

GIRL

winter 95

issue 3

AS SEEN ON TV!

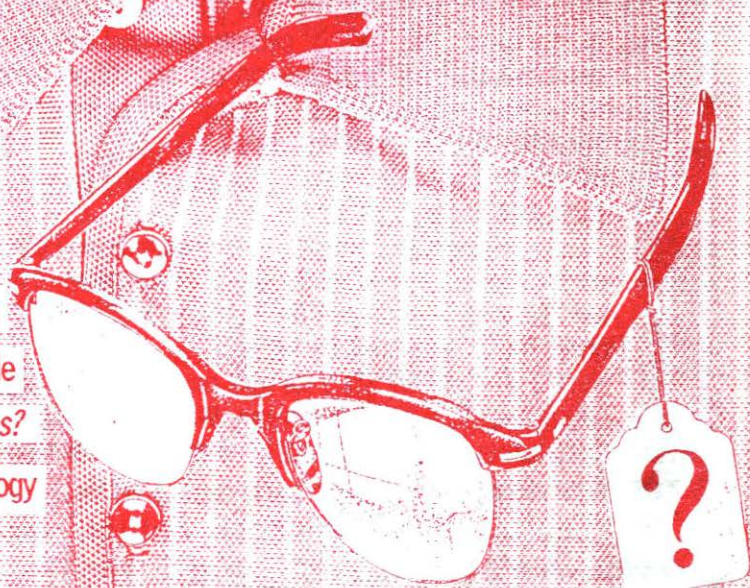
I Lost My Soul To Postmodernism

The Truth About Night People

Could Riot Grrrl Ever Beat the Press?

Cyberscared: Justifying Fear Of Technology

Outing Bisexual History



C U P S I Z E

Fear Of Strolling Guitarists

ROCK Music vitapup!

BICON Winner!

Mad Libs

and a whole ton more!

LETTER FROM THE CREATRIX

Welcome to CUPSIZE three. Get comfortable, cuz we assure you, it's a captivating read. Number three is a sure contender for a gold medal in the upcoming zine Olympics. (the ones we're planning to hold.) Long-time readers will notice that CUPSIZE has grown in size, in style, and of course, in ego. You'll also notice that Alexandra is now signing by her real name, Sasha, no more name changes after this one, we promise. That is, unless Emelye decides to reveal her true identity. We got bolder in this issue, taking on thorny topics like fear of cyberspace and riot grrrl and the media. We can't wait for feedback on the questions we've raised.

CUPSIZE number two ushered out a great NYC summer at our late August release party in the East Village. **Break to Sasha:** Another great courtesy scene affair, candy and wine was enjoyed by all.

Break to Emelye: Sasha won many compliments from partygoers for her Mrs. Roper-inspired gown. Thanks to all those who bought or swapped for number two, and extra special thanks go to those who sent us letters.

Here's a new CUPSIZE for the new year, the half decade countdown to a new millenium. We have an interplanetary zine distribution deal in the works with NASA for the year 2000.

For this issue, we each tore out a little piece of our hearts. Our hearts are growing back, but the pieces are yours to keep. Don't just skim #3, love it, and it will love you too.

This issue was a lot of work. We sometimes wonder why we're doing it, but the bottom line is this, we are young and thinking and we want to write. And we like cutting out pictures of little bras.

CUPSIZE

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after that, mail to:

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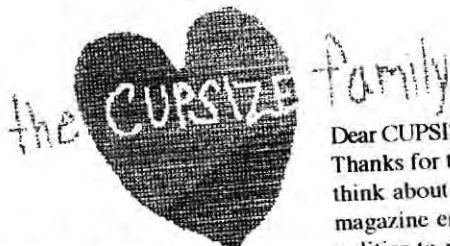
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Emelye
Sasha





Dear Emelye and Alexandra,
A few bits in CUPSIZE that I enjoyed: the squatter interview with the commentary following--the temptation to dislike someone who fits the slacker stereotype is so strong--almost as self-preservation against the media and my own slacker-like instincts. Thank you for bringing this to light, and for reminding me not to displace my frustrations on innocent people! Putting the Snapple/Fruitopia debate on the table was weird because I had actually been thinking about it since Fruitopia came to my school. My main problem with the article was how you characterized Fruitopia as an underdog against a sea of Snapple, when it took Snapple, a small company, years to get where they are, while Fruitopia just appeared on the scene immediately. In a time when big business is shutting down the locally-owned businesses and replacing them with mega-stores, I want to support the real underdog--small business, before we're all working for Kmart. I don't know about the city, but out here in suburbia, our downtown areas are dying because of the mega-stores. When the corporations eventually put everyone out of business, our world will be homogenous, bland, boring!
Yours Truly,
Andrea

Dear CUPSIZE,
Thanks for the new CUPSIZE. Lots to think about--it's great that your magazine encompasses so much, from politics to rock to gender issues to the Snapple/Fruitopia hegemony. Personally, given the choice between the two, I'll reach for a Snapple, only because I find Minute Maid/Coke's campaign so repellent and omnipresent. It's such a last-ditch effort at lifestyle marketing--like we're supposed to "get" the kaleidoscope camera effects and postmodern non-sequiturs, congratulate ourselves for being iconoclastic enough to get it, and go buy a Fruitopia to celebrate. But it doesn't work when these ads are EVERYWHERE, from to TV to the side panels of buses. It's like the Stone Temple Pilots being allowed to gather "alternative" credentials while being inescapable. Do Mad Planets have any tapes or records out yet?
Best, Mike

Dear CUPSIZE:
I was up at GO! compact Disk for a Lois Maffeo in store appearance this Saturday and took a glance through the zine section...zines are my latest, um, obsession. Anyway, I must say that CUPSIZE is quite the entertaining read full of many valuable insights, facts and the truth regarding the oppression of Snapple! What is your considered opinion of Clearly Canadian? Although it's not a fruit juice, per se, I can't help but wonder as to your thoughts on the subject. Do you get a sense that momentum is building behind Bi issues? Do you think that you'll be able to accomplish your goals through established Gay organizations or do you think you'll have to do this on your own?
Best, Stephen

Dearest Alexasha and Emelye,
Your piece on squatters and its accompanying "reaction" were just wonderful--you asked all the questions I'd been asking in my head for years and articulates *so much* of the confusion I've felt since I was 15 about what it means to be a "punk." Can I marry you both? If not, I'd love to receive the next issue.
Thanks--Carrie

My lovely darlings at Cupsize,
Thank you for Cupsize #2. Cupsize delights me with its brilliance, dorkiness, even balance of cynicism, magic and apology...it's impossible possibility. I am particularly thrilled by your coherent and complete thinking through of the easily mundaned, overlooked, taken-for-granted.
A bit on intellectual history: Thank you for "Uncelebrated Women." Emelye writes, "the novel was art before it was politics for me." yes! yes! and yes! without apology, thank you. My professor recently pointed out that our class was almost exclusively reading American Women writers. Although I understand the significance of "a heritage for women to look to and embrace" (like a heritage for lesbians, for queers, for african-americans, asian-americans, and more and more) it is important to demand Fornes, Wharton, Woolf, and Boulanger in a heritage for everyone, as a part of a never complete but ever expanding "Intellectual History."
Your fan and "friend,"
Ereck Jarvis



Cupsize can be found at SEP HEAR (7th St. Bklyn. 1st and 2nd) and at various downtown record/magazine shops. If you would like to sell or distribute, drop us a line.

Calling All
GIRLS

ed. Stephen is CUPSIZE's new beverage correspondent. Look for his fresh take on beverage satisfaction in this issue.



Courtesy Scene: Style, Class, and Kindness get notice in CUPSIZE




Do a
kindness
for a
friend...

I actually had three humanity-affirming encounters over the past few months, but this first one takes the spotlight. It goes out to the woman who lent me \$ for a cup of coffee in the union courtyard in October. I was sitting with my friend Annemarie and asked her if I could borrow a dollar for coffee. She had no \$ so I was moaning how I couldn't believe I couldn't even have my one cup of coffee. What was my life coming to? Then this voice spoke these words, "I will give you a dollar. Here." Was I hallucinating? I turned to my left and a woman, a complete stranger, at the table next to us was holding a dollar bill in her hand, extending it to me. She said "I understand. I am a coffee drinker." I offered her my firstborn in my melodramatic gratitude. She said I should just pass on the favor to the next caffeine addict in need. I was floored. How Cool!!!!

Runner-up: Disaster night on Long Island Railroad- I race to catch the train to NYC. The train guy asks me for the money for a ticket, and I cannot find my wallet- this does not happen to me! Then a man two seats back said, "if she can't find her wallet. I'll buy her a ticket." Oh my!

People are good! It turns out I was just panicking and actually had my wallet and finally found it and paid for my own ticket, but gosh that was so nice to offer, sir!

#2- This is directly CUPSIZE related. I was at the mail boxes etc. store copying cupsize (that place rules- high-quality machines that sort multiple page copies-small, with staplers and tape and even candy!) and I bought one of those copy cards cause I was making a zillion copies so I needed a deal. but, my math was wrong and I overcopied and I did not have the cash to cover- mr mailman said no problem, just bring me the \$ when you've got it!

I guess all the incidents point to a certain monetary delinquency on my part- yes, I have been caught in some binds lately, but I'm not usually that bad, I mean it! 

Leg hair is meant to be cut. Sure, shaving is an interesting excursion into the realm of feminine convention, but as a daily practice, shaving is not my bag. Cuts, scrapes, wasted time, wasted water, and I feel so silly with naked legs. For the razor's added bonus of exfoliation and the novelty of the act, I will shave my legs about once or twice a year for pure fun. But what I really enjoy doing is taking a pair of scissors to my leg hair.

