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Women as liberators

WOMEN AS LIBERATORS

By GINNY FOSTER

Edited by H. TRASK

At this point in the history of education, women are for the first time in a position to influence institutions of higher learning. As certificate programs for women's studies are being set up, the important decisions are not those of content, but whether women's studies will follow the patriarchal formula which has defined education in the past.

Women are "marginal to society", imprisoned in a culture of silence, and their education in universities has been indoctrination in the myths of the patriarchy, but women's studies offers an opportunity to re-define education as "cultural action for freedom" — if we establish priorities that do not reflect the dominant frame of reference.

University women must begin to think of what women's studies could be, as opposed to the kind of thinking which asks how we can get women's studies into the existing educational system.

THE NECESSITY OF A NEW GESTALT

Breaking out of the old myths has both a necessary and a utilitarian function, not only for women but for all of us. A new Gestalt is a matter of necessity because the actions based on the old perceptions of reality are leading us to disaster. What we have seen in the last few years is a growing awareness of the vast discrepancy between myth and reality. The values of power, conquest, and progress may have been suitable for a period in our history but they simply do not work any more. The precepts of the dominant frame of reference are failing us.

There can be no other subject for women's studies than human behavior. Psychology of women is not the scientific study of women (even if done by women); it is part of the history of the growing consciousness of human behavior, of how some human psychologists have looked at a part of human behavior. Thus it is a mistake to automatically adopt the categories of specialization (such as psychology or history) now organizing the university in a mode congruent with the dominant frame of reference — which is specialization. Our program will better call itself Women's Studies when it describes what has always characterized women — the inability to divorce humanity from one's daily work or study. We might want to pay particular attention to, for instance, the absence of women in accounts of history (as a peculiarity of the human consciousness up to now) but we must not make the mistake of further specialization, as if women's approach to history might be adding more atomistic bits of knowledge about one specialized area ("The History of Women") to a larger compartmentalized field ("History"). Instead, our truly radical approach, reflecting our unique Gestalt as women, must be to see that every subject we touch comes back to what we know is the only subject anyone can ever study — human behavior.

Thus women's studies, in rejecting the now dominant frame of reference of the university — that of specialization — might embody the following principles:

1. Women's studies are about human behavior, as are all studies.

2. Human behavior includes all subjects of study — including the sciences and studies of male behavior, as well as female.

3. All studies are united by a common factor — the humanity of "knowing" — and this connection of study and humanity should be emphasized in women's studies, particularly in the study of material presented in courses outside women's studies.

4. To study, experiment, record observations, write a text, or lecture on any subject without including its relation to human behavior is to be negligent in scholarship.

5. Inter-disciplinary studies and communication among scholars is not a convenience or a nicety but a fact of the way our knowing is constructed.

If women were to put these principles into action, I am convinced that their rapid expansion of knowledge about human behavior would be argument enough (even in the university's own terms) to justify breaking out of the dominant mode of specialization.

PRIORITIES FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES

Our first task, as always, is to question the

priorities of the dominant culture. We might begin by deciding what is absolutely essential, for "priorities" implies a rank order.

These might be the priorities of women's studies: freedom, survival, and satisfaction of basic needs. These are quite different from the dominant priorities — perhaps because they include the moral dimension of time. There are those who would cry out about the loss of our past culture. What

would happen, they say, if no one kept alive the humanities of the past. Well, they must face the reality that humanities will die when humans die or when they lose their freedom. Perhaps we must go through another Dark Ages when our culture, as defined by great works, must be the province of a select few, like monks. However, it is not likely that any study of freedom would ignore the struggle — from Prometheus to Invisible Man — contained in

the past records of man. As for those people who rest the case of modern "civilization" on science (an oft-times incriminating record) they need not fear the loss of constructive knowledge for any study of survival would surely draw from science as we know it. And we would not lose, under these priorities, any of the arts which had at their center the definition of freedom of the human spirit.

Women, because of their experience as the prime victims of unperceived external restraints, are in a position to study and counteract the forces of manipulation that now threaten to control the motivation of all human beings. The least perceived oppression is that of white males by their own institutions. This touches on an important point in women's studies. It is essential that we see ourselves as liberators, not as victims. By our studies and our action, we must free not only ourselves, but human society, including males. Men have won social freedom — the right to work, to vote, to have education. But it is psychological freedom which is the concern of women.

Men (and women) are now victims of their own institutions. I do not ascribe to a "devil theory" — I do not think that there is a controlling body of evil men who determine institutional goals and practices. Rather, men have created institutions which have a life of their own, in which the main purpose is not the stated overt goal — whether to educate or feed the poor — but rather to perpetuate the institution itself.

Women, who have "similarity of past experience," thus share a common world unless they have been co-opted by the dominant group. This common world of women is what I have been speaking of in references to the "gestalt" of women. Whether it be by conditioning or through genetic influence, most women bring a Gestalt to their perception of reality which is far different from men. The difference lies in the significance they find in their perceptions; the significances differ because of their prior experience. Women observe the world differently; they ask different questions; they act privately upon the world in a unique manner. But if they are prevented from bringing their unique Gestalt to the public actions they might take to transform the world, they will still be imprisoned in the "culture of silence", no matter how much education they receive. The world of a non-dominant group must be tested through action; in turn, the action will, of course, modify their Gestalt.

One of the consequences of the domination of women is that they have been prevented from uniting Gestalt, learning, reflection, and action.

Women know that they "do things." What we "do not know in the culture of silence" is that our actions as such could be "transforming, creative and re-creative." The potential of women to transform society will be lost if the education of women is based on the dominant culture, if their action is turned to the service of the present military-industrial-commercial complex, as is men's.

Women's counter-definition of reality may result in the freeing of men from the definition of their identity as dominant white males which prevents men from realizing their own humanity. For if women can "refuse to be what they are supposed to be, so can others;" perhaps, so can males. It is only when males as well as females refuse the roles institutions place upon them, that we can define what being human could mean. But we must begin by offering a counter-definition of reality.

If women are sucked into the same kind of thinking as the dominant Gestalt, it would be close to our last chance for radical changes leading to survival, for it would mean that the majority of people would be finally subsumed under the aegis of death and destruction. Better that we remain in slavery than to become like the masters. Better that we remain in the preserve of the "culture of silence," than to speak in the tongues of men.

