

# water wheel

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual

## Editors' Perspective

Recession, war and budget battles shape the national scene. Murders continue unabated in our metropolitan area. In the office the new fax and copier whirl with messages and missives from around the world. We are growing steadily because the needs that we address— theology, ethics and ritual from a feminist/womanist liberation perspective—are useful tools for substantive social change in difficult days.

We're busy. A child dear to many of us, Shawn Sheffield, died of AIDS at age 5. WATER staff designed and led the wake and funeral. Women in ministry want stimulating support. WATER launched a monthly breakfast meeting for their networking and continuing education. A Dignity chapter wants alternatives to mass. WATER staff provided resources. German groups want to discuss women-church. WATER staff lectured and led workshops in five cities in Germany. The needs are endless as we add layers to our work.

We're privileged to welcome women with learning disabilities and psychological problems from the Life Experiences Activities Program (LEAP) for on the job training at WATER. They teach us that every person has talent and energy to contribute to social change. They work hard here and contribute mightily. What a thrill to see them go on to regular employment with their computer and office skills.

Some commentators are predicting gloom and doom for the 1990's. They may be right. But we prefer to think that as the social and ecclesial needs of people become increasingly obvious, more people will take up the challenge to "make all things new." We see it happening and urge readers to make it continue. Let us be peacemakers.



## Medals On Our Blouses? A Feminist Theological Look At Women In Combat

by Mary E. Hunt

The question of women in combat drew critical public attention during the invasion of Panama by the United States in late 1989. The current build up of troops in the Middle East raises the same issue. Once again women are the problem, not combat. The result is a no-win situation for women, damned to discrimination if they cannot fight and damned to combat if they can. This reality presents a dilemma for religious feminists who believe in the equality of women but reject combat as a solution to global conflict.

There are more than 225,000 women in the U.S. combined armed services, making up 11% of the total; estimates of their numbers in the Middle East indicate that they are probably about ten percent of the total there, some 20,000 of the admitted 200,000 U.S. troops currently dispatched to the region. Officially they are in non-combat roles, but the threat of chemical warfare and the rigor of the conditions in Saudi Arabia render that distinction dubious if not moot.

am left in a kind of feminist limbo, having to sanction, at least implicitly, something that I oppose in the name of affirming something that I support.

I embrace the notion of women in the military with all of the enthusiasm I reserve for women in the episcopacy, and perhaps a little less. While I understand that cosmetic changes alter the aesthetic, I am not persuaded that they finally change structures at all. Rather, I suspect that in certain instances, as in the case of women in hierarchical leadership in sacramental churches, such additions of women to the structures may serve to maintain rather than to dismantle those structures. The Catholic Church, like the military, is hierarchical by design, de facto and de jure excluding women from leadership and decision-making roles, and using outmoded reasons for doing so that mask the real issue, namely, whether this model of religion, like this model of military, is good for anyone, male or female.

My basic worry about women in combat is the

### *What begs analysis is whether this is a feminist achievement or a patriarchal ploy...*

That many women have and will see combat duty is a foregone conclusion. What begs analysis is whether this is a feminist achievement or a patriarchal ploy, or whether it shows how even feminism can be coopted to serve the ends of patriarchal power structures. On the one hand, I urge women's equality in and access to all avenues of society. On the other hand, I oppose combat almost without nuance. Thus I

liberal claim that equality demands it. I wonder if there aren't really places, the combat-ready military for one, where alleged equality is really the diminution of the human spirit, beginning with women's and including men's, hence reinforcing rather than shifting the power equation.

Many issues beg attention. Inevitably the point is raised about women's competence and

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ISSN 0898-6606

Vol. 3, No. 3, Fall 1990

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WATER is an educational center, a network of justice-seeking people that began in 1983 as a response to the need for serious theological, ethical and liturgical development for and by women. We work locally, nationally and internationally on programs, projects, publications, workshops, retreats and liturgical planning which have helped thousands of people to be part of an inclusive church.

