

Kim Duckett Interview Notes

Interviewed by Rose Norman on Friday, July 10, 2015, at Kim's home in Asheville, NC

Biographical Background

Born and raised in Asheville, North Carolina, into a poor, working class family, Kim identifies as a Southerner and an Appalachian woman. Married at 16, divorced at 20, at 18 she co-founded the first rape crisis center in Asheville. She completed degrees at the University of North Carolina, Asheville (undergrad degree in Women's Studies 1980), Appalachian State University (graduate degree in Media and Instructional Technology 1986), and Union Institute (PhD in Women's Studies and Transpersonal Psychologies, 1997). In 1976 she was part of starting the first Women's Center in Asheville and in forming the Lesbian Caucus (about 1977) when the Women's Center asked lesbians to keep a low profile. In the 1980s, she started a nonprofit educational and religious organization called WHISPER (Women' Holy Inspirational Spiritual Performances, Events, and Rituals), which still exists today and through which she teaches a goddess and spirituality curriculum based on the Wheel of the Year. She has taught Women's Studies courses for thirty years at various colleges and universities in the region. Since 1999, she is an ordained priestess in Dianic goddess and Wiccan traditions.

NOTE: This is not a formal transcript. We hope to get funding for professional transcriptions, but at this point we are taking notes during the interview, excerpting pertinent parts of the interview, and then editing the result for publication and/or archiving. The interviewee may change or add anything attributed to or about her in these edited notes, including completely rewriting the interview as a personal memoir.

These edited notes will go to the archives at the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture in the David M. Rubinstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke University, along with the unedited audio interview.

Introductory

I wanted to start with now, so that I can back up to make sense of it for myself. I'm 59, and I've been disabled and having health issues since 2012 (I fell here in the house). This is really emotional and wonderful for me because I don't know what's going to happen with me. I have a mystery school that is twenty years old. It's a three-year goddess and feminist spirituality curriculum. I also have something called WOTY (Wheel of the Year). My work now follows the Wheel of the Year, those holy days that some of us honored in the 70s. In the 90s I became aware that we were sitting on a gold mine as a psychology, rather than just as a spiritual thing that women were doing. I went back to school and got my PhD in Women's Studies, Feminist Theory, and Transpersonal Psychology.

My work now, and for the last twenty years, has been to teach the Wheel of the Year as a psychology for women. I am still a radical lesbian feminist, and this is the way I'm doing my work now, keeping opportunities for women to circle and teaching them enough that they become politicized. I became politicized around rape. You give people enough information and if it's good information, women are still waking up.

updated 1/4/16

I taught Women's Studies for thirty years in various universities, first at UNCA [University of North Carolina at Asheville], and then at Western Carolina [University], and also at Appalachian State [University]. My last 16 years was teaching mainly at Warren Wilson College. I got my Women's Studies undergrad degree from UNCA in 1980. It was their first Women's Studies degree, and we had to kind of make it up. That made me have to work twice as much because they didn't trust this new field. I wound up with a lot of credit hours. My graduate degree is from Appalachian State in Media and Instructional Technology, making instructional materials so people can learn better. That came in handy later for me, teaching women's spirituality and how to do ritual. I did videos on things like how to file your own domestic violence injunction. That's been my whole life, women and feminism.

I have been an ordained priestess in Dianic goddess traditions since 1999. I did that because there were women in hospital or in hospice who needed me there, and having those credentials helped me get to women. People pay attention to the PhD and to having clergy credentials.

Early Life

I was born here in Asheville. It feels like there are very few of us natives left, now that Asheville has become a so-called mecca. I come from working class poor. I consider myself a Southerner and an Appalachian woman. When I first thought of getting a graduate degree I thought about getting it in Appalachian Studies because of the classism at work, and all that regionalism. My activism has been there as well. I'm proud to be from Appalachia and the South. We've had a lot of activists from the South. I'm a political creature.

