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100 Feminist Bookstores to Celebrate FEMINIST BOOKSTORE WEEK

—North America—

MAY 11 - 19, 1996

April 4, 1996

Dear Editor/Producer,

Feminist Bookstore Week — North America (FBW) celebrates the accomplishments and successes of feminist bookstores locally and throughout the U.S. and Canada. Feminist bookstores are lively and vital community resources that thrive because they provide essential services to their communities.

FBW draws attention to the importance of the work that feminist bookstores do both locally and as a part of an effective and successful international movement, to create an additional way to educate our communities and the publishing industry about the importance of feminist bookstores and their impact on what is (and isn't) published, and to celebrate 25 years of providing information services to individual women and the women's movement.

The event also supports feminist bookstores (and by extension other independent bookstores) in their insistence on survival as the super chains and discount bookstores fight to gain control of the bookselling industry. The centralization of control of the sales and distribution of books into the hands of three or four mega-conglomerates (who own the 16 largest chains) threatens freedom of the press and the free flow of ideas in our culture as surely as if the country had only three or four national newspapers with no local news or coverage.

Internationally known writers Alice Walker, Maxine Hong Kingston, Barbara Kingsolver, Ann Lamott, Adrienne Rich, Barbara Ehrenreich, Gloria Steinem, Dorothy Allison and many others have pledged their support to feminist and other independent bookstores (see attached) and will be participating in FBW activities across the country.

We're very excited about FBW and hope you will be able to cover FBW events or announce Feminist Bookstore Week to your readers and/or tell them how they can find their local feminist bookstore.

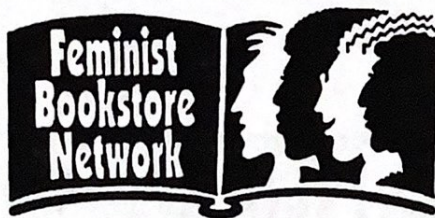
Sincerely,

CARD

Carol Seajay

National Coordinator

Feminist Bookstore Network



P.O. BOX 882554 SAN FRANCISCO CA 94188 PHONE: 415-626-1556 FAX: 415-626-8970

NEWS RELEASE

For additional information contact

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Best hours to reach: 9:30-5:00 PST

For Release After: April 15, 1996

April 4, 1996

100+ Feminist Bookstores to Celebrate Feminist Bookstore Week

—North America—

May 11-19, 1996

SAN FRANCISCO — Over a hundred feminist bookstores across the United States and Canada have joined together to celebrate Feminist Bookstore Week — North America (FBW) May 11-19, 1996. The event will draw attention to the contributions of feminist bookstores both in their local and national book communities.

Feminist Bookstore Week is sponsored by the Feminist Bookstores Network and grew out of a working session at the Feminist Bookstores Strategic Planning Conference in October, 1994. The goals of Feminist Bookstore Week are to draw attention to the importance of the work that feminist bookstores do

- to empower women to change their lives and to change the world by distributing books and other information
- to create women-centered space in every community
- to promote feminist books and publishing
- to educate our communities about feminist bookstores as local resources

— More —

- to educate our communities and remind the publishing industry about the importance of feminist bookstores and their impact on what books are published, a concern that is of particular importance as corporate chain bookstores have an ever-larger influence on which books are (and aren't) published and promoted, and
- to celebrate feminist bookstores' 25-year history as the information arm of the women's movement.

Feminist writers nationwide are calling for support for feminist bookstores. Over 100 feminist writers, from Dorothy Allison to Alice Walker, have signed the Feminist Writers Pledge to support feminist bookstores and to call on their readers to invest in freedom of expression and independent thinking by shopping in feminist and other independent bookstores.

The pledge reads, "As writers, feminists and political activists, we believe in the enormous power of words to inform, inspire and challenge. In order for our words to be read and heard, we must rely on publishers and bookstores to bring our work to the public.

"Independent feminist bookstores...have been supporting and distributing our books for many years. We count on them. Independent bookstores are now an endangered species because of the rise of corporate-owned chain bookstores that engage in predatory pricing and discount policies. The more corporate bookstores control the market, the less likely it will be that they and the publishing industry will take risks on new or controversial authors — and the more control the corporations will have over what we all read.

"Without independent and feminist bookstores and small presses some of us could be silenced and the next generation of authors with important ideas might never be found.

"As writers we pledge the following:

1. We will remain committed to supporting independent and feminist bookstores
2. We will seek out local feminist and independent bookstores in each city or town to do our *first* reading or booksigning
3. We will donate our time and talents to community events and campaigns that support independent and feminist bookstores.

