## '70s Chronicle

Manifesto, manifest, manual, woman. I fuck with my whole body. When I
was 18 I fell in love with K., and we spent most of our freshman year learning how to fuck on a single bed in a dorm room. There was Sister George, Harold's birthday party, The Fox, Jill Johnston's dance column in the Village Voice, my sister's death from when the commune in New England burned down, moratoriums, peace marching, bra-less-ness, speed, hash, sitars, geminis and leos, free, love, haight, Ali, Angela, stones, walls, lambdas, patches, bells, boots, number 9, touch, omega, low spark, philly cheese steak hoagies, mini, midi, maxi, brown leather, dead Kennedys, the JDI., windowpane, a stranger in a strange land, COs, people who didn't even eat eggs, granny gowns, pan handle, witches, war is not healthy. K. knew more than I did about what to do sexwise because she had read about it in Screw magazine. She made me pull my pants down so she could put her tongue on my cunt. Nothing feels so good, absolutely nothing, as that first thirsty tongue on virgin cunt. We didn't know any other gay people at all, and I used to look for them at anti-war rallies. It made sense that you'd find a congregation of queers at rallies and riots. The first openly gay admitted homosexual person I saw was at The People's Convention in Philadelphia, 1970, when this Asian guy in a mickey mouse $t$-shirt gave a speech in front of thousands of cheering radicals about how much he liked being gay and it was time to seize gay power. After his speech we chanted "Gay gay power for gay gay people!" Fucking ecstatic, except I still didn't know any other gay people except K . We went crazy together in isolation. Couldn't talk to family, and the only possible sympathetic sibling had just died. Finally quit school and moved away.

Pursuit, result; look at her, she's good, make her. I made it with a lot of women. Briefly into a southwestern trip, lots of pot and some acid, always broke and fucked up, friends walking around with six-packs like we were getting together just
for that, and we were, because it was often around $100^{\circ}$. I loved the desert, tried to appreciate it, but I still hated Arizona because I had no control over my life there. The drinking age was 19 , so we ran around to bars looking like little hippie freaks, while most of the other women in the bars were into beehives and tight jeans, dressing like a cross between C\&W beer bust and pulp novel heroines. Plus the classic and brilliant dyke cross-dressers. They were geniuses, had character, and moved kind of slowly, like villains. We would enter this type of scene and try to take over the tiny dance floors doing circle dances, honestly, and dress more "political," because we found butch-femme relationships, which were prevalent among the original clientele, oppressive or something. In reality, we were all into butch-femme too, but like hippies, we all looked alike and that seemed to provide our political justification. I fucked J. and some bi-sexual man-hater she was involved with one night after the bar. J. had been trying to get tight with me that whole evening, but I was too drunk to notice. We went to her brother's house and she finally started fucking me after I fell asleep on the floor. I woke up laying sandwiched between a chair and a couch, and tried to reciprocate the love that was being forced on me. J.'s bi friend tried to fuck me too, but that was unpleasant and I just waited grimacing until it was over. I fucked W., in a threesome a couple times, and I fucked these two other women, C. and E., with K., in a foursome on acid. It was unbelievably boring, but the next morning C. swore she was mine. Only I didn't want her. I fucked L., a corny folk singer at the Hilton Lounge, whose big crowd-pleaser was Tie A Yellow Ribbon ('Round the Old Oak Tree). L. did John Denver covers too, but I still found her attractive. No accounting for taste. I fucked B. and a 2nd B., too. I was still "with" K., of course. The first B. was a refugee from a terrorist leftwing cult out of Long Beach, called T-T-. She moved in with me and K., and the FBI was watching our house, but B. had left Long Beach for Phoenix shortly before T- T- had robbed the Bank of America on Ashby Ave.

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in Berkeley. They had no reason to watch our house, because $B$. had nothing to do with the bank robbery, and was never going back to Long Beach. If she did, the cult people would fuck her up good. The FBI was obvious, too, sitting right out in front of our apartment in a van, wearing sunglasses, just sitting there. I was too stupid to care, but B. was very nervous. For a while B. and I couldn't keep our hands out of each other's pants. K. would go to work, and me and B. would go fuck like mad. I remember her trying to drive the datsun down some funky falling apart neighborhood, and me trying to suck on her cunt. The 2nd B. was crazy and a liar, and we did it at the Travel Lodge, which was about 6 blocks from my apartment. We had a six-pack, of course, to smooth out the rough edges, but it didn't work too good. Sex with her was dead, but after that one half a night at the Travel Lodge, she proceeded to harass me and called me every day. She said I could live with her, not have to work, and have my own room. It sounded like prison. I didn't even like her, and she couldृn't make me come at all, and her cunt tasted weird. I put her off, pissed her off. Then she put a curse on me, and I got into a car accident and was never the same since. Made out with a 3rd B. on the dance floor of this place called Happy Gardens, a Chinese restaurant by day, lesbian bar by night. The managment intervened because we were getting oblivious to our environment, and were trying to fuck standing up. We were told we could dance together but not touch at all, because there were plainclothes cops there, who would bust us and them. Some messed up women started a fight together and we had to suddenly clear the floor anyway, or risk getting punched out. Meanwhile, the cops were out in the parking lot writing down license plate numbers, keeping tabs on us for some possible future abuse. I drank too many Cuervos and ended up puking half the night, while the 3rd B., my gorgeous make-out partner, went home with this hot long-haired butch from New Jersey named Catherine. Catherine was J.'s girlfriend.

