

## Rainbow Reviews

Treasures within diversity's spectrum

BY CYD ATHENS

**The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves**, edited by Evelyn C. White, Seal Press, Seattle, 1990. \$14.95.

**The Black Women's Health Book** is a chorus of forty-one black women's voices singing gospel. This gospel however, is not about the glory of God. Rather, it is about how racism, sexism and homophobia affect our health and our health care.

## Books

In this informative collection of stories—some autobiographical, others rife with social, cultural, political and/or economic statistics—I found pain, humor and determination. I also found permission to hurt, to grieve, to be angry and to forge ahead with our dreams.

There is validation here—validation of the sense of urgency we, as black women, so often feel. There is medicine here, too—the kind of medicine that helps invisible wounds heal.

It is traditional when reviewing a literary piece to address content, plot and how well the author or authors educated or entertained the reader. While the resources list at the end of the book is invaluable, the information to be gained by a thorough reading is even more so. Hearing gospel from the likes of Byllye Avery, Audre Lorde, and both the late Pat Parker and Zora Neal Hurston is a soothing experience. As Evelyn White says in her introduction, "Please take this sisterly medicine and pass it on."

**Finding the Lesbians: Personal Accounts from Around the World**, edited by Julia Penelope and Sarah Valentine, Crossing Press, \$10.95.

**Finding the Lesbians** is a book that should have come out in the seventies. Although it is good to see some of our techniques and discoveries in print, there is a sense of wanting more.

The National Organization for Women (NOW), Chinook salmon, pinkie rings and elevators all make appearances here.

Most of the contributors to this anthology are white women; some of them seemingly with money. As a result, we have for the most part, a narrative of their search for each other. Noticeable by their absence, are accounts by native women from Third World countries about how they find their lesbian sisters at home.

Quite a few of these reports are contemporary with the Stonewall era. This makes the book seem more a history than a current event and makes one wonder how we are finding each other in this era of AIDS.

According to Alix Dobkin's foreword, "Finding the Lesbians is good for us and good for women." Hopefully as we continue to search for and find each other, the sense of wanting more will become a sense of having, being, and doing more.



BY MUDGE

**Iroquois Stories: Heros, Heroines, Monsters and Magic**, told by Joseph Bruchac, illustrated by Daniel Burgevin, Crossing Press, \$8.95.

This is one of the best books I've ever read. It has many short stories and each one has a moral. A few of the morals are: Be satisfied with simple things, respect others, and if you walk with goodness in your heart, you have no reason to be afraid.

My favorite stories are, "The Creation," which tells how Sky-Woman was sent to Turtle Island (the Earth) after all the animals worked together to make a place for the seed she carried from the sky-world to grow. I liked it because the creator in this story is a woman. In "The Two Brothers," Good and Evil are born to the daughter of Sky-Woman. The brothers fight as they grow up, and their fighting shapes the world. "Stonecoat Woman and the Vampire Skeleton" are good, scary stories that made me jump out of bed and turn on the lights.

I think that kids of all ages who enjoy ancient myths and legends will want to read this book. Kids between 10 and 14 can read it themselves. Parents of younger children can read it to them. The print is large, the words are easy to understand and there is a part in the back of the book to help with native American words.

Editors note: Mudge is a 13-year-old Talented and Gifted (TAG) student from a gay-positive family. She will be reviewing books aimed at young readers which might be of interest to gay families with children.

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