I left North Carolina twice, first with my husband, later with a woman lover. I married young. I did that whole thing, though I didn't have babies. I married at sixteen and divorced at twenty. In 1972, when I was sixteen, I became a feminist and moved to Norfolk, VA, for a year, with that husband, who was in the Coast Guard. I became a feminist from watching my mother's life as a victim of domestic violence, and poverty. I myself was incested and harmed. It made me a feminist faster. I got unmarried at 20, so I had plenty of time to go on with my life. The reason we came apart (besides my feminism) was that I had gone back to college, and he became cranky about it during the first semester. I have a vivid memory of sitting at the kitchen table typing my first term paper (which was a big deal since I had been out of school for a long while), and he was in the living room drinking beer and said he did not think he liked his wife being in school, etc. I remember just pausing as I typed, and then continuing on knowing that giving me an ultimatum was not going to work this time. He had given me an ultimatum of sorts when he asked me to marry him.

In Norfolk I would go to the library and read that big red book about feminist resources of the 60s and 70s. I would sit in the library in Norfolk and look through all that. That was 1972. I rode motorcycles. My husband was way into motorcycles. He got my first one for me while I was still in high school, a small Yamaha. I chose the Harley Davidson while living in Norfolk, and that was where I met Kay, who also road a Harley. We became fast friends and riding companions, and became feminists together.

I think I was meant to be the radical lesbian feminist I am and was. That's why I'm here. Having that background in domestic violence, I didn't have a rosy view of what it could be like for

women and children. I began to read about it when I was sixteen, when I got married. There was no hope for that [marriage], but I got it out of my system. I'm glad I never had children. I don't usually tell people about getting married so young, because it's so shocking and there's so much judgement about it, although it's pretty common in the South. We split up because I went back to college. I went to UNCA to do that Women's Studies degree, and he couldn't handle that. So we separated.

Asheville-Buncombe Rape Crisis Center (1974) and WAVA (1976)

I co-founded the rape crisis center when I was 18, and became its director when I was 19. It was called the Asheville-Buncombe Rape Crisis Center, and it has just celebrated its 40th anniversary last year. I was invited to be a special guest at that celebration. My cohorts were three other women, one of whom had started a rape crisis center in Florida. **We** got it started, and I became the director. I kept the red phone in my closet in my married home. I was its director for two years, taught self-defense there, and was the liaison to the public. So I was very active at 18.

When the rape crisis center finally got funding, I was in school, and they wouldn't hire me because I was too radical. It was a pattern, those things that we started and did all volunteer, when money came, the professionalism would come. By then I was too radical. They knew my proclivities and my other activism.

I think my awareness about my calling and to work with the media came very early, too. I started with WAVA (Women Against Violence Against Women)—we created a chapter here after starting the Rape Crisis Center. My work with WAVA grew out of that. I would go places with **slides of** album covers and slides of lyrics that promoted violence against women. That all started for me between age 18 and 20.

I believe that my experience as a child in a home of intense and violent domestic violence certainly made me a feminist at a much younger age than some, perhaps. I was incested by my father and my brother as a young child, and then when I was 18 again by my brother (not physical, but verbal, in a letter). One of the other reasons my marriage ended is because he hit me once. And once was all it took. Again, I went on to heal much of this, as much as one can, and do believe that I have suffered from complex PTSD much of my life. Many women have had these experiences and suffer from PTSD. If I had more time and energy, I think I would be more activist along these lines now. And as a psychologist, I have always been alert to these issues with clients

Martha McLean's Depiction of Lesbian Culture in Asheville

Martha [McLean] in her book¹ talked about NOW, but doesn't say whether they were homophobic. It would be interesting to see what Jane Kniffin says about it. She was very much a part of NOW.

¹ *Looking for Sheville* (DogEar Publishing, Indianapolis, IN, 2011), Martha McLean's *roman a clef* about Asheville.

