HERESIES

a feminist publication on art & politics

patterns of communication and space among women

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HERESIES is an idea-oriented journal devoted to the examination of art and politics from a feminist perspective. We believe that what is commonly called art can have a political impact, and that in the making of art and of all cultural artifacts our identities as women play a distinct role. We hope that HERESIES will stimulate dialogue around radical political and aesthetic theory, encourage the writing of the history of *femina sapiens*, and generate new creative energies among women. It will be a place where diversity can be articulated. We are committed to the broadening of the definition and function of art.

HERESIES is structured as a collective of feminists, some of whom are also socialists, marxists, lesbian feminists or anarchists; our fields include painting, sculpture, writing, anthropology, literature, performance, art history, architecture and filmmaking. While the themes of the individual issues will be determined by the collective, each issue will have a different editorial staff made up of contributors as well as members of the collective. Each issue will take a different visual form, chosen by the group responsible. HERESIES will try to be accountable to and in touch with the international feminist community. An open evaluation meeting will be held after the appearance of each issue. Themes will be announced well in advance in order to collect material from many sources. (See inside of back cover for list of projected issues.) Possibly satellite pamphlets and broadsides will be produced continuing the discussion of each central theme.

As women, we are aware that historically the connections between our lives, our arts and our ideas have been suppressed. Once these connections are clarified they can function as a means to dissolve the alienation between artist and audience, and to understand the relationship between art and politics, work and workers. As a step toward a demystification of art, we reject the standard relationship of criticism to art within the present system, which has often become the relationship of advertiser to product. We will not advertise a new set of genius-products just because they are made by women. We are not committed to any particular style or aesthetic, nor to the competitive mentality that pervades the art world. Our view of feminism is one of process and change, and we feel that in the process of this dialogue we can foster a change in the meaning of art.

THE COLLECTIVE: Ida Applebroog, Patsy Beckert, Joan Braderman, Mary Beth Edelson, Su Friedrich, Janet Froelich, Harmony Hammond, Sue Heinemann, Elizabeth Hess, Joyce Kozloff, Arlene Ladden, Lucy Lippard, Marty Pottenger, Miriam Schapiro, Amy Sillman, Joan Snyder, Elke Solomon, Pat Steir, May Stevens, Susana Torre, Elizabeth Weatherford, Sally Webster, Nina Yankowitz.

This issue of HERESIES was edited and produced by three groups which met separately and together for more than four months: a nine-woman editorial collective, which takes final responsibility for the magazine; an eight-woman adjunct group which worked on general ideas, research and specific articles; and a five-woman design/production group. Still other women helped with additional aspects, such as copyediting, proofreading and mechanicals, and the larger HERESIES Collective supported us all. Because of the number of women involved and the number of manuscripts received (more than twice as many as were submitted to our first issue), the process was complex. Editorial work was new to most of us, and we needed a lot of time to listen to each other, to reflect on our disparate experiences and viewpoints—and to develop an overview of the magazine, which finally affected our decisions almost as much as individual submissions. We worked collectively on each piece, arriving at a consensus only after much discussion. Sometimes we frustrated those authors and artists who had hoped to hear more from us sooner. As we worked, we found that we were indeed involved in a process of communication with all the women who wanted to participate in this issue, as well as with each other. If this process was at times confusing, it was also intensely satisfying.

As this issue went into production, Ree Morton, an artist whose friendship, work and commitment to feminism made her close to many of us, died of injuries sustained in an automobile accident. We will miss her.

Editorial group: *Patsy Beckert, Lizzie Borden, Janet Froelich, Denise Green, Sue Heinemann, Diane Levin, Lucy Lippard, Pat Steir, Elizabeth Weatherford.*
And: *Ida Applebroog, Karen Harris, Stephanie Brody Lederman, Karen Shaw, Theodora Skipitares, Amy Snider, Carla Tardi, Mimi Weisbord.*
Design/production group: *Barbara Coleman, Paula Greif, Suzanne Kuffler, Francesca de Majo.*

Our thanks to those who helped get out this issue: Barbara Baracks, Marina Cappalletto, Nicole Croiset, Tony DeLuna, Debbie Dominguez, Birgit Flos, Maria Friedrich, Su Friedrich, Paula Harper, Laurie Leifer, Diana Long, Mary Lou Lopez, Melissa Meyer, Margot Norton, Lawrence Pitkethly, Bernie Rohret, Sarah Schuman, Amy Sillman, Jackie Wray, Nil Yalter, Ruth Young; our lawyer, Eleanor Fox; and our photographers, eevainkeri.

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Instead of writing individual statements, the editorial group has chosen to present photographs of the private spaces where we work. (Laurie Leifer.)

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Woman has always been associated with the dark, with the unknown. It has been in society's interest to consider women unknowable; that has been one of the devices to keep us from power. Separated then from the "light" of the dominant society, we women have perpetuated a culture of our own, expressed in our own forms, which has frequently been transmitted, as is the case with other oppressed cultures, in subtle, uncodified ways. Not taught in schools, it is communicated in the home, through kinship lines, laterally through sisters, grandmothers, friends. Influenced and affected by the dominant cultures within or against which it must exist, this culture nevertheless seems to incorporate certain universal elements which may in part be due to the fact that women everywhere are socialized into similar roles and oppressions. Ironically, despite our universal oppression, women seem to have survived as the guardians of certain human values necessary to the survival of humanity. At the same time, these values undermine the anti-human thrust of contemporary industrial and technological life. In bourgeois society, this contradiction is solved through the relegation of women to the home, and our isolation from public life, which prevents those values from entering the public sphere. Similarly, these contributions are further devalued through their association with women and they consequently lose their power to influence the direction of the dominant culture. Certain survival values then persist in isolation within the circumscribed female domain.

Woman's culture is the complex expression of a woman's sensibility, the interaction of knowledge, values, rituals, organizations and attitudes resulting from the interaction of role, biology, historical conditions and memory. It has developed forms which deny aggression, competition, rank and power—essentially non-hierarchical, intimate and cooperative forms. The tone with which women address each other when we are alone, calling each other immediately by our first names, the conversations women have with other women are, in themselves, models of the entire culture. Woman's conversation is a particular form of communication in which seemingly simple interchanges, as well as sophisticated theoretical and analytical discussions, incorporate a complex of other activities. When women speak to each other, the sentence functions both to communicate information and to establish intimate connection between women. Woman's conversation is often confined to intuition, accompanied by non-verbal interaction, touch, eye contact, which enhance the intensity of the interchange.

Women tend, when possible, to search for the common denominator, for the area of common and meaningful experience. Women so often talk about "women's things" because they are more interested in the feeling of community than in an abstract interchange, and what are commonly deprecated as "women's things" are in fact those events of daily life common to everyone's experience. For example, when we introduce ourselves to each other, we tend to avoid professional definitions, offering general statements about our lives, some bit of information which can create an intimate experience. Particularly since consciousness raising, we introduce ourselves in terms of personal struggle, openly communicating the current internal dilemma or problem: "I've just divorced" or "I'm trying to get my life together."

Women are willing to reveal the raw materials in order to explore together. Women's conversations may have a more "unfinished" quality because we begin at the unknown rather than the known. If men's conversations reveal, women's conversations explore.

I wish to create here a form appropriate to the subject of woman's culture which reflects those attitudes and values integral to that culture. I think of this article as a conversation rather than a monologue and have tried to create spaces that elicit response.

Rather than embody material, information, illustration in footnotes that indicate a secondary status or a formal acknowledgment of authority, I prefer to provide complementary space for the other voices which inform this article. A form that more honestly acknowledges the informal and constant exchange of ideas. I see these pages as places reserved for other women writers and artists to participate as partners. I invite the reader to use them to respond, think, make notes and add to what I have written according to her own insights and imagination.

"And so our mothers and grandmothers have, more often than not anonymously, handed on the creative spark, the seed of the flower they themselves never hoped to see: or like a sealed letter they could not plainly read." (Alice Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," *Ms. Magazine*, May 1974.)

Deena Metzger

So we begin again here to negotiate a form as if this were a conversation between us which contained references to other conversations, to our work, to those asides wherein we discover how we come to know this, reminding each other of previous discussions, those stolen moments in the kitchen, carpooling, when we meet in the supermarket, in the offices, the TV stations, the lecture rooms, those moments when we emphasize an idea by extending our hands to each other, the pressure of fingers on the upper arm, speaking a sentence of verbs, nouns, prepositions, affection, solidarity and acknowledgment. This does not come from me alone; I learned it from you; we have been passing it through our minds and bodies and conversations for years now. Virginia gave it word-flesh when she asked us to create the woman's sentence. Well, we have made it, we are making it. The woman's sentence, the woman's paragraph, the woman's building, the woman's design, the woman's portrait. . . forms as complex as *their* forms, but *our* forms, different forms, responsive to our own values, experiences, priorities. Each one of us knows one form. I will tell one, you another, then Barbara, Jane, Sheila, all the women I know.

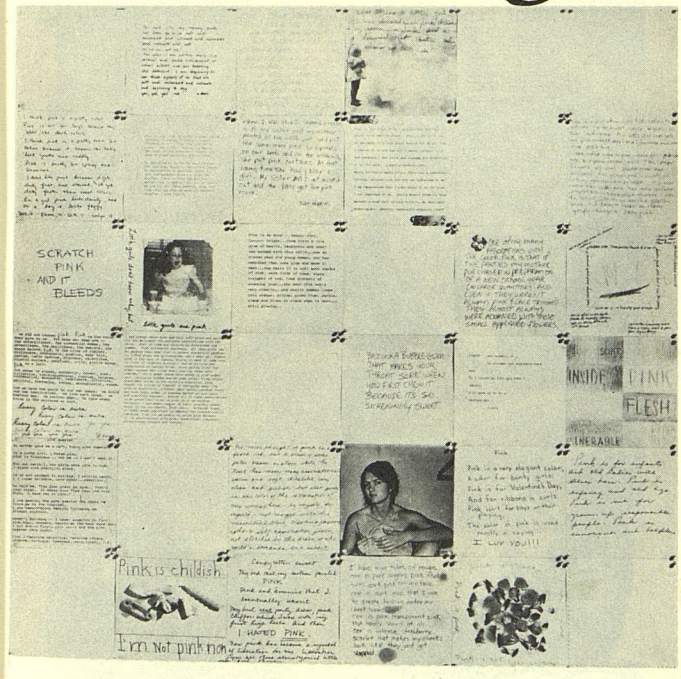
"Give an example," Martha says.

"Okay, Martha. Thank you." Your urging helped me to come to this form which is our form, a conversation not a dissertation. Between sentences, I am listening for your comments, incorporating them, answering them, and listening for them once more. That listening, asking, incorporating, is characteristic of us, we who are attentive. But now we bring that form into the public domain as one of the new ways.

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"Since childhood, women have always been *bricoleurs*, creating structures by means of events,' making-do, constructing whole lives out of leftovers, devising entire, though miniature worlds out of their peripheral status and tasks. Such worlds rivaled the male spheres in complexity, interest and involvement. They were worlds made of smaller and homelier materials but built in proportion, involving the entire range of social processes, as full-bodied as the external, male-dominated realm. In her own miniature world, the woman was in charge, using time and energy according to her own lights. Within the structured points of her day in the household, she did a great many highly diverse tasks, all at the same time, always expecting to be interrupted, never expecting full closure, bustling from one activity to the next, watching her work come undone as soon as completed." (Barbara G. Myerhoff, from an unpublished paper "The Older Woman as Androgyne: Sexual Stereotypes and Innovations.")

*In Her Image**



Sheila de Bretteville. *Pink*. 1974. Poster. 19" x 19". (eeva-inkeri.)

Women tend to focus on the person being spoken to. What do you want to know? What do you need from me? Women do not commonly tell each other jokes or puns, preferring more responsive forms. "You know how it is" invites identification and laughter, often bitter. The tendency of some women to raise rather than lower their voices at the end of sentences does not imply uncertainty so much as invitation, willingness to negotiate and desire for response and interaction.

One of the basic functions of women's conversations is nurturance. When women talk to each other, we simultaneously take care of each other, provide comfort, communicate information and verify a common reality through the discovery of basic common experience. It is not enough to find "common interests" but to discover those that are essential to, not oblique to, existence. The anxiety aroused because women talk about the essentials allows for our conversation to be characterized as gossip, trivial, materialistic. Women, in fact, talk about others, about children, clothes, cooking, the "stuff of life," because these are the universals, the common essential ingredients of existence.

Women who wish to participate in the public sphere as women rather than to conform to male standards as a condition of both entry and survival need to examine our own forms and their sources in order to integrate these forms into public institutions and behaviors.

How does one communicate this information? The language appropriate to formal presentation is heavy and abstract. Each idea is confined within a noun and those are arranged in order. One says "immediate," "integrated," "continuous," "collective," "personal"... But when we speak about it together, we create another tone and style...

When Sheila is invited to enter a design competition on the subject of color, she asks women friends and associates of various ages, including young girls, to respond to the color pink on small squares. These are organized into a grid in which no piece is more important than another. The poster permits women to respond to a color which has been socially devaluated. Pink is assigned to women; baby pink, thrust upon us during infancy, remains our color through old age. Its associations are with infantilism, indulgence, frivolity. How, then, can we claim it? Yet the responses on the pink cards indicate strength, assurance, energy. They contradict the preconceptions. When the piece is finished, the color has new associations representing a wide range of responses. The individual statements become a collective self-portrait, a self-examination, facilitating the reevaluation of pink and of ourselves. The poster is responsive. It is a non-hierarchical structure. It is a communal effort. It evokes a variety of responses. It is complex. It provides for reevaluation. It makes a feminist statement in form as well as in content.

Why do I begin with Sheila? Because we came to this at the same time although quite independently. Sheila was the organizer of the first Feminist Design Program at Cal Arts. She is also one of the organizers of the Feminist Studio Workshop and of the Woman's Building. She was teaching design and I was teaching literature. We were both pursuing our private design and writing. Looking at women's work from historical and critical perspectives, we discovered that it exhibited basic affinities despite historical and national barriers. This work does not yield easily to analysis with ordinary critical tools, as it departs from the dominant modes, goals and value systems. As we attempted to weave an appropriate feminist critical perspective, we realized that woman's work corresponds to a particular organization of time and space and to a frequent reference to the immediate and the everyday.

* Revised and excerpted from the manuscript of an unpublished book, *In Her Image: Woman's Culture*, 1976.

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Perhaps we should pause here, creating an interruption corresponding to the interruptions that women expect and incorporate into our own work, the spaces that permit permeation and invite response. We are not concerned here with the transfer of information so much as a simulation of the experience in which we come to know things; we are concerned with the context of information, how it comes from us and from our lives. No matter how abstract, no matter how formal, women's work is connected at one point at least to the fundamental realities, to our bodies, to our everydays, to our dreams. When our work is our work, it is always also of ourselves.

It is said that woman is nature and man is culture.... It is true that woman, for a variety of reasons, is more sensitive to natural forces, cycles, rhythms, as role and biology always thrust her into the immediate and domestic existence. If this sensitivity is expressed in behaviors that are responsive rather than closed, it is mistaken to assume that response is negative or imposed. Response requires openness, willingness, action, and like withdrawal, implies choice.

It has been woman's habit to create structures and behaviors that are both systematic and responsive. Women create culture as men do, but not having created a dominant culture, we act privately within forms that remain largely invisible to the public scrutiny although they are sufficiently forceful and intense to be communicated laterally and historically.

When we hear the words "immediate" and "everyday," we associate them with values ascribed to the woman's sector. They are the mundane, unimportant, banal, and we feel the anxiety which Western civilization terms "imprisonment in the here and now." "Imprisonment" itself refers to forms of closure that threaten male separateness and disengagement, such as possessiveness, enchantment, the vagina dentata. Similarly, "flux" stimulates cultural anxieties associated with chaos, death, unpredictability, sexuality, male anxieties regarding mortality, against which are opposed principles of permanence, eternity and transcendence.

The male-dominated movie screen informs us that modern "life" is a series of boring episodes which can only be interrupted by violent explosions. But the ordinary, from a woman's view, is hardly ordinary. It is repetitive, it is full of trivia, it is necessary, maddening, contingent, it is never-ending, but it is also, as in Papilla Estelar, wonder-full or awe-full. And women's art reflects this power of the immediate.

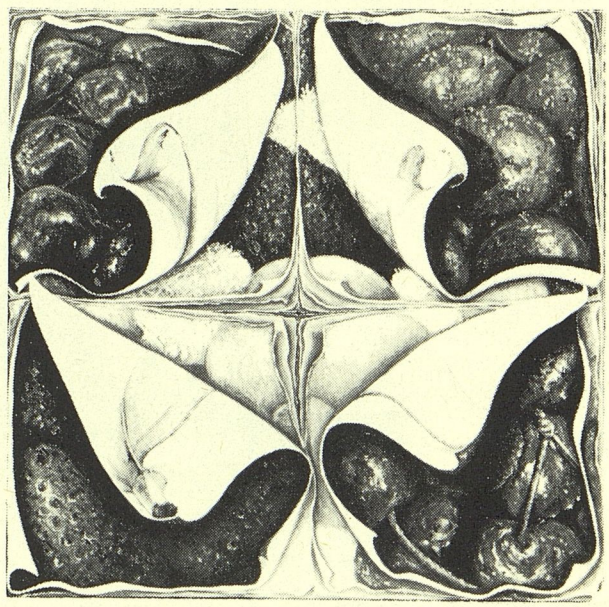
Gertrude, for example, predicates a style upon the immediate or the "continuous present," as she calls it, "using everything and beginning again." And beginning again. A cycle of repetition, of rhythm, everything told so completely and so simply that existence emerges as a fact and language becomes "an entire space always moving not something moving through a space."

Men are associated with behaviors that strive toward permanence as opposed to continuousness. That men legislate and women gossip may be a reflection of men's interest in autonomous social control as opposed to personal interaction. An organized and ordered society emerges. Facts of nature become anomalies, violations. Economic cycles, plagues, age, rain, children, sun, disease, menstruation, fatigue, fiesta, are all disturbances of the perfect unchanging order, inconveniences rather than essential conditions, factors to be mitigated or eliminated.

Interruption is a basic condition of a mother's life. One of the reasons for the segregation of the work world from the home is in order to avoid the interruptions of the daily life. In the home, one is constantly interrupted by need and continuous time is not available. Home is not the place where one can establish a hierarchy of priorities. It may be more "important" to write an address to the United Nations, but the crying baby takes precedence nevertheless. Women know that life has the terrible habit of asserting itself. The woman writing her doctoral thesis, the judge presiding at a trial, is also, simultaneously, thinking about the broccoli for dinner, the child's dentist appointment, the death of a friend. Women's art forms reflect the condition of interruption and simultaneity in a variety of ways.

Scars on the Body Politic, a novel I completed in 1975, is actually interrupted several times by actual events, equivalents of the "crying child." They imposed "non-negotiable demands" upon the material; they had to be heeded and incorporated in the framework of the book. In one section I actually say, "This is the place where the book was interrupted."

Similarly, women's works often have an unfinished quality —are anti-art art pieces, more faithful to the reality corresponding to the idea that only art, not life, can ever be finished. A journal, for example, which women are coming to recognize as a work in itself, and not the source for the work, is often a collection of thoughts, fragments, ideas, perceptions, descriptions, dreams, conversations, jotted down at odd moments, in sentences or codes, according to time and mood. In a class taught on "Autobiography, Journals and Life Histories," the students wrote more fluently when they were freed from the tyranny of the complete sentence. Given permission to write in fragments and notes, they could record their lives in a way they felt was more appropriate to their experience. The women more than the men responded to the more open form.



Gilah Hirsch. *Four Square*. 1972. Oil on canvas. 4' x 4'. (Ed Hirsch.)

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Integration is a significant characteristic of woman's work. Many parts tend to be represented in a single work. Into the daily life come the essential realities of existence, biology and death. The universal weds the specific; the ordinary and extraordinary dance; the wonderful refuses to be separated from the mundane.

Remedios Varo captures this integration in *Papilla Estelar* (1958). The painting shows a woman dressed in black, seated in a poor, cramped and barren house set within the heavens. She is grinding the stars through a kitchen meat grinder and feeding this stellar mixture to a domesticated moon confined within a bird cage. The eternal and the contingent, the metaphysical and the mundane coexist. This is one of several paintings by Remedios Varo that capture the forms of woman's culture. It is ironic that Remedios is categorized by art critics as a surrealist. Extraordinary as her vision may appear to the dominant culture, it is for us simply the complex accurate image of a female world view.



Remedios Varo. *Papilla Estelar.* 1958. Oil on masonite. 92" x 62". Collection Sr. Lic. Eduardo Villaseñor.

Woman is more sensitive to flux, cycle, to the transitory as the basis of experience. Change is part of her daily life while permanence, fixity are eccentric events. The cycle is a concept which coordinates repetition and change. Completeness has a satisfying resonance and is a reasonable female goal. Intensity rather than eternity. That work and art which reflect these female concerns do not always look like "work" because they are organized differently is another reflection of the simplifying tendencies of the dominant culture.

Sheila observes: "The organization of material in fragments, multiple peaks rather than single climactic moment, has a quality and rhythm which may parallel woman's ontological experience, particularly her experience of time... There are several genres of women's work, quilts and blankets, for example, which are assemblages of fragments generated whenever there is time, which are in their method of creation as well as in their aesthetic form, visually organized into many centers. The quilting bee, as well as the quilt itself, is an example of an essentially non-hierarchal organization."

Not exactly the lady one associates with quilting bees and other domestic tasks, the monumental Gertrude Stein nevertheless knit from one soldier's hospital bed to another during World War I, providing cheer, socks and letter-writing services. In this behavior we can see the patterns which she also translated into literary form. "You see," she says, "I tried to convey the idea of each part of a composition being as important as the whole... After all, to me one human being is as important as another being, and you might say that the landscape has the same values, a blade of grass has the same value as a tree."

An assemblage of fragments free of hierarchy. "Certainly," Sheila continues, "the quality of time in a woman's life, particularly if she is not involved in the career thrust toward fame and fortune, is distinct from the quality of time experienced by men and women who are caught up in the progress of a career. The linearity of time is foreign to the actual structure of a day as well as to the rhythm of women's monthly biological time... The assemblage of fragments, the organization of forms in a complex matrix, projects this experience of time, suggests depth and intensity as an alternative to progress."

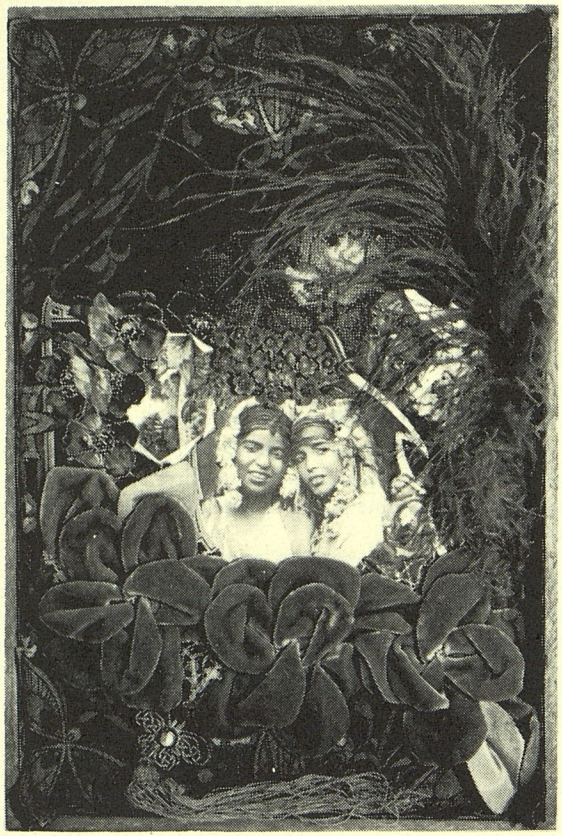
Our different organization of time and space requires that we react differently to phenomena. We do not know things in isolation or in a continuum so much as we know everything at once. The cycle is the long whole moment. (The implications of a different thought process ought to be considered seriously by psychologists and educators.) To know everything at once requires that we utilize every sense.

"Woman's intuition," then, is the direct result of holding oneself completely open to the entire experience in its immediacy and completeness. Intuition is simply knowing at the moment and knowing entirely with one's intellect, memory, body, emotions; it is knowing caringly, evoking information and ordering it through the personal context.

Intuition is simply testament to a context; it is knowledge which exists in a complete relationship. To the extent that men isolate experience in order to know, they separate it from themselves in the belief that emotion contaminates information. The subjective, the personal, the immediate, the evocative are seen as screens preventing the analytical mind from knowing things in themselves, out of flux, out of the conditional.

But much of what we know, we know exactly in the condition, in the daily life, the actual, the flux, the contingent and with emotion...

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Bettye Saar. *Bittersweet.* 1974. Mixed media. 19" x 14¾" x 4".

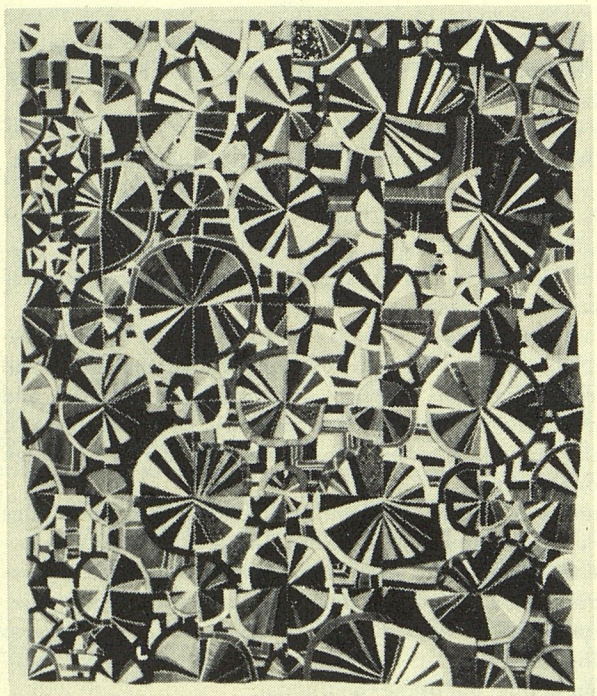
"The materials I use in my work are found objects, discards and natural objects. . . shells, feathers, etc. I merely recycle them. A particular object may suggest a piece. Maybe a feeling about a color or certain image or symbol will conjure a piece. . . .

"I may work on several pieces at once, going from one to another, selecting, rejecting objects, images, symbols, as if in a trance. But it works. The fragments fit, the message is revealed and again the magic happens. Dat Ol' Black Magic!" Bettye Saar, in *Art: A Woman's Sensibility*, California Institute of the Arts, 1975.)

". . . what might have gone on last night while four women taled about a quilt:

> how it grows rather than being planned. aletheia's hair piled on her head—the hair works loose through the evening—one long strand of it falls on her neck. they see it grow longer and longer until it's the longest strand of hair in the world. it reaches the floor, then through the house, out of the back door, around the neighborhood —playing with children, talking hopefully to old people and censes—moving on, still attaches to aletheia's head. the hair

and the quilt as the time that moves in front of us. streets and stores and traffic lights and the strangers that repeat every day, always and never the same." (Holly Prado, *Feasts*, Momentum Press, Los Angeles, 1976.)



Anonymous. Crazy quilt. 1900-10. Lancaster, Pa. area. Wool and flannel. 78" x 73". Private collection. (America Hurrah Antiques.)

The quilt has come to be symbolic because it is an assemblage of odd bits, organized in a non-hierarchical order, and because the quilting bee itself, the circle of women, remains to us as a form of non-hierarchical collective labor.

"In the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. there hangs a quilt unlike any other in the world. In fanciful, inspired, and yet simple and identifiable figures, it portrays the story of the Crucifixion. It is considered rare, beyond price. Though it follows no known pattern of quilt-making, and though it is made of bits and pieces of worthless rags, it is obviously the work of a person of imagination and deep spiritual feeling. Below this quilt I saw a note that says it was made by 'an anonymous Black woman in Alabama, a hundred years ago.'

"If we could locate this 'anonymous' Black woman from Alabama, she would turn out to be one of our grandmothers—an artist who left her mark in the only materials she could afford, and in the only medium her position in society allowed her to use." (Alice Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," *Ms. Magazine*, May 1974.)

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The leaderless group, the circular form, the non-hierarchical structure are perhaps the most socially significant contributions of the women's movement.

Classrooms, organizing meetings, work sessions are physically organized to diminish the distance between individuals. In contrast to seating arrangements in the male-dominated society, where desks, stages, lecterns, daises both separate and indicate rank and authority, physical position does not create hierarchical structure. Women tend to sit close to each other in formations which allow for the mingling of work, play, intellectual activity, emotional nurturance.

In this meeting of the Feminist Studio Workshop, one cannot distinguish the leaders from the participants, professors from students. Likewise, there is mingling of ages, both children and older people are present. A number of activities are occurring simultaneously. . . .



Consciousness-raising group. 1973. (Lila Pearce.)

The first extant autobiography was written in English by a woman. *The Book of Margery Kempe* is the first extant woman's book. Today it seems that all of us are keeping journals, recording our own lives passionately. We use these forms for documentation and disclosure. The last few years have shown an undressing of woman's experience which seems in inverse proportion to the intensity of the taboo against woman's nakedness. We are becoming more and more naked. And then we peel away the skin. Relentlessly naked. It is difficult to look. But we persist. Sometimes the images are so strong we look away. The vulval ecstasy of Monique Wittig's *Les Guêrillères* has that character, or the overwhelming honesty of Kate Millett's *Flying*, or the fecund kitchen dissections of Sylvia Plath and Gilah Hirsch, or the psychological exploration in the art of Frida Kahlo which is unprecedented in self-portraiture. In *The Two Fridas* she is herself one of the fates, holding the scissors which sever the lifeline—her own artery. The portrait examines the complexity, duality and contradiction of the personality.



Frida Kahlo. *Las Dos Fridas*. 1939. Oil on wood. 67" x 67".

As I read these words, I want to tell you everything I know at once and everything in at least three voices. Just as our days are layered (I used to say "laminated" but Barbara said that was too rigid, too hard, so I suggested "days like strudel" and she agreed), so our experiences are strudeled and we want to bite into them at once.

The cyclical form results in a literature and art that is dense, consisting of many coexisting layers. It creates a book that is neither journal nor novel, but what Kate Millett refers to as a new form of literature, the experiential book. The new critical standard in literature seems to de-emphasize plot, aesthetic beauty and form for a concern with the depth and intensity of the reality presented. Once the relationship between plot and form is seen, the arbitrary nature of plot is revealed. Plot, after all, is a pattern, familiar and reproducible, which can be repeated, albeit with variation, in novel after novel. Plot may be convenient for the writer, but it does not necessarily correspond to the way things are. Plot demands abstraction, elimination, selection, editing. It is a diminution of experience according to literary preconceptions. It removes the novel from the buzz.

As Doris Lessing asks in The Golden Notebook, "Why a story at all . . . why not simply the truth?"

The daily and essential realities are the focus of women's lives and work. "Do I repeat myself? Well, then, I repeat myself." The statement is Whitman's. Perhaps it is not ironic that Whitman is a poet of power whose masculinity is always questioned. Is it because of his repetitions that we recognize the female sensibility, or is it because he never forgot how close grass ought to be to the skin? Life and work—how did they become separated, is perhaps a more sensible question than why we are so intent on integrating them.

Even the popular media are occasionally sensitive to the narrow focus on work which is characteristic of the male dominant society and which is always puzzling to women. It is the male who creates industries, commercial centers, educational institutions that exclude children and other life forces from their boundaries. And it is women who have demanded that the doors be opened, to day-care centers, older children, the elderly, to greenery and the humanities of home.

Each day is a tapestry, threads of broccoli, promotion, couches, children, politics, shopping, building, planting, thinking interweave in intimate connection with the insistent cycles of birth, existence and death.

Women are aware of their bodies very early and very completely although this awareness has not been shared until now. Menstruation, lactation, pregnancy, menopause are long-term conditions of physical reorganization. When the blood comes at thirteen, we are always astonished even if we are well prepared. My mother slapped my face in the Jewish tradition "to bring the blood to my cheeks" and to punctuate the moment. The menstrual cycle is a repeated cycle of astonishments, physical disturbance and enlightenment forming a bond of intimacy between women based upon this shared experience. For years we have confessed that we are irritable at such times, but now we also need to admit that this is the time it seems to us we see most clearly. Perhaps this clarity comes from the regular cyclical connection with life and death symbolized by blood. Life is both prepared for and shed every month.

Is this the reason why women do not make war?

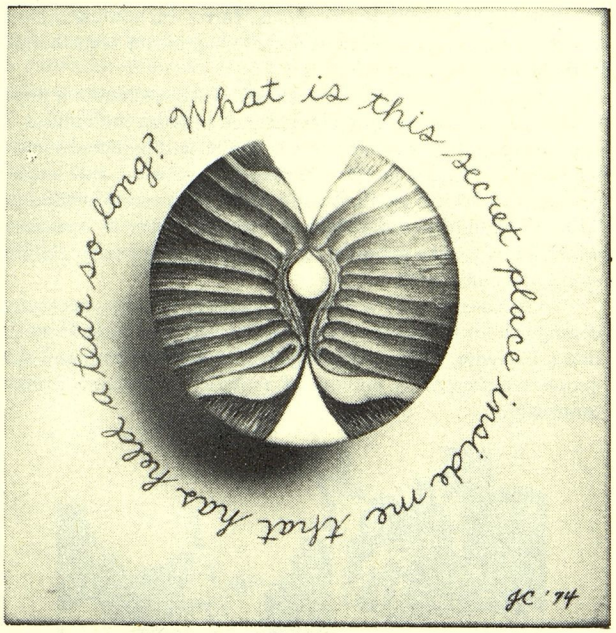
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The body, as one's own, and as a woman's body, is the first force that prevents women from becoming distracted by abstract intellectual behaviors, providing the immediate and intense private experience which simultaneously connects us with others. This dynamic is evident in the journal and the autobiography, which are particularly female forms. Personal revelation is one foundation of feminism and the new women's consciousness. The journal, as significant as consciousness raising, is a serious activity which cannot be pursued at proscribed times.

Recently I conducted a class in Secrets at Chino State Prison for Women. While it was relatively easy to deal with some of the consequences of search, seizure, scrutiny by wardens and guards, it was more difficult to evaluate the risk of revelation to one's fellow prisoners. It was relatively easy to understand that the prison authorities were simply the active instruments of social oppression and that acts of solidarity and revelation between women inevitably undermined the oppressive forces. However, it was more difficult to gauge the trust that was possible between women living under these conditions, whose lives were often regulated through the subtle manipulation of one woman against another. How much could they reveal to each other? How carefully would they honor each other's secrets?

As an act of faith, I first read a "secret" from my novel.

Then each woman wrote a "secret" to another woman in the room, with whom she could but was not obliged to share her writing. One woman decided to share her secret with the entire group, confiding in us that this was the first time she had revealed the event to anyone, despite three years of psychoanalysis. This was perhaps the first moment of social trust she had experienced. The secret, read in a trembling voice, was an agonized memory of sadistic and sexual cruelty perpetrated upon her, pregnant at fifteen, by someone she trusted and loved. Reading her own words, she now knew that she had not been responsible for provoking this incident. Fifteen years of guilt laid aside. Yet, listening to her revelation in the hushed silence of the prison classroom, I wondered if the support and love which allowed her to speak these words were temporary. Would she be betrayed later? And how? In any form, the guilt and pain had been a worm far more ravenous and lethal than any revelation could be now. Nevertheless, I hoped she would not pay the penalty that is often exacted by such nakedness.



Judy Chicago. *What is this secret place inside me that has held a tear so long?* 1974. China paint on porcelain. 6" x 6".

From *Skin: Shadows SILENCE : A Love Letter in the Form of the Novel*, West Coast Poetry Review, Reno, Nevada, 1976.

It is afternoon. You've heard this story before. This is the story I will tell twice and then again. It does not empty easily. This story has left a scar and the scar needs to be cut out. This story will be told again.

It is afternoon. I am alone. In an office. It is afternoon. I am alone. In an office. It is afternoon. I am alone.

There is a knock at the door. Or the sound of the door opening in the outer office. Or a knock and the sound of a door opening in the outer office this afternoon. I am alone. Thinking of things one thinks when one is alone in the afternoon. Almost a daydream. Allowed to think. Why should I be startled by a knock at my door or the sound of another door opening. Why should I hear the door or even interrupt my thoughts which are so pleasant this quiet afternoon. All the work is done.

Why bother to turn my head when I hear the floor creak? My thoughts are so pleasant, nothing can interrupt them. This is my time to muse. A rare afternoon alone. All the work is done.

Probably it is not a knock at the door that I hear and do not respond to. Probably it is the sound of a door opening quietly and of soft footprints across the floor. Or maybe it is the sound of a knock, a tentative tap to see if I am in. But it is a quiet afternoon and all the work is done and I am in to no one but myself, so I do not answer the door. Probably there is no sound. It is not that I refuse to be interrupted but that my dreams are so intense that I hear nothing, not the initial knock on the outer door, (if indeed there was a knock — probably there was no knock) nor the sound of the lock turning, nor the cautious feet across the floor, nor the cautious turning of the lock to my inner office and the stealthy opening of the door, nor the hand raised against me. Nothing. It is afternoon and I hear nothing, suspect nothing, till the gun is pressed against my head and the hand muzzles my mouth.

"Say nothing," he whispers.

It is a gun which is against my head. There is a man holding it. I cannot see him. But I do not think I know him. He ties an unclean and wrinkled handkerchief across my mouth. I close my eyes because I am afraid to know him. Simultaneously I keep them open in order to see this man. But I think I can see nothing.

"Take your clothes off," he says. Everything he says is in a strained and I assume disguised voice. Perhaps he is someone I know. Which is more awful—an anonymous assault by a stranger or by a friend?

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My hands are shaking and he is laughing. I am struggling to obey. My feet are shaking also.

I can only see his feet. I have told you before about his scuffed black shoes which look like those with steel linings in the toes. They are laced with frayed black laces. His socks are white. Dirty white. His feet are wide. I suspect his legs are hairy and that the hairs are damp.

It is afternoon. A quiet afternoon. No one is about.

No one is knocking at the door. "Take off your clothes," he says. My body is shaking. The dress peels from me like skin, a heap of feathers disordered, plucked live from the skin, a mound of fresh leather in a corner. And the animal is still alive! And the deer stretches denuded flanks, twitching. I can see the blood run across the hooves.

I am naked. He is wearing clothes. I do not wish to see his legs hairy at the ankle bone. I cannot bear to see his clothes against my skin. I am naked. He is fully clothed.

I remember nothing. I will remember nothing. I tell you this without hearing my own voice. I tell you this again and again so I will never remember it. I remember how naked I am next to his clothed legs in order to forget everything.

Handprints on my back. Indelible markings. In later mirrors it seems my back grows away from his hands. An announcement in reversal. In recoil.

An invasion. A tree opening to fire. And a black hollow from which no twig can emerge again. Perhaps it is a gun penetrating me and orgasm will be a round of bullets. Pain is a relief. I cherish it as a distraction from knowing. I am an enemy country. Destroy me with fire. But there is no distraction. The cloth rubs against my legs. There is a gun resting on my shoulder. I do not forget that death is the voyeur at this encounter.

Turning. Turning. The flesh of the spitted deer crackles against the fire. I want to reach for a knife to carve myself into morsels, to divide into portions, to carve a slit downwards from my navel to my spine.

There is a circle of steel against my ear.

I have told this before. It is afternoon, a quiet afternoon, and the taste of my own meat smeared on unknown flesh is in my mouth. I choke upon it. It is afternoon. I do not know what is thrust in my mouth. What banquet is this? What severed leg? What joint? What goat, deer, bone? I wish blood were dripping down my throat now. How long can I hold his sperm in my mouth without swallowing?

It is afternoon. I have told you this before. It is a quiet afternoon. I do not hear the sound of someone knocking at my door.

I try to say, "Come in." I would like someone to help me from the floor. I need a pillow under my head. Wrap me in a blanket. Turn the lights out.

It is early evening. It is night. It is tomorrow. I would like someone to help me up from the floor. I cannot say, "Come in." to the knock on the door. I cannot yell for help. I need to be wrapped in a blanket. I need a pillow under my head. And a nightdress. And a cover of white cloth.

Everything is quiet. My body is numb. I feel nothing. My body is dumb. It is early evening.

There is a knock on the door. I cannot hear the knock at the door. I cannot say, "Come in." I need...

There is a knock at the door. I cannot say... I...

There is a knock... I can not... I...

I can not...

Honor Moore's Mourning Pictures, an eloquent play about the death of the playwright's mother, closed after its first day on Broadway because, according to Clive Barnes, it did not transcend the experience of personal loss. Women are choosing to achieve "universality" through the exposure and identification of the personal moment rather than through its transcendence. The most powerful lines in the play are also the simplest: "Ladies and Gentlemen, my mother is dying."

Women are the Fourth World say the women of North Vietnam. We read each other's autobiographies as if they were our own lives. Nakedness is an ambivalent state implying weakness and power simultaneously. The naked person is an image of helplessness and yet nudity is terrifying to the observer. There has been much critical distaste expressed for the confessional mode of woman's art, which has been considered blatant, vulnerable, self-pitying, raw, untransformed. Not often admitted is the puritanical base for the anxiety felt before work which, as an editor told me about my own, is produced by "unrelieved personal disclosure."

This common interest in our history and experience is not only the response to historic anonymity, it is not merely a first step toward liberation, but the revitalization and making public of an honored female form which integrates the private and the public worlds, the individual and the collective sensibilities.

"I am not completely satisfied," Martha Lifson says, "by the autobiographies of Gertrude Stein as they emphasize the public world and the people she meets. I prefer the diaries of Dorothy Wordsworth where the work and the ideas, commentary and portraits are braided through the gardening, reading, cooking and conversation. I am interested in the entire life and the whole day."

Intense revelation, but not confession. Because we are so accustomed to confining intimacy to the private sector, the form disconcerts us when it is present in the public world. Women break down the wooden house and the anonymity and objectivity of the psychiatric privacy. We do not wish to speak alone. We demand that the listener be a participant. We tell our secrets openly and publicly without erasing them. We say, "These are our lives." We insist on telling these secrets to each other because we know it makes a difference. That is intimacy—the insistence upon response and equality. We want our talk to make a difference to ourselves and to others. We create open forms so that someone can answer us.

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What word can we interject to convey our meaning of tangible and certain? In lieu of concrete can we say braided, be fabric, be cloth?

"All mother goddesses spin and weave. In their concealed workshops they weave veins, fibers and nerve strands into the miraculous substance of the live body. Everything that is comes out of them: they weave the world tapestry out of genesis and demise, threads appearing and disappearing rhythmically."

I wonder how to credit Helen Diner for the above quote. Everything in me rebels against the learned footnote which does not provide a space for the essential information—the thrill of recognition which occurs when it is read. In graduate school I vowed to avoid all the Latin forms, the op. cits., loc. cits., ibids., which represented distant authority. But now it is possible to use footnotes again and even to peruse them eagerly before one reads the papers they are included in. Women's footnotes are of another form. They are not authoritarian, they do not necessarily refer to texts, to abstract tomes, to objective external sources. Often emotional statements or conversational asides, they serve to enrich the material by bringing in the strands, the choruses, the associations. They are informal, spontaneous interjections permeating more formal, carefully constructed works.

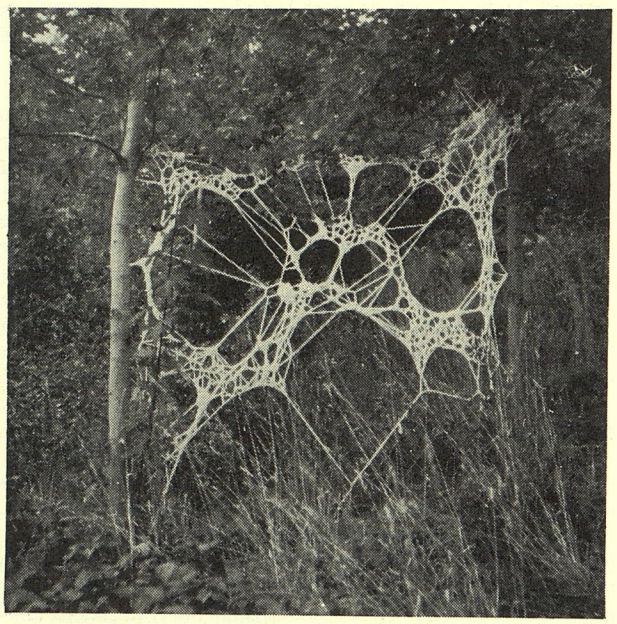
There are times when I do not know at all which ideas were mine, which Barbara's, Jane's, Sheila's. The ideas pass back and forth between us, and our shared experience and communication is their real source. The ivory tower shatters as an image for those of us who cannot and will not segregate our creativity, finding it as often as not in the kitchen as in the study. Footnotes no longer function only to identify a single authority, but can also challenge the concept in order to acknowledge and record collective efforts.

It is important to realize that for women the process of personal confession implies collective revelation. This is the recurring experience of journal classes, women's writing groups and consciousness raising.

One of the projects of the Feminist Design Program at California Institute of the Arts, directed by Sheila de Bretteville, was a series of videotapes about menstruation. The groups consisted of older women, young women, teenagers and mixed groups of boys and girls exchanging information, personal experience. This was one of the first attempts to eliminate the body of misinformation, prejudice, fear, and often self-hate which arises from the combination of silence and social anxiety. The anxiety is easily detected in the language which surrounds menstruation: "the curse," "falling off the roof," "on the rag," "unwell," etc.

Menstruation has indeed been a "red flag" (to borrow the title of Judy Chicago's well-known lithograph) for those who accepted the taboo regarding the discussion of menstruation or the use of female imagery in art. This visual confrontation with the female reality is part of women's contemporary insistence upon being naked, breaking the silence that has surrounded us and particularly our bodies. Looking at female biology is one part of telling the story of our lives and breaking the mystery that is a patriarchal prison, helping to create the mythos, the mystique of woman.

Often revelation has political consequences beyond consciousness, as did the public acknowledgment by hundreds of French women that they had had abortions, in order to achieve liberalization of abortion laws. Other times the revelation breaks a taboo or allows others to claim and understand their own experiences which have often been deadened by seeming unique or eccentric.

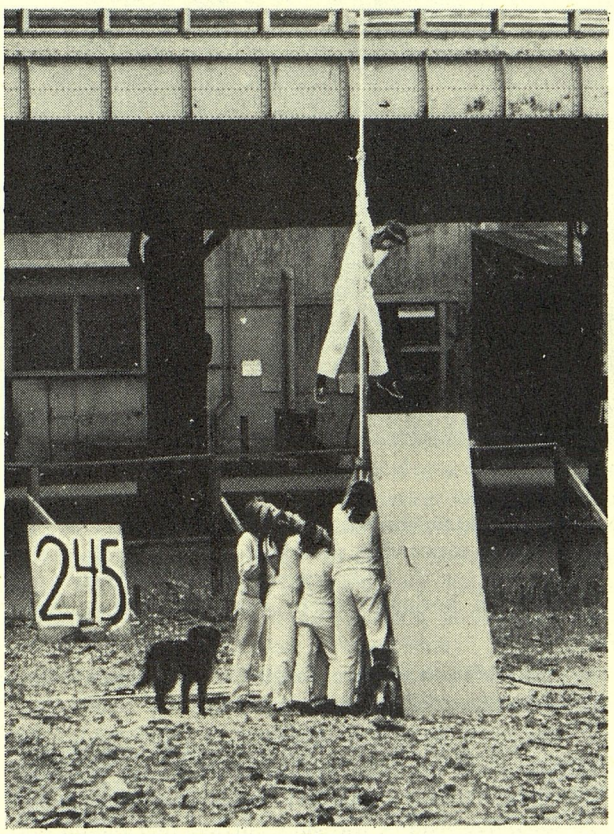


Donna Henes, *Web.* 1976. Mount Royal, Montreal.

"When a woman artist positively identifies herself to us through her work, she commits a courageous and daring act of self-exposure, because her contribution has neither spoken to nor been understood by the mainstream of the culture, and the content of her art has been bypassed by interpretations which could reveal it. Thus a woman's saying, 'I am, I know myself, and I feel a fundamental optimism—a grasp upon my own survival as a model for human survival,' is saying something which challenges the prevailing worldview. If consciousness is the content of feminist art, this level of human responsibility and hope is the content of consciousness." (Arlene Raven, feminist art historian, one of the organizers of the Feminist Studio Workshop and the Woman's Building.)

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Performance is a natural form of expression for women whose history has been limited primarily to oral forms. Performance like conversation is flexible, often without script, responsive, and invites participation. It is not meant primarily for publication or to have a long run, but is often conceived for a particular moment. Like gossip, performance can be seen as a form of social regulation which depends upon intimacy and association with the subject. Like journals, performances allow for the collective and public scrutiny of women's past and contemporary roles in order to create attitudinal and behavioral change. Performances therefore often have a personal as well as a social, didactic function. Performance is also a way of modeling, providing not only a critique of the past but alternatives for the future. Now that the journal is becoming a public document, and we are revealed in each other's books, the journal also may be a new benign and creative moral imperative.



Joan Jonas. *Delay Delay*. 1972. Performance viewed from nearby rooftop, New York City.

The woman's form is connective. It is a tapestry or a quilt, a weaving or collage, an interlacing of all the diverse parts which are obsessively differentiated in the dominant culture. For women to come into the public world we must be cognizant of our historic and contemporary forms of organization and expression in order to survive. At the least we must struggle like Penelope, weaving half the day, unraveling half the night.

Within woman's culture, because of its plurality and tolerance, man can exist; within man's culture woman is destroyed by individualism and abstraction. Woman is an appropriate word for Man. She is an appropriate substitute for He/She because he is contained in she—orthographically, physiologically, but more significantly, ontologically. One culture encloses within; the other segregates out.

Despite the frequent critical stance that female imagery, woman's art, female sensibility is a limitation imposed upon culture, a narrowing of vision, it should by now be abundantly clear that woman's culture, being primarily integrative rather than analytical, offers as rich and deep a universe as that which has been the basis of "civilization" until now. To define a woman's culture is not to delimit or to create orthodoxy, but rather to expand current cultural horizons and to provide the opportunity to explore experience in new areas through the validation of hitherto unrecognized and devalued expression.

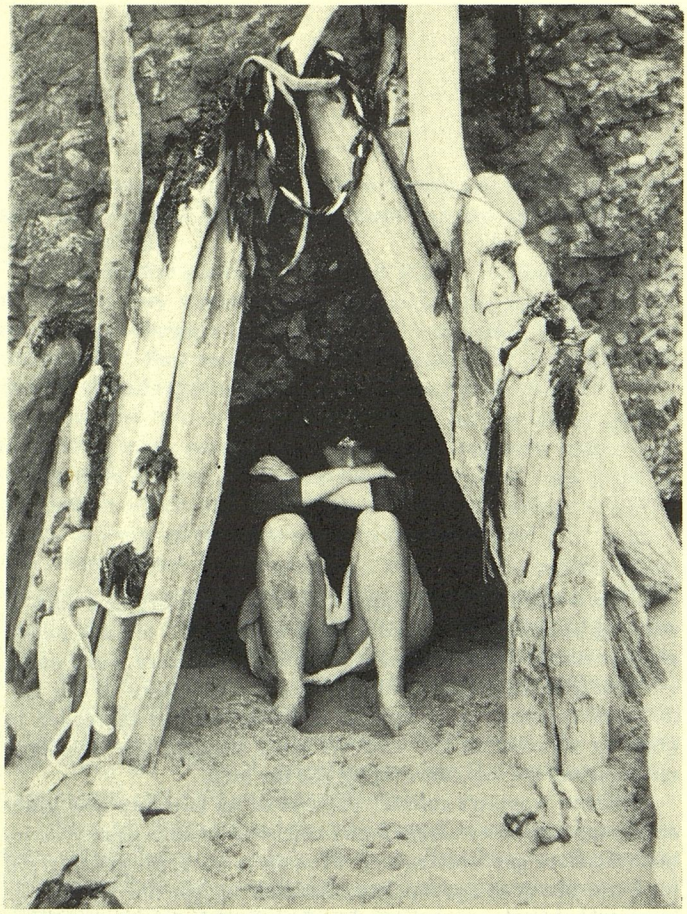
Woman's culture is not a set of rules or restrictions, rather it is a direction, an eye, a broad intellectual framework for discovering form and meaning. In its underground forms it is available to a few women and fewer men; named and public it is available to everyone. Now when we come into the world, it is in our image—as Eve—the image of integration and relationship. In that act woman challenges the dominant world culture.

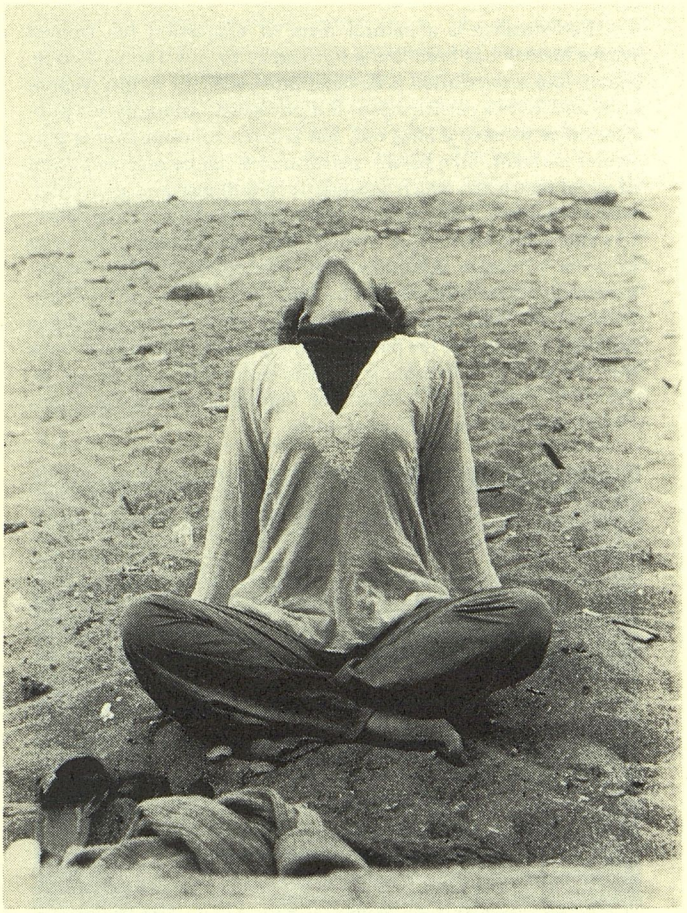
Deena Metzger is a feminist writer, poet and lecturer who is director of the Writing Program at the Feminist Studio Workshop at the Woman's Building in Los Angeles. She is the author of a novel, *Skin: Shadows / SILENCE* (West Coast Poetry Review, 1976) and a radio play, *The Book of Hags*.

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INSIDE/OUT: A RETURN TO MY BODY

SUE HEINEMANN





Another term we used a lot was "kinaesthetic awareness." The kinaesthetic sense has to do with sensing movement in your own body, sensing your body's changing dynamic configurations. But it's more than that. —Simone Forti, *Handbook in Motion*

I remember my first class with Elaine Summers, a New York dancer whose teaching focuses on kinesthetic awareness. As I lay quiet on the ground, eyes closed, Elaine led me on a journey through my body. Can you feel your toenails? Your metatarsals? Knees, thighs, on up through eyebrows and hair. Amazing how much of my body I couldn't feel—no sensation. As if parts of me had just disappeared. No calves, no armpits, no eyelashes. And I wonder how many of us really sense our bodies as integrated with our selves. Do we only acknowledge the body when "it" hurts, when something's "wrong"? In how many ways have we learned to disown our bodies?

I think of how we tend to enthrone our minds, all-knowing. The body as a tool, only necessary to get work done. Or the body as an object, to be looked at, admired, displayed. The body remains an accessory, not integral to our definition of being. Just to speak of body sensations, of how emotions are felt located specifically *in* the body arouses skepticism. And I wonder if it is even possible to convey what "listening" to your body means to someone who has not experienced it. The difference between *knowing* something intellectually and *understanding* it through your feeling *in* your body.

> Just as someone who has never seen the color yellow has no way of conceiving what that color is like, people bound into specific body controls cannot experience the vivacity of bodily freedom until they break those controls.[1]

Summer 1975. I went to California to participate in Anna Halprin's dance workshop. Anna explains:

> In our approach to theatre and dance, art grows directly out of our lives. Whatever emotional, physical, or mental barriers . . . we carry around within us in our personal lives will be the same barriers that inhibit our full creative expression. . . . . I work with the notion that emotional blocks are tied into our physical body and mental images. . . . .
>
> When a person has reached an impasse we know something in their life and in their art is not working. What is not working is their old dance. The old dance is made up of imprints imbedded in the muscles and nerves that is reflected in behavior patterns manifested in the way that person participates, interrelates and performs their life and their art.[2]

Each morning we performed "movement ritual," a series of exercises through which we listened to our bodies, "hearing" how we felt. According to Anna, "Daily movement ritual is a way of becoming aware of self, of your body and all the spaces and areas of your body, what you feel like and where your mind is."[3] One

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morning at the end of movement ritual, Anna told us just to let our bodies move themselves, without imposing any preset patterns, without interfering with notions of what might look "graceful." I lay there, not thinking about how to move. I felt my legs gently pull apart, opening up my genitals, and my pelvis tilted under, slowly lifting my torso upward and back down. The experience was both real and unreal, as if my body were literally talking to me, telling me how I felt. I watched, observing how my body wanted to unfold, to open out, my pelvis widening, my chest expanding. I got scared. And I retreated, my body closing in, curling up tighter and tighter. My "dance" spoke to me about my female sexuality in a way my head had never allowed.

My body as a woman. A biological given. Each month I go through the menstrual cycle. I sense the changes inside my body, the shifts in mood. My lower back tenses in anticipation, as if to inhibit the flow, to deny my natural female functioning. Is that a learned behavior? Clara Thompson, a well-known analyst, wrote: "Because menstruation is obvious and uncontestable evidence of femaleness, many neurotic attitudes become attached to it; many painful menstrual periods are not due to organic difficulties at all but to protests against being female."[4] The secrecy of menstruation, not to be mentioned, not accepted. If I let my lower spine and pelvis move slowly, unrestricted, as they want to move, I can allow the flow to happen. Without the cramps of protest.

Menstruation — a sense of inner rhythm, an obvious connection between my body and my being. And I wonder if the visibility of this connection, month after month, makes it easier for women to get in touch with their feelings through their bodies. Margaret Mead notes: "It may be that the fact that women's bodies are prepared for a so much lengthier participation in the creation of a human being may make females — even those who bear no children — more prone to take their own bodies as the theater of action."[5]

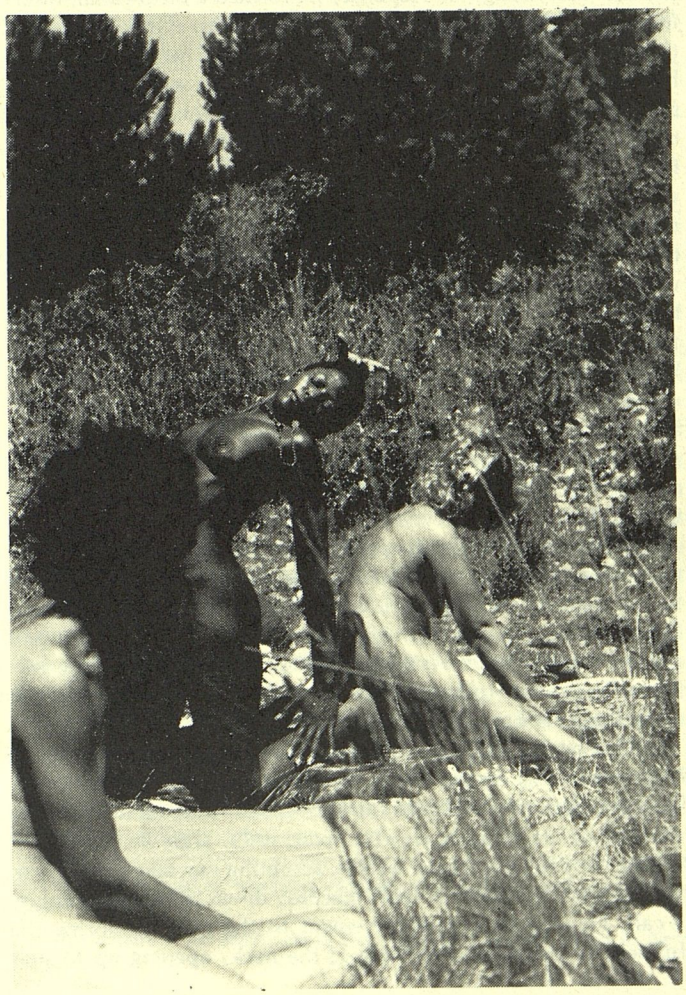
I think about Erik Erikson's article "Womanhood and Inner Space," and the controversy it raised.[6] Believing that play represents the child's experience of her/his own body, Erikson found that the differing spatial configurations of play scenes constructed by children reflected the girls' preoccupation with inner space (womb) and the boys' with outer space (penis). In a recent replication of Erikson's study, Phebe Cramer concludes, "In other words, the exciting events of a boy's life are exterior — and here I would say exterior to his own body . . . Girls, on the other hand, focus on the interior. Excitement occurs within. . . ."[7] I read this as a positive assertion. My body *is* constructed differently from a man's. The sense of inner space — not a void, empty, waiting to be filled, but a possibility, in touch with growth, alive, whole.

My body as a woman. Have I learned to hold my body in a particular way because I am a woman? How does my stance conform to and reinforce how I am supposed to feel as a woman? In Elaine Summer's class I was working with my shoulders. The exercise: to stretch my arm out from the shoulder joint as far as it *wanted* to go, then release it slowly back to center. Repeating this, turning my arm, rotating my shoulder first in, then out. Afterward my shoulders relaxed, heavy, weighted on the floor. Yet when I stood up, I felt vulnerable, my chest, my breasts exposed. Confusing instructions ran round my head — to be a woman is weak, you must not be weak, you must not show you are a woman. And I observed my shoulders rise in tension to protect me.

A friend told me that once, while working with her shoulders, she reexperienced her teenage embarrassment at being flat-chested. She remembered intentionally caving in her chest so no one would notice her "deficiency." Expectations of how to be a woman. Elaine mentioned watching a little girl running around, doing cartwheels, moving freely, naturally. The girl's mother called her over to walk beside mother and grandmother. The little girl's body stiffened, her "activity" constricted, as she readily assumed the pose of "woman" in imitation of her mother and grandmother. Three generations — a legacy of how to behave as woman. The little girl sits demure, hands on her lap, ankles crossed — do not fidget. All those messages. And how do they make me feel as a woman?

My body as a woman. I return to Anna Halprin's workshop. After three weeks of working together, the women and men separated to find out how we experienced ourselves as groups, women interacting with women, men with men. The women began with a rap session. Tentative, sensing each other, a preliminary.

Anna then led us through a "movement preparation," to take us inside ourselves. While doing the exercise, we were to visualize our "life histories as women," to become aware of our womanhood. We worked in pairs, focusing inward by concentrating on our breathing. I sat on my partner Sara's chest, pressing against her shoulders as she exhaled, letting go as she inhaled. Then, in another exercise, I gently pushed down on Sara's stomach as she breathed out. When she inhaled, I raised her up, my hands gripping behind her, opening out her chest . . . pulling her toward me as I lay back on the ground ready to exhale. Repeat, reversing roles in seesaw alternation. Release, letting go — expansion, taking in. A natural rhythmic cycle at the center of my being. And yet how hard it is not to try to control this vital process, not to interfere. Letting go, giving up freely, "passive"; taking in, opening up fully, "active" — the simple process of breathing acquires connotations. Do I resist exhaling, stopping short, afraid of being "passive"?



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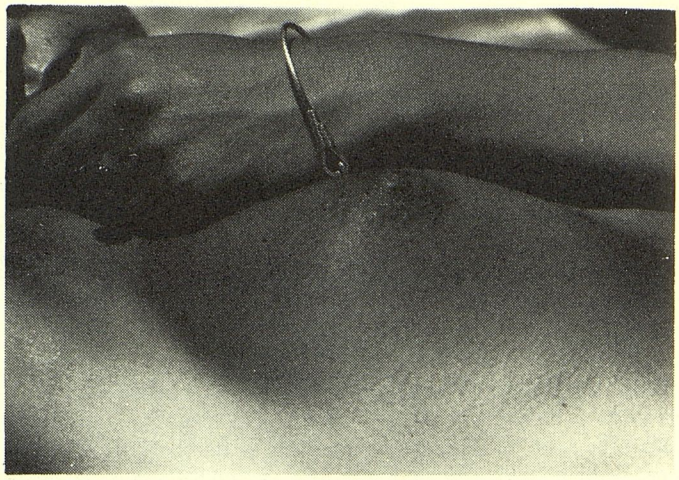
Often, doing the movement work, one associates in images. Each of us drew the images evoked by the exercises, and we showed our drawings to each other, relating how these images reflected our experiences of ourselves, our experiences as women. Dana had depicted a child-woman standing small before an enormous closed door, surrounded by empty space. No mother to greet her. Alone. On her own. Alice had drawn a little girl seated in a yoga position with her arms held tightly against her body. She explained that at 31 she felt "too young" to have children, that she herself was just a child. Alice looked at her breasts in disbelief; she couldn't be grown up. My own drawing showed an interior space — delicately pasteled, tenuous lines flowing into and around each other. Scribbled flames of orange-red anger surrounded the inner sanctum, threatening to penetrate, to overwhelm it. And all of this was rigidly encased in thick black lines . . . contained.

Some of the women danced out their visualizations. The process of drawing our responses to the original activity and then using these drawings as a score for another dance encouraged a dialogue with our experiences. Melinda had sketched an incident from her childhood: while trying to prove her strength by climbing a tree, she had fallen in front of her father and sister (her sister turned away from her in disgust). She asked us to call out conflicting instructions — for her to be a "lady" or a "tomboy." At one point someone yelled, "You won't have any boyfriends." Melinda lashed out at this voice and burst into tears. She closed her dance by convincingly repeating Anna's words, "I can cry and still be strong."

Marlo's dance was last. Her drawing was covered with words: "you can't get out," "push me." Like Alice, she explained she felt "too young." In response, we formed a birth canal, offering resistance as Marlo tried to crawl between our legs. Several times she stopped, frustrated, and we taunted her gently, urging her on. Finally Marlo reached Anna, who was waiting quietly at the other end. But Meg, the last woman in the canal, still held onto Marlo's legs. When the two separated, Meg curled into a fetal position. The group gave birth to twins. Humming softly, we became a chorus cradling the two women. Marlo rocked, nestled quiet in Anna's arms. Meg, in contrast, needed to laugh so that she could cry. And those of us surrounding the two women were no longer simply performers enacting a score. We were participants involved in a drama — not fiction but real. Each of us *was* Meg and Marlo, woman finding her self, woman reborn. Woman secure in the presence of other women.

The following day our movement preparation focused on how certain feelings correlate with specific body positions, how emotional responses are locked into particular body attitudes. We sank slowly, vertebra by vertebra, from a standing position, curling tightly into a ball, then opening out, spread on the ground. As we continued to shift from open to closed positions, we were told to imagine a man in our lives looking at our bodies and to note how we felt about his gaze. I saw first my father, then my friend Bob watching me. Again the feeling of exposure as my chest and pelvis expanded wide. As if by opening, I were to give up my self. My arms reached to hug my knees to my chest. No, I would not show them my body, my femaleness.

Finally we spiraled on the ground, one leg rotating across the body, reaching forward, the corresponding arm rotating out, reaching back. We explored this movement, making it more and more sensuous, twisting slowly, luxuriously, until we were dancing our love for our female bodies, accepting our sexuality. Turning the torso, tentative at first, reaching down to caress an ankle, a calf. Flowing from one movement to the next, exploring the fullness of the chest, the length of the neck, opening up to new



possibilities of movement, new ways of being. Each woman performed for the others, sharing her own discovery of the beauty of her body, of her self. A celebration.

In contrast, we spent the afternoon dealing with aggressive energies, with what Anna called "self-hate." We worked again in pairs. Alice lay down, hands beneath her head, elbows on the ground. As she tried to lift her elbows up to bring them together, I offered resistance by pressing down on them — not so much that she couldn't perform the movement, just enough to make it a struggle. While striving to raise her elbows, each woman was to let out a sound as a way of releasing energy and vocalizing her emotional response. A welter of groans, screeching into shrieks, often climaxing in tears.

Again we drew our experiences and danced them out. My image was a mountain, closed off in dense blackness, impenetrable, with a tiny figure struggling desperately all alone to the top. A pretense of strength. The barrier from my earlier drawing . . . I am afraid to cry, afraid to show "weakness." I keep telling myself I can make it, I can make it, I don't need anyone. So I grit my teeth, holding my feelings in, and lift my elbows . . . To perform this score, I asked several women to hold me down so that I *couldn't* get up. How real this "game" became. Despite the resistance, I was stubbornly determined to stand up. I couldn't (wouldn't) let any sound out, let anyone know how I was feeling. The others' taunts hurt me — "how constipated she is," "you don't want to take up our time," etc., etc. — but the hurt remained bottled up inside. Sure, I might have simply told the others to stop at any time, but (psychologically) I couldn't. And I reflect on Anna's insistence that dance is a direct expression of one's life. That the same emotional blocks that restrict our everyday functioning also limit our movement.

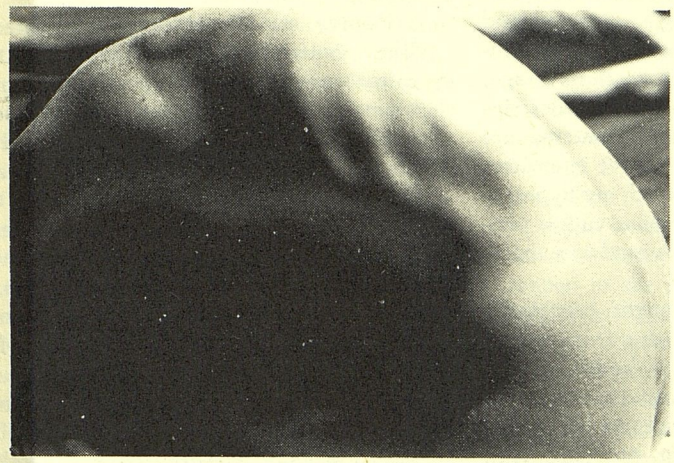
> I have people clearly looking at their old dance, confronting it and accepting what it is and by dancing it, experiencing that it is not working. Once this has happened, all that vital energy locked up in the old dance is rechanneled as energy and motivation to be used in creating a new one.[8]

After two days of separation, the women and men came back together. Each group presented its experience to the other. The women chose to perform in a redwood grove. First we sketched out a collective score, each of us offering suggestions as the plan took shape. The atmosphere of our setting was compelling . . . the silence, the needle floor muffling every footstep. We decided to make that silence the core of our dance — no words, no sound. Other elements impressed us. We noted the trees towering upright, the light softly filtering through, the sacredness, the timelessness of the place. We wanted to merge with this environ-

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ment without invading it, to recognize and respect its power as part of ourselves. And we wanted to convey what the two days of being together had meant to us, how our experience as a group had strengthened us as individuals.

We began our performance separated, each woman dancing her self in relation to the surroundings. I snuggled myself inside a tree stump, needing enclosure within the vastness around me. I couldn't see the others. Yet I felt their presence, I felt joined in experience to them. And I became more confident; I rose to meet the trees, standing straight and tall. My hands reached out to clasp Alice's. We walked toward each other, slowly, silently, deliberately. Other women too began to approach each other, linking hand to hand. Soon we formed a chain, and we wended our way, step by step, downhill. At one moment we paused. Sylvia stood alone, below us, sunlit on the dust-covered road. She just stood there . . . silent, still, the only movement the rising and falling of her chest as she breathed in and out. That was her dance. And her dance spoke to all of our experiences. A sense of



inner strength, not assertive, just present. An inner rhythm, in tune with, part of the world around. An openness both expanding, filling the space, and taking in, absorbing the space. One.

The men's dance was totally different. I find myself resorting to clichés. The men performed in a cove at the bottom of a sharp cliff, where the sea battled the rocks. The women watched from above. Each man stood isolated on his own rock. Each was costumed according to his self-image. Arthur posed erect, legs firmly astride, a warrior, face painted, high above on the tallest rock. Lower down, on another rock, Jamie writhed, moaning and shrieking, shaking his seaweed hair. Each man did a specific movement which the others then imitated. A male "chorus." Each note sounded, then echoed back in differing tones as each man adapted the movement to his own body. The shouts, the power flung amidst the waves pounding rocks. The aggressiveness, the "maleness" struck me.

One by one, the men disappeared around a corner. Arthur jerked his rattle in a frenzied dance, Jamie plunged into the icy water to swim away. We could only hear the triumphant cries of the tribe gathering. Then they reappeared, to enact a healing ritual. How different from the women's ceremony with Meg and Marlo. The men danced around each other, they seemed to avoid touching each other. Their gestures were bound; less gentle, less direct than ours had been; their mutual support less overt. And then they invited us down to the rocks to be healed. To be healed by the men? Was this really a meeting, equal to equal?

I still wonder that so many women went down. The atmosphere created by the men's dance was alien, alien to me as a woman. To go down was to enter a territory already staked out on their terms. Again the stereotypes. And yet . . . What I had felt among the women was our shared strength, each of us reinforcing the other — not so much through isolated echoes, as in the men's dance, more in harmony. We were less insistent on an individualistic integrity. The men seemed afraid of each other, afraid to let their bodies mingle, afraid to touch. An aggregate of dominant notes rather than a true chorus. (Some people have thought that the difference I sensed was because I was an observer of the men and a participant with the women. I don't think so. In later discussions, the men admitted how difficult it had been for them to come together as a group, how hard it had been to relate physically, to get close to each other.)

Differences in communication patterns. In Marge Piercy's novel *Small Changes*, Wanda is showing the members of her theatre group the different ways men and women occupy space. She chooses for illustration how people sit in public places. "Men expanded into available space. They sprawled, or they sat with spread legs. . . . Women condensed. . . . Women sat protectively using elbows not to dominate space, not to mark territory, but to protect their soft tissues."[9] And I wonder again about the ways women have been taught to hold their bodies.

It's almost two years since I became aware of my body. And I'm still learning. Finding my center. Me. A woman.

1. Ann Halprin, "Community Art as Life Process," *The Drama Review* (Sept. 1973), p. 66.
2. Quoted in: Fraňtisek Dêak and Norma Jean [Dêak], "Ann Halprin's Theatre and Therapy Workshop," *The Drama Review* (March, 1976), p. 51.
3. Anna Halprin, "Life/art workshop processes," in *Taking Part* by Lawrence Halprin and Jim Burns (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974), p. 174.
4. Clara M. Thompson, *On Women* (New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 25.
5. Margaret Mead, "On Freud's View of Female Psychology," in *Women & Analysis*, ed. Jean Strouse (New York: Dell, 1974), p. 127.
6. Originally published in 1968, reprinted with a reply to criticisms in *Women & Analysis*.
7. Phebe Cramer, "The Development of Play and Fantasy in Boys and Girls," in *Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Science*, Vol. 4 (New York: International Universities Press, 1975), p. 561.
8. Anna Halprin, quoted in Dêak, p. 51.
9. Marge Piercy, *Small Changes* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), p. 438.
10. Nancy Henley, *Body Politics* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1977).
11. Martha Davis, "Nonverbal Dimensions of Sex and Status Differences" (presented at American Anthropological Association Meetings, Nov. 1976).

Research into sex-role differences in movement patterns is still limited. Nancy Henley's new book, *Body Politics: Sex, Power and Nonverbal Communication*,[10] provides a much-needed compilation and review of the research on male-female differences, and what this means in terms of status. Just the title implies the importance of body language in regard to social "position." In another study, Martha Davis, a clinical psychologist, points out that a number of aspects of non-verbal communication have both sex-role and status significance—"frequently confirming the expectation of lower status associated with female, higher status with male."[11] Davis concludes her paper with a description of the pictures of man and woman sent into outer space on the Pioneer 10 spaceship: "The man stands upright, wide, ready to go into action. The woman stands with her weight shifted to one side, one knee slightly bent and inward, her attitude more passive, a role difference apparently considered important enough to propel beyond our solar system."

My thanks to Jacqueline Morrison who took all the photos at Anna's workshop.

Sue Heinemann is an artist, critic and sometimes dancer living in New York.

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FEMINISTS AND NON-FEMINISTS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

TERESA BERNARDEZ-BONESATTI

As a therapist I have seen feminists and non-feminists in treatment. The women I refer to as non-feminists did not initially mention women's rights, nor did they claim participation of any kind in the Women's Liberation Movement. When we later discussed this issue, their reactions ranged from indifference, to sympathy for some (usually less radical) aspects of the movement, to open hostility. In contrast, the women I call feminists referred to themselves as such and explicitly supported various aspects of the women's movement. All of them believed that women as a group are oppressed, handicapped or otherwise impeded in their full development by external forces, whether social institutions, cultural mores or men. While they varied in the degree of their actual participation in the movement, all of them had experience in consciousness-raising groups. Most of them chose to see me primarily because I am a woman, being fairly convinced that a woman would view their concerns with more understanding, that she would be less biased than a man, or simply that they could talk more freely with a female.

I have been struck by the differences between these two groups in their views of their problems, their behavior in our sessions, and their relation to the therapist. And perhaps even more important, I have found that feminists appear to have resolved successfully developmental stages that non-feminists have avoided. Let me briefly explain. Since feminists seek changes in others as well as in themselves, they develop more interpersonal skills and an ever-increasing sense of self. They are less afraid of their aggressive impulses —in particular, anger. They question the requests and expectations of others. Feminists do not dislike their sex and have discovered bonds with other women. They have achieved separation from important others, whether parents, husbands or children. They have asserted their autonomy by defining, protecting and defending their own needs, establishing their own goals and directions, with increasing trust in their own perceptions, judgment and experience. All of these are characteristics of the *healthy* adult, although feminists are outside the culturally defined "norm" for female behavior.

