

Transformation

Vol. 11 Issue 1
Winter 1996

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THE WOMEN'S PROJECT TURNS 15!

In 1996, the Women's Project will celebrate 15 years of commitment to keeping a progressive, multi-issue, multi-racial agenda alive in Arkansas. Excerpted from Suzanne Pharr's forthcoming book, the following article discusses some of the political beliefs, policies and practices which have contributed to our survival and success.

Trying to Walk the Talk: An Example

Suzanne Pharr

For the past fifteen years, we at the Women's Project in Arkansas have been trying to figure out how to follow a multi-issued agenda and how to develop political integrity. Certainly it has not always been easy, but it has kept us relentlessly growing and learning, has built in each of us a powerful political conviction and determination, and has made all of us feel more whole. And while the organization is not always thought to be correct on all of its issues, it is always respected for its efforts to maintain political integrity, internally and externally. We feel that we are participating every day in the creation of democracy and that we are as unfinished as it is, but the dream of justice and equality lifts us up and moves us forward.

The goal of the Women's Project is to eliminate racism and sexism. We believe these two are inextricably intertwined and must be dealt with equally, together, and head-on.

We also think that all other oppressions are connected to these two through similarity of method and intent and are rooted in economics. As a women's organizing and political education project, we have chosen to focus on economic injustice and violence against women and children as two major areas of discrimination and control of women of color and white women. Working on these issues includes working with men and boys and places us near the heart of community work.

In our community and nation our demand is for equality and justice, for shared power and resources, for opportunity and participation, for individual and group responsibility and freedom. In the search for political integrity, the challenge has been to create an internal philosophy and structure and practice that reflect the vision of the world we seek for everyone.

(continued on page 2)

Economics

Much of our political analysis is focused on economics as the root source of inequality, and we have seen it at work everywhere. Daily, we witness women unable to leave their batterers because they cannot afford to feed their children. We witness people condemned because of their poverty. We see the poverty of people of color viewed as an indication of their lack of value in society. Hence, we decided to address the internal issue of economics first. We pay everyone at the Women's Project the same salary, no matter what job she does, and no matter how long she has worked there. At any time we have only four to five full-time employees, and pay others such as a bookkeeper, child care providers, and layout designers for the newsletter on an hourly basis at the same rate the full-time staff is paid. Longevity is rewarded with other forms of compensation: a month yearly vacation after two years of employment; a retirement pension after five years; five month's paid sabbatical after every five years worked.

We believe that an hour of one woman working as hard as she is able is equal to another woman's working hard, no matter what the task at hand: whether it is writing funding proposals, providing care for children, giving speeches, clipping newspaper articles and logging violence, or cleaning the office. What is most important to us is commitment to the work and working hard. Consequently, we try to be very careful in our hiring. As a community-based, social change organi-

zation, our first concern is that a potential employee have a passion for social and economic justice and a desire to give her best self to the job. After that, we look at skills and the way needed skills can be learned during employment at the Project. Using these criteria, we are able to hire women

Increasing numbers of historically under-represented groups gives an organization integration or diversity, but does not necessarily bring about a shift in power.

whose life experiences are rich but who may not be formally educated and are inexperienced in a conventional workplace.

Our annual budget is slightly over \$200,000, derived from foundation grants, churches, individual donors and pledges, compensation for services, sales of books and products. Every member of the staff participates in fundraising. This way, we understand where our salaries and resources come from, participate in their creation, and are prepared to make decisions about their distribution.

When describing the organizational structure of the Women's Project, I am often told by people from larger organizations that such a pay structure could work

only in such a small place. Perhaps so, but a variation on it could also work. Larger organizations could create a policy to allow no more than a 20% differential between the highest paid employees and the lowest paid. If we do not do this, then the structure of our social change organizations reflects the economic pyramid of this country. Those at the apex (the fewest) make the most money and have the most power (control of decision making and distribution of resources). Accountability is vertical rather than horizontal. Those at the bottom make the least and are not allowed to take part in the decisions that affect their lives and the life of the organization and its constituency. It is common, for instance, in many social change and social service organizations for those who have the most contact with the constituency (battered women, for instance) to make the least money. Those who have the most contact with power (funders, community leaders) make the most money.

