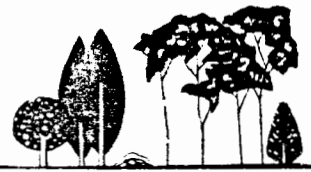


# ♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center  
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Telephone: (617) 354-8807  
TTY AND VOICE



**SUMMER 1985**

## WITH THE POWER OF EACH BREATH

The Women's Center and the Cambridge YWCA invite you to share in an evening of readings and discussion with Debra Connors, co-editor, and local contributors to WITH THE POWER OF EACH BREATH, A Disabled Women's Anthology, edited by Susan Browne, Debra Connors and Nanci Stern. This book, published by Cleis Press (June 1985) is the first to comprehensively document the lives of disabled women. It serves to bridge the gap separating disabled women from one another and from non-disabled women. Over 55 disabled women contributed poetry, fiction, biographical sketches, theoretical perspectives and a theatre piece dealing with common issues for disabled women.

Join us in the celebration of this publication on Tuesday, August 6, 8pm, at the Cambridge YWCA, 7 Temple St. (near Central Sq.). Donations are welcome. The building and restrooms are wheelchair accessible. ASL Interpreter will be provided. Please avoid scents/perfume, for some these are toxins.

## IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILDREN

The Women's Center is deeply concerned about the welfare of children: over the course of many years we have seen too many children pass through our doors who have been the victims of abuse. We have also had a certain amount of experience with a few of the many, many children who are homeless. It is based on these experiences that we urge the Department of Social Services to take measures to provide more children with safe foster homes.

To do this, the state must look beyond what are perceived as "normal" homes because we must add that most - if not all - of those abused children whom we have seen at the Women's Center have come from those so-called "normal" homes where they have been victims of rape, battering or incest at the hands of men who might have been considered the "pillars of society". It has become clear to us that the criteria of heterosexual and married are meaningless in measuring a home's safety and stability.

There are gay men and women, on the other hand, who are able and willing to offer good homes. The recent uproar over the placement of two small children in a gay home and their subsequent removal by the Department of Social Services was supposedly done in the best interest of the children. Isn't it in the best inter-

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est of those children to place them in any foster home that is safe, supportive and loving and with parents who want children in their lives? There are so many children who need good homes, and if the DSS were to exclude every home that is in any way different from the so-called norm, we would be left with very, very few homes, and many children alone and homeless.

We urge all those concerned with the welfare of children to make use of those resources the Lesbian and Gay community has to offer and to develop a policy that assesses gay families only by the same measure it assesses all potential foster families - by the measure of security and love they have to offer our children.



Photograph by John Tobin

Come visit us at 46 Pleasant St., at the intersection of Pleasant and River Streets near Central Sq., Cambridge. We have information on: upcoming events of interest to women in the Boston area and beyond, support groups for various issues, apartments to share, a library full of feminist literature and much more.

#### WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

MONDAY - THURSDAY	10AM - 10PM
FRIDAY	10AM - 5PM
SATURDAY	10AM - 1PM
SUNDAY	CLOSED

## DENMARK CAMPAIGN

An ad hoc group of social service workers is sponsoring an organized response to the recent Executive Office of Human Services policy statement which places gay and lesbian households "last on the list" of those being considered for foster care placements. In addition to denying children access to safe, loving foster homes, this change of policy has raised concern that further decisions based on bigotry and homophobia will occur, singling out gay and lesbian child care workers, parents, and teachers for officially sanctioned discrimination.

Groups and centers which serve children are endorsing a protest letter which pledges to protect gay and lesbian human service workers from identification and subsequent discrimination. If any effort is made to single out gays or lesbians, all members of the organization will claim to be gay men or lesbians. The letters of protest and solidarity will be presented as a group to Gov. Dukakis. So far, 45 groups throughout Massachusetts have joined the Denmark Campaign by putting the letter on their group's stationery, including shelters, child care programs, family violence crisis and counseling centers, and Y's. If you work in or live near a group serving children, or know of someone who does, you can help by lobbying the group to join the campaign. If you have any questions or would like to help, call the Women's Center at 354-8807 and leave a message for THE DENMARK CAMPAIGN.



