



ON MONDAY, MAY 21, PARTICIPATE  
IN A LESBIAN DIALOGUE. THE TOPIC:  
LOOT, THE COMMUNITY, AND 342 JARVIS ST.

Following the 1976 Lesbian Conference in Ottawa, a group of 50 women met in Toronto to discuss the state of the Toronto lesbian community. A number of needs were identified, the most pressing of which seemed to be better communication, a place to meet, and a base for political action. At this point, a small group of women joined to form a task force to accomplish these goals. Luck was on our side, and we were soon able to join two other Toronto feminist organizations, the Three of Cups coffeehouse and The Other Woman newspaper, to rent a house at 342 Jarvis St. The Lesbian Organization of Toronto (LOOT) was born during the winter of 1977.

In the last two and a half years, LOOT has sponsored a variety of activities, and the house on Jarvis Street has been a busy place. Various collectives have organized a phone-line, a weekly drop-in, a newsletter, a library, Sunday brunches, New Year's dances, open houses, and various political actions. The Three of Cups and The Other Woman have passed on into herstory, but since then 342 Jarvis St. has been used at different times by Sappho Sound, Women Against Violence Against Women, and Superbia Press.

Two years ago our dream was to have a house and an umbrella organization to sponsor a variety of women's activities. For sometime, this dream has been a reality. At this point, the dream isn't very exciting, and as the dream passes, energy and enthusiasm are drying up at the house on Jarvis Street. At \$300 per month (\$425 with utilities) the house itself is still a remarkable bargain. However, LOOT, one tenant, and Superbia Press are the only contributors to our rent, and the house is often empty. The task force, which has the crucial job of seeing that the rent money is in the bank, is seriously short of women, and many of the lesbians who are in collectives are uncertain about the future of their activities. We need some new women's energy and some new visions about where to go from here.

Has LOOT as an umbrella organization outlived its usefulness? Should LOOT break down into smaller, independent collectives with varying political outlooks? If LOOT continues, how can we alter our structure or our image to attract women with strong political beliefs without alienating the apolitical amongst us? Can we create a rejuvenating vision, a vision that will make lesbians want to raise money to help see it fulfilled? 342 Jarvis Street was intended for the use of the entire lesbian community. Are we making the best use of the house? Has 342 Jarvis become too closely identified with LOOT? At the Monday workshop we want to explore these and other questions. We want to find out what the lesbian community of 1979 needs, and how 342 Jarvis Street can most effectively accommodate those needs. Come to the meeting on Monday at 11:30 (after the morning plenary) to talk about the future of the Lesbian Organization of Toronto, and 342 Jarvis Street.