

Transformation

Vol. 16 Issue 1
Winter 2001

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**THANK YOU
FOR SUPPORTING
20 GREAT YEARS
OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
WORK IN ARKANSAS!**

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Suzanne Pharr

In 1980, when I was working as a Vista volunteer and beginning to build the idea of the Women's Project by talking with folks around the state, there was a presidential campaign going on between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. When I talked with Tom McRae at the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation about funding for the Project, he told me that the election of Ronald Reagan would bring a dramatic change in this country toward conservatism and against progressive ideas.

Tom advised me to find a church that would provide the fiscal umbrella for this new women's organization so we would be positioned to deal with the growing attacks by Christian fundamentalists and anti-feminists. That's how the Women's Project ended up

being under the umbrella of the United Methodist Church for its first five years, and that's how one presidential election enabled the right-wing to rise in power, bringing with it the destruction of social programs, worker's rights, the safety net, and a rollback of civil rights, leading to the greatest disparity between the rich and poor this country has ever known.

And now we are back full cycle, having just elected another deeply conservative president, George W. Bush, who offers the right-wing not just a chance to grow but to be institutionalized throughout government and the courts. During these two decades, we at the Women's Project knew it was vital to keep a progressive vision

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1990—Women reading the tombstones of Arkansas women killed by domestic violence

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and agenda alive in the state, no matter how strong the opposition. Something in us said that we should not change with the times and move more toward the center. Instead, our pledge was to remain on course: to work to eliminate sexism and racism while focusing on issues of violence and economics; to work with others to gain an understanding that all oppressions are connected and that those who are targeted by them could unite, forging transformative social relationships. We could achieve equality and justice.

When I look back over these twenty years, I am filled with images of our work, moments when we were bold in our political struggle and lives were changed. Here are a few of those memories:

- ✓ The first women's retreat (or "advance" as we called it) at the Little Red School House in Eureka Springs;
- ✓ The one-foot high stack of photocopied articles from the press when we spoke out about the rape of a woman by five University of Arkansas basketball players during a championship season;
- ✓ The weekly protests against the anti-choice, anti-gay Rev. Otwell during the first Clinton presidential campaign;
- ✓ The score or more tombstones on the front lawn of the Women's Project, one each with the name and description of a woman killed by a man;
- ✓ The moment in Dermott when octogenarian and civil rights veteran, Mrs. Evange-

line K. Brown, told me that she wanted me as a white woman to challenge the local hospital who refused to provide rape exams to black women;

- ✓ The four Sweet Honey in the Rock concerts we sponsored for the community;
- ✓ The assault on the legislature and local government for lack of voting access for people with disabilities, led by Ann Gallmeyer and other members of ADAPT;
- ✓ Kelly Mitchell-Clark facing up to the Klan at a Fort Smith rally;

In a time when most social forces were creating individualism, isolation, free market competitiveness, and consumer manipulation, we wanted to create an organization that valued collectivity, cooperation, honesty, equality, and strong relationships.

- ✓ Janet Perkins in her nontraditional jobs training class working with a hammer and saw;
- ✓ Felicia Davidson demonstrating safe sex with a banana and a condom in her HIV training session;
- ✓ The Southern Regional Domestic Violence conference, featuring leaders from NCADV who then were taken on a tour of the South;
- ✓ Kerry Lobel leaving the Women's Project in her 1971 VW bug every Monday night to drive to the Women's Prison at Pine Bluff to conduct a class

on domestic violence;

- ✓ The day we lost our rented office because people in the community thought that radicals like us brought the neighborhood down, and the day we bought the house we currently use as an office, the place we and other women can call home with a sense of assurance and security;
- ✓ The day women were included in the proposed national hate crimes bill, after a decade of our working toward this goal.

Most of all, I remember and cherish the relationships and politics I developed at the Women's Project; the two were inseparable. From the beginning, we believed that the most vital part of what we were doing was forging a way of doing political work that had integrity. That is, in a time when most social forces were creating individualism, isolation, free market competitiveness, and consumer manipulation, we wanted to create an organization that valued collectivity, cooperation, honesty, equality, and strong relationships.

