

[Jan 1982]

# PORTLAND WOMEN'S COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER POWER

ISSUE 15

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN & POWER

(This conversation developed from an article by Fry Wolhandler. Participants in the discussion were Nicole d'Entremont, Lynne Israelson, Diane Elze, Susan Turley-Moore, and Fry. Sections from the article are in italics.)

F: Let's play a word association game with ourselves from the word "Power."

D: Wealth, riches, choices, control, influence, might, muscles, change the system, revolution, violence.

N: Strength, hope, fulfillment, force, creativity, ain't I a woman, now, resolve, force, now.

L: nuclear, waterfalls, Hitler, my mother, the power of my legs...my mind, my muscles, cutting through the water when you're swimming, oppression, the system, my thoughts, the place where they come from...me.

S: Power, failure, struggle, light, changing, growing, uplifting, exhilarating, success, Power, how to use it after I've owned it, Power, responsibility, freedom to be me or to hide, feeling OK about it all, power is in accepting death.

F: Power, guns, force, strength, corrupts, influence, money, taking power, shortage.

*Examine how many of your words could be seen as negative, neutral or positive. If many are negative, consider that from early childhood women of our time and culture were rewarded for approval rather than aggression or competency as men were. Boys learn both positive and negative approaches to the acquisition of power, but all learn that they are "good" boys who manage to acquire it (wrestling champs, football captains, etc.)*

F: I want to say, first, that we are all feminists and if this was a random group of women, there's bound to be a whole lot more negative images. We're all women who have worked on this issue.

*The characteristics our society does foster in women are, not coincidentally the ones that cause our ambivalence around power and male ways of acquiring it. The nurturing and concern for others can help us to apply our power wisely. Our need for approval can be transformed to the desire for consensus in decision making.*

*The optimistic conclusion here, then, is that women finding their way toward a positive concept of power will greatly enlarge their potential for actually having it. Also, by retaining the virtues of our female conditioning, women can present the world with new options in sharing our communities' resources. Power in the hands of woman-identified woman will provide new positive models for future generations.*

cont'd pg. 2



## Reflections On Power cont'd

Male identified attitudes toward getting power are visible in our culture's cliches ("all is fair in love and war"), metaphors and words which imply a theft or violence i.e. wielding power, seizing, taking or usurping power. There's a grabby selfishness implied, a strong deterrent for women taught not to put themselves first.

Given that the very language we think in and teach each other in is highly charged, where one can begin then is by identifying the values and behaviors we reject as feminists and constructing a working definition of power for ourselves. To this end, psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller offers 'the capacity to implement' as a simple beginning definition of power. She further clarifies a distinction between the ability to influence others, as opposed to controlling and restricting others. Consider your feelings on competition. What happens inside when you win something (a race, a job, etc) that necessarily means others must lose? Can you enjoy your victory, or is it diluted with thoughts of others you feel either more deserving, more needy or desirous of the award or position? I ask myself, when and how did I learn to connect the effective and direct application of myself to the destruction or loss of someone else? How do I respond to the success of other women? When one can accept the positive taking of power for oneself, one can accept it in others.

L: I was thinking about competition and how when I was a young person, we were all set up and divided in school against each other. I can remember how some people were having trouble and I was learning more easily, and how I always wanted to help them, but we couldn't talk, everything was called cheating, and we had to compete for the grade, and that was the beginning place for me.

S: My reaction to that is, say, in sports or something, I remember feeling really defeated. I couldn't get an opportunity to do anything because everyone was competing so hard to do whatever they were doing, that I just gave up, and that's what I think women tend to do in competition...Before, you were talking about the differences between boys and girls, and I think boys are raised in such a way that they learn to take leadership roles and to make decisions; it's expected of them and they get affirmed in that, so that in adult life, men just assume they can do all that, and they don't go through all the trauma. Women really have to learn how to do that and it can be very traumatic. Say, she loses her husband and now has to do all the financial stuff and make all the decisions.

F: And the stakes are a lot higher later in life.

L: Fry, you were saying that men don't feel for the other people when they're the victor. I'm thinking of my brother. When he was young, his feelings were completely cut off, they pounded the feelings right out of him, so he was never aware of how other people were feeling, and that's very frustrating for him now and he has to totally retrain himself.

N: Yeah, and Susan, you were mentioning young boys learning to make decisions, and then men having that ability to make decisions. If you think too much about the other person, can you make those decisions? In the business world, if you're thinking a lot about your competitor and the fact that your competitor may be going bankrupt, you can't worry about that because you have to make a decision fast and you can't be concerned about that person's fate. There's something wrong with the pressure to think in that linear way where you do have to block a whole bunch of stuff. I think the fathers teach the sons real early on, as a survival technique - "You're going to have to go out there and make these decisions and do this stuff." It's a terrible inheritance.



# Book Review



Friedan, Betty. The Second Stage. New York: Summit Books, 1981.

In The Second Stage, Betty Friedan argues for a transformation of the women's movement into a broader "human" struggle for liberation, in order both to fulfill the movement's revolutionary function and to retain and live the equality won and now threatened by the conservative backlash of the 80's. The first stage involved the "assumption of the personhood of women, breaking through the barriers that kept women from moving as equal persons in the mainstream of society." But the freedom and personhood gained over the last two decades has been limited by the difficulty of actually "living" that equality in a nation whose socio-economic institutions have not evolved enough to give it any practical meaning. The second stage, which may not even be a women's movement and cannot be developed by women alone, will require a "restructuring of our institutions, on a basis of real equality, for women and men, so we can live a new 'yes' to life and can choose to have children."

