



by Meg McMullen

Boy, you really get fooled about life. You get weaned on Seventeen and Cosmopolitan, and it turns out like National Lampoon, and by the time you catch on to that, you're only able to read very large print anyway.

I have been a-visiting, of late. It seems to be the season for that activity, in much the same way that it's the season for mosquitoes, ticks, sun rashes and heat prostration. So I'm willing to do my part, lunging around the countryside driving old friends to distraction for a day or so.

As a visitor, I am something less than perfection personified. I start out nervously, pass that affliction along to my hosts, magnify it, bring discomfort to its pure state, and then leave, amid promises to come back again soon.

I tend not to eat as much as usual (partly in fear of dropping the gravy onto the linen) and my stomach protests loudly — usually during a lull in the conversation. I get so outrageously concerned about making even the most normal of bathroom noises that I freeze up and cause severe gurglings and discomforts in the lower abdomen. I tell funny stories that turn suddenly offensive, and try to recover by bringing in a funeral joke and remember halfway through that my host's family and friends all passed away last week. And I can generally manage to set the most genial of households to looking for the Valiums before my first 24 hours have passed.

I had a classic experience a few winters ago in western Maine, that, among other highlights, featured a power (and therefore water pump and therefore toilet) failure, starting my monthly benefit to the personal products industry, a sudden case of the trots, and a menu and schedule of strenuous activity totally un-

related to my life.

It was, for me, a giant step toward Padded Room City.

I made it through, but I have seldom been so ecstatic to return to my own home and settle into a comfy, overstuffed bottle of wine. Being home, of course, is always a relief. There you can belch and make rude noises and lick your fingers and besmirch the towels and generally be at concord.

I, naturally, do none of those things myself. I am simply saying that those are things you can choose to do in the simple elegance of your own hovel.

At any rate, I have several more visiting weekends on my summer social calendar (I suppose I had better let these people know that pretty soon), and I always maintain the hope that if I go visiting enough, I'll get good at it and not mind and fit right in like I'd been born there.

I should know better by now. For somewhere between me and the perfect guest, there is a whole continent of difference. And somewhere between reality and that model in Cosmopolitan, gauzily greeting dawn over strawberries and champagne, every healthy hair in place, is me, in my size 16½ sleeping shirt, fending off a breath tainted by last night's Gallo, flopping down the hall in my \$.59 rubber thongs, looking for the National Lampoon.

CONTEST

The Freewoman's Herald will be sponsoring a contest in the near future to see if anyone can come up with an interesting new mast-head (our trumpeting woman has certainly overserved her purpose and now we'd love to see some new ideas!). So start gathering up any drawings or designs of yours that you think may be appropriate to enter into the contest, and we'll let you know in the next issue when it will actually be held and what will be involved.



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WOMEN'S MUSIC

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maine freewoman's herald

FROM THE STAFF

The primaries just took place, and elections in the fall will soon be upon us. As feminists, we wish there were clear ways to create fundamental changes in the male run, class organized society in which we live. Whether electoral politics offer us the means to create these basic changes is unclear.

However, in an effort and hope that our democratic system will become more responsive and representative of women's needs and all poor people's needs, we have attempted here to focus on some issues that seem important to us as feminists, and to state briefly our views.

During the summer, we plan to send questionnaires (or perhaps get interviews) covering at least these issues, to all the candidates and to print their responses in the fall issue of the Maine Freewoman's Herald. We hope this information will be of use to Herald readers trying to figure out who the hell to vote for.

ABORTION

Women should have the right to control over their own bodies. If abortion laws were repealed, women would be forced back to the earlier 'butcher shop' illegal types of abortion. Disallowing Federal funding for abortion creates the same condition for poor women who are most vulnerable to unscrupulous practitioners willing to give them a 'cut rate' abortion.

The male institution would like and has had the control for a long time, through law and the Catholic Church and other institutions.

The Catholic Church takes the position that it is not to be called 'murder' when grown sons are killed in wars, but the choice of a woman to terminate her pregnancy can be termed 'murder'.

We now see that abortion funding will probably be taken from poor women. What is not so widely publicized is that at the same time, there is an increased effort to push (and fund) sterilization for poor and third world women.

BI-LINGUAL HUMAN SERVICES PERSONNEL

We would like our new Governor to be one who will direct and order hiring and placement of bilingual service people in areas with large Franco populations.

NON DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF AFFECTIONAL OR SEXUAL PREFERENCE

This is a bill which was introduced in the 1977 Legislative Session and was narrowly defeated.

Although homosexuality is not illegal in Maine, lesbians and gay men have no civil rights. As it stands now, anyone suspected of being homosexual can be denied employment and housing on that basis.

Human rights are precious, and we value them as feminists, and should as a democratic country, for all people.

It is not harmful if a neighbor or friend is homosexual, but it would be harmful to our children and all of us if anyone in our society is denied basic rights.

We will endorse a Governor or Congressman who supports civil rights for all.



GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED CHILDCARE

We think the idea of state and Federally supported childcare is excellent. In many cases, programs of low-cost childcare centers would enable women (such as women presently on welfare) to return or go to work, and/or to use the services of displaced homemakers centers. Now, for many poor women with few skills, the job they would be able to get would barely pay for childcare.

FUNDING FOR SHELTERS AND SERVICES TO ABUSED WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

One bill which would have provided \$300,000 for shelters was vetoed and sustained in the Senate this year. It was one of the most discussed bills, and was thought to have widespread support throughout the state.

The fact remains that the majority of physically abused spouses are women, abused by men; their husbands, lovers, sons. There is probably much discomfort for an overwhelmingly male body (the Legislature and Senate) to deal with this issue.

Shelters that do exist and operate to assist abused women, do so as a result of feminist energy, and the energy of other women who have been abused. The shelters operate on a day to day basis, getting by on bake sales, and other short term fundraising.

Some of the arguments of the opponents of the bill are that these places are already running, and why should they spend the 'taxpayer's money' on this problem? (Implication: Taxpayers don't beat their spouses, or get beaten, or support the idea of funding for shelters.) There are only three shelters in Maine. They come nowhere near meeting the needs, even in their own areas.

Another argument is that the bill will require twice as much funding from year to year. About this question we can't be sure. When society does not condone this type of violent behavior, and women/wives are looked upon as people, deserving of respect, probably the need will not be as great. One way to keep cost at a minimum would be to make sure the money allocated went to the community groups which are already working with spouse abuse, rather than the overlarge and overbureaucratic Department of Human Services.

There are other ways that lawmakers could work on cutting down the tolerance for family violence, such as proactive legislation for protection of spouses and children from a violent partner. Currently, the law (and the attitudes of law enforcement officials) makes it difficult to obtain even temporary relief.

If the Legislature and our Government is really committed to the principle that women should be fairly treated, than it seems essential that our Government provide funding for women who are being maltreated.

FARMLAND IN MAINE

We support candidates who are active in proactive legislation to preserve farmland and small farmers in Maine. There are about 7,000 working farms here now, as opposed to about 20,000 just ten years ago. We now depend much more heavily on imported food, whereas Maine used to be referred to as the 'breadbasket of New England'.

We are interested in cooperative farming, land trusts for farmland preservation, and/or tax relief for small farmers growing food for Maine use.

(From the Staff continued on p. 15)

CORRECTION in the Spring issue the 3 photographs of women working in the sardine factory on pages 2 and 3 were taken by Sue Farrell, sorry for the omission.

The Staff

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SPECIAL THANKS TO: Deb, Donna

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GOD COUNTRY and DECENCY?



by Gayle Price

GOD, COUNTRY AND DECENCY projected across three giant screens introduced the theme of the Word of Life rally held at Portland City Hall on May 14th (Mother's Day). The W.O.L. Evangelical Christian organization embellished their anti-gay, anti-feminist message with all the trimmings of a professional advertising campaign.

Flashing images of the Statue of Liberty were synchronized with the music of a thirty-person Christian youth chorus singing spirit raising renditions of "America", "This Land is Your Land", and "I Believe in America". As the band of rosy-cheeked cherubs raised their voices to the heavens, another band was gathering outside City Hall. They were wearing pink-triangle armbands and carrying protest signs. Among them were gay rights advocates and feminists including members of N.O.W. and Maine Lesbian Feminists.

At times the words spoken inside the hall echoed the same message chanted by those in the protest lines: "Freedom and liberty for all." Yet the difference in interpretation of these words could not be more opposite. The W.O.L. espouses Christian liberty with a catch, as stated in their standard of conduct: "Liberty needs to be restricted in certain instances. Practices that could do spiritual harm to other members of the Christian community must be forbidden."

What do they consider spiritually harmful practices? To list a few: feminism, abortion, homosexuality, card playing, swearing, dancing, use of alcohol and drugs, occultism, "the horror of the horoscope", and rock music.

How did the protesters interpret "Freedom and liberty for all?" Freedom from laws that violate human rights; freedom to be in charge of one's own body; freedom to love whomever one chooses; freedom to develop one's individual potential beyond the dictates of traditional sex roles; freedom to be given equal opportunities and not be discriminated against for one's lifestyle. Could these be the practices considered spiritually harmful?

The 1500 seat auditorium was filled with right wing W.O.L.'ers except for a few rows in the far back occupied by a small but vocal minority of gays and feminists. They maintained order and silence except when the W.O.L. message violated their personal rights. After an introductory prayer, the audience was assaulted with a barrage of songs and flashing national symbols designed to generate national pride and pro-capitalist sentiment. Seven U.S. flags adorned each side of the stage.

The song lyrics told of how the flag had served us in past war victories: (like an oppressed female) "She went where she was sent by Uncle Sam...and she can take a lot more."

"Red is for the blood of patriots who died to free us, white is for government and justice of love, blue is for honor and faith in all we do...."

This chorus was repeated several times, as the letters U.S.A. printed in American coins appeared across the screen. The audience rose to chant the Pledge of Allegiance, thus ending Part I of the program, entitled COUNTRY.

Part II--GOD began as our attention was directed to the chorus of Bible Institute collegians still standing on the stage. One black person was among them, a young woman strategically placed in the front row center for emphasis. A few of the collegians volunteered their personal testimonies. "I was a teenage alcoholic," spoke one young man, "until the Lord gave me a new chance." A young woman followed, "I was brought up in a Christian home where I learned that the saved go to heaven and the wicked dead sinners suffer eternally in hell; I just couldn't turn down the opportunity to be saved."

In the back of the auditorium, a silent testimony was borne by a handful of men and women standing with signs that read: "A True Christian Is Not a Bigot", "First the Jews, Then the Blacks, Now the Gays, Get off Our Backs."

After the testimonies there was another pause, this time for a word from the sponsor. Each person had received a program and an information packet at the doorway of the auditorium. On the back of the program was an ad for the next bigger than ever W.O.L. rally, entitled Youth Quest '78 to be held in New York. 10,000 people were expected to attend, and 42 speakers including Anita Bryant in the flesh. There are five existing W.O.L. Bible Institutes, and twenty W.O.L. camps that are designed to catch all age groups from 6-60.

As the W.O.L. programs were being plugged, collegians filed up and down the aisles passing white

gallon buckets as offering trays. For those who might have been short of change that day, the info packet included several other contribution options. For example, there was the "give nothing now" plan where one could become part of the world wide ministry simply by mailing a check for \$100 or contributing on a monthly installment basis until paid in full. A second option was to fill out the enclosed computerized name and address box on the back of the contribution envelope and send in your contribution at your convenience. For those who gave early, they were running a special on hardbound W.O.L. family bibles, and albums of the collegians singing inspirational tunes. Your money was guaranteed to be as good as placed in the Savior's hands. It is not difficult to see why the right wing movement has the most effective fundraising campaign in the nation.

A final item in the packet was a petition to President Carter urging the defeat of Madalyn Murray O'Hair's efforts to get "In God We Trust" taken off U.S. currency, and "under God" from the pledge of allegiance. It also urged Congress to put pressure on networks to stop the "blatant Godlessness" of homosexuality, violence, drinking, swearing and blasphemy that are so undermining our beloved nation." All one had to do is make several copies of the petition to spread around to friends, sign your name and send it to the President. The commercial ended appropriately with the reappearance of the letters, U.S.A. printed in pennies, combined with a musical vignette explaining why "In God We Trust" and E. Pluribus Unim" must remain on the cash.



GCN Photo

The growing movement in this country against homosexuality - as demonstrated by the rise of Anita Bryant, and the repeal of gay rights ordinances in Dade County, Florida, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Eugene, Oregon, is part and parcel of a growing right-wing movement in the U.S. which appears to be grass-roots, but is quietly being funded by large corporate interests.