I worked at O'Henry's [a gay bar in Asheville]. The first gay bar was the After Dark, so we all started there. Then a restaurant opened uptown, O'Henry's. At night it was a gay bar and I worked there in the late 70s and early 80s. Toward the end of Martha's book, Martha talks about another gay bar that opened right on the street. It could be the Treetops (it's toward the end of Martha's book). They hired me to be bartender so that women would come. I was an active feminist and did all this stuff in the women's movement. We played women's music some, and other kinds of music. I didn't last long, because I'm not a bartender kind of gal. That was an attempt to respond to our needs. There was never a lesbian bar here in Asheville, as far as I know.

Martha talks about CLOSER.
[Community Liaison Organization for Support and Reform, Western North Carolina's Gay Support Group. They met Wednesday nights in Biltmore according to *Womyn Together*, the Asheville women's newsletter, December 1980, p. 7.] My mother went with me to **the** first meeting **they** had, and was the first mother to attend. It was mostly gay men. They were very sweet to her.



(l to r) Jane Kennedy, Kim Duckett, Pam Amyot, 1970s. In *Looking for Sheville*, they are JT, Temple, and Shane. Photo courtesy of Kim Duckett.

The reason that I've talked about Martha McLean's book was not so much because she was a major mover and shaker as that she wrote it down. We have it in black and white, a lot that happened in Asheville. It's such an important gift and a great herstory of the 70s. I'm in there as Temple. She made much of my having been straight for a long time, and some of this is out of order (she took a lot of literary license).

I want to mention that we did some holy day rituals in the 70s. I remember a Samhain ritual and a winter Solstice ritual. But mostly we were drinking and smoking pot and cruising each other.

Women's Center (1976) and Women's Studies

We started the Women's Center after I started back to school. That was in 1976, and I had started the rape crisis center in 1974. The Women's Center was started through the mental health center by heterosexual women that I would describe as liberal feminists. Sure enough, the same thing happened to us as happened in other places. They asked us to tone it down as lesbians. [I was still straight then, but] that infuriated me, so we had the first lesbian caucus at my house. I didn't stay straight very much longer.

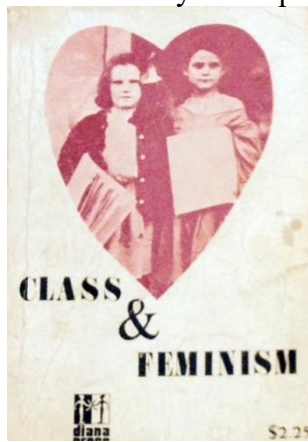
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During my undergraduate work on that Women's Studies degree (1976-80), I became a radical lesbian feminist separatist. We had to do a lot of classes as independent studies. Another woman and I, Jane Knox (Janice in the novel), asked professors to do classes with us. We became fast friends and were both radicalized. We read Jill Johnston [*Lesbian Nation*, 1973], all the radical literature we could find. I did not start as a liberal feminist. I came on full boogie.

What broke the lesbians away from the Asheville Women's Center that we had started? Sue (*can't remember last name*—hetero?) instigated the creation of the Women's Center, and we held meetings there for a long time. It became tense because of the lesbians, probably because of the radical lesbian feminists. Betty Swearington was a lesbian, and she didn't know what to make of us. So it wasn't lesbians like her who were speaking up. I want to make clear that it was the radical lesbian feminists who were speaking up. We had all been working on different fundraising projects, and we wanted to have a women's dance at the Y, which had accommodated a lot of groups then and didn't seem lesbian-phobic (I don't know if they were). We wanted to put the word "lesbian" on the posters, and didn't think there would be an issue, but that is definitely when the disconnect happened. The straight women who had convened the meetings for the Women's Center didn't feel comfortable with it and thought it wouldn't reflect well on the Women's Center that we had worked so hard to start. That's when we started the Lesbian Caucus and had the first meeting at my house. After that, the Women's Center broke up, but we continued, and it was all lesbian. So many cultural institutions that we started and maintained became majority lesbian, but we were still providing for others.

[Shows the book *Class and Feminism* (Diana Press, 1974) ed. Charlotte Bunch, a collection of essays from *The Furies*. Points out how it's very underlined, and how she reread it often.]

