Feminist Times April - May 1998

Feminist Times Editorial Board
FROM The MAINE LEGISLATURE

JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT

WHEREAS, 1998 marks the 150th anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement in the United States, a courageous civil rights movement that began at the first Women's Rights Convention in 1849 in Seneca Falls, New York, and that has changed this nation and the hopes of its women and girls irrevocably, and

WHEREAS, the Women's Rights Movement has had a profound impact on all aspects of American life and has offered new and well-deserved opportunities for women in all endeavors, including medicine, commerce, athletics, business, religion, the arts, exploration and politics; and

WHEREAS, the girls and boys of today lead richer lives as a direct result of the Women's Rights Movement, yet they have scant opportunity to know the heroes and lessons of this vital movement through the textbooks in most classrooms; and

WHEREAS, the 21st century will find an ever-increasing need for women and men to share in the fundamental responsibilities for our nation and the resulting rewards of full participation in society; and

WHEREAS, there still remain substantial barriers to the full equality of America's women before our freedom as a nation can be called complete; and

WHEREAS, this month of March 1998 is National Women's History Month, celebrated with the theme "Living the Legacy"; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 1998, we recognize Maine girls, our future leaders, who are learning about political participation through the Second Annual Girls' Day at the State House, sponsored by the Women's Development Institute; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Eighteenth Legislature, now assembled in the Second Regular Session, take this occasion to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement under the national theme "Living the Legacy. Women's Rights Movement 1848-1998" and call on educators, government officials, businesses and all citizens to mark this year of celebration with public demands otherwise, congressional authorization will be rescinded at the end of June, and the statue will be returned to the basement.

Why is it important that the statue of three of America's leading women be in the rotunda of the Capitol building? Because, as Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, said in her rededication speech, the rotunda is "the epicenter...of our American democracy. It matters that Americans place importance on the participation of women in the greatest democracy the world has ever seen."

When Adelaide Johnson sculpted the

(Continued on Page 4.)

The US Women's Hockey team, gold medal winners at the winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, were described in Time magazine as courageous and aggressive on the rink with a "girl-next-door" charm off the ice; educated, smart and good-natured.

"When we get on the bus we talk about boys, makeup, girl things," says team captain Cammi Granato. "We are not a bunch of feminists."

"While Lady Liberty has stood proudly atop the dome of the United States Capitol, the ladies who fought to make that liberty real for women have languished in the basement."

-- Olympia Snowe

"If Men Wore Bras"

Women and Technology

by Lucy G. Wendell-Thorpe

"Women learn early to abdicate our power in the technological realm," said Judith McGaw in a recent lecture, "If men wore bras -- what women could teach us about technology," at the University of New England's Westbrook College Campus. "Beginning in adolescence we start performing less well in technology-related subjects."

McGaw hopes to develop ways to involve more girls and women in technological fields by studying the technology with which women interact, but don't take seriously, such as kitchens, laundries, bathrooms and apparel such as bras. As a result of her research, she's discovered women do indeed possess an "enormous amount of technological knowledge."

She thinks it is important "to recognize the technological skills women already possess and encourage their use." She then added, "Women may be avoiding technological careers not because we know too little about technology but because we know too much."

She would like women to start thinking about technological change because it is intertwined with power relationships in today's world. Technology has an influence on what children learn, whether certain kinds of jobs are available

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Editorial

It's hard not to be overwhelmed by the recent shootings on a playground in Arkansas. Four girls and a teacher were killed, lured outside by a false fire alarm. The killers were two young boys, Mitchell and Andrew, ages 13 and 11, who had stolen rifles, hand guns, ammunition and a family van from the grandfather of one of the boys; then hid in the woods above the playground.

There has been speculation about what could have pushed two young boys to become murderers of their classmates, fantasies and hyperbole about southern violence, gun ownership and rites of passage, calls for gun control legislation, analyses by child psychologists and family therapists; and a great hue and cry for retribution and punishment. No prison term is too long for those who committed this heinous act. The one thing these writers and speakers all have in common is that they are projecting an adult understanding and comprehension of the world onto children.

In a child's world there is much play-acting and pretending. The two boys who shot their classmates were children, exposed over their lifetime to countless hours of a pretend world on television and in movies heavy with pretend violence and vengeance. In a pretend world, the children would have gotten up and lived again. Nothing pushed these children to become murderers because they did not see themselves as murderers. In this all-too-real world, when children have access to real guns instead of play guns, the consequences are real. Those four girls and their teacher will never get up and rejoin their class; the two boys will never rejoin a normal world of childhood and adolescence.

In my reading of the news, it seems apparent to me that those with the most violent reaction to boys murdering their classmates and their teacher were men, who regretted that the boys would only be held in prison until they were 21 because they could not be tried as adults. Women, on the other hand, seem to have suspended judgment on these boys, looking for a way to understand such a catastrophic event, and to forgive. We know that the punishment devised for these children is yet more violence.

We live in a world of instantaneous news coverage and an angry and grieving public wants explanations, understanding and healing to be just as instantaneous. No sooner were the images and headlines broadcast to the public than the public demanded action, assigning blame and justification, looking for a public grieving and healing. It doesn't happen that way. Long after the media spotlight is over the mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters and grandparents, classmates, teachers and police officers, ambulance attendants, emergency room personnel, ministers and neighbors will struggle with anger, sorrow and bewilderment.

There's a lot to celebrate about Feminist Times. During our first three years we created a dynamic, thought-provoking newspaper. We posed rarely asked questions about issues and events of particular concern to women.

The Feminist Times was the first to break the news about the midwife charged with reckless endangerment; the only media to investigate conditions for women in prison; the only media to consistently give the boys; then hid in the woods above the playground.

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ecent headlines have turned me away from my riveting research and in-depth reportage on the startling personal, physical and cultural effects of manicual.

Thirdly ever arise early enough on Sunday morning to view Face the Nation, but a few weeks ago I was lucky enough to catch Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe discussing the fact that "the feminists" had not come out against Bill Clinton. "Oh uh," I thought with a shiver, "the feminists... that must mean me." It's only a very mad mad world who can stand to be identified as a feminist these days.

But, the gauntlet has been tossed, and pride dictates that someone snatch it up. So, here's how one feminist really feels about the mess that our president has gotten himself into.

First of all, I wholeheartedly wish that I could believe that all this fuss really is about how women are being treated by men in power. I wish that I could believe that Kenneth Starr is going after Bill Clinton because of a Salem witch dance, but personally I don't think that he is personally outraged that women are being sexually harassed by Washington's main man. I wish that I could believe that the Republican party, the right wing nutters, Trent or Arlen are active in their private sex lives. Public agendas scream out their hearty distress for low-income people and those of the opposite gender. Call me a sentimental fool, but I tend to vote for those who, at least act as if they're on our side. So, if I have to choose, it'll be Bill. But you won't catch me leaping in triumphant delight.

Since this can of unpleasant worms has been opened, one of the many unsavory aspects of the whole sorry business is that I have been forced to conjure up Kenneth Starr's sex life. When I catch a glimpse of his smug features on my TV, I see him "sans" his buttoned-down three-piece suit. He springs merrily from my screen in garter belt, sharp stiletto heels, sporting a blonde Marilyn wig, net nylons, shiny black plastic, smashing his lips wetly and brandishing a whip. Let's face it, the fervor with which he is pursuing Bill, the unquotable threat to know every sleazy detail, smacks of the sadosexual. But maybe the most damning thing that can be said about all of this is that it's horrifying. It has long since ceased to be of any interest. It is no longer even a time-wasting activity.