"And we ask you, as readers, to do the same. Please shop at feminist and independent bookstores as often as you can. Think of it as an investment in freedom of expression and independent thinking. Thank you."

Although Feminist Bookstore Week — North America will focus on feminist bookstores and events in feminist bookstores, it is expected that FBW will strengthen other community-based and specialty bookstores by drawing attention to our collective role in the bookselling industry and the way in which feminist

— More —

and other specialty bookstores encourage more publishing in our interest areas by promoting books in our specialty areas and by proving the market for the kinds of books we sell. The event is also designed to have a positive impact on general independent bookstores that stock feminist and lesbian titles by drawing attention to categories of books they stock.

For a complete list of feminist bookstores in the U.S. and Canada, send \$1.00 and a SASE to The Feminist Bookstore Network, PO Box 882554, San Francisco CA 94188

The Feminist Bookstore Network is an association of 115 feminist bookstores nationwide that are committed to helping one another survive and thrive through the massive changes in the bookselling and publishing industries. Recent projects included a national Feminist Bookstore Strategic Planning Conference in October 1994, and publishing and circulating 400,000 copies of the Feminist Bookstores' Fall Catalog, a full-color 36-page catalog that featured 159 books from 113 publishers, and 115 feminist bookstores. It was the largest single promotion of feminist books undertaken to date in the U.S.

Notes:

A Labor of Love: A Tribute to 25 Years of Feminist and Lesbian Publishers and Bookstores, a one-hour radio documentary portraying a brief history of feminist and lesbian bookstores and publishers over the past 25 years and their ongoing importance as political and cultural arenas, is available for airing during FBW.

National media coverage will be coordinated by the Feminist Bookstore Network office. Local media will be coordinated by each participating feminist bookstore.

enc: Writer's Pledge
List of signers
Graphics & PSA ad slicks

Feminist Booksellers Suggested Interview List

Please contact your local feminist bookstore or any of the following feminist bookstores for interviews and further information.

Amazon Bookstore

1612 Harmon Place
Minneapolis MN 55403
612-338-6560

Contacts: Barb Wieser, Jo den Boer, and Donna Niles

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: Now 25 years old, Amazon is the oldest surviving feminist bookstore in the country. The store started in the front room of a feminist living collective in 1970 to distribute feminist magazines, pamphlets and books, and has moved through seven locations to its current home across from Lorin Park, nestled among three thriving restaurants. Not surprisingly, Amazon has a dedicated clientele, excellent community outreach, and continues to thrive in a city besieged by superstore chains.

Women & Children First

5233 N. Clark
Chicago IL 60640
312-769-9299

Contacts: Ann Christophersen and Linda Bubon

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: Women & Children First is a thriving bookstore in Northern Chicago. The bookstore is known for doing an excellent job of hosting events with leading writers (Gloria Steinem, Alice Monroe, Lily Tomlin and Jane Wagner, Susan Faludi), as well as for providing programs for teen feminists, and stocking a wide selection of feminist "zines." Chicago will host the American Booksellers Association Convention for the next six years and Women & Children will be seen by many as the flagship store for feminist bookstores.

Herland Book-Cafe

902 Center Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
408-429-6636

Contact: Kayla Rose

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: One of "the next generation" of feminist booksellers, Kayla and her business partner opened Santa Cruz' feminist bookstore-cafe a scant two years ago. They are "stoked" to provide books and a variety of services to the women of their community. Their approach to fundraising? Throw a party! They've opened their store and have thrived in a community that is already strong with general bookstores that stock feminist titles with seriousness and purpose, proving, once again, that there's more to a bookstore than even the books that line its walls.

Textures

5309 McCullough
San Antonio TX 78212
210-805-8398

Contact: Martha Cabrere

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: San Antonio had been without a feminist bookstore for several years when Martha Cabrillo mortgaged her jeep to create a women's bookstore in this multicultural, bilingual community. She was one of the first bookstores in the nation to get a Small Business Loan to expand her stock.

Lioness Books

2224 J. Street
Sacramento CA 95816
Contact: Theresa Corrigan
916-442-4657

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: An educator (university) as well as a bookseller, Theresa Corrigan, owner of this 15-year-old feminist bookstore, believes that the survival of independent bookstores of all kinds is the critical intellectual issue of today. She believes that new ideas are the vehicles of progress, and that with the demise of independent bookstores, intellectual integrity, cultural diversity, education, and progressive society will be seriously harmed. But she doesn't believe that the shift toward commodification of books and ideas is irreversible.

