



HERLAND SISTER RESOURCES

VOLUME II, NUMBER 2
FEBRUARY, 1986

HERLAND SISTER RESOURCES, INC.
1630 N.W. 19, Okla. City, OK 73106

VISIONS FOR A SOBER COMMUNITY

by Pat Reaves, OKC

Out From Under: Sober Dykes and Our Friends,
Jean Swallow, ed. Spinster's Ink, 1983, \$8.95

"This is a record of our life here when we finally decided to live. It is a record of our journeys, our fights, our joy. It is a road map and a vision, a sharing and a song. Come with me. Come inside this book I've been reading for the better part of a year now and watch how the journey unfolds. Know that you can live. Know that you are not alone. Know that there are pieces of real joy when you take the bitter-sweet journey into recovery, when you do get out from under." (from the Introduction)

Alcoholism is a major problem in the lesbian community. According to one study cited in Out From Under, 38% of lesbians are alcoholic and another 30% are problem drinkers. Out From Under is a collection of the voices of lesbians who are recovering alcoholics/addicts, co-alcoholics and adult children of alcoholics. These voices take a variety of forms including poetry, narrative, interview and fiction, but they all echo a common theme of recovery--making the choice to live by staying sober and clean. The contributors to this anthology offer the reader glimpses of their day-to-day struggles, a lesbian political analysis of drug dependence, information about physiological and emotional healing in recovery, and visions for a sober community.

Alcoholism/drug dependence is more than an individual problem--it is a political issue. Historically the excessive use of alcohol and other drugs has been used to decimate potentially powerful groups. In the U.S., they have been used in this way with Native American, Black and Hispanic populations. In the gay and lesbian communities, the most common public gathering places allowed to exist have been bars. Alcohol has been given a central place in our culture. The inevitable effect of alcohol/drugs is to stifle the user's

ability to think rationally and creatively and her ability to act. As a lesbian and as an alcoholic, the lesbian alcoholic is doubly isolated. Breaking the silence about the violence of alcoholism in the lesbian community relieves the isolation of the alcoholic lesbian and holds the prospect that together we can achieve what we cannot alone.

The personal accounts in Out From Under reveal the day-to-day struggles of recovery--the anxiety, the pain and the courage to go on. The contributors share how they get through the struggle. All rely on the support of others. Most use AA (in varying degrees) as a support system. They share also their joys and their visions of a sober and clean community.

Swallow states in her introduction that Out From Under was written primarily for herself and other lesbians in recovery. Yet there is something here for each of us. Alcohol and drugs affect all our lives. With the frequency of alcohol problems in the lesbian community (and in the larger society), as Swallow says, "You are one or you love one." The women speaking in Out From Under challenge us not only to examine our own use of alcohol/drugs and the role of alcohol and drugs in our community, but the larger challenge--to face life honestly making the choice to live and claiming our own power.

"Recovery is a process where the power is in the now. It is a time when we are able to venture back and pick up the pieces of ourselves that have either been relinquished, lost or covered over. Recovery is taking back all that we are, including who we are now and where we have been, what we have experienced, with all the strength and dignity that are ours."

--from "Recovery Is Power In The Now,"
Suzanne Balcer

(Out From Under is available in Herland's lending library and for purchase)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We encourage the exchange of information, personal opinions on issues of concern to the Oklahoma women's community, and your stories and experiences.

The editor reserves the right to edit and condense letters according to space limitations. Letters should be typed, double-spaced and signed by the author(s). Include your address and phone number. If you wish to be published anonymously, indicate so, but include your name, etc., for our information, in case the editor has questions.

Mail or deliver your letters to HSR, Inc., 1630 N.W. 19, Okla. City, OK 73106. Deadline is the 15th of each month.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In an effort to independently study and research the handwriting of AIDS victims, we ask your help. An associate of mine and I are looking for structural changes in handwriting due to neurological interruption brought on by illness.

Often, changes in writing precede conscious onset of a condition. The handwriting before diagnosis would be extremely beneficial, as well as after diagnosis. Any and all help is appreciated. Data will be kept confidential.

Age, sex, sexual preference will be very helpful statistics, and the more dated writing, the better. Writing need not be signed for this project.

In an effort towards research, thank you.

Please contact: Shelly Zaikis, MGA, Shell Inner Systems, P.O. Box 74965, Oklahoma City, OK 73147, 405-946-6928.

