

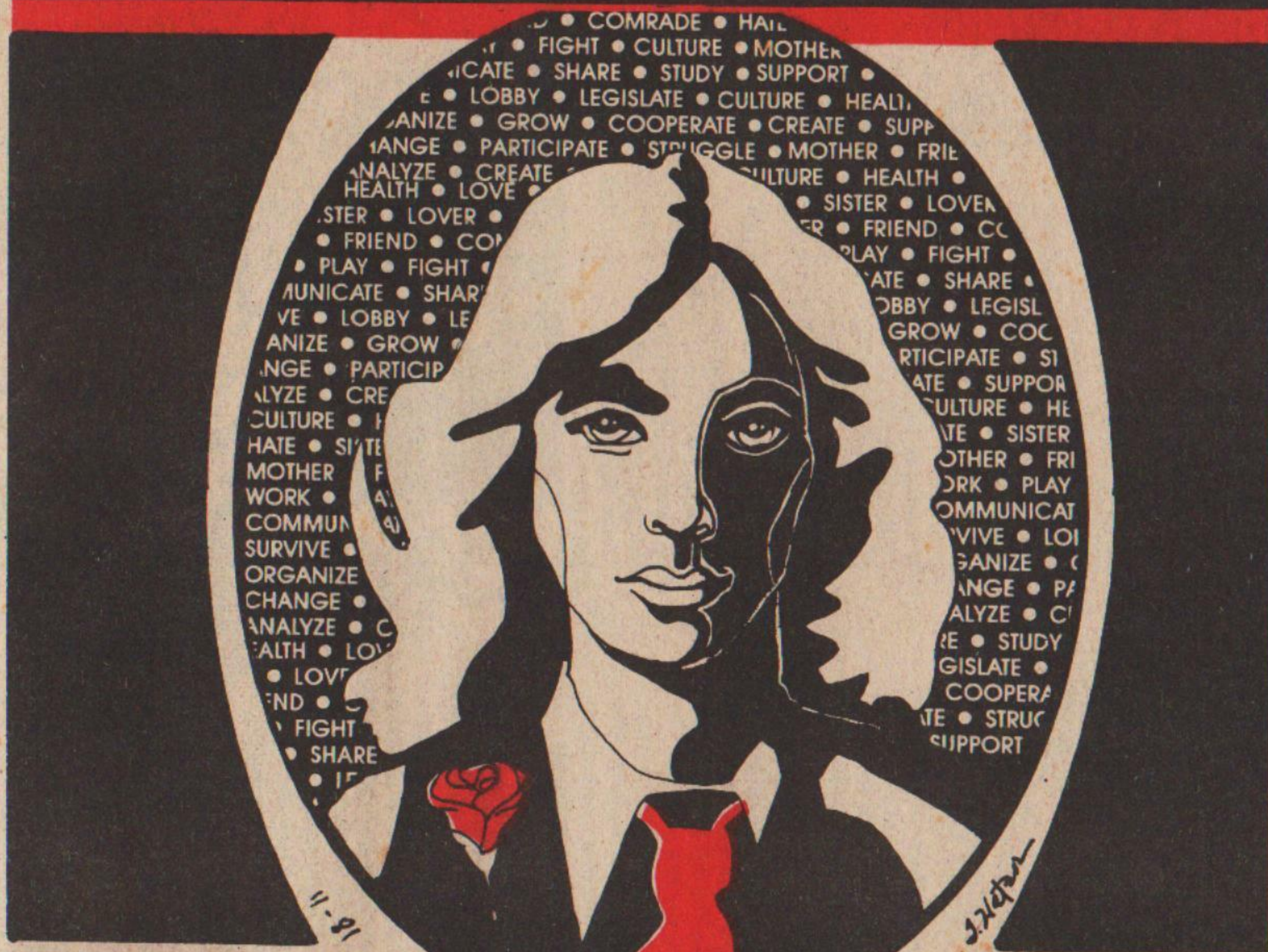
SPECTRUM

A Cooperative Newspaper for the Tallahassee Community

Winter Solstice, 1981

Issue No. 28

FREE



TALLAHASSEE FEMINIST HISTORY

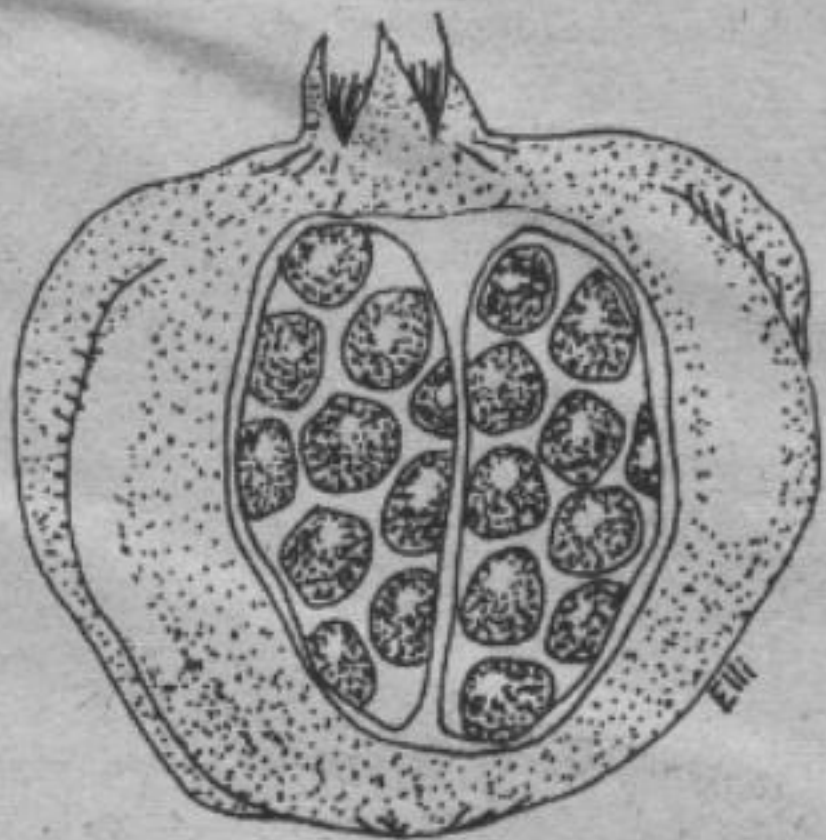
TALLAHASSEE FEMINIST HISTORY PROJECT



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A Cooperative Newspaper for the Tallahassee Community

Winter Solstice, 1981
Published every six weeks

625 E. Brevard St.
Tallahassee, Florida 32308

(904) 224-7222



The SPECTRUM Collective:

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Judy Adkins • Nancy Lycan

Contributing Artists:

Trisha Watson • Elli Rock • Suzy Fay • Frank Brown

What SPECTRUM Is:

SPECTRUM is an open forum for the Tallahassee Community. Emphasizing events, developments and activities in the alternative/progressive/cooperative culture here, we encourage people to participate with contributions of articles, labor or advertisements.

Writers and artists cannot be paid. Articles and artwork are printed on a space-available basis.

Views expressed by the writers are not representative of SPECTRUM or of any particular organization unless identified as such. Our goal is to provide an open forum for the community, but the staff does bear certain legal and moral responsibilities for the content of the publication. Therefore, we reserve the right to withhold from publication any material that is libelous in tone. The SPECTRUM collective also reserves the right to withhold material referring to specific individuals until they have had the opportunity to review and respond to all articles in question.

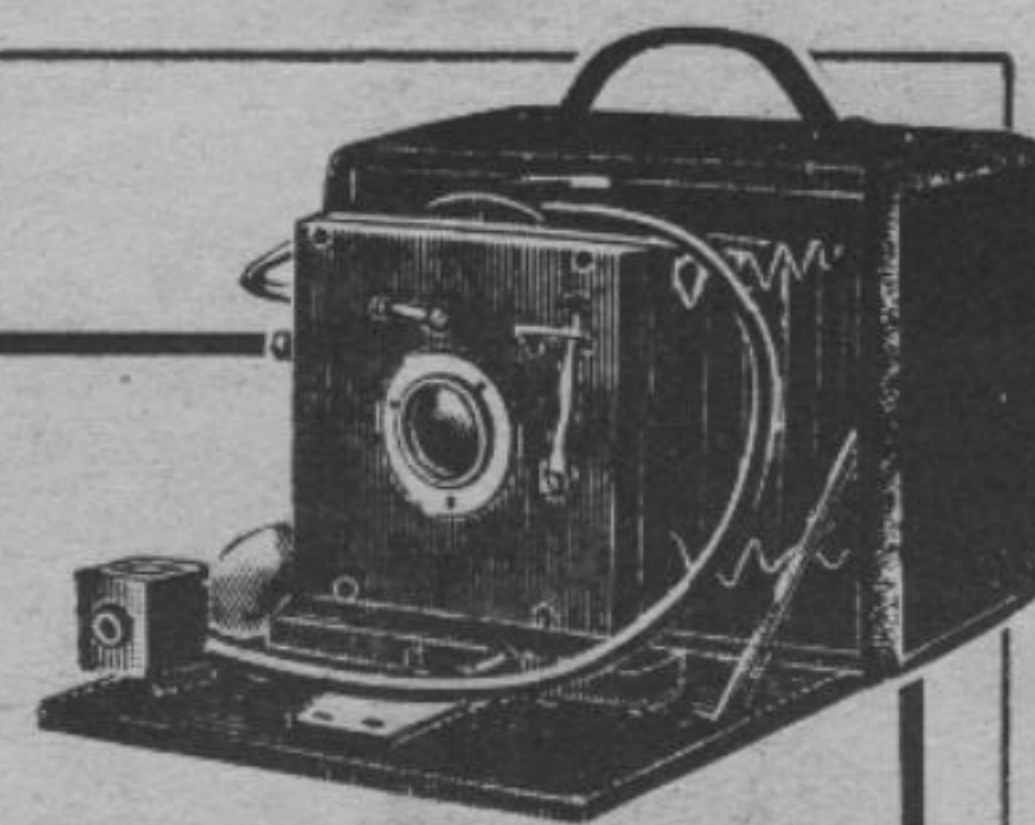
Submissions Guidelines

SPECTRUM cannot continue without your interest and participation. We have no reporters and are totally dependent on members of the Tallahassee community to submit articles informing the rest of us as to what's happening. Artwork and photos are encouraged, also. Send submissions to SPECTRUM, 625 East Brevard St., Tallahassee, FL. Articles should be no longer than 3 doublespaced, typewritten letter-sized pages. All material must be signed and include a phone number and address so we can contact writers when revisions or clarifications are needed. If we have no contact information, or if time is exceedingly short, we will edit to our discretion. If you wish original art or photos returned, you must provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope with a note telling us to return your material.

Advertising Sales:

Larry Teich — Call 224-7222 for advertising information.

SPECTRUM's Evolution Organic Process



by Tana McLane

Spectrum is proud to present this special issue, The Tallahassee Feminist History Project. Out just in time for midwinter reading, we've produced a journal of our community's important contributions to the women's movement as a political thrust, and to feminism as a philosophy. Tallahassee women have been aware and active since the beginning of the modern wave of feminism, and those of us who have worked on the Project are excited to share their historical record with you.

This newspaper has been faced with several complex things in the last little while. First, we felt the imminence of the History Project as a major work ahead for us. Then, unexpectedly, our printer informed us that the company had been sold and could no longer print our paper. At the same time, we as a collective were just starting to turn our attention to internal affairs.

The History Project is all but a printed reality as I write this. We have connected with a good printer in Bainbridge, Georgia, the *Post-Searchlight*. The project is being printed there. And after the holidays, we must regroup to discuss if and how we will continue as a paper, and what shape we will take.

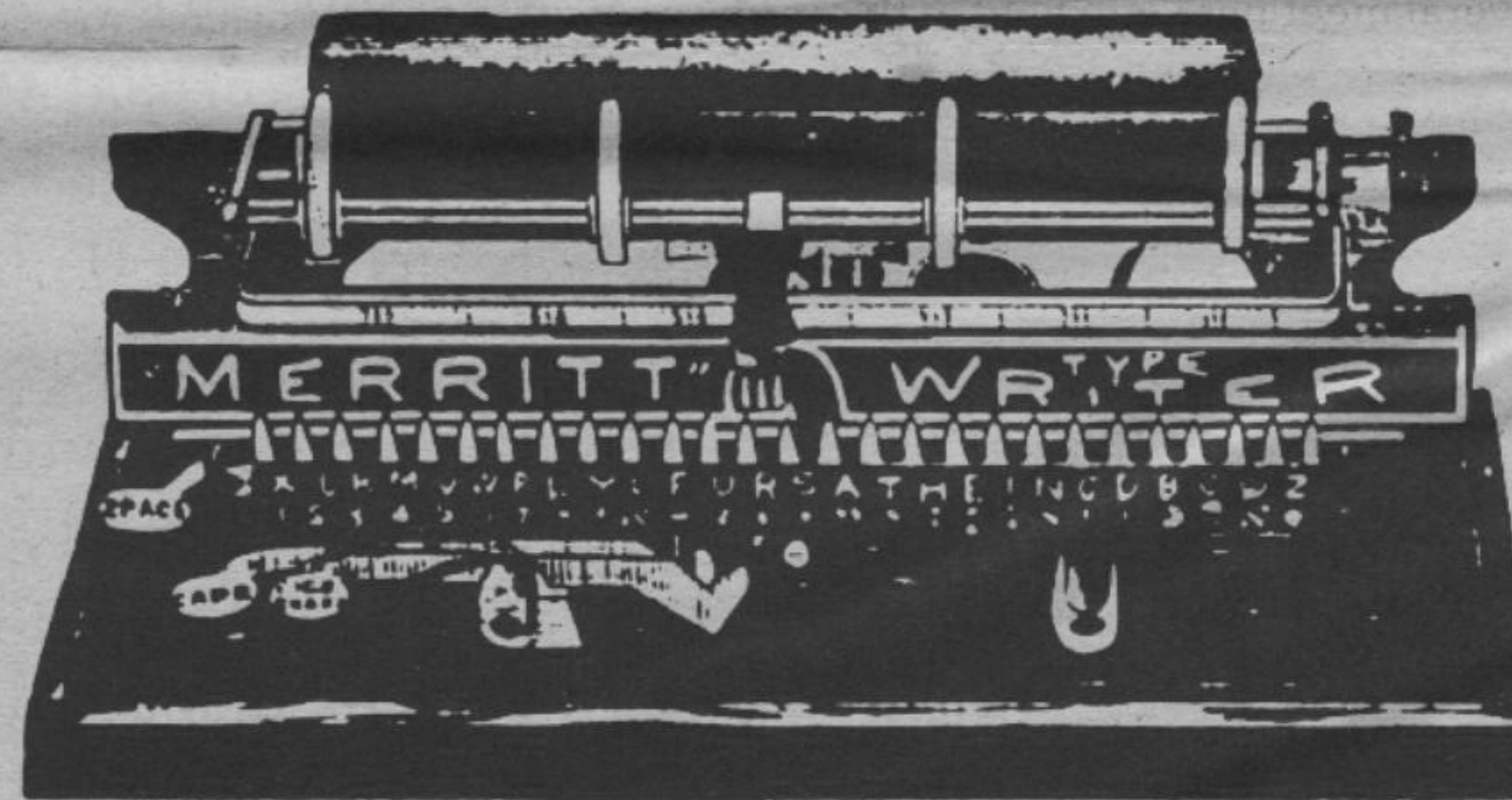
Spectrum is more than three years old. In that time, we have evolved organically, trying to fulfill the journalistic needs of the feminist/progressive/alternative community of Tallahassee. It has been a volunteer project to produce the paper every six weeks, eight times a year, and we have also depended on volunteer writers for much of our copy and on businesses for most of our economic support.

Producing the paper is often a burn-out because it is not a livelihood for anyone. We have made some dependable business deals so that we can produce the paper, but our costs continue to rise as the economy affects the printing industry. And we are aware that what is produced in Spectrum is not as universal as originally hoped.

The paper needs more editorial direction, more financial support, and perhaps more commitment to it as a *business* if we are to sustain its existence into 1982 and beyond. At this point, the possibilities are exciting but no decisions have been reached. There simply hasn't been time. This will be our task in early January.

We also hope that the wider collection of groups and individuals who appear in the History Project will be an inspiration to Spectrum and to you to reach out and contact more people who have not felt included or invited to participate in Spectrum. Please tell us who you feel should be in these pages, so that we may contact them.

As we go to press and as we end 1981, it feels like it's been a growing, educational year. Few people I know are in the same place they were a year ago. Enjoy these 32 pages of writing, art and history — and stay tuned for the future of Spectrum.



community announcements

A relief fund has been set up for David Jordan to help defray his medical expenses. Please contribute to Canopy Federal Credit Union account number 48-2 c/o Zoe Kopp/David Jordan.

The Tallahassee Peace Coalition will hold a day of educational workshops, discussion and sharing at the Unitarian Church (2810 N. Meridian Rd.) on Saturday, Jan. 9, 1982. Workshops will include: 1.) The Arms Race & Nuclear Freeze Campaign, 2.) Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy, 3.) Military Spending and the Economy, and 4.) Peace Education. Anyone concerned about these issues is welcome. Call the TPC office (222-5845, M, W, F) for more information.

CPE (Center for Participant Education) registration for leisure classes will begin January 27. To register, call 644-6577.

On January 26, American Indian Movement leader Russel Means will speak on "For the world to live, Europe must die — an indictment of industrial society."

"Planning for Peace" — Panel discussion at the Leon County Public Library, January 21; 7:30 pm.

The Information Center is a new referral and information service for people needing any questions about services in Leon County answered. Either stop by the office in the Ambassador Bldg. at 2005 Apalachee Pkwy and look for Social & Economic Services (HRS), or call 488-0675. After hours, call 224-6333 (Telephone Counseling and Referral Service).



Recording Our Own History

by Sherry Rauch

I have waited until all the articles have been typeset, put on the flats, until the pictures and artwork was selected, and the table of contents compiled before I wrote this introduction. The production crew has looked at the pages of this publication over and over during the past few days: *we can't believe it's almost done!* And it looks beautiful.

This publication has been a long time in coming. The idea for it first came up nearly two years ago when a group of women got together to discuss *Off Our Backs* special ten-year issue. It was an exciting night. After we discussed the OOB issue, stories about local feminist history began to be told - wonderful stories about women's first experiences with feminism. Why not do a local history, we thought. Women who had recently gotten involved with women's groups, like myself, were not aware of the work, successes and mistakes that had already happened. Many of the stories I heard that night were new to me.

We began to realize, like so many women all around the country, the world, that women's history is so easily erased and forgotten. There are many reasons for this: women are often so busy with just day-to-day survival that we don't have time to sit down and record our lives and accomplishments. Certainly male dominated society does not have a vested interest in making sure women are not silenced.

We decided that night that our local history would not be lost, forgotten, or silenced. We would publish something that would portray, as much as possible, the rich feminist history of our home town, Tallahassee.

Several meetings were held in the spring of 1980 to further discuss the history project. But it wasn't until the following fall that a CPE class, the Tallahassee Feminist History Project, was started. At this time we began to interview women and started to firm up what areas to cover in the publication.

In March of 1981 we had a successful spaghetti dinner to raise money for the project. The dinner was an event in and of itself. Women all over town attended; women musicians performed, and we made over four hundred dollars.

By the summer of 1981 several of the women who had originally started the project had left town. It was a slow, and sometimes discouraging time. I often wondered if the publication would really happen.

But people didn't forget about the project. "How's the history project coming?" was a question I often heard when I would run into people around town. "I really think it's a great idea," they would say. I knew then that the project would have to happen, somehow.

So in September women were re-contacted and enthusiasm returned. Then the *SPECTRUM* collective agreed to do the publication as a special December/Solstice issue.

Many women and men have participated in this project, from interviewing, to looking through old *Flambeaus* in order to make a card catalog time-line, to art work, and finally, to the actual typesetting and layout of the issue.

I would like to thank some of these people here:

Sandra Roland and Suzy Fay for starting the TFHP class and making the numerous beginning steps;

All the many people who helped with the spaghetti dinner last March;

All the writers [see table of contents] who wrote the articles;

All the women who were interviewed;

The artists: Suzy Fay, Elli Rock, Frank Brown, Trisha Watson, and others for their great work;

The *SPECTRUM* production crew: Vicki Mariner, Frank Brown, Tana McLane, Larry Teich, and Louise Beauchamp, as well as the extra help Amy Arbogast, Genie Nable, Judy Adkins, Angie Prather, and Nancy Lycan for the long hours actually putting the thing together;

And myself, for wanting so much to see it happen.



I would like to emphasize something else at this point. Throughout this project many of us began realizing the incredible responsibility of writing history. Men (mainly white men) are usually in the position of recording and interpreting history - and they often leave out large numbers of people: women, blacks, the poor, Indians, etc.. As work on this project continued we began to realize that even though we were women, we also had our own biases.

We have tried, in this project, to cover as many different types of groups and issues as we could. But I'm sure many people reading this issue will say, "Well what about this person, or that group." We apologize in advance for anything we have not adequately covered. And we want to emphasize that this is not the definitive history of feminism in Tallahassee. The choice of articles was mainly decided on because of our knowledge of various groups and individuals, and the interests of those women who chose to write for this issue.

"We hope... to inspire women to continue working, playing, and creating in ways that will change our lives and the world around us."

We encourage those who feel that people, issues, and groups were left out to write articles for future issues of *SPECTRUM*.

We have covered a wide range of feminist thought and activity in this issue from institutions such as the FWHC, Herstore, and the Women's Center to organizations like NOW and the National Hook-up for Black Women. Also included are such topics as art and feminist motherhood.

We hope to accomplish three major things with this publication. First, to record in one place the tremendous amount of feminist work and activity that has taken place in this town over the last ten to fifteen years. Second, to make women feel good about themselves and all the work they've done. And finally, to inspire women to continue working, playing, and creating in ways that will continue to change our lives and the world around us.

We have immensely enjoyed doing this project. We hope you will enjoy reading it.



1969

1970

1971

1977

1978

1979

1980

The "second" wave of feminism started in Tallahassee in the late 1960's. It started in a small way, like the acorn. Gradually roots took hold in the earth, as the branches above ground grew in many directions. To show this progression we have drawn a tree at various stages, representing feminist growth in Tallahassee. Watch for this tree periodically throughout this publication which documents many of the events written about in articles, as well as many others.

Watching It Change

"Women Can Speak Out, Speak for Themselves Now..."

by Sherry Rauch

"Women can speak out, speak for themselves now," said Sara Quinn, sitting in her small frame house where she lives with her husband. "Women are just going to have to take over the world."

Born in her mother's home outside Tallahassee in 1923, she feels that women and men both have more choices today. "I was staying in the country and you know, long in then, there wasn't too much of nothin' goin' on. Go to school, come back home, go to school, come back home, go to church... sometimes go to the movies. Now they have so much to offer the young people."

Looking at life from the perspective of 57 years, Sara believes that she might have done some things differently. "I sure wouldn't have been no housewife!" she laughed. "I would have gone on to school, get an education. After I was married my husband tried to get me to go back to school, but I just didn't see myself going back to school." She added, "I've been out of school soooo long. People don't understand, it's a hard job staying around the house all the time."

The youngest of five children, Sara was raised by her grandmother after her mother died shortly after her birth. She remembers doing a lot of cooking, washing and ironing, and reading the Bible every morning before breakfast. She went to grammar schools but quit after finishing the ninth grade. There wasn't enough money to send her in to the high school in Tallahassee every day.

At the age of 18 she moved in to Tallahassee to live with her cousin. She worked in the infirmary at Florida State College for Women, and later baked pies at a Pensacola Street cafeteria and worked at Sunnyland for a time.

After marrying C.W. Quinn, she kept books for his roofing business and helped rebuild the house she still lives in. "I love children," she said. "I reckon that's why I never had any." Church activities have always been a part of her life.

The longest journey of her life was to Boston to visit her relatives. "When I was growing up all my friends wanted to leave, leave, leave," she said. "But I never left." She described the north as "too fast" for her taste.

Even her travels around Tallahassee have been limited lately by an increasing fear of crime. She curtailed her visits to the mall after hearing about a man who had been robbed in the restroom. "It's just better to stay home," she said regretfully.

But staying at home hasn't put Sara Quinn out of touch with the world around her. "Women's role is changing fast," she said. "They want to be equal. I don't want to do what a man do, but if women can do the work, they should be paid the same. I believe in that."

Her vision of the future is optimistic. "I hope that the women will get the goal that they want. I'm lookin' for a woman to become president, I think they could do better than the men. Looks like the men aren't doin' nothin'."

...

Sarah Herndon was born the daughter of a preacher in Glade Springs, Virginia, in 1902. Her life, unlike Sara Quinn's, has included a large measure of both travel and education.

One of her fondest memories is of graduate school in New York in 1926. At the age of 24 she was completely on her own, partaking of the night life and coming and going as she pleased. It was an unusual privilege for a carefully-raised young woman.

She was an only child for the first ten years of her life and her family moved often: from Glade Springs to Louisville, Kentucky, to Cleveland, Ohio, and to Ocala, Florida. It was a happy childhood, she said, although in high school she became very studious and did not mingle with the popular crowd.



Sarah Herndon

To record only the last decade of feminism in Tallahassee—or anywhere—is to ignore centuries of feminist thought, both expressed and hidden. Tallahassee women were involved in the suffrage movement in the 1910's, and some were rebelling against their traditional roles as early as the turn of the century. The Project has focused on the "second wave of feminism" beginning in 1970 for the sake of time and definition, but the roots of the changes chronicled here go back beyond time and beyond definition.

To help fit the Project into a context, this article records the lives and views of two women who have lived in Tallahassee for many years. Both are named Sara(h), both worked at Florida State College for Women, and neither has any children, but there the similarity ends. Sara Quinn is black and has lived here since she was born, traveling rarely beyond the county line. Sarah Herndon is white, born in Glade Springs, Virginia. She came to Tallahassee in 1943, taught English at Flastacowo (now Florida State University) for 44 years and is now retired.

These sketches are based on interviews with both women in the fall of 1980.



Sara Quinn

Educated at Winston-Salem (earning a letter for athletics) and later at graduate school in New York, Sarah Herndon taught high school in Salem for a couple of years and then moved to Tallahassee to become a professor of English. She was promoted to full professor in 1947 and was Chairman of Humanities from 1950 to 1967.

"I never had the slightest sense of being discriminated against," she said, although she saw discrimination happening around her. Florida State College for Women became the coed Florida State University in 1947 and Sarah Herndon watched the transition. Tuition was low and entrance requirements were nil at FSCW, and the four major schools were Arts and Sciences, Education, Music and Home Economics. At FSU, men were in charge.

Enrollment was up, padded by an influx of GI's. Male teachers were hired and before long the newspaper was predominately run by men. Katherine Montgomery, Sarah's roommate for eleven years, played a critical role in maintaining the separateness of the men's and women's physical education departments.

"When the men first came in there was the men's physical education department and the women's physical education department," Sarah related. "The only reason there wasn't just one, run by the men, was because of Katy Montgomery. She was absolutely, violently opposed (to a merger)."

Using the influence that she had, Montgomery managed to keep the women's department alive. But by the mid-1950's, the battle seemed about to be lost. "So she organized a 25th anniversary of the physical education majors, which started in 1927," said Sarah. "She wrote alumni all over the country and she got them all stirred up."

Montgomery planned a full program for the celebration, including a banquet. "She sat some of these old alumni down on each side of the president. Talked his head off!" Sarah chuckled. "And that finished it. There was never going to be a joint physical education department, until Katy died. Now they have a head of women's athletics, but it's all under the athletic director."

Admission requirements changed, too, in the 1950's. "And you know why," Sarah said. "To prevent blacks from entering. That was the real reason for it."

One of Sarah's criticisms of FSU concerns the name of the library. "It should have been Louise Richardson and not Strozier," she said. "The reason why it's not is because of politics."

Richardson was an inspired librarian and an excellent administrator, Sarah said, but unfortunately "she irritated people sometimes. People who came from very fine universities marvelled at the kind of material we have in English at our library. We have a very fine library collection for graduate work, and that's because of Miss Richardson. She knew where to go for things."

Strozier was president of the library for two and a half years and is remembered for his pursuit of excellence. "But it seemed to a lot of us who had been there before that it was very unfair. Louise Richardson wasn't recognized. I understand there's a move to name the new library school after her."

Sarah supports the ERA and said she would vote for it "anytime," but added that most of her friends were against it. She believes that it will never pass Congress and that women are the ones who have stopped it. Changing state laws might be a better strategy, she suggested.

"I think it's harder for women," she said. "Actually, you have to go by statistics. At the time I retired, only 5 percent of full professors were women in the U.S. Obviously, there's been discrimination."

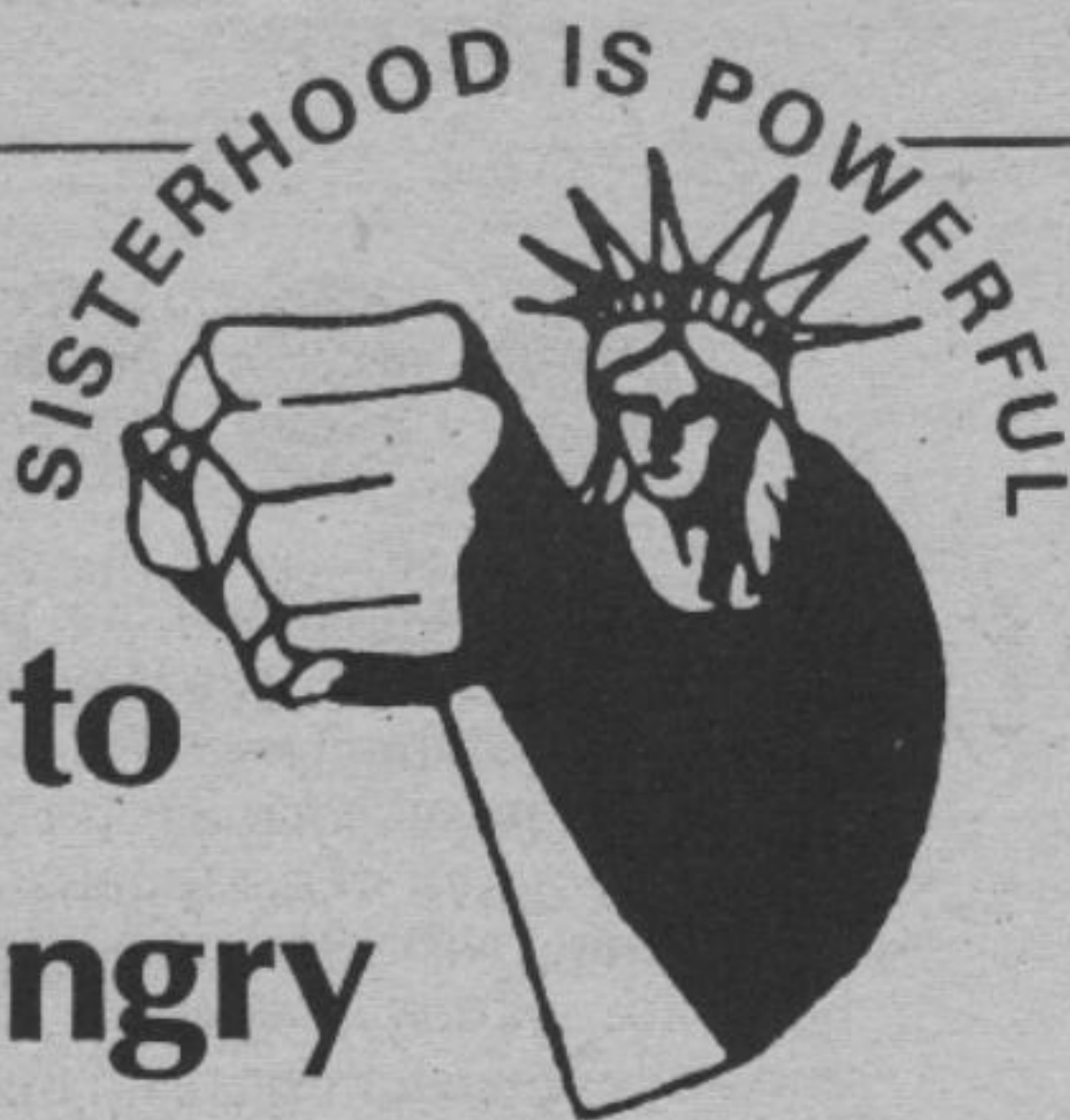
She has never been married. "They say I sublimated sex to a career," she said. "I always wanted to teach." Instead she has usually lived with other female faculty members. It wasn't uncommon, she said, for such pairs to rent an apartment or even buy a house.

