Feminist Times February 1998

Feminist Times Editorial Board

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The Threat of Food-borne Illness
by Nichols Fox

Bacteria in hamburgers, parasites on raspberries, viruses in strawberries, outbreaks caused by microbes on salad greens and alfalfa sprouts — it seems hardly a week passes when Americans aren’t confronted by more bad news about food. Day after day we discover that foods we have eaten our entire lives have suddenly become dangerous.

Food preparation is now a treacherous undertaking in which cooks are expected to become virtual lab technicians in biohazard environments, scrubbing down before and after preparing foods, disinfecting, avoiding cross-contamination, sterilizing. Suddenly it is a brave new and frightening food-world, and the bewildered cook can be forgiven for recoiling with surprise and asking, “What happened to food?”

The answer is as complex as the problem. Food-borne disease is nothing new, but in the last 30 or 40 years it has changed dramatically both in nature and numbers. While there is vast under-reporting of what can be at best a mild and at worst a deadly infection, estimates run from 33 million to 81 million cases in the United States annually with 9,000 deaths. E. coli 0157:H7 alone causes up to 20,000 illnesses and between 200 and 500 deaths here each year.

Once food outbreaks were local — the spoiled potato salad at the family reunion was a typical example. Now outbreaks may be national or even international in scope, and the public is learning a string of tongue-twisting names — the new culprits in food-borne disease: E. coli 0157:H7, campylobacter, listeria, cryptosporidium, hepatitis A, cyclospora, salmonella enteritidis. And instead of looking, as in the past, toward your last meal as the cause of illness, some of these new bugs may take days or even weeks to wreak havoc, making incriminating the food-vehicle difficult or unlikely.

What has gone wrong? In our microbial world, any (Continued on Page 5)

Care or Neglect?
by Jennifer Hersey

A n elderly woman defending her right to drive a car is described in news articles as “feisty,” although she is “sparrow-like” in stature. Her grown children whisper about “what to do with Mom” right in front of her, as if she is not able to understand them. The elderly woman in the store is the last to be waited on although she was the first to arrive.

Ageism shows its face in many ways, but according to several new studies regarding drugs and the elderly and a recent TIME investigation, pharmaceutical companies, drug researchers and nursing-home administrators are often the worst offenders and the biggest obstacle to natural, healthy and happy aging.

According to Women’s Health Advocate, one-sixth of the population, people age 65 and older, consumes 40 percent of the prescription drugs sold. Margaret Cruikshank, author of Drugs and the Elderly and professor of women’s studies at the University of Maine, believes the underlying assumption is that “the old need more prescription drugs than others because they are old.”

People do not die of old age. People die of heart failure or lung failure or cancer. Growing old is not a disease; aging is not lethal.

Most people in old age suffer from chronic (long-term) rather than acute (short-term) illnesses. As patients, they take medication, not for 10-14 days but for 16-30 years. This makes them a favorite target of pharmaceutical companies. And women are targeted and overdosed the most, according to Cruikshank.

The lifespan of both men and women is increasing, and the number of people over 85 is growing four times faster than the number of people over 65. By the year 2000, it is estimated there will be 39 men for every 100 women. To complicate matters, the elderly are the largest growing population living in poverty, which means many are unable to afford reliable health care, especially in the wake of managed care. And women are at risk additionally because of the lack of federal regulations mandating research. Although the U.S. Food and Drug Administration now requires testing to be done on female participants, it does not require the results to be broken down by sex. Women’s smaller body size, higher concentration of fat, hormone fluctuations and slower gastric emptying rate leave women at a higher risk of drug overdose, according to Women’s Health Advocate.

Many times the side effects of prescription drugs mimic the symptoms of other diseases. The patients are then prescribed more drugs which also have side effects and sometimes react to other drugs. “Given the adverse drug reactions specific to aging,” Cruikshank says, “and considering that the old use nearly one-third of all drugs prescribed in this country, it is logical to suppose that some, perhaps much of what we call ‘aging,’ is actually a cumulative reaction to prescription drugs; especially to more than one drug (Continued on Page 7)

Organizing Sweatshops in El Salvador
by Margaret Cox Murray and Jennifer Hersey

The Melida Ana Montes Women’s movement has taken on the monumental task of sweatshop reform in El Salvador. Marina Rios, coordinator of the Women Garment Workers Organizing Project visited the Unitarian Universalist Church in Bangor and the UMaine Women in the Curriculum lunch series on Dec. 3 to talk about its efforts.

For an audience of predominantly English-speaking Americans, the sound of Rios’ Spanish voice (translation via interpreter) describing the impact of the United States on the global economy was effective. Katherine Kates of Peace through Inter-American Community Action (PICA) in Bangor introduced Rios and said that a delegation of women from Maine traveled to El Salvador to explore sweatshop conditions where “people carry the global economy on their backs to survive.”

In El Salvador, where 70 percent of the population is female, over half the households are headed by women. A 12-year war, coupled with massive migration of males running from poverty and in search of financial security, has contributed to a situation where it is predominantly women and children affected by economic globalization. Because more than 50 percent of the people she speaks to are young and percent of the people she speaks to are young and female, desperately in need of hope. Rios represents an organization of women struggling for the rights of women working (Continued on Page 6)
Feminist Times was created to give attention to the feminist perspective on issues, asking questions that have not been asked; to shine a spotlight on women of achievement in business, politics, education and the arts; and is committed to providing a forum for women to express their view on local and world events -- a viewpoint that is often ignored, overlooked or misconstrued in the mainstream media. Our goal is to ask questions and inspire a dialogue on a diverse range of issues. We hope to challenge our readers to consider new points of view, and we would like to uphold the ideals of the feminist movement -- to reclaim and honor the title 'feminist' for women.

Editorial

If anything proves women need to take more of a role in running the government, the media, public relations firms and political parties, it is the current state of news coming out of Washington. The usual political game that is usually discussed is that the two of the leading candidates, George Bush and Bill Clinton, have the power to influence legislation, and the women in power in the White House have the power to influence the media.

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Statement of Purpose

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In this current crisis, feminists have been castigated by talk-radio hosts for not standing by the women who have accused President Clinton of sexual impropriety. They say feminists are inconsistent, have supported Anita Hill in her confrontation with Clarence Thomas on charges of sexual harassment we owe the same support to the women who accuse Clinton. These statements reveal more about the talk-show hosts and their inability to understand women and women's concerns than it does feminists.

We do not know the truth about the allegations of sexual impropriety brought to President Clinton, but if it is true, it shows that the women who have accused Clinton have the strength to live with the consequences of their choice. Whether we disagree with the (alleged) sexual activity the women engaged in with Clinton or not, the women entered into it willingly. They were not forced, nor did Anita Hill in her confrontation with Clarence Thomas, nor was she forced to endure the unwanted sexual misconduct of a man who had the power to destroy her career and therefore her economic independence and security. The prospect of a man with a demonstrated lack of sensitivity to women appointed (not elected) to a lifetime position in which he might render legal rulings on similar issues prompted the support of feminists for Anita Hill.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS... UNBELIEVABLE

On Jan. 22, 1973, the Supreme Court gave its approval (grudgingly from a few of the justices) in a landmark decision for women in Roe vs. Wade to uphold the Constitution in allowing women the freedom of choice on whether to continue incubating a fetus until term or to abort it. It boggles the mind that after 25 years, this issue of freedom for women is still so controversial. But then, why would it be so surprising? "Allowing" women to have access to the voting booth took 75 years. Is there something wrong with this picture?

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Amnesty International is leading the effort to get the U.S. Senate to ratify the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by March 8. Currently, 161 countries have ratified this treaty, yet the U.S., which has ratified other human rights treaties, has not. Without this support, other governments can easily ignore the provision of this treaty which women around the world are using in the struggle to end violence against women, poverty, lack of legal status and credit, and prohibitions against inheriting or owning property. It should be embarrassing to the men that dominate the leadership in our government that the country that has led the world for over 200 years in securing individual rights now lags behind 161 other nations. Call your senator today to urge ratification of this treaty by March 8.
I called a performer friend of mine a month or so ago to ask him if he'd be interested in doing a show to get out the vote on Feb. 10 in support of civil rights and he said, "Oh that! Surely not again! Didn't we just go through all of that?" I quote him only because I confess I had the same exact reaction the same way didn't we just do this? How many different ways can you say it? How long can you keep your energy and your indignation and your interest intact for it? And then the ice storm came.

At first it was quiet out in the woods. I think we even laughed and commented that the weather predictors had got it all wrong again. It didn't feel like much of anything. We were cozy inside, and it looked like we'd all get a day off from work because the driving conditions were moderately bad. Nothing much to worry about at all.

