

TRANSFORMATION

Volume 4, No. 1. Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72206. 501/372-5113. March, 1989.

Why the Women's Project Would Support A New Trial for A Convicted Rapist

And An Introduction to the Women's Watchcare Network

Last week, a friend of ours dropped by our office to give us a flyer she had found being put on legislators' cars outside the state capitol. On one side was a picture of black man hanging from a tree with a dog snapping at his heels and a crowd of men with guns in the background. At the top was "Death to Rapists!" and beneath was "It's time for old-fashioned American Justice," and the credit line was to the Blue Cross Mothers of America, London, Arkansas. On the back of the flyer was a picture of a black man with a bloody hand, a knife dripping blood, and a white woman lying on the ground, her skirt pulled up and her neck bleeding.

The heading in large caps is "THE BLACK PLAGUE" and underneath is written, "Every 30 minutes...a woman is raped somewhere in the U.S.A." Beneath the picture of the man are the initials "BLF," the initials of Barry Lee Fairchild, a black man and a convicted rapist on Arkansas' death row facing execution this month, the first execution in 24 years in this state.

A followup article in the Arkansas Gazette (3/1/89) indicated that Ralph Forbes (the same Forbes who directed former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke's campaign), the executive director of the Sword of Christ Good News Ministries, had designed the flyer because "the number of rapes committed would decrease if Fairchild were hanged in front of the

state Capitol." He also said that the name, Blue Cross Mothers, "represents loyalty, the cross of Christ and traditional women' rights--that women shouldn't be forced to work."

Our mission is to eliminate sexism and racism, and here is an instance in which a black man is convicted of raping a white woman and being an accessory to her murder. We have spent the lifetime of this project working to end violence against women and we have worked in the same way against racial injustice, and here is a case in which the two merge.

The circumstances of Barry Lee Fairchild's case and the responses to it touch on many issues of deep concern to us. Our mission is to eliminate sexism and racism, and here is an instance in which a black man is convicted of raping a white woman and being an accessory to her murder. We have spent the lifetime of this project working to end violence against women and we have worked in the same way against racial injustice, and here is a case in which the two merge. We abhor the fact that this innocent woman was raped and killed, and we grieve for her family. However,

all we have read about the Fairchild case indicates that there are many unanswered questions, especially about the issue of police coercion and brutality and about whether this man had the mental capacity (IQ in the low 60's) to understand his rights or the Miranda statement. A police dog was sicced on him, and the pictures of Fairchild on videotape show him wearing a large bandage on his head because the dog bit him in the head.

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Women's Project Library Hours

10am - 2pm: Thursday, Friday and Saturday
7pm - 9pm: Wednesday

The key to almost any successful marketing strategy is to get the word out. Productivity and success usually do not thrive in silence.

The Women and Work Project is no exception to this rule. Getting the word out is an on-going and tenacious process.

The Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers Project is designed to help prepare women to attain and retain nontraditional jobs. This assistance is provided through four weeks of classroom training offering physical fitness, tool identification, blueprint reading,

in nontraditional jobs, that is one barrier we are forced to endure.

For women, preparing for a nontraditional job is as much a mental challenge as it is a physical one.

The Women and Work project prepares women mentally because it exposes women to an array of issues relevant to their lives. It helps to present some focus and some direction to their lives, thereby intensifying their coping skills to maintain nontraditional work.

How can you help?

As friends of the Women's Project, you are accustomed to assisting us with various needs of the Project. This time, you can help us through any of the following ways or through other ways you may suggest:

Getting the Word Out On the Women and Work Project

math and reading assessment, assertiveness training, coping skills and some hands-on experience.

Our goal is not only to get women into nontraditional jobs, but for women to seek and accept jobs that they want, thus increasing the chances of retention.

The reality that women sometimes do not stay in male dominated jobs, for various reasons, is used as a flag to label women as unsuitable and uncommitted to nontraditional work. This is, of course, unfair to women. But until we can change the mindsets of society and increase the retention of women

- Provide us with leads on job openings
- Invite us for speaking engagements to your group or business
- Provide leads for speaking engagements
- Provide leads of businesses who need our service

The Women's Project appreciates the support of its many friends. We hope that we can count on you to help us get the word out on our Women and Work Project.

Charlye Washington Crawford

The Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers employment preparation program will begin it's second year of introducing women to jobs in fields that historically have been dominated by men.

In our first year of the program we 49 women completed the program and 36 are working, in school to pursue an education in a nontraditional field, awaiting apprenticeship, working temporarily or have started their own businesses.

The program plays two roles. We are an avenue for women to investigate being in a career that has never been presented to her as an option. Women are still choosing gender identified occupations. We still represent 96% of the workforce in occupations as secretaries, receptionist, fast food workers, sales personnel and childcare workers. We are still the majority of single-heads of households and minimum wage earners.

We also function as a strong presence in the community and to businesses. We see ourselves as educators and advocates to attempt to challenge the archaic myths which have limited the passage of women into decent lifestyles which is produced from earning decent wages.

Our vision for this project is to reach a place in time where, when we talk of jobs such as plumber, carpenter, engineer, pilot, small engine repairer, chef, welder, roofer, heavy equipment operator, truck driver, architect, contractors, owners of tool

companies, concrete finishers, elevator installers we no longer have few women in these occupations -- We are no longer calling these jobs nontraditional for women. We as women are searching for the change to come where we are no longer labeled as lesbians, or not being real women, or made to feel guilty that we are snatching the food from a man's table that needs to feed his family, just because we choose to enter a job that has had "Man" written on it throughout history. We can see women being self-sufficient and confident that she is capable of deciding the quality of her life based on her own potential, and not feeling that she must opt to choose a partner for financial reasons and to survive.

The Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers employment preparation project will again attempt to meet the challenges of changing the score for women in the workforce. For the 1989 session we have 4, four week programs scheduled:

TRAINING 1

Orientation: March 20
Training: March 27-April 21

TRAINING 2

Orientation: May 22
Training: June 5 - June 30

TRAINING 3

Orientation: July 24
Training: July 31 - August 25

TRAINING 4

Orientation: September 25
Training: October 2 - October 27

As always we are calling upon our newsletter audience for support of this project. If you are a woman or aware of women who are questioning their career possibilities, please call or refer them to our program. We still are requesting for women who are in nontraditional careers or pursuing education in a nontraditional field to please contact us to be role models in the training program.

For 1989 we have been fortunate to receive second year funding from Levi Strauss, Winthrop Rockefeller, Department of Labor Women's Bureau, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, ARKLA, and the Business and Professional Women.

We still are in need of financial support to complete our budget for this year. We are asking for contributions to be made to the Women's Project earmarked for the Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers employment preparation project. Also if you have information on foundations, corporations, or business that we can approach for funding please let us know.

For any information regarding the project please call Janet Doles or Charlye Crawford at (501) 372-5113.

Janet Perkins-Doles

Women's Project Welcomes New Interns

The Women's Project has two new people in the office. They are Kelly Mitchell Clark and Cheryl Doss, who are working with the Project for the next fifteen months. They are part of the Mission Intern Program of the United Methodist Church. It is a three year program, which sends young adults overseas to work for fifteen months, then places them in social change organizations in the U.S. The theme of the 1987-90 program is the "Search for Justice Across Boundaries of Race, Religion and Culture."

Cheryl Doss

I was sent by the Mission Intern Program of the United Methodist Church to work with a Women's Training Program in Monrovia, Liberia, for the past fifteen months. Liberia is a small West African country with strong links with the U.S. In the 1820's U.S. missionary societies and philanthropic societies sent former slaves to Liberia, with the hopes that they would "civilize and Christianize" the West African Coast. Liberia was declared an independent republic in 1847, although its economy has continued to be dominated by U.S. corporations involved in mining iron ore, producing rubber, and cutting timber.

The Women's Training Center was formed by a group of eight women who had spent many years as home economics

teachers for the Ministry of Education. In 1986, due to the lack of materials available for their programs, they decided to create their own Center which they would operate themselves. They set up three goals for their new Center: that it would be self-sustaining, that it would network with other women's programs, and that the focus would shift away from home economics per se to focus instead on teaching women income generating skills.

These were all big steps to take and they were steps in a new direction. During the 1960's, UNESCO had provided funds for women's education programs, and all of the teachers fondly remembered the days when sewing machines, ovens, and supplies were all provided. A small registration fee had always been on the books, but for many years it had not been collected from students. Both the teachers and the students had to struggle with the idea that the Center was going to be their program, that they were responsible for it, and that they were the ones who benefitted from it. Several months into the first semester, several students still had not paid their fees and became verbally abusive when they were asked to pay. A meeting was held of all of the students and teachers. Many students described what the Center meant to them. They stated that what they had learned

was certainly worth the small fee. The rebellious students either paid their fees or left the program.

Women's programs in Liberia had been in competition with each other for funds and support from the Ministry of Education for years. When resources became completely unavailable in the 1980's, the tension increased. Although they knew that the only way for women's programs to improve was for them to work together, it was much easier to say than to actually do. The Training Center in Monrovia began to invite women from other projects to the workshops which they offered as an initial step. In addition, I was able to visit a number of other women's programs to talk with them about what their needs were and how the programs could work together.

Finally, the Center was trying to move away from teaching home economics to teaching income generating skills. In many respects, it was a shift in attitude, rather than a shift in substance, that needed to take place. The teachers had studied in the 1950's when the purpose of the women's education programs was to teach women to be better wives and mothers. They had learned to sew, crochet, and embroider items for their homes. The students were interested in learning to make these items, however, the majority of students made the items to sell, bringing in an income for their families. Therefore, in addition to teaching the students how to sew and crochet, we decided to also hold workshops to teach them financial

management. The value of women's time was a recurrent issue every time we tried to put a price on an item made at the Center. As in many places, the women tended to value their time very low. Often the sale price of an item was just cents above the price of the materials, after they had spent twenty or thirty hours producing it. Slowly, the women began to talk about their time as being valuable. They began to realize that it was important to charge prices that would allow them to provide food and shelter for their families and pay their children's school fees.

The problems that the women in Monrovia face as they try to organize themselves to improve their lives are similar to ones that women everywhere face. Yet, they would all agree that their lives have improved as a result of their effort.

Kelly Mitchell-Clark

Two years ago, I was an unhappy young, African-American woman, frustrated by my unfulfilling existence. Today, I am still marveling at how the Mission Intern Program has led me along a path of self-discovery and self-realization. It did this by giving me the opportunity to travel to Africa, where I taught journalism, and to work at the Women's Project.

The time I spent in my homeland of Africa has affected me in ways that I still only partially understand or am aware of. I come from a people who were told that they came from nothing, were nothing,

and would never quite measure up. How, then, can I explain what it meant for me to see-- not read but see-- that I have a long, important history and come from a beautiful land? No, I am not a "minority" but part of a majority people who have nappy hair like me and whose noses, too, spread when they smile.

