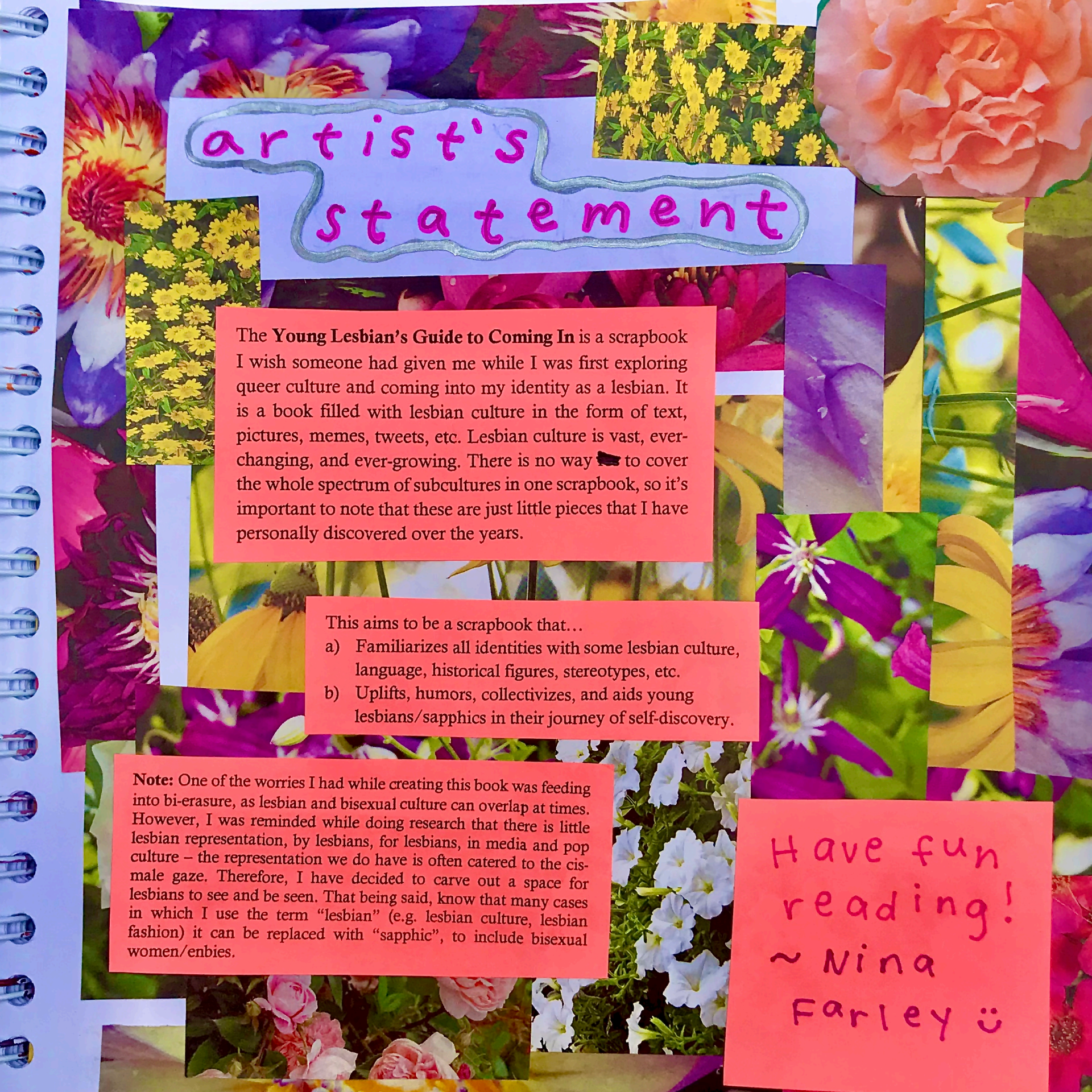


the
young lesbian's
guide to
coming IN:
a scrapbook



artist's statement

The **Young Lesbian's Guide to Coming In** is a scrapbook I wish someone had given me while I was first exploring queer culture and coming into my identity as a lesbian. It is a book filled with lesbian culture in the form of text, pictures, memes, tweets, etc. Lesbian culture is vast, ever-changing, and ever-growing. There is no way ~~to~~ to cover the whole spectrum of subcultures in one scrapbook, so it's important to note that these are just little pieces that I have personally discovered over the years.