Although the agenda for this transformation includes many elements, Friedan's main demand is that rigid feminists bend and work to "transcend the polarities" on issues which have alienated traditionalist groups and much of mainstream America from the women's movement. Above all, the second stage will require that feminists come to new terms with the family, transcending the "false" polarization between women's equality and the family which Friedan believes has constituted the blind spot of the movement while stalling the ERA's ratification. The negative attitude toward the family is a product of woman's historically oppressed and obsolete role in it. The "feminine mystique", that life-denying image of woman as wife, mother, and homemaker which Friedan exposed in her catalyzing work of 1963, gave way to that fourth dimension of growth and personhood which women achieved in the struggle for equality. But now she believes that many have inflated that fourth dimension out of proportion, becoming trapped in a "feminist mystique," another form of half-life, a new shortchanged personhood which denies the need for love, nurturance, and some form of home or family life. Some wallow in the "impotent rage" of sexual politics, focusing on sexual issues, defining their ideologies in reaction against man as oppressor rather than fellow-victim (as Friedan believes) and repudiating the world of "male" values while offering few viable alternatives. Confined in this "feminist mystique", women have sold out both "family" and "life" to the manipulating radical right, colluding in the false polarization, created by die-hard conservatives, between equality and the family.

To overcome the impasse and alienation maintained by this polarity, Friedan suggests that feminists admit their own (broadly understood) family needs and claim the family as a "new feminist frontier", while transcending the divisive abortion issue by affirming a reverence for "life" and approaching the issue in new terms as the "choice to have children." By "family" she means the diverse combinations to which people "come home" for emotional and economic sustenance, 89% of which do not fit the pattern of the nuclear family whose obsolete image the far right is still defending. If feminists would affirm the family as the "nutrient matrix of personhood" (rather than a buzz-word for reaction), and if they would work for a restructuring of institutions



EMPOWERING RITUAL FOR  
TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

PERFORMED BY 6 VOICES  
AND A CHORUS OF 200  
WOMEN

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

PERFORMED BY 6 VOICES AND A CHORUS OF 200 VOICES

LISTEN TO THE VOICES OF ALL THE WOMEN

voice I: strong/challenging  
athletic/concrete/dynamic  
courageous/visionary/willful  
powerful/dreamer/sturdy/pioneering  
creative/spinner/together/daring/trusting  
victorious/sincere/determined/loving/  
connected/joyous/bonded/capable/supportive  
competant/decisive/communicative/enduring  
perceptive/insightful/intuitive/resourceful  
emotional/resilient/protective/organizer  
assertive/activist/nurturing/beautiful  
energetic/aggressive/sharp/explorer/healer  
appreciative/earnest/earthy

voice II

I was born a great big woman  
Citizen of the earth  
The root of heaven and earth  
The wheel of endless becoming  
The starry dynamo of Night  
matrix/labyrinth  
belly power  
moonflow, river  
Bread & Roses  
The call of the wild  
She who binds &'s together  
Spiderwoman  
Turtle Island  
Sky Walker  
a Valley in starlight  
The mountain of regeneration

voice III

Woman, who ends silences  
Woman, who takes risks  
Woman, who nurtures herself  
Woman, who has compassion for other ♀  
Woman, who owns her anger  
Woman, who loves her body  
Woman, who is emotional  
Woman, who does her own naming  
Woman, who heals the earth  
Woman, who values her dreams  
Woman, who breaks taboos  
Woman, who does not discount her sisters  
Woman, who sings and dances  
Woman, who asks for help when it is needed



THEO WITIG  
AUDRE WORDE  
JONES

The hand that cradles  
the rock  
The hand that cradles  
the hammer  
The hand that cradles  
the pen  
The hand that cradles  
the flower  
The who looks forward and backward  
The language of the night. Daughter of the  
Medusa. Steady as a 3 legged cauldron

HELLMAN • RITA MAE  
KEEFE • LILLY TOM  
KOLLOWITZ • ROSALIN  
PARKS • MOTHER  
BROWN • MARTHA GRAHAM

Autumn • Primordial • Secrecy • Pulsating  
Sterile • Sustaining • Transforming • Provocative  
Nurturing • Protecting • Encouraging • Inspirational  
Liberating • Cultivating • Empowering • Bridging • Bold  
Spontaneous • Sparking • Spinning • Compassionate  
Regenerative • Careless Faith • Common Forgetting  
Fragrant • Furious • Pilgrim • Trailblazer • Survivor  
Trouble maker • Queer • American Gothic

I am everything that was, that is, that shall be  
Nor had anyone been able to discover what lies  
underneath my veil

mermaid / starpie / Banisher  
The night crow

Voice III

Voice II

Audre teaches us survival. Spring a fertile & fruitful  
to name helpless survive. the passion that ignites  
Barbara builds and repairs the fire of creation

Elly invents language  
Elly and ideas. groves of good  
Elly communicates loves. groves of children  
And knows animals. groves of dreams

Burner's hands are tools. wildly patient  
Wilma makes change. wildly loyal  
Wilma unites us for peace. wildly tender