The attack on the rights of homosexuals is another side of the growing attack on the rights of women. The Word of Life Rally started off, after the title appeared on the movie screens, with three words, one projected on each screen:

~~ERA~~ ~~ABORTION~~ ~~EVOLUTION~~

We as feminists support the goals of the gay rights activists who picketed and demonstrated at the Word of Life rally in Portland on May 14, 1978.

However, we do not support some of the behavior of the activists that day, namely the heckling which took place inside the auditorium during Jack Wyrzten's speech as he came to the subject of homosexuals.

We feel this behavior is incorrect from two perspectives. First, 1st Amendment rights, freedom of speech, are essential to all of us, and therefore Jack Wyrzten has a right to speak and be heard. Second, heckling and yelling and trying to drown out his words is self-defeating tactically. It does nothing but support a negative view of homosexuals. Jack Wyrzten used this incident effectively in his pitch to the audience. After the police led the demonstrators out of the hall, he said that he wished they could have stayed, they clearly needed help, and they clearly needed to be saved.

Next in the program came the moment we were all waiting for-- Part III, the message on DECENCY. It was delivered by Jack Wyrzten internationally known Evangelist with 40 years experience. He began with a heavy anti-communist thrust, quoting from Joseph Stalin ("the communist murderer"). "Stalin said, 'If we can kill their national pride and patriotism, then we can win the U.S.A. for communism.'" The W.O.L. leaders seem to feel no pangs of conscience over using this strategy in reverse to suit their own purposes. Their reasoning seems to go something like this: if we can inflate their national pride and patriotism, then we can win these fundamentalist Christians over to the side of Capitalist Imperialism. Wyrzten proceeded to give a twenty minute rundown on the U.S. history from the W.O.L. perspective; starting from the Mayflower Compact to the Vietnam War. That's what made America great, we had God on our side. (The old cliché still lives.)

Where are we now, in 1978? Wyrzten portrayed a grim picture of squalor and filth that threatens to undermine the moral fiber of our nation. Several feminists and gay brothers silently moved down the aisle and stood in front of the stage carrying signs: "Keep Your Laws Off Our Bodies", "Stop the Rise of the Fourth Reich".

What are the signs of the impending Armageddon? Wyrzten cited the practice "of murder by abortion" as one example adding his own statistics, (source unmentioned) "There are more lives lost by abortion than killed in wars by Hitler and Herod combined."

"Why are we against the ERA?" posed Wyrzten. "Because you are bigots, volunteered a voice from the back of the audience.

The W.O.L. answer was that behind the ERA was Women's Liberation which contradicts the Christian doctrine that man shall be the ruler and protector of women. Leading into the issue of homosexuality, Wyrzten added, "If God had wanted Adam's companion to be a man why did he create a woman from his rib?"

The minority in the back of the hall grew increasingly more vocal; their protests drowning out the words of the speaker, until policemen stepped in to escort them out of the hall. The audience applauded as Wyrzten offered a word of prayer to the agitators for their salvation.

The sermon was a diabolical masterpiece of persuasive language. When addressing the issue of pornography, Wyrzten stated, "Does one have to open a sewer to know it stinks?" Alluding to homosexuality, he stated, "Do you know there are those who are sick with cancer and they refuse the cure?" What is the cure? "The word of God." He propped up this argument by reading letters of testimony from alleged homosexuals who had repented and "gotten right with God."

The grand finale was when Anita Bryant's face appeared in the clouds on center screen singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". Images of apostles receiving divine inspiration flashed on the screens to either side of her, along with scenes of Antta's wedding and of her family. The climax of the show was when the full chorus superamplified version of the Battle Hymn came to a close; suddenly the platforms carrying the two sets of seven flags revolved around to reveal two human-sized blue plaster Statues of Liberty holding crimson

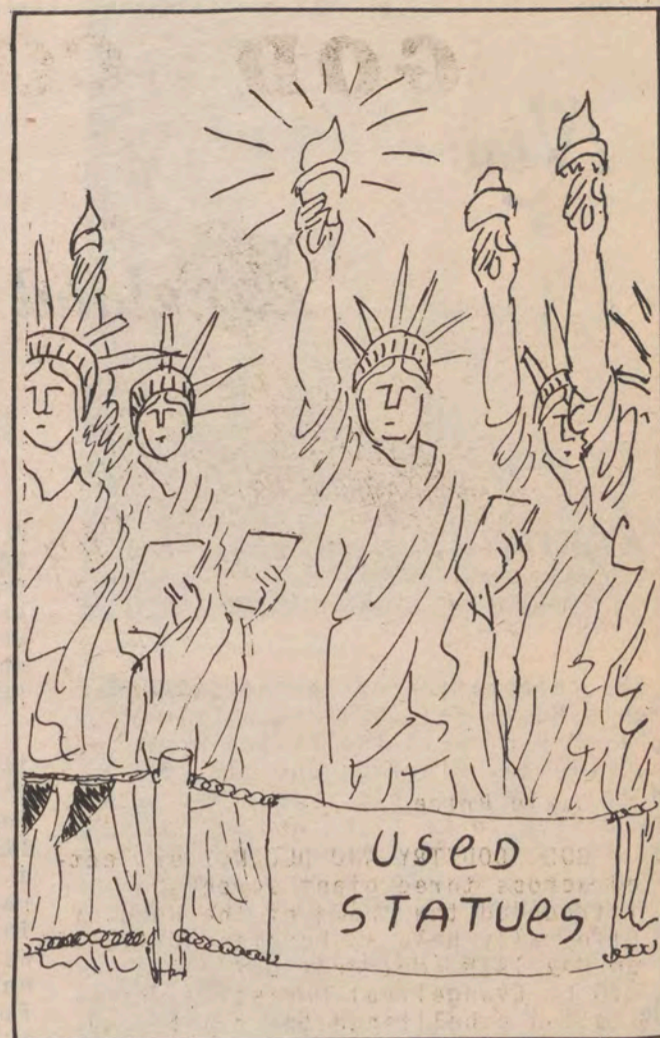
"a diabolical masterpiece of persuasive language"

electrified torches.

The closing prayer was anti-climatic; a kind of overkill to assure that there was no one left unsaved in the audience. We sat through twenty minutes (my neck was stiff from bowing so long) of fallacious arguments designed to snare your reasoning. Some of the tactics:

1. An appeal to the emotions-- You will be persecuted in his name, even by your own doubt, but do not lose faith.
2. The guilt trip-- "Who among you are phonies and who are the true Christians willing to sacrifice all?"
3. Incrowd fallacy-- "Don't miss your chance to be among the saved".

In conclusion, the multi-media W.O.L. performance was indeed "stirring" as the program had described. But for the few feminists (myself included) who managed to sit through the whole show without disclosing our true identity, our emotions were stirred in quite the opposite direction that they had intended. As the crowd poured out onto the sidewalk, confronting face-to-face the ranks of their adversaries, I breathed a long sigh of relief to be once again among my own kind. I groped around in my pocket for my armband, feeling more than ever, the need to identify myself politically; to add one more body to the numbers of those who represent the opposing point of view. From the expressions on faces and murmurings, "you people are sick", "we'll be praying for you". It was hard to judge what effect the protest had. Did they walk away feeling



more confirmed in their anti-gay, anti-feminist beliefs?

The power to manipulate people's attitudes seems clearly to be in the hands of those with the most money (the power), and those who can put on the most impressive show (the glory, amen). In this sense, the protestors appeared a bit like David up against Goliath.

For this writer anyway, it was enough that W.O.L. know that there are those who object to their bigoted beliefs. We objected loudly, strongly, and in more numbers than perhaps they had anticipated.

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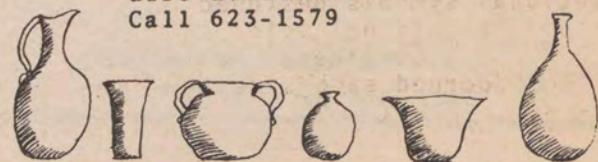
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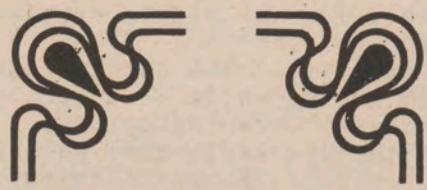
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New

Women's

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Music

Sparky feels...

The celebration of the First Annual Women's Music Festival began Friday night, May 5, with the Boston women's band, Lilith. Playing good old rock and roll, Bette Midler, jazz and blues, they proved to be tight and versatile as ever, and although the UMP gymnasium seemed to large for the dance, I found it very difficult to sit still.

The band just finished recording an album, by the way, called "Boston Ride"--it will be wonderful to hear them play in my living room!!

Saturday turned up beautiful and sunny, and women started congregating in Luther Bonney Hall in the early afternoon. Tables displaying women's record albums, festival t-shirts (which came out beautifully), bumper stickers, buttons, Hungry Hunza sandwiches, and scrumptious baked goods (thank you, Prudence), greeted you as you walked in.

A Women's Music Network was held, with valuable contributions from Wise Women Enterprises, while Ruth Pelham was outside entertaining the children and teaching them to make musical instruments; shakers, which were being sold all weekend. The children were going to use the money for women in prison and not for themselves--a good idea for sure.

At three o'clock, we experienced a short but amusing opera by Joanne Forman. The story line was a bit bizarre (and who knows if the ending was a happy one?). A "mad maid" named Polly Baker who had slept around five too many times was sentenced to death for these crimes. Despite her righteous protest, it was not until a young lad on the jury pitied her and offered marriage was she saved from her horrible fate. (Thanks a lot, Judge!) The voices of the actors blended beautifully throughout the play, and their performance gave us an interesting taste of another sound.

Pixie Lauer stepped on stage after the opera, delighting us with her happy-go-lucky tunes, strumming her array of unusual stringed instruments. Some of us in the audience had been fans of hers for quite a while, having heard her sing up and down the coast of Maine.

Some feminist music followed, with Shirlee Sherwood, Buffy Ozone and myself. None of us are "performing musicians" in a professional sense, as many of the other women at the festival were, but I feel the experience of playing with and for other women was an inspirational moment for us.

After returning from a supper break, we settled back in for an evening full of more music and entertainment.

The New Harmony Sisterhood Band from the Boston area gave us a real good show, had us clapping and singing along to their energetic political songs, and gave the audience a feeling of unity and optimism for all women. Very inspiring.

Ruth Pelham was next, a woman whose profession is being the travelling song woman of Albany, New York. She sang a variety of songs, some light and some very moving, and her warmth and liveliness inspired lots of audience participation and good feelings.

Then the stage was turned over to the "body music" of two women who call themselves Mischief Mime-- Anne Rhodes and Barbara Anger from Ithaca, New York. These women presented a few short acts ingeniously capturing various aspects of the human condition in women--our fears and insecurities as well as the humorous side. They have a magical way of combining fantasy and reality, moving their audience from laughing fits to tears in seconds. Not only did we benefit from their performance, but after the show they both expressed how pleased they were after getting such a favorable response from everyone watching. (Isn't it wonderful when good feelings are mutual?)

Anne and Barbara agreed that in Maine the audience doesn't get a chance to become spoiled for entertainment as they do in California, where one has to have a big name in order to draw a crowd. I think we'll all fondly remember Mischief Mime for quite a long time.

Kay Gardner topped the evening off. Her stage was set with a tableclothed table, candle and flower arrangement, creating that familiar, reflective atmosphere conducive to her soulful voice and dreamy flute music. She created quite a calming effect on us all, which was just right after a long day of creative energy and activity. We were fortunate she was able to find the time to play for us, despite her busy tour schedule.

Sunday morning brought us more glorious, sunny weather. The Irish-flavored Morris Dancer Team started off, all brightly outfitted in green knickers with sleigh bells a-jingle at their shins, dancing on the grass in perfect unison to a piccolo. What energy they had!

Afterward, some of us decided to take advantage of the sunshine and took the sound equipment outdoors, treating ourselves to a fresh-air concert. Paula Gills, from Vermont, sang some very melodic songs of love and life, all her own material. As a matter of fact, most of the women performing during the week-end played original music, which added to the excitement.

Gills asked if there were any women composers who would be interested in sending a cassette tape of their songs, or written lyrics, by mail for her to consider. She can be reached at 57 Central St., Northfield, Vermont 05663.