## ONGOING GROUPS

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS WOMEN'S GROUP  
7:30 - 9 pm every Monday

COMING OUT GROUP  
7:30 - 9:30 pm every Tuesday

GENERAL SUPPORT GROUP  
8 - 10 pm every Tuesday

LESBIAN MOTHERS GROUP  
8 - 10 pm every other Wednesday

MENOPAUSE COLLECTIVE  
5:30 - 9 pm 2nd Wed. every month

INCEST RESOURCES  
7:30 - 9:30 pm 3rd Thurs. every month

LESBIAN LIBERATION  
8 - 10 pm every Thursday



## COMPUTER FOR THE CENTER

A computer committee has been formed to choose a personal computer for the Women's Center. We hope to use the computer to generate mailing lists, send out fundraising letters, organize our referral listings and library resources, and do accounting and bookkeeping. We hope to make a decision and a purchase soon, so that the workings of the Center can run more smoothly and better serve the Boston area women's community.

## INCEST RESOURCES

Open to Women with Incest Histories Only  
Third Thursday of each month 7:30 - 9:30

Sept. 19 -- Secrets  
Oct. 17 -- Growing Up  
Nov. 21 -- Parenting Ourselves  
Dec. 19 -- Power

For Crying Out Loud subscriptions:

Write The Women's Center, 4 issues/\$5  
(send less if you can't afford it).  
Published by the Survivors Newsletter  
Collective

## BBWN

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a two-year old organization that is run by its volunteer membership of over 300 women. It originated from a small support group in Cambridge that suddenly blossomed into a network by reaching out to local communities. A newsletter is published every other month and currently, more than 500 women are on the mailing list. Every other month, there is an introductory meeting at the Women's Center where women can learn more about BBWN and join a support group. On alternate months, there are general meetings, held usually at Somewhere Else. Come explore BBWN! There are support groups, a coordinating committee, social events, study groups, political organizing, and community projects. All women are welcome to attend events, join a group and receive the newsletter at no cost. For more information, call 731-1399 until Aug. 6, then call 497-9555.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The Women's Center is thirteen years old and we have begun the process of thinking about our future directions. Please help us determine what changes need to be made by filling out the Women's Center questionnaire. Feel free to answer any or all of the questions.

We thank you for your time!



## LIBRARY

The Women's Center Library is open to all women whenever the Center is open. Literature is available on a loan basis; however, many of the borrowed books have never been returned. We have been losing an average of 150 books a year! If you have library books that you have not returned, please bring them back so others can use them. We have a large collection of books, periodicals and pamphlets. The Archives of the Contemporary Boston Area Women's Movement is also housed at the Center and is available to be used by appointment.

The Library always appreciates donations of women's literature. They can be left at the Center for the Library Collective. We need more members! Please call 354-8807 and leave us a message.

## WHEELCHAIR LIFT

We hope to have a wheelchair lift installed and operating by September! We also will be moving and altering the first floor bathroom, replacing thresholds, and reorganizing parts of the first floor of the Center. We still need some help with this work. Call 354-8807 if you'd like to volunteer a little time. This project has been made possible by your generous donations. We will have a celebration when it's completed.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Open House at NOW  
August 7, 7:30 pm at Now  
office 99 Bishop Allen Dr.  
Cambridge