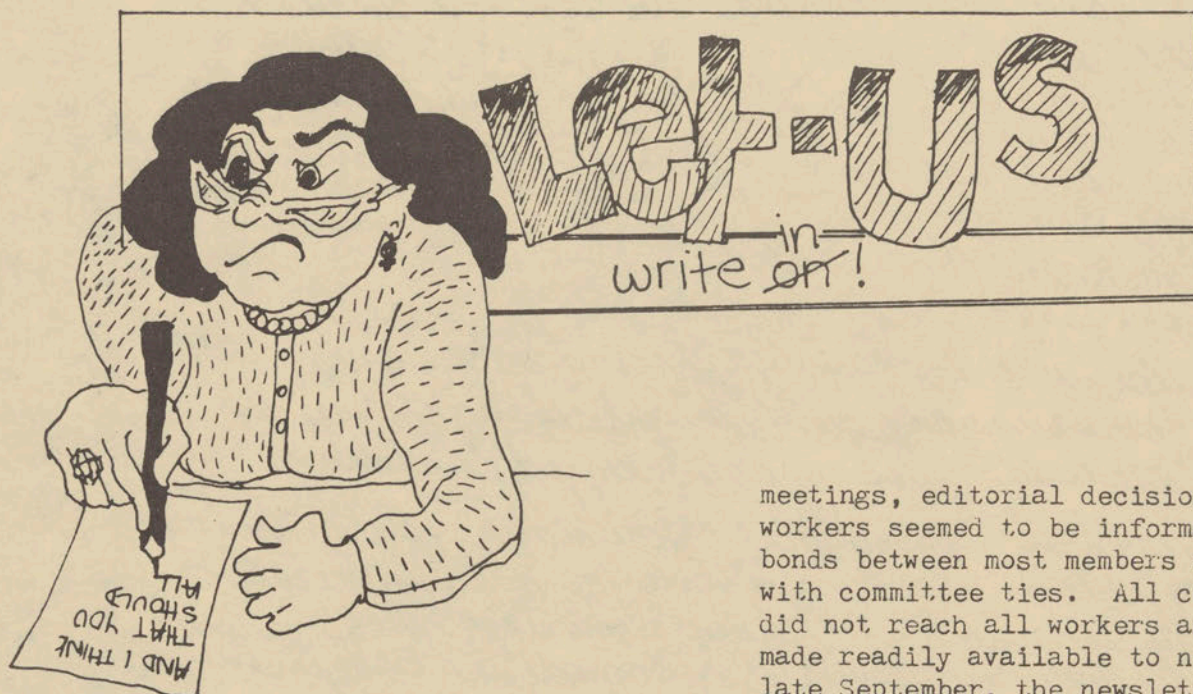
Sipao teaches commitment. night spinner  
Sipao lives commitment. night spinner  
These heal animals. at home in the dark

W. ERIDEL  
SAPHO • MOTHER  
ROSS • SONJA  
THE VOICES OF ALL  
THE WOMEN @ LISTEN TO THE  
ELIZABETH K. EDDY  
HARRIET KU  
MARY BAKER

HELLMAN • RITA MAE  
KEEFE • LILLY TOM  
KOLLOWITZ • ROSALIN  
PARKS • MOTHER  
BROWN • MARTHA GRAHAM

SUSAN B. ANTHONY  
GRACE PALEY  
LISTEN TO THE  
DOLLY PARTON • URSULA  
MY GRANDMOTHERS • LILLY  
GABRIELLA MISTRAL  
WALVINA REYNOLDS  
4TH GRADE  
LE GUIN • VIRGINIA  
@ LISTEN TO THE  
FLO KENNEDY  
EMMA GOLDMAN • DOROTHY  
TEACHERS • JOAN OF ARC  
DAY • ADRIANNE RICH  
NIKKI GIOVANI  
@ LISTEN TO THE





Dear PWCN:

I was inspired to see the increase in variety of articles, poems, and especially letters in the last issue! I was starting to wonder who those mysterious 150 subscribers were!

The front page of the January 1981 issue read:

"Who Are We? We are a group of women who have come together to find a place of belonging, support, action and fun. Because the personal is political, we wish to create personal space with each other that reflects the values and ethics of feminist politics. These include cooperation, validation for our female perspectives and experiences, support for each other in our diversity and creativity, shared power, honesty, and joy. This community is open to all classes, ages, colors, religions, and sexual perspectives." (Proposed Statement of Identity for the PWC)

It's a year later and the community hasn't been feeling that way for awhile. Back then, I enthusiastically picked up my pen and ruler, scissors and paste, ideas and time to work on the Newsletter Task Force (especially enjoying doing the calendar). By summer, the Committee seemed to be composed of an increasingly smaller number of women who also seemed to be the predominant contributors to the paper. A lesbian-feminist focus was emerging more than any other. Lines of communication (i.e. news of scheduled

meetings, editorial decisions) between workers seemed to be informal as social bonds between most members overlapped with committee ties. All committee news did not reach all workers and was not made readily available to new women. By late September, the newsletter was not reflecting my needs for diversity and interests and I no longer felt comfortable working on it. I would like to suggest, as I did then, that the Task Force set up an official phone network. This would prevent interested women from being left out and would make it easier for new workers to feel welcome. (It's worked real well for Lunatree.)

While voicing my criticisms, I thank the Newsletter Task Force for their perseverance in keeping it going, especially when contributors were few. I feel that here we are beginning to feel free to honestly and directly express our ideas - confrontation and controversy that they may spark. Hurray!

I enclose a poem and drawing. I'm hoping you'll continue to group poems in the Breaking Silence section as I was disappointed to find a poem of mine in August obscured on a page of unrelated writings. I'm looking forward to reading more from more of us and would enjoy seeing a feminist current events column each month. I would like to see still more exploration of our sexual perspectives/differences/similarities/politics and how they affect our involvement with one another. (How about a whole issue on this theme?) The newsletter can be a wonderful vehicle for us to build and share our Powers. "Our strength lies in our diversity."

Sincerely,  
Bita Swidrowski



[illegible]



## LETTERS cont.....

Dear Newsletter:

Martha Lunney's caring criticism of my letter deserves a thoughtful reply.

Martha says she does not know what I mean by "same old stuff." I had talked with several newsletter readers who knowingly and readily nodded their heads as we discussed our discontent with the "same old stuff" in the newsletter. That is why I thought readers and editors would know what I meant. On thinking it through, I find it would take more uninterrupted time than I have to clarify my words beyond what I said in my letter - "same old stuff" is feminist rhetoric, reiterations of previously stated points, and anything else that is not the product of deep, careful, honest, original thinking. If any of you head-nodders out there would like to help me out with further explanation, please do.