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In the name of Christianity -- witch hunts, crusades, inquisitions, burnings, plastic, smacking his lips wetly and brandishing a whip. Let's face it, the fervor with which he is pursuing Bill, the unquotable threat to know every sleazy detail, smacks of the sadosexual. But maybe the most damning thing that can be said about all of this is that it's horrifying. It has long since ceased to be of any interest. It is no longer even a time-wasting activity.

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my dismay and sorrow at the words and behavior of the "Christian Coalition." This group of people is using the media and the state government to put forward its own personal agenda, which I see as profoundly unchristian. I, too, am a Christian and I find it frightening that the followers of Jesus Christ (or a Christian) are being unfairly represented by a small group of people whose actions are being driven by fear and hate, instead of the love Jesus teaches us. Over the years much evil has been done in the name of Christianity -- witch hunts, crusades, inquisitions, pogroms, and much more. Now is the time for this subversion and division to stop! Through all the evil, the small voices and actions of the true Christians continue to shine through as small beacons of light in our, sometimes, very dark world. Christ called us, the people who love our neighbors -- ALL PEOPLE, EVERYWHERE -- without concern for their color, ethnicity, and inspiration of others and get on with the polls and give them some proper legal protection from discrimination. Despite the fact that we talk a good line about tolerance over beer at the local watering hole, we couldn't be bothered to get out and act on our beliefs. Despite the fact that many of my peers look down on the "ignorant, homophobic rednecks," most of us didn't do a damn thing to help anyone else understand why this law is important. And for our lack of action, we are to blame.

Dear Editor,

I was good to see the issues of old women highlighted. I am not one to speak up for women in general, but I am aExtension of the year 2000-2001, and my wish that I could believe that all this fuss really is about how women are being treated by men in power. I wish that I could believe that Kenneth Starr is going after Bill Clinton because of a Salem witch dance, but personally I don't think that he is personally outraged that women are being sexually harassed by Washington's main man. I wish that I could believe that the Republican party, the right wing nutters, Trent or Arlen are active in their private sex lives. Public agendas scream out their hearty distress for low-income people and those of the opposite gender. Call me a sentimental fool, but I tend to vote for those who, at least act as if they're on our side. So, if I have to choose, it'll be Bill. But you won't catch me leaping in triumphant delight.

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Mabel Wadsworth Celebrates Opening

by Margaret Cox Murray

With one impressive pair of large, gold-style scissors, Mabel Wadsworth cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center at 362 Harlow St. (Intown Plaza) in Bangor. Ruth Lockhart, executive director of the center, then thanked members of the community for their support.

A private, nonprofit organization, the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center provides health care and community education services along with political advocacy.

The center was founded in 1984 in response to political pressures which sought to restrict women's choices in sexual and reproductive health and advocates within the political process to work for women's sexual and reproductive rights and to raise community awareness. Most important to the center's philosophy are the maintenance of a woman's right to choose abortion and advocacy for lesbian/gay rights.

A longtime activist and leader in the women's health movement, Mabel Wadsworth has been in the forefront of the political struggle to achieve and maintain reproductive rights for women in Maine since the 1940s and was one of the first inductees into the Women's Hall of Fame and a recipient of the prestigious Mary Aunt Hartman Award.

On Oct. 1, the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center officially merged with Bangor Women's Health Care, formed in 1983 by Marley-DeRosier, a nurse practitioner.

Congressman John E. Baldacci, who was unable to attend the ceremony because of legislative business in Washington, was represented by assistant Lennie Mullen, and commended "all who have worked to make this expansion into a larger space possible. I also commend you as you stand on the front lines, ignoring the jibes of protestors as you seek to do your job: providing high quality, affordable health care to the people of Bangor."

Margaret Cox Murray is a free-lance writer. She lives in Bangor.

' If Men Wore Bras ' (Continued from Page 1)

and where people live. "There are some political decisions that are essentially technological decisions," she says.

McGaw examined the history of the development of the brassiere as an example of technology that is little appreciated, yet complex. "If men wore bras, the bra would be a technology worth considering."

A debutante invented the first bra out of two handkerchiefs in 1913. Earlier garments were designed to cover and minimize the breasts, said McGaw, but the 1913 version supported and separated. This initial effort was refined and improved upon by others through the years. Each version was patented, thus recognizing the bra as not only a garment but also a technological advance. The 1920s era was characterized by the loose-fitting, drop-waisted dresses men wore bras, the bra would be a technology worth considering.

With its complex engineering and various components of synthetic and natural fibers, latex and metals, McGaw believes the bra is deeply representative of technology. It is also big business. She noted that Wamaco, which is headed by a woman, is a Fortune 500 company.

Currently, McGaw is writing a book about women and technology. "The purpose of the book is to empower people, especially women, about technology. I want them to have choices about technology and to insist upon those choices."

The book focuses on seven technologies women have traditionally used: the brassiere, the bathroom, keyboards, the production of whiteness (laundry and cleaning), household filing systems (cups, drawers, etc.), fitness technology and guns. She has traveled around the nation talking to women and girls of all ages and studying these technologies. But McGaw is not trying to get more women onto the technology bandwagon. In fact, she'd like to see more skepticism among both men and women about technological change and whether that necessarily means progress. While at Westbrook College, she is researching the history of keyboard technology by searching through manuscripts in the Maine Women Writers Collection and interviewing alumnae from the former Westbrook Junior College secretarial programs.

Judith McGaw is the Dorothy Healy Visiting Professor for the spring semester at the University of New England's Westbrook College Campus. Lucy G. Wendell-Thompson is a columnist and former editor. She lives in Farmouth.
Revisiting Sexual Harassment Law

by Jan Anderson

Sexual discrimination in the workplace sometimes seems inevitable, but in the area of sexual harassment it doesn't appear likely. Now feminists have been caught in a defining moment, with Republican women legislators, including Maine Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, calling for a public accounting. The circumstances, accusations of sexual impropriety against President Clinton, lend an air of partisanship to the demand but the accounting is long overdue. When is sexual behavior harassment?

In the April issue of the Yale Law Journal, Vicki Schultz, a law professor who researched the effects of sexual harassment law for four years, suggests that prosecution of sexual harassment needs to return to its foundation as an anti-discrimination law. In interview after interview Schultz found that sexual discrimination in the workplace often does not revolve around sex but denies women opportunities based on gender. She describes cases such as that of Margaret Reynolds, an electrician working on a crew at the Atlantic City Convention Center. Reynolds' co-workers would not work with her and laughed when she unloaded heavy boxes. She endured verbal abuse and obscene gestures, and a union official refused to put a lock on the showers women workers used. When the Miss America Pageant was in town, she was replaced with a male worker at the request of an exhibitor. Her claim was rejected in court because there was not enough sex — nor was it judged to be a 'hostile work environment,' the other legal standard in the case.

"By focusing on sexual advances as the quintessential harassment," Schultz suggests, "courts are encouraged to extend protection to women for the wrong reasons. Rather than emphasizing the use of harassment law to promote women's empowerment and equality as workers, it appeals to judges to protect women's sexual virtue or sensibilities."

Schultz wants to return to the recognition of why there was a law of hostile work environment in the first place. The hostile work environment may include sexual advances, but not necessarily. She mentions a union training program in which the men are being taught the "five-second rule," which prohibits men from looking at a female co-worker for longer than five seconds. "That's a form of discrimination itself," she asserts, "trying to put women in a category where you can't even look at them. That's not what women care about."

