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# MONTANA

## WOMEN'S RESOURCE

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Spring 1983  
Vol. 6 No. 6



*Ferron*

*In Concert...*

Canadian folk artist, Ferron will be appearing at the University of Montana campus, in the university theatre, on June 3rd, at 8 p.m. One of Canada's most respected folksingers, the Vancouver performer has been steadily gaining fame and followers in the United States in the past six years. One of the most exciting talents in women's music, Ferron's vocal style reaches out beyond that genre. When asked her stance on the women's movement, she asserted that she is simply "a woman moving." Ferron speaks as a woman honestly and directly and in doing so, speaks for everyone.

Ferron refers to herself as a "folk-poet," singing songs straight from the heart, and indeed her lyrics boast the hard chiseled personal imagery of poetry. Her voice has power and authority; it's reminiscent of the haunting quality of the early Leonard Cohen and the drive of early Bob Dylan.

In concert she has a hearty, jovial sensuality, and her performance is always personal, highly moving, and evocative in its imagery. Ferron has a reputation for weaving a mystical bond between herself, her music and audience. "People cry at the shows," she says, "they laugh. We get real close."

Ferron has produced three albums by herself, not willing to give up any of her control or freedom. "My philosophy is that anything you create is yours and has meaning in your life. And you don't want that dirtied at any cost," said Ferron. "This is what I do, and nobody is going to step on that. And if they do step on it, then they step on me. I'm not out to make a dollar, I'm out to make a life." Ferron has no desire for her music to become another peice of product on a store's shelves.

Her latest album, "Testimony" is available in Missoula for those unable to wait for her performance in June. Ferron's music speaks to the quieter moments of our lives, and shares feelings that are universal in their appeal. Her rough folk style should be a refreshing change from Missoula's standard concert fare. Tickets are available at the Women's Resource Center, for \$6/\$7 day of show.

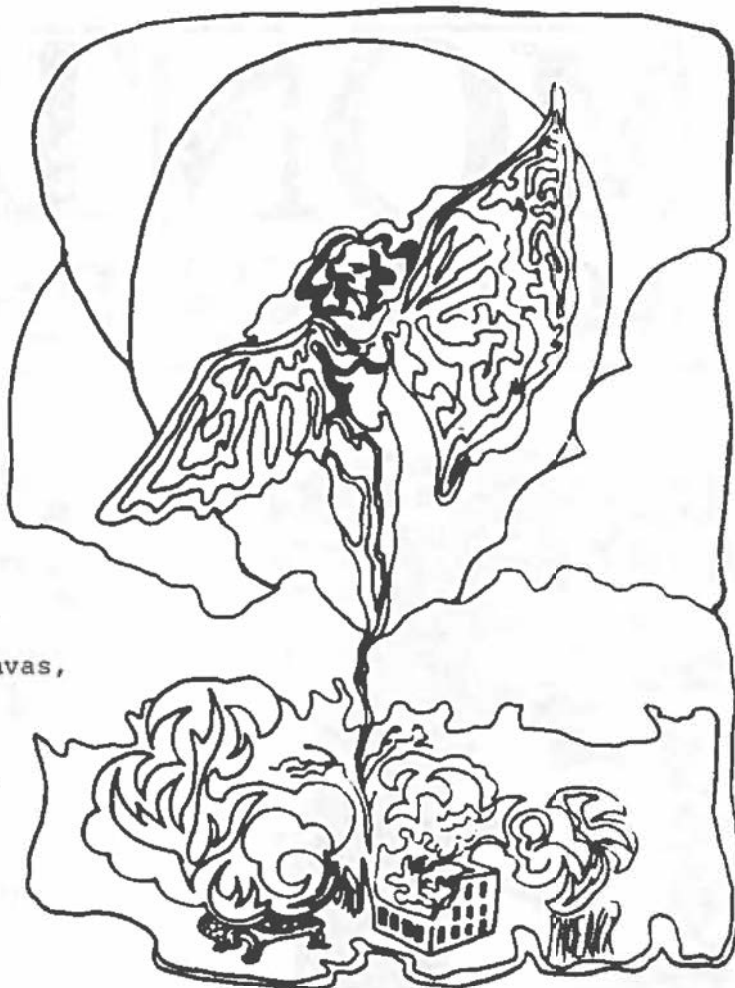
# Emptying the Landscape

Torch, gazing at her, said  
She is a landscape painting, this one.  
And, as if she became the painting  
he was looking at, he slipped her  
from the wall in his gallery.  
With his gift of talking to inanimates  
he gentled her, saying, I will make you  
perfect, airbrush your flaws away.

Torch filled the air with his voice,  
burned the field of her body  
killing the weeds. He turned  
the earth as if he had entered  
the landscape, become hard and honest.  
He cultivated the scene through seasons  
as if his hands were always deep  
in wet clay and he had kneaded  
the flaws from the soil,  
blown them from the hills of grain,  
brushed them from the cottonwoods, the sky.

