

LIBERA

Issue No. 3

Winter 1973

ARTS & CULTURE/literature
VIOLENCE & SEXUAL EXPLOITATION/rape
SEX ROLES & SEX DIFFERENCES/sexuality
♀'s MOV'T/general
♀'s MOV'T/women of color - Latina
L in file ♀'s MOV'T/general



On a political level, LIBERA deals with the contemporary woman as she joins with others in an effort to effect a change upon her condition. Emotionally, it explores the root level of our feelings, those beyond the ambitions and purposes women have traditionally been conditioned to embrace. One of our objectives is to provide a medium for the new woman to present herself without inhibition or affectation. By illuminating not only women's political and intellectual achievements, but also her fantasies, dreams, art, the dark side of her face, we come to know more her depths, and redefine ourselves.

STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE: *Ned Asta, Susan Stern, Dianna Goodwin, Lynda Koolish, Marion Sirefman, Cathy Dreyfuss, Janet Phelan, JoAnn Washburn, Jana Harris, Ann Mize and Suzanne Loomis*

Published by LIBERA with the sponsorship of the Associated Students of the University of California (Berkeley) and the Berkeley Women's Collective. Subscription rates: \$3 for 3 issues. \$1.25 per copy for issue number 1. \$1 per copy for following issues.

This publication on file at the International Women's History Archive, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley CA. 94708.



WOMEN:

We need your contributions of articles, poetry, prose, humor, drawings and photographs (black and white). If you'd like your work returned, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope. We also welcome any interested women to join the LIBERA collective.

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special thanks to Archetype (for typesetting)
and Women's Press Collective (for printing)

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a letter to sisters in the women's movement
(for nancy)

love your sisters; love yourself
love your sisters' love
love your sisters
love you R
love

yourself
your self-love
your self-love, sisters
your self-love, sisters: you R
your self-love, sisters: you R love

Lynda Koolish

POEM FOR MY FATHER

The delivery room was lit up
like an Olympic tennis court
luminous in the black evening
the attendants in their white tennis suits
dashing back and forth to administer to the champ
but you were nowhere to
leap the net
sailing over on oceans of applause.
You entered later
clutching me like a trophy
and searching for my eyes
for a bare remembrance
a silent recognition but
when my mother naked as a shriek
lunged open to admit a new body
inside out you
were locked inside
a separate flesh
a separate room

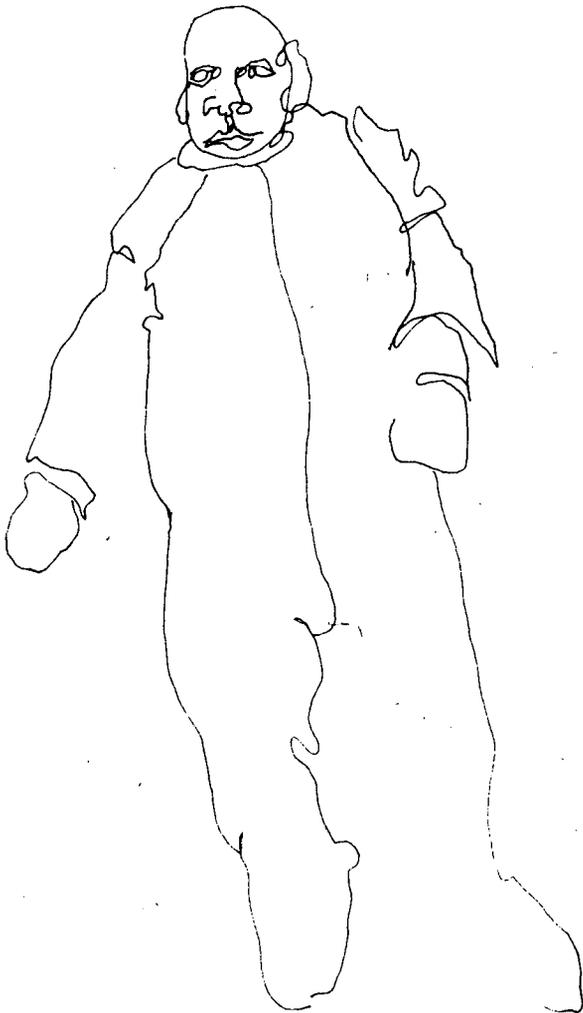
The lights were bright
my mother drugged
but she swears
that as I came
she saw you blue eyed and bald
diving
for a place between her thighs

Twenty years later
we sit in a dim restaurant
on the edge of the bay
drawn in by a noose of light
a bottle of Chablis
a plate of prawns
Tonight for a few hours
You are my lover
and we are speaking in music
Our words obscured by their sound
Their meaning fused with their cadence.
Two decades have made me beautiful

Two decades have made you old.
But tonight
you have jettisoned the years
into the bay, where they lie in wait
inert and deadly.

There is no saving you.
There is no saving me.
As we clasp hands
You dive towards the dark sea
I dive towards the bright.

Janet Phelan





BETTE MARRAPODI

"Mommy ... mommy ... mommy ... Oh, mommy, mommy, mommy!" The small, gnawing voice twisted through my bowels. Every second of my waking hours I was plagued with the cry of doom within me. My slumber was tormented with impregnable demons; hounding me incessantly: mommy ... mommy ... MOMMY!

I can remember with remarkable clarity the first minute I had become aware of the parasite dwelling within the moist innards of my body. It had been an *incredibly hot night* and as I lay floating calmly on the jello-like substance I deemed a bed, I heard a faint sigh. It was barely audible—but still a sigh. Seconds passed and I remained still, not daring to breathe for fear I'd miss a sound. Well, the minutes passed and I was slowly progressing from a soft pink to milder shades of purplish-blue—and then! There came the unmistakable chattering of another being other than myself. At first I was too fascinated and captivated by the wonder of this occurrence to pay any attention to exactly what was being uttered, but I rapidly passed this unattentive stage and sat stupified in a weird contortion. A sharp pain in my legs brought me tumbling from my fantasies.

"Hell," I scoffed in a weak giggle, "What a dynamite dream."

"Dream? You call the most miraculous happening of your life a dream?" the squat demanded in a haughty tone.

Suddenly I was gripped with terror. Was this a prelude to insanity? Had I finally overstepped the boundaries of reality into the bizarre world of surrealism?

As I lie there pondering this perplexing situation, I started to feel spasmodic movements inside my abdomen. My eyes grew into wide ovals and I gulped involuntarily.

"Sorry if I make you uncomfortable, but it's rather cramped in here. And awfully hot, too. Why don't you calm down so things can get cool and we can discuss things properly?"

"Where—I mean how—Goddammit! Where the hell are you hiding?" I demanded angrily.

"Oh, Veronica really. You are so stupid sometimes. Don't you have any sense? I'm an extension of You. I was implanted within your being to enhance a union that, unfortunately, was just dissolved. I am part you and part Michael. I am—"

"Just stop!" I screamed in a near-hysterical voice, "Just please stop." I started sobbing pitifully and collapsed on the divan. Bitter memories of Michael made the situation unbearable. The hurt was a recent trauma and though I had tried to dismiss him from my conscious mind, he still invaded my inner subconscious. Damn, my body ached for him. I sighed. Well, I reasoned, if this voice was emitting from my blackened depths, then I should at least try to communicate and relate to it. After all, how many women have the chance to converse with their subconscious?

I breathed deeply, trying in vain to steady my pounding heart, "Who are you? I mean, do you have a name?"

"No, I have no formal name. I am You. I am Michael. I am Me; the unborn menace. The Universe is me and I am the Universe. I am All; yet I am Nothing. Do you understand?" The little voice sounded concerned.

I'm trying to grasp all this. Are you implying that you are my unborn child—my aborted child?" I was suddenly frightened. No, I was repulsed at this thought.

"Finally!" The voice sounded joyous at my conclusion. But my insides were turbulent and I barely made my entrance into the bathroom before my entire dinner was regurgitated.

"Oh, Veronica," It soothed, "I don't mean to upset you. I want us to be friends—like every mother and daughter ought to be." I think it was at this point

that I relented to my body's natural outlet for shock—I fainted.

"Ronnie! Ronnie!" The voice seemed miles away, but as I traveled the stages towards consciousness, it grew in intensity, "Ronnie, what's wrong with you? Wake up dammit!" I had just joined the living when a hard, stinging slap jolted me, "Ouch! You didn't have to hit me, Jeff." I looked at his chalk-white face and waves of sympathy overcame me, "Oh Jeff, I'm really o.k." He was reluctant to believe me so I added a weak, "Honest. C'mon, help me up."

"Ronnie, what happened to you? Are you hurt or something? I'll call a doctor if you want . . ."

"And I'll call my mother if I want someone to get excited over me." He laughed, breaking the tension. "Hey, I'm sorry. Well?" He prodded as he took my arm to guide me into the bedroom, "Aren't you going to tell me?" The bed was a soft paradise compared to the floor and I spread my body greedily over its warm expanse. What could I possibly say, except the truth?

"A strange thing happened to me, Jeff. Now, don't laugh at me but I think that I need psychiatric help." I tensely waited to see what impact my statement would have on him. He sat quietly for a few seconds and then he shrugged, "So what else is new?" I was startled for a moment because I hadn't expected him to take this quite so nonchalantly. He continued, "There's no shame anymore in admitting that you can't control your own emotions. Sometimes we need an impartial guide to help us sort out our fantasies from existing realities. I'm proud of you, Ronnie, for realizing that. It takes a strong person to confess his weaknesses."

"No, no, no. I may not need a psychiatrist! What I'm trying to say, Jeff, is that I think someone is plotting against me. Someone or some people are trying very hard to drive me insane."

"Symptoms of paranoia," he said softly.

"It's true! I hear voices," I blurted frantically in an attempt to redeem myself.

"Illusions of grandeur. Tell me, are these voices directed to you from a specific source? Do they tell you that you have a special mission?" he quizzed rapidly.

"No! No! No!" I cried uncontrollably. Realizing that he had done more harm than good, he comforted me, "Veronica, I love you. I'll help you, I promise." Blindly I sought his lips and hungrily kissed him. I needed reassurance that something of my previous world still existed and functioned properly. Yet, I felt that I was exploiting his body for my own needs. I didn't crave him; Jeffery Walter Myers—I craved his sex. I didn't really love him, I was just using him to boost me over a broken heart. Poor Jeff, could I even confess that he didn't satisfy me the way Michael did? Could I ever confess anything that wouldn't

puncture his ego and make me appear as Bitch of the Year? (Especially that he was merely a substitute for Michael in bed?) And that he helped my sagging pride every time he professed love for me? No, not yet. Not until I had been healed entirely of Michael's deep wounds. Until then, Jeff would have to suffice. I'll just have to take it again and—

"Trying too hard, Jeffy." My little blabbed tactlessly. He halted abruptly, "Wh-what? Ronnie, did you say something?" He panted hotly. Without waiting for a reply, he started grinding away at my body. Stiff and unreceptive, I couldn't fake what I wasn't feeling at the moment. Still, he pounded away without a regard to my sentiments. He was an animal satisfying his own passions. Angrily, I felt like only a receptacle for his male lusts. Was this fair? As more and more dispassionate thoughts flowed into my head, his thrusts seemed more like a violation of my personal territory. I avoided his searching mouth and wiggled underneath his crushing, sweaty body. Oh God, get his hairy animal off me! His movements grew more violent and intense and I became more passive. I awaited his long overdue climax with impatience. The seconds seemed like eons. Good god, get it over with!

At last he came. Spent, he collapsed on me without mercy, "Ronnie, that was a good one." And just like a sex survey he continued, "Did you come?" I detested his prodding, "No," I answered curtly, "I didn't."

He was silent and rolled off me, "What's wrong?" He reached for my shoulder but I shrugged his hand off of it. How could I convey my sudden bitterness towards him? How could I tell him that I loathed the way he exerted his sexual chauvinistic wishes on me? How could—

"Well, if you can't tell him, I will!" The Voice announced haughtily.

"Who's that?" Jeff asked in a whisper.

"What do you mean, who's that?" I answered flippantly. "Are you hearing voices, Jefferey dear?"

"Cut out the shit, Veronica," he retorted acidly, "Who is that?"

"Oooh, now its Veronica? Better get away while you can, Jefferey—insanity is catching." I giggled. But he didn't share my humor. Grabbing my shoulders in a steel-like grip he snarled, "Don't play games with me, what are you trying to prove?"

"Only that you're an ass." The Voice said flatly, "that you are a male beast feasting on the sweet nectar of a compassionate woman. But she's tired of catering to your bully tactics. So that only makes you a piggy, Jeff. A little piggy."

"Who the hell are you? Where are you?" He scanned the boudoir. Then he looked at me. I laughed raucously. "It's here, Jeff. In here." I pointed to my

stomach and watched his face with amusement.

"You've flipped, Ronnie. I'm sorry, but I'm cutting out. I can't deal with a sick woman." He seemed to leap out of bed and jump into his clothes. He fumbled at his buttons on his pants and I taunted him with smirks and guffaws.

"Bye-bye, Jeffy!" The Voice called after him as he slammed the door.

"Thank you," I blabbed joyously, "thank you so much. You could never understand what you just did for me." As I gushed, It protested.

"Oh yes I could! How do you think I knew you wanted to get rid of him?"

"Well, yeah," I agreed as happiness-tears poured onto my sheets in pools.

"Together, mommy, we can be happy." The little voice was effusive. "I will guide you forever."

"Tell me, did it hurt you when I had the operation?" I inquired sincerely.

"Oh mommy," It cried, "it was terrible and I hated you for it. But soon it was over and I could feel myself floating around in a warm substance. It smelled awful but I like the feeling of being suspended. Why did you break away from my co-creator?"

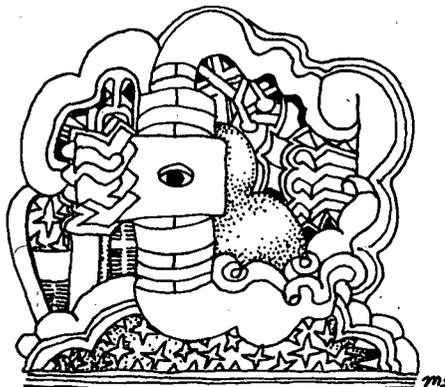
I sighed. No, I couldn't hide anything from her so I may as well confide in my new friend. "Michael conned me. Oh, I suppose I deserved it, being that I was so stupidly blind and naive to his tactics. I fell in love with him because he represented a kind of pseudo-father image, I guess. He had seemed so worldly. "I smiled at vague memories, "Ummm, he was a fantastic lover, too. I would've believed anything he told me. So, when he said he loved me I longed to trust in him. As I became more and more involved with him, he started to manipulate me. You see, I was now his puppet. I took a lot of shit. Finally I realized that he didn't really love me. I was just another pleasure-unit to him. But before I could make the break, he beat me to it. Maybe he sensed my discontent, I don't know. In any case, it was me who looked like a fool so I slinked away like a

whipped puppy with its tail between its legs. Oh, he made the usual empty promises like, 'I'll call you,' or 'This isn't the end, I'll get in touch.' Yeah, three brutal weeks passed by and nothing—not a word. I guarded the phone for days, not allowing a call to last more than a few minutes for fear that if he called and the line was busy, it might discourage him. What a complete ass I was. Nothing is more pitiful than a woman carrying a torch for a man who doesn't even give a shit about her.

"To wind up this tearful saga, a month later I realized I was pregnant with you, and needless to say I was scared shitless. I made the mistake of contacting Michael. I reasoned in my mind that it was a necessary call; that he would want to know. Ha! He laughed and said, 'Baby I can't offer any solution other than me pushing you down a flight of steps. What do you want out of me, anyway?' I sobbed over the phone and begged without dignity. He was too busy for me, he had returned to his wife and I was just regarded as a past mistake. Our brief interlude of illicit pleasure now seemed like a cheap affair you read about in a dirty paperback. So, my friend, I resorted to an abortion. But not a legal one. A guy I know is an interning medical student and he agreed to perform the abortion. After the operation we had to get rid of the fetus, so we filled a jar with formaldehyde and plopped you inside it. I guess that's what you smelled. I'm sorry, darling, someday I'll have another little girl and maybe you can enter her body and live a full new life with me."

"Oh mommy, do you really think so?" The little voice was bubbly.