We wanted our internal politics to mirror our external politics in a way that created integrity between the two. We believed this would give us a strong spiritual and political base in the struggle for equality and justice. These core values have been the heart of our work, and it has not been easy to go against the prevailing culture to achieve them. Our effort to begin dismantling historic racism led us to have women of color take the leadership as a majority on the staff and board. Our effort to bring about equality led us to paying each staff person the same salary, to involving everyone in decision making about the organization's agenda and use of resources, and to giving each staff person a place of leadership.

The difficult part is that equality does not just happen. It takes constant work and vigilance. Having good systems and procedures in place helps, but the greater task is to engage in the regular meetings and conversations and challenges to unjust power and practices that are necessary for people to have equal participation and voice. This internal effort is as much a part of the work of the Women's Project as its outside work with communities. Our national reputation has come primarily from this internal work and has brought numerous people to us to learn about and share in the development of political integrity.

When I think back over the past two decades, I find my life inseparable from the Women's Project and from the community who became my friends and comrades as we grew together, developed our politics through intense engagement with one another, and created better lives for women and children and the communities we live in.

The Women's Project is needed now as much if not more than it was when Reagan was elected two decades ago. We have even greater challenges before us: our communities have been weakened; racism is rampant; new prisons are built every day; reproductive choice is limited; health care is too expensive; the environment is under attack; public education is in

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trouble; people have little faith in government and most other institutions of our society.

Again, we must stay the course. The Women's Project, because of its work on political integrity, can show the way to live the politics we advocate. We can continue to build community, to fight oppressions, to take on issues that are unpopular, and to help those who have little voice organize for power.

For many of us, the Women's Project has been home. It is the place where we could bring our whole selves and grow politically and personally. Until our society is filled with such places, its work is not done. Thanks, Women's Project, for 20 great years. May there be more wonderful years of work for justice and equality, until our goal is reached. ■



1990—Non-traditional jobs training class for women. Janet Perkins is holding the hammer.

Transformation

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.

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** Printed on recycled paper. **

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Join Us
for Our
20th
Anniversary
Homecoming
Celebration

June 9, 2001
MacArthur Park

Memories of the Future

Amy Edgington

When I was asked to write about my memories of the Women's Project, what I recalled most vividly were the moments when our work has given me glimpses of the future—a future free of racism, sexism and homophobia; a future where people with disabilities are neither overlooked nor excluded; a future where young people and their elders enjoy mutual respect and equal power; a future where resources are shared fairly and used sensibly.

I had known Suzanne Pharr, founder of the Women's Project, in the mid 70's in Northwest Arkansas, but I encountered her again a decade later, at a workshop she gave on internalized homophobia. Such workshops were part of the work she was doing for the Women's Project in 1986, when the Project was still based in her home across from historic Central High School in Little Rock.

As I listened to Suzanne and the workshop participants talk about how often lesbians choose or are forced to lie or to conceal the truth or are simply rendered invisible by the assumption that everyone is straight, I exploded: "What does this do," I asked, "to our sense of ourselves as honorable people?" "Exactly!" said Suzanne. It was an "Aha!" moment for me and for many in the workshop. I began to see that what we were fighting for was not just physical safety, warm, fuzzy "acceptance," or equality before the law. We also needed to restore moral integrity and spiritual wholeness to souls devastated by lifetimes of enforced deception and invisibility.

As Suzanne made the connection between homophobia and sexism, I also

began to see how straight people, under homophobia's thumb, must conform to rigid sex roles and suppress their affection towards members of their own gender, in order to avoid any suspicion of being "queer." I glimpsed a future where all men and women would be able to live and love honorably.

Kerry Lobel, a major mover and shaker with the Project between 1986 and 1994, edited a groundbreaking book on battered lesbians, *Naming the Violence*, in 1987. This book was the first major



1985—Women attend a workshop on racism, sexism and homophobia.

validation from the feminist community of a traumatic experience I and many others had survived (or not). In the past, those of us who had spoken out not only risked further violence from our abusers, we faced disbelief, ridicule, rage and rejection from women who saw our stories as a challenge to the premise (spoken or unspoken) of female moral superiority.

