

WESLEY SUEKER

♥ start here! ↓

I WAS A TEENAGE GIRL!



A trans guy's look back at his girls' health class



Hey "Ladies!" (AND FUTURE
GNCS)

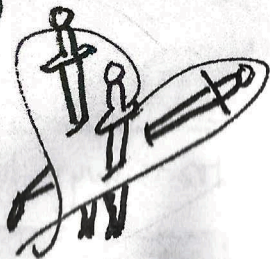
Remember us? Here's
our book! We loved
having you in our class.
You were an ~~awesome~~
AWFUL

~~Support~~ HATE group for one
another and we hope
those bonds ~~GET~~ ~~stay strong~~
DESTROYED.

You are ~~wonderful~~
PIECES

~~young ladies~~ 😊
OF GARBAGE

Always stay true to
~~yourself!~~
ANYONE ELSE



My name is Wesley. When I
was in 7th Grade, I had to take a
womens' health class (this was before I
was "officially" trans.) The class was
called

Oh My Goddess.

(This was
an "alternative"
public school
and all the classes
had cute/kitschy
titles and themes.)

I loved this school very much and I still
sometimes kick myself for going to the "normal"
school for grades 10 & 11. I enjoyed 3 wonderful
years (grades 7, 8, 9) at this school, and overall it
was a great experience.

Except for this fucking class.

See, I may not have been trans yet, but I definitely
didn't fit in with my classmates. And something
about this class brought it all to a point. This
class was the only time I was ever bullied, really.

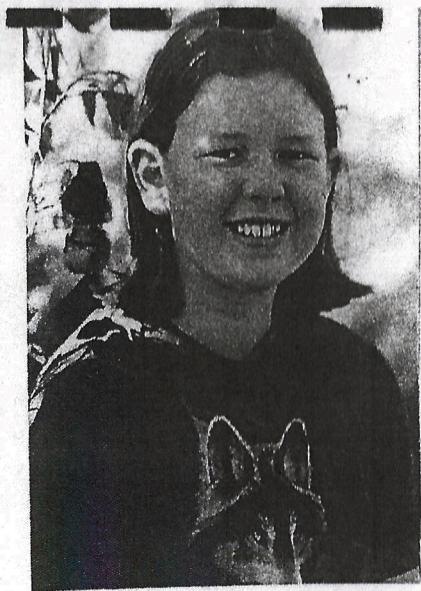
At the end of the class, we all put together
this zine called "Oh My Goddess Inc." Now,
14 years later and a trans masc demiboy, I
will be going through the zine, the people, and
the memories to provide commentary...
and all the juicy details.

I'm going to apologize in advance for saying this... but I was not like Other Girls. (A cliché, I know). At least not like the girls in my class. There were plenty of girls I was friends with (incidentally, they all turned out to be lesbians or trans later after middle/high school, just like me haha).

We all had to submit a picture.

I hated photos.

This was the only one I had - my sixth grade picture.



I wore that wolf shirt

✓ all the time, usually with an old flannel of my dad's.

That was ammunition for the Mean Girls in class.

We had complete freedom over our pages. By this point I was not willing to really express myself around these people, so I ended up with a pretty awful and basic page (I acknowledged this in my journal at the time and I kind of agree now) that was dominated by a lioness I drew on Photoshop, which I'd just learned how to use that year.



← This, but like, a whole 1/2 page size.

4/6

It's been a nice Spring Break. But tomorrow I have to go to school again.

During the parent-teacher conference, I found out that (a) a lot of people take advantage of me a lot and (b) mom's really busy.

OMGdness girls

(Context: I had to go to my own parent-teacher conference because my mom had a "meeting," aka getting high with her friends)

↑
Entries from my old diary

is a talker

She goes on and on and on and on

↓
From my zine page. Everyone made fun of me for talking... so I did too...

I remember in Oh My Goddess... maybe this will clear it up:

OMGdness Eval

I feel that I didn't fit in. It was supposed to be a group of friends being friendly as girls, but it got really cliquey. I felt left out and like I couldn't express myself at all. So that's why my page seems stupid and childish.

LAD!!xAXUM3R



Remember

"Bump →
-its"?

These are a few of the other girls in the class. I'll say this zine isn't meant to be a "callout" for any of these people, just my own processing and reflection of our limited time together.

I was the youngest in the class. I was definitely the biggest tomboy in the class, which was usually used against me. "You wouldn't like what we're talking about" followed by giggles was common.

