

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



Ready, Set, Go! Community • Visibility • Action

Margaret Purcell, 1951; Mary Henry, 1939; Gloria Stancich, 1933; and Deirdre Knowles, 1947

Unless the earth truly shifts on its axis between now and late July, the weather in Tacoma for the 2011 Regional OLOC Gathering should be comfy. That said, we want to talk to you about avalanches! Since Tacoma is within an hour's drive of Mt. Rainier and Snoqualmie Pass over the Cascades, and almost that close to the snow-capped Olympic Mountains, hearing about avalanches is a fairly common occurrence much of the year.

Why do we mention this? Well, members of the planning committee for the Regional Gathering have realized we're experiencing our own personal version of an avalanche.

One always starts with the innocent little bit of snow—in this case, that snow took the form of a few questions from the Steering Committee about whether we'd be interested in planning this Regional. Once we'd agreed, then came a flurry: Where would we hold the event? When would it be held? What programming could we offer? In the blink of an eye, the flurries had built into a series of storms filled with program ideas, committees, planning meetings, e-mails, phone calls, outreach, budgets, workflow charts, building the mountain ever higher, until ...

All that's lacking to trigger this snow-packed mountain of plans into an avalanche of fun, learning, and sharing is you—we need you to register! Lots of women already have, enough that we're now beginning to scramble to line up some extra housing options, so we have no doubt that this event will be memorable! We want you to be swept away with us, gaining momentum that will propel us toward a stronger future in OLOC.

Come join Lillian Faderman, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Arden Eversmeyer, and a host of others

at the 2011 Gathering in Tacoma, July 28–31. Registrations are already in from women all over Washington and Oregon, as well as Montana, Alaska, Colorado, California, Texas, Arizona, Ohio, and Minnesota. We'd love to add you to the list! Detailed information is available through OLOC or at www.psoloc.org.

Special Housing Note: Registrations are going so well, we've run out of rooms at the conference site, but there are several alternatives. The planners will gladly send you those details when you let them know you're coming.



When the Steering Committee met in Tacoma in early April, they got a warm welcome and cold weather. Carole Stoneking and Tita Caldwell, both from warmer climates, thought winter gear was in order!

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Steering Committee Update

By *Alix Dobkin, 1940*

Personnel changes:

The last meeting of the OLOC Steering Committee was a teary one as two valued members, to our regret, changed their relationship with the Steering Committee. Carole Stoneking, 1937, SC member since 2009, has found that a new and exciting trajectory her life has taken requires her full time and attention. In addition, due to a need to focus on rehabilitation from ongoing health issues, Mina Meyer, 1940, has reluctantly taken a leave-of-absence from the SC and resigned as Co-Director (see article). We will miss them as full-time members, but each hopes to continue working with the SC to whatever degree they feel they can, and Mina hopes to return to the Steering Committee in October. Alix Dobkin was elected Co-Director to replace Mina and serve in that capacity along with Jan Griesinger.

Focus & Direction:

An article from the March 2011 issue of *The Reporter*, "Input Needed for Anti-Racism and Anti-Classism Work," described a meeting called at the end of the 2010 Gathering. The meeting prompted the OLOC Steering Committee to re-focus on being more relevant, attractive, and accessible to Old Lesbians of Color and poor and working-class Lesbians.

- *A Vision & Action Statement* is currently nearing completion. The opening sentences of the current draft—"OLOC stands against all oppressions. We want to understand how these oppressions intersect, connect and affect Old Lesbians. We intend to advocate for change and work to bring about a just society"—underscore this top priority for the OLOC Steering Committee.
- *A committee of Old Lesbians of Color* who are part of OLOC has formed. Facilitated by long-time OLOC activist and ex-Co-Director Vera Martin, the group will develop a focused program for Boston in 2012 and work with the SC to maximize more varied participation in OLOC.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Honoring Mina Meyer

Mina Meyer recently ended her service as OLOC Co-Director, having served in this position since 2007. She will continue serving on the OLOC Steering Committee and as part of the Long Beach OLOC Chapter, which she co-founded. She has a wealth of experience, having helped organize the first-ever Old Lesbian gathering in southern California that led to the formation of OLOC. With her partner Sharon Raphael, Mina has been a feminist and LGBT activist for 40 years, specializing in issues regarding old people.