Now feminists, who made gender discrimination and sexual harassment a household issue, are the subject of grave commentary in no less than The New York Times. The male opinion-makers are calling on feminists not to clarify and explain this issue, but to espouse a male understanding of sexual harassment -- an idea that holds that women are children and cannot give or withhold consent and must be protected not just from forced sexual attention but from even the suggestion of sex.

Women legislators must not get caught up in playing party politics with the issue of sexual harassment. As Gloria Steinem said in The New York Times, women want the respect demonstrated by men understanding that "no means no." The real violators of Paula Jones are the conservative men who have used her to pursue and discredit President Clinton.

Women Helping Women:

Need a computer for your grassroots organization? The National Congress of Neighborhood Women (NCNW) is seeking local grassroots organizations that provide services for women and children in their community to receive one of 200 older computers, new modem installed, for about $150. Cost includes membership in NCNW and shipping. Computer useful for e-mailing, word processing and record keeping. Call Susan Guthrie, 338-6140 FMI.

Bella Abzug, 1920-1998

She did it her way, independently, with intelligence, determination, courage.

Independence? Courage? Intelligence? Determination? As a labor and civil rights lawyer, during the height of McCarthyism, she was one of the few independent attorneys brave enough to represent blacklisted teachers, entertainers and writers. In 1950, while pregnant, she risked her life by going to Mississippi to defend Willie McGee, a black man falsely accused of raping a white woman. The case received international notice.

She was also an author, lecturer, news commentator and former U.S. representative from New York. She was a lifelong activist in support of civil rights, equal rights for women, and disarmament. She represented all women at the Non-Governmental Organization gathering in Beijing in 1970 she became the first woman elected to Congress on a women's rights/peace platform. On her first day in the House of Representatives, she introduced a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all troops from Vietnam. She introduced the first resolution calling for the impeachment of Richard Nixon (for his secret bombing of Cambodia), the first federal gay civil rights bill and the first bill to decriminalize marijuana. One op ed piece described her as a "skilled legislative horse trader." She co-authored the Freedom of Information and Privacy acts and cast one of the first votes for the Equal Rights Amendment.

"You can't have a Congress that responds to the needs of the workingman when there are practically no people here who represent him. And you're not going to have a society that understands its humanity if you don't have more women in government," she said in 1974.

In her own words: "I've been described as a tough and noisy woman, a prize fighter, a man-hater, you name it. They call me Battling Bella, Mother Courage, and a Jewish mother with more complaints than Portnoy. There are those who say I'm impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash, and overbearing. Whether I'm any of those things, or all of them, you can decide for yourself. But whatever I am -- and this ought to be made very clear at the outset -- I am a very serious woman."

Bella Abzug was a woman who was not afraid to open her mouth and speak her truth, whether anyone liked it, approved of it, or not. A woman whom other women could trust.

She was tough. She will be missed.
IF NOT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, THEN WHAT?

by Margaret Cox Murray

hat was the question posed by Joanna Lee, director of Affirmative Action for Bates College, speaking on Feb. 11 at the University of Maine for the Women’s Studies Program’s Women in the Curriculum luncheon series.

Lee explained what she feels is her mission — equality for all people — and emphasized how everyone has benefited from affirmative action, even white males.

“Often when people think of affirmative action,” said Lee, “they think of quotas, when, in fact, quotas are illegal.” As a result, employers who want to continue affirmative action do not promise a job or entrance to a university, but it gives women, persons of color, the elderly and persons white males.

Lee mentioned that affirmative action includes the fifth amendment due process clause (passed prior to the 15th Amendment abolishing slavery), the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Executive Order 11246 (1965), signed by President Johnson. Executive Order 11246 requires affirmative action, and specifically prohibits quotas. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans discrimination based on sex as well as race. The equal pay act prohibits unequal pay for men and women if jobs are performed under similar conditions. Nevertheless, employers can find ways to get around these requirements. According to Lee, “We as supporters of affirmative action need to be on our toes.”

The greatest beneficiaries of affirmative action have been white women, Lee said. Women of color are still not making as many gains as their white counterparts.

Lee says that affirmative action is often blamed when jobs are scarce due to other factors or when companies move to another location. Budget cuts will affect affirmative action.

Lee mentions the need for a dialogue with white males in the workplace. Hiring and promotion for women and minorities are at risk. In a case of discrimination, she encourages filing a complaint or grievance, although she says very few people do so on the basis of race or religion because of lack of funds to help with legal cost.

“Interestingly,” says Lee, “according to polls, most people are not opposed to affirmative action, but that is not the way it is portrayed in the media.” She discussed a Texas case where a circuit court eliminated affirmative action in admissions even though the citizens were supportive of affirmative action.

Lee goes to a recent vote in Maine concerning gay rights as an example of what could happen to affirmative action. According to Lee, “We need to take a hard look at making changes in affirmative action rather than eliminating it altogether.”

She encouraged participants to work with affirmative action officers, to work together as women, and to work with men who are supportive of affirmative action.

As a result, employers who want to continue affirmative action do not promise a job or entrance to a university, but it gives women, persons of color, the elderly and persons white males.

Several large companies such as Amoco, Aetna, Kodak, as well as government agencies, offer nursing mothers on-site lactation rooms and equipment. The family-friendly programs also boost the loyalty and productivity of returning mothers, study employment and affirmative action, and specifically prohibits quotas. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans discrimination based on sex as well as race. The equal pay act prohibits unequal pay for men and women if jobs are performed under similar conditions. Nevertheless, employers can find ways to get around these requirements. According to Lee, “We as supporters of affirmative action need to be on our toes.”

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Breast-feeding in the Line of Fire

n the United States, less than 60 percent of women are nursing their newborn infants at the time of hospital discharge, and fewer than 22 percent continue to nurse six months later, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). This is far less than the official U.S. goals for breast-feeding which are to have 75 percent at initiation and 50 percent at six months by the year 2000, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. For working women, the rates are even lower. About 55 percent of women employed outside the home start out breast-feeding their babies, but only 12.5 percent of full-time working mothers keep nursing for at least five months.

Studies show that employers, as well as mothers and infants, would gain substantially from making arrangements to enable working women to keep breast-feeding. Babies fed breast milk tend to be healthier, better developed and more intelligent than those fed infant formula. Even babies who are only partially breast-fed benefit considerably, pediatricians say. As a result, employers who support breast-feeding mothers benefit from lower parental absenteeism and reduced health-insurance costs — saving as much as $1,400 per baby per year, studies show.

Several large companies such as Amoco, Aetna, Kodak, as well as government agencies, offer nursing mothers on-site lactation rooms and equipment. The family-friendly programs also boost the loyalty and productivity of returning mothers, study employment and affirmative action, and specifically prohibits quotas. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans discrimination based on sex as well as race. The equal pay act prohibits unequal pay for men and women if jobs are performed under similar conditions. Nevertheless, employers can find ways to get around these requirements. According to Lee, “We as supporters of affirmative action need to be on our toes.”

The greatest beneficiaries of affirmative action have been white women, Lee said. Women of color are still not making as many gains as their white counterparts.

Lee says that affirmative action is often blamed when jobs are scarce due to other factors or when companies move to another location. Budget cuts will affect affirmative action.

Lee mentions the need for a dialogue with white males in the workplace. Hiring and promotion for women and minorities are at risk. In a case of discrimination, she encourages filing a complaint or grievance, although

American Airlines
Human Rights Advocate

American Airlines is a major sponsor to and supporter of groups like GLADD, the Human Rights Campaign, the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, the AIDS Action Foundation, DIFFA, AmFar, and scores of community-based groups representing gays and lesbians. It is the first airline to adopt a written nondiscrimination policy covering sexual orientation in its employment practices.