This aims to be a scrapbook that...

- a) Familiarizes all identities with some lesbian culture, language, historical figures, stereotypes, etc.
- b) Uplifts, humors, collectivizes, and aids young lesbians/sapphics in their journey of self-discovery.

Note: One of the worries I had while creating this book was feeding into bi-erasure, as lesbian and bisexual culture can overlap at times. However, I was reminded while doing research that there is little lesbian representation, by lesbians, for lesbians, in media and pop culture – the representation we do have is often catered to the cis-male gaze. Therefore, I have decided to carve out a space for lesbians to see and be seen. That being said, know that many cases in which I use the term “lesbian” (e.g. lesbian culture, lesbian fashion) it can be replaced with “sapphic”, to include bisexual women/enbies.

Have fun
reading!
~ Nina
Farley ☺

WHAT IS "COMING IN"?

Coming in: The internal process of discovering, understanding, and accepting one's own sexual/gender identity.

Rosenberg, 2017

Coming in challenges the notion that "coming out" to others is the only way to achieve self-acceptance. There is often more work to be done.

Coming in is a lifelong process for some. Self-acceptance and self-discovery are not linear: some days it's natural, other days it's incredibly challenging

There's always more to learn about oneself – you may even find new identities to come into.

be gentle with
yourself as
you grow and
change.

"... The idea of 'coming in' offers considerable analytic leverage in understanding that a significant aspect of the journey of queer-identified people is not simply to come out to others, but rather to come in to a place of acceptance within oneself, whether that be through relationships with other queer-identified people, or through the development and acceptance of one's understanding of oneself" (Rosenberg, 2017).

scratching the surface of lesbian culture...

dip me
in honey
& throw me
to the
Lesbians



femme-af Follow

Where is the home of sexuals and who lives in it

For many queer people, part of reaching a point of self-acceptance can involve immersing oneself in culture. Maybe it that looks like learning about queer media, familiarizing yourself with history, or deconstructing stereotypes.

Though it is impossible to encompass all of lesbian culture in this scrapbook, some topics we will briefly cover are:



- ◆ Terminology
- ◆ Stereotypes
- ◆ History and activism
- ◆ Media representation
- ◆ Fashion
- ◆ Relationships
- ◆ Community



Lesbian Lingo!

Many identities have developed their own terminology in order to communicate, bond, and establish safety. Here is some lesbian vocabulary!

Dyke: a derogatory term referring to lesbians, can be reclaimed by lesbians.

Butch: a lesbian who identifies as masculine.

Lipstick lesbian: a lesbian who presents feminine.

Chapstick lesbian: (aka Soft Butch) a lesbian who presents somewhere in between masculine and feminine.

Stud: (aka Ag/Aggressive) a lesbian of color (Black or Latinx) that presents masculine, often takes the dominant role in sexual interactions.

Top: one who takes the more dominant role in sexual interactions.

Bottom: one who takes the more submissive role in sexual interactions.

Switch: one who is both a top and a bottom.

Gold-star lesbian: a lesbian who has never had sex with a man (can be seen as offensive and/or hierarchical).

U-Haul lesbian: a lesbian who becomes emotionally invested in a relationship very quickly.

When The Straights™ misuse gay slang



Stereotypes

"Someone is 'the man' in a lesbian relationship"

This is very heteronormative, and kind of defeats the purpose of lesbianism. Additionally, there doesn't need to be a masc and femme lesbian in every relationship.

"Lesbians hate men"

Not wanting a relationship with a man \neq hating men.

"Lesbian Bed Death* happens to all lesbian couples"

"Bed death" happens to plenty of heterosexual couples!

"All lesbians are masculine"

Lesbians can present in whichever way they want, masculine, feminine, or somewhere in the middle. It can even change from day to day.

"Lesbians try to recruit straight women"

This is silly. Actually, many lesbians would rather not be romantically / sexually involved with a straight woman / one who is just coming out. It can get very messy – like "coming in", coming out is not easy!

"It's just a phase, you haven't been with the right man yet!"

Sigh. Just, no.