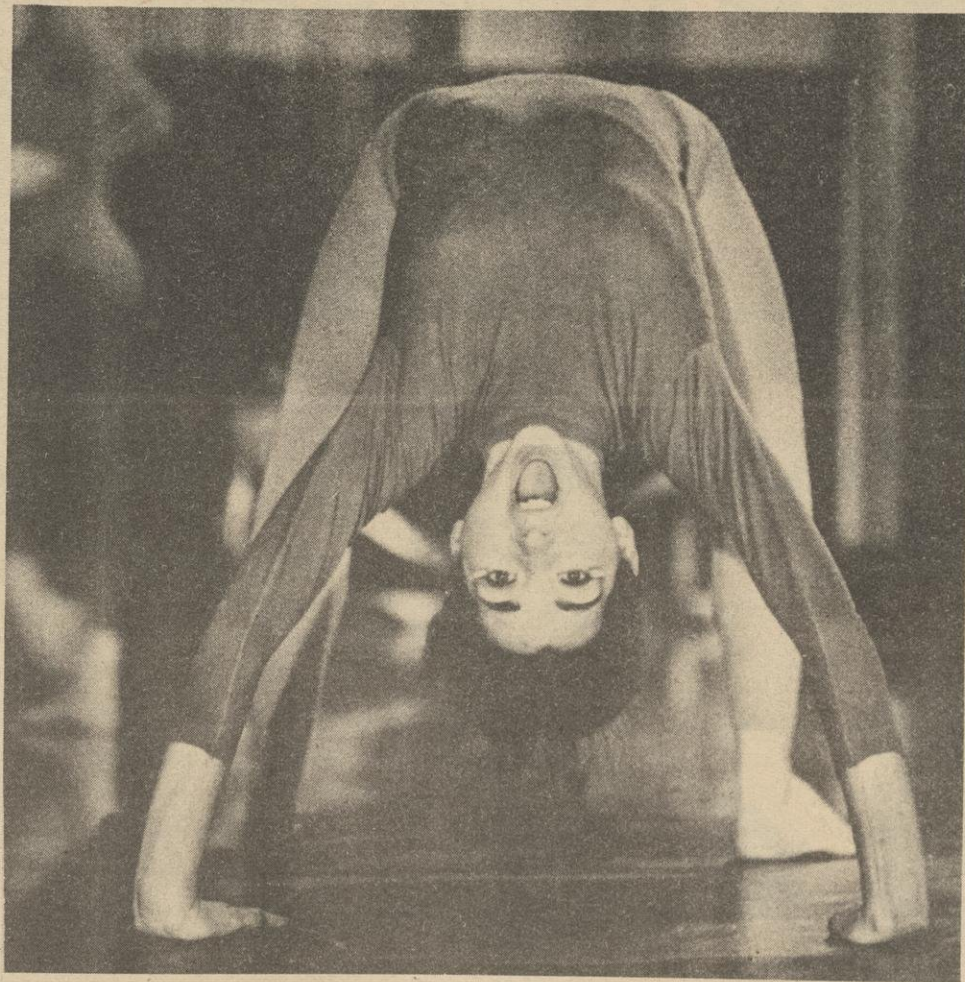
In the biological metaphors that come so easily to women, it would be better for women's liberation to abort, than to have it delivered in the image of the dominant culture.

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"But women's studies offers an opportunity to

redefine education as cultural action for freedom."

cardinal
MONDAY
magazine

Edited by Maureen Turim

Turning the University around

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without mishap for 25
feet. Record to beat
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till you try it!).

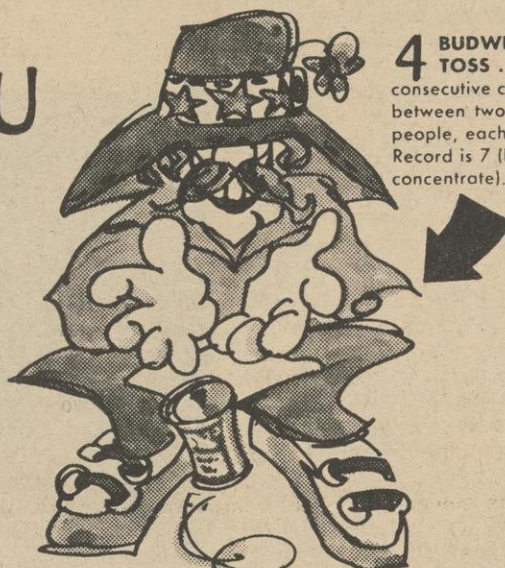


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Equal rights ammendment

Woman workers

By MARCH 8TH COMMITTEE

One of the most controversial aspects of the Equal Rights Amendment is its effect on on-the-job protective legislation for working women. While it is true that some protective legislation "protects" women out of jobs,

In states where protective legislation has already been abolished, women workers have been forced to work compulsory overtime, have lost required rest periods, and a score of other protective benefits. For example, in Ohio the State Supreme Court

mother."

The organizations supporting the ERA, such as National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, are hoping to benefit most women. However, because they are composed of middle class and professional women, they fail to see the harm that the amendment will bring to working women.

TRYING TO DECIDE ON A MAJOR?

This week a series of meetings designed to inform the student about the various majors in the college of Letters and Science. Profs. and students in the major will discuss course offerings, requirements of the major, and special programs. See Today in the Union for exact room.

At 4:30 p.m. Anthropology, Political Science, Education and pre-Business. At 7 p.m. Meteorology, Spanish, Zoology, Library Science and American Institutions. At 8 p.m. Statistics, Physical Therapy, and Biology Core Curriculum. These meetings will continue in other majors today thru March 8.



there is, however, protective legislation that is genuinely beneficial towards working women. This legislation, won after years of struggle, includes laws limiting hours of work, weight-lifting, and laws providing meals and rest breaks.

If the Equal Rights Amendment is passed by 38 state legislatures and becomes a constitutional amendment, each state will have the option of abolishing laws that discriminate against one sex or of extending their protection to the other sex.

FOR EXAMPLE, Wisconsin Assembly Bill 23, the state equal rights bill that is up for ratification in April strikes down a law that prohibits women from being night clerks in hotels, and yet "allows" them to work as scrub women all night in the same hotel. This is the progressive aspect of the ERA in striking down definitely discriminatory and sexist laws.

But the next section of Bill 23 abolishes the maximum work hour laws that exist in Wisconsin, limiting the hours of work to 9 hours in the day or 8 hours at night. Abolishing these limits allows corporations to further exploit women by forcing them to work 12-16 hour shifts.

Some states have already eliminated protective laws using Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as justification. Title VII prohibits discrimination in private employment based on sex as well as race, religion, color or national origin. The ERA finalizes these attacks on working people.

struck down all protective labor laws for women in March, 1972. As a result, women working for General Electric in Cincinnati have been forced to work 12 hour shifts. At the Inland Manufacturing Co. in Dayton, this brand of "equality" has meant that women are being forced into jobs (under the threat of being laid off) that are far too heavy, resulting in many injuries and severe back sprains.

IN FEBRUARY of 1970, six employer associations testified to the California State Assembly that all state protective labor laws—the eight hour day, 40 hour week, rest periods, lunch hours, and lifting requirements should be suspended.

Since 85 per cent of all working women are not organized into unions, it will be very difficult for them to fight for the extension of protective laws, and it will be these women who suffer if their state legislatures do not move to extend beneficial legislation to all workers.

There are some women's groups that support the ERA because it talks of "equality under the law" for men and women. It is important to recognize the positive aspects of the ERA: equal admissions to all public institutions of learning, and freedom of women to engage in business and manage their separate property. It is equally important to oppose the reactionary arguments against the ERA—that it will "weaken the family structure," or that it will challenge the role of women as "housewife and

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HEAR

BOBBY SEALE

Date: March 6 Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Memorial Shell Price: \$2.00

Ticket Locations: 1120 W. Johnson,
WSA Store, 5552 Humanities Bldg.,
Union Theater Box Office

The Daily Cardinal

Founded April 4, 1892

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WELFARE RIGHTS
There will be a forum by the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) called "Rebuilding NWRO: Life or Death Issue for the Working class" on Monday, March 5 at 9:00 P.M. in the Union. Jeannette Washington, cofounder of the NWRO, and Suzanne Ketcham,

from the National Caucus of Labor Committees, will speak. See Today in the Union for room.

VOLUNTEERS

Paul Soglin needs volunteers over the weekend to help distribute leaflets. Call 255-4871 for times or stop by the office at 458 W. Gilman St.

