

Woman Writes
1985
Anthology



Edited by: Alice Teeter & Leslie Williams

COVER PHOTO: Wominwrites '85
"closing circle"
by Maree Martin

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SHOW YOU HEAR
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

Among my people
it is rude
to listen to another
without making noises
of acknowledgement.
A famous anthropologist
now deceased
said the invention
of the boat
started race prejudice.
It is rude
to listen to this silently.
The world says
a "real" woman
has gratefully accepted
some man's vision
of herself.
It is unsafe
to listen to this.
A Black woman
loving other women
defies the narrow line
and draws the spiral
of her own
fire dances.
Make a noise
of acknowledgement.

TO SISTERS TURNED AWAY
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

I claim you raw
seek that part of you in me
living unashamed,
share entire truths out of love
only to see you turn away
as salt to ash
to steep in distrust
celebrate my cowardice
and not the coil that burns in rain
undenied and pure.
You touch yourselves in places forbidden
then praise your own deceit.
I love you hard
can do no less
deflect your lies as best I can
bury your phantoms of me in sand.
I am you, too--
more than skin and braid
in my choice of heart.
Our growth is pain
and I grow toward you
powerless to deny
the pull of the sun.

MOVING IN
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

Say y-e-s
and I will move in with you
bringing only...
5 Indian floor pillows
84 houseplants needing a northern exposure
my 30-piece weight-training assembly
1 set African Liberation satin sheets
with matching curtains
8 pairs lavender sneakers
23 stuffed armadillos
200 lbs. of quartz crystal
47 pairs of unmatched earrings
1154 Lesbian Feminist buttons-on-a-rope
69 blues 78s from the 1950s
12 crates of radical essays
7-piece wok set without instructions
4 pairs of striped socks with toes
my cat Kiku and her hand-knitted mouse collectin
from northern France
a stained glass profile of Yoko Ono
2 reams of patchouli-scented stationery
a trunk of silk panties in your favorite flavors
every note, letter, card, pressed flower you've
given me in the past year-and-a-half
and all the cornbread and red beans you can eat!

EARLY WITH AMY
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

she is vain
about her hair
waits for sun
with fingers
out/stretched
drinks coffee black
then washes her hair
with cucumber and aloe
combs it 5000 times
brushes it sinless
patting each swerve
each twist
for praise
she smokes a cigarette
to steady her hand
parts out
great steppes of asia
hanging babylon gardens
where i can plant
red dragon orchids
and slow morning kisses

STACKED DECKER
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

HIGH HEEL
HIGH HEEL
H IGH HEEL
H IGH HEEL
HI GH HEEL
HI GH HEEL
HIG H HEEL
HIG H HEEL
HIGH HEEL
HIGH HEEL
HIGH H EEL
HIGH H EEL
HIGH HE EL
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HIGH HEEL HIGH HEEL

YOUNG JAMAICAN DYKE ON LESBOS
Terri L. Jewell
c 1985

Momma be crazy
Don't know who I be
She dinks I still her baby
Deny what she see
No like my womoon lovah
No like my bold stare
No like my purple muscle shirt
My earcuff or my hair
She say "Da neighbors be talkin
Da police look you down
Da dogs do da barkin
Da preachah shake and frown
Thin out ya big man body
Pin somethin to ya hair
Don't hurt ya poor DaDaddy
Tone down ya bold stare"
I listen but no speakin
I slow but let go
I do as I please now
Don't fake myself no mo