



Astraea LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

# Astraea

In The 90's



ASTRAEA

ZINE



## A Snapshot of Astraea's Archive

# The Lesbian 90's



Astraea at New York City Pride March 1991

In honor of LGBTQ History Month, this zine spotlights some of Astraea's organizational milestones in the 90's, a time where women-led fundraising was generally on the rise. The 90's were a pivotal decade for Astraea--the organization came out as a lesbian foundation in 1990, adopting the name Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation. Also in the 90's, Astraea founded its International Fund for Sexual Minorities, shifting its strategy to include grants docket both in the U.S. and globally.

Today, Astraea continues to call itself a lesbian foundation, grounding its values in the lesbian feminist ethos of its founders, despite funding activists across the LGBTQI acronym. Astraea also continues to fund globally, with approximately half of its grants each year going to organizations based outside the U.S. It's no wonder that this period is also when Astraea's archives began to accumulate!

On the right: Text from a Lesbian Writers Fund Gala pamphlet, 1996, scanned onto graphic

The name Astraea ("Starry One") was the Roman title of the Goddess of Holy Law or Libra, who was also known as the Goddess of Justice.

In most ancient writings, Astraea is associated with truth, natural law and matriarchal justice.



**ASTRAEA NATIONAL LESBIAN ACTION FOUNDATION**  
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## Before the 90's

# Founding Mothers

Astraea's founding mothers were a group of cross-class, multi-racial lesbian activists. It all began at Nancy Dean and Beva Eastman's kitchen table, where a group of radical women made a political choice to start a women's fundraising group.

Their names were Stella Alvo, Audrey Barnes, Nancy Dean, Barabara Grant, Joyce Hunter, Roberta Kosse, Cynthia Long, Achebe Powell, Joan Watts and Leslie Kanés Weisman.



Astraea's Founding Mothers at Astraea's 20th Anniversary



Board members in the 90's



Board members throughout the 90's



### DYKE DOLLARS

*Astraea is the first and only national lesbian grant-making foundation. Board officers (left to right) Kelly Kuwabara, Elizabeth Schneider, Katherine Acey, and Valli Kanuha.*

Image from an article covering Astraea's "coming out", 1990

## 1990

# Coming Out!

In 1990, Astraea came out as a lesbian organization and changed its name to Astraea: The National Lesbian Action Foundation. It was the first and only national funding organization run by and for lesbians.

The decision to come out was not a strategy for narrowing its grantmaking, but a political act to recognize the often invisible multi-racial lesbian feminist labor and leadership in all kinds of movements.

"Lesbians have been politically active in every movement," says Acey, who has a seven-year association with Astraea as a board member and has served as executive director for the past three years. "It's time to put ourselves first as lesbians and women."

Quote from "Queer as a \$3 Bill" article, 1990



**ILLUMINATE...**

Graphic from Astraea's Fall 1990 bulletin

Headline from article covering Astraea's "coming out", 1990

# Queer as a \$3 Bill

National Funding Group Is out of the Closet and in the Money





Astraea Foundation is proud to announce the 1997-98 grantees of the International Fund for Sexual Minorities, established through a generous founding gift from Ise Bosch and in collaboration with International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. The creation of this Fund acknowledges the well documented need to support groups that enhance the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered peoples worldwide. A total of \$59,000 was awarded to 17 groups from Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America.

Above: Section from Winter 1998 Astraea bulletin  
Below: 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, 90's



Astraea staff and friends at International Grants Panel Meeting, 1997

## 1996: Moving Forward International Grantmaking

Astraea's International Fund for Sexual Minorities was founded in 1996, thanks to a gift from Astraea donor Ise Bosch. The Fund's first grant cycle awarded a total of \$59,000 to 17 groups globally. This was a crucial moment in Astraea's history. Since the Fund's founding, Astraea has made grants to over 500 groups globally and continues to fund internationally today.