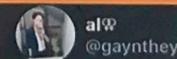
Being a lesbian does not come without its fair share of stereotypes. Some are funny, some are embraced, and some are outright harmful. Let's address some lesbian stereotypes...

How to Come Out of the Closet Using Only an Undercut and a Carabiner

Style - Mar 23, 2020

By: Cattie Moon

SHARE: [f](#) [t](#) [e](#)



alw

@gaynthey

how to detect a lesbian:

- walks fast
- can't park a car
- wears slides/crocs with socks
- owns several button ups/flannels
- vans/converse
- can't sit on a chair properly
- loves astrology
- is or tried to be a vegetarian
- likes to kiss girls

*Lesbian Bed Death: the notion that lesbians' sex life curbs or stops in a long-term relationship

Know your HERstory!

Lesbians would not have the rights that we have in the US today if it were not for the LGBTQ activists in history that fought for our safety and wellbeing. Here are some of the lesbians in history that helped pave the way for us.



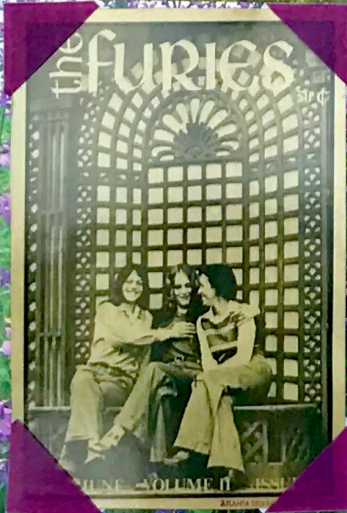
**Phyllis Lyon (1924-2020)
Del Martin (1921-2008)**

Martin and Lyon founded Daughters of Bilitis, a lesbian organization during the homophile movement in the 1950s. DOB helped organize lesbians politically and increased lesbian visibility. Martin and Lyon were the first same-sex couple to be legally wed in the state of California in 2004.



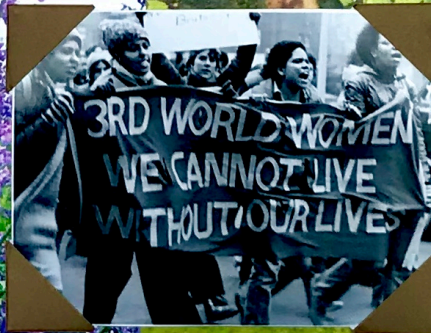
**Stormé DeLarverie
(1920-2014)**

DeLarverie was a butch lesbian, MC, bodyguard, singer, bouncer, and drag king. According to many eyewitnesses, she had an altercation with the police that started the Stonewall uprising. She is known as "the Rosa Parks of the gay community".



**The Furies Collective
(1971-1973)**

The Furies were a lesbian feminist separatist collective. The twelve women lived together in Washington, DC, slept in a common room, and wrote for a feminist newspaper called *The Furies*. Lesbian separatists focused on abolishing male supremacy and taught women skills such as auto repair in order to not be dependent on men.



**Combahee River Collective
(1974-1980)**

The CRC was a Black feminist lesbian organization focused on fighting racial, sexual, and class oppression. They rejected the idea of lesbian separatism, and ideologically separated themselves from the limitations of white feminists. "We realize that the only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation are us. Our politics evolve from a healthy love for ourselves, our sisters and our community which allows us to continue our struggle and work" (The Combahee River Collective Statement, Finding Out pp. 95-92).



**Audre Lorde
(1934-1992)**

Lorde was a self-described "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet" who used her poetry and activism to discuss intersectionality and fight racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia. "I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own" (Lorde).

