

# To the HERLAND VOICE

September, 1993

## SONGS FOR THE UNSUNG

by Joanne Forman

Sarah Bagley, Mehitabel Eastman, Kate Mullaney, Mary Harris Jones, Elizabeth Morgan, Leonora O'Reilly, Leonora Barry, Mary Kenney, Margaret Dreier Robins, Agnes Nestor, Jane Street, Mildred Rankin, Elizabeth Christman, Rose Schneiderman, Ernestine Rose, Anne Burlak, Moranda Smith, Molly Jackson, Ella Reeve Bloor, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Emma Tenayuca, Rose Pesotta, Addie Wyatt, Delores Huerta.

Who are all these women?

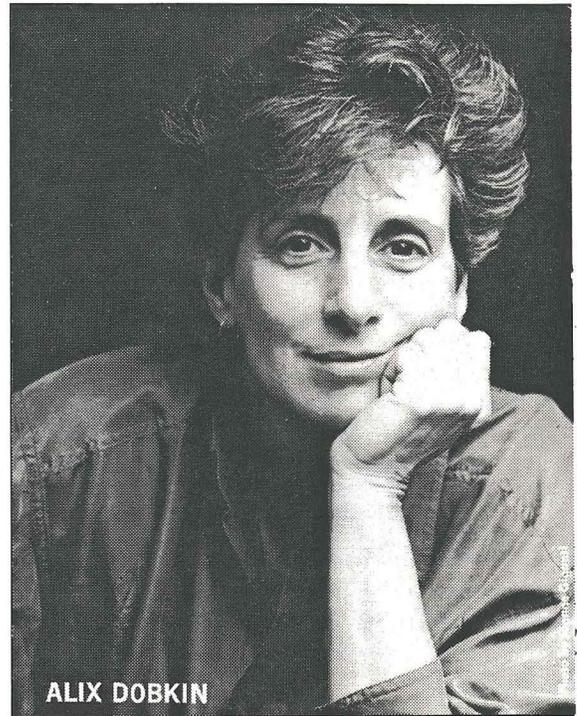
The only woman among these unsung heroines that most people are likely ever to have heard of is Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, the dynamic rebel and indefatigable co-founder of the IWW, the Wobblies, who lived to be one hundred years old, and fought for justice for working people to the very end.

But all the above were also labor organizers, hardly conforming to the crude notion of labor union leaders as unshaven, bullet-headed, cigar-smoking boys in the back room. As "women hold up half the sky" and do considerably more than half of the domestic labor, so they have always been involved in labor outside the home, whether in field, factory, store or office. "Should women work?" has always been a moot point for most women.

Women participated, in the United States, in labor "turn-outs" in the shoe manufacturing town of Lynn, Massachusetts as early as 1828, parading under the banner "American Ladies Will Not Be Slaves."

The participation and leadership of women take on new urgency as living and working conditions erode, and those "lucky" enough to have jobs face yet another round of speedup. We think it will hearten all working people to know that women have participated in labor organizing since at least the 1840s, when people asked anxiously if Sarah Bagley, a New England mill "girl" would lose her "delicacy" if she spoke before the Massachusetts legislature in favor of that newfangled notion, the ten-hour day. (She did, but that legislation was not passed until well after the Civil War.)

Besides the white factory women, there were about another million and a half women who labored in chains until the Civil War: the black women of the slave south. Though capable of thousands and thousands of daily acts of struggle, leadership and heroism, black women (and men) were only too long excluded from the labor movement. It was not until our own era that Addie Wyatt, who is very much alive, became one of the founders of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. (continued on page 4)



ALIX DOBKIN

## RETREAT WITH ALIX DOBKIN

Herland is proud to bring internationally acclaimed singer/songwriter/activist Alix Dobkin to its Fall 93 Retreat at Lake Murray in Ardmore, September 25, 1993.

"A funny woman full of passion about the lesbian community, she is also passionate, angry, sensitive, articulate, intelligent, responsible and a delight to listen to live."

A political activist and folk singer from an early age, Dobkin never opted for the security of mainstream American popular culture. In 1973 she leapt off the edge by openly singing about her love for women and releasing what is thought to be the first-ever blatantly lesbian album, *Lavender Jane Loves Women*. In so doing, she helped fuel a cultural revolution.

Having Alix at Lake Murray will offer Retreat goers a unique opportunity to talk and share with her. When Herland brought Alix to Oklahoma City in 1990, women of the community were treated to much more than a concert - at Alix's request a group of the extended Herland family joined her for a potluck and "rap session" that included laughter, tears and coming out stories.

