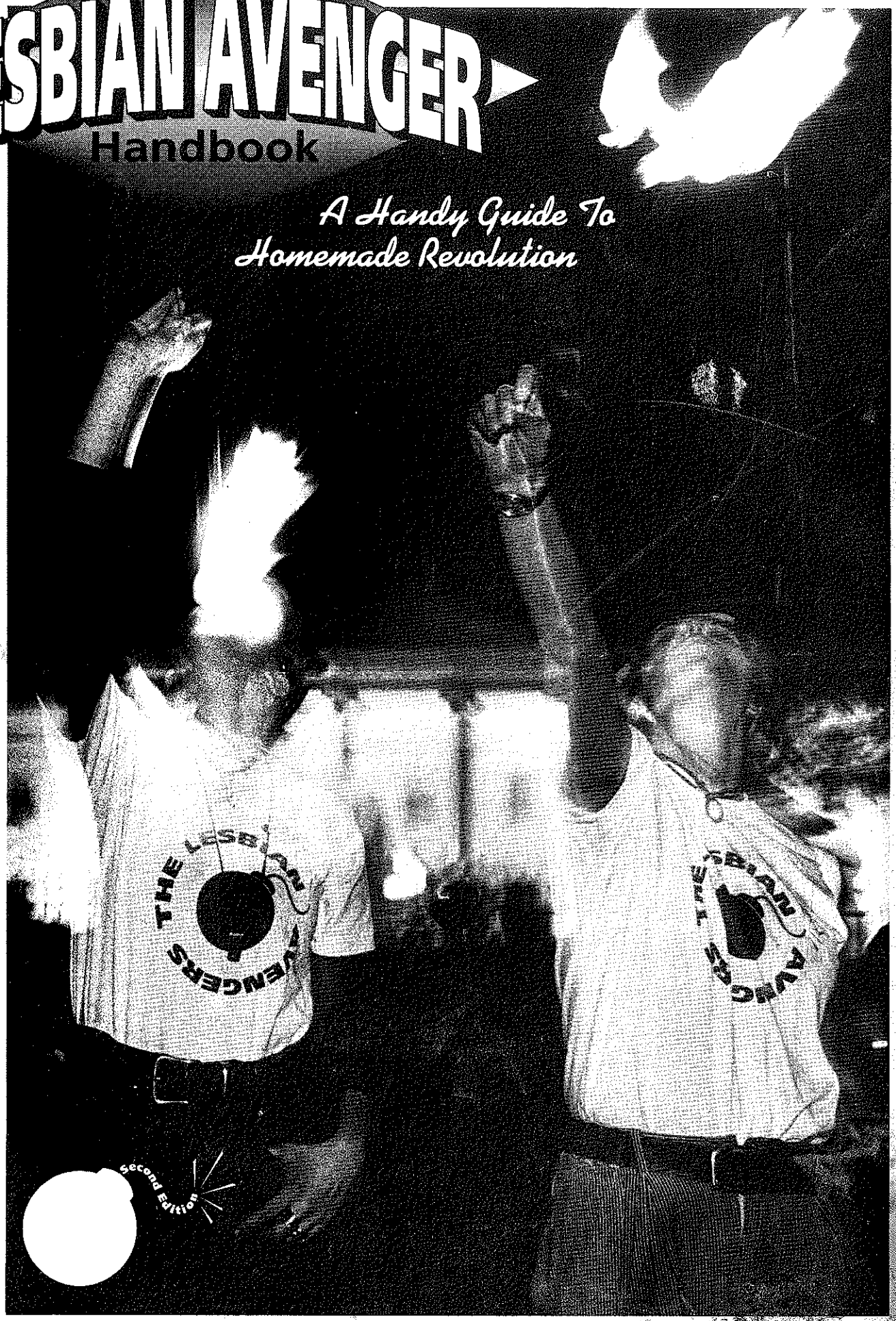
The LESBIAN AVENGER Handbook

A Handy Guide To Homemade Revolution



Second Edition

Handbook text by Sarah Schulman

Additional text by
Marlene Colburn
Ron Goldberg, Amy Bauer, Andrew Miller and Alan Klein
ZAP/Action Teach-In Outline
Ellen Levy
Phyllis Lutsky
Carrie Moyer
Sue Shaffner
Gene Sharp:
The Politics of Non Violent Action
Maxine Wolfe:
Checklist and Outline for Actions

Edited by
Amy Parker
Ana Simo

Cover photo by Carolina Kroon
New York Avenger Graphic Designs (pages 37-47) by Carrie Moyer
Handbook design/Type by Amy Parker

To order additional copies
Contact The Lesbian Avengers
c/o The Center
208 W. Thirteenth Street
New York, NY 10011
212.967.7711 x-3204

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Meetings	7
Planning an Action	7
Preliminary List of Tasks for Your Action	9
Graphics / Visuals	10
Identifying Resources: Xeroxing & Faxing	11
Marching Band	11
Mailing Lists	11
Phone Trees	11
Leafletting & Wheatpasting	11
Contacts	12
Fundraising	12
Money	13
Media	14
Video	14
Marshals	15
Legal Support	16
Police & Permits	16
Attorneys	17
Legal Observers	17
Appendix 1: Conflict Resolution	21
Appendix 2: Forms and Logos to Reproduce	25
Appendix 3: New York Avenger Graphics	37
Appendix 4: New York Avenger Media List	51

INTRODUCTION

The Lesbian Avengers is a direct action group using grassroots activism to fight for lesbian survival and visibility. Our purpose is to identify and promote lesbian issues and perspectives while empowering lesbians to become experienced organizers who can participate in political rebellion. Learning skills and strategizing together are at the core of our existence.

There is a wide spectrum of opinion in the lesbian community about what kinds of strategies to employ. Some people want to provide social services. Some people want to do theoretical development. Some people want to be in therapy groups. Some people want to work on electoral and legal reform. As a direct action, activist group, the Lesbian Avengers is not for everybody, nor should it be. It is for women who want to be involved in activism, work in community, be creative, do shit-work, take responsibility on a regular basis, have their minds blown, change their opinions and share organizing skills. Other strategies are also valid but the Avengers' reason for existing is direct action.

The Lesbian Avengers were founded in June 1993 by six experienced political activists. They had a vision for a grass-roots lesbian activism that would go beyond visibility to a larger goal of movement building. On Gay Pride Day that year, these six handed out 8,000 fluorescent green club cards that said "Lesbians! Dykes! Gay Women! We want revenge and we want it now." Fifty lesbians came to the first meeting. Since that time, an increasing number of lesbians have come to the Avengers in the spirit of cooperation, negotiation and flexibility in order to build a community of skilled political organizers committed to action.

What follows is concrete information on how to organize a direct action group. The more efficient your frameworks are, the more encouragement there will be for creative, imaginative work. We have left space in the margins throughout this handbook for you to add your own ideas, inspirations and lists of contacts. Go girl!

MEETINGS

If you want revenge, call a meeting. A meeting is the first step toward a life of retribution and an essential element in organizing Lesbian Avengers. Meetings are a great way to trade info and get to know other lesbians. This is the time to report on past and upcoming actions, share news, and sign up for committees. Committees meet outside the general meeting to plan and organize actions and then report back to the whole group for a vote. A facilitator, armed with the meeting agenda will keep things moving and focused at your meetings.

Often we begin the meeting by going around the room and having each dyke introduce herself. Sometimes we end by going around again so each woman can say what tasks and responsibilities she has taken on for the following week. Hopefully everyone in the room will have taken on some kind of responsibility.

The point of meetings is to keep them as short as possible, and get work done in an effective manner, but still give people time for productive discussion about the politics and creation of the action. Since most of the hammering out of details and brainstorming for creative silliness happens outside the general meeting, in committees, the role of the facilitator is crucial for keeping things focused.

Facilitators volunteer from the floor and usually serve four weeks. We hold a facilitator training every few months and women without experience cannot facilitate without first going through a training. We also ask people facilitating for the first time to invite someone more experienced to sit next to them and help them through their first few weeks.

The facilitator is responsible for setting the agenda at each meeting. But more importantly, she is responsible for creating an atmosphere of efficient respect. If people in the meeting that night are vague and inexperienced, the facilitator must listen closely and try to focus discussion around specific proposals for action. If people come to the meeting with rigidity or negativity, the facilitator needs to diffuse the tension and insure that the Avenger meeting is a place for free exchange of ideas.† People have to be able to offer their perspectives without being attacked and to have space to explore ideas. Our meetings need to be flexible and conducive to creative thought. It is the facilitator's job to keep people pro-active, encourage them to make concrete suggestions, propose alternatives and take responsibility for their ideas. She must insure that proposals are presented in a way that allows the largest number of Avengers to get involved.