With Kerry's support, I started a group for formerly battered lesbians. Overcoming our profound isolation was such a heady experience, we decided, with Women's Project backing, to sponsor the first national conference for battered lesbians. The conference prompted several

of us to publish work about our experiences in feminist papers for the first time, and to continue to push battered women's shelters to acknowledge our existence and needs.

This was a profoundly healing glimpse into a future where no one would be silenced in the name of solidarity, where the agenda of liberation does not depend upon tired notions of the supposed moral superiority of the victim. After all, if oppression turned us into saints, what better excuse could there be for continuing to oppress?

This was my first experience with the Women's Project's commitment to address causes that had been pushed to the bottom of the liberation agenda. I saw this commitment continue in subsequent years. A coalition of local groups came together to discuss how to improve AIDS/HIV education and prevention locally. Various groups were mentioned as targets for outreach; the Women's Project representative said, "What about prostitutes?" There were audible snickers in the room, and clearly no one else felt this work was a priority.

So the Women's Project organized a group of volunteers to approach and get to know women working the streets in our area. The Women's Project handed out countless safe sex kits and gave respectful, non-judgmental education on how to avoid sexually transmitted diseases. The outreach effort was expanded to the African-American community through house parties and distribution of safe sex kits by beauty parlors in the African American community.

Kerry Lobel first took the work of the Women's Project to incarcerated women in 1989, and nearly every staff member and many board members have participated in this work up

to the present day. Incarcerated people have extremely little control over their daily lives. What has impressed me most about our prison work is the way the Women's Project has given the prisoners as much control as possible over the work we do inside the prison. What started as a group on domestic violence for women in prison expanded over the years into numerous programs suggested by the prisoners themselves.

I made a couple of visits to the prison to speak on lesbian battering, before the prison officials decided it would no longer tolerate open discussion of lesbianism. I was made to feel welcome by the women there, and I took to heart something I already knew: that only a few accidents of fate and degrees of privilege separates me from women serving time. We lock women up mostly for crimes related to poverty, drug abuse and domestic violence. These women have an enormous amount to offer society. I glimpsed a future where we would spend money to set people free--giving them the chance to thrive and the means to do so--that we now spend to deprive them of their last bit of freedom and dignity.

Women's Project volunteer Ann Gallmeyer, who had recently begun to use a wheelchair, had a profound impact on my disability consciousness. With Women's Project support, Ann and I started a support group for lesbians with disabilities, which continued for several years, until the local chapter for ADAPT got started.

In 1987 the Women's Project moved into a rental house on Main Street in Little Rock. Soon after the move, the staff made the decision to install a wheelchair ramp. The landlord denied permission to install a ramp, citing the tired old excuse that providing access to people with disabilities would cause "unacceptable insurance

risks." The Project decided that not only was this excuse unacceptable, the incident indicated an unacceptable vulnerability of our work, much of which might antagonize a landlord's prejudices. So the Women's Project decided to take a brave step for a fledgling organization: we took out a mortgage to buy the building--and installed a beautiful ramp and wheelchair-accessible bathroom. This showed me that we build a future of social justice by our actions--by walking (and rolling) what we talk.

It was a time of high spirits and energy. In addition to Kerry and Suzanne, Janet Perkins and then Kelly-Mitchell Clark joined the staff. Each of these African American women, in her own unique way would have a profound impact on the future of the Women's Project. Kelly, who had been strongly influenced by Black nationalist philosophy, rose to the challenge of dedicating herself to an organization that is multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-issue. At the same time she challenged and sharpened our focus on racism. Janet, who was born and raised in Little Rock, brought a local perspective to the issues of sexism and racism, through her own experiences and her family's experiences with segregation. Janet became the Director of the Women's Project in 1991.

I was deeply moved that Janet, as a heterosexual woman, was willing to publicly confront homophobia, risking the support of her church and community, which is life and death support for any African American, especially in the South. I learned a lesson about my own responsibility to risk my privileges as a white person by taking a stand against racial discrimination.