"Yes," I agreed in ecstatic glee, "yes." I threw back the covers and opened the louvre doors to my closet. The glaring bulb hurt my eyes for a moment, but I spotted the item I sought with ease. I smiled as I gazed at its shiny facade. Yes, I thought, this would make a perfect conversation piece. Ceremoniously I carried the cold, slimy jar into the living room and placed in onto the coffee table. Standing back a bit, I admired it openly, "Welcome home, darling. Welcome home."





FRIENDS

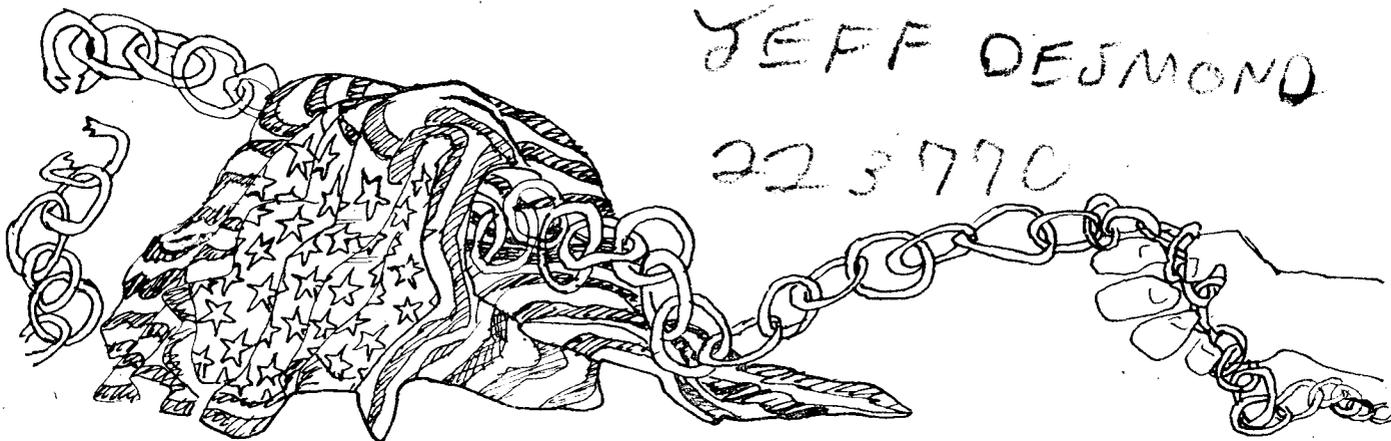
I RECEIVED YOUR MAGAZINES TODAY AND THANK YOU SO MUCH. THEY WERE DELIVERED INTO MY HANDS BY THE JOINT PSYCHITRIST. IT WAS HILARIOUS. HE WANTED TO KNOW IF I WAS A HOMOSEXUAL, DID I DESIRE CASTRATION, "THAT'S WHAT THESE WOMAN'S LIB FREAKS WANT YOU KNOW" HE SAID. AFTER TWO HOURS OF ARGUMENT HE ASKED TO BORROW YOUR FIRST ISSUE. HE'LL COME AROUND. I'VE HAD A TREMENDOUS RESPONSE FROM OTHER INMATES. AS SOON AS THEY SAW ME CARRYING AROUND YOUR SECOND ISSUE, THE QUESTIONS STARTED. THE MOST COMMON, AND PROMISING QUESTION BEING "WHAT DO THEY WANT FROM US, DESMOND? WE HAD AN IMPROMPTU GROUP SESSION OUT ON THE BALL FIELD THIS AFTERNOON ABOUT 20 OF US, INCLUDING 3 GUARDS. THE PIMPS CAN'T STAND THE WHOLE IDEA OF COURSE. 'SPECIALLY ONE BLACK DUDE THAT'S IN HERE FOR WHIPPING ONE OF HIS "GIRLS" TO DEATH. I ALMOST GOT IN A BEEF WITH HIM. BUT I HAVE A LOT OF FAITH IN THE INTELLIGENCE AND FAIRNESS OF MY FELLOW MALES. ONCE THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT. YOU MAY HAVE READ ABOUT ME 2 YEARS OR SO AGO. MYSELF, AND 3 OTHER GUYS WERE BUSTED FOR BLOWING UP A POST OFFICE IN SEATTLE. I WAS HOOKED ON SNACK AT THE TIME, AND AFTER A FEW DAYS IN JAIL, DESPERATELY SICK, THE F.B.I OFFERED TO RELEASE ME AND SUPPLY ME WITH HEROIN AND EXPLOSIVES IF I WOULD GO OUT AND PROVOKE PEOPLE TO BOMB THINGS, ONLY TO BE CAPTURED IN THE NICK OF TIME BY OUR ALWAYS ON DUTY, SEMPER PARADUS, F.B.I, DIG IT? I TOOK THEIR DOPE FOR A WHILE, BLEW UP A U.W. CONSTRUCTION PROJECT WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPLIED CYCLOTOL, SAME EXPLOSIVE THEY USE IN BOMBS TO KILL VIETNAMESE WOMEN WITH, AND THEN TURNED ON THEM. IN JUNE OF LAST YEAR, I WENT BEFORE A FEDERAL GRAND JURY INVESTIGATING ILLEGAL POLICE PRACTICES. I HAD A 5-DAY HALF PAGE SERIES OF ARTICLES IN THE SEATTLE P.I. DAILY PAPER, AN ARTICLE IN TIME MAGAZINE,

A FILM MADE BY N.B.C NEWS, AND A 20 MINUTE SPOT ON AMERICAN DREAM MACHINE WHICH J. EDGAR HOOVER HIMSELF TRIED TO CANCEL, THEY RAN IT ANYWAY, AND A MONTH LATER P. B. S.'S FEDERAL FUNDS WERE CUT, ONLY TO BE RESTORED AFTER THEY DROPPED THE PROGRAM. THAT'S WHY I'M DOING TIME FOR MARIJUANA POSSESSION IN A STATE WHERE IT'S NOT EVEN A FELONY ANYMORE. THEY SAID THEY WOULD PUT ME AWAY IF I SAID ANYTHING, AND THEY DID. THEY ALSO KNOCKED MOST OF MY TEETH OUT WITH A PISTOL BUTT IN THE CITY JAIL. I SCREW EM, BETTER YET. DONT SCREW THEM. ANYWAY YOU HAVE GIVEN ME SOMTHING TO HELP LEND PURPOSE TO PRISON LIFE. AND I CAN GUARANTEE THAT ANYTHING YOU SEND ME WILL GET MAXIMUM EXPOSURE AND DISCUSSION. THERE'S A BAT FLYING BACK AND FORTH IN THE SECURITY SCREEN OUTSIDE MY WINDOW. APPARENTLY THE BARS APPEAR TO BE A SOLID WALL TO HIS RADAR, AND HE CAN'T FIND A WAY OUT, ALTHOUGH HE COULD FLY BETWEEN THEM IF HE ONLY KNEW. AND I CAN'T GET OUT TO HELP HIM. IT REALLY HURTS IN HERE SOMETMES. THANK YOU FOR YOUR MAGAZINE'S, YOU WILL GAIN VICTORY. I WILL DO ALL ONE MAN CAN TO HELP, BECAUSE THE VICTORY CELEBRATION SHOULD BE A BLAST, AND I WANT TO BE THERE TO LIVE IN IT.

ALL POWER

JEFF DESMOND

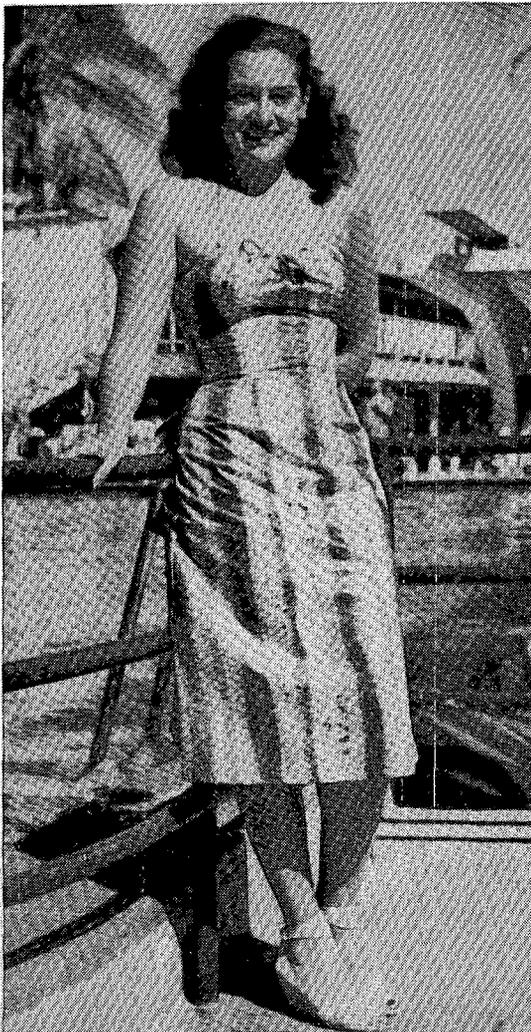
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to my mother

Old photos —
stuck together,
slipped,
from yellow gritty tape
to the smooth-curve of album page.
Smell of old faces,
groups posed cross armed
brown brick Chicago.
still party laughter —

Michianna — 1947
tall; full hiped-thighed girl/
woman, 19 and
black bush hair, skin olive fine,
brown long-eyed beauty.



A quarter century later
I see a shadow of my eye
in an old picture
in a dusty sticky book,
behind children's clay hand prints
and the jahrzeit candles.

I am the mellowing
of this black-haired girl,
this peacock dresser —
(see-through blouses, they tell me,
and jeweled platform shoes)
Who wrote poetry
dropped out of school,
married the man who took you
From Father —
to California.

I've grown to dance in your clothes
in your pink lace and
white chiffon I swirled
puffing out my baby breasts,
When he saw me
that night
my blue knee socks and
the green gown you wore —
he froze in his newspaper
you dim-eyed in your housedress
You were more beautiful.

Woman of the granite cheek-bones
and soft warm-musk mother-at-night smell
the thighs, where at night
I crept my cold feet
from a bad dream, were a virgin's once

Those picture eyes, mine too,
we know together —

The tearing open
a full-belly feeling —
and eyes awake against the snore.

Susan Stern

Cave Feminae

I

I am a darkness fathoms deep.
Who dives me better like it steep.

I am a surging, swerving sea.
Who swims me better clear his kness.

I am at last a shorebound thing.
Who drifts me, best want harboring.

II

I am a quarrel left alone.
My breasts shed salt. I smile in my bones.

I am a silence and a blade.
Who gets me hasn't got it made.

I am a softness and a blow.
Oh take me quick—but take me slow.

III

I am half mermaid, half sly shark.
Who hooks me may soon disembark.

Who rides me shouldn't try to cling
To veering, steep, and watery things

But hold me in his own hard dive
As we go down, and down, alive.



Judith McCombs

Surly Lady, Stay Awhile

after Roethke

When true love broke my poems in half,
I took three bottles from my shelf,
And told my daughters, Never laugh
I keep spayed cats, and hiss myself.

Judith McCombs

LITTLE POEMS FOR SLEEPING WITH YOU

1

It is not where my arms stop
that yours begin—someone is always
resting a leg across a leg or
tangling up the hands . . .

we have lost the boundaries
but forget to be afraid wondering
when you lay yourself against me
whose pulse it is you listen to

2

We remember being children now:
such vividness you say you
see yourself—precisely—
as you were at eight . . .

Nights we lie awake
curled against each other
the way we curled against our sisters
talking of grandmothers and gardens

3

I know the way you look
when you are alone your face
quiet against the pillow your
hands at rest against themselves . . .

I know the way you breathe as
you turn slow-motion toward sleep
and grayness Sometimes in the
first light, I know, you dream

4

But it is not sleep we crave
always distracting each other
from it you saying: Any time or
place, *any* bed would do . . .

Still, we get up laughing
wanting to stretch like cats
at dawn wanting to bite down
on the day like an orange

5

And even when I am alone
I am always resting against you
now . . . even my sleep contains you

Sharon Barba

VIETNAM: A Feminist Analysis



I am speaking about the politics of rape. There is a national phenomenon in this country that promotes myths about sex and violence that are recreated in imperialist wars against Third World countries. Rape is an act of aggression in which the victim is denied her self determination. It is an act of violence which always carries with it the threat of death. And finally, rape is a form of mass terrorism, for the victims of rape are chosen indiscriminately, but our male dominated culture tells us that it is women who cause rape by being immoral or in the wrong place at the wrong time — in essence, by behaving as though we were free.

For years the male theorists of the anti-war movement have spoken about the reasons America is involved in Vietnam: the imperialist search for profits in the war in Vietnam, and the American corporate need for a war to maintain a stable domestic economy.

This analysis of the war, while correct, has never gone far enough. It has been unable to explain the unprecedented sadism which is the overriding characteristic of this war. What is the rationale for the obsession we find in the universities, corporations, and military institutions of Amerika with increasingly hideous and perverse methods of torture and death as applied to the people of another race and land.

Through the years, scientists and professors have been inventing things like flechette pellets—tiny steel arrows with larger fins at one end — which enter the body enlarging the wound and lodge in the blood vessels — they're designed to shred the internal organs; white phosphorous, a more sophisticated version of napalm, that usually has to burn it way down to the bone before going out. The area denial program where they flood whole areas with hundreds and thousands of mines designed to look like leaves or animal droppings and to make the area totally uninhabitable for humans. Thousands of square miles of territory in Indochina are now flooded with little mines which are manufactured for the sole purpose of blowing off a foot. While white collar boys sit in their labs inventing these atrocities, the army recruits from its male youth the manpower to prove the potency of its weaponry on the battlefield.

The result is Total War, primarily against the civilian population. The civilians are usually the ones that are in and around the villages; they can't keep on the move all the time because they have families and belongings and homes. They are the ones who signal the weapons, the ones who are the main casualties.

A 23 month old baby is senselessly electro-shocked into unconsciousness.

Where does this come from in the American psyche? These perversions are the products of the mentality of rape. The mentality that produces the kind of war they continue to fight starts at home. Let's run down a few unknown facts about rape — about male sexual violence.

Susan Griffin in an article called "The Politics of Rape" found that official crime statistics tell women: forcible rape is the most frequently committed violent crime in Amerika.

Now let's once and for all smash the white male propaganda that says most crimes of rape are committed by black men on white women. Historically and statistically this is a lie. 90% of all incidences of rape do not cross racial lines — these crimes of sexual violence are usually committed by men against women of their own race.

Another myth: the rapist is a lonely creep who sees a woman without male protection and is suddenly overpowered by his innate craving for sex. **BULLSHIT.**

83% of rapes by men in two's are premeditated.

90% of all group rapes are premeditated.

58% of single rapes are premeditated. Rape is not a crime of passion; it is an act of aggression. An undeclared war against women.

Another myth: men who rape women are pathological, as distinct from your basic average run of the mill male. Amir's study called "Patterns in Forcible Rape" says men who rape are not abnormal. Amir writes "studies indicate that **SEX OFFENDERS DO NOT CONSTITUTE A UNIQUE OR PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL TYPE**; nor are they as a group invariably more disturbed than the control groups to which they are compared. Allen Taylor — a parole officer who has worked with rapists in prison facilities stated the question in plainer language: "Those men were the most normal men there. They had a lot of hangups, but they were the same hangups that men walking out on the street have."

Let's just examine two more aspects of rape — keeping in mind that all these things about rape are symptoms of a male dominated culture which feeds on the combination of sex and violence. The myth that some men protect you and some men rape you is false. First of all, the rapist is an average man. But secondly every man in this society gets male benefits from the existence of rape. These armchair rapists have their potency and masculinity vicariously confirmed through rape — witness the number of pages given over to violent sex crimes in men's adventure magazines.

Another way all men have their power enhanced

by rape, is the need then put into women for protection — the ancient chivalry racket, men protecting women from other men. It's not unlike the protection relationship which the mafia established with small businesses.

And finally, it is a fact that the most excessive degrees of violence occur in group rape. Far from discouraging or curbing violence upon women, the presence of other men may in fact encourage sadism, and even cause the behavior. Men egg each other on

...

What does all this have to do with Vietnam?

What starts as the socialization of male sexual violence in this culture is used by corporate and military interests to train a vicious, killing army — in the labs, and on the battlefields. Examples of the inseparability of sex and violence in the male are endless. In basic training the following chant is used to teach the distinction between a rifle, which is a weapon, and a gun, which is a cock. "This is my rifle, this is my gun. One is for killing, one is for fun." With such training it is not surprising that a major in Vietnam is quoted as saying "Don't let the news media fool you. These kids are maybe 18 or 19 — but they are beautiful killers — just beautiful."