My questions regarding seeking out the stories of diverse women do, on re-reading, seem "more full of indictment than query" as you say, Martha. I was writing quickly, in anger and frustration and relief and in trust that I did not feel the need to be so very careful with my words. It would, indeed, have been more responsible to write: "I am unhappy with the newsletter task force's policy of taking so little responsibility for its tone and content." If you say you want to be reflective of diverse lifestyles, I believe it is your responsibility to make some effort to solicit them. I believe it is your responsibility to ask yourselves why you receive few contributions from some groups of women, and to consider carefully what you are willing to do to correct that. I am angry at what I feel is your naive denial of the power of simply feeling different in silencing women. Further, I believe you will be denying yourselves enormous power as a newsletter if you do not value diversity and conflict, and if you do not take vigorous measures to create both.

I want the newsletter to have that power.

Now, as to complaints (which Martha feels are indirect ways of expressing our needs and emotions) and "grousing"

about sexual orientation which Toni Buzzeo Cyll objects to, I firmly believe that the grousing (about any issue) must continue. Grousing and noisily complaining women are the foremothers of feminism! Taking responsibility for one's emotions is of great value, but if we have to be oh-so-very-careful to be responsible, we can strap and silence ourselves with it. We need to give each other permission to be good and cranky now and then. It is far preferable to silence.

I hope that every heterosexual woman sitting on her complaints will voice them responsibly or grousily, just not privately. Grousing and replying to grousing are part of what a venture like the newsletter is all about. And, oh yes, spicy arguments are very spicy.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kelly-Rosenberg

P.S. The "Children" issue was great!



CORRECTION...The headline of Susan Turley-Moore's article in the last issue should have read, "A Mother's Confession." We apologize for the mistake.



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## BOOK REVIEW cont —————

to make them respond to the actual diversity of families in which Americans live, the women's movement would be addressing the real needs of people today while taking the family agenda from the right. A focus on reforms of home and workplace to make motherhood a truly "free" choice would, of course, still include the right to abortion. But the shift in values would enable feminists to work with Catholics and other groups who would make powerful allies against the Moral Majority and their cynical Human Life Amendment.

The second stage, then, requires that women join men and other allies to finish the revolution that did not succeed in the first stage due to the failure to come to terms with the family and to focus energy on reforms that would make equality livable. Friedan is convinced that "new" men are ready to work with women, for their needs are converging with our own and the restructuring of institutions holds the key to their growth and freedom as well. The 80's call for efforts to revolutionize the workplace and domestic life, thus enabling people to "Take Back the Day" (a chapter title underscoring Friedan's differences with sexual politics) by gaining human control over what was once woman's sphere. The reforms which she cites are familiar--extensive policies of parental leaves, child allowances, and child care to make feasible the "choice" to have children; greater development of options like flextime, rotated lay-offs, and job sharing to grant the "control of one's days"; changes in zoning laws, building codes, and mortgage financing to fit the needs of the diverse families of today. In the second stage, architecture will create a new concept of the home, no longer a doll's house, revolutionized not only by role change, but also by new spatial designs providing both private and communal areas, taking into account the need for shared services and various arrangements in which people actually live.

By means of these reforms, Friedan believes that equality will be lived when women and men share the work of their days. To implement them, not only a shift in priorities will be required, but also a new approach to politics and a transcendence of the struggle for equal power with men. Friedan argues that the limits of women's power, to act alone as a special interest group, have been reached. The problems of living equality will not be solved by the linear, win-lose, set-goal, all-or-nothing "alpha" approach which has characterized feminist battles on single issues, but by the flexible, improvising "beta" style which deals with human interaction and growth rather than static things, with ambiguous and contextual rather than set and isolated situations. The beta mode characterized the process used by women as they improvised the current women's movement in the late 60's and describes the style of many women's groups today. Friedan sees the "true potential of the women's movement" in the use of this beta style, the seed of its own vitality, to generate a new kind of power by allying with other "life-affirming" men and women to create a "human politics." Describing the women's movement as a "preview of the new national political mode", she claims that we must now subsume women's special interests under a broader human liberation, using the style and vitality of the movement as the impetus and pattern for a new democracy, a return to a grass-roots political base employing guerilla-type community resistance against the growing authoritarianism. Mostly at the local level, Friedan wants to see the new political base evolve fluid beta solutions to the problems of living equality by reforming the home and workplace. The massive budget cuts mean that the second

cont'd pg. 15



# Breaking Silence

## PHASE II

My breath rises slowly,  
blood flows, legs quake,  
hands tingle hotly  
like busts of volcanic flame.  
Fingers clench tightly  
pulling with the might of  
a lioness under attack.

My raised arms drop  
in magnified motion, fists  
Pound  
like snows in an avalanche  
Pound  
like boulders hitting water  
spraying potent drops of  
shame  
to be dissolved  
no longer to be swallowed.  
Pound  
releasing waterfalls  
fierce torrents of rage  
breaking locks and covers  
sealed lifetimes ago  
by hardened sediments of  
Rain and fear.

My heart pumps mightily  
body lunges again and again  
to slay  
centuries of crimes.  
Hurt animal  
wounded child of dark woods  
spitting and kicking,  
hissing to protect her young  
Self,  
fighting back in  
ferocious abandon.

My screams surge  
from stale caves of prehistory  
awakening silent pools of desperation,  
coursing through tunnels and veins  
to find  
Delicious air.

Rita Swidrowski

Write you say  
damned good stuff  
and you read my words to your friends who  
coo and admire in lethargic appreciation

so that I pump my blood out to you  
and spill it into letters  
goaded by your words  
write, write ---  
but only so long as I spill arid words  
of intellectualism  
dirt-dry spirituality

my emotions slime and smear across your  
veneer of soul and when you receive them  
you scurry away.

Martha Lunney





## breaking silence cont\*\*\*

Power is letting go control.  
It is waiting for decisions to surface  
from within.

Power is letting weighty problems  
dissolve

wait

go by.

