



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



Editorial

Occasionally events come along in the life of an organization which define future directions and sum up past progress. This summer's "Shared Garden" was such an event for WATER.

The Garden, as the accompanying article, liturgy and other materials show, was a wonderful time, not only for the 35 participants, but for the many scores of people who accompanied us.

Donors made it possible. Friends and family at home carried the load while participants were in Washington. Local host families gave of themselves. Messages and flowers came from colleagues around the world. It was a rich time of exchange and mutual support, perhaps a taste of the mythical Garden whence we came! Thanks to all.

The challenge of such an experience is in what to do for an encore. We will continue with our now 15-year-old exchange, "Women Crossing Worlds," with women in Latin America which is why we could make the Garden happen. And we will be looking for new ways to connect with our sisters here and abroad, especially now in Brazil, where Ivone Gebara and company are thinking about holding a third Shared Garden.

Regardless of what comes next on this front, WATER is forever indebted to the many people who collaborated in this work. We renew our commitment to diverse, multi-language work for social justice and change. We invite you to join us in doing so.

How A Garden Grows

by Mary E. Hunt

From 14 different countries, 35 women and a child gathered in Washington, DC for a ten-day institute, "Shared Garden II," focused on "Moving Beyond Violence." Energy was high, cooperation amazing and learning intense. On reflection, none of us will be the same again.

The child sang songs in Spanish and Portuguese, watched her mother and colleagues discuss and celebrate, and invited many a participant to go outside and play with her regardless of how pressing the agenda. In that small way, we moved beyond violence. By creating strong links between people and countries, groups and organizations, we took a giant step forward. Such events that mark people in important ways do not come along every week, and this one had that special character.

Shared Garden II was a coalition project of WATER, Con-spirando in Santiago, Chile, and Pe No Chao in the Northeast of Brazil. Thanks to funding from the Ford Foundation and other generous agencies and individuals, we were able to gather a very diverse group of women from a range of religions, associations and occupations.

The first such Garden took place in Santiago on January 27-February 7 (cf. **WATER-wheel** Vol. 10, No. 1, 1997, p. 3 for details) with 50 women from ten countries. The idea emerged from the convergence of Chilean, Brazilian and USA women's commitment to pooling our vari-

colleagues joined us to share their expertise and to meet women colleagues who are ministers, therapists, theologians, artists, social workers and other professionals all working from feminist religious starting points.

We should have known something important was going to happen when a major electrical storm knocked out electricity at the opening reception. In retrospect, we realized **our power** was more than sufficient as we gathered by candlelight for the initial meeting.

Each day at the Garden began with coffee and an opening celebration, the introduction of the day's symbol (water, sun, webs, bodies, etc.). Plenary sessions gave us common input: our shared starting points; the increasingly globalized context in which we live; the ways women work for justice on the basis of beliefs, and believe on the basis of our justice work; our feminist theologies in the struggle against violence; political work (lobbying) to bring about justice; ecological and economic approaches to feminist work in religion; feminist spiritualities for social change.

Presentations were unfailingly dynamic: panels and teams, pairs and small groups. Input was kept relatively brief in order for discussion to ensue. Invariably time was too short! The richness of commitments and viewpoints was simply overwhelming. A high point was an after-

*Energy was high, cooperation amazing
and learning intense.*

ous strengths - body work, socio-political analysis, theological reflection, liturgy/ritual, strategizing for social change. We combined our networks to create a larger, more effective and at the same time more nurturing web of women who seek to eradicate violence and to replace it with structures and behaviors that favor collective well being.

After a successful event in Santiago, we embarked on the Washington Garden with the same team: Judy Ress and Josefina Hurtado from Chile; Ivone Gebara from Brazil; Mary Hunt and Diann Neu from the USA. Local Washington area

noon during which many participants offered their wisdom from popular to theological education, from denominational to Goddess religions, from counseling to painting.

Our meeting room gradually took on the character of the group. It was bursting with newsprint and musical instruments. The walls hugged us with artist Barbara Gerlach's portrayal of women and children in struggle. The celebrations spilled over to the garden outside, where we danced and grieved, gave thanks and offered comfort. It was the time of the Summer Solstice (continued on page 2)

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WATER is a feminist 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 doing programs, projects, publications, workshops, retreats, counseling and liturgical planning which have helped thousands of people to be a part of an inclusive church and society.

