

BETWEEN THE LINES



**An Anthology by Pacific/Asian Lesbians
of Santa Cruz, California**

**editors
C. Chung, A. Kim, A.K. Lemeschewsky**

BETWEEN THE LINES

**An Anthology
by
Pacific/Asian Lesbians
of Santa Cruz, California**

**editors
C. Chung, A. Kim, A. K. Lemeshewsky**

**DANCING BIRD PRESS
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA**

1987

Acknowledgements

Thanks to: Barbara Englis; Sarah-Hope Parmeter and Irene Reti of HerBooks; UCSC Chancellor's Discretionary Funds; UCSC Student Services Vice Chancellor's Year Towards Community Funds; UCSC Women's Center; Annie Valva; Karen D. Chung; Laine Demetria; Marilyn McClain; Beatriz Lopez-Flores; Bettina Aptheker; Katherine Metz; Gwen Marie; and April Citizen Kane for all your financial, emotional and technical support.

Copyright 1987 Dancing Bird Press. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced without permission in writing by the author. Published in the United States by Dancing Bird Press. First Edition. First Printing. Printed at UC Santa Cruz Duplications. Originally published by: Dancing Bird Press P.O. Box 8187, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 and distributed by: Herbooks, P.O. Box 7467 Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

This book is no longer available in hard copy. This electronic version (page numbering differs slightly from the original) is reproduced by UC Santa Cruz's University Library with permission of the writers and artists. Copyright to the pieces remains with the authors who may be contacted through Irene Reti at the Regional History Project, University Library, UCSC, 831-459-2847 or email ihreti@ucsc.edu for more information.

"Sexuality, Lesbianism and South Asian Feminism" Copyright Anu Reprinted with permission of the author. "Ai no Kotoba/ Words of Love" and "Tiger Woman" (Copyright 1987) A. Kaweah Lemeschewsky, previously appeared in the 1987 edition of *Quarry* (published by the Asian American Student Alliance of the University of California at Santa Cruz). Reprinted with permission of the author. "Living Between the Lines" Copyright 1987 A. Kaweah Lemeschewsky, previously appeared in *Matrix Women's News Magazine*, July 1987, Santa Cruz, CA. Reprinted with permission of the author.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Preface | 5 |
| Introduction | 6 |
| Ai no Kotoba / Words of Love | 9 |
| Sexuality, Lesbianism and South Asian Feminism | 11 |
| Who Says We Don't Talk About Sex? | 15 |
| We Talk | 17 |
| Claiming an Asian Lesbian Identity | 18 |
| My Moon Will Fall | 19 |
| Dragon | 20 |
| Living Between the Lines | 21 |
| Weeds | 27 |
| Who is a Lesbian? | 28 |
| Shringar | 29 |
| Photographs of the Contributors | 30 |
| Defense | 32 |
| Response to "Don't Cry, It's Only Thunder" | 35 |
| Like a Chameleon | 36 |
| Who Are We? | 37 |
| Facing Both Ways: | |
| Japanese Lesbians in Japan and the U.S. | 39 |
| Life in the Interstices | 44 |
| Coming Out Couplets | 45 |
| Tiger Woman | 46 |
| Self Portrait | 47 |
| Baby Dykes | 49 |
| Because I'm Chinese | 50 |
| Silence | |
| Pacific / Asian Lesbian Bibliography | 51 |
| Contributor's Notes | 59 |

PREFACE

Who are we? We are a small but growing group of Pacific/Asian lesbians who have come together in Santa Cruz, California. Meeting weekly at a local pizza place in town, we talked story, planned, edited each other's work, wrote proposals till 3 a.m., laughed, cried and watched our work evolve from visions of a small staple bound book to the anthology you now hold.

We are aware that none of the writers included are of Pacific Island heritage, yet we choose to call this a Pacific/Asian lesbian anthology. We do so, claiming the name as a political identity, as sisters in solidarity.

Understandably, for personal and political reasons, there are some of us who chose to use first names only or pen names. There are others who chose not to appear at all, either in written form or in photographs. We respect those choices at the same time encouraging our voices to be heard.

We see this anthology as a seed, a beginning. There are many more issues we want to see addressed. We look forward to national and international collections of writing by Asian/Pacific lesbians and with that hope in mind we plant this seed.

INTRODUCTION

Dear Cristy,

May 5, 1987

Today, as I sit beside the ocean, I wonder what it means to be a Woman of Color, Asian American, Chinese-Korean, Lesbian, Feminist, Poet, Artist, Daughter, Lover, Friend.

Hmm... Lesbian. When I came out into a visible Lesbian Community, I thought, "Hooray, there's more than the three of us who had been lovers together." Here was a sense of belonging. I wrote for the Women's newspaper, organized Women's dances for me and my friends and did benefits for the YWCA and Seneca Women's Peace Encampment. I facilitated a Lesbian rap group. Except for three of us at the encampment, or three of us at the dances or three of us at the Y, there was a lack of color.

A few years down the road, I went to Califia, and the first Women of Color feminist camp. Thrilled, I was ready for the Colored faces—"my community." We were One, Women of Color, Sisters by Skin, by Oppression

I woke up there in Malibu Canyon. We weren't One, We were more than a hundred—each our own. Seven Asian Women gathered. American born, Hawaiian born, Korean born, Hapas, Chinatown raised... There was Diversity, not Oneness. Though we had something in common, we also did not. There was Dissension. Animosity. "What's that White Woman doing here?" "She's Chicana." "She's Native American." "She's too Light." "She's too dark."

I think about you today, Cristy, your often painful issues because you're Hapa Haaole — half white. How you're not Asian enough, or how you are. And about Barbara, who grew up choosing to be Black instead of Filipina cause Black had more "power."

I think about Sandy, Bisexual, closeted to Lesbians and Asians, wanting to work with/for both groups and not wanting the judgements of either.

I think about Carol, immigrant in the U.S., who wasn't a Lesbian, physically or emotionally, until she came here. It wasn't an option. Lesbians didn't exist in her world. There was no word, no concept.

I think about Hawaii and Dave who used to be active in the Asian Student movement, now working to end Apartheid. At a time when I questioned my having a White Lover he asked, "Did you read the article in East Wind about Interracial Dating—it talks about the political reasons for being with your own kind." And he meant Asians not Women!

Even though feminist theory logically says to me, "We must accept our diversity. The differences among us we celebrate," for me, like you, there has always existed a gap between theory and practice. Where is the Space of Integration?

I use my pen and my paper to literally and visually create. It is my survival. And now Together, You and I write and gather writings by other Pacific/Asian Lesbians, to create an anthology, a community. Though each individual work does not represent the whole, the existence of the collection—the visibility—begins to define our community. Though we aren't always physically visible to each other, we come alive through words. We are breaking down the stereotype of the silent, the seen- but- not-heard or in the case of Pacific/Asian Lesbians, the unseen-and-unheard.

The work you do is revolutionary. It is our revolution. Your choice, if it is choice at all, to research and name the connections between women's roles and lesbianism in Asian countries has not to this point been text book material. Nor has it been a prime focus of feminist study. But it is our focus, part of our community—one that begins to integrate our past with our present and our future.

