

# HERIZONS

## the manitoba women's newspaper

VOL. II NO. IV

MAY 17, 1982

60¢

### Johanna Stuckey

'And God created man in his own image . . .,' so says the King James Version of the Hebrew Bible (*Gen. Ch. 1, v.26*). In the Judeo-Christian tradition, God the Father placed human beings in the Garden of Eden to live totally protected lives, until Eve, prompted by the serpent, ate the forbidden fruit and Adam followed suit. Angrily, God and Father expelled his erring children from Eden and sent them forth to fend for themselves. As part of her punishment, Eve was cursed to desire Adam and be subordinate to him.

In this most influential of stories, God is male and decidedly patriarchal. What the story is trying to affirm is a new order — a male-dominated, patriarchal society watched over by a male god. What this story also tells us, however, is that things had not always been that way. For centuries, indeed, before the Adam and Eve story became a programming text for Jews (and, later, Christians), peoples all over Europe and the Near East, even in the 'Bible Lands' themselves, had worshipped as supreme not a male god but a goddess — the Great Goddess, the 'Queen of Heaven'.

Her origins go back to the dim beginnings of human time, at least to the earliest artists and probably farther. In late Paleolithic times (30,000 BC to about 10,000 BC), one of the most prevalent and widespread human artifacts was a female image, usually fat, often pregnant, certainly all woman. No one today can say for certain what she represented. Many scholars call her images 'Venus' figures and dismiss them as fertility-cult objects. Perhaps they were. But I think they are the earliest representations of the Great Goddess.

The people who made that beautiful little statue found in Austria were probably ancestral to peoples who, later, continued the making of 'Goddess' statues. Throughout Europe and the Near East, archaeologists have found numerous statues which bear similar features to those of the 'Venus' of Willendorf. Such statues, particularly Neolithic ones, abound in the 'Bible Lands, and from many periods. One of the most interesting Neolithic sites is at Catal Huyuk in Anatolia, Turkey. Its dates are around 6500 BC to around

5700 BC. Archaeologists have begun to uncover a large town there where they have found many female figurines similar to the 'Venus' of Willendorf. What is more interesting is that, along with the statues, they

In this Mesopotamian material — primarily poetry — we find that the Goddess was still — or had recently been — central to Sumerian worship. Further the myths preserved in these poems help us interpret artifacts such

alone; at this stage, if the Goddess is present at all, she is there as the inanimate matter of chaos. Hebrew Genesis 1:1 represents this last stage, for the Hebrew God creates everything by speaking it into being.

women knead their dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven . . .'  
(KJV. Ch. 7, v. 18)

And later in the same book we read:

'Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, . . . answered Jeremiah, saying, "As for the word that thou hast spoken until us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?"' (K.J.V., Ch. 44, vv. 15-19)

Certainly, all through the period of prophecy in Israel, many Hebrews worshipped the Goddess more or less consistently. And archaeology supports this statement for, throughout the 'Bible Lands', innumerable female figurines of familiar shape have occurred in sites of varying dates and well into Biblical times.

Who was the Great Goddess, the 'Queen of Heaven'? Her names are legion — Nammu and Inanna in Sumer, Tiamat in Akkad, Astarte in Assyria, Asherah and Anath in the 'Bible Lands', Isis and Hathor in Egypt, Kuan Yin in China, Morgan le Fay and Maeve among the Celts, Coatlicue among the Aztecs, Eurynome and Aphrodite in Ancient Greece, Jezanna in Zimbabwe, Pele in Hawaii, Hepa among the Hittites,

continued page 4

## The Great Goddess,



## Queen of Heaven

found evidence of a highly developed religion. Central to that religion seems to have been the worship of the Great Goddess, who, at the later levels at least, appears to have been worshipped in triad — as a young girl, as a mature woman giving birth and as a representative of death. That the Goddess represented life and death is powerfully demonstrated by the most evocative of artifacts found — breasts open at the nipples, out of which protruded the claw, beak, or jaw of a predatory bird or animal — pretty convincing evidence that the people of Catal Huyuk saw the Goddess as controlling life and death.

Up until now, we have been discussing the period called 'Pre-history', before the invention of writing, which occurred about 3000 BC in Sumer (the Sumerians attributed the invention to a goddess and the first examples come from one of her temples). Now we have written evidence of the Great Goddess, evidence produced almost certainly mainly by men.

as the Catal Huyuk finds and the 'Venus' of Willendorf.

These Mesopotamian myths, preserved in male-oriented poems (post-3000 BC), generally record successful attempts to demote the Goddess from her central position. Because of her power, her overthrow was extremely violent, the result of vicious conflict between the Goddess (and her supporters) and her young male descendants. Joseph Campbell, in his book *Masks of the Gods: Occidental Mythology*, says that origin myths go through four stages. At the first stage, the Goddess creates all things from herself alone. The next stage sees creation by an intermingled male-female pair (sometimes the female god has first created the male as her spouse). The third stage presents a male deity who

separates the ancestral pair one from the other, and then either he rapes the Goddess or he kills both and out of the body of the Goddess he makes everything. At the final stage, a male deity creates everything by his word

Indeed, the Hebrew Bible is, perhaps, the most powerful record we have of the conflict between peoples who worshipped God the Father and peoples who were devoted to the Great Goddess. There is little doubt that, when the Hebrews in the Bible entered the Promised Land of Canaan, they found, already there, a Goddess-worshipping culture which immediately presented an enormous threat. So, as the Bible tells us, the Hebrews set out to conquer the Canaanites and eliminate their religion. Town after town fell to the invaders, who then massacred all the inhabitants — men, women and children. But still, they were unable to suppress Goddess worship. The Bible records, again and again, the 'whoring' of the people of Israel after 'foreign gods' and through the Prophets we read of the Israelites 'whoring' after the gods of Canaan. In the Book of Jeremiah, for instance, we read:

'The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the

# Bulletins

**Coming up on June 7th - 11th.** the Women's Inter-Church Council has called a national gathering at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, to "explore the concept of sisterhood", "to educate ourselves in women's experience generally — non-Canadian, immigrant Canadian, native Canadian and multi-generational Canadian. The event is open to all women.

**On Saturday, June 12th an anti-nuclear rally & demonstration in Winnipeg is being held.** More than 100,000 people are expected to come together in New York City to demonstrate support for the goals of the Second Special Session on Disarmament (United Nations). Contingents from Japan, Europe and Canada will be present. At the same time, in cities and towns throughout the world, local demonstrations will be held. Here in Winnipeg the rally, parade and concert are scheduled to begin at 12 noon, to be held on the Legislative grounds sponsored by the Winnipeg Co-ordinating Committee on Disarmament. Local and rural organizations concerned with peace and justice, women's groups, church congregations, trade unions, families and individuals are invited to participate. Perhaps banner making parties and small group activities prior to June 12 can be organized. Let us join together in celebration of the possibility of a world without war, and in awareness of the need for voicing our opposition to the arms race. For more information, or to become involved in the June 12 planning group, contact Paul at 284-7679 or Doreen at 582-4248.

**Voice of Women** is a Canadian organization working for disarmament since 1960. We are funded solely by our membership, to join call 489-3675/832-5898 or write to 111 Lanark Street, Winnipeg, Man. R3N 1K9. Membership fees range from \$2 to 15/yr.

**A Series of Workshops About Women's Health Issues:**

Saturday, May 22/82 — 10:00 to 12:00 Feminist Counselling; 1:00 to 2:15 Post Therapeutic Abortion Counselling: Approaching an Unmet Need; 2:30 to 4:00 Sexuality.

All Workshops are held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery (Free). For further information call Women's Health Clinic Inc. 775-0418.