Dear Readers:

One of our readers called to relay a very frightening tale. While she was out of state during winter break, someone called and left a very threatening message on her message machine. The voice, that of a male, seemingly young, said he had seen her copy of "that Herland newsletter, that Herland lesbian newsletter," and went on to make some very unfriendly remarks.

She called to inquire about the possibility of the mailing list's being somehow made public, but I assured her that not even the members of the Collective know all the names on the list. Because her mail was held for her while she was out of town, we decided that it very well may have been someone who worked at her local post office.

If this is true, then her and our civil rights have been violated. There is no legalese backing this up, but I feel very strongly that NO ONE has

the right to look at or read another's mail. The entire postal system has angered me for so long and especially with the inefficiency with which they approach the whole forwarding/return process, but this is going too far.

If you hear of anyone's having a problem like this, please let us know. We will somehow try to document these violations and, when sufficiently armed and courageous, will possibly confront that "venerable institution," the U.S. Post Office.

Contact HSR, Inc. MAILPROP 1630 N.W. 19, OKC, OK 73106.



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THE COLOR PURPLE

Review of the movie, by Gail Garloch, OKC

A turning point in my life occurred around age seven when I discovered books that didn't have pictures. When I get to participate with an author and let my imagination supply the pictures, the soundtrack, the sensations of taste, smell, temperature, then I nearly always like the book, custom-made for my tastes.

Whenever I have read Alice Walker's The Color Purple, Celie didn't look anything like Whoopie Goldberg, and Mister wasn't anything like the gently beautiful Danny Glover, though Shug Avery did kind of favor Margaret Avery. And the color purple itself ("I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it") had been rare and deep like a lone violet, not expansive fields of cosmos (purple? pink? lilac?).

My next reading of Alice Walker's wonderful book with no pictures will be greatly enriched by my experience of the movie. "I like the book better," is what most people have said about the movie "The Color Purple." I like the novel best for its truth and depth and complexity and evocative language, but I like the movie best for its accessibility and truthfulness and soundtrack and sense of community (the unity that comes from authentic collaboration of producers, director, actors, writers, huge staff).

"The Color Purple" is a magnificent movie, grand entertainment in a variety of styles, from Harpo's juke joint on the river where Shug sings the blues, to the delight of little girls playing sophisticated patty-cake games in the fields and among the laundry, to marvelous comic sequences such as Mister's attempt to cook a breakfast. Steven Spielberg is a master of special effects, and this film enjoys some spectacular moments, yet each is fully integrated to support exploration of character and theme. Quincy Jones' contribution, the music, includes American gospel music and blues and African ceremonial drums--wonderful effects with the soundtrack allowing the African experience to parallel life in Georgia. Nothing in the film is heavy-handed. The acting is masterful, so fine, in fact, that I was never aware of watching actors.

One surprise: not since the Tom Mix days of my childhood have I seen a movie audience so actively involved in events onscreen, cheering and booing, muttering and explaining to neighbors, and audibly sobbing and guffawing. This isn't a movie that one can view politely and from a distance. It takes sides and demands audience participation, on the side of love, of justice, of forgiveness and reconciliation. The film contains a good deal of physical violence and emotional bru-

talities, and yet it makes a most affirmative stance for nonviolence. "The Color Purple" begins with man's inhumanity to woman and spends its energies toward overcoming that with the only force in the world that can--with love: the love of women for each other, for themselves and finally for those who wrong and brutalize them. And in the process, though it takes decades, everybody is changed.

If you haven't read The Color Purple, see the movie; and if you have read The Color Purple, see the movie. And if you've seen the movie, you're probably ready to see it again. One of the powerful songs in the film tells why: "Right Now! God's Trying to Tell You Something! Right Now!"

THE NEW YORK GAY FILM FESTIVAL: 1986

"Seduction: The Cruel Women" holds feminism, not to mention politics in general and the workaday world, has disappeared in the face of overwhelming sexual obsession. The film reflects one way that lesbian-feminist discourse has changed over the past half dozen years: less talk about child custody, more about sadomasochism.

"Novembermoon" is a heavily plotted World War II drama set mostly in Paris. A French woman, Ferial, falls in love with a Jewish woman, November. What makes it atypical as a lesbian love story--and this very small genre already has its conventions--is that we don't get a sense of either woman's previous relationships. Usually (in "Lianna," "Another Way," "A Woman Like Eve"), one character is straight to begin with and the film makes this clear by giving her a husband with children.

