

1

SDA 100-1-100000  
DETROIT MI 48201

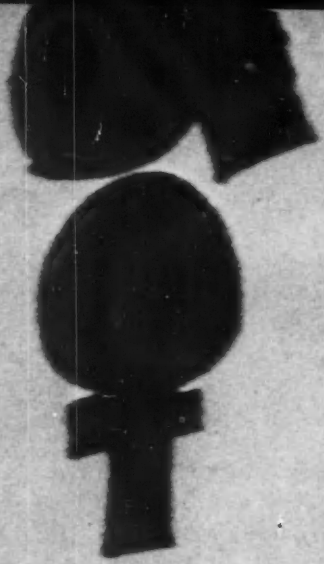
# CIVIL RIGHTS DIGEST

A Quarterly of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Spring 1979



Sexism and Racism: Feminist Perspectives

We  
Will  
Fight



for our  
rights

# CIVIL RIGHTS DIGEST

Volume 6 Number 3  
SPRING 1974

- 2 **WHERE FEMINISM WILL LEAD**  
An impetus for social change  
By Lucy Komisar
- 11 **EVERYBODY MAKES THE REVOLUTION**  
Some thoughts on racism and sexism  
By William A. Blakey
- 20 **PUERTORRIQUENAS IN THE UNITED STATES**  
The impact of double discrimination  
By Lourdes Miranda King
- 29 **NATIVE WOMEN TODAY**  
Sexism and the Indian woman  
By Shirley Hill Witt
- 36 **CHICANAS AND THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
MOVEMENT**  
A perspective  
By Consuelo Nieto
- 43 **ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN:  
45 STEREOTYPING ASIAN WOMEN**  
By Robert B. Yoshioka
- 46 **CHINESE IMMIGRANTS**  
By Betty Jung
- 48 **ISSEI: THE FIRST WOMEN**  
By Emma Gee
- 54 **WORDS ON WOMEN**
- 57 **A NATURAL ALLIANCE**  
The new role for black women  
By Geraldine Rickman
- 66 **THE WHITE MALE CLUB**  
Biology and power  
By Robert Terry
- 78 **A RESOURCE LIST FOR WOMEN**
- 80 **READING AND VIEWING**  
Forgotten women

*Director of  
Information and Publications*  
Marvin Wall

*Editor*  
Suzanne Crowell

#### U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Arthur S. Flemming, *Chairman*  
Stephen Horn, *Vice Chairman*  
Frankie M. Freeman  
Robert S. Rankin  
Manuel Ruiz, Jr.

John A. Bugge, *Staff Director*

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is a temporary, independent, bipartisan agency established by Congress in 1957 to:

- Investigate complaints alleging denial of the right to vote by reason of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or by reason of fraudulent practices;
- Study and collect information concerning legal developments constituting a denial of equal protection of the laws under the Constitution because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or in the administration of justice;
- Appraise Federal laws and policies with respect to the denial of equal protection of laws because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or in the administration of justice;
- Serve as a national clearinghouse for information concerning denials of equal protection of the laws because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and
- Submit reports, findings, and recommendations to the President and the Congress.

PHOTO CREDITS: Gray—inside cover, 11, 56; Library of Congress—3, 44, 49; Cade—7, 46, 54; Litowich—10, 15, 47; National Archives—18, 52, 60; Henry—21; OEO—24, 28, 33, 57; Hartley—28; Black Star/Haun—37; Dandeleit Interlinks/Campis—40; Bokser—64; Washington Star-News—67, 77; Black Star/Brack—70; N.E.W.S. Photo/Ortez—75. Roland Freeman—Cover Photo

The *Civil Rights Digest* is published quarterly by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as part of its clearinghouse responsibilities. Funds for printing the *Digest* were approved by the Director of Bureau of the Budget on January 29, 1963. Correspondence related to the *Digest* should be addressed to Editor, *Civil Rights Digest*, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20425.

The articles in the *Digest* do not necessarily represent Commission policy but are offered to stimulate ideas and interest on various current issues concerning civil rights.

# Where Feminism Will Lead

AN IMPETUS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

By Lucy Komisar

The ideology of feminism includes assumptions and beliefs about work, marriage, parenthood, and life roles that will have a profound effect on public and private policy far beyond the integration of women into men's jobs.

Feminism says that work is as significant to women as it is to men, that marriage ought to be a partnership of equals, that women ought to be financially independent, that child-bearing and child-rearing is not a woman's only or most important or even necessary role, and that family responsibilities ought to be divided evenly between women and men.

These notions will affect everything from Federal policies on unemployment and inflation to new styles of housing and social services. They will alter men's work and family lives as much as women's. And they can provide the impetus for social change beyond the narrow confines of women's role in society.

A Swedish feminist, Eva Moberg, once wrote that:

The male labor market has always been based on one self-evident condition: that somebody else is doing all the little practical jobs which need to be done for an employee and his children—cooking, washing, tidying up, and mending. As for the female labor market, it has also been founded on an equally self-evident axiom: that a woman employee has another, more important job on the side.

The feminist movement will first change the second part of that equation, and by doing that, it will also alter the first.

Increasingly now, women are recognizing that homemaking is not their only proper role. The feminist movement is reinforcing the belief that women as well as men need opportunities for achievement and fulfillment—with the recognition that in our society work is the chief source of those feelings for most people.

Feminism is encouraging women to believe that they ought not be financially dependent on their husbands. Thus, even if a man earns more, it will not be considered desirable or even acceptable for a woman to stay home and take full charge of raising their children.

It is certainly not "practical" even now; at any one time, 34.8 percent of all women over 18 years of age are either single, divorced, widowed, or married with their spouses absent (due to separation, military service, etc.).

Women will come to view their work as equal in importance and perhaps even more important than their roles as wives and mothers—a fact which will change those roles significantly. And all of this will have significant effects on employment and wage policy, work patterns, social services, and even housing design.

Most obviously, the feminist movement will lead to increased opportunities for women workers and to more equal pay rates. Government and industry have promoted the fiction that women as a group are somehow "secondary" or "marginal" workers whose incomes are not as essential as men's and whose jobs are not as important to them. Wives are routinely called "secondary workers" by the Bureau of the Census, which also labels men "head of household" regardless of the roles of the couple in their marriage.

In fact, some 63 percent of the women who work are either single, widowed, separated, divorced, or married to men who earn less than \$7,000 a year. Whatever truth may exist in the "marginal" image for the other 37 percent is the result of a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is caused by women's reduced earning power and the fact that work and social services are organized around the expectation that men are the primary wage earners and that women will take responsibility for home and child care.

Some women in fact do move in and out of the labor force, picking up the slack when jobs are available and disappearing when work dries up—the Christmas season in department stores is a classic example. Women who take jobs as clerical or sales

---

Lucy Komisar is past vice president of the National Organization for Women and author of *The New Feminism* and *Down and Out in the U.S.A.* She is writing a new book entitled *The Machismo Factor*.

d  
E  
ar

ne  
ge  
th  
ry

in  
an  
hill  
hill  
ge  
ng

to  
to  
ve  
e-  
n-  
bs  
ly  
he  
re-

rk  
or  
ar.  
or  
ng  
ng  
re  
he  
re-

he  
hil-  
he  
eic  
les

ni-  
and  
book

974



workers may leave when they marry—partly because they have accepted the sexist role division of men as providers and women as housewives, and partly because they find a minimal reward in their work and see no chance for advancement.

Sometimes they return to work when their children are in school or grown. However, even when women are fulltime, permanent workers who hold their jobs without interruption, industry has turned them into marginal workers by making them the last hired and the first fired—sometimes on the invented excuse that they don't need their jobs as much as men do. (During the Depression, some States actually passed laws that denied jobs to married women, especially teachers, and that attitude has not disappeared entirely).

### Federal Policies

At the same time that industry has practiced the kind of job discrimination that results in higher unemployment for women, Government has tolerated a higher general level of unemployment. In September 1973, William J. Fellner—then the newest presidential nominee to the Council of Economic Advisors—said what the administration had been hinting at for at least a year: the Government cannot seek to reduce unemployment much below five percent.

According to the *Washington Post* analysis, "The problem is that women and teenagers now make up a greater percentage of the labor force than they used to, and that women and teenagers have chronically higher unemployment rates than men. It thus takes much more priming of the pump to get the overall rate down to four percent than it used to."

Women's unemployment rates have sometimes been double that of men's, even excluding the many women who have given up looking for jobs and are counted as housewives rather than jobless persons. One of the reasons it has been possible for the Government to accept unemployment rates as high as four, five, and six percent is because it is not four, five, or six percent of *white men* who are unemployed. Women of all races make up 40 percent of the workforce, and together with minority men, their unemployment skews the figures.

When women's employment is not considered as significant as men's, neither is women's unemployment. Fellner's statement indicates that it is quite acceptable to have a higher rate of unemployment in the country as long as only women and youths (and, in fact, minorities) are the bulk of the new jobless.

However, the advance of feminist ideology and the success of job equality programs will increase the number of women seeking jobs at the same time it opens more job opportunities to them. It will thus reduce the disparity in the male and female unemployment rates by raising the jobless burden of male workers, especially those in categories where men have benefited from the discrimination against women. When that burden is shifted to men, the Government may not be able to countenance the same high rate of unemployment that it has permitted among women.

In addition to the disadvantages women suffer in employment, they suffer a disadvantage in pay—earning nationally only 60 percent of what men earn. Some of this is due to the fact that women get less-skilled jobs than men, but part of it is due to the fact that women get unequal pay for the same work, and another part reflects the lower value placed on work done largely by women compared to that done by men.

For example, the Department of Labor *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* rates nursery school worker below zoo keeper. Dieticians, who are generally women, earn less than truck drivers, who are generally men. In both cases, the skill and value of the "women's" jobs ought to be rated higher than the men's jobs. The feminist movement will cause a reanalysis of the worth of work.

Fair pay for women would have profound effects on the nation's economy, altering the costs of goods and services that are now based on cheap female labor.

Changes in patterns of unemployment and wages would have important effects on the nation's policy in regard to inflation. Higher unemployment and lower wages for women have an anti-inflationary effect. Equality either could result in a general equalizing of existing levels of employment and wages, with men suffering a loss in both cases, or in a net increase in jobs and wages, with the attendant rise in inflation that would cause. It is a dilemma the Government will be forced to confront.

Another obvious effect of the feminist movement on Government policy will be a change in training and job priorities. Presently, the Department of Labor *Manpower Administration Bulletin* says, "Priorities might be assigned as follows . . . males before females."

David O. Williams, who heads Federally funded manpower programs in the Midwest, offered the muddled explanation that this is "no attempt to suggest that females should not be hired or even given first preference. The guide only suggests that if there

is only one job and there is a female head of household and a male head of household, the male head of household should be referred first . . . ."

This discriminatory policy which penalizes families because they are headed by women is especially ironic in the Work Incentive Program, which was created to provide jobs and training for welfare recipients. The Labor Department set priorities for the program beginning with male heads of households and ending with mothers of pre-school children. Although a lawsuit overturned that policy, the new Talmadge Amendments reinstated it. There has been no challenge—partly because some welfare rights advocates do not want to expose women to the coercive aspects of the law.

Aside from priorities in admissions policies, women who seek Government-sponsored training often are denied the chance to learn high-paying skills and shunted instead into clerical and secretarial classes. A post-Title VII phone call to a New York City manpower official readily elicited information about separate lists of classes "available to women" and "available to men." Women would learn to pound the typewriters; men would learn to fix them.

### **The Effects on Men**

The change in the value and pattern of women's work will have profound effects on men. As Moberg suggests, men will no longer be able to assume that their jobs have priority and that responsibility for the care of home and children will be left to the wife.

Men's mobility will be limited by their wives' jobs and ambitions, and employers will have to take this into account in making job assignments. The Government will also have to change existing unemployment rules that presently give benefits to women who leave jobs to follow their husbands to new locations, but deny checks to men who leave to follow their wives. A suit has been filed in Washington State by a husband who was denied benefits under this rule.

Men who are not the sole support of themselves and their families will also feel freer to quit jobs and change careers. There will thus be more flexibility in people's work lives, more sabbaticals and mid-life changes of career, and more emphasis on the psychic as compared to the financial rewards of work. People will not be as bound to their jobs and not as willing to suffer poor working conditions in factories, or humiliation and tension in corporate suites.

Increasingly, the feminist movement will cause men to take equal responsibility for child care. A variety

of changes in employer and public policy will allow men and women to perform child care functions themselves and increase Government and private services that substitute for parental care. For example, businesses will have to institute paternity as well as maternity child care leaves. Some institutions have already taken that step, although not always willingly. The Board of Education of New York City was forced by the courts to establish paternity leave for teachers.

Men and women will be enabled to share child care through the restructuring of work—shorter hours, shared jobs, changes in the 9 to 5 workday. Representative Bella Abzug and Senator John Tunney have introduced legislation calling for the use of "flexible" work hours in 10 percent of Government jobs within five years.

Businesses will have to develop leave policies that allow parents to take time off to care for sick youngsters, to attend conferences with teachers, or to take sons and daughters to the dentist. Or, the Government may introduce home nursing for sick children, and teachers and doctors may have to alter their schedules to hold evening meetings with working parents.

The movement for universally available child care suffered a defeat with the veto of a bill that would have expanded Government-aided child care for families with incomes ranging up to middle class. Opponents of this measure maintained that such child care facilities would lead to the breakdown of the American family. In line with that thinking, the administration has attempted to roll back the present system so that only welfare families are eligible.

Since most of those families consist of minority women and children, it seems to many that official concern for family life diminishes depending upon the race and financial status of those involved.

In any case, when women follow the same work patterns as men, Government-sponsored child care centers will have to be established on a massive scale as they were during World War II. Opposition to child care is an anachronism that will be erased by the force of feminist history.

As work becomes more important for women, it will have to become less important for men. Job decisions will have to be taken in light of family responsibilities. Late meetings, business trips, and even one's presence at the plant or office will have to be adjusted to the demands of home life—for men as well as women.

Some feminists have already discovered that when

they insist that husbands share housework, that is the time the men decide to buy dishwashers, hire help, or eat out more often. It will likely be true that the demand that men share housekeeping chores will lead to added demand for paid services. Families increasingly will hire people to do cleaning, shopping, and laundry under contract. Home-catered meals may become more popular.

However, feminists must make certain that minority women, who make up a large proportion of household workers, are not further oppressed by such changes. This can be avoided by the professionalization of housework, including the elevation of pay and benefits available to household workers.

One of the defects of the suburbs, and of even much urban housing, is the lack of convenient services to take care of chores women do now. The Scandinavian countries are developing housing complexes that include shared facilities to end the need for the kinds of individual tasks largely assigned to women. These communities include common cafeterias, child care centers, teen clubs, laundries—and recreation centers for adults as well.

Government and industry will have to develop new rules about social security and pensions based on women's new independence. One member of Congress has introduced legislation to give wives their own Social Security benefits. In Sweden, a similar system already operates. Our Government will have to decide whether it wants to consider homemaking a socially desirable role that ought to be rewarded with state pension benefits.

Could a husband get "housespouse" benefits if he stayed home and cared for the family? If married women get such benefits, could divorced mothers get them, too? What kinds of contributions would be required? Could alimony be used for such payments? What about women on welfare? Isn't child care still a "job" even when no husband is around?

The increased mobility of men and women will make it necessary to liberalize the portability of pension rights even more than is being contemplated by legislation today. Perhaps there ought to be a national pension bureau that administers all pensions, and which allows the same total portability rights that exist for Social Security.

### **An Attitude About Power**

The end of sex role stereotypes and passage of the Equal Rights Amendment will confront feminists with

one Government institution that is based on principles which contradict a part of feminist ideology. This part has gotten less attention from the media than demands for job equality, child care, and abortion, but it promises to make an even more profound contribution to American mores and ethics. That part of the feminist ethic is an attitude about power, aggression, and violence—and the institution it will meet head on will be the armed forces.

A concomitant of the feminist critique of stereotypes about women is a rejection of stereotypes about men. The definition of manhood that judges masculinity on a scale of power, dominance, toughness, violence, and aggression is anathema to feminists, partly because women have been its chief victims. Rather than insist that women, too, ought to feel free to express those traits, feminists assert that males and females ought to develop a new human ethos based on an end to hierarchies, dominance, and force.

On the one hand, if women are admitted to the armed forces they ought to be able to do whatever men do—including engage in combat—and the Federal Government will have to deal with this eventuality even as it is now beginning to train women as non-combat pilots. On the other hand, women who have not been caught up in the kind of imagery that promises, "Join the Army, be a man," may become a new force against militarism.

In fact, the feminist movement holds possibilities for social change that have hardly been considered by those that view it from the outside. Three areas of particular interest will be affected by the feminist ethic. One is the structure of work and organization; another is foreign policy; a third is radical social change.

The women's movement has given much attention to the deleterious effect of "male" structure and organization, which is to say the pyramid hierarchy where power runs from top to bottom and where many people take orders and a few people give them. The leaderless "small groups," alternating chairpeople, cooperative projects that have no "bosses," and even the insistence that chairs in meeting rooms be set in a circle so that people are not inhibited from speaking out by being placed in a leader-audience position—all are efforts by feminists to counteract the effects of traditional forms of organization.

Sections of American industry have been experimenting with the notion that when decision-making is democratized, workers are more productive as well



as more satisfied. Production teams that share work and decisions have been substituted for systems where groups of workers are directed by foremen. The feminist movement has developed critiques which seek to go even further in wiping out the hierarchical style.

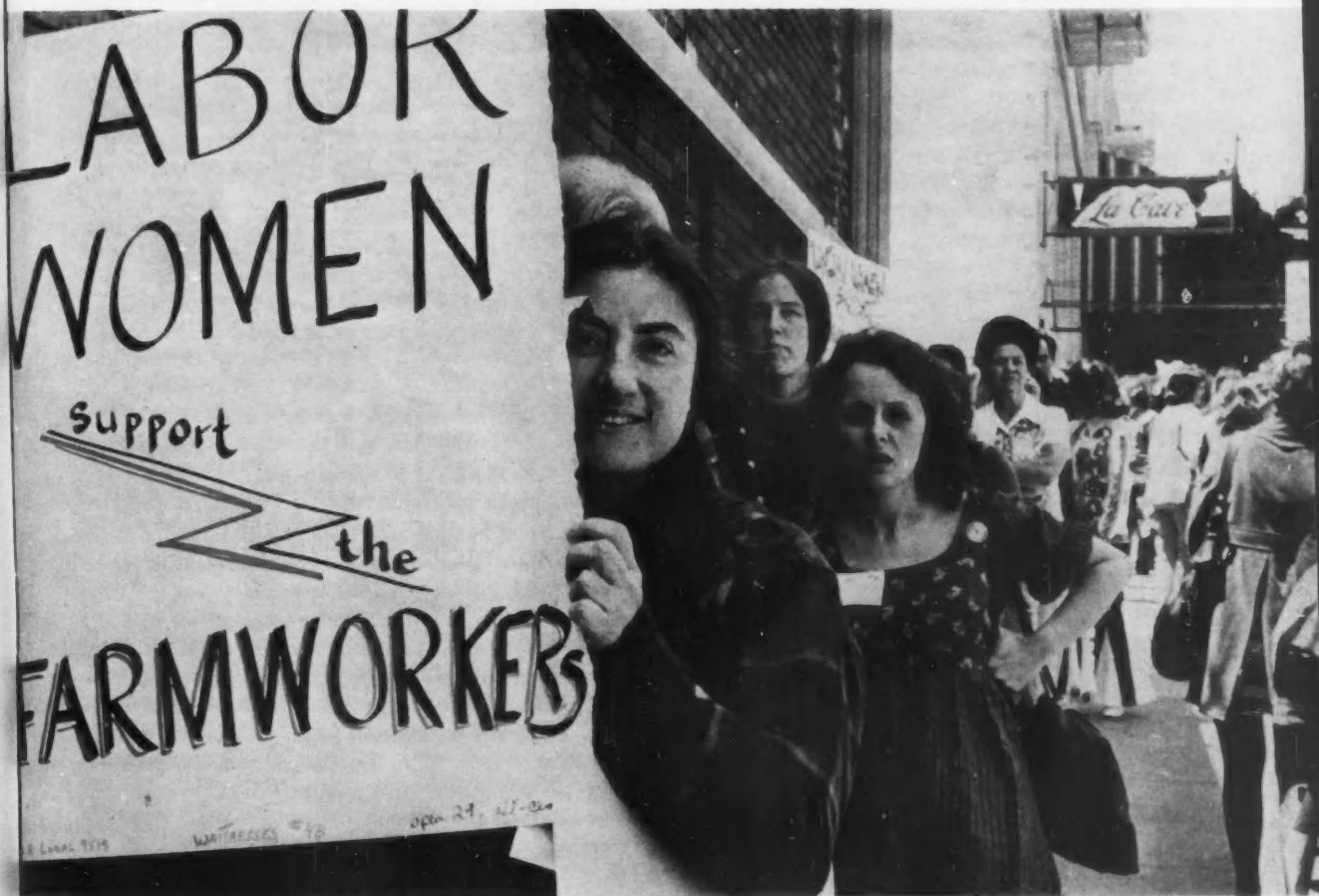
Women have been aware of how some of the perquisites of power can humiliate those at the bottom of the pyramid. The secretary who is forced to make coffee, run personal errands, and act as a status symbol for her boss, and the male underling who is forced to endure the tongue-lashing and lordly behavior of his superiors both suffer at the bottom. (One famous movie executive used to hold staff meetings at which his desk was placed on a platform so that others in the room had to look up to him.)

The etiquette of corporate life instructs inferiors and superiors how to act toward each other, showing proper deference to those who occupy the higher sta-

tions. If there is a conference, the inferior goes to the office of the superior. The superior waits until the inferior is on the phone before he picks it up. Sometimes people ignore their subordinates in a conspicuous manner. Superiors often do not return telephone calls; they insist that the inferiors keep calling back.

Bosses must not only exercise power, they must do it in such a way that the behavior of their subordinates reminds them that they indeed have that power. It is as if the image of power were more important than the possession of it.

The image of power is a factor as well in the conduct of American foreign policy, and the feminist ethic promises to confront this as well. American foreign policy has been based on the notion that we must be "number one" in military power. The last two presidents have made it clear that the U.S. can not be a "second-rate" power, or, for the first time, "lose a war"



—that we could not depart from our image of toughness or let ourselves be “humiliated” by the army of an impoverished, agricultural country whose people were different racially and even slighter in stature than most Americans.

Feminists are rejecting the notion of manhood that led President Kennedy and his advisers to approve plans for the Bay of Pigs invasion just because, as Theodore Sorensen, Arthur Schlesinger, and others have testified, they feared seeming soft. That led President Johnson to prolong the killing in Vietnam, because he could not be “the first President to lose a war.” And that encouraged President Nixon to continue war policies for fear the rest of the world would think the U.S. “a pitiful, helpless giant.”

The arms race, which takes such an overwhelming part of American tax monies, is supported by a national desire to be “number one,” to be the most powerful nation in the world. The feminist ethic does not see that kind of power as necessary or desirable—and it certainly does not see its opposite as “humiliating” or “unmanly” as it is described in the language of America’s foreign policy makers. (Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright is a significant exception to that line of thinking.)

### **Building a New Coalition**

The fact is that the feminist ethic has important things to say not only in the area of sex discrimination, but also about many other aspects of American life as well. Feminism has both the ideological and organizational potential to effect significant social change in this country.

In the past, forces for radical or even liberal social change have always been a minority. The labor movement, the abolitionist movement, the civil rights movement—even the anti-Vietnam war movement—were minorities that certainly affected Presidential decisions but could not put their own representatives in the White House.

Some civil rights leaders have attempted to establish coalitions for social advancement with the labor movement and liberal church and civic organizations. The Leadership Conference for Civil Rights perhaps is the chief example of that effort, and certainly, at a time when sit-ins, freedom rides, and racist violence aroused the moral indignation of much of the country, that coalition succeeded in getting legislation to protect voting rights and ban discrimination.

However, the civil rights coalition never constituted

a majority, and in this period, the Conference is fighting to preserve past victories—for example, to save school desegregation from the threats of anti-busing legislation.

The coalition has also sought the passage of social welfare legislation, yet the recent veto of a new minimum wage bill and the dismantling of much of the antipoverty program indicate that the majority supporting social advances in the 1960s was temporary.

In fact, it represented two forces—the representatives of the poor and of labor, whose own interests were at stake, and the liberals, who supported them out of ideological bent. The rest of the country went along; however, a majority committed to those programs out of self-interest never existed.

The women’s movement offers the hope of establishing a majority coalition devoted to civil rights and social welfare legislation out of self-interest. It is only women who can make that coalition a majority one.

The women’s movement will cause large numbers of women who in the past have identified with the privileged classes of America to reevaluate their own situation. They will come to see forceful enforcement of laws prohibiting job discrimination as something they need themselves, not as a charitable gesture toward others. (Black women, of course, already know the problem of race discrimination. I am talking about the majority of American women, who are white and have not in the past felt the importance of such laws.)

They will see child care as an issue that directly affects their own lives, not just the lives of the welfare poor.

And it will become clear that the same special interests and arguments that have been marshalled against blacks and other minorities are the special interests and arguments set against women.

Women cannot but help identify with minority people in America when they see themselves again and again treated with similar insensitivity and condescension; when they face similar discrimination, and when they discover the same failures to establish or enforce measures to end discrimination.

The bond that is forged by common problems will be strengthened by common action—something which has already occurred as feminist and minority groups have joined to press for legislation, file court suits, or seek administrative action.

The women’s movement is growing geometrically. Each new convert talks to friends, relatives and neighbors; each woman who files a suit, or gets a tradi-

tionally male job, or changes her life style becomes an example for others.

While the growth of feminism has substantially increased the chances for achieving social change, not all of those individuals (almost always men) who lead other sections of the (prospective) coalition always recognize this

Feminists committed to the cause of race equality used to find few minority leaders interested in the cause of women's rights. That has changed in the past few years to some extent: the Urban League is co-sponsoring a boycott with the National Organization for Women against General Mills; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and NOW have joined to protest Government failure to enforce affirmative action regulations for Federal contractors; and the new National Black Feminist Organization may force black political and civic leaders to pay more attention to the goals of women, especially minority women.

Similarly, the AFL-CIO's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment created ill feeling between feminists and labor representatives. Although both groups cooperated in lobbying on issues like the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, minimum wage, and child care legislation, the ERA was an obstacle to friendship and understanding between them.