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If you or someone you know would like to receive **WATERwheel** on tape, we will be happy to arrange for audio transcription of the issue(s) you desire. Contact WATER, 301-589-2509. Cassettes will be made by Volunteers for the Visually Handicapped at a cost of \$10 per tape.

...Garden Grows

(continued from page 1)

so we celebrated, inviting local women to join us, in a moving, rollicking, deep expression of gratitude for the sun.

Gardens, when tended carefully like this one, grow and grow. One evening we invited the general public to a lecture by Ivone Gebara on "Brazilian Women's Movements and Feminist Theologies." She described her experiences of living and working with poor women in the Northeast of her country, and the impact of the recent Vatican censoring of her and her work. She left no doubt but that her ecofeminist work in theology goes on with more vigor, dignity and grace than ever.

NETWORK, the Catholic social justice lobby, lent staff to encourage us to get involved in the political give and take in our various countries. A group of "gardeners" met with Ying Lee, from the staff of Rep. Ron Dellums (a California Democrat) to discuss the legislative process and the impact of US legislation on other countries. Ironically, the meeting took place in a hearing room for the National Security Committee, a fact not lost on our progressive people! This move to legislative involvement was new for many of us, but made sense and challenged us to consider it for future action in each of our different countries.

Fun was a major agenda item for the Shared

This means building in ways to use various languages (in our case, Spanish, Portuguese and English with the help of Sally Hanlon, a brilliant and effective translator/animadora) so that the hegemony of English is broken.

Third, we learned that there are as many ways to set up a program as to hammer a nail, but that certain aspects must be included: personal sharing, body work, sound theoretical materials, concrete information, time to process same, celebration and the arts, music and food, and serious strategizing for specific actions. This we did successfully in our context, just as our Chilean sisters had done in their context, and both ways worked. Lots of other ways will work, too, with the emphases on different aspects as decided by local groups. But the variety of ways of working and the aspects mentioned are key raw materials for a prosperous Garden.

Fourth, we learned that women involved in social change and solidarity work rooted in religious commitment need feminist spiritual nourishment. Likewise, women involved in feminist ministry and spirituality need concrete experiences of social change work. The Garden was a chance "to bring it all together," not with the notion that any one can do it all, but that together we can do a great deal. It was remarkable to see women who are longtime justice-seekers discover and reconnect with their spirits via feminist approaches. Likewise, it was amazing to see ministers and theologians come to the realiza-

First, we learned that our work must be global.

Garden. We toured Washington by day and night, partied hardy and enjoyed countless museum visits, family outings with hosts, and long conversations over cold drinks in the legendary heat and humidity of Washington in the summer. It was the new friendships that carried the day, and the overcoming of stereotypes and prejudices about one another from our various countries.

What did we at WATER learn from this delightful, if at times exhausting, experience? Let me cite five major enlightenings for us and invite you to contact a participant for her view.

First, we learned that our work must be global. The world is simply too interconnected now - with Internet and air travel, CNN and fax machines - to do it any other way. If feminist theology does not keep pace we will render ourselves irrelevant, worse, we will be unable to bring our contribution of feminist faith-based commitment to love and justice to bear on a world sorely in need of it. The Garden which began as an exchange in the Americas now includes women from Europe and Australia among its alums. Immigration patterns, mission and exchange programs and the like simply bring us more together.

Second, to know one language is to know no language. We must make provisions in our work to include a range of people on their own terms.

tion that they could do more in the practical arena, bring their skills to bear on social change. It is a wonder more than the lights didn't go out!

Fifth, we learned that small organizations like Con-spirando, Pe No Chao and WATER can, together, create this kind of high quality, high energy and high visibility programming to the benefit of literally thousands of women around the world. I only wish we had space to publish the greetings and reflections that came in by e-mail and fax, the calls and notes we have received from participants since they have gone home, as they absorb and apply what happened in the Garden.

This project is testimony to the fact that gardens grow because people care for them, because the Divine gives them life, and because the plants themselves are meant to grow. Such was our experience. The Brazilian colleagues are considering the possibility of another Garden in Recife in 1998. Colleagues elsewhere are thinking of similar gatherings. May they flourish as this one flourished and continues to nourish through the winter ahead.