I learned a lot about the realities of life for African-Americans in the Delta--the poorest region of Arkansas--when Felecia Davidson joined the board and then the staff. And when Judy Matsuoka, whose parents were interned during WWII in the Japanese relocation camp

in Jerome, became director of the Women's Project in 1997 she helped to enlarge my understanding of racial politics beyond the Black-white paradigm so familiar to us in the South. The staff of the Project and my sister board members, past and present have been role models for me in how to work together, how to stretch ourselves, how to rise to challenges and how to meet adversity with laughter.

Some of our most memorable moments came during press conferences, which put the Women's Project on the local map as an organization dedicated to social justice. In

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1989, the Women's Project supported a new trial for Barry Lee Fairchild (an African-American sentenced to death for the rape and murder of a white woman), due to strong evidence that his "confession" was coerced by assault, that he lacked the mental ability to understand his Miranda rights, and evidence suggesting that he may not have been the actual perpetrator of the crimes.

On the other hand, In 1991 Kelly and Suzanne appeared together in an interview in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, in support of a white woman

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Social Justice Song and Dance

Lynn Frost

Cultural work as a means toward social change has always been part of the mission of the Women's Project. When I came to the Women's Project in 1987, to volunteer, I had an idea that fit right in with their work.

My vision was a library of materials about cultural diversity, political organizing, the history of social justice movements, women's health, domestic violence, as well as fiction, poetry and films which reflected the lives of the people engaged in the work of the Women's Project. Staff members Suzanne Pharr and Kerry Lobel had large collections of books they were willing to donate and I had a source of hard-to-find feminist, gay and lesbian, multicultural and other progressive books at wholesale prices.

With the help of a committed group of volunteers, we had yard sales and sold books to raise money to buy more books. Items were then categorized and prepared for checking out, and extensive shelving was built by Teresa Lipsmeyer. One room was set aside to hold the collection and we had a grand opening celebration.

Today, 12 years later, the library consists of over 5,000 items and is running out of space in the three rooms it now occupies. A small bookstore continues to raise money to buy new books for the library and, because the store is listed in various lesbian and gay travel guides, we meet a number of folks who stop in for local information while on a trip or when planning to relocate to Arkansas.

I have watched the library become a meaningful resource for individuals who find support in their struggles in the pages of our books or who seek a comfortable and stimulating place to volunteer their time. We've had students researching controversial political issues, who were unable to find pertinent materials in their school libraries. We've helped men and women and their families find books, articles and videos dealing with coming out as lesbian or gay. There have been older women excited to find a copy of the first novel they had ever read about a lesbian. Others have been gratified to find a large section of the library devoted to fiction and non-fiction by and about African Americans.

The selling of books has been integrated into cultural events sponsored by the Women's Project and other groups. For

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example, I would pack up boxes of books and carry them to sell at our African American Women's Conferences in 1990 and 1995, to the Arkansas Department of Education's Cultural Diversity Conferences, and to the Arkansas Gay & Lesbian Task Force Coming Out Day and Pride Week events.

When Reverend Otwell brought his hate bus from Texas every Sunday for three months prior to the 1992 Presidential election to protest Bill Clinton's pro-choice, pro-gay candidacy, the Women's Project organized counter-demonstrations. I turned my minivan into a traveling bookstore, complete with "Hate Is Not A Family Value" T-shirts and bumper stickers.

To celebrate "another decade of working for social justice" in June of 1991, we produced our first cultural festival in MacArthur Park, where folks from many ethnic and racial backgrounds came together to share their cultures through music, dance, food and crafts. Along with many culturally diverse local entertainers, we were treated to the dynamic sounds of Pam Hall, an African American lesbian from Jackson, Mississippi, and Jane Sapp, a cultural



1996—Former staffer Linda Coyle (center) talks with Lynn Frost (right) at the Women's Project Bookstore.

worker from the East Coast, bringing her songs which have been an integral part of many social change movements.

