Each drum/rattle is a work of art, a special gift for the owner." Featured below are examples of her booming handiwork. Drums and rattles can be ordered by writing to Barbara Fosbrink, 83 Howard Street, Ventura CA 93003, or by emailing her at SacredActs@aol.com.



Pictured is the Buffalo Drum, one of three types of drums crafted by Fosbrink. Its design originates from Native American culture, is handcrafted from cedar and comes in a variety of sizes.

The Ashiko Style Standing Drum origins are also rooted in African culture. It can be personalized by choice of wood, hide and fabric. The drum can be played on the floor, or for all of you dancing drummers, it can be easily carried.



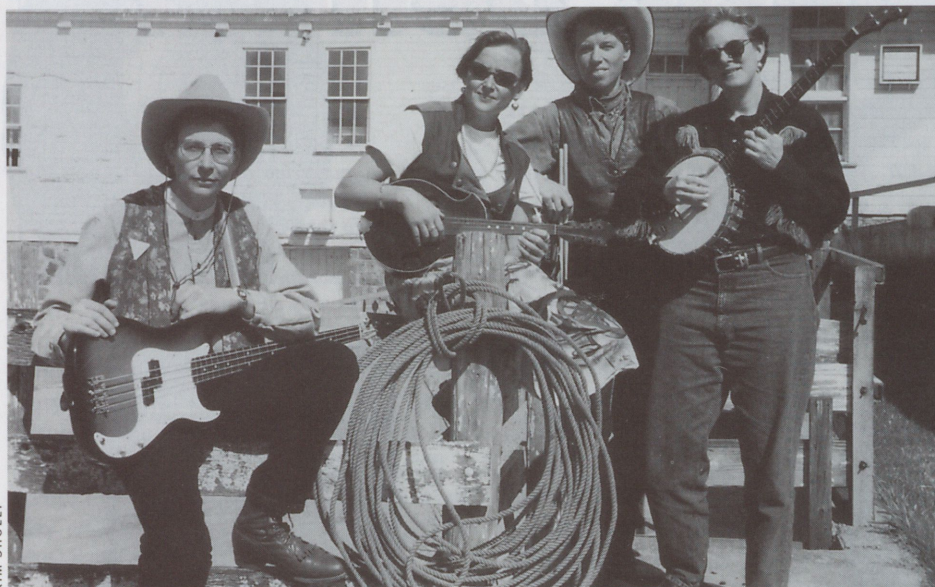
Fosbrink began making rattles in an effort to use the leftover materials from the drum making process. Its pen and ink art, as well as its beading and handle, all leave room for women to individualize their own rattles.





NEW FILM AND VIDEO REVIEWS

Judith M. Redding



KIM SHOLLY

These cowgirls sing their blues in *The Cowgirl Sweethearts*: A Dyke-U-Mentary.

Review: *Born in Flames*

I never before had the opportunity to review Lizzie Borden's 1983 film, *Born in Flames*, primarily because one couldn't see it anywhere, with the possible exception of an occasional screening at a lesbian film festival. In fact, I first saw *Born in Flames* at a local college in 1989 — and I watched a print with shoddy, almost indecipherable sound.

Born in Flames was kept from video release for years by the costs of music rights, but that — and the poor sound prints — have been set right. First Run Features, which has shown a true commitment to bringing good works by lesbian and gay filmmakers to home video, is releasing Borden's classic.

Strictly speaking, *Born in Flames* is a science-fiction tale. Set ten years after a socialist revolution, the film depicts a band of gun-toting women who decide to fight the patriarchy, including taking over the media. When the leader of the Women's Army is mysteriously killed, women from all walks of life — lesbian, straight, black, white, Latina — rise up to overthrow the system.

Born in Flames took Borden four years to make — she shot on weekends when cast and crew were available — and ultimately cost forty thousand dollars. Its style is rough and gritty, a look often embraced by wave after wave of low-budget filmmakers who followed after Borden. But

make no mistake: *Born in Flames* was one of the first ultra-low-budget independent films and one of the first feminist films to include lesbians and female violence.

This is not a video just to rent; it's a video to own. And I can guarantee that Lizzie won't be sipping champagne with her share of the profits — she'll be making another film.

Born in Flames — 1983 — 90 minutes — color film. Sapphic Screen-o-Meter rating: 10. Contact First Run Features at (800)229-8575 or www.firstfunfeatures.com.

Also recommended and already available on home video: Borden's 1986 film, *Working Girls*; and 1992 film, *Love Crimes*.

On the Big Screen

Two films that have been doing the cinema circuit and are bound to hit home video soon are Kevin Smith's *Chasing Amy* (not to be confused with Kevin Bacon's *Losing Chase*) and Emma-Kate Croghan's directorial debut, *Love and Other Catastrophes*. *Chasing Amy* — whose director also brought us *Clerks* — is about comic book artist Holden, who goes to a comic book convention and meets Alyssa, another comic book artist. He falls in love with her, but her sexual past gets in the way — that's right, she swings both ways. Not for the weak.

If, however, you want to relive your college days, *Love and Other Catastrophes*,

about Australian college students, may be the film for you. In addition to the usual collegiate angst and misadventures, one of the lead characters is a lesbian who (in a departure from mainstream movies) actually has a girlfriend. The film is hilarious in spite of its cuteness. And since I mentioned it, be sure to check out *Losing Chase*, a truly intelligent film about the complexities of love.

On the Little Screen (Besides Reruns)

Now that all the prime-time TV shows are in reruns for the summer, it's time to head to the video store and catch up on our movie viewing. If you haven't already seen them (and even if you have), consider popping one of these into your VCR:

Diabolique — The 1996 remake with Sharon Stone, Isabelle Adjani and Kathy Bates sizzles with a lesbian subplot and a new feminist twist to the ending. *Diabolique* has been remade several times, and the Stone/Adjani version is the best since the 1955 original with Simone Signoret and Vera Clouzot.

Heavenly Creatures — This is the true story of teenage love and matricide in New Zealand, featuring Kate Winslet as the teen who grows up to be mystery novelist Anne Perry. Yes, I said "true story."

The Berlin Affair — Director Liliana Cavani can't stay away from the Nazis: This 1985 film will remind many of her 1974 film, *The Night Porter*. In *The Berlin Affair* the wife of a Nazi diplomat falls in love with the daughter of the Japanese ambassador, a relationship soon swallowed by Nazi politics. Best of all: no subtitles.

Although the film is ultimately depressing, it is also incredibly empowering. Trust me — you'll want to take up kick boxing.

Shame — This isn't a lesbian film, but a feminist film from Australia about date rape. Following the pattern of the classic Westerns, a stranger rides into town to right wrongs — in this case, a woman lawyer on a motorcycle who kicks some serious butt when it comes to the town's male residents. Although the film is ultimately depressing, it is also incredibly empowering. Trust me — you'll want to take up kick boxing.



Lourie Kim as "Kim" in the compilation
but would you take her back?

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SARA LEE

A FUNK

PHENOMENON

Nobody does it like Sara Lee — the bassist, that is. With a résumé that includes the Indigo Girls, Ani DiFranco, B-52's, Gang of Four, Thompson Twins and League of Gentleman, the forty-one-year-old Brit has rightfully earned the title "bass slut," playfully given to her by Ani DiFranco. The only other female bassist who comes close in comparison (having played with David Bowie, Tears for Fears, Boy George, Sophie B. Hawkins and Donny Osmond) is Gail Ann Dorsey, who happens to be Sara's ex-girlfriend of four years.

Overcoming Sexism in Music

Lee has plucked her grooves in a predominantly male-centered music biz and bass world for the past twenty years. Long before the current Woman in Rock era, Lee had established her professional career in the testosterone-ridden rock 'n' roll world. Sara recounts, "There weren't many women bassists during my time....I dealt with my fair share of studio engineers and producers who looked at me and thought, 'You're the bass player?'...There was one record with Gang of Four where they actually replaced my part while I was out of the studio for a couple of hours." Even nowadays, Lee experiences sexism in the boys' club. "I did a studio session last year in L.A. surrounded by these heavyweight session guys and the guitar player said,

'You're the...? Oh, you're the bass player.

Okay.' But then the next day he said, 'Wow, you really play well with the drummer.' And I was like, 'That's what I do, you know.'"

Lee's immense talent has dissolved sexist barriers in the music industry and made her a much sought-after bassist. Lee's reputation precedes her — She finds that she often works with artists who already know her work and like her style of playing. Based on word-of-mouth endorsements, Lee has been pursued by the likes of the Robyn Hitchcock Band, the B-52's and Ani DiFranco, among other big names in music.

Indigo Girls

With the Indigo Girls, however, serendipity played a big role in initiating their working relationship. In 1988, when Lee was in the studio with her band The Raging Hormones, Scott Litt, the Indigo Girls' future producer, was in the

same studio next door with R.E.M. He heard Sara playing and then two years later, when the Indigo Girls needed a bassist for *Nomads*, *Indians*, *Saints*, he thought of Lee. Sara remembers that "it was very lucky because Raging Hormones was a very funky band. We happened to

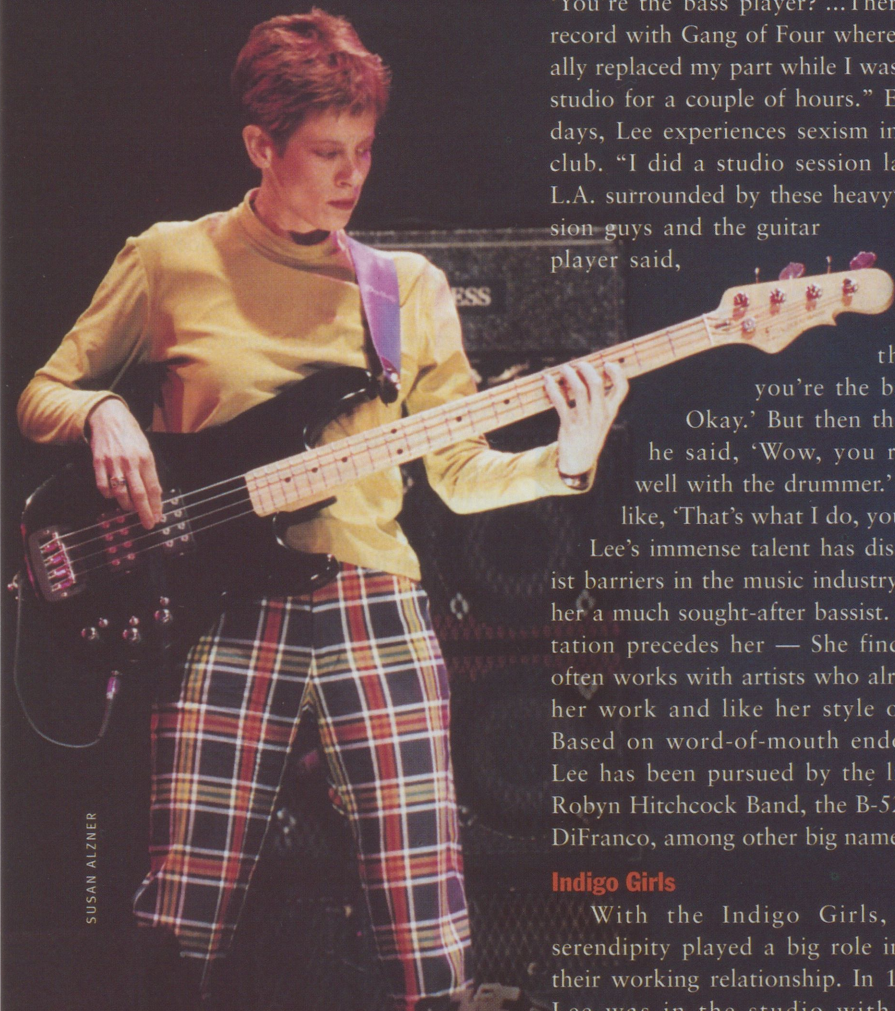


Ani shows Sara her paparazzi pose.

be recording a ballad that day. He heard my melodic side with my bass and felt it would be very appropriate for the Indigo Girls. If I'd been playing a funky song, I probably wouldn't have gotten the job. It was one of those fortuitous moments."

After the initial collaboration, Lee's own spunk helped establish a long-running relationship. Lee didn't expect to see the Indigo Girls after she recorded *Nomads* with them, because "very often as a session player you record a record and you never see the artist again." But about six months later, she saw that the Indigo Girls were playing in New York, where she lives, so she decided to check out their live performance. "So I went to see them, and of course I was blown away. I was sitting in the audience and I was just hearing my bass lines that I'd done on the record. And I thought, 'This is a tragedy that I'm not playing these lines with them.' So I went backstage to see them after the show and told them I really enjoyed the show, but the only thing was that I wished I was playing with them. They said, 'Do you want to play tomorrow night?' And I said sure. So I did the second show in NY with them and I got on the bus and I've been on the bus ever since."