Leg Hair



I cut my leg hair as a calming pastime. As I delicately shear my hair, the snip relieves anxiety and puts me back in touch with my skin. Leg hair cutting is a great study break. I don't even have to leave my room or find anyone to talk to. I adore cutting hair, and the snip of leg hair is a practice uncompromised by fear of the consequences. No one will be examining my leg hair for an even cut. And I rarely exhaust the follicles, it seems that there is always another patch that could use some grooming. S

★ *BICON WINNER!* ★

In its premiere issue, *CUPSIZE* sponsored a contest. We asked members of the *CUPSIZE* family to submit an icon that would signify bisexuality—a BICON, if you will. The flood of entries we received put us hard at the task of selecting a winner. Well, you're all winners, and *CUPSIZE* would daresay that there is room for more than one BICON out there. Soon other zines will be sponsoring BICON contests, don't worry. But for now, the official *CUPSIZE* BICON is brought to you by Craig and Sharon of God Is MY Co-Pilot. A Bicycle! Look below! Copy many times! Make stickers! Make stamps!

"If people who think they are bisexual cannot restrain their urges, they deserve society's condemnation, not its 'support.'"

SWITCH

HITTERS

UNITE



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I AM REALLY INTERESTED IN SEEING SOME
BI FEMINIST ACTIVISM HAPPEN IN NY. YOU
MAY REMEMBER READING ABOUT BARF
(BISEXUAL AND RADICAL FEMINIST) IN THE
LAST ISSUE OF CUPSIZE. IF ANYONE WOULD
BE INTO GETTING A CHAPTER OR A SIMILAR
ACTION GROUP TOGETHER IN NY, PLEASE
WRITE ME AT CUPSIZE'S ADDRESS. WE CAN
DO ALL KINDS OF EXCELLENT STUFF. \$

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**WE'VE GOT AN ICE-PICK AND WE
KNOW HOW TO USE IT!**

FOR REAL: you can make stickers real cheap and easy. Just buy some sticker paper and photocopy a BICON on there. Cut them up and voilà. There are other ways, too, I'm sure. Write us with your preferred method of making stickers.

Right now, in the ninety-fifth year of the twentieth century, there is only one word to describe the affectational potential of being emotionally and/or sexually attracted to members of either sex. Only one word that splits into two--Bisexual. At this point in history, it's high time that we find a way to describe non-monosexual consciousness in language that doesn't immediately sexualize and dichotomize "bi" existence. HOMOsexuals have a variety of adjectives to choose from: lesbian and gay topping the list as the most common in parlance. The time is now--CUPSIZE is sponsoring a new contest. Think up a word that will describe bisexuality on its own terms, not as an in-between split of subjectivity, and not as an existence rooted solely in sex. We'll print the winners' suggestions and you might even win a prize.

NEW CONTEST  

BYKE
(bi dyke)
Works especially
well with the
BICON winner!



Guitarists, the Fourth Wall and My Own Groove

My most profound fear is being serenaded by a guitarist. This fear extends to any type of in-your-face performance that tries to purposefully break down the "fourth-wall." I don't mean a pleasant entertainer in a Spanish restaurant, although that would be pretty bad, but a rock or blues guitarist who leaves the stage and picks people in the audience and looks goofily and intensely at you, and comes really close to your face and puts the guitar near you and expects you to dance and make faces back and bite your lower lip and groove with them. No thank you. I'll take my space in the back and dictate my own personal groove. To understand my fear, imagine having to interact with **G.E. Smith** from the Saturday Night Live band. He is the creepiest person ever. **If we each have our own personal hell, then he's Satan.** I get so nervous whenever it looks like a performer is gonna leave the stage and come at me. One time I was at a trendy experimental theater performance where there were no real seats and the audience just sat around the set. The characters would come up to you and say things in weird accents and then run away. **I was actually hit by a rock.** This is not fun. It is stressful. I go to a performance to relax and watch, not to be confronted by creepy people in stage make-up.

But back to the guitarist, my primary fear. There are people who want to have those weird moments with guitarists, when they dance together, and nod their heads like they're so groovin'. But there's too many potential awkward moments. Like what if you trip over the chord. Or how about when he strolls away and you have the pressure to still maintain you're groove for a few seconds even though he's gone cause people are still looking at you. And lets face it. Guitarists make weird faces when they play that make me uncomfortable. It is not cool to be the person a guitarist plays to. Its a cultural mistake that this is a coveted interaction. Say no. **E**



Back Issues: \$1 and 2 stamps for each issue, please.

CS#1: subway anxiety, mike kaniecki interview, the truth about our cupsizes, the color brown, and much more.

CS#2: squatter interview, women writers, stonewall reflections, the legendary snapple/ fruitopia debate, long island coffee scene.

In every CS: music and laughs.



Wisdom Teeth Holes and You

I've got a story to tell--the information is getting lost in the dental shuffle and I won't be silenced by bad breath embarrassment. If you're planning to get your wisdom teeth removed any time soon, read on. If you already have, perhaps you'll recognize parts of my story:

Months before my scheduled wisdom teeth extraction, I read several newspaper articles about unnecessary wisdom teeth pulling. Apparently, it's a rampant monster, particularly in Rhode Island. And ever since I took a class in medical anthropology, I have been unbearably distrustful of doctors. Western capitalist models of health care don't make for warm bedside manner or recognition of the personhood that usually accompanies embodiment. Read: we treat bodies and diseases, not people. No, I exist outside of my teeth and my Delta Dental number, please don't forget that there is a person called Sasha who is sitting on your reclining chair staring at the posters of clouds on the walls of this cubicle. These are my (probably not paranoid) thoughts.

I canceled my appointment three times before I made it to the clinic.

When I finally made it past the reception desk, I found that my dentist was, after all my stalling, a very nice man. Entirely respectful, he thoroughly explained the reasons for the procedure. Pleasantly surprised, but still on guard, I let him exist as a hopeful exception to the rule.

BUT I do have one complaint. I had no idea that after my wisdom teeth were extracted, I would be left with gaping craters in my mouth. NOONE TOLD ME. How was I to know? Noone ever talks about these ensuing cavities. There were some mighty roots anchoring my wisdom teeth, so I suppose it's only natural that these cavities would take a while to recreate themselves as gum. But most of us don't really contemplate these things, and we deserve to be told up front from people who know the terrain.

A day after the extraction, my friend Ami told me that I better rinse really frequently, because if a morsel of food got stuck in the hole, and I didn't rinse it out in time, the gum would grow around it and I would be stuck with rotting food in my mouth. As it decayed, a certain rank taste of spoil would infiltrate my mouth. That was COMFORTING. Laughing as if that would never really happen to me, I silently imagined that a chunk of cheese was sitting in there as I spoke.

A few weeks later, I could sense that it was happening. These slivers of food, they were there, I knew it, I could taste it. I tried rinsing, and that did nothing. Swishing water around my mouth was a laughably ineffectual tactic. I resorted to a regimen of continual TicTac consumption which would only mitigate the sour taste for the duration of a single tic or tac. I was brushing my teeth about seven times a day.

This isn't exactly an easy conversation topic. I didn't mention it to my friends for a few days, because I figured that noone would really be interested in discussing my bad breath.

It got so bad that I had to seek help. I unloaded my woes to Gretchen and Jill. They understood, they were sympathetic, I didn't feel un-hygienic shame in the least. And Gretchen knew exactly the solution. HER dentist had primed her for these problems. They gave her a syringe to flush out the cavities, and she gave hers to me! In a flash, a flush of the syringe shot the offending particles out of my holes. It was magic. I could go through the day again without a ten pack of TicTacs. I could get excited about kissing people again. It was really a new beginning.

So while I was happy with most of my dentist's bedside manner, I'm shocked that this crucial issue was not addressed in my follow up visit. If this is happening to you, you are not alone. Post-wisdom teeth bad breath is entirely normal, and there is hope. Go find yourself a plastic syringe and start flushing.



You, too, may have it and at first not even suspect it!



Dealing with any press and/or media can be very difficult--often in their quest to be objective, opposite ends of the spectrum are presented by never the gray area in between--like "All Riot Grrrls are man-haters," and "no, Riot Grrrls are not man-haters." How about the truth, like some Riot Grrrls hate men, some don't?--Kirsten Frickle

- **Directions: pls read these three quotes and then proceed to text. Don't sit too close to the tv.**
-
-
-
-

the mainstream press tends to distort things and get everything all out of proportion...this is because in mainstream media everything operates with signifiers, stereotypes and summaries. that's how a story is built to get the audience's attention. usually the story is summarized and often sensationalized and also the media likes to use spokespeople or symbols and rg doesn't lend itself well to that.-- Jordana Robinson

the reporters hardly ever seem to understand a few basic things about riot grrrl. like we don't have a cohesive philosophy or dogma. it seems like even though we try to tell them they just can't seem to grasp the idea of a movement of individuals working together without some kind of map or chart or set of rules. if reporters don't understand that, they understand even less that we are actively and continually trying to eliminate hierarchy when possible. it seems like you could look a reporter in the face and say a thousand times, 'there are no leaders,' and they'll still write 'so-and-so, the president of riot grrrl.'-fantastic fanzine

I asked myself these questions not so long ago: By hiding in the underground, did Riot Grrrl keep itself from becoming a feminist identity for a wider group of girls in America? By persistently avoiding interaction with the mainstream press, did Riot Grrrl preclude the possibility of having a broad cultural impact?

These questions evolved into an end-of-the-semester paper. The research that I did directed me to the answer that as a culturally specific movement, any representation of Riot Grrrl to a mass audience loses a lot more in translation than it gains in the numbers of adherents it might pick up. RG is such an unwieldy subject to write about because it is so rooted in punk and feminist theory (though not necessarily framed in academic language) and most down-home Americans I know are fluent in neither punk nor feminism.

According to the comments from these grrrls, the space limitations and structural dictates of journalistic writing effectively rule out any chance of really communicating what Riot Grrrl is about. They question whether it would be possible for the mainstream media to ever accurately represent Riot Grrrl.