The facilitator should set an agenda focused around the most important business—keeping things like teach-ins and announcements until the end. She needs to keep the meeting running smoothly and with focus on the task at hand. Usually discussion should not run longer than ten or fifteen minutes, at which point the facilitator can offer the room the option to vote or to continue discussion at a deeper level. If she sees that people are repeating each other, she can ask if anyone has something new to add.

† See Appendix 1, page 21 for advice on conflict resolution.

PLANNING AN ACTION

The purpose of an action is to make our demands known, win change and involve as many lesbians as possible in all aspects of organizing.

When Avengers have an idea for an action they can bring it to the group in two ways. They can bring a precise, specific proposal to the floor, or they can come to the floor with a vague idea and pass around a sign-up sheet* for those interested in developing the pro-

* See Appendix 2, page 25 for a sign-up sheet you can reproduce.

ject. Those who sign up then meet as a committee separately and return to the group with a specific proposal. This way the large group discussion will revolve around a concrete proposal creating a framework for a more constructive and satisfying, task-oriented discussion.

Once the large picture of an action is approved by the Avengers, the committee gets to work on specifics. It is in committee that all the brilliant, wacky ideas can come to fruition. Every action planning committee needs two co-coordinators who are responsible for following up with everyone who took on tasks, and for presenting the action to the floor at each step.

Co-coordinators need to be sure that their committee addresses the following questions and issues:

Concepts: What is the goal of this action? Who are we trying to reach? What is our message?

Logistics: What are the time, date, place and length or the action? Do these choices make sense given the goals and message of the action? How much space do we have? Will the action take place inside or outside? Are there any obstructions? Where are the entrances and exits? Will we have to contend with security? Will the action take place on public or private property? How wide is the street for banners and props? The location needs to be scouted as early as possible. How many people will be participating? Will they be Avengers only? Lesbians only? Anyone? What kinds of props and supplies are needed? Who will transport them to and from the action?

Tactics: What type of action are we planning: symbolic, disruption/interference, education? Avoid old, stale tactics at all costs. Chanting, picketing and the like, alone no longer make an impression; standing passively and listening to speakers is boring and disempowering. Look for daring, new participatory tactics depending on the nature of your action. New York Avengers have staged overnight encampments, surprised politicians with daring zaps in the halls of the Plaza Hotel, invaded the offices of SELF magazine, marched down Fifth Avenue at rush hour with flaming torches and handed out balloons that said "Ask about lesbian lives!" to school children in an anti-gay district. What is the visual design of the action going to be? It should let people know clearly and quickly who we are and why we are there. The more fabulous, witty and original the better. New York Avengers have used a wide range of visuals such as fire eating, a 12-foot shrine, a huge bomb and a ten-foot plaster statue. The more original, the better!

Contingencies: Actions should be as well planned as possible so everyone knows why we are there and feels involved. But, there is no way we can know everything in advance so we also have to be ready to make decisions on the spot in a quick and supportive way. Considering the following questions in advance can help you act instantly when necessary during the course of an action: What if we can't get the spot we planned for? What if the group is smaller/larger than we planned? Have we planned for the possibility of bad weather? How will we deal with police interference? Are we prepared to make decisions about arrest on the spot? How do we know when the action is over? How do we end the action?

PRELIMINARY LIST OF TASKS FOR YOUR ACTION

Once the general shape and look of the action have been planned, committee members can begin working on the following tasks. The two co-coordinators are responsible for following-up with each member of the committee to make sure their responsibilities are carried out on schedule.†

Graphics: flyers, posters, banners, signs, banners, props
Marching band
Flyer reproduction (xerox)
Mailing
Activating phone tree
Wheat-pasting
Contacting other groups/lesbians
Fund-raising
Media
Video team
Fact sheet (translation if necessary) to give out at action
Marshals
Legal support
Attorneys
Legal observers

Remember—the point is to involve as many Avengers as possible in the organizing. One easy way to do this is if each committee member responsible for a task comes to the large group with a sign-up sheet* (i.e., "Sign up to distribute flyers at the lesbian bars," "Sign up to learn baton twirling for the action," etc.) and then calls each person on the sheet to remind her of the time and place where the work will get done. The more organized the co-coordinators are, the easier it will be for people to participate.

† The co-coordinators can use the final action checklist (Appendix 2, page 27) to make sure someone in the group has taken responsibility for all of the essential elements of the action.

* See Appendix 2, page 25 for a sign-up sheet you can xerox.

GRAPHICS / VISUALS

If you've ever spray-painted anti-hate slogans around town, you know how good it feels to vandalize for a good cause. But there is more to direct-action than catharsis. In our post-modern age, media coverage is the message. Direct action is about getting attention, so don't be shy. the media loves photo ops so give them something to look at—dykes in deb gowns, slanderous slogans on banners and placards, sapphic serenades, flaming shrines.

Once you've decided on a target—an openly homophobic lawyer, a Cardinal, a wayward pol—plan a dramatic action. it's important to have a clear message, so keep it simple. The details of your position can be spelled out in the fact sheet you distribute at the action. Fact sheets can be used to more clearly explain why you're staging an action, and give facts to back up your position.

The visual design of our actions is a crucial part of Avenger work. In general we try to make each action look different from our previous events and have a style and presentation that has never been used by anyone before. Props (floats, shrines, burning torches, paper mache bombs, plaster statues...whatever!) play a huge part in this. Graphics need

to be eye-catching, meaningful and visually exciting. The more creative, imaginative and individual our actions look, the more inspiring and fun they will be.

The design of an action usually begins with the preliminary flyer announcing the event to the community. Innovative design, contemporary, clever graphics, and even the color of the paper are all important ways to convey to the viewer how fearless, open and new our approach is. To date our invitational leaflets have been one of the Avengers' strongest drawing cards.†

Usually the flyer features a slogan or phrase that will be a consistent theme through out the action. We try to never use a cliché or tired old rhetoric. Instead we've been able to come up with a wide range of eye-catching titles. When we built a shrine to the two gay people burned to death in Oregon, our demo posters said "DON'T LET THEM REST IN PEACE." When we dogged the mayor of Denver for 48 hours, the signs said "BOYCOTT THE HATE STATE"; when we held our New Year's Eve party, the poster featured a picture of 70s Blaxploitation film star Pam Grier, in hot pants holding a rifle. The poster advertised "ACTIVIST A GO-GO." Our Valentine's Day action honoring Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas celebrated "POLITICALLY INCORRECT DOMESTIC BLISS." Our demo banners favoring the New York City Department of Education's multicultural curriculum said "LIGHTEN UP! TEACH ABOUT LESBIAN LIVES." The banners for the torchlight parade down Fifth Avenue said "WAKE UP! IT'S HAPPENING HERE," and for the March on Washington said "LESBIAN AVENGERS: OUT FOR POWER." Whether the theme is whimsical or angry, our slogans have been clear, clever and strong.

Don't forget to put contact information for your group on all your flyers, posters and other materials, so potential Avengers can find you. Remember to include the bomb logo* and to state that "The Lesbian Avengers is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility." Get the word out.

It is important to recognize that good graphics—plastered all over the place, far enough in advance—can make or break your action. With this in mind, the entire graphics/promotion process needs to begin AT LEAST 3-4 weeks BEFORE the date of the action. At that time, the working group needs to meet with the designer to conceptualize what the poster will look like. In addition, the working group should provide the designer with the following:

- ❒ A snappy headline;
- ❒ A paragraph of copy describing why the Avengers are doing the action;
- ❒ Whatever art or photograph the working group has chosen;
- ❒ The action particulars: date, time, place, directions if necessary.

You also need to figure out how and where your flyers will be distributed (wheatpasted, handed out at bars, etc.) because that may necessitate creating the flyer in several sizes. The standard paper sizes appropriate for wheatpasting are 8.5" x 11" or 11" x 17". The "club-pass" size (4.25" x 5.5") is best for pressing into women's hands at bars. ALLOW AT LEAST ONE WEEK FOR COMPLETION OF GRAPHICS AND UP TO AN ADDITIONAL WEEK FOR REPRODUCTION.

† See Appendix 3, page 37 for examples of flyers and other graphics created by the New York Avengers.

* The Avengers' bomb logo and any other graphics we have used are available on disk (Macintosh System 7.0/Adobe fonts only) from the New York chapter. You can also make xeroxes, scans, stats, or veloxes of the logos provided in Appendix 2, page 29.

IDENTIFYING RESOURCES: XEROXING & FAXING

Lots of lesbians have resources that they are willing to share with the Avengers, even if they don't want to come to meetings and organize actions. Someone may be willing to do legal support or design flyers or just wheat Paste. Find out who has access to free xerox at their offices, or a fax machine. Give them advanced warning and assistance transporting the guerrilla copies.

