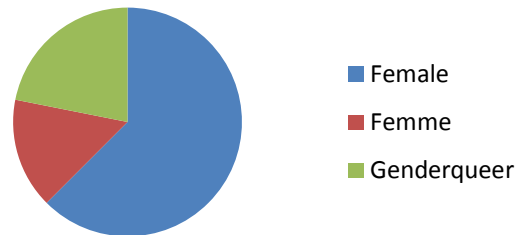


**HAEMONY'S STORY:** The whole period thing was not mysticized for me. It was a process. It's just going to happen. I don't remember quite the details of the actual experience because I've blocked a lot of that out, but I was at school when it happened. So I went to the nurse and I was like, um, I've started my period, and this is my first time, I don't have anything. She gave me a pad and called my mom. Mom took me home. We went to the store and got pads because that's what my mom used. She very matter-of-factly gave me all the details on how it worked, how to use the pad, how to put it on, all that kind of stuff. It was a diaper, but it got better.

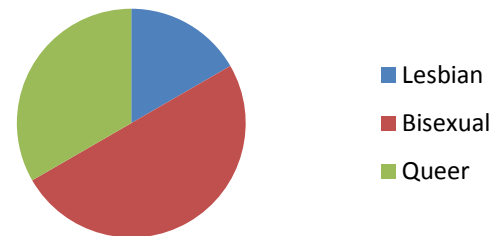
**MARY'S STORY:** I got my first period when I was 14, so all of my friends already had theirs. It was on a weekend and I did ballet growing up so I had a recital that evening. I started my period that day. It was really weird. My mom and my older sister were trying to help me with a tampon but I couldn't get it in so I wore a pad and it was really big and bulky underneath my ballet outfit. Luckily it wasn't showing, but I could feel it and it sucked. It wasn't like a big to-do, there was no party, nobody said anything special.

## IDENTITY CAN BE TRICKY

### Gender



### Sexuality



Yum! Red velvet uterus cupcakes!

This zine was lovingly created from a collaborative group storytelling session in Eugene, Oregon in June 2012. For more information about the menstrual lore project or to add your voice, please visit [mcnabbarchives.wordpress.com](http://mcnabbarchives.wordpress.com)

## MOON PARTY

MENARCHE NARRATIVES AND  
MENSTRUAL LORE



## HOME REMEDIES

Raspberry leaf tea and nettle tea  
Electric blanket and my cats  
5-HTP, Maca, and Calcium-Magnesium-Zinc  
Gentle yoga and I try to be really kind to myself  
Ibuprofen, cramp bark, naps, baths, and weed  
Floridix iron supplement  
Ice on my belly if I'm having really bad cramps  
A shitload of extra-strength Tylenol and a nap  
Reflexology trick where you massage your ovary area in inward spirals with your fingers  
I have an uptick in being interested in my vibrator  
Art and naps, self care stuff  
I try to stay away from caffeine and other chemicals  
Milk and red meat can make your cramps worse  
I learned to really baby myself during this time  
My herbal supplements and chamomile tea

**MEL'S STORY:** So we're in the great big choir rehearsal before the Christmas concert and I started to have cramps and I ended up going to the bathroom and figuring out that I was bleeding a little bit. And then I went to the nurse to get a pad or something. And I just burst into tears and she sent me over to the assistant principal, who was this very nice lady. She was the lady principal and she had pads. I liked her and I didn't get into trouble a lot, so she was just this badass authority lady. And she made me a cup of mint tea and sat me in her office and we talked for like 45 minutes. And I chose the smallest, thinnest pantyliner, because I was like, this is not happening!

**URSULA'S STORY:** I was so excited about puberty because my family always treated it as like this wonderful, magical journey. But then I got it at a really tough time. I'd been looking forward to it for so long, and then it was like I was sad and depressed and mad at my mom and I was lonely because I didn't have any friends, and now there's blood coming out of me. So my first period actually totally sucked. Although, my mom did tell me, you're blossoming into a woman. And then my favorite cousin mailed me an Indigo Girls CD. I listened to that CD on repeat like every day, and loved being a woman.

**ALEX'S STORY:** Right before I started bleeding, I remember having somewhat of an emotional breakdown. I don't remember what my mom said to me, but it ended with me running into the bathroom with a pair of scissors and I was going to kill myself. And I was very upset, but I didn't kill myself, obviously. A couple days later, I started bleeding, and so I approached my mom when she got home. I was a little freaked out. I was kind of expecting it, but she came home and I said, Mom I'm bleeding. She said, congratulations, you're a woman now! And she handed me a box of tampons and the instructions and said, go figure it out. I remember it being pretty uncomfortable, putting that first tampon in.

**SARITA'S STORY:** I remember getting up the night before and going into the bathroom over and over again, but I wouldn't turn on the light. I think I had like this 6<sup>th</sup> sense. I think part of me knew that I was about to cross a threshold. And I wasn't quite ready. But then I went to the bathroom in the morning and I obviously saw what had happened. And I just found a pad in the bathroom and then I asked my grandmother later in the day to take me to Walgreens so I could go and get some more. My grandmother kind of got excited later, but I just kind of knew that I had this hassle.

## FAVORITE PRODUCTS

Menstrual cup  
Cloth pads, but only with monkeys  
Cloth pads, especially with fun prints like religious figures  
Unbleached organic cotton tampons  
Tampons with applicators  
Disposable pads

## WORDS WE USE

Moontime  
My cycle  
Shark week  
I think 'Aunt Flo' is ridiculous  
The Communists have taken over the summerhouse and related variants  
'On the rag' feels derogatory  
I'm just mensin' around.  
I'm a vampire, rarr!  
I fell off the roof.  
GT, short for Girly Time  
Period  
I call tampons "the devil's cotton fingers"