WATERwheel is published quarterly by Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual. It is free to WATER donors. Address inquiries to the WATER office. Additional copies of this issue can be ordered for \$2 each. Include street address and daytime telephone number of the person ordering materials. Please send inquiries and comments to:

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## Medals ... (continued from page 1)

suitability for combat. In 1990 this sounds like a pitifully pedestrian concern about women's strength and spunk when evidence is plentiful that some women, as some men, are more than qualified for combat. Since modern warfare is based more on technology than brute strength, and since some women's physical strength surpasses some men's, this issue no longer commands sustained discussion except to point out how dated it is.

Politely speaking, combat does not require the highest mental, physical or spiritual capacity known to humanity. Just as some men are not physically and/or psychologically suited for combat, neither are some women. The point is that one qualified woman would be enough to justify inclusion of women in combat on the grounds of equal access, just as one Afro-American, one Hispanic and/or one Asian-American man was, in principle, sufficient to integrate the ranks.

Should women be in combat is asked often. The obvious question needs an equally obvious answer. Asking the question this way borders on the disingenuous, another effort at "war-speak" when plain English will do. It presumes that women are not in combat and that those who would protect women's virtue are asking for women's well being. The fact is that women are in combat already, virtue or no. It is time to reframe the question to reflect the reality.

unfair employment practices that are on the surface of the current controversy. Legislation of this sort is a first tactical step toward equal access to combat. Feminist politicians understandably deal with the immediate situation, in this case women who are being discriminated against on the job. Feminist law makers tend to leave aside the kinds of questions that I see as the essence of a feminist analysis, namely, should anyone go into combat. However, I cannot urge strongly enough the need for feminist ethics to take place within an activist framework so that such questions increasingly inform public debate.

Another issue that begs attention is whether war is really a male construct, something that women will imitate when given the chance but would probably not come up with on their own. I am increasingly leery of any back-to-nature brands of feminism that make earth mothers of all females, positing certain qualities of harmony and well being to women while saddling men with the blame for aggressive, bellicose behavior. I have met enough pacifist men and been involved in enough feminist battles to know the difference.

Still, at times in history when men have held sway, which would be most of recorded history, conflicts have been solved by fighting rather than developing consensus. Women, on the other hand, have been responsible for a range of anti-war efforts, prominent recent ones including the Jeannette Rankin Brigade during

## *Women, on the other hand, have been responsible for a range of anti-war efforts.*

Captain Linda Bray led her troops in Panama to a dog kennel where enemy troops were alleged to have been hiding. Gunfire was exchanged. This is combat by any definition. The question would be usefully reframed as "What does it mean that women are in combat?", this being the concern of those who stress strict equality, or "Should anyone be in combat?" or "How can we avoid combat?" These questions, virtually absent from public debate, are kept at bay by continually asking the wrong "should" question for which the answer, though devilish for the upper brass, is now an open secret.

Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colorado) proposed legislation to test combat roles for women (HR-3868 January 23, 1990) though it never saw the light of legislative day. It will be reintroduced in early 1991 as Congresswoman Schroeder and colleagues endeavor to resolve

the Vietnam War, the Greenham Common and Seneca Peace Encampments against nuclear weapons, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and other groups of relatives of disappeared persons in Latin America, the leaders of which are usually women.

The most persuasive case for women advancing in the military, something that combat hastens, is the practical case in terms of employment and future benefits. While it is true that combat is a sure route to decorations and promotions and for this reason women should have access, such arguments miss another point, namely, the erosion of military benefits at a time when those who sign up are disproportionately poor, people of color, and lacking in basic educational skills.

The G.I. Bill, long considered a ticket to higher education after military service, now requires that military personnel contribute

financially during the time served in order to be eligible afterwards. This is something many women who struggle to make ends meet on a military salary, especially if they have children, cannot afford and/or do not think they will ever use. Hence they lose out from the beginning due to inadequate counselling and the economic disadvantage with which they began their service. So much for an equal opportunity employer in an unequal society.

Sexual harassment is common. Abuse, even rapes, have been reported. The Committee on Women's Issues, including Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland), found recently that "There are structural impediments to assimilation of women" at Annapolis and that "Breakdown in civility and discipline contributes to sexual harassment at the academy." It is reported that "low-level sexual harassment can

for Peace and similar groups express a kind of patriotism that both women and men would do well to imitate. Rather, the gender-bound nature of patriotism, like every other gender-bound dimension of society, is kept under wraps until women cross the gender line as in the case of combat. Then it rears its ugly head, confusing those who do not perceive the message and punishing those who do.