Lee Bryant brought us her fine music of ballads and blues, and soon Mary Sossong joined in with her fiddle, and Susan Brown on upright bass, seducing the dancers in the crowd into moving about on the grass, thus beginning the perky contra dance with everyone kicking up heels and swinging each other about.

A very high spirited afternoon.

After settling back down, we listened to Lulu Love play some knee-slapping jugband music for us, followed by a unique combination of accordion and flute, played by Beth Borgerthoff and a woman whose name is unavailable at this time. I was really impressed by their unconventional sound.

Sandy Eliot and friends sang some nice three-part harmony, after feeling the need to explain that their songs were non-feminist oriented. That sort of variety was the reason I got so much out of the festival! I really felt good when a young girl from the audience popped up and sang "Country Roads" by herself, in front of people she didn't know. If she felt comfortable enough to do that, I'd say we had a successful time of this.

Thanks to the three incredibly dedicated women of the University Women's Forum--Buffy, Pam and Monica-- and to the equally dedicated sound people, CK and Karen Kane from Boston, plus many, many unnamed women who also pitched in, and, of course, to the performers.

Here's to the next time--New England Women's Music Festival, 1979!



photo by Donna Lee Rollins



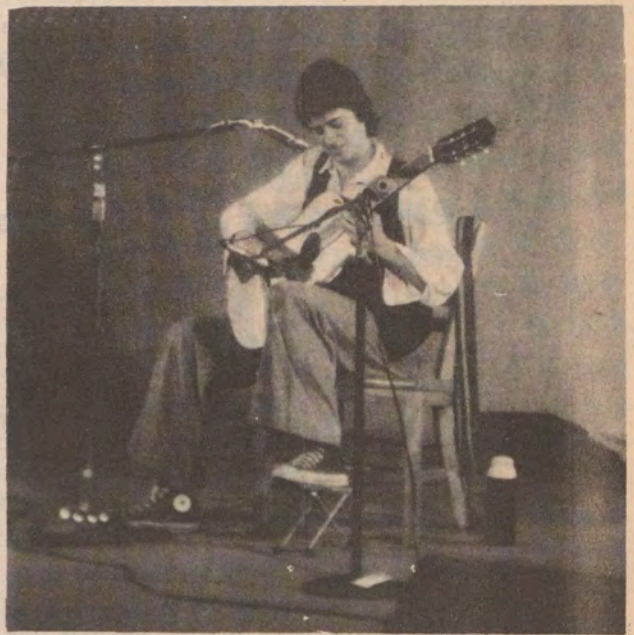
photo by Connie Saltonstall

You disappointed me. You disappointed women who had put out heavy amounts of energy and talent to make something happen for you. And you should be damned disappointed in yourselves. Because you missed vast quantities of women willing to share the deepest parts of themselves with you. But you couldn't quite take the trouble to get your spreading duff off the sofa, could you?

Let me tell you some things you missed. You missed Mischief Mime, which, in my estimation is powerful enough in itself to effect social change. Two women--count them, two--who walked up on a small stage in front of an audience that had been, to that point, rude (walking freely up and down the aisles at the quietest moments of performers' songs, being irresponsible about toning down the children making a game of tearing up and down the steps, entering the auditorium and letting the door slam behind them--and here come these two women...

In three minutes, they had you right there. Howling with joy and laughter and shared embarrassments, plunging with them to the depths of our vulnerability and compassion... they had you, and they kept you. There is no adequate way to describe what they did; it was magic, it was a moment impossible to recreate and impossible to forget.

It was art, it was being a woman, it was the gamut of emotion. It was something that, what, two, three hundred of you couldn't be bothered to get to.



photos by Deborah Granneman



The music throughout the three days brought other women to the same level that Mischief Mime brought me. There is no call for me to go through the list of performers; Sparky has mentioned them all. It was, musically, technically, very well done.

But the music for me, is only one component of what women's music festival is all about. The rest is the re-union, the communion, the reinforcement, the building and sharing of strength and weakness, the meeting new people, the absorption of new perspectives, the solid, vital pulse of all those rhythms brought together is a music unto itself. A music not appealing enough to your trained ear, perhaps, for you to need to be involved with, but a music for me that is as necessary to my social and emotional health as virtually anything else that I do.

And if it doesn't happen here again next year, you can give your absent selves a little sisterly pat on the back as you climb into your car to drive a few hundred miles because "nothing ever happens in Maine." And if it does once, you make sure it may not twice.

Meg feels...

There's a question I'm itching to ask several dozen of you strong supporters of women's music...and that is, Where the hell were you May 5, 6, and 7 when Maine finally had its own festival?

I see you in the bars and hear you complain how nothing ever goes on in Maine. I talk with you over the phone and listen to your tales of travelling to Boston, Illinois, Vermont, New York, Michigan, to hear women's music. I nod sympathetically when all you hot shot music lovers moan and groan about there being no place for you to enjoy good women's music in this big, boring state.

And then I go to the first music festival women have ever gotten together here, and I look for your faces. And I keep looking. And looking. And I'm thinking, surely Ann's here...and any minute now I'll spot Bonnie...and Carol, I remember her driving through sleet last winter to get to Boston for a concert...and Donna, hell, she only lives four blocks from here... and Fran, she'd love something like this...and Gerri, I know she's in town this weekend...and HeLen, she's a singer herself, she should be around...and Irene, I know it's a long drive, but for one long weekend a year...and Jill, she was around last night, so where is she today...and Kate, of all people... and Linda, my pal, where are you...?

And so on, through the entire goddamn alphabet two or three times. And where were you? Where was your sense of priority? Don't you know what kind of muck the women who organized this had to wade through to make it happen? Can't you figure out that if you don't support something the first time, you may not have the second chance? Weren't the stars bright enough for you? Are you afraid the paint will fade on your car if you drive on a sunny day? Was there a good old movie on TV? Were you having a living room discussion about supporting women in the arts that you couldn't tear yourself away from?



photo by Deborah Granneman

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BOOK REVIEWS

by Donna Jones

The Dream of a Common Language

Adrienne Rich

Poetry is a very powerful medium, it comes closer than anything I have ever found to expressing thoughts and feelings that are otherwise hard to articulate. When written by a feminist woman it unites the personal and political aspects of ourselves in a very solid fashion.

Adrienne Rich is a feminist woman and she has come out with a powerful, beautiful statement.

Within these pages Rich explores many different types of relationships between women: mothers and daughters, sister-siblings, lover and lover, friendships and the spirit-sisters of a collective past and future.

The book is divided into three sections: Power, Twenty-One Love Poems, and Not Somewhere Else but Here.

Hunger from the Power section is one of my favorites from the whole book, a long poem, here are some excerpts:

They can rule the world while they can persuade us
our pain belongs in some order.
Is death by famine worse than death by suicide.
than a life of famine and suicide if a black lesbian dies,
if a white prostitute dies, if a women genius starves herself to feed others,
self-hatred battenning on her body?
Something that kills us or leaves us half-alive is raging under the name of an "act of god"

and later....

The decision to feed the world is the real decision. No revolution has chosen it. For that choice requires that women shall be free.

and ending....

Swathed in exhaustion, on the trampled newsprint, a woman shields a dead child from the camera,
The passion to be inscribes her body.
Until we find each other, we are alone.

And from the last section, Not Somewhere Else but Here: another excerpt, from Transcendental Etude.

We cut the wires,
find ourselves in free-fall, as if
our true home were the undimensional
solitudes, the rift
in the Great Nebula.
No one who survives to speak
new language, has avoided this:
the cutting-away of an old force that held her
rooted to an old ground
the pitch of utter loneliness
where she herself and all creation
seem equally dispersed, weightless, her being a
cry
to which no echo comes or can ever come.

Shades of Mary Daly in the above, at least for me.

I could go on quoting pieces and whole poems that are special. I "use" poetry as if it is a magic incantation I can pull out of my head to comfort or celebrate, there is a rich storehouse within. If you're into poetry at all, get it, read it, love it. It can be brought in paperback for \$2.95. If your local bookstore doesn't carry it, I'm sure they would order it for you, it is published by W. W. Norton and Company, Inc. 500 Fifth Ave. New York 10036.

ORIGINS

Richard Leakey & Roger Levin

I was astounded by the consciousness contained in this book of layperson's anthropology.

To start off, within the first few pages, they put to lie the idea that man (sic) is inherently aggressive, as expounded by Konrad Lorenz, Robert Ardrey and other popular science writers. There are many examples in the animal kingdom of flight from danger and cooperation instead of fighting to protect territorial rights. The thought, too, that if we had been constantly at war with each other we would never have had the time or energy to concentrate on our own survival and, therefore, would not have survived, makes sense to me.

The authors see human society evolving as follows; in the beginning, after we came down out of the trees, we were a gathering-hunting society. This mode of survival required

cooperation among men in the process of hunting and among women in the process of child raising and teaching and gathering of wild edibles. Then, from a gathering-hunting way of life, we evolved into a farming mode of living, and the crises started to begin to accumulate. This change meant that land was needed to grow produce, it also meant that there was the possibility of passing possessions down to the next generation and the accumulation of property, in the form of tools and women and children needed to do the work on the farm.

There are no answers in this book as to how the subjugation of women did begin and they don't really address the question clearly. But, the point is made loudly and clearly, that regardless of how inequality did start, it does not have to continue, nor is the inequality between men and women natural or inherent. And, in fact, it is very crucial to us as a species for it to not continue. The authors see us as cultural beings, meaning people who have created our own life styles and societies because of particular needs at particular times, and give much credence to the fact that we can continue to create to better suit the needs of all humans alive on this earth.

Completely interwoven in the fabric of the book is also an ecological awareness, the stern fact that we do not have unlimited world resources, some countries do take much more than their share, and we had better, soon, figure out what to do about that inequality. I have focused upon consciousness in this report because it is what made this book exciting for me. Beyond that, it has a lot to offer. It is beautifully done, many pictures of animals and people and a lot of new information about how we as homo sapiens did develop.

It is published by Dutton and I'm sure most book stores carry it, however, I got this copy from the library, in lieu of spending \$17.95. I do prefer to spend my book money, such as it is, on books written by women and/or by small struggling feminist alternative presses. Put your money where you feel it will do the most good!

ME. ♀ CONFERENCE

NEXT TIME... WITH FEELING

In April of this year, the first "Maine Women's Conference was held at Colby College in Waterville under the sponsorship of the Maine Civil Liberties Union and the Maine Attorney General's Office.

Miniscule press attention has been devoted to what did or even did not happen there, yet this conference carried with it a certain amount of significance.

Its significance comes first from the fact that it was. To that fact, many point with pride.

Secondly, the attendance at this conference was well over 400 with all participants pre-registered, indicating an excitement perhaps, a healthy anticipation or a responsibility.

Thirdly, participants represented widely separated geographic locations of the state.

Fourth, the program selections were as diverse as the participants, thus offering a wide range of selections, interests and mingling, bearing a close resemblance to the 1976 International Women's Year Conference held at Husson College.

Fifth, pre-registered registrants received upon arrival, packets complete with schedule and evaluation form.

Sixth, exhibits and video were meant to enhance the collect electricity of all the many women.

Putting together a conference is no easy task, nor is putting together a lecture, a seminar, a concert, an exhibit, a publication. Especially difficult is the striving for and achievement of quality. Myriads and legions of women were consulted, pampered, enticed, excited, involved. Many responded with ideas, offerings, time, efforts, sincerity—but few were heard.

The "Maine Women's Conference" was another song n' dance, doing a soft-shoe instead of a high step; staying in the boundaries of politics and done "without feeling." Rushing to get all the "big names" in Maine and the spotlight, it fell over itself on the way to the grandstand.

Its organization and content were repetitious, middle class and insulting. If pre-registration was a must, publicity should have so stated. If it was to have been an event for all Maine women (or their respective representatives), outreach transportation and publicity could have stretched a bit further. Its organizers could have attended to the panelists and exhibitors in a more responsible fashion, explaining parameters and recognizing efforts.

Most Maine women because of family, financial, employment commitments lack the leisure time and energy to offer ourselves nourishment, and so, settle for pabulum. It becomes increasingly difficult to comprehend why something is better than nothing, why token efforts are accepted and supported. We wonder whose budgets were cleansed; whose affirmative action consciences satisfied; whose reputations uplifted; whose self-interests served....