MARCHING BAND

A marching band, drum corps, rhythm section, etc. can really aid all actions. Musicians in the group can get together with their instruments or make their own. Be sure to notify musicians well in advance of any action you may plan.

MAILING LISTS

In order to involve as many dykes as possible Avengers have to be co-operative, organized and, most importantly, know how to use mailing lists as an organizing tool. At every Avenger meeting we pass around a mailing list with names and phone numbers. New members are invited to add their names to the list. An updated activist list is presented every week. This is our activist pool. Whenever we have an action we call everyone on the list. Whenever we need people to leaflet, wheatpaste, work on a dance or build props, we call the list.

At every dance or public event we are sure to have a supporters' mailing list at the door. This is our constituent base. They receive mailings for all actions and events. Since these people have never come to meetings, we wouldn't call them for help with preparing for an action—but when it comes to filling the streets or our bank account—they are the ones we count on the most.

PHONE TREES

Phone lists are invaluable in Avenger warfare. A phone tree can get the word out fast on upcoming actions and parties. To create a phone tree, just divide up your phone list among a few strenuously seductive and reliable Avengers, who will become your lieutenants. You'll call them and they'll call their lists. Elevate yourself to phone tree Captain (or Diva) and enjoy activating the lines.

Every action or call for help goes out over the phone tree. The Diva is responsible for keeping the phone tree up-dated each week and for being sure that the callers are following through. The phone tree can only be activated by a decision from the group as a whole—that way arbitrary, half-assed, rumor-based attempts can be avoided. Ideally, everyone who has ever come to a meeting will receive both a mailing and a phone call for every one of our actions. Anyone who has only come to our events will receive a mailing.

LEAFLETTING & WHEATPASTING

Flyers make for cheap and easy outreach: leave them in church pews gym lockers, bars and bookstores, staple them to your dog before letting her out of the house, wheatpaste them everywhere.

Wheatpasting is the activist term for adhering flat art onto outdoor establishments so that the unsuspecting community becomes a captive audience. Here are the supplies you will need:

- ❒ A sign-up sheet of willing and able Avengers who know where to meet and when
- ❒ Wheatpaste—wallpaper paste in powdered form, usually one pound bag
- ❒ Wallpaper brush—wood handles and straw bristles are the best
- ❒ Plastic bucket—1 gallon or larger
- ❒ Rubber gloves—optional
- ❒ Yellow night-vision glasses (protects eyes and creates fashion statement)—optional

(All of the above supplies—except night vision glasses—are available at hardware stores.)

Mix the wheatpaste according to the instructions on the package. Mixing slowly with hot water helps you avoid lumps, but if you're on the run, a bottle of water from a deli will do.

You need three people for an effective team. One to paste, one to slap down the flyer and one for lookout. The paster coats the surface where the flyer will be placed. The slapper slaps down the flyer on the pasty place, and the paster puts a finishing top coat on the flyer. The lookout checks casually for police and large homophobic people. If she sees any, she should inform the rest of the team immediately and leave the area.

The best sites for wheatpasting are lampposts, mailboxes, deserted storefronts, construction sites and dumpsters. Avoid brick walls or other uneven surfaces when possible. Try to put up a large block of posters in one place for a more arresting visual message. Yes, it is illegal, but the law is rarely enforced in New York, so it's best to keep your activities on vampire standard time.

CONTACTS

Before each action we try to make personal contact with as many lesbian groups and lesbians in mixed groups as we can find to let them know what we're doing. Avengers who participate in other groups can volunteer to maintain contact with these groups on a regular basis. This is a great job for coalition- and cooperation-oriented people.

FUNDRAISING

We decided from the beginning that we did not want to apply to foundations for grants and instead would raise our money by drawing on our roots in the community. We throw wild, creative, insane parties on a regular basis with really creative posters - usually following a great action. The better our action, the more people from the community attend to support us. Most of us are poor so our events never cost more than we can pay. On New Year's Eve we charged $5 admission, 25¢ for coat check and $2 for beer and took in $5,000.

At our parties we usually come up with a fun theme, make thorough preparations, have great music and also provide a media room with videos and flyers. Parties are not just fun, they're an organizing tool. We see how well the community likes us, we have a chance to let our supporters know what we are doing, and we sign up lesbians on our mailing lists.

A good party takes about a month to organize. It requires two co-coordinators. The first thing they should do is make a list of specific tasks and bring sign-up sheets to the general meeting so that the most Avengers possible are involved in the planning and creation of the event. The co-coordinators should make sure they have recruited dykes to handle the following tasks:

Venue: Locate an unusual space, not familiar to your audience but large enough for dancing, lounging, hanging out, entertainment, etc.

Publicity: Generate an eye-catching flyer early enough to claim that day—try to avoid conflicts with other large community events. Mail the flyer to your mailing list. Distribute huge numbers of them early. Let newsletters, newspapers and radio shows know in advance. Wheatpaste vigorously.

Music: Music is the key to a great party. If no live DJ will volunteer their time, then find someone with diverse and extensive musical knowledge. A good sound system is absolutely essential.

Door and security: Two women post themselves at the door to collect money and to be sure that every person who enters signs up on the mailing list. Someone else should pick up the cash regularly and store it in a safe place. A few Avengers should slay on alert for security problems at all times.

Food and drink: Locate nearest all-nite deli for extra ice and beer. Provide some non alcoholic beverages as well. Large plastic garbage cans and bags are best for ice control.

Set-up/clean-up: You will need to schedule shifts to handle set-up, decorations and clean-up. Sign people up to work at different times throughout the party to clear up bottles, etc. Be sure you have plenty of toilet paper and towels on hand.

Media room: Two Avengers can take charge of displaying fabulous video and propaganda devices.

Special events: Go-go girls, kissing booths, tarot cards, etc., etc.—whatever pops into your imagination.

In addition to throwing parties and other fundraising events, we pass around an envelope labeled "ACTIONS" at every meeting and ask each person to throw in a dollar or two. We sell t-shirts and videos, but they are also organizing tools. We don't want to get too bogged down in the merchandise business. Avengers and friends can throw private parties to celebrate birthdays or other occasions and ask guests to make a donation to the Avengers instead of bringing presents.

MONEY

If you're planning a big action or event, it's advisable to make one person responsible for expenses/receipts. Avengers should be sure to keep receipts for all their expenses, because we absolutely cannot reimburse anyone without a receipt.

We have to keep legitimate records of expenses so the IRS has no reason to harass us at tax time. Write your name and a simple note about what the receipt was for on each one: for example, "Supplies for November 19 action." You don't have to go into detail about the expenses because we only use general categories like Xerox, Supplies, Postage, Transportation. Put all your receipts in an envelope, or staple them together, and bring them to the next meeting. Please don't expect to get a cash refund.

MEDIA

Standard media: Good, efficient media work is essential to any activist organization. The first thing you need to do Is amass a list of media contacts. Go through all the daily papers and weekly publications in your area and identify anyone who writes stories with lesbian or gay themes or people behind the scenes and in other departments who might be openly or discreetly lesbian or gay.

Call every local radio and TV station and ask them directly for the names of people on staff (not only news staff) who are particularly interested in lesbian or gay stories. Make personal contact with anyone in any media outlet who is openly lesbian.

Four days before your action fax your press release to your entire media list† and then spend the next few days making follow-up phone calls encouraging the press to attend your event. Use the set Lesbian Avenger press release format* and letterhead. Always include the Lesbian Avengers bomb logo, our tag line ("The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct action group focused on issues vital to Lesbian survival and visibility."), the day, time and place of your general meeting and a phone number where interested dykes can call for more information.

At the action itself, speak to every member of the press and get her or his name and number. That way you know who has responded, who to add to your list and whom you can call afterwards for more follow-up. Personal contact is the best way to get coverage.

Spanish Translation: Fact sheets and press releases to the Spanish language press should be translated into Spanish. Translators need enough advance time to do a good job and get their draft to the designer without cramping her schedule either.

Lesbian & Gay Press: The lesbian and gay press ranges from glossy national magazines to typewritten bar rags. There are hundreds of newsletters and newspapers around the country, and often they are the only way for gay people to communicate. Faxing and mailing press releases, communiqués and newspaper clippings to the gay media is another good way of encouraging the spirit of activism among lesbians and inspiring them to establish new Avenger chapters. It also provides crucial coverage of our issues, something that can't be expected of the mainstream media.

† See Appendix 4, page 51 for a copy of the New York Avenger Media List, which includes many national media contacts.

* You can reproduce the press release form from Appendix 2, page 31.

