The cackling of Crones together cracks the man-made universe. It creates a crack through which Cacklers can slip into Realms of the Wild. Laughing Out Loud is the Virtue of Crackpot Crones who know we have only Nothing to lose.

Mary Daly

Outercourse:
The Be-Dazzling Voyage
EDITOR'S NOTE:

Recently, the Lesbians For Lesbians collective decided to proceed with a rotating editorship for THE LESBIAN OUTLOOK. Until now, most of the responsibilities and time-intensive production work for the OUTLOOK have been taken on by a few committed, hard-working collective members. We decided we could better share the production work of the OUTLOOK if each member of LFL rotated into the position of editor (or editors) issue by issue. Thus, from now on, each issue of THE LESBIAN OUTLOOK will have a different/new editor and the content will change with each new dyke in charge. Hopefully, this dykely method of production will create Sparky Diversity in the content of the OUTLOOK that will reflect the myriad of complementary ideas and values of the dykes in Lesbians For Lesbians.

Lesbians For Lesbians welcomes all news stories, graphics, etc., about lesbian separatist reality from dykes all over this planet (and dykes from Other planets, too!). If you are interested in writing a feature story for the OUTLOOK, please contact us at the address below. Also, we'd love it if you could subscribe to the OUTLOOK. Send us your address and as generous a donation as possible for production costs. $3, $5, $10, $20... whatever you can afford is fine.

LFL
PO Box 1062
Greenfield, MA 01302

As editor of issue #7, I would like to thank Nett Hart, Batya Bauman, Joyce Contrucci and Liz Levy for their articles on living in radical connection with the Earth. Particularly important in this issue is F.G.'s Naming of the atrocity of the ritual abuse of animals-- thank you. Liz Levy created the beautiful cover art and graphics for this issue and also spent many hours doing lay-out work and xeroxing- you're an amazon, Liz. In short, all of the lesbian words on these pages are inspiring and inspired; thank you to all the contributors.

Melissa Hall
Hull, MA
GREETINGS FREE FLYING DYKES!

Welcome to issue #7 of THE LESBIAN OUTLOOK—alias, The Lesbian Look-Out. This issue of the OUTLOOK is for all of us life-loving revolutionary dykes who are Looking Out from the putrid patriarchal planetary necropolis to See/experience/create a Wild, Earthy, Lesbian-identified Present and Future. Part of our work as Look-Outs is to name sadism, man's favorite pastime (and present time, all-the-time), in all of its man-ifestations and to make the connections between the sadism acted out on our lesbian/woman bodies and the bodies of animals and the Earth. The main focus of this issue, then, is lesbians choosing biophilia as a radical lesbian ethic and living/be-ing this ethic by separating our Selves from the synthetic male State of Decay and leaping with all sentient life on planet Earth to a spiritual/physical place of revolutionary reconnection.

From my Look-Out position now, I see the boys enjoying an ever-expanding, planetary playground of simulated/synthetic reality built with the dismembered parts of the spirit-matter that is all Living be-ings of this universe. As lesbians we clearly see that the boys' favorite toys are women/wives. They dismember our minds/spirits (and our bodies when they can), and with our fragmented parts they build the heterosexual female on whose life-blood they depend for survival/domination. Likewise, they dismember the bodies of any non-human animal they choose to eat, fuck, torture, study, wear (usually a combination of these) and use their parts to build more lies/toys to fill the necrophilic playground. These toys are always products of male violence and lust for death and once they are produced, they are used to validate their own fragmented existence and are further exploited by the patriarchy to create ever more hollow, sadistic toys for the boys. Much of the most disastrous dismemberment perpetrated by the white male species is done to the Earth. To men in power or any male in the vast fixated fields of science, the Earth is the biggest playground short of the cosmos. The patriarchs dismember her organic chemicals and from these parts they produce carcinogens, nukes and plastics to play with for thousands of years to come. There is literally no place on Earth where male sadism is not made manifest through multi-levelled dismemberment of female minds, animal bodies and all organic matter.

As lesbian feminists and separatists, we know that the primary lust of the patriarchal male is sadism. We know that the intent of the sadist is to objectify, violate, destroy the Other's integrity and ultimately/preferably, kill and dismember the Other. We know that we are the Other, the intended victims/toys of the sadists. Whether the male playground is a rape-camp in Bosnia, a neo-nazi rally in Germany or Colorado, or an experimental animal laboratory at Harvard Medical School, it is still the same deadly fascist game. After dismembering our spirits/minds, the boys produced our roles in their game. Unfortunately, we are sometimes excellent players, energizing their cause, participating in the dismemberment
of our own kind. This seems to be particularly true when it comes to non-human animals. Participating in the sadism/death ritual of eating the bodies of dismembered animals and purchasing their skins as fashionable clothing perpetuates patriarchy and bonds us in necrophilia with our oppressors. We have the choice to either identify with the sadists and carry out their game plan or to bond in strength with animals as allies and co-conspirators who have spirits, minds and purposes of their own. To participate in the objectification and oppression of animals and the Earth is, as Marjorie Spiegel has written, "to say that we would rather be more like those who have victimized us, rather than like those who have also been victims. Let us remember that to the oppressors, there is often very little difference between one victim and the next."  

I believe that lesbian feminists, especially separatists, have a profound desire to stop male sadism from penetrating into our lives. We do not create this malevolence that binds our minds and keeps us stuck in their perpetual cycles of refined sadism. I propose that we give their death rituals back to them and sever our remaining ties to the patriarchs by living in radical, biophilic connection with each other and other sentient life.

At the core of our unnatural disconnection from animals is the patriarchal rule/tool of divide and conquer. We have been tricked into believing that what is naturally good and free and wild—animals, the Earth and the Elements—should be subject to us and serve our needs. Domesticated into double-think/reversal, we perceive wild non-human beings as having no true essence, spirit and individuality. The patriarchs pronounce, as Descartes did, that animals are really nothing more than unfeeling, clone-like machines. Thus, all animals, from the smallest insect to the largest whale, have been stripped of their identities in the real sense that their identities have been rendered invisible to us. In the past few years, lesbians have seen a new, creepy erasure of our identities under the guise of queerness. We have been equated with gaymen, bisexuals, transsexuals and any other gender-fuck sadist or masochist who wants a ready-made community to serve his purposes. I believe that the erasure of lesbian identity, lesbian uniqueness and the inherent anti-maleness of lesbianism is part of the same patriarchal plot as the erasure of the identity of animals; it is a plot to trick us into hating what is truly Wild and Free.

