

The Oregon Campaign

By Suzanne Pharr

(Editor's note: This article is # 4 in a continuing series on the religious right. Other articles, providing more detailed analysis and outlining specific strategies, will follow.)

At the Republican National Convention, Pat Buchanan announced that this country is in a "cultural war." However, I do not think we are in a war but are in a time of massive social change that is bringing about new forms of power and new participants in our society. For many, now unable to rely upon old systems of social control, this is a frightening time, and it is this fear that the religious right has seized upon to promote their agenda to gain religious domination over the political and social life of this country.

To increase the fear and to polarize the country into "good" and "bad" groups of people, the religious right frames this multi-faceted, complex shift in our society as a "war" which must be won by god-fearing people or else all is lost. For the purpose of media sound bites and fund raising, the metaphor of a war is clever indeed.

During eight months working in Oregon against the Oregon Citizens Alliance, a rightwing religious group who sponsored a constitutional amendment to make homosexuality "abnormal and perverse," I was able to witness the characteristics of their attack that make it perhaps similar to a one-sided, religious war in which the troops are armed with Bibles and funded by churches and the well-heeled Christian Broadcasting Network.

While rejecting the framing of this moment of social change as a war, I think in the interest of understanding rightwing thinking and strategies it might be helpful to look at the Oregon campaign through this metaphor.

As in war, the aggressor almost always proclaims that "God is on our side."

These rightwing Christians are fueled by a belief that only they are qualified by God to enforce their narrow vision of morality for all people. To them, Oregon was one strategic battleground in their nationally proclaimed war against women, people of color, gay men and lesbians, and people who practice religions other than Christianity.

As in most wars, there was an aggressor who tried to impose its will against a group that was then forced to defend itself. This particular attack ostensibly was launched against lesbians and gay men. But in the style of wars, there was the highly-charged, emotional public focus of the assault, defended in moral terms, and then there were the behind-the-scenes less popular and more base motives. Was World War I indeed fought to make the world "safe for democracy" or was it fought for economic gain and world domination? Was the Gulf War fought to liberate Kuwait or to protect our oil interests and maintain domination? While the public attack in Oregon was against lesbians and gay men, defended on moral terms (these people are the "abomination of God" and threaten families and children), the larger design was to gain control of the public agenda by the religious right. The ultimate goal was to gain "territory" in a war that seeks domination over women, people of color, lesbians and gay men, all who are different from dominant groups yet desire autonomy and freedom.

As in war, the violence was both physical and psychological. The terrain of physical violence was scattered with firebombing deaths of a lesbian and gay man, random attacks by racist skinheads, desecrated churches, vandalism of gay and lesbian organizations, sabotaged cars, and assaults. The psychological violence sought terror through name-

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calling, hate graffiti, and countless hate phone calls and death threats. The OCA even more effectively used a propaganda of lies and distortion to attack core values and self-worth among lesbians and gay men and to undermine their standing within the larger community. This was done using the classic fascistic tactics of scapegoating and dehumanizing. In this assault, lesbians and gay men were described as "animals," "abnormal and perverse," "unnatural," "an abomination of God," people who "eat feces," "spread disease," and "prey upon innocent children."

As in war, those defending themselves and protecting their terrain had to do so in an atmosphere of fear and crisis. It was a state of tension and high pressure that brought out the best and worst in people as they struggled to survive and resist. The very best could be witnessed in people reaching beyond their ordinary selves into the extraordinary behavior of courageous risks, of grace under pressure, of strong friendships and bonding in the face of attacks designed to fragment and alienate. In Oregon, ordinary people performed extraordinary acts of liberation every day of the campaign. However, the worst comes when the war without creates a war within. Then people experience paranoia,

betrayals, horizontal hostility, and divisions that subvert their work and relationships. In both Oregon and Colorado, the casualties of individuals and the community fell both at the hands of the religious right and at the hands of people working to mount a defensive campaign. Outrageously, in wars we call this "friendly fire."

As in war, people engaged in

Long before there is a direct attack, such as a racist or homophobic or sexist initiative on the ballot, we must be working on issues of inclusion and democratic process in our organizations and communities.

defensive electoral campaigns can develop a kind of amorality in which they come to believe that the crisis is so great that the end justifies the means. Thus, in Oregon and Colorado, decisions were made to keep lesbian and gay presence and issues away from the forefront of the campaign, using polls to substantiate that victory could not be reached if there was too much visibility. The process of inclusion of people of color in all stages of the campaign was sacrificed to the strategy of expediency which called for the more comfortable use of white people in leadership roles. Rural areas were ignored or treated shabbily because they were not seen as vital to the victory since they held so few votes compared to urban areas. The end seemed to justify falling back on the most entrenched forms of hierarchical decision making and uses of back-room power.

And finally, as in war, this campaign to save the few rights and protections of lesbians and gay men drained off community resources, both human and financial. This is a goal in all of the rightwing attacks against our communities: to spend us to death. For a year and a half,

the lesbian and gay community and most of the progressive community gave their energy to the defense of freedom and were forced to give scant attention to other compelling social issues such as homelessness, hunger, violence against women, HIV infection, neo-Nazi hate crimes, breast cancer, joblessness, the welfare of children and teenagers. The Oregon No on 9 Campaign and other PACs raised \$2.8 million to spend on advertising and get-out-the-vote, and no one knows how much was spent by other organizations and individuals around the state during this 18 months. The total was undoubtedly several million. A positive reading would be that it helped the Oregon economy, but it was as false as a military-based economy, requiring continued aggression and violence to sustain it.

Despite the phenomenal expenditure of resources, on November 4 lesbians and gay men awakened in Oregon with not one additional civil right than they had prior to the election: the victory was that justice-loving people had stayed an effort to divide the state and to dehumanize and disenfranchise a people. Though extraordinary organizing had led almost every person in the state who had a public forum to speak out against the initiative, in a state with a population of only 2-1/2 million, there were still more than a half-million people who voted in favor of eliminating rights and protections. Further, Lon Mabon, the head of the OCA, when conceding defeat, said that they would be back in January seeking signatures for a new constitutional amendment fashioned after the successful Colorado amendment. In this one, they would employ what they had learned from this campaign and omit words like "abnormal and perverse" and "pedophilia," and it would be on the ballot in 1994.

Thinking themselves in a war of "family values" and "no special rights," the OCA, as part of the religious right, no doubt viewed the Oregon campaign as just one skirmish or battle in a major war for which they have bountiful resources and people. And as fundamentalist Christians, they feel they have plenty of time – until the end of the world.

Transformation

Published six times each year by the Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72206. Letters to the editor are welcome.

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The Struggle for Cultural and Social Change

While the Oregon campaign, through the manipulation of the OCA, had some of the hallmarks of a war, for those of us who participated in any way in the effort to protect rights, it was not a battleground of good and evil but a very intense and dramatic time to sort through values: who we are as responsible humans, how do we want to relate to one another, what kind of community do we want to live in, who gets included, who excluded. It was a fierce moment in an on-going debate about this country's ability to be fully democratic and the meaning of democracy. Because the OCA forced this debate to take place in a cauldron of hatred they had created, many people were hurt but many found themselves made stronger and clearer in their individual lives and in the life of their community.

Additionally, all of us received intensive training on the strategies of the religious right, the ins and outs of operating an electoral campaign, the ways hope and optimism can be assaulted when hate and violence become central to everyday life, and the wonderfully creative ways people can respond to vicious attacks. The lessons we learned are critically important for shaping the response to the religious right, proactively advancing our rights, and developing our vision for a more fully inclusive, democratic society.

In many ways I left the Oregon campaign with reaffirmation of what I knew when I went there in January 1992, now tested:

- that the issue was larger than the lesbian and gay community, larger than Oregon; that this was a national test site of a strategy to further the religious right's goal of merging church and state, destroying civil rights and, ultimately, the Bill of Rights.
- that the campaign could not be managed like the campaign of a candidate or of typical referenda; that the expediency of the ends justifying the means

could not be employed; that traditional polling methods alone would not be helpful; that a numerical victory would not necessarily mean an overall victory for the lesbian and gay community.

- that as well as acting defensively to protect rights, we had to work during the campaign to create relationships and strengthen organizations so that after the vote, no matter which way it went, the community would have gained from the attack against it.
- that this unwarranted attack by the religious right was both a crisis and a remarkable opportunity; that there was an unparalleled chance to educate an entire state as the OCA forced it to consider lesbian and gay issues; that there was a perfect moment to forge deeper alliances with other oppressed groups, all of which are under attack by the religious right.

Many of my hopes for the campaign were not met. Expediency often won over movement building. I learned that when the campaign management in Oregon and Colorado too closely followed the pattern of traditional electoral campaigns, the lesbian and gay community was hurt in the process.

However, there were successes that went beyond my greatest hopes. Never have I seen so many people who were not natural allies come together to support a single issue in a state. Thousands of people donated time, talent, money, food, equipment, flowers, and emotional support to the No on 9 Campaign — all the things, large and small, that make people able to work beyond their usual limits. Consequently, there were people on the staff who worked under tremendous stress and difficult working conditions to create daily miracles.

I learned that a campaign cannot control a people who are under attack; they will not be prevented from fighting for their lives and for the quality of life in their state. In Oregon, the campaign was strengthened by people and organizations all over the

state who were not directly affiliated with the No on 9 Campaign but were determined to do the difficult and loving work of trying to educate ordinary people about a group of ordinary citizens within their midst, those who call themselves lesbian and gay.

There are a few in particular that stand out as shining examples of hope:

- The Walk for Love and Justice was a weeklong walk by lesbians, gay men, and their allies from Eugene to Portland. They were housed by churches, synagogues, a farm-workers organization, and fed by other groups and individuals along the way. Each night there was a community meeting filled with music, poetry, and conversations about justice.
- Over 100 people in Speak Out Oregon received training on all the ballot measure issues and then covered the state, speaking to organizations, doing radio talk shows, participating in debates, writing letters to the editor, and assisting local groups in getting the information they needed.
- The Rural Organizing Project organized over 20 communities, bringing together people from all sectors of the community — people of color, lesbians and gay men, religious minorities, women's anti-violence workers, labor unionists, etc. — to develop organizations and strategies to work against bigotry during the election period and beyond.
- The statewide newspaper, *The Oregonian*, under an absolute commitment to making sure the public understood the immense danger of ballot measure 9, printed over a dozen editorials (entitled "Inquisition I," "Inquisition II," etc.) that taught us about the history of injustice and scapegoating. Never has the lesbian and gay community

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Women's Watchcare Network Volunteer Bulletin

By Joanne Reich

As we face the year before us, let us take time to be thankful for those in our lives who continue to nurture and love us as we continue to work for a more just society. The year has brought both pain and joy, but most importantly we have learned that we must continue to be vocal when we witness injustices around us. The more we speak out, the more we help to bring about change. Let us make a New Year's resolution to grow stronger as a community of people who believe there is no room for biased violence on our earth. Rejoice in each victory, and grow stronger from the lessons each defeat brings. Happy New Year!

Sexist Violence/Climate

In October, a former UCA student, John E. Tiemeyer, was accused of firing a slingshot loaded with steel balls at three female students while he was still at UCA. When UCA Department of Public Safety officers were called in to investigate, they saw someone look out a window through binoculars and then saw someone shoot the slingshot. Later in John's dorm room, officers found a .25 caliber gun under his pillow and an empty box of Marksman .30-.06 slingshot and steel balls. One of the victims was hit directly on the head; the others were hit on the ankle and wrist. He was arraigned on December 21 on the charges of second degree assault, and carrying or possessing a loaded firearm in a state-owned building.

In an average month, over 50 incidents of sexist violence are reported in state papers, and then clipped and filed by our office staff and volunteers. To give you an example I picked two that illustrate the violent nature of these crimes. In Heber Springs, a woman was having

an argument with her husband when he went outside and started his chain saw, came back in, and cut her in the shoulder six times as she was raising up out of her chair. He was charged with second-degree battery. In another incident, a Little Rock woman was kidnapped at gunpoint in daylight hours, taken by three men to a wooded area, and raped. They later drove her to a park where they pushed her from the car before driving off.

Michelle Roberts of Faulkner County filed a lawsuit December 15, in Faulkner County Circuit Court, against former Pulaski County Sheriff's deputy Ken Dillon. Roberts alleges that Dillon kidnaped her and tried to get her to disrobe. Roberts is one of at least five women who have alleged that Dillon sexually assaulted or tried to sexually assault them after stopping their cars while he was on duty. Earlier in the year he was convicted and sentenced to 33 years for the rape of a Jacksonville woman. Michelle's suit also charges that Sheriff Gravett was negligent in hiring Dillon because of previous allegations regarding his conduct at other departments in Morrilton and Conway.

A lawsuit was filed December 10 in Federal Court against Pulaski County sheriff's patrol deputy Elijah Wright who was fired November 20 for allegedly forcing a man and woman to perform sex acts in front of him under threat of arrest. The suit also charges Sheriff Gravett "for failure to adequately train, supervise, and discipline Deputy Wright and other deputies." The couple sought help from a lawyer after waiting three days with no response to their complaint about the incident. To date they have yet to receive an apology.

Arkansas' legislature will consider the state's first "stalking bill" this session, which would provide harsher penalties for the crimes of harass-

ment and terroristic threatening. The bill would also create a new crime of stalking with penalties ranging from three to 20 years in prison and fines up to \$15,000, depending on various factors. A stalker would be someone who harasses a person at least twice, threatening to seriously injure or kill the person or members of the person's immediate family. Twenty-nine other states have similar statutes. This bill would primarily affect women being harassed by former husbands, boyfriends, or acquaintances, sending a message of importance and urgency about violence against women.

Outside the state of Arkansas there are also cases of law enforcement officers and other men in positions of power who have been charged with sexual abuse. This is an institutional power and control issue that needs national attention. David Lanier, a Chancery Court Judge in Dyersburg, Tennessee, has been charged with violating the civil rights of eight women through sexual abuse at a Tennessee courthouse. During his trial he admitted having sex with one of his accusers on his office floor, but said it was her idea. He described himself as physically expressive and said it is common for workers to hug each other at his small town courthouse. The judge's accusers were afraid of reporting him because of his political power in the small town. The women were subpoenaed after an FBI investigation of alleged civil rights violations by Lanier revealed accusations of molestation.

Racist Violence/Climate

An overtly racist climate continues to prevail in our nation. Jayne Dasher from Ozark wrote a letter to the editor of the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* that is evidence of this. "More minorities are going to be

chosen by Slick Willie than before, and the time has come for Americans to study apartheid and the struggles of Ian Smith and Africa," Dasher wrote. "If the Caucasian race intends to be extinct, all they have to do is nothing, and the end of the next decade will see a Third-World America."

Over the holiday season, U.S. Knights Ku Klux Klan members in Ohio, supported by Kentucky members, received a 10-day permit from Cincinnati to display a cross on the steps of Fountain Square. During that week protesters repeatedly tore down the cross, which was quickly replaced each time by KKK members.

The Center for Democratic Renewal reports that the Harrison-based Kingdom Identity Ministries broadcasts the "Herald of Truth" radio program that can be found on KAAY in Little Rock, and KCGS in Marshall. The show can also be picked up on 7.435 MHz and 7.355 MHz on shortwave radios. White supremacists are associated with this Identity Ministry. If you listen to this program, please keep us informed as to times the show is broadcast and events mentioned.

A judge dismissed a federal court lawsuit challenging the exclusion of former American Nazi Party member Ralph Forbes from a televised debate on the Arkansas Educational Television Network. Judge Waters said Forbes had no legal basis for his suit against AETN. Forbes, who was an independent candidate for the 3rd congressional district seat, now calls himself a "Christ supremacist."

Two North Little Rock police officers have been accused of violating the civil rights of two brothers they arrested December 5. Joe and Sam Oliver filed their complaint with the Civil Service Commission. Sam said at one point one of the officers asked him if he had a "f**** problem, nigger." The complaint asks that the two officers be fired for violating the Oliver's civil rights.

Evangeline Brown and other African American residents of Dermott are organizing to overturn the public school's long-held practice of not offering seniors a prom. There

has been no prom in this community since schools were integrated in the late 1960's. Instead, the students have had separate events, privately financed, away from the school.

The Little Rock police officer who dressed in black face and wore an Afro wig while carrying a watermelon to a Halloween party was suspended for 30 days without pay. Kevin Tindell, the officer, was described as remorseful and "admitted he had been insensitive," Chief Louis Caudell said. "He also indicated that he had no biases against blacks or other categories of people."

Kelly and I have been working with Father Scott Friend, who is in charge of the Hispanic Ministries Office. Father Scott is organizing a group of people who are interested in starting a Center in Little Rock that would assist the Latino (referred to by some as "Hispanic") community in Arkansas. Over 50 people attended the December 7 meeting where both Spanish and English were spoken. Around the same time, a letter to the editor appeared in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* entitled "Why Spanish is taking over?" in which the author criticized the fact that some Little Rock police officers were taking Spanish classes. "If Polish, Italian, German, Asian, etc. immigrants can learn to speak English, then why can't the Mexicans?" the author asked. Many people around the state still believe that Spanish is creeping into our society and that people of different origins should be forced to learn English.

On a positive note, Crystal Hill elementary students staged a peaceful sit-in this month in the cafeteria in a demonstration against anti-immigrant neo-Nazism in Germany. All were sixth-graders in J.J. Morely's class who had been studying the events of 1960s. After studying the 1960s the class selected its own subject of current interest to protest. It's wonderful to see Jr. Watchcare Network volunteers getting their start in social justice activities in the public educational setting.

Other states, too, have had glaring examples of racism. In Louisville, Kentucky, Cincinnati Reds

owner Marge Schott made a public apology for her racist remarks. Schott had admitted to the use of the word "nigger" and other derogatory terms. However, in reading her one-page apology she denied she's bigoted and tried to deflect criticism of her minority hiring practices (only one of 45 front office employees is black). "I know in my heart that I am not a racist or bigot," she said.

Homophobic Violence/Climate

We had an incident reported to the Watchcare Network which involved a white gay male leaving a club in Little Rock walking home when a Jeep pulled up to him and a man asked him if he needed a ride home. After the man responded "no thanks," two men from inside the Jeep jumped out and hit him in the face. No report was made to the police.

John Robert Starr, a columnist for the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, has cursed us with yet another taste of his racist, homophobic writing style this month. Early on in the month, he blasted African-American Senator Jewell, calling him "the world's sorriest excuse for a state senator", after Jewell made allegations of racist conduct in the Senate. On December 23, his editorial covered "special rights" in response to the Colorado anti-gay and lesbian legislature. Starr wrote: "It doesn't matter what I think. Gay and lesbian leaders, like many black leaders, aren't satisfied with equal rights any more. Colorado's move to take away special rights is perceived as anti-gay, and that was enough to touch off a boycott...I agree that discrimination should not be tolerated, and if Colorado laws discriminated in favor of gays and lesbians, they should have been repealed." The Watchcare Network wishes to thank Sandy and the Unitarian Church for their responses to this editorial.

The Family Council of Arkansas has printed their 1993 Proposed Master Plan in which their stated purpose is: to promote, protect and strengthen proven family values in

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Women, Incarceration and AIDS

By Cindy Haltom-Fox

I have been incarcerated since 1981. Back then, when the word AIDS came up, it was automatically associated with financial assistance programs. We know differently today.

HIV and AIDS became acquainted with the female inmate population in 1985. Of course, there was the usual panic and paranoia, such as, "Can I get it from toilet seats?" "Is it carried through the air?" "Can someone breathe on me and infect me?" Those questions may sound silly to some but they were sincere and serious questions for us. Many of the women incarcerated here come to the institution directly from the street, living conditions are crowded, and we don't know our "neighbors."

AIDS terrified us because we knew so little. No matter how hard a person tries, it's extremely difficult to stay informed on issues in the outside world. We tried, but to be honest, in 1985 the free population was as uninformed and fearful about the subject of AIDS as we were.

Over the years, a few of us consumed every tidbit of information we could get our hands on. For me, HIV and AIDS became very personal when I discovered HIV was transmitted through IV drug use – by the sharing of needles – and many of my dope-smoking buddies started testing HIV-positive.

When the different modes of transmission became known to the population, many of us were instantly concerned and wanted to know more. But how would we, in here, learn what we needed in order to protect ourselves and others?

The answer came from the Women's Project in Little Rock. Volunteers from the Project had been conducting battered women's support groups and some of the inmates took their concerns to them. Kerry Lobel from the Project understood their concerns and undertook the massive task of getting the necessary information to us and at the same time

battled the red tape of the Department of Correction. To give credit where credit is due, Warden Virginia Wallace of the Women's Unit, and John Byus and Dorothea Thomas of the Department of Correction recognized the need and supported the project.

Kerry recruited the assistance of Robin Bailey from the Arkansas Department of Health. After many infuriating little obstacles of the worst kind, the inmate population of the Women's Unit was offered a 19-hour workshop on "HIV Serological Test Counseling and Partner Notification Techniques." We were ecstatic. The first brick had fallen.

Seventeen inmates participated in the workshop. We learned what HIV was and how it affected the body, how the virus progressed into AIDS (HIV and AIDS are *not* the same thing – we didn't know), and methods of prevention.

We were also taught the methods of HIV pre- and post-test counseling, how to deliver test results, positive and negative, to clients, plus the different techniques used by the Department of Health in partner notification. Good-bye paranoia! When we completed the course, we were awarded our counseling certification from the Arkansas Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. All this was wonderful but there were 438 women and 101 staff members at the unit and only 17 of us. What now?

Ask a question and an answer will be provided. Kerry approached a few of us and asked if we would be interested in teaching HIV, AIDS, and STD classes to the rest of the population. Yes, yes, yes! What do we have to do? We put together a battle plan and a class format, and waited for approval. We were optimistic but I was a little anxious, knowing the DOC as I do, that good things are hard to come by.

The second brick fell and we started our classes. The four-hour course on HIV/AIDS and other STDs is broken up into two classes that are

held on the first and third Thursdays of each month with each lasting two hours.

The first session consists of basic HIV/AIDS information – definitions, modes of transmission and prevention, and explanations of the testing process and the "window period." Handouts and brochures are provided to the participants and they are encouraged to share them with their children, partners, families and friends. One person can affect many.

The second session consists of anatomy, reproductive health, contraception, and other sexually transmitted diseases such as genital herpes, syphilis, gonorrhea, genital warts and chlamydia. Nancy Liebbe of Planned Parenthood in Little Rock conducted these courses, complete with hands-on demonstrations and lots of class participation.

Once a wall has been weakened, it rapidly begins to crumble. The interest of the inmate population is growing strong; the women are enthusiastic, questioning, and filled with a sense of confidence in their ability to protect themselves and educate others. The correctional officers assigned to provide security for the classes have become interested in what we have to say, often asking as many questions as the inmates. Good things really *do* occur within these walls.

I've been teaching HIV/AIDS classes for over two years now and as of this date, over 308 women have completed the four-hour course. In addition, two more 19-hour workshops have been conducted, and a total of 54 women received their certification in HIV/AIDS counseling. We have established a program that ensures that an inmate certified through the Arkansas Department of Health is situated in every unit on the compound in order to provide on-going education and counseling to the inmates living there.

Kerry and I have co-authored a book, "HIV, AIDS and Reproductive Health: A Peer Trainer's Guide," which was funded by grants from the

Arkansas Department of Health, the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AMFAR) and INSURE. We are giving the manual our own personal test drive – our newly-certified counselors each received a copy, and are using it to guide them in conducting their own monthly classes. The book has exceeded our expectations in providing the information and format necessary in order to establish a structured class on HIV/AIDS and STDs. We hope and pray that this manual will be eventually distributed to every penal institution in the U.S.

The women on the compound are no longer afraid. Concerned, yes, passionate, yes, but we are no longer paranoid, suspicious or misinformed. There is peace of mind that comes with this confidence in our roles.

I asked some of our most recently certified peer educators how they felt about the HIV/AIDS classes and the work they are doing themselves.

Their answers are indicative of the atmosphere here at the Women's Unit:

"The AIDS classes gave me a lot of new feelings for someone who has AIDS and it helped me to know that they are people, too; they're not alone," says Sylvia Briggs. "Not only did it help me in that way, it has given me a chance to be an AIDS counselor for people who have the AIDS virus." There is no more paranoia, persecution or ridicule for those who are seropositive, helping to make situations a lot less volatile in here. Women who are seropositive are accepted by their peers just like anyone else.

Joyce Cope put it very nicely when she said, "I have learned how the AIDS virus got transmitted and hopefully with what I've learned, I can help some of the younger kids understand about AIDS and what to use to keep themselves safe and healthy. I want to continue in my

studies. I feel more confident now than before I got into it. I also know what to use myself." Knowing how to protect *ourselves* is the first step; once we realize that it's *our own* actions that put us at risk, we are granted that very rare and precious sense of control that is so hard to have in here.

Tommie Coleman says, "The AIDS class gave me a better understanding of the trauma of AIDS. The word itself carries fear and anxiety, and it helps being able to be a peer educator to help relax people that the virus is explainable." Yes, people don't realize how much it *does* help.

Education is the vital ingredient in preventing the spread of this virus. Being incarcerated doesn't mean we must be ignorant of an issue that affects the entire human race. We belong. We have the power to make a change, to protect ourselves and others, to help in any way we can.

That feels good.

Circle your Calendar NOW!

WOMEN'S PROJECT ANNUAL WOMEN'S RETREAT



April 2, 3 & 4, 1993 – Lake Fort Smith State Park

If you reserved a private cabin in the past, you might want to call soon to reserve one for this year. More information about dorm lodging, camping and costs for the weekend will appear in the next issue of *Transformation*.

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had more eloquent representation from the non-gay press.

- People of Faith Against Bigotry, representing people of all faiths, organized people all over the state to reach "those in the pews." They led discussion groups of social principles, invited lesbians and gay men to speak in their churches and synagogues, held days of reconciliation, distributed packets of materials targeted for specific faith groups, held candlelight vigils, and published a full page ad that read "The OCA Does Not Speak for Me," signed by hundreds of people of all faiths.
- At great personal risk, countless lesbians and gay men came out to their families, religious leaders, co-workers, neighbors, and talked about their lives. They put a human face on the ballot measure. Because of them, the OCA was deterred in its attempt to demonize and dehumanize the lesbian and gay community.

A big lesson of Oregon and Colorado for me was that this is not a series of strategic battles that will be

won or lost from ballot initiative to ballot initiative, from lawsuit to lawsuit. Though lesbians and gay men, women, and people of color will be attacked at the ballot box and in the legislatures, those of us under attack cannot spend all of our time and resources simply defending ourselves and being diverted from creating a place of justice for ourselves in our communities. What is important in this post-campaign season is how we use the lessons we learned from these attacks from the religious right to advance our movement.

Until now, the religious right has succeeded in dominating public debate and framing the issues of multi-culturalism and democratic process as a conflict between right and wrong, a cultural war that pits what they consider to be the moral against the immoral. They have moved into a vacuum created by our lack of strong leadership and conviction and visibility and filled it with their own definitions of issues and supporting misinformation. I believe we must reject this entire framing of what is going on in our society as being a war, cultural or otherwise. We must be creative, not merely reactive, and therefore name our own reality and morality and our own terms for living.

Rather than accepting the religious right's declaration that we are in the midst of a cultural or religious war, we need to acknowledge that we

are in the midst of a civil rights movement that is under such attack that it sometimes feels like the conditions of war but is instead steadily moving forward, creating fundamental social change. It is an ongoing movement that we create every day. One could say that this civil rights movement has a 500-year history in the U.S., and certainly its many streams began to collect into a river in the 1950s when African Americans initiated a unified struggle for justice. That river, made up of people of color, grew to encompass women and then lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities. It is an ongoing movement, flowing toward justice still, that place of moral being. Seeking control, the religious right wants to dam and divert this river.

While resisting attacks, our task as targeted groups is to find our place in this broad civil rights movement. I do not believe we will succeed as separate groups, if we consider our issues as distinct and different from those of other oppressed peoples. We have to put our lives with each other, understand our connectedness, and act in solidarity. The work is not short-term; it is for the long haul. We will always have immediate crises, but liberation will come from changing the hearts and minds of people, changing institutions, changing laws.

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Bulletin Board

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Women's Project now has a TDD. The number is 372-6853 and will operate Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CALENDAR

Lesbian Support Group
2nd and 4th Tuesdays
at 7:00 p.m.

Women's Project Library
Open Saturdays
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

All events, unless otherwise indicated, are held at the Women's Project at 2224 Main Street, Little Rock. The offices are wheelchair accessible. For more information about these events, call 372-5113.

OREGON

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We must remember that most of those more than one-half million who voted for ballot measure 9 were simply people who are afraid, people who have been fed misinformation, and people who are yet to be educated about lesbian and gay issues. Some of the best work of the Oregon and Colorado campaigns occurred when people were educating about civil rights. At the victory party for the Oregon No on 9 Campaign, the campaign manager announced that, for over a year, the state had been told that there was a militant homosexual agenda, and she wanted to affirm that, indeed, this was true. At that moment, No on 9 staff and volunteers unfurled an enormous banner bearing the agenda. It read:

EQUALITY
NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS

We must provide leadership and education in bringing the nation to understand the morality of justice wedded to equality and inclusion.

The religious right will be successful in reaching its long-term goal if we wait for them to control the public agenda and set the timetable for our activities, all centered upon defending ourselves from their attack. Long before there is a direct attack, such as a racist or homophobic or sexist initiative placed on a ballot, we must be working on issues of inclusion and democratic process in our organizations and communities. We must create statewide networks that include rural people and those who experience the extremes of economic injustice. People of color, women, lesbians and gay men, poor people, religious minorities, and people with disabilities must begin standing side by side to counter injustice and create systems of justice. We do not need coalitions and alliances only when under attack; we need them all the time because our issues are interrelated and ongoing.

