

# THE CIRCLE

The Circle Women's Centre

Brescia University College, London Ontario Vol. XIV Issue 3 Spring 2005

## Wildness

*Wildness is that which is not tame. In women it can be anything from rage to intuition to ecstasy.*

Perhaps it happened when you were crouched over the garden up to your elbows in soil. Perhaps it happened when you heard your favourite song come on the radio or maybe when you attended a peace rally. But somehow at that moment, you felt deep longing – something old, something wild, something perhaps lost for a long time, something saying, *pay attention to your wildest dreams!* By heeding this intuition, by embracing our wildness, we are offered a pathway to reconnect with our true selves and the ancient source of our creativity and strength.

This innate energy defies cages, social norms and cultural expectations. The word “wildness” itself conjures up images, language and feelings that defy control and order. For wildness, like wilderness, is considered by many to be disorderly and dangerous. In the past, civilizations necessarily sought to temper the wilderness, drive off predators, and create the illusion of order and security. But sadly it was systems of hierarchy and patriarchy that were established to maintain social order, while conformity and sameness became the social ideal. We abandoned nature's model of interconnectedness and diversity, and to this day, seek to hold back nature's wildness from cities and human wildness from society. Many “investors” in our society have much to lose if the rediscovery of wildness became a trend.

But like weeds that crack and poke up through the sidewalks, wildness will break through our illusions, plant itself into our gut and seek to enter the light of our consciousness. For many women, our first sensing of wildness occurs with an inner knowing that something is wrong. Maybe it was when another ancient tree was toppled by chainsaws or when the scope of global violence became incomprehensible or when another story of a man killing his female partner came on the news. Perhaps, if only briefly, the helplessness gave way and revealed itself as something terrifyingly wild and destructive, and yet a natural and reasonable response - rage.

In today's world, women who express their inner wildness to contest conditions, challenge boundaries and open doors often experience danger and are labelled dangerous. Rage is


considered unruly, antisocial. Women who are angry have been called hysterical, and lunatics – both terms acknowledging (albeit derogatorily) female interconnection to natural rhythms and the Earth.

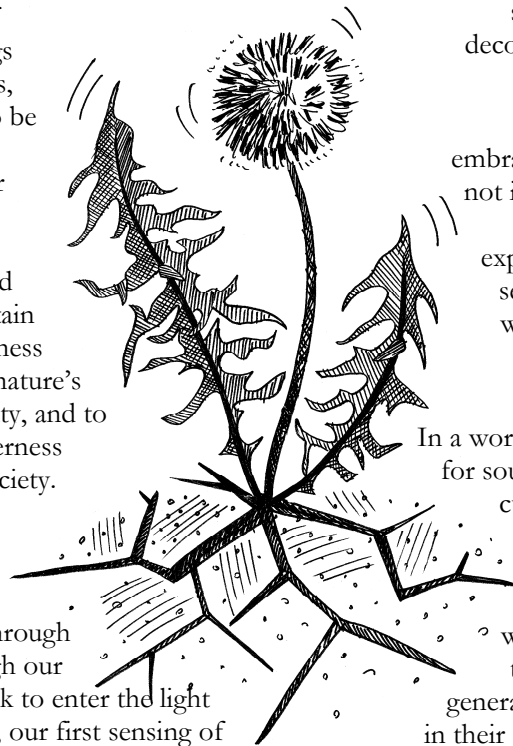
But what do women do with rage? We tend to fear the destructive aspects of our own wildness, like we fear the powerful forces of Nature. Yet, we are forgetting that “destruction” is subjective, that the ending of one thing is always the beginning of something new. As the Laws of Physics point out, energy can not be created or destroyed, only transformed. Just as order naturally and spontaneously emerges from chaos, it then deconstructs back into chaos – it is the rhythm of creation: life, death and rebirth.

By embracing our wild spirits we are embracing freedom, creativity and life. We must not ignore or suppress this! Even if scorned by and ostracized from the mainstream, the experience can teach us to be resourceful and self-sufficient, strong and capable. For once we acknowledge our rage, our intuition, our wildest dreams, there is no way to pretend they don't exist.

In a world that provides us with little space or time for soul work we must find innovative solutions to cultivate and nourish our wildness. Wisdom and ecstasy can be gained by forays into wilderness-physical and spiritual. Mystics have often retreated into the wilderness to face their demons and wrestle transcendence from the experience. Future generations need to see the evidence of wildness in their souls and in society-we must pass on these solutions so that what makes us creative and strong, lives on.