Anniversary celebrations have been opportunities for the Women's Project to give back to the community by producing the concerts of Cassellberry and Dupree in 1986 for our fifth anniversary and Odetta in 1996 for our fifteenth anniversary. At the 10th anniversary celebration in February of 1991, Sweet Honey in the Rock, the all female, a capella quintet, performed for an overflow crowd. Before the concert Evangeline K. Brown, Arkansas civil rights worker, was recognized for her work. During the concert Bernice Reagon announced that the ground war in Kuwait had begun at 7:30 p.m. that evening, and the group sang *Peace I'll write your name*.

In February and March of 1992, we added a film series to our cultural work, to celebrate both African American and Women's History months. The Reel Women Film Festival presented 34 films honoring the contributions of women to film as directors, actors, producers and writers. Included was the Southern premiere of Julie Dash's award-winning portrayal of a Gullah family, "Daughters of the Dust."

Cultural events are occasions for joy and hope as well. For me, singing along (or dancing along) has been inspiring, uplifting, energizing.



1996—Suzanne Pharr (left) discusses her book with Daisy Bates at the Open House

And, of course, the Women's Project has consistently brought entertaining and inspiring individuals and groups to the Women's Coffeehouse, again through the work of a group of committed volunteers. I will never forget meeting Leslie Feinberg, transgender activist, when she came to Little Rock to talk about her book, *Stone Butch Blues*, and to present a ground-breaking slide show on the history of transgender people.

What a treat to have S. Diane Bogus here from California, performing her highly political and erotic poetry; Alix Dobkin from New York, reminiscing about the beginnings of women's music in the 70s; Jorjet Harper from Chicago, with her "Lesbomania" show, poking fun at the lesbian community; the exciting, can't stay in your seat sounds of the women drummers from New Orleans, Sister Beat; as well as many talented local women singing, dancing and reading their poetry.

But is all this fun really political work? Of course it is! An event like a poetry reading provides exposure to political writing that helps us to get in touch with our anger about our oppression. And perhaps when we hear a poem about injustice to others, those of us whose privileges are part of the problem, will be inspired to become part of the solution.

Cultural events are occasions for joy and hope as well. For me, singing along (or dancing along) has been inspiring, uplifting, energizing and a way to feel more committed to the struggles I've been involved in these past 30 years. For some, a cultural event can also be the first experience of meeting other like-minded folks in a world where one feels alone.

For instance, lesbians who had been totally in the closet for years have found safety and friendship in the company of other women at the Annual Women's Retreat at Lake Ft. Smith State Park. Here we can relax, build women's community, greet old friends and meet new ones. Primarily attended by Arkansas women, the retreat has also hosted women from the mid-South, both Coasts and from as far away as Ireland!

April 5-8, 2001, we will have a special 20th anniversary retreat, starting one day earlier on a Thursday, and lasting all the way through Sunday night. Whether it's music, sharing stories or just hanging out with other women that makes you feel part of the community, join us in a celebration of the 20th Women's Retreat. ■

Celebrate!

Memories of the Future from page 5

who said she had been gang-raped by Black athletes in a dorm at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. They made a point of acknowledging the complex historical issues involved: the frequent false accusations against Black men involving white women as an excuse for racially motivated violence and repression *and* the frequent disbelief and dismissal of claims of rape by women all races. In this case, however, the white woman's willing association with Black men was being used to damage her reputation and credibility with the white public.

It was a complex and principled stand in a controversy which was being framed in a way that pitted feminists against civil rights activists. Press conferences such as these taught me to take a deeper look at how the strands of sexism and racism have been woven together, and they gave me a vision of how and why we must

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A similar press conference, brought together a multi-racial coalition of gay and straight supporters to take a

stand against the almost exclusive targeting by local police of gay (but not straight) men soliciting sex in public places and the decision of the local paper to publish the names of gays (but not straights) arrested, resulting in at least one confirmed suicide.

Gays and lesbians who participated in the press conference had to face not only the prospect of being publicly "out," many also had to resolve their squeamishness about associating themselves with behavior they deplore. Straight people who participated in the press conference had to risk the very strong likelihood that they would also be labeled as queers--and the "worst kind" of queers--in the public mind. But no one has ever been granted civil rights as a reward for good behavior. I glimpsed a future where we all will have rights to equal treatment by the press and law enforcement, because we choose to stand together whenever anyone's rights are threatened.