Historic Inequality: Beyond Affirmative Action

As a women's organization working to eliminate racism, we try to do what we call "tilting the balance of historic inequality." We live in a country that has systematically withheld access to opportunity and participation from people of color, a country that has practiced genocide in particular against American Indians and African Americans and blamed them for it, has induced poverty, has dealt the blows of substandard education and healthcare, has both appropriated the culture of people of color and condemned it as primitive and inferior—all lead-

ing to enforced inequality. We do not believe this history of injustice and inequality can be easily overcome but we want to try to make major changes both organizationally and individually. We want to change engrained thinking and assumptions.

We believe that when everything is placed in the balance, that racial parity is more than creating simply an accurate reflection of the racial makeup of the population, or balancing 50% white women and 50% women of color. White women belong to only one of many racial groups in this country and that particular group has been the dominant power which has created the historic inequality. Quite simply, once domination has been engrained for generations, for centuries, it is extremely difficult to throw off its assumptions and behavior during efforts for equality. Major structural changes have to be made to ensure and support changes. And it is still difficult.

The way we try to tilt the balance is to make the majority of our organization women of color, earning equal salaries and having equal decision making power. Our board is eleven women, seven African American, one Asian American and three white, and the staff of five is two African American and three white women. Out of sixteen women, seven are lesbians, four are over 50, half are rural, and most are working class. Where we are weak is in our development of youth participation and of women of color other than African American.

Changing the Agenda

Increasing numbers of historically underrepresented groups

gives an organization integration or diversity, but it does not necessarily bring about a shift in power. One of the ways we have tried to bring about this shift is to share access to decision making equally. We believe that when there are predominantly women of color on the staff and board and everyone

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has equal say in the decision making, then the agenda and how resources are used to support it will change.

Much responsibility is required: knowing about all aspects of the organization, attending weekly staff meetings and quarterly retreats, communicating well, and talking through issues until group agreement is reached. Each staff member is a lead organizer for a portion of the work. It is her job to oversee the vision, strategy, recruitment of other staff and volunteers to participate, keep the rest of the staff abreast of what is happening, etc. However, each staff member works on all areas, not just the one she is responsible for. In an annual board and staff

retreat, we assess the year's work and lay out the strategy for the next year. The staff meets quarterly to do the same on a three month basis, and then at the beginning of each month, we provide each other with a work plan for what we hope to accomplish during the month. There are constant opportunities for analysis, criticism, disagreements, revision. In addition to a strong framework of meetings and exchange, we have autonomy and independence; we are expected to dream big, to take on hard personal challenges, to think on our feet and be creative.

If we were a much larger organization, we would have to modify this structure, i.e., have people meet together in smaller work or issue groupings. The principle would be the same: everyone should take part in the decision making that affects their work and lives at the organization.

Our ability to do good work and participate strongly in decision making is affected by the opportunities we have to be infused with new ideas both from the local community and nationally. We constantly work to try to equalize the privilege of access. For instance, I spend a lot of my time traveling, making speeches, attending conferences, and doing strategic work with groups. Each trip gives me great opportunities to learn new ideas, to make contacts with helpful people. If others on the staff do not have similar opportunities, then the way we work and interact together is affected. We look for opportunities for everyone to travel, to represent the organization in meetings and conferences, to be spokesperson with the press. All honoraria goes to the Women's Project. Our

policy is to provide financial support for each staff member to attend one conference a year just for her own education, not as a representative of the Project.

Relationships

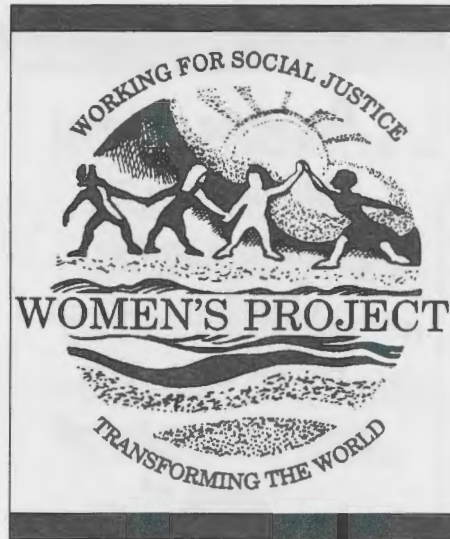
All of what we do is built on a foundation of developing and maintaining strong relationships with one another. We not only work with each other, we know and care about each other's lives. In a world of entrenched racism, strong relationships between women of color and white women are not built overnight. There are many stops and starts and uneven, rough terrain to cross.