**The Asociacion de las Mujeres de El Salvador, or AMES** (Salvadorean Women's Association) is raising money to sponsor an El Salvadoran woman to come to Canada for a speaking tour. She will tentatively be in Winnipeg June 9-11. Please send donations to: AMES, 2439 Vine St., Vancouver, B.C. V6K 3K7

*Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la Recherche Feministe* have accepted a proposal to publish an issue on lesbian research, teaching and writing in Canada. The issue will appear March 1983, all materials should be sent in by July 1, 1982. Manuscripts should range in length from 3 to 10 typed pages. Tentative outline: 1. Lesbian Research and Writing in Canada; 2. The Institution of Compulsory Heterosexuality; 3. Contemporary Lesbian Life. Since many women feel unable to participate for fear of recriminations in their jobs or personal lives, anonymity is assured to all those women who request it. RFR/DRF, Dept. of Sociology, OISE, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6 (416) 923-6641, Ext. 556.

Canadian Association of Social Workers Annual Conference — Eve. June 16, June 17 & 18, 1983. Theme: Working in the Human Services — Challenges in the 80's. For Registration information write to: M.A.S.W., 83 Rutgers Bay, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 3C9, Attention: K. Clare

Continuing Education at the University of Winnipeg presents a lecture series on THE LAW: Business; Criminal; Landlord/Tenant; Labour; Domestic. For Registration Form write to 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9.

National Film Board NEWS RELEASE: The June 12th Peace and Disarmament March/Rally Committee presents the NFB production *If You Love this Planet*: Dr. Helen Caldicott on Nuclear War in NFB Theatre, 674 St. James Street. Thursday Evening showings at 7:30 p.m. — May 20, 27, June 3, 10 (Free).

**WOMEN IN COMMUNITY:** A Conference Exploring Communal Life As it Affects the Lives of Women, July 9 - 12, 1982. Women's Culture — Women's Health — Feminist Therapy. Write or phone Dandelio Community, R.R. 1, Enterprise, Ontario K0K 1Z0 (613) 358-2304. Fees on a sliding scale \$35 - \$75; Children \$20.

Feminist Theatre At the Foot of the Mountain presents *Ashes, Ashes, we all Fall down*, a ritual drama about nuclear madness and the denial of death created by Martha Boesing in collaboration with the company. Dates are May 20 - June 27, 1982 at People's Centre, 2000 South 5th Street on Minneapolis' West Bank, Tickets \$4-10 Sliding Scale. For reservations call 375-9487 Mon.-Fri. 8-5 p.m.

**On PBS May 19 at 7:30 'Soldier Girls'** This 90 minute documentary explores the changes in attitudes and conflicts in roles for men and women in the American army.

by Kathy McCullough and Brigitte Sutherland

# Letters

The Editor, HERizons

Many years ago when was studying at university I was loaned a wonderful book, *Well of Loneliness*. I had grown up in a small relatively conservative Manitoba town where I remember no mention of homosexuality or lesbianism. No details of the discussions of the book come back to me but my class mates must have been accepting of the philosophy of the book because from that day to this I have not, in general, been critical of homosexuality.

I am in my seventies now and over the years have gradually become a feminist. Recently that has led me to an interest in *The Women's Building*. It is one of the few meeting places in Winnipeg where lesbians need not fear admitting they are lesbians, at least as a supporter of The Building, I hope that is true.

I am writing this letter to the *Manitoba Women's Newspaper* in reaction to Isabel Andrews' article *Homophobia*. And I have a question: how can people like me help lesbians to feel more accepted by society at large?

Margaret Robson

Hello:

Just saw my first (the March) issue of HERizons, and couldn't resist dropping you a note, along with my subscription form, to say how tremendously impressed I am. The quality of the writing, design, and layout is first rate, and the special features, such as the Bibliography and the quotations bordering the pages make for valuable resource materials.

It's past due that we as feminists make our views, concerns, and hopes known in such an impressive format. Keep up the good work!

Laura Steiman

Herizons offers free space for individual classified ads — no more than 5 lines. Mail in or phone in 786-7889, 730 Alexander Avenue, Winnipeg.

**Classified**

**HOUSING** — Looking for independent woman in St. Vital. 10 min. drive and 20 min. cycle from U. of M. Rent \$150/mo. & half of utilities. Option: summer or permanent residency. Call Milly at 257-1209.

The Women's Building is in need of volunteers. If you are interested in contributing to a feminist bookstore, please come to an organizing meeting on May 20th at 7:30 p.m., or call and leave your name and telephone no. Our address is 730 Alexander Ave. (783-7889).

**Washington's finest** — A United States federal court has ruled that no city, regardless of size, is required to provide its citizens with police protection. The ruling came in a suit against the Washington police department, brought by three women who were brutally raped and beaten for 14 hours, after two men broke into their home.

Initially, two of the women hid from the attackers and called the police twice — but both calls were ignored. A DC court agreed with the facts of the case, but dismissed the women's suit on the grounds that the government has "no general duty" to provide police protection.

From Uniter (RNR/CUP)

**Heartfelt Terror** — In the last few years about 70 girls and young women have been forced through Bible drills, terror, fatigue, isolation and boredom at the Bethesda Home for Girls, a fundamentalist Baptist home in Hattiesburg, MS. The director claims the treatment is spiritual "heartwashing" to save girls from self-destruction. The young women are mostly unwed mothers and runaways.

**The Russian feminists'** description of abortion clinics as "mince-meat machines" is also true in Poland. Abortion has been used as a political weapon between the church and the state with complete disregard for women's freedom. The Church opposes abortion, while the state does not allow any other forms of birth control, forcing women to go through an endless series of abortions.

**The Roman Catholic Church's** "congregation for the doctrine of faith" confirmed in an official declaration that Freemasons, Nihilists, Charcoalburners and Anarchists are to be considered as automatically excommunicated from the church. Such evil-doers are thus deprived of burial according to the Catholic rites and will, of course, be consigned to the innermost circles of hell.

**Penney Kome**, who is known across Canada for her column "Women's Place" which appears monthly in *Homemakers' Magazine*, has written a uniquely important book based on a survey of more than 3,000 Canadian women. To be published by McClelland & Stewart on April 3, 1982, **SOMEBODY HAS TO DO IT — WHOSE WORK IS HOUSEWORK?**, is a lively examination of the job that keeps most women working 60-hour weeks for little pay and no status. The first major study of the realities of homemaking and housekeeping, it is filled with suggestions for ways to relieve women of this inequitable burden.

On December 1, 1981, in a decision which surprised many legal observers, the Supreme Court of Canada granted Joe Borowski of Winnipeg standing to challenge our abortion law. **Borowski claims that a fertilized egg is a person, deserving of and en-**

# Nelligrams

titled to protection of the Diefenbaker Canadian Bill of Rights. Borowski would allow no abortions under any circumstances — not even in cases of rape or incest. Women, though, will continue to have unplanned unwanted and unsupportable pregnancies, and, in their desperation, seek ways to terminate them. Canadian women will again be driven into back street abortions, and possibly be maimed or die as a result. The **Canadian Abortion Rights Action League**, of which I am an honorary director, plans to take legal action to counter Joe Borowski's threat to turn back the clock. Your interest, participation and financial support can make the difference. You can stop Joe Borowski from turning back the clock. **Will you?** Yours sincerely, Margaret Laurence.

**The long arm of the patriarchy colonized Peru**, centre of the Inca empire, and local women who heard the "confessions" of other women were accused of witchcraft and idolatry. They were nevertheless tolerated if they translated other women's confessions to the priest. Translators were called *hermanas mayores* (older sisters), and were inclined to make liberal translations that omitted "sins" not traditionally regarded as sinful.

**Religious Air waves coming at you** — pressure on the CRTC to allow religious broadcasting networks is being brought to bear by a group of Conservative MP's. This would set a precedent of contravening the Broadcast Act which requires that stations present "a reasonable, balanced opportunity for the expression of differing views on matters of public concerns."

These self-described conservative Christian men urge the CRTC to licence a national religious network, either commercial or public, now that satellite transmission has expanded the channels available and Parliament has acknowledged the supremacy of God in the constitutional resolution.