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



Brazilian Women's Movements and Feminist Theologies



Ivone Gebara, speaking at a public lecture during the Shared Garden, brought a special depth of understanding from her work with the people of Recife, Brazil. A theologian renowned for her eco-feminist views, Sister Gebara has only recently returned to Brazil from a Vatican-imposed "silence" in Belgium where she made good use of her exile by developing her ideas for global economic justice. Here is a shortened version of her remarks at the Garden.

by Ivone Gebara

Every one knows about poverty, about marginalization, but we do not know how to struggle concretely against it. There are a lot of good initiatives coming from marginalized people and from their allies.

My feminism and my theology try to be connected to the interest of this marginalized population, especially women and children. They are living without any social security, outside bank systems, trying to survive every day. It is a real miracle. Their lives inspire my theoretical and practical position and make me feel the huge contradiction in our society and also in myself.

My connection and solidarity to poor and marginalized people is in order to show the con-

means struggle for a changing of structures that exclude people from living with dignity.

To struggle in theology in a liberationist perspective as I did with others in the Institute of Theology of Recife led to the suspicion of the Vatican. In November 1989, the bishop of Recife closed the Institute obedient to the orders of the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church who were fearful of what they understood to be a communist position.

For me, becoming a feminist means to enter in a deep and concrete search for liberation. Liberation became a concrete concept, helping me to see the faces of those in need of liberation.

Different events led me to become feminist.

are worried about a lot of diseases coming from pollution and bad conditions of food and water. So, for women, ecological concerns are linked to daily life.

Becoming an ecologist means to enlarge my anthropological perspective and see the importance of taking care of the ecosystem or, in very simple terms, to integrate ecology to feminism in a liberationist perspective. This position led me to think concretely about different issues for women such as decriminalization and legalization of abortion; birth control; pleasure; sexual dignity of women. It led me also to de-construct and re-construct our thoughts about God and the traditional dogma of the Roman Catholic Church.

My feminism and my theology try to be connected to the interest of this marginalized population, especially women and children.

tradition of a religious system that wants to help them but in fact keeps them in a dependent system. I denounce that in my classes and writings.

Poor people are living the process that was decided without them and sometimes they live it as a kind of destiny. They feel that what they are living is not good, but they do not have tools of analysis in order to understand what they are living and why. Also the struggle for survival, in general, does not help the organization of a political struggle.

My question is not to stop development but to stop destructive development that puts a lot of people outside the benefits of humanity. And destroys their human roots and produces a lack of meaning and also great violence.

I like to say that I became a liberationist in the '70s, a feminist in the '80s and an ecologist in the '90s and I continue to be faithful to this trilogy or to this Trinitarian perspective. Maybe in the next decade I'll add something more and become faithful to the four cardinal points.

Since my childhood I have been very sensitive to the search for justice. To become a nun was part of this search. In this journey Liberation Theology gave me more elements to pinpoint what was present in my personal research. In the '70s and '80s when military dictatorships were strong, the need for liberation became central in our countries and theologies. Liberation was particularly understood as an economic, political and social liberation. Concretely that

Let me share with you some of them. With some colleagues I was responsible for leading an alternative formation to priesthood or simply for pastoral workers, men and women in different parts of the northeast of Brazil. One of these groups was in Cabo, a small city close to Recife. Every month I was there to study the Bible with some workers. The study was in the house of one of them. His wife didn't sit with us but stayed between the kitchen and the living-room so she could listen to our discussion and prepare tea or coffee for us. Every meeting I invited her to sit with us and always her response was "no thank you."

One day I decided to visit her alone. And in this situation she told me why she did not like to sit with us. She said: "I don't understand your language. I don't understand men's language." I replied: "What do you mean by men's language? I am a woman, I am there and I am speaking and I am leading the conversation." She answered: "But you, you are able to speak and understand men's language." Men's language was not only a different combination of words, but issues, perspectives, powers, ideologies which did not take into consideration women's domestic life.

My concern about ecology comes from my concern for women and children. Because of the patriarchal division of work, women are responsible for child care, nutrition and health care in daily life. In the poor neighborhoods women

Our traditional theology seems unable to listen to our cries and see our tears. The patriarchal God seems to be so distant and so almighty that we cannot feel free to open our hearts. Re-imagining Human Life, God, evil and salvation in a woman's perspective upsets the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church. Because of that, they invited me to study more theology, to leave for some time my narrow perspective and open my mind to the traditional thoughts of the Mother Church... In the present moment I don't know what those authorities are thinking about me. They are worried about the theology of my friend Father Tissa Ballasuraya from Sri Lanka. I hope they forget me.