Charis Books and More

1189 Euclid Ave. NE
Atlanta GA 30307
404-524-0304

Contact: Linda Bryant

THUMBNAIL SKETCH: Charis, the South's oldest feminist bookstore, made the plunge into permanent commitment by buying a building to provide a permanent home for the bookstore, and turned the old building into a elegant and lovely bookstore. The staff is particularly committed to providing books and services for the diversity of women who make up their community.

The Book Garden

2625 E. 12th Ave.
Denver CO 80206
303-399-2004

Contact: Kasha Songer

The Book Garden celebrated FBW 1995 with a very successful street fair. In addition to running The Book Garden, Kasha is the president of the Mountains and Plains Booksellers Association.

Feminist Bookstore Network Spokeswomen

Carol Seajay
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Feminist Bookstore Network
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Sacramento CA 95816
916-442-4657

Quotes and Soundbites
From Feminist Booksellers
on
The Importance of Feminist Bookstores
to Feminist and Mainstream American Culture

"To have intellectual, political and literary diversity, we must have diversity in the marketplace. Without feminist bookstores, the kinds of books you see at your local feminist bookstore will, for the most part, cease to exist.

"Every time each of us invests in a feminist bookstore, we are helping to protect the range of literature available: from lesbian and gay novels to nonsexist, nonracist children's books, from goddess-centered books to feminist theory.

"The future of progressive and quality publishing is in our hands — simply by making conscious decisions about where we spend our money."

— Theresa Corrigan, Owner
Lioness Books, Sacramento, CA

"We have a commitment to carry and disseminate progressive ideas, not merely to sell commodities. We do much more than sell books; over the last ten years we have helped innumerable women through life crises, not by counseling them, but by empowering them about the choices they have."

— Tollie Miller, former Co-Owner
A Readers Feast, Hartford, CT

"Feminist bookstores are a resource the chains can never be. We have 20 years of history about our communities and our movement; people come to us to make use of the knowledge we have acquired."

— Gilda Bruckman, Co-Owner
New Words, Cambridge, MA

"If people buy books at Barnes & Noble, independent stores (including feminist stores) will go out of business, feminist presses will suffer and books will disappear. This is how economics creates censorship — book buyers contribute to their own censorship by supporting the chains. If book buyers allow this to happen, Barnes & Noble (and the other chains) will decide what gets sold, what is in print, the size of print runs, and ultimately, what people have access to. The question is not who gets a piece of the pie; the pie itself will be drastically changed. And don't expect feminist and other progressive causes to be part of what's left."

— Sally Owen, Co-owner of the recently closed Judith's Room, New York City

— More —

"A network of feminist booksellers, publishers and periodicals work with writers to get certain kinds of truth into print and into the world. When we are successful, the mainstream publishing industry notices and says, 'Oh, that's a good idea, we'll publish some of that.' But if we don't put those ideas out into the world first — if we don't prove that there's a profitable market for those ideas — they never show up in mainstream publishing and chain bookstores. Sometimes people find these kinds of books in chainstores or at the discount store and think, 'Oh, we've made the mainstream now.' But the fact is that if feminist bookstores disappeared, you can be sure that all those feminist books and ideas would disappear from the corporate bookstores and publishers just as quickly.

"The information industry in this country is, like anything else, an ecosystem. If you let any part of it die off, the rest of the parts will also go into a decline."

— Carol Seajay, publisher of *The Feminist Bookstore News*,

"We are in feminist bookselling to educate, to end sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, classism, and all the other inequities that threaten our society and survival, and to create a safe space for our sisters and brothers. We are in the business to change the world. Feminist bookstores are in it for the long haul and are proud to be part of a larger movement for social change."

— Theresa Corrigan
Lioness Books, Sacramento, CA

"When price becomes more important than substance, we get cardboard tomatoes, cheap but tasteless. Then when we want real tomatoes, we have to pay through the nose. Making decisions about where to spend money — and prioritizing what's most important is difficult (for women) because women still make less money than men and so cost is an important factor. Ethnic communities have also faced this dilemma. Communities that have supported their own businesses have created healthy endeavors that reinvest in their own communities. Feminist bookstores reinvest in their communities every day through the services they provide."

—Mary Morell, Co-Owner
Full Circle, Albuquerque, NM

When asked, "How are feminist bookstores dealing with competition from the chains?" Jane Troxell, co-owner of Lammas Bookstores (in Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD) emphasizes "customer service, knowledge of the literature, community resources and dedication. We don't wait for women to come to us, we reach out in as many ways and directions as possible. We also organize special events for the community, such as self-defense classes, financial planning workshops, camping and rafting trips." She adds with a laugh, "We may carry fewer mainstream bestsellers, but Crown doesn't have menstrual goddesses or Margie Adam tapes."