Our work is now, not some time in the future. Through attacking us, the religious right has put all of our issues smack in the middle of the public debate. It is our work to use this debate to educate the public about justice and injustice and the ways to bring about change that includes the well-being of all people.

For the first time since the 1960s, I sense there are rising expectations among those from whom justice has been withheld. Major movements are built on this kind of hope, not despair. Our historical moment is upon us. If we join with and bring together those who experience injustice, we have the hope for building a mass movement that will achieve the dream of people from biblical times until the present, a world where justice will "flow down like a mighty river."

BULLETIN

from page 5

Arkansas. In their lobbying agenda, they say they will work for the passage of pro-family legislation and for the defeat of "anti-family" legislation. They also announced that the Family Council Action Committee will be proposing pro-family legislation in the 1993 session of the Arkansas Legislature.

Volunteers around the state are already writing to their local newspapers in support of repealing the state's sodomy law, and passing an inclusive civil rights bill. The conservative Christian Right is well organized in this state and their agenda is clear. We must be prepared to work during these upcoming controversies in our state.

Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue, has announced he is planning to disrupt the Clinton inauguration week's activities to protest Clinton's support for abortion and homosexuals in the military. As reported by *Spotlight* Terry said "look for a clear challenge to Gov. Clinton not to be sworn in with the Bible."

There's been some good news in our region. St. Louis quietly adopted one of the strongest gay-rights laws in the nation in October of this year. The law bars discrimination in housing, credit, employment, education and public access on the grounds of physical or mental disability, race, religion, family status and sexual orientation.

Satanic Violence/Cllmate

In Gravette, Arkansas, on December 19, someone slashed the tires on several vehicles and spray painted satanic writings on vehicles and signs. A local church was also vandalized inside with obscenities and satanic symbols. Police will continue to investigate.

Call for Art

The Women's Project is looking for donated art work that can be used for AIDS materials targeting African-American lesbians. We'd like images of Black women that are tastefully seductive or show intimacy. These images will be used on brochures and fliers, and possibly on matchbooks.

For more information, call Kelly or Kerry at 372-5113.



BOOK NOTES FROM THE WOMEN'S PROJECT LIBRARY

BOOK REVIEW By Dudley

Locked Down (New Victoria Press) tells the story of Mary "Lee" Dortch, a Russellville, Arkansas, lesbian who came of age at a time when there was little support for women who did not fit society's gender norms. Unable to play the role of good girl and experiencing confusion about her sexual identity, she lashed out violently at those around her. First arrested at age sixteen for stealing a car to impress her girlfriend, Lee has spent the past thirty years incarcerated in federal and state prisons throughout the country. Hers is a story of rebellion and violence, but also of the dehumanizing methods used to control women whom society labels deviant.

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

Trauma and Recovery by Judith Lewis Herman, M.D. (author of *Father-Daughter Incest*) - "...astute, accessible and beautifully documented. Bridging the worlds of war veterans, prisoners of war, battered women and incest victims, Herman presents a compelling analysis of trauma and the process of healing. Without shying away from political or clinical realities, she presents a convincing case for the empowerment and care of all trauma victims." - Laura Davis, coauthor, *The Courage to Heal*.

The Woman Who Outshone the Sun by Alejandro Cruz Martinez, Illustrated by Fernando Olivera. More beautiful than the sun, loved by the whole of nature, purveyor of quiet goodwill, Lucia Zenteno is a part of the story-telling tradition of Mexico's Zapotec Indians. In this English-Spanish retelling, Lucia's fate at the hands of unkind strangers is captured in artwork glowing with color and

vitality. When the dazzling girl arrives in a village, it is no surprise that the river falls in love with her, rising "from its bed to flow through her shining black hair." The villagers are less welcoming, however, and only on discovering the loss of their glorious river do they repent of their cruelty toward the mysterious Lucia. Ages 7-up. *Publishers Weekly*

When Someone You Know Is Gay by Susan & Daniel Cohen - The subject of homosexuality is a difficult one for most people to deal with, especially teenagers, who are just finding out who they are in every part of their lives. Using interviews and personal anecdotes along with a historical perspective and scientific information, this book provides a basis for discussion and understanding for teenagers who are straight as well as for those who are not.

Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths & Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype by Clarissa Pinkola Estés - Multicultural myths, fairy tales, folktales, and stories to help women reconnect with the healthy, visionary attributes of the wild woman within. This wild and natural creature is a powerful force, filled with good instincts, passionate creativity, and ageless wisdom...Charis Books

Black Looks: Race & Representation by bell hooks - In these insightful essays, feminist theorist and cultural critic bell hooks digs deeply into the personal and political consequences of contemporary representations of black women and men within our white supremacist culture.

The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader, edited by Joan Nestle is a fabulously popular anthology of erotic journal excerpts, fiction, poetry, and essays exploring "butch-femme" in lesbian life. Complete with photos and including such

writers as Pat Califia, Dorothy Allison and the late Audre Lorde.

Typical American by Gish Jen is a novel about a Chinese student who comes to the U.S. in the late '40s to get his Ph.D. in engineering - and ends up owning Ralph's Chicken Palace. The darkly comic story follows his frail wife who blossoms in the suburbs, and his sister, a strait-laced "giantess" with feet so large "they entered rooms before she did." As the three immigrants are swept up in and transformed by the American Dream, they discover that even dreams have their price. "No paraphrase could capture the intelligence of Gish Jen's prose...The author keeps coming at you line after stunning line." *New York Times Book Review*.

Bailey's Cafe by Gloria Naylor - this novel "may well be Gloria Naylor's finest achievement to date. Naylor writes with luminous lyricism that never scants the pungency of the vernacular. and by the end, she's somehow captured a big chunk of America. This is a book to read and reread." *Henry Louis Gates, Jr.*

The Alchemy of Race and Rights by Patricia J. Williams - "There is passion in these essays, and there is rage, clarity, confusion, intelligence and tenderness. This is more than the alchemy of race and rights. This is the magic and complexity of life."...Judy Scales-Trent, *Women's Review of Books*.

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Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

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.

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

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CURRENT PROJECTS

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support group for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

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

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

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Civil Rights For Everyone

Suzanne Pharr

This year we put the finishing touches on our Women's Watchcare Network log the same week that the state's legislative civil rights task force began discussion of the necessity for introducing a civil rights bill to the Arkansas legislature. The task force was created two years ago by then Gov. Bill Clinton after members of the legislature failed to reach a compromise on civil rights legislation. Almost 30 years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act on the national level, Arkansas is one of two states that still does not have a civil rights bill. The absence of such a bill means that all Arkansans do not have protection from discrimination nor avenues for legal challenge.

Because we believe that everyone should have equal access to employment, housing, public accommodations, and should be able to live lives free of violence and harassment, we have been working with community groups to support the inclusion of all people of color, women, religious minorities, people with disabilities, lesbians and gay men, the aged – all of those who are discriminated against because of who they are. As we learned from the Civil Rights movement, if democracy is to work, it must include everyone. To include everyone, there

must be justice, access, and equality. If any group is singled out for exclusion, then the fabric of democracy becomes unraveled, giving rights and privileges to one group of people at the expense of another. When injustice is the law of the land, the entire society suffers.

Because the Women's Watchcare Network monitors bias violence against four groups – people of color, women, Jews and Catholics, lesbians and gay men – we are painfully aware of what it means to live in a state where a belief in civil rights and equal protection is not a priority. In 1992, in newspaper reports of racist violence around the state, over a dozen were incidents where police were accused of brutality. Nazi graffiti was a haunting reminder of the annihilation of Jews. Lesbians and gay men were harassed and threatened with violence by individuals and law enforcement officers. Sixty-six women were killed by men.

It is in our monitoring of violence against women that we gather reams of evidence of the societal cost of discrimination and injustice. When any group of people is not considered to be first class citizens, then violence is turned against them. Witness the attacks against people of color and lesbi-

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CONTENTS

Insert:
**The 1992 Women's
Watchcare
Network Log**

Civil Rights

From Page 1

ans and gay men, for example. Our files are flooded with accounts of rape, battering, harassment, and murders of women.

Of the killers whose identity was known in the murders of 66 women last year, only one was a stranger to his victim: all others were husbands, boyfriends, other relatives or acquaintances. They

shot, stabbed, beat, and strangled women to death. They came from every socio-economic class, and their ages ranged from 8 months to 77 years. The majority – 40 – were between the ages of 20 and 40. Two were pregnant, and eight children witnessed their mother's death. We as a society are permitting these atrocities to occur, and the loss is immeasurable.

Our colleague, Holly Pruett, the director of the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Vio-

lence, has written a compelling argument for the inclusion of women in all aspects of civil rights bills, including the portion concerning hate violence. We include a portion of her article as part of our plea that all groups – people of color, people with disabilities, lesbians and gay men, Jews, the elderly, and women – be included in every section of the civil rights bill. To do otherwise is to participate in the kind of discrimination civil rights bills are created to eliminate.

The Relationship Between Violence Against Women and Bias Motivated Violence/Hate Crimes

Holly Pruett

...The point which must be understood and acknowledged by civil rights and bias crime monitoring groups is this: violence against women constitutes a profound human rights violation. Violence against women is based on an ideology of male supremacy which entitles men to political, economic and social dominance over women, which is maintained by the use of violence. This ideology of supremacy requires that women be seen as subordinate, less than fully human, and as objects to be hated and feared. This ideology is rooted in and perpetuated by all of our social institutions, such as the legal system, the church, the family, and popular culture.

This ideology is also promoted by organized groups such as those in the Christian right and the "fathers' rights movement" who seek to take rights away from women by using "traditional family values" as a code for promoting traditional male supremacy. Their propaganda has been accompanied by an increase in the rates of violence against women.

Violence against women could

not exist without a widespread hatred of women and an underlying ideology of male supremacy. This belief system, and the resulting epidemic of violence, serves to intimidate and control all women. As women make greater advances toward equality, the levels of expressed hostility and violence toward women are increasing.

It is time for civil rights and bias crime monitoring groups to recognize violence against women as an issue which is parallel and related to violence based on race, national/ethnic origin, religion and sexual orientation. Violence against women provides the template for other forms of violence based on supremacy. Children learn from watching their fathers beat their mothers that violence is a legitimate route to dominance, and that women as a class are meant to be subordinate. Children learn from the Judeo-Christian tradition that all of the world's troubles stem from Eve's rebellion against her subordinate role; this belief establishes scapegoating and blaming the victim as another legitimate route to dominance.

Furthermore, half of all members of groups which are targeted by bias because of race, religion, or sexual orientation, are women. In order to address these women's experience with bias violence, the extent of bias and violence attached to women as a class must be taken into account.

For these reasons, the well intentioned efforts of civil rights and bias crime monitoring groups to address hate crimes are compromised by the exclusion of gender violence. We can continue to debate whether violence against women should be counted within hate crime statistics guidelines, or whether it should be prosecuted under hate crime statutes. **But we should not continue to debate whether violence against women belongs at the table when other forms of bias violence are being addressed.**

Just as groups organizing against violence towards women need to address racism, homophobia, and other forms of bias, it is time for civil rights and bias violence monitoring groups to take up the fight against violence based on gender.

The 1992 Women's Watchcare Network Log

A documentation of sexist, racist,
homophobic and religious violence,
and the activities of organized
hate groups in Arkansas

INTRODUCTION

Since 1989, the Women's Project has published an annual report of bigoted violence and hate group activity in Arkansas. This report, the Women's Watchcare Network Log, documents incidents of bigotry and bigoted violence targeting women, people of color, lesbians, gay men, Jews and Catholics. It also documents the activities of organized white supremacists.

Most of the reports we gather come from newspaper articles from across the state. The Women's Project subscribes to the clipping service provided by the Arkansas Press Association. We also gather reports of bigotry and violence from Watchcare Network volunteers and allies, victims, advocates for the groups we monitor violence against, and people who are concerned about social justice issues. Because of limited staff time, priority in following up on incidents is given to those which occur in Little Rock and the surrounding area.

The number of incidents of bigotry and violence documented in this Log is disturbing. However, we realize that these incidents represent only a fraction of all such incidents that occur. The very nature of bigotry and violence, especially that which is sanctioned by our institutions, silence and shame their victims, thereby making documentation difficult. Groups who experience oppression often expect brutal and inhumane treatment, and the criminal justice system often re-victimizes victims of bigoted violence. The biases of journalists is often another hindrance to our documentation efforts.

This year, we added the category of **Christian Right Activity**. Because we didn't begin collecting articles on Arkansas' Christian Right until late in the year, we have only a few entries. Over the past year, a Watchcare Network staff person spent a considerable amount of time learning about and working against the Christian Right attack against lesbian and gay people in Oregon and other states. In 1993, we plan to focus more intently on countering the Christian Right's attempt to subject social and political life to Christian authoritarianism.

1992 WOMEN'S WATCHCARE NETWORK LOG

All incidents are listed by the date of the first report to appear in the media. The newspaper cited most often is the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, which is listed as *AD-G*.

SEXIST VIOLENCE: MURDERS OF WOMEN

There were 80 Arkansas women and girls murdered in 1992. Of the 80, 66 were murders known, as of February 26, 1993, to have been perpetrated by men (in two cases, women participated in the killing). In seven cases, we are assuming, until proven otherwise, that the murderers are also men. We make this assumption because of the high incidence of men killing women and the rare incidence of women killing women. This year, we made a distinction between sexist murders, robbery-related murders of women, and murders in which women were not intentionally targeted. In 1992, there were seven killings in which women were murdered by other women with no involvement by men.

Star City, January 5

Lila Davis, 77, and her daughter, **Mary Sue Moore**, (w) 53, were shot and killed with a .12-gauge shotgun in Davis' home. A woman friend was also shot, but managed to crawl to a neighboring house and call police.

Raymond Dale Davis, 55, Lila Davis' husband, was charged with two counts of capital murder and one count of attempted capital murder in the shootings.

Davis had separated from her husband two months before and had obtained an order of protection against him. The Lincoln County sheriff was quoted as describing the murders as, "just some kind of family deal."

1/5-1/9: *AD-G, Lincoln Ledger, Pine Bluff Commercial*

Harrison, January 30

Margaret Ann Cooper, 40, was found in a ditch, stabbed nine times in the abdomen and with lacerations around her neck and chest. Prosecuting Attorney Gordon Webb said that some wounds appeared to be inflicted in a way typical of teasing or torture.

Dale Edward Bryant, 39, who has a history of violent crimes, was arrested in Kentucky and pleaded guilty to capital murder.

Bryant had been seen leaving a club with Cooper the night of her death. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

1/27-8/20: *Newton County Times*, AD-G, *Boone County Headlight*, *Harrison Daily Times*

Jonesboro, February 3

Marcella Kelley, 50, was shot five times in the chest with a 9mm pistol. Her housemate, Ann Chamberlain, found her in the hallway of their home.

Danny Edward Verdict, 41, Kelley's estranged husband, was arrested in California in connection with the murder and extradited to Arkansas. During the trial, several witnesses testified that Verdict was trying to get Kelley to come back to him, but that she had refused. Verdict testified that he lost control and fatally shot Kelley after she bragged of getting sexual gratification from other men and women. "This was an emotional shooting," Verdict said.

Verdict was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

2/3-11/14: *Jonesboro Sun*, AD-G.

Little Rock, February 11

Michelle Crook, 25, was shot with a pistol in the head and neck by her estranged husband, Ricky Crook, 28. Michelle Crook spent 10 days at Baptist Medical Center before she died. The two were living in separate apartments at the same complex at the time of the shooting, and had been separated for 15 months.

Two witnesses said they heard a shot and then saw Ricky Crook shoot Michelle Crook at point-blank range in the head. Ricky Crook said he became enraged because Michelle Crook flaunted an affair she was having and refused him a divorce that would mean she would have to return to her native Barbados.

Ricky Crook was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

2/11-6/12: AD-G

Jonesboro, March 2

Naomi Woods, 59, was beaten to death with a baseball bat and hit above her right eye. Her body was found outside her son's mobile home.

James Edward Coleman, 42, Woods' son, was charged with first-degree murder. Coleman told police that he and his mother were quarreling when the murder took place.

3/2-3/4: AD-G, *Jonesboro Sun*

Little Rock, March 13

Tammy Sue Jackson, 26, was found face down on a street corner. She had been stabbed numerous times. Jackson had previously told her housemate that she was going to meet a friend at the corner.

The case is still under investigation.

3/13: AD-G

Forrest City, March 16

Tarsha Cotton, 17, was shot in the face with a .38-caliber pistol by her husband, Ezell Cotton, 22, in an attempted murder/suicide. Cotton was six months pregnant at the time of the shooting.

Ezell Cotton died one day after the shooting while Tarsha Cotton died 10 days after the shooting. Ezell Cotton had just been released on bond from the county jail on charges of second-degree criminal mischief and third-degree assault on warrants signed by Tarsha Cotton.

3/16-3/29: *St. Francis Times-Herald*, *Brinkley Argus*

Little Rock, April 8

Betty Lou Robinson, 38, was beaten on the head with a piece of concrete and stabbed in the chest while walking home from a church where she had just received food supplies.

Earl Edward Williams, 49, Robinson's former boyfriend, was charged with first-degree murder. Williams pled guilty to first-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison.

4/8-12/12: AD-G

Pine Bluff, April 10

Kathee Lea Burnett, 32, was found in a ditch. The cause of death was a blunt trauma to the head and lower parts of her body. Burnett had apparently left a local nightclub and was walking along the highway when she was hit by a car. The Pine Bluff Police Department is treating the death as a homicide, and the case is still under investigation.

4/10-8/9: AD-G, *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Lake Village, April 22

Diana B. Collins, 43, was shot while talking on the telephone in her home.

Casey Jones, 34, was charged with first-degree murder. Collins was talking to Jones' sister on the phone. Jones said he did not intend to shoot Collins, but wanted to scare her by shooting over her head. Jones was being held under \$150,000 bond.

4/22: *Chicot Spectator*

Magnolia, April 29

Doris Green, 69, died of injuries sustained in an apparent fight. The weapons used are believed to be a vase and lamp. The death occurred in her home.

Curtis Green, 77, Doris Green's husband, is believed to be the assailant. He sustained stab wounds but it is not known if they were self-inflicted. Doctors said Curtis Green was physically unable to perform the murder and is not mentally competent enough to be questioned or to stand trial. No charges have been filed.

Arkansas Crime Information Center, Magnolia Police

Beebe, May 12

Sherry Summers, 27, was shot in the head by a .22-caliber pistol fired by her boyfriend, Johnny Brock, 22, who then shot himself in an apparent murder/suicide. The two lived together and had planned to marry soon.

5/12-5/13: *Daily Citizen, AD-G*

Little Rock, May 13

Krystan Phillips, 8 months, died of a skull fracture and swelling of the brain. Lashand Thornton, 16, Phillips' mother, had left the child with her grandmother and step-grandfather while she was at work.

Grover Easter Jr., 34, Phillips' step-grandfather, has been charged with second-degree murder.

5/13-11/11: *AD-G*

Prescott, May 19

Malissa Clark, 21, and her fiancé, Jeff Lewis, 24, were found in a wooded site along with Lewis' pickup truck. Both had been shot with a .22-caliber firearm. Clark was shot five times and found nude on the ground. Lewis had been shot four times and was found inside the pickup.

It has not been determined if Clark was raped, but investigators seem to assume that she was. "After all she was found naked," said Sheriff Abb Morman. "If she was raped, she was raped after she was shot."

The deaths are still under investigation. Police believe there may be suspects in the local area.

5/19-1/23/93: *AD-G, Nashville News, Arkansas Times*

Van Buren, May 23

Amanda DeAnn "Mandy" Craig, 11, was found by children in Chouteau, Okla., at a municipal park approximately 120 miles from her home. There were scratch marks on her hands and all her fingernails had been broken off. She is believed to have been strangled. Craig was last seen walking home from her friend's home after leaving her elementary school in Van Buren. An autopsy report showed she had been sexually molested. A needle found in a hotel in Oklahoma may be the one used to inject Craig with an animal tranquilizer.

Vernon Lynn Hopper Jr., 32, of New Mexico, has been charged with Craig's kidnapping. Hopper, who is being held in Texas on unrelated charges of rape and kidnapping, has not yet been charged with murder as investigators are awaiting DNA test results. This was an apparent stranger abduction. Hopper had been recently employed in Blytheville and had links to Van Buren and Chouteau.

5/23-9/6: *Southwest Times Record, AD-G, Van Buren Press Argus-Courier, Springdale News*

Little Rock, June 2

Rhonda Estis, 19, was shot in the head after she tried to break up an argument.

Lonnie Franklin, 19, was charged with first-degree murder, and his bond was set at \$200,000. Franklin was also charged with first-degree battery and four counts of aggravated assault for shooting Lonnie Woods, an acquaintance of Estis, in the hand, and for pointing the handgun at four other people before shooting Estis. Franklin's trial is scheduled for March 17.

6/2-6/3: *AD-G*

Little Rock, June 2

Alicia Blackmon, 20, was shot in the head with a .38-caliber revolver. As many as six people were in the apartment at the time of the shooting.

Fred Nash, 18, an acquaintance of Blackmon, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for second-degree murder.
6/2-6/3: AD-G

Wynne, June 3

An **unidentified** black female body was found in the St. Francis River in Cross County. Police are awaiting results of DNA testing for possible identification. The age could not be determined.

6/2-12/16: AD-G, Wynne Police Department

Ozark, June 19

Dr. Rebecca Johnson, 53, was found in Cypress Creek near Florence, Ala. Her head was covered with a white plastic bag and pieces of a white sheet and duct tape was wrapped around her neck. Autopsy reports show she died of strangulation after being struck by a liquor bottle.

Alan Michael Johnson, 42, an acquaintance who was unrelated to Rebecca Johnson, was involved in deceiving her in a money-making scheme that ended in her death in a Fort Smith hotel room. Alan Johnson used various members of his family to assist him after the murder was committed. Alan Johnson was sentenced to life in prison without parole for capital murder.

6/19-11/24: *Southwest Times Record, Mena Evening Star, Russellville Courier Democrat, AD-G, Arkansas Times, Van Buren Press Argus-Courier, Ozark Spectator*

Marianna, June 25

Mae Ella Long, 61, was stabbed along with her housemate, Lonnie Parker, inside their residence by one of Parker's relatives. The motive for the stabbing is unknown.

Willie Lee Brand, 37, is being held on \$250,000 bond for the stabbing deaths.

6/25: *Marianna Courier-Index*

Pleasant Plains, June 29

Tina Lee Strickland, 28, was shot with a .30-caliber rifle by her live-in boyfriend at their mobile home. The two were apparently arguing and struggling with the gun when it discharged.

Vance Blanton, 32, was arrested on suspicion of first-degree murder. He was released with no bond set pending the completion of the investigation.

6/29-7/1: *Batesville Guard, AD-G*

Conway, June 30

Linda Wright, 33, was shot three times with a .12-gauge shotgun by her live-in boyfriend, Michael Russell Gilkey, 44, who then took his own life. The murder/suicide was described by the chief deputy of the Faulkner County Sheriff's Department as "a domestic disturbance that got out of hand." Two children, ages 2 and 8, were inside the home at the time of the shooting.

Gilkey had threatened Wright in the past, and sheriff's deputies had been to the home several times before for disturbances that involved arguing and fighting.

6/29-7/2: AD-G

Rogers, July 7

Brenda Gail Shcoonover, 29, was struck by a car driven by her brother Charles Edward Perry, 31. He told police he thought he had hit a deer. Perry did not stop but later pulled over to check damage to his car and could not restart the engine. Perry and his sister had been involved in at least three violent altercations recently. Rogers Police Sgt. Steve Russell said, "I think it was one of these family things where he was always jealous because he thought momma paid more attention to sis, only they carried it to extremes and beat on each other."

Charles Perry will be charged with manslaughter, leaving the scene of a fatal accident, and a drunken driving offense.

7/7-7/9: *Benton County Daily Record, Northwest Arkansas Morning News, AD-G*

Clark County, July 31

Theresa Chamberlain, 24, died of gunshot wounds in her home. She was found holding a butcher knife in her hand.

Randal T. McCarty, 25, Chamberlain's boyfriend, was charged with first-degree murder.

7/31-12/17: *Arkansas Crime Information Center, Clark County prosecutor's office.*

Little Rock, August 3

Shirley Jean Barnes, 46, was found on the kitchen floor of her apartment. She had been shot once in the chest with a .38-caliber pistol.

Her husband, Don Patrick Barnes, 52, said he shot her in self defense as she approached him with a hot curling iron during

an argument. Don Barnes was sentenced to 17 years in prison for second-degree murder.

8/3: AD-G

Fayetteville, August 3

Rebecca Lynn Overbo, 19, and her husband of two months, **Montgomery Overbo**, 33, were found inside their home. Both had been stabbed multiple times with a kitchen-type knife. Seminal fluid was found in the body of Rebecca Overbo, suggesting that she was raped.

Jefferey Scott Thomas, 20, was charged with two counts of capital murder. He had known the Overbos and was picked out of a photo lineup by a neighbor who saw someone at the house. Thomas had recently been charged in the 1991 strangulation death of **Karen Stout**.

8/3-10/8: AD-G, *Northwest Arkansas Morning News*, *The Morning News*, *Northwest Arkansas Times*

Jacksonville, August 7

Sandra Wilson, 36, died of a single gunshot wound to the head. She was found on the dining room floor of her home.

Aaron Shells, 36, an acquaintance, is being held and was charged with first-degree murder in Wilson's death. Witness **Yeldar Hood** said Wilson and Shells were drinking gin with other people. Hood said the two were "mouthing off" to each other when Shells picked up a .38-caliber revolver and shot Wilson.

8/7: AD-G, *Jacksonville News*

Pine Bluff, August 18

Stephanie Watkins, 23, was found in a grassy lot by a 10th-grader on his way to school. Watkins, whose body was partially decomposed, apparently died of gunshot wounds.

8/18: *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Forrest City, August 19

Karen Renee Swanson, 28, was found in a ditch at least a week after her death. Swanson had eight knife wounds in her back and midsection, which were determined to be the cause of death.

Larry Davis Jr., 36, a truck driver, was a suspect in the case; however, he committed suicide in South Carolina in November. Investigators from the St. Francis County Sheriff's Department said the fingerprints found matched Davis' but they are awaiting DNA test results on his blood and hair. "We feel like we're 99 percent finished in this case," said Deputy **Glenn Ramsey**.

8/19-1/23/93: *Times-Herald*, AD-G, *St. Francis County criminal investigator*

El Dorado, August 25

Brenda Dansby, 34, died of multiple gunshot wounds in the front yard of her house. **Ronnie Kimble**, Dansby's boyfriend, was also shot during the domestic argument between Dansby and her estranged husband, **Ray Dansby**. Kimble died several days later. The Dansby's 8-year-old son witnessed the incident; another witness saw the boy crying as he ran after his father following the shooting.

Ray Dansby, 32, was charged with murder. Ray Dansby had a long history of harassing and abusing Brenda Dansby. His bond was set at \$500,000.

Capt. **Bill Hickman** of the El Dorado Police Department said, "Over a period of eight years we made about eight arrests in an attempt to protect Brenda – several felony arrests – and it didn't work."

8/25-8/31: *El Dorado News-Times*

Magnolia, August 31

Sue Shackelford, 46, called 911 to report that her estranged husband, **Joe Shackelford Jr.**, was beating her and tearing up the house. Two minutes later she called again, saying he had shot someone. By the time deputies arrived, Sue Shackelford was dead from a shot to the head.

Joe Shackelford, 49, killed himself after murdering Sue Shackelford and **Thomas Oglesby**, 45, an acquaintance of Shackelford who was also in the house. All three were dead when police arrived.

8/31: *Banner News*

West Memphis, September 4

Demeteros Phillips, 28, died two days after being severely beaten and dumped along the Arkansas 77 Bypass in Crittenden County.

Willie Balentine, 38, of Marion was charged in the case. He was arrested in Memphis in February 1993 and is awaiting extradition to Arkansas.

9/4-2/6/93: *Evening Times*, AD-G

Marked Tree, September 5

Delois Coleman, 32, was found dead in the bedroom of her home. Officers recovered a knife and a firearm at the scene. **Willie B. Jones**, 31, was arrested for the murder. Jones was Coleman's former boyfriend. The two had recently lived together.

9/5-9/9: *Jonesboro Sun*, AD-G

Pine Bluff, September 10

Cora Smith, 42, died several days after being stabbed during an argument.

Robert Lee Woods, 37, who lived at Smith's residence, was originally charged with first-degree battery but is expected to be charged with murder.

9/10: *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Hot Springs, September 15

Laura Fulbright, 1, died from multiple severe fractures of the skull.

Joseph Johnathan Rank, 24, the boyfriend of Fulbright's mother, **Mary Ellen Robbins**, was charged with first-degree murder. Rank was looking after Fulbright. When Robbins returned home, Rank told her that Fulbright had fallen on some rocks. Robbins at first thought Fulbright was all right but later in the day the baby began having trouble breathing. **Rheeta Stecker**, a doctor at the hospital where Fulbright was taken, has alleged the abuse. Stecker said she had warned Robbins of possible child abuse at least six weeks before Fulbright's death.

Rank's bond was set at \$50,000; his trial is scheduled for May 11, 1993.

9/15- 2/2/93: AD-G, *The Sentinel Record*

Jonesboro, September 25

Mary Prater, 27, bled to death from a bullet wound in her aorta. She was found unconscious in her car in the parking lot of a convenience store, and had been shot with a .22-caliber gun. A detective believes that she was pregnant at the time.