The major denominations should have leadership of such a network and any programming by "unorthodox and quasi-religious groups should be restricted to time that would reflect their popularity." Presently religious programming provided on radio and television amounts to 1,761 hours in 1981, up from 1,644 in 1964.

(Condensed from Free Press (CP).

**SUBSCRIBE NOW!** Canadian Women Studies les cahiers de la femme Suite 204 - Founders College York University 4700 Keele Street Downsview, Ont. M3J 9Z9 one year (4 issues) individual \$15, institutional \$25.

# spiritual beliefs

## “Our Kookums”

by Bernelda Wheeler

*“She was very wise, and strong . . . she taught me all I needed to know about being a man. When I was young, it was she who brought me up, and she who provided the incentive that made me seek an education. Then she told me to write everything down that she was telling me, because she said that my generation didn't remember things. We had to have a paper or a book in our faces she said, in order for us to remember. The old people could remember but us, . . . well, I better write things down”.*

Tommy is a teacher, and a musician, a poet and a traditionalist, and as he strummed on his guitar and hummed a tune now and then in the little kitchen, along with four others, he talked about his grandmother and he remembered her.

Tommy's grandmother was one of the many old women that people didn't know too much about. They were medicine people who had learned and practised their ways for lifetime.

When she died, she was one hundred and ten years old. The book of poetry that Tommy has written was 110 pages, and through his poetry, he imparts some of the wisdom passed on to him by his grandmother. The book will be published this fall, hopefully. It will be called “Reflections”, and published by Hurtigs of Canada.

Tommy's old grandmother was an astounding and amazing individual. Tommy says he remembers during ceremonies, that blue flames would appear to come from her hands like a flaming halo following the outlines of her fingers. He remembers eagles being close to this old woman . . . and he remembers how kind and gentle she was. She prayed a lot . . . and sang old songs and taught Tommy . . . oh how she taught Tommy . . . about the old ways . . . about honesty . . . kindness . . . respect; about the life and plane in which we are living which she called “The Shadow World.” The next world she told him, was the real world where everyone and everything was alive with a vibrance that we can't even begin to imagine. Her analogy of the two worlds was of human beings and their shadows.

Throughout the colonization of the native peoples of the Americas, it was the women who retained the strength of the nations. The men were thrown into an utter state of confusion; their resources and abilities to provide for their families was so totally undermined, exploited



and destroyed that they were left with little more than the will to survive. It became necessary for the women to take over . . . raise the families . . . keep them together . . . and at the same time to tolerate and endure the results of male chauvinism. The chauvinism was the logical result of European influence and the shattering changes that came to native civilization . . . making the men the most damaged victims of colonization.

Women reaped the results and in the process grew steadily stronger and more understanding. The responsibilities had not changed and were carried out silently and inconspicuously. If medicine men went underground, then medicine women went further. They are emerging now, but it is the men who have the highest profiles. It is the women who are the stronger.

Men talk about the wisdom, knowledge, strength and understanding. Women live the wisdom, knowledge, strength and understanding.

Perhaps testimony to the strength and wisdom of native women can be found in the language . . . there is no he or she, him or her . . . his or hers . . . gendered language doesn't exist. Also, strong testimony to the credibility in spiritual evolution of native women, is the fact that the sacred pipe was given to the Sioux Nation by a woman. Her name was Buffalo Calf Woman. “Daughters of Copper Woman”, a recent book by Anne Cameron is a telling story about the wisdom and strength of native women of the West Coast, about their leadership qualities and their knowledge of themselves.

My deceased husband respected no one as much as he respected his grandmother. He used to get very angry about people who boasted about their native heritage and spirituality.

“You know Bernelda,” he'd say, “If you know about that way, you don't have to go around talking it up, you live it . . . like Kookum.”

And his Kookum was kind and generous . . . she was known for her strength and humility. Kookum travelled to the “next world” two years ago but she lives on in some of her grandchildren and in one of her daughters . . . and through them, the teachings of Kookum continue . . . they live in me too. There are still Kookums around . . . and there are still grandsons and granddaughters who listen.

*“Women have been divided from each other by pseudo-identification with groupings which are androcentric and male dominated. Among these are the various religions whose ideologies degrade and mystify women to such an extent that even the fact of this degradation is not perceived by its victims.”*

Mary Daly

*“In the first picture writings, statues, and paintings there is the moon — mother — Musician Goddess in the full flower of Her glory.”*

Sophie Drinker, 1948

AMARGI — Sumerian for Return to the mother; freedom.

*“i found god in myself & i loved her/i loved her fiercely”*

Ntozake Shange

*“She is ever, She is all, She is us.”*

Charlene Spretnak

briefly

ON THE HERIZON

### Sexism in the Classroom

(WINNIPEG)

The University of Manitoba Women's Studies Department has found that there is a shortage of women professors, a lack of women students in male-dominated faculties, an absence of women's support networks and sexism in textbooks and in classroom discussions.

An economics student feels that women lack the close link with male professors that men have because they often shy in approaching them or may fear gossip. She added that it is important to know a professor well before they will write reference letters for students and that male professors are reluctant to get to know female students for the same reasons.

An engineering graduate however, defends the Engineering Department, saying there is no sexism in the department, but added that there are no women professors in the faculty.

Sexism often permeates the walls of the classroom as well as was cited in the example of a marketing graduate who refused to tell an interviewer from the Hudson's Bay Company if she intended to marry and was consequently refused the job.

### Marriage license fee to aid battered

(CALIFORNIA)

The California legislature is considering a move which would see the fee for marriage licenses increased an extra five dollars which would go to fund shelters for battered wives.

The increase has already been approved by a senate committee and could raise a possible one million dollars for the shelters.

### Thalidomide still available

(AFRICA)

The drug responsible for thousands of deformed babies in Europe and North America in the 1960's is still available in Africa.

A representative of the African Students Association says the manufacturers of thalidomide want to dispose of their drug and that Africans are used as guinea pigs to test other products before they are marketed in North America.

Before a new product is introduced into North America it has been tested on the African market for at least five years, he said, citing intrauterine devices as examples of medical devices tested on African women.

“Steroid-containing ointments are producing blotching effects on African women. They end up looking like zebras or growing beards,” he said.

### Pornography linked with violence

(WISCONSIN)

A recent University of Wisconsin student found that men were likely to inflict pain upon women in an experiment after they had been exposed to pornography.

Women and men were paired in different combinations for the experiment and one member of the pair was exposed to pornography before the experiment, which involved telling members of each group to administer shocks to each other.

The only increase in the participant's enthusiasm for giving shocks were the men who were exposed to pornography who were paired with women.

Similar experiments are being done at the University of Manitoba.

### Security Chief says assault victim “looking for trouble”

(OTTAWA)

The chief of security at Carleton University said that a woman who was indecently assaulted on campus last month was “looking for trouble.”

Two men threw the student to the ground and tried to remove some of her clothing but were scared off by her screams.

“She was under the influence and in the company of males. She was looking for trouble. And if you do that, you're going to find it.” the chief said.

Although there have been incidents of women being attacked in the tunnels in past years, Rodgers, who has been with security for over 15 years, said that he was unaware of any problems in the tunnel where the woman was attacked.

