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HERLAND SISTER RESOURCES, INC.  
1630 NW 19, Oklahoma City, OK 73106

## Laws Against Self-Defense

by  
C.J. Wyattte

Kim sat in line at the grade school, watching children get into the cars of waiting parents. Her two daughters would be out soon. Something, she wasn't sure what, triggered negative memories: face-down on the floor, regaining consciousness, lips hurting, neck stiff, the sound of gunshots, screaming, praying; then, the thud of the cell door as it closed behind her, loneliness, claustrophobia. As she watched children laughing and running across the school yard, Kim wondered what had gone wrong in her life. Where had the last ten years gone?

Kim, like many women in American, spent years as a battered wife. She worked hard to please an aggressive, demanding, unpleaseable man. Kim had tried several times to get the police to do something about his unpredictable, brutal attacks. She had tried several times to get away from him, he always seemed to find her. Finally, in desperation, she took a stand and tried to defend herself. She found, as many women do, that our laws lean toward abusive men and against women who try to defend themselves.

Kim is on probation for pulling a gun on her husband during a beating. He knocked her out, threatened her, and fired the weapon. When the police arrived, they arrested Kim for pointing a weapon. It didn't seem to matter that her husband had threatened to kill her. Kim is in hiding. Kim is on probation for self-defense, the law didn't see it that way.

Wife-beating is almost completely ignored by our legal system. The first legal authorities a battered woman contacts are the police. In cities all across the country, their instructions are to mediate, not arrest. Often they give the woman incorrect or misleading information about her legal rights and options.<sup>1</sup>

A National Crime Survey showed that from 1978 to 1982, an estimated 2.1 million women in America were victims of domestic violence at least once during an average 12-month time period.

About a third of domestic violence cases are classified as rape, robbery, or aggravated assault by police; felonies in most states. Police classify the remaining two-thirds as simple assault; a misdemeanor.

The traditional way of classifying a crime as a felony or a misdemeanor is by the presence or absence of a weapon and the extent of injury as seen by the police officer. This has the effect of masking the seriousness of domestic violence.<sup>5</sup> Police officers tend to hold the belief that man is the ruler of his house, thereby downplaying the extent of injury to women who live with wife-beaters. This ignores the fact that violent crimes are crimes where ever they may occur.

No one deserves to be beaten or physically threatened, no matter what the excuse. Prevention starts with people changing their attitudes about violence and women. It is a crime to beat anyone - a stranger, a friend, or a wife - and the law should be enforced. Until society rejects its tolerance and acceptance of violence for resolving conflicts and expressing anger, meaningful changes in family relationships will not occur. Women will continue to be the punching bags for angry men, with no recourse.<sup>12</sup>

The battered woman facing her husband's random unpredictable violence, learns that there is no necessary connection between what they do and what happens to them. A husband may beat his wife for overcooking an egg, or for undercooking it, for turning the TV on or for turning it off, for talking or for keeping still.<sup>13</sup> The battered woman who seeks help will be taught the lesson over and over again: police won't arrest, prosecutors won't prosecute, judges won't sentence. Under these circumstances the women finds that whatever she does to help herself may boomerrang or at best come to nothing.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1980's, there are shelters that help battered women. The laws also are changing, but the process is slow. Women live in fear for their safety and for their lives.

According to a University of Florida study, husbands mostly kill their wives because of bruised egos. Wives usually kill their husbands because of bruised bodies. More women are injured by their husbands than by muggings, automobile accidents, and rapes combined.

There should be a system of mandatory counseling for men who beat women. In cases of domestic violence: an arrest should be made, separation and legal protection should be mandatory as should counseling for the abuser. Women should be given information about alternatives available to them: where they can go for protection, information about laws as they relate to the situation, and lists of programs that are designed to help people in this situation.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Del Martin, Battered Wives, (New York, N.Y.: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1983).
5. Patrick Langan and Christopher Innes, "Battered Women Should Call Cops," Oklahoma Observer, January 10, 1987.
11. Plain Talk About Wife Abuse, (Rockville, Md: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1983).
12. Ibid.
13. Ann Jones, Women Who Kill, (New York, N.Y. : Fawcett Columbine, 1985).
14. Ibid.

\* Kim is not the real name of the woman in this article. Her name was changed for her protection.