Demonstrations tested our mettle too. In 1991, David Duke was invited to address the Republican club in Crittenden County. Despite his refurbished exterior, "ex" Klan-member Duke is still an ardent white supremacist who has learned to cloak and hood his agenda in coded language about "welfare" and "crime." The Women's Project organized a coalition of progressive students from nearby Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and volunteers, staff and board members from the Women's Project, many of them African-American.

Imagine the surprise of Duke and the



1991—Suzanne Pharr (left) and Janet Perkins (right) are interviewed at Demonstration against David Duke. Suzanne's sign reads: *If Duke sends African Americans back to Africa, will he return me to Germany?*

Crittenden County Republicans when they arrived to find a biracial protest vigil outside their meeting place. Most of them looked angry and somewhat shame-faced to have the veneer of respectability removed from their racism. I felt great respect for my African American sisters for standing in the face of a known Klan leader (I have no doubt there were other Klan members present). I glimpsed a future where we will never remain silent and invisible while the enemies of justice organize against any of us.

In the summer of 1992, during Clinton's presidential campaign, right wing activist Rev. Otwell brought a busload of his supporters to Immanuel Baptist Church to demand that the pastor expel Clinton from the congregation because of his support of feminism, reproductive choice and homosexuals. His anti-gay rhetoric was especially violent. None of this namby-pamby "Love the sinner--hate the sin" stuff for Otwell.

The Women's Project organized a coalition of feminist, gay and lesbian, pro-choice, anti-racist supporters and progressive college students to counter-demonstrate every Sunday

through the elections. As Otwell bussed in more and more supporters, every week the progressive coalition turned out an even larger number. I remember most vividly the children Otwell's group brought along, presumably to teach them hatred at an early age. I wonder what those children thought as they viewed the two sides of the street—one filled with purple-faced white people spewing violent rhetoric, the other filled with vibrant people singing, chanting, laughing, while deliberately avoiding hostile confrontation. Who will those children want to emulate when they grow up? I glimpsed a future where, because we showed them another op-

Felicia Davidson and DeeDee Green and board member Sarah Facen have been organizing a group of young people to help register voters in the largely African-American community near the Women's Project. They decided to rent a van and take a group of youngsters to the alternative convention held outside the Republican Convention in Philadelphia last year. It was a radical experience for all involved to see the massive demonstrations and intense cooperation between groups around many social justice issues. The young people asked many questions and took pictures and wrote journals about their experience. Now they had some ideas about what democracy means and why it is important to work for. I believe that we will be led into a just future by young people like these.

At the Women's Project I have learned that it is impossible to create a future without sexism unless we dismantle racism and economic injustice. I have also come to believe

that our direction and leadership must come from working class women and women of color, who experience the impact of a combination of these realities on their own bodies. The Women's Project's philosophy and work can look complex, even messy, to those used to dealing with single issue organizations (including potential donors and funders). We have often been asked to narrow the focus of our work, but we have refused to compromise. Explaining the work of the Project gives me the opportunity to help others understand the connections between the issues we address in our work. I hope to give others a glimpse of the future the Women's Project has shown me and an invitation to join us in creating that future. ■



1991—Women's Project Demonstration against Duke in Jonesboro. Felicia Davidson is second from left.

tion, those children may choose the path of love and justice.

Recently the Women's Project worked with a group of young artists in New Orleans to create banners highlighting the deaths of victims of hate violence—part of our Watchcare Project which has sought to document and combat bias-based violence since 1989. In the process of creating the banners, the youngsters had the opportunity to question and learn about different forms of oppression they had not been aware of. And the banners made a dramatic way to present the facts to the local press.

Women's Project staff members

Transformation...

is published four times every year. In each issue, members 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 and would like to continue receiving the journal, please fill out the membership form below.



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

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Lessons for the Long Haul

Janet Perkins

Iwould like to share some of what I have learned from being on the staff of the Women's Project for 11 years. I believe in holding on to your dreams very tightly and never giving up even when it seems that change will never come. You must be solid in your convictions and passionate about the pursuit of the desired goal. You must never try to quiet your spirit as you are being nudged to do something to make a difference. Taking a risk can be a scary affair, but the safety net is always there to catch you when you are taking that risky step toward justice.