VIDEO

Every single action should be covered by an Avenger video team. Hi-8 is best, but Camcorders will do. In this way, even if we don't get television coverage we can always provide TV stations with our own footage after the fact. Saturate your local (or regional) public access cable channels with your own subversive video tapes—by law, they must broadcast them.

Even more importantly, Avenger video teams can compile our own videos to be shown across the country and around the world. These videos have proven to be our best organizing tools for starting new chapters. Since the Avenger phenomenon has never been seen before, it is often hard for people to imagine the type of actions and spirit that define us. Videos are invaluable in communicating our work and attitude.

MARSHALS

Actions need marshals—that is, a group of women who take responsibility for big decisions like when to go into the street, when to sit down in traffic, etc. Marshals need to do a training before an action, learning legal issues involved, developing a method of communication and cooperation with each other. And preferably undergoing civil disobedience training (invite a trainer from your local ACT UP, Quakers or peace group). Usually marshals are identifiable by brightly colored armbands. They serve as the wall between demonstrators and the police and also are the people who block traffic as the procession moves by peacefully.

The following tips for marshals are provided as a reference and cannot replace a formal marshal training.

1. **The role of the police at an action**
   - Protect property from damage
   - Keep you from making a commotion
2. **The role of marshals**
   - Information source
   - Facilitate action
   - Deal with police, hecklers, bystanders
3. **What's legal**
   - Moving picket with signs and chanting on a public sidewalk
   - March on sidewalk with signs and chanting
   - Handing out literature (without blocking way)
4. **What you technically need a permit for (The New York Avengers have done all these things without permits.)**
   - Use of electric sound device
   - Parade on streets/street closure
5. **What marshals do on a picket**
   - Keep people moving
   - Lead chants
   - Watch the perimeter/be aware
   - If civil disobedience occurs, show legal area limits
6. **What marshals do on a march**
   - Lead at a slow pace
   - Block traffic at intersection (face cars)
   - Watch the perimeter, be aware
   - Bring up the rear
   - Make sure no one gets left behind

7. **What marshals don't do**
   - Don't do the police job
   - Don't panic
8. **Dealing with problems**
   - Police: Bluff and Stall, Stop and Sit
     - Tell them it's legal
     - Ask what the law is and why they think you're breaking it
     - Ask to see their superior officer
     - Know your rights and keep insisting on them
     - NEVER touch a police officer
   - Hecklers: Face trouble, isolate and converse if possible
   - Violence: Isolate, separate, call attention
   - Medical emergency: Get police, have another marshal stay with injured party

LEGAL SUPPORT

A coordinated support effort is necessary when there is the possibility or probability of arrest.

The goal of those doing support is to track the arrestees through the system and wait for them to be released. Support people have a responsibility and an obligation to remain until the last person is released. It is important for those on the inside to know that they have the support of those on the outside.

Before the action legal support dykes collect support sheets† filled out in duplicate. One copy stays with the support coordinator on-site and one copy should be kept off-site in case the support coordinator gets arrested by mistake.

During the action try to avoid getting arrested. Keep a list of people as they are being arrested. Ask them to shout out their names if you don't recognize them. If you witness any police violence try to get badge numbers. Politely ask police (ranking officer if possible) what precinct the arrestees are being taken to. Once the arrestees are taken away, go meet them at the precinct. When the paddy wagons arrive, try to let the people inside know that you are there for them.

After the action hang out and wait until the very last person is released. Check off names as Avengers are released and get as much information as you can about the conditions inside the precinct jail (i.e., Are people being treated well?). Contact the attorney, and collect summonses for the attorney while making sure that the arrestees know when to appear in court.

† See Appendix 2, page 33 for a sample of this form you can reproduce.

POLICE & PERMITS

In general, Lesbian Avengers do not ask for permission to do actions and do not negotiate with the police in advance. Of course, special circumstances may require changing this approach. All is subject to discussion in the group.

ATTORNEYS

Recruit supportive lawyers to attend your action as far in advance as possible. The local lesbian and gay lawyers association or other direct action groups are good places to connect with attorneys who will be willing to support you. If possible, arrange for them to speak to the group—preferably at the pre-action meeting—so all Avengers participating in the action can have a clear understanding of the legal rights going into the event.

LEGAL OBSERVERS

We usually need at least two legal observers for an action. Before the action begins, make sure you know the names and faces of the attorneys and legal support dykes. Bring paper and pens or pencils to the action and keep notes on the activities of the police throughout the action. If the attorney(s) or police liaison negotiate with the police, at least one legal observer should take notes on what is said. Write down the names of any lesbians you see being arrested. This is especially important if you don't see a legal support person nearby. Ask the arrestees to shout out their names if you don't recognize them. If you witness any police violence try to get badge numbers. Write down the names of the activists involved and the events as you see them happen.

Appendix 1
Conflict Resolution

Since the Avengers started working together, we have found that certain organizing ideas help us keep our work pro-active, gratifying and successful. One outstanding revelation has been to stay away from abstract theoretical discussion. It is easy to create false polarities when there is nothing concrete on the table, but when our political discussion revolves around the creation and purpose of an action, it is much easier to come to agreement and share insights.

Another idea that has surfaced in our work is to encourage each Avenger to take responsibility for her own suggestions—in other words, to be willing to make them happen. This way "Someone should..." becomes "I will" or "Who will do this with me?"

Because lesbians have been so excluded from power many of us have developed a negative stance where the only influence we have is to say "no." The Avengers is a place where lesbians can have their ideas realized, where we can each have an impact. A crucial part of that process is learning how to propose alternative solutions instead of just offering critiques. So, if you disagree with the proposal on the floor, instead of just tearing it apart, propose another way of realizing the goal.

If an issue on the floor is contentious and only has the approval of a small majority, instead of simply proceeding based on directed vote—we try to enter into a phase of negotiated compromise. During this period every party must be willing to be flexible and open until we find a solution that most people are comfortable with. This commitment to negotiation overrides factions and closed analysis.

In order to focus on the issues at hand rather than on the numbers or strength of presentation of individuals on either side, we can alternate pro and con speakers. This way, both sides will have equal representation and the issues will have a chance to emerge. Under these circumstances, we all try to refrain from speaking unless we have something new to add to the discussion. We also try, despite the passion of our positions, to treat other Avengers as respectfully as possible, focusing our passion on the issue and not on people.

We have also found it productive to take a non-binding, preliminary or straw vote. If that vote is severely divided (whether in a positive or negative direction) we can, before taking a final vote, attempt to come up with a constructive alternative which attempts to speak to the issues where disagreement exists.

If a particularly divisive discussion is taking place at the end of the meeting when everyone is exhausted, we can vote to table the discussion to the beginning of the next meeting. In that way we can consider an issue seriously rather than simply acting just to get the discussion over with.

Either the facilitator and/or the members can decide/request that any or the above methods of conflict resolution be implemented. Of course, if, after all parties negotiate in good faith, we still cannot come up with a solution, the majority vote will determine the final outcome.

Appendix 2
Forms and Logos to Reproduce

SIGN-UP SHEET

Activity: _____

Contact(s): _____

Date / Time: _____

Place: _____

Name	Phone	Time(s) Available

FINAL ACTION CHECKLIST

		Yes	No
1.	Do you have a clear message, dramatic visuals?	❐	❐
2.	Does everyone know the action scenario from beginning to end?	❐	❐
3.	Have you planned responses to possible contingencies?	❐	❐
4.	Have you gotten the word out? (Through posters, mailings, parties, phone trees, contact with other groups.)	❐	❐
5.	Have you leaked info to the media? (Timely press releases and follow-up calls are absolutely essential.)	❐	❐
6.	Have you arranged for transportation? (For yourselves and your props.)	❐	❐
7.	Do you have a fact sheet?	❐	❐
8.	Do you have a video person/team?	❐	❐
9.	Have you held a CD training and made sure you know your legal rights and risks?	❐	❐
10.	If you expect trouble, do you have marshals, police liaisons, attorneys, legal observers and support people ready?	❐	❐
11.	Do you have bail money in case of arrest?	❐	❐

AVENGER LOGOS FOR REPRODUCTION

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is
a direct-action group focused on
issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group
focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group
focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action
group focused on issues vital to
lesbian survival and visibility.

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

LETTERHEAD FOR PRESS RELEASES

(Reproduce boxed area at 133% for 8 ½" by 11" final copy.)

the LESBIAN AVENGERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS:

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

(Use space under tag line to fill in meeting time and place and hotline or general information phone number.)

LEGAL SUPPORT SHEET

Please fill out both halves.

Name _____

Home address _____

Home phone _____ **Age** _____ **Date of birth** _____

Social Security # _____ **Job title** _____

Place of employment _____

Work address/phone

Person(s) to notify in case of emergency:

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Other (specify medical consideration, notify work, etc.)

