

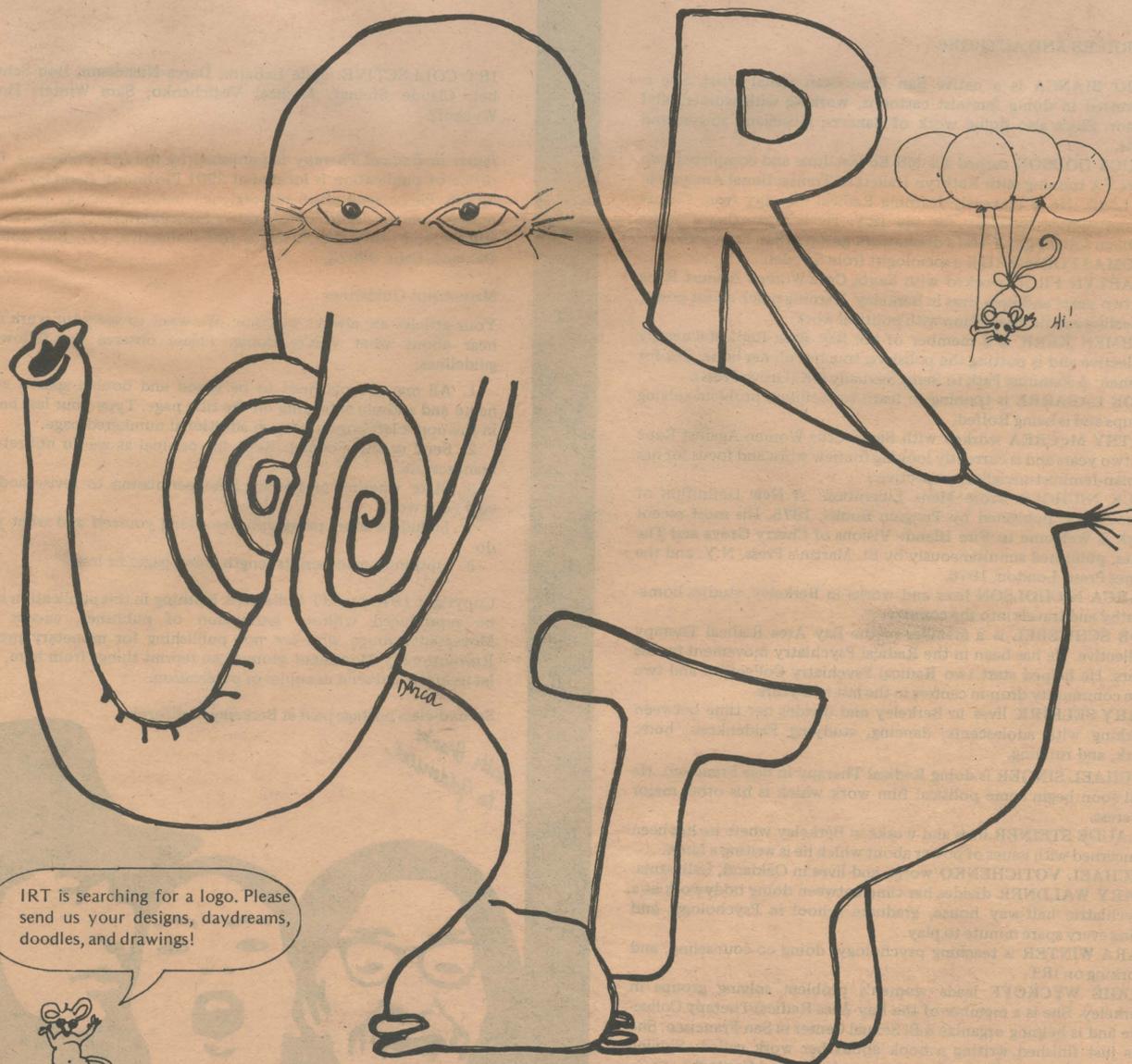
# Radical Therapy

Corruption of Feminism

Working Cooperatively Men's Sexuality

Against Rape Women Loving

Reclaiming Mysticism



IRT is searching for a logo. Please send us your designs, daydreams, doodles, and drawings!



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## Manuscript Guidelines

Your articles are always welcome. We want to see your work and hear about what you're doing. Please observe the following guidelines:

1. All manuscripts need to be typed and double spaced with name and address appearing on the title page. Type your last name in the upper left corner of each additional numbered page.
2. Send us three copies. Keep the original as we do not return manuscripts.
3. State whether or not we have permission to revise and/or edit your work.
4. Include a short paragraph describing yourself and what you do.
5. Optimum manuscripts length is ten pages or less.

