



Issue #19

Spring 2009

HELLO! ♥

I'm not gonna lie to you, this zine was a little difficult to put together. I had a lot of thoughts and memories that simply needed to be put down on paper. The first few pages deal with assault, so please read this zine in a safe space. I guess this is sort of a "coming out" issue, as weird as it feels to say that. I must say though, I feel a lot happier now than I did when I first started writing it. I've said it before and I will say it again: Everything will work out fine. Thanks be to Mandy, Tukru, Chantal, Kate and everybody else who has helped me articulate myself through long letters, David for being an awesome boyfriend and you for reading this zine. Now go pour yourself a cup of tea or a glass of wine, sit down and enjoy.





I was thirteen
years old the
first time I

THIRTEEN

got drunk. My friends
lived in an apartment
above a shop downtown.
I was the youngest one in
the room, sat cross-legged
on the floor with a few other
people. We surrounded the
coffee table, which was
littered with magazines, weed,
empty bottles, scraps
of paper and such.
A boy, no, a man, sat
next to me and offered up
his Colt45.

I took a sip and passed
it back. He had some
more, passed it back
to me. I started
chugging it, wondering
what it felt like to
be drunk.

We listened to cassette tapes, some punk bands that escape me now. People came and went throughout the night. When they came, they always brought gifts of alcohol; cheap beer, cherry wine, gin... I tasted everything, learned what it felt like to be drunk. It got late. People made their way home, or crashed on the floor. Colt45 dude and I were lying on the couch, his arms were wrapped around me. I was comfortable, but I did not want anything more than that. I was ready to sleep like everyone else. He had wandering hands. They tickled my hips, they wandered up my shirt. I didn't know how to say no. I'd been drinking his beer all night and I felt like I owed him. [I'm well aware of how fucked up that is.] Every time he tried to reach down my pants, I rolled over, adjusted myself so he couldn't get in there. The room was silent, it was dark. I couldn't bring myself to speak. He kissed my neck and my ears and I played dead.

☺The best profit of future is the past.☺

I pretended I'd fallen asleep so that I wouldn't have to touch him. It felt like it lasted for hours, but I have no idea. He gave up eventually, fell asleep and so did I.

He was twenty-three, an entire decade older than me. I was still a few months away from entering high school.

When everyone else woke up, they congratulated me on surviving my first drunken night without a hint of a hang-over. "We thought for sure you'd puke! You're tough!" Later, one of the girls pulled me aside and said, "I saw the way he was touching you last night. You should be careful."

I saw him around town a couple of times after that. He towered over his teenage skater friends. They probably thought they were hot shit when they were hanging out with him. The girls, too. He had money and beer and he didn't have to go to school everyday. Everyone thought he was their cool older friend, but I see him now for what he really was: A predator.

LATER THAT SUMMER

~~XXXX~~ I was spending an afternoon with a friend. He was 15, we met when I became friends with his sister, who was in my grade eight class. We stopped by an acquaintance's place for a bit. He was 23, same as Colt45 dude. They shot the shit for a while, I was quiet like usual. I was wearing a t-shirt that I'd borrowed that morning. When it came time to go, one of them said, "Flash us." I said no, I thought they were joking. "We're not letting you leave this apartment until we see your tits." I refused. "Fine then," said the 15 year old. "But you're wearing my shirt. I want it back." I told him he was being crazy, but he threatened to take the shirt back right then and there.



He was strong, much stronger than I'll ever be. I imagined myself walking home topless and defeated, holding onto my breasts and praying not to be seen, even though it was a beautiful sunny afternoon. There was no way out. "It's my t-shirt," he explained. "So you have to take it off if I tell you to." "They're really small," I argued. "I don't know why you want to see them." But they were stubborn. I lifted my shirt and showed them my breasts, which had barely begun to develop. They stared and after a minute or so, they were satisfied. I pulled the shirt back down. "Okay, you can go now." We left and the incident was never spoken of. I never told a soul. I was completely ashamed of myself.

CAN SOMEONE PLEASE

TELL DUDES TO STOP

ACTING LIKE

TOTAL ASSHOLES

My old boyfriend used to liken me to a cat or a dog who would sit at the door waiting to be let out. But when the door finally opens, the animal just sits there, suddenly unsure of where it wants to go. He asked me, "Do you want in or out?" What he meant was, "Are you straight or are you gay?"

We had this conversation a lot. It was exhausting. Over and over again he would tell me to hurry up and make up my mind.

We met when we were seventeen. I was a clerk at 7-Eleven, he was a bag boy at the Value-Mart down the street. I watched him ride his bike past the store everyday. On one of the first days we were together he wore an old faded Bush t-shirt and I wore a white shirt with Hole's logo painted on. We walked down Russell Street and I observed, "We might as well have CUNT written across our chests." I thought I was totally hilarious but he didn't get it. He was so innocent.