How can I explain what it meant to discover the beauty of nature for the first time, to feel that I was part of the soil and the sunrise and the moonlight? I had never felt that same kind of attachment to the land in this country. And since coming back home (and I'm not sure this really is my home), I can admire the beauty of America, but it can never really be mine, it can never satisfy my longing for a land to call my own. Here I pay rent, but in Africa I own the house. Silly, isn't it, considering that black people have as much right to claim this land as any other people who made America their home. (And let us not forget that the true owners of this land are Native Americans).

My time in Africa was not always easy. Anytime one ventures to an unknown land thousands of miles away from what is familiar to her -- despite the treatment received in that familiar place -- there are things to get used and adjustments to make. I sometimes became frustrated, angry and disappointed, but I also learned a lot, established bonds, experienced many joys and did some growing. Suffice it to say, going to Africa was probably the single most important experience

of my life.

Now, on to the second part of the program. A big reason for my earlier unhappiness was that I was dissatisfied with my career. After graduating from college in 1984, I worked for two years as a reporter at a newspaper in Greensboro, N.C., and then joined the Washington, D.C. Urban League as a public information specialist.

While there was nothing wrong with these jobs, they just didn't meet my need to be involved in making change. I didn't know that you could have a career doing work that you believed in or made you feel good. All I knew is that there were so many things that needed fixing in the black community and in the world that I wanted to be out there working toward solutions. I guess that is evident in my progression from working for a mainstream newspaper to working for a black social service agency like the League.

Here at the Women's Project, I am getting the fulfillment that I longed for. Imagine actually being excited about going to work! I just hope that during my 15 months with the Women's Project, I will be able to give as much to the organization as it has given me.



Women's Watchcare Network: Bringing Together All of Our Issues

from page 1

It is common knowledge in this country that a grossly disproportionate number of people on death row are people of color. In fact, the two main characteristics of the majority of people incarcerated are that they are poor and people of color. For instance, the daughter of a member of the Women's Project--a young black teacher who was a leader for others--was raped and killed by three white men several years ago. Those men received minor sentences and are not on death row; neither is anyone calling for "old fashioned American justice" (lynching) for them. We have serious questions about the equality of justice for those who are poor and are people of color.

The implication of the Blue Cross Mothers' flyer and numerous letters to the editor is that rapists are black and their victims are white. However, those working in the criminal justice system with perpetrators or in organizations that support victims know that the vast majority of rapes are black on black, white on white, etc. It is both false and inflammatory to suggest that those responsible for raping white women are black. Such suggestions are designed to promote and increase racial hatred.

We do not know whether Barry Lee Fairchild is guilty or innocent. What we do know is that there are serious unanswered questions. And we think that every person deserves justice in the courts. As much as we abhor rape, we also find injustice an abomination. Hence, our staff has been joining the weekly vigils to demand justice for Fairchild.

This information came just as we were helping to put in place our new project, the Women's Watchcare Network, which will monitor racial, religious, sexual and anti-gay violence, and the activities of hate groups in Arkansas. We are establishing a network of 150 women over age 55, plus volunteers from gay and lesbian communities to do the monitoring. Two women in each county will clip articles from

newspapers, listen to the radio, and be our eyes and ears in the community. They will send us information each month which we will compile, analyze and report back to our monitors and other interested persons, as well as to churches, social change groups, community organizations, etc. The volunteers will receive training from the Center for Democratic Renewal and North Carolinians Against Racial and Religious Violence, two organizations that monitor hate groups, and once a year all of the volunteers will meet to share their work.

Our primary goal is create a network of people who have a high awareness of bigoted violence in the



state so that we, working together, can develop strategies to bring an end to that violence. This is the project that brings all our issues together as we work for social and economic justice for all women and against the interconnected oppressions of sexism, racism, and homophobia.

Why do we need a project such as this? We have had increasing reports of racial incidents in schools--not only fights but racial slurs written on walls, name-calling, etc., the presence of skinheads

and evidence of hate group recruitment. At the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, there have been anti-gay flyers distributed by a group that calls itself the Gay and Lesbian Student Bashers. There are many hate groups in Arkansas: the KKK, the Christian Patriots, The Sword of Christ Good News Ministries, etc. The national hotline for the KKK is located in Harrison, AR, and the computer center for the Aryan Liberty Net is in North Little Rock. Thom Robb, recently elected Grand Wizard of the KKK, lives in Harrison, and there are indications that his leadership will lead to more white supremacist meetings being held there in the survivalist country of the Ozarks. The politics of Gerald K. Smith are at work in and around the Passion Play in Eureka Springs, and A.J. Lowery lives in Clinton and edits the Justice Times, the publication of the Christian Patriots.

For 4 1/2 months, we read two of the three statewide newspapers for acts of violence, and the violence perpetuated against women and children was startling. It clearly paints a picture of women's lives being expendable. From shopping malls to the workplace to their own homes, women are vulnerable to being killed, raped or beaten. There were nine women killed. In two cases, young women and their mothers were both killed by the former's ex-boyfriend. An increasing number of violent acts have left evidence of devil worship or satanic rituals. We documented 22 rapes of women and girls, ranging in age from an infant to a 67-year-old victim. Twelve women were assaulted or abducted, including one who was left paralyzed from the neck down after being shot by her boyfriend. This documentation does not cover the entire state because our newspapers do not pick up all small town news.

We also began this project in order to involve churchwomen in the work against violence. There are many conservative churches and religious groups (such as Christian Identity) that support the politics of bigotry and hatred. We feel that church people who believe in peace and justice need to be offered productive ways to support their beliefs. This project will enable over 150 women from both white and black churches and Native American, Asian, and Latina groups to be actively involved in social change. To be offered a meaningful and productive role in society is of real benefit to older women and it is also of major benefit to social change

organizations. Not only will we increase the numbers of active, socially educated and aware people in the state, but they will provide the important information that will be the basis and impetus for organizing to take action against bigoted violence.

Of all our projects, this one ties together all of our issues, provides an opportunity for diverse people and groups to work together, involves our constituency in important social change work, and provides the information necessary to make informed decisions and develop

strategies to end bigoted violence.

Those interested in volunteering for the Women's Watchcare Network should call Suzanne Pharr or Kelly Mitchell-Clark. It is work that has relevance for all our lives, every one of us.

Suzanne Pharr

Of all our projects, this one ties together all of our issues, provides an opportunity for diverse people and groups to work together, involves our constituency in important social change work, and provides the information necessary to make informed decisions and develop strategies to end bigoted violence.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 27. Women & Work: Breaking the Barriers. Four week training program begins.

April 1. Yard Sale to Benefit the WP Library.

9am - 4pm at the Women's Project. (Drop of donations at the WP on 3/31 until 8pm.)

April 9. March for Women's Equality/Women's Lives. In Washington D.C. Take the bus with Arkansas N.O.W. to this historic event. Call 565-2108 or 375-8525.

April 10. Women & Chemical Dependency.

Women's Issues Discussion. 7-8:30 pm at the Women's Project.

April 21-22. Women's Retreat. Two days of relaxation, discussions, music, community building and fun at a state park. Call the Women's Project for information.

April 27. Advocates for Battered Women Annual Media Auction. 5:30 p.m. at the Main Street Mall. For ticket information call 376-3219.

April 28-30th. Making a Living and Making Change. Regional women's conference sponsored by the Southeast Women's Employment Coalition. Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. The Women's Project has scholarships and travel money for 10 low-income women who are working on women's economic issues in their communities. Call us for information.

April 29. Ninth Annual Women's 5 K Run. 8am on the Riverdale course starting on Riverfront Drive, just south of Rebsamen Park Road. Registration forms are available at the WP and at sports stores in LR, PB, and Memphis. Contact Pat O'Brien at 375-8525 for more information.

May 8. Notes and Slides from the March on Washington for ERA and Reproductive Rights.

Women's Issues Discussion. 7-8:30 pm at the Women's Project.

May 12. Spring Fundraiser for the WP Building Fund. Call for information.

May 27 - 28th. Second National Tradeswomen Conference. Chicago. See page 9.

June 10. Women's Project 8th Annual Awards Dinner.

June 12. Women In South Africa. Women's Issues Discussion. 7-8:30 pm at the Women's Project.

December 2. Season Sampler.

December 15. Holiday Open House.

For more information about any of these activities call the Women's Project at 501/372-5113. The Women's Project is located at 2224 Main Street in Little Rock.

2ND NATIONAL TRADESWOMEN CONFERENCE

To Be Held In Chicago – May 26-29, 1989

A major conference for tradeswomen and women interested in entering the skilled trades will be held at the Congress Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, on May 26-29, 1989.

Under the auspices of the National Tradeswomen Conference Planning Committee, the gathering is being funded by the U.S. Department of Labor through the Women's Bureau and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training.

The Conference will address the opportunities available to women in the skilled trades. Of the 800 million women entering the workforce over the past five years, fewer than 4% are employed in the skilled trades. The Conference sponsors want to encourage more female participation in the field and emphasize long term job benefits and satisfaction for women.

Women's reasons for entering the trades are basic: good wages and satisfying work. Women welcome the challenge of doing something different; they like working with their hands, building, repairing and creating. Women should be able to make the choice to enter skilled trade jobs or other nontraditional occupations without being denied this right based on gender.

Projections for the year 2000 indicate that between 80%-90% of those entering the workforce will be women, minorities and immigrants. The skilled trades

have an under representation of women who have only recently become acquainted with the field. Jobs that pay decent salaries are in the skilled trades and need to be filled.

The Memorial Day Weekend Conference will address how women can gain entry into the trades as well as other issues through workshop presentation in five tracks:

Working in the Trades:

employment, union membership, dealing with harassment and other problems on the job

Advocacy: training programs, affirmative action, funding, networking

Starting Out: how to find jobs, training programs, survival techniques

Organizing: legal, legislative issues, local and national organizing and sharing

Self Employment: dealing with contractors, getting loans, hiring and firing, moving from being a small contractor to a big contractor

The goal of the conference is to develop a vehicle that will provide national information sharing, document tradeswomen's herstory, develop leadership, encourage increased numbers of women into the skilled trades by addressing barriers and educating the

public. Finally, the conference will set in motion plans for the 3rd National Tradeswomen Conference.

Limited scholarship funds are available. Applicants should contact the national office 1-800-225-3748 or the Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas regional representative, Janet Doles at (501) 372-5113. Deadline for registration is April 28, 1989.

Applications for workshop leaders are still being solicited on the issues that are listed above. If you are interested in presenting a workshop please call the numbers above.

Battered Woman Convicted of Murder

On January 30, 1989, a Lonoke County jury returned a verdict of guilty of 2nd degree murder in the trial of Mary Miller in the shooting death of her husband Gerald Miller. Prior to the trial, Mary had refused to plea bargain for a lesser sentence believing in her own innocence and trusting the justice system to see the shooting for what it was – an attempt by Mary to save her own life. After several weeks in the county jail, Mary was recently transferred to the Women's Correctional Unit in Pine Bluff after being sentenced to 20 years. Mary asks for support from battered women and their advocates. You can write Mary Miller, Unit #3-34848000 W. 7th, Pine Bluff, AR 71603.