Our writings are our visibility and our community. They are our survival.



Kaweah

Aly

Cristy



Aly

Cristy

Kaweah

Akemi

Roberta

AI NO KOTOBA/WORDS OF LOVE

A. Kaweah Lemeschewsky

Ai no kotoba #1

Coming Out

"You must a got from a you father,"
she says
when at twenty three, California
I tell her
that at twenty one, Okayama
I confirmed
what I knew
at eleven, Virginia.
She pats my hand,
"You still a my daughter, I love a you anyway,
just don't a get a AIDS."

Ai no kotoba #2

Grandmama's Cousin

"And this is a pic-sha of m'cousin
Mary,"
she explains,
as I peer
past her sloping
shoulders and wisps
of gray hair
at the yellowed
photograph in her hand.
"Ah think she was a lesbian."

Ai no kotoba #3

Grandmama's Heart

"Don't tell a you grandmother,"
she whispers fiercely
in the darkened hallway,
"you break a her heart."

Ai no kotoba #4

Conversation with Aunt Peggy

A/Peggy: "You know, if you told me
you were a lesbian
it wouldn't bother me
a bit."

Me. "What do you think
about
the situation
in
Afghanistan?"

Ai no kotoba #5

On the Phone

"Ah love you too, grandaughta,
and give ma love to Bah-bara."

Ai no kotoba #6

She Tells My Sister

"Yes, I like a Babara;
I just a wish she is a man.

SEXUALITY, LESBIANISM AND SOUTH ASIAN FEMINISM

Anu

The term sexuality in the South Asian context appears to carry two related meanings both of which are, to my mind, inadequate. Firstly, it seems to conjure up notions of individual sexual pleasure and desire. As such, attempts to raise the issue for discussion in any feminist forum are immediately met with both embarrassment (not surprising given our cultural context) and a kind of pious conviction that such 'personal' issues are not the proper province of a mass based feminist movement. Alternately, sexuality is equated with lesbianism with the attendant connotations of 'separatist' and 'anti-male females'. Both senses limit the meaning of sexuality in important and telling ways.

The first individualizes and privatizes the term, effectively implying that it escapes political, cultural, social and historical determination. Even the briefest reflection would suggest that such a position is a curious one for feminists to take. For example, the Indian feminist campaign against rape proposed an analysis of the phenomenon that took into account the social, political and cultural forces that shaped women's lives. The nature and experience of rape thus emerged as varying according to one's cast and class position, location in village or city, employment status and so on. If social and political factors intersect in this way to determine rape, how, one might ask, can sexuality be conceived as a personal and autonomous realm?

The second response to sexuality is to equate it with lesbianism. This is perhaps more revealing because it points to the fact that heterosexuality is so normative that it does not need to be named as a sexual practice. Only those who resist this norm are called upon to define their sexuality. It seems to me that in this sense 'sexuality' is analogous to 'gender'. Everybody has both a sexuality and

a gender. Yet it is only the marginalized who have produced an explicit and self-conscious discourse on both. Gays and lesbians have insisted on the importance of sexuality and women on that of gender. The equivalence that is presumed between sexuality and lesbianism is also partly a function of a reductive understanding of sexuality as sexual 'preference' or 'choice.' We can see how this notion feeds the first meaning extended to the term as an individual's private matter.

If sexuality is neither individual, nor private, nor simply a code word for lesbianism, what is it and how should it be approached? It seems to me that one might begin by applying some of the fundamental principles of historical materialism broadly conceived. If we did this, we would have to conclude that sexuality is a historically specific set of social practices, one of which—heterosexuality—is considered normal, while its alternatives—lesbianism, homosexuality, bisexuality—are regarded as abnormal. As the norm, heterosexuality distances itself from their sexual practices, registering these as deviant and institutionalizing its own normative status.

The principles of heterosexuality are enshrined in everything from our customs and mores, to our legal system: what constitutes a 'family', who counts as a 'spouse', the celebratory status of heterosexual marriage. The legal system not only embodies class ideology and the ideology of male supremacy but also that of heterosexuality. Thus two women who are committed to each other cannot purchase medical insurance 'as a couple' or receive tax compensation as 'married persons'. Worse, two adult women who may have lived together for years cannot have the assurance that hospitals will treat them as each other's 'next of kin'. In the USA there have been many instances when a patient's lover has been debarred from having any contact with her because she is 'only a friend' or 'merely a roommate'. In such instances, parents are given primary rights over the patient. In other words, in the absence of a husband, women are regarded as being the

responsibility of their parents. Any other relationship is disregarded as illegitimate.

On a more day-to-day basis, many South Asian women who may be lesbians are compelled to submit to heterosexual marriage. few who cannot face the prospect and feel they have no options have been known to commit suicide together, their tragedy reduced to a brief sensational item in the newspaper column devoted to sundry crimes. The only women who stand a chance are those whose class position enables them some degree of control over their lives. However, though such women may successfully resist marriage, there remains a continuous struggle with the family. If the family is 'liberal', a lesbian may have' to contend with their grief that she has chosen to remain 'single' and allay their fears that she is not going 'to die alone'. If the family is conservative, the struggle for autonomy may have cost her their 'loving protection.'

Clearly then, sexuality is not a 'personal' issue. it is also evident that some of the issues that confront women who are lesbians are those that also affect heterosexual women who choose to defy societal and familial expectations of them. Independent women, whether heterosexual or lesbian, threaten the contemporary form of the patriarchal family. However, while heterosexual women may wish to ensure that marriages be non-coercive, that women be accorded an equal status within the family and that their labour on its behalf be socially recognized, the needs of lesbians represent a deeper challenge To them any participation in heterosexual marriage implies coercion of the most profound nature. In other words, their resistance to heterosexual marriage is founded equally in the fact that it is heterosexual as in the knowledge that marriage usually entails male domination.

One can see how the demands of lesbian feminists intersect with those of the wider feminist movement. Many South Asian lesbians believe that a dialogue between us and other feminists on the issue of sexuality can deepen our analysis of contemporary society making for a richer

feminist praxis. An exchange of this sort, however, requires that South Asian lesbians become a strong and visible presence and that South Asian heterosexual feminists be open to what we have to say. Visibility though is a risky business. Homophobia (fear of gays and lesbians) keeps many of us 'in the closet' as the saying goes. Some of us who have the pleasure and privilege of knowing each other have discussed our situations and the relation of our struggle with other feminist issues. Until recently, such conversations have invariably taken place in private. In 1985 though, two Indian lesbians initiated a newsletter—*Anamika*—that is making it possible for us to reach out to each other in a more systematic fashion. Apart from being a support network, *Anamika* promises to give South Asian lesbians the space to write, think, dream envision and theorize our histories, our presents and our futures. *Anamika* can also become the vehicle for beginning a long overdue dialogue with heterosexual South Asian women, an exchange which can only strengthen and sharpen our feminism, making it more relevant to those of us who have laboured in a movement that has insisted on the marginality of our concerns, forgetting the feminist insight that the perspective from the edges is often the clearest.