Lee has an "extremely compatible" relationship with the Indigo Girls, largely due to the creative freedom they bestow upon her. "They love what I do and I love what they do. When I started working



by Shirley Liu

with them in 1990, they just said 'Make up your own bass line.'" The Indigo Girls foster this spontaneous spirit on stage as well, something Lee really appreciates. "They were the first band that for me took risks on stage. They invite friends up when they're in a town; they're far more adventurous than anybody else I've played with in terms of getting on stage and having a good time, taking musical risks and not being worried if we make a mistake. They were definitely a band that I could improvise with to a certain degree," Lee remarks admiringly.

And after seven years of working with the Indigo Girls, Lee has developed a strong friendship with them. Such a good friendship, in fact, that Amy Ray visited her several times while she was on tour with Ani DiFranco in 1996 (even making cameo stage appearances with Ani). "We missed each other. Amy also was a big fan of Ani's music...and I think she was missing playing music and playing with a band and being out there. I think there was a number of things that converged and she thought, 'I'll go out on the road for a while.'"

Ani DiFranco

During the Indigo Girls' hiatus in 1996, Lee joined Ani DiFranco's traveling roadshow. Apparently, DiFranco feels lucky to have had Lee around. "Touring with somebody is pretty much like having your heads duct-taped together and being put in a cardboard box for months. It's very intense, and I'll tell ya, there's pretty much no one I'd rather be in that box with than Sara. She's a babe."

Lee feels similarly about her experience with DiFranco. "I had an absolute blast playing with her," she exclaims. Part of the fun, according to Lee, was feeling like a primary member of a band. "It was very different from the Indigo Girls. The Indigo Girls are very much Amy and Emily and then we're the backup band. To play with Ani felt much more like a band, especially when we started to jam around in sound checks and start coming up with ideas that

she then wrote songs from. I'd be playing a groove with the drummer. She'd like it and she'd jump in and play the guitar and then we'd start expanding it. And I actually was able to sing — I love to sing."

Musically, it was a perfect fit between Lee and DiFranco. "It was a very funky, groovy musical situation, which is very appealing to me. Ani's definitely inclined to be funky. She just didn't have a bass player playing with her and backing it up and strengthening the groove." So enter Sara Lee for some strong groove support and out comes "a really rocking outfit." Though it was just a three-piece band, "it was a very powerful unit. It was very exciting to be playing that music and knocking them dead. It's a very rare and exciting thing for a session musician to have that experience. I loved it." Lee merged efforts again with Ani on her newest studio album, set for release in fall. Both Lee and DiFranco hope to work together in the future.

Working with Lesbian Icons

Lee's long and fruitful career in music has been interwoven with a large lesbian following of the artists with whom she has worked. She is very grateful for what this support has given her, which is "a mutually supportive community of women — friends, peers and fans — from which you can gain strength." The lesbian/women's community that surrounds Lee has been a source of positivity for her. "It's been

very empowering to work with strong, motivated women. It's a constant source of inspiration."

After twenty years in music, what else is left for Lee to do? Her own work, naturally — the next step for this talented musician is to produce her own album. And judging from the wealth and diversity of Lee's musical experiences, it's likely to be fun, fresh and definitely funky. In the meantime, we can count on Sara Lee to spice up the music world and keep the low end grooving strong. ■

INDIGO GIRLS

Shaming of the Sun

by Amy RaNae Wilson

There has never been anything flashy about the Indigo Girls. Since signing with Epic Records in 1988, Emily Saliers and Amy Ray have taken a blue-collar approach to their craft, embarking on marathon tours and churning out one solid record after another. That is why their sixth studio album is such a pleasant surprise.



While *Shaming of the Sun* is still very much a homegrown effort, the Girls incorporate an array of creative touches that set it apart from their previous discography. Strings, banjo, mandolin and even bouzouki are used to add flavor and texture to their sound. On "Burn All the Letters," the backing vocals of Native American ensemble Ulali are employed, lifting the song's coda to an earthy nirvana.

As usual, Saliers surrenders the harder-edged material to Ray, concentrating on gentler melodies such as the standout "Everything In Its Own Time." Ray, who wrote her songs primarily on electric guitar, kicks up the volume a bit, infusing some of the live energy missing from the band's earlier studio work. Her "Shed Your Skin" is a grooving highlight, complete with a hip-hop sample looping underneath.

That the Girls are able to write about their passion for women as a detail rather than a driving point is a deliciously honest treat. Saliers' "Caramia" oozes with desire: "With your head on the bed board/The anguished repeat/The sweat of our sadness/The twist of the sheets;" and Ray displays a twisted sexual wit on "Don't Give That Girl a Gun."

Shaming of the Sun is unquestionably the Girls' most ambitious album to date, and with the added flash, their most fun. ■



Sara Lee lounges backstage with her famous red shoes.

Toshi Reagon's adolescent injury may have been a stroke of bad luck for professional football, but it was a blessing to the music world. In forcing Reagon to give up her sports-star aspirations, the injury gave her the time to take her music more seriously. Now, nearly two decades later, Reagon has just come out with her fourth album, *Kindness*, and is already planning her fifth.

Kindness, a departure from her usual eclectic mix of rock, blues, reggae and traditional gospel, draws on folk, blues and ballads, with a little funk thrown in for good measure. Her easy tremolo slips through the strains of each song, gripping, coaxing, seducing, whether it be a call to solidarity, as in her passionate rendition of Ferron's "Misty Mountain," or a lullaby to her own lover, as in "Darlin'."

Reagon's melange of dedicated followers has created a groundswell through eager proselytizing. Her original fan base, comprised mostly of white lesbians, has gradually widened to reflect the diversity of the people in her life. But Reagon, while grateful for the change, is careful not to dis her original audience. Some people, she says (without mentioning names) "have a tendency to hate the bridge they walked in on."

Reagon has always been "out," though the media rarely seems to dwell on her sexuality. Reagon herself thinks that people are beyond caring. Aside from the comforting affirmation the media gives the gay community, she sees all the speculation about people's sexuality to be unwarranted and sensational. "I don't think it's even

"I don't care if Whitney Houston ever comes out."

something to get obsessed about," she declares. "I don't care if Whitney Houston ever comes out. I don't care if she's a lesbian; I don't care if she's not. Who cares?" Instead of wasting time on poolroom gossip, Reagon suggests that lesbians should be diverting our energy into our communities. "It's great if people can be role models," she continues, "but I think that [change has] really got to happen on the day-to-day, who-you-come-home-to-level."

ROCKED WITH *Kindness*

**TOSHI
REAGON**

by Maya Lara



DINA ALFANO

Despite her assertion that the public has no business prying into celebrities' private lives, Reagon does feel that performers have a responsibility to be real, a lesson she learned at her mother's knee. "From where you are, from who you are in your everyday life, that's where you make change. I'm a musician and that's where my strength is. I don't see the point in living a bullshit life as a musician and then coming up with some other thing I do on the side to say, 'This is how I display my politics about humanity.' Why not just be who you are all the time? Whatever your gig is, make change through your strength."

The words seem to echo from the past as though spoken by Reagon's illustrious mother herself: Bernice Johnson Reagon, former civil rights activist and founder of

"I'd like to do a rock and roll thrash band next."

Sweet Honey in the Rock. And indeed, Johnson Reagon has been a tremendous influence in Reagon's life. Reagon has written and co-produced with her mother, and has performed on Sweet Honey albums. Johnson Reagon cites Toshi as her strongest musical collaborator, a mantle that her daughter wears proudly.

A divining rod, or any amount of good sense, would tell you Reagon's one to watch. But she's too busy to participate in the "why isn't Toshi famous yet?" discussion. Frankly, if fame comes knocking, she may be too busy to heed it anyway. She's been honing her production skills over the years, as well as tossing around the idea of playing some heavy metal. "I'd like to do a rock and roll thrash band next," she offers. But right now, she's got her hands full, what with publicizing *Kindness*, working on a dance/music/text piece, writing a detective novel and preparing for her next album. That album, she says, is going to be "with a band and with a band sound and with a lot of different collaborations and even more hybrids of musical ideas."

"That'll confuse people even more," she laughs, "but the world's wide open, so why not?" ■

SINGING TO BE FREE

by Karen X. Tulchinsky

The first time Faith Nolan went up on stage she was sixteen years old. "There was a place called the Black Musicians Union in Toronto," recalls Nolan. "I was playing, 'Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child.' I remember my hand was trembling — I could hardly strum and my voice was trembling. I was shaking from head to foot."

Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where her parents were coal miners, and raised in Toronto's working-class Cabbagetown area, Nolan has been performing for over twenty years. She is a singer, songwriter and political activist. Nolan sees music as a cultural tool which she uses in her political work, a politic firmly grounded in her roots as a working-class, African-Canadian lesbian. Over the years, Nolan has toured across Canada, Europe, Japan and the United States. She has performed at such wide-ranging venues as universities, picket lines, demonstrations, schools, women's prisons, music festivals, shelters and unions.

Nolan's music blends the styles of blues, jazz and folk, following in the tradition of Odetta, Josh White and Bessie Smith, yet with a style uniquely her own. In 1986 she released her debut album, *Africville*, which was the first album and songbook about black history in Canada. It covered slavery to the 1969 displacement of black people in Africville, Nova Scotia, who were relocated by the Canadian government after a long history of racist treatment.

In 1987 Nolan put out *Sistership*, and *Freedom to Love* was released in 1989. Her latest CD, *Hard to Imagine*, was launched in the summer of 1995. "My aunt was murdered by this man who was obsessed with her," Nolan explains. "The song, 'Hard to Imagine' is about when someone's been murdered. It's really hard to imagine, especially when it's someone



DIANE WHELAN

Faith Nolan has toured the world with her bluesy rhythms.

you knew or someone in your family. It's also hard to imagine a peaceful world, a world of equality."

Some of her songs are funky and jazzy. Some are reggae. Primarily though, they are blues-based.

"I got into listening to the blues when I was twelve years old. As a performer, I've always been deeply moved by the blues. I love the honesty, the emotional intensity. It speaks about working-class people's lives. You can hear the struggles of black people in it," she says.

She is currently working on a jazz CD, which should be released sometime next year. Nolan's CDs are self-produced by Multicultural Women in Concert, a non-profit collective of women artists. She is self-distributed by W.r.p.m., Womyn's Revolutions per Minute, Canada's only women's distribution company. Both are based in Toronto. She produces her albums herself because, "if you make an album and someone else produces it, then that person

owns it for the rest of your life. Do it yourself and stay poor — but at least you'll own your work," she advises.

Nolan has been out as a lesbian since she began performing. "I can never hide the fact that I'm black. Being a lesbian is something I could be silent about, but I believe that the struggle of equality for lesbians and gays is similar to the intense hatred that was felt for black people during slavery. We are so enslaved, we have to watch where we walk if we hold hands. We don't have our civil rights. To be out as a lesbian is to say, 'Yes, you may hate me, you may not hire me, but I have to speak out, because I want my equality, I want my freedom and I won't have it if I'm silent.'"

Several years ago, Multicultural Women in Concert purchased seventy-five acres of land two hours north of Toronto. This collectively owned women's land is named Camp Sisters in the Struggle, or Camp SIS for short. Last summer, with the help of many women, they began to build the main structure. This year they plan to finish the building, which will be a main dining hall, washroom and shower room. Eventually the camp will be open all year round, and there will be political and cultural workshops, music, art, dance, theater and wood working. It will be a retreat and health center for women in crisis. Sometime in the future they plan to build a recording studio on site.

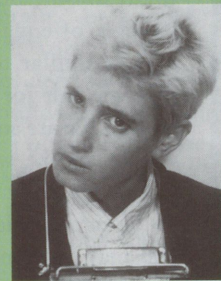
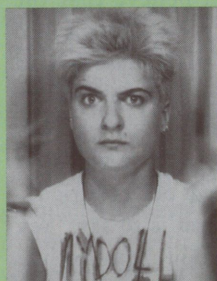
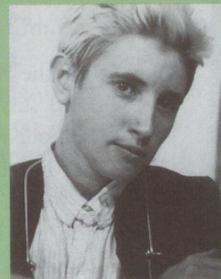
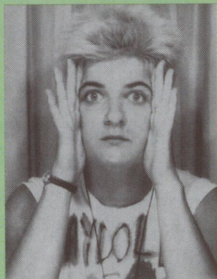
Nolan has no regrets about the path she has taken as an out lesbian focusing on political songwriting and performing instead of pursuing a mainstream recording career.

"I don't want to spend my time knocking on some bigwig record-executive-who's-snorting-cocaine-engaging-in-some-debauchery's door so I can sell, sell, sell. I think musicians should be creating music that is of the most humane quality."