Women's Project Library Expands Hours

The Women's Project Library will now be open on Wednesday evenings from 7pm until 9pm. These new hours are added to the regular hours of 10am - 2pm, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

If you haven't been to the library come on down and browse through over 700 books, many not found in libraries or bookstores in Arkansas. Here are some examples of what you might find.

You Can't Drown the Fire: Latin American Women Writing in Exile, Edited by Alicia Portnoy. This important anthology of writing by Latin American women confronts us with the painful experience of exile, torture, and death. Their personal testimonies, their poems, and stories, are all deeply marked by the tragedy of violence and loss. (Jean Franco).

'Sippi, a novel by John Oliver Killens. Set in the 1960s, *'Sippi* chronicles the black college student voting rights struggle of that era. Malcom X, Stokely Carmichael, Harry Belafonte, Paul Robeson, and Martin Luther King, Jr. are some of the figures Killens weaves into the fabric of this protest novel. He recounts in vivid detail the bombings, shootings, and other acts of terror and intimidation endured by the courageous students and local blacks who dared who dared stand up and push for voter registration.

Changing Bodies, Changing Lives: A Book for Teens on Sex and Relationships, by Ruth Bell and other co-authors of *Our Bodies Ourselves*, together with members of the teen-book project.

Broderie Anglaise, a novel by Violet Trefusis. Nearly 50 years before the love affair between Vita Sackville-West and Violet Trefusis was revealed in *Portrait of a Marriage*, Vita wrote about it in her novel *Challenge* and Virginia Woolf gave it the seal of immortality in *Orlando*. Neither woman ever knew that Violet Trefusis had the last word – in her novel, *Broderie Anglaise*.

Interesting Memoirs and Documents Relating to American Slavery and the Glorious Struggle Now Making for Complete Emancipation. First published in 1846 by the Negro Universities Press. A documentary of American slavery as taken from the diaries, narratives, speeches and sermons.

Hard Hatted Women: Stories of Struggle and Success in the Trades, edited by Mollie Martin. In this lively collection, 26 women talk about their experiences in nontraditional, blue-collar work. Employed in a wide range of occupations, the women vividly describe the large and small challenges of life on the job..

The library continues to need funds for buying new books and any donation should be made to the Women's Project, making it tax deductible. We will continue to offer new and used books for sale at WP events and during library hours. Of course, we are still accepting donations of books and we also need a small file cabinet, a small desk, a small bookcase, and a short stool (No, we are not a children's library – we just have to get all of this into one room!) If you want written acknowledgement of a donation, let us know.

We need to get the word out about the library. If you live in Central Arkansas (Conway to Hot Springs to Arkadelphia to Pine Bluff to Cabot/Lonoke) and can distribute flyers describing the library or at an appropriate event, let us know.

Lynn Frost

Poultry Study Needs You

The Women's Project has initiated a study on the poultry industry in Arkansas. In the next months, we will be exploring how this industry impacts consumers, workers, and the environment. In particular, we will look at the health issues involved.

If you have information on the poultry industry that you would like to share with us, please contact Suzanne, Cheryl or Kelly at 501/372-5113.

Our Current Work

Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers

A training and advocacy project to make nontraditional jobs accessible to women.

Technical Assistance to Domestic Violence Programs

Workshops on organizational management.

Women's Watchcare Network

A project to monitor incidents of racial, religious, sexual violence, and the activities of hate groups in Arkansas.

The Homophobia and Racism Project

Workshops on understanding racism and homophobia and developing methods to eliminating them.

Monthly Discussion Groups

Topics of interest to women and their lives are held the 2nd Monday of each month.

Communications and Events

A quarterly newsletter, a lending library, statewide and regional conferences, and production of women singers, poets and novelists.

Yes, I would like to join the Women's Project

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone/day _____

Phone/evening _____

____ \$ 5 low income

____ \$ 15

____ \$ 25 ____ \$ 50 ____ \$ 100

Make checks payable to the Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, AR 72206.

The Women's Project - Our Mission

Our goal is social change or, as the poet Adrienne Rich writes, "the transformation of the world." We believe this world can be changed to become a place of peace and justice for all women.

We take risks in our work; we take unpopular stands. We work for all women and against all forms of discrimination and oppression. We believe that we cannot work for all women and against sexism unless we also work against racism, classism, ageism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism and homophobia. We see the connection among these oppressions as the context for violence against women in this society.

We are concerned in particular about issues of importance to traditionally underrepresented women: poor women, aged women, women of color, teenage mothers, lesbians, women in prisons, etc. All are women who experience discrimination and violence against their lives.

We are committed to working multi-culturally, multi-racially, and to making our work and cultural events accessible to low income women. We believe that women will not know equality until they know economic justice.

We believe that a few committed women working in coalition and in consensus with other women can make significant change in the quality of life for all women.

Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism

By Suzanne Pharr

The first book of its kind on the subject of homophobia and sexism. Essential reading for those whose lives and organizations are affected by homophobia and for those who do trainings on homophobia.

Table of Contents

Homophobia: a weapon of sexism
An analysis of why homophobia exists and the way it works

The effect of homophobia on women's liberation A discussion of the ways homophobia stops our work

How the oppressions are connected
The common methods used by sexism, racism, homophobia/heterosexism, etc. to keep people oppressed

Women in exile: the lesbian experience
Internalized homophobia and strategies for setting ourselves free

ORDER FORM

Check or money order must accompany order. Bulk orders: please write for information

Please send me _____ copies of **Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism**

@ \$10 each

Postage and handling \$2 each

\$ _____

\$ _____

TOTAL

\$ _____

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Telephone: _____

Send orders to: **Women's Project** • 2224 Main • Little Rock, Arkansas 72206

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Volunteers are needed for the newsletter, library, bulk mail, clerical and support work, research, fundraising, organizing special events, video projects, leading support groups and more. For more information call Kerry at 372-5113.

Moving? The post office won't forward your newsletter to you - Drop us a line with your new address.

**The Women's Project
2224 Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72206**

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Job Announcement

Women and Work Project: Breaking the Barriers

Job Title	Staff member, Women and Work Project
Project Description	The Women and Work Project assists Arkansas women to get ready to hold jobs that men traditionally have held -- jobs that often pay more than double what most women make. Some of those jobs are carpentry, highway construction, welding, painting, engineering, auto mechanics, electronics, printing, and heavy equipment operation.
Job Responsibilities	Work closely with co-workers to <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Conduct followup contacts with program participants.2. Provide staff support for four week training program.3. Refer program participants for additional training or skills development.4. Establish linkages with other organizations for training and skills development and placement in apprenticeships or on the job training programs.5. Develop jobs in nontraditional work areas and visit job sites where participants been placed.6. Educate the Arkansas community about nontraditional job opportunities for women.7. Act as an advocate for increased availability of apprenticeships, on the job training programs, and jobs for women.8. Network with other organizations locally, regionally, and nationally.9. Fundraising.10. Perform other duties as assigned by the Women's Project.
Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Job or life experience which has prepared you to carry out the responsibilities outlined above.2. Good writing and communication skills.3. Willingness to learn and grow.4. Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently.5. Reliable transportation, insurance, and driver's license.6. Willingness to work long hours, nights, and weekends.7. Regard for others. Respect for diversity.8. Commitment to Women's Project work and goals.
Salary	\$20,000/year + benefits
Deadline	April 21, 1989. Send cover letter outlining experience in areas above, resume and three references to the WOMEN'S PROJECT, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock AR 72206. Women of color encouraged to apply
About the Women's Project	Since 1981, the Women's Project has worked for social and economic justice for women. Its commitment is to work for a world where opportunity and justice are not determined by gender and race.

TRANSFORMATION

Volume 4, No. 1. Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72206. 501/372-5113. June, 1989.

Buying a Building and Building Community

When I think about the Women's Project having signed the papers to buy a building, one cliché after another comes to my mind: "we've taken the big leap"--"we've bitten the nickel"--"we've gone out on a limb." Only the old truths of long-used clichés seems to fit the thrill of joy and fear I feel as I think of what we have done to ensure our safety and permanency.

First, the what and then the why. What is this building we are buying, what is the cost, and what are the details of the capital campaign? We are buying the building we have occupied for the past two years--a Victorian style house sitting on a lot that has large oak and pecan trees in a neighborhood of low to moderate income black and white residents. Our offices are in the main house that has five rooms, a large foyer, kitchen and three baths. Attached to the back of this house is a small apartment, and separate from the main building is a large carriage house that has outstanding architectural design.

The major renovations will be to open up the attached apartment to make a 700 sq. ft. meeting room, build a deck that will make the entire building and carriage house wheelchair accessible, paint the exterior of the buildings, build privacy fences, install security systems and exterior lighting, and landscape the grounds.

For this property we are paying \$95,000 and raising an additional \$35,000 for renovation and improvements. We have set up our capital campaign in three stages: first, to raise \$30,000 for the down payment, which we accomplished in the first month; second, to raise \$35,000 for renovation, and we are now at one third of this goal; and finally, to raise \$65,000 to pay off the mortgage.

And now we come to the question of why we decided to buy this property instead of continuing to rent. We decided to buy the property for several reasons. Perhaps the first reason was because we are a progressive women's organization doing work in the South that often puts us at risk, and we wanted the security of having a place where the whims or politics of landlords could not put us out on the street, no matter what social justice work we do. We wanted a sense of rootedness,

of permanency--a place and an organization that, in a time when many things are impermanent and transitory, would be here for the women who count on us.

We feel that during politically conservative times, it is

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Women's Project Library Hours

10am - 2pm: Thursday, Friday and Saturday
6:30 - 8:00: Wednesday

Throughout my childhood, I witnessed my mother and father give to our neighbors in times of hardships when it appeared that my parents had little or nothing monetary to give. And no matter how little they made on their 80 acre dirt farm, 10% of their income was always tithed to the church...

These models have always stayed in my mind, but like many of my generation, I have not chosen the church as my place to do community service; instead, I have chosen activism on social justice issues...

Report from the Women's Watchcare Network

It has been of interest and concern to us that other groups monitoring hate violence do not include sexual violence--or violence against women--in their targeted groups. Indeed, civil rights groups and gay and lesbian organizations that are currently coalescing to present national legislation regarding hate crimes do not include women in their list of targeted groups.

We think this is a critical omission. Violence against women is consistently minimized and trivialized by virtually everyone in this society to the peril of the wellbeing of over half the population--which is female. Consequently, thousands of women are killed in this country every year, and those deaths are more or less brushed aside as "domestic matters" or "family affairs." Women and little girls are raped every day, either through stranger or acquaintance rape or incest. Women of every race and class lack safety and live under constant threat. The documentation of their abuse reads like reports from a war zone.

