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Subject: Vice cops raid party at LA art gallery  
From: Margaret Freewoman  
To: Lambda:All Areas  
Reply-to: MFREE

Importance: high

Anyone know anything about this? (Source is a press release)

#### VICE COPS RAID LESBIAN PARTY

Four plainclothes vice dept. police officers with uniformed backup officers stormed a lesbian party on Feb. 22, 1991, at a downtown Los Angeles art gallery. Four women were handcuffed and five were given citations and will have to appear in court to face criminal charges on April 5. They were charged with running a dance hall and selling alcohol without permits. Three women were made to sit in the back of a police car with their arms cuffed behind their backs for approximately an hour. Officers reportedly frisked the crotch of one woman twice and asked her if she was a man or a woman. Four of the five women charged were women of color, and only one of the women was an organizer of the event. The party was a benefit for Scream Box, a small lesbian literary and arts magazine in Los Angeles. Officers confiscated the guest list and proceeds of the benefit forced attendees to leave the building. During the raid, officers were verbally and physically abusive.

The benefit organizers are seeking legal counsel to mount a defense against the charges. A civil suit is also being considered. A defense fund has been established for the cited individuals. To donate to the defense fund, please make checks payable to Bryn Austin, and send to Scream Box, 7985 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 109-51, LA, CA 90046. Contact: Bryn Austin, (213) 871-1225 x 246