

# Old Lesbians Organizing for Change



Founded  
in 1989

# The Reporter

A quarterly publication  
of OLOC  
March 2020

Dear OLOC,  
Thank you for keeping Lesbian Culture alive!!!  
Trina Porte



So, over the past couple of weeks, in the midst of this impeachment fiasco, between visits to our State house, singing at rallies with the Rhode Island Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty and the Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence, and then commemorating Roe v. Wade, I found myself contacting one of our State Senators, asking her to introduce an all-inclusive Equal Rights Amendment. This Senator is someone I consider a fabulous, radical, Lesbian feminist whom I have known for close to 35 years. She is also a judge, and she married Ruthie and me. After asking me some "procedural" questions, she surprised me with an interesting one: "Jodi, where is this coming from?" and without a thought, I heard myself say, "fear. FEAR that those in power will do whatever they want to take away the very hard-earned rights we, ourselves, and those we have respected and emulated for all our lives have given their lives to establish. And then I remember reading words suggesting that chaos is not cured by chaos and fear, but only yields more.

I guess while it is time for continued, heightened radical feminist activism, it is also time for heightened radical feminist collaboration. Thank you OLOC, in any form—online, on paper, or in person—with gratitude and humility.

Jodi Glass, 1953

To the elders of OLOC from two under-60 supporters, Deborah Stone, 1971, and Susan Boren, 1968:

Our elders show us who we are and who we can be, and we are so grateful for your presence, your spirit, and your continued activism.

We wish you all the love, vital energy, and strength of spirit you need—and more than that, for good measure—to continue manifesting your truest identities in this life.



Enthusiastic OLOCian  
drawn by  
Sally Miller Gearhart, 1931

OLOC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization



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

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This newsletter brought to you by:

Editor: Sheryl, 1954.

Proofreader and Copy-editor: Nancy Krody, 1939.

Content Review: Alix Dobkin, 1940, Sally Tatnall, 1937, Jan Griesinger, 1942, and Susan Wiseheart, 1941.

Design/Layout: Malinda McCain, 1940.

All of the writers and photographers.

Deadline for the next issue is May 1, 2020.

Limit general contributions to 300 words.

Contact us for the style guide (revised November 2018). We may edit articles for clarity and/or length. Send articles to OLOC at [reporter@oloc.org](mailto:reporter@oloc.org).

Memorial announcements: Send name, birth and death years, and city and state of the Lesbian who died. See the E-News for life stories.

#### Steering Committee Members Contact List

Co-Directors:

- Alix Dobkin, 1940, Woodstock, NY, [alix@oloc.org](mailto:alix@oloc.org), 845-679-7586  
Sally Tatnall, 1937, Lyndhurst, OH, [sally@oloc.org](mailto:sally@oloc.org), 216-912-8627

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- Ruth Debra, 1944, Operations Coordinator, Palm Springs, CA, [ruth@oloc.org](mailto:ruth@oloc.org), 760-318-6794  
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María Cora, 1953, San Lorenzo, CA, [maria@oloc.org](mailto:maria@oloc.org), 510-366-8630

**Who We Are:** OLOC is an organization of Old Lesbians. We are dedicated to preserving and enhancing the Lesbian voice as well as increasing Lesbian visibility in a world that stifles it and threatens to erase it. OLOC is supported in part by a grant from the Carpenter Foundation.

**OLOC Membership** (as of 10-23-2015): National OLOC welcomes as members Old Lesbians who have reached their 60th year.

**OLOC Support:** Anyone who agrees with our purpose is welcome as a supporter.

## OLOC's Media Library Has Expanded Again!

OLOC has eight new movies! Thank you to **Women Make Movies** for donating five of them! See the OLOC **website** or the January E-News for full descriptions.

**The Archivettes** OLOC member Deb Edel, 1944, is a founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives in New York. This engrossing film is about how the Archives came to be and continues to present day.

**Regarding Susan Sontag** Susan Sontag is billed as “one of the (past century’s) greatest and most mercurial thinkers,” an “unapologetically grand intellectual,” and “one of the most influential and provocative thinkers.”

**Heather Booth: Changing the World** The story of Heather Booth’s lifelong activism and organizing. Her story will fascinate all of you who love community work.

**The Grey Area: Feminism Behind Bars** A class for women prisoners about feminism provides us with a look at the lives of some women in an Iowa prison. We learn their views on feminism and what needs to be done to improve their situations.