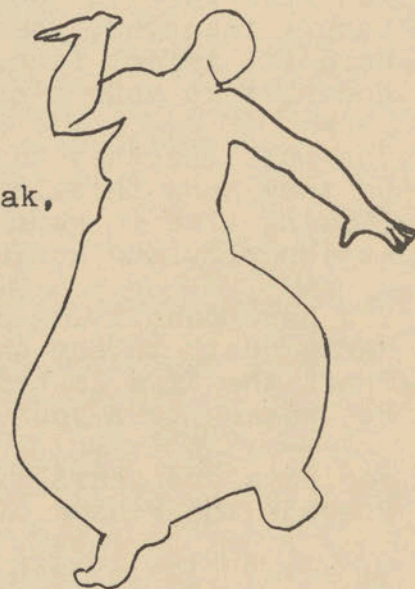
Power is side-stepping criticism,  
Not making comparisons.  
It is looking on with objectivity.

Power is the ability to hear another's soul speak,  
Seeing the being.

Power is looking within myself quietly and  
honestly, with love.

Power is taking charge of my life: sensing  
what I need to do for myself and doing it.

Power is recognizing love.



Marlane Spillinger

### "in the cave of the heart"

she's taken up pants again, letting her ambitions give her  
A Fine Name.

Look how she rings her eyes with night-life  
keeps packing up her living collection,  
ever ready for the road;

The vows of the pilgrim written like a moses stone  
on the inside of her skull.

No longer a bee to the flower faces of children,  
She can go-a-long-time without sweeping her floor.  
the grit of her travels toughen her feet.  
keeps her shoes by the side of her bed,

can of traveling beans in the cupboard,  
stamped post cards already addressed;  
and yet, and yet,  
this is what I have to say,  
deep in the cave of her heart  
She is waiting for you to come.  
an unsettled woman, yes,  
but deep in the cave of her heart she would settle,  
for you.

Betsy Whitman



## Untitled

(to the ghost of Clara Schumann)

Woman, take your time.  
Fire sparking from the fingers  
Takes its days and months of labor--  
Woman, play your scales with vengeance.

You have felt the source arising  
Deep within you, years abiding--  
Hold it, infant fire, gently--  
Woman, take your time.

She-bull (as they have described you);  
Do they know this is survival?  
(Making fire in your fingers  
As you play and scream with vengeance.)

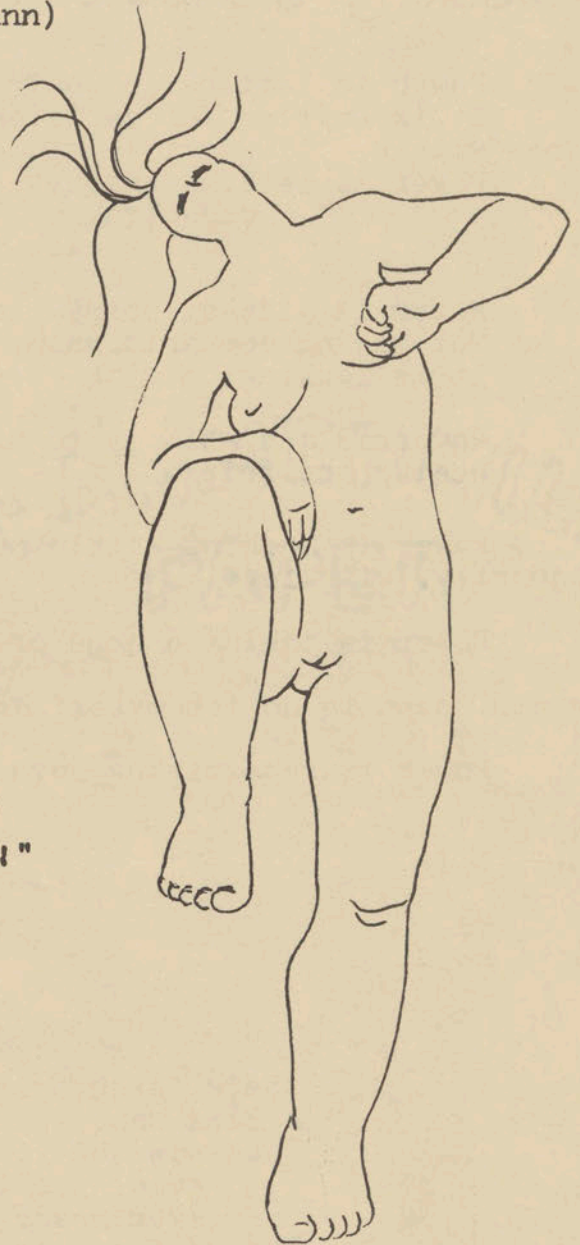
You have seen it in a vision--  
Early death to she who does not  
Spark the fire in her fingers.  
But woman, take your time.

For days and years of labor must  
Precede the rising of deep fires--

Angry, loving, she-ghosts move you:  
"Sing and soar with sparking blazes!"

And you can abandon  
Vengeance.

Andrea Kelly-Rosenberg



## WORDS AS POWER!

Power: That word, Power, makes me think of my own power. I love love love the power I have over words that are supposed to hold power over me in a negative sense. Certain words used to have the power to illicit a specific reaction from me. I was the victim of these words. People could yell, "JEW," and I would immediately be afraid and angry, oh that adrenaline would get a roaring through my veins. Words used in this way would control me. I was in a rut.

Now after a lot of help from my friends (Bless You All), lots of emoting and experience, I have reclaimed my power over these words. My brain now can think instead of react. I can decide what's appropriate to do, be spontaneously creative, humorous, whatever. I now have the upper hand with these words. This is an incredible happening, a wonderful occurrence for this member of an oppressed group. Also, I feel quite powerful getting over the wall and finally submitting an article. Sisters, Shalom with love.

