

COWGIRRL INK



**A ZINE FOR THE SAUCIEST AND
ROWDIEST FEMINIST
ICONOCLASTS THAT THINK
PATRIARCHY AND MISOGYNY
REALLY SUCK**

3949

I want to be a cowgirl. The ranch that I entertain and invent in my mind is an archetype that I have created to store, organize, and utilize the ideas I have about life, its purpose, and how to find meaning in it. This mental playground facilitates the ranch as a medium that allows me to express myself. The ranch is the unsullied sum and substance of me. My philosophical visions are in chaotic order at the ranch. I am anxious for the familiar feeling of pulling on the old chaps and boots, jumping on my horse, and riding around the ranch exposed to the Montana summer sun. I will open each morning with a sassy "yee-haw!" to remind myself and my companion cowgirls of our commitment to shape and sustain what will hopefully be the most eclectic, eccentric all-girl ranch in the West. The ranch is an exaggerated culmination of everything that is important to me. Hopefully, it will be the greatest achievement rather than the greatest figment of my imagination. I really feel quite passionately about making it happen... This is cowgirl ink...stay tuned and in the meantime send all commentary/ response to: cowgirl ink 1726 ashland ave #14 st.paul minnesota 55104

Come here. Let me befriend you. This zine will become a medium through which we can commune with each other. Write about some ridiculously ideal notions that may never materialize, romanticize and celebrate beautifully insignificant stuff, expand the stagnant narrow minds of an anonymous audience, forge some serious political dissidence, or attempt to transcribe the elusive and sacred feelings concealed in that soul of yours. So, maximize the productivity of your manual dexterity while simultaneously exercising the gray matter and put out some stuff on paper that will connect and affect another.

Cowgrrrl ink is my undernourished brain child. Undernourished because I'm writing under an intimidating deadline entitled "March 4th" by my women's studies course at the University of Minnesota. This was initially a project for class rather than some desperate misunderstood artistic attempt at expressing some lustfully crude ideas. So, although not entirely honorable notions for putting out a zine, I really have fallen in love with the idea and have reconciled with myself that Ink is worthy of having hundreds of compatibly intellectually immature eyes receive partial cerebral stimulation from its prose. Let me elaborate on some of the finer points of Ink that I hope will materialize if it ever gets its butt off the ground. I'll probably initially address the readers with a love note similar to this one to let ya'll know what's going on with management. Then we'll ease on into the good stuff. "Saga" is going to be my attempt at formulating some semi-fiction about this ranch thing that I often mentally masturbate about. I don't want to divulge too much about it, for it will hopefully unfold beautifully in your minds if I can manage to articulate it with some justice, but let me give you a taste. Just a little taste to get those creative visualization juices flowing. I want the ranch to be a sanctuarial think tank for women to come to and be able to live life passionately and happily without the constraints of our patriarchal society that forces us to accept misery as a viable existence. Absolutely feminist oriented, appreciating and expecting diversity in ideas with a fondness for the "fringy" kind of stuff that is totally underrated and under exposed. Loosely structured to accommodate an influx of women that will bring with them a mixed and messy bag of experience and wisdom to create a resourceful and self-sufficient female friendly environment. Lesbian? For sure, but not entirely. Separatist? I don't know yet.

I'm still in the process of creating departments for Ink, the paper manifestation of the ranch. For example, in this issue the reader can experience "fabfavefemme", a swooning dedication to an extraordinary babe that has managed to consummate several desirable attributes worthy of idol worship. Prepare for a really gooey, pathetic, distant admiration for a grrrl who will never love me back. Also making a debut is "Perspectives", an effort to expand the audience's feminist scholarship by taking time out to appreciate an accomplished and admired feminist writer. The Cowgrrrls need to be well read because her weapon is her word that will draw from an inner source of thoughtfully processed feminist theory. Various other ideas will be experimented with on the audience, and hopefully some will solidify and nab a spot at Cowgrrrl Ink and expand its repertoire.