Direct Action Resistance

This is the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In 1990 the passage of ADA teetered in the balance. Strange amendments were being introduced, and the bill's supporters in Congress seemed to be getting cold feet. ADAPT (disability activists) members descended from their wheelchairs to crawl up the steps of the US Capitol, took over the Capitol rotunda, and told Congressional leaders that "they should walk a mile in our shoes to see from our point of view why the ADA is so critical." Then 101 protesters in wheelchairs chained themselves together and were arrested in the rotunda.

Direct action reinforces the self-worth of those who participate, as we learn we do not have to "just take it."

—From *Resist* newsletter, Fall 2010.

OLOC provides Old Lesbians with the chance to meet like-minded women in our common struggle to confront ageism, to share mutual interests, and to experience the joy and warmth of playing and working together.

Creating Change **By Jan Griesinger, 1942**

OLOC sent four Old Lesbians to *Creating Change* in February, thanks to a grant from the Arcus Foundation: Vera Martin, Carole Stoneking, Ruth Debra, and me. Produced by the National Gay/Lesbian Task Force, *Creating Change* was held in Minneapolis, MN. Over 2,500 LGBT people attended, a large proportion of them young people.

Vera Martin commented:

- I was very interested in the workshop "Black Lesbians Matter" because ageism is now being addressed. Hopefully, OLOC can now interest them in some of our agenda and purpose.
- I discovered ageism is being practiced by some with power and authority involved with *Creating Change*. No Old Lesbians were involved in the Host Committee, and there was very little about ageism from the podium.
- I so enjoyed the keynote speaker, Chrystos, a 64-year-old Lesbian. She is a member of the First Nations and well versed on American history.

Several of us attended a workshop about immigration intersecting with LGBT concerns.

Our workshop, "Identifying and Resisting the Social Construction of Aging and Embracing Old Pride," included some reflections on ageism followed by substantive small-group discussions reacting to the often-heard phrase, "Aging Gracefully." We ended with our chant "Old, Proud, Out, Loud." Old Lesbian visibility makes clear that we are a vital part of our LGBT movement.

The OLOC caucus reported the need to address ageism from the platform and have a panel on Old Lesbians or Old LGBTQ folks as a plenary session.

Ageism is a social disease. This is what our presence makes clear.



Annalee Stewart, 1927 and Vera Martin, 1923, during the OLOC caucus at Creating Change 2011

A Chant

"Escucha, escucha, estamos en la lucha." This terrific chant in Spanish has been used at peace and justice events. It means "Listen, listen, we are in the struggle."

The Question of Race

What is race? Are there racial differences? If yes, what are they? What race (?) are you? Do you think race matters?

—Jezz Jesmain, 1931

The OLOC Reporter is published by Old Lesbians Organizing for Change:

- www.oloc.org. E-mail: info@oloc.org
- Post Office Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701; 888-706-7506

This Newsletter Brought to You By:

Co-Editors: Jennice Thomas, 1940; and Susan Wiseheart, 1941

Proofreaders and Copy-editors: Malinda McCain, 1940; and Nancy Krody, 1939

Content Review: Alix Dobkin, 1940; and Jan Griesinger, 1942

Design/Layout: Margaret Purcell, 1951

The mailing crew and all of the writers and photographers.

Deadline for the next issue is Aug. 1, 2011. Submission guidelines: copy due by Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, and Nov. 1. Limit submissions to 300 words. Contact us for a style guide. We may edit articles for clarity and length. Send articles to OLOC: info@oloc.org or OLOC, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701.