In an unusual joint letter released to the media March 14 from the Family Research Council, Concerned Women of America, American Family Association and Coral Ridge Ministries, American Airlines was openly critical of its homosexual "pride" events constitute an open endorsement of promiscuous homosexuality.” She and the other groups have written Bob Crandall at American to complain that the airline has “gone beyond mere tolerance” of gays and lesbians. The full article appears in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and possibly picked up by other newspapers around the country. It has come to the attention of the gay and lesbian community that American Airlines’ switchboard and e-mails are being bombarded now by homophobic and hateful callers who have been urged by LaHaye and others to demand the company terminate its gay-friendly policies.

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Back Door to the Moon
Specialties, For the Mind, Body & Soul
Women in Business...

Michelle Walker --
Finding Softness in the Hard World of Business

by Tracy Lord

Belfast -- Walk into Coyote Moon and candles and clothing, jewelry and perfume fill the eyes and alert the senses. Music is in the air, and light dances from the glass ornaments suspended from the ceiling. There is a decidedly different feel to this shop. It is, as owner Michelle Walker says, "a place with soul."

Six years ago, with no retail experience and little capital, Walker decided Belfast was the perfect place to open a store that reflected her desire to do it differently -- and in a quiet, remarkable, sense she has succeeded, beautifully.

Or perhaps it is because of her sense of beauty and her belief others need to see it around them that she draws people from around the country into Coyote Moon. To hear the soft sound of water running through a pale pink quartz fountain, to finger elegant clothing, dresses and jackets, hats and jackets made of linen and silk, cotton and rayon. To leaf through books on re-engaging joy with life, to sample the enormous selection of lotions and creams, oils and incense.

Simply written nudges for the psyche adorn cases holding petroleum-free candles and cruelty-free soaps. "Make room for yourself", "Everyone is afraid of Something," and "Love is our Guide," they remind the browsing customers.

"My intention with my business is to create a place of beauty where people can come and nourish themselves and find products that mean something to them with regards to beauty and spirit and growth," says Walker.

It is definitely a woman-oriented shop -- to the point where, as Walker says, it is too much for some men. "We have guys who walk in with their wives and are just overwhelmed by what they see. They turn and say 'I'll wait for you outside.'" Not that they don't appreciate Coyote Moon when it's time to buy a gift. "We have a lot of men who buy for the woman in their life, and we try our best to help them. They seem to really respond to our care and concern."

That driving philosophy has led to a shop that is balanced, not only in its inventory but in its staff. Walker employs a "circular managerial style," where everyone is responsible for everyone else. "They have power and are responsible for representing the values of the store. There is a lot of creativity in the daily work," she says.

Monthly staff meetings keep the six employees in touch with each other and various concerns. And since Walker started studies at California's Pacifica Graduate Institute, the meetings are even more important.

"When I first started the shop, I was the force behind the business. That is no longer the case. I created the skeleton, but my staff has added the flesh. And it is constantly evolving." Walker's educational quest is grist for more than one mill. Not only have her forays into integrating soul into her work prompted a commitment in her and the staff to keeping the shop's environment a harmonious one, "it also keeps relationships clear and clean. I've created a form where it works out pretty well."

Now that Walker splits her time between Coyote Moon, monthly travels to California and time at an internship at Chalice Skyward, a substance abuse center in Rockland, her shop has become an even greater respite for her. "This is a place of rejuvenation for me. And my studies allowed me to truly appreciate the playfulness in my business."

With such success, thoughts of expanding routinely crop up in Walker's head, "Every time I've investigated enlarging, or starting a new store, I come back to what it was that motivated me to begin this one, and it really doesn't make sense to do more."

Instead, Walker envisions coupling her upcoming psychology degree with workshops or mentoring programs for women entering the work force without necessary skills. "I would like to help women get on their feet, to help create meaningful work for them."

A life in the retail arena does cause some questions for Walker, who seeks to reconcile commercialism with spiritual growth. "I've stewed over this one for a long time. But what I've found is what's felt is most important. Offering something to life, opening possibilities to those who come into the shop is how we give back. How we relate to the merchandise, how we honor what we do helps move us forward."

A while ago, Walker wrote an essay, published in the Buddhist journal Turning Wheel, in response to her growing concern between spiritual growth and consumerism. She writes of the pain and guilt involved in being at a large trade show in New York, the manifestation of greed and insatiability and the continuing exploitation of workers in Third World countries -- workers who create much of the merchandise shown.

"We are grossly ignorant as consumers. Things come from stores, that is often all we know. Not so long ago, people knew where their food and clothing came from: local vegetables, local artisan, local cow. Now we have a highly complex world market. I eat food that comes from halfway around the world, and it's hard to find the answers to those questions," she writes.

"These questions are much larger than I am, and to expect myself not only to have all the answers but to be implementing them already is to do violence to myself. Patience is necessary in order to investigate right living," Walker concludes.

So as the investigation continues, those who patronize the unique confines of Coyote Moon might not only contribute in a subtle way to the unfolding of life's riddles, but to Michelle Walker's vision.

"One of my discoveries," says Walker, "is that the business is a living and growing entity. It will continue to grow. I need to take care of that -- of what wants to happen. There is a life force, a spirit here."

---

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Ethical Investing

by Fritz Weidner

FAQ's in Investment Strategy

1. My IRA (my primary investment) is in a bank CD and I want to make more money by putting it into ethical mutual funds. What are the good ones and what risks are there?

Your IRA has had no risk related to the stock or bond markets, and you face both timing and market risk if you put the whole thing into a mutual fund at once. The exception in this risk has to do with your age now. If you have more than 20 years to retirement you could put half your IRA right away into an ethical stock fund, and if you have more than 30 years to retirement you could put the whole thing in. If not, I suggest moving your IRA to Citizens Working Assets money market by reports I have read is an example of “Greenwash.” For example, Nestles publicizes its use of genetically engineered agricultural products. As readers here know from previous columns by me, Nestles was reluctant to remove its unsafe, chocolate covered toy from U.S. markets alternate products for pallets at its Canadian factory, so they save trees. But a number of baby-milk activist groups have renewed their boycott of the firm because it not only pushes its infant formula (giving it away in third-world maternity wards even when not legal to do so, giving gifts to health workers there to offer formula for weaning babies at 3 months, etc.) but is aggressively involved in marketing genetically engineered agricultural products. As readers here know from previous columns by me, Nestles was reluctant to remove its unsafe, chocolate covered toy from U.S. markets last year and finally did so only after enormous pressure. For me, as a father of four children, all of whom nursed, at least, to some extent, I know that there are times when every imaginable support is needed to help the nursing mother succeed. The very idea of dissuading women, giving gifts to health-care workers to do that, having various subtle ways to undermine the nursing process, is unconscionable. I wrote to Pax Growth Fund, and the response was that the head of social research of which nursed, at least, to some extent, I know that there are times when every imaginable support is needed to help the nursing mother succeed. The very idea of dissuading women, giving gifts to health-care workers to do that, having various subtle ways to undermine the nursing process, is unconscionable. I wrote to Pax Growth Fund, and the response was that the head of social research health-care workers to do that, having various subtle ways to undermine the nursing process, is unconscionable. I wrote to Pax Growth Fund, and the response was that the head of social research had not seen its files any of the complaints I raised. So I say, not only stay away from Pax Growth Fund, but feel free to write the manager: Robert P. Colin, 222 State St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3853. Oh yes, my wife and daughter are selling their shares of Pax Growth Fund because of this information.