Women in Latin America and in different parts of the world dare to dream and build new relationships. We are convinced that we have strength and grace and pleasure to keep this earth alive and be alive with her and all living beings. Because of this courage we are here planting seeds in our "Shared Garden" project in Washington DC, one of the hearts of a hierarchical and unjust world wide system. We believe that we can dream together and work together in order to change relationships between men and women, countries, religions. This is our new utopia when some post-modern thinkers are talking about the end of utopias. This is the utopia of women trying to build a web of love, justice and solidarity together. We are inviting all of you to be part of this web. Welcome!

These rituals were planned for and used at the Shared Garden Institutes in both Washington, DC and Santiago, Chile. May they give your community gatherings inspiration for planning the rituals you need.

* * *

Welcome to the Garden

Preparation

This ritual of welcome was celebrated in the midst of a reception in the WATER office. Tables of food and drink were prepared. Each participant had a glass of wine or juice when all were called to gather.

Call to Gather

(One plays the tambourine and gestures for participants to form a circle around the center table.)

Welcome

Welcome, Sisters from Chile...Brazil...Peru...Bolivia...Uruguay...Nicaragua...Honduras...El Salvador...Australia...Ireland...France...Germany...Zambia...and the United States: Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington State, New Jersey, California, New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina...

Any other countries or states not named? *(Pause)* We are women from 14 different countries, 11 different states, and the colony of the District of Columbia.

We represent 13 religious backgrounds: Catholic (struggling to stay Catholic, tentatively RC or small c catholic), Methodist, UCC, MCC, Mennonite, Southern Baptist, Seekers Church, Yoruba priest, Buddhist, Orixas (Afro-Brazilian religion), Uniting Church, Christian and interdenominational. Amazing!

We come from different cultures and lifestyles. We range in ages from 19 to 72: five in their 20's; eight in their 30's; nine in their 40's; seven in their 50's; five in their 60's; one in her 70's.

Let's say in as many languages as possible:
We are powerful and diverse women! *(Echo)*
Somos mujeres diversas y poderosas! *(Echo)*

Introducing Ourselves

So who are we here? What are our names? Let us introduce ourselves by saying, "I am... I come from... and I give you my hand in solidarity."

Circle of Solidarity

(When all hands are joined, one raises hers, all follow, then all come to the center of the circle and say:)

To ourselves, beautiful women, welcome!
(Repeat)

A nosotras mismas, mujeres creativas, bienvenidas! *(Repeat)*

To ourselves, women in solidarity, welcome!
(Repeat)

A nosotras mismas, mujeres del jardin compartido, bienvenidas! *(Repeat)*

Song/Round: "So Many Flowers" by Susan Kisslinger, Lingering Music, c 1990.

1. Each one comes with gifts to share.
2. So many flowers, no two are the same,
And each is a part of the garden here.

Toasting the Garden

(Each woman has a glass of wine or juice.)

The First Toast: We come here from so many places. Let us offer the first toast of the evening to the Pacha Mama, Sophia, the Holy One, however we name her. *(Toasting)*

The Second Toast: Let us dedicate the second toast to those who have made it possible for us to be here. I invite you to offer a greeting and a toast to the Shared Garden from your group. *(Toasting and greeting)*

The Third Toast: Women from around the world have sent us greetings: Herta Leistner, Ute Knie and friends in Gelnhausen, Germany; Adriana Atencio, Marta Bustos, Blanca Canndia in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Kitty Stafford in Edmonton, Canada; Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza in Berlin; Pamela Cobey in Boston; Carolyn Farrell, Gannon Center for Women and Leadership, in Chicago; Patricia Horsley, Christine Fensham, Coralie Ling and Gwen Benjamin in Australia; Rose Mary Meyer for the Women-Church Convergence and the BVM Women's Office; Christina Cathro and Veronica Dunne from the beach in New Zealand; Jacqueline Haessly on WATER's e-mail; Luz Maria Troncoso and Maria Guerrero in Talco, Chile; Cristina Grela in Montevideo, Uruguay, and many others. Let us raise this third glass to the worldwide women's community. *(Toasting)*

The Fourth Toast: To us! *(Toasting)*

Song/Round: "So Many Flowers"

Eating and Feasting

Shared Garden

by Diann L. Neu

* * *

Come to Our Garden

Preparation

Place in the center of a circle a pot of soil. Circle around it a bowl of soil, a garden rake, a pitcher of water, a bowl of seeds (we used edible flower seeds), and four statues of women water carriers from different cultures, or the equivalent. Put a variety of herbs, one for each participant, around the edge of the table.