**Brincando El Charco: Portrait of a Puerto Rican** Young Lesbian in New York grapples with many issues, including whether or not to return to Puerto Rico. “A meditation on class, race, and sexuality as shifting differences, a wonderful mix of fiction, archival footage, processed interviews, and soap opera drama.”

**Holly Near: Singing for Our Lives** This story of Holly’s life and work includes interesting tales and her inimitable music, with Ronnie Gilbert, Gloria Steinem, and Jane Fonda.

**We’ll Meet Again Season 2** Each episode reunites people who have not been in touch for many years. The one on Women’s Rights is inspiring and educational.

**Cupping the Flame of Women’s Culture** The final event at the Montclair Women’s Cultural Arts Club in Oakland, California. Interviews with founder Boo Price and others, and a concert featuring Women’s Music icons.

To borrow films (documentaries, drama, activism, and comedy), music, audio, National Gathering presentations, and other herstorical videos of interest to Old Lesbians, contact Susan at [susan@oloc.org](mailto:susan@oloc.org), phone 888-706-7506, or look at our website under OLOC PROJECTS: Media Library ([oloc.org/media-library/](http://oloc.org/media-library/)).

**Get merchandise here!**  
t-shirts tanks sweatshirts  
buttons and pins



Check out the beautiful  
shopping webpage at [oloc.org/shop/](http://oloc.org/shop/).



## Random Thoughts (Edited Version)

By Karen Williams, M.Ed., 1952

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Without women, wimmin, womyn, there can  
be no men

No one to dominate us

Control, abuse, manipulate us

Obliterate us

Hate us

Rape us

Disempower us...

I see so much bullying to make trans people  
feel equal

To what?

Black people?

Where is the push for Black equality?

I'll tell you what's equal in this country

Hatred

Bias

Bigotry

Ignorance

Such crusaders on both sides of the gender  
jails

Arguing and fighting for equality

On another of the same note

Who thought marriage equality would be le-  
galized before marijuana?

Of course that happened...

Wait for it...

We can't legalize marijuana when all those  
Black boys and girls are in jails and pris-  
ons for it.

How do I get to bully my way into my right to life,  
liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

And who should I bully?

I'm still fighting redlining, police brutality, gentry-  
fication, cultural appropriation, the justice  
system, banks that won't give me loans,  
fashion that questions my hairstyles and on  
and on and on...

Even my Black trans friends had no idea  
they'd be followed and tracked around  
stores

because as Black men

Where's the privilege?

I've totally stopped using the term "white  
privilege"...

It's white dominance

Reinforced by any means necessary

Including rampant systematic bullying

Of anyone perceived as less than

And who is "less than" a woman

I am not a caricature of myself

Nor do I want to be confronted with hostility  
by caricatures of me...

When I am authentic

I am respectful

Your bullying of me is  
disrespectful...

You can't out-woman me!

You can respect me and  
together we can free-  
dom fight

After all

You're not free

Until we're all free...



Karen Williams

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### OLOC works for change by supporting:

- comprehensive immigration reform
- elimination of violence against women
- enactment of universal single-payer healthcare for all
- an end to corporate "personhood"
- an end to any curtailment of voting rights
- the Black Lives Matter movement
- the Say Her Name! movement
- the civil rights of all indigenous people

### OLOC Mission Statement

To eliminate the oppression of ageism and to stand in solidarity against all oppressions.

### OLOC Vision Statement

OLOC will be a cooperative community of Old Lesbian feminist activists from many backgrounds working for justice and the well-being of all Old Lesbians.



## Final Update on Susan's Injury

Okay, folks, at Susan's request, here is the last regular update on her year-long hip adventure. She asked us to tell you she is doing really well, regaining mobility, driving [see how happy she is in the photo—such a nice, big smile!], exercising a lot, and resuming more of her usual activities, such as yoga and dancing.

And we add our thanks to all of you for your support, encouragement, chocolate, donations, and healing energy that have enabled her to recover so well.

Goddess speed to you, Susan!



Susan arriving at her house

## What Do You Think?

Jan Griesinger, 1942, has suggested a future topic for this newsletter: "What is best about getting old? What is worst about getting old?" Please send your responses in by May 1—no more than 300 words. Your ideas are more important than your writing skills, so tell us what you think!