Class and race and radical lesbian feminism were all wound up together for me. Definitely class, because of my own upbringing. I wasn't a socialist feminist or a Marxist feminist, but this book has always been important to me, and I'm passing it around the younger community now. (See photo of book cover.)



As a person who has taught feminism and feminist theory, women's studies all these years, one of the things I get upset about is the way we're presented nowadays in gender studies. That's been really hard for me. That's one of the reasons I left Warren Wilson [University]. They wanted a Gender Studies Department instead of Feminist or Women's Studies. I'm one of the people who had to make huge changes because of that.

I also notice that people talk about academic feminists as being somehow "ivory tower," but that certainly wasn't me. I was always active in the community and applied all that I learned in the academy to our grassroots movement. I didn't teach full time. I did that on purpose, and that ended up being hard on me later because I didn't get tenure or retirement benefits, but I knew it would curtail my radicalism, and I didn't want to do that. That's why I did classes in the community, and that's one of the ways the mystery school started. I wanted it to still be in the community, not just in the classroom. It's been very satisfying to bring that level of women's studies and intellectualism into the community in a way that women can get—making it accessible. I still love talking about all the intellectual feminist theories. That's what really saved me from that whole Southern

marriage thing – that I was really smart, and that I got back in school. I had a scary **high** IQ when I was young, and that helped me not go down the road so many young, poor Appalachian women did. I think my education saved me. I was the first one to get a college degree in my family, and it's been the thing that has opened all the doors for me.

I started teaching Women's Studies at UNCA right after finishing my undergraduate degree, first through continuing education in 1980, a feminist science fiction class. I got my first teaching job that same year at Appalachian State. I took a break after that, getting my graduate degree in media from Appalachian State in 1986. I had moved to Grand Rapids, MI, for about four years with my lover. I came back in 1990 when my mother was dying, to be here with her.

So in 1991 I started teaching again at Appalachian State. I taught all their intro classes [in Women's Studies] and the Women and Media class. I also taught the first gay and lesbian class in this region in 1991. It was a film class about the way lesbian and gay folk are presented in media. It appears to have been the first gay and lesbian class in this region, western North Carolina (surely not the first in the UNC system). Watauga County, where Appalachian State is, has a timeline that lists this as the first LGBT class in that region.² I taught the Women and Media class for thirty years. It was my signature class. I would teach from coloring books to pornography. I always said that I took them to hell and back, because I think it takes that to get them to change.

In the 80s I was doing graduate work, did projects about pornography and the sex wars, and presentations about Appalachian women at the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) conference and at conferences of the Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA). I was keeping up my radical perspective in all of those things. As a part of my graduate work I made slide shows about violence against women and also created a presentation on women in non-traditional jobs, interviewing a number of women in our Asheville community and presenting this slide show to various women's groups. The 1980s was also when I started going to MichFest, since I lived up there then. I've been going since 1986, and I go there to rest. I don't do any of my teaching there. I rest. It's going to be really tough going this year, it being the last year. We are celebrating our 40th anniversary [at MichFest]. So much did start forty years ago. For me it did, anyway.

² Fall, 1991: ASU's first LGBT course, IDS 3533 Gay Experience/Media Interpretations, offered by Kim Duckett, <http://www.outhistory.org/exhibits/show/watauga/timeline>.

Shamanism, Feminist Spirituality, and WHISPER

As I became a woman of spirit, I realized that what I was doing [in teaching the media class in Women's Studies] was shamanic, emotionally and spiritually. That's what shamans do, they go to hell and back. That helped me later to understand my shamanism when I became a priestess.

My shamanism began in the early 90s. When I came back to North Carolina, I went to our women's bookstore, Malaprop's. Eموke B'Racz is the owner now. She is a lesbian, but maybe not a radical lesbian feminist separatist. At that time, I had never thought of getting a PhD, even though I'd been teaching all those years. At Malaprop's I saw all those books about women's spirituality and goddess spirituality, and I wanted to read them all. There was a whisper in my ear that said, "You can!" So that's how I went back for the PhD.

