

## The Newsletter – A Lesbian Position / Linda Anderson

### Overview

Linda Anderson speaks about her experience as one of the founders of ‘The Newsletter: A Lesbian Position,’ a community newsletter for Lesbians in and around New Haven, CT (1982-1992). The publication aimed to connect and inform the local Lesbian community and was produced through collective efforts. “It’s not the Lesbian position, it’s just “A” Lesbian position .... we were very deliberate about that. We didn’t want to brand ourselves as “the” Lesbian position, as if we’re the authority. This is just one Lesbian position.”

### Summary

In this interview, Linda Anderson speaks about her experience as one of the founders of ‘A Lesbian Position,’ a community newsletter for Lesbians in New Haven, CT. A Lesbian Position began out of the New Haven Women’s Liberation Center’s consciousness raising groups, where women would regularly gather to discuss feminist topics and find solace in each other by sharing their experiences of sexism. While living at the Liberation Center, Linda was offered a job as an administrative assistant for the new Women’s Studies Program at Yale University; a role that she remained in for over 25 years. Linda and other women at the Liberation Center would regularly host gatherings meant to foster community amongst women and provide space for political organizing alongside the regular consciousness raising groups, including potluck dinners. They decided to start a newsletter to advertise these gatherings and communicate with other Lesbians in the New Haven area, and A Lesbian Position was born.

A Lesbian Position was a collective effort, and all members of the newsletter collective would work on each part of the publication by helping in the writing, assembling, and mailing of the newsletter. The group operated without a hierarchy between members, and relied on collective action for all aspects of the newsletter. Linda remembers her own political consciousness growing throughout her time at A Lesbian Position, because she learned about and attended gatherings of various groups in the New Haven area that advocated for social justice causes. Linda made activism part of her life’s work, but she frequently found Yale Women’s Program to be a sexist and classist atmosphere, and butted heads with the Yale administration over the program’s lack of inclusivity over the course of her many years of working at the school. Linda assisted in A Lesbian Position for four years, and believed that the newsletter was an important part of on-the-ground community organizing for Lesbians in New Haven. Linda has now lived in Florida for almost twenty years, and she’s found it difficult to find an already established Lesbian community where she lives due to the lack of Lesbian bars and other meeting spaces. To meet other Lesbians without these in-person spaces, Linda has established a Facebook group to

connect with other Lesbians living in her area, and whenever she can, meets up with Lesbians who reach out to her for friendship and community.

## Video Quotes from Interview

### 📺 How The Newsletter Began (1:24)

*Linda speaks about how A Lesbian Position newsletter was bore out of the necessity for Lesbians in New Haven to communicate with each other in the pre-internet era:*

You know, we were always doing potluck suppers. And political organizing at the potluck suppers, and I think— I can't remember, but you know, somebody must have said, 'Let's do a newsletter.' And so a bunch of us did. That's what I remember about it starting. That's the way we did anything. It's like, 'Let's do this.' 'Okay, done.' .... Well, we needed a way to communicate with one another. You know, we didn't—there was no Internet. We had our phones with our answering machines. But there was no sort of, you know, central news outlet. And I'll say, there was the Women's Center and these various political action groups, but there was no media. So, we knew we wanted and needed a little bit of media people could subscribe to and get information about what was going on and upcoming events and write little articles, and this and that.



Well, we needed a way to communicate with one another. You know, we didn't—there was no internet. We had our phones with our answering machines. But there was no sort of, you know, central news outlet. And I'll say, there was the Women's Center and these various political action groups, but there was no media. So, we knew we wanted and needed a little bit of media people could subscribe to and get information about what was going on and upcoming events and write little articles, and this and that.

### 📺 Working as a Collective (1:14)

*Linda speaks about the lack of hierarchy within the collective that put together A Lesbian Position newsletter.*



Well, we were a collective and you don't hear that term anymore. Collectives. And a collective—combined with our notions of feminism and our complete lack of interest in hierarchy, right? Because all combined together to—it's like, 'Yeah, you know, do what you want.' I think somebody was in charge of the mailing list, or maybe somebody kept charge of the money, or something like that. But in terms of putting the thing together, what I remember is it was just very, very informal and whatever you wanted to do. Whatever you wanted to do.

Because we valued everybody, it wasn't like, 'Oh, you have to do this, and you have to do that, and you went to school for this. So that's your thing.' It was like, 'No, this is—we're going to make decisions collectively, and we're going to spread out the work, and there's not going to be anybody who's not going to be the editor.' There was no editor. It was like, this is the group of people who do this.

**📖 A Personal Passion for Politics (2:04)**

*Linda reflects on how being a part of the A Lesbian Position collective helped her develop a passion for politics that persists into the present-day.*

I mean, when I was growing up in Illinois, I knew nothing about politics. Nothing. Literally nothing. And so the kinds of experiences that I had being in New Haven and the various communities there—and not just the lesbian community. The civil rights people, the anti-war people, you know? All of that stuff was a revelation to me. And that never left me. I guess, my passion for politics. You know, there's this weird notion going around that people get more conservative as they get older. I don't know where that came from, but that certainly is not true for me or any of the other women that I knew during that time. I'm more radical now than I've ever been. I'm not less radical. It's like, once my light—once my brain was turned on to how things actually work, what oppression is, what discrimination is. That's what I wanted to do. I wanted to be part of making it easier for women, and other people.

**Related Items in Wanderground Collection**

- A nearly complete set of issues of The Newsletter: A Lesbian Position
- Digital copies of photos sent by Linda Anderson

**Details**

Interview with: Linda Anderson

Topics: 'A Lesbian Position' Newsletter

Date/How Recorded: Recorded on March 2, 2025 on Zoom

Interviewed by: Ellen Huggins

Summary prepared by: Ellen Huggins, edited by Marth Young and Mev Miller