Faith Nolan is doing just that. ■

FROM PUNK TO FOLK AND BACK AGAIN

A Conversation with Gretchen Phillips and Phranc



Bleached blondes from the early Eighties

Gretchen:

1. Came out as a teen.
2. Grew up listening to Beethoven and Tijuana Brass.
3. Janis Ian changed her life.
4. Became involved with the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival but could never completely get down with the lesbian separatists.
5. Moved to Austin in 1981 and found punk rock.
6. Played in the punk band Meat Joy.
7. Went on to found the bands Two Nice Girls and Girls in the Nose.

Phranc:

1. Came out as a teen.
2. Grew up listening to Hollywood show tunes and Allen Sherman's *My Son the Folksinger*.
3. Alix Dobkin changed her life.
4. Became involved with the Los Angeles lesbian separatist community in the Seventies.
5. Moved to San Francisco in 1977 and found punk rock.
6. Played in the punk bands Nervous Gender, Catholic Discipline and Castration Squad.
7. Went on to perform solo.

Gretchen: Phranc, what do you think is the connection between punk and folk?

Phranc: Well, punk music is just folk music with the amps turned up. The lyrics were what was so important in punk to me. The music was the driving force behind it because it carried all the passion and the anger, but the lyrics were brilliant. My frustration was that I couldn't hear them.

G: What do you make of the scene now? Who are you into?

P: I like to focus my energy on and support the young dyke bands and musicians. There wasn't a whole lot of support for me when I was young...I struggled so much. I tried to kill myself because I was a queer...I thought I was the only one. And when I came out I put it on the loudspeaker. That's why I always feel so responsible to say the word "lesbian" when I'm out there...I think one person really makes a difference. I don't support outing, but I do encourage people to come out because I think it saves lives.

G: When I was nineteen, in my first Austin band, I wrestled for about a week with whether or not to come out musically. I was afraid I'd get assassinated like Garp's mother in *The World According to Garp*. I knew it was going to be upsetting to some people. But I asked myself, "Are you willing to die for this?" and ultimately I decided, "Of course." That was the decision that I made and I've never gone back on it at all. I will die for the right to say who I am, and who I love. And then I'd like to get quite explicit about how I love. Because, y'know, sex in my work has always been so important. I need that libidinal side to be represented. To me that's one of the main things that Two Nice Girls and Girls in the Nose have contributed.

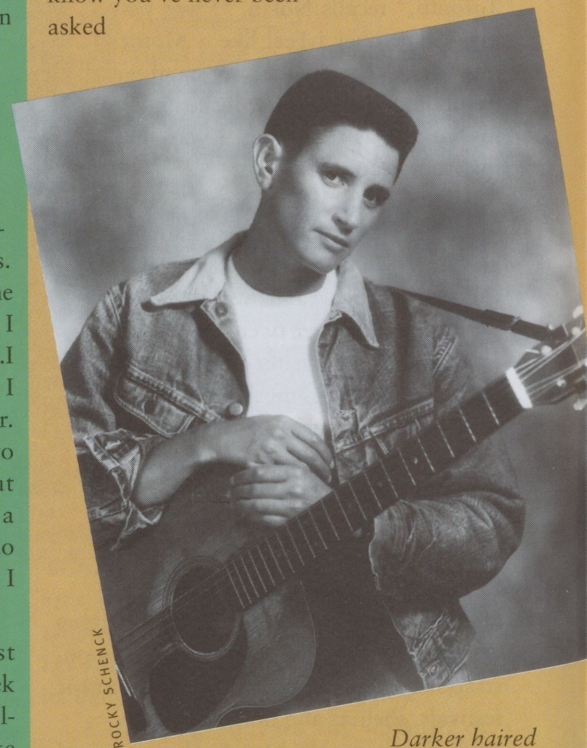
P: That's very very true. You put the sex in...you fill in all the sex blanks that I left. You fill them in good.

G: Thank you. Fill that blank in good,

wouldja? [Laughter]

I think, Phranc, that you and I always being out could have potentially affected our careers.

P: (Sarcastically) Yeah, you think? I know you've never been asked



Darker haired beauties of today.

this question before, but do you really think that you've had a harder time as a woman and a lesbian in the music business? [Laughter]

G: Why don't you ask me if I'm a lesbian first or a musician first?

P: Oh, that's a good question.

G: I always want to say "Are you ignorant first or a rude asshole first?"

P: I always want to say (condescendingly) "Look, being a lesbian isn't the biggest part of me, or the smallest part of me, like my haircut or my shoes. It's just a part of me."

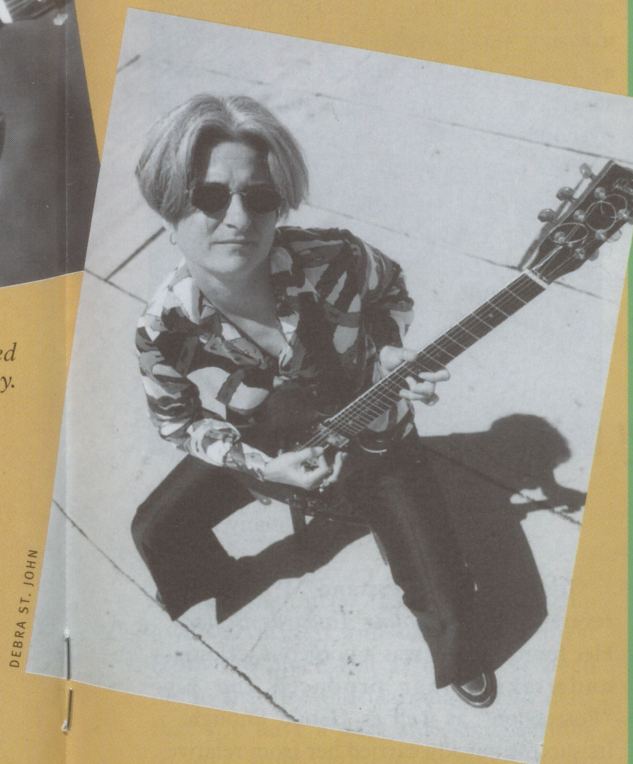
G: I want to know who else they're asking this stupid question. "So, are you a

guy first or are you a guitarist first? Are you a father first or an alcoholic first?" I hate this question.

P: Just because I identify as a lesbian and say that I'm a lesbian doesn't mean that everything I sing and write about is about being a lesbian.

G: When people ask for more universal themes in my songs, I always wonder if they would be asking that of straight people. One aspect of homophobia is that we're not supposed to be "shoving our sexuality down people's throats." People don't even see that everyone's being relentlessly heterosexual in our faces all the time.

P: Right.



DEBRA ST. JOHN

G: It completely informs their work and they're not being critiqued, or even asked about it.

P: They don't even see it. It's not even a topic of conversation.

G: It's not like my desire is for queer dominance.

P: It's for presence. To be here.

G: Exactly. And I want to be a part of a movement that is about increasing tolerance, where we do tolerate differences and are figuring out all of the ways in which we are similar and all the ways in which it behooves us as humans to be together without fighting or killing or hating.

P: Growing up as a junior dyke separatist it was a big challenge for me to let go of the stuff that I learned when I was really young. And I'm still getting challenged today: The transgendered movement and the inclusion of bisexual and transgender to gay and lesbian student unions at colleges, y'know all of this has been very educational to me as a lesbian. I cannot say that I have always been a completely enlightened liberal tolerant lesbian. I haven't. When these straight people have a hard time opening their minds, y'know I'm having a hard time opening my mind, too. We're all in the same fucking boat.

G: I like to hang with the people who want to embrace the challenge. Because that's why I'm here: to be constantly opening up to a world that can be hurtful and repressive. I want to be big enough to embrace...Anyway, why don't you tell me what you're doing next?

P: I'm bringing back my Hot August Phranc show [Phranc performing in drag as Neil Diamond]. I haven't done it in years. And my new record will hopefully be out by fall. I have a lot of stuff I've been trying to write for the last five years, about my brother's death, and losing a lot of friends. So it'll be about murder and life and love and loss and everything. And I'm looking to go out there and really dedicate myself to performing all over, all the time.

G: Cool.

P: Then I'll also be doing the Phranc 'n' Stein show. [Gertrude Stein's poems put to Phranc's music]. It's really a multi-media piece because my cardboard sculptures of the objects we're singing about are hanging around us, and the actual text of

Tender Buttons is projected above the stage. Kind of like the opera.

G: I thought that show was really good when I saw it at Michigan last year.

P: It's interesting to perform and collaborate in a different way. And your next project is?

G: Well, I had a transformational experience at my aunt's funeral last year. All my relatives are intense Christians. And when we sang the hymns everybody was bawling. I had this unprecedented experience where some of these Christian songs about God which had never really meant much to me before became this vehicle for her

When people ask for more universal themes in my songs, I always wonder if they would be asking that of straight people.

spirit. It was weird, but something I've been looking for because I want to be touched musically. Honestly, I've gotten kind of bitter and cynical post-Two Nice Girls and I have been looking for my spiritual center inside of music. Outside of "the business" and "making it" and schmoozing. Those stupid things don't remind me of my punk beginnings when it was just about the music. And the really predictable chord changes and simple melodies of gospel have really freed me up.

P: There's something very powerful about simplicity. It's like coming back to folk music again. It clears the path for all the emotions to come through. So we're kind of in the same place. 'Cause the record I'm making now is all about spirituality. It's not the stuff that drove me in the punk world. This was triggered by death, same way as you, and it's like when I play the music it brings up emotions...it makes me cry, it makes me really happy.

G: That's exactly what I'm looking for.

P: That's the record that I'm making.

G: Good. ■

FUMBLING TOWARDS SARAH

by Amy RaNae Wilson

"It seems to me, that just about every performer, at some point in their career, there are stories of them being gay," says Sarah McLachlan of the rumor that has buzzed around her name for years. "But I don't know, I probably played into it, too. I have a lot of gay friends, and if the general public sees me hanging out at a lesbian bar — which I've been known to do — then rumors will fly."

Since signing her first record deal at age nineteen, McLachlan has drawn in millions with her pensive beauty and moody soprano, but the lesbian community has found a particular empathy within her dark velvet music. "One thing I really want to project when I write lyrics is no gender bias. There is very rarely 'he' or 'she' in there. Especially 'Good Enough,'" the singer/songwriter says, acknowledging the song some considered proof positive she was a lesbian herself. "That was about loving and respecting women for sure. Absolutely, you could take that as lesbian bent, or you can take that as a very close friendship between women, and then there's also the mother element in there as well. But for sure I can see how my lyrics perpetuated the myth."

Myth?

"Sooorry," McLachlan says, simultaneously revealing both the truth and her Canadian roots.

In February, McLachlan's lesbian fable came to an end when she clandestinely wed Ash Sood, the drummer in her band. "It was pretty much the hardest secret I've ever had to keep," she says of the event, which took place in Jamaica. "We planned it for two months and my parents didn't even know...but it was fantastic."

Heterosexual Shangri-la aside, McLachlan says she's wistful to see her faux lesbian status go, admitting she took pleasure in the speculation surrounding her orientation. "I liked it," she says with a laugh that is somehow both mischievous



Sublime Sarah offered a celebration of women through music with her nationally touring Lilith Fair.

and innocent. "It was fun!" McLachlan, twenty-nine, has just rolled out of bed following a late night mixing "babies" for her new record in a Montréal recording studio. Charming and down-to-earth, she happily — if groggily — chats about what is poised to be the greatest year of her career thus far. "I was looking at Lollapalooza last year and thought, 'God, there are no women represented here,'"

"I wanted to prove we could do this, because four years ago promoters would have laughed at us if we had wanted to put all these same women on one bill."

the Nova Scotia native explains. "There's so much amazing talent out there and I thought it's just really strange that there's nothing like that...so, I just got a big wish list together and asked my agent to give these people a call."

As fast as you can say "speed-dial," McLachlan's management helped her create Lilith Fair, a thirty-five-city mega-festival featuring what is being touted as the most impressive list of female performers in history. The jaw-dropping line-up includes Tracy Chapman, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Paula Cole, Shawn Colvin,

Sheryl Crow, the Indigo Girls, Jewel and, topping the bill, McLachlan.

"It's simply a celebration of women because women are fantastic, women are beautiful," McLachlan says of her creation. "I wanted to prove we could do this, because four years ago promoters would have laughed at us if we had wanted to put all these same women on one bill. They wouldn't have taken a chance on it. They now realize that people can stand hearing two women back-to-back on the radio. They're not going to turn the channel. There was a

really silly old-school attitude that prevailed about that for a long time. There certainly is a lot of sexism in the music industry, and it's interesting to see it turn around so quickly, although I think the sexism is still there. But public demand overrides it. People want this."

The public also has been longing for a follow-up to McLachlan's 1994 multi-platinum smash *Fumbling Towards Ecstasy*, but, the singer admits, she has been reluctant to produce. "For a long time I thought I should just quit, that *Fumbling* was my swan song," she says. "I thought, 'I'm not going to get any better than this.' I thought that, for me, it was the perfect record, and I had so many mental blocks."