My observations are based on a study of 60 women—32 non-feminists and 28 feminists, ranging in age from 18 to 45, from varied racial and educational backgrounds, including single, divorced and married women in both groups. The feminist group was younger on the average, the oldest woman being 35. My descriptions of the behaviors encountered are based on the first two or three interviews with these women, although my hypotheses are based on longer observation periods during which I intervened as a therapist.

The non-feminists sought psychiatric help for complaints ranging from vague, chronic feelings of dissatisfaction, alienation or depression to marital conflicts, inability to be creative, inhibitions in sexual functioning, phobias or problems with their children. All of these women, *without exception*, presented their problems as signs of *personal* inadequacy. Frequently, they were baffled by their discontent, simultaneously pointing out all the advantages of their daily lives. As one of the patients put it, "I have a kind husband, three healthy children, no financial problems, freedom to study and I'm not happy —what's wrong with me?" This last question was implicit in the statements of most of the non-feminists who expressed their malaise in terms of symptoms, had no coherent way to explain them, and saw these symptoms as something in themselves that needed correction or change. A few stated their wish for understanding, but on further inquiry it became clear that for them "understanding" was something that would automatically "dissolve" their discomfort. Others who wished to know themselves saw a successful outcome as contingent on their ability to correct "whatever I am doing wrong."

If one couples these statements with the behavior of the non-feminist patients in the office, one finds a remarkable congruence: these women were not assertive, they behaved in a compliant and submissive manner, and they never questioned the examiner. They found it hard to be critical of others, while they downgraded their own perceptions and feelings, as if they doubted their validity. Their emotional responses tended to be limited to the expression of sadness, desolation, pain, very frequently accompanied by crying.

Passive self-references predominated. The non-feminist often responded to questions by repeating observations others had made of her behavior, her needs or the purposes of her acts. The absence of an active self-referent was so striking, that I began to pay attention to how often and in which context the personal pronoun "I" was used. Comments like "it feels better," "my mother says," "friends don't like me to" or "my husband gets irritated at me if" were frequent. My impression was that of a woman accustomed to relying on others' understanding or reactions to her and unable or unwilling to attempt a more active and self-directed search for definition. This characteristic of defining the self via others was found among the non-feminists regardless of their education, intelligence, age, race and marital status. It was even present in those "active" women who demonstrated competence, at home or at work, in areas requiring a certain level of decisiveness and organization.

In contrast, the feminist patients' complaints were largely related to a set of already established ideas or goals. They were dissatisfied at finding remnants of old behaviors that contradicted their present goals, at their self-defeat in attempting to defy the old order, at the failure of their behaviors to elicit the desired good feeling about themselves, at their excessive sensitivity to criticism or conflicts originating in their attempts to alter their heterosexual behavior and relationships. Some of the most militant were attempting to introduce changes in traditional organizations or institutions, or worked in predominantly masculine occupations and were faced with tremendous pressure to conform to mores at variance with their own. Their discouragement and distress at the frequently negative responses they encountered led them to reexamine their goals and their behavior in order to find a

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compromise that would permit them to continue their own development or interest at less cost to the self. If they had "symptoms" such as anxiety, depression, periods of low self-esteem, sexual inhibitions or guilt feelings, it was not the symptoms they focused on but the behaviors, interactions and conflicts that in their opinion resulted in those symptoms. These women appeared to have already made a fairly exhaustive analysis of the cause-effect relations between their behaviors and experiences and the symptoms they generated. They were explicit about their goals and aware of both intrapsychic and interpersonal conflicts.

In this regard, the feminists' awareness of *external* sources of pain and confusion, for which they did not feel responsible, seemed to help them make more and more discriminating judgments between their problems and those of others. Their conscious and purposeful engagement in altering the social context in which they lived or the persons to whom they related did not hinder their examination of their own motives, needs or inadequacies. This capacity was largely responsible for these feminists' positive attitude toward their "problems." For although they saw themselves as not quite equal to their expectations, they also saw their attempts as a desire to grow, to become more capable, more self-reliant and more flexible.

Awareness of their inadequacy to reach desired goals did not lead these feminists to question their sanity or their intrinsic "neuroticism." Since for the most part they believed that the traditional labels "ill" or "neurotic" had been incorrectly attached to the victims of oppression whenever they gave signs of their pain, their whole view of "treatment" and the psychiatrist's role in it was very different from that of the non-feminists. The feminists were more selective in their choice of therapist, more critical of his/her views, more knowledgeable of and attentive to therapists' tactics or ideologies that smacked of disguised oppression. While the feminist patients sought alleviation of their pain and discomfort, they rejected symptomatic treatments. Drugs and biological treatments were suspect as repressive tools. Their active, inquisitive and critical attitude toward the therapist contrasted with the pliable, unassuming, dependent stance the non-feminists took in the beginning of therapy.

The non-feminists often portrayed the behavior of others in a way that left the listener with no doubt that the behavior was destructive, hostile or decidedly unjust. Yet they voiced no criticism, nor did they react with open anger. When questioned about their feelings, they seemed to have great difficulty voicing their anger, particularly toward those upon whom they were dependent financially or otherwise; more often than not, their quick acknowledgment of anger was followed by guilt, self-incrimination and doubts about their femininity. These women appeared to dread becoming the stereotype of the "bitchy," "castrating" or otherwise aggressively destructive female. Anger toward men, in particular intimate male partners, was frequently subdued, avoided or quickly turned into "awareness" of their own "demandingness" or unreasonable dissatisfaction. The listener was, however, simultaneously briefed about these men's demanding attitude, their insensitivity, exploitation and other blatantly hostile behaviors, as if the patient needed outward sanction of these feelings by having the therapist voice them first.

Anger was more freely expressed toward other women. The non-feminists tended to see other women as shallow, empty-headed, jealous and untrustworthy. Aside from one or two "exceptional" female friends, these women seemed to believe that women (themselves included) were justifiable targets of contempt, tending toward envy, selfishness and manipulativeness. They thus found themselves isolated from other women and considered their company uninteresting and unsatisfactory. While they did not voice such feeling in relation to me, when questioned they did state that they were concerned about having a female therapist or that I might be one of the "exceptions" they could trust. On further exploration, it became clear that they had mixed feelings. They felt freer speaking to a woman, but this was partly due to their low esteem for women. They clearly felt that the important judges of their worth and attractiveness were men and that it mattered much less whether a woman found them satisfactory. My status as a psychiatrist did, however, tip the scales to the other side. Their tendency to respect my role as an "expert" and to trust my opinion somewhat uncritically was in line with their tendency to respect "authority" (particularly malelike authority) and their compliance with it.

The feminists, on the other hand, displayed a greater capacity for critical judgment—of the therapist as well as of their cultural milieu—which was in direct relation to their tolerance of and ability to voice angry feelings. Although at times the intensity of their anger had a disorganizing and even paralyzing effect on them, the freedom to express anger verbally and the ability to channel some of it into groups or personal goals (fighting school boards, the political system, legislation or simply husbands and bosses), plus the sense of inner rightness about their claims, clearly differentiated them from the non-feminists.

Anger was sanctioned and indeed encouraged in groups in which these feminists found validation and support for their perception of what made them angry. Although they had been or still were fighting the image of the "castrating" female, they believed that this specter had been raised to dissuade them from openness about their dislikes, or from confronting people with their contradictions and put-downs. "C-R groups" gave them an additional chance to contradict such stereotypes, for these groups provided a great deal of nurturance and mutual support.

In this regard, an important difference between the two groups was found. The feminists were able to feel a bond of loyalty and a common source of concern with all women—an important developmental stage for females. Their newly found "sisterhood"—based on attempting honest friendship, support without moralistic judgment, openness and trust, and on the sharing of deep feelings and experiences—was of extraordinary import in their ability to channel, utilize and tolerate angry and destructive feelings. Although aware that most women would part company with them on sticky issues, they envisioned a potential union with them and were sympathetic to the plight of women in general. They explained other women's hostilities as the result of their fear of awareness, their indoctrination to see women as enemies, their competitive strivings around men and the utterly dependent state of most women.

The non-feminists were isolated from this realm of female experience, having had perhaps a few close women friends, but neither knowing nor believing in women's capacity to help one another and to join in creative action. Being alone, and usually able to communicate their deepest worries only to the psychiatrist or minister, they had no way of realizing how common their concerns were to those of other women, or of discovering their own potential capacity to understand, help and decide about their own lives. The feminist women had already tested this ground in "rap groups" where they had validated their own perceptions, gained confidence in their own experiences,

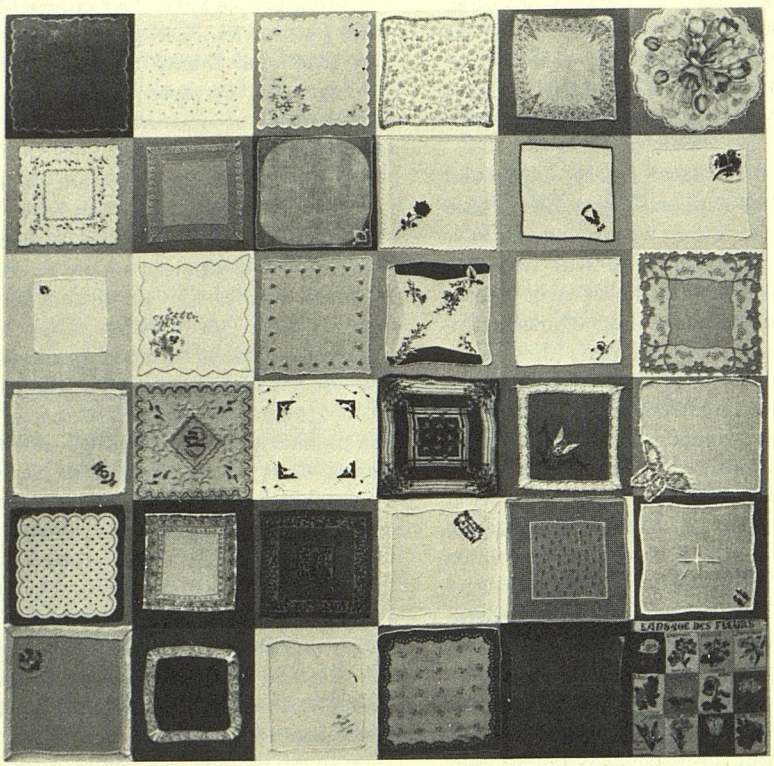
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achieved a new sense of self-enhancement and the ability to assert the self (yet not at the expense of others). Although the feminists felt alienated from much of conventional society and had to bear considerable stress, they were not alienated from their own sex, and they believed that not knowing who they were or what they wanted was more insidiously destructive by far than a rude awakening.

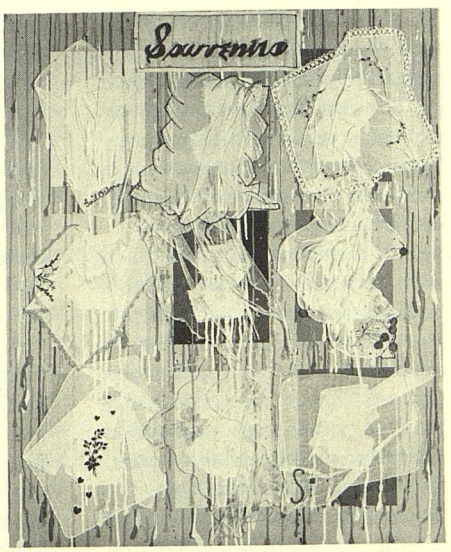
My underlying contention is that feminists have advanced further on the developmental ladder and are at a psychological advantage compared to non-feminists. I regard as crucial the role the liberation of aggressive impulse plays in regaining self-esteem, achieving separation-individuation and making discriminating critical judgment possible. The freedom to tolerate anger, to voice it and to channel it into meaningful activity is a prerequisite for further change. The pervasive inhibition of aggressive impulses in non-feminists drains them of energy; those impulses tend to be directed against the self, resulting in self-depreciation, depression and feelings of worthlessness. This state of affairs prevents moves toward self-assertion since these moves are perceived as threatening the precarious balance of dependency on others. In contrast, feminists' attitude of defiance is an affirmative stance that provides the ability to weather disapproval and criticism from others. Independence and autonomy are achieved by struggling against confining expectations at variance with those of the self. This posture of feminists forces active interaction with others and opens the way for individuation and self-control.

It seems important to conduct a further study of feminists and non-feminists who do *not* seek treatment. The findings discussed here are relevant only to those women who have actively sought help.

Teresa Bernardez-Bonesatti is a feminist psychiatrist whose special research interest is women and mental health. She is an associate professor of psychiatry at the College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University, and chairperson of their Affirmative Action Committee.



Miriam Schapiro. *Connection.* 1976. Collage and acrylic on canvas. 72" x 72". (B. Keerl.)



Miriam Schapiro. *Souvenirs.* 1976. Collage and acrylic on canvas; embroidery by Adele Blumberg. 40" x 32". (eeva-inkeri.)

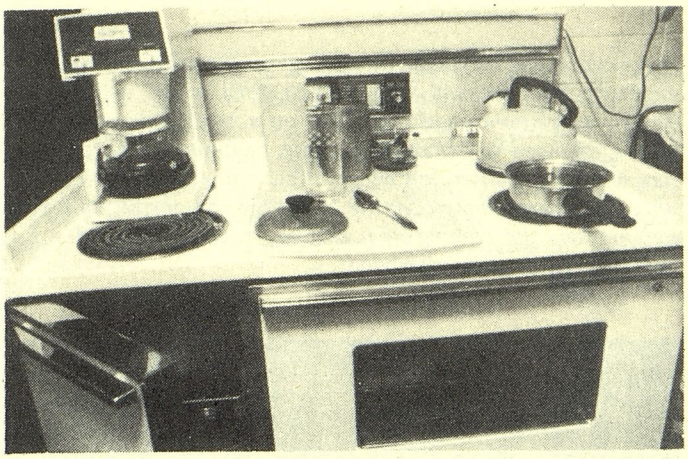
I have met women all over this country who love art. They were teachers or students at schools and museums where I came as a visiting lecturer, or where there was an exhibition of my work. Often as I talked about my work, explaining my idea of "connection" to them, I asked for a "souvenir" handkerchief, a bit of lace, an apron, a tea towel—some object from their past which they would be willing to have "recycled" in my paintings. I saw this as a way to preserve the history of embroidered, often anonymous works which are our "connection" to women's past. I have used the pieces women sent me in these collage-paintings. — MIRIAM SCHAPIRO

Miriam Schapiro lives in New York City, is a painter and member of Heresies Collective. She will be teaching at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia in the spring of 1978.

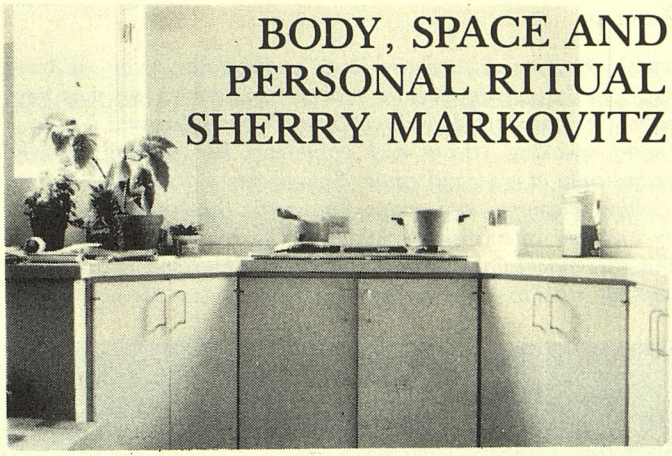
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BODY, SPACE AND PERSONAL RITUAL

SHERRY MARKOVITZ



Rose's Kitchen.



Merilyn's Kitchen.

My initial ideas for this project concerned the observation and documentation of a 24-hour period in a woman's life, long enough to allow a certain time, body state or space to dominate. To date I have documented six people and am still in the process of observing four of them, including my mother, Rose, my sister, Merilyn, and my sister's four-year-old daughter, Anda (who occupies one bedroom and one playroom).

In my photographs I try to locate the feelings and sensations of my subjects, though sometimes it is just a scanning process. I am concerned with a person's experience at a particular time and in a particular space. Past and future apply only when they obviously relate to the present; for example, a woman in her ninth month of pregnancy who has gained 40 pounds has a different energy than in prepregnancy, and her movements become cumbersome, fewer, and more focused.

My selection of subjects has been critical. I have chosen for the most part by instinct. External circumstances, such as economic constrictions, are major factors in occupation of space, so I have selected women from diverse economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. There is also a wide variety in the degree of intimacy, as my subjects range from my mother and sister to total strangers. I am documenting a lesbian couple because women living openly with other women in love/sexual relationships is one of the important recent changes in women's life styles. I had thought about documenting a transsexual and a pair of identical twins, but I finally decided that such unique situations emphasized the anomalies and detracted from exploring the essentials of body, space and personal ritual. I always ask, "Why do you want to be documented?" The answers often contain vital clues. Some people just want to be observed. Some have a fantasy or a political-ideological commitment they want to project through their space, personal ritual and body movement. For instance, many feminists have approached me, but I want to document women's space, not just feminists' space.

Two events have been significant in my use and understanding of my own space since I began this project. First I painted my bathroom and then I moved from my 500-square-foot home to a new apartment with 1200 square feet, which I transformed into a fantasy of space that I had had for a long time — large, empty, quiet, low stimulation. The second event was being hospitalized for ten days with a serious pelvic infection. I was given a little tray with powder, cream, toothbrush, toothpaste, mouthwash and cup. Nurses and doctors took over the care of my body, which was so much a part of my personal ritual. I adapted to this externally imposed space, but as I recovered, I began to reassert my control over my personal ritual. When I shared a room, it was with a very sick woman who had cancer. I observed what happens when the disintegration of a person's body breaks down her ability to control her own space and ritual. I listened to the nurses and doctors repeating how good she smelled from baby powder. I began to think about this and what happens in prisons, mental institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, dormitories, the army. I thought about how a person maintains her personal ritual or utilizes space in such involuntary circumstances, what a woman takes with her to such places.

My project is primarily concerned with how a person takes up space, whether or not she seems to fill a room, how her use of space relates to that of her husband, children or roommates. I had trouble understanding one woman who seemed perfectly at ease with her body; perhaps it was just that which lessened her need to order or definitively affect external space. Some people don't make good subjects because their lives are too much in flux or too disintegrated. With others it is hard to separate what the subject believes to be true from what I observe.

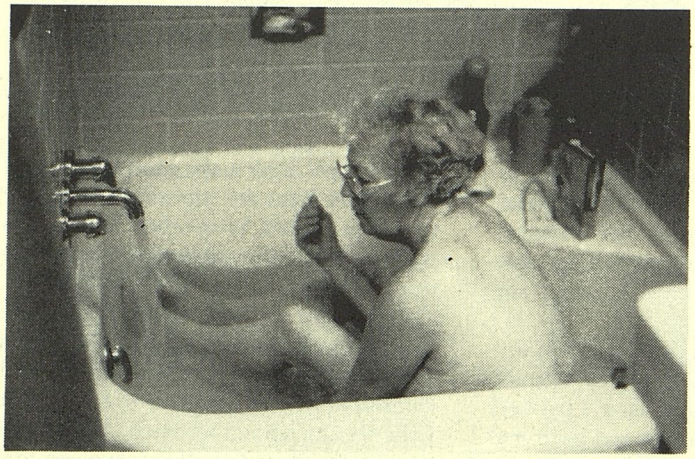
It is important to me that the subject really understand what the project is about on her own terms. I have to feel comfortable with my subjects, to feel that I am not intruding too much. What they do and don't want photographed is informative, though I don't want to be controlled by what someone wants me to see. Concealment is a delicate issue I've thought about a lot. The project is really about disclosure, about how much a woman is able to disclose to the artist. As soon as the camera comes in, there is inevitably a certain amount of playacting. I have to understand that, and at the same time minimize my presence to get as real a picture as possible of everyday ritual and space.

The key to personal ritual is found in different places for different women. It may appear in the areas to which a woman devotes the most energy during the day. And yet a dirty kitty-litter box may say something more important — or plants (when they are watered or moved into the sunlight), or the humidifier (the ritual of keeping it filled and the space at the proper temperature), or the medicine cabinet, the phone, the television set, a workspace, shopping bag, refrigerator, cupboard shelves, cosmetics drawer. The pace of the daily ritual is particularly important. In one case the care and time taken to wrap a head of lettuce indicated general "compulsive perfection." The same woman told me that she had once sent out her cloth napkins to be cleaned and pressed for her husband's birthday dinner party. They "didn't look right" when they came back from the laundry, so she rewashed and reironed all of them.

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Rose

Jewish, 57 years old, married for 37 years, three grown children, part-time housewife recently returned to nursing on part-time basis. She has started studying Spanish to understand her non-English-speaking clients and volunteers her nursing services periodically at a second clinic. Still spends a great deal of time cooking, cleaning, and caring for people (husband, grandchild once a week, often visiting children). The day always starts early and goes quickly, with great activity. Her husband, a car dealer (age 63), used to put in an eight- to 12-hour day. He now comes home earlier and they have (to her joy) more social life. Rose also entertains her friends at home (a two-story house) with weekly dinners of lox and bagels (paid for on a rotating basis by "the girls"), followed by a Mah-jongg game. Bedtime is usually nine or ten, sometimes earlier, but never without an evening bath. Probably the greatest changes for her at this time are the recent loss of her mother, the coming of a second grandchild, and the full transition to "grandmotherhood."



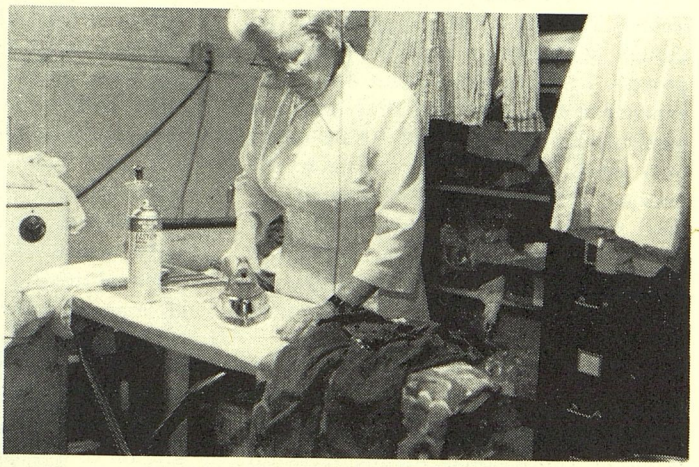
Evening bath.



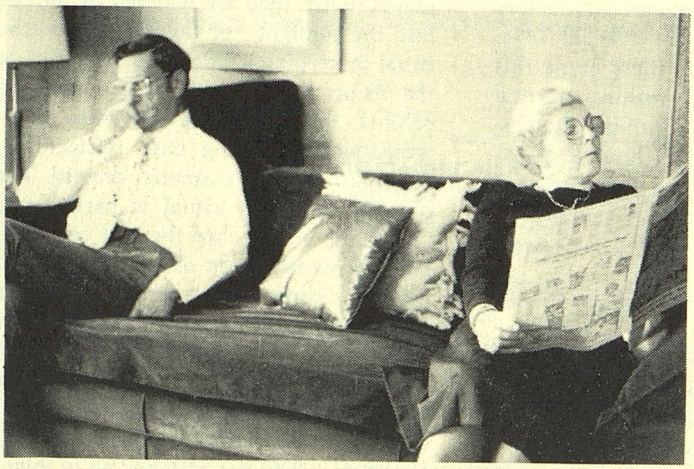
Subject puts away clean dishes, puts dirty dishes in dishwasher.



Mah-jongg evening, with lox and bagel dinner.



Subject starches and irons her nurse's cap in the basement.



Rose and husband Jack before going out to a Sunday concert.



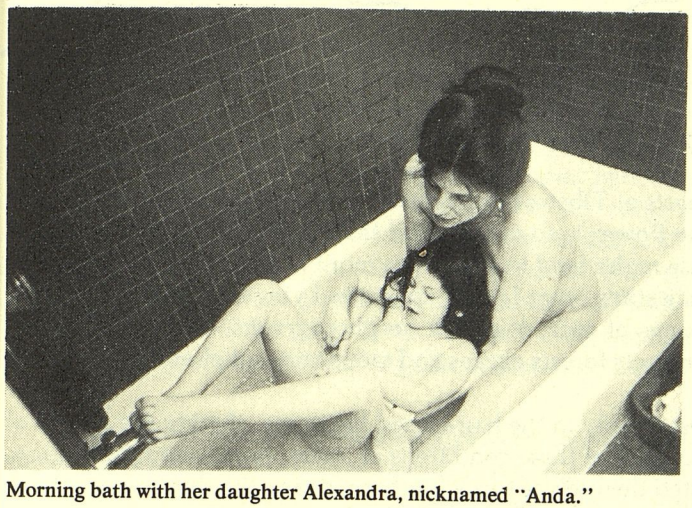
Subject awakens at 6 a.m., cuddles with her husband for a while.

I would like to express my appreciation to Carolyn Ashbaugh for help in organizing many of the ideas in this article.

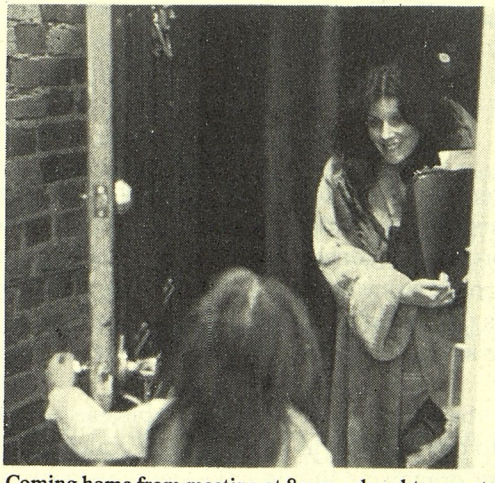
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Merilyn

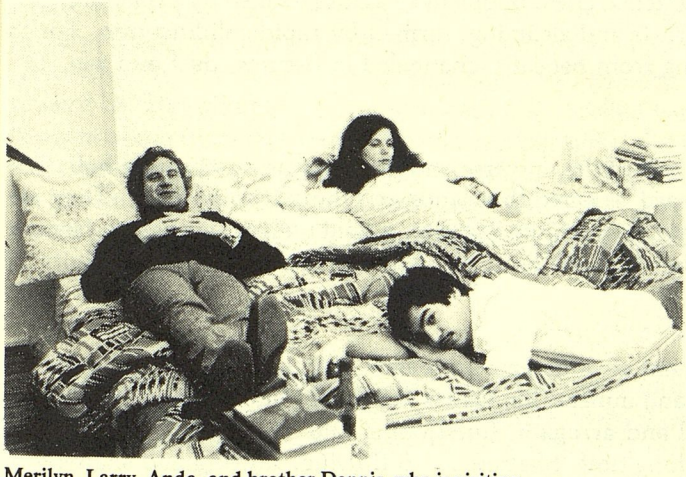
Married, 34 years old, a mother, expecting her second child, working on a Ph.D. in human development—"busy, researcher, clinician, social worker, psychologist, woman." She feels a lot of pressure to fulfill many roles. The pregnancy has made both physical and mental activity more difficult, with many days needed for rest and many nights to bed early. What is obvious about Merilyn is the pleasure and time she takes for personal ritual, both alone and with her family. The white space, although designed by her artist husband, is also an expression of her own aesthetic—it comes from the need to create a sanctuary. In her demographic form for this project, she describes her marital status as "a lot, happy, traditional, non-traditional"; her ethnic background as "a lot (chicken soup)"; her religion as "sometimes."



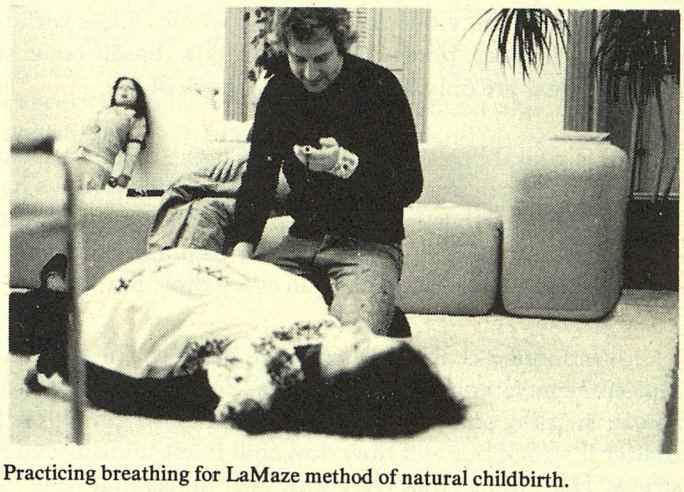
Morning bath with her daughter Alexandra, nicknamed "Anda."



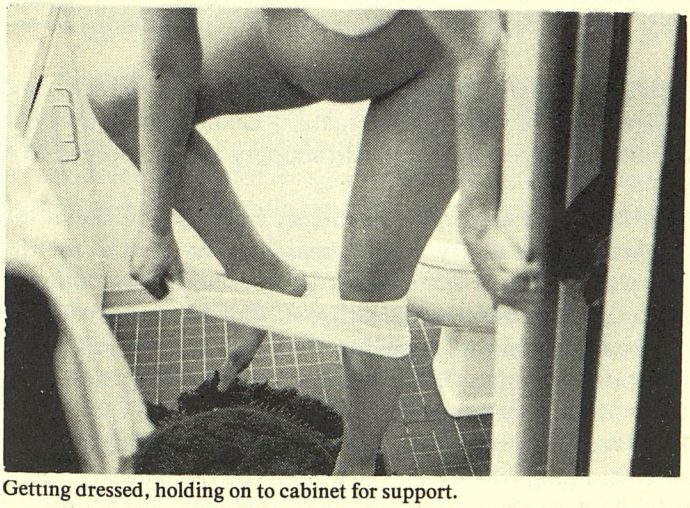
Coming home from meeting at 8 p.m.; daughter greets her at door.



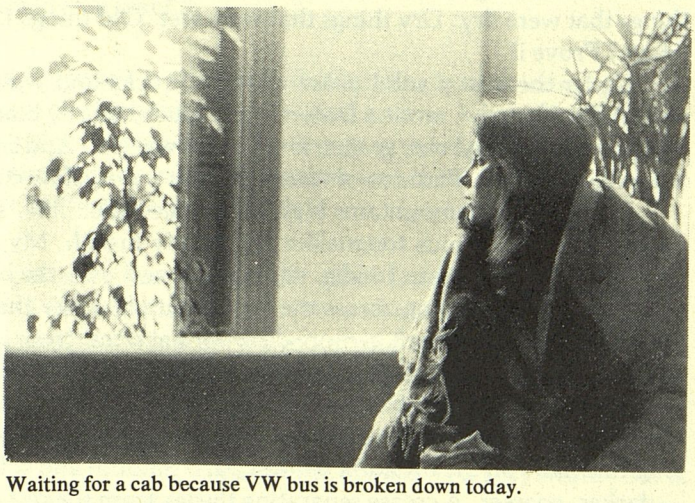
Merilyn, Larry, Anda, and brother Dennis, who is visiting.



Practicing breathing for LaMaze method of natural childbirth.



Getting dressed, holding on to cabinet for support.



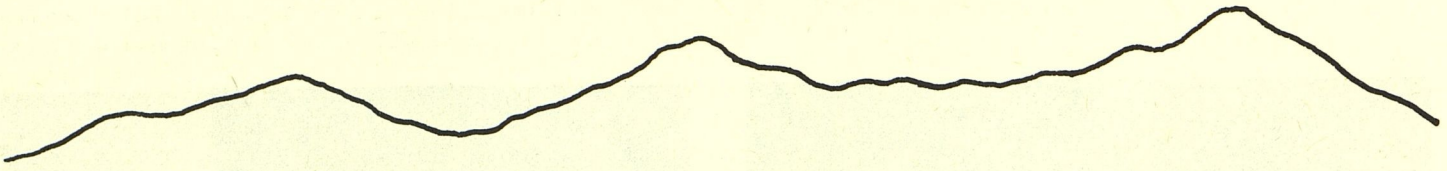
Waiting for a cab because VW bus is broken down today.

Sherry Markovitz, age 29, is an artist living in Seattle who works photographically with themes of family and sex differences.

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3 short fictions

lucy r. lippard



1. *the cries you hear*

The rocks trembled every day for over two months and in parts of Tibet a sick person or a woman who had given birth to a child was carefully prevented from sleeping. Sometimes the flower is so constructed that the insect cannot get at the nectar without brushing against a stigma which, perhaps because males tend to fall asleep more rapidly than females after intercourse, returns to stone needles. In the process of collapse the star's outer layers compress. Lying naked in the pouring rain, our wetness the world's wetness, our hard bodies the makings of rock. We took no photographs. The vacant plains were a featureless screen on which we projected our memories of rivers forests oceans and mountains, of elsewhere — quick! Before it. . . .

Meanwhile, the females of the indispensable earthquake rest quietly in the half-closed blossoms, sharing the power of sleep, oblivious to our pain. I was long in doubt concerning the origins of these conditions of stress, horror and exhaustion. That two different organisms should have simultaneously adapted themselves to each other. During the third severe shock the trees were so violently shaken that the birds flew out with frightened cries. Bubblelike cavities formed by expanding gas. Solid pieces blown violently out of the womb. Glass surfaces, brittle and gleaming, formed by rapid solidification. Touch me here. Wrinkles, pores in the earth's skin, basalt lavas swelling from beneath, channeled in fissures, dust and ash. The cries you hear are only the continuing shock of life.

* * *

"It is a fatal delusion which presents the earth as the lower half of the universe and the heavens as its upper half. The heavens and earth are not two separate creations, as we have heard repeated thousands and thousands of times. They are only one. The earth is in the heavens. The heavens are infinite space, indefinite expanse, a void without limits; no frontier circumscribes them, they have neither beginning nor end, neither top nor bottom, right nor left; there is an infinity of spaces which succeed each other in every direction."

* * *

A mountain chain is an effective barrier. The slow movement of underground waters carrying silica into sandstone. Limestone metamorphosed is marble. Bedding planes obscured and mineral impurities drawn out into swirling streaks and bands, swirling streaks and bedding planes obscured. He is tall and arrogant, questioning and vulnerable. Cold tar will shatter if struck but will flow downhill if left undisturbed for a long time. Shattered and flowing, flowing and shattered if struck. Hard things that were soft. Soft things that were hard. Hot things that were cold. Cold things that were hot. Wet things that were dry. Dry things that were wet. Old things that were young. Young things that won't be old. It stops somewhere? Prove it.

Under the mist a solid prose of rocks, rocks and water, hard rocks and flowing water, safe rocks and treacherous water. Rough rocks, motion frozen to the touch, thorny black volcanic piles, a vein, an aggregate, a channel worn away, a pit blown or swirled out, grains, knife edges vertical. And smooth rocks, covered with pale and slippery algae, soothed to a fine old gentleness. Patterns of water, ancient muds, slow curves.

In some alpine mountains high above the timberline, sheets of frost-shattered rock fragments creep slowly down the valleys making curious tonguelike forms. My mouth. My tongue makes love to my mouth, searching its cavities for the softest, wettest places to fondle, sliding past and over the hard sharp teeth so that it hurts a little, overlapping, lapping its own roughness, slipping across the toothmounds under the gums and falling into the dark throat. Craving in. Prose, not poetry. Its tentacles reach in more directions at once, from a solider base, at a natural pace. It circles and radiates, has a core and a skin and a network of capillaries instead of only arteries. Memories wear away the present to an older landscape.

My leg, thicker at the top than at the bottom, stronger at the bottom than at the top, stranger at the top than at the bottom, more useful at the bottom than at the top. At the top, plump flesh held firmly between thumb and forefinger, a few long fine hairs on the broadest whitest part. Smooth and soft and secret lining where other hairs intrude from other sources — darker, coarser. A crease separating the leg from the rest of the body, a crease that changes character as the leg is used for

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different things, a soft crease when I am sitting, a mysterious crease when I am lying with one leg curled to my stomach, no crease at all when I am walking, but creased again when running, sometimes. A taut surface when held back, a valley between bulges when not. A leg slimming gradually to a knotted center where the bones assert themselves. A hard hairy hilltop, then a wrinkled old topography flattened into valleys. A leg that swells again, harder this time, smooth again, with a neatly turning strength of its own, a leg that is straight in front and soft-hard in back, flat then rounded, a leg that finally gives way to ankle and foot, the working parts detached from pleasure places above. The bony not so pretty skeletons of motion, fleshed only around the ankle bones, arched over the instep and finally twice in touch with the earth.

* * *

Each major time unit is brought to a close by orogeny, also called revolution. Disturbance, disruption, disintegration, under pressure. Even the strongest rocks may develop fractures. Deep decay and rotting of igneous and metamorphic rocks, from blocks to egg and sphere shapes. Water entering into union with minerals. Metamorphic rocks have undergone kneading and shaping, baking and shaking, shale turning to slate when split by cleavage, by slippage, during the process. Slate when struck sharply rings metallically. Clay comes in all colors. Playing the geomorphic role of a weak rock, staring at each other but not speaking until finally. A poetic geology to take back to the red hills, white clay to merge as pink. Isolated submarine mountains, the ocean floor pulled apart here, causing a rift, a certain cruelty. Alone is better I say. Then stop the invasion. If you see two scorpions together they are either making love or one of them is being eaten. Aries energy stepped back into the earth. My rock, your mesas. Ice needles pry apart joint blocks, tremendous pressures and bare high cliffs fall off into conical forms, especially in dry climates. Niches, shallow caves, rock arches, pits, cliff dwellings. Come now. Yes/No. In deserts, flash floods and earthflows, mudflows result from the inability of the dry land to permeate the permafrost. Shrinking and swelling. Given sufficient time, barriers can be broken down and new topographies arise. An unbridgeable gulf does not exist between organic and inorganic matter.

* * *

Drift, and erratic boulders are ascribed to mineral richness, to the action of great waves, but women's tides told in the caves refute such theories. Play pale beyond. In a climate warmer than that we warned each other, islands separated from ice cover by a wide expanse of ocean, foregoing clubs for quieter power, fleshed fat and knowing. Warm interglacial leaves, closer to the fires, hands in a ring, shadows on the ceilings, circles drawn at dusk, footsteps from below. The occasional peculiar transportation of boulders in a manner not in harmony with what we see ice doing at the present time. But little girls are crafty. Our laughter pits the ocean floor. Echoing with pebble talk, scratched on anemones. Walls curving inward toward us. No windows. Pictures nonetheless. Melted between sisters in collision. Only global catastrophes could have brought about that smoothness. Only torrential rains, wet hair, wet cheeks. Each other. Barren stone and fragmented debris stops here, swept back while lakes and valleys are dug out by other women. Each a specialist in her field. What generates the enormous forces that bend, break and crush the rocks in mountain zones? What indeed. Women's cataclysmic work, traced by fingers in the meteoric dust. Giving birth to each other. Excessive.

2. into among

Stepping down and out. Someone else can move into this house. It looks o.k. from the outside but the inside needs some work. I only regret how long it took to get down those stairs to the basement. Overhead the pretty flowered curtains make wavered patterns on the sunny floor. A tomato is rotting fuzzily in the icebox drawer and other closets capture other odors, other faults. Under the bed dust gathers roses smell acrid. The sheets at the hamper's bottom were stained last winter, not since. I've opened the windows but not the doors. It's all yours, if you want it.

* * *

Nesting fantasies. I am high in the tallest tree in the world and it sways in the wind. Exhilarating, precarious. I cling to my egg which is disguised as the sea. When the fish hatches I swim through the air until I find a cave, brown, humid, and grainy, where after a night with the boulder another egg is laid, this one transparent. I'm happy watching the beginnings of a new dream. It sometimes has petals, sometimes blades. One morning the walls are opaque and that's that. Dead leaves turn to stone and I would leave but for the field of snakes that writhes beyond the entrance.

* * *

Shuttered. Unhinged. Falling off the roof. A nice white clapboard house with a soft green lawn, lace curtains at the windows, roses on a trellis over the door, the old fanlight sparkling when the light hits it. We need a very long time to move up the flagstone walk. In the process a war takes place, peace reigns, men land on the moon and women defend it, black blankets of oil are thrown across birds' coffins and the sea stinks. Still the little house remains, the sun always dappling its freshly painted walls, the sound of piano scales twinkling delicately behind the curtain of warmth. When we reach the door we are exhausted, gray, crippled, and in pain. The doorknob, though brilliantly brass, is cold to our touch and the door sticks. It takes our last strength to open it and throw ourselves across the threshold onto what should be a rosy hearth but is instead a deep dark well, the bottom of which, at this telling, we have not reached.

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3. *headwaters*

For reasons of their own, women are suspicious of diving and frown on their menfolk going down. D----, who has starred in several underwater films, has never received a fan letter from a woman. —Jacques Cousteau

We are already down there. We have already gone down, our breasts bumping the boulders struggling to rise. Our menfolk don't know where to send the fan letters. Can dive, but not delve. Perhaps far down are boundaries between layers of water not obvious at the surface of the sea and quite independent of surface phenomena. Not just still waters. Rapture of the depths. At a town called Headtide there is an old white church unconsciously marking with its spire the spot where the Sheepscot River, short and wide, a tidal estuary, comes to an end in a stony brook and then goes underground. The term tidal wave is loosely applied. Some rivers braid long plaits of sand with thinning streams, and others — always full, muddy and sated — lag in fat banks. Tides are most marked when the sun is nearest the earth. Tides thigh tickling, oozing over the edges and hummocks, a band of foam, making liquid land. Creeps up me toward immersion. Hold your waters. Making waves, seeing red. I flow she flows we flow. Lunar and solar tides coincide, are fully cumulative only twice each lunar month. While fans unfold, snap shut, and leave the flowers no escape. Underwater, irregularities rise and, cursing, fall. Two or more wave patterns at the same place and time. There can, however, be independent waves. And long rivers pass through different landforms like changing lovers. Impatiently cutting gorges, willing waterfalls and rapids to flatness. Unfamiliar bodies hurled at each other. Beneath the rumbling, boulders lurk and lurch, needing a pool.

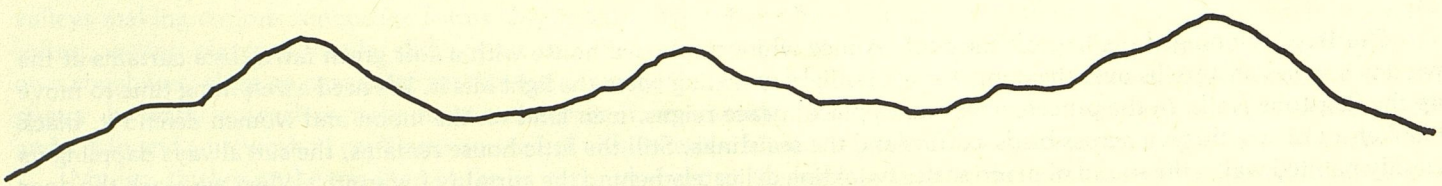
* * *

My traveling dreams are washed in foreign waters. In one I swim along a beach. The water is warm and the same pale blue as the sky — bleached but not burning. Behind me swims a large black dog and before me floats a group of exotic birds, brilliant pink feathers wet but still light, raised above the water in a tangle of wings. The end of the beach is distant; all sand, no rocks or trees in sight. My swimming is leisurely but purposeful. In another dream I wake alone and rush to find my lover. He is in the bathtub and I yell desperately at him: Did I sleep alone last night? Did I sleep alone last night? Another night, my child, my lover and I are going to see a lighthouse through a swamp. The waterway is not very wide. Trees hang dense over the edges but in the center where we swim it's blue, unshaded. A long trip to make boatless, but we are swimming, accompanied at times by a fat friend. I'm not struck by the fact that we are swimming so much as by the length of the trip, not tired so much as a little bored. Once again the water is tepid, body temperature, lulling. The lighthouse when we get there is on a broader bay, still inland, mountains in the distance. There is some talk of leaving and returning in the afternoon. But there isn't time.

* * *

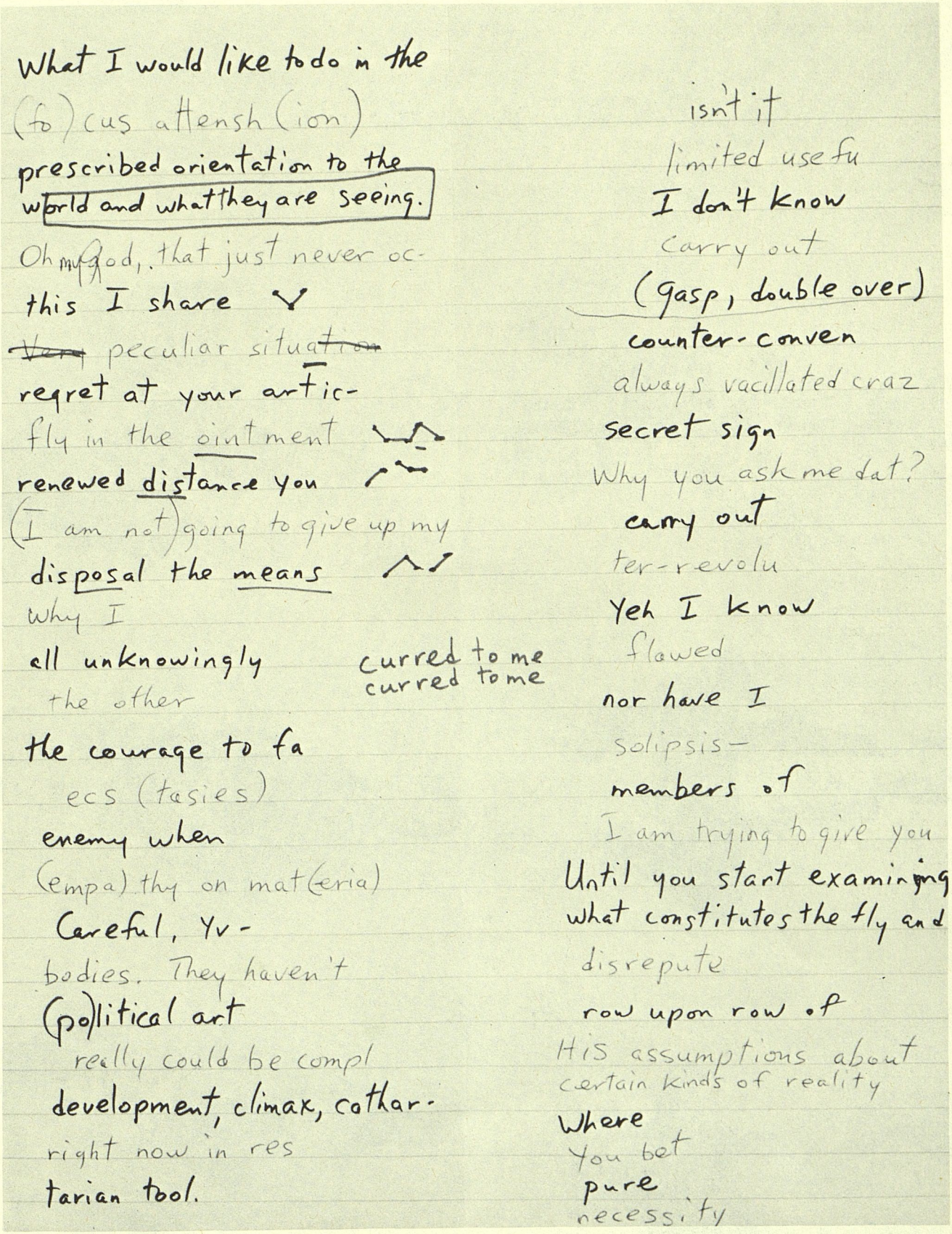
The waters broke with no warning. Lie still, pretend while it crests. Above our caves the divers' forms pass dimly, unaware. Destructive advances of the sea upon the coasts have two distinct origins: dreams like sunwarmed flats when the tide comes in very slowly, visibly; earthquakes and storms. Neither related to the tide, and often not actually waves. Floating, I am a fleshy layer between sea and sky. Why go down? Letters melt and corals build. Why go down and not feel the moon in the pit of your stomach? Or hear ripples whisper on the floor? The ocean's bedrock blurred. Unexpected, the cold and purifying northern channels. With no warning, water on the brain, the belly, breast and buttock. Internal waves stained pink affecting everything below above. Doesn't hold water, that's all. Divers ring their bells but fail to reach us, cannot pierce the bubbles that contain them. And we are already down there, friendly, calm, constructing small places in which to wait, making room for others, settling in, exchanging disguises, rearranging caves and mountains, waiting until they stop pouring oil on the waters, till they stop throwing rocks, sinking ships, turning our tides.

Lucy Lippard is a feminist art critic who also writes "fiction"; it has been published in *Center, Big Deal, Tractor, The World* and elsewhere.



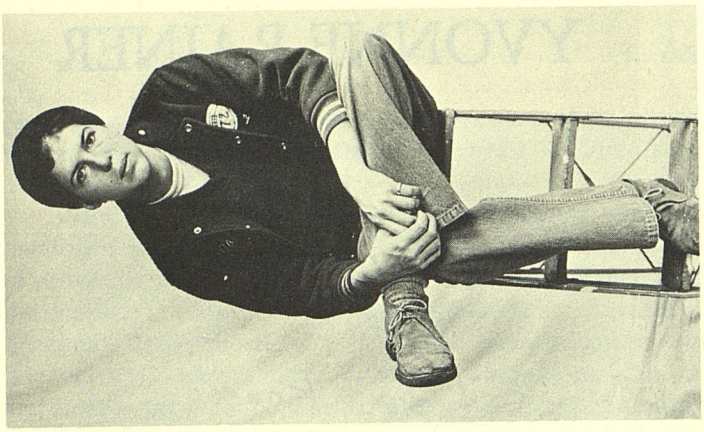
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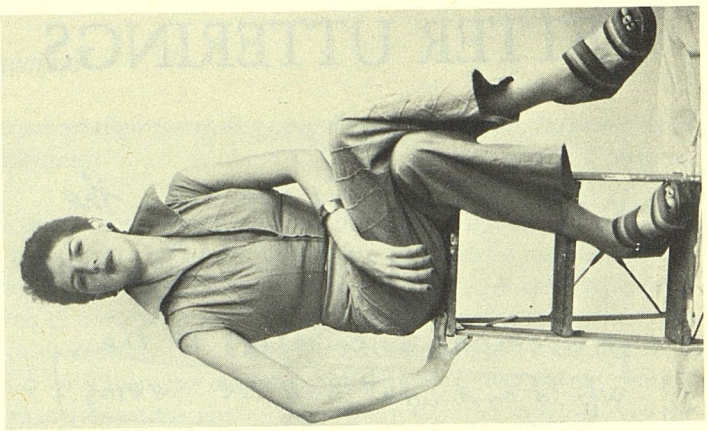
LETTER UTTERINGS YVONNE RAINER



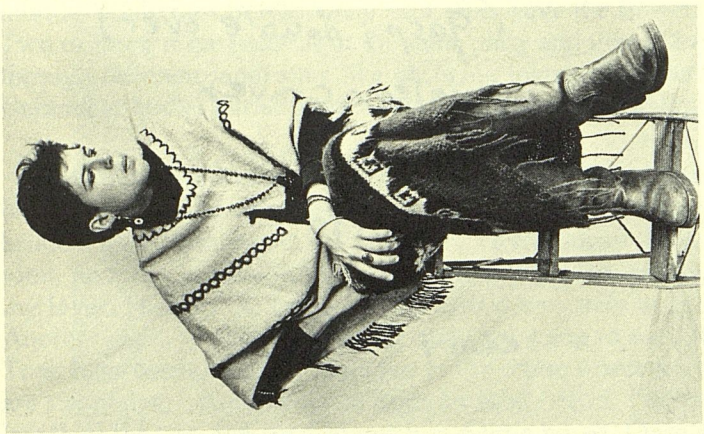
Yvonne Rainer is an American filmmaker currently living in Berlin. Her most recent film is *Kristina Talking Pictures* (1976) and she is the author of a book, *Work 1961-73* (The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design).

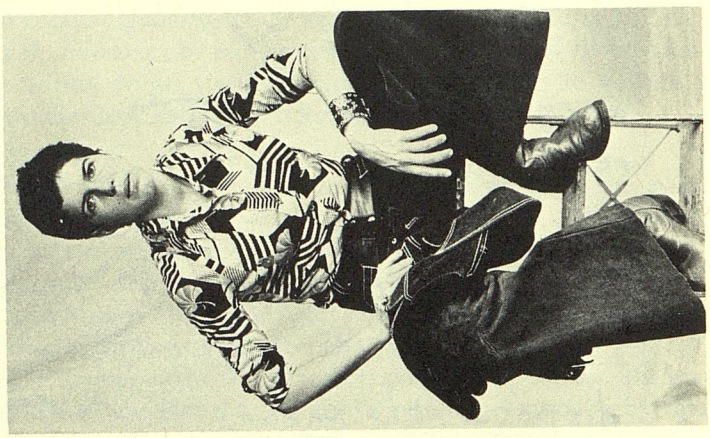
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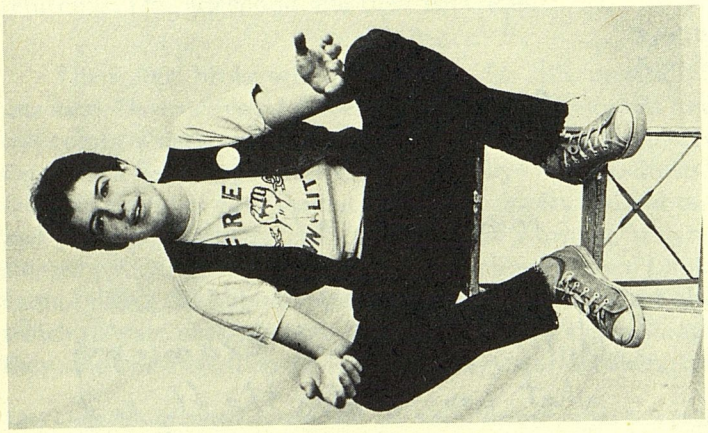


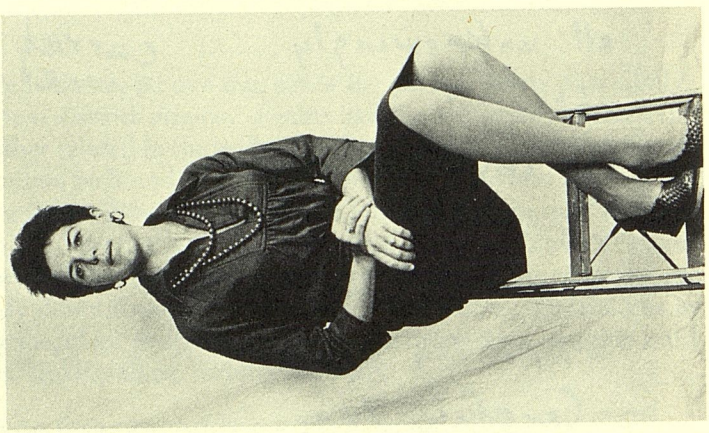


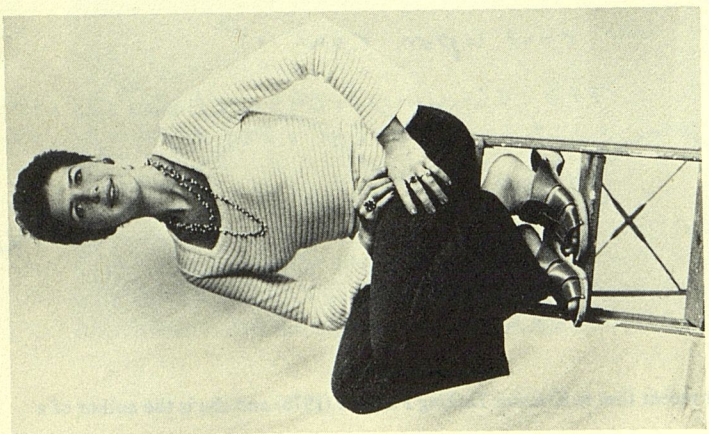
Photos by Amy Sillman and Su Friedrich

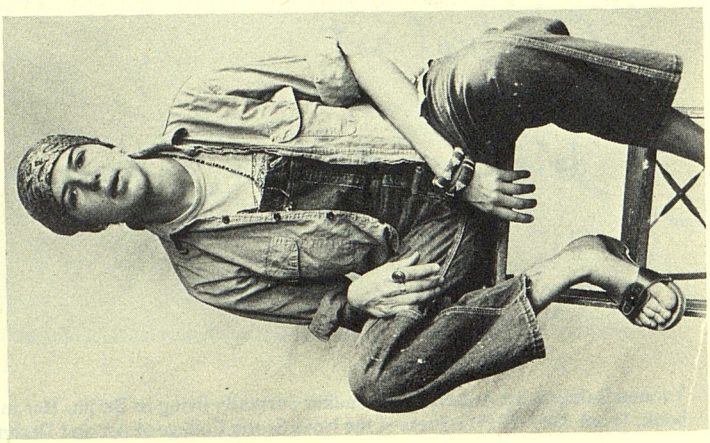












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MEA CULPA*

SU FRIEDRICH

I used to read *Vogue* "for the photography" the way I read *Playboy* "for the articles."

Help keep America beautiful — *Cosmetics ad*

To assemble the props for this project, I spent an afternoon in the room-sized closet of Helen, a clothes maniac. When I lived with her, I was always carrying on about "the renunciation of material wealth as a primary political act"; I return one year later more humble, less certain that this renunciation is actually as easy as They make it seem.

We are well past the days when beauty was an idle woman's way of passing the time — and we're secure enough to know the difference. Today, when time is something no one has enough of — when women have jobs, families, and half a dozen other commitments — caring about yourself isn't the icing on the cake. It's one of the responsibilities of everyday life to look as well as you can . . . for yourself . . . and for the delight of others.
— Vogue's *"Point of View," 1975*

Helen is a perfect resource because of her indiscriminate attachment to all clothes. On the same day she'll buy a satin kimono, suede pantsuit and pink mohair sweater and then pack them away and continue to wear her Hellenisms. If I were a freudian, I'd triumphantly claim her for my "clothes as a sexual surrogate" thesis. But I'm more interested in squeezing the lifeblood out of the deadly aphorism: Clothes Make The Woman.

Tonight, I feel as ethereal as a silken butterfly. This afternoon, I helped him change a tire. Is it magic, the moonlight, or Cheryl Baron's slither of silk? — *Clothing ad in* Vogue

I must remain alert during this project, wary of its seduction. I have what some people consider the bad habit of rarely confronting myself in the mirror. In fact I'm usually surprised to see myself. My appearance runs the short course from plain lesbian feminist to affordably classy dyke. Even these images seem rigidly codified and I am confused and dissatisfied with them.

Do you blame me for wanting to be a man — free in a man-made world? Do you blame me for hating again to resume a woman's clothes and just belong? — *Cora Anderson in 1914, who, after living as a man, in man's dress, and marrying a woman, was "exposed" and ordered by a court to resume wearing female clothes* (*cited in* Gay American History)

Gentlemen prefer tuxedos . . . When it's you. In your best . . . double breasted satin tux . . .
— *Clothing ad in* The New York Times, *1976*

It's a guilty struggle, indulging in fantasies of myself in new clothes and roles and then rejecting each of them on "political principle": material projection of self seems at odds with a serious commitment . . . And then the cycle twists and I defend artifice as a great form of subversion.
Women stride in boots.

Little vests are super — little fur vests, little vests in gold at night . . . Don't let anyone talk you into one of those suit-with-a-vest routines — a take-off on men's clothes is not *what it's all about . . .*
— *Clothing ad in* Vogue, *1976*

There is no intrinsic sin in riding astride a horse, or in wearing boots and breeches, but there is harm in violating those decent rules by which the conduct of either sex is regulated.
— London Medical Times, *1897*
(*quoted in* Gay American History)

So now, disguised as a "project," I'm exposing myself to an overwhelming array of visual, emotional and intellectual costumes and it's becoming very difficult to overcome the predetermined identities built into these clothes.

The wearing of one scent alone can become as much a part of a woman's behavior as the way she speaks, parts her hair, wears down her lipstick . . . and it's deliberate.
— *Editorial comment in* Vogue

I usually don't think of myself as having the same soft curves that I see displayed everywhere. I imagine that they belong to women with very different perceptions of themselves. But no . . . in the right clothes I'd be indistinguishable from them. Breasts, legs, pink, smooth, a mute smile.
And then I know that underneath they're as full of blood and guts as I am.

She dresses for herself but we dress her. — *Clothing ad in Vogue*

More than a way of dressing, Halston is a way of life.
— *Clothing ad in* Vogue

Helen's attic.
I slip on an apricot satin gown. It gleams. Soft, fantastically soft, cool on my thighs, hanging loosely over my breasts. My usual garb doesn't exact such erotic responses from my skin. I begin to act out a seduction but it's very unclear whom I'm seducing. I enter a male fantasy. I see more clearly than ever the motives for this madness.

I was nine years old, reading comic books in the seclusion of my back porch. Eagerly, I flipped to the Frederick's of Hollywood ad in the back, my fingers slowly tracing the outlines of those drawings, lingering over the firm pointed breasts and outrageously full hips. Stroking, stroking. Squeezing my eyes shut I dreamt of perfect curves and crevices, of cleavage and sculpted limbs on those crazy high heels.

In the more discreet magazines of high school and college I recognized Frederick's aesthetic translated into Tasteful and Chic. They had merely disguised it as "The Fresh Young Look" and "The New Romanticism."

In 1678 Abbe Jacques Boileau published "A just and seasonable Reprehension of naked Breasts, etc."
— *Quoted in* The Unfashionable Human Body

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Feeling guilty: "How can I worry about the world of fashion while the world out there is falling apart?" The World and The Fashion World? It's clear how divisive and misleading man-made categories are.

I recall the months of hours spent in Catholic girls' high school earning the admiration of friends and the disapproval of the nuns. Their typically "altruistic" rationale for our hideous uniforms was that they were freeing our energy for pursuits more honorable than vanity, but by basing this rationale on their priorities (chastity before comfort) rather than our own, they were destined to fail. Precisely because everything was so ugly (to our self-conscious eyes) we spent that precious energy undermining the dress code.
Red bras or naked breasts shone through the thin white blouses, high heels and gym shoes replaced the tyrannical saddle shoe, arms were laden with clattering jewelry, eyes and lips and nails changed color every day, and 3:00 brought the hysterical rush to change into presentable street clothes.

The consciousness of being perfectly dressed may bestow a peace such as religion cannot give. — *Herbert Spencer*

In the days when I should have been daydreaming about boys, I was busy admiring magazine models, my classmates, and myself. I was being trained to appreciate the artificial and real curves, gestures and textures of women, but while I never wanted that physical perfection in those to whom I was emotionally attracted, I demanded it of myself. It seemed, however, that the harder I tried to achieve that perfection, the more elusive it became. I saw how arbitrary the rules actually were; I learned to laugh and to formulate some of my own ideas.
Powerful feelings of rejection set in: even my most stalwart friends were trying to "grow up," to dress and act "maturely." In response, I discovered nervous habits, too much unwanted attention, too little love, self-consciousness and ANGER.
Thanks for the anger.

"Dressing should be exactly that—a tasteful overlaying that brings out the best in me. And you know what: This is the year I can really be me!" We understand you at Saks Fifth Avenue.
— *Clothing ad in* Vogue

Like most mothers, mine is respectful of Culture. I once went with her to The Ballet, in old jeans, my favorite peasant blouse, and without shoes. I try now, seven years later, to remember her shame, and her rage (at me). She asked, "Why do you DO it?", sounding as if I was poisoning babies. But I don't predicate my appearance on how effectively it will offend others. I am confronting how I alone want to dress. If I am ostracized because I dress like a "slob" or a "dyke," she mutters something about my "deserving" it. They all do. The impulse to please her, to conform, is a glass splinter in my gut, dangerous to extract but fatal to ignore. What else can I do but try?

I admit the monster in me. I salute the witch. My ancestors were proud and fierce and slaughtered. My sisters remember. We remind each other, we snarl.

Spot tip: to reduce a too-full upper lip, outline it with a white pencil and smudge it down. — *Beauty tips in* Vogue

I go to Woolworths for makeup for this project. I have to work some black magic on my unkempt face. I expertly "blush on," frost my lips, sculpt my lids with manufactured nature.
Why does it feel so natural to perform this ritual? I want to feel terribly strange. I want to experience it with the same bewilderment that someone from a preindustrial culture would feel on seeing the first photograph of herself, but I feel as if I'd never been away from it.

The Papuans, for instance, have a high regard for the vibrating buttocks of their women who early learn to cultivate a provocative walk. — *in* The Unfashionable Human Body

— First in class to shave my legs. Brave.
— Discarded my bra with my Catholicism. Subversive.
— Wore sandals and a long braid at the university. Intellectual.
— Feel professional in my velvet jacket. Adult.

I see how powerfully Their definitions have defined my reactions, how much my spontaneity has been predetermined. This affects not only how I "choose" to dress but how I respond to others.
The "Ahh, I *thought* so" when a woman's actions fit her appearance.
And the delightful confusion when a woman in Ladydrag gets ANGRY, gets FURIOUS.
The disappointment when gym shoes and labyris protect a hypocrite.
The disorienting pleasure when a "butchy" woman speaks tenderly to me.

How ludicrous.
But I challenge anyone to say that she doesn't go through the same gyrations.
I hate it. I hate it and I keep doing it.
Everyone tells me not to worry, "Everyone does it."
A lousy argument.
Whatever happened to self-definition? To inner-directed fantasy?

. . . there is a woman among the Snakes who once dreamed that she was a man and killed animals in the chase. Upon waking, she assumed her husband's garments, took his gun and went out to test the virtue of her dream; she killed a deer. Since that time she has not left off man's costume . . . by some fearless actions she has obtained the title of "brave" and the privilege of admittance to the council of chiefs. Nothing less than another dream could make her return to her gown.
— *Pierre-Jean de Smet (quoted in* Gay American History)

The danger lies in rebelling on Their terms, replacing one dictate with another. Are we really appeased now that we can wear pants to work? No . . . we embrace the egalitarianism of pants and then create socioeconomic distinctions between pants, slacks and trousers, between fine and grubby pants.
Fashion changes, but its significance remains: style costs money. We have been taught to be grateful for the "democratic" variety in our lives, but our clothes reflect our economic tyranny. Not only can few of us afford the ever-changing demands of fashion, but we are also destroying animals and the earth to satiate our insatiable "needs."
This isn't a fixed reality, it's been built from egocentric and ruthless fantasies. Alter the fantasy and we alter the reality.

The mystery of fashion is that this sudden change of detail is imposed on women: they cannot escape it . . . In matters of style, women obey some hidden law analogous to the one that decides the colors of the wings of birds or the petals of flowers.
— *in* Feminine Fulfillment

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We must begin to believe in a value-free body aesthetic; free choice will come only when the options aren't value-laden.

I'm tired of sad-looking women, of drab suffragettes, of dull and unbecoming colors. — *Valentino, clothing designer*

Trying to extricate myself.
Trying to think without Do's and Don'ts, feminine and masculine, fame or famine.

Growing up a Catholic middle-class white girl taught me the value of disobedience. I have a vivid sense of my difference and I want to exploit this to catalyze a reaction, to force a confrontation of values.
My appearance is an immediate, nonverbal statement and what I do subsequently either confirms or destroys people's assumptions; they don't want to hear an articulate defense of my "bad habits." They want room to condescend.
They tell me I'd "improve my chances" if I wore the right things.
Chances? Is this a lottery? Who are they to decide my worth?

I know that we need to feel okay about ourselves, but the question here is using clothes to get or keep privilege.

. . . as hard times were crowding upon us, I made up my mind to dress in men's attire to seek labor as I was used to men's work. And as I might work harder at housekeeping and get only a dollar per week, and I was capable of doing men's work and getting men's wages, I resolved to try.

— Lucy Ann Lobdell, 1854, age 25

When I feel jealous of women who "survive" by wearing the right trinkets smells shoes colors, I remind myself that with the game comes the terror of losing. I had assumed that being a dyke meant not playing the game, but I'm in the same trap as an obedient sister. She has to remain desirable by Their standards while I have to continually fight Their insistence that I be desirable. I fall into the trap of thinking that I had no interest in being desirable.
Of course I do, but not on Their terms.

There is a way of dressing — a way of looking — that to American women is like a way of life. It has to do with a certain free-wheeling casualness and dash that goes through and through and up and down. — Vogue
Slob.

. . . elegant clothing becomes your coat of arms, by which others will recognize that this is indeed yourself. A rag can be eminently elegant, as we see in Andalusia with the beggars . . . We understand that elegance is not conferred by luxury but rather by poverty; the latter brings us close to a state of nature where nothing is useless. — *in* Feminine Fulfillment
Hippie.

Thank you, Arthur Richards. At last, someone recognized that women prefer what gentlemen prefer. And that's the fit and quality of menswear tailoring. — Vogue
Dyke.

Confidence is a Lady in a Leon Levin. — Vogue
Ballbreaker.

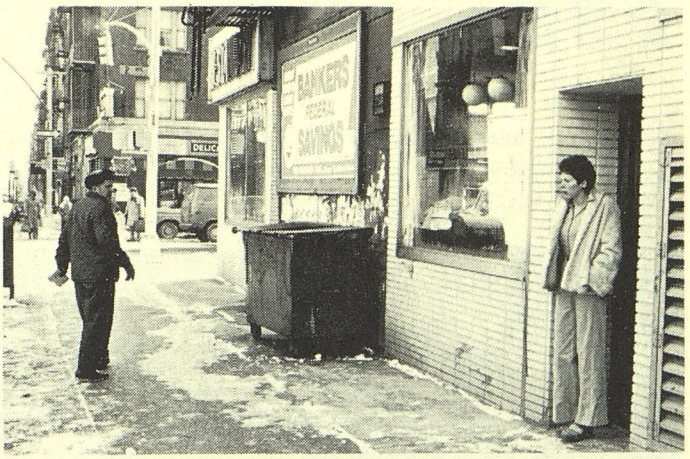
The new bareness . . . and what it takes to wear it. — Vogue
Whore.

People resent anyone who won't dress "nicely." We defile their sanctified spaces.
"Irreverent!"
"It's just a phase."
"When I was your age . . ."

I am not a string of phases. I am no age.
In childhood they taught me that acceptance and success would come only with conformity. But my acceptance of myself has come only through nonconformity. They call me selfish because I don't want to validate their "need" for discretion and propriety, their need to belong. I answer that the incessant craving to be legitimate is the corrupting force in all of us.

I don't want to have to dress like a man to get in.
I'm not interested in looking like a Lady to receive sanction.
I'm tired of being fooled by flannel shirts.
I'm not a feminist because of my boots.

What are we all trying so desperately to "get into" anyway?
Who wants to rent a room in a burning building?





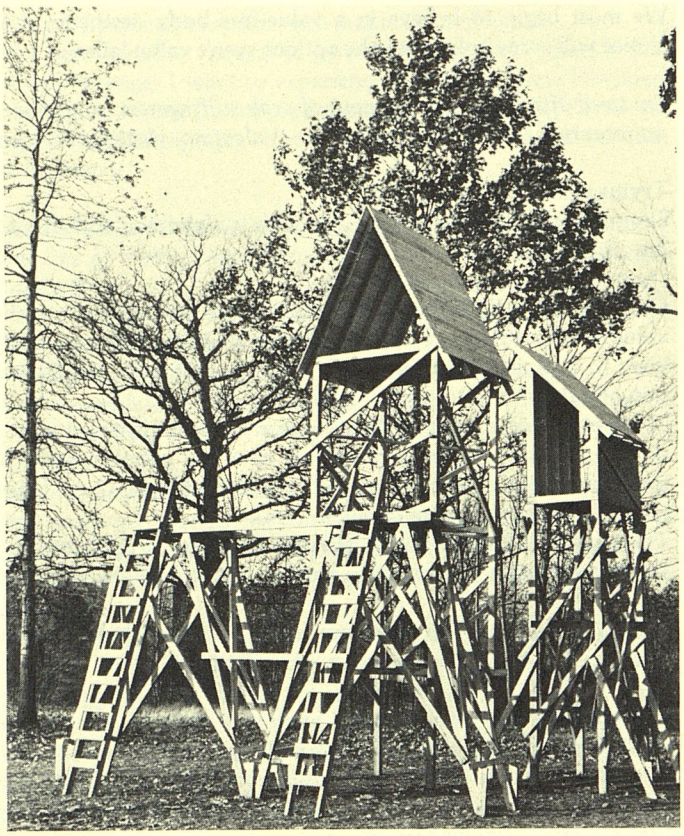
* During Catholic mass, the assembled chant "Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa" (through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault) as they beat their breasts three times.

Thank you Helen for your clothes, and Amy Sillman and Cynthia Carr for assisting in the photography, and Jonathan Katz, *Gay American History* (New York: Crowell, 1976), Bernard Rudofsky, *The Unfashionable Human Body* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1974) and Jean Guitton, *Feminine Fulfillment* (New York: Paulist Press, 1965).

Su Friedrich teaches photography to the women at Bedford Hills (N.Y.) Correctional Facility, is a freelance photographer and lecturer and a member of the Heresies Collective.

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SPACES

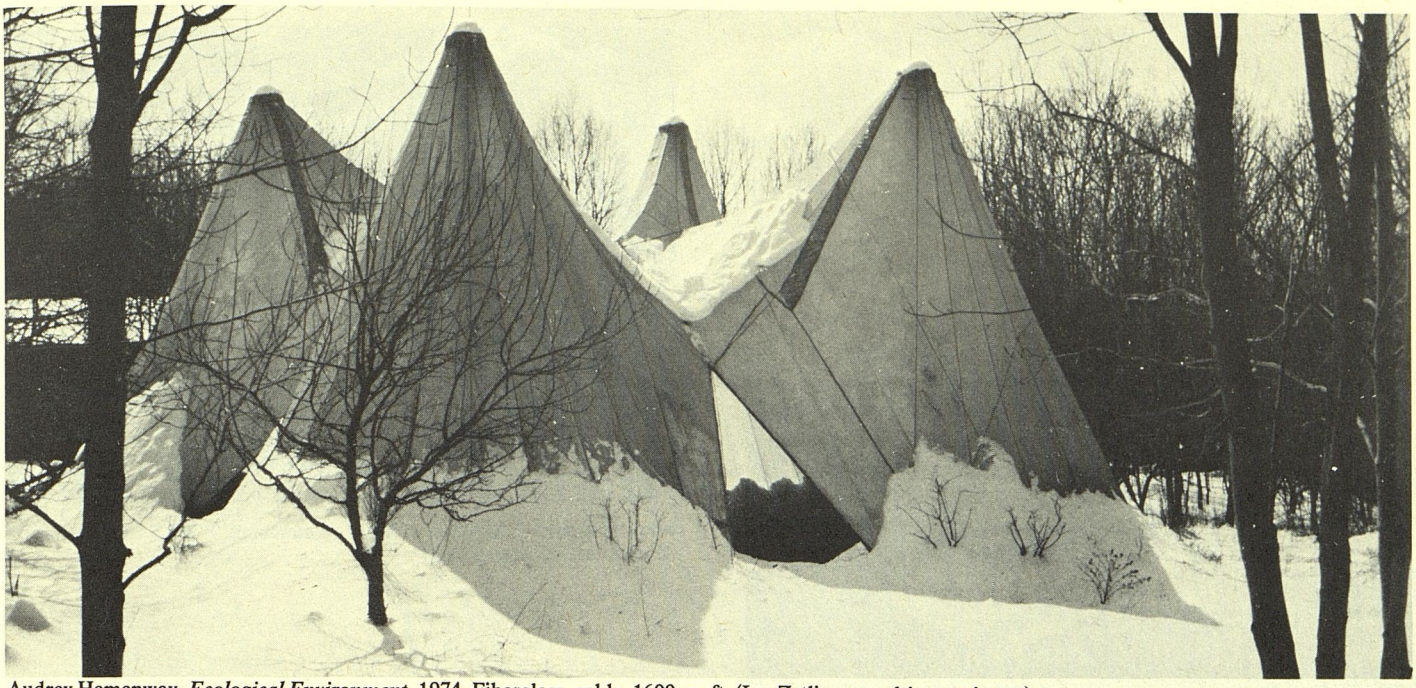


Alice Aycock. *Wooden Shacks on Stilts with Platform.* 1976. A-frame: 6' x 3' x 17½' h. Platform: 18' x 10' h. Hartford Art School, West Hartford, Conn.