For me, in the 1980s, during the backlash, I think women's spirituality was the women's movement. For me, it was radical. It was never namby pamby, because I always had that radical background as a radical feminist. I never came into it as a flowing gown kind of thing. I do feel that spirit, the Goddess, moved me in the direction of doing a PhD in Women's Studies and women's spirituality, so those two would always be combined with the feminist theory. I went to the Union Institute in Cincinnati.³ It's an independent program, like Goddard. Goddard does the same kind of independent, cutting edge kind of work. I was in that school five years getting my PhD. I began a nonprofit organization called WHISPER (Women' Holy Inspirational Spiritual Performances, Events, and Rituals). I could do anything under the auspices of that nonprofit educational and religious organization, just to aggravate the system. It still exists and is how I still do my work.

I started teaching Women's Spiritual Journeys then, and still teach it. It's a 16-week course that walks women through ancient goddess cultures and their loss, the burning times, all kinds of women's spiritualities in different cultures. I teach non-appropriation. So many white women think they don't have an earth-based tradition. The first year [of the course] is the Wheel of the Year, taught as a spiritual psychology. [It's different from other spiritual practices.] For example, I would go to other people's spring equinoxes, and we would have our flower headdresses, and it seemed frivolous to me. It never touched me. Then I realized we were talking about girls, and all I knew about girls from Women's Studies, and that's how I teach it. Girls have really hard lives. I teach the truth about incest, the truth about stereotypes, and then maybe we'll get to the flowers and stuff. I do that all the way through, for the adolescent girls, the maidens, how hard it is to live in patriarchy. That's why I say it's still my activism. It's still radical. Just like I did the media class, I have to tiptoe up to it. I can't come on as a totally radical feminist separatist. If what I'm saying makes sense, they'll get there on their own. I have seen four women become radical lesbian feminist separatists through this school. And that just gives my heart joy, that we can still get there.

Then a big change happened. Do you remember the term *trashing*? That still happens. My board of directors (WHISPER's board) trashed me. I was walked out of my own temple, the locks were changed, and they took all the money. I called it the earthquake. I didn't remember the word

³ Union Institute and University emphasizes distance learning and short residency graduate degrees. The main campus is in Cincinnati, and it has satellite campuses in Vermont, Florida, and California.

trashing until later. It happened in January 2005. I called it the earthquake because after it happened, we were going through the rubble. People believed this stuff. They accused me of sleeping with one of my clients. They have not stopped me, but I no longer have a temple.

I was getting ready to start travelling for a large organization called the Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, International (RCGI). They're in Madison, WI. Jade River is the mother of that organization, the first organization on the planet that started ordaining priestesses again. They did not ordain me, my community did. I felt it was radical to have no body except the body of my community ordain me. When Jade saw my three-year feminist spirituality curriculum, she wanted me to take it on the road for them. So I started traveling to teach the Wheel of the Year as a psychology in 2005. That was in the works already.

I can't say exactly what happened [to cause the trashing]. I wrote about it in a chapter of this book ["Psychological Aspects of Priestessing," in *Stepping into Ourselves*. In that chapter, Kim tells a little about what happened to her and terms it "trashing."] It would be good if someone could do an oral herstory of that, interviewing all the women who were involved, so it could be understood as part of what we went through. Recalling the practice of trashing in the 1970s and later helped me understand it. One of the women was in love with me, and I didn't know it. We talked every day. We were close. I was with another woman but wasn't partnered. We talked about polyamory, all of us, but I wasn't engaging in polyamory at that point. Then a woman appeared, who became what is called in my Dianic goddess tradition, a Guardian. I'm a Priestess and she's a Guardian. You can find more info about this in RCG-I and other Goddess/women's spirituality communities.

My partner in the 1990s (we broke up in 2002) was my first Guardian though we did not use that term then.