Army Sgt. David Glasco, 24, dated Prater while he was separated from his wife, and he said she began harassing him when he reconciled with his wife. Glasco said Prater had been following him when he pulled over to the side of the road. Glasco told police that he and Prater struggled over a .22-caliber handgun and that it fired when she pointed it at him and he attempted to force the barrel downward. Glasco told police he put Prater in her vehicle, left the shooting scene and drove home; he then returned to the scene and called authorities. No charges have been filed.

9/25-10/3: *Jonesboro Sun*, AD-G

Eudora, October 7

Crystal Hudson, 16, was discovered in a field last summer. She had been listed as a missing person. The cause of death was a blow to the head.

Harley E. McCoy, 20, Hudson's former boyfriend, was charged with second-degree murder but later pled guilty to manslaughter. McCoy said that Hudson became hysterical after informing him she was pregnant with his child. McCoy shook Hudson and she fell to the ground, striking her head on a rock. McCoy placed Hudson's body in his truck and hid the body under a bridge. McCoy said that when he returned later, Hudson's body was missing.

McCoy received a 10-year prison sentence.

10/7: *Eudora Enterprise*, *Chicot County Sheriff's Department*

Wynne, October 13

Gardenia Cross, 16, was found off a roadway in a ditch. Her death was apparently caused by puncture wounds and lacerations to the face and neck.

The case is still under investigation.

10/13-10/16: *Wynne Progress*, *Jonesboro Sun*

Bentonville, October 19

Wynona Frazier, 44, died of a close-range gunshot wound to her face while at her home. **Bobby Jones**, who was also shot in the incident, survived.

Police charged **Everette Lee Frazier**, 44, **Wynona Frazier's** husband, with capital murder and attempted capital murder. The two had been separated for several months. The Frazier's 11-year-old daughter, **Tammy**, phoned police, told them her address and said, "Mom and Bobby have been shot." The girl told authorities that she had been asleep on the couch when the shootings occurred and that she had not seen her father. **Tammy Frazier** told authorities that she overheard a conversation earlier in the week in which her father threatened to kill **Wynona Frazier**, **Jones**, and himself. The Frazier's other daughter, **Linda**, said she had heard **Everette Frazier** threaten to kill **Wynona Frazier** several times over the last two years, and had asked **Linda Frazier** to help him

seek reconciliation with her mother.

10/19-12/29: *Benton County Daily Record, Morning News, Northwest Arkansas Morning News*

Hoxie, October 20

Violet Hensley Starkey, 30, was found dead at her home.

L.B. Starkey, 43, her husband, first told police that she had shot herself in the left side of the neck with a .12-gauge shotgun. L.B. Starkey then told officers a different story of Violet Starkey shooting herself before admitting he shot her. L.B. Starkey said the shooting was accidental. Both had been drinking.

L.B. Starkey was charged with first-degree murder. His bond was set at \$50,000.

10/20-10/21: *The Times Dispatch, Jonesboro Sun*

West Memphis, October 20

Teresa Kaye Singleton, 30, was found nude in a ditch by sanitation workers along a road near railroad tracks. No gunshot or stab wounds were visible on the body. The Crittenden County Sheriff's Department said it appears she was strangled. The case is still under investigation.

10/20-10/23: *Evening Times, AD-G*

West Helena, October 21

Loistene Lovelace, 31, was raped and shot three times with a 9mm weapon. She had been kidnapped in her car and then taken to a field where she was raped, shot and left for dead.

Larry Davis, 20, was found driving her car. He had been a friend of some of Lovelace's family members. Davis was charged with capital murder, rape and theft of a vehicle.

1/28/93: *Arkansas Crime Information Center, West Helena Police Department*

Russellville, October 21

Virginia Wilson Malick, 31, a potential witness in the trial for the 1989 murder of Pamela Smith, was found stabbed to death on her waterbed at her home. Malick was nude, she had been stabbed numerous times, her hands and feet were bound with tape, a sock was stuffed in her mouth and her mouth was taped shut. It is believed she was tied up for some time before the murder. Malick's fatal injuries included stab or cut wounds over her eye, under her eye, on the right side of her back, four on her buttocks and two or three wounds to each breast. Malick's throat had also been cut. Malick's three children were asleep in another bedroom of the house at the time of the murder.

David Malick, 26, Virginia Malick's husband, was charged with capital murder and the kidnapping of Melissa Harris, Virginia Malick's 17-year-old friend, who was staying with her at the time. David Malick kept Harris tied up in another room of the house while he murdered Virginia Malick, and later took her to a motel room, where she and David Malick were found by police. At one point, David Malick forced Harris to shave his body hair, including his pubic hair. David told officers he had tied his wife up to try out "new sex" and that he "just snapped." David Malick later claimed that his wife was killed by an intruder.

The trial has been set for March 10. Malick was also charged with capital murder in the Smith murder.

10/21-2/6/93: *Courier Democrat, AD-G, Conway County Petit Jean Country Headlight, Atkins Chronicle*

Mount Ida, November 4

Anna Philbrick, 74, was killed by a blunt object, and her body was found in a mobile home 3 miles north of Glenwood.

Charles Lee Jenkins, 61, was charged with capital murder. Anna had befriended him and had a dinner date with him on the evening of her death. Jenkins had previously served time for attempted murder, kidnapping and other charges. Montgomery County officers are continuing the investigation.

11/4: *AD-G*

Camden, November 9

Marilyn Walker, 31, was shot in the head and arm with a .22-caliber rifle.

Willie Walker, 52, her former husband, turned the gun on himself after shooting Marilyn Walker; he survived. The couple was recently divorced and had been having trouble over property. Willie Walker, whose bond was set at \$100,000, is charged with first-degree murder.

11/9-11/17: *Camden News, AD-G*

El Dorado, November 29

Marilyn E. McCathern, 34, was shot and killed by her husband, Jimmy Dale McCathern, 39, who then shot and killed himself.

11/29: *El Dorado News-Times, Arkansas Crime Information Center*

Walnut Ridge, November 29

Carrie Galbreath, 20, was found shot to death in her sister's vehicle. Galbreath was shot twice outside a convenience store. Witnesses said they heard Galbreath say "he shot me" before a man shoved her into the car and shot her three more times. Galbreath suffered five gunshot wounds to the left side of her body, apparently from a .22-caliber weapon. The body was sent to the medical examiner's office.

An unknown male suspect is being sought in Galbreath's murder.

11/29-12/16: AD-G, *Pocahontas Star Herald*, *Jonesboro Sun*, *Walnut Ridge Times Dispatch*

Pine Bluff, December 2

Danita Ferguson, 16, died of a gunshot wound to the stomach following an argument.

Albert Ellis Jr., 21, is charged with first-degree murder. Ellis told the prosecuting attorney that he and Ferguson were arguing in the street outside a residence when she slapped him and a .32-caliber pistol went off.

12/2-12/5: AD-G, *Pine Bluff Commercial*

El Dorado, December 4

Latonya Billings, 19, was found dead in the back seat of her car. She had been shot in the right temple with a .25-caliber pistol. Lying next to Billings was her former boyfriend, who was also shot in the temple in an apparent murder/suicide attempt.

A week later, **Richard Earl Thrower**, 22, died of his injuries. The two had broken up not long before.

12/4-12/11: AD-G, *El Dorado News-Times*

Pine Bluff, December 11

Vanshanda Shaw, 15, died of gunshot wounds sustained after an apparent argument with **Horace G. Brown**, her 32-year-old boyfriend. Shaw was found in Brown's bedroom.

Brown's first-degree murder trial is scheduled for May 17.

12/11-12/12: *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Pine Bluff, December 12

April LeShaun Pruitt, 2, died from massive head trauma as a result of child abuse. **John Cone**, deputy prosecuting attorney, said the child's body showed "bruises, scars and bite marks."

Bobby Knight, 32, her mother's boyfriend, and her mother, **Martha Williams**, 30, were charged with second-degree murder.

12/12-1/7/93: AD-G, *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Heber Springs, February 26, 1993

Linda Carter, 52, died December 14 after being shot above her left eye with a .22-caliber rifle.

Ethridge L. Carter, 66, will be charged with first-degree murder in the killing of his wife, which initially was thought a suicide. **Ethridge Carter** told police that he found **Linda Carter** on the living room couch with a gunshot wound above her left eye and the gun in her hand. Tests from the state Crime Laboratory showed the husband's fingerprints on it, not the victim's.

2/26/93: AD-G

Marianna, December 17

Deborah Anderson, 36, was found beaten to death in the back yard of a residence.

Charles Prater, 42, her boyfriend, was charged with second-degree murder. Witnesses reported seeing **Prater** drag **Anderson** up the street before dawn.

12/17: *Marianna Courier-Index*

Huntsville, December 22

Carolyn Harvey, 37, was shot in the head several times with a .22-caliber rifle at her mobile home. **Harvey** was hiding in her bedroom closet when her 16-year-old son, **Burl Harvey**, shot her. He later tried to make the shooting appear to be a suicide. **Carolyn Harvey** was found by her younger son when he came home from school.

Burl Harvey was charged with first-degree murder. A March trial date was set.

12/22-12/24: AD-G, *North Arkansas Times*, *The Morning News*, *Northwest Arkansas Morning News*

Hot Springs, December 27

Carol A. Canfield, 23, and **Kathleen White**, 47, were shot by a small-caliber handgun after going to a club. They were each shot once in the back of the head.

Thomas Meece, 37, was charged with two counts of capital murder in the deaths. **Meece** was the resident manager of the club, a home for recovering alcoholics. He had called **Canfield** and **White** to ask if they would come over and give him a ride to

the hospital.

12/27-1/1/93: *AD-G, Sentinel Record*

Jonesboro, December 31

Dorothy Hurley, 23, was shot once in the chest with a sawed off .12-gauge shotgun. She was shot as she stood alongside the highway after exiting a vehicle and approaching a car driven by Donnie Sims. Two persons witnessed the shooting from the vehicle she exited.

Sims, 24, her ex-husband, was charged with first-degree murder. Craighead County Sheriff Larry Emison said, "They had been having problems. Apparently they were getting back together, but it was an on-again, off-again thing. She was with someone else and he kind of lost it." Sims' bond was set at \$200,000.

12/31-1/1/93: *AD-G, Jonesboro Sun*

ROBBERY-RELATED MURDERS OF WOMEN

Helena, February 12.

Louise F. Dwyer, 78, was found strangled by a piece of electrical cord in her home.

James Johnson Jr., 37, who had done chores for Dwyer in the past, was charged with capital murder in the death.

2/12-2/14: *AD-G, Daily Word*

Pine Bluff, March 24

Teresa Jester, 42, was shot with a shotgun in her shoulder as she used a telephone at a service station.

Sherman Noble, Vernon Dedmon and Timmy Hordsberry were charged with capital murder. The three men went to Pine Bluff to steal a car, and were on their way back to Little Rock when they saw Jester talking on the phone next to a BMW and decided to steal the car. Noble told police he shot Jester accidentally and the other two say they didn't know he had a shotgun. Noble pled guilty and was sentenced to life without parole.

3/24: *AD-G, Pine Bluff Police Dept, Arkansas Crime Information Center*

Batesville, May 27

Margie McGowan, 59, was robbed and murdered at a laundromat where she was the operator-manager. She was stabbed several times in the face, back and chest with a screwdriver, and struck on the head with a two-by-four.

Frankie Ray Taylor, 17, pled guilty to capital murder and will receive life without parole.

5/27-12/30: *AD-G, Calico River Current, Batesville Guard*

Benton, June 2

Robin Richardson, 13, was with her mother while she was at work in a convenience store when she was shot with a shotgun in the head and stabbed in the back. Her mother was shot in the chest but survived. Investigators said the shootings apparently were robbery-related.

Steven Ray Weger Jr., 18, was convicted of capital murder and sentenced to life in prison for Richardson's murder. Chad A. Kitchell, 17, pleaded guilty to capital murder and was sentenced to life in prison without parole. Both men were convicted of attempted capital murder with a recommended sentence of 30 years for the shooting of Richardson's mother.

6/2-11/14: *AD-G, Benton Courier*

Little Rock, July 30

Yvette Ibarra, 22, died of multiple gun shot wounds to her chest, stomach, and arm. She was sitting in a car with her boyfriend when two men approached them and asked for money. They attempted to drive off when one of the men opened fire.

Keith Hawkins, 22, has been charged with capital murder. His bond was set at \$100,000.

7/30-8/1: *AD-G*

Wilmar, December 3

Rhonda Kaye Newman, 26, was shot once in the head during an attempted robbery of the convenience store where she worked. Newman was found dead by a truck driver who stopped at the store.

James Rhodes Jr., 20, and an unnamed 16-year-old youth will be charged with murder in Newman's death. Both were being held on \$100,000 bond each. Police reported that the suspect who fired the weapon apparently panicked and left the store without taking anything.

2/3/93: *Monticello Advance Monticellonian*

Cascoe, December 16

Mary Lou Jones, 53, was shot and killed with a .22-caliber revolver during a suspected robbery attempt at a convenience store where she worked. The store's owner was also killed. Approximately \$200 was taken but a bag containing \$900 was left behind.

Albert Bell, 16, and **Terry Sims**, 16, have each been charged with two counts of capital murder. The youths knew the victims.

12/16-1/13/93: AD-G

NON-ROBBERY-RELATED AND NON-SEXIST MURDERS OF WOMEN

Auvergne, January 31

Mary Williams, 68, was shot numerous times in the head and shoulder region inside her home along with her husband, who had also been shot. Both a .22- and a .32-caliber pistol were found inside the home.

Gary W. Williams, 32, their son, was charged with two counts of capital murder. Gary Williams called police, turning himself in the morning after the shootings took place.

Mary Williams and her husband had on previous occasions sworn affidavits for the arrest of their son on charges of terroristic threatening.

1/30-2/3: AD-G, *Jonesboro Sun*, *Newport Daily Independent*

Little Rock, February 20

Sabrina Earl, 23, was shot in the back of the head at close range. Her body was found on a bed at her apartment. Two other men were killed during the incident. Earl was seven months pregnant at the time. It is believed she was killed for being a witness to a soured drug deal.

Nathaniel Thomas Jr., 36, was convicted of one charge of capital murder and two counts of first-degree murder. He was sentenced to life without parole plus 40 years. Referring to Earl, Thomas said, "If they had known she was pregnant, they would not have killed her." Thomas originally said that three other men were with him at the time of the murders, but the judge has dropped the charges against them due to lack of evidence and false statements by Thomas.

2/20-12/11: AD-G.

De Queen, March 26

Charlene Friend, 49, and her husband were found slain in their bed. The Friends were repeatedly beaten on the head and upper body with a baseball bat. Charlene Friend's throat had also been cut.

Bobby Michael Friend, 19, their adopted son; **Ricky Dawson**, 19; **George Lemoin Rhodes**, 18; and **Timothy Allen Oliver**, 15, were charged with two counts of capital murder. Weapons used during the attack included a baseball bat, a sword, a box cutting knife, and a dowel pin. In the past police had visited the home to settle domestic disputes between Bobby Friend and his parents.

Bobby Friend told police that he "never meant to kill, only knock unconscious the mother." However, he admitted in court documents that he brought the sword to the attack. Bobby Friend received two death sentences for the murders. Dawson testified against Bobby Friend in exchange for life in prison without having his case tried.

3/25-10/18: *De Queen Bee*, AD-G, *Little River News*, *De Queen Daily Citizen*, *The Sentinel Record*, *Texarkana Gazette*, *Nashville News*

Sheridan, June 17

Vicki Perkins, 29, died of injuries sustained during a shooting at a night club in May. Also killed was Gary Thomas.

William St. Jean, 39; **Rick A. Visneau**, 41; **Loza W. Table Sr.**, 41; and **Frederick Peterson**, 28, were all charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of Perkins and Thomas.

6/17: *Sheridan Headlight*

Little Rock, July 13

Lamesha Barton, 14, was shot once in the upper chest with a 9mm automatic handgun as she was standing at the corner of 15th and Oak streets. It is estimated that at least 15 rounds were fired into the intersection. A second girl was also injured with gunshot wounds to both legs.

Kenneth Johnson, 25, was arrested and charged the following day with first-degree murder. He is said to be a Crips gang member. A dispute between Johnson and another man, who lives near the shooting, apparently escalated over the weekend, leading to the fatal shooting. Bond was set at \$1 million, but was later reduced to \$100,000. Johnson paid the bond and is out of jail. Johnson had numerous previous arrests in Little Rock and California.

7/13-8/4: AD-G

Little Rock, July 14

Sheronda Abdullah, 21, was killed while a passenger in a car during a drive-by shooting apparently aimed at Kenneth Johnson, who was driving, in retaliation for his role in the killing of Lamesha Barton. Johnson was charged in Barton's death. Abdullah's 2-year-old son was also in the car, but neither Johnson nor the child was injured. Abdullah was Johnson's girlfriend. She was shot in the head and neck with a semi-automatic weapon. The car was sprayed with six to eight bullets.

Douglas Clayton Jr., 18, was charged with first-degree murder in the shooting. Police said an ongoing dispute between Johnson and Clayton was apparently at the root of the slayings of innocent female bystanders and the wounding of another. Clayton's trial is scheduled for April 6.

7/14-8/22: AD-G

Pine Bluff, July 23

Annie Ruth Summerville, 44, and her son Marvin Summerville, 21, were shot in the front yard of their home. Annie Summerville suffered from gunshot wounds to her wrist, chest, and her head. Her son died of a single gunshot to the chest.

Carey Williams, 17, was charged with first-degree murder in the killings. Three other teenagers have been arrested. Marvin Summerville had apparently been in an argument with the four teenagers earlier in the day and they went to his house looking for him. When Marvin Summerville and his mother stepped out of the house, Williams fired upon them.

7/23-7/25: AD-G, *Pine Bluff Commercial*

Fort Smith, July 28

Amanda Phelan, 14, was shot twice in the head with a .22-caliber rifle while someone held a pillow over her face pretending they were playing a game.

Amanda's half brother, Kenneth Ray Brisco, 19, and half sister, Tracy Phelan, 17, were charged in the death. Brisco pled guilty to first degree murder and use of a firearm in commission of a crime and was sentenced to 50 years. Tracy Phelan was sentenced to 20 years in prison with 15 years suspended on a reduced charge of second-degree murder. Amanda Phelan's murder was to be the first in a long line of killings of family members. Brisco and Tracy Phelan then planned to take the family's car and property to Florida while robbing businesses along the way. Tracy Phelan called a friend of Brisco's immediately following Amanda Phelan's murder and asked him to come over to help. Instead, the friend called the police and Brisco and Tracy Phelan were apprehended.

7/28-12/9: *Southwest Times Record*, AD-G

RACIST VIOLENCE

Under the category of Racist Violence, the Women's Project documents incidents in which people of color are victimized by white people.

USE OF FORCE AND OVERTLY RACIST ACTIONS BY LITTLE ROCK POLICE OFFICERS

In 1992, there were five times when a Little Rock police officer fired a weapon and struck a person, and in each incident, a white, male officer struck an African-American man. The entries detailing these five shootings are grouped together and listed first. These are followed by other entries detailing actions by white Little Rock police officers against people of color

Little Rock, Feb 4

Jim Aulwes, a white Little Rock police lieutenant, was fired for improper use of deadly force after he fired three shots at 19-year-old Jermaine Johnson, an African-American, and seriously injured him. Johnson, who was with two other people in the parking lot of Parkview Arts-Science Magnet High School, fled on foot from two Little Rock police officers as they radioed for a warrants check on him. Aulwes followed Johnson in his patrol car before exiting the vehicle. Johnson then jumped into the driver's seat and put the car in gear. As Aulwes reached into the vehicle holding his .38-caliber revolver, Johnson slammed the door on Aulwes' forearm, causing the gun to discharge. The bullet struck Johnson in the back of the head. As Johnson drove away, Aulwes pulled his arm free and fired three more shots.

Johnson was unarmed and did not have access to a weapon inside the police car. Police Chief Louie Caudell fired Aulwes for violating the department's deadly force policy by shooting and seriously wounding a fleeing theft suspect while innocent people were nearby.

Johnson filed a \$190,000 federal lawsuit against the city of Little Rock and Aulwes for violating his civil rights.

2/4-2/3/93: AD-G

Little Rock, March 26

Dwain "Rusty" Watson, a white police detective who shot and seriously wounded an African-American man, was cleared of any wrongdoing after an investigation by the Pulaski County prosecutor ruled that the shooting was justified. Larry Rhodes,

32, was shot in the stomach by Watson, 30. Rhodes had been seen leaving a house that was under surveillance for a suspect in a triple homicide (Rhodes was not that suspect.) Police followed his car, signaled him to pull over and told Rhodes to put up his hands. Because Rhodes showed only his left hand as he suddenly got out of the car, Watson, who is white, thought he was going to be fired upon and shot Rhodes. Rhodes is quoted as saying he was "acting a fool. I got out of the car. The policeman told me to put my hands up. I didn't. I tripped and fell, and the police shot me." Rhodes, a reporter for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, admitted he had been using crack.

Pulaski County Prosecutor Mark Stodola said that the shooting was justified as Watson believed Rhodes was about to commit an act involving force or violence against the officers. Watson was on administrative leave with pay during the investigation.

3/21-3/26: AD-G

Little Rock, August 28

Jerry Smith, a white police lieutenant, was cleared of any wrongdoing after shooting Kevin Thomas, 16-year-old African-American, in the hand during an arrest. According to police reports, Smith said that as he scuffled with Thomas, he felt his gun slipping and tightened his grip on the weapon, causing it to discharge. However, Michael Booker, Thomas' attorney, said witnesses to the shooting told him that there was no scuffle and that Smith shot Thomas as he was getting out of the driver's seat. Smith was standing outside the opened passenger door after the front-seat passenger had been removed, the witnesses said.

Smith was cleared after the police investigation; however, Booker has filed a lawsuit against the police department with primary grievances against Smith.

8/28: AD-G, Michael Booker

Little Rock, November 23

Following the shooting death of William Tayes, an African-American, by white police officer Steve Gorbet, an internal police investigation determined that Gorbet did not improperly fire his gun. Tayes, 38, was killed after being pursued by Gorbet for running a stop light. Tayes finally pulled his car over but did not stop. He continued driving and crashed his car into a brick wall before jumping out and fighting with Gorbet. After Tayes grabbed a corner post from a nearby wood fence and either struck the officer with it or threatened to do so, Gorbet drew and fired his service pistol once.

11/23-12/31: AD-G

Little Rock, December 30

White Little Rock police officer Michael Davis, 26, was justified in shooting Herbert Davis, 43, according to the findings of an internal police investigation. Herbert Davis, who is African-American, was seriously injured when he was shot in the chest and wrist by Michael Davis. Police said Herbert Davis fled when officers walked up on a group of people he was sitting with at the Highland Court housing project. Police said that Herbert Davis pointed a gun at the officers during the pursuit.

12/30-2/24/93: AD-G

Little Rock, May 31

Little Rock police officer Doug Elms, who is white, quit rather than be fired after he was accused of misconduct in the arrest of Herbert Cuning, a 39-year-old African-American. Cuning said he was falsely arrested and roughed up by Elms while Cuning was staying at the Master's Economy Inn. At the time of the incident, Elms, who was off duty, was providing security for the hotel. Elms charged Cuning with disorderly conduct and public intoxication. "The only thing I'm guilty of is being black," said Cuning, who accused Elms of threatening him with his dog.

Cuning was acquitted of the charges, and Assistant Police Chief David Rowan recommended that Elms be fired because there was "insufficient evidence to prove or disprove" Elms' allegations about Cuning's conduct.

5/31-9/20: AD-G

Little Rock, October 14

Two Latino men were deported and one is still awaiting trial after the three were the victims of harassment, intimidation and abusive language by a white Pulaski County sheriff's deputy. Carlos Tapia, who is in his early 30s, Antonio Montes, 20, and Renee Garcia, 20, lived at the same west Little Rock apartment as Pulaski County sheriff's deputy Keith Martin. The Latinos said Martin began harassing them several weeks before the arrests. Martin, the night manager for the complex, told the men he didn't like Mexicans.

On October 14, Tapia, Montes and Garcia were drinking beer in their apartment when Montes and Garcia left to make another run to the liquor store. They were stopped by Martin on the way. Montes ran to the apartment to inform Tapia and when Tapia went to the scene, Martin threatened him with arrest if he didn't leave. Martin then went to Tapia's apartment, forced his way in, and hit Tapia in the face with his pistol. Martin also pulled the pistol on the other adults and children in the apartment and threatened them with arrest. Tapia, a documented worker, fled, and was treated at the hospital.

Martin said he arrested Montes and Garcia because they smelled of alcohol and yelled at him when he advised them to keep their voices down in the parking lot. Martin said when he entered the apartment, Tapia, who was wielding a knife, said he would kill Martin. Martin also said his arm was injured when Garcia pushed him.

Tapia was arrested five days later and charged with terroristic threatening and fleeing, both misdemeanors, and second-degree escape and second-degree battery, both felonies. Montes, an undocumented worker, was charged with public intoxication, disorderly conduct and fleeing, all misdemeanors, and with aggravated assault and second-degree escape, both felonies. Garcia, also undocumented, was charged with public intoxication and disorderly conduct, obstructing government operations and resisting arrest, all misdemeanors. They were given the option of pleading guilty and being deported to Mexico or spending a year in jail.

Tapia's bond was first set at \$25,000 and later reduced to \$2,500. The case was moved to circuit court, where Latino community advocates believe Tapia has a better chance of receiving a fair trial. The trial date has not been set. Following the arrests, immigration officials checked the status of all Mexican residents in the apartment complex.

Father Scott Friend, Catholic Diocese Hispanic Ministries

Little Rock, November 18

Kevin Tindle, a white Little Rock police officer, was suspended for 30 days without pay for attending a Halloween party wearing a large Afro wig, painting his face black and carrying a watermelon. Tindle is also said to have used the term "nigger" three days earlier during a dispute with several black officers.

Thirty officers – representing 60% of the black members of the Little Rock Fraternal Order of Police – quit the organization following the incidents. The Fraternal Order of Police agreed to pay Tindle's legal fees during his appeal of Police Chief Louie Caudell finding that Tindle violated department rules with personal conduct, causing justified criticism of the department, and for ridiculing or willfully embarrassing or humiliating a person. The Little Rock Civil Service Commission upheld Caudell's decision.

11/18 - 2/6/93: AD-G, *Arkansas Times*

USE OF FORCE AND OVERTLY RACIST ACTIONS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OUTSIDE LITTLE ROCK

The following entries provide details about the use of force by white law enforcement officers against people of color, and about overtly racist actions on the part of white law enforcement officers. Each of these incidents occurred outside Little Rock.

West Helena, Feb 5

Police Capt. Joe King, who is white, was given a one-year suspended sentence with six months of supervised probation after being convicted of beating a 14-year-old African-American youth.

King's wife and a friend were driving to a restaurant when a shot was fired at their car, breaking a window. Neither woman was hurt. Mrs. King called the police and her husband, who was at home. After meeting his wife at the restaurant, King drove to a bowling alley, stopped a 14-year-old black youth and beat him even though the boy said he knew nothing about the incident.

King was charged with third-degree battery following a state police investigation. He pleaded no contest to the charges. In addition to his sentence, King was ordered to pay \$475 in restitution to the boy for his injuries. This case marked the second time brutality charges with racial overtones had been made against King. In the first case, in 1975, the brutality charge against him ended in an out-of-court settlement.

2/5-4/11: AD-G, *Phillips County Progress, The Daily World*

North Little Rock, June 1

About 20 African-Americans gathered in front of the North Little Rock Police Department to protest what they described as racist and brutal police practices.

Several at the protest said they had been arrested unnecessarily and that officers used unnecessary force. Rosalind Jackson, 17, one of the protestors, said she was standing in front of her residence talking with her grandmother when a police officer drove up and alleged she and others were skipping school. The officer told them to get in the car. At the time Jackson was wearing a uniform from Rally's Hamburgers, where she worked. When she refused to get in the car, Jackson said the officer slammed her against the vehicle, twisted her arm behind her back and kicked her. Jackson said she was two months pregnant at the time and that the incident caused her to lose the baby.

Police Chief William Nolan said at the time of the protest that no community members had filed formal complaints.

6/1: AD-G

Camden, June 2

An internal police investigation found that Michael Benson, a white police lieutenant, was justified in shooting Curtis Patterson, an African-American, who later died of his injuries. Patterson, 21, was shot in the back by Benson. Patterson had been

under surveillance by police and was known to be armed with a semi-automatic pistol. Benson and other officers surrounded Patterson, who was on foot, and ordered him to stop. Patterson ran directly at Benson, who had his gun drawn. When Patterson ran past Benson and pulled a .32-caliber pistol from his waistband, the officer fired two shots, striking him in the rear mid-torso area.

6/2: *AD-G, Jim Waller Camden News*

Forrest City, September 23

Allegations were made that white Forrest City Police Chief Joe Goff used a racial slur when referring to an African-American officer during a conversation with another department employee. The City Council's Police Committee said they could not find any evidence to prove the charge against Goff. Because of the allegation, the council intended to amend the city's personnel manual to "make any racial epithet or slur by any employee of the city of Forrest City, upon proof of such offense, grounds for immediate disciplinary action or dismissal."

9/23: *Forrest City Herald*

Pulaski County, October 24

The shooting death of Brian Sampson, a 19-year-old African-American, by three white Pulaski County sheriff's deputies was justifiable, according to a ruling by Prosecuting Attorney Mark Stodola. Sampson was shot after he allegedly struck two deputies with the 1984 Ford Bronco he was driving. Three deputies fired a total of eight shots at Sampson while he was riding in his vehicle, and after he exited the truck and fled on foot. No weapons were found in Sampson's truck, and a community advocate said that Sampson was denied medical treatment for two hours after he was shot.