We held a weekly gay coffeehouse in the basement of some stupid church, and got visited there by all the cranks and losers of Phoenix, but so what. We did a radio show too, and chose the Rolling Stones' Gimme Shelter as our theme song to open the program. It made sense at the time. K. and I ran a gay phone hotline out of our apartment too, and it was mostly suicidal, gay 14 year olds who called. Two years of that kind of activity was about all I could take of the Southwest. Me, K. and the first B. left Phoenix for San Francisco in February 1975. Love, love and more love. The Mission District was our new stomping ground. I was like a funnel, as far as women were concerned - wide open, and ready to just let it pour in. The three of us settled into a one-bedroom apartment on Hampshire Street, after being turned away from another place (housing discrimination) for being lesbians - the reason given was that we were three "unmarried women" and this particular owner wouldn't rent to "unmarried" women. Welcome to SF, ladies. The landlord that did rent to us thought I was a runaway teenager, and called my brother-in-law to make sure I was actually old enough to be on my own. True, I looked young for my young age. The thing with K . began to fade, but we still had another year together, and then, after a total of five years together, we broke up. The thing with B. took a little longer to fade because it was mostly based on excellent sex. Eventually she began to resent my unceasing flirtations and after a number of years of an on-again off-again affair, she closed her door to me and never wanted to see me again. Who cares. I met P. at a job interview for Headstart. What did I know about kids? Absolutely nothing, but I knew a little bit about women, and P. was cute and strange, dark, funny and spaced-out - irresistible. I didn't get the daycare job, but eventually I got the girl. I went after her one night at this bar on 15 th \& Potrero, A Little More, which was mostly a Filipina lesbian bar. A Little More was a fire-trap on the second floor of a Victorian structure, with one rickety staircase up, and no back way out. One night I spotted P., with her room-
mate, who had a job doing "non-sexual massage" out of an on-call type of agency. That quickly turned into turning tricks so she could afford a particular pair of thighhigh boots she had been eyeing. She thought if she was going to have to touch these businessmen's slimy bodies, she should get something concrete out of it. I'd rather starve, but anyway, I ran over to P.'s table, met the roommate, and got P . to dance with me. We boogied all the booze off, dancing to Disco Inferno and the last of old school Motown. I think she was actually into George Benson. P. was high on a chemical hallucinogenic at the time, which I didn't realize, and as we danced she got agitated by this white man, a fag who was taking up too much room. He bumped into her a couple times, his arms flailing around, disrespecting women's space, and his legs stomping in no orderly fashion at all. Basically, he couldn't dance, but that didn't stop him from trying. She finally went off and gave him a full frontal shove, and he fell on his ass, in the middle of the floor. I was a little embarrassed, but didn't want to interfere with her violence, in case she'd decided to push other people down, too. After a couple dates with P., I got to go home with her one rainy night when Dizzy, a wiry non-stop talker with a pick-up truck, dropped us both off afterhours at P.'s house in Western Addition. She showed me her house, her spool table, her meat-free kitchen, and we took some MDA. Then we got completely naked almost right away and headed for the waterbed. I rolled on top of her warm firm body, and before the night was over, I had a very sore, rubbed raw, completely fucked cunt. We couldn't have slept anyway, because of the MDA. A Little More was a favorite place, but we also had an occasional late night rendezvous at a real dive, La Cave, in the Tenderloin. This one required you to go downstairs, below street level, to a soot-encrusted stucco interior where you could sit after-hours and slurp up a coffee that was distinctly reminiscent of lukewarm dishwater. La Cave was a hide-out for run down drag queens and junkies. There were also bona fide women's bars such as

Maud's, Scott's, Wild Side West, and Peg's Place. P. and I visited them all and maybe drank a little too much. The greyhounds and white russians were offset by as much pot as we could afford. We finally decided to move in together, and that's when I left K. She was already in love with a film buff, N., who ran a class with Breakaway, the free alternative women's university in Berkeley, which me and K. signed up for. The class was called "Women and Film." We went to various movies around town and read articles on female movie directors like Dorothy Arzner and Maya Deren, then went over to Berkeley every weekend to sit in a circle in someone's hippie backyard, or in their shared communal living room, to discuss movies and articles under myriad macrame creations. N. was so smart, and K. moved in on her behind my back. It was ok because I was, by this time, fucking $P$. whenever I could get the chance. That was the beginning of when it dawned on me that I needed to do something with my life. Be an artist, I told myself, and not having had anything to do with "art" since 8th grade didn't seem to enter into it. Move in with P., settle down, stop the rowdiness, try to have an honest relationship, start painting pictures, enjoy smoke-free environments (pot was still ok), live in the Castro, drink espressos, try to dress better, be a real person. P. couldn't settle down, however, and she finally fell in love, hard, with D., a prostitute/office worker from Youngstown. That broke us up. After four and half years with her I moved out, and went over to Berkeley to live with K. and N. A few weeks later, Dan White was virtually acquitted of murdering Harvey Milk and Mayor Moscone, and I watched the cop cars topple and burn on tv. P. and I had just been bashed recently, a couple times in fact, and we were scared and pissed. I wished I was there at City Hall, smashing and burning, but the gay folks who were there were doing a great job. At least there was hope. This is hardly half the story, but this is exactly what it was like to be a dyke in the " 70 s. You had to make it up as you went along, and we did.