In our last newsletter, we reported that our monitoring of two statewide newspapers for four months had shown 8 women murdered by their boyfriends, ex-husbands, family. Though we do not have all 150 volunteers in place yet for the Network, our current monitors have reported these murders of women:

Forrest City: A 25 year old woman stripped to only her pantyhose had her throat slit, was hit in the face with a blunt instrument, and "stomped in the face by a tennis shoe."

El Dorado: A formerly battered 32 year old woman who was a paraplegic was found in the Ouachita River with a 35 lb. pipe tied to her ankle. Husband prime suspect.

Warren: A five year old girl who was being taken to school by her mother's live-in boyfriend was found sexually molested, strangled, and her body stuffed into a tree.

Paris: A 19 year old woman was found in a shallow

grave with head injuries, apparently battered. Husband arrested.

Fort Smith: A 14 year old girl is killed by two men.

Jonesboro: Two women killed in their separate homes with three shots each. There are rumors of anti-Semitic markings in one home. Assailant(s) unknown.

Blytheville: A woman shot and killed by her boyfriend.

Little Rock: A 32 year old woman stabbed repeatedly in chest and neck found in her home.

In addition to the reports of these murders, our office just received the 1988 report of rape in Arkansas from the Arkansas Crime Information Center. There were 656 reported rapes and 123 attempted rapes (total 779) in this state of less than 2 1/2 million people, and given what we know about rape, possibly that many or more were unreported. Of these, 55% were white, and 69% were less than 25 years of age. The youngest victim was 6 weeks old and the oldest 90. It is important to note that 366 of these victims were under the age of 17.

Of the 779 rapes and attempted rapes, 654 were of the same race, that is white on white or black on black. This information flies in the face of the popular racist myth that the majority of rapes are black on white. Where the age of the offender was known, 50% were between the ages of 20 & 30 years.

The murders and rapes of women come out of a climate of sexism where it is customary to think of women as less than men, to treat women as sexual objects through pornography and advertising, to dehumanize women through the use of sexual epithets, to subject women to internalized sexism (the corollary to internalized racism) through devaluing and minimizing our lives and withholding opportunity and equality.

Why should we consider these murders and rapes

as acts of hate violence? Hate violence comes from generalized hatred or prejudice toward a group of people who hold in common a single difference from the defined norm-- religion, race, gender, sexual identity--and it evolves out of a societal system of oppression such as anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, etc. Hate violence is shown toward groups of people who are not generally valued by the overall society and who do not have full access to justice. Hate violence is the extreme end of the bigotry and prejudice that exists in the general society and its institutions.

The proponents of racial violence shout "Nigger," and burn crosses as warning; the proponents of anti-Semitic violence shout "Dirty Jew" and draw Nazi symbols on synagogues as warning; and the proponents of sexual violence shout "Bitch," and create magazines and movies of women's sexually assaulted and brutalized bodies as warning. African-Americans have been and are threatened, stalked and killed because of their race, their culture; Jews have a long history of death and destruction brought to their lives through hatred because of their religion, their culture; and women have had a long history of violence against their lives simply because they are female.

These figures for Arkansas--9 women murdered in a three month period, 656 women and girls raped in a year--show how women are in a terrible season of brutalization and death. And there is not public outrage in response to it. We must learn to understand this brutality in the context of hate violence so that we can begin to learn the ways to change that context to one that values women, that considers women whole and worthwhile human beings, and to create a society that does not give permission for violence against women.

Suzanne Pharr

We will hold a statewide meeting of volunteers who monitor for us at the University of Central Arkansas on July 8 & 9.

Women interested in joining us in monitoring racial, religious, sexual, and anti-gay violence and the activities of hate groups are welcome to join us for this training meeting. The weekend is free. It is a great opportunity to join other women in talking about crucial issues which affect all of us. Please call Kelly Mitchell-Clark if interested.

Support Group for Adult Survivors of Incest

The group, led by Betty Moseley, will begin on June 29th, and will meet from 6:00p.m. every Wednesday for 12 weeks. Those interested in the group should call before June 28. The group is limited to 8 participants.

Carriage House for Rent

At the back of our building is a carriage house that has extraordinary architecture -- floor to ceiling windows, sunken living room, vaulted ceilings, fireplace, spiral staircase, two bedrooms and two baths. All in all, approximately 1500 sq. ft. We would like to rent it to someone in our constituency. The rent is \$450.00. Children and pets are allowed.

If interested, please call us.

Conference to Build Black Women's Agenda Planned

The Women's Project is in the process of planning our 1990 Annual Conference. The focus of this conference will be to develop an agenda for Black Women.

Women that are interested in participating in the planning of this conference, please call Janet Perkins Doles at the Women's Project at 372-5113.

South's Fastest Growing Industry: Poultry

The poultry industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the South. Yet the stories of the terrible working conditions in the poultry processing plants continue to be heard. With encouragement from other organizations in the South who are trying to improve the conditions in the poultry plants, the Women's Project initiated a study to look at the poultry industry in Arkansas.

We met with people and organizations who had been impacted by the poultry industry to learn about the situation and to explore the possibility of providing support to poultry workers who are interested in improving their situation.

Since 1983, there has been growing concern among residents of northwestern Arkansas that the Poultry industry is polluting the region's land and groundwater supply through wastes from its poultry processing plants and poultry farmers.

Much of the information on environmental issues was supplied by Steve Work, a Green Forest resident who has filed suit against Tyson Foods, Green Forest city officials, the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the state department of Pollution Control & Ecology. According to Work, the problems began when he and some nearby residents became sick. Most, if not all, of the residents rely on well water for drinking and bathing. It was then discovered that a sinkhole had opened up in a creek that received discharge from the municipal sewage treatment plant. That sinkhole allowed the wastewater to directly enter and contaminate the groundwater supply, thereby causing the diarrhea, vomiting and other illnesses afflicting the residents.

Since then, numerous complaints have been filed against the plants for discharging liquid wastes in

unauthorized bodies of water. In tests conducted by the state health department, dye put in the outfall from the Green Forest treatment plant showed up in wells and springs as far as 12 miles away.

Poultry plants have three ways to dispose of wastes generated by poultry processing: discharging it into municipal wastewater treatment plants, spreading the "sludge" on land or storing the liquid waste in lagoons or ponds. There have been problems with each of these methods. For example, Tyson has been accused of overloading the Green Forest wastewater treatment facility for several years until

the city was forced to upgrade the facility and increase its capacity. Right now, the plant can handle wastes generated by a city of 175,000 though Green Forest's population is only about 1,400. That excess capacity was created to meet Tyson's needs.

Land application of solid wastes has been approved by the EPA and PC&E but strict guidelines must be followed. These guidelines include careful application and not putting it on during rainy periods or cold weather. Tyson Foods,

according to citizens' complaints, has done both. Unless the sludge is properly applied, rain will carry the run-off from the waste into nearby streams and eventually, the groundwater supply.

Lagoons or holding spaces for liquid wastes, too, can be problematic. These are lined with puncture-proof materials so that theoretically the waste can never seep into the surrounding land and eventually into the ground water supply. In Dardanelle, the lining did break and rose to the top of the lagoon like a giant balloon.

Many of the residents in northwest Arkansas had

Because their jobs are constantly in jeopardy and their economic lives depend upon those jobs in communities where \$5 an hour jobs are rare, workers were afraid to talk about problems in the plant. We talked with five women, two of whom were former workers. Three of those women, including one who had worked in the poultry plant for 17 years, talked at length about the penalties for talking about work problems; they said, for instance, that one plant did not even allow company picnics .

been engaged in activity against the poultry industry before and seemed battle-fatigued. However, they were sympathetic to any kind of organizing against the environmental atrocities.

In Arkansas, we found no consumer groups which are presently working on the health issues of chicken consumption. Although there have been reports of salmonella poisoning on 60 Minutes, and concern expressed about the antibiotics, other chemicals and heavy metals fed to the chickens, no action is being taken, even in terms of consumer education, in the state. Two health food organizations said that commercially grown chickens were unhealthy and the solution is to buy their organic chickens. Potentially there is a link between the consumers who are concerned about consuming the chemicals in the chickens, and the plant workers who are exposed to the chemicals in the plants and on the farms. (There is also an overlap between these two groups--in the poultry processing plants they serve chicken in the cafeteria.)

Our most difficult research was with the workers themselves. Because their jobs are constantly in jeopardy and their economic lives depend upon those jobs in communities where \$5 an hour jobs are rare, workers were afraid to talk about problems in the plant. We talked with five women, two of whom were former workers. Three of those women, including one who had worked in the poultry plant for 17 years, talked at length about the penalties for talking about work problems; they said, for instance, that one plant did not even allow company picnics because the company did not want workers coming together in group settings. Such is the company fear of organizing. The former worker was afraid for the survival of her current business if the company learned that she had discussed worker problems.

From all the workers we heard about similar problems:

1. Problems with repetitive motion. Carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, etc. We were told by a local doctor who treats poultry workers that these problems could be solved or alleviated by proper physical training before a worker initially begins work. However, the workers said that what is

needed is change in work assignments during the day, adequate breaks, changes in the work stations related to the height of the worker and the height of the machine, and most importantly, adequate time off to heal when physical problems occur. Workers are frequently given pain medications when they complain of problems. Giving workers strong pain relievers when they are working around heavy machinery increases their risk of accidental injury.

2. Respiratory diseases. The workers perform their tasks in very hot or very cold and always very wet conditions. The company needs to attend to ventilation, heating and cooling systems. Also workers are affected by gas leaks. The company needs to act immediately and responsibly to such leaks and provide examinations for the workers.

3. Skin rashes and diseases. These are caused by the worker being splashed with chicken juices. Better protective gear is needed, and the company should provide adequate time and means for cleaning the juice off the worker's body.

4. Physical injury. Cuts, eye infections, deafness. Better protective gear should be provided--made of high quality, top of the line materials. The workers should not be required to purchase their own protective gear.

5. Stress. The line moves at a fast pace, and the breaks are not adequate for workers to visit the toilet (long lines frequently form) and to rest. Toilet visits are rarely allowed except at break time. Workers frequently given little or no notice of when they will be required to work overtime.

6. Health benefits. Health benefits are provided but going through examination by the company nurse and then the company-approved small town doctor who receives the majority of his/her income from company employees often leads to a minimizing of the injury. Also, this system leads to workers almost never getting certified for worker's compensation. Tyson, among others, self-insures for worker's compensation, rather than participate in the state fund. Therefore, companies have a great incentive to fight every worker compensation claim. When

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Buying A Building and Building Community

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particularly important for social change organizations to own space where gatherings can be held, and people can come together to figure out the ways to bring freedom and justice into their lives. And we feel it is especially important for women's organizations to own property, for we have had a history of limited access.