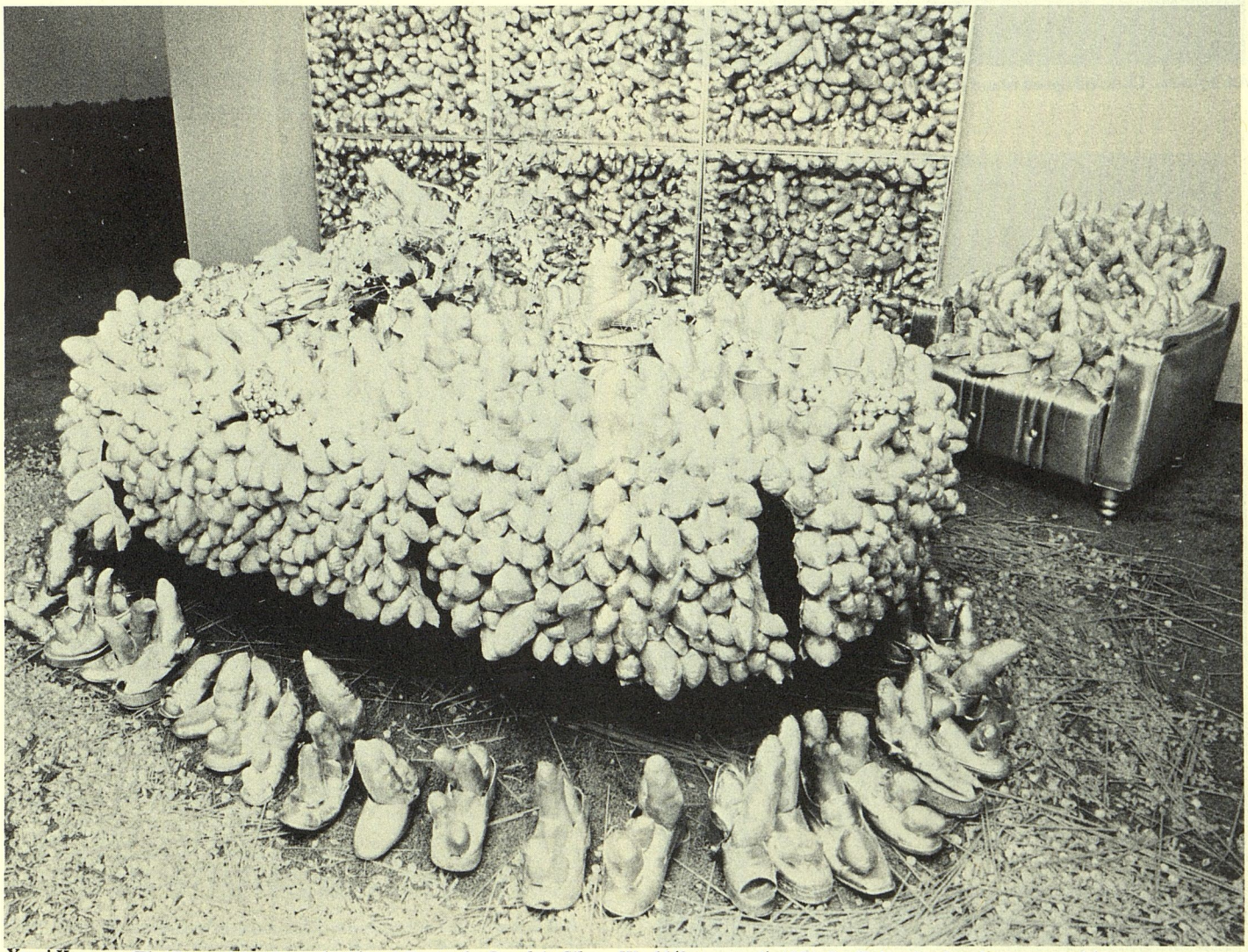


Jody Pinto. *Detail of Spotted Bundle Enclosure.* 1975-76. Excavation of old well: ladder, bundle containing personal mementos, objects found near site. Vacant lot, Philadelphia.

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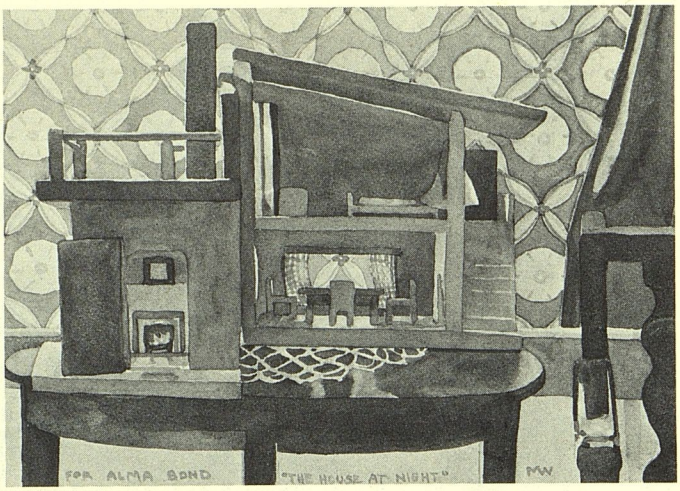


Audrey Hemenway. *Ecological Environment*. 1974. Fiberglass, cable. 1600 sq. ft. (Lev Zetlin, consulting engineer.)

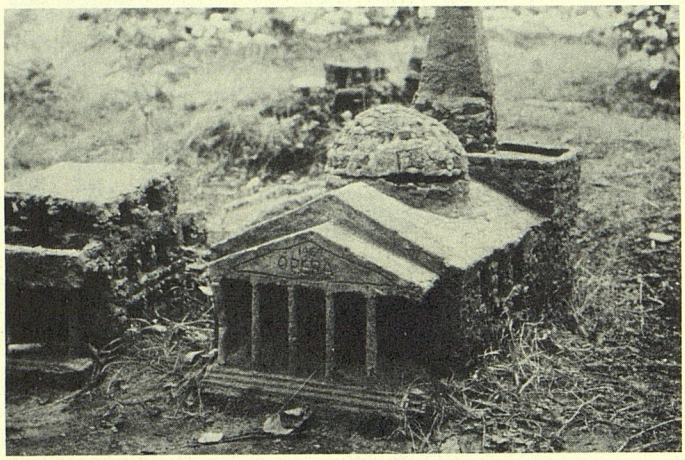


Yayoi Kusama. *The Compulsion Room* (wall) and *Desire for Death in Silvery World* (foreground). 1976. Stuffed and painted canvas on objects.

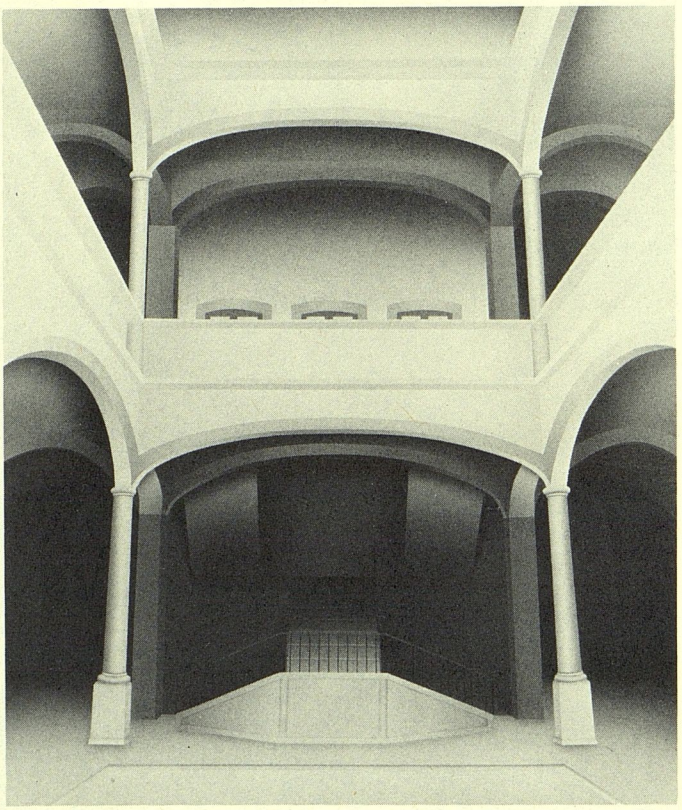
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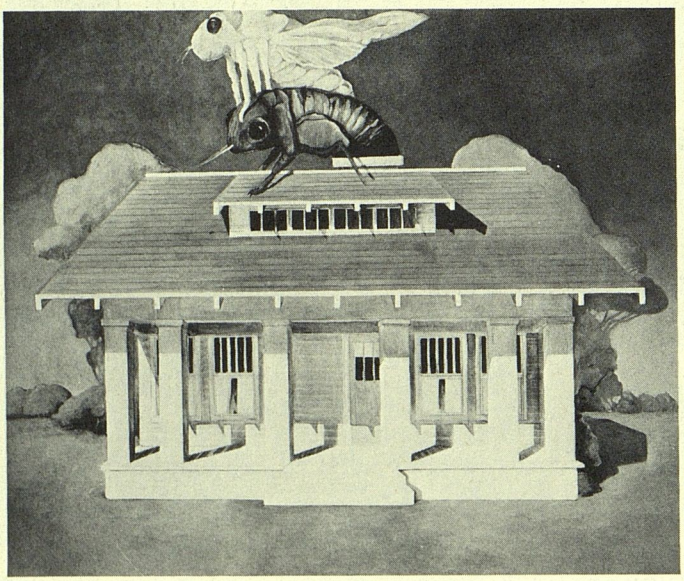
Mimi Weisbord. *The House at Night.* Watercolor. 9" x 13". Collection Dr. Alma Bond. (D. James Dee.)



Anonymous. Little village on island in northern Wisconsin.

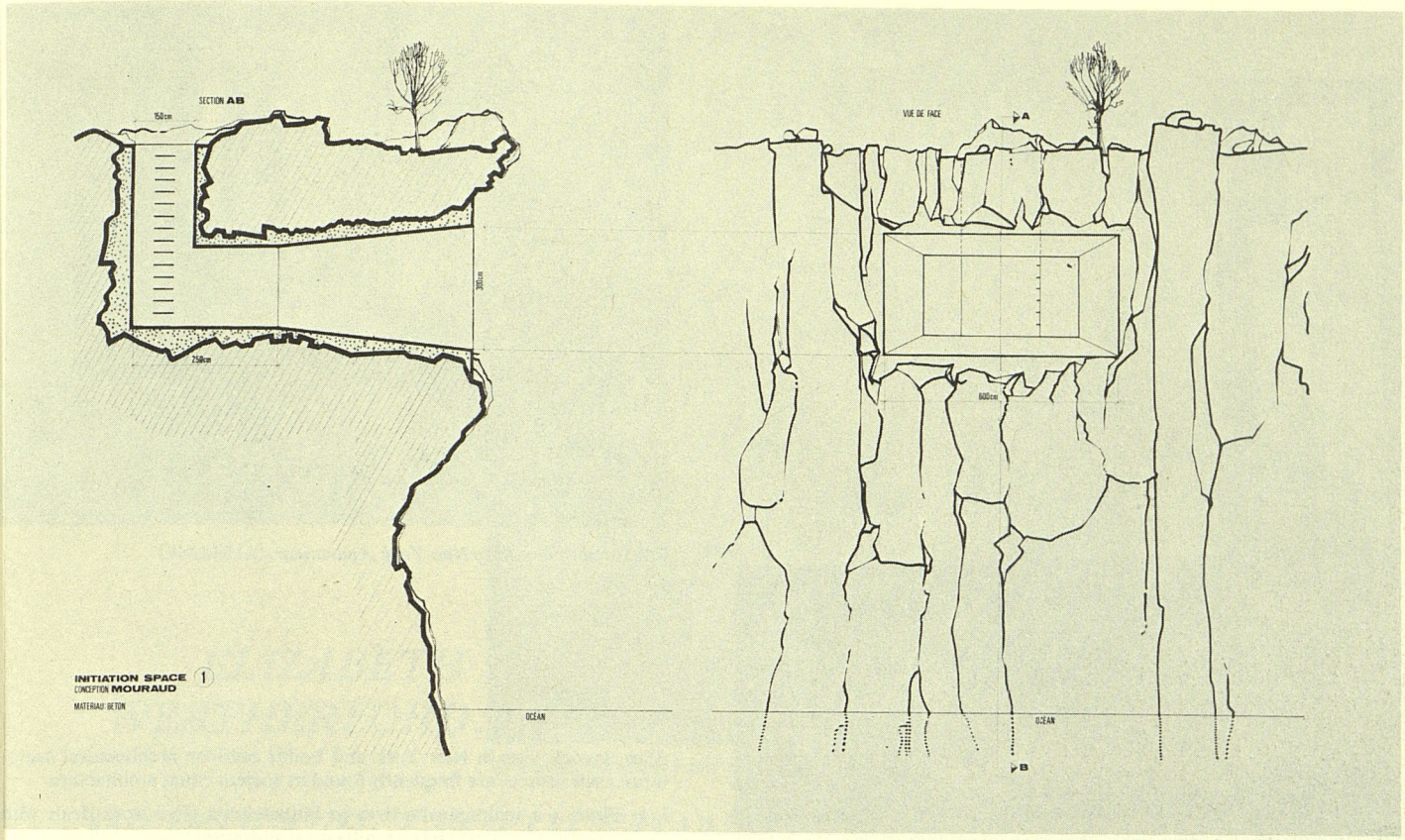


Elena Borstein. *Cuernavaca.* 1974. Acrylic on canvas. 72" x 50". (Eric Pollitzer.)

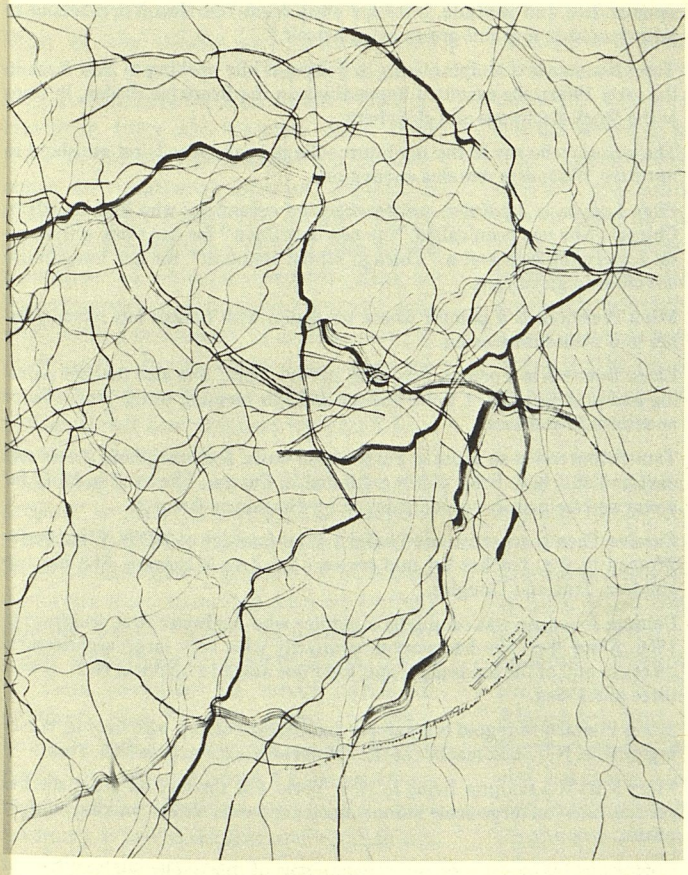


Ellen Lanyon. *Cicada.* 1974. Acrylic on canvas. 48" x 60".

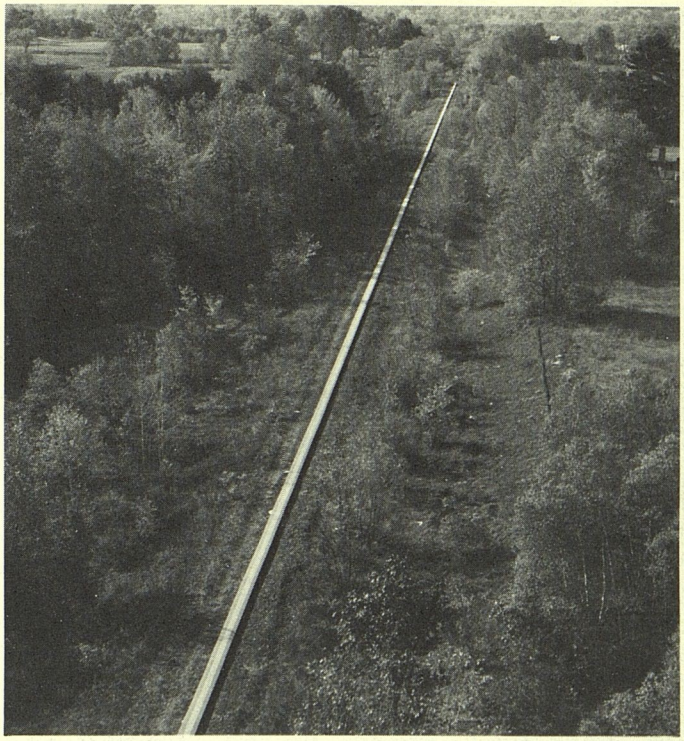
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Tania Mouraud. *Project: Initiation Space No. 1.* 1970. (André Morain.)

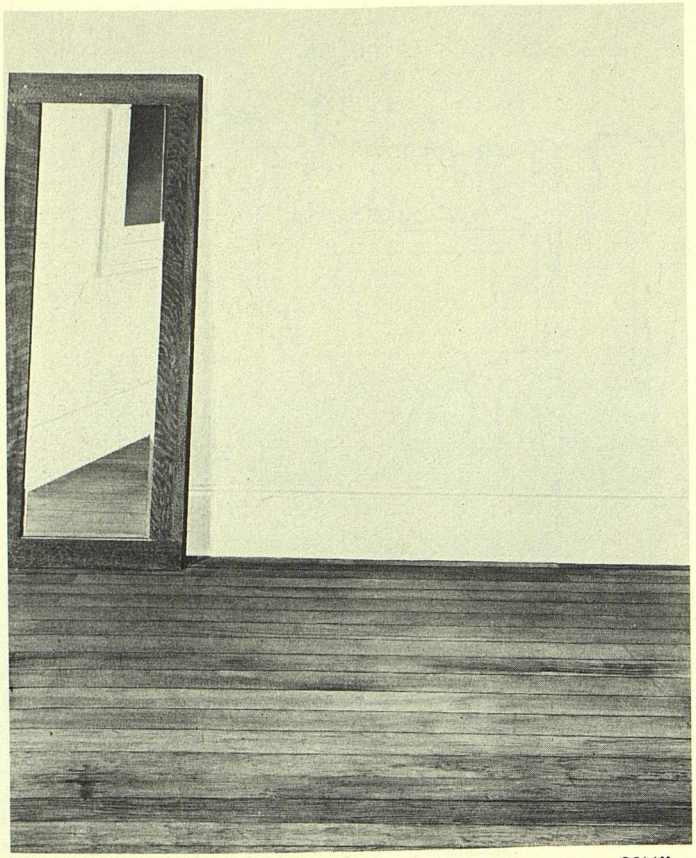


Carolee Thea. Recreation of my commuter routes on the Penn Central R.R. Map tracings from time/space into another medium. From *A Scheme to Annihilate Magnificent Distances:* drawings, photographs and a film: *Bronxville to New York*, 1977. Oilsticks and graphite. 20" x 30".

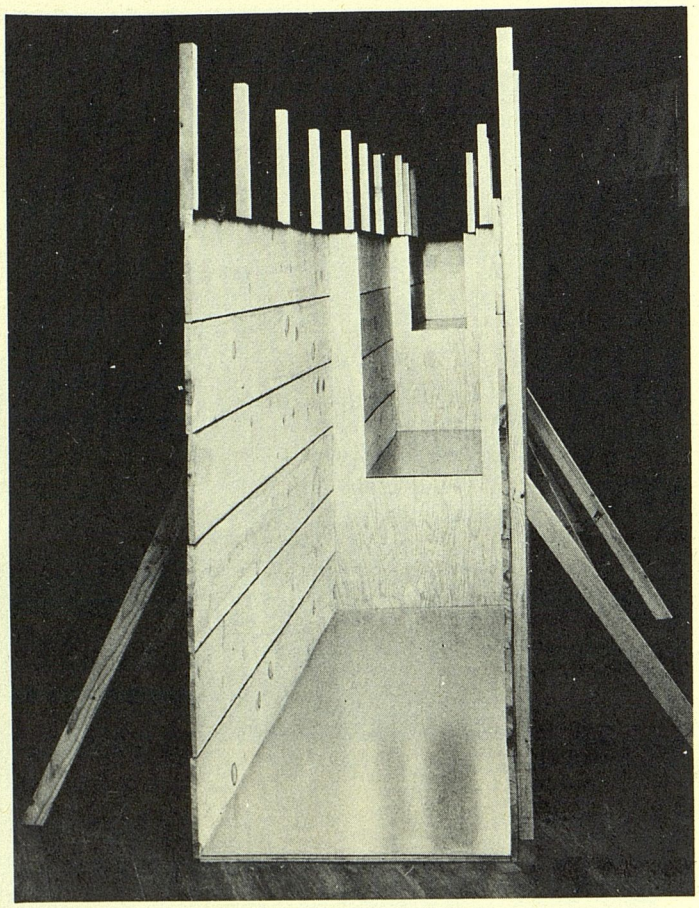


Patricia Johanson. *Stephen Long.* 1968. Acrylic on plywood. 2' x 1600'.

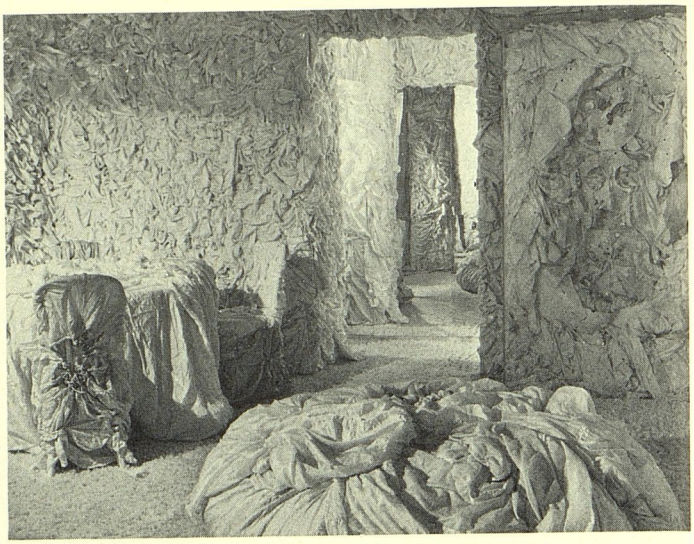
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Sylvia Plimack Mangold. *Night Light.* 1973. Acrylic on canvas. 83½" x 64½". Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina.



Mary Miss. *Sapping.* 1975. Wood, steel, paint. 9' x 20'.



Colette. *A View of My New York Apartment.* (Al Mozell.)

Alice Aycock lives in New York and builds outdoor architectural sculptures; their sources are frequently found in ancient ritual architecture.

Jody Pinto is a sculptor who lives in Philadelphia. Her work deals with private body images in urban architectural situations.

Audrey Hemenway was born in Brooklyn early in the Great Depression. "Family camped summers and I developed lifelong passion for sunlight, salamanders and solitude. . . . Crept away from the New York School to raise daughter, now full-grown artist herself."

Yayoi Kusama is a sculptor living in Tokyo. While working in New York in the early 1960s, she executed happenings on the Brooklyn Bridge, in front of the Stock Exchange and elsewhere.

The woman who made the miniature village in the woods on an island in northern Wisconsin remains anonymous.

Ellen Lanyon is a painter, printmaker and ceramicist who lives mostly in Chicago. She has been called "the new Audubon" for her work with natural history subjects and a "Chicago school fantasist" for her imaginative use of nostalgic objects.

Mimi Weisbord is a painter whose obsession with houses has recently led her into a third dimension.

Elena Borstein is a painter who lives in New York. She also teaches painting and photography at York College and is a member of the Andre Zarre and Soho 20 galleries.

Tania Mouraud is an artist in Paris whose walls, feminist photo pieces and environments have been widely exhibited in Europe. She lived in India for a year and frequently concentrates on meditation enclosures.

Carolee Thea is an artist and feminist, a co-founder of NOW Westchester Women in Art, teaches art and reviews for *Arts Magazine.* She has two children, Jane and Douglas.

Patricia Johanson was originally a painter who made her first sculpture in 1966. Since then she has worked primarily with very large architectural pieces in and of the landscape; one, near her home in Buskirk, N.Y., is over three miles long.

Sylvia Plimack Mangold is a painter and mother of two who lives in Washingtonville, N.Y. and teaches at the School of Visual Arts in New York.

Mary Miss is a sculptor living in New York. For the last six years she has concentrated on large-scale indoor constructions as well as making outdoor pieces.

Colette creates landscapes and becomes part of them. The landscapes exist outdoors in street works and indoors in rooms.

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ELIZABETH WEATHERFORD



Kickapoo woman in front of her wigwam.

WOMEN'S TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Human culture has been viewed by history as the product of "mankind's" efforts. Most of the events and achievements chosen for posterity as significant have been dominated and determined by males. However, there are histories other than those of modern post-industrial nation/states. In traditional societies, located in what is often called the Third World, women have played a crucial role in the formation of cultural features vital to human existence. One such area, not usually credited to women, is architecture. In traditional cultures, women are often the builders and owners of structures, providing shelter and creating the conditions for social interaction.

Although I will use the "ethnographic present" in most of this article, many of the traditional non-state societies in North America and Africa on which I focus here no longer exist, or no longer exist in their original forms. Their structures differ vastly from those of modern states. Some of these societies are small bands of gatherers and hunters, some are seminomadic peoples who seasonally follow herds, and others pursue a form of farming called horticulture, where the local economy is self-sufficient and women are frequently the farmers.

Initially victimized by colonization, virtually all those societies that remain are now undergoing "modernization." If we lose the histories of these cultures, we will also lose an important part of the history of women's roles in world culture, for in societies whose traditions remain intact, the roles women play are central to their cultures—not on the sidelines, where our culture seems to wish us to be. In light of this, contemporary feminists' identification and re-creation of "women's culture" can be seen not just as a protest against oppression, but as a recognition of the arbitrary denigration of the history of women's activities. The discovery that architecture is a traditional woman's art opens up the possibility for a new understanding of our role in the formation of human culture.

Grass Houses

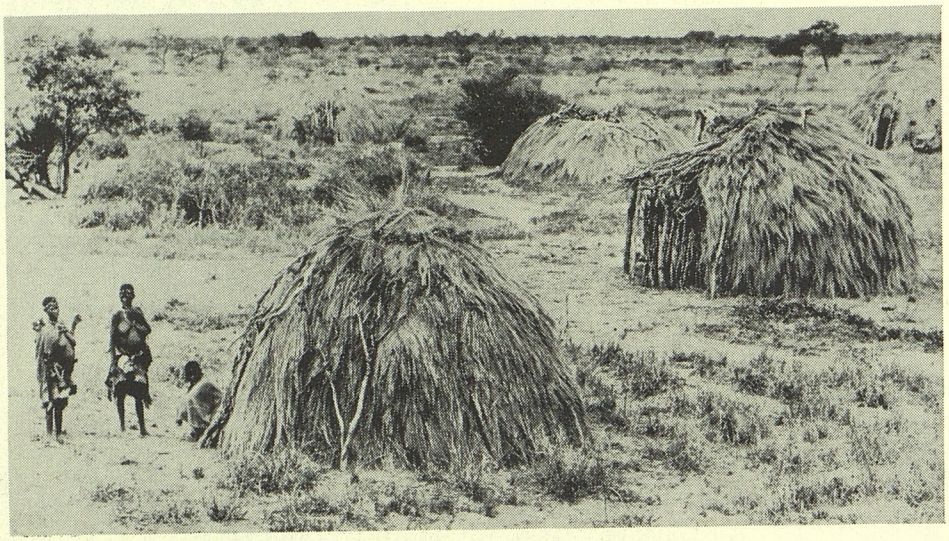
Societies of gatherers and hunters lived in small bands, constantly moving within a relatively large territory from which they foraged for plants and animals. These groups, which include the !Kung of the Kalahari Desert in Namibia and the BaMbuti (Pygmies) of central Africa's Ituri Forest, bands in the Sahara Desert, Algonkian and Athabascan groups in North America, are intriguing in their social harmony and their knowledgeable, non-exploitative interaction with their environments. Women and men regard each other as equals. Among the BaMbuti, hunting is a joint effort, men care for babies and women enter public discussions.[1]

In gathering societies women may provide up to eighty percent of the food and as an extension of their expertise in plants and fibers (with which they make nets), they are also the builders. The dwelling the women construct usually consists of a framework woven like an inverted loose basket, covered or thatched with available materials such as large leaves, bundles of grass or woven mats. These shelters share significant characteristics across cultures. They are flexible, often flooded with translucent light, and scented with the smoke of fires and fragrant floor coverings. They are round, ovoid or conical, with no edges or planes to interrupt the flow of space. Their size and shape maximizes physical and psychological contact among the dwellers. Anthropologists suggest that such human proximity is particularly conducive to intuitive and nonverbal communication, to the development of internalized cultural rhythms.[2] In our Western cultures, such tacit synchrony is usually found only in mother-infant relationships, a vestige of what was once the nature of communication between both sexes and all ages.

A freudian theorist might suggest that the organic nature of gatherers' dwellings is a cultural extension of the biophysical environment of the womb. But in fact, these shelters can be extremely open and unwomblike. They include unsheltered areas where the work of the household, such as plaiting mats and scraping skins,

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takes place. The house life overflows into outdoor space, allowing the activities of its inhabitants to expand. Many gatherers' dwellings are easily adaptable, and when not easily expanded (as in the hemispherical *scherms* of the !Kung) there is flexibility as to who inhabits them. Children do not have to sleep with their parents, and can either stay with their grandparents or make camp with other children of the same sex at either end of the settlement.[3] Thus the gatherers' house is not a structure enforcing family isolation, but serves as a shelter of great social fluidity.



!Kung gatherers and *scherms*.

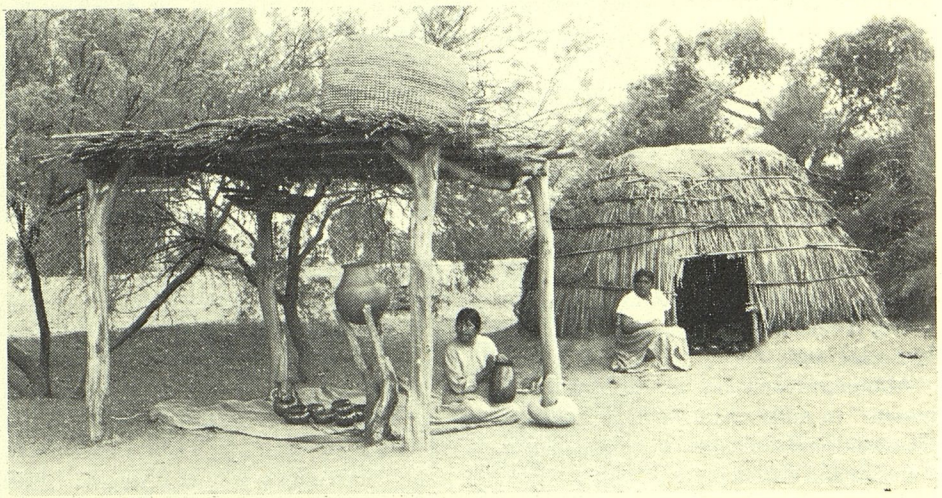
In these mobile cultures land is not individually owned and no dwelling is permanent. Women possess the building *know-how* rather than the actual structures, which they may erect collectively. The building activity may be almost ritualized, as the "performer" sets into motion a body of traditional knowledge shared with other women:

> Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across forming a lattice framework. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.[4]

The dwelling in the gathering culture is the focal point of women's creative activities. Since it is usually constructed from materials that can be replaced from available natural sources, it also binds society to its natural environment.

Desert Dwellings, Wigwams and Tipis

Semi-nomadic peoples live some part of the year in relatively permanent camps when an adequate food supply is available — wild plants, such as the wild rice of the Great Lakes region, or those provided by temporary cultivation. Some semi-nomadic peoples follow herds of wild or domestic animals part of the year and spend the rest gathering and hunting, or trading. These societies are not sedentary because they or their animals must range for some proportion of their food and the basics for making material goods. Generally they inhabit arid desert lands or plains choked with grasses, where farming is difficult.



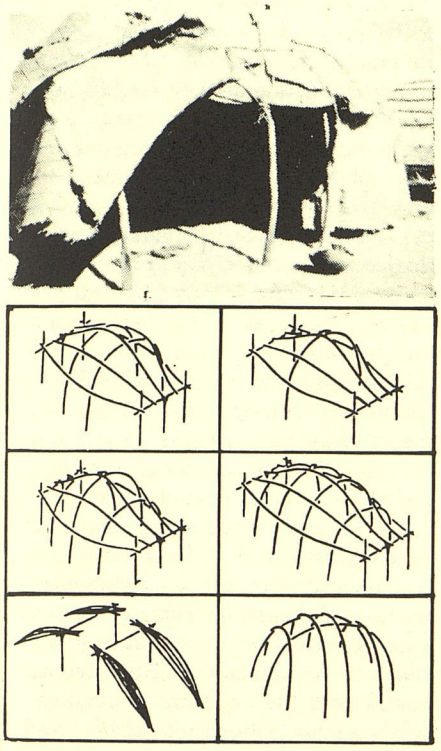
Pima women and house. (Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.)

The architecture of such semi-nomads grew out of forms developed within gathering societies. Certain structural features of the grass house remained essential. For semi-nomadic desert dwellers, such as the Pima and Papago of the American Southwest, the convenient raw materials for building might still be plant fibers, particularly where the women were highly skilled basketweavers and had developed ways of weaving fibers into other forms, such as cotton cloth or yucca-fiber sandals. Up until the twentieth century the Pima were dispersed in the winter and settlements were occupied only for a few months during a short growing season. The women built structures that mingled the style of mobile peoples with that of the ancient Southwest Pueblos. Their houses were grass but the interiors were slightly below ground. Sometimes earth was used to anchor the lower portion of the exterior wall, a feature which perhaps explains the evolution of the earth lodges built by the Navaho and by the Mandan further north.

Another feature of grass houses is the tensile flexibility of the structure, which was later developed into the tent form. In the desert or plains it might be adjusted or even formed in relationship to wind patterns; the walls might be opened, or closed tightly, to adapt to the wide range of temperatures characteristic of these environments. The tent consists of a framework over which a tight covering is stretched; it may be low and rounded or tall and conical, but either shape, with its flexible covering, is perfectly adaptable. Tents also differ from grass houses in that the coverings, and sometimes the frames, are carried with the band as it moves. All the components of such tents, including those of the Tuareg, Algonkian wigwams and Plains tribes' tipis, are made by women — exterior and interior walls, floor coverings and frames. There is a traditional basic form, but the tent is by no means standardized. In each society wom-

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en have created subtle variations on the frame or the arrangement of tent flaps for ventilation. In the arid Atlas Mountains of North Africa, Tuareg women weave and embroider wool coverings for their tents. The frame has a number of possible shapes, demonstrating the interplay between individual choice and cultural tradition.



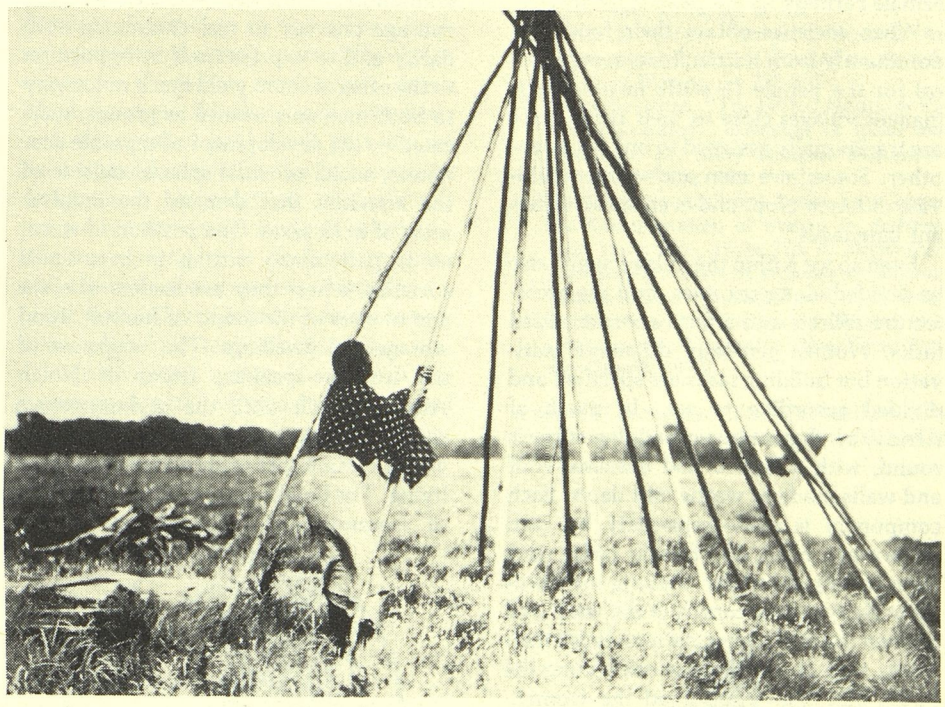
Tuareg tent and structural variations. (From Nicolaisen.)

Algonkian-speaking groups, originally inhabiting much of the Eastern United States, were pushed west to the Great Lakes region after the white invasion. They hunted, gathered, fished, collected maple sugar, gathered wild rice, and had gardens. Some, like the Kickapoo, constructed wigwams of frames covered by mats. Others, including the Ojibwa, constructed conical tents covered with thin sheets of birch bark sewed together with small roots until long enough to cover the sides. Ojibwa women cut the poles for the frames and made colorful mats from reeds to cover the walls, and to serve as carpets, beds and sofas. Softening, bleaching and dyeing these reeds was a complicated process. The completed mats were carried from site to site. Early white observers were greatly impressed with the women's strength, as shown by this comment from 1855:

> It may be easily supposed that these squaws, owing to their performing all the work of joiners, carpenters and masons have blistered hands. In fact, their hands are much harder to the touch than those of the men; and indeed their entire muscular system is far more developed and they are proportionately stronger in the arm.[5]

Similarly, the tipi-builders of the Great Plains were responsible for all aspects of the construction of their dwellings. They developed one of the most striking forms in women's vernacular architecture. The Plains societies were mobile; they moved from winter hunting camps to large summer ceremonial villages and the women carried not only the skin coverings and interior liners, but the poles with which the tipi was erected as well. These were hard to find on the Plains, and made a useful sled (*travois*) for carrying household property and people over long distances.

When more permanent materials were used for making dwellings, women often cooperated in their manufacture. In making an ordinary tipi, the owner scraped and tanned the hides from which the cover would be made, frequently using treasured tools which she had inherited from the women of her family. Then a female specialist was called in to cut and fit the skins, and neighbors gathered to help stitch them together with sinew.



Southern Cheyenne woman erecting a tipi. (Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.)

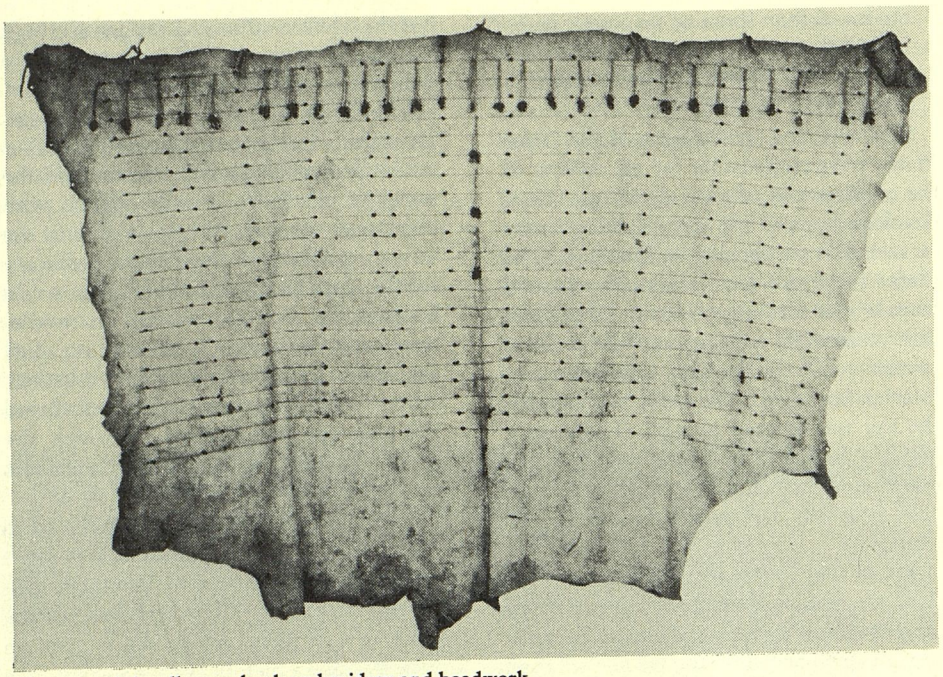
Making a tipi could also fulfill a sacred function. Plains women formed special associations, notably the Cheyenne Quillers' Society, for the ceremonial decoration of tipis and their interior walls with dyed porcupine or bird quills. More recently these tipis have been made from canvas and decorated with glass beads, but the traditional sacred designs and high standards of work are still rigorously adhered to.

The Quillers' Society met when a woman of the community had vowed to undertake a project. An older woman held the society's medicine bundle, filled with objects of spiritual power, and with the vower, performed the rituals necessary for the work to begin and end. She would instruct the younger woman in needlework and the society's ceremonies; then the entire group started work together. Afterwards the woman who had vowed the task continued alone, although she could consult with society members whenever a problem arose.

Men and children were not allowed to touch or see the work until it was completed, when members of the society displayed the piece to the public. Following a feast, the women whose work was on view became a member of the society, one of the most respected institutions of her world. Among the Cheyenne a woman's achievements in decorative craft were valued as highly as a man's deeds in war. Moreover, the Quillers' Society:

> . . . was spoken of as being similar in conception and attitudes to the Sacred Arrows [most sacred Cheyenne men's society], one very important difference in behavior may be noted. During the four-day arrow ceremony no talking, joking, or laughing was allowed in camp. The making of the sacred beading was attended by a good deal of joking, teasing, and fun. While the cere-

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Cheyenne tipi wall, corn-husk embroidery and beadwork.

monial character of the work was recognized, it interfered in no way with the social pleasure of the occasion.[6]

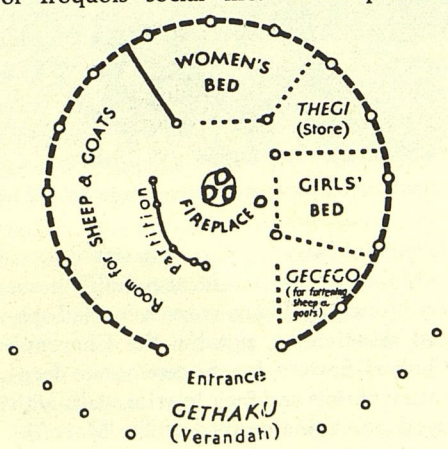
Female Farmers

When societies obtain their food predominantly from horticulture, it is practical for the people to settle in more permanent villages close to their fields. Jobs are traditionally assigned to one sex or another. Sometimes men and women cultivate different crops and even speak different languages.

Even space within the village might also be divided along sex lines, and the architecture reflects and affects sex-specialized tasks. Women generally dominate cultivation but building tasks are specified and divided according to sex. In much of Africa the characteristic building form is round, with a gabled and thatched roof and walls made of wattle and daub. Each component is made separately by men or women. Male and female tasks vary from society to society. Among the Kikuyu of Kenya, men construct the walls and women the roof. After the men finish their work, they go to the feast celebrating the house building. They goad the women, calling them "slow chameleons" who will miss the feast if they don't hurry. The women, who are working on the thatching, typically respond in chorus:

> You men, you lack the most important art in building, namely thatching. A wall and an empty roof cannot protect you from heavy rain nor from the burning sun. It is our careful thatching that makes the hut worth living. We are not chameleons but *nyoni ya nyagathanga* [small songbirds known for their beautiful nests].[7]

Separation of the sexes does not necessarily serve as a foundation for male domination. Cultural practices that encourage one sex to feel communal solidarity and to express itself in opposition to the other seem to yield much autonomy to both men and women as groups, indicated by the development of separate economic, social or ritual spheres outside of the activities that demand the involvement of both sexes. The position of women is particularly strong in matrilineal societies, where they are leaders of clans and owners of the fields, of harvest, food storage and dwellings. The longhouse of the Iroquois-speaking tribes of North America, built until the mid-nineteenth century, was controlled by women, and was a remarkable example of communal living. The longhouse served as the center of Iroquois social life. Ritual performances took place there and it was both dwelling and workplace for the many families of the clan to whom it belonged. By controlling the longhouse and the food stores, women played a vital part in the political affairs of the tribes.[8] Through manipulation of supplies they could encourage or prevent war parties. The senior women, who controlled the longhouse, also played an important role in social policy decisions. They appointed spokesmen for the clan in village and tribal councils, and they could also "remove the horns," that is, remove those spokesmen from office if they did not do their job according to the women's interests. The longhouse stood as a symbol of the society at large; the confederation of the Iroquois tribes recognized the significance of this woman-owned institution by naming themselves The League of the Longhouse.

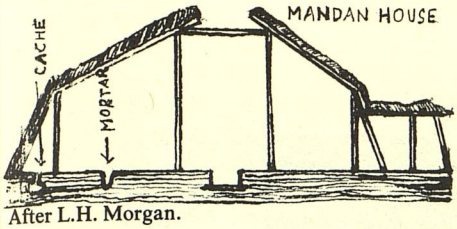


Floor plan, Kikiyu women's quarters. (From Kenyatta.)

There are few matrilineal cultivating societies remaining in the world. One of their striking characteristics was that they were subsistence societies — that is, no wealth was accumulated from year to year. Although the source of food and the type of settlement differed, they shared this feature with the gathering peoples mentioned earlier. The change from subsistence society to one in which it is possible to accumulate wealth frequently comes with the addition of livestock or herd animals to horticultural life. Such a change in process was observed in the early nineteenth century among the Mandan, a cultivating society living on the North American Plains. Basically, the Mandan lived two life styles. The matrilineal one dominated the life of the village, where women were the farmers and owned and built the houses; the second was patrilineal, occurring during the summer months, when some of the women tended the fields, while most of the men and a few women went into the Plains to hunt buffalo. This resulted in an important division of economic tasks and calendars — the women living by an older agricultural calendar, and the men by the seasonal migration of the buffalo herds.

In the Mandan village, the lodges the women constructed were admirably suited to the climate of the Great Plains. They may have originated as structures like those of the Pima. Walls of willow saplings and brush and a final layer of earth were erected over a wooden frame. The walls were built quite thick and the lodges were cool in summer and warm in winter. Quite possibly these were the prototypes for the sod houses built by pioneers settling in the Plains in the nineteenth century.

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After L.H. Morgan.

If the Mandan had survived the epidemic of smallpox which destroyed the tribe in 1840, it is possible that they would have become patrilineal, giving up cultivation altogether to pursue the buffalo as other Plains tribes did. In patrilineal societies, as we have seen with the Cheyenne, the woman's position is secure when she continues to control important cultural or economic features. Frequently these two spheres are connected, as in societies where women have a specialized architecture for their own activities. The Igbo society in Nigeria is patrilineal, but with the exception of the yam, all produce is considered women's property; they sell anything left over from feeding their families, becoming successful traders. A century ago, when this marketing activity was increasing, the women also began to construct ritual sanctuaries in groves outside the villages. Called *mbayo* houses, these were maintained by a cult of the earth goddess Ala, and were decorated with male and female symbols and erotic figures.

In patrilineal societies women may have certain economic powers; if so, they usually own their own houses within the compounds of their husbands' families. But when men control agriculture and herding, or have access to a modern cash market, the domicile and all public buildings fall totally under male control. Men erect the structures; if they are dwellings, women may decorate the walls. In Mediterranean villages in Spain, Greece and the Balkans, and in Islamic villages of the Near East and Africa, woman is associated with the domicile as its caretaker, not as its owner. The isolation of women in the home is, of course, a function of wealth. In poorer cultures the woman may be forced to work for the family's survival, but in most places, she is *supposed* to remain in the home. In Spain, she decorates her house with whitewash as a symbol of purity — both of the domicile and of its keeper. When a woman's life is relegated to the private sphere of society, her significance in the culture appears merely symbolic. She is a possession to be protected. In Berber villages, she weaves inside her husband's house; the loom is not considered *her* tool, but a symbol of male protection. Sitting behind it, she is shielded from the door and from the street life that lies beyond it.[9] Thus women are isolated from the world of confrontation, conversation and public interaction.

With the advent of industrialism and the wage economy in any society, separation of home life from public work becomes firmly entrenched. The many roles of women are reduced to motherhood and housekeeping. The number of craftswomen, artists, businesswomen and builders decrease. Separation of home from business premises makes it more difficult for women to share in a work world dominated by men. Machine-made products limit the type of paid work that can be done in the household. Control over the design and construction of buildings passes into the hands of "professionals." Women's creativity is confined to planning interiors and obtaining or making interior decorations according to mass-produced guides like women's magazines.

Ironically, this vestige of woman's importance as architect and builder is used against her when psychology and popular belief insist that women are "by nature" oriented to interiors, and interiors alone. The home, as the exclusive province of women, has become a significant cultural image on many levels — almost an archetypal reflection of the privatization of women's lives and the resulting obsession with house/home. So now we paint, write, sculpt our houses; so far, too few of us are creating architecture.[10] In learning more about the options available to women in other cultures, we become more conscious of our own untapped potential.

1. Colin Turnbull, *The Forest People* (New York: Natural History Library, 1962), pp. 156-157.
2. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), Chap. 5, *passim.*
3. Patricia Draper, "!Kung Women," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), p. 94.
4. Turnbull, pp. 59-60.
5. J.G. Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Wandering Round Lake Superior* (London, 1860), p. 4.
6. Alice Marriott, "The Trade Guild of Southern Cheyenne Women," *Bulletin of Oklahoma Anthropological Society* (April 1956), p. 24.
7. Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, Reprint of original 1938 edition (New York: AMS Press, 1976), pp. 80-81.
8. Judith K. Brown, "Iroquois Women: An Ethnographic Note," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, pp. 235-251.
9. Pierre Bourdieu, "The Berber House, or the World Reversed," excerpted in *Rules and Meanings*, ed. Mary Douglas (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), p. 100.
10. Two recently published books have begun the documentation of women in architecture: Doris Cole, *From Tipi to Skyscraper: A History of Women in Architecture* (Boston: i press, 1973) and Susana Torre, ed., *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1977).

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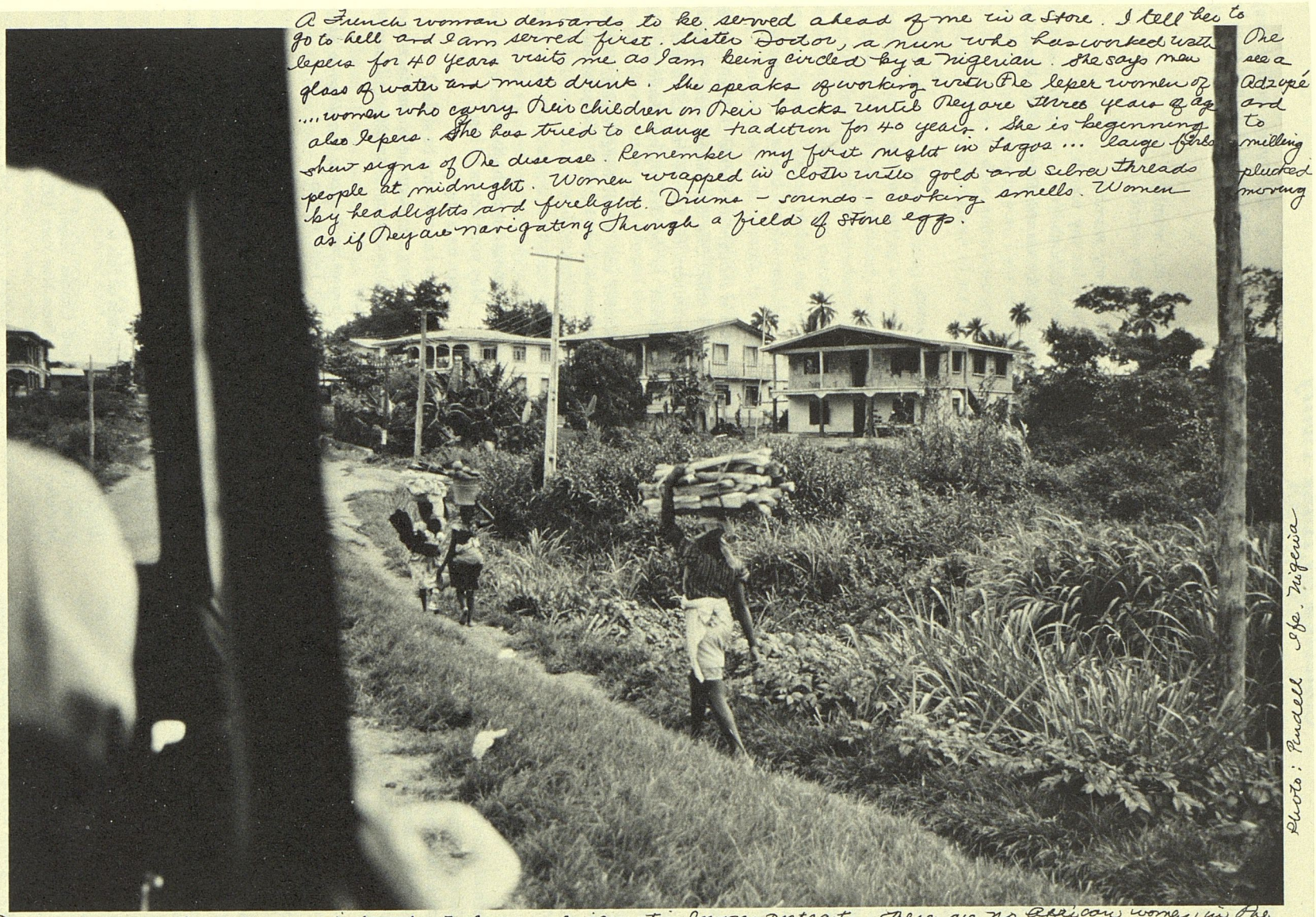


Excerpts from a diary (1973) and from memories of Africa. A game park borders the road to Nairobi. It is 1973, the year of the drought. They say that when the animals have come
thirst they will come into the city. Full face image of Col. Saunders
revolver slowly over Kentucky fried on the right hand side of the road:
The Europeans who remained .... many joined "white only" country clubs
and refused to learn Swahili while others married women of the ruling tribe
in order to retain their positions of power. We were the only Blacks staying at the
new Stanley Hotel. White children ran from us in the hall. Spoke a few words of
Swahili to the African women who worked in the hotel. Their reaction was warm but
puzzled ... "what are you? Are you married? You have no children? What is your
room number? I will send a man to your room tonight and you will come back."
waking up is difficult, slow, labored ... a struggle to gain consciousness because of the high
altitude. Walking up and down the stairs is difficult because of my chest pain has multiplied
with a friend of a friend, a Kikuyu, rests and asks: "Are you travelling alone?
Wife a White American? No! Good .... Then I can invite you both to lunch." At lunch
the next day I meet her husband, a tall blond Dutch fellow. Women of the Masai are
silent and distant, draped in red-ochre cloth ... green, blue, red beads in a circle
their necks. They are trained to work while See aged
women of other tribes used as the men tend the cattle.
beasts of burden while men truffle
idly at conversation.

Photo: Purdell - Osogbo, Nigeria

morning tea and toast at the new Stanley. News item: "Man burns wife to death .... should he be tried under parliamentary
law for murder or should the case go before a tribal tribunal which may rule in the man's favor since he has the right
to destroy his property. Lagos, Nigeria — morning headline: "Women. You should be proud to be first wife. Think of all
the joys of being first wife in charge of all of your husband's other wives." Women who attend Ibandan University are
called names, but my friends say that men in high government posts prefer them because they can converse with
"westerners". There have been women stoned to death in Ibadan for being "witches". Self-policing — the women ...,
if one breaks the tradition of silence, one may be killed. A man enters the plane for Ghana followed by his first,
second and third wives and their eight children. The women in Ghana are forming women's groups ... they speak ....
They have professions .... yet there is a taboo against speaking in the company of men. Although the children
speak, they speak of men's work and women's work. Abidjan, Ivory Coast: The French women look at us with
contempt. In Ghana the women looked at us with pity because we were of mixed blood and had no tribal language.

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MAGIC SONGS

*Collected by Anne Twitty**

Magic is a universal language, a technique for transformation. It works by binding or loosing, invoking, destroying, leading away. Wherever they were, the women who said or chanted these incantations had the same purposes—they wanted to stop the flow of blood or start the flow of milk, to ease childbirth, to send a fever back into the forest it came from. For them, the word was not the refuge of the helpless but a medicine or a thunderbolt, a sacramental tool. Their words were acts.

The child's mother first wipes her sexual organ with the shirt and then the child's face, saying:
Flee marvel from marvel.
Here is a greater marvel.
White partridges flew by and brought white milk.
They pour it out of the stone,
they pour it round out of the stone.
One hand fastens the sleeve of the other.
The axe by itself cuts the Evil Eyes.

Let the Evil Eyes melt away
like bees over the flowers,
like lard on the coals,
like foam on muddy water.
We shall tread over the water,
we shall make the Evil Eyes wither and dry up,
that they appear no more.
A southern Slav charm collected by Phyllis Kemp, who practiced medicine there before World War II, and made an extensive study of folk medicine/magic.
(From Phyllis Kemp, *Healing Ritual*, Faber and Faber, London, 1937, p. 141.)

I dance a strong dance.
The god comes on the rainbow
to his shrine.
He comes with the red rain
and the blue.
It is the sign of the god.
He comes down here to earth.
Dance, all ye children of his!
From Ifaluk Atoll, an island south of the Marianas, where the women write all the poetry. This is an invitation to a god.
(From Edwin Grant Burrows, *Flower in My Ear: Arts and Ethos of Ifaluk Atoll*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1963, p. 353.)

I cut all witchcraft from you.
Hiao!
I cut off the rainbow curses from you.
Hiao!
I cut all spirit-husband harm from you.
Hiao!
I cut from you the evil talk
of the watering place.
Hiao!
I cut from you the harmful talk
of the firewood-gatherers.
Hiao!
From Adayme, Africa. The pregnant woman is bound with magic strings. Then, as the charm is said, line by line, each string is cut. First around the head, then the neck, then the waist, the knees and the feet.
(From Hugo Huber, "Adayme Purification and Pacification Rituals," *The American Anthropologist*, v. 29, 1927, p. 178; Twitty version.)

Whose womb do I have for my womb?
The gull's womb I have for my womb.

Whose womb do I have for my womb?
The sea-fowl's womb I have for my womb.
Eskimo. For a woman in childbirth.
(From William Thalbitzer, *The Ammassalik Eskimo*, AMS Press, New York, 1914; Twitty version.)

Earth-Woman, Earth-Woman,
may you fall sick.
Your milk turn to fire.
May you burn in the earth!

Flow, flow, my milk.
Flow, flow, white milk.
Flow, flow, as I will.
My child is hungry.
Gypsy. The Earth Woman is thought to suckle children so that they refuse their mother's milk. She has many sister spirits—child-stealers and child-destroyers like the Hebrew Lilith and the Islamic Karina—who appear to be destroying shadows, the woman's double.
(From H. von Wlislocki, "Zauber und Besprechungsformeln," *Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Hungarn*, v. 1, no. 1-2, 1887; Twitty translation.)

May the lion take you coming out of the thicket.
May he eat your flesh. May your bones be lost.
May Gaweg beat you when he is angry.
May God protect me! How can weeping be stolen?
Ethiopian. A woman's angry song. Someone else has taken her mourning song and sung it. Ethiopian women traditionally invent and sing the dirges for the dead.
(From Enno Littman, *Publications of the Princeton Expedition to Abyssinia*, E.J. Brill, Leyden, 1910-1915; Twitty version.)

The woman who cannot nourish her child:
Let her herself take a piece of her own child's grave,
then wrap it up in black wool and sell it to traders.
Let her then say:
I sell it: buy ye it,
this black wool, and seeds of this sorrow.
Anglo-Saxon.
(From J. H. G. Grattan and Charles Singer, *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1952, p. 191.)

* From a collection begun while working with Julia Blackburn, who found two of the poems.

Anne Twitty is an American writer and translator who lives in London and in Deyâ, Mallorca. She is currently working on a book of collected origin myths and magic songs.

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CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

JACKI APPLE AND MARTHA WILSON 1973-1974

August 6, 1973

Dear Jacki Apple — . . . When I read the c. 7,500 catalogue I was overjoyed to find that I am working alongside of a great many other women, especially you. I am enclosing a resume, a descriptive list of works to date, and transcriptions of videotapes for you to peruse. Also a photograph of me invading homosexual consciousness. . . .

Recently I have been working on a piece called "Male Impersonator" and on method acting concerns. I find that in front of the camera I don't feel particularly male or homosexual or whatever; the identity shock comes when I look at the photographs of myself in those roles. I am considering an actual invasion of another identity: being picked up on Halifax waterfront as a prostitute. That would involve real risk. I don't think I would be able to forget who I am, though, in spite of the immersion. To lose myself was my original intent, I think, in December of 1971. Also I used to worry about audience verification of my success a good deal more than I do now. In the method acting exercise, I wanted to track the images that would cause me to, say, cry, using a tape recorder, and I found that the intellectual process of talking about emotion prohibited me from experiencing it.

Who are the "four people" in a relationship? Do you distinguish between real self and perception of self? How do you document your interchanges, exchanges and redefinitions? . . .

Hope to meet you someday. If you're ever in Halifax (ha) you can sleep in my studio. Martha Wilson

August 26, 1973

Martha Wilson came to see me last Thursday. She is in the c. 7,500 show with me, and after receiving her pieces and talking on the phone, I was excited about meeting her. We talked with familiarity, not as strangers. Yet there wasn't enough time — little more than an hour — allowing us to barely do anything more than become aware of each other's positions. . . . We jumped from subject to subject like two people sampling a feast of appetizers, wanting to taste everything. She is full of curiosity and hunger, and buoyancy, asking questions, taking in information, talking rapidly, never resting.

She has an open face, quick to smile with her eyes as well as her mouth, a gamine quality with a sense of camp. Short shaggy yellow hair, plucked out, bleached eyebrows, fair skin. She wore pants and a short-sleeved printed shirt. She laughs easily, and has a natural extroverted sense of theater. Yet there is nothing theatrical about her appearance.

I liked her immensely. I also recognize something of myself in her, younger. The energy, independence, restlessness; the quickness of response, so direct yet somehow elusive, testing, trying out life. I liked her optimism. She has a quality of motion and sunshine, and underneath a vulnerability. I hope we will be able to expand the relationship, write to each other, even make the correspondence a piece in the future.

August 26, 1973

Met Jacki Apple today, big surprise. A professional woman, I expected a stringbean like myself. Jolted me to realize women from different circumstances are doing similar experiments with identity. She runs her own design room, draws a pair of pants, chooses a fabric, a pattern cutter cuts it, two Hispanic women sew it up. Her designs on Macy's third floor, Sportswear. Anyway, I was shocked when I saw her: She looked professional all over, eye makeup to high heels. I thought artists weren't supposed to look like that. A sexist belief, something inherited from Gertrude Stein, a woman has to be un-pretty to be taken as seriously as a man. I "believe" this, questioned Jacki's intelligence on the basis of her appearance, even though I had read her work, yikes.

September 18, 1973

Jacki — I xeroxed all the "Selfportrait" notes and am waiting for an 8x10 enlargement to come back from the drugstore. Now working on an idea sparked by Yvonne Rainer: images of my perfection/deformity. Also a piece about the chemistry of camera presence which came out of our conversation. Drop me a card. Martha

October 14, 1973

Dear Martha — I've been trying to write you for weeks, no — months, and this is the second letter I've started. I came away from the hour we spent together feeling it was much too brief, that we were like two people at a banquet wanting to taste everything, with only enough time for a first bite. So the hour left me stimulated and looking forward to corresponding. Part of my excitement was in discovering another artist, a woman artist, working with concepts similar to my own, and with the attitude of experimentation which is so important to me. Another part of it was your own personal openness and energy and curiosity.

The day your postcard arrived I had gone to the c. 7,500 opening at Moore College in Philadelphia. I have a number of mixed feelings about the show, and it was an interesting experience for me. One thing which I was surprised about (and probably shouldn't have been) was the discovery of how far from the mainstream both of us are. Your perception of that from the catalogue was more astute than mine. In the final analysis the work that was most interesting to me, the work that was not "conventional" or "acceptable" in its approach, its intent, the work that seemed to attempt to present a different perception — a female perception through female experience — was less prevalent than I had hoped. I suppose that my personal criticism was that much of the work, like much of conceptual art, was boring. It is amazing how quickly a "Movement" becomes academic. How easy it becomes to fit into the formula, to make bland ideas appear important, to inflate them through fancy presentation. So much

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conceptual art has become slick documentation without real substance. It is a difficult problem, very much related to commercialism and egoism (fortune and fame). How ironic that "dematerialized" art has become almost more "material" than painting and sculpture, without the compensation of pure sensual pleasure.

I think that what really disappointed me was not the art but seeing other women fall into the male-role prison, women falling into the forms and patterns of male-defined concept art, and wanting acceptance within that framework; women not communicating through their knowledge and experience of themselves as women. Worst of all was seeing women behaving towards each other very much like male artists I see each week in Soho—guarded, competitive, assessing each other, vying for position, not interacting. When we have a chance to do things differently, because we've never been in this position before, I hate to see us blow it.

Right now I am working on some new pieces and I am concerned about pushing myself to the next stage, not doing things which are repetitive. Yet I also think it is important to work things through, not be precious, risk losing it, experiment on several levels at one time.

I am interested in how a person changes his/her perception of him/herself through both self redefinition and definition by others. Right now I am considering a piece which will involve a person, then a group, experiencing then reexperiencing themselves through their color aura, their self-color, and then their alien color. . . .

I would like to hear more about the piece you are doing about the "chemistry of camera presence" as it is something that has been both a concern and a conflict for me. Do you plan to do the same piece twice, with and without a camera, and see how they differ? . . .

Would you be interested in doing a piece with me? Some thoughts, possibilities: (1) Both of us doing the same piece separately. (2) Exchanging pieces and carrying out each other's pieces, then doing our own. Showing the four interpretations. (3) Perhaps doing my "Identity Exchange" piece together as we are of similar coloring, size, and sign. I have never performed this piece myself. It was enacted by Geoff Hendricks in February 1972 at Rutgers University. If you plan to be in NY we could do it as a one-day event. (Like a Saturday in Soho—unofficial use of galleries!)

I've been taking ballet classes twice a week now since the beginning of July, and it is changing my body awareness. It makes me think about movement pieces. It would be good to work with a dance group.

Write and let me know what you are doing and thinking. I am looking forward to hearing more about the pieces you mentioned in your card, and everything else going on in your life. Let me know when you plan to be in New York again, and hopefully we will be able to spend more time together. I will take a day off. Jacki

October 23, 1973

Dear Jacki—Your letter put adrenalin back into my blood. Actually, I'm an avid letter writer, but I hesitate to write copious letters to non-writers or post-carders; now I have an excuse.

Did I tell you about my "value scale," composed of colors that have emotional value for me? When I read the part of your letter about "color aura" I started glumping around my empty kitchen making soft exclamatory noises. Friday I'm going to a paper company downtown to get a sheet each of high-intensity orange, blue, red and green, the colors that represent the four points on my emotional compass. I was thinking of making calling-card-sized chips of color to place before me as I confront a (stranger? Haven't worked this out yet) during a ten-minute interval. The number and combination of chips would suggest the tone of the confrontation (for me). As I explained in New York, I used to worry about the content of my subjects' consciousness, but it's too hard to document it. On the other hand, for the "Chemistry of Camera-Presence" piece, I've decided the only way to keep the element of surprise is for me to surprise other people with a camera; since I am going to set up the piece, I would always be aware of the possibility of being filmed. I want to blow up the adjustment process as an individual realizes s/he is being filmed. Also I want to do a piece next week on videotape recording the time it takes me to act out an emotion. Method actors recall certain images to make themselves cry, etc. I'm not as interested in the tears as I am in the images. These will be written and read silently while I'm on camera (?). I've discovered that reading out loud does not produce tears or whatever, and neither does description into a mike; the intellectual process cancels the emotional experience. Silent fantasy is necessary. I'm wondering what the camera will do to me, since I'm not an experienced actor. . . .

I have been taking Graphoanalysis by correspondence, and I am happy to inform you that you are highly intelligent, have initiative, spurts of enthusiasm and determination, don't hold grudges, are sympathetic, not too precise, but were pessimistic when you wrote the letter. Oh, yes, very original, as indicated by figure-8 "g" formations. I am typing because when I get excited, my handwriting becomes code.

Now for the facts: I plan to cut first term a week short and come to NYC. If I came on, say, Monday the 3 of December, could I stay with you through Saturday the 8th? We could use the week to get together a performance in 420 West Broadway such as "Identity Exchange" or we could do our color pieces simultaneously and trade off. I could do a reading of "Routine Performance" et al. in front of an audience instead of a video camera; also I've been wanting to try out "Body Images" on a live audience. I hadn't thought about it before, but perhaps I could do "Composure," the piece which was in the c. 7,500 show, in front of an audience with the aid of a mirror.

I have been thinking about "Identity Exchange" and (don't worry, I won't tell you) I can't help associating New York with you. In your case, I think it is valid to associate place with character; I just hope I don't make you think of Mackerel. . . .

I'd like to attend a women's meeting in NYC; a group has finally started meeting here, but for some reason I don't feel close to anyone as yet. I'm not trying to prove myself as strenuously as I used to through my appearance, as they do. Appearance is still critical to me, but I'm settled now and they aren't. Many of them see me as a teacher (which of course I am to some of them) with all the connotations of that position attached: wise, old, reserved, yuk.

Thanks again for your letter. Martha

January 3, 1974

Dear Jacki—Richards met me at the airport; he and Marcia arrived the day before. He guessed that I might sue him, and said I would have to do it, but we reached an amicable peace eventually. We sat in the car for an hour talking, and he ended up saying that he couldn't believe how strong I was. Last night I didn't sleep at all and consequently felt rotten all day today, but today I got an apartment which I can move into January 12th. I am envious of the way Richards looks at Marcia, but that's all. I don't think Marcia is any shakes. She has this defense mechanism, looking wide-eyed, that really annoys me.

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Enough of that. I am depressed but doing rather well.... I wrote a movie on the plane. I'll show it to you. Love, M.

January 13, 1974

Dear Martha — Chin up and smile. We are all with you all the way. You are going to make it, beautifully too. Whenever you begin to feel the depression closing in, think of the whole world waiting for you here.

I'm exhausted. Can't wait till you get here. For some reason I've had trouble getting my fire going since the piece. It's as if so much power was used, such intense concentration, that I need refueling. Talk about an energy crisis! I've also discovered how jealous people can get when you get yourself together, have any power, and can affect others. The threatened ones work very hard at undermining you, searching out your vulnerabilities. No wonder the alchemists banded together in secret societies.

I worked today, wrote the second half of the piece up (downtown part). Anne has really come out since the piece. She just told her shrink about it this week. He was so turned on that he asked to see me. He can hardly believe it, thought it was the most extraordinary thing he'd ever heard. Should I charge him $40 an hour to talk to me? If he wants to write a paper about it, it will have to be with our final approval and permission before release. After all, we have "all rights reserved."...

Have a lot of things to talk to you about. I hope we can share our strengths and weaknesses and balance each other, and support each other. I need your opinion on a few things....

Stay strong and don't let R. screw you out of what's legally yours by doing a number on your emotions.... See you Friday night the 25th. I'll make a lovely leisurely dinner, and we can sit and relax and talk.

Take care of yourself. Love, Jacki

January 30, 1974

I noticed after the Bar Mitzvah that when I stood on the corner of 57th and 6th Avenue in my braless red dress that lots of people looked at me as though I was a call girl, even though it was 3:00 in the afternoon. Definition by circumstantial evidence. Photographs of me in the same outfit on various corners in NYC: 57th and 6th; West Bway and Spring; 1st Ave and 69th; Wall Street; Bway and 125th. Costume acts as a mirror; bluejeans could do the same?

February 15, 1974

Two letters from Martha Wilson. She has become intertwined in my life since December, and I ought to examine the events, and the complexities of feelings that have come out of them. I am slightly antagonistic towards her today. Somewhat resentful of her carelessness, her total self-absorption, the complete subjectivity of her way of dealing with things, always seeing through her needs, never beyond them or around them. Perhaps it is her youth, her limited experience. No matter. Combined with all that intense hungry ambition and that fine sharp intellect, it fills me with a vague sense of annoyance. I have been very generous with her, given of myself — my friends, my home, my clothes, my time, my ideas, experiences, knowledge, my food, my energy, and finally advice when asked for. I find her to be less sharing. At first her sunshine smile, her eagerness, seemed so unassuming. But her apologies are aggressive, and her assumptions border on arrogance. Yet underneath there are still the self-degrading gestures, the feelings of inadequacy, the fear. She is full of contradictions, inconsistencies. Overriding everything is the impressive professionalism of her art.... Our relationship seems to have gone around in a full circle. I think we will have to talk about these things.

February 28-March 2, 1974

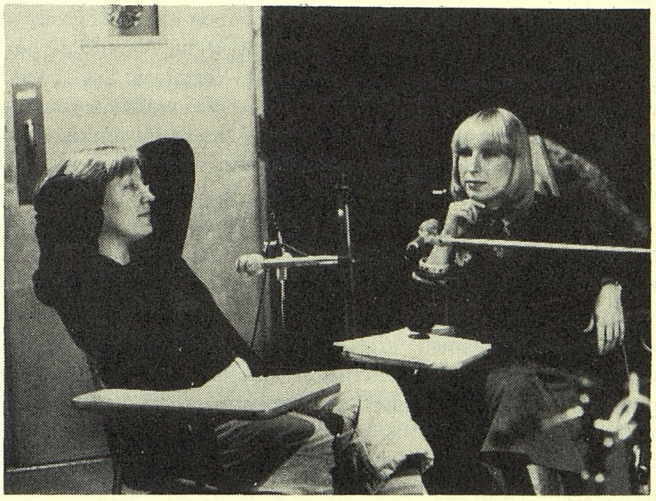
Dear Martha — ... Rereading your letter I get the feeling R. and M. are really bugging you underneath the bravado. That is very real, a painful fact you have to deal with daily. It's understandable. Hard to avoid them. Glad your friends are supportive. Don't worry. As you've begun to discover, facades become realities, and it takes about six months and distance for a lover to become a stranger in your mind. Love, Jacki

March 8, 1974

Jacki — ... I got an assurance that our piece could be shown in the Mezzanine Gallery here at NSCAD, so I will take installation photos when it's up....

I don't talk to Richards anymore; we speak if we bump into each other, but don't seek each other out. I'm speaking to a female lawyer on Tuesday and I may sue Richards if I'm legally capable because he really did step on me. Otherwise I'm dating a concert pianist who lives out in Hubbards. He now plays only to amuse himself and directs plays in experimental theatres and prisons for his living. He knows I'm leaving in May. He says he was first attracted by my independence. Men like that are hard to come by....

I keep my social life full as possible so I don't have to think about being in Halifax near Richards, etc. I'm going to a shrink who is sending me to relaxation therapy because I don't know how to relax.... I'll let you know how the layout progresses. Love, Martha



Wilson and Apple, March 1976. (Judith Vivell.)

March 31, 1974

Dear Martha — ... There are a lot of things I want to get into in relation to the really extraordinary experience that we've been through. I don't think either of us realized just how far we had gone. We placed ourselves in the most vulnerable of positions. As two strangers we entered into immediate and intense intimacy with total trust. We took an enormous gamble. It was very daring of us. And I think we both suffered from aftereffects not anticipated and not immediately perceived or understood. I don't have the time right now to explore this and I think in another sense it is kind of another piece. Certainly the subject of another part of our piece and worth investigating....

This weekend I worked up my "Brunette" piece. It's turned up some interesting surprises for me. Perhaps a subconscious equation — Blonde-Female, Brunette-Male (hmmm.....) in relation to identity/image projection (mine).

Reading books on Archaeology for the Digging piece in May. Fascinating. Also, I'm enjoying my privacy. Like being alone.

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I'm very glad you called me that day as it cleared a lot of conflicts and questions and complex mixed-up feelings all colliding in my head. It relieved a few tensions, and I felt a release of certain anxieties after talking. It was also good to talk with you as the extra dimension in voice clarifies the meaning in words so often misread in print....

Take care. Love, Jacki

April 5, 1974

Dear Jacki — ... It's wonderful to hear about L's interest in the piece. It is so bleak up here, and New York gets more and more frightening to contemplate from this distance. I keep questioning whether I can survive as an artist and get worry wrinkles thinking about it.

Your letter was tremendously supportive. Today I do a videotape of making myself up first as beautiful and then as ugly as I can. I have been thinking a lot about "vomiting" on people; I see this as playing a joke on myself.... Love, Martha

April 28, 1974

Dear Martha — I wanted to write to you immediately, as soon as I got back from London, as I am bursting with things to tell you. That was two weeks ago, and my life has been in turmoil, so I am beyond apologies....

First I want to tell you about the c. 7,500 show in London. I called Tony Stokes (at Garage Arts) when I arrived and he seemed very relieved that I was there. On Saturday morning I went down to Garage and then with the help of a terrific group of London women artists I installed the show in the Warehouse next door. It was a perfect space for the show. Very New York raw! I must say I did a fantastic job. Did two terrific walls for us, putting our work next to each other's. Added the B&W contact sheet from "Transformance" with your article in the middle. It really looked good....

I have been going through some fairly difficult changes and conflicts. I long for my own psychic space, room to grow in, to experience my art in. The time has run out for me to continue in the double life of full-time work (job) and full-time art. I am exhausted, overstrained, and colliding with myself, struggling with hostilities and overextension emotionally. I don't have enough time and I feel like I'm suffocating from spinning too quickly and not being able to slow down to breathe deeply.... Not having money is as paralyzing as not having time. They equalize and neutralize each other. Besides, earning one's own money is part of both the real and psychological independence and liberation from the role of the woman-child. So I have to search for alternative possibilities. This is especially difficult now because the economy is a disaster area. There are no jobs anywhere.

I am at a point of change in my life, trying to create new structures. The piece we did together was a culmination point for me, the end of a cycle.... I find myself looking into another mirror, seeing a different image.

The DIGGING piece has become very complex and multilayered. It is just a beginning now, and it might take months to complete. The actual "dig" itself will take place in several weeks. When I think about it I get very excited, like someone about to take a journey into unknown territory, like going to a foreign city after having read a book about its history.... It will be good to see you and sit and talk for hours.

Also it will be interesting to do a tape about the other part of TRANSFORMANCE — what we experienced with each other, the risks we took, how far we went, how we reacted later, overreacted, then rebalanced; where we are now. We plunged into each other's lives off a high diving board. We went very deep, very quickly, and perhaps suffered the mild bends coming up for air. It could be a very important tape to go with the piece. Also maybe a photo of us today, six months later. Call me when you get to New Jersey....