A community advocate reported that the FBI is still investigating the shooting; also, there is still the possibility that the officers could be disciplined under departmental guidelines.

The shooting sparked organizing by members of the African-American community. More than 100 people attended the initial community meetings to protest the shooting and law enforcement brutality, and to devise strategies for countering the related issues of drugs and crime. The community is trying to organize an NAACP chapter, and has developed a Neighborhood Community Action Project. Efforts are being made to develop better relations with law enforcement officers.

10/24-1/21/93: *AD-G, Spectrum Weekly, the Rev. Clarence Guy, pastor to victim's family*

Russellville, October 30

Lasonya Foster, an African-American, was charged with inciting a riot and criminal mischief after Russellville police accused her of calling them "child beater" and "pigs" in response to her cousin's alleged beating by police the night before. According to her written statement, she and several others joined about seven people in Russellville's African-American community who watched as several police officers talked to a white man. Some of the people gathered started calling the police names and yelling that the department was "going to be a black police force." Foster stated she was in the process of walking off with her friends when she was approached by a white officer and told she was under arrest for disorderly conduct.

After Foster was handcuffed and put in the patrol car, the crowd started throwing objects at the police officers, who were all white. Foster, the only person arrested, was charged with inciting a riot. When she went to court November 10, Foster stated that a detective, who was not at the scene when the incident took place, made false accusations against her. She spent two days in jail - which cost Foster her job - because she couldn't post her \$15,000 bond. Attorney Michael Booker has agreed to represent her. The trial date is June 28, 1993.

10/30-1/26/93: *victim's statement, Michael Booker*

Pine Bluff, November 21

White police officer Barry Puckett, 23, was fired after he admitted striking Boyd Lee Frazier with a loaded pistol. Frazier, who is African-American, was beaten by Puckett and two other white officers after a high-speed chase that ended when Frazier rammed into three police cars.

The Pine Bluff Civil Service Commission upheld the firing of Puckett. The other two white officers were suspended, one for five days and another for 30 days. The beating was reported by an African-American police officer. More than 100 African-Americans attended the open hearings about the case, and there is reportedly a lot of tension between African-American and white officers.

11/21-12/23: *AD-G, the Rev. Richard Bullard*

North Little Rock, December 15

Sam Oliver and his brother, Joe Oliver III, filed a complaint with the Civil Service Commission in response to an incident on December 5 in which they claim that a North Little Rock police officer walked on Sam Oliver's porch and asked him if he had a "fucking problem, nigger." After the officer and Oliver exchanged words, the officers chased Sam Oliver into his house, where he was hit with a nightstick above his eye and one of his fingers was broken. Other officers at the scene were white and African-

American, but the main complaint was with the white officers. Four children were in the home when the incident occurred.
12/15-12/19: AD-G

NON-POLICE-RELATED RACIST INCIDENTS

Little Rock, March 17

A white driver of a pickup truck shouted a racist remark before threatening to shoot seven African-American teenagers who were playing football in the front yard of their home. When one teenager asked what the man said, the man jumped out of the truck and threatened the teenagers with a board. The man then got a gun from another passenger in the truck, cocked the hammer and threatened to shoot. A group of golfers across the street witnessed the incident, and the men left when they realized they were being watched.

David G. Rogers II, 33, turned himself in and was charged with aggravated assault. Rogers bail was set at \$1,500. He was traced through his license plate number.

3/17-3/26: AD-G

Nashville, May 7

Racial tensions between African-American and white Nashville High School students that first erupted off school grounds resulted in injuries to five youth. At a Saturday night party to which several African-American students had been invited, some uninvited whites – including adults between the ages of 22 and 31 – showed up. A fight broke out, sending four African-American students to the emergency room for treatment of minor injuries.

Police jailed Brian Billings, 23, who is white and is Sheriff Dick Wakefield's nephew, for throwing the first punch. Later Michael Tolliver, 22, who is also white, turned himself in. Tolliver pled guilty to one charge of third-degree battery and no contest to another charge. He was fined \$50 and costs and required to make restitution of \$149. Third-degree battery charges against Billings were later dismissed when no testimony from the four African-American students indicated that Billings had hit them.

On the Monday following the party, black students at Nashville High School targeted white students in retaliation for the Saturday fight. Many white parents took their children out of school following the stabbing of a white student.

5/7-7/20: *Nashville News*

Nashville, June 15

The words "KKK" and "Nigger" were found spray-painted on a concrete wall near a Church of Christ church and cemetery.

6/15: *Nashville News*

Cabot, June 18

A white Cabot School Board member, Chuck Drees, was charged with disorderly conduct and asked to resign from the board after he used a racial slur against African-American umpire Larry Fobbs at a May 30 girl's softball game in Cabot.

During the game, Drees, the assistant coach, became angry after Fobbs called a strike. Drees is accused of making several derogatory comments during the game and of going up to Fobbs with his fists clenched after the game, threatening to ruin him as an umpire and calling him a "nigger" several times. The school board could not force Drees, who is in his first year of a five-year term, to resign. Drees said he does not intend to quit. The softball team's head coach did apologize to Fobbs.

Fobbs filed a complaint of disorderly conduct against Drees, but failed to show up for the trial. Drees is attempting to get the charges dismissed, and the judge gave the Cabot city attorney until March 31 to locate Fobbs, who is stationed at Fort Chaffee.

6/18-1/29/93: AD-G

Watson, July 22

Two white men, Kenneth Alan Coats, 23, and Perry Wayne Moore, 24, were charged with arson and conspiracy to commit arson – federal charges – after three African-American churches in eastern Arkansas were burned down. Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church and St. James Church, both in Desha County, and Love Rest Baptist Church in Arkansas County, were destroyed by fire on May 17. U.S. Attorney Chuck Banks said the apparent motivation was the racial composition of the predominantly African-American churches.

Both men were sentenced to 37 months in prison and three years supervised release.

7/22-8/29: AD-G, *Pine Bluff Commercial*, *Northwest Arkansas Times*, AD-G federal court reporter

Little Rock, September 3

A white AP&L supervisor was demoted, given a "substantial" salary reduction and suspended five days without pay for his participation in a racist incident. In August, an AP&L work crew was sent near Zinc, home of the headquarters of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Larry Hankins, 40, said he was chatting with some local people and thought it would be funny to play a practical joke on the only African-American lineman that day, William Kenneth Brown. While Brown was working in a lift bucket,

a pickup truck drove by and three men in the back, draped in sheets and carrying a cross made of broomsticks, began chanting "white power." They drove by twice and left, later telling Brown it was a joke.

An AP&L investigation resulted in Hankins' demotion. Action was also taken against the two managers above Hankins.
9/2-10/7: AD-G, *Boone County Headlight, State Press*

Rogers, September 14

Paulo Aros and Manuel Gonzalez, two Latinos, received minor injuries when they were shot by a drunk white man, Dale Cannady, who approached the two for some beer. Aros and Gonzalez were in their front yard drinking at the time. Cannady lived two doors down. Deputy Prosecutor Brad Butler said the shooting was racially motivated.

Cannady pled guilty to two counts of second-degree battery. He received a 10-year sentence with four years suspended. Cannady also had to pay victim's restitution for hospital fees.

9/14-2/10/93: *Northwest Arkansas Times, Rogers Police Dept.*

Helena, September 29

James Guest, a white Elaine School District coach, was charged with battery for allegedly kicking Kevin Williams, 12, who is African-American, in the back after the boy knocked some papers off his desk. Superintendent Kenneth Parker said an investigation supported Guest's contention that he kicked the boy's chair, not the boy.

9/29: AD-G

Springdale, September and October

In violation of Arkansas state law, a white driver's license examiner began requiring Latinos to show proof of their status with the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service before allowing them to take the driver's license exam. Springdale attorney Alene Cox, who is an advocate for Northwest Arkansas' Latino community, said Peggy Allred admitted confiscating about four cards a month. Cox said that state law does not require a person to prove residency or immigration status before being allowed to take the examination.

Cox wrote letters complaining about the discriminatory practice to Attorney General Winston Bryant, Arkansas State Police Director Col. Tommy Goodwin, Allred and Capt. Winford Phillips, head of the Arkansas State Police office where Allred works. Cox never received a response from her letters and has yet to follow-up on them. She and other advocates for the Latino community are telling Latinos seeking driver's licenses to go to a newly-opened office in Bentonville, where the staff does not discriminate.

2/19/93: *Alene Cox*

De Queen, October

A 15-year-old Mexican boy, who was defending his younger cousin from racist taunts and harassment, was suspended from school and charged with first-degree battery after he got into a fight with a white schoolmate. Latino community advocates said a 13-year-old boy had been repeatedly harassed by some of his white schoolmates. The boy had been hit and told "we don't like Mexicans" and "go back where you came from." The younger boy complained to his 15-year-old cousin, who confronted the white youths. The advocates said a white youth threw the first punch but the older Mexican ducked and returned a punch that broke the white youth's nose. No action was taken against the white youth by school officials, and his parents filed charges against the Mexican youth.

The Mexican youth's trial date has not yet been scheduled. A probation officer has been assigned to mediate between the Mexican and white families.

2/24/93: *Father Ed Mundwiller*

Jonesboro, October 7

Terry Hayes used the term "wetback" to refer to Mexicans while expressing his support for the North American Free Trade Agreement. Hayes said the agreement would produce "wetback reversal" by improving the Mexican economy and encouraging undocumented workers to return home. Hayes lost against Blanche Lambert for Arkansas' 1st Congressional District seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. "Wetback" is an offensive term used to describe Mexican workers who illegally enter the U.S. by crossing rivers.

10/7-11/3: AD-G, *Arkansas Times, Spectrum Weekly*

Little Rock, November

An African-American gay man was the victim of housing discrimination when he attempted to rent a room in a boarding house in downtown Little Rock. A white woman in her 60s told the victim that she "would not rent to a black person." Advocates for the victim were unable to file a formal complaint because the victim is in poor health due to AIDS-related complications.

11/92: *AIDS Outreach of Arkansas*

North Little Rock, November 14

Shan Gachot alleged in a federal lawsuit that the Pulaski County Sheriff's Department discriminated against him by allowing his co-workers to call him derogatory names – including "chief," "Indian Joe" and "Redskin," – because he is Native American. He called his work environment abusive, hostile and racially intolerant. Gachot said he complained in 12 letters but no action was ever taken to correct the situation.

11/17: AD-G

Jacksonville, November 12

Shadrick Flemons, an 11-year-old African-American, was shot in the head and killed by Michael Hamilton, his white, 14-year-old friend. Police said the two boys were arguing when the white youth went into the house, returned with a .22 caliber rifle and shot Flemons once in the head.

Police have ruled out race as a motive in the shooting. Hamilton was charged with first-degree murder and will be tried as an adult. The trial date has not been set.

11/12-2/20/93: AD-G, Assistant Chief Larry Hibbs

Pocahontas, December 2

A handmade cross was burned in a vacant lot in Pocahontas. On the cross was written "Ngger's (sic) we have something for you two (sic)." Earlier in the week, Carrie Galbreath, a white woman who lived in Pocahontas, was murdered in Walnut Ridge and the suspect was a black man. Investigators said there was a possibility that the cross-burning was linked to the murder. Pocahontas Criminal Investigator Doug Cousins called the cross burners "a bunch of rednecks," and said he did not think the perpetrators were local people.

12/2: Jonesboro Sun

Springdale, December 5

Darren Little, 20, and Robert Flaig, 21, both white, were arrested for throwing a Molotov cocktail at a truck belonging to Juan Alberto, who is Latino. Little and Flaig filled up beer bottles with gasoline and threw them at the truck, which was parked outside Alberto's home. Witnesses told police Little threatened to blow up a house and car with Molotov cocktails. A criminal investigator said the incident had overtones of racial motivation.

Little and Flaig were charged with possession of explosive devices and attempted arson. Little was also cited for driving while intoxicated.

12/5: Northwest Arkansas Times

ANTI-SEMITIC VIOLENCE

Under the category of anti-Semitic violence, the Women's Project documents incidents in which Jewish people are victimized by non-Jews.

Northwest Arkansas, May 1

A white, Jewish man, who wishes to remain anonymous, was the victim of anti-Semitic remarks from his employer, a prominent non-Jewish white man. During this verbal harassment, the employer made such remarks as "all of America's business problems are because of the Jews." The victim reported the incident to a Jewish professor at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. The professor offered to call the Anti-Defamation League, but the victim did not want to pursue the issue any further.

Women's Watchcare Network volunteer

Berryville, June 11

Buildings on the mountain near Saunder's Heights were filled with images bearing a partial pentagram, an upside-down cross, and a swastika.

6/11: The Star Progress

Little Rock, November 25

Erika Rosenberg, a writer for *Spectrum* newspaper, reported that she received a call a few months ago from a woman who was upset over an article Rosenberg had written. Rosenberg, who does not describe herself as Jewish but who has some Jewish heritage, said the woman ended her one sided conversation with the screech, "You damn Jew!"

11/25-12/1: Spectrum

ANTI-CATHOLIC VIOLENCE

Under the section on anti-Catholic violence, the Women's Project documents incidents in which Catholics are victimized by non-Catholics.

Eureka Springs, September

A large flier entitled "Antichrist and his Mark and the Number of his Name" was found on cars in the downtown area of Eureka Springs. The flier called the Church of Rome "a fallen church and anti-Christian," and named the Pope as the anti-Christ. The contact organization that is listed is Religious Liberty out of Alpena.

Copy of flier from Watchcare volunteer in Eureka Springs

Hot Springs, September 7

The Watchcare Network staff received a letter written by Pete Castella that was filled with anti-Catholic language. Describing them as nothing but "bloodthirsty," Castella wrote that Catholics control Hot Springs. He called the Catholic policy "ruin or rule."

Copy of letter from Pete Castella

ANTI-GAY/LESBIAN VIOLENCE & VICTIMIZATION

Under the section on anti-Gay/Lesbian Violence and Victimization, the Women's Project documents incidents in which lesbian and gay people are victimized by heterosexuals.

Hot Springs, January 31

Irving Rector Jr, 23, an inmate in the Garland County Detention Center who claims he was raped by a fellow inmate, filed a \$4.5 million lawsuit against the center and Garland County Sheriff Clay White for discrimination, operating an unsafe environment and negligence. Rector said he was raped on October 20, 1991, after repeated warnings to officials that he was being threatened.

Rector alleges that no charges were filed against his attacker because Rector is African-American and gay. Rector said the case was turned over to County Prosecutor Paul Bosson, who never filed charges because Rector had been labeled a homosexual and "they figured I must have wanted it. Just because I'm a homosexual, (the rapist) had no right to violate my body." Rector's suit was filed in U.S. District Court.

1/31: The Sentinel Record

North Little Rock, February 5

A gay white North Little Rock man was arrested and verbally harassed by Little Rock police after being spotted in a park frequented by men who have sex with other men. The victim said he was in his car eating lunch when he was approached by a stranger in Burns Park whom he believed was an undercover police officer. The stranger eventually got into the victim's car and the two talked but the victim never made any sexual innuendos. The victim told the stranger that he knew he was a police officer. When nothing happened the stranger said, "I can see I'm wasting my time." The stranger got out of the car and the gay man drove a lap around the park.

Two plainclothes officers then came up to the victim's car. One showed a badge and said "you're right, we are cops." When the victim said he was only in the park to eat lunch, they said, "Don't lie to us or we'll cuff you". One officer also commented on a missing children's flier in his car and said, "I can't bring my children to the park because of you god damn faggots." The victim was arrested and charged with loitering and taken to jail.

2/5: Victim's statement, Watchcare volunteer

Sherwood, September 29

Anthony Bonds, a gay white man with AIDS who had been released from the hospital the night before, was the apparent victim of anti-gay and anti-AIDS name calling, harassment and threats of beating after being taken to the Sherwood City Jail for writing a hot check. Bonds said that after informing law enforcement officers of his illness, he was warned not to "kiss the boys" and then separated from the other inmates, apparently so he wouldn't infect them. Bonds had been hospitalized for kidney problems and - despite repeated requests - was denied medical treatment and water. Jail officials never formally arrested Bonds or read him his rights. Because of the stress he was under and his illness, Bonds began to experience physical reactions and was unable to walk to leave the jail, prompting jail officials to threaten to beat him. Finally, Bonds crawled out of the jail.

Bonds wanted to file a lawsuit against the Sherwood City Jail to protest his treatment and to protect others from such treatment in the future. He was referred to an attorney through Central Arkansas Legal Services, but later dropped the case. Bonds said while his attorney thought his case was good, she wasn't certain of a win and he felt uneasy about putting his family members in the spotlight.

9/29-2/22/93: Victim's statement

Fayetteville, October 6

Dan Coody, a member of the Fayetteville City Board who read a proclamation issued by the mayor in honor of Gay and Lesbian Pride Week, received four to five letters disagreeing with his action. Coody read the proclamation at the family reunion organized by gays and lesbians in Northwest Arkansas. One of the letters that Coody received was handwritten, unsigned and much more "chastising" than the rest. The author mentioned the Ku Klux Klan several times, said it was a good organization and wondered why Coody didn't support the rights of Klan members.

10/6: Dan Coody

Hot Springs, October 7

An anonymous letter describing the owners of Arkansas Hearing Aid Center as witches, lesbians and baby killers was distributed through the mail to several of the business' clients and former clients. Freddie and Cheri Catlett first learned of the letters when the daughter of a deceased former client brought one in. The daughter turned the letter over to the Hot Springs post office to investigate. In the following weeks, four more people received letters. All but one were clients or former clients.

An excerpt from the letter, which urged people not to patronize the Hearing Aid Center, stated, "We do not want this kind of people in Hot Springs. We have all kinds of ear phone places here and we can do without Witches and Gays spreading the AIDS to our people here."

Freddie Catlett contacted the FBI about doing an investigation but was told it would not get involved since one federal agency – the post office – was already investigating. At this time, the owners are unable to determine if the letters have affected their business. Because the owners suspect that the people responsible for sending the letters had access to their mail and clients' records, they now shred all documents and records that previously would have been thrown away.

10/7: Victim's statement, copy of letter

Fayetteville, October 13

After Fayetteville teacher Bryan Manire appeared on a local cable access program in observance of National Coming Out Month for Gays and Lesbians, a mother pulled her daughter out of Manire's classroom. Manire said the school superintendent got two calls from citizens who wanted to make sure he knew a gay man was teaching in the Fayetteville schools. Finally, the cable channel received calls from people who wanted copies of the videotape. There was concern that people opposed to gays and lesbians may have wanted to use the tape to expose the panelists or somehow further their homophobic agenda. The station doesn't have a policy of taping its programming and Manire is believed to have the only copy of the show.

11/10: Victim's statement

ANTI-GAY/LESBIAN CLIMATE

These incidents indicate the prevailing anti-gay/lesbian attitudes in the state that imply it is not right to be gay or lesbian, not right to be the person you are. Arkansas remains one of five states in which sodomy laws make same-gender sexual activity illegal. Such attitudes – many of which are promoted by self-described Christians – promote and legitimize the harassment, threats and violence perpetrated against gay and lesbian people. Letters to the editor provide a vehicle for people to vent their homophobia, and are often a good barometer of the climate of bigotry.

Little Rock, June 30

Referring to Bill Clinton's campaign promise to lift the ban on gays and lesbians in the military, Paul Green of Cabot wrote in a letter to the editor that "no self-respecting person would join an organization that places him in the same category as a mentally deranged, sex perverted individual who may be more dangerous to his health than an enemy bullet."

6/30: AD-G

Little Rock, August 5

Othello Gordon of Solgochachia, in a letter to the editor, described AIDS as a "purifier of the human race. It seems to eliminate the trash and dead wood from society: the sexually promiscuous, the drug addict and the homosexual."

8/5: AD-G

Little Rock, October 25

In a letter to the editor, Robert Witcher of Hot Springs wrote that "homosexuals are oddities of nature, not performing normal functions, and there is no such thing as a homophobic."

10/25: AD-G

Little Rock, October 25

Referring to lesbian and gay people, R.D. Munger of Little Rock wrote in a letter to the editor that "although a small group, they demand the right to indoctrinate our vulnerable children into their unfortunate lifestyle; to lower our moral standards; cut our

birth rate; encourage promiscuity, perversion and child abuse; (and) raise health care costs sharply."

10/25: AD-G

Pine Bluff, November 11

Baptists attending the Arkansas State Baptist Convention passed a resolution on homosexuality that said they will work to defeat passage of laws "designed to convey civil rights based on their sexual preference." The resolution further states that the Bible "unquestionably indicts homosexual behavior as unnatural, perverted and destructive ... (and) such behavior is fraught with serious spiritual, psychological and physical risks."

11/10: *Copy of resolution*

Little Rock, December 19

Harold L. Powell of Searcy admitted in a letter to the editor that he is a homosexual basher. "I feel with God being a homosexual basher that I am in good company. Now you have to admit that homosexuals are wrong or God is wrong. Good luck."

12/19: AD-G

HATE GROUP ACTIVITY

Continuing the trend of the past several years, organized hate groups and their leaders wage their campaigns of hatred and intolerance with increasingly sophisticated language and image. This was a strategy perfected by David Duke and copied by white supremacists such as Arkansas' Thom Robb, national director of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Thom Robb and the Knights continue to portray themselves as concerned citizens attempting to cure the ills of their communities, and as victims of the intolerance of liberals and government who have given all protection, opportunity and advancement to everyone but white, Christian heterosexuals.

Zinc, January 2

The Arkansas-based Knights of the Ku Klux Klan won its federal lawsuit against the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department for barring Klan participation in the anti-litter Adopt-A-Mile program. Jim Lingle, a member attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, represented the Knights. The Highway Department had already given the mile requested by the Knights, which is near the Arkansas-Missouri border, to another organization. Therefore, the Knights will have to be assigned another stretch of highway.

1/2-11/12: AD-G, *Arkansas Times, Harrison Daily Times, Morning News, Prairie Grove Enterprise*

Cabot, January 15

Three male students at Cabot High School were suspended for 10 days for distributing a flier in an attempt to start a Ku Klux Klan club on campus.

1/15-1/22: AD-G, *Cabot Star Herald*

West Memphis, January 29

The Crittenden County NAACP criticized the *West Memphis Evening Times* for giving "free advertising to the Ku Klux Klan" after the newspaper ran a story about the Klan's recruiting efforts. The article, published January 14, was about a West Memphis telephone number that residents could call to hear a recording of a song about the KKK that allegedly requested donations and offered membership information. The telephone number was not listed, according to the editor. Elbert Smith, president of the Crittenden County NAACP, said the recording used "inflammatory language to relay its message" and that the group would begin monitoring the newspaper's editorial content.

1/29-2/1: AD-G

Eureka Springs, March 27

The Great Passion Play, the brainchild of Gerald L.K. Smith, which has been criticized for its anti-Semitism, started its 25th season. A section of the Berlin Wall is now on display on the Passion Play grounds. At the season opening, Anita Bryant, known in the 1970's for her anti-gay crusade, was scheduled to lead the crowd in singing "God Bless America." The Eureka Springs Passion Play received its 5 millionth visitor this year.

3/27-9/10: *Times Herald, Star Progress, Eureka Springs Times-Echo*

Little Rock, April 2

Thom Robb, national head of the Harrison-based Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, filed for the District 39 seat in the Arkansas House of Representatives. Robb will run as a Republican against the Democratic incumbent for a district that covers portions of Boone, Baxter, Marion and Stone counties. Twenty-three of the estimated 81,000 people living in those counties are African-American, according to the 1990 U.S. Census. As part of his platform, Robb said he wanted to cut state bureaucracy, lower taxes

and reverse government intrusion into people's lives. African-Americans and whites should not be forced to live, work or go to school together, he said.

4/2: AD-G

Little Rock, April 3

Klan leader Thom Robb, who is running as a Republican for a state House seat, said a denouncement of his candidacy by state Republican leaders could boost his chances of winning. Robb, who heads the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, filed to run for the District 39 seat. Robb said because Republican "party bosses" denounced him, Democrats wouldn't feel they were betraying their party when voting for him. Robb said he has denounced violence and hate groups, and that he belongs to a group that "seeks to ensure the rights of white citizens of this country."

4/3: AD-G

Luxora, April 3

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan began forming a chapter in Luxora.

4/3: *Blytheville Courier News*

Marshall, April 17

James Wilson, who is said to be the ambassador for United Kingdom of God Embassy – Yahweh's Ministries, harassed and put curses on Searcy County Sheriff Kent Griggs and other county employees. Wilson was arrested for driving without a license. While in the Searcy Jail, he refused to eat, saying it went against his religious beliefs. Wilson is friends with Ed Udey, who had been convicted of harboring tax protester Gordon Kahl. Kahl was the Posse Comitatus member who attracted national attention in 1983 when he murdered two federal marshalls in North Dakota and became a fugitive. Kahl later died in a shootout with Arkansas law enforcement officials in a town near the Arkansas/Missouri state line.

4/17-6/17: *Harrison Daily Times*, AD-G

Jasper, May

Mike Collom of Jasper is listed in the Center for Democratic Renewal's *Weekly Update* as a Christian Identity minister. Christian Identity, popular among hate group members, provides white supremacists with a Biblical justification for their hatred.

5/92: *Weekly Update*

Springdale, May 3

Don Snedeker, grand titan of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, attended the arraignment of Freddie Bradley, an African-American football player at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville who was accused of having consensual sex with a 13-year-old white girl. Sex with a minor under age 14, even if consensual, is considered rape by Arkansas statutes. Bradley pled not guilty. Snedeker said, "I'm just here to make sure these girls' civil rights are ensured."

Bradley was found not guilty of sexually abusing the girl, but was permanently dismissed from the football squad.

5/3-1/27/93: *Morning News, Northwest Arkansas Times*

Little Rock, May 6

Ralph Forbes, a former member of the American Nazi Party, filed as an independent candidate for the 3rd Congressional District seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. Forbes said during an interview that he was adamantly opposed to abortion.

2/6: *Morning News, Southwest Times Record*, AD-G

Walnut Ridge, June 3

Lawrence County Republican chairman Earl Sloan Jr., invited Zinc resident Thom Robb, national head of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, to speak to local Republicans about racial and sexual harassment of white inmates in state prisons. Stories about the event gave conflicting reports of the number of people who attended Robb's speech – between 12 and 30 – and the number of protestors outside the courthouse – between five and 10. Some of the protestors were Watchcare Network volunteers.

Robb is running as a Republican for the House District 39 seat. Addressing campaign issues, Robb said he is opposed to free trade agreements with other nations, abortion and gay rights legislation.

6/3-6/10: AD-G, *Jonesboro Sun, Pocahontas Star Herald, Times Dispatch*

Harrison, June 16

Independent presidential candidate Ross Perot's Harrison campaign office was closed after a Watchcare volunteer alerted the press that the office was being run by a woman with ties to the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. According to the volunteer and to the Center for Democratic Renewal, Sharon Elder had organized an anti-abortion rally in 1990 attended by Klan members, and was seen at a meeting of white supremacists in northern Arkansas in the late 1980's. In her defense, Elder said Klan members

"just showed up" at the anti-abortion rally. However, Elder's pro-life stance, as evidenced by her organizing of the rally, contradicted Perot's pro-choice position.

Campaign officials later reopened the office because, according to Perot's 3rd Congressional District coordinator, there was no proof that its current volunteers had any connection to hate groups. However, Elder was again listed as a volunteer for the Harrison office.

6/16-10/28: AD-G, *Harrison Daily Times*

Harrison, June

Thom Robb, national director of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, solicited funds for his campaign for seat 39 in the Arkansas House of Representatives via a 1-900 telephone number, through which \$20 contributions could be made. In a promotional flier, Robb said, "America belongs to us, it does not belong to the homosexuals, the abortionists."

June: *Promotional flier*

Harrison, June

A Patriot's Day picnic was scheduled for June 12 - 14 at the Soldiers of the Cross Camp near Harrison. All Knights, their family members, friends and neighbors were invited. The picnic was sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ.

June: *White Patriot*

Pope County, August 8

Ralph Forbes was able to get the 2,000 signatures required to certify him as an independent candidate for the 3rd Congressional District seat. Forbes advocated separate societies for whites and blacks, and said he hoped to run graphic anti-abortion commercials as part of his campaign.

8/8-9/1: AD-G, *Morning News, Southwest Times Record, Northwest Arkansas Morning News*

St. Francis County, September

Otto Jones, an African-American candidate for St. Francis County sheriff, was the victim of vandalism. "KKK" was spray painted on one of his election signs. Prior to the incident, Jones received three threatening phone calls. "The last thing we need is a nigger sheriff," one caller said. Jones was running against Sheriff Dave Parkman, who is white. Parkman had two of his black deputies arrest Jones for writing a hot check that Jones had allegedly written five years before. Jones' arrest was illegal because the hot check warrant was found to be invalid and untrue.

September and October: *Homeland*

Little Rock, September 16

Judge Chris Piazza upheld the state Republican Party's decision to exclude Thom Robb from the ballot for state representative. The party voted September 12 not to certify Robb's name because of his white separatist views and his active involvement with the KKK. Watchcare volunteers and other Women's Project supporters staged a silent protest against white supremacy outside the courthouse where Robb's case was being heard.

9/16-9/23: *Morning News, AD-G*

Fort Smith, October 23

Ralph Forbes, now describing himself as a "Christ Supremacist," lost a lawsuit against AETN, Arkansas' public television station, which prohibited him from participating in a candidate's debate. Judge Franklin Waters dismissed the federal lawsuit.

10/21-10/23: AD-G

Little Rock, October 29

Richard Barrett, a white supremacist from Mississippi, held a news conference in Little Rock to "Retake Central High." Barrett gave a 10-minute speech in which he asked for an apology for the "attack" (his choice of words for school integration) in 1957. Several Watchcare volunteers and other supporters of the Women's Project protested during his speech.

