



March 1991 Lesbian Uprisings!

LU! Events

Wednesday, March 6 - Book group discusses Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak, edited by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea and Basima Qattan Bezirgan Meet at Gail's/Deb's, 1835 Clay #302 (buzzer #19) in SF. Please come, even if you haven't read the book. It will be an interesting discussion in light of recent events. Call 441-6238.

Tuesday, March 19 - Political group addresses the "butch-femme" issue and what that entails. Why is this now such a "hot" topic in the community? Find out at Laura's, 4060 18th Street (near Castro). 6:30 socializing; 7 pm meeting. 626-7821.

Wednesday, April 3 - Book group considers Carmen Monteflores' Singing Softly (Puerto Rican fiction). Meet at Laura's, 4060 18th Street (near Castro) at 7 pm. 626-7821.

Tuesday, April 16 - Political group examines "what's happening to the Lesbian community?" Why are we so fragmented? How can we meet other women with like values? What has become of social consciousness? Meet at Gail's/Deb's, 1835 Clay #302 (buzzer #19) in SF. Call 441-6238.

Also of Interest

Monday, March 4 - Support Ellenora Johnson on the day of her court martial for failing to board a plane to Saudi Arabia. Meet at 8 am at front gate of Presidio (Lombard & Lyon); trial will start at 9 am, Legal Building 222. Call 465-2241 or 821-6545.

Thursday March 7 - Orientation for new volunteers at the Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic. CMCC offers free/low cost alternative treatments such as chiropractic, acupuncture, homeopathy, therapeutic massage. 7:30 pm. 5349 College (near Broadway) in Oakland. 601-7660. Also on Sunday April 7 from 2-4 pm.

Thursday, March 7 - "Women and Spirituality, an Evening of Myth, Vision and Action" benefit for Donna Read's Film "Full Circle". Screening of "The Burning Times;" clips of "Goddess Remembered" (also by Read); panel discussion with Read, Z Budapest, Starhawk, Luisah Teish, Elinor Gadon and Charlene Spretnak. Wheeler Auditorium, 7 pm.

Tickets \$7-25 Mama Bears, Ancient Ways, Old Wives Tales.

Friday, March 8 - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - celebrate, demonstrate all day! Here's some of what's happening:

2-3 pm - KPFA (94.1) will air a program on women, violence and the war with an international perspective.

3:30 pm - Wail-In. Meet at corner of Market & Fremont (BART), wear costumes, makeup, black clothing, bring signs, drums, instruments. Join the IWD demo at 5 pm. Target downtown corporations such as Chevron, the Stock Exchange. "For women to mourn and publicly express our grief at the war in the Persian Gulf. To howl our outrage at violence against women, the violence of racism, the violence of poverty, attacks against Lesbians and gay men, and the destruction of the earth." Sponsored by Feminist Alliance for Peace. Info 626-7821.

5 pm - IWD demonstration meets at Justin Hermann Plaza. See flier enclosed. WAI - 995-4735.

8 pm - "Our Lives on the Line" women's voices for peace, justice and equality. An evening of information and discussion on the impact of the Persian Gulf war on the lives of women globally and locally and building the anti-war movement. Speakers Nagat El Sanabary, Leticia Pena, Azania Howse, Farcia DeToles, Carmen Vazquez mc. Women's Building. \$3-6. 431-1180.

Saturday, March 9 - "Sister Hold On." A collaboration of Jamaican dub, poetry/reggae and Afro-Caribbean dance with Lillian Allen and the Revolutionary Tea Party Band and Harambee Dance Ensemble. Calvin Simmons Theater, 10 Tenth Street (Lake Merritt BART) at 8 pm. Tickets \$8-14 at BASS, LaPena, Mama Bears.

Sunday, March 10 - Meditation Protest, prayer for peace and speakout for women with harp music channeled by TruthSayer, a local spiritual healer. A chance for women to focus our will and intention on the complete cessation of violence, death and destruction of women, children, animals, our environment and our earth. A chance to grieve the horrendous slaughter, the horrible losses of lives,

limb, homes, and community to the war which happen on a daily basis. Noe Valley Ministry, 23rd and Sanchez in SF. 3-5 pm. Free but donations welcome to cover expenses.

Thursday, March 14 - Feminist Alliance for Peace. Women, the war is not over. Organize for true peace at home. Meet at 7 pm at the Women's Building. Call Ann M. at 664-3240. Also meeting March 28, same time, at Radical Women's Hall, 523A Valencia in SF.

Thursday, March 14 - Friday, March 22 - Ano 'a Kakou! 5th Annual Wahine Gathering at Wood Valley Temple. [See January newsletter or call Arnell 707/586-0765 for details].

Saturday, March 16 - "Stop the Bombing of Iraq, Stop the War" nonviolent civil disobedience, direct action and legal protest at Concord Naval Weapons Station. Sponsored by Pledge of Resistance, LAGAI and others. Will include both a women's cluster and a gay cluster. Even though this war is over, a demo protesting US militarism will still take place. More info call 655-1177.