The AFL-CIO had opposed the ERA on the grounds it would wipe out protective laws that unions had won many years ago. Even though Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act appeared to invalidate such laws, labor spokespersons argued that the law could be amended. In the meantime, it took some years before the impact of Title VII on protective laws was felt. They ignored the feminist contention that protective laws would be extended to men under Title VII.

However, last October the AFL-CIO Convention voted unanimously to reverse its stand and endorse the ERA. The resolution noted, "State protective labor laws applying only to women are being invalidated in nearly every instance by the courts under equal employment opportunity provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act." It said too that, "Recent Supreme Court decisions have thrown strong doubt on the constitutionality of most laws that differentiate on the basis of sex."

The ERA resolution calls on State labor federations to lobby for ratification. That could be an important

beginning of cooperative action on a State level. And the Convention emphasized its own recognition of the women's rights issue by amending the AFL-CIO Constitution to include among its purposes: "to encourage all workers without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or ancestry to share equally in the full benefits of union organization."

The labor movement's commitment to women increasingly will be one that redounds to its own benefit. In an economy where craft jobs are diminishing and union gains are being made among clerical and professional workers, women constitute an important source of union membership. And, as their consciousness and feeling of solidarity is raised, feminist women will be more ready to organize into unions to fight for their rights than other white-collar workers who reject such organizations for ideological reasons.

Once all women accept and approve the fact that they will be working most of their lives and not necessarily leaving their jobs when they marry or have babies, the conditions and future of their work lives become more important. And once women organize as women, organizing as workers is an easy and logical step to take.

Some have already done it. Feminists at Columbia University have organized clerical and administrative workers and are seeking representation by District 65 of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union.

In California, Union WAGE (Women's Alliance to Gain Equality) is using feminist themes to promote the organization of clerical and other women workers. "You as secretaries are not being treated right because you are all women," it tells workers. "Companies are taking advantage of the fact that they can pay you less than men."

San Francisco Bay area feminists have organized clerical workers at Bancroft-Whitney, a law book publisher.

Women look with ironic amusement at the male commentators and analysts who continue to predict that the movement has "disappeared" or "peaked." (An *Esquire* editor several years ago told me that feminism was a "fad" and the big movement would be ecology; recently *Esquire* ran a special issue on women; it has not done one on ecology.)

It is difficult for those who do not understand the depth of feminist feeling to envision the significance and potential strength of the movement. It is a lesson they will learn as the decade of the feminist 1970s continues.



About five years ago, the movement for women's rights and opportunities began to re-emerge in America. Its revival might be dated as early as 1966, when the National Organization for Women was founded in Washington by 28 women tired of the lack of enforcement of anti-discrimination laws by the Federal Government. But the women's movement did not become known to most of us until the media began publicizing it in 1968, following the protest against the Miss America pageant.

In 1970, while working at a private consulting firm, I had the good fortune to meet and later to work with a woman who brought to me my first insights into the women's movement. Her consciousness was being raised at the time and I benefitted indirectly from her learning experience. She pointed me toward the relevant literature and I sought out additional information—primarily to make the experience meaningful to me as a black male.

I began to look for historical perspective and soon realized that few men had written about, or had been involved in, the early struggles for women's rights. I found two, although the general public knows little about their efforts.

*On the Subjection of Women* by John Stuart Mill is probably the best male-authored article of any length. Mill's last book appeared in 1869, but it was written some years before with his stepdaughter, Helen Taylor Mill. John Stuart Mill's contribution to this essay stemmed primarily from conversations with his wife. Taken from Mill's lifelong theme—the abuse of power—the essay discusses at length the absolute subjugation of a wife to her husband by legal enactment. He described the plight of women in these words:

We must consider, too, that the possessors of the power (men) have facilities in this case, greater than in any other, to prevent any uprising against it. Every one of the subjects lives under the very eye . . . of one of the masters, in closer intimacy with him than with any of her fellow subjects; with no means of combining against him, no power of even locally overmastering him, and, on the other hand, with the strongest motives for seeking his favour and avoiding to give him offence.

William A. Blakey is Director of Congressional Liaison for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

## Everybody Makes The Revolution

SOME THOUGHTS ON RACISM AND SEXISM

By William A. Blakey



In struggles for political emancipation, everybody knows how often its champions are bought off by bribes, or daunted by terrors. In the case of women, each . . . is in a chronic state of bribery and intimidation combined. . . . A large number . . . must make an almost complete sacrifice of the pleasures or the alleviation of their own individual lot.

If ever any system of privilege and enforced subjugation had its yoke tightly riveted on the necks of those who are kept down by it, this has.

Another male who took cognizance of the early struggle for women's rights was Frederick Douglass, militant abolitionist. Douglass made common cause with women seeking complete equality in marriage, equal rights in property and wages, the right to make contracts, to sue and to be sued, to testify in court, and above all, to vote. His interest was not surprising, since the beginnings of the struggle for equal rights for women were closely related to the abolition movement.

Douglass was quick to point out the parallel between black oppression and female suppression and allied himself with the women's movement on December 3, 1847 with the phrase, "Right is of No Sex," in the first issue of his paper, the *North Star*.

Possibly the least well-known fact about Frederick Douglass was his support of the women's movement from the 1840s until his death in 1895. Even after a bitter dispute in 1867-68 with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton over granting the franchise to the freedmen (leaving out women), Douglass still could write, in October of 1870:

We know of no truth more easily made appreciable to human thought than the right of woman to vote, or, in other words, to have a voice in the Government under which she lives and to which she owes allegiance . . . it is plain that women themselves are divested of a large measure of their natural dignity by their exclusion from such participation in government.

Power is the highest object of respect. . . . We pity the impotent and respect the powerful everywhere. To deny woman her vote is to . . . deprive her of a certain measure of self-respect . . . . Woman herself loses in her own estimation by her enforced exclusion from the elective franchise, just as the slaves doubted their own fitness for freedom from the fact of their being looked upon as only fit for slaves.

The commonalities and links between sexism and racism establish the need for black women and men to be involved in the battles against both.

### **Race and Sex Stereotypes**

Of the numerous parallels between racism and sexism, three are most significant. Others exist, of course, but these three are continually used against minorities and women with injurious effect.

Race and sex stereotypes are the first and single most handicapping factors facing us today. Stereotypical images in movies, in books, in the news and entertainment media, and finally, in our own minds, deny minorities and women pride and the will to change. The use of these stereotypes—from the ancient image of the shuffling, absent-minded servant to the contemporary "I'm Cheryl, Fly Me"—have denied minority groups and women a positive self-image. Such images have steered them toward occupations traditional for their race and sex, and have limited their perception of possible goals and accomplishments.

These stereotypes exist historically in education as well as in the media—and they have been reinforced by a discriminatory legal system. The Nation's public schools regularly purchase and use textbooks and other learning materials which exclude blacks from their pages and place girls and women in stereotyped roles.

A survey by one feminist group of 134 elementary school readers in use across the country found that boys portrayed outnumber girls five to two. Adult males were portrayed in 147 different jobs, while females were shown in only 26. The jobs in which females were portrayed required less intelligence, were one-dimensional and nonadventurous, were rarely outside the home, and generally did not involve decision-making.

A black or Chicano student might wonder whether he or she ever existed after reading the textbook world. A girl surely might ask if she could be anything other than a housewife, a secretary, or a nurse.

Barbara Sizemore, Superintendent of Schools for the District of Columbia, summed it up recently in a workshop on "Racism and Sexism in Our Schools" when she said: "You can count on one thing in public school textbooks—they'll be racist, sexist, and elitist."

### **200 Words A Minute**

With the great influence of visual perception on the human mind, nothing could be more critical than including males and females of all races and nationalities.

ties in various roles on television. There was a time you could not find a single black person reporting the news, analyzing the actions of a world leader, or even needing some mouthwash in the morning. Nor can you still find many women whose fulfillment does not come from washing dishes with Super Brand X, typing 200 words a minute, or changing diapers while hubby goes to work.

The media's failure to include minorities and women in a variety of roles not only projects a distorted picture of the real world but also bolsters the viewer's negative race or sex-biased concepts. If you believe that all blacks are loud, trifling, and lack intelligence, *Amos and Andy* would largely substantiate that negative impression. Even if the program could be defended because of its humor, where were the prime time programs with blacks cast in offsetting roles, such as *Black Journal*, *Agronsky and Company* (featuring Carl Rowan), *Room 222*, etc.?

Strides are being made with regard to minorities but not with regard to women. All too many negative images of women still appear on television, particularly in advertising. It is difficult to turn on the tube and not find voluptuous women selling something—clad either in some product or in next to nothing. After all, women equal sex and sex sells.

### Three-fifths of A "Man"

A second parallel between sexism and racism is the extent to which the law and our system of justice have perpetuated the oppression of minorities and women. Our government of laws, not men, began by describing blacks and women as non-persons. The Constitutional Convention declared a slave equal to only three-fifths of a man. Only white males were included for purposes of voting and taxes.

Thus from the beginning our Nation's lawmakers gave minorities and women second-class treatment. Except for the 19th amendment, Congress did not act until 1964 to safeguard the rights of minorities and women.

During congressional debates in 1869 on the 15th amendment, Southern senators attempted to defeat the amendment by including language which would have enfranchised women—an unthinkable, laughing matter in the Reconstruction era. This tactic, which seeks to set minorities and women against each other, has been used several times since—most notably in 1963, during debate on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The courts, like Congress, have played a mixed role in determining the legal status of women and blacks. From *Dred Scott* until *Brown v. Board of Education*, black people suffered from adverse Supreme Court decisions. Similarly, women have been plagued by a judiciary unwilling to act on the many inequities based on sex.

In *Bradwell v. the State* (1873), the Supreme Court held that women could be denied a license to practice law. The Court went to great lengths to explain the "roles" of women (translate: wife and dependent) and men, and how the practice of law was not a woman's mission. A recent decision, *Frontiero v. Richardson*, may be for women what *Brown* was for blacks. The Supreme Court held that discrimination and separate treatment, or distinctions based on such artificial factors as sex, are as "inherently suspect" as those based on race.

### The Equal Rights Amendment

The Equal Rights Amendment, which would do much to improve the legal status of women, seems to me to be born of much the same spirit as was the 14th amendment to the Constitution. The ERA would establish the fundamental legal principle with regard to sex that the 14th amendment established with regard to race—that the law must deal with the attributes of an individual, not with classifications based on biology.

---

**'Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.'**

---

As Commissioner Frankie M. Freeman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has noted, "The 14th amendment has been of crucial importance in achieving whatever gains we, as black people, have made. While it has not eliminated racism, it has provided the legal basis for doing so. The Equal Rights Amendment will provide women a status as persons under the law."

### The Clearest Example

Although employment discrimination based on sex or race is unlawful, it still occurs. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 33,948 complaints during fiscal 1973. Of these, 15,719 were from women, but not necessarily because of sex discrimination.

Many victims of discrimination are unaware of what they can do. Some accept discrimination for fear of reprisal or because relief is expensive and time consuming. Employment discrimination is perhaps the clearest example of the adverse effects of race and sex discrimination. The "white male club" has prevented for years the economic advancement of minorities and women into higher job classifications and decision-making positions, and hence has kept them dependent and out of the economic mainstream.

Women have often been labeled "unqualified" or non-supervisory material for the same specious reasons that blacks were denied employment and promotions for 200 years. Affirmative action plans and the new enforcement powers granted to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission promise much, however, for the future.

It is important to note here that black women suffer a kind of double jeopardy when they seek employment. Although historically both black men and women suffered from racial prejudice when looking for a job, it may now be difficult for a black woman to determine whether she is being discriminated against for reasons of race or sex. If she has a B.A. degree in anthropology and is asked to type, she will no longer have to guess—white women suffer the same fate.

Even if being both black and female is beginning to be a plus for black professional women who get counted twice in affirmative action plans, the vast majority of black women are exploited in the labor market. They are paid less for the same work that men do and are relegated to low-paying, dead-end jobs. They also constitute a surplus labor supply. In 1971, nearly half of all employed black women worked as household domestics or in service occupations not covered by the Federal minimum wage.

### Political Participation

A third example of the parallels between sexism and racism exists in the political arena. Congress first granted the right to vote to freed male slaves through the 15th amendment, and later to women through the 19th amendment. Yet few follow-up measures were enacted until passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Since then, more than 1,444 black officials have been elected to public office in the 11 states of the old Confederacy.

No similar legislative effort to encourage and ensure political participation by women seems forthcoming, perhaps because women do not suffer reprisals of the

type experienced by blacks in the South. Still, women's participation is limited by the lingering effects of pre-suffrage ideas about a woman's "place."

Recently women have begun to seize the challenge without legislative assistance. As Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm argued in her book, *Unbought and Unbossed*, it is time for women to stop making coffee and cake for the party socials and to start making some of the decisions.

Congresswoman Chisholm's election to the House of Representatives in 1968 presaged an era in which many women new to the national political arena (three of them black) would not only successfully seek election but would have a profound influence on the political and legislative process.

### Lynching and Rape

Legal and political parallels between sexism and racism are not the only ones that can be drawn. Another extra-legal societal oppression draws racism and sexism together in my mind. When black slaves were freed in the South, many new tactics were employed by their former white masters to keep the freedmen in their place. The most brutal and effective of these was lynching.

Carried out swiftly, often for pure fun and sometimes for purposes of reprisal, the lynching of blacks was widespread until 1936, when the total number of lynchings in one year first fell below ten. In the last 16 years of the 19th century, more than 2,500 lynchings were recorded. In the first 14 years of the 20th century, more than 800 lynchings occurred and at the outbreak of World War I the toll had reached 1,100. Sporadic outbreaks continued.

Besides being sheer sport, lynching reminded "niggers" that whites were still their masters. In a comparable way the raping of women is a societal oppression. It reaffirms "superiority" in the male attacker and is executed with wanton disregard for the person attacked. Rape, too, is carried out as sport and as a "logical" extension of the male attacker's normal role. Rape as a crime is sometimes ignored by law enforcement officials and often the rape victim is treated by authorities as if she were the criminal.

Although legal prohibitions against rape have existed since early common law, they have not been effective in either reducing rapes or in encouraging female victims to prosecute. Corroboration of the rape claim and the requirement that the female resist to avoid "consenting" (inviting injury or even death)



n's  
of

nge  
man  
and  
ffee  
ing

use  
ich  
ree  
lec-  
the

and  
wn.  
ism  
aves  
em-  
the  
tive

me-  
acks  
r of  
last  
nch-  
20th  
the  
100.

nig-  
com-  
pres-  
cker  
rson  
as a  
role.  
orce-  
d by

have  
been  
ging  
rape  
st to  
eath)

# THE RICE HOTEL

HISTORY  
IN THE  
MAKING  
WOMEN'S  
POLITICAL  
CAUCUS

poses a dangerous dilemma. Most authorities agree that a substantial portion of rape victims never report the attack. Rape laws need reforming and, under pressure from women's groups, some legislators are now seeking solutions.

A peculiar connection exists between rape and lynching and their uses against women and blacks as tools of oppression. In my opinion the Thomas Wansley case in Lynchburg, Va. presents a classic example of the point I want to make—that rape is often only considered a crime when the woman is white and the male is black, particularly in the South. Although rape is most often a monoracial crime, involving a black male and female or white male and female with offenders equally distributed in both races, of the 455 men executed for rape, 89 percent have been black.

As Anne Braden notes in her "Letter to White Southern Women," the use of rape prosecutions for selective racist oppression and the dehumanization of the complaining woman by police authorities and society generally will continue until women organize and demand change. Such organization, she indicates, would require that black and white women organize together. She goes on to outline the critical requirement in that unification process:

It may seem paradoxical—but in this racist society we who are white will overcome our oppression as women only when we reject once and for all the privileges conferred on us by our white skin. For the privileges are not real—they are a device through which we are kept under control.

### **The Wrong Issues**

One thing preventing the development of a coalition of the black and women's movements to achieve common goals is that people get hung up on the wrong issues. The most destructive and frequently raised false issue is the "black man—white woman" phenomenon. Since slavery—and maybe before—rumors, myths, and distortions about black male sexuality have led many to believe that all black males either want white women or white women want them. Some black women voice the opinion that the women's movement is a white woman's plot to entrap black males.

With good reason, black women are concerned about the proportional decline of the eligible black male population because of the Vietnam War, the increase in homosexuality among black males, the overpre-

sentation of black males in the prison population, and the increased birth rate of black females compared to black males. The number of available "good catches" among black bachelors is further diminished by the effects of discrimination on black male incomes.

But most such concern is focused on the apparent increase in interracial dating and marriage, resulting in the further reduction in raw numbers of eligible black males.

Interracial and interreligious dating and marriage are byproducts of the times. Because of changed attitudes, interracial couples are more open in their relationships and so more visible to everyone who notices. The women's movement has had little to do with changing attitudes on this score.

Furthermore, black men—according to Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint of the Massachusetts Mental Health Center—are no longer afraid to take a second look at an attractive white woman while in the presence of whites. Looks are often followed by conversations and dates, but not always by marriage.

Blaming the women's movement when a black man dates a white woman appears a bit nearsighted. Not only does it assume that he would be with a black woman if he weren't with a white one, but it blames white women for the individual behavior of a black male.

The most disturbing remarks I have heard from black women about the women's movement are "black women don't need it, we are already liberated" or "we have to get behind our black men." I can only say that before any black person announces his or her "liberation," that person ought to check out the latest unemployment statistics, the latest suicide statistics, and the arrest records for blacks in America.

No person is liberated until he or she can make unfettered "free choices." The women's movement, much like the civil rights movement, would enable people to make free choices concerning their future, and to change the system from one of predestination to one of free will. Black women and black men should be walking beside each other. A woman need not be a slave or competitor to "her man." Blacks should reject any definition of "manhood" which requires dominance or "femininity" which requires a woman to assume a domestic, submissive role and not involve herself in throwing off the yokes of sexism and racism.

Finally, it seems axiomatic that when a potent coalition seems ready to form, divisive tactics will be employed by those who fear such a coalition to prevent

its birth. The demands of both movements will be played off against each other.

So it is now. Attempts are being made to pit black men against white women and to force black women to choose one side or the other in the fight to end employment discrimination. Where affirmative action plans call for goals and timetables, employers try to hire minority women and count them twice, or to replace black males hired in the 1960s with white women hired to cope with what employers perceive as a fad for the 1970s.

Cynical efforts to build antagonism and division between these two movements must not succeed—rather, blacks should recognize the “permanent interests” they share with the women’s rights movement and work for the benefits active involvement would bring. Conversely, white female activists will have to recognize the particular and peculiar interests of blacks in such a coalition effort, and adapt their strategy in order to overcome both sexist and racist manipulations by the common oppressor.

### **What's In It for Blacks**

Black males and females and the black community in general can benefit directly from participation in the movement against sexism and racism. Aside from ending legal discrimination, another goal of the women’s movement is to reshape the marital relationship on an equal, and hence stronger, basis.

The black family has always been a mainstay and a source of energy for black survival in America. Despite slavery, lynching, poverty, and the Moynihan report, blacks in America have survived through the collective wit, skill, and strength of the family unit. Now more than ever, that unit faces an uncertain future and has declined as a source of power for black people. One of the many possible reasons for its dwindling influence is the failure of people to find joy and happiness within the institution of marriage.

As Ambrose Bierce has said, marriage has become a community consisting of a master, a mistress, and two slaves—making in all, two people. Marriages are failing among blacks and whites at alarming rates. Divorce statistics are higher for blacks and remarriage rates are lower.

While “shacking” or “living common law” has always had its place, other alternatives exist for preserving a family-type unit and yet allowing the two partners the freedom to grow as individuals. Such “open marriages” offer an honest and open relation-

ship between two people, based on equal freedom and identity for both partners. There is no need in this type of relationship for a dominant partner or a submissive one. Rather it depends on the continued growth of the two individuals—making the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

Another alternative is being tried by one black couple in Washington, D.C. Their marriage involves a contract which challenges D.C. marriage laws and could establish a legal precedent in domestic relations law.

Marriage contracts are not new, but formerly they were used to transfer dower and inheritance rights, and they were often made by the families involved, not between the marital partners.

The new contract made by this couple sets ground rules for a new husband-wife relationship over a specified, renewable period of time. It deals with such issues as surnames (she keeps hers); relationships with others; children, birth control, and related responsibilities; careers and domicile; care and use of property, debts, and living expenses; evaluation of the partnership; termination of the contract, and decision-making.

Such a contract forms the basis of an understanding before the wedding, and eliminates guessing and blind marriages, thus offering a better opportunity for a successful union.

Implicit in the contract’s recognition of the woman as an equal partner in the marriage is the acknowledgment of her personhood and the set of choices that full personhood brings. This recognition is necessary if black women are to realize their own potential and to participate fully in the struggle and if we are to build and sustain strong black families. The contract also puts into perspective the husband’s responsibilities.

A second benefit of the coalition against racism and sexism, of particular interest to black males, would be the shedding of the “black stud” image. Such a development would be the logical result of eliminating race and sex stereotypes.

Black men have been both glorified and victimized because of their alleged sexual prowess. The number of black men who have been lynched, castrated, and had their bodies mutilated because of this mythical fantasy and the fear it brings to white men is a matter of record.

According to Dr. Poussaint, “White men have felt free to kill black men who even vaguely offended the supposed purity of white womanhood. Of the hundreds



of men executed for rape in this country, about 80 to 90 percent have been blacks accused of raping white women."

Black men also may wish to eliminate unrealistic expectations of women who believe the stereotype image. Despite popularly held views, sexual studies and reports show that not all black men have large phalluses, nor are they more sexually active than white men of similar class background.

The amount of time and mental frustration that black males expend trying to fulfill the fantasy, however, is probably phenomenal. Relieving this burden would allow black men to spend their time and energy in a more universally productive manner.

### **The Black Woman—In the Middle**

Finally, let's turn to those in the middle of the racism-sexism issue—black women. It should not be necessary to cite the double discrimination affecting black women, the lack of child care for working women, the failure to receive equal pay for equal work, the raping of black women by white and black men, the increasing number of forced sterilizations of black women, and the miserable treatment black women receive in prison in order to make the point that however bad a black man has it, black women have it worse.

Black men, no matter how strong, probably could not bear the yoke that black women have borne throughout black American history. They were slaves in the master's home and many remain slaves in their own homes today. Since black men are not always in a position to alter the societal status of their women, perhaps they should act to change those things totally within their reach.

The thing I see most lacking in black male-female relationships is respect—mutual respect, but most importantly male respect for a female partner. Black men, as they gain better paying jobs and higher status, tend to fall into the same trick bags as white males do. Some re-enslave independent women, making them human appendages to their handwagons of success. Nothing could be a greater waste of black talent and creativity.

Other black men with hangups about their own accomplishments try to restrict their partners' growth—discouraging night college classes or a job in which she earns more money than he.

Finally, in their personal relationships, black men denigrate black women by planting seeds they don't

intend to cultivate, by dehumanizing and dominating the marital union or relationship, by proving their manhood with as many women as they can find, and last, by ignoring black women in favor of exclusively white female relationships.

In part, this attitude of dominance and disrespect may be a response to the historical myth of the "castrating" black matriarch. Black men may feel they must persecute black women to repudiate the myth. Although the myth needs repudiation, that should be accomplished, as Angela Davis has pointed out, by learning about the black woman's true history.

It would also be well for black men to do something which George Jackson contemplated doing prior to his death: a systematic critique of his past misconceptions about black women and their roots in the ideology of the established order. Whether one has time for such an exercise or not, each of us needs to look at black women in a new light. Black feminists have enough problems countering misunderstanding among black women without having to face black men who feel they are going to be destroyed by the women's revolution.

### **Avoiding A Trap**

When I started writing this article, I wanted to present a black male's point of view regarding the women's movement for a black male audience. Even while writing down what I had thought about for some time, I realized that the real audience was larger.

To exclude all others would be to fall into a vicious trap. It is necessary to address everyone in order to overcome the misconceptions, distortions, and apprehensive and defensive attitudes on the part of many people involved in the black and women's revolutions.

Despite the fact that black women are doubly affected, arguments about whether racism or sexism is more prevalent or savage are counter-revolutionary. Such dialogue divides those people who have the most to gain by addressing their common ills, without dealing with the oppressor or the oppression complained of.

Regardless of one's viewpoint on this subject, black men and women should give some thought to something which Bobby Seale wrote in *Seize the Time*:

In the Panther household everyone sweeps the floor, everybody makes the bed, and everybody makes a revolution, because real manhood depends on the subjugation of no one.

## **Puertorriquetas In The United States**

THE IMPACT OF DOUBLE DISCRIMINATION

By Lourdes Miranda King

The Puerto Rican woman is too often pictured as a passive female, bending first to the will of her father, then of her husband—an obscure figure shuffling to the needs of her children and the men in her family.

This image has become an excuse to justify excluding her from full participation in the life of the United States. It reinforces the Anglo American stereotype of the Latin woman as childlike, pampered, and irresponsible.

The view supports the notion that Puerto Rican women deserve their subordinate status. After all, are not many of them employed in service occupations and as unskilled labor? That must mean they are suited only for demeaning work and is proof enough that they belong in that category. If one adds the prevalent assumption that Puerto Rican women are all alike, the stereotype is complete.

In many ways, the image of the Puerto Rican woman is similar to that of Puerto Rican men. That

---

Lourdes Miranda King is a former professor of Spanish literature, and a founder of the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women.

too  
ale,  
her  
-an  
the  
men

ex-  
rom  
the  
the  
the  
am-

tion  
erve  
all,  
oyed  
un-  
mean  
ning  
that  
one  
that  
like,

f the  
milar  
That  
pro-  
oun-  
uerto



image is embellished by the perception of Latin men as indolent skirtchasers, in addition to being irresponsible and undependable. They, too, are at the bottom of the occupational ladder—which serves, in turn, to justify their exclusion and discrimination.

The adoption of the terms *macho* and *machismo* from Spanish to describe the supreme male chauvinist reflects the Latin male stereotype. Is it a coincidence that earlier the English borrowed *Don Juan*, the stereotype of the great lover?

Surely, other cultures have created words and literary figures to portray the traits of lovers, "banty-roosters," and authoritative males. If such spontaneous labels faithfully reflect life, as has been pointed out, then the selection of words from one culture for the popular language of another must reflect deep-rooted value judgments and cultural assumptions.

Official statistics show the disastrous results brought about by false assumptions. The overall situation of Puerto Ricans in the United States attests to the low esteem in which they are held. By any standards, Puerto Ricans are a severely deprived ethnic group.