10/29: AD-G, *Protestors, Little Rock Police Department*

Hot Springs, November

The minister of the gay and lesbian Metropolitan Community Church in Hot Springs received a newsletter from the Ku Klux Klan after she wrote a letter to the *Hot Springs Sentinel Record* criticizing a homophobic cartoon that appeared in the newspaper. The Rev. Susan Higgins, who signed only her name to her letter, received 11 hang-up calls on her answering machine in one day, and between five and six hang-ups everyday for two weeks after her letter was printed. She also got four calls of support. When the hang-ups stopped, Higgins received the Klan newsletter. She said she felt uneasy that Klan supporters knew where she

lived and felt better after moving in December. The move had already been planned.

November: *Victim's statement*

Little Rock, November 4

Ralph Forbes received 6,300 votes – coming in third behind Republican candidate Tim Hutchinson and Democratic candidate John Van Winkle – in the 3rd Congressional District race.

11/4: *Center for Democratic Renewal Weekly Update*

CHRISTIAN RIGHT ACTIVITY

In late 1992, the Women's Project began documenting the activities of the Christian Right. The Christian Right consists of organized rightwing Christians who merge politics and theology to produce a system of social control.

Little Rock, July

The Rev. W.N. Otwell, of Nagadoches, Texas, and followers of his "God Said" Ministries began weekly demonstrations outside the church where presidential candidate Bill Clinton is a member to protest Clinton's support for rights for women – including abortion rights – and rights for lesbians and gay men. Each Sunday, Otwell and his followers traveled to Little Rock where they demonstrated in front of Immanuel Baptist Church.

In response, a broad-based coalition of progressive groups was formed to do nonviolent, non-confrontational counter-demonstrations. These included the Women's Project; the Arkansas AIDS Brigade; the Arkansas Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Coalition for Education & Action on Sexual Issues, Hendrix College; Gays, Lesbians and Straights Together, Unitarian Universalist Church; Lesbian and Gay Student Alliance, University of Central Arkansas; the National Organization for Women, Arkansas chapter; and Planned Parenthood of Greater Arkansas. The number of counterdemonstrators grew from about 16 to more than 150.

During the course of the demonstrations, Otwell and his followers increasingly singled out gay people for attack. "God Said" followers carried a coffin to signify that gay people – so called "AIDS carriers" – are doomed; displayed signs such as, "You're HIV positive, you're going to die, get used to it"; and came dressed up as exterminators carrying "homo-cide" spray to get rid of the homosexual pest.

Each week the counterdemonstrators focused on a different theme to show their commitment to civil rights, justice and inclusion for all people. These included Reproductive Rights Sunday, National Coming Out Day for lesbian and gay people, Anti-Racism/People of Color Sunday, People Living with HIV and AIDS Sunday and Anti-Bigotry Sunday.

8/3-11/5: *AD-G, Triangle Rising, Arkansas Times, counterdemonstrators' reports*

Little Rock, November 1

The Little Rock-based Christian Coalition of Arkansas paid for the Christian Coalition Voter Guide '92, which provided information on where the presidential candidates stood on issues such as abortion, lesbian and gay rights, the death penalty, condom distribution and the balanced budget amendment.

11/1: *AD-G*

Little Rock, November 1

Arkansas Christians for America of Altheimer paid for an ad entitled, "Christian Beware: Do Not Put the Economy Ahead of the Ten Commandments." The anti-Clinton advertisement said he promoted the distribution of condoms to teenagers in public schools, which violates Exodus 20:12, Colossians 2: 5 and Romans 1:28 - 32.

11/1: *AD-G*

Little Rock, November 1

An independent group of Arkansas Southern Baptists paid for "A Statement of Our Convictions," an advertisement that opposed homosexuality and condom distribution in public schools and advocated the sanctity of life.

11/1: *AD-G*

With thanks to our many volunteer monitors,

Kelly Mitchell-Clark
Suzanne Pharr
Joanne Reich

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.

Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

Current Projects

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support group for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

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



Yes, I would like to join
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Phone/evening _____

_____ \$ 5 (low income)

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Transformation

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Pedophilia And The Endangerment Of Children: How Wrong Can The Right Be?

Suzanne Pharr

Along with the "No Special Rights" propaganda, the religious Right has been successful in falsely labeling lesbians and gay men as "pedophiles" to frighten the public with misinformation. This highly emotional issue is used as one of the linchpins in the effort to persuade voters that homosexuality is about wrongful behavior and therefore discrimination is a moral issue rather than a civil rights one.

For the last decade, women's anti-violence programs and child advocacy organizations have brought the issue of child sexual assault to public attention. However, the media coverage has often been misleading and sensational, leaving many people confused about the true nature of child sexual abuse. While most understand that it is widespread, people are generally ignorant about how and where it happens and who the perpetrators are.

The religious Right, with unerring instinct for creating highly emotional reactions marked by alarm and anger, steps right into the middle of this confusion and ignorance, and manipulates people's fears about the safety and well-being of their children.

If we are to combat the Right's false information by using the truth,

we have to stop using the incorrect terms they introduce into the public debate. Pedophilia does not describe child sexual abuse in general; it is a psychological term used to define the behavior of a very specific group of people: **adults who have sexual attraction only for children and are unable to relate sexually to adults.** The religious Right, for the purpose of distortion, uses the term in a broad manner to describe *any* adult who has sexual relations with children.

Using "pedophilia" as a catchall for all forms of child sexual abuse, they link the word directly with gay men and lesbians by arguing that our contact with children – through parenting, teaching school, leading youth groups, etc. – will lead to sexual molestation of the children involved.

They suggest that we are out of control sexual predators and present the preposterous lie that because we cannot have our own children (despite the evidence that many of us are parents) we have to recruit children into our ranks. To complete the "big lie" (so outrageous that many believe it, thinking that no one could tell a lie that big), they state that association with

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Pedophilia

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lesbians and gay men causes children to become homosexual. They then argue that we must protect children by making laws to keep lesbians and gay men separated from children.

If caring and publicly responsible persons came to believe that there was a single group of people in this society that was primarily responsible for the sexual abuse of children, would they not want laws created to restrain and limit this group of people? This idea is behind the strategy of the religious Right to lead people into believing that homosexuality equals pedophilia; **however, the flaw in the strategy is that the information they provide is false.**

Even though we are bombarded with sexual images by the media, few people in the U.S. talk about sexuality in any real sense. It is the great unknown. The religious Right relies upon the public's ignorance about sexuality in general for the success of its campaign to demonize lesbians and gay men. Most schools do not teach about sexuality and certainly not the wide range of human sexual expression. The religious Right, of course, fervently opposes sex education in the schools. They insist that sex education be kept in the family, but families are reluctant to discuss it. Hence, most of the population gets its education haphazardly through bits and pieces of information picked up from acquaintances or the popular media. In the absence of open discussion and adequate information, it becomes simple to use misinformation to manipulate attitudes. The area of

child sexual abuse is especially volatile because of our feelings about the innocence and vulnerability of children.

Who the real child abusers are

It is common knowledge that the majority of the perpetrators of sexual abuse of children are heterosexual men. The religious Right wants us to believe the primary perpetrators are lesbians and gay men, particularly the latter. Though most people think of girls as the victims of sexual assault, we know that boys are also often victims, and when the perpetrator is a man, people jump to the conclusion that the man is gay. Nicholas Groth and Jean Birnbaum, the most respected researchers in the field of sexual assault of children, address the inaccuracy of this conclusion:

In the course of our professional work we have had an opportunity to study men who have sexually assaulted children. Our aim is to examine some of the psychological characteristics of the child offender with particular attention to the relationship between the offender's choice of victim in regard to sex and his adult sexual orientation. Those offenders who choose children as their victims were for the most part (76%) exclusively heterosexual in their life-style. There was a small group (24%) classified as bisexual. However, in no case did this attraction to men exceed their preference for women, and in every case the sex partners, male and female, were adults. *There were no men who were primarily attracted to other adult males found among the group of child offenders. Those offenders who are sexually attracted exclusively to chil-*

dren show a slight preference to boys over girls, yet these same individuals are uninterested in adult homosexual relationships. In fact, they frequently express a strong sexual aversion to adult males, reporting that what they find attractive about the immature boy are his feminine features and the absence of secondary sexual characteristics such as body hair and muscles. Homosexuality and homosexual pedophilia are not synonymous. In fact, it may be that these two orientations are mutually exclusive, the reason being that the heterosexual male is sexually attracted to feminine characteristics, and the sexually immature child's qualities are more feminine than masculine. In our twelve years of work with child molesters, we have found...the child offender who is also attracted to and engaged in adult sexual relationships is heterosexual. The adult heterosexual male constitutes a greater sexual risk to underage children than the adult homosexual male. (Emphasis added) ("Archives of Sexual Behavior", Vol. 7, #3, 1978)

Why the lie works

Given that long-term studies of child molesters point to heterosexual men as the major perpetrators, why then is it that people so easily believe that the abusers are gay men? There are several reasons:

❖ In general, people do not understand that rape and child sexual abuse are about power, control and dominance rather than sexual gratification. Hence, when heterosexual men are perpetrators of incest or sexual abuse of nonrelated children, their focus is not so much the gender of the child but the fact that they can dominate and control the child sexually. Whether the

victim is a boy or girl is not necessarily relevant to the perpetrator.

❖ Because the word homosexual has been used loosely to describe same-gender sex, regardless of whether the parties involved are heterosexual or gay in sexual orientation, it is easy for people to confuse the sexual *act* with sexual *orientation*. In prisons everywhere, there are heterosexual men who assume dominant sexual roles and force other heterosexual men into submission. In the rapes or sexual relationships that occur, one can easily observe the significance of power and control as a motivation. It is also easy to see that the perpetrator's or victim's heterosexuality is not changed by the experience of same-gender sex. When these prisoners leave prison, they act out the same heterosexual orientation that they did prior to imprisonment. They go home to their girlfriends and wives.

It is not the act of sex that makes someone heterosexual or homosexual: one can be a lifetime celibate and still have an orientation of heterosexuality or homosexuality. How we determine sexual orientation is by the gender – same or opposite – one has consistent sexual/erotic attractions to. Homosexuals can have sex with heterosexuals and it does not make them heterosexual. The same is true for heterosexuals having sex with homosexuals. **It is not the act of sex that determines sexual orientation; it is instead the persistent source of erotic attraction, whether acted upon or not.**

❖ People often do not understand or accept that the majority of

the perpetrators of child sexual abuse are family members or known and trusted individuals: clergy, coaches, teachers, neighbors, etc. Abuse by strangers is more rare. Fathers, step-fathers, boyfriends of the mother are the most common abusers, and they are heterosexual. However, it is easier to accept the notion of stranger abuse and to warn our children away from strangers than it is to accept that the potential abuser could be a man the child trusts. **The most dangerous place for a child is in the home.** The problem of protecting our children becomes all the more complicated when family relationships are involved. **If we accept the myth that the homosexual stranger or the unknown rapist is the greatest threat, then we divert ourselves and our children from looking at the true source of danger. The result is that we leave our children even more vulnerable to abuse and undefended by those responsible for their well being.**

❖ There are, of course, some children who are sexually molested by lesbians and gay men because the lesbian and gay community, for good or bad, reflects all the variety that exists in the larger community. However, these cases of abuse are only a small percentage of the whole. The lesbian and gay community must hold these people accountable for their actions. There are also gay men who in their youth had sexual relationships with older gay men. (And to a lesser extent, young lesbians and older women.) We must also examine the power and control issues in these relationships.

Given the homophobia and heterosexism that isolate gay and lesbian youth, judges them harshly,

and prohibits their exploration of their sexual identity with other gay and lesbian youth, it is not surprising that some welcome an opportunity to be in relationship with someone of their own sexual orientation no matter what the age difference is. Having experienced the sexual violence against women that is a given in this society, many lesbians are especially concerned about cross-generational relationships because of the imbalance of power and potential for abuse.

Concern for children: protection or propaganda

That the religious Right's civic concern for children is limited to using them only for political gain in the attack against lesbians and gay men and against reproductive rights is demonstrated in their lack of interest in supporting programs that advocate for children. For instance, in a country where most of the impoverished are children, the Right opposes welfare. And at a time when most women have to work to support their children, they oppose pay equity, parental leave, publicly funded childcare, etc. Rather than preaching sermons that hold men accountable for the sexual abuse of children and women, they promote keeping families together at any cost and attack women's shelters and child protection groups for "breaking up the family." The religious Right's fundamentalist belief requires that men have power and dominion over women and children; hence, for them to acknowledge the truth about violence against children and women would severely damage the argument for male domination.

Given what is known about

heterosexual male violence, one might wonder, rather ironically, why the religious Right is not seeking laws to restrict the contact of heterosexual males with children, if indeed they are so socially and biblically concerned about child sexual abuse? After all, it was heterosexual Lot who offered up his two virgin daughters to be gang-raped by the heterosexual townsmen in the famous Sodom and Gomorrah passage (Genesis 19: 1-10) that is used so often to condemn homosexuality. This offer was made after Lot refused to deliver up the two male angels to the same crowd of men.

The perfect tool of oppression

The religious Right's strategy for using children as the centerpiece to build discrimination against lesbians and gay men is twofold:

- 1) to demonize lesbians and gay men by identifying us as out of control sexual predators;
- 2) to prevent us from having contact with children, thereby eliminating the possibility of countering false information with real life, truthful experiences.

Establishing an argument that lesbians and gay men are sexual predators is a perfect strategy for oppression because it meets two of the basic requirements: stereotyping and scapegoating. The accumulative effect of the two is to dehumanize. Once a group is dehumanized, those who wish to do them harm no longer feel standards of conscience or common humanity: members of the targeted group are no longer seen as worthy of fair

treatment or capable of experiencing ordinary human feelings. Indeed, perpetrators of discrimination and violence often believe that they are doing society a favor by doing harm to their victims. **It becomes the mark of a good citizen to discriminate.**

The accusation that a targeted group harms children has been a part of the demonizing and dehumanizing process throughout history. It was classically employed to promote racism, and now the Right has transferred it to increase homophobia. To arouse fear, hysteria and violence, gypsies were accused of stealing children, Jews of killing and drinking the blood of gentile babies, Native Americans of stealing white babies. In their attempt to prevent school desegregation, the KKK distributed fliers showing African-American males (drawn to resemble a gorilla) towering over little white girls at their school desks. Each group is inevitably described as oversexed, predatory and dangerous to children. If one accepts the lie as truth, then discrimination becomes a matter of morality.

The second arm of the strategy—to prevent association with children and youth—ensures the maintenance of oppression by preventing generation after generation from exposure to information and experiences that would counter bigotry. Another falsehood enters here. The religious Right would have us believe that association with lesbians and gay men, or even talking about homosexuality, leads one to become homosexual. They base this notion on the idea that sexuality is a choice, not an orientation, and they ignore the fact that no one, at this point of study, knows what makes a person heterosexual, homosexual or bisex-

ual in orientation. There is no evidence that association or conversation about sexuality effects one's orientation. Gay and lesbian children growing up in heterosexual families and living in a primarily heterosexual society are not shaped into heterosexuals, and neither do heterosexual children of lesbian or gay parents become homosexual. The more important point in such a discussion is that it should not matter whether sexuality is a choice or a condition of birth. No matter what the sexual orientation, everyone should be treated with dignity and given full civil rights.

Turning lies into policy

The false premise that reading or hearing about homosexuality makes children become homosexual leads the Right to create policy that harms children. For example, a few years ago the country became aware that a large number of youth were attempting and/or successfully committing suicide. The Department of Health and Human Services under the leadership of Louis Sullivan, a Bush appointee, commissioned a study of teen suicide. It found, among other things, that over 30% were youth who were struggling with their lesbian or gay sexual orientation—not because they were sick or mentally ill but because they were so isolated, condemned and unsupported. Upon the study's completion, Sullivan suppressed it because it "promoted homosexuality" by talking about homosexuality as a factor in teen suicide. Until it was later released under protest, this decision prevented teachers, school counselors, administrators and parents from having information that

could help save children's lives. The very clear message from the Bush administration was "We'd rather have our children dead than gay."

Preventing lesbians and gay men from teaching, retaining custody of our children, adopting, participating in foster care, leading youth groups, etc., eliminates the possibility of children and youth understanding lesbians and gay men as individualized and fully human. Additionally, lesbian and gay youth are prohibited access to role models and adequate information about who they are and the life they are entering. Instead, they along with heterosexual youth, are not given access to the history and culture of lesbians and gay men, though they are given the full range of biased information and attitudes concerning homosexuality. Because of the extremes of the prejudice, there is no one to counsel or protect lesbian and gay youth and rarely is there anyone who will intervene in situations when biased language is used, such as "faggot," which is common name-calling in schools.

Consequently, our schools become breeding grounds of bigotry. It is no surprise that the majority of those who physically attack and kill gay men are boys in their late teens and early 20s. Part of what motivates them is their own sexual development and attendant insecurity at the time of entering the often repressive and violent arena of manhood. Equally significant, however, is that they have just graduated from what could be called boot camps for bigotry against lesbians and gay men—the public and private schools of the U.S.

What can be done

It is the challenge of the lesbian and gay community and progressive groups to figure out how to counter misinformation with the truth. There are many arenas to work in as we begin to gather information to create a truthful and complete analysis: lesbian and gay sexuality, children's rights, child sexual abuse, violence against women and children, progressive policies in welfare, health, education, and support for families (using, of course, a broad definition of family.)

❖ On the issue of pedophilia and child sexual assault, it seems important that the lesbian and gay community begin the dialogue internally before attempting to work in coalition with other groups on debunking the myths and lies. Since all of us, whether heterosexual or homosexual, are recipients of society's misinformation and lack of adequate information about sexuality, lesbians and gay men share equally in the general ignorance about sex.

We are unclear about what we think about sexuality, what is good or bad, right or wrong. The Right's narrow view of sexual morality has diverted us from the questions that might help us sort through the differences of sexual orientation, sexual behavior and sexual ethics. It is the latter that requires our clearest thinking and most persistent attention. Perhaps we could get closer to developing positive community standards if we held all sexual practices up to this ethical question: **Is there use of power and violence and control to violate the integrity, autonomy and wholeness of**

another person? If so, then we know we oppose that behavior. Using this guideline, it becomes simpler to talk about difficult issues such as cross-generational relationships, sadomasochism, etc., within a framework that does not call for immediate polarization.

Additionally, there needs to be discussions about the many ways lesbian and gay sexuality manifests itself, how individuals came to understand their sexual orientation, and what the most positive relationship to children should be. Throughout history we have had positive and meaningful roles in children's lives — as parents, coaches, teachers, priests, poets, actors, etc. — but we have been closeted and afraid of exposure. However, it seems exceedingly clear that homophobia and heterosexism can never be eliminated until lesbians and gay men can associate openly with children and youth and provide truthful information to them. Lesbians and gay men must develop the courage to confront this artificially constructed taboo head-on by taking responsible positions that put us openly in association with children and youth.

❖ We must advocate for sex education in schools. Alliances can be made with those groups working for reproductive rights, for HIV education, for freedom of expression and against the banning of books. If we continue to keep children and youth in ignorance about their sexuality, we keep them in risk of teen-age pregnancy, AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as self-destructive behavior and suicide. In this context, to refuse sex education is once again to send the message, "We had rather see you dead than gay."

Unfortunately, there has not been enough effort put into what should be a natural alliance between those working for reproductive rights and those working for lesbian and gay rights. These meet on common ground in the area of sex education, school-based clinics, and HIV/AIDS education, of the understanding of the right to privacy, and of the fundamental belief that all people must have authority over their own bodies. It is the latter – the belief that we own our bodies – that stands in direct opposition to the Right's authoritarian vision. Therefore, the Right must oppose sex education in the schools because an underlying premise of sex education is that if we understand our own bodies and their uses in the world, then we will have authority over them. These bodies – their sexuality, their health and wellbeing, including the right to choose death through a living will – will not be given up to someone else to control.

❖ The lesbian and gay community must take a strong position that never excuses sexual exploitation or abuse of children. Our bottom line must be that no one be allowed to sexually abuse children, no matter what gender or sexual orientation, race, religion, age or class. To achieve this goal of protecting children, we must tell the truth about who the perpetrators are. Alliances can be made with the women's anti-violence movement and children's advocacy groups to present the truth and to develop strategies to eliminate sexual violence against children.

❖ We must join others at the forefront of the work against racial injustice, using our understanding

that the tactics of oppression are similar and are employed against all targeted groups. We must understand that the religious Right's attack against lesbians and gay men originates in racism and sexism, in the desire to dominate and control. The language of "No special rights" and of sexual predators comes directly from racist strategies employed to destroy programs designed to eliminate discrimination and from tactics used to increase fear and bigotry. Homophobia and heterosexism cannot be eliminated without the elimination of sexism and racism. All are intertwined, and no progressive movement can succeed without major leadership from people of color and women.

Finally, we must do mass education. Were it not for the widespread ignorance about sexuality in general, and lesbian and gay sexuality

in particular, the religious Right would not be successful in its efforts to demonize lesbians and gay men. The greatest hope for changing ignorance to informed understanding is to put a human face on the oppression. To do so will require lesbians and gay men to be open with the people we live and work among, talking about the reality of our lives. Study after study shows that discriminatory and bigoted attitudes change positively in relation to how well people personally know someone of the group targeted for discrimination. Many people attribute the victory in Oregon in large part to the fact that thousands of lesbians and gay men, in acts of great courage and dignity, came out to their families, their co-workers, their neighbors, and talked about their lives. Discrimination finds no fertile ground when people are seen as individualized and fully human.

Moving

In mid-June 1993, my longtime friend, Ann Gallmeyer, and I are moving to Oregon where we hope to find greater services for people with disabilities and a large women's community for friendship and support. Working out of a satellite office, I will remain on the staff of the Women's Project doing the same work I now do: national organizing and writing. For two weeks of each quarter I will return to Little Rock to work with the staff and board. Hopefully, this plan will give me the best of both worlds, a residence in the Northwest and work that remains rooted in the South I have loved all my life.

— Suzanne Pharr

Annual Dinner Will Honor Euba Harris Winton

Janet Perkins

On Saturday, June 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, 4823 Woodlawn Avenue, the Women's Project will sponsor its annual dinner. This year the dinner will be combine the presentation of the Evangeline K. Brown Award to a deserving woman and the celebration of cultural diversity through music, poetry and dance.

The dinner is our opportunity to honor a woman who has shown extreme commitment and dedication to fighting to improve the devastating conditions that so many face. One who has pushed the limits for justice. This year's receipient of the Evangeline K. Brown Award is Euba Harris Winton, a member of the Women's Project board of directors and a longtime organizer from Fort Smith.

Winton has battled racism, gang violence, drug abuse, teen-age pregnancy, illiteracy, AIDS and other offenses against humanity for 22 years as a community developer for Mallalieu United Methodist Church in Fort Smith.

Winton has been a member of Mallalieu United Methodist Church for 60 years and was hired in 1970 to strengthen the small church's outreach ministry. Through her work she has persuaded the city, through the courts, to spend federal community development funds in the African-American community. She has worked to gain improvements in housing, employment, education and municipal services. Through her

program, at-risk students are able to receive tutoring and support from adult mentors and attend peer-group activities to help them remain in school. Winton has been instrumental in developing community forums, counseling and other measures to combat violence, substance abuse and the devastating spread of AIDS.

Presently Winton is a South Central Jurisdiction representative nominating committee core planning group member for United Methodist Women. Winton has also been active in Fort Smith as district coordinator for Christian Social Involvement and Christian Global Concerns. In the North Arkansas Conference she served as president of United Methodist Women South Central Jurisdiction representative to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

In 1985 the Women's Project sponsored the first dinner and presented the award for outstanding work to the woman the award is named for, Evangeline K. Brown, who for more than 50 years has

fought for improvements for her Dermott community and for a better Arkansas. For those who have encountered Mrs. Brown, they know that she stands firm on the things she believes in and will go down to the wire to fight against injustice. For this reason our award was named for Evangeline K. Brown. She is tireless and fearless in her effort to transform the world into a better place.

For too long the contributions that women have made have gone unnoticed. Therefore we feel we must find avenues to celebrate the lives of women and the long struggles they have encountered in order to survive. We feel Euba Harris Winton has demonstrated enormous courage and longevity, thus making her most deserving of the Evangeline K. Brown Award.

Please feel free to call Janet Perkins at 372-5113 for more information related to the dinner. Tickets for this event will be available in May. We look forward to you coming out and helping us to celebrate the lives of women.

Transformation

Published six times a year by the Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72206.

Letters to the editor are welcome.

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Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin

April, 1993

Volume 2, No. 4

Sexist Climate

Two Garland County Community College faculty members under criminal and internal investigation in two separate incidents of alleged sexual harassment said that they will retire. The charge of public sexual indecency filed against Ron Adams was dismissed at the request of the victim. The victim accused Adams of sexually molesting her by fondling her breasts while she was working in the college's data processing lab on campus. She stated she would drop the charges if Adams was fired or resigned. Fred Price was accused by another student on a misdemeanor harassment charge of allegedly touching her on the stomach and buttocks on numerous occasions while in class.

Racist Climate

Jacksonville Mayor Tommy Swaim was found guilty in federal court of discriminating against former Police Chief Frank D. Neely because he is black. The jury awarded Neely \$40,000 and directed that \$22,000 of it be paid by the city and \$18,000 of it be paid by Swaim. Swaim announced in April that he would not appeal the court's decision.

Dr. Betty J. Cravy was fired from her position of head of the state's first residential high school for mathematics and sciences due to lack of management and organizational skills to make the school top-notch. Cravy has been under criticism for the low level of African-American youth that were recruited to be part of the school, located in Hot Springs. Less than 9 percent of the students enrolled for next year's courses are black, compared with an application pool of state 10th graders that is 21 percent black.

Joyce Scott Littleton, was named interim director. Littleton becomes the first African-American employee on the school's eight-member staff.

The North Little Rock Water Department settled a lawsuit out of court with Andrew McFadden, who had contended that he had been denied a promotion

because he is black. The settlement was for \$2,500. McFadden said he had been verbally disciplined by his supervisor unfairly and had been denied a promotion because of his race.

Anti-Gay/Lesbian Climate

During a showing of the film "The Crying Game" at Park Plaza mall someone released a canister of cayenne pepper-based "defensive spray" inside the theatre, forcing the evacuation of the theatre complex. The film has become quite controversial because of its portrayal of a gay female impersonator. Some believe the act was a political statement. No arrest has been made and no injuries were reported.

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and the *Pine Bluff Commercial* are two of 13 newspapers nationally to cancel the comic strip "For Better or Worse" because a character in the strip has revealed his homosexuality.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock Art Department pulled a series of graphite and ink drawings, some of which displayed homosexual acts, from the department's student seniors show. The student wanted his work to be displayed with the other students; but the department chairman said it would have to be exhibited under conditions "deemed appropriate" by department personnel. At least 15 art students signed and attached disclaimers to their work stating that exhibiting their work wasn't "an endorsement of UALR policies which abridge the right of free expression." Later a compromise was reached in which the work was put up in the Print Study Room. The room is unlocked but monitored to prevent unsupervised children from entering.

Religious Right Activities

In continued attacks on the Governor's School, the video, "The Guiding Hand: The Clinton Influence on Arkansas Education," has been shown around the nation condemning the curriculum at the school.

Jeff Botkin, famous for documenting the Willie Horton issue, produced the film, along with the Family Council's Jerry Cox. On the video, a former Governor's School employee and unsuccessful Republican candidate for the legislature, Mark Lowery, states that a young man had become a member of a cult, and that he'd left a long suicide note blaming the Governor's School. The young man's mother said she called Lowery and told him "If you guys are going to give wrong information, leave me out." According to the *Arkansas Times*, her son was never involved in a cult. He did leave a suicide note, but it was short, and he did not mention the Governor's School. This follows action by the American Family Association of Arkansas last month which asked Governor Jim Guy Tucker to investigate the school.

The Family Council of Arkansas sponsored an ad in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* entitled "In Defense of a Little Virginity: a message from Focus on the Family." The ad speaks strongly against birth control, condom use and "safe sex" as methods for AIDS prevention. The Family Council is closely affiliated with Focus on the Family, an anti-gay organization formed in 1988.

A coalition of "family-values" lobbying groups won a victory in the state House of Representatives when it adopted a compromise amendment to the appropriation bill for the state Health Department.

Marilyn Simmons, state director of Family, Life, America, God (FLAG), said her group "would have liked a stronger amendment." The amendment states that before any new school clinics are established, the school board in question must pass a resolution requesting it, and that any clinic distributing condoms must maintain records of teen pregnancies at the school and report their findings annually to the school board. It also states that it is a state policy to discourage premarital sex, and that any sex education or health class must emphasize abstinence from sex as the best and only sure means of avoiding pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.

During a House Committee meeting on Senate Bill 500, the Arkansas Disabilities Act, Fred Hart and Jerry Cox of the Family Council argued against S.B. 500 saying it's "simply disingenuous to say AIDS is not related to homosexuality." The bill failed to pass.

Ann Dierks, past president of the Arkansas Right to Life Committee, told *The Washington Post* recently that Health Department Director Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's choice for surgeon general, "is to me really a very dangerous woman because of her policies. I see not an extension of a pro-choice policy, but a pro-abortion policy." Elders' response: "I'm not about abortions. I'm about preventing pregnancy. Which would in turn prevent abortions."

