

Lesbian Lives II



Photo: Kellie Greene

Marie Mulholland belting it out at the Lesbian Lives Conference

Lesbian lives II, the latest production from WERRC (Women's Education, Research and Resource Centre) in conjunction with LOT, took place in UCD on Saturday March 11. There was virtually an entire new cast, with speakers being flown in from such far-flung corners of the globe as Belfast, England, and Glasgow.

The morning session opened with a Panel Discussion chaired by Ailbhe Smith on Differences and Diversity. The panel included Marina, Marie Mulholland, Izzy Kamikaze and Antonia Corrigan and their experience ranged from frontline services, voluntary groups, republican politics and hands-on activism (hands on what?). All contributions were very well received



Cherry Smith reading from her poetry at the Lesbian Lives Conference Photo: Kellie Greene

by an enthusiastic audience of 150 and a special mention must go to Izzy for her very humorous and commonsense approach to where we've come from and where we may be going! A break for coffee gave women from all corners of Ireland a chance to catch up with each other. The morning workshops were quite varied and included Violence in Lesbian Relationships, Sexualities, a slide show from Cork, Coming Out and Lesbian Mothers. The workshop topics went some way towards dispelling Izzy's contention that there are only two types of lesbian! Lunch time afforded an opportunity to see Linda's Cullens completed version of *Dublin Pride '94* and also to peruse the craft stalls.

The afternoon began with another Panel Discussion; this time the topic was Activism. The speakers concluded Chris Corrin, a community activist based in Glasgow, Helen Slattery (Cork), and Patricia Carey (Dublin). A lively discussion ensued between panel and audience and nobody disagreed with the assertion that there was a need for a direct action group such as Lesbian Avengers in Ireland. An unfortunate oversight occurred when the chair of the panel, Ger Moane, wouldn't let Pauline respond to the slurs cast upon Dublin lesbians by Helen (joke!). This was followed by more workshops, including the Combat Poverty Report on Lesbians

and Gay Men, Differences and Diversity, Creative Writing and Drama workshop by the legendary Joni Crone.

The Conference was concluded with a reading by Cherry Smyth which was greeted by rapturous applause, as was Marie Mulholland's burst of song. Then the conference retired en masse to McCluskey's in Donnybrook for mineral water, lentil and rice cakes! Many thanks to everyone in WERRC particularly Rosemary Gibney and LOT for organising it.

Pauline Tracey and Anita Thoma

Mná Mná

West Cork lesbians on the rampage are proud to announce the first copy of *Mná Mná*, a quarterly rural Irish lesbian newsletter.

Conceived at the Irish Women's Camp and put together at a weekend workshop in January, we hope *Mná Mná* will be a space for lesbian culture and creativity and bring together rural and country-loving dykes all over Ireland.

We welcome contributions for the next issue which will be out for Beltane at the beginning of May. Send £1 and your address if you want to receive a copy and/or send writing and artwork to: Toma, Lahern, Ballydehob, West Cork.

Susannah and Toma