Saturday, March 16 - Women's History Poster and Essay Contest Awards Presentation, 11 am at Zephyr Theater, 25 Van Ness at Market. SF NOW presents awards to children in grades 1-8. Winning posters will be on display at the City Hall Rotunda from March 4 to March 15. 525-7273 for more info.

Saturday, March 16 - Dr. Helen Caldicott speaks on personal activism, environmental solutions and stopping war at Herbst Pavilion, Ft. Mason Center (Buchanan and Marina Blvd) in SF. Tickets \$10 from Ticketron or WAND. 647-5272.

Thursday, March 21 - Motherlode celebrates their tenth year and third album, "Heartline," with Judy Fjell. Freight and Salvage, 1111 Addison, Berkeley. Tickets \$8-9. 548-1761.

Friday, March 22 - Friday, March 29 - "Maria's Story," at the Roxie Theater (16th St between Guerrero and Valencia, SF). An award-winning documentary portrait of love and survival of an FMLN guerilla during the El Salvador civil war. Benefits for WAI, CISPES and Global Exchange. Call theater for times - 863-1087.

Saturday, March 23 - Bay Area Women's Philharmonic "California Dreamin'" with Mary Watkins, Deborah Schwartz on marimba. 8 pm. First Congregational Church, Post and Mason in SF. Also on Thursday, March 21 at Mills College in Oakland. \$17 at the door.

Saturday and Sunday, March 23-24 - A gathering of young Lesbian separatists and radical feminist Lesbian friends in our teens and twenties in Chicago. Details in January's newsletter. Write Waxing Crescent, 2825 North Laramie, #2N, Chicago, IL 60641 or call Claudia 312/736-4482

Monday, March 25 - Marlene in concert, presenting her master's thesis and releasing her album, "Feed the Fire," (cassettes will be on sale). New College, 777 Valencia at 8 pm. \$4-8 ss. Call 585-4610.

Friday and Saturday, March 29, 30 and Friday - Sunday, April 5, 6, 7 - "Pandora the Myth," created and performed by the Dance Brigade at Theater Artaud, 450 Florida in SF. Call 465-3686 for info and tickets.

Saturday, April 6 - Save the date for a proposed rally and united action against the war. More details next month.

Articles, Notes and Letters

Lesbian Uprisings! has no formal *subscription rates*. We don't cross you off our list if you don't or can't contribute regularly. However, as you know, it costs us to produce and send every month. So, if you appreciate being kept informed of events and wisdom of interest to women, we strongly urge you to send \$10 or more per year to keep us alive and growing in these times of particular peril to all women. Our address is LU! Calendar/Newsletter, PO Box 14772, SF CA 94114. You can also call Gail de Rita direct (441-6238 home; 777-0220 work). We are a sponsored project of the SF Women's Centers, so checks of more than \$25 can be made out to them for purposes of tax deduction. All other checks should be made out to Gail de Rita. No checks should be made to LU! -- we have no bank account in our name.

In addition, we definitely seek your letters, articles, poetry, questions and/or criticisms. We try to print at least a part of everything we receive, so route us what you want to share with other women (but

please keep it concise). We encourage debate, especially about controversial issues -- and just because we print an article or letter does not necessarily mean we all agree with its content.

Possible focus of **upcoming LU!** issues:

April -- Eastern European Women (and beyond).

May -- Incarcerated women

June -- Lesbian/Gay Pride Month and report back from National Lesbian Conference

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Save Sunday afternoon June 23 (week before SF Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade and Celebration which happens June 30) for our Second Annual, even better, **"Building Lesbian Community Action."** Watch for details here! Organizing will begin soon.

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We hope, by the end of March, to have opened an account for Lesbian Uprising! at **Community Thrift**, the gay-owned thrift store at 625 Valencia. Thereafter, if you take your donations (used clothing, furniture, you name it!) to them and so specify, they'll send us part of the proceeds of everything we send that they sell. This can add up to quite a bit over time.

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April 24-28 is the first ever **National Lesbian Conference**. To be held at the Atlanta Hilton and Radisson Hotels and the Civic Center. Next month's newsletter will have registration forms and other information (it would put this month's over the weight limit). Call them in Atlanta at 404-373-0000 to find out details for yourself.

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Art Against the War from March 1 through March 23. At Artists' Television Access, 992 Valencia (at 21st). Laura McCamy and other local artists will exhibit their works. Call 824-3890.

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Worldwide Women's Rights (PO Box 2651 Petaluma CA 94953; 707/829-6937) began meeting every other Sunday starting February 17, 1991 from 1-4 pm for

ten meetings. You'll listen to many women activists who, like yourself, have children, jobs, or school and lots of stress and still have found a way to make a difference in the world. And you'll learn by doing: to make effective leaflets, street theater, public speaking, community organizing, educating younger women, fundraising, working internationally, influencing legislatures and more. It doesn't matter if you've never done any of this before. That's the purpose of the forums, to give you the confidence and skills you need to fight back effectively. For more information call Worldwide Women's Rights.