In Defense of Old **By Jennice Thomas, 1940**

The Cleveland OLOC chapter took offense at the use of “older” instead of “old” to describe people in their 70s and 80s. They provide us with a useful set of arguments to help us explain our insistence on OLD Lesbians Organizing for Change. This is an excerpt from a Letter to the Editor that Sally Tatnall, 1937, wrote on behalf of the chapter:

- We call ourselves “old” because we value the years of experience and contributions we have all made. Calling us “older” only removes the distinction we deserve.
- We also call ourselves “old” (with pride) because we refuse to accommodate a society that has turned the term into an insult. To be old means to be ignored, scorned, invisible, and expendable. OLOC believes it means to be valued, an asset, a problem-solver thru life as well as a wealth of information. We don't know everything, but if anyone cared to ask, they would find some answers.
- We call ourselves old because we will not accommodate a world where old means inferior.

Puget Sound OLOC Chapter News **By Gloria Stancich, 1933; and Mary Henry, 1939**

Undoubtedly, by the time the fall issue of *The Reporter* rolls around, PS OLOC will have a long list of positive lessons and insights we gained by hosting this summer's Regional Gathering. Even though it's still months away, we can tell you that doing the outreach for this event has been an amazing experience. We may have thought we had tooted our horn about as loudly as we could before this undertaking, but we were wrong. We keep on hearing from women in our area that didn't know OLOC existed, much less a local chapter of OLOC. What a great, unexpected benefit!

Planning for the upcoming Regional Gathering really has consumed much of our time and energy in Puget Sound OLOC, but

we're also trying hard to stay mindful about our other commitments and involvement. We continue to build new alliances and work to strengthen those already established with like-minded organizations throughout the area. Our newest outreach has been to begin working with NOW. Representatives from PS OLOC have attended and provided some input into plans for NOW's statewide meeting which will feature a keynote presentation by the National President, Terry O'Neill. Even though it isn't an OLOC event, we'll make sure NOW notices that OLOC is there, asking to be counted.

Bay Area OLOC Political Action Plan **By Simi Litvak, 1942**

The March Bay Area OLOC meeting discussed ways our chapter can react to the current political situation. Three panelists outlined how, as old people, we face economic insecurity. National, state, and local legislators are balancing their budgets by limiting public-employee pensions, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. They are cutting programs benefiting disabled people and children, youth and their parents from working and poverty-class households.

As a result of these discussions, we are:

- 1) Monitoring and responding to attempts to change Social Security and Medicare, by letter-writing and keeping informed through our representative to the California chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA).
- 2) Supporting legislative proposals to increase revenues, e.g., bills increasing taxes on corporations and the very rich, eliminating the income ceiling for Social Security and Medicare withholding, and stopping the wars!
- 3) Alerting members of our newly formed OLOC Social Action Network about upcoming demonstrations around these issues.

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(e-mail, phone, write or check www.oloc.org)**

“Corrective Rape” in South Africa

By Diana E. H. Russell, Ph.D.

“Millicent Gaika was bound, strangled, tortured and raped for five hours by a man who crowed that he was ‘curing’ her of her lesbianism.”

—Alice Jay, Lesbian activist in Cape Town.

Millicent almost died as a result of this vicious lesbophobic so-called “corrective rape.” This is the term now used in South Africa for the increasingly prevalent male practice of viciously raping Lesbians to “cure” them of their sexual orientation. According to Lesbian activist Alice Jay, the frequency of “corrective rapes” has reached crisis proportions. While many Lesbians live in terror of becoming victims of these misogynist, lesbophobic rapes, no man has ever been prosecuted for this kind of heinous attack.

The courageous activists of Luleki Sizwe, an organization devoted to combating “corrective rape,” are currently risking their lives to try to ensure that the legal case against the perpetrators of multiple attacks on Millicent will result in more prosecutions of other corrective rape offenders in future.

I was a recipient of one of the activists’ online petitions, distributed to massive numbers of individuals in South Africa and internationally. Having collected over 140,000 signed petitions by January 25, 2011, to deliver to the Minister of Justice Radebe, they intend to call on him and President Zuma with the following goal: “to publicly condemn ‘corrective rape,’ criminalize hate crimes, and ensure immediate enforcement, public education and protection for survivors” (Alice Jay, personal communication from Anne Mayne, Jan. 25, 2011).