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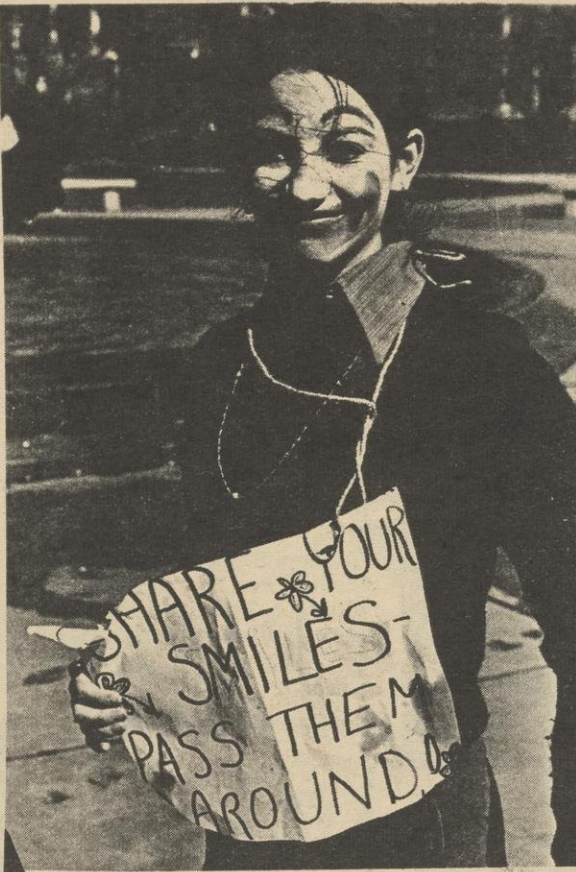
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Lesbians self-defined

THE WOMAN—IDENTIFIED WOMAN

What is a lesbian? A lesbian is the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion. She is the woman who, often beginning at an extremely early age, acts in accordance with her inner compulsion to be a more complete and freer human being than her society—perhaps then, but certainly later—cares to allow her. These needs and actions, over a period of years, bring her into painful conflict with people, situations, the accepted ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, until she is in a state of continual war with everything around her and usually with herself.

She may not be fully conscious of the political implications of what for her began as personal



necessity, but on some level she has not been able to accept the limitations and oppression laid on her by the most basic role of her society—the female role. The turmoil she experiences tends to induce guilt proportional to the degree to which she feels she is not meeting social expectations, and/or eventually drives her to question and analyze what the rest of her society more or less accepts. She is forced to evolve her own life pattern, often living much of her life alone, learning usually much earlier than her "straight" (heterosexual) sisters about the essential aloneness of life (which the myth of marriage obscures) and about the reality of illusions.

To the extent that she cannot expel the heavy socialization that goes with being female, she can never truly find peace with herself. For she is caught somewhere between accepting society's view of her—in which case she cannot accept herself, and coming to understand what this sexist society has done to her and why it is functional and necessary for it to do so. Those of us who work that through find

ourselves on the other side of a tortuous journey through a night that may have been decades long. The perspective gained from that journey, the liberation of self, the inner peace, the real love of self and of all women, is something to be shared with all women—because we are all women.

It should first be understood that lesbianism, like male homosexuality, is a category of behavior possible only in a sexist society characterized by rigid sex roles and dominated by male supremacy. Those sex roles dehumanize women by defining us as a supportive/serving caste in relation to the master caste of men, and emotionally cripple men by demanding that they be alienated from their own bodies and emotions in order to perform their economic/political/military functions effectively.

Homosexuality is a by-product of a particular way of setting up roles (or approved patterns of behavior) on the basis of sex; as such it is an inauthentic (not consonant with "reality") category, in a society in which men do not oppress women, and sexual expression is allowed to follow feelings, the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality could disappear.

But lesbianism is also different from male homosexuality, and serves a different function in the society. "Dyke" is a different kind of put-down from "faggot", although both imply you are not playing your socially assigned sex role; are not therefore a "real woman" or a "real man." The grudging admiration felt for the tomboy, and the queasiness felt around a sissy boy point to the same thing: the contempt in which women—or those who play a female role—are held. And the investment in keeping women in that contemptuous role is very great. Lesbian is the word, the label, the condition that holds women in line. When a woman hears this word tossed her way, she knows she is stepping out of line. She knows that she has crossed the terrible boundary of her sex role. She recoils, she protests, she reshapes her actions to gain approval. Lesbian is a label invented by the Man to throw at any woman who dares to be his equal, who dares to challenge his prerogatives (including that of all women as part of the exchange medium among men), who dares to assert the primacy of her own needs. To have the label applied to people active in women's liberation is just the most recent instance of a long history; older women will recall that no so long ago, any woman who was successful, independent, not orienting her whole life about a man, would hear this word. For in this sexist society, for a woman to be independent means she can't be a woman—she must be a dyke. That in itself should tell us where women are at. It says as clearly as can be said: women and person are contradictory terms. For a lesbian is not considered a "real woman." And yet, in popular thinking, there is really only one essential difference between a lesbian and other women: that of sexual orientation—which is to say, when you strip off all the packaging, you must finally realize that the essence of being a "woman" is to get fucked by men.

"Lesbian is one of the sexual categories by which men have divided up humanity. While all women are dehumanized as sex objects, as the objects of men they are given certain compensations: identification with his power, his ego, his status, his protection (from other males), feeling like a "real woman," finding social acceptance by adhering to her role, etc. Should a woman confront herself by confronting another woman, there are fewer rationalizations,

(continued on page 7)

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LIPSITT EXHIBIT

A one-man exhibit of paintings, sculpture and drawings by Peter Lipsitt, a graduate of Brandeis University, with a BFA and MFA from Yale School of Art and Architecture, will be held until March 11 at the Hillel Foundation, 611 Langdon. Hillel is open on Sundays and weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. (closed all day Saturday.)

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Cardinal photo by Michelle Citron

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International Women's Day -a chronology

— March 8 is International Women's Day, a day of great historical significance to women, for it is on this day that the important role of women in the continuing fight for the justice and liberation of the working class is honored.

The day originated with a demonstration on March 8, 1908, when 30,000 workers, mostly women from the garment and textile industries, marched through the streets of New York focusing on women's rights and the fight against sweat shops and child labor, demanding a minimum wage, shorter hours and decent housing. March 8 was officially designated as International Women's Day by the International Socialist's Congress in 1910 at the urging of Clara Zetkin, a communist and a leader of the women's movement in Germany.

The history of women's struggles in the U.S. can be dated as far back as 1734 when maidservants attempted to organize in the American colonies. Here is an attempt to recover some of this history:

May 29, 1824--Women weavers of Pautucket, Rhode Island, united with the men workers, established the first joint strike of men and women in the U.S.

May 1, 1830--The birthdate of Mother Jones who was an organizer for the mineworkers and for 50 years was in the middle of the violent mine strikes of that era. She once told the striking men to stay home and mind the children while she led a brigade of their mop-carrying wives to chase the scabs out of the mines. Mother Jones believed that winning the vote for women was secondary to winning economic justice for all working people.

June 1, 1843--Sojourner Truth, a freed slave, began organizing for women's rights and abolition of slavery.

Feb. 13, 1845--Sarah Begley, the leader of the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association, testified in front of the Massachusetts legislature on the unfit working conditions in the mills. Later that year, women workers united to conduct some of the earliest mass strikes for higher wages and better working conditions in American labor history.

July 19, 1848--The Seneca Falls convention marked the beginning of an organized movement for women's rights.

May 28, 1851--The first women's rights convention was held.

March 7, 1860--In Lynn, Massachusetts, 800 women shoemakers went out on strike.

May 14, 1863--The National Women's Loyalty League opposed to slavery was founded. The League's goal was to collect a million signatures for a petition to Congress to emancipate the slaves.