This difficult scenario admits of no easy feminist solution. Involved are not only deeply held beliefs about the inferiority of women, but also economic, political and racial structures that guarantee that the impact of such beliefs will be felt most profoundly by young, poor women of color who will be the first female canon fodder when combat is officially opened to women, and the ones to suffer most economically if it is not.

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pass as normal operating procedure" among some students and faculty.

The Catch-22 for women in the military, and especially for women in combat, is that they must conform to a norm in which what is feminine is inferior. Recruits are taunted with the epithet "girls" if they do not perform properly. It is one thing for a young man to have stereotypically masculine traits ingrained into him, quite another for women. Women must choose between participating in the implicit degradation of all women by tolerating the abusive macho practices, or distinguish themselves as feminists, worse, be accused of being lesbians, because they maintain their integrity as women in a system in which being a woman under any circumstance is wrong. This dynamic leaves me pessimistic about rapid changes in military life even if women enter combat, and fearful that women who do will be victimized by enemies on both sides, including their would-be comrades. Who would want her daughter in such a situation?

Even patriotism is gender-linked in a patriarchal society. While for men the ultimate expression of loyalty to one's country is to serve honorably in the military, in combat if necessary, women are given a very different message. To serve in the military, other than as a nurse or in some other support position, is at best anomalous, at worst invading men's territory, in short unpatriotic. It never occurs to people that groups like Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike

I suggest three preliminary moves toward resolving the question from a feminist perspective. First, reframe the question, beginning with acknowledging that women are in combat and then asking whether anyone should be. How such questions are framed, indeed who frames the questions, determines the answers. Admittedly, this sounds idealistic in the face of a massive military build-up that has been supported by an overwhelming majority of the U.S. population. But it cannot be forgotten that religious opposition to the Vietnam War was a major factor in the U.S. withdrawal. Such opposition is articulated strategically not simply by disagreeing with policy but by restating the issues.

We can redirect the analysis to question whether anyone, male or female, is usefully dispatched to combat at a time when nuclear, chemical and even some conventional weapons virtually assure mass destruction. We are not talking about hand to hand combat with national security at risk due to women's lack of upper body strength.

A second feminist ethical move is to take the debate to where women are, to listen to their perceptions, and to theorize out of that base. This kind of grassroots, participatory ethical model avoids the pitfalls of dogmatic liberal feminism wherein mostly white women in no danger of combat make decisions for those who are faced with the choice. More important, it avoids the pitfalls of patriarchy by educating women to listen to one another instead of to the

conventional wisdom, especially in this kind of life-death situation.

Women's lives have always been considered expendable in a patriarchal society, so there is reason to think that once combat is open to women, it would serve the interests of society to fill the ranks with women. Such a sinister plot may seem more the stuff of a Margaret Atwood novel than of a civilized country, but the U.S. track record on abortion, for example, seems to indicate that women's well being is a low priority. As in the abortion case, I trust women to make responsible decisions as women have made throughout history. Opening combat to women and then coping with the massive numbers of women who conscientiously object would be a strong statement. Support for such a move will be garnered by inviting women to discuss these matters and then to strategize creatively on the basis of their discussions.

Finally, a third feminist move is to broaden the ethical umbrella to include men in the company of those who, in the name of equality, stress peace, justice and cooperation. This is perhaps the most promising strategy because it accomplishes two goals at once. It models equality by insisting that whatever solutions we hope to implement will have to include women and men working together (in sharp contrast to the military decisions about women in combat that are made by all-male combat-trained soldiers). It offers an alternative to the "equality at any price" liberalism that would tolerate women in combat in order to achieve that goal. It takes account of the reality of unequal power dynamics for women and men that assure that equality is impossible in patriarchy and that women will always pay disproportionately for their rights.

This strategy is also practical since it gives peace groups a concrete "both-and" goal. Both gender equality and peace can be pursued through creative educational programs, counselling for women and men about alternatives to military service that will result in job skills and express their patriotism. Children of both genders can see Mom and Dad resisting participation in a military machine that would happily take both of them. And even men and women in the military can consider their role in preventing future wars. Obviously this is a long term, perhaps unachievable goal, but it sets a trajectory for educational programs, lobbying, resistance efforts, tax withholding and other effective strategies that women and men can engage in together before it is too late.