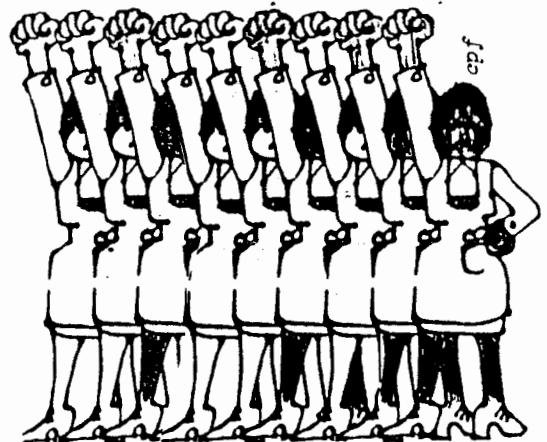
Womyn's CD action in  
protest of the use of  
nuclear weapons at Seneca  
Army Depot . August 9-10

Michigan Womyn's Musical  
Festival. August 8-11

New England Women's Musical  
Retreat. August 30-Sept 2  
Bethel, NY

A New England Conference  
on New Directions For the  
Peace Movement. October  
5-6 at Boston College

Mobilization for Survival  
is sponsoring "From Hiroshima  
to Star Wars" an educational  
program to commemorate the  
40th anniversary of Hiroshima  
and Nagasaki. August 7,  
7:30 pm at Arlington St. Church  
Boston



## SUPPORT SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

There will be a rally on Friday,  
August 9th, 12-1pm at the Deak-  
Perera Office, 160 Franklin St,  
downtown Boston, in celebration of  
South African Women's Day. This  
commemorates the day in 1956 when  
20,000 South African women demon-  
strated to oppose the pass book law.

## FEMINIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Wednesday night "Introductory Group" has been transformed into the "Feminist Discussion Group". More members are needed to get things rolling and to help facilitate. Meetings will be on Wednesdays from 7:30-9:30 pm, with such topics as "Women and Work", "What is Feminism", "New Reproductive Technologies", "PMS", "Body Images" and "Lonliness". We hope to start sometime in August. If you are interested in joining and/or have suggestions for topics, call Deb at 935-0611.

## OPEN HOUSE

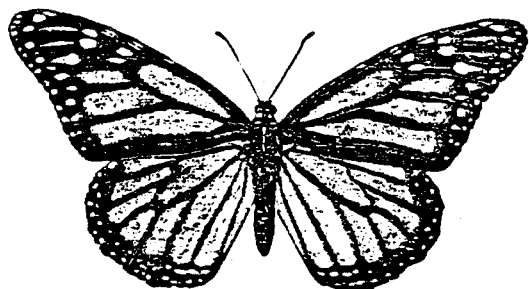
The Rape Crisis Center Outreach Committee will be sponsoring an Open House at the Women's Center for Cambridge neighbors on Saturday, September 21. Any women seeking more information can call 492-RAPE.

## GENERAL SUPPORT GROUP

The General Support Group meets weekly on Tuesdays, 8-10pm. It is open to any woman who is looking for a basic support group. Call 354-8807 for more info.

## LESBIAN LIBERATION

Lesbian Liberation has not been meeting during the summer, but will be restarting near the end of August. Announcements of the first meeting will appear in GCN and Bay Windows. Interested women can call 354-8807 for more information.



## LESBIANS CHOOSING CHILDREN NETWORK

We are a support and information network for lesbians interested in having children biologically, by adoption, foster parenting or co-parenting. We meet once a month, usually with a presentation and discussion on a specific topic. Several smaller support groups meet periodically including groups for women thinking about or in the process of adopting, single parenting and decision making. There is also a support group for women trying to get pregnant and a large and active group for women who are already parents.

Topics for the next several months include artificial insemination, adoption, co-parenting, single parenting, grandparents, pregnancy and childbirth and legal issues. We invite all interested lesbians to join us, whether you have just begun to think about these issues or have already taken concrete steps towards making your decisions a reality. For more information or to be put on our mailing list contact the Women's Center.

## FEMINIST CLUSTER

A new group meeting at the Center is the Feminist Cluster -- a collection of feminist and lesbian affinity groups and individuals affiliated with (but independent of) Pledge of Resistance. This group meets to plan and coordinate actions in the Boston area and beyond. The group welcomes all women interested in resistance actions, but meeting times are presently irregular. Call the Center for more information about planned meetings.