### A Profile

In 1972, Puerto Ricans had lower median incomes (\$6,210 for a family of four), higher unemployment rates (9.6 percent in New York), and lower educational attainment (8 median years of schooling) than any other group in the United States, including blacks. Puerto Rican men are concentrated in the lower paying occupations, such as operatives,

laborers, and service workers. Of all Puerto Rican families, 27.9 percent have incomes below \$5,000; 12 percent have incomes below \$2,000.

As did others before them, Puerto Ricans came to the mainland United States in search of work and improved economic opportunities. They arrived by plane in massive numbers during the late 1940s, mostly as unskilled workers entering a specialized economy.

Unlike previous immigrants, however, Puerto Ricans are American citizens. They all retained a nostalgic hope of returning to Puerto Rico—a new type of non-European immigrant.

On arrival, Puerto Ricans encountered numerous problems—their scanty knowledge of English, differences in customs, experience in a racially mixed society which ill prepared them for confronting racial inequities. All these factors conspired to sour the "American dream."

Today, even such fundamental facts as our numbers within the population are unclear. The 1.4 million count of the 1970 Census understates the true total, especially in New York. There, 200,000 Puerto Ricans remained uncounted, according to the Center for Social Research of the City University of New York.

Although approximately 60 percent of the Puerto Rican population in the United States is concentrated in New York City, that is not the only place where Puerto Ricans live. Substantial numbers are dispersed throughout the country—in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, and as far west as California and Hawaii.

It is within this context that one must view the status of the Puerto Rican woman in the United States. Her situation is intertwined with that of the Puerto Rican male in American society. Both question their sense of worth, both feel the impact of discrimination as members of a minority. As a young woman told me, "Our men don't have equal rights or equal pay. We are all fighting for the same thing; both male and female are oppressed."

How Puerto Rican men are treated when they try to enter the so-called "mainstream of society" greatly influences Puerto Rican women. If, as has been the case, the Puerto Rican man is defeated or does not fare well, the woman bears the brunt of this treatment.

### The Puerto Rican Woman

The Puerto Rican woman becomes a part of the cycle of failure. She drops out of school at an early age or enters the labor force at the lowest level, in the hope that her earnings will help lift her family out of poverty. Or her family unit may disintegrate through separation or divorce, leaving her the sole provider and head of household.

The Puerto Rican woman in the United States fits the historical pattern of the immigrant woman who worked alongside her man, sharing the burden of work and responsibilities. Unlike any other woman who has preceded her, however, she is a member of a group in continuous flux, moving between the United States and Puerto Rico for varying lengths of time throughout her life.

Studies have shown that women predominate among the return



migrants to Puerto Rico. Some are single young women who have lost their jobs; others are older women whose children have left home. A still larger group is composed of women who have returned after a marital break-up.

It is not unusual to find women working in the United States whose children are cared for by grandmothers or other relatives in Puerto Rico, or to find wives and children living in Puerto Rico while their husbands find work in the mainland, or to find working wives in Puerto Rico "pioneering the resettlement" of husband and children—different patterns, yet with the same divisive effect on families. The woman is thrust into the role of sole supporter, creating the new immigrant woman and incidentally destroying the myth of the passive female.

As has been the case in other minority groups, the woman frequently has had more access to the larger Anglo-American society than has the Puerto Rican man. I have often heard, "When we came to the United States, my mother was able to get a job first while my father was still looking."

For many reasons, Puerto Rican women found employment more readily. Sexist attitudes permitted hiring a woman for a lower wage than a Puerto Rican man. Either they were seen as less of a threat in the white male hierarchy, or the available opportunities were so-called "women's jobs"—that is, unskilled.

In many communities with a concentration of Puerto Ricans, the pattern of employment was reversed and women had a lower unemployment rate. As late as 1969, according to the study, *Poverty Area Profiles: The New York*

*Puerto Rican*: "Whereas normally the jobless rate for women is higher than for men, among Puerto Rican workers the pattern was reversed. Adult men 25-54 had a rate of nearly 8 percent, compared with less than 4 percent for women in this age group."

The Census Bureau attempted to explain this difference:

Puerto Rican men in their prime, no matter what their employment status, are as firmly attached to the labor force as men in their prime generally, while Puerto Rican women tend more readily than women generally to withdraw from the labor force upon being laid off, or to re-enter it only when recalled or when accepting a new job. The short average duration of unemployment among these women in part reflects these unusual patterns of labor force entry and exit, and makes for low jobless rates.

Later data and trends belie this simplistic and confusing explanation. The low rate of unemployment is more likely caused by "dropping out" of a labor force which does not offer useful work—considering women's supreme difficulties in finding a job and their childbearing and child rearing functions. The harm was done, however, and a generation of Puerto Ricans were led to believe that Puerto Rican women were better off than their men.

### The Myth of Success

In spite of a current 10 percent unemployment rate for Puerto Rican women in New York (the highest unemployment of any group in that city) and the decrease during the past decade in

the level of Puerto Rican female participation in the job market from 38 to 28 percent (which runs against the national trend), the myth of female success was firmly entrenched among the Puerto Rican communities on the mainland. The belief prevailed that any attempt at upgrading the status of Puerto Rican women would of necessity take jobs away from the men, downgrading the Puerto Rican man and the Puerto Rican family.

As one woman told me, "We have so many bread and butter issues and such few human resources that we have to establish priorities and my main interest is toward Puerto Rican issues, regardless of sex." She added, however, "as long as the women's movement is fighting for those things which we as a minority group are fighting for—such as equal rights, the end to poverty, and expansion of child care centers—we are with them."

The aversion toward focusing on the status of the Puerto Rican woman has been detrimental to both males and females. It blatantly ignores the economic facts. The Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor has found that: "There were 19.2 million married women (husband present) in the labor force in March 1972; the number of unemployed men was 3.1 million. If all the married women stayed home and unemployed men were placed in their jobs, there would be 16.1 million unfilled jobs."

History has shown that gains in income by the productivity of a new group do not come at the expense of existing groups.

Many of the Puerto Rican community leaders who have swal-



lowed the myth of female success are women. They have been made to feel guilty about their leadership role in relation to Puerto Rican men, even though more than half of the Puerto Rican population is composed of women. I was horrified—and mortified—when a prominent Puerto Rican woman leader was telling me about her tribulations in locating a young male to serve as president of a Puerto Rican youth leadership group.

"The most promising candidate, and the one most likely to be elected, was a young woman," she said. "I quickly had to come up with a boy to back for president . . . There are just too many women leaders in the Puerto Rican community already." Although clearly not the most qualified, the boy was elected president.

The Puerto Rican woman in the United States then is caught between two forces. On the one hand, she is entrapped within the bleak economic and political powerlessness affecting the Puerto Rican population in general. On the other hand, she suffers from the socialization of sex roles which causes her to have guilt feelings about the fulfillment of her potential and its expression in a society which looks down its aquiline Anglo nose at her and her people. Above it all, the statistics verify that her situation is worse than even she might be willing to admit.

### Some Comparisons

The Puerto Rican woman in the mainland United States feels the impact of double discrimination as a woman and as a Puerto Rican—often as a woman, a black, and a Puerto Rican. The Puerto Rican man has a median income of

\$5,613 a year; the Puerto Rican woman earns \$2,784 a year. Of all Puerto Rican males, 12 percent have incomes below \$2,000, compared to 34 percent of all Puerto Rican women. The men complete 9.3 years of school, while women finish 8.8 years.

Unemployment among Puerto Rican women is a whopping 17.8 percent—the highest rate among any Spanish origin group, and almost three times higher than the national average. The Puerto Rican male unemployment rate, although high, is 8.8 percent.

The Puerto Rican woman is often prevented from working by the number of small children in the family who need her care and attention, for the Puerto Rican population in the mainland United States is extremely young. The median age is 18 years. Of all Puerto Rican families, 76 percent have children under 18, and of all Puerto Ricans living in this country, 28.7 percent are under 10 years old.

This situation is further aggravated by the greater family responsibilities and income needs of larger families. Over half of these families have more than five members in the family.

Lack of child care facilities specifically geared to the language and cultural needs of the Puerto Rican child (bilingual child care centers, since Spanish is the language spoken in 73 percent of Puerto Rican homes) often force the mother either to stay at home, or to ship her children off to a willing relative in Puerto Rico.

If she does brave that obstacle, she starts her day earlier than the average worker in order to dress and feed her children before taking them to be cared for in someone's

home. In any case, knowing that her children are being raised by another person often a thousand miles away under less than adequate conditions, or that they are roaming the streets alone after school, becomes a source of further worry and stress.

For 105,000 Puerto Rican families in the United States, female employment and earnings are vital. Those families (29 percent of the total number of Puerto Rican families) are headed by Puerto Rican women. Yet official figures show that only 12.7 percent of those Puerto Rican women were able to work full-time all year, compared to 80.3 percent of white and 73.5 percent of black female heads of households who worked at full-time jobs. Only 23.6 percent of such Puerto Rican women worked part of the year.

We all know that a part-time job is not enough to support a family above the poverty level. Should it astound us, then, to find that a shocking 65 percent of the Puerto Rican families headed by women were living in poverty in 1971? This is much higher than the 27 percent of all white female-headed families and 54 percent of all black female-headed families living at the poverty level.

Among the migrants returning to Puerto Rico, more than one-fifth were women heads of households. Jose Hernandez, in *Return Migration to Puerto Rico*, found that 42.8 percent of the female heads of household were married women whose spouses were absent. He concludes: "It is clear that this category contained many survivors of family breakage at the 'launching stage' . . ."

When she is able to work, the Puerto Rican woman faces serious

disadvantages. She lacks sufficient education and training to command a decent salary, thus compounding her housing, health, and overall problems further. Lack of full command of English is yet another obstacle.

And always present are the subtle pressures of finding her values as a Puerto Rican threatened and misunderstood. Since her livelihood depends on it, she has to prove herself constantly—among men and women—in the larger society, straining to conform.

I am always saddened when I see Puerto Rican women with hair dyed flaming red or yellow. Is it not the ideal of beauty to be a long-limbed, slim-hipped blonde? As the Anglo woman chases a male-determined standard of beauty, the Puerto Rican woman pursues that same standard established by cultures other than her own. She can't stretch herself, but she can always color her hair.

### **Women in Puerto Rico**

Any discussion of the Puerto Ricans in the United States would be incomplete if it did not cover their place of origin, the island of Puerto Rico.

The situation in Puerto Rico helps to debunk further the stereotype of a passive Puerto Rican woman. The woman in Puerto Rico, despite the discrimination which persists against the woman employed outside the home, has played an unusually important role, especially in public and academic life. Even before gaining the right to vote in 1932, she has been active and outspoken—from the courageous Indian Cacica Yuisa in 1514, to Mariana Bracetti (Brazo de Oro), who embroidered the standard of the Grito de Lares

proclaiming the 24-hour Puerto Rican republic in 1868, on down throughout Puerto Rican history.

A complete list would be too long, but some must be included: Lola Rodríguez de Tío, patriot, poet, and revolutionary author of Puerto Rico's anthem, *La Borinquena*; Ana Roque de Duprey, journalist, ardent feminist, and founder of the first feminist organization in the island; Trinidad Padilla de Sanz (*La Hija del Caribe*), writer, and Isabel Andreu de Aguilar, professor, suffragette, and author of the first memorandum addressed to the Puerto Rican Legislature demanding women's right to vote.

Others are María Cadilla de Martínez, educator, painter, and historian; María Martínez de Péres Almirioty, elected to the Puerto Rican Senate in 1936; and —also in the political arena— Felisa Rincón de Gautier, for 23 years mayor of San Juan and president in 1954 of the Inter-American Congress of Municipalities.

However impressive these women are, it would be less than fair to cite them as the only examples of the strength, dignity, and sense of justice which have characterized the Puerto Rican woman throughout our history. Nameless, yet very much in my mind, are the thousands of women who in their daily struggle have been the main source of strength and the stabilizing force within Puerto Rican culture. It is because of my strong faith in the Puerto Rican woman that I see her as the vehicle by which men and women will reach equality and fulfillment.

### **New Trends**

As the economy of Puerto Rico becomes more industrialized, a new

social base is being created—the urban working class. With the emergence of this class, the role of the woman is being redefined. Increasingly, the authority of the father and the husband is being questioned. The dogma of male authority and the culturally defined role of the wife as subordinate to the husband is giving way to the emancipation of the Puerto Rican woman, especially as she becomes more economically independent of man.

Between 1962 and 1971, for instance, the rate of women's participation in the labor force rose from 22 to 27.1 percent. This trend is comparable to that in the mainland United States. In 1970, Puerto Rico had 253,000 working women—30.1 percent of the total labor force. That same year on the mainland 34 percent of the labor force was composed of women.

To understand the roles of women in Puerto Rican society, we should keep in mind the uncertainties which the political situation in the island has created for both its men and women. For over 400 years Puerto Rico has suffered the rigors of colonization. This is a reality which many Puerto Ricans still have to face in order to understand the complex relationships which have influenced our character, and to a great extent, determined our conduct. The migration experience and the patterns it molded, as well as the economic situation which propelled that migration, are cases in point.

### **The Pill**

A devastating example of particular importance to women is the vast testing of experimental drugs carried out in Puerto Rico by American drug firms. Only now

are the facts beginning to emerge concerning a 1957 experimental study of the birth control pill on 838 Puerto Rican women. In this field study, five Puerto Rican research subjects died; they were not attended by physicians, nor autopsied.

As Dr. Edmond Kassouf stated before the Subcommittee on Monopoly of the Senate Select Committee on Small Business, "Five such deaths in a research series of 850 is high. All five deaths are, in fact, reasonable suspects for a pill link." The Food and Drug Administration had no record of the deaths. The drug company did not report them and declared the drug safe, restricting death risk data to the continental United States.

The Puerto Rican study was the basis for approval of the new drug application for the birth control pill. A hoax was perpetrated on thousands of unsuspecting women, not to mention the Puerto Rican women of the initial research studies. Aware of this situation, certain segments of the population in Puerto Rico have become suspicious of any official attempts at population control, fearful of "genocide" of the Puerto Rican population.

On the other hand, studies have shown that Puerto Ricans do not adhere to the anti-birth control beliefs and practices which characterize many Latin countries. For years female sterilization, or "la operación," has been the most known, available, and widely used method of limiting the size of a family. Sterilization is part of the overall health program of the Puerto Rican government and is encouraged by physicians throughout the island. As is the case elsewhere, the woman thus bears the

responsibility for family control.

The subject of abortion has received great attention recently. Before many States in the mainland United States had legalized abortion, Puerto Rico was a mecca to well-off American women, who flocked to have surgical abortions performed in private clinics. Wealthy Puerto Rican women also underwent abortions at will. However, their poorer sisters died by the hundreds and continue to do so, as a result of self-induced abortions. Some employ the crudest of instruments; others impair their health and that of their unborn child by drinking concoctions or taking any number of pills. The power of the purse still determines what should be an individual decision.

### The Women's Movement

The Puerto Rican woman, both in Puerto Rico and in the United States, must examine the issues surrounding the women's movement. Today, the participation of Puerto Rican women in the women's movement in the United States has been limited to a small core of middle class professional women and, to a lesser degree, working class women who have always had to struggle for survival. Others active in the movement have been completely "assimilated" into the American middle class structure, sometimes rejecting that which is unique about our culture. However, a small group of Puerto Rican women with clearly defined priorities have chosen to work through the women's movement as part and parcel of the advancement of all Puerto Ricans.

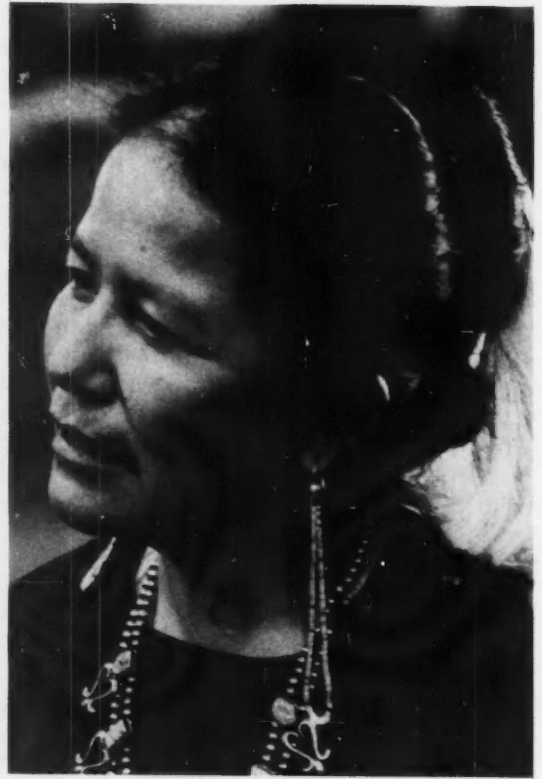
Unfortunately, the women's rights movement has barely started to reach the ordinary mid-

dle class woman who, through the "success" of some man, has vicariously achieved "success" as defined by our society, and has built her life around her family, her house, and the incessant acquisition of material goods—never realizing that she is but a man away from poverty.

For all Puerto Rican women, the movement must concentrate on education concerning the issues involved and the true distinction between the women's rights movement and the negative image of "women's liberation" created by the media. Although we have been mistakenly led to believe that radical feminists advocate doing so, Puerto Rican women are not going to divorce themselves from their cultural heritage or be alienated from their men.

The Puerto Rican woman's views on the qualities of womanhood, her strong family ties, and her respect for the family as an institution will accept a movement which asserts, but not one which divides. If the movement appeals to the basic issue of human rights for both men and women, to the values inherent in the freedom of men and women from sexism in their relationships, to the fact that a woman with freedom of choice also frees the man to decide what he wants to do with his life—if it appeals to the real issues involved and not the image—then Puerto Rican women will support it.

It has been basic misunderstanding of the movement as anti-male, anti-family, and somehow sexually promiscuous which has made it difficult for more Puerto Rican women—as well as Anglo American women, I might add—to embrace the cause of feminism.



# Native Women Today

SEXISM AND THE INDIAN WOMAN

By Shirley Hill Witt

The stereotypes concerning Native Americans popular among the descendants of the European pioneers—whether in legend or on television—nonetheless depict *male* natives. A different set of stereotypes materializes when one says “an Indian woman” or, so demeaningly, a “squaw.” In fact, it takes some effort to conjure up an impression of that invisible native woman.

On a time line of New World history, one might locate Malinche of Aztec Mexico, Pocahontas of Virginia, and Sacajawea of the Northwest. They are probably the only female “personalities” that come to mind out of the great faceless sea of all the native women who were born, lived, and died in this hemisphere.

And ironically, these three native women are not now native heroines, if they ever were. In Mexico, the term “malinchismo” refers to selling out one’s people to the enemy. Malinche, Pocahontas, and Sacajawea aided—perhaps unwittingly—in the downfall of their own people.

Another stereotype, the personality-less squaw, is regarded as a brown lump of a drudge, chewing buffalo hide, putting that tipi up and down again and again, carrying heavy burdens along with the dogs while the tribe moves ever onward, away from the pursuing cavalry.

---

Shirley Witt, an Iroquois, is associate professor of anthropology at Colorado College, Colorado Springs.

The term “squaw” began as a perfectly acceptable Algonkian term meaning “woman.” In time, it became synonymous with “drudge” and, in some areas, “prostitute.” The ugliest epithet a frontiersman could receive was to be called a “squawman”—the lowliest of the low.

Very much rarer is the image of a bronze nubile naked “princess,” a child of nature or beloved concoction of Hollywood producers. This version is often compounded with the Pocahontas legend. As the story goes, she dies in self-sacrifice, saving the life of the white man for whom she bears an unrequited love, so that he may live happily ever after with a voluptuous but high-buttoned blonde.

Since all stereotypes are unsatisfactory and do not replicate real people, the myths of native women of the past ought also to be retired to the graveyard of stereotypes. But what about stereotypes of modern native women—are there any to be laid to rest? Present stereotypes are also male, are they not? The drunken Indian, the Cadillac Indian, Lonesome Polecat—facelessness still characterizes Native American women.

In this third quarter of the century, Native Americans yet remain the faceless minority despite a few “uprisings” such as Alcatraz, the Trail of Broken Treaties, and the Second Wounded Knee. That these “uprisings” were of definitive importance to the Indian world only underscores its basic invisibility to most Americans, many of whom

pass off those protests as trivial and, naturally, futile—much ado about nothing.

And if a million Native Americans reside below national consciousness, certainly that fifty-or-so percent of them that are female are all the more nonentities.

### **Before Columbus**

As many as 280 distinct aboriginal societies existed in North America prior to Columbus. In several, the roles of native women stand in stark contrast to those of Europeans. These societies were matriarchal, matrilineal, and matrilocal—which is to say that women largely controlled family matters, inheritance passed through the female line, and upon marriage the bride usually brought her groom into her mother's household.

In a matrilocal society all the women were blood relatives and all the males were outsiders. This sort of residence pattern was frequently seen among agricultural societies in which women bore the responsibility for farming. It guaranteed a close-knit working force of women who had grown up with each other and the land.

Somewhat similar was the style of acquiring a spouse called "bride service" or "suitor service." In this case, the erstwhile husband went to live and work in his future bride's home for a period of time, proving his ability to manage a family of his own. This essentially resulted in temporary matrilocal residence. After the birth of the first child, the husband usually took his new family with him to live among his own kin.

In matrilineal, matrilocal society, a woman forever remained part of her original household, her family of orientation. All the

women she grew up with stayed nearby, although she "lost" her brothers to other households. All the husbands were outsiders brought into the family at the time of marriage.

In such societies, usually agricultural, the economy was maintained largely by females. The fields and harvests were the property of women. Daughters inherited rights to fields and the like through their mothers—fields which they had worked in all their lives in one capacity or another, from chasing away the crows as a child to tilling the soil as an adult.

Women working together certainly characterized aboriginal economy. This lifestyle was roughly similar in such widespread groups as the Iroquois, the Mandan, the Hopi and Zuni, and various Eastern Pueblos. Among the Hopi and the Zuni the husband joined the bride's household upon marriage. The fields were owned by the women, as were their products, the house, and related implements. However, the men labored in the gardens and were (with the unmarried brothers) responsible for much or most of the work.

The strong and influential position of women in Navajo society extended beyond social and economic life. Navajo women also controlled a large share of the political and religious life of the people, called the Diné. Hogans, herds, and equipment were passed down through the female line, from mother to daughters. Like the Iroquois, women were integral to the religious cycle. The Navajo female puberty ceremony ranked among the most important of Diné activities.

Although the lives of Native American women differed greatly

from tribe to tribe, their lifestyles exhibited a great deal more independence and security than those of the European women who came to these shores. Indian women had individual freedom within tribal life that women in more "advanced" societies were not to experience for several generations. Furthermore—and in contrast—native women increased in value in the estimation of their society as they grew older. Their cumulative wisdom was considered one of society's most valuable resources.

### **Today**

What do we know about Native American women today? Inclusive statements such as the following refer to both sexes:

Only 13.4 percent of the U.S. Indian population had completed eight years of school by 1970.

The average educational level of all Indians under Federal supervision is five school years.

Dropout rates for Indians are twice the national average.

Only 18 percent of the students in Federal Indian schools go to college; the national average is 50 percent.

Only 3 percent of the Indian students who enroll in college graduate; the national average is 32 percent.

Indians suffer from unemployment and underemployment—up to 90 percent unemployment on some reservations in winter months.

Indians have a high birth rate, a high infant mortality rate, and a short life expectancy.

But there are differences in how these facts relate to Native American women as opposed to men. There has not been equal treatment of native males and females



any more than there has been equal treatment of the two sexes among non-natives. We can look at this by considering a few major institutions affecting all our lives—education, employment, and health.

### Education

For over a century the Federal Government has assumed the responsibility for educating Native Americans to the standards of the general population. Nearly every treaty contained provisions for education—a teacher, a school, etc.—as partial payment for lands and rights surrendered.

Until recent years, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs educational system relied upon the boarding school as the cornerstone of native education, the foundation for indoctrination. Generation after generation of Native children were processed through boarding schools, from the time they were five or six years old until departure or graduation, whichever came first. They lived away from their homes from 4 to 12 years except during summer (and in some cases, even then). They became divorced from their cultures in line with the Government's master plan for the ultimate solution to the "Indian Problem": assimilation.

And so, generation after generation of native women have been processed through a system clearly goal-oriented. That is to say, the Government's master plan for women has been to generate an endless stream of domestics and, to a lesser extent, secretaries. The vocational choices for native children in boarding schools have always been exceedingly narrow and sexist. Boys do woodworking, car

repair, house painting, or farm-work, while girls do domestic or secretarial work.

Writing about Stewart Indian School, in their book *To Live on This Earth*, Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havighurst report:

The girls may choose from only two fields: general and home service (domestic work) or "hospital ward attendant" training, which the girls consider a degrading farce, a euphemism (they say) for more domestic work.

Thus young women are even more suppressed in working toward their aspirations than are boys. Furthermore, just as the males will more than likely find they must move away from their communities to practice their crafts, females cannot exercise their learned domestic crafts in the reservation setting either. A woman cannot even play out the role of a domestic, or the average American housewife and mother (as portrayed by the BIA), in the reservation atmosphere. As one author explains the Navajo woman's dilemma:

Reservation life . . . cannot support the picture of the average American homemaker. The starched and relatively expensive advertised clothes are out of place and unobtainable. The polished floors and picture windows which generated her envious school dreams are so removed from the hogan or log cabin as to become unreal. The many convenient appliances are too expensive and would not run without electricity. The clean and smiling children require more water than the Navajo family can afford the time to

haul. Parent Teacher Association meetings, of which she may have read, are the product of tax-supported schools with the parent in the ultimate role of employer. On the reservation the government-appointed teacher is viewed more as an authority figure than a public servant.

Off-reservation, given the prevalence of Indian poverty, the all-American homemaker role still is thwarted, although hiring out as a domestic servant is possible.

Statistics about the educational attainment of Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts are not hard to come by, but it is very difficult to obtain figures by sex. The exhaustive Havighurst report does not provide separate tabulations by sex in its summary volume *To Live On This Earth*. A U.S. Civil Rights Commission staff report found that 5.8 percent of the Indian males and 6.2 percent of the Indian females in a recent Southwest study had completed eight years of school. (The rate for all U.S. Indians in 1970 was 13.4 percent.)

The impression left from scanning available surveys is that in recent years females attain more years of formal education than do males, although some 50 years ago probably the reverse was true. This impression sits uneasily with study after study indicating that Native women are dramatically less acculturated than males.

Much data suggests that the BIA educational system is less effective for females than it is for males in creating successful mainstream prototypes—although young males have an alarming suicide rate that is far higher than that of females.