It's easy to understand McLachlan's reverence for *Fumbling Towards Ecstasy*. Her fourth album was a gorgeous, celestial undertaking that produced the hit "Possession" as well as "Good Enough." Its success quickly carried her from relative obscurity to VH-1 staple, where she led the wave of Nineties female musicians that made a tour like Lilith Fair possible.

Alas, fame does have its price, and two years of constant touring contributed to McLachlan's thoughts of early retirement. "I just wanted to try and get my life back together, because I'd been out for so long,"

she explains. "It's like being in outer space. It's very alienating and, at the same time, you're so in the middle of things. Your perception on every level gets pretty messed up. It took me a long time just to find myself again. I had to find out that I could write again, because for the longest time writing was just truly the last thing I wanted to do."

So McLachlan holed up in her Vancouver home and began renovating, gardening, "anything besides writing." After several months of reclusive solace, she was finally centered and confident enough to begin work on her new record.

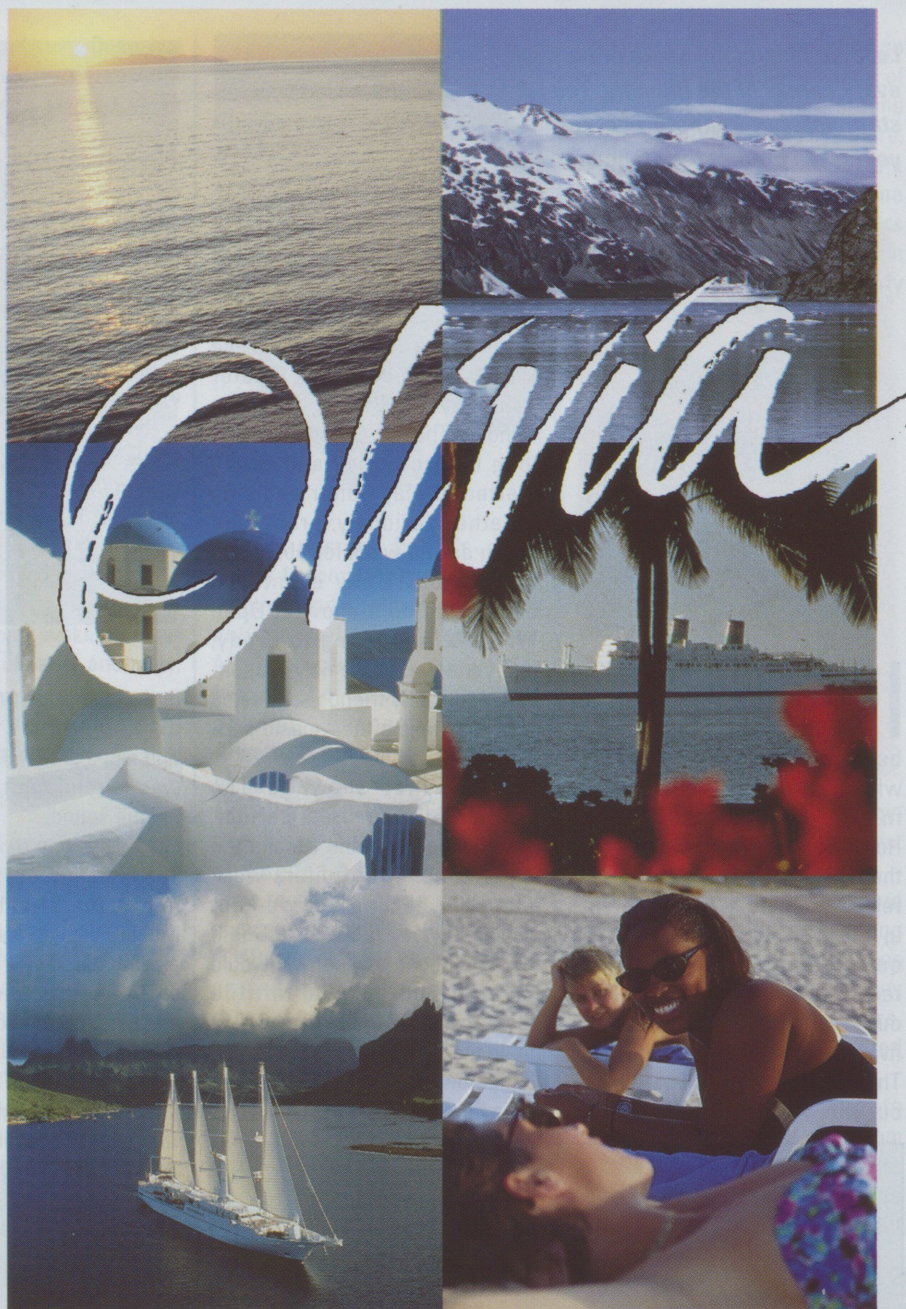
McLachlan will unveil the appropriately titled *Surfacing* mid-summer. "I'm incredibly excited about it. It's dark and...I think it's even more honest than the last



TANYA LEAH NEMCHIN

McLachlan during the days of her hit song "Possession."

record," she offers. "I keep trying to chip away at myself and it's really honest from the place I'm at now. I've been doing therapy and learning not to deny that you have a dark side, and learning to love your ugliness, because we all have it. I love seeing that in people, that ability to lay yourself out so nakedly and say 'I love myself regardless of all this, I love myself because of all this.' I just find that very refreshing in our society, so it's fun to be able to be at that place myself — be so close to that place. It's been an empowering trip." ■



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world characterized by "coffee...dark-roasted in the fire," "the laughter of love," and "the dancing of the wind." Yet amid the poetry of her lyrics lie bold challenges to colonialism, military rule, greed, homophobia and classism.

In the lively song "Luisa Capetillo," Pérez pays tribute to the Puerto Rican labor organizer of that name, who was arrested in Cuba earlier this century for wearing men's clothing in the streets: "'Disgrace!' said the judge/'Sacrilege!' shrieked the priest/Smiling she went, knowing the absurdity of those who would judge her..." Pérez herself chuckles as she explains that "A lot of people want to remember [Capetillo] primarily as a labor

scends language. Drawing together the colorful threads of musical traditions as diverse as Puerto Rican *plenas* and *aquinaldos*, blues, Pan-Latin *nueva canción*, even elements of folksy American "wimmin's music," she creates a feeling of wholeness amid contradiction, an empowering message about identities that will not be lost on anyone who has ever struggled with a fractured sense of community or self.

Perhaps the best example of Pérez's ability to communicate through music alone is the song "La Carta." With its resounding "call and response" pattern — a musical tradition indigenous to Africa — the song evokes a powerful sense of solidarity and unity,

Pérez sings bravely of *familia* and *memoria*, of love and anger and the ache of loneliness.

organizer, but she was also a cross-dresser." And judging from Pérez's descriptions of Capetillo's starched pants and slicked-back hair, she was a mighty dapper one, too.

In a slightly different vein comes the velvety acoustic piece "Tengo la Vida en Las Manos," a song that honors the simple, potent wisdom of folks not formally educated. Pérez paints a picture of a powerful woman who has learned her lessons in the school of life. "I only have these two hands and the history of my people," comes the haunting refrain, "I don't know about verbs or adverbs...but I know that love is equal with roses and I know of your black eyes."

With lyrics this compelling, it is easy to fall for Pérez. But even those who don't understand the words seem to flock to her shows — a testimony, perhaps, to the raw power of the music itself. Now dropping to a whisper, now soaring into rich dulcet tones rivaled only by the legendary Mercedes Sosa (to whom she is often compared), Pérez tran-

s of people supporting each other in the face of hardship. The song's messages about love and human dignity swirl in the warmth and strength of Pérez's voice. The words simply paint final details onto the canvas of the music.



Yet despite Pérez's clear genius for communicating intense emotion and complex ideas with only her voice and her guitar, American promoters continue to balk at her decision to sing only in Spanish. Recounts manager Annette D'Armata wearily, "A lot of times they'll ask me, 'Doesn't she sing anything in English?' Or they'll say, 'I just don't think my audiences have the attention span to sit through an entire hour of music they don't understand.'"

Pérez refuses to bow to the pressure, however, a decision that is more about creative integrity than anything else. "I can be the most honest and emotional when I'm singing in Spanish," she says simply. "My language is the creative place that I go to when I write...that's where my creative images come from."

Look for Pérez's new CD *Vestigios* this fall. Painting a colorful mosaic of women's strength, the new compilation is a series of anecdotes, memories, and portraits. One of Pérez's goals with the album is to challenge the American notion that "women's music" is primarily a white-dominated folk phenomenon. "The movement of music from women is broader," she declares, adding "I have a lot of respect for [Anglo] traditions, but they are not my traditions." Pérez is also eager to improve lesbian visibility in the music world of her native Puerto Rico. To this end, she has included a song on the album *Vestigios* with "super-traditional" Puerto Rican rhythms...and openly les-

bian lyrics. Pérez is planning to go on tour this fall to her country of birth, and it will be the first time she has ever performed live there. While a bit nervous about the possibility of confronting some homophobia, the singer offers quietly that "there is a strength in doing work that speaks clearly about who you are." ■

Doing It For Ourselves

by
Pamela Green

In the early Nineties, Toni Gogin — then a drummer and guitarist with The CeBe Barns Band — started getting the urge to record her music. But it didn't take long to realize how limited her options were. "I didn't want just some guy recording us," she remembers. "There was no one we wanted and there were no women."

In 1994, Gogin moved to Portland. Taking inspiration from the women she met there, she and a partner bought some recording equipment and taught

"So many boys have bands and record their own music... Girls need to learn about this."

themselves how to use it. By the end of 1995 they had started the label Horsekitty, and were recording their own music and that of their friends. As their expertise grew, a broader mission evolved: to help women and queers record their music and learn about the industry while doing it.

Looking back on those days, Gogin says, "When I was young,



COURTESY OF CANDYASS

Gogin, Kingan and Bleyle of Candyass.

help for girls and queers wasn't there. So many boys have bands and record their own music....Girls need to learn about this."

Jody Bleyle (of Team Dresch) experienced the same frustrations as Gogin back in the early Nineties. Independently of Gogin, she formed Candyass, in 1993, in order to provide women with some recording options. To date, her company has served Kaia, Vitapup, The Lookers, and of course Bleyle's own band, Team Dresch.

Last April, Gogin and Bleyle joined forces to form Candyass/Live Transmission. One of the major benefits of the partnership is that it gives both of them the chance to continue their music without neglecting their business. (Both women spend a lot of time of tour: Gogin is currently jamming with Cypher in the Snow and Bleyle is with Hazel.)

In theory, their new business should run like a well-oiled machine: Candyass finds a band it wants to represent. Bleyle and the musicians work out details such as release date, tour dates, song order, cover art. The band goes in for a recording session at Live Transmission. Gogin finishes up the eight-track while Bleyle han-

dles the marketing and promotion. The band sets off on tour just as the CD arrives in fan mailboxes or indie record stores across the country.

Unfortunately, reality isn't quite so streamlined. Candyass/

pendence by never insisting that musicians signed with Candyass record with Live Transmission or vice versa. Bands who do record in-house get terrific deals, though. Recently Live Transmission recorded a band for around fifty dollars — thousands less than with other studios. Gogin charges a low hourly rate and even waives the fee for bands which suffer from a serious lack of funding.

The business even has a company web page (designed by Emily "The Metallic Blue Goth" Kingan) that reviews other queer and female bands on various labels and provides commentary about environmental concerns.

No one is properly paid, of course, but as Bleyle says, "We don't really care about the pay because we're building the future and creating community." Although they have only a few employees, there are always friends, musicians, babies, cats and dogs in the offices. Everyone got in on the phone interview with CURVE, including high school intern Ilanya Strauss

"We don't really care about the pay, because we're building the future."

Live Transmission has only a few employees, and financial difficulties constantly loom on the horizon. Neither Bleyle nor Gogin had much startup capital, the business still has no corporate backers, and recording equipment is extremely expensive — a good microphone runs about seven hundred dollars.

Despite financial difficulties, the business has managed to hold fast to its original ideals. Over half of the bands handled by the duo are women-led and almost all are queer or have a queer member. Gogin and Bleyle respect every band's creative integrity and inde-

(who recently took her girlfriend to the prom).

Candyass/Live Transmission is actively creating a community that dares to "redefine punk, go beyond identity politics and prove that queer rock isn't just about who you sleep with." Looks like the next generation of queer girls in rock will have a lot more options than Gogin and Bleyle did earlier this decade. ■

To order or get info about Candyass, write to: PO Box 42382, Portland OR 97242. For recording info, write to: PO Box 14284, Portland OR 97293.