The history of women is a record of women being kept out of political clubs, social organizations, teams, places where people meet, talk and make decisions. Owning this property gives us and other women interested in social change a place to gather for politics, for support, for fun. It is a place to build the community of women. It is a place where women can feel safe, where they can know they belong. It is a place we can call our own.

At the core of social change work is people meeting together to tell their stories, to develop understanding and analysis, and to undertake work together to bring about change. For instance, at the heart of the battered women's movement since its beginning has been battered women coming together in a safe place to tell their stories. All else has emanated from those connections.

It is essential that we build community because it is isolation that increases our vulnerability to discrimination and oppression. Isolation is a common element in the lives of battered women, old women, disabled women, lesbians, sexually abused girls and women, prostitutes, etc. Our isolation leads to accepting blame for the unjust treatment we receive and it prevents us from reaching out for the support necessary to change our lives.

The Women's Project building is the physical cornerstone in the work to build a community of women united in their desire to improve the lives of all women.

The Gift of Giving

And how are we raising the money to buy and improve this property? Through direct requests for

donations from people who believe in the work of the Women's Project. We have asked people to give us "stretch" gifts or larger donations or pledges than they would customarily make. And the majority of people we have asked have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to give. For instance, one woman who made a very large donation told us that it was the first time she had ever been asked face to face for such a donation and that she felt honored. Why the honor? Because she believes in the work we do.

More and more people are coming to understand that a charitable contribution is not only a gift to the non-profit organization such as a social change organization or a church but is a gift to one's self.



We recognize that if we want this imperfect world to change, then we must help that change along either through gifts of our time or money--or in many cases, of both. By giving, we do something positive not only for other people but for ourselves. It is an act of belief and hope and of one's connection to other humans.

I grew up in a time (40's & 50's) that there were strong models of people who believed that one had to contribute to society in more ways than just doing a job to earn money; one had to give something back. For instance, there was John F. Kennedy who

said, "Ask not what your country can do for you but ask instead what you can do for your country." And then there were the leaders of the Black community who believed that survival depended upon people helping each other--that it was indeed people's Christian duty.

In an article in the 2/27/89 New Yorker about Marian Wright Edelman, we learn that

For Marian Wright, growing up in the small town of Bennettsville, South Carolina, where her father was the minister of Shiloh Baptist Church, the two most important expectations were getting an education and giving service... 'Working for the community was as much a part of our existence as eating and sleeping and church.'

My own white Southern family held similar values. Throughout my childhood, I witnessed my mother and father give to our neighbors in times of hardships when it appeared that my parents had little or nothing monetary to give. And no matter how little they made on their 80 acre dirt farm, 10% of their income was always tithed to the church, regardless of what needs their eight children had. When my father died of old age a number of years ago, an elderly friend of his told me at the funeral that he remembered my young father walking across the fields on Saturday evenings to collect quarters and fifty cent pieces from church members to make sure that the church could keep going during hard times.

These models have always stayed in my mind, but like many of my generation, I have not chosen the church as my place to do community service; instead, I have chosen activism on social justice issues. However, it took me many years to realize that one could and should give to social change organizations the way one formerly gave to the church. Finally, I came to understand the both the spiritual and social aspects of our social change work.

It was also then that I gained some peace about my change in status from low-income workingclass to middleclass, for I realized that the only way that the privilege of education and income could be made

bearable was through the sharing of it in clearly defined and intentional ways. My life in many ways began to make more sense once I began tithing 10% of my income to organizations that do the work that I with my limited time cannot do but which I believe in so deeply. I feel particularly satisfied when I designate money for organizations who have difficulty getting money from traditional sources: progressive women of color groups, lesbian organizations, radical peace groups.

Hence, I join many others who give money because they do not have extended time to give. And those are the kinds of people who give money to the Women's Project. They say to us that they want the world changed around issues of violence against women, women's economic status, the damaging effect of personal and institutional racism and homophobia, incarcerated women, prostitutes, old women and women with disabilities--and they give us money to work in their name. We use this money to do our most risk-taking work--that work that has the most chance to make lasting change. Most of our donors and pledgers are women because they recognize that very little change is going to happen on behalf of women unless we do it ourselves. We have an obligation to make our women's organizations strong.

This understanding has brought me a new role in our fundraising efforts here. I once thought that having grown up poor I would never be able to overcome my issues about money to the point that I could ask someone for a donation. But these days I

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How You Can Help Buy the Building

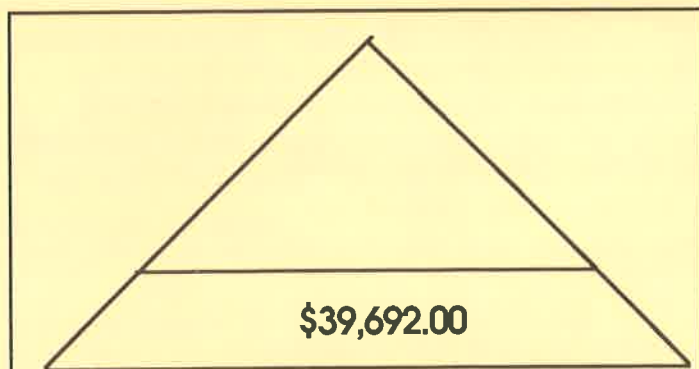
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ask all kinds of people for a pledge or a donation because I know that my asking can be a gift to their lives and that their donation can be a gift to the lives of women.

We are buying a building for the Women's Project one gift at a time. We ask you to join us.

There are several ways in which you can help buy the building:

- By making a large one-time gift
- By making a monthly or quarterly pledge (or increasing the one that you have already made.)
- By making a yearly pledge for three years.
- By continuing to attend the Women's Project fundraising events
- Hosting a fundraising party of your own (invite your friends who do not yet know about the women's Project – tell them about the building campaign and ask them to support us)



With the support of our community around the country, the Women's Project is well on its way to meeting its \$130,000 fundraising goal. Now more than ever is the time to contribute to the Women's Project. Please send your contributions to the Women's Project • 2224 Main Street, Little Rock AR 72206 or use the envelope enclosed with this newsletter. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Bousquet Joins Staff

Forrest City native Debbie Bousquet as a new co-coordinator for its non-traditional job training program, "Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers."

Debbie, who started June 1, fills the vacancy created by Charlye Crawford's resignation March 31. Debbie will work with co-coordinator Janet Perkins Doles, and be primarily responsible for identifying training and employment opportunities for program participants and placing them in those positions. Advocacy to raise employers' awareness about the need to hire women in male-dominated fields will also be a major piece of her work.

Just before joining the Women's Project, Debbie was a field coordinator for the division of children and family services of the state Department of Human Services. There she was a liaison between DHS and community-based care providers who offered alternatives to the institutionalization of delinquent and at-risk youth. Before that, Debbie spent four years as a displaced homemaker coordinator based at Crowley's Ridge Vo-Tech in Forrest City. To help women re-enter the workforce, she taught employability skills, goal setting, motivational concepts, interviewing techniques, resume writing and did job development.

The plight of battered women is the issue Debbie feels most strongly about. "I was a battered wife and it's important to me that women know they don't have to stay in those situations. I realize that they stay because they think they don't have any options. They lose sight of their goals, their self esteem and even lose themselves in the process because they become whatever the abuser wants them to be. I want to help them realize that there are options and that they are viable people."

Kelly Mitchell-Clarke

Thanks to all of those who helped launch our building campaign on May 12th.

The event raised over \$10,000 for the building fund.

Poultry Project Report

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workers discover that no one ever receives worker compensation, they are reluctant to file and no lawyer is willing to assist them. The record also stays clear—few, if any, worker compensation claims are filed and the companies can claim that there are no injuries.

There appear to be two different approaches used when someone has been injured. One is to keep them busy working at a job which they are able to do, in spite of their injury. As long as the employee is working, even if they require strong pain relievers, they are less likely to file and win a worker compensation claim. The other approach is to give the worker an extremely difficult job upon their return to work after an injury; when the employee is unable to complete the shift, she is fired. Again, although she would be legally entitled to worker compensation, it is unlikely that she would be able to obtain it.

7. Economic benefits. Because plants are located in economically depressed areas, there is always a constant supply of low-income people eager for work; consequently, the plants maintain an economic stranglehold on the area and manage to place any requirements they wish on workers. The \$5 an hour they pay, while little more than subsistence wages, are accepted by local workers because job opportunities of any kind are so few. The other problem is the lack of opportunity for advancement for women workers. They begin on the line and end on the line. The very most they can hope for is for the occasional woman to be made supervisor.

Finally, the overall message we received is that there are serious problems for workers but they are not yet ready to organize to make change. For the most part they live in a small town climate of economic depression where the company has control of economics through owning banks and grocery stores, through providing insurance business to doctors and dentists, etc. The Chamber of Commerce usually supports the poultry industry's

policies because it wants its economic presence. Workers indicated to us that they were not only afraid of economic violence but of physical violence if they took a stand against the policies of the company.

From talking with these workers and others in communities where the chicken is king, we felt that what is most needed is the long, slow process of building a relationship of trust with women workers by providing other kinds of services and meeting other not specifically work-related needs. In a climate of fear, trust has to be built over time, and issues of self-esteem, confidence and strength have to be addressed. Support has to be provided and community building has to be done.

That is the foundation from which workers will have the support and courage to act as a group to confront inequity and injustice.

*Cheryl Doss
(with Suzanne Pharr and
Kelly Mitchell-Clarke)*

Nontraditional Job Training Programs Scheduled

Orientation: July 24
Training: July 31 – August 25

Orientation: September 25
Training: October 2 – October 27

MCC Benefits Community Groups

The Metropolitan Community Church held its first Healing Hearts Helping Hands dance to benefit the Women's Project. MCC will hold dances the first Saturday of each month at 8:00p.m. at the Unitarian Church on Reservoir Road. Other groups to benefit from the MCC Dance will be Kramer House on July 1 (residence for People with AIDS), Advocates for Battered Women on August 5, and Food Supplement Program for the Kramer House Food Bank on September 2. Tickets are \$5.00.

Women's Project Library News

New Hours

The Wednesday night hours for the library have been changed slightly to 6:30p.m. to 8:00p.m. Other library hours are Thursday Friday, and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00p.m.

Yard Sale

The Library Committee raised almost \$500 for the library at our yard sale on April 1st. We would like to do another yard sale in the fall...September 16th with a rain date of September 30. Please save as many items as you can until then to donate, especially clothes and knick knacks which are our biggest sellers. If you can't save the items and must get them out of your sight immediately, call and leave a message for me at the Women's Project and we will arrange storage. Otherwise, bring your donated goods to the Project on September 15th.

If you don't have a membership yet to the Women's Library, here are some of the things you are missing.

New Novels

Nervous Conditions by Tsitsi Dangarembga, Seal Press. This brilliant debut novel by a young writer from Zimbabwe is the moving story of a girl's coming of age as well as a compelling narrative of the devastating human loss involved in the colonization of one culture by another. The reviewer for the African Times has declared, "Another example of a bold new national literature...one which bears no mimicry of European forms and experience."