Then the night came and it was colder. Still it didn't seem too bad. We'd all seen worse. Blizzard snow blowing, wind howling. There was none of that. It was true that there was some ice build up and it had caused discomfort and inconvenience, especially on long backwoods roads and driveways. Later in the night and deep in the woods the crescent of sound and motion culminated in the trees toppling around us every 5 seconds. Every 5 seconds a tree screamed and fell. The next day we woke up to a completely changed landscape.

Everything was rearranged. It looked like a war zone after the army had departed. Nothing stood in the same way as it had the day before. It was Day 1 of the power outage.

When you rely on electric power, as most of us have learned to do, you are sorely inconvenienced when it goes away. You very quickly learn what is important and what is not. The list of important things is brief and simple. A hot drink, decent food, dry clothing, warm shelter, a safe place for an extended bowel movement, an amiable companion, or human or otherwise. That's it. It all quickly fades if you lose the means to access any of the aforementioned. After a few days of no power you add some way to get moderately clean to the list. And there it ends. That is what you must have in order to live as a human being. At least those things.

But what does all of this have to do with getting out to vote "No" on Feb. 10? For me it breaks down this way. I am one of those people whose power stayed out for a long time. In fact I am writing this column by hand in the romantic but inadequate light of oil lamps and candles. It is Day 15 of my particular power outage (all the lights on the rest of my street are burning brightly).

During this storm I have been forced to go back to the basics. I have been reminded constantly what is important and what is not. The right to a decent meal, warm shelter, an invigorating companion, the means to earn a living. The right to cause a good of my house or my job because someone objects to something about me: my gender or the color of my skin or my accent or my choice of friends and companions. It is really that simple. I could go further and say that every one of you need have in order to live as a human being. At least those things.

What bothers me most about this referendum is that it's all about the ways people feel about this one referendum. And the ways people feel about this one referendum is going to cause a good of our house or our job.


Letters:

Dear Editor,

I thought you'd be interested in a 1997 Bell Atlantic survey which served as Maine's telephone service for the past decade. From 1993 to 1997 Hospitality House was listed in the emergency numbers of the phone book by Nynex as a statewide homeless hotline. Bell Atlantic arbitrarily removed the listing from its telephone book. We were told Hospitality House needed full business service to be reinstated in the 1998-99 telephone book. Rather than publish a newsletter by the 2000 students, including myself, are organizing a conference in April and publishing a newsletter by the end of this month that will be sent to all high schools, colleges and community activists in Maine. Our ultimate goal is that through this newsletter and conference, we will be able to create a strong coalition of progressive groups in Maine and eventually all of New England which can quickly respond to legislative threats and other calls to action. This will be a network to share ideas, information and other resources. In other words, we are trying to build a New England progressive coalition.

As you can probably imagine, this effort is mammoth in scale. Any and all help would be greatly appreciated. This help can be anything from lists of students and other activists you are aware of, updates on exactly what your group is doing and coming, offers of speakers and/or workshop presenters for the conference, in kind services, financial or product donations, etc.

This effort is an attempt to break down barriers that have been preventing environmentally and socially progressive groups from working together for sometime now. When we arrived at College of the Atlantic we were struck by the lack of communication between different high schools, colleges and community groups throughout the state. We will change this with your help.

Send information to Rob Fish, College of the Atlantic Social Environmental Action; 105 Eden St., Bar Harbor, ME 04609; or call 288-5015; or e-mail fish@ecology.eco..vaadin; or turner@ecology.eco..vaadin.

Rob Fish
Rita Turner

Dear Editor,

The circle of women of the Women's Center in Belfast and the Feminist Times urge every resident of Maine to finally put to rest the question: Does anyone have the right to discriminate against others? We say: No. Maine Still Won't Discriminate.

Dear Editor,

Here we go again. In about a month, Mainers will be voting on whether or not to repeal the law banning discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

Send information to Rob Fish, College of the Atlantic Social Environmental Action; 105 Eden St., Bar Harbor, ME 04609; or call 288-5015; or e-mail fish@ecology.eco.vauna; or turner@ecology.eco.vauna.

Rob Fish
Rita Turner

Dear Editor,

In all seriousness, this referendum is cheap. It is the Crypto-Petition -- most likely circulated only in the lobbies of fundamentalist churches and after Christian Civic League meetings. It's easy to get signatures when you've got a captive audience. It's also easy to forget that your opinions and beliefs aren't shared by everyone else in the state.

Jane Kelley
Belfast

Dear Editor,

[Referring to her two-year subscription to Feminist Times]. Sometimes we must give a gift to ourselves. I'm a good student in political science with emphasis in feminist political theory. I'm from Maine, and the Feminist Times will help me keep in touch. Thanks for the good work.

Eric Watson
Durham, Ohio
The Threat of Food-borne Illness (Continued from Page 1.)

change has the potential to open the door to an opportunistic microbe, and we’ve changed everything about our relationship to food.

We eat out more, leaving food preparation and safety to some of our lowest-paid workers without questioning that irony. We demand novelty, convenience and year-round availability — supplied by a vast global trade. It’s no longer possible to say “We have the safest food in the world.” We have the world’s food, and it’s as safe as the environment from which it comes. A woman in Baltimore became ill with cholera from imported frozen coconut juice from Thailand. Imported canteloupes, tomatoes, green onions, raspberries and canned mushrooms have caused outbreaks.

We’ve changed how we manufacture foods. When a yogurt manufacturer in the United Kingdom replaced the sugar in hazelnut yogurt with artificial sweetener, that small shift created an environment that suited Clostridium botulinum. The result: 30 cases of the potentially fatal disease, botulism.

We expect food to be cheap and that has meant changes in how we produce food, how we process it and how we distribute it. Chicken was once reserved for Sunday dinner; now it is everyday fare and a quarter the price of a yellow pepper. Why is it a surprise that the factory farms that make chicken cheap have also made it more likely to cause disease-causing bacteria? Subjecting intensively raised virtually identical animals to stresses such as overcrowding, antibiotics, contaminated feed, rough handling and difficult conditions in transport make these animals more susceptible to getting infections and spreading them. Some cattle are eating recycled chicken litter, an unsavory practice if there ever was one. Vastly speeded-up modern slaughter can make matters worse. Rubber plucking devices, conveyor belts and water chill baths for chickens can spread bacteria. Even refrigeration, which has extended shelf-life and improved food safety, has opened the door to pathogens, such as Yersinia and Listeria, that actually thrive in these chilly conditions. Every step forward, it seems, creates a niche for microbes adapt.

At the same time, mass production of food products means that contamination can be spread widely across the country causing seemingly sporadic cases of illness that are, in fact, linked to a single food. In 1994 a mass-produced ice cream contaminated with Salmonella was identified as the culprit in an outbreak of human disease. When the investigation was complete it was estimated that the product actually caused 224,000 illnesses in 48 states.

While animal products have always had the potential to carry pathogenic organisms, there is no doubt that eggs and poultry and mass-produced hamburger are more contaminated today than ever before, and the finger points directly toward the irresponsible rearing of food animals and the mass-processing and distribution of foods. When thousands of cows from up to four different countries meet at the mass grinders that now produce our hamburger, everything is contaminated. One contaminated cow can contaminate 16 tons of hamburger, which explains the recent massive recall from Hudson Meats (which they were doing at the request of Burger King). In 1997 they didn’t prevent 25 million pounds of contaminated meat from being distributed.

The market place and consumer action could have had a profound effect on food safety, but there are missing ingredients. Consumers need to know just how contaminated their food is. A USDA base-line study found more than 99 percent of chicken positive for generic E. coli, an indicator of fecal contamination with pathogenic bacteria. When a Tufts University scientist went looking in his local supermarket for the toxin produced by the viable E. coli 0157:H7 and other strains, he found it in 25 percent of hamburger he sampled.

Consumers also need to know that food can be cleaner. When the Swedish public discovered how contaminated their food was, consumption quickly dropped by 40 percent. The industry responded. Now Salmonella-free chicken is available there. They cost more, but it only takes one trip to the hospital to discover that cheap isn’t cheap when it makes you sick.

At the very least, consumers need options. The food industry has been reluctant to use new technology as a marketing strategy, but there are important cracks in that wall of silence. An organic egg producer in Massachusetts includes a flyer in its egg carton that announces regular testing for Salmonella enteritidis. These are eggs I will buy. A well-known seafood chain in Boston spells out what they do to ensure safe fish right on their place mats. This is a place where I will eat. A Seattle supermarket labels its produce with its origin — sometimes right down to the farm — because of consumer demand, and all over the country the growth of local farmer’s markets and community-supported agriculture is evidence of the people who want to know where their food is coming from. This information consumers have a right to.