Lynne Israelson



# \On love and power/

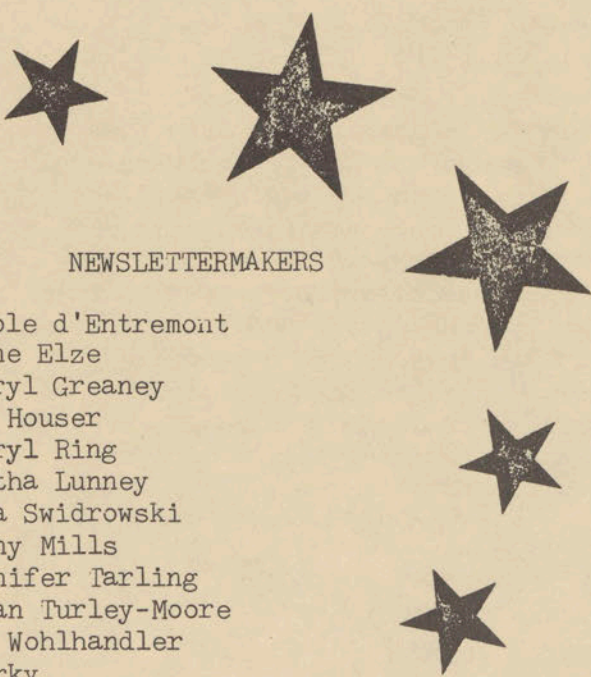
At ten minutes after ten I read your letter (having followed a single line of sliding cars down seventeen miles of dark and snow slick curving roads from city to farm.) On the second page (all the way home you filled my thoughts, hope for our relationship renewing itself in the silence around me) come these words, "I see I have no right to feel victimized, only powerless, which I am in reality." God! Power . . . again. How many times in four years? Will we never be done pronouncing the word, each in our turn? (The first time is still so clear in my mind, me staring at red velvet drapes in a room saturated with smells and memories of love, hearing your voice admitting the power balance was in your favor. How long had I known you then? One month? Two?)

This letter saddens me with its talk of power. We are at that same familiar turn of dialogue, roles seeming to have reversed down the course of forty eight months and (surely) as many pronouncings. I do not rage over this statement of yours. (When this power issue was alive for me as well, and all too real, we paid premium rates for our long distance ragings.) Now I sit down in silence to make some written plea for wisdom.

Power, I've learned, is not something I must do without because this society requires the powerlessness of women. In my work and in my life I've learned to accept, to seek, to actively take the power available to me, and I have grown stronger (the woman staring at closed red draperies, not quite the same as I.) But power in relationships is something I no longer choose to struggle for, to gain, to own. There is power in the love we share, the bond stretching down four years and more (these nine hundred miles we've conquered so many times.) We are both empowered by its shining, both recipients of that light.

You (friend, soulmate, lover) are neither victimized nor powerless. You are made lonely and confused by a struggle we share, but whose course we cannot direct. There is wisdom in waiting silently for resolution. There is power in loving wisely beyond fear. That power belongs to us both in equal measure.

Toni Buzzeo Cyll



## NEWSLETTERMAKERS

Nicole d'Entremont  
Diane Elze  
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Ann Houser  
Cheryl Ring  
Martha Lunney  
Rita Swidrowski  
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Jennifer Tarling  
Susan Turley-Moore  
Fry Wohlhandler  
Sparky

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THE COMMUNITY. Bring ideas to the  
next meeting. The winning name  
receives a dinner for two.



## Reflections on Power cont'd

S: In thinking about relationships, women think about relationships and our perceptions are more global.

N: Yeah, and I like what Fry was saying about using that ability to think globally and still making decisions that may be harsh sometimes, but would be considered decisions and not just knee-jerk, blinder kinds of decisions that men end up making.

S: In speaking about men having no feelings when they're the victors, I always felt guilty about success, like I shouldn't deserve it and I felt so bad for the people who lost that I couldn't enjoy it. I always felt there was something wrong built into my success. Women, when we start reaching success, we start sabotaging it too.

L: ...When I got offered a job, I wondered, should I share it with Fry because you're still looking.

D: When I was younger, I picked up that competitive thing and got a lot of goodies out of it. I was successful in sports. I developed some self-confidence, became more outgoing, and felt I could control some things around me. It helped me develop some strengths. There's a positive side to it. At the same time, I always felt bad about the kids who were "at the bottom" - I enjoyed my success, but I hated what the structure did to those kids. There's something to be said about having power, but at the same time not doing it in a way that oppresses other people. But then again, power means exerting control and doing some restricting, not just influencing other people. Making societal changes means restricting and controlling those people in our way, and might there be ways that we will need to act as they do in order to make the changes we want. If we're serious about getting rid of nuclear power plants, the defense department or whatever, are we going to have to use tactics that the opposition uses to get power over that stuff? We usually talk about violence in an abhorrent way, but do we need to be ruthless for the "good of our vision"? Do the ends justify the means sometimes?

F: We've been taught certain ways to get power, like through manipulation. What's the price of getting power in that way? What are we sacrificing when we use those ways to get power?

D: Are we necessarily sacrificing our integrity when we are manipulative, when we choose to be manipulative and we are clear on what we're doing, why we're doing it, and what we want to get from it?

L: They're survival tactics.

*There is much internal process work to be done to rid ourselves of feelings that drain us as we struggle to succeed. Many of us were never raised to take our lives seriously enough to plan for employment, not as a garnish to a middle class existence, but as a necessary means of survival. Taking responsibility for one's growth, skills and the promotion of oneself in the marketplace is a tremendous, often frightening task. Some of us fall prey to feelings of depression, paralysis or victimization by society's oppressions, bad luck or the economic recession. Even though some of the external hurdles may be real, together we must find ways out of the feelings that drain our capacity to implement a new society, and to make our feminist vision manifest.*

Women's Community Meeting Sun. Feb. 21  
3 p.m. Everywoman's Center, Portland ywca  
14 Goodfood, Goodtalk, Bring wood for the fire place.