_____

_____

Name _____

Home address _____

Home phone _____ **Age** _____ **Date of birth** _____

Social Security # _____ **Job title** _____

Place of employment _____

Work address/phone

Person(s) to notify in case of emergency:

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Other (specify medical consideration, notify work, etc.)

_____

_____

Appendix 3
New York Avenger Graphics

HOMOPHOBIA IS NOT A FAMILY VALUE.

Community School Board 24 has deleted any mention of lesbians, gays and their families from their multi-cultural curriculum.

LESBIANS join the LESBIAN AVENGERS in planning an action to protest the Community Board's attempt to make us and our families invisible once again.

The **LESBIAN AVENGERS** is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian visibility and survival.

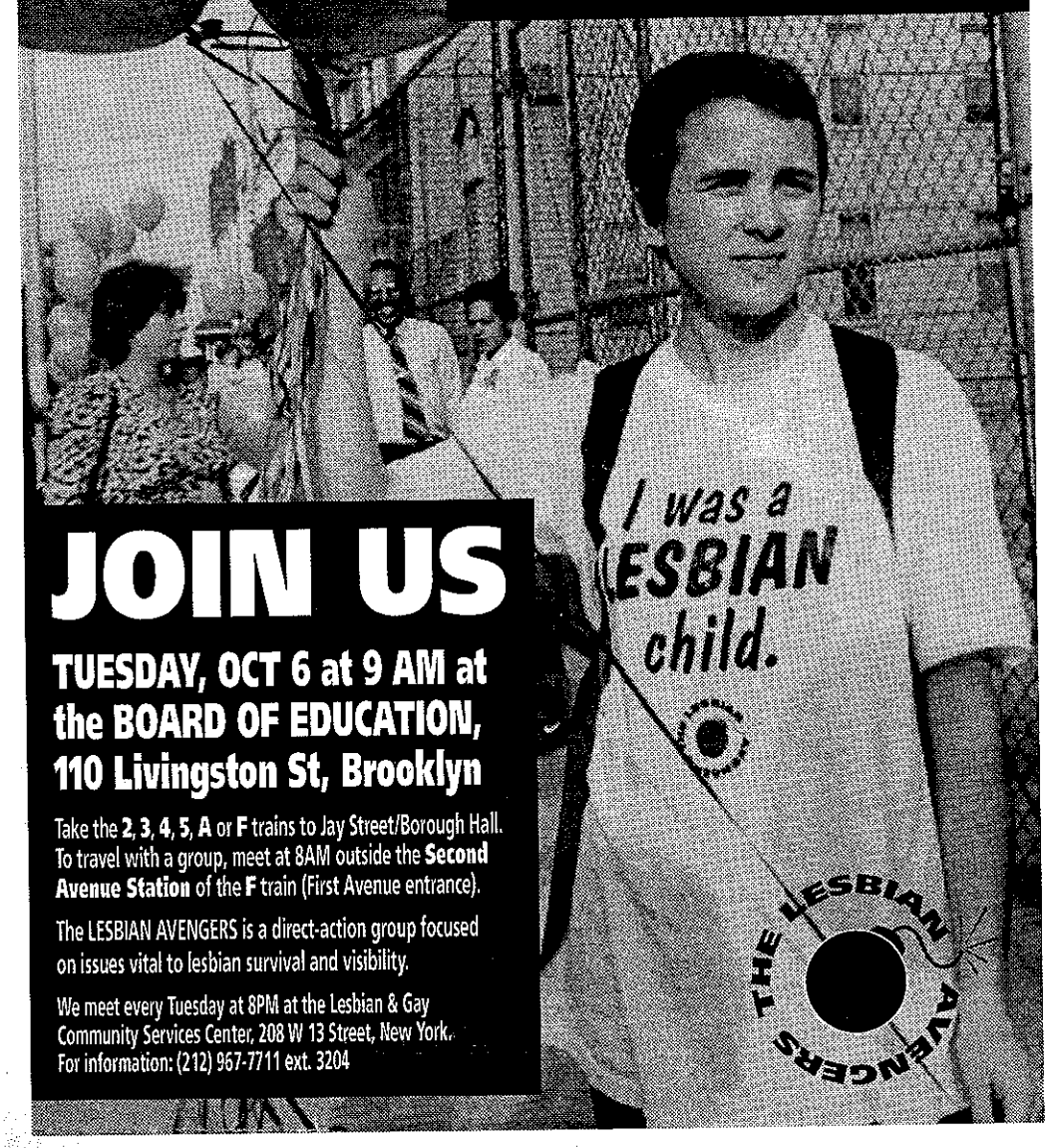
We meet on Tuesdays at 8:00 PM
The Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 W. 13th St., NY
For more information: (718) 499-3802

THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

WE DID IT

AND WE'LL DO IT AGAIN!

On Sept 9, the first day of school, the LESBIAN AVENGERS went to PS 87 in Middle Village, Queens to demand the inclusion of lesbians and gay men in the NYC school curriculum. OUR DEMONSTRATION WAS A SUCCESS.



JOIN US

TUESDAY, OCT 6 at 9 AM at the BOARD OF EDUCATION, 110 Livingston St, Brooklyn

Take the **2, 3, 4, 5, A** or **F** trains to Jay Street/Borough Hall. To travel with a group, meet at 8AM outside the **Second Avenue Station** of the **F** train (First Avenue entrance).

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

We meet every Tuesday at 8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13 Street, New York. For information: (212) 967-7711 ext. 3204

the LESBIAN AVENGERS

WE RECRUIT

PARTY/FUNDRAISER/BLAST

GO-GO GIRLS/MUSIC/MEDIA INSTALLATION

SATURDAY, OCT 24, 9PM-4AM

119 AVENUE D, 2nd FLOOR

$5 AT THE DOOR

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

We meet every Tuesday at 8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13 Street, NYC. For information: (212) 967-7711 ext. 3204

THE LESBIAN AVENGERS


the LESBIAN AVENGERS
WE RECRUIT
PARTY & FUNDRAISER
GO-GO GIRLS MUSIC
MEDIA INSTALLATION
SAT, OCT 24
9PM–4AM
119 AVE D, 2nd FLR
$5 AT THE DOOR
The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.
We meet every Tuesday at 8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13 St, NYC.
For info: (212) 807-7711 ext. 3204

DON'T LET THEM REST IN PEACE.

Hattie Mae Cohens, 29, an African-American lesbian and Brian Mock, 45, a disabled white gay man were burned to death on Sept. 26, 1992 when white-supremacist skin-heads tossed a molotov cocktail into their home in Salem, Oregon. These murders occurred as Oregonians prepare to vote on Measure 9, a constitutional amendment which would REQUIRE the state to discriminate against lesbians and gay men. Oregon is being overwhelmed by a campaign of homophobic terrorism incited by right-wing "Christian" groups. THE NATIONAL MEDIA HAS REFUSED TO COVER THESE MURDERS.

AVENGE THE OREGON MARTYRS.

LET YOUR ANGER BURN! JOIN THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

THURS NOV 19, 4:30 PM IN FRONT OF THE PLAZA HOTEL (5TH AVE & 57TH ST). WE'LL MARCH TO ROCKEFELLER CENTER TO DEMAND MEDIA COVERAGE OF THESE CRIMES.

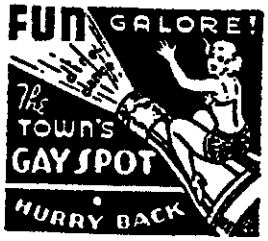
THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility. We meet every Tuesday at 8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13 St, NY. Info: (212) 967-7711 ext. 3204


SPEAK OUT ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST LESBIANS!
Have you been the target of anti-Lesbian violence, verbal or physical?
OPEN MIKE • ALL LESBIANS INVITED
Do you have ideas about the issue of violence against Lesbians?
LESBIANS SPEAK OUT
Do you want to do something about what's happening in our community?
THE LESBIAN AVENGERS
The LESBIAN AVENGERS is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to Lesbian survival and visibility. We meet every Tuesday at 8 PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 208 West 13th Street, NYC. For more information: (212) 967 7711 ext. 3204
SUNDAY, NOV 22, 6-8PM • THE LESBIAN + GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER • 208 W 13TH ST, NYC

BLOWOUT DANCE!

WITH THE LESBIAN AVENGERS



NEW YEARS EVE 9PM-? $7
PS 122, 150 FIRST AVENUE
(CORNER 1ST AVE/9TH ST)

ACTIVIST GO-GO!