We have been basking in the assumption that the magic wand of technology and federal inspection was guaranteeing clean food. It is past time to put such complacency aside, rethink our relationship to what we eat, ask hard questions about where our food comes from, and demand cleaner food.

Nicole Fox, with the author’s Spalding, Louisville, KY.

Some old favorites that could make you sick... or worse.

Because of the danger of Salmonella contamination:

- sunny-side up eggs or any eggs, such as soft-boiled or poached, where the yolk is not solidly cooked.

(This eliminates literally hundreds of recipes for the serious chef, such as eggs Florentine.)

- lemon or other meringue pies
- raw cookie dough
- mousse
- Caesar salad
- homemade ice cream
- frostedings and fillings made with lightly cooked eggs
- homemade eggnog
- homemade mayonnaise
- hollandaise sauce

Because of the danger of contamination from Vibrio vulnificus and Vibrio cholerae (cholera):

- raw or undercooked shellfish of any kind
- seviche

Because of the danger of contamination with E. coli 0157:H7:

- raw hamburgers
- beef tartar

Rare steak that has been pierced or skewered (poking with a fork or skewer can transport bacteria from the outside to the sterile inside of meat.)

- unpasteurized apple cider

Because of the danger of contamination with Yersinia:

- chitterlings (the preparation can infect food-handlers and those they touch)

Because of the danger of contamination with campylobacter:

- under-cooked poultry or barbecued chicken blasted throughout the cooking process, which could spread bacteria.

General food safety advice

Assume that any raw animal product you bring into the house has the potential to be contaminated with microbes that could make you sick or kill you. Ground turkey is especially dangerous. Keep raw animal products apart from foods you expect to eat without further cooking. (Heating foods to 160 degrees will kill bacteria if cross-contamination has not spread the contamination. Do not eat pink hamburger and look for steam as an indication of heat in the absence of a thermometer.) Have all utensils and baking equipment washed thoroughly, rinse with hot water and soap for 20 seconds. Keep counters and sponges clean and disinfected. Do not put cooked meats back on the platter you used to take them to the grill and avoid using the same utensils on raw and cooked products. Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly before consuming.

Milking the public...

from CHICAGO LIFE MAGAZINE by Hillary Vamer

New research suggests that our milk supply may be increasingly more dangerous. With the increased use of hormones and antibiotics in milk-producing cows comes an increase in the levels of the naturally occurring growth hormone known as “insulin-like growth factor-1” (IGF-1), which has been linked to major health problems. It has been suggested that drinking milk with high levels of IGF-1 may lead to an increase in breast or colorectal cancer.

When the bovine growth hormone Posilac (rBGH), manufactured by Monsanto, was approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 1993, many felt the debate on its safety was a moot point. But since the FDA approval, health experts claim new findings concerning the bovine growth hormone are cause for alarm.

The growth hormone regulator IGF-1 is present in both cows and humans. IGF-1 controls milk production and growth, but the Consumer Policy Institute’s Jean Halloran asserts that it is also known to be a “tumor growth promoter.” This means that while IGF-1 helps to grow, it also accelerates the multiplication of cancer cells. Studies done on rBGH-injected cows show that IGF-1 levels are increased anywhere from 25 to 700 percent.

Dr. Samuel S. Epstein, professor of occupational and environmental medicine at the University of Illinois School of Public Health and chairman of the Cancer Prevention Coalition, states that “IGF-1 is a growth factor for human breast cancer cells, maintaining their malignancy, progression, and evasiveness.” IGF-1 has been linked similarly with colon cancer.

The main concern by many is simply that IGF-1 is very potent and no one is sure of much about how it works. Keith Ashdown, of the Cancer Prevention Coalition in Chicago, says about IGF-1, “It was never really looked at carefully.”

(Continued on Page 7)
How Great the Loss... Pamela S. Raabe Murphy

PAMELA S. MURPHY

Pamela S. Murphy, Ph.D., 41, of Belfast, scholar, mother, housewife and struggling novelist, died at Rosae Manor, Bangor on the morning of Jan. 4, 1998, as the result of a severe brain injury suffered in an automobile accident on Aug. 11, 1997.

Pamela Murphy, formerly Pamela S. Raabe, enjoyed a distinguished academic career. She earned her Ph.D. in English and American literature at Boston University in 1987, her M.A. in English and American literature from Boston University in 1979 and her B.A. in English (summa cum laude) at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1978, where she also completed the requirements for a B.A. in classics.

She was appointed assistant professor of Medieval literature at Bowdoin College in 1983 and previously from 1980-1987, she was a lecturer and teaching fellow at Boston University. In 1990, her major treatise, a work of literary criticism titled, "Imitating God: The Allegory of Faith in Piers Plowman," was published by the University of Georgia Press.

In 1990, she left academia to raise a family and to pursue her first love, the writing of long fiction after the fashion of 19th century women novelists, especially Jane Austen. She loved her home, her children behind. Certainly we were grown up and had our own lives, in touch, we visited on occasion. But that was not my mother's idea of a family, and we children, too,resented being outsiders.

There were things we loved about our mother while she was alive. We were proud because she was beautiful, and she was proud of it, too, though never vain or shallow -- her beauty was just a lucky fact that pleased her. We also loved our mother's industry, her rigor and creativity, her stylishness, her expert sewing of pretty clothes, mostly for us.

And there were things we didn't like. Though she raised us in the age of Dr. Spock, my mother subscribed to the turn-of-the-century theory that children are natural malogamaniacs who must be broken to society's will. By modern lights this seems a little harsh, and from the child's point of view, cruel, but now that I'm a mother and, as my son said, "I'm going to be a mother," I've come to see the value of literature and could penetrate the chaff to discover the wheat by word, but by example.

My mother rang her other changes in the family independence by wanting more than farm life had to offer. She had her dreams of high flying, of urban sophistication; under her senior picture in her high school yearbook it says she wanted to be an airline stewardess. But hearthead pragmatism must have won out, and after two years at the county normal school she was teaching Grades 1 through 3 in a one-room schoolhouse. Maybe she felt her ambitions would be realized through her father, another ambitious farm kid who had put himself through college, who married my mother and whisked her off to life in the military and the middle class.

That's where we were born, my sisters and I, in decent tract houses that got bigger and nicer over the years but never became home.

When my father retired, it was the strength of my mother's will that dictated where they should settle, and she lived the last 20 years of her life so happily in the northwoods, going fishing instead of doing her homework for the Bible study group led by my father. She was back among her family, amid her friends, sisters and inlaws, within a few miles of the farm where she had been born.

Unfortunately, her daughters had no place in that world. It was the last remaining sadness to my mother, I think, that in choosing her real self she was obliged to leave her children behind. She had chiselled, as it were, a life for herself, always a finite number of words, and that's that, the whole story is in your hands. But people are infinite, for every word said there are millions left unsaid. When a book is finished, everything is known. When a life is done, it's more mysterious than ever.

We will never know the mystery that is Pamela Murphy. Unlike the books she wrote about, her life and her work on Earth is unfinished: she leaves not only two sons and her husband, but her dreams and plans: an infinite life with millions of words left to be spoken.

Below is the last piece she wrote for the Feminist Times.

Not a Book Review

by P.S. Murphy

The review I intended to write this month was one of many personal plans scuttled by my mother's sudden death on May 29. At the top of my obituary itinerary for June had been a long-overdue road trip to Wisconsin with my husband and sons to see my mother. We would have arrived June 29. I hadn't seen her in two years.

It's easier to know a book than a person, which is why there are so many more book reviews than people reviews. A book, however many interpretations you may have, always has a finite number of words, and that's that, the whole story is in your hands. But people are infinite, for every word said there are millions left unsaid. When a book is finished, everything is known. When a life is done, it's more mysterious than ever.

My mother was well worth knowing, and much about her life would make a great book, though it's not a book I could write. Our experience was too different -- hers was vastly more colorful, a fact which always filled me with wistful envy and her, I often suspected, with a gentle, mocking sort of disdain for her bland suburban daughters. She was the fifth of seven children, all still living except her, all shocked that their sister is gone. They are the tightest-knit group of siblings I've ever seen, having grown up on an isolated, hardscrabble farmland. This seems a little harsh, and from the child's point of view, cruel; but now that I'm a mother and, as my son said, "I'm going to be a mother," I've come to see the value of literature and could penetrate the chaff to discover the wheat.

There was a renegade quality to my mother's early life that never left her, and I think served her well. The farm she grew up on was not like my father's in southern Wisconsin, a solid dairy business on gently rolling hills. It was a town-and-farm in the harsh northern woods, when farming didn't suit, my grandfather turned to lumberjacking, well digging, ditch digging, ditch digging, anything. Much venison was consumed out of season, and the family tone was and still remains distinctly ironic, independent, even scoffing. They are good Swedes, good Lutherans, very pious up to a point, but life tough, and even God should know his place.