Love, Jacki

May 3, 1974

Taking diet pills, haven't slept in 2 nights. Cried on bus w/ Marcia, talking about Primal Scream and ego-coasting, being alone. She said R was unoriginal, I was the "individual" which shocked me. She sees me as courageous, she said in her letter to me, envies me. I love speed, it relieves the panic, the separation, substitutes euphoria, wholeness? I wish I could stay on it. Have lost some double chin. Dinner tonight with R and Marcia. Sat with R yesterday watching John Watt tapes, didn't feel much. I admire him from a distance. I plan to break down in the car tonight, tell him I am alone, afraid. He is my father substitute because of his aloofness. I should be doing something all the time, can't do fruitless activity.

May 5, 1974

Kicked and screamed w/ R last night, he said there was no sense pretending he wasn't happy. I saw that he was. I felt very hurt, cried a lot over loss of children, middle-class life which his marriage to Marcia represents to me. I can't do that now? Now I'm in the kitchen and I feel lethargic, desperate, speechless, embarrassed, like being at home. I have to be intellectual around him. I snap at Damian, can't play, indulge him. Had a dream that I stayed in the room below them. I am a frustrated child and I communicate that frustration to Damian, I frustrate him. I don't let myself feel. Ate cheesecake out of the fridge this a.m. R represents home situation which I am trying to resolve. I feel like I have to perform for him. He came in to ask what my plans were and for a split second I felt guilty? Not a barrel of fun to be with. Have to learn to love myself, whatever that means. Art about performing for others. Double exposure = "Exposure"

May 11, 1974

My emotions are frozen. I am frightened, not attracted to men. Metaphor, describe my parents as luggage. I do what they and authorities say because I am afraid they will not love me.

May 10, 1974

Feel generally OK. Felt good to see Jacki last night. Saw Nancy Kitchel show at 112 Greene St. which put me in awe. Darkness, "masking," lit tables, notebooks, folders for papers. Her involvement with Vito, a story about tragic encounter, her grandmother's gestures. Talked w/ [Jane] Kleinberg at Whitney about how women are making art about separation. I fantasize about my loft. I discover who I am as I go along. "Borders" occurs to me. I will take photos of rooms during search. I'm tired. Art about not knowing how I feel about things. Accept, discard. Divide objects. Retouched photos of how I want things to appear. How much are we defined by our surroundings. Deprived of middle-class life. Photograph the fantasy. Marcia and I occupy the same space in relation to R, but opposite sides of a single personality pulled in two directions. Forced into a position. Men = authority figures, never women. Dad wanted me to pity him, told me he was nearly out of a job. Apparently she is ambitious, an egomaniac, a blood-curdling bitch. She uses people, squeezes them dry, dumps them. Actually, she's sensitive, retiring, sweet-tempered.

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May 12, 1974

I used to feel like women were the "enemy," men were my best friends. Then I didn't have any respect for myself, treated them like authorities to please. Now I feel more comfortable with women, even have a distaste for men. I look at attractive men on the subway and experience revulsion. Dad made me afraid of him to cover his weakness. Sylvia Plath got at that real hatred everyone feels for his/her parents. For how they have hurt you. Trembling hands, my own fear of incompetence. Videotape of a simple task, hands hammering nails. Unfamiliar, incompetent, bad craftsman, danger, "hammering." Stuttering videotape, head w/ eyes closed, Mother & Dad dialogue of unsaid phrases.

July 26, 1974

Martha and I have lunch at the Plaza Palm Court. Reprise. An attempt to reexamine, redefine "Claudia" (TRANSFORMANCE). Same setting, shift in context, intent. We want to see how we feel, how we act. The mystique dissolves. It is, after all, like having lunch any other place. Just a restaurant. . . .

Over too expensive spinach salad we pursue the question of female sensibility, questioning whether women artists have become caught in a web of confusion between subject matter and "sensibility." Often they choose objects, acts and symbols associated with the stereotypes of the female role in our culture as content, when they are in fact the objects and conditions created by male sensibility and value systems. Do too many women artists perpetuate the "system" by attempting to elevate a certain kind of subject matter out of proportion to its significance? On the other hand, liberation declaring equality continues to enforce the concept of there being no female sensibility. "Anything they can do we can do as well if not better" thinking. In the struggle to achieve power and position in the art world we charge forth into battle to prove this, and the result, which is often successful, is also often indistinguishable from the acclaimed and established art created by a male sensibility. Again we reenforce their system, their concept of reality. Perhaps the only answer, at least the only one we can come up with, is to work through an internal view coming from our female experience of reality (or lack of it!), and that out of this will come some alternative perspectives that also do not end up putting us all together in yet another box. Still the same old questions go round in a circle. Cultural conditioning and biology. Well, how do we change the patterns of the conditioning, making our viewpoint carry equal weight? "Claudia" was a magnification of role models and stereotypes of power, media images programmed into all of us. The "power" of the beautiful, rich woman. The illusion of power. We exaggerated it, "lived" in order to also shatter it, expose the illusion, blow it up, not reenforce it, or **validate** it. It's a fine line, a delicate balance of form and content, intent and context. Both Martha and I have all kinds of ambivalences about that work and whether it worked. In two years perhaps we will be able to see it in the right perspective, with the distance to analyze it better, understand it in relation to female sensibility and art.

Martha Wilson, performance artist, began executing private performances or "transformations" in 1971. In 1975 and 1976, she performed five chapters of *The Arnotated Alice* in which the heroine encounters contemporary conventions—social, sexual, logical and linguistic. Jacki Apple began doing performances in 1971. Since 1975 she has been doing installation works exploring psychological space. She and Martine Aballea are writing a collaborative novel between New York and Paris. Martha is the founder and executive director of The Franklin Furnace Archive for artists' books in New York City, and Jacki is its curator.

LAMENT ON THE EVE OF HER DAUGHTER'S BIRTHDAY

ESTELLE LEONTIEF

My head doesn't ache
no one pulls out my fingernails
what I eat sits easy

On this long
blue night each year
I even forget that
hard hard laboring

a magician
hacking a woman in two

If I lie still
your thirty-six years
blow my mind

If I try to reach you
I'm too short

But now at last
night darkens
into day

and you may wish for
what you want
What is it

Write me
Tell me something
Sing

SEPTEMBER SOLITAIRE

ANN LAUTERBACH

There are always added difficulties: unwashed glasses,
the box with some sweaters, the floral arrangement
in the kitchen, the kitchen floor. It was a grid
of pale blue and gray linoleum; it no longer exists.
All of us move in time for winter.
Things are most dangerous when habits are kicked;
birds, and the way you imagine.
We tell stories.
This to restrain the sense that we would give in
too easily when the time came. The time had come.
The first red and the first green are not the same;
between death and birth are radical colors,
of which the trees are stain. I told stories for hours,
each made from imminent, rendered places; talk itself
a terrain. I recall games: ducking and kisses and tails.
Someone is always blinded. Someone was removed in a chair.

Ann Lauterbach is a native New Yorker. She has just compiled her first collection of poems, titled *Chalk*.

Estelle Leontief was poetry editor of *Colloquy* magazine, has published two books of poetry—*Razerol* and *Whatever Happens*—with Claire van Vliet of Janus Press, Vermont. She is now a reader of poetry and fiction for the *Partisan Review*.

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CONTRACT *IONS*

KATHERINE BATEMAN

Prologue

the woman who emerges from the fatherless child
is like a May fly still wet from an evening hatch

if the sun is not unnaturally warm
her wings will not dry in time to escape the trout's
dinner hour

Dialogue (or, perhaps, Monologue)

Hold up her shoulders and she will be able to see.

wet hair matted to small large head
phlegm sucked in squishing sounds from unborn torso
body working intuitively in waves of painless pain
shoulders belly knees enter exit in bursts and slithers

You have a girl this time, Katherine.

throwing self back into scrambling hands of husband and nurse
a daughter
i have a daughter

How frequent is this violent vomiting?
every six months for the last three years
Vomiting is indicative of emotions being unacknowledged.
Are you angry?
no. i never feel anger
Are you unhappy?
no. i have three lovely children and a responsible husband
Are you lonely?
no. i have my work
Vomiting is indicative of emotions being unacknowledged.
Until you recognize your feelings your body will have to rid
itself of them physically.
are you angry?
no. i never feel anger
are you unhappy?

anger swooped down like the Wicked Witch of the West
i, like Dorothy, smiled and skipped
but it didn't help (and Wizards are out of style)

metamorphism (noun) a change effected by pressure . . .
that results in a more compact and more highly
crystalline condition

highly crystalline conditions may be hazardous
to your health

facing one another across antique Oriental carpets
murky shadows hover in the spaces between us dimming
perception

I don't know how you do it, Katherine.
I have listened for hours and I don't understand
a goddamned word you've said.

our marriage stands now before us
like a teenage child who can
no longer be dominated

Thus spake the high energy physicist:

How can I respect you when you are sick and spoiled.

sick and spoiled
spoiled and self-centered
self-centered and selfish
selfish and insecure
insecure and illogical
illogical and insane

words constantly turning on themselves
like an Escher spiral

a high energy physicist does not know that
Escher's logic is sometimes fallacious

i can't leave the children
yet i am not here now
my inner spaces have contracted
like a uterus which after the fullness of birth
tightens into a clenched fist
the sperm child can no longer penetrate my gates

how can i help them understand
that if my spiritual contractions continue
i will abort my self

are such abortions classified
illegal
or
therapeutic?

waking each morning
to see the sun
stream through the amber decanter
then the realization
that no decision is made
and the instant illness
stomach a fist
gripping my windpipe
and plunging a knuckle into my diaphragm
Take two before meals and at bedtime.

You made a contract with me.
It must be honored.

a contract
requests made
the child accepted
the woman rebels

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contrahere ME, fr L to draw together
contract (noun) a binding agreement between two
or more persons or parties

marriage is a rootless noun
when the germination period is over
and summer finally comes
the new growth may not portray the stem

like contracts

the birthday of my first born
eight boys of ten romping
crepe paper looped in circus tent colors
orange and red cups encircle the clown candle king
who tells in shrinking size
that the march from chocolate smeared high chairs
to cheese cake and football
has been a steady one
Thank you, Mrs. Roy. That sure was good. My mom never
fixes cheese cake.

birthday pictures of my tall blond son
You and Daddy get in this one, Mom.
I want one of us all.

Lindsey my son
with your Byronic look
a child who soars in the sunlight
and crawls on caterpillar legs over creviced bark

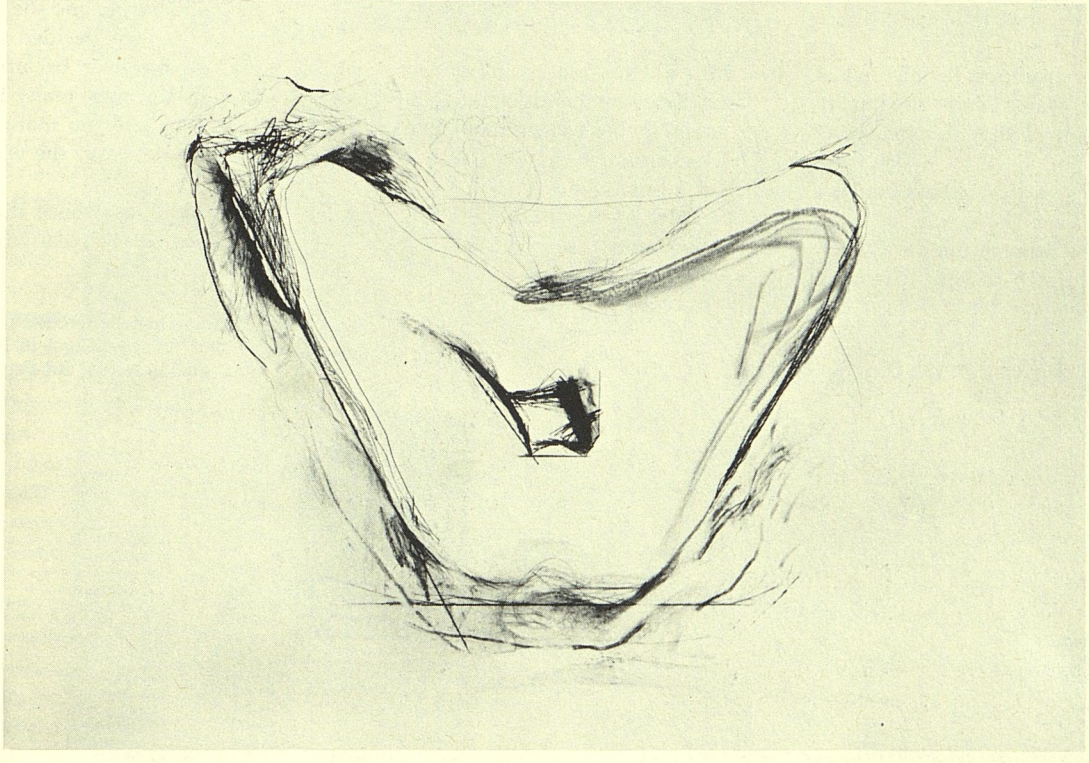
you of all will someday understand
that i was losing my ability to soar
and that without the sun
i could not be
the mother
you knew

Epilogue

the protective mountain lake is behind me now
i knew its terrain and seasons well
yet security is a Pandora's box
on opening more springs out than bargained for

now riffles and deep holes are my domain
and the linearity of my new world
thrusts me onward

Katherine Bateman is an art historian and medieval scholar who teaches both medieval and feminist art history at The School of The Art Institute of Chicago.



Julie Gross. 1977. Graphite and pastel. 42" x 59". "This body drawing was made by sitting cross-legged on paper and drawing around myself."

Julie Gross is a painter living in New York whose recent work "came out of an impulse to get back to myself. My process is now coming from real things, real feelings."

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PATTERNS OF HEALING AND REBIRTH

Claudia Orenstein and Anaïs Nin

A Postscript by Gloria Orenstein

Introduction.

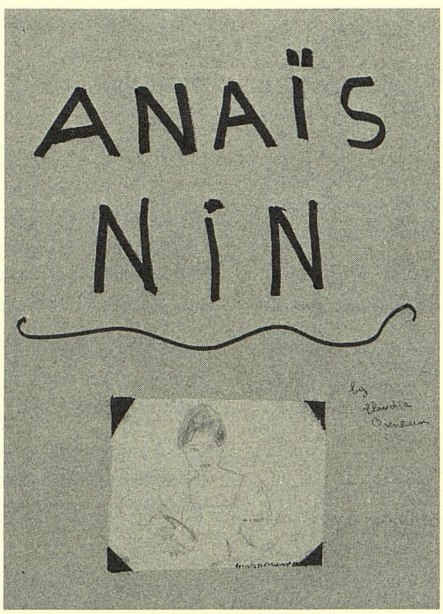
You are about to hear, the life of a lady whose whole career started when her father left her. She is a famous writer and her name is Anaïs Nin...

Anaïs Nin is a writer. She was born in 1920 in Neuilly near Paris. When she was eleven her father left her. He was a Spanish pianist. Her mother, a Spanish dancer, lived with her and her brother. When her father left her she started writing a diary. It was really a letter to her father to try to get him to come back to her.

The family was living in Richmond Hill in Queens and her father went to Paris to become a famous pianist. She had even actually sent him a letter, only her mother didn't mail it and said it had gotten lost in the mail. When she was about 24 years old she wrote some very beautiful poems and stories but since she was a woman (and there weren't many women writers) no one would publish her works. But Anaïs Nin thought that they were good enough to be published; so she set up a printing press and she published all her works herself. Since then they have become very famous.

Anaïs Nin's career started very late and, still today, she is writing some of her best novels and stories.

Anaïs Nin is unlike most people. When she dreams she wants these dreams to come true. She says that dreams won't come to you. You have to make them come true. Once she dreamed about a nice big houseboat. Then she saw an ad for a houseboat on the Seine in the newspaper. She bought the houseboat and moved into



it with all her friends. They were very happy living out her dream together.

Anaïs Nin has written many books. Her Diaries, of which there are now six published volumes, and

Children of the Albatross
A Spy in the House of Love
Solar Barque
Cities of the Interior
Ladders to Fire
D.H. Lawrence—An Unprofessional Study
House of Incest
On Writing
Realism and Reality
The Four-Chambered Heart

And, many others. She is a great writer.

When Anaïs Nin's father left her she wanted him to come back so much that she became a Spanish dancer. (Since he was a Spanish pianist she figured he could play and she could dance.) She performed in Paris under the name Anita Aguilera, and even though she was a writer and was doing it for her father, she was a very good dancer.

Anaïs Nin has been interviewed in many magazines like *Ms.* and *The Feminist Art Journal* and many more. She is very famous.

Anaïs Nin has a policy about answering her mail. When she was young she wrote to Djuna Barnes and she never received an answer, so she decided to answer all her mail if she ever became famous. Even though she gets many letters each day sooner or later no matter what else may stand in the way, she will always answer them.

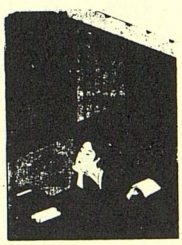
Anaïs Nin, whose diaries have made her famous, is a great writer thanks to her father.

Claudia Danielle Orenstein is a seventh grader at the Fleming School in New York City. She has acted in several Off-Broadway plays.

A letter from Anaïs Nin.

Anais Nin
P. O. Box 26598
Los Angeles, Cal. 90026

Dear Claudia:
Your note made me very proud, not only to be chosen instead of Shakespeare but by a poet and I hope you write a lot more.
Love
Anaïs

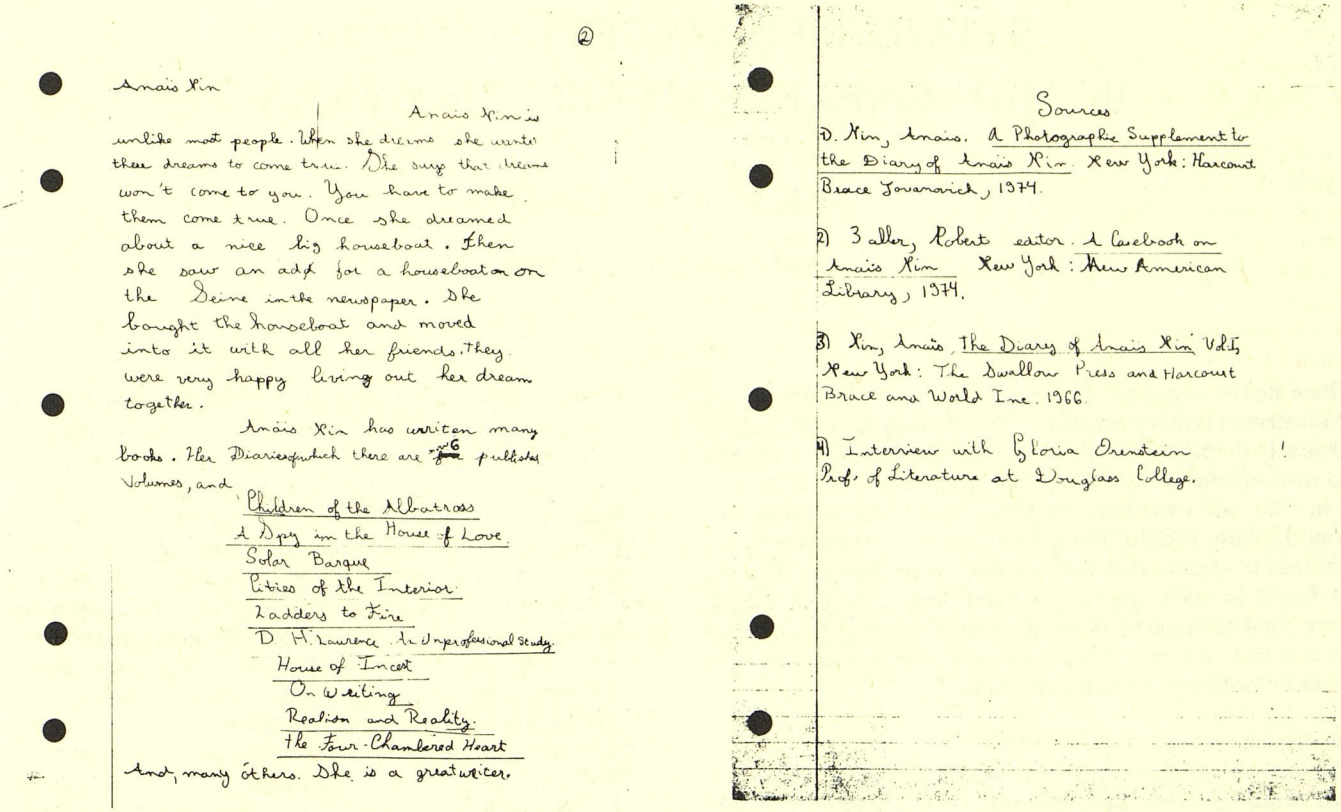


April 11 1975

Dear Claudia. Please tell your mother I have been seriously ill for 3 months and not yet recovered so can only write small letters but I want to send you both my love and I would be happy to hear from you both

Love
Anais

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Anaïs Nin

Anaïs Nin is unlike most people. When she dreams she wants these dreams to come true. She says that dreams won't come to you. You have to make them come true. Once she dreamed about a nice big houseboat. Then she saw an ad for a houseboat on the Seine in the newspaper. She bought the houseboat and moved into it with all her friends. They were very happy living out her dream together.

Anaïs Nin has written many books. Her Diaries of which there are six published Volumes, and

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Realism and Reality
The Four-Chambered Heart

And many others. She is a great writer.

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2) Zaller, Robert editor. A Casebook on Anais Nin New York: New American Library, 1974.

3) Nin, Anais, The Diary of Anais Nin Vol 5, New York: The Swallow Press and Harcourt Brace and World Inc. 1966.

4) Interview with Gloria Orenstein Prof. of Literature at Douglass College.

A friend once told me about a feminist workshop in which each woman was asked to acknowledge her matrilineal ancestry by repeating the phrase: "I am the daughter of . . ." and then naming her mother. To everyone's amazement, many of the women in that small, randomly selected group spontaneously responded: "I am the daughter of Anaïs Nin."

A major theme of the women's movement has been that biology is *not* destiny. Therefore a doctor's words to the youthful Anaïs are ironic: "You were not built for maternity." Instead of becoming a biological mother, Anaïs Nin was the spiritual mother to an entire generation of women writers. As a biological mother and a feminist, I can think of no greater gift to my own children than a spiritual parent. It was with this in mind that in 1974 I suggested that my ten-year-old, Claudia, contact Anaïs Nin.

One of Anaïs' recurring motifs has been the transcendence of loss through artistic creation. I wanted to share this motif with my daughter. My husband and I had recently separated. I was teaching a college course on Anaïs Nin's *Diaries*. I began to realize how very much like my own children Anaïs had felt when her father left her at approximately the same age. Claudia's English class project was to write the biography of a famous person. She had chosen Shakespeare, but was making little progress. It occurred to me that the painful after-effects of her parents' separation might be connected to this "writing block." But I found myself in the position of being unable to help her at the time she needed me precisely because I *was* her mother. The person my children missed most in the world was the person against whom I harbored extremely bitter sentiments. I felt torn between my own anger and my children's need for me to understand that they still loved their father. I knew instinctively that Anaïs Nin, through the *Diaries*, could do the spiritual mothering I found impossible, that reading about how she had used her own pain as a source of creative energy might give Claudia confidence that childhood wounds could be overcome.

When I spoke to Claudia about Anaïs, she perked up and instantly switched her topic from Shakespeare to Nin. Then she wrote to Anaïs, telling her about the project and asking if there were any possibility of obtaining the childhood journal, written, as Anaïs tells us, "as a diary of a journey to record everything for my father. It was written for him and I had really intended to send it to him. It was really a letter so he could follow us into a strange land, know about us." Claudia included some of her own poetry with her letter and soon received an enthusiastic response.

If Anaïs Nin's *Diaries* can speak personally to a child of ten, it is because Nin herself has never lost sight of the child she was. It is this intermingling of past, present and future that gives the *Diaries* their universal and timeless appeal for the young and old alike. She says in the fourth *Diary*: "We live back and forth in the past or in the present or in the future. With the *young* one lives in the future. I prefer that. Changes occur constantly according to the vision, image or myth that possesses one. . . . . We never discard our childhood. We never escape it completely . . . The young's attraction for the old is the protection of their future. The need of faith and the elder's vision into the future." If, as Anaïs states, "changes occur according to the myth we are possessed by," it is no wonder that those who read the *Diaries* and become possessed by the myth of transcendence through creation undergo the therapeutic effects of a transpersonal healing. It was precisely this faith in the future and the elder's vision that I wanted to pass on to my daughter and that caused just such a psychic healing to take place.

I think Claudia was helped most in handling that difficult period in her life by the knowledge she gained from Anaïs that reality need not only be composed of what you live, but more importantly of what you dream, and that the creation of the Marvelous in life is not denied those who experience loss or pain, as long as the creative will prevails and transforms that suffering. Of all the papers I have read on Anaïs Nin, none has moved me more than the very simple project written by my own daughter.

Gloria Feman Orenstein is an assistant professor and acting chairperson of Women's Studies at Douglass College.

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THE RAISED VOICES OF WOMEN IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE

CÄCILIA RENTMEISTER

TRANSLATED BY JUDITH LEE

These are the questions: With what weapons did women in the mid-nineteenth century actually fight? Did they have allies? Was their enemy simply the male? What goals did they fight for? How were women affected by the reactions to the first French Revolution in 1789, and what laws controlled them? Why did they seek to join the early socialist groups and why were they rejected or disciplined as soon as they asserted their own interests? Why did their hopes in such apostles as Saint-Simon, Fourier, Cabet, George Sand or in the workers' alliances turn out to be illusions? How is it that women of all classes were able to unite, so as to form an autonomous women's movement? . . .

1789: The Pioneers

The women's movement of 1848 sought victory in a battle in which, since the Great Revolution of 1789, it had only experienced defeat. In 1789 women had left their homes, had climbed down from the allegorical pedestals of freedom and fatherland to fight for these values with weapons in their hands. The "amazon of freedom," Théroigne de Méricourt, and her sisters throughout France formed amazon corps. It was women who advanced on Versailles to bring the royal couple and the crown prince—"the baker, the baker's wife and the baker's little boy"—to Paris.[1] As long as they integrated themselves into the fighting lines and subordinated themselves to common goals, they were accepted. But when they followed the men's example and established clubs to demand civil rights and freedom of economic activity for themselves, then the amazons of freedom became hateful Megaeras. As a companion to the "Declaration of the Rights of Man," Olympe de Gouges proposed in 1789 a "Declaration of the Rights of Women": "A woman has the right to go to the gallows; she must also have the right to mount the speaker's platform."

In the same declaration she concluded, "Oh women, women! When will you stop being blind? What advantages have you gained through the Revolution? Greater contempt, more flagrant disregard. In the centuries of corruption the only thing you controlled was men's weaknesses. Your empire has been destroyed. What is there left? The conviction that men are unjust. . . ."[2]

Even though in 1790 the Constituent Assembly introduced a law enabling daughters to inherit property and, in 1792, a divorce law, it was only the wives and daughters of wealthy men whose lot improved. Women's more basic demands for education, the free exercise of an occupation and political rights were rejected. Napoleon's "Civil Code" of 1804 stated outright: "A wife owes obedience to her husband" (Article 1). Although Article 488 of the code states that all unmarried women of legal age are ". . . absolute mistresses of their person and property" and are able to carry out all acts of civil life,[3] as long as a single adult woman was not able to support herself through her own work, she would hardly pass her twenty-first year unmarried. By 1826 the restoration government had rescinded the divorce law; the women's clubs had already been banned in 1793 by the revolutionary government's Committee of Public Safety.

Women's Emancipation between Revolutions: The Apostles

In spite of the setbacks, women had perceived the possibilities for freedom. Soon after the turn of the century the social utopians appeared before the public with plans for a new social order. Searching for a new identity and lacking their own theories, women believed they had finally found their place in Saint-Simon's *Association universelle*. Here man and woman would form the future "social unit" in a structure free of all enslavement. However, Saint-Simon himself provided only general formulations. The exegesis of his gospel was left to his apostle Père Enfantin.[4] And Enfantin again placed woman on the very throne that had always stood in the way of her liberation: she became an ideal figure to be worshipped. Enfantin and his numerous followers, men and women of all classes, awaited the appearance of the *Mère*—the female messiah who, with the *Père*, was supposed to form the Saint-Simonian papal couple, the "Divine Androgyne." This "Mother" was also supposed to break the "seal" on the shackles of women. But despite an intensive search, which included expeditions to the Orient, this worthy woman was never found. The seal on women's chains remained.

Enfantin loosened one bond, however, with his *rêhabilitation de la chair*—the "liberation of the flesh" from the bonds of Christianity's aversion to the carnal. This meant the moral relaxation of the bonds of marriage to the very boundaries of promiscuity and was first perceived by Saint-Simonian women as progressive. However, it proved to be neither a theoretical nor a practical step toward their liberation. The dualism of body and soul was maintained. Woman continued to be flesh, but her corporeality was elevated as a means of dignifying the male spirit. By making the body divine, woman could be sexually exploited that much more easily. In addition, no women sat in Enfantin's *Conseil suprême*, and in 1851 they were completely excluded from the hierarchy.

A great many women learned a lesson from these disappointments. They began to search for a new apostle. Former supporters of Saint-Simon wrote in the first issue of their women's journal, *Femme libre* (1832):

> When everyone is concerned about freedom and the proletariat demands liberation, in the face of this great movement of social emancipation taking place before our very eyes, shall women remain inactive? . . . Is our lot so fortunate that we have no demands to make? Up to now woman has been exploited and tyrannized. This tyranny, this exploitation must cease. Like men we are born free; one half of the human race cannot be subjected to the other without injustice.[5]

* Excerpted from *Honorê Daumier und die ungelosten Probleme der burgerlichen Gesellschaft: Katalog zur Ausstellung der Neuen Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst*, Berlin, Schloss Charlottenburg, 1974.

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Women saw themselves here not as a minority, but as one half of humanity. If the male proletariat, numerically a smaller group, could demand liberation, why not women?...

Yet women were not in a position to create an autonomous emancipation movement. For too long they had been forceably prevented from gaining any insight into social relationships. Before 1848, no matter what family and social role the women's rightists envisioned for themselves, they always viewed their liberation in conjunction with that of the most oppressed classes. However, even these classes, which the women held to be their natural allies, rejected them as soon as they demanded the end of sexual domination.

Flora Tristan, for example, led a lifelong battle for the cause of women and workers because of the dual oppression she had herself experienced. After the early death of her father she went to work as an illuminator. Her youthful marriage to her employer was unhappy; Tristan left her husband and took her children with her. According to the law at that time the marriage could not be dissolved and the husband was able to persecute his wife for many years without punishment.[6]

Tristan's major work, *The Union of Labor*, appeared in 1843, shortly before her death. Long before Marx she proposed and expounded her idea that although the emancipation of workers must be achieved by the workers themselves, it would only remain an illusion without the emancipation of women. Tristan also suggested to the workers the text for a declaration which ends, "We, the French proletariat...recognize...that the neglect and disregard which men have shown for the natural rights of women is the sole reason for unhappiness in the world....Sons of 1789, this is the task that your fathers have given you to do!"

Because of this declaration and especially because of her portrayal of the misery of proletarian marriages, Tristan did not meet with sympathy from her public. Marriage and family were the last reserves where the worker could exercise control on account of his sex. Thus labor and trade associations recognized Tristan's work belatedly, if at all. In a letter to Considérant she writes with disappointment, "Almost everyone is against me. The men, because I demand the emancipation of women, the property owners, because I demand the emancipation of wage earners."[7]

The Bluestockings Corrupt the Moral Tradition of Marriage

The Bluestockings (*Les Bas-bleus*) were not a specific organization. Originally the term referred to a group of female scholars and writers who owed their nickname to a certain blue-stockinged Mrs. Stillingfleet, a literary lady prominent in London around 1780.[8] By the mid-nineteenth century, Daumier and his contemporaries used the term to mean any emancipated woman from the bourgeois class, which, being their own class, posed the greatest threat and inspired the strongest defenses.

Since bourgeois married women revolted naturally not against employers, but against their husbands (who were not recognized as employers since housework was unpaid), marriage was the focal point of the emancipation efforts of the caricaturists' Bluestockings. In Daumier's series *Conjugal Mores* (1839), the battle between the sexes took place in the parlor or bedroom, the target the flaws of a lower- or middle-class marriage. The sixth plate of the series points clearly to the Bluestockings. A husband in his underwear holds out his torn pants to his wife, who is reading, and complains that George Sand keeps wives from mending their husbands' trousers: "Either we should make divorce legal again ...or outlaw this lady writer!"[9] This print evokes the three chief complaints against the *Bas-bleus*: wives refuse to mend trousers and even want to dress themselves in this symbol of their husbands' power; marriage and family are neglected in favor of the woman's own interests; and George Sand—"that woman writer" who has inspired literary ambitions in the heads of faithful wives —is the source of all evil.

What did George Sand really want and what kind of views did Daumier credit to her blue-stockinged followers?[10] In 1831 the Baroness Dudevant had left her husband and experienced her first success as a feuilletonist for *Le Figaro* under the pseudonym George Sand. Soon after that, in her novels *Indiana* and *Lélia*, she created heroines who protested the tyranny of marriage. The subsequent development of Sand's political consciousness was similar to that of countless other women. She moved from the Saint-Simonians, who wanted her to be their "Mother," to the social utopians and Lamennais and eventually, at the end of the 1830s, she converted to the views of Pierre Leroux, who fought capitalism through forced development of new methods of agricultural production. George Sand took Leroux's position in her so-called social novels written after 1840. She made farmers and workmen her protagonists and declared them to be the determining social force, paralleling the actual historical role of these classes from 1830 to 1850. Her opinions placed her in the left wing of the *petit bourgeois* democrats.

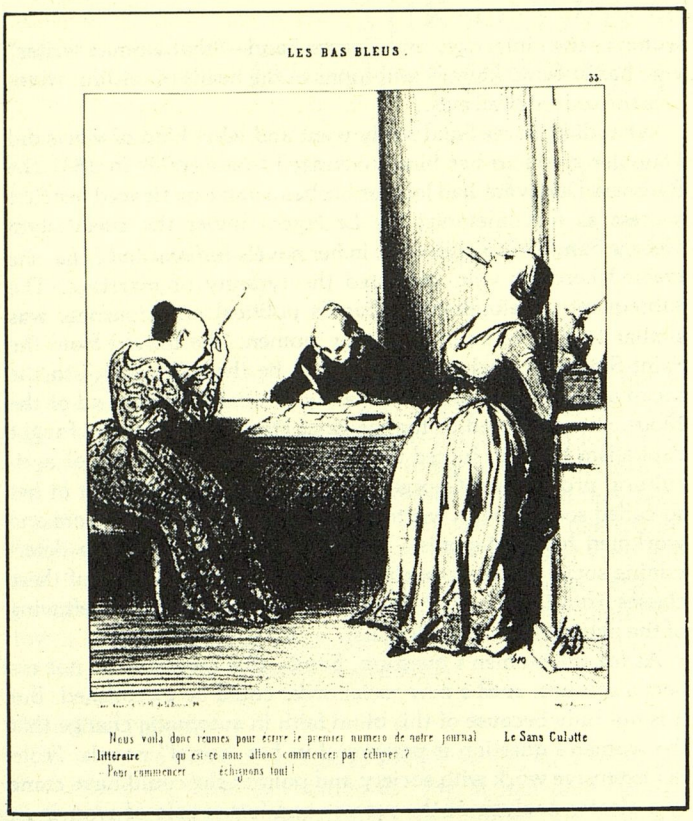
As for the women's question, Sand—like Leroux—did not expect a solution until a new social order could be established. But it is not only because of this blind faith in automatic change that the women's question is peripheral in her "social" novels. From her extensive work with society and politics she could have come to a clearer analysis of the present and future role of women in society. But Sand was no longer concerned with the women's question. Having been accepted as one of their own by the most influential men of her time, she believed she had attained emancipation and was, indeed, already beyond it. She had become a man out of conviction and had nothing but contempt for her former sex. Thus even in 1848 she disassociated herself very clearly from the women's rightists.

The George Sand who is the central figure in Daumier's Bluestocking series is still the early Sand, opposing marriage, although by the time the series appeared in 1844 she had already begun the development described above. Sand was the perfect model even for Daumier's travesty of emancipation—portrayed simply as the imitation and exchange of sexual roles. She dressed like a man, smoked, used male gestures...Daumier's Bluestockings have only first names, which makes them anonymous and insignificant. Among the precursors of these Eudoxies, Ismenes and Arsinoes are the French *précieuses* of the seventeenth century, whose legacy is visible today in the *petites bourgeoises* who imagine themselves to be leading intellectuals.

When intellect and creativity, considered to be masculine qualities, are appropriated by daring women, they supposedly become—if not men—then at least sexless creatures. Thus, in the first plate of Daumier's series, an unattractive Bluestocking gazing at her own likeness in a mirror takes comfort in Madame de Stael's words, "Genius has no sex."[11] Nevertheless, Daumier's Bluestockings still have families and still assume the duties of production and reproduction of manpower, although because of their intellectual predilections, they are unwilling to do housework. Indeed the very existence of the family is in danger, when the children are always falling into the bathwater or when the husband must care for them while his wife writes an "Ode to Motherhood." It escaped Daumier's notice that the traditional division of roles gives far *more* occasion for comedy when the husband is writing an ode praising the joys of motherhood while the wife keeps the children out of his way.

In contrast to the women in *Conjugal Mores*, whose activities were limited to the domestic sphere, ambition drives Daumier's

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Honoré Daumier. "Well, we've gathered here to write the first issue of our journal... *The Women's Literary Sans-Culotte*.... What do we want to wreck first?"—"For a beginning... let's smash everything!" Lithograph. 1844 (No. 33 in the series "The Bluestockings").

Bluestockings to take the first steps out of the house and found organizations limited only to their own sex. They are either gaped at or hooted at as salon socialists; they change the function of the ladies' tea party and meet as a circle of drinking companions who parrot revolutionary ideologies. Daumier deals with the real, and more threatening, women's newspapers and clubs only twice. At a meeting to found their journal *The Women's Literary Sans-Culotte*, Bluestocking journalists discuss the contents of their first issue: "What do we want to wreck first? For a beginning, let's smash everything!" And in the second print— the chaotic meeting of a women's club—it is typical of Daumier that once again the ironic caption speaks only of women's incapability of working as an organization. The observer learns nothing about the reason for the meeting or the topic of discussion. These sheets do not give the vaguest notion of the explosive power that the women's movement was about to develop in the February Revolution of 1848.

The Women's Movement in 1848: Goals and Organization

The February Revolution again called women to the battlefield. Again the overthrow of an old social order loosened their bonds, and for a short time in the anarchy of law and morals they escaped the control of their masters. Since 1789 they had expanded their demands and made them more precise: without the complete abolition of the domination of one sex by the other, the revolution could not be victorious. Their common goals were the right to work, the autonomous organization of wage-earning women, abolition of educational privileges, and the procurement of political and civil rights (suffrage, divorce).

So that men could hear them, these working and bourgeois women gained the right to speak in democratic and socialist men's clubs like the *Club Lyonnais* or the *Club de l'émancipation des peuples*. At best the men tolerated or smiled at the women's presentations. Once again women learned from these experiences; they organized themselves autonomously. They came together from homes and factories to form their own clubs and editorial boards. "The natural agent for your liberation is woman," points out one of the women's papers.[12]

The two largest women's clubs in Paris were the *Club de l'émancipation des femmes*, founded by Jeanne Deroin and Dr. Malatier, and the *Club des femmes*, founded by Eugénie Niboyet. Clubs founded newspapers, newspapers founded clubs. Thus Jeanne Deroin published the *Opinion des femmes*[13] and Niboyet the *Voix des femmes*. To properly evaluate the achievements and significance of the women's newspapers, it must be kept in mind that they appeared daily and that newspapers were the only form of mass communication.[14]

Among the editors of the *Voix*, Niboyet had worked for a long time on women's newspapers,[15] and Deroin was a teacher who wrote for the *Opinion des femmes* as well. Désirée Gay was a worker and later founder of a women laundry workers' union. A large number of other writers for the paper signed their articles with first name and occupation only. With its first issue on March 20, 1840, the *Voix* called for support of the aforementioned demands of the women's organizations.

The battle dealt primarily with the right to vote and the right to work. On March 5, 1848, the provisional government had proclaimed "universal suffrage." The next day it specified exactly who was allowed to vote—all men over twenty-one years of age who enjoyed the rights of citizenship. Mentally retarded people and minors were not permitted to vote. The women belonged to this group.

Women rose up in arms. In an address to the provisional government on March 16, women artists, workers, writers and teachers demanded equal political rights for both sexes. Delegations from the "Committee for Women's Rights" went to Marrast at City Hall and insisted on the right to vote because the voting law failed to specifically exclude women. The Jacobin Club released a trial balloon with the nomination of George Sand as a candidate for the National Assembly. The women's clubs enthusiastically endorsed the nomination. The *Voix des femmes* of April 16 proclaimed, "We have nominated George Sand!" A woman in the National Assembly, one whom men had declared to be a genius, would have to be heard! But in the newspaper *La Réforme* Sand clearly disassociated herself from the movement. She admitted that freedom of opinion was the right of both sexes, but protested the unsolicited support of women whom she did not know and with whom she did not wish to associate.

Eugénie Niboyet had realized that Sand was no women's rightist. In the *Voix* on April 10, 1848, she returned the affront. "The candidacy of Madame George Sand was decided by men in clubs where women are not permitted.... The republic has not done away with the privileges of the talented, but it has limited them by imposing responsibilities." In the election on April 23 George Sand was defeated. One half of the French people still had no voice.

Organizing by Women

The right to work meant economic independence, a fundamental step towards women's liberation. Finding work for women had nothing to do with charity. "Under a republican government privilege is replaced by equality, just as charity becomes fraternity...." (commentary in the *Voix* on April 3, 1848). The

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women's demands were presented before the *Commission du travail* of the provisional government in a very general and rather feeble form. An address directed to Louis Blanc, the commission chairman, read:

> Many women are in a desperate situation.... Good morals build republics and it is the women who are responsible for good morals! Let the nation praise women's labor through your voice. We hope that through our will work done by women will have a status in the present reorganization of labor and that you will urge that the fundamental principle of association be applied to the kinds of work that are carried out by women.[16]

In a postscript the woman writing this appeal demanded auxiliary protective measures to make it possible for women to work and to make their work easier, such as the establishment of "national restaurants," state laundries, day-care centers and so forth.[17]

The women's movement sought to organize female workers in two ways. First, through the creation of associations at existing places of work. Second, by demanding that the state set up national workshops for women to reduce unemployment.

Workers' associations already existed under the July Monarchy in embryonic forms, but they were constantly exposed to persecution by Louis-Philippe's government. However, with the February Revolution of 1848, the concept of an "association" took on an almost magical significance, for it represented both an end to all exploitation and a "brotherliness" which would be realized in all social realms.[18] Women also formed associations. Pauline Roland founded an association for socialist teachers. The alliance of midwives, *Sages femmes unies*, demanded medical training, better care for the working classes and state wages. The *Voix des femmes* added that women should reclaim gynecology and no longer surrender their bodies to profit-seeking, incompetent doctors.[19]

The *Voix* also founded an association for domestic workers, *Association des femmes à gages*, to eliminate the isolation inherent in domestic work. In October, 1848, Jeanne Deroin launched the *Association des ouvrières lingères*. The female laundry workers organized their businesses themselves, from soliciting orders to delivery. One quarter of the profit was paid out in wages, one quarter went into a relief fund for the workers and the other half went back into production.[20] Finally, in August 1848, Deroin founded a central French labor union movement. In answer to her call delegates from a large number of associations met in Paris to discuss suggestions for a federation — 140 associations formed the alliance. In 1850 Deroin was imprisoned for half a year as an enemy of property, individualism and male domination in the state and in the family.

In March 1848, the suggestion was first made, in the *Voix des femmes*, that the government's National Workshops also be established for women. In the course of their campaign, delegates of female workers finally established *Ateliers des femmes* (workshops for women) through the *Commission du travail*. Désirée Gay, a worker and editorial writer for the *Voix*, was chosen as a delegate by the female workers of the second *arrondissement* of Paris. She gave regular reports in the *Voix* about the organization and development of the newly opened workshops in the second district, and from her reports we get an idea of what was happening in other *ateliers*.

Every 100 female workers were under the command of a division leader (daily wage: 3 francs). Every ten women were in turn assigned to a brigade leader (daily wage: 1.50 francs). On March 20, 1848, the *Voix* published figures on the average earnings of seamstresses: for a twelve-hour day they could earn at the most 1 franc in the city, in the country no more than 60 centimes. In general, women earned only about one-third of what men earned. Female workers sewed national guard shirts for the government and received piece-wages. Since most of them were untrained, many barely received 30 centimes a day, far below the subsistence minimum. The substantial wage differences within the *ateliers* also made women unhappy. The complaints multiplied. An editorial in the *Voix* on April 14, 1848, declared:

> Why do women revolt? Because women's workshops are controlled by men, because favoritism brings higher wages than work accomplished, finally, because some have too much and others too little. What the female worker wants is not an organized hand-out, but rather a just reward for work done.... We want all people to be able to make a living from their labor....

On April 18 Désirée Gay wrote:

> Female workers are dying of hunger. The work that they are given to do is only bait. The organization of women's work is only despotism under a new name. The appointment of women's delegates is a false pretense thought up by men who want to get women off their backs.

Because of her energetic advocation of women's rights, Désirée Gay was fired as division leader several days later. The government threatened to imprison her and close the *ateliers*, if there was an uprising among women workers.

In the government decree of June 23, 1848, on the closing of the National Workshops, the *ateliers des femmes* did not even need to be mentioned. They had already become ineffectual due to the participation of women in the June insurrection.[21]

The most infamous society of female workers formed for the liberation of women was a paramilitary group, a feminist "militia," called the *Vesuviennes*. The members adopted this nickname, mockingly applied by the public, and gave it their own interpretation. Actually it described their situation superbly: like long dammed-up lava, they would cause social upheaval. With weapons clashing, the *Vésuviennes* marched in front of the City Hall and at the Place Vendôme under the command of Josephine Frenouillet. This was grist for the mill of *Charivari*. From the end of March onwards, the house caricaturist Cham was already lashing out at the "Vesuvian marriage" under the weekly heading *Revue comique de la semaine*. He had the husband of a *Vésuvienne* sigh while minding the children, "Since early morning my wife has been in front of City Hall at a proclamation ceremony and here little Gugusse has been proclaiming for two hours that she wants to be fed!"[22]

The ideal "Vesuvian marriage" is presented in the "constitution" of the *Vésuviennes*.[23] Divorce is permitted—*but* every woman over twenty-one and every man over twenty-six is obliged to marry. If a woman should refuse to marry, or if it is proved that she is adopting her husband's political views, she will lose all her rights as a female citizen, rights which she otherwise enjoys without restriction from the age of fifteen. In a Vesuvian marriage"...the spouses are partners, united by interest and feelings. Neither one is allowed to dominate." Both marriage partners are to be gainfully employed; housework is shared. If the husband refuses to do housework, he must then serve in his wife's place in the Civil Guard as well as his own in the National Guard. It is a program of equality consistent to the last degree: even sex-related clothing was gradually to disappear.

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In the face of such goals, it is no wonder that the *Vésuviennes* were the favorite butt of satirical attacks. While Daumier's "Divorce Rightists" series did not appear until August 1848, *Charivari* had already been printing the twenty-plate series *Les Vésuviennes* by E. de Beaumont since the first of May. Beaumont pictured the *Vésuviennes* almost exclusively as capricious young girls, as ballet pupils upon the drill field, their rifles held, as if by accident, in delicate hands.

The relationship between the *Vésuviennes* and other women's organizations was probably strained due to methods rather than goals. Except for a few stones thrown through the *Charivari* windows, the socialist women rejected violence as a political instrument.

The "Socialist Women"

After the June (1848) insurrection, all political activities, above all the organization of clubs, were forbidden to women. The *Voix des femmes* had to cease publication. These measures were based on a decree by the *Assemblée*, which was initially worded: "Women and minors may not be members of a club nor attend club meetings." After protests against the defamatory way in which women and minors were put in the same category, minors were eliminated from the decree, but the ban against women remained.[24]

As a consequence, women turned to political banquets (*bankettes*), which because of their inflammatory nature, partially replaced the clubs. At the beginning of 1849 Proudhon protested against the participation of women in a banquet presided over by Pierre Leroux. Daumier referred to this on January 25, 1849, in *Charivari*. A woman in one of his caricatures complains, "And Proudhon does not want us to go to socialist banquets...the unfortunate man has never been in love...otherwise he would realize that a woman graces any occasion by her very presence!" [25]

The conspiracy against husbands, the resistance to obedience and the neglect of the home are once again presented as the chief goals of Daumier's *Femmes Socialistes*.[26] In this series, however, he also addresses himself for the first time to contemporary events: the closing of the clubs, the banquets, and the election campaign of Jeanne Deroin, who had intended to capitalize on the fact that there was no law which made women ineligible for public office. At the meetings of the Democrat-Socialists she took the floor and demanded that she be nominated, explaining, "They are Democrat-Socialists, they desire the end of exploitation of one man by another and of women by men, they want a complete and radical abolition of all privileges of sex, race, birth, class and property.... It is in the name of these principles that I present myself as a candidate for the legislative assembly and request the support of the party...." [27]

As a political candidate she went directly to the voters of the Seine district: "A legislative assembly which is made up only of men is just as incapable of making laws to govern a society of men and women as an assembly of privileged persons would be to decide on the interests of the workers, just as an assembly of capitalists would be incapable of upholding the honor of the fatherland." When the Democrat-Socialists tried to prevent her from speaking at a meeting, she took the floor anyway and asked what had happened to the principles of those "...who demand the abolition of 'privilege' but still try to keep that privilege which they hold in common with the privileged, that privilege which is the source of all privilege and of all social injustice: the domination of man over woman?" Although she was finally suggested as a candidate for the Democrat-Socialists, Deroin received only a few votes.

George Sand was also suggested and rejected as a candidate. Again she demonstrated that she did not think of herself as a woman, for she disapproved of both active and passive suffrage for members of her own sex. In Sand's view women were political minors, incapable of making decisions because of their fundamental disenfranchisement. The women's movement could only cause promiscuity and put the home in danger. Only in the distant future, under changed social conditions, would women be able to participate in politics and share in the decision-making process.

On the subject of Deroin's candidacy, Proudhon again spoke out, in the journal *Le Peuple*, taking a strong position against women's emancipation: "What woman must free herself from is not man. In our modern society there is little progress to be made in this respect. As with the proletariat, it is capitalist despotism which tyrannizes her heart and throws her into the milieu of the workshop where slowly her morale and her body are destroyed."

And Jeanne Deroin replied in her paper, *L'Opinion des femmes*: "Pardon me, Monsieur, women *are* trying to free themselves from men.... it is not so much a question of getting women out of the workshop as a need to change the workshop itself and to ennoble it both for women and for the proletarian worker, since it is the source of work and independence." [28]

1. Cf. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Knopf, 1953); Léon Abensour, *Histoire Générale du Féminisme* (Paris, 1921); Clara Zetkin, *Zur Geschichte der proletarischen Frauenbewegung Deutschlands* (Berlin, DDR, 1958); Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden from History* (London, 1973).
2. Quoted from Daniel Stern, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848* (Paris, 1878), II, pp. 378-379. Cf. also d'Agoult (Daniel Stern), *Mémoires 1833-1854* (Paris, 1877).
3. Cf. *Gazette des femmes*, no. 53, 10. 10. 1846.
4. Cf. Edith Thomas, *Les femmes en 1848* (Paris, 1948), pp. 7ff.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
6. For the following cf. Zetkin, pp. 161ff. and Thomas, pp. 18ff.
7. Thomas, p. 29.
8. Brockhaus, *Kl.* [*eines*] *Konversationslex.* [*ikon*] (Leipzig, 1886).
9. *Charivari*, 6. 30. 1839; [Loys] Delteil, [*Honoré Daumier*, 10 vols. (Paris, 1925-1930)], no. 629.
10. Cf. G. Sand, *Gefahrten von der Frankreichwanderschaft* [*Compagnon du tour de France*] (Berlin, DDR, 1954), with an afterword by Rita Schober; Edith Thomas, *George Sand* (Paris, 1959); Jean Larnac, *G.*[*eorge*] *S.*[*and*] *als Revolutionarin* [*George Sand as a Revolutionary*].
11. *Charivari*, 1. 30. 1844. Delteil, nos. 1221-1260.
12. *Voix* [*des femmes*], 4. 20. 1848.
13. The successor to the paper *Politique des femmes*.
14. There were countless other journals for women, but often only a few issues appeared because of the special difficulties involved (financing, organization, marketing and distribution, quality).
15. She was editor from 1833 to 1834 in Lyon of the pro-Fourier *Conseiller des femmes*.
16. Stern, II, p. 161.
17. *Voix des femmes*, 3. 2. 1848.
18. Edith Thomas, *Pauline Roland* (Paris, 1956), p. 127.
19. *Voix des femmes*, 4. 20. 1848.
20. Thomas, *Les femmes en 1848*, pp. 71ff.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
22. *Charivari*, 4. 2. 1848.
23. Thomas, *Les femmes en 1848*, pp. 59-60.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 57ff.
25. Delteil, no. 1794.
26. Delteil, nos. 1916-1927.
27. Thomas, *Les femmes en 1848*, pp. 63ff. on the candidacy of Deroin.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

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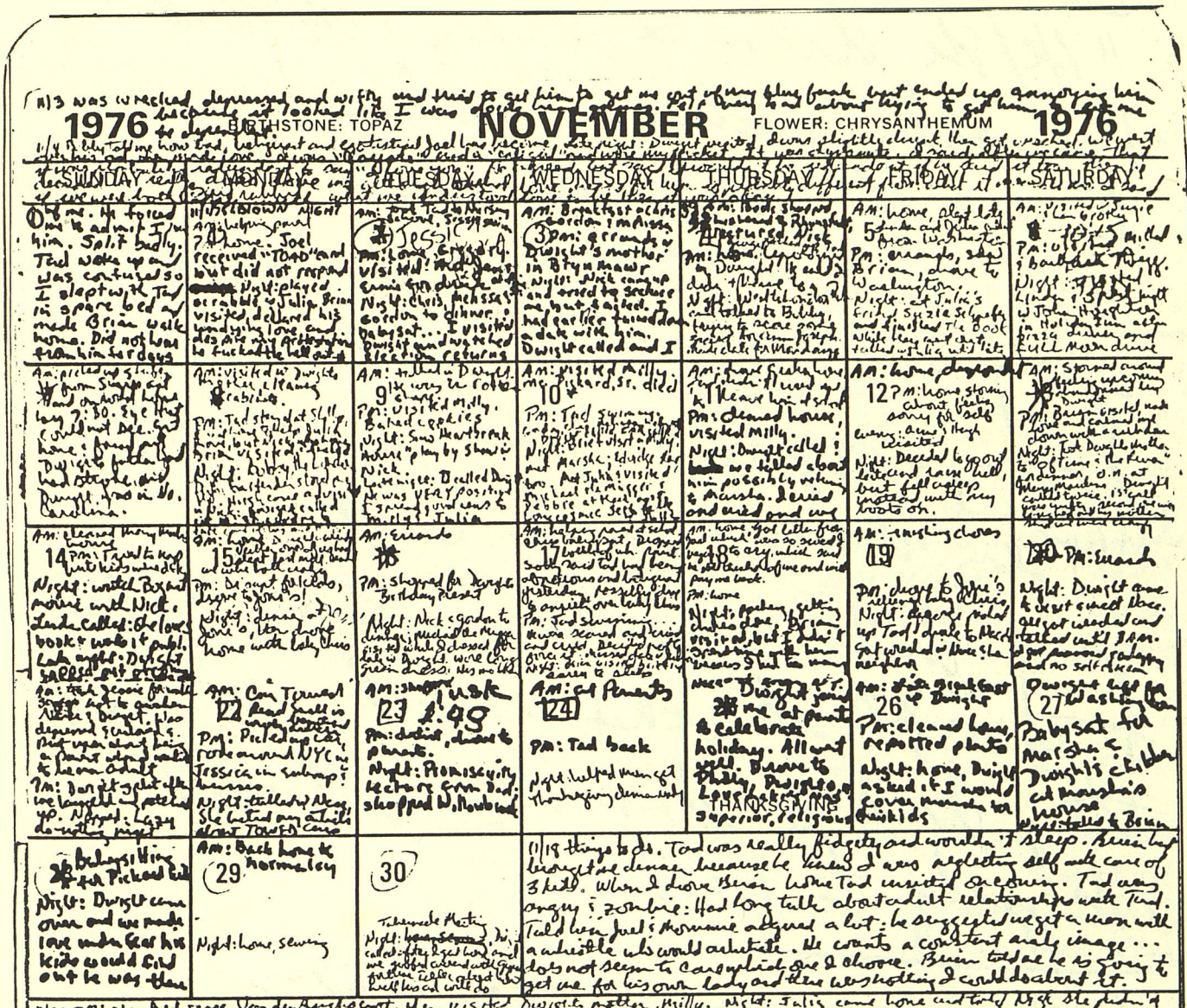
Twenty-Seven Personal Records

Edited By
Stephanie Brody Lederman
Theodora Skipitares
Amy Brook Snider

We feel that the following pages speak for themselves.

Journal entries are included in Section I, drawing and project ideas in Section II and completed works that contain personal writing in Section III.

Section 1.



Good order is the foundation of all good things.

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no one validated any feelings I had as a child — so I doubted my own ~~thoughts~~ + doubted others — "He/She doesn't really feel that" (secretly watching for feeling/wanting to see it) the most intense was after being "FUCKED" by that guy + looking out window at boys couple + feeling so strange "they don't feel that" so I did + believe others felt + thought it was murky when they did + didn't allow myself to feel.

(Then so many people talk about "feelings these days" + I don't trust that either.

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the movement, shapes and surfaces and especially what happens to the light. By surprise I found some footage of deep blue with white sparkles on it that looks like stars for the very end. I am extremely exhausted but very high.

2·16 early am

Spent the whole day doing the books. figured out expenses/month leaving me $3.00 a day to live on. With a $1360.00 debt on top of all — I am way down. or should be — But for the great exhuberance of having done "PORTRAITS" and "OUTER SPACE," and seeing Maya Deren's films for the first time... as I wrote to Kenneth tonight, she is my Merce Cunningham. She is the first filmmaker whose work sets a precedence for my own. Not so much in content but in intent. I am very excited!

2·16 a talk with Rick today about how the work of the artist takes on its own life, takes over the artists life so he or she simply becomes a good servant... I had written to Kenneth about being in the middle stretch of preparing for my piece when I was seized by anxiety and worry — the fear of performing, the fear it would be awful or too personal... and trying to process all that by reviewing what I'd learned from my teachers (Tina, the Lamas). I then had the clear experience of being a medium for the piece, of not being in possession of it. It was a moment of grace in which my confidence returned and stayed through to the end... It was a bit like a downhill run on a sled. In praise of vertigo —

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D. + I in bed. We've forgotten the diaphragm - left it on the bed in cold weather, we wonder where it is. Then I see it; it's blown against the window, covered by glass - as if it's caught between the window and the outer storm window. Exposure to the cold has turned it transparent, as if it's made of Saran Wrap. Also it's frozen, ice crystals clinging to it. It's hard, wedged in.

Briefly - important event and parallelisms. Yesterday read at Douglass - class on women artists. About 50 people, including Wanda, Andy, Ann Snitow, Elaine Showalter's class, etc. Had arranged about 20 poems in an order Candy later called order "brilliant" - began to sense a book - Then read his Journal. ~~Offended~~

83 4

~~Beg~~ I felt good, reading - later people said good things (Ann Snitow - the work is so rich" - what I want). Showed V. W. film - talked with group - later Mando, poet from Greece read. Question to me, and she joined in, about being an artist. Talked about what I care about - loneliness, isolation, support, self vs. rhetoric, money, personal attempt to link up to public. It felt SO GOOD. I was saying things I had earned the right to say - things I could only say because I'm living them. and I was accepted - no, more than accepted, embraced - as an artist, a poet. later, a woman asked ~~to~~ if she could tape me - for an oral history project on women artists. And many other people invited me to come again, how could they obtain my work, etc. AND ALL BECAUSE I DID IT -

35 5

A secret admiration, jealousy - needless.

Oh my god - please have me!

I'm tired of the smell of shit - Tampax shit, cat shit - all the shit. It's chilly, grey + overcast today - like me, like my heart - we are both huddled up, I, my self in me with layers of clothes to keep warm - we have no warmth to give each other. I think I would like a storm - then I could cry -

I want to lie on the beach - have the tide come up + wash me out to sea - I am just dried up - like an old log - a fish bone - now. I just want to dissolve + go with the tide, I want, I want, I want ——

Familiar dreams last night - one I often have - being in the halls at high school - I can't remember which locker is mine - the number in the combination -

6

11

his body was shapeless, with endless thighs and brutal hands. His arms were [illegible] and his penis [illegible] in case from being



Jacob Riley's eyes dec. 13

like a parrot all day his head was blocky, thick bones made a fortress of his forehead + his eyes were a liquid pure blue, they were oblong and oval at the same time . .

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7

but there is some guilt attached to it - as though I should not have access to such thoughts.

Forgot to mention one aspect of conversation with Theodora ... When I told her how I felt about journal she said she thought individuals should have the option to read from their journals every few weeks at the beginning of a meeting - I said I felt that the reading would lose its impact as a statement or expression of interiority if it stood by itself, plus I didn't know if that would be enough motivation for me to continue writing - I seemed to ~~feel~~ need to know that a group is involved in some work for me to participate. Reminds me of my old piano lesson problem - * I took lessons - every one outside playing punch ball - I quit so I could join them - Everyone inside practicing piano, I quit. Couldn't keep up with shifting public opinion.

PROBLEM: fear of being engaged in some solitary activity - being left out.

8

Dec 14,

Went to a lecture discussion, debate last night between Mimi Shapiro & Lawrence Alloway. I was late - so I missed a lot of it - Mimi Shapiro showed Widow Tongues a slide. I am really pleased about that.

But also after Harmony Hammond spoke to me about the correlation between being Sicilian - American & being a widow - Boy it really hit me this morning - Growing up with all those women who wore black all the time & whose lives were over because they were widows. Young women also - not only the old ones - Their faces were like sad puppies - beaten & old before their time - all in black - hair pulled back - lonely - with only children to keep them company. What a fear as a young girl to think you might become like that.

9

10/10

web ↔ support (scientific validity)

interlacing - network - mesh - web, gauze, gauze

weaving - entwining

found the ghost in old notes & thing about my quick mental note not to think of myself as doing 'gods' at the hearing of show —

.....pressures to make effort to have stuff

seen — represent - plot slides

see - communicate

involves what?

does one ever feel ready?

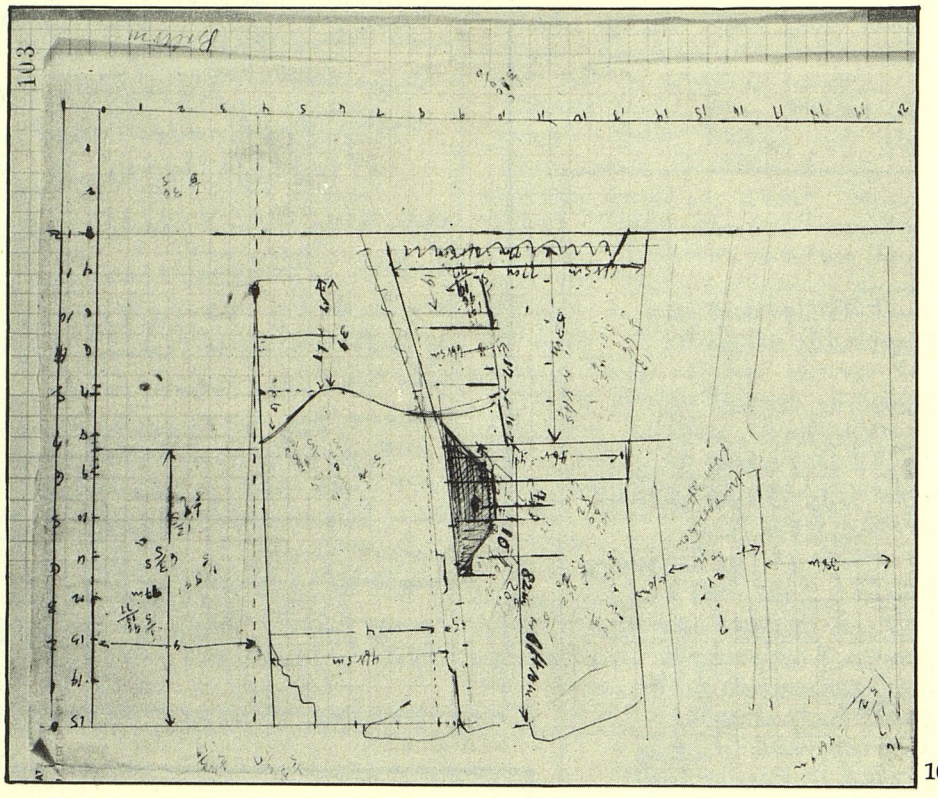
something lacking in long ladder that don't have to deal with in small [stuff] at womens center — showing as a group is important step for us as (group unit) + as indiv.'s — essential for group growth support strength

10/12

I feel good about us showing together — not shifted around in physical space where show is to be held but us together in a given area within show — + hopefulness about our dealing w/ work but feel confusion about our dealing w/ personal or just me?

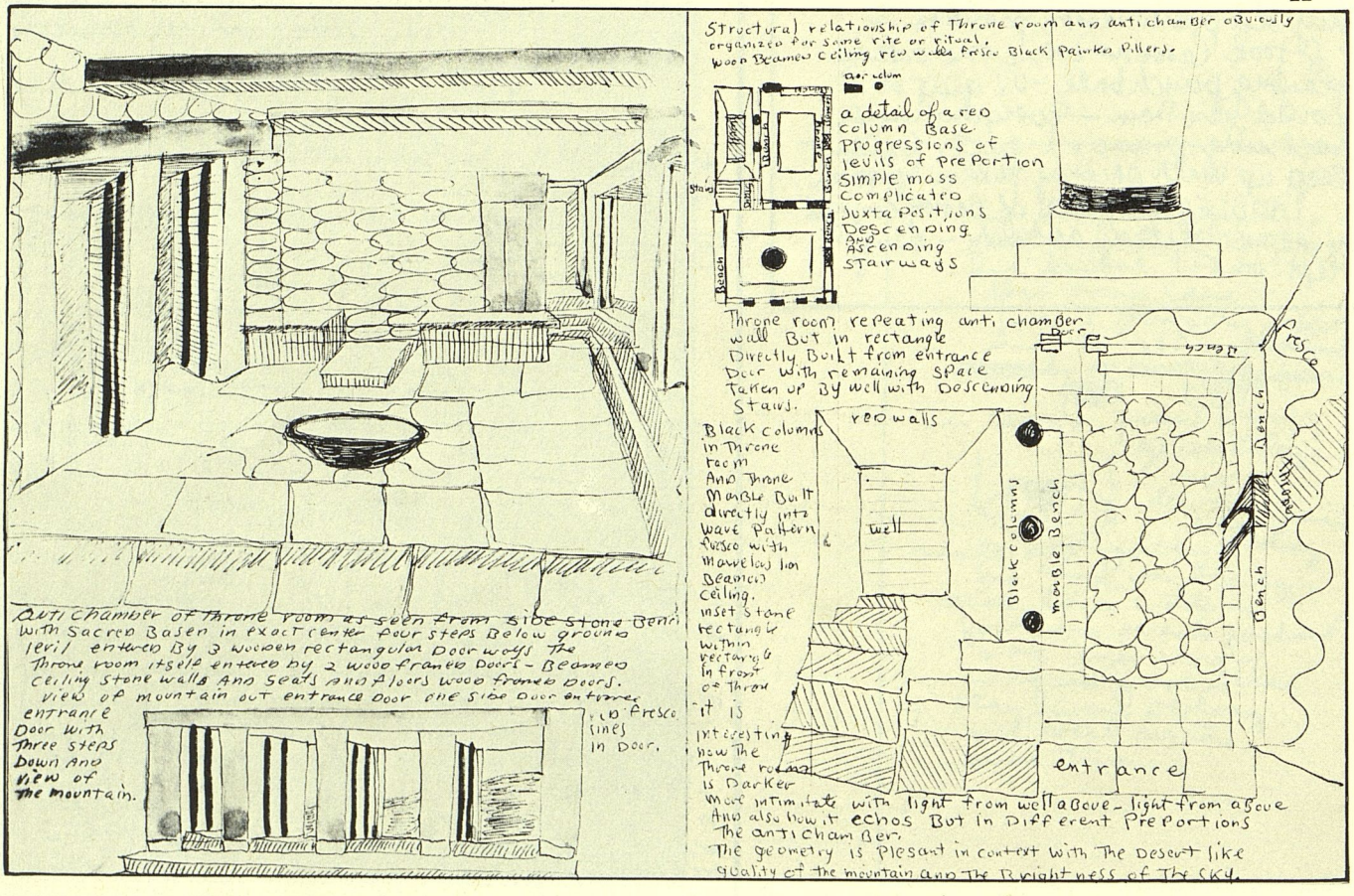
10/13 - felt more than a bit crazy + upset after last week — many of my feelings are not new + in past I have always

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10

11



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56-7 all through with any per life not ordinary mortals -

61 Divorce ?

64 He loved your mother.

65 after she left us ... always a love their that I can't get over.

72 What caused mom to fall "high Bebby in Science

75 Healing ? 1st N.B. in living room - Jesus came in thru window. Told Dad. Dad distrust. His distrust caused her relapse.

85 I didn't Blame either Dad or Mom

86 ... They had come to a parting of the ways - mystical + in flesh

★ 98 ... Dad is a very light sleeper why didn't he wake up - suicide

108 separate beds.

113 Styles - beds

1189 Never left a note

★ 121 ... kill yourself and be right mentally ...

128 worry about interesting it

★ 136 sleep - she couldn't sleep.

141 Schock treatments

142 I don't think we can understand."

146 Gram I think mom is still alive. Your mother would be proud of you - no - your mother is proud of you" mom is looking down on us.

153 "It's a real mystery to me how she could have done it"
No conception of what the mind can do.

157 light hearted, full of pep woman

159 No question in my mind she was suffering.

160 memory of 1st upset in 66 ↓ play room in Dark

163 "Gram, Gram what is the matter with me ?"

167 What could you say to that ?

168 Oh you'll be all right now, just quiet down.

173 How she slipped in and out of it. Flashes in and out

179 wouldn't talk to the psychiatrist

180 Christian science preacher came.

186 turning hair out - over and over.
No calm, couldn't talk to her

12

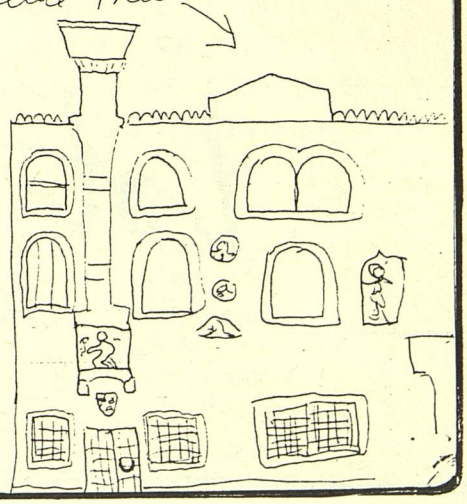
anyone could play anything. On all of us play dictators, children, orphans et-

At one point - maybe the orphans come to visit the child.

Is Quarry about childhood fear ? But the fear that remains in adulthood but is not acknowledged is put away. is hidden. The end - Healing ritual is the important statement. Think of how we celebrated + acknowledged Hiroshima at Goddard. That was important as a means. The sadness of the world. The world crying

The dictator having his nightly meal. And nightly listening to Wagner with his coterie at that time. The Nuzzred being the one point of reality.

For Venice/Milan
Here I'm sitting at the Ponte di Trodasso. The building to my right looks like this



13

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A PILLOW ... !

FOR DREAMING

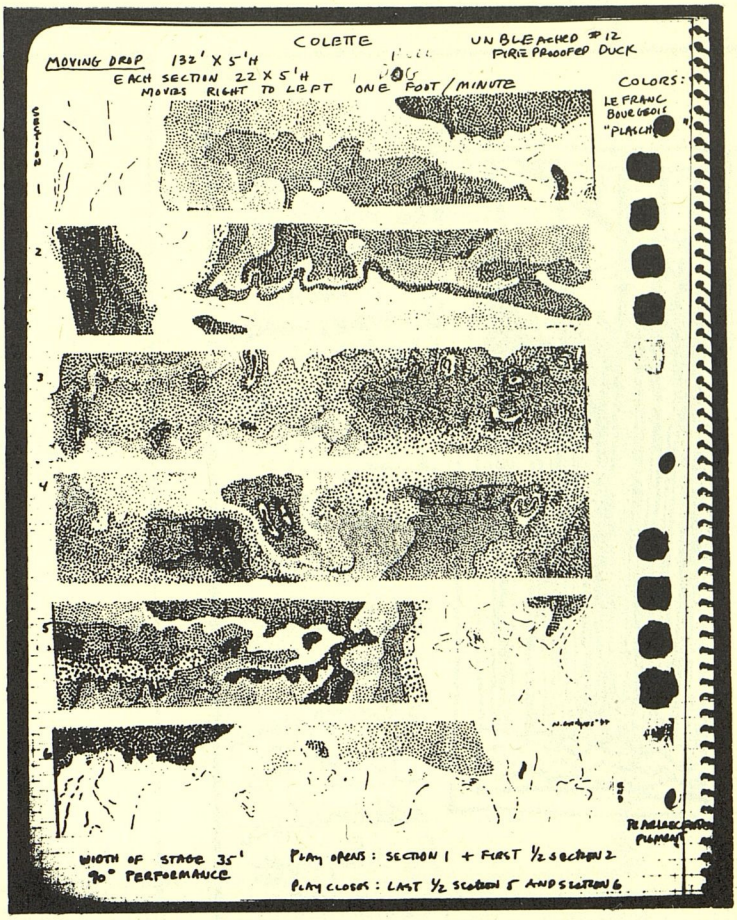


Lots of Tendrils

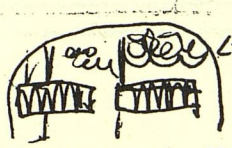
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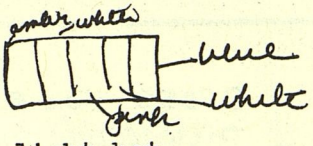
14

15



16


silver curtain



SIDO

like Black curtain opens. ~~Hole.~~ Pink stripe. Pink light hot. Ellen and Ruth back into hole. Lit shoes ~~seen~~ and legs visible. Very slow dance. J. follows Ellen. Stops at edge of blue stripe. When E. And R. are at the edge of the hole. J. says:

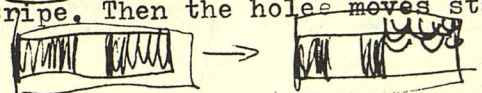
Fleuris's mare

WHEN YOU CAME INTO THE WORLD, I SUFFERED FOR #HREE DAYS AND TWO NIGHTS. WHEN I WAS CARRYING YOU, I WAS AS BIG AS ~~A HOUSE~~ Madame ~~&~~. THREE DAYS SEEMS A LONG TIME. ~~THE~~ ~~BEASTS~~ Animals Beasts PUT US TO SHAME, WE WOMEN WHO CAN NO LONGER BEAR OUR CHILDREN JOYFULLY. BUT I'VE NEVER REGRETTED MY SUFFERING, THEY SAY THAT CHILDREN LIKE YOU CARRIED SO HIGH WHO TAKE SO LONG TO REACH THE LIGHT OF DAY, ARE ALWAYS THE MOST BELOVED BECAUSE THEY ~~WANTED~~HAVE LAIN SO NEAR TO THEIR MOTHER'S HEART AND WERE SO UNWILLING TO LEAVE HER.


in dress

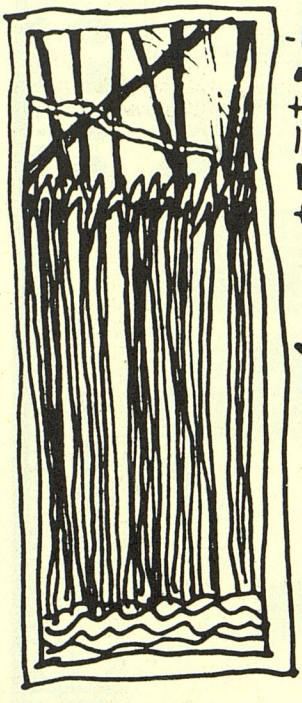
doing the investigative mirror dance in the hole. They are wearing old-fashioned underwear

Ellen and R. are ~~in the hole.~~ ~~Stage~~ left side of each curtain moves until it forms a two foot stripe. Then the hole ~~moves~~ stage ~~left~~ right to the white stripe.