2. You've mentioned Pax World Fund as well as its newly formed Pax Growth Fund. How do they differ?

Something terrible came to my attention a month ago about the new growth fund: It has shares of Nestles. The old, original Pax World Fund continues to have socially responsible stocks and bonds in it and continues with good performance. But the growth fund has shares of a firm that by reports I have read is an example of “Greenwash.” For example, Nestles publicizes its use of alternate products for pallets at its Canadian factory, so they save trees. But a number of baby-milk activist groups have renewed their boycott of the firm because it not only pushes its infant formula (giving it away in third-world maternity wards even when not legal to do so, giving gifts to health workers there to offer formula for weaning babies at 3 months, etc.) but is aggressively involved in marketing genetically engineered agricultural products. As readers here know from previous columns by me, Nestles was reluctant to remove its unsafe, chocolate covered toy from U.S. markets last year and finally did so only after enormous pressure. For me, as a father of four children, all of whom nursed, at least, to some extent, I know that there are times when every imaginable support is needed to help the nursing mother succeed. The very idea of dissuading women, giving gifts to health-care workers to do that, having various subtle ways to undermine the nursing process, is unconscionable. I wrote to Pax Growth Fund, and the response was that the head of social research health-care workers to do that, having various subtle ways to undermine the nursing process, is unconscionable. I wrote to Pax Growth Fund, and the response was that the head of social research had not seen its files any of the complaints I raised. So I say, not only stay away from Pax Growth Fund, but feel free to write the manager: Robert P. Colin, 222 State St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3853. Oh yes, my wife and daughter are selling their shares of Pax Growth Fund because of this information.

3. If you had to pick one socially responsible stock, what is it?

This stock may not perform as well as the general markets but is an outfit that began its socially responsible outreach in 1888 by including conservation cards in its baking soda boxes. The company does not have women on the board and has only one high-level woman executive. But I wish that folks would invest in this company and tell them to shape up in this one regard, because its business is inherently good for the environment, and many corporate practices are socially responsible. For example, the company makes bicarbonate-based solvents that compete with petroleum-based ones. The company has been helpful to homeless groups and offers recipes for children to make safe play-dough. The brand name is Arm and Hammer and the company, Church and Dwight, trades under the symbol, CHD. You can buy a few shares and join its dividend reinvestment plan to purchase extra shares without a broker’s fee. I believe this is a good firm with which to get involved. If it had women on the board, I think it would be a lot more creative and then get the share price up more too. Remember, you have a strong voice as a shareholder, and the company will listen.

Fritz Weidner is an ethical investment adviser living in East Vassalboro. He can be reached at weidner@pivot.net. Send questions for this column to Jan Anderson at Feminist Times.
Women in the Arts...

In the Spotlight ~

Casting Off --

Katherine Cobey Knits Personal Politics into Sculpture

by Tracy Lord

Katherine Cobey sits in a rocking chair. Knitting needles punctuate her thoughts as the sun streams through the picture window overlooking a shining Meduncook River. An enormous spinning wheel perches over her shoulder, and baskets, soft with newly spun linen, silk and wool, line the floor of her Fiber Work studio.

She's encompassed in a woollen wrap, her white hair piled onto her head, and has carefully set out tea for us. But don't get any idea that this is a picture of a gentle, sweet grandmother making booties for her next grandchild. Katherine Cobey is out, not necessarily intentionally, but just because of who she is as an individual, to put any stereotypes to rest about women, knitting and the politics of gender.

"I don't tell galleries I knit -- I tell them I sculpt," she says, surrounded by the objects of her passion. Cobey uses fibers made by both animal and human: fibers that are new, fibers that are recycled, and with newly spun linen, silk and wool, punctuate her thoughts as the sun streams through the picture window.

Behind her, a full-length black coat, complete with boa, hangs so gracefully it takes more than one glance to recognize the material: deftly woven strips of garbage bags. Titled Slick, it is Cobey's reaction to the Gulf War. LoosE Ends, a lovely wedding gown made from white kitchen trash bags, is currently on a 12-museum tour for the next year. Dangling in front of the window is Knitting Gesture, a coppery transparent glove made from Chore Boys kitchen scrubbers. A circle of crucifix covered in shrouds stand in Cobey's Rocking Chair. Knitting needles punctuate her thoughts as the sun streams through the picture window overlooking a shining Meduncook River. An enormous spinning wheel perches over her shoulder, and baskets, soft with newly spun linen, silk and wool, line the floor of her Fiber Work studio.

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Knitting Gesture, a coppery transparent glove made from Chore Boys kitchen scrubbers. A circle of crucifix covered in shrouds stand in Cobey's Rocking Chair.
Business Leader Says Girls Deserve Their 'Just Desserts'

CAMDEN -- Joline Godfrey's message to girls is: "Business isn't Spinach."

Godfrey, a Bangor native, is author of several books on women and girls economic empowerment, founder and CEO of Independent Means, Inc., a national organization of entrepreneurship education for teen women. She was the keynote speaker at the fifth annual WITH Girls conference, "Strut Your Stuff (& Strive for Success)" March 28.

Godfrey's message was the underlying theme for the conference. She believes that many of us grew up hearing that the time for play only comes after work is done (just as dessert comes after spinach), but the truth, she says, is work and play can be integrated to maximize learning.

Independent Means, Inc., a California-based company, provides entrepreneurial education and economic literacy programs and products designed specifically for teen women and aims to give girls and young women the tools, knowledge and experience to prepare them for independence and economic wellbeing. Godfrey notes that the workforce of the future must be prepared to make jobs not just take jobs.

The all-day conference was sponsored by WITH Girls, Women's Initiative To Help Girls, whose mission is to support the unfolding of female spirit and potential in girls and young women.

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The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling
by James Hillman
Waan NY 1997 paper $12.99

In one of his boat-rocking earlier works—We've had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World's Getting Worse; written with Michael Ventura, James Hillman proposed that "for ideas to be therapeutic, that is, beneficial to the soul and body politic, they must gather in to themselves, garnering force, building strength, like great movers of the mind's furniture, so that the space we inhabit is rearranged." Hillman is a Jungian analyst and teacher who has had considerable success making connections between Greek archetypes of human nature and contemporary society's struggles to come to terms with death, destiny, gender roles, themselves, gambling force, building works—

whole meaning-making enterprise.

The acorn theory, in a nutshell: "[E]ach person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present," like the germ, shape and capacities of the oak in its acorn, "before it can be lived... The soul of each of us is given an unique daimon," genius, or guardian angel, "before we are born, and it has selected an image or pattern that we live on earth. This soul-companion, the daimon, guides us here. Whatever the vicissitudes of your life, "it remembers... what is in your image and belongs to your pattern." The extent to which the daimon demands and receives or is simply given recognition is the extent to which the life unfolds fully and with seeming ease, or partially and with difficulty.

In chapters with such provoking titles as "The Parental Fallacy," "Neither Nature nor Nurture-Something Else," "Fate," "The Bad Seed," and "Mediocrity," Hillman examines his themes using reconsidered lives of the famous—Judith Garland, Josephine Baker, bullfighter Manolete, Churchill, Ingmar Bergmann, for example—and the infamous—Hitler, Dahmer, Manson—to put flesh to his theory. Sometimes the theory seems to add too neat, the fit of the celebrities lives a bit too pat, but their familiarity is part of the book's a popular treasure. This is meaty writing, worthy of rereading several times, as is Journal of a Solitude; her classic, first journal. Hillman's strong, passionate voice, untouchable by her later illnesses, is remet with joy.