What is routine conduct at home is routine conduct abroad. Acts of male domination and violence are the cornerstones of society in the United States. Here in the states we are torn with conflicts of race, class and sex. When we transport these conflicts overseas they show up in the army, in the highest echelons of the Thieu government, and in the destruction of culture in Saigon. AND UNDERPINNING IT ALL IS THE ASSUMPTION OF AMERICA'S ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO RULE WHERE AMERICA WILL.

The passion with which we perpetuate this war: war crimes no longer war crimes but genocide; violence promoted to contain a war we have no hope of winning.

How else to explain this but by understanding the phenomena of male sexual violence in Western culture. Germany in 1944 and 1945 was without hope of winning the war but none the less went on building bigger ovens and crueler technologies for destruction.

It cannot be stated too strongly that: THE CRIMES OF VIOLENCE WE HAVE BEEN SHOCKED BY IN VIETNAM CAN ONLY HAVE BEEN CREATED AT HOME IN THE U.S., in a country which trains young men from birth to connect violence with sex. Ann Froines has written that the popular culture — magazines, movies, books — in South Vietnam now promote a model soldier stripped of all human values or political understanding. He never talks about Vietnam in

patriotic terms. He kills to survive, then seeks pleasure afterwards through sex. An integral part of this culture is the glorification of American "natural instincts": sex, violence and the desire for money.

In a revolutionary society violence and domination are not what holds life together. In China or North Vietnam the whole society is being geared to create human values based on love and sharing — not based on greed and violence.

On May 8th Nixon announced he had mined 7 harbors in North Vietnam, risking confrontations with the Soviet Union and China to preserve "American honor."

I.F. Stone said last week there is a possibility Nixon would finally use nuclear weapons to blow Vietnam to bits rather than be caught with his pants down at the Moscow summit conference: Genocide of a whole people in order to save male face. THIS IS THE HEIGHT OF WAR INSANITY.

We are faced with an imperative. Without a feminist analysis we will never confront some of the deepest motivations behind the waging of aggressive wars.

The same men and power structure who victimize women are engaged in the act of raping Vietnam, raping black people, and raping the very earth we live upon. Rape is a classic act of domination where the emotions of hatred and contempt, and the desire to break or violate personality takes place. This breaking of the personality characterizes modern life itself. No simple reforms can eliminate rape.

As the symbolic expression of the white male hierarchy, RAPE IS THE ULTIMATE ACT OF OUR CIVILIZATION, one which, Valerie Solanis warns, "is in danger of humping itself to death."

This speech was written by Lesbian Feminists. Hollibaugh, von Bretzel, Crichton, Lindbloom



This speech was given on May 6th at a large anti-war rally in Boston.

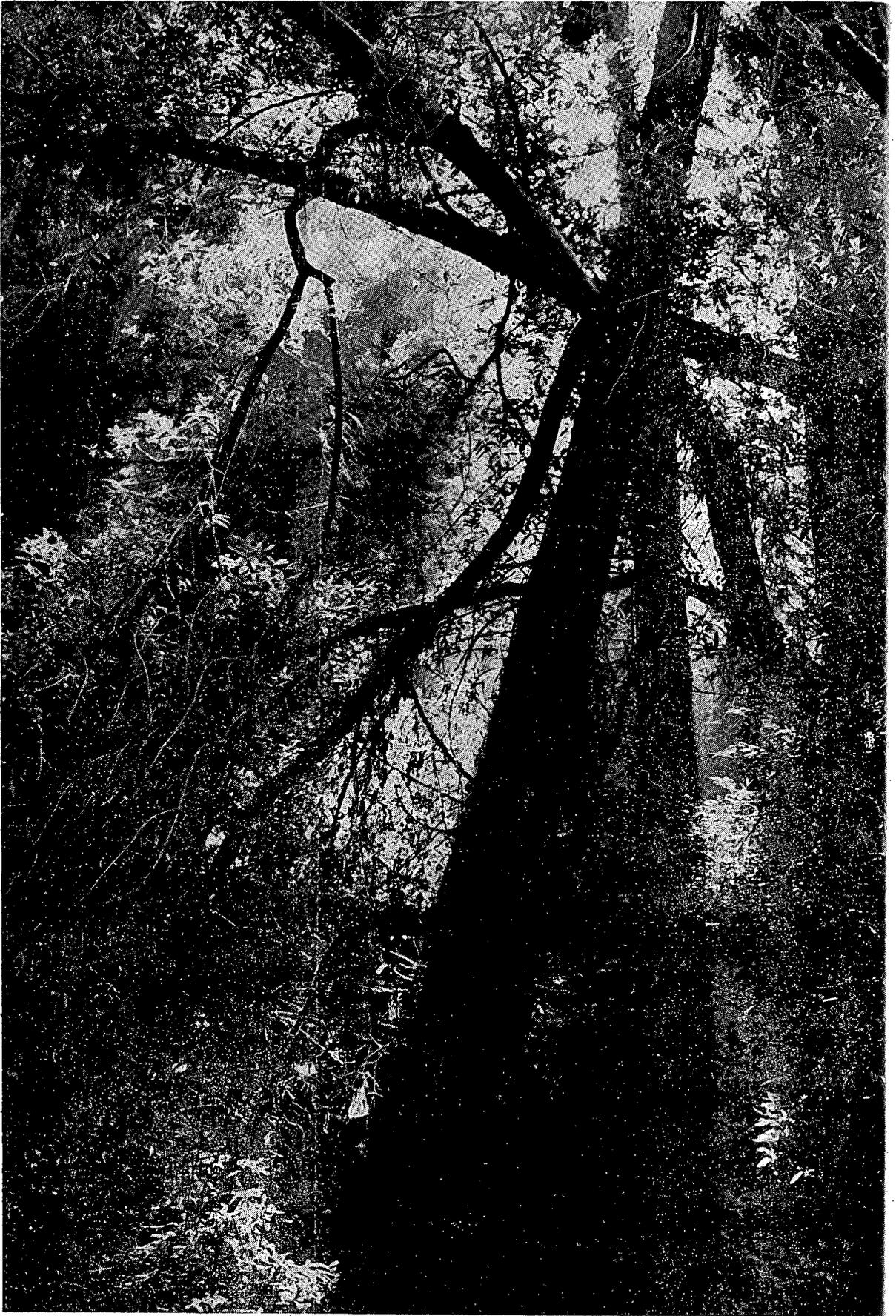
All publicity prior to the rally listed an all-male roster of speakers. Women were contacted at the last minute and were then met with blatant sexism. A crowd-pleasing rock concert mentality was more than reluctant to put women speakers on the platform. We were not announced until after many people had left and then only because women in the audience shouted for a woman speaker.

"The subject of feminism is very ordinary; it's the question of male domination that makes everybody angry."

Ben Lomond, Ca.

There is nothing here to do.
The earth has effervesced
a wildness, a babble of leaves,
a profusion of trees. The pines
are unconsciously erect, calm and expansive
without therapy, without a philosophy
and a plan. It is
a natural act to stand
upright in the sun, to sway
in bad weather, to flower
in the spring. Nowhere
up the thick stem is there
a stoop of explanation, a
curvature of disgrace. The
children of the earth are
on their feet in ovation
and the language of the leaves
is applause

Janet Phelan



Romance Revisited *by laurel*

It was Labor Day, a Sunday feeling nuzzled up in the rocker with my bathrobe on devouring Colin Wilson hellbent on a solipsistic specialness I've claimed since I was five — yes — me, an "outsider" — amongst good company — Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Nijinsky — but hardly able to stand being alone. It took three nights without sleep to wean me from the necessity of another body in my bed — my sine qua non for six years, a warm ass to push my belly against.

"Let's be spoons," I always said, but I didn't like the mornings when spoons the wrong way their prick woke me burrowing into my crack. The price I paid you see) like all the rest of it — to not be alone. Anything to not be alone.

But I was trying to learn that art. Trying to absorb that wondrous self-absorption that would waft me beyond compromise. Colin Wilson was my liturgy — my Acres of Diamonds of the inner life. For two weeks I had hardly left the house except to scare up another book of his — the metaphysical bookstore, the library, used bookstores. Fourteen hours a day I read and marked and reread Colin Wilson. Strengthening, tightening, learning to be alone.

And then, Labor Day, a knock on my door and from three years and three thousand miles away stands my husband, ex, asking me to show him a bit of the California scenery — just a casual visit, just passing through (from Florida), thought he'd look me up, maybe some wine tasting. Unable to spoil a good scene (couldn't I recognize the dramatic potential even in the split second before I answered) I accepted and left him on the porch to wait while I put on some clothes.

It was, in brief, one of the most miserable days of my life — comparable only to the three years I spent with him. It was the day I decided never to look on his face again, it was the day I decided never to fuck with a man again, the day the pattern of my life came clear to me.

He hadn't changed. It all came back plummeting me into the same nausea, the same claustrophobia, that I, nursed only on Ann Landers and Dear Abby, prisoner of the South, teenager in the fifties, had called love. It wasn't love. It was sickness, the ultimate abyss of sick dependency — the penultimate. Hating his grizzly beard, his greasy black hair, his thick jowls, ape-like walk, his ridiculous obsession with guns (82 guns he kept under our bed cradled in oil soaked flannel), and despising his prick, bent, purple and swollen, veins popping obscenely — I held to him fiercely.

For three years, the three years it took me to find an accidental way out of it, I clung to him; I gasped for breath when he was gone for more than an hour. I defined myself against our misery.

His need for me, his melancholia, his despair of any meaning except what he found in me and his guns (trite metaphor that it was) — they sustained me, that and my headlong plunge through graduate school. Fred and my term papers — intravenous feeding. My only hope an A at the end of the term. My only pleasure the weekly allotment we allowed ourselves on Friday nights — a six pack of Millers and a pound of steamed shrimp. Trips to the laundry and the grocery store were our biggest entertainment.

It all came back within minutes after I got into his car. Speeding through the hot ugly towns enroute to the wineries — Vallejo, Napa — no different from any little neon-spangled town in the South. The blackness of his shadow descended on me. He tried to be nice, he was kind, solicitous, anxious to please — a vampire in short — a man who says he will always love you no matter what you have become — because he loves you — that's all. Who you are is of no consequence. Who you may become — that doesn't matter. He will always love you.

"You know, Laurel, you always were headstrong, stubborn — I hope you don't get stuck in this man-hating phase — it would really be a pity — you used to think much deeper than that."

Oh yes, Fred, I know that depth-hole to which you refer. The hours-long parrying and scurrying around our central vortex, our only point in common, that much decorated god — MEANINGLESS. I know that state of mind you are much more comfortable sharing, the despair which is glamorous in common, a legitimate religion almost — it becomes a trifle suspect alone — only a seedy kind of laziness — or at worse your own vile sickness, your will to destroy. I was your Colin Wilson of sorts — your excuse for the darkness in your soul.

It was torture to see him again. Especially now that I have words, concepts, analogies to understand better just what those three years had been.

For four hours I fended against his patronizing attempts to "renew our love" as he put it . . . I told him how I hated men . . . how I no longer wanted to relate to them. I was the Amazon bitch with a cartload of facts and figures to back up my anger. Did he know, for example, that women are paid lower — even white women — than black men? Did he know? (He's a sociologist, you would think it possible.)

He didn't know and he didn't care. It was rhetoric, he said. He was sorry, but he had mellowed out, just couldn't take political stuff seriously anymore ... couldn't we get back to "us"?

He had come on impulse — a pure Lawrencian fire burning in his bosom (his bent prick!) to reclaim me from this heathen life-style. Or more specifically he had come to swoop me away from the land of the man-haters.

I had just twenty-four hours to decide. He offered me a lifetime of leisure, good books, records — even more graduate school if I wanted — but I must decide quickly. He was returning the next day.

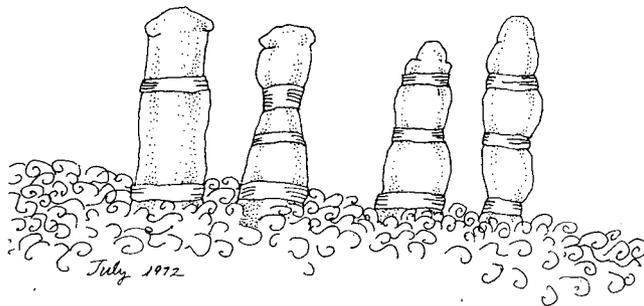
Oh Lord, was this familiar. When I was eighteen and a totally friendless freshman at a huge university pondering jumping out my seventh floor dorm window from loneliness, he had given me two weeks to decide to marry him (and that was only three days after I met him). He saw all those love-at-first-sight movies in the fifties or ... or did he pick up that pitch from a shifty-eyed used car dealer?

I was operating the switchboard at the dorm one night (75c an hour) when he came in — a caller for some girl on third floor. I saw him again, went out to supper with him and then a movie. The third day this note was in my message box.

Perhaps you won't believe it but I know beyond certainty that you will come to love me. I will make you my wife. I have seen all this and more.

*Til Tonight —
Fred*

*Some of the various forms of degrees of
EMASCULATION*



I was an easy target, starved for the romantic, the mystical, never having found much in small-town Florida. He gave me two weeks to make my choice.

Was it love? I agonized, I cried, I vomited. Was it? Wasn't that just further proof that I loved him? Girls in love lose their appetite — right?

Dear Abby, Ann Landers, you failed me. You didn't tell me how to tell about love. I followed what you said too closely. Marriage is 10% take and 90% give on both sides you said. (He never read Dear Abby.) Even if you don't love at the beginning you will learn to, you said ... your condolence to the girls who married because they carried his baby ... "you will learn to," you said.

And then, after our marriage, there was the Kinsey report. I gave myself three years. I calibrated my progress — I would come during intercourse by the third year — because 96% of American women do — by the third year. (Bullshit lie)

So I waited and tried, and endured the pain of his bent prick searing into my flesh — yes, it was bent — I never fail to get a laugh now when I tell my friends — but it wasn't funny then — it wasn't funny at all — I didn't know it was funny — because — simply because — I'd never seen another. Thought they were all like that — the disadvantages of being a virgin bride. Or maybe a virgin bride in the South with no sex-education classes and where the genitalia drawings in our biology book were razor bladed out before we got them — I didn't know, you see, that pricks weren't supposed to look like meat hooks — didn't know they were supposed to come straight out instead of coming at me bent almost double. (That little fluke of his was my ticket to an annulment — a mixed blessing.) It took me two weeks past our honeymoon to get it in. And I almost died. But of course it was me — FRIGID — too much masturbating when I was a kid, I thought. He bought me a copy of *The Art of Sexual Surrender* and carted me down to the college marriage fixit shop twice a week. It never occurred to me that some things are beyond repair — that staying in a marriage could signify its "failure" as easily as splitting up.

For the most part those years are a blur of sameness. Classes, term papers, Walter Kronkite, and then long evenings reading as late as I could hoping he'd be too tired when we got to bed. And the boredom — our constant houseguest. My only way of keeping it at bay was school and more school. A full load for four years with never even a summer off — a BA and a MA in four years, record time — not because I was in any special hurry — just because I couldn't stop. It was the only positive thing I had ... I could get A's.

I researched and wrote with a passion about everything from solipsism in the late works of Mark Twain to the metaphors of John Crowe Ransom. I carried every question to its ultimate conclusion. But there was one question plaguing me — one question I couldn't track down in PMLA or the Humanities Index — for three years I wrestled with it sometimes thinking yes, sometimes no. Such a simple thing it seems now. All I wanted to know was how to tell if I was really in love . . . Did I love this ape man, this hoarder of pistols and rifles, this shell of a man who already at twenty-four looked back more than he looked ahead, back to the heavy drinking shoot-em-up roughnecks of his teenage years . . . did I love this needful creature, this bear, this tiger, this mouse, this dog?

He was all those. And so was I. For we were, you see, the Animals.

Most all couples have child-play in their relationship — cooing, tickling, lispng little endearments. But this was the best part for us, our vocabulary of squeaks and barks and growls and catch phrases we repeated over and over to each other in lieu of anything more meaningful to say. Bears, me baby bear, and (oddly enough) him daddy bear — they could just hug and wrestle and tell each other stories with none of the human type problems like sex. For you see we weren't real bears ever, nor real mice, nor real dogs, nor real tigers — we were teddy bears and stuffed mice and bugs bunnies. Those are the things that stand out in the landscape of my marriage — the bunny phase, the tiger phase . . .