Hopefully, the articles, art, etc., in this issue of THE LESBIAN OUTLOOK will inspire us all to keep making the connections between loving lesbians and loving all truly Wild beings. It is through our reconnection with the Wild that we will re-awaken what Mary Daly has named our Elemental Memory, re-membering a profoundly Separatist Future, finally.

Melissa Hall

Notes:

8 Reasons Why I Hate Sadomasochism
Minneapolis, MN 10/92

by F.G.

1. At the pride parade a float occupied by members of an SM group was stopped for a few minutes in front of where I was standing. They were yelling "we want more slaves" and making sexual comments about people in the crowd.

2. In art school, as a queer and artist, I was expected to defend Mapplethorpe's SM pornography.

3. I don't want to go to screenings of lesbian films and videos anymore after seeing lesbians urinate on each other at the Walker and lesbian porn at Film in the Cities.

4. A sticker by Loring Park that said "Sadism is abuse". On it someone had written "Sadism is sexual freedom" and 2 womyns symbols.

5. A rape scene was performed on stage at the East Coast Lesbian Festival.

6. At the U of M Coming Out Day Rally there was a dominatrix of ceremonies and one speaker included being proud to be sadomasochists in his list of what lesbians and others should be proud of.

7. As a child and teenager I was used by my parents and others in SM practices including being chained up, raped, tortured, urinated on, locked in cages, and master/slave scenarios.

8. The final reason I hate SM is because I may have read this in the presence of lesbian sadomasochists who found it erotic or others who will tell me that I don't understand how empowering sadomasochism really can be or that I am being oppressive to SM lesbians.

RITUAL ABUSE OF ANIMALS by F.G.

I am a survivor of ritual/cult abuse. Most of it occurred in the context of "religious" ceremonies, and was perpetrated by people who identified themselves alternately as christians, satanists, and witches. I was forced to participate in the torture, killing, cooking and eating of both animals and people. The connection between meat and death/torture for me comes mainly from the abuse I suffered and witnessed. Abusing animals this way is accepted as "normal" and "natural" in patriarchy.

As a child I was put in situations in which I was made to think that if I didn't kill an animal or insects that I would be killed by them. My perpetrators used similar tactics to try to make my sister and I relate to each other only through betrayal and pain. They tried to destroy any possibilities of me having real non-oppressive connections with other wimmin and animals. The only ways my perpetrators wanted me to be able to relate to anyone/thing were as an oppressor or a victim. Being a Lesbian separatist and a vegetarian are ways I work to break away from cult programming and move towards feminist connections with Lesbians, Wimmin, Animals, the Earth, and myself.
COUNTRY HOSPITALITY, COMPASSION AND COMMUNITY

By Nett Hart

Foreston, Minnesota

The visitors. It's part of what I like about being a land dyke. Most of the weekends are spoken for and often weekdays as well. Nobody drops by for a cup of tea. Visitors come for a whole day and most stay over at least one night. I'm 1½ hours out of the city, but a world away and the long visits reflect a perception I share that it takes a while to really get here.

Not all my visitors are close friends. Lots of dykes who call asking to visit for the weekend have homes I'll never be invited to. I don't advertise as a resort or vacation place. I do welcome dykes to visit and there is no shyness even on the part of total strangers. Some visitors ask to stay a week, a month. Some come willing to work. Some bring food. Every country dyke knows how it goes.

I like life on the land and I want as many dykes to share that as possible. I want dykes to visit and find new resources within themselves to resist patriarchy. I want dykes to visit and decide they could choose this life. I want this place where I home and wild myself to be open to others to do the same. I want dykes to see the reality of life on the land and flesh out my context, to place this life choice in reality, not fantasy. This life is a political act, a boycott of as much patriarchy as possible, a self-loving choice, not a sacrifice. In this it is healing: healing my Lesbian self, healing the connection between dyke and nature, healing the earth.

What does it mean to live where there is a flux of visitors that come for healing, for finding their center? How can we live our lives, make available the space for healing, and not get personally exhausted dealing with so many wimmin? How can we remain centered when we witness so much turmoil in a succession of visitors that it becomes routine?

Even friends who come to visit are often out of center. Would they be surprised to know that I have those days, too, here in eden? I don't deny it. Yet there is something in the stresses here that seldom undermine my agency. If something is broken I fix it, even though land dykes are not automatically endowed with innate mechanical ability. If it is the need to respond to the season, the weather, it is all a part of the life here. And although I work long and hard, I work at my own pace.
I need certain things for my centeredness. I need time alone in the woods, time alone with my projects. I need a certain continuity of land work that assures the harvest will happen before frost no matter how many dykes have emotional crises here. I need to live my values, specifically my disengagement from the patriarchy, without having to answer to visitors why I am vegan, why I have no TV, why this is chem-free, pet free, male free and violence free space.

Visitors who come for healing usually have no shortage of leisure time and yet their concept of healing is idleness, and believe that idleness can be found in the country, you know, idyllic. I have even been "confronted" by such wimmin for working too hard, which must mean, disturbing the romance. The labor I do is directly related to my wellbeing and that of my guests. I do a lot of things I want to do. I do some things that need doing, but I recognize that not everything on the list is ever going to be done and I'm at ease with that.

Where does the assumption come from that healing to the self takes place in an absence of action, that only when free of all work responsibilities can we be healed? From the land I have learned that work creates a relationship, that in the daily reproduction of our lives splitting wood and cutting hay, digging in the earth and gathering wild fruit we find a rhythm that puts the self into perspective. What we can share with our healing-seeking visitors is the rhythm of that work, projects that concretely provide food or shelter or medicine.

And what is to be done about the wimmin you have accomodated in your home who in turn are inhospitable to other wimmin who have come for many of the same reasons? Can we expect that in creating an abundance of space to be Lesbian that the largeness of this vision will open others to it? This is a source of much disappointment to me as I often have overlapping visitors and it is the rare visitor who in seeking solace, offers solace. We cannot wait until we feel "healed" to become compassionate beings. Community begins in taking one another where we are now and that includes accepting ourselves as makers of community even as we are healing.