Anamika is a newsletter for and about South Asian Lesbians. So far it has carried creative writing, information about laws regarding homosexuality and lesbianism in South Asian countries, reports from workshops at the Nairobi conference, an article on gays and lesbians in Sri Lanka and the stories of individual lesbians. In the future it hopes to provide a forum for debating and discussing the practical, political and theoretical issues that face South Asian lesbians. *Anamika* can be contacted c/o ALOEC, P.O. Box 652, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215. *Anamika* is mailed free to women in South Asian. For a subscription from the USA, mail \$5.00 for 3 issues. Make checks payable to ALOEC.

WHO SAYS WE DON'T TALK ABOUT SEX?

Alison Kim

Not you, who knows the boundaries of my play, of my sexual energy that rises with the heat of my passion, flowing like lava, hot between my legs, ready for the lap of your tongue. Where are you now when my lips swell and my clit grows just thinking of the touch of your fingertips or your tongue tip?

I can feel your breasts, large and brown, areolas wide, your nipples small, pressed against my small breasts, my large nipples, hard, ripe, anticipating the squeeze of your thumb and index finger that causes my stomach to tighten and my lungs to get taught. I know for you it's not your lungs that get excited, but the space below your belly button—four to five inches below— where you get soft and moist, sloshy and drippy, anxious and hot, wanting my fingers to melt inside of you, to disappear as you suck me inwards, tightening your muscles to squeeze me, to pull me, to beg me in.

I move inside you slowly, deliberately, till I feel the twitch of your body, hear the moans from your mouth. Then I stop, waiting for you to relax again, letting your breath calm, knowing in your relaxation you feel me most and want me more. Your body craving, you arch, you grab hold tightly and let loose a wail. Again I move so slowly inside you, my fingers quivering, bouncing gently off the walls of your passion till you squeeze them so tightly my fingers can bounce no more.

WE TALK

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung

you and i
filling the rooms we enter
with our words
an endless flow of words between us
surrounding us
caressing our bodies
feeding our minds
giving in to our thoughts
leaving the world of
shoulds and should nots

we talk knowing
we love each other

we talk
losing touch with time
lost to the world
in tune with our own
created in our intensity

we talk
about everything
omitting nothing
so much to share

we talk
anywhere
everywhere
a car, the bathroom, the kitchen, a bedroom
a hall

i hear your voice
see your smile
feel your arms around me

i learn from you
feel you
give to you

a bond
with few words to describe it
yet so many words between.



CLAIMING AN ASIAN LESBIAN IDENTITY

Akemi

Ever since I knew I was a lesbian I felt “different”. I couldn’t feel comfortable in the Asian community because I thought I was the only one; looking around at lesbian gatherings confirmed this feeling. There were lesbians and there were Asians, but there weren’t any Asian Lesbians. I needed someone to understand both parts in me. Not just my Asian half or my lesbian half, but my Asian lesbian whole. As I was growing up I was very involved in the Asian community. What I realize now is that the Asian community is very homophobic. Being Asian was/is very important to me, so when I knew I was a lesbian, I thought I had to make a choice. I had to either be Asian or lesbian. I chose to be Asian for a couple of reasons. One; physically it is obvious that I am not white, and two; fighting against racism and for pride in my Asian identity was more comfortable for me because it is more acceptable. It’s not “in” to be racist, but it’s okay to be homophobic. So I chose to push my Asian identity in hope of suppressing my lesbianism. But I found out that I couldn’t “overcome” my lesbianism and would have to deal with it. That’s when the search started. And finally, I feel my search has ended.

As I look over what I have written, I see that I did a lot of explaining, and I realize that I probably didn’t have to explain so much, and that many of You could relate to my experience. That’s the beauty of this new community. I find myself having to explain or teach people about myself and what it’s like to be a minority within a minority. It gets very exhausting. With You I feel that the need to explain is gone. With You I can share my experiences. Whether You realize it or not, there is a connection or bond between us, and I plan to use it.

MY MOON WILL FALL

A. Kaweah Lemeshefsky

for Cathy and Cristy

on july 15 my moon will fall
and you will not hear about it
on the evening news
you will not read about it
in the morning paper
even the astronomers with their all-seeing eyes
will not notice it is gone

in a world of black and white
who notices the subtle shades of yellow
mixed with white/red/black/brown?
who understands the words that flow
from three hearts that pulse to a pidgin beat?

on july 15 my moon will fall
and even the psychics
will not know that anything is wrong

they will see only the figure of a lonely woman
standing on a nightfilled sea cliff
they will not know
she is watching the shadows
of two dragons flying west
as her moon
falls
into the sea.



Cathy Q

June '87

LIVING BETWEEN THE LINES: A MIXED HERITAGE WOMAN'S SEARCH FOR COMMUNITY

A. Kaweah Lemeschewsky

(reprinted from Matrix Women's Magazine, July 1987)

I often hear talk of "reaching across our differences—building alliances across racial, sexual and class lines, but my experience has shown me that very few people ever make the effort. Most choose to hire, work with, build friendships with, or spend their time with people who are like them in history, background and values, and to reject those who do not fit their narrow mold.

As a woman of mixed heritage, however, I do not fit anybody's mold. My upbringing and my search for a place to fit in have taken me through several different "worlds" and value systems, all of which have become integral parts of me. I want to share my story of this search in the hope that others like me will find something meaningful in it, and know they are not alone.

The full circle of it all started several years ago. I was eighteen and trying to "go back home," trying to find my way back to the Indian in my blood. I was raised by my Japanese mother, and carried the last name of my Russian grandfather. Now, after graduating from high school, I was trying to go out into the world and find my way as a whole person, which meant going back to the Indian in me that had been left lying half-starved, fed by my once-a-week Title IV/Indian Education classes in junior high and high school.

I met Dennis Banks, co-founder of the American Indian Movement, at a talk in my home town. He noticed me in the crowd because he had a half-Japanese daughter he had lost touch with years ago, and had hoped I was her. We started a friendship of sorts; I went to Davis several times a week to help him build an earth lodge on the DQ

campus, an Indian and Chicano-controlled university, and gradually became involved in DQ Indian life. Dennis took me under his wing, taught me about the sweatlodge, the Sundance, and told me he would like to see me Sundancing in the arbor someday.

Becoming more and more involved in the Movement and its return to traditional values, I pledged to Dance the following summer and spent the rest of the year preparing: rigorous four-day fasts on the mountaintop at the beginning of each season, sweatlodge purification ceremonies, a vow of celibacy.

In the meantime, I had become friends with a man who had had an unsuccessful relationship with the head woman Sundancer, and there were bad feelings on both sides. I knew very little about it and did not care to become embroiled in it. As it turned out, I had little choice.

Two days before the beginning of the Sundance, the head woman approached me. She told me the elders in South Dakota were keeping their eye on the DQ Sundance to make sure it was being run properly; everything had to be done just right or it would be taken back. She told me that I looked too Japanese and she did not want me to Dance, that she did not want to raise suspicions. She went on to tell me what an awful man my friend was and that I should be careful. I told her we were just friends. Surprised, she warned me even more.