Torch. She has lifted herself from the canvas,  
she is emptying the landscape you filled  
with yourself. You were the flaw  
you could not see, your back to yourself.  
She has moved up into air, is moving still,  
is speaking; her words wash you away.

by Leslie Burgess



## MONTANA WOMEN'S RESOURCE

The Montana Women's Resource and the Women's Resource Center need your continuing support. Any financial contribution toward the newsletter, specific WRC projects, or toward office expenses for general services are always needed and greatly appreciated. Please make checks payable to the Women's Resource Center, University Center, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812. You may indicate where you would like your contribution to be used.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ ENCLOSED FOR SUPPORT OF THE WRC

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE MY MONEY USED FOR \_\_\_\_\_

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Maureen Jones

# Garden City Seeds

It is that time of year when one's fancy turns to gardening. Recently I spent a relaxing morning in a restful spot talking with a member of the Garden City Seeds collective in Missoula. Basking in the sun, surrounded by the rich aroma of healthy soil, I learned how this group of people developed a concern for the earth into a business.

Growing out of the Down Home Project, a nonprofit environmental education corporation, Garden City Seeds began as an outlet for thousands of tomato plants which had nowhere to go. The Down Home Project teaches self-reliant living, systems designed for urban areas, which encourage growing one's own food, preserving food, and using appropriate technology. The garden supply house exists to finance the educational goals of the group.

As a result of the Seed Savers Exchange and other organizations, an awareness is developing that the world seed supply is in danger. Old varieties are becoming extinct as they are cross-bred to form disease and pest resistant hybrids.

Garden City Seeds is working on growing their own seeds and encourages people to save seeds from their gardens to add to the genetic diversity.

It takes a few years of testing to assure the vegetables are "true to type" and that the seeds will germinate. Now about 80% of their seeds are bought in bulk from Johnny's Select Seeds in Albion, Maine and repackaged in Missoula. They are open-pollinated and grown for this climate.

Garden City Seeds has several greenhouses where they raise starter plants to sell, such as: the cabbage family, tomatoes, peppers, and many herbs and flowers. They raise plants in beds and have approximately 100 herb varieties growing, some of which come from the Lost Prairie Herb Farm by Kalispell.

There are 4-5 fulltime members of the collective, assisted by volunteers from the community. Progress has been slow because of lack of funds and most members need to work away from the business part of the year to make ends meet.

One member of the col-



lective has been hired to grow an experimental plot at the state prison in Deer Lodge which will evolve into a farm scale project.

The Down Home Project promotes organic gardening practices and offers workshops on seed saving, composting, herbs, solar food dryers, and solar greenhouses. They are expecting a grant to help finance education projects.

Garden City Seeds carries many organic and biological soil supplements and insecticides.

by Danette Curry

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## HERLAND

Charlotte Perkins Gilman was a feminist and social critic in the early 1900's. She wrote numerous books and wrote and published a magazine, The Forerunner, which dealt with women's rights and socialism, from 1909-1916.

Women and Economics, 1898, an analysis of women in the context of history, sociology, and political economy, is her most famous book. Other of her books include: Concerning Children, 1900; The Home: It's Work and Influence, 1903; Human Work, 1904; Man Made World: Or Our Androcentric Culture, 1911;

His Religion and Hers: A Study of the Faith of Our Fathers and the Work of Our Mothers, 1923;

Novels include:

What Diantha Did, 1910;

The Crux, 1911;

Moving the Mountain, 1912; and

Herland, 1909;

Gilman had an unhappy childhood and loathed being married. After the birth of her daughter she was under a "rest cure" for depression which forbid writing and allowed only a little reading. After a "scandalous divorce", because there was no reason for it, and giving custody to her husband when he

continued pg. 13

# Women in the West

The Women's West conference, August 10-13, 1983, in Ketchum, Id. will be the first major inter-regional conference to explore the role of women in western history. The project is sponsored by the Coalition for Western Women's History and funded by grants and gifts to the Institute of the American West, including a grant from the Association of Humanities in Idaho.

Many histories of the West are heroic tales, stories of adventure, exploration and war in which women are rarely mentioned. By focusing on women's history, the conference will help to make western history more clearly reflect the total western experience.

Oral histories are beginning to document informal activities by women that led to the formal organization of schools, churches, and libraries. These insights challenge the stereotype of women as "gentle tamers."

In addition to oral histories, other new research techniques are providing important information. Women's club records, women's own diaries and demographic data, such as census records, document women's attitudes and actual activities and woman's role in providing for the family.

Recent research suggests that early passage of women's suffrage by western states indicated general acceptance of the essential role of women in the economy. In a like manner, some women's issues today seem to emerge politically in specific cases in which women's economic value is apparent.

The Women's West conference will provide an opportunity for sharing, comparing and discussing new findings and research methods developed in a variety of locations and contexts.