Shining Starr

by
Denise Sheppard

Picture it: A young singer/songwriter sits, quite out of her element, at a snobby, upper-crust restaurant. Across from her is a fifty-something man. But wait — it's not what you think. Clive Davis, a record company mogul who has signed the likes of Patti Smith, Annie Lennox and Janis Joplin, has flown to Vancouver to meet an eccentric new talent named Kinnie Starr. The conversation flows and the two connect, but one thing is missing: Davis can't stay in town to see her perform live. Kinnie then asks the highbrow crowd if she may interrupt their meals and perform a spoken-word piece for her guest. She does, the restaurant watches in glorious awe and voilà! a new fan base is born.

Kinnie Starr may be a lot of things, but she is definitely nobody's puppet. This West Coast woman is confrontational, political and emotional. She aims to get her music heard, to incite, to get people to react. And react they have: Fans flock to her shows. The media gushes. Labels climb over each other begging her to sign on the dotted line.

But enough speaking on her behalf: It's time for this challenging, articulate woman to speak for herself.

DS: What performer most prompted you to act, or re-act?

KS: PJ Harvey. Definitely. Single-handedly. Just for being guttural. She's the person who got me off of acoustic guitar and got me to write songs from that deeper place. Listening to her stuff made my whole body feel really weird

and fucked up, and I thought, "Whoa, I've gotta get an electric guitar."

Singing about your relationships with both men and woman seems a very natural thing. That said, is there any sense of responsibility that brings your sexuality to the forefront?

I know who I am — and I know a huge chunk of the population is [also bisexual] — so I really feel like I have to say, "This song is about a woman" or "This song is about a man" or "I was hanging out with a guy and his boyfriend said..." Just to talk very openly and casually about same- and opposite-sex relations. To show that is a comfortable topic and that it shouldn't be approached as something taboo.

One of the rumors running around is that when your new label, Mercury, approached wanting to sign you, the first question you asked them was "Who are the women in executive positions at your label?" True?

Yeah. While dealing with people like Arista and Interscope, Columbia and Dreamworks and all those fucking people, I started thinking, "Where are all the women?"

The post-Alanis backlash is everywhere. How has it personally affected you?

I've heard more than a handful of people suggest to me that the

until I see equal representation everywhere — studios, record labels, bands, sound people, roadies — I'm gonna laugh when some egotistical boy says, "You're so lucky you're a girl." It makes me so irate. Equal representation is not too much to ask for.

You've performed in so many different spaces, from all-girl rooms to biker bars. How important is that diversity to you?

"Until I see equal representation everywhere...I'm gonna laugh every time some egotistical boy says, 'You're so lucky to be a girl.'"

reason people like my music is because of my looks. I know a lot of men who are very offended that women are starting to be seen and heard in music. They're trying to pigeonhole any women singing anything remotely aggressive. But

I read this Ani DiFranco review and something really hit me: The writer was praising her but also mentioned the fact that she's preaching to the converted. Which is relevant! But I wanna reach the fucking bonehead who reads *Playboy* and eats pizza and rapes his girlfriend, you know? Those are the people I wanna reach.

A Sweet Ride

by
Denise Sheppard

Ana Egge is a walking divining rod. Some artists are like that — blessed with an intuitive sense for reading situations, people, maybe even the future. Something, that inner water rod perhaps, brought Egge east from Silver City, New Mexico to Austin, Texas to pursue a



JANE BIRCHUM

dream already emerging from deep within her.

River Under the Road, Egge's first CD, is a debut masterpiece worthy of a songwriter decades worldlier than this mere twenty-year-old soul. For a songwriter who professes to write from what she knows, she seems a bit young to be generating such rich depth.

But ask her the story behind one sweet, insightful lyric line and she'll paint an entire character portrait of someone dear to her. Or she'll tell a childhood story — uncomplicated, yet laced with intricate, exponential memories. Egge could grab the ripples of heat rising off of scorched pavement and turn it into a song. It is this ability to see beyond what's there that makes her a great songwriter.

Jimmy Dale Gilmore — along with Austin bass-legend Sarah Brown — co-wrote the title cut from Egge's *River Under the Road*. The track rips and sways like an international flatbed on a country bridge. Rumbling currents swirl beneath the surface, in giddy anticipation of the mystery that lies ahead (and below): "It goes much farther, deeper and darker than the road above could ever go...."

Gilmore has just invited the engaging young singer to join his 1997 East and West Coast road tours, but it's difficult to imagine Egge ever becoming cocky about her charmed career. She is



COURTESY OF VIOLET INCH RECORDS

sweetly shy about her own success, and quick to credit those who have supported her, including her partner Amy Pancake (who designed the cover art for *River Under the Road*).

Ana Egge is a rare talent. While many musicians are still coming into their own at her age, Egge is far more than a diamond in the rough.

Carla Gets Butch

Interview by
Gina Bowers

“We’re not really married to any genre of music and that annoys a lot of people, but I can’t help it. I get bored,” Carla Bozulich admits. Impatience, in her case, proves to be a virtue: Witness the meteoric rise of her band, The Geraldine Fibbers. Within eight weeks of its conception, the five-member group — including stand-up bass and violin — independently recorded a ten-inch single and were soon signed to Virgin Records. After touring the United States and Europe with their debut album, *Lost Somewhere Between the Earth and My Home*, Carla and her fellow Fibbers returned to the studio. “This is the only interview we’re gonna do while recording and you’re from CURVE, so it’s kinda cool,” says Carla as she sinks into a leather couch, lights a cigarette and begins our chat.

GB: Is there a theme to your new album?

CB: Yes. The album’s called *Butch*. The recurrent thread through the album is gender issues and ambiguity, as far as sexual orientation. I wanted to name the album *Butch* because



JENNIFER ROPER

it’s a very homo-specific word. It just means so much to me, that word. It’s a state of mind, really. It’s usually used in reference to a woman, but it doesn’t have to be...

What else can I say? It’s for the butch inside us all. It was an alternative to the title *Bitch*.

That fits into your gender ambiguity theme.

Yeah. There’s a lot of stuff on the album about power as a woman. I’m a person that refuses to lay down and be walked on. The album is about reaching that place where you’re ready to just fucking kill someone or die before you’re ready to let that happen again. Because, as a woman, you deal with that. I’m pretty fucking good at it and I don’t take shit.

How do you relate to your audience?

I feel like I plug directly into whatever people are feeling or thinking. We opened for Joan Osborne last year, and one of the shows was all ages. The whole front row was taken up with little girls and their mothers. It was obvious from the first note that we struck that they were horrified. The mothers were helping the little girls cover their ears. I’m an empathic person, so I suddenly

Yeah, I read that. That was real nice of her.

You two dated, right?

Yeah. That was five years ago. She used to look really solid. She’s a solid gal. She still carries that with her, but she used to be a solid hunk of a girl. She’s really an excellent person — fun, funny, gorgeous.

And your friend, your “best friend?”

(Smiling) Gorgeous as well. Pretty. Smart. Excellent kisser. It’s a little scandalous, I think. That’s why I’m a little reluctant to talk about it. I don’t know if she would want me to or not.

Is she married or something?

(Laughs) No, no. It’s just really a tangled-web situation, you know?

I haven’t had many girlfriends. I’ve had a pretty intense history, and a lot of it has to do with the things that men do to their girlfriends and to the women in their life, and some of it’s not very nice. Girl Land is very pleasant territory for me because I’m relatively inexperienced, I guess. It’s kinda cool because I feel really awkward and naive and not very good at it. Like, I don’t feel all confident in what I’m doing. And it adds a sweet element to the whole thing that is lost for me with boys. ■

started feeling what they were feeling.

Are you seeing anybody right now?

Mmmm...I’ve had a date or two recently. It’s kind of one of those best friend scenarios. We’ll see what happens with that. I don’t know.

When CURVE interviewed Jenny Shimizu a while back, she mentioned you.



JENNIFER ROPER

BABES IN BANDS *scene report*

NEW YORK CITY

compiled by Renee Payne

The following bands can be seen at Meow Mix, 269 East Houston, East Village, NYC.

Betty Girl-arena rock for the Nineties. Call 1-800-HIBETTY or go to www.hello-betty.com.

Fresh Fish Imagine if the B-52's all dressed up in fish heads. New seven-inch out now. Contact Kelly Webb at P.O. Box 20885, NYC, NY 10009.

Miss Guy and The Toilet Boys They are the punk queens that Kiss could never be. Ask for The Toilet Boys and send \$8 to P.O. Box 931, Village Station, NYC, NY 10014, or get their new seven-inch on HyPurr Records at most record stores.

Motochronic The definition of East Village rock, with great T-shirts to boot. For their seven-inch, send \$4.50 to A Real Good Time Unltd., 237 East 5th St., #13, NYC, NY 10003 (include the band name).

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

compiled by Alicia Nevarez

Bobsled Loud-ass punk band, influenced by the Dickies. <http://www.shocking.com/links/musics/bsled.html>.

Bubby Girl A punkish band that plays women-based Appalachian folk songs. K. Andrews, boom berneatha records, 2365 Orange Ave, Costa Mesa, CA 92627.

Madigan Belting out her own songs on the cello and guitar, folky punk Madigan will impress the hell out of you. P.O. Box 36345, LA, CA 90036-0345, MoonPuss@aol.com.

Red Aunts Karate-kicking, flyglass-wearing freaks who need to upgrade their amps. Epitaph records, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Suite 111, Hollywood, CA 92627.

VANCOUVER, CANADA

compiled by Denise Sheppard

Mollies Revenge Melodic, sexy and positively guaranteed to charge girl libidos everywhere. Their album *Every Dirty Word* is on Atlantic, also check out <http://www.axionet.com/molliesrevenge>.

Puncture A mix of politics and performance lyrically inspired by freedom fighters worldwide. Candy Ass Records, Box 42382, Portland, OR 97242.

SAN FRANCISCO

compiled by Gretchen Phillips

Cypher in the Snow So very great and smart, the aural equivalent of Nicole Eisenman's paintings. New one out soon on Candy Ass Records.

Soul Divine Danceable, good-time rock and roll; Heart without the hobbits. For CD, send \$10 to 2059 Market St., #10, San Francisco, CA 94114, <http://www.slip.net/~sodivine>.

TORONTO, CANADA

Compiled by Jane Farrow

Messy These bossy ladies lay down the phunky shit while delivering a rock star-sized serving of polyester SM role playing. CD, \$18, and cassette, \$12, (U.S. money orders) to Boss Lady Deluxe, 25R Atlantic Ave, Toronto ON M6K 3E7, phone & fax: (416)588-9209.

Random Order Eight-year veterans that dish up a tasty ska-blues-folk gumbo. The core trio (guitar/bass/drums) have illustrious band bios that fill at least two chapters of the elusive Canadian chick-rock history book. \$18 (U.S. money orders) includes shipping to Box 243, Station E, Toronto ON, M6H 2X0.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

compiled by Lois Maffeo

Third Sex Portland girl-band brimming with power anthems. Chainsaw Records, P.O. Box 1151, Olympia, WA 98507

The Lookers From Portland, featuring Sarah Douger, who also wows the ladies with her non-wussy solo performances. Candy Ass Records, P.O. Box 42382, Portland, OR 97242; Sarah's solo single, K Records, P.O. Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507.

The Need Art rock dykes who are tearing up the popularity contest at cool school. They are to music what cubism was to art — a totally new way of looking at things. P.O. Box 2912, Olympia, WA 98507; www.olywa.net/need. Seven-inch is out on Out Punk and Kill Rock Stars. New full-length coming out on Chainsaw.

Cha Cha Cabaret A roving band of musicians, artists and raconteurs in all forms of drag. K Records, P.O. Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507.



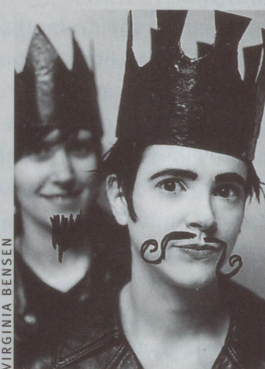
JANE WEITZEL

Mollie's Revenge



ELIZABETH PEPIN

Soul Divine



VIRGINIA BENSEN

The Need



DANNY HOLE

Red Aunts

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34 CURVE SEPTEMBER 1997



NEW BOOKS TO NOTE

Rachel Pepper

In the introduction to the new edition of *Gay & Lesbian Online* (Peachpit Press \$16.95), Jeff Dawson writes of the Internet, "So what is this potentially new species measured in bits and bytes? It is us, in all our variety: The queer Oz, cyberqueerdom, lesbigay digitopia..." True words, in my experience. If you still aren't plugged in, but want to be, you might find Dawson's book a treasure trove of information. It's a resource guide broken up into categories such as Activism, Adult Children of Heterosexuals, African-American, Art — and that's just the A's! Each chapter includes web addresses and other info on related sites.