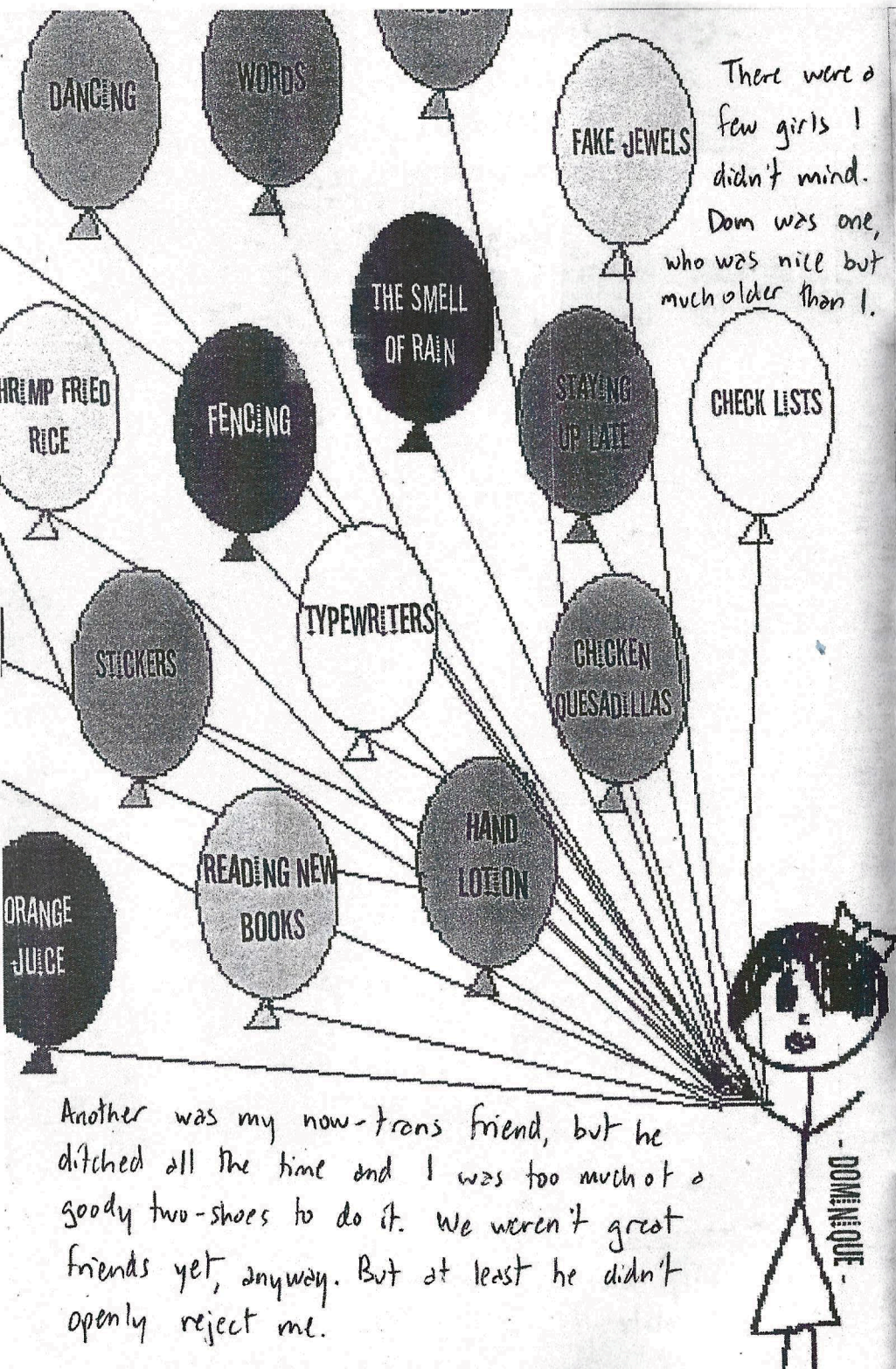
One thing I was hassled about was how I hadn't gotten my period yet.

Which feels like such an outdated thing to make fun of someone for!

These three were the worst. ↑

↙ They were the ones who were outwardly hostile. They were the openly "you can't sit with us" group. (They weren't all together, just they were all like that within their own groups). →

I frequently wished I could be in the boys' class cause I couldn't relate to any of these people. (I don't know that I'd have been much better in the other class either.)



Another was my now-trans friend, but he ditched all the time and I was too much of a goody two-shoes to do it. We weren't great friends yet, anyway. But at least he didn't openly reject me.

I'm going to try to make it clear that compared to some other people, my bullying experience probably wasn't all that bad. I wasn't beat up, I wasn't called any slurs (at least not that I can remember). It was more of a subtle rejection, like any time I stepped forward they would all step back.