Call to Gather

(One plays the tambourine to gather all around the altar table and says:)

Come to our garden. *(She gestures for all to stand in a circle.)* There is a time for everything and today, a beginning, let us plant a garden together.

Naming the Circle

Let's begin by creating a planting dance, a wave of blessing. Speak your name and share a gesture, then we will each repeat your name and the gesture rapidly around the circle. Example: Maria *(she rubs her hands together)*. *(Naming)*

Song: "We are the Daughters of the Earth," Traditional, from **Songs of the Earth** by Anna Kealoha, c 1989.

We are the daughters of the earth.
Born from the place where the sun comes up.
(2x)
(Refrain) She is calling to us.
Grandmother is calling to us.

We are the daughters of the sky
Born from the place where the eagles fly. *(2x)*

We are the daughters of the land
Born from the place where the tall corn stands.
(2x)

We are the daughters of the night.
Born from the place where the moon shines bright. *(2x)*

We are the daughters of the sea.
Born from the strength that will always be. *(2x)*

We are the daughters of peace.
Born from the love that will never cease. *(2x)*

Liturgies



Invocation of the Grandmothers

Let us call upon our Grandmothers, our foremothers, the Holy Spirit, Sophia-Wisdom, to bring ever-greening life to our garden and to Planet Earth. Let us receive the blessing of women gardeners around the world, and bless one another.

(Four women, facing the four directions, invoke the spirits.)

N: Blessed are you, Pacha Mama of the North, Creation of the Earth Cycle.

Bring ever-greening life to our garden and to Planet Earth.

(She puts soil into the garden)

E: Blessed are you, Amaterasu of the East, Winds of the Air Cycle.

Bring ever-greening life to our garden and to Planet Earth.

(She aerates the garden with a rake)

S: Blessed are you, Spirit of the South, Metabolism of the Fire Cycle.

Bring ever-greening life to our garden and to Planet Earth.

(She gestures for the sun to warm the garden)

W: Blessed are you, Wisdom of the West, Flow of the Water Cycle.

Bring ever-greening life to our garden and to Planet Earth.

(She pours water onto the garden)

Planting Seeds

Come! Let us gather around this earth as women gardening together. We have filled our garden with the gifts of the spirits of the West, South, North, and East.

Come! Let us bless this earth by planting

seeds. Take a seed, make a wish for these days together, aloud or in silence, and plant a seed.

(Planting seeds and making wishes)

Watering the Seeds

(One links her arms with those on either side of her and begins to sway the circle from side to side. When all are swaying in unison, she brings the swaying to a close, and makes falling rain gestures with her hands, inviting all to join her. She takes the pitcher of water from the altar and pours the water through her fingers. She returns to the circle.)

Blessing the Space

Let us make this place a safe place. Take some herbs and place them around the room so you will feel safe here. *(Placing herbs)*

Song and Dance: "O Great Spirit"

Feeling safer now, let us form an inner and an outer circle with partners facing each other and palms touching and mirroring. Let's close with a dance of blessing. *(Directions are for the inner circle; the outer circle follows using the opposite hand. The dance continues until the circle makes one rotation.)*

O, Great Spirit, *(left hand circles up, out and to center)*

Earth, Air, Fire, and Sea: *(right hand circles up, out and to center)*

You are around *(partners let go of hands and turn left to touch palms with a new partner)*

and all inside of me *(new partners, palms touching, bow to each other)*

Diann L. Neu, MDiv, STM, MSW, feminist liturgist and psychotherapist, is co-founder and co-director of WATER.

In the Garden

What weeps so deep within me
crucible bursting with tears
of starving babies.

I taste my own
salty leaven.

What is this cracking
aching for attention
a yearning not to be starved
an opening, waking up
incredulous

a theology that fits
a drivenness to something more
than work?

What is braking my heart
this time

something more than injustice rage
something that cannot bear to leave this place.

Could it be "plural love"

14 countries thick

and more.

Is that what weeps so deep within us, sisters,
more than the world's suffering?

Is it that "in love" love

fierce and tender
our sacrament
the community we are
to which we must bow before.

We don't have to dance down to that
communion rail

Ya, we're there
embracing circle of all that's real
stitching our souls tight.

Ya, we are food
for dying children, and a dying church if it
wants

Ya, we are food
for each other's inner screaming babies
Ya, we can kiss dry each other's tears,
and touch tender.