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*Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., co-director of WATER, is a feminist liberation theologian and ethicist.*



## Background

*This is the season of peace. Every season calls us to be peacemakers. With the threat of war around the corner once again, we need to gather together in every way we know how to do so to shout "No! No More War! Never Again! We will only work for peace!" As we send and receive holiday greetings, let us challenge one another to talk and walk that peace may be possible again.*

*This liturgy was celebrated with our women-church base community during the harvest season. Unfortunately, this liturgy can be adapted to any season until war ceases. Use it for small groups, large congregations, international gatherings or personal reflection.*

## Preparation

Gather seasonal symbols, a basket of bread, a glass of wine and a glass of juice for the altar. Have for each person a copy of the graphic of the flower with petals saying peace, justice, and the integrity of creation in a variety of languages. Give each person a "people's page" which contains the words of the songs and the graphic of the flower. Invite the same seven people to be blessers for the gathering prayer, the blessing of the bread, and the blessing of the fruit of the vine.

## Introduction

Welcome. Let us begin our celebration by sharing our name and a word or phrase that we think of when we hear the words "war" or "peace."

## Call to Celebration by Mary E. Hunt

Our theme, war and peace, preoccupies our minds and hearts this season. With the impending, escalating war in the Gulf, it is clear that the U.S. has not learned the lessons of Vietnam. Mainline church leaders have spoken up against war in the Gulf. Now it is our turn as women-church to express our serious concern not over oil and boundaries, emirs and Islamic fundamentalism, but over war.

It is easy to feel powerless—there is little I can do. Or to feel worn out by doing so much—didn't we at least prevent the worst of this from happening in Central America? But it is time,

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to focus on what we can do, indeed to pray together for peace at a bare minimum, lest we of women-church be like the churches in Germany during Hitler's time who did nothing.

So let us take a few moments to center ourselves for worship, reflecting in silence on the gift of peace that we need this season.

## Gathering Medley of Songs

"Peace Like a River" by Marsie Silvestro c 1983  
Moonsong Productions from *Circling Free* and  
"Down by the Riverside"

(refrain) Peace...flowing like a river,  
Acting like a giver...Come bring us,  
Come give us...new life.

We your sisters of the earth,  
we join empowering new birth.  
We know your song is left undone,  
Until all drop their weapons  
and put away the guns. (refrain)

I'm gonna lay down my sword and shield,  
down by the riverside (5x)  
I'm gonna study war no more (6x)  
For peace...is flowing like a river.

## Gathering Prayer by Diann Neu

*(Seven different people pray each sentence.)*

O Holy One of Peace, we gather with your people around the earth to harvest peace.

We gather with your people of the Middle East where Arab, Jewish and Christian people find peace an unattainable goal.

We gather with your people of Germany where unification is a small sign of hope.

We gather with your people of Central America where the beauty of the land is mixed with the blood of the martyrs.

We gather with your people of South Africa where violence and bloodshed continue.

We gather as your people of the United States feeling a deep responsibility to bring about peace starting in our own neighborhoods, especially in the nation's capital where murders continue unabated.

We gather with your people through the ages who have turned swords into plowshares that peace may be harvested.

**Song:** "Mountain Moving Women" by Sandi Moore c 1985 from *Her Wings Unfurled*

(refrain) We are mountain moving women  
called by justice to awake.  
In the Spirit's gentle pow'r  
and the strength of our love,  
the earth shall be remade.

# Harvesting

by Diann Neu

Feel the fear of nations without trust,  
building up a mountain of weapons.  
If together we shout "No!" we can pull that  
mountain down,  
and our earth shall be remade. (refrain)

**Reading 1:** A reading from *From Woman-Pain to Woman-Vision* by Anne McGrew Bennett, edited by Mary E. Hunt c 1989 Fortress Press.

We began with a question about Vietnam, How did it happen? How could it have happened? Our question now is, How can we keep it from happening again and again, now, in other parts of Asia, in the Caribbean, in South and Central America, in the Middle East, in Africa? How can we move our government away from policies of domination and war?