The little things, though, they build up. The subtle jabs like "did you even brush your hair today?" "How come you always wear that lame shirt?" "Our group is all full, no we can't make room." "Why don't you go complain to the teacher? You're already a teacher's pet." "Oh, you wouldn't have heard of [band/show/brand/thing]." "You know you're not as good a drawer as you think you are." "What are you nervous about? It's just a condom you baby." "Don't be so sensitive."

Maybe if I had a better home life I would have been able to weather this better. But my mom was really abusive so it was basically an attack on my self esteem on all sides. School was always the place that felt like a refuge from her, so dealing with these girls was like my last sanctuary being invaded. The message felt pretty clear: You Aren't Welcome Anywhere.

that makes your dreams come true. And when you find that star never take your eye off it because if you do someone else will wish on that



Girls ARE COMPLICATED,
YES IT'S TRUE
BUT YOU COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT US
AND WE WOULD DIE WITHOUT YOU.

This is some stuff
from the other girls'
zine pages.



You hate me,
Why?

no
kidding



Because I've probably been the selfish me



I don't know what this culture was,
I just know they wouldn't let me be
part of it. Did I want to be part of it?

hate what they cant imitate.

Love status: taken

I LIKE WAFFLES

Do you like waffles?



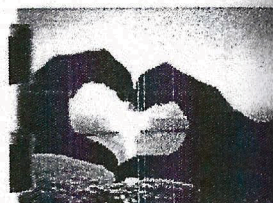
the coolest shiz



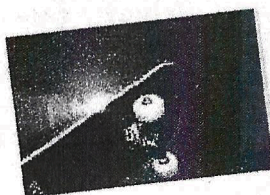
what a
joke

I'm the type of girl
that can be so hurt but
can still look at you & smile
The type of girl who is
willing to brighten your day
even if I can't brighten my own

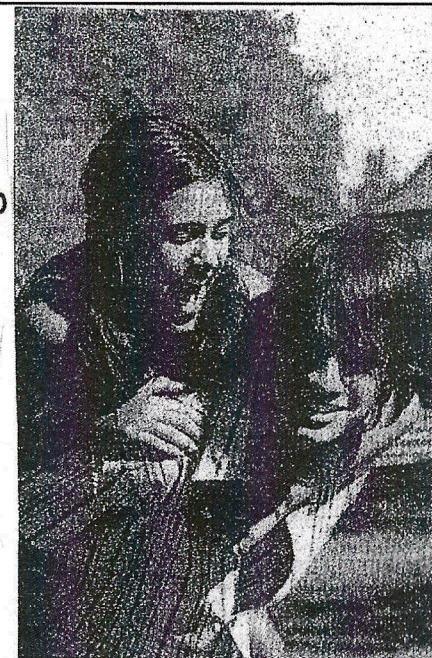
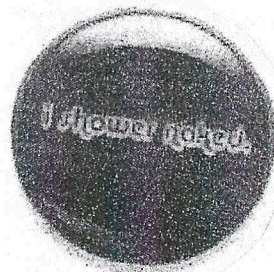
I tried to use this word →
too. They said it was "theirs".



As people grow up,
they realize it becomes
less important
to have more friends,
and more important to have
real ones.



Favroite quote: My prince
charming is coming, he just
got lost on the way and is too
stubborn to stop for
derections.



the best word ever is RAWR!

(It's all funny looking
back. This was Peak Cool.)

(I have no nostalgia for this because I was never "cool".)



I'm not above the
influence. I'm not below the influence. I am the
influence.