June 2, 1863--Harriet Tubman led 300 Black Union troops in a raid on the Combahee River plantations. Backed by three gunboats, they lifted torpedoes, set fire to the plantations, and freed 750 slaves. This is just one example of the courageous leadership provided by Harriet Tubman, a freed slave who helped run the Underground Railroad.

Sept. 17, 1868--The Working Women's Association was founded.

July 28, 1869--Nine years after the strike of the women shoemakers, in Lynn, Massachusetts, the first convention of their union was held. Demands put forward were "equal pay for equal work."

June 17, 1893--Susan B. Anthony, one of the founders of the Women's Movement, was tried for voting in an election in Rochester, New York.

Nov. 22, 1909--"The Girls' Revolt." 30,000 women garment workers went on strike in New York against sweatshop conditions.

Their unity and bravery in the face of police brutality won them the support of the middle class women's suffrage, as well as the whole working class.

March 24, 1911--The Triangle fire tragedy in a sweatshop on New York's East side brought intolerable working conditions to the attention of the public. 146 women were burned to death in a crowded packed loft from which there was no effective escape.

Jan. 11, 1912--Many have claimed that certain kinds of workers cannot be organized, especially minority workers and women. The ten-week strike of mill-workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts proved this myth to be a lie. 10,000 workers, mainly

in.

Jan. 10, 1917--Women picketed the White House to demand the right to vote. Banners said, "Democracy should begin at home," and they pointed out that revolutionary Russia had given women full political rights.

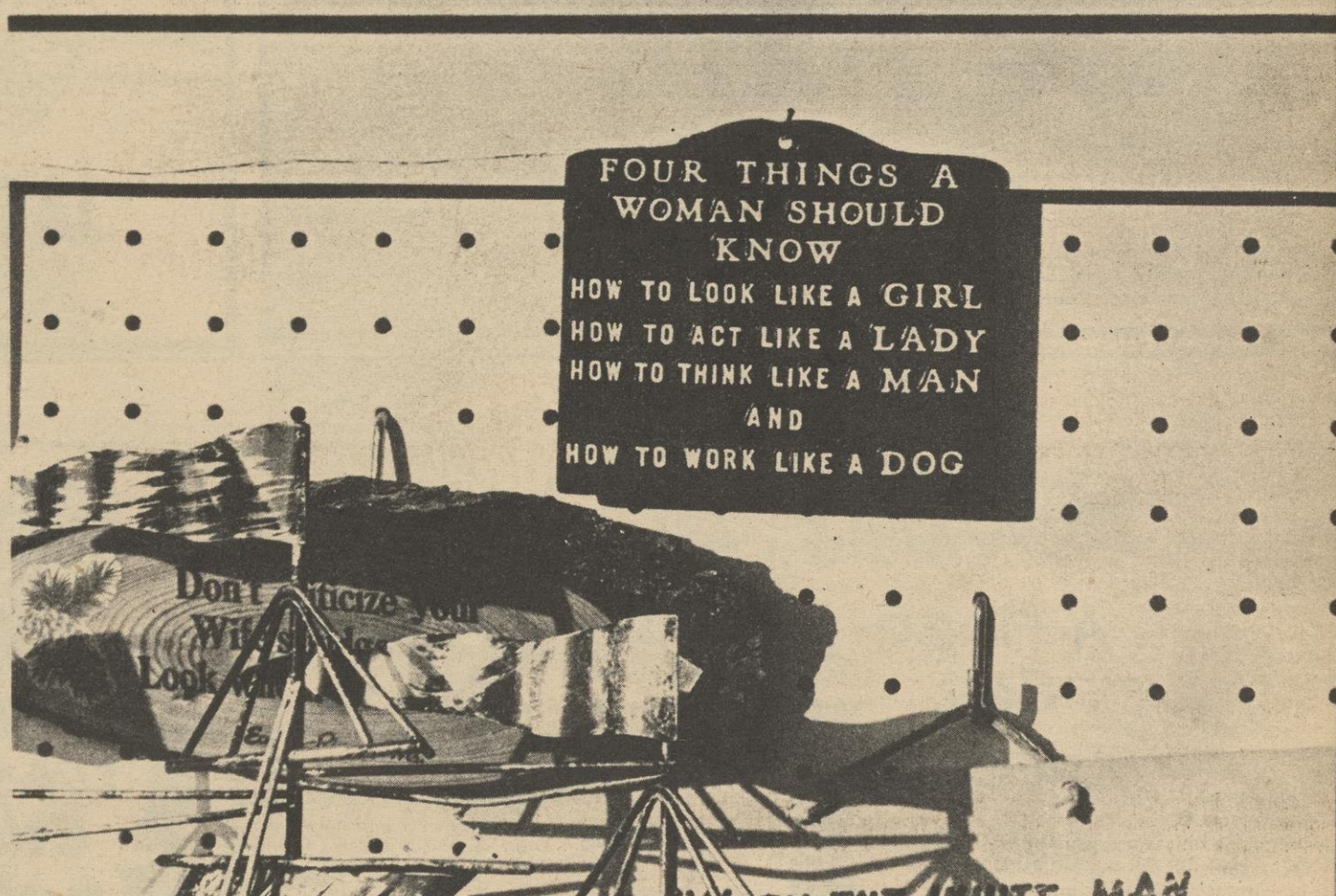
June 22, 1917--Women picketing in Washington, D.C., for the right to vote and against the war were arrested.

Aug. 26, 1919--Women gained the right to vote creating a potential 26 million adult American women voters in American elections. The 19th Amendment was adopted after the state of Tennessee was the 36th

picketed West Virginia mines and touched off a five-week strike.

April 28, 1971--Disabled miners and widows won suit against United Mineworkers Welfare and Retirement Fund.

May 9, 1972--Workers at nine Farah Manufacturing Co. plants in Texas and New Mexico went out on strike. Most of the workers are Chicano and women make up 80 percent of the workers at the El Paso plant. Farah, which has a 50-year record of sweatshop exploitation, has refused to recognize the union, fired more workers, restricted personal conversations and



women, organized mass picketing. The strike was called over speed-ups and pay cuts, but the workers were also striking for dignity. "We want bread and roses too." On Feb. 24 the official strike began with 23,000 textile workers striking. The strikers held out over management, repression that confronted them with guards armed with bayonets. Public outrage forced the mill-owners to grant all of the strikers' demands. Textile wages were raised not only in Lawrence, but throughout New England.

Feb. 15, 1913--In Rochester, New York, a 17-year-old worker, Ida Brayman, was fatally shot by her employer during a garment workers' strike.

Feb. 25, 1913--Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a union organizer active in the Lawrence strike, and one of the first American women to lead mass strikes, was arrested in Paterson, New Jersey.

March 4, 1913--In Washington, D.C., 5,000 women marched to demand the right to vote. When police refused to protect them from a hostile crowd troops had to be called

state to ratify it.

Jan.-Feb. 1937--The "Women's Emergency Brigade" was an important force in showing solidarity and support with the workers in the General Motors strike in Flint, Michigan. The brigade fed the men and battled with the police. Jan. 11 marked the "Battle of the Bulls' Run," a battle between the women and police; the women had brought food to the men each day for almost a month and were not about to be stopped. Fourteen fell from gunshot wounds and others were gassed, but the women returned to the picket line and continued the struggle.

Dec. 5, 1955--Mrs. Rosa Park's defiance of segregated bus seating sparked the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott.

Aug. 10, 1966--At the Levi-Strauss plant in Blue Ridge, Georgia, 450 women went out on strike over low wages and poor working conditions.