Intellectually we recognize the danger of another Vietnam because of what the Vietnam war has done to the fabric of our society, even though not a bomb or a drop of napalm fell on us and our land: our leaders are not trusted. Our very structure of politics is suspect.

Most Americans "know" what war, and the preparation for war, has done and is doing to us ...we must change our traditional belief that the United States must be "number one" and that we are a "special people" ...powerful religious and secular myths condition all of us in subtle, and not so subtle, ways... These are overwhelmingly military; the implication is clear: war and domination are the most important elements in our culture.

Most of our ideas, language, and symbols were formed, and continue to be formed, in a patriarchal culture with a hierarchy of dominance, exploitation, and oppression.

Let us, as we enter our third century, reject those religious and secular myths of ourselves as special people, heaven-sent to rule, "number one forever," and commit ourselves to the idea of a global community with policies of peace and justice for all people...

Anne Bennett spoke these words in 1976.

**Song:** Peace...flowing like a river...

**Reading 2:** A reading from "Our Stunning Harvest" by Ellen Bass from *Reweaving the Web of Life* ed. by Pam McAllister c 1982 New Society Publishers

**Introduction:** This poem should be copied and sent to all the government officials and the

# Peace

pentagon officials and the nuclear power plant officials. It should be memorized and droned by wise old women, acted out on street corners by troops of wandering minstrels, sung by choruses of chest-beating, angry, women-loving women.

I want to talk to the president.  
I want to go with other mothers  
and meet with the president.  
And I want mothers from Russia there.  
And the head of Russia.  
And Chinese mothers  
And the head of China  
and mothers from Saudi Arabia (Iraq,  
Kuwait) and Japan and South Africa  
and all the heads of state and the families  
of the heads of state  
and the children, all the children of the  
mothers.  
I want a meeting.

I want to ask the president, Is there nothing  
precious to you?

And when the president explains how it's the  
Russians, I want the Russian women to say  
We don't want war. I want all the women to  
scream We don't want war, we,  
the people, do not want war.

I want each head of state to tell his children  
what will happen  
if any country sends a thermonuclear bomb.

I want them to watch the faces of their  
children.  
I want them to watch their eyes pale  
the flecks of light fading,  
and when their children ask Why?  
I want them to point to the other  
heads of state  
and the others to point back  
and I want the mothers screaming...  
We can protect our children.

**Song Response:** We'll protect our children  
in every land, down by the riverside (3x)

## Reflection and Sharing:

How do you feel as the world is poised on the  
brink of war? What kind of changes are you  
willing to make to avoid war? What is the role  
of prayer / spirituality in this?

(At the close of the sharing) These times call  
us to make a commitment for peace and against  
war. This flower has the words justice, peace  
and the integrity of creation written on its  
petals in the language of our sisters and broth-

ers around the world. Take this piece of paper  
and write your commitment statement. We will  
use it at the closing of the liturgy. Let's share  
some moments of silence together to focus and  
write our commitments.

**Song:** "Mountain Moving Women" refrain

## Blessing of Bread by Diann Neu

(Each person who prayed the gathering prayer  
prays a sentence of blessing. Each blesser extends  
her hand, palm up, toward the bread as she prays.  
The first blesser holds the bread and prays:)

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, for you  
promise your people food for the journey,  
nourishment for the struggle.

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, for you  
sent your people manna as they wandered in  
the desert.

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, for you  
are the bread of life.

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, give us  
this day our daily bread, the bread of freedom  
from war, the bread of peace for all peoples.

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, for you  
taught our mothers to bake this bread. Fill us  
with the rising power of this bread.

Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace, for you  
keep us hungry for a world without war.

Let us extend our hands, palms up, and bless  
this bread. Blessed are you, Holy One of Peace,  
bless this bread with your gifts of peace.

**Song:** Peace...flowing like a river...

## Blessing Of Fruit of the Vine

by Diann Neu

(Each person who prayed the gathering and  
bread blessing prayers prays a sentence of bless-  
ing. Each blesser extends her hand, palm up,  
toward the drink as she prays. The first blesser  
holds the glass of wine and the glass of juice and  
prays:)

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest, for  
you invite us to come and drink deeply.