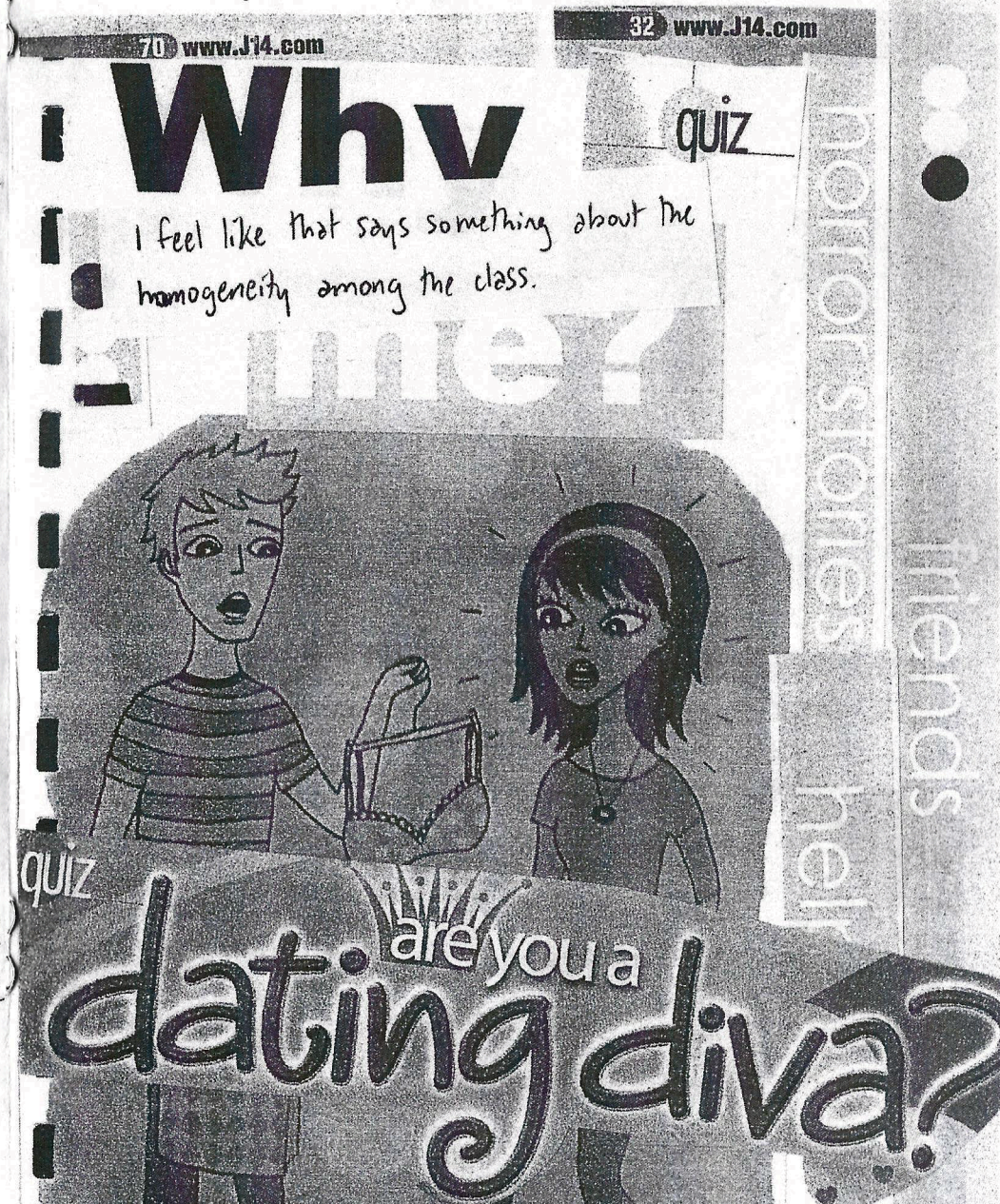


THERE ARE FAKERS,
THERE ARE HATERS,
THERE ARE REAL,
THERE ARE PLASTIC.

Before i die i want to...

- 5) Invent a new way to eat potatoes ← Potatoes were funny for some reason back then
- 13) Throw a tomato at someone
- 14) Drink soda till i puke
- 17) Eat one million gummy worms
- 21) Wear contacts
- 23) Dig a big hole ← Mine. I left off "to die in"
- 26) Take a tiger to Bangladesh and dance the Macarena while cooking rice ← Also mine. A pathetic attempt at "random" humor to ingratiate myself, which failed
- 30) Throw tomatoes at all the celebrities i HATE!
- 31) Shave Hannah Montana ← A popular one
- 37) Save the red wolves from extinction ← Mine
- 53) Drink wet water ← ??? I guess this was the "random" humor they actually wanted
- 56) Over come my fear of spiders ← Respect. Spiders are our friends!
- 57) Dance on 5 T.V. shows
- 67) Meet all of the celebrities ← We were very divided on celebs apparently
- 83) Buy a hot topic store
- 100) Fall in love with a rock star
- 101) Shave my head ← I hope whoever this was actually did shave their head. It can be super liberating esp. gender-wise
- 107) Be a nurse for Halloween ← ... really?
- 108) Fall in love
- 109) Live ← Lezame.

Aside from this group activity, the rest of the zine was
 ↳ Submissions from the class. The majority of submissions were literally just photocopied pages from the same teen girl magazine (J-14).



a bit of bad luck

My friends and I were at a mall and we saw my crush walking toward us. I wanted to use a cell phone so I would look cool, but I didn't have one. I asked my friend if I could borrow hers, but she refused because she liked him too. When I tried to snatch the phone from her hands, we both lost our footing and fell into the fountain. Of course Mr. Hottie saw the whole thing.

magazine
encouraging
girls competing

Can you

R Honestly this story sounds fake. And tragically mean.

Relate?

I guess this is where my gender feelings come in. Because this was where the disconnect became obvious. I couldn't relate to any of these experiences of femininity. The things I could relate to (lizards come to mind) were all things understood by Boys. Even in a very progressive school in a class that was as much about feminism as health, these expectations were part of the culture and (sadly, unknowingly) perpetuated by the students.