Nineteenth century Romantic by day suckling on Wordsworth and Carlyle, Emerson and Thoreau, and then baby bear at night safe in the arms of my papa bear. No thoughts, just an endless stream of little stories we made up for ourselves. Baby bear and the mean witches in the forest — that was one — saved by Papa Bear just in the nick of time . . .

But really I move too fast . . . perhaps someone who has never been there could hardly imagine a life played out as animals . . . You couldn't believe that night after night our bedroom scenes sounded more like Saturday morning cartoons . . .

I went to every length of invention to keep it going. When I ran out of stories for the bears we started the tigers. Shortly before I left him we were churning out the mice. There was Fred the long-legged mouse and Laurel the fat-bottomed mouse and all their adventures with the hoary toothed cat.

An adventure a night kept the prick away. An adventure a night kept the awful, hook-clawed, cat off my face. I was too busy making up stories to even think about who that cat might be. Just what was I afraid of?

Being alone. ALONE. Alone all my childhood, isolated in the ignorance of the South, light years behind the culture I could see hinted at on t.v. — I wanted to hold on to this man from the North, this man who had traveled, knew something first hand about life. Perhaps he was the best I could ever find . . . I had to admit I'd never talked to a man with such "depth." He outshone all those fraternity men, all the football stars, all the rednecks in my experience. What if there were nothing better?

But I dreamed. Turned over on my side away from him at night, breathing heavily, feigning sleep, I dreamed about the smooth-skinned, sleek, blonde young boy who I was "saving myself" for — it was for him that I refused to "suck him off" when he begged for it (if my bottom weren't virginal at least my mouth would be). I would tell him I had never loved — that I had only been waiting — waiting for him my graceful prince. And oddly enough he showed up.

Ten days after unintentionally I had left Fred and by some miracle of temporary insanity had refused to go back, the prince showed up — not in any positive way — I should say he showed up in potential. It took my trailing him to a "discotheque" (I'd never been in a bar in my life) and asking him to dance twice and finally inviting him to come home with me for him to come out of himself enough to even see me. And about a week later we fucked, with me reassuring him, coddling him limp little prick, telling him not to worry because he was inexperienced. I was Momma and I loved it. And then —miracle — it was straight. That might not seem like much of a drawing card but to me it was all it took — a sleek face, a passive nature that needed encouragement, and a prick skinny and straight enough to slip right in. Just that was enough to keep me hanging in there . . . and he was a needer too. There are bleeders (too little vitamin K — a congenital trait) and there are needers — and needers, it seems, attract.

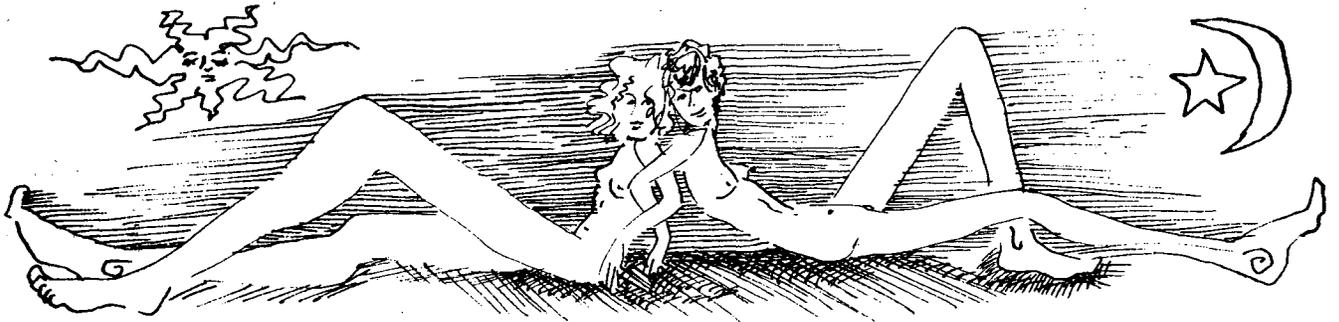
It wasn't bad. It wasn't good. It was insulation against the aloneness. We comforted each other enough to get by. But it wasn't enough that I wasn't seeking more. Inspired by the Walter Kronkite version of the Haight in '66 we migrated from the south in '69 to San Francisco.

But when we got here the monstrous city opened its mouth to devour me and all my brave protestations of wanting to live alone, of kicking David out for the freer life, disappeared into the fog. It was cold and foggy and miserable in the Haight June of '69 and no one was friendly except the pushers and the occasional guy who'd try to pick me up.

The dangers, it seemed (was I right?), were real. It would be foolish to live alone in the Haight. I still needed the neutral comfort of living with David. We

weren't sounding the "depths" with our relationship — he was uncommunicative and only more sullen the more I tried to draw him out. We hardly said two words to each other all day long. What I had taken for artistic sensitivity turned out to be just your plain ordinary neurotic withdrawal. Sex was just another way we were noncommunicative. I put up with his fucking and he put up with my needing to come by hand afterwards . . . a mutual putting up with. By now the glory of his straight prick had worn off — and I was wondering just how attracted I was to pricks at all . . .

But then I fell into the hands of Anais Nin, *Diary One and Two*, and pretty soon we'd moved to Berkeley where I, like the mysterious June, I hoped, was wandering the streets searching for the unmistakable look in the eyes of the man who would love me. I wore black, I moved differently — like a woman who smokes even though I don't — like a woman who has lived abroad even though I haven't — in short like June. When men struck up conversations with me I was as enigmatic as possible



(I called it "honest"). I played out the final dregs of my Hollywood-Paris-in-the-thirties fantasy to the hilt.

Then, almost by accident, I stumbled into women's liberation and onto the realization a few months later that the eyes I had been searching for, the eyes I had been needing, wouldn't belong to a male. I understood with more clarity than anything in my life before that my next lover would be a woman — and that's really a misnomer — I understood at that point that my *first* lover would be a woman — that what had passed between me and the men in my life had never been "it."

But still it was only a dream. It took two years, two years of going to meetings, and searching the bars, and writing my heart out so somebody'd hear, and alternately falling back on the sheer physical presence of David begging him to sleep in my bed long after we'd given up on sex — just the comfort of another body in my bed — back and forth alienating the women I knew and David too — before I found the woman I love.

As I look at the three major relationships in my life I see that I've moved in steps away from maleness

and the necessity of a father. From Fred the hairy gruff super-daddy (bent prick notwithstanding) to David, as neuter as possible and yet still having a prick and all the defenses that a male who has not succeeded in the role has had to build up in order to survive . . . to Gina, a woman whose emotional rhythms are the same as my own . . . a woman, for whom I've never had to make a compromise nor she for me. (Abby, Love is fifty-fifty or not at all.)

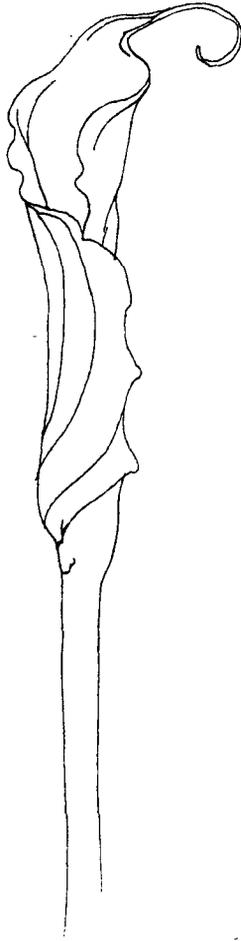
Some sister's lips curl when we say we're in love. (Remember Shulamith Firestone!) They look like maybe we said capitalism instead of love. Or maybe they just shake their heads understandingly: "Poor dears, still at consciousness level 17B. Still caught up in the couple game."

I know that place. Hell, I used to instigate the smash monogamy phalanxes at all the women's dances. I did my time as a celibate. I spent my pains in "collectivity" . . .

But this is what feels right. The best feeling in my life. And for lack of a better (new-feminine) word — it's love.

Maybe you've learned how all the Hollywood stuff about love is just a lot of romantic bullshit. Maybe with men you've come to understand that. But what I've learned is that all the mush, the most disgustingly romantic, impossible, explosions of feeling that sent us weeping out of the movie houses in the fifties and kept us spinning for days — it is possible with a woman — it is possible to be happy with someone like you.

Happy and stronger. It has strengthened us. We learn not from conflict, from pain now, but from the support and understanding we give each other. Gina even understands my strange obsessions with reading, my old passion for Colin Wilson, and she understands how I don't need that anymore — that mournful, self-pitying, contemptuous, ALONE, view of the world to make me special. We are special in each other's eyes — no longer object as I have been all my life — but SUBJECT, ACTIVE, artists and lovers. We write and paint out of our joy for each other — as an expression of the sweetness we have found.



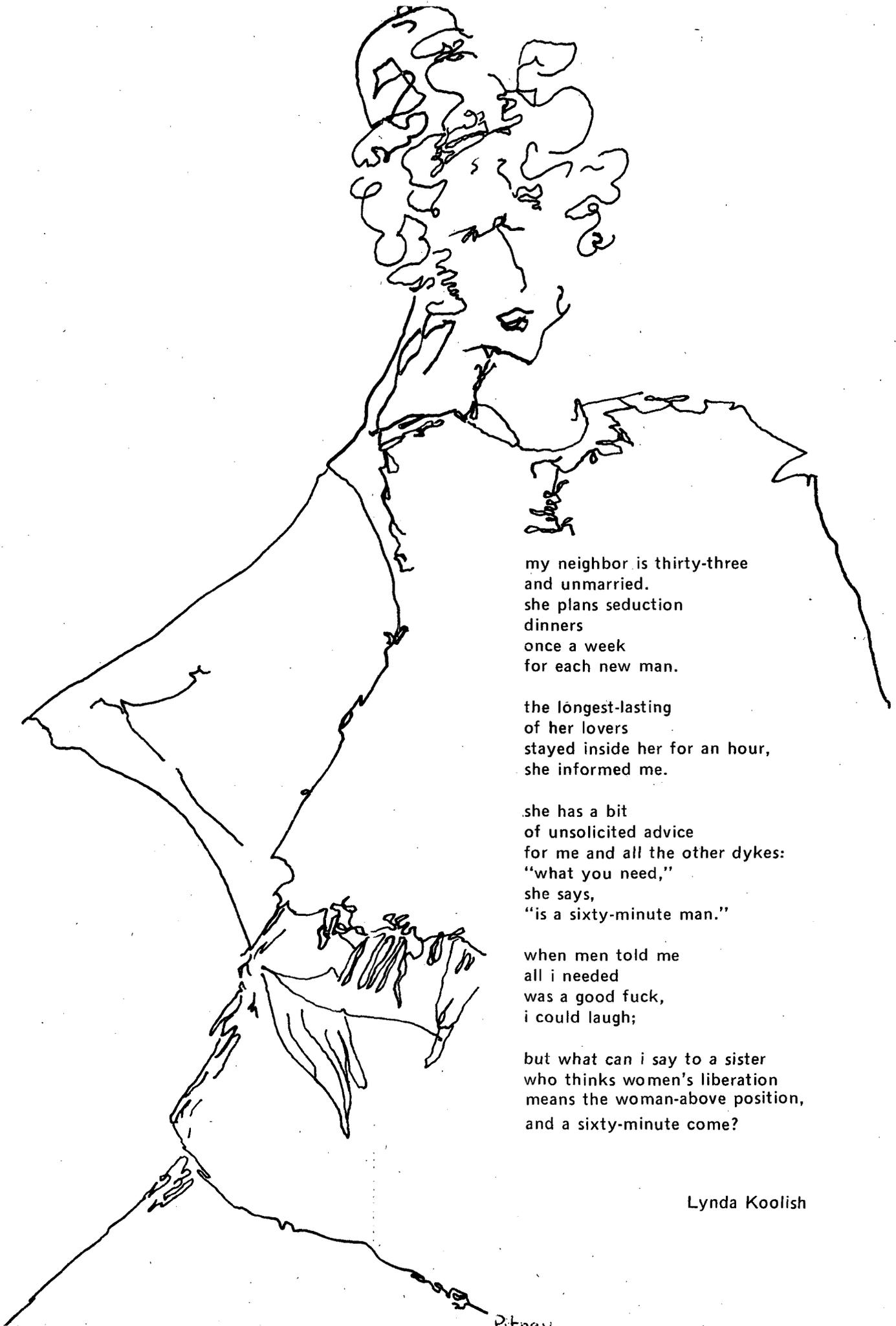
For Linda

In December I watch the leaves
redden against the grey drained
sky. They are mad, bursting
and withering in their pain,
bleeding and paling in the frenzy
of change. I wait for the snow.

On the fourth floor of Herrick
Hospital, you finger your cue,
and take clumsy aim. There
are five people alive in you
Four of them on fire
leaping and stamping
burning small black holes
in the carpet and bedspreads
turning the crisp white ward
into a jungle of decay, a bombed out city.

Four of them are drenched in doom, and burning.
One of them is made of alabaster.
Someone cut her face, but she is beautiful.
In the morning, when the
anguished trees are soothed
with snow, she will amble
across the recreation room
and leaning on the
pool table shoot
all the crazy balls
into their pockets
one by one.

Janet Phelan



my neighbor is thirty-three
and unmarried.
she plans seduction
dinners
once a week
for each new man.

the longest-lasting
of her lovers
stayed inside her for an hour,
she informed me.

she has a bit
of unsolicited advice
for me and all the other dykes:
"what you need,"
she says,
"is a sixty-minute man."

when men told me
all i needed
was a good fuck,
i could laugh;

but what can i say to a sister
who thinks women's liberation
means the woman-above position,
and a sixty-minute come?

Lynda Koolish



There comes an unfolding

There comes an unfolding
this night of the winding sheet.
Let me be gentle with myself,
for the primitive lady within me
is raging against this knowledge
that I was hyacinth;
I asked of you perpetual spring

for sunstreams
and rainstorms
a fecund earth
in which to sink my sad roots

for great petalfuls
of serene wind
embracing that fragile thing
which is my body— the stem.

I was hyacinth;
I asked of you perpetual spring.

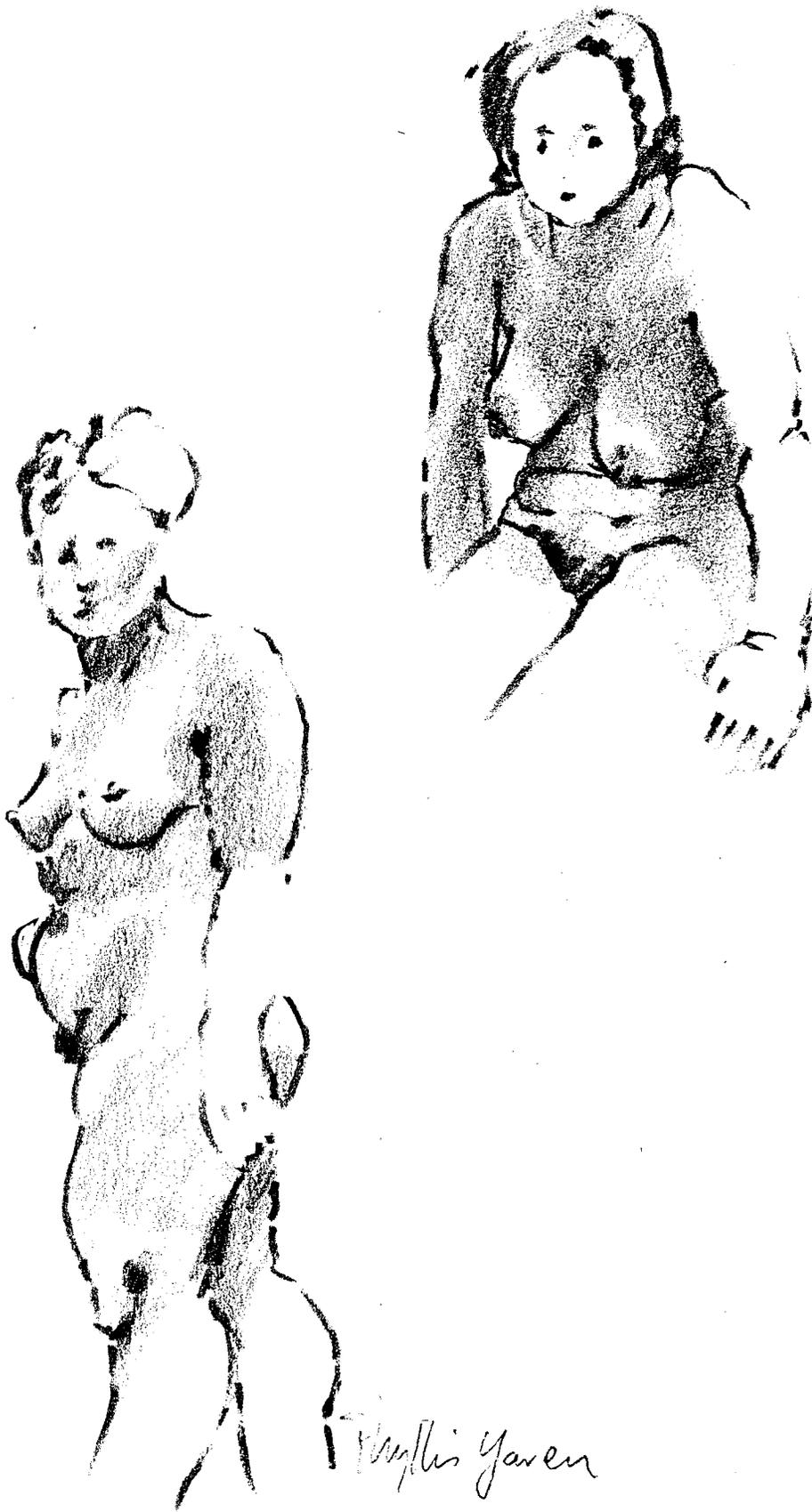
These many months
planted in an untended garden,
the filament of unsubstantial veins
shrieked out against dry ground.
I was hyacinth;
I asked of you perpetual spring.