Her 78 years have been full, Sarah said as the interview ended. "I survived. I'm in good health, only thing is I can't see too well. I'm trying out a hearing aid because I can't hear too well in this ear. Get myself slimmed down — I'll be fit for a new life." □

Early Women's Liberation

"It's Really Hard to Describe How Angry People Were..."

by Margie Menzel



Early feminism in Tallahassee was bounded by conventions — excessive conventions, we might call them today. But those feminists' courage was awesome. In the face of opposition from the community and harassment by authorities, their activities were bold and daring. Their victories freed us, many years later, to go on.

Three members of the original group who still live in Tallahassee tell their stories here through interview, and another who has left town found the time to put her thoughts down on paper.

...

The climate was very different for Tallahassee activists in 1968 and 1969. The women who formed the first group of feminists here say they first became politically active in the civil rights and anti-war movements.

Kathy: All citizens look for unusual behavior. I just felt I lived in a police state.

Pat: All sorts of weird things were going on.

Kathy: Most people assumed the violence would turn on them.

Pat: My phone was tapped. My house was watched. People would get stopped and harassed for minor traffic violations. (The police) came into one guy's house and tore the whole place apart. When they couldn't find any dope there, they planted some.

The opposition to the civil rights movement in Tallahassee was brutal, and those who spoke out against injustice often felt terrorized. The lines were clearly drawn and the system moved against them in much the same way that it squelched opposition to the Vietnam war.

Kathy: I had grown up believing in the system. World War II was the war to end all wars. My dad lied about his age to join the military (in World War II). That war was against fascism, and there was all this idealism until the 'sixties, when it started falling apart. Korea... then Vietnam... civil rights...

Pat: It's really hard to describe how angry people were about what was happening — not just on campus, but as a national response.

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was formed with the primary purpose of opposing the Vietnam war. They were confronted with terror tactics here as well as in other parts of the nation. At Kent State, they were shot at — and some were killed — and in Tallahassee they were arrested for arranging a meeting with an "outside" speaker. The event became known locally as "The Night of the Bayonets."

A national SDS representative came here to speak and the FSU administration obtained an injunction to keep the meeting from taking place on campus. The participants had earlier agreed to be nonviolent, but they refused to disperse. They were arrested instead.

Kathy: We'd heard of oppression but never experienced it.

Why do we discuss SDS in the context of Tallahassee's feminist history? Kathy put it simply: "As far as I know, that's where women's liberation [in Tallahassee] got started." Pat added, "Just because other women were in it." Kathy pointed out that SDS supported all "oppressed groups" under the umbrella of opposing the war.

Women's status as an oppressed group was analyzed rather differently by SDS, however, than by radical feminists today. D— recalled that SDS women were expected to cook and type and be available as sex objects, and were otherwise

ignored "while the men read Hegel." She described the women of SDS as having a "weak class analysis." They were college girls, she said, who would work a week as a clerk typist and then claim to be working class. "But you've got to start some place," she said.

To a large extent, activists and their allies lived together, and it was as much for protection as for financial reasons, Kathy pointed out. There were three houses where the women tended to meet, and men were a part of their meetings — at least at first. D— said that men came to the meetings "to keep an eye on the ladies."

They were finally barred from the meetings by the women, who realized, D— said, that men had usurped all the skills women needed to learn: writing, speaking, political analysis. The women began to give each other support in their tentative attempts to acquire those skills.

They also began to realize that it was possible to refuse men sexually.

D—: It was a big shock for the little darlin's. It had never occurred to us that we could sleep with other women, or alone.

Kathy: They didn't appreciate it too much, but there wasn't a lot they could do.

Pat: They didn't want to be called male chauvinist pigs because it sounded rather counter-revolutionary, and they wanted to be revolutionaries.

These women forged their own way, under pressure from the men who felt neglected and excluded. There were few books to guide them, few places to turn for support, and little relief from the compelling tug of tradition.

Kathy: There wasn't much to read.

They found copies of *Journal of Women's Liberation* and *Off Our Backs*. They wrote their own poetry and articles and published *Sisters*. They set up a table in the FSU Union and passed out leaflets at some of the more obviously sexist local events. Abortion referral was one of their services.

For some, it was a springboard to a separatist life (see article by Morgana). For others, it was just one aspect of working for social change.

Pat: Women's liberation was a forum to share feelings, but only one forum. It was just one part of my life.

Kathy: It was a process of learning about myself, a context for working out my feelings on my own without being attacked or attacking anyone.

Pat: I always saw women's oppression as part of a whole system of oppressions.

At the time, there was no ongoing argument about whether sexism or racism or classism was the root from which all forms of oppression sprang. "There was no particular depth," said Pat. She described concern over school work and fear of family disapproval as major considerations.

Pat: It was very much a question of emotional needs. People were trying out new lifestyles. Premarital sex was still not accepted behavior. I didn't know anyone in SDS who was philosophical, where they saw nonviolence as a very useful tactic.

Kathy: There were definitely people with Marxist feelings, Trotskyites, just anti-war.

Pat: People were just starting to rock out and take dope and make revolution.

D— commented that blacks were seen as people apart from the white male power structure. It was a long time, she said, before the early feminists began to realize that black men could be sexist, fresh as they were from the bitter civil rights struggle. "At that time, we didn't argue with anything that any black person said," she said.

But after awhile, they began to realize that the analysis of the power structure as being white, exempting black men from charges of sexism, came from black men, not black women. The early women's group was all white.

Lesbianism was not seen as an option at first. Marxist-Leninist groups are very puritanical, D— pointed out. "The idea was that the working class is married and lives together in male/female relationships, so we should, too." The group put considerable energy into dealing with their relationships with men.

D—: Sexual liberation — we were pretty much expected to be available (sexually) without marriage or personal commitment.

Kathy: (We tried to) make our own relationships a little more balanced. Most of them changed, at least a little.

...

Writing this article has been a revealing experience. So few years have gone by, but I can hardly imagine a meeting now without a nursing baby, without women-identified women, with men dominating everything. It's a lesson to us all that the efforts of a few can bear fruit so soon. These women are connected to us. Our lives are strengthened by their courage. □

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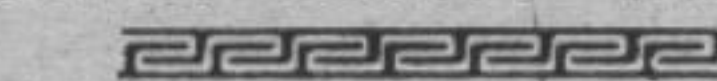


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Full Circle...

by Morgana

Remembering the Beginnings

The circle: Symbol of change, process and enfoldment. It has no beginning, but it connotes birth and the dawning of awareness. It is the symbol which best embodies womyn's spirituality.

Tallahassee was the personal birth center where I first discovered the existence of my circular path. It pushed me out of my rigidity, nurtured me as I grew stronger and more creative, and gave me guidance in my feminist process.

The first meetings of Women's Liberation at Florida State University were in 1969. As in many other university towns, they grew out of the New Left and included womyn from a variety of liberal and radical organizations. Most of us had barely heard of feminism. We had a few articles from the *New England Women's Free Press* to discuss, and several books such as *The Feminist Mystique*, by Betty Friedan. Mostly, we thought of ourselves as members of SDS or YSA, or some other anti-capitalist group. The "women's question" was our concern once a week when we were away from the boys.

But we were usually clear about the importance of our time together. It was a time for validating ourselves and talking about our personal and political lives. We met regularly throughout the anti-war days of student protest and Tallahassee's *Amazing Grace* alternative newspaper, developing our own theory and practice. I left Tallahassee for a year in 1970, but when I came back there was still a group of womyn friends awaiting me.

Soon after that, we began to publicize our meetings for the womyn of FSU and Tallahassee. We petitioned the university administration and received our first official meeting room — the ladies' powder room in the University Union. Undaunted, we turned it into an organizational office where we met regularly and out of which we circulated the brochures and books of the growing "second wave" of our movement.

By this time, most of us thought of ourselves as feminists, although many were still involved with other organizations. We were beginning to develop a clear vision of our institutional and cultural framework, and our feminist spirituality grew out of a common struggle to create a space for ourselves. Somehow, with all our differences and diverse political orientations, we developed a politic of cooperation and activism.

We began to speak about women's liberation in classrooms and we picketed the FSU Bridal Fair. We conducted street actions against sexist hecklers, and our literature was displayed daily in the Union arcade and every term at orientation. By 1972, we had a successful public relations and letter writing campaign behind



us, and had obtained the first portable building in Mabry Heights. This was to become the Tallahassee Women's Educational and Cultural Center.

My clearest memories are of this phase in my developing consciousness. For me, it was the most concrete experience of that time, and offered, perhaps, the greatest amount of personal growth. It was an experience of fulfillment, creating a vision along with other like-minded womyn. A budget from the student senate bought furniture, equipment, books and materials. We brought feminist writers and activists to campus and began the first classes in womyn's studies (later incorporated into the FSU curriculum), and acquired two new buildings for childcare and our cultural center.

While I was working with these sisters making T-shirts, teaching workshops and singing at our weekly coffee house, I was also getting in touch with my spiritual center. I was learning to love myself and my womyn friends with new depths, and beginning to redefine my sexuality and to become less centered around males and male institutions. Many other womyn were experiencing the same excitement of the stirrings of womyn's culture. As the lesbian consciousness that had grown from the Gay Movement merged with the feminism of the women's movement, the concept of woman-identified-woman emerged.

In Tallahassee, this new exploration and interpersonal affirmation resulted in the city's first womyn's living collective on West College Avenue, and also in the collective efforts that established Her Store, Inc. Serving as both a community center and bookstore, Her Store filled a need for Tallahassee womyn for several years. My own early involvement there brought the realization that I needed an even larger womynspace where I could both live and work.

I left Tallahassee in 1974 to develop myself as a Ritual Dancer and to join together with Lesbian feminists to create a womyn's community in St. Augustine. I envisioned a womyn-owned environment where all could be assured of safe and stimulating space, where we could be inspired by each other to develop our minds and bodies, and where we could celebrate our heritage and our crafts.

It took only two years to find other womyn with similar visions and to create such a reality. The experience I had gained in Tallahassee was invaluable. Many Tallahassee sisters have visited our womyn's community and attended concerts, workshops and spiritual circles, keeping alive my connection with my original womyn's community.

A womyn's center is a very powerful thing. Its very existence creates a strength in womyn's psyches. Living here gives me a constant sense of identity and renewed purpose. And whenever I pause to reflect on this, I always come full circle back to my Tallahassee days, and I feel more than a little bit nostalgic. □



The Women's Center

by Sherry Rauch

The first Women's Center at Florida State University was in the "ladies lounge" on the second floor of the union where the ticket office is currently located. They soon moved to a second location in Mabry Heights, and then finally to their present office at 112 N. Woodward Street.

Throughout its history the Women's Center has continually emphasized

programming. Women's Weeks, and in more recent years, Black Women's Weeks have been important yearly events. During these weeks they have brought in such speakers as Flo Kennedy and Rita Mae Brown in the early Seventies and Robin Morgan, Barbara Omalade and Sweet Honey in the Rock in more recent years. Films and slide shows were shown on other nights and the week often ended with a woman's talent night.

The rest of the year the Women's Center offers even more.

- Over the years, the Center has been used for a variety of groups and classes worked one night, the received four nights of free child-care in return.
- Over the years, the Center has been used for a variety of groups and classes. Every quarter these classes were advertised in the Center for Participant Education catalogues. They have ranged from C-R groups to karate classes.
- Providing information and referrals about community and university resources for women has always been a priority at the Center.
- When the Center first started, a library was set up almost immediately. Before Herstore opened, the Women's Center was often the only place to get a hold of feminist literature as it came out. Today it contains books and magazines not available in the Strozier library.

The Women's Center has historically had to struggle to get funds for its programs as well as for such basics as postage, paper, and printing. This is still true today. During the past quarter several of the Center's programs were funded (however minimally) but money for advertising was not included in the budget. Without advertising, women don't know about the programs, and therefore don't come to them. Then student government accuses the Center of not reaching the women on campus. Sound familiar?

Hopefully the Women's Center will continue providing its many and valuable services. They've come a long way since the days in the "ladies lounge" in the FSU union. □

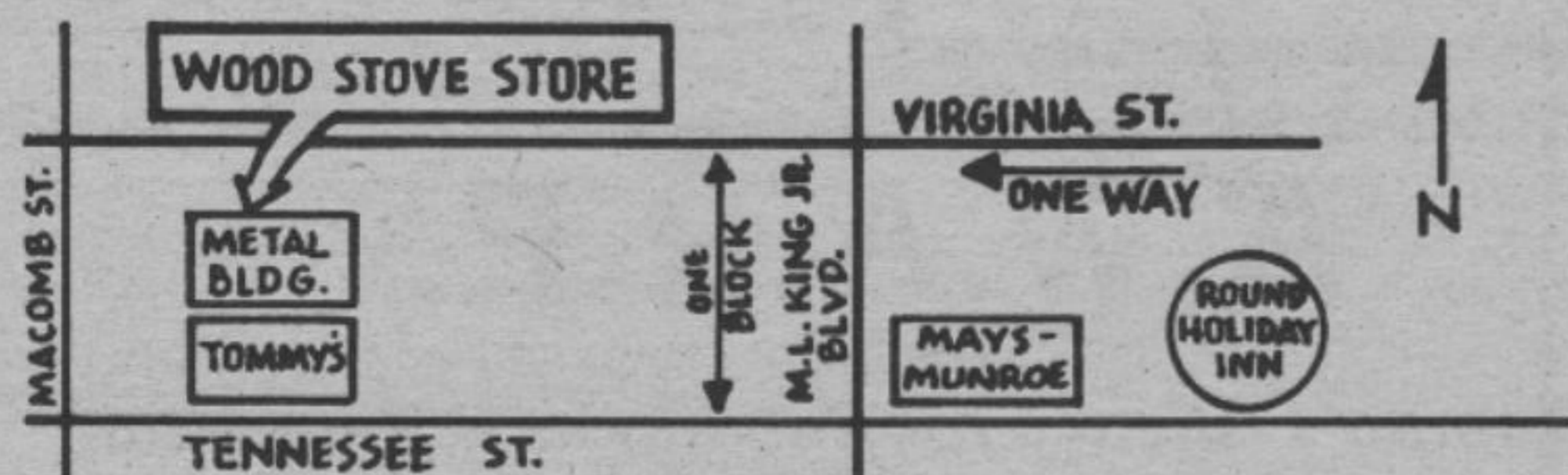


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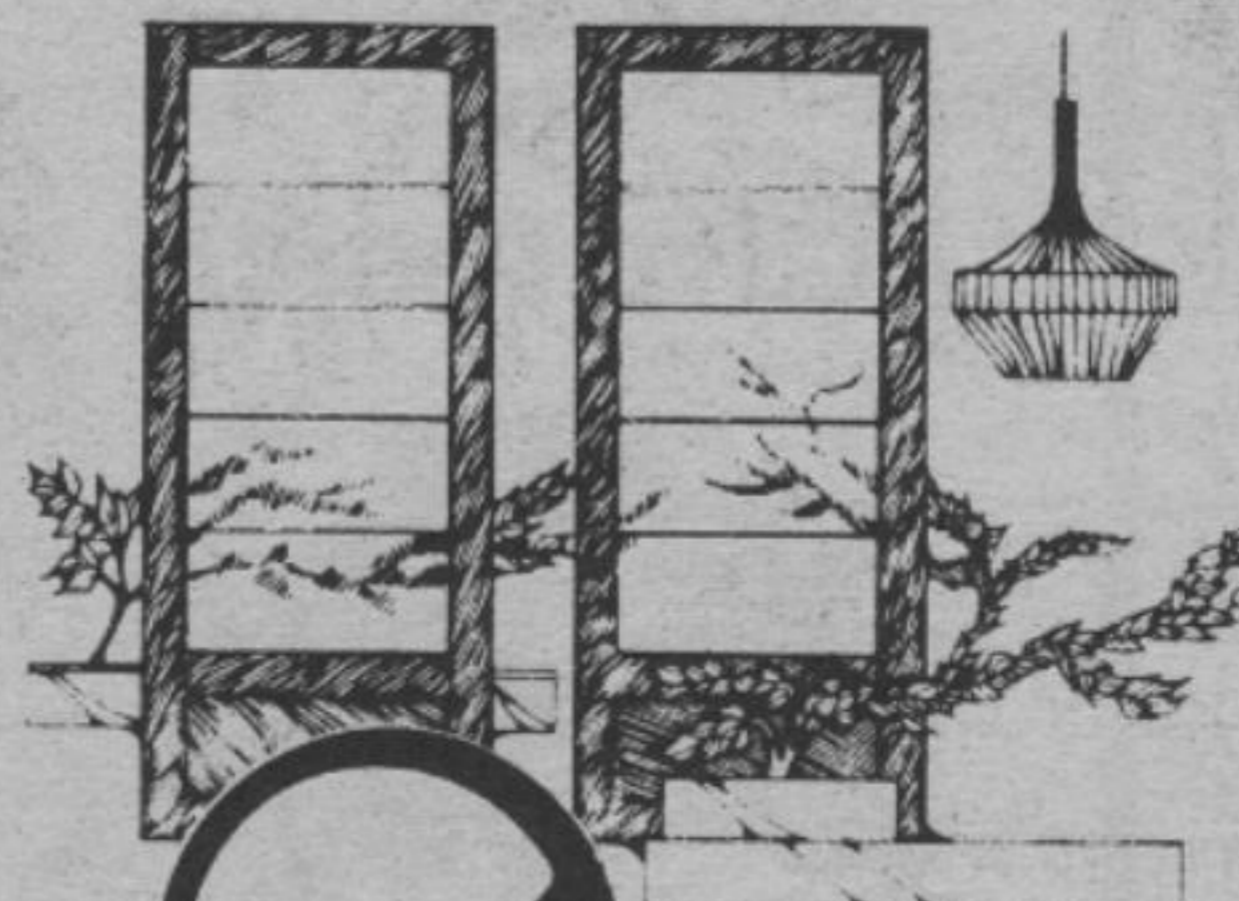
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An Interview With Toni Head

"I Still Have A Lot of Anger..."

by Vicki Mariner

Toni Head has been active, first in Civil Rights and then in the Women's Movement since the early 70's. She is the founder of the Mother Church and a long time activist in the National Organization for Women. Toni has lived in Tallahassee since 1979. These excerpts are from a taped conversation made in the fall of 1981.

...

"Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* was the first thing I ever read that confirmed my feeling that the double standard was wrong. *The Feminine Mystique* came out and I read it and bought copies for all my friends. I was married and had two kids and *The Feminine Mystique* really spoke to me. I was galvanized by it.

I was also going to Civil Rights marches then. I went to Washington D.C. for the big one with Martin Luther King...but it took a while for me to connect that women were discriminated against and we didn't have to sit still for it either.

"Women are usually so isolated from each other, you know, you think if you have a man to take care of you, how can you call yourself oppressed...you can even live in upper class style. If you felt angry about having to play this role then you just weren't well adjusted. A lot of women have always just internalized it in the form of depression. And of course if you went to get help you were told you just hadn't accepted yourself as a woman.

"I had been out of the country for a while and when I came back in '72 there was a N.O.W. chapter just forming in Melbourne, Fla...I read a little newspaper announcement about it...so I went to the first meeting and became a charter member. After I joined the local group down there, I got more and more involved in state activities and conferences...did you hear about Dumpsey the pig?

"When we had the big parade for the ERA in 1975 I made this paper mache pig, put him on little rollers... he had a banner that said "Be a Person Not a Pig". Now my friends and I got lined up in the parade and we were calling this little pig Dempsey. The parade organizers came by and said there were not supposed to be any personal attacks on the opposition. We looked at each other and almost simultaneously came up with the name Dumpsey. He was a big hit. Later we went over to the Hilton Bar and everyone wanted to buy a drink for Dumpsey.

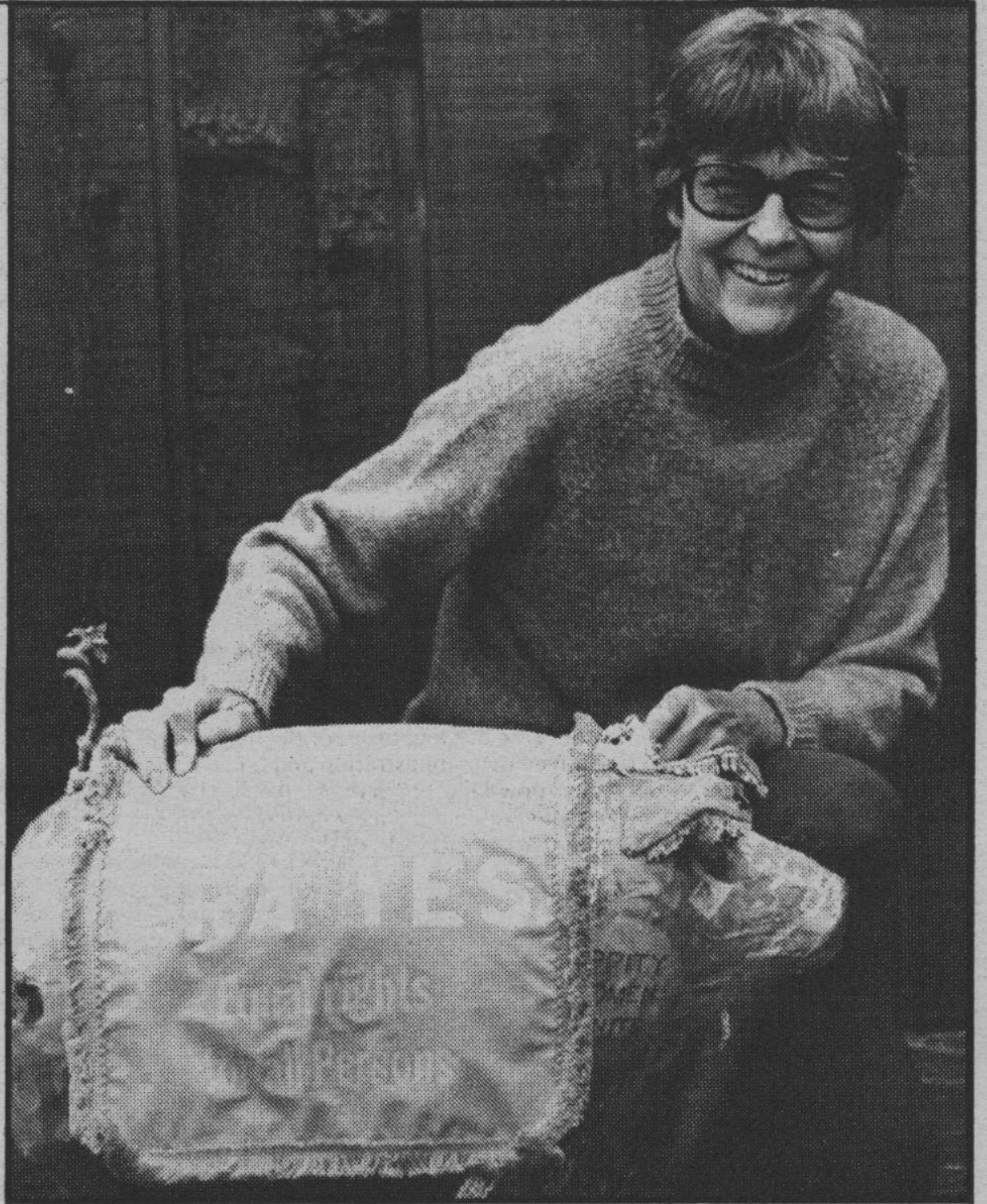
"When I got back to the N.O.W. group in Melbourne our president was very upset that our chapter was identified with this pig. You know, there was this attitude that you had to be so polite to be taken seriously. But even the local newspaper had picked up on it. After several controversial letters had been written they ended up printing a letter of mine with the headline "Dump Dempsey Not Dumpsey". It was great. I still have that pig and if there's another ERA march Dumpsey will ride again.

"Now that was a good way to deal with anger too. We got a lot of pleasure out of doing something humorous. You know that bit about the Women's Movement not having a sense of humor...of course a lot of it is inside jokes and there's a lot of bitter humor. It's just another way to make us feel guilty. Can you imagine people accusing labor unions of not having a sense of humor? And there's always so much joy in what women are doing together. Those early parades and demonstrations...the singing, just made us so high. I've missed that lately too...but they take so much to organize and you get so discouraged when these huge efforts seem to get no results. I predict that something big is going to happen, though, if the ERA doesn't pass. Women aren't just going to let it go by.

"After going to the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City in 1975 I was really fired up to do more. I had read Elizabeth Gould Davis' *The First Sex* and had heard Flo Kennedy make the statement, "If men got pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament." Somehow around this time I also started corresponding with Merlin Stone (author of *When God Was a Woman*). I got the idea that it was about time we established a religion based on feminist ideas. So I set about incorporating and getting legal and tax-exempt status for the Mother Church.

"Now the first reason for starting the church came from my memories as a child of just not being able to relate to this male god. I thought how wonderful it would have been to see god as a woman and myself in her image. I think there's a very profound psychological difference there. I also wanted to take the stigma off abortion. Every child has a god-given right to be wanted, and every woman has the right to make this choice. I believe that very deeply.

"The second thing was...damn, those tax advantages are good. Why shouldn't the feminist movement have the same benefits as the Baptists and these other religious groups who are so often our enemies?"



Toni Head and "Dumpsey"

"Maybe it was a little ahead of its time. It's a very radical idea. Now, I wasn't thinking of this as anything like Wicca (feminist witchcraft). I think all that witchcraft tradition is really fascinating but it's not really my thing. But you know, that wonderful feeling you get in groups of women is almost a religious experience. I thought, why not start something here? After all, Joseph Smith started a whole religion after saying he found some tablets that came directly from god. Why couldn't I say I believe that god's a woman and abortion is a sacrament and that's my religion?"

"Well, I had been talking about this with people and putting out the Mother Church newsletter for a while when I went to a big N.O.W. conference in Orlando. It was at the Sheraton Hotel and I was there with Alice McAdams and her mother, Jane. The first evening we had been up in our room talking and were just heading down to the dining room. You had to go through this little garden area...and I was talking away when suddenly Jane points and says, 'Oh, look, a burning bush!' I looked and there were some sparklers stuck in the ground ahead of us, blazing away. Then she said, 'Oh, look, some golden tablets!' And sure enough there were some golden tablets, with writing in code yet! It was really delightful. They had set this all up just for me and I was so busy talking I almost missed it. I spent the whole evening deciphering the code.

"Before I moved up to Tallahassee I realized that the Mother Church needed some new direction. I didn't want it to drop out of existence. So I gave the papers to the Pagoda collective in St. Augustine. That's where it is today."

"The thing that has fueled me is my anger. I try not to take on too much at once, but I still have a lot of anger. It doesn't go away, and the best way to handle anger is through action. I'm on the steering committee of the Tallahassee N.O.W. and I'm C.R. chair of the state N.O.W. I used to be treasurer but I generally avoid holding offices. It's awfully good experience for younger women. I try to pace myself.

"I'm in for the long haul." □

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1969
First women's liberation group was formed in Tallahassee

Housing office at FSU discontinued maid service to men's dorm because "if the girls can clean their own rooms, so can the boys."

1970
Bridal Fair disrupted by feminist who held a mock wedding incorporating the ideas of women's liberation on marriage ("honorable estate instituted by big business). They issued a tract stating that marriage perpetrates the idea of women as strictly housewives and sex objects, and that women are told to measure their success in society "in terms of the products they buy."

An Interview With Margret Menzel

"We Were Not Alone..."

by Louise Beauchamp

NOW. The name was born in 1966, before acronyms became a fad and every group began to search for a name more clever than the others. It was, simply, the National Organization for Women, and 30 women had decided that its time had come.

The founders were professional women, educated and experienced, many of them veterans of one or another Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. They were ready to stop studying the issues and start doing something about them, and NOW was formed as a national lobbying group on behalf of women's rights.

"My ears pricked up right away," said Margaret Menzel, one of the 195 charter members nationwide and co-founder of the Tallahassee chapter. "I thought it might be my kind of thing and I joined up right then. There was a great sense of elation over the next three or four years as women like myself began to discover each other and found that we were not alone."

The membership mushroomed. By the end of the first year they had gathered 1,200 members and "it became apparent that there was something called the National Organization for Women," said Menzel. After a few years the members began to recognize that much of the action needed to take place at the state level, and they developed a program to help organize local chapters. By 1974 there were more than 700 local chapters and 40,000 members.

The Tallahassee chapter was one of the first three or four in Florida, and it was conceived when Menzel attended regional action workshop in Atlanta in April 1971. "I came back from that conference charged up with the possibilities of what a chapter could do," she said. Together with Evelyn Martin, a faculty member at FAMU, she sent invitations to about 75 women and men and about 25 of them came to the first meeting. Fourteen joined up. By the end of 1972 the chapter had 50 members and by the end of the second year it was approaching 80.

Most of the initial members were associated with the universities, but the makeup of the local chapter has been in continual flux. "About every two years there's been a change in leadership," Menzel said. "It's been a very amicable change. But each time we get a new set of leaders, the constitution of the membership changes, too. Right now the chapter is mostly composed of younger women who work in state government.

"I think that's good," she said. "Women come to the chapter when something has fired them up and they need a vehicle to work with. They work with the chapter for two or three years and learn what they need to know. Then they drift out of working with NOW and go on to apply the skills and self-confidence they've learned."

Like the national organization, the Tallahassee chapter was ignored at first. "And then gradually," Menzel said, "thanks in large measure to the fact that there were some bright young female reporters on the Democrat staff, we learned how to do things that would get publicity."

But the broad-based nature of NOW allowed it to be quickly overtaken in imagery by the more radical women's groups that were springing up. "In about three or four years' time it went from being ignored, to active hostility,

"Women come to the chapter when something has fired them up and they need a vehicle to work with"

to being accepted almost too well — as a 'conservative' women's liberation group!" Menzel laughed.

Activities during the early years included a reception for presidential candidate Shirley Chisholm, a dinner for Betty Friedan, a dinner and conference with Bernice Sandler and, of course, a landmark discrimination suit against FSU. "The first big issue that we took on was equal pay at the universities," Menzel said. The story of the suit is still told to younger initiates to feminism in Tallahassee.

The 1972 amendments to the Civil Rights Act, specifically including women who worked at public universities, coincided in Tallahassee with an accreditation study conducted at FSU. The university, "in its arrogance or ignorance," Menzel explained, "assigned the women in every department to compare women's salaries and status with that of men. They thought it was a woman's issue.

"So we all, for the first time, got a real good look at what was being done to us. Some of us took it a little personally that we were only being paid

Tallahassee Democrat

Section Two
Monday, April 14, 1975-11

Local news
Comics Sports Classified

1,500 urge favorable ERA vote

By SUSAN LYKES
Covered State Women
The Florida Parade for the Equal
Amendment, a project of the
Organization for Women, drew
people into the streets of
Tallahassee today to ask their state
legislators to vote for the ERA.

"Move on over, or we'll move on
over you," sang other marchers.
National President of NOW Karen
Schechter led the parade route in
Tallahassee today along
the downtown
streets.



half as much as the men at our rank... You started to see women having lunch with each other from different departments, little knots of angry faculty women," she chuckled. "It was a really dumb move on the part of the university."

Menzel and nine other women filed suit in 1972, charging a variety of equal pay and equal opportunity violations. "We were angry," she said, "and scared... Most of the women who sued universities at that time lost their shirts and their jobs and their professions."

The case dragged on for years and never did come to trial, but they won a significant moral victory and even a little "back pay." The turning point came in 1975 with a separate court ruling that a federal court could not order a state or municipal government to pay out money. The university, feeling safe, offered a very favorable out-of-court settlement and the women accepted it, reserving the right to reopen the issue of back pay.