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Sadly, **Old Wives Tales** must close the Zora Neale Hurston Room (just built a few years ago) next month because the cost is too great. Don't be alarmed; they are not closing the entire store, just the room next door to the original shop. Continue to matronize this wonderful resource in our community. They appreciate and need our support now more than ever.

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Update from **Oregon Woman's Land Trust**: At our last quarterly meeting, some of the decisions we made were to limit the number of pets on the land, not to give our mailing list and to have a gathering in summer of 1992. Any woman can be a member of the Trust, receive the newsletter (suggested donation \$3-10) and attend Land Trust meetings. The next meeting is March 2 at OWL Farm at noon. Or write PO Box 133, Days Creek, OR 97429. OWL Farm can still use your donations of warm blankets, small pots (no aluminum or teflon, please), cutting boards, and on a larger material plane, we really need a truck for hauling wood, rock, etc. Thanks from Kaseja for OWL.

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Have you heard about the **Bay Area Lesbian-Feminist Bar Association**? A minority bar association registered with the State Bar of California and providing Lesbian-feminist attorneys throughout the greater Bay Area with an avenue for networking and representing their interests within the State Bar. 1731 Holland Circle, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Call 933-0887.

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Feminist Alliance Formed (Ann Menasche) - Out of the senseless violence and destruction going on in the Persian Gulf, a new organization has been born (many individual feminists from diverse organizations such as Lesbian Uprising!, N.O.W. and Women Against Imperialism being the midwives). We're calling ourselves the Feminist Alliance for Peace (FAP).

After only three meetings (the largest involving over 50 women), we have begun to create a strong visible feminist presence in the peace movement. We're making connections between the US sponsored war against Iraq and the male violence and oppression women suffer everywhere -- from Saudi Arabia to the United States itself. We are challenging the masculinist concept that the greatness of a country is measured by the destructive power of its armaments, rather than the quality of life it offers its people. We know that women will pay for the war disproportionately, from the civilians killed in bombing raids in Baghdad and Basra, to the rape and sexual harassment and anti-Lesbian witchhunting that women experience in the US military, to the cuts in education, health care, housing, childcare and other social programs that women desperately need. We refuse to be silent!

We have ambitious plans: On International Women's Day, March 8, we are sponsoring a "wail-in" at Market and Fremont Streets, starting at 3:30 pm. At 5 pm, the wail-in will join WAI's Wall of Women Against the War at Justin Hermann Plaza. FAP will also be organizing a giant women's contingent complete with feminist banners and slogans at the national anti-war protest in San Francisco on April 6. Our next meetings are scheduled for March 14 and March 28 (see calendar above). All women are encouraged to join us! Call Ann at 664-3240.

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Disarmament activist, **Susan Rodriguez** is due to be sentenced on March 20 for her sledgehammer destruction of at least five computers at Physics International, a San Leandro nuclear weapons contractor for Livermore Labs and Star Wars. In addition, she damaged all the architectural blueprints for the building. This courageous and committed woman deserves our support. Her defense team

urges us to write to Judge Benjamin Travis (Dept. 17, Alameda County Superior Court, 1221 Oak Street, Oakland, 94612). Ask him to be lenient in sentencing, since she is not a violent person, and allow her to do community service rather than be sentenced to prison. Susan's actions and the continued postponement of sentencing have had a serious financial impact on her life. Not only is her defense fund broke but Susan herself is destitute, homeless and very much in need of our financial support. If you'd like to contribute to her personal expenses or defense or if you'd like more information, call 582-7011 or write c/o Susan B. Rodriguez Defense Fund, PO Box 57323, Hayward CA 94545.

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Berkeley Women in Black (Ruth Michaels) - Has been meeting every Friday from noon to 1 pm at Haste and Telegraph in Berkeley since November 1988. We know this corner well. We have been standing here dressed in black for a long time. This vigil was started by three women from New Jewish Agenda soon after a vigil started in Jerusalem. We have grown and expanded since.

We are heterogeneous in age. A few are close to 80 years old. One was a nurse in the Lincoln Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. On the other end of the spectrum are young college students. The majority are Jews and include some young Israelis; there are also women with Christian backgrounds and one young Palestinian. There is a sizeable Lesbian minority. All the women want an immediate stop to this insane war and an end to all occupations in the region. We also want an immediate end to the violation of human rights of Palestinians both in the occupied territories and in Israel itself. We are for a two-state solution: the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and recognition of Israel by its neighbors with guarantees as to Israel's security. Beyond that, our politics are as different as our backgrounds, and we support each other in the expression of our respective beliefs. Many of us share an aversion to becoming more "organized." We like the grassroots approach and prefer to share ideas informally over coffee rather than to have formal meetings. Women have grown to really care about each other and many friendships have developed. Most feel very connected, committed and loyal and will come to the

vigil if at all possible.