One very difficult area in the work to create equality is that of white privilege. What is one to do with the privilege that society gives a person simply because of the color of one's skin—so that when a white woman and an African American woman are together in public they are always treated differently? One cannot change the color of one's skin and necessarily society's response, but one can change how that privilege is used. It can be used—or spent—for oneself or on behalf of those who do not receive it.

"Spending privilege" is not just a matter of becoming an advocate and a friend, though those are important roles. It also means using privilege to make gains for others rather than for oneself, using it to open doors to helpful people, to sources of money, to information, etc. It means moving out of the way for someone else to be in leadership, be the face of the organization, be the major contact. It does not mean paternalism or off and on involvement in issues that are more crucial to the

lives of others than one's own.

For trust to be built, those with privilege have to take great risks, putting the loss of that privilege at risk on behalf of the liberation of others. Why, for example should a black woman ever trust a white woman unless she sees that white woman is willing to take risks in



the effort to bring about racial justice? A common slang expression is "you get my back for me," meaning I trust you to cover my vulnerable side that I cannot see or protect. That trust is not to be placed in someone who, when the bottom line is reached, is going to escape into her privilege to save her skin. The rhetoric of race relations has to be moved into action. As white people, we have to be traitors to the domination politics of our race. The same is true for all areas of domination. Heterosexuals, to earn trust, have to be willing to put their privilege at risk on behalf of lesbians and gay men, that is, by never hiding behind their heterosexuality and being willing to let the public think that they are homosexual. Men, in fighting sexism, have to be willing to be seen as foes of male su-

premacy, as gender traitors, as not "real men," for that is how they will be attacked. People who believe in equality have to be willing to be identified with the oppressed and willing to lose their unearned privilege in the process. We have to be willing to go to the line for each other. Otherwise, we are dealing with only rhetoric and good intentions.

All of us constantly have to check the assumptions that come from our privilege. It is no easy task. But the reward of struggling for shared power and the elimination of privilege is the expansion of possibility for genuine friendship and the bond of common humanity. At the Women's Project, we seek friendships in our work. African American and white women, lesbians and heterosexuals socialize with each other outside the office. Much of our best thinking and work occurs in raucous, no-holds-barred conversations in the hallway, around the copier, at the local blue plate diner. We joke, tease, disagree, fuss with each other, and we talk, talk, talk. Our work is often enough to break our hearts, but we also believe wholeheartedly in fun, in the outrageous, in high waves of satirical response to the morning newspaper and the telephone call that pushed us over the line. Mostly, we believe that we have to bring our whole selves to these many hours we work together each day, that we have to be living the vision of the world we want to create.

Results

Does it work? Not always. Sometimes we are overwhelmed by the murders of women we document, the entrenched pov-

erty of so many of our constituency, the relentless racism, the reactionary legislature, the crack cocaine in our neighborhoods, the obscene greed of the billionaire Tysons and Waltons of our state. We do not always bring our best selves to the work. We have had our share of conflicts about race, class, and sexual identity. We have sometimes failed the community through lack of imagination or understanding of issues. We stumble. We move too fast without thinking through our strategy and possible outcomes.

Most of the time, however, it works. Our board meetings are daylong political conversations, with lots of food and laughter. We have to chase people out at the end. Even our most stressful days at the office are lightened by laughter and a sense of some accomplishment. Every staff member grows politically during her tenure with us and if she leaves, she exits as a strong social change worker.