Six months later, with great irony, the U.S. Supreme Court made an opposite ruling on a reverse discrimination suit involving a white male. The women reopened their case and eighteen months later were finally awarded a total of about \$20,000.

"I would not recommend that any woman go by the route of federal court," Menzel said. "A federal judge is an absolute dictator. The reason that federal court suits don't work for women's rights, by and large, is that you're appealing to the most sexist institution in the nation for redress of your rights. You're appealing the action of a less sexist institution to a more sexist institution. That is not a good way to go, and it left me feeling very disillusioned about justice in its country."

One issue that Menzel believes the women's movement has not yet come to grips with, and must, is motherhood and parenthood. "If you're going to say that you have to be either a traditional woman and raise children, or a feminist and not raise children, it's just not going to wash," she said. "Somebody has to raise children, and we're just not going to make any progress until children are raised by feminist parents — men and women both."

After ten years of activism, Menzel said she was drifting away from active involvement in the political battle for the Equal Rights Amendment. "I feel

bad about it, I support it and contribute money to it and all that, but I just can't get up for it again," she sighed. "I have this terrible feeling of déjà vu about it... Really, in my heart, I don't believe the Equal Rights Amendment is going to solve anything for us now. I'm so disillusioned about the political process as a vehicle for achieving women's rights. But it would certainly be a symbolic victory."

Menzel and the interviewer had a good laugh over the idea that "back in the old days" anyone could have believed that a person might not be entitled to equal pay. "Would you believe that in 1972 that was a radical idea?" she asked. "Would you believe that it's still a pretty radical idea at FSU?"

Rank by rank, women are paid pretty much the same as men now at FSU Menzel said. But their average salaries are only about 65 percent of the men's, mainly because "they're clustered at the bottom ranks and they turn over faster," she said. "And if you don't keep constant pressure on (the administration), every year, you find that you tend to drift back, even within ranks.

"That's happened within the last two years because of the Quality Improvement money that's come to FSU. It's been used to beef up the salaries of the male superstars.

"It's like Thomas Jefferson said, you know: Constant vigilance is the price of freedom."

In 1982, the acronym for the National Organization for Women will still be appropriate. □

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Writing this article on short notice, working from a taped interview and several documents, was a marvelous experience. There is so much more to Margaret Menzel than can be said here, and she is a warm and coherent speaker even on tape. The article practically wrote itself. She has many stories to tell of her work in Tallahassee — committed and by-laws beyond endurance, handling confrontations with male biology students, personal struggles against fatalism and negative thinking — and she tells them well. My apologies are offered in the event that, out of ignorance, anything of personal or general significance has been omitted.

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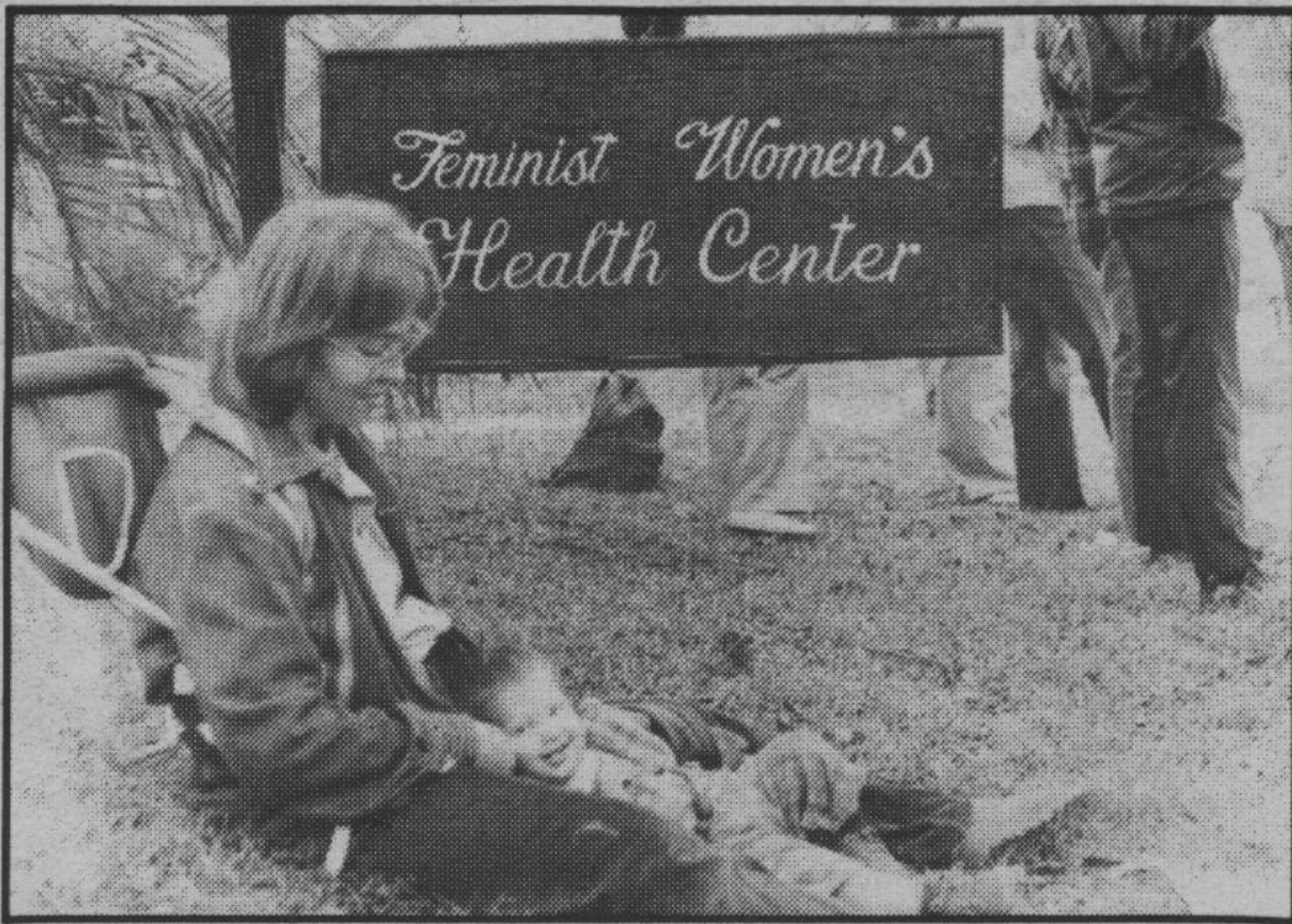
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1982 Women's Music Calendars Now In Stock



by Margie Menzel and Renee Bradshaw

This article is based on court records, newspaper clippings, hand-outs, the Feminist Women's Health Center files, my files, and many hours of interviews. Sherry Rauch obtained the initial interviews and I went over them. Then I spent two hours with Risa Denenberg and Brenda Joyner to clarify any ambiguities and to request further discussion on points that I didn't feel were developed with sufficient depth. When necessary, I have referred to the interview tapes, but have not quoted them, specifically because of space limitations. — MM

Origins

Rebecca Pierson: I did have an understanding of how healthcare has been used as a way to control and manipulate and mutilate people.

Risa Denenberg: This particular center was assisted in getting started by the Los Angeles Feminist Women's Health Center. They started a clinic in 1971, on a similar basis, that basis being self-help (specifically, vaginal self-examination — the process by which women could practice self-demystification); and also through consciousness raising. It was in 1973 that the Supreme Court decision changed the manner of getting abortions, and abortions became more accessible. I think that a major thrust of the women's movement at that time was getting women abortions... There's a lot of national history involved. I don't know exactly what was happening in Tallahassee at that time because I wasn't here.

Rebecca: In the late '60s, the women's movement was just starting here, and it was an outgrowth for women who were frustrated at the inability of women to be recognized for the assets they brought to Left groups and progressive groups. A lot of women came out of SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and groups who were fighting the war.

Risa: In so many communities, women were doing abortion referral... There have been at least eight clinics that grew out of the training that the L.A. FWHC did, and this is one of them. Of the three women who were involved in starting this center, two of them trained in L.A.: Linda Curtis and Lynn Heidelberg. The third was Kelly Patterson, who was working at the Women's Center at FSU. It was the FSU Women's Center that Linda and Lynn turned to for support in getting started. Kelly Patterson was the woman at the Women's Center who was interested enough in what Linda and Lynn were trying to do to join them. And she went with them through the process of starting the center in the early months of 1974. They did self-help in the community, in women's homes and at the Women's Center. They participated in sharing menstrual extraction, a technique completely in the hands of women. They shared everything they knew with the community, while at the same time struggling with local physicians, and began offering pregnancy testing services. The first actual abortion clinic was in June of 1974.

The Anti-Trust Suit

The suit filed by the Tallahassee FWHC against six local obstetrician-gynecologists on the grounds of conspiracy to maintain a medical monopoly (of abortion) has been considered epoch-making for health consumers. It's impossible to write about the FWHC without including the anti-trust suit, but we haven't space for all the details.

The FWHC was expanding. A *Democrat* article was written in June of 1975 which described the feminist clinic as flourishing. The fact was that clinic abortion was considerably less expensive than going to a doctor because doctors would check women into hospitals for what is truly a short and relatively non-debilitating procedure. So the FWHC was catching on and had, in fact, lowered their fees once volume permitted them to do so. They were also succeeding at teaching their self-help methods. The result was that their original building, a house near the hospital, had become too small for them. When the *Democrat* chronicled their move to a larger building, attention was drawn not only to the FWHC's success, but to the fees earned by their local physician, Dr. A.D. Brickler. He quit the next day.

The other local obstetrician, Dr. McWilliams, told the FWHC that he, too, would quit if an agreement could not be reached between the FWHC and the Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, then the only local hospital. The primary objection of the local ob/gyns appeared to be that, as physicians, they could not advertise their procedures as the abortion clinic did.

Dr. Mahmood Mohammad, later one of the defendants in the anti-trust suit, met with the directors of the FWHC and pointed out that not just paid advertising, but speaking to community groups, self-help clinics, etc., "Feeds into your medical clinic." Dr. Mohammad did his utmost to convince TMH not to associate with paid advertising. He was ultimately successful.

On August 5, 1975, the Capitol Medical Society decided that, "Physicians in the Capitol Medical Society should not be associated with agencies that advertise their medical services." This was, effectively, a boycott of the FWHC, and four days later, Dr. McWilliams quit working at the clinic. He said that, as a junior physician, he had to rely upon his colleagues at TMH to treat his patients in his

Feminist anti-trust suit settled out of court
by rose goldsborough
An out-of-court settlement yesterday between the Tallahassee Feminist Women's Health Center and six local physicians culminated a five-year-long court battle between the two groups.
Brenda Joyner, a member of the FWHC's legal team and full-time staff member, made

with the hospital has now been obtained, and that the doctors had agreed to maintain a receptive climate in Tallahassee for doctor, FWHC.

"This should pave the way for getting back physicians to do abortions here," Joyner said. Presently, a physician from

"I have nothing to say about the matter," Palmer said when contacted about the out-of-court settlement.
Curtis referred all questions to his attorney, Murray Wagsworth.

absence. He expressed the fear that another doctor could claim to be too busy to attend on of McWilliams' patients. Naturally, Dr. McWilliams was also harassed in a number of other ways.

In any case, the FWHC had to find a local physician to perform their abortions. The reason for that is that the doctor must have staff privileges at the local hospital in order to follow up procedures should a patient develop complications. TMH refused the FWHC a transfer agreement that would have transcended the immediate problem of hospital privileges. The FWHC tried to acquire a local doctor, but met with no success. The Capitol Medical Society would neither allow public attendance at their closed meetings nor notes to be made available. CMS, it was later shown in court, actually pressured out-of-town doctors not to work with the FWHC, also.

So, on October 1, 1975, the FWHC filed a federal anti-trust suit against six local ob/gyns charging restraint of trade, as required by the statute, and the attempt to monopolize women's healthcare in Tallahassee.

Judge William Stafford denied the FWHC's request for a preliminary injunction, but ruled a "substantial likelihood" that the case would succeed on its own merits. The FWHC and its supporters were aghast when Stafford threw the case out of court twelve hours before it was to be heard.

[The FWHC was able to make emergency back-up arrangements and to hire out-of-town ob/gyns for their abortion clinics. It should also be noted that the FWHC's complication rate for abortion is well below the national average.]

It would be difficult to describe here the sacrifices of the FWHC staff and the dedication of their supporters. They did receive many contributions for their legal costs. Risa Denenberg estimated that the staff contributed \$96,000 in salaries before the out-of-court settlement, and \$20,000 since.

It can be simply stated that Stafford's decision was appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court in New Orleans. On December 20, 1978, this body ruled in favor of the FWHC's case being heard in court. The doctors appealed, and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the ruling of the Fifth Circuit Court in October, 1979. Legal precedents were set for health consumers.

Thus the FWHC was in a position to win its suit. Aside from their own sacrifices, they note the contributions of the Tallahassee community, the national women's health movement, Co-op Books and Records, the American Public Health Association, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and many other groups.

The Case Against The Attorneys

In January of 1980, the FWHC agreed to an out-of-court settlement with the defendant doctors. They claim to have done this on the advice of their legal representatives. The immediate benefits of the settlement were considerable, including a pledge of good faith from the doctors that a "receptive climate" would be maintained for health consumers who patronized the FWHC.

The FWHC was also awarded \$75,000. "This amount could never compensate for the sacrifices which the FWHC has made over the last five years," they say, "Because of non-cooperation by the local medical establishment."

Any possible celebration was shortlived, however. The FWHC's attorneys, Kent Spriggs, Betty Owen Stinson, and Stewart Parsons, filed suit claiming that the settlement money was actually theirs as legal fees. In fact, they seek a total of \$110,000. The FWHC points out that along with the \$30,000 these lawyers have already received, their fee, if their suit is successful, would represent 175 percent of the damages.

The FWHC says, "We feel that Kent Spriggs and Betty Owen Stinson have treated us unjustly and taken undue advantage of the FWHC by advising us to accept a settlement which they negotiated in their own self-interest, not in the interest of the FWHC. They repeatedly refused to talk with us about their fees when we initiated such discussions during the settlement negotiations. They simply told us the settlement award would be ours... Because these attorneys have full knowledge of our non-profit status, the nature of our work, and our financial hardships, and because they are fully aware of what their present action could mean to the FWHC's providing health services and doing community work, we have no choice but to view their actions as intentionally designed to suppress work which they once claimed to support." (From a press statement released in April, 1980.)

The FWHC filed a counter-suit against their former attorneys, charging misrepresentation and breach of contract. The suit was heard by Judge John Rudd in June, 1981, and he ruled against Spriggs and Stinson. In fact, his judgement was quite vitriolic. He said, claimed the *Democrat*, that he regretted the shame the case brought on the legal profession.

"Shame is brought on all members of the Bar when attorneys harm those who they have the highest duty to protect — their clients," Rudd said.

The case is being appealed.

continued on page 26



The Tallahassee Lesbian Collective

"The Only Women I Knew Like Me Were Living in that House"

by Sherry Rauch

If you were walking down College Avenue about eight years ago, you might have slowed down when you passed a gray apartment because of all the activity taking place in and around the building. Women were going in and out the doors talking, almost arguing, intently with each other. Other women were playing pool in the downstairs apartment while someone upstairs was cooking. A woman on the front porch was holding a snake. You would also hear music, a woman singing, "Any woman can be a (did you hear that right?) leeesbian." By this time you would either have quickly walked on, vowing never to come this route again, or you would stop, introduce yourself, and hope someone would invite you to dinner.

If I had been the woman walking down the street eight years ago, I would have been the latter women. (Of course, maybe I would have done what I did in Herstore: walked in, saw books about lesbians, and walked right back out. By the time I decided it was okay to go back, it was closed.)

But alas, I was still going to high school in South Florida during the time the Tallahassee Lesbian Collective existed (Fall of 1973 to Winter of 1975). I did, however, get to interview Karen, a woman who was part of the collective from the beginning 'til the end. I found this interview one of the most fascinating — I needed to hear about women living together and how it was a viable alternative to the traditional nuclear family. Knowing about some of the successes and failures of the Lesbian Collective has taken me a step further in imagining ways in which women can live and be together.

The following article is based on an interview with Karen in the Fall of 1981.

•••

The women who originally started the collective wanted women from 'different walks of life', Karen said at the beginning of the interview. "Of course it became limited to white, middle-class women that had all gone to college or were going through college and realized they wanted to be something else besides a housewife."

Still, there was a variety of women who lived in the collective. "Everyone had different experiences — life experiences, sexual experiences, different expectations of what they wanted for their life."

They hadn't always called themselves a Lesbian Collective. The original idea, in fact, was to start a Women's Center off campus. A Women's Center had been started in the ladies' lounge in the FSU Union, but they didn't know if it would continue to be funded. Some women also felt a Center off-campus would be more accessible to women in the larger Tallahassee community. They wanted to have offices and a large room for meetings, in addition to actual living space.

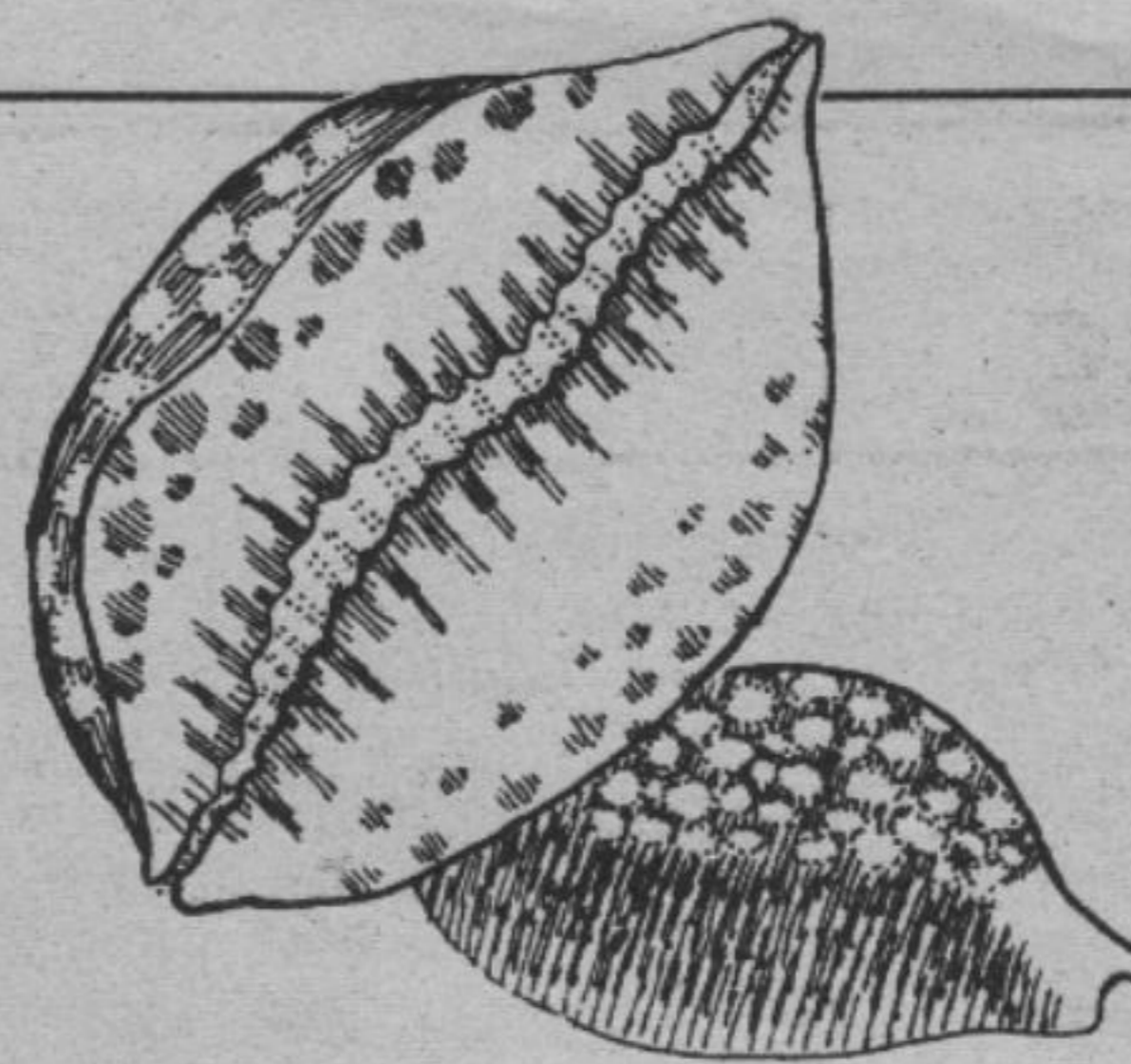
Soon they found what they were looking for: a four apartment building on College Avenue. The owner agreed to rent to them, but mentioned that two women were still living in one of the upstairs apartments. She assured the collective that they would be moving in a few months.

The women didn't move, however, and the collective was faced with its first problem. The two women upstairs knew nothing about the agreement between the owner and the collective. One woman had lived there for five years. The collective eventually had to ask the women to move.

Once it was announced that the apartment building was going to be the new Women's Center, women, especially lesbians, started to visit. "It was the first time lesbians could go somewhere to be themselves and congregate together without having to go to a bar," Karen said.

As time went on the collective started to change from a Women's Center to a living space for lesbians. Nine months after the collective began, lesbians lived in most of the apartments and they began calling themselves the Tallahassee Lesbian Collective.

They also began having regular meetings around this time. The idea for a



woman's bookstore, which eventually became Herstore, came out of one of their meetings. They also provided the main energy for the first Women's Week at FSU.

All the meetings were not about projects, however. Karen is still left with a bad taste about a lot of the meetings: "The only thing we seemed to accomplish was complaining about each other. And as a group we tried to mediate a lot of personal problems."

Sexuality was a big issue. A lot of women who had previously been straight started to see lesbianism as an option. Karen described her own experience: "I started thinking 'O my gosh, I'm attracted to women sexually. It really makes me feel wonderful to see a woman kissing another woman.' It was amazing. I lived there thinking I was straight and then realized I identified as a lesbian."

Many of the women adopted the motto: An army of lovers cannot fail. "Everyone was taken with Rita Mae Brown and wanted to build a lesbian nation," Karen explained. "Everyone became lovers with everyone else practically. Of course it didn't work out. Most of our time was spent on interpersonal relationships."

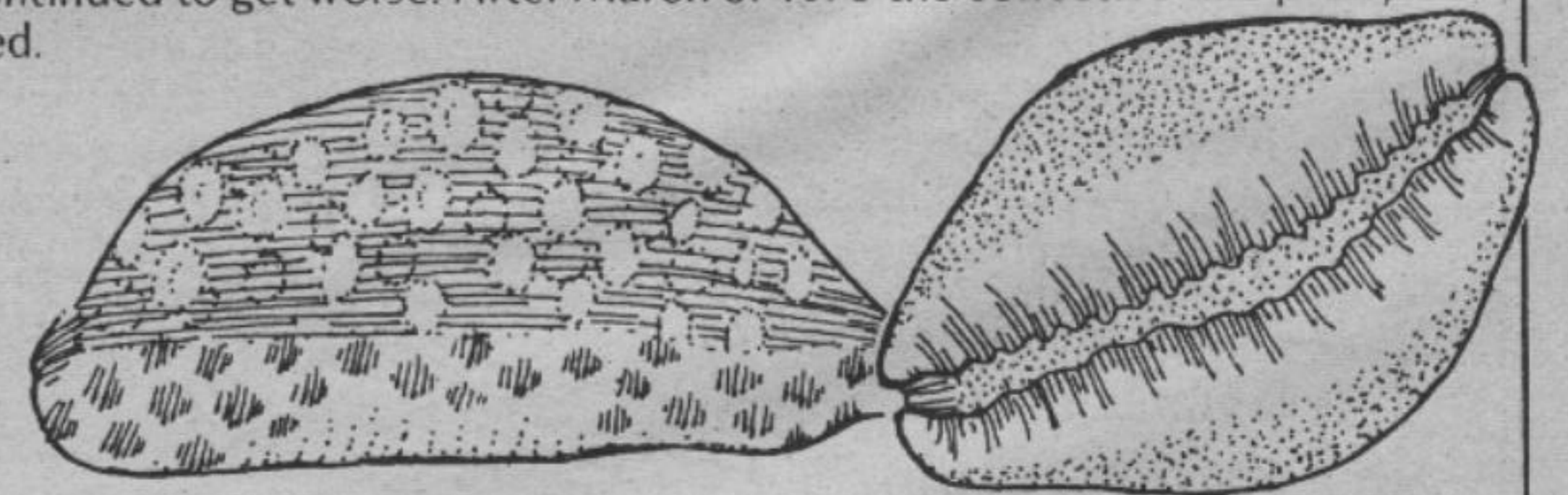
Despite the time spent in meetings, the women did a lot of other things. They taught each other skills: electronics, carpentry, car repairs. Karen said she even learned how to masturbate and use a vibrator while she lived there. They had fun together too: taking showers, cutting each others hair, and taking care of each other when they were sick. One activity important to Karen was going to Goodwill on Saturday afternoons. "We had fun buying clothes, finding different ones to try on to make the point of what our identity was."

Music was also important to the collective. They hosted coffee house nights and collected women/lesbian music as it came out. Karen remembers the first time she heard a record about lesbians: "I remember coming home one day and someone came up and said 'We have a surprise for you.' Each woman who came home that day had to sit down and the others would play this one record. I was sat down on a couch and was all plumped up and all the women who had come in before me were sitting there to watch my face while I listened to this record and it happened to be 'Lavender Jane Loves Women.' It had just come off the press. I said 'O my god, there's a record about us! We're real! Somebody else like us.' The only woman I knew like me were living in that house."

A lot of women also began writing journals: "We wrote about our lives, what we felt. What a woman tastes like and what it was like to just hold a friend. What it was like to cut your friend's hair and knowing how freeing that was for her. To watch women play pool with their shirts off, and having their breasts bang against the pool table. We kept great journals."

But the pressure of trying to discard old values and create new ways of living took its toll. Some women were mainly interested in being a politically active group. Others came to the collective to meet other lesbians, and still others wanted to form a different kind of family unit. "All of it was going too fast. We were caught up in trying to change things all at once."

Certain women held more power than others. "Some people would say everything revolved around Mary (not her real name). She had such charisma and control that things went pretty much as she wanted." Communication between the women continued to get worse. After March of 1975 the collective had pretty much dissolved.



For the women who lived there, however, the collective remains an important part of their development. "It was a time of trying things on and trying things out, multiple relationships, waterbeds, clothes, values, and reading, reading, reading. It was a time to decide what our personal lives were." □

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Rape Crisis

by Susy Fay

In 1980, Tallahassee ranked third in size among American cities with high rape rates. Looking at national rape statistics another way, it ranked first: Tallahassee had the highest incidence of rape in the country for a city of its size.

Tallahassee has recently added to its history a monstrous record of extremely violent rapes that ended in death or disfigurement of the victims. Among these were the Chi Omega murders in 1978 and, more recently, the dormitory murder of a FAMU student and violent assaults on a state worker and a visiting foreign tourist.

For women who survive rape in Tallahassee, since the early Seventies Rape Crisis has offered peer support and victim advocacy.

Rape Crisis, pre-1974, began as a grassroots feminist organization, with politically active lesbian feminists at the helm. Getting a lukewarm response from conservative Tallahassee, Rape Crisis began to emphasize a "human services" approach by 1974-75.

The center incorporated and hired staff for the first time in 1978. For a while, becoming official seemed to have little effect on Rape Crisis' difficulty in attracting volunteers. This difficulty was, apparently, a by-product of Rape Crisis' radical image. According to Gail Dixon, the center's current executive director, "Feminism" is a real devil term in Tallahassee. It's not one of the things you advertise. Rape Crisis also had its problems with the local social services and legal communities. A persistent problem was these agencies' perception that Rape Crisis actively urged women not to report rapes, although Rape Crisis held that the decision to report or not was up to the woman.

Rape Crisis was without an executive director from April to November 1980, and was run by a core group of six volunteers. That September it merged with Refuge House of Tallahassee, a temporary shelter for battered women and their children.

When we talked to the new executive director in November of 1980, she told us, "I've had this job for two weeks." Despite the brevity of her tenure, and a bad cold, she gamely granted an interview.

Dixon's greatest concern is establishing Rape Crisis, once and for all, so that it will be there when women in Tallahassee need it. "It's a hard and fast reality that right now, with the recent election results [Reagan], money for human services is going to be scarce. I think we would be foolish not to acknowledge that the more politically conservative an organization appears, the more likely it is to gain access to the kind of resources it needs to operate."

...

How many women seek out Rape Crisis?

Gail thinks it's a small proportion of the women who are attacked. In 1980, Rape Crisis had approximately 50 calls from victims, which is roughly the same as the number of rapes reported to the Tallahassee Police Department. Estimates of the rape reporting rate in Tallahassee range from 10 percent to 50 percent. "I tend to think it's closer to one in five," Dixon said.

Police presently do not offer any information on Rape Crisis, perhaps because Tallahassee police believe the center urges women not to report. Dixon would like the police to at least let rape victims know that Rape Crisis exists.

"Often, women do not call about a rape until long after it has occurred. . . There's a long period of reorientation for a rape victim," she said. The peer support that rape crisis centers offer, the counseling available to the victim's

family, and the advocacy — being with a rape victim to see that she gets fair and adequate treatment from the legal system — can be vital for the process of reorientation. "It's important that women have the choice to use these services if they want."

...

Florida has one of the most liberal statutes on sexual assault in the country, according to Dixon. Unlike the FBI's definition of rape ("... the unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman by a man, forcibly and against her will. . ."), the Florida law, which changed in 1978, is not sex specific, does not exempt the marital situation, does not limit rape to vaginal penetration by a penis, and allows the threat of force as a condition for coercion. This results in a more comprehensive legal definition of rape.

Nonetheless, only a small number of rape cases in Tallahassee and the state result in arrest. Even fewer get to trial. Of those that make it to trial, a small percentage are prosecuted, and only a small proportion of those result in conviction. It is an unusual case that results in substantial sentencing.

When a rapist is sentenced, the following has probably occurred: "There is a preponderance of evidence against the assailant — witnesses, strong medical evidence, and a victim who has suffered excessive violence along with the rape. Where you have a responsive legal system, liberal laws and liberal juries, an excellent state attorney, and where the victim is considered a very credible witness, usually when she is a young virgin," Dixon said.

For most women who have suffered a rape, the police are not very protective and the legal system is not set up to provide victim justice. It can be easy to get frustrated when you work at a rape crisis center, Dixon has found. "It's very hard not to use up a lot of energy in anger when you deal with women who are victims. It's hard not to get pissed as hell when you see a woman who has been beaten to smithereens by her husband and you know she's going back. . . The criminal justice system is set up to protect the accused." Dixon sees Rape Crisis as a crucial safety net for women who have to deal with unresponsive legal and police agencies.

Talking with Dixon was more like glimpsing the future of Rape Crisis than scanning its past. She thinks that networking and resource sharing will play a large part in that future. Twenty-seven agencies in a seven state area have formed the Southeastern Coalition Against Rape. Rape crisis centers will probably do more sharing of printed and multi-media information. Through regional networking, technical assistance could become available at a low cost to cities without rape crisis centers.

Rape Crisis presently has staff and interested volunteers, and there is increased awareness in Tallahassee that rape is a serious local crime. The combination of these circumstances may mean that it's the right time for the center to say to local agencies, "We have something we can offer you. Let's work together."

"Ten years ago, I might have said that this was not the thing to do, and I still don't believe in sacrificing victim services for political image, but I've learned the hard way that if you don't have the right political image, your services aren't going to be there." While this image may involve a certain perceived conservative stance, Dixon said, at the same time, "I've become much more radical and strongly feminist in the sense of my commitment to women. . . Ultimately, the hard line for Rape Crisis is being there for the victim of rape." □

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by Vicki Mariner —
former member of the Herstore Collective

It was not an accident that Herstore, Tallahassee's only feminist bookstore, opened its doors on Halloween of 1974. The founders planned it that way, for Halloween is the witches' new year, a time of new beginnings as well as resolutions.

The women in the College Avenue collective had been talking about a store for months. There was a need in the community for an off-campus place for women to meet, hold celebrations, discuss ideas, sell their crafts and generally find a woman-affirming atmosphere.