As *Common Ground* of Buffalo, New York, said, "Dobkin is one performer who never disappoints...equal parts humor, stories, beautifully crafted and executed music and political rap...she gathers the pieces of our women's movement's struggle and knits them together, makes the connections, presents the whole picture." In addition to "*Lavender Jane*," Alix's albums include "*Living With Lesbians*," "*These Women/Never Been Better*," "*Yahoo Australia*," and "*Love and Politics*." □

# ST. SYBIL

*Sybil Ludington, unsung heroine of the American Revolution, is an occasional contributor to this space.*

Dear St. Sybil,

Back when I used to read the morning paper every day, before I cancelled my subscription to The Daily Disappointment for refusing to run the comic strip with the gay coming-out theme, I went around mad all day, just furious at their attitude and their editorials; but as the day wore on I would eventually mellow out. Since I have been relying on television for my news, I am pretty calm during the day, but depressed as all get out every night. What's the solution for me, Sybil? - I have to know what's going on in the world.

Pitifully,

Scylla N. Charybdis

Dear Scylla,

Well, first of all, give up the evening news, right away. How anyone can sleep at night after watching all of those stories of mayhem, betrayal, and brutality is more than I can comprehend, and you shouldn't subject yourself to it. As Cicero said some years before your day: "If we are forced, at every hour, to watch or listen to horrible events, this constant stream of ghastly impressions will deprive even the most delicate among us of all respect for humanity."

Secondly, take the following list of questions and every morning find out if:

1. there are any new wars or cease/fires around the world;
2. there are any disasters in the local area you could help with;
3. anyone who you might give a fig about has recently died; (Oh my god, not Generalissimo Franco!);
4. anything great (or particularly awful) has come out of city, state or federal government recently; (Oh my god, you mean we've got a woman on the Supreme Court? *Two women?* Well all riiiiight!);
5. anyone interesting has been outed recently.

This is all the daily update you really need. True, you will be at some risk of meeting a friend for lunch and discovering that the restaurant you chose burned to the ground since you were there last; but better an occasional surprise than reading a newspaper you despise (and that despises you) - by the way, there *are* papers you can get from nearby cities that pretty well answer the above questions; also, if you are willing to lose your snobbish attitude you could try reading the national newspaper, the McNews. It ain't much, but it beats the Daily Dis all to pieces.

Best wishes for a serene disposition night and day,  
Sybil

Dear St. Sybil,

What do you think of the current controversy over nature vs. nurture - the debate over whether it is sexual *preference* or sexual *orientation* - whether we choose to be gay and lesbian or are born lesbigay?

Your old pal and buddy,  
Jess Wondrin

Dear Jess,

I'll tell you, Hon, I think the debate is scary as all get out. Why should it matter whether it's your choice or your genes that get the credit for you being gay? Who on earth cares what causes people's behavior, unless they are looking for ways to stop it or alter it? (People talk about what causes baldness, or cancer or impotence, not beauty and sexiness and love!) If the hard-core crazies ever reach power, and they think that homosexuality is a choice, that it is learned behavior, they will feel justified in punishing those who are "willfully" gay. If they think that it is an inherited trait like eye color, they will feel equally smug and justified in out-selecting for that trait - in blocking the birth of people with the "gay gene".

So my advice to you is to refuse to engage in any discussion of the "causes" of homosexuality. There is only danger, no benefit, in such a dialogue.

Love,

Sybil

□

## FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS

The fight for lesbian and gay rights is intensifying in Oklahoma. Focus on the Family conducted a one day Community Impact Seminar in Tulsa early this year. A similar seminar is scheduled for Oklahoma City in October. These seminars proved successful in the passage of Amendment 2, which called for taking away equal rights for gays and lesbians in Colorado.

In any fight it is important to know the enemy and to develop a strategy that ensures victory. Simply Equal chapters around the state and Herland are co-sponsoring a two day Fighting For Our Rights conference in Oklahoma City on October 22 and 23.

The workshop will emphasize two tracks: Media and Grassroots Organizing. Workshops slated for the conference, at press time, were: Media 101: Basics of effective press relations; The Right Wing-- Know your enemy; Introduction to opposition research; Media 201: Advanced tactics for press relations; Introduction to Grassroots organizing, and Organizing Communities of Color.