The way we describe it in the Mystery School, the radical feminist Amazon is celebrated in the holy day of the Amazon, which is July, for freedom. We always do it in July, to offset the independence day of patriarchy. The Amazon is She Who Protects That Which Has Been Created, Sustained, and Nurtured. This could also be a good beginning of the definition of a Guardian. RCG-I speaks of her in this way. But is not specific enough for us because we all consider ourselves Amazons in my community. We actually consider and call ourselves a culture.⁴

⁴ Another way I try to describe the Guardian is like this. In our Mystery School/WOTY/WHISPER culture there are all kinds of Beingnesses, including Priestesses, Guardians, Seers, Bards, Storykeepers, etc., etc. The way I explain it is that along with this thing that we have called "the reemergence of the Goddess" came, I believe, the kinds of women, or Beings, that lived during ancient Old European Goddess cultures. Included in these cultures are what were called the Amazons, of Libya and later Northern Mongolia. So, those in my community/tribe speak of their true lineage being Amazonian, as well as other old Goddess cultures, the most well know being the Celtic folk, etc. All of this is to say/add that in those ancient cultures and now in the contemporary Dianic Goddess cultures there are these Beingnesses back on planet earth known as Priestesses and Guardians. Priestesses are those wimmin who are called to serve the Goddess by providing spiritual experiences for wimmin. That's the short definition and all needed for now I think. The Guardians began to "return" after the Goddess spirituality movement had gained some footing due to the work of the Priestesses and they soon became recognizable as more Amazon-like than the flowing gown priestesses though I myself consider myself an Amazon Priestess (and I don't mean Xena) whether in a gown or jeans. I continue to equate all things Amazon with our early radical lesbian feminism, along with our beloved labyris. It has just all continued to evolve in these communities and what I call Dianic Goddess cultures.

This woman who appeared in my life in 2003 was my student, and we started a relationship two years into knowing each other, and because I did that, the woman in my circle who was in love with me got pissed off. A lot of other factors came into play, it was a perfect storm. It's one of the reasons I hesitated to be interviewed. I still have PTSD about it. I don't have a website. I keep a real low profile. I'm not feeling sorry for myself, but once you've been trashed by the women you're with every day, it's not just political.

I didn't stop. It happened in January, and I went on to have the Imbolc ritual in February. I did not stop. Why I called it the earthquake is that's how we were reacting. We were going through the rubble, trying to see what was left. People believed these people. That was the hard part for me. As a radical lesbian feminist who had dedicated my life to women, I had counseled incest survivors, and they accused me of sleeping with one of my clients.

It has not stopped me. I went on to do my work nationally. I wrote this article called (they named it this) "Psychological Aspects of Priestessing." What this does is explain what happens in women's circles. I talk about projection and those kinds of things. And then I looked up trashing because I remembered the word, and was able to get quotes from the 70s so I could bring it to the here and now. It's not just some women hurting another woman. It has a name, and we named it in the 70s. So I was able to conceptualize it for myself and also teach people in the present that this isn't something new. I still have the PTSD from it. It's hard for me to trust. I had no venue to explain myself. I did let the women know that if they had any questions they could ask me. I had meetings.

At RCG-I, Jade asked me, "What was it about? money, power, or sex?" It was all three. I'm going to leave it at that. It's a pattern that happens to strong women. I have some theories about why that is [in the essay cited above], and it behooves patriarchy. It's an important connection between what happened in the 70s and now. It has a name, and we named it. I'm sorry we still have to talk about it, but it did happen.