In an All Things Considered interview in August 1997, Sherman said, "They [the letters] are her most brilliant prose." I agree. These long letters are profound. They contain many of the same concerns as the journals: human relationships, passions and betrayals; literature and writer's lives; descriptions of natural scenery; various insecurities about her worth as a writer and as a lover and friend, and political events of the day.

Sarton needn't have been so insecure. She was always generous, in her books and in her daily life. One of her most generous gifts was her deeply felt, lyrical letters, which her painter friend Bill Brown, one of her most frequent correspondents in this volume, says he liked to "savoir... alone, like a wonderful meal!" (Even though, in one letter to Brown, Sarton writes humbly, "I am no good at letters.")

Sarton tried to respond to all letters, generally setting aside Sunday mornings for this task. She often had hundreds to respond to. During her early and middle years, she wrote almost daily letters to both parents or to one of them. Friends were always terribly important.

(Continued on page 12.)
More Book Review...
(Continued from page 11.)

for: "We dull our lives by the way we conceive them. We have stopped imagining them with any sort of romance, any fictional flair." We must, he proposes, dare to envision our lives, as if we might all be famous, "in terms of very large ideas such as beauty, mystery and myth." The Soul's Code may also be selling well because it offers ways of viewing our children and childrearing that could free both from the simultaneously rigid and promiscuous roles we've slipped into in the second half of the 20th Century. "What is the connection, if any," he asks, using the sort of vocabulary he would have us learn to use about ourselves "between the parental imagination and the child's acom? How do the parents imagine the child? What do they see in this little person who has been dropped in their laps, what is it bearing on those frail and bony shoulders, what is it looking for with those eyes? Have the parents a fantasy of an invisible fate in the visible traits displayed every day?" Helen's parents did, therefore she did, and my biography of her will suggest that it made all the difference.

It may help that The Soul's Code doesn't leave out the world around us in its effort to find a way for us to understand our selves. "The more I believe my nature comes from my parents, the less open I am to the ruling influences around me. The less the surrounding world is felt in its effort to find a way for us to explain ourselves, the stories we cast ourselves in are dysfunctional.

I think this idea of Hillman's has gotten better the more I've wrestled with it, or maybe it's that I've gotten better the more I've wrestled with it. I begin to feel that I have it instead of it having me. Though, like the myths in whose realms he moves comfortably, it's not the sort of idea that can be validated by science, or that even wants to be, it's an idea that can change for the better the way you see yourself and others. My corresponding idea is that, even if life and lives don't work the way Hillman proposes, if you behaved as though you did, as though you were here with a gift and for a purpose which your guardian daemon can help you discern and protect, and if you behaved as if you and you alone could fulfill that purpose, and if you treated your children accordingly... well, it strikes me you and they might live beyond life's meanings rather than beneath them. Is that what psychology's for?"

As novelist Nikos Kazantzakis, another lover of myths of personal empowerment, wrote: "Reach what you cannot." In his acom theory, Hillman proposes we have within our selves all the help we need to succeed. That's a therapeutic idea, for sure.

Ellen LaConte is a free-lance writer and is Helen Nearing's biographer and editor of "Starting Point" newsletter.

More Book Review...
(Continued from page 12.)

to her; she had many and kept in touch. She also believed in responding to her readers' adulation and needs although few samples of these are included in this thick book. Sarton's letters were handwritten in a tiny hand or pounded out, one finger style, on a manual typewriter.

For this first published volume of letters, Sherman, who has also edited May Sarton: Among the Usual Days, and the festschrift, Forward into the Past, has chosen only examples that glorify or mythologize the writer. She has been fair-handed and objective, and has included many types of correspondences, not just those that paint Sarton in a favorable light. In these letters, written from age 4 until about the time the author bought her house in Nelson, N.H., we rediscover that Sarton had a temper and many insecurities. We learn that she struggled with her strong passions and with her sexuality. She was bi-sexual for many years and even writes of being picked up by a man. We learn of her extreme emotion for Marie Cloquet (Jean Dominque) and for Lady Juliette Huyot. Her view of women's love relationship is quite clear from a 1954 letter to Louise Bogan, with whom she also was in love: "The great difference between man and woman is that woman cannot separate sex from love and man can... The drive which is back of two women who unite in passionate love is therefore, as in any love relationship for a woman, first of all and primarily emotional rather than sexual. Emotion overflows and tries to find a medium of expression... Surely, these letters were one of Sarton's mediums of expressions for her many love affairs.

In the same year she commented to Edith Forbes Kennedy, ["How long for steady rhythmical unfurled companionship. I do want to marry." I had always known that she had at least one offer, but never that one of her early goals was exactly this union (which, of course, she later achieved with Judith Mathlack, who we learn, from these letters, was not a great passion but a giving and patient person). Actually, the lack of attention to Judy is somewhat surprising, although I had known this relationship was not the great romance of Sarton's life, but, rather, her rock.

Her love of cats and flower gardening shows through from an early age. In 1941, she writes British novelist Winifred Bryher, "We are now ruled implacably by four cats. When we sleep they wish to bounce up and down on the beds, bite our toes, catch flies off our noses etc. When we are wide-awake and would like to play they cannot be moved, but lie exhausted even forgetting sometimes to put in their tongues." Of course, we learn everything Sarton is reading. The letters read like a "what's valuable to read" for the '50s, '40s and '30s. A few of the various authors she enjoys in these years are H.D. (Hilda Doolittle), Marianne Moore, Ruth Pitter, Antoine de St. Exupery and Hermann Rausching, a German political writer. She had no college education, by choice, and was largely self-taught in and took her pursuit of fine literature seriously. This recommendation of good books follows throughout all her journals.

Finally, the letters are not only about her personal affairs and daily life. They reflect the concerns and people of the early and mid- part of this century, especially during World War II. Sarton volunteered as an instructor for first aid work and sent many care packages to Europe. She writes of meeting, or at least seeing dozens of famous people, including Josephine Baker, Brancusi and Robert Frost, and of the deaths of Virginia Woolf and of Roosevelt, the first of which effected her the most strongly.

Included in this first volume of letters are black-and-white photos, some seem for the first time, 19 pages of previously unpublished poems (a few in her first language, French), and several letters also in French. In the English letters are a few passages in French; these Sherman has translated.

In her essay, "The May Sarton I Have Known," Carolyn Heilbrun, who knew Sarton since 1972, writes, "The May Sarton I have known is an omery, out-spoken, virtuous, finny and too-long- ignored woman of courage and secret knowledge of what matters in life, which she has shared no matter what the price." In these letters, May Sarton is all these things, to my delight. Their spontaneity and honesty show her to be "fully human." I eagerly await the next volume of letters, which Sherman is now editing.

Deborah Straw is a free-lance writer and lives in Burlington, Vt. She is completing an ecotourism book to the Florida Keys and is a teacher at Community College of Vermont.

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FEMINIST TIMES...

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APRIL 1998

Round'n About With Women

This datebook page is dedicated to the support of women in the arts. To be included in this acknowledgement, send announcements, press releases and photos.