YOUR SEXUAL FUTURE REVEALED

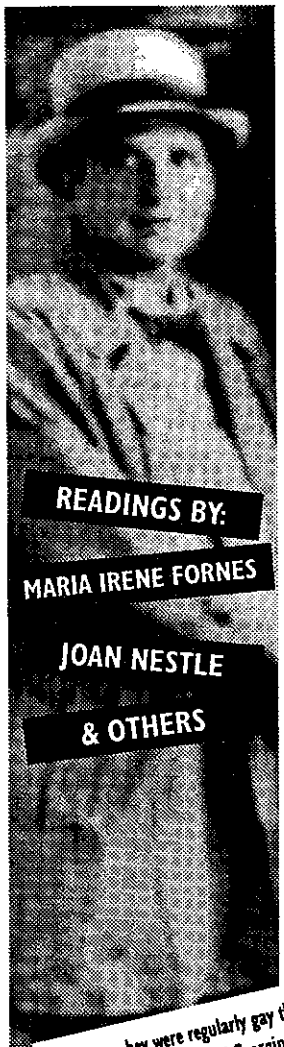
HUNKY GIRLS!

TABLOID VIDEO
BAD FASHION
INCENDIARY KISSING BOOTH
TRASH
BOMBSHELLS

THE NEW YEAR'S EVE BLAST YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

THE LESBIAN AVENGERS IS A DIRECT-ACTION GROUP FOCUSED ON ISSUES VITAL TO LESBIAN SURVIVAL AND VISIBILITY. WE MEET EVERY TUESDAY AT 8 PM AT THE LESBIAN & GAY COMMUNITY CENTER, 208 WEST 13TH STREET, NYC. FOR MORE INFO: (212) 967-7711 EXT. 3204.

THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

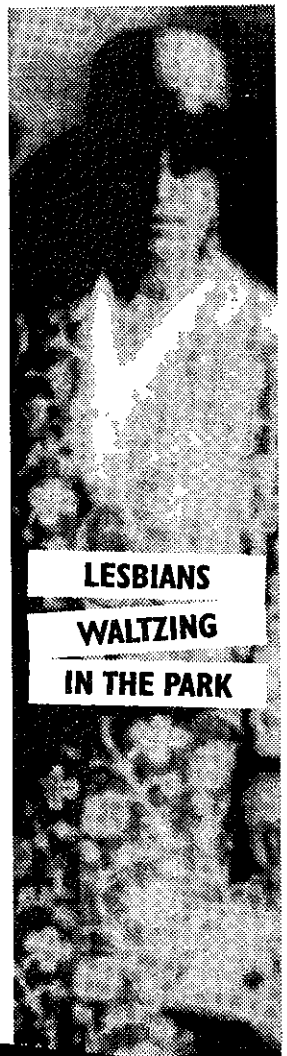


Join Gertrude Stein & Alice B. Toklas to Celebrate Valentines Day

On Valentine's Day the **LESBIAN AVENGERS** will invite the entire lesbian community to the unveiling of our **ALICE B. TOKLAS** Statue to stand next to the statue of **GERTRUDE STEIN** in Bryant Park. Our action will be a rallying cry for unity, survival, visibility, and for the appreciation and celebration of lesbian love everywhere.

CELEBRATE & VENERATE

- The glorious herstory of conventional romantic love!
- Politically incorrect domestic bliss!
- Butch genius!
- Forgotten femmes!
- Queer biddies at large!
- Lesbian odd couples/singles!
- And especially the union of Gertrude and Alice.



VALENTINE'S DAY

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 14, 1993 • 2 PM
in front of the
statue of Gertrude Stein
in Bryant Park
(40th St between 5th & 6th Aves)

They were regularly gay there, Helen Furr and Georgine Skeene, they were regularly gay there where they were gay. They were very regularly gay.

To be regularly gay was to do every day the gay thing that they did every day. To be regularly gay was to end every day at the same time after they had been regularly gay. They were regularly gay. They were gay every day. They ended every day in the same way, at the same time, and they had been every day regularly gay.

—"Miss Furr and Miss Skeene"
Gertrude Stein

THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

DON'T MISS
OUR OTHER EXCITING L-U-V ACTIONS PLANNED FOR VALENTINE'S WEEK!

CALL THE AVENGER HOTLINE FOR INFO: (212) 967-7711 x3204

The **LESBIAN AVENGERS** is a direct-action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

We meet every Tuesday at 8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13 Street, New York

COMMUNIQUÉ Nº 1

FROM THE FRONTLINE

DECEMBER 1992—Wellington Webb, the **MAYOR OF DENVER**, was about to fork his eggs over easy under the indulgent gaze of a Wall Street Journal senior editor when eight **LESBIAN AVENGERS** broke into the plush **REGENCY HOTEL DINING ROOM** chanting at the top of their lungs "We're here. We're queer. And we're not going skiing!" and "Boycott Colorado!" The Mayor had come to New York to promote tourism and investments in Colorado—**THE HATE STATE.** It was about 9 a.m., Monday Dec. 7—a day the Regency power-breakfasters will never forget—**THE DAY WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM THE LESBIAN AVENGERS.**

While hotel security frantically cackled about like headless chickens, the unstoppable Avengers stomped around the room for three triumphant tours, noisily waving placards and giving leaflets to all, including the Mayor. Next morning, the story was all over the front page of the Colorado press. The message: there's a price to be paid, in dollars and cents, when a state deprives its lesbian and gay citizens of all civil rights protection, as Colorado did on November 2 when it added the hateful Amendment 2 to its constitution.

After the Regency fracas, it was all uphill for the Mayor's damage control visit to New York. Proving once again that a small group of fearless **AVENGERS** can wreak considerable political havoc in a few hours, **WE DOGGED HIM ALL DAY** Monday and Tuesday Dec. 8, from ABC to Time, from The New York Times to Newsweek, from the Plaza Hotel to City Hall. To cap it all, about 80 people loudly demonstrated with us on Monday night in front of the CBS Broadcast Center while the Mayor was doing a radio interview inside.

By the end of his trip, a plaintive Mayor Webb was telling the press that he had come to New York City to talk about tourism and investment and all everyone wanted to talk about was Amendment 2 and "Boycott Colorado". Thanks, in part to Lesbian Avenger pressure in the streets, his trip to woo New York's media, business and political establishments away from a boycott backfired, with **MAYOR DINKINS** publicly endorsing a tourism boycott and lots of bad press here and back at the ranch. Mission accomplished.

Throughout our two-day action, we carefully kept the focus on the "Boycott Colorado" issue, avoiding any personal attack against Mayor Webb. The Mayor, an African-American, had strongly opposed Amendment 2 before it was adopted; we urged him "to continue his outspoken support."

THUS THE YEAR ENDS IN A FIERY WHIRLWIND OF LESBIAN AVENGER ACTIVITY. In the three months since we first took to the streets with a vengeance, we've lit New York City's political fuse on three issues vital to lesbian survival: the campaign to erase lesbians and gay men from NYC's multicultural curriculum; the Colorado boycott; and violence against us, as exemplified by the murders of Hattie Mae Cohens and Brian Mock, a Black lesbian and a disabled white gay man, burned to death in Oregon on Sept. 26, as that state prepared to vote on the homophobic Measure 9, which was later narrowly defeated. All three issues were languishing in relative obscurity until **WE LIT THE FUSE.**

Since September, we have given lavender balloons inscribed "Ask about Lesbian Lives" to Queens first-graders to the tune of "When the Dykes Come Marching In" played by **THE AVENGER MARCHING BAND** and we made a mess of the Fifth Avenue-holiday shopper-mania when we took to the streets with lit torches to protest the Oregon murders. We staged a five-day around-the-clock encampment in the West Village before a shrine dedicated to those murdered in Oregon and elsewhere and we organized a well-attended speak-out on violence against lesbians. We have demonstrated twice before the Board of Education, attended local School Board meetings, created an Avenger video group, and thrown three fabulous parties—the fourth and most fabulous being the New Year's Eve party you'd be a real fool to miss.

So, it's not immodest to say that we're HOT, HAPPENING and BUSY. **And yes, Mary: WE WANT YOU.** We want you if you want revenge. If you're sick and tired of being invisible. If you refuse to be trampled on any more. If you thirst for **RETALIATION.** If you're ready and raging to take to the streets!

WE WANT YOU. When you're ready, of course. And we give you several options. You can: A) **COME TO A TUESDAY MEETING** (8PM at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13th St); B) **CALL THE AVENGER HOTLINE (212-967-7711 x3204)** and leave a message asking for information on where the Avengers are going to strike next and just show up; or C) keep coming to our strenuously fabulous parties until you're ready for options A or B.