An investigation by Harry W. Martin, *et al.*, showed that of 411 Indian women at two Oklahoma

Public Health Service medical outpatient clinics, 59.4 percent were classified as mildly or severely neurotic, compared to 50 percent of the males.

For the severely neurotic category alone, 31.7 percent of the Indian females were found to be severely impaired. This was almost one-third more than the males, who rated 23.7 percent. No clear relationship seemed to exist between the ages of the women and the incidence of impairment. (Men, on the other hand, tended to show neurotic symptoms more often in the 50 to 59 age bracket.)

When scores and level of education were correlated, it appeared that males with less education suffered more psychiatric problems than high school graduates, although the rates rose again with post-high school attainment. For females, a similar set of rates prevailed, but—as with suicide—their rate was not as acute as the male rate.

Such evidence suggests that amid the general failure of the Federal system to educate Native Americans in school curricula, the system also acculturates native females to a lesser degree than males. It cannot even transform women from native homemakers into mainstream homemakers. The neurotic response seems to tell us of widespread female disorganization and unhappiness.

The suicide statistics for young males who rate as more acculturated than females simply point up the shallowness of the assimilationist mentality of the BIA educational system. Is it not ironic that after more than a century of perfecting a Federal indoctrination system, their best product—the more acculturated males—so often

seek self destruction, while nearly one-third of the females abide in a state of neuroticism?

### Employment

Employment of native women is as one might expect, considering the level and quality of their educational background. Most employed women are domestics, whether in private homes, in janitorial positions, or in hospitals. The *Navajo Times* newspaper regularly carries want ads such as:

WANTED strong young woman for live-in babysitter and mother's helper. No smoking or drinking. Call collect: San Diego, California.

As one young woman commented, "They must have run out of black maids." Perhaps the economic reality is that blacks are no longer at the bottom of the pile. Indians who have or will go to the cities are taking their place.

Federal employment for Native Americans essentially means employment in the BIA or the Indian Health Service. Native women in the BIA provide a veritable army of clerks and secretaries. They are concentrated, of course, in lower GS ratings, powerless and vulnerable. The U.S. Civil Rights Commission's *Southwest Indian Report* disclosed that in Arizona, Indians comprised 81.2 percent of all the personnel in grades 1 (lowest) through 5, but white personnel constituted only 7.3 percent of employees in these grades.

The figure for natives includes both male and female employees, but it might not be unreasonable to suggest that females outnumber males among natives employed as GS white-collar employees. And although men most likely outnumber women in the blue-collar jobs,

the large numbers of native women in BIA and IHS domestic jobs (for example, hospital ward attendant) should not be overlooked. In general, the *Southwest Indian Report* concluded that although Indians constitute the majority of BIA employees in Arizona and New Mexico, they are disproportionately concentrated in the lower wage, non-professional jobs.

In the Commission report, Ms. Julia Porter, a retired Indian nurse who also testified about Indian employment in the IHS, noted that:

... most of the supervisors are Anglos. You never see an Indian head nurse or a supervisor. You see a lot of janitors. You see a low of low-grade employees over there.

Ms. Ella Rumley, of the Tucson Indian Center, reported that Indians who have jobs in that area are employed only in menial positions. There are no Indian retail clerks, tellers, or secretaries, to her knowledge. The Arizona State Employment Service reported that domestic employment placement averaged out to "approximately 34 percent of the job placements available for Indians in the years 1969 and 1970."

Moreover, given the wage disparity between the sexes in salary in the general population, it comes as no surprise that native women in clerical and domestic work far often receive only pittance for their labor. The reason for absenteeism and short-term employment which may to some degree characterize native as well as Anglo female employment are similar: responsibility for the survival of home and family. Outside employment and familial duties conflict

om-  
obs  
at-  
ked.  
lian  
ugh  
y of  
and  
por-  
ower

Ms.  
urse  
lian  
oted

are  
lian  
You  
ee a  
over

eson  
In-  
area  
posi-  
etail  
her  
Em-  
that  
ment  
y 34  
ents  
ears

dis-  
alary  
omes  
men  
t far  
for  
osen-  
ment  
arac-  
nglo  
ilar:  
il of  
ploy-  
nflict



for all women. In addition, discrimination and prejudice produce low employee morale, inhibiting commitment to a job. Native women and men are passed over in promotions, as shown in the congressional staff report, *No Room at the Top*—meaning, “no natives need apply.”

Sadly, even in the brief but brilliant days of the BIA New Team under former Commissioner Louis R. Bruce, an Iroquois-Sioux, native females in the upper echelons were scarce. One doesn't need to be an Anglo to be a male chauvinist! The common complaint is, of course, that no “qualified” native women are available. This brings to mind the statement of U.S. Civil Rights Commissioner Frankie M. Freeman:

I have been on this Commission . . . for about 8½ years. And I remember back in February of 1965 when the Commission held hearings in Jackson, Mississippi (and was told) “We can't find any qualified . . . blacks”. . . . And then in December of 1968 we went to San Antonio, Texas (and, we were told) they could not find any “qualified” Mexican Americans or Chicanos! And in February of this year we were in New York, and they couldn't find any “qualified” Puerto Ricans! And today you can't find any “qualified” Indians!

What disturbs me is that the world “qualified” only gets put in front of a member of a minority or an ethnic. The assumption seems to be that all whites are qualified. You never hear about anybody looking for a “qualified white person.” . . . It seems that the word “qualified” sort of dangles as an excuse for discriminating against minorities.

In this sense, clearly *all* women must be included as minority members, but to be a woman *and* a minority member can be all the more difficult.

### Health

President Johnson observed that “the health level of the American Indian is the lowest of any major population group in the United States.” The situation has not improved, as the *Southwest Indian Report* demonstrates. It is inexplicable that the Federal Government provides the best health service anywhere in the world to its astronauts, military, and veterans, while its service to Native Americans is hopelessly inadequate. The obligation of the Federal Government to provide health services to Native Americans derives also from treaty obligations, and appears to be administered in as incompetent a fashion as are the educational services.

The symptom-oriented practice of the IHS makes preventive medicine a secondary effort. Social as well as biologic pathologies are not being attacked at their source, but rather at the stage of acute disability.

Not long ago, Dr. Sophie D. Aberle, a Ph.D. anthropologist and an M.D., advised against following her two-degree pattern. “No,” she said, “don't go after the M.D. now that you have your Ph.D. in anthropology, for two reasons: one, because you wouldn't want to spend the rest of your life interacting with doctors—they're so shallow!

“And two, as a doctor I can cure gross symptoms perhaps, but I have to send (people) back into the environment in which they got sick in the first place. Cure the social ills and we're a long way

down the road to curing the symptoms.”

As it relates to women, the major “preventive” effort has been in the area of birth control and family planning. One gets the impression that it is the sole program concerned with before-the-fact care. But Native Americans on the whole reject the concept of birth control. In an impoverished environment, whether rural or city slum, infant mortality is extremely high. As Robert L. Kane and Rosalie A. Kane describe the rationale for unimpeded reproduction in their book *Federal Health Care (with Reservations!)*:

In earlier years, population growth was crucial to survival of the tribe and its people. In many agrarian societies, children are a form of economic protection. They guarantee a pool of manpower for maintaining and enlarging one's holdings; they are a source of protection and support when the parents can no longer work. With high rates of infant mortality, large numbers of offspring are needed to ensure that several will survive to adulthood.

When the standard of living is raised above the subsistence level, third world nations usually experience a diminution of the birth rate. The Native American population so far does not seem to have taken a downward swing. In fact, birth rates for some native groups may be the highest ever recorded anywhere.

Birth control is a topic laden with tension for many groups, particularly for nonwhites in this country. Federal birth control programs began with nonwhites: Puerto Ricans, Navajos, and blacks. It is not too difficult to

understand how some may view this first effort as an attempt to pinch off nonwhite birth production. It is hard not to draw such a conclusion.

Among Native Americans, the memory of genocide and tribal extinction is a raw unhealing wound. Fear persists that the desire for the "ultimate solution to the Indian Problem"—the extinguishment of Native Americans—still lives. Kane and Kane say of birth control:

It is associated with extinction as a people, [with] genocide. The tension runs close to the surface when Navajos discuss this issue. Many interpret efforts along the family planning line as an attempt to breed the race into oblivion. Other Indian tribes have virtually disappeared because of declining birth rates in the face of captivity and inhospitable government reservations.

Native intractability can be sensed in the statement made at a community discussion with IHS officials about family planning. A Navajo woman concluded: "As long as there are big Navajos, there will be little Navajos." And then the meeting broke up.

An exceedingly interesting set of investigations by two Egyptian female scientists, Laila Hamamsy and Hind Khattah, seems to cast in a new light the accelerating birth rates among some Navajo groups. Their thesis suggests that white American males are the cause, and in a wholly unexpected way.

First, Navajos are traditionally matriarchal, matrilineal, and matrilocal. From such a position of strength, Navajo women performed a wide array of roles necessary for

the survival and success of the extended family.

However, as the thesis goes, white Anglo males from a rigidly paternalistic, male-dominated society refused to recognize and deal with the fact of Navajo matriarchy. Instead, they dealt only with Navajo males on all matters where the two cultures touched. As a result, more and more of the women's roles were supplanted by male actors and then male takeover.

There seems to be a statistical correlation between the period in which Anglo ascendancy impinged on female roles, and the onset and acceleration of the birth rate around the peripheral Navajo communities where most cultural interaction takes place. Anglo culture as practiced by white males brought about the loss of nearly all Navajo women's roles save that of child-bearer. When producing offspring is one's only vehicle for gaining prestige and ego satisfaction, then we can expect the birthrate to ascend.

To what extent this thesis can apply to other minority groups—and also to middle class white American females who are now the biggest producers of offspring—is not yet answerable. But the thesis is appealing, in any event.

Other preventive programs are virtually nonexistent. Among some of the Northern Pueblo groups and elsewhere, prenatal care clinics are held sporadically and with a minimum of success. This is the fault of both lack of funds and lack of commitment on the part of the IHS and the general lack of information available to potential users about such programs.

That preventive programs can

and do succeed where there is commitment is seen in the fine example set by Dr. Annie Wauneka. She received the National Peace Medal for bringing to her Navajo people information and procedures they could use to combat tuberculosis ravaging on the reservation at that time.

Charges that Native Americans are locked into superstition and therefore hostile to modern medicine just are not factual. Preventive programs properly couched would no doubt be welcome. But, as the Citizen's Advocate Center reports in *Our Brother's Keeper*:

The Public Health Service has no outreach system or delivery system, no systematic preventive care program, no early detection system. Thus . . . (it) is not structured to cope at the right point and on the proper scale with the underlying causes of poor health.

### Some Comments

In the briefest way, this article has touched upon a few of the major institutions of life—education, employment, and health—as they are experienced by Native American women.

The next step in understanding among women and between peoples is mutual identification of needs. Many of life's difficulties for Native women are no different than those of other minority women—blacks, Chicanas, or the Appalachian poor. And then when the commonalities between minority and majority women are recognized—if not on a socioeconomic level, at least on a philosophic level—we may expect to witness a national movement for the equality of peoples and sexes.

# The Chicana And The Women's Rights Movement

A PERSPECTIVE

By Consuelo Nieto

Like the Adelitas who fought with their men in the Mexican Revolution, Chicanas have joined their brothers to fight for social justice. The Chicana cannot forget the oppression of her people, her *raza*—male and female alike. She fights to preserve her culture and demands the right to be unique in America. Her vision is one of a multicultural society in which one need not surrender to a filtering process and thus melt away to nothingness.

Who is the Chicana? She cannot be defined in precise terms. Her diversity springs from the heritage of the *indio*, the *español*, and the *mestizo*.

The heterogeneous background of her people defies stereotyping. Her roots were planted in this land before the Pilgrims ever boarded the Mayflower. As a bicultural person, she participates in two worlds, integrating her Mexican heritage with that of the majority society. The Chicana seeks to affirm her identity as a Mexican American and a woman and to define her role within this context.

How does her definition relate to women's rights? How does the women's rights movement affect a Chicana's life? The Chicana shares with all women the universal victimhood of sexism. Yet the Chicana's struggle for personhood must be analyzed with great

care and sensitivity. Hers is a struggle against sexism within the context of a racist society. Ignore this factor and it is impossible to understand the Chicana's struggle.

The task facing the Chicana is monumental. On the one hand, she struggles to maintain her identity as a Chicana. On the other hand, her demands for equity as a woman involve fundamental cultural change.

The Chicana shares with all women basic needs that cut across ethnic lines. Yet she has distinctive priorities and approaches, for the Chicana is distinct from the Anglo woman. The Chicana's world, culture, and values do not always parallel those of the Anglo woman.

Many Chicanas support the women's movement as it relates to equity in pay and job opportunities, for instance. Yet for some, particularly the non-activists, the closer the movement comes to their personal lives, the more difficult it becomes to tear themselves away from the kinds of roles they have filled.

---

Consuelo Nieto is a member of the National Education Association Women's Rights Task Force and of Comision Femenil, a feminist organization of Chicano women, and a doctoral candidate in education administration at Claremont Graduate School.



nt

sm  
ac-  
a's

the  
s a  
ity

hat  
ies  
the  
and  
glo

as  
for  
sts,  
es,  
ray

esso-  
nil,  
oral  
ate

1974

The lifestyles of Chicanas span a broad and varied continuum. Education, geography, and socioeconomic living conditions are but a few of the variables which make a difference. The urban, educated, middle class Chicana usually has more alternatives, sophisticated skills, and greater mobility than her sisters in the barrios or the fields.

In the worlds of the barrio and *el campo*, with their limited social options, the role of the woman is often strictly defined. Fewer choices exist. Yet among all groups one finds women who are strong and who have endured.

Traditionally, the Chicana's strength has been exercised in the home where she has been the pillar of family life. It is just this role that has brought her leadership and her abilities to the larger community. The Chicano family is oftentimes an extended one, including grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins (of all degrees), as well as relatives of spiritual affinity, such as godparents and in-laws.

Chicanas, collectively and individually, have cared for that family. It is the Chicana who goes to her children's school to ask why Juanito cannot read. It is the Chicana who makes the long trip to the social security office to obtain the support needed to keep *viejecita* Carmen going in her one-room apartment when taking in ironing will not do it.

It is *la Chicana* who fights the welfare bureaucracy for her neighbor's family. It is *la Chicana* who, by herself and with her sisters, is developing ways in which the youth of her community can be better cared for when their mothers must leave home to work.

Because life in the poorer barrios is a struggle for survival, the man cannot always participate in such community activities unless they pay a salary. He must provide the material support for his family. This is the tradition. It is in his heart, his conscience.

Chicanas owe much of their freedom to work for their communities to their men. It is the Chicana who often gains and develops those skills and attitudes which provide the basis for the transition of her culture into that of the modern United States. A transition, and yes, even a transformation—but not at the price of dissolving that culture.

Last year I taught an adult education class which included some mothers from the barrio. I'm sure they were not aware of the women's movement per se, but I was amazed at their high degree of interest and concern with the question, "How can I help my daughters so that when they get married they will be

able to do things that my husband won't allow me to do?"

None of them thought of trying to change their own lives, because they knew that it was a dead end for them. They would say, "He loves me and I love him. I will accept things as they are for me, but I don't want that for my daughter."

It's not that they didn't view change as personally attractive, but that to demand it would place their family and their home in too much jeopardy. It would mean pulling away from their husbands in a manner that could not be reconciled. And they will not pay that price.

Other women who wanted to enroll in my class could not, because their husbands would not permit them to go out at night or allow them to get involved in activities outside the home during the day. This is not surprising—some Chicanas have many facets of their lives more tightly controlled by their husbands than do their Anglo sisters. For some women of the barrio, their hope is to achieve that measure of control over their own lives which many Anglo women already have.

Similarly, some Chicano men will state that they are fighting for their women, but not for that kind of status and position that would give women equal footing. They are fighting to be able to provide for their women the social and economic status and position that Anglo men have been able to give Anglo women.

### The Church

The role of the Catholic Church in the history of the Chicana is an important one. Not all Chicanos are Catholic, and among those who belong to the Church, not all participate actively. But since the arrival of the Spanish, the values, traditions, and social patterns of the Church have been tightly interwoven in Chicano family life.

The respect accorded the Church by many Chicanos must be not shrugged aside. Many will support or oppose a particular issue simply on the basis of "the Church's position." For these people it is very difficult to assess a "moral" issue outside the pale of Church authority and legitimacy.

For the most part, the Church has assumed a traditional stance toward women. It has clearly defined the woman's role as that of wife and mother, requiring obedience to one's husband.

The words of the apostle Paul have been used to justify this attitude: "As Christ is head of the Church



and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife, and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives submit to their husbands in everything."

Also:

"A man certainly should not cover his head, since he is the image of God and reflects God's glory; but woman is the reflection of man's glory. For man did not come from woman; no, woman came from man; and man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman was created for the sake of man."

*Marianismo* (veneration of the Virgin Mary) has had tremendous impact upon the development of the Chicana. Within many Chicano homes, *La Virgen*—under various titles, but especially as *La Virgen de Guadalupe*—has been the ultimate role model for the Chicana woman.

Mary draws her worth and nobility from her relationship to her son, Jesus Christ. She is extolled as mother, as nurturer. She is praised for her endurance of pain and sorrow, her willingness to serve, and her role as teacher of her son's word. She is Queen of the Church.

Some Chicanas are similarly praised as they emulate the sanctified example set by Mary. The woman par excellence is mother and wife. She is to love and support her husband and to nurture and teach her children. Thus may she gain fulfillment as a woman.

For a Chicana bent upon fulfillment of her personhood, this restricted perspective of her role as a woman is not only inadequate but crippling.

Some Chicanas further question the Church's prerogative to make basic decisions unilaterally about women's lives. When the Church speaks out on issues such as divorce, remarriage, and birth control, those Chicanas wonder, "Who can really make these decisions for me? Upon what basis should such choices be made?"

Many Chicanas still have a strong affiliation with the Church and seek its leadership and support as they attempt to work out their lives. Others try to establish their identity as women on their own, yet choose not to break with Church mandates.

Still others find this middle road too difficult. They choose not to work within Church structure and seek their independence totally outside the folds of religion. Chicanas find that to advocate feminist positions frowned upon by the Church often evokes family criticism and pressure. Thus some compromise personal values and feign conformity for the sake of peace within the family.

Concerned leaders within the Church do speak out in behalf of the Chicana's struggle for equity. But this is not the norm. While the Church supports equal pay and better working conditions, it would find it most difficult to deal with the sexism expressed in its own hierarchy or within the family model.

### Brothers and Sisters

Chicanos often question the goals of the women's movement. Some see it as an "Anglo woman's trip," divisive to the cause of *el movimiento*. These men assert the need to respect women, but women's liberation . . . ? "That deals with trivia, minutiae—we all must concentrate on the battle for social justice."

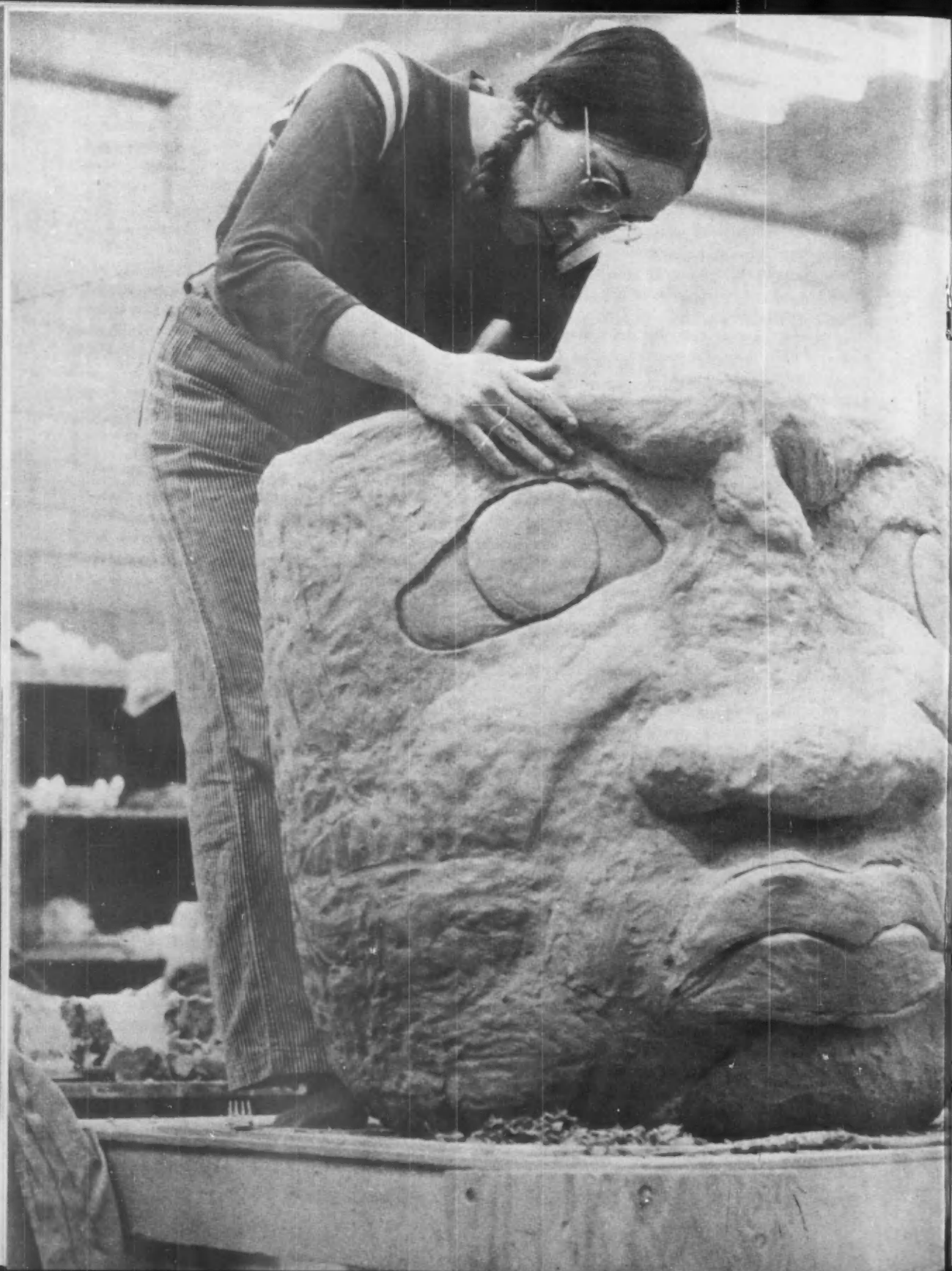
Many of our brothers see the women's movement as another force which will divert support from *la causa*. On a list of priorities, many Chicanos fail to see how the plight of *la mujer* can be of major concern within the context of *la raza's* problems. They see the women's movement as a vehicle to entrench and strengthen the majority culture's dominance. They are concerned that their sister may be deceived and manipulated. They warn her never to be used as a pawn against her own people.

Yet the Chicana may sometimes ask, "Is it your real fear, my brother, that I be used against our movement? Or is it that I will assume a position, a stance, that you are neither prepared nor willing to deal with?"

Other Chicanos may be more sensitive and try to help their sisters achieve a higher status, but the fact that they too usually limit the aspirations of their sisters is soon evident. They would open the doors to new roles and new alternatives, but on a selective basis. Some support upward mobility for their sisters in the professions, but renege when it comes to equality at home.

A good number of Chicanos fear that in embracing the women's movement their sisters will negate the very heritage they both seek to preserve. The Chicana would ask her brother, "To be a Chicana—proud and strong in my culture—must I be a static being? Does not the role of women change as life changes?"

Too many Chicanos fall into using rhetoric which reinforces stereotypes damaging to both men and women. For example, some overglorify large families. To father and mother such a family is considered "very Chicano." Our numbers will increase, goes the story, as the Anglos decrease. This is "good," because somehow our power as a people will grow as our



numbers grow.

It is forgotten that each man and each woman must share the decision to have children. To limit the size of a family is a personal right. To limit the size of a family does not negate a man's virility or a woman's worth.

Further, although the term "machismo" is correctly denounced by all because it stereotypes the Latin man, chauvinist behavior based on a double standard persists and is praised as "very macho." This behavior does a great disservice to both men and women. Chicano and Chicana alike must each be free to seek their own individual fulfillment. Superficial roles and attitudes should be abandoned. Each must support the other in their struggle for identity and fulfillment.

The pursuit of affirmative action for the Chicana in employment and education is often seen as a threat to Chicanos. Our men have not shared social and economic equality with the men of the majority culture. Gradually, jobs have opened up for minorities on higher rungs of the career ladder. When one opens for a Mexican, it has been assumed that Mexican would be a male.

Now Chicanas are gaining the education and skills to qualify for such jobs. But when a Chicana begins to compete for employment, more often than not she is pitted against a Chicano, not an Anglo male or female. The Chicano and the Chicana must both fully understand all the ramifications and subtleties of this process which would divide them against each other. And institutions need to realize their responsibility to provide opportunities for all Chicanos, male and female alike.

Affirmative action is crucial to fighting discrimination. In assessing affirmative action programs, institutions must establish well-defined categories. Minorities cannot be lumped together. Each major ethnic group must be counted separately. Within each group a distinction must be made between male and female.

Statistics quickly dispel the myth that to be a Chicana is an advantage in current affirmative action models. Too often affirmative action for women has been interpreted to mean for Anglo women, while that for minorities has been interpreted to mean for minority males. There must be affirmative action for everyone hitherto excluded.

Chicanos themselves should take an active role in supporting their sisters. Within our own organizations, Chicanos must seek to include women in positions of leadership, not just "decorate" their conferences with

them. How often Chicanas have participated in organizations or gone to conferences, only to see their role limited to that of the "behind the scenes" worker or the "lovely lady" introduced at dinner for a round of applause!

The Chicana wants more than that. She wants to be among the major speakers at Chicano conferences and to be involved at policy-making levels. She wants to be supported wholeheartedly in bids for public office.

Too often she hears her brothers say, "We would love to include 'qualified' Chicanas, but where are they?" This question has an all too-familiar ring. It is exactly what Anglos tell us collectively.

And our answer is the same. If we are not "qualified," my brother, what are you doing to help us? What experiences and training are you providing us? What support do you give us that we may become articulate and politically sophisticated, and that we may develop the skills of negotiation and decision-making?

When Chicanos maneuver to open up a position for a Mexican and a highly qualified Chicana is not even considered, another familiar statement is heard.