## ...and more book review

stage will also call for a "new passionate volunteerism", transcending the polarity between volunteer work and a more valued professionalism, to provide services badly needed.

This oratory proclaiming feminists as the unwitting messengers of the "new democracy" will dismay many, as will Friedan's declaration that the "true potential of the women's movement" is to give up its energy to an ambiguous "human politics" long before women's goals have been achieved, the gains now highly threatened. Friedan's visions for the second stage are hardly new to her; indeed, this book reads like an expansion of the ideas presented in her 1976 "Open Letter to the Women's Movement", calling for unity when the conservative threat first began to loom. She has preached the "transcending of polarities", the openness to allies and the restructuring of institutions since 1973 when she began teaching courses on the sex-role revolution. What is new in her latest statement is the focus on the "choice to have children", the great effort to change the strategy concerning the family, and the attempt to give her pragmatic approach the support and sophistication of the beta-mode, new wave democracy catalyzed by her seemingly defunct women's movement. Friedan has gathered in one work the various messages of her gospel in belief that the dangers of reaction have finally vindicated her compromising reformist approach and the dire necessity of its implementation at this particular point in history.

The Second Stage will gain many disciples while incurring the wrath of others. For a work purporting to outline the means to human liberation, the attention to issues of class, race and minorities is minimal. Radical feminists (as well as many moderates) will not share the author's simplistic faith that the freedom of the night for which we have so struggled will be achieved as women and men "share the work of their days", nor that rape and pornography will disappear with the progress of the superficial sex-role revolution. The book may cause problems for lesbian-feminists, whom Friedan blames for distorting the goals and meaning of the movement. Although she intends to describe plans that would make equality livable in all types of families, she focuses her discussions on married couples struggling for the means to "choose" children, while insisting that gay people keep their life-styles to themselves. When asked where this leaves lesbians politically in the second stage, Friedan replied that these women can take up the banner of the family because they, too, have family needs; she declines to discuss gay families because it "shifts the focus to sexual politics." (This might inspire some lesbians to "transcend the polarization" between them and Friedan by developing some terms in which to affirm their own family needs so that the focus doesn't shift to sexual politics.) She really wants lesbian-feminists to express an abstract, pro-family position without specifying what "family" means to them. In her vision it must remain abstract because, for that homophobic society among which Friedan would like us to seek allies, the only type of family or home recognized for gay people is in the closet, a fact of which she refuses to recognize the significance and capacity for alienation. *Cont'd pg. 16*



# last of the book review!

Nevertheless, the scope of the Second Stage extends beyond the problems it raises. Many of Friedan's recommendations are timely-- there are millions of uncommitted Americans who would take up the cause of equality if they were shown that the dream included rather than threatened them, and progress over the next few years may well call for the innovations in living arrangements, the alliances and bending of rigid positions which she describes. The question is-- how far do we have to go, even in this conservative era, in retreat from a direct battle for equality and creation of new values, to make compromises and alliances that were inconceivable five and ten years ago? Friedan's repeated suggestion that the "women's movement" is of the past, expressed timidly at first but with growing confidence throughout the book, is a dangerous message to give to the large audience that will read the paperback issued next year. But it has the merit of arousing those sleeping or retreating in fear to ask themselves how they plan to survive the 80's. The Second Stage, prescribing a humanism enriched by Friedan's feminism, leaves one hungry for a broader message and alternative visions.

Joyce Rowe



## more sundry.....

Greater Portland N.O.W. meets the 4th Tues. of every month, 7:30 pm, Public Safety Build. IO9 Middle Street, 2nd floor. Feb.23, film "The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter." March 23, Feminist C-R Demonstration . For more info: Marilyn 846-4644

RACQUETBALL PARTY, Maine Women's Lobby Fundraiser, Feb. 6, 1982, 8 P.M. to midnight, Meeting Racquet Swim Club, Route 201, Topsham. Racquetball, hot tub, music, swimming, sauna, cash bar, \$10 per person (reserved or at the door). For further info, call Kim Matthews, 774-5621 days, or Lauren Ann Corbett, 865-4616, eves.

WELLNESS - A Workshop Series Open to All.  
Tuesday evenings, 7-9 P.M. at the Everywoman's Center, Y.W.C.A. Cost: \$2.50 for YWCA members, \$3 for non-members. Workshops marked free are free to all persons.

- Feb. 2 - The Power of Positive Dieting
- Feb. 9 - Woman Spirit
- Feb. 16 - Women and Intuitive Health
- Mar. 2 - Building a Wellness Lifestyle "Free"
- Mar. 9 - Self Awareness
- Mar. 16 - Fitness and Your Well-Being

MASSAGE AT THE YWCA - by appointment, 774-5068.

EVERYWOMAN'S CENTER at the Y.W.C.A. is a comfortable space for women to relax, meet with friends, browse through the library, eat lunch in front of an open fire. The Center is open: 11:30-1:00 P.M., Monday through Friday; 5:30-7:00 Monday evenings (Women's Reading Group); and Tuesday evenings 5:00-7:00 P.M. Through March 16, bring your supper Tuesday evenings and share friendship and ideas. All women are invited to attend a pot luck supper on the fourth Thursday of each month.



# NEWSLETTER NOTES

The Newsletter Task Force is behind schedule. There will be no February issue. Everyone's subscription will be extended one month, except for those whose sub has expired (green dot on the mailing label). The deadline for the March issue on "FOOD" is February 15. The April issue's theme is "SPORTS/RECREATION/FITNESS/BODY IMAGE." The deadline is March 15. The theme for the May issue will be "COMMUNITY." The deadline will be April 15.