July 12, 1970--The growing concern over working conditions of miners became evident when disabled miners and widows

issued an injunction against mass picketing complete with 1,000 arrest warrants. Despite this repression the courageous struggle of the Farah workers continues, gaining more strength as workers all across the country join in support for the strike.

International Women's Day began primarily as a demonstration focusing on the needs of thousands of poor and working women. Since then March 8 has been celebrated in many ways all over the world. Today, the struggle continues. In the U.S., women are fighting the enslaving welfare system; they have been actively participating in the anti-war movement; they are actively participating in the United Farmworkers struggle; they are striking for the right to organize in Farah plants; and they are organizing against programs of police repression in the black community, programs like STRESS in Detroit.

International Women's Day is a day to honor the tradition of the heroic struggles of women for justice and equality. We must learn from our history and continue to build a fighting unity between women and men in the struggle to end all exploitation and oppression.

Women's Day in Madison-a schedule

Tentative schedule for Women's Conference

Wednesday, March 7
7:30 Workshop in Angola
at Women's Center

Thursday, March 8
7:30 Movies: Salt of the Earth
Women's Happy Time Commune
Wilmar Center, 923 Jennifer \$1 donation

Friday, March 9
8:00 Concert: Family of Women
Lesbian-Feminists' Concert
Union South Assembly Hall
Tickets, \$1.50 advance, \$2 at door
Tickets available at Women's Center, WSA Store, Mem. Union

Saturday, March 10
12:00 Women's March
Meet at the Art Center 700 block East Gorham, march to Square
for speakers at 1:00

3-6:30 workshops
Details on workshops available in Daily Cardinal and Capital
Times later this week

11:30-6:30 daycare will be available at Union South

8:00 Play: Freedom House presents The Independent Female
After the play: Women's Dance

Sunday, March 11
1:00 Women's Liberation and the working class
3:00 Women in China
Memorial Union

Deolinda Rodriguez

... was born in Catete, Angola in 1938. After going to school in Brazil and later in the United States she returned to Africa, to her MPLA* in 1962. Two years later Deolinda joined a guerilla detachment of four women to go inside Angola. After carrying out an extremely dangerous mission all five women were captured and executed. March 2nd, the day on which

Deolinda and the other four women were killed (they were killed in 1964) has been made Angolan Women's Day in tribute to their courage and dignity. The following poetry was written while Deolinda awaited her execution.

*People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola

CHRISTMAS EVE

...At seven
near the toilet
do not fail, one by one
I have everything ready
to take you to the other bank.
Know only how to run
for the pilot is here waiting.
If you are discovered I am shot
What reward do I get for this risk?

It is past seven.
Jail teaches one to fool oneself;
when the arranged signal does not come
one dreams in anticipation:
tomorrow is Christmas
Christmas in freedom.
Oh? to be with the comrades

breathing the air of dignity
to be myself again.
The signal!
Let's go?
...Not yet...later,
first the payment
to be mine here in the grass.
You don't want?
Think yourselves too good?
Right, I'll get you at midnight.

Is it the signal? No.
It is day
A night of vigil
and all in vain.
It is Christmas
Christmas in prison.

(continued on page 11)

Lesbians self-defined

(continued from page 4)

fewer buffers by which to avoid the stark horror of her dehumanized condition. Herein we find the overriding fear of many women towards being used as a sexual object by a woman, which not only will bring her no male-connected compensations, but also will reveal the void which is woman's real situation. This dehumanization is expressed when a straight woman learns that a sister is a lesbian; she begins to relate to her lesbian sister as her potential sex object, laying a surrogate male role on the lesbian. This reveals her heterosexual conditioning to make herself into an object when sex is potentially involved in a relationship, and it denies the lesbian her full humanity. For women, especially those in the movement, to perceive their lesbian sisters through this male grid of role definitions is to accept the male cultural conditioning and to oppress their sisters much as they themselves have been oppressed by men. Are we going to continue the male classification system of defining all females in sexual relation to some other category of people? Affixing the label lesbian not only to a woman who aspires to be a person, but also to any situation of real love, real solidarity, real primacy among women is a primary form of divisiveness among women: it is the condition which keeps women within the confines of the feminine role, and it is the debunking/scare term that keeps women from forming any primary attachments, groups, or associations among ourselves.

Women in the movement have in most cases gone to great lengths to avoid discussion and confrontation with the issue of lesbianism. It puts people up-tight. They are hostile, evasive, or try to incorporate it into some "broader issue." They would rather not talk about it. If they have to, they try to dismiss it as a "lavender herring." But it is no side issue. It is absolutely essential to the success and fulfillment of the women's liberation movement that this issue be dealt with. As long as the label "dyke" can be used to frighten women into a less militant stand, keep her separate from her sisters, keep her from giving primacy to anything other than men and family—then to that extent she is controlled by the possibility of a primal commitment which includes sexual love, they will be denying themselves the love and value they readily accord to men, thus affirm their second-class status. As long as male acceptability is primary—both to individual women and to the movement as a whole—the term lesbian will be used effectively against women. Insofar as women want only more privileges within the system, they do not want to antagonize male power. They instead seek acceptability for women's liberation, and the most crucial aspect of the acceptability is to deny lesbianism—i.e., deny any fundamental challenge to the basis of the female. It should also be said that some younger, more radical women have honestly begun to discuss lesbianism, but so far it has been primarily as a sexual "alternative" to men. This, however, is still giving primacy to men, both because the idea of relating more completely to women occurs as a negative reaction to men, and because the lesbian relationship is being characterized simply by sex which is divisive and sexist. On one level, which is both personal and political, women may withdraw emotional and sexual energies from men, and work out various alternatives for those energies in their own lives. On a different political-psychological level, it must be understood that what is crucial is that women begin disengaging from male-defined response patterns. In the privacy of our own psyches, we must cut those cords to the core. For irrespective of where our love and sexual energies flow, if we are male-identified in our heads, we cannot realize our autonomy as human beings.

But why is it that women have related to and through men? By virtue of having been brought up in a male society, we have internalized the male culture's definition of ourselves. That definition consigns us to sexual and family functions, and excludes us from defining and shaping the terms of our lives. In exchange for our psychic servicing and for performing society's non-profit-making functions, the man confers on us just one thing the slave status

which makes us legitimate in the eyes of the society in which we live. This is called "femininity" or "being a real woman" in our cultural lingo. We are authentic, legitimate, real to the extent that we are the property of some man whose name we bear. To be a woman who belongs to no man is to be invisible, pathetic, inauthentic, unreal. He confirms his image of us—of what we have to be in order to be acceptable by him—but not our real selves; he confirms our womanhood—as he defines it, in relation to him—but cannot confirm our personhood, our own selves as absolutes. As long as we are dependent on the male culture for this definition, for this approval, we cannot be free.

The consequence of internalizing this role is an enormous reservoir of self-hate. This is not to say the self-hate is recognized or accepted as such indeed most women would deny it. It may be experienced as discomfort with her role, as feeling empty, as numbness, as restlessness, a paralyzing anxiety at the center. Alternatively, it may be expressed in shrill defensiveness of the glory and destiny of her role. But it does exist, often beneath the edge of her consciousness, poisoning her existence, keeping her alienated from herself, her own needs and rendering her a stranger to other women. They try to escape by identifying with the oppressor, living through him, gaining status and identity from his ego, his power, his accomplishments. And by not identifying with other "empty vessels" like themselves. Women resist relating on all levels to other women who will reflect their own oppression, their own secondary status, their own self-hate. For to confront another woman is finally to confront one's self—the self we have gone to such lengths to avoid. And in that mirror we know we cannot really respect and love that which we have been made to be.