My mother rang her other changes in the family independence by wanting more than farm life had to offer. She had her dreams of high flying, of urban sophistication, under her senior picture in her high school yearbook it says she wanted to be an airline stewardess. But hearthead pragmatism must have won out, and after two years at the county normal school she was teaching Grades 1 through 3 in a one-room schoolhouse. Maybe she felt her ambitions would be realized through her father, another ambitious farm kid who had put himself through college, who married my mother and whisked her off to life in the military and the middle class.

That's where we were born, my sisters and I, in decent tract houses that got bigger and nicer over the years but never became home.

When my father retired, it was the strength of my mother's will that dictated where they should settle, and she lived the last 20 years of her life very happily in the northwoods, going fishing instead of doing her homework for the Bible study group led by my father. She was back among her family, amid her friends, sisters and inlaws, within a few miles of the farm where she had been born.

Unfortunately, her daughters had no place in that world. It was the last remaining sadness to my mother, I think, that in choosing her real self she was obliged to leave her children behind. She had chiselled, as it were, a life for herself, always a finite number of words, and that's that, the whole story is in your hands. But people are infinite, for every word said there are millions left unsaid. When a book is finished, everything is known. When a life is done, it's more mysterious than ever.

We will never know the mystery that is Pamela Murphy. Unlike the books she wrote about, her life and her work on Earth is unfinished: she leaves not only two sons and her husband, but her hopes and dreams and plans: an infinite life with millions of words left to be spoken.

Below is the last piece she wrote for the Feminist Times.
The Clean Clothes Consumer Network: Making the Connections to the People Who Make the Clothes We Wear

by Bjorn Skorpen-Claeson

In the global clothing industry, power and control is covert and cloaked in darkness. The industry is rife with labor practices in garment factories. Globalization allows large garment companies to auction off production to local and national governments here and abroad. Minimum production standards, sweatshop abuses (below subsistence wages, excessive working hours, physical abuse, sexual harassment), and minimum wages, excessive working hours, physical abuse, sexual harassment) prevent the development of national and international standards of ethical production capacity among garment companies. By joining the Clean Clothes Consumer Network (see coupon below), we become part of an organized community of consumers with the education and information to uncover the realities of sweatshop production. We are beginning to unveil the realities of garment production, breaking down our sense of distance to "those people." Contrary to industry expectations that "people are not going to stop buying Nikes because workers are paid low wages," Nike can claim; "We don't know the first thing about manufacturing. We are marketers and designers." Or Reebok: "We are manufacturers without the burden of plant ownership." As consumers we experience a sense of inextricable distance to "those people" who make the clothes we wear, obscuring the fact that their lives and fates are inextricably linked to ours.

But now consumer movements are beginning to educate the public about sweatshop abuses. The power and control is inextricably linked, we take action with others against an exploitative system that sets governments against governments, communities against communities, and workers against a race to offer the most competitive investment environment. This is a race which brings longer hours, lower wages, and job insecurity everywhere from Maine to Malaysia and makes life more precarious for us all. Once we discern the connections to the human lives linked to the clothes we wear, we also understand that we face the same reality as the people who make our clothes; that, indeed, our struggles to live lives with dignity are shared.

As consumers, we have the leverage to hold the garment industry accountable for the way clothes are made, not just their quality. Despite their distance from the production process, the large garment retailers and brand-name merchandisers in effect set the pace of production and the wages of workers in their contractors' factories. Concentrated buying power in the retail and wholesale sectors and excess production capacity ensure that workers will work for whatever wages the market can bear in order to provide the prices and delivery schedules. Contractors pass on the demands to workers, holding down wages and increasing working hours. But the large garment companies are ultimately dependent on consumers to sell their wares, and U.S. shoppers buy 25 percent of all manufactured garments. If we organize a widespread, organized consumer demand for "clean clothes," we can create movement toward a business ethic where garment companies and their suppliers protect their bottom line by providing living wages and humane working conditions. This demand will benefit garment in Maine as well as workers worldwide.

It starts when we see the labor behind the labels we buy and understand our connection to the people who make the clothes we wear.

Bjorn Skorpen Claeson is an organizer with Peace through Inter-American Community Association in Bangor.

Organizing Sweatshops in El Salvador

(Continued from Page 1)

under the less-than-desirable labor conditions in El Salvador. She describes a work environment of poverty wages, abusive supervisors, and minimum production standards (workers who do not meet these standards are often not paid for their work). Many of the human "rights" violations are clandestine and Rios says women are fearful about speaking out. Women lose employment, even though the law provides for their right to organize.

The Garment Workers Organizing Project works closely with the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPEs) to educate workers and others, and connections with churches, universities and unions have been important, as is awareness, whether it be through radio interviews or distribution of flyers. But, Rios points out, there is much to do, and a united effort of organizations working for the movement is essential, particularly in the United States.

Rios focused on her lunchtime talk mainly on the global economy becoming more and more privatized. In El Salvador the banks are owned by government officials and money is disseminated to the bosses of the pockets of corrupt leaders. She said that a telephone company subsidizes education and health care, yet the people pay the company's taxes, which results in a profit of $500,000 to the telephone company. Those paying the toll are women and children.

Rios believes there is hope in El Salvador; and it lies in the FMLN political party. El Salvador has laws to protect women from being exploited, but the party in control does not want investments to go elsewhere. Rios said that when the FMLN is in control, these laws will be enforced.

Buyoots, according to Rios, are one means of addressing the problem of sweatshops, along with awareness and from the production process, benefiting from low labor costs and unregulated working conditions without a direct or apparent line of responsibility. Thus, Nike can claim; "We don't know the first thing about manufacturing. We are marketers and designers." Or Reebok: "We are manufacturers without the burden of plant ownership." As consumers we experience a sense of inextricable distance to "those people" who make the clothes we wear, obscuring the fact that their lives and fates are inextricably linked to ours.

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...
Care or Neglect?  (Continued from Page 1)

percent of people 65 and older live in nursing homes (the percentage is higher in the over 85 group), increasing incidences of abuse and neglect are being exposed. Among the causes of death reported in nursing homes around the country is malnutrition, urinary tract infection and bedsores -- preventable conditions. Why? Understaffing and underfunding, according to Time. "Many nursing homes have become dangerous places largely because they are understaffed and underregulated," Thompson notes. "The federal government doesn't dictate staffing levels, and state efforts at regulating quality are meager." One nurse said that she only had 20 minutes to feed seven patients and that many residents need to be spoon fed, sometimes taking 30 minutes each. The result? Trays untouched, residents not fed and, therefore, malnourished. The government's disgraceful lack of action is continued in the courtroom where nursing home violators guilty of neglect receive fines which are reduced when paid without appeal.

If it were babies in the delivery room or nursery dying of bedsores, malnourishment and thirst, there would be no question of punishment. So why, when the face of the victim is wrinkled, do those in authority turn a blind eye? Is it a simple matter of where money comes from, or is it just contempt for the old? According to a recent survey by the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 30 percent of respondents said they would rather die than live in a nursing home. There seems to be ample evidence to justify this response.

Jennifer Hessey is a free-lance reporter living in Orono.

New abortion methods get noticed

WASHINGTON -- New drugs and surgical techniques are enabling women to have quicker, less complicated abortions, several experts in obstetrics and gynecology said Dec. 22.

Although some of the methods have been around for as long as 35 years, they said women are only just becoming widely aware of them and starting to demand them.

Dr. Richard Hausknecht, a professor at New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, said he was delighted to see a description of one of the techniques on the front page of the New York Times Dec. 21. "I like the fact that there's all this talk about it. It means that women are learning about this," he said.

Abortion opponents do not approve of the newly publicized methods. "Once again, abortion proponents have depersonalized the child in the womb," Judie Brown, president of the American Life League, said in a statement. "I think there is a real need for safe, non-surgical abortions," Hausknecht countered. "Those who are opposed to abortions are fighting a losing battle."

Hospital Welcomes New Physician

BELFAST -- Dr. Eleanor Handler is the woman-half of the new two-staff practice, The Center for Women's Health, at Waldo County General Hospital. The other is Dr. Gus Schwenk.

Handler and Schwenk have named their practice to more accurately reflect their personalized and encompassing approach to women's health issues including pregnancy, infertility and menopause. Handler brings 15 years of prior experience and will provide obstetrical and gynecological services for women.

Handler says she welcomes the opportunity to build "better and closer relationships with patients that a community-based hospital like WCGH is able to offer."

Handler graduated magna cum laude from Barnard College in 1978 where she was an Oxford English Fellowship recipient. She earned her MD in 1982 from New York Medical College where she was presented with the Joseph Wiederman Award in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Handler was designated a Galloway Fellow in Gynecological Oncology at the world-renowned Sloan-Kettering Cancer Institute. She taught at Cornell University Medical College in the Obst-Gyn department for 13 years.