Ellen and Ruth continue dance while curtain moves. David hums Copin Polainnaisse. When black curtain moves, David and Bill are revealed. David ~~sees~~ under the silver curtain turns on blue lamp. (over)

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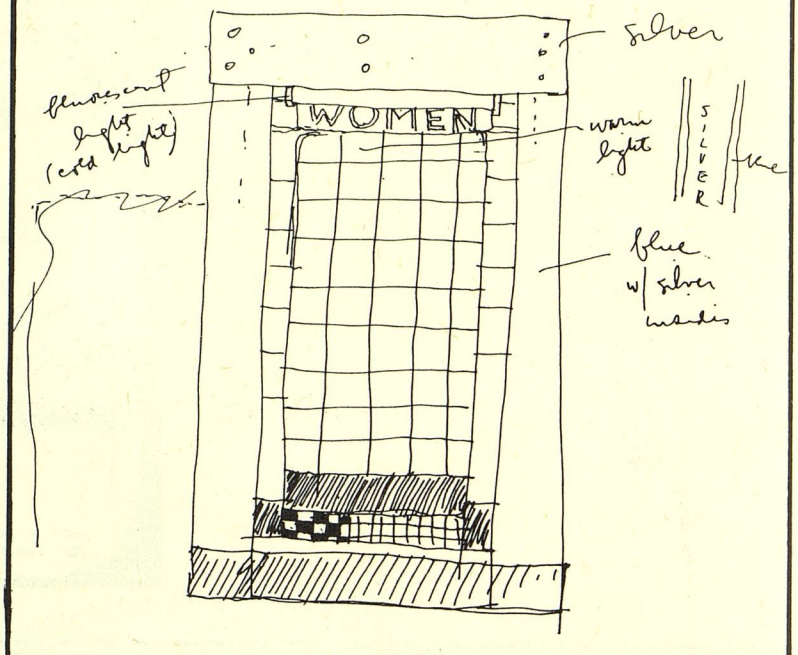


-burnt sienna add blue (cerulean) to borders of leaves - behind branches - water + border - & leaves across

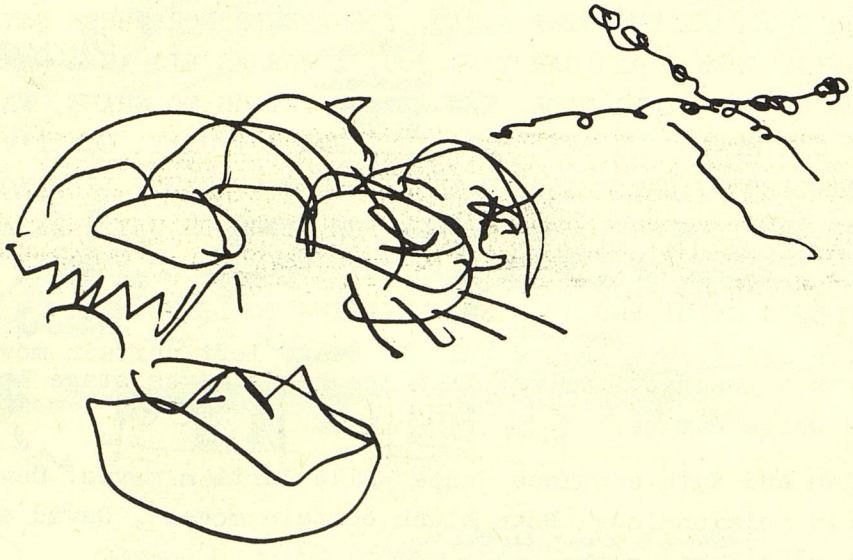
for black leaves + water + lighter branches - add crimson to whites add cerulean to sky area

NOV. 7-'75

up. again? Should I have kept it more strictly subway?



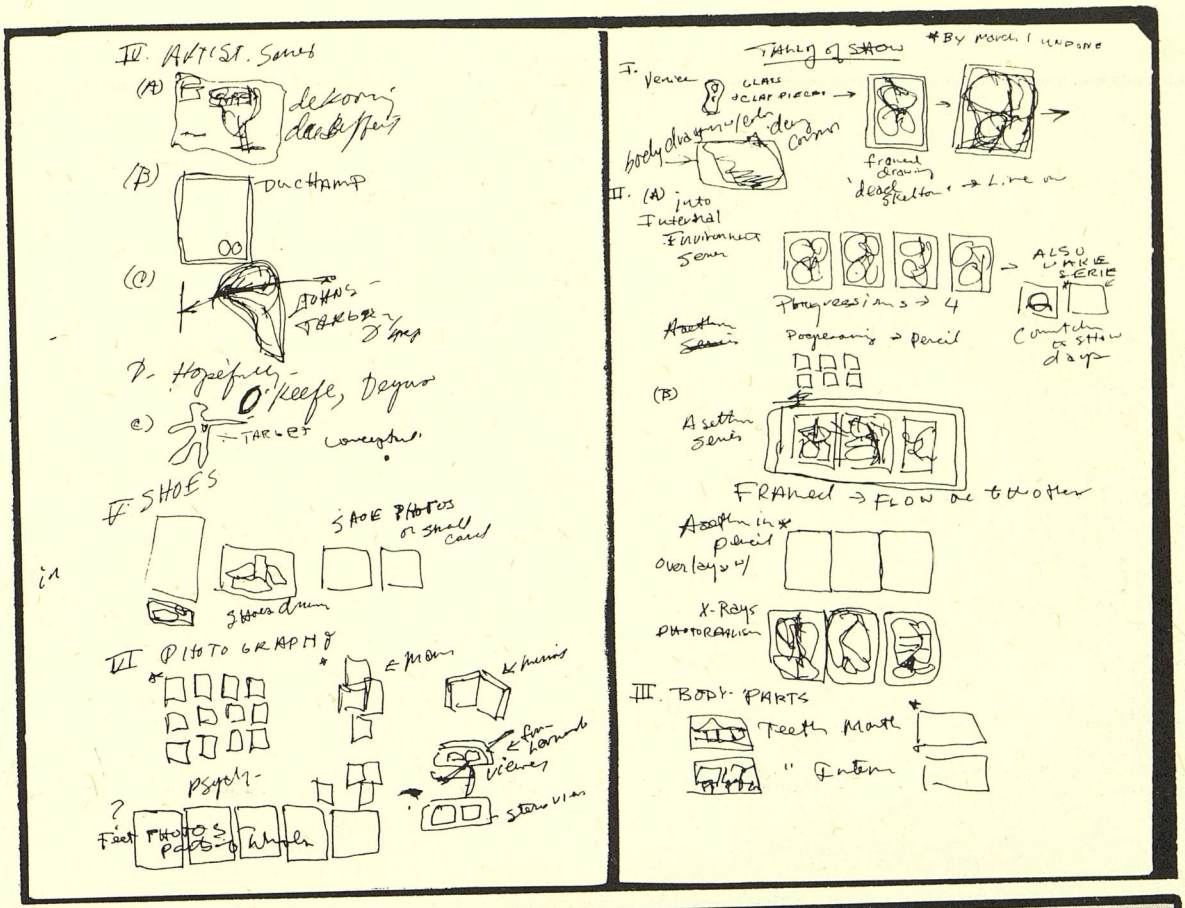
CROSS YOUR EYES.
THEY WILL FIND THEIR
OWN VISION IN THE
PARALLEL LOOKING
AT WHAT YOU DO.



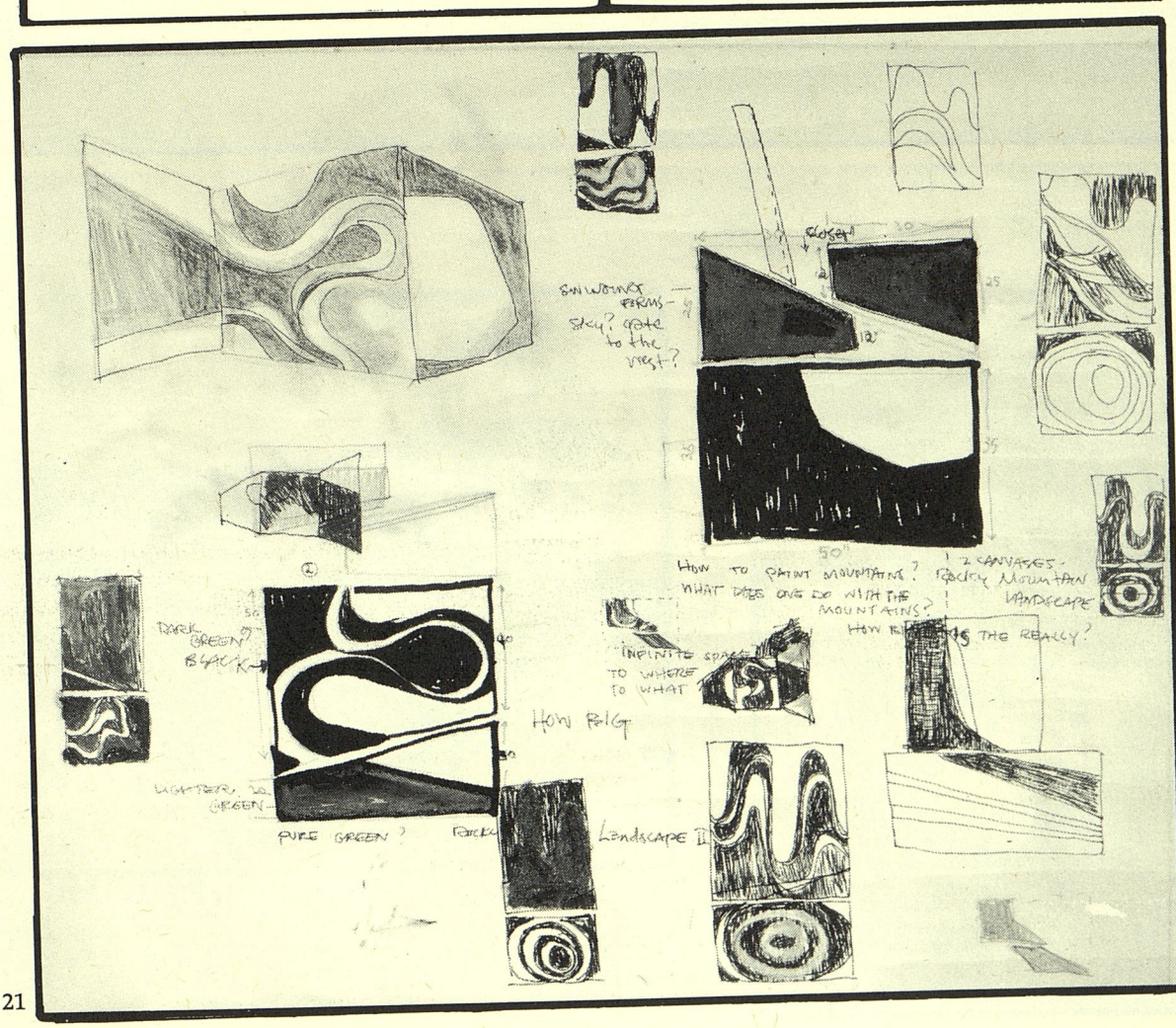
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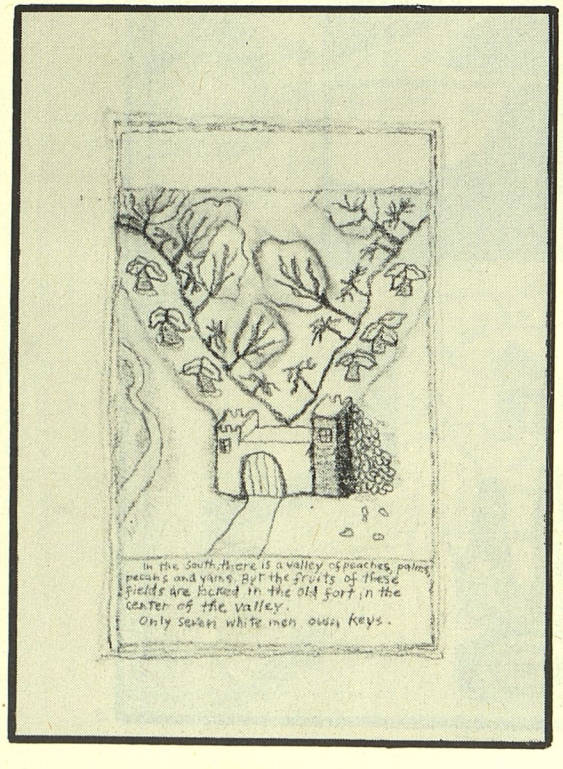
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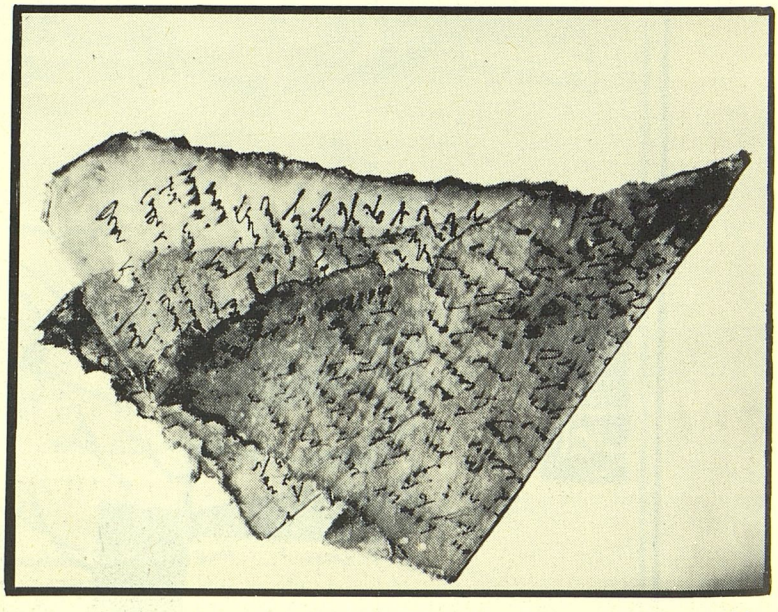
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22

my name is Patricia Lasch
my father's name is Fred Lasch
my mother's name is Helen Richter Lasch
my father's father's name is Fredrick Lasch
my father's mother's name is Wilhelmina Gutjahr Lasch
my mother's father's name is George Richter
my mother's mother's name is Anna Reilly Richter
my father's mother's father's name is Jacob Gutjahr
my father's mother's mother's name is Wilhelmina Berger Gutjahr
my mother's father's father's name is John Richter

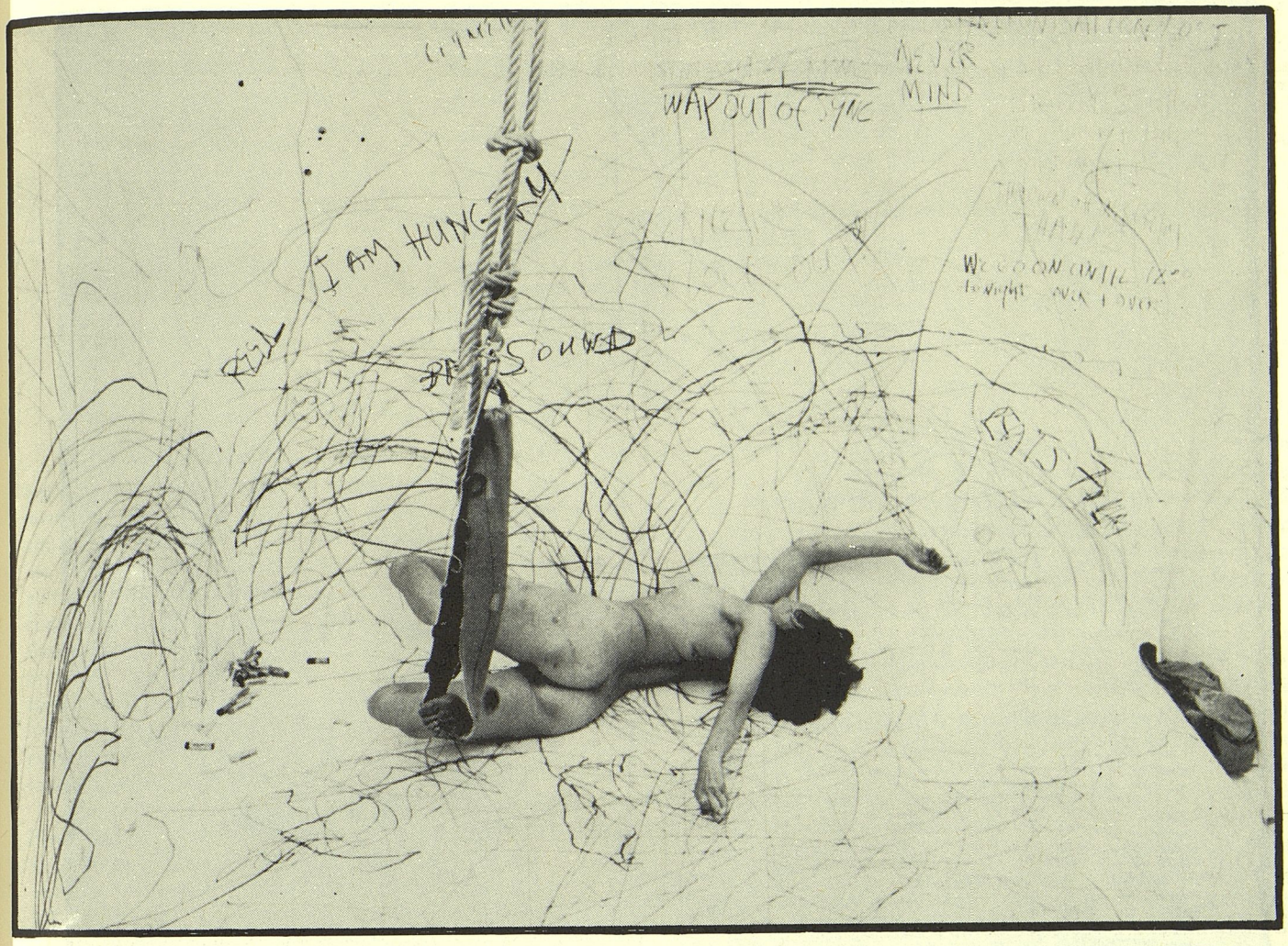


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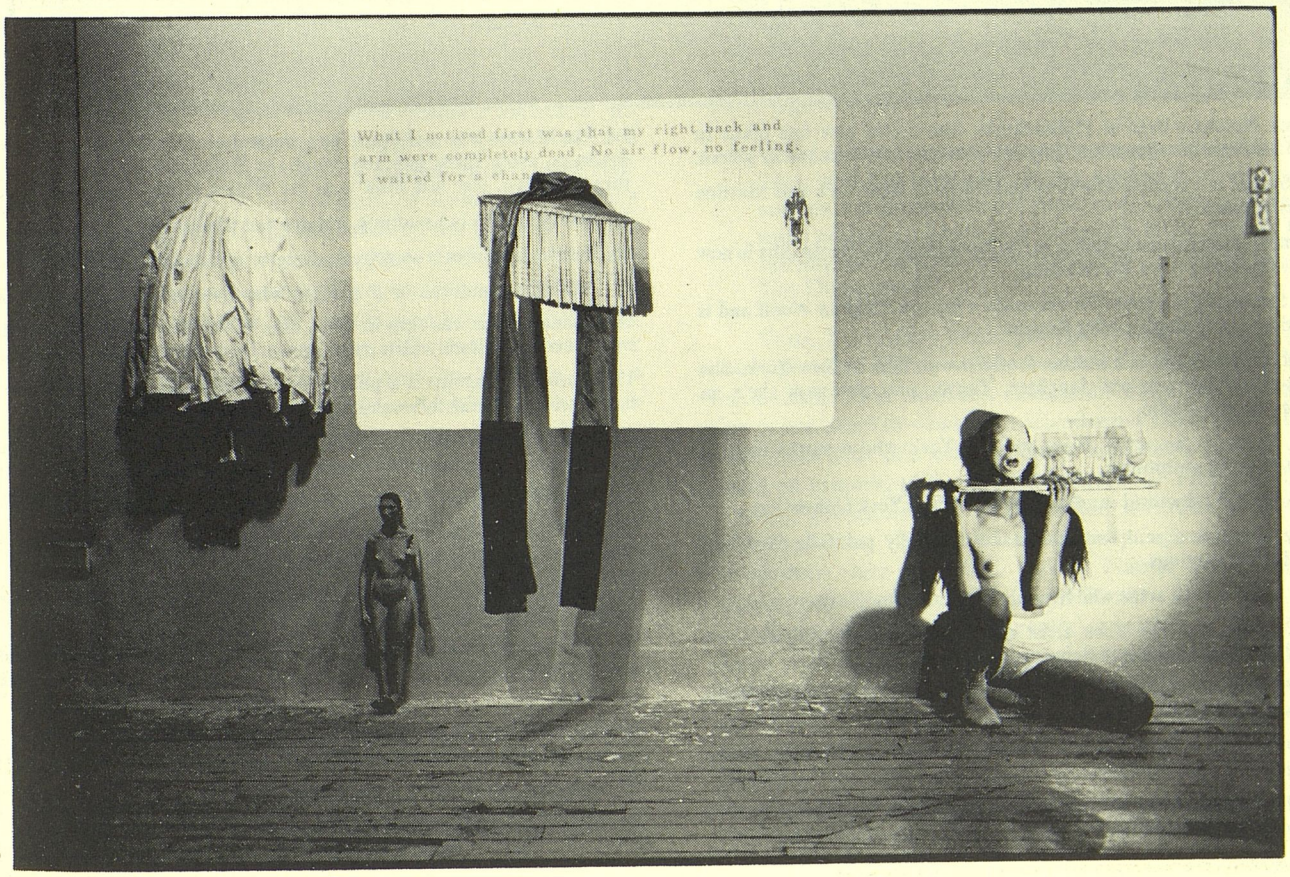


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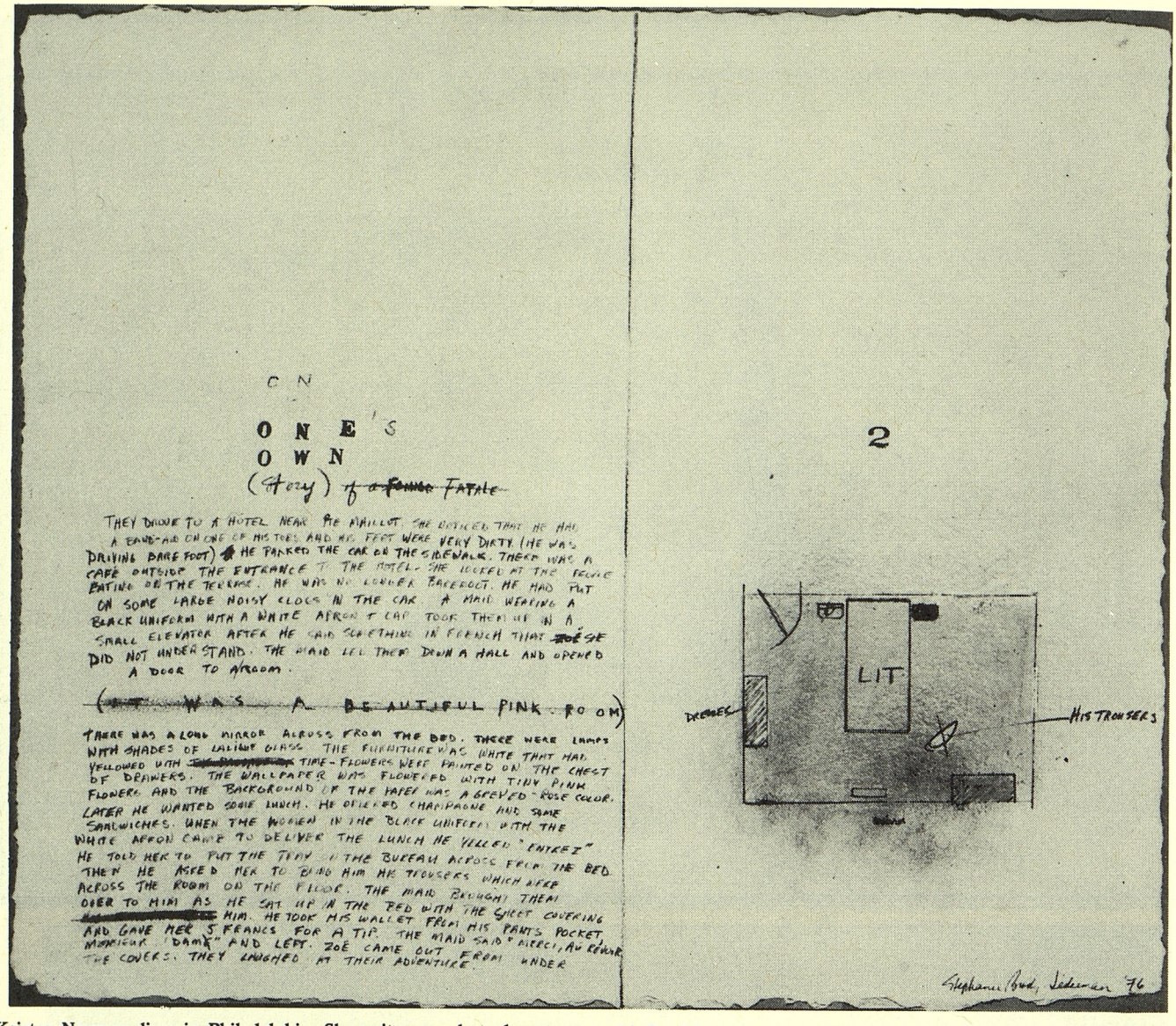


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1. Kristen Newman lives in Philadelphia. She writes now but plans to return to a career in science and physics when her children are in school.

2. Joan Snyder is a painter who lives and works in New York and Martins Creek, Pennsylvania.

3. Robyn Brentano was a member of the Byrd Hoffman Byrds. She is now a dancer who makes films about dance.

4. Janet Sternburg is a poet who has made a film on Virginia Woolf and is co-authoring a play about Louise Bogan.

5. Harmony Hammond is a lesbian feminist who lives in New York. She has a six-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Tanya, who also says she's an artist. They share a studio.

6. Paula Tavins is an artist living in New York whose works include painting and small sculptures.

7. Amy Snider is a doctoral candidate in art at New York University.

8. Nancy Azara is a sculptor who makes partially painted, oiled and assembled wood carvings.

9. Sarah Draney is an artist who lives and works in New York.

10. Reeva Potoff is a New York artist who is presently showing at Louis Meisel Gallery and teaching at Bennington College.

11. Ann Wilson was one of the original Coenties Slip group in the 1950s and is now working in multimedia.

12. Elizabeth Le Compte is a performer, director and member of the Performance Group of New York.

13. Meredith Monk is a performer, dancer and singer. Her company, The House, works in New York.

14. Ree Morton was a sculptor who worked environmentally, indoors and outdoors, wrote, drew, lectured, taught at Philadelphia College of Art, had three children. Her last show is at the Walter Kelley Gallery in Chicago.

15. Nancy Graves is a sculptor, painter and filmmaker.

16. Joanne Akalaites is an actress, director and member of Mabou Mines.

17. Michelle Amateau is a painter who lives and works in Boulder.

18. Donna Dennis was born in Ohio, lives in New York, and makes painted wooden constructions which stand on the floor and resemble architecture.

19. Rosemarie Castoro is a painter and sculptor living in New York. She has received several fellowships, shows and also writes.

20. Susan Stoltz is from Marinette, Wisconsin. She is currently completing her Masters degree in studio art at New York University.

21. Phoebe Helman is a sculptor who lives and works in New York.

22. Pat Lasch is an artist living in New York whose work is concerned with family and geneological relationships.

23. Jenny Snider is an artist who lives in New York and works in several media—painting, film and writing.

24. Mira Shor is a New York painter currently teaching at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Her paintings are made as a day-by-day record of her life.

25. Carolee Schneemann, the first painter to choreograph environmental theater (for the Judson Dance Theater), created Kinetic Theater in 1962.

26. Theodora Skipitares is a performance artist in New York.

27. Stephanie Brody Lederman draws and tells stories on paper.

(photos: eeva-inkeri, 10, 11, 15; Jeff Way, 14, 17, 19.)

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WOMEN AND ANARCHY
LIZZIE BORDEN

They say that at the point they have reached they must examine the principle that has guided them. They say it is not for them to exhaust their strength in symbols. They say henceforward what they are is not subject to compromise. They say they must now stop exalting the vulva. They say they must break the last bond that binds them to a dead culture.—Monique Wittig, **Les Guérillères**

In the past decade, women have worked together, met together, and talked together in ways that have been considered novel, emerging from and at the same time creating a new attitude about group organization which proposes only egalitarian, non-hierarchical relationships. The methods used in support/collaboration (such as consciousness raising) and the kind of group created have seemed unique. However, this attitude and these methods have been generally restricted to the small group, while the dominant form of mass organization among middle-class women has been conventionally reformist, aimed at changing legislation, working for the ERA and so forth. This kind of political work relies on organizing methods historically unrelated to significant social change.

Many women who were in radical politics in the late 1960s have fallen back on working methods that can have immediate, tangible effect. This is a recurrent problem for the left: should it work for immediate reforms, setting the stage for greater ones? Will reform (or opportunism, according to some) eventually produce a consciousness sufficiently advanced to change the social structure? The women's suffrage movements in England and America were also divided on this issue. Some saw the vote as leading to further reforms for women, while others saw it as leading to socialism. Today, reformist politics tactically involved with a more or less accepted social structure are at odds with attempts by radical feminists to rethink society and relationships within society. In the criticism of power, bureaucracy and institutional rigidity, in the emphasis on the personal, on the family (whatever its form), on education, child care and sex —feminists have proved, consciously or not, to be anarchists.

The anarchist premise of radical feminism is that only through collectivity and equality can individuality, autonomy and independence be achieved. Individuality, in this sense, means something like "personal and interpersonal realization." This is "therapeutic" only when the group helps women "survive" within the system, when the group becomes estheticized or escapist and class analysis doesn't provide a basis for further organization. Anarchist egalitarianism in women's groups has been based not only on political, but on ethical or moral grounds which presume that women should behave in a certain way—openly, honestly, with integrity. Women, by requiring this of each other, sometimes create a feeling of moral superiority over men who, by implication, and often in fact, are not honest among themselves, or "in touch with their feelings."

Historically, ethical and egalitarian relationships among women did not result only from choice, as was the case with anarchists, but from material conditions excluding women from full participation in production and power—and thus from the hierarchies of production. Whenever women began to work together, each contributing what she knew, there was relatively the same level of experience and skill—a necessary or "natural" equality, which often made democracy intrinsic to organization. Because woman's domain was traditionally more personal, women's political activities tended to center around personal questions. (Sheila Rowbotham suggests that this focus is a *necessary* precondition for the mobilization of women en masse.[1]) But the moral imperative, when elicited as a response to oppression, often bogs down in the attempt to reconcile morality with revolutionary strategy. The impetus behind a moral position is more often rational than revolutionary; it is a call to reason, to the recognition of how things should be and the decision to make them that way. But the idea that change is effected only by reason and understanding can be utopian and/or reactionary, since recognition of class and economic contradictions alone cannot affect the power relationships behind these conflicts. On the other hand, the alliance of feminism with political ideologies that stress revolution, especially marxism-leninism, has often been destructive to the radical content of feminism. The real question is, then: how can the *content* of change be maintained within a confusion about form? What organizational form will work without sacrificing feminist content to political ideologies that maintain sexist social institutions?

> **"The law of evolution is that the strongest survives!"**
> **"Yes, and the strongest, in the existence of any social species, are those who are most social. In human terms, most ethical . . . There is no strength to be gained from hurting one another. Only weakness."**—Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

Thus, feminism's major problem—how to concretize ideas about personal liberty within a form of organization that is not hierarchical, that does not contradict individual freedom, and that is not utopian—has been anarchism's traditional dilemma as well. Anarchist and often feminist arguments tend to be predicated on a moral-philosophical belief in a "natural" social state without government or male-created institutions—a condition that would be "naturally" reinstated if government or male institutions were abolished; that is, Nature herself, or women, would produce a better social organism.

Some of the most influential anarchists—Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and later, Emma Goldman and Federica Montseny—provide the historical precedents for many aspects of women's groups. It must be kept in mind, however, that anarchists and feminists have often reached the same conclusions from different directions, which raises the question of intentionality. For example, William Godwin, husband of Mary Wollstonecraft and father of Mary Shelley, imagined the world

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structured around discussion groups with a purpose similar to consciousness raising. His ideal society, as described in *Political Justice* (1793) was based on "public inspection," "positive sincerity," and "political simplicity"—the foundation for the first two. This meant reorganization through federalism, nations broken down into small autonomous units. Psychological pressure would replace force, for people would have to be honest and virtuous in face-to-face confrontations. Small discussion groups would encourage the pursuit of knowledge, extending laterally to become a universal movement. Godwin's speculations, however, were based not in practice but in reaction against the retardation of the French Revolution by governmental authority.

The major impetus of consciousness raising has been Godwinian, centering around discussion and inquiry with trust, loyalty and honesty as criteria for respect. According to the Red Stockings, the purpose of consciousness raising was to "develop female class consciousness through sharing experience and publicly exposing the sexist foundations of all our institutions." While the call-to-arms was political, the methods were personal, based on the idea that the subjective experience of objective conditions can lead to objective analysis. "We regard our personal experience, and our feelings about that experience, as the basis for an analysis of our common situation. . . ." The notion of equality, as conceived by feminists, has had a double meaning: the struggle to be recognized as equal to men (the oppressors) and the struggle to maintain equality among women (so as not to oppress each other). "We are committed to achieving internal democracy. We will do whatever is necessary to ensure that every woman in our movement has an equal chance to participate, assume responsibility, and develop her political potential."[2] Methods like "going around the circle" have been used to prevent dominance—and to recognize that personality is an instrument of domination.

However, when consciousness raising fails to distinguish between sex and class consciousness and does not acknowledge middle- and working-class contradictions, it falls into liberalism —"a moralistically humanitarian and egalitarian philosophy of social improvement through the re-education of psychological attitudes."[3] From a marxist point of view, there can be no radical analysis if the critique of society rests upon change within the individual (or in self-help and education) rather than relations of production. While small-group interaction can extend laterally to become a mass *movement*, consciousness raising includes no strategy for mass *organization*. Consequently, while personal interaction can be helpful as a beginning—generating support, building up individuals' confidence—it remains idealistic if everything stops there.

> **". . . wasn't it Odo who said that where there's property there's theft?"**
> **"[She said] 'To make a thief, make an owner; to create crime, create laws.' The Social Organism."** —Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

Another strain of feminism is related to the theories of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, who carried anarchism into more concrete forms of organization. He wanted to rebuild society by creating a federation of communes and cooperatives based on "Mutual Aid," through contract and mutual credit, replacing "economic powers" with "economic forces." In his statement, "property is theft," Proudhon opposed the exploitative accumulation of capital but not property for use.

Some feminist organizations, such as health centers, credit unions and food co-ops, are Proudhonian in their reliance on mutual aid, on exchange of skills and services. While such groups can often radicalize a particular community, they restrict themselves to immediate need, affecting consumption rather than production, and they do not in themselves deal with the sources of production or help analyze the power of women in the labor force. This kind of cooperative activity is still linked to household activity, which is also about consumption, contrary to what the Wages for Housework women argue.

Cooperative organizations are Proudhonian in their hope that cooperation can extend laterally to change the economic and psychological bases of society. If the cooperative form is that of the extended family, if it is apolitical, and isolationist, like most communes, it simply avoids the realities of production. A commune is similar to a consciousness-raising group, it can radically change the individuals within it but it is imperialized, economically and socially, by external institutions, and can serve only as an example rather than as a political force.

> **The women say they have learned to rely on their own strength. They say they are aware of the force of their unity. They say, let those who call for a new language first learn violence. They say, let those who want to change the world first seize all the rifles. They say that they are starting from zero. They say that a new world is beginning.**—Monique Wittig, **Les Guérillères**

Mikhail Bakunin's influence—on both anarchists and women—seems to be emotional; his ideas are based in conventionally "female" modes: "revolution is instinct rather than thought, it operates as an instinct, and as an instinct gives first battle."[4] Unlike Proudhon, he did not think institutions could be rebuilt; they were to be demolished in a revolution that would culminate in the construction of a world where everyone would be free and equal. Bakunin was the only influential anarchist to make a constant litany of violence, and his statement, "the passion for destruction is a creative passion," became a romantic battle cry.

American middle-class feminist activism has usually not included physical violence, although from the time of the temperance societies and the suffragettes there have been bloodless demonstrations and guerrilla actions—women chaining themselves to benches and fences, hunger strikes, bar smashing, window breaking. In England, upper- and middle-class guerrilla actions were more violent than those of working-class women because poor wage-earners could not risk jail. For middle-class feminists, prison brought class conflict into the public eye; upper-class women were given privileges, while bourgeois women were treated miserably. They often left jail determined to work for prison reform.[5] Contemporary feminists who have advocated violence and terrorism (such as the Weatherwomen and Susan Saxe) often operate in the Bakuninist spirit of acts that seem to be political theater rather than effective strategies, even though these women are not professed anarchists. Being forced underground, however, away from usefulness in organization, has fostered greater impotence. It is ironic that the legal defense of some of these fugitives, once they have been caught, has become an organizational focus. Jane Alpert's surrender was an exception, because it appeared that she collaborated with the government in locating and arresting her friend Pat Swinton. To be jailed for being in contempt of grand juries, for refusing to turn state's evidence, has at times been seen as a high honor, serving to focus class and sex contradictions better than the original bank robberies or bombings.

> **Decentralization had been an essential element in Odo's plans for the society she did not live to see founded. She had no intention of trying to de-urbanize civilization. Though she suggested that the natural limit to the size of a community lay in its dependence on its own immedi-**

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Emma Goldman.



Clara Zetkin.



Alexandra Kollantai.

ate region for essential food and power, she intended that all communities be connected by communication and transportation networks, so that goods and ideas could get where they were wanted, and the administration of things might work with speed and ease, and no community be cut off from change and interchange.—Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

Pëtr Kropotkin may have set the most useful anarchist precedent. Many strands of feminism stem from his thought—from anthropologists and historians attempting to rewrite the history of women by material analysis of sexism in production in early societies, to socialists who have practically rejected marxist-leninist authoritarianism but still base their economic analyses on those theories. Both Emma Goldman and Federica Montseny were strongly influenced by Kropotkin's ideas, especially by his attempt to place anarchism on a scientific and evolutionary rather than moral ground. All three advocated a communism that went beyond collectives and mutualism, which Kropotkin saw as reflections of "mitigated individualism." He argued that communist possession of land and individualist production were too contradictory to survive, that the wage system should be abolished, that common possession of the means of production implied equal consumption, that people should be provided for according to their needs rather than the amount of labor they performed. Dismissing any technical necessity for large-scale industrialization, Kropotkin argued that the tendency of industry was toward decentralization. But small scale was also important for the same reason it was for Godwin and for today's feminists —for its reliance on trust and honesty in making and keeping agreements. However, Kropotkin's belief that change would come through evolution, shared by some feminists, is optimistic but utopian. Past glory is as problematic as future glory, and as useless to speculate about.

We have nothing but our freedom. We have nothing to give you but your own freedom. We have no law but the single principle of mutual aid between individuals. We have no government but the single principle of free association. You cannot buy the Revolution. You cannot make the Revolution. You can only be the Revolution. It is in your spirit, or it is nowhere.—Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

During and after the Russian Revolution, anarchists in Russia and elsewhere, hoping to create a political science by basing their analyses more concretely on economics, rejected the romantic utopianism of their nineteenth-century predecessors. There were two major lines of social-anarchist thought—that of the anarcho-communists, who were opposed to large-scale industry, and that of the anarcho-syndicalists, such as Emma Goldman, who supported trade unionism and thought that anarchists should use the capitalist system of production progressively to liberate rather than to alienate people. Both groups agreed in their opposition to the Bolsheviks when they saw that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" really meant the "dictatorship of the Social Democratic Party."

Emma Goldman, the most famous female anarchist, was one of the harshest critics of the Bolshevik government. She came to America as a young Russian immigrant and was radicalized by the condition of the working class—long hours in sweatshops, unsafe conditions, the sexual exploitation of women workers, the prejudice against Jews. Objecting to communist authoritarianism, she was drawn to anarchism. Goldman was influenced by Bakunin's passion for revolt—("As to methods. Anarchism is not, as some may suppose, a theory of the future to be realized through divine inspiration. It is a living force in the affairs of our life, constantly creating new conditions"[6])—and by Kropotkin's economic analyses of decentralization, his attempt to make anarchism scientific—("Just as the animal cells, by mutual cooperation, express their latent powers in formation of the complete organism, so does the individual, by cooperative effort with other individuals, attain [the] highest form of development . . ."[7]). Goldman became an anarcho-syndicalist, agitating for women's rights, birth control, and labor reforms. She was not *primarily* a feminist, although feminism was part of her anarchism, and she criticized women who were committed only to women's suffrage, asking why they would want the same right to be oppressed as men. She also lambasted middle-class suffragettes for failing to understand the problems of working-class women.

When Goldman was deported during the Red Scare after World War I, she went to Russia, but was bitterly disappointed by what she saw as the betrayal of the revolution.[8] She argued that the people's passionate yearning for liberty had made the revolution possible, in spite of industrial backwardness. The "spirit of mutual purpose" in the labor organizations and cooperatives emerged in response to the *need* for them. However, the Bolsheviks limited the scope of popular power. Seeing that the Soviets threatened the supremacy of the state, Lenin put a "new economic policy" into effect, destroying the Soviets, the trade unions and the cooperatives in order to further centralize the political state. The revolution, though, had been fought with a different objective—the *negation* of authority and centralism. Goldman blamed not only the Bolsheviks, but the "fanatical governmentalism" of marxism—and felt that only anarcho-syndicalism—"the industrial power of the masses expressed

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through their libertarian associations"—could organize economic life. The power of the masses represented revolution to her: "The inherent tendency of the state is to concentrate, to narrow, and to monopolize all social activities; the nature of Revolution is, on the contrary, to grow, to broaden, and disseminate itself in even wider circles. In other words, the State is institutional and static, Revolution is fluent, dynamic."[9] Goldman also criticized the Russian Revolution for propagating anti-humanitarian feelings in its criticism of all ethics. The Bolsheviks saw the desire for justice, equality, and liberty as sentimental, bourgeois, superstitious and counter-revolutionary, this last a criticism especially leveled against outspoken women. All of history, she wrote, "is continuous proof of the maxim that to divest one's methods of ethical concepts means to sink into the depths of utter demoralization."[10]

For Goldman, the primary ethical precept was the identity of means and ends. Like Kropotkin, she found ethics involved more than morals. How, *in practice*, could the dictatorship of the intelligentsia transform itself into the dictatorship of the proletariat? Wouldn't any class dictatorship be the same as any other? How could a revolution attempting to free the masses do away with all ethical concepts about *why* they should be free? This means-ends contradiction is important for feminists, preventing the advocation of revolutionary action where revolutionary method and end are not compatible.

> **They say that they foster disorder in all its forms. confusion troubles violent debates disarray upsets disturbances incoherences irregularities divergences complications disagreements discords clashes polemics discussions contentions brawls disputes conflicts routs débâcles cataclysms disturbances quarrels agitation turbulence conflagrations chaos anarchy**—Monique Wittig, **Les Guérillères**

It is interesting to compare Goldman's ideas with those of some of the leading female communists, for many of these women, no matter how allied their ideas were to an orthodox marxist line, tended to separate from their male compatriots and come closer to anarchism in their opposition to bureaucracy, to the subversion of revolution by the Bolsheviks, and to the use of purely efficacious means. Some of them resisted official policy so strongly that they were silenced by not receiving appointments, dismissals from posts or absurd "propaganda" missions to the hinterlands.

It has often been pointed out both in criticism and support that Rosa Luxemburg's treatment of the nature of organization, her belief in the creative power and spontaneity of mass action and her advocation of the mass strike were replete with anarchist assumptions. Though she was, in fact, strongly opposed to anarchism in any form, in relation to Lenin's authoritarian political analysis, Luxemburg's refusal to support any rigid relationship of leadership to masses seems more sensitive to the complexities of struggle. While her goal was the same as Lenin's—the destruction of capitalism by the working class—she believed in creative improvisation of leadership rather than in precisely planned strategies. She did, of course, believe in leadership, but considered good organization the product of action rather than its precedent and saw organization as growing out of struggle.

While Luxemburg understood the necessity of centralism as a reaction against the "autonomy and isolation of the old organizational type, against localism and federalism,"[11] the task was "to unite all workers and all worker organizations in a single party" despite national and religious differences. In the German Social Democratic Party, this was predicated upon the "direct, independent action of the masses," where the workers would "develop their own political activity through direct influence in public life." However, Luxemburg objected to Lenin's principles of centralism: "1. The blind subordination, in the smallest detail, of all party organs, to the party which alone thinks, guides, and decides for all. 2. The rigorous separation of the organized nucleus from its social-revolutionary surroundings. . . ." The German Social Democracy, she insisted, was not *joined* to the proletariat, it *was* the proletariat. The party was synonymous with the masses; it was to provide the "spirit of movement" to the masses. Luxemburg objected that the power of the Central Committee would be comprehensible only if it took the initiative of a "vast revolutionary act," paralleling Goldman's means-ends argument.

Luxemburg saw the development of class consciousness as a product of the frictions between the party and trade union activity. Lenin, denying this dialectical function, saw trade union activity as a mere reflection of bourgeois consciousness in the working class. Through her belief that continued agitation was the only way to prevent the retardation of the struggle, Luxemburg supported the traditionally anarchist idea of the mass strike. "Spontaneity," as she used the term, meant action as opposed to static or reformist attitudes; it was misinterpreted by the Bolsheviks to mean confusion or to suggest that the party's rational policies should be determined by the "spontaneous" desires of the masses. "But what has been the experience of the Russian socialist movement up to now? The most important and most fruitful changes have not been the inventions of several leaders and even less so of any central organizational organs. They have always been the spontaneous product of the movement in ferment." The tactical policy of social democracy was not "invented" but was the "product of a series of great creative acts." Luxemburg argued that Lenin's was not a "positive and creative spirit," that he tried to "narrow the movement rather than to develop it, to bind it rather than to unify it. . . .For us it is not the letter but the living spirit carried into the organization by the membership that decides the value of this or that organizational form." It is here that she seems closest to anarchism. She wanted to replace system not with another system, but with the opposite — movement and dynamism.

Clara Zetkin, a close friend of Luxemburg, agreed with most of her ideas. However, Zetkin was a feminist, working for women's rights, editing a socialist women's paper, organizing biannual women's conferences in the German Social Democratic Party, the International Socialist Women's Conference, and International Women's Day. She felt that as long as there were sexist attitudes in the party, there was a need for separate women's organizations, meetings and groups for self-education and political agitation. She compared woman's relation to man to that of the worker to the capitalist (a favorite quotation was from Engels: "*He* is the bourgeois in the family, the woman represents the proletariat"[12]), and she believed that economic independence through socially productive labor was the key to women's freedom. Because of this, she thought at first that the destruction of private property would free women by transforming the family from an entity bound by economic ties to a "moral entity" united by "love, understanding, and respect."[13] But like Goldman, Zetkin later recognized the difference between the role of women's rights for bourgeois women and for working-class women. Middle-class women could focus on issues of personal liberation and more individual concerns, while working-class women, exploited as women and as workers, did not have that kind of leisure. Because she believed that biological as well as social factors created oppression, she concentrated, perhaps too heavily in later life, on motherhood as the primary defining characteristic and fulfillment of women. Because of her feminism, Zetkin was victimized by the party and excluded from important positions.

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Angela Balabanoff.



Federica Montseny. (Alain Klarer.)



Spanish anarchist group. (Alain Klarer.)

Angelica Balabanoff, active primarily in Italy, was like Kropotkin a Russian aristocrat who rejected family and background for communism. Compared with Luxemburg and Zetkin, she seems a bit simplistic, naive about the political machinations going on around her, but she was broad-minded and loyal to her sense of what was right. She too initially criticized anarchy because it lacked a basis in objective conditions, but she changed her mind upon meeting Emma Goldman, realizing that she had accepted without question the official charges against anarchist dissenters. Balabanoff's objections to the Bolsheviks were similar to Goldman's and Luxemburg's. In her autobiography, *My Life as a Rebel*, she wrote: "I have always believed that the emancipation of labor must be achieved primarily by awakening and educating the masses to a consciousness of their human and social rights, whereas the Bolsheviks have maintained that the transformation of the social system must be accomplished by a relatively small minority."[14]

Balabanoff not only opposed minority rule, but the cult of leadership, convinced that revolutionary work should be anonymous "in order to prevent the development of hero-worship and the undue influence of the individual upon the movement." Objecting to the idea of revolution imposed from above, she argued that method must come from the experience of the workers themselves, as an exploited class, if the revolution were to maintain itself against reaction. She despised the Bolshevik practice of exterminating the opposition—the "path of least resistance," advocating instead the discussion of conflicting methods and the confrontation of honest differences of opinion rather than discrediting or buying off opponents. When she made these objections, she was accused of being too "soft-hearted" to understand the necessities of the revolution—that is, too female and sensitive, which amounted to being "counter-revolutionary" and "bourgeois."

Balabanoff's autobiography is informative on the subject of her comrade, Alexandra Kollantai, who led the first organized opposition to the policies of Lenin and Trotsky.

> Alexandra was not an Old Bolshevik, but she had joined the Bolshevik Party even before Trotsky had done so and much earlier than I. During these first few years of the Revolution she was a frequent source of both personal and political annoyance to the Party leaders. On more than one occasion, the Central Committee had wanted me to substitute for her in the leadership of the women's movement, thus facilitating the campaign against her and isolating her from the women of the movement. Fortunately I understood this intrigue and refused these offers...By the Ninth Congress of the Russian Party, the last vestige of trade-union autonomy and workers' control in industry was swept away to be replaced by the control of the political commissars over the trade unions and the workers' soviets. Kollantai had become the leader of the "Workers' Opposition," a protest movement against the bureaucratic suffocation of the labor unions and the democratic rights of the workers. As there was no possibility, even at that time, of publicly criticizing the Central Committee or of placing an unofficial opinion before the Party rank and file, she was courageous enough to have a pamphlet secretly printed for distribution to the delegates of the Party Convention...I have never seen Lenin so angry, as when one of these pamphlets was handed to him at the Convention...Taking the platform, he denounced Kollantai as the Party's worst enemy, a menace to its unity...

Kollantai was accused of being an anarchist (a "syndicalist") because of her criticisms of the party for the absence of worker participation, its substitution of "specialists" for the working masses in decisions, its fear of criticism and freedom of thought. The Workers' Opposition, which demanded real participation of the workers in economic self-administration and the organization of production, was condemned by Lenin as "a petty bourgeois anarchist element hiding behind the back of the proletariat." Kollantai's view of revolution parallels that of Luxemburg and Goldman in its emphasis on spontaneity and creativity: "We cannot decree Communism. It can be created only through active searching, through temporary setbacks but, at all events, through the creative force of the working class itself."[15]

Kollantai also extended her criticisms to the absence of equality for women, arguing that the party was not genuinely concerned with women's liberation in practice. Women "still lived under the same yoke: without authority in family life, enslaved by a thousand menial household tasks, bearing the whole burden of maternity...." When she went to Germany and joined the Social Democratic Party, she was influenced by Zetkin and took part in the International Conference of Socialist Women. In Russia, as Minister of Social Welfare after the revolution, she was interested in redefining not only political conditions but social and psychological attitudes concerning women; she worked for maternity welfare, prenatal care and day nurseries, as well as birth control, and strove to change ideas about sexuality and the structure of the family. Like Goldman, Kollantai distinguished the existing bourgeois women's liberation movement (which was not primarily concerned with creating a new social order) from the need for a working-class movement based on the

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recognition of class contradiction. She was "accused" by the party of being a "feminist" for putting too much emphasis on matters concerning women. But even though she believed that women have special needs arising from their biology (a materialist argument), she criticized feminism for making only abstract demands for equal rights without any concrete material analysis of the situation for women at the time. This was her distinction between feminism and socialism, between the bourgeois and the working-class women's movements, which amounted to a distinction between liberalism and radicalism.

Tension between Kollantai and the party became more and more severe. "Now began a (dark time) of my life which I cannot treat of here since the events are still too fresh in my mind ... (There were differences of opinion in the Party.) I resigned from my post as People's Commissar (on the ground of total disagreement with current policy)."[16] She was sent on a "diplomatic mission" to Oslo as ambassador—supposedly a prestigious assignment but intended to get her out of the way. After years of being suppressed, her spirit of resistance was broken and she stopped publicly criticizing the party and adopted the official line.

> **With the myth of the State out of the way, the real mutuality and reciprocity of society and individual became clear. Sacrifice might be demanded of the individual, but never compromise: for though only the society could give security and stability, only the individual, the person, had the power of moral choice—the power of change, the essential function of life.**—Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

The most extensive example of anarchism in practice occurred during the Spanish Civil War—a revolution that came closer to creating a stateless society on a large scale than any other. Aside from being a resistance to the fascist military takeover, it was a social revolution by millions of workers and peasants trying to rebuild society in a libertarian way through collectives, self-management and changes in personal and social relationships, particularly in the status of women.

Before the war, in the first years of the Second Republic (a coalition of bourgeois republicans and socialists formed after the collapse of the monarchy), some legislation had been passed to improve conditions for women: paid maternity leaves, time to nurse children during the work day, suffrage and the legalization of civil marriage and divorce. Anarchist women, however, did not organize to implement these legal changes or form separate women's organizations because they, like the men, wanted total social revolution rather than reform. Yet even with more liberal attitudes, sexism and patriarchy were not abolished. Women with jobs were still resented and received lower wages. Because a token number of well-educated women achieved good government positions, middle-class feminism subsided. The greatest militancy was among working-class women, who had the worst, lowest-paying jobs.[17]

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1936 brought vast changes, as a wartime economy inevitably does, because with the labor shortage, the need for women in factories and collectives increased, and because anarchist men and women agreed to fight for total social revolution. Feminism became an active political issue, and women felt the need to form separate organizations to work for their liberation. This was implemented by two major factors: formation of the women's group, *Mujeres Libres* (Free Women), and the activities of Federica Montseny, the only woman in Spain to hold a ministerial post.

Mujeres Libres, formed in Madrid, published a journal by the same name; it consisted primarily of anarchist working- and middle-class women, both illiterate and well educated. They were joined by Barcelona's *Centro de Cultura Feminina* (Feminine Culture Group), also predominantly anarcho-syndicalist working- and middle-class women.[18] By 1938, *Mujeres Libres* and its affiliates had become a mass organization centered around demands for freedom from oppression by capitalism and sexism; for developing skills for meaningful rather than menial work; for equal wages; for access to social services. Many of these demands—for birth control, abortion, changes in the attitude toward prostitution—were influenced by Emma Goldman's essays, which appeared in *Mujeres Libres*. The organization developed into a decentralized federation of local, regional and national committees allied with various anarchist groups. While there were also rightist, leftist, and Catholic women's groups, they mostly concentrated on wartime services. *Mujeres Libres* also set up units for transport, sanitation, manufacturing, public services, communal kitchens and the organized collection of food, but mainly they strove for the feminist-anarchist transformation of economic, social and personal institutions. They set up day-care centers in factories and collectives and special technical schools so that new skills would give women the power and means for their own social liberation.

Federica Montseny, under whose influence many of these aims became legal, was born in 1905 to anarchist parents, the publishers of the journal *La Revista Blanca*.[19] While close to the socialist tradition of Goldman, Kropotkin, Bakunin, and Proudhon, she was also influenced by the individualist anarchism of Stirner, Neitzsche and Ibsen, which stressed personal autonomy. While she approved the "egoism" of this position, Montseny rejected its often aristocratic tendency, arguing that the dialectical relationship between individual uniqueness and the anarchist's social commitment and responsibility prevented solipsism. Perhaps for a woman in patriarchal Spain, a more individualistic stance was necessary. In any case, it was the female anarchists, Montseny and Goldman, who stressed the importance of the individualization of the masses and saw the prevailing concept of the masses as the annihilation of individuality and originality. Montseny's idea of revolution was that it had to be social, not political, internalized in each person and transforming all institutions; this would not be utopian because people have an unlimited potential for creating alternative social organizations.

During the Second Republic, Montseny wrote essays criticizing the government and propagandizing for anarchism; she organized anarchist labor groups and helped *Mujeres Libres* set up day-care centers and technical schools for women. By 1936, when the anarchists joined the Popular Front government, she had become a popular leader, as well as the leading anarchist theoretician, and was appointed Minister of Health and Social Services. Although she was criticized for accepting the "reformist" position, and betraying anarchist principles, her decision was affected by her sense of responsibility to society, and especially to women. While she worked for change in many areas—education, prison reform, abolishing the death penalty—she was primarily committed to changing the status of women. Within the deeply embedded Spanish patriarchal tradition, she realized that anarchist revolution alone could help women only economically; social attitudes would have to change if women were to be secure and independent. While in office, she drafted a law legalizing abortion and argued for birth control and the legal reform of prostitution, which she considered a result of rigid sexual relations and women's lack of significant work. Yet, like Goldman and Kollantai, Montseny was not a "feminist," and criticized the aims of feminism as narrow and reformist: "To propagate feminism is to foment masculinism; is to create an immoral and absurd struggle between the two sexes which no Natural law would tolerate ... Feminism? Never! Humanism? Always!"[20] Because political upheavals forced the anarchists out of government, Montseny held her ministerial post for only a year. After

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the Civil War, the strong anti-feminism that emerged in the right-wing government wiped out most of the women's gains.

> **I think men mostly have to learn to be anarchists. Women don't have to learn.**—Ursula LeGuin, **The Dispossessed**

Why are women attracted to the most basic anarchist premises? Why do women tend to believe that the highest development of the individual, that which leads to the least oppression, takes place within collective forms; that change has to come from below; that any "human" society must be based on direct contact, the destruction of hierarchy and ethical behavior? Women have always distrusted leadership and, in fact, there have been no powerful and charismatic female leaders who influenced anarchism or feminism in the way that, say, Marx and Lenin influenced communism. Anarchist and feminist emphasis is on the quality of life, on the basic structures of community, family and education. Many anarchist attitudes are seen as culturally *female* —the emphasis on intuition, instinct, feeling and spontaneity, the distrust of logic as authoritarian and dominating. While anarchism has directed its argument against government, women have fought against patriarchy as such, private as well as public. It may be that this rebellion against all patriarchal institutions is what has led women into anarchist positions. Paralleling a retrograde anarchism that sees freedom only in liberation from industry (non-syndicalist anarchism) is that retrograde feminism that sees freedom only in liberation from men (separatism). As the Spanish experience of feminism shows, permanent liberation depends upon a total social structure. Sexism must be fought as an integral part of the class contradiction, for it cannot be explained without it, but it must always be recalled that feminism is only part of the primary focus on class contradiction. The history of the socialist struggle in Russia and China, of feminist anarchism, and even of the Weather Underground, shows how easily feminist demands, expectations and rights get lost in or exaggerated by male habits of dominance.

Anarchist tendencies in feminism could come from two sources. The first is the concept that women are "naturally" more anarchistic because woman's "nature" is closer to the earth, to the anarchist idea of the "natural state." The second possibility is historical and cultural. Women have been excluded from full participation in government and industry, and have been confined to the smaller, more immediate contexts of family and community where harmony and cooperation are desirable and important. Because talk, gossip and expressing emotion were for so long the only expressions permitted women, direct contact in small groups seemed appropriate and necessary for the beginning of social transformation. But there have always been at least two women's movements. The middle-class movement, historically originating from the free time and the good education that permit women to rebel against the emptiness of their leisure and the absurdity of female roles, has been able to concentrate on issues of personality, personal freedom, structures of language and art, social interaction and individual response to conditions of oppression. More recently, middle-class women have been able to work in small groups in an attempt to build up mutual confidence. The working-class women's movement, on the other hand, has sometimes been invisible because it has been aligned with socialist struggles and unionism. For these women, oppressed by class as well as by sexism, feminism is not usually the primary strategy; they seek more immediate changes, tied to conditions in the working place, and often ignore their extension in the home. While their demands are often feminist—for equal pay, pay during maternity leave, day-care centers—these are sought within sexually integrated contexts. The task now seems to bring these two feminist movements together.

Anarchism presents an unresolvable contradiction. How can it be achieved in a world where everything is leading toward greater centralization? As soon as anarchists begin to build practical systems, they are forced to approach a more centralized communism through the necessity for concentration of capital. But in spite of this contradiction, anarchism is important, particularly to women. Perhaps it *can't* be put into effect unless allied with another system (socialism, communism); perhaps it has to serve as a constant criticism of authoritarianism, bureaucracy, paternalism, protesting the erosion or obfuscation of liberty. Its role may be to serve as a moral reminder that social change is, and always should be, for people.

There is a lesson in all of this: if in the entire history of women's struggles, we have been opposed to authoritarianism and hierarchy, it is masochistic and self-destructive to align feminism with party lines advocating what Goldman called "fanatical governmentalism." Marxism, for example, can also provide an economic analysis of the contradictions of capitalism, but there has to be, in addition, a movement toward direct democracy, self-management and freely associated workers—a feminist-anarchist-socialism?

Extracts are from: Monique Wittig, *Les Guêrillères*, trans. Peter Owen (New York: Viking Press, 1971); Ursula LeGuin, *The Dispossessed* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).

1. Sheila Rowbotham, *Women, Resistance and Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 124.
2. All quotations in this paragraph are from the *Redstockings Manifesto*, July, 1969.
3. Charnie Guettel, *Marxism & Feminism* (Ontario, Canada: Women's Educational Press, 1974), p. 3.
4. Mikhail Bakunin, quoted in Eugene Pyziur, *The Doctrine of Anarchism of Michael A. Bakunin* (Baltimore: Gateway Editions, 1955), p. 17.
5. Sheila Rowbotham, "The Vote," *Hidden from History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), pp. 77-89.
6. Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays* (New York: Dover, 1969), p. 63.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
8. See "The Revolution Betrayed," *Patterns of Anarchy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 98-115.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
11. The quotations in this and the following paragraph are from *Rosa Luxemburg: Selected Political Writings*, ed. Robert Looker (New York: Grove Press, 1974), pp. 96, 99, 101, 102, 104.
12. Peter Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 415n.
13. There is very little available in English on Zetkin. Thus, a valuable essay is "Clara Zetkin: A Socialist Approach to the Problem of Women's Oppression" by Karen Honeycutt, *Feminist Studies* (Spring-Summer, 1976), pp. 131-144.
14. The quotations of Balabanoff are from *My Life as a Rebel* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1973).
15. The quotations of Kollantai are from *Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Communist Woman* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971).
16. *Ibid.*, p. 40. Parentheses indicate the passages Kollantai deleted from the published book, demonstrating her reluctance to reveal the conflicts between herself and the Party.
17. Little material on this period is translated into English. An important article, then, is by Lourdes Beneria: "Women's Participation in Paid Production under Capitalism: The Spanish Experience," *Women and the Economy* (Spring, 1976), pp. 18-33.
18. An important source on *Mujeres Libres* is Temma Kaplan, "Spanish Anarchism and Women's Liberation," *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. VI, No. 2, 1971), pp. 100-110.
19. I have drawn a lot from the only source on Montseny I was able to find: an unpublished dissertation by Shirley F. Fredricks, "Social and Political Thought of Federica Montseny, Spanish Anarchist 1923-1937" (University of New Mexico, March 1972). I am thankful to Lawrence Pitkethly for lending me the microfilm.
20. Fredricks, p. 131, from Montseny, "Feminismo y Humaniso," p. 14.

Lizzie Borden, a filmmaker and writer, lives in New York.

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WAYS OF CHANGE RECONSIDERED: AN OUTLINE AND COMMENTARY ON WOMEN AND PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

SARAH CHARLESWORTH

Compared to the devoted and laborious build-up that took place before all the other peace rallies that I have attended in Belfast — the advertising, the canvassing, the carefully balanced composition of the platform party — here there was apparently no planning at all. No platform, no loudspeakers, no stewards, no prepared order of service. Just a vast throng of women, gathered at the spot where shortly before, the war between the terrorists and the army had cost the lives of three children. . . . One had a gnawing uneasiness that nothing more was going to happen.

What did happen was a sudden burst of derisive yells and taunts from a band of youths defiantly brandishing the tricolour flag from a vantage point on the roof of a nearby garage. At that moment perhaps nothing could more effectively have "rallied the rally." Suddenly it seemed we knew what we were there to do. From one to another the word threaded like quicksilver through the crowds: "We're goin' to walk down to the Falls." And walk we did — pushchairs and all — along the road that has become so notorious for violence and anger. Here and there spectators jeered and flaunted the slogans of hatred, but calmly and steadily the column of women — in the most casual fashion — walked on. As we walked, we talked. "They say," said the woman beside me, "that there's Protestants walking with us." "That's right," said I. . . "I'm one of them." The response was immediate: hands shot out to grasp mine, heart-warming ejaculations of welcome fell on my ears. I felt simultaneously the reality of the division and the unity. [1]

1.

In August 1976, there emerged in Belfast, Northern Ireland, apparently quite "spontaneously," a movement, which although it was later to be dubbed "The People for Peace" movement, was quite without a doubt a women's movement, initiated, supported and sustained primarily by women. From the perspective of classic political forms, it was and is both extremely traditional and profoundly radical, and it is particularly within the context of Irish politics that it becomes so.

My initial interest in the peace movement grew out of a feeling of solidarity and empathy with both the frustration and the positive vision these women revealed. As I followed its progress, my interest began to turn increasingly to its larger political and social implications, not simply in relation to the situation of Northern Ireland, but also in regard to basic issues posed by feminism in relation to traditional patriarchal political analysis and practice. What became increasingly apparent as I continued my research was the fact that the peace movement could not be understood and evaluated either on the basis of the primary social-political traditions of Northern Ireland or from the perspective of an *abstract* marxist or feminist analysis. These models must themselves be continually measured against the social realities which they presume to appraise.

The peace movement, to the extent to which it can be called a "women's movement," is interesting precisely because it is not in any sense "sophisticated." Its values and the forms of its organization are a direct manifestation of the attitudes of women

Peace Women hit Ulster streets despite threats

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) -- The Peace Women of this turbulent British province take to the streets of violence-scarred Belfast Saturday, defying terrorist death threats in their campaign to end seven years of sectarian bloodshed.

"There's no way we're going to give up now," declared Mrs. Betty Williams, the Roman Catholic housewife who launched the burgeoning movement 10 days ago after three children were killed by Irish Republican Army gunmen fleeing British troops.

Thousands of Catholic and Protestant women, setting aside the centuries-old hatreds that have separated Northern Ireland's feuding communities, were expected to gather for a rally in Ormeau park in Protestant East Belfast.

The attendance at the rally will be a crucial test of the strength of the campaign, the latest in a long string of peace movements in Ulster. All the earlier campaigns fizzled out.

Last Saturday, more than 10,000 women and a handful of men attended a peace rally organized by Mrs. Williams in Belfast's staunchly Catholic Andersonstown suburb at the spot where the three children were slain.

Mrs. Williams, 32, and many other Catholic women at that rally were branded "touts" -- terrorist parlance for informers and pro-British collaborators -- by the IRA's "Provisional" wing.

Young IRA supporters last week tried to burn Mrs. Williams' house down. She and other women received death threats from the mainly Catholic "provos" who are fighting to end British rule and Protestant domination in Ulster.

Despite the threats, the peace movement has spread. Mrs. Williams said groups in other parts of the province have voiced support and local peace committees have sprung up in both Catholic and Protestant quarters.

But the violence has continued unabated. At least six persons have been killed since the peace campaign began and dozens have been wounded by gunfire and bombings.

Government officials, community leaders and experienced observers who have seen earlier movements fail are still sceptical that Mrs. Williams campaign will change anything.

"The sad truth is," said Catholic community leader Tom Conaty, a onetime adviser to the British administration in the province, "that the IRA and the Protestant paramilitary groups do not depend on popular support for their survival.

"They have shown this in the past and, despite this courageous display by the women, I believe they will be around for a long time."

However, IRA sources said the guerrillas' leaders are taking the emotion-charged campaign "seriously." The provisionals have cracked up their well-oiled propaganda machine in a bid to counter the movement's growing support.

The Republican news, the provisionals' mouthpiece in Ulster, Friday vowed: "the struggle goes on." The headline was printed over a big photo of a hooded IRA gunman brandishing a U.S. - made armalite automatic rifle.

The Andersonstown news, a flourishing newssheet that has supported the provisionals in the past, stridently attacked the "peace-at-any-price brigade."

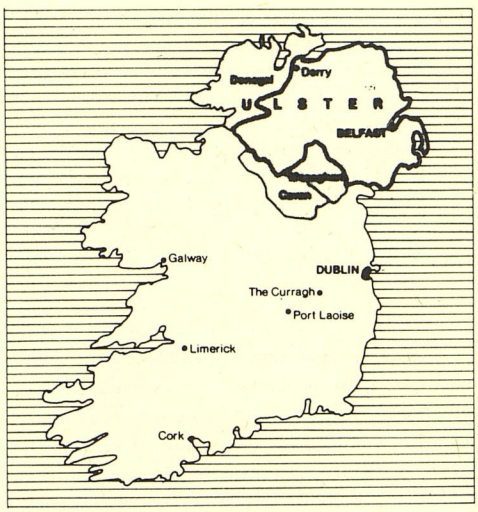
Both papers published articles and letters denouncing the peace campaign as pro-British. However, Mrs. Williams stressed that her movement is not just opposed to the IRA, but the Protestant terrorist organizations as well as Ulster police officers and British troops who "commit cowardly acts."

Provisional sympathizers have organized a counter-demonstration in south Armagh, an IRA stronghold, at the spot where a 12-year-old Catholic girl was killed, apparently by army fire, last Saturday. [2]

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historically isolated from one another within a social structure over which they exercise minimal control. Within the context of American feminism, the questions posed by the peace movement are relevant to the extent to which they underline and elaborate some of the more complex issues pertaining to the gender bias inherent in the very "logic" of commonly accepted political norms. As Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo points out:

> Since women must work within a social system that obscures their goals and interests, they are apt to develop ways of seeing, feeling, and acting that seem to be "intuitive" and "unsystematic"—with a sensitivity to other people that permits them to survive. They may, then, be "expressive." But it is important to realize that cultural stereotypes order the observer's own perceptions. It is because men enter the world of articulated social relations that they appear to us as intellectual, rational, or instrumental; and the fact that women are excluded from that world makes them seem to think and behave in another mode.[3]



Map showing the six-county state of Northern Ireland.

2.

The Province of Ulster was born in conflict. The partition of Ireland was a highly artificial solution to an age-old problem. The question of whether the current crisis is a religious war, a class war, or a war of national liberation is in many ways a false one. It is all of these at once. The peculiar complexity of the situation stems from the fact that the political and religious identity of each community is coincident in broad terms, and it is with these political and religious groups that individuals have from birth learned to define themselves.

The sources of bigotry in Ireland as well as the mechanisms of its maintenance are ancient. In the Protestant community, patriotic songs and yearly festivals celebrate the siege of Londonderry and the assent of Protestant rule. These are matched in Catholic culture by a heritage which stresses the heroism and glory of national revolt as well as an almost mystical alliance with the church. According to the Irish Republican tradition to which the modern Provisionals are heir, "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."

The Catholic population in general has tended traditionally to identify with a united and independent Ireland and was in fact instrumental in winning support for the Home Rule Bill by which the Republic of Ireland was established in 1922. The Protestants, who form a minority within Ireland as a whole, had been successful in their violent opposition to what they termed "the papist state," which led to Britain's partition of Ireland in an attempt to pacify loyalist Protestants in the North. The long-term and blatant suprematism of the Protestants concentrated in Northern Ireland, their overt domination of political and civil institutions, is countered by a Republican commitment to "victory through physical force"—a form of patriotism which finds its most extreme manifestation in the IRA tradition of blood sacrifice, in which each death only serves further to legitimize the unquestioned heroism and "justice" of the nationalist cause.

With the outbreak of widespread and violent sectarian rioting in 1969, the collapse of the repressive Protestant-controlled Stormont Government was achieved only through the further intervention of the British, "justified" at the time by continuing paramilitary violence and the threat of civil war. This was to mark the beginning of a period of intense segregation and economic disintegration in Northern Ireland, during which a climate of hostility, combined with a complete lack of dialogue and a military standoff, has made the possibility of further political and social development virtually impossible.

When the IRA split in 1969, the Official IRA (increasingly concerned with developing economic and class consciousness) apparently dwindled in effectiveness. The "Provisionals," on the other hand, with their more traditional focus on militarism and nationalism, were able to take advantage of the already tense political climate, playing into and further aggravating sectarian hostilities. They became self-appointed "people's protectors," like the Protestant paramilitaries in their own districts. The British policy of internment and torture of IRA militants only served to further escalate guerrilla activities. The vicious circle was complete.

During the last seven years, continued paramilitary and military violence have all but wrecked large sections of both the residential and commercial areas of Belfast, Derry and Armagh. Industry has declined and unemployment is soaring. Meanwhile, among the general population, apathy, fear, frustration and poverty have begun to flourish. Amid invariably righteous claims to the representation of "justice," hatred and despair have increasingly come to dominate "political" life in the Northern State. While numerous "brave and valiant" soldiers have lost their lives, countless ordinary citizens, often women and children, have also been the victims of this ancient and unending cycle of fear, recrimination and violence. The deaths of the three McGuire children, killed on August 10 by an IRA getaway car in Belfast's Andersontown district, were just another "accident." It was, however, to have a resounding effect. Betty Williams, an Andersontown resident who had witnessed the incident, and Mairead Corrigan, the children's aunt, "had had enough." Within hours they began organizing their neighbors to protest the senseless violence of a war which had long since become a way of life.

3.

The peace movement was from the start fueled by an emotional commitment which was not without its own particular rationality. To the skeptics who denied the possibility of a peaceful resolution to a feud stemming from deeply ingrained attitudes and opposing loyalties, the women replied that three hundred years of warfare had likewise accomplished nothing, that the Northern Irish people had been for too long divided against themselves.

> Thank God I'm still angry enough to do this, because I'd march anywhere in Northern Ireland. I don't give a darn what the fellow's beliefs are. Everybody has got a right to believe in exactly what they want to believe in, but there is no one in this whole wide world has any right to kill for it. So, when I'd seen the children die or the awful accident—my daughter also witnessed this—she has screamed about it since, my five-year-old daughter who was unfortunately in the car with me at

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the time—I went home and sat down. Did you ever get sick inside, so sick that you didn't even know what was wrong with you? I couldn't cook a dinner. I couldn't think straight. I couldn't even cry, and as the night went on I got angrier and angrier. And my sister came up. She lives quite close to where I live, and I had a cousin in the house at the time. And I just said—and I don't mean to swear, I'm very sorry—I said, "Damn it, we have got to do something." And my husband was at sea, and I . . . took an air-mail writing pad, and I went right up into the heart of provisional IRA territory in Andersontown and I didn't knock at that door very nicely, by the way, I didn't say, "Excuse me. Would you like to sign this? We all want peace." I was spitting angry, and I banged the woman's door and she came. I frightened the life out of her. I really did.

When she came out, I said, "Do you want peace?" She said "Yes!"

"Yes, then sign that." It sort of started off like that, and it went on . . . further down the street, every door you knocked. All the women felt that way. I just lifted the lid. They all poured out. I mean, I ended up rather like the Pied Piper of Hamlin because I had a hundred women in provie territory collecting signatures for peace.

We had 3,000 or 6,000 signatures in three hours. We went back to my home. They were in the lounge. They were in the living room. They were in the kitchen. They were in the hall. They were lined up the stairs. They were in the bathroom, the two bedrooms. There just wasn't enough room to hold them all, and they were all just as angry as I was . . . that we had let this go on for so long. [Betty Williams[4]]

You see, unfortunately, in a long time in Northern Irish society and, indeed, in the world we have glorified the man with the guns. Do you know we sit in our clubs and we sing about the brave man who took life? Now, we're going to say in Northern Ireland, we want a complete new change of society. The hero in Northern Ireland is going to be the guy who stands up against the man with a gun in his hand and said, "You're not speaking for me. I haven't got a gun. I'm not prepared to take your life, but you're most certainly not speaking for me."

The guy who gets involved with the man next door, with the old-age pensioner; the guy who recognizes the Protestant and the Shankhill to be his brother or the black man across the road to be his brother. The man, who, in society, acknowledges his brother . . . the man next door to be his brother. This is the kind of whole new society that we want to create in Northern Ireland. Indeed, we want to say that we have led the world in guerrilla warfare for years; we are going to lead the war in peace and we say to the people of the world, "Watch us." Because we are going to do it, and not only watch us but imitate us because the whole world is led by violence and it doesn't pay. One thousand six hundred people dead in Northern Ireland.

My sister was lying in a hospital after losing three babies, and do you know her major concern? There was a bomb the previous week in a bar where a guy had gone out to have a drink—and he was lying across the ward from her—one of those open plan wards, and he had no legs, seventeen years of age—he had no legs and he kept squealing all day, "Please take my hands off. My hands hurt so much." That is only one awful incident of what's going on in Northern Ireland with guns coming into Northern Ireland. That's got to stop. That's no answer, but to the gunman we say, "We acknowledge that the gunman in Northern Ireland has taken guns perhaps because of their political ideals, perhaps because they were never offered a way, but there's a new way. There's another way," and we say to them, "Put up your guns, and if you really care for the people, come into society. Let's talk about it." We're not telling them to "get lost" or go under the carpet because it'll fester in thirty years, but let's talk about it. Let's hear what you are saying, but not by the gun. [Mairead Corrigan[5]]



Betty Williams (left) and Mairead Corrigan at Belfast Peace March, Aug. 21, 1976. (UPI.)

During the weeks that followed the initial demonstration at the site of the McGuire children's death, Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan continued to publicize the incident and organize for an all-out assault on violence. This took the form of massive demonstrations *for* peace. The first demonstration (August 14) drew 10,000 women, both Protestant and Catholic, to the Catholic Andersontown district. Provo supporters jeered the rally and denounced Williams as a traitor, but she was not dissuaded and the following week brought 20,000 people together in one of Belfast's few remaining "mixed" neighborhoods. The third weekend the peace movement returned to the hard-core Protestant Shankill Road area where close to 30,000 demonstrators showed up. The fourth rally was held in Derry, Ulster's second largest city, on Craigavon Bridge, which connects the Protestant and Catholic sections of town. Again approximately 30,000 people turned out. By this time the Provos were saying that they did not oppose the peace movement, but supported "Peace with justice." Meanwhile, in Dublin, the capital of the Irish Republic, a march by 20,000 was organized in support and smaller marches were held in Corm, Galway, Carlon and Castlebar.

The unexpected popularity and energetic style of these initial marches contributed to their dramatic impact. Both support and criticism abounded. Within weeks of the first rally, smaller community "peace" groups began to spring up throughout the province, with no apparent orientation other than a commitment to peace, to furthering dialogue within the community and to constructive non-sectarian local action.