Among the "encores" (shown at previous festivals), I can recommend Nouchka Van Brakel's "A Woman Like Eve," sort of a "Lianna" transported to the Netherlands--and predating it. But I'd be wary of "Olivia," a girls' boarding school picture from 1951. When I saw it 11 years ago, it was still titled "The Pit of Loneliness," and it failed my criteria. No sex, one death.

excerpts from The Village Voice, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, January 14, 1986, C. Carr, pp. 53, 59.

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LOCAL NEWS

****House Bill 1377, still in committee, defines an unborn individual as a person on whose behalf another can be sued by causing its death. House Bill 1378 prohibits any person for being liable for any act or omission that results in a live birth instead of an abortion.**

Realistically, these bills will probably not come out of committee but, technically, they could.

House Bill 112 affects the licensing of child care facilities by requiring as a condition of licensing, a background check of employees and potential employees. In the House version of the bill, the check would include sexual preference. The Senate amended it to delete the sexual preference requirement, and replaced it with a check of criminal records. That bill as amended by the Senate is now under consideration by the House of Representatives.

Sexual preference is not an indicator for child abuse. Contact your Oklahoma legislators in support of the bill as amended.

****The Oklahoma Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, 2920 N. Robinson, OKC, 73103, 405-524-5577, requests your involvement regarding the tragedy of the recent Kerr-McGee incidents. Write to Mike Synar, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and ask what is going on!**

Mike Synar, 1713 Longworth Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515, 202-225-2701

Environmental Protection Agency, First International Bldg., 1201 Elm St., Dallas, TX 75270

Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region 4, 611 Plaza Dr., Suite 1000, Arlington, TX 76011

****The Metro OKC Chapter of the National Organization for Women will meet Wednesday, February 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the Okla. Blood Institute, 1001 N. Lincoln Blvd. Sister Leona Luecke, of the Benedictine Peace House, will speak at 6:30 p.m. on "Women for Guatemala."**

****The National March for Women's Lives, sponsored by the National Organization for Women, will take place March 9, 1986, in Washington, D.C. The theme for the march is "Keep Abortion and Birth Control Safe and Legal." Participants will assemble at 10:00 a.m. on the Mall between 7th and 14th Streets. A rally will be held at noon at the Lincoln Memorial. Participants are urged to wear white.**

According to Margaret Cox, OKC NOW Chapter, Eleanor Smeal, national NOW president, is expecting 100,000 for the Washington march.

"We're expecting between 50-100 women from Oklahoma to attend," said Cox. Contact her at 528-0400 to coordinate transportation. A similar march will be taking place March 16 in Los Angeles.

****The Chautauqua Center offers opportunities for personal growth and transformation. On Sunday, Feb. 2, from 1:30-6:00 p.m., they are sponsoring "Experiencing Chautauqua/Open House." On the first Sunday of each month, individuals interested in learning more about the center are invited to tour the facility, sip hot teas, participate in an orientation and join them for meditation, a light supper and visiting. A \$4 donation is requested.**

On Feb. 14-16 Chautauqua is sponsoring a women's retreat, "Reflection and Renewal Time." Winter is the time to go inward to our roots, the source of all inner wisdom, for nourishment, purification and a sense of peace. In this workshop, they will use meditation, chanting, guided imagery, journal keeping, snoozing, sitting in front of the fire, hiking on the land and quiet time to refresh and renew. Limited to eight, the room and board and workshop fee is \$100.

For information, contact Dr. Becky Cohn at P.O. Box 5119, Norman, Ok 73070, 405-321-2148.

****The Second Fret, 3009 N. Classen, is featuring Peggy Johnson on Saturday, Feb. 8, at 9:00 p.m. Johnson said she'll be joined for part of the performance by Mary Reynolds. "If you've never heard her, I urge you to come out," added Johnson. "If you've never heard us, let me just say, you'll be pleased."**

****The Oklahoma Big Mountain Support Group will meet Tuesday, February 4, at 7:00 p.m. at the Native American Center, 2900 S. Harvey, in Oklahoma City.**

****The Oklahoma Big Mountain Support Group is announcing a tentative late February date for a benefit performance of the play, "Running on Indian Time," a satirical look at Indian stereotypes held by many non-Indians. The play is to be presented by the American Indian Ensemble of Tulsa. Call the Native American Center, 232-2512 for details.**

Beverly K. Evons, M.S.W.