Book Notes

From The Women's Project Library

***How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez** – "To speak without an accent is the ultimate goal of the immigrant, yet the literature of immigration requires an accent to lend it authenticity and flair. This threshold – between accent and native speech, alienation and assimilation – is the golden door through which (the author) sails with

her first collection of interwoven stories." The best stories come at the end of the book and include "rich descriptions of island life and details of the Garcia's first year in the United States." The author has "beautifully captured the threshold experience of the new immigrant, where the past is not yet a memory and the future remains an anxious

dream."

– *New York Times Book Review*

***Kitchen* by Banana Yoshimoto, translated by Megan Backus** – "A sense of the fragility of life permeates these works (two novellas); death is the central event. But Yoshimoto's message, articulated

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Book Notes

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with delicacy and maturity, is that humans have the intellectual and spiritual resilience to overcome tragedy and find meaning in existence. A bestseller in Japan, Yoshimoto's first book should delight a discerning audience here."

— *Publishers Weekly*

1959 by Thulani Davis "is a powerful coming of age story set against the beginnings of the civil rights movement. In 1959 Billie Holiday dies, the main character has her first date, and her father begins to worry about integration when eight black college students go into the local Woolworth's and sit down at the lunch counter. This debut novel by an acclaimed playwright, journalist and poet received reviews that compared her book to *Sula* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*."

— *Feminist Bookstore News*

Both Right and Left Handed: Arab Women Talk About Their Lives by Bouthaina Shaaban. "Arab women tell of constant shame and fear, of the astounding ignorance of sexuality among Arab girls, of violent male revenge for being 'dishonored' by women's sexual behavior. These are extraordinary people recounting triumphs great and small, from persuading a husband to cook a meal to smuggling arms."

— *New York Times Book Review*

Daughters of Africa: An International Anthology of Words and Writings by Women of African Descent, From the Ancient Oral Tradition to the Present edited by Margaret Busby. Here are the

works of more than 200 authors from Africa, North America, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, and Asia, spanning two millennia—from the ancient Egyptian queen Hatzhepsut and the Queen of Sheba to contemporary American writers such as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Jewelle Gomez. Within the 1,152 pages are excerpts from oral history, autobiography, historical fiction, science fiction, literary novels, short stories, poetry, essays, journalism, memoirs, diaries, letters, plays, folklore and more. It also includes a biographical sketch of each author and a list of her individual works, as well as substantial bibliographies of sources and further readings.

Catholic Girls edited by Amber Coverdale Sumrall & Patrice Vecchione — Women who grew up Catholic share an experience that transcends class, race and nationality. This unique anthology of 52 short stories, poems and memoirs captures in moving, humorous and

sometimes angry words the stories of Catholic girls—tales of first doubts and disappointments, fears and rebellions, and the emerging sexuality that finally challenges the church's narrow concept of womanhood. Contributors include Louise Erdrich, Audre Lorde, Mary Gordon, Marilyn Murphy and Valerie Miner (What! No Kate Clinton?!?).

Songs of My People – African-Americans: A Self-Portrait edited by Eric Easter, et al is an extraordinary and historic photo documentary of the world of African-Americans. Fifty photojournalists examine and capture on film the stirring lives of African-Americans from the cotton fields of Mississippi to the floor of the New York Stock Exchange; from the anguish of the homeless in the nation's capital to the selflessness of the nuns of the Oblate Sisters of Providence. *An exhibition of photographs from this book will be at the Arkansas Arts Center through May 16.*

More New Books in the Library:

The War Against Women by Marilyn French

From Paycheck to Power: The Working Woman's Guide to Reducing Debt, Building Assets, and Getting What You Want Out of Life by Little Rock's own Linda Bessette & Anne Owings Wilson

Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men by Gary David Comstock

This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer by Ray Mills

Families We Choose: Gays, Lesbians & Kinship by Kath Weston

Bastard out of Carolina by Dorothy Allison

Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing edited by Jill Radford & Diana E.H. Russell

Almanac of the Dead by Leslie Marmon Silko

Love, Zena Beth by Diane Salvatore

The House Tibet by Georgia Savage

Searoad: Chronicles of Klatsand by Ursula K. Le Guin

The Invisible Epidemic: The Story of Women & AIDS by Gena Corea

Undersong: Chosen Poems Old and New, Revised by Audre Lorde

Hot Chicken Wings by Jyl Lynn Felman

Talking with Your Child about a Troubled World by Lynne S. Dumas

Sapphic Songs: Eighteen to Eighty, Revised by Elsa Gidlow

Deborah, Golda, and Me: Being Female and Jewish in America by Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Life Is Painful, Nasty and Short...in My Case It Has Only Been Painful and Nasty: Djuna Barnes, An Informal Memoir by Hank O'Neal

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.

Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

Current Projects

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support groups for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

A 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.

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Transformation

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Racist Politics and Homophobia

Suzanne Pharr

No one can say that the leaders of the religious Right are not smart. Indeed, they are brilliant in their strategies that move people toward their goal of an authoritarian regime dominated by a Christian fundamentalist vision. Perhaps the most stunning display of shrewdness is their ability to use deception, secrecy, and confusion as tactics. We see this in their much promoted victories of stealth candidates, their ability to persuade voters to focus on a single issue rather than the Right's entire agenda, their attack on lesbians and gay men as a way of diverting people from grasping their overall agenda of dismantling the gains of the Civil Rights Movement and democracy itself.

Among the most disturbing of the religious Right's tactics is their use of racial politics wherein they deliberately omit discussion of race in their overall agenda yet use coded racial language to win the support of the white population and use religion and homophobia to win the support of communities of color. In their vision of social control, race becomes the bedrock that discrimination is built on, and racist fears are the motivation for the religious Right's movement to reject inclusive, participatory democracy.

We must never forget that their

vision is one of exclusion, not inclusion. We need to take a look at that vision and then think about how race fits into the hidden agenda.

Simply put, the religious Right wants to impose an extreme, fundamentalist Christian vision, with a political agenda to achieve it. That vision, which excludes the beliefs and participation of Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and most Christians, is based on a belief that God gave man power and dominion over the earth and all its peoples. That means that God (thought of as white) gave man (who is white) authority over women, children, people of color, and nature. The Bible, read in this literalist and selective manner, has been a powerful weapon in the hands of the Right to defend slavery and segregation, the subordination of women, and condemnation of those who love others of the same gender.

For the religious Right, this line of authority is rigid and provides order. Those who get out of line must be controlled. When people seek to have authority over their own lives, such as people of color in the Civil Rights Movement and women in the Women's Movement, the religious Right reacts by setting forth a political agenda that opposes any gains that promote self-

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determination and full participation in society. Thus we see a 30-year effort to dismantle the gains of the Civil Rights Movement, and systematic attacks against women's reproductive rights, publicly funded childcare, pay equity, and women's anti-violence programs such as battered women's shelters.

To sell their vision during this time of intense social and economic chaos, the religious Right pointedly appeals to a nostalgia for an ordered life that most people have never even experienced but have been shown in television shows and movies. They ask us to return to the 40's and 50's when times were more prosperous, and young white men returning from the war were able to get jobs or go to college on the GI bill. On the financial front, cities were not yet broke, discount stores had not destroyed the commerce of small towns, and farming was still a viable occupation. Socially, the mood of the country was patriotism and McCarthyism. What the Right calls the "traditional family" was given widespread publicity in advertising consumer goods, on radio, tv programs and movies, and in popular literature.

But let's think carefully – not in t.v. images of nostalgia – of what that time was like for many people. Segregation was legally and rigorously enforced. African Americans lived under Jim Crow laws and were subjected to persistent violence and intimidation. Almost all people of color experienced economic deprivation. Male authority was unchallenged by women, and domestic violence, incest, and rape were kept secret in the "traditional family." That family, of course, was not thought to include lesbians and gay men because it was too dangerous to

be openly visible.

Also, people of color were not considered part of that "traditional family." For example, without mercy or compassion or respect for family units, slavery assaulted African American families through dividing them according to individual workers or "breeders." African American families have survived against terrible oppressive odds, developing new definitions of family and bonded relationships. Many of these families in their inclusiveness are not considered proper "traditional families" by the religious Right. Instead, the Right stereotypes and condemns them along with Native American, Latino, and Asian families as fostering illegitimacy, criminality, and welfare dependency.

Because all of us feel the effect of the current social and economic chaos, the religious Right is able to appeal to some of us with their rigid vision of law and order, male control, and white supremacy. Our fears combined with our prejudices give them fertile ground for organizing.

"Special Rights"

The religious Right, in attacking the lesbian and gay liberation movement, puts forward the argument that lesbians and gay men should not have minority status or receive rights such as affirmative action or quotas; nor should there be specific anti-violence laws to protect us. What we have here is a deliberate scrambling of categories. Minority status, currently granted to those who have known historic discrimination based on race, religion, sex, disability, and age, gives those groups access to the tools to fight discrimination in employment,

housing, public accommodations, and through anti-violence laws. Affirmative action and quotas, on the other hand, are not rights or laws but programs designed to redress a history of discrimination which prevented equal access to education and employment. As Jesse Jackson says, it is an attempt to level the playing field.

The "special rights" argument is designed to appeal to both white and people of color communities, but in different ways. With the white community, the Right plays on racist fears and uses coded language to call them up. For their anti-gay organizing and constituency building, they depend on the complex fears white people have about the current economic depression and the changing demographics of the country, along with a lack of knowledge about sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. That is, they build on the factual information that the population is shifting gradually from predominantly white to increasingly people of color, and on the myth that white men are losing their jobs because people of color are taking them through affirmative action. Then, to stop the gay and lesbian civil rights movement, they call up the specter of yet another group that is trying to take away jobs. To enforce this argument emotionally, they consistently characterize lesbians and gay men as undeserving of any rights at all because we are sick and evil. Discrimination, then, becomes a matter of job protection as well as a social necessity.

It is the racism encoded in the "special rights" language that makes this argument work so powerfully.

The religious Right argues that *everyone* was given the same rights

by the original framers of the Constitution, and that anyone seeking any rights or protections beyond that original document is seeking "special rights." That was the argument they used against integration and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, that they used to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment, and are now using against lesbians and gay men. The Civil Rights movement, however, was built on the idea that certain groups had no voice or legal standing when the Constitution was framed and therefore must be included at a later time when the public is made aware that the effect of discrimination against any group is to prevent their full participation in democracy. Because the Civil Rights movement made such a compelling argument that there can be no true democracy without justice and access to full participation, other groups such as women and gay men and lesbians followed their lead and created movements inspired by this model.

Since the early successes of the Civil Rights Movement, which gained some integration but not necessarily its goal of equality, there has been a constant backlash against it from the Right. It has tried to block continued efforts for equality. The central point of this backlash has been that anything gained by people of color in this country must inevitably take something away from white people — that there simply cannot be enough jobs or education or even rights to go around. It is the myth of scarcity played on a racial theme. In the 1970's, the focus became affirmative action, the program that sought equality as well as integration. It was interpreted by the white community as an unjust program that took jobs away from

talented and skilled white men and gave them to "unqualified" people of color and white women. By 1990 when David Duke talked about "special rights" in his gubernatorial campaign, everyone knew he was talking about the so-called threat to the white race by people of color.

It took only a short step in 1991-92 to build on this perceived sense of white loss by using the "special rights" argument to suggest that lesbians and gay men would be just one more undeserving minority group trying to take away "deserving" white men's (and in this case, all heterosexuals') rights.

The "special rights" pitch to communities of color is of course different. This time it is the myth of scarcity played on a homophobic theme. The religious Right delivers the message that lesbians and gay men are trying to get some of the same economic pie which people of color fought so hard to get, and there is not enough to go around. They suggest that people of color were clean and upstanding and through their goodness earned their rights during the Civil Rights struggle whereas lesbians and gay men are evil and sick and are merely trying to take advantage of the history of that movement.

Wait a minute. Are these the same people who developed their base during the Barry Goldwater campaign in response to the Civil Rights movement and then strengthened it during the George Wallace campaign? Are we now to think that they were longtime supporters of civil rights for people of color and to this day are out there promoting equality? Are these many of the same people who supported David Duke? Is not one of their major spokespeople Pat Buchanan who

suggested that M-14's would be an adequate solution to the uprising in L.A.?

They suggest to people of color communities that civil rights should be granted only to those whose differentiating characteristics are immutable, such as race or sex or age. They say that sexual identity is a matter of choice, not a matter of who one is. First of all, we do not know how people acquire their heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual identity, but we do know that people have a sexual identity, and currently homosexuals experience extreme discrimination and violence because of it. Such groups, united by a common sexual identity, deserve rights and protections. Still, the religious Right returns to the argument that sexual identity is choice of behavior, though they do not choose to argue that heterosexuals then must also choose their sexual identity and consequent behavior. To make this argument work, they have to dehumanize and demonize lesbians and gay men as sexual predators, just as they have characterized African American men since slavery. Lesbians and gay men become "pedophiles;" African American men become "rapists."

Also, the religious Right does not discuss choice in another area of major civil rights protections: religion. Many of the early white immigrants to the U.S. came in search of religious freedom, and protection of that freedom has always been a basic tenet of this country's beliefs and legal system. That freedom means that people may choose their beliefs and forms of worship, whether it be in synagogue or cathedral or storefront church, whether speaking in Latin or speak-

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ing in tongues. It is a matter of choice, and is covered under both the Bill of Rights and civil rights protections. We believe in that freedom so strongly that we grant religious groups tax exempt status, even when they use that status to raise money to mount campaigns of hatred and discrimination.

That is not to say that homosexuality is the same as either race or religion; it is different. Like religion, however, sexual identity is invisible and similar to religion, is attacked where practiced. Along with women, people of color, people with disabilities and religious minorities, lesbians and gay men have experienced historic discrimination, and the methods of discrimination have an identifiable kinship with those of other oppressions, as do the results. We see the same tactics used again and again, from oppression to oppression. They all lead to one group of people being able to define another group and have power and control over them and their lives. They all lead to exclusion from equality and full participation in democracy.

The white leadership of the religious Right depends on the concern people of color have for their families who are under attack both economically and socially and on their share in the homophobia that is rampant throughout all of U.S. society. They suggest that homosexuality is only about white people and is threatening to their families and lives. Lesbians and gay men of color are treated as nonexistent or rare aberrations.

The religious Right is particularly active in fundamentalist churches within people of color communities, using the same arguments against lesbians and gay men

that were used against African Americans in my own conservative rural church in Georgia in the 1950's. Discrimination requires such vicious stereotyping and dehumanizing. The religious Right works to make the church a place of exclusion and condemnation rather than a place of liberation and acceptance. Their appeal is not to people's social conscience but to their sense of self-protection.

What they do not talk about in communities of color is their opposition to affirmative action for *anyone*, to welfare, to government funded programs that support families, to immigrant rights, to equal access to public education, to multicultural education, to HIV education that would prevent the dramatic rise in deaths of people of color.

To people of color communities, they scapegoat lesbians and gay men as the cause of economic problems. To white communities, they scapegoat people of color as the cause of these problems. For example, in California, Asian and Latino immigrants are attacked as a "burden" on health services, school systems, and welfare, causing them to break down. While attacking affirmative action as a critical economic problem, the religious Right of course does not talk about who is really taking the jobs of working class people: those who make obscene profits by going to countries of color to pay subsistence wages for the manufacture of goods which are then brought back here to sell to those who are daily losing their jobs from this practice. Affirmative action is not closing down plants and businesses in the U.S. Unrestrained greed is.

Focusing our attention on the civil rights effort of lesbians and gay

men is a shrewd way of diverting our attention from the real social and economic issues of our times. While the religious Right talks about morality, I believe they oppose HIV education because they consider the people currently most affected by AIDS as being dispensable: homosexuals, women, and people of color. If they care about the well-being of communities of color, why are they not spending an equal amount of time working for universal, government-funded health care? When the Right talks about families, I believe they care about only certain kinds of families, narrowly defined. If they care about families, why are they not mounting a national campaign against violence against women and children and against alcohol and drug abuse, the most destructive issues in family life today in both white and people of color families? When the Right talks about crime, through coded language they suggest that it is committed primarily by people of color. If they care about the effect of crime on our society, why do they support the creation of more jails rather than crime prevention through job training and jobs development? The solution to our economic and social problems is not the promotion of increased discrimination.

The religious Right is expending an enormous amount of time and money in its fight against the extension of civil rights to lesbians and gay men. It is clear to almost everyone that there is a larger agenda than just the repression of a small percentage of our society. Why else so much effort to dehumanize and scapegoat one minority group? What is the larger agenda? If it can be established that any one group of people in this country does not deserve civil rights and therefore can

be legally discriminated against, it calls into question whether other groups *deserve* civil rights. If civil rights can be put to the vote for one group of people, then it follows that they can be put to the vote for other groups. This trend suggests that by the end of this decade, current civil rights laws will be put to popular vote for reconsideration. If civil rights can be defined as "special rights" and the original Constitution held up as a sufficient, all inclusive document, then not only civil rights for people historically discriminated against, but the Bill of Rights itself, will be in the line of attack.

Public Schools

I believe the religious Right has set out to destroy public schools and replace them with private schools that they more closely control. To achieve this goal, they attack the schools from two directions. From without, they work for a school voucher system which will require that public funds be used to finance private education. From within, they run campaigns as stealth candidates to gain seats on school boards so they can control the curriculum.

The idea of universal, free public education is an idea that supports the principle of participatory democracy and a movement for equality. Rather than private schools for the wealthy or for those of a particular religious faith, public schools have worked to offer all citizens a common entry point into society. Struggles around inclusivity in public schools, such as desegregation, have been part of the continued development of the dream of democracy. Those struggles have been met with strong resistance from the Right. We can mark its battles

against integration, Head Start, and now multi-culturalism, to name a few.

For the past three decades the Right has supported a private school movement that is now represented in the promotion of a school voucher system. The argument is that people should be given vouchers so that they can choose to spend their portion of school tax dollars on private schools if they wish. While presented as providing greater choice, this program is designed to bolster private schools and break the backs of already ailing public schools.

Whether private schools are for Catholics, Protestants, or the secular rich, they are all generally known to be segregated schools, despite minor inclusion of people of color. In fact, "private school" is virtually coded language for "segregated school." The private school movement will segregate schools even further, leaving urban public schools to people of color and a few poor whites and moving the majority white children into church-operated schools.

If a theocracy is being created in this country, where one religious group will dominate both religious and secular life, what better way to advance it than with the takeover of public schools.

Schools controlled by the religious Right would be characterized not by the expansive number of things children could learn but what they would not be allowed to learn. We get a view of their plans for schools by looking at what they are currently doing on the school boards where they now occupy seats throughout the country. They support English-Only, banning books, school prayer, creationism; they oppose sex education, HIV educa-

tion, school-based clinics, evolution, values clarification, multi-culturalism. They support the control of minds rather than the development of critical thinking and freedom of thought and judgment.

One of the most talked about school battles has been in New York over the Rainbow Curriculum which proposed the introduction of multi-culturalism, a very small piece of which was discussion of lesbian and gay families. The larger part was focused on teaching about the different cultures which are represented in the city. The religious Right was so successful in diverting the public's attention by causing a flap over the possibility of talking about lesbians and gay men that people overlooked the rest of the curriculum. The curriculum included lesbians and gay men because they are parents of children who attend the public schools and because a portion of the children in the classroom are lesbian and gay. For the same reason, different cultures were included because New York is a multi-cultural city. In the heated debate that ensued, all those who were different from the dominant culture risked loss.

The idea of multi-culturalism in the public schools strikes terror in the hearts of the religious Right. It is for that reason that the Christian Coalition opened four offices in New York in preparation for the school board elections. Multi-culturalism is a linchpin issue in the struggle between the politics of inclusion and the politics of exclusion.

If multi-culturalism were not presented in a tokenized way (a month of Black history, a month of women's history, a week for Asians, etc.) and instead different cultures

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were presented as having equal value with European cultures, then our schools would become academies of freedom. Students of different cultures would be given an equalized entry point; that is, children of, say, Asian or African descent would enter on the same footing and pride as those of European descent. They would not have to try to persuade the dominant culture to value them and their people's history.

As schools are now, domination and prejudice are built into the curriculum and inequality is established from the first day a child enters. Rather than being the proverbial melting pot, schools force all children to study and obey European dominance in literature, history, and even ways of thinking. For example, the religious Right supported English-Only movement serves as insurance to make sure that Latino and other immigrant children cannot carry the pride of their culture into the schools or receive information as easily as English-speaking children. Language is culture, and to forbid its use is ultimately to crush the culture.

However, the greater terror for the religious Right is critical thinking. Multi-cultural teaching mandates critical thinking. For example, if children are taught the European history of the "discovery" of America and indigenous peoples' history of the invasion of their land, then students are required to think about the differences between them. The equally respected and balanced presentation of different cultures — their history and literature — requires students to select among them, make comparisons and judgments, see things from varying points of view, and decide for themselves what they believe. This is the very essence of

critical thinking and freedom. And critical thinking is the greatest known enemy of authoritarianism and fascism.

Most of the publicity the religious Right has received about its school board work across the country has been its opposition to anything related to sex education: HIV education, dispensing condoms, school-based clinics, discussions of dating and sexual behavior, etc. Obsessed with sex, the religious Right has taken a hard line: one must not talk about sex (because talking makes it happen), and abstinence is the only answer to any sex-related problems such as unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, homosexuality, and I suppose, sexual abuse.

It is in this area of whether or not to talk about sex that ACT UP's "Silence Equals Death" is directly to the point. If one assumes, as I do, that children learn most about sex not from their families or schools but on the street and from the media, it simply does not make sense to think that discussions of it in schools will increase children's activity. To not talk about it in the places where adults have responsibility for children is to deliver our children over to street misinformation and to prevent them from having the means of protecting themselves. Given the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, this abdication puts them at risk of sickness and death.

The religious Right targets people of color communities to get support in opposing sex education and HIV education, suggesting that sex education is a means of promoting abortion and HIV education is a scheme for promoting homosexuality. It is true that gay men are a primary targeted group for HIV

infection, but they are not alone. The other extremely high risk group is people of color, especially women. To let homophobia prevent HIV education because gay men are not considered worthy and valuable human beings is to support the racism that prevents the work necessary to prevent AIDS among people of color. Homophobia and racism share the same belief: that certain groups of people are not as valuable as others and do not deserve health and happiness.

White Gay and Lesbian Racism

The religious Right has had some success in penetrating people of color communities and getting support for carefully framed pieces of its agenda. It has employed those constituencies in its electoral campaigns.

It is important to analyze some of the reasons for this success, since they are dividing what should be natural allies in pursuit of an inclusive democracy. In addition to those already discussed, I believe there is another: the racism in the white lesbian and gay community and the Right's ability to play upon the racial divisions that already exist.

For the past two decades, the lesbian and gay community has characterized itself as white and, indeed, mostly male, despite outstanding work on the part of people of color and lesbians. Because that community has not given leadership and visibility to lesbians and gay men of color, worked openly against sexism and racism, nor supported them in their work in their own people of color communities, there is a racist legacy that is now heightened in the glare of the current attack. If lesbians and gay men of

color had had their share of leadership and support, communities of color would now recognize the lesbians and gay men among them, and there would be natural bridges built between the issues of racism and homophobia.

Instead, homosexuality is often perceived as a "white thing." This means that lesbians and gay men of color get rendered invisible by both the lesbian and gay community and their own people of color communities. It means that when the Right picks up a small economic marketing survey of middleclass lesbians and gay men and then characterizes all as being well to do, communities of color say, how can those rich white people compare their oppression with ours? Why should they be concerned about discrimination in employment or public housing when they can buy their way? It begins not to matter that the assumption of wealth and race is false.

It also means when white gay men ask for support for lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military and compare the lesbian and gay movement to the Civil Rights movement, that African Americans in particular are often resentful. Not identifying their own people as lesbian or gay, and not having had gay visibility in the 60's movement (despite the presence of closeted gays), African Americans now ask, where were you? Why this sudden interest in the Civil Rights Movement? And how dare you say that race and sexual identity are the same when one can be hidden? The lesbian and gay community is seen as making sweeping generalizations and broad analogies in its desire to get support in the face of this current attack. Communities of color are saying in return, why should we

support someone who just discovered us? The central issue that everyone deserves civil rights gets lost because of unchallenged homophobia in communities of color and because of persistent white racism.

An interesting twist comes from the legacy of sexism. Because lesbians experience sexism and invisibility in the movement, our contributions are often overlooked. Of all the white people doing anti-racist work in the U.S. for the last two decades, white lesbians have done the most consistent and pervasive work. The disregard for lesbian politics continues as the major focus of the gay and lesbian civil rights issue has become not employment, public housing, or public access, but instead, ironically, the military, that male bastion, where once again women are not seen as central to the issue, despite the extraordinarily large number of women discharged and the history of homophobic attitudes against women in non-traditional jobs.

Community by community, the religious Right works skillfully to divide us along fissures that already exist. It is as though they have a political seismograph to locate the racism and sexism in the lesbian and gay community, the sexism and homophobia in communities of color. While the Right is united by their racism, sexism and homophobia in their goal to dominate all of us, we are divided by our own racism, sexism and homophobia.

A Call for Dialogue and Coalition

We can no longer afford single issue politics that look at the small picture and miss the big one. We have to recognize that fascist devel-

opment in this country is moving like a steamroller, and in its path it does not selectively choose specific groups to put under its authoritarian control: it is rolling toward all of us. Our only chance for defending the democracy and freedoms we now possess and creating the inclusive world we want to live in is to join together in our efforts. This will take recognizing how oppressions and oppressed people are interlinked – and then how this linkage necessitates mutual solutions.

First, there is internal dialogue. We cannot understand the issues of other constituency groups until we understand them internally. That means, for example, that the lesbian and gay movement must have serious discussions about race and gender, and people of color groups must talk about the role of women and lesbians and gay men within their own organizations and communities. And it means that people of color have to address homophobia within their own fundamentalist churches, and white progressives have to deal with the homophobia and racism in the white churches that are the major organizing base for the religious Right.

Once we understand these issues and take action on them internally, then coalition with other groups becomes much easier and our divisions are narrowed. We understand what is going on, what the issue is, without having to be brought up to speed because our vision is limited to our own particular area of social change work. Coalition work is hard because we are taunted and baited and set off against one another by the Right who keeps drilling the message that exclusion is necessary, that there is

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Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin

July, 1993

By Kerry Lobel

Volume 2, No. 6

■■■■■ CORRECTION ■■■■■

In Volume 2, No. 5 of the Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin, we wrote about House Bill 1892, which overhauled the state's equal access law. What we should have said is that the law rewrites the state equal access act to expand the definition of school meetings to include graduation ceremonies and football games. The bill, which will be challenged in court, may lead school administrators and other adults to encourage students to offer prayers at graduation and football games. While on the face of it this bill may seem neutral, it is unlikely that its provisions will be made readily accessible to those across the wide range of political, philosophical, and religious beliefs.

■■■■■ COURT WATCH ■■■■■

High Court Legitimizes Hate Crimes

Increasing prison sentences of people convicted of hate crimes motivated by bias doesn't infringe on their First Amendment free speech rights, a unanimous Supreme Court ruled on Friday, June 11, 1993. Ruling in a Wisconsin case, the court said government, in an effort to combat bigotry, can give tougher sentences for crimes in which victims are selected because of their status than for crimes in which bias plays no role. The Wisconsin law is similar to laws in at least 30 other states that step up sentencing if bias is implicated in assault, trespass or other state criminal charges. The court agreed that while government may not punish pure expression, it can punish bigotry once it becomes criminal conduct.

AD-G June 12, 1993

High Court Voids Animal Sacrifice Ban

A Florida city's ban on animal sacrifice breaches the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion, the Supreme Court ruled. The case had drawn national attention because of its potential implications for all religious rights. The court said that when the city of Hialeah forbade the ritual sacrifice of chickens, lambs, goats and other animals, it was unfairly targeting adherents of the Santeria religion. The ruling was one of the

most anticipated cases of this term not only because of its exceptional subject but also because it presented the court with an opportunity to reconsider a 1990 ruling that made it easier for governments to pass seemingly neutral laws that infringed on the free exercise of religion. Numerous mainstream churches had asked the justices to use the Hialeah case to reinstate a 1963 standard requiring governments to prove they have a "compelling" interest in enforcing a statute that incidentally affects religious practice. But the court found at the outset of the Santeria dispute that the ban on ritual animal sacrifice was a direct attack on a religious practice, rather than a neutral law that only incidentally affected a church.

AD-G June 12, 1993

Court Orders Klan Faction to Disband

The country's largest, most active Ku Klux Klan faction must disband and give up its assets under an order signed by a federal judge in Georgia, ending a five-year lawsuit against white supremacists who assaulted civil rights marchers in Forsyth County.

Center for Democratic Renewal Weekly Update, 5/17-5/24

Hawaii Court Recognizes Gay and Lesbian Marriages

Three gay and lesbian couples in Honolulu won an appeal alleging that the Department of Health's denials of their requests for marriage licenses were discriminatory on the basis of sex. A lower court had ruled that no law supported their claim, and that a state statute prohibits same-sex marriages. But the state's high court ruled that the state may not prohibit gays from marrying under the state constitution without a "compelling reason" to do so. The case will return to trial court to allow the state to prove a "compelling reason" for maintaining the ban on homosexual marriages.

National and International Religion Report, May 31, 1993

Judge Orders Release of Haitians with AIDS

Judge Sterling Johnson ordered that all Haitians on Guantanamo with under 200 T cell counts be afforded

proper medical care or be moved. The Clinton Administration did not appeal the judge's order, and the interns are now being transported to the U.S.

Center for Constitutional Rights News, Spring 1993, Number 2

■ ■ ■ ■ WASHINGTON WATCH ■ ■ ■ ■

The Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act

Attorney General Janet Reno asked Congress to pass legislation giving the federal government greater authority to stop clinic blockades. The Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE) would make it a federal crime to use "force" or "physical obstruction" to injure, intimidate, or interfere with a woman or health care professional or to damage abortion facilities.