I want Ink to be very interactive with its audience, a kind of kinky cooperative effort in the sense that our relationship will be somewhat elusive as Ink evolves into "our" zine. So, let us share some material and enlighten one another. Take a leap with what you think is in sync with Ink, and maybe you'll get your fifteen minutes of fame by not only being published, but by being initiated into the ranch as a hardcore cowgrrrl. Any grrrl who has the heat and can transfer it onto paper is obviously destined for cowgrrrlville, and will house herself in my heart, mind, and soul. I'll be your biggest fan.

fabfavefemme

Juliana Hatfield



woe is me
who gives thine heart to thee
without the slack
of being loved back

"Dame with A Rod" by Juliana Hatfield as the Cowgrrrr's anthem. Imagine the magnitude of all the Cowgrrrrs singing :

touch her again and your dead
you heard what I said
I am a heroine
he tried to do her in
I gave it back to him
he won't do it again...
Don't try to run
you did what you done
I got a gun
you unmerciful scum
you're gonna rot in the ground
now come back around
you pushed yourself down
now outta my town

You'll have to forgive my rock star crush, Jullana, of her public denial of being feminist oriented. She's kinda got her head in her butt concerning feminism. She writes poignant songs about killing rapists and the absurdity of super modeling, yet she seemingly gets off on irking her feminist fans by saying things like, "I want people to know that I'm not part of any trend or movement, and I'm not trying to be a role model. I'm not doing this to advance the cause of women." Not, not, not is starting to sound like a broken record. When she says that "women are biologically destined to be inferior guitar players" maybe she's being offensive just for the sake of being offensive, which can be admirable just as long as she keeps in check and avoids being poisoned by her own words. Or maybe she's knowingly bashing herself and her sisters in a masterful plan to conquer the patriarchal music industry, which she will triumphantly spit on it when she's reached the top, and then dedicate it and all of its royalties to women. You know, like the fantasy we all have that the next Ms. America, stifling all her radical passion and her desire to menage-a-trois with New York and California in order to infiltrate the pageant, will announce that she's a lesbian feminist separatist aspiring to destroy beauty myths. Then she will surprisingly bare her breast to reveal a tattoo of the fisted woman symbol. The eagerly awaiting American audience, expecting the usual heart felt words through the hallmark tears as to why the hell the new Ms. America thinks being crowned the epitome of this humiliating pageantry is so flattering, will be moved and applaud our heroine. She will bring the patriarchal pageantry down.

So, my heart doth feel conflict. Mine eyes dotingly admire the sweetness of her, yet mine cerebrallness is bitterly aware of being betrayed. This closeted feminist is still worthy of fabfavefemme, for it is her artistry that truly speaks her soul. Let us have faith in Jullana.

The Cowgrrrls? Oh, they're a fledgling fringe group that I have been slowly materializing. I would like the Cowgrrrls to be a rowdy bunch of rad feminist girls who are seeking out their true selves without constraints and in disregard for society and its love affair with mediocrity.

Seeking to identify injustice and destroy it. Seeking to be heard. Fostering a think tank, creating more fuel for the feminist movement, fighting backlash, living and loving life passionately, trying to give up misery for the pure sake of happiness and beauty. Learning, loving, and teaching each other. What do you think?

Congrats

R

Coming

♀

Er

I Pledge Allegiance

The following was composed after the author went to a Bulls game. She stood in the stadium with thousands of people. To her, it was peculiar, if not down right astonishing, when she witnessed every person stand up, place their right hand over their right heart, and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. She pondered, do they know what they are pledging allegiance to? This thought inspired the following...ohh, and the author thinks the following messages should be explored in public schools.