What weeps so deep within us, dear sisters,
too is water

the life-giving kind
the smitten in love kind of love
overflowing
flowing-over

to water our shared garden
the gardens we go to
the world we will build.

So when pain presses deep
and it's suffering you weep
drink in memory

of the faces
oh, the faces
our community
this sacrament which we are.

Let us bow before its beauty
and remember.

*birthed by many women
gathered in this form
by Jean Stoken
June 26, 1997*



The Mothers Fund

by Carol Scinto

As a child of the Depression era, I know how hard my mother had to work to "make ends meet." Use it up, wear it out, make it last and hand it on kept her children dressed, fed and in school during a bleak period. How she managed in her final years to save enough from her small pension to leave us each an inheritance I do not know, but her spirit lives on in this fund, my share of her estate, that enables WATER to help other women in some small way "make ends meet" around the world.

To date, the Fund has provided library resources to women's groups in the Philippines, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, England, New Zealand, Australia and any other place we can reach.

In addition, it has provided scholarship assistance to a promising student in Brazil and has helped Latin American women produce a video of Ivonne Gebara.

In the Gardeners' Own Words

Time in a garden invites contemplation. In answer to the question, "When you go home what will you tell a dear friend about the Garden?" participants offered a bouquet of responses:

* We are not alone! Hay mujeres por todo el mundo que sienten, piensan y escuchan como nosotras.

* The joy and work of bringing forth to the surface of my life questions of feminist theology and spirituality among such an incredible group of colleagues.

* I think and work often with feminist theology, but the context is usually opening others to it instead of the synergism of this group. I felt like I could set my "armor" aside.

* That no matter where we are in the world, I still feel part of the Latin American community, and also, to a much wider community.

* I will tell her I fell in love with life, with women and with passionate desire to preserve both.

* That it was a fantastic, wonderful experience with lots of rich connections and discussions and rituals.

* There is such a strength in women connecting from many different geographic places but from the same place of the heart.

* Tiene mucha fuerza para mi el saber que tantas mujeres de USA y otros lugares de "Primer mundo" estan trabajando en la misma cosa.

* Una riquisima experiencia de intercambio entre mujeres de distintos paises y edades, que realizan distintos tipos de trabajo y que tienen mucha fuerza y generosidad para llevar adelante sus proyectos.

* Le compartire las experiencias y la invitare a ser parte del jardin compartido.

* Esperanza de cambio de posibilidad, de crecimiento.

* WONDERFUL!!!

* The amazing experience of being with women from around the world. Also, the integration of activities to include the mind, body and spirit.

* Great! The kind of refresher and impetus I needed to move forward in new directions.

* How delightful, enriching and freeing it was! An impression of tender, joy-and-humor-filled strength in this women's community

* The power of women, in all of our diversity uniting - to move beyond violence, to heal with one another, to celebrate our power.

* I loved/love the women of our Garden, their eyes, their pain, their dance movements, their faces, their differences from me, and our shared sense of carrying sufferings of many.

Planting the Seeds: Garden Priorities

How do we grow a Shared Garden of plenty, with justice and safety for all? Here is the list of tasks drawn up by June participants to take with them as a daily reminder and inspiration. Add it to your own calendar. As every farmer knows, the work goes on year-round.

Concerning women: End sexual harassment and sexual violence; ensure basic rights, especially reproductive health; develop women-based spiritualities; stop women blaming women; pay attention to women's health, especially AIDS, cancer; empower poor women; help women build confidence and find their voices; incorporate bodily expression and empower bodily integrity; rethink gender roles to eliminate gender violence

Concerning the earth: reconnect with earth; rediscover our place as human beings in the entire earth community

Concerning economics and politics: work on economic justice; propose the cancellation of foreign debt; deal with the uprootedness caused by migration (especially in Latin America); accompany refugees, displaced people, immigrants; deal with economic/political powers so as to build democratic/participatory ways of working together; encourage upper and middle class people not to abandon cities; alleviate homelessness; bring about peace and disarmament: Vienna 1998 Human Rights Conference

Concerning cultural issues: celebrate and study other cultures; develop ways to share power; build multi-cultural, multi-racial communities; develop feminist conflict resolution skills; influence the media away from violence; accept diversity as part of solidarity

Concerning children: raise them in multi-cultural ways; make their well-being a priority; pass on to students tools for eliminating violence; create environments that heal violence; value all ages

Concerning anti-racism work: develop leadership training; cooperate on concrete strategies

Concerning lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered people: end discrimination based on sexuality; end homophobia, a form of violence

Concerning theological/religious issues: re-imagine God; integrate feminist theology with other disciplines; change violent church structures; develop non-violent theological content; eradicate religiously caused violence, especially against women and people who are poor

Concerning personal goals: challenge my community with regard to its own violence; express human suffering through art; clarify my call to justice work

Aldredge-Clanton, Jann. *PRAYING WITH CHRIST-SOPHIA*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1996 (144 pages, \$19.95).