Gradually plans came together. Yard sales were held and donations gathered into a special bank account, adding up to several hundred dollars in a few months. It was enough to pay the rent and make the first book orders, and a storefront with lots of space was found just a block away, close to campus and downtown workers. Cleaning and decorating parties got the store in shape, and shelves and furniture were donated. The store opened with a party on Halloween night with good food, wine and lots of enthusiasm.

In the early '70s, there were not a great many feminist books being published. Pamphlets, journals and small presses were just beginning to spring up. All the money for books went to Diana Press, Daughters Inc., Persephone and the Feminist Press, the first publishers of writers like Rita Mae Brown.

Books like Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* were new then. The first anthologies of feminist thought — the Redstockings' *Feminist Revolution* and Robin Morgan's *Sisterhood is Powerful* — had come out. Elizabeth Gould Davis' book *The First Sex* challenged the rooted bias of male-written history and "her-story" was coined.

The central theme of the bookstore was as an idea center and vision generator. Without the spark of reading and shared understanding, the collective believed, women would remain isolated in "personal" problems and solutions. Discussion groups and CPE classes on feminist theory carried their visions further afield.

A Friday night coffeehouse became a regular event. Beginning with a potluck dinner, the entertainment included skits, local musicians, readings and the new records of women's music.

The discussions were intense and exhilarating, but it was hard to match the reality with the ideals. The Herstore building had few windows and a tendency to be dark and cold. The shelves were not well filled and money was scarce. The open collective basis on which the store was, theoretically, being run presented many difficulties. The idea was that any woman who came to a meeting would be a part of the decision-making, but in fact, a few women tended to take most of the initiative and responsibility.

After a little less than a year, the group decided that a less expensive and more comfortable location had to be found. Exploring downtown Tallahassee sidestreets turned up an empty shop on West Call Street that had formerly been a candlemaking business. It was smaller but much sunnier, with a front window that ran the length of the store. Along with two adjoining shops, it was part of the old Floridan Hotel block and the rent was very low.

Most of the original founders were gone by now, but participation in store meetings had increased. A part-time paid staffperson was carefully budgeted to insure that the store was open most of the working day, but everything else was done by volunteers.

Working and imagining a new future together was exciting. Many women were just discovering the Women's Movement and beginning to consider the ways in which their lives were going to be changed by it. Most of the collective members had full-time jobs and some had children. In addition to volunteering in the store and attending Tuesday night collective meetings many of them helped other groups with finding feminist speakers and programs. These took many hours of planning and often led to the feeling that life was just a series of endless meetings.

In addition, fluctuating levels of dissention in the progressive community led to attacks that were sometimes startling in their intensity and often deeply demoralizing in their effect.

Herstore's second Halloween in 1975 was celebrated with a "Witches' Eve Ball" in the old ballroom of the Floridan Hotel. This event brought together, at least for



Herstore coming together

August 23, 1976

by Michael Fawcett

To the 'feminist' of both sexes, femininity is synonymous with the eternal female principle, connecting strength, integrity, wisdom, justice, dependability, and a psychic power foreign and therefore dangerous to the plodding masculinists of both sexes.

Elizabeth Gould Davis (*The First Sex*)

Yoko Ono L. non once referred to women as "niggers of the world," as slaves to the slaves. It is widely acknowledged today that women generally have been treated as second-class members of society throughout history. Consider, for example, that they could not even call themselves U.S. citizens until 1920.

The women's movement is part of a planetary movement to redesign human consciousness and enable freedom, both men and women, to live in dignity and freedom. Herstore is part of that movement.

Herstore is located at 110 E. Call Street. It is a non-profit, collectively-managed "feminist" bookstore which sells books by, about and for women. The store also sells periodicals dealing with various aspects of womankind's struggle for liberation, in addition to posters, crafts, jewelry and non-sexist children's books.

According to Dina Acosta-Mars, one of the store's members, the store was started in 1974 by a group of local women "who felt within themselves an urgent need to come together and share ideas and feelings." The hope of Herstore, she said, is "to raise women's consciousness to enable them to develop the ability to survive on their own terms."

"Herstore is more than just a bookstore," she said.

"We are a growth center for women. We want to encourage women to cultivate a positive image of themselves, and to think of themselves as people, as persons rather than mere objects."

Acosta-Mars said she thinks the word "feminist" is something of a misnomer.

"The word has many different connotations for different people," she said. "Each of Herstore's members probably has a different concept of what a feminist actually is."

Herstore is an important tool for community good, she said. "Many women who are new to Tallahassee or who are passing through the city come to the bookstore to find out what is happening in the community. We can't always supply the information or the services that some women want, but we do refer them to those agencies which can supply their needs," she said.

Herstore has no formal affiliation with either the FSU Women's Community Center or the Feminist Women's Health Center, although many of the interests of these groups inevitably overlap.

Ronda Hanson, another of the store's members, explained that the store sells many non-sexist children's books, and that these are of enormous importance in the primary education of children, both boys and girls.

"Women and men are portrayed in many of the traditional children's books in a ridiculous way," she said. "Take the classic fairy-tales as an example. Men and women are depicted as magical figures — the wicked witch, the beautiful princess, the shining prince. You can

turn to HERSTORE, page 3

an evening, many different elements of the progressive community. It also brought in much-needed money for book orders.

Although the store survived financially through its third Christmas, there were continuing slumps. The sharing of responsibilities, poor communication and the sense of "never doing enough" were topics for long and often frustrating meetings. A reading of the store log and meeting agendas for 1976-77 shows an amazing amount of activity. Women's music concerts, benefits for groups like Rape Crisis and the Women's Center, a community anti-rape program, poetry readings, and a community-wide women's art show at the County Library were being held. Collective members found films and speakers for campus programs and especially for Women's Week, led CPE classes in political theory, organized consciousness-raising groups, and held workshops in skill-sharing and doing-it-yourself. Regular fundraising efforts were planned: tables at the Renaissance Fair, flea markets and garage sales.

It was also expected by other activist groups that this feminist collective would provide well-organized support for issues ranging from the ecology movement to militant anti-imperialism.

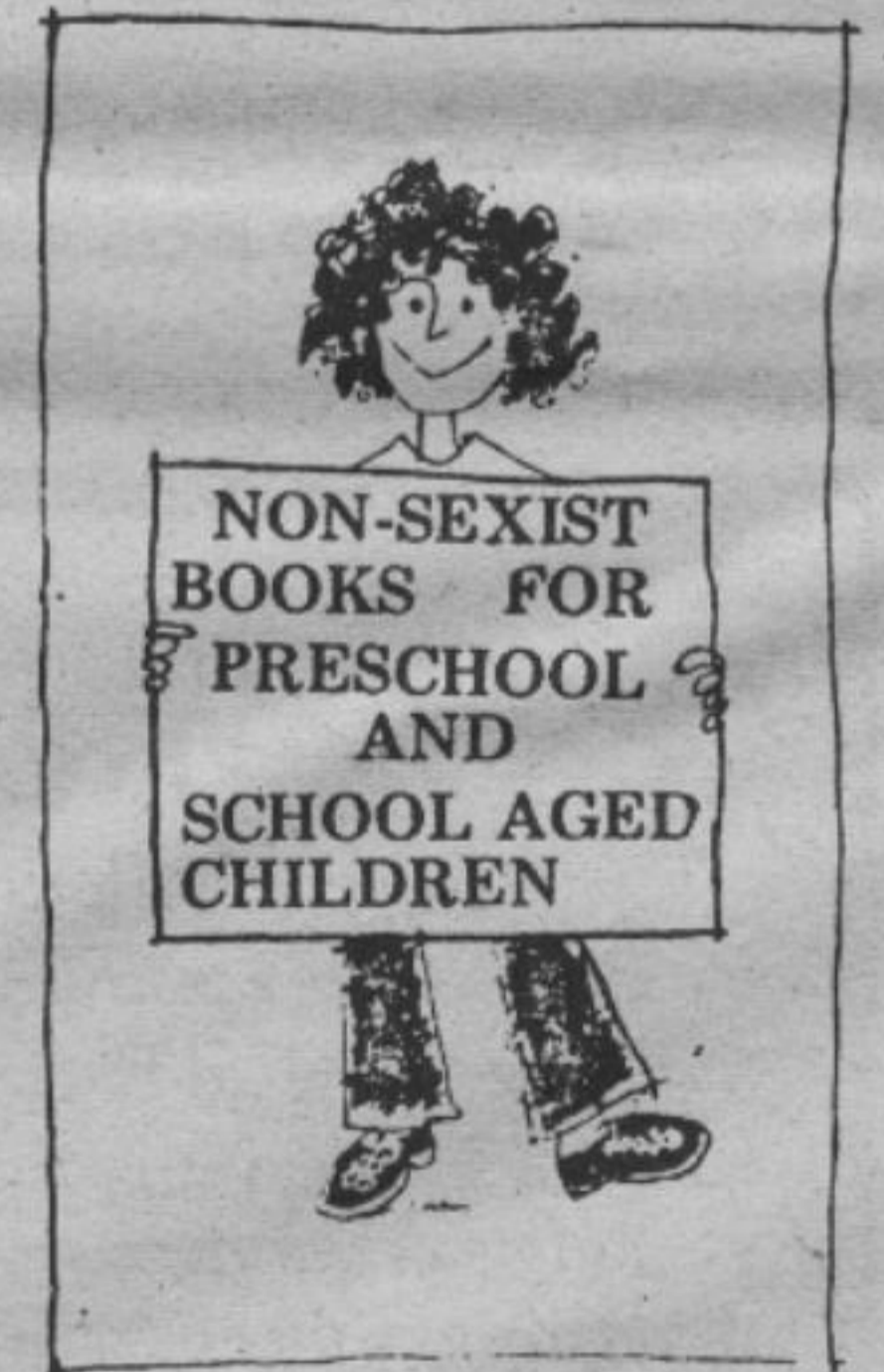
By the spring of 1977, some of the active collective members were talking about reducing their commitments and time obligations. The idea of passing on the store to a new group of women with fresh ideas was discussed. In spite of this, the desire for a continuing "women's space" was constantly affirmed as well as the desire to work together as friends as well as activists.



Her Store

Her Store, a feminist book shop, has opened at 301 W. College in Tallahassee. The book store is owned and operated by a group of young women who have applied for non-profit status and

hope to make Her Store a community center for females as well as a place to buy feminist literature and non-sexist children's books. Hours are noon until 7 p.m. every day except Sunday. (Democrat Photo by D. n Stainer)



Through the summer of '77 there was talk of opening a combined coffeehouse and bookstore at a new location closer to downtown offices. Committees were set up to check out rental possibilities and financial feasibility.

Then in August of 1977, while future plans were still being debated, the axe fell. The Floridan Hotel was condemned by the City and within a few days the utilities for the hotel and adjoining shops were permanently cut off. It was obvious that there was no initiative or money for a quick move to a new storefront. The remaining stock was taken to Co-op Books to sell on consignment, and the furniture and files came to rest in various garages.

As a place, Herstore ceased to exist.

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Remembering Herstore...

"Most of the women who started Herstore have left Tallahassee. I know the idea for it originated with the women living in the College Avenue collective. I didn't get involved until several months after it opened. By then some of the most active people had gone up to Sagaris [the Feminist University at Goddard College] for the spring and summer sessions. There were several other new women like me who had never done anything like this before."

"One dynamic that was going on was that there were a lot of straight women like me who were really excited about feminism and curious about lesbians, and then there were women who had always considered themselves lesbian who were coming to be with other women and weren't very political. There were women who came to lesbianism through feminism and women who came to feminism through their lesbianism and they didn't automatically go together. There was a certain amount of sexual tension and confusion. The feeling was that there needed to be this total commitment to women."

"It was hard to sort through the different reasons for being there. Some of us were really into the feminism revolution, talking politics and visions and wanting to make big changes in the world. Others were trying to get support for more immediate things like getting through a divorce and raising children alone. There were women who felt they had to keep trying to relate to men and others who thought it was a waste of time and didn't want to hear about it."

"There was a phenomenally supportive atmosphere there, though. I remember all the afternoons I staffed when women would come in, sometimes on lunch breaks, and just be so excited about this place existing. Sometimes women would come in who were real tentative at first, they would just look at the books and wander around for a while. But lots of times it was obvious they were looking for other women to talk with — about their jobs as secretaries sometimes, how belittled they felt, about their lives."

"Most of the time we would end up sitting on the big couch (it's at the women's center now) and just chatting. Me and Laura and Dina a lot — talking to other women, sharing stories, laughing. There was always a lot of laughter and knee slapping — especially when we hit

on a real shared experience. We'd yell "That's right! That happened to me once." And that woman would leave feeling a lot better and less alone. A lot of times these women would tell us how lucky we were to be able to talk like this. That always came as a surprise to me because I would forget how the real world was and just get insulated with all these women. It was good to be reminded how lucky we were."

"That was something that was always surprising to me. Other women, women who weren't in the Herstore collective, were always telling us how lucky we were and how glad they were that Herstore existed. At the same time we were haggling over internal stuff, like who dominated meetings, and we never felt like we could do enough, or do anything right."

"The issue of who did all the talking at meetings was a big one. A few people like myself came to the group with pretty strong personalities and were used to speaking up. But others came looking for a place to develop into that kind of person."

"I remember once we were going to hold pieces of paper and every time you talked you had to put one down. When all your pieces were gone you just had to shut up. We never did it though. We decided on self-regulation instead."

"Ha!"

"It was hard for me to be with less articulate women. I didn't want to suppress myself at all. I think I really communicated strong judgments of women who didn't share my enthusiasm and my vision of women doing wonderful things together. It just drove me nuts that women would be kind of half in and half out, waiting to see if we would meet their particular needs. I was in there with my whole body...but now I can see that I took up so much space that sometimes it was hard for anyone else to find room."

"It might have been a mistake to try and mix the political and personal with a business. Just one is hard enough."

"There was a kind of amorphous power structure that was hard to get a grip on. It seemed like we spent so many meetings trying to work it out, make it more fair. We really didn't succeed but we tried."

"It's only now that I see that those two and a half years were crucial to what I'm doing now. It was the first time in my life that something persisted after conflict. I was used to thinking that conflict was the termination." □

The Tallahassee Feminist Project, 1977-78

The discussion over a financial base and location for a new store continued for some months. There was still a desire to sponsor feminist programs and to support other women's groups while still maintaining the identity of the collective. When plans for a store were finally dropped, the group decided to adopt a new name reflecting their new identity as an autonomous activist collective. The name finally settled on was the Tallahassee Feminist Project.

In addition to working with the Women's Center, this group began to turn more

attention to writing. The "Diana Rising" column became a regular bi-weekly feature in the *Flambeau* for about six months. Beginning with a response to a blame-the-victim mentality that pervaded the Chi Omega murders, the column went on to explore a variety of issues from a feminist perspective.

One idea had been for each column to be written by a small group, but this became increasingly difficult, as there were varying levels of interest in the writing process.

The Tallahassee Feminist Project continued to meet and work together for about a year after the closing of Herstore. The slow dissolving of the three-year collective left many close friendships, and many women continue their feminist activism in other organizations. □

Violence against women

Editor's note: the following column was written in a joint effort by the members of the Tallahassee Feminist Project.

"This crime was apparently the result of an unlocked door... It happened on campus because students think that they are immortal... Their lifestyle gets sloppy because they don't think it's going to happen to them..."

As Tallahassee women, we find these statements insensitive and misleading. Our entire community is shocked and outraged at the extent of the violence committed last weekend, and in confusion we are all seeking to make sense out of a seemingly gratuitous act of brutality. In our struggle to understand the event of that weekend we have come to feel that a number of issues are being obscured by the media. We would like to provide an alternative approach to understanding the tragedy. The issues we wish to discuss are the placement of responsibility on the victims and the portrayal of the event as an isolated event. We want to promote engagement and there was an epidemic of yellow fever. Fashion

A state of fashionable anarchy

Diana Rising

by clare raulerson

Like art generally, fashion is concerned with dematerializing the material world.

— Susan Sontag

There was a time when being fashionable meant a lot more than wearing trendy clothes. The concept of fashion used to extend to manners and speech and social skills. Rich people, particularly rich women, determined what was, and what was not, fashionable. A person's social standing could be detected by wearing something deemed inappropriate by the leaders of the community. Look what happened to Bette Davis in "Jezebel" (a film set in the antebellum South). All she did was wear a strapless, red silk dress to the Liberty Ball (where all the unmarried women wore white) and bam — no one would talk to her. Henry Fonda broke their engagement and there was an epidemic of yellow fever. Fashion

Visions of future society

Diana Rising

Contributors to this column were Jocelyn Stowell, Libby Brice, Laura Newton, Bonnie Bailey and Lorna Kingbury of the Tallahassee Feminist Project.

Being a feminist and a mother is often a source of conflict. Being a feminist involves constantly examining the role of women in our culture, whereas being a mother includes fulfilling one aspect of woman's traditional role. The demanding, ever-present awareness of feminism cannot help but illuminate some very dark corners of our lives as women and mothers. Mothers are caught in the middle of the extreme contradictions in our culture's attitude towards women. We, as mothers, and as women who are concerned about supporting mothers, are trying to deal with the issues motherhood raises in our lives. We have no pat solutions, but we would like to explore the issues, to raise questions, to



1970

Banking commissioner received application for first Women's Bank of Florida

1971

Women at FSU petition for Women's Center

Gloria Steinem speaks at FSU on women's place in history and pre-written history matriarchies.

1972

Shirly Chishom speaks at FSU during her presidential campaign.



National Hook-Up for Black Women

Women have always been involved with the National Black Caucus, but around 1975, they began to realize that some of their needs were not getting met. Edith Fresh, the current regional coordinator of the National Hook-up for Black Women, explains: "They felt they needed to do something special, so several women got together and began talking, and decided to form the Hook-Up."

One of the first things the women discovered was that they had no means to communicate with each other. Their first priority, then, was to form a network of black women all across the country. They also wanted to form a support network for black women entering the political arena as well as the professional fields. Professionally, they felt they were often in a double jeopardy situation by being counted twice as a minority and then competing with black men for jobs.

"It's a sticky situation," Edith related. "Black women suffer from both sexism and racism."

The National Hook-up meets in Washington, D.C., around the same time as the National Black Caucus. Local chapters have also been started all over the country. A regional coordinator is elected to help the various groups keep in touch with each other.

This past year, the Southern region of the Hook-up held a conference. "We didn't get to talk with each other much at the national conference," Edith said. "But at the regional conference we had a chance to sit down and discuss what issues we wanted to deal with."

"A black woman is faced with several stereotypes when she enters the work force," Edith explained. "Whether it is the 'welfare mother' or that she's willing to hop into bed with any man in pants, or that she's a castrator."

The Tallahassee chapter, started in 1978, has done several projects. They publish a local directory of black businesses which, Edith says, "We are very proud of." They also asked county commission candidates questions pertaining to black women before the last election, and then typed up their responses and distributed them throughout the black community.

"We wanted everyone to know exactly where these candidates stood on certain issues," Edith said.

Currently the Hook-up is looking into the hiring practices in state jobs and good, inexpensive child care. Edith feels black women are in a lot of clerical positions in Tallahassee, but not in any of the key positions. In addition, it is hard for black women to find child care they can afford.

The Hook-up meets on the second Saturday of every month. A discussion follows each of the business meetings. For more information call Wanita Williams at 575-6630.

NOW

The

National Organization for Women

in Tallahassee

You are invited to attend the meetings of the Tallahassee N.O.W. chapter, every first Tuesday of the month at the First Presbyterian Church, 110 N. Adams St., 7:30 pm. Room 117. 893-2720



Women in the Malcom X Liberation Front

The Malcom X United Liberation Front was a local Tallahassee group formed in the early seventies "to make the unity of the black colony an effective united front in dealing with needs for self-determination by the black colony."

Many women participated in this organization. An issue of *The FRONT* (the group's newspaper) in 1971 contained a couple of articles about how women viewed the women's movement, both in and outside of the MLF. Below are excerpts from these two articles. The last excerpt is taken from another issue in which a man is writing to other men about some of the principles of women's liberation.

Black Women and Women's Liberation (Author Unknown)

"In 1971, black women refuse to join white women liberation movements in America for reasons of survival. We understand how the year 1920 marked a turning point in many white women's lives, because women's suffrage was passed by America's chauvanistic and racist white male society and, ironically enough, black women or men were not guaranteed the right to vote until 1965. Now white women are wondering, only fifty years later, why the majority of black women are reluctant to join the numerous womens groups springing up in racist America today. They exclaim, 'Black women are twice as oppressed as white women because first, they are women and being oppressed by a male domineering society; and secondly, they are black and being oppressed by white supremacy.'

Our response to this is we realize and understand much better than you, who we are, and what is happening to us. . . Black Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm expresses a very good point beautifully by saying, ' . . . women's liberation movement is a white middle-class thing. As an ethnic group with broader interests, the liberation of our total race is our main goal. . .'

"You see, it is ironic that so many white women can shout, 'Liberation for all oppressed people,' 'Sisters Unite,' and even 'Power to the People,' and simultaneously oppress other women. Yeah, while you are out picketing for executive jobs, some of our sisters are struggling to put down the mop and dishes in your homes.

"We are about freedom, freedom for all oppressed people. What are you about? Until white women realize that they are oppressed by the same racist dogs that are oppressing people of color, particularly blacks, they will not stop jiving themselves.

"This dramatized elaboration was just to point out to white women in America that you don't mean any more to white male capitalists than we do. You are a convenient problem for them. Notice how they so arrogantly say, 'Oh, that's just a nigger,' or whatever word they hook up as a label for people of color. Or they say 'Oh, that's just a woman,' or 'That's just a minor' (referring to those under 21). . . The only thing white women are capable of doing that keeps them from being another name on the genocide list is produce more white males insane enough to take over after they are gone. . . For god's sake, don't ever think that the only reason the test-tube babies are being worked on so hard is to relieve you of this duty. Since so many white women are working hand in hand as accomplices in those genocidal attempts on people of color, we don't have time for women's liberation because it also is a form for genocide, and we plan to survive in America. Sisters, unite with real revolutionaries and seize the times."

What Liberation Means To Me As A Black Woman

(by Beverly Gail Perkins)

"The men need to recognize that we women are their other half. We are not their weaker half, but their stronger half; and we sell ourselves out, we sell our children out and we are sold out when we are treated in any other manner.

"This is very important in the context of our revolutionary struggle today, because women can and are playing a most important part. We women cannot allow our men to limit our revolutionary potential and the kinds of roles that we can play in that struggle. We have to be very careful about that.

"We women have to liberate ourselves and our men from attitudes that demean us and limit us because of an incorrect prejudice as to the inferior status and ability of women. We have to fight our men in their tendency to undervalue us, for their own ego-gratifying ends. We sisters have a duty and a right to do whatever we want to do in order to see to it that we are not relegated to an inferior position and that we are treated as equal members of the black nation, and equal in all regards."

The Man Question (by Donald Cox)

"My original intention was to prepare a statement dealing with the woman question. However, after attempting to organize my thoughts on the subject, I find it necessary to address myself to the real essence of the problem, the man question.

"The object of this statement is to expose some of the reactionary practices that result from the reactionary attitudes men have towards women. The ultimate objective being to stimulate men to struggle against these attitudes. My basic motivation is making revolution. And I know revolution is impossible with women relating to the struggle through "their" man. Or, with men relating to the struggle with their dicks in the way, making their decisions for them.

"Only after a deep and thorough analysis of ourselves with weaknesses as men will we be on the right track as far as dealing with the essence of the problem. Weaknesses that have caused us to take the attitude that women are at our disposal to be used as tools through which we enhance our manhood.

"We are talking about making revolution and creating the type of society where all people will be free from all forms of oppression and all needs of all people will be provided for. In addition to struggling against capitalism, imperialism, racism and fascism, it is necessary that we struggle against the reactionary attitudes these types of societies have imposed upon us.

"One of the most damaging attitudes, one that is causing untold misery amongst the oppressed people of the world, is the attitude men have towards women.

"We must become selfless in our attitudes towards our fellow human beings. And to rid ourselves of selfishness, it is necessary that we dig deep. To the bottom of our souls."

"The Idea of a Woman Controlled Abortion Clinic was Phenomenal to Me"

An Interview with Susan Griffin Jalali

by Sherry Rauch

The following contains quotes from an interview with Susan in the fall of 1981

"The perspective I came to Florida State University with had little to no women consciousness. I was intensely anti-abortion at the time. I wasn't aware of the concept of a woman's right to control her own body or of women's issues besides the feeling that, sure, I could do anything a man could do. My consciousness began to change, like a lot of other women, because of our ability or inability to work in the anti-war movement, or the ecology movement, or any other movement that is male-dominated. They either patronize you, or they ignore you. I had a combination of those things happening to me.

"In the spring of 1971, a friend and I decided to go to a woman's liberation meeting. (You never went to a woman's liberation meeting without a friend!) Now, there were problems for someone like me — I was naive, non-aggressive. My nickname around then was the sponge. I took in all sorts of information, but never talked about what I thought. So the meeting was very threatening to me. If it wasn't for one woman who made a point to talk with me and my friend I probably would never have gone back. She came up to me, asked me what I thought, asked me what we had read. She gave me *Sisterhood is Powerful*, and a couple of Second Wave magazines. Reading a book wasn't quite as threatening as participating in a meeting.

"I went to England for six months on the FSU London program, so I stopped any kind of political activity. When I got back, I went to a woman's liberation meeting with J. and a woman who was wearing an Andrew Pulley button which caused an immediate split between the Trotskyists and the non-Trotskyists. You see, there was a whole movement nation-wide to throw the Trotskyists out of women's liberation groups because they had a tendency to have take-over tactics. They had tried it in the anti-war movement and it was assumed that they would do the same thing in the women's movement. And to some extent that was true. Basically, the Young Socialist Alliance, a local Trotskyist group, demanded a cohesive political perspective and required that you do what is best for the party.

"Anyway, because J. and I were at the meeting with the woman with the Andrew Pulley button, we were immediately considered Trotskyists and were attacked at the meeting. It was harrowing for us. They accused us of being "male-identified" because we were associated with the YSA. I was appalled that anyone who even associated with a Trot was not to be trusted. Well, the women's liberation group split in half.

"This led to another problem. The Trots thought the most important issue in the women's movement was abortion. But women who wanted to do things around abortion on this campus during that time were considered male-identified because obviously they were pushing the Trot line. It was a round robin kind of thing. I agreed that the right to control your own body was of primary importance, so several of us formed a WONAC (Women's National Abortion Coalition) chapter. The YSA did control WONAC on a national level though...it was a mushy problem.

"Some of the other women in Tallahassee Women's Liberation decided to form a women's center. It was supposed to be an umbrella for all these other groups. After it started TWL folded and WONAC was kicked out of the Women's Center. The Women's Center became something in and of itself.

"Around then I had dropped out of school and decided to go to Lively and learn how to print. We were talking about starting a women's press in Tallahassee. Then I got a job at the Tallahassee Democrat on the night shift.

"I was out of the women's movement for six months when I decided that I had to get back. I decided the women's movement was the most important thing that I could be working on. So I started working at the Women's Center. By that time some of the women who had originally started the center had left and there was a change in the center, brand new faces. It was broadening out some. I formed my own role at the Women's Center because I was working at night and couldn't go to meetings and make decisions. I decided that I would be the hostess of the center. Basically what I did was sit down and talk with every woman who came in the Women's Center. I did that because of my earlier experience at the first women's liberation meeting. I felt someone needed to talk with these women, find out why they were there. It was effective. Many women told me that if I hadn't been there they might not have come back.

"Around 1973 some women were touring Florida and demonstrating self-help (classes that showed women how to use a speculum to view their own cervical changes). Then a woman named Linda, who had been to the Feminist Women's Health Center in Los Angeles, decided to go back to Florida to start a FWHC down here. She was going to do one in Jacksonville but first decided to do a tour on menstrual extraction as a followup to the self-help tour of the previous year. When she came to Tallahassee the women at the Women's Center talked with her about opening a clinic in Tallahassee because Jacksonville already had one. So she decided to stay here.

"I went to a self-help clinic when Linda started doing them regularly. I soon began working with her and some other women on opening a clinic. The idea of a woman controlled abortion clinic was phenomenal to me. It took us three months to open the clinic. Our first clinic was in June of 1974.

"I was at the FWHC for five years. When we started we basically had separatist politics. There were male doctors we had to deal with. They were professionals, but it's not that it didn't take its toll. There were very big problems. I was considered environment. It was a very growing experience to be involved with a group that had national connections and being able to work with other women on politics you agreed with.

"It's not that it didn't take its toll. There were very big problems. I was considered a second-class member at the Center, and that lasted for about three years. I was working there for about four years before I was recognized as a director. There were definite problems in the internal structure. The whole group recognized that.

"Herstore opened somewhere in there, but we didn't have a working relationship with them, or the Women's Center. Later on, there were three or four different splits, times when we fought vehemently, and then tried to re-make up.



"We didn't have the same goals or interests, or we didn't see that we did. At least we didn't have the same kind of political philosophy of what needed to be done. That's where the cultural feminism came in. What the women's community was doing here was supporting itself. It wasn't like they were doing concrete things. The only group that was doing anything concrete was the FWHC. We felt that what we were doing was more important and that they should be supporting us... We felt what we were doing was right, and I'm sure they felt what they were doing was right.

"Anyway, for our first year, our interactions with them were minimal to none. We were into a real internal kind of thing. We spent our time on making ourselves self-supporting, paying our debts that we had used to help start our clinic. We kept in touch with FWHC's nationally.

"In 1975, during the summer, the medical community tried to close us down. When that happened we tried to start interactions with the whole feminist community, trying to consolidate support so that we could stay open.

"The kinds of things the FWHC has done have been milestones in the women's movement. The abortion community nationwide is a profit-making industry and they have been forced to do a lot of things that they would not have done if there hadn't been FWHC's making them accountable to women's needs. When they cut off funds for abortions, if there hadn't been FWHC's in major cities I don't think there would have been abortion clinics giving free abortions. Now they are working on a book that goes far beyond *Our Bodies Ourselves*. They've decided to publish it themselves because they couldn't find a publishing house that would print it.

"Working at the FWHC throughout its history to the present has been demanding, on your time, on your thoughts, in order to be able to work in a woman controlled environment. The FWHC has always striven for a consensus of political ideal of

"Those who didn't want to make a total commitment sometimes walked out."


what's important to be doing and how you were going to do it. Those who didn't want to make a total commitment sometimes walked out.

"The first time was in 1976 when we had just lost the preliminary injunction in the anti-trust suit. Women were working from 60 to 100 hours a week for about 50 percent of their salaries or below. You worked all day long and never left that building. There was an incredible amount of pressure. When women started saying, "I can't take it," the people who felt it had to get done just saw it as being more work for them. That led to women walking out with other women saying that they were deserting, that they weren't feminists, that they didn't care about women.

"Being a part of the people who stayed, a part of the people who attacked the people who left, I know that I was unfair, I know that I was dogmatic, all those things. I also felt that this was absolutely the most important thing that a woman could be doing with her life. The things that we did under stress took an amount of frenzy, an amount of focus, that was, I think, unfair to a lot of people. But I don't think we could have done the kind of things we did if we didn't have that kind of focus.