The activists are continuing their campaign to collect as many more signed petitions as possible, so I hope that members of OLOC will sign it and send it to a minimum of ten others whom they are confident will be willing to act on it in a timely manner.

<http://tinyurl.com/43mhuqk>

Black Lesbians from OLOC To Attend Two Powerful Events:

- ZUNA Institute National Black Lesbian Conference, August 25-28, 2011, in Orlando, FL - www.zunainstitute.org
- National Black Justice Coalition National Conference, September 20–25, 2011, “Out on the Hill,” in Washington DC—for Black LGBT activists and other leaders. NBJC’s 2nd Annual “OUT on the Hill” Black LGBT Leadership Summit is timed to coincide with the annual Congressional Black Caucus Foundation’s Annual Legislative Conference (CBCF-ALC) in Washington DC that draws thousands of folks from around the country. There will be an NBJC booth at the DC Convention Center where the CBCF-ALC is being held. www.nbjc.org

Share Your Thoughts

A vehicle insurance salesman told Jan Griesinger that rates go up at age 65 and then up some more at age 75. Isn’t the accident rate higher for 16–25 year olds than for old people? Is this a concrete example of ageism or just good business? Send us your letter to the editor.

Blaque Womyn— Our Stories, Our Lives, Our Love

Original/unpublished works are being accepted from self-identified womyn of Black or African descent who dance anywhere along the LGBTQ spectrum. Work may be in the form of an essay, prose, or poetry. Those whose work is chosen will receive a complimentary copy of the final project. It is being edited and published by Erin Upchurch of Columbus, OH. Deadline is June 30, 2011. Submissions should include name/pen name, city and state, and a brief bio. Send to blaquewomyn@gmail.com, or mail it to Erin at 5109 Ranstead Court, Columbus OH 43220

April Blessing: Old and Young

Activists Converse

By Lynn Brown, 1943

I attended the Bay Area OLOC-sponsored event featuring three Old Lesbian feminists and four younger women who identified as queer. It was a diverse intergenerational panel presented by OLOC to bridge and dispel the myths and misinformation we accumulate without direct contact with one another. It was created in the spirit and desire of wanting to learn about and appreciate the upcoming generations of OUT women and to understand the language barriers we Old Lesbians sometimes experience.

I went without any preconceived ideas and I got everything I wanted, leaving there both satisfied and hungry not to lose what I learned and to continue to share the intimacy of our conversation across generations. I was so impressed with the young women and their willingness to expose their evolution with us.

I was again happy to listen to my peers tell their journeys and reveal the blanks in their learning curves that desired to be filled. I heard calls for respect and a mutual opportunity of listening intergenerationally. I sat riveted in a room of 100 women, absorbing this conversation, this large dialogue, this great hug across the walls we erect and want to cross. My heart was so happy just to listen.

Perhaps there will continue to be more acceptance of how we grow and what we become without all the fuss, flack, and violence against differences. It's fun to have a world with rainbows of expression, and I feel so encouraged after listening to just a small number of other women that all of us benefit from expanding our horizons and sharing what we know with each other.

Student Volunteer Coordinator

Diane Germain is the Student Volunteer Coordinator for the Lambda Archives of San Diego, CA. She has also provided great Old Lesbian graphics for OLOC.

No More Guy

Do you call women guys? Do you get called guy? The planners for the OLOC Northwest Regional Gathering, influenced by Alice Walker and by a blog at *Bitch Magazine*, have a campaign to stop using the word guy to address or talk about women.

Some members have taken a pledge to stop and, if that woman is caught using it, she must put a quarter in a can. The money will be used toward other OLOC projects.

Read the story on the blog at their website. It also directs you to the one from *Bitch*. Here are the links: <http://tinyurl.com/3gao3hh> (scroll down to the entry called Hey You Guys! NOT). <http://tinyurl.com/4xbvplu>

If you don't have Internet access and want to read these messages, phone 888-706-7506, say what you want, and give your mailing address.