I make no claims to be a simple person, but I endeavor to make simple my life. The fewer ways I engage the patriarchy, the better I succeed in that simplifying. I am anti-consumerist because consumerism wastes the earth's resources, exploits the most economically vulnerable peoples worldwide and encourages the system that is killing all life. Visitors bring consumer habits not only in the form of designer clothes for outdoor wear (I can't ask them to get dirty in) but also to the relationship with the land, "taking" pictures, planning one-day spiritual quests, overpicking wild plants. As westerners, part of our healing is an end of consumption, an end of seeing the universe as available for our use. If my visitors, in seeking healing from this environment, consume rather than create this relationship, then they could have this experience anywhere. How do we emphasize the discontinuity of Lesbian land with the patriarchal mind without seeming to make endless rules? I know I am not responsible for the quality of any visitor's experience, yet I need to remove my life and my personal presence from the shelf of consumables.

And this might be the core of my question. Beyond my social needs for Lesbian community, I believe in offering my home and myself to Lesbians in need, especially when that need coincides with what I have to offer. I do not want to be compensated for my time. I don't really want to be given time in the city in...
I’ve been trying to remember what it felt like to be a Gay kid. The effort is like forcing myself to walk, unsteady, back into a war zone. Though I almost immediately loved being Gay and enjoyed every moment of joy I could steal, there could have been no more emotionally — and often physically — vulnerable feeling than the abrupt reality of a world beginning to preach, teaching, and safeguarding against me.

I was only a kid! How could it have happened? Overnight my very tender, new, deliciously overwhelming emotions had become criminal. My tasty clothes, illegal. My best friend judged a sinner, influence. I was in enemy territory with no rights but silence, no sustenance but untried inner strengths, no peers but that 14-year-old friend turned lover. And I knew no choice but to deny myself or hide.

Lee Lynch

What kind of barbarity was this? I might as well have been a prisoner and tortured. My severe depressions, my escape into liquor and drugs, my lousy school grades — what in Hell did the world expect from a teenaged prisoner of war? There are no Geneva conventions binding anyone when it comes to a kid who falls in love with someone of the same sex.

Over 30 years later the change has begun. Candace Steele is Northwest Regional Director of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. She’s also mother of three daughters, one of whom is non-Lesbian. A licensed professional counselor, Steele is investigating ways to serve children who have recognized their Gay sexuality.

The problem Steele has encountered is the extreme liability of professionals attempting to help this particular client population. One clergyman she knows has had to purchase an enormous amount of additional insurance just to provide such support. How many brave people can afford the risk of entering the war zone?

According to a 1989 U.S. Health and Human Services report on youth suicide, Gays account for 26 percent of the 5,000 suicides committed in America every year by people from the ages of 15 to 24. That’s a lot of dead kids, Americans who are obliterated in a war far deadlier and more morbid than any mumps-up invasion of foreign soil. The same report found that conflicts over sexual identity force 26 percent of Gay youth to leave home. What will they go face now? How many of the runaways, the homeless, the institutionalized, the street statistics, the dying — how many represent Gays who didn’t make it out there on the streets?

I was lucky. My family could afford to send me to college. I immediately got into trouble, lots of trouble, but it’s easier to talk problems on camping than downtown. I lied, I bid, I used my talents and I probably hurt people, but somehow I survived. There were two Gay role models who befriended me, some downtown exemplars moral enough to understand that my humanity was as precious as theirs, an old high school gym teacher who acknowledged our common bond. That’s all it took from the adult world: a few courageous people who were willing, each in her/his own way, to say “You’re OK.”

All around me, though, I watched other kids fare less well. The boy who called himself bisexual and subsisted from shame. The girl who needed she was not a person, a sexual being. And the young woman who dropped out, confusion sapping her energy and study time. The dopers and drinkers so lost to chemicals it didn’t matter who they were or what they had in their sexuality, or whom they shared it with.

Some of us were nourished by our very defiance. Even as society disapproved, a rebel culture emerged. For Gays it became Stonewall and that liberating night propelled us into a slow, slowly evolving world that produced such miracles as P-Flag.

In the early ‘70s I lived in a women’s collective. One night two teenaged Lesbians showed up on our doorstep. They were in love, and had run away from home. I’d seen those two before, smoothing in hundreds of ill-lit hallways, thrown out of Gay bars, locked behind heavy doors in psychiatric wards, the streets wildly threatening to kill themselves while friends calmed, dragged them away. Jail was; we were called in the ’60s, sisters in the ’70s. Those two made it to Lesbian adulthood, though not together. But to this day Gays yearn, many from fear or convenience. They consume themselves with partying because the real world was too hard. To this day few can say in relationships, if you hate yourself, how do you respect a partner? Garbage, they are still garbage tossed out by society, herded into closets and told it’s their own fault if they hurt. And they do hurt, daily they’re damaged, mutilated by the scourges of isolation, scorn, discrimination, random violence, rejection and self-images so low they don’t register on any scale. How do they grow up at all?

This year Massachusetts has created the first state commission committed to reducing the Gay, teen suicide rate. The consequences of such a move, initiated by Gov. William Weld, may be enormous. If New York had had such an entity when I was a baby dyke, would it have made a difference? I think so. I guess as every feeling could find. Just knowing a governmental body was concerned, knew I was out there, wounded would have strengthened me. Certainly the commission will eventually have an impact on the hurdles faced by counselors like Ms. Steele. It’s a big step in ending the war on Gay youth.

I sometimes run into an androgynous baby-faced young woman in town these days. She wears an old coat that looks heavier than her. And boots, big dyke boots. When our eyes met I imagined that hers went wide in music recognition. It’s territorially exciting to be on the verge of living your real life. I want her to be able to enjoy being who she is. Finally, I can, but it’s all too easy, looking at her, to feel again all the bruises and terror of Gay youth; to, even now, feel the wounds of my battle.
WHAT IS LOVING ANIMALS ALL ABOUT?
by Batya Bauman

Looking through what is perhaps the most popular lesbian publication of "personals," I discovered that many women in their self-descriptions claim to love animals. Fascinated by this, I perused the publication more carefully, reading each description, and here are some statistics I came up with:

Of a total 149 entries, 19 expressed that they either loved, liked or lived with cats, 12 with dogs, 5 with horses, 4 with birds, 1 with a chicken, 5 with "pets," and another 51 just said they loved animals. That makes 98 out of 149, or almost two-thirds who felt strongly enough about animals in their lives to mention it in a self-description meant to attract a partner or losing friend who would share this love of animals. Many made a point of saying they were gentle, kind and nonviolent and sought those qualities in other women.