We lost our virginity to each other that summer. I drank a bottle of red wine and proclaimed, "I want to fuck you and I'm not just saying that because I'm drunk!" We

turned up Nirvana really loud but that didn't stop his brother from hearing our awkward fumbblings in the next room.

For a while it seemed like he'd saved my life. Suddenly I had a reason to leave the house besides going to work and making my lonely trips to the public library (where I used to read many biographies on the likes of Mary Pickford, Marilyn Monroe, Greta Garbo and Jean Harlow). Suddenly I went to parties, suddenly I had friends, suddenly I had someone to cuddle up and listen to cassette tapes with. But after a while, we were just forcing it, I guess.

Five years later we were still together, living in the basement of a house we shared with his band (plus a girl friend that I dragged along to keep me sane). It was autumn and already so cold in there. An old friend asked me to join her at the Pride Parade in a nearby city. I was so excited - my first Pride! The boyfriend was meant to drive me halfway there where I was meeting up with another friend before the whole

shahang. In the days leading up to the event he made bitter comments, accused me of trying to cheat on him. I was honest with him. I told him why I wanted to go: I wanted to hang out with those friends that I don't get to see very often. I was tired of keeping secrets, I wanted to be in an environment where queer was the default, where I wasn't assumed to be straight. I wanted to spend the day surrounded by queer kids, I wanted to party with like-minded people. I thought maybe I could make new friends and Lindsay would feel a little less claustrophobic.

On the morning he was to drive me, he slept in. Drank too much the night before, played video games 'til sunrise. Slept 'til noon. I moped around the house all day and when he asked what was wrong I said, "I can't help but feel that you purposely slept in. You didn't want me to go." It was only a few nights before that he'd snuggled with me in bed and whined, "Why can't you be straight??"

One of our friends had just gotten his own apartment out of town and wasn't spending his weekends with us in Lindsay anymore. I felt like he was living a secret double life. He had his Lindsay Friends and his Out-Of-Town Friends. In Lindsay, we got drunk and ate pizza and watched The Simpsons every Sunday night. He told us odd facts he'd read online and stories of his travels in Europe. Outside of Lindsay, he was out. He never told us stories about his Out-Of-Town Friends, wouldn't let the two groups mingle. Maybe he was ashamed of us, his Small Town Friends or maybe he thought we'd think his City Friends were weird, who knows? It was almost this unspoken thing. Sometimes the boy would ask, "When are we going to meet your new friends?" but it was a joke because we knew we never would.




We found ourselves driving to his new place on a sunny afternoon armed with fliers for an upcoming show and a bottle of rum. He knew we were on our way, told us to call him from the parking lot. The boy and I talked about his secret friends. He said, "I don't care if he has a boyfriend, I just don't wanna see them kissing and stuff." "Well you kiss me in front of our friends, what's the difference?" "I don't know, it's just weird." No wonder we weren't allowed to mingle with his new friends. "Do you even hear yourself?" I asked. "Do you really like knowing that a supposedly good friend of yours is afraid of sharing his life with you?" I was really upset, not only by my boyfriend's homophobia but by the fact that I was also being alienated, simply by being with him. "I'm queer too, you know. Are you forgetting that?" It was a tense drive.

"What are you, a queer or something?" he joked when his brother showed up in a clean new pair of pants, a change from his usual grunge style. And I wanted to stand up and shout, "NO HE'S NOT BUT I AM."

their friends just to impress the boys. I always rolled my eyes and left the room. Gosh, I thought those girls were dumb. Those nights really fucked with me. I thought that they were really screwing things up for me, and for other girls who were confused about their sexuality by turning it into one big spectacle for the boys. I was embarrassed for them, but a little jealous, too. I wanted to kiss girls, but I didn't want the boys to watch me do it.

What's a girl to do? I learned to become a little less judgmental. I've



realized that those girls might've been in the same situation as me. Maybe they couldn't find another way either.

I don't remember when I started discussing my sexuality with the boy. Perhaps it was in the very beginning, but I don't like "coming out" so I usually just drop hints until people figure it out on their own or straight up ask me how I identify. He didn't take it seriously and it was too hard to explain. I just don't like the assumption that I'm straight. I don't like the way the whole world seems to assume that everyone they know is straight unless they are told otherwise. My mom once told me that she believes that coming out should either be expected of everyone, or no one at all. As in, "Mom, Dad, I'm straight, just so you know." She was only half-joking. My mom is a pretty awesome woman. She's funny and open-minded and she loves Pearl Jam and she raised twins on her own so I have massive amounts of respect for her. She always used to say, "If you have something to tell me, just tell me." She even asked me once, "Is your sister a lesbian? You can be honest with me." But I just can't bring myself to tell her that I'm queer.