Oh, if you're very rich, or just a little rich, there's also another option, Option D: give us a check. We also take cash, money orders, travellers checks, and the family jewels, especially if they're engraved with names like "Xerox" or "Sony".

THINK ABOUT IT. Being nice isn't going to get you anywhere. Nice, obedient girls always end up lying under the master's table, like doggies, eating his crumbs. **WERE YOU BORN TO HIDE AND SEETHE? NOT.** Besides, with the religious right out to get us, there's really no place for you to hide. You've got nothing to lose but your frustrations. Be disorderly! **BE UNRULY! GET EVEN! JOIN THE LESBIAN AVENGERS AND JOIN THE RIOT. WE RECRUIT.**

See you later.
The Lesbian Avengers

COMMUNIQUÉ No 2

FROM THE FRONTLINE

FEBRUARY 1993—The year started off with a bang at the Lesbian Avengers' New Year's Eve party. As go-go girls undulated out the old year, hundreds of hot, pulsating dykes boogied in the new to raise $5,000 for the year's avenging.

The cash we raised didn't burn a hole in our pockets. Within the week, the **Lesbian Avengers** were out in force to defend the **Rainbow Curriculum.** On January 6th, some 50 Avengers braved the cold to teach the ABCs of respect to members of the **United Federation of Teachers** (UFT) who had gathered for their general delegates meeting. Sporting placards with slogans based on the letters of the alphabet, Avengers distributed hundreds of leaflets to those entering and leaving the meeting, urging them to support the curriculum, their queer colleagues, and queer kids. The action put pressure on the UFT, particularly union president and waffling Rainbow advocate Sandra Feldman, to put full force behind the Rainbow Curriculum, grades 1-12.

In a homophobic world, a Lesbian Avenger's work is never done, and so just three weeks later those dazzling dykes were at it again. This time, our aim was **Self** destructive. The big boys at **Self Magazine** evidently thought no one was watching when they decided to go ahead with a staff ski trip to Aspen, Colorado, with full knowledge of the state's passage in November of the hateful Amendment 2, which deprives queer citizens of civil rights protection. But, proving the time-worn adage that we are everywhere, Lesbian Avengers were there to show them that bigotry is bad for business. At 11:30 a.m., a dozen **Lesbian Avengers stormed the chic Madison Avenue offices of Conde Nast** to protest the proposed sojourn in the Hate State. Chanting "Boycott Colorado," "We're here. We're queer. And we're not going skiing," and handing out fact sheets on Amendment 2, the Avengers struck fear and awe into the hearts of onlookers, inspiring a rumor that they were packing guns. While gray-suited security guards looked on meekly and editor Alexandra Penney retreated to her office, the Avengers held their ground. When Penney made a dash for her limo soon after, she had to wade through a line of Avengers picketing on the sidewalk outside. The trip was cancelled the next day.

From boardroom to courtroom, Lesbian Avengers were on the watch. At the sentencing of convicted **lesbian basher Freddy Garcia**, Judge Madden gave an inspired speech about the victim's heroism only to let Garcia off with a slap on the hand. The courtroom erupted with enraged Avengers. Garcia had been sentenced to 200 hours of community service in the office of Marjorie Hill, the mayor's liaison to the gay and lesbian community, allegedly on Hill's recommendation. Lesbian Avengers marched into Hill's office to demand an explanation. Hill denied having made the recommendation and agreed not to let Garcia or other convicted bashers work in the office.

Not all the Avengers' actions are in your face. Sometimes they're in your nose. The lunch-hour crowds who entered the foul-smelling elevator of the Bar Building on February 12 didn't have to wait long to find out where the stench was coming from. When the elevator doors closed, they revealed giant stickers announcing **"Homophobia Stinks,"** dedicated by the Avengers to **Jack Hale,** lawyer for the Archdiocese. Stink bombings also took place at the **Forty-second Street Army Recruitment Center** and **St. Patrick's Cathedral.** These were the first wave of the **guerrilla Valentines** launched by the Lesbian Avengers in February. On Valentine's Eve, the Avengers staged a **skate-in** at the Rockefeller Center ice rink; dykes skated arm-in-arm and kissed before the amazed Saturday afternoon crowds. That night, Avengers braved the cold to serenade the bigoted enemy of the Rainbow Curriculum, **Mary Cummins** at her home in Queens. And on Valentine's Day, 250 dykes gathered to witness the unveiling of a statue of **Alice B. Toklas** in Bryant Park where she was reunited with her lover **Gertrude Stein.** Readings by prominent lesbian writers followed, culminating in joyous **lesbian waltzing** amidst the scintillating snow. The actions, which drew crowds and media attention, capped off the Lesbian Avenger's rough and retributive itinerary for the first six weeks of the year. And now we have **four new chapters** of Avenging lesbians—in **Atlanta, Durham, Austin** and **Tucson.**

Time and again the Lesbian Avengers have proved that good politics can be a good time. And now, you're asking, "How can I become a part of this fabulous, funky, and fierce group of dykes?" Money's always good, so come to our mouth-watering March 20th dance (Saturday, 9pm, March 20, 119 Avenue D, 2nd floor). **LET US PUT YOU ON THE ROAD TO REVENGE.**

WE WANT YOU. If you are fed up with being ignored, with fighting for everyone's rights but your own, then come and join the Avengers. There's a lot you can do. Come to a Tuesday meeting (8pm at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 W 13th St).

CALL THE LESBIAN AVENGERS HOTLINE 212-967-7711 x3204

and leave a message asking for information on the Avengers next target. Better yet, join us in coordinating the first national Lesbian Avengers-sponsored action the weekend of the March on Washington, DC (April 24th). Then join us for the march itself where we will be out in force and **OUT FOR POWER**. And if you make a fashion statement, Lesbian Avengers t-shirts are just $10. (Our video is just $13.95.)

GET MAD! GET EVEN! JOIN THE LESBIAN AVENGERS AND JOIN THE RIOT. WE RECRUIT.

COMMUNIQUÉ No 3

FROM THE FRONTLINE

MAY 1993—Almost a year after our collective explosion into the world of direct action, the Lesbian Avengers are still raising hell, lighting fuses and breaking hearts. Our March 20th benefit got those tender dyke hearts pounding. Once again hundreds of lesbian revelers thrilled to the the sights and sounds of **go-go girl boogie fever**, raising thousands of dollars for our Washington, DC exploits. As Avenger chapters spring up around the country, most recently in **Minneapolis, Boston, and Houston,** New York dykes are still giving lesbophobes the most bang for your buck.

On **St. Patrick's day,** scores of soaked but feisty Avengers joined the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization to protest their exclusion from the parade, which **Mayor Dinkins** had made city policy with 2 (count 'em, 2) injunctions against ILGO. As Avengers were cuffed and piled into vans, supporters countered with rousing Irish ditties. And to jail we went, with the tune of **"As Irish Dykes are Smiling"** ringing in our ears.

Arrests don't slow Avengers down. We renewed our vigilance at dyke hating school board meetings and spoke up for **kiddie queers and lesbian moms.** We crashed a forum on New York public schools and showed bigoted educators what true Avenger fury was all about. Together with other powerful queer advocates we invaded the **Brooklyn Conservative Party** to show our outrage over their award to notorious anti-multicultural curriculum hate-monger Mary Cummins. **From schoolhouse to jailhouse,** Avengers fought for dykes everywhere. After witnessing the death penalty railroading of **accused 'lesbian serial killer' Aileen Wuornos,** a group of Avengers contacted Wuornos in support of her case. The Avengers received a letter from Wuornos, who is currently on Florida's death row, and are working to publicize her case and the homophobia and misogyny of the **Florida court system.**

Our finest hour came in our weekend of actions in **Washington, D.C.**, April 23 to 26. On our first day in D.C., the Avengers joined ACT-UP/NY's lesbian caucus outside the **Health and Human Services** building to demand research on lesbians with AIDS. While 350 riled and raucous dykes rallied outside and lesbians with AIDS spoke out about their lives, 19 ACT-UP and Avenger women, 16 of them lesbians with AIDS, met with HHS secretary **Donna Shalala**. Shalala was so impressed with these forceful and eloquent women that she extended the planned meeting time from 5 minutes to half an hour, listening to lesbians talk about **research, treatment, housing and homophobia**.