But mostly we point to the work for our assessment. We think these policies account for our ability to get so much done with so few people and so little money. With our small budget and a current staff of five, we

- conduct an African American Women's Institute that works with women in local communities to develop leadership, to organize to solve community problems, to conduct political education;

- monitor racist, religious, sexist, anti-gay and lesbian violence, as well as the activities of the White Supremacists and religious Right, document these activities and publish them in a yearly log, publish bi-monthly reports, work with community groups to do hate violence education and to organize against biased violence, work with

allies to make public policy change, do political education about the economic and racist underpinnings of incarceration;

- produce written materials analyzing the Right, work with national groups to produce strategies to oppose them, provide political education nationally;

- provide incarcerated women weekly sessions for battered women, work with United Methodist women to transport children to visit their mothers in prison, work with allies to change prison policies;

- publish an economic analysis of women's work and income in Arkansas; provide political education on economics; work with women in the Delta on economic issues;

- provide HIV education and training for women—especially lesbians, women of color, and in-

carcerated women;

- operate a lending library and a bookstore of women's books;

- produce a bi-monthly newsletter of political analysis and opinion;

- operate a women's monthly coffeehouse, conduct a lesbian support group, produce women's concerts, organize statewide conferences and national strategy meetings.

The work is slow but it sustains us. It is hard but we draw inspiration from it. We recognize that every day we are struggling uphill against centuries of prejudice and injustice. We are all too aware that we do not have all the answers, but we are deeply convinced that we have a significant beginning. This is the only way we know how to advance a progressive agenda: to practice our politics as close to home as possible. ■

STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S PROJECT



BACK ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: *Linda Coyle, Onie Norman, Lynn Frost, Annette Shead, Felicia Davidson and Amy Edgington.*
 MIDDLE ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: *Deborah Evans-Johnstone, Judy Matsuoka, Freddie Nixon, Suzanne Pharr and Estella Morris.*
 FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: *Juanita Weston and Janet Perkins.*

Words, Sticks, and Stones

Amy Edgington

These days, I often hear words like homophobia and racism used in the national media and in my home town, as if they could be defined as painful personal experiences with prejudiced individuals. When I hear lesbians and gay men accused of "heterophobia" and, over and over, white people attacking the "racism" of African Americans, I feel as if I'm listening to language that attempts not just to rewrite history, but to distort reality. I keep reminding myself that I learned long ago to use my own experience and that of other lesbians and gay men, those I know in person and in writing, as the experts on homophobia. I extend the same reasoning to other oppressions—racism, for example. To me the experts on racism are those who experience it on their own bodies in ways that I never will. By listening, reading and a great deal of bungling, I have come to understand, that even though racism and homophobia are very different in many ways, they share this feature: they are much more than prejudice, even though people commonly believe that eliminating prejudice would end all oppressions.

Prejudice causes us to treat people as types, rather than waiting to find out what kind of individuals they are. As the Lesbian poet Adrienne Rich explains, it is a shortcut through the complexities of life. This is also her definition of a lie. Anybody can be

prejudiced and in fact we all are to some degree. But if I exhibit prejudice towards a straight person am I guilty of "heterophobia"? No, I'm not. I might hurt her feelings; if I were bigger I might inflict injury. But I am not backed up by a legislature that makes it a crime for hetero-

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sexuals to have intercourse, that forbids them the right to marry; movies do not portray heterosexuals as perverts; school systems do not ban openly straight people from teaching; libraries do not receive protests when they buy books about straight families; courts do not frequently give light sentences to lesbians and gay men who hunt down straights and brutally murder them because they are straight. That would be institutionalized power; that would turn my prejudices about straight people into an oppression equal to homophobia.

When straight people, men, or white people sincerely want to stop being oppressors, they try to shed their prejudices, they treat people they've been taught to look down on with courtesy, even bend over backwards. I have been treated this way by a few well-meaning straights, and I appreciate it to a degree. But. These same friends can hold hands fearlessly in public, put their wedding pictures in the paper, have never lost a job, church, home or family because they were straight. They cannot help but benefit from privileges bestowed on them and denied to me by the institutions of our society. I wish they would object out loud in public to homophobic remarks, sign letters to the editor supporting civil rights for lesbians and gay men, call their legislators and demand that they repeal the sodomy law, in short, do something to attack the power bases, the sticks and stones, of homophobia. Straight people may sense my lack of satisfaction with their efforts to be nice to me, and guilt makes them jump on my resentment or any evidence of prejudice towards them. See, they say, you're just as bad as we are—you're heterophobic! Perhaps they don't understand that lesbians and gay men just don't have that kind of power over their lives. Or they want off the hook, so they won't have to take the risks involved in confronting a power structure they benefit from. Or they don't really want to let go of any of that power, and want us to back down and be satisfied that they haven't personally bashed anybody.