— Jane Troxell, Co-Owner
Lammas Bookstores, Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD



SECOND ANNUAL FEMINIST BOOKSTORE WEEK

—North America—

MAY 11-19, 1996

April 4, 1996

Dear FBN Sisters,

We hope that every feminist bookstore will find a way to participate in Feminist Bookstore Week — North America (FBW). Your participation can be as simple as copying some bookmarks and passing them out or as elaborate as a street fair. But if we all do something, it does create a national wave and, in the end, benefits us all.

FBW was the brainchild of the Feminist Bookstores' Strategic Planning Conference (Fall, 1994). (The next installment will be Feminist Bookstores Camp in October 1996.) The idea was to create a national event that could generate both national and local media attention and educate our communities about the importance of supporting feminist bookstores.

Here's your FBW packet. It includes

- Order forms for t-shirts, FBW flags, and bumperstickers.
- Ready-to-go bookmarks (just add your own logo)
- Take-them-to-the-copy-shop-and-blow-them-up FBW posters, a "Take the Pledge" poster to promote the Feminist Writers' Pledge, and a list of Feminist Writers' Pledge signers
- Copy the Writer's Pledge onto the back of the Take the Pledge to make a self-explanatory sheet you can hand out at the counter, take to out of store events, and generally use to recruit more signatures. (Our goal for this year is 1000 signatures.)
- Ready-to-use FBW ads (just drop in your logo and address) and clip-art.
- Ready-to-use Public Service Announcement-type ad slicks to give to your local papers with a request that they run them in whatever extra space they have.
- Articles to photocopy to include with your press kit and/or to pass out in the store as educational tools.
- Some suggestions for decking out the store for FBW.
- Some suggestions for using FBW to garner media attention.
- An FBN article describing a variety of ways stores utilized FBW last year.

Order your t-shirts, flags, bumperstickers ASAP for best results!

Some of these materials will look new and others will look more familiar. I'm hoping that next year we'll have a Spring Catalog or Feminist Book Awards to inspire additional media coverage.

FBW has some serious goals:

1. To provide a vehicle for stores to get both mainstream and alternative publicity in their own communities and to strengthen media connections to encourage further publicity during the year.
2. To increase credibility, visibility, public awareness, and good will toward your store locally.
3. To give our communities an opportunity to celebrate our work and remember how important we are to them.
4. To raise customer consciousness about where they spend their book dollars and why it's so important *to them* to go the extra mile to shop in your store.
5. To get national publicity for FB-Network stores.
6. To enhance our visibility and credibility as a national force to the publishing industry.

(In other words, to remind those corporate-identified mainstream publishers who are ready to sell independent bookstores down the river — or who have already written off independent bookstores — that feminist bookstores are still here, we're still a presence and a power, and to remind them that we are a strong and viable market (so publish some good books for us!).

The Dates

We chose this time because it includes Mother's Day, because it doesn't conflict with Gay Pride celebrations of National Lesbian and Gay Book Month, it's before the school year ends, and it's before ABA.

Media Hooks

FBW has several media "hooks." The idea is that if one doesn't work, maybe one of the others will. When approaching media, it's usually useful to provide two or three "hooks." Oftentimes the media will focus on one angle in their story, but they were convinced to do the story by one of the other angles — even though that isn't what *their* story is about.

FBW Media "Hooks"

1. This is a national/international (Canadian stores, too) event.
2. Tie-ins with other independent businesses vs. Kmart/WalMart/etc. stories.
3. Follows on ABA's National Independent Bookstore Week and all the anti-chain publicity it generated.
4. Big Name Authors and Local Authors have pledged their support of feminist bookstores.
5. Your own in-store events.
6. Focus on national organizing (FBW, Strategic Planning Conference) and major past success (the joint Feminist Bookstores Catalog). One of the surprise spins from the Catalog was how thrilled many customers were to find that feminist bookstores work together on a national level. Hopefully some of the media will like that, too.

Decking Out the Store

1. Print up FBW bookmarks and pass them out at the counter and drop them around town...

2. Dress for Success! Wear FBW t-shirts.

Or better yet, have every staff member wear a FBW t-shirt all day, every day, during FBW. *That* will get your customers' attention!

(Order from WomanMade. Order form enclosed.)

3. Make NFBW posters for the window and other in-store displays.

We don't have the budget to print and mail posters to each store, so we're enclosing an 8 1/2 x 11 FBW poster-mock-up that you can take to your local copy-shop and blow up into posters for about \$5. Put them in the window, post them in the store. They feature the same art as the t-shirts.