Presenters for the workshop include three seasoned veterans in the fight against the right-wing. Robert Bray is the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's (NGLTF) Fight the Right Media Director. Scott Nakagawa is the NGLTF's Fight the Right Organizing Director. Suzanne Pharr is a lecturer and community organizer with the Women's Project.

Mark your calendar for these important dates and be watching the next issue of the Herland Voice for complete details and registration information. □

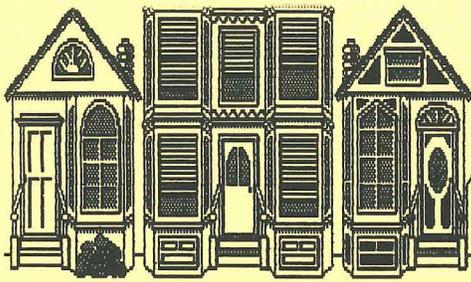
Herland Presents  
**Cris Williamson and Tret Fure**  
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**8 P.M., November 18**

**Civic Center Little Theatre**

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**Tickets go on sale September 18 at Herland**

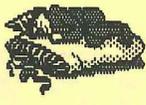


# September 1993



Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

Historic Dates in September: September 2, 1869, Esther Morris, 1st female Justice of the Peace in Wyoming (or anywhere?) held a teaparty asking citizens to work for women's suffrage. September 13, 1663, slaves and indentured servants conspired in the first recorded attempted slave revolt, in Gloucester County, Virginia.

			1  Happy Birthday LILY TOMLIN Born 1939	2	3	4
5	6  LABOR DAY	7	8	9	10  REGGY JOHNSON 9 pm Grateful Bean 10th & Walker	11
12 Gay Day at Frontier City	13	14  Margaret Sanger 1883 - 1966	15	16	17	18  PEGGY JOHNSON 8:45 pm La Baguette
19 HERLAND Board Meeting 4:30 All Welcome	20	21	22	23	24 HERLAND RETREAT begins at Lake Murray	25 ALIX DOBKIN in Concert at the HERLAND RETREAT
26 Herland Retreat	27	28	29	30	<p>This elegant calendar and the chock-full-of-news Herland Voice are brought to you each month gratis; if you would like to help offset the cost of this effort, please consider a one-time donation or a monthly pledge of any amount from \$1 to \$1,000,000. Nothing over One Million or under One Dollar will be accepted with this form.</p>	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

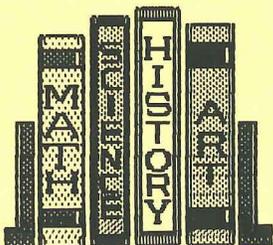
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# WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

by Vivien Ng

It's all in the genes--sexual orientation, that is. There has been in recent years a mad rush to identify biological causes for homosexuality. First, there was the much-analyzed finding of Simon LeVay, which suggested that an undersized hypothalamus might be a cause for male homosexuality. Lesbians were left out of that flawed study. More recently, two separate research teams announced with much fanfare--did the mainstream press have a field day, again--that certain genes might contribute to homosexuality (male, again). According to one of the studies, the suspect genes are found on the "X" chromosome--that is, the chromosome that is passed on by the mother to her son. (Guilt-tripping Mom again?)

I have mixed feelings about these developments. The historian in me is extremely wary of such attempts (however well-intentioned they may be) to "naturalize" sexual orientation. I am worried that the other side of the coin may be "medicalization" of homosexuality, and we know from the past what that had wrought.

In August, I saw a provocative play at Washington, DC's Kennedy Center, "Twilight of the Golds," which may serve as a cautionary tale of sorts. At the heart of the play is this moral question: if the fetus in my womb tests "positive" for male homosexuality, shall I carry it to term or, knowing how difficult life is for gay people, abort it? In this scenario, homosexuality is viewed/treated as another congenital "condition." This play is pro-choice and gay-positive, and it works as didactic theater

because at the end of the performance, the mixed audience is moved to tears and comes away with a better appreciation, if not understanding, of the multifaceted aspects of the social construction of homosexuality. However, a nagging question remains: is this what finding a genetic cause for homosexuality will bring? Will gayness be construed as another genetic disease?

On the other hand, the political advocate in me recognizes the potential usefulness of the recent findings in our struggle to have our civil rights affirmed. One ruse the right-wing has used to great effect is that sexual orientation is a "lifestyle" and thus when lesbians and gays ask for anti-discrimination protection, society is actually being asked to regard certain "behavior" as protected. "Special rights," in other words, are being sought, not "civil rights." So, if we can present evidence to show that sexual orientation is as "natural" as gender and race--let's set aside for the moment the fact that gender and race are both socially constructed--then civil rights protection is warranted. We shall see.