What I have learned growing up in Little Rock as a white lesbian in the near-apartheid conditions

News & Notes

that existed between 1946 and 1969 and what African-Americans have taught me in person and in writing, leads me to believe that I cannot stop being an oppressor by shedding my prejudices, even if that were possible, or by being "nice" to people of color. It is worse than useless for me to wallow in guilt about the enormous amount of privilege having white skin has bestowed on me. It would be insulting for me to equate that advantage with a glare or even a racial slur from a Black stranger. There is nothing I can change about my personal behavior that would enable me to stop benefiting from my white skin, because oppression, of anybody, goes way beyond personal power. To stop being an oppressor, I can only join my efforts with others who seek to eliminate the sticks and stones of oppression: political tokenism, legal discrimination, police brutality, distorted media images, biased educations, economic injustice, etc.

It's hard to give up power. If we have been oppressed, because we are lesbians or gay men, for instance, that doesn't necessarily make it easier. Because we have been stripped of power ourselves, we tend to cling in terror to whatever we have left. We huddle, ashamed and furious, behind the barricades of our own guilt, precisely because we do know what it feels like to be on the receiving end of oppression, and we want desperately to believe we could never do to others what is done to us. But only when we work against oppression wherever we find it, whether it hurts or bestows advantage on us, will we be able to build coalitions strong enough to create a world where everyone is judged and treated on individual merit. ■

Ann Gallmeyer, a long-time friend of the Women's Project and disability rights activist, died November 9, 1995. Memorial contributions may be made to the Women's Project or to Mainstream Living, 1501 Main St., Little Rock, AR 72202.



Beginning January 1996, *Transformation* will be published quarterly.



LOCAL PBS AFFILIATE WILL SHOW *NOT IN OUR TOWN*

Shown in most states in December and in a special screening by the Women's Project on Dec. 14, *Not In Our Town*, a half-hour film about how the Billings, Montana community worked together in response to white supremacist hate crimes, will air on AETN Tuesday, January 23 at 9:30 p.m.

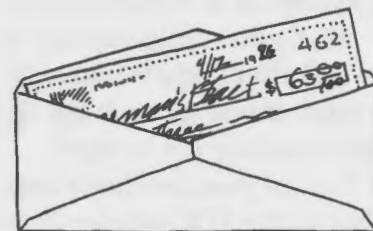


MEMBERSHIP DRIVE SEEKS TO FILL FUNDING GAPS

The "Contract on America" is only a year old and the

money is already starting to run thin. Even though the Women's Project does not directly depend on government money, those who are will be tapping into our funding sources more and more.

If you can afford to increase your membership dues when you receive your reminder to renew, that would help a lot! Our goal is to have at least 1/3 of our budget met



through memberships, pledges and other donations from individuals. If you can't increase your membership dues, convince a friend to join.



JOIN US ON-LINE

We are creating an e-mail directory for rapid and inexpensive communication. To receive our calendar through e-mail, or if you are a member and want to receive the newsletter also, please send us your name and e-mail address.

Things I Will Remember About Welfare

Felicia Davidson

Being a former AFDC recipient, I know how it feels when you have to choose between paying bills or buying the children some of the things they need (not want). I can remember clearly when I gave up welfare for the workplace. Many nights the children went to bed hungry because I had to ration the food so that it would last until next payday. It is a hurting feeling to hear your child crying to sleep night after night because the little food mom gave was not enough to satisfy his hunger.

For the last year, we have been working with AFDC women in an effort to evaluate what they need to move from welfare to the workplace. We often heard affordable childcare, affordable housing, affordable health care and transportation. Our work is to present information and opportunities for people to build their confidence and to gain hope in the possibility that their lives and communities can grow and change. We are facing great needs.

After working with several women on welfare, just listening to their struggles took me back to where I came from. Several have tried to give up welfare to work, but the jobs do not pay enough to take care of their basic needs like childcare, transportation, food, and paying the bills. Once a woman living in a Housing Development (projects) takes a job,

her rent goes up, her food stamps are cut and she doesn't have any medical benefits for herself or children. So before you judge them, get to know them.