It was, therefore, amazing to me that only one woman stated that she was a vegetarian, and only two stated they were involved in animal rights issues.

Several questions occur to me about the many self-described "animal lovers" in the women's community. Are these women feminists? Do they apply feminist analysis to their lives and especially to their relationships with animals? Does it mean that the women who profess love for animals accept vegetarianism as so pedestrian that it does not warrant mentioning in a self-description? Or, was there really only one vegetarian among them? How were the dogs, cats, birds and horses they live with acquired? Were they rescued animals, or were they purchased from pet shops or breeders? Are all the animals spayed or neutered? Do these women love only their cute, cuddly pets in an objectifying way, or do they feel empathy for all that walks, runs, creeps, flies, slithers, swims, pulsates with life and feeling? Do they love animals enough to rescue a starving homeless dog scrounging for food in a garbage dump, or do they look the other way, pretending not to see this animal, pretending there is no problem? Do they love animals even while piercing a worm and working it onto a fish hook and then hooking a fish who struggles in its own way, not having a voice to cry out its pain, while it slowly bleeds and suffocates, flopping about until the last trace of life fades away?

Is working with animals, such as breeding pedigrees, driving carriage horses, working in pet shops, performing with animals, an expression of love for animals? Many men engaged in the pornography industry claim to love women. And what of horseback riding?

Must we love animals? Or should we, rather, respect animals?

It is not necessary to love animals to respect them. We can still do something to alleviate suffering. All animals deserve respect, and not only the cute, cuddly respect we love. If we really cared about animals, we would not objectify them, and we would not eat them. Loving an animal is the icing on the cake. Respecting all life is really what's important.

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PO Box 10017
North Berkeley Station
Berkeley, CA 94709

KILL MEN, NOT ANIMALS
LESBIANS AND NATURE
Our Revolutionary Relationship
by Liz Levy

What we are trained to expect of this dog is as much a patriarchal plan as femininity/heterosexuality. Both of these domesticated stereotypes are designed by and for men. Both are roles that deny the place/space where wimmin and nature were/are connected/communing. Men reign supreme because they have been ordering us unrecognizable to one another as ally/important/whole.

Their authority is violently taken and is reenforced through dismemberment of all threatening (self-sustaining) Life/Be-ings. This is done through pin ups, slaughterhouses, the dinner meal, the daily rape. Male supremacy tightly pulls wimmin into a fear/hate of Life through their "commandment" to kill/destroy and the resulting scarcity of unfragmented Selves. Our participation in the consuming of animals keeps Lesbians from realizing how obviously/frantically men enforce necrophilic dependence. Wimmin are not the only ones they need to break into holes.

Wholly untold is the strength and abundance of psychic and social diversity that living in harmony with the cosmos reflects. The male plot (as in R.est I.n P.ieces) is ripped out of their control and into ours when Separatists choose to care for all Life. The potential of Separatist reality expands with untamed confidence when the evil purpose of male supremacy is judged as a perpetual pimper of dependence on and destruction of what is naturally good.

The numb name animals and the Earth: "created to consume". The processing of creation. Wimmin are forced similarly. We are built to breed. Animals are built to be bred. And so no animal can be murdered, as no insatiable womyn can be raped. Men reduce wimmin, animals, and the Earth to psychic holes, wholly for their enjoyment, appeasement, and comfort. Domestication/dependence/depletion, convenience, and other assorted assistance is paraded as my benefit.

I am in the process of reassessing what I want to create, what to hate. I locate my abilities and vision for Biophilic breaking away through identification with whole selves. An interpretation of Otherness that takes flight with the creating of Lesbian community and ethics of Wild Self-determination is possible through my respect and commitment to Lesbians, the Earth, animals, and the Elements.

*much of my re-shaping is due to the Elemental Feminist Philosophy and words of Mary Daly.

Other, capitalized, means: "an awesome sense of Otherness from patriarchal norms and values" that is a "conscious choice".

Alone Again Naturally: On Self-Sufficiency and Female Creativity

By Joyce Contrucci

(The following is an edited version of a talk delivered at the W.I.T.C.H. Lecture Series on 14 April 1987, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA.)

While drawing my thoughts together on female creativity, I was pleasantly taken with the insight that I am continually engaged in the highly creative process of fashioning my daily life and in so doing, I am unfolding my Self. The process involves putting together in new and nourishing ways the elements of my existence. It involves breaking damaging perceptual sets that keep me stuck in patriarchal definitions of my life. It involves discarding mechanical and formulaic actions and reactions which keep me imprisoned in his system instead of spinning in my own cycles. Creating my own life requires making spontaneous connections between my feelings and experiences; between my sensations and thoughts; between my life and my dreams -- connections which catapult me into new ways of Being. It requires what is naturally available to us all -- consciousness, common sense, and a fierce determination to grow...

While thinking about creativity I had another insight. That is, in creating my daily life, I am alone. I don't mean isolated. I mean I am the only one who can do it. The energy is mine; the evaluative processes are mine; the choices are mine; the elements from which I construct my life are my own sensations, perceptions, feelings, dreams, body...The more I understand the aloneness of the creative process and act from that understanding, the more I like it. It's exhilarating to take responsibility for my life. It's deeply satisfying to do what I need for my Self.

That brings me to the related reality of self-sufficiency -- i.e. maximal reliance on my own energy and personal resources and minimal dependency on outside and/or professional help -- as I go about the business of creating my daily life... It wasn't until relatively recently, however, that I have had what in this day is a privilege of homesteading a small piece of land to provide my own food while replenishing the Earth from which I take. I never dreamed how much this experience would teach me about my needs, my abilities, my Self and my responsibility to the Earth and her creatures. I am still emerging from the heavy layers of insensitivity and obtuseness that separate me from Nature and from my Self...