(CUP) News

"The first step in the elevation of women under all systems of religion is to convince them that the great Spirit of the Universe is in no way responsible for any of these absurdities."  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

"You are the devil's gateway . . . How easily you destroyed man, the image of God. Because of the death which you brought upon us, even the Son of God had to die."  
Tertullian

"All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is unsatiable."  
Malleus Maleficarum

"I believe . . . that in the rejection, or transcending, of the scapegoat principle lies the greatest moral challenge for modern man (sic)."  
Thomas S. Szasz

"Her is my daughter; she is a virgin; I will give her to you. Possess her, do what you please with her, but do not commit such an infamy against this man."  
Judges 19:24

"Our western culture with its beautiful Judeo-Christian ethic . . . alone among the cultures of the earth . . . has brought the technology of killing and destruction much further than any culture on the earth ever dreamed of doing before."  
George Wald

"You are a Witch by saying aloud, 'I am a Witch', three times, and thinking about that. You are a Witch by being female, untamed, angry, joyous and immortal."  
New York Covers

"They speak together of the threat they have constituted towards authority, they tell how they were burned on the pyres to prevent them from assembling in future."  
Monique Wittig

"If a woman ignores these wrongs, then women as a sex continue to suffer them; there is no help for any of us — let us be dumb & die."  
Elizabeth Barrett Browning

"Take the snake, the fruit tree and the woman from the tableau, and we have no fall, nor frowning Judge, no inferno, no everlasting punishment — hence no need of a Savior. Thus the bottom falls out of the whole Christian theology. There is the reason why in all the Biblical researches and higher criticisms, the scholars never touch the position of women."  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

**The Great Goddess, the Queen of Heaven** *from page 1*

Mayuel among the Maya, Kali in India, Venus and Magna Mater in Rome, Atira among the American Plains Indians, Freyja in Norway, Ishtar in Babylon, the Morrigan in Ireland, Amaterasu in Japan, the Virgin Mary among Christians, the Shekhina in Judaism; her names go on and on.

In her earliest possible form, as Paleolithic 'Venus', she was clearly a Goddess of fertility as well as (perhaps of life and death), one and indivisible, as was the creator Goddess of the earliest stage of myth, 'Mother of all the Gods', 'Mother of all living'. Later on, her worshippers, probably both male and female, began to separate one of her various functions from the other — motherhood and fertility, sexuality and love and death. By the time of Catal Huyuk, for instance, the division seems to have begun with the three Goddesses, one young and sexy, one mature and fertile and likely a third concerned with death and represented as a vulture. So, by 3000 BC in Sumer, there were three main Goddesses — Ninhursaga, the Mother Goddess; Ereshkigal, the Goddess of the underworld; and her younger twin sister, Inanna, the Goddess of love and sexuality. Here, clearly, is the origin of the Madonna/Whore dichotomy that has so influenced modern Western Culture.

It is to this division of the Great Goddess into her various aspects that we can trace the division of women against each other, just as, in her violent overthrow, we can find the origin of the sex-class system. In male-dominated worlds the Goddess has, in the past, usually had a place — subordinate, to be sure, and powerless — and women have followed suit.

And this thought brings us back to the Hebrew bible and the Adam and Eve story. Today we are taught to read the tale as a myth of female evil and betrayal — Eve lost Eden for us forever. But is this reading valid? Eve's name means 'Mother of all living', an epithet of the Great Goddess. The serpent, usual companion of the Goddess in her Garden of Delights, should make us pause. Perhaps this most influential of all the mythic stories in the Hebrew Bible is a male version of Goddess tale? Should we add the name 'Eve' to our list of Her names?

Whatever the case, one fact is sure — the Goddess was everywhere, in all cultures, even, I think, in altered form in the Adam and Eve story. What is more, despite Judaeo-Christian attempts to eliminate Her, she persisted until, in the Middle Ages, the Church had to bow to popular feeling and reinstate a female principle in Christianity. Who is the Virgin Mary but the Great Goddess, the 'Queen of Heaven' in fact?

Even today She is with us, still exerting Her power. It is no coincidence that feminism (Goddess worship in political form) and the ecology movement (Goddess worship in scientific form) grew up together. For the Great Goddess, the Queen of Heaven, is at the same time Mother Nature and the Female Principle, and She is alive, powerful, essential. We ignore Her at our peril.

(reprinted from *Canadian Woman Studies*)

"Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion . . . It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the person of Jesus."  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

"A transvaluation of values can only be accomplished when there is a tension of new needs, and a new set of needy people who feel all old values as painful — although they are not conscious of what is wrong."  
Friedrich Nietzsche

"I will multiply your pains in childbearing, you shall give birth to your children in pain. Your yearning shall be for your husband, yet he will lord it over you."  
Genesis 3:16

"Women who accept false inclusion among the fathers and sons are easily polarized against other women on the basis of ethnic, national, class, religious, and other male-defined differences, applauding the defeat of 'enemy' women."  
Mary Daly

# Scandalo in the Vatican



by Marnie Pastuck  
Brigitte Sutherland

The Vatican, headquarters of the largest church in Christendom, still thrives as the world's smallest city-state and as its oldest political institution. To this day, the Home of the papacy maintains its supremacy as the richest multi-national corporation on earth.

Not an Equal Opportunity Employer, this tiny burg in the heart of Rome boasts of 3,000 people in the employ of the Roman Curia (that old-boy network of elderly men enjoying the status of Cardinal). Less than 400 of these employees are women, the majority of whom are nuns.

Sister Pasqualina, a singularly high-profile nun, was a formidable presence during the reign of the authoritarian Pius XII. With an iron fist, she purportedly ruled the papal apartments and staff; screening all visitors, including the Pope's personal physician. Yet, Sister Pasqualina was an exception to the usual role of women in the Vatican who lighten the domestic burdens of the flesh for many a cardinal. For in-

stance, prelates may inexpensively hire the services of the "Oblates of the Sacred Heart": an order formed exclusively to live-in, six days a week; cooking and cleaning for the clergy.

Recently, a new role for women in service to the church has been revealed. The "Lay Christian Virgins of Social Action", brainchild of Belgium's Abbe Jean Roussel, have warranted media attention. Like some self-styled Hugh Hefner, Roussel, age 72, has maintained nine "Eau Vive" (Living Water) restaurants on five continents since the 1950's. He employs approximately 140 uneducated "girls" recruited from the third world. These "Lay Virgin" waitresses are known for their bright, colorful dresses and penchant for singing religious chants, while serving fine French cuisine and wines. Amidst these religious charms, any distinguished ecclesiastical or foreign diplomat could dine, secure in his privacy, during a night on the town. In more ways than is obvious . . .

The Abbe and his ministry have had some adverse fortune lately. Roussel is being investigated by the authorities for tax evasion, exploitation of minors, and infractions of the labour code. A few of the "Lay Virgins" have run away, not of sufficient faith to endure the "training", consisting of two years of slave labour relieved only by fervent prayer. Duties for these "faithful" also include dancing naked for "Eau Vive's" distinguished guests.

The investigation by authorities currently underway has brought to particular attention Rome's "Eau Vive" outlet on the Via Monterone. Long a favourite watering hole of ecclesiastical personnel, the restaurant on the Via Monterone has a back room where the "Lay Virgins" were forced to dance naked to a liturgical beat for their cassock-clad clientele. Ostensibly, they were told, this display of devotional action, flaunting their virginity before men, served to purge their minds of evil. The Abbe is presently facing possible excommunication.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, . . . for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church."  
Ephesians 5:23-24

"Before our eyes, the procession of the sons of educated men, ascending those pulpits, mounting those steps, passing in and out of those doors, preaching, teaching, administering justice, practicing medicine, making money."  
Virginia Woolf

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PROMISES..PROMISES.....

The political Right makes certain promises to women that exploit and quiet women's deepest fears. These fears are that male violence is uncontrollable and unpredictable. Dependent upon and subservient to men, women are always subject to this violence. The Right promises restraints on male aggression, simplifying survival for women — making the world habitable.

The Right offers a simple, fixed, pre-determined social, biological, sexual order.

Women are brought up to maintain a husband's home and to believe women without men are homeless. Ingrained with a deep fear of homelessness — at the mercy of the elements and strange men, the Right claims to protect the home and women's safety within it. For women, the world is dangerous. The Right acknowledges the reality of danger — manipulates female fear. It promises that an obedient woman shall be protected from harm.

A woman is loved for fulfilling her female functions; obedience is an expression of love and so are sexual submission and child bearing. In return, men are expected to be responsible providers. Increasingly, to redeem the cruel inadequacies of mortal men, the Christian Right offers women the love of Jesus; beautiful, tender, compassionate healer; the one male a woman may submit to absolutely, without being sexually violated or psychologically abused.