She is an avid sailor, hiker and cross country skier; she lives in Northport with her husband, Russell.
Ethical Investing

by F. Weidner

"I don't want to be a bag lady," said the highly successful Maine executive. Before she made that statement, I had been enjoying her appearance and manner of speaking. Her words "bag lady" drew me into listening very intently.

"My sister, brother, and two grown children live away," she continued. "We visit and share but I am alone here in Maine and it might stay that way. I make good money now and have retirement funds and an annuity I pay into, but I wonder if I can really make it when I am not working. And continue by myself."

I would never have associated this extremely capable person with someone who was "down and out." But her words have echoed in my mind. Especially when I see reports after reports of rampant sexism in the financial industry, as documented in Sue Herera's book Women of the Street. In recent years, trade journals by men written for men on Wall Street talk about this important "target" for financial sales. Such firms recruit women brokers for this purpose. Here I was, face to face with a "target." (For a fresh, yet seasoned alternative there is Muriel Siebert's discount firm at 1-800 872-0711.)

As she explained what she had actually done I began to realize why she was uneasy. Her nest egg was only fractionally greater than what she had paid into it. And statements of her annuity and other accounts were very difficult to comprehend. It was very clear that the firms who bought or held her nest egg were flourishing at her expense. The administrative fees, commissions, "loads," and mediocre performance were serving her poorly. As we poured over her paperwork, I saw two years in particular when the firms administering her money made more than she did.

I suggested that she immediately

(A) Stop paying into the annuity each pay check and instead, put that money into Pax World Fund (1-800-767-1729);

(B) determine the exact non-penalized dollar amount she could withdrawing each year without penalty and put that into a retirement account at Pax or at Citizens Trust Index Fund (1-800-223-7010). Each year do the same thing until the predatory firm is no longer involved;

(C) Shop around for an ethical manager for her 401 K plan. A good place to start is First Affirmative Financial Network at 800-422-7284.

(D) When the fund in (A, above) reaches $5,000 buy her first stock. Pick one of the ethical firms listed among the 300 by Citizens Trust and be sure to buy one that has a low dividend, good growth record and a free dividend reinvestment plan.

(E) Accumulate such stocks well into retirement; and

(F) Immediately make what I call a "reverse budget."

In a reverse budget you put financial records for a period of time into a single record, such as a spreadsheet in a computer or a ledger with at least half a dozen columns. List each check written, each charge made, and each cash expenditure over $4 (yes, four dollars). Then categorize items using a paperback book on financial planning. (A used book is adequate; these categories don't change much over time, they're basic.) By summing and sorting the categories, the picture of your finances becomes clear. And it offers you insights and ways to manage that are very straightforward. How does this relate to her retirement? Simple, your cost of living is directly related to what you NEED to spend. And "need" is highly subjective. This reverse budget permits you to refine your sense of what you need and lets you master this aspect of your life. When retirement comes, all you face are the multitude of consequences of aging. And that my friends, is another story.

Fritz Weidner is an investment adviser serving clients throughout the U.S. He lives in East Vassalboro but offers ideas on the web at http://www.weidnerinvest.com. Drop a postcard to Fritz Weidner, 63 Third Street, Auburn ME 04210.

How Serious Are The Mood Disorders?

Mental health experts differentiate between the depressions triggered by external events (such as death, divorce or family problems) and the biochemically-caused clinical depressions that are far more devastating. So devastating, in fact, that Maxmen & Ward, in their book Essential Psychopathology and Its Treatment, state unequivocally that depression is "far and away" the most common cause of suicide.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, some 17.6 million Americans are affected by depression each year. Depression is so prevalent, it's been called the "common cold of mental disorders," with women experiencing serious depression nearly twice as often as men.

Two to three million of those with depression are actually coping with a type known as bipolar disorder (manic depression), a destructive illness characterized by wild mood swings from extreme highs to abysmal lows. Depression and bipolar disorder cost American businesses nearly $44 billion in lost productivity each year.

Other related illnesses include dysthymia (essentially a persistent, low grade depression often lasting for years), cyclothymia (a milder form of bipolar disorder causing erratic behaviors and instability at home and on the job), and probably, seasonal affective disorder.

Devastatingly, depression and bipolar disorder are often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. People suffering from these mental illnesses blame themselves for having a "weak personality" or "bringing it all on myself." They can't see that the lack of motivation, confused and disorganized thinking gloomy outlook and overwhelming guilt are the symptoms of a serious biochemical disorder.

Provided by Linda M. Hertell and the Mood Disorders Network, Auburn.

moody views...

Stinks, doesn't it?

We know. We've been there, too. But there is hope. Check us out.

$18, professionals)...Like a support group for a free simple/more info...

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In the Spotlight ~

TEACHER TO POET... When Caron Lee of South Berwick decided to become a poet, while pursuing a teaching career, her life was transformed. "You see more. You taste more. You hear more because you're always thinking, 'Could this be a poem?' It really enriches your life," she says. Lee was inducted into the Maine Artists Roster in 1997 and now conducts writing, reading and filmmaking workshops to youngsters in area schools in the Thinking Through Literacy program.

STORYTELLER EXTRAORDINAIRE... Pamela Beliveau of Lewiston specializes in folk tales and stories for youngsters ages 5 and up. She kicked off the 1998 Noon Performance Series in the Statehouse Hall of Flags in January where she brought to life classic stories in a "must see" performance for the young and young-at-heart. Beliveau has created also educational programs for preschool through sixth-grade students.

TEACHING TEACHERS... Kym Dakin of Portland has worked on a variety of stages since moving to Maine six years ago, including Oak Street Theatre and Portland Stage Company. She has created, written and staged performance pieces and taught classes in acting. She is co-writer, performer and musician with A Day Without Television, a troupe touring public schools, and works with Programs in Expressive Learning, teaching performance techniques to teachers in public schools.

SHE TALKS IN CIRCLES... That is the title of this silkscreen and hand-colored banner book by artist Rebecca Goodale. It was part of a juried exhibition Sex & Gender at College of the Atlantic in January.

PHOTO BY ED WALD.
The Common Becomes the Uncommon
by Rhea Côté Robbins

The Franco-American Women's Institute is made up of Québécois, Acadian and Métis women. Daughters, mamans, mères come together in a way which encourages them to claim their voice while collecting a record of their and their mamans' existence.

Franco-Americans live in pockets of communities throughout the Northeast. In Maine, several communities have been chez-nous for Franco-Americans for the past 100 years. Women have contributed to the Franco-American culture and to the state of Maine in many significant ways. Not only have they carried and passed on the culture to their families, they have worked in mills and on farms to help their people prosper.

They have become the women of the future in their own right. The F-AWI exists to record their contributions of the past, present and for the future.

Where is the net that doesn't let the Franco-American woman's soul fall through? Is it the Franco-American Women's Institute, designed to capture, catch and free the diversity of expression of women, their mamans's and their mamans' mamans. Daughter's, too. Because daughters are the best insurance for the future. This daughter/maman knows.

The institute is an archival place, a recording place, an egalitarian place, a place where women in a way which allows for the future. At the institute, women are listed for their gifts, talents and contributions: women who knit a mean afghan along with women who write a dissertation on a famous, but heretofore neglected Franco-American woman author; women recorded for their lifelong contribution to their families, which include recipes, knitting patterns, pictures of quilts, bread baking and jam making; the lost arts of healing found again; family histories, including immigration/emigre stories; samples of cloth and common tools of the household; women in the church — nuns, orders and order of nuns; business women; the arts, high and low and in between; birthing practices and birth stories; death dates and wedding pictures. These are the dish towels of our lives.

The net is wide, intended to make the institute a fisher of women who are different and who will become visible after generations of invisibility and vocal after generations of silence. This is a way of making woman's history out of the artifacts and rituals of the Franco-American culture.

The collection process is ongoing. Register yourself or someone you know by typing a short biography and sending it to the institute. If you would like to be a part of the institute or you know someone who would, contact Franco-American Women's Institute, 641 South Main St., Brewer, 04412-2516; or e-mail: fawi2000@aol.com. You will be sent a brochure and newsletter.

Place Your Ad Today
Call 342-4761 or 338-1429

ICE - URVIVED
By Donna Light

Like many Mainers, I got caught up in the drama of the "disaster" of the "ice storm of 1998." For almost two weeks it was the topic of news, conversation, connection and basic living. Yet, it seems to me, there is something else of which to be aware.