Items for this page are due by the 15th of the previous month. Send to Calendar Editor, 309 High St., Belfast ME 04915
207.338.1429
fax: 207.338.9895
e-mail: jlanders@acadia.net

ON CAMPUS

BATES COLLEGE (FM) 786.8330
• Benjamin Mays Center: Art and the Conversion of the Heart, lecture by Jane Smith Bernhardt as part of the Spiritual Series, 4:30 pm, April 28;
• Olin Arts Center, Concert Hall: Black Maria Film Festival, May 2, 8 pm, May 3, 2 pm (FM) 786.6158, admission $5, May 8, 8 pm concert w/Lawrence Golan, violin, Kurt Kaufman, cello.
• Museum of Art, lower gallery: through May 24, Anne Harris.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE (FM) 725.3743
• Becker Gallery: Still Time & Face It!, through May 31.

LEWISTON-AUBURN COLLEGE (FM) 800.639.2919
• Atrium Gallery: Ninth Annual Show cultivates in a May art auction, through May 8.

UNITY COLLEGE (FM) 948.3151, fax 948.5026
• Student Center: Earth Day Celebration, April 18, 9 am.
• Activities Bldg, Room 1B-2B: La Strada, 1954 film, April 19, 7 pm.
• SC: Doug Emery, jazz, April 22, 8 pm.
• SC: Cornfields of New York, one act play, April 25, 7 pm.
• AB: Rear Window, 1954 film, April 26, 7 pm.
• SC: Robert Hoyt, musician, April 29, 8 pm.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE @ PRESCOTT IS (FM) 768.9611
• Reed Gallery: Bonnie Harp, Canadian watercolorist, through April 17; April 18-20 May, Senior Art Shows.
• Campus Center: Jah Spirit, Reggae concert/dance, April 18, 8 pm.
• CC: Alexandra Oehler, pianist, May 1, 8pm.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND (FM) 797.7261 Ext. 4375

AUGUSTA
• Faces of Recollection, Dianne Saffas paintings, through May 29, Moss Gallery of Contemporary Art; 622.6111

BAR HARBOR
• Visions of the Cape, poetry & prints by Polly Cote, Thorneide Library, through April 30; 288.5015.

BATH
• Life Cycle, sculpture installation by Tamar Ettingen, Chocolate Church Arts Center, through April 25; 442.8455.

BLUE HILL
• Left Bank Bakery & Cafe (FM) 374.2201: April 15, Bill Parsons; April 16, Chris & Meredith Thompson; April 18, The Beatroots; April 19, Annie Gallup; April 22, Erin McKeown; April 23, Jules Shear; April 24, The Boneheads; April 25, Open Stage; April 26, The Allison Brown Quartet; April 29, Planet Pan; April 30, Blues Jam; May 1, Andrew McKnight & Bobbi Lane; May 2, Northern Lights; May 5, Cris Williamson & Tret Fure; May 7, Wild Oats; May 9, The Nudes; May 9, Mindy Jostyn; May 14, The Piners; May 16, Maggi, Pierce & EJ; May 21, Gideon Freudman; May 22, Mike & Suzy Fay; May 23, Gordon Stone Trio; May 29, Maria Sangioio, May 30, 31, Paul Sullivan Jazz.

THINK THIN... Susan Poulin's head juts out above a classic voluptuous nude body in a scene from In My Head I'm Thin, a play written and performed by Poulin and her husband, Gordon Carlisle. The popular musical comedy will play for a one-night benefit performance, 8 p.m. Friday, April 17, at the Oak Street Theatre in Portland, followed by a dessert discussion with the actors. Tickets at $20 for adults and $15 for students may be reserved (775-5103) or purchased (92 Oak St.). Photo by Andrew Edgar.

Journeys Over Water, retrospective show, paintings by Stephen Etner, Museum of Art, through June 7, 775.6148.

RAYMOND
• Annie Gallup performs songs from her latest CD, Courage My Love, Slate's, FMI 622.9675.

LEWISTON
• Educating Rita, play by Willy Russell, The Public Theatre, May 8, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 782.3200.
• The Beauty of Place, Creative Photographic Arts Center, Bates Mill Complex, through May 9, 800.691.1369.

SAY AHHH... Ann Foskett and Patricia Doan in a scene from Susan Sontag's Alice in Bed which plays April 17-May 9 at the Oak Street Theatre in Portland. Photo by George Glum.

CAMDEN
• Words & Images: An Exhibition of Poetry & Art, Public Library, through May 11; 236.3440.

ELLSWORTH
• Barns, Beaches, Boats and Broads, watercolors by Robert Calhoun, public library, through April 30; 667.6363.

FARMINGTON
• Spring Thaw exhibit, Classic...
Haiti

In 1986, Joseph Paolino & Sons contracted with the city of Philadelphia to dispose of 15,000 tons of incinerator ash containing the toxic chemicals lead, cadmium, arsenic, mercury, dioxin and benzene. Paolino contracted to a Bahamian shipping company to transport this ash on the ship the Khian Sea. It left Philadelphia with the waste in August, 1986 and traveled the Caribbean Sea for 16 months before promoting this ash as fertilizer to the Haitian government and receiving permission to deliver the waste to Gonaves and a fictitious company. An estimated 4,000 tons of ash was unloaded in an open heap on the earthen wharf in Gonaives, less than five feet above sea level before Haitian authorities learned the true nature of this ash and ordered the ship's captain to reload it and leave immediately. This ship left in the night, eventually unloading the remaining 11,000 tons of waste in the Indian Ocean.

Outrage over this incident inspired the Basel Convention which bans the export of hazardous waste from industrial countries to developing countries. It was signed by 115 nations including the U.S., but it has never been ratified by Congress.

Much of the ash on the wharf was blown in the sea, the rest removed to an open, unlined cinder block containment area and covered with dirt. However it is leaching into the soil and groundwater and ultimately the Caribbean Sea.

Although the city of Philadelphia refused payment to Paolino & Sons at the time of the illegal dumping, they are now refusing to remove the waste from Haiti. The government of Haiti insists the waste be removed by Philadelphia and/or the U.S. Government.

In March, Witness for Peace, a national non-profit organization which seeks to change U.S. policies which contribute to poverty and oppression in Latin America and the Caribbean sent a delegation to Haiti to interview representatives from community organizations and exploitation of factory workers and to Haitians protesting the ash dumping in Gonaive. Victoria Sztakowski, of Portland, was one of ten representatives from North America in the Witnesses for Peace delegation to Haiti.

Victoria Sztakowski will provide Feminist Times of updates on this and other issues in Haiti.

Zimbabwe

An unremarkable four-bedroom house in a middle-class Harare suburb has become a secret destination for hundreds of Zimbabwean women fleeing domestic and sexual abuse. Established by the Musasa Project, a women’s organization working to fight gender violence, the shelter has provided refuge to more than 300 women since 1996. It is the first women’s shelter ever in Zimbabwe, a place for women to consider options with the help of trained counselors and legal advisors during a two-month stay.

According to a 1994 World Bank study, more than 9 million years of life are lost annually worldwide as a result of violence against women. In Zimbabwe, a recent survey by Musasa and Women in Law and Development in Africa found that 59 percent of 245 murdered women were killed by their partners.

Musasa wants the government to criminalize domestic violence and marital rape. It uses town meetings, theater and television documentaries to raise awareness. It has won the backing of Ebiscion Zvobgo, former cabinet minister and legal expert who says that if stealing cattle is a punishable offense, so is domestic abuse.
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Each year, government at every level hands out hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars in the form of corporate tax breaks and subsidies. In fact, government spends more on corporate welfare than it does on aid for the poor. Senate Majority Leader Chellie Pingree has introduced a bill, L.D. 2243, the Corporate Accountability Act to improve the rate of return on large taxpayer investments by requiring more disclosure and public participation in the subsidy application process; insisting that recipients receiving aid in excess of $250,000 in one year or over $2.5 million in a ten-year period follow through on jobs promised and comply with labor agreements establishing a prevailing wage and health and pension benefits, authorizing state and local governments to recapture their investments; and creating a public commission to oversee the corporate subsidy process.