The Newsletter Task Force has received many submissions for this issue. If you do not see your submission here, it will appear in the next issue. Due to limited funds, we needed to limit space. We are also delighted that we are receiving so many articles, poems, etc. for the Newsletter and we wish we could print them all in a gigantic issue. We apologize for needing to hold some for the next issue.

NEWSLETTER TASK FORCE EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING AND LAYOUT, February 17, 7 P.M., 381 Deering Avenue. Everyone invited. Call 774-3329 if you desire further info.

YOU WHO HAVE A GREEN DOT ON YOUR MAILING LABEL, THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE. Please renew.

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

The purpose of the Portland Women's Community Newsletter is to provide women with a forum for our feminist voices. Thus, the Newsletter Task Force will only print articles, poetry, and essays by women, and will consider for publication any material not deemed racist, sexist, classist, heterosexist, ablebodied, or ageist. We reserve the right to edit material on matters of literary merit, length and content. No revisions or rejections will occur without dialogue with the author. Thus, material submitted must include name and phone number or address. However, within the pages of the Newsletter, names will be omitted upon request.

## COPYRIGHT

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## ADS

The current rate for advertising is \$15 per ad for appearance in 3 issues.

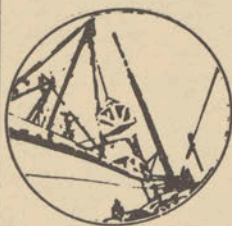
*\*\*ski...ski...ski\*\**

Cross country ski day, Saturday, Feb. 27. For info, call Ann Houser, 772-3093.

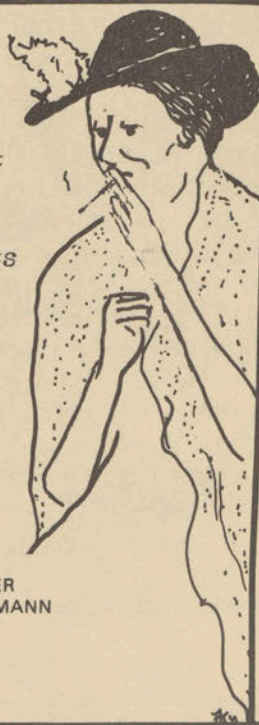
MASSAGE FOR WOMEN - Esalen/Swedish massage is a healthful, relaxing, meditative and intensely pleasurable experience, a sharing of energy between the giver and the receiver. Experienced practitioner, reasonable rates, sliding fee scale. Call Ruth at 774-2802. Let it ring!

*If Virginia Was In Town  
She'd buy her cheroots  
at  
Seaport Tobacco and Import  
10 Exchange  
A great place for great  
cigars and Peruvian imports  
and clove cigarettes.  
p.s. We carry MS.*

**SEAPORT TOBACCO  
& IMPORT CO**



DANIEL G. EBER  
SOLANGE KELLERMANN







## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board of Directors of the Portland Women's Community will be meeting the first Sunday of every month, 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. at various women's homes. All are invited. Call Nicole d'Entremont or Diane Elze, 774-3329, for locations.

### *dues blues \$\$*

Due to many concerns and complaints being raised about the institution of membership dues for the Women's Community, the dues structure is "on hold" and will be reviewed at the next Board meeting. Many women raised important issues around the dues structure, including women who participated in voting it in. Thus, it is being re-evaluated.

## **—Internal Processes—**



The INTERNAL PROCESS TASK FORCE is sad to say that our invitation to women to talk about their discomforts within the Community was ignored. We had a nice cup of tea and spent some time wondering why no one had felt strong enough to voice their concerns or interested enough to give the Community a chance to serve them.

This can be your community. Each voice does have equal weight. Individual instances of disappointment or rebuff do not constitute Community Policy. If you allow such experiences to push you out of the Community, you are buying into a particularly nasty and potent form of the internalized oppression of women. The nirvana of sisterhood is not a place where you go to "get it"; it is something we will all have to struggle and laugh with each other to create. If you are angry at other women for not giving you what you need, please try to remember that we've all been hurt in one way or another by the competitive values of our culture. We need each other in our diversity to create new forms of communication and interaction. Inevitably in this process we will step on each other's toes.

Consider again joining with us in this exciting, sweaty, giggling, powerful, nervous, joyful endeavor. Contact Deborah, 772-3093 or Liz, 773-1394 if you are interested in attending another soiree to voice your concerns.

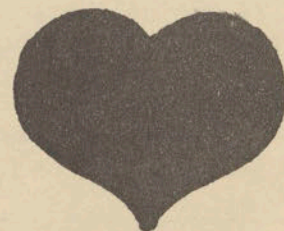
Deborah Cole and Liz Cinnamon



# **VALENTINES DANCE ...**

**friday feb. 12**

**8:00 - 12:00 p.m.**



**u.s.m. payson smith cafeteria**

**.LIVE DISC JOCKEY**

**.KISSING BOOTH**

**. RAFFLE**

**. REFRESHMENTS**

**benefit - portland womens comm.**

**co-sponsor womens forum & p.w.c.**

**TICKETS**

**\$2.00 in advance at U.S.M. Women's Forum**

**\$2.50 at the door**

**everyone welcome**  
**alcohol free**



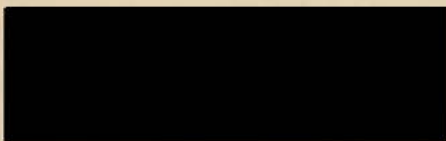
Believe it or not, this is the January issue (or Jan-Feb if you'd like). See page 17 of this issue for the Newsletter's status and the themes for upcoming issues. We are delighted with the influx of articles, graphics, essays - Keep them coming!!!! Submit your writings to: Nicole d'Entremont, 381 Deering Ave., Portland, 04103. Subscriptions are \$8 (more if you can, less if you can't).

\*\*\*\*\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ (Checks can be made out to "The Community")



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