Your bf buys you Rascal Flatts tix. You're more of a Lil' Wayne girl. Are you kind of peeved that he doesn't know your taste in music?

No Yes

Your BFF suddenly ditches you for a new crew. Do you wonder what you did wrong or try to bond more with your other buds?

Wonder Bond

Demanding Date

If a guy wants to hold a primo place in your heart, he has to earn it. Like Rihanna, you have zero patience for guys who give anything less than 100 percent—if that makes you high-maintenance, so be it. While it's cool that you won't settle, make sure you're not treating him like a doormat. He's your bf, after all!

cancer

June 22–July 23

life: Change is a big theme, but fear not because it's the exciting kind. Even if it involves home or school, you'll be happy. You could get something you've dreamed about, just remember talking things out can help overcome most obstacles. cuties: Someone may bring an attractive new guy right to your doorstep. But you will have some big choices to make. November is likely to get spicy. treat: A spa day or at least a mani/pedi.

The magazine is saying "spicy"

Friday is your one-month anniversary, but he has plans with his boys. Do you demand he ditches them to celebrate with you or schedule something fun for Saturday?

Schedule Demand

start here!

are you a good flirt?

mostly Bs

shy, but trying

The "cute and shy" act may work sometimes, but guys get bored by it. You need to figure out how to not be embarrassed, it's not easy to be a master flirt, but once you figure it out it's superfun. Check out our tips, or watch an expert and take notes. Next time, it'll be you who captures the boys' attention.

silly shoes

I bought these really cute heels, but sometimes they made a "fart" sound when I walked. They were so cute though, I didn't care and wore them to the school dance anyway. As I walked past my crush, my shoes were "frrt!" He started laughing, and I swore to never wear those shoes again.

mostly As

flirting failure

Maybe you don't want to be a flirt, and that's cool—it's not every girl's game. Or, could it be that the boys just automatically flock to you and you don't need to sweat it? That's fine, too. But if you're not flirting because you wouldn't even know how to begin, start with the basics. See "Flirting 101" for some pointers.

mostly Cs

confident and coy

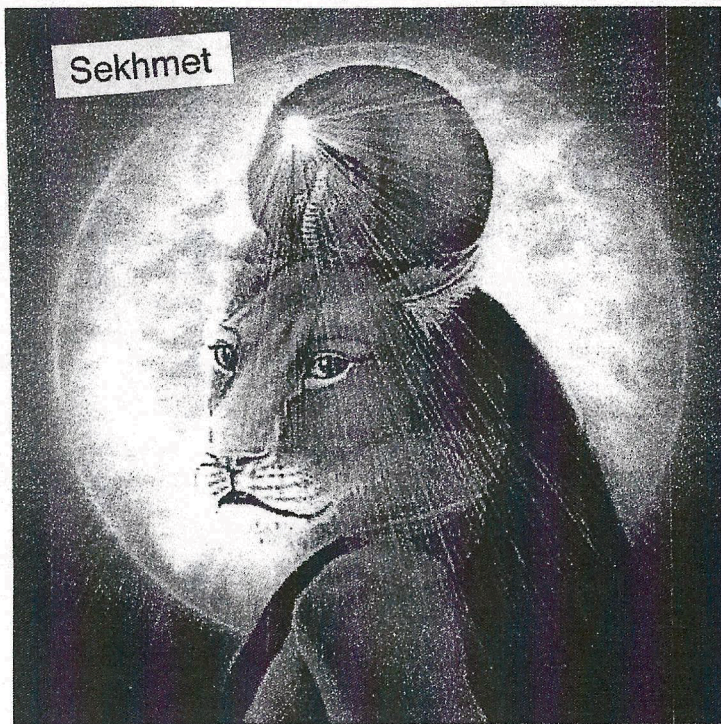
Kudos! You have major flirting skills, which will serve you well in the boy-getting game. It's great you aren't shy around dudes. Your confidence makes them feel comfortable around you. Just remember the rules: Don't flirt with your friends' crushes or with your boyfriend's buddies, and don't overdo it! Otherwise, keep working it.

In hindsight it really sucks that this was the culture the others were part of. Being trained to flirt and wear heels and break each other when 14 year olds should be getting grass stains.

Isis

My submission was about mythological goddesses. I couldn't relate to the experience of femininity, but the archetypes of femininity was more accessible. I guess I had an easier time seeing myself in fictional, historic figures, stories that felt so fantastical and far away.