But there comes an unfolding
this night; I will be
hyacinth no longer.
Knowing no one
can ever be all things
to another, I will give
to myself the love I need.

There comes an unfolding
this night; filled with wonder
I take flesh; my knotted veins
swell and flow,
streaming with new sap.

Uprooted
from Carthage,
I am Isis,
I unfold.

Lynda Koolish



I don't like our friendly
Milkwood conversations
Long distance
All about
How in love you are
When it was only months ago
That you gasped softly
As I flexed my fingers
Touching you
And our sleep was kind
Afterwards
As we breathed in unison
Or so it felt
From my side of the bed.



Brigid Kelly





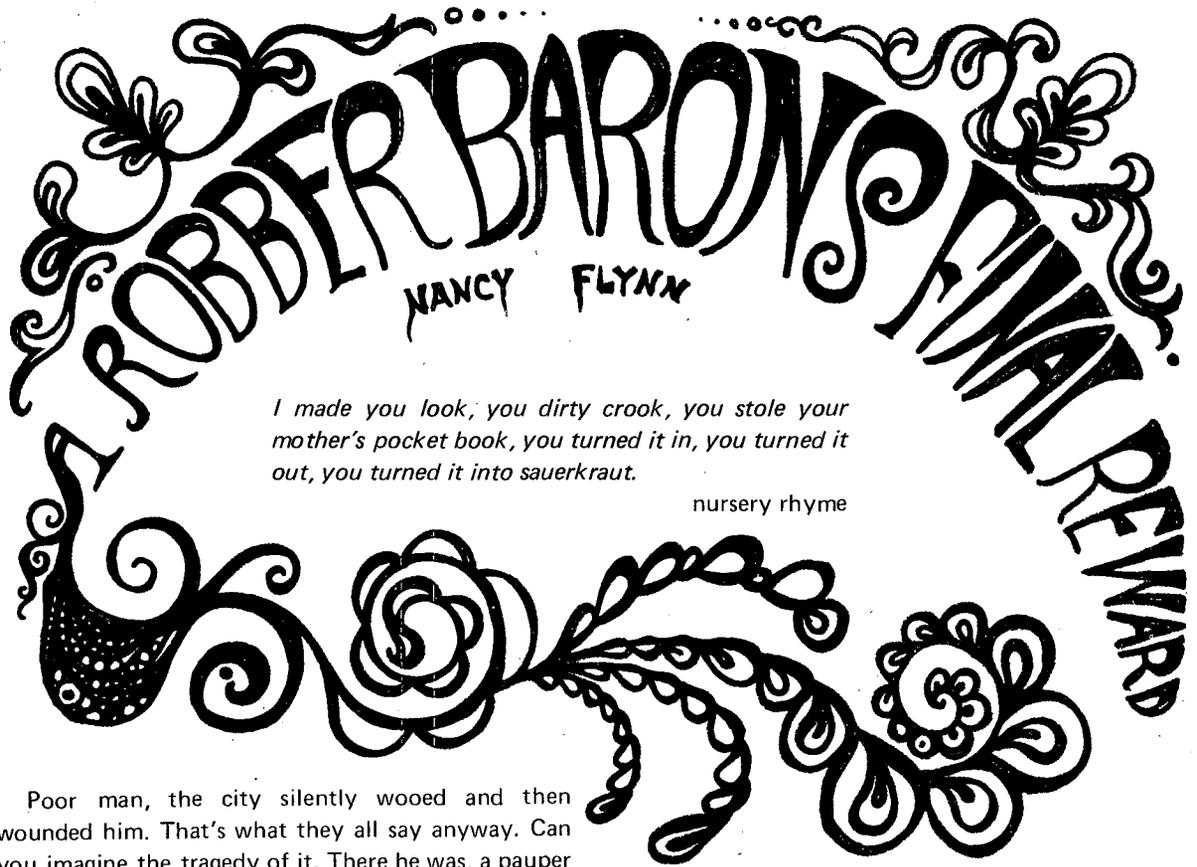
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Poor man, the city silently wooed and then wounded him. That's what they all say anyway. Can you imagine the tragedy of it. There he was, a pauper dressed in rags and an old newspaper to keep him warm, and he had to fall for a lady. She spirited him away into the night and in those first sizzling hot dog moments of his passion he saw a young woman's body, luscious and full as a peach winking the promise of its juices. He even forgot about the stony pit inside, how it was pockmarked like bad skin and possessive of the seed it nested and how it would never relinquish that seed to him unless he changed. But she already knew he wouldn't change.

He was quick to bed her down, eager to sink into her many soft cells. They say she undressed for him that first nights and afterwards he was never the same again. They say he watched transfixed as she peeled off layers of silk and fur and gauzy lace, a gewgaw goddess spewing jingling rings and things, then a haze of undergarments, girdles and corsets and waist cinchers all at once, down to a wig and teeth and eyelashes and nails. They all lay on the floor before him, layers and layers that had once been her. But it was only after they made love that he knew for certain that she was truly old, way past 100. A faded tease, scag hag with a multitude of holes, some of them cavernous abysses, others tiny perfect cups, all stabbed into her flesh as if the rain she walked through were arrows. He winced for her. Bowels and belly were in ruins. Rotting centers long since condemned. And having razed them, the city's clean up crew had not done its proper union job.

They say he turned into a maniac after that first night. It seemed she was all he had. He toyed with the idea of plastic surgery. Perhaps it was the answer. He had seen it give back ears after the war. So he walked about with his little first aid-Mr. Fix-it kit, tinkering and whistling as he investigated all the holes with his stethoscope.

The holes were both big and small. All equally squalid, equally bleak, full of piss and the fetid stench of old sneakers. He used bandaids and applied suction cups to leech blood and mud from them. He made a great collection of rusty beer cans and found more nickels than he knew what to do with. They were small dry ice cubes which numbed him as they burned more holes into his pauper pockets. A small price to pay for saving her life.

He was on the brink at every hole, at the edge of something slippery, peering over, looking deep and staring, staring through eyeballs of fuzz until the hole belched up a greeting: "Take a look in the mirror yourself, sometime, whydontcha, big boy." But he didn't have to look into the mirror. He just looked back down into the hole and the fuzz burned off of his eyes and there he was. And there was the question too. He hadn't figured it out yet, which hole came first—his or hers—the chicken or the egg—whether his hole had helped make her hole or the other way around. He only knew they had similar pits. His mistake came when he thought that by filling her

holes he could make his own disappear. They only went into hiding for awhile. Doing tricks to make him smile.

But they say the real trouble started when he began to think he was an expert. One hole had been particularly trying. It had yawned quivering below him, then gaped wide and flapping in the wind. Was it the wind after all, or just him catching his own breath? He didn't know. He was too busy clinging to the rim, watching as it beckoned living creatures cooked beyond recognition and little hard round pellets to lift the veil of time and space and in the end a ticklish tablet that fizzed white when it hit water. And he watched it all spiral like a maelstrom down the drain and heard the woman crying with the pleasure of her suck. And then almost as suddenly, the chasm pursed its lips into a tight kiss and spewed everything it had just consumed out backwards. What had gone in came out looking and smelling differently, muddy and the shape of cigars. And it was pitiful now, the lowing sound she made like cattle, from pools deep inside where moans rise up like poisonous vapors. How he hated her like this. The sight of her pockmarks, pinker than her pink flesh, reviled him. But she still knew her power. She was old and she was ugly, yes. But she was a continuous being. She would live beyond his petty mortality. She had holes in her skin to be sure, but she tended to them with her own salves and unguents and played dressup for those who couldn't stand the sight of her sores. They were sickest and she'd have to work her cure very slowly, very patiently, very gently. She would play the radiant Prince Charming to his Sleeping Beauty. Of course, the timing was crucial. He couldn't be forced, but if she waited too long, he would be too far gone, too full of holes himself. And he would begin to notice their echo in the wind and try to put on a suit of armor or fill them with quick drying cement. Anything not to have to hear them. Of course, he would never think of sewing them up or filling them with soil so living things could grow there. It was a mystery to her, how he ever expected things to grow in quick drying cement. And that armor. How could he possibly feel a caress if he wore shields around all day long? Before you know it, she thought, he'll have my holes filled with quick drying cement too.

So very gently, she led him to the door of her prize. The only hole with a door before it. Those who had come back alive called it Death Valley, not so much because it was a desert as because they were so frightened by what they saw there. He balked at the door. "I must sharpen my teeth for tonight. I always overcook the meat I eat in my new microwave oven and it is very tough to chew. I spend all my time at it."

She only countered. "Then why don't you switch to vegetables? They are known to be softer."

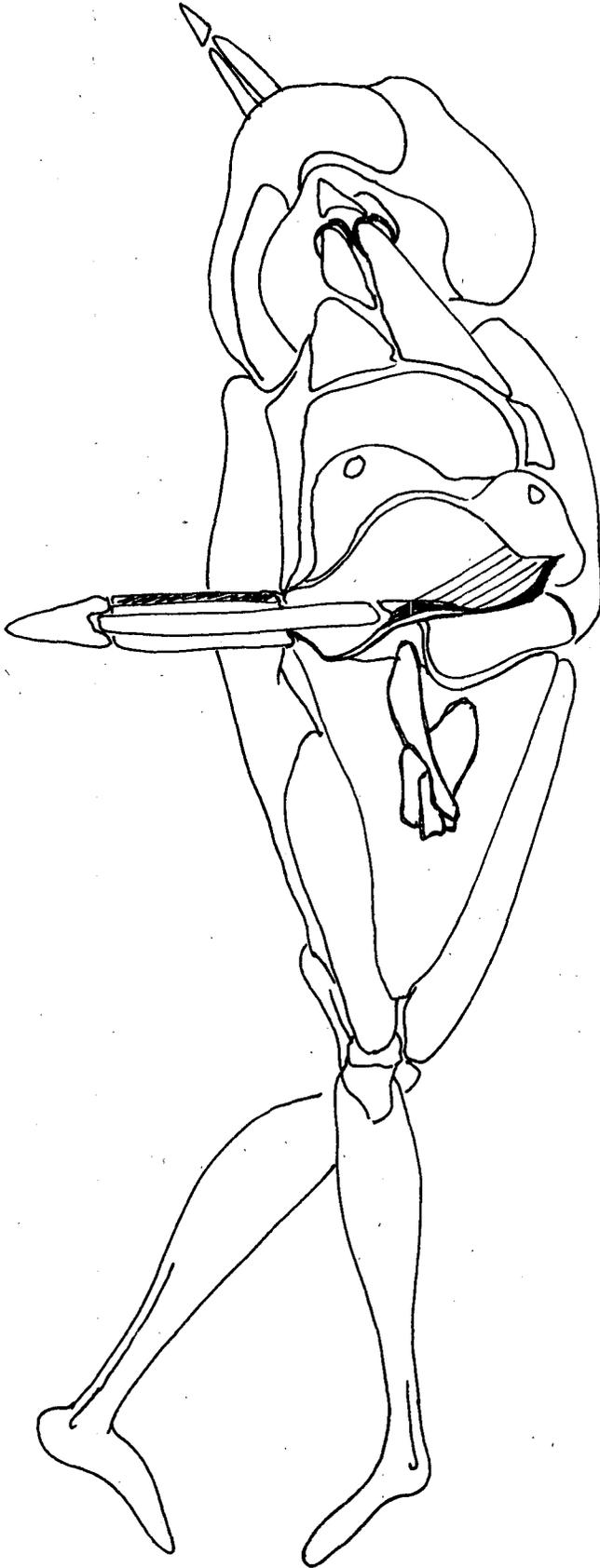
"But there's still the matter of overcooking. Meat gets tough to armor, vegetables? They are known to be softer."

"But there's still the matter of overcooking. Meat gets tough to armor, vegetables tender to mushiness. And that mushiness that I eat turns my own insides to mushiness. They travel towards the sun, moon, stars, aurora borealis. Home is everywhere, so it's nowhere. It's just a place to gaze into beyond from. There is no center, so that gaze becomes petrified into ritual. I look desperately to any god for an answer, and I imitate, I only imitate. So I've given that up. Now I look to eggs and cheese and custards of every kind. People knock me. They say, this is his junket era, the bland following the bland. But I don't care. These foods soothe me going down."

She was very pleased. She helped him along, pushed him over the brink, into the nether regions that was Death Valley. It would be hard for him at first. After all, the swamp keeps changing. And there's quicksand everywhere.

What happened to him, nobody really knows. After all these years, some say he never came back. And on a night like tonight, when there is no moon to burn through the filmy netting that covers the sky, many people are disturbed in their sleep by screams so loud that no one is safe from them. They pierce through the hole he fell into. "Give it back! Give it back! What can you do with an old peach pit? Spit. Spit. You can't eat it. You can't beat it. And the seed inside is mine. You can't get to it. Not without my word. Not without my word."

That's all anybody ever hears. Except for a laughter afterwards that turns children into old men. Some say it's the pauper, delighted to have snatched the pit. Others say it is the old woman, gleeful to hold him captive, stoning him into a corner with her closet supply of age old bones. Of course, there is very little scientific proof as to which it could possibly be. But the day after all that laughter, when the women in these parts hang out their bedclothes to air, they say there's blood on the sheets and it's his blood, his blood she sucked to avenge the loss of her seed. And on those days there's blood in the sky, too, and blood in the whites of the egg, blood in the mashed potatoes, blood gurgling cold from the tap, blood, blood, and more blood; blood from the record, the book; blood from the gold in our rings, blood from the ticks in your thighs, blood in the browns of my eyes, and blood where you can hide it, crushed flat under layers of stone, blown big into magic bubbles near a flute; blood icing on man's birthday cake of flesh and bone.



**AT LAST
for Martha**

**No one counted
your grief, his
was so big
we snagged on it.**

**Silent or snapping
you fed him well,
as though there were
tubes from your body**

**to his. He knew it,
said he didn't deserve
to be married to that;
then played it out for us,**

**fearing that as we grew
we'd see. Some of us
were women, some
of us would know**

**what held him up.
And turn toward you,
years late, learning,
after his example,**

**how you rise
from any wreckage,
fierce and
unattended.**

Sharon Barba

I am a Chicana. I am thirty-three years old . . . almost thirty-four really. I am wife and mother to a husband and five children.