- The United States, along with the world's richest industrialized countries, is negotiating an international treaty that will give a "bill of rights" to big corporations. The Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI) would eliminate restrictions on international investments, prevent governments from instituting policies aimed at strengthening local economies, and allow multinational corporations to sue governments if they establish new worker protections, public-safety regulations, or measures protecting the environment. Call Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at 202/647-6575 and urge her to withdraw from MAI negotiations. We don't need to grant more rights to big corporations.

- New Mothers' Breastfeeding Promotion and Protection Act, a bill introduced in Congress last week, would guarantee the right of working women to breast-feed and grant them unpaid breaks of up to an hour a day to express milk during their child's first year. It would also offer tax credits for employers who set up nursing stations, provide breast pumps, or hire lactation consultants. The bill marks the culmination of a recent wave of legislation in states and localities aimed at countering bias against breast-feeding in the United States. It comes on the heels of new pediatrician guidelines, announced in December, that urge women to nurse their babies for a full year.

Workshops, lectures, classes, etc.

April 18: • Children's Book Workshop, led by Lisa Jahn-Clough, 10-3, Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance (MWPA) office, 12 Pleasant St., Brunswick; FMI 729-6333. • "Health in Our Hands" conference, sponsored by the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, 8:30-3:30, Donald P. Corbett business bldg., UMaine; FMI 947-5337. • Spiritual Readings by John Amoroso, Back Door to the Moon, 5 Dunn St., Oakland, 10-6; FMI 465-7005. • Linda Tatelbaum, author of Carrying Water as a Way of Life: A Homesteader's History, talks about writing and self-publishing, as part of the Maine Readers' Festival, sponsored by Maine Times, Harlow Gallery, Hallowell, 1-2; FMI 785-4634. April 21: • Poet Laureate of the U.S. Books & Literature, 6-8 Back Door to the Moon (see address and FMI above). April 22: • No One Can Deny Us: Black Women Activists Put South African Women on the Agenda, lecture by Leslie Hill, 12:15, Bangor Lounge, Memorial Union, UMaine; FMI 581-3756. April 29: • (To May 1) Maine International Women's Business Conference, Augusta Civic Center, FMI and registration form, 737-2121 or fax, 737-2122. May 2: • Exploring Healthy Buildings: Indoor Environment and Your Health, 9-1, First Congregational Church, Camden; FMI 594-6889. • 2nd annual "Utterly Unbelievable" Benefit Unitarian Universalist Auction, Belfast Area High School, 6 (preview & silent auction), 7 (general auction), admission free; FMI 338-1146 or 338-4408. May 4: • Six-Week Screenwriting Course, 6:30-8:30, Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance office (see April 18 FMI and address). May 7: • (Through June 11) Nonfiction Writing Workshop w/ John Cole, 7-9, Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance office (see April 18 FMI and address). May 9: • "Alive & Kicking: Life After Feb. 10; A Workshop on Local Organizing" sponsored by Community Circle for Human Rights, 9:30-3:30, Fugh Center, Colby College Campus, Waterville; FMI 832-5683.

World Federalist Association -- Maine Chapter PO Box 397 Waldoboro, ME 04572 832-6863 This WPA 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. 10/97

Maine NOW (National Organization for Women) PO Box 4012 Portland, ME 04101 797-8508 The largest feminist grassroots organization in Maine. Active in securing increased women's rights: reproductive freedom, lesbian/gay rights, ERA, economic justice and eliminating racism. Local chapters in Bangor, Brunswick, Farmington, Kennebunk Valley and Portland. 7/97

LET CUBA LIVE PO Box 245 Brunswick, ME 04011 725-1330 We work to normalize US relations with Cuba, by direct action, education and legislative efforts. We also promote discussion of the accomplishments and problems of the Cuban Revolution. 7/97

List your organization in the Network, send $30 and a 30-word description to Feminist Times, 301 High St., Belfast, ME 04915.

Feminist Times Network

MAINE CENTERS FOR WOMEN, WORK AND COMMUNITY 46 University Drive Augusta, ME 04330-9410 621-3430 MCCCWC provides state-wide community-based entrepreneurship training and workforce development services to displaced homemakers, single parents and other workers in transition. 10/97

Maine Tradeswomen Network P.O. Box 10813 Portland, ME 04104 797-4801 A bond of tradeswomen finding strength, education and support from each other. Our goal is to share our knowledge and encourage other women to enter the non-traditional work force. 6/97

Labor Party PO Box 1812 Portland, ME 04104 780-1247 http://www.portlandpages.com/laborparty Fighting for a living wage for the work that you do! The Labor party is a political party that exists to build a powerful movement around a new agenda for working-class people. 2/98

Amnesty International ALUS Group 169 PO Box 203 Bath, ME 04530 832-5683 An independent worldwide movement working impartially for the release of prisoners of conscience, an end to torture and executions.


PLACE YOUR AD TODAY

April - May 1998
Pornography -- What Can We Do?

by Jory Squibb

The second part is more complex. Why are we worried about young pornography watchers? My own uneasiness comes from seeing -- and remembering! -- how slowly, if at all, we men become mature and responsible in our sensual natures. I wish our passages from age 11 to 22 could more consistently lead us to a loving, nonviolent, give-and-take partnership. Instead, so many of us linger on as predatory reptiles.

Pornography is a part of that failure to mature. Begun as a steady diet in younger years, it can desensitize us, cripple our true emotions and invite us to maintain our adolescent obsessions. When such a young person is later turned loose on the world with some adult skills, the result can be a menace.

Do I exaggerate? Try this: Ask a woman friend if she's ever had a rape or near-rape experience, and if so, can she tell you about it. I think you'll come to agree: Male sexual immaturity brings a vast amount of suffering.

So pornography is a kind of sex education. It responds to the intense curiosity of youth, but can begin a social sidetrack. The problem is not only the sidetrack, but the educational vacuum that exists around it. That's where the second solution lies.

Raising teens is like raising toddlers. They resist our guidance mightily, but need it mightily. Their behaviors are off-putting, designed to wear out our earlier intrusiveness. They gain space, a chance to figure things out without a parent too close. Yet I find that, behind the independence, they are still hungry for parenting, for leadership, even for long talks when the time is right -- in short for a strong relationship.

We counter pornography by building this relationship and the teaching and modeling which naturally comes from it. Our sons especially need a chivalrous way of relating: respectful, gentle, protective. Protective? Can you feel how out-of-step that is with contemporary values? Yet protecting is a deeply programmed part of being a man. Our nature yearns for it in the lonely plains of enforced sameness.

So my second solution is an invitation to the dance: Overcome the ego-brusings of parenting. Slowly, humbly get to know that young person in our midst -- the music, the costumes, the friends, the parents. Strengthen or begin common interests. I'm anxious to find my 14-year-old is a Doors fan!

Dare to be close. Dare to teach, even to teach values. There may be no immediate resonance, but later we may find that a surprising amount of rejected values have taken root. And though our culture is youth-intoxicated, perhaps we can find again the ancient self-confidence of age. Our virtue is simple. We've clung to this spinning planet a little longer.

Jory Squibb is a father and writer who lives in Camden.