National and International Religion Report, May 31, 1993

Violence Against Women Act Approved by Judiciary

The Senate Judiciary Committee has unanimously approved the Violence Against Women Act (S.11) as amended. It is now known as the Biden-Hatch substitute, and Senator Biden has pledged to bring the bill to the Senate floor as soon as possible—possibly before the fall. The bill currently has 60 Senate co-sponsors. In the House, the Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 1133) has 165 co-sponsors and must still pass before four subcommittees.

Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund, May 28, 1993

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ OTHER NOTES ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Sexual Harassment in the School House

Eighty three percent of girls who responded to a *Seventeen Magazine* survey on sexual harassment reported being touched, pinched or grabbed by male students (96%) or staff (4%). When girls reported harassment to

teachers or administrators nothing happened to the harasser 45% of the time. Only 8% of girls said their school had and enforced a sexual harassment policy.

Action for Public Schools, National Coalition of Education Activists, Spring 1993

Hate Crimes Report Released

A January 1993 Department of Justice report on hate crimes in America reveals that the highest number of reported hate crimes were directed against blacks, 16,689. The second highest number were directed against Jews, 792. Nine percent of the reported incidents were against gays and lesbians. Most of the incidents directed against whites were because of their sexual orientation, not their race. While the Justice Department statistics give a picture of the epidemic of hate crimes in 1991, it is a very small picture. Because of the voluntary nature of the reporting system, only 2,771 law enforcement agencies provided data, less than 19 percent of the 16,000 such agencies in the United States. Those agencies that do not wish to keep data on hate crimes or report them to the federal government do not have to do so, unless local legislation mandates data collection and dissemination.

Center for Democratic Renewal, The Monitor, May 1993

CDR Appoints New Director

Beni Ivey has been named as the new executive director for the Center for Democratic Renewal. She has been associated with CDR for many years as a fundraising and special events consultant.

Women's Project Announces New Staff Member

Donna Rayford has been hired to work with the Women's Project. Donna will work ten hours each week to document incidents of bias violence and follow-up with local and state authorities. Welcome Donna.

Transformation

Published six times a year by the Women's Project, 2224 Main Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72206.
Letters to the editor are welcome.

Editor Kelly Mitchell-Clark
Art Director Kelly Henry

Women's Project Staff:
Lynn Frost, Kerry Lobel,
Kelly Mitchell-Clark, Janet Perkins,
Suzanne Pharr, Donna Rayford

* Printed on recycled paper. *

Staff News

In May, Suzanne received two national awards. She was first given a \$25,000 Stonewall Award for her work on behalf of gay and lesbian people. She was also one of four recipients of a \$2,500 Ms. Foundation Gloria Steinem Award.

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After four and a half years on staff, I have decided to move to Oakland, California. While I am excited about what the future holds, it is difficult to leave my co-workers and dear friends at the Women's Project. I am certain that there is no place in this country that offers more loving, supportive and challenging work relationships. And no matter where I work, my heart will *always* remain with the staff of the Women's Project.

Kelly

Racist Politics

From Page 7

not enough to go around, that one person's gain is another person's loss. There is plenty to go around; the problem is that the method of sharing has not been equalized. We have to understand that if any group can be left out, then reasons can be found to leave any other group out.

It is coalition work, the longterm work of relationships, where we recognize the big picture and our connectedness, that will make it possible to build a progressive movement in this country that includes everyone, where power and resources are redistributed, and everyone gets a fair share. Certainly, everyone has the right and obligation to use discernment in determining social and moral val-

Book Notes

From The Women's Project Library

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

Venus Envy by Rita Mae Brown is the tale of a woman who unwittingly comes out of the closet in midlife when she is diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Under the impression that she is on her deathbed, she mails a series of brutally candid letters to her kith and kin, only to discover that she isn't dying after all.

Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume One 1884-1933 by Blanche Wiesen Cook "Eleanor Roosevelt's spirit seems to have been waiting for an empathic biographer who would finally treat her as an individual, and Blanche Wiesen Cook has done exactly that. This book gives us not only a fascinating, clear-eyed look at a pioneering leader of the past, but a friend who can lead us into the future."...Gloria Steinem

Allies In Healing: When The Person You Love Was Sexually Abused As A Child by Laura Davis (author of *The Courage to Heal*) – The author offers practical advice and encouragement to all partners – girlfriends, boyfriends, spouses, and lovers – trying to support the survivors in their lives while tending to their own needs along the way..

Lesbians, Gay Men & the Law edited by William B. Rubenstein "is one of the best compilations of writing by and about gay men and lesbians I've ever come across. Reading it....you will be not only overwhelmed by how much the law hates us, but by how courageous and downright inspirational we are in our never-ending struggle for recognition, protection, and equal rights."...Larry Kramer

All-Bright Court by Connie Porter – The author "has written a beautiful and profound first novel about a community of black steelworkers and their families who have migrated north from the rural South in search of jobs and freedom. The time is 1960, the place the huge Capital Steel plant outside Buffalo, where the black workers live in company-constructed tenements. In vivid vignettes, the author distills nearly two decades of life at All-Bright Court. She portrays the struggles and expectations of the inhabitants, as well as the foundering of their hopes in the violence of the late 60's and the plant layoffs of the early 70's. The effect is heart-rending and exhilarating."...*New York Times Book Review*

ues, but it is general discrimination against any group as a whole that we must work against. Full inclusion and acceptance of differences without stereotyping and dehumanizing are issues of morality because they lead to justice evenly distributed. When justice is evenly shared, then

everyone wins because the world becomes a better place – where everyone is secure in the knowledge that basic rights are not to be earned or "deserved" but are generally applied as the safety net for everyone.

(This is article #6 in an ongoing series on the religious Right.)

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.

Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

Current Projects

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support groups for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

A 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.

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Transformation

Vol. 8 Issue 5
September/October 1993

The Religious Right: Dividing The African-American Community

Janet Perkins

Thirty years ago thousands of people came together at the Washington Monument to make a statement that would change history. More than 300,000 people, many more than had even been expected, crowded the streets of Washington, D.C., for miles and miles. The message was clear that this was a united front, a demonstration of strength and power to demand this country take seriously the employment needs of Negroes and set a standard for freedom that really would be inclusive of all.

The March on Washington has always held a special place in my heart. Every time I see a television broadcast of the march I long to have been there. You can see the energy and the intensity that permeated the crowd. You also know that each and every individual there was taking a big risk – but you also know that these people felt their long journey and the risk were well worth it – because they were doing something to bring about change and push, no, *force* this country forward in recognizing that all people deserve

dignity, justice and the right to live as whole human beings with all the same rights afforded white Americans.

For the march to become a reality many hours of organizing had to occur. Much time had to be spent hammering out the strategies to make the best use of this occasion, so one minute would not be wasted. From literary accounts that have been written since the march, we know much debate occurred among Dr. King, Roy Wilkins, A. Phillip Randolph, James Farmer, Whitney Young, John F. Kennedy and many others. When you review the history of what went on to organize the march you see that working for justice does not mean that the work will be done justly or peacefully. Rather we read about some very harsh decisions being made at the expense of others, with hard feelings developing among the organizers of the March and pressure being placed on Dr. King to discontinue association with some with whom he had worked closely for many years.

Bayard Rustin, who has been

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termed one of the most brilliant organizers nationally and internationally, had been estranged from Martin Luther King some years prior to the march because threats had been made to use his homosexuality to blackmail Dr. King. Although Rustin was seen by many to be the very best person to be the lead organizer and make the march a reality, his admission of being a communist and his homosexuality were seen as issues that could possibly cause political attacks that would harm the development of the march. In *Parting the Waters*, Taylor Branch recounts a conversation between Rustin and Wilkins who had pointed out the possible problems that could tarnish the march if Rustin were the main organizer. Rustin responded to Wilkins' comments by saying, "but what happens depends on you people who are the main leaders. If you stand up and have courage, it will do no damage." Wilkins quickly responded, "Randolph (A. Phillip Randolph) may be prepared to do that, but I'm not. I just wanted you to know." Unfortunately it was agreed upon to endorse Randolph as the lead organizer of the march, and Rustin as his deputy.

Which held the most weight of being detrimental to the march – Rustin's admitted association with the Communist Party or his homosexuality? Which of these descriptions of Rustin were most difficult for Wilkins to defend?

Given the climate of the time we understand that being labeled a

communist carried serious repercussions – you could be imprisoned, abducted never to be heard from again, or killed. Many civil rights workers and leaders of the movement lived with that fear and the constant scrutinization by J. Edgar Hoover just because they worked against the grain and were determined things had to change so all people could be free and appreciated as human beings.

If the charges against Rustin were only his communist affiliations, it is understandable that could have caused a lot of attention being focused on defending him and would have detracted from organizing the march. But for his sexual identity to be seen as an issue they could not get around is very sad to me and I have many problems with it.

It is so tragic that Bayard Rustin and many others who participated in the march were expected to bring only one aspect of who they were to this great event – their race. This promoted a belief that if you're black your struggle has to be about racism; sexism and homophobia are secondary.

African-American women, in many cases, have been forced to choose between racism and sexism – we have to assess which is more important and have been made to feel that our only problem is racism, that all of our efforts should be directed toward fighting this racist society, and if racism is successfully dealt with, our community would be all right. Or we are made to feel if

we work on women's issues, we can't be serious about our community because we are diluting the strength of the community by attempting to take away the power from our men. And if you are attempting to raise the issue of homophobia, again you are seen as being outside the real issues that are needed to be focused upon in order to gain power in our community.

The position of the African-American community basically has been the same as the military, "Ask Not, Tell Not." You can be a homosexual, but in public look and act in a more appropriate manner, which means heterosexual. As long as we suspect someone is gay or lesbian that's okay, but God forbid they describe themselves as an African-American lesbian or gay man. So therefore, many African-Americans live their lives invisibly – without their families or communities ever coming to learn or understand the issues that are faced by an African-American lesbian or gay man. This also adds to the misconception that there are very few African-Americans who are homosexual, therefore leading people to think homosexuality is more of a white thing than a black thing.

In the African-American community the heart of working for change and organizing has been in the church. From the pulpit the issues are shaped and people are inspired to move. For too many the only political education they receive

comes from the analysis offered by their pastor. So when we talk about making sure all the issues that befall us as African-American women and men are raised, the clergy is looked upon for direction.

Recently a group of African-American ministers in Cleveland, Ohio, decided to raise the issue of homosexuality. Their goal is to speak out against federal legislation that would protect gays and lesbians under federal civil rights statutes.

"We come out of a very deep conviction that the gay and lesbian lifestyle poses, for us, profound problems of morality," stated the Rev. Marvin McMickle, pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland. "It is not a biblically sanctioned lifestyle, and it is not the kind of lifestyle which we would like to see imposed by legislation upon the country."

According to the view of the church, gays and lesbians should not be given status because homosexuality is not an "ontological reality" such as being black or being a woman, a fact that cannot be hidden. Instead, according to the view of the church, homosexuality is a chosen lifestyle.

Though the ministers oppose the homosexual lifestyle and are expressly against any kind of legislation that would lead to legitimization, they contend they are not hostile toward gays and lesbians, nor do they believe that they should be discriminated against or their rights taken away.

Their efforts focus on defeating the federal civil rights bill (HB 431) which would allow basic civil rights such as fair housing, fair employment protection, fair taxation and representation to all human beings regardless of their sexual orientation.

How can you deny lesbians and gay men the protection of the law, but in the same breath say you are not hostile toward gays and lesbians, nor believe that they should be discriminated against or their rights taken away? Does that make sense?

According to the view of the church gays and lesbians should not be given status because homosexuality is not an "ontological reality"...

Surely this group can't be aware that many lesbians and gay men are harassed, beaten and killed each year—not because of their race or gender, but because of their sexual identity. What recourse do lesbians or gay men have if they are evicted from their apartment or denied the right to purchase a home because of their sexual identity? What does it mean to live in fear that you can be fired from a job or unable to enter a restaurant because of your sexual identity? How can a group of people that has had to fight for each and

every right and opportunity they experience, have the nerve to give birth to a campaign in the black community which denies the rights of not only white lesbians and gay men, but also those of their own who are homosexual?

The very first question that entered my mind when I heard about this effort being initiated by a group of ministers was why did they decide to take a position on a civil rights bill that would provide protection to lesbians and gay men? Why would providing protection to lesbians and gay men move a group of African-American ministers from different denominations to band together?

Did these same ministers band together to express their outrage when Lani Guinier was withdrawn from being nominated to head the Civil Rights Division of the U. S. Justice Department? Are they gathering signatures to support the nomination of Dr. Joycelyn Elders for surgeon general? How supportive has this coalition been to South Africa, Somalia or the Haitian refugees?

It appears the religious Right has found yet another opportunity to further their agenda of power and control. We are witnessing how they are establishing representation on school boards, in city and state government, large corporations and in all aspects of the media. Communities of color are not represented in significant numbers among the reli-

(continued on page 4)

gious Right – but the religious Right recognizes that in order for them to move forward in their mission of having influence and power in all areas they must have a presence in communities of color. The religious Right is calculating and intentional in preparing themselves with the information needed to further their goals. They understand the influence and control African-American ministers hold in the black community, therefore this was a logical target for them to approach. They are also aware that black folks love the church and the minister. The church has been and still is our main forum and through the gospel of the Bible we learn to live.

So the issue they felt would bridge the gap between them and the African-American community is homosexuality. How did they shape the issue to gain the support of these African-American clergymen – was the key to their influence built on an argument that homosexuality leads to black genocide, or was it to instill fear in them of how, on judgement day, God would hold them accountable as ministers if they didn't take a stand against sin and immorality, of which homosexuality is the biggest sin of all sins, for which there is absolutely no forgiveness? And this is the *biggest* of sins?

Much of who I am and what I believe in is rooted in the church. The church has taught me how to live and not to fear death. The church taught me to be determined

in the face of opposition and to know that if I am fighting for something that is right I will surely be victorious. The women in the church showed me their strength, therefore allowing me to know that I too can be strong. The men demonstrated courage, dedication and gentleness, which provided me with the knowledge that my men are worth more than what the world will ever admit.

Three of the students who were in the heat of the Central High crisis came from my church. The minister who helped shape my understanding of racism at one time was Daisy Bates' minister. I can remember us praying for the safety of our minister's son when he was jailed in Alabama and Mississippi because he was active in the civil rights marches – and even then, as a child I felt more pride for what he was doing than fear for his life. And as long as I can remember I have heard the story of how a black man was lynched from the steeple of my church because he jumped in a white woman's buggy to stop a runaway horse, but he was accused of trying to rape her.

So I come, as do many African-Americans, from a church that has played a significant role in struggling for civil rights.

I never learned to have animosity, hate or feelings of indifference about lesbians and gay men because I always had connections with homosexuals in my community and in the church.

There was always this tolerance of their presence. They were then, as now, very active in all areas of the church. In many cases we would not have the music that soothes our burdened hearts and beaten-down spirits if we did not have lesbians and gay men on the piano or organ or in the choir. Many pulpits would be empty if lesbians and gay men decided to leave their posts.

Someone who is very dear to me has had this tremendous struggle of being an African-American woman and being out as a lesbian in the community, specifically the African-American community. Her fear is the loss of her community – the black community. She struggles with her right to worship in a church with her people, the people with whom she identifies the most, and fears most being rejected. She, along with many other African-American lesbians and gay men, faces this dilemma of loving her community but also being aware that the community has the potential of beating and killing her – which is horrible. But the real hurt and pain comes from being told you have no place in this community because you are a lesbian or a gay man – that's the real death, which many black lesbians and gay men do all they can to avoid. So, they sacrifice a large part of who they are to maintain their membership and connections to their community and the church.

The church is the mainstay of our community and has always

provided a refuge – maybe only a temporary one, from all the struggles that we as African-Americans must face. The church has been the only stable institution in our communities; therefore I am furious that these African-American ministers would allow anyone to influence them to use the church, where all the struggles for civil rights were started, to attempt to deny lesbians and gay men their right to be protected by the law.

What is needed in our community is a unity and bond that can't be broken by anyone. We must see every aspect of our community as valuable and worth protecting, and yes we must give full membership to our sisters and brothers who are homosexual. For all these years we have seen them, now we must start to hear them and respect them for who they are.

These African-American ministers fail to understand they have been drawn into a plot that has as its mission to further separate, divide and place additional pressure on African-Americans so they are unable to come together to work on the problems of the community. The African-American community is very fragile and has many problems and many people are feeling so hopeless because there seems to be no end to the misery. In the last five years we have seen more young women and men succumb to drugs, and we have witnessed so much violence. The kind and type of drugs keep changing from cocaine to crack

to crack-cocaine and now we are hearing that heroin is back on the market. Although unemployment figures are going down, the incidence of unemployment is still very high among African-Americans. More black babies will die prior to their first birthday than white babies. The AIDS epidemic is steadily growing in the African-American community. If you remove the focus from working on empowerment of the African-American community to lines and divisions being drawn in the community, you have successfully stopped any progress

Self-determination and empowerment of marginalized groups are the real threats to the religious Right .

and growth.

The real problem is that the religious Right fears a loss of power and control, power and control for setting the standards and agenda for this country. Self-determination and empowerment of marginalized groups are the real threats to the religious Right. When people begin to see themselves as powerful they will question and challenge the status quo — this is what the religious Right fears. The power and control of white, heterosexual, Christian males is being diluted and that is the basis for their mission; this causes their hysteria.

Although there are many problems we are dealing with in the African-American community, some real progress is being made – which the religious Right is attempting to limit. There were more women and African-Americans elected to Congress in the last national election. Carol Mosley-Braun is the first African-American to be elected to the Senate, therefore weakening the old white boy network of dominance. Redistricting in Arkansas has created the opportunities for more African-American judges to sit on the bench. Across this country, African-Americans are investing in learning more about their history and culture. We have seen many more activities expressing multi-culturalism – the teaching of only European history is being challenged – English being the primary language in this country is being challenged – and it's just not accepted any longer that Columbus discovered America.

Ben Chavis, who is now the executive officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has moved into this position with plans that have the potential for making some real changes in this country. Early in his tenure Ben began to build relationships in the Asian and Hispanic communities, expanding the agenda and role of the NAACP. The civil rights leader made his presence known by speaking at the on Washington in April, again

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The Wolf At The Door

Suzanne Pharr

This story of the wolf is not a fairy tale, whatever they say. What is the religious Right doing dressed up in those sweet "I'll take care of you, my dear" grandmother outfits? Or is it in sheep's clothing? Whatever works at the moment. Here's what I say: beware of the wolf in drag.

Since the first of the year, we have observed the religious Right employing a new strategy in communities of color: to persuade them to organize around single issues, such as homosexuality, that in the end will lead to their own loss of freedom.

Some examples:

- We have just witnessed the Christian Coalition moving into communities of color in New York to organize them against those who represent "multiculturalism issues" in school board elections. Focusing on the inclusion of lesbians and gay men in the "rainbow curriculum," the Right successfully linked supporting multiculturalism to supporting teaching about homosexuality. The second connection they made was that to support multiculturalism was to support the idea that parents could be forced to accept their children being taught subjects and ideas that the parents do not approve of. And who loses if multiculturalism is seen

as a bad thing? The wolf eats up the idea of inclusion of the history and ideas of people who are not white, heterosexual, European males.

- Paul Weyrich and the National Empowerment Television are gleeful about the recent opportunity to organize local NAACP chapters against the national office. The issue: that the national NAACP supported lifting the ban against homosexuals in the military. Who loses if the national organization is weakened or destroyed? Who gains if African Americans are divided against one another? This attack comes at a time when the NAACP has perhaps the greatest opportunity it has ever had to become a powerful national player, led by Ben Chavis who apparently has the vision to bring all people of color together under its umbrella. The wolf eats up the idea of strength through unity.

- In California there is a November ballot initiative advanced by the Right promoting school vouchers of \$2,600 in state funds to help pay tuition for private or parochial schools. Their 1978 tax-cutting Proposition 13 has already drastically weakened public schools. Analysts expect the voucher system to complete their total collapse. Who stands to lose the most if the public schools are destroyed? The newest and poorest students. It is

not by chance that this initiative appears in the state that has the most immigrants of color and the nation's largest people-of-color population. The wolf, creating a private and mostly segregated school system, eats up the hope of free and accessible education for everyone, regardless of race or financial status.

- In August the Traditional Values Coalition released a new video as part of its obsessive, ongoing attack against lesbians and gay men. Entitled "Gay Rights: Special Rights," this video pits the African American community against the lesbian and gay community, using the myth of scarcity argument that there are not enough rights to go around. No longer covert in this approach, TVC states on the video's flier: "SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR GAYS=LESS RIGHTS FOR YOU!" Who loses if the religious Right manages to argue that civil rights should be granted only to the "deserving" and the general public should decide by vote who deserves them and who does not? This attempt to coalesce with people of color on the gay and lesbian issue happens at the same time that the Right consistently links people of color with criminal activity — especially in the areas of drugs, welfare, theft and murder. The wolf, through

court cases and ballot initiatives, will manage gradually to eat up protections for people of color because they are not "deserving."

• • • • •

The wolf is at the door of all of our communities but none more frighteningly so than communities of color. For example, immigrants. Our news media is currently full of stories of anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S., with most suggesting that much of the population sees immigrants as a drain on U.S. resources and a cause of the present economic problems. California Gov. Pete Wilson, in an open letter to President Clinton, called for refusing citizenship to U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants, denying education to illegal immigrants, cutting off health and other public benefits, and requiring them to carry an identification card. Again, the Right is invoking the myth of scarcity, suggesting that there is not enough to go around. Roger Hernandez, writing in the Aug. 13, 1993 *Oregonian*, reports that Julian Simon, an economist at the University of Maryland, states that the average immigrant family pays \$2,500 more in taxes than it takes in from government services. And this does not even include the immigrants' economic activity. Yet, Wilson, whose letter was immediately supported by the religious Right, states that immigrants cost his state \$3.3 billion each year. The net result is that the

public is led to believe that immigrants – in particular, people of color – are the source of our economic problems.

Increasingly, people of color, in one way or another, are blamed for our economic woes. No one is focusing hate rhetoric and ballot initiatives against those rich white men who made millions off the HUD and S&L scandals of the 1980's – which taxpayers are now paying for. Also little notice has been given to such things as the Medicaid prescription-drug fraud. Ironically,

Increasingly, people of color, in one way or another, are blamed for our economic woes.

it is popular opinion that people of color are the main recipients of welfare and the perpetrators of welfare abuse. However, columnist Jack Anderson writes on Aug. 16 that this fraud is perpetrated by "physicians, pharmacists, patients and other Medicaid middlemen who collude to loot a program intended to serve the poorest of the poor." Here are some examples he notes: "A doctor wrote 2,000 prescriptions a month; a pharmacist billed for more than 30 prescriptions a day for a single recipient; one recipient had the same three lab test five times in four days at three labs and six

prescriptions for Zantac in the same four days at six pharmacies. Medicaid shelled out more than \$3,000 during an 18-day period for this recipient." Why then are low-income people of color being targeted for blame for the cause of our economic problems?

The wolf is at the door trying to pit racial groups, as well as women and gay men and lesbians, against one another in its drive to put in place its authoritarian, fundamentalist vision of domination. For the religious Right, group must turn destructively against group, and chaos must reign so that it can instill its fundamentalist Christian solution of church-based authority and rule. It is engaged in a "holy war" that calls first for destabilization and then for domination. It develops the chaos and fear that can lead a populace to engage in "ethnic cleansing." Syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer in her column of Aug. 15, quotes an article in the March/April 1992 *Bulletin of the Field Museum of Natural History*, "The Causes of War," by Jonathan Haas. He gives two lessons from his archaeological studies of ancient warfare: (1) "If ethnic differences don't exist before a war, they are sometimes made up to justify a war," and (2) "The causes of warfare are not to be found in ethnic differences but in the economic and demographic conditions at the time."

In the U.S. at this moment in history, we are in hard economic

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Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin

September, 1993

By Kerry Lobel

Volume 2, No. 8

■ ■ ■ ■ DR. ELDERS GOES TO WASHINGTON ■ ■ ■ ■

It came as no surprise that President Clinton's choice of Dr. Joycelyn Elders of Little Rock as surgeon general generated controversy. The outspoken Elders has been the subject of heated debate since 1987, when she was named by Clinton to head the Arkansas Department of Health. Her views on teen-age pregnancy, reproductive health, school-based health clinics and condom distribution have made her a favorite target for Arkansas' conservatives for many years.

When a coalition of about a dozen conservative political and religious organizations held a news conference on July 7 to oppose Dr. Elders' nomination, this too was no surprise. It was a continuation of (as Ernest Dumas of the *Arkansas Times* calls it) the most virulent impulse in the new conservatism, the demonization of women.

As Dumas writes:

With the appointment of Dr. Elders, as in the case of Lani Guinier, whose nomination was withdrawn by the Clinton administration, the demonization of women is combined with unsubtle racism. Black women are special objects of loathing. The effort always is to link them with the old black stereotype, the "welfare queen," the unwed mother who takes the government for thousands of dollars and drives a Cadillac bought with illicit government checks. Thus Lani Guinier was tagged with being the "quota queen." The "condom queen" is the name hung on Dr. Elders. The message is another irresponsible black person, not to be trusted.

The line-up against Dr. Elders included all of the heavy hitters for the religious Right.

She's the "condom queen."

Phyllis Schlafly, Eagle Forum

We don't want her to do to the children of America what she's done in Arkansas. Dr. Elders' bloodstained ideas must not touch our nation's children.

Andrea Sheldon, Traditional Values Coalition

[Elders is a] radical leftist who was part of the radical fringe of Woodstock.

Pat Robertson, Christian Coalition

She is undoubtedly one of the most overt anti-Christian bigots I have ever seen in the public sector.

Dale Morfe, Fort Smith
Westark Christian Council

She, quite honestly, is offensive in her behavior. She has difficulty in controlling her anger. She comes across as harsh.

Betsy Hagan, Arkansas' Family
Life America and God (FLAG)

Deborah Mathis said it best in a column in the *Arkansas Times*.

Gradually the opponents are mounting a full-court press against the Elders nomination. Phyllis Schlafly—anti-feminist crusader who has benefited as much from the women's movement she so loudly disdains—actually called Elders a disgrace.

Come again?

The sharecroppers' daughter who rose from the mire of poverty in the Mississippi Delta and got herself educated all the way up to pediatric endocrinology even while most of her med school classmates wouldn't so much speak to her—a disgrace?

The longtime wife of one of Arkansas' most venerable high school coaches; the mother of two, fine, productive sons; the sister and parishioner of a thoughtful, peace-loving Methodist minister—a disgrace?

Joycelyn Elders the citizen, the neighbor, the educator, the firing line advocate for children—a disgrace? Quick, someone give Phyllis a dictionary.

At the same time that the religious Right is aggressively wooing people of color in local communities to support their so-called 'pro-family agenda,' they have waged a racist campaign against a woman who disagrees with their views.

The campaign has resulted in a delay on the final vote for Elders' confirmation until Congress returns to

(continued next page)

Elders From Page 8

Washington, D.C. in the fall. The religious Right has used this fight to raise money and to mobilize their forces. And although over 100 organizations have lined up to support Dr. Elders, every voice must be raised in her support.

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Senator Dale Bumpers
United States Senate • 229 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator David Pryor
United States Senate • 267 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Divisions From Page 5

making it clear our strength lies in our ability for all of us to come together in order for us to go forward.

These ministers never once questioned how this agenda would benefit the African-American community. How do we gain when we block the path for anyone gaining their rights? And although the visible face of the lesbian and gay community looks white in the media, there are many of our brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandmothers, grandfathers, cousins and friends who are African-American homosexuals and I know we can't afford to throw them away because of a lack of understanding about their lives.

The Bible is used too often to control people by making them feel guilty and immoral. The Ohio ministers are saying the homosexual lifestyle is not biblically sanctioned and it is not the kind of lifestyle that we would like to see imposed by legislation upon this country.

These same ministers would be the first to deny the Bible supported any idea of inferiority or inequality when it comes to the status of African-Americans. But how often have you heard white people use the scriptures to justify mistreatment of African-Americans and denial of equality, and quote scripture after scripture to substantiate why black people are supposed to be submissive to white people.

Also, I would like to ask these ministers: Is it biblically sanctioned that hundreds of women are beaten and murdered

each year? Are rape and incest biblically sanctioned? Are extramarital affairs, of which we see many in the church, biblically sanctioned? I never have seen one injustice against humanity sanctioned in the Bible.

The Bible I read says, "the first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul, and second is like unto it that you should love your neighbor as yourself." It never told me to decide whether my neighbor was worthy of my love based on that neighbor's sexual identity.

This lack of sensitivity to the rights of others clearly points to the need for the Women's Project to continue to find ways for people to understand how all the oppressions are so connected. You can't fight for the rights of some, and then decide others don't deserve to have rights. I feel Bayard Rustin expressed it best in his conversation with Roy Wilkins, "but what happens depends on you people who are the main leaders. If you stand up and have courage, it will do no damage." Those of us who claim to be working for social justice, dignity and peace for all people must stand up and have courage in the face of all oppressions, and then the hate mongers and the real threats to reaching our goal for a better world can do no damage. ♦

Transformation

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Letters to the editor are welcome.