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# EDITORIAL

The beginning of winter has found the IRT Collective and workers in high spirits and good health. We are looking forward to the holidays, a new year, and a new volume of IRT, Volume 5. We hope in this new volume to have more manuscripts from you, our readers. We wonder if some of you are not sending us your thoughts for fear of not having enough writing technique.

Please be aware that IRT is not a literary journal. Great writing is not our central purpose. We encourage a non-academic style of writing, a simple language that all can understand. We are looking for manuscripts that are both personal and political. Some of the subjects we would be especially interested in seeing are: Monogamy, Bisexuality, Violence, Money, and Menopause. The deadline for the next issue will be January 26. We hope to hear from you. We need your help to make this journal a place where Radical Therapists and people everywhere can share their ideas, communicate, and learn from one another. We are also looking for a logo and are having a hard time coming up with one. Again we would greatly appreciate your contributions. Please send any drawings, doodles, daydreams, or ideas you might have in this direction. Let us hear from you!

In closing we would like to wish all of you a happy holiday season and a successful new year.

Bruce Dodson for the IRT Collective

This issue contains important contributions to the men's movement. The men's movement of the early 70's was a reaction to the women's movement and seemed to be dictated by the notion that anything male was bad, that if you are a man you should feel guilty and try to abandon all that you are. As Carmen Kerr points out in "The Corruption of Feminism," man-hating *per-se* is not feminism. In Jack Nichol's article on "Men's Liberation" we see a step in an important new direction. He appeals to the basic androgynous human spirit and asserts that men are fully capable of tenderness, empathy, loving kindness, and receptivity without ceasing to be men. He points out that men have been stripped of their best virtues because being "masculine" is pushed on them "with greater urgency than even religious beliefs," but that the androgynous spirit is there to be reclaimed.

Claude Steiner's review of Brownmiller's book on rape speaks to this point. We see here an example of a man striving to regain his deepest

sense of empathy. In this culture men are permitted to have intellectual or moral support for women who have been raped; but they may not keep their nerve endings raw to it. Claude's article also takes the controversial position that rape may be something in addition to an act of violence. It may be a most distorted and desperate attempt at attaining warmth. This type of understanding points to the necessity for men to learn about real tenderness, warmth, nurturing, and how they have been twisted by sexism. Men must regain their most oppressed part, their ability to love.

In "Sexism and Male Sexuality," Michael Singer draws the connection between the internalized oppression of men and the bad sexual experiences it creates. He notes the important contributions of some of the sex therapies, but also points to their lack of a social-political analysis. The article concludes with some things that men can do differently to improve their relationships and sexuality.

The men's movement is beginning to define its own dimensions apart from its companion, the women's movement. We are happy to make a contribution.

Bob Schwebel for the IRT Collective

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# THE CORRUPTION OF FEMINISM

By Carmen Kerr

Feminism, like a notorious woman, has gained a bad reputation recently through no fault of her own. Feminism is being misunderstood: interpreted as a man-hating movement, as a political moral code, as an anti-average-woman, anti-heterosexual movement supported by angry, ugly women and wimpy, academic men. So how did a movement dedicated to loving women and bringing the sexes together as equals get so misunderstood?

Feminism, like any prominent and powerful movement for change, has many followers and proponents, some good, some not so good. Although the overwhelming majority of those who support feminism give her a good name, there is a vocal minority of followers who corrupt the movement by



espousing it for their own ulterior purposes, both personal and political. This causes factionalism and divisiveness among women and between women and men.

This phenomenon within the movement I love pains me and enrages me. I observe that some current trends within feminism are actually damaging and dividing women rather than helping and uniting them. Although only a small minority of the women in the movement are involved, their voices are loud and their actions strong. It is time to take note of them, as I fear their influence will continue to alienate many women and men from our movement, a loss we can't afford.

It appears that as we women gain power and our movement consolidates its force and energy, we have become liable to the same

sorts of corruption we have so earnestly fought against in other organizations. These corruptions we have labeled "male," "capitalistic," "competitive" and "individualistic." I am concerned that in our ignorance of the uses and, consequently the abuses, of power, feminists, as they gain power have unwittingly adopted some of the abusive means of using it. For instance, I see some women wielding feminism as a club, using it as moral justification to gain their own ends and to reinforce their own prejudices. Even feminism has been co-opted in some places as a competitive power tool.