Isis was the most worshipped goddess in Egypt. She was thought of as the Mother goddess, the patron of magic, the friend of slaves, and she listened to the women's prayers and answered them. She was the first daughter of Geb and Nut. Her brother and hubby is Osiris, who is the mightiest of all gods and decides what to do with truthful souls. Her son is Horus. When Osiris was killed, she and her sister restored him. This gained her much respect, and actually helped women become a bigger part of Egypt.



Saraswati

Saraswati is the four-armed goddess of knowledge and the arts. She is the first goddess to be worshipped in Hinduism. Being wise and creative, Saraswati is supposedly the perfect match for the lord of creation, Brahma. But they had a disastrous marriage. Brahma is the god of creation, Saraswati is his daughter. He was put off by Saraswati's lack of affection (being both his daughter and wife) and kicked her out of his house and disinherited her. For this he could no longer be worshipped.

Saraswati learned to channel her anger into meditation and stay peaceful. She symbolizes the independent woman. She is most often seen playing her veena, which is a stringed instrument, and with a peacock or a swan alongside her.

If Barbie was a Real Woman...

Barbie's Measurements:

Height: 7'2"

Weight: 101 lbs.

Dress size: 4

Bust: 39" (FF cup)

Waist: 19" (same as her head)

Hips: 33"

Shoe size: 5

Barbie's neck is twice as long as the average human's which would make it impossible to hold up her head.

Barbie's waist is the same circumference as her head.

She would suffer from chronic diarrhoea and death from malabsorption and malnutrition.

Barbie would be unable to walk upright; she would need to walk on all fours.

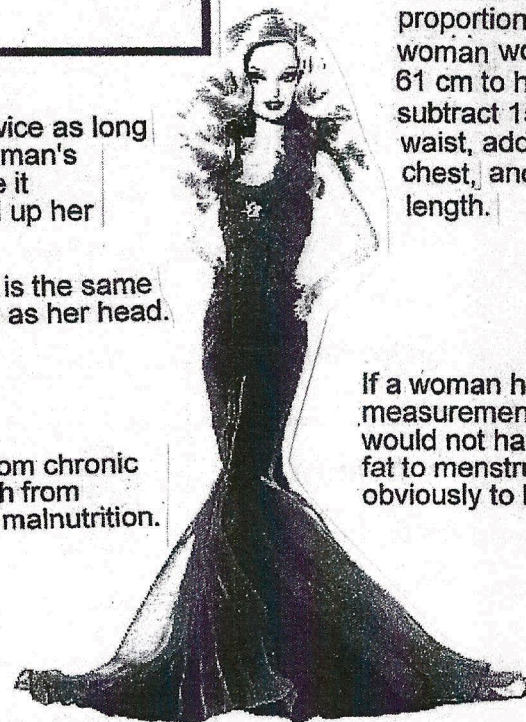
Her feet are so proportionately small that her chest would pull her perpetually forward onto her

The only other page I really liked was, of course, Dom's. It was more of a critique on society than something meant to represent me.

Barbie's body would have room for only half of a liver and only a few inches of intestines, as opposed to the usual 26 feet.

To look like a Barbie doll proportionally, a healthy woman would need to add 61 cm to her height, subtract 15 cm from her waist, add 13 cm to her chest, and 8 to her neck length.

If a woman had the same measurements as Barbie, she would not have enough body fat to menstruate (and obviously to have children).



Barbie's legs are 50% longer than her arms, whereas the average woman's legs are only 20% longer than her arms.

The climax of my OMLess experience was The Play. Towards the end of the semester, the class was going downtown to see a play for a field trip. It was a comedy about women's issues and liberation; I don't remember much about it except that the whole thing was a two-woman show and it was pretty damn good. The class had been doing fundraisers throughout the semester to raise the money to go. We all took a bus to get there after school, but we'd have to arrange our own transport back.

I didn't want to go in the first place. I'd been having a rough few days at home and wasn't excited about having to spend time with the girls in class. But I pulled it together.

After school, when the class was already out there, I called my mom to check in. She said she expected me to figure out my own way home (we lived about 40 minutes from there with no bus routes). When I asked how, she said to talk to the other kids and arrange a carpool. When I said I wasn't comfortable with that (and she knew they bullied/rejected me), she said to get over it and stop being a baby. I asked what if people didn't give me a ride, and she said to only drag her out there as a last resort.

So I spent the entire evening completely petrified. These kids already didn't like me, and now I was supposed to ask them a favor. I asked one girl (don't remember which) and she said they lived in the other direction (which I found out later was a lie). I asked another who was much less subtle with her lie; she said she "didn't know where she lived"; and when I asked if she knew how close she was to the school and if her mom might be able to take me there, she said there wouldn't be room for me in the car (which I soon found out was a lie as they drove one of those big ass SUVs.) At that point, I decided I was only embarrassing myself and called my mom to tell her they'd all said no.