In this paper I want to discuss some of what I have discovered about creativity and aloneness as I work in the garden through the seasons of the year for Self and Self-sufficiency.

SPRING

This is the time of rebirth, of regeneration, of veriditas/greening. It is a tender time and one full of vigor and energy. The air is alive with the sounds and the smells of life starting over again. As I take in the garden so recently released from Winter's grip, I am amazed by the urgency of the Earth to recreate herSelf and I am horrified to find how life-less I feel. Why can't Spring happen in me with the same rush and certitude that I witness all around me? Even the grasses and weeds long dormant in the composted soil of the houseplants have emerged as the vernal equinox approached. The tuberous begonia, deeply buried in peat moss and stored in the darkest corner of the cellar, has, from some incomparable wisdom, sent forth its slender shoots in anticipation of light, air, food. Ah, yes, food. Suddenly I am filled with an urgency and the certitude that if I don't join in the activity of Spring (if not in her Spirit), I will have to buy chemically-grown, hybrid, sterile transplants for
The garden this year. I am perfectly capable of growing my own seedlings and that without forcing them with man-made substances.

So I gather the pots, the soil, the seed packets while I ruminate on what to plant and how much of each I really do need. These decisions made, I drop each seed in a shallow hole, gently yet firmly cover it with soil and then water. As I plant, my thoughts turn to the seeds themselves. The variety of their colors, their sizes, and the totally unique promise of life each type holds within it. I ponder the growing power in even the tiniest cabbage seed and the friendly, supportive conditions of light, air, Earth, and water which release its self-contained energy. Surely my Self is such a powerhouse and if I don't feel the quickening of Spring perhaps it's because I have been too careless this year with the conditions surrounding me. A thorny thought — too thorny to consider just now. Yet as my mind runs away from it, I notice I have already begun to feel more alive just by planting and watering these seeds. By participating in their well-being, I am creating my well-being. Smiling ever so slightly as I clean up the mess I made, I remind myself, yet again, that it's in the doing, doing for my Self, that I come into Being.

As the days pass my attention is riveted on those little pots and hope starts sprouting inside me — hope for their sprouting, for my future food, for my Self-sufficiency, hope that it really is true that I, like these seeds, have the power in me to create my life. Finally, there they are, those green tips moving toward the light, toward the open air, through what must feel like tons of soil to them... Defying gravity, they invariably rise and that helps me believe that I too have the unerring movement in my Self toward freedom and all the patriarchs in patriarchy cannot confuse me as to which direction that is — up and OUT. Already I am beginning to create the conditions of my growth — belief in my Self and my abilities...

Seeds sprout into seedlings and seedlings grow into transplants which must be strong enough to withstand uprooting, outdoor climate, and relocation to the garden soil. The transplant is prepared for this final transition in a cold frame where it basks under glass in the warmth of the Spring sun and finds protection overnight from cold temperatures and unexpected frosts. Everything seems to be growing well but I must not slacken my attention and care. Their still delicate systems cannot long withstand drought and it would take forgetting to lower and close the glass covers on just one frosty might nip their tender growth forever.

As I review my own growth, I am amazed that I ever developed as much as I did under necrophilic, patriarchal conditions. Proof positive of the power of female creativity. Now I am about the business of patiently and purposefully spreading out roots deeper and deeper, pushing out more and more growth, hardening off to withstand full-time exposure to inclement conditions. Some days I am right on schedule and other days I am literally beside my Self with his business — queuing up on his highways for hours to get to his institutions, to teach his courses, on his schedule, for his pittance. Cut off and distracted from my Self, I end such days exhausted from the fragmentation. I queue up again and head home, my head aching, my heart pounding, my thoughts scattered, my feelings deadened, my body weirdly disembodied. This is the worst. I am not going to make it, I think. I do not have the energy. Just then I pull into the driveway. I am surrounded by grand sights and sounds and smells — the old cedar looming overhead, the chickadee contemplating a morsel of food, the lilac spreading her fragrance like a heavy blanket. Patriarchy recedes.

Later in the evening after I close the covers on the transplants in the cold frame and the back door on me, I begin to reconstruct my day and recreate my Self. Awareness returns. Feelings gradually emerge. My thoughts become my own again and I name. I gather strength to harden off a little more tomorrow by becoming taller, firmer, louder. More visible and audible than yesterday.

With time and continued attention and caring, the transplants will harden-off
properly. In the meantime, the garden must be prepared. The winter rye seeded
in the beds in the Autumn is now 2-4 inches tall. It must be turned under. Its
roots and greenery will decay into rich nourishment for the transplants to come.
The shock of their uprooting will be softened by this lavish welcome. I turn the
garden soil by hand with a fork that's just my size; I use it as an extension
of my arms, as an augmenter of my strength. I do not like putting machines be-
tween mySelf and my task. The energy substitution is almost always exploitative
of Nature, diminishes my ability to do for mySelf, makes me dependent upon another
source of power, and destroys the relationship between me and the Earth -- i.e.
interfacing with the machine, its motions, its noises, becomes the experience. I
lose the attention to detail I need to keep me responding to the life of the garden.

After turning and time, the soil is aerated and fertile. The transplants are
vigorous enough to stand alone. All that remains is the setting of the plants in the
Earth. But even now, solicitude for the unique needs of each plant must continue
and I must be certain to clump together plants which are friendly and will encour-
age each other's growth while protecting each other from predators. This, very
aptly, is called companion planting. Tomatoes like to grow with onions and basil
but find it difficult to be themselves in the company of cabbages and potatoes.
Beans celebrate with carrots but feel depressed with garlic. It all has to do with
auras of sorts and complimentary growth patterns. Just because a transplant is
ready for the main garden does not mean it can be casually situated.

And so I too, as I go about the business of creating my daily life, must
give great care to my companions. Not just anyone will do. This necessitates know-
ing my Self -- my purposes and desires, my strengths and limitations, my penchant
and moods. Growing even in the well-prepared main garden takes all my energy. I
cannot be frittering it away resisting the influence of unsuitable companions.
Sometimes I find that the best companion for me is Me. I need the space to get the
feel of my own edges. At other times, I grow best with the bees working the newly-
opened crocuses for pollen. I know that growing by mySelf is infinitely prefer-
able to struggling to maintain mySelf in uncompanionable company.

