

BEVERLY ANNE BROWN

Author and social justice activist Beverly Anne Brown died at home in Portland, Oregon, on October 27, 2005, from cancer. She was born February 21, 1951, in Fresno, California, to Ann L. and Elton John Brown. She grew up in Redding, California, attended Reed College in Portland, and earned a Master's degree in Rural Development from Antioch University's joint program with the Rural Development Leadership Network.

She is the author of *In Timber Country: Working People's Stories of Environmental Conflict and Urban Flight* and co-edited, with Agueda Marín-Hernández, *Voices From the Woods: Lives and Experiences of Non-Timber Forest Workers*. In 1994, she founded the Jefferson Center for Education and Research, a popular education organization with links from California to British Columbia. She was the organization's director through 2004.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Beverly moved between Portland, Rhode Island, southern Oregon, and New York state, working in various wholesale and retail produce, restaurant, printshop, and clerking positions. In the late 1970s she fought the threat of surface strip mining in rural areas of southern Oregon. She was active in the women's and lesbian liberation movements and, in 1983, founded *Maize: A Lesbian Country Magazine*.

During those years, Beverly worked with social activists and educators, cultivating her interest in popular education: education emerging from the lives of people in their workplaces and communities. In 1986, as an intern at the Highlander Center for Education and Research in New Market, Tennessee, she deepened her commitment to popular education, community-based research, and social justice. While at Highlander, she supported rural communities organizing against strip mining and initiated Highlander's first lesbian and gay gathering.

In 1987, she returned to the Northwest to renew connections with the Oregon women's land community. While working at Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Beverly began chronicling the stories of people living in the region's timber towns and exploring ideas for generating dialogue among diverse peoples about their lives, work, and community.

The Jefferson Center has provided a place for rural working people to find and develop their voices about work in the woods and the changes facing small rural towns. A key focus is connecting long-term residents with recent immigrants. Beverly facilitated innovative, lively, and respectful multi-lingual community meetings, chronicled and wrote about people's struggles, and supported non-timber forest workers in influencing public policy and speaking out for workers' rights. Her work and her vision were the catalyst for numerous ground-breaking initiatives led by forest workers and harvesters. Her last project was a comparative study of contract forest workers in Canada, Mexico, and the USA.

For many years she lived in Sunny Valley, Oregon, with her long-time partner Tee Corinne. One of her great pleasures was cultivating the beautiful garden at their home. She is survived by her mother, Ann L. Clark of Redding, California, and her brother, Ronald J. Brown of Lacey, Washington, as well as by a large community of friends and colleagues. The Beverly A. Brown Papers are housed in Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Oregon Libraries.

A southern Oregon memorial will be held Saturday, November 12, 2005, from 11 am to 1 pm at the Sunny Valley Town Hall located on the grounds of the Applegate Trail Interpretative Center in Sunny Valley. A Portland gathering to celebrate Beverly Brown's life will be held on November 19 from 2 to 5 pm at the Leach Botanical Garden, 6704 SE 122nd Avenue.

Contributions in Beverly's memory may be made to the Jefferson Center, P.O. Box 12190, Portland, Oregon 97212.