I Pledge Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the United States
I pledge allegiance to a country where no matter who you voted for,
the government will get in
I pledge allegiance to the year 1619 when the first SLAVERY boat
POENCED Africans from their homes
I pledge allegiance to Columbus who killed the original settlers
I pledge allegiance to million men who are legally not allowed to
have lesbian relationships with men
I pledge allegiance to people, who, like some humans, will shit
wherever, whenever, and on whatever
I pledge allegiance to the United States
I pledge allegiance to CHILD ABUSE
I pledge allegiance to eat them
I pledge allegiance to my family, who sometimes think I'm 100000000
POLITICAL
I pledge allegiance to a constitution which will say slaves are 3/5ths
of a person
I pledge allegiance all the QQQQQQUEERS who demand that they be
allowed to have a person and not a man
I pledge allegiance to GUATEMALAN WOMEN who work in
mangrove swamps because people there is the stomach. If the
women resist the preaching that she is pregnant. If she is pregnant
then she is fired
I pledge allegiance to the United States who supports this with
business conferences explaining how to set up mangroves in
forever countries
I pledge allegiance to business not as usual
I pledge allegiance to why because THERE IS STRENGTH IN
NUMBERS
I pledge allegiance to hunger, in spite of it all
I pledge allegiance to starvation, though sometimes my emotions
demand sacrifice goes
I pledge allegiance to all those WOMEN who did not get recognized
in the CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
I pledge allegiance to others because there is I draw anger and
therefore strength
I pledge allegiance to all QUEER YOUTH who are kicked out of their
homes because they chose to live
I pledge allegiance to the United States of America
I pledge allegiance to change
I pledge allegiance to not land of the free but home of the greed
I pledge allegiance to an honest re-writer of history
I pledge allegiance to the United States, under an unethical god for
of course one unethical culture
I pledge allegiance to FOOTIE
I pledge allegiance to the men
I pledge allegiance to the balance of masculinity and femininity
I pledge allegiance to the moon
I pledge allegiance to the stars
I pledge allegiance to making love with my girlfriend under the stars
in a pasture in Iowa
I pledge allegiance to White Supremacy because there is I give
privileges
I pledge allegiance to some inner-city schools that never give people
of color a chance
I pledge to some people who are not easily proved to be ignorant but
arrogant about their ignorance
I pledge allegiance to reform
I pledge allegiance to Seymour Tush
I pledge to Martin Luther who led hundreds of slaves to freedom
I pledge allegiance to confounding racism, homophobia, sexism,
classism, racism...
I pledge allegiance to people who know about discrimination but
refuse to do anything about it. I question
I pledge allegiance to the old activist who are now Yuppies and have
consequently decided to forget about the struggle of the G.O.P. WILL I
pledge allegiance to YOU?
I pledge allegiance to some men who look at me as a sexual object
I pledge allegiance (bending dick and body), "They body". I got a to to
offer you.
I pledge allegiance to the United States' secret military that kills and
rapes unarmed indigenous people of the 3rd world

I pledge allegiance to a government who gives weapons to white
 supremacists in South Africa
 I pledge allegiance to the RAPE I ignore next door
 I pledge allegiance to false judgments about both poor people and
 people of color because those scandalous judgments justify my
 superiority complex
 I pledge allegiance to a media that creates and reinforces those
 judgments
 I pledge allegiance to the print and electronic media who are owned
 by the wealthy white elite
 I pledge allegiance to their fucking values
 I pledge allegiance to F A C I S M
 I pledge allegiance to don't ask don't tell Clinton policy go to hell
 I pledge allegiance to broken campaign promises
 I pledge allegiance to people who are straight but not narrow
 I pledge allegiance to the United States
 I pledge allegiance to calling United States Citizens United States
 Citizens because we are not the only Americans. Latin Americans are
 also Americans
 I pledge allegiance to a business psychology who hires only part-time
 workers to avoid paying benefits
 I pledge allegiance to capitalism whose foundation is based on
 exploitation
 I pledge allegiance to people who fail to see that wanting 2 cars and
 a swimming pool causes someone else's poverty
 I pledge allegiance to Puerto Ricans que luchan para su
 independencia
 I pledge allegiance to bridges that build communication
 I pledge allegiance to nature and environmental racism
 I pledge allegiance to education, a tool of change
 I pledge allegiance to balance
 balance
 balance
 balance
 balance
 A balance that channels anger to productive energy
 A balance that keeps you smiling despite all the shit pigeons may
 poop
 A balance that lets you love despite all the hate you see and want to
 change
 A balance that lets you enjoy puddles, kites, sun sets, beaches,
 intimacy, birds, trees, bubble baths, dancing, skipping, books, smiles,
 spiders that get in your way or roaches that run across your face,
 and potential
 A POTENTIAL THAT HUMAN BEINGS CAN CREATE A WORLD
 THAT IS DECENT TO HUMAN LIFE, NATURE, ANIMALS AND
 OTHER ORGANISMS
 Will you make it possible?



lesbian avengers **DYKE MANIFESTO** lesbian avengers
CALLING ALL LESBIANS
WAKE UP! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

IT'S TIME TO GET OUT OF THE BEDS, OUT OF THE BARS AND INTO THE STREETS
TIME TO SEIZE THE POWER OF DYKE LOVE, DYKE VISION, DYKE ANGER
DYKE INTELLIGENCE, DYKE STRATEGY.