The unifying theme of the conference will be a comparison of the actual lives of western women as they relate to traditional western histories. Keynote and workshop sessions will bring together historians, poets, dramatists, filmmakers, musicians, writers, artists and people working on public policy issues. Panel discussions will involve audience and presenters in dialogue on the issues.

Keynote topics and speakers include: "Women's History and Western Mythology," Susan Armitage, Director of Women's Studies and associate professor of history, Washington State U., Pullman, WA; "Women as Workers and Civilizers--True Womanhood on the Western Frontier," Betsy Jameson, Director, Research Center on Women, Lorreto Heights College, Denver, CO; "Distinctions in Western Women's Experience--Ethnicity, Class and Life Cycle," Rosalinda Gonzales, visiting professor, Department of Comparative Culture, U of CA, Irvine, CA; "Western Women's History--The Challenge for the Future," Suzan Shown Harjo, legislative liaison, Native American Rights Fund, Washington, DC.

A tabloid will be published prior to the conference, designed to provide information about conference themes so that people attending can participate in panel discussions. Tapes will be distributed through

National Public Radio affiliates and a book based on conference presentations will be published.



A limited number of stipends covering travel/lodging/meals will be awarded depending on the availability of funds. To apply, send a one page letter briefly describing your background, why you wish to attend the conference and how you anticipate interpreting your experience at the conference to your students or to the public. Please send stipend applications to: the Institute of the American West, PO Box 656, Sun Valley, ID 83353. For more information contact Marcia Jones at 208-622-9371 or the above address.



To celebrate the Centennial and Jeannette Rankin's birthday, June 11, WRC members will be marching in the Centennial parade that day. The "Jeannette Rankin Brigade" is an imitation of a similar march to protest the Vietnam war in which Rankin participated several years ago. Participants should wear old-fashioned outfits, white if possible. For more information call the WRC at 243-4153.

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## Heritage Quilt — *Women in Montana History*

A Women's Heritage Quilt is being created as a gift to the Montana Women's History Project as a way to commemorate women in Montana's history. The quilt will be displayed by the History Project at women's organizations and future women's events.

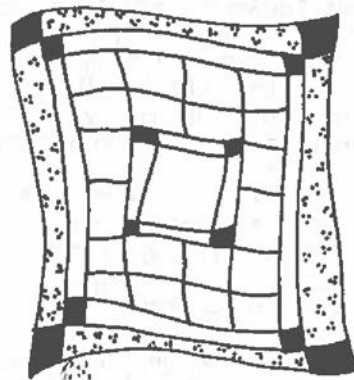
The quilt consists of a center patch that is a white-on-white applique of the Women's History Project logo, a pioneer woman holding sheaves of wheat, surrounded by smaller hand-worked patches. Each of these patches represents a woman of Montana's past. The commemorative patches are alternated with unbleached muslin squares needleworked in simple designs that are symbolically female, such as a butterfly, a woman's symbol and an open flower. The general color scheme of the piece-work will be blue, maroon and natural.

The Heritage Quilt was designed by Barb Larsen and Rachael Simpson to stimulate an interest in the women who settled the West and go unnamed in history.

As many as twenty women are involved in sewing the quilt and we have each researched the woman we chose to represent in order to get ideas for the design of the appliques. We've found that our interest in Montana Women's History has grown with our excitement over the quilt's progress.

For more information contact Rachael Simpson at the W.R.C.

by Rachael Simpson





# Perspectives on Prevention

by Deborah Tomas & Vicki Kober, Women's Place

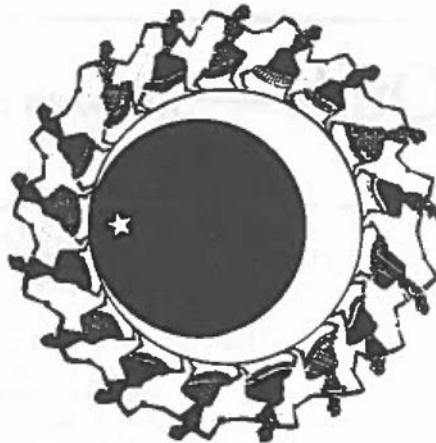
The anti-rape movement has accomplished many things in its history. Rape laws have been revised to more accurately reflect the nature of the crime. In most areas, survivors of rape can expect good psychological support from rape crisis workers and better treatment by courts, hospitals and police. Public education by feminist groups has focused on the societal causes of victimization of women, supportive responses to the rape survivor and rape prevention. And we've shifted the blame from the victim to the rapist where it belongs. Or have we?

More and more frequently, we are hearing the "how-to's" of preventing an attack. These articles and speeches are addressed to the individual women and include instructions to install deadbolts on doors and locks on windows, among other things. However well intentioned this advice might be, the exclusive focus on the individual is dangerous on at least two accounts.