Members and friends of LINK, Davao of the Philippines share a moment of visibility and solidarity.

Image of one of Astraea's first International grantee partners from Winter 1998 Astraea bulletin

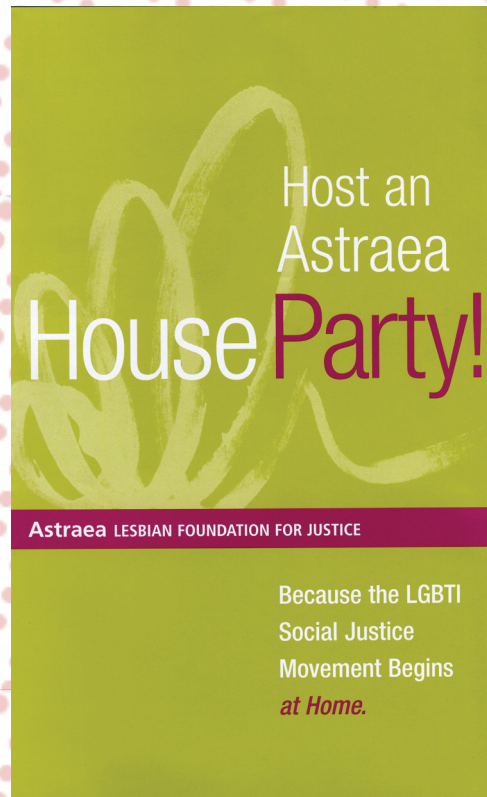


International Grants Panel in NYC 1997



# Astraea Extravanzas

## Fundraising and Celebration



House party flyer, 90's

At Astraea, we center joy in our activism. Presented here are old gathering invitations and photos of Astraea members enjoying themselves at "Astraea Extravanzas", gatherings and parties. Here's a look back at Astraea's previous celebrations to remember its community and impact during this decade.



"Party with Pride", house party in Brooklyn, 90's



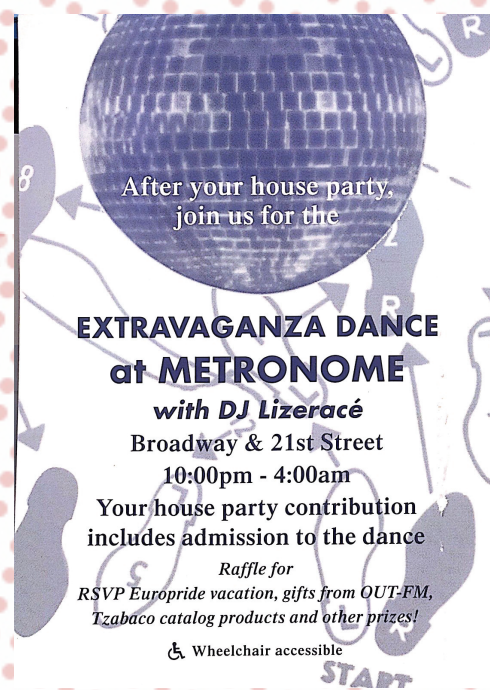
Dancing at 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, 90's



Lesbian Writers Fund Gala, 1996



Astraea holiday party, 90's



Invitation for Astraea Extravanza event, 1997

**IT'S THE ASTRAEA EXTRAVANZA!**

Saturday, May 31, 1997

You're invited to a

\_\_\_\_\_

kind of party

\_\_\_\_\_

your host(s)

\_\_\_\_\_

party location

\_\_\_\_\_

time

\_\_\_\_\_

donation (per person)

PLEASE RESPOND BY FRIDAY, MAY 23rd

Old friends overjoyed to see each other at last year's Extravanza.



Astraea staff and grantee partners at 20th Anniversary celebration



# 90's Bulletins and Event Materials

## *From Beijing to Washington:* **LESBIAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**




Lesbians marching for Human Rights in Beijing.