TIME TO ORGANIZE AND UNITE. TIME TO GET TOGETHER AND FIGHT
WE'RE INVISIBLE AND IT'S NOT SAFE—NOT AT HOME, ON THE JOB, IN THE
STREETS OR IN THE COURTS

WHERE ARE OUR LESBIAN LEADERS?

WE NEED YOU

WE'RE NOT WAITING FOR THE RAPTURE. WE ARE THE APOCALYPSE.
WE'LL BE YOUR DREAM AND THEIR NIGHTMARE.

LESBIAN POWER

BELIEVE IN CREATIVE ACTIVISM: LOUD, BOLD, SEXY, SILLY, FIERCE, TASTY
AND DRAMATIC. ARREST OPTIONAL.

THINK DEMONSTRATIONS ARE A GOOD TIME AND A GREAT PLACE TO CRUISE
WOMEN. DON'T HAVE PATIENCE FOR POLITE POLITICS. ARE BORED WITH THE
BOYS. BELIEVE CONFRONTATION FOSTERS GROWTH AND STRONG BONES.
BELIEVE IN RECRUITMENT. NOT BY THE ARMY; NOT OF STRAIGHT WOMEN.
ARE NOT CONTENT WITH GHETTOS. WE WANT YOUR HOUSE, YOUR JOB, YOUR
FREQUENT FLYER MILES. WE'LL SELL YOUR JEWELRY TO SUBSIDIZE OUR
MOVEMENT. WE DEMAND UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE AND HOUSING. WE
DEMAND FOOD AND SHELTER FOR ALL HOMELESS LESBIANS. WE ARE THE
13TH STEP. THINK GEL GAMES ARE THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

LESBIAN SEX

THINK SEX IS A DAILY LITATION. GOOD ENERGY FOR ACTIONS. CRAVE,
ENJOY, EXPLORE, SUFFER FROM NEW IDEAS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS:
SLUMBER PARTIES, POLYGAMY, PERSONAL ADS, AFFINITY GROUPS.
USE LIVE ACTION WORDS: Hot, walk, eat, fuck, kiss, bite, give it up, hit the dirt

LESBIAN ACTIVISM

THINK ACTIONS MUST BE LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, GLOBAL, COSMIC.
THINK CLOSETED LESBIANS, QUEER BOYS AND SYMPATHETIC STRAIGHTS
SHOULD SEND US MONEY.

PLAN TO TARGET HOMOPHOBES OF EVERY STRIFE AND INFILTRATE THE
CHRISTIAN RIGHT.