As the source of self-hate and the lack of real self are rooted in our male-given identity, we must create a new sense of self. As long as we cling to the idea of "being a woman", we will sense some conflict with that incipient self, that sense of I, that sense of a whole person. It is very difficult to realize and accept that being "feminine" and being a whole person are irreconcilable. Only women can give to each other a new sense of self. That identity we have to develop with reference to ourselves, and not in relation to men. This consciousness is the revolutionary force from which all else will follow, for ours is an organic revolution. For this we must be available and supportive to one another, give our commitment and our love, give the emotional support necessary to sustain this movement. Our energies must flow toward our sisters, not backwards toward our oppressors. As long as women's liberation tries to free women without facing the basic heterosexual structure that binds us in one-to-one relationships with our oppressors, tremendous energies will continue to flow into trying to straighten up each particular relationship with a man, how to get better sex, how to turn his head around—into trying to make the "new man" out of him, in the delusion that this will allow us to be the "new woman." This obviously splits out energies and commitments leaving us unable to be committed to the construction of the new patterns which will liberate us.

It is the primacy of women relating to women, of women creating a new consciousness of and with each other which is at the heart of women's liberation, and the basis for the cultural revolution. Together we must find, reinforce and validate our authentic selves. As we do this, we confirm in each other that struggling incipient sense of pride and strength, the divisive barriers begin to melt, we feel this growing solidarity with our sisters. We see ourselves as prime, find our centers inside of ourselves. We find receding the sense of alienation, of being cut off, of being behind a locked window, of being unable to get out what we know is inside. We feel a realness, feel at last we are coinciding with ourselves. With that real self, with that consciousness, we begin a revolution to end the imposition of all coercive identifications, and to achieve maximum autonomy in human expression.

RADICALESBIANS, 1 May 1970

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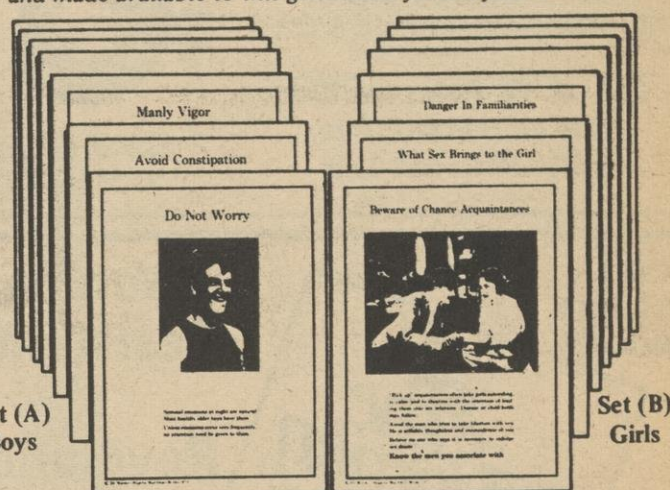
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Women on welfare

H.R.-1, the Nixon Administration's welfare "reform" bill, stands out as one of the most blatant examples of the myths—that circulate about welfare. The sponsors of the bill claim it will benefit the entire country—both welfare clients and the general public as it would create meaningful jobs for welfare recipients, taking them off the welfare rolls and stem the rising costs of welfare.

In reality, H.R.-1 provides nothing but a cheap labor force. The following is an interview with Sharon Black, a working woman on welfare in Madison, who has worked for the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Cardinal: What kind of people are on welfare?

Black: People like anybody else. A lot of people are women whose husbands had to leave them because they couldn't afford to take care of them. The only way they could provide for the family is to leave so that the woman could get welfare. Welfare isn't paid to a husband and wife living together, except in disability. It's always been the idea that people on welfare were lazy and stupid. Making recipients work for \$1.20 an hour at any job offered them is another presumption that people on welfare are stupid, that they can't think for themselves. I found that most people I've met while being on welfare were intelligent and had the most wisdom about life of all the people that I've ever met.

How does this bill specifically affect women?

Most people on welfare are women and most of these women are supporting families. In Dane County 85 per cent of the women that are receiving Aid for Dependent Children (ADC) are working full or part time. But they need welfare because their wages are so low. They can't earn enough. The Work Incentive Program (WIN) makes women into slaves. It forces them into deadened jobs—the lowest paying jobs where they're the first to be laid off.

The Work Incentive Program is a major part of H.R.-1. What exactly will it do?

It is supposed to be a training program for low income women to

get training, get a decent job and get off welfare. Then it tightened up because of Nixon's cutbacks and the two or three year programs were cut down to 90 day programs. Now, you can only go into something like domestic work, dishwashing or being a nurses aid. Under the bill, you have to have a job or register at

check is going to be cut out", you don't think about the guy who might be out on the picket line because that means your kids won't eat. So you cross that picket line because somebody told you you had to work.

Who has to register for the Work Incentive Program?

Anyone 16 and over has to join



the employment office once a week or with your case worker—if you don't you don't get your check. It also states that \$1.20 is the minimum wage that needs to be paid, but you know if someone can get away with paying \$1.20 an hour they won't pay more. Welfare Rights Organization started calling it the WHIP Program, and it got all the administrators upset because people were saying they were being whipped into work, which they are, so they changed the name to WIN and I don't know what the N means.

They also use this to force welfare workers to cross picket lines. If you're told "either you go to work at this job or your welfare

the WIN program. All women with children over six who are receiving welfare, all unmarried women who are expecting a child have to register to work and continue to work up until the eighth month.

Does the Bill provide any real job training?

Job training is being a dishwasher at VA hospital, or learning how to scrub floors or be a domestic servant an any other jobs that nobody else would want to take. Nixon makes a law that says you have to go to work and then he cuts off money for any real job training programs.

I think the economy has reached a point where its beginning to fall fast, and Nixon has to do something to conserve money. Rather than cut back on the people that supported him for office, he's cutting back on what he considers the most defenseless people. I know federally only 2 per cent of the budget goes to welfare. The Bill says it provides

(continued on page 11)



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6210 Social Science

Bates: with the Aborigines

Daisy Bates, *The Passing of the Aborigines*. A Lifetime spent among the Natives of Australia. Pocket Books, New York, March 1973. \$1.25.

By CAROLINE RALSTON

Between 1900 and 1946, Daisy Bates (1861-1951) lived in the deserts of West and South Australia with a number of remnant Aboriginal tribes who settled at her campsite and looked upon her as "Kabbarli" (grandmother and guardian). *The Passing of the Aborigines*, first published in England in 1938, is Daisy Bates' own extraordinary account of her experiences, which she wrote aged 77. It is even more extraordinary to learn that after writing this book she returned to the deserts and the Aborigines, among whom she remained until she was 84. To the end she tended to the sick, buried the dead, arbitrated in disputes and continued her extensive ethnological studies.

Only twice in all these years did she have the company of other Europeans. For four months in 1900 she lived with a colony of Trappist monks, helping them to build their monastery and a hospital for the Aborigines, and even dragging a surveyor's chain over the rocky desert as they surveyed the brothers' 10,000 acre claim.

She did confess that her high-heeled buttoned boots made this task rather difficult, but buttoned boots and gloves were never to be discarded for more comfortable or practical wear: "Throughout my life I have adhered to the simple but exact dictates of fashion as I left it, when Victoria was queen." This included white blouse, stiff collar, and ribbon tie, skirt and coat and of course a hat and plenty of fly veiling. (A series of delightful photographs in the center of this edition testify to her Victorian dress even in the 1940s.)