But it is the romantic in me that is most vexed out. I agree with Carter Heyward when she writes that, "such terms as 'sexual orientation,' 'sexual preference,' and even 'sexuality' are . . . vapid proximations of the real thing--the experience of touching one another physically, emotionally, and spiritually in such a way that we come together."

I don't want this core of my being, that I love women, to be blurred. To the scientists and activists, I implore them to ground their analysis and their rhetoric in this foundational question: "What's Love Got to Do with It?" Genetic disposition does not--should not--displace the choices I make with my mind, my soul, and my body. I am a lesbian not because I am a prisoner of my biology, but because I find the power of mutuality only with other women.

## Herland Sister Resources 1993 FALL RETREAT FOR WOMEN SEPTEMBER 24-26 LAKE MURRAY STATE PARK

Single Person's Annual Income	Retreat Pre-registration per person	Household Annual Income
under \$6,500	\$15	under \$13,300
\$6,500 - \$13,250	\$25	\$13,300 - \$18,000
\$13,250 - \$19,500	\$35	\$18,000 - \$26,000
\$19,500 - \$30,000	\$45	\$26,000 - \$50,000
over \$30,000	\$60	over \$50,000

Please choose the registration fee most appropriate for you based on these suggested guidelines. On-site registration will be \$60 and with no exceptions. The deadline for pre-registration is September 20, 1993. Registration is non-refundable after September 22.

The Lake Murray Group Camp does not allow pets. Please make other arrangements for yours.

Complete and return the pre-registration form to Herland, 2312 N.W. 39, Oklahoma City, OK 73112.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee enclosed:  \$15  \$25  \$35  \$60  I need a scholarship to attend.

I'm enclosing an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to provide retreat scholarships.  
 I'm bringing \_\_\_\_\_ children. (Girls of all ages and boys under 10 are welcome at the retreat.)  
 I would like to ride with someone.  I can help provide rides to the retreat.

# SONGS FOR THE UNSUNG

(continued from page 1)

Latinas were concentrated, until our era, mostly in the West and Southwest, and that region was industrialized later than the eastern region of the nation. As almost universally the case with women's efforts, it was not thought important to note them, and this was even more the case with "minority" women. One of the few for whom any information at all exists is Emma Tenayuca, the Texan who participated in a 1933 cigar maker's strike, but was most active in that seminal area of Western and Southwestern labor organizing: agriculture. In 1938, she led six thousand mainly Mexican-American women employed as pecan shellers for \$2.50 a week. She went on to become active in the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America.

Today's outstanding Latina organizer is the indefatigable Dolores Huerta, former vice-president of the United Farmworkers Union, and perhaps the only person on earth more energetic than the late Cesar Chavez.

Asian women, for many decades excluded from the United States by immigration law, now form (with their Puerto Rican sisters) a relatively new underclass of sweatshop workers in non-union garment shops.

Nor were Native American women exactly lying around eating bonbons all this time. They are part and parcel of the female labor force.

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## *...courage, humor and plain spunk were bountiful.*

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Space forbids more than the most cursory introduction to the history of these unsung sisters, but as one delves into the details of their lives, one learns that courage, humor and plain spunk were bountiful.

Undoubtedly the most colorful of all was Mary Harris "Mother Jones. Sweet-faced, impeccably clad in rustling widow's black with a touch of ladylike white lace, white-haired and tiny, she was "not afraid of the devil." For example, when confined to a dark cellar in Walsenberg during a Colorado miner's strike, she passed the time by fending off the rats with her shoe. Confronted by thugs in Pennsylvania's tough Monengahela Valley, she whipped out from under her crisp little gingham apron a .38 special and invited them to withdraw. They did.

Hauled up before a judge during a West Virginia miner's fight, she called him a scab to his face. Told she must address him as "Your Honor," she snapped, "Well, I can't call him 'Your Honor' until I know how honorable he is. I took an oath to tell the truth."

Her meager possessions wrapped in a black shawl, -- "I like to travel light" -- she crisscrossed the country again and again. She sometimes passed herself off as a peddler, with an appropriate stock of pins, needles and threads. In Alabama, she told a befuddled military sentry that she was "going to a missionary meeting to knit mittens for the heathen in Africa."