England's Older Feminists Network

England has an Older Feminists Network and a newsletter—their motto is "Proud to be older and bolder" (sound familiar?).

This was in their most recent newsletter:

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them had to be a girl.

Other issues addressed in their newsletter include what you can do right now to support farmers in Palestine and peace in the Holy Land and information on the Campaign against Pornography

You can reach them by mail c/o Astra, 54 Gordon Rd., London N31EP, UK or go to at www.olderfeminist.co.uk

OLOC Member Saves A Life *By Sandra Tignor, 1937*

In mid-April 2011, OLOC member Jan Held (1947) of Cleveland OH drove past her friend's home on two different occasions within a couple of days and noticed that the car had not been moved from the driveway. Papers, mail, and flyers were starting to pile up in the driveway and mailbox. Jan tried to open the door and found it unlocked. She entered the house and found her friend, Ellen, sprawled on the floor amid newly purchased groceries and the contents of her purse. Jan checked Ellen and found her to be still breathing. Jan also checked the date on the receipt for the groceries and realized that the accident had happened four days earlier. She called "9-1-1" and her friend was immediately rushed to the hospital. Good job, Jan.

Language Matters

Palm Springs CA's Golden Rainbow Center-SAGE, after much prodding from OLOC Steering Committee member Ruth Debra (see last issue), published the following on their website:

"We apologize to anyone who was offended by the title and marketing photo of an upcoming nutrition program. The instructor offers a motivational program aimed at reducing body fat, maintaining energy throughout the day, and improving sexual health.

"But members found the program's title, "Eating to Live Young," and the marketing poster's photo of the instructor's bare torso to be offensively ageist and exploitive. We regret falling into the ageist belief that 'Young' is desirable in ways that being 'Old' is not. This is not our mission at the Golden Rainbow Center-SAGE.

"So we have pulled the program from our current schedule."

OLOC Chapters & OLOC Approved Research

To find out about OLOC chapters, presently in California, New York, Ohio, Missouri, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado, look here: www.oloc.org/about/chapters.php.

Are you doing or wondering about participating in research? Check in with our Research Gatekeeper, Sharon Raphael, Sharon@oloc.org, or view our guidelines here: www.oloc.org/researchrules.php.

For chapter or research information in print, phone 1-888-706-7506 and leave your name and address.

Women Helping Women *By Jan Marotta, 1940 New Paltz, NY*

In the May-June 2010, issue, I wrote about a privately organized network of a few women friends helping out other women with such things as small repairs, pet/house sitting, rides to appointments, yard-work, and help with various projects. In the following months we did some significant yard-work projects, helped someone with a broken hip get a handicap entrance built for her home, took care of some cats, ran grocery errands, helped with medical insurance paperwork, and visited Old Lesbians in nursing homes. These are just a few examples of our friends' network word-of-mouth service that doesn't cost anything but our time. No paperwork, no payment or other expectations, no rules, just women working together, reaching out to help others in times of need.

OLOC is now an affiliate of Wolfe Video. You can order *Hannah Free* or any other Wolfe Video by using our link and we will receive cash from Wolfe to support our work. In fact, OLOC recently received a check from Wolfe Video for nearly \$65.00. Thank you to those of you who have used our link to order from Wolfe. www.wolfevideo.com/default.asp?R=1344 will take you to their site. Once there, you can move around, order what you want, and OLOC will receive some money. Wolfe Video is Lesbian-owned-and-operated.



Kathryn Avis Kay (1940–2010) *By Louise Luczak, 1951*

Having recently entered my 60th year, I attended my first OLOC event, the National Gathering in Cleveland last July. There, I hoped to see my friend Kathy Kay.

