

## History of Boston's Dyke March

### *Inspiration:*

In April 1993 the New York Lesbian Avengers organized a huge Dyke March during the March on Washington weekend. It was a huge success — just imagine thousands of dykes marching past the White House. The NY Avengers went on to have a Dyke March during New York Pride each June. Many women from all over the country went to the Dyke March during the Stonewall festivities in June 1994. The thrill of marching with thousands of dykes of all colors, ages, and backgrounds in these marches was the inspiration for the organizers of the Boston Dyke March.

### *Dyke March 1995*

After the clinic shootings in Brookline in Dec 1994, a coalition of women from the Lesbian Avengers, WAC, R2N2, as well as those unaffiliated with any group came together to protest Weld's hypocritical politics in claiming to be pro-women while at the same time favoring punitive welfare reform and working with Cardinal Law to find 'common ground'. After an action at the state house, three women from WAC, R2N2, and the Lesbian Avengers — Beth Hastie, Susan Trotz, and Sarah Shreeves — got together to plan events for radical political women to meet each other, have fun, and build coalitions. This short-lived group called GAB held the Girls' Action Brunch, G.A. BBQ, and the G.A. Beach Day.

At one of these planning sessions in March 1995 over pizza at Bella Luna in J.P., Sarah mentioned how great it would be to have a Dyke March in Boston. Beth and Susan jumped on the idea and the three women began to call groups and individuals for a planning meeting in mid April at Crone's Harvest (now, alas, closed).

The thirty women who came to the first Dyke March meeting had varied political experiences — from pro choice to anti-racism work, from AIDS activists to those fighting domestic violence, from activists for economic justice to queer rights activists. These women came to plan the Dyke March for a wide variety of reasons. For some it was a positive and passionate reaction to Pride, for others it was a chance to focus on lesbian visibility and relive the intense and amazing experience of the Dyke Marches in Washington and NYC. Everyone agreed that it should be a political and celebratory march.

Boston's first Dyke March was pulled together in six weeks. It was planned for the morning of June 10 and started at Ruggles T and wound its way up Mass. Ave to Boylston to end at the start of the Pride Parade. Through the course of the meetings it was decided that we did not believe in registering and paying to be in the parade. In the end, however, a member of the Pride Committee paid for the Dyke March to enter Pride.

On the morning of June 10th about 750 dykes showed up for Boston's first Dyke March. It was a fabulous march from start to finish — hundreds of women marching, chanting, singing, flirting, scoping, waving to the confused tourists on the trolleys. Moving Violations led off the March and many groups of women — from Girlfriends to the Lesbian Avengers — were there in force. A large number of the women continued through the Pride Parade and ended at the Esplanade. There members of the Dyke March Committee participated in the protest at the prolife booth. It was an amazing and historic day.