## kissing approved

OREGON--Lesbian and gay prisoners won a victory in December of last year. After a complaint by inmate Wesley M. Johnson, represented by the ACLU, the state's correction division ruled that prisoners may kiss, hold hands and embrace visitors of the same sex. ACLU Attorney Ed Reeves, pointed out that "the (past) rule concerning contact visit rights does not refer to sex or sexual orientation of inmates or their visitors, but the corrections division apparently had a long-standing practice of ordering gay and lesbian prisoners to have no more contact than a brief hug with prisoners of the same sex."

Johnson complained because he was punished for kissing the hand of a male visitor, contrary to the order given by the guard present. According to the new ruling, lesbian and gay prisoners will no longer receive punishment for physical contact with same sex visitors, nor will the contact be entered into the prisoners' official record.

by sba

info from: ACLU press release

off our backs, Feb., 1987

## Ontario oks gay rights

OTTAWA--On December 16, Ontario's provincial legislature voted 64-45 to extend protection of the province's human rights law to lesbians and gays. The province of Quebec has banned discrimination against lesbians and gays for the past ten years. The two provinces are home to about 60 percent of Canada's people.

Similar bills have been introduced in the legislatures of Manitoba and the Yukon Territory.

Lesbian and gay activists have been trying to gain passage of human rights legislation in Ontario since 1972. Conservatives and the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops who opposed the bill said that allowing gays human rights would hurt children.

However, the news from Ontario is not all good. Ottawa's City Council has cut in half the funding for a local women's center, Woman's Place/Place aux femmes, because a conservative group called R.E.A.L. Women said the center was full of lesbians, pro-abortionists and other feminists.

--info from body politic and  
gay community news

off our backs, Feb., 1987

## gems from the medical literature

*From The Lancet, October 25, 1986, this comment on an article by R.G.N. Thonet in the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology:*

"Obstetricians will be grateful to Thonet for providing a modern perspective of obstetric hysterectomy...Thonet urges, and we will probably begin to see, a more liberal and prompt use of obstetric hysterectomy in women who have completed their families. In women with no living children, obstetric hysterectomy must remain a last and desperate resort."

*From the New England Journal of Medicine, December 5, 1985, this letter to the editor:*

"We investigated by questionnaire all Swiss board-certified female gynecologists . . . to assess the influence of the sex of the gynecologist on attitudes to hysterectomy. . . . Female gynecologists performed about half as many hysterectomies as male gynecologists.

". . . The importance of negative psychic reactions to hysterectomy is well-known. Women seem to perceive this procedure as signalling a 'loss of womanhood and of attractiveness.' Female gynecologists may perhaps identify more easily with this position and thus be more restrictive in their indications.

"A second hypothesis is that the effect is produced by the particular selection of patients that seek help from a woman gynecologist."

*From The New England Journal of Medicine, September 12, 1985, this reassuring "personal observation" entitled "Le Maladie du Petit Papier: Is Writing a List of Symptoms a Sign of an Emotional Disorder?":*

"Traditional medical wisdom holds that patients who relate their complaints to their physicians from prepared lists are, ipso facto, emotionally ill. . . . From my personal observation of . . . 72 list writers I found no association of emotional disorders with list writing in men. Women list writers are more apt to have nervous troubles, but the majority were emotionally normal."

off our backs, Feb., 1987

Loral C. Reeves  
C.P.A.

1014 Cedardale Drive  
Okla. City, OK 73127 405/495-1094

Collective Meeting  
March 15, 6 p.m.  
at Herland

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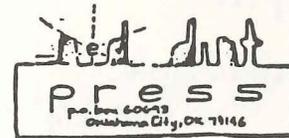
# Events...

## Join Us! Celebrate With Us!

Bring your friends and come celebrate Women's Studies at OU on March 26, 27, and 28 with Judy Chicago, Jennifer Robertson, and Andrea Weiss. The conference kicks off Thursday, March 26 with a potluck dinner and the premiere showing of *Before Stonewall*. It will continue Friday with a keynote address by Jennifer Robertson, workshops in the afternoon, followed by an evening reception for Judy Chicago's Birth Project. The fun continues Saturday morning with a keynote address by Judy Chicago, workshops morning and afternoon, and lunch on the terrace featuring entertainment by local artists. The 3 day celebration of Women's Studies will be topped off Saturday evening with a Nancy Day concert brought to you by Herland.