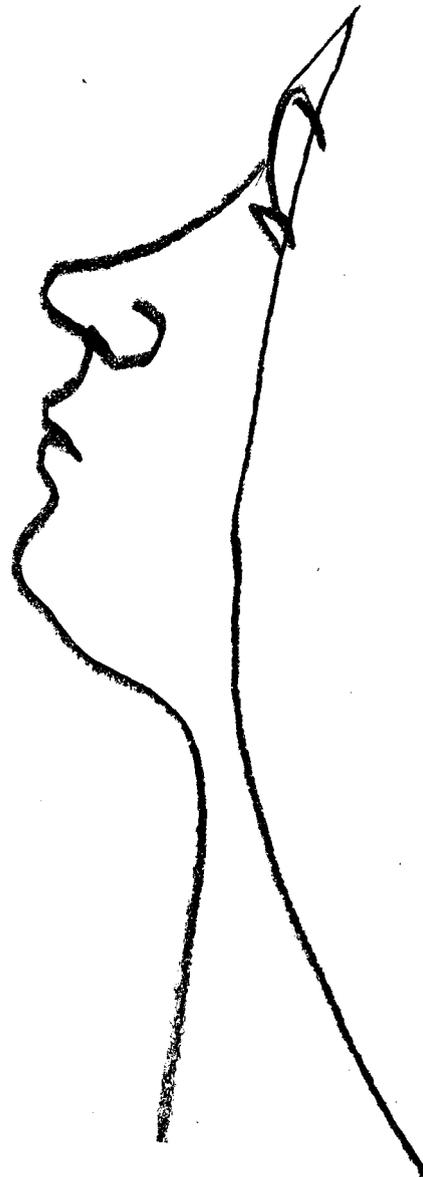
I was born and raised in Riverside County, Southern California. Riverside was at that time a fairly small community. Within this community there existed another, a barrio called Casa Blanca. Ironically, this means — The White Houses. The houses were not white, they were brown . . . and very ugly. Shacks mostly, with no indoor plumbing or even glass windows, for as far back as I can remember. Initially, only Chicanos lived in Casa Blanca, later came the Blacks. I have vivid memories of this place; mostly I remember everything as a brown color. Brown dirt, for we lacked paved roads or sidewalks. Brown houses, for we could ill afford to paint. And Brown people . . . in a variety of shades.

There were white things in this brown place. A large Catholic Church, a small Baptist church and an elementary school. Everyone working in these three places was White also. White teachers, White clergymen and a White principal. Everything that stood for goodness and intelligence in our small community was White. I learned very quickly to hate all things brown. I had contempt for my schoolmates, and I, with very little effort, did excellently in school. I became the favorite, the teacher's pet in every class. I became increasingly unpopular with other children, but I was the darling of the White adults. I stopped reading, writing, and later even speaking Spanish. I became as White as possible in an all Brown school. I was accepted . . . or so I thought. At the age of thirteen, I was promoted to Junior High School. An integrated school where I soon learned I could never be "White" enough. In the face of discrimination, I grew hostile. I had been fooled. I was rebellious. Once I had known how to read, write and speak Spanish. I had been taught in school that this was bad. Now in seventh grade the teachers wanted me to learn Spanish. I became angry. I considered them fools. I could learn, but I would not. There were no more friends, I had made enemies of Brown youngsters. I was lonely . . . I hated school. I hated people. Mostly I hated myself.

It has taken so long for me to like me. There are good things about me that I never gave a thought to, because I was so used to dwelling on the negative. I am intelligent and creative, and I am Brown. I am generous, and loving, and fiery, and dramatic, and I am Brown. I am passionate, and hard-working, and dedicated and sort of bubbly with enthusiasm and I am Brown. Oh sure! I am also moody, bad-tempered and sarcastic and I lack patience! With a capital P! But that's okay — 'cause generally I am a pretty nice person to know, especially because I am a woman . . . and I am BROWN.

UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND THE CHICANA

**linda
peralta
aguilar**



The current Women's Liberation Movement has been the prime factor in the emergence of vocal and assertive females throughout the United States. This makes it easy for the public in general to assume that all women who speak up in reference to their oppression are a part of the National Women's Liberation movement. This is not the case of the Mexican American female, or as many prefer to call themselves, *Chicanas*. Their emergence as a strong motivating force within their community has been in conjunction with that of the Chicano, or Mexican American male. For this reason, the Chicana's struggle cannot be paralleled with the role of the Anglo woman fighting for rights against the male Anglo. *Chicanas* have fought side by side with their men in the struggle for equal opportunity in all areas of American life. Unfortunately, because the major emphasis has always been on opening doors to opportunity for the Mexican American male, the female in essence . . . fights the battle, but does not share in the spoils.

Much has been written on the problem of lack of equal opportunity for Chicanos in the various areas of employment. Practically no one has ventured to write about employment discrimination directed at *Chicanas* not only from male Anglo employers, but potential Chicano employers as well. I use the word potential because in my own experiences I have found that a *Chicana* has a better chance of being employed by an Anglo, if she seeks any type of administrative position, than by a Chicano. With a little bit of perception one can see that part of the reason is the fact that the Anglo Administrator does not feel his masculinity threatened by the *Chicana*. Rather, he finds it enhanced, if he even vaguely falls for the stereotype of the Mexican American female. That being that Mexican women are for the most part hot blooded, primitives interested only in sexual gratification and grateful for any attention from Anglo males. This stereotype is constantly reinforced by the various media, television, movies and publications. Rare is the film that does not depict the *Chicana* as a loose, wanton whore. On the other hand, the Mexican American female that has emerged from the Chicano movement, has taken on some characteristics of what has been described as a Macho. She may be very vocal, aggressive and an effective community organizer. She may prefer to pursue interests outside the home and reject homemaking as the total fulfillment in her life. This then is the new image for some Mexican American females, the docility and submissiveness are evidently lacking, and although the Chicano views her with interest, this interest is not totally absent of fear, wonder and suspicion. Fear, because, traditionally, Mexican

American women have been totally submissive of males. Wonder, because they are demonstrating abilities they thought them incapable of. Lastly, suspicion, because one is always suspicious of something one does not understand. *Chicanas* who have grouped together for strength and unity of purpose are at best, tolerated. More often, ostracized and ridiculed by Chicano men.

The Chicano revolution has brought about great changes in the Mexican American community and family structure. Women have stepped out of the kitchen and into the spotlight as spokesmen at the various public meetings. School boards, commissions and City Councils, to name a few, have felt the sting of the verbal slaps imposed upon them by irate Mexican American women. *Chicanas* have shown themselves to be alert, aggressive and intelligent and have proved to be a major force in the Chicano community. The aggression on the part of the *Chicana* towards the Anglo has not only been condoned . . . but encouraged by the Mexican American male. The results have been good. Capable and competent Chicano males have been hired into decent positions of administration by a reluctant Anglo community.

The problem begins. The same forceful *Chicana* that berated the Anglo looks to the Chicano for employment. She has been forced into a position of leadership in the community but finds that with the Chicano employer the traditional man/woman relationship that existed in the home has not changed. In the book "A Forgotten American," Luis Hernandez writes, "Traditionally all men (*Chicanos*) are considered to be superior to women (*Chicanas*), a girl looks forward to the day she will fulfill her role as a woman . . . where her first duty is to serve her husband." (Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith 1969, page 20.) This role as far as the Chicano is concerned has not changed. It has merely been transferred from the home to the office. If a *Chicana* seeks employment above clerical help status, her fiercest opposition comes from the Chicano. The reprieve from the kitchen has been temporary, or more realistically, not a reprieve at all, for although a *Chicana* is encouraged to "stand up" to an Anglo, deference to the Chicano is still mandatory. In the book "Pensamientos," Elius Carranza states, "*Chicanos* have exposed with a little bit of honesty the big lie that we are all free, we are all equal . . ." (California Book Co., Ltd., Berkeley, California, 1969, page 14). Perhaps the time has come for *Chicanas* to also expose "with a little bit of honesty" the big lie that we are all free, we are all equal. In our own San Jose, California community the number of Spanish surname females employed by the City is

twenty-one, out of a work force of 2,575. In a special program, EEA, Emergency Employment Act, the number is twenty out of 288. These numbers do not mean that forty-one Chicanas are employed by San Jose City. Some of these women are Anglo females married to Mexican American males. In addition, the majority of these positions are non-supervisory. Equality in employment for Chicanas is simply not a reality, although the Chicano family structure is certainly changing. Chicanas, through divorce, separation or other factors are assuming the role of family breadwinner. In these families headed by women, two thirds of the incomes in the Los Angeles area alone are *below* the poverty level (see, "Negroes and Mexican Americans in South and East Los Angeles," State of California, Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Fair Employment Practices, 1966, page 21).

It is my feeling that most Chicanas work because they have to. Either they must supplement their husbands' income or they are the sole support of their families. This is a reality that Chicanos must face. It demands more than a shrugging of shoulders and a mumbling that it's too bad. Along with standing on the speakers platform and demanding relevant education for Chicano youngsters, Chicanos have to realize that without adequate housing, decent clothing and basic necessities such as food, Chicano youth will continue to fail. Words will not provide for needs, but actions will. Chicanos must be willing to provide employment opportunities to Chicanas faced with these problems or continue to deal with the situation of children who are too preoccupied with family problems, including a lack of food, to be concerned with something as nebulous to them as education. In the "Civil Rights Digest," Edward Cassavantes writes, "We also need to constantly stress to the individual Mexican American that he can make it; that many competent Chicanos have come from the ghettos . . . that chances for success in life are increasingly more open to him. It is clear then, that there is literally nothing wrong with the Mexican American except that he is economically poor and poorly educated. We need only to banish our poverty and our ignorance. If prejudice and discrimination stand in our forward thrust towards those ends, then we will need to take action against that prejudice and discrimination." (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., 1970.) What of the competent Chicanas from those same ghettos who have little chance of "making it" simply because they are women? What of those who are properly educated and still remain economically poor due to the disparity in wages? This is a more acute problem for Chicanas, since traditionally they have had less opportunity for furthering their education, while the

Anglo female was encouraged to attend college, if only to provide a favorable environment for meeting a suitable husband. Lastly, if the prejudice and discrimination are directed at us from our own brothers do we then "Take Action" against *them*? At this time in the "Movimiento" this is hardly conceivable.

Are we to settle for working side by side with men in the fields and the migrant camps alone? Chicanos must realize that women, too, need an outlet for their creativity, need fulfillment, need to utilize their talents and most of all need to be able to earn a living to upgrade the lives of their children. Deprive us of a decent living because we are women and you also deprive Chicanos of a better future, for in depriving us you deprive our children . . . and our children are the future.

Linda Peralta Aguilar



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we who are borned: Come
 no questions asked. Your mother
 threw herself down
 stairs to stop you. Mother
 still, she bore you
 bore me
 I
 only
 know you
 through me
 your period stoppt
 and
 water
 springing
 to your breasts—
 three months pass—
 the choice is made—you
 carry this contract for a life-
 time grows in you—the body of a stranger
 takes nine months of belly swelling—in the night
 you dream that it is over with you—bag burst and over
 flowing—you are left to mouth the darkness—in a trance
 awaking only to the next contraction—no questioning your belly
 that its coming and it clenches tight

it thrusts you harder than the fist

of any man

can

contract you

now

to bear down

now

to PUSH

us

into being I

came

crying

mother
spirited I

high

ABORTION

come crying

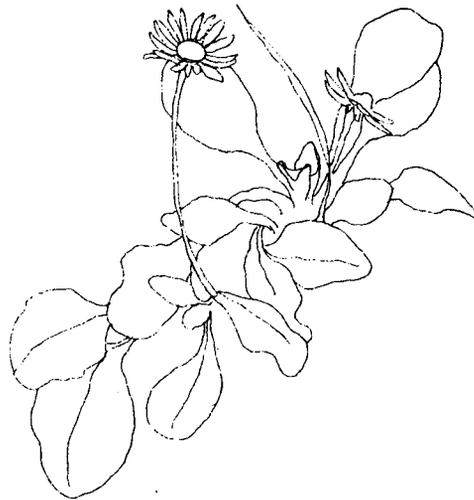
that I am
 do you understand? making a difference
 between us. I take my birth
 right to question this man
 's child caught in me
 to put my thumb down thus and open
 up my legs to the long handled spoon
 this scraping clean decision that:
 this life I have, frustrated mother,
 is nothing, just
 a little blood and tissue like
 a period.

Naomi Lowinsky

to Ron Pendergaust

Chicawgo
Hot.
Close.
Summer in a crowded bus.
I wore dark blue
Because I didn't
Children didn't
Wear black.
The house was clean quiet
like clothes kept in mothballs
all winter.
There was coffee
Only warm
I had water
Played in muddy scrap of lawn
beside cracked
brown sidewalk
and house.
Watching curling ant-train.
My parents, relatives
wore black
looked hot.

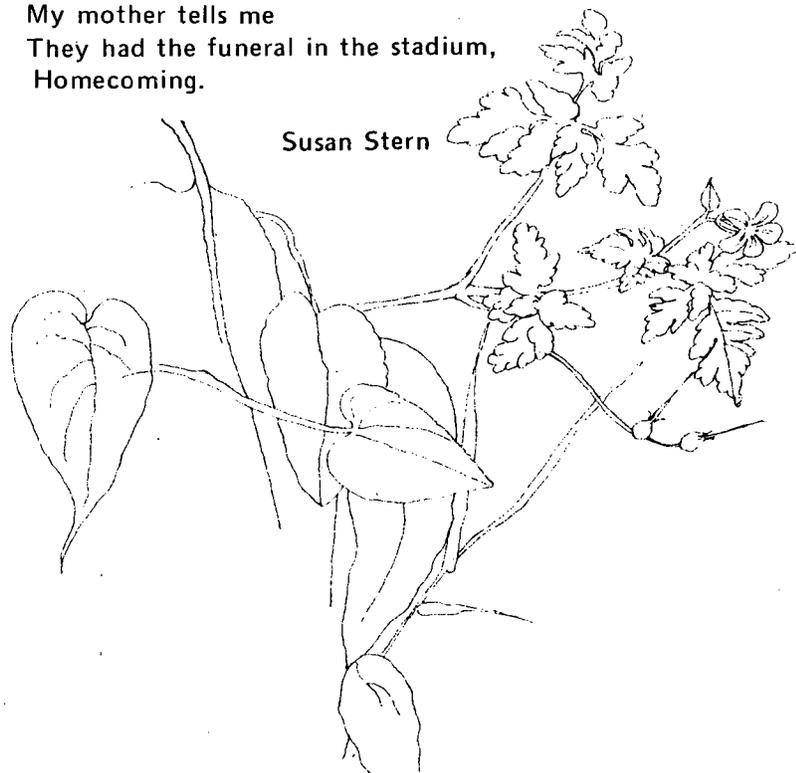
Today
Summer was rising warm bread
sweet and warm
Music in the truth
of fifty different
soothsayers
in Sproul.
And today
my mother's newsy, nice, and nothing
letter
told me you had died.
me you had died
had died you had
died
died
Pendy. Shit.
You who had always
blushed away the rules and
taught new games.
White man
with kinky cream corn hair
Who learned at Tuskegee
to teach
High School kids
To have balls.
You knew High School
Was cold cement
Even for me.



Pendy, there was a woman somewhere.
We never knew.
Was it her in L.A. before the car left the road?
And
An eight year old boy.
Shit, Pendy—
We used to say,
"You should get married"
Father without a son
Now
A child without you.
Did your boy wear black
Pendy?
Little eight year old
probably squatted outside
watched the ant-train

Night now.
Wavewind car sound
under my window.
I never got to tell you that
I've been happy here.
No more PEP leader
sign painter
Gym clothes on
A tall girl
Leaning one leg bent,
stomach pressed to a cold rail
Talking to you—
Scared.
I thought you'd always be there
With 1200 scared, cocky high school punks
Growing around you.
My mother tells me
They had the funeral in the stadium,
Homecoming.

Susan Stern



FEMALE HETEROSEXUALITY ITS CAUSES AND CURES

joan hand

THE MEANING OF HETEROSEXUALITY: DEFINITION

The prefix *hetero* is derived from the Greek word meaning other or different. The term heterosexual, in its popular sense, means one who has sexual relations with the opposite sex.

In this study, I will concern myself mainly with the female heterosexual, *hetera* (feminine of hetero), or *exvert* (opposite of invert).*

FACTS AND FALLACIES ABOUT EXVERTS

The many myths surrounding heterosexuality can be explained by the lack of scientific investigation into the problem. Until very recently the entire subject was avoided, and even now one never hears of the causes and cures for the perversion. It is a grave error to repress such facts, for it only adds the lure of mystery! Knowledge about heterosexuality is, in itself, a preventive measure.

Listed here are some of the most common myths about female heterosexuality.