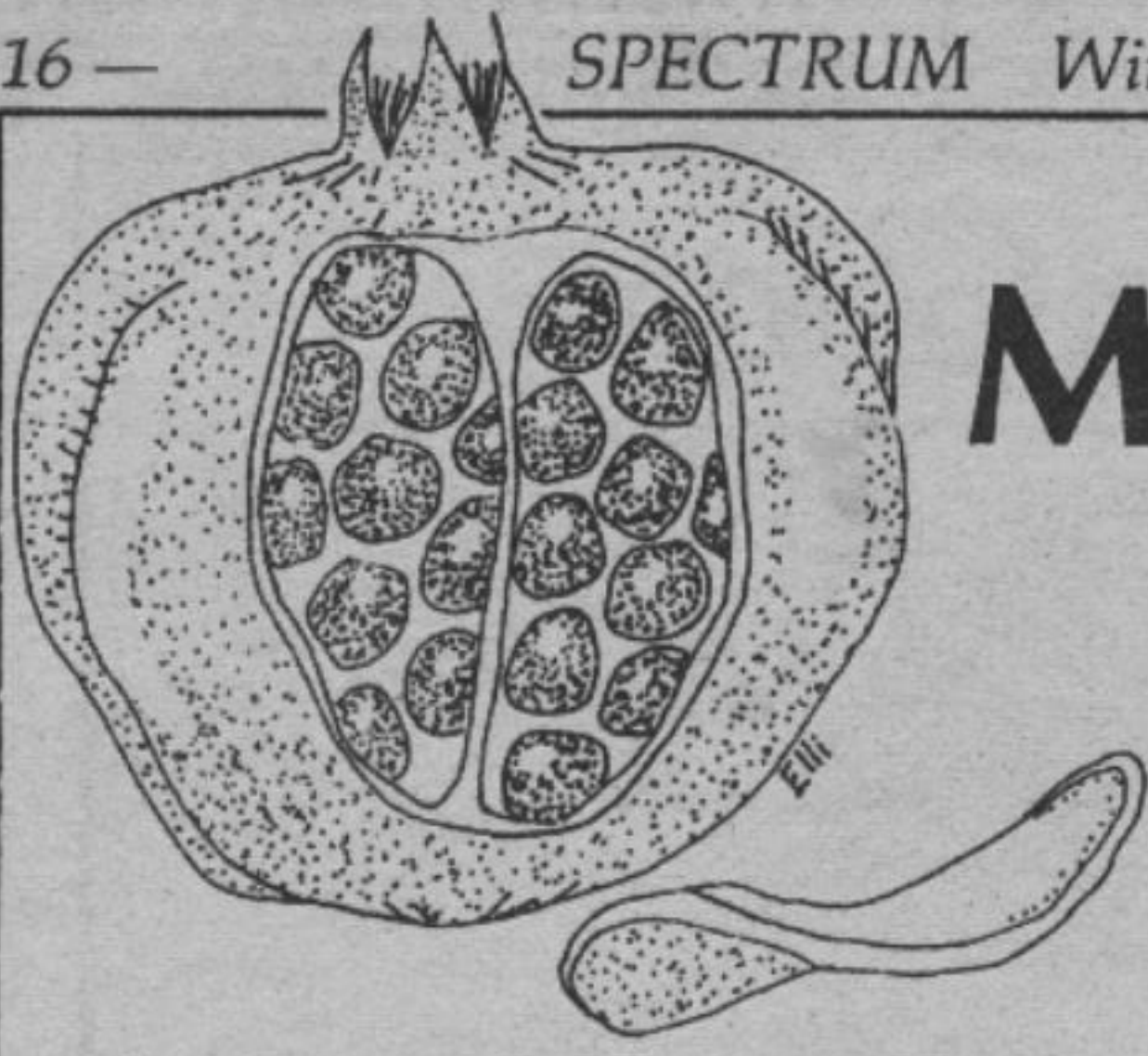
"The group I'm working with now, the biggest problem they have is they can't tolerate confrontation on the level we did at the FWHC. And I miss it. I just spent an

Continued on page 30



1972

- * FSU Women's Center opens in University Union
- * Women start boycott of ARA food services for using sexist ads and holding a Playboy Bunny night
- * Margaret Menzel and Frances Clay filed sexual discrimination suit against FSU
- * Representative Gwen Cherry speaks at FSU on "The Black Woman in the New South"



Motherhood and Feminism

by Laura Newton

*...but who can tolerate the power of a woman
close to a child, riding our tides
into the sand dunes of the public spaces.*

— Alicia Suskin Ostriker
The Mother/Child Papers, 1980

In November of 1981, a group of seven women spent an evening together discussing motherhood and feminism. We are seven women who have participated in feminism in varying degrees and ways over the last ten years, women who once belonged to a collective which ran a feminist bookstore, who have belonged to feminist study groups, a woman who belongs to a feminist craft/business collective, women who have been and are active in women's health care and issues, all mothers. We taped three hours of conversation, excerpts of which are quoted here. None of us is black, and, although we represent a variety of classes both in terms of background and current status, none of us is poor. One of us is a lesbian mother who remains anonymous for her own protection. Her anonymity here also serves to remind us of how quickly our culture relegates a woman who breaks the rules to outlaw status. In spite of the limitations of our group, the evening was an historical event in itself. Listening to the tapes, one is privy to a glimpse of the inner room of the temple of women together, their support for each other and for the planet earth. There are moments of shared recognition, indicated here as [laughter] or [chorus of affirmation], that are much like the moments when a congregation "Amen"s the preacher at a particularly meaningful pause in the sermon. At these moments a tide of "yes," "whew," and "right" would ripple around the table and then we would fall silent. What emerged and shaped itself here, discussion of the relationship between motherhood and feminism, the special issues and problems feminist mothers face, hopes for what will make the world a place fit to mother in, is the result of the brave intimacy and vulnerability of these seven strong women.

•••

Being a feminist and a mother is often a source of conflict. Being a feminist involves constantly examining the role of women in our culture; whereas being a mother includes fulfilling an aspect of woman's traditional role. The demanding, ever-present awareness of feminism can not help but illuminate some very dark corners of our lives as women and as mothers.

— from *Visions of Future Society*, Diana Rising
1978 written by members of
The Tallahassee Feminist Project

•••

Denni: Motherhood seems to be a magnet for all these other things that you are not choosing for your life.

Agnes: The biggest thing for me about being a mother and trying to become a feminist (because I spent my first years as a mother not being at all conscious of any of that) was knowing that everything they were saying about being a mother didn't add up. I didn't label it "patriarchal values," but I knew that there was something about what they said I was supposed to do and feel that just didn't fit me.

Anonymous: I don't think I would have become a feminist as quickly as I did, or with the intensity that I did, if it hadn't been for the actual childbirth experience. It was a hospital delivery. I talked to the doctor about wanting to try different positions, about not necessarily having an episiotomy, all the things you are familiar with. They were very patronizing the whole time. When I talked about not having an episiotomy they told me my vagina would be so big that my husband would never enjoy having sex with me again.

Tana: How many people got that?
[chorus of groans]

Anonymous: But then the actual delivery itself...they had told me they would do what I wanted. When I got to the hospital they did exactly what they wanted. Everything. I felt physically abused, totally humiliated, and it was that contact with the medical establishment, which is so male, that made me a feminist. Supposedly, mothers are revered, loved and honored...

Laura: Until you are one...

Anonymous: ...but I was totally humiliated during my pregnancy and delivery. It was that contradiction that really changed my world.

Tana: I often felt humiliated. One guy backed me into a corner and said, "You look like you're having twins. Are you?" I said, "Nooo." He said, "But you look like you are." "No, I am not having twins." By this time I was in reverse, trying to get away from him. I said, "Go to hell," and turned away. I felt like saying, "How am I supposed to respond to you when you start out making me feel like I'm doing something wrong?"

Laura: Somehow motherhood is supposed to make you ultimately feminine.

Tana: "Women are so beautiful when they are pregnant."

Laura: So that when someone says to you, "You look like you're getting fat," and you're not, the implication is that...

Agnes: You certainly are getting fat... [Laughter]

Tana: He's saying, "I don't desire you. You don't meet my criteria."

Agnes: "But I'm supposed to be getting fat."

Tana: Well, that was one of the worst ones. I'd come home in a rage. Fortunately, I've been a feminist for years. It was partly feminism that led me to motherhood. I was coming at it from another angle. When all this happened to me I had a political framework to put it in.

Anonymous: I had to find that.

Judy: I saw this feminism happening all around me. I just didn't see how it

pertained to me because I was independent. But it really came into focus that first year after Orinda was born. Just trying to get some balance back into my own life. I had gone from a very independent lifestyle to being totally dependent financially, for transportation, even for communication. Trying to get the balance back...

Tana: Well, it seems that whichever way you came to it, whether you were a feminist when you got pregnant or whether you came to it later or during, it's still very hard.

Denni: I resent the way the patriarchal culture has ruined motherhood so that the ways I feel good about being a mother, the things I'm enjoying about being someone's mother...I feel like I have to do it in a box that no one can see. Because if I let the larger society see that I'm really getting a kick out of it they'll box me in forever...I need to do it on the sly.

Laura: It seems as though in order to get to the place where you can be free of traditional attitudes toward mothering you have to pretend that you don't enjoy mothering. You have to figure out how you can be nurturing and not be taken advantage of.

Agnes: That for me...dealing with my children and my mate, was really what pushed me, more than the childbirth experience itself, into looking at women and their roles in society and where it was at. The feeling that "I want to be loving. How come every time I am I end up somewhere in a bad space. I mean, we're supposed to be doing this. I know it's right, but I end up feeling bad." Having those two children really made me come to grips with that. How I could want to give, but realize that it was unfair. Somehow this other person wasn't giving, nurturing those children also. If I didn't do it the children paid, not this other person who wasn't doing his share.

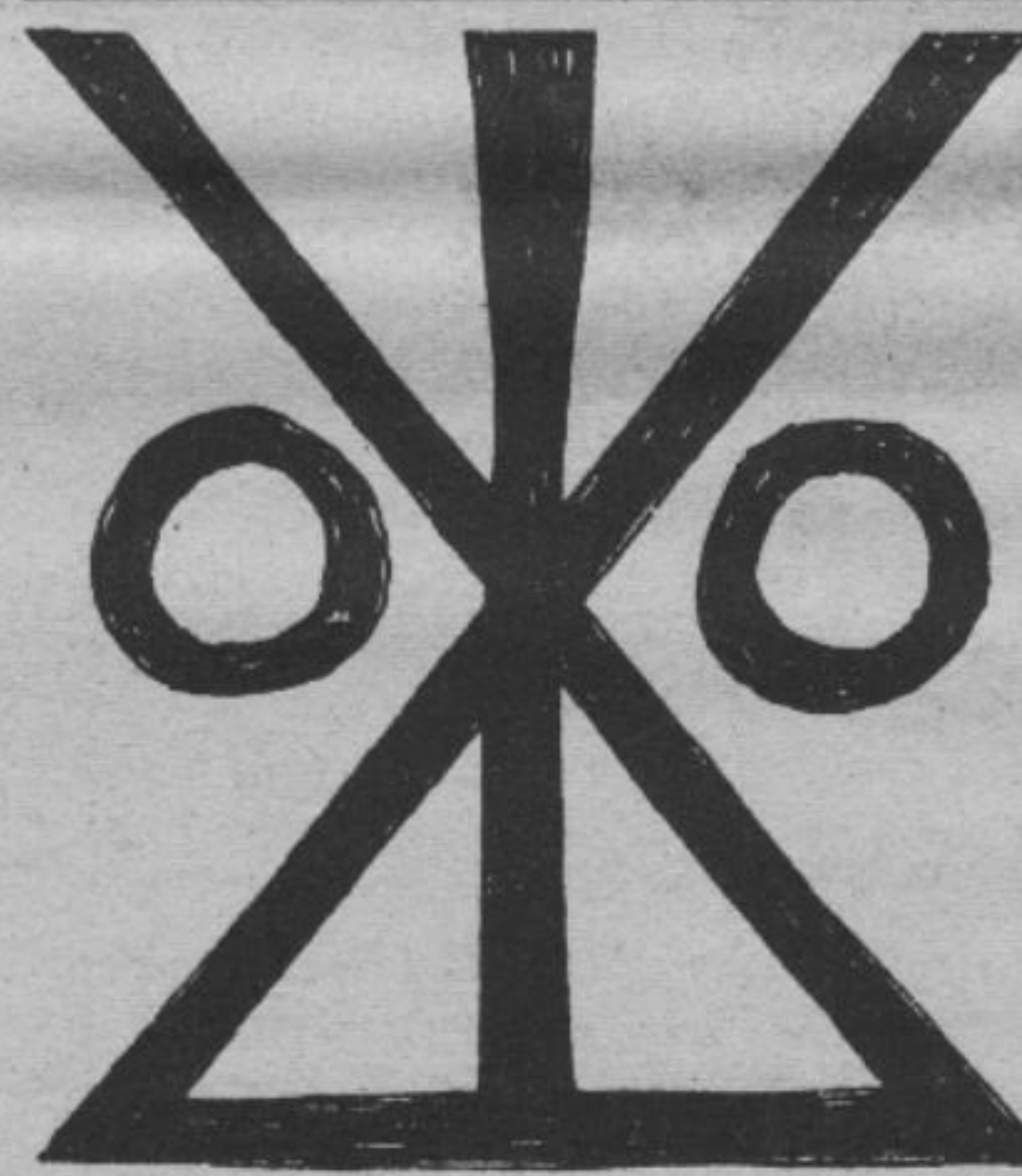
Laura: When I was pregnant with Cellan, I had a dream that I could unstrap my uterus like a big shoe and strap it onto Michael and make him walk around with the eight-months-pregnant uterus. Let him understand what it's like to have everything about you on display and filtered through this big belly. He could walk around and no one knew that he was pregnant. [Laughter]

Agnes: No one knew he was about to take on the role of being a parent.

Norine: And he could go a long time without anyone knowing it, if he played his cards right.

Laura: Recently, I heard a father talking about how surprised he was to hear another father talk about taking care of his infant daughter while his wife went out as "babysitting." He wanted to tell this other father that spending time with your own child is not "babysitting." [Chorus of affirmative noises and remarks.]

Denni: Kyra's father is willing to go outside of the stereotypical behavior of how mother and father perform. People say to me, "You are so lucky. He changes diapers?" And yes, I recognize that, but I do a lot too.



**"If I am a feminist, they
don't understand where the
baby fits in."**

Agnes: I have a friend who tells her husband, "If you think that I should thank you for taking care of our child, don't wait around. I'm not going to do that." She says, "Do you thank me for being a great mother?"

Judy: I have to bite my tongue to keep from saying "Thank you."

Agnes: I used to think every little thing Burt did was just wonderful.

Tana: If I thank Larry for taking care of something, he says, "Thank you for breastfeeding." [Laughter]

Norine: What I feel lately is that I want to be thanked for those things that never, never get talked about. All the emotional support. We've been talking about bottom line, changing diapers and fixing dinner every other night.

Laura: That's the superficial stuff.

Norine: Right. I am just realizing the extent to which I keep the emotional household going. And that is never talked about.

Agnes: Which leaves you totally drained. You need it for yourself.

Laura: You need to talk about it.

Norine: Because if you don't, you often feel totally worthless. You just don't realize the work involved.

Laura: When Michael and I first got together, who did the dishes or cooked fell into place quite nicely. But who said, "Things don't feel quite right. Are you okay?" He wouldn't say, "Something on your mind? Do we need to talk about this?" I became very resentful because I had to take care of my emotions, the kids' emotions and his emotions. Doing the emotional laundry.

Norine: The only way I feel things will really change is by admitting how much nurturing has to be done. We have the need for it...it makes us feel good to do it...but not exclusively...Sometimes I think the only solution is to have men do the child care. I think that is the most radical thing we can do right now. I think that no woman could have created nuclear energy, for instance, where there is the waste problem. Women are so tied up with garbage and how to dispose of it. [Laughter] No woman would conceive of an energy source that created garbage like that. Men are not connected enough to the garbage of life. The messes we are cleaning up are going to put us under.

•••

In learning to give care to children men would have to cease being children. The privileges of fatherhood could not be toyed with, as they are now, without an equal share in the full experience of nurture.

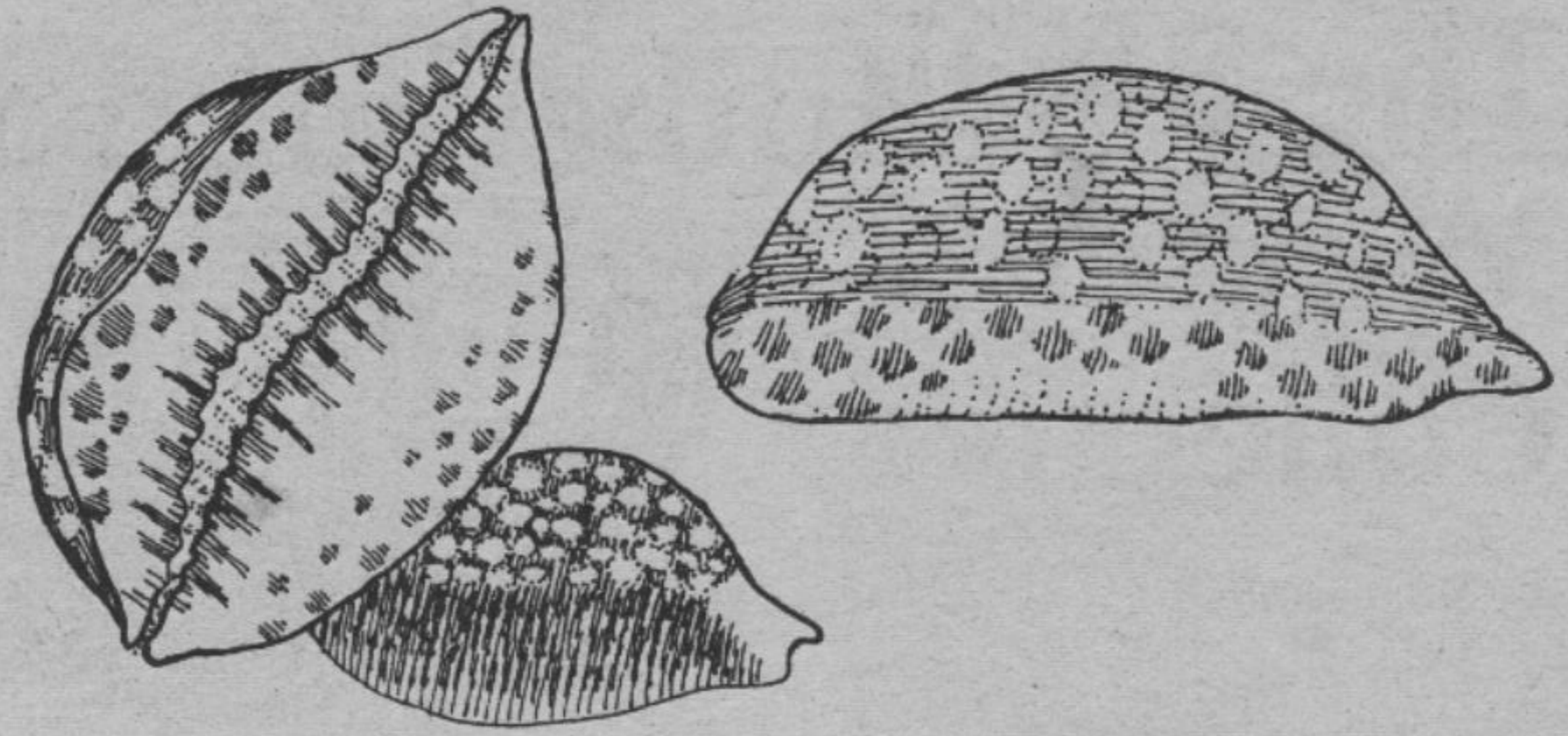
— Adrienne Rich
from *Of Woman Born*, 1978

Agnes: A lot of mothers want to do something outside of the mothering role to change the world. But we will not sacrifice the children we have chosen to have in order to do that. We have to be mothers and competent in other areas as well.

Anonymous: It is a fact that most women who are successful in careers are not mothers. It is important for us not to underestimate those pressures. There has been a tremendous push for women to adopt values, goals and lifestyles, and strategies that are totally incompatible with having children. There are no support systems. When we talk about the switch, wanting people in general to be more nurturing, we are talking about the alternative community. That is not a societal possibility at this point in time. We are still dealing with an enormous amount of pressure for women in business to adopt lifestyles that are not compatible with having children. Supposedly, there are ways to work out of low spots in life. But the options that are available are often considered unmotherly things to do. To focus on herself, to take time out to think about what to do with her life.

Agnes: That involves changing societal attitudes toward mothering.

...



Denni: If I am a feminist, they don't understand where the baby fits in.

Norine: Perhaps motherhood was suspect in relationship to feminism...but I think that's only temporary. Because ultimately motherhood *makes* feminists. I talk to women who are not mothers, who are still going through the same things, because society places all its worth on women as childbearers and nurturers, women who still feel unfulfilled because they have made this decision not to have children, and they have to keep coping with this decision.

Agnes: Every once in a while, when we're in the middle of a baby boom at the food co-op, someone who is single will say to me, "I really am having a hard time dealing with this. I feel great for all these people and about what they're doing, but I feel somehow inadequate. Like, 'why aren't I doing this?'"

Laura: Somehow that seems to be the pendulum swing from the days when being a feminist and a mother was suspect. The point at which the issue was resolved for me, knowing that other women had trouble with my being a mother, and the fact that I am raising boys, was the point at which I realized that much of feminism in the early seventies had to do with women being more like men, learning to take power in male ways. Something clicked for me when I realized that I don't want to be more like men; I want men to be more like women.

...

Denni: When people ask me when I will have the second child, I think, "I have dreams and aspirations for myself and kind of a vision of where I am going. Staying home for the amount of time I have with Kyra and not being able to put energy into those visions... I know I can do that for a couple of years, as long as I know I'm going to surface again and get a big breath of air. But to have to go back under again and come up... that second time I would come up totally changed, whereas after one I feel I can come up with large pieces of myself intact."

Laura: Ideally, it shouldn't have to be going under.

Tana: The thing is that you'll never be the same again. If Kevin quit existing tomorrow, I would never be the same.

Agnes: It definitely changes you, and I'm real glad it did, despite all the hassles and everything. I've thought about that a lot. "Would I choose not to have done this?"

Everyone: No way.

Agnes: It is definitely the richest and most intense experience of my life.

I am telling you and you can take me for a fool there is no good time like the good time a whole mama has with a whole little baby and that's

where the first images of death came from — sister, you know it's true...

— Alicia Suskind Ostriker
The Mother/Child Papers, 1980

A Lesbian Mother's Story

Male defined roles say that if a woman is normal she is not a lesbian, and she is a mother. So the concept "lesbian mother" just does not compute.

Anon: Woman's role is to nurture men and children, not to nurture women. That breaks all the rules.

Question: You mentioned being very cautious because of your children.

Anon: Yes, people were talking about making choices...but it's not that easy to make a choice.

Q: You mean in terms of the legality of keeping your children?

Anon: The process I went through when my child was three, when I realized what was happening and what I wanted to do with my life, people said, "You can't do that. You can't make the choice to be a lesbian because of the possibility that you might lose your children." I felt as though the only option I had was to pretend to be something other than I was. And then I thought that would be the greatest disservice — that whatever the consequences he has to pay because his mother is a lesbian (and there are

consequences for him), those would never be as devastating as a parent living a lie by choice. So, I ended up feeling really good about my choice.

Q: But it didn't come easily, either?

Anon: So much of the time I was numb. My husband threatened to try to prove me an unfit mother. I was actually served the summons. He was talking about taking my child away from me when he was only three. He had been with me all that time and did not have a relationship with his father. But his father was talking about taking him away.

Q: He really wanted him?

Anon: He didn't. He just wanted to hurt me. My decision, my priority was to have my child with me at that time. What would happen if he were taken away from me would be too devastating. But I also knew that if I fought in the courts I would risk losing him altogether. So, after the preliminary skirmishes I approached my husband with a compromise. We talked a bit about joint custody, but that means that neither parent is the decision-making parent. You have to

make decisions together. With him holding the lesbian thing over my head, no way would I have done that. So, the legal arrangement is that I have him for a certain number of years and then his father gets custody. I'm in the situation of having my child for a few more years and then...it's not good. What I said to myself when I made this arrangement is that when the time comes, if he wants to be with his father, and his father wants him, then that's going to be all right with me. In some ways it's because of what we have all been talking about. There is no reason to be the only parent all the time. And, if when my son is ten, he does not want to live with his father then I'll reopen it. And I've got a real advantage this time because his father knew, when he agreed to let me have our child these years, that I am a lesbian. So how could he turn around years later and say "That's not okay"? I also hoped, very naively, that the climate in the courts would change. Of course, it has. But not in the direction I had hoped.

Q: It's going the other way?

Anon: Yes, lesbians are losing their

children all over the country right now. I remember the moment when I knew that this is what I was going to do. And there was this incredible kind of terror, because I knew I was risking my son.

Q: But you knew that to not risk it might be losing him in another way?

Anon: It's possible that someone could take him away legally, but no one could take me away from him. There are some real sanctions against those who do not play the game correctly. Being a lesbian feminist mother is not the way it's supposed to be played.

Q: The motherhood role placed on us by society can be very oppressive, but if you don't play by the rules, society can do you one step worse. They'll remove you from it entirely.

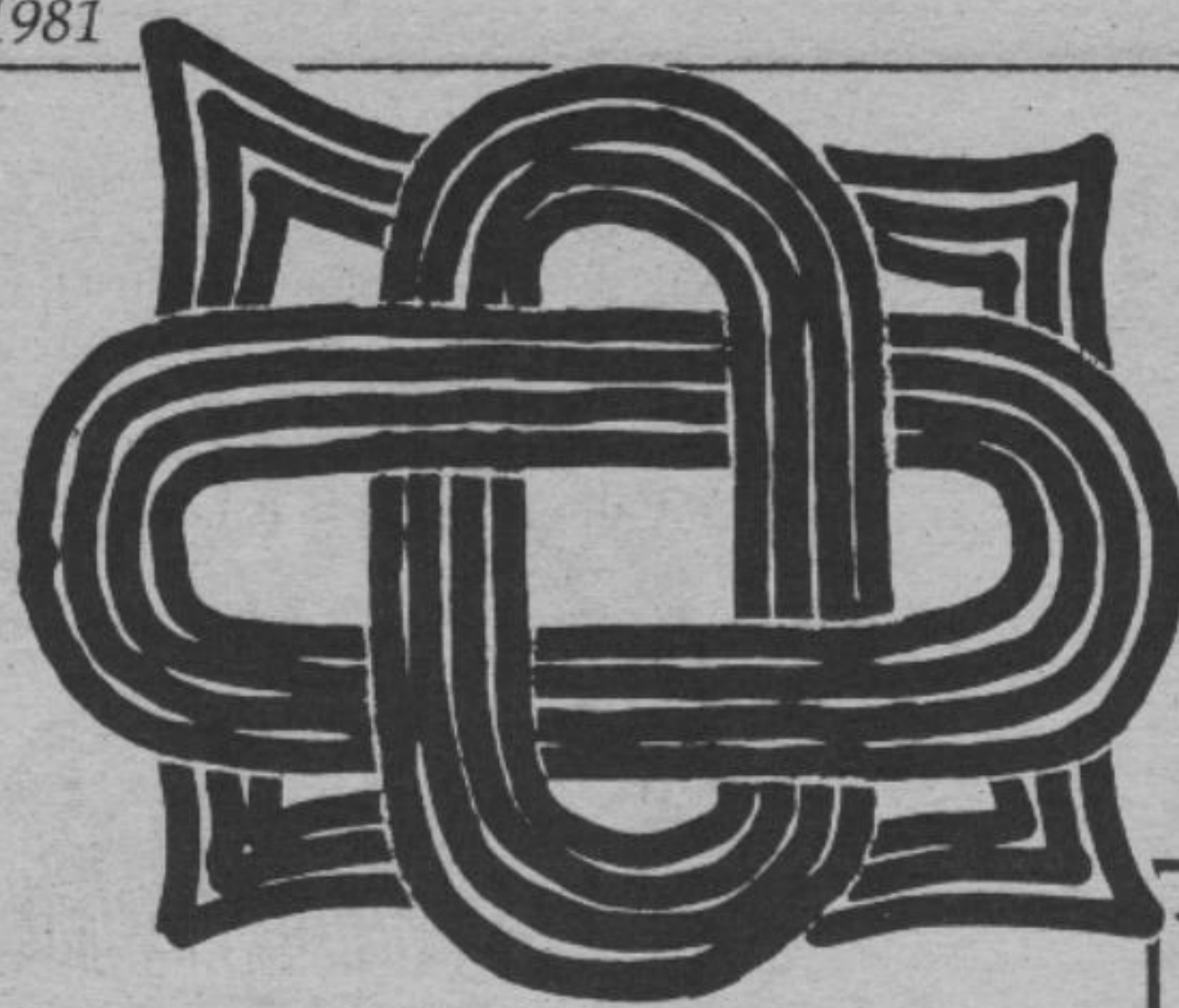
Anon: I find myself thinking, "How will it look in court?" every time I have to make a big decision. I have enormous resentment about that, being in that position. Do you know what I am saying?

Q: That your motherhood is fundamentally suspect.

Anon: Absolutely.

The Black Women's Collective

by Sherry Rauch



The need for a forum, a place for black women to talk freely about themselves and their families, jobs, and ideas, was the foundation for the Black Women's Collective. Community workers who sensed a strong need for a women's support system called for a meeting in the winter of 1980. Fifteen women attended the first meeting. Two weeks later at the second meeting, twenty-seven showed up. Many of the collective members have been students who subsequently moved out of town, but the collective has continued in spite of its fluctuating numbers.

The group came together to find support, but the members quickly found that they had more to offer. Skill-sharing became an important part of the meetings, with each member discovering and sharing her unique talents. The skills have varied from counseling to dancing to knowledge of legal services.

As a collective, the group also discovered its potential for effecting change. The members found that they could respond to community problems with an impact far greater than as individuals. One of their early concerns was the popularity on local radio stations of music that degraded women. Uneasy about the effects such attitudes might have on their children, the members expressed their views to the station management.

School board policies were another issue on which the collective voiced its opinion, speaking out against a rule to fail a child for missing more than five days in a six-week period. Child advocacy is a special concern of the group, and the members have begun forming an advocacy network to act on behalf of children when the parents are not available.

Helping to preserve and promote artistic expression has also been an emphasis of the collective, which hosted an Evening of Cultural Expression at Florida State University in 1980. The three-hour program included music, dance, poetry reading and theater, with collective members presenting most of the performances.

The Sisters of Soul is another outgrowth of the Black Women's Collective — a dance group of girls aged nine to twelve that has become so popular that boys have begun asking to join. (The collective is considering forming a group for boys to be called Rebound.)

The Sisters performed in December, 1980, during Kwanza, an African holiday that lasts for seven days. It was also the first Tallahassee community celebration of Kwanza, traditionally a time for giving thanks and enjoying the fruits of labor. The collective was an organizing force behind this first observance, providing dancers, food, costumes and decorations. In the African tradition, Kwanza is also a time for all members of the community to share opinions, community purpose, responsibility, determination and faith. Everyone is included, from the youngest to the oldest, and each is given a chance to speak. By bringing the Kwanza

celebration to Tallahassee, the collective hoped to introduce its concept of group-sharing and support to the larger community.

The Black Women's Collective does not hold regular meetings, but exists through a telephone network by which meetings can be called when they are needed or wanted. Many informal gatherings are called for the group's initial purpose — to offer a supportive framework for individual lives, and these tend to take the form of potluck suppers or picnics. Other meetings are called when an issue arises or a project is suggested. The members, all busy with a multitude of other interests, feel most comfortable with this arrangement. It infuses all their meetings with a sense of purpose and enthusiasm, and avoids the "burnout" that results from too many regularly scheduled meetings without focus. □

Women for Racial and Economic Equality

by Judy Adkins

In 1976 a group of Tallahassee women formed an informal organization to discuss local, state, national, and international issues, and to offer support to one another in the daily struggle of earning a living, getting through school, caring for families, etc. The women met on a regular basis for the next year and participated in local activities to forward the basic aims of racial unity, economic equality, and women's liberation.

In September 1977, one of these local women attended the founding convention of a national organization called Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE). Upon her return, and after studying the material she brought back, the group chose to affiliate with the fledgling organization that focused on the same concerns the women had chosen to struggle around.

During the past five years, Tallahassee WREE has co-sponsored programs such as: • Sarah Broome, on the J.P. Stevens boycott; • Addie Wyatt (the international vice president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters), on the Winn-Dixie boycott and women in labor unions; • the 1978 Mothers Day festival; • celebrations of International Women's Day and Women's Week activities.