I was turned away for being half Japanese and for being friends with the wrong person. In tears, I explained to her that my father was lying in a hospital bed with cancer, and I wanted to Dance for his health to return. She would not bend. On the third day of the Sundance, my father went into a coma and died.

No one intervened. Dennis explained that he was powerless to change a decision made by the head woman Sundancer. Other women were sympathetic but powerless as well.

I cut my hair and buried my father.

The following summer found me in Japan with my mother and sister. It was my mother's first time back after twenty six years, and together we met her long lost half sister and walked the streets of their hometown. We visited my ancestors' graves, scrubbed the stone markers engraved with their Buddhist names and family crest, and poured water over them. In performing this simple task I found a connection with my Japanese past, soothing the pain I had felt at the hands of the Sundance community.

I stayed in Japan for the summer, walking the Heiwa Daikoshin, an annual peace walk from Tokyo to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Through talking with the Hibakusha—the survivors of the atomic blasts, and working with the Japanese anti-nuclear movement, I found meaning in being mixed Japanese, American Indian and Russian. I also found solace in the Obon, the three day summer festival honoring the return of the dead: that year, Obon fell on the first anniversary of my father's death.

I returned to the United States a changed woman. Besides the fact that I had just come out as a lesbian, I was inspired by the Hibakusha and their request for us to take their words to the American people. Together with eight other women I organized a cross-continental walk from Bangor, Washington, the home of the Trident nuclear submarine, to the PanTex nuclear weapons plant in Amarillo, Texas, birthplace of all U.S. nuclear warheads, and on to Charleston, South Carolina, the East Coast home of the Poseidon and Trident missile systems.

The organizing work was as hard and as fun as I expected; the challenge came in what I expected to be the easiest part—walking. As it turned out, I left the walk in Wyoming. The act of walking was no problem; the fact that the other eight women all were white, was. I found their company unbearable; they could not or would not acknowledge my difference in race, culture and historical

background, and their enforced denial of my existence made me physically ill.

When I came back to California, I was physically sick, emotionally raw, and alone. In the strong women's community of Santa Cruz I found the support I needed to be out as a lesbian, but the false, colorblind liberalism of this community has made me reluctant to participate in it. Last year, I marched in the San Francisco Gay Pride Parade, hoping to find other women like me.

In the park, after the march, I spotted the huge teepee belonging to Gay American Indians. I went up to talk to the people at the table and sign their mailing list. As I rounded one side of the teepee, I spotted the figure of a woman sitting and talking with a few others. It was the head woman Sundancer!

After a short exchange of, "I didn't know you were a lesbian!" and "When did you come out?" ' she introduced me to her lover, who is the sister of a prominent Sundancer. She told me that she was coming out in the community and was going to try to Dance again that year. I soon left, dizzy with shock and disbelief at the way our lives had come together again, and angry for the pain she had so uselessly caused me.

I saw her again at the International Lesbian and Gay People of Color conference in Santa Barbara last November. She told me that she went back to South Dakota and was not allowed to Dance, that in effect she has been ostracized from the traditional Indian community. She said she will keep trying to go back, will keep trying to bring up the issue of lesbian rights.

At one point in the conference, when I was exasperated over the fact that I had to choose between a workshop for Asians and a workshop for American Indians, she made a comment on how nobody ever thinks of "you mixbloods." I saw this as a small acknowledgement of the pain she had caused, and I will

hold on to it until I feel strong enough to talk with her about what she did to me that summer several years ago.

My search for community goes on. In Santa Cruz I have felt frustrated, stymied in my attempts to find a feeling of home. I share Aly Kim's experience of finding myself "the only lesbian in a group of Asians, and the only Asian in a group of lesbians," except that I must include my identity as Russian and Indian as well.

Lately I have found refuge in a small group of friends who call ourselves "PALS- Pacific/Asian Lesbians. We meet regularly, and together we are publishing an anthology of fiction, essays and art by and for Pacific/Asian Lesbians. It is the first book of its kind, and is scheduled to be out in July.

One of the highlights of our year was the First Annual West Coast Retreat for Asian and Pacific Lesbians, held in Sonoma County in May. Now we can proudly boast a Bay Area community of over eighty Asian/Pacific women. This is an exciting development for us as Asian lesbians, but I know that for me as a mixed blooded woman, this still is not home. There are parts of me I still need to bring together to become that whole person I set out to be seven years ago.

Writing is becoming one way in which I can create a sense of home. By writing my experiences down and publishing them, I hope to create some awareness of the needs of mixed heritage people and to encourage them to talk about what life has been like for them, living between the lines.

It is time for our voices to be heard. We are beginning to organize, to write, to speak out. Aurora Levins Morales of Oakland is taking submissions now for a book by/for women of mixed heritage, called Born at the Crossroads: Voices Of Mixed Heritage Women. The submission deadline is October 1, 1987. For guidelines or

more information, write to 5251 Broadway, Box 543, Oakland, CA. 94618.

For more information on PALS: Pacific/Asian Lesbians of Santa Cruz, call Kaweah at (408) 476-3288, Cristy at 425-8487, or Aly at 426-4342.

WEEDS

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung

that hateful identity
sneaks out
through my eyes

that hateful identity
staring back at me
laughs
torments

that hateful identity
seeps through
the cracks in my skin
calling attention
to my halfbreed body

that hateful identity
grows back like weeds
its roots too deep, too strong
makes death impossible.



WHO IS A LESBIAN?

Anu

A lesbian is a woman who loves women sexually.
Not just sexually, but especially that way.
This seems to me fundamental to her condition.
It marks her specificity. Draws a circle around her.
It is an illicit truth she cannot forget.

A lesbian is not just a woman identified woman, although she may be that too.
Woman identified women do not get 'discovered', beaten up on the street, separated from their lovers.
True, women identified women respect and treasure their connection with other women. But this bond is different; equally important but different.
It does not call upon itself the wrath of homophobia.

To insist that lesbians are women who love women sexually is not to claim that their sexuality is the most important fact about them. It is to acknowledge that their sexuality places them in a particular relationship to the world.

A tangible, significant difference.
Would we want to overlook it?
Do we need to explain the term lesbian and forsake its critical specificity?

SHRINGAR

Anu

Black eyes. Copper skin. Long black hair fragrant with the oil of shoefflowers.

Her saree is worn just a touch beneath her navel.
Her belly narrows wickedly behind the multiple gathers at her midriff. Folds of soft cotton.

As she lifts her arms to coil her hair into a low bun, the smell of Cinthol talcum powder assails me and I sense deeply that this is a woman I love.





DEFENSE

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung

ACT I

It was a cold gloomy day — the middle of winter. I went to the beach to think, to be alone. I looked out into the ocean, wanting it to take me away, becoming fully absorbed in the rhythm of its crashing waves. I became the little bird chasing the waves, concentrating on catching sand crabs, running as another wave was thrown my way. I lay down, feeling the solid cool sand against my back and closed my eyes — hands behind my head. I listened to the beach sounds. Breathed in the cool salty air releasing my mind from tormented thoughts. A tap on my foot sent my eyes flying open. I stared straight into the eyes of a man crouching at my feet. Remaining calm on the surface terror flew through my body.