Right then I thought about saying to her, "You know, just because I have a boyfriend doesn't mean I'm straight." But how weird is it to say that to your mom? Besides, sometimes I think she knows and she just doesn't wanna ask questions.

IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD

The first person I ever told was a girl named Chloe. She lived in England. We were both fifteen, sixteen and we used to exchange long letters across the ocean. We wrote about rocknroll and crushes and our love of Velvet Goldmine. She used to send me jewelry and foreign candy, magazine clippings of our favourite bands and pictures of herself wearing fairy wings and glitter makeup. We made elaborate packages decorated with neon ink and shiny stickers. We called ourselves bisexual then. I don't like that word anymore. It reminds me of Girls Gone Wild and that kinda bullshit. Boys perk up when they hear about a bisexual girl. I don't wanna be that girl. I'm strange. I'm queer.

The boy, he wasn't such a bad person, maybe he was just a bit too traditional for me. We never quite got along, but we always tried.

I used to leave little recipe cards in random places with the text, YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL on them. Eventually I grew tired of the cards, tossed them in the recycling bin and made stickers instead. He found them outside and scooped them up, saved them in a drawer, unbeknownst to me. On two separate occasions

I came
home

from
work and
found these cards
all over the house, on
the kitchen counter,



in the bathroom, on my craft table, the nightstand, the computer screen, on top of my typewriter, on the coffee table... Everywhere. I nearly cried. It was just too sweet.

Living with an angry confused queer girl was probably pretty fucking difficult sometimes.

We used to talk about getting married. At first it was "We'll get married when we're older." Then it was, "We'll get married when we have more money." Then it was ~~we~~ "We'll get married when you stop acting like such a bitch." We even looked at houses together. I feel like I just barely escaped.

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL



thoughtful

My twin sister is also queer. We never, ever talk about this. It's like we both know, but neither of us will say it out loud. We dance around the subject. We never discussed it at all, until I told her I was working on this zine. Because really, who wants to hear about their sibling's sex life? It's weird. But I'm hoping that

this is just a phase. Right now, we're young and shy. Perhaps as we become older and more comfortable (with our bodies, our beliefs and our lives), we will be able to share our stories with each other. After all, she is my best friend and an obvious ally.

I think it would be really interesting to do a study on the sexuality of twins.

This whole thing is a process for me. I'm still learning. I'm figuring out who to tell and how to say it. Sometimes the only

way I know to go about things is to write about it in a zine. I don't particularly like the idea of "coming out" but I need to talk about this shit and this is the only way I know how.

I feel like I'm not recognizable as a queer person. But I want people to know.

My old boyfriend knew, but refused to acknowledge it, except to sometimes glare at me if he thought I was flirting with another girl. Some of my friends know, some don't. It can be difficult to talk about. I worry that it's something my friends can't relate to, something that they just don't want to hear about. On the other hand, I worry that my queer friends might think I'm some sort of a fraud. I feel like I may not be taken seriously because I'm in a relationship with a guy. What could I possibly know about being queer?

“

THE COMMUNITY

” I want to meet other queer people,

especially girls who have been in my situation before. I want to continue my relationship with my awesome boyfriend, but still be surrounded by rad queer kids who wanna fuck shit up. I wanna say, "Hey, that girl's cute," without people looking at me funny. I wanna go to pride proms and parades. I want to speak my mind without being written off.

After all of the confusion and frustration with my old boyfriend, I was sure I wouldn't date another dude again. Not so soon, anyway. I very clearly remember lying in bed with him one night and saying, "You are the last guy I'm going to be with for a very long time." We had these nights where we would stay up and talk about how our lives could be so much better without each other. But in the morning, it was like it never happened. He was afraid of change, I was afraid of being lonely and poor. We weren't meant to be, we forced it for too long. We made plans that were never going to happen.

I had every intention of running away to a new city, creating a beautiful life for myself and dating girls. I was just waiting for the right time.

And then I fell in love with someone else. Another guy, imagine that. We wrote many secret letters to each other, and eventually I moved to Montréal to be with him. But not before warning him that I'm a crazy angry strange shy queer feminist girl. He said he's cool with that, so here I am. I'd still like to be able to talk about my queerness more. I'd like to be able to talk about my desire to be with other girls without him worrying that he doesn't make me happy or that I'm going to leave. Because I am happy and I am not going to leave, but I'm also not going to close the door on future possibilities. I'm not willing to let that part of my life go unexplored, unfulfilled.