A woman who has very little or no work experience tends to accept any job, even if it does not fit well with her skill, to improve her current situation. Having a job is as important to poor women as it is to "rich people". Work offers the opportunity to advance a person's dignity, self-esteem and economic situation.

The hopelessness and shame that women feel in admitting that their lives have become unmanageable and need welfare is devastating. I don't know anyone who wants to be on welfare, but there are plenty who need welfare in order to provide for their families.

The myth that welfare recipients are lazy is not true. In one rural area I visited recently women on welfare were chopping cotton to make ends meet. Think for a minute, how hot it was just walking from the car to the house? Well, these women were out in the heat for eight hours trying to better their family situation.

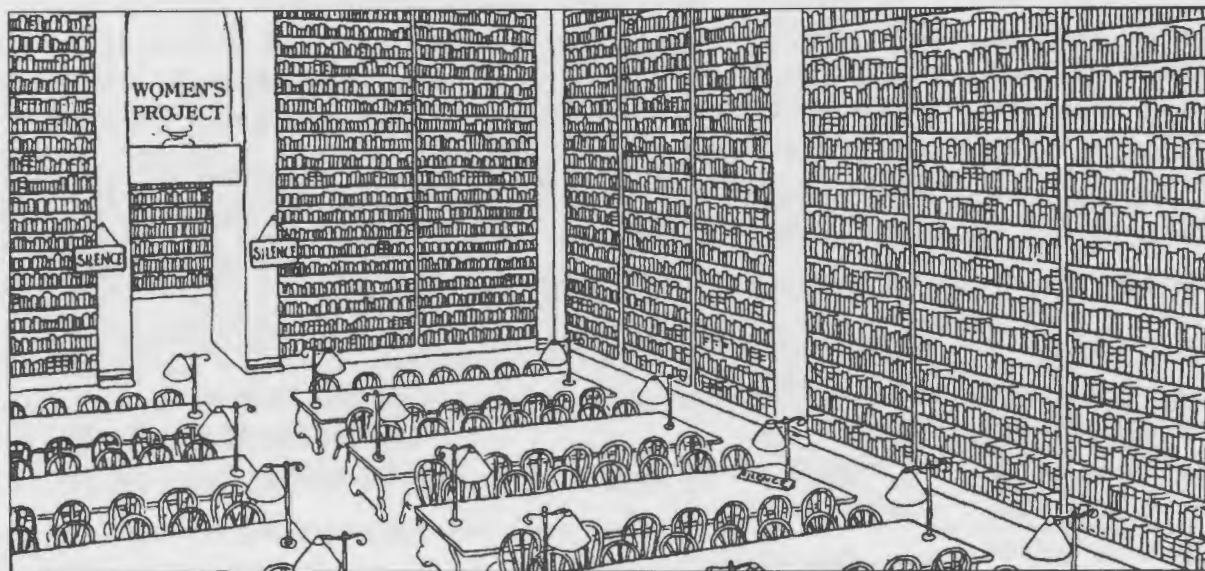
The Department of Human Services offers a program to welfare recipients called "Project Success". Services are provided to certain AFDC and Food Stamp clients for the purpose of increasing self-sufficiency. This program provides

clients with opportunity to acquire the basic education and skills necessary to qualify for employment. Project Success services include job skills training, job readiness activities, and job placement assistance. Childcare and other supportive services are available so that clients can participate in the program and accept employment. But the reality is those programs have been cut, so where does that leave women who were participating in the program. So I wonder if they really want poor people to better their lives. Some women had created their own jobs as childcare providers for recipients, but once the program was cut, so were the jobs. I agree that welfare needs to be reformed, but in ways that realistically move women from welfare to work, with education, job training, childcare and transportation, so it will be permanent.

The AFDC program consumes 1% of the federal budget and 2% of the average state budget. After adjusting for inflation, AFDC benefits increased -47% from 1970 to 1994. In 1994, the median AFDC maximum benefit was 36% of the poverty line. In the United States, government tax and transfer systems (AFDC, Food Stamps, etc.) lifted less than 5% of single-parent families out of poverty. (Poverty & Race, Vol. 4, No. 4, July/August 1995).