1. "That heternas are born that way." This can be disproven by the fact that a Hetera's physical make-up is the same as a lesbian's. There is no trace of hormone imbalance as many self-appointed "authorities" claim. Heterosexuality is caused completely by environmental (cultural) factors.

2. "That Heternas cannot be cured." It is true that many overt exverts have no desire to become homosexual and these often prove to be difficult in therapy. However, if the exvert wants to be cured and seeks help, the results are usually favorable.

3. "That heternas are incapable of carrying out or enjoying sex relations with their own sex." The overwhelming majority of exverts have not even tried homosexuality. However, Frank S. Caprio has discovered several cases where a woman will suffer from guilt and anxiety after having sex relations with another woman.* This is not because she is repulsed by her own sex, as Caprio claims, but is rather a reaction to the social ostracism, real or imagined, from her heterosexual peer group.

4. "That heternas are really well adjusted." This is indeed a myth! After careful study, it has been proven that these women are frustrated and masochistic. They are forced into a submissive role by their mates and they tend to become timid and dependent which causes them severe feelings of insecurity. The only emotional outlet given them is crying, for they are forbidden by their "butch" companions to show healthy aggression and anger.

Carl Wittman writes that heterosexuality "is fraught with frustrations. Sex is aggression for the male chauvinist; sex is obligation for traditional women."^t

Dr. Maurice Chideckel presents a case of a lesbian named "Babette" who tried to adjust to a heterosexual marriage. Even though it is written from a male chauvinist viewpoint, the case is a good example of how emotionally detrimental heterosexuality is.

"Babette suppressed her homosexual strivings and conditioned her external life to suit society. She married, only to find that her homosexual impulses were too powerful to overcome, and hence unconquerable.

"The inhibition of masculine tendencies created new material in her conflict. She began to hate her husband, and became indifferent to her children. *She could not help but admit to herself that all her struggles to stragulate her individuality were in vain, and that she could never succeed in becoming a part of the social collective unit like all normal women.* Her husband not only had no sexual attraction for her, but as the years went on actually created a revulsion in her. Heterosexual practices had to be



given up. Then came the obsession that she was losing her mind. She could no longer withstand the thought that she was a wife and mother, and therefore feminine. Death offered the only solution to her difficulties.

"Then came a change. Babette, unequal to the struggle, let society go hang. She met an attractive woman of her age and refinement, a pronounced homosexual.

"Babette was happy. All her morbid thoughts receded; heterosexual practices were not even thought of. Her husband, as a husband, was non-existent. Her children, until now practically neglected, received a warm response, and were tenderly cared for. There was not a sign of hostility and anxiety in the womanly face of Babette. She looked vivid and rosy, and took part in societal activities among those who were not aware of her homosexuality."

TYPES

There are several ways of classifying female exverts. One is to differentiate between the substitutive and compulsory types. The first would be the exvert who turns to men because either there are no women available or conditions in her environment keep her from associating with others of her own

kind. The compulsive type is the woman who prefers men regardless of availability.

Another way to classify is to place them on a scale ranging from super-effeminate to aggressive. An extreme example of the first is the "Playboy Bunny" type. This exvert has very little confidence. She exists to serve all men and very rarely does anything exclusively for herself and by herself. It is obvious that she even has great doubts about her appearance for she paints and decorates her body as though she is not sure it is adequate in its natural state. This woman is also called the "feminine-protest type." When she finds herself incapable of being a total entity, she renounces her natural aggression and becomes feminine and passive. This femininity complex found in many women is a result of dehumanizing trends in society. These must be dealt with, as they are often responsible for heterosexual patterns of thinking. Women with this complex must be made to recognize it in themselves. If left unchecked it can lead to serious problems, exversion being only one of its detriments.

The woman on the opposite end of the scale is least suspect of having heterosexual leanings. She is aggressive, intelligent, has a high degree of social awareness and dresses for neatness and efficiency. Her relations with men are formed more out of love than need. Of these two types, the latter is more willing to

admit that she is also attracted to women.

LATENT HETEROSEXUALITY

In dealing with exversion, a distinction is made between the Overt and the Latent. An overt hetera is one who is conscious of her heterosexual cravings and actively seeks men for sexual purposes. Of the latents there are two types. The first successfully sublimates the heterosexual component and the second is plagued with conscious heterosexual yearnings. The second type of latent hetera fears that someday she might make a heterosexual gesture and she develops a state of anxiety. She builds up various neurotic defense reactions to situations that remind her of her exerted desires. These are known as "heterosexual repressions."



THEORETICAL APPROACH

In most families, the father is absent a good deal of the time and the mother is left to wield a suffocating power over her children. It is my contention that female heterosexuality is an effort to compensate for the lack of fatherly affection. Indeed, some of the requirements made of a man by an exerted woman are that he be older, stronger, wiser, and that he be able to support her economically as her father did before. The interaction between the man and woman would certainly point to this father/daughter relationship. Often a man will call his female companion "baby, chick, doll, little woman," and other condescending endearments.

What part does the overbearing mother play? By doing everything for her daughter she incapacitates her. The girl is unable to be assertive, to realize herself as a responsible individual who has control over her destiny. Instead she is forced to be dependent and to live vicariously through others. Also, because of this strong mother/daughter relationship, she will, in later life, feel homosexuality to be incestuous and therefore repugnant.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This society, unfortunately, accepts and even rewards heterosexuality. On television, radio, in books, movies, a woman is constantly subjected to the heterosexual act. She is told by other heteros that to be fulfilled as a woman, she must have a man and eventually bear children.

A pronounced heterosexual, Dr. Bauer states, "Woman is intended for reproduction; she has been appointed to take an active part in the reproduction; she has been appointed to take an active part in the reproduction of the race by pregnancy and child-birth. And while these laws of Nature remain, every attempt at emancipation is futile." With so much of this propaganda being expounded, it is a wonder that so many women are still able to see through it and become well-adjusted lesbians.

Another cultural factor which causes female exversion is heterosexual seductions. Advances are made on women at a very early age, usually by older experienced male exverts.

This kind of outrageous activity among men is encouraged in chauvinist circles. A very high status goes to the man who can seduce a large number of women. It is proof of his desirability and also is somehow related to his male-ness although the reasoning behind this is unclear.

The frequency of these seductions is appalling. A young woman who walks alone in an urban area is sure to meet with sexual propositions by men. The only way she can avoid such harassment is to have a male escort. This, of course, is playing into the hands of the enemy. Many bars and cafes noted for attracting exverts will not allow women to enter without a man.

With all of these societal pressures, there are very few lesbians who have not at some time in their lives, succumbed sexually through persuasion or force to a male exvert.

CURES

We know that heterosexuality is an acquired disorder and not due to any biological factors. Therefore, its treatment must be a psychological one.

One effective means is to try to reduce the anxiety and remove defenses the patient has against her own sex. Rather than concentrating on why she is heterosexual, the therapist focuses on what keeps her from being homosexual. After this is discovered, her homosexual component is released. Usually after actually having a lesbian experience, she will realize its superiority and give up exversion.

Some analysts try to make the patient accept her heterosexuality. This is a mistake if the patient really wants to be cured. She begins to feel that her exversion is inborn and any efforts at changing would

be futile.

If the hetero trusts and accepts the therapist's opinion, much of her behavior can be reshaped simply by his responses. When she speaks favorably of her own sex, she is rewarded by his positive reaction.

A faster method of reinforcing the patient for her sexual leanings is through the use of conditioning. The patient is seated before a movie screen on which is projected images of nude men and women. When she is shown a picture of a woman she is given a caramel chewy as a positive reinforcer. When she is shown a picture of a man she is given a mild electric shock. Initially, this is quite successful, but the effects are usually short-lived if the patient does not being a satisfactory relationship with another woman immediately after treatment.

When the patient is cured, she will need the therapist's help in dealing with former heterosexual relationships. Some women, after the first impact of realizing their capacity to love other women expel their male lovers in what are sometimes very unfortunate ways.

Dr. Karl Menninger describes the case of a young woman who, after having discovered the joys of loving women, beat her husband to death with a hammer. She left him thereafter locked in their apartment while she drove fifty miles to a bridge party. There were probably good reasons for her rebellion, but a therapist might have been able to suggest some more socially accepted methods of releasing her hostility.

This paper was written in retaliation to the bullshit that's been coming down about all oppressed minorities. Poor people, women, blacks, chicanos, gays and all people who constitute a threat to white middle- and upper-class males are defined, classified and put out of the way.

As a gay woman I refuse to accept their definition of me. Possibly, if the other side is analyzed in the same way it dissects us, other oppressed people will throw away the head-chains psychology has placed on them. The arguments they use to make us look sick can be turned around and used against them.

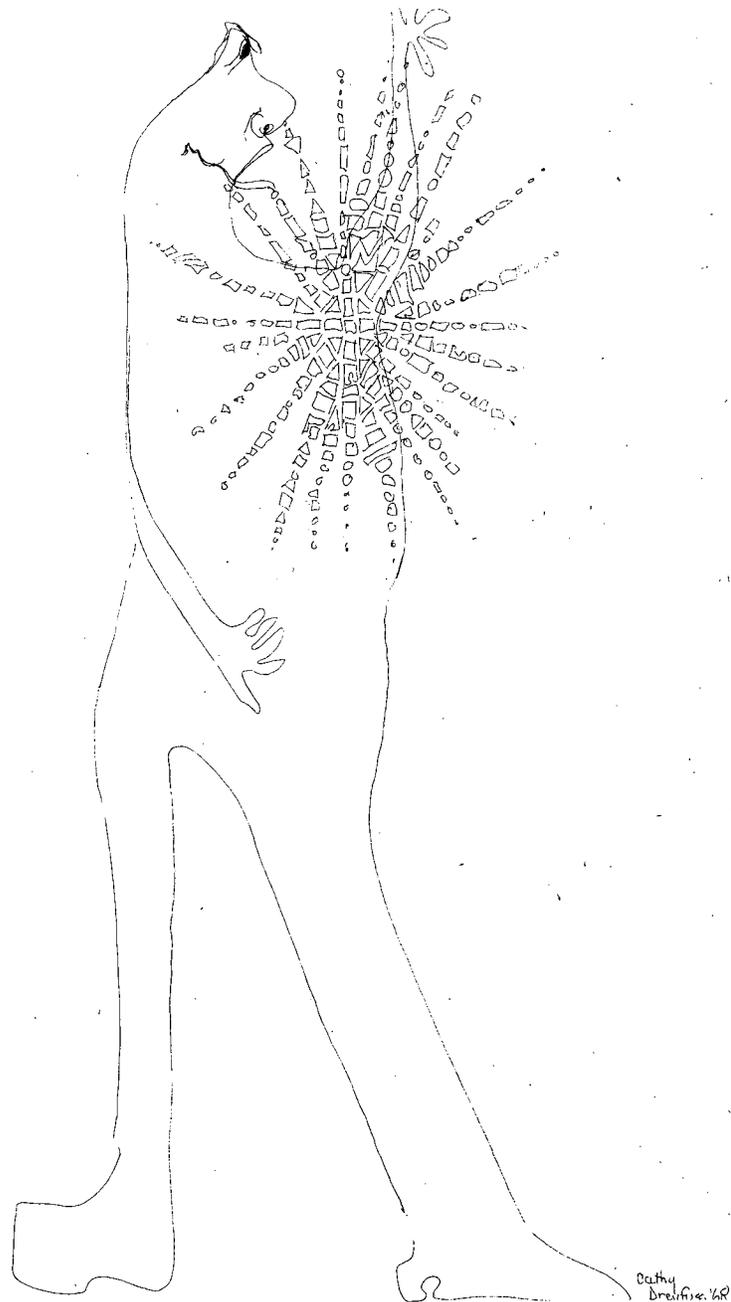
The government has never sponsored research programs to analyze rich businessmen, psychiatrists, doctors, or politicians. Their sole purpose for having shrinks analyze us is to gain control over us. No More!

Joan Hand

* Terms Hetero and Exvert my own.

* *Female Homosexuality*, Frank S. Caprio, M.D. 1962

† *A Gay Manifesto*. Carl Wittman



Notes from a Cooptation:

"LOUISA AND THE JACK OF HEARTS"

Fog drips
Wind pruned Cypress
prostrated
on rocks
and Rhododendron Blossoms,

Crows stalk the pasture
like cats
The sheep eye me
like lions.
These tides razor
my skin,
I fall away in strips
of Eucalyptus bark. . .

His problem
was his wife, he said;
she had left him.

But Louisa,
without you
for a scapegoat,
it wouldn't have been
half as much fun:

I was lost
in a metropolis
of xerox machines,
he was making copies
of his sperm
dried
on white sheets of paper.

I filled my cunt
with yogurt,
it's good for infections;
A friend told me
her lovers
like boysenberry the best,
but I was her favorite,
I was never a threat.
I slept on stacks
of xeroxed poems,
afraid to leave
them in the morning—
fires
could consume every line.
Sweet rhythms,
at night I considered
Safety Deposit boxes for them
at the Bank of America;
I searched
for master copies. . .

But he was looking
for a woman that
he needed to leave.

Discussions
were what our futures
were made of.

Louisa,
on visits with me,
his mother
referred to you
31 times in one afternoon!

I threw darts
at the folds
of your vulva,

He attacked you
with toilet plungers,
the snout of a vacuum,
and dreamt about noses
of anteaters
at night.

I even suggested
he send you
white bouquets
of conium and cow parsnip.

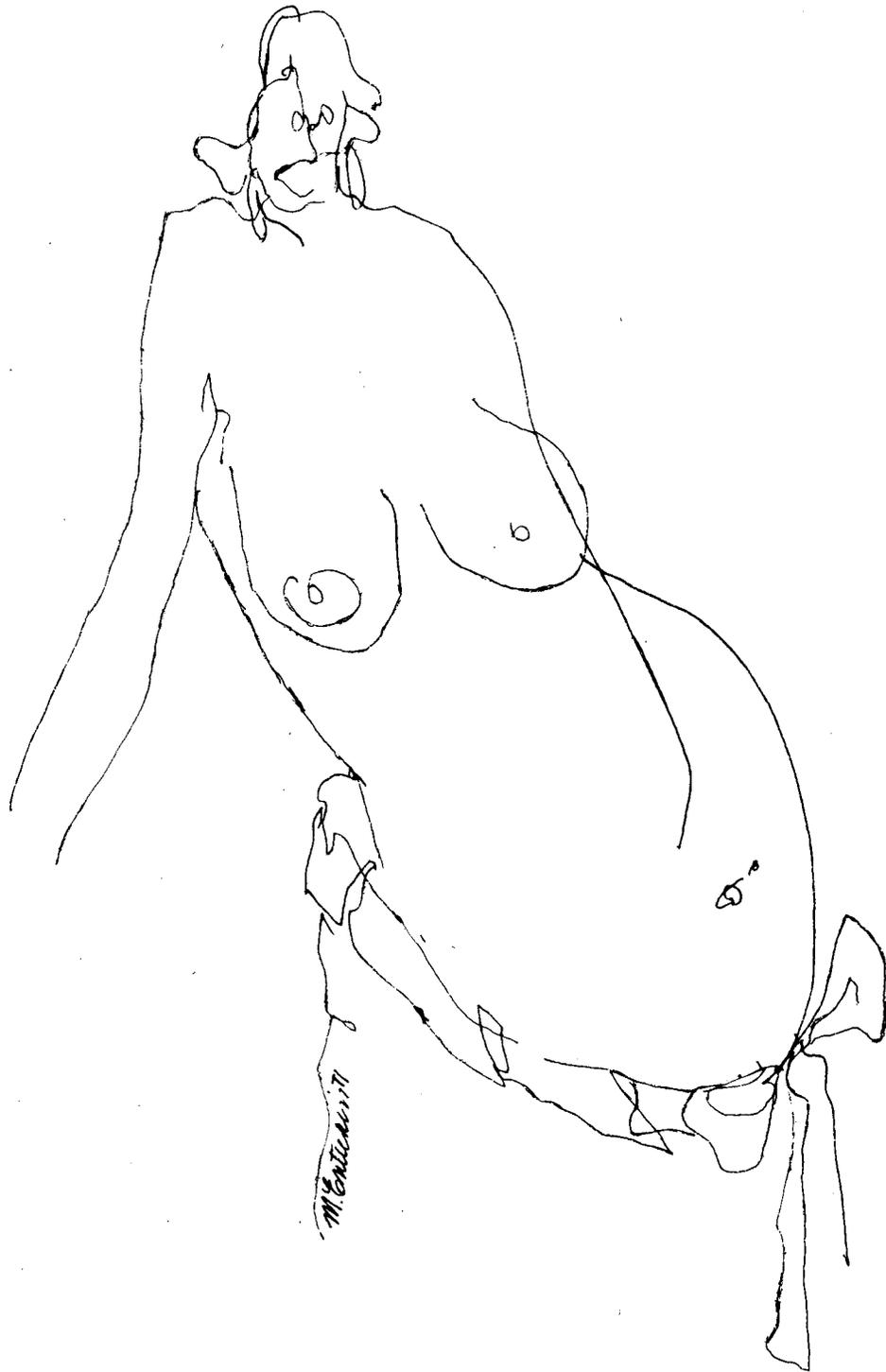
At work,
he contemplated
fucking
his 3 yr. old daughter,
Wondering
when he could tell her. . .
But there was always
his son
with those 87 allergies
inherited from his mother. . .