Now all the transplants are securely and carefully firmed into the garden
soil. After a deep watering, I review my handiwork. Now the emerging smile over-
takes my whole face. Like my garden, I am full of Life and I brought us into being.

SUMMER

The days are longer still. The sun higher in the sky. Abundance and bene-
volence permeate the air. Everything is growing by leaps and bounds... A critical
concern in the summer garden is maintaining adequate moisture in hot, drying sun.
Mulching the plants helps to conserve the moisture in the soil, making watering
the garden unnecessary except during the dryest of summers. This is another re-
member that I can never achieve Self-sufficiency and create mySelf if I allow my
energy to evaporate in hot air. Focus. Concentration. Shutting out unwanted dis-
tractions which bombard me from all sides is called for.

Conservation of Self requires honing my abilities to distinguish between
what is and is not essential. It requires setting priorities based on my well-
being and restricting my "yes-es" so I have the energy to follow through on what
is truly important. Saying "yes" to everything is tantamount to say "yes" to nothing.
I end up with a collection of beginnings and nothing completed. And oh, how tho-
roughly the garden has schooled me in that lesson.

Conservation of Self means withdrawing my energy from the patriarchy which
is mined with distractions for women. I have become very aware of and unwilling
to continue to fill up on biophilia over the week-end and then carry it to the
patriarchy on Monday morning. So I dream and scheme of withdrawing all my energy
and time from his plans and projects, conserving them for my own radical purposes...
The finale of summer is the harvest. With proper nourishment, protection, conservation of essential elements, the plants have leafed out and some have blossomed and set fruit or vegetables, as the case may be. Some are to be enjoyed now and some must be preserved and stored for the months to come when new growth is scarce or not at all. After hours and days of harvesting and putting food by, I wearily sit back and inspect the fruits of my labor. I hope my judgments have been correct and this stored energy will last me until the next growing season. Too exhausted to smile, nonetheless I am suffused with pride and a growing sense of confidence and Self-sufficiency.

**AUTUMN**

I look out at the garden on a cold wet afternoon in late October. Little green remains: a splash of chard here, a wave of carrot tops there, respectively bordered by sentinel-like leeks and gnawed brussel sprouts. The rest of the garden quietly sits, droops, dies back. I should be out there assisting in the process in preparation for Spring. Carefully removing stalks, gently shaking off soil, teasing out worms from tentacular roots and harboring them under winter mulches. I know I should chop the spent remains and return them with other hoarded treasures of decomposing life, to the Earth. Today I cannot bring mySelf to do that -- the garden brings me to the dying back of those who have gone after deeply nourishing my life.

I hang on. I linger over the little remaining green and cling to the waning autumn light. Not wanting to let go. And then the first frost. It is finished. All is silence now. What the Earth jubilantly sent forth a few months ago returns to her now with a tender embrace.

I too am dying back into mySelf. My heart is heavy with lost hope, lost dreams, lost parts of Self whose time is past. I carry it all out to the garden with me. The burden slows my steps and unsteadies my hand. The garden feels like a crucible instead of Summer's loving cup. I sink to my knees. I collapse.

The touch of the Earth strengthens me and I remember our mutual caring when all was green and growing and hope filled the air. I do not understand why all must change but I know her well enough by now to trust her wisdom and I will not break faith with her. In the midst of decay, I renew my commitment to recreate this garden and mySelf as I do what must be done to ready her for the harsh winter ahead. I frantically gather leaves, crop residues, straw. I spread everything over her surfaces and turn it under. The chill in the air adds urgency to my movements as I seed the garden to winter rye, hoping it is not too late for the still-warm autumn sun to quicken it to life. I clean up the grounds. I mulch perennials which need protection. And I wait. Finally from the study window I can see a reddish haze on the garden beds -- the grass is emerging! It will be tall enough when Winter arrives to blanket the soil and rich enough in Spring to provide nourishment for next year's growth. I sit back. Relieved. Saddened. And protected by my effort and determination.

**WINTER**

The sadness of Autumn gives way to the numbness of Winter. Now the garden is blanketed under heavy layers of snow. No sign of life is visible. This reality is as stark and unforgiving as the snow itself. Did I dream there was ever a sea of green there? Do I deceive mySelf that there will be again? As days pass with no relief, the bleakness outside turns to despair within. I am assailed by confusion, Self-doubt, and fear. Overwhelmed by insignificance and meaninglessness and the futility of Life. MySelf is under siege. I shudder as I stand alone on my own two feet and face this desolation.

And then Winter crashes over me, breaking off the brittle limbs that receive no living sap from mySelf. One falls and then another. Life is not futile.
Rather, trying to prevent the pruning of Winter is futile. I cannot make it into Spring carrying this dead weight, these false selves. And no, I did not dream that sea of green. There is all that food I have put by.

Ah, yes. Food! I go to the cellar and collect an armful of potatoes, carrots, onions, cabbages, squash. Within minutes I have them simmering on the stove. My Spirit and my body are restored by the smells and tastes and nourishment of my creativities. As I lean back in my chair beside the woodstove with two dogs vying for one lap, I begin to dream and spin plans for new gardens, new Selves, in the new Spring. Alone again. Naturally.

OUTERCOURSE: THE BE-DAZZLING VOYAGE

By MARY DALY

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— NICOLE BROSSARD, author of Picture Theory

"My True Course was and is Outercourse—moving beyond the imprisoning mental, physical, emotional, spiritual walls of the state of possession."

"Take me to the moon, Mary Daly!"