There were a few other incidents that night. When we were asked to buddy up to sit at the tables for the play, I was the last one standing with Rachael, who said "Guess I'm stuck with you" and about ten minutes in moved her chair to some other group and left me alone. While waiting for the shuttle to the meeting/pickup point we did a "Have you ever" game, and whenever it was my turn and I hadn't done something they all groaned, muttered "virgin" (regardless of the thing I hadn't done) and sometimes threw a wadded-up napkin at me. In hindsight the teachers really should have done something.

It all peaked when we got to the meeting point. Our shuttle (a city shuttle that took people along one long street) had been to a point

My mom put on a friendly face in front of the teachers and other parents, but as soon as we were in the car she snapped. She screamed at me for the entire 40 minute drive and for two hours after. She was pissed about having to drive down here, pissed we were late, but even more pissed that apparently I could've arranged a carpool. She'd been talking with one of the other moms while we were on our way, and guess what? She lived five minutes from our house and would've been happy to drive me back.

She was also the mom of the girl who told me she "didn't know where she lived."

I tried to explain all this, that I asked the girls but they didn't like me and lied to me. My mom was having none of it, even though I still had bits of napkin in my hair.

It's funny that we tell victims to feel sorry for bullies because they might have a bad home life, but we never tell bullies that their victims might be attacked enough at home. I doubt they'd have been any different even if they knew my mom was abusive.

That night was the first time I ever felt suicidal, or at least the first time I remember. It wasn't the other girls' fault exactly... but they sure didn't help.

LOSE WEIGHT FAST

Gain it faster...

Rachael might have been afraid. She was the fattest girl there and probably didn't want to be rejected (like me).

"THIS PILL REALLY WORKS"
- THE ROLLING STONES

(This was her page. It was also pretty cool.)

WARNING:

Side effects may include:

Nausea
Heartburn
Headache
Kidney Explosion
Liver Failure
Bladder Infection
UN wanted bleeding
Foot Acne
Heart Attack
Vomiting

I always thought this was funny. As opposed to wanted bleeding?

Extra doses of estrogen to turn that fat into... HOT.

In just three days you'll have the tummy you've always wanted. In just 5 days, you'll lose it.

If you're wondering readers,
if I was suicidal ~~if I was suicidal~~,
just had to write it. [NAME REDACTED]
- Later.

↑ from my old journal

me?

Sometimes I wonder if I was just being a baby like my mom said. Others have been bullied much worse, I turned out okay, etc. But you know what, that's crap. Things hurt, man. Middle school sucks for a lot of reasons and for me this was one of them. And if I can't feel compassionate for myself then who will?

→ You've had the worst day at school. Tomorrow, you vow to:

Get back on track

Take a sick day

→ always take a sick day/mental health day when you need it! No shame! Take care!

Did you have a crappy class? Were you excluded and rejected by your class? Were you subjected to bullying from anyone, large or small or physical or emotional? This is me saying you didn't deserve it. Make a zine about it, send me an email to process. And flip everyone else off because they suck anyway.

If you chose mostly a's...

You might wanna consider getting a new BFF! This relationship might not be the best friendship for you. You also could sit down with your BFF and have a one on one talk about her behavior. Be nice!

If you chose mostly b's...

You have a pretty good friend... but she could be a bit more considerate. She seems to not get how delicate feelings are, maybe you should tell her how you feel and how you want to be treated!

I was in a weird in-between state back then. I didn't relate to the other girls because I wasn't a girl. I didn't relate to crushes and "cuties" because I didn't want to be with them, I wanted to be them.

cuties: A budding romance could become so much more, and he may be every bit as surprised as you! This will be a really fun time.

And although I related more to the boys, it wasn't perfect either because no one (not even I) thought I was one of them.

cuties: Expect an attraction to a nice, caring guy. A hottie also might be in the picture, just be sure his heart is in the right place before you pass over Mr. Nice.