I need to be able to articulate myself because I don't want this relationship to turn out like the last one.

MONTREAL LOVE

1

I LOVE THE ANONYMITY OF LIVING IN SUCH A BIG CITY. WHEN I WALK DOWN THE STREET, I'M NOT SO-AND-SO'S GIRLFRIEND, I'M NOT THE SALES CLERK FROM THAT WEIRD SHOP IN THE MALL, I'M NOT THE GIRL WITH THE COLOURFUL HAIR, OR NENA'S DAUGHTER, OR ONE OF THE TWINS. I'M JUST SOME GIRL THAT YOU MIGHT NEVER SEE AGAIN. I'M STILL SHY (SOMETIMES PAINFULLY SO). BUT I'M LESS SELF-CONSCIOUS. I CAN DO THINGS LIKE PICK UP PENNIES OFF THE GROUND WITHOUT WONDERING WHO'S WATCHING ME.

2

DAVID AND I WERE MAKING OUT ON THE COUCH ONE EVENING AND OUR NOSE RINGS GOT HOOKED TOGETHER. UNBEKNOWNST TO US, MY HORSESHOE HAD HOOKED ITSELF INTO HIS HOOP. WHEN WE PULLED OUR LIPS AWAY FROM EACH OTHER'S, WE WERE STUCK TOGETHER! MY NOSE BLED! HOW SEXY IS THAT? SOUNDS LIKE AN EMBARRASSING STORY TO SEND INTO SOME PUNK ROCK VERSION OF SEVENTEEN MAGAZINE OR SOMETHING.

3

I WISH THIS ISSUE CAME TO SOME SORT OF CONCLUSION, BUT IT DOES NOT. I'M STILL CONFUSED, I'M STILL FRUSTRATED, AND I'M STILL PROCESSING MY THOUGHTS. SOMETIMES I THINK I'D LIKE TO LIVE A DOUBLE LIFE, HAVE A BOYFRIEND ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS, AND A GIRLFRIEND ON THE REMAINING DAYS. PERHAPS I AM DAMNED TO ALWAYS WANT WHAT I CANNOT HAVE. I DON'T KNOW. ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'VE FINALLY SAID WHAT NEEDED TO BE SAID... FOR NOW.

FIGHT

BOREDOM

WITH

ZINES

!!!

Conestoga #1 sickbdATmizzou.edu

This zine really struck me the first time I read it, and I've read it several times since. I love the kind of honest, personal zine you can read over and over again. Sarah writes about attending university and majoring in Women's & Gender Studies. Although assumed by her classmates to be an ally, she is in fact queer and is learning about how to deal with her sexuality, come out to her friends, and become more visible as a queer girl. She also includes short childhood tales (like asking her mother if two women could marry each other), and the importance of her summer camp experiences. I really enjoyed this zine, and recall writing a long letter to the author as soon as I'd finished reading it.

Motor City Kitty #11 and #12 motorcity_kittyATyahoo.com

Motor City Kitty has been one of my favourite perzines for a long time and I consider Bri to be a good friend of mine. In issues 11 and 12, she writes about shedding her past identity as bisexual, coming to terms with her queer identity, and trying to help her friends understand it. We're both in the same boat, in that we both had some major sexual confusion whilst in long-term relationships with guys, and felt the need to get out and explore. Bri also writes about bicycle trips, exploring small town train tracks and other such adventures. Love her!

Larceny #23 still_illATnewdisorder.com

This zine made it to nearly thirty issues before I ever heard of it and I feel like a total loser because it is so, so awesome. This is your classic quarter-size cut and paste perzine, complete with typewritten text, rub-on letters and vintage maps and clippings. It includes the amazing line, "A fear of women's anatomy runs parallel with a fear of women in general, dipshit," written after a conversation with a co-worker who was talking about his ex-girlfriend's pierced clitoris, but was too embarrassed to actually SAY the word CLITORIS. Score one for the ladies! Shaun writes about coming out as queer after many years of denial/confusion. This zine kept me busy for the better part of a Greyhound trip from Ottawa to Montréal, and hunting down some more issues has been added to my summer to-do list.

Open Your Eyes And Make A Wish / Ouvrir Les Yeux Et Faire Un Vœux / Abre Los Ojos Pide Un Deseo riotcocoATgmail.com

Possibly one of the most interesting zines I've picked up in a long time. Coco writes about being a genderqueer person, "WTF trans expression" and anger in English, French and Spanish. Drawings and quotes are peppered throughout. Not only is it a very interesting read, but it's helping me practice my French!

QUEER



THE PRIVILEGE TO IMAGINE MORE

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