Provisional "support," however, was to prove short-lived. The weekly marches were disrupted on October 2 by small IRA counter-marches in which several of the peace marchers were assaulted. Death threats against Betty and Mairead were occasionally found scrawled on Belfast walls. The Provos, claiming that there had been an increase in British army raids, arrests and harassment, issued a statement warning that if any women from the peace movement cooperated with security forces, they would be treated as informers and shot.

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From the onset there has been confusion in the press about the attitude of the peace marchers toward the British and the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary — the "legitimate" police who have been theoretically neutral but effectively on the side of the Protestants). While the peace leaders have been extremely outspoken in their criticism of the Provisionals and of the UDA and the UVF (Ulster Defense Association and Ulster Volunteer Force, the Protestant paramilitary equivalents of the Provisional IRA), they have been less direct in their denunciation of the British and of the "legitimate" Ulster security forces. Though they have consistently condemned all "men of violence," their position on "legal" military forces is more ambiguous. While this is a crucial issue and one on which the peace leaders are perhaps most vulnerable to criticism, IRA supporters have consistently twisted its significance to imply that they are pro-British — unlikely, as the movement is both Catholic-led and strongly backed by non-violent Catholic Nationalists. There is in fact a simple and rational explanation for their hedging on the question of British intervention. Since one of the main thrusts of the movement is its anti-sectarian character, and since it is the first major popular grass-roots movement uniting both Catholics and Protestants, its very existence is dependent on widespread support from both camps. The vast majority of Protestants (two-thirds of the population in Northern Ireland) for the most part do not favor British withdrawal, and many Catholics, including the Official IRA Sinn Fein[6] do not advocate an *immediate* withdrawal, so that any public position in regard to either imperialism or British "security" forces is indeed difficult and problematic. Due to this fact, as well as to the general diversity of political sentiment within the movement, the leaders have confined themselves to taking general positions against violence, encouraging local initiative toward peace and speaking in very broad terms about the need for the "Northern Irish" people to resolve their own differences "from the bottom up."

Although heavy criticism from both the Provisionals and extremist Protestant groups may have slightly affected the movement's popularity, demonstrations, rallies and meetings throughout the fall of 1976 continued to draw wide support. Several supportive demonstrations were organized by feminist groups in Germany and the Netherlands; a rally in London on November 28 drew a crowd of approximately 15,000.

The movement now has a magazine (*Peace by Peace*), a small office in Belfast, and over 125 local groups "organizing for peace" in Northern Ireland. "Support," however, is not what the movement is all about. In terms of opening up effective channels of discourse and creating a climate in which constructive non-sectarian political development can occur, there is no way at present to estimate its success.

4.

The current peace movement is not the first of its kind in Ireland. Two others in the recent past have attempted to dispel sectarian violence by non-violent and non-sectarian means. Both times they were eclipsed by British military escalations which rallied Catholics to the IRA. In 1971, an organization called "Women Together" gained considerable support, but lost ground when the British introduced internment. Another movement sprang up in Derry in 1972. After a British soldier had killed a Catholic youth, the IRA "executed" a young man from Derry who had joined the British army. That was the last straw for Margaret Doherty, who organized her neighbors to demonstrate their anger. This was effective to the extent that the Official IRA declared a cease-fire which they maintain to this day. The 1972 movement collapsed however, when the British invaded the Catholic no-go areas in what was known as "Operation Motorman." Once again the Provisionals were vindicated by British actions. With the rebirth of the peace forces this year, Margaret Doherty, who had been viciously harassed for her peace activities in 1972, again came forward and has participated in the organization of the present campaign.

Even these recent interventions on the part of women are not unique in Irish history. In 1921, during the struggle for Home Rule, the British section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, headed by Jane Addams, sent their own commission to study Irish self-rule, clearly opposing the interests of their own government. The Irish section of the WILPF, led by Louie Bennett, was active in organizing women to employ passive-resistance techniques in a struggle against the British. Their view as women was that human life was precious and that war was an outmoded way of dealing with imperialist rivalries. While the women supporters of the 1921 struggle were largely middle-class suffragettes organized internationally behind a pacifist ideology, the current peace campaign is indigenous, widely supported by both middle- and working-class people, and relatively "unorganized."

The peace movement, as Bernadette Devlin has pointed out, is not a feminist movement. There is in fact virtually no feminism in Ireland in the sense in which we as Americans understand it. While there have been several notable female political activists in the Republican movement (Bernadette Devlin, now associated with the Irish Republican Socialist Party, Marin de Burca, joint general secretary of Sinn Fein, and Maire Drumm, the recently assassinated Provisional IRA spokeswoman), the vast majority of Irish women, oppressed as they are by poverty, war, extremely discriminatory employment and pay practices, and perhaps most importantly, by a strong religious and patriarchal family structure, have, by and large, remained unorganized *as women*.

For Catholic women, a very intense religious indoctrination which places a strict taboo on birth control, abortion and divorce is still a major obstacle. While as citizens of a Commonwealth nation, Northern Irish women are *technically* entitled to equal pay, and according to an anti-discrimination law passed at Westminster in December 1976, they are protected against job discrimination, the fact is that women's employment opportunities lag far behind not only those of men, but behind those of most European women as well. While the legal status of Ulster women is superior to that of women in the Catholic Republic of Ireland where women still have almost no independent legal rights, a very strong patriarchal ideology still prevails throughout Ireland, and Northern Irish women are for the most part still politically subservient to their husbands as well as being educationally and economically disadvantaged. While these conditions can ultimately be traced to the relatively low level of industrial and economic development of Ireland as a whole, and to the powerful religious infrastructure, they do underline some of the reasons why feminism has failed to develop, as well as the crucial importance of independent women's organizations.

How then can we evaluate the effectiveness of the peace movement from a feminist perspective? While its prevailing attitudes are traditional, in that they are not activist from a feminist or socialist perspective, the movement does potentially represent an important step forward in both of these directions. The self-initiated emergence into the political sphere of a large sector of the female population which has heretofore remained inactive, or at best has existed in an exclusively supportive role in relation to those very male modes of political activity which they are now so explicitly criticizing, is not without significance to the development of either.

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The rallies do help to get rid of a certain amount of fear. You are going to such-and-such a place and at one time you would have been frightened to go there. But at the rally you're a bit frightened but you just go on. Each time you come back from a rally, you have more courage to keep going. It's because you're meeting with people.

Let's face it, for seven years we went about the city and sat in our homes, all the time wrapped up in our own family and our own home and our own constant worry that something would happen to them. You felt it was just yourself had all this worry. Going out to the rallies is making people realize that other people have the same fears and the same worries. We are able to talk to each other about it. It's bringing a new closeness. [June Campion, member of a local peace group in Knoknagoney[7]]

5.

It is also important to remember that the current peace movement is at present not a political organization; it is perhaps misleading to consider it as such. While plans for the future include meetings designed to develop a more explicit form of organization, the movement as yet has no formal structure and no official platform. It is a phenomenon that can accurately be termed "spontaneous" in that it has not been planned and the form it has taken to date can be regarded primarily as a demonstration of solidarity around a commitment to peace.

The three most visible leaders at present are Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan and Ciaran McKeown, a journalist who has given up his newspaper position to support the women in their struggle. The organizational network as a whole, however, is neither centralized nor highly controlled by those who are apparently most prominent. Indeed, there has been a consistent effort by all concerned to systematically locate the basis for participation and direction *within* the numerous communities where peace groups have been emerging.

While direct support for the movement is clearly widespread (estimates range from 170,000 to 250,000 people in Northern Ireland alone), it is extremely hard to gauge its size or class composition on the basis of mass rallies and demonstrations. When I criticized the somewhat naive character of some of the statements by movement leaders, an American woman who had gone to Northern Ireland to participate in one of their rallies told me that it was precisely this tone that contributed to the movement's popularity among working-class women. It is certainly true that there has been a very deliberate attempt by the peace people to avoid direct affiliation with any specific political groups, and certain of the more politically "sophisticated" women supporters have deliberately remained in the background, not wishing to "take over" or divert the movement from its primary focus, that is, bringing an end to violence and encouraging local initiative toward non-sectarian community development.

Marin de Burca, a socialist and leader of Sinn Fein (Official IRA) spoke of the peace movement in an interview during a recent tour of the U.S.: "We go to the marches as individuals. It would be the kiss of death if we openly supported them. We have issued statements supporting them, but I don't agree with trying to move in and take them over."[8]

De Burca believes that if the British withdrew the Provos would be politically undermined. She argues that unification of the country is still the solution but that it can be achieved only through unification of the various factions around initially modest reforms.

> The demand for peace is not Marxist, but in the context of Northern Ireland it is very revolutionary at the moment... The reason we're looking for peace is to allow us to operate openly and intensively in a political way to unite Protestants and Catholics. If we have to look for something that sounds as reactionary as peace, then we look for it. If people can't see behind the facade to the reality then it's their problem.[9]

When Marin de Burca speaks of working in a political way to unite Catholics and Protestants, she is speaking as a marxist attempting to organize working people to assume greater economic control. While, as a member of the Official IRA, de Burca definitely supports an anti-imperialist struggle, she feels that in the long run the sectarian disputes dividing the Catholic and Protestant working populations are perhaps an even greater obstacle to the struggle for self-determination. As the situation exists now, separate Catholic and Protestant labor unions render the labor movement as a whole relatively ineffectual, and continued economic disintegration due to sectarian violence has left large sections of the Catholic *and* Protestant population unemployed.

It is interesting to note the difference between de Burca's marxist analysis, which views the entire Irish working class as the oppressed class and the type of marxist analysis supported by *other* Republicans, which views the Catholic minority in the North as the oppressed class. The Provisionals, who are not necessarily socialists but prefer to think of themselves as consistently on the left, persist in opposing both the British and the Protestant paramilitary and are engaged in a constant struggle for unification with the Catholic South. Bernadette Devlin, a socialist and an aggressive Republican, generally supports this form of analysis where class—purely in economic terms—is secondary to anti-imperialism and a class analysis stressing the political and economic discrimination that the Catholic population *as a whole* has suffered at the hands of a Protestant-controlled government and industry.

The complexity of the situation and the relative inadequacy of this approach is apparent when one considers, even in crude terms, the economic composition of the Catholic and Protestant population. While it is definitely true that the Protestant majority, as a group, has greater economic control, and that the highest levels of unemployment in the North are in Catholic districts, the large majority of the Protestant population is also working class. It is, in fact, the youths of these two communities who are fighting one another, while the small minority of Protestants who are wealthy maintain an economic advantage and have an interest in continuing sectarian hostilities for precisely this reason.

6.

It would be a mistake, however, to attempt to evaluate the significance of the peace movement on the basis of its potential effectiveness in furthering the cause of other political movements. It is perhaps more useful to consider the way in which the peace movement is indicative of an entirely different struggle for self-determination, as well as a profoundly different approach to these issues. It is significant that what is being questioned by the peace people is not the ends of political struggle so much as the means by which ideas, opinions and interests are both culturally reinforced and socially imposed.

The critical issue which is the historical source of internal Irish conflict is that of the relationship between Ireland and the British Empire. This has not only kept Catholics and Protestants feuding for generations, but has also led to innumerable splits within both camps. It is paradoxical that within this context British imperialism is the one issue on which the peace campaign has most consistently refused to take a stand. This is not because individual participants have no opinions on this question, but rather because the movement locates the "solution" in people, in a process of interaction and definition rather than in abstract "positions."

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For the peace people, the question of the relative legitimacy of opposing traditions is momentarily suspended. What is revealed instead is the logical perfection of institutionalized conflict. Military, political and even religious leaders are themselves to blame, claim the peace organizers, not because of this or that "position" in relation to government, but because they have kept the Irish people divided among themselves. "Rationality" is for them not merely a question of "right" and "wrong," but rather begins with the realization of how two non-dialectical visions of "right" are sustained by a culture which is imperialist and authoritarian in its very mode of thought.

Problems arise, claim the peace workers, because we have "lost sight of a basic respect for the individual." "Solutions," they assert, cannot be artificially constructed and then imposed but must arise through a process of creative interaction in which government does not exist to control people, to violently suppress dissent, but rather as an extension of the more or less clearly articulated needs and desires of *all* the people.

These concepts, while they may reveal an element of political naiveté which translates as liberalism, are not rhetorical. The practical orientation of the movement to date, with its emphasis on open and careful discussion and a decentralized approach to developing democratic forms, is indicative of this fact.

From this perspective we might examine Bernadette Devlin's claim that the peace movement is "dangerous" because it "dulls consciousness." "We were stupid," she claims, "never to have organized the women."[10] Both the truth and the potential fallacy of this statement are apparent. From the standpoint of almost any traditional political perspective, assertions of the sanctity of life, of respect for the individual and of a genuine "creative form of democracy" must appear naive without a "program" or a definition of the specific conditions under which such values can be realized. The peace people, however, do not qualify these conditions; the values themselves must define the very process of political interaction. If this is the case, how then can we interpret Bernadette's regret at not having "organized" the women? Is it conceivable that the women supporting the peace movement are not in fact organizing themselves, organizing in such a way as to deny the legitimacy of those very political forms into which others seek to recruit them?

A supportive statement by the Provisionals, in which the peace movement is described as a "spontaneous overreaction led by the photogenic Mrs. Betty Williams" reveals both the condescension and lack of reflexivity which typify those attitudes the women are most directly challenging.

> We are not necessarily in opposition to the peace people. But we want to explain to the people that there cannot be peace without justice. We just want to explain to the people turning out to these marches what the *true position* is and show them the road to real peace.[11]

This raises the most subtle and yet critical issue of the peace movement's significance. The whole notion of a "true position" is what the peace movement calls into question—it is not the political views of the opposing factions that are being attacked; even the "violence" the movement condemns is but a manifestation of something far more profoundly significant. The peace people are, in my opinion, not reacting simply to a specific incident of violence, nor even to violence in the abstract. They are (perhaps naively but nevertheless insightfully) challenging a whole tradition. What is fundamentally being questioned is the legitimacy of the imposition of the will of one group upon another. "Justice" is not being challenged so much as how justice is socially defined. Imperialism, in this context, is not simply a question of national or international conquest. Imperialism is the imposition of a social order, whether through military force or political manipulation, by those with power on those without. The very question of how Northern Ireland can be governed, says Ciaran McKeown, "is an imperialist question" because it implies the imposition of political forms by politicians on people who are for the most part excluded from the process of a creative democracy. Thus all extant political solutions are inevitably violent, whether the violence is "legal"[12] or "illegal," because they require military force to secure them.

From this perspective, British colonialism, Protestant political suprematism and IRA military violence can be seen as identical in their implicit attitudes toward the imposition of social order. In every case, whether justified or not, "justice" is an extension of self-interest and democracy is a rhetorical, not a methodological phenomenon. While it would be absurd to consider the peace movement as a feminist or a socialist movement, it expresses values that are fundamentally in accordance with both socialist and feminist thought, in that it addresses the whole issue of power and questions the way the right of self-determination has been eclipsed, not only by those *in* power, but by those who conceive of power alone—economic, military or political—as the just determinant of social order.

> Perhaps it's been our fault, you see, because we have sat back—as ordinary people—which is the fault everywhere—where the ordinary people sat back and let a few extremists say, "We are speaking and we are working for the people." We should have long ago stood up and said, "They're not speaking for us." I mean, people have been coming out from Ireland representing the people—the ordinary people, perhaps people like ourselves, who never had the nerve. I mean, just to be here takes all the courage one has got, you know. [Mairead Corrigan[13]]

1. Margaret McNeil, "They Say That There's Protestants Walking With Us," *The Friend* (London, Sept. 1976).
2. *Daily American* (Rome, Aug. 22, 1976).
3. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974).
4. Betty Williams on *Woman* program, moderator Sandra Elkin (Buffalo: WNED TV, Oct. 1976).
5. Mairead Corrigan on *Woman* program (Buffalo: WNED TV, Oct. 1976).
6. Sinn Fein (means "we ourselves"), founded in 1916, has functioned since the 1930s mainly as the political wing of the IRA. In the 1960s it swung to the left as did the IRA and became involved in social and economic agitation and in 1970 split along the same lines as the IRA into Sinn Fein, Kevin Street (Provisional) and Sinn Fein, Gardiner Street (Official). The names come from the streets in Dublin where they have their headquarters. Both groups use the name Sinn Fein, however, in spite of the fact that their views are widely divergent. The Provisionals are more militant and nationalist while the Officials are marxist and not militant.
7. June Campion, quoted in *Peace by Peace* (Belfast, Oct. 16, 1976).
8. Marin de Burca, quoted by David Moberg, *In These Times* (Jan. 1977).
9. *Ibid.*
10. Bernadette Devlin, quoted by Lucinda Franks, "We Want Peace, Just Peace," *New York Times Magazine* (Dec. 19, 1975).
11. Irish Republican Information Service (Dublin, Oct. 14, 1976). Italics the author's.
12. Ciaran McKeown, "The Price of Peace" (Belfast, 1976).
13. Mairead Corrigan on *Woman* program (Buffalo: WNED TV, Oct. 1976).

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PROSE POEMS FOR OLD WOMEN

May Stevens

SITTING STILL

Some people died who never died before she said
They died just now she said reading The Times
Her skin was pink her flesh concealed the bones
inside She pretended she was a chair
hoping death would flash past sat still as a sofa
A dress laid over two shoes neatly placed.

WOMAN WAITING

My mother sits at a window watching the field.
When I come after six months, a year, she waves.
Moving from chair to bed to table she opens the
door to the field, waits to receive words of praise
and affection. The days of no figure crossing the
field have moved to this moment. We are together.
We drive off. She has nothing to say. She is humming.

ALICE DICK b. NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA 1895

As children in Chatham Alice and her sister Mary
went for picnics on a boat down the River Miramichi
as far as Bay de Vin and Burnt Church where the boat
turned around. They carried sandwiches and lemon
meringue pie homemade by Nellie Morn who hooked
five or six rugs a year, took in laundry, baked
and sold fresh bread in her store, made all the
family's clothes and delivered milk to her neighbors.
Three of her four children were girls but they never
learned to do all the things their mother did. She
had no time to teach them.

Alice was in the second grade when Nellie Morn threw
a log from the top of the woodpile into Alice's left
eye. Her blue dress turned red.

Alice was twelve when her father died. She went to work
as mother's helper for the Snowballs and the Steeds
who lived in the big house on the hill. They owned the
pulp mill.

Later she came to Boston, got a job in a Chinese
restaurant where she waited on True N. Stevens half-
owner of Stevens and Greene Groceries and his boy Ralph
who flirted with her. Asked what A.D. on the bill stood
for she said after dinner. They got married. She was
twenty-four. I was the first of their two children
the one who lived.

She is nearly eighty now. She has a pink-gummed smile
incredibly innocent and sweet without the least inflec-
tion of twenty years' confinement in the back wards of
state mental hospitals. The light in the one eye that
sees has never gone out.

OLD WOMAN BATHING

Loosened strands slip down deep divided back.
Buttocks' shelf slides to creasing thighs. Knees
keep a partial crouch. Belly slings body center
forward over a hairless pouch. She lifts each breast
soaping the smell of age. She (matter self-propelled,
mushrooms pink and lavender, lustful, greedy, feeding)
steps into air, hands stroking space, trusting someone
is there to towel her dry, pin remnant hair, give back
her name, her watch, her story. She loves being clean
but who has time to wash her every day? Is she a baby
with a future? She loves hair dressed but fears over-
handling may make it thin. Dampish still, flushed,
talced, her body blooming, she swings foot, hums
nightgowned beside the bed, waits for milk and pills.
Glasses folded under pillow, sheet clutched high,
one hand slipped between her thighs, she sleeps a
sleep she will deny, in tongues converses with
familiars, unshareable. No she did not speak she lies
keeping her secret garden, loving the long continuous
dialog, absorbing, obsessing, warm and sweet as ex-
crement newly made, unspeakable, but hers, and real.

ADDIE, ALICE

Aunt Addie went to the hospital for a three day checkup
came out with a clean bill of health rejoiced at eighty-three
ay-yah she says Maine voice unaided eyes family proud race proud
discipline proud straight square proud spareness dryness proud
awkward proud truth proud. Addie: You start out with nothing
you end up with nothing. My traveling days are over. I
remember Souza's band and Burton Holmes' lectures. In fact I
heard Winston Churchill telling his experiences in the Boer War
the winter of nineteen hundred and one. Making blouses for
April pajamas for Ramona distant granddaughters putting up
pears for the winter of nineteen hundred and seventy-two. Aunt
Addie's house is bare of suffering as her face in which suffering
would be an indulgence eyes no feeling showing asking Maine
voice slightly rasped edges knowing but not dwelling what did
you expect?

In Istanbul a woman of one hundred and one is lifted out of bed
into bed mind clear in a crooked cage telling how the sultan
was deposed and another came in the palace.

Mary had a sister Alice pleasingly plump white calves
hairless armpits clear brow still eyes. Alice lost an eye
when wood was thrown from the woodpile. Blood ran down her
dress. Alice lost a son flu carried him off. Alice lost
a daughter who married a Jewish artist. Alice lost a husband
when she grew fat and mad. Twenty years after one-eyed
burnt-out schizophrenic Alice sees three figures swarm through
glass doors daughter husband her husband? son her son? to
take her outside. She smiles says well I declare gets up
goes to the door where coat hat bag are hanging and turns
ready.

May Stevens is a New York painter.

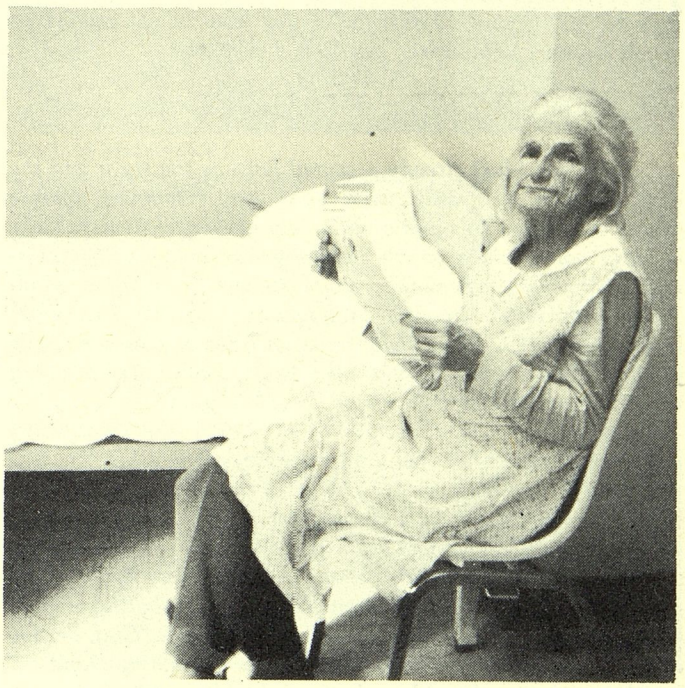
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HOMELESS WOMEN

ANN MARIE ROUSSEAU



(Photo by Jane A.)



(Photo by Mary S.)

Who are the homeless women huddled in the doorways, train stations and parks of New York City? Called shopping-bag ladies because they carry all their possessions in bags, they roam the streets—alone, isolated and without the basic necessity of shelter. In a world where myths of marriage and motherhood tell us women are protected in the home, these women symbolize our worst fears about women who do not, or cannot, fit into a society that values production and work.

The Shelter Care Center for Women is a temporary residence for homeless women in New York City. It costs the city over $60 a day per woman to keep 47 women at the Shelter. This pays for the rent of the building and for a full-time staff of 50 who provide social work and other services.

In connection with a community arts project sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum, I have been teaching an art class at the Shelter. The following excerpts are from taped conversations with some of the women staying there. The photographs were taken by the women who participated in my classes.

Adele Raiffen, found sleeping on the subways, was brought to the Shelter by the police. She comes from Boston, where her father was a lawyer, and unlike many of the Shelter women, Adele went to college. She majored in religion and managed her life reasonably well until her last year in school.

When I started reading the New Testament I certainly wasn't seeking God and probably 95 percent of my fellow students weren't either. But I began hearing the words of Jesus and I saw that I was not cleansed in the eyes of the Lord. I started to get really upset and I found I couldn't cope. It was at this time that I decided to jump out of the window. This was pretty dumb, but it was a very definite decision. I had definitely given up on life. I thought I was mad. I ended up staying in the local infirmary for a while and then they put me in a mental hospital for two years.

About five years ago a government policy turned out thousands of people from state mental hospitals in the name of humanity and reform. People who had spent years passively being cared for in institutions were abruptly left to fend for themselves on welfare.

When they let me out I moved into a hotel and lived there for a number of years. I had a great many emotional problems and a chronic drinking problem that had been going on for five years. I

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was pretty unhappy. Everyone was a chronic alcoholic like myself and the discipline wasn't very great. Most of the people came and went out of the local hospital.

Most of the women cannot find or hold jobs. Often they are placed in welfare hotels where their checks are lost or stolen or they are unsuccessful in budgeting their money. These city-financed hotels are poorly kept places of despair and misery. Pimps, addicts and junkies hang out in the lobbies and the women fear being robbed and assaulted. Worst of all is the loneliness. There are few programs to reach the many people isolated inside their rooms. Without treatment or any kind of community or family support, problems of mental illness intensify.

I felt that I had already accepted Jesus as the truth and the only salvation, so I was drawn to visit a church fellowship house that was nearby. This was a nationally organized Christian fellowship house where people lived together in very tight communal situations where they could receive the word of God. Pretty soon I decided to move in. It was a good move. They knew that living together in a tight situation often makes somebody grow very fast, and I did that for a while. I grew very fast, but after two weeks I had to go into the hospital again.

When I came out, I decided to go back to this same house and things went pretty well until two weeks later when I started another drinking binge by drinking all of the vanilla in the house. When I did that, I ran out and ran down the street and I thought, "Well, I've replaced vanilla bottles on a Sunday morning before. This is no sweat. This is real easy." And that was it. I couldn't stand one more moment of hunting down vanilla bottles. I guess it was the love I had for other people. So I prayed, "God, I'm too tired to drink anymore. You just gotta do something about it," and I turned around and I ran home and told my pastor about it. From that day forward I didn't take a drink in that house.

After a while I decided to leave that house because I had obviously been cured and no longer needed the fellowship of Christian people. I thought I could do well enough on my own and I wanted my own life. I came to New York to visit friends and I stayed with my sister and her family.

(Photo by Jeanette W.)



I think I was pretty unhappy at the time. Pretty lost at sea. I think a lot of people come to New York to be alone with themselves or something; to cut off ties with people they know. It's kind of a self-destructive thing to do, to come to New York without any concrete plans and I might have been doing that.

My sister is pretty happily married and sometimes we've been very close, but I was not finding a way to live with the contentions going on around me. I wasn't able to cope with people who had never met Jesus. My sister was one of those people, and it became very hard for me to cope. You see I'm basically a back-sliding Christian. For about a year now I've felt God's kind of deserted me, but His word is still pretty faithful, and in my sister's house I wasn't finding a way to live, so essentially I guess I ran away. I just upped and left one day.

While it is estimated that there are as many as 3,000 homeless women wandering around New York City, the Women's Shelter has only 47 beds. Last year more than 2,000 women were turned away. Close to 800 were accepted and stayed anywhere from one day to several months.

I stayed in the park and I wandered around for a while. I don't remember how I found the Shelter. Maybe through the grapevine. I wasn't thinking too clearly then. I'm hoping to get on welfare, or maybe I could get a job as a salesgirl somewhere. Fortunately or unfortunately I don't drink anymore. It doesn't seem to be a problem. There are too many other things to occupy my mind. Occasionally when I get desperate, I head for a bar or something, but usually I stop in midstream and change my mind.

The goal of the Shelter is to provide a short-term residence where women can be helped and then returned to the community or placed in an appropriate institution, but the recidivism rate runs to 50 percent. The women do not get the kind of help they need at the Shelter or anywhere else.

Selma Lyons is 46. She has spent most of her life in mental institutions or nursing homes.

You see the thing was like my mother. She had a problem drinking, and she didn't get along with my dad. So when they split up the family they just made the kids wards of the court. There were nine of us and I was right in the middle.

My younger brothers and sisters went to the orphan home, but I got sent up. You know you're supposed to get a trial of some sort before they send you to state hospital, but I didn't get none. I never seen the judge. They just decided to send me up. They didn't say why. They didn't say much of anything. They just said something about going for a long nice ride and enjoying the scenery. You know they don't tell you nothing. They took me up there and when we got there they told me where it was after they locked me up.

After I got there, the doctors that talked to me got madder than hell for them to bring me there because I was only fourteen and the patients that were there were mostly either forty or fifty,

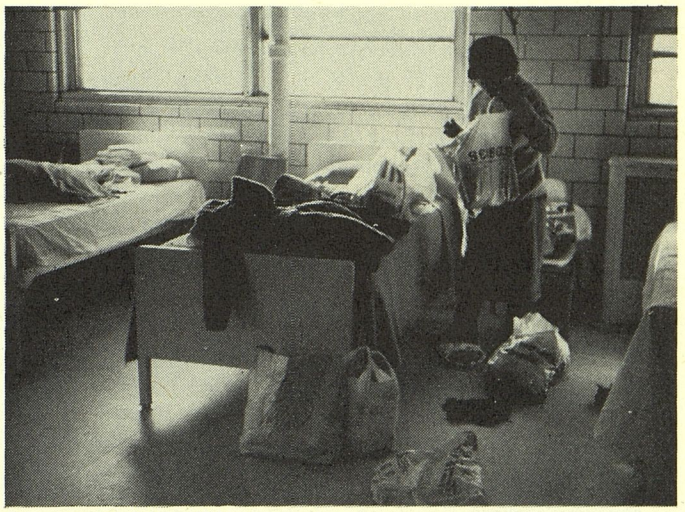
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and he said he liked to have the person that sent me there for one hour and call him dirty names. Most of the patients there were old people. I was the only young one. That makes a big difference being a young person and then being with so many old people.

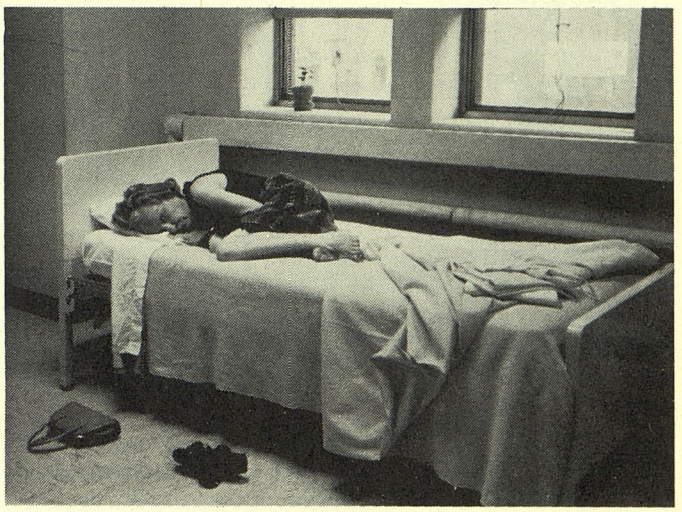
I stayed in the hospital that first time three or four months until they asked me a lot of questions and they figured I was okay. Then they sent me back to a nursing home in Quincy. See, in Illinois when people get out of state hospitals sometimes they send them to nursing homes with full privileges and all.

But my mother started coming round and asking for my money and stuff. She told me to come over and see her, so I went and brought her a sack of groceries. She didn't like me staying at the home, and I just figured, well, I'll stay at my mother's. So I stayed at my mother's house and all of a sudden a policeman came down saying he was going to take me to jail because I was still a ward of the court, see. And I wasn't supposed to be at my mother's. Course I didn't know cause the law don't tell kids anything anyway.

So they took me to jail and they had a new judge. Came in. He said, "You ain't guilty of nothing, there's no charges against you," and he said, "I got some real nice people where you can live with them, real nice, that'll treat you right, treat you decent and everything." So he introduced me to the Parsons, see, and the Parsons decided to get me a job. He was a guy that worked for the state and he went around helping teenagers get jobs. He just loved teenagers, working day and night to help them. He got me a job at the Pepsi-Cola plant working on an assembly line sorting bottles. I stayed there about four months and then the boss said I wasn't able to keep up, you know, work fast enough. So he said that being he liked me he'd keep me a month longer because he hated to, you know, see me go.



(Photo by Madeleine V.)



(Photo by Melba R.)

The only alternative to the streets available for many people is an institution.

Later on when I was older they let me go to St. Louis to live with my mother in the boarding house she ran. I lived there for a while but my mother had a drinking problem. I couldn't understand her too well. So one night I decided to go to Kansas.

When they picked me up they found out that I once was at the state hospital by questioning, so they kept me in the hospital in Kansas for three months and then they transferred me back to the hospital in Illinois.

At the hospital they sent me out to a workshop where I folded bags and put them in a little packet. I got $18 a month but I didn't keep my money. I did good deeds. See, I lived on a ward where nobody had soda or cigarettes, nothing. I'd go out and bring back somebody a jar of coffee and we'd have coffee and play cards. I don't like no kind of institution but I figure if I'm going to live there I'm going to do good to the patients.

One time I decided to go to San Francisco. I cashed in my Social Security check and got a bus. It was a nice trip. I went to look at the ocean, sat on the beach for a while and had me a cheese sandwich with several different kinds of cheese and French bread. That was real nice, but when I was in the bus station I left my purse on the bench and went over to look out the window. When I came back it was gone, so I didn't have another cent left to me. After a while a policeman came over to me, real nice, and he says, "Anything I can do for ya?" I says, "No, I don't want to tell you my problems. I don't want to cause you no trouble, but back home everybody talks about California. How great California is." He said, "You'd better believe California's great." He said, "We help people, the people help us." He said, "Now is there anything I can do for you?" and I told him that I lost my purse and he said, "Well, I'll just send you over to this Catholic place. They'll keep you till your check comes, or else they'll send you to another place till you can get back on your feet."

So I went over to the Catholic place and they kept me for a while, but then they sent me back to Illinois, to the home.

It's horrible in the home. When they put you in an institution they practically destroy your life completely. When you're young and you have to be around people that are old. You figure you can be classified, say, with them. It gets to you. Here I am. Ain't done nothing. Ain't been nowhere. Course I've done a few things, but if I have to spend all my life in institutions, well, I won't be putting nothing into life. I won't be getting nothing out of life.

One of the patients in the home used to talk about San Francisco, so I'd been to San Francisco, and there was another patient who talked a lot about New York, so I thought, well, I'll go to New York. I'd always heard about a store called Macy's. I heard it was a block long and I thought I'd like to see that!

The buses had a $50 special. Usually it costs about $100 to go to New York, but they had a special where you can go anywhere for $50 or less. I thought I'm not going to have this bargain

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probably never again in my life so I might as well take it now. I cashed in my SSI check again and came to New York.

I didn't pack much. I just took what I wanted to take and left everything there. I didn't tell no one, cause every time you'd start to talk about doing something they'd talk you out of it. So I never mentioned nothing. Every time anyone gets inspired to do something or be something at the home they'd talk so much that you're not going to be anything or do anything, and that's why you'd give up. So I never talked much.

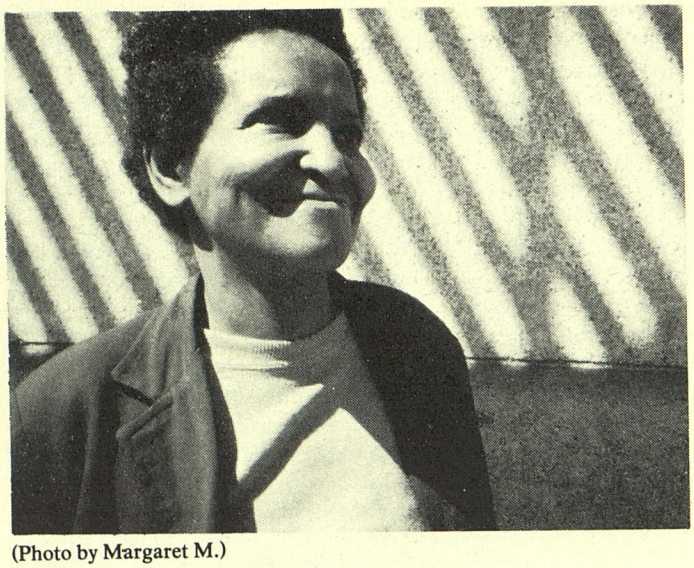
There are no outreach programs to contact the many homeless women who don't know about the Shelter. When a woman does not qualify or when the Shelter is full, the only alternative for someone without funds or a place to stay is the Emergency Assistance Unit of the Department of Social Services. There, a woman can sit on a chair all night.

My money was stolen on the bus I think. See, I forgot to close my purse and I left it on the chair next to me, and there was a kid right across. Later on, about ten minutes later, I was gonna smoke a cigarette and I looked in my purse and the money was gone. All I had was a dollar bill.

When I got to New York I went up to an officer and told him my money was stolen, so he referred me to a place where people sit all night long. It was a small room with people sleeping on chairs. The next morning they sent me to welfare, but welfare refused to help me because I was on SSI. Eventually I found the Women's Shelter. I couldn't get in at first, but I did after a few days.

Homeless men are treated differently. At the Men's Shelter they are given chits entitling them to a free meal and a flophouse bed. Although the flophouse hotels may not be as institutionally neat and clean as the Women's Shelter, there is room for thousands of men. They are almost never denied a bed.

At one time if a woman with children found herself without a place to stay, she was allowed to keep her children with her in a family shelter. Now, a mother who needs help and has nowhere to live must put her children in placement until she can get on welfare or find some means of supporting herself and her children.



(Photo by Margaret M.)

Hanna Schaeffler was born in Brooklyn. She was adopted when she was two and knows nothing about her real parents. Her adoptive parents separated when she was five.

At first I lived with my mother. She was having a great many personal problems at that time and couldn't cope with anything, so when I was in the sixth grade she sent me to Bay Shore to live with her sister. That was a nice home life for me and I stayed there for two years. I don't really know what my mother's problems were. She couldn't straighten out her life, her bills, her boyfriend.

When I came back she had gotten rid of her boyfriend, but something had happened to me. I didn't want to go to school because I was getting pimples. I became silent and quiet and wouldn't take a bath or anything. My mother didn't understand then. It got to the point where I practically couldn't do anything and my mother didn't make me. When I went to school I kept dropping to the bottom. I had no interest. I was a very confused person.

My mother later signed me out to go to work.

I lived at the Simmons House for a few years and during that time I had several office jobs, but I was never really happy. I started becoming depressed and having a lot of problems. It was at that time that I met the man I've been living with for the past three years. He used to hang around the Simmons House looking for girls. When I met him, I had just left my last boyfriend and I was very lonely. He insisted I move in with him right away. I didn't want to but I gave in. I was very weak then. I had no mind of my own and would allow myself to be led any way without really knowing what I wanted.

Things were okay for a while, but then I got pregnant and that messed everything up. I had to give up my job and I began staying home. My boyfriend really wanted to have me like a maid in the house and to have other women outside. Sometimes he would stay away the whole weekend and not say anything about where he had been. At night I never knew if he would be coming home or not. When I asked him what he did, he said it was none of my business. Getting women seemed to be all he thought about. I once heard him telling his friends that his biggest dream is to get an answering service and to come home and turn on his answering service and then go out with whoever he wants.

I felt like I was going crazy because I had no outlet. My only girlfriend is in the building, and then I found out that my boyfriend was trying to turn everyone against me. He was telling her that I never did anything, even the laundry, and that I was lazy and good for nothing. When I found that out, I was so hurt about the way he spoke about me, about the way he was getting a car and locking me in that I didn't know what to do.

Everything got to be too much. That's when I tore up the furniture. One morning I took a knife and tore it all to pieces. I couldn't take it anymore. I tried to get out, but there was no choice. I had stood it for as long as I could and then that morning I ripped everything to shreds. My mind was very calm. I don't even remember where my little boy was at that moment. Sometimes I wonder what he saw. I know he knew something was up because later I saw him looking at the couch, just staring, like he knew something was wrong.

The police said I should go see a social worker, but I didn't know where to go. After that my boyfriend was saying he was

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going to beat me up. I heard about a free community legal service near where I lived so I went over there. They told me I should go to family court. It was difficult. I was very mixed up and I didn't know what to do. I did a lot of things wrong. I took out a paternity suit and they took away my birth certificates. I was trying to get myself on welfare at the same time—going from place to place carrying the children. I couldn't get welfare because they said I was being supported by my boyfriend and then I didn't have my birth certificates because they were at the court, and I was running all over waiting in this place and that one with the babies in my arms.

The social worker said I should come to the Women's Shelter and put the boys in foster care until I got more straightened out, so I thought that would be the best thing to do. It was pretty hard to give them up. I placed them to get self-sufficient.

The first time I got to visit my boy after he was placed in foster care was like I was in another world. When I saw him I suddenly couldn't even hear what the people around me were saying and I was looking at him. Then I had to go into the bathroom to hide my crying.

My oldest boy acted shy at first, like he didn't recognize me, but then I played with him a little and he was better. They say that the first few nights he didn't eat or sleep at all. They had a lot of trouble with him because he was so upset.

The little baby seemed to be okay. He didn't really recognize me but sometimes I used to make a funny little noise at him with my throat, and he always made the noise back. This time when I made the noise he looked at me and he made it back, so I guess he did recognize that.

Some women spend lifetimes in a cycle moving from mental hospitals to the Women's Shelter to welfare hotels, to the street and back into a hospital or the Shelter. For other women, there is perhaps a small hope that through luck or endurance they will eventually carve out a reasonable life for themselves. These are the women who have left within themselves some resources of strength and enough will to fight for the scraps of help offered by individuals and social agencies.

Adele was placed on welfare and expects to go into a welfare hotel.

I'm not very happy about going into the hotel, but there doesn't seem to be anything else I can do. I'll be okay as long as my drinking problem doesn't come back. I'm waiting for the will of the Lord.

Selma would like to get a job, but with little education and no skills, she has little hope.

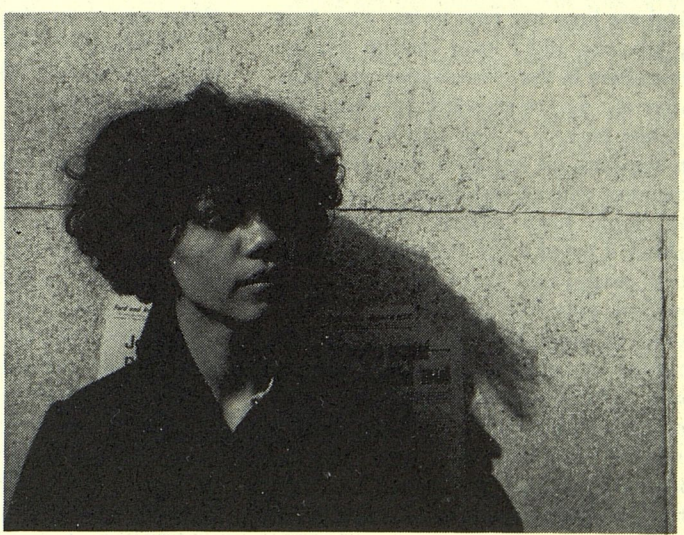
If I can't get an apartment and a part-time job in New York, I guess I'll have to go back to the home. I don't know if I'll be able to get a job or not. It's like you have to give up or something. Like there's nothing you can do. It's practically impossible for me to get out of this situation. My only choice is to be in the home with a bunch of mental patients in a workshop, and that's not a real job. That's nothing. There ain't really nothing for me, just institutions.

Hanna is struggling to establish a home for her children.



(Photo by Joyce J.)

I won't get them back until I have something to stand on—a job. The children's agency is helping me. Maybe I could get into a nurses aid program or something, as long as I don't have to go back to him. I never want to get married or to live with any man again. I don't think men are necessary for me. I just want my children back and to have a home and a dog and to go to church on Sunday. The whole bit. I hope I'll get everything straightened out. I'm tired of suffering and going around in circles.



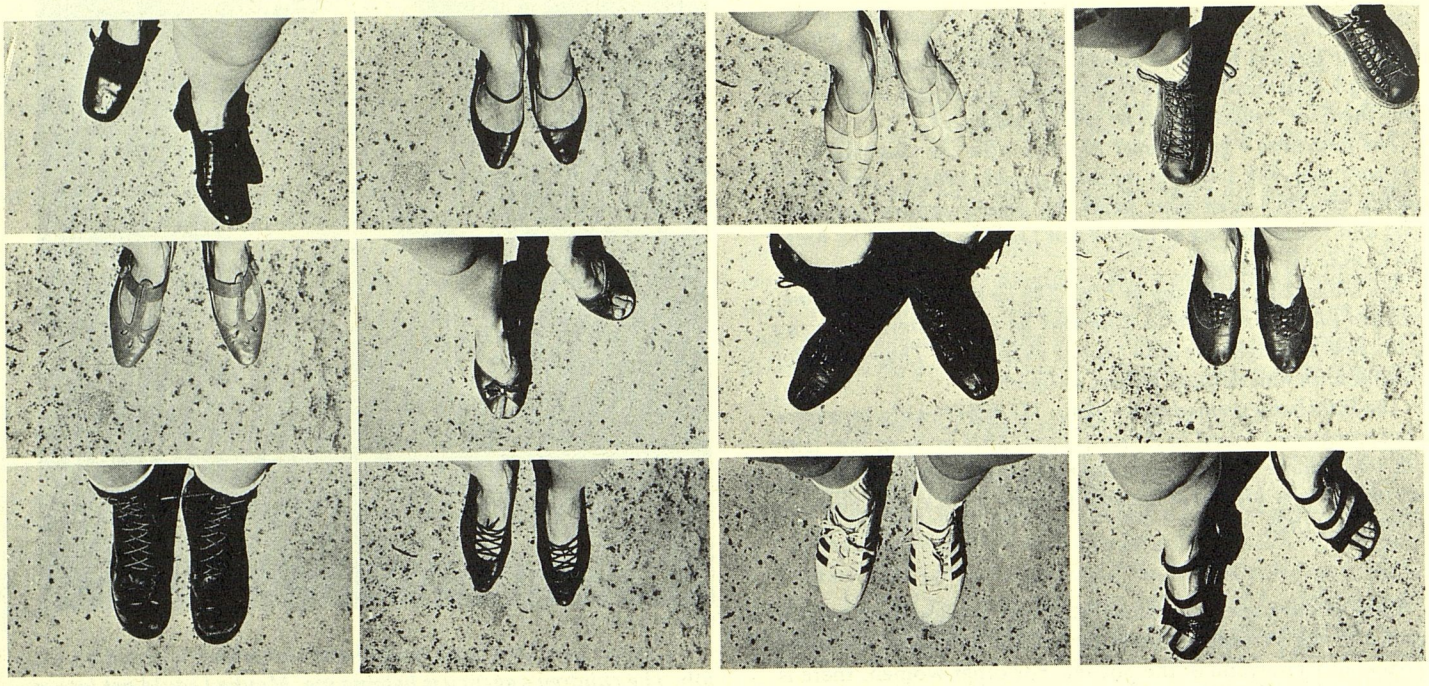
(Photo by Sheri P.)

Ann Marie Rousseau is an artist living in New York. She has worked at the Woman's Shelter for several years and is a member of the anti-catalog committee. The photographs reproduced here will be exhibited with others by women from the Shelter at the Metropolitan Museum of Art this summer.

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MARTHA ROSLER

SHE SEES IN HERSELF A NEW WOMAN EVERY DAY



I called you today, we spoke a long time, you and I. You were in a good mood, a mellow one. You'd just seen your sister, your brother-in-law was having his eighty-first birthday. Your sister was married to him for 49 years this January. You asked me how my new house was, how my job was, did I have enough money. Somewhere in the conversation you said, "After all, you're standing on your own two feet now...." *You* said it, you said I'm standing on my own two feet.... I remember when I was little, I'd want to stay home from school—I hated the yeshiva, I hated it for eight years, in the fourth grade I said, thank you God, thank you God, only four more years of this—I used to want to stay home but you wouldn't let me. Daddy would let me stay home... but he would never want to tell you. He would tell me, "A lie of omission is not the same as a lie of commission." You used to come home from teaching school at three o'clock in the afternoon, but the yeshiva didn't let out until 4:30. You used to come in and go out again because you were very busy—you were a *very* busy woman—you had a *lot* to do. So—Daddy had a very simple solution. At five to three I would hide in the closet in my bedroom. He would hide me in the closet. I would hide there until almost four o'clock. I would hide in the closet so you wouldn't know I wasn't in school. The closet had a closet inside it—I know this is very peculiar now, but I didn't know it then. In the front part of the closet were a lot of clothes, and my father's graduation picture, his graduation from law school: St. Lawrence University, Brooklyn Law School, 1932. That meant he went to law school at night. I used to look at his picture in the closet—his diploma too—and wonder why it was there. In the front part of the closet with his picture were a lot of clothes. And in the back, past the first clothes rack, was a smaller closet, a creep-in closet. And in between the two, on a kind of sill, were a lot of shoes, old shoes. *Your* old shoes. You used to wear really *serviceable*, cheap shoes when you taught. Every day you wore sensible, cheap, serviceable and sturdy shoes but in the closet there were wonderful shoes—silver dancing shoes with high heels and buckles, silver dancing shoes from the 1920s or 30s, laced with thin silver laces. I used to wonder what they'd be like on your feet—you had such sturdy legs, sturdy, serviceable, sensible legs.... I'd hide in the closet, and I'd look at your shoes, and I'd sit down among them and wait for you to walk out the door.

You always thought that dressing up was very important. I'm sure you believe that clothes make the man—and the woman—but I always felt that shoes made the woman. You'd always dress me up for photos, in costumes that other people gave you. I always wore everyone else's hand-me-downs, it was such a sensible thing to do. You'd dress me up for photos, I remember. I remember one—I still have it, or you do—I was wearing a scotch plaid dress, a little blonde jewish girl with a dutch haircut in a scotch plaid dress—you made me hold it out in a semicircle as though I were squaredancing—and on my head was a little scotch cap. I was smiling, I had a tooth missing. I was wearing plain brown shoes, laced oxfords. You were not very interested in the shoes I wore for these photos. You always insisted I had to get sensible ones, so my feet would grow right, and I always wore Stride Rite shoes. But once you took me, when I was five or six, to get a pair of mary-janes that had—a buckle. Two buckles—that's it, they had two straps and two buckles. And the two straps lay across my feet like two hard fingers grip-

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ping them, in such a way that the bone between them was pressed upward. They pressed on this bone in the most peculiar way and I'd say, "mommy, mommy, mommy — these're, these're pressing on my feet, they're pressing on my feet and my feet are getting to be shaped funny." You said, "No, these shoes are good. They're expensive shoes. These are good shoes. These shoes are good for you." And so I have, on each foot, a bone that protrudes on the top, because of these shoes that pressed my feet into a funny shape.

I remember once, the teacher called you from school and said, "Her boots don't fit." And you said, "But they're new boots." But those boots — those boots were someone else's boots, they were hand-me-down boots. I think they were hand-me-down boots, or maybe they were new boots. They were size 8. You always bought me things very large, so I would grow into them. Now you want me to dress my child in enormous clothing, so he'll grow into it. These boots were size 8. I wore size 4. "Never mind," you said, "you'll grow into them." I wear size 6 today. But you were sure I'd grow into those size 8 red rain boots. The teacher called to say, "She can't walk in her boots, they keep doubling up under her feet every time she takes a step; maybe she's got the wrong boots. You'd better come get her, it's raining out and she needs her boots."

There were times that I recall being at your feet, on my hands and knees. From the time I was about 10, you and I used to be alone all week in the country house together, in your sister's country house, while Dad worked in the city. I'd always want to stay up at night and read. I read a lot, I loved to read. It was my one chance for privacy. All day I was away, swimming. I'd swim in the lake from early morning till lunch, hop out, climb up the bank, eat some lunch, and hop back in. Creeping, as it were, past you, doing the crawl. But I'd have to come out at dinnertime and *endure* all through dinner. In the evening I just wanted to read. But you always wanted to go to bed early. There were four bedrooms in the house, but you always insisted that we sleep in the same one, so as not to get the others dirty. You always reminded me that it wasn't our house. So, at about 9:30 or 10 we'd have to get into bed, you into yours and I into mine, and turn out the light and go to sleep. But I'd never be tired. So I'd lie there, and count your breaths: Listen, and listen, and listen and... I'd sli-i-ide down the side of my bed, cre-e-ep on my hands and knees — holding the book, trying to get out the door and into the bathroom, where I would read by the nightlight you always left burning. MOST of the time, though, you'd give a start and: "what's that, what's that?" You'd get up, see me, grab me, and knock me around. You used to threaten to get your shoe, but you always made do with your fist, sometimes you'd choke me a bit. When I got a little older I wasn't so interested in reading; I'd set my hair every night with bobby pins and little rollers, the way my girlfriend Rosemarie taught me. On warm evenings we'd pretend to take a walk together but really we'd stand by the side of the road, in the driveway, with our chests puffed out and our bellies sucked in, in short shorts and little clingy jerseys, barefoot or in sandals. We'd strike bathing-beauty poses and stand stock-still, waiting for the boys in their low-slung souped-up cars to drive by and whistle and leer and make the sound of kisses.

I remember once seeing your shoe, as it came up to hit me in the ear. I was about 17, and I thought you were out of the house. I was on the telephone to my girlfriend. She was somebody I liked a lot but I was kind of afraid of her because she went to the High School of Music and Art where I'd wanted to go but you wouldn't let me because it was too far away — and you were probably right — it was too far away — to travel from Brooklyn almost to the Bronx — or so it seemed, that it was too far — anyway, I was on the phone, and I thought you had stepped out, and I was lying on the floor in my room, talking on my phone. It was my phone because once my brother called up to speak to me and Daddy answered the phone and he didn't know who it was, and he said, *"Who is this?"* and Larry, realizing that he didn't know it was his own son, said, "Is Martha home?" And Dad said, *"WHO IS THIS?? WHY DO YOU WANT TO SPEAK TO HER? WHADDOYOU, WHADDOYOU WANT WITH HER?"* ...And so Larry got me a phone; he was upset by that kind of behavior. He thought it was an invasion of privacy. I thought it was normal. Anyway...so there I was, on my phone, on my floor, smoking a cigarette. See, that was the kicker — I was smoking a cigarette. I was forbidden to smoke. I can understand, I'm a mother too, that you were protecting my health. Anyway, you came in and you saw me lying on the floor and you kicked me in the head. I'm sure you were aiming at the cigarette, but you got me right in the ear. Luckily, I wasn't deafened. However, I never spoke to that...friend again.

I used to really believe that shoes made the woman. I would buy a new pair of high-heeled shoes, you know the kind that people — that women — wore when I was growing up, do you remember those? Very high, very high pointy spike heels with pointy toes? And I'd buy 'em and I'd think, "Tonight's the night...a date... romance...dance..." and I'd go out. And they'd be fine. They'd be fine for a while and then I'd realize they were pressing on a nerve; they always pressed on a nerve. They were fine in the shoe store, and I always thought, "These are better, these are different, these really feel fine," and I'd make it about, oh, a quarter of the way through the evening and I'd have to take my shoes off. Now, if there's one thing that a woman wasn't supposed to be, it was flat-footed on her own two feet; I mean, flats were for lower-class girls; *nobody* wore flats. And nobody walked around without their shoes, not if you wanted to keep your reputation. So there I was, spending the evening at a dance without my shoes and having to go home, through the streets of New York City, freezing cold in tattered stockings and I'd say..."I made that mistake again"

Cinderella was oppressed; she was treated badly. She was given only crusts and scraps to eat and old cast-offs to wear. Often she had to go without shoes. She had to perform endless household chores. The chill and the lack of food made her light-headed. She was very unhappy and could only escape through daydreams. Nobody thought of training her to be a lady.

Her stepsisters were given all the advantages; their every move was scrutinized and corrected, their diets were watched. They had the fanciest clothes, the most fashionable little slippers and boots. Their mother planned to make them ladies who would rise above her own station. When the prince's emissary brought around the mysterious lost slipper, Cinderella's stepmother made her older daughter cut off her heel and her younger daughter cut off her big toe to try to fit the test.

This piece was originally presented as a performance.

Martha Rosler is an artist living in Encinitas, California, who works with photography, video, texts and postcards. Her book, *Service: A trilogy on colonization*, is being published by Printed Matter Inc.

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PHOTO - JOANNE LEONARD

COMPARTMENTS

CATE ABBE

Betty Bonnet was her name. She was the one with all the hats. One had a grey plume that stuck out the top. Mother said it was ostrich. Betty was only a little girl, maybe twelve or thirteen. But she had the most beautiful clothes—coats with fur collars, brown velvet dresses with white lace around the neck for parties. She had such pink cheeks. Her hair fell in long curls from under the hat. I wanted to be her. I wanted to take her out of her compartment and play with her. Take the dresses and choose for myself. Fold the paper tabs over her shoulders. She would go to school, she would be the prettiest. She would be me. I would make her lovely for everyone. Like Mother said I was to be when I had to sit still so she could brush my hair, parting each side for braids. She pulled tight; pulled and twisted each braid with her strong hands.

Mother said no. Not until you are older and know how to touch them. They are fragile. Paper. Betty was her favorite. All those years living between the yellowing pages of the magazine that smelled like the closet in Grandmother's house. Each doll had a place, with all her dresses, her hats. One had a fur piece with just enough space for the head to fit through. It was Betty's older sister. Mother had a fox stole too. Sometimes she wore it to parties. She is my mother. They are her dolls.

One day I was allowed to play with Betty, just Betty. Mother went to the heavy chest in the dining room. She took out the box tied with strings. She was a child too. She hid things. She hid things from me. She didn't want me to know. Betty was her favorite, my favorite. She had the best clothes. When I touched her the paper felt like silk. I chose the blue dress with buttons down the front and legs attached. Her high shoes matched. She matched perfectly. I asked Mother if that's the way she dressed when she was twelve. Be careful, she said.

She tightens the braid until it hurts. Now look for yourself in the mirror, look. She slips my head between the slit in the hat, she tells me to smile. In the mirror I am beautiful. In the mirror I am paper; I am flat, flattened. I am to be placed somewhere and she is cutting.

Cate Abbe won the Academy of American Poets Award at San Francisco State University in 1976. She is completing a masters degree in creative writing there and lives in Palo Alto. Her poetry has been published in several small west coast magazines. She also plays the guitar and writes music.

Joanne Leonard is a photographer living in Berkeley whose work is beginning to be shown and published broadly.

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FROM THE *PINK* AND *YELLOW* BOOKS

POPPY JOHNSON

The context of my writing is the performance situation which I set up at Artists' Space, the Leo Castelli Gallery, and the Whitney Downtown, where a video camera on a tripod behind me instantaneously transmitted the image of the letters, words, sentences as they were written to a video monitor across the room. The pink book was written in anticipation of performing, the yellow book is one-third performance and the blue and subsequent books consist only and totally of material written in performance.

Pink Book

Beginning at the beginning. Which is rock bottom. To be an artist who has not made any art for two years is very depressing. I have been very happy and absorbed. I had two perfect little bodies come out of my body. My body was huge and soft and full of milk. I held and nursed and fondled and fed and dressed and undressed and talked to and listened to my babies in an unending orgy of interdependence. Since Mira and Bran were born I have had no time to myself except sleep. But now I have been hired by Carl Andre to do this job of sitting for three hours a day in an old green space with a sign eight feet from my right eye about possibilities for art production. . . . So Carl is unwittingly my first patron (this work), my inspiration and my competition. My materials were paper and pen, now I have a typewriter here so that what I am doing now is part typing what I have already written and part writing now and it all has to do with the future. My economic resources are not vast, but neither are my needs. I figure I need $500 a month to support myself and half of two children which works out to $8.20 an hour if I work three hours a day five days a week which is all I want to spare right now from my children. The economic resource I have right now from this job is really time. The rest is all my subjective characteristics which will be manifest in the work which is to write whatever I am thinking publicly so that it can be simultaneously read. I am not being particularly clear, but this is the boring part where I am trying to elicit interest and support and collaboration or patronage or whatever. Already I feel a need to rewrite the beginning. This work is writing about this work. Writing about this work is this work. I am keeping my private journal publicly. I am the Delphic oracle. I am studying to be a shopping-bag lady. I am redefining art. I want to be in a public room with a typewriter and some machinery, maybe video, that could shoot a written page of 8½ by 11" paper and project the image of it on a wall or screen, but so it is easily legible. The room is somewhat dark except for a good light on my typewriter. I am writing down whatever I am thinking as fast and completely and well as I can. People come in and watch and read. There is a xerox machine somewhere so that xeroxes of pages may be made. I want to find out what and how I think. I want the publicness of it to interact with the process of finding out. I like using machines although I am not technically proficient and comfortable with them because they and art are the two metaphors for the mind that I am always bumping up against . . . It isn't terror. It isn't joy. It's some sort of physical sensation which starts from the very top of my head and ripples down to my buttocks since I'm sitting. If I were standing it would ripple to my feet and make my insteps tingle. I'm stoned. If I thought it were terror I would be terrified. If I thought it were joy I might be still and meditative and happy, but that is different from this absorbed state of working that I am in. This is where there is that possibility of inarticulableness, either stoned or orgasming or making or contemplating art or mystical experiences. There is the temptation of feigning speechlessness because of fearing the inadequacy of words. It can't be the words that are at fault, but my laziness. Outside there is a New York sirocco blowing hot restless moving air all around my legs and hair. It's exciting but disturbing since I'm wearing only a light short cotton dress and a pair of underpants. A pair of underpants is only one thing unlike a pair of mittens. I feel naked and lustful and agitated. I just thought about Gertrude Stein and Jill Johnston as heroines, but I didn't like to think it because it broke my other train of thought. I'd rather stay physical today. While digging in my purse for cigarettes (a man wouldn't have written that) I found a three-inch high light gray plastic horse, missing its flowing tail but complete with flowing darker mane and red indented nostrils and lips, that belongs to my children. Well, I bought it for them but it's questionable if children actually own things at all. . . . I remember Lambie, a big soft stuffed white lamb I slept with, and later used to dust with my mother's perfumed talcum powder to make him white again. Funny that I thought he was male. I wonder when I started dividing the world that way and what arbitrary rules did I make up in unknown gender cases like toy animals and why. I did write a list of the first hundred words the babies spoke, but I haven't written them a journal of their daily activities. That's their bedtime story every night anyway so I suppose I could tape it and save it for them for eternity. "Once upon a time there was a little boy named Bran and a little girl named Mira and this morning they woke up very early and woke up their mommy and daddy and had eggs for breakfast and . . . ." Every once in a while I get conscious of switching the order girl/boy, boy/girl, every alternate night, but often slide back to Bran/Mira several nights in a row. I even started telling it "Once upon a time there were two children, one named Mira and one named Bran . . ." so that there wouldn't even be the boy/girl differentiation at all, but I'm afraid that they and I are already conditioned that way. Bran is masculine and Mira is feminine and they get more and more different every day. I hope that Mira won't hate me when she grows up. I hope that all the femininity that I have inevitably inculcated in her will be perceived as positive and valuable instead of the degrading powerlessness I have often been made to feel. The only way I can attempt to assure that is to make sure she grows up with good images of female power surrounding her, starting with my own self. And that means not totally answering her current demands of all my time and affection and attention so that I can go out and get myself powerful and make sure that I feel it and feel good about it. Which is difficult to do. Which I'm not pretending to do for her sake, but knowing that it is also for her makes me stronger. It's for Bran too but not as empathetically. For a long time I was taught to see my mother, and she was being convinced to see herself, as a mean, castrating, frigid, evil bitch. I don't blame her for that, but I would blame myself if I let Mira suffer the same thing. She will have to suffer something else. Some new pattern. In my mother's family one only talks about the women, at least as far back as the civil war, because they were the interesting ones and/or they lived longer. Anyway it is the female line that is traced. I read a diary of my mother's mother's mother's mother who was a southern belle named Emma Munnerlin, daughter of a rice plantation and slave owner, who married Charles Stocking, a yankee whose family had been long settled in the Connecticut River valley. He made a small fortune and then the civil war broke out and his brothers

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and cousins were all fighting for the union. He got wiped out financially and went catatonic for a while and then just psychotically morbid and depressed and afunctional. Emma's brothers and father were killed and ruined so she had to move north with two infant daughters and a crazy husband and support everybody by giving french and music lessons to the local yankee daughters. She didn't complain in her diaries and they are not too exciting to read unless you already know the story and empathize a lot. She had been brought up with a personal slave companion, a girl a little older than herself, who brushed her long hair for her every morning and every night. They must have started out like twins or best friends or lovers and been trained to accept their difference in status. Her slave would have been the real child of the black woman who suckled her and the reason the woman was still full of milk for the little white baby. It is easier to imagine the rage that the black baby girl woman might have felt but probably didn't than to understand what subtle unconscious mixtures of interdependence and guilt and affection and tyranny Emma might have felt. Either way there's no record of it. Only imaginings based on experience or literature or movies. One of my best friends throughout high school was a very brilliant, angry, tricky and unfathomable black girl, one of the three or four blacks in the whole hypocritical elitist bourgeois school. I am a complex and conscious racist. I wish I weren't a racist at all, but I am a racist and a sexist and would probably be a capitalist imperialist if I had the chance. Fighting those things personally can either give or take away the strength to fight them on a political level. . . .

When Eva Hesse died, some friends of mine were moving into her place on the Bowery, and they knew how poor I was, and they said I could have any of the materials I could salvage from the heaps on the floor. I took inks and charcoals and watercolor sets and oilpaints and cords and tubing and strings and bits of rubber and everything. I figured it might be magic and I needed all the money I was making (working for a real estate agent in Brooklyn) for food anyway. I can never have too many bottles of half-evaporated foul-smelling multicolored Higgins ink and little wads of used art gum erasers. I carry it all with me from studio to studio. First to the 5th floor of 323 Greenwich St, then to Mulberry St, then to the country, then to the 4th floor of 323 Greenwich St, then to 319 Greenwich St. It comes in handy. Except for the horrid little nose masks for working with plastic.

One time I used a whole lot of that material plus other stuff to make work in the woods. I was reading a lot about shamanism at the time and, while thinking, I would spend all day in the woods, one late summer into fall, making things from painted strings and painted wood and the trees that were there and the rocks and a brook and rubber slingshots and the works were visible enough to be photographed but invisible enough to be magical traps. Nobody ever saw them except the man I lived with and the man who used to own the woods and still walked his dogs there and perhaps an occasional hunter. I always wore red when I worked so I wouldn't be shot at. And big rubber boots so the copperheads and rattlesnakes wouldn't bite me. One weekend some people were coming to visit. A critic and a painter. I was very excited because I wanted them to come see my work. I worked hard on Friday afternoon in the woods (after cleaning the house and shopping and making beds etc.). They arrived for supper and it was dark. I woke early Saturday morning from excitement and anxiety and went walking to the woods to see everything once more alone before it became public and found everything I had done wantonly destroyed and stolen and dragged away and gone. This art is writing about this art. Writing about this art is this art. I love grammar but I don't understand its relation to meaning. If thoughts are born in words, as words, then the grammar is part of their initial existence. If thoughts are born not words, then the words come next and then the grammar is invented for them that puts them in the best order. My daughter has just invented or discovered a sentence that she says all the time which is the question "What is the ——— doing?" ——— being any noun she knows, mommy, truck, daddy, brother, cookie, kitty, chair, table, toy, etc. I answer the question as best I can when it refers to anything capable of action (doing) but I get confused by "what is the cookie doing?" Sometimes I just say "it is" or "it is being a cookie" or "the cookie is sitting on the chair where Mira left it, waiting for Mira to hurry up and eat it before Poppy or Bran does" or "I don't know, Mira, what is the cookie doing?" to which she replies "UH." She has three answers to the kind of questions that I don't know the answers to myself, No, Yes, and uh. It is not grammar, anyway, which is only a structure, but the enormous number of words and then the mathematical infinity of combining any two, three, seven, twenty-four, thirty-three of them in one sentence that staggers the imagination. . . .

I've been thinking about Suzanne Harris' work *Locus Up*. It is experientially describable as a saint approaching death. It is made of sand and stucco walls. Suzanne looks to me like a combination of Joan of Arc and Saint Sebastian by various renaissance masters. I think she is very beautiful. That may not be relevant but I wrote it anyway. The saint approaches her death. She walks slowly in the sandy desert and the horizon melts away as the sand rises symmetrically on either side of her progress. She won't look back which is the only way to see the world and people and life she is leaving behind. She looks straight ahead at a narrow dark doorway cut into the mound of sand ahead. Inside is a cool, dark but short passageway that immediately and clearly opens into a bright round limited space. In the center of the bright round space, so huge that it takes up three-fourths of the space is an implacable white cube. The saint looks up into the blue sky above. She has left everything else behind and entered into her own metaphor for her soul, hermetic and infinite. She is not afraid.

I wrote a very long list of all the women who I think are beautiful that I have been in the same room with. This is all related. I have been trained by art at the service of society to see certain things as beautiful: sunsets, flowers, stars, jewels, fruit, oceans, shells, trees, mountains, circles, colors, sunrises, and rocks and mothers with children and gold and sunlight and eyes and animals and glass and wood and shiny things; calligraphy and birds and structure and dragons and hills; stars and moonlight, boats, flags, crucifixions and repetition and liquids, flight and the lives of the saints, altruism and patriotism and irony, rhythm and power and women. This list could be short if it were generalized and long if it were particularized. Very few of the women on my list are mothers, so why did I want to be a mother? I thought of two ways to be useful on this earth. One is to alleviate human suffering which would make one want to be a saint a scientist a revolutionary a doctor a politician a nurse a teacher a social worker a mass murderer a saint a mother an artist an entertainer a whore a mathematician or to add to human joy by being.

Yellow Book

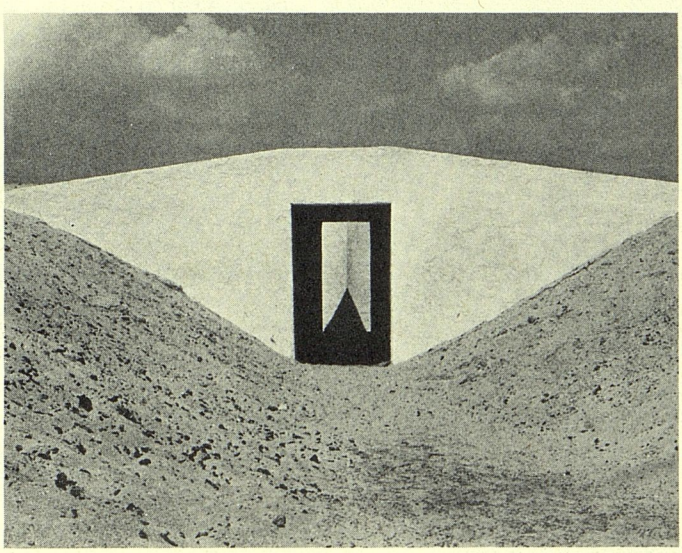
It might be possible to believe that Chang Ching truly tried to revolutionize culture or the relationship between people and culture and that is why the bureaucrats who seem to be in power now are afraid of her. *The New York Times* says her revolutionary operas were rigidly propagandistic but they see propa-

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ganda as a pejorative word and what do they know anyway? It interests me that she was an actress and perhaps an adventuress and I imagine she has been made to suffer because Mao sent his loyal wife of the Long March, who bore him children given to peasants on the route and then lost, off to Moscow and then divorced her so he could marry young Chang Ching. My son is crying in his room. It is ten o'clock at night and he is supposed to be learning to go to bed without me lying beside him or singing songs or telling stories until he goes to sleep. If I do all or any of those things his father gets mad at me. If I don't he cries and his father gets mad at him and then at me because it is my fault he cries and it takes hours before everyone calms down because I get mad too. All that writing was interrupted by my going and lying down beside Bran and holding his hand and within five minutes he fell asleep. The other night both children were in the bathtub and I gave them two roses from the dozens given me at my performance to play with. I dethorned them first. I got in the bathtub with them and they were pulling the petals off the roses and we all decorated each other with rose petals. But I worry about Chang Ching. What if both she and Mao had been mythologized together, as an inseparable passionate toward each other and passionate to the revolution pair. He would seem less a father if he were also seen as a lover. Wasn't it Justinian and Theodora who ran such an ideal government and she had been a dancing girl or something. I know I used to think that all men were republicans and all women democrats. (My daughter sometimes declares that all girls have blue eyes and all boys have brown eyes, but now she has a blue-eyed doll with a penis so her faith is a bit shaken.) (She also knows her brown-eyed halfsister has a cunt which is the word used opposite penis in this house because vagina is just not one of my favorite words and cunt is despite its frequent misuse as an insult.) I was taught that men were republicans because they had to worry about money and they didn't like to give it to poor people and that women, because they didn't have to work and are naturally extravagant and generous and soft-hearted, are democrats and fuzzy-headed liberals. Also because women can afford to be idealistic and hopeful whereas men have to be cynical to survive in the jungle. There is probably no demographic truth in that, it was only my own family. I am registered and almost always vote as a democrat but my real party is the changchingist communist party, which is entirely feminist and attempts to integrate art and life in a truly revolutionary manner. This party has only just now been imagined by me and its inspiration is languishing under house arrest in Peking on the other side of this funny round world, but the . . .

Our loft is very odd now. You walk in and are confronted with what is either called a what-not or a marbletop, being an elaborately carved wooden object with a mirror and knobs for hanging coats and bags and a marble tabletop for throwing keys and letters and a drawer for lint brushes and miscellany, very victorian and handy. Then you turn right into a wall giving you three choices. December 2nd. You see, yesterday was short and unsatisfactory. There was a chinese piano tuner and a dinner party, the place I live in was not described, a tiny baby and very cold weather. My eyes are heavy-lidded, always have been. I don't look innocent. I have of course been told that my eyes are beautiful, but they aren't. They are hooded and abandoned and of a blue more organic than mineral. They feel tired except when I remember they are round balls mostly inside my head. They are not just what they appear. Once I saw a short accompanying a movie which was made for german children to explain the physiology and physics of the eye. I especially remember the waves of color, the red short and angry jumping and the blue long and peaceful wavy like the ocean. Then they made gray rosebushes turn all red. Would that it were that simple. I hate mysteries. I would truly like to know everything. I'd like to begin with all the most important things and then all the subsidiary facts would just fall into place in an orderly way and wouldn't be worrisome instead of just accumulating a lot of small things and reasoning out their places to build a structure I cannot imagine the shape of until I have finished building. I would like some blinding flashes like Einstein had on the trolley. I would like not to have to work so hard and be so heavy-lidded. I would also like not to think that I have to read a lot of books, that there I might find enough details for my constructions. No, I scream at myself, that is not where it is found these days, politely hiding on a quiet page, you might find it in the bathtub with your body or in socratic dialogues with your peer group or even in a cultural manifestation, but, no, never just sitting in a book.

Poppy Johnson is an artist who lives in New York.



Suzanne Harris. *Locus Up One*, 1976. Stucco over wood and wire. Tunnel: 4' w x 8' h. x 20' l.; diam.: 21'. New York City.

Suzanne Harris is a sculptor living in New York, working indoors and out, mostly with space, who is particularly interested in making public art.

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TWO FROM SHORT STORIES AND LOVE SONGS

Pat Steir

KITCHENS 1970

My Aunt Beverly came to visit me .
I last saw her twenty-two years ago when I was twelve .

This time she had freshly dyed and set hair .
It was glossy red . short . and neatly curled .
A friend was with her . her friend's hair was dyed blond .
She was tired looking . and not as neat as Beverly .
Aunt Beverly said "this is fran . . . do you remember her ?
I know her since before you were born" .

They were boyish sixty-year-old women .
Reminding me of the working women I see
leaving their offices and factories at 5 on winter afternoons .
I suppose it is a hard lonely life they have .

"I have traveled a lot since len died" she said .
"I took a cross-country bus trip" .
Funny . she always called him leonard . when I was a child .
when he was alive .

I remember her well . from the old days .
The years when the children were growing up .
Her hair was longer then . and darker . she was thin .
I remember she thought herself a cross between
katharine hepburn and ingrid bergman .

We were all poor .
We lived in four-family wooden-frame buildings .
Railroad flats .
Beverly's daughters abby and marta were smart — and beautiful .
Her son jeffrey was retarded .
Each summer uncle leonard tried to teach jeffrey to count .
They spent years in the front bedroom . years of summers .
Counting and trying .
I feel those summers often .
a flavor . a taste . a just missed time .
Some days seem pregnant with them .

It is as though a day from long ago
is about to arrive in the midst of a new summer .
Once I was sunbathing on a foreign beach .
and the heat — the sun — the loneliness of a distant
voice brought them back to me .
Aunt Beverly and my mother in the kitchen .

I remember myself a fat child .
Sitting in the shade — at the side of the house .
"The oldest" — "keeping an eye on the smaller children"

My mother's and Beverly's voices
coming through the open kitchen window .
Their voices became part of the air . a hum and a whisper .
words barely audible . the clink of ice .
All summer they drank iced coffee with milk in it .
they sat in their flower-print housedresses .
at the white enamel kitchen table . near the window .
sometimes — but rarely laughing .
endlessly talking about childhood friends . operations .
and abortions . deaths . and money .

while in the hot mud driveway . I watched a red ant .
crawl from shadow to shadow . across the Australian Plains

CONVERSATION 1969

I mourn mortality .
my friend came to visit .
the evening passed .
time wove back and forward again .
we spoke about places .
the room seemed to become other rooms .
i described a room . a room i never remember
except when i am in it .
she described a room .
a gift for a gift .

the conversation became a gigantic sculpture .
a transcontinental journey on the queen mary .
something rare .
we wanted to capture it . the event . in a novel .
writing on six pages at once . filming it .
writing poetry of poetry on the walls of it .
painting pictures in non-existent colors .
the memories and the memories of them .

in the morning she told me of a road sprayed with sunshine .

i told about a little horse in mexico . he lived inside a fence
8 feet in diameter . beneath a banana tree .
the girls in the house hung their petticoats
on a line that passed above him .
all the days i was there . i could see him standing
inside his fence . beside the banana tree .
under the petticoats . with a huge erection .
cows grazed on water lilies in the pond . just beyond him .
only their heads showed . the horse was black .

she said write it .

then we ate lunch .
when my friend got ready to leave i followed her
through the house .
i watched her go down the stairs .
i ran inside to the window .
i wanted to call to her . but by the time i got the window open .
she was already down the street .

then i phoned another friend .
and ate half a box of "Famous Cookie Assortment" cookies .
in this way i mourned the nature of time . all partings .
and the frail thing that each day is .