On Friday morning, Jan. 9, I ventured out to see what mother nature had done. I was awed. Most obvious was the paradox of all that ice: so incredibly beautiful — and so deadly. But the sounds were even more impressive. There was groaning, cracking, tinkling, snapping and crashing. In between the sounds it was very, very still — there were no human sounds. Mother nature had frozen humans to a standstill; forced us to take notice. And we did.

For some it was dangerous to be without power; for most it was inconvenient. I found it hard to live without lights each evening, because I couldn't do some things I wanted to do. But I had heat and cooking facilities. And living without readily available water was no problem — I had in my past lived for four years without convenient water. I had all I needed.

It was the living without stereo and TV or enough light to do "projects" that got to me. I had to be with myself. Day 6 I was having a hard time, getting restless and irritable. By Day 8 I was thinking maybe I would be better off without electricity. Day 9, electric power was back.

I have long thought that someday the system would break down and there would be no reliable power that was not solar. I knew I could survive on a physical level when that happened, but what about spiritual? What I confronted for nine days was spiritual survival.

I believe that the more "modern conveniences" I surround myself with the more I separate myself from what is real, my spiritual connection. While I was facing myself, I also was listening to people calling the radio station (on my battery-operated radio). I heard them discover closeness, peace and happiness with each other without TV. What mother nature showed me is that maybe this culture would be happier and more connected without electricity — but I haven't turned mine off — yet.

Proposed FY'98 Discretionary Spending
(Budget Authority in $ Billions)

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Note: Discretionary funding for Social Security and Medicare covers various administration costs. It is not related to benefits mandated by law.
A Mercy and A Marvel

Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You: A Novel
Fred Chappell
Picador NY 1997 paper $12.00
review by Ellen LaConte

First came across Fred Chappell's writing several years back in an evocative little anthology called Porches. The excerpt was so heart-rending that I went looking for the author. His stories are set in rural North Carolina where he lives and have a down-home, wise, laconic sort of poetry like Eudora Welty's, so they've been most often published and marketed in the South. No Welty's, so they've been most often ignored. Though his work is grounded in where he lives and have a down-home, homey porches.

In this novel that reads like a collection of short stories, Chappell's people stay put without preening about it. Some of the women are long dead, some still struggling, some make lives or make sense of their lives in the isolated hollers. All possess a characteristic that marked them and their stories as worthy of keeping, telling, revising, adding to and telling again. All their stories have been told -- aloud mind you, only and uniquely -- and they've attained perfection, like things do that are touched and bring comfort, like a good book.

Each of the grandmother's stories -- some told in duet with Cora or with Jess's interjections -- is about one of the hill women they've known of all their lives. Some of the women are long dead, some still struggling to make lives or make sense of their lives in the isolated hollers. Each of the grandmother's stories -- some told in duet with Cora or with Jess's interjections -- is about one of the hill women they've known of all their lives. Some of the women are long dead, some still struggling to make lives or make sense of their lives in the isolated hollers.

There's Aunt Sherlie Howes, "The Figuring Woman," the Miss Marple of the Western hills who deduces from clues no one else notices because they're too busy talking, who's observed and who shot Eben. There's the exquisitely provocative, powerful, completely "Silent Woman," Selena Mellon, who looks so straight into folks' hearts that many, afraid of being so deeply known, refuse to look her in the eye. When she takes up with a young woman called Lexie Courland, everyone in the surrounding county reckons it was an arrangement that must have been made in heaven. This pair of women lived together in peace and contentment till the end of their lives. There's "The Fisherwoman," spirited young Earlene Lewis who trained up in fly-casting under her father wait in the darkened parlour. When she takes up with a young woman called Lexie Courland, everyone in the surrounding county reckons it was an arrangement that must have been made in heaven. This pair of women lived together in peace and contentment till the end of their lives. There's "The Fisherwoman," spirited young Earlene.

Lives have to drive his ancient pickup out of the backwoods where he preferred to fish, into town to get help when he twisted his ankle, and she'd never driven before! Nobody can do enough for her ever to even the score. Angela, for all we are drawn into spitting her, comes to a deservedly lovely, totally unexpected end.

Like the music of the wind in "The Wind Woman," her passing is "a mercy and a marvel," for Angela as well as her guilt-ridden community. Only "The Remembering Woman" of the 11 tales, struck me as a bit too precious and poetic to carry its weight in this otherwise perfect "novel."

"Most of the women of that generation are gone," grandmother says, "and their loss is a destruction to all of us, for they were a good and faithful company and the generations that have come after don't seem to have their hardness of spirit. Or maybe I'm wrong about that. I'd like to think I am."

I'd like to think so, too. These are women whose company you'd like, you like, be in. Ellen LaConte live in Stockton Springs and is the publisher of Helen Nearing's biography.

from ANOTHER LONG (22.)

She takes this new year's breakfast for communion:
Kris's Christmas bread spread with Harriet's blackberry jam:
nothing elaborate, this visit is over before we're done.

Turning to wave, I see the sunset splashed on your windows and wonder at my delight; it's never an old miracle for me.

Meleta Murdock Baker

 nothing elaborate
we managed to get together
for brewed tea
and store-bought cookies
(with no more apologizing
for it wasn't fancy)
and found a place to sit
amidst family chaos
to chat, then really talk
and really listen --
mend a few problems
enjoy bits of beauty
discovered right here in our lives.
These few hours
spent strengthening our challenge
to such complex and wonderful demands.
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Review by Ellen LaConte

Patricia Ranzoni
Backspor

Nothing Elaborate

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Meleta Murdock Baker
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM IN THE FASCIST ERA

 review by Allan Keith

Women's issues. Racial equality. Civil rights. Peace issues. Economic justice -- the right of all people to health care, to a job and to a decent standard of living.

This sounds like a litany of issues propounded today by Progressives. And they are just that. However, they are also the same issues raised by liberals, such as First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, some 60 years ago.

A fascinating discussion of the leftist political activism of Eleanor Roosevelt is presented on one of many tapes offered by Roger Leinster and Radio Free Maine, based in Augusta.

The tape, which traces Roosevelt's "endless crusade for justice," includes a talk by Blanche Wiesen Cook, a university professor and author of Eleanor Roosevelt: A Biography.

Titled "Eleanor Roosevelt's Crusade for Freedom in the Fascist Era," the talk outlines Roosevelt's constant struggle against the forces (at home and abroad) that were determined to impose fascism on people of this planet.

Roosevelt was not only one of the great women in American history, but a true conscience of the nation in the period of the Great Depression and of World War II. This, of course, was the time when Nazi and other fascist forces in Germany, Italy, Japan and elsewhere were planning to militarily occupy the entire world.

For her progressive efforts, Roosevelt was constantly vilified by the press and by other right-wing elements. She is quite well-known for her efforts to encourage racial acceptance and end discrimination. She touted the benefits of education for the masses. She supported the efforts of labor. She supported women's rights (and even had press conferences for women journalists only).

But, many people do not know of her intense support for economic justice -- and, of course, most of those goals have NOT been met to this day.

She wanted, for example, the right (as a matter of law) to a job for everyone. But she wanted more than a right to decent employment. People, she said, also have the right to an education, to decent health care and to decent housing.

After her husband, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, died in 1945, (Anna) Eleanor Roosevelt continued her struggle for humanity through the United Nations. She enthusiastically supported the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which outlined economic as well as political rights.

Cook presents also an Eleanor Roosevelt with her idiosyncrasies: For example she went everywhere with her "rotten, mean dogs" that snarled, barked and bit; and she had a squeaky, trademark voice.

The Cook tape recounts the life and work of a true American patriot. These and other tapes can be ordered from Roger Leinster at Radio Free Maine, P.O. Box 2705, AUGUSTA, MAINE 04338.

Allan Keith is a reviewer for Post American of Bloomington, Ill.

Music/Music/Music/Music/Music

About Zap MaMa

by Judith Monroe

Marie Daulne. Remember the name. Seeing and/or hearing (preferably both) this woman who is half European, half African is a powerful experience. On the cover of the first CD she produced, Zap MaMa, Adventures in Afropop 1, she says she is interested in "returning to the musical roots -- mostly vocal -- of the people most underated by the modern world." This means that she and the other four women and two accompanying men who make up Zap Mama, emphasize the music "with the beauty and purity of one of the most ancient cultures -- that of the Pygmies." But they do not stop there. There are songs from Zaire, from Syria, from Rwanda, even from Cuba.

Zap MaMa's CD is a wonderful kaleidoscope of sounds that work both sensually and sensuously, humorously and seriously. Zap MaMa struggles both with and for dissonance and harmony in its energetic expressions. This is often the music of gratitude, and it is made of air against object, resonating upon the ear and the soul of the listener; it is made of breath and hands against wood, glass and skin, matching the pulse and heart beat of the performers.