"The problem," Chicanos say, "is that 'our' community wants a man. 'We' know that a certain woman may be highly competent, but in our tradition we look to the male for leadership. Chicanos respect women and care for women, but leadership is seen as a male role."

First, the Chicana questions the assertion that the Chicano community would not accept a competent female in a leadership position. Second, supposing that such a view were valid, what are the "supportive and understanding" Chicanos actively doing to validate the role of a Chicana as a leader and spokesperson within the community?

### **Dealing with Contradictions**

Participation within organizations of the women's rights movement can bring to the Chicana a painful sense of alienation from some women of the majority culture. The Chicana may often feel like a marginal figure. Her Anglo sisters assure her that their struggle unequivocally includes her within its folds.

Yet if she listens carefully, certain contradictions will soon emerge. The Anglo women will help the Chicana by providing a model, a system to emulate. The Anglo will help the Chicana erase those "differences" which separate them. Hence, "We will all be

united under the banner of Woman. This will be our first and primary source of identity."

For a Chicana allied with the struggle of her people, such a simplistic approach to her identity is not acceptable. Furthermore, it is difficult for the Chicana to forget that some Anglo women have oppressed her people within this society, and are still not sensitive to minorities or their needs. With Anglo women the Chicana may share a commitment to equality, yet it is very seldom that she will find with them the camaraderie, the understanding, the sensitivity that she finds with her own people.

Anglo women sensitive to Chicanas as members of a minority must guard against a very basic conceptual mistake. All minorities are not alike. To understand the black woman is not to understand the Chicana. To espouse the cause of minority women, Anglos must recognize our distinctiveness as separate ethnic groups.

For example, in dealing with sex role stereotyping in schools, a multicultural approach should be used. Materials must encompass all groups of women. Women's studies courses should not exclude the unique history of minority women from the curriculum.

And the inclusion of one minority group is not enough. Chicanas know only too well the pain of negation which comes from omission. The affront of exclusion may not be intentional, but to the victim that doesn't matter. The result is the same.

What does it mean to be a Chicana? This question the Chicana alone must answer. Chicanas must not allow their brothers or other women to define their identity. Our brothers are often only too ready to tell us "who" we are as Chicanas.

Conversely, some Chicanas seeking fulfillment in *la causa* do not question or challenge the parameters set down for them by Chicanos—or more basically, they do not challenge the males' right to such authority.

Similarly, a woman who has never shared our culture and history cannot fully grasp the measure of our life experiences. She will be unable to set goals, priorities, and expectations for Chicanas.

Chicanas must raise their own level of awareness. Too many do not recognize their repression and the extent of it. Many have come to accept it as the norm rather than as a deviance.

Chicanas also need to deal with their men openly. Perhaps the Chicana has been overly protective of her brothers. Hers is a difficult role. She must be sensitive to his struggle, but not at the cost of her own identity. She must support him as he strives to attain the

equality too long denied him, but she too must no longer be denied. To fight and provide for the fulfillment of the Chicano while denying equality to women does not serve the true aims of *la causa*, and will not liberate our people in the real sense.

What must the Chicana do? First, she must work with her own sisters to define clearly her role, her goals, and her strategies. This, I would suggest, can be done by involvement in one of the many Chicana feminist organizations which are currently emerging.

Second, she must be involved with Chicanos in the Chicano movement. Here the Chicana must sensitize the male to the fact that she, as a woman, is oppressed and that he is a part of that oppression. She must reinforce the *carnalismo* (spirit of fraternity) which is theirs, but point out that as long as his status as a man is earned at her expense, he is not truly free.

The Chicana must tell her brother, "I am not here to emasculate you; I am here to fight with you shoulder to shoulder as an equal. If you can only be free when I take second place to you, then you are not truly free—and I want freedom for you as well as for me."

A third mandate I would give the Chicana is to participate in the mainstream of the women's rights movement. She is needed here to provide the Chicana perspective as well as to provide support for the activities designed to help all women. Moreover, her unique role as a liaison person is crucial. How tragic it would be if all women did not promote and participate in a valid working coalition to advance our common cause!

Chicanas must avoid a polarization which isolates them from Chicanos as well as other women. They must carefully analyze each situation, as well as the means to reconcile differences. This is not easy—it requires a reservoir of understanding, patience, and commitment. Yet unless it is done, success will not be ours.

Finally, the Chicana must demand that dignity and respect within the women's rights movement which allows her to practice feminism within the context of her own culture. The timing and the choices must be hers. Her models and those of her daughters will be an Alicia Escalante and a Dolores Huerta. Her approaches to feminism must be drawn from her own world, and not be shadowy replicas drawn from Anglo society. The Chicana will fight for her right to uniqueness; she will not be absorbed.

For some it is sufficient to say, "I am woman." For me it must be, "I am Chicana."

# Asian American Women

The unique problems of minority women have only begun to be explored in print. Asian-American women in particular have suffered from gross ignorance about Asian societies on the part of most Americans. One place to begin an examination of the status and problems of Asian American women is with a look at their history in the United States.

We have excerpted two articles from *Asian Women*, a publication written and compiled entirely by Asian American women involved in Asian American studies courses at the University of California. *Asian Women* contains articles on history, politics, racism, and third world women, as well as poetry and personal reflections.

We have also selected, as an introduction, an excerpt from the report *Asian Americans and Public Higher Education in California*, prepared by Robert B. Yoshioka for the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education of the California State Legislature. Yoshioka's brief outline of the stereotypes applied to Asian American women provides a useful backdrop for the articles concerning first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans.



# *Stereotyping Asian Women*

By Robert B. Yoshioka

Asian American women are confronted with a three-fold discrimination pattern. They are women and subject to all the biases occurring to that sex. They are Asian American women and subject to the stereotypes directed at Asians. They are Japanese American, Chinese American, Filipino American, Korean American, etc. women and subject to the biases and stereotypes reserved for the women of each ethnic group.

The consequent list of stereotypes, both positive and negative, that accrue to an Asian American woman is legion. They are regarded in paradoxical terms, depending largely upon the favor or disfavor their particular ethnic group is experiencing. These stereotypes have a long history; most find their origin in the anti-Chinese period of 1870-1900 in America. The deliberate misconceptions and outright slander directed toward Chinese American women were used at later periods against Japanese Americans and Filipino American women.

The stereotypes have expanded considerably since that time. American social imagination developed new and derivative stereotypes. Some of these were derived from popular notions about women in Asia. When the erotic art and literature of China and Japan became known to Americans, the erotic aura associated with women in Asia was transferred to Asian American women. The notion of the courtesan, skilled in the art of love, supplanted the earlier "lewd and debauched" stereotype of the Chinese prostitute.

U.S. soldiers of World War II brought back glowing impressions of Japanese women. Their wifely virtues and male-pleasing attributes were widely discussed. Because Japanese women made "perfect" wives, this stereotype has been associated with Japanese American women. The illogical belief that Japanese American women are the same as Japanese women is clearly operative and clearly discriminatory. The Japanese American woman, like her Asian American counter-

parts, has deep cultural ties with Asia, but is culturally distinct from it and her Asian American cousins.

Of the stereotypes that have been most detrimental to Asian American women in graduate and professional education, several stand out. One is that Asian American women are domestic and excellent homemakers. Another is that they are obedient, quiet, and subservient. They win awards as "Future Homemaker of Tomorrow," but are intellectually uninspired. These stereotypes are unconscionable and arrogant in their presumptuousness and yet many American educators continue to believe them.

Thousands of Asian American women graduate annually from colleges and universities in California, but few continue on to graduate school or professional schools. Most of these women take their baccalaureate degrees and become secretaries, clerks, or technicians.

Those Asian American women who advance to graduate and professional schools appear most frequently in the health sciences and technical research areas. Like Asian American men, they are clustered in disciplines with minimal emphasis on aggressive verbal behavior.

Academic tracking begun in the pre-collegiate experience and continued through undergraduate and graduate advising is a major contributor to this unequal distribution. Asian American women are counseled and directed on the basis of sexual and racial stereotypes into academic disciplines that will most readily accept them. Stereotypes play an undue part in the counseling process: they reflect the biases shared by counselor and institution.

Asian American women are severely hindered by such negative images based on sexual and racial criteria. Any solution to the problems encountered by Asian American women in . . . graduate and professional schools must be thorough enough and expansive enough to include the many subtle facets of sexism and racism.

# Chinese Immigrants

By Betty Jung

Chinese immigrants were different from any previous group. The Chinese had stronger family ties, and because of this, planned to return to China, while groups like the Irish and Germans came to stay permanently. Chinese immigrants were known by the term "sojourners" (here to visit, complete their work as soon as possible, and then return to China).

Most of the Chinese immigrants were married men who had come to America only to earn enough money to buy land in China. Some were only recently married and arrangements were made by the parents to insure their return. Their wives and children were thought of as "bait" to lure them back to China.

Of the women who did come over in this early period (1840-1860), many did not survive the journey or they did not survive the rigors of American life and returned to China. By 1890, only 3,868 Chinese women were reported in the United States. During the same period the number of Chinese men migrating to America was much larger. The census reported 33,149 male Chinese immigrants in 1860; 58,633 in 1870; 2,106 in 1880; 2,678 in 1890; and 1,887 in 1900. The sex ratio between the Chinese male and female in the U.S. was so out of proportion that it was fatal to produce problems.

One of the inevitable conditions which arose was





prostitution. As early as 1852, several hundred Chinese prostitutes had arrived by ship from Hong Kong. A large majority of these women were not originally prostitutes but had been sold to men in Hong Kong who later forced them into prostitution.

There was much money to be made in the business which was controlled and run by men. The women were usually bought in China from \$100 to \$300 and sold in the U.S. for \$300 to \$600 and up. It was common practice to sell the women in terms of years of bondage; that is, the woman agreed on paper to work as a prostitute for her buyer's profit for a specified number of years. The average Chinese prostitute came to California as a slave and remained one for life.

By 1890 there were only 3,868 Chinese women in the U.S. compared to 103,620 Chinese males. Immigration laws passed during this early period contributed to the imbalance.

The first Federal Exclusion Act, passed in 1882, allowed teachers, students, merchants, and their servants to come and go as they wished. Suspensions applied only to the Chinese laborer, "the undesirable." The laborer was thought of as a threat (yellow peril). Chinese laborers who were in the United States previous to the Exclusion Act were permitted to stay, or to depart and re-enter.

This law required, however, that the immigrant upon departure must obtain a certificate from both the Chinese Consul General and the immigration inspector at San Francisco. These two certificates were the immigrant's rights of re-entry.

Since the Exclusion Act suspended the entry of new immigrants, the immigrant laborer was unable to bring his wife and children over. Upon marriage, the Chinese woman acquired the legal status of her husband and if he were a laborer, this would bar her from entry.

### Tragic Consequences

Consequences of the barring of Chinese women were many and tragic. Many of the men were separated from their wives for decades and, with the passage of this law, could not have their wives join them. Single men were forced to marry back in China because of the shortage of Chinese women in America.

The options of either temporarily returning to China to produce heirs or of permanently returning to China were possible only if the immigrant had enough money saved. Many immigrants were not as fortunate and had to remain in the United States where they



died without a family and an heir—a traditionally important responsibility in the Chinese family.

In 1890, the married Chinese male immigrants were 26.1 percent of the whole Chinese population and the single Chinese males comprised 69 percent. The years between 1930 and 1945 show an increase in the percentage of women in the Chinese population—from 13 percent in 1920 to 26 percent in 1940.

In 1943, the Exclusion Act of 1882 was repealed and amendments to the Immigration Act of 1924 permitted a great number of alien-born Chinese wives and their unmarried offspring under 21 years of age to enter as non-quota immigrants. Similarly, in 1947, the amended War Brides Act, with the removal of racial restrictions, enabled Chinese ex-servicemen to go to China to marry and bring their alien-born wives to the United States as non-quota immigrants. Under this amended act 6,000 alien-born Chinese women and 600 young babies entered the U.S.

The repeal of the Exclusion Act of 1882, the amendments to the Immigration Act of 1924, and the War Brides Act were in accordance with the new United States policy of "promoting family unity." Of a total of 15,022 immigrants who entered the United States between 1941 and 1954, . . . females comprised 81 percent. The new policy of promoting family unity has helped very much to equalize the sex ratio in the Chinese-American population, although . . . it is still highly imbalanced in certain age categories.

Betty Lee Sung states in her book, *Mountain of Gold* (1967), that "Fortunately, recent immigrants have been overwhelmingly female so that the sex ratio has been lowered significantly and, within another decade, should even out."

## *Issei: The First Women*

By Emma Gee

Like the Chinese pattern of immigration in the 19th century, very few Japanese women came to America in the early period of Japanese immigration during the late 1880s through the 1890s. Unlike the Chinese pattern, however, within a couple of decades many young Japanese males began to bring over wives. The turn of the century signaled the beginning of Japanese female immigration to America and it continued until the Japanese government curtailed it in 1920.

In 1900 out of the total Japanese population of 24,326 in America there were only 985 females—approximately 24 males for every female. During succeeding decades this ratio was significantly reduced with the arrival of additional females. In 1910 the number of females jumped to 9,087. By 1920 there were 22,193 out of the total population of 111,010.

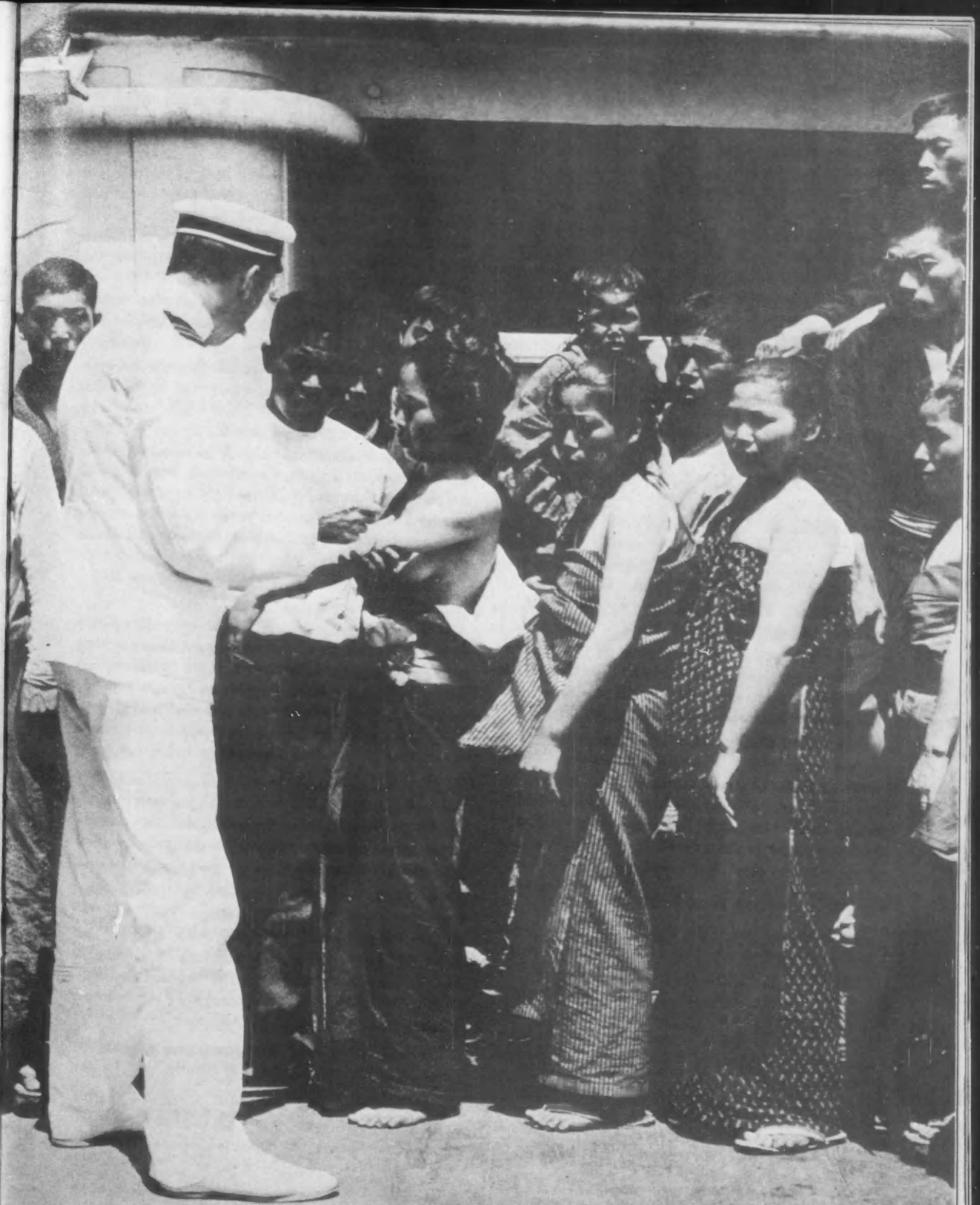
The immigration of these women made the Japanese American family unit possible and produced the second-generation, marking the transition from a society of single male sojourners to permanent immigrants.

This remarkable demographic change stemmed from the so-called “picture-bride” practice. For the Japanese males in America, there were a number of ways to secure a spouse.

On the one hand, the problem was straightforward for those who had married prior to their emigration. Upon establishing themselves in this country, they simply summoned their wives to rejoin them.

But the problem was not as easily solved for the





3. Vaccinating Japanese emigrants aboard a Pacific Steamship en route to Hawaii. Copyright 1904 by C. H. Graves.

majority of Japanese males who were still single. If they had the opportunity, some married single Japanese women already here, but these marriage opportunities were rare.

Most single men resorted to one of two other ways to secure wives. Many returned to Japan to seek them—usually in their home villages—married while there, and then came back to America with their new brides. Though widely practiced, this method was not the most common, reserved as it was for those who had the economic means. For not only the return trip, but also the myriad of responsibilities of marriage in Japan entailed onerous expenses. Hence the majority of single Japanese males adopted the often misunderstood and maligned practice of selecting picture brides.

### Picture Brides

Picture-bride marriages grew out of the *omiai-kekkon* or arranged marriage. An agreed upon go-between or go-betweens carried out the negotiations between Japanese families throughout the selection process, and the initial customary meeting or *omiai* between prospective brides and bridegrooms often was preceded by an exchange of photographs, especially in cases in which the families were separated by long distance. Apart from the fact that the partners to a union neither met during the course of negotiations nor were both present at the wedding ceremony, the picture-bride marriage satisfied all the recognized social conventions regarding marriage in Japan.

Moreover, it became a legally recognized marriage as soon as the bride was entered in her new husband's family register. To apply for a passport to America, the bride was required by the Japanese government to present a certified copy of her husband's family register with her name entered in it for at least six months.

### The Anti-Japanese Movement

The coming of the picture-bride added fuel to the anti-Japanese movement. One of the chief arguments against the Japanese was their "non-assimilability." To the rabid exclusionists, the picture-brides provided additional substantiation of this allegation, for they interpreted—and hence condemned—picture-bride marriages as an immoral social custom antithetical to American Christian ideals. That the Japanese engaged in such a degrading practice was evidence of their non-assimilability.

In their condemnation of picture-brides, the exclu-

sionists circulated exaggerated figures on Japanese fecundity, conjuring up the ominous specter of picture-brides breeding like rats and producing even more unassimilable Japanese. They also charged that picture-brides became laborers as soon as they set foot on American soil. Since the Japanese government had consented to curtail the emigration of laborers with the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907-1908, the Japanese, according to the exclusionists, violated the spirit, if not the letter, of this agreement. Thus, immorality was linked to Japanese governmental treachery in the exclusionist's virulent attacks upon the picture-brides.

Because of these attacks and U.S. Government pressures, the Japanese government discontinued issuing passports to picture brides in 1920, which, along with the subsequent 1924 Immigration Act, left 42.5 percent of the adult Japanese males still single in America with no hopes of getting married—a cruel blow to a people who believed the saying "no matter what possessions a man may have, he is not a success unless he is married and has a family . . . to fail in this is to fail in life."

### Pioneers

It is difficult for us to imagine the experience of the Issei (first generation) pioneer woman from the time of her marriage to her arrival and settlement in America. Excerpts from accounts written by some of them will provide some insight into their experience. How did she feel and think about her marriage and her future in America? One picture-bride comments on her husband:

I had but remote ties with him. Yet because of the talks between our close parents and my parents' approval and encouragement, I decided upon our picture-bride marriage.

The family in her specific case—indeed, in most marriages—had played the decisive role, and her decision was dependent upon it. But however the decision was arrived at, the prospects of coming to America must have been viewed with mixed emotions. On the one hand, there is the example of a wife whose husband had preceded her to America:

I was bubbling over with great expectations. My young heart, 19 years and 8 months old, burned not so much with the prospects of reuniting with my new husband, but with the thought of the New World.

Many women like her placed great store in America, and their glowing images of America accounted for their enthusiasm. This same person continues:

My husband who had returned to Japan to seek a wife wore a Western style high-collar suit at our *omiai*. He told unusual stories about America which were like dreams to me. Being reared in the countryside, I listened intently with wide-opened eyes. Thus, I thought about how heavenly America was.

Attired in the latest Western suits, Japanese men who returned to Japan naturally told tales which, while not necessarily fictional, were probably embroidered to impress prospective brides. After all they were the "successful" individuals who had the economic means to return to Japan!

Other women received similar impressions from letters and photographs from their husbands-to-be in America who were equally anxious to secure wives. An element of vanity no doubt was intermingled, especially with a captive audience eager for news about foreign lands, and the tendency was toward the hyperbole.

Still there were husbands who were candid.

"My unknown husband had said," according to another picture-bride, "If you come with great expectations about living in an immigrant land, you will be disappointed." I had received letters which said that if I intended to see things through without giving up, then I should come to America." And this particular woman, having this understanding clearly in mind, made the following resolution:

On the way from Kobe to Yokohama, gazing upon the rising majestic Mount Fuji in a cloudless sky aboard the ship, I made a resolve. For a woman who was going to a strange society and relying upon an unknown husband whom she had married through photographs, my heart had to be as beautiful as Mount Fuji. I resolved that the heart of a Japanese woman had to be sublime, like that soaring majestic figure eternally constant through wind and rain, heat, and cold. Thereafter, I never forgot that resolve on the ship, enabling me to overcome sadness and suffering.

#### Arriving in an Alien Land

The passage across the Pacific was a mixture of sadness at leaving Japan and apprehensions concerning the future. Having left families, relatives, and all that was familiar to them, now the women were

actually en route to meet and live with their husbands in an alien land.

As soon as the women debarked, it was common for the husbands to whisk them to a clothing store. The Japanese were well aware that the Chinese had been excluded in 1882. Since the Chinese had not adopted Western-style clothing, the Japanese believed the Chinese had provided substance to the charge of being non-assimilable. To avoid the same accusation, Japanese husbands had their new brides fitted in a new set of Western clothing to replace the traditional Japanese kimono. A picture-bride described this event:

I was immediately outfitted this Western clothing Store . . . At that time a suit of Western clothing cost from \$25 to \$28. Because I had to wear a tight corset around my chest, I could not bend forward. I had to have my husband tie my shoe laces.

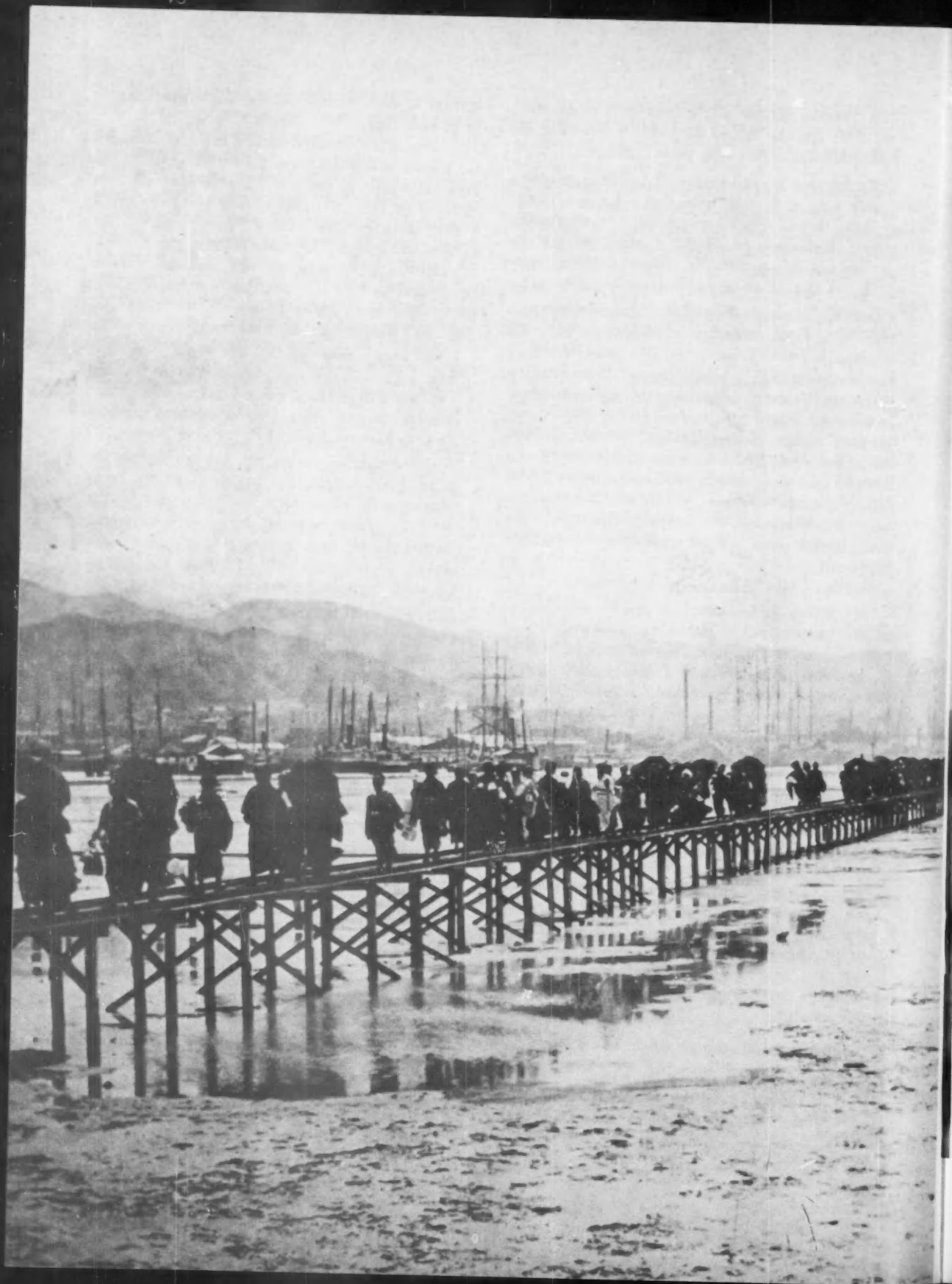
There were some women who fainted because the corset was too tight. The stories of women being carried to the hotel rooms by their husbands who hurriedly untied the corset strings were not joking matters. In my case, I wore a large hat, a high-necked blouse, a long skirt, a buckled belt around my waist, high-laced shoes, and, of course, for the first time in my life, a brassiere and hip pads.