While one can laugh at this saucy tartar, there are no smiles when one contemplates the short life of Ella May Wiggins, shot in the head during a textile strike in North Carolina, and laid in her grave before she was thirty. Her crime? Like "Aunt" Molly Jackson, she not only struggled, she had the temerity to write songs -- a dangerous and effective weapon. Unsung and unremarked, many other women, too, shared the dangers and hardships of the men, being beaten, jailed, insulted -- and injured in all the ways with which women are only too familiar.

One of the outstanding figures of the great era of CIO organizing in the 1930s was Rose Pesotta, a Russian immigrant who was heavily involved in the great sitdown strikes in the big Midwest factories. A quick thinker with a ready tongue, she had an answer for a boss who suggested that, rather than aiming for a general strike, it would be better to call strikes in individual shops, one by one.

"An excellent idea," she snapped. "We'll do it. On Monday we'll call our first strike -- in your shop."

Pesotta was also sterling in dealing with some of the prejudices and blindnesses of working people -- she never made the mistake of thinking that they were perfect. "Sister Pesotta," said one woman, "you simply can't trust these Jews." Despite her Italian sounding name, Pesotta was Jewish. But she took the time to make the woman think, "You know that Leonitti, a manager who betrayed you, prides himself on being a good Catholic. Would you advise me to say that it was because he was a Catholic that he betrayed your cause?"

Many labor organizers who were women were given traditional "feminine" jobs such as organizing commissary for strikers -- but organizing three meals a day for thousands of workers and their families was not such a soft touch. Women were also crucial in organizing other women -- the wives, mothers, sisters and girlfriends of male strikers. They were crucial in the hard-fought Akron rubber workers strike, where few actual employees were women, and in the historic sitdown in Flint, Michigan, which organized the auto industry.

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## *Women are bound to be a key part of a new wave of organizing.*

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Except in agriculture, where all the old ghastly conditions and brutalities only too often still prevail, the heavy industrial organizing era is over, and unlikely ever to return. The task now is to organize in the ever-increasing service and office sector. Handed the lemon of temp, part-time and "flex-time" -- all work without benefits -- and faced with the double shift of the paying job and the non-paying job of housework and childcare, women are bound to be a key part of a new wave of organizing. The immediate task is to gain benefits for all work and to halt the brutal speedup. The longer task is to realize that all the victories, all the gains, all the concessions for which working people fought, bled and died over the past century and a half have been very rapidly eroded, since 1945, and particularly since 1981. For what the boss can give, the boss can take away, and the only ultimate answer is for working people to own their jobs and their places for work. That will not come in a day, but the time to begin is always now. □

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Subscriptions to *The Voice* are free upon request.

*The Voice* is printed on recycled paper.

## LONE STAR WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

Now in its fourth year, the Lone Star Women's Music Festival is bigger and better than ever. Producers Bonnie Moore and Kathy Mills are gearing up to welcome an estimate 1,000 women to this year's event.

The festival takes place from October 1 to 3 on the banks of the Guadalupe river near New Braunfels, 30 miles south of Austin. While the emphasis is on local and regional talent, a glance at this year's program shows upwards of 25 acts. Included too, are such internationally known legends as Alix Dobkin and powerful folk-blues singer Odetta. "We have the widest variety of music of any women's music festival -- everything from rock to cajun," says Moore.

The three nights of music kick off with a Friday program hosted by Alabama comedian Matina Bevis and including such local favorites as singer/songwriter Diana Jones and the conjunto sounds of the Texana Dames.

Saturday, hosted by the popular and funny Robyn E. from New Orleans, sees, among others, the "brainy beauteous and somewhat bawdy" BETTY take the stage, as well as "vulvacentric" Girls in the Nose and full-tilt rock band Power Snatch.

Sunday's lineup includes three Austin institutions -- Nancy Scott, Sara Elizabeth Campbell and Emily Kaitz -- and winds up with a Denton, Texas band whose name somehow seems to capture the spirit of the entire weekend: Lyndzi Wildheart and the Amazon Range Riders!

Volunteers are needed to help run the festival. "It takes a lot of women to make this happen," said Moore. "We need women in technical positions, to drive shuttles, to cook meals ... and we've lost our old contact list, so call even if you worked in previous years."

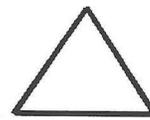
For more information on tickets and volunteering, call (512) 929-0002. □

## ALLISON JOSEPH TO VISIT OSU

Allison Joseph, winner of the John C. Zacharis First Book Award for her poetry collection *What Keeps Us Here*, will give a poetry reading at Oklahoma State University on Friday, October 1, 1993. The reading, which is free and open to the public, will be at 8 pm in the Student Union Theater. Following the reading, Ms. Joseph will sign copies of her book at an Autograph Party in the French Lounge, 270 Student Union.