Lesbians in the MEDIA



Carol (2015)



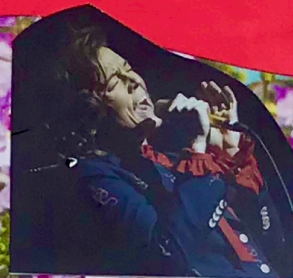
But I'm a Cheerleader (1999)



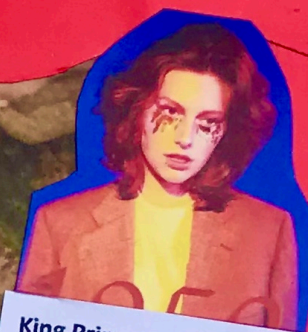
Blue is the Warmest Color (2013)



Hayley Kiyoko, singer/actress



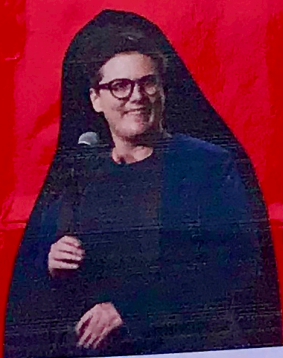
Brandi Carlile, singer-songwriter



King Princess, singer/producer



Pariah (2011)



Hannah Gadsby, comedian/writer



Wanda Sykes, actress/comedian



Portrait of a Lady on Fire (2019)



Lena Waithe, actress/producer



Kate McKinnon, actress/comedian



Young M.A, rapper/entrepreneur

In *Finding Out: An Introduction to LGBTQ Studies*, the importance of queer representation in media is illustrated: "they provide LGBTQ people a set of images with which to relate and identify, they serve pedagogically to instruct the larger culture how to respond sympathetically to queers... they offer metaphorical ways of thinking critically about culture and difference" (Finding Out p. 305).

There have been many cases in which queer representation in mainstream media has been stigmatizing or offensive. As a result, queer communities online have taken opportunities to challenge stigmas and can respond to heteronormative media through parody, snark, and fan fiction (Queer: A Graphic History p. 109).

Lesbian representation in the media has its limitations. There is little of it, it can be male-centric, lacks diversity, and all too often ends in tragedy. However, there is more lesbian representation in the media than ever before, which is a step in the right direction.



Samira Wiley, actress

FASHION

Fashion can be a leading player in the way one performs gender and can also be a form of creative expression. It can align with, or subvert and parody gender norms. "All gender is an imitative performance" (Queer: A Graphic History p. 80). Fashion can push you outside of your comfort zone, or it can aid you in being comfortable and secure.

There is not one way for a lesbian to dress by any means, but it's fun to see the different patterns that emerge in lesbian fashion statements.



gaychel
@lameravioli

how many XL men's hawaiian shirts do I need to purchase from goodwill to convince ppl I'm not straight

the two ends of the lesbian fashion spectrum



Saint Sims
@SimsJoseph

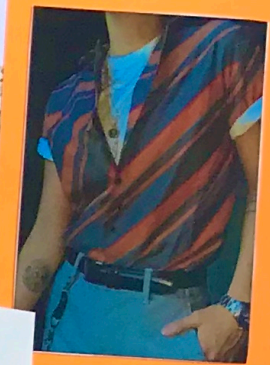
All clothing is unisex if you stop being a little bitch about it

9:21 pm · 23 Aug 18

56.2K Retweets · 205K Likes

My homophobic mom saying that I can't dress like a guy, people will think I'm lesbian

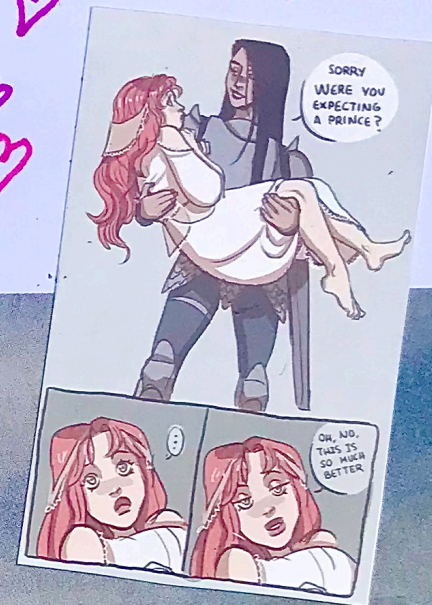
Me, a lesbian



Relationships



Do lesbians move into relationships too fast (i.e. U-Haul lesbian)? Is "lesbian bed-death" inevitable? There are many stereotypes about lesbian relationships and sex, but it is important to note that lesbian relationships are highly individualized. They can be messy and complicated, like any relationship. They can also be incredibly beautiful.