In Israel the vigil is a silent one. Being silent does not work for us. Many people that pass stop to talk. Some encourage us; others want to express opinions; some confront us. There is a lot of interaction and also a lot of networking among ourselves. Women give out fliers, some wear signs, others unfurl one of our banners. We have a table with the ever-present petitions, and we sell buttons and bumper stickers to keep financially afloat. We also now have a huge bulletin board propped against a lamp post with room for all kinds of information. A few weeks ago, some of us grouped together to wail and shout to express our grief and anger. We have continued this; it feels cathartic. How long will we have to stand vigil? How long til all this insanity stops?

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Maryland Women Who Killed or Assaulted to be Freed (February 20, 1991 San Francisco Chronicle) - Governor William Schaefer of Maryland commuted the prison sentences of 8 women who killed or assaulted abusive men. He said he was convinced the women acted in self defense. The women are serving sentences ranging from three years to life on convictions of battery, voluntary manslaughter or first-degree murder. This commuting (and last month's similar decision by Ohio Governor Richard Celeste) gives hope to battered women and ultimately may make stronger laws against domestic violence possible.

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Peace Brigade Meeting with Palestinian Women (Terri Massin) - The question of Palestinian independence and the 43 year old occupation by Israel has always been a divisive one in the women's/Lesbian communities. As a Jewish Lesbian feminist, active in the anti-imperialist movement for almost two decades, I was proud to be among 17 other feminists (over half of them Lesbian) on a recent women's peace brigade to meet with Palestinian women active in the intifada (three-year old uprising) as well with as Israeli women peace activists.

Unlike my first visit there in 1972, I left for the trip with no question in my mind as to the validity of the just Palestinian demand for an independent state. My understanding of the Palestinian women's role in

this struggle, however, was more superficial; and like many feminists, I had quite a few unanswered questions about the integration of feminism into the struggle for an independent homeland. The power of the women we met was astounding, and the Palestinian women's committees answered many of our questions with political clarity and without hesitation.

A week before we arrived in Jerusalem, a conference attended by almost 400 women came together to address these questions. This conference underlined the historic moment we ourselves witnessed: the national struggle and the fight for women's liberation must happen simultaneously, not in stages. With their actions and their words, women showed their determination to play an equal and often leading role on every level. Whether in daily confrontations with Israeli occupying soldiers at home or smuggling in food during curfews, Palestinian women are breaking through patriarchal traditional and religious barriers with dignity, confidence and the support of their families and companions.

The question of the "hijab" (headdress, veil, scarf) wove its way into many of our discussions and experiences, especially when we stayed in Gaza. The hijab represents the Islamic fundamentalist attempt to force women back into a more traditional role. Women, however, are outspoken in their refusal to be sacrificed, often citing the example of the Algerian women (when post-revolutionary women combatants found themselves veiled and back in the home). We saw the attempt, by religious fundamentalists to equate the veil with a strong spirit of nationalism, expressed in graffiti that said "veiled women are honored women." But a fierce battle against the subjugation of women is being waged by the women's committees whose commitment to both the liberation of women and Palestine will not be compromised.

For Palestinians, the call to establish an independent state alongside Israel, as posited in November, 1988 by the Palestine National Council, is a difficult yet acceptable solution to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. As feminists, our support for Palestinian women can't be seen in a vacuum. I encourage discussion and debate within the women's/Lesbian communities in order to deepen our understanding not only of women's oppression in all of the Middle East, but also of the history of Zionism, Palestinian resistance, and the US role in the region in addition to the

growth of anti-semitism and anti-Arab racism in our background.

If you'd like information about sponsoring a slide showing by our delegation, call Women Against Imperialism at 995-4735.

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Connections between Violence to Women and the Persian Gulf War (Laura McCamy) - The first thing we have to do is define what we mean by "peace." I do not define the state of peace as including: 2/3 of all women raped by men in their lifetimes, 1/3 by age 18; 7 out of 10 women beaten by the man they live with; a man raping a woman every three minutes in the US; a man beating a woman every 9 seconds in the US; beatings by men the leading reason for emergency room visits for women; 5,000 serial sex murderers (men who sexually torture and kill women) on the loose in the US. I think THIS is war. The Persian Gulf war caused an escalation in this domestic war. Male domination of both the right wing (i.e., mainstream) media (did you notice women reporters practically disappeared from the news when the war started?) and of the left-wing anti-war movement; attacks on abortion rights under cover of the media war-blitz; increased violence against women and people of color, particularly Arab-Americans.