Prior to the reading Ms. Joseph will speak at a dinner honoring recipients of the Southern Heights Youth Scholarship. The dinner is at 5:30 p.m. in the Oklahoma Room of the Best Western of Stillwater, 600 E. McElroy. Tickets are \$8.50, and the public is encouraged to attend. Send an SASE and a check earmarked for "Allison Joseph Banquet" and payable to "United Ministry of OSU", 823 W. University, Stillwater, OK 74074. Phone 405-377-9174.

Allison Joseph was born in London, England, in 1967 to parents of Caribbean heritage. She grew up in Toronto and the Bronx, and studied at Kenyon College and Indiana University. She was the first undergraduate student since Robert Lowell to be published in *The Kenyon Review*. In the last four years her poems have appeared in over fifty magazines, including OSU's *Cimmaron Review*. She has been awarded an Academy of American Poets Prize, a Ruth Lilly Fellowship, and an Associated Writing Programs Intro Journals Prize. Her book was the first winner of Ampersand Press's Women Poets Series Competition. □



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**WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY, 1993**  
**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED**  
**STATES OF AMERICA**

**A PROCLAMATION**

On August 26, 1993, we celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. In declaring that the right to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex, the Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed for women the most cherished prerogative of American citizenship.

Since America was founded, women have demonstrated an active interest in shaping the practice of democratic government. But it was not until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment that women's myriad contributions to the social, cultural, and economic life of our Nation began to receive the full acknowledgment they deserved. As women's voices continue to gain strength in the political arena, female elected officials at every level of government bring crucial insight to the decision-making process.

The struggle for true equality among the sexes has not been limited to the public sphere. Broadening the franchise fundamentally changed our understanding of equal opportunity, helping to encourage shared responsibility in the home and personal growth in the work place. Today, more and more women are leading the way through advancements in law, science, business, and the arts. As we approach the 21st century, women's unfailing strength and wisdom remain integral to ensuring the lasting prosperity of our Nation.

Each year, we observe August 26 as "Women's Equality Day," to honor the infinite sacrifices and contributions that women have made to the United States. On this occasion we reaffirm our national commitment to the distinctly American promise of guaranteed equality for all our people. □

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**TWO MOTHERS IN THE MORNING**

by Lilith Lynn

In the morning  
I turn to you  
Your hand strokes my cheek  
and I turn to your breast  
I suck your nipple and am comforted.

I think of how years ago  
you awoke with a baby by your side  
here where I lie now  
you stroked her cheek  
and she turned to you  
took your nipple in her small pink mouth  
sucked and was comforted.

I think of this  
I can see this because years ago  
I did the same.  
I also awoke with a hungry baby  
beside me  
I also stroked her cheek  
until she turned to me  
took my nipple in her mouth  
sucked and was comforted.

We both take it for granted that  
two mothers together  
we know these ordinary things  
But, oh my love, I tell you  
knowing these things together  
is NO ordinary thing.

**WOMEN PRISONERS**

The publication of *Women Prisoners: A Forgotten Population* has been announced by Praeger, of Westport, Connecticut. Edited by Beverly R. Fletcher, of the University of Oklahoma, Dreama Moon, of the University of Arizona, and Lynda Dixon Shaver of Indiana University, the book, based on a longitudinal study of women incarcerated in Oklahoma, covers a variety of issues relating to female offenders.

Because previous research has failed to address the problems of imprisoned women from a holistic point of view, two unique features of this book are its recognition of the importance of women researching women and its multidisciplinary, multiethnic approach. Beverly Fletcher, an African-American, Dreama Moon, an Anglo, and Lynda Shaver, a Cherokee woman, co-principal investigators and editors of this research, are themselves symbolic of the diversity of this work. □

## ABORTION FUNDING:

### SOME WINS, SOME LOSSES

Debate about federal funding of abortion services surfaced several times during the annual appropriations process. Both pro-choice and anti-choice advocates see these actions as important precedents for the treatment of abortion services in the health care reform package Congress will consider this fall.

#### Federal Employees Health Benefits Program

Since 1983, coverage for abortions under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) has been banned, except when the woman's life is in danger. Over 300 private plans are offered to federal employees under FEHBP. On June 22, the House passed its version of the Treasury-Postal-General Government appropriations bill without the FEHBP restriction.