Three Glasses of Wine Have Been Removed from this Story by Marian Michener, Silverleaf Press. The scene for this book is the western U.S., and the cast of players includes Olivia, a recovering alcoholic and the narrator, her lovers (women, and, earlier in her life, men), and her friends. "Maybe the most impressive thing about the book is the way Michener allows us to participate in Olivia's growing awareness of her own addiction (to alcohol). Sometimes we know more about it than she does, yet we're never tempted to put her down or get impatient with her gradual coming-to-terms with the pattern that has grown into a disease that more and more controls her life." From review in Lesbian Contradiction.

New Children's Book

Harriet Tubman: They Called Me Moses by Linda D. Meyer, Parenting Press. "Moses" brought hundreds to the promised land. She tended to the wounded on the North side of the civil war. She helped the newly freed learn to live free. In this book, her world comes alive for small children through realistic illustrations and a subtle use of dialect.

New Nonfiction

The Devil in the shape of a Woman by Carol F. Karlsen. A revealing look at 17th Century America where "women who failed to serve men failed to serve God" and ended up branded as witches.

AIDS: The Women edited by Ines Rieder and Patricia Ruppelt, Cleis Press. A ground-breaking collection by women from 12 countries whose lives have been irrevocably changed by AIDS.

New Poetry

Desert Run: Poems and Stories by Mitsuye Yamada, Kitchen Table Women of Color Press. "Yamada's writing weaves back and forth – between Japan and America, between childhood and adulthood, between past and future generations – connecting the strands of her personal history. (She) teaches us an important lesson: to do more than survive we must rescue and learn to love even those parts of ourselves that have been used against us as deadly weapons." From a review by Amy Edgington in NCADV Voice.

New Section – Audiotapes

Marge Piercy reading from At the Core: Selected Poems, 1976.
Gertrude Stein reads from her works.
Eudora Welty reads her stories.
Women and Foreign Policy, 1988 program on KABF Radio.
Women and AIDS, 1988 Program on KABF Radio.
Battered Lesbians, 1983 Program on KPFF Radio

Small Sampling of Periodicals

Hot Wire: The Journal of Women's Music and Culture.
Spare Rib: A Women's Liberation Magazine from Great Britain.
Woman of Power: A Magazine of Feminism, Spirituality and Politics
Sojourner: The Women's Forum
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Lynn Frost

Our Current Work

Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers

A training and advocacy project to make nontraditional jobs accessible to women.

Technical Assistance to Domestic Violence Programs

Workshops on organizational management.

Women's Watchcare Network

A project to monitor incidents of racial, religious, sexual, and anti-gay violence, and the activities of hate groups in Arkansas.

The Homophobia and Racism Project

Workshops on understanding racism and homophobia and developing methods to eliminating them.

Monthly Discussion Groups

Topics of interest to women and their lives are held the 2nd Monday of each month.

Communications and Events

A newsletter, a lending library, statewide and regional conferences, and production of women singers, poets and novelists.

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The Women's Project - Our Mission

Our goal is social change or, as the poet Adrienne Rich writes, "the transformation of the world." We believe this world can be changed to become a place of peace and justice for all women.

We take risks in our work; we take unpopular stands. We work for all women and against all forms of discrimination and oppression. We believe that we cannot work for all women and against sexism unless we also work against racism, classism, ageism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism and homophobia. We see the connection among these oppressions as the context for violence against women in this society.

We are concerned in particular about issues of importance to traditionally underrepresented women: poor women, aged women, women of color, teenage mothers, lesbians, women in prisons, etc. All are women who experience discrimination and violence against their lives.

We are committed to working multi-culturally, multi-racially, and to making our work and cultural events accessible to low income women. We believe that women will not know equality until they know economic justice.

We believe that a few committed women working in coalition and in consensus with other women can make significant change in the quality of life for all women.

Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism

By Suzanne Pharr

The first book of its kind on the subject of homophobia and sexism. Essential reading for those whose lives and organizations are affected by homophobia and for those who do trainings on homophobia.

Table of Contents

Homophobia: a weapon of sexism
An analysis of why homophobia exists and the way it works

The effect of homophobia on women's liberation
A discussion of the ways homophobia stops our work

How the oppressions are connected
The common methods used by sexism, racism, homophobia/heterosexism, etc. to keep people oppressed

Women in exile: the lesbian experience
Internalized homophobia and strategies for setting ourselves free

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Volunteers are needed for the newsletter, library, bulk mail, clerical and support work, research, fundraising, organizing special events, video projects, leading support groups and more. For more information call Kerry at 372-5113.

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Farming My Politics

I define myself as an organizer and an activist and, when I'm at my best, a farmer and a revolutionary. As the 8th child of Georgia dirt farmers I sometimes think that working in the fields during my first 18 years prepared the ground for most of my subsequent political thinking.

Ours was a family farm, the kind that never made any money but kept ten people alive and growing and thriving. On 85 acres, we farmed with mules and plows and finally, in the 50's, with a tractor. We sold some of our harvest at the state farmer's market out of the back of a pickup truck. To survive, we bartered goods and services, and our highest value was placed on independence and cooperation.

We knew we had to have both independence and cooperation in order to survive. If we lost our independence, we would lose our freedom to be who we were, and if we did not have cooperation with others, we would not survive: the result of these losses would be spiritual and physical death.

These values have carried over into my political beliefs: that I must work to enable all of us to have the freedom to be who we are and this must be done in a context of cooperation so that all of us survive. The practice of these beliefs necessitates equality: non-hierarchical structures, consensus, shared power.

Among farmers and people who think and talk about farming there are two

different positions about the best way to grow the food for the world. The first position is that bigger is better, that we must produce on a large scale, that we must be big business. These people believe that large farms, usually owned by corporations or conglomerates, using high technology, large machinery and the newest chemicals are the only way to feed the world. These farms use enormous amounts of gasoline, water, electricity, oil, and they produce enormous amounts of goods. There is a sense that the land can be taken care of chemically and will keep producing as long as new farming technology is created.

The second position is that smaller is better, that we need small farms that are small businesses providing income for small groups of people who live on the land. These people believe in low technology and small machinery, in as few chemicals as possible, in decentralization, where produce is sold at state or local farmers markets. They believe that our resources such as oil are not limitless, and that our water-tables are disappearing. They believe in replenishing the land and in working to keep the topsoil from disappearing. They believe that land can be abused and destroyed.

I take the second position.

It didn't take me long in my political

(Continued on Page 2)

This may be your last issue of *Transformation*. See page 11.

Farming my Politics

From Page 1

experience to discover that there were two similar positions people take about political movements.

The first position is that the way to get bigger and better is to create institutional structures as fast as possible and to connect them to the mainstream of society. Those who hold this position work for social reform by lobbying for legislative change, working on systems, engaging in electoral politics, and seeking government funding for programs.

The second position chooses farming language to name itself: grassroots.

Those who hold this position believe that our work should be local, beginning with small groups of people seeking answers to local and consequently societal questions. They believe that change comes slow, and from within. Autonomy and independence from external controls are highly valued. Once the small group becomes strong, then there is a need for networking, coalescing, cooperating.

I hold the second position.

Working with the earth takes patience. After the pleasure of preparing the ground and planting the seeds, there is the waiting which can be prolonged by droughts, floods, high winds. All can be destroyed in one day of disastrous weather. But the joy of farming is the possibility of beginning anew, if not this season, then next. Renewal is always possible as long as one respects the land. There is that green and shining moment of rebirth in the spring,

and all of the work that goes with it. Life is not finished with one season's effort.

The land loves diversity. Plant the same crops year after year, without variety, and the land loses its vitality and ability to produce fully. Left alone, the land gives us hundreds of different plants on any given acre. Many types and varieties have been diminished through the application of high technology to farming, but people are countering this potential loss by collecting and saving old seeds to make sure that we can have on this earth all our wonderful variety.

The land requires replenishment. We cannot just take from it year after year for our own needs without returning substance to it. When that replenishment happens in a consistent and thoughtful way, then the yield of the land is large and unending.

I have never understood government involvement in farming. I don't understand paying farmers in the 1950's to leave fields unplanted, those same fields that are filled with scrub pines and sagebrush today throughout the South. I don't understand buying up surplus milk and cheese and wheat and corn and letting it rot in warehouses while large portions of the world's population go without food. I don't understand the practice of paying dairy farmers to have their herds slaughtered.

I don't understand the combined forces of government and banks urging farmers to expand their holdings at high prices and then foreclosing on them now when farm prices are low.

I need evidence that the govern-

ment's involvement is for the best interest of farmers and food for a hungry world and not for political coercion and control.

I don't understand the involvement of the government in social change movements, here or abroad. I don't understand a government who calls dissenters at home terrorists and terrorists abroad freedom fighters. I don't understand a government that says it has to destroy a village in order to save it. I don't understand a government that dismantles piece by piece our civil rights and civil liberties and calls those who struggle to maintain our civil rights and human values anti-American and puts them in jail when they protest government sanctioned injury to our people.

I need evidence that the government's involvement in social change movements is because it wants to help create a world where all of us can be who we are, living with justice and peace in our lives.

Movement work like small farming, is slow. It requires thoughtful, careful steps, autonomy and independent thought, diversity and inclusiveness. It requires resistance to adversity, and a commitment to begin again after losses and defeats. Movement work is only people putting their acts of resistance and creation and growth together, people who refuse to let the seeds disappear and save them for the future, people who refuse to destroy a village in order to save it, people who believe that change is made one person at a time, until our numbers are legion.

Suzanne Pharr

BOOK NOTES FROM THE WOMEN'S PROJECT LIBRARY

The library continues to grow and we are now looking for more bookshelves to accommodate our selection of books, periodicals, video and audio tapes. Also on our Wish List are blank video tapes so we can copy some of the good programs people have been taping for us, blank audio tapes, and donated periodicals when you're finished with them.

RAISING MONEY TO BUY MORE BOOKS

Our next big fundraiser will be a Yard Sale on Saturday, September 16 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. If you can donate goods to the sale, try to hold onto them until Friday, Sept. 15 and bring them to the Project between noon and 8 p.m. If you must get rid of them immediately, call the Project and leave a message for Lynn Frost. Clothes and knick-knacks seem to be our biggest items, but we will take anything in reasonable condition.

Look for the Women's Project Library book sale table at the upcoming Women's Conference on Tuesday, October 3 at the Camelot Hotel. We will be selling books, cards, and calendars, with all money raised going to the library. You will see us again at the Season Sampler in December and again at the Holiday Open House.