YEARNING



jovan
@EhJovan

lesbian stages of love:

stage 1: i hope she gay 🙄🙄🙄

stage 2: she is 😍😍😍😍😍😍😍

stage 3: ask each other out after 2 conversations 🙄😍🙄

stage 4: moving in together before 3rd month 🏠👫

stage 5: pick out wedding dresses and get married month 6 😍😍😍

1/27/18, 9:33 AM

LOVE

love

lesbian first dates starter pack:

- exchanging natal charts
- promising to make each other a playlist
- touching palms to "compare the sizes" of ur hands (when u rly just wanna b close to them)
- 6 hours of awkward romantic tension
- "text me when you get home!!!"



LOVE



Struggling?

You are
not alone.

~♥~

It is not uncommon for lesbians and other queer identities to feel lost or confused in the process of coming in. Whether you are questioning your sexuality, struggling with gender, or navigating the nuances that come with being a queer individual, talking things out is important.

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT

"The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention & suicide prevention services to LGBTQ young people under 25".

If you are feeling suicidal, are in crisis, or need a safe space to talk, call the **TrevorLifeline** at:

1-866-488-7386

or visit thetrevorproject.org for other resources.



REMINDER:
**YOU ARE NOT
ALONE!**

building community



For queer individuals, it can help to have a community or inner circle of like-minded people to help guide you. Depending on where you are from, a queer community may not be easily accessible. Here are some ways to meet other queer people online:



Lex

Making friends online can be difficult, but there are many queer subcommunities on Facebook, Twitter, etc. Try searching LGBT or other tags that you are interested in. Always use caution, and avoid catfishing by watching out for red flags (empty profile, no pictures, no friends, etc.)

Meetup.com is a website to find scheduled, in-person, meetups of people with common interests. Success with this website may vary from city to city. Searching LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, etc. may help you find LGBTQ+ sports teams, book clubs, bar hoppers, creative groups, and more.

Lex's description: "Lex is a lo-fi, text-based dating & social app for lesbian, bisexual, asexual, & queer people. For womxn & trans, genderqueer, intersex, two spirit, & non-binary people. For people of marginalized genders, inspired by old school newspaper personal ads." Basically, this app is for everyone but cisgender men (who have many other apps to use). I personally have made online friends through Lex and know queer people who have had luck with the app as well.

8 year old me: walks
past a Victoria's secret
poster

My brain:

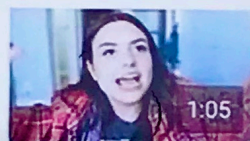
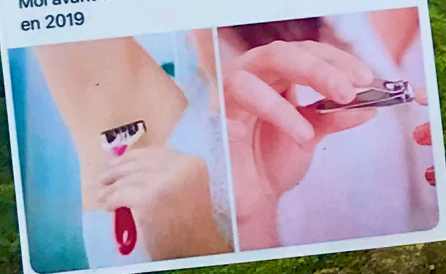


to my fellow lesbians...

The process of coming in is daunting. It is not easy, and hell, maybe it'll take forever. But rest assured: there is support out there. Whether it is by finding solidarity with lesbians in history, watching your favorite lesbian film, listening to your favorite queer artist, expressing yourself through fashion, leaning on a partner or friend, or reaching out to a counselor, you will get by.

i don't even speak french but this
transcends language

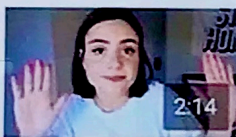
Pauline Mignola @PaulineMignola · 1d
Moi avant un date en 2016 vs moi avant un date
en 2019



I'M NOT A LESBIAN

Amy Ordman · 242K views

1:05



OK MAYBE I AM A LESBIAN

Amy Ordman · 90K views
2 weeks ago

2:14



lesbianitachi

freshman yr vs senior yr

theyellowbrickroad



i sword fight my ex gf in a denny's
parking lot

754 views

20

1

Share

Download

Save

kazuhihamiller

so glad we're finally getting accurate lesbian
representation in the media

pendeja
@flaquitx

I am not a top or a bottom I am a
burden

2:15 AM · 06 Apr 20 · Twitter for iPhone

11.5K Retweets 36.8K Likes



now take your time
coming in, ~~~~~
the water's fine!
~~~~~



hyunasflowers Follow

all lesbians pass their vibe checks i don't make  
the rules





# Citations

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