Once the initial encounter with America was over, their new life with their husbands began—and that was anything but easy. For not only did the brides have to adjust to an alien environment, they also had to establish a new household. On the lack of modern amenities a woman writes:

At the farm on Vashon Island to which I went, I had to draw water by bucket from a well. . . . I boiled water and put it into a tub. There was no electricity. I used oil lamps. No matter how backward Japan may have been, this was life in the hinterland. Still I toiled in sweat alongside my husband.

Most Issei women immediately began to work alongside their husbands. They could not afford a honeymoon. Besides doing the regular chores of cooking, washing, cleaning, and sewing, they labored long hours in fields or shops. A woman recounts her early agricultural work:

At the beginning I worked with my husband picking potatoes or onions and putting them in sacks. Working with rough-and-tumble men, I became weary to the bones; waking up in the mornings I could not bend over the wash basin.



Sunlight came out about 4:00 a.m. during the summer in the Yakima Valley. I arose at 4:30. After cooking breakfast, I went out to the fields. There was no electric stove or gas like now. It took over one hour to cook, burning kindling wood.

As soon as I came home, I first put on the fire, took off my hat, and then I washed my hands. After cooking both breakfast and lunch, I went to the fields.

Work was neither less difficult nor shorter in the urban occupations. Take, for example, the case of a woman whose husband operated a laundry. After working the entire day, she records:

... I started at 5:00 p.m. to prepare supper for five to six persons, and then I began my evening work. The difficult ironing remained. Women's blouses in those days were made from silk or lace, with collars, and long sleeves and lots of frills.

I could only finish two in one hour, ironing them with great care. Hence, I worked usually until 12 to 1 a.m. But it was not just me—all women who worked in the laundry business probably did the same thing.

### Starting a Family

Soon after these experiences with the harsh realities of life in America, Issei women began to bear children. In most rural areas where the Issei settled, doctors were not readily available. Even if they were, either the white doctors refused treatment or the Japanese could not afford them. No prenatal clinic existed. As a general rule, midwives substituted for doctors during childbirth.

Problems of post-natal care and child-rearing naturally followed successful childbirth. In households where the women also performed crucial economic functions—especially in farming areas—a reasonable period of post-natal recuperation was considered a luxury. An Issei woman commented:

Twenty-one days of post-natal rest was common even in Japan. Even busy housewives with household chores to do took this 21-day rest without doing anything. I, however, could not rest for more than three days.

Most Issei women had to raise their children by themselves because of the sharp sexual division of labor within the home. Even if they worked in the family economic unit, they still had to carry the entire burden of housekeeping and childrearing. As an Issei

### Mountain Moving Day

The mountain moving day is coming  
I say so, yet others doubt.  
Only a while the mountain sleeps.  
In the past  
All mountains moved in one fire,  
Yet you may not believe it.  
Oh man, this alone believe,  
All sleeping women now will  
awake and move.

—Yosano Akiko, 1911

woman reveals:

My husband was a Meiji man. He did not think of helping in the house or with the children. No matter how busy I may have been, he never changed the baby's diapers. Though it may not be right to say this ourselves, we Issei pioneer women from Japan worked solely for our husbands. At mealtime, whenever there was not enough food, we served a lot to our husbands and took very little for ourselves.

Despite long, arduous hours of labor and the innumerable difficulties of childbirth and childrearing, the Issei women persevered.

### The "Quiet American"

From these brief excerpts, it is clear that these were truly remarkable women. From their initial decision to come to America, through the trans-Pacific voyage, and finally to their adaptation to life in America, they had the physical stamina and moral courage to persist and survive.

In spite of the primitive conditions, particularly in the rural areas, they worked unremittingly with a minimum of complaints. They never thought solely of their own welfare. They thought more about giving than taking. They labored beside their husbands and raised their children as best as they could within the framework of the beliefs and values they had been taught in late Meiji Japan.

Their lives were not sensational. Possessed of an extraordinary strength of character derived from quiet fortitude, the Issei women found life meaningful.

Many Sansei (third generation Japanese Americans) today are decrying the image of the "Quiet American" with some justification. Yet amid the clamor for social change, accompanied at times by loud political rhetoric, we should not disparage the quiet fortitude of these Issei women.

In America quietness and modesty tend to be equated with weakness. But with these Issei women quietness and modesty are sure signs of strength.

## Words on Women

*In education, in marriage, in everything—disappointment is the lot of woman. It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows to it no longer.*

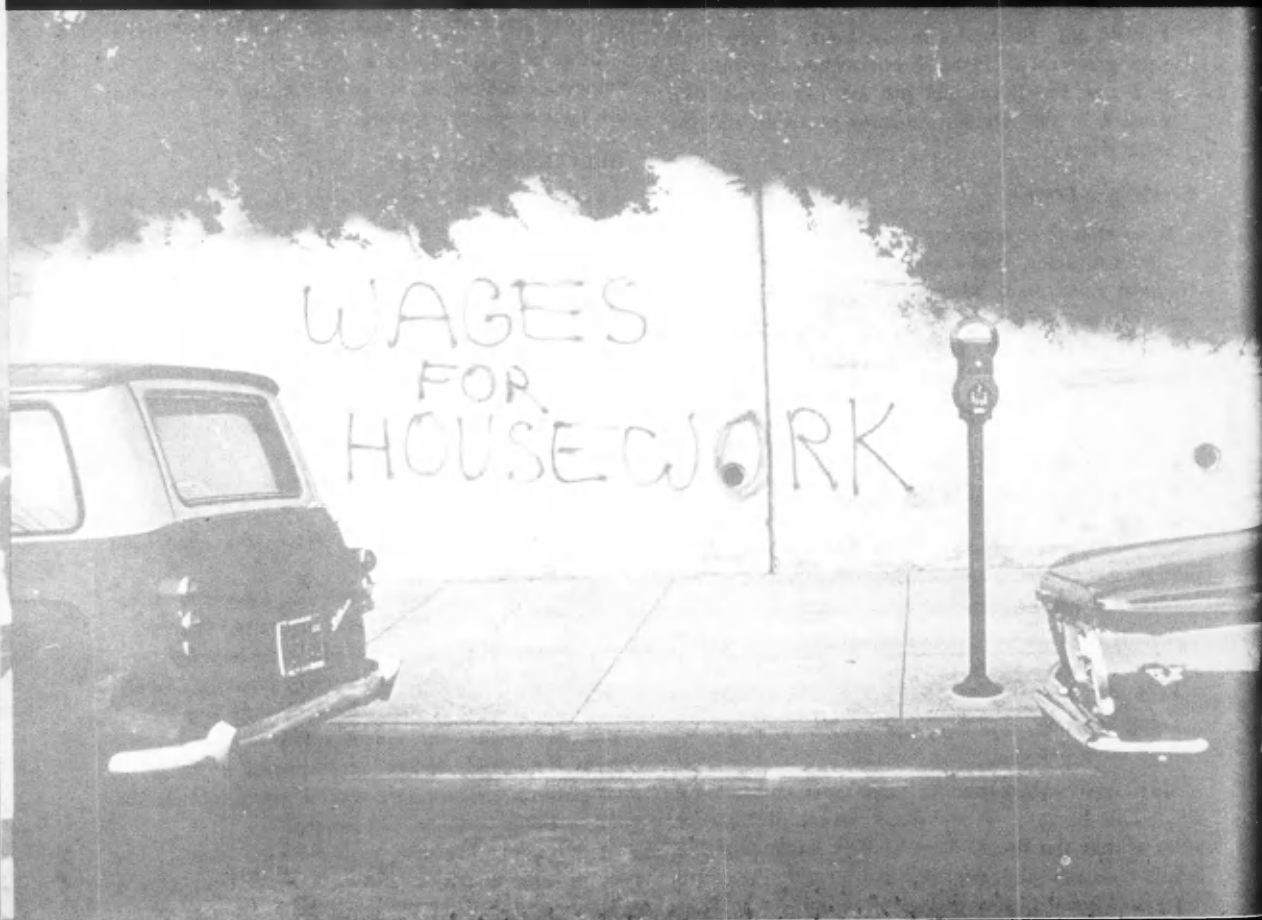
—Lucy Stone, 1855

*Divide and conquer—that's what they try to do to any group trying to make social change. I call it D & C. We've got to stop comparing wounds and go out after the system that does the wounding.*

—Florynce Kennedy

*While violence has been the ultimate weapon of resistance to racial desegregation, its psychic counterpart—ridicule—has been used to resist sex equality.*

—Pauli Murray





For some reason women are supposed to be more suitable than men for looking after children. This is nonsense. It is a suggestion propagated by men who surrogate the responsibility because they do not want to do it themselves.

—John Kenneth Galbraith

I've started getting letters from boys all over the country saying how they'd die before they'd let anyone know that they baked cookies or sewed with their mamas—until they saw that big old Rosey does needlepoint. I get letters like that and I could just bust.

—Roosevelt Grier discussing his new book, *Rosey Grier's Needlepoint for Men*

What do women want? It's an interesting question. I mean that literally—it's more interesting than the answer, which is quite simple. Women want control over their own lives, and authority or influence commensurate with their abilities in the external world. So does everyone else—i.e., men.

—Elizabeth Janeway,  
*Man's World, Women's Place*

### A Work of Artifice

The bonzai tree  
in the attractive pot  
could have grown eighty feet tall  
on the side of a mountain  
till split by lightning.  
But a gardner  
carefully pruned it.  
It is nine inches high.  
Every day as he whittles back the branches,  
the gardner croons,  
It is your nature  
to be small and cozy,  
domestic and weak,  
how lucky, little tree,  
to have a pot to grow in.  
With living creatures  
one must begin very early  
to dwarf their growth:  
the bound feet,  
the crippled brain,  
the hair in curlers,  
the hands you  
love to touch.

—Marge Piercy

I am the son of a woman and the brother of women. I know that this is their cause, but I feel that it is mine also. Their happiness is my happiness, their misery, my misery. The interests of the sexes are inseparably connected, and in the elevation of the one lies the salvation of the other.

—Henry B. Blackwell, 1853

The myth of the strong black woman is the other side of the coin of the myth of the beautiful dumb blonde. The white man turned the white woman into a weak-minded, weak-bodied, delicate freak, a sex pot, and placed her on a pedestal; he turned the black woman into a strong self-reliant Amazon and deposited her in his kitchen. . . . The white man turned himself into the Omnipotent Administrator and established himself in the Front Office.

—Eldridge Cleaver,  
*Soul on Ice*

As long as men accept this society's definition of women and male-female relationships, then men remain oppressed by this society; to the degree that a man views a woman as an object, he is himself an object. No man who is fully human can be threatened by woman's liberation. Rather, he is overjoyed by it.

—Julius Lester

A man puts a woman on a pedestal so he won't have to look her in the eye.

(Anonymous)

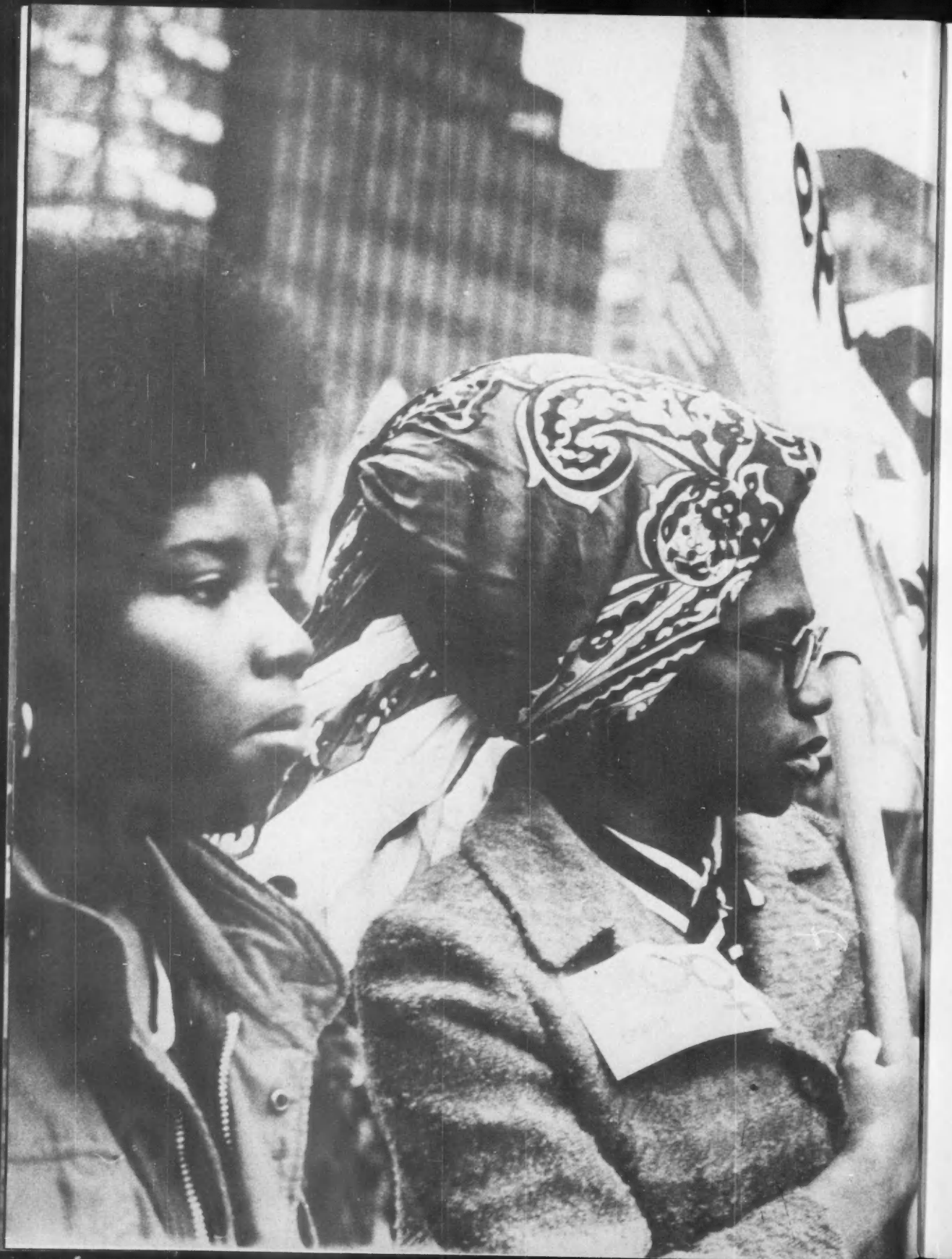
A feminist believes that women (just as men) are first and foremost people, and that human rights are indivisible by any category of sex, race, class, caste, nationality, religion, or age.

—Wilma Scott Heide

It would be very easy for me if the oppressor would split up the week and say from Monday to Wednesday we are going to mess over her because she's female, and the rest of the week we are going to put her down because she's black . . . but it doesn't happen that way.

—Margaret Sloan

*Sisterhood is powerful*



# A Natural Alliance

THE NEW ROLE FOR BLACK WOMEN

By Geraldine Rickman

Black women represent the legitimate instruments by which the women's movement and the black movement can forge a power wedge for accomplishing significant change—legal, economic, social, educational, and political—that will benefit both groups.

Such a natural alliance is not inevitable. It is subject to the pressures of all alliances made between groups with similar destinies competing for recognition and power: black women, black men, and white women.

The point must be made early that—although the emphasis here is on the role of black women—the active involvement and support of white women is essential to the successful development of new alliances around issues affecting both women and blacks. (Ultimately, the role of black women in effecting new alliances with powerful white men will be, if not a continuing source of concern or irritation to both white women and black men, at least a “problem” to be overcome.)

Black women can become 21st century “change agents” by taking on a linking pin relationship with white women, white men, and

Geraldine Rickman is Director of Resource Development, associate professor of psychology, and adjunct professor of psychiatry at the University of Cincinnati.



black men. By "change agents," I mean those persons who desire to participate in, and often instigate, institutional change processes through strategic risk-taking and calculated planning. "Change agents" are also those persons who are called upon to work and live in vanguard positions in order to model new behaviors that affect persons and institutions. This role for black women was never envisioned by the social scientists who pioneered the theories and processes designed to aid managers in making institutions more tolerable for humans and more productive for society.

In fact, no role for women—black or white—or for black males was envisioned by these men. But some of their theories, concepts, and processes are relevant to our strategy of change, and deserve closer scrutiny, testing, and—where necessary—rebuilding.

Rensis Likert, in his work at the University of Michigan, advanced the linking pin concept, which he described as follows:

One condition for supportive relationships is that the form of the organization should be one of multiple, overlapping groups in which each supervisor is a "linking pin"—a leader of the group below and also a member in the group above.

In addition, persons at all levels are members of other groups (committees, representational groups, and the like) which help link the organization laterally.

Linking pin change agents thus enjoy membership (or psychological affinity) in overlapping groups. With their ability to articulate the viewpoints of differing and competing groups, and their skill in

interpreting one group to another, such change agents can perform an important unifying function in complex organizations (according to Warren Bennis, in his book *Changing Organizations*).

The deliberate attempt to take the language and concepts of organizational behavior and scientific management and apply them to social institutions and their problems is a new, and different, approach. The social science-scientific management mold is not a perfect fit, but it provides a fresh way of looking at and working with at least two critical problems in the world today: how to develop new leadership at all levels, and how to utilize it better in solving the problems afflicting society.

The ideas above are important to proving that the black woman can play a linking pin role. She has the necessary adaptability, sense of self, and reality orientation. The high risk involved for the black woman as a functioning change agent is equal only to the high stakes to be gained by her. Economically, she is at the bottom of the barrel, and, as a group, there is only one way to go—up.

Nor will she be alone in this effort, for others have been looking for a new approach to institutional change, a new language, and a new rationale. But few have utilized the concepts of social science as a "looking glass" for black women, or as a reasonable ark to float in on the stormy sea of social movement rhetoric.

The linking pin effect was meant to apply to white male leadership in circumscribed formal organizations rather than social institutions. But the black female can be the real linking pin in a new change strategy.

Before examining strategies any further, one question in particular must be answered: who is the black woman?

### Some Facts

Census data tell us that:

She is 52.6 percent of the total black population of 22,672,570.

She remains single more often than white women (28 percent against 21.3 percent).

She is paid less than any other group in the country. The order, from the lowest paid to the highest, is: black women, white women, black men, white men.

The unemployment rate of nonwhite women was half again as high as nonwhite men (6.6 percent female; 4.4 percent male). The unemployment rate of white men was lower than that of nonwhite men (2.6 percent against 4.4 percent respectively) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1969).

Of the 3.4 million nonwhite (principally black) women workers in 1968, nearly one-half were service workers and domestics. The same ratio exists in 1973.

In 1970 there were 608,745 more black women than men between the ages of 15 and 44—when college and training occur, possibilities for marriage are greater, and the need for male companionship, with or without marriage, is greatest.

In 1969, black women 25 years or more of age had a median income of \$2,078, which is \$2,670 less than that of the average black male, and about three-fourths of the median income for white women.

Of all black women, 30 percent are employed, while 23 percent of all white women are employed. Of all black women, 29 percent are service workers, while 18 percent of white women are service workers. Of all black women, 31 percent are white collar workers, while 64 percent of white women are white collar workers. Of all black women, 18 percent are blue collar workers, as opposed to 16 percent of all white women. Two percent of each race are farmworkers.

Of the 4 million women employed in professional and technical occupations in March 1968, 79 percent had attended college and 58 percent had graduated. Black women constitute 8.7 percent of this group of employed women.

Of the 1.2 million women employed as nonfarm managers, officials, and proprietors, black women constitute 4.3 percent.

Of the 9.1 million clerical workers, about 21 percent had some college and about 75 percent had attended high school (66 percent graduated). Black women constitute 6.4 percent of this group.

Black females who have completed or gone beyond college earn only 78.8 percent as much as black males who have completed or gone beyond college, and only 54.2 percent as much as equivalent white males.

In 1971, 28.9 percent of black families were headed by females, as compared to 9.4 percent of white families.

In 1970, the marital status of

females 14 or more years of age was:

	Black	White
married, spouse present	42.0%	60.3%
divorced	4.3	3.4
widowed	13.5	12.4
single	28.0	21.3

In 1970, for those 21 or more years of age, 4.5 percent of black males as compared with 4.4 percent of black females had completed or gone beyond a college education. In addition, black females have had less access to the most prestigious institutions of higher education than have black males and white females and males.

Many fabled myths surround black women. They have suffered from the stigma of being seen as the white woman's domestic, the white man's lover, and the black man's matriarchial oppressor. Such myths tend to reinforce erroneous beliefs that directly affect social policies—which in turn adversely affect many black females.

Clearly, the black woman has the most to gain. She is already a high-risk change agent in her own world, or she would not have survived. She is adaptable, knows who she is, and knows what the real world is all about!

As Beth Day points out in *Sexual Life between Blacks and Whites*:

Legal marriage for blacks in the South was possible only following the Civil War, and black women did not develop the same economic and social dependence upon the marital state that white

women did. No matter what her own needs and emotions, the black woman as a slave had been utterly on her own, having to dredge up whatever inner strength she could muster to survive separation from her husband and sometimes, most cruelly, from her children. She survived alone.

In contrast to the dependent white Southern woman, the black woman was eons ahead in strength, durability, and independence. If she had survived, it had been through the protection, support, or strength of no man, educational system, or body of law. It had been by her own native strength, wit, and gut wisdom . . . [In this context] the white woman has never even been tested. She has never learned to survive in the world on her own.

### Outgrowths of Involvement

As more and more black women enter the feminist movement, the distortion of their role will be increased significantly via the media—television, magazines, newspapers, and books. Most of the country is predisposed to believe the myths surrounding the black woman—especially the matriarchy myth and the one about her access to and success in the educational arena (as compared to that of black men). But she does not actually have such success, and the social policies developed by foundations, Government, and even business which deal with the "urban crisis" are oriented only toward the needs and concerns of black men and not black women also. It can be expected, therefore, that the black



woman "out front" in the women's movement will be subjected to a backlash from many black men who oppose her involvement.

They fear that the women's movement is a planned subversion to undercut the black movement. Never mind that the statistical profile of black women demands new strategies for change and a new sense of purpose—if for no other reason than just to begin that long trek up from the bottom of the social barrel!

The fear of subversion of the black movement by the women's movement has some historical basis. At the annual convention of the Equal Rights Association in 1868, white women were angered that females were not included in the 15th amendment. Frederick Douglass, in a painful political bind, chose race over sex in voting for suffrage for black males and not women—black or white. His action produced what might be called the first white backlash. Such a reaction on the part of white women could occur again.

Douglass, in spite of his continued rhetorical support of the suffrage movement, set an example that black politicians, sociologists, psychologists, and political activists use to this very day to discourage black female participation in the women's rights movement. This tactic has been more than just moderately successful in keeping black women from speaking out in behalf of their needs as women as well as blacks.

Black women have remained silent and somewhat officially insensitive to their own needs as individuals. They have been subject to criticism for viewing their problems as women as important, and for seeming to be traitors to their

race. Above all, the black woman fears losing "her man" (if she is lucky enough to have one) should she dare examine the gnawing and persistent feelings within her heart and the incongruent thoughts within her mind!

The editors of *Essence* magazine examined this problem and concluded:

Many black women have been forced to apologize for their strength and defend their sense of responsibility. Now there are young black women who think that they can please their men by obeying and walking five paces behind them. Others reveal a masochistic tendency to shoulder the blame for the emasculation of black men and for maintaining a black matriarchal society . . . .

Certainly we must respect and continue to expect the best from our men. It is important that we stand *beside* them, champion their every cause for equality and uphold their manhood. We must support their every effort to emerge as a valuable force in this society.

At the same time, we must face what many of the young, the Women's Lib groups, the modern innovators are saying . . . that there will be no positive change for any of us—black or white, men or women, young or old, rich or poor—until certain basic institutions of our society are changed. Which is all the more reason why the black woman can ill afford to become the silent woman, content with cooking soul food and making incoherent baby talk at the dinner table, in the name of black manhood.

That statement by *Essence* casts the die in blunt language. Despite the problems inherent in being change agents, black women have no alternative but to insist that their role be recognized by black men in particular and white society in general. They cannot, by silence, consent to become third-class citizens. And there is evidence that they will not.

The 1972 Virginia Slims American Women's Opinion Poll indicated that black women desired change in women's status more than black men, 62 against 47 percent. While white women are in the forefront of media coverage (translate "visibility") compared to black women, it is black women who are more supportive of change in the status of women. White women by 49 to 39 percent are unsympathetic to the efforts of "women's liberation" groups. More white men than white women favor changing women's status.

This same poll indicated that black women are more strongly in favor of increased participation in political activity.

Still, the black woman is troubled by all of the uncertainties surrounding being a woman, a black woman, and being free to respond to issues affecting her as they affect all women. Such issues include equal pay for equal work, the right to reproductive choice, child care, political participation, consumer practices, educational opportunities (especially post-secondary and professional schools), media image, business and economic opportunities (including owning businesses and managing them), respect and justice under the law, and recognition.

For black women to oppose any of these for any reason is unthinkable.

able—especially if one uses the right approach and the right words to encourage their active participation in the women's movement. The use of the linking pin model makes the development of the right language easier, because it makes sense. Let's see how it translates into future possibilities for marrying the interests of the women's liberation movement and the interest of blacks, using black women as the catalyst for this power association.

### **Black Professional Women**

Black professional women will best serve as the initial focal point for this linkage—not that any other black female participation in this new role development should be excluded. But the 400,000 black females who are categorized by the Census Bureau as “nonfarm managers, officials, and proprietors” and “professional and technical workers” seem—by interest, educational preparation, temperament, and motivation—best able at this time in history to “take the heat” in the move toward a truly changed status for all women.

The black woman and her role (or lack of it) in the woman's movement is an “in” topic of conversation in organized women's groups around the country. Whether she will be involved, how she will be involved, or indeed, should she be involved are questions which lead white professional women especially to take a personnel inventory of their club membership. Hurriedly, in some cases, they begin trying to “involve a broader cross section of the community”—a euphemism meaning “we have no black members” or in some parts of the country, no minority members.