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

The Forbidden Stitch: An Asian American Women's Anthology, edited by Shirley Geok-lin Lim, Mayumi Tsutakawa and Margarita Donnelly. "This book represents a fine diversity of Asian American women who may claim their native



soil in Oakland or Tucson or Manila or New Dehli. These writers and artists, many of them young or publishing for the first time, are breaking down a barrier to make a statement." (from the Introduction)

Three Swahili Women: Life Histories from Mombasa, Kenya, edited and translated by Sarah Mirza and Margaret Strobel. This exploration of the lives of three Mombasa women reveals the complexity of Swahili society—its ethnic diversity, the impact of slavery, and the varied reactions to colonialism and Western culture.

News: A Suspense Novel of Women. Revolution and Love, by Heather Conrad.

Can they pull it off? Can a bunch of women really gain control of the world's most sophisticated computers and create the action to make the empire-builders and the money-makers stop destroying the people and the Earth? Can the thousands of them together in NEWS truly bring peace and love into the world on a global scale?

At Risk, by Alice Hoffman. Amanda is an eleven-year-old girl who contracts a disease that no one ever thought would touch the

small New England town where her family lives, a disease that throws her parents and brother, their friends and neighbors into a terrible struggle to come to terms with it.

VIDEOS AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

We now have five shows on tape featuring lesbian mothers—two documentaries about gays and lesbians parenting, a Geraldo Rivera show on lesbian custody, and a 20/20 segment and a Sally Jessy Raphael show on lesbian mothers.

Don't forget the library is open on Wednesday night from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

YARD SALE

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9 am-4 pm

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Women's Project

2224 Main

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To donate goods, call
372-5113 or drop by the
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September 15th from
noon to 8 pm.

Women's Watchcare: Eyes and Ears for Justice

During these past three months, those of us working on the Women's Watchcare Network have had good reason to feel discouraged about our work to document racist, sexist, anti-Semitic and anti-gay/lesbian violence, and the activities of hate groups. Almost daily we are inundated with accounts of hate and violence committed against people just because of who they are. But we have also had even more reason to be encouraged and hopeful about the possibility of effecting change as more and more people join the resistance movement against violence in hopes of making our state safe for all people.

In July, just as we were preparing for the training for our volunteer monitors and allies, Little Rock was in the midst of a racially explosive situation surrounding repeated attempts by black activist Say McIntosh to burn the U.S. flag to protest social injustice. Angry whites descended on the State Capitol carrying signs such as "Save the flag, burn a Nigger named McIntosh" and others that urged black people to "go back to Africa." Members of hate groups were there, including a group of Nazi Skinheads from Memphis and Ralph Forbes, a Pope County resident who is a self-described white supremacist and leader of several groups who hate Jews, people of color and gay men and lesbians. Not surprisingly, shouting matches between blacks and whites occurred and fights broke out.

Whether or not people should be allowed to burn the flag is an emotional issue that has polarized people in Arkansas and across the U.S. But our concern is that whether or not we support flag burning, the right to do so is constitutionally protected and so should the person who tries to do it. There was, of course, the added dimension of racism, despite initial attempts by whites to dismiss it. We know that had Say been white, he may have been



been called "commie pig" but never "Nigger" and never told to go back to Africa. It seemed as though what enraged whites the most was not the issue of burning Old Glory but that a black person who, according to these racists, has done nothing to contribute to this county and in fact only takes from it in the form of welfare and other social programs, would have the gall to protest anything.

Throughout this turmoil, what strengthened us was the willingness of human rights and religious groups to speak against the intolerance and hate that seemed to have gripped the city. A

loosely-formed coalition presented a press conference supporting human rights and then decided to organize a silent vigil that would monitor what was supposed to be Say's third try at flag-burning to ensure his civil rights were protected and to let rational, justice-loving people know that — despite the public uproar — they were not alone. Even more importantly, the coalition members were eager to commit themselves to developing strategies to eradicate racism, not just protest its existence.

At the end of the same month, the Arkansas Gazette, one of two state-wide newspapers, ran a three-day series on gay men and lesbians in the state entitled "Searching for Acceptance: Homosexuals in Arkansas." While we have some criticism of the articles, all in all we were heartened to read about the lives of a group of people who are generally despised by this society in the pages of a mainstream newspaper.

We know that in this Bible Belt state there are many who oppose homosexuality. However, we were unprepared for the onslaught of hate letters from people who thought that the lives of gay men and lesbians didn't merit discussion in a "family newspaper". In letter after venomous letter, so-called Christians warned lesbians and gay men that their perversion — which could be altered through prayer and faith — would earn them God's wrath and subsequently, a reserved seat in hell.

Then came the second onslaught, this time from gay men and lesbians as well as heterosexuals, who commended the Gazette on its series and took the first group of letter writers to task for making a mockery of God's message of love. These letters came from people like us, people who believe in the dignity of all human beings and individual freedom and "justice for all." These are the people who embolden us to go further and push harder in our work to make this state safe for all of us.

This "going further and pushing harder" includes our work to put violence against women in the same context as hate violence against people of color, Jews, Catholics and gay men and lesbians, which we discussed in our last newsletter. In June, a Forrest City woman was strangled to death, and her boyfriend, on whose behalf she had testified when he was accused of killing another woman two years ago, is the prime suspect. In early July, a white woman was found shot to death in her car, and three black men have been charged in the killing. Police believe the shooting was drug related. The rapes continue to mount but since we have yet to get volunteers to read every newspaper in the state, it's difficult to give an accurate count. However, the information we have tells us that many more rapes are committed every day in every conceivable location and situation.

Earlier we mentioned our July training of volunteers and allies,

which was conducted by two staff persons of North Carolinians Against Racist and Religious Violence in Durham. It was an informative two-day session that provided us with the tools we needed to begin the Women's Watchcare Network but also left us feeling drained from being bombarded with philosophies of hate. We were given a history of the Ku Klux Klan and German Nazism, which helped us to see the differences and similarities in the two philosophies which have come together in the 1980's to create an even more frightening hate doctrine. We were given in-depth materials about the key hate leaders in Arkansas and the organizations they run. And we also learned who the targets of hate group activity are — people of color, lesbians, gay men, and Jews — and that an inclusive social change movement of these groups is necessary to combat bias motivated violence.

Perhaps the most useful part of the training was the community response exercises, where participants discussed various hate crimes and how communities could help the victims of such crimes as well as raise awareness about bigoted violence. That let us know that something can be done, that we are on the right track, that we can transform Arkansas.

Another way we know that we're on the right track is the fact that more than 100 women and men in this state have joined us on the

Women's Watchcare Network. The Women's Watchcare Network can't work unless there are women (and some men) around the state who agree to participate. And by becoming volunteer monitors, these women and men decided that they want to be part of the movement to counter bigotry and violence by helping us document such incidents. They have decided to be our eyes and ears for justice.

Kelly Mitchell-Clark

FEDERAL WORKERS IN PULASKI COUNTY

This year, designate all or part of your Combined Federal Campaign contribution to the Women's Project. A form will be distributed to you at your workplace. Designate the Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock AR 72206, CFC #9002. If you would like materials about the Women's Project to distribute to co-workers, call Kerry at 372-5113.

.....We Are Not Afraid.....

There is so much information circulating about the job market of the future. Much of what you hear can cause you to have hope, or produce panic.

We are talking about a job market that is drastically changing in the type of work that will be performed and who will be doing the work.

Two of every three new workers in this country will be women. Women, together with minorities and recent immigrants, will add 19 million new workers to the labor force, which will reach 139 million by the turn of the century. White men, the majority of the U.S. labor force, will represent less than 10 percent of all incoming workers. Women already make up about 45 percent of the labor force, and the pressure that today exists for employers, labor unions, and legislators to improve women's access to jobs by addressing a range of issues will increase as that share grows.

The economy has long been and will continue to be dominated by the service sector. This sector includes transportation, communication, and public utilities; wholesale and retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; services; and government.

High technology is rapidly providing more and more new careers. Among the exciting areas of future high tech employment are robotics, telecommunications, medical technology, information processing and computer aided design and manufacturing. Ninety percent of the new high-tech jobs by 1995 will be in services rather than

manufacturing.

Construction will continue to grow to new heights in the future, with most of the employment growth being seen in the area of renovating miles of highways, dams that are in danger of breaking if they are not fortified, millions of existing homes, apartments and office complexes that will be expanded or remodeled rather than replaced by new expensive structures, expanding sewage treatment facilities; and replacing old water lines, and other public systems. City and state governments are devoting billions of dollars annually to these projects, which are considered mandatory for the country to progress.

Construction has a broad range of occupations that will need to be filled. Some of these occupations are air conditioning/heating technician, architectural draftsman, bricklayer, carpenter, carpet/floor installer, concrete worker, construction estimator, construction supervisor, drywall installer, electrician, glazier (glass installer), insulation installer, painter, paper hanger, plasterer, plumber, roofer, sheet-metal worker, structural worker and surveyor.

The number of new jobs is growing, and most analysis of the needs of that job market clearly informs us that the skills levels of many of these jobs will be rising. Employers will place a high premium on higher levels of reading, computation, communication, and reasoning skills. Such skills will be vital to our domestic economic growth, as well as our ability to compete abroad.

The skills hurdle is even more pronounced in the service sector, where virtually all the nation's job growth will take place for the rest of the century. The secretary who once pecked away on an electric typewriter must now master a word processor, a computer and telecommunications equipment. Even the cashier at the 7-Eleven store has to know how to sell money orders and do minor maintenance jobs on the Slurpee and Big Gulp machines. Virtually all the mid and low-wage service jobs require more flexible workers who can read, reason, learn new tasks on their own and deal efficiently and graciously with customers and clients.

In the past, high tech occupations involved extensive education because of the research effort needed to develop new technologies. But finding new uses for emerging technologies will be the future trend. This will involve more technical and again, very good "reasoning" skills. To put high tech development into everyday use, it is estimated that seven or eight technicians will be needed for each scientist, engineer, physician, or other professional position.

Construction workers who have a technical background will be prepared the best for the future. More and more employers are looking for construction workers who have completed vocational or technical programs at a high school or community college.

The situation that we are faced with is that there will be very few jobs created for those who cannot read, follow directions, use mathe-

matics and are unwilling to be retrained. Those presently employed or those potential new entrants to the workforce who have poor basic skills will be ill-equipped to survive on the job market.

There are 27 million illiterate adults; up to 20% of the adult population is functionally illiterate. Women are affected disproportionately by illiteracy. Twenty-three percent of adult women are illiterate as compared with 17% of adult males. Remember, there will be few, if any, occupations for those that suffer from having limited skills.

Throughout the economy in the 1990's, job security for both sexes will become a relic of the past: automation, swifter product obsolescence, and cut-throat competition from abroad will mean many jobs will disappear. It is estimated that employees will change jobs an average of five to six times. This means a person must be very flexible and be prepared to train and retrain to continue to stay afloat in the workforce.

Hope, encouragement and inspiration spring from the fact that the number of new jobs are growing. The U.S. economy will spin off millions of new jobs. The job market of the year 2000 will pose unique challenges and opportunities for the American worker.