4. Make a Writers' Pledge display.

Blow up copies of the Writers' Pledge, the "Take the Pledge" poster, and the list of writers who've signed the pledge. Put them in your window or use in-store. Some stores did discounts on Pledge signers' books during FBW last year as a way to draw attention to the pledge and to thank the women who've signed it.

5. Buy some colorful FBW flags for your window and/or for in-store displays.

Hang them off the bookcases. \$1.75 each. Order with t-shirts. Then carry them in your local Pride March! They're even cheaper than the blow-up posters. (Order from WomanMade. Order form enclosed.)

6. Buy a handful or hundred (or several hundred) FBW bumperstickers to give away or sell at FBW events — and to use all year around. Tape them to the wall when selling at conferences, put a few in the bathrooms, use them like graffiti — get them out there! Or better yet, make a bumpersticker for your store. (Order from Patty at Brigit Books. Order form enclosed.)

7. Order book bags with your logo and address in big letters. Full Circle and The Book Garden gave bookbags to their best customers and now the customers take their advertising all over town. Full Circle recommends the 15-ounce shoulder totes (\$3.40 each for 100). Plus \$35 to make the screen. FC put their logo/address on one side, and put the FBW logo on the other, so you can have two-sided bags for only \$.20 each. Call Enviro-Tote at 800-233-7254 for more information. Tracy took the FC order and is familiar with the already-made screen.

Have a wonderful FBW! May your celebrations be wonderful, may your community respond by celebrating your work, and may the media give you much free publicity!

And when its over, don't forget to tell us how FBW worked for you and all your ideas for making next year even more effective.

Getting Media: The Steps

Ok, so most of us are introverts, bookworms or wall flowers. If we wanted to be extroverts and to do mega self-promotion, we'd be in a different business! So if you're feeling shy or hesitant about asking for major media coverage, you're in good company! But FBW is a chance to go for it — to go all out and ask for more media coverage than you've ever dreamed possible. Dream big and go for it! Talk your way into a local radio show, ask your newspaper for a front-page Sunday Living story, ask radio stations to run PSA announcements and give the ad-slicks to local papers to run as "filler."

1. The point is to get attention for the store. Lots of attention. Dream about a TV spot on the 6:00 news, a store photo (and write-up) on the front page of the family living section of the daily paper, as well as photo-quality coverage in the feminist *and* gay papers... Keep this in mind as you make all of your plans and carry them out. The footwork you do now will pay off for years to come.

2. Create your events if you haven't already done so. All of the writers who've signed the Feminist Writers' Pledge are waiting to be invited to do FBW events (even if they don't yet realize it!) Tie your event(s) in with FBW.

3. Make your media list.

Start with all the contacts you normally use to promote store events then get wild! Make a list of all the other newspapers, TV stations, radio talk shows, book review sections, local magazines, alternative press, etc. that might *possibly* be talked into covering FBW. Send your press release to the book review editor, for sure, but don't forget about the features editors, the business editors, the entertainment section and the photographers. Think about all the sections (newspapers) and shows (TV/Radio) that might possibly cover this kind of news. Include local newsletters and organizations that have newsletters.

Post a note and ask your customers for suggestions for who to contact.

Give your store a present (or ask a customer/supporter to do it) and put all these names and addresses on a computer list or on a form (available at your copy shop) that can be photocopied onto labels. If you don't know who at the TV station (or which producers or editors) to direct your media packet to, call and ask. Secretaries and receptionists can be great allies. Collect fax numbers, too. This list will help you promote FBW, but it will also be an ongoing resource for the store.

Mailing to all these folks may *seem* like a waste, but something interesting will come of it sooner or later...

4. Plan the Package.

What are you going to send to all of these folks to interest them in giving you a lot of free media coverage?

You need a cover letter and a press release to begin with. (Sample copies enclosed.) If you have a recent bookstore profile or photos of last year's events, make copies and include them. Include other articles (the *Ms.* article, the *Soj* article, the *Women's Review of Books* article). Include a FBW bumpersticker.... Put the whole she-bang in an attractive folder. If it's bound for a progressive or public radio station, be sure to include information about Mev's documentary which is suitable for re-broadcast.

5. Make a schedule. Plan the timing.

In that best of all possible worlds, you'd send a letter with a short press release telling them more will be coming soon, then follow-up with a more detailed press release. Monthly publications, obviously, need the information earlier than daily papers do — but it doesn't hurt to give even the dailies a lot of lead time so it can be put on their feature calendar *early*.