The word limit of a typical feature would prevent the journalist from presenting nuanced understanding of RG. RG's philosophies and modes of operation require pages of explanation. Ten pages of the New York Times Magazine might do it, a two-page feature in TIME wouldn't. The journalistic tendency to quote opposite poles of the spectrum would also prevent a more "authentic" look at RG (as in some RG's hate men, some don't). Since RG refuses a certain set of goals, there is no easy wrap-up of its purpose without distorting RG's intent. And because RG refuses a hierarchical structure, it doesn't make a very easy interview for a regular Jane or Joe reporter. There's no club president so, YOU'LL HAVE TO INTERVIEW EVERYONE. The endgame is that RG encourages grrrls to tell their own stories, write their own zines, make their own music and reject corporate media--the mainstream media would have little interest in selling the movement so well that they would lose subscribers and viewers. For these reasons, it seems that the media would never really do more than titillate the reader and present incomplete assessments of the RG movement.



RIOT

GRRRL

It seems fairly obvious that the mainstream media would exploit a story like RG--but what I wondered was whether RG could manipulate the media to its advantage, like the Lesbian Avengers and ACT-UP have done. Because of the unique (anti)philosophy and structure of the RG "movement," there seem to be limited possibilities for engaging in outreach through the channels of mainstream media. RG is simply too anarchic, and because it positions itself in opposition to "Older feminists, seventies, NOW, MS," as one respondent put it, RG is not in a position to learn tactical tricks of media work from more experienced activists.

The result of all the past media hoopla is the birth of a population of hipsters who think that they know something about RG and feel free to make their various judgments, without ever really understanding anything about it. Before I did my research, I would estimate that I had only generalized, caricatured impressions of Riot Grrrl. As I got more and more involved with the project, it became increasingly clear that I had come into the paper with little real understanding of what RG is (or was) about. For example, in my first questionnaire, I spelled grrrl with two r's. That was an immediate tip-off of my outsider status. That might seem initially surprising in light of the fact that I basically fit the RG demographic: a young feminist who goes to RG and RGish events. The "riot grrrl" label has even been applied to this zine. One would expect that I would have some familiarity with RG tenets and lingo. But like almost everyone else who thinks that she or he can make a judgment about RG, everything I ever heard about it was filtered through the lens of the (mostly) mainstream media. THE FACT IS THAT MOST OF US REALLY NEVER KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT IT. Us being those who weren't involved first-hand or didn't have direct access to RG culture. Most people took their SPIN soundbite accounts of Riot Grrrl and ran with them, feeling free to apply the label to any feminist or female rocker. The research I did convinced me that while "the media" is structurally incapable of delivering anything approximate to the truth about RG, they have succeeded in convincing the general gen x public that they know something about it.

It seems unfortunate that one wouldn't really "get" Riot Grrrl without having had first-hand contact with a group, a Riot Grrrl or a RG zine, because there are severe limitations on the people who will be reached through personal, underground means. There are so many girls out there who would benefit from the knowledge that something other than Seventeen and Sassy (RIP) exist. Is Riot Grrrl dead? I don't think you can answer that question, given that RG is so decentralized and has emerged in different communities since groups in DC, NY and Olympia have ceased to exist. I have pretty much concluded that RG isn't equipped to "recruit" through most media with large audiences, but I don't think that because RG is incapable of that kind of work, that all forms of grrrl activism are similarly disabled.

Sarah Dyer's experience is a taste of success. She publishes Action Girl, a newsletter that lists girl zines and resources. Sarah has been contacted by Fox TV, Sassy, Seventeen and has carefully considered the pros and cons of working with the mainstream media. She wrote:

There's only so much preaching to the converted you can do before it gets pointless--we've got to find ways to bring information to people who haven't been exposed to it at all...(in response to 'can you work with the mainstream media without losing your integrity?' Yes. I think so. Consider each decision very carefully. What is my advantage? What is the person's/media's advantage? Who will benefit most? I think it depends on exactly what's being promoted. A resource, a philosophy, a message--those should be mainstream. A zine, a band, an individual, no.

continued on pg 28



EMERGENCY! It's great.

This is no joke. I can't keep this inside me any longer. General Hospital is some of the best television on these days. I have urges to write to ABC to praise them and also so they know about it so it doesn't change suddenly and get really cheesy. Even when The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd was cancelled, lethargy won out and I didn't do a darn thing about it that a normal citizen could have. I just watched it in syndication on Lifetime until even that was taken from me.

General Hospital transcends the soap opera genre. Even though it takes part in cheesy plot conventions, like staging rock concerts in foreign countries and having the whole town fly down together in one plane, they do so many cool things in the midst of this stuff that it makes it all tolerable and most of it a delight.

The show is exceptional because it has a sense of its own history. It is true to its past and recognizes previous plots, relations, and important developments so that it doesn't seem like the characters are floating around in a meaningless sea of spontaneous murders and pregnancies and affairs.

The characters kid around slyly and exchange private jokes that we are in on. Such attention to detail is a risky business in the soap opera world; not to pander to the lowest comprehension level. They take the risk that innuendos and subtleties may go unnoticed. Well, I noticed!!!

It reminds me of the first soap opera I ever loved, *The Edge of Night*...

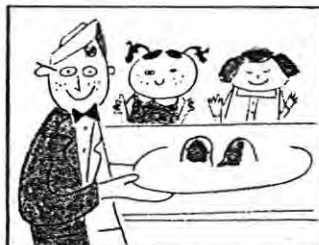
Also, they stay attentive to not-so-recent but totally important events in characters' lives. Bobby and Tony have been mourning B.J.'s death and noting its effect through many aspects of their lives for months!

The writing is amazing. Real dialogue with pauses and jokes.

Recent topics: breast cancer, aids benefit, single mothers, marriage counseling.

I don't know what happened to make the show what it is, but it has earned my tv viewing luv. E

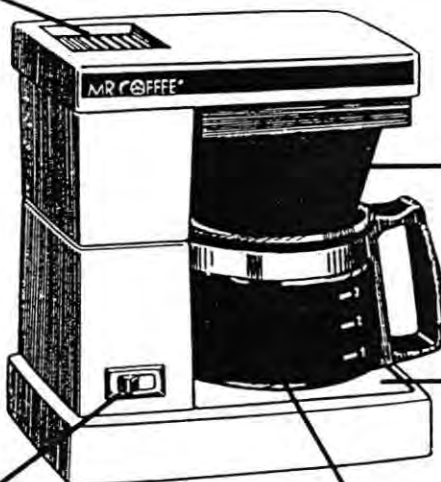
Diagram of Parts



Bananas — the fruit with a split personality! (Sent in by Dianne Wooley, Age 11, 1605 Utah St., Albuquerque, New Mexico)

A split isn't a split without bananas, Dianne. Bananas make all kinds of ice cream taste better... make sauces taste simply super. And how about this for a new split idea: splitabana, top with frosty fruit sherbets, then pile on lots of fresh berries.

Water Intake



Coffee Brewing Funnel

Warmer Plate

On/Off Indicator Light

Glass Decanter

the couch is taken



preserving my own
tv territory

Watching television in public places makes my skin crawl. I think one of the reasons that I fetishize going home for break is so that I can sit in my basement family room, alone in the dark, with the remote in my hand, in complete control of the television. I don't really enjoy watching TV that much at all—it's just the comfort, a womblike return to solitary tv-watching that beckons me back to Cranston.

The same has been said about the cinema—that the view from the cushiony seat is an intensely private experience that resembles an entry into a womb world of wonder. ALONE you sit, experiencing the reality of the projected film in a dark all your own. I love to go to movies alone. There is little pressure to engage in ongoing commentary with fellow moviegoers at the cinema. Social prohibition: that would be RUDE, RUDE, RUDE. As soon as I enter the darkened space I can count on undivided singularity.

The rules for television spaces are entirely different. Even when I sit in a the dorm tv room alone, the edges of my view are ragged—anyone, who knows who, could walk in and disrupt my seat of spectatorship. Maybe he'll demand that we watch Monday Night Football. Or maybe she'll tell me how much she likes Ricki Lake. No, I will want to tell them, you are not allowed to enter into this realm. These sounds, faces, commercial jingles, storylines belong to me. I will share them if I trust you. Please do not disturb.

Last semester, I made a decision. If I were to watch *Melrose Place* straight, I would have to do it alone or in the company of a few intimates. One night last fall, I remember being lodged between two people who were having the most disturbingly insipid conversation about Heather Locklear and that nice-girl character. Try to imagine watching MP amidst a group of thirty college students who are tuned in for their wednesday nite fox fix. I really could not deal. It's not that I'm elitist in a high/low cult way—it's just that I can't stand to be in the company of a whole bunch of people who don't challenge the most obvious sexist plays employed by those shows. And I don't want to have to verbally notice them FOR THEM, cuz they're so blatant I would feel silly. Instead, I wind up feeling really alienated and depressed by the scarcity of consciousness in my tv room peers. Maybe they are having the same thoughts as me. No, just listen, they're saying that Kelly looks fat.