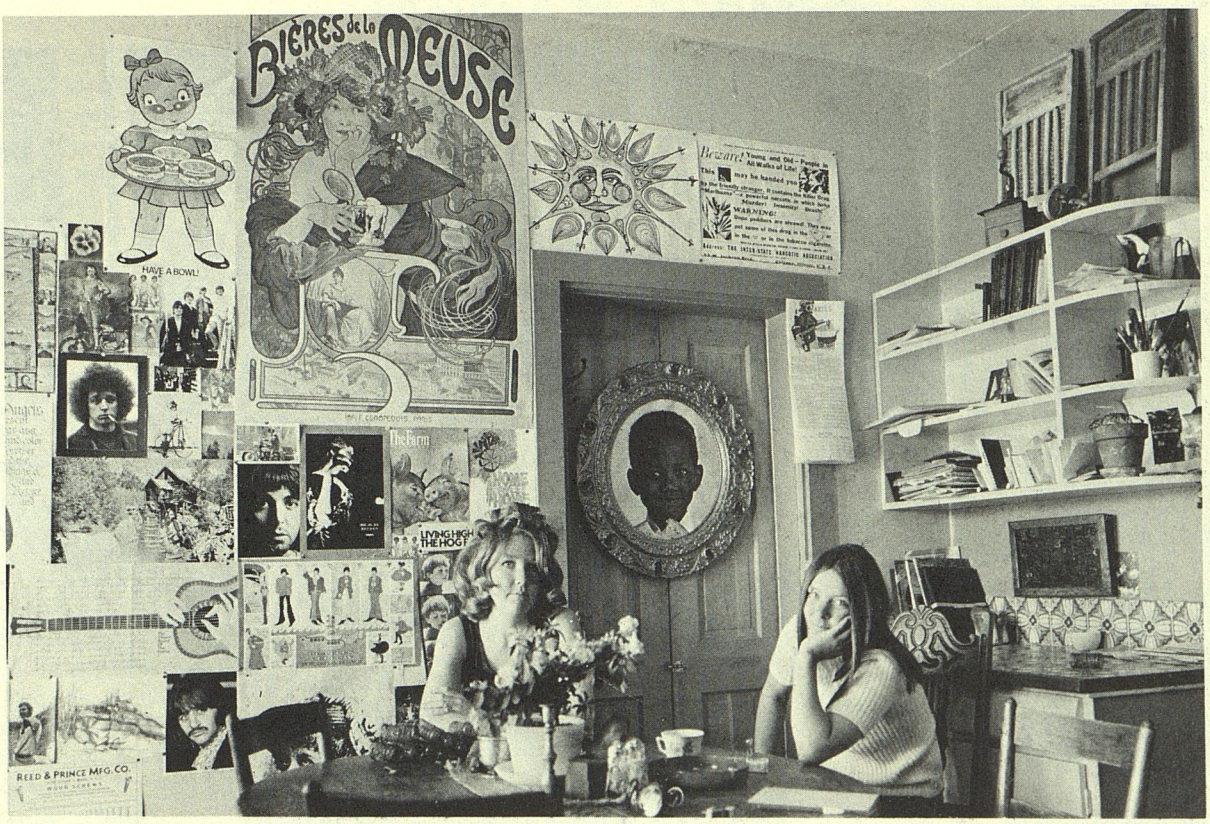
I wonder what it will be like when i get home . she had said .

Pat Steir lives in New York and makes art and poetry. She is involved with two alternative publishing ventures as well as being a member of the Heresies Collective.

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Roberta Neiman. *Birthday Party*. 1973. Beverly Hills, California.



Roberta Neiman. *Pat Smith and Friend*. 1968. Aspen, Colorado.

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Roberta Neiman. *Spring*. 1972. New York City.

Roberta Neiman. *Bloomingdale's*. 1971. New York City.



Roberta Neiman is a photographer working in New York; before that she was a special-production photographer on film in California. She teaches and has shown at various museums.

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INTERACTIONAL SHITWORK

PAMELA M. FISHMAN

A rallying cry of the early women's movement was "The personal is political." This was not only a slogan, but a directive for analysis that would be a means for understanding and reinterpreting our private lives. I was a first year graduate student in sociology when I joined the women's movement. My specialty, ethnomethodology, had already shown me the importance of everyday interactions, that they are not simply a reflection of reality but the means by which people construct and maintain their understanding of the world and of themselves. Through interactions, we constantly define reality, as well as the form and substance of our social relationships.

However, this approach did not deal with power, which, as a feminist, I found was a central concern in everyday interactions. I wanted to know the ways in which interactions between men and women express power relations; I wanted to see exactly how our personal interactions are political.

We know much more now about the social sources of our oppression than we did a few years ago. The relative positions of the sexes in the economy have been well documented. Analysis has shown the ways in which women's unpaid domestic labor contributes to our position of powerlessness. Still, we feel this powerlessness individually, and it is maintained concretely on an everyday basis.

I began to research the ways in which the general social organization of male-female hierarchy exists in our daily activities. Specifically, I have analyzed male-female conversations between intimates in their homes.

Initially, I hoped to tape record arguments, since these would be conversational power struggles. But as it turned out, I didn't get any arguments. Instead, I discovered that such overt power struggles were not necessary to illuminate women's oppression in everyday conversation. Rather, supposedly trivial daily talk reveals a division of labor between men and women in conversation which supports our more general positions of power and powerlessness.

It is not simply two people talking that produces conversation, but their active agreement to mutually cooperate in talk. Interactions are always potentially problematic and are sustained only by the participants' continuing efforts, turn by turn. They must be begun, developed and ended jointly.[1] Every remark or turn at speaking is an attempt at producing conversation. The question of whether the attempt is successful or not depends on the participants' willingness to do interactional work. When one person makes an attempt, the other participant has the power to turn it into a conversation or to stop it right there.

How, then, is the work of interaction accomplished in conversations between male and female intimates? Who does what kind of work? To find out, I listened to 52 hours of tape-recorded conversation between three couples who had agreed to have a Uher 4000 tape recorder set up in their apartments. The apartments were small enough for the recorder to pick up all conversation from the kitchen and living room as well as louder talk from the bedroom and bath. The tape recorder was in place from four to 14 days. The tapes could run for four hours without interruption. Though automatic timers could switch the tapes on and off, all three couples insisted on doing the switching manually. Uninterrupted recording varies from one to four hours. The talk did not seem self-conscious because of the recorder's presence and conversations seemed natural.

The couples had lived together for varying amounts of time—from three months to two years. All were white and professionally oriented, and all but one woman (a social worker) were in graduate school. They were between the ages of 25 and 35. Two women were declared feminists and all three men as well as the third woman described themselves as "sympathetic" to the women's movement.

The Preliminaries

I made some interesting discoveries even before I began my analysis, through casual conversations with the people involved in the taping. First, in all three cases, the men set up the tape recorders and nearly always turned them on and off, sometimes without letting the women know. The reverse never occurred. Now, controlling a conversation is more than controlling the topic; it is controlling the situation in general—not only what will be talked about, but whether there will be conversation, and under what terms it will occur. The tape recorder introduced a new element into the routine home situation. Controlling the tape recorder meant controlling part of the situation in which conversation took place.

Second, there was the issue of normally private interactions being available to a third party, the researcher. In addition to the men doing most of the censoring of the tapes, they made other attempts to control what I heard. For instance, the clicks that are recorded when the machine is turned off (and my own sense of the conversations) helped me to separate time segments. One man carefully erased all clicks on his and his partner's tapes, confusing my attempts to identify different time segments.

The second case was worse. I had made the mistake of asking one couple to help me transcribe a particularly difficult tape of theirs—a conversation about a book club selection. In fact, they couldn't hear themselves any better than I could, and the man wanted to know why I was interested in the conversation. He kept guessing what I was looking for, was annoyed that I wanted a literal transcription, kept saying that only the gist of the conversation (which he could tell me) was important, and repeatedly tried to tell me the meaning of the conversation, explaining his motivations for saying things.

These preliminaries already suggested that men are more likely than women to control conversation. The men made sure that they always knew when their interactions were available to me by their control of the recorder, but they were unconcerned, if not sneaky, about letting the women know this. When they had the chance, they attempted to control my interpretations of the conversations.

Conversational Work

I listened to all 52 hours of tape and transcribed five hours of it for close analysis. Given the small amount of conversation analyzed, my findings from the transcripts are provisional. But the implications from such a small amount of material suggest this is only the tip of the iceberg. From listening to all the tapes, it appeared to me that the men controlled the subject much more than the women did and that the men were consistently

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successful in initiating interactions, while the women's attempts often failed. They did not fail because of anything inherent in their talk, but because the men did not respond, did not do any interactional work. The men's remarks succeeded because of interactional work done by the women in response to them.

When I analyzed specific transcripts, it appeared that the men did very little to gain such control, and by doing very little, they displayed power without specifically exercising it. A turn-by-turn analysis revealed the women's constant conversational work. They struggled to get responses to their own remarks or were busy responding to the men's remarks. In my analysis, I identified a number of strategies used in conversational work. These strategies reveal the differential work men and women do.

Asking Questions

Questions are a powerful kind of utterance. They are half of a paired relation, with answers the second half. That is, Q-A is a unit, not two separate things. Questions demand answers, while statements do not demand other statements. If no answer is given, its absence is noticeable and can be complained about. A question in conversation works by beginning a two-part sequence; it ensures an interaction of at least one utterance by each of two participants.

Counting the questions in about seven hours of tape, I found that the women asked two and a half times more questions than the men did—150 to 59. At times, it seemed that all the women did was ask questions. Then I began noticing my own speech and discovered the same pattern. I often made questions out of remarks that could have been statements: "Isn't it a lovely day?", "Shouldn't we go grocery shopping?" I then tried to break myself of the "habit" and found it was difficult. Many remarks came out as questions before I noticed. When I did succeed in making a statement, I usually did not get a response. It became clear that I wasn't asking so many questions out of habit, but because unless I did, my attempts at interaction would fail.

Attention-Getting Devices

Attention-getting devices are remarks that, whether they give information or not, attempt to get the attention necessary to begin conversation. The women used these devices consistently while the men did not, indicating the women's difficulty in assuming that what they said would be treated seriously and would generate a response. I've identified three types of attention-getting devices.

The first was originally discussed by Harvey Sacks when he explored children's restricted rights to speak in the presence of adults.[2] Sacks noticed one type of question used extensively by children as a conversational opening: "D'ya know what?" This type of question is answered by another question: "What?" The first speaker is then in the position of having obtained the attention needed to say what he or she wanted to say in the first place. This is a Q-Q-A sequence, setting off a three-part exchange. Sacks further pointed out that while the use of this device ensures children's rights to speak, at the same time it acknowledges their restricted rights. These three-part sequences in conversations tell us about the work of guaranteeing conversation as well as identifying differential rights of the participants. In the five hours of my transcripts, the women used this device twice as often as the men.

Second, there were many instances of "y'know" in the transcripts. This phrase is an attempt to see if the other person is paying attention. It was used 34 times by the women and three times by the men. The use of the phrase increased as the men's responses decreased.

Third, "This is interesting," or a variation, was used throughout the tapes. By engaging in conversation people indicate that there is a mutual interest in what is being said. When one uses "This is interesting" as an introduction, it signals that the remark itself may not be seen as worthy of attention. The speaker is working to establish the interest of the remark. In the five hours of transcribed material, the women used this device ten times, the men seven.[3] When interest is not in question, that work is done by both interactants. The first person makes a remark, the second person responds to it, and together they establish its joint interest.

Minimal Response

A minimal response refers to a speaker saying "yeah," "umm," "huh," and little more. Both men and women used this, but often in different ways. The men used the monosyllabic response as one step short of not responding at all. For example, the woman made a long remark, and the man responded with "yeah," which neither encouraged her to continue nor elaborated the topic. Minimal responses

F: I didn't know that.(=) Um you know that ((garbage disposal on)) that organizational

M: Hmm?(=)

F: stuff about Frederick Taylor and Bishopsgate and all that stuff?(=) In the early

M: Umhm((yes))

F: 1900s people were trying to fight favoritism to the schools(4)

M: That's what we needed.(18) I

F:

M: never did get my smoked oysters. I'm going to have to look for ((inaudible)) (14) Should we

F: OK. That's a change.(72) Hmm. That's very interesting. Did

M: try the Riviera French Dressing?(=)

F: you know that teachers used to be men until about the 1840s when it became a female occupa-

M:

F: tion?(2) Because they needed more teachers because of the increased enrollment.(5)

M: Umhm((no))(=)

F: Yeah relatively and the status.(7)

M: And then the salaries started going down probably.(=) Um,

F: There's two bottles I think.

M: it's weird. We're out of oil again. Now we have to buy that. ((whistling))(8) Dressing looks

F: It does yeah.(76) That's really interesting. They didn't start

M: good. See?(2) See babe?(1)

F: using the test to measure and find the you know categorize and track people in American pub-

M:

F: lic schools until like the early 1900s after the army y'know introduced their army alpha

M:

F: things to the draftees(?) And then it caught on with the schools and there was a lot of oppo-

M:

F: sition right at the beginning to that, which was as sophisticated as today's arguments. The

M:

F: same arguments y'know (=) But it didn't work and they came(4) ha.

Yeah(=) Leslie White is probably right.

Numbers in parentheses indicate number of seconds of a pause. "(=)" means the pause was less than a second. Brackets show simultaneous talk. My own remarks are in double parentheses. M and F stand for male and female speaker. The conversation is presented in paired exchanges, Sets 1 through 15. The sets are like a musical score and ideally would be strung together in ticker-tape fashion. They should be read that way.

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used in this way display lack of interest and attempt to discourage further interaction.

The women also used this kind of minimal response at times, but mostly in a way that is best termed "support work." While the man talks, the woman skillfully inserts "mmm," "yeah," "oh," throughout the stream of talk. By doing this, the woman signals that she is paying attention to what is being said, that she is fully participating, that she has a continuing interest in both interaction and interactant. This is done with agility during the speaker's pauses, seldom causing even slight overlaps. Nothing in either tone or structure suggests that the woman is trying to take over the talk.

Making Statements

Finally, there are statements that do no *specific* conversational work. Of course, by its mere existence, a statement provides for a response, and thereby does some minimal work. However, it also shows the speaker's assumption that any attempt will be successful and interesting, that he or she will be responded to. It is as if the speaker assumes there are no problems, that success is naturally his or hers. In the transcribed material, the men made this kind of statement more than twice as many times as the women. The substance of their remarks was not more interesting than the women's, but took on that character because they generated interaction.

An Example

One segment of conversation from my transcripts is the beginning of an interaction. The woman is reading a book in her academic specialty and the man is making a salad. I originally transcribed it for analysis because conversation seemed difficult for the woman, and she used strategies to ensure some response. (I suggest reading the transcript before continuing with the text.)

The woman (F) starts off in Set 1 with two "d'ya know" question sequences, signaling that she is not sure she can get the man's (M's) attention. It seems to be the right assumption, since M's response in Set 3 is minimal and both fall silent. F's next attempt, in Sets 5-6, uses more attention-getting devices. This time, F prefaces her remarks both with a "That's very interesting" and "Did you know . . .?" The double-barreled attempt is more successful and generates two exchanges, Sets 7-8. F's success is short-lived, however; M fails to respond to her last contribution and thus ends the exchange.

F's third attempt begins in Set 10 with "That's really interesting." As M makes no attempt to follow up on any of her statements, F continues talking for 30 seconds, using two "y'knows" and a question intonation. M finally responds with a "Yeah" after F repeats herself and says "y'know" a third time. Though there are further attempts made by F later in the interaction, a conversation on this topic never develops.

The transcript shows some ways the strategies described earlier are used in actual conversation. It shows the woman working at interaction and the man exercising his power by refusing to participate fully. As the interaction develops and F becomes more aware of her difficulties, F brings more pressure on M by increasing her use of strategies. Even so, she only ensures immediate, localized responses, not a full conversational exchange.

Immediately following this transcribed material, M begins and continues a conversation about a soft drink and Richard Nixon being a former lawyer for Pepsi-Cola. F gives elaborating responses, with a series of exchanges between them that end when M opts not to continue. This Pepsi-Cola/Nixon exchange shows that the man was willing to engage in discussion, but apparently only on his own terms.

Conclusions

There is a division of labor in conversation. Though the women generally do more work, the men usually control the conversations couples have. Since the men's remarks develop into conversation more often than the women's, men end up defining what will be talked about and which aspects of reality are the most important.

Women are required to do specific kinds of interactional work in conversations with men. More than that, we are generally required to be available. The conversational work expected of women differs according to the situation; sometimes we are supposed to be an audience, "good listeners," because we are not otherwise needed. We may have to fill silences and keep conversations moving. Sometimes we are supposed to develop other people's topics and other times to present and develop topics of our own.

There are subtle demands on women to be available for interaction. If women do not answer these demands—if we are not "naturally" available, we get in trouble. Women who sit silently while a conversation flounders are seen as hostile or inept. Women who consistently and successfully control interactions are criticized, particularly by men who question the female's status as a woman. They are likely to be called "bitchy," "domineering," or "aggressive." When women attempt even temporarily to control conversation with men, it often starts an argument.

Women who do not behave interactionally are punished; often it is implied that they are not "real women." One's sexual identity is crucial. It is the most "natural" differentiating characteristic there is. But it is not simply our bodies that define gender. We must constantly behave as male or female in order for our gender to be taken for granted in interaction. We must prove our gender continually.

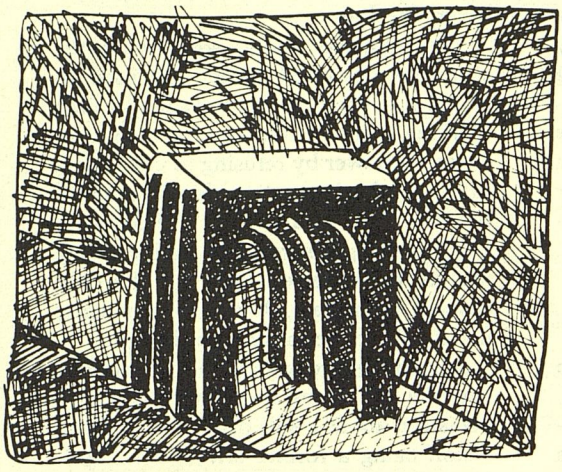
The active maintenance of gender requires women to be available to do whatever needs to be done in interactions. Since interactional work is tied up with female identity, with what a woman *is*, the fact that it is work is obscured. It is not seen as something we do, but as part of what we are, similar to caring for the house and children, which have also been seen as part and parcel of what women are. In both cases, the value and necessity of the work are hidden behind the screen of the sexual division of labor.

1. This view is influenced by the work in conversational analysis done by Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson and others. See Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn Taking for Conversation," *Language* (Sept. 1974), pp. 696-735.
2. Harvey Sacks, "On the Analyzability of Stories by Children," in *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, ed. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), pp. 325-425.
3. Six of the seven male usages occurred during one lengthy interaction, while the usages of other strategies discussed were randomly scattered throughout the transcripts. This long conversation was transcribed because it was one of the few where the man had trouble maintaining the conversation. As it became more difficult for him, he used more attention-getting devices. In contrast, four of the female uses were from one transcript, the other six scattered. My impression from listening to all 52 hours of the tapes was that a complete count would show a much larger proportion of female to male usage than the ten to seven ratio indicates.

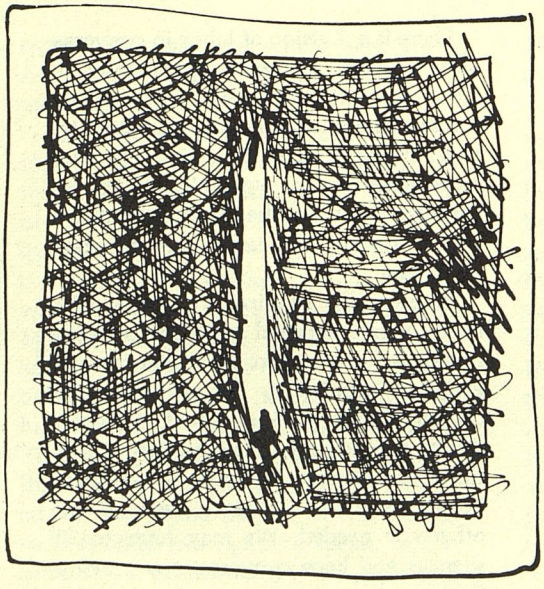
I am grateful to Harvey Molotch, with whose guidance I began this research, and to Myrtha Chabran, Mark Fishman, Drew Humphries, Linda Marks, Morgan Sanders and Susan Wolf for their help or ideas and criticism on this and earlier drafts.

Pam Fishman is 32, grew up in Arizona and lives in Brooklyn. Her Ph.D. thesis, from the University of California at Santa Barbara, is on power in everyday conversation. She and Linda Marks are writing up what they and their friends often talk about—using their daily experience to do feminist social analysis.

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Denise Green, *Archway*. 1976. Pen and ink 4" x 4". (eeva-inkeri.)



Denise Green. *Needle*. 1976. Pen and ink. 4" x 4". (eeva-inkeri.)

Denise Green is an Australian-born artist showing in New York since 1972. She has taught most recently at the Art Institute of Chicago.

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"Who controls the box office, controls the industry." — Adolph Zukor, President, Famous Players-Lasky Corporation and Paramount Pictures, c. 1923

HEWING THE WOOD AND DRAWING THE WATER
WOMEN AND FILM IN COLONIZED CANADA

ARDELE LISTER

To comprehend fully or to appreciate the fact of women making films in Canada, one must know something of the history of filmmaking in Canada, because all filmmakers in this country are faced with certain facts:

1. The Canadian film audience pays over 200 million dollars annually to Famous Players and Odeon, both foreign-owned conglomerates (Famous is 51% owned by Gulf and Western, which also owns Paramount Pictures; Odeon is now owned by Rank, a British conglomerate concentrating on U.S. film productions. Rank was originally 50% owned by Famous Players' Nathanson.) None of this money is taxed to leave any percentage in Canada to build the Canadian film industry; and there is no stipulation that requires Canadian films to be seen in Canadian theatres.
2. Famous Players and Odeon control over 80% of urban Canadian theatres and openly indulge in practices such as tie-on bookings (made illegal in the U.S. in 1948 under U.S. Antitrust Laws) by which, in order to exhibit a moneymaking film like *Jaws*, theatres must agree to exhibit a string of mediocre American films pumped out by Hollywood studios. As a result, neither mediocre Canadian films nor excellent Canadian films qualify for exhibition.
3. In 1963 Canada was the sixth most important foreign buyer of American films. By 1975 Canada had the dubious distinction of being the biggest buyer of American films outside the U.S.
4. 94% of film rentals in Canada goes to the seven major U.S. distributors. With as little as a 5% cost-of-doing-business tax *in* Canada, 10 million dollars could be fed yearly into the impoverished local film industry. The Canadian government, afraid to be "unfriendly," refuses to legislate.
5. United Nations statistics suggest that an industrialized nation should be able to produce a feature film per million population per year. Canada, with a population of 24 million, produces roughly five features a year.

* * *

Back to God's Country, directed by and starring Nell Shipman, a Victoria-born woman, was released in 1919. It returned 300% on its investment and was a smashing success. It was the first Canadian feature directed by a woman and ranks in the history of early Canadian filmmaking as one of the finest. In it Nell Shipman appeared nude. The scandal that ensued only provoked her to attach to all publicity for the film the slogan "The Nude is Not Rude." Such were our beginnings.

Based on the bestselling novel by James Oliver Curwood, *Back to God's Country* follows the adventures of an independent woman living in northern Canada, braving the bitter winters and fighting off would-be suitors and rapists dressed up as Mounties. Archetypal as the film's heroine and villains are, it offers a portrait of a woman with a strong sense of self and purpose outside traditional notions of servitude who spends eight reels fighting for her right to be herself, to make her own choices. She embodies some of those qualities that have since come to be seen as typically Canadian — a fierce individualism and tenacity *without aggression*; a tendency to explore undiscovered places, both physical and metaphysical; a quiet kind of intense spirituality; a strong identification with animals, especially as victims of man's greed and ambition; and a commitment to the land, however bleak. These are recurring themes in the broken threads of Canadian culture, the most timely of which is that of the loner, often a loser, often recently urbanized, in desperate search for his or her identity. In the culture of the last twenty years, the bearer of these qualities has most often been a male who exploits women in the process of upgrading his own status and self-image. This is a phenomenon common in world history — men who see themselves without power turn on their women and families in hostility and frustration, preferring some power, however ugly, to none.



Director Nell Shipman in *Back to God's Country*. 1919. (Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive.)

> . . . the English Canadian projects himself through his animal images as a threatened victim confronted by a superior alien technology against which he feels powerless, unable to take any positive defensive action, and survive each crisis as he may, ultimately doomed. (Margaret Atwood, *Survival*)

There have been few Canadian heroines and even fewer filmmakers as inspiring as Nell Shipman, and so it is that as Canadian women filmmakers we refer again and again to *Back to God's Country*, in search of our own reflection from which to build anew.

* * *

In 1927, when Canada's feature-film-producing industry was already on the decline because exhibition and distribution were so tied in to American production that indigenous industry was being suffocated, Universal studios remade *Back to God's Country*. This version starred a different cast and shifted the story slightly so that the romantic life rather than the independence of the hero-

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ine was emphasized. In 1953 Universal International Technicolor made the third version of this classic story, starring Rock Hudson and further diminishing the role of the heroine; her nirvana became inseparable from Rock Hudson's arms. Each version of this film accurately reflects its time and place; by 1953 women weren't allowed to be heroines without being submissive to men. The cultural focus had shifted back to the kitchen and away from other life styles.

> Every colonized people — in other words every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality — finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated . . . in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. . . . the goal of his behaviour will be the Other . . . for the Other alone can give him his worth. (Franz Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*)

> The division of sexes is a biological fact, not an event in human history. . . Here is to be found the basic trait of woman: she is the Other in a totality of which the two components are necessary to one another. . . To decline to be the Other, to refuse to be a party to the deal — this would be for women to renounce all the advantages conferred upon them by their alliance with the superior caste. Man-the-sovereign will provide woman-the-liege with material protection and will undertake the moral justification of her existence; thus she can evade at once both economic risk and the metaphysical risk of a liberty in which ends and aims must be contrived without assistance. (Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*)

* * *

Although the proportion of female to male directors in early Canadian filmmaking was small, there was at least room for women's participation in key roles. As in most professions at the earliest stages, there was no rigid role tradition to prevent women definitively from any or all interests or occupations. Most of the women active in early Canadian filmmaking did, however, work in husband-and-wife production teams. They shared the work — rarely the credit. Only recently was Nell Shipman correctly credited with directing *Back to God's Country*, previously attributed to her producer-husband, Ernest Shipman.

In addition to the women working in independent filmmaking, there have been women working at the National Film Board since its inception in 1941. John Grierson, founder and director of the NFB, believed that the organizational skills and talents of librarians were ideal credentials for beginning filmmakers. Much to the surprise of the women librarians he hired, not to mention that of the established filmmakers, the ensuing films did in fact prove the skill of these women. So it was that in the 1940s Gudrun Parker and Evelyn Cherry, to name just two, began their careers in filmmaking, careers that continue to this day, each woman still successfully producing and directing commercial short films, each with her own prairie-based production company.

From the earliest days of Canadian filmmaking through the 1940s, women played key roles. For the next twenty-five years they did not, and only in 1969, with Sylvia Spring's first feature film — *Madeleine Is. . .* — was a woman again visible in a directorial role. What accounts for the quarter-century gap? First, as the NFB's production of short films and documentaries increased, the production of feature films radically decreased, often to the point of non-existence. If Canadian men were getting few opportunities in film, Canadian women were getting fewer — or none. As is the case in all other professions and classes, competition among male filmmakers is such that female inclusion would only make it worse, and in every aspect of the industry women have been deterred from participation. Second, in keeping with the general back-to-the-kitchen backlash after World War II, not only were women omitted from key roles in making films, but the images of women in the films made by men regressed, became more hollow and one-dimensional, reinforcing the cultural stereotype. All of



Director Nell Shipman in *Back to God's Country*. 1919. (Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive.)

this compounded the problem of Canada's aborted film industry, sanctioned by the Canadian Cooperation Project and Canada's previous refusals to hinder the American takeover of exhibition and distribution.

* * *

During the 1920s two factions in the American film industry battled over methods of expansion. The struggle was between the independents (producers and exhibitors) and the monopolists, who favored "vertical integration" — bringing all aspects of filmmaking, distribution and exhibition under the control of the big production studios. Under the guidance of Adolph Zukor, the monopolists won, and independent filmmaking in both Canada and the United States was wiped out. In 1948 the U.S. legislated against this kind of control, and distribution and exhibition were separated from production, allowing the resurrection of an independent film-producing and exhibiting community. In Canada, no such legislation has been passed; foreign companies are allowed privileges they do not even have in their own countries, and the existence of a commercial Canadian film industry is effectively killed. All Canadian filmmakers are, then, by definition, "independent," and yet there is no parallel "independent" system for distribution and exhibition.

In 1931 Famous Players was taken to court under the Canadian Combines Act which forbids foreign companies from controlling the Canadian market in such a way as to put Canadian companies at a disadvantage. But after various tactical pressures and maneuvers, Famous Players was allowed to continue its expansion. In 1948, when the Canadian film-producing community was ready to build a permanent feature industry, the American government was threatened with the loss of millions of profit dollars from Canada. It quickly proposed the Canadian Cooperation Project, by which Canada would promise *not* to make any feature films. The U.S. Motion Picture Export Association promised the Canadian government that the Cooperation Project would make at least $20 million a year for Canada in tourist trade sparked by Hollywood films mentioning Canada. In addition,

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Canada was to get a film on her trade dollar problem, more complete news coverage, a short film on Canada made in Hollywood, release of NFB films in the U.S., Canadian "sequences" in Hollywood features, radio recordings extolling Canada and a more careful selection of films sent to Canada. In its infinite naiveté, the Canadian government agreed.

If you watch American films from that time (1948-58) you will catch occasional references such as: "Well, they're sort of a special kind. They live in the hills there ... red-winged orioles ... from Canada..." (from *Bend in the River* with Jimmy Stewart). No such bird exists. And if it did, it is highly unlikely that such a reference would increase tourism to Canada. The other most common reference was to villains escaping over the border. Aside from these totally meaningless mentions, the image of Canada was that of a bleak and harsh landscape unsuitable for human life, with mounties and sex-crazed *coureurs-du-bois* (trappers) running after helpless females. Needless to say, tourism not only failed to rise, it took a turn for the worse. In retrospect, the only thing that the Project did publicize was how easily, and how cheaply, the Canadian authorities could be persuaded to sell out Canada's chances for her own film industry.

In the last twenty-five years, Hollywood's business in Canada has continued to boom uninhibited. Canada remains the only film-producing country in the world with no quota for nationally made films in national theatres, no levy restrictions on money being made by foreign companies in Canada. The films that do manage to get made in Canada are "foreign" in their own country. In addition, Canadian films that have received awards in Cannes, in New York or in Edinburgh, such as *La Vie Rêvée* (*Dream Life*) (1972) directed by Mireille Dansereau, have yet to receive commercial Canadian distribution. Sometimes five or six years lapse between the completion of a film and its distribution —if it is distributed.

> Not making films you should be making is awful, but making them and then not having them shown is worse. (Claude Jutra, French-Canadian director)

To dispel the popular notion that Canada is a lucrative paradise for filmmakers, who are fully funded by a national system of art patronage—here are some other facts. In Canada there is virtually no private or corporate funding for films. Until last year there were no tax incentives to encourage investment. There are two government-sponsored funding sources for film: the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) and the Canada Council. The CFDC, in nine years, has invested $25 million in "Canadian" films, many of which were American coproductions in which Canadian filmmakers were doing no more than "hewing the wood and drawing the water." This kind of generosity has, for the most part, ceased. To give an idea of amounts of actual financial support: Joyce Wieland's feature, *The Far Shore*, was the most expensive film funded by the CFDC to date; their share was $210,000, half of the film's total production costs. In the CFDC's history, only two films have been made by women. (The other one was *La Vie Rêvée*.) The film section of the Canada Council funds an average of ten to fifteen short films a year, usually between $5,000 and $10,000. Their budget is diminished year by year by government cutbacks.

The National Film Board does not fund independent films or filmmakers. It is an institution, producing institutional shorts and documentaries. In the early days of the NFB, women enjoyed a certain amount of equality; recent surveys indicate otherwise. The following is from a 1975 interview with Peter Jones, then Regional Director of the NFB in Vancouver:

Q: In Studio D's literature, it says that the Film Board makes more films with fish in them than with women. Do you have any comment on that?
A: Well, there are more fish than women.
Q: But are they more important?
A: I don't know...

In 1975 (International Women's Year) "Studio D" was set up by the NFB to focus on women as filmmakers and as audience. Conveniently rendered impotent by having substantially less staff and a lower budget than other NFB studios, it has been able to make few films. Those that have been made are so heavily booked it is often difficult to obtain them. *Films About Women and Work*, a series of eleven shorts, is booked up six to eight months in advance of screenings. (Most NFB films are available within a week or two.)

Despite obstacles that have at times seemed insurmountable, Canadian women have made a considerable number of films over the last ten years. There have been three features made for commercial release, and several feature-length, non-commercial films. Sylvia Spring's *Madeleine Is...* was released in 1969, Mireille Dansereau's *La Vie Rêvée* in 1972 and Joyce Wieland's *The Far Shore* in 1976. Each of these films presents us with a woman as central character, in different stages of social and political development. Madeleine has not yet clearly defined her position in the world but she is aware of and struggling with the forces that exploit her. In *La Vie Rêvée* the two female leads are friends (a rare relationship for women in film) who work for a film company and on the weekends, live out their fantasies, most of which concern men. Nevertheless, they are not in competition with each other, nor are they victimized by their fantasies. *The Far Shore* goes back to 1919 (the period in which *Back to God's Country* was made) and to a story of love, the isolation of artists, the conflict between the French and the English, and Canadian history.

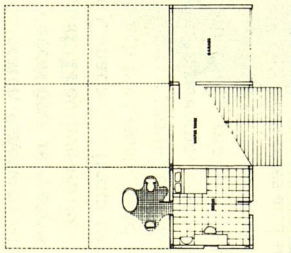
Several films have resulted from the universal feminist preoccupation with digging up one's roots, personally and collectively. *Great Grand Mother* (NFB, 1976, 30 min., color) is a film by Lorna Rasmussen and Anne Wheeler made in Edmonton about the lives of pioneer women who were instrumental in settling the prairies. Bonnie Kreps' *After the Vote* (CFDC, 1969, 22 min., black and white) is a feminist documentary covering the history of women's rights in Canada; it is factual and informative with a sense of humor. Kathleen Shannon's *Goldwood* (NFB, 1975, 22 min., color) is one woman's memories of childhood in the wilderness of northern Ontario, first recalled in paintings, then revisited in the reality of thirty years later. Shannon is currently producing a documentary film about the women filmmakers who began making films at the NFB in the 1940s. *Buenos Dias Compañeros: Women of Cuba* (Phoenix, 1975, 58 min., color), directed by Aviva Slesin, examines the lives of four very different Cuban women.

Over the last few years some people have concluded that the future of Canadian filmmaking rests in the hands of women. Though it reeks of reverse sexism, this opinion gains credibility with the emergence of more women's films. Women making films in Canada have had nothing to lose and everything to gain. They continue, encouraged by the words of one of Canada's most outrageous foremothers, Nellie McClung, who said in 1873: "Never retract, never explain, never apologize—get the thing done and let them howl."

Ardele Lister is a Canadian feminist/artist/filmmaker/critic and the editor of *Criteria*, published in Vancouver. Last year she co-scripted and directed *So Where's My Prince Already?*—a tragicomedy about love and marriage.

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DIANA AGREST: LES ÉCHELLES 1975



ground floor

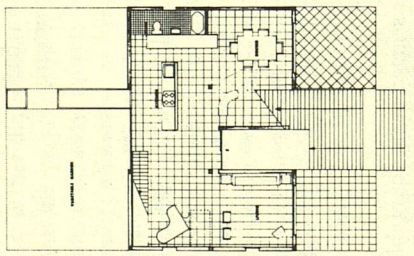
The Public/Private Dialectic

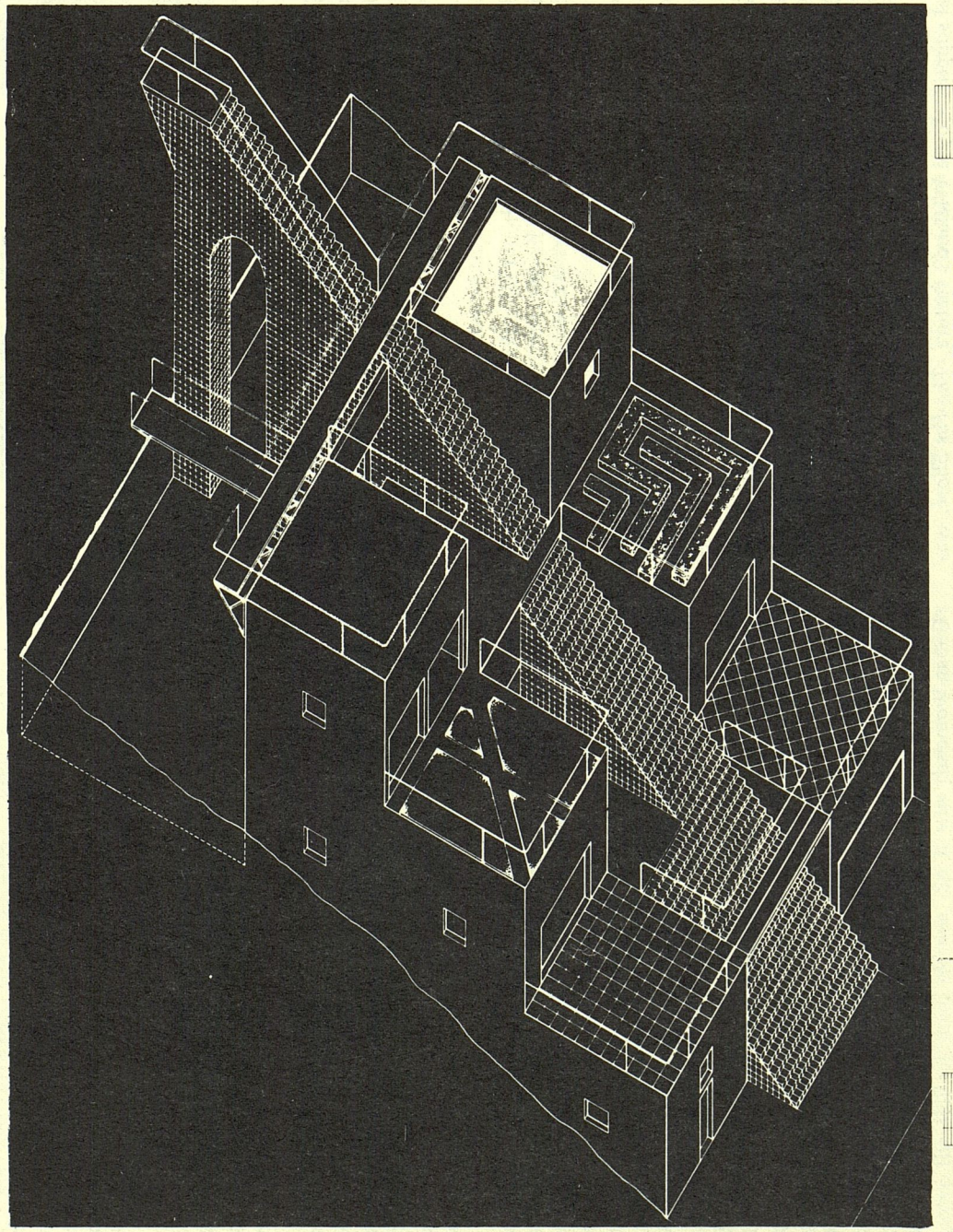
In the design of this house for a musician, located on a hillside in Spain overlooking the Mediterranean, the house, a private domain of seclusion, becomes a public space. The house is not just a private interior space, but a building that has its own outside life. The whole house is a sequence of fragments of gardens, organized along different modes of transition—staircase, bridges, doors, passageway. Musical and theatrical events can be created on the various terraces as well as along the glassblock staircase, which can be illuminated inside at night. Thus the house becomes a stage, acquiring a social meaning.

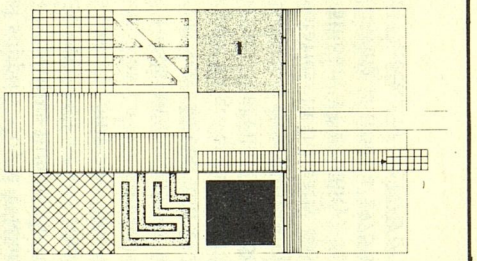
Body and Architecture

My design incorporates the body as part of the experience of space and culture. The body has usually been negated or repressed in architecture or used as a metaphor for "man as the center" or as a technocratic graphic standard. Here the body becomes inseparable from object in the excitement of moving through space.

first floor







roof

Readings

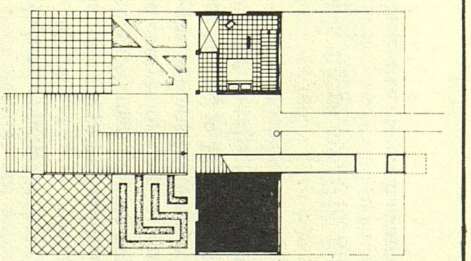
The house allows for multiple readings. Fragments link associatively in a *mise en sequence*. The reading is not a linear discourse, but an infinite, spatialized text in which levels of reading organized along various codes are combined and articulated. This work incorporates the dimension of pleasure into architecture.

Gardens: history—nature—culture... sand—water...Versailles—labyrinth... the Alhambra...grid...arch grid...

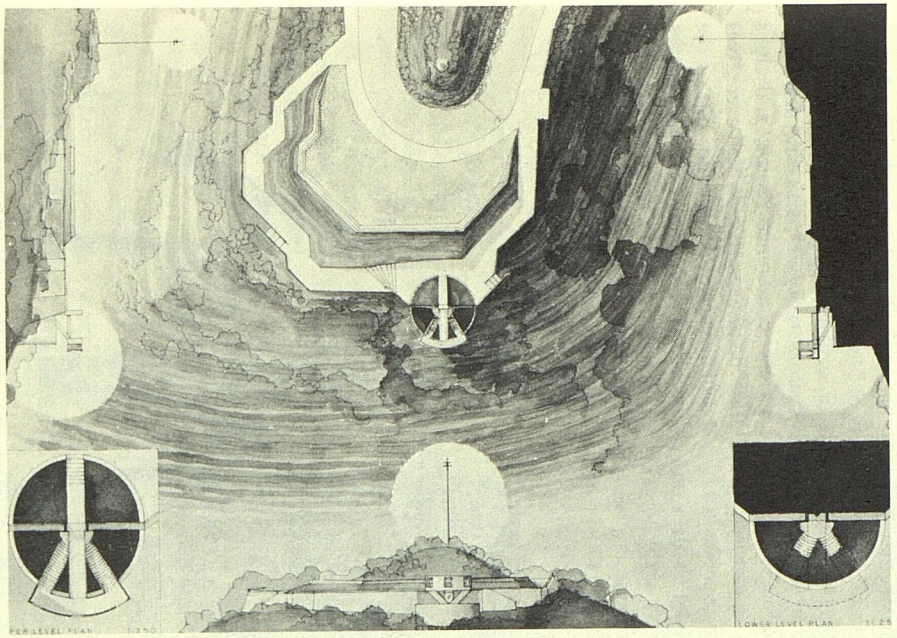
History: cultural fragments...fragments of gardens...fragments reconstructing a whole...articulation... transitions...

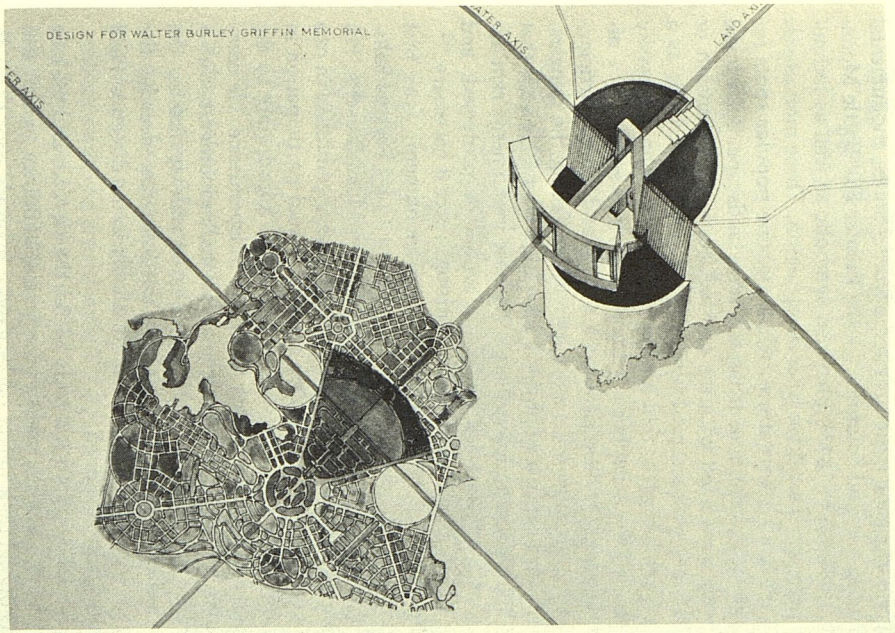
Diana Agrest, an architect from Argentina, practices in New York.

second floor



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A FEMINIST MONUMENT (FOR MARION MAHONY)

SUSANA TORRE

This project was submitted in 1975 to an international competition for a memorial to Walter Burley Griffin, the American architect who designed Australia's capital city, Canberra. It was to be built on the summit of the highest mountain in the area. Griffin (1876-1937) worked with Frank Lloyd Wright and practiced in Chicago, but settled in Australia in 1914, after winning the Canberra commission. He was the husband of Marion Mahony (1871-1961), who collaborated with him in the Canberra competition; her drawings in photodyes and watercolor on satin reputedly won him the prize.

Mahony graduated in architecture from MIT in 1878 and was the first woman licensed to practice architecture in Illinois. In 1895 she entered Wright's Oak Park studio, earning a meager $10 per week designing ornamental work and details. Her extraordinary renderings in the famous Wasmuth Portfolio established Wright's international fame and influenced Bauhaus and De Stijl designs. In 1909 she became chief designer in Wright's office, but received no public recognition. Many of her designs were subsequently attributed to Herman von Holst. (In her unpublished memoir, Mahony obliterated von Holst's name from drawings of this period, sometimes writing her own over the erased area.) She collaborated on a number of Griffin's projects when they married in 1911, but remained in his shadow. After his death she returned to the U.S. and designed two major community planning projects (unexecuted), commissioned by Lola Lloyd, a pacifist, feminist and co-founder with Jane Addams of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The monument here is based on a series of spatial metaphors considered archetypally female in our culture, in honor of the presence and influence of Marion Mahony, who was not chosen to be honored by the organizers of the competition.

The visitor is led through a passage aligned with the city's land axis into the observatory's tridimensional facade, where three windows open on the city's main axes and civic monuments. The passage is partially contained within one-half of a circular pool and entered through a pink marble doorway. After seeing the city below from the conceptual perspective composed by the windows, the visitor descends to the lower level of the observatory. There, enclosed by a pink marble "room" dug into the mountain, whose entrance is on the level above, is Griffin's effigy. Water from the upper-level fountain cascades around the marble room into the half-circle fountain that surrounds the observation platform one level below. From this vantage point, the city is again viewed, framed by the stairs, which are aligned with its diagonal axes. Thus the city (the public realm of action) is seen from within two enclosures: the "house" above (woman as social being) and the "cave" below (woman's body).

Since Mahony was not a feminist and did not demand recognition for her talent and work, this building —a metaphor for woman's body as a physical, nurturant receptacle and as a spiritual and intellectual vessel—most accurately represents her role. Its symbolic elements are water, earth (as primal shelter and last sanctuary), door/passage, "window," circular composition, pink marble doorway and interior "room." The memorial can also be conceived as an *anti-monument*, in that the building is not meant as a monument to a man but as a means to focus the observer's attention on the idea of the city as a monument of culture.

Susana Torre is an Argentine architect practicing in New York. She was curator and editor of *Women in Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective.*

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SKYSCRAPER SEDUCTION SKYSCRAPER RAPE

Dolores Hayden

> Once you learn to look upon architecture not merely as an art, more or less well, more or less badly, done, but as a social manifestation, the critical eye becomes clairvoyant, and obscure and unnoted phenomena become illuminated.—Louis Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats*, 1901

The skyline of Manhattan tells the dynamic story of the growth of American capitalism in the past century; we see a few lively Gothic and Art Deco towers marked with the names of individual tycoons, then many bland International-style office towers built by industrial corporations, real estate developers, and the government; and finally, a limited number of supertowers, remote and anonymous, like the multi-national corporations or multi-jurisdictional bureaucracies which inhabit them. A complex national symbol, the American skyscraper has been associated with military force and corporate expansion during various phases of American economic and urban growth. In popular culture, skyscrapers have also symbolized personal social mobility and personal sexuality for those who commission, design, or use these buildings. In the history of world architecture, the skyscraper ranks as America's most distinctive technical innovation; in the history of human settlements, the skyscraper-dominated city is America's legacy to the world. For a century most American architectural historians have busily rationalized the aesthetic, functional, and social distress the skyscraper creates, nurturing the prevalent belief that the skyscraper is a glorious triumph of engineering, a natural part of urban life, and an inevitable result of urban concentration.[1]

While the skyscraper is a cultural artifact reflecting the economic developments of the past century, it is also a building type designed to affect both economic activity and social relations. As a result, a fuller history of the skyscraper reveals a century of struggles and protests against the tendency to build ever higher. The builders' fantasies alternate with grim reality. Each new argument in favor of the skyscraper may incorporate some response to previous urban protests against it. Yet there is no escape from the contradictions of the capitalist city; as an instrument for enhancing land values and corporate eminence, the skyscraper consumes human lives, lays waste to human settlements, and ultimately overpowers the urban economic activities which provided its original justification.

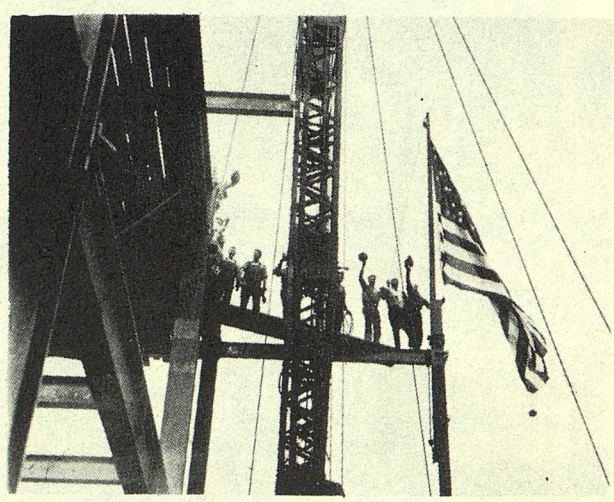
Perhaps the metaphor of rape suggested by the strongly phallic form of the skyscraper can illuminate the process by which American urban residents and workers have, at times, resigned themselves to this oppressive architectural form. In our literature, as in our judicial system, rape has often been presented as seduction. The aggressor "couldn't help himself," we are told, or the victim "really wanted it." The skyscraper is justified by builders with the same rhetoric: developers "can't help themselves," or the city "really wants it," despite the economic and social anguish it brings. A brief review of skyscraper history illuminates a painful dialectical process with alternating themes of reality and fantasy, rape and seduction.

First Fantasy: "Manifest Destiny"

The earliest tall structures in the United States, monumental military obelisks and columns like the Bunker Hill Battle Monument (completed in 1843), provided symbolic as well as technological precedents for skyscraper construction. These monuments usually included observatories which became popular spots for surveying the surrounding urban and rural landscape. Such grand vistas were associated with the cry for westward expansion or "manifest destiny" accepted by many patriotic Americans as a political goal during the mid-nineteenth century. John Zukowsky has described the experience of the ascending observers, "...afforded seemingly endless panoramic views, and visual participation in those expansionist concepts without facing the dangers, hardships, and expense of physical relocation west." He adds that "the military connotations inherent in those monuments reminded all that this westward expansion would be protected, and policies of Manifest Destiny upheld through force if necessary."[2]

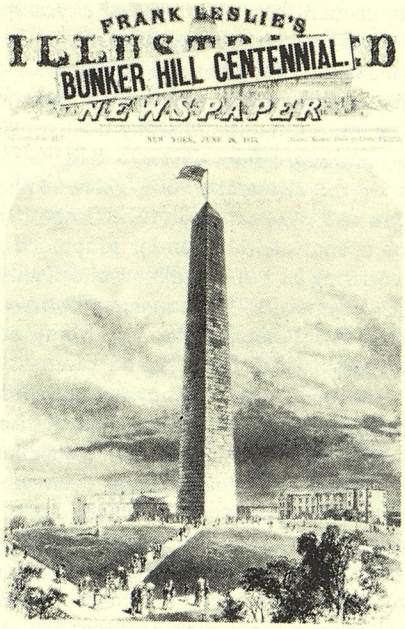
The symbolic imagery of military monuments was first transformed into a vision of the American city by Erastus Salisbury Field, an itinerant painter from western Massachusetts. His *Historical Monument of the American Republic* combined in one large canvas ten columns which implied "visual participation in expansionist concepts," as well as militarism appropriate to the 1876 centennial celebration of American independence. He composed these columns, usually seen as isolated monuments, into a spectacular urban design with an elevated railway linking the observatories at their tops. During the following decade, the American city began to evolve dramatically in the direction Field had whimsically imagined.

In the 1850s, 1860s and early 1870s, the elevator and the cast iron frame boosted the size of commercial buildings, which still tried to conceal their height under gawky mansard roof lines; in the 1880s and 1890s, such traditional roof lines were abandoned in favor of competition for height, and steel-framed towers began to fill the business districts of New York and Chicago. Some of these tall buildings included observatories similar to those atop the traditional monuments, so visitors to skyscrapers could also have panoramic views. Private offices, conference rooms, and clubs were also located at the tops of the towers, from which executives could overlook the cities their enterprises dominated. Just as the centennial obelisks and columns had been decorated with statues of heroes, so the new skyscrapers often bore the names of tycoons, and, sometimes, their statues looming against the sky, proclaiming not the patriotic warriors' slogan, "manifest destiny," but the corporate imperative, "survival of the fittest."

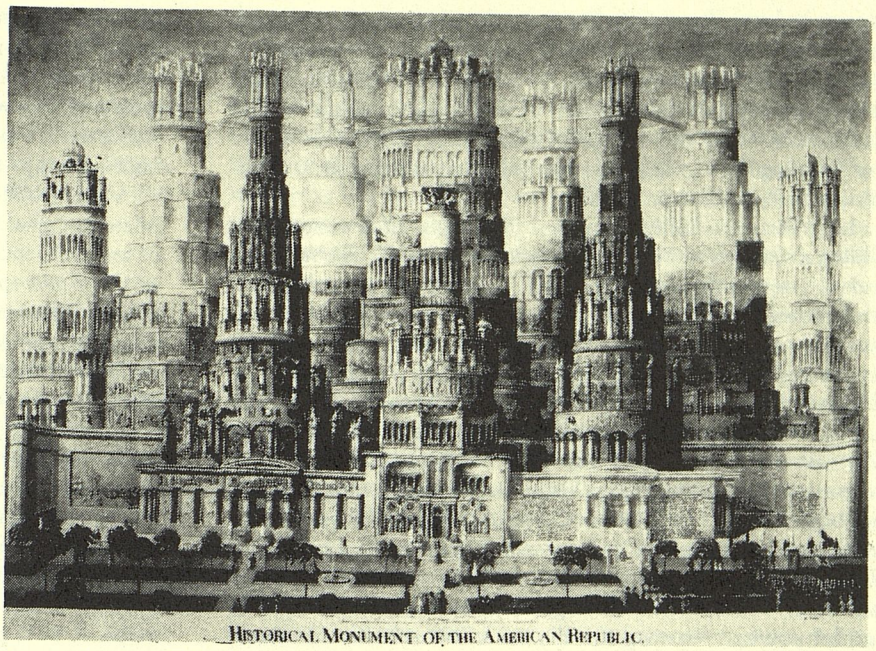


"Sky-boys" top out Empire State Building, 1930. (Lewis W. Hine.)

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Bunker Hill Monument. *Leslie's Historical Register.* June 26, 1875.



Erastus Salisbury Field. *Historical Monument of the American Republic.* 1876. Oil on canvas. Springfield Museum of Art.

Reality: Workers' Funerals

The social Darwinist motto, "survival of the fittest," was an accurate description of the skyscraper construction process. At the turn of the century, competition for height and eagerness to realize a return on investments led builders to encourage architects and engineers to strain the limits of existing technology with each new tower. "Survival of the fittest" in the builders' world of financial speculation thus became the excuse for casual attitudes toward safety conditions for construction workers. One British reporter lugubriously observed public reactions to the deaths of workers on the Woolworth Building, constructed between 1911 and 1913: "Anybody in America will tell you without tremor (but with pride) that each story of a skyscraper means a life sacrificed. Twenty stories—twenty men snuffed out; thirty stories—thirty men. A building of some sixty stories is now going up—sixty corpses, sixty funerals, sixty domestic hearths to be slowly rearranged."[3] By 1930, *Fortune* magazine claimed that this estimate was no longer correct, commenting, "In general, deaths run from three to eight on sizable buildings," but conceded that "a bloodless building is still a marvel."[4]

Ironworkers (who erect structural steel) endure the greatest risks. Often builders and journalists use the language of militaristic, romanticized machismo to describe the "raw danger" of a "daredevil" ironworker's job, and the Stars and Stripes is always unfurled whenever a building is topped out suggesting a patriotic conquest. Yet ironworkers themselves may feel fearful, since Mike Cherry reports in his autobiography, *On High Steel,* that one out of fifteen dies within ten years of entering this risky trade.[5] Cherry recounts his gut reaction to a look at the New York skyline: "the anxiety that I'd thought I'd conquered came running back at me all over again. . . The city had never struck me as so *tall* before. . . I drove past several buildings that were nearing completion, twice pulling over to the curb to stare at them, developing a slight case of the shakes."[6]

Theodore James, author of a recent history of the Empire State Building, constructed between 1929 and 1931, recalls the days when ironworkers were called by the condescending, romantic nickname, "sky-boys," (perhaps relating them to military air heroes called fly-boys), yet he passes lightly over the fourteen fatalities and numerous injuries that occurred during the building process. Cherry has a grimmer view of the trade in New York in those years, claiming that foremen could insist on work in hazardous wet weather, or cut off a man's pay at the moment of an accident. He states that during the Depression "gangs of out-of-work ironworkers hung about on the streets around job sites, so that when a man fell, they would be instantly available to take his place."[8] In the 1930s, the best workers in each building trade, alive and walking at the end of a skyscraper job, were awarded "Certificates of Superior Craftsmanship" and gold buttons for their skill by a building contractors' association, but both union and insurance company safety campaigns got nowhere because of the developers' pressure to build quickly.[9]

Today, construction workers' unions are stronger. No one has to work in the rain, and a fallen worker (or his widow) at least gets paid for a full day's work. Still the grim process of building a skyscraper continues to take its toll of lives, as Cherry described a death on a New York job in 1972: "Somehow, Timmy, in hurrying from one side of the bay to the other, managed to put his inside foot down an inch to the right of where he should have, and the plank, which had a slight warp in it, rocked. . . He fell in silence, and no sound from the impact of his body on the concrete plaza reached up to us."[10] Some of the highly skilled, agile ironworkers willing to endure the risks of this trade are American Indians, and in their employment the symbolism of manifest destiny turns in an ironic circle. Descendants of the native Americans who survived the white man's self-righteous westward expansion in the nineteenth century, they build the secular monuments of a redefined, corporate, manifest destiny.

Second Fantasy: "Procreant Power"

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while tycoons battled for top positions on the skyline, and "sky-boys" fell to their deaths, skyscraper architects began to use the imagery of male sexuality to describe these buildings. The earlier monuments had celebrated military conquests, and now towers did the same for economic conquests. Just as American authors like Theodore Dreiser and Henry James used the imagery of male potency to enhance the moneymaking activities of fictional entrepreneurs like Frank Cowperwood or Caspar Goodwood, so many American architects began to express the economic power of their corporate clients through metaphors of sexual power. Thus the

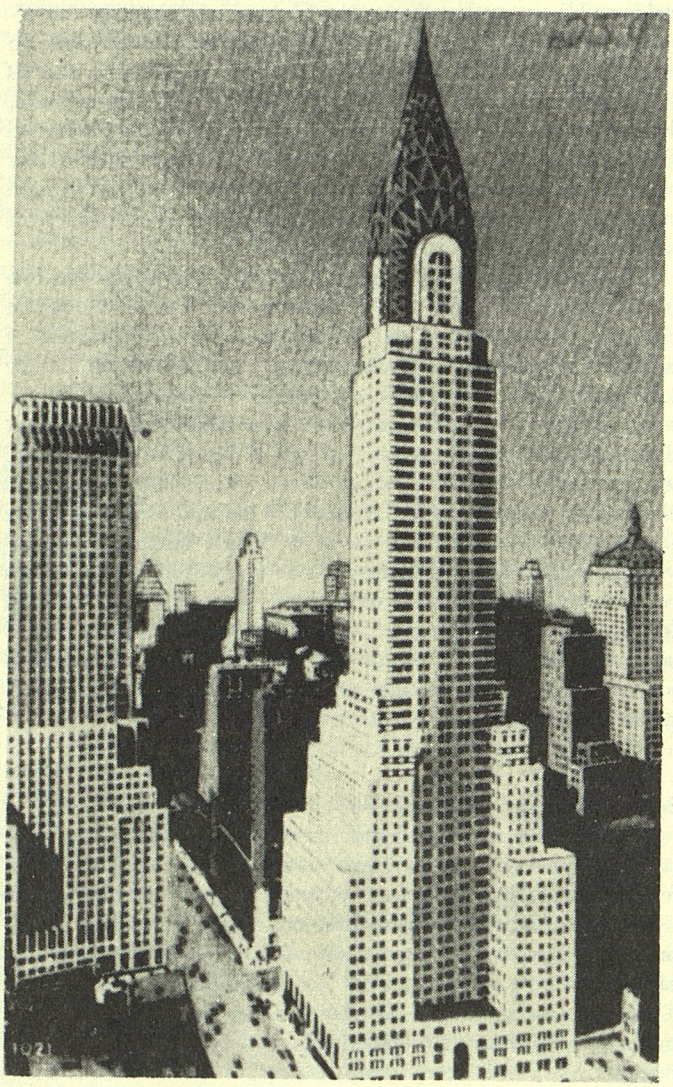
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imagery of war and patriotic death was overlaid with an imagery of fecundity and generative power. However, as skyscraper architects added the office tower to the procession of phallic monuments in history—including poles, obelisks, spires, columns, and watchtowers—very few designers asked what the effects would be of insisting that ordinary people regularly inhabit such extraordinary, tall, erect structures.

In 1901 Louis Sullivan praised the design of a commercial building (which was not a skyscraper) by H. H. Richardson: "...here is a man for you to look at...a real man, a manly man; a virile force...an entire male...a monument to trade, to the organized commercial spirit, to the power and progress of the age...a male...it sings the song of procreant power...."[11] As Sullivan himself and other architects built commercial skyscrapers, this language of male identification was extended. One designer saw skyscrapers as "symbols of the American spirit—that ruthless, tireless, energeticism delightedly proclaiming 'What a great boy am I!'" [12] In 1936 Le Corbusier identified himself with America's vital economic forces, using phrases which recalled Sullivan's "song of procreant power." He observed "an erect Manhattan, the drives of Chicago, and so many clear signs of youthful power." Viewing the skyline of New York, he wrote, "Feeling comes into play; the action of the heart is released; crescendo, allegro, fortissimo. We are charged with feeling, we are intoxicated, legs strengthened, chest expanded, eager for action, we are filled with a great confidence."[13] The architectural historian Vincent Scully carried this celebration of skyscrapers, money and sex into the 1960s when he praised Rockefeller Center as "...one of the few surviving public spaces in America that look as if they were designed and used by people who knew what stable wealth was and were not ashamed to enjoy it. Flags snap, high heels tap: a little sex and aggression, the city's delights."[14]

The erotic charge of the skyscraper was more explicitly related to phallic erection and penetration in formal discussions of towers as including base, shaft, and tip, and in graphic visions of the skyscraper. A rendering of Louis Sullivan and Dankmar Adler's Fraternity Temple scheme of 1891 shows a phallic tower on a broad base with a pointed tip piercing the sky. Many architectural renderers of the 1920s, such as Hugh Ferriss, often utilized perspective to convey a sense of upward thrust, enhanced by strong lighting from below. Lighting could suggest ejaculation as well as erection, as in a view of the Chrysler Building ejaculating light into the night. (Its articulated tip anticipates today's skyscrapers with brightly lit revolving restaurants, where diners can rotate tirelessly in the night skies above American cities.)

Architects' words and graphics encouraged their clients to phallic, urban displays, but occasionally architects might do more. A 1931 photograph shows seven men positioned in an irregular line, wearing cloth costumes banded with vertical or horizontal stripes. Tall cones or ziggurats cover their heads. Six levels of sharp-edged points culminate in an eighteen-inch rod atop the leader's mask, making his total stature nine feet. Are





Chrysler Building by William Van Alen. 1929. Old post cards.

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these tribesmen about to execute some primitive ritual celebrating male fertility? Below the photograph the caption reads: "Famous architects forming a miniature skyline of New York as they don their Beaux Arts costumes." The symbolic predilections of skyscraper architects have rarely been shown so clearly: urban professional men require a social occasion to turn themselves into a Dionysian landscape, a miniature version of the revenue-generating skyline they promote in their daily work.

Reality: Urban Bankruptcy

Whatever the myths about their phallic power, towers have proved economically powerful, but in a negative as well as a positive way. The glorification of the "procreant power" of the skyscraper serves to obscure the drain on municipal finances which towers create. Many urban historians have described the American urban downtown as a three-dimensional graph of land speculation, and locating clusters of towers is a quick way to guess at land values. Yet although tall buildings reflect the desire for maximizing private investment in a city based upon private land ownership, skyscrapers are not always profitable for their developers. For whom is skyscraper revenue generated? And how is it calculated?

A need for immediate usable space is never enough reason for building a skyscraper. The construction cost of several low-rise buildings is almost always less than the cost of equivalent space in a skyscraper since expensive foundations and unusable space for elevators and mechanical equipment increase as the tower goes higher. Land cost, rather than building cost, is the justification: a very expensive piece of downtown land may be said to "require" a skyscraper to explain its price.[15] But the height of such a skyscraper will not be calculated on the city's needs, nor even on the current value of the land and the existing density of the area. Rather, a developer calculates the rising land values created by present and future skyscrapers, and makes a guess about how much more land speculation the neighborhood will bear.

Developers who try to profit from the inflation of urban land values in this way almost always leverage their capital with large bank loans. Banks of course receive large amounts of interest. Developers therefore attempt to minimize their indebtedness by hastening the construction process (with the hazardous consequences for workers previously described) and by taking advantage of the federal tax structure and selling tax "shelters" (derived from real estate tax loopholes) to profit-making industrial corporations.

While banks and large tax-sheltered, industrial corporations can always profit from the "procreant power" of the skyscraper, real estate developers hope for rising land values to justify their investments. Meanwhile, taxpayers bear the huge public costs of infrastructure and services for skyscraper developments. As Stephen Zoll argues in "Superville," "an increasing CBD (central business district) bulk becomes, itself, the principal sink in the municipal treasury."[16] His persuasive historical analysis of high-rise economics in New York explains why skyscraper construction is disastrous for the city's budget: municipal tax revenues never catch up with the spiraling costs of infrastructure which the city must provide. Attempts to control urban density through zoning or to raise taxes are usually met with corporate threats to leave the city altogether, which would cause unemployment. Caught between financial drain and the skyscraper and the threat of unemployment, the city loses either way.

The tactics of land speculation and of transferring infrastructure costs to the city budget explain some of the reasoning behind the craze for skyscraper height, but there is still more to explore. Since the turn of the century many developers, aware of the economically and technologically "optimal" level of speculation on a given parcel of urban land, have chosen to build ever higher, and urban officials have accepted this. The builders have sacrificed high economic returns in order to enter a citywide, nationwide, or worldwide competition for height and prestige.[17] In terms of monopoly capitalism, although the tallest building in town may not be quantitatively efficient as office space or housing it is qualitatively efficient in promoting dominance over an urban region: towers are landmarks which can be seen from many distant viewpoints. They become symbols of corporate dominance over the city as well as the city's dominance over the region.

The goal in building these extremely tall skyscrapers is psychological "procreant power" or awe. Awareness of the power this kind of architecture offers is reflected by the skyline of Washington, D.C., where skyscrapers over 90 feet tall are forbidden by law, so that the Capitol reigns as the highest structure. For many years, beginning in 1931, the Empire State Building was the tallest in the world; its pretentious name and an overbearing lobby mural showing the building dominating a map of New York, "the Empire State," enhanced its awesomeness. The World Trade Center rose higher in 1969. Its even more imperial name reflected an obvious attempt to supercede the Empire State Building. Yet in both cases symbolic posturing concealed unrented space, as these hulking developments were planned to exceed all calculations of needed office space in the city. Knowing that the World Trade Center was not fully rented, the owners of the Empire State threatened to build just enough extra structure to overtop them in the 1970s, and triumph again. They didn't pursue this competition however, and as a result the 1976 version of the film *King Kong* transferred the symbolic confrontation of the "natural" ape and the "civilized" capitalists from the Empire State, where it was set in 1933, to the World Trade Center, now the tallest structure in New York.

Third Fantasy: "I'm Taking the Town!"

While municipal governments struggle with the high costs of the skyscraper, and builders seek both financial and psychological "procreant power," popular novels and films employ skyscraper imagery to create fantasies about sexual power and upward mobility for "ordinary" people in capitalist society. In the 1970s, women may be cast as executives or stockbrokers in these fables of success. A fashion advertisement compresses many strains of oppressive imagery—militarism, sexual power, false social mobility. Two models wearing suits with military tailoring pose holding statuettes of the Empire State Building. "Thinking positive... The way to make things happen in the city where everything's possible," reads the copy. "In soft, smokey officer's pink, I'm in my element, making strides and taking them.... My head's in the clouds and the view's terrific. Officer's pink in sleek new shapes, that are budding with potential. I'm perfectly suited to the pace of The City...." The dialogue concludes, "I'm *taking the town*...."

In the movies of the 1920s and 1930s, it was more common to see women encountering skyscrapers as stage-struck young things coming to the big city to seek stardom. Sustaining individual competitiveness in times of collective difficulty, the most successful films of the Depression years, as Martin Pawley has observed, "dealt with the random access to power and influence in high society of 'ordinary' people."[18] Often such hopeful movie romances occurred in skyscraper offices, skyscraper penthouses, and skyscraper night clubs.

In a production number from the 1933 film musical *42nd Street*, miniature skyscraper tips, glowing with colored lights, saluted Ruby Keeler as a sweet kid who managed to become a

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star, and the manipulation of skyscraper scale made her seem larger than life. A film critic recently commented on the effects of this process: "...life in New York is made more than bearable by the fine romance this city has always had with the movies. We have been exalted by a Hollywood version of ourselves that is often no closer to reality than this scene. This is Big Flick City—and welcome to it."[19] Another Ruby Keeler film, *Go Into Your Dance* (1936), elaborates the cinematic process by which New York's hostile environment is "made more than bearable" by the association of the skyscraper with themes of personal success and imperialist corporate expansion. In a night club at the top of a New York tower, Al Jolson in blackface sings, "She's a Latin from Manhattan," about the fantasy of one "ordinary" person making it in the big city. Then Ruby Keeler and other performers in evening dress engage in a dance routine of world domination, climbing up and down a globe, tap dancing on various countries of the Northern Hemisphere to the tune of the title song with its catchy Depression lyrics, "When you feel sad and blue now, go into your dance!"

While these examples show women succeeding, most American skyscraper fantasies have dealt with male success and mobility, suggesting that an industrious young fellow may develop a personal empire of banks, shipping lines and factories, and build a skyscraper from which to look down on them. Architect Howard Roark, hero of Ayn Rand's novel, *The Fountainhead*, and of the 1949 film based on it, endows this plot with an artistic rather than an entrepreneurial tone. Roark, played by Gary Cooper, stands for the "survival of the fittest." A poor boy who made good, he fights the "creeping socialism" of his time by designing buildings for tycoons so he can develop his creative genius. At the film's end, Roark stands, remote and supreme, atop a new skyscraper he designed. He is joined there by Dominique Francon, an architectural critic who has been moved to ecstasy by an elevator ride up the side of this building. Roark "takes" both the town and the world of cultured society Francon represents; in fact, early in the story, he rapes her and she is rapturous.

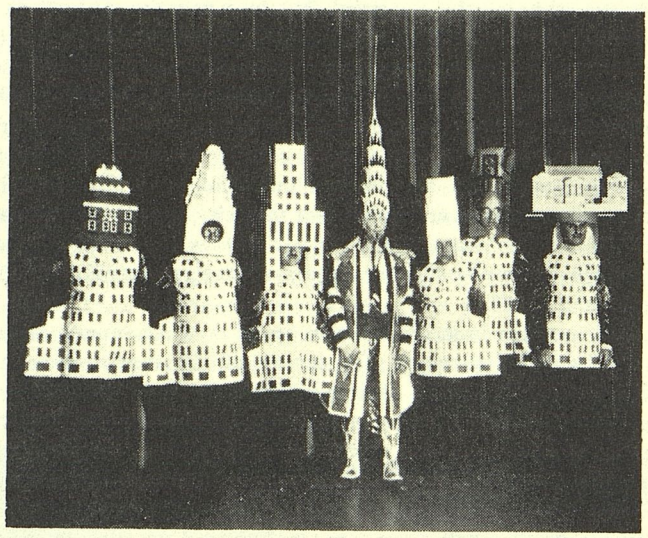
Skyscraper restaurants and hotels trade on the renewal of this sort of cinematic fantasy. For the price of a drink or a meal, you can share the reflected power of a skyscraper location. One nationwide chain of penthouse restaurants advertises, "Make a top decision,"[20] implying executive success for those who dine at at the top of a tower. Woody Guthrie made fun of such aspirations when he sang about the Rockefeller Center bar and grill, "This Rainbow Room is up so high/ That John D.'s spirit comes a-driftin' by..."[21] but this did nothing to affect its popularity. Although the tip of a skyscraper is an especially charged location, the rest of the skyscraper also has powerful symbolic associations: one foreign resort hotel advertises its advantages to New Yorkers with a photograph of a phallic building superimposed on the bikini-bared torsos of three models.[22] Whether they want to be chief executives or simply sophisticated playboys, clients of skyscraper restaurants or hotels are encouraged in their fantasies of power and control.

Reality: Urban Oppression

In the romantic world of popular films and advertisements, life in the skyscrapers is a whirl of money, power and sex. But as more and more people of all economic classes live and work in skyscrapers, the oppressiveness of these environments cannot be denied. In the 1960s and 1970s, community groups and workers' organizations began to detail the social and physical problems of skyscraper life. Injuries to workers building skyscrapers continued, accompanied by the problems created by the completed skyscrapers themselves.

Ever more gigantic skyscrapers, when placed in urban plazas, could create dangerous wind forces (up to 175 m.p.h.) that hurled pedestrians off their feet. The towers themselves had to be designed to resist wind forces, but unforeseen difficulties could occur, as in the John Hancock Tower in Boston, where winds wrenched gigantic sections of mirror glass from the curtain wall, hurling them to the sidewalks below, terrorizing citizens with resounding smashes. Amazingly, there were no pedestrian fatalities.

Urban residents also complained of enormous skyscraper shadows darkening whole neighborhoods and changing the ecology of local parks. Motorists and pedestrians found shadows



"Famous architects forming a miniature skyline of New York as they don their Beaux Arts costumes." 1931. From *Architecture Plus* (Sept.-Oct., 1974), p. 120.

were only half the problem with mirror glass buildings which, on their sunny sides, reflected blinding flashes of light into cars and homes. Community groups in San Francisco documented such difficulties when they fought construction of the Transamerica Building and other high-rises.[23] In Boston, community groups have slowed but not halted construction of the Park Plaza project, whose shadows will darken the Public Garden.

Workers inside the towers have added their complaints to those articulated by urban residents. Endlessly repeated skyscraper floor plans reflect hierarchical design which allots interior fluorescent-lit spaces to predominantly female clerical workers, and exterior offices with natural light and views to predominantly male executives. New trends in "office landscaping" using low partitions and plants may mute the most obvious effects of such plans, but light and space are always assigned according to status. In the John Hancock Tower, formal rules allow a senior vice president 406 square feet of space compared to a clerical worker's 55.[24] If clerical workers constitute the majority of the towers' populations during the day, cleaners work predominantly at night—squads of men and women, poor white, black and foreign-born workers. The best paid have extremely perilous daytime jobs washing windows or polishing facades, hanging on scaffolds as high above the streets as the ironworkers. The night shift works for lower wages, and the thrill of seeing the city lit up at night is, after all, the frisson of watching thousands of these cleaners at work.