"Lesbian Rights and Human Rights" from Winter 1995 bulletin

**ASTRAEA NATIONAL LESBIAN ACTION FOUNDATION**

Astraea is the first and oldest nationwide lesbian foundation working for lesbian visibility and empowerment through its grantmaking programs, training and technical assistance projects. Individual contributions are the primary support for Astraea's various grantmaking programs. Send your contribution to Astraea, and become part of a community that is working and learning together in the struggle for social change.

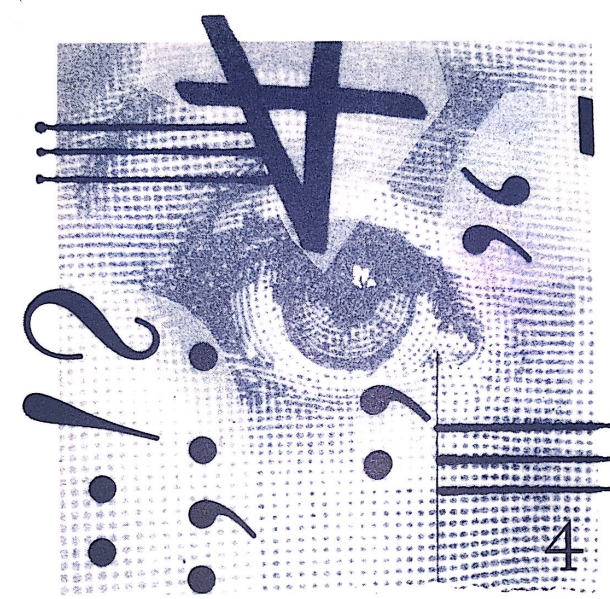


**ASTRAEA**

Projects funded by Astraea are actively working to eliminate all forms of oppression.

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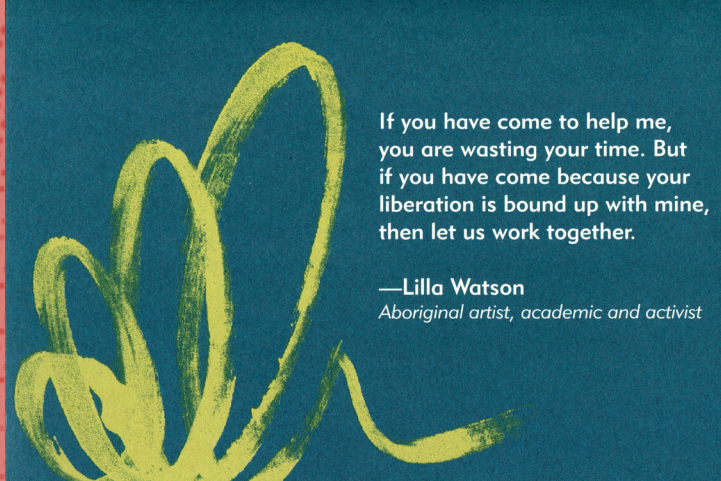
Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation introduction from bulletin in the 90's



"Lesbianism is based in a belief that between women, power is shared, which makes it a radical act"

Chrystos  
"The Night Gown"  
In Her I Am

Cover of Lesbian Writers Fund Gala, 1995



If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

—Lilla Watson  
Aboriginal artist, academic and activist

Lilla Watson Astraea graphic

**empower**  
**envision**  
**embrace**

ASTRAEA NATIONAL LESBIAN ACTION FOUNDATION

Graphic from an old news bulletin in the 90's



## Learn More



**Astraea** LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice is the only philanthropic organization working exclusively to advance LGBTQI rights around the globe. We support hundreds of brilliant and brave grantee partners in the U.S. and internationally who challenge oppression and seed social change. We work for racial, economic, social, and gender justice, because we all deserve to live our lives freely, without fear, and with profound dignity.

[www.astraeafoundation.org](http://www.astraeafoundation.org)

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