Marabel Morgan describes her own marital misery and desperation preceding her discovery of God's will. She recalls years of tension, conflict, boredom and gloom. Her solution — "It is only when a woman surrenders her life to her husband, reveres and worships him, and is willing to serve him, that she becomes really beautiful to him." Citing God as the authority and submission to Jesus as the model, Morgan defines love as "unconditional acceptance of man and his feelings". She has taken the basic sexual scenarios of male dominance and female submission within the context of a Christian value system, she gives a how-to in catering to male pornographic fantasies in the name of Jesus Christ. "Learn to capitalize on disappointment and heartbreak . . . hold him in reverence, it says in the Bible . . . it is your nature to give . . . Tell him you love his body, if you choke on that phrase, practice until it comes out naturally . . . be prepared mentally and physically for intercourse every night this week . . . are you guilty of that heinous act ingratitude? A wife cannot be grateful if she grasping for her rights." In effect, a submissive nature is the miracle for which religious women pray.

Male philosophy, both secular and religious, is fond of naming women as "biologically conservative". Women as a class adhere rather strictly to the traditions and values of their social context. Women as a class are dull conformists, the orthodox believers, the obedient follows the disciples of unwavering faith. To waver, whatever the creed of their men, is tantamount to rebellion; it is dangerous.

Women decline, believing that if only they had been perfect wife, mother or whore, they would not have come to hate life so much, to find it so strangely difficult and empty, themselves so confused and despairing. Women die, mourning not the loss of their own lives, but their own inexcusable inability to achieve perfection as men define it for them.

Survival is promised in conformity and nowhere else. Woman must blend into her environment, never calling attention to the qualities that distinguish her, because to do so would be to attract deadly attention.

Accounts of rape, wife beating, forced childbearing, medical butchering, sex-motivated murder, forced prostitution, physical mutilation, sadistic psychological abuse, and other common places of female experience given by contemporary survivors is buried in cultural invisibility and contempt. One must believe in the existence of the person in order to recognize the authenticity of her suffering.

By committing themselves to male values, women seek to acquire value. By advocating male meaning, women seek to acquire meaning. Subservient to male will, women believe that subservience itself is the meaning of a female life.

The right is a social and political movement controlled almost totally by men but built very largely on the fear and ignorance of women.

Fear of a greater evil and a need to be protected from it intensifies the loyalty of women to men who are, even when dangerous, at least known quantities. Having reason to hate, but not the courage to rebel, women require symbols of danger which justify their fear. The Right provides these symbols of danger by designating clearly defined groups of outsiders as sources of peril; e.g. racism, anti-semitism, homophobia.

The tragedy is that women so committed to survival cannot recognize they are committing suicide as self-sacrificing foot soldiers who obey orders, no matter how criminal.

Edited from *The Promise of The Ultra Right*, Andrea Dworkin, 1979.

Gyn/Ecology

continued

"wholly other". Reclaiming the title of spinster (archaic — a woman whose occupation is to spin) Daly sees this as a rich and cosmic verb; as our foremothers, we must spin tapestries of genesis and demise; as we spin we break the credibility of contrived boundaries — false divisions of "fields" of knowledge and splits between mind and heart. We then begin to truly define female for ourselves, discovering our deep sources, native resiliency, springing into life, speech, action. As we revolt, reconsider, we commit deicide and find our own divinity. No longer allying ourselves we break with class and racial identification. Freed, we become "strange", haggard; that is we are the hags who so frightened the politically powerful, personally impotent patriarchs. We were burned (9 million) at the stake — conveniently erased from the annals of the Renaissance — to purge the body of Christ from evil ostensibly.

We become the Hags/Harpies/Furies/Crones formerly reviled and reduced through the patriarchal devices of their institutions; body language, silences and deceptions of media, grammar, education, professions, their technology, oppressive and confusing fashions, customs, etiquette, "humor", and subliminal advertising. Finding our own divine spark, we seize charge of the nameless fears, unbearable quilt feelings for affirming our own being, fear of our newly-discovered powers and of successful use of them, fear of discovering/releasing our own deep wells of anger. We spark, igniting light and warmth, creating, moving, expanding the self and seeking our sisters. The spinster, does not become fixated on the atrocity of andiocracy, but spins on her heel and takes to other directions, depending less and less upon male approval, recognizing that such approval is often a reward for weakness. Hag; from the old English meaning "harp, witch." Webster's gives the archaic as "a female demon", also "an ugly or evil looking woman." Spinsters ask; ugly or evil to whom? For the beauty of strong, creative women is ugly by misogynistic standards of beauty. We begin to understand names in their radical sense. The original, primary meaning of "haggard" means "untamed", so-called obsolete meanings include "intractable", "willful", "wanton", and "unchaste", also "wild in appearance," "wild eyed" and especially "a woman reluctant to yield to wooing".

"A woman must never be free of subjugation." Hindu Code of Manu, V

"I thank thee, O Lord, that thou has not created me a woman." Daily Orthodox Jewish Prayer

"Creator of the heavens and the Earth, He has given you wives from among yourselves to multiply you, and cattle . . . Nothing can be compared with Him." Holy Koran of Islam

As we dispossess ourselves of patriarchal checks and restraints, seizing our strengths, bonding with our sisters, we wild-ize ourselves. Wild means "living in a state of nature; inhabiting natural haunts; not tamed or domesticated; growing or produced without the aid and care of man; not subjected to restraint or regulation." It also means exceeding normal or conventional bounds in thought, design, conception, execution, or nature; extravagant, fantastic, visionary. "Wild" means great in extent, size, quantity, intensity; extreme, prodigious. Wild is the name of the Self in women. In the tamed state, women are domesticated, dedicated to the cult of male divinity, seduced into disloyalty to Self, into false loyalties that fragment, leading further and further from the self. The call of the wild is to dispossess ourselves, and invent, create Hagocracy. Rejecting false polarization, hags do not accept false inclusion among the fathers and sons, and are not polarized against other women on the basis of ethnic, national, class, religions and other male defined differences.

Bonding of women is the ultimate state of enmity in relation to the War State of patriarchy, it is the radical withdrawal of energy from the death march of males.

Sisterhood exists precisely where women have found something better than the War State, rejecting the offered

womanly ideal of self-sacrifice. Daly shows that women are transformers; not with power over others, but transforming power, their essential power. Their chance is, as united the world over, to eliminate the necrophile attitudes and practices of patriarchy, by getting together to rend the social fabric of established political and socio-economic regimes.

Gyn/Ecology, and Daly's courageous example cannot fail to inspire the feminist, the woman searching for truth and meaning. Taking the journey, getting past the horror, mobilizing the anger, women have, in this indispensable text, a foothold, an articulation, a network of support, a veritable light at the end of the tunnel, truly a visionary impetus, a relief, a release, a source of joy and hope for the future of the world.

"When you go to church where 2 men stand behind the communion table, and 10 men serve communion & another man stands at the lectern & reads scripture, & another man stands up and preaches, and 3 more men stand in the aisles handing out bulletins, you hear a fairly loud statement about the nature of the church."

Rev. Harold Dowler, Pastor University Christian Church, Texas

"Basic to the position of radical feminism is the concept that biology is not destiny, and that male and female roles are learned — indeed that they are male political constructs that serve to ensure power and status for men."

Anne Koedt

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## The latest "poop" from the Pope

by Erin F. Phillips

On September 14th, 1981, Pope John Paul II issued an encyclical entitled *Laborem Exercens*. This encyclical, which dealt with labor, was described by some as "radical." However, while he dealt more extensively than others before him with certain issues, John Paul did not depart radically from the social teaching of John XXIII or Paul VI. An indication that the encyclical was meant to follow the traditional teaching of the Church is the fact that it was released on the ninetieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, a monumental encyclical on work. However, in light of the situation in Poland the concern expressed in *Laborem Exercens* for human rights, including the right to associate in unions, had the appearance some said, of a radical statement.

