

# Herland

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## VOICE

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January, 2001

## A KILLING SEASON

by MOC

Oklahoma has nine executions scheduled from January 4, 2001 through February 1, 2001. Although many people think this is a ghastly, tragic way to begin a new year, let alone a new millennium, there seems little chance of persuading the governor to grant stays and perhaps declare a moratorium. One might have expected the Governor to consider it when the Pope asked him for clemency a year ago, before the execution of Sean Sellers. However the Governor opined that His Holiness erred in thinking that the death penalty was against God's will. Here in Oklahoma, leaders of the Catholic, Episcopal and United Methodist faiths, in addition to numerous secular groups, have all asked the Governor for a moratorium.

There are ongoing events designed to protest these executions, as well as a bill pre-filed in the Legislature.

Representative Opio Toure has introduced HB 1013, which would effect a moratorium on executions from March 1, 2001 to March 1, 2002.

On February 4, 2001, the Reverend Jesse Jackson Sr. will be in town to petition the governor for a moratorium. People will gather at 4:30 p.m. at Mabel Bassett Correctional Center, 3300 N. Martin Luther King Boulevard. They will march to the Fairview Baptist church at 1700 NE 7<sup>th</sup>; and at 6 pm will rally inside the Church – speakers will include Rev. Jackson, Bud Welch, Robin Myers, Rep. Toure, and Jim Fowler, father of the prisoner slated to die January 23.

At 8:30 p.m. there will be a Vigil in Protest of The Execution of Robert "Eagle" Clayton at the Governor's Mansion just east of the Capitol on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Executions are scheduled on January 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 24, 30 and February 1, 2001. On each of those days there will be vigils in front of the Governor's mansion at 5:00 p.m. and again at 8:30 p.m.

Websites: you can read Rep. Toure's bill 1013 at <http://www.dpio.org/moratorium/HB1013.html> ; you can read volumes about the death penalty across the land in <http://www.thenation.com> . The Nation's website has a Death Row Roll Call section chronicling each month's executions. □

## 1ST WOMAN SCHEDULED FOR EXECUTION

Unless Governor Keating intervenes, Wanda Jean Allen will be first woman executed in Oklahoma since statehood. She is scheduled to be executed on Jan 11. The Oklahoma Pardon and Parole has denied Allen's clemency request. The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has refused to overturn her sentence and the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear her appeal. Governor Keating can still grant clemency and commute Allen's sentence to life in prison.

The last woman to be executed in Oklahoma was Dora Wright in 1903 (four years prior to statehood). She was also an African American. *(continued inside)*

Coming to Herland!

### ***But I'm A Cheerleader***

Playing January 19, 2001 at 7 PM

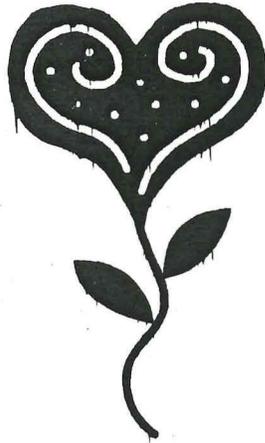
\$3.00 donation requested

*But I'm a Cheerleader* is a hilarious movie about gay and lesbian rehabilitation. Staring Natasha Lyonne as Megan, this hysterical satire is about teenagers who are forced to go to a gay rehabilitation camp, "True Directions", to turn sissies into he-men and girls like Megan into perfect housewives. Megan's parents and friends are convinced she is a lesbian based on certain clues - Megan is a vegetarian, she hates kissing her boyfriend, and she has a poster of Melissa Etheridge in her locker.

At True Directions, Megan tries very hard to work the program but while there she meets Graham, thus beginning a lesbian relationship that would not have happened had she not been sent there in the first place and helping her to come to terms with her true nature.

This movie is full of laughs and clearly illustrates the stupidity of homophobia.

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## EXECUTION SCHEDULED (continued from pg. 1)

After two years of being involved in a violent relationship Allen, an African-American lesbian, admitted to shooting her partner, Gloria Leathers, on Dec. 1, 1989 just outside Oklahoma City.

In appeals, Allen has maintained that she had inadequate legal representation in her trial. Her attorney failed to investigate fully her background showing that she has an IQ of 80 and has neurological problems that cause her to lose control in stressful situations - factors that were not introduced into court. In addition, according to a review of court records, prosecutors attempted to use Allen's sexual orientation and relationship with her partner to prejudice the jury against her.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has joined other progressive gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) groups in calling on Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating to grant clemency to Allen.

Joining NGLTF in calling upon Gov. Keating to grant clemency to Allen are the Oklahoma Lambda Intercollegiate Coalition, OU Gay,

Find more information on  
Wanda Jean Allen's case at  
[WWW.HERLANDSISTERS.ORG](http://WWW.HERLANDSISTERS.ORG)

Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Friends, ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, National Center for Lesbian Rights, Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation, Gay Men of African Descent, the National Youth Advocacy Coalition, and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. □

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## CHECK THESE OUT!

—Deb Willis

The past year or so saw a number of books published about the lives of lesbians. Several of these are available through the Metropolitan Library System.

*Out of the Ordinary: Essays on Growing Up with Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Parents*, edited by Noelle Howey and Ellen Samuels (St. Martin's, c2000). A unique collection of short memoirs by adult children of lesbian, gay, and transgender parents which prove that, despite attempts by government and society to regulate love and family, these bonds cannot be dictated and that ties between parents and children rise above the polity.