So I hardly ever, let's just say never, watch TV during the semester, but when I go home I get a chance to tap back into the American collective unconscious. Since my mom moved out of our old house into a smaller one (no bedroom for me), I have been sleeping on the fold-out couch in front of the family tv. Migrating back to my hometown, where I spent endless childhood hours watching sitcom reruns, nestling in my rediscovered womb: all night long, me, the remote and the TV. §



CYBERSCARED



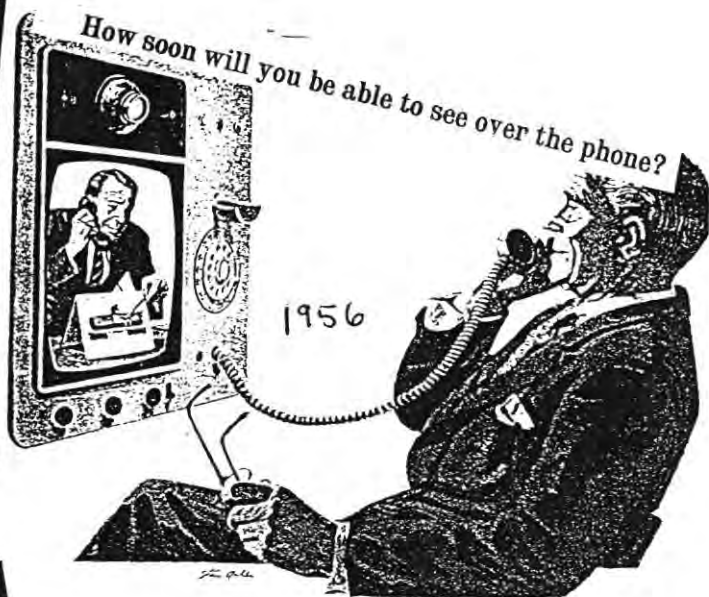
It is the end of the twentieth century. Those in their early twenties should feel blessed (by whatever deity or lack thereof they wish) to experience the approaching millennium in the prime of youth. In an abstract, romantic sense, it truly is wonderful event. But there are down sides. Right now, AT&T bombards America with advertisements for products we are not even sure exist yet. They blatantly admit that we do not need these products now, and only promise, as their slogan says, "YOU WILL." Will I? With the failure of any one religion or system of thought to prevail universally, humankind is instinctively constructing a secular medium that all can ascribe to: cyberspace [the on-line world, a word used by William Gibson in his novel, *Neuromancer*] In the global world of multi-culturalism, relativism, and deconstruction, there can be no right and wrong, no great and bad or boring, just an accumulative mass of information being misidentified as KNOWLEDGE, submitted piece by piece to databases through computers. Through the development of cyberspace, we are building the collective mind. Humankind's inclination to progress is not at its most fundamental about greed, accumulation, or human accomplishment, but a race for the tangible institution of collective being, an accessibility of information so complete that it provides instant omniscience to the participant in it.

In the haze of History that accompanies a liberal arts education, students are told a story of progress, change, and evolution. At our times of greatest nihilism, perhaps after having read Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* and related to the self-conscious paranoia of its protagonist, we exasperated, ask, "haven't I heard this story before?"; the story of the sense of a generation encroaching on doom. Has Generation X a right to fear the technological age that awaits it? Is their seeming laziness a rightful conservative reaction to the whirlwind of their first twenty years? In the span of their mean twenty years, the 8-track tape player has stayed around just long enough to be mocked, the cassette has been overrun by the compact disc, cd challenged by DAT systems and all along vinyl has been loved the most. The generation approaching the millennium should distinguish their precise, distinct, and unique fears. In effect, learn to build an argument against progress- that not everything can be entered into cyberspace as data and retain its "essence."

In a recent AT&T commercial, a child sits in front of a computer terminal. She is smiling. On the screen is graphics of a book. An encyclopedia. In this case, not only is the information of the book entered as data, but the form itself. With a click of the mouse, the pages turn before her. Graphically produced images of pages turning. Setting aside obvious environmental advantages of on-line encyclopedias (less paper, less tree slaughtered, more forests) we must examine the urge to make this transition. Or how it is being sold to America. There is a seemingly instinctive drive to immediately turn all of life into an image of itself. Weddings are staged so that they look more real in the videotape than when they are actually taking place. This is more than a universal increase in vanity; we are building things to produce images, to represent the real objects and happenings of our lives. In cyberspace, rather than being the mere spectators of images, like in the local movie house, we are participants-creating the images, changing them, shaping them, interacting with them. Are we moving swiftly to a time when real actions and events and objects will be kept around merely for their anachronistic appeal? If this is the instinctive drive of humankind, is it ultimately a doomed process-can we distinguish when cyberspace has enveloped too many aspects of our physical and sensible world? If a series of generations only viewed books on cyberspace, would the graphics eventually just represent random blocks of color, no longer attached to the original object?



ALIENATED AND PROUD



The vastness of the super highway scares me and does not intrigue me. I e-mail and that's it. I don't even use the PHONE function of most e-mail lines. It just all seems so ephemeral to me. When people try to teach me the rules to use MUDS and other databases, my brain shuts off, because I know the rules will probly be revised tomorrow or the whole "world" may be deleted in an hour. If a piece of information has a life-span of a day, I may just as well by-pass it. Why do I want to go cruising through an arena of graphically produced sensations, "getting to know" cyberspace when I haven't even been to Europe yet for real.

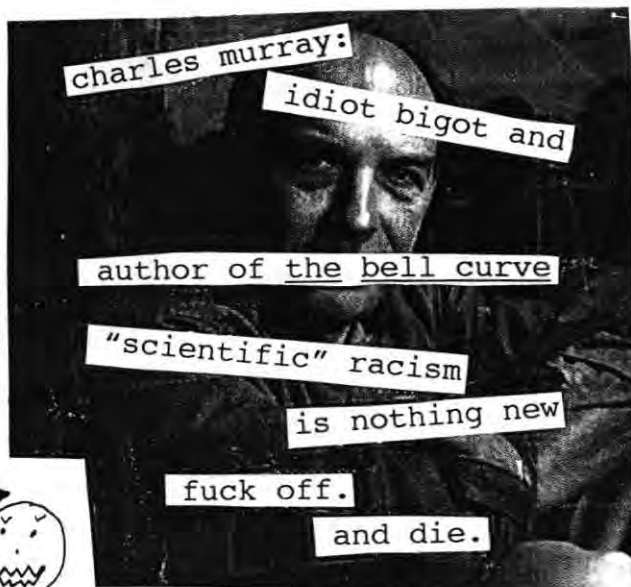
I am scared that the job market will insist that I exist in cyberspace. My humanity screams out against it. Am I a conservative, a reactionary? If I were around when the printing press was developed, would I have protested against that too, saying handwriting dictates nature's natural text reproduction rate and we shouldn't tamper with it. Its all changing so fast that I just can't get the energy to learn today what may be obsolete tomorrow. I don't want to spend my free-time existing bodiless in cyberspace. I could spend my whole life walking the streets of New York and not know everything. I'd rather start there than at a computer prompt.

I admit that I like limits. I like books with a beginning and an end. Is being able to re-mix Todd Rudgren's new album on cdrom really progress? Our forthcoming technological age overcomes boundaries like time, place, location. By global communication linkage, we can all be present all places at once. All information is accessible at all times. Time is not lost in tracking down books in libraries. Projected into a perfect future, all history and human discourse would be down-loadable. The role of chance and limitation in shaping human life becomes less, or becomes limited to the function of technology. I had a hard enough time carving an existence for myself in my highschool, learning the quirks of my peers, where I fit in. The prospect of existing with meaning in the infinite world of cyberspace makes me yearn for the simple days when my commodore 64 was hot news on the block, but my neighbor's new BMX ruled overall. E

I love wearing fancy, multi-color, professional with reflective tape running shoes for everyday existence. They are shoes for running, NOT SNEAKERS. When I ask my mom where they are, I say "Mom, have you seen my running shoes," not "Have you seen my sneakers." I wear asics gels. They massage my feet even when I am sitting completely still. The foam and rubber just strapped to my foot energize the whole appendage. This is not a fashion thing. My asics are white and purple and don't match anything. When people see them, though, the shoes are excused from any fashion responsibility because people can sense immediately: this is a serious shoe. Whenever I come to a flight of stairs and have them on, I am grateful and empowered. They are a life support.

RAVE 

RANT 



Sometimes I don't realize how twenty-something I am. (twenty-one to be less vague, barely twenty-something...) Moments before writing this what I hoped would be a diatribe against annoying hippie professors. I skim across the one-sentence plot encapsulation of Douglas Coupland's Shampoo Planet (ugh, generation x rears its ugly head, again): "SP is the rich and dazzling point where two worlds collide—those of 1960's parents and their 1990's offspring." A tidy summary. And I am living it. In school.

I have experienced this phenomena under the guise of wisdom, education, and higher learning... ANNOYING HIPPIE PROFESSORS. I am frustrated by being in the presence of hippie professors who lived in the sixties and quote Mailer left and right and make everything an interpretation of Vietnam and hate America and squash any youthful enthusiasm with their institutionalized bitterness that they have managed to make a career of. Such attitudes are especially rampant in English departments, where hating America and reinterpreting Emerson texts as elitist is seen as a legitimate "angle" and "progressive reading." I have had two professors in particular who have a sneaky personal agenda in the classroom. Apparently, they really identified with their youth movements and having lived it, are now professional experts in it. These are smart people who are still enraged about 30-yr old gripes. I know the twenties are formative years and we will all wear the scars of our particular generational titles in some way all thru life, but I hope there's more to my future than telling my kids about Kurt Cobain's suicide and insisting that they adopt the cliched pessimism that the media said I was feeling when I was twenty.

One fun thing to do to confirm suspicions about professors is to find out what books they have out of the school library. If you have a friend who works at the library it provides endless hours of fun and enlightenment. This prof had out something like 66 books...and they were all JFK conspiracy theory books! I am fond of conspiracy plots as well, and this bit of data just confirmed my suspicions that my English prof was an undying child of the sixties who was quite consciously dodging my questions about that had more to do with writing style than with paranoia.

It's not surprising that professors like this are a prosperous breed. Student response encourages their negligence. They cheer if a professor curses or puts down America or calls a famed writer by their first name.

continued on p. 28



ATTN. FINALIST: that means me!

Whenever I find an envelope from Publisher's Clearing House or American Family and Ed McMahon in my mailbox, I believe the writing behind the clear plastic window. Yes, I may be the next millionaire, in fact, there's a good chance that I will be.

Each time the envelope PREPARED JUST FOR ME arrives, I gleefully search for the stamps that will inaugurate my new millionaire existence. Sometimes it's even a challenge to find the special stamps for each special box. They know what they're doing—sifting out the Americans who don't really plan to be millionaires by hiding the key components of a winning entry. ME- I know that I am one of the chosen ones. I take the time to find the bonus stamp in the middle of the magazine offers. I am one of the breed who are truly committed to sweepstakes entries. I will come out a winner in the end. Not only do I fill out the sweepstakes addressed to me, but my mother forwards me hers and when my brother and sister come of age, I will probably take charge of their sweepstakes applications too.