Less commented on was what the encyclical had to say about women and labor. There is little discussion within the encyclical on specific issues of women's problems in the work force. This is not to say that women are ignored by the encyclical. The provision is made early that "man" is to mean both male and female. However the only explicit statement on women comes in a section named "Wages and Other Social Benefits."

As part of "man" women presumably would be entitled to the rights advocated in the encyclical, the right to meaningful, safe work, the right to free association, the right to rest and relation, the right to reasonably priced health care, the right to old age and accident insurance, and the right to having a say in the running of society. The common good of all can not be subordinated to the right to private property of individuals or the ownership of capital. John Paul's vision of

an ethical economy is one in which the tensions surrounding capital and labour are overcome and where human dignity of all is preserved.

A fundamental part of John Paul's vision of an organic society is the family unit. Family life, he states, is a "natural right and something man is called to." Work, in that it provides subsistence for the family and helps members of the family become more human, is a vital part of John Paul's vision of a good society. With the stress on the family comes the discussion of women as mothers.

Basically John Paul calls for a "social re-evaluation of the mother's role" in raising children that are "responsible, morally and religiously mature and psychologically stable persons."

He calls society to make it possible for a woman to stay at home and take care of her children without "inhibiting her freedom, without psychological or practical discrimination, and without penalizing her as compared with other women". Forcing women to leave the home for paid work hurts society and the family. To deal with the problem he makes two proposals, either pay the father a family wage that a family can live on or pay family allowances to mothers who stay at home, relative to the number of children they have.

Despite the fact that the encyclical deals with the specific problems encountered by the handicapped and by farmers, there is no discussion of the problems encountered by women. Huge disparities in their incomes in comparison to men, job insecurity, discriminatory hiring, the need for legal and pension reform and sexual intimidation on the job are just a few of the problems that could have been looked at. Even if he chose not to identify specific

changes, there would have been value in identifying the problems and at least endorsing the right of women to solutions.

The second missing factor is the protection of the father's right to be involved with the family. Nowhere does John Paul raise the right of a worker, regardless of sex, to an adequate private life. Perhaps in Western Industrial countries maximum work weeks have been established but this is not the case universally. In areas where people (particularly men) are forced into migratory work, the right of a father to be a part of family is crucial to a well-balanced society. One can argue this without even raising the question of whether the traditional family model of working further and home keeping mother used by John Paul is necessary.

Despite the fact that the "family wage" paid to the father betrays an assumption about the model of the family, there are more progressive assumptions about women's work in the encyclical. Part of the debate in recent years among (male) historians has been whether or not women's home work, including having children, should be considered work.

The more conservative scholars deal only with paid work while those who are more progressive deal with the work done by women in the home. Surprising perhaps to those who would expect the Pope to be in the conservative camp, John Paul makes the radical presumption that work done in the home should be included in an encyclical on labor. In fact his proposal of a mother's allowance looks much like a wage for work many women are already doing. The allowances would mean that a woman would not be forced to leave her work in the home for work that paid better.

In all, *Laborem Exercens* does not make radical statements on women's work. As a part of the paid work force they are entitled to the same rights as men and in this area the encyclical makes some substantial statements. However, John Paul fails to carry the encyclical far enough to deal with problems encountered specifically by women.

## "heretic" within the Mormon church

"I am a warrior in the time of women warriors; the longing for justice is the sword I carry, the love of womankind my shield." *Sonia Johnson*

*From Housewife to Heretic: One Women's Struggle For Equal Rights and Her Excommunication From the Mormon Church.* Sonia Johnson. Doubleday & Co. \$14.95/Hard

*I still thought I could be a good Mormon and a good feminist at the same time. It took repeated beatings of my unbelieving head against the solid rock of chauvinism, and an excommunication, to teach me the impossibility of that combination.*

*Women cannot serve two masters at once who are urgently beaming antithetical orders, though I know many who are trying to do just that — compromising, adjusting, rationalizing, excusing, apologizing for the men and for men's system. I understand perfectly why they do this, having done it myself for years. But it is psychologically unhealthy and in the long run spiritually disastrous for both sexes. Either we believe in patriarchy — the rule of men over women — or we believe in equality. We cannot believe in both at once. Neither can we with impunity choose not to choose which one we believe in. To remain in indecision, and perhaps thus to have our cake and eat it too, erodes great chunks of our identity, along with great chunks of our integrity.*

*For the 17 years preceding my feminist awakening in 1978, I was living a sort of half-life, in half-light, a grayish, half-awake limbo of neither clouds nor sunlight, a gray, same numbness. Because I was not allowing myself to feel the pain of oppression, and was in fact actively denying it, I was unable to feel emotions on the other side of the continuum either.*

*Feminism called upon me to have the courage to grow up, to discover and exercise my womanly strength, to be unafraid of pain — and the pain is immeasurable — knowing that fully experienced, it makes joy fully possible. If a friend were to ask me today who I am, I would answer unhesitatingly,*

*"I am Sonia — woman, human being, glad to be alive, loving every second of it. I was dead and am alive. I had wandered far from home and have at last found my way home again."*

Sonia Johnson faithfully tried for over 40 years to follow patriarchal authoritarianism with all her "heart, soul, mind, and strength." She was an obedient wife and mother in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) until she was introduced to feminism. When this type of woman breaks from the patriarchal mold, she does so with a deep experience of all the issues involved. She knows firsthand what ramifications are present in the system.


Developing her story by means of anecdotes which portray family, church, and community attitudes, Sonia relates common religious patterns with some specifically Mormon ones (testimony meetings involving witnessing concerning paranormal occurrences). The book alludes to some important changes which could occur if women were allowed to take part in Mormon temple ceremonies (temple rites are secret and men perform all the blessings and priesthood functions) and describes her own healing from arthritis by faith healing.

The book's emphasis is politics and social activism rather than theology, yet Johnson's account of the Mother God is powerful and important. The Mormon Trinity is not "3 in 1", but 3 separate personages: Father, Son, and male Holy Spirit . . . But the Mother God is the wife of Father God. Mormon missionaries advised me, in 1966 (before the women's movement hit Mormon country), that God's wife is not mentioned publicly nor prayed to, so that Mormonism would not seem too foreign to potential converts. Sonia states that she was advised that both non-mention and non-prayer are to "protect" Mother God. Whatever the reason, Sonia states that the psychological reason is to keep women from feeling that they have an ally in Heaven.

Sonia's refusal to be hoodwinked and cowed by her bishop and her heresy trial is a superb act of courage and model for all women to follow.

The book concentrates on the Mormon church's political lobbying against the ERA. Fascinating details are given, together with the comical well-known story of the counter-activity of flying banners.

Patricia D. Highby  
Abridged from Big Mama Rag



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# A Woman Friend

by Barbara Roberts

It was a woman friend who introduced me to the Quakers. I met her in the summer of 1973 when she was teaching history at Simon Fraser University where I was a student. Jo Vellacott is a small woman in her fifties, with silky flyaway hair and the kind of open, child-innocent blue eyes you see in toddlers before they learn not to trust. She sometimes has an air of vagueness about her, almost of shyness. She lets her ice cream cones drip all over everything. She's a brilliant scholar. She's the best teacher I ever met. She continues to have a profound effect on my life.

Jo had been a Quaker for years before I met her. She in turn had been introduced to the Society of Friends by a woman professor while Jo was at college in England in the Thirties. This woman, also a Quaker, spent her school breaks smuggling Jews out of Europe. I think Jo admired her greatly, as I came to admire Jo. When I visited Jo in Toronto a year later, she took me to a Friends' Meeting for Worship. I'm still going to the meetings.

At the time I met Jo, I was already a committed feminist. For me, this meant strong ties with my women friends, feeling part of a community of women, part of a network of sisterhood that covered the globe and reached across time. My CR group has a place to grow, to learn, and to love. I could take risks in life because I had sisters to egg me on and to help me when I needed it. I was (and still am) a marxist-feminist, a fledgling historian, a mother, and a wife in a dissolving marriage. I was an atheist (I don't know if I still am). Yet the more love I felt for myself and my women friends, the more I felt aware of spiritual needs. Once Jo took

me to meeting, I kept going partly because it was like an extension of my experiences of sisterhood and growth in the women's movement.