The conference includes such diverse topics as birthing, lesbian custody, feminist folk tales, and relations with men. Judy Chicago's Birth Project brings together stirring images of childbirth rendered in all forms of needlework. This mammoth undertaking was executed by a network of 100 skilled needleworkers throughout the country supervised by Chicago. The work serves as a study of world-wide childbirth practices, a history of maternity clothing, a collection of creation mythology and a survey of needlework techniques. Works of this magnitude are expensive to ship and display and donations are urgently needed to cover these expenses. Those wishing to help can mail donations to the Women's Studies Department, Rm. 530 Physical Science Bldg., Univ. of Okla., Norman, OK...*Before Stonewall*, narrated by Rita Mae Brown, provides an informative and engaging portrait of the history of the homosexual experience in America. From the social experimentation of the Roaring Twenties, to the discovery of the true size of this hidden society during World War II, to the scapegoating of homosexuals during the McCarthy era, to the development of the early homophile rights movement, the film celebrates the strength of those who led their lives with dignity despite widespread social discrimination. In addition to *Before Stonewall*, Andrea Weiss will present and discuss another of her films, *Sweethearts of Rhythm*, a story of the multiracial all women's jazz band of the 1940's....Workshop topics include disabled women's theatre, women's literature, professional midwives, religion, feminist education, black women's identity, loving too much, and sexual harassment...There's something for everyone at the Women's Studies Conference, so bring your friends and be sure to stop by the Herland booth, buy a book and say hello.

\*\*\* The bookstore will be closed Saturday, March 28. Come and browse our books at the conference.



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by

Abigail Keegan

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conference by and for old Lesbians  
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# Poetry...

## THE SEEKER'S SERMON

(for Sally)

Let's assume for our purposes,  
there are castrating women;  
where have these generations hidden  
all those delicate male organs?  
Have they arranged them  
in water and vases like bouquets;  
stuffed and raised them high  
on a mantle;  
put them on chains like a rabbit's foot  
for luck;  
do they speak of them as another  
bead on their necklace--  
like the sporting notch on the belt?  
I wonder?  
Where are all the balls that have been busted?  
I questioned all the tom-boys  
I could round up;  
from what they said, they had a motive--  
the fellas had laughed  
every time the girls wanted to play a game.  
But they all said they weren't guilty--  
never peeled the skin off one baseball,  
didn't even crack one marble.  
Then I asked myself,  
did these females walk around their houses  
or go out their doors saying,  
let's get some?  
I began putting my ear to keyholes,  
but I still couldn't find a suspect.

I could see this was going to be a tough nut to crack.  
I mean there's not even a word for those gals,  
you know, not like there's a word for women haters--  
mysogynist, and that word doesn't have an antonym either.  
Seems funny, a word without balance,  
like an asymmetric tree,  
or like my dog who lost his leg, trying to defend our house.  
May be a lot of words like that--  
invalid words:  
Misogamy, what about somebody who likes marriage?  
Emasculate, what's it called when you take away a woman's power,  
or when she feeds a man's ego with a loving spoonful--  
we like to accentuate the masculine negative.  
Then there's the categorical--homo-hetero-sexual,  
they make us talk like cripples, our off-balance selves.

It's like the old priest with arthritic hands,  
fingers bent over, nails crooked into his palms,  
said he couldn't pray anymore, couldn't hold the beads.  
Words that merely imply sex don't allow us to infer  
anything about love--  
we need warrants to investigate love.  
And there don't seem to be any words to authorize  
thorough investigations into the area--  
husband and wife only allow you to go so far,  
and a lot of investigations are detained by rules  
that keep people closed in the small areas of possessive pronouns--  
his, her, my--that'll never even get us close  
to evidence that love's possible.

We're still like children learning to talk and walk,  
lots of stuttering and unbalance we'll have to endure;  
we keep crawling around on calloused knees,  
rug-burned hands, with floor patterns in our memories,  
and slobber running down our chins.

Well, I'm no philosopher or psychologist,  
just an inquisitor seeking some clues,  
maybe you have information, i mean,  
we all grew up on that game, Clue.  
Anyway some evidence like:  
a cod piece, jock strap, shield, cups,  
anything that might've been ripped off  
from that life-bearing organ.  
I'm going to have the lab check for traces of semen  
in the cauldron soup;  
you might check your friend's drawers,  
under the mattress or in the attic  
for those homuncules Augustine talked about--  
they'd probably be wrapped in small cloth pieces,  
tied up with string or yarn.