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest, for  
you beg us to drink this fruit of the vine in  
memory of all who have died for peace.

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest, for  
you help us to remember women's lives,  
women's blood, women who have been killed,  
martyred, raped and wounded at the time of  
war.

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest, for  
even though we drink, you keep us thirsty for  
peace.

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest,  
refresh us with a firm and daring spirit.

Blessed are you, Holy One of the Harvest, for  
you create the fruit of the vine and show us the  
way to liberation.

Let us extend our hands, palms up, and bless  
this fruit of the vine. Blessed are you, Holy One  
of the Harvest, bless this wine and juice with  
your gifts of peace.

**Song:** Peace...flowing like a river...

## Sharing the Eucharist

(The blessers pass the bread and drink around  
the circle.)

## Commitments for Peace

A liturgy like this one calls for action/com-  
mitment. Let us share with one another our  
commitments for peace so that we may be  
strengthened by our community and have new  
ideas about how we may work for peace.

## Greeting of Peace

Peace may seem such a long-term goal for us,  
yet, at this time we can commit ourselves to  
bringing peace to this place. Let us make peace  
with one another. Let us offer one another our  
warm embraces, our hugs, our commitment to  
live peacefully with one another. Let us offer a  
greeting of peace.

**Closing Song:** "Creation of Peace" by  
Carolyn McDade

## Sending Forth

Strengthened by this community, let us go  
forth to bring peace to the earth and her people.  
(The seven blessers send people forth by pro-  
claiming one of the following sentences.)

May peace be within us.

May peace be around us.

May peace be beside us.

May peace be between us.

May we walk peacefully with Mother Earth.

May peace fill our days and our nights.

May peace fill the earth. Amen. Blessed Be.

Let It Be So.

Diann Neu, M.Div., STM, co-directs WATER  
and is a feminist liberation liturgist.



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# WATER At Work (And Play)

## In the Office: We're Growing

Beth (Elizabeth Remington) Wheeler has joined WATER as an intern for 1990-91. She is a graduate of Colgate University where she majored in Religion and Women's Studies and studied with Mary E. Hunt. She recently spent a year at The Institute for International Cooperation and Development (IICD) where she traveled and studied in Central America. This strong background in feminist religious search as well as in Spanish make her a real plus on the WATER team. Naturally her special interest is "Women Crossing Worlds" and she hopes to help organize a spring WATER delegation to Argentina, Chile and Uruguay (the Southern Cone).

Lucy Tatman is a regular volunteer in the office. She is a recent MTS graduate of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary where she studied with Rosemary Radford Ruether. Currently a paralegal in Washington, Lucy looks forward to further graduate work where her strong writing skills and insights about metaphors in theology will be developed.

WATER delights in the contributions of both Beth and Lucy. Their energy and fresh ideas exemplify the contribution a new generation of women are adding to our movement.



## In Argentina: Sara's Networking

Sara Newbery, WATER's staff member in Argentina, files the following report on her activities:

. A seminar on feminist theology, a continuation of the WATER sponsored seminar, is underway with colleagues at Centro de Estudios Cristianos (the Christian Studies Center) colleagues in Buenos Aires;

. An Argentine women-church group is forming under the name "La Urdimbre de Aquehua," reflecting the influence of indigenous spirituality;

. Weekly leafletting in front of Congress on abortion law reform is gaining momentum;

. Sara's television and radio interviews bring feminist religious perspectives to mass audiences;

. The Fifth Encuentro of Latin American and Caribbean Feminists will be held in San Bernardo, Argentina in November 1990 with three thousand women expected to participate including some WATER staff.

It is exciting to see this work take shape and to cooperate with other feminist social change groups in making it happen. Adelante, Sara.

## Honoring Friends: A Book Party

Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey, long time justice workers in West Virginia and courageous signers of the famous 1984 *New York Times* ad on reproductive rights, were honored at a book party sponsored jointly in Washington, DC this fall by Catholics for a Free Choice and WATER.

Their book, *No Turning Back*, written with Jane O'Reilly, chronicles their lives as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. It is a lucid, moving and instructive story of how women's religious communities have changed since Vatican II. It is a case study in women's moral agency in a patriarchal society making a real difference.