Tallahassee WREE has also participated in campaigns initiated by the national organization including: circulating petitions demanding federal funding for locally controlled child care; gathering community support for the bill to save public education; surveying women about the various forms of harassment received on the job; collecting money for the "diaper fund" campaign for the child victims of South African apartheid; a postcard campaign to save Nalvia Rosa Mena, who is being held by the fascist Pinochet regime of Chile; supporting the boycott of the Nestle company and its subsidiaries that unscrupulously market infant formulas to third world mothers unable to properly prepare them, causing thousands of infant deaths attributed to "baby bottle disease."

During the next year, WREE will be working around the issues of abortion rights, the E.R.A., and International Women's Day.

Membership in WREE is \$5.00 per year, which includes a yearly subscription to the bi-monthly newsletter WREE-VIEW. Anyone agreeing with the goals and work of WREE is welcome to join. For more information, please contact either Laura McKinley, 224-8232, or Judy Adkins, 222-7737. □

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Cheerleaders No More

Women and Sports

by Clare Raulerson

Women athletes are not some new, rare breed. From 1938 to 1943, the FAMU Rattlerettes basketball team lost only one game, and that game was lost to a team from Tuskegee by one point with 12 seconds left.

Women athletes in the 1930's and 1940's competed for and won the respect and dignity for which women athletes in the 1970's have had to fight. Maybe it was WWII and all those women working in the factories, outside the home, that made the idea of women athletes seem tame at the time. When my grandmother was living in South Carolina in the 1930's, she always spent each Saturday the same way — 18 holes of golf followed by two sets of tennis. She didn't think there was anything strange about it and neither did my grandfather.

Athletic programs for women thrived at some state universities during the 1930's and 1940's. Althea Gibson played tennis at FAMU from 1949 to 1953. She then went on to win the Women's Singles title at Wimbledon in 1957 and the U.S. Open at Forest Hills, New York, that same year.

Then came the 1950's: We Like Ike, the American Dream of owning a home and two cars, the exodus to the suburbs, Country Squire station wagons and basic black dresses with pearls. Women stayed at home, in the kitchen with aprons (just like Jane Wyatt in *Father Knows Best* and Mrs. Cleaver in *Leave It To Beaver*), slaving over a hot stove in a sheath dress and stiletto heels. If you weren't in the kitchen or on your way to the store in your station wagon you were very suspicious and probably deviant.

For women athletes there were few options. While swimming continued to be an acceptable sport for young women (after all, they wear *bathing suits*), not every woman wanted to or could be a swimmer. Women athletes in the 1950's were faced with being cheerleaders, majorettes (instead of Rattlerettes) and experiencing the vicarious thrill of wearing his letter sweater.

This trend away from women's sports and into the kitchen, coupled with the low pay for coaches for women's sports, resulted in the gradual closing of most women's athletics programs around the country.

During the 1970's women athletes worked to reverse this trend. Women's sports began to inch their way into the national spotlight. As all people became more interested in physical fitness during the 1970's, the stigma of being a woman "jock" lessened. Women became involved in body building, in team sports and in martial arts for self-defense. With the advent of Title IX there was more money for women's sports, although the struggle for funds between men's and women's athletics at the collegiate level continues to be fierce.

The recently resurrected "trickle-down" economic theory is pure bunk, but in matters of consciousness it has merit. As more and more women become involved in sports, their delight and increased self-awareness is bound to trickle down to the daughters and nieces and neighbors.

Title IX in Florida

Between 1973 and 1978, women's athletics budgets for schools in Division I nationwide increased 900 percent. This figure is not so phenomenal when you consider that most women's athletics budgets were sitting on empty at that time. During the same time period, the number of female participants in women's athletics increased more than 250 percent.

During the 1978-79 school year, women comprised 30 percent of the varsity athletes in colleges nationwide. However, women's athletic programs received only 21 percent of school athletic scholarships, 19 percent of the athletic salary budgets and 14 percent of athletic operating budgets.

Because of such unbalanced figures, Title IX was introduced in 1972 to prohibit sex discrimination in all educational programs that receive federal assistance.

In 1979, after giving state universities three years to bring their programs into compliance with Title IX, then Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph Califano released the final interpretation of Title IX. This interpretation

Joining the City Leagues

The Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department also offers city league sports for women. The program began in 1970 with a women's softball league and now includes soccer and volleyball league matches. The most recent addition to the program is a women's basketball city league. For more information, call 222-7529.

This is an interview with one woman who plays in the city softball and volleyball leagues:

"I think the city leagues are great. I've got friends who have played in the leagues for years and I've been going to the women's softball games since 1970.

"The city leagues for women have really grown in the last few years. If there were more ballparks they could easily get more women's softball teams. The trouble is that now you end up playing real late at night because there aren't enough parks.

"I think the Parks and Recreation people have been real responsive to women and to women's sports. All women have to do is show an interest in some sport and the Parks and Recreation people will try to form a league.

Like with basketball — women have been complaining for years that there wasn't a women's basketball league in Tallahassee. Well, finally enough women got on the phone to Parks and Recreation and said, 'Listen, I've got four other women and we want to play basketball.' So this season for the first time there's going to be a women's basketball city league.

"More women are coming out for the city league teams. I've always played sports, but I have a lot of friends who've never played team sports before. Like two women I know who were both runners and they were asking me about the city leagues and I told them about the soccer teams. They both went out to soccer practice and they loved it. It's the first time either one of them has played a team sport.

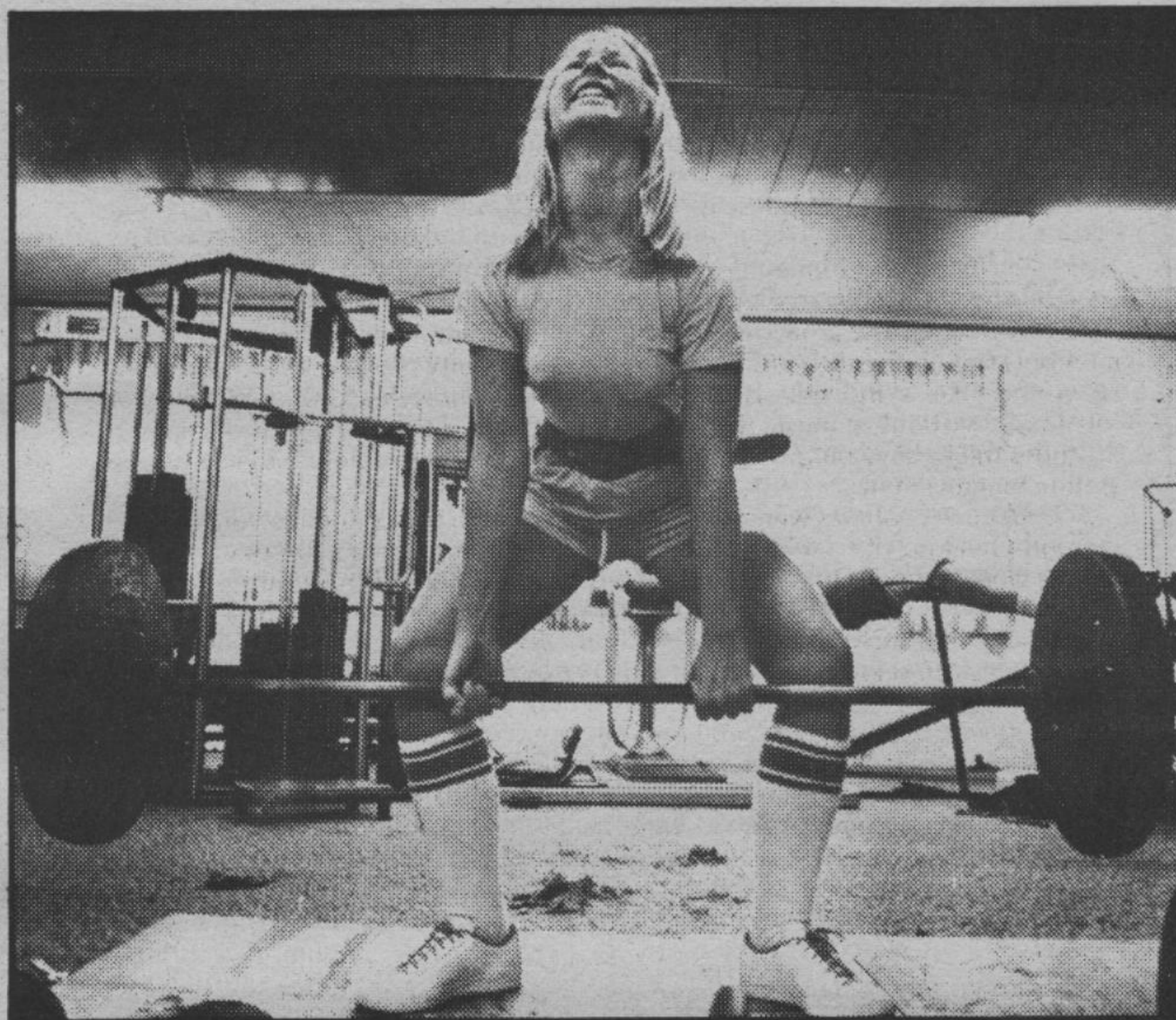
"There's been a change in the climate of women in athletics overall. It used to be you were just a jock or you weren't. Now more and more women are coming out to play, to get in shape and to be with other women. Team sports aren't easy. You have to work as a group and that's hard for people. But I've seen a lot of people modify their attitudes and really start to work together as a team. It's exciting." □

did not exempt revenue-producing sports (football) from the equity computations, even though a men's coalition had hired a public relations firm to lobby against the inclusion of revenue-producing sports.

In 1980, the Florida Legislature passed the Women's Intercollegiate Equity Act, establishing a council to determine the distribution of state dollars to insure statewide compliance with Title IX. This successful act came largely through the efforts of Florida State University's Women's Athletics Director Barbara Palmer. Florida is the first and only state to pass such a law guaranteeing Title IX compliance. Passage of the bill meant approximately \$2.8 million for women's athletics in Florida.

FSU — The Lady Seminoles

When Barbara Palmer came to FSU in 1977 the Women's Athletics budget was \$163,000. Today the budget is in excess of \$1 million. When Palmer came to FSU one of her goals was to have all the women's teams in the top ten within five years. Four years later, the women's teams have all cracked the top twenty. FSU has women's teams in softball, golf, swimming, track, cross country, tennis, basketball and volleyball.



FAMU — The Rattlerettes

The present women's athletics program at FAMU began in 1975 with a budget of \$5,000. Today the women's athletic department runs on \$258,000, has seven intercollegiate teams and has recently completed construction of a new women's athletic building. Sarah Hill is the FAMU Women's Athletic Coordinator.

FAMU unofficially began its new women's program in 1973 with a women's track team. Basketball was added in 1974, tennis and softball joined in 1977, swimming in 1978 and volleyball is this year's addition. The FAMU Rattlerettes' basketball team holds the state record in attendance, with more than 1,200 people at each home game.

Local Elementary, Middle and High Schools

Although Title IX is effectively forcing compliance on the collegiate level, girl's athletics are still suffering. For example, at Godby High School, where there is a nearly equal enrollment by sex, there are fewer than 70 girl athletes while there are more than 200 boy athletes. There are only three coaches exclusively for girls at Godby, while there are 12 coaches specifically for boy athletes. Young women often accept this inequity because they are used to being treated as second-class citizens on the playing fields. Young women athletes always have to wait until the boys are finished with the field, have to suffer ratty uniforms and second-rate equipment while all the athletic money goes for boy's sports.

One solution to this problem is the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department, which has seven different sports available for girls and boys: basketball, softball, flag and tackle football, soccer, gymnastics and swimming. There are already more than 7,500 school-age children participating in this program, and almost 2,500 of those children are girls. For more information call 222-7529. □



1972

Knestra King is arrested for handing out abortion literature in FSU union

1973

Women's Living Collective begins

Women's Center begins to push for Women's Studies with credit classes

Rape Crisis service begins

1974

FWHC started

First and only publication of 'Amazing Grace,' a women's magazine in Tallahassee

A Politics of the Spiritual

by Violet Burr Rose II



In the early 70's, not too many women would have considered their consciousness-raising group a form of spiritual communion; most viewed their meetings as radical therapy or political discussion. In fact, the major struggle was over whether you were a cultural feminist or a political feminist. Cultural feminists read and discussed books like Elizabeth Gould Davis' *The First Sex* which was about ancient matriarchal civilization, goddess myth, anthropology, erased female personages of history, etc.; cultural feminists also organized women's cultural evenings, women's arts festivals, and women's dances. Political feminists, on the other hand, read and discussed books such as Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectics of Sex* which was grounded in Marxist and Freudian analysis of societal structures and political dynamics between men and women; political feminists also organized women's strikes and marches, women's anti-imperialism/war and anti-female oppression newspapers, women's union activities, and women's legal challenges to the system. Soon the cultural feminists were identified as the "spiritual" camp whose pie was in the sky and who had substituted "Goddess" for "God" and were doing the same old shit. The "political" camp, in the meantime, identified as users of the tools of Mao and Marx with which they analyzed and dismantled patriarchy and developed new feminist "politically correct" behavior among women. Ironically, as a basic feminist tenet "the personal is political" took hold in our consciousness, these two polarized groups found themselves crossing over and merging actions, beliefs, ideologies, and ideas. Personal politics make spiritual bedsisters.

At the Women's Spirituality Conference in Boston in '76, a number of politicians and espíritus from Florida attended this national gathering of over 2,000 women and was held at U. Mass. At the end of the conference there was a big split between the two groups but I couldn't immediately figure out why all those politicians were there in the first place: if women's spirituality was such pabulum, how come the big fuss? The point was, the espíritus were diverting "real" action and struggle from the "real" problems of the world. I think for most women the definitions of what was political and what was spiritual were artificial overlays on the real process of daily living. The very act of delineating and fragmenting is mechanistic and linear — traditional tools of patriarchal rule. An organic and wholistic overview of relationship embodies the new age/woman-identified spirit. From that conference, we brought back a lot of shared information and created long-lived bonds and communication networks.

Consciousness-raising groups, study groups, political work groups, and efforts like Herstore in Tallahassee were all part of the long-term spiritual bonding of women. Dina describes these beginnings in the following letter:

Herstore opened its doors on Halloween — Hallowmas 1974 — the Witches New Year — we knew it was significant on some level. We knew it was a powerful time. Dorothy was aware of wicce even then; Morgana was much into wimmin's culture even then and Robbie was too — they were all part of that early stuff. No one was meeting in rituals or meditation circles, but we had beginning notions of the significance of what we were doing and, of course, we had the *beginning* (unconscious) tapping into of our old collective wimmin's memory. So what we would do was dance and sing and have parties on Halloween rather than circles.

Her definition of wimmin's spirituality based on these early stirrings is also clarifying:

...It is the enspiriting and empowering process, the healing process, the creating process, the act of seeing our connections to each other and to Nature, the act of recognizing and participating consciously in our journey. It is respecting our individual consciousness and power and recognizing and acting in the power of our collective energies. It is respecting our whole Selves — our emotions, our bodies, our thoughts, our will. It has to do with us all coming together and the love involved in that. Respecting the Life Cycle — birth, death, rebirth. Respecting the Earth.

She also feels that the political/spiritual split are really two sides of the same coin:

...they are the processes that we enact as we become and are whole beings. It's harder for me to cut fine lines, to define so clearly. It is, in fact, impossible. Politics and spirit to me and in my work are not separable — they work from the same premise, the same orientation, and they both mean transformation — the changer and the changed. It is political for wimmin to be reclaiming themselves and their culture and the process is enspiriting and it will be the way for us and the Earth to survive and gain all that we need to be whole beings. Ranting and raving, participation in the world has a lot to do with wicce also — not escaping.

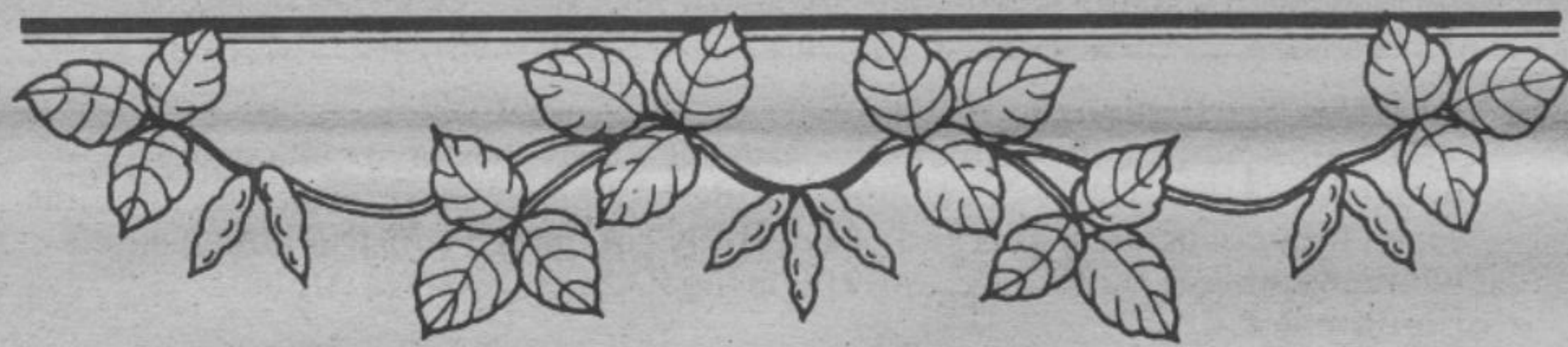
Not escaping but understanding and challenging necrophilic structures by changing our consciousness, our awareness, our psyches — that is exactly what many radical feminist authors advocate. Two of these women have visited Tallahassee in recent years: Mary Daly in November of '79, and Z Budapest in April '81.

Before Mary Daly arrived for two days of shaking up the molecules of Tallahassee, a study group who were reading her books and others had been meeting. *Gyn/ecology* is the book that describes patriarchal culture's most woman-hating and devastating practices. These include Chinese foot breaking and binding, Indian widow burning and ritualistic murder of poorly dowried brides, African and Saudi Arabian razoring of the clitoris and vulva and infibulation, European torture devices for women including the chastity belt, pierced labia bound with a lock, and the mass slaughter of women as witches by learned Christian fathers, and modern male gynecology whose practitioners remove wombs and breasts from women's bodies to eliminate their despised presence. All these acts of sado-ritual by men towards women are re-enactments of gynocidal Goddess murder — institutional male violence against women that began with day one of the patriarchal overthrow in order to wipe out women's power and to teach women the "reality" of their submissive natures, their "feminine" qualities, their inferior role in life.

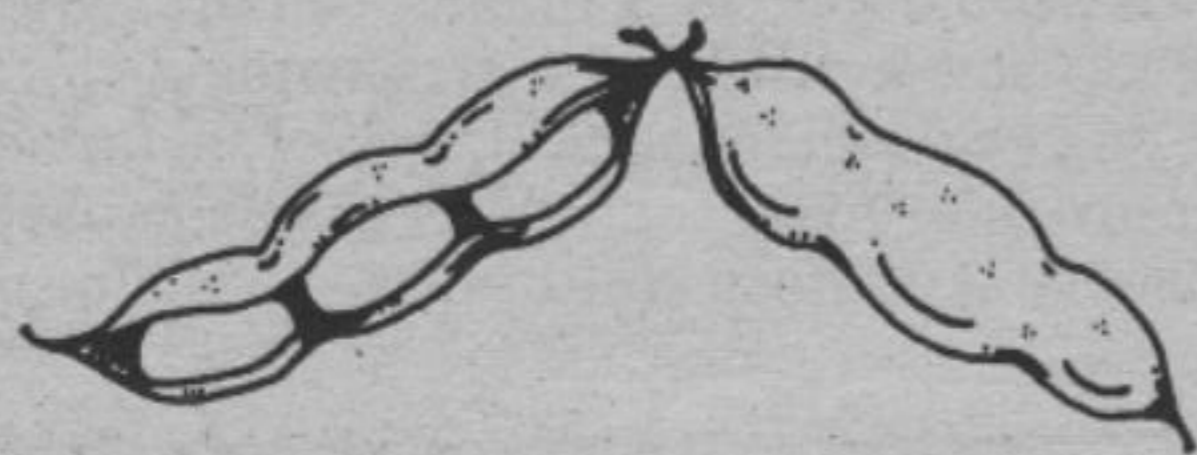
These practices are deceptively legitimized by scholars and "authorities" of patriarchy. The language of these "authorities" betrays, or rather, loyally and faithfully displays, the fact that they are apologists for atrocities against women. When Daly spoke at FSU, she especially emphasized the mis-use of language and the hidden and distorted meanings with which we are taught to perpetuate misogyny and male thinking. Her "lecture" was an eloquent weaving of contrapuntal sound and meaning that took into account the ancient etymology of every word. Her message was a revelatory chant that startled and pleased the brain. She was not particularly dramatic or stagey; she was a woman of intricate anger and beauty of mind.

Another catalyst of a different ilk was Z Budapest who led a wonderful women's circle at the Land Co-op and presented a slide show of Goddess images from around the world and lots of witchy woman-identified information. She is the embodiment of a spiritual/political approach to feminism. The empowering of the psyche with the knowledge about the thousands of years of matriarchal culture and ancient and recent Goddess worship gives us access to new possibilities for the future. Z's witch work emphasizes the practice of Dianic craft (lesbian-identified) is not for personal gain but for the political and social gains for all women. Her books *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries I & II*, express a political awareness that stresses the important connection between accepted religion and cultural edicts and mores. Like Alix Dobkin, another woman who is a wholistic blend of art and politics, Z Budapest rolls with the masses — that is she makes it a point to get to know the women of the community through workshops on "How to Hex a Rapist/return his energy to him" and priestessing a new moon circle with women who would not otherwise be together in Tallahassee.

continued on page 28



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Women and Art in Tallahassee

by Clare Raulerson

"Art may well have been invented by women for the purpose of sketching their own shadow-selves rather than those of their lovers. Self-portrait as self-identity: like diaries, one of the few ways women have to leave their side of the story. Looking at art by women has been for us like looking in a mirror."

—From *Women Artists: Recognition and Reappraisal From the Early Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century*, Karen Petersen and J.J. Wilson



There have always been women artists. We rarely learn their names when we are taught the names of Rembrandt and Mozart and Milton, but women artists did and do exist. For every Rembrandt there was a Sofonisba Anguissola; for every Mozart a woman troubador rendered anonymous by her sex; for every Milton a George Eliot forced to conceal her sex and use a man's name so her work could be published and read.

Why don't we know about these women? Because art historians have ignored the accomplishments of women artists. In all of Janson's *History of Art*, the most commonly used art history text, there is not a single woman artist mentioned. It is only in recent years that we have become aware of the names of these women artists and of their lives, through the research of other women who examined the lives of men artists and discovered the obscured woman — the daughter or the sister or the wife who clandestinely created art, sometimes art signed by her brother or father or husband — the woman behind the man rather than the woman alone.

Now it is important to find the women artists in our own communities, to know their work and to make sure they are not lost from sight again.

Women Artists, Politics and Tallahassee in the 1970's

"The real art or literature of any group comes into being when the members of that group cease feeling the need to explain and justify themselves to a dominant culture and begin to reclaim and create their own culture, for themselves. Women are the one caste which cuts across and forms a majority of every national, political, social, cultural fragmentation into which the species is divided. Patriarchy, with its arbitrary and violent divisions, has denied us our community as women, denied us even our channels of communication where it could. And we now begin to hear and to address each other, the possibility of a real world culture begins."

—From Adrienne Rich's introduction to *THE OTHER VOICE: Twentieth-Century Women's Poetry in Translation*

During the 1970's in Tallahassee — just like other communities of women around the country — women's creative energy was channeled into the singular purpose of creating a new nation, a haven for women. Every ounce of our energy went to developing new methods of living in the world. Women created women's centers and refuge houses. They tore apart old relationships to find the truth at the heart of them, and, when there was no truth, they cast aside these old relationships and forged new ones. We discarded men's rules as fast as we could decipher them and struggled to figure out new rules that would apply. Too often nothing applied and we would begin again at rock bottom. It was an exciting, bewildering time that went by much too fast. No woman who was involved does not still yearn, at least in part, for a return to that time—to the camaraderie and the all-nighters, to the shared anguish and the shared dream.

One could safely say that this energy, this building of a new nation, was surely creative energy. I would go further and say this creation was art and all these women artists. Our canvas, our loom, our big chunk of marble was the world itself and we eagerly hacked away until we could be precise enough to file and sand and polish the surface of that stone.

For example, women working together began the FSU Women's Center. At the time of its inception, the Center was called the FSU Women's Educational and Cultural Center — a long-winded indication of the breadth of creativity within a white frame portable in Mabry Heights.

With the Center came:

1. Space for women musicians and poets and dancers to perform for other women. Most weekends included a performance night for local women artists.
2. Women writers and artists with some modicum of printing skills who got together to produce the first women's periodical in Tallahassee, *Amazing Grace*.
3. A daycare center for women students to use so they could continue their education when they couldn't afford the prohibitive cost of private daycare.
4. Programs for women featuring national women artists and writers — a priority that eventually developed into Women's Week — a yearly extravaganza of speakers, music and performances.

And more. Many of these things have become staples in the Tallahassee community. Every Women's Week includes a women's performance night and there have been two such nights sponsored by the public library. One Women's Week included the first women's art show in Tallahassee, a concept expanded by the public library a few years later to a month-long series of films, exhibitions and performances of women artists.

The problem is not a dearth of creative women. It is rather that creative women must do so much they rarely have time for their art. They must make time, in between the meetings and the children, in between dinner and a job. In Tallahassee, and in every other place, there are few women who are solely artists, who are not also teachers and mothers and workers and wives. What's more, there are few women who would not feel supreme guilt at devoting all their time to their art, few women who would not feel that they were being "selfish" or "not doing enough."

A Day in the Life of a Woman Artist

(with apologies to and in the manner of Laurie McLaughlin)

- 6:30 a.m. Up to type the rest of a dissertation for a doctoral student in History. Title of the dissertation: "The Role of Women in the Colonies during the Revolutionary War." Findings: the role of women was to keep the social fabric of the new nation from tearing apart at the seams by being good wives and mothers, staying home and tending the fire. I get a dollar a page. It pays the rent on one room with a bath down the hall and a "community kitchen."
- 9:00 a.m. Audit a drawing class at the Fine Arts Building at FSU. Today we draw from a live nude model, Linda, an artist friend of mine who gets \$3.50 an hour for posing.
- 10:00 a.m. Go and open the Art Co-op, a tiny storefront on Tennessee Street that I helped start so we could sell artists' supplies at cost.
- 1:00 p.m. Go to lunch, if the volunteer shows up, with Martha to talk about the program on rape we want to do at the university. My job is publicity. I have to design the poster, get it printed, post it all over town, hit the newspapers, do public service announcements for all the radio stations and put an ad in the Flambeau.
- 2:00 p.m. Back at the Art Co-op. Touch up the Art Co-op sign that I painted for the front of the store, talk to two more women about the rape program. Serve six customers. Study a little.
- 6:00 p.m. Meeting at the women's center about the rape program and about getting the flyer done for the women's film festival we are cosponsoring with CPE.
- 9:00 p.m. Go home for a few minutes to put the finishing touches on a drawing I did for the women's center. Finish matting the drawing and take it over to the center. Pick up Rape Crisis beeper on the way to the women's center — it's my night to be on call.
- 11:00 p.m. Finally get down to the film festival flyer at the women's center. Got press-on letters and illustrations scattered all over the floor while I type the descriptions of each film.
- 1:50 a.m. Beeper blows. A woman has been attacked outside her apartment by a guy with a knife. Luckily, she screamed and someone came out of the place next door. I go to talk to her and be with her while she gives a description of the guy to the police.
- 4:30 a.m. Stop by Howard Johnson's for some coffee and run into Shelley. She tells me about the story she is almost finished with. She's going to do a reading.
- 6:00 a.m. Back at the women's center, finishing up the film festival flyer. Lie down on couch to take a nap until 8 when I can take the flyer to the university print shop.
- 8:00 a.m. Woman comes to the women's center looking in the library for a book on women and work to help in a management test she's about to take. She helps me hang the drawing I finished up on the wall. She really likes it. She says "Why don't you draw more?" People are always asking me that. I never know what to say. They don't believe that I don't have enough time.

continued on page 23

Women's Studies At F.S.U.

by Brandyn Briley

In the past decade, in the process of trying to win a long denied political and social equality, women stumbled across something they had never had before: a past. Discovery of our foremothers made being a woman not just a birth accident, but a personal characteristic in which one could take pride. It meant being a member of an illustrious club of writers, astronomers, mathematicians and political activists that had been systematically shunted into limbo.

The women who are our past lived their lives in feminine isolation with only their own strengths and ambitions to keep them fighting. It was hard to find fellow women who shared their thoughts, fears, and dreams.

Woman's search for herself led her logically to the colleges and universities, but the repositories of such a wealth of information on even the most trivial and minor accomplishments of man had no answers.

These searching women were the products of a decade of political action, however, and they were becoming unaccustomed to accepting sardonic snickers and "wait and see" answers. So the children of the '60s brought their new found political and social power to bear on the monolithic institutions of learning, and the system yielded.

The result was the hiring of women as professors to satisfy affirmative action requirements, and the demand for courses that included women as participants in building a culture.

The course material was sparse, surveys were bad and sources were limited, but to those who discovered that there were indeed women in history, literature and science, it was a time of self-congratulation. They had discovered each other. But what was union to the students was still isolation to the professors assigned to find those women in their past.

"I had no background. I'd never had a course on women's history," remembers Dr. Jean Hales, of Florida State University.

"I was hired with the specific proviso that I would develop a course on women's history, which I had no training in. But I was a woman, and I was expected to know about it."

The first group of students that Dr. Hales would face would be the very committed, very political women that had pushed for the course to be offered. One of those students was Clare Raulerson, an FSU sophomore from Jacksonville.

"I have a mental image of that room. There were maybe thirty people in it when it started out, and they were women who were active politically. Not necessarily feminist, but along different stages of discovering feminism."

Faced with women who expected so much from the course, Hales says, "I was scared. I'm sure they had their own ideas about what the women's history course should be and I was caught in the bind, the traditional historical bind, of wanting to make it historical and 'objective,' trying not to cross that line of advocacy quite that much. Although any women's studies course, or women's history course is by nature political, and it ends up being an advocacy course for changing perceptions, but you don't have to stand there and talk as if it is, because the material says it so well itself."

Having the material say it was too subtle for women who were tired of waiting and working low key.

"I remember Jean as being hesitant," Raulerson says. "I was disappointed at the time that it was not more rabble-raising. We wanted leaders."

There was a tension on both sides. A tension both were aware of. While the women students were struggling to find an identity that had been denied them, the professors were engaged in a different struggle.

Hales admitted, "I think many of us teaching women's studies courses felt conflict, but at that stage we were trying to make our own commitment to feminism by surviving in the profession — which was difficult."

The women teaching the individual courses that would later become the basis for the Women's Studies curriculum were still effectively isolated from each other. Often one professor was not aware that courses on the accomplishments of women were being taught in other disciplines. In the spring of 1974, they were all called together at the Women's Center on campus. That was when the isolation ended, and Women's Studies began.

"It was wonderful, finally," enthuses Hales. "All of a sudden the women got to talking about how exciting the courses were that we were teaching, but how frustrating that we didn't know enough. We felt so isolated. Just 'Help!' was the general feeling."

That meeting was the first of many, and it provided the core for Women's Studies — the courses that would provide a sense of belonging to women students

Women and Art, from page 22

What Will Happen in the 1980's?

There are many, many women artists in Tallahassee — writers, musicians, weavers, potters, painters, on and on. There are also many artist-based groups with keen women involvement — *Sun Dog*, no space art foundation, the etc. theatre group.

What is missing is a space specifically for women performers and their art. Rumours is sorely missed as a location for periodic performance nights. For years there has been late-night talk about starting a women's theatre group. Clearly, there is sufficient talent here in Tallahassee. There are many women involved with theatre at FSU, FAMU and TCC. Some of these women have been expressing some discontent about the theatre programs within these schools. There are certainly enough women writers around to supply the group with material. And production skills are shared by the women responsible for bringing in women performers like Holly Near and Meg Christian.