## OLOC is Now Registered with AmazonSmile

When online shoppers sign up for AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)), they are asked to select one of over a million nonprofits to support. When you click on our unique link, you can skip this selection process. Instead, you will be taken to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and automatically asked if you want to support OLOC, Inc. Our link is [smile.amazon.com/ch/76-0393649](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/76-0393649), from which Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to us. If you shop at Amazon, this is a "free" way to support OLOC with your contributions. Nothing could be simpler! Thank you for your support of the only national Old Lesbian organization by and for Lesbians!

## Seeking Spousal/Partner Caregivers of People with Alzheimer's

*[Editor: OLOC received this request for your participation, if it applies to you and you are interested. This research was approved by Sharon Raphael, 1941, OLOC's Research Gatekeeper.]*

We are conducting a study on older (65+) adults who care for their spouses and partners with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. This national study is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Aging (NIA), awarded to Toni Calasanti, a Sociology professor at Virginia Tech ([liberalarts.vt.edu/toni-calasanti](https://liberalarts.vt.edu/toni-calasanti)), in conjunction with Brian de Vries, Professor

Emeritus at San Francisco State University. Our study builds upon previous research we have conducted on older heterosexual spousal caregivers as well as older LGBT persons. We are interested in the roles that gender and sexual orientation play in the experiences of caregiving, some of the similarities, as well as any unique challenges—and how we can apply what we learn to better support all caregivers.

Based on our previous research, we would expect interviews to last about 1½ hours. While we are unable to pay participants, we can offer a small (\$30) gift card as a token of appreciation and gratitude for your time and sharing of your experiences.

If you are interested in participating, please contact us by email at [toni@vt.edu](mailto:toni@vt.edu) or [bdevries@sfsu.edu](mailto:bdevries@sfsu.edu), and we will try to arrange a convenient time to conduct an interview. We are hoping to conduct in-person interviews with interested persons during the spring and summer. But if this time frame does not work for you, or if we cannot arrange to meet in person, we will try to arrange an alternative time or method for the interview. We must conclude all interviews by the end of 2020. Thank you for your help with this important study.



To find OLOC on Facebook, go to [www.facebook.com/NationalOLOC](https://www.facebook.com/NationalOLOC).



## Working against Aboriginal Racism

By Jean Taylor, 1944

The following are some of the protocols and anti-racism work in solidarity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that the Lesbian community in Australia has been practising at our Lesbian gatherings since the first National Lesbian Festival and Conference in Melbourne in January 1990.

“Pay the Rent” is an Aboriginal initiative whereby the invading and dominant non-Aboriginal people, as a way of acknowledging that we live on stolen land and that sovereignty was never ceded, can either with money or in kind “Pay the Rent” to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Lesbian community does this at all our gatherings by adding a 10% levy to the registration fee so we can then offer free registration and subsidised travel costs for Indigenous Lesbians to attend, as well as to sometimes donate money to local Aboriginal women’s groups.

At the beginning of the opening ceremony there may be a “Welcome to Country” by an Aboriginal Lesbian who is a member of the local tribe whose country we are meeting in. Or, as is more usually the case, either an Aboriginal Lesbian who is in attendance or a non-Aboriginal Lesbian do the “Acknowledgement of Country” to pay our respects to the local Aboriginal people whose land it is.

At the Opening ceremony, all the participants introduce ourselves with our name and the name of the “Aboriginal Country” we live on. For example, “My name is Jean Taylor and I live on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Woiwurrung language group of the Kulin Nation.”

At the end of the Opening, the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander Flags are flown from a flagpole and/or placed in prominent positions in the main hall as a constant reminder of whose land we’re on.



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### Next Steering Committee Meeting

The next National Steering Committee in-person meeting will be April 15–18, 2020, in the Phoenix area of Arizona. The Committee also meets regularly by conference call between the semiannual in-person meetings. If there are topics you want the Steering Committee to address, contact them by email at [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org), a note to OLOC at PO Box 834, Woodstock, NY 12498, or a phone call to 888-706-7506. Be sure to say if you want a response.

### PASSINGS

Morgan Ahern, 1948–2019, Vashon Island, Washington

Casse Culver, 1944–2019, Milton, Delaware

Lucy Frey, 1932–2020, Springfield, Missouri  
SJ (Susan Jill) Kahn, 1947–2019, Oakland, California

Jean Mountaingrove, 1925–2019, Wolf Creek, Oregon

Judith Witherow, 1944–2020, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

See the *E-News* for more about these Lesbians.