“Hi. How ya’ doin?” he said, “Mind if I come sit with you?”

Sitting up I said, “Yes, I do. I’d really like to be alone right now.”

“No one else around, pretty empty beach, huh?”

“Ya I like it this way, I like time to myself. Please leave.”

“Why it’s a free beach. I sit where I want. Besides, what’s wrong with you? I just wanna be friendly and talk.

“Mme., I don’t. I want to be alone. Please leave.” My voice showed my annoyance.

“What are you gonna do, make me? We’re all alone out here — can’t call for help. Where do you think you’re gonna go, cute thing?”

“Look, I want to be left alone. Please leave!”

As he stood up I stood up, adrenaline pumping faster and faster through my body, I backed a far distance away. He followed.

“Doll face I only want to be friends.”

“Leave me alone now!”

“No, I don’t have to.”

“Fine! You stay, enjoy the beach, I’m leaving.”

I left him on the beach shocked and walked away feeling my new-found strength.

ACT II

It was late at night; I came home alone after a long day at work. Tired as usual, I clung to my keys. I left the car heading for the path I always take to our apartment. Bobbie wouldn’t be home for another three hours. I hate going home to a dark empty apartment. It seemed unusually dark — some of the lights on the path were out. “Oh well, don’t worry,” I calmed myself, “you’ll be there soon. No problem.” I walked along feeling more confident. Then I felt him, an intruder, walking a little too fast and a lot too close.

“Hey baby, how ya doin’?”

“Fine.” I kept walking feeling him get closer to me.

“What’cha doin’ out so late?”

His body was close enough now for me to feel his breath in my ear. I knew without looking he was of medium height, fairly large body.

“What do you want? Leave me alone.” I yelled swinging around to face him—taking him by surprise.

“Oh baby you know...” He grabbed my arm.

I jerked it away. Standing my ground I began yelling, "There's a lot of people around in these apartments and if I yell loud enough they're gonna hear me," my voice getting louder and louder, "so if you don't leave me alone right now you're going to be in a lot of trouble. "Pushing him I kept yelling, "I suggest you get the hell out of here!" and gave him a final push.

ACT III

As the effect of my adrenaline wore off I found myself in a spacious room—blue padded mats covered the hardwood floors. Women lined two walls. They sat surrounding the mats—clapping and cheering—yelling, "that was so strong," "great job," "good reaction," "no one will mess with you!" Their voices filled the room. Warmth and support surrounded me. I made it—I was okay—I could take care of myself.

The room grew silent. The next woman walked across the mats to the center of the room. Her scenario set — the attacker entered the scene. I sat mesmerized by this woman's strength, her quick reactions, her will to fight back. I sat in self-reflection and realized I had been the actor in the last scene. As the class came to the end of its eight weeks I had begun to heal from the rape a year ago. I felt the strength and power of my body.

A RESPONSE TO "DON'T CRY, IT'S ONLY THUNDER"

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung

But all I can do is cry
 I hurt inside
 I hurt all over
 there is no answer
 just pictures on a screen
 tears fill my eyes

All I can do is cry
 alone
 is no one else affected
 helpless in my fear

All I can do is cry
 face of an unknown Asian child
 her experiences unfamiliar
 vivid in my mind

All I can do is cry
 death—bodies everywhere
 hurt—shrapnel piercing skin
 pain—innocent lives extinguished
 enraged I go on

All I can do is cry
 I cannot speak
 fear consumes me
 seized by painful recognition
 I am that child

LIKE A CHAMELEON

Alison Kim

Blend with the scenery
 like a lizard
 like a chameleon
Blend like a Waring
Puree your ideas
Chop up your history
Grate your culture and your nerves

Blend with the scenery
 like a lizard
Change your skin
 like a chameleon
Fade into the woodwork
Squeeze into the mold that doesn't fit
Disappear into a crowd
Lose your vision and your voice

Blend with the scenery
 like a lizard
Change your skin
 like a chameleon
 to survive in the world
Shun your thoughts in a roomful of Reaganites
Act straight when lesbians are being chastised
Say you are American when Japan bombs Pearl Harbor
Sit silent in a roomful of friends as they crack
 anti-semitic jokes

And someday,
 your back against a wall
 your ally
 will have blended with the scenery
 like a lizard
 changed skin
 like a chameleon
 faded into the woodwork

The chameleon changes without will.

WHO ARE WE?

Anu

We are not a movement. Movement evokes large numbers, amassed, ready to strike. It implies an agenda. We are a presence audible to those who will listen. Disparate, scattered, fragmented, we speak in many languages. From India and Pakistan, US and Canada, Sri Lanka and Bangla Desh, Britain and Malaysia, Latin America and Africa. Fugitives from the mainland, children of the global trails of labour migration.

Differences in history, experience and politics crosscut our personal stories of being South Asian lesbians. 'South Asian lesbians'. The term is immediately intelligible to me. I am from India and have lived there most of my life. What about you, you who are from Toronto, Glasgow, Nairobi and Kuala Lumpur, what does it mean to you? What is it that I recognize as unmistakably South Asian about you?

We are not a movement. Is this why I have a deep ambivalence about the status of our struggle? I realize that movements have often sprung from small groups growing, becoming increasingly vocal, and pressing their demands on society at large. But we may never become such a critical mass. I also know that the justness of our demands—to live with dignity and without harassment as lesbians—does not depend on the strength of our numbers.

But numbers do count. They imply the strategies open to us. 'Us' a collective term that needs clarification. In our different locations we face different options for building political alliances. Our Canadian sisters maintain a delicate balance between their allegiance to an often racist gay and lesbian movement and the often homophobic South Asian progressive community. Those like me, who plan to return to India or others already living there, will build our

'homes' in a different context—the women's movement and the Left.

It is unclear how hospitable the Indian women's movement will be to us. Will we be asked unfairly to choose between the hunger of the many and the sexuality of the few? Will we respond by claiming that to deny us our sexuality is to sanction a form of hunger? Will this be an appropriate response? Or merely a clever linguistic resolution to the problem of political priorities? We have much to discuss, much more to decide. We may only be a group but the questions that confront us are the same as those faced by movements. Our answers will determine our passage and development, in short, our movement.

FACING BOTH WAYS: JAPANESE LESBIANS IN JAPAN AND IN THE U.S.

A. Kaweah Lemeshewsky

(adapted from an unpublished paper)

Introduction

I met the five women interviewed for this paper at the First Annual West Coast Retreat for Asian/Pacific Lesbians in Sonoma County, California, in May of 1987. When I first approached them about an interview concerning their experiences as Japanese lesbians, they seemed interested, and we arranged a date soon after the retreat.

These women are founders and members of an organization which meets monthly to provide support for Japanese lesbians in the San Francisco Bay Area. They are lesbian-identified and come from various regions of Japan, including Tokyo, northern Honshuu, Kyuushuu, and the Kansai region. Wig arranged the interview for immediately following their monthly May meeting.