It's so easy to imagine the Prize Patrol calling from the desk of my dorm. I have wondered about how they will find me in New York, since the sweepstakes entries usually come to my Rhode Island address. I'm sure that they have researchers who confirm details like that. They will wake me on a Monday morning, come upstairs, I will groggily unlock my door in a t-shirt and underwear and as they hand me a three foot check for \$125,000, they will thrust funeral-size bouquets of flowers into my room. Then, I, ummm, begin my new life.

This is the hard part. How will I make ethical choices about my windfall of dough? Can one be rich and not be a total slug? Will I make good use of my diligence and yes, good fortune, or will I succumb to inevitable capitalistic impulses that will transform me into your (and my) worst nightmare?

Last year, I recognized the need for a plan of action. My friend Ami and I tried to chart out the next few years.

I will probably open a bookstore/record store/café for me and my friends to run cooperatively. No one will have to worry about not eating when they graduate (or not having enough money for books or records). I just haven't decided what city would be best. Suggestions are certainly welcome.

I'll pay off all of my college loans, my parents' debts and all of my friends' debts. I'll start some scholarships in Cranston (my hometown). Maybe I'll give a tremendous grant to my high school with the stipulation that I can get rid of all their horrible teachers and hire some good ones. I will make certain that there is an out queer teacher at my high school. Anyone who harasses him or her will be run out of town.

I'll save enough for graduate school and an apartment, and the rest I will give away. But I don't want people to have to go through some formalized application process to get the funds. I just want to give it to them. I have to work this part out.

All of this becomes rather complicated, because it's really hard to keep unslimy if you are so far outside of the realm of paycheck struggle...and it would be really hard to assuage the onslaught of guilt. But heck, I look forward to the day that my first \$125,000 check arrives. Yes, I'll be rich, and that may make me the enemy, but I'll be an entirely benign richie. I'll help you out when you won't expect it and I won't condescend in the least. Somebody has to win, somebody like me, cuz all of us aren't born tenacious sweepstakes entrants. S

PASTE
GOLD SEAL
HERE
FOR THE
TEN
MILLION
DOLLARS!

Janice Hamblin
of Indiana



TEN MILLION DOLLAR
PAYMENTS IN PROGRESS!

You'll see me
in there within
the next ten yrs.



Maybe with my
new connection
to Ed, I can get
the Mad Planets
on Star Search.



the plex 116th.st NYC Oct.29.94

Jonathan Bentley/Slant

Six/GodCo The highlight of this show was a band from Washington who played before slant six but i didn't get their name in time for this writeup. they were six cool/crazy guys with tons of style playing guitar new wave with enough attitude to count but not to annoy. slant six did not impress. lame songs, distracted stage presence and some leering ramones-esque dude side-stage who stole what little show there was. godCo was lively as ever, with only one drummer this show, but lakisha danced onstage and all was right.

desfite!

VITAPUP 7"

Vitapup stop ,start and clank in timely fashion in the trenches of HARD ROCK music. When we put the record on the turnstile, we immediately recognized our favorite songs and started shaking our heads rock clone style. A three-song release...Laxative Cat and My Abortion are CUPSIZE's favorites. Melissa is an incredible drummer--one of the best I have seen live. Vitapup is a really fun nite out--I'd have to say that there is something a lot more substantial to the experience of seeing them live, but I think that's just because they are so raucous IN CONCERT. If you see them play, you might be lucky enough to see Spinner Jones doing his glowlight sideshow and Vitapup's friend Jane performing one of her clever songs. Definitely check them out and look for their record.

ROCK MUSIC

Mary Lou Lord has her own record out on Kill Rock Stars! I used to listen to her play on the plat for ms of the T

Dec 2, 1994. A cool vibe was shared by all the kids in attendance at Long Island's southshore Right Track Inn for a night of four solo sets and then MADPLANETS. Debut performances by four singer/songwriter/guitarists Tricia, Joe, Marc, and Emelye. Christmas lights, dangled off the mikestand as melodies and proper guitar angst filled the room during these expressive sets. The planets played later on and the kids sure did dance.

The show was organized by Joe of Nilla, who played his beautiful acoustic songs. He was thanked a million times and more because the show was such a treat. He is in Portland now and we wish him happiness there and miss him already!!

(the Boston sub way) & sigh when the train finally came. She's got a beautiful voice and an enchanting jangle.



Charles Brown Superstar

They sure know how to work casio warblings into a funky beat. I really, really enjoyed playing CB Superstar during my radio show. Little else could get my schoolday tired bones moving in an energetic groove. They have a 7" and a six-song ep. Give them a listen.



Reeve Little took 3rd place honors with his 13 string Gibson Lap Steel. Here, he plays the lead ride from "Stairway To Heaven." Not Really!



Girls and Guitars

I love my Kay guitar, but I hate guy-run guitar shops, which is most of them. I think the last wave of the girl music onslaught has to be girl-run/owned guitar stores. Right now, guitar shops are as steeped in male egostroking as the weightroom. Most are run by bi-level hair sportin Rush fans, or an updated 90's version wearing fashion vests and worshipping Sound Garden. Or they are "guitar legends" of some sort who have such an attitude when you enter the store that you end up browsing through the paltry sheet music section instead to avoid their bad vibes.

I dream of a girl run guitar shop where I am welcome. Where I can try a guitar and play my chords and not be stared down or patronized. Does anyone know of anyway? Please send me a map and I am there!!!!E



Some say the Mad Planets are the loneliest band in the world, but all agree that they triple-R rrock with PoP passion and pride. Like great trios of the past and present (the police, stray cats, versus, pointer sisters), THE MADPLANETS sing each song like its their last chance to love, sad but sweet and everything in between. Amidst trips to dunkin donuts and mass viewings of MST 3000, Emelye(yes! Cupsize's very own), Erik, and John have finally recorded a long-awaited, pre-maturely announced demo LEARN TO SAY GOODNIGHT. 6 songs plus. It's homemade and delicious. Write Cupsize for inquiries, or send \$3 to cover costs. It's yours for the asking!



CUPSIZE
Box 1678, 301 Broadway
NY, NY 10027

The Mad Planets recently rocked thru a spontaneous live cover of that Weezer sweater song, by request, on WUSB in late December 94. Other highlights of their hour-long radio jam...a cover of the MST 3000 theme song. Ya better listen and get to know 'em before they turn totally surf.



Easy does it!

3 ISSUES of
CUPSIZE, 3 BIG
MADLIBS, HOURS
of FUN!



MAD LIBS

WORLD'S GREATEST KIDS' PARTY GAME

At The Bookstore

One day, I _____ opened the door to the
adverb
_____ bookstore. I went straight to the _____
* noun noun
section because I was looking for the Norton Anthology of
_____. The air was so _____ that I took off
noun adj
my _____. All of a sudden, a _____ hit the
article of clothing natural disaster
_____ bookstore and all the _____ started to
same noun * noun (pl.)
fall on my _____. " _____!" I exclaimed. The
body part * exclamation
_____ cashier came up behind me and started
adj
reciting _____ while massaging my
English Romantic Poet
_____. "You're _____! Leave me alone. Go
body part (same *) adj
call an ambulance!" The ambulance arrived, and as the
paramedic _____ lifted me into the back, the
adv.
_____ cashier handed me a copy of *I'm Okay, You're*
adj.
_____.

Beware. When you least expect it, you may be victim to the zen stare. But them be grateful, for it will make you a more honest, true, and articulate human being.

I first experienced the zen stare three years ago. I was super-hyper and nervous, all set to beg and bother a certain professor to get into his class. I thought the class would change my life. The class didn't-the zen stare did. Upon entering his office, he turned with a look of total peace and attention on his face. Shook my hand. Asked my name. Emitted a magical sense of peace and power that demanded that my own demeanor fall in line. He let me into the class. The zen stare stopped my anxiety right en route. I was stunned; silenced; awed. That is the zen stare.

Since my first exposure to the zen stare and my gradual maturing, I have cultivated my own power of zen stare that is essential to my existence, survival, and unique expression of goodwill to others. I use the zen stare on girls who are not pro-girl. Who are stuck in 3rd grade gossip/back-stabbing behaviour and want to share it with me and drag me into it. Basically all people who engage in bogus conversations as a way of life that goes beyond the pleasures of flirting and socializing. And especially passive-aggressive types.

Other zen stare situations: gooey, kissy, super-hyper people running up to me all "hey" and what's up" just for the hell of it. They had better chill. You can't be that happy to see me. → The ALL POWERFUL

Other potential targets- people who cannot interact unless they are somehow entertaining me and getting a reaction. I take this as an insult after a while, like I am just there to be provoked. If I wanted people to constantly make me laugh, I'd go to comedy clubs and be a groupie. This is so oppressive and demands so much of my energy and I just want to say "fuck off"...but the zen stare works even better than that cathartic phrase.

When you use the zen stare, you refuse to be manipulated. You keep eye contact with the person, smile, and listen, as if you are taking them seriously. YOU ARE NOT ACTING in this behaviour. You are giving them the benefit of the doubt, trusting them, telling them you are not bullshitting. You become a spiritual mirror they see themselves and calm down. They get real. * 1/2 0,0 * ZEN STARE! ←

Using the zen stare is delightful. It truly incapacitates and it is GOOD FOR PEOPLE. It feels good. They know when it's happening. It's disarming. It may sound a bit cruel, but in the end it is good for others. It is more gentle and constructive towards people that in the past you may have written off as just worthless. And it allows you to exist in the world and not be a total hermit or thora-in-the-side cynic.

I think I actually assaulted my entire english class once with the zen stare. It was just when my zen stare powers were getting really fine-tuned. One particular meeting was so boring and outa whack when it's usually a great class. It was a waste of everyone's time that day and I was definitely exuding a "get real" zen stare vibe. Next thing I know, class is being dismissed 1/2 hour early.