I'd known Kathy for 27 years. We shared Lesbian/feminist community organizing, both valuing womyn-only space. She was a layout artist for our local feminist newspaper, *What She Wants*. She was a long-time member and supporter of Windsong, Cleveland's Feminist Chorus. I was her gardener. We argued about how to prune shrubs. We were both photographers. I was one of her dog Cassie's aunts.

We were very different. She was solidly middle class and fastidious, me working class. Kathy ironed creases in her blue jeans! Mine were often dirty. I don't own an iron. We managed to

appreciate each other's differences.

Kathy was one of the *older Lesbians* in our community. Once, I asked her age. She broke eye contact, shook her head—clearly letting me know she wasn't going to answer that question. I then saw her as *one of those Lesbians* who believed there was nothing positive about being old or admitting your age.

At the Gathering, when we first saw and smiled at each other, I quickly glanced at her tag—ah hah—1940! Kathy was 70 and very proud that day!

Our dear Kathryn died October 31 of an aneurysm. The last couple of years she'd been battling uterine cancer—and winning! She had worked too hard at healing to die.

She remains in our hearts forever.



Maria Dolores Diaz



DJ Furnish



Kathy Kay



Bobbie Gove

DJ (Dorothy Jean) Furnish (1921–2011)

DJ was active in the Northern Colorado chapter of OLOC. Arden Eversmeyer remembers that she was helpful in setting up the networking for the first gathering. DJ was with her partner, Dr. Mary Jo Osterman, for 50 years. She loved to camp, hike, take photographs, and play guitar. She spent as much time as she could in Rocky Mountain National Park. Her niece, Brianna Furnish, was the first to contact national OLOC about DJ's death. Brianna told us: "She was such a wonderful person and helped me a lot." DJ was, according to a story from her memorial service, glad to be out in the later part of her life.

Maria Dolores Diaz (1938–2011)

Maria was active with OLOC in the early part of the 2000s. She lived in the Triangle Square apartments in West Hollywood. As an activist, she worked with young Chicanos in the 1960s to help them achieve higher education. She was involved in raising awareness about issues related to Lesbians and women of color and in mobilizing for change. In the 1970s she attended several Califia Educational Retreats in Southern California. She organized the Honduras Healing Recovery Project in 1998 to help victims of Hurricane Mitch. She was an acupuncturist and earned her Ph.D. in public administration. She is remembered by others as a wonderful, smart, and caring Lesbian.

Bobbie Gove (1935–2011)

Bobbie was part of OLOC since 1994. Her partner, Ethel Hammarquist, died in 2005. Bobbie said about OLOC, "I love going to the meetings OLOC has and I feel right at home among them." She also attended Golden Threads gatherings in Provincetown. She once told OLOC she knew by face at least 500 Lesbians living in Asheville, NC (she lived near there). She attended the Regional Gathering in Columbia, SC, in 2009 and tried hard without success to get to the 2010 Gathering in Cleveland. She stayed in touch with OLOC by e-mail, sending photos and updates. She almost always signed her communications *Semper Fi* (always faithful), *Your Marine*. Bobbie was a Marine who started a few military groups such as the Korean War Veterans (she was the only woman in it) and the Marine Corp League. She was proud of her time in the service ("I was a Marine and always a Marine.") and once tried to get a group of ex-service-women in OLOC to start a group.

Joanna Russ (1937-2011)

Award-winning writer, critic, and teacher, Joanna Russ died on April 29, 2011, in hospice care in Tucson, AZ, after a series of strokes. An out Lesbian since 1969, she is perhaps best known for her novel *The Female Man* (1975), an exploration of a feminist utopia and, through its device of parallel universes, a description of how various sexist societies can produce different versions of the same person.

As a critic, she was instrumental in challenging male dominance in science fiction and a leader in establishing feminist science fiction as a rapidly expanding field. Her only non-science-fiction novel, *On Strike Against God* (1980), features a discussion of Lesbian experience. Her feminist criticism includes *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1984) and *To Write Like a Woman: Essays in Feminism and Science Fiction* (1995).