"But wait!" you exclaim. **Don't those irrepressible Lesbian Avengers have any fun?** If you'd been to our D.C. Dyke March on April 24 you'd know the answer. In coalition with dykes from around the country, the Lesbian Avengers threw **the largest lesbian march in history.** We had handed out 8,000 palm cards before the march, but even we were overwhelmed by the response. Almost 20,000 fierce dykes took over D.C that Saturday night, stretching from Dupont Circle to the White House. As crowds of lesbians filled the streets, **incandescent Avengers ate fire in front of the White House**, spoke out on the Ellipse, and for one night turned the nation's capital into a shimmering lesbian universe. We handed out thousands of our "Dyke Manifesto," an incendiary broadsheet urging lesbians to wake up and take action. The day of the March on Washington, Lesbian Avengers dressed for the occasion in super-dyke action capes and Avengers t-shirts. **Dykes from Montana to Maine joined us on the road to recruitment and rabble rousing**. And no trip to D.C. would be complete without an invasion of the halls of power. On the next day 7 or 8 Avengers crept into the **House of Representatives** and stood in the gallery. They set off stink bombs and plastered the walls with **"Homophobia Stinks"** stickers as 2 busloads of Avengers, ACT-UP members and other assorted activists were arrested outside demanding equitable health care.

But with every breakthrough comes a backlash: Back in New York we learned that Dee DeBerry, a visible dyke with HIV who had been threatened with the **fire-bombing** of her trailer if she went to Washington, returned to **Tampa, FL**, to find that indeed her home had been destroyed. Her courage has inspired us, and once again we're out for vengeance, for her and all dykes. The Avengers are descending onTampa to support Dee and all **lesbians living with the threat of violence**. On Sunday, June 13 we'll hold a candlelight vigil at the site of Dee's home, and on Monday, June 14, we'll stage an action in downtown Tampa to let the homophobes know that we won't let their actions go unnoticed. The Lesbian Avengers won't rest until all dykes have retribution.

And we won't rest until we've shown the world that **"Lesbians Lust for Power!"** We're kicking off Lesbian & Gay Pride weekend with a march to celebrate dyke desire. Come out on June 26 and **practice the art of mass seduction** as we lick, squirm, fondle, moan and kiss our way down Broadway from Bryant Park to the Pride rally at Union Square.

Word is getting around. From Newsweek to New York Magazine, Deneuve to Mademoiselle, Radical Chick to CNN, the country is waking up to Avenger time. **Revenge is sweet** and so are rough, activist lesbians. If invisibility and lesbophobia are getting you down, join us! Come to our meetings—Tues-days at 8pm, at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 W.13th Street).

CALL THE LESBIAN AVENGERS HOTLINE 212-967-7711 x3204

and leave a message asking for information on the Avengers next target. or about Avengers chapters in your area. Wear a Lesbian Avenger t-shirt (still only $10) with pride and fury.

The Lesbian Avengers is a direct action group focused on issues vital to lesbian survival and visibility.

GET MAD! GET EVEN! JOIN THE LESBIAN AVENGERS AND JOIN THE RIOT. WE RECRUIT.

Appendix 4

New York Avenger Media List

Lesbian & Gay

Television	Contact	Fax	Phone
Dyke TV	News Editor	212.343.9337	212.343.9335
Gay Cable Network	Gay USA Louis Maletta	212.229.2347	212.727.8850
Out in the 90's	News Room Bobby Dean Butch Peaston Kurt Woolf Studio	212.941.9382 718.786.1406 212 941 9382	 212.627.3844 212.243.1570 212.627.3844 212.475.1550

Print	Contact	Fax	Phone
The Advocate		213.655.9452	
Baltimore Alternative		410.889.5665	
Washington Blade	News Department	202.797.7040	
Bay Area Reporter		415.861.6534	
BLK		213.410.9250	
Dallas Voice		214.969.7271	
The Empty Closet		716.244.8246	
Etcetera		404.525.1908	
Frontiers		213.656.8774	
Gay Chicago Magazine		312.327.0112	
Gay Community News		617.426.2723	
The Gay Paper		301.837.8512	
Gaze Magazine		612.338.5292	
Hot Shots		619.278.9081	
LA Weekly		213.666.5025	
Lesbian News			213.237.0277 est. 113
Metroline		203.231.8503	
Montrose Voice		713.529.9531	

Lesbian & Gay

Print (Cont'd.)	Contact	Fax	Phone
Mom, Guess What		916.552.7921	
NY Native		212.727.9321	
Outline		312.871.7609	
San Francisco Bay Guardian		415.255.8762	
Sentinel		415.861.8431	
San Diego Gay & Lesbian Times		619.299.3430	
Bay Times		415.512.0130	
Seattle Gay News		206.322.7188	
Southern Voice		404.876.2709	
This Week in Texas		713.527.9305	
Update		618.255.0167	
The Weekly News, Miami		305.756.6488	
Windy City Times		312.935.1853	

Spanish Language

	Contact	Fax	Phone
El Diario/La Prensa	Robert Abramowitz Richard Araujo Fernando Moreno	212.807.4705	
WNJY-TV- Channel 47	Luis Fernandez Viviana Fernandez Noticiero 47	201.288.5166	
CNN Spanish / Noticiero Mundial CNN	City Desk Liane Melendez Telemundo	404.827.1593 212.714.7935	
Noticiero Univision		212.867.6710	
AP Latin American Desk	Daniel Harker		212.621.5449

General Media

Television	Contact	Fax	Phone
ABC		212.456.2831	212.456.3173
	Good Morning America	212.456.7920	
CBS		212.975.9387	212.975.2161
	News This AM (6AM)	212.975.2115	212.975.2161
	News This AM (7AM)	212.975.2115	212.975.2161
NBC		212.664.2994	212.664.2731
	Today Tabitha Soren		
Fox TV		212.249.1182	212.452.3800
	Good Day New York	212.879.0636	212.452.3800
Channel 9		201.330.3844	201.330.2199
Channel 11		212.210.2591	212.210.2411
WNET—McNeil-Lehrer (PBS)		212.581.7353	212.560.2000
Channel 68	Bill Roller	212.643.1903	
CNN		212.714.7935	212.714.7820
CSPAN		202.737.6226	
MTV		212.258.8718	
	News Desk		212.258.8000
NY One	Dan Jacobson Andrew Kutyman	212.563.7154	212.465.0142

Radio	Contact	Fax	Phone
WBAI	News Department Laura Flanders Victoria Starr	212.564.5359	
WABC	News Desk City Desk Bob Bucci	212.456.5150 212.947.1340	
WCBS	News Desk City Desk Assignment Editor Terry Raskyn	212.975.9387 212.975.3814 212.397.7811	

General Media (Cont'd.)

Radio	Contact	Fax	Phone
WNEW	City Desk News Desk Donna Fiducia	212.237.2681 212.599.5339	
WNYC		212.669.2288	212.669.3358
NationalPublic Radio	News Desk Jim Zarroli	202.822.2329	
WQXR	News Department	212.633.7666	
WEVD	Newsroom Gary Arnel	212.979.8674	
WHTZ	News Department Valerie Segrazes	212.239.2308	
WQHT	News Desk Lisa Glassberg	212.391.7830	
WHLI	Newsroom	516.746.0034	
WQCD	Newsroom	212.210.2771	
WFAN	Newsroom	718.706.6481	
WNSR	Newsroom	212.644.7190	
WLIB/BLS	Newsroom Newsroom	212.922.9640 212.921.4204	
WPAT	Newsroom	201.471.1386	
WLTW	Newsroom	212.764.2734	
WRKS	Newsroom	212.768.7957	
WXRK	News Department	212.888.2959	
WYNY	Newsroom	212.237.2681	
WMXV	News Department	212.980.1614	
WNCN	News Department Mollie	212.302.7814	
WFUV	Newsroom	718.365.9815	
WBLI	News Department	516.732.3848	

General Media (Cont'd.)

Radio	Contact	Fax	Phone
WNYC	News Desk Gene Johnson	212.669.2288	

Print	Contact	Fax	Phone
City Sun			718.569.7429
Newsday	Jesse Mangaliman Liz Smith Liz Willen City Desk	212.696.0487 212.696.0487 212.696.0487 212.696.0487	
Daily News	Lynnell Hancock Linda Stasi City Desk	212.949.2307 212.949.2307 212.682.4953	212.210.2100
New York Times			212.556.1234
	Josh Barbanel Natalie Brozan Anna Quindlan Metro	212.556.3690 212.556.3690 212.556.3690 212.556.3690	
Washington Post		202.334.5661	202.334.6000
New York Post		212.732.4241	
Amsterdam News		212.222.3842	
Village Voice			212.475.3300
	Donna Minkowitz Michael Musto City Desk	212.475.8944 212.475.8944 212.475.8944	
Associated Press	City Desk	212.621.1679	
UPI	Peg Byron	212.643.8970	
Christian Science Monitor		212.819.4130	
New York Observer		212.688.4889	
USA Today		212.643.8970	
L.A Times		213.LA7.4712	800.528.4637
Reuters	Leslie Gevirtz	212.603.3368	