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* Printed on recycled paper. *

Book Notes

From The Women's Project Library

Books In Our Library Concerning Topics Discussed In This Newsletter:

Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black and Ain't I A Woman: Black Women & Feminism by bell hooks

The Black Spiritual Movement: A Religious Response to Racism by Hans A. Baer

Confusion By Any Other Name: Essays Exploring the Negative Impact of The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman edited by Haki R. Madhubuti

Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology and Toward A Black Feminist Criticism by Barbara Smith

I Am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities and Sister Outsider: Essays & Speeches by Audre Lorde

Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right by Sara Diamond

Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism by Derrick Bell

The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours by Marian Wright Edelman

In The Life: A Black Gay Anthology edited by Joseph Beam

Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity by Cornel West

Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal by Andrew Hacker

Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible by Renita J. Weems

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963 by Taylor Branch

Challenging the Christian Right: The Activist's Handbook by Frederick Clarkson & Skipp Porteus, Institute for First Amendment Studies

The Women's Project Library is open from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Saturday. The one-time charge to use the library is \$5 for Women's Project members and \$10 for nonmembers.

Wolf At The Door

From Page 7

times, where the disparity between the rich and poor grows greater, and our new young president is set the impossible task of creating a fair and workable economic system out of the years of greed-based policies he inherited. We live in a failing economy in which the loss of manufacturing jobs from overseas relocation have hurt people of color disproportionately. It is also a time when the demographics of our country are rapidly changing through immigrants from around the world seeking economic and political asylum. Widespread economic stress and hardship make this time fertile for discrimination and injustice. Certainly it is easier to blame people of color, women, and gay men and lesbians for our economic problems than it is to examine the motives of those corporations and businesses that close down shop in this country and go to Asia and Latin America to exploit workers there. Those corporations do not have a face. The person of color on the street does. Where easier to put the blame, to focus the frustration?

The wolf is at the door, taking advantage of these ripe conditions. He carries a Bible and wears a good suit and tie. As he teaches people to hate one another, all in the name of morality and getting ahead, we must never forget that he has a ravenous appetite for discrimination and exclusion, and he will consume anyone in his way to reach his goal. ♦

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, 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.

Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

Current Projects

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support groups for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

A 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.

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Transformation

Vol. 8 Issue 6
November/December 1993

Eliminating Civil Rights

Suzanne Pharr

Why is the religious Right deliberately trying to confuse the public about civil rights?

They consistently muddle legal civil rights together with the program of affirmative action to make people think they are one and the same. To clear up the record one more time:

■ Most of the civil rights necessary for a free society are outlined in the Constitution and Bill of Rights and theoretically should apply equally to all people. Because prejudice and discrimination exist, specific civil rights laws are enacted to ensure these rights are applied justly to certain classes of people, such as people of color, women, people with disabilities, religious minorities, etc. The Civil Rights Movement focused on laws that provide a legal framework (or in plain language, the tools) for fighting discrimination on the job, in housing and public accommodation, and for fighting violence. These laws are an effort to equalize the justice system in the face of bigotry and discrimination.

■ Affirmative action is a *program*, temporary in nature, chosen by some institutions to help remedy historic patterns of discrimination by trying to create access to the workplace and to education. It is an effort to

equalize opportunity. It is neither a civil right nor a law.

■ Minority status, referred to repeatedly in the Right's anti-gay initiatives, is a *made-up term* that has no legal standing. Due to numbers, lesbians and gay men are already a minority, no matter what anyone says or does. What the Right is worried about is that there will be legal recognition of the fact that discrimination and violence exist against lesbians and gay men to such a degree that as a class they should be viewed as others already recognized in the Civil Rights Act. This recognition would indicate that lesbians and gay men also need additional vigilance to ensure their protection from discrimination and injustice. Already included in the Civil Rights Act are race, sex, age, religion, disability, ethnicity and national origin.

I don't believe for a minute that the religious Right believes that lesbians and gay men are going to be qualified for affirmative action programs and subsequently take jobs away from heterosexuals. This stands in contradiction to the history of affirmative action.

I believe the Right plays the economic card in its "no special rights"

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Changing the dialogue to focus on the idea that those who exhibit bad behavior do not “deserve” civil rights opens the door to all of the control and punishment that the religious Right desires. The authoritarianism of the few will strip away all rights, one by one, from the many.

campaign for two reasons:

1) to rile people up emotionally, working on everyone's fear about job loss and economic chaos;

2) to totally change the way people in this country think about civil rights for people of color and women.

Let me see if I can walk you through the confusion they are trying to create through distorted information:

■ Failing to acknowledge that ordinary people already have civil rights, they assert that civil rights are *special rights* that go beyond what the “ordinary” citizen already has and are given by the will of the majority to a few other approved people who “deserve” or “earn” them. Re-writing their own history (many of these people cut their teeth in the Goldwater campaign that opposed the Civil Rights Act), the religious Right now quotes Martin Luther King Jr. and says that African-Americans *back then* deserved civil rights. They carefully avoid talking about people of color in the present,

and there is never any mention of *women* as deserving civil rights.

■ Next they argue that lesbians and gay men do not deserve civil rights (which, you must remember, are to them special rights) because they say homosexuality is not sexual identity but merely chosen bad *behavior* and should not be “rewarded” with *special rights*. Civil rights then are to be thought of as something people must earn and deserve through good behavior. They are no longer the tools for access to justice.

■ Having centered the discussion on the issue that behavior renders people undeserving of justice, the Right then builds on popular prejudice to lead people to think that this country's problems are due to certain groups of people who exhibit what they call bad behavior. Their primary focus is people of color. For them, despite statistics to the contrary, it's the criminal behavior of African-Americans and Latinos that is responsible for violent crime, drug

traffic and welfare abuse. For the Right, it is immigrants (people of color) whose bad behavior (illegality) is swamping the job market and welfare system of this country, as well as increasing crime. Again statistics are to the contrary.

■ When people have come to believe that civil rights are special rights that are bestowed by the majority only upon those who demonstrate “good” behavior, and when through anti-gay initiatives, civil rights (which they call “special rights” or “privileges”) are submitted to the popular vote, a pattern is carefully established to place the civil rights of all people in jeopardy, both in the voting booth and in the courtroom. The questions become these: Do people of color deserve civil rights if they are thought of as criminals? Do immigrants deserve civil rights if they are seen as a drain on the economic system. How would the popular vote go? Who ends up in control?

The religious Right is deliberately confusing the public about civil rights in order to dismantle all the gains people of color and women have made in their efforts toward full participation in democracy. Changing the dialogue to focus on the idea that those who exhibit bad behavior do not “deserve” civil rights opens the door to all of the control and punishment that the religious Right desires. The authoritarianism of the few will strip away all rights, one by one, from the many. A police state – with prisons sprouting up everywhere, police departments beefed up with special drug and gang teams, thousands of armed guards at the borders, etc. – will be offered as the single appropriate solution to the control of “bad people.” ♦

Threads: Tying Our Lives Together

Kerry Lobel

Just when I think that my work is starting to lose its edge, something happens to reaffirm that I am on the right track. I tend to be the sort of person who develops projects, sticks with them for the long haul, but still wakes up in the middle of the night wondering if I am doing the right thing.

Like most stories at the Women's Project, this one has no particular beginning, middle or end, but these are the threads. The first thread begins five Februarys ago when the Women's Project began holding a battered women's support group at the Arkansas Department of Correction Women's Unit. This battered women's support group was the beginning of a long-term commitment to women in prison that has expanded and deepened over time. The second thread continues to over four years ago when I sat in a room with other Central Arkansas AIDS activists to discuss AIDS education and outreach to minority communities (in those days meaning anyone who wasn't white, male or gay) and was laughed out of the room when I raised issues of concern for women working as prostitutes. And the third thread continues to almost four years ago when the Women's Project began our AIDS work which has included street outreach to women and men trading sex for drugs or money and a peer AIDS education program at the women's prison.

The story picks up again last fall

when a woman I knew through the prison programs called to say that she was being released from prison two days before Thanksgiving.

I had met Jean Leach soon after I arrived at the prison and shortly thereafter learned that she was infected with HIV. For several years, I brought her information about AIDS from the free world, supported her decisions about healthcare, and also befriended her. When she called to say that her flat date (the date when her full sentence would be served) had arrived and that she would be set free from prison the following day, I knew that I was the obvious, and only, choice to pick her up.

Picking her up was the easy part. Like many who leave prison, Jean left with only the clothes on her back, the \$25 check they gave her at departure, two boxes of crafts she had made, and a tattered sheet of paper with the names, addresses and phone numbers of everyone that she knew.

She also left prison with less than a week's supply of AZT, two days worth of anti-depressant drugs, and none of the hormones that she had been taking. The prison medical staff sent along a list of her medications, although no prescriptions were included, and it would be some time before she would have access to her medical records. She had no identification, no birth certificate, no source of income and no place to stay.

Before Jean could panic, the women's network moved into action. For two weeks, Jean stayed with Mary and me and our menagerie of animals. Sue Landenwich offered shelter at Advocates for Battered Women. Sandra Wilson from AIDS Outreach of Arkansas, a new organization, moved even more quickly to open up a planned house for people living with AIDS and worked with an organization called Integrity to find Jean work. Caroline Decker, a case manager paid for by Jefferson Managed Care and housed at the Arkansas AIDS Foundation, took over the painstaking task of setting up medical appointments, making contact with disability and rehabilitation services, and maintaining oversight for the continuity of Jean's care. Caroline, working with Shelley Crump, case manager for the Ryan White Act-funded HIV consortium, found money for medicine and medical care.

In a matter of a few short months, Jean travelled the road from despair to feeling like her life was going where she wanted it to. She was working, she was living on her own, and most importantly, she began the process of re-establishing relationships with most of her eight children.

I wish that I could say that the story ended here but it didn't. Last March, Jean went to her primary-care physician complaining about

(continued on page 4)

severe abdominal pains. He told her she had a urinary tract infection. The next day Caroline took Jean to the emergency room and she was admitted to the hospital. Over the course of a week, the hospital staff discovered that Jean had a mass around her kidneys and eight days later she was taken to exploratory surgery where doctors discovered a fast growing and well advanced lymphoma – a kind of cancer often associated with people living with HIV. The discovery of the lymphoma moved Jean from being classified as a person living with HIV to a person living with AIDS – finally she could qualify for SSI and other programs. The following morning, Caroline, Sandy, Mary and I sat on my porch talking about respite care for Jean following her release from the hospital. By noon, Caroline was getting Jean's permission to contact her family about the surgery. By six o'clock, we were making arrangements for 24-hour watch at the hospital and for Jean's daughter from California to come visit her mother. As Shelley sat vigil through the night, Jean had her second respiratory arrest. By the following morning, it was a matter of time before Jean would die. Late into the following morning, Sandra and I held Jean's hands as she died.

Following Jean's death, Caroline worked with the family to arrange the memorial service where seven of her eight children as well as numerous brothers and sisters attended. Jean's long-estranged family had come together at last.

Our women's network had come together under stress and under fire. We provided support for Jean and we provided support for each other. Different kinds of relationships, forged under duress were formed.

We saw first hand that when tested to the limit, the institutions we had built could work.

We saw just how strongly each program that we called on for help relied on women in leadership. Without us, there would be no network. Without us, there would be no services.

But we also saw that women needing this network found it often quite alone and quite by chance. We saw the flaws in the way the system addresses women living with HIV and AIDS, particularly women who,

Because, until June,
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through incarceration or family separation, are left homeless.

In Jean's case, the Arkansas Department of Correction knew exactly when she was due to be released from prison. Like most prison systems, Arkansas' is woefully understaffed and disinterested in women's lives after release. For women like Jean who serve their full sentences, rather than going out on parole, there is no one with the responsibility for helping women plan for the transition between prison and the free world.

For starters, leaving prison with identification and a birth certificate would have meant that Jean could apply for assistance immediately. Leaving prison with a copy of her medical records, prescriptions for medications, and a list of resources for people living with HIV would have been an enormous boost. In Jean's case, she was fortunate to know me and I was fortunate to be well connected to resources for people living with HIV and AIDS.

Because, until June, Arkansas was without a program to provide housing for women leaving prison, Jean's HIV status was her only door to services and support. Most women leaving prison are on their own with no such support.

Like in most states, Arkansas has had little experience with women living with HIV and AIDS. Although the CDC definition for AIDS changed in January (which resulted in women jumping from 12% of total cases in Arkansas in December 1992 to 18% total cases in March 1993), many women like Jean still find themselves in situations where they have inadequate documentation of chronic yeast infections or other ailments. Like Jean, they find themselves waiting for their CD4 count to drop below 200 or for an opportunistic infection. Ghoulish as it may seem, access to care is determined by these changing CDC case definitions. In a state that has little to offer women without children in the way of financial support or training for work, waiting for an AIDS diagnosis becomes a way for women to have access to job training and disability benefits.

Although the number of women with HIV is increasing, the medical professionals have not changed their

attitudes about women and the disease. Many medical professionals tend to dismiss women's complaints. Many are unsure about proper protocols for gynecological check-ups and PAP smears for women with HIV. Intuitively, many of us know that HIV affects women differently than men. Yet medical professionals and researchers have not told us concretely what to do about that.

Politically, we have always understood that women play the role of caretakers in society. We know that when women become ill, there is often no one to care for them. If they have children, someone must care for them as well. In Jean's case, the lack of a family caretaker placed very different stresses on the organizations that exist to support people living with HIV and AIDS. Like many women living with HIV and AIDS, Jean needed the full menu of services from A-Z. Fortunately for her, she lived in a state and a community where these services were relatively easy to access. Twelve months ago, this wouldn't have been true.

For five years, the Women's Project has worked to make HIV education and services more accessible to women. Over the last few months I was able to see that our work and the work of others has started to come together in the way that it should.

At our Passover Seder this year, our family and friends once again ritualized the Jewish people's struggle for freedom and liberation. I thought of Jean and the legacy that she left those in the struggle against HIV – a rededication to our work, a rededication to each other, a rededication to our struggle for social justice for all people. ♦

African-American Women's Statewide Conference

Janet Perkins

Plans are under way to have the second African-American women's conference on June 10-11, 1994. We are soliciting the support of African-American women who would be interested in assisting in the development of this conference. We are having the first planning meeting Saturday, Oct. 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Women's Project office, 2224 Main St., Little Rock.

In June 1990 the Women's Project sponsored the first statewide black women's conference and as soon as the conference was over many of the participants inquired about when we would do the next conference. We also have received many requests from women who did not attend the first conference, but heard about the event from other conference participants and are anxious for us to do it again so they can be involved.

The first conference was a wonderful experience for the Women's Project, for we were able to bring together more than 125 African-American women and 25 children for two days to discuss who we are, what we want and need, and how we will manage to survive against the odds. As in the first conference, we are working to ensure that this conference will be to celebrate our lives and to honor our heritage and culture. We are also determined to maintain our commitment to bringing all aspects of our lives into focus. We refuse to have a conference that attempts to paint a picture that all African-American women are the same. We are intentional in having all our experiences represented. Therefore, we want to make sure in the planning of this conference, as in the last, that we bring together women who have disabilities, ex-prisoners, single-mothers, lesbians, welfare mothers, heterosexuals and those who are working and non-working, and provide the forum for each of those experiences to have expression.

The second conference will be devoted to looking at the violence in the lives of African-American women and children.

If you are interested in being involved in the planning of this conference, please contact Donna Rayford or Janet Perkins at 372-5113.

Campus Rape: Blaming The Victim

Donna Rayford

Like many other students, as a freshman entering college I didn't find the issue of stalking laws and college campus crime reports to be the most important issues in my life. Three years later, however, I would find myself greatly affected by the absence of a stalking law in the state, Texas, where I attended college.

About two weeks before Easter vacation 1992, I was walking to my apartment from classes and as I neared the front of my apartment building I heard someone yell "Hey Baby!" I did not respond and just entered my building. Over the next few weeks, this same man would be standing across the street yelling things in my direction. I did not feel threatened by him even after the day I came home to find him standing directly in front of the door to my building. As I walked past him, he yelled, "Dumb bitch."

After I returned from Easter vacation, the harassment continued and I decided to call the police. A woman dispatcher asked me exactly where he was standing and if he had threatened me with bodily harm. When I told her he had not, she informed me that he was not violating any law and "probably just had a crush" on me. I tried to explain that this man was a total stranger, but she said the police could not do anything unless he actually caused me "physical harm." I remember thinking, "I guess they won't do

anything until he rapes me."

Over the next few weeks, he became even bolder. He started showing up on campus near buildings I had classes in. Once, he was actually standing in the doorway of one of my classes. It got to the point that I would skip a number of my classes and hardly ever left my apartment. Then, just as suddenly as he had started, he stopped. He was no longer standing outside my apartment or around campus.

I was relieved he had stopped, and decided to forget the entire thing – he was probably just some nut. The Thursday night before my first final, I went to the music building to practice. When I had finished, I realized that it was after midnight. After an hour of trying to call someone for a ride, I decided to just walk home.

I had only gone a few feet when I saw a shadow come up behind me. When I turned around, I saw that it was the guy who had been following me the previous month, and I immediately turned to run. I was wearing a very large T-shirt and he grabbed the back of the shirt and pulled me toward him, causing the shirt to choke me. I tried to yell, but the neck of the T-shirt was too tight against my throat.

He was dragging me up the driveway in the back of the music building toward the loading dock. When I started kicking, he put a small, rusty knife to my throat and said that he would kill me. He dragged me to a

very narrow walkway between the music and history buildings that was sealed off at the end by a brick wall. He pushed me up against the wall, and I screamed, but he grabbed my hair and pulled my head back saying he would "slash my face up" if I did not stop screaming.

For what seemed like a lifetime, he just stood in front of me talking and holding the knife at my throat. He just kept calling me names and saying things such as, "Just 'cause you go to this white school, you ain't white." I tried that psychological stuff self-defense experts teach – talking to him in an understanding way to buy some time and keep his attention off taking any type of action with the knife, but this made him angrier.

He said I was making fun of him and told me to get onto my knees. I was so afraid, I guess I was a little crazy because I refused, and he grabbed me and pushed me down on the ground up against the wall. For a moment he looked as if he wasn't sure what to do next, but he quickly ripped my shorts open, yanked my shorts and underwear down and started unbuttoning his jeans.

At that moment, I guess I made a decision. I thought he might really kill me if I fought, so I turned my head away, closed my eyes as tight as I could and tried to leave my body. Just as he laid down on top of me, I heard voices coming in our direction.

When he heard them, he started

getting up and quickly buttoned his pants, looking at me for just a second and ran out of the walkway. I never did see where the voices had come from – I just ran to my apartment.

When I got into the apartment, I locked the door, went into the bathroom and sat down on the floor in front of the shower mirror door. I kept thinking I should have been more careful and I shouldn't have said anything to him the day he was in front of my building (I had told him to go to hell). I didn't decide not to tell anyone, I just didn't for some reason. Instead, I took a shower and a bath, put my clothes in the trash can, took three of the Buspars my doctor had given me for anxiety and went to sleep. I slept straight through the next day and the entire weekend – getting up only to use the bathroom and take more Buspar. I didn't answer the phone or the door buzzer and I don't remember eating.

On Monday, I took two more Buspars, put on clothes, gathered some books, and went to class. By the time I was playing for my piano final, what had happened to me suddenly hit me. I did not know what to do or who to tell, and I just wandered around campus most of the afternoon. I finally told a friend, who took me to a school counselor and she called the school police.

The next year would make me wish I had been one of the more than 80 percent of women who never report their assault. Everyone from the school police to my fall dorm mother acted as if I was over-reacting about what had happened to me. I was made to feel I had committed a crime by reporting the assault.

When I returned from summer break, the school police informed me that the officer handling my case was being investigated for child

molestation and no one had been working on my case the entire summer. Even after I began seeing my attacker around the town and campus, the police would not take any action. Instead, they asked me to "try and hold him" until police could arrive.

When I tried to talk to school officials about the way the police were handling my case, the only advice I received was to "calm down." My dorm mother asked, "What do you want me to do, Donna, walk you to and from classes?"

Although I had not been shown any lineup or pictures, the police told my mother that I had been asked to identify my attacker in three separate lineups. It became quite obvious that the new officer on the case either did not believe I had been assaulted or did not think my case was very important. He missed the only appointment scheduled for me to look at photographs and questioned the fact that I told a male friend about my attack instead of a female. He always referred to this friend as "a boyfriend" and regardless of how many times I told him I had not known the guy, he insisted I had probably met him at a "club or party."

I was later told by a school counselor that at least two other women had reported being attacked by someone who had followed them prior to the attacks and fit the description of my attacker. I left school to finish my degree at home because I did not feel safe on campus, (I had to go through hell to do this), and as far as I know my attacker has never been caught.

As of July 1, there is federal legislation designed to make colleges take more responsibility when students are raped. This legislation requires schools to provide counseling for the victim, provide orientation on the issue of rape for all incoming freshmen and inform rape victims of their right to file a report with the local police department. While this legislation will not prevent rapes on college campuses, it will make universities more accountable.

If this legislation had been in place at the time of my attack, I feel my university would have treated me in the way I should have been treated – as a victim of a crime. If there had been a state stalking law, I would have been helped three weeks prior to the attack when I first called the police. ♦



African-American Women's Discussion Group: **African-American Mothers and Daughters Learning To Communicate**

Do you have problems communicating with your daughter? Do you have a hard time telling your mother certain details about your life? Are you always afraid for your daughter's safety? The Women's Project is sponsoring a discussion group for African-American mothers and daughters to have fun learning about how to communicate about hard subjects like **SEX, DATING AND PEER PRESSURE**. We promise this will be an afternoon full of fun. We want to really encourage good relationships and communication between African-American mothers and daughters.

This event will be held Saturday, Nov. 20. If you are interested in attending or would like more details, please call Donna Rayford at 372-5113.

Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin

November, 1993

By Kerry Lobel

Volume 2, No. 10

..... Religious Right Seeks To Control Media

Founded in 1977 as the National Federation for Decency (the name was changed in 1987), the American Family Association claims 640 local chapters and 450,000 members. In addition to its network of local and state chapters, the American Family Association Law Center, aggressively promotes the "Christian" agenda through the judicial system. According to the *AFA Journal*, "AFA is a Christian organization promoting the Biblical ethic of decency in American society with primary emphasis on TV and other media." Their priorities include opposition to sex, violence, profanity, "anti-Christian bigotry," and positive portrayals of gays in the media. Leading boycotts and letter-writing campaigns against major corporations is the AFA's main activity. In 1992 and 1993, AFA claims to have distributed 30,000 copies of the anti-gay video, *The Gay Agenda*.

Using full-page advertisements in local newspapers throughout the country, AFA has waged a full-scale war against sponsors of prime-time TV programs that according to AFA ratings, "promote sex, violence and profanity on television."

How does AFA rate television programs? Here's a sampling from one of their latest mailings:

Violence: A violent incident is defined as an attempt to do bodily harm to a person or bodily harm actually done. Cartoon and comedic violence were not included.

Sex: A sex incident is defined as a scene of suggested intercourse, a sexually suggestive comment, or a skin scene (undue and unnecessary emphasis on the human anatomy). The ratings include sex outside marriage and sex inside marriage.

Profanity: A profanity incident included the terms he--, da--, God (when used as a profane expression and not in reference to the Deity), and other generally accepted words of profanity.

Based on the average number of sex, violence and profanity incidents sponsored per 30 second commercial aired, companies are targeted for AFA boycotts. These companies have included Kmart, Holiday Inn, Blockbuster, Slimfast Foods Co., Philip Morris Companies, Wendy's International, AT&T, Toyota Motor Sales and General Motors Corp.

But AFA's work goes far beyond encouraging consumers to boycott companies that sponsor programs that do not meet their standards. Their goal is in fact to take what they consider to be objectionable television shows off the air completely. What dangerous programs have been the targets of AFA? Donahue, Roseanne, Saturday Night Live, Melrose Place, Cheers, LA Law, Good Advice and a wide array of made-for-television true-crime movies.

Their latest target was (and is) the controversial television show "NYPD Blue." In response to AFA-organized consumers, nationwide at least 40 of ABC's 212 affiliates refused to air the show. In Arkansas, affiliates in Jonesboro, Fort Smith and Fayetteville rejected the show, while KATV in Little Rock chose to air it. KATV, however, kept viewers guessing about its decision until its 6 p.m. newscast aired the day of the program.

KATV General Manager Dale Nicholson said the station decided to air the show because if it did act as censor, its viewers wouldn't have a voice in choosing the programming they want to watch. He added that such choices should be made by the viewers. He also hinted that if the furor continued, Central Arkansas viewers could look for a changing line-up after the November television sweeps.

The "NYPD Blue" saga hasn't ended here.

(continued on page 9)

Women's Watchcare Network Bulletin – Continued

Supporting the efforts of Arkansas' chapter of the American Family Foundation, the Christian Civic Foundation (the public-policy arm of the Arkansas Baptist Convention) advertised in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* on Sunday, Oct. 3 urging viewers to boycott KATV and to contact sponsors of "NYPD Blue" and the station's newscasts. On Oct. 6, James Dobson's Colorado-based Focus on the Family took out a full page ad in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* urging consumers to contact sponsors of the program.

The implications of these actions go far beyond a simple boycott of advertisers. The goal of the religious right is to exert control over what Americans view in television and movies, what we hear on the radio and what we read in books. By using American's concerns about the escalating violence in our society, the religious Right uses people's real fears as a wedge to destroy those protections offered to us by the First Amendment.

The religious Right asks "Sick and Tired of Sex and Violence on TV?" Their solution is to have them play censor and to pull the collective plug on programs they find objectionable. Those of us who wish to preserve our rights as guaranteed by the First Amendment cannot afford to stand idly by while others are taking aggressive action to control the choices and options available to the majority of Americans. Each of us can pull our own plug on our own television set.

Think for yourself. If you want choices in your television viewing, contact the companies that have been targeted for boycotts by the religious Right. (Their names and addresses are provided in the next column.) Send copies of your letters to the Women's Project.

In Arkansas:

Brandon House
1100 South University Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72204

Harvest Foods
Box 2101
Little Rock, AR 72203

Landers Jeep Eagle, Chrysler, Plymouth, Dodge
Box 1649
Benton, AR 72018

Twin City Bank
Box 5581
North Little Rock, AR 72119

Walloch Home Center
9701 Interstate 30
Little Rock, AR 72209

Nationally:

Benckiser Consumer Products, USA
(Aspen Cologne, Calgon, Stetson)
55 Federal Road
Danbury, CT 06810

Sony Corporation of America
Sony Drive
Park Ridge, NJ 07656

Time-Warner, Inc.
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10019

The Walt Disney Company
500 S. Buena Vista Street
Burbank, CA 91521

Transformation

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Book Notes

From The Women's Project Library

Lynn Frost

New Books in the Library:

Saturday Is Pattyday by Lesléa Newman, illustrated by Annette Hegel is the fourth children's book by Lesléa Newman to address the issues facing children of gay and lesbian parents. Her *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride* and *Heather Has Two Mommies* have sparked national debate as part of New York's Children of the Rainbow curriculum. *Pattyday* deals with the difficult issue of failed relationships and the break-up of lesbian families. Frankie is hurt and confused when his two mommies, Patty and Allie, separate, but he is reassured that Patty will always love him and still be his mommy even though she no longer lives with him. He learns he will be able to visit every week because Saturday is Pattyday.

Masterpieces of African-American Literature edited by Frank N. Magill offers descriptions, analyses, characters, plots, themes and critical evaluations of major works of fiction, nonfiction, drama and poetry. Some titles included are *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, *Another Country*, *Soul on Ice*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Beloved*, *Black Boy*, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois* and many more. Authors reviewed include Paule Marshall, Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, Amiri Baraka, Ntozake Shange, Samuel Delany, Octavia Butler, August Wilson and many more.

Forbidden Subjects: Self-Portraits by Lesbian Artists edited by Caffyn Kelley for Gallerie Women Artists' Monographs – Lesbian artists scrutinize memory & desire, identity & community, subjectivity, self-image, pain, anger, love and survival in this remarkable anthology. Visual artists and writers contribute photographs, paintings, mixed-media work, poems and essays to represent themselves and their concerns.

Children of Horizons: How Gay and Lesbian Teens Are Leading a New Way out of the Closet by Gilbert Herdt and Andrew Boxer – For the first time in history, self-identified gay and lesbian youth are coming out while they are still in their teen-age years. Despite this

unprecedented cultural development, there is almost no information available on their lives. As an invisible minority, stereotypes about them still abound: they are confused, or mentally ill, or corrupted and seduced by older homosexuals into a secret society. This book is a groundbreaking study that confronts these myths about gay and lesbian youth and explores their real experiences. The authors have uncovered an important generational change as attitudes about sexual identity are beginning to free our youth from a crippling self-doubt.

Holiday Gifts Now Available At The Women's Project

Postcard Books

Amulets of the Goddess (27 amulets with instruction on daily use)

T-Shirts

Bumper stickers & Buttons & Enamel Pins

Books, Journals & Audiotapes

Holiday Cards & Other Notecards

Playing Cards & Tarot Decks

1994 Calendars & Datebooks, including:

Celebrating Women Artists

Many Strong & Beautiful Women

March On Washington Calendar

Mother Earth Through the Eyes of Women

Photographers

Celebrating Women's Spirituality

PMS Attacks

Cowgirl Classic

Quiltscapes

African Textiles

Paintings from the Rainforest

Women of the African Ark

Dykes To Watch Out For

Women Who Dare

Women Bodybuilders

... and many more!

Visit us at 2224 Main St. in Little Rock –
Mon.-Fri. 10am-5pm or Saturdays 11am-1pm.

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.

Transformation is now published six times every year.

Six times each year, members and volunteers 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.

Current Projects

Prison Project

A support and advocacy project for women in prison that provides support groups for battered women in prison and formerly incarcerated women, and job training and advocacy.

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 Social Justice Project

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

Women and AIDS

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

African-American Women's Institute for Social Justice

A project which creates strategies for overcoming the barriers that hinder African-American women's efforts toward power and self-determination.

Communications and Events

A 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:

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

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