So, when we see throughout our cities Nature's wildness erupting as tiny seedlings heaving up concrete and human wildness erupting in protests, we know that not all has been tamed. When we find ourselves sitting on the staircase scribbling out a poem while the vacuum lies lifeless by our side, we have moved into a wild, creative space that does not recognize boundaries, or dust. Wildness embodies change, and it is the source of creativity. So let us sing! Dance! Write! Rage! Take action! Feel sexy! Love fully! Live with, instead of just on the Earth! Let's break some rules, set ourselves free.

Go wild! 





# On Our Shelves...

*Wild Reads*

## *The Dark Goddess:*

### *Dancing With the Shadow*

Marcia Starck and Gynne Stern  
Reed Business Information, Inc. 1993

This book tells the stories of eight goddesses from diverse cultural traditions.

Through beautiful storytelling, their mythology provides women with a pathway for reconnecting with our wild, intuitive selves. Grounded in Jungian psychology of the personal and the collective unconscious, this book is focused on personal transformation and growth using the stories and symbols of the dark goddesses.

## *Women Who Run with the Wolves:*

### *Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype*

Clarissa Pinkola Estés  
Ballantine Books 1996

Estes uses folklore, fairy tales and symbols to encourage women to tap into their intuitive and instinctive abilities – to get to know the Wild Woman within. Using myths and stories from various cultures, Estes invites women to explore their wild and ageless ways of knowing, their passionate creativity and to reclaim the Wild Woman that lies within us before she disappears. The rich story telling in *Women Who Run with the Wolves* makes this book a wonderful read as well as a road map for personal growth.

## *Dancing in the Flames: The Dark Goddess in the Transformation of Consciousness*

Marion Woodman and Elinor Dickson  
Shambala Publications, Inc. 1996

Woodman and Dickson explore the archetype of the dark goddess as a powerful symbol for the wild, creative energy within us. The cycles of creation, destruction, death and rebirth are explored through symbols, dream analysis and archetypal psychology. Woodman and Dickson assert that the reemergence of the sacred feminine indicates a readiness to move into a new level of consciousness both personally and on a more global level. They invite women and men to move beyond rigid categories, using the myths, and symbols of the dark goddess to hold space for reason and order as well as creativity and chaos.

"There is no greater blessing a mother can give her daughter than a reliable sense of the veracity of her own intuition"

-Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D.  
*Women Who Run With Wolves.*



## The Wisdom of Elizabeth May

Elizabeth May, Executive Director of the Sierra Club of Canada, spoke at Brescia for International Women's Day. Here is some of the wisdom and advice that she shared with us:

The first thing we can do to help the environment is to remain hopeful.

**Climate change is not an environmental issue, it is a security threat.**

Even Pentagon studies confirm that global warming is a greater threat to humanity than terrorism or nuclear war.

The empowerment of women, through education, economic autonomy and access to healthcare, is the only effective form of population control.

We must not get smug in Canada and blame pollution and population problems on the developing world– the richest 20% of the earth's population uses 80% of the world's resources.

Complaining that organic food is too expensive? We need to re-evaluate our concept of fair prices for food. It used to be that 25% of household incomes were spent on food, now it is 10%. Food is cheap in Canada!

The amount of CO2 in the air is higher now than any other time in the evolution of the planet.

The gulf stream has been projected to stall in 2010. This will cause extreme weather, drought, floods, civil unrest, difficult time producing food, etc.

That the environment isn't "out there" and we go to visit it once in a while. With every breath, we interact and become one with the environment.

Science, technology and money will not save us, we need a shift in our attitudes and priorities.

Demand better emissions on cars. Support our government when it regulates the auto industry. Car companies are fighting our government tooth and nail to not have to be accountable for their emissions.

Re-evaluate sources of energy. Our hydro is a linear system not a loop. We need more local power supplies.

Buy and cook with whole foods! Mass quantities of energy are used to create processed foods, huge amounts of garbage is produced in their packaging and they are made with with GMOs and pesticides.

A triple threat to our environment!

Fight to keep PEI organic.

Write your MPs! One letter is believed to reflect the opinion of 5000-10 000 citizens. Letters by mail are more effective at this point than email.