### OLOC and Your Birth Year

As many of you know, OLOCians identify ourselves with our birth years as part of our commitment to anti-ageism. It is about proudly declaring our age instead of hiding how old we are. Some people have expressed concern that this may not be wise for safety reasons. We checked with a techie-geek type knowledgeable about computer security matters, and, after some consideration, we decided we believe it is safe to include this information. We will continue to use birth years unless a writer specifically asks us not to. We do not feel there is significant reason to worry about identity theft resulting from using birth years, but we will certainly honor your request if you are concerned. When you send in material for our newsletters, website, or other source, simply tell us that you don’t wish your birth year to be included. Simple enough!



## Chapter and Regional News

### OLOC Tri-State (Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia) Chapter News

By Koby Lee, 1954

Our chapter has held three meetings since October's kickoff. Inspired by the Gathering in Columbus, Jacqui Lewis, 1949, and Bernie Miller, 1949, took the lead in finding a location and getting the word out. The first meeting garnered four Old Lesbians gathered at the Huntington (West Virginia) Visitors Center.

Jacqui, Bernie, Koby, and Kathy Givens, 1969, munched, debated, and plotted out ideas for 2020. We discussed National OLOC information, and Jacqui reported on her trip to Phoenix to meet with the Steering Committee and the Arizona Chapter. It was agreed that, due to the nature of the Lesbian environment in the Tri-State area, it would be important to reach out to Lesbians younger than 60 and make meetings open to them; for the chapter to participate in Huntington Pride events to showcase that Old Lesbians exist; to provide education on topics such as financial planning and health-care issues; and to utilize social media to get the word out.

The second meeting was held in November and was attended by six Old Lesbians. Jacqui informed those gathered that we had secured the meeting space through June and Bernie had set up the chapter's Facebook page. There was much discussion about the challenges of being out in our conservative states. It was acknowledged that it might not be the employer who was anti-LGBTQ but the customers, which presented a different type of concern. There was a lengthy discussion of the challenges the holidays can bring and difficulties associated with ending long-term relationships. It was agreed the December meeting would offer an opportunity to watch the video *Laughing Matters*, which features Lesbian comics. That brought out nine Lesbians, who enjoyed the sweet treats and the time spent in Lesbian community.



### New Mexico Chapter

By Susan Buchler, 1946

*November Program:* "Women and Our Disabilities" was presented by Mary Morell. We first looked at the general topic of physical disabilities and strategies to deal with our issues. We discussed, in small groups, personal response to disabilities. We also touched briefly on emotional as well as cultural disabilities. We shared what the "dis-" in disability means to us and handling day-to-day issues. We shared with each other regarding our greatest fear of a disability—such as blindness, losing our memory, mental illness. We discussed how to respectfully speak to and behave around people who have disabilities.

*December Program:* "Winter Solstice Celebration" was facilitated by Carole Eagleheart, 1944, and Paula Fisher, 1951. We shared stories of holidays past and how we had celebrated the solstice, and we created gift bags for people who are unhoused. We ate delicious food and sang solstice songs to the Goddess, led by Carole Eagleheart with her guitar. Then we made gift bags. Women had been generous. We had warm socks, gloves, jackets, personal health items, and assorted healthy food items—and chocolate. Some of us assembled bags, while others wrote notes on notecards to go into each bag. We assembled 60+ bags and took some home to give to unhoused persons on the street or in "homeless" encampments. Paula led us in talking about introducing ourselves, learning the recipient's name, and even chatting and asking what sorts of things they might like to see in a gift bag.

*January Program:* As we do every January, we brainstormed for program ideas. We brought ideas and we picked ones we would facilitate or assign presenters for. We have some great programs coming up for 2020, starting in February, including topics from poetry to chair yoga to arts and crafts and a program featuring Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project stories.



## More Chapter and Regional News – Pg 2

### Pioneer Valley Chapter

By JR, 1943

Last fall, our chapter finalized our Member Handbook, a momentous event since our subcommittee (JR, Lynne, Laura, and MaryEllen) had been meeting for about a year to put it together. We also held our Annual Holiday potluck in December, with dancing afterward.

In January, we held our beginning-of-the-year organizing meeting. We decided on topics we wanted to learn about for 2020. We talked about the Democratic Primary coming up. Several volunteered to use nine questions we decided on to research the five top candidates. We also wanted to know more about the Electoral College.