When the bill reached the Senate in July, Senator Don Nickles (R-Oklahoma) offered an amendment to ban coverage of abortions except in cases of rape, incest or life endangerment of the woman. Insurance coverage for abortions could be offered only through a separate rider with the premium paid entirely by the employee. Sen. Barbara Mikulski successfully blocked the amendment at the subcommittee level and on the Senate floor.

With both versions of the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill free of restrictive language, abortion coverage will be restored in health plans offered to federal employees, beginning October 1, 1993.

#### Medicaid abortions for poor women:

The restriction against the use of federal Medicaid funds to pay for abortions for poor women, commonly known as the "Hyde Amendment," has been in effect since 1977. Retaining this restriction on Medicaid was the major goal of abortion opponents this year.

After heated debate and procedural maneuvering, the House voted 255-178 on June 30 to approve a modified Hyde amendment. Federal Medicaid funds may not be used to pay for abortions except in cases of rape, incest or life endangerment.

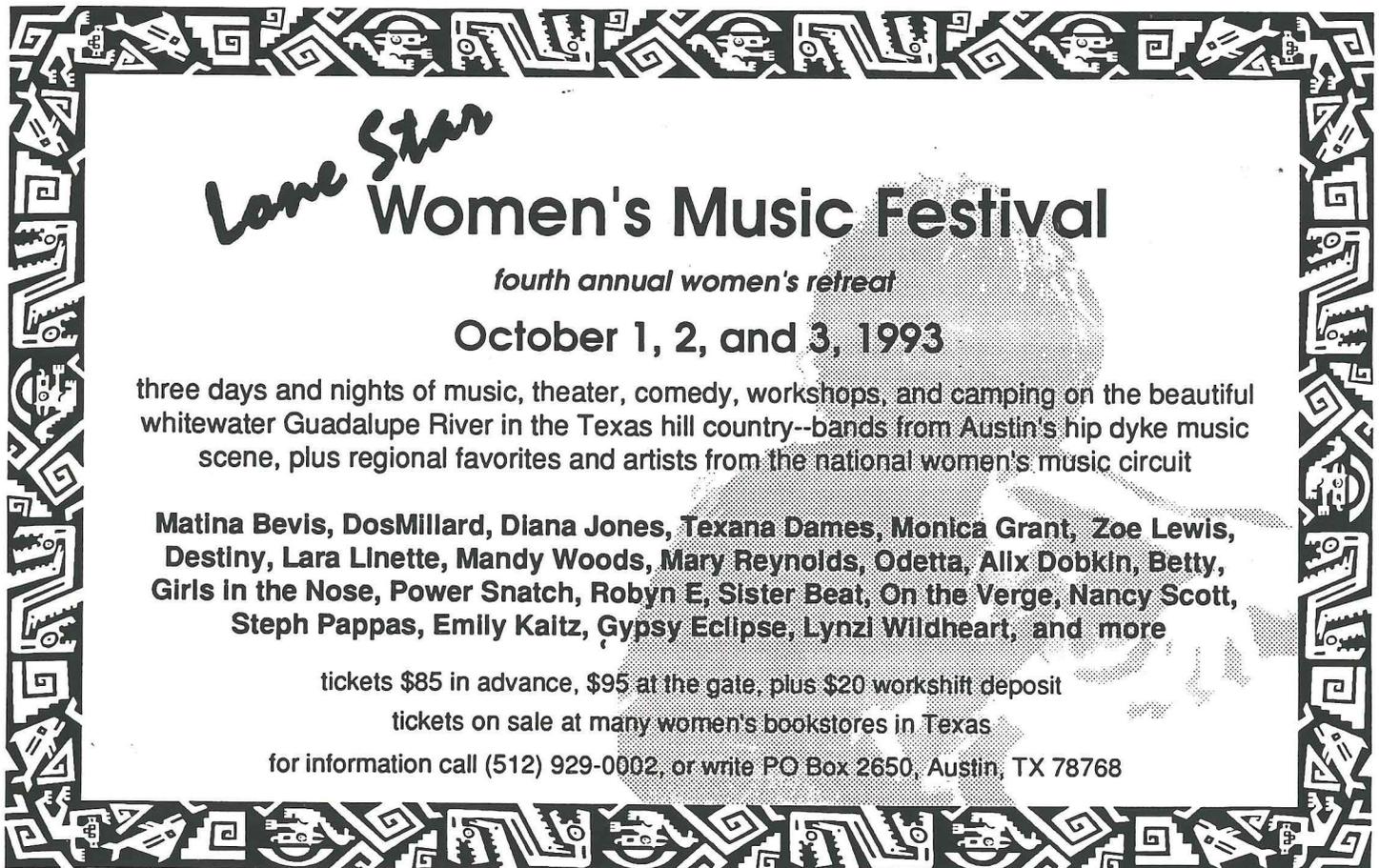
The Senate is expected to begin consideration of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill in September.