When I find her, I'll get a confession out of her--  
I'll make her tell us her game and name--  
we have to name power, and lock it up!  
Once I get this case solved, the file closed,  
I'm going after those gals  
who don't have the sense of humor.

By Abigail Keegan  
From THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTIONS  
Reprinted with permission of author and  
Red Dirt Press, Inc. Oklahoma City.

In a silent, slow-motion movie.  
The trees are barren,  
only a cold wind to comfort  
the empty spaces,  
an icy breeze rolls  
upon the lawn  
and to my doorstep,  
rustling the screen.  
The sound makes me shudder.  
intimate ally  
emotional lover  
come back to me  
The scenes become vacant  
without your affections. I'm  
keeping a vigilant candle  
to disperse the threatening chills,  
to rescue my trembling foundation,  
we have rebuilt,-  
with a caress of smooth skin.  
warm memories counsel;  
feeling peaceful  
in an open field

Sally Venard



848-5429

**SHIRLEY M. HUNTER, M.A.**  
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- \* REEL WORLD STRING BAND
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- LEA DELARIA
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- JO ANN LOULAN (Lesbian Sex)
- NAN HUNTER (Director, A.C.L.U. National Lesbian/Gay Rights Project)
- SONIA JOHNSON (Going Out of Our Minds)
- JOYCE HUNTER, M.S.W.C.S.W. (Director, N.Y. City Institute for the Protection of Lesbian & Gay Youth)
- VIVIAN SHAPIRO (National Co-Chair, Human Rights Campaign Fund)

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(\*refers to Southern Performers)

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\$80 to \$90 very limited Sat. noon to Mon. passes (camping) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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## MURDER AT THE NIGHTWOOD BAR

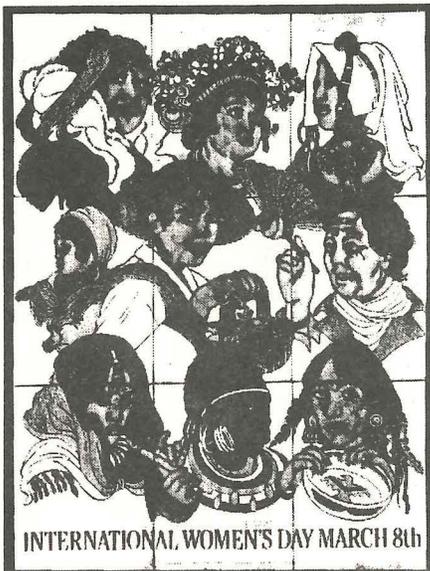
By Katherine V. Forrest (\$8.95)

Dory Quillin, nineteen years old, her white-blond hair ruffled by the gentle breezes of a June evening, lies dead in the parking lot of a lesbian bar. Her bewildered silver-blue eyes stare beseechingly into the mind and soul of the woman who kneels beside her: LAPD homicide detective Kate Delafield.

The investigation into the murder of Dory Quillin is far from a simple matter. Traveling a circuitous path that leads into the "gay city" of West Hollywood, Kate uncovers shocking facts about the brief life of the murdered young lesbian. She finds her road to the killer obstructed by Dory Quillin's uncooperative, judgmental parents, the waning interest of her own partner, and most frustrating of all, the open hostility of women who should be her allies-- the lesbians who frequent the Nightwood Bar. Kate's emotional equilibrium is further disturbed by her powerful attraction to one of those women, the enigmatic Andrea Ross.

Who killed Dory Quillin?

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY POSTER



March was chosen as National Women's History Month in recognition of International Women's Day, March 8th. The date commemorates the tremendous labor struggles of the 19th century, organized by and affecting thousands of women in the garment trades. The full color, ceramic tile portraits on this stunning poster symbolize the international connectedness of all women and our roles as workers in the world.

18" x 24"

Bored with MTV? Does the top 10 traumatize your brain? Perhaps your ready for something eclectic, electric, and the exception? HAWKINS & DELEAR is finally out for your listening consumption. You remember the great duo that performed at the spring retreat, the Second Fret, and before that in Norman. These two performers, with the help of electric drums, computerized key boards, guitars, horns, and all kinds of percussion instruments, make you feel as though you are hearing a 5 piece band. The cassette includes "Midnite Silence", "Sweet Boy", and 3 other cuts. Be the first on your block to have this great new cassette from Herland.