SCHEME AND SCREAM AND FIGHT REAL MEAN

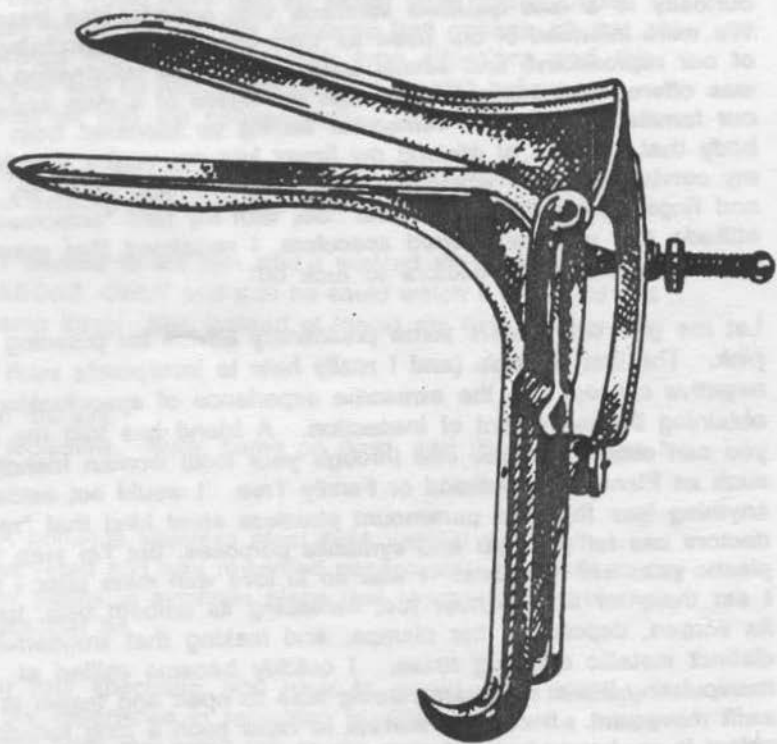
the lesbian

AVENGERS



THE LESBIAN AVENGERS: WE RECRUIT

SPECULUM PRIMER



A PRACTICAL GUIDE

speculum primer

Touch the tip of your nose. This will preface a deeper and pinker endeavor. Grrris you have ta get to know, befriend, fondle, touch, and check out your...(drum roll, please)...**VAGINAL UNIT**. The traditional medical institution, the brain child of papa patriarchy, has knowingly alienated us from our bodies in an attempt to control our sexual and reproductive powers. The socially constructed male "expert" who took on the role of "Dr." and "lover" facilitated the process of women hesitantly handing over the speculum and her own curiosity to a less qualified schmuck with questionable intentions. We were informed of our need for their expertise in becoming aware of our reproductive and sexual anatomy, but the information that was offered was interpreted through the words of a man and kept our familiarity at bay. I remember feeling so alienated from my body that the idea of sticking my finger into my vagina and feeling my cervix was about equivalent to shoving my hand down my throat and fingering my bronchial tubes. So, with my new "empowerment" attitude and recently aquired speculum, I reclaimed that precious territory and told the doctors to fuck off!

Let me give the readers some preliminary advice for pursuing the pink. The first obstacle (and I really hate to incorporate such a negative concept into the awesome experience of speculunking) is obtaining the instrument of inspection. A friend has told me that you can obtain a plastic one through your local woman friendly clinic such as Planned Parenthood or Family Tree. I would not settle for anything less than the paramount stainless steel kind that "real" doctors use for practical and symbolic purposes, but I'm sure the plastic ones are adequate. I was so in love with mine after I got it. I sat there for like an hour just caressing its smooth bills, turning its screws, depressing the clamps, and making that wonderfully distinct metallic cranking noise. I quickly became skilled at manipulating it with one hand, being able to open and fasten in one swift movement. It seemed surreal to have such a long forbidden object in my hands and at my disposal. I was ready to adventure. But, before I continue with the speculunking, let me inform the readers about accessing a metal speculum.

I began my search at the yellow pages under medical supplies which provided me with many numbers to call. But, the answer on the other end of the phone was a little less encouraging:

"Acme Medical Supplies, can I help you?"

"Yes, I'm looking for a vaginal speculum. Do you have one?"

"Uhh, yeah...What do you need it for?"

I was thinking to myself, now if I had called for crutches would they be asking me what I needed them for?

"Home use."

That usually signaled the end of the conversation. There were variances on the prototype phone conversation above, but I interpreted the general response to be, "As a responsible citizen that is looking out for the community, I detect this as some sick and twisted sexual frenetic undertaking, so even if I do have a speculum in stock and I need to sell it in order to save the store, I would not sell it to some crazy woman like you so you can go around looking at vaginas." Seriously, people act like speculums are illegal or something, in fact I would have had an easier time getting Cuban cigars. I finally got a hold of this company that collects all this old medical stuff from going-out-of-business type situations and the man on the phone said he had a speculum. I couldn't believe we actually got that far into the conversation...

"So, you do have one, a vaginal one, one that I can purchase?"

"Well, are you associated with some medical profession?"