Useful liturgies for inclusive communities, or groups that want to move in that direction but are not sure how.

Bons-Storm, Riet. *THE INCREDIBLE WOMAN: LISTENING TO WOMEN'S SILENCES IN PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996, (164 pages, \$16.95).

An intriguing case for hearing what is not said in order to empower those who have been schooled not to speak.

Cole, Ellen et al, eds. *WILDERNESS THERAPY FOR WOMEN: THE POWER OF ADVENTURE*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 1994 (262 pages, \$19.95).

New ideas abound here about the healing and challenging power of nature to invite women to greater awareness, confidence and skills.

Curran, Charles E., Margaret A. Farley and Richard A. McCormick. *FEMINIST ETHICS AND THE CATHOLIC MORAL TRADITION*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1996 (627 pages, \$29.95).

The title may strike some as an oxymoron, but the collection is unmistakable evidence of the fact that even Rome is affected by feminist work in religion.

ELCA Stop the Violence Project on Domestic Violence. *WOMEN HEALING AND EMPOWERING*, Participant and Facilitator Guides. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress (Item # V6-0000-6542-6) 1996 (2 volumes meant to be used together for maximum safety, \$30).

A careful, thoughtful approach to dealing with domestic violence. An "8-week Bible-focused support group resource for women seeking help and hope in dealing with past and present abusive relationships."

Ellison, Marvin M. *EROTIC JUSTICE: A LIBERATING ETHIC OF SEXUALITY*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996 (160 pages, \$17).

Pro-feminist men's voices are needed in the effort to remake society and make room for "erotic justice." This is a help.

Gross, Rita M. *FEMINISM AND RELIGION: AN INTRODUCTION*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996 (304 pages, \$16.95).

Rita Gross encourages feminist scholars to engage in comparative studies to clarify and strengthen their work in religion. A worthy suggestion.

Rapping, Elayne. *THE CULTURE OF RECOVERY: MAKING SENSE OF THE SELF-HELP*

Resources



MOVEMENT IN WOMEN'S LIVES. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996 (256 pages, \$24).

The same movements that save lives can also be responsible for disempowering by depoliticizing.

Finson, Shelley Davis and Gail Golding. *BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES: RELIGION AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE*. Contact Shelley at Atlantic School of Theology, 650 Fracklyn Street, Halifax, N.S. Canada B3H 3B5 (\$5, tax included).

A helpful resource on a difficult subject.

Isherwood, Lisa and Dorothea McEwan. *AN A TO Z OF FEMINIST THEOLOGY*, Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996 (266 pages, \$19.95).

A basic, competent collection of definitions which will help interested researchers get started.

Merchant, Carolyn. *EARTHCARE: WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT*. New York: Routledge, 1996 (280 pages, \$16.95).

A basic text in ecofeminist theory.

Moessner, Jeanne Stevenson. *THROUGH THE EYES OF WOMEN: INSIGHTS FOR PASTORAL CARE*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996 (333 pages, \$21).

The essays vary in quality, but the overall gestalt is helpful for students pondering how to provide the best pastoral care for women in patriarchal churches.

Parson, Susan Frank. *FEMINISM AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996 (279 pages, \$16.95).

Solid overview of the foundations for a renewed ethics.

Scmitt, Miriam and Linda Kulzer, editors. *MEDIEVAL WOMEN MONASTICS: WISDOM'S WELLSPRINGS*. Collegeville, MN: The Order of Saint Benedict, 1996 (284 pages, \$19.95).

Foresisters in faith have their stories told by contemporary Benedictine women scholars. A labor of love and respect.

Schottroff, Luise. *LYDIA'S IMPATIENT SISTER: A FEMINIST SOCIAL HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY*. Louisville, KY:

Westminster John Knox Press, 1995 (298 pages, \$19.95).

How women lived in the early church offers clues as to their treatment, agency and mutuality.