Sometimes the zen stare requires compete and brutal honesty. Other times, you respond to the person's bogusness as if it were spoken with integrity so they

feel really stupid having to prolong their act. It is hard to pinpoint. But when you feel it you know it, and when you use it, you improve the world. E 18



Kate Millett
Langston Hughes

Bessie Smith

Walt Whitman

Gore Vidal

Vita Sackville-West

Greta Garbo

OUTING BISEXUAL HISTORY

In the gay press, in gay and lesbian studies, in casual conversation, all it takes to call a person of the past gay or lesbian is one ounce of same sex inclination. Politically-motivated selective accounts of history aren't limited to the province of heterosexist history. The people I have listed above have in the recent past been claimed as gay or lesbian. Take a closer look and you'll find that they loved men and women during their lives. Lani Kaahumanu, co-editor of *Bi Any Other Name*, recalled the afternoon when she came out as bisexual to her mentor in women's studies. Her professor told her, "You have a lot of work to do reclaiming bisexuality. Sappho wrote love poems to men too."

This article isn't about converting you, dear reader, to bisexuality -- it's about unearthing a bisexual history that has been denied in the pages of an emerging lesbian and gay canon. I will not call Sappho or Walt Whitman bisexuals. Nor will I call them lesbian or gay. I will say that they lived bisexual lives--and that the richness of their experience has been obscured in maneuverings that distort their herstory and their lives.

First it is imperative that we recognize that sexual identity is a unique invention of the twentieth century. To call a pre-twentieth century individual "gay" or "lesbian" is an anachronistic misuse of language. Lisa Orlando writes, "As much gay historical research has shown, 'homosexuality' as we understand it in the West didn't exist until, with the advent of capitalism, religious ideology began to lose ground and medical ideology took its place. What Christianity saw as a sinful potential in everyone, psychiatry reconceptualized as a sickness which permeated one's being, displacing heterosexual desire."

In light of the recent development of such a thing as "sexual orientation" or "sexual identity," we must evaluate historical figures in the context of period-specific attitudes about sexual behavior. If the labels we choose for historical figures apply to modern understandings and not to those of the specific period, we distort history's claim to truth. As Robert Padgug argues in the volume *Passion and Power*, "In any approach that takes as predetermined and universal the categories of sexuality, real history disappears."

If we are to engage in an honest discussion of Sappho's sexual behavior, it would be most accurate to say that she behaved bisexually and wrote of passion for both women and men.

Eleanor Roosevelt

James Baldwin

Sappho

Oscar Wilde

Lorraine Hansberry

Margaret Mead

Ma Rainey

Emily Dickinson

If we look at the construction of a modern gay patron saint, Oscar Wilde is only permitted to fit the bill when we erase from memory the opposite-sex satisfaction he found in the first half of his life. Oscar Wilde pursued women with the same passion that he pursued men--only at different points in his life. Some might call him a sequential bisexual. For the first 32 years of his life, Wilde enthusiastically enjoyed relationships with women on a sexual and emotional level. He married, not to cover up his "homosexual side," but because he was deeply in love with his wife. Upon his first separation from his wife, Wilde wrote to her, "O execrable fates that keep our lips from kissing, though our souls are one...my soul and body seem no longer mine, but mingled in some exquisite ecstasy with yours. I feel incomplete without you." Clearly, his was not a marriage of convenience.

When this love died, he spent the remaining fourteen years of his life as an equally enthusiastic "homosexual." A culture structured around binary oppositions translates this part of Wilde's life into the image of an exclusively homosexual man. In the selective memory of revisionist history, there is no space for an evaluation of the subtleties of Wilde's life. Black or white--there is no room for the inevitable grey. The truth told about Oscar Wilde, we might learn more about the nature of desire and the fluidity of sexual preference.

Let's look at a modern day figure--Gore Vidal has consistently been labeled "gay" by his contemporaries. Vidal writes in the afterword to *The City and the Pillar*, "...All human beings are bisexual. Conditioning, opportunity, and habit account finally (and mysteriously) for sexual preference... Admittedly, no two things are equal, and so a man is bound to prefer one specific to another, but that does not mean that under the right stimulus, and at another time, he might not accommodate himself to both. In any case, sex of any sort is neither right or wrong. It is." Unlike earlier figures who did not live in an age of "sexual identity," Vidal deploys the language of that particular discourse to express his bisexuality. Despite his forthright honesty, Vidal's words have largely been ignored. There is a sense of all or nothing in the air--people continue to call Vidal homosexual.

I would argue that a belief in the non-existence of bisexuality has been institutionally reinforced by a revisionist history that has persistently obscured bisexual lives. Call them by the name that actually describes their lives--many "gay" people behaved bisexually and did not define themselves as exclusively "homosexual" (for many, such a term did not exist).

This distortion of the truth of people's lives shouldn't just matter to bisexual people. Writing a history that acknowledges both same and opposite sex relations and affection is about getting closer to historical integrity and a deeper understanding of the nature of sexuality, for gay men, for lesbians, for straights and for bisexual people. Defensive distortions of the truth don't lead to emancipation. Tell it like it was and liberation will be a little closer to home.

elements of faith and devotion...

last time, in this continuing column, i wrote about unconventional forms of loyalty and commitment in our society manifested in bands, gangs, and squatter communities. this time i discuss a smaller unit and expression of faith and devotion, as unique and uncredited, the forever reliable **platonic friend...**

you know, there are platonic physical desires; the desire for the company of a friend, for their presence, but pretty much sans conversation. This physical desire does not even include hugging and playful interaction like so many semi-flirtatious relationships do. This is the desire for someone walking beside you; thru city streets, thru a museum, watching t.v., renting movies, reading in the same room. sharing space and breath.

i have friends with whom its really no fun to talk on the phone. our dynamic is a physical one which can't be recreated through tele-communication.(one blow to cyberspace) but they are great to browse in record stores with or go thrifting with. these are friends who will wait on line with you at the DMV. they'll go to arcades and play separate machines for an hour and meet up with you at the door. they exist and live in our peripheral glances.

My individual friends fit this description in varying ways and to varying degress. but it is an element of faith and devotion that i treasure. often i refer to it as the modern soul. like a binary star that exists on the basis of attraction and resistance...these forces cancel and the enduring stasis is friendship. **E**



I saw Vaginal Davis' series of shorts, 'Drag Queen Feminism,' this past fall at the experimental lesbian and gay film festival. A more than droll satire on Camille Paglia post-feminist rhetoric. I laughed very, very hard.



Vaginal Creme is also in a band called Black Flag with BECK'S MOTHER'S

I cannot believe that before I had graduated from high school I had read *No Exit* twice and *The Bald Friggin Soprano* for class and never had read *Little Women*. I just saw the movie and it was great. inspiring, etc. If you have a young cousin or sibling, grab that copy of *Blubber* from her and give her *Little Women* instead, by Louisa May Alcott.

My personal library is growing and particularly with works by or about women writers. Recent additions: *The Collected Poems of Sylvia Plath*, Woolf's *Orlando* and a hardcover copy of *To the Lighthouse*. Two nonfiction books that I have been really into: *Searching for Mercy Street* by Linda Gray Sexton, novelist and daughter of Anne Sexton. Its a great examination of the mother-daughter bond and tension, which has a unique dimension for the Sextons because they were both writers.

Another is *Letters Home* by Sylvia Plath, *Correspondences 1950-1963*, by her mother Aurelia Schober Plath. This collection is amazing to read...they show a young woman's drive, her striving for balance between an austere passion for scholarship, creativity, and life adventures. The following reprints show the enthusiasm and fanaticism she felt about her course of study at Smith. Her obsession that a particular science course was destroying her is considered indicative of her neurotic tendencies. I, however, related to them enormously and thought others might too. I never said I wasn't neurotic. E

- A Dressmaker
- A Female Friend
- A Female Innabitant of Leeds, *
- in Yorkshire
- A Female Slave
- *A Flirt

Nov 19 1952

life has fallen apart. I am obsessed by wanting to escape from that course. I curse myself for not having done it this summer. I try to learn the barren dry formulas. Sick, I wonder why? why? why? I feel actually ill when I open the book, and figure I am wasting ten hours a week for the rest of the year. It affects all the rest of my life; I am behind in my Chaucer unit, feeling sterile in creative writing. My whole life is mastered by a horrible fear of this course, of the dry absurdities, the artificial formulas and combinations. I ask myself why didn't I take Geology, anything tangible would have been a blessing. Everyone else is abroad, or falling in love with their courses. I feel I have got to escape this, or go mad. How can I explain the irrevocable futility I feel! I don't even want to understand it, which is the worst yet. It seems to have no relation to anything in my life. It is



Optimism and Angst
of Women Writers
in their Youth

Letters from Sylvia Plath
Nov 15 1950

PLATH



* As to my subjects—I'm beginning to see light. I love them all. I'm being stretched, pulled to heights and depths of thought I never dreamed possible—and what is most wonderful—this is only a beginning. The future holds infinite hope and challenge. I somehow can't keep from singing to myself, no matter how weary I am. Sunshine which I had when I was little seems to have been restored by Smith, and I know that, in the cycle of joy and sorrow, there will always be an outlet for me. I can never lose everything—all at once.

- Amy Lowell (1874-1925)
- Mary Guignard
- Mrs. ---- Moorhead (17-)
- Mrs. A. Gomersall (fl. 17-)
- REAL NAMES *
- Mattie Griffiths (fl. 1860)
- Lady Charlotte S. Bury (1775-1861)

plenty more in
Pen Names of Women Writers by
Alice Kahler Marshall



The

Truth

About

Like Sasha's celebration of her favorite color, BROWN, as a mainstay in her outlook, identity, and being(see CUPSIZE #1), I celebrate and acknowledge my existence as a NIGHT PERSON. Its something I can begin to commit to, to include in my decisions and investments More reliable and stable than sexual orientation, we call ourselves day or night people with a self-righteousness I approve of. Night person pulses through my blood and beams in my eyes. And oh how I love the night person lifestyle. And oh how I dread the difficult transformation that may have to take place if/when I visit the 9to5 world for a while. It will surely kill me. Its really a metabolic state, a medical condition but not an illness, that should be recognized and certain allowances made for those of us who take it seriously. I deserved a doctor's note of pardon from my required-for-the-major music theory course which met at 8:20 in the morning. How can you explain this to a revenge-of-the-nerds trombone-playing T.A.? He was not sympathetic. However, I'd rather suffer conformity than have "Night Person" status be known as a flako disorder like ADD.