This may seem overblown praise or just plain silly if you have not seen Zap Mama. Seeing and hearing this group will make a believer of you.

Not so long ago I turned on the television and found this phenomenal musical group performing on the Maine Public Broadcasting Network. Further revelation found that the lead singer, Daulne, spent part of her childhood in both Africa and Europe, having an African mother and a Belgian father. She is a survivor of racism, a peacenik, who spent a year of her early life living under the protection of the Pygmies after her white father was killed. Her sense of what music is -- and she is the inspiration behind much of the music of Zap MaMa -- owes a debt to a philosophy of respect for diversity.

Yet Zap Mama performs the kind of music that defies exact classification. It is primitive, of course, in the best sense of the word, as "radical" is when it means from the roots. And it is also a blend of folk and jazz, an offspring of both. The performers are uninhibited, incredibly energetic, romantic, sad, angry, tragic and sexy. Lyrics matter. Dancing or not, bodies sway, bow, twich. Facial expressions are dramatic, comic, sweet, ever changing. When they sing in English, as they did when they joined Phoebe Snow in a rendition of The Poet's Man, Zap MaMa brought a delightful new dimension to that song. The costumes are colorful African garb, and faces are marked with tribal designs beautiful to behold. Troupe members not only sing and dance, they play African instruments, they shout and laugh, often stopping to talk together on stage as if they were gossiping in a village marketplace in Zaire. The rhythm of their music often has the unmistakable ancestral beat of jazz, and someone who loves jazz cannot help being caught up in it.

I recommend the purchase of any disc cut by Zap MaMa, only because I am fully convinced that the energy flowing from this exuberant group cannot be cut back by mere electronics.

Judith Monroe is a free-lance writer living in Hallowell.
Women, a totally unauthorized subsid­

gainst Women:

BELFAST
9343. And before the film @6:

iary of NOW.

Library; performers include singer/

parliament, blazed a trail that overturned

7,700-9:30, Abbott Room, Belfast Free

BANGOR
7, 8, Chris

Smither, admission; Feb 8, 2,7, Roger

uppers welcome & tours (advance registration re­

required); FMI 786-6158.

PORTLAND
CRIMINAL Hearts, play by Jane

Martin (produced by Mad Horse

TheatreCompany), Oak Street The­

ature, through Feb 8, 775-5103.

Burn This, play by Lanford Wil­

son (produced by Acorn Produc­

ions), Oak Street Theatre, Feb 13

through Mar 7, 775-5103.

Barbara Gail, surrounded by a group of elementary­

age children at The Space at Silo in Mt. Vernon, dem­

onstrates the magic of rhythm. Gail invites chil­

dren of all ages to bring drums, bells and shakers

(many provided by her), to play, dance, listen and

enjoy when she holds

"playshops" for children. Such an event, Per­

Drum Circle & Dance, led by Gail and Jeff Hanna, is

held for children and adults at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb.

28, at Silo. Cost for adults is $5; $3 for teens; and

free to supervised children. Bring pots (or finger­

do clothes) to share. For further information, call

293-2239. PHOTO BY ROY GLASEMAN.

BELFAST
• Get Out the Vote" benefit concert for

"Maine Still Won't Discriminate," Feb

7,7:30-9:30, Abbott Room, Belfast Free

Library; performers include singer/­

songwriter Kathleen Hannah, per­

cussionist Judi Nielsen, the Stella Dance

Theatre and humorist Lorraine Brown;

tickets (advance @ Green Store, Belfast,

& Wild Rufus Records, Camden) $8; (at
door) $10; FMI 338-6331.

BLUE HILL
• @Left Bank Bakery & Cafe: Feb 4, 7,

John McEuen, admission; Feb 6, 8,

Brotherhood Dogs w/lead singer Lisa

Gallant, admission; Feb 7, 8, Chris

Smither, admission; Feb 8, 2,7, Roger

Day, admission; Feb 13, 8, Geoff Bartley,

admission; Feb 14, 8, TBA, call;

Feb 18, 2, Susan Silver, admission;

Feb 15, 7, Zulu Leprechauns, ad­

mission; Feb 22, 5, A Little Night

Music; in "reader's theater" style, the

Jacques Brel troupe, admission;

Mar 6, 8, Faith Soloway, ad­

mission; FMI 374-2201.

BRUNSWICK
• Offersings by Maine Writers &

Publishers Alliance: Feb 6, 6:30-8,

Learn How to Write About Ro­

mance: Panel discussion/Q&A fea­
ting authors and literary agent,

MWPA office, 12 Pleasant St., fav;

Feb 7, 10-3, Essay Critiquing Work­
shop w/Elizabeth Peavey, Portland

Public Library, fee; Feb 13, 9:30­
1, "Sell More Books": conference for

small-press publishers, Augusta

Civic Center, fee; FMI, to register

and/or information on other MWPA

winter events, 729-6333.

LEWISTON
• The Business of Murder, play by

Richard Harris, Feb 1, 5, 6, 7 & 8,

the public theatre, Lisbon & Maple

streets; FMI: 800-639-9757.

ORONO
• Hearts and Minds, Academy­
award film on the Vietnam War,

Feb 5, 7, University of Maine; FMI

942-9343 (Peace & Justice Center,

Bangor).

PORTLAND
• Criminal Hearts, play by Jane

Martin (produced by Mad Horse

TheatreCompany), Oak Street The­

atre, through Feb 8, 775-5103.

• Burn This, play by Lanford Wil­

son (produced by Acorn Produc­

ions), Oak Street Theatre, Feb 13

through Mar 7, 775-5103.

The 1998 Maine Literary Yellow

Pages is available @$10 and may be

purchased directly from Maine Writers &

Publishers Alliance or at some local

bookstore; discounts available for

MWPA members, bookstores, libraries

and schools; inquire by calling 725-0690.

• Applications for the 1998 Maine

Media Women and Lee Agger Scholarships

are being accepted by MMW, a

statewide organization of communica­

tions specialists. Applications should

include a SASE envelope and be

received prior to April 1. Send to:

Maine Media Women, 9 Middle St.,

Hallowell ME 04347. Both scholarships will be

awarded during MMW's annual May

meeting. FMI, call Katy Perry, 626-3242.

ON CAMPAIGN:

BATES
Museum of Art, through Mar 20;

Upper Gallery: Narrative Quilts, Michael Cummings;

Lower Gallery: Highlights from the Permanent

Collection, includes work by Lewiston native

Marsden Hartley; Tue-Sat, 10-5; Sun 1-5; school

groups welcome & tours (advance registration re­

quired); FMI 787-6158.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
• ORONO: Women in the Curriculum & Women's

Studies Program Lunch Series, 12:15-130, Bangor

Lounge, Memorial Union: Feb 4, "Future Perfect:

Women Students Talk About Present Reality and

Vision 2000"; Feb 11, "If Not Affirmative Action,

Then What?"; Feb 19, "Radon at Home: Is It Danger­

ous to Women?"; Feb 25, "Lesbian Histories &

Cultures: The Making of an Encyclopedia"; free; FMI

581-1228 or 581-3756.

• FARMINGTON: UMF Art Gallery: Tue-Sat, 12­

4 (FMI 778-7001), or by appointment (778-7002),

through Feb 12; Dudley Zopp's Reading the Land­
scape, a site-specific, mixed-media installation "evok­
ing the experience of walking the landscape"; Eliza­

beth Billings' Mingled Destinies draws from the Asian

tradition of ikat weaving, natural dyeing and printing;

"with the dipping of the first white threads into the deep

blue indigo a rhythm begins"; free, disability accommo­
dation, 778-7002; TDD, 778-7000.

PRESCOT ISLE: Reed Gallery, Campus Center,

Mon-Fri, 10-5, Sat, 1-5; through Feb 28, "The Way

Life Should Be: Tourism, Romance, and Reality in

Early Modern Maine, historical photographs; Mar

14-Apr 17, Canadian watercolorist Bonnie Harp;

FMI 768-9611. Campus Center: Poolly Theatre

Production: In My Head I'm Thin, celebrating

Women's History Month, Mar 6, 8pm; adults, $6;

children under 12, $3; UMPI students free with ID;

FMI 768-9611.