In 1910 she accompanied the English anthropologist, Radcliffe Brown on the Cambridge University Expedition to the North-west coast. Apart from these two episodes and a 3,000 mile trip, side saddle, droving cattle with the help of some stockmen, her only other contacts with Europeans were fleeting visits to Perth and Adelaide or when some chance European passed by her distant camps.

As she herself describes it, her life was devoted to easing the final years of a dying race, ministering to their physical needs and carefully preserving their ancient rituals and myths. Although she held appointments as Protector of Aborigines under both the South and Western Australian governments, not once did she receive a salary from them, or money to feed, cloth and doctor the Aborigines in her care. After her own small inheritance was expended, she sold the cattle station and other property that had passed to her on her husband's

death (she had left this husband, whom she found rather dull, many years before his demise) and finally when that was gone, she supported herself and her dependent followers on the little she earned for newspaper and magazine articles which she sold to the Australian and English press. Her experience as a professional journalist in the 1890s in London, before she came to Australia in 1899, was thus to stand her in good stead.

As biography, *The Passing of the Aborigines* is a fascinating study of an indomitable woman with truly Victorian moral strength and self-confidence: as ethnology or anthropology its

qualities are very uneven. Imbued with the accepted ideologies of her time, Daisy Bates quite clearly saw herself taking up the whiteman's burden, and soothing the last agonies of an 'uncivilized', 'savage' race (terms she uses continually), whose death in the face of the superiority of Western civilization was inevitable. (The rapid growth of the Aborigine population today has proved both her and her fellow thinkers quite mistaken.) Many of her statements are tinged with condescension if not outright prejudice concerning the Aborigines' mental capabilities and their state of civilization — an Aboriginal boy performed a

surgical operation "with a skill and intelligence rare in a native". On the other hand the closeness of her association with the Aborigines — she spoke more than 100 Aboriginal dialects and was entrusted with sacred knowledge from dying elders that otherwise would have been lost irretrievably — made it possible for her to supply properly trained anthropologists and ethnologists with invaluable information.

Since *The Passing of the Aborigines* was not written as a scientific treatise, it would be highly unfair to condemn it on the grounds of its fallacious an-

(continued on page 11)

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Irving Kolodin, Saturday Review

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Daisy Bates

(continued from page 9)

thropological theories. While the anthropological observations must be taken with a certain skepticism, the book as a whole is a vivid and eminently readable

account of a highly independent and strong-minded woman who proved more than capable of taking on the whiteman's burden and carrying it undeterred for more than forty years.

Caroline Ralston

Welfare

(continued from page 8)
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Mama Africa
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Born in the colonial typhoon
I sucked your body's milk
Grew
Atrophied but I grew
Swift youth
Like the fleeting star
When the nganga dies.
Now I am a woman.
Young or old I no longer know
But it is to you I came
Africa
Mama Africa
You who bore me
Do not kill me
Do not curse your own offspring
Else
You have no future
Do not be matricidal
I am Angola, your Angola
Do not join the oppressor
Or your bastard son

They jeer at you
You have fallen in the trap
Deceived
Mistaking true for false
In your candid and secular vigour
Blinded
And now it is you
Africa
Mama Africa
Who give force to the bastard brother
To asphyxiate me
Stabbing me in the back
The oppressor, the oppressor's friend
Your bastard son
(You too, Mama Africa?)
Will all rejoice
To hear me breathe my last
But Africa
Mama Africa
For the sake of coherence
I want still to believe in you.