In order to keep the steady course of seeking justice you must pace yourself, because it is a long, tedious journey and you want to make certain you don't burn out half-way there. Hate, bigotry, divisiveness and power seekers determined to destroy and devour the powerless have been with us far longer than we want to remember. Therefore, those of us who have visions and ideas of justice and freedom embedded in our hearts, souls and spirits can't give up, nor get tired...pace yourself for the long haul.

We must always find the joy while we are on this journey. We will have some defeats, but we will have many victories, as we have witnessed over the years. We should never become so bogged down with the struggle that we neglect to celebrate and be lighthearted, finding reasons to laugh and be glad that we are involved in this pursuit at this time and in this place.

And may we never forget, that although the ideals, philosophies, theories, strategies, and all we commit to paper have their value and importance, people are the most important element of social justice work. The relationships we build

along the way make this work worth doing, full of richness and possibilities. The real heart of this work is about dignity, respect, integrity and love, not just for those who share the same vision, but also for those with whom we share little.

I just want to say thank you to the Women's Project for not tiring or becoming discouraged in the fight for justice. The Women's Project's motto is to "transform the world." I would say they have been able to do that over their 20 year history, one person at a time. I hope that many, many more people will be able to participate in the Women's Project and continue to raise the bar of excellence for justice.

Twenty years is a long time for a non-profit to survive, but I'm hopeful that the Women's Project will manage to stay around as long as there is a need for that intentional work that moves us closer to real justice for all people. Again, congratulations and thank you for all you do to make this a better world. ■

The relationships we build along the way make this work worth doing, full of richness and possibilities.

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, women with disabilities, 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.

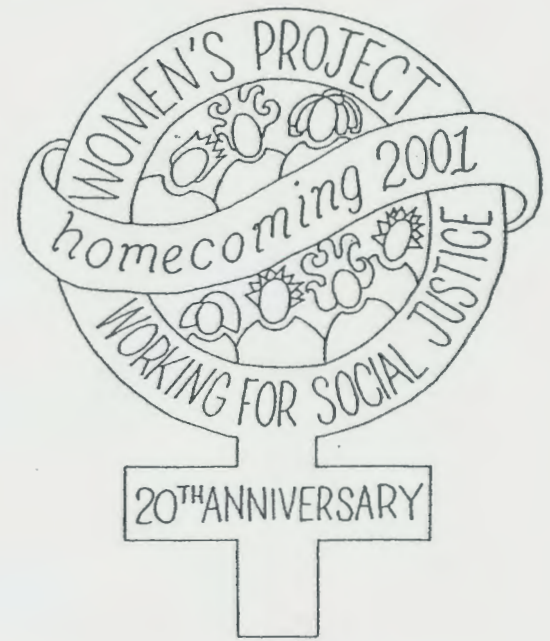
We believe that a few committed women working in coalition and in consensus with other women can make significant change in the quality of life for all women.



Personal Tributes

20th Anniversary Homecoming Celebration

On June 9th, 2001, the Women's Project will proudly host a 20th Anniversary Homecoming Celebration at MacArthur Park in Little Rock. We will be selling programs which will include pictures and memorabilia from our 20 year history. In the spirit of this occasion, we invite you to take this opportunity to publicly thank or pay tribute to the women who have made a difference in your life. You may also share memories of Women's Project events that have special meaning to you. Your personal tribute will be printed in the program, which will be sold at the celebration



Your Personal Tribute

To: _____ Size: _____

From: _____

\$25.....half page
 \$10.....quarter page
 \$5.....business card size
 Deadline for submissions is May 1, 2001
 Return to Judy Matsuoka
 at the Women's Project

Women's Project
 2224 Main Street
 Little Rock, AR 72206
 phone 501-372-5113
 fax 501-372-0009
 email: jmats75@prodigy.net

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

Herland Sister Resources
2312 NW 39th
Oklahoma City OK 73112

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