Medication and Over-Medication

Jennice Thomas's article about the July National Gathering in Cleveland in the September 2010 issue included this: "Margaret Cruikshank reminded us that aging is not a disease but ageism can be deadly. She warned us of the dangers of overmedicating." In the December 2010 issue Mina Meyer wrote in to say how important medication has been to her continued survival and that for those with many illnesses, taking multiple medications is often a lifesaver. She and Peg (Margaret) had a friendly conversation by phone about it and Peg has this to say: "Mina makes an excellent point about meds and I thank her for it. Since my talk, I have had to go on cholesterol medication, after 12 years of resistance."

Dear OLOC

"The issue we just received [March 2011] is one of the best yet, filled with much news of members' doings."

—Chris Roerden, 1935

Dear OLOC,

"What a delightful surprise!

Many thanks for sending a card for my 67th birthday recently; it was much appreciated and brought back some wonderful memories.

We've just returned from a Lesbians over-forty gathering which was a great deal of fun and prompted some in-depth political discussions as well as lots of laughter, much like OLOC really (especially as most of the participants were over 60)."

With love,

Jean Taylor, 1944, Australia

OLOC is supported in part by grants from the Arcus Foundation and the Carpenter Foundation

From Whence Ageism? By Sharon Deevey, 1944

What, beyond cloddish insensitivity, motivates the careless ageism of contemporary American society? I had long assumed a primary factor to be fear—that clenching dread of losing memory, hearing, romance, stamina, independence. I assumed ageism emerged from youthful preoccupation with the superficial—that mirror-fear of body changes: wrinkles, thinning hair, sagging skin, limping joints. Lately, however, I perceive another motivation—namely, anger, expressed in jealousy and resentment.

In Ohio, I dance and write almost daily at three senior centers, with folks my mid-sixties age and older, seventy to ninety-nine. These centers belie the menacing nursing-home imagery of aging. They are instead a hub of creativity and camaraderie, offering low-cost meals, sewing rooms, weight-lifting, and dance floors. The seniors who attend come from the generations who raised several children, worked long hours, rarely complained, and cared deeply for appearances. Many have the financial benefits of hard-earned pensions, long marriages, and Medicare insurance.

Younger folks, and one or two of the center staff, occasionally leak jealousy, as they see us old folks with an easier life, at the moment, than theirs. They want our free time, our dance floors, and our health insurance. They can't imagine all we have survived to get here. They don't suspect how much bravado helps to manage pain. I now suspect ageism is so powerful because it combines the fear of aging-illness with the envy of the aged-active.

Mission Statement for OLOC

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change is a national organization for Old Lesbians age 60 and over and will:

- Promote Old Lesbian Pride.
- Educate, support and empower Old Lesbians.
- Challenge ageism in our society and educate the general public about the effects of ageism and oppression.
- Celebrate our strengths, our talents, our experiences, and document our lives.
- Convene National Gatherings of Old Lesbians.
- Encourage, establish, and support local chapters and regional events

Travel Directory & LC

The OLOC Travel Directory has been discontinued. We discovered from a survey of Lesbians listed that it is used so seldom it is not worth the time, energy, and resources it takes to produce it. For an alternative, use *Lesbian Connection's* Contact Dyke list.

OLOC encourages its supporters to subscribe to *Lesbian Connection*, which comes out in print 6 times a year and often features OLOC writers. The May–June, 2011, had material from Gloria Stancich & Mary Henry on the upcoming OLOC Regional event and also materials written by OLOC members Charlotte Ellis from St. Louis, Sally Cohn from Portland, and Ruthie Berman from W. Palm Beach, FL. Contact LC at Elsie Publishing, PO Box 811, East Lansing MI 48826, elsiepub@aol.com or 517-371-5257

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Tita Caldwell, 1931, San Francisco, CA
Ruth Debra, 1944, Palm Springs, CA
Mina Meyer, 1940, Long Beach, CA
Sally Tatnall, 1937, Cleveland Heights, OH

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The Travel Directory has been discontinued due to very little use. Thanks to those of you who have been listed or who have bought a copy.

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