6. Write your Press Release. Assemble your packets.

Mail them out.

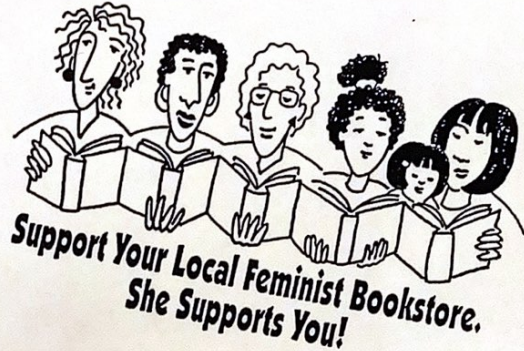
7. Do some follow-up calls.

None of us have full time publicists, but you may get some unexpected results if you can devote 15-30 minutes to making follow-up calls 3-4 times a week.

And most importantly...

Remember that this is an optimum plan. Think about what you can realistically do — and focus on that.

Order Form FBW T-Shirts and Flags



*Dress for Success!
Make a fashion statement!
Take the message to your customers! Wear FBW t-shirts every day during FBW!
Buy them for the bookstore workers.
Buy extras to sell in the store. Let your customers wear the message all over town.
Dress up the window and the store with yellow and lavender FBW flags.*

Womanmade Products is making our FBW t-shirts and FBW flags again this year. Both feature the same graphic and say "Support Your Feminist Bookstore. She Supports You!" Neither have dates, so you can sell the t-shirts all summer, and take the flags to the Pride March. Shirts are Turquoise or Ash (light gray and white mottled) with black lettering. XXXXL shirts are 50/50. M to XXXL are 100% heavy weight pre-shrunk cotton. Flags are 12" X 12" w/ 24" poles; Yellow or Lavender with black lettering.
Order by April 30 for guaranteed delivery.
Orders received after April 30 subject to reality.

Bookstore Name:
Street Address:
City, State, Zip:
Phone:

Please send us:
___ Yellow Flags ___ Lavender Flags
Total Number of Flags: _____ X \$2.75 = _____

Size	No.	No.	
Med.	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # Med. Shirts X \$7.45 = _____
Large	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # Large Shirts X \$7.45 = _____
XL	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # X-L Shirts X \$7.45 = _____
XXL	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # XXL Shirts X \$8.55 = _____
XXXL	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # XXXL Shirts X \$8.95 = _____
XXXXL	___ Turq.	___ Ash	Total # XXXXL Shirts X \$8.80 = _____

Total number of shirts: _____ Total cost of shirts: _____
Shipping for shirts: _____
Total cost of flags: _____
Total: _____

Shipping: 1-3 shirts: \$3.00; 4-5 shirts: 4.00; 6-7 shirts: 4.25; 8-10 shirts: 4.50
Over 10 shirts, call for quote. (Charges vary by zone.)

**Send order with prepayment to Becky Bly, Womanmade Products, PO Box 517,
Seneca Falls, NY 13148. Phone: 315-568-9364. Fax/ Attn: Becky 315-568-1256.**

Order Form for Radio Documentary Cassette

A Labor of Love

A Tribute to 25 Years of Feminist & Lesbian Publishers and Bookstores

Written and Produced by Mev Miller

A Labor of Love was originally produced as a radio documentary portraying a brief herstory of women's/feminist and lesbian bookstores and publishers over the past 25 years, underlining their contributions to feminist and lesbian movements. It considers their current struggles and their on-going importance as political and cultural arenas for women and lesbians and highlights the 25th anniversaries (in 1995) of *off our backs* (Washington DC), The Feminist Press at CUNY (New York City), and Amazon Bookstore (Minneapolis MN).

Format: Narrated history liberally interspersed with phone interviews conducted with 15 women integrally connected to women's publishing and bookselling. Short music clips have been included to create "breaths" and atmosphere, and to add to its overall professional quality.

Highly recommended for broadcast in conjunction with Feminist Bookstore Week.

Total length: 57 min. 31 sec.

Side One primarily features the work of publishers, printers, and newspapers/periodicals.

Side Two primarily focuses on the work of women's bookstores.