But enough of cyberspace. On the other end of the technological spectrum we have *zines* — those little magazines usually photocopied and stapled together as acts of love and revolution. They have been big stuff in the queer community since the early Nineties, originally traded in the mail through the Fact Sheet Five circuit. I myself was guilty of publishing several loud-mouthed creations myself back then, and can proudly say that I helped launch the widespread commercial distribution of these critters. Now you can find *zines* for sale at almost every queer and women's bookstore across the country and in Canada, too! Celebrating this rapid proliferation comes *A Girl's Guide to Taking Over the World: Writings from the Girl Zine Revolution* (St. Martin's \$14.95), just out from that dynamic New York duo Tristan Taormino and Karen Green. The book draws on the history of girl *zines* but concentrates on those readily available today, and includes excerpts from *zines* like *Hip Mama*, *Fat Girl*, *Femme Flick* and *Princess*. For the most part, the pieces in *Girl's Guide* are written and published by women in their late teens and early twenties, and many are proudly, defiantly queer.

Young women and girls also star in two exciting new anthologies which have recently come our way. *Jo's Girls: Tomboy Tales of High Adventure, True Grit, and*

Real Life (edited by Christian McEwen, Beacon \$19) and *Girls: An Anthology* (edited by Edith Chevat, Laurie Piette and Angie Argabrite, Global City Press \$14) share the same spirit, some of the same authors, and even an overlapping story ("Ruthy and Edie," by Grace Paley, appears in both collections). Both books are good romps into the high-spirited world of girls throughout literature.

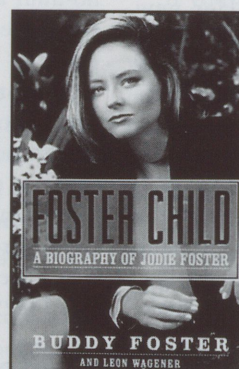
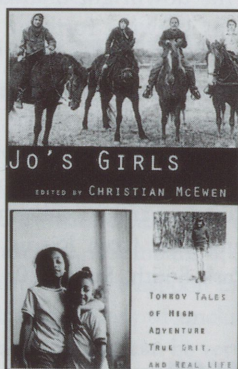
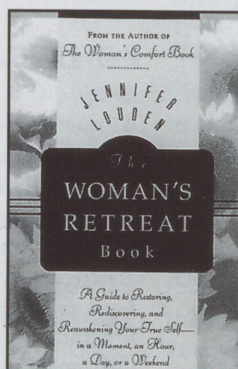
To see what young girls are actually reading today, check out the *Girls to the Rescue* series, edited by Bruce Lasky

some new voices in the fantasy field, check out *Bending the Landscape: Fantasy*, a collection of primarily queer selections. Edited by well-known authors Nicola Griffith and Stephen Pagel (Borealis \$19.95), this anthology is the first in a series which will also include science fiction and horror books.

Speaking of fantasies, actress/director Jodie Foster certainly occupies a special place in dyke daydreaming. Don't miss the new book called *Foster Child: A Biography of Jodie Foster* (Dutton \$24.95), written by none other than her brother Buddy. There's not a lot of queer content about Jodie here, but one fact that fascinated us was that the siblings' mother was allegedly in a long-term lesbian relationship with a woman named Jo D., for whom Jodie was named!

Placing Jewish women's herstory into a fictional context, Judith Katz, author of one of my favorite novels, the Lambda-winner *Running Fiercely Toward a High Thin Sound*, now gives us *The Escape Artist* (Firebrand \$12.95), which takes place in the Jewish community of Buenos Aires at the beginning of this century. And being Jewish myself, I fully appreciate Rebecca Alpert's *Like Bread on the Seder Plate: Jewish Lesbians and the Transformation of Traditions* (Columbia University Press \$24.50). Alpert, an out lesbian and one of the first women to be ordained as a rabbi, advocates welcoming lesbians into Jewish tradition primarily by presenting new interpretations of the Torah, usually seen as condemning homosexuality.

Finally, reminding us to be gentle and compassionate with ourselves comes the *Women's Retreat Book* by Jennifer Loudon (Harper San Francisco \$17). Whether retreat means simply taking a wonderful long bath, exploring your creativity through art classes, finding new spiritual direction through "imagining the divine" or going to a commercial center just to get away for a spell, this book will inspire you to take your own rejuvenation seriously. ■



(Simon & Schuster \$3.95). The series features multicultural girl heroines in a format accessible to middle-school-age girls.

Despite the title, *My Life as a Boy* (Algonquin \$16.95) is another book likely to attract lots of attention in the women's community. It traces the life of well-known feminist author Kim Chernin and includes a rather odd account of how the growth of her inner boy-persona precipitated her shift toward lesbianism. Hmm.

Moving into a more fantastical realm, several new science fiction/fantasy books with lesbian themes deserve our attention. Melissa Scott, author of the award-winning novels *Shadow Man* and *Trouble and Her Friends*, now presents a sequel to an earlier novel, *Dreamships, in Dreaming Metal* (Tor \$22.95), which explores the theme of artificial intelligence with her character Celinde Fortune, a controversial illusionist. Another Lambda award-winning author, Maureen F. McHugh, is finally available in paperback. *China Mountain Zhang* (Orb \$13.95), is quite the trip worth taking, especially if you have a love for both science fiction and Chinese culture/politics. For a sampling of



HOT LICKS FROM COOL CHICKS

Rachel Pepper



LINDA PERRY

In Flight

Interscope

Can Linda Perry, ex of 4 Non Blondes, still kick butt? You bet! Her new album, *In Flight*, is a powerful debut from an artist whose passion still finds its fullest expression acoustically. *In Flight* is one of those albums that plays like a complete musical and spiritual journey. Where Perry goes, she takes you with her. Many of the record's songs, like "Fill Me Up," are about the changes one thirty-something rocker chick finds herself undergoing. "Freeway," the album's most likely single, is a gorgeous song with violin licks, creatively layered instrumentals and lyrics that Perry explains are about "running free and expressing yourself." Perry's growling voice soars and searches out the sublime on all the album's cuts, including a duet with longtime heroine Grace Slick on the song "Knock Me Out." The band on the album, including Bill Bottrell on guitars, the late Kevin Gilbert on keyboards, Dan Schwartz on bass, Brian MacLeod on drums and Lisa Germano (of the 4AD label) on violin, sound great throughout. Perry tells me she'll soon be at work on a new, more rock-oriented record with them. Watch for it!

BEST OF LESBIAN COMEDY VOL. 1

Various artists

Rising Star

It's a brave move on Rising Star Record's part to release an all-comedy sampler of lesbian performers. Not only are comedy albums notoriously slow sellers, but it's the rare joke that can be heard more than once without it losing its appeal. Still, our lesbian comedians have been sadly overshadowed by their musician sisters — hopefully this compilation will change all that. Among the artists or groups included on the *Best of Lesbian Comedy* are Dos Fallopi (who at seven appearances on this

album, albeit short ones, pushed my endurance button a bit too far), Kate Clinton, Georgia Ragsdale, Karen Ripley and Amy Boyd. Selections range from the ho-hum to the downright hilarious, with the comedians spewing forth on subjects ranging from Sara Cytron's "Public Restroom Protocol" to Vickie Shaw's "Mammograms, Barbie & Midge." This is a great sampler to play as an ice breaker at parties, or simply to help choose what comedians to see at an upcoming music festival. Order direct from Rising Star, 52 Executive Park South, Suite 5203, Atlanta GA 30329.

TOSHI REAGON

Kindness

Smithsonian Folkways

Toshi Reagon's always been a star on the rise, never quite reaching her apex. Hopefully *Kindness*, her new album out from Smithsonian Folkways, will bring her closer to mainstream acclaim. Although I've always been a fan, the recording quality of this album and the wise mix of songs on it are the best we've seen so far from Toshi. The title track "Kindness" is a fine song; it's a foot-tapper, head-nodder and I dare you to try and not sing along with Reagon's rich, reaching voice. "If you wake up and hate yourself/ And you cannot find your voice/ You can come and shake me/ And we'll scream until we get hoarse/ Because I believe in kindness/ I believe in sweetness/ I believe in peace and love/ That is all I've been thinkin' of." There are mostly original songs on this album featuring voice, guitar and percussion. These include the funky "Action" and "Where you Gon Be Standin'," a duet she sings with her mother, Bernice Johnson Reagon. A few covers, including Ferron's "Misty Mountain" and a rendition of "Land on The Shore," round out the package. Been craving an acoustic album with lots of soul that's just a step beyond folk, but not too far from the

blues? Toshi Reagon's *Kindness* will take you to a place of peace. Go there. Write Smithsonian Folkways, 414 Hungerford Drive, Suite 444, Rockville MD 20850 or call (800) 410-9815.

K.D. LANG

Drag

Warner Brothers

She's sultry, she's sexy, she's...smoky? Could it be that k.d. lang, environmental activist, has actually recorded an album of smoking songs? True, these are all covers, mostly classic tunes like "My Last Cigarette" and "The Air That I Breathe," and lang's renditions, lush with instrumentals, including violins, cellos and harp, make the listening a pleasure, albeit a sedate one. "Smoke Dreams," "Theme from Valley of the Dolls" and "Your Smoke Screen" set the tone for the album — serious little numbers with a lulling lilt. While other critics are remarking on her remix of "The Joker," it's probably the one song on the album I've always hated — must be bad memories from back in high school or something. Fans will surely drool over the luscious full cover photos of our gal in suits, and they certainly are sexy. All in all, I have no complaints with lang or her musicians on *Drag*. Still, one important question does come to this reviewer's mind. And that is, should one of our idols — and a politically active one at that — be endorsed for singing about smoking? Oh, sure, the parody is an obvious one: smoking as a cover for other forms of "drag." Call me heavy-handed for pointing out what I find distasteful, but do we really think songs like "Love is like a Cigarette" are ground-breaking musical listening for the lesbian nation? You'll have to admit after a few listens that you may find yourselves pawing the album sleeve more than perking up your ears at *Drag*. Nonetheless, I'm sure every dyke in the country will soon own this album, so enjoy it despite my crabby criticism. ■



THE HEALTHY TRAVELER

Off to Michigan this summer? Travel can wear down your immunity and leave you prone to disease. Be sure to protect yourself with a few easy-to-follow routines:

TO BEAT JET LAG

Melatonin, the natural hormone that controls the body's clock, can help to reduce symptoms of jet lag and is readily available over the counter. Take it for two days prior to your departure and for two days after your arrival to help adjust the sleep cycle. Melatonin should be used only sparingly, as no one knows the side effects associated with long-term use of this hormone.

If you drink a glass of water every hour that you are in the air you can avoid all the symptoms of dehydration, such as dry mouth, light-headedness and constipation. Alcohol or caffeine worsen dehydration, so it's best to avoid these substances while flying.

You can get some exercise while on the plane by getting out of your seat and walking around at least once an hour. Qi Gong, a Chinese breathing and energy-moving exercise, can help tremendously. Visualize your muscles tensing and relaxing as you

draw breath into your lower abdomen. Some airlines offer in-the-seat aerobics on long flights. Take advantage of these programs when possible!

When you arrive, consider taking over-the-counter Chinese herbal pills called Curing Pills once a day for three days. These can help with jet lag as well as constipation. Again, you can take melatonin for two days after arrival; but do not use it for more than a total of four days.

If you have the time and money, get an acupuncture treatment soon after arrival. Ear acupuncture as well as body acupuncture can help to reharmonize your system quickly.

RELIEVING DIGESTIVE DISTRESS

Changes in water, stress, time changes and bacterial infections all can contribute to digestive problems when you travel. Take *Lactobacillus acidophilus* before leaving home and continue taking it during the course of the trip. A standard dosage is one-fourth to one-half a teaspoon two to three times a day in a glass of unchilled water. Eating miso soup also can be very helpful.

If you get cramping or diarrhea, take some of the Curing Pills mentioned in the jet lag section. To help with nausea or

GINGER TEA

Ginger tea is used for nausea or motion sickness when there is no burning sensation in the stomach or intestines. Get some fresh ginger at the grocery store (organic preferred). Cut two to three slices and place them in a cup of water. Boil for ten minutes. Drink this tea every few hours or after meals.

motion sickness, take some ginger pills, which can be found in health stores; or brew up some ginger tea (see sidebar).

If you are prone to bacterial infections, it may be wise to have your physician give you an antibiotic prescription before you leave. However, many women who have taken enough *lactobacillus* prior to leaving on a trip find that their immune systems are equipped to stave off infections naturally.

For motion sickness, press on the acupuncture point about two inches above your wrist crease on the inside of the arm.

— Misha Ruth Cohen, OMD, L.Ac.