—Jane Caputi
will I ever write a love poem for You?

this is not a love poem not Love not a poem about colors color changing the Fall falling into arms slapped I was carved out of You the Womyn You who gave Birth to Me it's not Love not obligation You told Me You're not obligated not responsible for anger the rage and questions of a little girl who once painted your nails

this is not a love poem Because Once I am unforgiving this poem is uncompromising it's about booze and pills those pills I stole from you Seeing then I saw I knew they were taking you far from Me erasing You they took oil they took canvas and you painter no paint became Numb the one that wouldn't can't love Me at twenty-four I'm asking for the Mother I will not find I cannot have You and I hate that as much as you hate your Self

this is not a love poem this is not love.

post script

I will not bury MySelf
    in your Words your actions shovel dirt
the depth is grave
I was cut you fragment Me
but Now I'm ReMemberIng Now I'm Threat and you need Me boxed Silent tagged DisCredit
I will not bury MySelf this Place is hollow the caskets called Family.
You're seasons salty sweet with lilacs orchids soil and sea surrounding abounding re winding within around Me twisting churn they are purples jasmine ginger
You're seasons surround abound re wind while I am apart and a part testing poking I pry for sleet snow the kiss of gentle smooth rain a hint clues the heat cold of Us
You're seasons salty sweet with lilacs orchids soil and sea surround abound re wind while I am apart a part while I am a part and apart.

by Caitlin Cain

I Am Separate, Dykely, Different: Other. Swooping I Dart: Revolution, Animals, the Earth and Seps. p.s., I live in Eastham, MA

MARY ELLEN EASTERBROOKS was born in Swansea, Massachusetts on January 12, 1938. She was only 53 years old when she was diagnosed with cancer. Unfortunately, by the time the disease was detected, it had spread from her legs through her body to her lungs, becoming fatal. She had suffered from multiple sclerosis for years, making her body too weak for chemotherapy. She was moved from the hospital to a nursing home for temporary care until her home in Wendell, Mass. was equipped for her return. Before she was able to go back to her house and her lover, she passed away in her sleep between four and five o'clock a.m. on September 27, 1991. During her hospital and nursing home stays, her friends were very supportive and greatly appreciated.

Mary Ellen had a master's degree in philosophy, and worked at the Montague Machine Co. in Montague, Mass. as a machinist. She retired in 1980. When she passed away, she had lived in Wendell for over 20 years.

She was a wonderful woman and she will always live strong in my memory. She was not just my best friend, but also my Lesbian grandmother.

--Iris Evernow
I Wonder

every day I wonder,
how is she?
does she remember
all the long talks
all the short cries
and laughs,
all the times
we spent
in silence?

every day I wonder
can she still talk,
letting her wisdom
flow into words,
words
for me to ponder,
words,
that changed me,
words,
that made me wonder.

—Iris Evernow
October, 1991

*I wrote the poem to the right when I was out of the U. S.
and hadn't yet been contacted about my grandmother's death.
1,500-year-old mosaics unearthed in Israeli city

ZIPPORI, Israel (AP) -- Archaeologists uncovering the ancient city of Sepphoris have found an array of colorful mosaics featuring gods, hunting scenes and bare-breasted women with spears.

The mosaics, about 1,500 years old, consist of tiny stones in rich natural colors. They are so detailed and well-preserved that when sprayed with water, some of them look like carpets spread on the floors of the newly excavated rooms. Sepphoris, four miles from Nazareth, is like a time capsule of the region's turbulent history.

(Sept., 1992; thanks to Cathy Flum and Susan Wolfe)

On June 7, 1992, the Montréal Lesbian community lost an important activist, Jeanne d'Arc Jutras, the author of three Lesbian novels. She fought to have sexual orientation included in the Québec Human Rights Charter in the early 1970s, and was the first outfront Lesbian visible in mainstream media in Québec. In the 1980s, she was the first to address the issue of ageism within the Lesbian community.

This was Montréal's first loss of an activist in its 20-year herstory. In memory of Jutras, Labyris, Montréal's Lesbian cafe, will now be called the Jeanne d'Arc Jutras Library.

Trusty and Treat Testify in Case of Lesbian-bashing

OXFORD, OHIO (AP) -- On May 15, 1992, a judge dismissed a student and all of the parents named as defendants in a lawsuit filed by a former New Miami High School student who accused them of harassment.

Butler County Common Pleas Judge Miachael Sage dismissed the 21 parents and student Jeanie Peters from the civil suit filed by Faith Elliott. He also dismissed Elliott's mother, Joyce Elliott Welch, as a plaintiff, saying she had not provided proof to support her as a plaintiff.

Twelve students were left as defendants.

Elliott, 16, and her mother had sued 55 students and parents, saying they screamed insults at the girl, physically abused her in school and called her a lesbian. Elliott attended the school until 1991.

Elliott testified that she is a lesbian. She said students told her they hated her because she is a lesbian.

Gary Key, recalled as a plaintiff's witness, testified that Elliott suffered trauma because her father had sexually abused her. Key said the abuse at school worsened her condition.

Carl Trusty, retired administrator for Preble-Shawnee School District and former principal of Camden Elementary School, testified for the defense saying Elliott had problems with attendance and tardiness at the elementary school. Under cross-examination,
Trusty said he was not the school's official recordkeeper and had been retired since 1990. Deborah Treat, secretary at New Miami High, testified that Elliott went to the office in December, 1991 and complained that she had been harassed in the locker room. Treat said she talked with the girls in the locker room.

Student Niki Rogers was disciplined for fighting with Elliott, and Elliott was disciplined for cursing in the principal's office in front of Treat, Treat testified.

(Clipping from The Plain Dealer, May 16, 1992, by Julia Penelope)

Lesbians get Minneapolis benefits

MINNEAPOLIS -- Three library employees were awarded more than $90,000 in damages after a civil rights panel ruled that the city discriminated against them by not providing health insurance for their lesbian partners.

A Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission panel voted 2-1 last week to require the city and the Library Board to stop refusing to provide health-care benefits to the women's partners. The panel rejected the city's argument that providing the benefits would be too costly.

(Clipping from Worcester, Mass. Telegram & Gazette, November 25, 1992, by Julia Penelope)

Text of the Colorado Amendment 2

NO PROTECTION STATUS BASED ON HOMOSEXUAL, LESBIAN OR BISEXUAL ORIENTATION.

Neither the State of Colorado, through any of its branches or departments, nor any of its agencies, political subdivisions, municipalities or school districts, shall enact, adopt, or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices or relationships shall constitute or otherwise be the basis of, or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status or claim of discrimination. This section of the Constitution shall be in all respects self-executing.

Dyke Standard Time:

Q: How long should one wait for a late guest before serving a meal?