Also in January, several OLOC members joined the Women's March for Climate Justice held in Springfield, Massachusetts—the largest city in Western Massachusetts and also a multiracial city. JR staffed our table at the Activist Fair with National and Pioneer Valley literature. We were attempting to grow our chapter and to appeal to Lesbians of Color. JR met several Women of Color; some were too young and some older women were not Lesbians. Additionally in January, our Northeast OLOC Gathering Committee had our first conference call. We made several decisions: hold the Gathering August 28–30 at the Willits-Hallowell Conference Center and Hotel at Mount Holyoke College; find a way to subsidize low-income Lesbians; invite those who are members of National but not a chapter, as well as Old Lesbians who are not affiliated with OLOC; and reach out to Lesbians of Color in the Northeast. We also discussed our visions of what we would like to see happen at the Gathering.

Since the Presidential Primary was to be held March 3, our February meeting was about Political Education. Our volunteer researchers for the top five Democratic candidates presented the information gathered about Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Bernie Sanders, and Elizabeth Warren. A member volunteered to check out the Electoral College.

### Colorado Chapter

By Katherine Wood, 1954

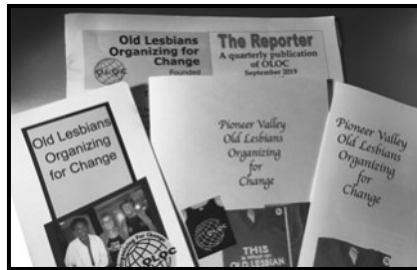
Colorado OLOC had an informative program in November on women's suffrage delivered by members Janet Gilmore, 1948, and Sara Beery, 1937.

In December, we celebrated the holidays with our annual holiday luncheon, and in January, we had a program by Becky Brinkman from All Terrain Lesbians (ATL). ATL was started by a group of Colorado mountain-biking friends when they had \$300 left over in a fund they'd collected to support their friend while she had cancer. After her death, they started a 501(c)(3) foundation that in 2019 gave over \$48,000 to Lesbians in need in Colorado. Colorado OLOC has a tradition of passing the hat for one organization per quarter,

and ATL has been one of our recipients for many years. Several of our OLOC members have been ATL recipients—one for a wheelchair ramp and another for funeral services. To qualify for help, the woman must be a Colorado resident, a Lesbian, and have a financial need.

In our discussion, the question came up as to whether there are similar groups in other states. If you know of one, please contact me at [kwood2454@aol.com](mailto:kwood2454@aol.com), and I will let Becky know.

After the women's suffrage program, members asked for more biographical information on women of courage. We purchased a deck of knowledge cards (*Women Who Dare*, Volume 11, Library of Congress) and spent our February meeting learning more about these women. At the start of the meeting, each woman drew a card. On the front of the card was a picture, and on the back a short biography. We then role-played these women in a speed-dating game where we had three minutes to introduce ourselves and get to know the woman of courage across from us before the bell.



OLOC's Steering Committee welcomes constructive feedback and suggestions from members by way of mail, phone, or email. Please let us know if you would like a response.



## Chapter and Regional News – Pg 3

### St. Louis Chapter

By Charlotte Ellis, 1943

The St. Louis chapter was restarted in September and went from four women at our first meeting to 11 at our third. In November we showed the Angela Bowen film [Editor: *The Passionate Pursuits of Angela Bowen*], which we enjoyed. One of our members had studied ballet extensively so she was able to give us more information about Angela's school.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our December meeting due to snow. We had a planning meeting in January. We planned to show a movie in February, and the following month, a member was to give a workshop about computer security. We have several other topics and speakers we may explore. Attendance was down a little due to extreme cold.

### Where Are Your Reports?

OLOC has 17 chapters, yet for this issue of the *Reporter*, only six sent reports in. **We would love to hear from the rest of you!** We have an email list of writers who receive deadline reminders twice per issue, which is eight messages per year. Please let us know if you would like to be on this list to get reminders. We also have a style guide to help you follow our writing style. *Do not think that you cannot write!* We are not concerned about writing skills. We simply want to hear your voice and to know what is going on in your community. If you wish, we can help you write the report.

**And to those of you who are not associated with a chapter, please, you, too, don't be shy!** Send in your book reviews, vacation stories, life lessons learned, experiences with ageism and how you handled them, what you did to interrupt racism or other oppressive behavior, a protest you attended or organized, jokes, photos, cartoons, and the un-funniest of all: relationship stories. Share what you have learned with your OLOC sisters.