First, it doesn't stop rape. No matter what you do to secure your home from intruders, how many potentially dangerous situations you avoid or how assertively you walk on the street, your risks for being raped are only lessened, not eliminated. The threat of rape still exists. Mass media still carries its misogynistic equation of sex and violence, perhaps

more obviously. Yet, in many of these prevention instructions we are told if we do such-and-such we can relax. With this approach our realistic and self-preserving fears are discounted and our reality is denied.

Secondly, with an exclusive focus on individual rape prevention, the responsibility for stopping rape is placed on the individual woman instead of on men and the culture for its permission of this systematic act of terror against all women.

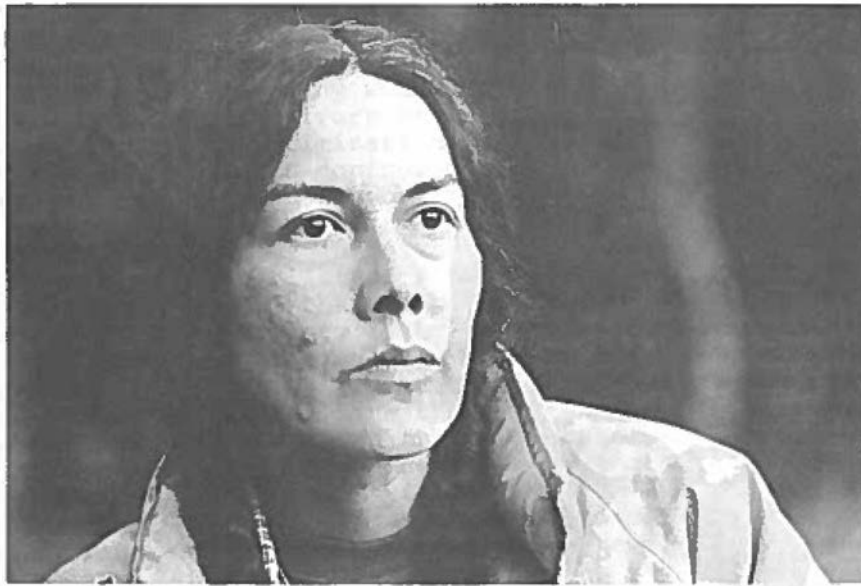


We are made dependent upon others (men?) for our safety and are robbed of our autonomy and the simple pleasure of being alone. Rape prevention for the individual woman de-politicizes the issue of violence against women and inhibits our identifying with each other as women under oppression. "The Right Way" theories to preventing rape abound. The unspoken extension of this approach

is another version of blaming the victim, "If you don't do it my way, it's your own fault for getting raped."

Similarly, even if we are including an analysis of societal causes of rape from a feminist perspective while we are zealously teaching women assertiveness skills and self-defense techniques, let's keep some things in mind. All positions of victimization are seen as "feminizing." Our male-dominated culture demeans traditionally feminine characteristics. Let's hope we aren't unintentionally buying into that discount of women or providing a few more non-traditional token women as examples by which other women are blamed for their oppression. In sharing assertiveness skills with each other, let's not imply that this training is "The Right Way" but instead that these behaviors increase the number of options open to women when under attack.

We do have a legitimate and important struggle to resist on individual levels our legacy of the victim's role. Women have the right to self-defense and to individual resistance to violence in passive or active ways. This is an important part of anti-rape work. However, we must also take up the broader challenge and direct our energies to overturn the economic and political injustices which oppress all women.



## THE WANROW INSTRUCTION

### *Racism, Sexism, and the Law*

by Martha Newell

On August 12, 1972, Yvonne Wanrow shot and killed 62 year old William Wesler. The shooting was self-defense by a 5'4" mother in a leg cast, against a drunk 6'2" neighbor and known child molester. Eleven years later, with one year probation left, Swan spoke of her ordeal at the Kyi-Yo Indian Conference.

Swan's legal battle, which ended in Washington's Supreme Court, resulted in a legal precedent, "the Wanrow Instruction", which requires juries to take into account the woman's perspective. In Swan's case, how she felt as a 6'2" man who she knew had molested her friend's children, and had threatened her child hours before, burst into the house at 5 A.M., drunk and incoherent. The Wanrow Instruction has since been instrumental in freeing at least ten women across the country.

In reviewing Swan's ordeal, it is impossible to ignore the sexism and racism that affected her case as a Native American and a single mother. The first trial took place during the 1973 government attack of Wounded Knee, S.D. The second trial occurred during a dispute over Indian fishing rights. The juries were all white and the racist tensions ran high in the court. Swan's defense of herself and her children from male violence is a threat to the sexual hierarchy which is maintained, in part, by the legal system of the U.S. Because our

society is dependent upon male domination over women, the legal system provides little help to the women who fight back.