The discussion centered around the difficulties of organizing a lesbian movement in Japan, and included the topics of economic survival as single women in Japan, the difficulties of "coming out" in Japanese society, and the dual discrimination facing them as lesbians in Japan and as "foreigners" in the Bay Area gay and lesbian community.

Community Resources

There are few organizations in Japan which act as a support network for lesbians both in and out of the closet, and the few that do exist are located in the main urban centers of Tokyo and Osaka. Both cities together have a handful of bars where women can go to socialize, but most seem to operate on a members-only basis and are very expensive. Tokyo has at least one lesbian organization, Regumi Studio, which presently has an active membership of about ten women. A letter on Japanese lesbianism printed in the newsletter of last year's Lesbian Conference

in Geneva, Switzerland, however, produced over one hundred responses from Japanese women struggling with their sexual identities and needing someone to talk to about their feelings of being different.

Lesbians and the Work Force

I was particularly interested in this topic after reading Thomas Rohlen's book, For Harmony and Strength, on the employment practices of a certain major Japanese bank. The policy of hiring mostly young women and using them only as temporary labor, with the understanding that they would leave to get married, struck me as a policy that would be severely detrimental to the economic well-being of lesbians who were out of the closet and unmarried. I asked the women how common this practice was, and they all agreed that work is very difficult to find after the age of thirty, and that in the workplace, women over thirty are considered "grandmothers" by their younger co-workers. They also mentioned that women who do not marry are considered to be odd or mentally ill, unless they remain single in order to care for their parents. With the emergence of a "Career Woman" (*kariya uman*) role model, this attitude is beginning to change, but single women are still looked upon as unusual, and disturbing to the social order.

Coming Out

Obstacles to coming out in Japan seem to be threefold. The first cited by the women is the personal reluctance of most Japanese to discuss sexuality or to be affectionate. This creates a less than nutritive environment for the development of any social dialogue on the issue of sexual diversity, especially in a country which ethnically is virtually homogeneous and thus has had little opportunity to confront the issue of diversity.

The second obstacle to coming out is the strength of the institution of marriage, and the unchallenged

assumption that all people will marry. As mentioned earlier, those who do not marry are considered abnormal or mentally ill (i.e. homosexual), unless they forfeit marriage to care for elderly parents. Also, the institution of arranged marriage and its accompanying concept of marrying for economic or social reasons rather than for romance tends to downplay the importance of sexuality within a marriage and reinforces itself as a social institution. Thus, many women are not able even to conceive of a relationship outside the established heterosexual norm. Perhaps with the growing trend among the young to marry for love and romance, an opportunity to examine alternatives will develop.

The standard hiring practices of many Japanese companies, as explained in the preceding section, serve to reinforce the institution of heterosexuality and to decrease the ability of lesbians to survive economically.

Surviving In the United States

The difficulties of finding acceptance 'in the local lesbian community and of overcoming the language barrier are the biggest problems facing the five women I interviewed. Several related their own personal accounts of trying to join local Gay and Lesbian Alliances on college campuses or of working in lesbian organizations, only to be met with indifference and invisibility. They felt that they were being treated as unimportant because they were immigrants, and that their needs as foreign lesbians were not being addressed. In order to avoid the racism they experienced at the hands of white lesbians, and to overcome their own growing sense of shame and alienation at being different again, they formed their own organization, based on the model of Tokyo's Regumi Studio.

San Francisco Regumi is comprised of seven active members who meet monthly to learn about each other and to provide mutual support. Their meeting format usually

consists of one person telling her story, and letting the discussion center around the issues raised.

A former member of San Francisco Regumi moved to Los Angeles and started an L.A. Regumi there. Members praise the important function the support group plays. Many mentions were made of the importance of being able to get together and talk to each other in Japanese. One woman said, "To live in this country as an immigrant is very hard. To live in this country as an Asian lesbian is very hard. English is hard to communicate, so we need to get together in Japanese."

One interesting aspect of these women's experiences in this country is the awareness they have developed as minorities. One woman said that when she was in Japan, she knew of Chinese and Korean Japanese, but that as a member of the racial majority, "it is easy to avoid it". She said that as an Asian lesbian in the United States, "I get to understand the Chinese and the Koreans, how they feel. I think it is a great experience."

Conclusion

Lesbians in Japan face many of the same obstacles in regards to self-determination as their straight counterparts, and as lesbians in the United States, but the institutions of marriage, employment and the unwillingness to discuss sexuality combine to produce an atmosphere of inhibition and denial of the possibility of a lesbian lifestyle. This enforced denial of the option of lesbianism in Japan poses a particular problem towards organizing, in that lesbians can not yet be considered to be even a marginal population: whereas gay men have been allotted a place in the public consciousness for centuries, and suffer the prejudice that comes of being different, Japanese lesbians are not even yet acknowledged to exist.

Systematically denied access to well-paying jobs through the policy of hiring and retiring women while they are young, and paying them low wages in the expectation that their husbands will support them, Japanese lesbians

face the difficulties of trying to assemble the resources necessary to create a viable social-political movement. Psychologically, they are inhibited by the societal denial of the existence of Lesbianism, and the reluctance to discuss sexuality. Institutionally, they are confronted by the assumption that all will and should marry, an assumption that is reinforced by common employment practices. This combination of factors produces an socio-economic institution of discrimination against lesbians and is an obstacle to their ability to survive, yet they are organizing in self-support despite these repressive conditions.

In the United States, Japanese lesbians are organizing to provide themselves the support they do not find in the stateside lesbian community. Even at the historic West Coast Asian/Pacific Lesbian Retreat held this year, there were no workshops to address the special needs of immigrant/foreign national lesbians. It is on the agenda of these determined women to begin to raise this issue among the general Asian/Pacific lesbian community, and to begin to organize on this issue among themselves. One goal is to begin networking with other Asian lesbian groups worldwide, to find out if and how they are coping with the same issues. Several of the women I interviewed also intend to return to Japan someday, and perhaps with the organizing skills and the social awareness of minority issues that they are acquiring here, they will be able to begin a program of social education on lesbian and minority issues in Japan.

LIFE IN THE INTERSTICES

Anu

The scooterwallah has his transistor on full blast. His roving eye pauses for a moment on the women in his rearview mirror. His idle inattention causes the scooter to teeter precariously and cursing, he trains his sight on the road ahead.

In the back, barricaded behind suitcase, tiffin carrier, water bottle and bed roll, two women hold hands. A sensation strong as an electric current traverses their clasped fingers and moves back and forth. They turn to look at each other, investing their gaze with the intensity of a sustained sensual embrace. For a few moments they are truly alone with each other. Time stolen from relatives, friends and a world that insists on crowding them out. Not even the whistles from a passing bus can touch them. They wish this ride would go on forever.



COMING OUT COUPLETS

Let Your Fingers Do The (Sleep)walking

She said she was dreaming I was her
husband.

Enlightenment

There we were in a room full of monks and nuns,
and it just happened.

Breakfast

I went to wash the spatula—she followed me
and the pancake burned.