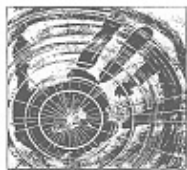
*Our Heartfelt Thanks*

What a woman & what a gift she has been to The Planning Circle,

*Mary Fran Damaren*

# Events at The Circle

OPEN



CIRCLES

...a tapestry of story, laughter, silence and the mystical experience of women gathered, where we can reflect the *sacred in our lives*. Last Wednesday of the month, Merici Lounge, Brescia UC, 7:30 p.m.

29 June

**Dancing the Labyrinth : A Musical Meditative Walk**

28 September

**Gratitude for Summers Bounty - Living with a Grateful Heart**

Dyna mikos Members 2005:

Frances Abley, Mary Hagan, Jennifer Hanke, Karen Huiberts, Pauline Maheux, Kim Young Milani, Jean

Next Year's Theme

*Tending the Garden...*

cultivating  
harmony  
in the great  
Community of Life

*Principles and  
practice...*



The Circle depends on your membership.  
Get your 2005 -2006 Membership Today!

**A 15th Anniversary Project:**

**FULL CIRCLE**

A JOURNAL OF INSPIRATION AND REFLECTION

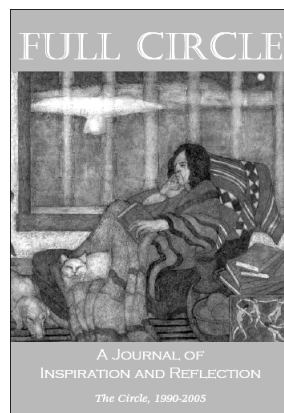
With excerpts from  
15 Years of  
*The Circle Newsletter*,  
history and illustrations

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For more information  
call 432-8353 x28288  
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**Do You Have Books You'd Love to Share with Others...? Donate them to The Circle!!**

Urgently Needed! Ensure the continued success of our "More Than Just a Book Sale" by donating your gently used books to The Circle. We cleaned out our entire stock of used books at last year's sale and need to rebuild for the upcoming year. Donations accepted after 2nd August!



*...and Beyond*

**17-19 June - Womyn & Girls Drum Camp,**

Mink Lake (near Eganville), \$225-\$325 for womyn, \$100-150 for girls depending on choice of accommodation; conga, djembe, riq, djun djun, shekere, bellydance, movement & more. Info: [www.drumcamps.ca](http://www.drumcamps.ca) or 519-435-0861

**23-26 June - Regional Social Forum: "Exploring the Globalization Project"**, FREE, Scouts Canada Grounds & Facilities, 531 Windermere Rd., space and time to share information, experiences, and networks via various days of workshops, panels, conferences, presentations, testimonials, seminars, cultural and artistic performances/activities, and other media of consciousness raising and social change. Speakers include: **Judy Rebeck, Tony Clarke, Alex Neve, Rick Salutin, etc.** Info & registration: [www.regionalsocialforum.ca](http://www.regionalsocialforum.ca) or [regionalsocialforum@gmail.com](mailto:regionalsocialforum@gmail.com)

**27-30 June - Circle of Quiet**, Medaille Retreat House will be set aside as a place of **silence** for those who wish a place for quiet reflection. Spiritual Direction available upon request. Info: (519) 641-1379 or [medaille@mnsi.net](mailto:medaille@mnsi.net)

**July & August - Medaille Retreat House will be open for private retreats.** There will also be times when a director will be available.

**8-10 July - EarthSpirit Rising: A Conference on**

**Ecology, Spirituality & Community**, Xavier U, Cincinnati, OH, \$200 USD, Mathew Fox, Winona LaDuke, Paula Gonzalez, SC, Miriam Therese MacGillis, OP, John Seed, etc. Info: [www.earthspiritrising.org](http://www.earthspiritrising.org), 513-921-5124

**22-24 July - Women's Ordination Worldwide Ecumenical Conference: Breaking Silence, Breaking Bread: Christ Calls Women to Lead.** Carleton University, Ottawa, \$330, featuring **Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Mary Hunt, Maria Pilar Aquino & more.** Info: [www.wow2005.org](http://www.wow2005.org), [www.cnwe.org](http://www.cnwe.org), 613-225-0844

**6 August - Vandana Shiva** at *Human Rights in a Globalizing Era Conference*, 7pm, Room 104, Odette Bldg on Wyandotte St. E, sponsored by Centre for Studies in Social Justice, U of Windsor. Info: Nicole Noel, 519-253-3000 x3492 or [nnoel@uwindsor.ca](mailto:nnoel@uwindsor.ca)  
**Ongoing Stained Glass Classes - with Lynette Richards,** [www.rose-window.com](http://www.rose-window.com), 673-4976. Day or evening classes.