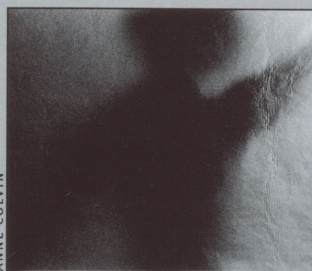
For more information about the healing benefits of Chinese Medicine, visit Misha Cohen on the web at www.DocMisha.com.

STAYING ABREAST

The Activist Cancer Patient — How to Take Charge of Your Treatment by cancer survivor Beverly Zakarian, hits right on the mark. Activist groups which fund annual hiking trips for cancer patients — in a misguided stab at empowerment — should instead be handing out this book for free at every meeting, rally, support group and workshop.

Zakarian's book, now one year old, addresses the importance of the cancer community organizing itself and lobbying the FDA and the government research apparatus the way ACT UP has done for the AIDS com-

munity. "On the basis of number of people affected alone, there should be at least ten times the number of drugs for cancer as AIDS. The number of drugs approved to treat HIV- and AIDS-related conditions in recent years is



ANNE COLVIN

about equal to that for cancer, a breathtaking statistic," Zakarian writes. She goes on to explain how the psycho-

logical barriers to change begin in the doctor's office, with the patient's overdependence on her physician. "If someone runs into a problem getting a treatment, it is rare [for her] to think that the system is wrong," she writes.

The book serves also as a guide written from a patient's perspective: on what's wrong with the medical system; how doctors are reluctant to aggressively diagnose at the earliest possible stage; and the reluctance among patients to organize and fight for the release of more drugs and meaningful research. Additionally, Zakarian breaks down the complex world of clinical trials to its most basic components.

After her 1985 diagnosis with ovarian cancer, Zakarian established CAN ACT, the country's first grassroots cancer patient organization. She spoke before Congress, the President's Cancer Panel and the FDA. Disillusioned with the rigors of politics, Zakarian now concentrates on writing articles about cancer treatment issues. ■

— Mary Ann Swisler

The Activist Cancer Patient — How to Take Charge of Your Treatment by Beverly Zakarian, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., NY, 1996, 223 pages.

STRAIGHT GIRLS DON'T BOINK WOMEN

Michele Fisher

Het chicks don't do the bone dance with dykes. Why? Because being heterosexual means one's sexual attraction is for the opposite sex. It doesn't mean one is latently bisexual. Nor does it mean one has yet to meet a "manly enough" woman. See, straight girls get off on rolling around in the sack with guys. Not other girls.

All this may seem simple and logical, but still some dizzy dykes think they have the power to change another woman's sexuality. Now don't get me wrong — a lesbian may indeed be instrumental in another woman's journey to self-discovery and may well help her awaken her buried or repressed homoerotic desires. But as for changing a strictly-dickly woman into a muff diver — well, it ain't happenin'. After all, how pretty would a penis have to be to make you hop the fence?

Here's a bit of logic for all you het hags: you can't sleep with a straight woman more than once. It's like having a thing for virgins. Once the deed is done, it's done. After that, you can no longer claim to be seeing a straight woman. Sure, you can tell people you are seeing a "formerly straight woman" or a "woman who was het when you met her" but stop fooling yourself and face up to the fact that once she's bent, she's bent for good.

Now I'm not talking about youthful exuberance here. Experimentation in adolescence is perfectly normal, and groping someone of the same sex in high school does not make you queer. Sleeping with half the boys in my town sure didn't make me straight. (Though sleeping with half the girls nearly did.)

Granted, there are a few types of truly straight, adult women who do have sex with other women. Women who are incarcerated, for example, often find a girlfriend to avoid physical harm. These women are definitely not homos — they are just gals with a strong survival instinct. So I guess if you are a lesbian who is exchanging protection for sex with a straight girl in a prison setting, you would be correct in stating that your woman is straight.

By the same token, if you are sleeping with a gold digger who is repulsed by same-sex relations but gives in to your advances to gain money or prestige, you



When will we stop torturing ourselves?

too would be telling the truth when you said that your other half is hetero. It would be equally accurate to say that you are pathetic. (Dear readers, please note that to observe this particular mating ritual firsthand, one has but to head for the Dinah Shore Classic in Palm Springs.)

But most het hags aren't preteens, aren't having jail house romances and aren't trading diamonds for orgasms. Most of them are in relationships with what I call "professional straight girls," women who make their sexual living off pretending they are straight with their lesbian lovers.

***Here's a bit of logic for all you
het hags: you can't sleep with a
straight woman more than once.
It's like having a thing for virgins.***

"Professional straight girls" like to hang around lesbian meeting spots looking innocent and alluring and slightly overwhelmed. They stand there waiting to be rescued by a dyke in shining armor. (And there are always plenty of us who adore nothing more than a beautiful damsel in distress.) They are shy when it comes to talking about their

desires and curiosity, but are eager to confess their apprehension about entering our big scary subculture. They will tell you that they are looking for someone they can trust to guide them into the experience. They see "making love" with a woman as sacred. They need someone who will treat them gently and who — this is key — will understand that they are straight.

Now let's just cut to the chase here, shall we? These professional straight girls are good at what they do. And what they do is manipulate another woman into eating them (they rarely reciprocate) and showering them with attention. Since they are "straight" no one can expect them to make an emotional commitment or be accountable for their behavior. Nice work if you can find it, huh? Most of them are not straight. They are just jerks.

I bet this warning comes too late for many of you, but for those of you who have not yet had the displeasure and do not want it, keep in mind that "straight" women don't hang around lesbian bars looking to be rescued by horny lesbians. That is one of those if-it-sounds-too-good-to-be-true-then-it-probably-is kind of deals.

Regretfully, I have also been running into a lot of folks lately who call themselves "straight-identified." They may just

be lesbians who are trying to get away from me, but I think there is actually a new movement afoot. I haven't done much research on this sort of thing, but from what I gather, these are women who want to have a life with a man, but enjoy a slice of pie once in a while.

As for meeting an actual "straight" woman who wants to roll around naked with another woman on a regular basis, I haven't — ahem — come across her yet. I'm not saying that there is no such thing, though I will say that you would be much more likely to run into a Catholic Rabbi.

So we see that a sexual relationship with a straight woman is pretty much impossible. But even if you could have one, why would you want to? And why are other dykes so impressed by it? I think it is all about low self-esteem and internalized homophobia. I know, I know, not the kind of lingo you are used to seeing in this column, but there is no other way to put it. Low self-esteem shows its ugly mug when you want a girl who has never done it with another woman because you want to ensure that you will be the best she has ever had. When you find yourself searching for someone who will think that your bizarre behav-

ior is normal because she doesn't know any better, it's time to get help.

Another warning signal on the self-esteem-o-meter is when you are chasing straight girls because you don't like the way lesbians look. Sure, there is a "lesbian look," but if your type is (and I despise this term — we'll talk about this in a later column) quote/unquote "straight looking," there are plenty such women out there.

And then there are those who justify grabbing from the other side of the fence because they supposedly want to avoid dyke drama. That is like standing on the train tracks to avoid being hit by an automobile.

Do you think it's relaxing to try and outrun an angry husband? Yep, listening to a woman sob about her life being turned upside-down really gets me in the mood.

By way of conclusion, here's a final word to those of you who idolize het hags: Frankly, I really don't get your drift. Are you actually sitting there thinking, "Gosh, I wish my girlfriend was a sperm swallower, too." Reality and a sense of gay pride may slip away from you completely if you don't fill out that subscription card to CURVE real quick. I mean it — hurry! ■

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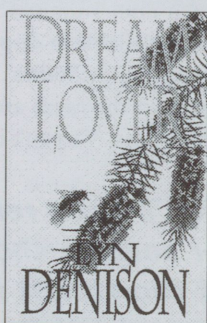


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DREAM LOVER Lyn Denison

Jo couldn't remember when the dreams began, but they always ended with her desperately reaching out for something just beyond her grasp. The dreams could easily be a metaphor for her own unfulfilled existence. Having given up all hope of love and happiness long ago, Jo now seeks escape from a failed marriage and the apathy that engulfs her more each day.

On an extended vacation, she hopes that a change of scenery will help her get on with her life. But never in her wildest dreams did she imagine that a chance meeting with an attractive stranger would lead to her first taste of real passion — on the lips of a woman with the strength and the desire to make all her dreams come true.

ISBN: 1-56280-173-2 \$11.95

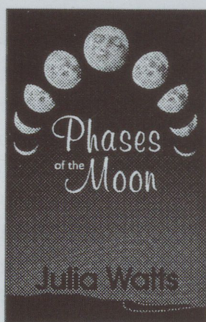
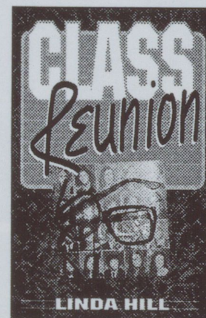
CLASS REUNION Linda Hill

Jennifer decided to attend her high school reunion in the hopes of freeing herself from past heartbreak. But when she comes face to face with her first lover, she is overcome by a rush of desire.

Sheila's reckless spirit and burning sensual need have always spelled trouble. She wanted Jennifer, the way she wanted her before.

Heather has come a long way from her ugly duckling days when she was the butt of her classmates jokes. Despite the painful memories, she has returned to capture the heart of the woman she loves.

ISBN: 1-56280-178-3 \$11.95



Phases of the Moon Julia Watts

Growing up dirt poor in a Kentucky coal mining camp in the 1940's has made Glenda Mooney hungry for everything that life has to offer. She discovers early on the two vital forces that will sustain her throughout her life: music — in the sweet harmonies of gospel and bluegrass — and love — in the arms of a preacher's daughter. This ill-fated romance and the resultant broken heart increases Glenda's devotion to music, and, armed with just raw talent and wide-eyed wonder, the young singer sets out to conquer the world.

ISBN: 156280-176-7 \$11.95



RUMORS FROM THE LESBIAN NATION

Emma Shera

In the fast-moving world of celeb gossip, yesterday's news may as well be last year's, so we can't even guess which way the **Ellen DeGeneres-Anne Heche** story will go. Rumor has it that it's already over between showbiz's most notorious blonde duo. And that Anne will go back to being the up-and-coming cinema starlet she was before her eyes met that of the gap-toothed comic across the room after the Oscars. Sigh. It was too good to last, wasn't it?

They say that in Hollywood any publicity is good publicity, so we'll just have to wait and see what effect the whirlwind affair has on Heche's movie career. You see, her future employer is Disney (same company behind *Ellen*...there are probably a few new gray hairs on those balding pates...tee-hee), and they are none too happy about Heche's sapphic dalliance, considering it an embarrassment and a liability in her heterosexual romantic appeal. She'd just signed to co-star as Harrison Ford's love interest in *Six Days, Seven Nights* before the story about her and Ellen broke, and apparently moves are afoot to throw her off the picture and find someone a bit more, eh, conventional. Sordid biz, isn't it?

On the bright side, *Ellen*'s been renewed for another season, though word has it that the starlet herself didn't want to return!

Babe, you can't leave us hanging like that. There's a whole post-coming-out world to explore. Maybe Anne could guest-star. Or maybe not.

But the hottest post-*Ellen* fallout is the guessing game that's been going on as to who will come out next, and speculation has fallen on a number of high profile ladies in television, especially those who are nearing the end of their contracts. (Odd how contracts figure so largely in Hollywood coming-out stories. Tacky,

tacky.) Names bandied about include **Roseanne**, **Helen Hunt**, **Brett Butler** and **Candice Bergen**. We'll take all of them, thanks. And whom would you choose?

LesboFile would like to pause at this point and say that whatever Roseanne's relationship with the closet, we'd like to thank her for many laughs and many eye-openers. Things may have gone a bit "off" toward the end, but there's never been a show quite like *Roseanne*. Sniff.

Okay, back to the dirt. So guess who was spotted purchasing a dildo at the Pleasure Chest in L.A.? Why, it was Miss



DINA ALFANO

Spectacled Joan Osborne, part of the Lilith Troupe.



DEBRA ST. JOHN

Sarah McLachlan: not to be mistaken for a radical feminist.

Sharon Gless, long-time dyke icon and renowned heterosexual. Details, we want details. Make? Color? Size?

Which leads us nicely to the latest entertainment craze sweeping British pubs. No, not darts, pretzel-tossing, or drink till you puke. No, my friends, it's vibrator racing. Yes, indeed. Folks gather for miles to watch mini vibrators zip around a special course. The little gadgets are available in dispensers in both the ladies and gents toilets. Interestingly, the ladies' dispenser outsells the men's, but most competitors in the races are male. S'pose the ladies are putting theirs to other uses. We can't imagine what.

Ellen's been renewed for another season, though word has it that the starlet herself didn't want to return! Babe, you can't leave us hanging like that.

Moving swiftly on...you've probably heard that **Buddy Foster** has "outed" sister **Jodie** as a presumed lesbian. Yawn — is she now? We'd never have guessed. But what to make of the fact that she was named after her mother's lover, Auntie Jo D., who helped raise the kids? Mmm, now this is good stuff.