The women of Maine are as diffuse as wind ripples across a lake, yet we allow ourselves to be categorized, to be fussed over and de-flowered by the leisure class of us. Those of us with "power", with leisure time, and with titles need yet to learn how to cultivate responsibility, how to respect, how to learn, how to teach, and how to take risks.

Next time..... "with feeling."

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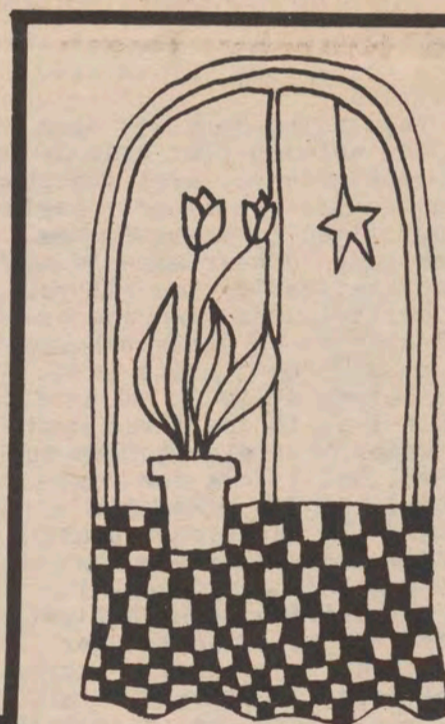
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now dare you presume I'd rather be thin!

by Gail Lipfert

Fat. The word conjures up images repulsive and distasteful to most of us. We do not want to be fat. If we are, we blame ourselves and feel ashamed, unattractive. But few of us consider the reasons for this aversion to being fat. Advertising, television, magazine articles, diet books, the opinion of others who are influenced by these things, are all promoters of being thin. Clothing retailers carry fashion lines with rarely anything over size 16, if that. People say, "She'd look fine if only she lost a few pounds."

Fashion is an important aspect of many people's lives. It is a visual extension of the need to be accepted by others. One must appear right to be accepted. Women, in particular, fall prey to the societal pressures to be thin.

The universal need to be accepted is intense and persistent. It is the prime force behind behavioral control. The American advertising industry is adept at coercing people to buy completely useless items by appealing to their psychological needs. Insecure, paranoid people are easy to control. Women are raised to be insecure, to desire the security of husband and home. Governments rely upon psychological control over their subjects in order to function. Some industry relies on real physical needs such as shelter, food, etc. But the fashion and clothing industry goes beyond basics and creates 'needs' that we must have in order to be accepted.

I have nothing against anyone who wants to be attractive, but being attractive has more to do with feeling attractive than with adorning one's self with the latest articles of fashion and torturing one's body and mind with miracle diets and artificially sweetened foods.

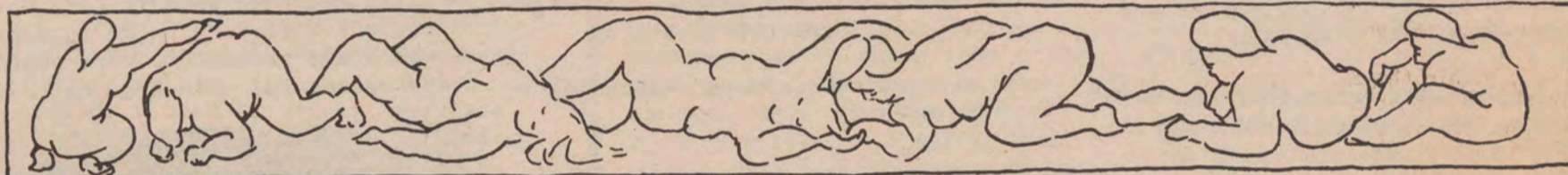
Men are rarely susceptible to this thinness mania. For they

are the ones who created it. Women are still well under the influence of male-dominated society and industry, even feminists are not immune to such psychological pressures. We all know women who, though they appear to be attractive, rational and quite thin, have just started a crash diet to lose some imaginary bulge.

A hundred years ago, fashion was different. Thin women were thought to be ill. Large bosoms and broad hips were in. But there was always that same pressure to be accepted, to look right, to be secure.

Being fat is defying control. It is saying I hear you but I will not conform. I like the way I am. I feel good about myself without weight watchers approving.

Control seems inherent in human interrelationships, regardless of how personal, intimate and equal we try to make them. But at least we can be aware of the way the money-hungry aspect of our society attempts to manipulate us.



SUGAR BLUES and Starchy Death

by Erna Koch

I grew up on sugar and starch. As a child of a poor woman's household, the types of food we could afford were Kraft dinners, Franco-American spaghetti, macaroni, Campbell's soups, Kool Aid, sweetened artificially flavored juices, and packaged foods of all kinds.

Those foods are the diet of the American poor person, and a large part of the diet of many middle class people.

Later, when I grew up, I wondered why poor people so often had lost their teeth at a young age, were so often fat (or excruciatingly thin), and had a generally unhealthy look. Some politicians would attribute this to "slovenly living and laziness", but it is clear that the foods the poor are forced to eat plays a large part in lack of health and mental outlook.

Information on good nutrition which does not include sugars and starches in large quantities is not available. The literature which is passed out with food stamps emphasizes eating "low cost" meals, which include eating meat, but "stretching it out" with starches and sugars. The U.S.D.A. does not consider seriously alternative sources of filling protein, such as soybeans, other beans, and eating complementary foods. (Complementary foods, such as wheat and milk, when combined, offer a much higher percentage of protein than either of the foods separately.)

A diet which makes use of these low cost alternatives can be combined with a 'conventional diet'. Many people would eat more sensibly if information was available, and if supermarkets carried more of the low cost nutritious foods. This is not happening because the food chains would not be making as much money, not to mention the medical and dental industry.

The United States is the major producer of soybeans in the world, and 90% of the soybeans grown in the U.S. for U.S. consumption are used for oils for cooking, and additives for food and dog food. In many other parts of the world, the soybean is a major protein source, in the form of soy milk, tofu (pressed soybean milk curd), miso, cooked as beans, etc. Soybeans are very inexpensive.

Fast food corporations, the sugar industry, the processed foods industries, and the dental and medical professions all stand to gain by our continued ingestion of non nutritional sugar and starches. Big business and the medical institution want us to continue and step up our use of these poisons.

We all know that sugar produces tooth decay, obesity, and sluggishness. It also has absolutely no nutritional value. In William Dufty's book, *Sugar Blues*, he traces the use of sugar as an additive in foods and as a tool of colonialism in third world countries. Countries which were originally producing mixed crops changed to the sugar 'cash crop', with the effect of becoming totally controlled by the 'sugar barons'.

When sugar was first introduced in Europe, the Aristocracy hailed it as a great delicacy, and bought it, thus encouraging more production of sugar. They also were encouraging their own gout and diabetes, an unknown disease at the time.

When sugar became available to peasants, they reacted to its unnatural sweetness with suspicion. The town healers told the peasants not to eat the sugar. (Town healers were wise women, herbal healers, and were later called witches. When witch burning started, one of the big issues was sugar. People listened to the healers, and the sugar business was picking up in the aristocracy. Sugar merchants saw that if they discredited or somehow disposed of the witch-healers, they could make much more money.)

At that time, beer was one of the staples of the peasants' diet, and provided many nutrients. (Nothing like "beer" today.) When brewers began to use sugar to speed up the fermentation process, they were boycotted or forbidden to do so by common law. Peasants conducted a test on the beer by pouring some on a chair, and sitting down. If their leather breeches stuck to the chair, it was clear that the beer had been adulterated.

Now, there is sugar in almost all processed foods. And not just a little. Ingredients lists are arranged on labels so that the largest quantities of ingredients are listed first, in descending order. Things at the beginning of the list comprise most of the enclosed food, things at the end comprise less. In many foods, sugar is listed as one of the first five ingredients.

Some of the foods which contain the largest quantities of sugar are ketchup, commercial salad dressing, canned soups, canned and boxed dinners of all sorts, crackers, bread, mayonnaise, beer and wine, to name a few.

Since many of us eat most of these foods, even if we don't eat candy or sugar per se, we consume enough to be thoroughly addicted.

I stopped eating sugar recently, after a lifetime of "hidden" addiction, I didn'tt eat candy, cake, or ice cream much, but had eaten processed foods with sugar. Not only am I losing weight, but I feel better. One of the first things I noticed was a substantial difference (the first week) in my mood. I was not having mood swings, but felt pretty good at all times. I also had much more energy. After two months, I still feel better, and recommend this step to anyone feeling apathetic or feeling you would use more energy. Naturally, not eating sugar has caused me to eat almost no processed foods, and less chemicals.

Last week, at a town benefit dinner for the Volunteer Fire Department, I decided to eat a piece of homemade pumpkin pie. After the meal, I went home, fell asleep, and "slept it off" the whole afternoon. What more can I say?

Maggie Letvin says our bodies are beautiful machines. Various religions say that our bodies are temples. Whatever our views about what we put into our bodies, we are what we eat.

Experiment with your diet.***

MAINE ISSUE

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LE DEUXIÈME

SHIFT

CLAIRE BOLDOC

IRÈNE SIMONEAU

CÉCILE COLLIN

The following are excerpts from a conversation among three Franco-American women who explored themes like cultural tools, class, men, language, mother... This issue picks up where the last one left: in the middle of the conversation:

ON COMMENCE.

Jésus, Marie Joseph. Jésus, Maire Joseph. On a besoin d'une prière... Voilà.

Cécile: I moved to Bangor-Orono and became involved with FAROG.

Irène: Were you aware that you were getting involved in a movement at the time?

Claire: I don't consider it a movement. Do you think of it as a movement?

I- I think of it as activism. The words Franco-American mean what to most Francos? It's either there or it isn't there. I feel like I'm doing something active. I'm out there. I'm trying to re-identify myself, trying to take stock of myself, trying to sort out in that closet, and I'm doing things like this with other people. I'm getting some support. It's not like I'm doing it alone.

C- Survival is not a movement, you know. Most of the time, for me, it's been very personal too. How else?

I- How is it different for you, Cécile, from my taking stock of myself? For my way is personal too. How do you mean it in terms of personal?

C- It was never a decision I made. I didn't go about living one way, and then sitting down and saying I'm going to go back and look at this.

I- Would you say there's more of a continuity of consciousness in your case?

C- Yeah, it's my total life. It's almost being a misfit, out of the St. John Valley. It's like being from the Valley where a whole existence worked more or less perfectly, and then leaving there and finding rules changing elsewhere.

I- So it's really identified with leaving a geographic area as much as feeling one is a misfit because of cultural disconnection?

C- Different intensities. A lot of putdowns from being French, even at home. Not at home, but at school, in the case of being punished for speaking French. Irish nuns from New York come and tell us we were like Appalachia, disadvantaged uncultured. Demeaning, demeaning, demeaning, all the time. A constant attack. So I got out of there.

I- And you were always responding to the attack?

C- No, just the environment. But in the school yard, I could go out there where no ----- nun was going to suppress me and make me something else. But you leave the Valley and everything is reverse. Everything that worked, everything I had taken for granted I couldn't take for granted anymore. It was realizing I was an oddity. I was different, naive. It was weird.

I- How could people at the University pick you out? Because of an accent?

C- Yeah. Les premiers deux ans au collège, I would translate in my head. I wanted to say something and my face was transparent, so they could see all those emotions on my face. But for me to say something would be a long process. My face or reactions were a lot faster than what I could express.

So you have a professor who was presenting a lecture, and faced with a whole panorama of expressions. He would stop and ask questions. I would have to stop and think about what I was thinking in French, and then think about how I would say it in English, and then say it in English.

I- A Black person might be able to place herself in that setting and say "yeh, I'm perceived as different because my skin is black." How could you perceive yourself as different unless someone was giving you those messages?

C- But I wasn't supposed to be different. People were giving me the messages that I wasn't supposed to be different, cause I didn't look

any different. If they saw you in a room, they wouldn't say "She's different."

We spoke French all the time. My father didn't speak English. My mother was cooking for the nuns. She was learning English. C'était une famille excitée: loud, boisterous, had a lot of fun. My family was poor, very hardworking. My mother was very supportive of my going to school, because she had been pulled out of school at twelve years old. My mother was brilliant. She was the oldest of the family, so she had responsibilities. She got married and then when it came our turn, she wanted us to go to school. I was class president, very popular, very successful - in Ste. Agathe.



Nicole Cécile Collin of Ste. Agathe, Me. Coordinator of Franco gerontology programs, Univ. of Southern Me.

I- Making it in Ste. Agathe, but not in Orono?

