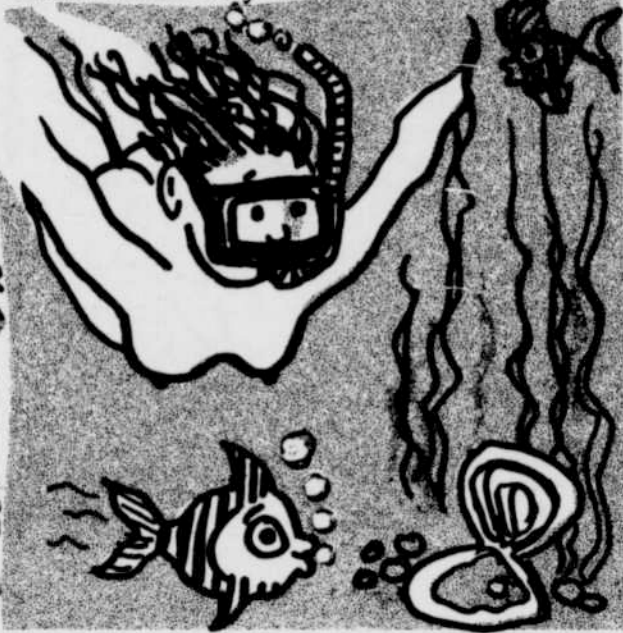


national news

Lesbians have more fun

Not only do lesbians have longer sexual encounters than straight women, they experience more multiple orgasms, reports *The 1995 Advocate Survey on Sexuality and Relationships: The Women*. The study appears in *The Advocate's* annual double issue on sex and sexuality, which hit the newsstands July 25.



The study reports that 39 percent of women who identify themselves as lesbians stated that their most recent sexual encounter lasted more than an hour, as opposed to 15 percent of straight women. Multiple orgasms during that last sexual encounter were reported by 32 percent of the lesbians and 19 percent of the straight women.

Eight thousand women, from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, participated in the survey. Ages ranged from 15 to 75 years; the average age was 34. Nearly two-thirds of those responding have a college degree; more than one-quarter have a graduate degree.

Dr. Janet Lever, an associate professor of sociology at California State University in Los Angeles constructed the survey, which follows last year's *Advocate* survey on gay men's sex lives. Lever has researched and written about human sexuality and gender issues for more than two decades.

Arsonist destroys queer magazine

The Phoenix Fire Department has ruled that a July 26 fire that destroyed the offices of *Echo Magazine* was arson. According to authorities, there is no clear evidence, as of yet, to indicate the arson was a hate crime. Four other businesses were located in the same building as *Echo Magazine*. The building burned to the ground.

Echo, the most widely distributed gay and lesbian publication in the Southwest, was insured. The staff has set up a temporary office and intends to continue to publish. Jeff Ofstedahl, *Echo's* general manager, said, "We've lost almost everything. But we are going to see this as an opportunity to rebuild and grow even bigger."

A \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the arson has been offered through the Maricopa County Attorney's office.

PDX poet plucks prize

Portland poet Pamela Crow is one of five lesbian writers awarded grants last month by the Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation. Adrian Oktenberg of Northampton, Mass., also won a prize in poetry. Winners in fiction are Reid Gomez of El Cerrito, Calif., Larissa Lai of Langley, Wash., and Elissa Raffa of Minneapolis, Minn. This is the fifth year that the Astraea Foundation has awarded grants of \$11,000 each to emerging lesbian writers.

The Sappho Award of Distinction, a \$5,000 grant presented annually to an established writer,

was awarded this year to the poet Chrystos.

The Lesbian Writers Fund was begun by a founding gift from philanthropist and activist Joan Drury. That endowment has now been depleted, and the fund is seeking new contributions to maintain the current program and expand the numbers and kinds of awards.

In addition to the writer's grants, Astraea announced that 29 community organizations and 11 film and video projects had been awarded grants during the second round of its 1995 grant cycle. Organizations receiving funding include the National Asian Women's Health Organization in San Francisco, Old Lesbians Organizing for Change in Houston, Urban Bush Women in New York City, and the Progressive Student Leadership Exchange in Minneapolis.

Advertisers grab for lesbian and gay dollars

Advertising in gay and lesbian publications is a growth industry, according to a nationwide survey of 128 gay- and lesbian-oriented magazines and newspapers. Advertisers spent \$61.6 million this year to advertise in these publications. Mulryan/Nash, a New York-based advertising agency that specializes in reaching queer consumers, conducted the survey, called "Advertising Spending in the Gay Press," for the second consecutive year.

According to Dave Mulryan, a partner at Mulryan/Nash, gay and lesbian publications are the fastest growing print market in the United States. While the queer press posted a 16.2 percent increase over last year in ad spending, *Hispanic Business* reports a 6 percent increase for the Latino/a press, and *Target Market News* reports a 3 percent increase for the African American press. Increases for the mainstream print market were reported at 6.77 percent for newspapers and 13.3 percent for magazines.



Various studies have shown that lesbians and gay men read their local queer media and intentionally buy from companies who advertise in gay and lesbian publications, according to Mulryan.

Flu shots not always good

According to a report published in the August issue of the medical journal *Blood*, flu shots may stimulate the growth of the AIDS virus. Researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles AIDS Institute found that even mild stimulation of the immune system could cause the growth of HIV cells to temporarily increase.

The research team cautions that while the vaccine increases the growth of HIV cells, actually catching the flu causes even greater cell growth. They suggest that most persons with HIV should still get flu shots. Their findings, they say, should be used by doctors in deciding which of their HIV patients should get flu shots.

Compiled by Kristine Chatwood

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