One of the most serious hazards to all workers in high-rise buildings, by day or by night, is fire. The skyscraper is constructed to resist fire, but if faulty wiring or a smoldering cigarette causes a blaze, then escape from a burning tower can be extremely difficult. Stairwells may fill with smoke, elevator shafts can act like

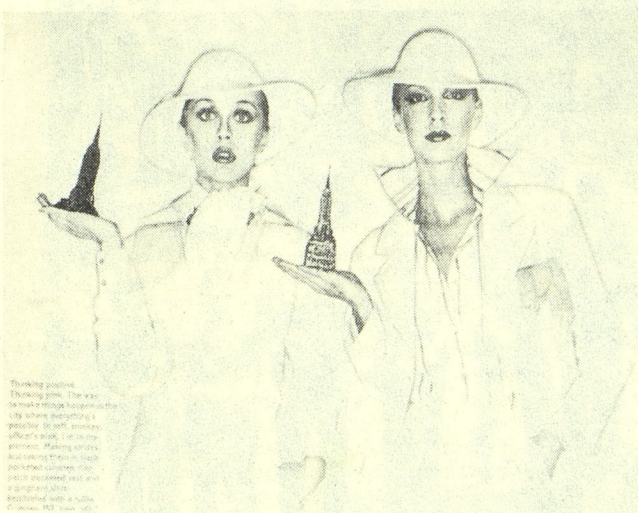
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chimneys, and traditional firefighting ladders cannot reach the upper floors. *The Towering Inferno*, a film about skyscraper conflagration, was playing in New York on the evening of Valentine's Day, 1975, when a moderately serious fire broke out in one of the two World Trade Center buildings there. Because the fire took place at night, most of the thirty injured were fire fighters and cleaners. Building officials managed to calm the thousands of daytime workers, who were unnerved to learn that New York fire codes had not been followed in the construction of the complex. But as skyscraper fires occur every few months around the country, one expects protests to increase.[25]

Since the skyscraper has been established in popular culture as a place for "taking the town," personnel in skyscraper offices are exposed increasingly to scenes of conflict at skyscraper tips, which are harrowing to the police, firemen, or passing workers who are involved. Bomb threats are not infrequent in corporate towers, and sometimes there are explosions and kidnappings as well. A *Los Angeles Times* story for December 7, 1976, headlined "Gunman Holds Hostage Atop Skyscraper: Youth Gives Up After Antismoking Message Is Read On Radio," tells the sad story of a youth trying to attract attention in his crusade against lung cancer by "taking the town" with a weapon and a hostage.

Fourth Fantasy: "Within the City, Without the City's Problems"

In the movies the skyscraper was first presented as a place for dramatic encounters, celebrations, and awe, but as it became the standard building in the center city, the alienation of workers and residents increased. Pre-war fantasies of beautiful, shining tower cities—such as Hugh Ferriss' romantic renderings and Le Corbusier's plans for a Radiant City—led to extensive urban renewal programs in the 1950s and 1960s, when office towers and



"I'm taking the town," advertisement by Saks Fifth Avenue, *New York Times* (Feb. 8, 1976), p. 29.

upper-class housing were joined by the grim, stripped-down tower in a field of asphalt as the preferred solution for public housing, a vertical filing cabinet for the urban poor. While such programs added towers to the already densely built-up cities of New York and Chicago, other American cities like Boston and San Francisco were "Manhattanized," developing predominantly skyscraper skylines for the first time. During these years the expanded activities of many American corporations and American architects abroad led to the exportation of the skyscraper, promoting corporate visibility and land speculation from Paris to Nairobi.

The builders of this era succeeded in realizing the goal of an earlier generation of architects—a city composed largely of towers. As a result, they multiplied the economic problems of the metropolis and the social problems of skyscraper workers and urban residents, but the next generation of fantasizers never let up. Although the city was being turned into a field of towers, the supertower could still stand above it. Frank Lloyd Wright produced a plan for a mile-high skyscraper in 1956. Urban megastructures proliferated on drafting boards in the 1960s, and in the 1970s, Paolo Soleri continues to lead the utopian skyscraper architects with endless plans for "Arcologies" with towers hung upon towers. (He uses the Empire State Building as a scale symbol to dramatize the size of structures many times its height.) The World Trade Center in New York, the Transamerica Building in San Francisco, and the Sears Tower in Chicago have all set new records for skyscraper height in these cities, but the quest for architectural dominance does not rest with the supertower which is the tallest building in town.

The 1970s have brought a new kind of skyscraper which simply swallows up the city. Instead of a tower being presented as the typical building in the center city, it becomes a substitute for the city. More and more resources and activities are concentrated inside, while problems—wind, shadows, glare, utilities, transportation—are left outside for the municipality to deal with as best it can. In New York, Rockefeller Center anticipated this trend with offices, shops, restaurants, pedestrian spaces, and a skating rink. The World Trade Center is a city of 50,000 within a city of 8,000,000. With its own police force, newspaper, and restaurants, the complex is in many ways a private urban realm of government agencies and corporations set down in the public city of New York. This is a workaday complex, even more deserted at night than Rockefeller Center. Chicago's John Hancock tower, in contrast, functions as a 24-hour skyscraper city, providing housing as well as stores, restaurants and offices. Some residents may rarely emerge; others call the doorman to check the weather (which they live above) before they venture down from the clouds into the real Chicago below.

The ultimate skyscraper development goes even further than these giant towers, incorporating urban landscape as well as residential, commercial, and recreational facilities into its interior design. John Portman's hotels in Atlanta, Cambridge, and San Francisco are hollow towers or pyramids advertised as being as exciting as (and implicitly safer than) the city outside. Interior courtyards and glass elevators allow for the traditional skyscraper observation to occur within rather than outside of the tower. The visitor experiences the thrill of riding to the top of the tower, but the views are carefully controlled vistas of the circumscribed, artificial, urban life within the hotel. Going them one better, two new Atlanta complexes include a lake and an ice skating rink as private skyscraper landscapes on their ground floors. Other buildings reveal the same privatization of landscape. The Ford Foundation Building in New York surrounds an interior garden. The penthouse farm of Stewart Mott, with its "natural" earth loaded onto a New York tower, shows that "nature" can be put on top of a skyscraper rather than left in a public place.

As the American city is economically drained and environmentally destroyed by the skyscraper, developers of tower apartments, hotels, and office blocks sell back a limited, guarded version of urban life to those who can afford it. (This is, after all, what Disney and the developers of "adventure parks" have done, selling synthetic American rural and small town landscapes.) The new, private tower cities exclude the poor, minorities, the aged, and the unemployed. Fortified by private police forces and by the best technology industrial security firms can supply, these private towers recall the militarism associated with the centennial obelisks and military watchtowers. They pose an extreme answer to urban oppression, selling the urban experience without an urban

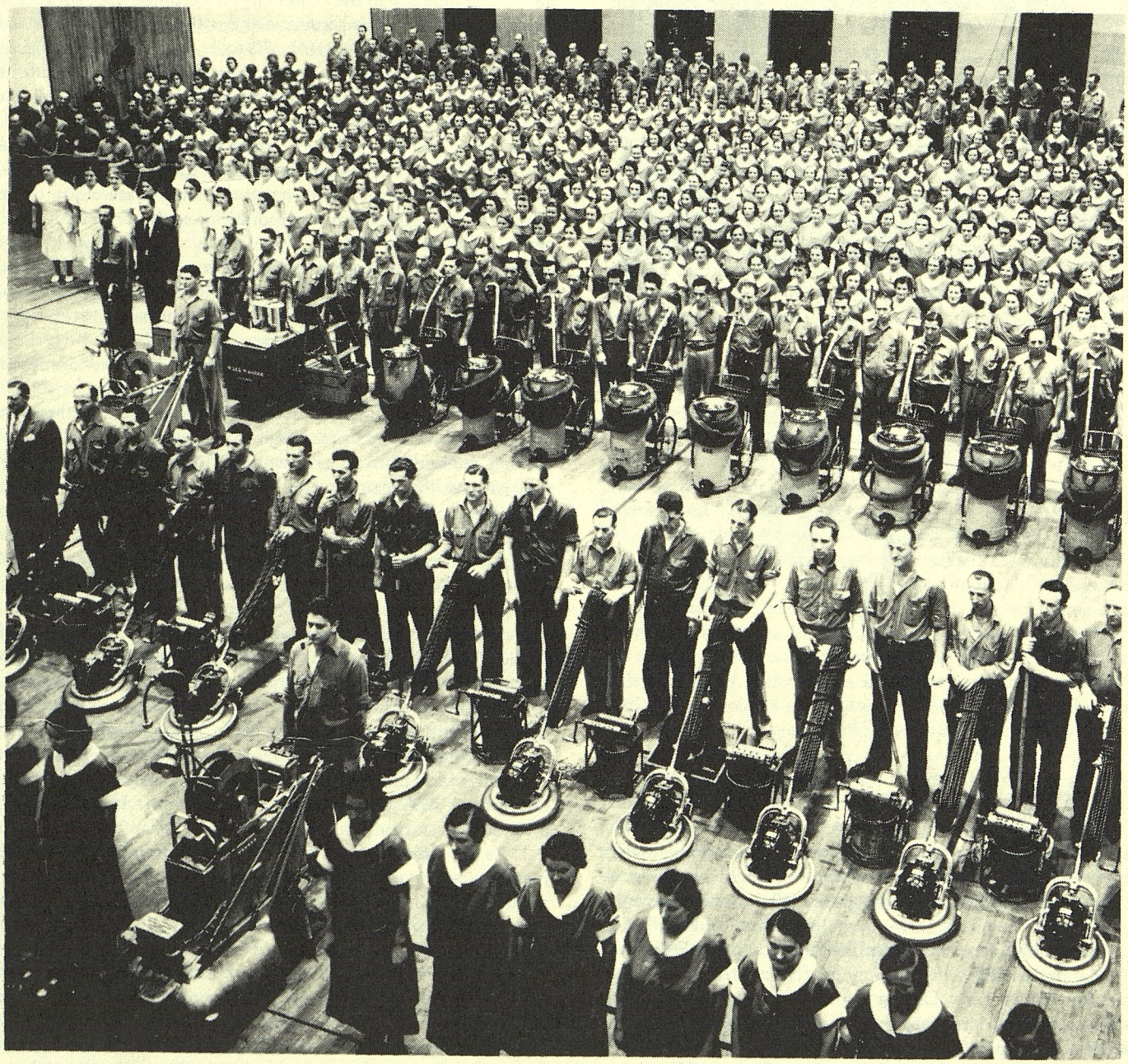
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reality. They want customers to "take the town," and since the real town is too far gone, they offer a substitute.

While urban escapism flourishes and builders construct skyscrapers of the present decade, satirists and science fiction writers have provided strong critical images of a world of urban towers being erected amid urban rubble. "Superstudio," a collective of Italian architects, mocks the trend in their "Twelve Cautionary Tales," with a design for a skyscraper factory stretching around the earth, churning out new towers as fast as the old ones crumble.[26] On the same theme, J.G. Ballard's story, "Build-Up," describes a world where high-rises cover the earth, except for blacked-out spaces where they have collapsed, and subways and high-speed trains are replaced by vertical and horizontal elevators.[27] For every such satirist, there are many more individuals planning new supertowers, perhaps justifying their projects with the rhetoric of a New York housing developer who advertises his expensive high-rise apartment block as being "within the city but without the city's problems."[28] Skidmore Owings and Merrill offers the perfect architectural expression of this slogan in two of their newest commercial blocks on 57th and 42nd Streets in Manhattan. On each building, a concave facade covered in mirror glass manipulates the view so it appears from below that all the rest of the city is toppling, giving a doomsday twist to the perennial competition for skyscraper size as well as reinforcing the idea that the only city worth experiencing is inside, not outside, the skyscraper.

Making Changes—Fantasy and Reality

Criticizing the design of skyscrapers will not make them disappear, whether the criticism comes from a revisionist historian, an outraged citizen, or a pragmatic urban budget analyst. Pat-



Building maintenance staff of Rockefeller Center. 1942. (Herbert Gehr, TIME Inc.)

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terns of corporate growth and patriarchy have determined the history of the skyscraper. The economics of urban land development today make it impossible to effect major changes in present building trends without a political revolution to socialize all urban land. In the meantime, at least some attempts in changing consciousness can begin. To understand the skyscraper and its place in the American city, we need the perceptions of all skyscraper workers and urban residents, women and men, as well as the specialized insights of architects, artists, and social critics.

As a nation, we have exported the skyscraper around the world. Like pre-Copernicans who dismissed anyone who disputed the place of the earth as center of the solar system, today's American design professionals often exclude from serious architectural and urban discourse anyone who refuses to accept the importance of the skyscraper to "rational" urban design. Romantic notions of military preparedness and "manifest destiny," dreams of economic conquest and "survival of the fittest," fantasies of social mobility and sexual power, all have been marshaled in support of the skyscraper during the past century. All still flourish as skyscraper fantasies today. Designed first as urban monuments, then as typical urban buildings, then as synthetic cities, American skyscrapers attest to the power of fantasy to confuse our perceptions of urban reality. If we look up, we can read in the skyscrapers' looming shapes a reminder that our culture depends on false hopes of economic mobility as well as on rigid hierarchy, and that it thrives on social seduction as well as on architectural rape.

1. For an aesthetic justification, see Louis Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," in *Kindergarden Chats and Other Writings* (New York: Wittenborn, 1947). For an aesthetic analysis focusing on analogies with classical columns, see Winston Weisman, "A New View of Skyscraper History," in Edgar Kauffman, ed., *The Rise of an American Architecture* (New York: Praeger, 1970). Diana Agrest, in "Le Ciel est la limite," adds to this with a discussion about towers reaching into outer space, *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* (skyscraper issue) (March-April 1975), pp. 55-64. Cass Gilbert, in his introduction to *Skyscrapers of New York* by Vernon Howe Bailey (New York: Rudge, 1928), goes on about "Mt. Woolworth" and the "Singerhorn," viewing skyscrapers as mountains and cliffs created in the city. Many other architects take up this last image, Hugh Ferriss and Raymond Hood being notable examples. Manfredo Tafuri has criticized it in the *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* issue.

   A brief article which provides welcome relief from the usual romanticization is by Elizabeth Lindquist Cock and Estelle Jussim, "Machismo in American Architecture," *Feminist Art Journal* (Spring 1974), pp. 8-10, but the authors conclude, "...at what cost these expressions of machistic corporate power?... Perhaps it is time to insist that women be given the chance to design our buildings." This suggestion bypasses the economic demand for skyscrapers rather naively, assuming that female architects employed by large corporations would actually be in a position to create real alternatives. Gertrude Kerbis, Chicago architect, makes a more realistic assessment of the small changes possible when she states that men have designed high-rises as sexual symbols and that if she got a chance to design a skyscraper, it would have some air spaces for wind to pass through. On Kerbis, see Donna Joy Newman, "High-rise-ing Women, Making a Mark on the Skyline," *Chicago Tribune* (August 8, 1976), Sec. 5, p. 7.
2. John Zukowsky, "Monumental American Obelisks—Centennial Vistas," unpublished paper (1975).
3. Arnold Bennett, "Your United States," quoted in Harlan Paul Douglas, *The Suburban Trend* (New York: Century Co., 1925), p. 305.
4. "Skyscrapers: Builders and Their Tools," in *The Skyscraper*, reprinted from *Fortune* magazine (New York: American Institute of Steel Construction, 1930), p. 29.
5. Mike Cherry, *On High Steel: The Education of an Ironworker* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), p. 27.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
7. Theodore James, Jr., *The Empire State Building* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 68. In contrast to many American projects, the Eiffel Tower, a tall and complex engineering project, was built in Paris in 1889 without a single fatality; the effort and resources expended on safety equipment matched the desire for spectacular height.
8. Cherry, pp. 26-27.
9. *Fortune*, p. 29.
10. Cherry, p. 232.
11. Louis Sullivan, *Kindergarden Chats*, pp. 29-30. He refers to the Marshall Field Wholesale Warehouse, Chicago.
12. Claude Bragdon, "Skyscrapers," in *The Architecture Lectures*, (Chicago: Creative Age Press, 1942), p. 103.
13. Le Corbusier, "I Am an American," in *When All the Cathedrals Were White* (1936) (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), pp. 90, 149.
14. Vincent Scully, *American Architecture and Urbanism* (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 154.
15. One example of the older literature describing economic "rationality" is William C. Clark and J. L. Kingston, *The Skyscraper, A Study in the Economic Height of Modern Office Buildings* (New York: American Institute of Steel Construction, 1930). Clark and Kingston rationalize a profitable 75 stories. During this period 75 stories was often exceeded and the Empire State Building was under construction including 102 stories.
16. Stephen Zoll, "Superville: New York, Aspects of Very High Bulk," *Massachusetts Review* (Summer 1973), p. 538. Zoll provides an eloquent discussion of political and economic factors in skyscraper construction with an extended bibliography. A former New York City employee, he sees the need for cities to reform their accounting systems and show the social costs of CBD density.
17. Many cities are engaged in such symbolic battles. Perhaps the most extreme ironies are the deliberately misleading understatements issued by builders during construction, in order to fool competitors into thinking that the new structure is less tall than it really will be. Suzanne Zwarun, in "The Calgary Tower," *Interlude* (Oct.-Nov. 1976), p. 9, writes about Calgary's Husky Tower. The developers lied, she explains, boasting of 613 feet when all the time the structure was 626 feet. "The developers kept thirteen extra feet in reserve to protect the image of the Canadian west.....They knew some dirty rat would toss a few more feet on a project somewhere, just so it would out-tower the Husky Tower... Take that, San Antonio."
18. Martin Pawley, *The Private Future* (London: Pan Books, 1974), p. 30.
19. "New York's Love Affair with the Movies," *New York* (Dec. 29, 1975), p. 33.
20. "Make a Top Decision," Stouffer advertisement, *Mainliner* (United Airlines' Magazine, Nov. 1976), p. 100.
21. Woody Guthrie, *Bound for Glory* (New York: New American Library, 1970), p. 292.
22. "Smack-Dab in the Middle," advertisement for Rio Orthon Palace, *New York* (Dec. 13, 1976), p. 139.
23. Greggar Sletteland and Bruce Brugmann, eds., *The Ultimate Highrise: San Francisco's Rush toward the Sky* (San Francisco: San Francisco Bay Guardian, 1971).
24. Susan Quinn, "My Desk Is Bigger Than Your Desk: Playing the New Office Status Game," *Boston* (March 1977), p. 78.
25. "Trade Center Fire Stirs Row," *New York Daily News* (February 15, 1975), p. 1.
26. Superstudio, "Twelve Cautionary Tales for Christmas: Premonitions of the Mystical Rebirth of Urbanism," *Architectural Design* (Dec. 1971), pp. 737-742.
27. J. G. Ballard, "Build-up," in *Cronopolis* (New York: 1971), pp. 218-240.
28. The Century, "Look Up, New York!" advertisement, *New York* (Nov. 22, 1976), p. 45.

I presented a preliminary version of this paper at the Woman's Building in Los Angeles in March 1974 at a conference on Women and Design. I would like to thank Whitney Chadwick, Robert Manoff, David Hodgdon, Peter Marris, Jean Strouse and Susana Torre, who made extensive comments on early drafts, as well as Sheila de Bretteville, David Gordon, Rosaria Hodgdon, Jane McGroarty, and Gwen Wright, all of whom supplied encouragement, material or important perspectives. Klaus Roesch did expert photographic research; Ets Otomo and Thea Muscat typed with precision and speed; members of the *Heresies* staff helped enormously with the final version. Copyright 1977. Please do not quote without written permission of the author.

Dolores Hayden is a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute and assistant professor of architecture and history at MIT in Cambridge. This essay is part of a book in progress that deals with contemporary American cityscapes, entitled *The Dream at the End of the Line.*

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WOMEN'S FANTASY ENVIRONMENTS
NOTES ON A PROJECT IN PROCESS

NOEL PHYLLIS BIRKBY LESLIE KANES WEISMAN

This project is about the process of women giving birth to a new architecture. It emerged in 1973 as part of my search for a feminist consciousness and process of woman-identification. I had come to realize my own male-identification and conditioning—especially as an architect (registered, licensed, numbered, legitimatized by the patriarchy). What would a truly supportive environment be if women had their way? Would women design the world differently than men? I purposely began workshops with women not professionally involved with architecture to avoid the machismo conditioning the professional is subjected to. To some extent all women are conditioned by the dominant culture, but they usually do not see themselves as creators of the built environment. However, all women experience it, react to it, live and work in it, and are affected by it, consciously or not. I wanted to help lay a foundation for a new architecture based on the experience, consciousness and creative imagination of women in the process of self-definition. —NPB

In 1968 I began teaching architecture, including design "methodology," the process by which subjective experience and intuition are systematically objectified and rationalized. I was unaware of how one-dimensional this approach is and how it isolates mind from body, feeling from action, and divides people into male/female, white/non-white, rich/poor, old/young. While objective description is important, it is incomplete. As I became involved in the women's movement, I recognized the importance of listening to myself, of trusting my own experience. By 1974 I had taught hundreds of students, less than one percent of them women, and was still the only woman faculty member in the University of Detroit School of Architecture. Despite my strong connection to other feminists, I felt painfully fragmented and isolated. I urgently needed to explore many conflicts between my woman-identity, my teaching and the man-made environment, to discover and embrace the environmental sensibilities of other women. —LKW

We began collaborating in 1974, collecting women's drawings of their environmental fantasies in workshops conducted across the country, literally "from Maine to California." The women constituted a wide cultural cross-section—diverse in life style, age, experience and education.

A workshop participant notes, "Underlying the fantasies is a common kind of understanding. I know the sources from which these needs arise. I feel them too.... I can relate to the messages in these drawings because I've experienced so many of the same frustrations, needs and daydreams. They seem to reflect me in them too. It makes me feel really connected to other women."

Readily apparent is the intense hunger for a truly supportive environment. Although many drawings reveal humor, whimsy, imagination and complexities, there are frequently signs of neglected and unfulfilled needs. There are expressions of anger and rage, often convoluted into a light-hearted joke, a defense mechanism familiar to many women. The range of vision is characterized by women's multiple rhythms and experiences. There is no one dominant statement. Nevertheless, we have noticed patterns that speak of shared experiences and common aspirations.

AUTONOMY, CHOICE AND CONTROL. We see networks of accessibility, intricate support systems, a desire for greater mobility in limitless landscapes, a tremendous openness usually qualified by a definite need for protection, through either distance or symbolic, metaphysical barriers. Many women depict retreats, but most often with some connection to the public domain.

FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY AND CHANGE. The drawings relate the shifting of human mood to the shifting of environmental form over time. Architecture is not static and monolithic, but manipulable, expanding and contracting, organically evolving—stretchable nets, systems of attachment and separation, multiple purposes, recycleable forms.

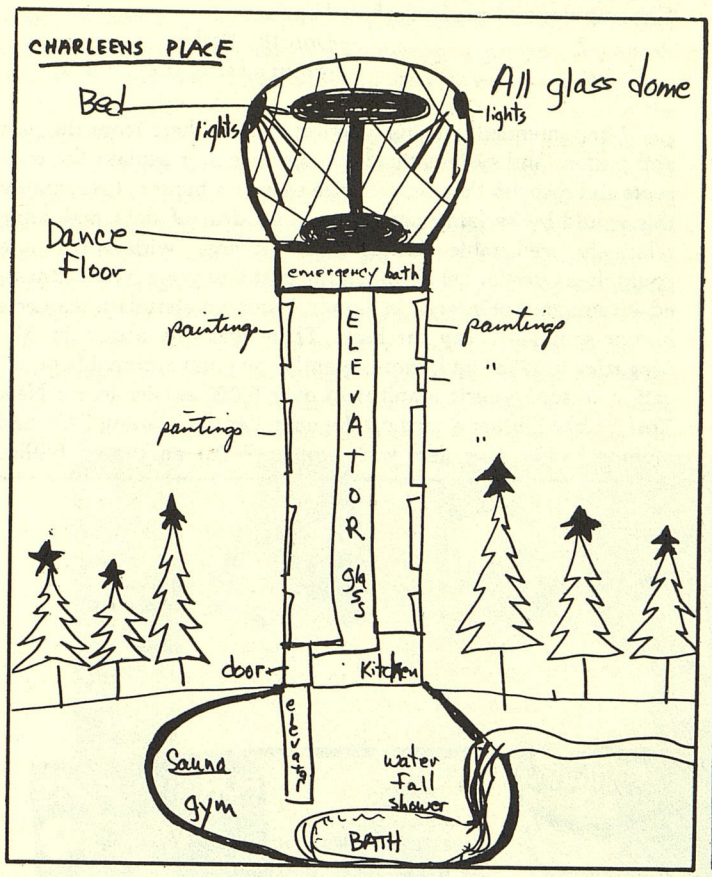
LIFE AS A MOSAIC OF CONTINUOUS EXPERIENCE. Many drawings show a spatial organization that is multicentered, fluid, informal and non-linear. Time is perceived as a continuum, often embodied in swirling movement and spiraling forms.

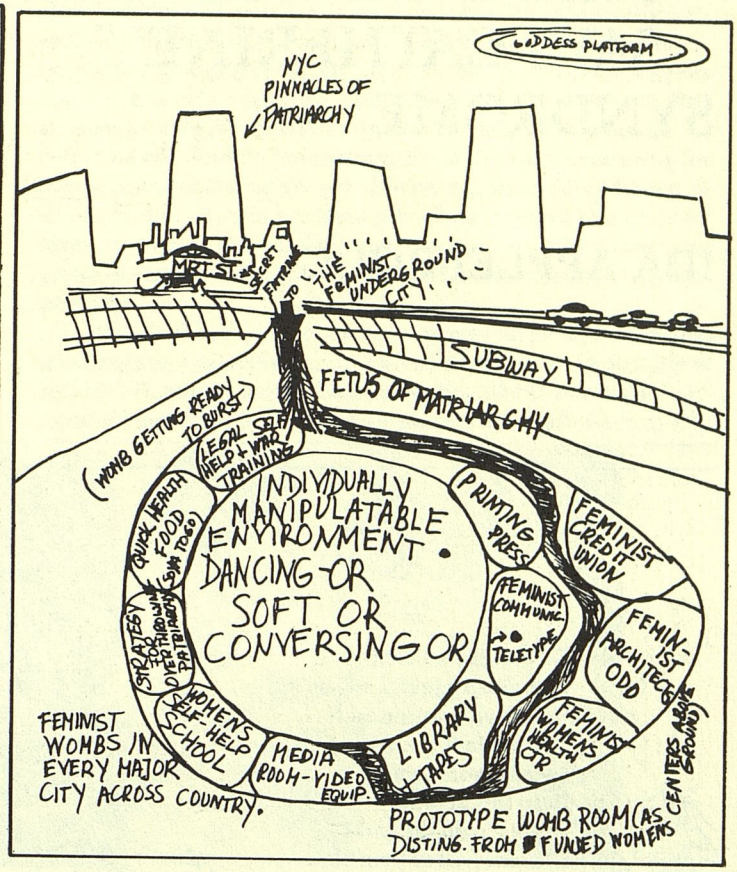
INCLUSION OF THE HUMAN DIMENSION. The expression of physical and emotional intimacy is consistent. Although there are vast spaces and vertical forms, there is little abstraction or monumentality. Spaces are described directly in terms of human activity—relaxing, dancing, working, screaming, lovemaking, eating.

INTEGRATION OF BODY/SENSUALITY AND MIND/ORDER. Sensory stimulation plays an important role—temperature and climate, surface textures, sounds, smells, the softening of hard-edged shapes into more fluid architectural forms. At the same time, work, technology, order, thought and access to information are included within these spaces. Water, plants, colored prisms, soft pillows and saunas coexist with libraries, toolshops, financial institutions and computers.

RECOGNITION OF LIFE'S COMPLEXITY AND AMBIGUITY. Forms are often open-ended and inclusive—tapestries of complication and detail, wheels within wheels of wavelike organization, inclusiveness within a private space that shows an awareness of multiple scales of experience and relations.

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The physical world constitutes a necessary component in this program for change as women continue to sort out what they want and need for a new society. We know that through our conditioning we can adapt to all kinds of spaces, but we also know that space can dominate, inhibit, reinforce role patterns. It can remind us we are small or large, with or without will. Space itself can be receptive and intrusive, expansive and restrictive. In short, it can be a form of either social control or support. A supportive environment may be many things to different people. Its physical element is but one aspect of what women conceive of as a context in which self-actualization can be achieved. A truly supportive environment would consist of cooperative, non-competitive, dynamic, in/out interactions with each other, a lack of power over relationships and an economic system and atmosphere that encourage the development of feminist institutions housed in appropriate forms and spaces of our own making. Since this project began, there has been increasingly visible evidence of a new women's culture. We are reclaiming language, poetry, music, art, ritual, religion. Architecture, curiously referred to by our culture as the "mother of the arts," can be reclaimed too. We can learn much from our past, but there is an urgent need to listen to our own experience as women if we are to create the morphology of the future. —NPB

Architecture is rarely created in isolation. It must be evaluated and criticized within the semiological framework of history and culture. A closer look at the man-made environment from a feminist perspective reveals the iconography of the patriarchal culture in spatial metaphors. One of the most obvious is the extreme bifurcation between public and domestic environments. The public world of events, "man's world," is associated with objectivity, individuality and rational functionalism. The private domain, the single-family detached house, "women's world," is associated with subjectivity, cooperation and nurturance. One of the most important responsibilities of architectural feminism is to heal this artificial spatial schism. We need to find a new morphology, a new architectural language in which the words, grammar and syntax synthesize work and play, intellect and feeling, action and compassion. This is not a particularly new insight, but I reiterate it here because so many women expressed the same vision in their environmental fantasy drawings. A feminist architecture will emerge only from a social and ecological evolution embodying feminist sensibilities and ideology. Architectural form making is a political act. We will not create a new and integrated environment until our society values those aspects of human experience that have been devalued through the oppression of women. And no one will ever convince me that we have a "revolution" until I see feminism institutionalized in the nature and quality of the environments we build. —LKW

Noel Phyllis Birkby is a registered architect in New York and teaches architectural design at Pratt Institute. Leslie Kanes Weisman is a professor of Architecture and Environmental Design at New Jersey Institute of Technology. Both are long-time feminist activists and among the co-founders of the Women's School of Planning and Architecture. They have written for many feminist and professional journals and hope to share their collection of drawings in book form.

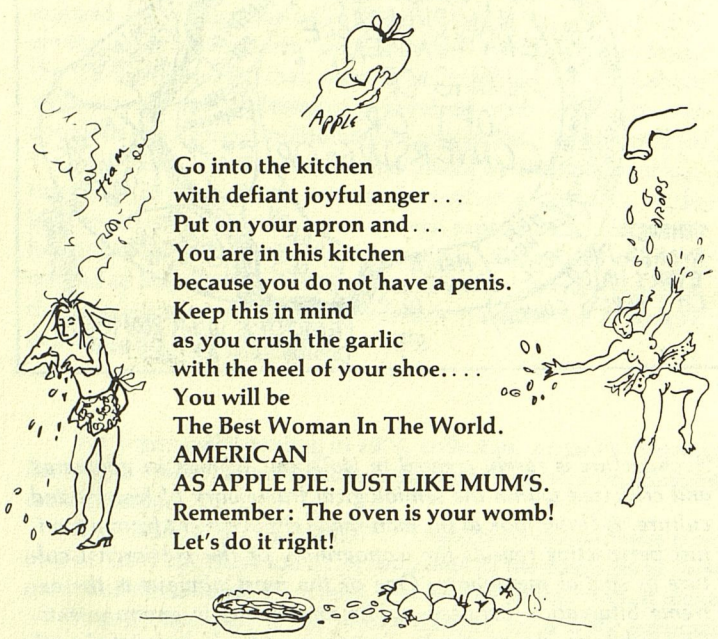
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THE "'I AM HEATHCLIFFE, SAYS CATHERINE'" SYNDROME

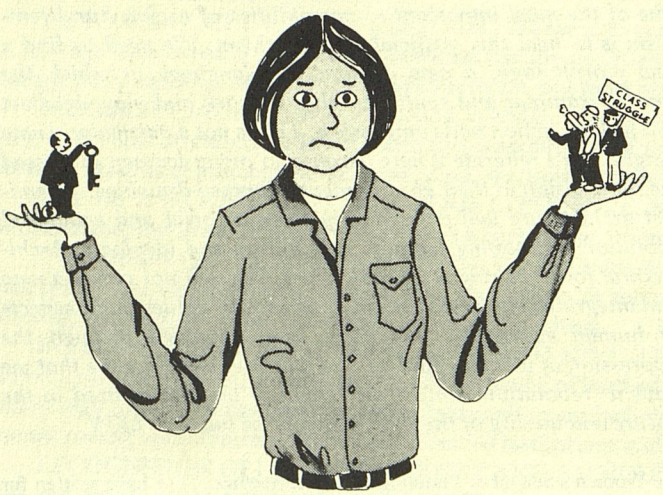
IDA APPLEBROOG

That thing he wrote, the time the sparrow died—
(Oh, most unpleasant—gloomy, tedious words!)
I called it sweet, and made believe I cried;
The stupid fool! I've always hated birds.
—*Dorothy Parker*
(*From a Letter from Lesbia*)

I had intended to bring together material here from the past and present and systematically summarize and explain the concepts and theories that characterize women's humor. Presumably this would be be fairly simple; a good deal of data and some relatively predictable themes would emerge, with which one could then wrestle. Yet although the past few years have witnessed a resurgence of interest in humor, I found material on *women's* humor sparse—to say the least. There was one article in *Ms. Magazine* in 1973[1] and, more recently, one unmentionable publication of sophomoric inanity; in over 5,000 entries in the New York Public Library's card catalogue under the heading "Wit and Humor," only *four* deal with women.[2] An annotated biblio-



Carolee Schneemann. Excerpts from performance *Americana I Ching Apple Pie*. 1972.



Carol Conde. 1977. Pen and ink. 3½" x 5½".



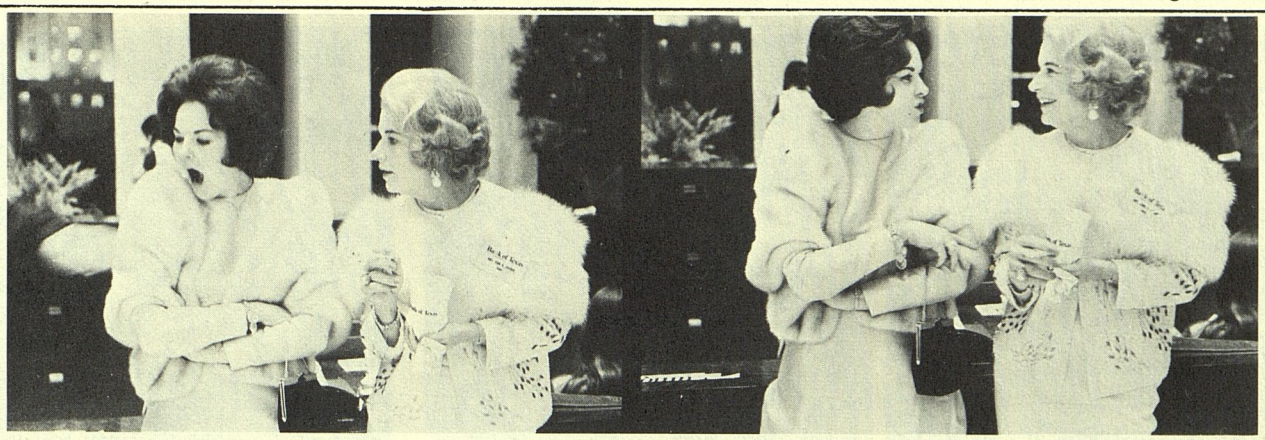
Karen Shaw. *Additional Meanings: Forgiveness = 139*. 1975. 11" x 7¾".

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graphy of "all published papers on humor available in the English language in the research literature" (1900-1971)[3] contains approximately 400 items, of which *not one* relates to women's humor.

Humor itself is difficult to define. In this article, I will consider it generically as any form of communication which is *perceived* as humorous by any of the interacting parties. "Women's humor" is used to connote humor created by women and dealing in some way with woman's role in the human condition. Of the various theories, the psycho-sociological approach, stressing the notion of humor as social interchange, may be most fruitful for our purposes. Humor is potentially part of every social structure and affects all social systems. When the subject is relationships between women and men, men are traditionally permitted to tease or make fun of women, who in turn are required to take no offense; in fact, we are frequently expected to join in the "fun," even though it is at our own expense. This context is similar to that of racist humor—gratifying one group at the expense of the underdog; its purpose is to throw blame on some group and to reinforce its inferior position. In this process the role of the scapegoat itself is vital. Generally, as O. E. Klapp points out, the scapegoat has a specific socially defined role and position. To the dominant group, "the fool represents values which are rejected by the group, causes that are lost, incompetence, failure, and fiasco."[4] The fool's position is degraded, but simultaneously valued—s/he serves as the scapegoat, the butt of humor, the cathartic symbol of aggression. But even beyond that, Klapp suggests that there is an underlying, continuous, collective process that ascribes this fool's role to a group of people as a means of enforcing conformity, maintaining the status quo, pressuring for status adjustments, or simply eliminating an undesired form of deviance. In fact, this has been one of the components of every form of racism. Blacks, Chicanos, Jews, or any other minority group as the butt of humor is too well known to require description here.

What is the usual reaction of the scapegoat group? How does it use humor—as a defense, or even as a weapon in its struggle to survive? Historian Joseph Boskin, writing about the social functions of black humor (black ethnic humor, not "gallows humor"),



Eve Sonneman. *Opening Night*. Houston. 1972.



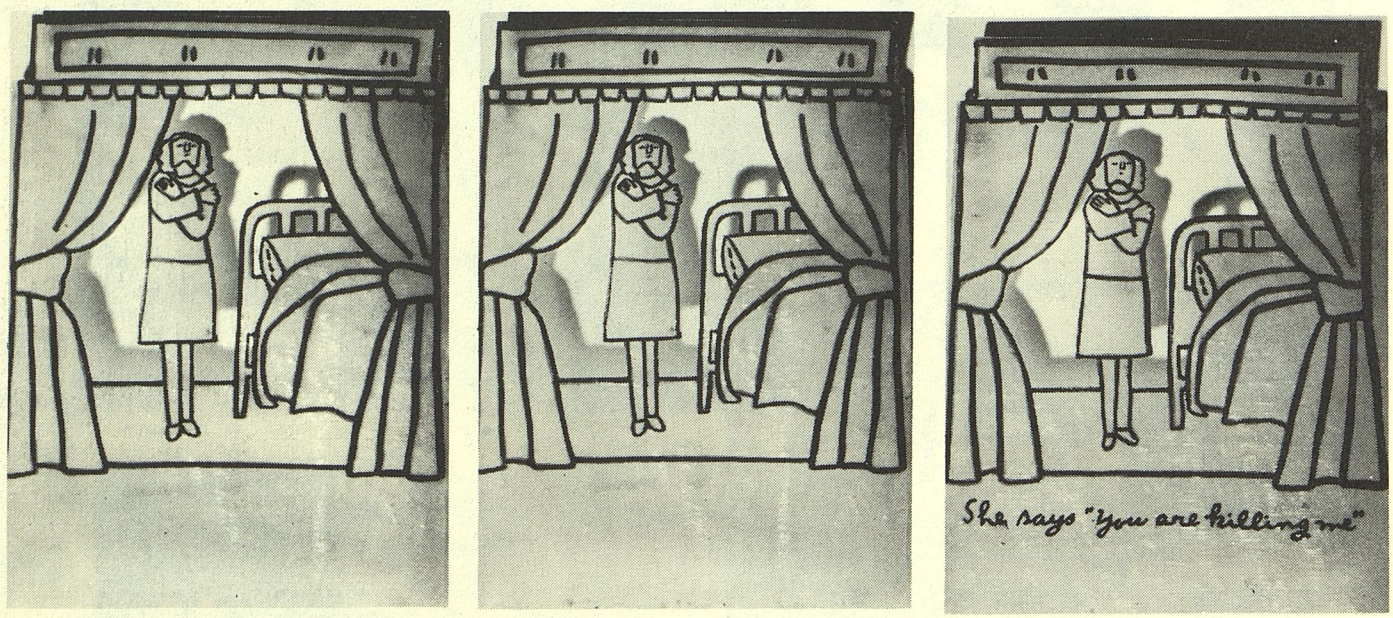
Sandra Matthews. *Sleight of Hand Series*. 1976.

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suggests that there are two varieties.[5] External humor is presented to the dominant culture as an accommodation to white society, a means of survival. Totally different, however, is internal humor, which reinforces the ingroup's behaviors or values, and in which one of its members usually triumphs over representatives of the dominant group. Some jokes may also poke fun at the ingroup itself, but that's all right; it's "within the family." This same analysis holds in regard to any other ingroup/outgroup or dominant/scapegoat relationship—except in the case of women.

A fascinating phenomenon takes place in women's humor, different from what is found in black, Jewish, or any other scapegoat humor; namely, the absence of internal humor. Obviously, much humor has been directed at women by men, but I have no intention of going into those jokes. There has also been a good deal of women's external humor—the face we have presented to the male-dominated society as a means of survival: yes, we are silly, mindless playthings; aren't we fun(ny)? But where is our internal humor? Where are the jokes, the anecdotes, the cartoons that would positively reinforce our existing or changing behavioral patterns? And where are the "in-jokes," where we poke a bit of good-natured fun at ourselves, and which simultaneously serve to solidify the group—the type of humor with which Dick Gregory, for example, helped to create a new image for blacks, a consciousness of their past and their identity? Most important, where is the humor directed at the common oppressor? Where are the anecdotes in which we come out ahead; the jokes in which the men fall on their asses while we stand there and laugh? The answer is that for the most part, there weren't any. Yes, there were stories told by Dorothy Parker, Ruth Draper, and maybe one or two others, but generally there has been no women's ingroup humor until very recently.

Why not? Women have been identifiable as a group in every culture since time began. Yet the jokes or stories that women tell each other when they are together are the same jokes that men tell, sometimes slightly cleaned up. In other words, for the most part we have accepted the outgroup's humor. We have even emulated it and its values, making the same kind of disparaging remarks about ourselves that men do.



Ida Applebroog. *Galileo Works.* 1976. Shadow puppets, rhoplex on paper. 10" x 12" each.

POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS (A DIALOGUE)

"Ever since I saw photographs of those poor women in sweat shops, I refuse to buy *anything* readymade."

"What a wonderful thing to do. It's like a one-woman boycott—like the grape boycott. You know, I *still* can't bear to eat grapes?"

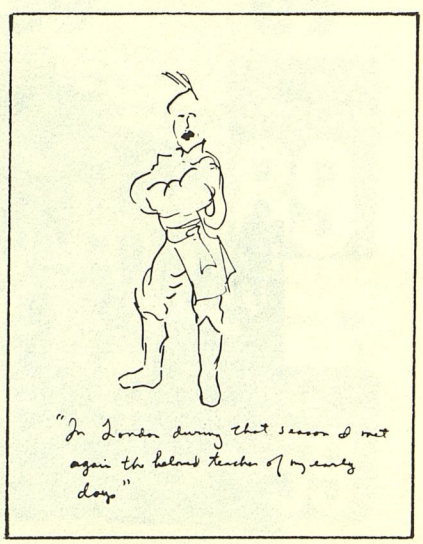
"There was one on lettuce, too."

"I didn't hear about that one. And I just ordered salad! I feel so badly."

"It's all right, dear. It's over now and the workers are happy again. Yours was endive, anyway."

"But I do think you're right about mass-produced clothing. If women didn't buy those cheap copies of designer dresses, it would protect the designers' incomes, too."

Nancy Kitchel. 1976.



Eleanor Antin, *Recollections of My Life with Diaghilev.* 1973. Red ink on paper. 9" x 12". "In London during that season I met again the beloved teacher of my early days."

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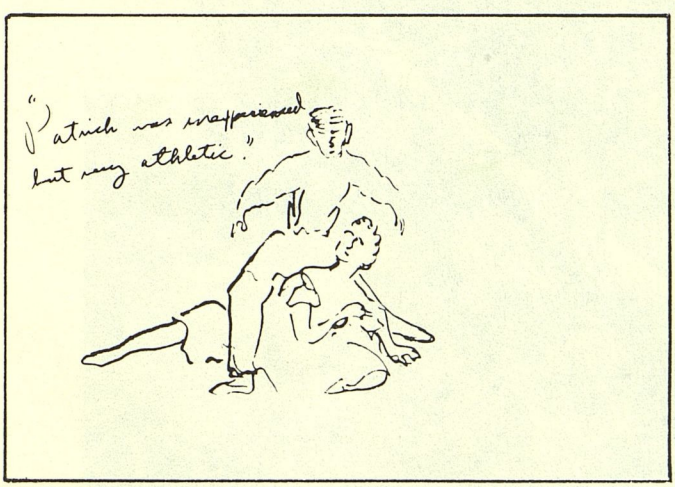
This has been the pattern for a long time. In the eighteenth century, one of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *bon mots* was, "It goes far towards reconciling me to being a woman, when I reflect that I am thus in no danger of marrying one." Hannah Cowley extended this further when she said, "What is a woman? Only one of nature's agreeable blunders." But even in more recent years, we find Lady Astor stating, "My vigour, vitality and cheek repel me; I am the kind of woman I would run away from." Women are inherently inferior and therefore, according to Margot Naylor, have great difficulties achieving success: "If every successful man needs a woman behind him, every successful woman needs at least three men." But who really wants to be a success anyway, when Elizabeth Marbury assures us that, "A caress is better than a career"? Ilka Chase agreed; she knew how to invest her money: "America's best buy for a nickel is a telephone call to the right man." What we really ought to do is follow the advice of Anita Loos: "A girl with brains ought to do something else with them besides think," because, as Sophie Tucker so aptly concluded, "No man ever put up with a successful woman, and he's right!" Yes, folks, those were the jokes. That was women's humor. And things haven't changed too much. As recently as March 11, 1977, in reviewing an all-female amateur comedy revue at Once Upon a Stove, Anna Quindlan noted:

> Certainly making jokes about the female condition is a comic tradition—male comics have been doing it for years. But why no turnabout? Why are mothers still the butt of jokes? Why does Farah Fawcett Majors get savaged for her looks three times in one evening? Why doesn't one voice cry out in the wilderness: "Take my husband—please"?[6]

Why not, indeed?

When we encounter such a bizarre situation, we have to try to explain it. The psychoanalytic concept of "identification with the aggressor" may be the "defense mechanism" which explains this particular "feminine dilemma." Anna Freud mentions the case of a little girl who was afraid to cross the hall in the dark be-





Eleanor Antin. *Recollections of My Life with Diaghilev.* 1973. Red ink on paper. 9" x 12". "Patrick was inexperienced but very athletic."

"Negating the Negative"

anti-pure, anti-purist, anti-puritanical, anti-minimalist, anti-post minimalist, anti-reductivist, anti-formalist, anti-pristine, anti-austere, anti-bare, anti-blank, anti-bland, anti-boring, . . . anti-universal, anti-internationalist, anti-imperialist, anti-bauhausist, anti-dominant, anti-authoritarian, anti-mandarinist, anti-mainstreamist, . . . anti-black, anti-white, anti-gray, anti-grid, anti-god, . . . anti-logic, anti-conceptual, anti-male-dominated, anti-virile, anti-tough, anti-cool, anti-cruel, . . . anti-controlled, anti-controlling, anti-arrogant, anti-sublime, anti-grandiose, anti-pedantic, anti-patriarchal, anti-heroic, anti-genius, anti-master.

"On Affirmation"

fussy, funny, funky, perverse, mannerist, tribal, rococco, tactile, self-referring, sumptuous, sensuous, salacious, eclectic, exotic, messy, monstrous, complex, ornamented . . .

Excerpt from Joyce Kozloff. *Negating the Negative* (an answer to Ad Reinhardt's "On Negation"). 1976.

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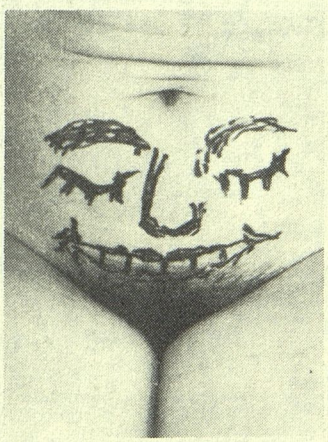
cause she dreaded ghosts. Finally, she hit upon the device of making all kinds of peculiar gestures and noises as she crossed the hall, because "There's no need to be afraid in the hall; you just have to pretend that *you're* the ghost who might meet you."[7] Anna Freud goes on to point out that this is a normal defense mechanism of the ego when confronted by authority and/or when dealing with anxiety. She also states that such identification may at times represent an intermediate stage in the development of paranoia.[8] (We had better watch out for that one!)

There is little doubt in my mind that in order to survive, we have for thousands of years identified with the aggressor. Judy Chicago has said about women's art:

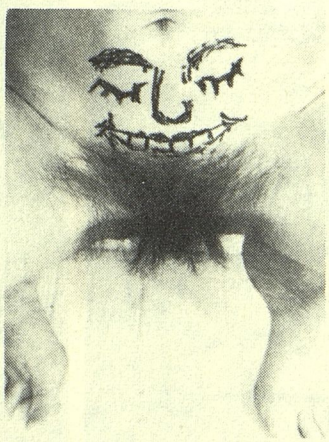
> If you are invested in the structure and values that male dominance has provided . . . or if you want validation from those institutions that have grown out of that structure, then you don't want to recognize that women exist separately from men. . . . what subject matter and what forms are important, and what the nature of art is and who defines it and who makes it, and how much it costs, are simply projections of the male value structure.[9]

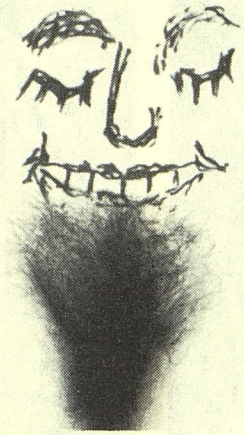
It is my contention, then, that as a partial consequence of women's identification with the aggressor, we have until recently accepted the aggressor's humor, in which we are the scapegoat. This same identification has also prevented the development of any humor directed against the oppressor. Even in love, it has been expected that the woman identify totally with the man. Simone de Beauvoir states:

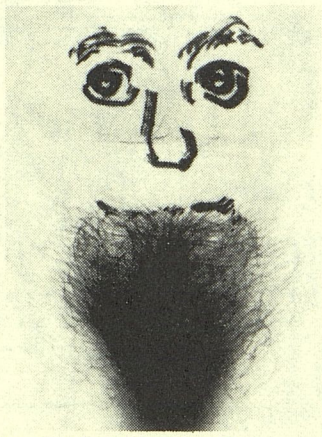
> . . . it is not enough to serve him. The woman in love tries to see with his eyes . . . she adopts his friendships, his enmities, his opinions . . . She uses his words, mimics his gestures, acquires his eccentricities and his tics. "I am Heathcliffe," says Catherine in *Wuthering Heights*; that is the cry of every woman in love; she is another incarnation of her loved one, his reflection, his double: she is *he*.[10]



1. Annette Messager. *Trickster.* 1974-75. Ink on flesh.







2. Annette Messager. *La Femme et le barbu.* 1974-75. Ink on flesh.



Ulrike Rosenbach. *Berlin: The Column of Victory.* 1974.

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If love is "every girl's dream," and if one-sided *over*-identification is part of love, then it is not surprising to find that it has been an integral element of all of woman's history. When you're identified with the aggressor, clearly you don't make fun of him, and you don't make fun of yourself for being identified with him.

Today, however, we are in the midst of an evolutionary process which is beginning to have some impact on women's humor. For many of us, our previous conventional roles are no longer tenable ways to deal with the world and with ourselves. We are reevaluating our sexual identities, and we are beginning to create the missing link in women's humor, as illustrated by the works following this article.

These works were produced by a particular group of women —artists whose frame of reference is essentially the "art world." Nevertheless, they provide some insight into an emerging ingroup humor. Some of these works represent a satirical view of previously accepted male stereotypes and values; others are concerned with our new identities, as illustrated by some pieces that deal with our own anatomies. Women's bodies always have been sensuously exploited as outrageous cheesecake images. While some artists parody this male viewpoint, others, like Annette Messager, Ulrike Rosenbach, and Eleanor Antin, pleasurably explore their own anatomy to produce comic illusions in which sexual exploitation is not paramount. At other times, women's humor in art is primarily concerned with the general human condition. In the introduction to Louise Bourgeois' book of engravings, *He Disappeared into Complete Silence* (1947), Marius Bewley wrote:

> They are tiny tragedies of human frustration.... The protagonists are miserable because they can neither escape the isolation which has become a condition of their own identities, nor yet accept it as wholly natural. Their attempts to free themselves, or accept their situation invariably end in disaster.[11]

In a lighter vein, Laurie Anderson writes, "On Church Street, I decide to name my daughters Luncheonette and Delicatesse . . . at the fruitstand, the owner's son yells at me 'Hey cereal Lady!'; I don't know why and try to look as neurotic as possible."

FROM 'PHOTOGRAPHY AND OTHER GOOD DESIGNS'

DARLING, I STAYED AT YOUR PLACE WHEN YOU WENT TO CALIFORNIA
AND I SAW ALL THOSE PHOTOGRAPHS OF HER SMILING FACE
THERE'S A BIG ONE IN THE KITCHEN, SHE'S SMILING ON THE BEACH
THERE'S A SMALL ONE IN THE BATHROOM, SHE'S LOOKING OUT AND SMILING.

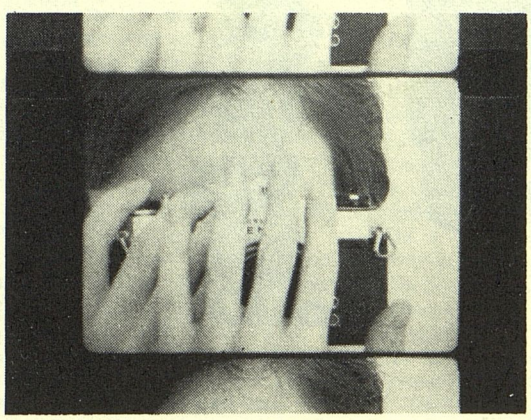
WELL I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST FRIENDS, TIL I FOUND A LETTER
IT SAID, "DARLING, I LOVE YOU, BUT YOU LOVE ME BETTER."
IT READ, "DARLING, I REALLY LOVE YOU BUT YOU LOVE ME BETTER."
WELL I MAY HAVE BEEN BLIND, BUT NOW I CAN SEE
DARLING, MY DARLING, YOU WERE TWO-TIMING ME.

I LOOKED AT THOSE PHOTOGRAPHS, DAY AND NIGHT
HER EYES WERE A DAZZLING BLUE, EVEN IN BLACK AND WHITE
I TRIED TO PICTURE THE WAY SHE TALKED, HOW SHE MOVED
WHAT SHE THOUGHT ABOUT DRIVING ON THE ROAD ALONE
SHE WAS SO STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL, SO COOL, SO WARM
AND SHE DID SMILE A LOT.
AFTER A WHILE, I KNEW I WAS IN LOVE WITH HER.
I COULDN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE WITH HER.

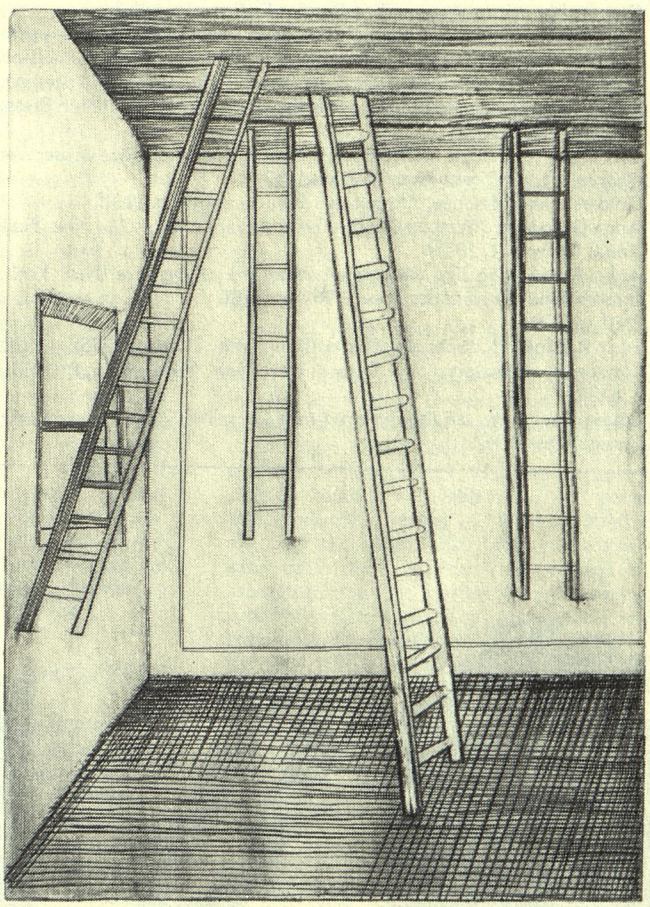
I HAD A DREAM THAT SHE AND I WERE LOVERS,
WE MADE LOVE ALL DAY UNDERNEATH YOUR COVERS.
WE USED ALL YOUR TOOLS TO DRILL HOLES IN YOUR SCULPTURE
THEN WE LAY ON THEM ALL DAY—
SHE WAS A GREAT COOK TOO - COLD CUTS.

I LOVED HER SO MUCH, AND I WILL NEVER FORGET HER
THE DAY SHE SMILED AT ME AND SAID, "DARLING I LOVE YOU,
BUT YOU LOVE ME BETTER."
THE DAY SHE WHISPERED, "DARLING, I REALLY LOVE YOU,
BUT YOU LOVE ME BETTER."

©1977
LAURIE ANDERSON



Laurie Anderson. 1977.



Louise Bourgeois. From *He Disappeared into Complete Silence.* 1946. Engraving. 5" x 7".

Once a man was angry at his wife, he cut her in small pieces, made a stew of her.

Then he telephoned to his friends and asked them for a cocktail-and-stew party.

Then all came and had a good time.

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In my own work, as part of a series of "puppet plays," I use humor to communicate what would otherwise be difficult to say, to make constantly problematical human contacts less threatening. Carol Conde, entering the traditional male arena of politics, presents women wondering whether to join the class struggle, or to submit to the seductions of the capitalist.

All of these types of humor are still comparatively rare. It is probably too early in our identification process to expect them to appear frequently. And we are still at a stage where some of us see anything that isn't female-self-congratulatory as "anti-feminist." It takes time, and it's difficult. One of the signs of real social change will be when we can invent jokes about ourselves, as well as about "them," and laugh freely.

"Freedom produces jokes and jokes produce freedom"
—Jean Paul (Richter), 1804.

1. Naomi Weisstein, "Why We Aren't Laughing ... Any More," *Ms. Magazine* (Nov. 1973), p. 49ff.
2. Kate Sanborn, *The Wit of Women* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1886); Martha Bensley Bruere, *Laughing Their Way: Women's Humor in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1934); Bernard Hollowood, ed., *The Women of Punch* (London: Barker, 1961); Lore and Maurice Cowan, *The Wit of Women* (London: Leslie Freewin, 1969).
3. Jeffrey H. Goldstein and Paul E. McGhee, "An Annotated Bibliography of Published Papers on Humor in the Research Literature and an Analysis of Trends: 1900-1971," in *The Psychology of Humor*, ed. Jeffrey H. Goldstein and Paul E. McGhee (New York: Academic Press, 1972), pp. 263-283.
4. O.E. Klapp, *Heroes, Villains and Fools: The Changing American Character* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1962).
5. Goldstein and McGhee, "Annotated Bibliography," p. 112ff.
6. Anna Quindlan, "Women Comics Get the Last Laugh," *The New York Times* (March 11, 1977).
7. Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* (New York: International Universities Press, 1961), p. 118f.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
9. Lucy R. Lippard, *From the Center* (New York: Dutton, 1976), p. 228.
10. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Knopf, 1953), p. 613f.
11. Louise Bourgeois, *He Disappeared into Complete Silence* (New York: Gemor Press, 1947).

Laurie Anderson, born in Chicago and living in New York, is a performance artist working with sound, film, and spoken words.

Eleanor Antin is a "post-conceptual" and performance artist living in Del Mar, California. Her work absorbs her other identities—the King, the Ballerina, the Black Movie Star and the Nurse.

Louise Bourgeois is a sculptor, a symbolist and intimist, who describes the piece reproduced here as "an attempt at the sublimation of pain."

Carol Conde, a Canadian artist living and working in New York, is an editor of *Red-Herring* and a member of Artists Meeting for Cultural Change.

Nancy Kitchel is a New York artist whose work deals with identity, exorcism and political awareness.

Joyce Kozloff is a painter who lives in New York, teaches and has been active in the women's movement on both coasts.

Sandra Matthews is a photographer who was born in Chicago and attended Radcliffe and the State University of New York at Buffalo, where she lives.

Annette Messager has two identities—the "collector" and the "artist." Both live in Paris and both make "art" primarily from found materials obsessively reassembled.

Ulrike Rosenbach is a feminist performance and video artist living in Cologne. Her work is primarily concerned with ritual, magic, eroticism and the female image.

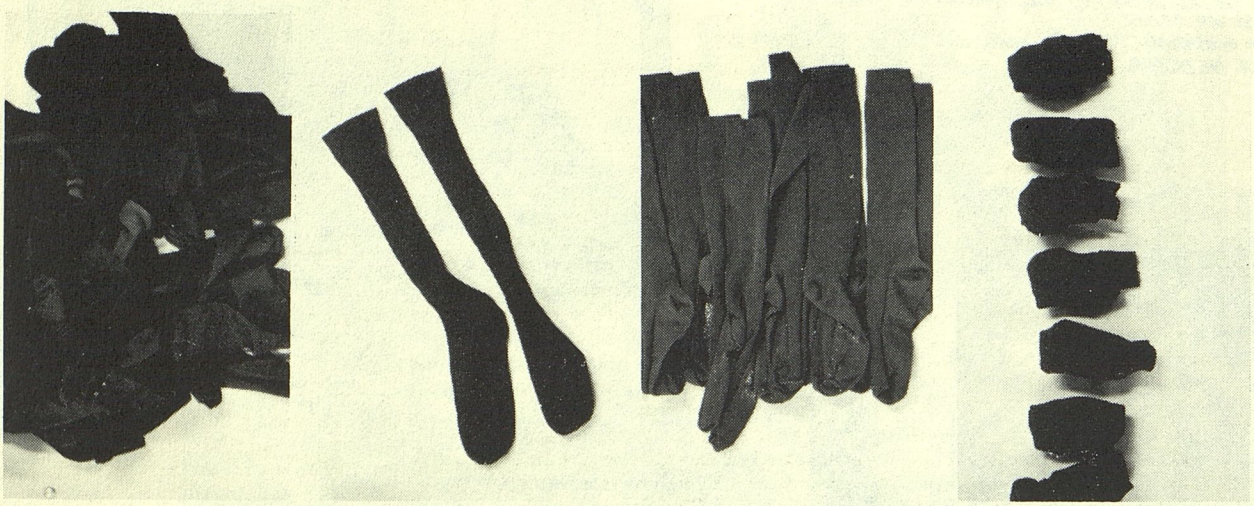
Carolee Schneemann, the first painter to choreograph environmental theater (for the Judson Dance Theater), created Kinetic Theater in 1962.

Karen Shaw is an artist dealing with language and has been published occasionally. She is the mother of two boys.

Eve Sonneman, born in Chicago and living in New York, works with photography and teaches at Cooper Union and the School of Visual Arts.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles conceived Maintenance Art Works in 1969. She has been maintaining it ever since and vice versa.

Ida Applebroog is making art and living in New York. Before that she was making art, teaching, and living in San Diego.



HOMAGE TO MU CH'I

(7th-century Southern Sung Zen painter, especially painting: "Persimmons"; Mu Ch'i was an early "forerunner" of abstract expressionism)

Mierle Laderman Ukeles. *Doing the Laundry: The Sorting of the Sox.* 1977. 12" x 4½".

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FROM THE READERS:

. . . There's so much I could write or respond to in your first issue; but I want to say above all that it is important and valuable that HERESIES exists, that there is yet more new space for the testing and challenging of new thought and art by women.

Two apparently minor, but perhaps significant items: I mentioned to you that I found the advertisement for SEVEN DAYS gratuitously offensive in its reference to "the latest rage in the women's movement." How about the latest rage in the Black movement? the latest rage on the Left? The sentence betrays yet again the misogyny of male Leftism, the attempt to trivialize feminist politics; I wish HERESIES had refused to run it. I also found questionable the ad for HERESIES itself, which implies that feminism and politics are two different things. It seems clear that the HERESIES collective believes that feminism is more than "life style"; if it is not political, if we are not concerned with fundamental societal change and with the structures and abuses of power in existing society, what are we about?. . . Adrienne Rich, N.Y., N.Y.

Lucy Lippard's article has given me more hope about people, the art world, and my art work than anything I have read yet. I speak to you as an artist and the youngest child of second generation American parents whose oldest child became a doctor and now buys art from Marlborough. I have lived with all the contradictory feelings that you describe, yet, I think through my good instincts, I have not gone off the deep end —i.e., dressing downward, maintaining an intellectual elitist attitude.

I have, however, felt at a dead end, and this is why I think your article is so important. It provides another option for women artists. To look to other women artists for understanding and criticism; to form a network; to hopefully and eventually break through the patriarchal economic monolith that dominates the art world— that is what we *need* to do. . . . Leslie Sills, Brookline, Mass.

Harmony Hammond's defense of feminists practicing abstract art was wonderful and very intelligent. I was an active feminist for several years. . . . I am still a feminist and a woman struggling to produce my (abstract) art. Neither then nor now have my militant feminist friends been particularly interested in abstract art, nor are most of my other, non-political friends. I think most people prefer some sort of representation in art. They feel art should serve some end . . . I don't believe that there is a "universal art," an art that contains something for almost everybody. (I'm not sure I even believe in "mass" politics, even mass feminist politics. We may have to accept what we have—a mass of splinters—and work with it). . .

There's a lack of interest in the spiritual dimensions of art, the non-material dimensions (in life, too). I believe abstract art, of all the possible kinds of art, is the most closely linked to the spiritual. Your article was not just a defense of the practice of abstract art by feminist artists, it strengthens the case of abstract art itself. You breathed a lot of new life into abstract art by defining elements it contains that either weren't there before women artists began using them or weren't recognized (especially the "marking" idea).

When you state that abstract art is used "by men as a defense mechanism against the alienation of their own capitalist system," this is true for *me*, too, but the concluding part of the sentence, that it furthers the "myth of the artist as alienated," is not true in my case. I'm not trying to further a myth—just survive! It still seems necessary for many of us to defend ourselves. What I'm producing is art by a person who is trying hard not to be a victim but who still *is* a victim. (Very little has changed for the better in most women's lives; in fact, the world of making-a-living has become much more difficult than it was in the 1960s.) You say it has been suggested by some that the "content of one's work can be separated from one's political beliefs." I believe I would say that the content of one's work cannot be separated from the circumstances of one's *life* . . .

What is there in some radical feminists with their belief in totally overhauling society that makes them produce abstract art? Is there some connection between the drive to make revolution and the drive to produce abstract art, some visionary quality? If we could discuss questions like this we might understand ourselves better and be better understood by others, including other feminist artists, not dismissed as counter-revolutionary or irrelevant to the women's struggle. Feminist abstract artists struggle to make art, to survive and to change this sexist society. Every part of our lives is political, whether we make "political" art or not. What one believes (and is) is expressed in totality, not by separating the life of the artist from the work of the artist.

You say: "In a reactionary escape from formalist criticism, most movement writing on feminist art deals with political issues, but lacks any real understanding of the creative process . . ." I think the first part of the sentence is an excellent criticism. So is the part about the lack of understanding of the creative process, but this is true of most art writing . . . Movement writers are no more guilty here than all the other writers on art. There seems to be a sort of embarrassment about the creative process. Everybody seems to be very busy demystifying art and artists, but the creative process *is* something else, isn't it?—Joan Mathews, N.Y., N.Y.

DO YOU SEE FEMINISM CORRECTING THE ERRORS OF SOCIALISM?

If more pulp inside red covers continues to bleed into the magazine stands of elegant bookshops, the dollar signs on cash registers will be heralded and no more. What do you think another "feminist publication on art and politics" is going to do? Wage war? If not, what's the point? Take note: "Politics cannot be equated with art, nor can a general world outlook be equated with a method of artistic creation and criticism." "Idealists stress motive and ignore effect. . ." (Mao Tse Tung). The dialectic of social transformation is embodied in the ability to set correct analysis in motion. Within your motives is a sincerity that guards but does not attack. You end up only caressing yearnings to be effective. Criticism is the beginning of political definition. Criticism of Capitalist Society cannot exclude the liberals who grease the chains!

HERESIES allows women to remain within a state of oppression by offering console to comfort instead of challenge to correct: by offering women the feeling that they are not alone, the suffering is common. HERESIES is a pseudo-sophisticated development of consciousness-raising groups. Instead of watered-down group therapy terms, you're handing out watered-down leftist jargon which is ultimately rhetorical and glosses over the fact that you have no stance; that you are not coming to grips with the organizational tasks embedded in class struggle. Do you believe that anybody is right? How many more pleas for "socialist-feminism" can you make? How many more pictures of vaginal imagery can you pat on the back?

Who is your audience?

Are you trying to cross class lines?

(Can any *art* journal cross class lines?)

Are you trying to popularize feminism while advertising women's art?

Does uniting art and politics politicize your art by creating a politicized context?

What is the class of your "politicized" community?

Are you proselytizing a "catch all" feminism because you're unable to define and support a unified stance?

Or is HERESIES just about the discovery and application of a female mode of communication designed for the women who feel oppressed rather than against the social relations that determine the oppression?

Is this not based on the notion that "the personal is political"? (Isn't it a truism to say that the personal is political? Isn't the personal also social. . . collective. . . ?)

Is HERESIES a product of personal pain trying to set up a politicized context?

Is this the basis upon which you identify with each other?

Does HERESIES use politics opportunistically?

We refuse to meet you on the grounds of "group" individualism. What changes can you effect by inflating the market with another commodity: an object of contemplation destined to parallel your art, a static, palatable item for easy consumption? Would potentially offending your audience be too great a risk? How can the wedding of "feminist" art and "feminist" politics (the enculturated version of "Women's Lib") be anything but liberal? (Enculturated politics = fashionable doubt = liberal conscience). You are legitimizing your position by imperializing a wider cultural context. Why do you *choose* to be reactionary? Proselytizing a privitized politic, a personal politic, a politic rooted in guilt is powerless as well as idealistic. Iconoclastic behavior cannot be equated with revolutionary strategy. If you think HERESIES is only about female method, look again! (Is the parallel of paternalism, "maternalism"?) IMPERIALISM HAS NO SEX.—Movement Women's Caucus, N.Y., N.Y.

Errata: First issue of HERESIES.

There was a misprint in Adrienne Rich's "Notes on Lying." On page 25, paragraph five should read:

> Does a life "in the closet"—lying, perhaps of necessity, about ourselves to bosses, landlords, clients, colleagues, family, because the law and public opinion are founded on a lie—does this, can it, spread into *private* life. . .

HERESIES mistakenly substituted "public" for "private." And there was a reversal of paragraphs at the end of Carol Muske's "The Art of Not Bowing"; the top paragraph on page 34 should in fact have been the last.

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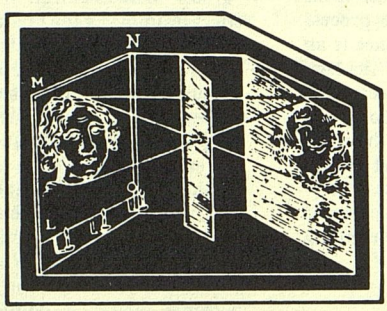
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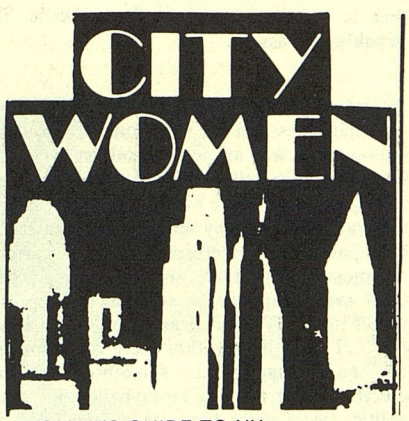
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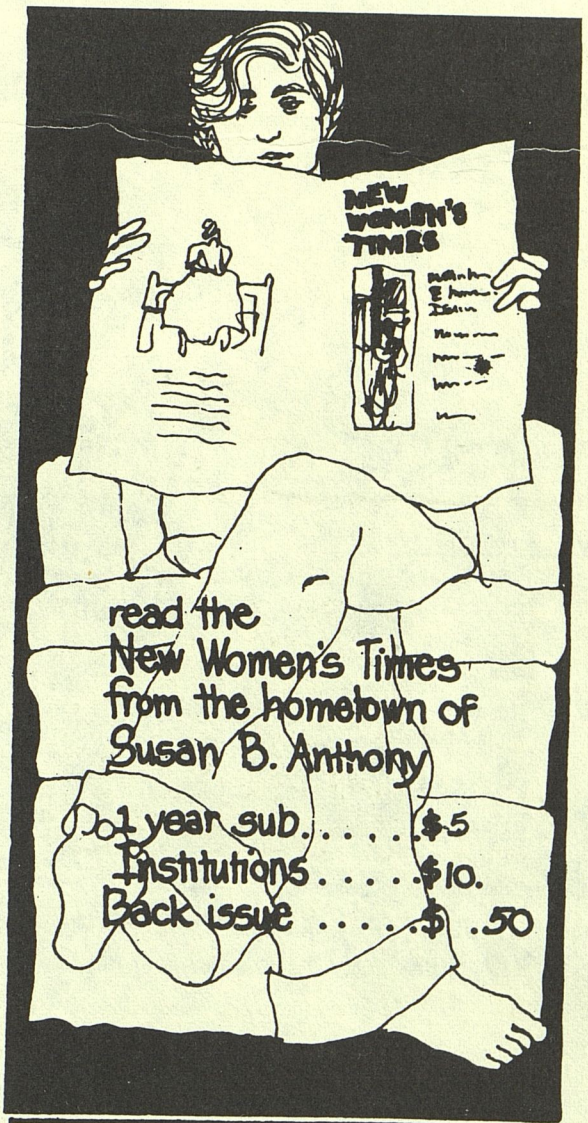


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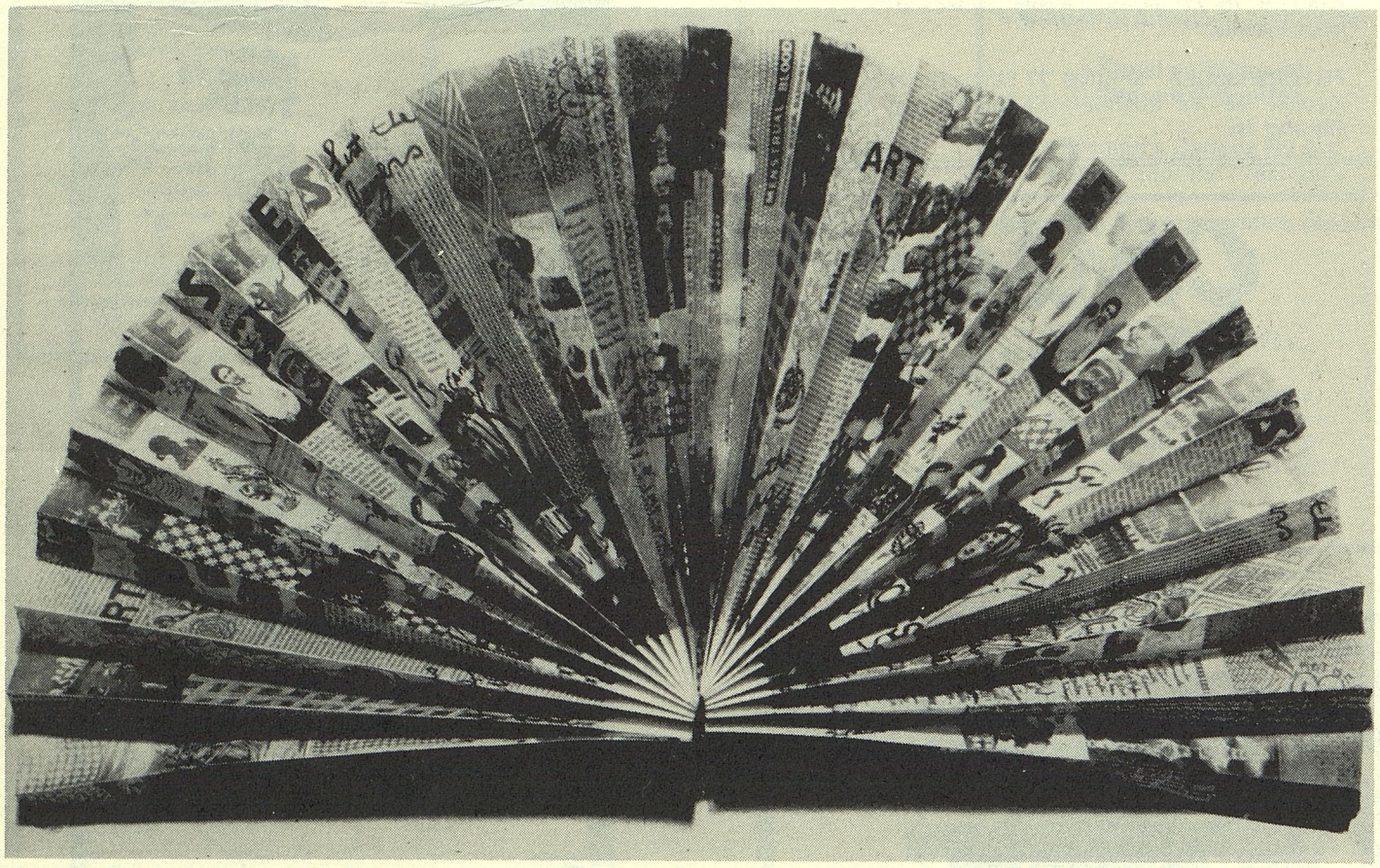
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We apologize for any misspellings in the last issue.

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