While Swan is understandably bitter about her ordeal, she points to the victories in the case: the legal precedent, the fact that she spent only 3 days in jail, and has only one year left of her five year probation, after originally being charged with second degree murder and first degree assault. Now she turns her attention to others who are victims of the legal system, because they are women, or Indian, or poor and without the resources to fight back in court.

Among other cases, she mentioned Paula Three Stars, a 30 year old Oglala Sioux who will go on trial August 15 in Everett, WA. Paula is charged with first degree murder for killing her husband after suffering seven years of psychological and physical abuse from him. (For more information: Sharon Brown, PO Box 2752, Everett, WA 98203)

The Montana case she mentioned is that of David Madera, who is serving a 50 year sentence at Deer Lodge for robbing the Butte brothel, the Dumas Hotel. Madera contends he was not in Montana at the time.

Swan's message is clear: these people are victims of the legal system, as she was. However, Swan knows well that with a lot of help there can be victories. Her goal now is to find that help.



# INCEST:

**no longer a secret,  
but a community  
problem.**

by Sheila Smith

Ten years ago the women's movement brought to the public eye the problem of wife battering. Now feminists are working to expose the sexual abuse of children within the family. When women began to talk about their personal experiences as victims of sexual abuse, they recognized that this kind of victimization was not unique, but rather a common occurrence. Recently, we have begun to realize that at least one in three girls is the victim of sexual assault before she reaches the age of 18. Ninety percent of these assaults are perpetrated by someone who is not a stranger to the child. According to Judith Herman,

author of Father-Daughter Incest, the most common offenders are fathers and stepfathers.

The Montana Incest Prevention Coalition, now almost two years old, is a working coalition of feminists. Our goals include promoting community awareness and education regarding incest across Montana. From February through May, MIPC, with funds provided by the Montana Committee for the Humanities, sponsored panel discussions on incest in nine Montana communities (Hamilton, Great Falls, Kalispell, Libby, Butte, Billings, Livingston, Glasgow and Glendive). As MIPC's project director, I worked with three to five

people in each of the communities to organize a local program. Attendance at these programs ranged from 45 to 135 people--an excellent turnout of community members to discuss incest as a community problem.

The Panel members in each community were mostly local citizens, though some communities invited panelists from other towns in Montana. Each panel included an incest survivor, who shared her own experience as a victim and talked about the effect of incest on her life; a feminist, who analyzed incest as male violence against women; a humanist, who addressed issues surrounding privacy and public policy as related to the family; an attorney, who clarified the current legal system approach and its problems as regards incest; a local service provider (usually a Child Protection Worker from the County Welfare Dept.), who explained the process of investigation and intervention that follow a report of suspected or confirmed incest; and a mental health professional, who refuted common myths about incest, talked about consequences of victimization and treatment models for victims, offenders and their families.

Though there is not a universally agreed upon definition of incest, for the purposes of the panel discussions, incest was basically defined as sexual contact perpetrated against a child by an adult or older child who is not a stranger--who is usually a family member or close family friend. The sexual contact is not limited to intercourse. The incest perpetrator is nearly always male (97% when the victims are girls, 85-95% when the victims are boys).

Incest can best be explained as an abuse of power. It is an act committed by an adult that the child trusts. Because of



the trust, perpetrators rarely need to use physical force to have sexual contact with the child. In fact, physical force is too great a risk to the offender, who needs to be sure that the incest remains a secret in order that he can continue to have access to the child. He also threatens horrible consequences if she tells what is happening to her. This added burden of secrecy makes the child feel guilty and responsible for the incest. Often the fact that it is "secret" is what makes the child realize that the incest is wrong--especially if the child is very young, or has no information about sex.

Sexual assault is almost always committed by men against women. When male children are victims of sexual assault, they frequently identify with the aggressor and become abusers themselves. Girls, on the other hand, most often continue to be victims. Our cultural perception that sex is a male prerogative and a female duty results in sex being defined as an act a man "does" to a woman. A man may use sex as a way to prove his status as "head of the household".

Victims suffer the consequences of incest their whole lives. They may carry the secret for years, blaming themselves for what happened. They have low self-esteem, feel ashamed of their bodies, and have a difficult time trusting anyone. They may turn to drug or alcohol abuse, make suicide attempts, and continue to be victimized as a sexual object and/or a battered wife. The incest has

The findings, conclusions, etc., do not necessarily represent the views of either the Montana Committee for the Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

served as training for the role of woman in patriarchal society.

Many women do become survivors after years of victimization. They can gain control of their lives with support through therapy and from each other. They learn that the responsibility for the incest was not theirs, but the perpetrators'; that they were not singled out alone for sexual abuse, but that many women have the same experience; and that the abuse was not deserved, but that it was a violation of their trust in an adult who was supposed to care for them. These courageous women have begun to tell their stories in order to help other victims and survivors cope with the betrayal.