Tribas (aka Barb Lutz), my Guardian now for twelve years, "protects" me and my energy and time. One of the ways she can be known is as an Amazon, which we also define as "She Who Protects" and "She Who Protects That Which Has Been Created, Sustained, and Nurtured" and "She Who Protects She Who Creates, Sustains, and Nurtures" in our Wheel of the Year work as a psychology. When I teach a class or do a ritual she creates all the altars and sacred environments which enhance my work and also "teaches" especially those who learn best visually. (She is well-loved in the Goddess community and her work and words about her work can be seen on RCG-I's website under the seasonal salon, for example:

<http://www.rcgi.org/news/seasonal-salon/67-news/seasonal-salon/summer-solstice-2015/474-summer-solstice-altar>) She is dedicated to making sure my "work" gets out to the world, i.e., my classes, rituals, and now the work with the Wheel of the Year not just as a spirituality of paganism, etc., but as what we believe is an ancient psychology for Goddess women. That is a huge part of her Beingness as a Guardian to this Priestess. We consider our social, political, psychological, spiritual lineage as Goddess-honoring Amazons.

Book about Wheel of the Year

I'm writing a book now about the Wheel of the Year as an earth-based spiritual psychology for women. It's my life's work, and it seems like it's taking forever. I'm doing footnotes and final editing now. When I first sent [parts of] my book out [for review], they had to send it to Europe because it wasn't just about spirituality but about psychology, and they didn't have anybody with any grasp of that. The woman wrote back a critique that said, "I don't know how this can be about the holy days because she's not talking about sex and fertility." I have taken the sex (mostly hetero sex) out of it. For us it's not about sex. I'm trying to wrest us back from the brainwashing that's in European earth-based traditions. They talk about maidens, and for them it's about sex. For us it's about desire, not reproduction. We say that none of this is about reproduction. Patriarchy wants us to think that. Nobody could understand what I was saying because I had so radically broken away from that. I don't tell the maidens, "now you can have babies." There's so much more to tell them. That's how the book goes, very radical. (See article for *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*. Available online.⁵)

I knew that a regular publisher would not publish it, and I was curious to see what Goddess Ink would do [they published *Stepping Into Ourselves*, mentioned above; Goddess Ink is run by two women, one heterosexual, one bisexual, both feminist]. I sent them the first part of the manuscript, about the Wheel of the Year, and they asked why I didn't just write about patriarchy in the beginning and get over it, just move on. Don't do your work in relation to being against patriarchy. And it's true, the word *patriarchy* comes up in my book all the time, because there's no way I can write women's psychology, lesbian psychology, feminist psychology, without reminding us all the time that this is not normal. What we are and how we are is not normal. It's normal under patriarchy. The way I work with women is to own that we have always lived under patriarchy, and so our psychology and spirituality has always come from there. In ritual, there are moments of time when we are briefly outside of it. That's in the book, too, moments when we are what we might be outside of patriarchy. That's why I love female shamanism. You can get outside of patriarchy, even though it's hard. In my death chapter, I've written about how patriarchy even affects us in death, not just what happens to us in hospice, but what happens to us afterward. They've messed with birth, the moment we come in, so I'm sure they're messing with the moment we go out. So they won't be publishing this book. It's way too radical. I'm not going to back off saying the word *patriarchy* and do a little workbook.

About Bringing Sonia Johnson Back to Lecturing

Sonia Johnson came to Asheville because of one of my students, Lisa Garrett (also called Phoenix), now an ordained priestess in my tradition. She teaches the Women's Spiritual Journeys class. She is one of the students of mine who became a radical lesbian feminist separatist and read everything she could. There were three women in town that she considered radical lesbian feminist separatists. I was one of them, and a woman named Marie Stevens (she came in the 90s) and her partner Joy. Lisa had read Sonia Johnson and wanted to bring her here. Sonia had stopped doing lectures for 15 years, and Lisa talked her into starting again. It revived Sonia

⁵ Valeire [sic] Kim Duckett, "The Wheel of the Year as a Spiritual Psychology for Women," *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 29.2 (2010):137-51. This is a special issue on transpersonal feminism.

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Johnson. Sonia asked me to come do her rituals for the Hullabaloo, which was the reunion of the Wild Sisters in Santa Fe. Mary Daly was there. Sally Gearhart (she caused quite a little uproar), Cherie Moraga, Althea Walking Tree. The question was, “What is going on with feminism?” That was in 2007. All of that is in the June 2007 *off our backs*.