The tragedy of this is that while it hurts our sisters and causes major schisms within the women's movement only, the victims of the corruption of feminism are directly aware of what is occurring, and they are too intimidated by it to expose it. As women, our strongest powers, traditionally, are those of intuition and emotion, particularly nurturing. As we are being run over by women who have learned to use more masculine power moves, those of linear, so-called logical reasoning and political manipulation (including anger, verbal violence, ostracism and arbitrary rules), we often know only, that "It feels bad." We're at a loss to articulate why — much less stop it. Colluding with this is our feminist's feeling of sisterhood and loyalty to other women. It is our prejudice that all women are good and fair (as opposed to all men are bad and unfair), and we are made powerless to speak our observations because we don't want to confront and possibly hurt the feelings of other women. For months now women have complained to me, in angry whispers, about how they have experienced women being competitive with them, and turning against them all in the name of feminism. "I thought we were on the same side," more than one astonished woman has gasped. Yet when I suggest they speak up, they reply, "Are you kidding? If I complained I'd have to change my name and move to Siberia."

Men, on the other hand, are completely immobilized and don't dare being critical. I mean, who listens to them anyway?

So, it is with great concern for the women's movement and from a loving desire to defend the great Lady Feminism from her detractors that this paper is written. I cannot stand the cold and I have already changed my name once. So this is it.

Let's start at the beginning with defining what feminism is. The meaning has gotten pulled off course like a boat in the currents of a big sea of factions. My mother, who considers herself a feminist, pointed this out to me the other night. After seeing Patty Hearst referred to as a feminist on T.V. she asked, "What's a feminist these days, anyway?" That's a good question, Mom.

But before giving our working definition, I want to take this opportunity to throw some well-deserved mud at the master corruptor itself, The Media. I want to thank the media for doing a good hatchet job on feminism. Until newspapers and radio and TV and magazines with their penchant for sensationalism came along, we all

had a pretty good idea of what we were talking about when we spoke of feminism and the women's movement. Then the media men got scared of women united, sensationalized us, and featured our most angry, our most radical, our most desperate and offensive spokeswomen and their tactics. Those bra-burnings the press reported probably never happened, and yet to this day that's the one major image many women and men have of women's liberation. Media, to repeat an old cliché, does not present a balanced view. They rarely mention the equally important, sober, loving, moderate women who support feminism. They choose, instead, to inform us



that only outrageous women are active in women's liberation, those who are angry, crazy, gay, or lack media beauty. For instance, the press eagerly jumped on the SLA women as perfect examples of what happens to nice girls who become feminists. Patty Hearst was characterized by media as rich, simpleminded, a bank robber, a nymphomaniac, a radical, and — and — and — yep: a feminist. The press doesn't just pick on radical women, though. They'll take on any uppity woman. Barbara Walters, for example, was smeared by fellow newsmen when she landed her million dollar job. The headlines gave us locker room gossip about what a bitch she is, how competitive, how unladylike, proving to us, once again that a woman may be liberated but she'll have no men friends. Stay in line, girls!

I think it is primarily due to the media's misrepresentations of the women's movement that feminism has come to have such a bad name nationwide. If the media failed to cover the angrier and more divisive feminists quite as often then we wouldn't give them so much credence when we run into them in daily life. If media treated feminism with the same respect it treats Henry the K's shuttle diplomacy or male political candidates' election year antics, the national impression of feminism would be of an important, significant, serious movement.

So much for that. Back to defining feminism. I spoke with a number of women and men who work at the heart of the movement, and from the boiler-rooms

came this composite definition. A *feminist is a woman or man who feels in their soul and expresses in their life a love for women.* This love respects women as as peers; and supports women's liberation both politically and personally. Feminism is being for women, being proud to be a woman, proud to love women, rejoicing in woman power. Feminism advocates the end to sex roles, seeing such roles as oppressive to both sexes. Feminism is androgynous, a blending of the best of male and female power. It is holistic, not divisive.

As feminism becomes popular, as it slowly gains respect as a force to be reckoned with, opportunists, like carpetbaggers, have appeared

to co-opt the movement. They forgot, if they ever knew, the root definition of feminism as woman-loving. Almost anyone can use feminism to his or her own advantage — it's a powerful force. I've divided the corruptors, those who abuse feminism, into four groups: Manhaters, "The New Working Class," Plastic Feminists, and Uncle Moms.