C- Yeh, yeh...full of conflict, because of the language thing. Identifying with my father and my mother, and thinking: 'it's the only way I have of communicating with them...feeling dirty and bad about them...feeling inadequate. It was like doing both extremes depending on where I was. If I was in the schoolyard, then everything was great and my tools were put to work. If I was in the classroom, I would be overcome with these feelings of being inadequate, because of what they said about our French. We had no way of proving them wrong, except that it worked. I would go home and really enjoy communicating, not just at home, but with others I knew. And then leaving there and going to the University of Maine at Orono, where

everybody had to fit in a certain mold. I'd open my mouth and they'd say 'isn't that cute, why don't you say some more? Isn't that a cute accent?' I have an accent, you know

I- Yeah, I know.

C- Well, I didn't know until I went away to college. It was something I had to deal with because everytime I opened my mouth people made me deal with it or forced me to dwell on it. People pointed out that I was different. Because I was very naive, my eyes were always bugged out of my head. I was always looking, and looking, and looking at this whole new world. But I wanted some privacy in looking. Because I was different, I couldn't get enough privacy.

C- Also, it was a hardship for me in college: I was in a totally different world and going through moments of not knowing if I could ever go home again...that if I kept on developing intellectually and changing in all these ways...suddenly I was totally panicked thinking about my father and trying to bridge the gaps...try to make him understand. You know, he was more than halfway there, but I was so convinced that there were such BIG gaps; it was so inadequate, and we were so far apart that I couldn't take the risk. Everytime I brought something back, I blew my mind and I found myself way back there...and my father way ahead, in terms of what I had projected.

I- What about other people?

C- I used to believe people, like if somebody didn't like me, I didn't look at them, I looked at me, and think about why somebody wouldn't like me, and I'd come up with the answer. So, if somebody liked me in the moment, I was O.K. If somebody disliked me, Boy, I was nothing.

C1- You should talk about what you thought of French men.

C - Oh, I just used to think they were really crude, I used to think they would really tie me down, I used to think that I would really be trapped. I used to think they were the real pits. I would think about marrying some Italian from New York, My escape was to find some Anglo man and make that my life.

I- So what did you do?

C- I fell in love with the devil...and he scorched my soul: I put all my talents to work making an Anglo relationship work. But it was all brought home, somehow: everything I've done, I've brought home to my family, my town... What I was trying to get across to Irene, though, is this: For me, the Franco spirit is one of ...integration, of moving on: there are political struggles I can give my heart and soul to, but this is even more personal, it's a question of integration, of wholeness, of oneness, I guess.

Photo by Claire R. Bolduc

BATES FRANCO SYMPOSIUM: A CRITIQUE

Franco Americans from Maine and New England states gathered at Bates College in Lewiston on April 8,9 for the first international symposium on the "Franco-American Presence in America". This symposium, sponsored by the Centre d'Héritage of Lewiston, in cooperation with Bates College and the support of the Maine Council for the Humanities and Public Policy was the first of its kind. Speakers were invited from all over the United States and from Canada to give their perspectives on French Catholic and French Protestant past and present contributions to American society.

The Bates symposium, though limited in some respects, represented a breakthrough in the pattern of Franco-American conferences and gatherings. French people of both Catholic and Protestant traditions finally met together to share some of the history of their separate development. This observer is not certain whether the values inherent in the inheritance of either a Catholic or Protestant tradition were sufficiently clarified or discussed but assuredly an important first step had been taken by inviting members belonging to both groups to meet together.

Furthermore, unlike previously planned Franco-American New England or regional conferences, this one was bilingual. What a blessed relief to have the opportunity to express oneself in the language of one's choice. At last, this observer found a Franco-American conference with no written or unwritten mandate to speak "le français seulement". By the same token the Anglo society's similar commandment of "English only" was not heard at this conference.



Claire Quintal of Worcester, Ma., President of La Fédération Féminine Franco-Américaine (Franco-American Women's Federation) speaks to the symposium audience.

Photo by Irene Simoneau

The young as well as the elderly and those of the middle generation who attended this symposium were free to raise questions, offer comments and generally greet one another in their favored language.

Although this symposium did not reverse the trend of male domination of Franco American conferences, it did offer the experience of a strong female presence. One third of all panelists and lecturers were women and some of these women, such as Madeleine Giguère of the University of Southern Maine did not hesitate to present historical perspectives geared to the Franco woman's experience. A few remarks and jokes made by some male moderators and panelists alluding to female participation on the panels and in the symposium served as a reminder that the female presence was acutely felt. Franco-American gatherings may never be an "old boys" club again.

But despite all the positive features offered at this symposium the Bates conference was plagued by the same limitations found at Franco-American conferences in general. Only the credentialed were invited to give presentations. Perhaps this is only fitting at an academic-type conference and was certainly appropriate at this particular symposium. But the Bates conference, seen as part of a series of symposia, conferences, gatherings of and for Franco Americans reinforced the trend toward relying on the advice and consent of the credentialed to examine the Franco-American experience. This trend, and probably now a reinforced trait, effectively bars new input, new opinions, new visions of the Franco experience potentially emanating from non-credentialed but equally valid sources.

Moreover, it is questionable whether the "grande parlotte" (the great or incessant "talk") mentality featured at all Franco American conferences and certainly not absent at the Bates symposium has or can solve the crushing problem of Franco-American search for identity, survival and flowering of the culture.

However, when all is said and done one must be grateful and even celebrant of the breakthroughs and the new directions offered at the Bates symposium. They offered hope that future Franco-American gatherings will build on the experiences and results of this Lewiston meeting.

Irène Simoneau

CHILD LABOR

Washington—On April 13 the U.S. Dept. of Labor announced a proposal to permit the hiring of 10- and 11-year-old children for farm labor "when the crop to be harvested is one with a particularly short harvesting season" (that is, they spoil fast) and "when employment conditions would not be harmful to the health or well-being of the individuals" (when did growers ever care). The proposal is a step backward from the 1974 Amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act which prohibited children under 12 from farm labor employment. That amendment, achieved only through pressure from labor organizations, was one of a long series of efforts to ban the exploitation of child labor. Although child labor was prohibited in most industries in 1938, large scale hiring of children in agriculture continues today. In 1969, one out of every 4 farm laborers was under 16.

Growers are all for the proposal since they can pay children substantially lower wages since Social Security, minimum wage and, in some states, Workmen's Compensation laws don't apply to child labor.

from Off Our Backs

BROOM IN HER MOUTH

CHICAGO (UPI) - Housewives should receive fair compensation, a couple married 56 years says, and they want it to be the law of the land.

Edward and Doris Bernays say housewives should be paid for their work. They also say housewives' equipment should be standard business tax deductions.

"A woman is born with a broom in her mouth" - not the mythical silver spoon, Mrs. Bernays said Sunday.

The Edward L. Bernays Foundation will award \$3,000 to anyone who draws up the proposed law in 5,000 words or less by Oct. 16. Then they hope Congress or the legislatures will enact it.

"I have always felt that housewives should be reimbursed for their work, which consists of at least 35 different skills and professions," said Mrs. Bernays.

CESAREANS MULTIPLY

Cesarean section—delivery of a baby through a surgical incision in the abdomen—was up at 11.6% of all deliveries in 1974, more than twice the rate in 1967 and now accounts for 20-25% of all deliveries done in major hospitals, according to a story by Maritza Arrastia in the May 5 issue of Seven Days.

Although cesarean section is a necessary and life-saving operation in some cases, there is growing evidence that many cesareans being performed are not necessary.

The risk of death in a cesarean is 5 times greater than with a vaginal delivery.

Some believe economic factors have caused the increase in cesareans. Doctors charge \$600 to \$900 for a vaginal delivery and \$1,000 or more for a cesarean and the patient must be hospitalized for a week increasing profits for the hospital.

Low income patients have a better chance of having a cesarean because frequently "low socioeconomic status" is itself used as an indication of high-risk pregnancy and because with Medicaid reimbursement is higher.

Also, the number of birth per doctor has dropped by 50% so that obstetricians have less business and therefore more economic incentive to perform cesareans.

from The Guardian

EQUAL EDUCATION RIGHTS

A survey conducted by NOW's Project on Equal Education Rights (PEER) which traced every case filed with the Office for Civil Rights from 1972-76, shows that the federal government has widely ignored sex discrimination charges, delayed investigations, and stopped short of enforcing penalties even when discrimination was confirmed. Hundreds of letters, complaints, and inquiries were found stashed away in an unused room at HEW headquarters.

info from EMR

GENITAL MUTILATION

Genital mutilation of female children in Africa continues to be widely practiced. According to estimates, many millions of young girls and women are mutilated in Africa today. Female circumcision is the popular but medically incorrect term for a variety of operations commonly performed on female children as mandated by local or cultural custom. The operations consist of the removal of the clitoris, labia minora, and sometimes all external genitalia, and the sewing up (infibulation) of the vagina except for a tiny opening. Mainly practiced by Moslems, infibulation is usually performed on female children aged 4 through 8 years old, the purpose being to guarantee that she be "intact" when she is given to a man for marriage. In many African and Moslem countries, the clitoris is regarded as a vile attribute that allows women sexual pleasure. The operations are considered necessary for the preservation of the family. Health results have been called catastrophic by physicians. Aside from heavy bleeding, infections such as tetanus often result from the use of dirty tools. Fatalities are never recorded.

These practices are concealed by all United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Non-governmental agencies such as church groups working in health care in Africa are similarly involved in the cover-up, because all international organizations claim "they cannot interfere in local customs." A Somali ambassador in a telephone interview stated that all female children in Somalia (a recipient of U.S. foreign aid) are infibulated, but stressed that "women have equal rights in Somalia." --info from WIN News

HUSBAND STILL MASTER

A man's home is his castle, and in it he reigns as lord and master over the wife and kids.

Sound a little old-fashioned for the 1970s? Maybe—but the notion of equality in the home has yet to reach Louisiana. Last month the state supreme court decided to let stand a state law calling the husband "head and master" and allowing him to make all decisions about property shared with his wife.

from The Guardian

CARCINOGENIC ORANGES FROM FLORIDA

If you've joined the current boycott of Florida orange products to protest the Florida citrus fruit industry's support of Anita Bryant's attack on homosexuality, you've made a healthy move. It turns out that Florida oranges are dyed with Citrus Red 2, a carcinogen, while California oranges are not.

from Ecology Center Newsletter

Over the past winter and spring, anti-abortion forces have escalated harassment of abortion clinics into outright violence. With vandalism, arson and death threats to clinic workers and their children, the objective is clear: to stop abortion by any means necessary. The following places are among those being attacked.

* In March, a fire was set in the Akron, Ohio, Women's Clinic resulting in severe scorching and smoke damage but no injuries.

* In February, at the Concerned Women's Clinic, Cleveland, Ohio: A chemical bomb was thrown through a window one night in February, causing the clinic to be closed for nine days. In the same city, a Planned Parenthood Family Planning Center suffered \$4000 damage from arson last November; the Margaret Sanger abortion clinic was the target of a failed fire-bombing attempt and the Price-Hill family planning clinic is picketed daily by anti-abortion protesters.

* Northwest Women's Center, Columbus, Ohio: Arson caused \$200,000 worth of damage.

In addition to the concentration of attacks in Ohio, these violent tactics have been spreading throughout the country. In January, a national anti-abortion group called People Expressing a Concern for Everyone (PEACE) claimed credit for invading and disrupting clinics in New York City, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Omaha, Anchorage, and Fairfax, Virginia.

* Planned Parenthood Clinic, St. Paul, Minnesota: In February, a professionally constructed bomb was thrown in a clinic window but failed to detonate. In a separate action, the administrative offices above the clinic were destroyed by arson causing \$250,000 worth of damages, and the clinic has been sprayed with gunfire throughout the year.

* The Ladies Clinic of Omaha, Nebraska and the Vermont Women's Health Center in Burlington have also suffered heavy fire damage in the past six months.

* In addition to bombings and arson, there is also terrorization efforts--In St. Paul, Minnesota, a clinic board member's son received a note inside his locker at school saying, "if your mother doesn't stop killing babies then we're going to kill you."

* In March, in Boston, two men and two women entered a Pre-term Clinic and disrupted medical services by blocking entrance to examining rooms.

In general, police throughout the country have been slow to correct attacks on clinics to an organized pattern, and slow to defend and protect the clinics.