Then there is the matter of the Persian Gulf war in itself. I am finding it hard to agree with all those clamoring to bring the troops home. Yes, it would be best if they came home immediately. But once the ground fighting begins, I don't think I want them back. War is a dehumanizing experience for the soldiers, and rape is SOP -- standard operating procedure. Already, the problem of sexual harassment of women soldiers is out of control. And, if we can use Vietnam as a suggestion of what might happen to Iraqi and Kuwaiti women once US troops move in on the ground, it's horrifying. Susan Brownmiller recounts appalling stories in Men, Women and Rape. Whole platoons would pick a village woman and gang rape her; the last man would shoot and kill her. The assumption that men at their malest -- when they are killing and being killed -- need to consume women as a commodity is one of the ugly by-products of war and something that is not left behind when they leave the front. Already, the US has admitted that some Air Force troops were watching pornography before flying bombing missions.

Airplanes become penile extenders, disseminating bombs (semen) on the enemy (woman). Thus, the connection between sex and violence that surrounds us in the media is further reinforced.

Note: the war may be over, but the US troops are still in Kuwait. If we ever hear stories about their "wildings" of Kuwaiti women and their torture of Iraqi troops, it won't be for some time, but believe that it is happening, even as you read this.

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More Thoughts on "The War" (Gail de Rita) - Although in the past several months, nearly everything that can be said about the Persian Gulf situation may have been said (and even though, since I wrote this, a cease fire has occurred), I want to focus for another moment on my feelings about this war. As a Lesbian, sure, but especially as a woman and as a Feminist. I feel very angry, furious in fact, for several reasons.

I'm angry because once again, this government is trying to divert my attention and energy from issues of importance to me and other women with its systematic violence and preoccupation with the death and destruction of our entire planet. The boys are playing their war games again. Testosterone levels are high all over the world. The patriarchy, which has been waging war for centuries, is doing it anew. (The striking and scary similarity and, if you will, continuity of this was brought home vividly to me at the film, Cyrano, set in 18th century France, where during the battle scenes I kept seeing Marines fighting a land war in Iraq.)

Every time men wage war, women all over the world are forced to stop work on building ourselves a new society based on cooperation and life-affirming values. We must take our attention (and all of our money!) from critical matters such as health care. For example, breast cancer will strike 175,900 women this year in the US and an estimated 45,000 women will die from it. More women die each year in the US from cancer than the total number of people that have died in the US since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. [statistics from Women's Cancer Resource Center] And yet, it is an "invisible" issue. I call this misogyny.

I am asking those flag-waving, yellow ribbon flaunting Americans what they'll do about all the direct casualties when soldiers return without limbs or so psychologically screwed up they're unable to function in society as a consequence of battlefield mentality. Who will be responsible for these women and men? The streets today are full of homeless Vietnam vets whose minds have been blown and bodies destroyed by the effects of waging an earlier war. Or if they return in a body bag, who cares for the families left behind? The same flag wavers right now are closing veterans' hospitals, mental health centers, and other important social services because there is "no money" to run them -- despite or because of the billions diverted to funding this New World Order. So, responsibility for the welfare of these maimed and wounded will undoubtedly fall on us individually as women.

Our energies are also diverted from improving conditions for women in the workplace. A woman still makes only 67 cents to the dollar a man makes. That figure has gone up only pennies in the last two to three decades. What about money for adequate childcare, money for education, money for the arts, money for environmental protection?

And, as if women haven't noticed in a big way, there is a war on women all over the world every day. Not just in Iraq or Saudi Arabia. Rape and other forms of sexual abuse are rampant worldwide. No woman is safe even to walk in her own neighborhood. Police protection from attackers is a joke. At least 80 percent of the casualties in war (and our ceaseless bombing of Iraq is no exception) are women and children! But, we're not important -- we're just "collateral damage." I call this misogyny, too.

What about those Lesbians (and gay men as well) who enlist in the military to get a college education, or because that's the only job available to them? To survive, they certainly must stay in the closet. They'll be sent to the Gulf to die "for their country," but when they return -- if they return -- they'll be dishonorably discharged. After all, Lesbians and gay men are morally unfit for combat. We cause just too many problems!

How can I pay my taxes with a clear conscience this year (or any year for that matter) when I know that at least 64 cents of every tax dollar goes to pay the

huge expense of war? (For instance, the \$141 million it costs just to feed the troops for a month would feed one million children for an entire year through the National School Lunch Program!) How dare they tell me it's illegal to withhold as much as possible to keep my money from fueling the war machine and from killing hundreds and thousands of innocent, children, women and men all over the world.

I also feel tremendous disgust with the way the media plays along with this "game." Covering up the truth and printing lies. When I read the newspapers, I can only agree wholeheartedly with Sonia Johnson who says it's not news. It's olds.

My idea of peace goes far beyond just ending this war against the people and environment of Iraq. As women, let's channel this righteous anger into building a "pro-peace" movement -- a movement of our own. Let's accept our individual responsibility to lead lives of resistance. Or to borrow from On Our Rag magazine, women "wreak havoc, pose a threat and incite to riot" against the patriarchy and all it stands for.