Louisa, he says
you snuck
those babies
into your womb;
scratched them out
from the walls
of your diaphragm.

I listen
to our last night's
intimacies
in the hall;

The voices of his friends
—they screw *their* wives
with cucumbers and carrots—

And Louisa,
When you walked past
the office
we all ran out to stare.



At home,
he measures
the exact dimensions
of my greatest
sexual capacity,
—200 cubic centimeters—
“cunts,
gotta be tight lipped
to be any good.”

Louisa,
with a french curve
he compared the length
of our stretch marks,

I tell him
that you
must have prints
of cactus leaves
embedded
in your breasts.

NIGHTS,
bare bulbs light my face,
“I want you to know
who’s in you,”
he says.

Bald ticks
as big as eyes
live placidly
in my hair,
DAYS
I contemplate tortures,
—Perhaps I could burn them out
with Kerosene.

I singe the hair
of his arms

While he screams
“Now you’ve done it,”
—now you’ve done it.

I am hot and cold,
there are vapores of asphalt,
tar weed has tarnished
the soft nose
of my horse;

For escape
I write testimonial
poems

he says he cannot eat
these demonic tones
all of the time,
and that—

She had composed lists,
lists of groceries,
lists
of household needs;

Louisa,
I have spent hours
making pictures
with the letters
of your name.

Girls in dark dresses
eclipse
with bay-laurels;
I have moved
into the cedar wardrobe,
Safe from the moths
and light bulbs.
Sleeping with my dog,
sweet pet,
intruders upset her.
On Sundays
my friend's mother
bathes in concern,
telling me
there's no substitute
for motherhood;
What I want to know is,
are those afterbirths
or strawberries
drying in the sun?

The faucet in the next room
runs
My sores drip
into reservoirs.
The crows screaming
in the canyon
are wet,
The sheep
are bloated and stiff;

Louisa
I awake to nights
when the rain
wails your name.

Out my window
on the rocks
are they Cormorants
or bats
drying their wings. . .

you and I, louisa,
you and I

The turkey vultures
from these hills
have picked my bones
clean.

Jana Harris

LETTER REACHING OUT TO MY SISTER, 1600 MILES

I cannot think of you
apart from your men
All those years
you were potential for them

for a husband locked in by
government men
You will be his woman-waiting
writing long letters no doubt
reminding him there will be
trees on the farm and water
and love is the thing which holds together

and tell him of his son
the current that runs between you
the way he is learning his name
and how to stand up

I wished you a daughter
though it was your baby after all
and you were glad for a boy
ignoring the bad delivery
ignoring the pain since you
loved him before he was born
loved him before he was conceived
loved him before you found
the father to make him

If the same mother made us
she is as dual as we are
she contains us both
Once she said she should have been a nun
(not knowing how else to say it)
but she had to get us born
daughter of love and daughter of bitterness
daughter of men and daughter of women
daughter of children and daughter who
holds her womb hostage against them

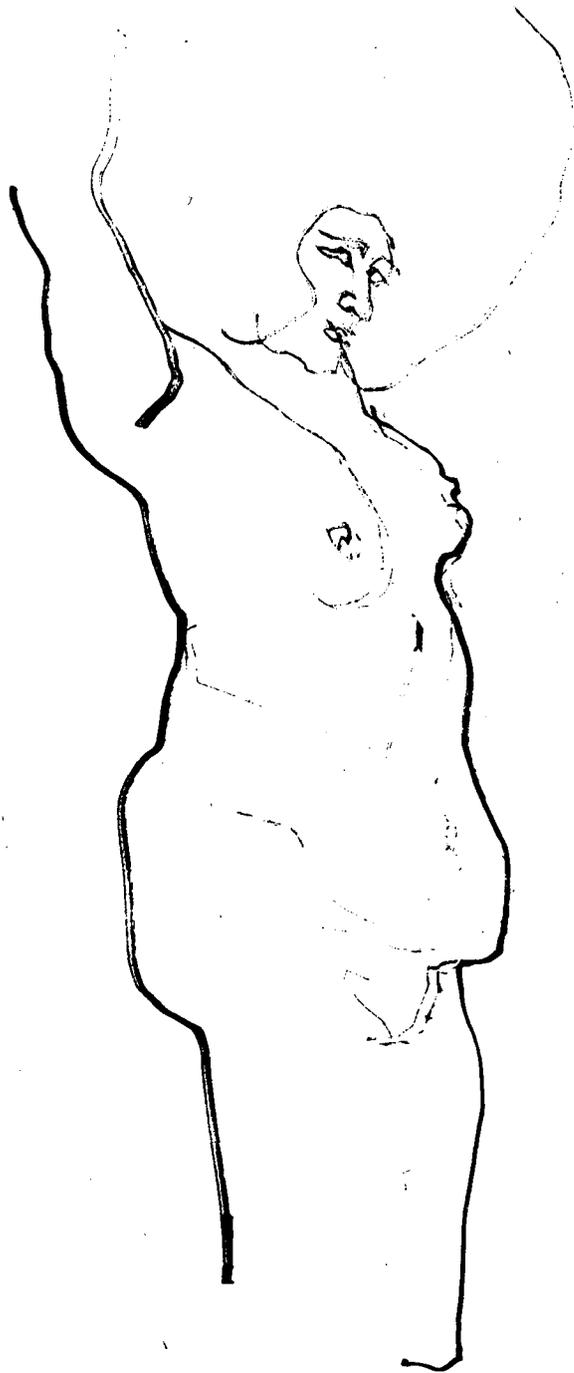
I knew you all the time you say
I saw your wounding how you
hold yourself into yourself
You hoped he would heal me
seeing no other hope and when
I wrote saying I'd left him
you said only You make things so
complicated you always have
you could have loved him simply

We are sisters
we are the halves of woman
Someday we will be healed
and made whole
and our daughters will not
distinguish between us

Sharon Barba



Pitney



CONTRIBUTORS

SUSAN STERN — "I live in Berkeley. I'm from the midwest and the desert. I'm trying to get an education despite being a college student."

MARION SIREFMAN: Has been with Libera from the start. She has now journeyed to Chicago and points East to take the time to find out if she's "doing what she wants to be doing."

ANEDA ASTA — alias Ned now living in Berkeley, N.Y. lesbian artist active in gay students union & Libera at Cal. Karate, pottery & love at grove st. "need a poster?"

GINA—"I am learning to have my cake and eat it too."

DIANA GOODWIN: has contributed her time and happy personality to Libera. She is a Biology student and ex-forest ranger.

LYNDA KOOLISH — is studying & teaching at Stanford University. Her first book, *Journeys on the Living*, a collection of poems, photographs, and drawings, has just been published.

LAUREL — "I'm spending most of my time now working on Amazon Quarterly, a new lesbian-feminist arts journal. I'm writing fiction and learning to love without limits."

JANET PHELAN: lives in Berkeley.





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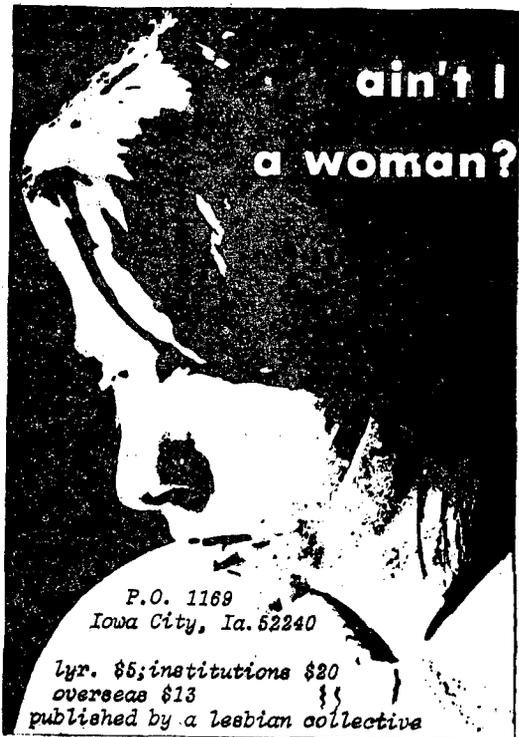
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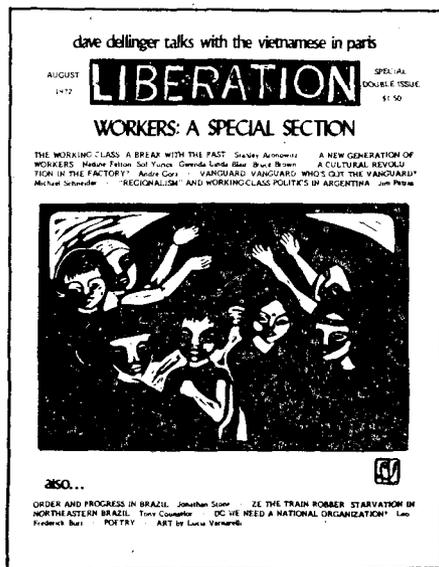


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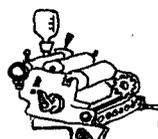
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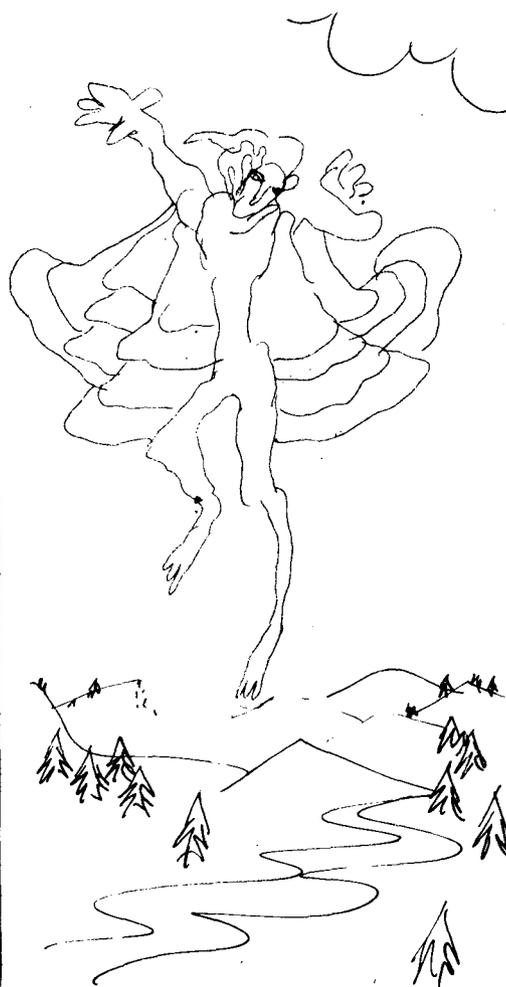
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Sisters.

To those of you who have been running out to your mail boxes all winter looking for Libera number three, we're sorry we're late. To those of you who keep us alive by sending articles, fiction, poems and graphics we're sorry that sometimes we've taken a while to get you a reply.

One nice thing about the LIBERA Collective is that there are always new women. This issue was put out almost exclusively by new members. It slowed things down, but there was a lot of learning & loving going on.

Working on this journal is really consciousness raising. In sharing our skills & experiences within the collective we learn about ourselves as women.

By pouring over the contributions of our sisters we become involved with the lives of hundreds of other women.

We would like to be more in-touch with our readers. Tell us what you think of LIBERA, what you're doing, and how you're feeling. If you live around Berkeley, join us!! We need new members to make a magazine out of ourselves as well as the contributions we receive.

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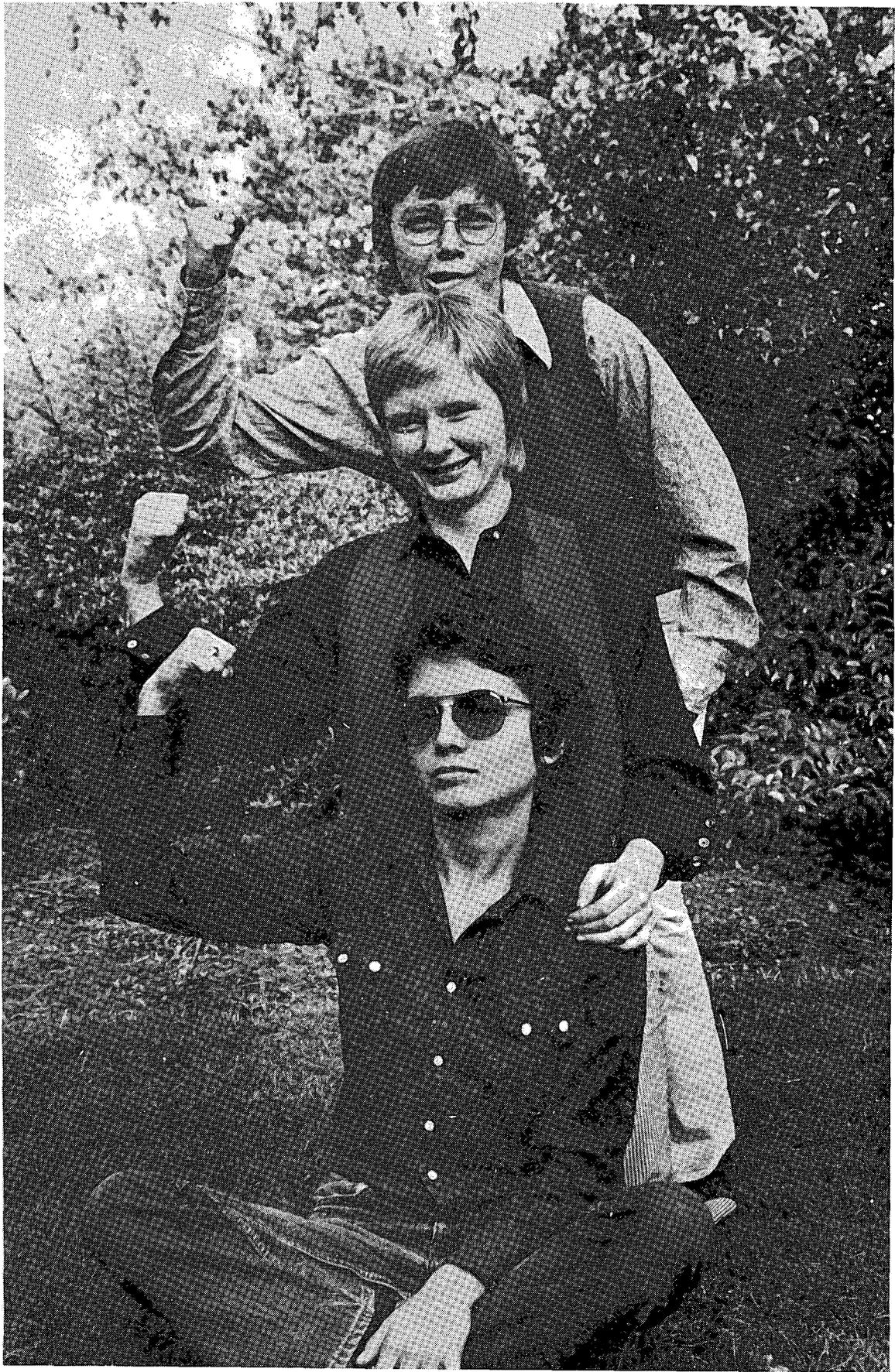
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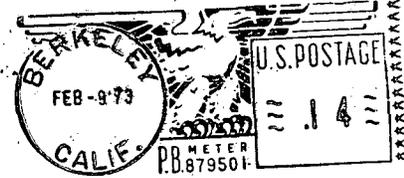
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