CUMMINGS, Michael; Upper Gallery: Narrative Quilts, Michael Cummings; Lower Gallery: Highlights from the Permanent Collection, includes work by Lewiston native Marsden Hartley; Tue-Sat, 10-5; Sun 1-5; school groups welcome & tours (advance registration required); FMI 787-6158. UNIVERSITY OF MAINE • ORONO: Women in the Curriculum & Women's Studies Program Lunch Series, 12:15-130, Bangor Lounge, Memorial Union: Feb 4, "Future Perfect: Women Students Talk About Present Reality and Vision 2000"; Feb 11, "If Not Affirmative Action, Then What?"; Feb 19, "Radon at Home: Is It Dangerous to Women?"; Feb 25, "Lesbian Histories & Cultures: The Making of an Encyclopedia"; free; FMI 581-1228 or 581-3756. • FARMINGTON: UMF Art Gallery: Tue-Sat, 12-4 (FMI 778-7001), or by appointment (778-7002), through Feb 12; Dudley Zopp's Reading the Landscape, a site-specific, mixed-media installation "evoking the experience of walking the landscape"; Elizabeth Billings' Mingled Destinies draws from the Asian tradition of ikat weaving, natural dyeing and printing; "with the dipping of the first white threads into the deep blue indigo a rhythm begins"; free, disability accommodation, 778-7002; TDD, 778-7000. • PRESCOT ISLE: Reed Gallery, Campus Center, Mon-Fri, 10-5, Sat, 1-5; through Feb 28, "The Way Life Should Be: Tourism, Romance, and Reality in Early Modern Maine, historical photographs; Mar 14-Apr 17, Canadian watercolorist Bonnie Harp; FMI 768-9611. Campus Center: Poolly Theatre Production: In My Head I'm Thin, celebrating Women's History Month, Mar 6, 8pm; adults, $6; children under 12, $3; UMPI students free with ID; FMI 768-9611. • THE 1998 MAINE LITERARY YELLOW PAGES IS AVAILABLE @$10 AND MAY BE PURCHASED DIRECTLY FROM THE MAINE WRITERS & PUBLISHERS ALLIANCE OR AT SOME LOCAL BOOKSTORE; DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR MWPA MEMBERS, BOOKSTORES, LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS; INQUIRE BY CALLING 725-0690. • APPLICATIONS FOR THE 1998 MAINE MEDIA WOMEN AND LEE AGGER SCHOLARSHIPS ARE BEING ACCEPTED BY MMW, A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION OF COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS. APPLICATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE A SASE ENVELOPE AND BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO APRIL 1. SEND TO: MAIN MEDIA WOMEN, 9 MIDDLE ST., HALLOWELL ME 04347. BOTH SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED DURING MMW'S ANNUAL MAY MEETING. FMI, CALL KATY PERRY, 626-3242. • ROUND'N ABOUT WITH WOMEN ~
CALIFORNIA

U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken denied immunity from prosecution to agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Oakland Police Department in the 1990 car bombing of Jadi Bar and Darryl Cherney. The civil rights lawsuit charges the FBI and OPD with false arrest, illegal search and seizure and conspiracy to deny Bar and Cherney's First Amendment right to organize for social change.

Wilken's ruling states plaintiffs have made an adequate showing that the FBI and OPD deliberately misrepresented evidence to justify the false arrest of Bar and Cherney who were organizers of "Redwood Summer," an action to protect the Redwood forest from logging.

Bari and Cherney were arrested on 6 October 1995 in Alba Iulia and held in pretrial detention for reportedly attempting to seduce another woman. In May 1996, Cetiner was indicted under Article 200, paragraph 4, of the Penal Code then in force, which made it an offense punishable by one to five years imprisonment to entice or seduce another person of the same sex, and under Article 192, paragraph 1, for trespassing on private property.

On 17 June 1996, the Alba Iulia court found Cetiner guilty of both charges and sentenced her to three years imprisonment. In January 1997, ruling on her appeal, the Alba Iulia Appellate Court reversed the decision of the Alba court and ordered Cetiner to serve the remainder of the three-year prison sentence. In convicting her under what had latterly become the final paragraph of Article 200, by attempting to seduce Vana Adina, the victim, to practice sexual acts between persons of the same sex, and this fact became known to other people, who were indignant at the attitude of the accused, provoking sentiments of repulsion." Ten days later Cetiner was re-arrested and began serving the remainder of the sentence.

In June 1997 representatives of the Human Rights Watch and the international rights commission interviewed Cetiner in the Tirgsor prison. She told them how an officer had beaten her the day before because she had filed a complaint. "He handcuffed me and pulled me out of my cell by the hair. I have much to say but it is forbidden. When you leave, I will have big problems." She had a large bruise on her right thigh and her knee was bandaged.

If confirmed, the alleged ill-treatment of Cetiner would represent a violation of Romania's international treaty obligations. These include Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 3 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which state that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Women's Business Development Corporation

PO Box 658
Bangor, ME 04402-0658
947-5900, fax, 947-5278

Women's Choice Program’s Alliance & Maine People’s Resource Center new address: Executive Director John Dieffenbacher-Krail, 27 State St., Bangor ME 04401 (990-0672); MPA/MPRC staff (Kathleen McGee, John Thibodeau, Chris Donnelly, Nate Brimmer, Nate Hardcastle & Jane Dieffenbacher-Krail, 27 State St., Portland ME 04101 (761-4400 MPA; 761-1881 MPRC).

Women's Action for New Directions has launched a campaign to cut defense spending and corporate defense welfare. WAND's Women Take Action materials include everything you need to know about the federal budget process, tips on how to talk to your member of Congress about budget priorities and information on how the cuts affect women. Call, 617/876-0196

World Federalist Association -- Maine Chapter
PO Box 597
Waldoboro, ME 04572
832-6683

WFA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to ensure peace, economic progress, environmental protection and human rights through world law and global structures such as a strengthened United Nations. 109F

Volunteers Needed

The Grand, Hancock County’s Nonprofit Performing Arts Center, is looking for volunteers to help at concerts, plays and movies — ticket takers, ushers, popcorn poppers, poster distributors and general assistance people. Experience is not required. Call Nancy Adams, volunteer coordinator, at 667-7257 (daytime) or 667-9795 (evening).

Research Project: Women Choosing Women Looking to interview women who've left heterosexual lives (15 years or more) for lesbian (women-centered) ones. To learn more, contact Teresa Arendell, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Colby College, Waterville, ME 04901. 207-872-3135, tjarend@colby.edu.

World Feminist Times

Network

February 1998

Women Centering Women

Women's Business Development Corporation

PO Box 658
Bangor, ME 04402-0658
947-5900, fax, 947-5278

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During this age of liberation from sexist requirements, it’s astounding that in one important aspect of our lives, women continue to lose their rights 95% of the time. If they have children, they give up these rights forever. To all appearances, they do so willingly, in front of friends and relatives and announce it in the newspapers.

How could this be? What significant vestige of sexism could exist all around us without our alarm and without our making more progress to stop it, and even reverse it?

The answer is the practice of assuming husbands’ surnames at marriage. There is no universal law requiring this practice, as is confirmed by a 1974 Opinion of the Massachusetts Attorney General that there is no state or Common Law obligation for a wife to assume a husband’s name.

Then why does it continue? Especially when, as noted by Anne Barnays and Justin Kaplan in their book, *The Language of Names*, our names are very important to our identities. Sometimes the power of tradition and custom is underestimated, as is surely the case here. We are so accustomed to this unfair practice that we barely understand how unfair it is.

The problem is not that a woman should never change her name to that of her husband, for there may be many, good, nonsexist reasons for such a change. For example, she may simply prefer the sound of her husband’s name or believe that its meaning is more appropriate than her birth name. These and other reasons were all very acceptable reasons for name changing at Ellis Island and elsewhere, and they can be applied to the migration into marriage.

The problem with the current, traditional practice is the perception that the woman, “should” always change her name to that of her husband with no “shoulds” for the husband to change his name.

There are at least two fair, equal, nonsexist alternatives. First, the woman need not change her name at all, just as the man need not change his. Many women, with their careers and identities well established, follow this course. However, the usual follow-up question is: What do you do with the children’s names? That, too, can be settled equally, with one alternative being to name the sons with the father’s surname and the daughters with the mother’s. Another is to name the first with the mother’s and the second with the father’s, or decide by a flip of a coin. Yes, one would have a home with different surnames, but stepfamilies have already shown us that such families can thrive.

A second name choice for the marrying woman and man is to change a surname equally - a hyphenated name such as Clinton-Rodham or Rodham-Clinton or a name new to each, Hillary and Bill Truman.

The third choice is at the social level where an equal number of women and men change their names to that of their spouses. If there is virtue in having one family surname, then let men change their names just as often as the burden falls on women. Thus, for every Hillary Clinton, we would have a Bill Rodham. These alternatives are sometimes awkward, but they have one overriding virtue in that they are not unfair to women. There is no good reason for women to bear the name burden by themselves.

The Lucy Stone League has been dedicated to name choice freedom since 1921 and can be reached at 43 Boardman St., Newburyport, MA 01950; e-mail at people@LucyStoneLeague.org; Web Site: www.lucystoneleague.org.

Morrison Bump is president of the Lucy Stone League. She has a home in Newcastle.