A: Twenty minutes, according to formal etiquette.

SO?

Expressing anger is healthy:

According to one medical researcher, a 41-year study at Johns Hopkins indicated that "suppressed hostility" raised levels of the bad cholesterol, LDL. Subjects who had habitually bottled up their tensions for as long as 20 years appear to be twice as likely to die by age 55.
"It's My Culture and I'll Cry if I Want To..."
by tara baxter

Fact: WOW Productions, organizers and producers of the Northampton/Amherst Lesbian (emphasis mine) Festival are bringing Annie Sprinkle to the Northampton Center of the Arts in February.

Fact: "Performance artist" Annie Sprinkle is not a lesbian.

Fact: Annie Sprinkle says she became a prostitute when she was 18 because she needed the money, not because she "was (n)ever abused, (n)ever raped." And she became the mistress of Gerard Damiano, maker of Deep Throat (you know, the rape documentary) because she wanted to become a filmmaker. She says, contrary to feminist opinion, sex-working isn't really all that bad. "I think that if I was a victim, in a sense I was just as responsible as the victimizer... I created alot of it... I had a low self-image which affected how other people treated me... so I take responsibility for any exploitation that occurred."

Fact: During Sprinkle's performances, she simulate oral sex with men by sucking hundreds of different dildos, inserts a speculum inside her vagina and asks any interested member of the audience to step right up and look at her cervix. She usually ends her show with a "masturbation ritual" in which she masturbates with a vibrator until she has an orgasm.

Opinion: I think it's really dumb that a group of supposed dyke producers would pay some straight woman to come to Northampton so that she can have patrons look at her cervix, and then talk to them about how great prostitution and pornography are. Annie Sprinkle is not a lesbian-- nor should she be the center of any "lesbian" event. I encourage lesbians to confront WOW Productions about this show passing as lesbianism in any way you find appropriate.

Sprinkle will be at the Northampton Center of the Arts on February 5, 6, and 7 at 8pm. The phone number for WOW Productions is (413) 586-8251. Cost is $10.50 and cameras are welcome (yuk).

Graphics from an interview with Sprinkle in Angry Women
Deep Inside Annie Sprinkle. Full length 35mm film, written, directed by & starring Annie Sprinkle.

Convenient Adults. Full length 35mm docudrama conceived, casted by & co-directed by Annie Sprinkle. Producer: Gerard Damiano.

Annie. Ten minute 16mm film by Monika Treut, about how Ellen Steinberg becomes Annie Sprinkle. Success. 16mm feature film by Monika Treut; Annie has a leading role.

Rites of Passion. Written, directed & edited by Annie, produced by Candida Royalle.

Linda/Leo & Annie—the First Female to Male Transsexual Love Story. Docudrama written, co-directed & co-edited by Annie, featuring Leo Nichols & Annie.

The Sprinkle Salon. NY Cable TV show aired weekly for 6 months, w/Annie, Veronica Vera & Willem de Ridder.

Portrait of a Porno Star, Inside, Inside. Annie Sprinkle. 68 minutes, directed by Michelle Anderson.

Deep Deconstruction. One hour documentary by Steven Kolpan.

Current Flow. Safe lesbian sex demonstration.

Sprinkle Report. Newsletter devoted to Piss Art, w/Willem de Ridder.

Annie Sprinkle Hot Shot Book. 80 page magazine, published by LOVE magazine.

Annie Sprinkle's ABC Study of Sexual Lust & Deviation. Published by R. Patt Press.

Annie Sprinkle's Bawdies. 48 page magazine from Red Lion.

The Kinky World of Annie Sprinkle. 48 page magazine from Hudson Communications.

Love 85: Pool Art in America. 80 page magazine about Annie & Veronica Vera, designed by Willem de Ridder; published by LOVE magazine.

Some That Perform

"Strip Speak," burlesque performances at various theaters across the USA.

"The Prometheus Project." Directed by Richard Schechner at Performing Garage in NYC.

"Deep Inside Porn Stars." With 6 other women at Franklin Furnace, NYC.

"Sex Three." By Linda Montano, performed in Cleveland, Ohio.

"Annie Sprinkle—Post Porn Modernist." One woman play/performance written and performed by Annie, first directed by Emilio Cubero, later by Willem de Ridder. Performed at the Kitchen, LaMaMa, Joseph Papp Theater (NYC); LeKleine, Comedia Theater (Hamburg); COCA (Seattle).

101 Uses For Sex or Why Sex is so Important by Annie Sprinkle

1. Sex as a sedative. It helps you go to sleep.
2. Sex to fight addictions. It helped me quit smoking.
3. Sex as a laxative. Regular sex helps have regular shit.
4. Sex to get to know somebody. You can tell a lot about a person by fucking them.
5. Sex as a meditation.
6. Sex to relieve boredom.
7. Sex to improve concentration.
8. Sex to make money.
9. Sex to create magic. Some witches believe the most powerful time to cast a spell is during orgasm.
10. Sex for manipulation. It can get you what you want.
11. Sex as a reward. Either to yourself or to someone else.
12. Sex for relaxation.
13. Sex for rejuvenation. It keeps you looking and feeling younger.
14. Sex to increase energy. A great pick-me-up.
15. Sex to improve immunity. It can help prevent colds.
17. Sex to reduce anxiety. It can help reduce anxiety.
18. Sex to elevate moods. It can help elevate moods.
20. Sex as an anti-depressant. It will, they say, make you feel better.
21. Sex to relieve pain. It can help relieve pain.
22. Sex to reduce stress. It can help reduce stress.
23. Sex to improve concentration. It can help improve concentration.
24. Sex to improve memory. It can help improve memory.
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Has appeared in Cheri, High Society, Club, Playboy, Penthouse Forum, National Lampoon, as well as in interview with Alice Neel and photographer Joel-Peter Witkin.

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Do the pricks really think we're stupid enough to ingest this lie? Racism and speciesism are parts of the same patriarchal plot.

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Sue and Mandy Coe, MEAT. Women Artists' Monographs; Canada: Gallerie Publications, 1991. $3.95

Nett Hart, SPIRITED LESBIANS: LESBIAN DESIRE AS SOCIAL ACTION. Minneapolis: Word Weavers, 1989. $9.95


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