The socialization we undergo as children into separate roles and expectations for our lives as women and men can be seen as primarily responsible for male violence against women and children. The hierarchical structure of the family and society which places males at the top, and women and children under male domination, allows for such abuses of power. The assumption of the family as a sacred institution that ought to be free from outside scrutiny allows abuse to occur within the family with near impunity.

The most important thing we can do about incest is to work to prevent its occurrence. We can do this by creating the family and society as egalitarian structures where power differentials are equalized. We cannot teach our boys to be aggressive and girls to be submissive without creating a new generation of aggressors and victims. We can encourage and support children in the ownership of their bodies. They can be taught that no one has to touch them without their permission, that they can say "no"! We must also allow them to tell us if someone behaves toward them in a way that makes them uncomfortable, so that we can help the child protect herself/himself. For children to grow up as responsible adults, they must be able to take control of their own lives. Being free from violation of their bodies is the first step in that process.

The resources of the whole community need to be directed towards providing more skilled, comprehensive and coordinated services to victims, survivors and their families. Education of community members which helps create better awareness can initiate community action to provide closer evaluation and support of community agencies that deal with incest cases. It can gen-

continued on pg. 10

The Montana Incest Prevention Coalition is currently working on other projects. We are compiling a network directory of individuals and agencies in Montana who want to share resources and information on incest. We also sponsor workshops on starting incest survivors groups to interested communities, and developing other kinds of training related to prevention, intervention and treatment of incest. With Montana Committee for the Humanities funds, we have produced two videotape programs on incest which are available for rental. Send inquiries to MIPC, 315 S. 4th E., Missoula, MT 59801.

I want to support the activities of the MIPC.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail an application for the incest directory to me \_\_\_\_\_.

# Kaleidoscope Theatre

Kaleidoscope Theatre is an educational group which uses the medium of theatre to teach children and adults about child sexual assault and self-protection.

We, (Brooke Corr, Mary Manning, Judy Greenberg, Barbara Blomgren, Michael Larkin, and Betsy Brigham) founded Kaleidoscope Theatre in January, 1982, originally known as "Masque Theatre". We first presented our ideas at the statewide conference: "Incest, No Longer a Secret, But a Community Problem", held in Missoula, 1982. Since then, we have developed a curriculum on child sexual assault for school use. Several P.T.A.'s and other interested groups have viewed our ideas. We have also been a resource for other communities interested in developing sexual assault prevention programs of their own.



Last month, Kaleidoscope Theatre offered a 4-week program (held on consecutive Sundays) to sixteen Willard School children in grades three through five. The program was a great success: the children learned the information and enjoyed themselves. We were excited to see the program in action.

Since the beginning of Kaleidoscope, our focus has been prevention of child sexual assault. We believe the key to prevention lies in educating children about the nature of the problem, children's rights to their own bodies, and available resources in case of assault. This information then empowers children to make the decisions necessary to protect themselves. In asserting their rights, children can stop the cycle of abuse before it spirals through the next generation.

by Barbara Blomgren

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## *Incest Con't...*

erate interest in providing prevention education to children and adults. It will also aid victims and families in the process of healing by revealing the secret, and understanding the problem; thus banishing the taboo that has surrounded any discussion of incest and limited the possibility of support for victims and survivors.

For further reading:  
Conspiracy of Silence, Sandra Butler;  
Father-Daughter Incest, Judith Herman;  
The Best Kept Secret, Florence Rush  
No More Secrets: Protecting Your Child from Sexual Assault, Caren Adams & Jennifer Fay

(Impact Publishers, PO Box 1094, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406)



# Feminist forum

In the last issue of this newsletter we asked for help in producing Western Montana's women's radio show - Feminist Forum. As the new co-producer of the program, I'd like to renew the plea for volunteers and extend thanks to those who have done the work up until now.

We need women who can work on a regular basis as well as people who want to make a one-time contribution; those with experience and those who are starting out fresh. We can teach you what you need to know to take part. Our program is pre-recorded so we can take, and are seeking, volunteers from all parts of Western Montana.

There are many events and women in Montana that go unnoticed on our program only because we don't have anyone to go out and get their stories. Our central need is for interviewers who can attend rallies, concerts, and meetings to record women making herstory. We also need interviewers to meet one-

to-one with women and ask them about their work. We want you if you'd like to interview on a regular basis, once a week or once a month, or if you want to cover just one event or person that is of special interest to you.

Two features we'd like to include regularly on Feminist Forum, but lack the personnel to do it, are reviews of movies and books, and feminist commentary on issues important to women. Again, the frequency of such contributions would be up to those who volunteer. We also know there are many women artists out there whose works would add a lot to our program. We ask you poets, fiction writers, musicians, let us record your work to share with our listeners. We do regularly publicize events of interest to women, but we can only include those we hear about. Please contact us if you know of events that you either want announced or about which you want more in-depth coverage.