## WOMEN'S SCHOOL UPDATE

The Women's School held two community meetings during June, in an attempt to determine its focus and importance to the Boston area's women's community. Both meetings were attended by about 15 women. On July 10, 1985, a group of women from these two meetings met to further discuss the future of the Women's School. We are struggling with these issues:

- o The Women's School in the changing political climate.
- o How to determine the women's community needs and the Women's School's response to those needs.
- o The structure of the Women's School
- o Free classes or tuition?
- o The fall term?

This group of women plans to meet every other Wednesday, at the Women's Center to consider these issues and to recreate The Women's School.

## HIRING COMMITTEE

The Women's Center is looking for a new staff coordinator (deadline for letters of interest is August 5). A hiring committee has been meeting weekly to clarify the job responsibilities and to define the coordinator's relationship to others who work at the Center. We will soon begin the selection process. If you would like to be on the hiring committee, call 354-8807.

## MATCHING GRANTS

### YOUR DOLLAR IS DOUBLED

The Center has received \$9875 in grants from corporations and foundations which must be matched by individual donations from the general public. These funds will be used for operating expenses, paid staff, and house renovation projects. The Center needs your help to match these and future grants. Any amount will help. Please make checks payable to "Women's Educational Center, Inc."

## BATTERED WOMEN'S DIRECTORY

The 9th edition of the Battered Women's Directory will be available the second week of August. It's been completely updated and new information has been added. The Directory has served the battered women's movement for 10 years as an indispensable tool in providing information and aid to millions of women suffering male violence. The 9th edition will be distributed from a new location. To order copies, send to:

Directory - Terry Mehlman  
Box E-94 Price: \$12.00  
Earlham College  
Richmond, IN 47374

## SUPPORT GROUP FOR BATTERED WOMEN

The support group offers help to women free of charge in an informal setting. Battered women can find new directions for their lives by sharing their concerns with others in the same situation and by exploring new ways of dealing with this all too common problem.

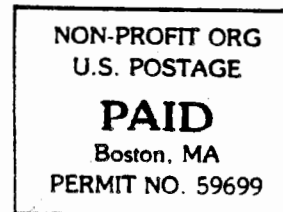
Groups meet twice weekly: Wednesday mornings 11:30, and Monday evenings, at 6:30. For further information call the Women's Center at 354-8807 or call 661-7203.

WOMEN'S CENTER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you ever been to the Women's Center?
2. If so, have you used:  the library  job resource book  housing resource book  
 other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you attended meetings at the Center? \_\_\_\_\_ (please list) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you used the Center to find a referral? \_\_\_\_\_  
What was it?  therapist  abortion clinic  women owned business  
 job counseling  events/meetings  
 other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Was the information useful? \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments (any details will be appreciated) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Have the Center's staffers been helpful? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are you physically challenged? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, does it affect you use of the Women's Center? \_\_\_\_\_ How so? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What are the strengths of the Women's Center? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What are the shortcomings of the Women's Center? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Would you like the Center to have: (Check as many as you want)  
 political discussions  childcare  
 more crisis counseling  more job counseling  
 more Open Houses  more community coordination  
 more support groups (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 more social events (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 information about \_\_\_\_\_  
 workshops/courses on \_\_\_\_\_  
 sports teams (which) \_\_\_\_\_  
 more discussion groups (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
11. Would you be willing to help organize any of the above (including Other)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Would you like to be more involved with the Women's Center? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. What is your current involvement with the Women's Movement? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. What are some of the current problems of the Women's Movement? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. How can the Women's Center help to address these problems? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. How can the Women's Center make their questionnaire more fun (less painful)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Additional comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. If you would like to help us with any of the topics mentioned above, give us your phone number and we will contact you \_\_\_\_\_

THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.  
46 Pleasant Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139  
Phone: (617) 354-8807



Address Correction Requested