This summer I indulged in and cemented my night person status: I worked the nightshift 4 nights a week at a local diner. Here's a 24-hour time table, starting from rise to sleep...

11:30am...awaken, COFFEE, shower, music, phone calls

1:00am consume some meal that is lunch or breakfast, somehow.

1-4 productive pursuits, schoolwork, letter writing, etc

4-5 prepare to work, for day to really start!

5-1 Work, make \$\$\$, interact with humanity, have a personality, express wit.

1-3:30...socialize, watch infomercials and latenight comedy showcases.

Any chance I get, including almost every weekend, I slip back into this natural schedule.

Some misconceptions about night people: #1. We are slackers and oversleepers. NO WAY. Our metabolism just kicks in at different times. Basically we are about 3 1/2 hours behind DAY people.

Misconception #2: Night people are raucous party animals. Day people may know the morning sun, but night people know the sounds of the house settling at 1:30 am. The hum of the refrigerator, the quiet conspiracy of the appliances. They know the shadows in the backyard, and the constellations. They know the quiet of a desk when at 2am and they pick up a book and read for one peaceful hour and too bad that hour can't come at 9 pm so they could live like others but this is the way it is for them and gosh darn if they should miss this mystical hour.

MY
LIFE!





NIGHT PEOPLE



Navigators are night people. Stargazers and disk jockeys, convenience store clerks and diner waitresses (me!) and truck drivers. We are a race before the paper boys and the mailmen, or the commuters on the 6am train. We end the day and pass it to others. A common language exists between us. Mostly of infomercials and the psychic friends network and the flow-be and soloflex.

4 am is a pivotal hour. This is truly the witching hour, no man's land. 5am can typically start a working day for some. At 3am even night people are winding down. The hour between 4 and 5 is the closing of the bar, the learning to say goodnight, the how-soon-is-now surrender, the giving over of night and all its possibilities to tomorrow. It's best to sleep through this creepy hour. It can wreck you if you don't. 4am is late.

There is the question of nature vs. nurture. I was convinced I was born a night person. As a child, I hated taking afternoon naps. At night, I hid in my den so I could stay up late and watch "Fantasy Island" after the "Love Boat" on ABC. Everyday, I barely caught the bus for high school, and it was for reasons beyond adolescent depression and angst. But this fall I had to get up at 7:30 three days a week and even

though every cell seemed to reject it, I got it under control after a while and wondered if I would lose my night person tendencies because they would be rusty and out of practice. An identity I had come to relish in, wasted away in early morning music theory!

This identity became most real to me when I realized it was not determined by age. I thought all college folk stayed up late roaming around halls, etc. But my peers, free of parents and curfews and homeroom at 7:15am, went to bed at 10 by choice. Started settling in around 9. My neighbor who is almost 60 years old swears by being a night person. Her husband and she stay up til about 3 every morning. They go for latenight drives in their big van, and get 7-11 coffee at 2Am.

I cherish night person life. But I know it will cause problems for me. I will have to learn to cope, to suppress some of my most innate habits and behaviours to earn a living. I am by no-means anti-day person. The times I visit that world are often bearable and sometimes pleasing. I hear the morning birds chirp. But its mostly a novelty appeal. After many years of night-person living, I can say its really me and ride off into the sunset, fully awake, again and again. E



Sasha



Emelye



Sasha and Emelye Out on the Town in Baby Doll Wear

"We felt so liberated!"

When women dress like girls (not grrrls): *the Village Voice* set out to tell me what infantile garb on mature women is all about. The *Voice's* article argued that for some women, girl fashion represents a return to early adolescence, the period that precedes the command to shut up and simmer. Pigtails are somehow empowering because they harken a pre-oppressed playground, an age of innocent liberation. To promote this one page article, I might mention that the *Voice* also didn't hesitate to include a scantily clad model on the cover.

I think there is a certain element of truth in the sociological studies that have isolated the period around 12 years of age as a time when American girls start to lose a sense of themselves and become less assertive, more quiet and removed. Pre-hesitation girlhood was an era of less inhibited existence. But for me, being a girl was not about wearing provocatively tight clothing and pigtails. The beauty of that period cannot be invoked by carrying a lunch box around with me. If I choose to adorn myself with girl-child clothing, my uniform will suggest youth, but cotton candy outfits are not going to transform my spirit into a nostalgic girl emancipation.

I see the girl-woman baby tee as more a Lolita sex creation than a form of empowerment. This is the fashion INDUSTRY, a profit-motivated enterprise that co-opts fashions that sincerely signify girl-power and sells them back to alterna-stores and mall outlets for maximum profit. The politics get watered down somewhere between the riot grrrl signifying aesthetic and the SKU coding of the price tag. Let's face it, tight t-shirts scream little girl fetish before they do girl's game on the playground.

At 99X, a hipkid downtown retail outlet, every article of "women's" clothing this summer was shrunk to pre-high school proportions. The fabric allotted in the "women's" section was half that in the "men's." **Prominently displayed:** a tiny pink tee with "Baby" inscribed in the form of the Barbie logo. "Baby" doesn't quite speak girlpower to me. We are not creating these signs, insignias, dress codes to express our own return to girlhood. They are being created for us, from the hierarchy above, to fatten corporate dividends. It's pretty simple really, I don't think anyone really pretends to buy empowerment at the cash register. Tight clothing sells because it's sexy. Not that there's anything wrong with dressing sexy—I would just rather that the *Voice's* commentators don't couch the trend in absurd liberation metaphors to justify putting models on the cover.

It's more than a little silly to call a trend of tight shirts and short skirts a meaningful return to "pure" girlhood. Baby tees no revolution make. S



I Lost My

Soul

To

Postmodernism

or how my fear of
birds allows me the
illusion of a self



By day and night, I live and think by way of social constructionist tools, striving to locate "natural" assumptions about race, gender, sexuality and everything else in historical, social and political contexts. It's all a part of my world crusade to strip unchallenged givens of the power of immutable essence and to transform the world into a genuinely egalitarian place. RIGHT. This little world critique of mine quickly envelops everything with quotation marks...nothing exists as an essential entity, but as a body more continually constructed than originally created--myself included. It often gets to the point at which I feel the need to place my SELF in quotation marks. My "self," "myself," "sasha," the aggregate of social forces that coalesce into some body or thing that I claim as me.

I'll invoke the anthropologist Clifford Geertz's metaphor to describe the dilemma. Describing culture as an onion, "as we peel off each layer (economics, politics, families, etc.) we may think that we are approaching the kernel, but we eventually discover that the whole is the only 'essence' there is." The more cognizant I become of the complex forces that have shaped who I am, the less that I will be able to clasp a kernel of the me. Yes, this is wonderful, how beautiful to realize that there is no essential soul; how liberating to realize that I am only a mirage of accidental social combustions. Fuck that--I want some soul security.

I have to say that with respect to me, deconstruction--no matter how useful and powerful--creates profoundly disconcerting personal aftershocks. I would guess that it would take real spiritual sustenance to understand oneself in terms of emptiness or negative space. If I were Buddhist, well, that would be a different story. But I must own up to the fact that I am not Buddhist, that I grew up in the epistemological tradition of American suburban culture. Because of that upbringing, I want to know that I have a self. Here is the disjuncture between café musings and life existence. No matter how much I deconstruct the very concept of a "self," I exist in a world that assumes that I have one. I was brought up in that world, and it's a real balancing act to find a comfortable space of claiming a self without losing my intellectual integrity.

I have been thinking that the provisional way out of this morass may lie in my most inexplicable quirks, and I have made a pact with myself that I will not deconstruct the idiosyncracies of my personality. If I can hold on to the most unusual parts of my life as odd eternal, "essential" aspects of me, I will be comforted by the illusion of a self. Only I'll pretend that it isn't an illusion.

I find strange solace in one mysterious curiosity of my temperament: the paralysis that I experience at the sight of a bird. Upon seeing one, I startle, I shudder and I will usually do as much as I can to keep my distance. I cross streets to avoid them. I hesitate to open my window for fear that one might fly in. When I was babysitting for a six year old girl, she kept me hostage in the bathroom by letting her pet canary fly around the house. I locked myself in the bathroom. I'm not joking. My friends torment me by giving me bird figurines. Inexplicably strong, I wonder why I react so viscerally to their feathers, their beady eyes and the power that I perceive in their ability to fly, to swoop down on me, to flap their wings in my face, to peck my eyes out of their sockets....

Just the sight of a bird flapping its wings has caused me to take flight. Why am I so paralyzed by birds? Nothing so unusual has happened to me--Like most of my friends, I saw the Birds. Yes, seagulls have shat on me at the beach, but that's really not so rare. I cannot isolate anything particular to my life experience that would justify the intense fear that grips me. Others are deathly afraid of spiders, cockroaches, or rats. No one else I know shares my birdphobia.

I love the fact that I cannot explain my relationship to birds. I can imagine that it exists independently of deconstructive analysis. Yes, if I tell that to certain friends, they will suggest endless explanations of my birdphobia, but I don't want to hear. In order to exist in some comfortable life state, I feel that I must preserve some "essential" part of my being. I know that this impulse contradicts all of my thought processes, but, heck, contradiction is part and parcel of that crazy thing we call life. Is it too much to ask to keep my me outside of quotation marks?



Someone at a party taught me the equation:

SELF-CONSCIOUS GENERATION X = STUDENTS AND PEOPLE WHO WORK AT MAGAZINES

ONE MORE ZINE REVIEW

Gogglebox

Made by my schoolpal Jen, Gogglebox is chock full of good times and good reading. Can't even list it all: an investigative cults report, honest and powerful insights on sex, road trip stories and a smart "open letter to all the fucking Baby Boomers." Send \$1 and two stamps to Jenn G, PO Box 250402, New York, NY 10025-1536.

I fit both categories.