Feminists are struggling to find ways of preparing and defending against these recent attacks on the right to abortion. On local levels, abortion rights activists are trying to stave off anti-abortion disruptions with escort services and self defense tactics. In Ohio, where many clinic attacks have occurred, feminists are trying to develop a statewide fightback strategy, forming "Freedom of Choice--Ohio" an organization to coordinate information and provide resource people for abortions rights groups already existing in the state.

The question of how to deal with the phenomena of violent, physical attacks on abortion clinics and workers and women is a difficult one to answer.

--info from the Guardian

WOMAN BRIEFS

NATIONAL AND LOCAL

CHILD CUSTODY VICTORY

On March 29, the Suffolk County Family Court in Hauppauge, New York, refused to set a date to remove Jeanne Baum's daughter, Siba, from her custody. In announcing the decision, the judge said he never had any intention of carrying out the custody order, and would not do so as long as Jeanne and Siba Baum remain outside Suffolk County. The judge let stand, however, a 1976 "child neglect" conviction against Baum for pulling Siba out of school.

Jeanne Baum, a Siksika Blackfoot, took Siba out of Selden Junior High School in September, 1975 after school authorities refused to take disciplinary action following several anti-Native American incidents.

In one incident, Siba Baum, then 12, was told by her teacher that Indians are lazy, alcoholics and that they "got what they deserved."

ERA STATUS

Supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment have asked Congress to extend the March, 1979 ratification deadline another seven years. The proposed amendment has only 10 months left under the seven year deadline to win ratification by two-thirds of the states. Only 35 of the necessary 38 states have approved it, and supporters say it is unlikely that the other three will accept it before the March deadline.

Eleanor Smeal, president of NOW, said that refusal to extend the deadline risks "setting back the clock on women's rights."

Phyllis Schafly, chair of STOP ERA, stated an extension "would be an unfair attempt to tamper with the U.S. Constitution."

Vice President Walter Mondale gave the first official administration endorsement of the extension and has urged Congress to extend the ratification date.

The House Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee recently passed a resolution giving states seven more years to approve the ERA.

LESBIAN RIGHTS: CHILD CUSTODY

A Minnesota judge ruled last week that a woman's sexual preference has nothing to do with her ability to be a good mother.

The June 1 decision by Family Court Judge Robert Bowen granted permanent custody of her three young children to a divorced lesbian identified only as "Carol". It also represented a hopeful step forward for the thousands of other lesbian mothers in the U.S. who are fighting similar custody battles and challenging the charge that they are unfit to live with their children.

The Minnesota case stemmed from an attempt by the woman's former husband to overturn a temporary order allowing the couple's three boys, aged 4, 10 and 12, to live with their mother. He had argued that his wife's lesbianism could influence the children toward homosexuality.

Judge Bowen rejected that argument, however. "Both parents are good parents," he said, and concluded there was no reason to alter the custody arrangement.

It was the first such child custody ruling in Minnesota.

ONE OUT OF TWO

In 1976, there was one divorce for every two marriages in Maine. Statistics from the State Department of Human Services indicate 5,522 divorces were granted and 11,302 couples were married that year. The average length of those marriages was 5 1/2 years. The second year of marriage is most vulnerable to divorce. Children are now with single parents in more than half of the cases.

ON-THE-JOB SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Gary, Indiana—United Steel Workers Local 1066 has formed a Committee Against Sexual Abuse to hear testimony from women who have been subject to on-the-job sexual harrassment. One 33-year veteran of U.S. Steel described to the Committee how she had been fired for failing to respond to her foreman's suggestions that they get together after work. Two other women were fired before they could finish their probationary period for refusing their foreman's advances. Another woman testified about her foreman's foul language and lewd remarks.

The Committee has been using its mounting documentation of sexual harrassment of women to focus public attention on this kind of sex discrimination and to push for legislation to compensate women who are fired or forced to leave their jobs because of sexual harrassment

info from Worker's Power

MORE HARRASSMENT

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—An Investigator for the Sacramento Human Rights Commission has been fired for "disdain and disregard for authority." Yvonne Day, an employee of the Commission for 3 1/2 years, was fired in January after filing two grievances regarding unfair employment practices and sexual harassment by Claudel Kinnex, Director of the Commission. Kinnex was hired in April, 1977 over two other highly qualified candidates and began his directorship by humiliating staff members, making sexist remarks to female employees and making direct sexual overtures to Day in particular. After months of sexual abusiveness and sabotaging of Day's case load, Kinnex escalated his behavior into attempted molestation and physical abuse. She filed her grievances and he fired her. Day is demanding a hearing and reinstatement with back pay and compensation for time lost.

information from
Sacramento Rising

WOMEN WORTH LESS?

A Gardiner Area High School teacher claims her coaching salary violates federal law which guarantees equal pay. Andrea Bemiss, the girls' varsity field hockey and softball coach, has begun grievance procedures against SAD 11; she believes her rate of pay should be equal to that of some of the boy's varsity coaching positions. On June 1, the school board refused to change Bemiss' salary, although they voted to take the grievance under advisement. Bemiss says that an unequal pay situation exists with several coaching positions for girls' sports.

Information from the Kennebec Journal.

EPISCOPALIAN SPLIT

On May 13 and 14, over 200 conservative Episcopalians met in Salem, Massachusetts to discuss procedures for organizing a New England diocese of the Anglican Church of North America. This formal breakaway from the mainline Episcopal Church is caused by the recent policy of ordaining women and homosexuals as priests, and by recent growing acceptance of women's right to abortion.

--info from Kennebec Journal

WOMAN IN WOODS

Deborah S. Palmer of East Corinth is the first woman to join the ranks of the Maine Warden Service. She ranked first in her class at the special training school for wardens at the University of Maine at Orono, and is now assigned to warden service in Aurora.

ONE MAKES IT

Mary Helen White has been appointed superintendent of School Union 98 (Southwest Harbor Area), becoming the only woman school superintendent in the state, out of approximately 135 school superintendents in Maine.

Out of 35 assistant superintendents in the state, 34 are men. There are only three women secondary school principals compared with 137 men principals. However, women represent 58% of the teaching force.

Maine Human Rights Commission has gathered information for a report which charges that public schools discriminate against women. Women are allowed to teach, but not to advance to administrative positions.

BIRCHING IN THE PINE TREE STATE

This past legislative session, an act was voted into law (Public Law 619) which makes legal the "use of a reasonable degree of force" to maintain discipline or prevent misconduct in the schools. In other words, our kids can be physically disciplined by their teachers and such actions are legal. And, yet, if these same children, now or as adults, use force as a means to meet their own needs, their actions will be called immoral or illegal. What sort of model are schools offering our children?

BATTERED WOMEN SENT HOME

An Act appropriating funds to establish emergency shelters for family members who are victims of family violence was vetoed by Governor Longley and the veto was sustained in the Senate by one vote. Thus the work of the Maine Coalition for Family Crisis Services Inc., asking for \$300,000 from the legislature, met with defeat.

The private groups in Maine working with abused women and with the problems of domestic violence are still operating, and are seeking local and other forms of funding.

To send donations, offer time or energy, get assistance or information, contact:

Family Crisis Shelter, Inc.
PO Box 4255, Station A
Portland, Maine 773-5516
Spruce Run
Box 653
Bangor, Maine 947-0496
or Dial Help: 947-6143
Abused Women Advocacy Project
Box 713
Auburn, Maine 784-3844
Caring Unlimited
31 Beach St.
Saco, Maine 282-4151, 967-4251
Family Violence Assistance Project
Box 2283
Augusta, Maine
623-4511 (Crisis and Counseling)

This news section represents an initial attempt to include as much information as possible about work by feminists throughout the state and about any event reflecting on or affecting the status of women in Maine.

We need a women's information network to sustain and expand this function of the newspaper. We need our readers -- you -- to send us information (even one paragraph will do) about work that is being done, or events that are happening relating to women.

Please send any information to: Maine Freewoman's Herald, attention: news, P.O.Box 7232 DTS, Portland 04112.

Helen, at 9 am, at noon, at 5:15

Her ambition is to be more shiny and metallic, black and purple as a thief at midday; trying to make it in a male form, she's become as stiff as possible.

Wearing trim suits and spike heels, she says "bust" instead of breast; somewhere underneath she misses love and trust, but she feels that spite and malice are the prices of success. She doesn't realize yet, that she's missed success, also, so her smile is sometimes still genuine. After a while she'll be a real killer, bitter and more wily, better at pitting the men against each other and getting the other women fired. She constantly conspires. Her grief expresses itself in fits of fury over details, details take the place of meaning, money takes the place of life. She believes that people are lice who eat her, so she bites first; her thirst increases year by year and by the time the sheen has disappeared from her black hair, and tension makes her features unmistakably ugly, she'll go mad. No one in particular will care. As anyone who's had her for a boss will know. The common woman is as common as the common crow.

excerpts from

THE COMMON WOMAN

by Judy Grahn

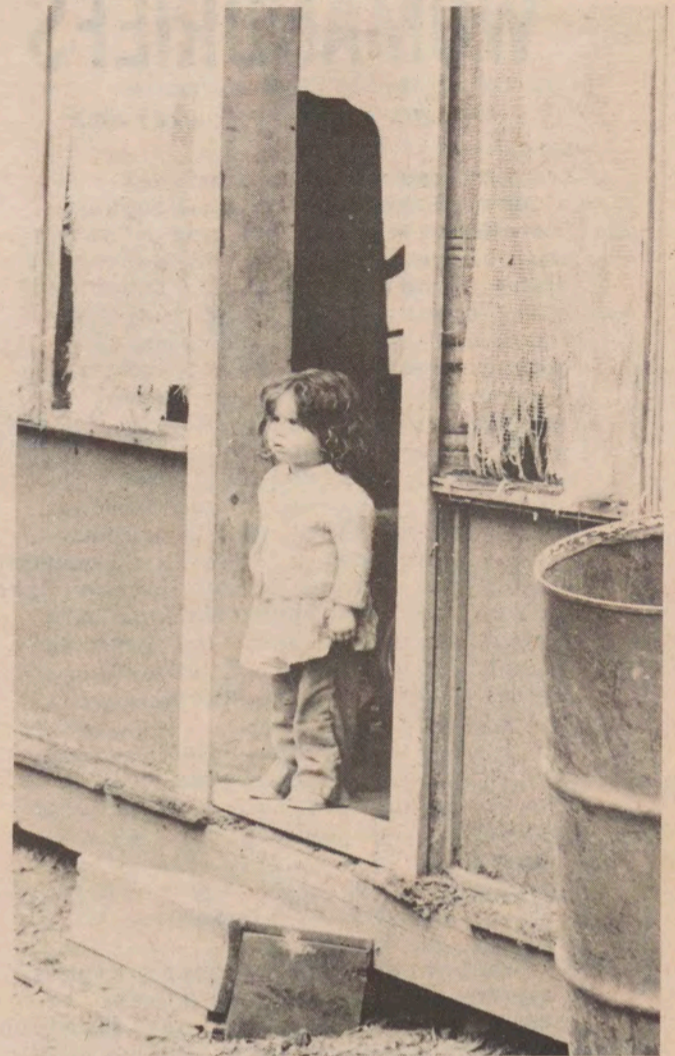
Ella, in a square apron, along highway 80

She's a copperheaded waitress, tired and sharp-worded, she hides her bad brown tooth behind a wicked smile, and flicks her ass out of habit, to fend off the pass that passes for affection. She keeps her mind the way men keep a knife-keen to strip the game down to her size. She has a thin spine, swallows her eggs cold, and tells lies. She slaps a wet rag at the truck drivers if they should complain. She understands the necessity for pain, turns away the smaller tips, out of pride, and keeps a flask under the counter. Once, she shot a lover who misused her child. Before she got out of jail, the courts had pounced and given the child away. Like some isolated lake, her flat blue eyes take care of their own stark bottoms. Her hands are nervous, curled, ready to scrape. The common woman is as common as a rattlesnake.