**15 September - TAKE BACK THE NIGHT- Speaker- Rally-March!** 6:45pm, the Peace Garden,. Sponsored by the Women's Events Committee. Info: [thewomenseventscommittee@gmail.com](mailto:thewomenseventscommittee@gmail.com)

## With deep gratitude, Patty, as you embark on new adventures



You only have to attend a few meetings with Patty McLean before recognizing that she is the author of her own life. She lives her life from the inside out, entirely herself, grounded in that which she knows to be true. This is the gift so many of us have received from Patty: not just the privilege of bearing witness to her personal authority, but the deep joy of being awakened to our own. Patty has lived her life awakened to her own intellectual hunger and is wise enough to know that if she is thinking about something, so are others. It is this understanding that led her, in part, to the founding of The Circle, and has inspired much of The Circle's programming over the years. Barb MacQuarrie beautifully writes: "With Patty at The Circle, I discovered for the first time in my life, a spirituality that didn't merely acknowledge women or welcome women but a spirituality that put the experience of being a woman at the centre of all that is sacred..."

Viewing the world through this lens is [also] a call to feminist political action. "One of Patty's most deeply held convictions is that the personal is political... that to create new ways of being in the world, we must all be willing to engage in the work of challenging the patriarchal structures that present barriers to the education, freedom and flourishing of all women and all peoples. Patty has planted seeds of enormous possibility ... and who are we to even guess at where they might lead? We know she will continue to voice that which she knows to be true, and in so doing, will continue to create and make visible common chords of knowing and being for all women.

*Excerpted from a presentation honouring Patty's 15 years of dedication to The Circle by Anne Marie Madziak and Laurie Hazzard*

## F O R G I N G   L I N K S

...this year, inviting stories of newcomers to our Canadian culture.



My daughter, my husband, and I arrived in Canada on March 2003. We came from Colombia a country covered in green all year round. Our hometown, Bogotá, it is the capital; it

is occupied by around 12 million inhabitants encircled by farms growing flowers, vegetables, and animals of different species. There is "primavera" every month. It is a beautiful country, even though it shares all the social problems suffered by the countries in Latin America. This is the reason why the three of us, who are artists, came to Canada looking for new horizons.

We arrived with our suitcases full of hope, some art supplies, little money and inadequate clothing for a winter that was still not done, and that let us see the playing of the sun over the "glass trees", the light grey of the fog falling above the white snow of the empty street and on my black coat, the wonderful crystals dissolving...

Ice, lines... six, three,

Line by line, lin.

Li...qui...fying,

With the warmth of the fingers which tried in vain to discover their secrets.

Slowly winter fell asleep and the memories migrated from our homeland in winged songs, to lodge in the branches left naked by the wind. And from the back of squirrels, the lukewarm gloss of April jumped onto the windows, inviting us to go out and to look at the buds of the plants. The people, who are born again from the inside of their jackets undulating in the breeze; spread happiness with

their verses which fill the buses, stores, and sidewalks to flutter near the shadows which disappear in the middle of the ethnic groups, their voices and tones. Then imagination flies to the pages of art books, to their characters and themes, to the studios the local artists and to mine.

Since we moved to Canada we have been surrounded by friends, some of old times and many others who started coming into our life when we met Sister Maria and the St. Joseph Community. There we found compatriots and volunteers, some whom have remained our friends, like Michael Rouse, who have taken us by the hand through the culture and the institutions.

We feel really happy in London. In this city most of its residents are cordial and generous, and they know how to respect physical or ideological differences. They have given us great impressions every time. We are deeply grateful to everyone.



We believe that, as artists, we are being offered good opportunities. We have shown our work at Port Stanley, The Arts Project, For The Art Of It, and Artistix. We are searching for new contacts, producing art works, and learning English, so that in the near future we can contribute towards the development of new art expressions.

**Author: Sofia Loaiza**