527 N.W. 23rd Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
(405) 521-8241

NATIONAL NEWS

****Sweet Honey in the rock** will appear at the Robinson Center Auditorium in Little Rock, Arkansas, on Saturday, February 22, at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$8 each, are non-reserved, and can be ordered from the Arkansas Women's Project at 1601 Dennison, Little Rock, AR 72202. For more information, contact the Women's Project at 501-372-5113.

Sweet Honey in the Rock, a very fine a cappella group, was most recently featured on the made-for-television special, "Martin Luther King: The Dream and the Drum," aired on public television Jan. 15. Based in Washington, D.C., they don't get out this way often, so don't miss their southern tour.

The group's albums and tapes, "Sweet Honey in the Rock," "Believe I'll Run On," "Good News" and "We All...Everyone of Us," are available through Herland for \$8.98.

If you haven't heard Sweet Honey recorded, a live concert will be an a-mazing introduction! If you know their music, you know a trip to Little Rock is on the agenda. Contact Herland about coordinating transportation.

****Woman to Woman/Mujer a Mujer** invites you to participate in a 10-day exchange of experience with Latin American women in Mexico.

According to Elaine Burns, organizer for these events, "the trip last November was powerful and built momentum for more!" It introduces U.S. women to Latin American women's realities and struggles; introduces Latin American women in Mexico to U.S. women's realities and struggles; builds relationships between activist women on both sides of the border.

A group of 12 U.S. women representing a variety of U.S. women's realities and organizing experiences will spend 10 days in Mexico City, visiting with women about land, water and services, workplace rights in the (U.S.-based) assembly plants, the maquiladoras, rape, batterings, incest, forced sterilization, homophobia, involuntary motherhood, and self-determination for the peoples of Central and South America.

Women will be talking about their lives, their communities, their organizations and their visions, bringing any pictures, music, poetry or other materials that would help in this sharing. All discussions will be fully translated--a knowledge of Spanish is not necessary.

The cost is \$300 for all expenses except round-trip transportation. Full and partial scholarships are available for community-based grass-roots women.

The dates are June 12-22, July 3-13, August 29-

September 7, and November 20-30. If interested, please write Woman to Woman/Mujer a Mujer, 1524 Summit, Little Rock, AR 72202. If very interested, please include which dates you prefer and some information about yourself and/or your organization.

****A Womyn's Land Conference** is being planned for the fall of 1986 by Heathcote Women's Community and Conference Center, Freeland, Maryland. The conference planning is just getting started, so if you are interested in participating, let your interests be known. They are looking for people who will assist in the development and location. Contact Heathcote Community, 21300 Heathcote, Freeland, MD 21053, 301-343-0280.

****Deviance** is a new, eclectic collection of prose and poetry dedicated to the exploration of the female experience. Publication begins spring, 1986. Subject matter is unlimited and theme issues are currently being planned. Deviance will be a forum for saying what must be said--by anyone--with all viewpoints welcomed. Send SASE to Deviance, c/o P.O. Box 1774, Pawtucket, RI 02862.

****Charitable giving in the U.S. in 1984** by individuals, foundations and corporations, and through bequests totaled \$74.25 billion. Gifts by individuals made up \$61.55 billion of that total. In Oklahoma, Herland Sister Resources, Inc., is joined by more than 11,000 organizations eligible to receive charitable contributions.

Under present law, for charitable contributions made in 1986, individuals who do not itemize their deductions will be allowed to deduct the full amount of their charitable contributions. However, this deduction for non-itemizers is set to expire after 1986. (from Jan. 2 letter from Sen. Don Nickles)

****As noted earlier, I.K.Y.K.** promised to publish in December and the women came through. Some of the articles had obviously been written for an '85 summer publication (pre-NOW Convention/election), but we were so glad to see the first issue of our subscription that this is not to be mistaken for quibbling. It's a beautiful, four-color, slick magazine. The things that make it so attractive, also make it very expensive to produce, thus the \$27 subscription rate. There is no other like it. Here's hoping for a long and beneficial career.