Hope comes from knowing that two of every three new workers will be women. There is a growing need for women to be present in all types of occupations, breaking the barrier of us only participating in the traditionally female jobs. The United States Government has targeted the construction

industry as an area with many opportunities for women to learn skills through apprenticeship and other entry level jobs. The potential now exists for us to move into careers where women can earn wages comparable to those of men. Politicians, labor unions, and employers are seriously looking at the job market, recognizing the needs, and recruiting women for positions that historically have been held by males.

Yes, there is a growing job market where women will be the primary participants. But I ask the question, are women prepared to move into this changing labor market? Do we possess the good basic skills, technical background, and mathematical skills that will be required by employers to be able to do the job. Are women aware of the information that is surfacing about work and are we preparing ourselves to enter this competitive market? If women do not take advantage of the opportunities that are and will be available in the future, we will have missed so much and denied ourselves a chance to improve the quality of our lives.

We must think critically about who we are and what we want out of life.

Women must never forget that we and our children are the nation's poor. We must always be aware that we represent 61% of all persons who have incomes below the poverty level. As has been the case historically, women are still concentrated in low paying jobs. Women earn only \$.64 to every \$1.00 earned by a man. Only 20% of those children deserving child

NEW WOMEN AND WORK TRAINING SERIES OFFERED

In the past our nontraditional employment preparation program has attempted to offer information on a large number of careers. We have made some changes to the program in an effort to provide women with much more specific training centered on one particular industry.

The Women's Project will be offering a training with the main goal of preparing women for careers in the construction industry. There are opportunities for women to find employment through the carpenter's union, highway department and with private contractors. The training will take place on September 19 - October 6, 1989 at Liberty Hill Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. daily. The orientation will be held on, September 13, also at Liberty Hill Baptist church from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. In order to attend the training you must attend this orientation session. Childcare is provided for women attending the orientation and training. Transportation is provided to women who choose to go through the three-week training session.

Some of the information presented in this training will be tool identification, blue print reading, daily math and physical fitness instructions, various careers available in the construction industry, CPR certification, health and safety instructions, measurements, building job market skills, and field trips to construction sites.

For women interested in being involved in this training, please call Debbie Bousquet or Janet Doles at 372-5113 for more information.

(Continued on Page 10)

Voices of Many Women

This reading, "Voices of Many Women" is from part of the collected writings of 24 Arkansas women who over the years have participated in support groups for adults healing from child sexual abuse.

The women are 18 to 57 years old.

Their poem is in four parts:

- I. I Remember Now
- II. Things I Heard
- III. I Want to Say
- IV. Now I Know
Now We Know

I REMEMBER NOW

I remember now

- Sitting on the swing set afterwards in the backyard wearing old clothes and feeling bad...pitiful

I remember

- Fear of shadows in my doorway
- When I found out it was abuse I asked mom about me having a baby
- I rolled my own hair for my 7th grade school picture because mom had to work that evening and couldn't fix it for me. That night, among other abuse my dad busted my lip and it was swollen.

I remember now

- Being in the back seat of a red and white car...my oldest brother fondling me...
- having me straddle him to have intercourse
- I was only a child..a teenager..a young woman.

I remember

- being hand tied to the rail of the bed, then some kind of material was stuck in my mouth Frozen fear all over my body. I felt a tremendous amount of fear.

I remember now

- My father's stomach coming down on me

I remember now

- We were playing hide-and-seek by the house on Elm Street. The teenage boy from the next block found me in a bush. He put his hands in my underwear. I must have been four years old.

I remember now

- The laughter that was pretend.
- I was molested by my grandfather. I remember his hands; his large, terrible hands.

I remember

- The old road by the airport where my uncle raped me every Sunday afternoon - after I spent the weekend at my grandmother's house, playing with my cousins.
- He paid me \$5.00 to keep quiet. I was 11. He threatened to do the same to my cousin Pam, she was 7 then.
- I remember as a child lots of times. I would hide to get out of doing things. Two places I would hide were the closet and behind the couch.

I remember now

- My stepfather's nude body... and his saying "kiss it."
- I remember my mother's laughter. She called me a liar.
- As a child I rebelled against all that was happening by not eating.
- My memories come in flashes — like my dad taking a lot of nude polaroids with me crying and posing in different positions as he instructed. This started when I was 6.

I remember now

- Feeling so scared, so crazy, so alone.

THINGS I HEARD

- Don't let any little boys do this to you.
- You'll make someone a good wife someday.
- Dad, how can you keep doing this to me? (having sex)— I asked.
- He said he could do whatever he wanted as long as he asked God's forgiveness just before he died.
- I love you kid, you know I would never hurt you!
- Keep quiet.
- Don't tell.
- Don't tell or you'll get in trouble.
- "You and I are just alike" whispered my father to me during the sweet talking time to encourage me to participate
- He kept telling me how my body wanted it.

I WANT TO SAY

- You are the sorriest creep I have ever known
- How dare you sexually abuse me and then say maybe something is wrong with me!!

- You are the one that is mentally off!
- I hate your guts.
- How could you do this to me?
- What you did to me was the worst thing that has ever happened to me.
- Do you have any idea how much you have screwed up my life?
- Leave me alone.
- I don't want you to care about me or even play like you care— its disgusting to me.
- If you ever touch another child, I'll get into the computer bank and slash your credit ratings.
- I just wanted you to love me.

NOW I/WE KNOW

- I am not alone
- I have courage to stretch and grow.
- We are not awful people.
- We are here and now together, glad that we are starting to LIVE!!!
We deserve it—
Healing, struggling, toward healthier lives
- You are not to blame
- The abuse was not my fault
- The abuser was wrong
- You deserve someone to love you the way that love is supposed to be given... with trust and respect, with care and honesty.
- You never forget it but life can get better.
- Healing is possible.

We say all these things because our lives matter.

We say these things so it will never happen again.

**24 Women. Survivors Group. Little Rock, Arkansas
May, 1989**

Auralie Tortorici is a therapist in private practice in Little Rock. Aura specializes in working with adults healing from child sexual abuse and women's issues.

The Women's Project offers a support group for adult survivors of incest. For more information, call us at 372-5113.

Women in the Military

The military is promoting itself as a great opportunity for women and people of color to gain new skills and have great adventures. As the pool of young white men becomes smaller, the military will work even harder to encourage white women and people of color to enlist.

The reality of the situation for women in the military is often very different than the picture that the recruiters present. Army recruiters often tell women that only 15% of job categories are closed to women, yet 50% of the jobs fit into these categories. Thus, only half of the Army jobs are available to women.

Many women enter the military with the hope of being trained in a nontraditional job. Yet, even if you receive the training that you were promised (and this is dependent upon your passing the appropriate entrance tests), there is no guarantee that you will be placed in a job which uses these skills. Nor is there any guarantee that the skills you learn will be useful once you leave the military. A 1985 study showed that only 6% of the women vets surveyed made any use of their military skills in the civilian world.

If you are a woman who has served in the military (either in the past or currently), especially if you worked in a field that is nontraditional for women, we are interested in speaking with you to learn about your experiences, both good and bad. Please call Cheryl Doss at the Women's Project, 372-5113.

Support Group for Youth Meets

A support group for Gay and Lesbian youth ages 16 and over meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1818 Reservoir Road, in Little Rock. The group is sponsored by the Arkansas Gay and Lesbian Task Force. For more information call the AGLTF Switchboard at 666-3340.

Study Group on Women and Economics Forming

A six week study group, will begin by looking at our own economic stories and backgrounds. We will build on our own experiences to gain a better understanding of the national and international economic situation and how we fit into it. Some of the areas that we will explore include employment and unemployment, inflation, the federal budget, the "debt crisis" and the shift of manufacturing jobs to other countries.

If you have always tried to ignore "economics" because it seemed complicated and far away, this study group is for you. No economics background

is needed — we will speak in plain language.

The study group will meet on Wednesday evenings, from October 11 through November 15, from 6:30-8:00 at the Peace Center, 415 N. Maple, NLR. The study group is sponsored by the Women's Project and the Arkansas Peace Center. For more information, call Cheryl Doss at the Women's Project.



SEASON SAMPLER RETURNS

December 9, 1989



GET READY FOR...

SANTA PAWS

A photo opportunity for you and any pet that has paws.

November 18, 1989

We Are Not Afraid From Page 7

support receive it, and the burden of supporting, nurturing and caring for the young in this society becomes women's to bear alone. These things we must never be allowed to slip from our consciousness. But, there is a chance for us to make some changes.

We must take seriously, overcoming our fear of math and science, and developing whatever skills that are necessary to secure positions that will be rewarding and beneficial to us. Many mature women workers may need to update their skills upon reentering the labor market.

know that we can survive these changes coming about in the world of work. All we must do is transfer our skills and talents as homemakers, mothers, and low income wage earners to this new market that is awaiting us. We must take seriously the preparation that is needed. We as women are not afraid to tackle this challenge that is before us. We have proven ourselves so many times, and we will do it this time.

Janet Perkins Doles

Facts for this article were obtained from the following sources:

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ence on the United Nation's Decade
for Women

I know that women can do it. I

Workforce 2000, Executive Summary,

**TRANSFORMATION
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Starting with our November/December issue, Transformation will be published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers will receive analysis of contemporary issues, information about Women's Project upcoming events and activities, book reviews, and more.

If you are not a Women's Project member or volunteer and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please fill out the membership form on this page.

**Yes I would like to join
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Make checks payable to the
Women's Project
2224 Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72206

MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal is social change or, as the poet Adrienne Rich writes, "the transformation of the world." We believe this world can be changed to become a place of peace and justice for all women.

We take risks in our work; we take unpopular stands. We work for all women and against all forms of discrimination and oppression. We believe that we cannot work for all women and against sexism unless we also work against racism, classism, ageism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism and homophobia. We see the connection among these oppressions as the context for violence against women in this society.

We are concerned in particular

about issues of importance to traditionally underrepresented women: poor women, aged women, women of color, teen-age mothers, lesbians, women in prisons, etc. All are women who experience discrimination and violence against their lives.

We are committed to working multi-culturally, multi-racially, and to making our work and cultural events accessible to low income women. We believe that women will not know equality until they know economic justice.

We believe that a few committed women working in coalition and in consensus with other women can make significant change in the quality of life for all women.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Women and Work: Breaking the Barriers

A training and advocacy project to make nontraditional jobs accessible to women.

Women's Watchcare Network

A project to monitor incidents of racial, religious, sexual, and anti-gay violence, and the activities of hate groups in Arkansas.

The Homophobia and Racism Project

Workshops on understanding racism and homophobia and developing methods to eliminating them.

Prostitutes and AIDS

A project to develop strategies for working with prostitutes and caregivers around AIDS issues.

Communications and Events

A newsletter, a lending library, statewide and regional conferences, and production of women singers, poets and novelists.

**Women's Watchcare Network
Report on Page 4**

**The Women's Project
2224 Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72206**

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