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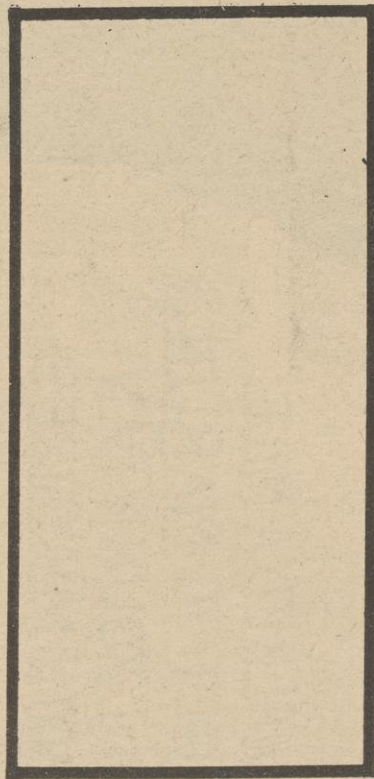
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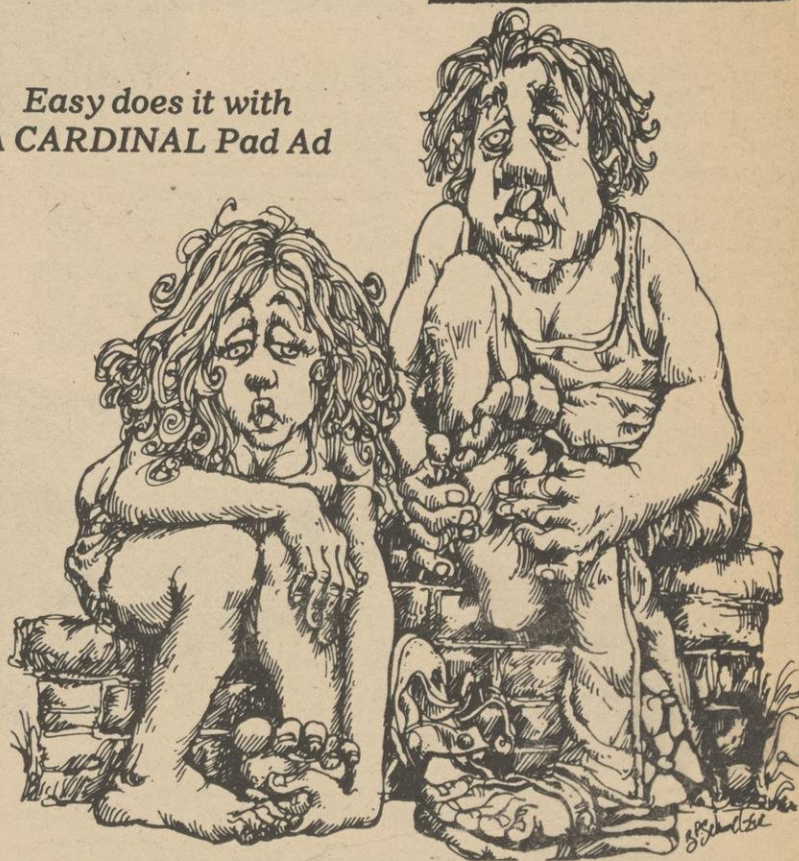
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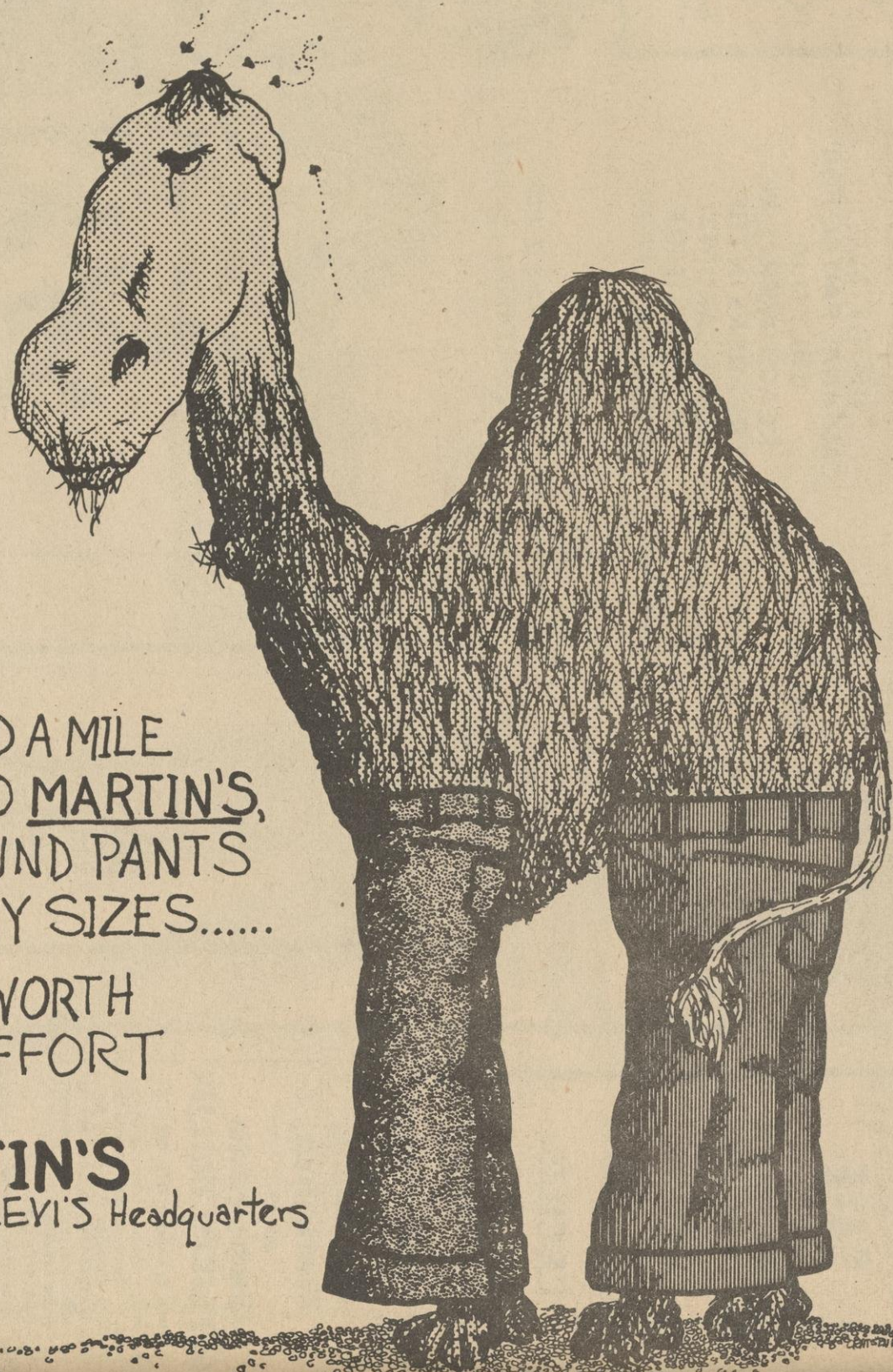
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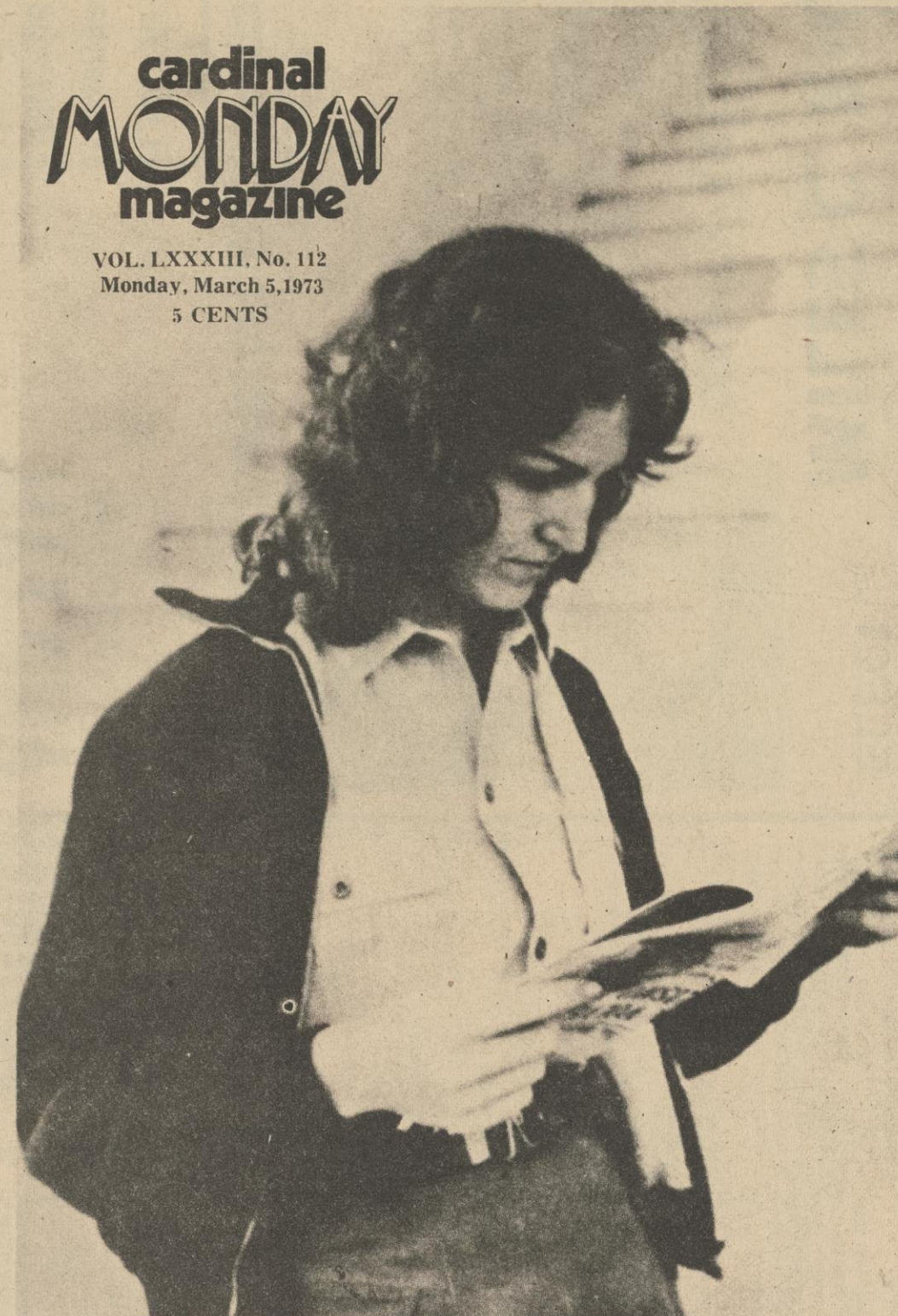
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VOL. LXXXIII, No. 112
Monday, March 5, 1973
5 CENTS



I'm tired of the way we talk about women, the way we think about women the words we use to describe them, our myths, images stereotypes, which slowly become the only truths we know about women, working backwards, repression, an imperialism against the self, in which a single image of ourselves conquers all the hundreds of thousands of separate individual beings we could be, each of us, an internal napalming of all life that wishes to live by remote controled B-52's.
Maureen Turim

Tamara Bunke, known as Tania, guerilla who died with Che in Bolivia.

International Women's Day