Black women are moving to have their presence felt and their voices heard through the growing communications networks of the women's movement. Any information system designed to serve women must serve all women, if an alliance between black women, white women, and black men is to be based on reality.

### **Distorting Information**

White social scientists (especially sociologists, psychologists, historians, and economists) have distorted the information about black women and the black family so badly that no one really knows what to believe.

Jacquelyne Jackson, Robert Hill, and Andrew Billingsley, to name a few, have begun the important and arduous task of undoing centuries of myths about blacks in general and black women in particular—especially those perpetuated by Ivy League academicians (Moynihan, *et al*).

The Hill rebuff of the matriarchy label so clearly began to turn the tide of thinking that it stands as a benchmark in the literature about black families, black women, and what constitutes the black middle class. Hill wrote:

It is imperative that social scientists no longer accept the tenets of the pejorative tradition without empirically testing them.

Contrary to popular belief, our findings indicate that most black families are characterized by equalitarian patterns. And the wives in these families, although strong and resourceful, are not domineering matriarchs. They provide needed economic as well as emotional support to their families. Although their earnings are much less than their

husbands', the additional income is essential for the survival of many of these families. . . .

The distortion of information extends beyond the scholarly world. Black women are now experiencing increasing role frustration, political tension, personal alienation, and self-derision. Part of this is due to the continual denial of their existence by black men, white women, and the media. Even when mentioned, a generally negative view of what black women represent seems to prevail.

Eudora Pettigrew, a professor at Michigan State University and an outspoken and thoughtful black feminist, says:

This complex of male-biased myths and negativistic stereotypes relegating black women to a caste as inferiors leads not only to actions by black and white men which psychologically, socially, economically, and occupationally victimize women, but leads also to the victimization of black women by white women.

Inexcusably, this tradition of black women as menials and victims is one which the civil rights movement has failed to explicitly and forcefully combat. The black man grapples to achieve social justice and parity with the white male—essentially to attain white male power, privilege, and status—while black women are shoved to the “back of the bus” . . . .

Pettigrew goes on to note the indivisibility of the struggles against racism and sexism:

The status of race and sex interact to consign black women to the most restricted, deprived, discriminated, and oppressed



caste in American society. It is unrealistic to think that discrimination against black women can be eliminated by abolishing discrimination based only on race.

It is racism and sexism combined that black women must endeavor to overcome if they are to secure their minimal rights as persons, and reverse patterns of injustice perpetuated by a male-dominated, male-controlled culture . . . .

Black women are not struggling for equality and social justice merely to be further oppressed by black male supremacists when they reach picket-fenced suburbia. To argue . . . that blacks should first become liberated as people before black women seek their human rights as an exploited gender is specious.

There is no need to fight two different battles for different kinds of liberties, rights, and justice. Both racism and sexism should be fought simultaneously.

### Old Change Agents and New

The need to fight racism and sexism together underlines another reason why black professional women occupy a critical position. Warren Bennis, in *Changing Organizations*, defines a change agent as:

Professionals, men, who for the most part have been trained and hold doctorates in the behavioral sciences. Many of them hold university posts, and others work as fulltime consultants, but they owe their professional allegiance to one of the behavioral science disciplines.

Bennis and others who have influenced organizational development and organizational theory went awry with their myopic view of who could function as change agents. Many people without doctorates are change agents in organizations. In fact, one might argue that the criteria presented above by Bennis would instead present barriers to performing as a change agent in today's world.

More to the point, the thinking of Bennis and others has ignored such factors as race and sex. As we shall see, it is ironic that the human relations movement gave birth to the phenomenon now known as the T-group (Training Group)—a well-known and widely used educational technique today.

In June of 1946, Frank Simpson, executive director of the Connecticut Interracial Commission, wanted someone to help him implement the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act. Kurt Lewin of the new Research Center for Group Dynamics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and one of the initiators of the "human relations" approach to management, agreed to help Simpson. They were joined by Leland Bradford, Kenneth Benne, and Ronald Lippitt—all destined to exert great influence in the field of human relations training.

All of them met the change agent definition—white, male, professionals, university-employed, with a background in the behavioral science disciplines. Lewin, moreover, was director of the Commission of Community Interrelations, an undertaking of the American Jewish Congress.

Yet despite the nature of their first assignment, the importance of

race and sex as key training considerations neither entered their minds, nor the literature they wrote, except through occasional oblique references.

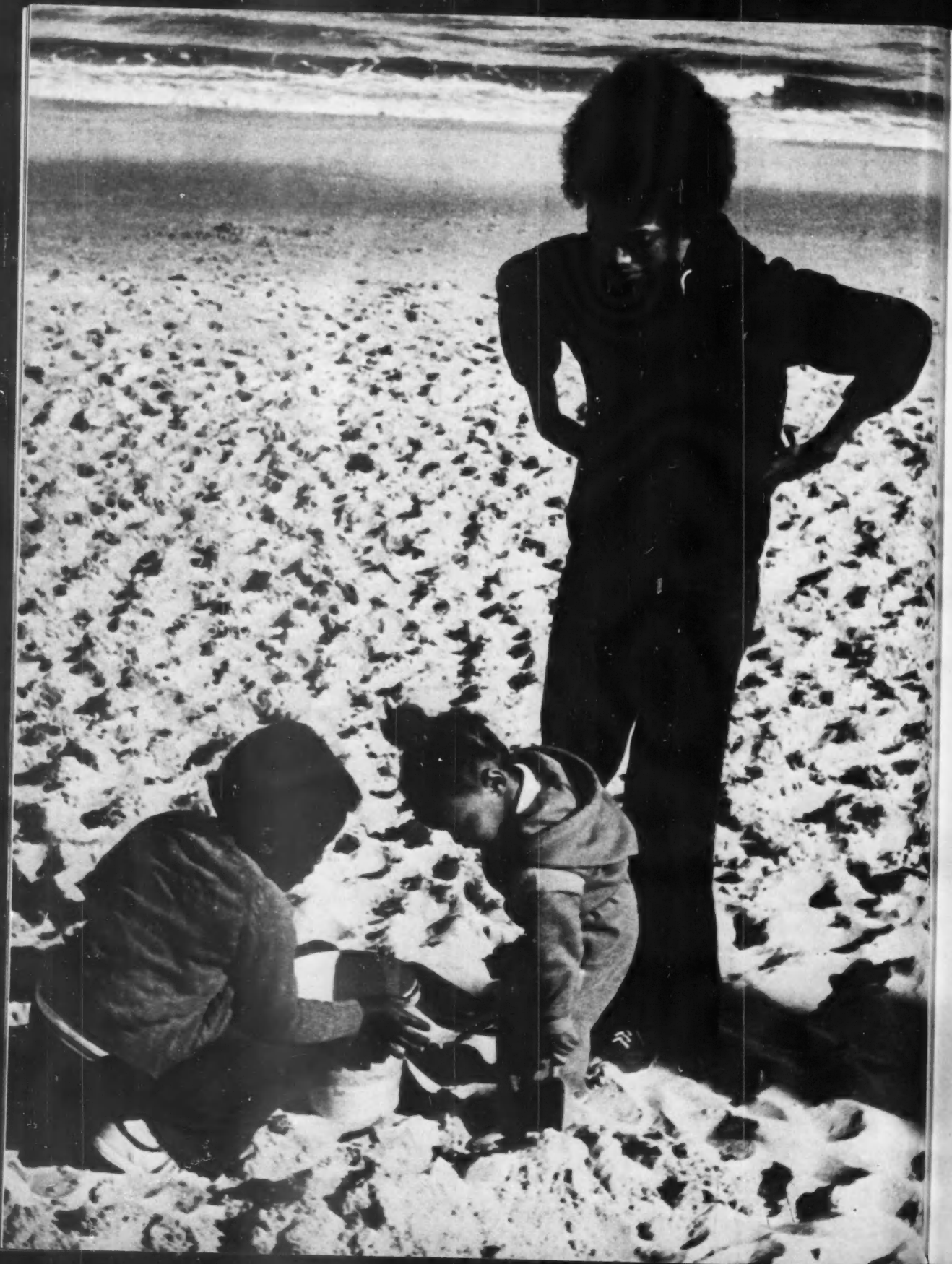
But the work of these men must not be seen as unrelated to the problems of blacks (men and women) and white women. The use of their ideas allows a new look at how we can solve problems. Alvin Toffler, in *Future Shock*, offers one example:

Problems will be solved by task forces composed of "relative strangers" [with] . . . diverse professional skills. Executives and managers in this system will function as coordinators between the various transient teams. They will be skilled in understanding the jargon of different groups of specialists, and they will communicate across groups, translating and interpreting the language of one into the language of another.

People in this system will, according to Bennis, "be differentiated not vertically, according to rank and role, but flexibly and functionally, according to skill and professional training."

Black women who function as the new executives and managers have the ability to be linking pins between the "various transient teams" (translate: white men, black men, and white women).

They are skillful in understanding the jargon of each group and interpreting one group to another. Indeed, black women have done this since slavery, with much skill, as they carried messages from Miss Anne, to her plantation-owner husband, to the "man" in the field—carefully maintaining the uneasy balance between them in



order to ensure her survival and that of those she loved most.

Black women in this country—from the very beginning—constituted the first “psychologists.” They were unnamed and unlabeled, functioning, to quote Bennis, “not vertically, according to rank and role, but flexibly and functionally, according to skill and . . . training.”

Bennis’s definition of a change agent—complete with degree—would not fit these early black women. Except for his insistence on the use of the term “men,” however, the new black female professional does fit. She has a real opportunity to exert herself politically within the women’s movement and elsewhere. As one who is able to develop intergroup, overlapping relationships (as in Likert’s model) she has a real obligation to assess her role for the future and to assess the risks involved in speaking out and acting for recognition.

### Costs and Benefits

Let’s review the requirements for the role of linking pin which black women possess.

She enjoys membership and psychological affinity in overlapping groups.

She has developed an acute sensitivity to the meanings of words, and has the ability to use them to bring people together.

She dares to risk being different, can solve problems, and adapt.

Although often uncertain just how to define herself, she knows herself better than anyone else does (and for our purposes, perhaps it is better that she remain something of a mystery to others).

She understands reality and tests it all the time for survival.

As a professional, she recognizes that at best her existence is marginal. She leads an ambiguous life, often insecure in spite of her obvious strengths.

Finally, risk-taking is what her life is all about, because she has very little to lose!

Black women know that the time has come to recognize emergent leadership among their ranks. Many are no longer content to be used as the psychological and social whipping posts for men who have difficulty planning for a future of equals, for sharing resources, and supporting people on merit, regardless of sex.

What are the costs and benefits of the change agent role—especially for black women?

—Increased alienation from some black men now in leadership positions;

—Increased recognition and support from a growing number of black and white men looking for a legitimate “handle” on which to hang an increasing interest and affection for competent, out-front black women;

—Continued loneliness for a while, but not forever. Having a new role and purpose will increase personal and professional options over a period of time; but not right away—not even in the next five years!

In spite of everything, more black women will have to think of dating and perhaps even marrying more white men—if for no other reason than that there aren’t enough black men to go around. This is a crucial point, for the logical concomitant to the political

role of linking pin will be a personal one.

Linking competent, educated, exciting black women with competent, educated, and influential white men will occur for the same reasons that have always existed, but which have not been legitimate for black women (in some minds). Those reasons are love, marriage, political influence, money, and companionship.

Americans have given little thought to the potency of the black woman as an insurgent in the “citadels” of white power. Nor has her potential as a recognized mistress of “citadels” of white power (either legally or socially enthroned) been of great concern.

In any case, the historically terrorist nature of most previous encounters between black women and white men must be replaced with new forms of relationships and new strategies for gaining power.

Pride and involvement in an historic movement—women’s rights, coupled with a new role as linking pins and change agents, will tend to offset some of the crucial growing pains of the next era. The long-range benefits of the newly formed natural alliance will far exceed the short-term inconveniences and struggles. The involvement in this alliance of white men who understand power and recognize the importance of the alliance will make the bond even tighter.

Can it be pulled off? Yes. If we use new mechanisms and new resources (especially human resources) and test old theories, we can bring this Nation near the pluralistic, liberated society we so often talk about.

# The White Male Club

BIOLOGY AND POWER

By Robert Terry

A recent advertisement for U.S. Savings Bonds communicated a more profound message than intended. It captured on one page the heart of much of the American experience. Headlined "Welcome to the club," it invited the reader to join the ten white male executives pictured and buy savings bonds. That more than half of all Americans might not identify with a club led by such corporate leaders seems to have escaped the ad's creators.

Much of what has happened and continues to happen in America can be understood more completely if we analyze this country as a white male club, committed to technological superiority and dominance on the world scene.

This club is an organization which arbitrarily selects members and bestows appropriate material and psychological benefits. It dis-

---

Robert Terry is a consultant on racism, sexism, and institutional change with the Detroit firm of Neely, Campbell, Gibb, Terry, and Associates.

tributes influence and power among its members and then uses that power to dominate groups unlike itself (consciously or unconsciously). It rigidly regulates behavior and demands conformity as a requirement of admittance, and it legitimizes certain life-styles and requires at least public acquiescence to them.

In America, the application of this concept of club results in the conclusion that our country is a white male operation. Although relatively few white males run the club, all are offered benefits—even if they are only psychological. Minorities and white women are relegated to a secondary status and are exploited for club purposes when deemed necessary.

From its inception this country has been a haven for white males, compared to everyone else. Its relationship with Native Americans, the structuring of the Constitution, and its dominant institutions have perpetuated white male supremacy. We have witnessed over the years many attacks on the club—partly

efforts to break it open and partly efforts to change its character. However, the club has been resistant to changes—making only those necessary to quell an immediate disturbance without fundamentally affecting the character and vitality of the club itself.

This resistance to change is partly due to our tendency to examine and try to change the victims of injustice rather than the forces perpetuating injustice. This approach has failed to produce much progress toward eliminating either racism or sexism. The focus needs to shift to an analysis of the "system" as a whole.

When examining any society, organization, or relatively permanent group, it is critical to isolate and analyze four interdependent aspects. Any slighting or over-emphasis of one or more of these aspects distorts a comprehensive view of what is going on. It is essential to know:

Who has access to societal resources?

ib

VER

Ferry

partly  
acter.  
re-  
only  
me-  
nda-  
acter

e is  
o ex-  
vic-  
the  
This  
duce  
ating  
ocus  
f the

tiety,  
rma-  
olate  
dent  
over-  
hese  
sive  
it is

ietal

1974



Are the resources equitably distributed?

Who holds power? Who can marshal the resources to accomplish a goal?

What are the institutionalized patterns and practices of the club?

What are the dominant and persistent cultural values and assumptions of the club?

A quick review of what has been happening to the club over the last few years is important, especially for those who believe the club is making great strides forward.

### Club Membership

The challenge to the club has long been joined around the issue of membership. Belonging to the club meant access to resources. Under what terms and conditions would membership be offered to and/or demanded by minority people and white women?

Membership has always been presupposed for white males. Of course, not all white males have participated in the same way, but individual hard work, initiative, and struggle could pay off. Although white males were not assured of success in the club, they were not penalized for their race or sex. Membership in good standing was their birthright.

Native Americans bore (and continue to bear) the brunt of club supremacy. Genocide, broken treaties, club controlled reservations, and false promises of urban resources marked the club's relationship to the tribes.

Blacks were treated in two ways. In the South, blacks were permitted great social intimacy with whites—caring for white children, cooking, housekeeping—as long as

they were under club control. At no point could any kind of equality be tolerated.

In the North, the club preserved social distance—locking blacks into ghettos while perpetuating the myth of Northern freedom. Blacks could do as they pleased, just as long as they kept their distance.

White women have long struggled to belong as well. However, their peculiar position—being both white and women—created confusion in many women as well as opportunities for white male manipulation. Because many white women accepted and relished white male protection of their womanhood, they refused to look at their own suppressed condition. Particularly in the South, white women's protection had a racial dimension, and meant guarding against supposed black assault.

However, many women also realized their awkward club status—supposed privilege and protection without real access to resources and power. They were being exploited while being protected. Thus white male leadership was able to perpetuate sexually-oriented racial myths while simultaneously legitimizing restricted, stereotyped role definitions for women, designed to keep them in subservient and controllable positions.

Anne Braden grasps the double bind of white women well. In a pamphlet directed to her Southern white sisters regarding a black man—Thomas Wansley—held in a trumped-up rape case of a white woman, she says:

I believe that no white woman reared in the South—or perhaps anywhere in this racist country—can find freedom as a woman

until she deals in her own consciousness with the question of race. We grow up little girls, absorbing a hundred stereotypes about ourselves and our role in life—our secondary position, our destiny to be a help mate to a man or men.

But we also grow up white—absorbing the stereotypes of race, the picture of ourselves as somehow privileged because of the color of our skin. The two mythologies become intertwined, and there is no way to free ourselves from one without dealing with the other . . . .

It may seem paradoxical, but in this racist society we who are white will overcome our oppression as women only when we reject once and for all the privileges conferred on us by our white skin. For the privileges are not real—they are a device through which we are kept under control.

### The Ground Rules Change

In spite of slave insurrections, civil war, the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, the women's suffrage movement leading to the 19th amendment, the civil rights movement, urban rebellions, and the contemporary feminist movement, the club persists. Racism and sexism thrive. Equal access to resources is still an ideal and not reality.

As long as the symbol of individual initiative and free market competition had some real roots in American experience, the myth of achievement by bootstrap could persist. But, as the frontier mentality was buffeted by two world wars and a depression, contradictions soon surfaced.

After World War II, the ground rules for club membership changed drastically. America became a vast network of interlocking support systems that required a level of technical capacity and sophistication unparalleled in history. Yet, at the same time, this network—able to produce and distribute goods in seemingly unlimited quantity—was destroying the very resources necessary to sustain it. The means of production were undermining the capacity to produce.

Participants in this technological process were either in on the ground floor or cast into marginal roles. The myth of individualism now has no foundation in fact. Individualism contradicts material interdependence and the requirement for technical competence. The ground rules for membership have changed. In his book *Being Free*, Gibson Winter sharpens the picture for us:

In a high technology society, one either belongs at the outset or one is out for good. One starts inside or he [sic] never starts. Such are the terms of membership in the technically competent society.

Without health, intellectual preparation, personal discipline and many other qualities, the opportunities of a high technology society are closed. The ceiling is zero . . . the distance between the included and the excluded grows at an accelerating pace.

### Open Doors?

Many believe that the club is opening its doors to new members. A variety of statistics are marshalled to argue the case that there has been, in fact, dramatic redistribution of resources. The best-

known expression of this thesis is contained in the article "Black Progress and Liberal Rhetoric," by Ben J. Wattenberg and Richard M. Scammon (*Commentary*, April 1973).

The authors argue that a remarkable, even revolutionary, development has taken place in America over the last dozen years. They believe that a majority of black Americans now are "middle class." The authors present data demonstrating that black family income climbed from 53 percent of white family income in 1961 to 63 percent in 1971. They also point to the fact that black families earning above \$10,000 increased from 13 percent in 1961 to 30 percent in 1971, using equivalent 1971 dollar figures.

The authors assert that large numbers of blacks now "belong." They argue that a rise in income means the rest of middle class values and goals follow. The authors suggest:

Once the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing are provided for, a vast flow of secondary desires follows. A middle income family wants not only a house that is safe and sanitary, but one in a safe and sanitary neighborhood. Middle income parents want their children to go to good schools, to stay in high school and graduate and, they hope, then go on to college. The young adults who come out of high school and college want better jobs than those their parents have held, the kinds of jobs that have always been available to whites in an equivalent socio-economic position. The middle income blacks . . . have made much headway toward satisfying all

these traditional middle class desires.

At no point do the authors argue that enough is being done, but they resent the fact that black and white liberals play down progress when it seemed so dramatic.

Karl Gregory, consultant and economist, has criticized the article, saying that the authors "neglected to state that while the ratio of black incomes to white incomes has indeed risen, the absolute gap in purchasing power between whites and blacks has also expanded." Gregory suggests that income alone is an insufficient measure of the distribution of societal resources. Income must be distinguished from wealth.

"Black families," he states, "own less than 2 percent of the nation's wealth, and about 70 percent of the little they own is in the form of the wealth that is least associated with power, namely, equity in a home."

Scammon and Wattenberg also ignored or glossed over much of the institutional quality of racism. Many authors have documented the fact that the poor pay more for equivalent services. And the *Commentary* article assumed that all middle class values are equally shared by whites and blacks. We will say more about that later.

### Racism and Sexism Interlock

Racism and sexism interlock to produce predictable results. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith reports a startling statistic: "White males hold 96 percent of America's over \$15,000 a year jobs; women and blacks divide the remaining 4 percent."

Government sources report that in 1971 unemployment was lowest for white adult males (4 percent)

and highest for minority teenage girls (35.5 percent). In 1970, the median income from fulltime, year-round employment exhibited a similar pattern:

White men \$9373  
Black men \$6598  
White women \$5490  
Black women \$4674

This pattern continues to hold even when education levels are kept constant. Housing and health care show similar patterns

Many social activists and social scientists stop here. They assert that equal access to resources is the essential criterion to measure social progress in America. Behind this position is an assumption: assimilation is the solution to racial and sexual discrimination. Race and sex should predict nothing of significance. The club is basically

healthy; it only needs to eliminate exclusionary practices to make it fair.

This position is held by many minority people and white women, but primarily by white males. However, an increasing number of people are questioning "integrating into the club." Integration by race and sex is being viewed as racist and sexist, insofar as it means "You can make it in the club if you act like white males."

Although others are even questioning the idea of the club itself, most minority people and white women agree that some form of inclusion in the club is absolutely essential. The debate hinges on the terms of inclusion. Those terms necessitate an examination of power, institutional practices, and cultural standards. Can the club be transformed into a society open on

the basis of both race and sex practicing a humanized technology, domestically and internationally?

### Who Has Power?

Having access to resources is necessary but not sufficient to possess power. One has power when one can mobilize resources to accomplish one's goals. The key to power is the effective conversion ratio of assets into concentrated and concerted action. A small group of people may convert 90 percent of its assets into action and force change opposed by a larger force that does not choose to marshal resources in resistance. This phenomenon accounts for the ability of the civil rights movement to have new laws enacted. The possibility of confronting power becomes more difficult, however, because of a further





characteristic of high technology societies.

That characteristic is the new concentration of power in machines, materials, and decision-making.

White males dominate the corporate centers of technological power. Their control is buttressed by an over-representation in the institutions designed to regulate that power—the military, courts, police, and Federal, city, and State governments.

It is encouraging to see black mayors elected in major cities. But in each case we must watch carefully how whites retain important checks on black power in government councils, courts, civil service, and police. Hopefully, black leadership will gain enough support to be able to test new programs and policies.

Although the election of blacks is encouraging, the larger picture is not as encouraging. For example, increasing concern exists in some white quarters in Congress and the Pentagon that the voluntary military is attracting too many minority people—presently, about 35 percent. The concern is based on the fantasy that military power will not enforce club interests—a fantasy not based in reality. The promotion process will certainly weed out resisters to military orientation and select loyal military personnel. However, some are still anxious that lower level troops will not be obedient to upper level orders.

Many powerful sections of the trade union movement have not followed up on earlier promises of equality to women or minorities. Most large unions are controlled by white males, even when their union membership is predomi-

nantly minority or female or both. These leaders have often adopted positions supporting blacks and women with regard to civil rights legislation and the Equal Rights Amendment, but they have not allocated power internally on a truly representative basis.

The passing of the present generation of union leadership combined with the pressure of the civil rights and women's movements offer the first prospects of change in many years. It is likely that the newer unions involved with groups such as farmworkers and hospital workers will lead the way. But strong resistance remains, particularly within the construction trade unions. Their desire to maintain a monopoly on the skilled work force has led them to resist aggressive hiring and promotion of minorities.

Some argue that white women possess inordinate power through control of stocks. Half of all stockholders are women. However, men carry out 75 percent of all securities transactions, according to the New York Stock Exchange. Women often control stock in name only to suit their husbands' tax purposes. In any case, they hold only 42 percent of the dollar value and 38 percent of the total number of shares—mostly in small chunks.

### Sharing Power

In industry, those bearing the brunt of social change are at the bottom of the organization. The white males in that position are the ones actually affected by their bosses' decisions to obey Order 4 (the requirement that Government contractors have an aggressive affirmative action program). Dramatic moves to shift power at the

top of these organizations have not occurred. My own efforts as a consultant to get white males to share power, although meeting with some success, encounter endless rationalizations and diversionary tactics.

Implicit behind much white male resistance is the assumption that blacks are ill-prepared for major management responsibility, coupled with the fear that blacks will treat whites the same way whites have treated blacks. Women face a similar kind of resistance; the threat of the women's movement—in the form of court cases, back pay awards, and new union organizing—is just beginning to be felt in industry.

The power to mobilize resources into action is obviously in male hands—but not totally! Some activists use such terms as "the powerful and the powerless," "master and slave," "colonizer and colonized." Although the rhetoric is stirring, it perpetuates the idea that people cannot change the system. Power is certainly not easily given up, usually it is taken—if not by force, at least through strenuous organizing and hard work. Yet changes do occur—and for at least two reasons.

First, not all powerful white males in the club agree. The Vietnam war is a vivid example.

Secondly, not all white males have equal power. Even though white males as a group have a disproportionate share of club resources, the decision makers are relatively few. The club obviously has leaders and followers.

The club leadership must convince lower-level males that they receive sufficient benefits from the club not to worry about gross power disparities. It may be in-

come, a rewarding job, or leisure time. It may be just a psychological benefit—"at least I ain't a nigger."

However, an increasing number of white males, although still too few, are catching on to the club trick—convincing someone that nothing is something. The club, they are beginning to see—not minority people and white women—is the cause of injustice in the society.

### Institutional Patterns

Promoting minority people and white women to positions of increased responsibility changes the color and sex composition of power, but does not necessarily change its oppressive use. As one black man put it, "A cop is a cop, black or white. They work for the man and they will kill you just as dead."

Institutional practices and policies set structure, define roles, and allocate rewards and punishments. They are the backbone of the club: its constitution. To fit into one of the roles is to take on the task of club maintenance. Minority people and white women can humanize that process to some degree. But the pressures to conform to typical role expectations are great, especially as one moves up the institutional ladder.