At this point I wanted to tell him that I wanted the speculum for **SEXUAL REASONS ONLY** and that he could watch if he would just sell me the damn thing! But, instead of losing my cool, I played it cool.

"I'm a medical student."

"That sounds legitimate. Sure, come on down and I'll sell it to ya for five bucks."

Five bucks! A bonafide stainless steel AMA vaginal speculum. Sweet! I perservered and was rewarded generously. Needless to say my spec is my trophy, a symbolic piece that represents my triumph over the powers that be.

After obtaining your speculum, you have to recruit some willing participants. My experience in recruiting friends has been a mixed bag including the ones that won't talk to me anymore and the ones that are suspiciously over-anxious. For the most part, people think it's cool and are willing to open their minds and legs to it after some consideration. I think women are somewhat timid because of previous bad experiences, but ensure them of a comfortable, empowering experience. Women are better purveyors of speculunking because they are performing on bodies like their own and are able to take into account the mental and physical experience that it entails, and therefore can accomodate a woman's needs. Women can truly appreciate each other while reclaiming this appropriately female domain.

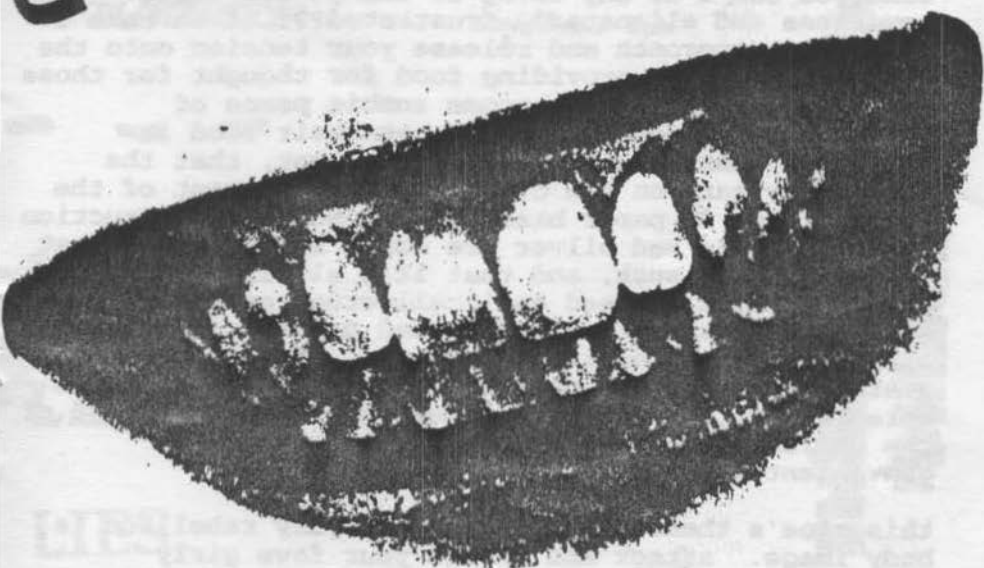
Technically speaking, there are a few bits I should extend to the readers. First, cleanliness is important in terms of the speculum. I wash mine with soap, rinse it, and then let it boil in some water. While I'm letting the water and speculum cool, I coax my friend into the bedroom for some relaxation (foreplay optional), pick out some music (recommend something mildly sensual like Cowboy Junkies' The Trinity Sessions), and soothingly prepare them for insertion of the spec. **THE SPECULUM MUST BE WARM!** The insertion of a cold speculum is not only notorious in male defined gynecology, but incredibly cruel, so be sure to keep it sitting in the warm water. Insert the speculum closed, handle side down and at a 45 degree angle. Once you have reached the hilt, turn the handle down so it is vertical. Now you are ready to open the vagina. There should be a lever that is attached to the upper bill of the spec that you push down to separate the walls of the vagina. You should have created a tunnel-like view leading back to the cervix. Secure this setting in place by turning the screw which is attached to the lever. You are now prepared to take a look...