#### Other abortion restrictions:

The District of Columbia and the Commerce, State, Justice appropriations bills passed the House and Senate without restrictive abortion amendments. The D.C. government has been banned since 1988 from using local funds to pay for Medicaid abortions. Women in federal prisons also have been denied abortions since 1986. There was little debate concerning abortion funding during consideration of these bills, although abortion opponents mounted an unsuccessful effort to defeat final passage of the D.C. spending bill over this issue.

The restriction on paying for abortions for Peace Corps volunteers was also left in place by the House. The Senate is expected to take up the Foreign Operations appropriations bill in the fall. □

From: *Update On Women and Family Issues In Congress.*



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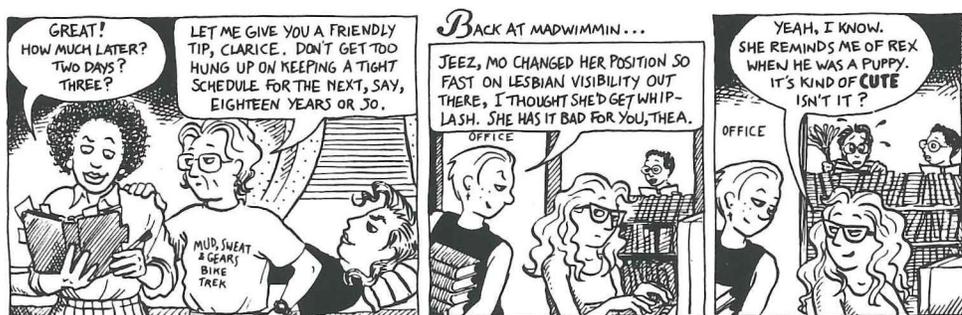
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# Dykes To Watch Out For



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*The Voice* is provided free to anyone who asks for a subscription. Each month, 1300 copies are distributed by mail in Oklahoma and nation-wide and in community centers and bars in the Oklahoma City area.

We need your help to continue this service. Production and mailing of one issue of *The Voice* costs about \$460 and takes at least 80 woman-hours of volunteer labor. Advertising helps to meet the costs but doesn't completely pay for production of *The Voice*. Herland relies on contributions to meet these regular expenses.

If you enjoy reading *The Voice* each month, please consider making a contribution of \$10 or more to help meet the costs of publication. Send your contribution to Herland Voice, 2312 N.W. 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. We'll promise to keep working to bring you a variety of information about the Oklahoma women's community and other items of interest. □

## BULLETIN BOARD

**Coming Out Stories:** The October *Voice* will celebrate National Coming Out Day by publishing your coming out stories. We invite you to submit a short account of how/when you first recognized yourself as a lesbian/bisexual or told others about your lifestyle. Recognizing that coming out is an ongoing process, *The Voice* will publish stories without the full name of the author on request.

**Lesbian Only Counseling group.** Wednesday evenings. Call Jo L. Soske, M.Ed/MHR/NCADC/NCC/LPC at 364-5708.

**Julianne Malveaux, Ph.D.,** economist, writer and syndicated columnist, has been named keynote speaker for the second annual Women Mean Business Conference to be held September 20 at the Marriott Hotel in Oklahoma City. Ms. Malveaux writes a newspaper column that appears regularly in over 20 newspapers, including the *Oklahoma Women's Front Page News*. She provides commentary on socio-political issues on TV and radio programs such as CNN and "To the Contrary."

**Spinsters Ink** is seeking feminist writing by women of color in the form of full-length novels or non-fiction work. Submit to Spinsters Ink, P. O. Box 300170 Dept C, Minneapolis, MN 55403 or call 612-377-0287.

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**Correction:** The correct address for Judy Chicago's *Through The Flower* is P. O. Box 8138, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504.

**\$100 Poetry Prize** for the Sue Saniel Elkind Poetry Contest. Submissions must be postmarked by November 1, 1993. For information write "Kalliope," Sue Saniel Elkind Poetry Contest, FCCJ, 3939 Roosevelt Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32205.