Expectation was in the air at the Cannes Film Festival, where self-outing rumors swirled around trouser-wearing actress **Greta Scacchi**, best known for taking her top off in her films. Scacchi wasn't biting, but didn't seem bothered in the least by the innuendoes.

Joining the fray of girlie-interest pics in production is a bio-pic about artist **Frida Kahlo**, she of the impressive eyebrows and bisexual inclinations. A while back, **Madonna** was sniffing around the project, but now **Salma Hayek** has been signed as Frida.



DINA ALFANO

Salma Hayek in deep thought over playing the role of Frida Kahlo.

ellen and anne's future **guess who jodie is named after**
k.d. lang and the prime minister **thank you roseanne**
disney's idea of a bad match **pamela's best asset**



DINA ALFANO

*k.d. and Leisha at "Boathouse Rock,"
to benefit AmFAR in NYC.*

How about that charmer k.d. lang and her new album *Drag*? A non-smoker herself (as one might expect, with those powerful lungs), k.d. has nevertheless been inspired by the evil weed. Oh, and as insiders may already know, we should all be calling her "k.d. lang, OOC" these days, as she's been honored by her native country as an Officer of the Order of Canada. Well done, darling. First, Ellen and Anne get an audience with the President; now k.d. gets a medal from the Prime Minister. Moving on up.

On a more tragic note, a recent poll indicates that the most recognized Canadian face around the world is that of — drum roll, please — Pamela Anderson Lee. Oh, dear. You're sure it's her FACE everyone recognizes?

We haven't had much opportunity to mention Katrina and the Waves, well, ever, actually. (You do remember them, don't you? The summer of '85? "Walking on Sunshine?" Right.) Anyway, Katrina's made something of a comeback in Europe, where she and the Waves won the Eurovision Song Contest, previously scooped by such luminaries as ABBA. Well, there was no stopping her then —

the woman was everywhere, turning up at the opening of an envelope, she was. But she really outdid herself when she locked lips onstage with the comic Mrs. Merton, otherwise known as Caroline Aherne, who happens to be the ex-wife of the very jealous Peter (New Order) Hook. Still, if it came to blows, we'd be in Katrina's corner. Friends of Caroline are said to be worried by her "outrageous" behavior. Heavens, let's not resort to that sort of language now, girls.

In other music news, the R&B festival Jamison is supposed to be headlined by Toni Braxton. And we were amused to read about the Lilith Fair, aiming to spotlight women artists. Where has this idea cropped up before? Hmmm. Tracy Chapman, Indigo Girls, Joan Osborne, Sheryl Crow and Mary Chapin Carpenter



DINA ALFANO

Is Candice Bergen one of us?

have all signed up. But rest assured, girls, that the Lilith Fair won't turn into "a soapbox for extremist feminism," and that's a promise straight from the mouth of organizer Sarah McLachlan.

Sigh. Will it ever be possible for someone to organize a pro-woman event and not be goaded into making baldly anti-feminist statements? We dare you. ★

LONG DISTANCE

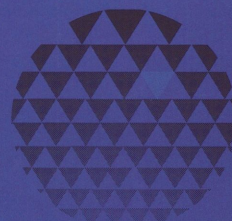
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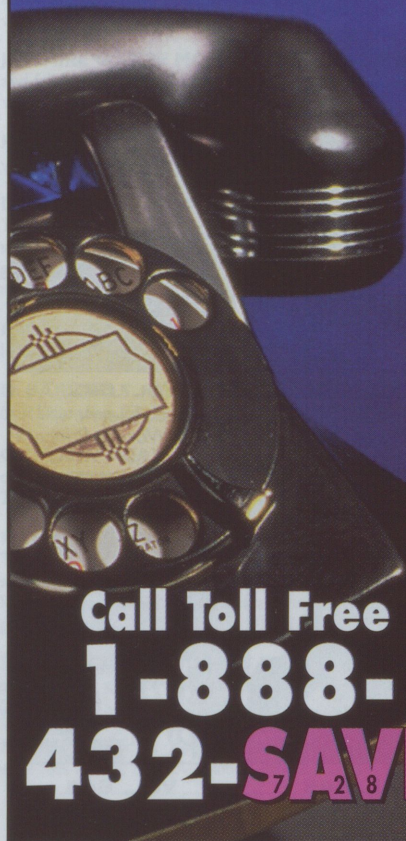
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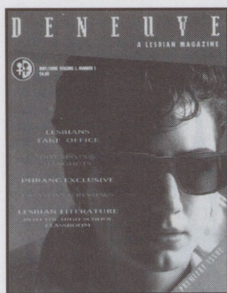


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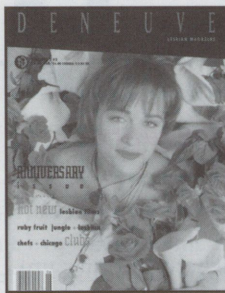
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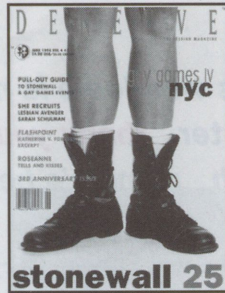
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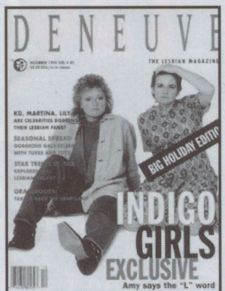
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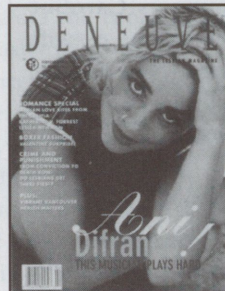
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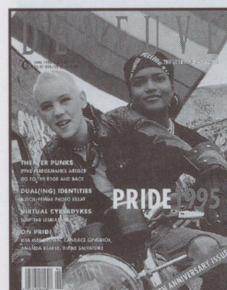
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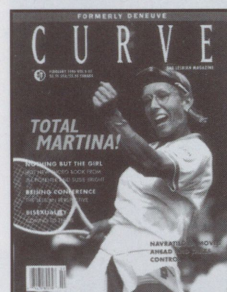
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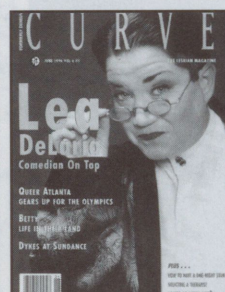
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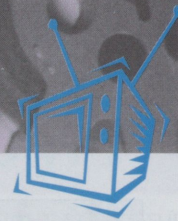
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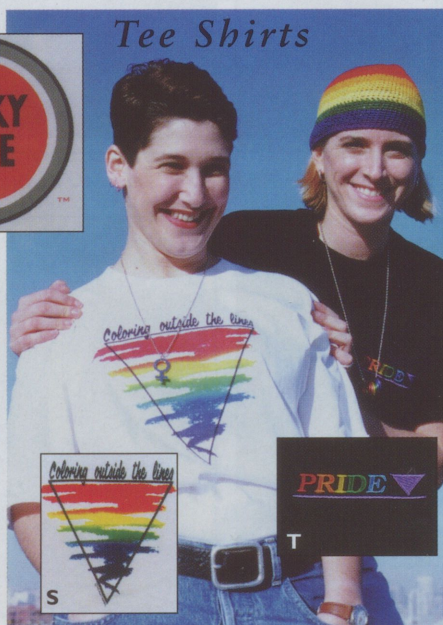
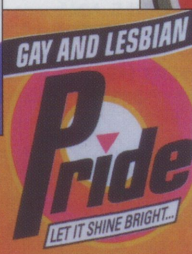
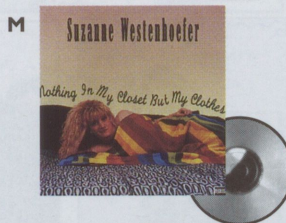
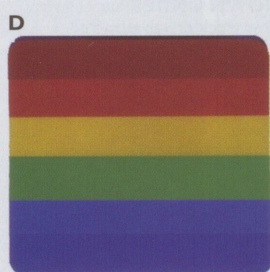
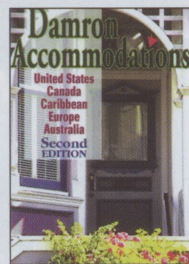
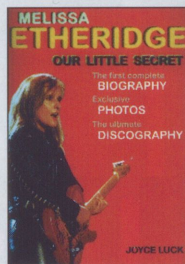
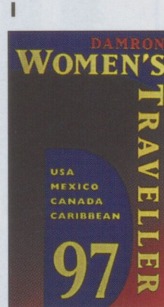
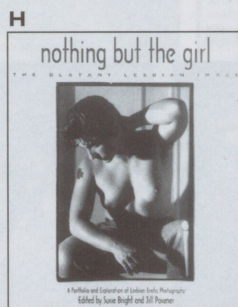
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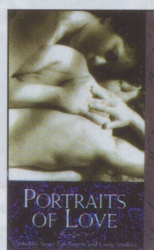
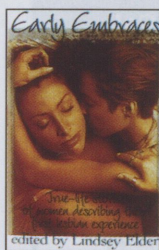
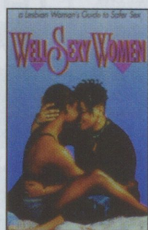
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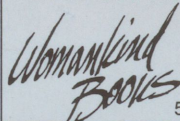
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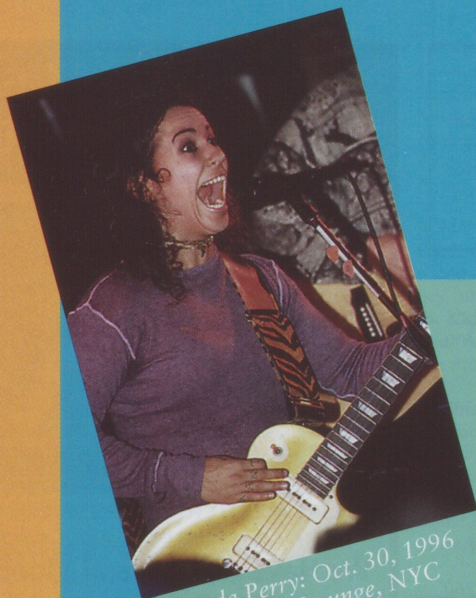
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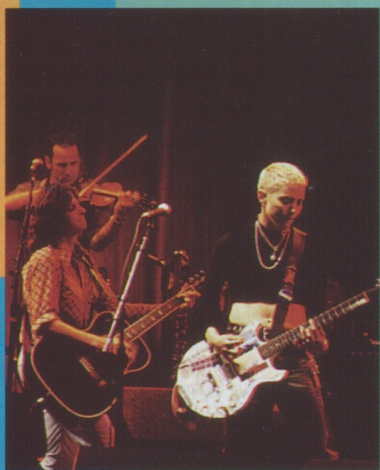
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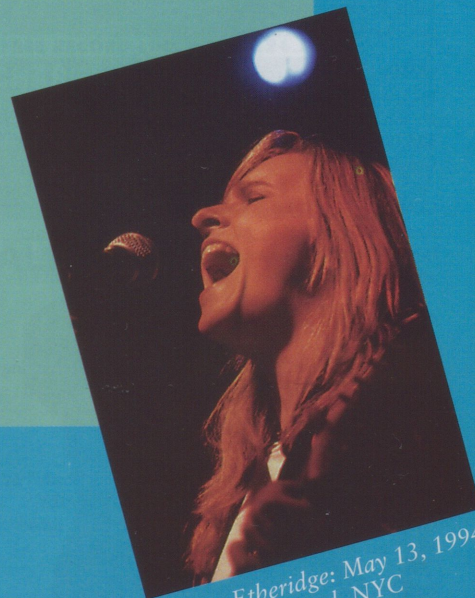
Jewel: Dec. 5, 1996
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k.d. lang: Aug. 29, 1996
Jones Beach, NYC



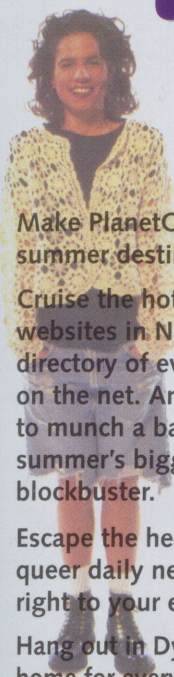
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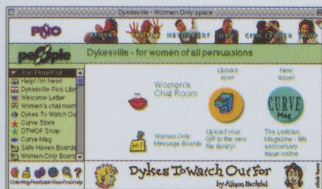


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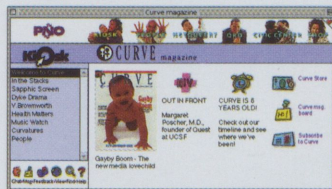
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