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My Life in Israel as an Arab (Ruth Michaels interviews B., a Palestinian woman in her thirties who lives in the East Bay) - I was born in an Arab village in the Galil in northern Israel. The village has grown, and now has about 5,000 inhabitants. You ask what my family's economic status is. I would describe it as "petty bourgeois." (laughs) I have one brother and two sisters. They live at home. My youngest sister is attending university. In the village there are both Moslems and Christians. My family is Christian. My father is a farmer; my mother a teacher. My father was also the mukhtar (equivalent of mayor) of the village. The Israeli authorities wanted him to help them get villagers to sell their land so they could annex it. He did not want to be a collaborator, so he stepped down from his post.

We did not have any electricity in the village until I was 12 or 13. We had no streets. We did have running water. The authorities would shut it off at times, and we would use the well. Until I was ten, we had no school house. We took care of our own schooling -- in rooms or outside under trees.

At one point, the authorities decided to build an elementary school and gave my father a lot of responsibility in that regard. They felt he was trustworthy. They gave a sum of money, but the rest had to be paid for by the villagers. Some of them defaulted on their payments, and my father sold part of his land (to an Arab) to make up for the money that was missing. From that time on, my mother had to work harder. She taught part-time in our village and part-time in a village nearby.

For high school, I was transported by bus. There were Moslem, Christian and Druze students, but no Jews. Teachers were Arabic. I then became a student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Fortunately, my parents had some money to pay for this. There are some scholarships available, but they are usually only for students who have served in the army and Arabs don't serve. Bank loans are privately arranged and very expensive. I started the university in the winter term and happened to be the only Arab female entering. They would not let me share a room with a Jewish student. The manager of the student housing said that Arabs and Jews should not be living together. I had not been prepared for this discrimination, and it was very upsetting. After a while, the student housing situation became so acute they had to give me a roommate. The same thing happened when I was a nursing student at housing associated with Hadassah Hospital. For a year I lived in a room by myself except during the summer when it was okay for foreign exchange students to share my room (laughs). It was nice to have a room of my own, but it sure did not feel good.

I then decided to change careers and started a professional school. Again, housing was a terrible problem. Things would go well until I had to give my name. Then they would say, "I have to ask the neighbors" or "someone has rented this already," and so on. One landlord said, "My mother lives in this house and she is more afraid of Arabs than of dogs. Don't tell anyone you are an Arab." I did not want to live like that. At one point I went to the Human Rights Organization and they wrote letters, but nothing much happened. Finally, a friend who had a Jewish landlord who didn't care helped me and I was able to live there.

I lived in Jerusalem for 15 years. Things became much more difficult after the war in Lebanon and the development of the intifada, and I experienced

more and more harassment. For the last four years, I lived in a house owned by a Jew that was in West Jerusalem, but it was on the boundary between west and east. Each time I went in and out of the house, my papers would be checked by the border patrol and I must be identified as an Arab. One time, there was a curfew in East Jerusalem but not in West Jerusalem. I was surrounded by six soldiers with drawn guns insisting that I observe the curfew, even though I lived in West Jerusalem. It was very scary. I again called the Human Rights Organization and they said things were pretty inflammatory right now. They said I should go and stay in my house and they would send the police to help me. I did, and after a day or so, the police came and freed me. Now I am here in this country. I sure don't like what is going on here, and I know you don't either. The problem is -- where to go?

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A Woman's View of the War (excerpted from Worldwide Women's Rights flier) - *International Violence Begins at Home*: Great demonstrations and debates are searching for peace. But war is sure to follow war until we deal directly with violence at home. Most US children do not grow up in a democratic environment. Instead, they, like most other children on earth, receive their most lasting understanding of the world in the authoritarian structure of the family. The father rules and the mother submits, serves, and works without pay. In 57% of US families, this system is enforced violently by men against women. Every year, millions of US children watch as the father uses his fists and weapons to enforce the limits of the mother's freedom. Before the children even enter school, exploitation of labor, servitude, and in most families, violence as a means to obtain it, is established in the child's mind as the basis for human relationships. The boy child learns that these powers are his to wield in the world. The girl child learns the terrible danger of ever expressing her will. We cannot eliminate violence from society until we do so in our own homes.

Male Domination Breeds War: The war in the Middle East and most all wars are a direct consequence of the combination of male domination and men's propensity to violence. Men are responsible for most all acts of human violence; men commit over 90% of all homicides and child sexual

abuse, 95% of acts of domestic violence, nearly 100% of all rapes and nearly all acts of terrorism and war. Clearly, urgent priorities of all peace efforts must be: (1) The struggle for women's rights at home and around the world; (2) The redistribution, in every sector of society, of the exclusive decision-making power now held by men; (3) The denunciation of all forms of boys' and men's violence; (4) An analysis and an agenda to deal with the many other connections between male dominance and war. It is also essential that the peace movement itself cease to be dominated by white males, especially by those who remain unwilling to deal with the racist and sexist taproots of war.