Publisher:	Herland Sister Resources, Inc.
Editor:	Elaine Barton
Typesetter:	Marian Hulsey
Advertising:	Marian Hulsey, 521-8434
Circulation:	600

****LATE BREAKING NEWS****

The Herland Collective is pleased to announce that we have been chosen by the Arkansas Women's Project as one of ten communities across the country to offer a homophobic workshop series.

The series, developed and facilitated by Suzanne Pharr, Director of AWP, and funded by a grant from the Chicago Resource Center, is scheduled for sometime this spring. The exact dates will be announced in the March Herland newsletter.

Three sessions will address general homophobia, internalized homophobia and political organizing, and will be presented to both non-lesbians and lesbians.

For further information, contact Pat Reaves, 525-8013, but specific details will be sent along to you as soon as the dates are finalized.

**SPRING FESTIVAL/WOMEN'S RETREAT
AT ROBBERS CAVE**

Call for Proposals

After the fall retreat at Osage Hills received such rave notices, the Herland Collective is organizing a second one.

We received positive feedback on the workshops offered there, and would like to know who among you would like to present a workshop, or if there is a particular topic you would like to see addressed.

Make your ideas known now so they can be included in the development of the event. Herland retreats become what the participants make them, a tradition possibly, with special memories.

And, by all means, mark your calendars for the first week in May for the Robbers Cave treat we promised you last fall and had to postpone.

In the meantime, the mailbox awaits your ideas!

I would like to attend a workshop on _____

I would be interested in presenting a workshop on _____

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FACT SHEET, CIVIL RTS. RESTORATION ACT

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (prohibiting sex discrimination), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (prohibiting race discrimination), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (prohibiting discrimination on the basis of an individual's disability/handicap) and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 each barred a particular type of discrimination in federally-assisted (funded) "programs or activities."

From 1972 to 1984 the wording of Title IX that prohibits sex discrimination in "any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" was interpreted by the federal governments to mean that the prohibition against discrimination was extended to the entire institution if it received federal funds for any program or activity.

The Reagan Administration reversed this interpretation and narrowed the prohibition to only the particular program receiving federal funds, not to the entire institution. On Feb. 28, 1984, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld this limited interpretation in the Grove City College v. Bell decision.

The wording of Title IX that prohibits sex discrimination is similar to the wording that prohibits other types of discrimination in the three other major civil rights acts mentioned above. Thus, immediately after the Grove City decision was announced, William Bradford Reynolds, head of the Civil Rights Division in the Justice Department, announced that he would apply Grove City to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and to the Age Discrimination Act.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act clearly defines "program or activity" to include "all the operations of...(an institution)" in order to restore the intent of the Congress in the original legislation and, thus, the original interpretation pre-Grove City.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act is being blocked in the U.S. House of Representatives by an abortion rider. The opposition to the Civil Rights Restoration Act has used the strategies of delay and of attaching numerous amendments and riders to block passage of the bill since 1984. The abortion rider being used in the House is referred to as the Tauke-Sensenbrenner Amendment. In the Senate, Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah has pushed an incredible number of amendments--some speculate as many as 1000--in the effort to block the Civil Rights Restoration Act.

The abortion rider, while being sponsored and pushed by Rep. Tom Tauke, R-Iowa, and Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wisconsin, is really the brainchild of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, an organization that purports to be a

strong supporter of civil rights, but that obviously is willing to sacrifice 20 years of civil rights progress for three-fourths of American citizens in an effort to impose its religious beliefs upon this nation.

Proponents of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985 are refusing to accept the Tauke-Sensenbrenner Amendment. The position of proponent groups is that the major civil rights act changes should be restored to their original intent without substantive changes that either broaden or narrow the provisions of the acts first passed by the Congress in the 1960s and 1970s. Proponent groups are convinced that the abortion rider is a ploy to kill the Civil Rights Restoration Act.

Unless the Civil Rights Restoration Act becomes law, the federal government can continue to fund institutions which discriminate against women, minorities, disabled persons and senior citizens. This is why the Civil Rights Restoration Act must become the law of the land.

The work for which Martin Luther King, Jr. fought and died, and the work for which the entire Civil Rights community has struggled for over the past 20 years has been gutted in less than two years.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act must pass cleanly with no substantive amendments. Massive lobbying on March 10 in Washington, D.C., following the National March for Women's Lives on March 9, is essential to this effort.

--National Organization for Women, Jan., 1986

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