List of women interviewed in this piece in order of first appearance:

April Jackson off our backs, Washington DC
Carol Ann Douglas off our backs, Washington DC
Florence Howe Feminist Press at CUNY, New York
Carol Seajay Feminist Bookstore News, San Francisco CA
Barb Wieser Iowa City Women's Press and Amazon Bookstore
Barabara Grier Naiad Press, Tallahassee FL
Barbara Smith Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, Brooklyn NY
Marj Schneider Womyn's Braille Press, Minneapolis MN
Jamie Lee Evans Aunt Lute Books, San Francisco CA
Teresa Corrigan Lioness Books, Sacramento CA
Donna Marie Niles Amazon Bookstore, Minneapolis MN
Linda Bubon Women and Children First, Chicago IL
Gilda Bruckman New Words Bookstore, Cambridge MA
Pokey Anderson Inklings Bookstore, Houston TX
Selma Miriam Bloodroot Feminist Vegetarian Restaurant and Bookstore
and Sanguinaria Publishing, Bridgeport CT

Engineered at the community radio studios of KFAI-FM in Minneapolis with technical assistance and supportive engineering provided by Michelle Johnson. Tape reproduction done at GreatTapes in Minneapolis. All interviews were conducted and recorded by Mev Miller at KFAI.

Attn:

Bookstore Name:

Street Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Please send us ____ copy/ies of ***A Labor of Love*** at \$8.00 each, prepaid. Our check is enclosed.

Order from: Mev Miller, 1483 Laurel Ave., St. Paul MN 55104
Phone: 612-646-0097 Fax: 612-646-1153 E-mail: mev@winternet.com

(Cover Letter to go w/ Press Release...to type onto your letterhead)

FEMINIST BOOKSTORE WEEK

—North America—

MAY 11-19, 1996

DATE

Dear Editor/Producer,

Attached is a press release describing local activities for Feminist Bookstore Week — North America (FBW), an event that celebrates the accomplishments and successes of feminist bookstores locally and internationally. Over a hundred feminist bookstores in the U.S. and Canada will be celebrating FBW and _____ (store name) will be celebrating in _____ (city). We're very excited about FBW and hope you will be able to cover it (on your program, in your column, in your paper, on WKZO, or whatever. Or just end the sentence after "it" for form letters.)

(Add a paragraph here to briefly describe your store's events.)

The event supports feminist bookstores (and by extension other independent bookstores) in their insistence on surviving as the super chains and discount bookstores fight to gain control of the bookselling industry. The centralization of control of the sales and distribution of books into the hands of three or four megaconglomerates (who own the 16 largest chains) threatens freedom of the press and the free flow of ideas in our culture as surely as if the country had only three or four national newspapers with no local news or coverage.

Local writers and nationally-known writers Alice Walker, Maxine Hong Kingston, Barbara Kingsolver, Ann Lamott, Adrienne Rich, Barbara Ehrenreich, Gloria Steinem, Dorothy Allison and many others have pledged their support to feminist and other independent bookstores (see attached) and will be participating in FBW activities across the country. (Note: Change names to reflect local authors, lesbian writers for les/gay papers, etc. This list of authors is directed at mainstream press.)

Feminist bookstores are essential, lively, and vital community resources that thrive because we provide essential services to our communities — and also because community institutions such as yours support us with publicity for these kinds of events which enable women who need our services to find us.

We hope you will be able to cover our events during FBW. For further information, call _____ (name) at _____ (store name) between _____ and _____. (hours) (Tell them when the contact person will be in.)

Sincerely,

Enc: graphics & PSA ads

NEWS RELEASE

For additional information contact

NAME, title
STORE NAME
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP
PHONE/FAX

best hours to reach:

For Release on or before: DATE
TODAY'S DATE

**(Your bookstore's name) Celebrates
Feminist Bookstore Week**

—North America—

May 11-19, 1996

With These Great Events... __ (fill in events)

YOUR CITY — _____ (Your bookstore's name) is joining with over a hundred feminist bookstores in the United States and Canada to celebrate Feminist Bookstores Week — North America (FBW) May 11-19, 1996. The event draws attention to the contributions of feminist bookstores both in their local and international book communities.

_____ 's (city or state) local feminist bookstore, _____ (your store's name), located at _____ (address and or location) will be celebrating Feminist Bookstore Week by _____.

(Describe event/events w/ dates/times/places and author/performer bio info. ie: In Cartoon City, Jezanna, Mo, Lois, and the gang at Madwimmin Books, the most beloved women's bookstore in Cartoon-land located at 6969 Main Street, will be celebrating FBW with a Women's Rights Now Street Fair on Saturday May 11 from 10-4; a Lesbian Family Fun Day Kiss-in at The Mall of America on Sunday, May 14; and X, Y, and Z authors will perform passages from their books, XX, YY, and ZZ on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. The FBW celebration will end on Sunday, May 19 with an all-day in-store party with k.d. lang (at 4 and 9 pm, local author readings up the wazoo all day, a 10%-off-everything sale all day, and drop in surprise visits by Lily Tomlin, bell hooks, Amy Tan and Gloria Steinem (two of whom will announce that they are an item). Raffle drawings will be held in 17 different categories.... etc. (Nice how comic-strip bookstores have unlimited time and resources, etc... but this is the gist.)