I feel it is unethical to disclose what you will discover, but some fun things to look for include the cervix, the cervical os (which is the opening to the uterus), the many folds and wrinkles of the vaginal walls, and the interesting little puddles that form. You'll definitely need a mirror and a posable light (I use a flashlight) for maximum viewing pleasure, especially for the recipient so she can see for herself how lovely it is. There are many interesting variances on viewing the vaginal unit at different points in a woman's cycle. The point of menstruation offers a better

understanding of one's reproductive cycle, viewing a pregnant woman demonstrates the changes that the vaginal unit undertakes in preparing for childbirth, or perhaps speculunking with a woman who has reached menopause whose vaginal unit is preparing for the retirement of its reproductive capabilities. The diversity you will encounter when speculunking with other women is probably the most awesome experience you will have. I developed a greater appreciation for physiological diversity after my first speculunking experience with my grrrl, Leslie. That grrrl had lips that you could see from across the room, so I was a little intimidated to further divulge in her generously endowed genitalia. But, after befriending them with some tender kisses, they were very receptive to my curiosity as I began to languish into the beauty of the pink...

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.
INDULGE. DISCOVER. ENDEAR.
HAVE FUN, GRRRLS!

READING
LONGRRRL INK



MAKES ME
SMILE

ordinary everyday rebellion

infiltrate the mediocrity of mainstream life by executing some mildly offensive informative protest onto its intellectually desolate, passively ignorant, creatively bankrupt, stinking, stagnant, perspectiveless framework. status quo will hate you for it, but the kids will love you for it. it is incredibly effective in exposing injustice, bringing about awareness, extending "deep thoughts" to a larger audience, arresting and refreshing one's conscience, and holding people uncomfortably responsible. it's a personal protest that empowers and inspires. feel like you can't do any thing to change the world? feel powerless and alienated? frustrated??? then take a pro-active approach and release your tension onto the environment while providing food for thought for those who have unfortunately become zombie pawns of patriarchy and don't realize that their food is tasteless, that their votes don't count, that the money they earn on the clock (another figment of the imagination) is paper based upon a social construction that says gold and silver are worth killing for, that their TV shows suck, and that it's all lies, lies, lies. i think we need an intellectual overhaul, so exercise those critical minds and create some witty, pithy practical political primers. if you are in a state of ketosis and unable to maximize the creative cerebral cortical powers, then just take advantage of the ordinary everyday rebellion that i have conveniently provided.

this zine's theme for ordinary everyday rebellion is body image. attack and deface your fave girly periodical that insists on making money through pitting women against each other for the best body, hair, make-up, clothes, and, of course, the best man. deface blatant misogynistic magazines with the cowrrrrl ink stickers provided on the following pages. you'll need to take the master copy for the stickers over to a kinko's (maximize the scam-o-rama possibilities here, i.e. run off 10 copies, pay for 5 mentality), ask for some sticky backs for copying, and then run off some copies. try to do the copying yourself, to further habituate self-sufficiency and decrease economic liabilities. you're equipped for a day of political dissidence and social deviancy.

p.s. for those who are a little timid of handcuffs, i've found that stickering the array of magazines found at the library can be very satisfying without any risk.

MASTER COPIES...

VULGAR
OFFENSIVE
GARBAGE
USHERING
EXPLOITATION

cowgrrrl ink

LIES,

LIES,

LIES.

cowgrrrl ink

CONSPIRACY
OF
SEXIST
MISOGYNIST
OPPRESSORS

cowgrrrl ink

WARNING!
THIS MATERIAL HARMS WOMEN



COWGRRRL INK

this month:

*starvation

*hatred

*lies

exclusive! Interview with Cindy Crawford: "Why I portray unrealistic
ideals of women and perpetuate crippling body image complexes."

cowgrrrl ink

Perspectives...an accomplished writer's wisdom

She probably doesn't need an introduction, but for those who may be unfortunately unacquainted with Naomi Wolf, I would like to say a few words about this woman who rocks my world. Naomi is basically beyond definition and I cannot do her justice with my meager lexicon, but the one word that comes right to mind when I think of her is awesome. She is an incredibly right on woman. She knows her shit, articulates it in a witty, sophisticated manner, and arrests your mind with her flawless feminist scholarship which is refreshing and demanding, humorous and compelling.