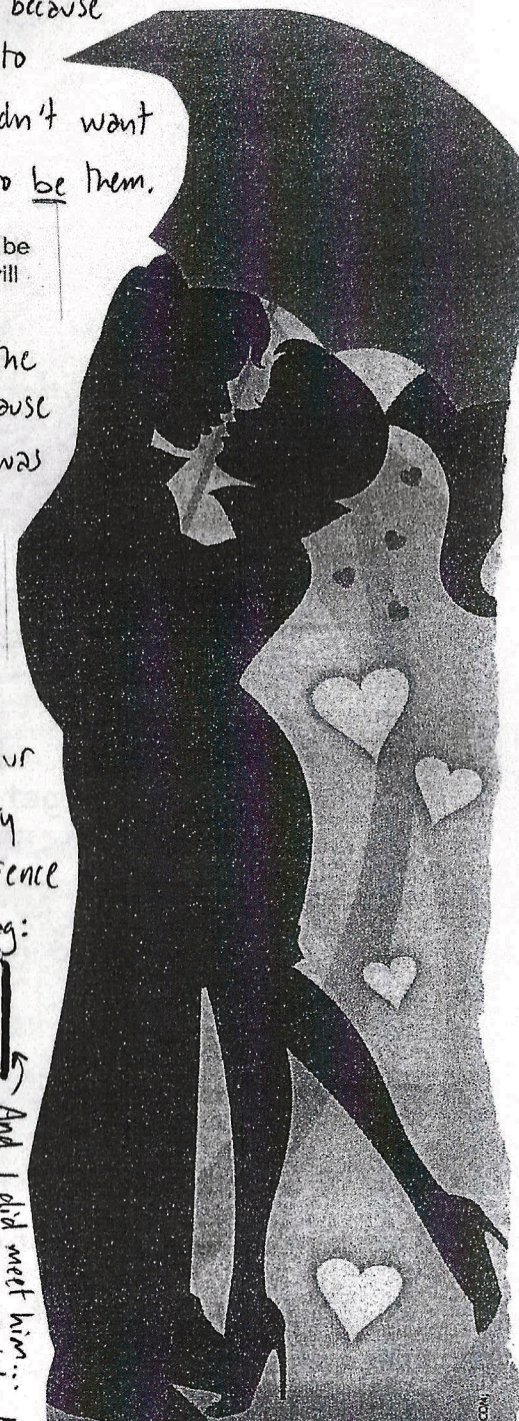
You know what's funny? One of these "cuties" horoscopes from our zine actually captures me pretty well. This is my trans experience as explained by a teen girl mag:

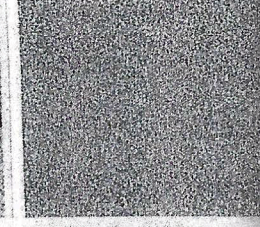
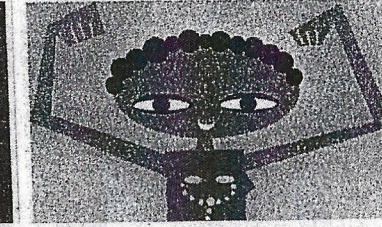
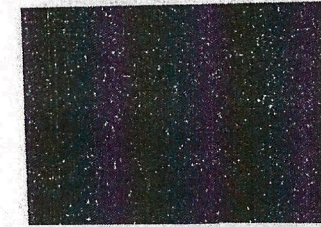
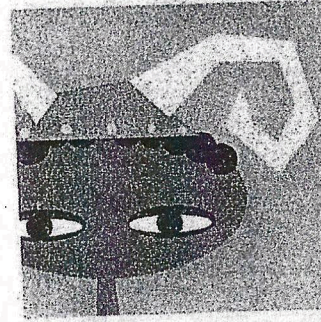
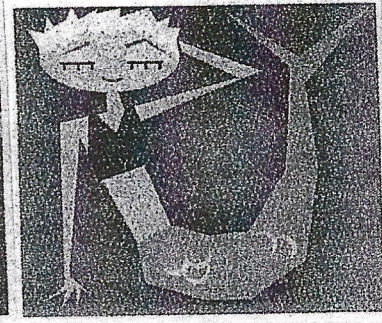
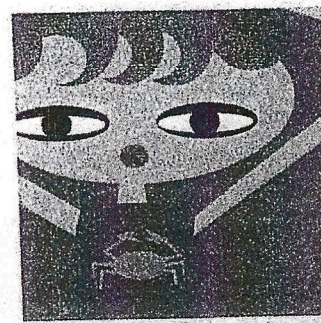
cuties: Look to meet a hot new prospect (and we do mean hot) through buds. You're not completely open about this guy, though—check your motives.

If you chose mostly c's...

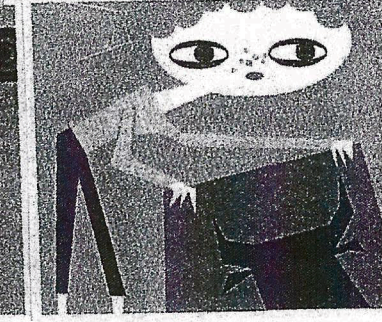
You have a GREAT BFF! She knows how to treat you and cares about your feelings! She seems like a good listener and would never put you in a sticky situation! Yay for you!

And I did meet him... 9 years later.





That's right. Buy now and get 5 barf bags at NO extra cos
That's right folks.



Wesley Sueker Twenty Two Zines Summer 2020

twentytwozines@gmail.com
twentytwozines.storenvy.com