The Society of Friends is a mainly Christian movement, originating in 17th century England. There is no official dogma, creed, or set of rules about what you must believe to be a Friend. There are traditions, but they change over time. What each Friend says and does is based on her own experience, and it is to that experience that she is asked to turn for guidance. The heart of Friends' experience is the Meeting for Worship (in fact Friends have Meeting for Worship for Business, and for Eating.). Meetings are generally unstructured gatherings where participants sit in silence and listen for an inner voice.

Sometimes someone feels impelled to speak about a thought, feeling, or experience important to her. Others listen not only to her words, but to the spirit behind the words. (This was the only instruction Jo gave me: if I didn't feel comfortable about what someone said, try to listen for the spirit behind it.

Generally I felt okay when I did that).

I have felt close to others beyond the power of words to describe. I have felt filled with laughter or with tears. I have been so shaken that it was hard to breathe. All this from silence together. My life has become increasingly centred around these meetings. It's how I find out from myself what I feel and what I must do about my life.

I find profound paradoxes in being a Friend. Although there is no official creed, there are some generally accepted beliefs and practices. Most Friends believe that: "that of Goddess/the Spirit in every person". Each of us has access to an inner Voice, Truth, Light. Friends may explain the source of this inner Light in various ways — but the explanation is seldom an issue: to each her own. The point is, it's there. All that friends do, follow from this.

Another generally accepted practice is that Friends as a rule do not have hierarchies, special sacraments, or clergy. All people are sacred, every day is a sacrament. We are all responsible for making deci-

sions. Friends act when there is consensus (of course that means that everything takes forever and some things never get done). The peace testimony is another central Friends' belief. It springs from accepting that: that of Goddess in every person. The classic statement of the peace testimony originates in the 1660s and appears today among Friends: "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons for any end or any pretence whatsoever". This does not mean peace at any price. Rather it means a commitment to nonviolent methods to reach just ends.

I found some parts of the Quaker peace testimony hard to swallow at first. I found it hard to accept the notion that men were human and salvageable. My reaction to men as a group was a mixture of contempt, scorn, fear and rage. I felt so powerless that I couldn't contemplate giving up any weapon I could get my hands on, violent or not. Gradually, as I became more in touch with that of the Goddess within me and within others as a source of power, my feelings began to change. Jo Vellacott sent me a copy of a talk she had given on "Women, power and peace" where she speaks of the resourcelessness that underlies violence, and resourcefulness that supports nonviolence. She points out that the people she knows who lead truly nonviolent lives are those in touch with the source of power — what Friends mean by "that of the Goddess in every person." Resourceful, I could begin to accept that men are people, and that there is something of the Goddess within them too.

Many other women, many other feminists, have found a

place within Friends: Margaret Fell Fox, an early Quaker organizer and writer; antislavery worker and preacher Sarah Harrison; Laura Haviland who was "Superintendent" of the US Underground Railroad; Sarah and Angelina Grimke; Lucretia Mott; Susan B. Anthony; most of the women who organized the 1848 Seneca Falls convention; five of the first eight women doctors in the US; astronomer Marie Mitchell; prison reformer Elizabeth Fry; Alice Paul, who originated the women's rights amendment and founded the Women's Party; head of the US Children's Bureau Grace Abbott; sex educator Mary Calderone; sociologist Elise Boulding and dozens of activists in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Voice of Women, a host of national and international government and non-government agencies — such as Alice Shaffer of UNICEF-Latin America. I think many of these women would remind me of Jo and other women Friends I know — the perfectly ordinary-looking women who can be so quietly and matter of factly brave that I can't believe I might be one of them.

I am most comfortable with the social activist and feminist traditions of Friends, although in many ways Friends reflect the societies they live in: sexist, authoritarian, hierarchical, and patriarchal. Yet inherent in being a Friend, there is a commitment to confront and challenge these forms of oppression. For me, being a Friend is rooted in my experience of the sisterhood of women, and leads to my hope for the eventual sisterhood of man and all humankind.



## Spinsters weaving their future

*Gyn/Ecology — The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*

by Mary Daly  
Beacon Press/1978

by Marnie Pastuck

This book is classified under philosophy, religion and women's studies. It is all this and more.

It takes immense psychic energy to assimilate this synthesis of theology, mythology, history, medicine, and political theory. It requires great courage to see the horror, the banal evil of history that Daly so scrupulously exposes, but she does not simply recite global crimes against women. She offers hope, alternatives; pointing the way to the free state of "Hagocracy," where feminists come together in truth and celebration.

Daly is a doctor several times over, and currently occupies an associate professorship at Boston University's faculty of theology. A veteran of academia, she swiftly debunks the myths surrounding traditional scholarship and proceeds to peel back the veils of deception, pseudo-dichotomies and blatant lies inherent in so called "higher learning." She raps the worship of "professionalism" as the male elite and refutes the self-serving pronouncements of male experts.

Daly abandons the deadening process of typical scholarastic methodology, (the fragmentation of various "fields", the non-feeling stance of "objectivity") and does not seek to elevate the thinker "above" the mundane. Rather, she incorporates pedestrian issues within abstractions. And this is the essence of her genius; to always come back in her

theories to the realities of living. She accuses all philosophers of the crime of erasure; traditionally relegating certain concerns to the level of "trivia" to devalue women's experience.

Daly stresses connectedness, and the high creativity necessary to seeing interconnections between apparently disparate things. In this ambitious book she traces the multi manifestations of worldwide androcratic culture.

The acquisition of this knowledge in Daly's book is a journey and an exorcism. She calls for the emergence of radical Be-ing of women; that is a discovery and creation of a world other than Patriarchy, a call to claim our own spirituality and revive the Goddess; Recognizing the divinity in woman and nature.

Ours is a culture possessed by the myth of feminine evil,

resulting in the naming, describing, and theorizing about good and evil that constitutes a complex web of deceit with a stranglehold on all life. Our objectification and alienation occur when we are locked within male-centered, one-dimensional definition; the all-pervasive language of myth, overt & covert in religion, "great art," literature, dogmas of professionalism, media, and grammar.

Required of the feminist on this journey of spiritual self-discovery is courageous sinning. — To question the sources; to ruthlessly expose layers of mindbinding reversal, then emerging through. This demystification process is tantamount to ecstasy. Women must grasp the pseudo-dichotomies/dual decoys in traditional thought; self/other, thought/action; spirit/matter,

*continued*

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## Gyn/Ecology

These categorizations distract from the reality of both deep knowing and external action.

Again and again Daly returns to the connective skeins of social phenomena, endeavoring to make ourselves whole, to regain our integrity, it is essential we resist the fragmentation cast upon us in all codifications, classifications of human thought and experience.

Patriarchy is the prevailing religion of the entire planet and its essential message is necrophilia worship, according to Daly. Budahism and Hinduism, islam, judaism, christianity; secular derivatives such as freudianism, jungianism, marxism, and maoism, all are infrastructures of the same edifice.

Inherent to this, the oppression of women knows no ethnic, national, or religious bounds; and the barbarous rituals ancient and modern unmask the very real, existential meaning of Goddess murder in the concrete lives of women.

Citing the Babvlonian genesis, (predating patriarchy) in which the primordial parents fought and in legend He slew Her; so began the colonization of the planet by variations of ritualized female dismemberment. Daly shows that the continuing practises of Suttee in India, the 1,000 years of Chinese footbinding, the continuing practises of clitoridectomy in Africa, etc. are related, and far more sinister, atrocious, than "authorities" who call such gynocide "customs" would have us believe.