In the following piece she offers her audience of graduating students at Scripps College a few words of advice, and I would like to extend them to my audience of cowgirls because they are the passionate and inspiring statements that are fundamental in Cowgirl Ink's philosophy. Literally, read it and weep. Let her words affect you and then we'll be able to fuel our generation of backlash fightin' generation X feminists that will fight "fire with fire."

Excerpts from "A Woman's Place" by Naomi Wolf

BREAK THE ULTIMATE TABOO IN YOUR LIFE: Ask for money in your lives. **Expect it. Own it.** Learn to use it. Little girls learn a debilitating fear of money—that it's not feminine to insure we are fairly paid for honest work. Meanwhile, women make 68 cents for every male dollar and half of marriages end in divorce, after which women's income drops precipitously.

Never choose a profession for material reasons. But whatever field your *heart* decides on, for god's sake get the most specialized training in it you can and hold out hard for just compensation, parental leave and child care. Resist your assignment to the class of highly competent, grossly underpaid women who run the show while others get the cash—and the credit.

Claim money not out of greed, but so you can tithe to women's political organizations, shelters and educational institutions. Sexist institutions won't yield power if we are just

patient long enough. The only language the status quo understands is money, votes and public embarrassment.

When you have equity, you have influence-as sponsors, shareholders and alumnae. Use it to open opportunities to women who deserve the chances you've had. Your B.A. does not belong to you alone, just as the earth does not belong to its present tenants alone. Your education was lent to you by women of the past, and you will give some back to living women and to your daughters seven generations from now.

BECOME GODDESSES OF DISOBEDIENCE. Virginia Woolf wrote that we must slay the Angel in the House, the censor within. Young women tell me of injustices, from campus rape cover-ups to classroom sexism. But at the thought of confrontation, they freeze into niceness. We are told that the worst thing we can do is cause conflict, even in the service of doing right. Antigone is imprisoned. Joan of Arc burns at the stake. And someone might call us unfeminine!

When I wrote a book that caused controversy, I saw how big a dragon was this paralysis by niceness. "The Beauty Myth" argues that newly rigid ideals of beauty are instruments of a backlash against feminism, designed to lower women's self-esteem for a political purpose. Many positive changes followed the debate. But, all that would dwindle away when someone yelled at me-as, for instance, cosmetic surgeons did on TV, when I raised questions about silicone implants. Oh, no, I'd quail, people are mad at me!

Then I read something by the poet Audre Lorde. She'd been diagnosed with breast cancer. "I was going to die," she wrote "sooner or later, whether or not I had ever spoken myself. My silences had not protected me. Your silences will not protect you....What are the words you do not yet have? What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day and attempt to make your own, until you will sicken and die of them, still in silence? We have been socialized to respect fear more than our own need for language."

I began to ask each time: "What's the worst that could happen to me if I tell this truth?" Unlike women in other countries, our breaking silence is unlikely to have us jailed, "disappeared" or run off the road at night. Our speaking out will irritate some people, get us called bitchy or hypersensitive and disrupt some dinner parties. And then our speaking out

will permit other women to speak, until laws are changed and lives are saved and the world is altered forever.

Next time, ask: What's the worst that will happen? Then push yourself a little further than you dare. Once you start to speak, people will yell at you. They will interrupt, put you down and suggest it's personal. And the world won't end...

And the speaking will get easier and easier. And you will have *fallen in love* with your own vision which you may never have realized you had. And at last you'll know with surpassing certainty that only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth. And that is not speaking it.

**All that you suspect about women's
friendships is true. We talk
about dick size."**

-Cynthia Heimel

"I got it.
grabbed it by my right hand
And when I grabbed it,
I gave it a yank.
And when I yanked it,
It twisted all at
the same time."

-Curtescine Lloyd, middle-aged Mississippian
who refused to cooperate with a would-be
rapist. Instead, Ms. Lloyd seized the assailant
by the salient portion of his anatomy, squeezing
persistently until he was incapable of committing
the intended crime.

"If I can't dance, I
don't want to be part of
your revolution."



Emma Goldman

go sweat it, grrrls.

ONE

**READ ME AND RELISH ME, THEN
RESERVE OR REROUTE ME**