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by Bode Noonan

Essays that serve up a wacked-out, politically and spiritually conscious, full course dinner of Lesbian thought that gets at those ideas which all too often whiz by unnoticed. Illustration and design are by Diane Souza who also manages to express things you hadn't even noticed were on your mind.

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### HOW TO BE A COUPLE AND STILL BE FREE

by Tina B. Tessina and Riley K. Smith

Tradition seems to say that we can give up our "self" and have a close, loving relationship or we can be free, and lonely. Tessina and Smith have derived a clear, gentle, pragmatic method for solving problems so both couplehood and freedom are possible. Their perspective specifically includes gays who are seeking a model for being a couple that is not based solely on heterosexual examples.

Paperback \$6.95

# They Want You :

## Sagewoman

Sagewoman magazine is one of the feminist, grass-roots quarterly centered on women's spirituality, and earth-based spiritual practices. Sagewoman is dedicated to our inner visions and the strengthening of those visions to transform our world.

Sagewoman began publication in fall, 1986. They welcome articles, poems, drawings, short fiction, black and white photographs, book reviews, short fiction, rituals, music, and letters. Yearly subscriptions are \$13; single copies are \$4.50. Deadlines for copy are: November 1 for winter, February 1 for spring, May 1 for summer, and August 1 for fall. Women who want to help produce the magazine and will be in the Portland, Oregon area during November, February, May, or August please write for information.

Sagewoman Magazine  
P.O. Box 1478  
Hillsboro, Or 97123

Only women bleed...but instead of sharing and celebrating, we are often ashamed and secretive. I am a woman author compiling a book of menstrual stories. I would like contributions from women at all stages of life - from those awaiting their first periods to those who no longer bleed and everyone in between. Please share your joyous, sad, frightening, silly, embarrassing and enlightening stories with me and other women. I would appreciate knowing your age and any personal details you care to include. All contributions will be published anonymously - you need not identify yourself. My address is:

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SPRING DEADLINE: MARCH 15  
SUMMER DEADLINE: JUNE 15

Visibilities, a new magazine for lesbians, seeks writers. Visibilities is an eclectic magazine which will include profiles of women in the community, feature articles, columns, poetry, short fiction, etc.

We are looking for writers in these categories, as well as movie, theatre and music reviewers, photographers and cartoonists. If interested, please send samples of your work to Visibilities, PO Box 1258, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009-1258. Material will be returned if you enclose SASE. (We hasten to add that, at the moment, NOBODY is getting paid; we certainly plan for the day when this will no longer be true!)

FRAMELINE, a non-profit lesbian and gay media organization, is now accepting entries for the 11th San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, June 19-28, 1987. Held each year during San Francisco's Lesbian/Gay Freedom Celebration, the Festival brings together the best in feature, documentary and short films and video works by and about lesbians and gay men. Frameline presents the annual Festival to promote a demand for quality productions and wider exhibition of film and video works by and about lesbians and gay men. Awards will be presented in several categories: Best Feature Film, Best Short Film, Best Video, Best Documentary, Best Super-8, as well as an Audience Award for best film or video in the Festival. Formats accepted are 35mm, 16mm, super-8, 3/4 inch and 1/2 inch VHS NTSC video cassettes. The deadline for entries is Wednesday, April 15, 1987. For more information and entry forms contact: FRAMELINE, PO BOX 14792, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114, U.S.A. or call (415)861-5245.