Patriarchy is a state of war, and sado/masochism is the basic structure of all its manifestations, Daly purports. The demolition of all female presence in the realm of spiritual matters and establishment of all male divinity has paved the way for the technological ellimination of the "other" — woman and nature. Necrophilia is expressed in the worship of speed and machines as living forces, glorification of war, destruction of culture and rampant misogyny.

Radical feminist analysis reaches a point of recognizing patriarchal myth in the deepest sense, as distortions. For women to see through male gender deity is to begin to live,

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finding her own exhaltant divinity.

Confronted with the implications of religious exclusion of all female mythic presence, we recognize the all-male trinity as the epitome of male bonding. Sublime (disguised) erotic male homosexual mythos; the perfect all-male marriage; the ideal all-male family, the best boys club, the model monastery, the ultimate men's association, the mold for all varieties of male monogender mating. The mythic paradim of the trinity is the most refined, explicit, expression of patriarchal patterning of society.

Virginia Woolf saw the death-oriented processions ensconsed in pomp and ceremony, self-legitimizing through repetitive ritual. (Pagan is from "paganos" meaning civilian) Soldiers of Christ, in essence parades of costumed men, a giant funeral march dragging with them all life forms. God the father requires total sacrifice/destruction and this salvation army seeks reconciliation with the father.

Radical feminism does not seek reconciliation; rather it releases the inherent dynamic in the mother-daughter relationship.

Myths are said to be stories expressive of intuitive insights and relating to the activities of gods. Mythical figures are symbols, said to open all depths of reality otherwise closed. Daly postulates it is not often suggested they may also close off depths of reality otherwise open to us.

Living in Post-patriarchal time/space; feminists recall the immortal Metis, goddess of wisdom, who presided over all knowledge. Androcratic culture has her swallowed by Zeus while pregnant with Athenia. The Greeks began ascribing wisdom to this prototype of male cannibalism. The parthenogenic Mother is devoured so Zeus may give birth through his head, whereby Athena became his mouthpiece; male identified, employing priests, urging men into battle and siding against women. Likewise the original triune Goddesses in their many forms have been usurped. Today images still exist in Western Art

that depict the three Fates, the 3 graces, the Moirae. The original female trinity, whose symbol was the tree of life and whose shrines stood at every fork in the road, has been consigned to "trivia". Tracing to pre-patriarchal times we find Tri Via, or three ways, synonymous of the multiplicity of life. Trivia today is trifles; common, ordinary, and insignificant. Fitting to patriarchal values, the commonplace is of little worth, in competitive heirarchal society scarcity is intrinsic to worth; thus gold is more important than clean air. Trivia then is concrete evidence of Her multi-dimensional presence reduced to the nothingsness/barrenness created by the fathers in their own image and likeness.

As Helen Diner has shown in Christianity the tree of life becomes the torture cross of the world. The fertile goddess is replaced by the dying body hanging on dead wood. In this colossal reversal, in keeping with the bizarre belief system enforced by the Church, the more blatant the lie, the greater the credibility.

Men become mothers in patriarchal myth. (Adam gives birth to Eve; Zeus to Athena) evidencing men's envy of female creative energy in all of its dimensions. Truly, the condition of men is to be childless; disturbing to those obsessed with reproduction of the male self. Thus, there is an (unacknowledged) evidence in ethical writings on abortion, of a widespread male-tendency to identify with the fetus, and assume the role of controller, possessor and inhabitator of women. The surgeons and hormone therapists of transsexual practise in their efforts to give birth can be said to produce feminine persons. They cannot produce women. Femininity is a man-made construct having essentially nothing to do with femaleness.

In Judeo-Christian culture women are forced to become mindlessly "normal", murderously "selfless", or moronically "sexy" — the real self is silenced. Faced with the theological minimizing of Virgin Mary we see a dutifully dulled derivative, drained of divinity, ravished, crushed, tamed, silenced remnant of femaleness. The annunciation/virgin birth strips all

women of their integrity, transforming them into a hollow void waiting to be made by the male, a mere functional co-ordinate between father and son.

The stubborn human belief in parthenogenesis has found a modern equivalent in cloning: a deliberate effort to remove creativity from women and re-establish it in the realm of male control and domination. The Christian demolition of the Goddess and mythic establishment of male divinity has paved the way for the technological ellimination of women through the application of modern medicine, transsexualism; cloning and other genetic engineering.

"Sophisticated" persons will deny that old Christian myth has any controlling effect on behavior or beliefs. In fact, the characteristics of sado/masochistic ritual permeate western culture and is actively promoted by technocracy. Mental/moral dismemberment, continual mind/spirit/body pollution in the interests of consumer society profiteering, assaults us every day in massive public relations promoting violation and death disguised as pornographic "entertainment". Trained to believe the unbelievable, that the crucified christ glorifies suffering as a means to purification, and ultimate joy in the "afterlife", so to does secular S/M gospel proclaim female suffering as joy.

Torture for "higher causes", both religious and secular is legitimized. A necrophile society does not restruct brutality to porn.

Amnesty International exposes torture as a world wide phenomena. The Modern Age has engendered a super refinement of technique, and there is a striking resemblance between the "treatments" in political prisons and mental hospitals. The fact that most gynecologists are men is a colossal comment on male control over women. The specialty displays a certain indifference and fatalism toward the diseases of women. Daly shows us the hideous origins of these "experts", that these medical practitioners arose in direct response to the first wave of feminism.

The early gynecologists openly declared their purpose

and intent; far from healing, but a violent enforcement of the sexual caste system. "Disorderly" women were routinely handed over by husbands and fathers for radical treatment. Crude sexual surgery made a lot of physicians of the last century very wealthy as they claimed to elevate their patients' moral sense, make them industrious and cleanly.

The phallocracy teems with perpetrators of iatrogenic disease; soul doctors; (priests and gurus), mind doctors (psychiatrists, ad-men, academics); and body doctors (physicians, and fashion designers); all are hostile to female well being.

The Necrophile myth functions as self-fulfilling prophecy. Christianity promises Armageddon — the book of Revelation — a series of earthquakes, drought, assorted horrors, plagues, and the graphic punishment of a famous prostitute. Ultimately destructive patriarchy has through modern technology facilitated movement beyond passive expectation to active enactment of the envisioned haulocaust. Technologists sons of Christian culture have led the way in acting out apocalyptic myth with nuclear development. Scientists, as priests of the phallocracy, are busy performing the last rites, just as patriarchal scholars extend and continue the sado-ritual on all life forms with language; authorities who are detached apologists for atrocity.

In naming her work Gyn/Ecology Daly is wrenching back some word power. Ecology is the complex web of interrelationships between organisms and environment and she coins the word "biophilic" (non existant up till now) as a start to the monumental task that lies ahead. "Bios" means life and let all of us who by some quirk happen to be life-loving take up the term as we move beyond patriarchy and discover the Goddess within. Daly succinctly stated during a lecture that "a little bit of feminism is going to get you punished, so you might as well go all the way."

Overcoming silencing is an extreme act in a sequence of extreme acts, demanding that a woman live in existential courage while she becomes

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### HERizons

The Manitoba Women's Newspaper  
Box 551  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 2J3

(1 yr.) 10 issues at \$5.00  
\$12.00 — institutions

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"Herizons" conceived by Gerri Thorsteinson  
Flag Design: Marnie Pastuck



The aim of this newspaper is to provide an alternative means of communications with a feminist perspective in order to stimulate, to inform, to effect change and to unify women's strengths. It also serves as a public forum of discussion for the women of Manitoba.

The Manitoba Women's Newspaper is currently operating out of Box 551, Winnipeg, Manitoba, for further information call Debbie Holmberg at 772-8170. Views expressed in this publication are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect The Manitoba Women's Newspaper policy. Submissions are welcome. Editing rights are reserved and submission does not guarantee publication. A self-addressed stamped envelope will ensure that submissions will be returned to the writer. We have applied for a 2nd class mailing permit.  
Published ten times a year. Price: \$5.00 per year, 60 cents per issue. For institution or business: \$12.00