Unfortunately, most of this late-night talk was being done by the regulars, women who already have twenty-odd irons in the fire and barely a moment to spare.

Still, it's something to shoot for. With Barbara Speisman's plays being produced on a regular basis and Sheila Taylor's novel *Faultlines* about to be published by Naiad Press, we have a lot to be thankful for in Tallahassee. Birds of a Feather production collective, after successfully producing the Meg Christian and Alix Dobkin concerts, is laying the groundwork for the first Southeastern Women's Music Festival. Unless some heavy backsliding occurs, the future bodes well for women artists in Tallahassee. We just need to keep tending the fires and make sure they don't go out. □

like Raulerson.

"It made me feel a lot stronger. I think there was a tendency at that time to look at feminists as really strange people. You were 'women's libbers,' you know, and people would write you off because of that. It was good and important to learn that there had always been women who were active and who had survived, women who had accomplished a great deal. They had produced newspapers and gotten laws passed. To realize that women had been struggling like that forever, that women had always contributed and played important roles in the development of the country, but that we just hadn't had a chance to learn about it. It was frightening the way women had been systematically omitted from the history books, the art books, math books; that any one group of people would determine that because of the sex of someone, their contribution was not important enough to be written down."

The study of women has been more than chronicling the accomplishments of a few. It has been the validating of all women, bringing them in from the fringes and according them a place in our collective consciousness. For the students in these courses has come a recognition that women can exercise, and have exercised, tremendous talent and leadership outside of traditional peripheral roles. In spite of it being the study of the history of half our people, it is still separate from the mainstream.

Professors like Dr. Hales believe that this is something which will take a long time to change.

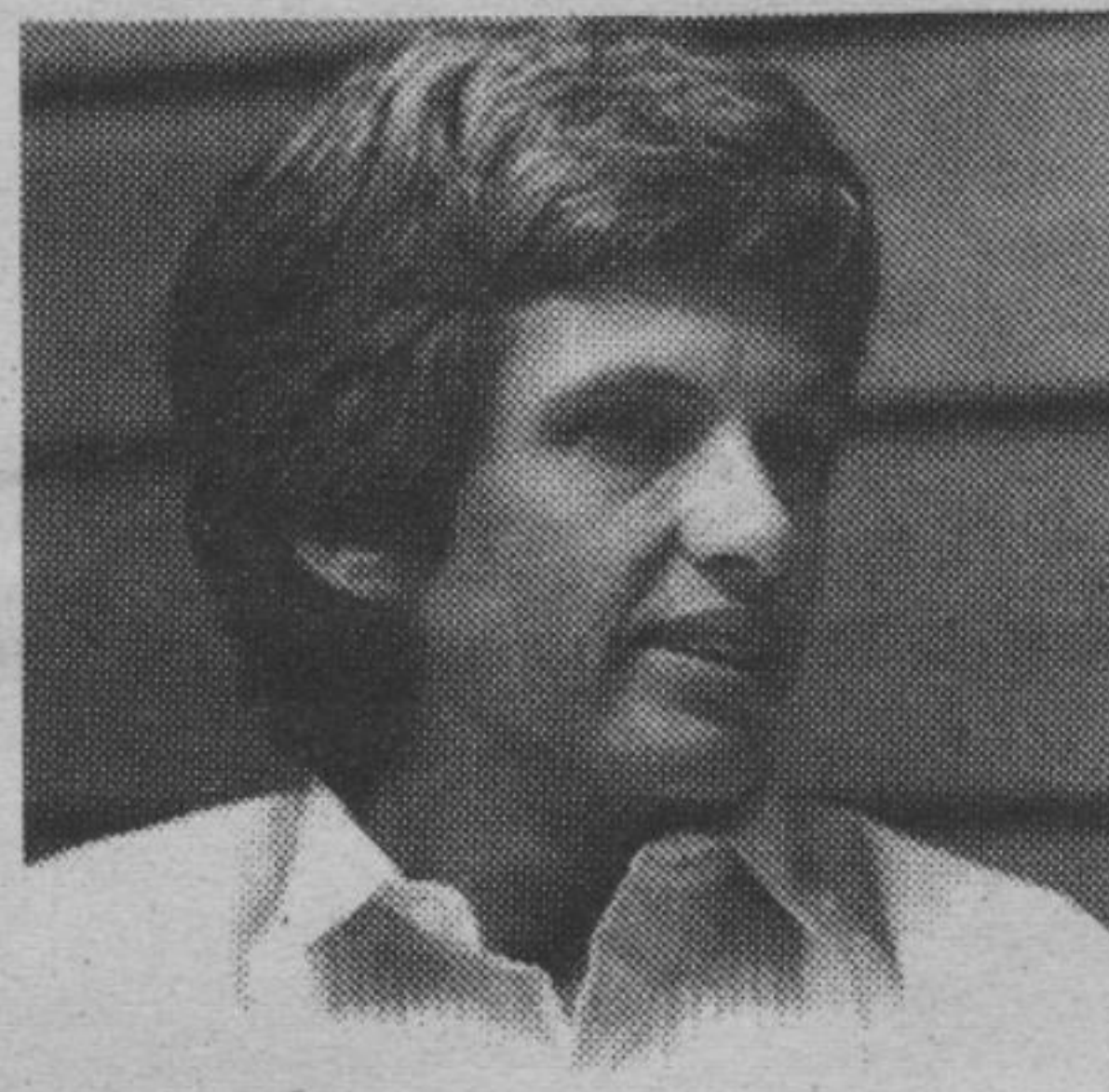
"The goal of Women's Studies is ultimately to self-destruct," she says. "That will happen when we bring about changes in the curriculum in each area women's studies has something to say. But it won't be for a long time, and it won't be all at once."

For Dr. Hales and her students, the first course in women's history was a time of exhilaration and pain.

"I never felt direct pressure from them," she claims, "but I was aware that they may have wanted more from me. And I got so much from them. Together we became aware, more aware than we would've liked, of how deep the prejudice against women is, and how strong the obstacles are to overcome."

It will be a long time before the study of women in the humanities and sciences becomes totally integrated into mainstream material. For example, the basic studies courses approved a few months ago at Florida State University include no courses which offer a balanced view of the contributions of women. Politically, on a national level, women are losing more to conservatives than they are gaining. But no amount of backtracking and inaction can ever put women back in that dark isolation in which each struggled separately for so long. □

An Upcoming Novel



One of the interesting and important creative endeavors taking place in Tallahassee right now is the forthcoming novel by local author Sheila Ortiz Taylor. Published by the Naiad Press, Inc., a lesbian feminist book publishing company, Taylor's novel *Faultline* is due out February 10, 1982, as Naiad's first book of the new year.

Faultline, according to Naiad Press, "is about the famous San Andreas earthquake fault in California." The story is "a cyclical, episodic comedy — a strictly light and entertaining book. Its basic plot is about a lesbian mother with six children who fights for custody of those children. But that is an almost

incidental fact in the kaleidoscope of fascinating characters' tales, each of whom tells a portion of the story in his or her own words. This style is a literarily distinguished method of storytelling that has been used in *The Canterbury Tales* and a few others along this line.

"*Faultline* is also a lesbian feminist novel that is non-threatening, according to the 'token' heterosexuals who have read the book. We have found that they are not frightened or put off by the book because it is beautifully written and its message is love. The real theme of the book is love: for old people, for young people — the country of the heart. It's about caring and supportive relationships, about the love for children and the love for animals. Bunnies are important in *Faultline*. The lesbian mother has 300 rabbits or so, because if you have a few rabbits, you have more.

"The book promises to be a bestseller. And it's a wonderful thing for Tallahassee because Sheila Taylor is a professor at Florida State University and a member of the Tallahassee community. She teaches women's studies, 18th Century literature and creative writing.

"Sheila Ortiz Taylor is a wonderful writer who has a career ahead of her beyond our imagination, but it should be a fabulous career. We are extraordinarily proud to be her publisher." □



1975

ERA parade at Capitol. Speakers: Betty Friedan, Marlo Thomas, Alan Alda, Karen DeCrow, Karen Collman, Judy Lightfoot, and Robert Shevlin

FWHC filed anti-trust suit against doctors

1976

NOW charges Leon County Sheriff with disobeying laws against sex discrimination. He made the comment: "I take my coffee like I take my women: sweet, white, and hot."

Letter to the Editor: "I take my Sheriff Hamlins like my toilet paper: soft, white, and disposable."

EXCERPT FROM HER JOURNAL

by Pat Simmons



AMARANTHA

Dated February 12, 1977

Wow, what a wonderful Dark/Cool this was. All the womyn gave so warm with cuddles, made such soft sounds. Many gave/shared squeezes, holds/hugs with hands rubbing my tummy, scratching my nose.

I liked it, being with at cheryl's house. Especially when all the womyn came at the Dark/Cool to eat, sit on the floor and soft/talk around. They gathered, many of them, covered by big fluff coats, inside furry sweaters on cool skins, to be with others, to talk/listen, to eat, to rest in the together of each other.

Cheryl, my friend, always lets me snooze/be on the big crinkle-sound pillow she made. It is in the corner of her big room, in just the spot for me to stretch/lay out, be with the womyn.

It is very special for cheryl to let me be here with in her big house. Cheryl must know i like it here with. She must know how i am here, that lee and pat have brought me with. I am with at many houses, inside many womyn's places. I have heard many womyn talk/speak with others, together, around in gatherings with food, with warm spots like crinkle-sound pillow.

This time had many come be with. I could smell the food the womyn cooked/worked. I could hear the stirring/blending, the can opener grind, the oven pulled/open snapped/closed, the cool box rattled, all the pots on the stove above me

moved in turns on/in the heating places. Womyn who came later brought more, in bowls, dishes into the kitchen. More food was made, and the counter space filled with colorful/smellaful tastes. But, there was no meat, no cans were opened with familiar smells to me. This was not my dinner, but i will share with anyhow.

I could see the womyn move back and forth from the big room to the kitchen, sometimes move outside to the Cool. Sometimes cheryl or lee dropped a piece of cheese down to me, so i stayed close. They know i don't mind to help clean up what they drop. Sometimes i have to remind cheryl and sometimes i don't.

It was so warm/small/crowded, smelled so good inside the kitchen. My face watered/begged. Sounds were so many of busy goings around. Knives sliced/cut, brushes scrubbed, water poured, oven snapped, womyn laughed/shouted/touched together with.

The womyn always remembered to say hi to me. They never forgot i was here with/beside. They always remembered to carefully step over me and smile to me. I smile back with my eyes. They always know this.

Mouth dripping fragrances, lee said they had three quiches, broccoli with butter, baked breads, salads, and cheryl soup. This must all be good, the womyn said, to share with friends. I agreed.

Henderson came in to check the goings around. He is a nice fellow, quiet and modest, not always wanting to be with. Henderson can not see all the movements around, so i helped him move between the legs and through the kitchen. Cheryl asked him to go back outside, that is Henderson's place, i helped him find the door to the Cool. Henderson is my friend, even though he is a cat.

The womyn gathered to sit/eat in the big room space where the crinkle-sound pillow is with. They are with/together in soft/talk. Some womyn read/speak from books or papers to others. Some are in laughs, some are quiet. Some gave rubs/touch to other's backs or tummies. All carried plates piled in foods, placed on tables or between their legs. Sounds/songs in many voices, made in many tones moved across the big room space. Pat sat with on the crinkle-sound pillow and held me close. Libby, soft/warm, rubbed my tummy. Soft/holds with love/speakings to me. Bonnie gave me bits of quiche. Of course, i accepted/gobbled.

Some of these womyn i know from other places. Some have sounds/smells familiar to me. I know them from the small, old house of gatherings where i stayed when i was found. And from the long house in dim light, with pillows, where i rested on Dark/Cools with womyn who read books in words i could not understand. These womyn have been with in my house, and sometimes i have been/visited in theirs. Yes, i have known them with, from many times/gatherings made before.

As they ate/drank/rested, cheryl added different smells to the big room. On these smells none of the womyn could/wanted to eat. The smells were for the nose and eyes only. They glowed in bright ambers and made clouds drift through the big room space. These smells were strange/smooth. I did not sneeze.

Cheryl had many green/grows inside the big house. They were inside especially now the Dark/Cool was outside with. They sat/watched from the high places. Foods were in bowls placed all around them. Cheryl's green/grows purred/whispered happy hums to my ears.

I fell asleep on the big crinkle-sound pillow. Womyn chewed/moaned/talked/laughed, they made me sigh/stretch. We were with around together inside cheryl's big house. And the Dark/Cool, outside with, watched us from the windows.

Communities of women friends can certainly relate to this poignant memory of dinners at Cheryl's house as told to us by Amarantha.

Named after a woman character in a book who endured Appalachian hardships, rape and male brutality, Amarantha was found by Pat, Lee and Bonnie R. in the winter ("Dark/Cool") of 1975. Terribly emaciated, scarred with cigarette burns, mange and rope burns, she surprised everybody when she gave birth to two puppies only a week after they took her home.

The women in the Feminist and Lesbian community in Tallahassee helped care for Amarantha and her puppy, Aaragon. She spent many a day and night at the original Women's Center in Mabry Heights ("small house of gatherings"), and at the old Herstore on College Avenue ("long house in dim light with pillows").

Amarantha has been an integral part of the women's community in Tallahassee. She has proven to be a very special dog, as you can see.

Since this writing in 1977, she has participated in women's gatherings and meetings of all sorts. She often sings to liven up a sagging party, and has been a representative to Artemis at moon circles. Amarantha characterizes all animals living with and loved by women.

It is suggested that this contribution, in order to be better understood and articulated, be read aloud by a woman to a woman.



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A Sampler of Women's Groups

by Denni Jennings

Groups of people come together to work on an issue, an idea, or a need. The effects of their efforts are contingent upon resources, a supportive climate, and just fast-thinking folks within the group who can manipulate the resources and climate so that they are favorable for the group's goals.

Groups addressing women's issues or needs face additional hazards in their operations. Needs and ideals in our society are based on a definition that has no recognition of the dreams and desires that exist outside the patriarchal mind. Thus women's groups suffer from a lack of legitimacy in the larger society and in the boards and commissions that sometimes hold the future of these groups in their hands. Funds and political support for women's issues can be removed at the first sign of budget cuts or trouble. It is presumed that women's mental health needs or the rehabilitation of displaced homemakers can be just as effectively addressed by the community psychologists and local churches (when, in reality, these institutions often work *against* economic and personal stability in a women's life). Further, these women's groups are disposable because women are perceived as having little financial or political power.

Many women's groups in our area have survived these hazards. I am writing about a few of them because of their success and the services they offer to women. I have also included information about a woman's group that has folded because of what their demise tells us about the situation for women today.

Tallahassee Women's Drinking Club

This enlightening and informal group of women has met on Thursdays after work for nearly four years, off and on. Their original idea was to offer professional women peer support to counteract whatever undermining these women faced in their (traditionally male) careers. While women come to the group for other reasons — political or employment networking is another activity within the T.W.D.C. — the peer support still exists today and there is a new brand of "sisterhood" among these high-achieving women that has encouraged each along her way.

Women's Growth Center

A group of counselors at Apalachee Community Mental Health Services labored over a plan in 1976 to meet the different set of motivational and situational factors that women with alcohol problems faced, as opposed to male alcoholics. Their approach was multi-functional: they sought to enhance a woman's self-esteem, to grant her the right to her own anger and sense of powerlessness, and to work on the personal problems that her alcoholism had created or aggravated. This plan became the Women's Growth Center and services at the Center today include nutritional counseling, assertiveness training, relaxation and dance classes, as well as individual and group therapy. Most of these services are available to all women, whether or not there is an alcohol problem. They offer a community information lunch on the last Thursday of every month that features topics specific to women's needs and a very good lunch.

Friday Lunch Group

This assembly of women is also known as the Women's Network, the Good-Old-Girl Network, and That Group That Meets at the Round Holiday Inn. They do meet at the round Holiday Inn for lunch on Fridays, as they have done almost every week since their inception five years ago. The founding women came together in 1974 to discuss employment discrimination that many of them were experiencing. Through the group's evolution, they have come to serve as an excellent employment network for women seeking jobs or promotions. It is also a good place to hear what is going on behind the scenes politically and commercially. The group works informally to promote women's career aspirations. More than 600 women have attended the group and there is a crowd of 30 to 50 women who come regularly.

Center for Creative Employment

This group of women, most of them displaced homemakers, came together to provide support services and employment counseling for other women bumped out of their careers as homemakers without having other marketable skills available. They operated for two years on a state demonstration program status. Recently those funds were cut back and no other body would pick up the program and the Center was shelved. What remains of the program is housed within two offices — at the Women's Resource Center at FSU, which is an office in the School of Home Economics that operates as a clearinghouse for women's programs in Florida, and in the state Office of Aging and Adult Services. The fact is that neither of these offices address issues of employment inequities or women's economic status, but rather women as homemakers and recipients of state services. What happened to the Center is a sorry example of how women's needs are still seen by the people in power as separate from the *real* concerns of this society.

Refuge House

As a victim of physical abuse, a woman's health and safety are threatened. Concern for this, and a desire to break the cycle of family violence motivated clinicians at Apalachee Community Mental Health, in conjunction with the Tallahassee Police Department, to establish Refuge House in 1978. Currently, they offer shelter, food, clothing, medical care, child care and individual and family counseling for the women who come to the House. They also provide an option for women who previously had no alternatives to abuse at home. The staff at Refuge House strives to offer an accepting and supportive climate as the women work through the experience of victimization. While the location of the shelter must remain confidential for the safety of the residents, they do provide a speakers' bureau to educate the community about family violence.

Tallahassee Women's Political Caucus

This group is quiet this year, but soon the machinery will gear up for another election year and we'll hear from the Caucus again. This Tallahassee group is one of a network of Women's Political Caucuses across the country that work diligently to promote and elect women candidates for public office. They are a bipartisan group who participate in fund raising, public affairs, and media endorsements to support women in politics. Some things to watch for are their annual cocktail party at the opening of the State Legislative session, and the Florida convention of the WPC, also held annually. □

The Women's Bars...

A Short History

by Sherry Rauch



Women in Tallahassee have created two strictly social spaces for women in the past ten years: *Mother's Garden Gate* (MGG) and *Rumors*. Neither lasted very long, MGG for six months, *Rumors* for about a year and a half, because of two problems that plague women in many other areas of their lives: economics and safety. For the time they did exist, however, women had a place to be together, relatively free from male harassment and control.

What follows is the history of the bars based on interviews with two women who were instrumental in creating these social settings for women. One of the women's names has been changed due to the nature of her job.

Mother's Garden Gate had its grand opening on New Year's Eve of 1977. "The word had really gotten out — we had a lot of women there," Sue recalls. "A women's bar was long overdue."

MGG was primarily a lesbian bar, although the managers, Sue, Katie and Laurie, later tried to broaden the base of their clientele to include all women. At the time they opened, two other gay bars were in existence: the *Foxtrot* and the *Panhandle*. These bars were much larger. The *Panhandle* in particular was "very ambitious," according to Sue, for a small town like Tallahassee. It had two levels, a lighted dance floor and a salad bar. Gay men were more attracted to these bars, and although women were not discouraged from coming, they often felt like outsiders. "It was troublesome for me and other women to go there," Sue explained. "You knew you were in a men's bar."

MGG had previously been a gay bar until the owner decided to open the *Panhandle*. When he talked with Katie, she became excited about turning MGG into a women's bar. Although the bar was small, it was, in Sue's words, "a beautiful, cozy spot." It was split level, the upper part furnished with couches for conversation and the bottom part cleared for dancing. Katie talked with Sue and Laurie and they became the managers. "We acted as if we were the owners: we made all the decisions, paid all the bills," rearranged the furniture, kept records and made new accounts. "But we were working for someone else — we just tried to forget about that someone else as much as possible."

Once they had their feet on the ground, they tried to incorporate other needs felt by women in the community. During the week they would have women musicians play, both novices and professionals. On weekends they catered to the "party" crowd with happy hours, lots of dancing, and staying open to all hours of the morning. They soon provided juice for women who didn't want alcohol, sandwiches for those who were hungry, and even changed beer salesmen when women requested a type of beer they hadn't previously served. "We tried to listen to what the women in the community wanted, but we also had to toe the line of what sells," Sue said.

For the most part they were not harassed, but occasionally they had some trying moments. One time, when their backs were turned, some men came in and stole

ten cases of beer out of their cooler. When this was discovered, the women got together and did a little investigating. They went around the corner and found the men in the act of putting the beer in their car. The women called the police immediately and had them arrested. "Scared us to death," Sue recalls. "Did they think they could steal from us right under our noses? It also made us angry."

Another time some men came in who were obviously looking for trouble. "You can tell what they're up to when they come in the door," Sue explained. "They had several beers and we kept our eye on them. We couldn't ask them to leave because we weren't a private club. The next thing I knew, I looked up and one of the men was taking a swing at one of the women on the dance floor. A brawl was beginning to ensue right before my very eyes."

Sue turned to Laurie and told her to call the police. She and Katie took off for the dance floor. "It was all we could do to keep over-zealous women from jumping in and giving the guy his just desserts." Broken glass was everywhere and Laurie sustained two or three broken ribs from a flying elbow. Within minutes the police were there and arrested the men. "All in a night's work. Being next to a biker's bar (the *Crow's Nest* was right next door) we never knew what to expect. It taught us a lot about preservation and resourcefulness."

As the summer drew near, the managers were thinking of ways to keep the bar open after the students went home. During this time the owner was also making plans, only his plans were to leave town to avoid paying the debts he had accumulated. Without notifying the women at MGG, he took all the money out of the bank account and left town. "We were bouncing checks right and left and we were forced to close," Sue said. "How could we have been so foolish not to put the money in our names?"

They had a great farewell party. Sue felt regret for being naive about money and the way the world works, but not about the bar. "I think the ideas and excitement over a project like MGG lasted for a long time. I always run into people who make reference to the bar, even if it was only open for six months. I can't regret that."

Like MGG, *Rumors* began as a gay bar. But when a new bar opened, *Club Park Avenue*, the male clientele started going there. The two women who owned *Rumors* sold it to Loretta, who decided that women needed an alternative to the predominately male gay bar. She decided to offer various programming differences, to the point that some women didn't even classify it as a bar.

Evenings began at eight o'clock with a pot luck dinner. The music was low and women could talk and play pool. Around 10:30 or 11:00 the "rowdy" group, as Loretta called them, would arrive, the music would be turned up and dancing would begin. "They would stay there until 4:00 a.m. if we let them," Loretta said with a smile.

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The Future of Feminism: Survival in the '80s

by Deborah Hepburn

If we want feminism and the women's movement to survive in the 1980's, then we, the feminists of Tallahassee like our sisters elsewhere, would do well to critically examine our feminism.

Every day we see legal abortion, affirmative action, and even the right to vote come under attack. ERA appears doomed. As women, we stand to lose all the gains made in recent years. Virtually all social programs have been eliminated or are in the process of elimination. Meager as they were, these programs were central to the well being of many women. But the New Right is not about to limit itself to an attack only on women. The Blacks, the Chicanos, the unemployed, the old and weak, all the marginalized human refuse unable to "make it on their own" in this dog-eat-dog macho country are targeted. As feminists, we must address this matter.

"Feminism" is often loosely used to describe a general attitude toward issues that are primarily of concern to women, for example, women's rights. However, this is not the way feminists use the term. For them, contemporary feminism is a specific attitude or orientation toward life characterized by a particular view of male-female relationships. Feminism analyses the human world in terms of male domination. It is an ideology that hinges on the concept of patriarchy. But what in the past has gone under the name of feminism has frequently amounted to little more than an excuse for self-pity, egotistical subjectivism, and escapist fantasy. Although in many respects Tallahassee's feminist women score higher than their counterparts in other areas of the country when it comes down to addressing the concrete issues of today, there is still room for improvement.

For example, during the 1970's Tallahassee, like many other university towns, witnessed a marked increase in the number of women's organizations and associations. In ideological persuasion these groups ranged from the most conventional Americanism to the most radical lesbian separatism. Today, many of these groups are defunct. As an activist in several of these groups I can attest to the crippling effect sectarian interests have had on the women's movement.

Specifically, I was a member of the Tallahassee Women's Collective and the Tallahassee chapter of Women for Racial and Economic Equality. What passed between us and other feminist groups is indicative of what occurred inside the women's movement generally. More than one sister who claimed to possess a "higher feminist consciousness" denounced us for being "politicos". We were often accused of having "sold out to patriarchy" because several of us happened to like men. And anyone who may have had a few Marxist thoughts in her head was dismissed as hopelessly "male-identified". We in turn, were also guilty of certain self-righteous sectarianism although of a different kind. I relate these matters for no other reason than to point out how counterproductive and self-defeating divisions have been for the women's movement — infighting mainly because of a peculiar thesis feminists have concerning patriarchy.

To suggest that feminists, even Tallahassee's relatively progressive and socially responsible ones, should somehow change their tactics or improve upon their ideology is not simply an opinionated expression of one's personal tastes or value judgement. It is a question of our collective interests. If the problems of hunger, exploitation, and genocide are not resolved and resolved quickly there may soon be no feminists left in the world. And not only no feminists, but also no women, no men, no children, and no animals. The world situation has become this critical.

Throughout the Third World countless numbers of women are starving to death along with their husbands and children. Many are undergoing severe political repression and torture. These women demand both a revolutionary theory and a strategy for revolution. But what has feminism offered these women? What has feminism contributed to the global struggle for liberation? Unfortunately, the answer is not much. In this respect feminism has thus far been a failure.

The failure of feminism to meet the needs of the majority of the world's women is a fact that should be recognized. Third World women do not look to feminism as the means of transforming their existence; and neither do the impoverished, the

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Feminist Women's Health Center,

from page 9



Abortion Rights

The FWHC is among many in opposing efforts to outlaw abortion. However, their anti-racist, anti-sexist, non-classist analysis leads them to view the Human Life Amendment as a multi-level issue. It's not simply that they view a constitutional convention with alarm, as a threat to the Bill of Rights, the Voting Rights Act, and other basic human liberties. They also perceive a withdrawal of legal abortion as a method of retarding the women's movement and all progressive political work.

The FWHC was outraged by the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits Medicaid payment for abortion; by clinic licensing; and by other relatively minor legal actions harassing abortion clinics. The point is that they are particularly concerned with liberation for poor, black and Third World women, and perceive the end of abortion as designed to limit women to staying at home with many

children, and dependent on the male medical establishment. They point out that women having no control over their bodies is tantamount to neutering them politically. This lack of control, the FWHC analyzes, will severely retard the women's movement and other political work.

The women at the FWHC also point out that the same woman who can't get an abortion can (ironically) easily obtain permanent sterilization. The FWHC believes that the population controllers are particularly anxious to sterilize poor, black and Third World women, while white male fetuses, of course, must never be aborted.

Present and Future Work

The FWHC is particularly concerned with anti-racist and anti-fascist work and coalesces with many groups dealing with similar analyses. When such groups aren't actively anti-sexist, says the FWHC, they themselves boldly confront objectionable behavior. But a feminist analysis isn't an absolute prerequisite for coalition politics.

They analyze certain events, like the Ku Klux Klan murders in Greensboro, North Carolina, as particularly threatening. Fascism in the U.S., they say, takes the form of racism. While they say that anti-racism is part of a feminist analysis, they don't feel white feminists go far enough in opposing racism. Other groups who analyze a given situation somewhat like the FWHC might be found working closely with the FWHC on that issue.

The FWHC continues to pour energy into women's healthcare as it opposes racism, the Klan and the Nazis. But they don't always feel aligned with other feminists. Brenda Joyner says, "I can no longer support phoney feminism, the activities of women who don't do political work against racism, who give criticism without accepting it."

The FWHC views "red baiting" with alarm, and says they would repel such an attack on Kent Spriggs with the same energy as they would for a close ally.

Brenda says, "We will continue to take unpopular stands if they are on the side of justice."

During the course of writing this article, I spent many hours talking with Brenda Joyner. We referred over and over to that quote from the Nazi victim who said he never objected when they came for everyone else, and when they came for him, there was no one left to object. That quote became almost a sort of shorthand for Brenda and me. During the last interview, when I raised some objection, she turned to me and simply said, "And when they came for..." That seemed to say it all. □

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An Interview With Naiad Press

“What’s a Nay-ad?”*

by Tana McLane

Naiad Press, Inc. is a local lesbian feminist book publishing company that is new to the Tallahassee area, but not new to publishing. It began in the Midwest in 1973, having evolved from the processes of a now-famous lesbian feminist magazine known as *The Ladder*. This interview is with one of the four founding women who, sadly, cannot be identified here. This is not her choice, but is due to political sensitivity at this point in time. Hopefully, in a future issue of *Spectrum*, we will be talking with Naiad Press again, and more about the lives of the women responsible for one of the largest lesbian publishing houses can be illuminated.

...

What is a publishing company?

Good question. A publishing company is an organization for taking (in our case) the booklength creative works from the women who write them—after we’ve read and decided to publish them—through all the steps and stages of publishing functions. These include editorial and rewrite functions (in conjunction with the author), arranging to have the book typeset and printed. We use C&H Publishing Services, a women’s typesetting service in Shelburne Falls, Mass., and we have our books printed at the Iowa City Women’s Press, an all-women printing establishment in Iowa City, Iowa. The books are then shipped to us and we distribute them by direct mail and through mass mailings to over 5,000 bookstores all over the world. We do the promotional work of creating flyers, brochures, advertising and arranging reviews in publications all over the world.

One thing we’re not, and which our name would imply, is a press. Other publishing companies use it in their names, too. It’s probably a bad thing to do. I didn’t realize it myself until the recent Women in Print conference in Washington, D.C., which brought women in all aspects of the publishing industry together. At this conference, the women who are actually in press services raised hell with the publishers who called themselves presses: Naiad Press, Persephone Press. . . We don’t print anything. We just call ourselves presses, and we really shouldn’t.

In publishing, you can be a book publisher, a magazine publisher, a newspaper publisher. There are lots and lots of women’s publications all over the country and at all these levels, as well as in printing services, typesetting services, etc. There are probably a dozen all-women publishing companies that deal with books, probably a couple of hundred that deal with newspapers, and probably 24-25 that deal with magazines. And I suppose that if you included all the local newsletter-type things, there are probably a hundred or so of those around the country.

What about the other part of your name, Naiad?

It’s a wonderful, crazy name. Everyone looks at it and asks, “What’s a Nay-ad?” Naiad is pronounced Ny-ad, and it means water sprite. The dictionary definition is a champion female swimmer or water sprite.

How and when did Naiad Press come into being?

Naiad began in 1973. Its structure is four women, one of whom was editor of the magazine called *The Ladder* as “Gene Damon,” a romantic *nom de plume*. Gene Damon was its publisher for the last four years of its existence. When it ceased publication (after 16 years, an incredibly long life), two women who were supporters of the magazine approached Gene Damon and her lover, and asked if they would be willing to do the physical handling of running a lesbian feminist publishing company to do books. The two older women are retirees, both on disability retirement, and one of them is a famous attorney. They could not do the physical work, but they could contribute a little money to get things started. With that small amount of money (\$2,000), Naiad published its first book in 1974. It was called *The Latecomer*, by Sarah Aldridge.