Carol, in the park, chewing on straws

She has taken a woman lover whatever shall we do she has taken a woman lover how lucky it wasn't you. And all through the day she smiles and lies and grits her teeth and pretends to be shy, or weak, or busy. Then she goes home and pounds her own nails, makes her own bets, and fixes her own car, with her friend. She goes as far as women can go without protection from men. On weekends, she dreams of becoming a tree; a tree that dreams it is ground up and sent to the paper factory, where it lies helpless in sheets, until it dreams of becoming a paper airplane, and rises on its own current; where it turns into a bird, a great coasting bird that dreams of becoming a piece of air with lightning in it. She has taken a woman lover whatever can we say. She walks around all day quietly, but underneath it she's electric; angry energy inside a passive form. The common woman is as common as a thunderstorm.

photo by Maida E. Solomon



Margaret, seen through a picture window

After she finished her first abortion she stood for hours and watched it spinning in the toilet, like a pale stool. Some distortion of the rubber doctors with their simple tubes and complicated prices, still makes her feel guilty. White and yeasty. All her broken bubbles push her down into a shifting tide, where her own face floats above her like the whole globe. She lets her life go off and on in a slow strobe. At her last job she was fired for making strikes, and talking out of turn; now she stays home, a little blue around the edges. Counting calories and staring at the empty magazine pages, she hates her shape and calls herself overweight. Her husband calls her a big baboon. Lusting for changes, she laughs through her teeth, and wanders from room to room. The common woman is as solemn as a monkey or a new moon.

Vera, from my childhood

Solemnly swearing to swear as an oath to you who have somehow gotten to be a pale old woman; swearing, as if an oath could be wrapped around your shoulders like a new coat: For your 28 dollars a week and the bastard boss you never let yourself hate; and the work, all the work you did at home where you never got paid; For your mouth that got thinner and thinner until it disappeared as if you had choked on it, watching the hard liquor break your fine husband down into a dead joke. For the strange mole, like a third eye right in the middle of your forehead; for your religion which insisted that people are beautiful golden birds and must be preserved; for your persistent nerve and plain white talk- the common woman is as common as good bread as common as when you couldn't go on but did. For all the world we didnt know we held in common all along, the common woman is as common as the best of bread and will rise and will become strong-I swear it to you I swear it to you on my own head I swear it to you on my common woman's head.



12. photo by Maida E. Solomon

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MONIQUE WITTIG

PERSPECTIVE

by Nancy Brockway

FROM FRANCE

Monique Wittig, author of feminist novels *The Lesbian Body*, *Les Guilleres* (*The Female Warriors*) and *L'Oppoponox*, read an essay on "The Category of Sex" before an attentive audience at Colby College Women's Week. The title of her talk had been announced as "Feminist Utopias". Some people left in disappointment when she launched into an abstract intellectual paper in her hard-to-understand French accent.

She explained that she had written the essay with a friend to respond to a backlash against feminism that was growing in her native France. The view that women are truly liberated when they live out the stereotype of the soft and passive homemaker is gaining acceptance in France. I feel that the angry edge has gone out of feminism in America, too, so I was interested in what she had to say about this.

Her essay gave me little concrete guidance, even about what she herself thinks, in part because it was hard to follow. I look forward to when she has the essay printed.

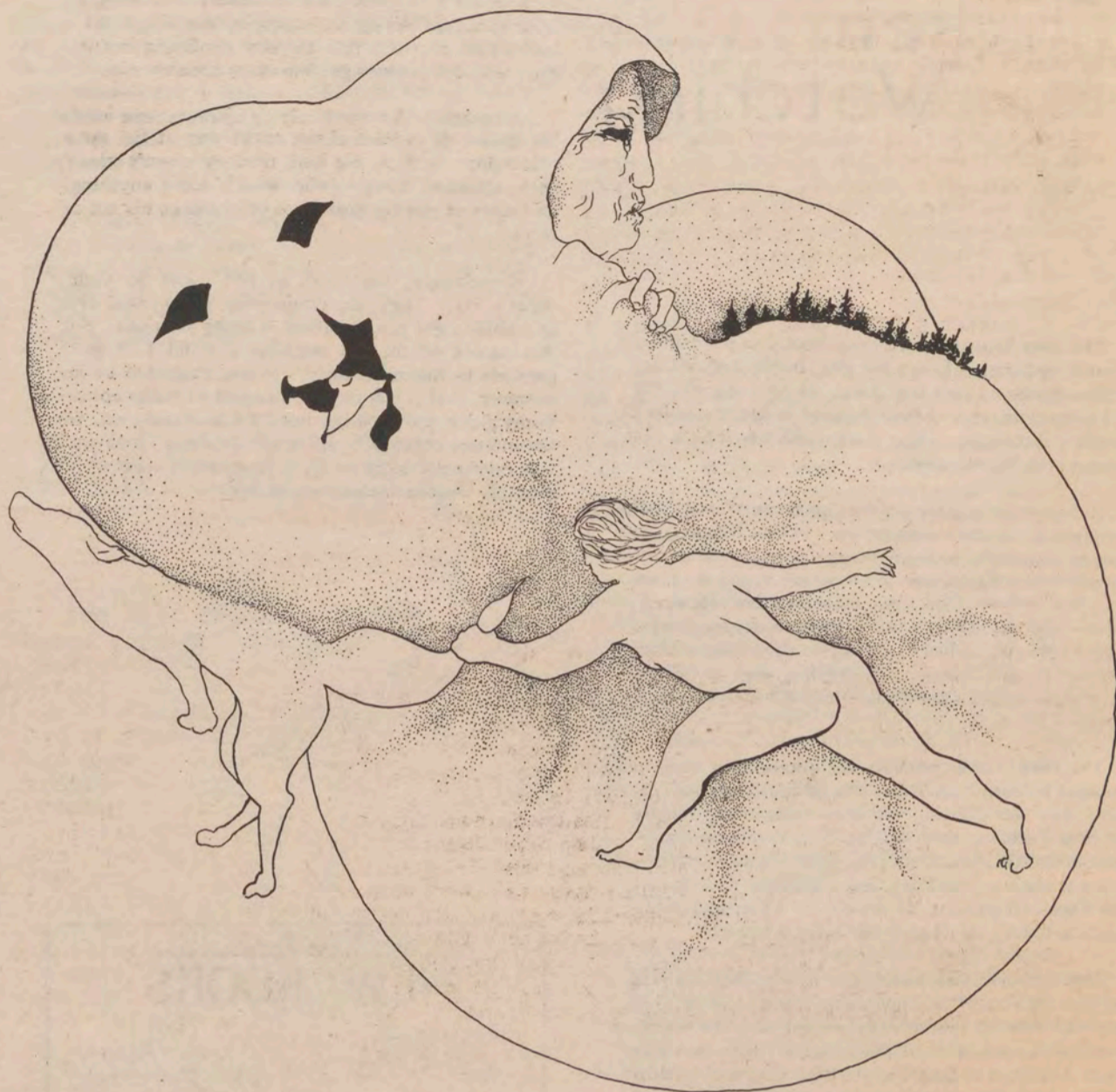
Her main point was that the whole concept of "sex" or "gender" is a product of social forces, that is, of male domination. She suggested that if there were no domination of one sex by another, the whole category of "sex" would lose its meaning. She challenged the "objectivity" of scientific definitions of sex differences, calling these as much a product of the system of male control as the social beliefs and religious values which keep women down.

She called for a return to the state of existence before one "gender" had control over another, and thereby a return to the state of existence when there was no such idea as "sex" or "gender". In this condition, she said, all human potential could be realized, since it would not be artificially classified along sex lines which, she says, are arbitrary classifications designed to perpetuate the oppression of women by men.

Monique said that she was using a Marxist/dialectical and materialistic approach in her essay. I understood the materialism as the principle that our material circumstances determine our beliefs and values. Thus, male-controlled culture holds there is such a thing as "sex", because this belief is necessary to justify its physical domination over women. I didn't understand what she meant by the dialectical process.

A lot of the question and answer period was devoted to probing Monique's thoughts on the relationship between materialism and the means of overthrowing male domination of our ideas, language and values. A member of the audience referred to Monique's use of ancient names of Goddesses in her works (e.g. *Les Guerilleres*), and to her attempts to retrieve the language of women in the times before male domination. Monique agreed that this was a case of using a change in ideas and language to bring about a change in material circumstances: if we use non-sexist concepts, we will encourage non-sexist behaviors. Monique brushed aside the apparent inconsistency between this approach and the materialistic approach, reminding us that we should move ahead on all levels, including the level of ideas.

Monique's assertion that an end



Graphic by Gail Lipfert

to the concept of sex will bring liberation for all was questioned by a woman who asked if women would bear and raise children in Monique's utopian, "sexless" society. Monique said they could do that if they wanted to: every individual would be free to do as that individual chose.

At one point a man got up and challenged Monique, saying something to the effect that biology is destiny, and that physical realities of sex differences could not be ignored. I was unhappy at the amount of time Monique spent arguing back and forth with this man. I was already frustrated because we were not hearing about feminist utopias from one of our movement's most creative fantasizers. I was angry to have time spent debating with a man who seemed bent on justifying male oppression of me.

At the same time, I agreed that sex differences cannot be ignored, or made to go away by using language with no gender. I feared that Monique's utopia of a world where sex differences were not recognized would be a hell for me. I asked Monique if her utopia meant, as it sounded to me, that there would be no place for "women-identified-women", lesbians, since there would be no such thing as "women". That is, as opposed to "men". I wanted to know whether she meant to say that I would be perpetuating sexism if I refused to relate closely to men, among other things.

Her answer to me was essentially the same as her answer about childbirth: I would be free to associate with whom-ever I chose.

At the end of the talk, I felt bewildered and stirred up. I was excited by the intellectual stimulation of discussing materialism versus idealism, the problem of whether physical changes in circumstances determine changes in our ideas, or whether we act to change our material circumstances as a result of a change in our ideas. This debate goes back as early as recorded philosophy, and I hold with those who say it is not possible to come out on the side of either one or the other. Both ways of change exist and mingle together in our life changes.

I was confused about what Monique was saying about sex differences, and not at all sure I agreed with her. I felt her concepts went back to earlier theories from the beginning of the new wave of feminism.

She made references to Naomi Weisstein's early article on "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm." While I agree with much that is contained in that article, I feel feminist theory has grown and changed since it was written. Monique did not incorporate in her essay the ideas developed in the "Clit Papers", the Lesbian Connection dialogues on separatism, Amazon Quarterly's article on parthenogenesis, Mary Daly's works on the oppression of patriarchal religions, Janice Raymond's paper on transvestites, Elizabeth Gould Davis' book *The First Sex*, Merlin Stane's *When God was a Woman, The Descent of Woman* by Elaine Morgan, or Jill Johnston's *Lesbian Nation* (much of which Jill has since privately rejected), to name a few. Monique seemed to have ignored or rejected the development of matriarchal theory, and the idea of the "women-identified-woman".

I don't know the cultural climate in France, or whether a highly abstract essay like "The Category of Sex" will be effective to stem the tide of the backlash there. I don't think its message about the elimination of the concept of "sex" will help stem the anti-ERA, anti-abortion, and anti-gay backlash in this country.

We need more work to assert the positive and unique values of women, and the need for the reestablishment of these values to the human community. I still feel that men cannot be trusted to love and respect women as equals until they respect and love each other as equals. Further, a culture which insists that women join with men and denies women their separate space is a culture which is continuing to bind women to male domination. The present historical situation requires that the sexes explore their own conditions, not that we try to eradicate the knowledge of our differences. Whatever our differences, I am grateful to Monique for restating these thorny questions again.

Chicken Watching

by Terry Yale

This year I have too many roosters, five of them (and about sixty hens). There's Big Red, Inside Red, Whitey, Peachie Bloomers, and Scar Face. At 3½ years old, Big Red is the patriarch and they descend in pecking order to Peachie Bloomers and Scar Face, both less than a year old and both known rapists.

Before there was the population strain of extra males, I thought all roosters were rapists in that the hens never seem to consent to or enjoy being mounted. At best their attitude was resigned tolerance; which it still is, when mounted by one of the three older roosters. However, if even approached by one of the underlings, they squawk and run in fear. If despite their best efforts, they are mounted by an undesirable, they never give up - squirming and squawking loudly for help the whole time.

The first time I observed this drama, Scar Face had managed to corner Queenie, one of the most respected hens. She was fighting and squawking determinedly. But Scar Face was soon on top of her, pulling mercilessly at her head feathers. Big Red eventually arrived on the scene and Scar Face fled. But instead of chasing Scar Face and pecking his ass off (as I was suggesting from the fence), he jumped on Queenie himself!

The incident had stirred the whole flock up. In less than two minutes a hen came tearing out of the barn with Peachie Bloomers in hot pursuit. She managed to escape, as did most of the harrassed hens that afternoon. I decided to forget about gardening and sat down to take note of the situation and to study the M.O. for chicken rapists.