We look forward to hearing from you. This is YOUR newsletter, so please help to make it the best it can be! Thank you in advance for your contributions.

### Rhode Island Chapter

By Mev Miller, 1955

The Rhode Island Chapter of OLOC celebrates our two-year anniversary in April of 2020. We are a small but determined group of Old Dykes ages 62–86. We meet monthly, with an average of 10–15 regular participants. Several of our members are still regularly employed, while many of our retirees maintain very full schedules doing work in our communities. Four of our members went to National OLOC Gathering in August and came back energized with lots of new ideas.

We've experienced growing pains as we work through how to make decisions, how we can accommodate meeting in homes rather than "other" spaces, and determining where we want to use our (limited) energies and what activism to focus on. We also have occasional discussions about becoming more of a social group, but the core stays strong with wanting to emphasize our collective activist work in organizing for change. We enjoy a balance of social and political!

In November of 2019, we sponsored an "Open House" to become more visible in the community and expand our membership. As a result, our monthly meetings enjoy new participants and our mailing list has grown to nearly 50 Lesbians from all over the state! We're beginning to be contacted by Lesbians from other states who are considering a move to Rhode Island and wanting to be connected with us. We are steadily becoming more visible in the Rhode Island network of LGBTQ organizations and state services for the elderly.

In 2020, we are focusing our efforts on voter registration in Rhode Island and encouraging Lesbians and women to vote as if our lives depended on it (because they do)! We expect more good things to come in the future!



Some Rhode Island Chapter Members



## Tech Support in Aging

By Kate Seelman, 1938

I am not a techie, but I am a technology policy wonk. Computer-related tools have enabled me to function in many areas of my life, especially in old age. My car is high tech (smart), so coming upon a blocked highway on a road trip recently, she and I worked out the optimal alternate route. I use a Samsung Galaxy 9 phone, soon to be updated. The speakerphone feature, combined with my hearing aids, enables me to use the phone; it also supplements my memory. My Kindle reader has speech output, as well as a feature to increase font size. Caveat, as I was writing this article, I felt guilty because each of the devices costs more than many people can afford. Mainstream devices with accessibility features built in are not covered by insurance. Even hearing aids, which are devices specifically designed for individual users and recognized in law as assistive tech, are not routinely covered by insurance.

Over time, by law, *accessibility* has been required for some mainstream tech, e.g., closed captioning in TVs. You may be familiar with the accessibility features/options in your computer. Apple was a leader in innovation, but now that accessibility is required, other information tech (IT) companies also sell accessible products. Usability is sometimes an industrial design standard for devices. Accessibility, usability, availability, and affordability of devices are all important public policy issues for older women. While TVs, computers, PDAs, and Readers are not free, designing them for a wide range of human function reduces costs. Orphan “special needs” upgrades in response to mainstream products routinely do not keep up with change in the dynamic electronics and IT markets. Users who are blind have had problems with software made incompatible with next-generation mainstream products.

So many challenges, so many opportunities: perhaps an occasional column is a possibility?

[Editor: Please let us know at [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org) if you would be interested in seeing more on this topic from Kate.]

## Response to the Two Articles on Class (June and December 2019)

By Anonymous

I disagree with the statement, “Middle-class children usually get what they want to eat and to wear, and they live in nice houses, go on vacations, and always feel safe.” I do not understand how anyone can think that being middle class keeps children safe. Are middle class kids not abused, incested, raped, and neglected? Are they usually “spoiled” by getting what they want? Does the family having some money mean that Daddy keeps it zipped up? How do I make sense of these assumptions as a middle-class dyke who was abused and terrified?

I also do not understand this claim: “I often experience middle and upper class women asking for the sliding-scale rate as though they have a right to this consideration.” Class background is related to the values we grew up with—herstorically, class was determined by the type of work one’s father did. So, if your father was an attorney, you have a different class background than if he was a mechanic. This does not always have to do with income; for example, some jobs that are considered working class actually pay a lot of money.

But the real point is that one’s father’s job and the values one grew up with have no bearing on one’s present financial/economic situation. For many reasons, dykes’ current access, as adults, to money vastly differs from their class background. For example, being incested often causes multiple coping, behavioral, and/or mental health problems that can affect one’s ability to earn money. Someone can grow up middle or upper class and be poor or have a working class job as an adult. Why is it not okay for these dykes to request the sliding scale? Your values and what you learned when young are not the same as the resources or income you have now, particularly as an Old Lesbian.