TIGER WOMAN

A. Kaweah Lemeshefsky

Born in the Year of the Tiger,
The blood of four rivers
flows in her veins.
North, east, south and west,
she is the daughter
 of strong Indian women
 fighting for freedom,
of a staunch Russian mother
 hiding her children in cornfields,
of a Japanese Fire Horse woman
 crossing the Big Water
 to fulfill a prophecy.

She is fire
strength
passion
and love.
She speaks
through the voice
of eagles.

Listen to her music,
Hear her words.



Self Portrait—Roberta

BECAUSE I'M CHINESE
Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung
(a performance piece)

machine gun sounds
boychild's arms
shoot at me

you bombed Pearl Harbor
I did not
go home
no, I'm Chinese

ching chong Chinaman
sittin' on a fence
tryin' to make a dollar outa fifty cents
he missed
he missed
he missed like this

my mother's Chinese
my father's Japanese
and I'm just a mixed up kid

Chinese
Japanese
dirty knees
look at these

chung king—TV dinners
connie chung—TV news
chung king—TV dinners
connie chung—TV news

not my name

hey China doll
I love Oriental girls

Baby
Dykes



SILENCE

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung

my body fights
its conditioned silence
remembering my new-found voice
it talks and won't stop
scared into a silence
of complete confusion
knowing only too well
the harsh, immobilizing pain of silence
fearing
the jagged, spirit-ripping edges of rejection
inner turmoil
crashes against the walls of my body
i find myself
blurting out unclear words
recklessly struggling with the silence
that threatens my existence
exhausted
my body battered
from the fight to break old patterns
yet strong
my spoken words
declare inner healing.

PACIFIC/ASIAN LESBIAN BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alison Kim

After spending hours in the library and in bookstores, after lots of frustration and excitement, and lack of sleep, this bibliography is presented. If you have gone to a library or a bookstore and looked for works by or about Pacific/ Asian lesbians (PALs), chances are you have found nothing or a few names repeatedly. This is one reason this bibliography came into being.

I began compiling information for a workshop I wanted to facilitate for Pacific/Asian Lesbians. That was back in 1983. I thought all that existed was the six books and two articles I owned. The beginning stages of research added to my frustration. I spent hours going through bibliographies of bibliographies, abstracts and indexes to find nothing. I was disheartened going through specifically lesbian books, lists, and references, finding Black lesbians, Chicana lesbians, Native American lesbians and Jewish lesbians and no listings for Asian lesbians. At times, I'd search the "other" category looking for the writing representing an Asian experience. This invisibility made the search for our voices even more important. I searched out every book, journal, newspaper—anything in print—that had a PAL focus and I xeroxed, borrowed or bought it.

Today my collection includes more than forty books, magazines, newspaper articles and unpublished papers. My bibliography now has more than 175 entries.

Having access to writings of other women like myself helps me to place myself in some sort of historical context. It helps me to break the isolation of feeling like the "only one in the world." Many times I find myself the only Asian lesbian in an all white lesbian group or the only lesbian in an Asian group. It serves to validate my existence as well as those of other Pacific/Asian lesbians. This is the importance of the collection.

Originally, my bibliography was to be of works by / for/about Asian American lesbians, because of my own

limited experience and access to material as an Asian American woman. As the work progressed, I realized the importance of making connections with all Pacific/Asian lesbians and was ecstatic to read about other lesbians internationally.

Often times we (PALs) hear and internalize the notion that lesbianism is a white phenomenon and that being a lesbian takes away from the struggles of people of color in combatting racism by creating a division between the men and the women. In order to make the connections between our heritage as Pacific Islanders/Asians and lesbians, and to de-myth this theory of lesbianism as a Western idea, I felt it imperative that as many writings as could be found by or about Pacific/Asian lesbians internationally should be included, and especially historical works.

The works listed which are written by lesbians are not limited to the issue of lesbian identity but rather express our full range of experience, while works by non-lesbians are exclusively related to issues of lesbianism.

There re limitations to my doing this work. A major one is in naming women of the past as lesbian and not having experience the context in which they lived, socially, economically, culturally, or historically. The women I have included are either self-named or those whom, given my eyes and my experiences, I have chosen to include because of their exceptional relationships with other women. I see lesbianism as a continuum of women loving women that is not limited to sexual experience. Given this as a basis I present my work.

Too often, the stereotype (especially in the U.S.) of Asian women is one of being silent. Part of breaking out of this role is re-searching what has been and is being written and making it available. The bibliography presented here is just the tip of an iceberg. I see my work in this field of research as life-long. Gratefully, Pacific/Asian lesbians continue to write, and this bibliography is always in process as we express the words of our lives.

I ask all of you to send me information you have of other potential listings—name, a publisher, a title, in any language, any style. And if you have read it, a brief synopsis would be great.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Asian Women. Berkeley: UC Berkeley, 1971

Book deals with issues pertinent to Asian women, not specifically lesbian, though on page 1 is a poem by poet Yosano Akiko and pages 128-129 discusses the gay question and the need for solidarity with lesbians and straight women in working for the liberation of all women.

Atsurni Ikuko and Rexroth, Kenneth, eds. and trans. Women Poets of Japan New York: New Directions Publ. Corp., 1977.

Works by 76 poets of Japan from the 8th century to modern. The brief biographies included talk about the intimate relationships held between several of the writers.

Bandarege, Asoka and Camarena, Pat, eds. Women, of Color: A Celebration of Power. No. 4 (Fall 1986).

Quarterly of feminism, spirituality and politics which has two articles by Gail Hart speaking about two Asian men's groups (ASIA and OWAAD) and their respective views of lesbianism.

Bridge: An Asian American Perspective. New York: Bridge. Vol. 6, No. 4 (Winter 1978-9)

In this edition is a poem by Kitty Tsui, "harvey milk/we burn these words let them ascend in clouds of incense," and a short story by Merle Woo about a recovering alcoholic, "Recovering."

Bruchac, Joseph, ed. Breaking Silence, an Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Poets. Greenfield Center, N.Y.: The Greenfield Review Press, 1983.

Includes poems by Kitty Tsui: "it's in the name" and Chinatown Talking Story" and by Merle Woo: "The Subversive Poem for the Creative Writing Class, Spring 1982" and "Yellow Woman Speaks".

Bulkin, Elly, ed. Lesbian Fiction. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981 .

Includes fiction by Barbara Noda: "Thanksgiving Day" and by Kitty Tsui: "Poa Poa is Living Breathing Light." Bulkin,

Elly and Larkin, Joan, eds. Lesbian Poetry. Watertown, Mass: Persephone Press, 1981.

Includes poems by Willyce Kim: "A Woman's Tribal Belt" and "Keeping Still, Mountain"; by Kitty Tsui: "the words of a woman who breaths fire: one" and by Barbara Noda: "Strawberries."

Connexions: Global Lesbianism., Oakland, CA: Connexions. No. 3 (Winter 1982).

Page 6—two stories of contemporary lesbian couples in Indonesia. Page 7—lesbianism in India, historic and contemporary. Page 8—poem and short stories by Suniti Namjoshi. Page 25—homosexuality in New Zealand and its relation to the Maori.