The offending rooster always worked alone and was constantly alert to potential victims. The small, distracted loners were the easiest targets, though any hen with a disadvantage would be attacked.* They weren't above pretense or ploy either. Calling the hens to come for food when there was none to be shared was common.

Homework: define to your satisfaction the following slang terms: Chick, Chicken, Cock, Strut, Crow, Pecker, Old Biddy

Post Script - As a result of continuing chicken watching (and people watching too), I conclude that only males of inferior status rape. Males of superior status can spread their genes around without force. The catch is that all males are at one time inferior.

* I tested this theory several times by creating a disadvantaged hen by, for example, throwing a hen backwards into the pen thereby confusing her a little bit. The peckers got 'em every time!

A rooster was more likely to ignore a rape within his sphere of interest if the rapist was of the same coloration. In fact, Big Red, riled by a hen's cries for help, attacked Whitey (who wasn't doing anything!) and allowed nearby Scar Face to continue his act of force.

Surprisingly, the hens do not come to each other's aid. They act completely nonplussed even as a sister right next to them is being attacked. For this aspect of chicken behavior I could find no parallels in human society. It was suggested to me, however, that if the over-population of males continues in my flock and rape becomes the inevitable way for the inferior roosters to spread their genes - that hens will eventually learn to fight the rapists together - after all, women are learning to fight!

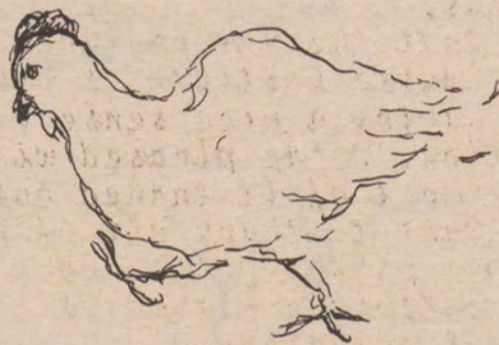


photo by Marty Layne

CLARA TUCK SPEAKS OUT

Clara Tuck Bean made her first public appearance in Portland last fall at a Halloween party, to which she had mistakenly been invited. It later was revealed that she did not realize we were in costume, and we did not realize that she was not.

Over the ensuing months, Ms. Tuck (as she prefers to call herself) has developed quite a following, with her winning West Texas charm and sophistication. Clara is on occasion seen at local night spots, bewigged, boggled and begilded, charming the denizens with her gusto. (Or, as Clara might say, "You only go round once in this life, you gotta grab whomsoever you can!")

Clara Tuck Bean has views on everything, and if you glance at the wall, you might see a few of them ricocheting off it right now. Here, she chooses to speak on mothering, and it may be obvious why two of her three children are no longer at home with their ma.

The name's Clara Tuck and I am a housewife, feminist and mother of three. Here I am pictured with my new rose-blush shades from Porteous. Candid's aren't usually my style and too bad my son Steph isn't in this one too so you could see the resemblance, although he looks more like me in the daylight so maybe it's just as well. Someday I'll have to pull out my family photo album from the truck of my Rambler and show you some better snaps, but for now I am going to as they say "speak out" on motherhood.

At times it can be a real pain in the left moon. Listen to my son's latest development that's been going on now for at least 6 years. Seems to think I don't have a clue about how he "carries on" with that Protestant girl named Tulsa. Now I know what's best for my son and she just doesn't measure up. Why she takes his attention clean away with a mere sigh when he and I are having a heart-to-heart across the breakfast table for instance. I always do my best to be a supportive force in his life and stand by him when I know he's right (it's what you could call unconditional love), but when he's clearly in the wrong, as in the case of Tulsa, I put to him plenty of sound value judgements of which he oftentimes rebelliously discards (right in front of my back, no less). And I want to make a point right now to say that women must influence their men when they go astray, as they so often do.

But being a mother is actually quite rewarding at times. My other two boys don't live at home anymore (Fairmont-31, Eddie Allan-30 and Steph is 23) and my husband was a Navy man who was lost at sea in the Everglades in '63 and so life has been no uphill slide for me don't you know. But Steph and I share many loving moments when we are both of good cheer and when Tulsa is out of town.

I sure hope to continue writing articles similar in fragrance to this one in future issues of "Freewoman's Herald" because I feel I have quite a bit of worthwhile firsthand knowledge to convey.

yours faithfully
Clara Tuck Bean
Intown Portland, Me.

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The University Women's Forum has moved to the 94 Bedford St. building at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. We're located upstairs in the front of the building. Everyone is welcome to come visit our new womenspace. We welcome any donations of plants or pillows--anything to brighten up the room.

Our office hours this summer shall be 9-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Some of our plans for workshops for this fall are on: Relationships, Sexuality, Women's Music, Co-parenting, Body awareness, Women and Money, Women's clothing and Androgyny. The collective welcomes any input, or interest and of course, any new members.

Lesbians and Alcoholism

I am writing a book on lesbians and alcoholism—the first of its kind. Would like to talk to lesbians who are recovering alcoholics about their experiences, friends or lovers of lesbian alcoholics and women who are working with recovering alcoholics either in treatment centers or therapy programs, especially those which are lesbian or feminist oriented. A specific focus of the book will be the health aspect of alcoholism—both the physical and mental—positive and negative: experiences and/or resources are needed. Send inquiries/information to: Mary Fridley, 1201 West 8th St. #102, Austin, TX 78703.

Dykes and Tykes - come to a pot-luck country picnic on Saturday July 22 in central Maine (halfway between Wiscasset and Augusta) - starting at 11 a.m. - bring food + frisbees.

WELCOME: Lesbian mothers, kids (all ages) who are lucky enough to have lesbian mothers, lesbians who like kids and any woman who is concerned about how women are kept in line by fear of losing our children if we come out.

Come and have fun. Raintate, Sunday July 23, if Saturday is pouring rain.

Write Dykes & Tykes c/o Maine Freewoman's Herald, PO Box 7232 DTS, Portland, Maine 04112 for directions to picnic.

ERA WALKATHON IN AUGUSTA

The ERA Walkathon will be held Saturday, August 26, in Augusta. Plan to meet on the Statehouse step at 10:00 a.m. The walkathon, sponsored by NOW, is a five mile walk and rally. People can obtain pledge cards from JoAnn Dauphinee, 23 March Street, Bangor. Last year 35 marchers raised over \$1000; this year it is important to do better, because the cost of ratification of ERA is high.

Lesbians/Feminists opposed to nuclear energy-- Group forming in Maine to study nuclear power and engage in direct action. Possible alliance with New England-wide lesbian anti-nuke coalition. Interested women contact Julia Gies, RFD 2, Chute Road, South Windham, Maine 04082.

announcing...

Greetings,

Now that the New England Women's Music Festival is over, we are having a nice sense of completion. We're pleased with the way most of it turned out, and we want to thank all of you who came, participated and helped celebrate--it was a wonderful gathering.

There were some loose ends and some low spots--remember, this was our first try, and to better them in the future, we need your feedback. Your impressions, experiences, suggestions, visions, and criticisms--anything you want to offer; we'd like to hear it!

We want to continue with our work, plan more women's music events, so do get back to us.

Singing,
Pam, Buffy, Monica
Elysian Fields Productions
University Women's Forum
94 Bedford St.
Portland, Maine 04103

The Women's Counseling Service, 72 Front St., Rm. 23, Bath, has changed the hours on Thurs. to 12:00 to 2:30. The other hours open are still as before and as follows: Mon. 11-2, Wed. 11-2 and Sat. 10-1. Some classes and courses being planned for later this summer are assertive training, sexuality awareness, and possibly a body awareness weekend. On June 24 they are having a table at the Bath Farmers' Market, Front St. to sell pottery, t-shirts and other items.

Moonforce Media is announcing two new packages of films by and about women. Anyone interested in bringing these films to their community can contact: Moonforce Media, P.O. Box 2934 Main City Station, Washington, D.C. 20013 or call (202) 546-7292, Mary Farmer. How about it, somebody in Maine, there continues to be talk about a film festival here, it could be dynamite!

There is now, as of June 1, 1978 a new and valuable resource for female musicians and/or clubs or organizations wishing to hire musicians. Its a biannual directory called The Performing Woman with three categories, Performer, Free-Lance and Seeking a band to Join. Advertising space available. Free listing to professional women musicians, categorizing by city and state. A yearly subscription \$5.00. For more info.: Janice D. Dinneen, Editor & Publisher, The Performing Woman, 26910 Grand View Ave., Hayward, Calif. 94542

The Southern Maine Women's Soccer League is looking for women interested in learning to play soccer, for fun, exercise and skill. For more information please call 774-6695 or 775-3391. Clinics and practices are being held now. Coaches are needed.

Margaret Cruikshank of 175 Paris, San Francisco, Ca. 94112, would like to find lesbians who can write for a collection of short autobiographies by lesbians. She needs works that have a very specific focus on one or 2 incidents in a lesbian's life. Length should be 5-10 pages, and the deadline is August 15. She will send more information to anyone who requests it.

from the staff (cont)

NUCLEAR POWER

We, as women and mothers believe that nuclear energy is unsafe and unnecessary. Nuclear waste cannot be disposed of anywhere that is safe, and has a radioactive life-time of several million years. Our descendants would still have to keep away from any site of nuclear waste. (That is assuming the containers last that long). Containers have not been developed which will last more than ninety years. Present containers have fifty years to go before we will have to deal with that problem in this era.

If we at some time found that we did not want to use nuclear power anymore and would like to get rid of the nuclear power plants, it would cause some difficulty, because there is no known way to safely dismantle the plants. Even if a plant sits for a period of time after it is built (being used or not), a natural deterioration must take place, thus releasing some amount of radioactive material.

As residents of a state in which many citizens burn wood for heat, and take advantage of other energy sources, we have the conviction that more electrical energy will not be needed in the future. Many operations and uses for electrical energy could be accomplished by using mechanical and other forms.

We support research into solar energy, the use of methane (produced from chicken-shit), and other types of energy which could benefit Maine. We would like to see an educational program which de-emphasizes use of electricity and fossil fuels and which points to other ways. (Such as the 'soft path' advocated by Amory Lovins, energy advisor to Friends of the Earth, and an energy advisor to President Carter. You may wish to look up his article in Foreign Affairs magazine, October, 1976, "Energy Strategy, the Road Not Taken".)

DICKEY LINCOLN

We do not support development of Dickey Lincoln until more research has been done on the project, and a more palatable way to do it has been found.

There are many arguments presently being posed against the dam. The power it would provide is not primarily for Maine, it would flood many acres of farmland and land on which people now live, would destroy the natural ecology of the Saint John River, and would not increase employment opportunities in the area in the long term, as after the construction is over, specially trained people will be needed and brought in from other areas. It has been said by some groups that Dickey Lincoln will provide less power than several smaller dams adding up to equivalent size and value would.

We like the idea of locally instituted and controlled waterpower, such as the dam in Ludlowe, Vermont.

INDIAN LAND CLAIMS

The Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian's claim to land and money for damages should be settled with both land and money, as requested by the Indians. Native Americans have been exploited and dispossessed of their rights and land ever since the white men have been taking over North America.

We also respect highly the attitude of the Indians in regard to people living on the claimed lands now, which is that people should keep the land they have worked for, and should not be displaced by the claim. The lands which would be released would be lands currently owned by paper companies, and land not used now.

DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS CENTERS FUNDING

In Maine, this is a bill which was introduced in 1977 by Merle Nelson (Democrat, South Portland). It is a legislative bill to provide assistance to women out of the labor market for a long time, who are thus unskilled or underskilled for jobs now. The women who would benefit by this bill are women who must support themselves, including widows, divorcees, women going back to work after their children are gone, older women, battered women, or women coming from institutions.

The bill was funded in 1977 for \$15,000, \$10,000 to operate a center, and \$5,000 for a revolving loan fund for emergencies, security deposits on apartments, and other necessities. The Center would be a place women would go for counseling, resume preparation, career planning and other assistance.

We urge a more responsible funding of this type of bill for the future, as the amount presently appropriated can not meet the need of one area of the state alone. (If you paid one person fulltime to work on the project, it would cost \$8,000 to \$10,000 just for that!)

BI-LINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Maine has a large Franco-American population, yet there are few school systems and activities which encourage children to be bilingual and bicultural. We support and acknowledge Franco contribution to the state, and feel it is essential that the Franco culture be retained in schools, and taught to non-Franco residents of Maine.

Some state funding for bilingual programs would begin to bridge the present gap and change some of the attitudes which don't recognize many of Maine's citizens.