Members: Are you in National OLOC’s online group? It is a great place to converse with other members. To subscribe, go to [groups.io/g/nationalOLOC](https://groups.io/g/nationalOLOC). If you have any problems, contact [susan@oloc.org](mailto:susan@oloc.org).



## For Those Who Think the Term “Guys” Means Being Inclusive

By Anonymous, 1954

I feel that the term erases us as womyn, as Lesbians. Yes, of course, many of us envied guys when we were growing up. They have what we now know to be male privilege. They got all the good stuff, while we were told we couldn't, shouldn't, can't. A lot of us wished we were guys, if only so we could get and have what they got and had.

But does terminology, or anything else, being in common usage make it OK? Rape and battering are common occurrences. Very common. Does that make them OK? Or to stick with terminology—does a term being in common use make it OK? I won't give examples here. We all know plenty of sexist, racist, homophobic, etc, terms that are in regular use. Does that make them OK?

Whether we want to be guys, envy them, resent them, all of the above, none of the above—we're not them. We're womyn. We are just as capable as they are (and more). Lumping ourselves in with them just erases us. Womyn-identified womyn don't compare ourselves with males, at least anymore (as we have gotten older). We're proud to be womyn and stand on our own as such. Does anyone think the term “gals” is all-inclusive of gender? Then why would they think “guys” is?

### Old Age and Happiness

Readers may want to take a look at this article by Mary Pipher in the *New York Times*: [www.nytimes.com/2019/01/12/opinion/sunday/women-older-happiness.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/12/opinion/sunday/women-older-happiness.html). It is about happiness and old age. Thank you, OLOC members Susan Chacin, 1945, and Ruth Debra, 1944, for sending it to us (and Ruth received it from Gail Christian). Here's a quote from the very beginning of the piece: “Our country's ideas about old women are so toxic that almost no one, no matter her age, will admit she is old.”

*The Reporter is available both electronically (PDF) and in print. To switch formats or add one, please email [susan@oloc.org](mailto:susan@oloc.org); write to OLOC at PO Box 834, Woodstock, NY 12498; or phone 888-706-7506.*

## Doctors Are Ageist—and It's Harming Older Patients

*Without a major change in medical training and attitudes as the country ages, more and more of us will be at risk when we seek care.*

Without a major change in medical training and attitudes as the country ages, more and more of us will be at risk when we seek care.

We medicalize the natural process of aging and then look down on the patients who seek treatment. Yet medication-related problems are estimated to be one of the top five causes of death in those 65 and older, and a major cause of confusion, depression, falls, disability, and loss of independence. One in three seniors [*sic*] who take five or more medications will have at least one bad drug reaction each year.

Deep-seated failings in the delivery of medicine to elderly [*sic*] patients are indicative of a larger problem in health care: ageism. Ageism permeates the attitudes of medical providers, the mindset of older [*sic*] patients, and the structure of the health care system, having a potentially profound influence on the type and amount of care offered, requested, and received.

Many physicians, as well as older adults themselves, believe pain, fatigue, depression, and dependency are a “normal” part of aging. Ailments like poor hearing or cognitive decline can brand a patient as noncompliant or “difficult.” Studies show providers communicate differently with older adults than with younger ones. They're less patient, less engaged, and provide less information.

Society can't ignore the population data. By 2035, adults 65 and older are expected to outnumber children in the US for the first time. Most of those 79 million elders will need health care at some point. Indeed, the medical establishment should recognize that older patients offer valuable lessons to practitioners. These include managing complexity, demonstrating patience, effective listening, fostering inclusivity—and treating people with dignity and respect, regardless of their number of years on the planet.

*The full story is at [www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/doctors-are-ageist-it-s-harming-older-patients-ncna1022286](http://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/doctors-are-ageist-it-s-harming-older-patients-ncna1022286). Thanks to OLOC member Cristina Vegas, 1945, for sending this.*





## Old Lesbians Organizing for Change OLOC Supporter Form

To join us in promoting the well-being of all Old Lesbians, send us this form. If you are an Old Lesbian, let us know and you will be considered a member as well as a supporter. This form makes you active for one year. Each form is valid for one person. For couples, send a form for each. If you need a second copy, write to [info@oloc.org](mailto:info@oloc.org), call 888-706-7506, or download one from the page at [oloc.org/join-support/](http://oloc.org/join-support/). Although we rely on your financial support, if you can't send money now, you can still be a supporter and, if eligible, a member.

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