*My Lesbian Husband: Landscapes of a Marriage*, by Barrie Jean Borich (Greywolf Press, c1999). With wonderful prose, Borich delights her readers with essays on the development of her long-term relationship with her lover, Linnea, and their eventual wedding. Set in a decaying Minneapolis neighborhood, *My Lesbian Husband* illustrates the uniqueness and ordinariness of being a lesbian couple. Winner of the Non-fiction Award in the 2000 American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Book Awards.

*The Red Rose Girls*, by Alice Carter (Harry N Abrams, c2000). An exquisite book which examines the lives of three early-twentieth-century artists, Jessie Willcox Smith, Elizabeth Shippen Green, and Violet Oakley, who were dubbed "the Red Rose girls" because of their shared living-studio space in the Red Rose Inn.

*Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict: The Kinship of Women*, by Hilary Lapsley (University of Massachusetts Press, c1999). This enjoyable narrative incorporates written correspondence between Mead and Benedict, along with poetry and dream interpretation, to present a highly readable exploration of the lives of these two women. Winner of the Judy Grahn Award for Best Book of Lesbian Non-fiction, 1999

*This Is What Lesbian Looks Like: Dyke Activists Take on the 21st Century*, edited by Kris Kleindienst (Firebrand Books, c1999). Reflections on race, class, conflict, and differences within the gay liberation movement, and the rise of the religious right.

*Out & About Campus: Personal Accounts by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgendered College Students*, edited by Kim Howard and Annie Stevens (Alyson Books, c2000). This collection offers poignant and powerful glimpses into the lives of LGBT people on campus.

Visit the Metropolitan Library System online at [www.mls.lib.ok.us](http://www.mls.lib.ok.us) □

Deb is the Assistant Manager at the Midwest City Library and can be reached there (732-4828 x 3) or via email at [dwillis@mls.lib.ok.us](mailto:dwillis@mls.lib.ok.us)

# SAINT SYBIL

Dear St. Sybil.

Can you suggest a good New Year's resolution for me to begin the new millennium? I understand that a great many new Year's Day resolutions actually are kept long enough to become habits, and I'm thinking of giving it a try...

Thanks,

Seeker

Dear Seeker,

Yes. I have some advice for you: Live your life through song. All the wisdom of the world can be found in popular music, you know, if you'll look for it. For instance, can you imagine the heart so hard it's owner has never gotten tears in her ears from lying on her back in the bed crying over - someone?

Here are the songs I would recommend that you sing this coming year. Sing them, believe them, belt them out!

Start with "I've Got to be Me" - That's all you are really here for, now isn't it? That's the most - and the very best - you can aspire to.... There's already been a Mother Teresa, a Mitch Snyder, an Angela Davis, a Sandra Day O'Connor, . . . You are the only You there will ever be, in all eternity.... YOU have got to be your new hero, the person you will cherish and respect and nurture and help grow free and develop - as Peggy Johnson's song "Time To Do It" says, *you don't know all of you yet*. And you need to. And let her song "Being Alone" remind you that only by spending time with yourself - and yes, this would mean turning off the television and the computer games - will you get to know yourself....

Sing frequent reprises of "Just As I Am" - you want to grow yourself freely - you mustn't espalier yourself flat and beautiful and unholy, or trim yourself into a bonsai, or prune yourself into a fabulously beautiful but NOT YOU Yew tree. Think kudzu, not topiary. *Grow!*

And do it "From This Moment On" - don't look back more than absolutely necessary, you might become smugly complacent or, more likely, drown in a pool of ready regret. Besides, as my new friend Satchel Paige, Patron Saint of Flash & Dazzle and Refused to be Overlooked says, somethin' might be gaining on you.

So, Seeker: Sing. Always, every day, sing. Sing a judicious blend of the Blues. "Beale Street Blues;" "Low-Down (Let Those Dogs Run Loose) Blues;" "Blues in the Night;" "Down to Seeds and Stems Blues;" "Blue Monday," any old blues - Blues will keep you on an even keel. Blues are the great attitude adjuster - an enigmatic tonic of cheer when we are blue ourselves, and an instant reality check when we are flying high - been blue before, gonna be blue again, keep your balance!

There will be times when the best you can do is set your mouth and your path and do the corny old cliches: "Carry On," as you strive "Against All Odds" to "Climb Every Mountain." Corny, but valiant. And next year, next millennium, and always as you go through life, remember that odd squinty-eyed little Liverpool boy who tapped into so much wisdom, and "Imagine...." Imagine peace and harmony and joy and justice, and your place in it. Take the Millennium!

In radical sisterhood,

With love,

Sybil

p.s. and if you wrote me hoping to learn how to lose a few pounds - *nevermind*. □

## OK LAMBDA YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

Oklahoma Lambda Intercollegiate Coalition (OLIC) announces its newest program and another first for the state of Oklahoma: the Oklahoma Lambda Youth Scholarship. The purpose of this scholarship is to promote pride in youth activism and foster GLBT leadership on our college campuses.

Oklahoma high-school graduates who intend to remain in the state throughout their college careers are eligible for the \$1,000 award. Applicants will be selected according to three equally weighted categories; community leadership, scholastic merit, and financial need.

Applications are available Dec. 1st from OLIC constituent organizations, at the Oklahoma City and Tulsa Pride Centers and online at [www.geocities.com/okolic/](http://www.geocities.com/okolic/). Applications are due on Feb. 15th, 2001. Winners will be announced in late March.

The Oklahoma Lambda Intercollegiate Coalition is an umbrella network of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender student groups from Oklahoma schools. □

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