Tea drinks are over! The market is getting old. I'm on the lookout for a wave of coffee beverages.

Iced Coffee does things for you!

is flooded and the taste is for superior choices in the new. Let me know of any you like.

It doesn't get any better than this. Manhattan Special absolutely zings with coffee tang and a hint of carbonation. Confession time: I don't even really like coffee, I only drink it when under social obligation. I certainly have never been one to insist on "my morning coffee." But espresso soda definitely fulfills morning pick-up expectations. The taste is right there and the jolt is undeniable. Try it with a bite-size peppermint patty. The bottle is also incredibly cute--it's awful small at ten ounces, but the limited quantity only makes the experience more bittersweet. Manhattan Special is a rare find, and I think I like it that way. It's nothing less than a special treat. S



Dear Sasha--

Please, PLEASE never apologize for your concerns about modern beverages. This is not in anyway taken by yours truly as the raging obsession that others might take it as but rather a soul-searching truth for a product that provides bliss both orally and aesthetically at a fair (and modest, we hope) price.

I was impressed by your exegesis on the topic of Clearly Canadian. (via e-mail, ed.) I find myself to be duly impressed by this beverage. Perhaps most likely because I seem to have a tolerance towards sweet as in how can anything be too sweet? Certainly the bottle's light blue color is aesthetically appealing. I can relate to your qualms regarding the price...very disturbing. Perhaps if you cut up fresh fruit and added this with a bit of soda water...I guess this would only serve to jack up the price, increase the workload to, perhaps, little effect. Though it might prove to be impractical when thirsty on a hot summer day on the streets of New York, I say you owe it to yourself and to history to see if there are any circumstances under which you would find yourself under the sway of a beverage primarily composed of Clearly Canadian. May I suggest your doing a grant proposal to Clearly Canadian?

I was mixing up a drink last night involving coconut milk, cream and seltzer water. It was very tasty.

I find your interest in coffee beverages most interesting...I tend to prefer tea, though I understand your interest in this spectrum.

Best, Stephen



RIOT GRRRL cont. ^{from} p. 8

Rejecting offers from the rest, Sarah chose to work with Seventeen. The magazine had received a number of letters from readers asking about zines, and they wanted to expose their readers without plugging one zine. (This is very responsible behavior--according to Sarah, Sassy has reviewed more than one zine without telling the editor, and has consequently spelled the zine's demise by sending unexpected mountains of orders). Seventeen rented a PO Box for the orders for Action Girl and gave Sarah "the most incredibly accurate review I have ever gotten. So much for punk rock." As a result, Sarah has received over 600 orders for Action Girl from girls who would have never had access to underground culture. Sarah's experience proves that it is not entirely possible to engage in a productive dissemination of underground resources and culture. (to read more about it, write away for Kikizine through Action Girl.)

I really admire Sarah's careful consideration of the issues at stake and her commitment to girl activism that incorporates a target group that extends beyond strict "scene" identifications. I think that we should all really think about how we can get through to people who could really benefit from the knowledge that independent girl-produced culture exists. No, we'll never reach everyone, not even close, but I think it's far too easy to sit back and uncritically resolve that it's "sell-out" to work with a mainstream media source.

AND we should all ask ourselves what we ever really knew about Riot Grrrl that wasn't tainted by the biases of the mainstream press. Yes, it sucks that RG, as a function of its form and content, has been almost entirely inaccessible and that it has been impossible for almost any source with a large readership to really disseminate information about it. Does that effectively rule out dialogue on the Riot Grrrl movement, except among the few with insider privilege? Perhaps--so let's start talking about a Girl Power movement, the new (rather than third) wave of the feminist movement. Yeah, come on, Intervention Grrrl-Style Now and Forever! *S Thanks a ton to everyone who answered the survey. -S*

It's somewhat difficult to summarize fifteen pages in a zine. If you would like a copy of the paper, send me a few stamps and I will send it to you. But of course you must first prove to me that you will use it only toward the promotion of honest and thorough dissemination of RG information. Thank you.

Cont. from
p. 13 ↓

All such academians are not hippies. They are older and misguided and often chauvinist despite pledges and disclaimers at the beginning of the term that it's for important reasons that we are not studying George Eliot this term, even though she was a great Victorian novelist and this class is Victorian Literature. These professors think that because they say "HE/SHE" now as second nature that they are liberated. It takes more than a pronoun change. They reminisce outloud about past student bodies who were full of vigor and energy (those of the sixties, to be exact...no joke. If they weren't part of it themselves, they long to teach the kids of the sixties, AGAIN), openly insulting a room full of living, thinking, young people. Come on, you were also 30 years younger then. That probly has a lot to do with your fondness for 1969.

After hearing about it for 30yrs, we gotta believe a little that the sixties was a groovy time to grow up. But I don't attend class to witness living icons from the era telling what would have been thought about texts then. Or to be sold the idea that America is creepy and sneaky. I have my whole life to find that out.

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*COORS CO. (COORS BEER AND ZIMA) » JOSEPH COORS, THE PRESIDENT, FOUNDED THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION, WHICH IS REGARDED AS ONE OF THE LARGEST CONSERVATIVE THINK TANKS IN AMERICA. MANY INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THIS FOUNDATION HAVE TIES TO RACIST AND NEO-NAZI GROUPS AND TO GROUPS THAT BANKROLL RIGHT-TO-LIFE ORGANIZATIONS.

*LLBEAN » LINDA BEAN, MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER, WAS A 1992 CHRISTIAN COALITION CANDIDATE FOR U.S. CONGRESS AND HAS SUPPORTED JESSE HELMS AND PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY.

*DOMINO'S PIZZA » MOST SHOULD KNOW BY NOW THAT DOMINO'S FUNDS OPERATION RESCUE. THEY ALSO GIVE MONEY TO WORD OF GOD (A FUNDAMENTALIST GROUP) AND THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION.

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LOVE YOUR MENSES

TELL HER

Until this, my twenty-first year, I almost exclusively wore maxi pads rather than tampons when my aunt came for her monthly visit. After the first junior high years of menstruation, virtually all of my friends progressed to tampon use. Tampons are considered a second rite of female passage, a step beyond infantile diaper wear to mature womanly insertion. But I held back. For whatever reasons, tampons were sometimes uncomfortable, I didn't like the idea of putting bleached cotton in my body and I had a certain dread fear of Toxic Shock Syndrome.

A year or so ago, I discovered the joy of maxi pads, or you might say I rationalized my insistence on their use. I now know why I took so long to make the crossover. The use of tampons makes for no means of perceiving the material emerging from the uterus. When you retrieve the tampon, all you find is a ball of cotton saturated with blood. If you wear a pad, you have the opportunity to really examine the stuff of menstruation. You can actually get a good look at the menses. This is true life blood, the chunky sustenance of the beginning of human conception, gorgeous red preparation that our bodies create every month. I am so grateful to be able to see it because it affords me a look at the inside of my body. This is what goes on in there. We rarely get to see any interiority without the help of technology. And if I have the chance to understand the stuff of my body, I want to see and understand it for myself. Pads give me that chance.

Menses are not gross at all. You, dear reader, might think these are perverse proclivities, but they are not. **MENSES ARE BEAUTIFUL.** Wear a pad and give yourself the chance to discover your body inside out.



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Guilty Appendage: OK, so some of my friends have read this article, and if I mention that I have to go buy tampons, they act all indignant as if I have lied to them. Life is never all or nothing--sure, I love to insert cotton too, (and to examine it on its way out), but all I'm saying is that we need to get out of an all-tampon rut and remember the advantages of pads. **PAD PRIDE!**

See Karen Houppert's cover
article on the UN regulated
tampon industry. Village
Voice, Feb 7, 1995.

ACTION GIRL NEW S L E T T E R



A guide to zines, books & comics produced by girls, grrrls and women; plus gay & women's resources. Boy-friendly, but determinedly pro-girl! Each issue contains four pages of reviews and addresses of pro-female publications from the U.S., UK & Canada. For those of you who missed the first 6 issues; may I present the Action Girl Guide, a full-size zine comp of all six.

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Thanks a lot!!! xox Sarah

GIRL ♥ CAN SAVE THE 🌍

★ Zine Reviews ★

Send away for these gems!

Grope

This zine rules and so does Kirsten, the grrrl who writes it. She was one of the wonderful people who filled out my RG survey. This issue of Grope includes a beautifully blunt narrative recounting all the boys Kirsten has scored in her "so-called sex life." I love this part, "If you think I'm a slut, fuck you, I am. So what. Maybe things would be different if my brother and dad hadn't molested me, but I don't think my past is anything to be ashamed of. It's as much a part of me as my eyes, my legs, my heart. It's my life and whatever you think of it, it's still me." Also, Kirsten's inspiring daily battles against sexism and more about being a survivor. Send a dollar or two and some stamps to PO Box 543, Arcata, CA 95521.

Ms. America

Ms. America is brought to you by two grrrls who tackle all the most pressing topics. Covered in this issue: all cupsizes=breast perfection (Go! Go!), birth-power (they do a really great informative section on the ways in which medical technology pathologizes the natural process of birth), the grrrl convention in Omaha, virgin revolution and Lois, Spitboy and a grrrl band line-up. Stamps/trade OK. PO Box 148421, Chicago, IL 60614-8421.

✓ Same Sarah from the RG article. She's great. Get yrself a copy of Action Girl.

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Pasty

I love Pasty! This is the first issue of what looks to be a highly promising endeavor. There's a list of Pink Things--here are some that got me, "one third of spumoni, Tab cans and communists (thanks, Dad!)" There's also a really funny and honest account of a grrrls-only sex party called Pussy Galore and a well-dressed fat grrrl clothing directory. Send a dollar or a couple of stamps to SKL, Pasty, 734 20th Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112.

My Bulimic Grandma

Scrappy and lyrical. This zine scatters sincerely pretty reflections on life. Honest to goodness poetry and Mae really likes mail. Send a dollar, a trade or some stamps to MBG, 68 Nussalequin Dr., Burlington, CT 06013

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