Women and Minorities Bear the Cost of War: The money for war is generated by exploiting the labor of women and people of color. In addition, we are being robbed of health care, prenatal care, family food programs, drug programs, education, and the innumerable community resources that have been diverted by white men to pay for destruction. But none of this compares to the wholesale and wrenching theft of children for war. People of color have been robbed of a disproportionate number of their children. And 100% of the kids at the front were carried and birthed by women. Most all received their nurturing and care from women.

There is No Defense for Sexual Apartheid: Sexual apartheid is as morally and politically repugnant as racial apartheid. A woman's right to speak publicly, to vote, to move freely in her community, to be sovereign in her body, to be educated, to live and work where she chooses is exacted by the same Human Rights Convention as men's rights. The denial of woman's human rights is not culturally justifiable under any circumstances. The US defense of sexual apartheid in Saudi Arabia is an outrage to all women. We understand that the purpose of repeated US alignment with such oppressive regimes is to force the people to submit to the US agenda and to suppress resistance without restraint.

* * *

Jennifer Rycenga requests our assistance: Please help me in this on-going project to document the language/propaganda/rhetoric/jingoism of war being waged by both sides in the Persian Gulf. Given the live coverage of this war, the increasing sophistication of media machines and manipulations, the control

fetishes of both sides in the conflict and the analytic talents of you, my precious friends, I think we can create a definitive list. Drop your additions to me by memo, postcard or letter at: Department of Religion, Pearsons Hall, Pomona College, Claremont CA 91711. Some examples at the moment: "hierarchy" people behind the soldiers behind their COs behind the presidents behind the (singular) male god; sports analogies; holiday analogies, such as Fourth of July, Disneyworld fireworks; weaponry/technology (theirs are "not controlled," "not coordinated," "sinister," "nasty," ours are "sophisticated," "beautiful," "clean").

* * *

Our Allies, the Slave Holders (by Germaine Greer, excerpted from New York Times, November 14, 1990) - Who are our new friends, the Kuwaitis, for whose national sovereignty we are prepared to die? Who is the beaming Emir, who was given a standing ovation at the United Nations despite the fact that since 1986 when he dissolved the Kuwaiti National Assembly, he has ruled by personal decree?

For one thing he is the kinsman of Sheika Faria el-Saban and Sheika Samiya who stole their servant's passport and her two gold teeth, kept her a prisoner in their Bayswater apartment for four years and gave her no bed but the floor outside the locked kitchen door and very little sleep in any case, very little food and no wages but daily whippings that have left her scarred for life. The High Court awarded the slave 300,000 pounds damages only last December, but who remembers?

The Home Office makes it easy for gulf Arabs to import slavery by issuing their servants visitors' visas and denying them the right to work for any other employer.... Foreign workers in the gulf have no rights and no representation. Their fate is in the hands of the employer and his family. Children are taught to discipline -- to insult, pinch, slap and pull the hair of -- servants who displease them. Many servants have to carry buzzers so they are on call at all hours. They can only eat what is left after their employers and guests have been fed.

Now and then, the Kuwait Times reported spectacular cases of servants thrown from rooftops, burned or blinded or battered to death; the systematic abuse they endured every day was unworthy of remark....

We are not proceeding with all flags flying to the rescue of 500,000 foreign workers or of the 350,000 Palestinians who found temporary refuge in Kuwait or even of the professionals who are admitted to Kuwait for the term of their working lives only to be unceremoniously kicked out at retirement age.

We are sending our finest to defend the 8.6 percent of the total Kuwaiti population of 3,000,000 or so who are allowed the rights of citizenship: namely the male descendants of males resident in Kuwait in 1920. We are risking a war that could poison the planet at the same time as it scuttles our precarious economy, to restore an idle and luxurious lifestyle that depends upon the daily humiliation and degradation of hundreds of thousands. And we are taking the slave owners' money for doing it....

Seven million Kurds did not become our friends when whole villages lay dead of Iraqi nerve gas. Though they pleaded for relief and assistance, nobody heard. Like the working women whose screams echoed among the Kuwait City high rises, the Kurds are poor, too poor to command so much as a frontier of their own. We do not make friends among such as they, no matter how cruelly our enemies oppress them.

* * *

A Jewish Woman's Perspective on the War (D'vora Tirschwell) - I remember being in our front yard when I was younger throwing a football around with my father (yes, baby dykedom began early for me). My mother, may she rest in peace, came outside looking very upset. She started talking to my father about how there was war again in Israel, and then my father being too startled to look upset. I didn't know what was going on since I had no concept of Israel other than bits of information I learned in Jewish schools. Mom saw that I was confused so she showed me Israel on the map. I can still remember my surprise that it was so small -- I had a sense from all who spoke of Israel that it would be as large as Texas, where I grew up. Mom told me that none of the surrounding countries wanted Israel there and that was why they were going to war. I asked her a lot of questions about why Israel was important to Jews, and she talked about Jewish persecution in a way that perplexed me yet didn't make me hate the gentile world.