Because of the tremendous influence of institutions, institutionalized sexism and racism have been key targets for change. While most of our political, economic, educational, and religious institutions were just developing during the early stages of our history, slavery was already highly institutionalized. Some commentators have argued that slavery was the first well developed institution in Amer-

ica. With this head start, a web of racism developed that persists to the present. To be racist or sexist today only requires that one be "normal." In his essay, "The Web of Urban Racism," social scientist Harold Baron states it well:

Maintenance of the basic racial controls . . . is now less dependent upon specific discriminatory decisions. Such behavior has become so well institutionalized that the individual generally does not have to exercise a choice to operate in a racist [and/or sexist] manner. The rules and procedures of the large organizations have already pre-structured the choice. The individual only has to conform to the operating norms of the organization and the institution will do the discriminating for him [sic].

Interestingly, the status of slaves paralleled the status of women in America, and slaves were often likened to women or children. As Gunnar Myrdal pointed out in the appendix to his famous book on racial discrimination, *An American Dilemma*:

In the earlier common law, women and children were placed under the jurisdiction of the paternal power. When a legal status had to be found for the imported Negro servants in the 17th century, the nearest and most natural analogy was the status of women and children. The Ninth Commandment—linking together women, servants, mules, and other property—could be invoked, as well as a great number of other passages of Holy Scripture.

Of course, as Myrdal points out, the plight of women was entirely

different. They were perceived as ornaments, while slaves were laborers.

Nevertheless, pro-slavery writers frequently defended slave-holding as similar to having a wife. Myrdal points out that the parallel went beyond an ideological argument. Women in fact had few of the rights otherwise accorded to free white citizens. The close relationship of the positions of white women and of slaves was summed up by Dolly Madison, whom Myrdal quotes as saying that the Southern wife was "the chief slave of the harem."

Whether it is seniority systems, selection of textbooks, hiring and promotion practices, or educational testing and tracking—traditional practices reinforce club control. Even when organizations try to institute practices and policies that are more flexible and responsive to their membership, old practices persist.

For example, companies forced to comply with revised Order 4 often get quite imaginative in recruiting and enrolling white women and minority people. These moves are all to the good. However, the company continues to hire white males in the same old way. The message is clear. The outsiders will have to fit into the club; white males—who implicitly belong—will not have to be screened in any different way to fit into a newly open organization.

If the club were firmly committed to becoming such an organization, it would require that those not firmly committed to an anti-racist and anti-sexist posture either be refused employment or required to get additional training. That is how other employment standards are handled.

What the club fails to realize is that the pressures for fundamental change will not cease just because melanin and chromosomes are widely distributed in the organization. The pressures for change go far beyond inclusion on white male terms.

And of course not all the practices and policies of any given organization or society need changing. The concern here is that such practices and policies be flexible and responsive to the members of the organization. Instead, we frequently find the opposite. Hospitals, for example, are often designed to satisfy the medical profession more than the community which they ostensibly serve.

The pattern of relationships within organizations must be changed. Racism and sexism are perpetuated more by everyday role definitions than by psychic needs of individuals to be superior. To change institutional structure is to go a long way in eliminating racism and sexism.

### Cultural Standards

The club legitimizes itself by appealing to common definitions and values that are supposedly shared by society. These assumptions are usually taken for granted and operate at a subconscious level. They become overt only when threatened—as, for example, in abortion reform, the Equal Rights Amendment, and school busing for integration. The result is intensive political struggle.

In the context of club life, cultural standards mean at least three things.

First, ethno-centric standards are used to measure acceptability into the club. Unfamiliar behavior is usually interpreted negatively.

If the Afro is too big, it may be signifying militancy; if minority people eat together, it is a sign of separatism; if women want an off-site meeting for themselves, an anti-male action is underway. Gross denial and ridicule are two of the many ways the club has to side-step or deprecate authentic anti-racist or anti-sexist activities.

### Value Orientations

Value orientations are a second dimension of cultural standards. Not all white males accept them. Nor do all white women and minority people deny them. But enough evidence exists to question the assumption that a basic value consensus really exists in America.

The white male, Western, highly technological society rewards individual initiative; encourages competition; supports dispassionate, objective, and analytic thinking, and provides for creativity and personal advancement within the system. But many minority people and white women are discovering a different value orientation within themselves because of their oppressed and suppressed positions in the club.

In place of individual initiative, blacks, Chicanos, and other groups—more recently, white women in large numbers—value communal experience. “No one makes it until the whole group makes it” is a growing conviction among these groups.

The image of the strong dominating entrepreneur, risking and competing for advancement, is challenged by a collaborative, open, non-aggressive style. For most whites, pro-black means anti-white. For most men, pro-woman means anti-male. This kind of “I

win, you lose” mentality is under question.

White males are taught from childhood to restrain tears, suppress feelings, and “be rational.” White women, in contrast, are allowed to be emotional and are rewarded for “mothering.” Minority people, who have been forced to trust their feelings in sizing up potentially hostile situations in and around the club, are also much more alive emotionally.

It is no accident, therefore, that the white middle class has been the main “consumer” of sensitivity training. White men are seeking ways to get in touch with feelings; white women are seeking legitimate avenues to express feelings.

The club does reward creativity and personal advancement if one obeys the system. For years, white males have been promised that hard work, education, and ability pay off. The club has been a good place for competent creative strivers. As a result, white males often find themselves living in a myth world—frustrated and demoralized when the system does not deliver on its promise.

Minority people and a growing number of white women, in contrast, have had to face the club's lie repeatedly. Only by going outside club rules, or by using them against the club, have basic changes been possible. Authentic creativity is rooted in the capacity to doubt past traditions and form new ones. Those most experienced in that process are those who have survived by coping creatively with the club itself.

Readers steeped in a competitive mind set will probably conclude from this discussion that one must choose only one set of values. A both/and approach rather than

an either/or approach is more appropriate.

White male technology needs humanizing, not total elimination. Its effects need redirection, not cancellation. Bringing together the strengths of both sets of values—a process of cultural synergism—is absolutely essential if any alternative to the club is to emerge.

### Misplacing The Problem

The third aspect of cultural standards is the capacity of the club to misplace the problem. To examine racism and sexism one must look beyond facts and statistics, at the character of the club itself. Racism and sexism in America are not problems simply to be listed alongside other problems. They are part of the club's foundation.

In order to resist such scrutiny and change, the club blames the victim for its problems. One dramatic example was the Kerner Commission report on civil disorders, which had an auspicious beginning. It said in one paragraph that the basic problem was white racism. But having said that, it went on to propose massive training programs, education, etc. for the victims—implying that it was their fault after all.

Much of the social science literature and the media depict minorities as culturally deprived and unqualified. They are labeled as disadvantaged, unreliable, too aggressive, militant, or expecting too much. Women are called too emotional, unqualified to manage and make hard decisions, better equipped for certain kinds of roles (i.e., secretarial, because women "can type"; feaching, because women know how to take care of children). In each of these cases

the focus on the victim removes pressure from the club.

Victim blame by the victor is a survival mechanism. Those who win can attribute their success to the incompetence of the losers. When it comes to race and sex, it is clear who gets blamed.

It is essential to understand that I am suggesting that the club is the problem—not white males *per se*. It is more a question of social system than it is of biology. White males have options in relation to the club. They can actively defend and perpetuate it; they can react passively and conform to club pressures; or they can actively work to change the club. One cannot be passively anti-racist and anti-sexist. That option does not exist in America in 1974. To be passive is to conform to the club and to support it.

From this analysis it follows that racism is fundamentally white racism and sexism is fundamentally male sexism. Minority people are not racist nor are women sexist on their own. (Individual minority people and women who do express anti-white and anti-male feelings are the logical outgrowth of a society which is racist and sexist. In any case, minority people and white women in general have at this point neither the access nor the power needed to direct club life.)

Minority people and white women can, however, act to perpetuate the white male club. Blacks can be white racists and women can be male sexists. All they need to do is imitate white male behavior.

In order to make sure that the victim is not being blamed, one

examines the club to see if the resources are being equitably distributed; power is being shared; institutions are becoming flexible and responsive to their constituencies; and cultural standards are becoming synergistic.

It is a mistake to think that since the club is the problem, white males are the solution. On the contrary, it takes everyone to change the club.

### Club Alternatives

There is no doubt the club is changing, albeit all too slowly. There is also no doubt that today the club is divided against itself. It is in the midst of political crisis.

Tremendous pressure exists to solve the crisis so that club leadership can close ranks and return to some kind of normalcy. That return does not seem likely for some time. If challenges to the club are sophisticated enough, that return may never come. If ecologists, the poor, white women, and minority people begin a common struggle to humanize the technological order, then normalcy and justice could become colleagues.

If that does not happen, the club will continue old patterns, attempting to pacify and/or eliminate dissent. Either way, the solidarity of the club can be maintained.

### Eliminating Dissent

Overt oppression in which the club mobilizes appropriate force to dominate and control masses of minority people and white women is always a possibility. It need not be conspiratorial. FBI disruption of political groups, the medical experimentation on black males at Tuskegee, the involuntary sterilization of women in North and South

if the  
ly dis-  
hared;  
lexible  
tituen-  
ds are

k that  
white  
On the  
ne to

club is  
slowly.  
today  
itself.  
crisis.  
ists to  
leader-  
turn to  
that re-  
r some  
ub are  
return  
sts, the  
minority  
ruggle  
logical  
justice

n, the  
atterns,  
elimi-  
e soli-  
main-

ch the  
force  
esses of  
women  
eed not  
ruption  
medical  
ales at  
eriliza-  
South



Carolina and Alabama, and continued broken treaties with Native Americans—all of these are ways in which the club controls and oppresses outsiders.

Of particular concern lately is the growing popularity in some governmental circles of works by Edward Banfield, David Armor, and Arthur Jensen—all of which legitimize cutting back Federal programs to aid minorities.

Banfield would cease all aid to cities on the grounds it does no good. Armor has tried to prove that blacks do not benefit from attending better schools through desegregation. Jensen is popularizing white supremacy in the guise of scientific formulations.

Although these theories do not have widespread support in academic circles, they are receiving attention elsewhere and have the potential, if it is not already realized, to become the rationale for restricting programs to change the club's character. Although all three have received much publicity, their critics have not had equal time.

Similarly, many authors are writing books which would justify the current status of women in society. Such titles as *The Inevitability of Patriarchy* by Stephen Goldberg, *Men in Groups* by Lionel Tiger, *Sexual Suicide* by George Gilder, *Manipulated Man* by Esther Vilar, and *The New Chastity* by Midge Decter all offer various rationalizations for the "natural" dominance of man over woman. All these authors implicitly or explicitly attack the goals of the women's movement and label its female advocates psychologically "unbalanced."

## Pacification

The other major alternative strategy used by the club is pacification. This kind of activity is more difficult to identify because it has the appearance of change without its substance. Samuel Yette in his book *The Choice* documents a number of pacification efforts and their outcome. Two particular pacification approaches are gaining popular currency today and need to be examined.

The first approach is color and sex blindness. There was a time when the Federal Government felt that the elimination of racial references from application forms would encourage entry of new employees into the club. Following this line of reasoning, the Government required industry to eliminate all such references from personnel forms and to adopt a non-discriminatory or a sex and color blind policy. Over the years it was found that this policy did not, in fact, produce change.

One could argue that it was never really tried, or that it was tried in a perfunctory fashion. Color and sex blind policies sound on their face to be fair. It is wrong to discriminate. However, to be color and sex blind in a racist and sexist society was to be passive. Everything stayed the same, except the club said the door is open. Hiring and promotion policies continued unexamined. Companies recruited from the same white male campuses. No examination was made of entry requirements or other institutional practices and policies that perpetuated the club ethos.

The Government—in response to increasing demands from blacks and then Chicanos, Native Ameri-

cans, Asians, and now women—has moved to a new policy: affirmative action. This policy requires that large organizations be color and sex conscious in their hiring and promotion. That is a step in the right direction.

But, as this policy begins to take hold, forces are mounting to return to color blindness. For example, a recent Federal district court decision would outlaw Indian preference in the employment practices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on the grounds that it violates provisions of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. In the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, an ombudsman was created to handle internally all complaints of "reverse discrimination" made by white males in colleges and universities affected by Federal contract compliance rules. Complaints made by minorities and women are sent to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission where they could languish for months or even years, given the huge EEOC caseload.

If color and sex blindness is reinstated, it will represent a victory for white male supremacy. Discrimination excludes groups of people on the basis of arbitrary criteria. Racism and sexism, as we have tried to show, involve more than just exclusion. Thus, to move against racism is a more involved and radical process than simply eliminating discrimination. If one is only non-discriminatory, one ends up being racist and sexist.

The second pacification alternative that is gaining popularity within certain circles of the club is encouraging ethnic pluralism. On the one hand, pluralism is an important value and stands in contradiction to the club's tend-

ency to assimilate white males. For that it should be applauded and supported.

However, ethnic consciousness without an understanding of racism and sexism becomes a conspirator with the club to maintain white male control. The reason for this is relatively simple. Ethnic groups have as a part of their history in this country the fact of their whiteness. That fact accrued benefits upon them regardless of their intention or condition. Ethnic groups were able to assimilate if they desired.

This is not to underplay the serious struggles and battles that ethnic groups faced in dealing with the WASP version of the club. However, Poles, Irish, and Italians were eventually able to change their identity to fit into the club. They could become invisible.

Invisibility was not possible for blacks, nor is it really possible for white women. The extent to which white ethnic groups do not recognize their whiteness as a part of their ethnic history in this country is the extent to which they can easily be deluded about their own advancement in the club and manipulated to perceive minority people as their enemy.

### Ending Captivity

No one is free until all are free. In a racist, sexist society all of us are initially captives. The type of captivity may impinge on various racial and sexual groups differently, but its impact is just as destructive. Liberation involves four things—a new self-understanding; a clear self-interest in change; a comprehensive social analysis, and a political strategy and appropriate tactics.



To free oneself from the club and to change it, one must question its assumptions and carve out a new self-understanding—both individually and as a member of a group. Minority people have been involved in that process for a longer time than either white women or white men. White women have made great strides in the last few years.

It is understandable that white men will be the last to see the need for a new self-perception, although an increasing number are beginning to grasp the necessity for a new white male identity.

Nothing is automatic about a new self-understanding. It must be both color and sex conscious, and develops only as a result of disciplined reflection and involvement in change. I get uneasy when I hear anyone say that they have arrived and that they are at a higher level of consciousness than someone else. Such elitism can only lead to alienation between people and a perpetuation of a hierarchical mentality.

Sending each other on guilt trips or punishing each other will not do the job. We need to learn how to affirm ourselves—be we red, brown, yellow, black, or white, male or female. And we need to support each other's struggles in our common quest for a new self-definition.

To work for self-interest is to walk a fine line between selfishness and sacrifice. Many groups new to social change fail to clarify the reasons they are in the change effort. Then when the going gets tough, they drop out.

To be freed from the club we have to be clear why and how the club is not serving our best interests. For some people it may be that it violates their personal integrity to participate in a fundamentally unjust system. For others it may be the realization that they are paying more for housing, crime, and inefficient use of resources to perpetuate an unjust system. For still others it may be the fear that unless things change no one will make it.

No single self-interest argument or reality hits everyone the same way. Each of us has to find his or her own self-interest around particular issues and in the general struggle. Our self-interest may change or it may stay the same. In either case the task is to combine a new self-understanding with a sharpened perception of why we are in the struggle.

Not everyone opposed to the present club arrangement will agree on one economic or political analysis. That is to be expected. However, we must be willing to think through and test out alternatives. Do they end up perpetuating the club? Or do they really change it to benefit all? Perhaps nothing is worse than activists highly committed to change without a plan that outlines what they are changing and toward what ends.

One driving force sustains us in the struggle: the conviction that we are all working for our common liberation and for justice.

# A Resource List For Women

## Research Centers, Institutes, and Clearinghouses

**Advocates for Women**, 654 Market Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94104. An economic development center working on employment and credit discrimination and aiding women starting their own businesses. Offers job workshops, counseling, skill banks, job listings, and blue collar apprenticeships programs in the San Francisco area. Services free. Also available: a directory of women in business in San Francisco (\$2.50).

**Black Women's Employment Project**, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., 10 Columbus Circle, New York, N.Y. 10019. A research and education program planning a nationwide study of discrimination against black women in employment. Interested in class action suits.

**Black Women's Institute**, National Council of Negro Women, 1346 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Sponsors education and research program designed to collect, interpret, and distribute information for and about black women and their families. Operates Resource Service Center which assists women with employment, day care, health, education, legal assistance, and welfare rights.

**Center for the American Woman in Politics**, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903. A non-partisan research and information center committed to increasing knowledge about American women's participation in government and politics. Activities include model educational programs, research, conferences, and disseminating information.

**Center for the Study of Women in Society**, 4339 California Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94118. A nonprofit group affiliated with the Scientific Analysis Corporation, designed to assist research projects about the role and status of women in society.

**Center for Women Policy Studies**, 2000 P Street N.W., Suite 508, Washington, D.C. 20036. A research institute currently working on credit dis-

crimination and the legal and medical treatment of rape victims. Has investigated "Women and Policing," women and Federal programs, and the economic status of women internationally. Project reports available to the public.

**The Feminist Press**, Box 334, College at Old Westbury, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568. Clearinghouse for information on non-sexist education. Projects include workshops on sexism in children's books, in-service courses for teachers, clearinghouse on women's studies, the "Women's Studies Newsletter," and new curriculum materials. Has published more than a dozen paperback feminist biographies, nonsexist children's books, and reprints of various works by women. More to come.

**KNOW, Inc.**, P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221. Nonprofit feminist publisher of reprints, course designs, and other books, and a bulletin, "KNOW News." List of over 200 offerings available (include stamped, self-addressed envelope).

**National Chicana Institute**, P.O. Box 50155, Dallas, Texas 75250. An umbrella group coordinating the activities of several Chicana organizations doing research on problems facing Chicanas.

**NEA Resource Center on Sex Roles in Education**, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Designed to prepare nonsexist materials for schools and community groups, to develop a national clearinghouse, and to provide technical assistance to others doing research and projects. Newsletter available.

**New Feminist Talent**, 250 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. A feminist speakers bureau. Fees for speakers, who include Bella Abzug, Betty Friedan, and Sissy Farenthold, range from \$200 to \$3,000.

**Project on the Status and Education of Women**, Association of American Colleges, 1818 R Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Compiles ma-



materials on the status of women in higher education. Publications available include summaries of pertinent legislation, lists of professional women's caucuses, and a newsletter, "On Campus with Women."

**Women's Action Alliance**, 370 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. Provides organizing assistance and "information packets" on the women's movement, discrimination in State and local government, and the organization of child care centers and women's centers; is developing a nonsexist early childhood education program (description available for 25 cents); maintains a national communications and referral network for women. Also available: "Women's Action Alliance Directory" (of women's groups).

**Women's History Research Center, Inc., Library**, 2325 Oak Street, Berkeley, Calif. 94708. Maintains archives of materials on women's movement; has organized the Women's Periodical Archive, available on microfilm as "Herstory" from Bell and Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio (\$550 for 23 rolls). Also available: "Films by and/or about Women"—a directory of filmmakers, films, and distributors (\$3 to individual women; \$5 to groups, etc.) and price lists of other Center publications (\$1 with stamped, self-addressed envelope).

**Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press**, 3306 Ross Place N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. Researches structure of the communications industry and the role of mass media in maintaining male dominance in society. Newsletter: *Media Report to Women* (\$10 to women, \$15 to others).

**Women's Media Alliance**, 155 East 77th Street, New York, N.Y. 10021. A group of women involved in television and films. Plans include public hearings on discrimination in the media; will use material gathered to set up a resource center. Film showing media abuses is in production.

**Women on Words and Images**, P.O. Box 2163, Princeton, N.J. 08540. Combats sexism in education. Pamphlet, "Dick and Jane as Victims," on sexism in children's texts (\$1.50). Also available, for rent: 25-minute slide show on sex stereotypes in primers.

### Legal Aid Information

**ACLU Women's Rights Project**, 22 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Handles constitutional litigation; lobbies for national legislation, and dis-

seminates information. A book, *The Rights of Women*, by Susan Consuelo Ross, now available from Avon paperbacks (\$.95).

**NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.**, 641 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. The litigation, research, and education arm of the National Organization for Women (tax-exempt). Assists in court cases involving precedents and/or class actions; sponsors public service advertising and other public education projects.

**WEAL Educational and Legal Defense Fund**, 799 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20004. Helps pay costs of legal cases; researches, studies, and publishes information on sex discrimination. In the future: a report on women and fellowship and training awards, and an information center on legal remedies for women in education.

### Women's Centers

Space permits us to list only a few of the many women's centers now operating. Of our four examples, three are of special interest to minority women, and one is of general interest to all women. Such centers as these can serve as models for the development of similar centers in other cities.

**Asian Women's Center**, 722 South Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. 90005. An organization devoted to the needs of Asian women, with programs concerning education, drug abuse, health, child development, and general counseling.

**Black Women Organized for Action**, P.O. Box 15072, San Francisco, Calif. 94115. Maintains talent bank of black women; monitors government activities, and publishes a newsletter with job listing. Is planning a program of nonpartisan political education.

**Chicana Service Action Center**, 5340 E. Olympic Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif. 90022. Handles job placements and training, and provides supportive services and counseling concerning welfare, immigration, child care, etc. Publishes "SAC Newsletter."

**Rape Crisis Center**, P.O. Box 21005, Washington, D.C. 20009. Handles counseling and medical and legal referrals for rape victims. Holds classes in self-defense, and has available several pamphlets on counseling, setting up a crisis center, and on changing rape laws. Has become a national clearinghouse for information on rape.

## *Reading and Viewing:*

### **Forgotten Women**

**Asian Women** (1971). A first-of-its-kind compilation of essays, fiction, poetry, and personal reflections, all by Asian women on such subjects as "herstory," third world women, and the politics of womanhood. For copies, write to Asian Women's Class, 3405 Dwinelle Hall, University of California at Berkeley.

**Amerasia Journal** (Spring 1974). Entire issue will be devoted to women. For copies, write to Asian American Studies Center Publications, P.O. Box 24A43, Los Angeles, Calif. 90024).

**The Black Scholar**. Two special issues: "The Black Woman" (December, 1971) and "Black Women's Liberation" (March-April, 1973). The first contains essays on the history and current situation of black women, by Angela Davis, Shirley Chisholm, *et al.*, with an annotated bibliography. The second emphasizes the

relationship between sexism and racism, including articles on the black male, sex stereotypes, and the black middle class, by such authors as Barbara Sizemore and Mae C. King.

**Black Women in White America**, ed. by Gerda Lerner (New York: Random House, 1972). A documentary history including speeches, letters, poems, and essays covering slavery, education, racist sexism, work, achievements, and almost every other conceivable aspect of the lives of black women in the United States. Lerner notes the double invisibility of black women, and has, with this collection, done much to combat it.

**Womanpower: The Movement for Women's Liberation**, by Cellestine Ware (New York: Tower Publications, Inc., 1970). An excellent account of the development of the women's move-

ment in the late 1960's, together with an analysis of the relationship of black women to women's liberation.

**La Mujer—en pie de lucha,** ed. by Dorinda Moreno (Mexico City: Espina del Norte Publications, 1973). An anthology, including photos, poetry, and articles (in English and Spanish) focusing on the struggle of Chicanas against sexism, racism, and exploitation.

**"The Mexican-American Woman,"** by Henriqueta Longaux y Vasquez in *Sisterhood is Powerful*, ed. by Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970). This short article examines the dilemmas of Chicanas as potential members of two movements: women's rights and the Chicano struggle, with particular attention to the plight of the Chicana as a single head of household.

**"Economic Organization and the Position of Women Among the Iroquois,"** by Judith K. Brown (*Ethnohistory*, Vol. 17, pp. 151-167, 1970). A scholarly but readable comparison of the position of women in Iroquois society to that of Bemba women in Northern Rhodesia. The author outlines how the "high status of Iroquois women was the result of their control of the economic organization of their tribe."

**"Who Cares That A Woman's Work Is Never Done?"** by Mary E. Fleming Mathur. (*Indian Historian*), Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer, 1971). Mathur urges cross-cultural comparisons of the roles of women and surveys some work already done. She argues that liberation for any group is possible only through acquisition of economic power. Many references will be

obscure to the lay leader, but these do not seriously detract from the article's value.

**The New Indians,** by Stan Steiner (New York: Harper and Row, 1968). Chapter on "The Changing Women," in particular, notes the important role of Indian women in much traditional life and in the current Native American movement.

**La Igualdad de Derechos y Oportunidades de la Mujer Puertorriquena** (San Juan: Commission on Civil Rights of Puerto Rico, 1972). A comprehensive survey of the position of women in Puerto Rican society, covering education, employment, economics, legal status, marriage, and the family, with recommendations for change. Includes biographies of noted women and a major bibliography.

**The Puerto Rican Woman,** by Federico Ribes Tovar (New York: Plus Ultra Educational Publishers, Inc., 1972). A simple history of Puerto Rican women, from the arrival of the Spanish to the present, covering slavery, conquest, cultural life, and politics. This book is not unflawed, but should serve as an introduction to the story of Puerto Rican women.

**Hillbilly Women,** by Kathy Kahn (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1973). Kahn has written an introduction and explanatory notes to tie together interviews with several Appalachian women. They tell of hard times in mining and mill country and hillbilly slums, and of their participation in the fight for decent wages, black lung benefits, and welfare rights.

**Absent from the Majority,**

by Nancy Seifer (New York: National Project on Ethnic America, American Jewish Committee, 1973). This 85-page pamphlet surveys the effects of the last three decades on white working class women, and concludes that change is just beneath the surface. Increased community organizing, demographic change, and the women's movement are all affecting the attitudes of white ethnic women—which could in turn mean enlarging the coalition for social change.

**Welfare Careers and Low Wage Employment,** by Joe A. Miller and Louis A. Ferman (Springfield, Va.: National Technical Information Service, 1972). A Detroit study comparing the labor market experiences of working welfare recipients and non-welfare low-wage workers, which concludes: "The startling fact is that on each indicator women fare more poorly than men, even when the race factor is taken into account. . . . For Detroit, at least, sexism reinforces racism and is more important in accounting for the prevalence of low wage incomes." (To order, refer to "PB 22197.")

**Women in Prison,** by Kathryn Watterson Burkhart (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1973). Burkhart describes how women get into prison, what happens to them there, and what happens to them when they get out. The outrageous, arbitrary, cruel, and destructive practices of America's prisons for women are outlined in a calm and compassionate narrative. Interviews with prisoners and officials detail the peculiar effects of sexism, among other things, on women prisoners.

U. S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20425

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE: \$300

POSTAGE & FEES PAID

U. S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

CONTROLLED CIRCULATION RATE