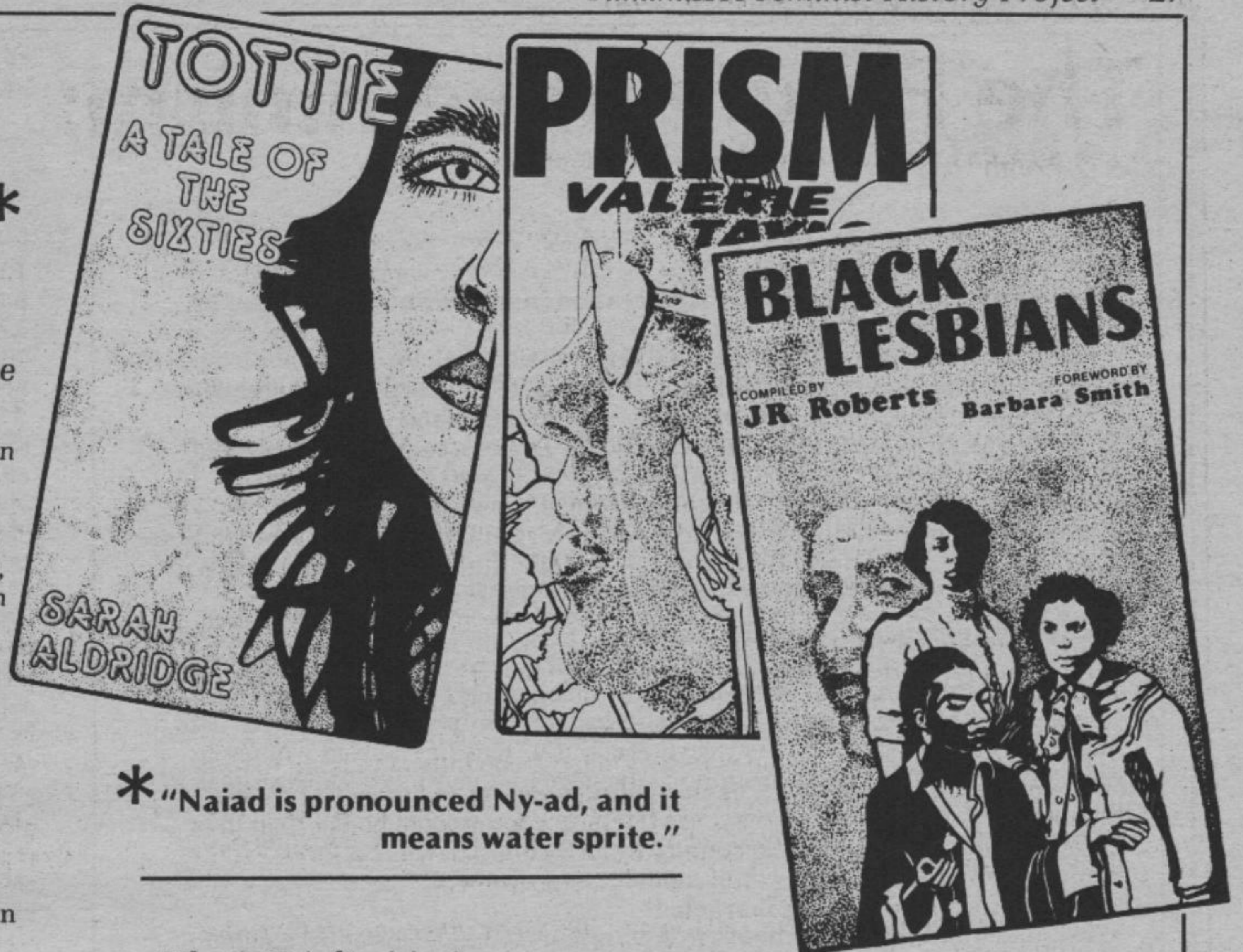
We have a different philosophy about publishing than the large trade presses. We keep our books in print, regardless of their “shelf life,” which is what determines the life of a trade book. We are growing immensely because our audience is growing all the time despite the best efforts of the Moral Majority, which I call the immoral minority. Because there is an increasingly open lesbian feminist audience in the United States (as contrasted to the constant 10 percent of women who are lesbians in any given period of time), our books are becoming increasingly popular. The first press run of Aldridge’s *The Latecomer* was 2,000 copies and it took about a year to sell. We sold 2,000 copies of the book in the first half of 1981.

How has Naiad grown since that time?

We published a book in 1974, a book in 1975, two books in 1976, and so on . . . until 1981, when we published eight books, having published three books in 1980. And in 1982 we will publish another eight. The only reason we aren’t publishing more is that we won’t have any full-time staff until early next year. But eight books in a year is one every six weeks, with all that it implies. Sarah Aldridge’s fifth book, *The Nesting Place* will come out on April 10, 1982. And we’ll be printing the work of a local Tallahassee author on a local Tallahassee press as our first book of the new year, coming out February 10. That will be Sheila Ortiz Taylor’s *Faultline*, which promises to be a bestseller, according to its advance notices. Also at this time, a large trade paperback reprint house is looking at *Faultline* with an eye for buying it for a mass market paperback. [See article on *Faultline* in these pages —Ed.] It will be printed in Tallahassee because the Iowa City Women’s Press doesn’t have the capacity to print 30,000 copies, which we’re running.

Why a lesbian feminist publishing company?

We print books that portray lesbians very accurately. We believe that the positive and happy approach to life is the only way; it is to be enjoyed. We also believe that lesbianism is the way of life, and we are promoting, though not proselytizing, that. We know that it is happy, positive and healthy, and we have found since we began a hunger for the sort of books we produce. Lesbians and gay men are still denied every kind of civil right. I have a black friend who refers to lesbians as “the last niggers.” We print a variety of works which portray lesbian women in a wholesome light.



* “Naiad is pronounced Ny-ad, and it means water sprite.”

What is Naiad’s vision?

Originally, we started out with the idea that we publish books that might appear to be dangerous to the trade press—books that portray lesbians accurately. We publish books that no one else will publish, and we appeal to a limited rather than an enormous audience. Because so little has been published for this limited audience, we find ourselves growing tremendously. We are a small press, as contrasted to the trade houses, but Naiad is big as far as small presses go. In the lesbian feminist publishing movement there are 14 or 15 companies that do this work. They’re either feminist publishing houses or lesbian feminist publishing houses doing book publishing. Naiad and Persephone are probably the two largest lesbian presses. The Feminist Press in the Massachusetts area is a male-controlled company. It’s the largest strictly feminist publishing company, but they’re controlled by men, so their process and product don’t line up.

Talk about the books of Naiad.

We’ve published all kinds of books: bibliographies, book review anthologies, poetry of important deceased poets, historical works, fiction, but no biographies yet. We like to emphasize fiction. We’re trying to be a publisher of lesbian fiction, but we have gotten far afield.

We published *Black Lesbians*, by J.R. Roberts, which is the first bibliography on the subject of black lesbians. We also published a book called *Lesbian/Feminism in Turn-of-the-Century Germany*, by the distinguished educators Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Erikson. This book is a collection of autobiographies, biographies and fiction written between 1880 and 1910, and it’s all lesbian feminist material. There was an enormous lesbian feminist movement in Germany from around the 1870s through 1933 or so, when Hitler managed to wipe out its last remaining women. They disappeared at that point in time.

Another book published by Naiad Press is *A Woman Appeared To Me*, the English translation of the novel by the American and British expatriate Renee Vivien, who lived in France at the turn of the century. Many famous and wealthy young women lived in Paris then because the emotional and legal climate was much more open and healthy than in the U.S. Jeannette H. Foster, the author of *Sex Variant Women in Literature*, translated Vivien’s full length work of fiction about Vivien’s love affair with Natalie Clifford Barney as a birthday present to one of the women of Naiad because she knew the woman couldn’t read French. This translation was published as *A Woman Appeared To Me*. Barney was much more famous as a colorful and notorious figure in Paris during that time. She slept with hundreds of women, and was a great wit and entertainer, though not so good a writer as Renee Vivien, whom she somewhat overshadows. Vivien wrote all of her poetry and her small amount of fiction in French, which was not her native language, which makes her success even more remarkable. Despite the fact that *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature* pronounces Vivien’s lyric poetry among the finest written in the French language in the first quarter of the 20th century, not a single line of her work had ever been translated into English because it was rampantly, overtly lesbian in tone.

Naiad Press also acts as distributor for some books that we do not produce ourselves. To date, we’ve published 25 books, and we distribute six others. There’s a whole new world in distribution. A lot of women writers are now self-publishing, or getting their books published where there are small companies that don’t have any distribution facilities. So we distribute for self-published books in some cases. We also distribute for Pagoda Publications here in Florida, near St. Augustine, which functions as a publishing name for the work of Barbara Deming. Deming is a famous activist who lives on Sugarloaf Key, Florida, with her lover, Jane Capen, whose book we also exclusively distribute for Pagoda Publications. There are others along this line. We distribute Peg Cruikshank’s self-published book, *The Lesbian Path*.

What are your requirements for publishing a book? How are books selected?

Poorly (laughs). We have one very strong requirement and that is that our books must be primarily lesbian books, not slightly lesbian. We read lots of manuscripts and for every book we publish, we turn aside a hundred that we cannot. I’d like to mention here that Naiad Press does not publish what, in many stereotyped minds, could be considered “lesbian material,” because we live in a pornography-laden society. Anyone who comes to our books out of prurient interests in terms of lesbian relationships or sexuality is going to be sadly disappointed. Several of our books have been adopted for use in young adult collections around the country because they are such wholesome, positive works.

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Is quality of writing a major consideration in determining which books Naiad will publish?

I wouldn't say that "great literature" is our major goal. While we have published or are about to publish books that I'm extremely proud of and whose authors take a back seat to no writers—Jane Rule's *Outlander* [reviewed in *SPECTRUM*, November Eve, 1981] and Sheila Taylor's soon-to-be-published *Faultline*. Our books range from serious, scholarly works to those written strictly for entertainment and fun. For instance, we've published a gothic romance which is strictly for crackers and cheese and beer in bed, *The Marquise and the Novice*, by Victoria Ramstetter. It's a light, fluffy, romantic gothic with an all-lesbian cast. It's illustrated with many adorable drawings.

Have you published science fiction?

Oh yes, we have a science fiction book called *Retreat: As It Was*, by Donna Young. The thing that sets *Retreat* apart from all other books is that the famous science fiction writer Joanna Russ, also a lesbian feminist, has chosen to hate it in public and has written a nasty review about it. This has caused women to rally around Donna Young in support. Because Joanna Russ is clever, she is having the final word in print all over the country, which is fascinating to watch. If we could find a way to get another famous person to hate one of our books publicly, we would do it.

Where are Naiad's books marketed?

We send hundreds of our books to Australia, Holland, Germany, England, France, all over Europe and the free world. A few weeks ago, we had to make a moral decision about whether to sell our books to a bookstore in South Africa. We decided to do it because we feel we're putting in information against what they're doing, anyway. I'm sure they're as oppressive to their lesbian feminists as they are to their blacks. We send our books everywhere. We have customers in Hong Kong, India, and some Arab customers—very small orders we're talking about, in Arab countries.

Why have the women of Naiad Press chosen to bring the business and their lives to Tallahassee?

That's wonderful and easy. The two younger women of Naiad, and we're not very young anymore, feel like we are a family unit with the two older women (we are in our forties and they are in their late sixties/early seventies) and, like most families, we like to be together, or at least reasonably close. As they became older—and time does not stand still—we decided that we would come from the middle west, where we were located, to Florida. We made career changes, looking for jobs somewhere in this area, where the older women live for part of the year, and in line with Delaware, where they are the rest of the year, so we wouldn't be half a continent away from them. And here is where we landed.

What is the future of Naiad?

We're going to get bigger and bigger all the time. We're going to publish more books, and the individual women of Naiad are going to live to be very old, very happy old ladies. Perhaps I see the world through bright glasses—though we've certainly lived through a lot. All the women of Naiad feel that everything we do is joyous and exciting. □

Future of Feminism, from page 26

beaten down, and exploited women of our own nation. We feminist want to know why this is the case.

Feminists have, by and large concerned themselves more with the personal than the political, more with individual freedom, creative self-expression, and career advancement than with issues of world-historical consequence. This is no accident. Feminism, as the term is presently understood, is primarily a phenomena of the First World particularly the Anglo-Saxon countries, the breeding grounds of imperialism. Moreover, it is the economically privileged, so-called middle-class elements within these countries that are most attracted to feminism. Again, we feminist want to know why.

If feminism has a future, if the world has a future, it is with the world's women and their movement for liberation. America's new foreign policy involves an aggressive drive to crush all liberation movements. The machismo of the Reagan Administration is unrivaled in recent history. And its spokesmen openly acknowledge that they will stop at nothing to protect what they consider to be America's interests. Anti-communist propaganda and paranoia are driving the bully boys in Washington toward total nuclear annihilation and they have more than one female accomplice. Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, is an excellent example of a woman in league with the machos. There are others.

It must strike some feminists as odd that the hard and callous domestic policies of the New Right receive so much active support from women. Women are supposed to be more sensitive, understanding, and compassionate than men, aren't they? But in both the United States and Great Britain women play a leading role in the right-wing offensive. And it is not only in domestic affairs that they shine. The fair and gentle sex gives plenty of support for their governments' rapist and genocidal policies toward developing nations. Reactionary women are riding high these days. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Margaret Thatcher, Sandra O'Conner, Phyllis Schafley, and our own Paula Hawkins are only a few.

It was never the intention of feminism to further the goals of reactionaries and macho women. However, feminism has done little to hinder them. The basic tenet of feminism, the fundamental thesis, is that patriarchy or male-domination lies at the bottom of all human misery. A direct corollary of this principle is that all women are oppressed, which is absurd. Not all women are oppressed. Here is a bitter pill for feminists, although some try to weasel out of swallowing it by defining oppression in convoluted abstractions and metaphysical jargon. Compounding absurdities does not eliminate them.

Feminism has entrapped itself with its own concepts. The notion of patriarchy, never clearly delineated, has led feminism down a blind alley. Feminism must come to grips with this problem. The future of feminism, like the future of any theory, depends upon how accurately it can explain the facts. In its present form, feminism is practically useless as an ideology of women's liberation.

The quality of life in the years ahead depends upon the success of the women's movement and all liberation movements around the world. The New Right must be defeated. Feminism can be a powerful weapon on effecting that defeat only if we feminists have the guts to admit our past theoretical mistakes and move to correct them. □

A long standing political activist, Deborah Hepburn has lived in the Tallahassee area since 1974. During this time she has traveled abroad several times working as a teacher and freelance writer. In 1979 she visited Cuba and Mozambique. Last year she went to Nicaragua. Her present research interests will take her to Mexico in 1982. Deborah has done graduate work in political and social philosophy. She has a M.S. degree in government and is currently a doctoral student in economics.

Politics of the Spiritual,

from page 20



Besides the inspiring women who come to Tallahassee, the books that these women write are also inspiring. Many books have had a powerful psychic effect on local women. *The Wanderground* by Sally Gearhart is a fantasy novel about post-apocalyptic times in which lesbian women on the fringes, beyond the male-controlled cities, have developed their psychic communication networks and their healing and survival powers, including parthenogenesis. *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk is a poetic explanation of traditional witchcraft in a positive light. Women at the Land Co-op were particularly inspired by this book to initiate a community pagan celebration. Merlin Stone's *When God Was A Woman* is a scholarly exposure of the patriarchal imposition of racism and sexism through the historically enforced and destructive religion of the Bible. Her *Mirrors of Ancient Womanhood I&II* offer an historical catalogue of goddesses worshipped by world-wide civilizations. Locally, the publication *Spectrum* is an important outlet for women's points of view in many areas, including spirituality. These books, including the ones previously mentioned, are women's bibles, so to speak. They contradict the "truth" we have been taught/are being conditioned to believe.

Currently one aspect of wimmin's spirituality in Tallahassee is centered around a class held at the Women's Center. Pandora is the "spinner" of the workshop and her feeling is that the commitment of the women involved certainly won't end after the class does. Besides studying the traditional areas of astrology, development of psychic powers through psychometry, Tarot, and dreams, there is also an emphasis on dealing with racism and classism among women. Books such as *This Bridge Called My Back*, Persephone Press and *Conditions 5: the Black Women's Issue*, and *Hebrew Goddesses* are important texts for our understanding of these issues. Politics and spirituality can no longer be separate categories for women-identified women to exclude from their evolution. Another study/project group is the Morning Glory Collective who have just published a beautiful moon-menstrual calendar for women to describe and calculate their periods and emotional rhythms.

Over the years in Tallahassee, a varied group of women have also been meeting on Hallowmas/halloween in a woodsy area for meditation, impromptu

affirmations and music, reading excerpts from a favorite author or something a woman herself has written, new year's rituals, dancing, and chanting. This yearly celebration is special because in wicce tradition, what you do at the time of the new year is what you'll be doing for the rest of the year.

The attitude about wimmin's spirituality has slowly changed from thinking of "those lesbian wackos separated into their solipistic ego witch trips" to "Hey, this stuff might mean something and besides it's great to be bonding with all these wonderful women." In our daily lives it means paying attention to women instead of men; it means energizing and being energized by women through touch, hugs, and nurturing rather than automatically giving these powers over to men; it means developing the ability to love, respect and accept other women, mirrors to each of us, in order to stop self-hatred and begin loving our selves. As wimmin's spirituality grows and evolves in Tallahassee, so it does in the world as we are all part of the spiritual/psychic "leaps" of planetary consciousness.

In order to create another world-view beyond that of the dominant male structure of militaristic and divisive control, love of fixed perfection/order,

"It means developing the ability to love, respect and accept other women, mirrors to each of us. . ."

destruction of Nature and institutionalized violence towards women, we are changing our behavior and thinking to question even the most mundane events of the day. Watching women cover their real faces with makeup because they don't match men's fantasies of what women are required to be or seeing women hobble around in pornographic fashion high heels that are slowly destroying their spines are painful reminders that most women happily embrace this internalized psychic mind-set. Even the Capitol in Tallahassee, built over a waterfall that was once a sacred Indian site, is a reminder that yes, the concrete dick with the two balls of legislative testosterone rules the land.

So, here we live, making the free choice to love women, emerging into 1982, facing job-freezes, unemployment, dwindling affirmative action, work speed-up, inflation, escalating rape and economic enslavement. To regenerate ourselves, to keep from burning out, to continue our struggles in spite of the great fear of punishment that we have, we affirm our wimmin's bonding. Woman the Nurturer, the Divine, is the guiding spirit in ourselves we must listen to, love and revere to turn this thing around, dancing and juggling our way into a new age, left foot forward. □

Miaisha Mitchell: "Women Will Make the Difference"

by Margie Menzel

Miaisha Mitchell has the unusual gift of challenging and constructing at the same time. Many of her activities have shaken the foundations of oppressive institutions, yet many have created the homes for Miaisha's constituency: the poor, the lonely, the oppressed, those in pain. Miaisha has helped to create the C.W. Quinn Clinic, Women Outside for Women Inside (a support group for women in prison), and the Women's Growth Center.

Miaisha is originally from Tallahassee, but she traveled to Boston to train as a mental health worker. Her major area is alcoholism and substance abuse, (particularly in the light of a political analysis that defines social pressures that create an impetus for escape.) She attended Simmons College of Social Work, Northeastern University, and the Alcoholism Training Program at Boston City Hospital. She became involved with women's groups then and, of course, alcoholism. When she returned to Tallahassee, she studied pharmacy at Florida A & M.

In December of 1979, Miaisha helped to found C.W. Quinn Clinic, with Zaid Haynes and Jamal Amin. While the clinic definitely incorporates the professional expertise of the three, it retains a certain "barefoot doctor" ethic that is both refreshing and sensible. The Quinn Clinic uses the skills of acupuncturist Haynes and psychiatrist Amin, as well as herbalists, massage therapists and many other talents, including those of Miaisha herself. Her contribution has been in the areas of alcoholism and substance abuse.

Miaisha says that racism creates a particularly conducive atmosphere for alcoholism. She points out that it's common to use certain forms of escape from the pressure of unbearable problems. Certainly specific individual problems are included here, but Miaisha also analyzes political oppression as integral to alcoholism. She calls drinking a "double whammy" for women and a "triple whammy" for black women.

Miaisha generally deals with people who have reached a crisis point in their drinking. They may be ill. They may not be able to hold a job. The general effect of alcoholism is to satisfy needs for carbohydrates with liquor, thus reducing the nutritive value of the diet. Then too, Miaisha says, drinking cuts emotional and intellectual response in half. She also points out that alcohol has the effect of externalizing violent impulses, which with men tend to be spent on others and with women tend to turn inward.

Miaisha uses a great deal of group support and family counseling in her work. She claims that for every one person who drinks, an average of five others are affected. Group support can be effective by helping women to break through the isolation that makes them drinkers.

Appalachee Mental Health Center is the agency behind the Women's Growth Center. Miaisha had worked for Appalachee as an alcohol counselor and in the Bond Day-by-Day Program with Barbara Bozeman. She wanted to work with women, and she saw the need for a more secure refuge for women making the first tenuous steps back from alcoholism, so she became involved with the Women's Growth Center.

The Women's Growth Center has the capacity to help women who are re-establishing lives that have been devastated by alcohol. Finding a job, getting support for child care needs, other sources of difficulty can often be solved with the help of the Center. But Miaisha perceived that women rebuilding an alcohol-interrupted life weren't alone in needing such services. When she talks about women in prison, she's quick to point out that return from prison life is a



terrible transition. It requires both emotional and practical support

Miaisha is one of the founders of Women Outside for Women Inside, a support group for women in prison. The Women of WOWI had made several visits to Lowell Prison, and in fact were expelled from their tour after the second. Their offense? Asking the prison guard whether the pregnant prisoners had been pregnant when they entered prison.

In any case, Miaisha analyzes prison as a frequent punishment for the crime of being poor and a woman, especially a black woman. Many women are penalized in this way for defending themselves against a battering husband or boyfriend. Many poor women go to prison for property crimes, for trying to fight poverty and provide for their families.

So WOWI started last year as support for these women. They held a benefit to raise money for their printing supplies and the goods they send to women in prison. They put out a newsletter whenever they can afford it. Miaisha has done considerable organizing work around women in prison, including reporting in the WOWI newsletter her attendance of a conference on Women in Southern Prisons. WOWI also tries to provide essentials like stamps and books for women behind bars. And WOWI helps women make the transition when they emerge.

Miaisha reveres her African heritage and passes it on to the children of her circle. [See article on Black Women's Collective.] She also identifies culturally as a woman and spends some of her energy spreading the creations of women. WOWI, in particular, publicized the poetry of women behind bars.

As leader of the black community, Miaisha takes her role seriously. She was one of the major organizers of last year's march on the capitol after the beating death of Arthur MacDuffie. She claims that women will make the difference in the fight against oppression. She says, "We must take a more active role."

WOWI
PO Box 20191
Tallahassee 32304
575-2940

Orientation, Saturday, January 30
Women's Growth Center 222-4523

The Morning Glory Collective

by Sherry Rauch

Many women's idea of a perfect work environment: woman controlled and owned, no bosses or hierarchy, a place you could bring your children if you had any, a business which makes products both creative and useful to other women.

Several women in Tallahassee have managed to mix this range of values, talents and interesting business in the form of the Morning Glory Collective. Last February this group first got together to make a list of their visions for the collective. They first decided to sell some of their sewing wares at Springtime Tallahassee, and then later at several other local festivals. In addition, they started a mail-order business with their newly-produced *Everwoman's Calendar*. They describe this calendar as a "self-help tool" for all women whether she wants to keep track of her menstrual cycles or any other physical changes that happen throughout the month.

One of the collective's fantasies is to have a building where the downstairs was split into a restaurant on one side and a woman-made craft center on the other side. The upstairs would be used as a work and meeting space for women.

Although the collective is interested in making money and earning decent living, they also put a lot of emphasis on mutual support and cooperation. They always try to have at least two women do whatever jobs need to get done so that everyone learns the skills to run a business. Supporting one another emotionally is also considered a high priority.

Between all the women there are fourteen children. The women feel that children should be able to be with them in the work place so that working outside the home doesn't automatically mean children are excluded.

The collective has recently rented a room in the Murphy House on Park Avenue, between Calhoun and Gadsden Streets. Once they get their business license they are looking forward to a long a fulfilling business future. □

North Florida Women's Health & Counseling

BY Zoe Kopp

North Florida Women's Health & Counseling Services (WHCS) is the result of the commitment of a diverse group of women in the Tallahassee area to create an innovative service that would provide care for the whole woman — both mind and body. In Spring of 1980, plans were initiated and ground work laid to assure the successful opening of such a service. Since then, many dedicated women and men have combined their talents and knowledge to make WHCS a reality.

The philosophy of the clinic is that every woman has the right and responsibility to be knowledgeable about her body and mind, and to learn to maintain the health of both.

The clinic offers a full range of gynecological care, provided by a staff of health professionals and trained health workers.

Women coming to the clinic with the problem of unplanned pregnancy receive counseling about all alternatives, including pre-natal care and delivery, adoption, single-parenting, and abortion. First trimester abortion services are available at the clinic, performed by a trained physician.



Founders Debbie Kasper, Mary Cash and Zoe Kopp

The clinic also provides services for men, including psychological counseling, educational workshops, birth control and abortion counseling, and vasectomy services.

The goal of the counseling service is to foster personal growth and a responsible approach to taking charge of one's life. Short-term individual and couple/relationship counseling are provided, as well as group and crisis counseling. The clinic offers a referral service for women seeking/need more long-term, in-depth therapy.

Workshops are offered on such topics as: self-care and preventive medicine, birth control, infection information, pre-natal care, herpes information and support, and natural remedies.



1976

Willie Tyson and Cassie Culver: An Evening of Women's Music

1977

Mother's Garden Gate opens on New Year's Eve

1978

The *Diana Rising* column was started by the Tallahassee Feminist Project.

The local chapter of the National Hook-up for Black Women was started

And in the end. . .

by Tana McLane

Watching this History Project come together, take shape, has been a satisfying and exhilarating experience. There's been a special magic in creating these pages, a magic that has transformed us from heel-dragging, sage newspaper producers to gleeful, yet dedicated inventors.

As mentioned elsewhere, the ideas and work for this publication have taken place over the past two years. It has drawn together many people as writers, graphic artists, typesetters, darkroom people, photographers, researchers and people with a story to tell. The admiration and gratitude we feel for these memories being spun again, tracked in printed images, must go to Sherry, the spearhead for this effort. Ultimately, she was the editor for the History Project, and the rest of us lent our expertise so that it would be written and produced. She has done her job extremely well. (You should see her phone bill!) The most complex and fatiguing aspect to this work is coordinating the ingredients that go into baking the bread. This is what Sherry has done, fueling herself with a vision and the wonderful novice energy it takes to go beyond imagining such a project to its actualization.

And get done it did. Many interesting small things came out of all of us as we worked hours and hours beside each other in the lab. The images I see in my mind still: Frank bent over the typesetting machine, a flurry of fingers and a concentrating frown, with Sherry or Genie or Louise or Angie beside him at another one — and Frank again adding some beautiful final touch to the pages; Larry calmly and methodically pouring through Spectrum's ad file box, making sure that ads were accurate and that announcements were remembered

— after hitting the streets to sell many of the ads you see here — and also not in the lab a lot of the time because he was at home with one-year-old Kevin, Spectrum's only child to date, so that I could spend hours working with the crew; Vicki delightedly bringing pages to life that she had been inventing in her mind, working hard over the drawing board and rifling through everything to find art and photos that would enliven otherwise grey pages; Elli showing up at my house at dawn to give me the original drawings she produced for us (the pomegranate, the cowrie shells, the moons, and the ancient symbols); Amy moving quickly and surely through ad production, being the competent expert that she is while adding a touch of humour to the work room; Margie talking with me on the phone again and again and showing up at my house, at the lab, with her articles which came one by one — during exam week; Judy showing up one night just to "proof everything" and give us some input and moral support; and me, trying as best I could to spend quality time with my child, my partner, and the newspaper crew, and get something done — in the second week of a new job. Pretty amazing.

Those images will stay with me as long as these pages will. I feel electricity as I write these words, pounding them out on this typewriter at 2 AM. In many ways, it's like the first Spectrum all over again. It's the biggest and prettiest we've ever produced, and the first color cover (thank you, Louise and Trisha).

The experience of working on this issue is being recorded here as part of Tallahassee's feminist history. Some of it was funny, and some exhausting and painful. But in all, it was there to be done, and we did it.

"Where's page four? Has anyone seen page four? Did we lose it? Did we make one? I can't find page four."

"I could go one working on this forever. I don't want to sleep. I don't want to go to work. I don't want to be away from these pages. I've discovered that what I like to do is work on feminist history projects."

"Oh god. The typesetting machine just ate my galley. Five and a half pages' worth. Again."

"I need a quiet place to write."

"Veloxes. We'll do veloxes."

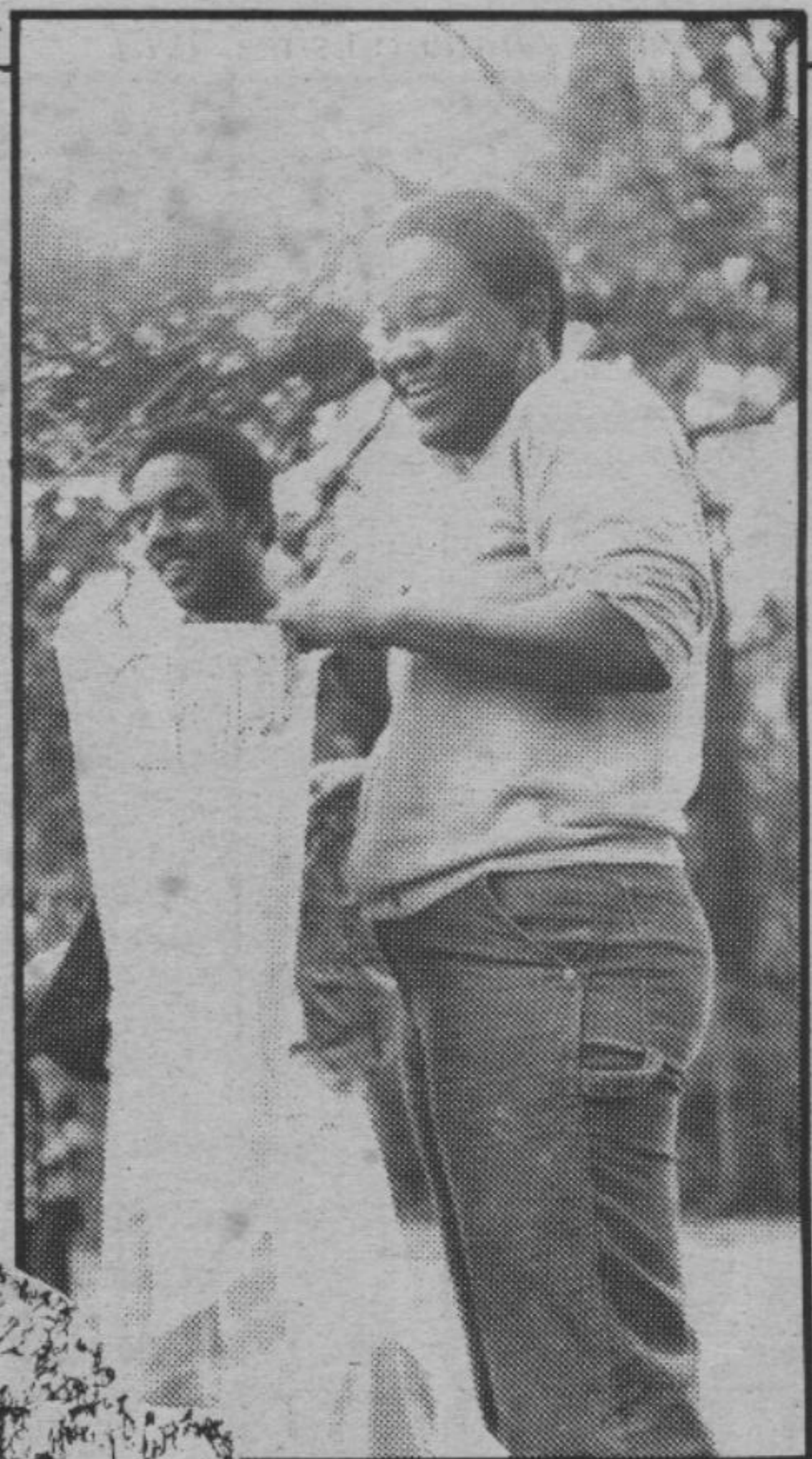
"I'm sooo happy about the veloxes. I've lain awake at night freaking out about the printer cropping our photos wrong."

"I guess I'm the only one around here who cares about quality."

"You all, I've done it. I've written the introduction. Finally."

"Suzy's trees look great."

"Page one is beautiful. Look at this page! I love it."



1979

Mary Daly speaks at FSU on her new book GYNECOLOGY

1980

Fifteen women protest the Flambeau for its sexist advertising and lack of women in editorial positions

1981

Sweet Honey in the Rock perform at Moore auditorium during Black Women's Week

Morning Glory Collective starts

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