Over the years I have added to the understanding of Israel, being Jewish, and the gentile world my mother gave to me. I, like many young, progressive Jews have gone through periods of self-doubt at best, self-hatred at worst. No period has been more challenging than my intense questioning and ultimate (re-) embracing of Zionism [the idea that a Jewish homeland is necessary] which, in itself, would require another article.

I was in school when I heard that "we" (more correctly the US phallocracy) attacked Iraq. My first thought was, has Israel been attacked, since I knew that Hussein would live up to his promise to drag Israel into any US-Iraqi conflict. I watched on my television as missile after missile hit Israel. I remain extremely angry at the US government for starting this war, not only because of my general opposition to war and intense distrust of the government's motives, but mainly because the US placed Israel in such incredible jeopardy. When I say "Israel," I am talking not only about the nation (that I believe will prove in time to be the only true refuge for Jews) but also about my family members and friends who live in Israel.

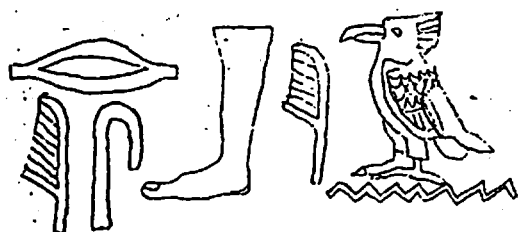
I knew before the anti-war demonstrations that there would be a great deal of anti-semitism expressed both in the form of anti-Israel remarks and the reemergence of "Jewish conspiracy" theories. I was disturbed by support of the idea of "linkage" of Israeli-Palestinian issues with the resolution of the war. For years, "progressives" have approached this issue with incredible historical ignorance and simplemindedness. I was not surprised to hear from my friends and the Jewish press of anti-semitic incidents since I have for several years monitored such things among progressive movements.

Most heartening for me has been the awakening of many progressive Jews to the anti-semitism on the left, and their struggles to clarify their positions as supporters of Israel. There have been Jewish teach-ins, articles in the local press, gatherings of Jews, and so on. I think this process of clarification and coming together as Jews will result in a stronger "out" Jewish presence in progressive causes. At least I hope so. And, of course, towards a powerful Jewish Lesbian presence in SF.

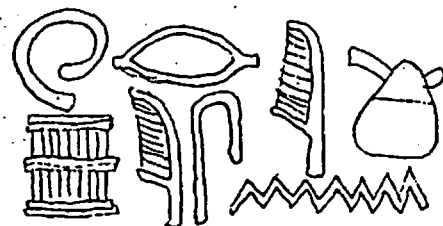
As for me, I never went to the peace demonstrations.

Not because I am not anti-war, but because I didn't want to deal with anti-semitism and anti-Israelism. I knew that if I were going to attend a rally or march, I would need to make a huge sign describing my positions, and I didn't want to march alone with my opinions. I know many of us felt ambivalent about making anti-war pronouncements, especially around the times that Israel was being attacked -- Israel was relying heavily on US defense and our country owed Israel a responsibility for adopting a policy of restraint.

I have much more to say about Israel and the Palestinians and will try to get another piece together for the newsletter. But if you are a Jewish Lesbian interested in discussing these issues, contact me for info about the Jewish Lesbian group I'm in.



EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS
SPELL LESBIAN
UPRISING!



* * *

Operation Desert Storm (Ann Menasche)

When the bombs
began falling
on Baghdad
the earth
trembled
and screamed
Like a woman struck once
too often
her mouth cut
and bleeding
Refusing to be silent
any longer.

And echoes of the screams
travelled on the winds
Cut through layers
of thick fog
To the heart
of San Francisco

Where the people stared
glassy-eyed
at their television sets
Listening to the voice
of their leader
painting pictures of
surgical
strikes
faceless
enemies

While the homeless wandered
from street corner
to street corner
carrying their bedrolls

When the bombs
began falling
on Baghdad
Some of us, numbly,
hung out flags
prayed silently
for the lives
of our own children

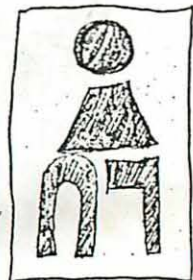
But soon, our children
began dreaming
the dreams
of Iraqi children
And no one
could sleep well
at night

When the bombs
began falling
on Baghdad

Some of us searched for shelter
Walking along ocean beach
among the seagulls
and pigeons
Sand littered with garbage
and the rotting
carcasses
of seals
the surf a strange
sudsy
brown
While others
poured into the streets
Transforming them
into rivers
of fire
and tears

When the bombs
began falling
on Baghdad
They fell onto
our own schools
our own hospitals
our own homes
And there was no peace
anywhere.

Thanks to Laura
Hackney for the
graphics!



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