Early rave reviews of the book and a nationwide promotional tour mean that Barbara and Pat continue their educational and organizing work with renewed vigor. Brava! Brava!

## Welcoming WINDS: A Collaborative Effort

The Women's International Network for Development and Democracy in El Salvador, WINDS, arrived on the justice scene in Washington this fall. WINDS, a collaborative effort of Co-Madres and Co-Fenasatras, is a project by and for Salvadoran women to develop and deepen participation of international women in working with their Salvadoran sisters for empowerment. They need technical and financial assistance, sisterhood and solidarity.

To welcome WINDS to Washington, D.C., WATER co-hosted a festive evening with Women's Ordination Conference, Center for Educational Design and the Carmelite Sisters of Charity.

Special guest America Sosa was honored for her triumph over the Immigration and Naturalization Service in a recent legal battle. Salvadoran food, community singing and the pre-

entation of a fan, appropriately, for WINDS' office made it a delightful time.

An October conference, "Buscando La Hembra (Searching for the Female)," introduced WINDS to the feminist global community. WATER provided office space, resources and staff skills in organizing the conference. Mary E. Hunt serves on the new WINDS Board of Directors; Diann Neu is on the Co-Madres board. Beth Wheeler was "on loan" from the WATER staff throughout the conference.

[Editors' note: WATER and WIND are here. Can FIRE and EARTH be far behind?]





Some of these titles will make good reading for study groups and discussion clubs.

Arenal, Electa and Stacey Schlau (translations by Amanda Powell). **UNTOLD SISTERS: HISPANIC NUNS IN THEIR OWN WORKS.** Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989 (439 pages, \$19.95).

This find is a collection of the writings of 16th to 18th century Hispanic nuns. Original Spanish texts (and English translations) and insightful commentaries provide material on women's lives never before accessible in one place. A must for contemporary religious communities who wish to understand their Hispanic foresters. A fascinating read by and about women who influenced patriarchal structures.

Bloomquist, Karen L. **THE DREAM BETRAYED: RELIGIOUS CHALLENGE OF THE WORKING CLASS.** Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990 (120 pages, \$9.95).

A sensitive and savvy treatment of how working class people live and worship in a country that lets individualism, victimization and privatization rule their lives. Churches are public places where change can be made. Karen Bloomquist shows how.

Bozarth, Alla, Julia Barkley and Terri Hawthorne. **STARS IN YOUR BONES: EMERGING SIGNPOSTS ON OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS.** St. Cloud, MN: North Star Press of St. Cloud, Inc., 1990 (100 pages, \$19.95).

Art, poetry and history are combined to bring three women's spiritual journeys to life and to provide a framework for readers to do the same with their efforts to live an integrated life.

Carter, Brenda, et al editors. **A DREAM COMPELS US: VOICES OF SALVADORAN WOMEN.** Boston: South End Press, 1989 (246 pages, \$10).

History and statistics come alive through the stories of women who struggle to survive in a war-torn country. The unheralded heroics of women and women's organizations unfold as a powerful testimony to a peace process that has scarcely begun.

Cashmore, Gwen and Joan Puls. **CLEARING THE WAY.** Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches Publications, 1990 (74 pages, \$5.75).

These women find much crossover in their respective searches for meaning and value. The model of spiritual partnering is interesting.

## Fall Resources

Dexter, Miriam Robbins. **WHENCE THE GODDESS: A SOURCE BOOK.** Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1990 (280 pages, \$18.95).

An excellent introduction to goddesses complete with photos, bibliography and ancient texts.

DuBois, Ellen Carol and Vicki L. Ruiz. **UNEQUAL SISTERS: A MULTI-CULTURAL READER IN U.S. WOMEN'S HISTORY.** New York: Routledge, 1990 (473 pages, \$18.95).

Finally, a history text that encompasses women of various racial/ethnic groups and retells the story of the U.S. accordingly.

Falbel, Rita, Irena Klepfisz, and Donna Nevel. **JEWISH WOMEN'S CALL FOR PEACE. A HANDBOOK FOR JEWISH WOMEN ON THE ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN CONFLICT.** Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, Pamphlet #3, 1990 (88 pages, \$4.95).

The intifada needs careful analysis from a feminist perspective. This valuable resource does just that, providing perspective, information and promise.

