

Happy Birthday!

Over a year ago we set out to publish a zine for the fat dyke community—the synergy of which has carried us farther than we ever imagined. Recently we found ourselves mentioned in *Time* and *The Nation*. Our web site has been getting an average of 1000 hits a day. Putting it all into perspective is a task in itself. When we stop to think about all the daily work it takes to make each issue happen—it can be quite frightening. The thing that keeps us going is all the incredible positive feedback we get (plus a little break this summer helped check our crotchety-ness and impending burnout).

The real reason that FaT GiRL continues to happen is the support we get from our readers and friends and the incredible submissions that have been pouring in. Sometimes you do get what you wish for. I like to be proven right...there *are* brilliant sexy fat dykes out there with some amazing creative visions to share.

For each of us in the collective, this year has been quite a journey. Collective living ain't easy, as some of you know, but somehow we've managed to get this far and still have a good laugh at each meeting despite ourselves. Hard as it is to admit, we're spreading ourselves a little thin. We desperately need some fat dykes who are interested in working with us—especially helping with distribution, advertising, and photography. We're committed to having a diverse group, so if you don't walk just like us don't be afraid to give us a holler.

The fat girl roundtables have been important features in each of our issues—we've hoped to provide a place where fat dykes who come from differing experiences could get together and talk about the hard issues that our community faces, collectively and as individuals. We've liked the roundtables so far, but feel they lack the depth of interaction we want to see happening. We'd like to take a new approach. Instead of us top-down instituting and arranging a round-

table we hope that you will be inspired to dialogue with the people you trust on the burning issues that are inspiring you. And if you do, that you will submit the discussions to us for publication. Contact us if this rocks your boat. We are open to suggestions, as long as you have energy to help us make them happen.

Publishing FaT GiRL continues to be a political act. Things are crazy politically—in a heated, frenzied way—on international, national and local levels. Everybody is fighting over resources and control. The war on our bodies—our bodies as commodities, as points of control—is ongoing. We welcome your diatribes and insights and actions, so keep 'em coming and keep 'em on their toes.

Many of us have dealt with death this year, in all its shocking and daily ways. Grief has been closely tied to my journey with FaT GiRL. Two days away from shipping our first issue, while doing layout I heard that my grandmother who raised me died. I worked straight through and finished the zine. I chose not to go back to NY for the funeral because I didn't want to deal with my family's fat and queer hatred, while I carried the joy of what I was doing with FaT GiRL and the pain and loss I felt in losing my first love and beloved Grammy. If it weren't for her, I don't think I would have ever ventured into starting FaT GiRL. She shared with me her capacity for love, and had faith in me that was at times blind and self-centered, but was the kind of faith I could run with and change the world. I've spent all year working through the fog of that loss and with the new places my life with FaT GiRL has taken me. So it seemed only appropriate to find myself traipsing naked through the Oakland cemetery, coming home to my body and sex and death while being photographed for FaT GiRL. Beginning a new year and coming full circle, dealing with the underbelly of where our lives can take us—be they places of joy or perversity or confusion or pain. —*Barbarism*

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