If you've got a lot of events, follow this lead paragraph with a paragraph giving the vital details for each event)

(Include a paragraph here about your store: History, age, size ("a comfortable size

bookstore"), including that it's locally owned and operated and some of the ways your store serves your local community.... ("Long a source of information for women of all kinds...in Your Town"), etc. as well as any community awards your store has won, some "puff" regarding what you offer that other stores (and/or chains) don't (Offering much more detailed information about resources than local chain stores and a more comprehensive selection than other local bookstores....) It doesn't hurt to add that you're part of a national network of feminist bookstores....)

Over 100 feminist writers, ranging from Dorothy Allison to Alice Walker, have signed a pledge to support feminist and other independent bookstores during Feminist Bookstore Week and year 'round. Many of these writers will be participating in FBW events in their own communities. (See the list that follows for the list of signers to date.)

(Insert known local authors who've signed the pledge into this paragraph.)

The pledge reads, "As writers, feminists and political activists, we believe in the enormous power of words to inform, inspire and challenge. In order for our words to be read and heard, we must rely on publishers and bookstores to bring our work to the public.

"Independent feminist bookstores...have been supporting and distributing our books for many years. We count on them. Independent bookstores are now an endangered species because of the rise of corporate-owned chain bookstores that engage in predatory pricing and discount policies. The more corporate bookstores control the market, the less likely it will be that they and the publishing industry will take risks on new or controversial authors — and the more control the corporations will have over what we all read.

"Without independent and feminist bookstores and small presses, some of us could be silenced, and the next generation of authors with important ideas might never be found.

"As writers we pledge the following:

1. We will remain committed to supporting independent and feminist bookstores
2. We will seek out local feminist and independent bookstores in each city or town to do our *first* reading or booksigning
3. We will donate our time and talents to community events and campaigns that support independent and feminist bookstores.

"And we ask you, as readers, to do the same. Please shop at feminist and independent bookstores as often as you can. Think of it as an investment in freedom of expression and independent thinking. Thank you."

Feminist Bookstore Week is sponsored by the Feminist Bookstores Network and grew out of a working session at the Feminist Bookstores Strategic Planning Conference in October, 1994. The goals of FBW are to draw attention to the importance of the work that feminist bookstores do

- to empower women to change their lives and to change the world by distributing books and other information
- to promote feminist books and publishing

- to educate our communities about the feminist bookstores as local resources
- to educate our communities and remind the publishing industry about the importance of feminist bookstores and their impact on what books are published, a concern that is of particular importance as corporate chain bookstores have an ever-larger influence on which books are (and aren't) published and promoted, and
- to celebrate feminist bookstores' 25-year history as the information arm of the women's movement.

Although Feminist Bookstore Week will focus on feminist bookstores and events in feminist bookstores, FBW will strengthen other community-based and specialty bookstores by drawing attention to our collective role in the bookselling industry and the way in which we all encourage more publishing in our interest areas by promoting books in our specialty areas and by providing the market for the kinds of books we sell. The event is also designed to have a positive impact on general independent bookstores that stock feminist and lesbian titles by drawing attention to the categories of books they stock.

The Feminist Bookstore Network is a three-year-old association of 115 feminist bookstores in the U.S. and Canada that are committed to helping one another survive and thrive through the massive changes in the bookselling and publishing industries. Recent projects included a national Feminist Bookstore Strategic Planning Conference in October 1994, and publishing and circulating 400,000 copies of the Feminist Bookstores' Fall Catalog, a full-color 36-page catalog that featured 159 books from 113 publishers, and 116 feminist bookstores. It was the largest single promotion of feminist books undertaken to date in the U.S.

For further information contact: _____ (name), at _____ (bookstore), _____ (Address, phone and fax.) or call the Feminist Bookstore Network at 415-626-1556 or write to FBW, c/o FBN, PO Box 882554, San Francisco CA 94188,

Note: *A Labor of Love: A Tribute to 25 Years of Feminist and Lesbian Publishers and Bookstores*, a one-hour radio documentary portraying a brief history of feminist and lesbian bookstores and publishers over the past 25 years and their ongoing importance as political and cultural arenas, is available for airing during FBW.

National media coverage will be coordinated by the Feminist Bookstore Network office. Local media will be coordinated by each participating feminist bookstore.

enc: Writer's Pledge
List of signers
PSA ad slicks