Ferraro, Barbara and Patricia Hussey with Jane O'Reilly. **NO TURNING BACK.** New York: Poseidon Press, 1990 (332 pages, \$19.95).

The page-turning story of two women of integrity who successfully challenged the Roman Catholic Church on reproductive rights. Their life stories as Catholic nuns show the growing contradictions of being self-identified women tied structurally to patriarchal authority.

Freedman, Marcia. **EXILE IN THE PROMISED LAND.** Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, 1990 (234 pages, \$8.95).

The fascinating story of an American feminist emigrant to Israel who becomes a member of the Knesset. However, the conflict between lesbian feminist consciousness and increasing militarism in Israel sent Marcia Freedman back to the U.S. though not necessarily home. The dilemma bears reflection.

Monaghan, Patricia. **THE BOOK OF GODDESSES AND HEROINES.** St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1990 (1981) (421 pages, \$17.95).

A comprehensive research tool for the study of female deities with photos and careful indexing.

Petchesky, Rosalind Pollack. **ABORTION AND WOMAN'S CHOICE: THE STATE, SEXUALITY AND REPRODUCTIVE**



**FREEDOM.** Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990 (1984) (403 pages, \$14.95).

This revised edition of Professor Petchesky's classic is well worth reading for a social scientific view upon which to make moral choices. It is a convincing case for choice, especially the updated version with a focus on the virulent problems for women of color.

Paludi, Michele and Gertrude A. Steuernagel. **FOUNDATIONS FOR A FEMINIST RESTRUCTURING OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.** Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 1990 (266 pages, \$24.95).

A multiplicity of approaches to the feminization of education will get the job done. This volume is a valuable start with insights that can be applied in many disciplines.

Rebera, Ranjini, editor. **WE CANNOT DREAM ALONE.** Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches Publications, 1990 (138 pages, \$14.90).

A look at women and development based on concrete projects that empower women and foster solidarity. Very practical for groups seeking to engage in "women crossing worlds."

Russell, Diana E.H. **LIVES OF COURAGE: WOMEN FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA.** New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989 (361 pages, \$22.95).

First person accounts of twenty-four South African women make gripping reading. Even if one does not want to know why prison is different for women, how children are brutalized and how sexism can permeate a union, these women make it compelling.

Stein, Diane. **ALL WOMEN ARE HEALERS.** Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1990 (272 pages, \$12.95).

Natural healing is something that women have favored for centuries. This comprehensive volume provides an introduction to the major strands: herbs, polarity, stones, crystals, homeopathy and much more. Regardless of one's prejudices for/against such methods, this is a useful overview.

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# Rewarding Fierce Tenderness

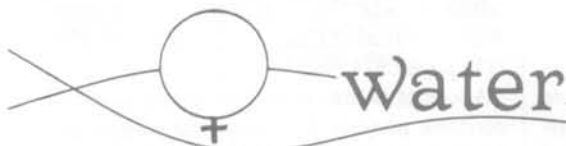
Mary E. Hunt, co-founder and co-director of WATER, has been awarded the 1990 Crossroad Women's Studies Prize for her new book Fierce Tenderness: A Feminist Theology of Friendship. In the words of the publisher, this is "a learned, sensitive, experience-based book on one of the most neglected of religious values--friendship. The Christian theological tradition has all but ignored this rich resource for living in 'right relation,' something that women have known for generations."

In naming Dr. Hunt's book winner of this year's prize, the Award Advisory Committee noted: "In this world our deepest commitments are subjected to criteria of safety... the author is concerned to create a theological world where all kinds of relationships are safer. When people choose to love in right relationship, paradigms of the holy emerge. These sprigs of holiness must be tenderly nourished and fiercely protected. Mary E. Hunt's work is about these tasks. It is a work worthy of honor."

The Crossroad Publishing Company will present the award to Mary at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in November in New Orleans. The publisher will host a reception honoring the author at that time. WATER is planning a reception in the Washington, DC area for early December.

*(Note: You can order Fierce Tenderness from WATER for \$23. It would be a fitting holiday or friendship gift for a friend.)*

**Congratulations, Mary, from all of your friends  
who love you fiercely and tenderly.**



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