And finally, let us know if you have other ideas for things you'd like to hear on the show, so we can truly become a forum for Western Montana feminists. One of the hardest parts about working in recorded media is that we rarely learn what people think of our programs. Only you can correct that. F.F. can be reached through the WRC or by calling me at 543-5679.

F.F. has almost entirely a new staff now, most of us with no previous radio experience, so you can be sure newcomers are welcome. Co-producers are Donna Carter and myself. Barb Fermanis prepares the weekly newscast. Interviewer Susan Nose has worked with F.F. for several months and is our one continuing staffer.

We'd all like to thank the women who preceded us and who taught us how to make the show--producer and host Deb Danelson, newsperson Kim Kelly, and commentator Elaine Fnarson.

Let us hear from you.

by Dorothy Woods

# Health - Our own choice

## Alternatives in Health by Dorothy Woods

Though there are many varied models of health care, and several of these approaches are fairly accessible in Montana, most of us follow a surprisingly similar path in seeking good health. We live our daily lives without giving much thought to how what we're doing will affect our overall well-being. We often don't pay attention to the fact that ignored emotional stresses will soon show up as bodily distress, or that how we eat will be reflected in our ability to concentrate. In most cases this inattention results only in mild dis-ease of one sort or another, which we also generally try to ignore. But

when the imbalances are of greater proportion, most of us will seek "medical attention" for our diseases and injuries.

Alternatives imply choices. The first health care alternative I would recommend is one of attitude, rather than one of method or practitioner. The most important choice to be made is in how we view ourselves. If we define health as being free of disease or ailment, then we will often ignore the status of our well-being until obvious symptoms of illness are present or we have an accident. If we think of health as a state of balance between all aspects of ourselves- mind, body, emotions, and spirit- then we will probably be more sensitive to the subtle energies that make up our whole selves. And if we can come to experience well-being as a joyful, harmonious process within ourselves and in relation to the universe, then we are more likely to take a fully conscious role in continuously creating our health. Being healthy means, to me, that I have full access to all my powers,

that my strength is vital, and that I am at peace.

It is no accident, considering our male dominated social structure, that women are at the bottom of a very hierarchical health care system in our country. The vast majority of health care consumers and providers are women. Yet in both roles we are largely prevented from making important choices about the health care we accept or deliver. Under the traditional allopathic model we must seek out another, generally a male doctor, to tell us what is wrong and to give us access to the technology that can cure. A patient, by the way, means one who undergoes treatment, rather than the agent of change.

When we choose to see ourselves as the experts on our own health and then increase our knowledge by becoming more aware of our constantly changing states of well-being, we will have taken important steps toward being well. We will have begun a process that can lead to understanding of other alternatives, both preventive and remedial, which in turn will enable us to make informed choices about what kind of health care we want to actively participate in. These choices might range from how best to use an allopathic medical doctor, to yoga, naturopathy, acupuncture, homeopathy, biofeedback, meditation, and many, many more.

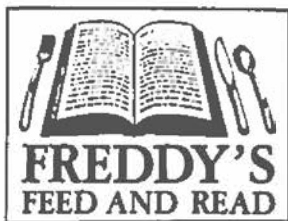
In future articles I will discuss some of the health care systems that are available in Western Montana and profile some of the practitioners I am familiar with. (Dorothy Woods is a counselor on leave of absence from Life Development Center in Missoula)

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# Women's Studies

University of Montana may soon have an Interdisciplinary Women's Studies option within the Liberal Arts Degree Program. Women's Studies, the analysis and understanding of the experience of women, is an important part of liberal education. Women's Studies is not simply courses that have something about women added on. It goes beyond adding women into existing categories; it asks what new categories must be created to understand women's experience. If women's experience has been left out of most traditional pursuits of knowledge (we now have extensive documentation that it has), we may need to develop whole new approaches and different sets of questions in order to describe and analyze women's reality.

For example, recent research (Gilligan, *In A Different Voice*, 1982) demonstrates that men and women develop a very different morality. They make hard choices based on a different set of questions. Women are concerned about relationships; men are concerned about personal independence. Their earlier theories on moral development came from research that used results only from male subjects. The results from female subjects were discarded because they differed significantly. The original

theorists did not try to explain these differences—they simply ignored the female and generalized from the male experience.

While there is no formal program on campus, Interdisciplinary Women's Studies has been available through courses and conferences offered by the WRC. Recently a proposal was submitted to the University Planning Council requesting funds for an Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Committee. The Committee, made up of faculty, student and community members, would be responsible for providing at least one interdisciplinary women's studies course per quarter and for promoting related research and student educational opportunities. Women's Studies and related courses would be listed as an upper division concentration within the Liberal Arts Degree Program.

The Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Proposal is now being considered by the Planning Council along with several other interdisciplinary proposals. The results should be known this spring. If you are interested in knowing more about the Interdisciplinary Women's Studies Committee or the proposal, contact Mary Birch, Social Work, or Judy Smith, WRC.

by Judy Smith

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*Charlotte Perkins Gilman* (continued)

remarried, Gilman was ostracized by her reading public.