Connexions—Global Lesbianism 2. Oakland, CA: Connexions. No. 10 (Fall 1983)

Page 2—shows the word lesbian written in different languages. Page 5-7—excerpted interview with Uma, a New Zealander of Indian descent. An autobiographical piece with apolitical, social, economic analysis of lesbianism for her. Page 0—Gharjetje Choenni speaks of Surinamese women and homosexuality. Page 18—Japanese lesbian writers. Page 19—interview with Chinese Malay lesbian. Page 30—letter about lesbianism in Indonesia.

Devi, Shakuntala. The World Of Homosexuals. New, Delhi: Bell Books, Viras Publishing House.

Historical information on lesbians.

Dream of the Red Chamber, China: n.p., n.d.

Novel about two actresses; one playing the male role, one the female, who were passionately in love both on and off the stage.

Feminist Review, No. 17 (Autumn 84)

Several articles by Partibha Parmer: "Challenging Imperial Feminism," "Black Women Organizing Autonomously," and "Revolutionary Consumerism."

Fukaya, Michiyo Cornwell. Lesbian Lyrics. Self-published, c/o A.L.O.E.C. PO Box .50, N. Y., N.Y. 10002, 1981.

Collection of poetry by a Japanese American lesbian poet

Hasselrodt, R. Leighton. Lesbianism Around the World.

Mentions two Japanese lesbian groups.

Hiratsuka Raicho. Jiden: Genshi Josei wa Taiyo de atta (Autobiography: In the Beginning Woman was the Sun.)

Japan: Otsuki Shoten, 1971-73 (?).

Humana, C. and Wang, W. The Yin Yang. London: Allan Wingate, 1971.

Description of lesbian practices in Chinese history.

Hsieh Ping-Ying. Autobiography of a Chinese girl (I Konu Ping Ti Tzu Chuan). Trans. by Tsui Chi. Introduction by Elisabeth Croll. China: n.p., 1943; reprinted. Boston: Pandora Press, 1986.

The chapter "Platonic Love" discusses female schoolmates' love affairs with each other.

Kawabata, Yasunari. Beauty and Sadness. Trans. by Howard Hibbett NY: Knopf Borzoi Books, 1975.

Novel about lesbian couple Keiko and Ueno Otoko. Portrayal of lesbians as vengeful — wanting to get revenge on a man who had hurt one lover in a prior relationship.

Kim, Alison. "A Cup of Steam." In Rain Bird: A Literary Magazine Kaneohe, HI: Windward Community College, May 1985.

—————Mirror Mirror (Woman Woman). Santa Cruz CA: Dancing Bird Press, 1986.
Collection of poems.

Kim, Willyce. Dancer Dawkins and the California Kid
Boston: Alyson Publishers, Inc. 1984.
A novel.

—————Eating Artichokes. Oakland, CA: The Women's Press Collective, 1972.
Collection of poetry.

Lieh-Mak, F., O'Hoy, K. M. and Luk, S.L. "Lesbianism in the Chinese of Hong Kong." In Archives of Sexual Behavior Vol. 12 (Fall 1983): 21-30.

Historical and literary background regarding lesbianism in China. Demographic data, family background and behavioral characteristics of 15 Chinese lesbians are described, compared and matched with a group of married women.

Narnjoshi, Suniti. The Conversations of Cow. London: The Women's Press, 1987.
Novel about Suniti, average middle of the road lesbian separatist and Bhadravati, a Brahmin lesbian cow.

—————Feminist Fables. London: Sheba Feminist Publishers, 1981; reprinted. Exeter: A. Wheeler & Co., Ltd., 1984

Fables, fairy tales and legends rewritten with a feminist perspective, some specifically mention lesbian/dykes. "The

Badge Wearing Dyke and Her Two Maiden Aunts" and "The Wicked Witch."

Noda, Barbara. Strawberries. Berkeley: Shameless Hussy Press, 1979.

Collection of poetry with drawings by Wendy Yoshimura.

Smith, Barbara. Review of Many Voices, One Chant. Black Feminist perspectives. In Conditions: 11/12, 1985.

Speaks of growing voices of women of color, some of them lesbian. Specific to lesbian issues is the piece "Becoming Visible: Black Lesbian Discussions." It is important to note here that in Britain the term Black refers to people of Indian and African origin and sometimes other people of color,

Soule, Janet S., ed. Tracking Our Way Through Time: A Lesbian, Herstory, Calendar/Journal. Chicago, IL: Sandpiper Books, 1984.

Quotes and herstory information for each date. Entries include excerpts by Merle Woo, Z Wong, Kitty Tsui and Barbara Noda.

Utsa ed. "There Are, Always Have Been, Always Will Be Lesbians in India." Conditions: Thirteen, Brooklyn, NY: Conditions, 1986.

Interview with Khayal and Utsa conducted by Susan Heske, aired on WBAI Radio, NY, NY on 29 April, 1984. Delves into non-western roots of lesbianism with historical references dating to 520-480 BCE, some positive, some negative. Discusses the more current view women in India hold about lesbians and cites journals now in print whose focus is South Asian lesbians and gays.

Van Braan, Ger. "Note from Abroad: Thanksgiving from Indonesia." The Ladder. Nov. 1964.

Indonesian lesbian breaking isolation with friendship and love with other Indonesian lesbians.

Vatsayayana. Kama Sutra: Hindu Ritual of Love NY: Castle Books, 1963.

Book is very male-identified but does talk briefly of sexual practices between women.

Watanabe, Mieko. Trans. by Nancy Nakayama and Elizabeth Thomson. Japan: n.p., 1984.

Collection of poetry.

Wong, Christine. "Yellow Queer: An Oral Herstory of Lesbianism." Frontiers: A Journal Of Women Studies., Vol. 4 No. 3 (Fall 1979): 52-53

Short theatre piece written and performed as a dance by Christine Wong dealing with the issues of being Asian and being lesbian.

Woo. Merle. Yellow Woman Speaks. San Francisco: Radical Women Publications. n.d.

Selected poetry.

CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES

Akemi: Japanese-American, student of Environmental Studies and Biology. Athletic, likes nature. Enjoys outdoor activities, eating, talking, laughing, playing. Self-description: short, intense, crazy, serious, honest, always searching, questioning.

A. Kaweah Lemeshewsky is a multicultural Lesbian born of a Japanese immigrant mother and a Blackfeet/Cherokee/Russian father. Originally from Alexandria, Virginia, she was raised in Vacaville, California and now lives in Santa Cruz, where she studies Spanish and Japanese, and periodically jumps in the ocean to combat spiritual dessication.

Cristy Terese Mei-Ling Chung: Baby hapa dragon chaqua dyke in high tops; pumps iron, loves to dance, disappears for four days, and is on the move to Hawaii. Revolution surges in her blood from a past life as a martyr in the French Revolution.

Alison Kim: I'm an artist; struggling and passionate; nasty and playful. I love eating, Hawaiian music, and lots of hip action on the dance floor till the wee hours of the morning. A focus in my life is making writings by Pacific/Asian lesbians (past, present and future) available and accessible.

Roberta Almercz: Puerto Rican/Filipina artist and freelance photographer. Hates to write and loves to dance.