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HUMOR



Blast from the past

How I saved the world
from patriarchy

One of the great things about having a Web site—other than daily e-mail invitations to enlarge my penis—is that people from my past can find me. I just got an e-mail from the woman I came out with!

We were college roommates in 1975 when, after the first five minutes of Women's Studies 101, we ran out and shaved our heads, had our IUDs removed and changed our names to Hayfield and Glacier. (True!) We swore off men because we wanted to undermine the patriarchy. We became those "political lesbians" who born-dykes love to ridicule. And I can see why.

We were not attracted to each other, nor to other women. We didn't want anyone to be attracted to us, either (which wasn't too much of a problem considering our preoccupation with smashing through the sexist belching taboo and our ongoing boycott of deodorant as a patriarchal plot). It wasn't about attraction at all.

In fact, we thought attraction itself was patriarchal. The idea was to raise our consciousness and love ourselves until eventually sisterhood would be powerful enough to make us an army of lovers who could not fail.

We immersed ourselves in feminist theory. We wouldn't participate in any cultural or academic activity dominated by men. We wouldn't touch a book by a male author. We read TiGrace Atkinson, Jill Johnston and Pat Parker. We listened to Meg Christian, Baba Yaga and Alix Dobkin. We volunteered at the women's center.

Being students, it was our job to pull pranks (now known as vandalism). One day we graffitied the wall behind the urinals in the men's bathroom with big red letters: "You hold the tool of patriarchy in your hands!" We signed it with a fist inside a women's symbol and went home smug about our accomplishment. Were we surprised the next day when men were still running everything!

My friend and I finally figured it was about time to see if there was more to being lesbians than spray painting bathroom walls, but we didn't know what to do. Unfortunately, we hadn't yet recovered from our heterosexual indoctrination, and neither of us wanted to be the boy.

Of course, neither of us wanted to be the girl, either. We squirmed around in the back seat for a while, but we never got past first base, to use an analogy of an American pastime that is totally male-dominated. (No offense to women's softball.)

Thankfully, gym class provided woman-only space. In fact, a "No Men Allowed" sign hung outside the women's locker room. We loved that sign.

We had at least enough lesbian sense to



Living OUT

by Sally Sheklow

know that dykes were supposed to carry Swiss army knives—the bigger the butch-er. My friend and I were so butch, we carried knives the size of Rhode Island. We're talking three blades, can opener, fork, spoon, saw, scissors, pliers, jack-hammer and wrecking ball. And most important for our mission, a Phillips screwdriver.

We took turns standing guard for each other while the Phillips screws holding the sign to the ivy-covered wall were loosened. After a week of surreptitious unscrewing—and we saw nothing Freudian in that activity—we liberated the sign and used it to defy the patriarchal norm of college boys sitting around under their stolen beer signs smoking pot. We sat around under our "No Men Allowed" sign smoking pot. It was a heady time.

So you can see why I was pretty excited to get an e-mail from my old college buddy.

Although we went our separate ways after graduation, I did run into her 15 years ago on the Supreme Court steps during the March on Washington. We didn't get a chance to catch up on our lives then because we were too busy eradicating homophobia by chanting at the cops about two, four, six, eight, how did they know their grandma was straight? The whole world was watching.

We were giddy with the magnitude of it all. Obviously by then we'd learned not all men support patriarchy. We could now work in coalition with men and even make friends with some of them. Michael Hardwick himself was there, the hero of the day leading the sodomy law protest. Let me tell you, that is one fun law to protest—thousands of us lesbian-gaytransqueers and allies descending on our nation's capital and prancing around the Supreme Court under the marble engraving "Equal Justice Under Law." All us demonstrators have been pretty bummed that we never got our equal justice.

Now all these years later, out of the blue, Glacier (not her name anymore) came across my Web site and sent me a wonderful, newsy e-mail. Turns out she's been partnered with her girlfriend for 20 years. They have a 17-year-old daughter and a 10-year-old son. Wow, a son. My guess is they didn't graffiti his bathroom wall. 

SALLY "HAYFIELD" SHEKLOW is living in the past at www.sallysheklow.com.

MacRory Tip to Clip

Have An Escape Plan

If your Mac freezes, escalate your escape in small, gentle steps:

1. "Command Period" (⌘+.) will solve some freezes
2. A "force quit" (⌘+Option+Escape) may be needed for others
3. A "soft boot" uses ⌘+Power+Control (or Shift for some Macs)
4. Press your Mac's physical "acupuncture point" reset button
5. Unplug the machine and wait 60 seconds



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