Sewell, Marilyn. *CLAIMING THE SPIRIT WITHIN: A SOURCEBOOK OF WOMEN'S POETRY*. Boston: Beacon, 1996 (337 pages, \$17.95).

Strong poems, like good medicine, work. These do...for worship, for enjoyment, for inspiration.

Wade-Gayles, Gloria, ed. *MY SOUL IS WITNESS: AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995 (370 pages, \$24).

Trustworthy women like Mary Helen Washington, Sonia Sanchez, Audre Lorde, bell hooks among many others make their mark in the spiritual traditions. A "must" for any religious person's reading. Equally powerful is the editor's new collection, *ROOTED AGAINST THE WIND: PERSONAL ESSAYS*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996 (216 pages, \$20). These include the unforgettable story of an attempted rape and how the author's students helped her beyond homophobia. A compelling collection.

Ware, Ann Patrick. *NAMING OUR TRUTH: STORIES OF LORETTO WOMEN*. Inverness, CA: Chardon Press (P.O. Box 864, 94737), 1995 (289 pages, \$14.50).

Loretto history comes alive through the stories of its members. These are women with a sense of themselves, together.

Winter, Miriam Therese. *SONGLINES: HYMNS, SONGS, ROUNDS AND REFRAINS FOR PRAYER AND PRAISE*. New York: Crossroad, 1996 (100 pages/ 100 songs, \$14.95).

Popular music and concepts for feminist liturgy and ritual.

World Council of Churches. *WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES: ARTICULATING THE LIBERATING POWER OF THE GOSPEL*. Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 1996 (64 pages, \$5.50).

Essays from the Beijing conference by seven women theologians from around the globe. An excellent publication for group discussion on the "state of the art" in Christian circles. Also from the WCC, *WE ARE THE ONES WE ARE WAITING FOR: WOMEN OF COLOR ORGANIZING FOR TRANSFORMATION*. Edited by Rinku Sen, 1995 (56 pages, \$8.95). P.O. Box 240, Durham, NC 27702. A challenging collection of stories that invite more stories. Women recognize, celebrate and pass on their proud history of organizing for a just life for all.

Reaping the Fruits

At the end of the Shared Garden participants named three action steps that they would each take to continue the work they had begun in this garden. One, a personal action; another, an action for the group that they represented; a third, for coalition building.

Personal Actions included:

- * learn Spanish
- * use feminist ritual to nurture myself weekly
- * try to listen more to my own body
- * continuar y profundizar la reflexión/acción sobre no violencia y teología feminista
- * go home and plant a garden, tend my backyard garden with mindfulness of this garden, and write about it
- * transmitir esta experiencia a mi grupo y a las mujeres en general
- * deepen solidarity with action with one group (either Homeless Women Movement, Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition, or Native American Task Force)
- * pursue readings in eco-feminist theologies
- * work more in women's groups
- * rethink my relationship to a more diverse faith community



- * crear un espacio en mi casa para conectarme con mi espiritualidad

Group Actions included:

- * reconnect with women in my area to talk about forming a young women's spirituality group
- * hacer una fiesta para compartir lo que vivimos aquí
- * challenge other Grail women to listen with their hearts to women - feminist and womanist perspectives - and challenge myself to write and theorize about these issues within our Afro-Latina perspective
- * generate a center, a magazine, funding...

- * use some of the rituals with my group
- * escribir a mis compañeras de 'Talitha Cumi,' enviarles materiales del encuentro con mis apreciaciones

Coalition Building

- * strengthen the efforts and initiatives of young women in search of different ways of maintaining their spirituality and commitment to social justice
- * mantener una red de comunicación
- * find a way for the Grail Young Womens' Network and the Young Feminist Network to work together
- * continue friendships with organizations represented here
- * mantener una conexión ritual con las participantes del jardín
- * make some connection with EATWOT and particularly the Circle of Concerned Women for Africa
- * create ties to Women-Church Convergence
- * identify issues for which solidarity / support is needed
- * intercambios y visitas entre participantes



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Inside

- Editorial, 1
- How A Garden Grows, 1
- Brazilian Women's Movements and Feminist Theologies, 3
- Shared Garden Liturgies, 4
- Welcome to the Garden, 4
- Come to Our Garden, 4
- In the Garden, 5
- In the Gardeners' Own Words, 6
- The Mothers Fund, 6
- Planting the Seeds: Garden Priorities, 6
- Resources, 7
- Reaping the Fruits, 8

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