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# NANCY DAY

## In Concert

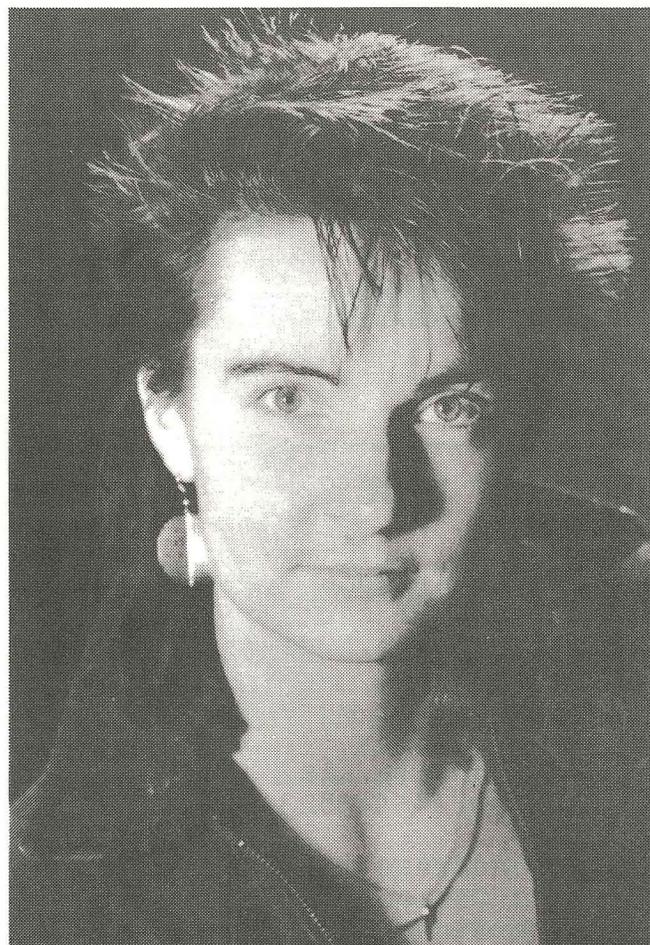
Nancy Day will be the featured musician at the Herland Benefit Music Concert, presented in conjunction with the South Central Women's Studies Association Conference, March 28, 1987, 8:00 p.m., in the Choral Room of the Catlette Music Center, located on the corner of Boyd and Elm in Norman Oklahoma. Opening for her will be two of Oklahoma City's, rapidly rising to fame, local musicians, Peggy Johnson and Donna DeSalvo.

Tickets for this event will be available at Herland March 7, 1987. They may also be purchased from individual ticket sellers, or be calling 672-6459.

Since making Pittsburg her home, Nancy Day has excited audiences at such events as the National Women's Music Festival in Bloomington, Indiana, 1983, 1984, and 1986; she also performed at the New England Women's Music Festival in 1984. In 1980, her first album was released, entitled "Nancy", which consisted of ten original compositions and featured ten other musicians. In 1983 she composed, recorded and produced a cassette entitled "Lavender", and composed the music for an original musical in 1986, entitled "Time and Time Again."

The year, 1986, continued with Nancy opening for Holly Near, performing at the GAIA Canadian Music Festival, and being voted Pittsburgh's pianist of the year.

Nancy has presented at various community fundraisers, such as for women's shelter houses in Pittsburgh, Community AIDS Fundraiser, and Clean Water Action Project, to name a few. She has presented workshops on creativity and composition for the gifted children in the Pittsburgh school system.



NANCY DAY  
in  
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There are many quotations as to Nancy's performance. J. Casselberry states.... "The combination of technical proficiency and life spirit in a performer is a joyous find. Nancy Day possesses both qualities. She's refreshing, vibrant, and pure in her approach to music...." Kay Gardner states..."Nancy Day's music is rich, vibrant, and strong. I'm sure we'll be hearing much more from this young artist in years to come."

I've heard Nancy Day in Bloomington and would like to add to the many quotes by saying...."I listen to Nancy's music almost every day. Her music reaches the depths of my soul. Now I feel privileged to have the opportunity to present her to you." (Barbara Cleveland)

Please purchase your tickets in advance. It helps with pre-concert expenses.

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11	Quincy College	1:00 pm
12-14	Sooner Tourney	
17	Okla. Baptist	5:00 pm
25	Okla. City	5:00 pm

### OU WOMEN'S TENNIS

MAR 22	Texas Christian	1:00 pm
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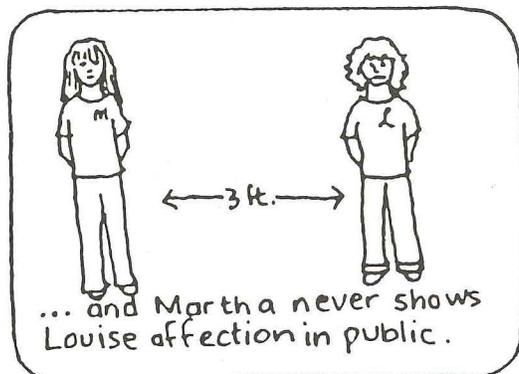
## personal note-

Moving to Arizona - Come visit - about an hour south of I-10, just east of Tucson. Beautiful desert and mountains.

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