It is not welfare that is so hard to escape. IT IS POVERTY. Those who follow their parents onto the welfare rolls do so because it is very difficult for children of poor women to work their way out of poverty, especially in the current economy of high unemployment. ■

BOOKNOTES



New Books In The Library

Lynn Frost

Of "Sluts" and "Bastards": A Feminist Decodes The Child Welfare Debate

by Louise Armstrong

This book is a wake-up call for women—untangling the New(t) American Dream and unmasking the all-out war on women and children. What has reality been for women when the child welfare arm of the state intervenes? What do children so "rescued" have to tell us? Armstrong compellingly argues that the issue of child welfare, like its twin issue, welfare, has long cried out for a strong feminist response.

Making Ourselves At Home: Women Builders & Designers

by Janice Goldfrank

A collection of incredible true accounts of women who have mustered the courage and resources to do what few men and even few women ever do: design and build their own homes.

Eyes Right! Challenging The Right Wing Backlash

edited by Chip Berlet

This anthology unmask the right-wing movements whose authoritarianism and intolerance pose a frightening threat to democracy and diversity in America. It pro-

vides essential facts, analysis and advice for anyone wanting to oppose the Radical Right's agenda.

Great Gay & Lesbian Places To Live

by Lanie Dills & Lynn West

Covers 133 U.S. cities and towns, detailing every pertinent aspect regarding the best places for gays, lesbians and bisexuals to live. Interviews with "locals" tell what individuals think of their town.

Sexual Harassment: High School Girls Speak Out

by June Larkin

A riveting exposé based on first-

hand interviews with teenage girls. Sexual harassment is a part of daily high school life, with teachers, administrators and officials reinforcing the problem by ignoring the situation.

Juanita Fights The School Board

by Gloria Velásquez

A young adult novel about a poor Mexican-American girl faced with expulsion from high school. To fight for her rights, Juanita must confront the powerful school board of her district.

Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work For Racial Justice

by Paul Kivel

This book talks about racism without rhetoric or attack. It helps us understand the dynamics of racism in our society, institutions and daily lives, and it shares stories, suggestions, advice, exercises and approaches for working together to fight racism.

The Delany Sisters' Book Of Everyday Wisdom
with Amy Hill Hearth

"These two strong, beautiful women...are role models for women of the 90's." ...The New York Amsterdam News.

MORE NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY:

Stir-Fry

by Emma Donoghue
(Lesbian Novel)

Sisterfire: Black Womanist Fiction & Poetry

edited by Charlotte Watson Sherman

Horseshoe Sky

by Catherine Koger
(Lesbian Novel)

Blood, Bread, and Roses: How Menstruation Created The World

by Judy Grahn

Racism 101

by Nikki Giovanni

OtherWorld: A Stoner McTavish Mystery

by Sarah Dreher

Moon Marked &

Touched by Sun:

Plays by African American Women

edited by Sydne Mahone

The Vinyl Closet:

Gays In The Music World

by Boze Hadleigh

Transforming Abuse:

Nonviolent Resistance And Recovery

by Louise K. Schmidt

Fires of Aggar

by Chris Anne Wolfe

(Lesbian Science Fiction)

Wounded In The House Of A Friend

by Sonia Sanchez

(African American Poetry) ■



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

Phone: 501-372-5113

Letters to the editor are welcome.

Transformation

Editor Suzanne Pharr
Art Director Melissa Britton James

* Printed on recycled paper. *

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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 published four times every year.

In each issue, 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, a prisoner-led AIDS program and a transportation program for the children of incarcerated mothers.

■ Women's Watchcare Network

A project to monitor and respond to incidents of racial, religious, sexual, and anti-gay violence; and to provide education and strategies to counter the activities of hate groups and the Radical Right.

■ The Social Justice Project

Workshops on understanding racism and homophobia and developing methods to eliminate them; women's economic issues; organizational development for social change organizations.

■ 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 _____

\$ 7.50 \$ 20 \$ 50
(low income) \$ 25 \$100

Make checks payable to:

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



Women's Project

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