Herland, a lost utopian novel, is an entertaining story which imagines a paradise without men. When three Americans stumble upon this land it is remarked, "This is a civilized country, there must be men." They are wrong, however, as Herland is a community of mothers and daughters which emphasizes humane social values. It is a difficult adjustment for both sexes and civilizations when they come in contact. In the end one of the women remarks "At first I thought of men just as males, a Herlander would, you know. Now I know that men are people too, just as much as women are."

Gilman preferred to be called a humanist and believed that a changing consciousness would produce a better world as a result of different and improved inhabitants.

Her books are relevant today because the problems addressed and the solutions proposed are as much with us now as they were then.

Believing the home was the primary location of inequality, she designed societies where housecleaning, cooking and laundry are social activities and the distinction between women's and men's work disappear. Gilman created models after which young women could develop a new way of life.



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## *A Landing*

by Bettina Escudero

The rock wall stood seven-hundred feet high overlooking the clear blue ocean. The white froth of the waves raced toward the beach reaching over the receding water. Our instructor called impatient assurances to me perched high on the wall, balanced on my stomach, arms extended straight out, ready for take-off. "Lift your legs; lift them up. Don't let them hang down like that!" he screamed, though I could barely hear him, a speck of a man on the white sand by the glimmering ocean. I felt I'd fall if I did what he told me. I wasn't ready. The person that had risen in flight before me was riding the currents of the air over the water, graceful as a seagull, gliding round and round far above me.

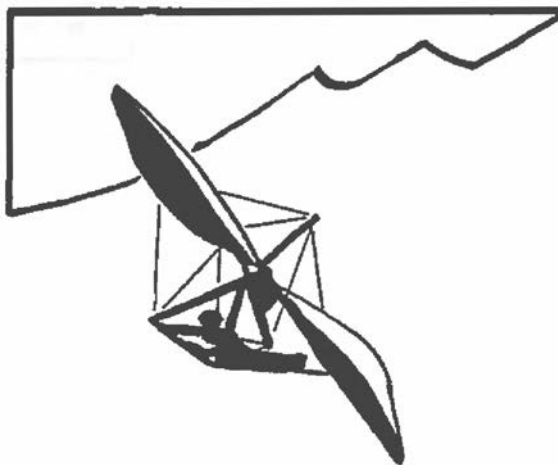
Remotely, again, I heard him call to me, more encouraging this time. "You can do it. Come on. Lift your legs and form the 'V'." I looked down. The wall was indeed very high. The grey and brown mottled rocks resembled the rock of the wide semi-circular steps that my father built leading to our swimming pool at the cotton farm where I grew up. Did I ever fall from them? I stood on those rock steps the first time I heard the great roar of a tractor, thinking it was the earth rattling, crumbling into itself. I strove to level myself on the wall, bring my legs up, lift my weight and in one springing movement, fly into the air. But my body, heavy as lead, didn't respond. Would I fall if I tried?

Balancing on that wall was like being on the tall, tall, lifesaver's high chair that stood on one side of the dark night, the lit universe everywhere around me in the dream I used to have over and over every time I was feverish as a little girl. My purpose then was to fly across all empty space to the other side of night, where I could alight on another tall, lifesaver's chair. In the middle of the flight across the empty night space, I'd begin to fall, down, down, down, into the dark black vastness, a vastness like eternity. Trembling and

perspiring, I'd wake up. I never made it to the other side. Always I'd wake up, falling.

Now, the man that would go after me wasn't balancing himself on his stomach anymore, nor his feet dangling on one side of the wall and his upper body on the other. He sat on the thin wall and I saw him carefully inch his way to the far end of it. He managed to stand and leap to the ground. Although it was a high jump, it was nothing compared to the drop to the smooth sand and the inexhaustible ocean on the other side.

Clamboring over the wall, I, too, managed to sit and make my way to the end of the wall. Below me the earth was rocky and steep down a canyon, but I saw exactly where, if my feet landed, I could avoid slipping and tumbling down, creating a landslide that would take me with it. I took a breath and swung myself down. My feet landed exactly on the two spots I had chosen for them. At last, I found a way down without falling. Now all I had to do was regain the direction that lead to the ocean.



Bettina Escudero is a Missoula peace-and-fun loving writer & activist. She is also a mother in dire need of a job.

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*"We said our purpose here  
Was to be complete with 'I want you'  
It's a woman's dream this autonomy  
Where the lines connect  
And the points stay free  
We said passion as an open sea  
Would only haunt you"*

## *Summer Schedule*

Two workshops are planned during the first summer session. They will be held consecutive weeks. June 29th, 1pm to 4pm Diane Sands is presenting "Incorporating Women's History in the Curriculum." July 6th, 1pm to 3pm Non-sexist Education will cover "Career Education" and "Non-sexist Classroom Materials."

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