#### Manhaters

\* *When Lloyd Metale, 45, Sammy Thomas, 26, David Rosen, 37, and Clyde Caruso, 65, members of a San Francisco group discussing sexuality, hear the word "feminist" spoken, they all respond in kind. They get red in the face, wave their arms frantically, and puff, "Feminism — it's manhating! Human liberation is what we need!"*

\* *Linda Silvertouch and Lucy Wilson used to be closest of friends, and they still struggle in the same women's group. But their friendship ended when Linda became gay and stopped taking Lucy seriously. "A woman who's not gay is a male-identified woman and not a true feminist!" she pronounced. Lucy disagreed. Their women's group, torn by the issue, battles for survival. Lucy and Linda say "political contradictions" terminated their friendship.*

Some women have misinterpreted woman-loving as meaning man-hating. There are a couple of levels of this. There is a fairly large group of women who say they are feminists solely because they can do without men, don't particularly like them, and yet are no more allied to women than they are to

men. (Many of these women still think Prince Charming is out there.) There is a smaller group of women who truly hate men and often this group has a high proportion of nouveau-gay lesbian separatists.

Whatever the level of male dislike, however, it colludes nicely with the media version of feminism as an organized movement of anti-men women. Thus, many sexist men who fear being an endangered species and other men who are just afraid of women, period, like to point justifying fingers at the anti-male factions and say, "See, we told you so." This man-hating reputation offends many women, particularly third world women (who see their men as often more oppressed and needing support).

I am not saying that men are wonderful, that they are just as oppressed as we are, and that we should feel sorry for them and bail them out of their misery — not at all. I am merely saying we should be more fair and realistic and begin to look at men as individuals, rather than as the creepy enemy: "Them." We must understand that there are men around, few though they may be, who are working just as hard to acquire feminist awareness as women are. When we are angry at men, it is hard to believe this, I know. As a woman who's punched men and drawn blood in response to sexism, I know that blinding rage. But at the same time, I've wept at meetings seeing women angrily trashing men who sit by, eyes downcast, taking it. Just last week a feminist man recounted how a woman in his collective said, in a matter-of-policy tone, "No matter how nice they seem, underneath it all, all men are fucked." The other women in the collective nodded their heads in uncertain agreement. Naturally, the man is now quite worried about his emotional safety in a group of such negatively opinioned women. We must keep in mind that sexism oppresses both women and men (though in different percentages, for sure) and be critical of both sexes in those terms.

Each woman, each of us, goes through the rage phase of the dialectical process of consciousness raising and woman self-awareness. In this valuable and necessary process we hit a point of realization in which we refuse to put up with male hoo-ha, refuse to acquiesce to men the way we have all our lives, and react to each male as if he is an infecting germ in the soft and vulnerable tissue of our new womanly self esteem. We see little in men that is exciting or interesting, and we prefer the company of loving, warm sisters who validate who we are and don't make us feel crazy. This anger is purifying. It burns out the old unhealthy tissue of sexist sex role adaptation and leaves healthy tissue for a fresh viewpoint and a new start. Emerging from this anger, our lives are changed, our attitudes toward men radically changed.

If we decide to continue to relate to men, we demand relating to them as equals. This is not easy, and can be frustrating, patience-trying, and — god knows — lonely. We may decide we aren't really interested in relating to men and decide to devote our energies to women. I wholeheartedly support

women who do not want to deal with men emotionally, politically, or sexually. What I do not support is being told by contemptuous women who have decided not to relate to men that since I have chosen to relate to the "enemy" I am not a true, of-the-faith feminist.

Lesbian separatists beliefs about the true nature of feminism have caused a lot of pain in my life. I've lost a number of close women friends over this him-or-me issue. So when did being anti-male become a political stand for feminists? Since when does being a feminist mean not liking men? It looks to me like a few angry women with new consciousness made that decision for us. They began imposing their beliefs on us all-too-guilty heterosexual and bisexual women. We were susceptible through our sexuality, which we were just as insecure about as everything else in our newly emerging personalities. "Maybe I am gay," we'd ponder. We felt we ought to be expressing our love for women physically, too, to prove how liberated we were. The anger of separatist gay women looked more right-on, more serious than ours and we admired their ability to cut off men so absolutely, resolutely, even fiercely. Separatists were more-feminist-than-thou and we didn't dare argue.

The pressure to be anti-male is incredible. It does afford some occasional comic relief, though. Like seeing heterosexual women arriving at women's groups meetings: they have their male friends drop them off around the corner so they won't be spotted covorting with the enemy. Or seeing an advertisement at a woman's coffee house: "I am a dyke cobbler. I fix dyke shoes." How do you tell a dyke shoe from a straight or bisexual shoe? If we could chuckle at these extremes instead of feeling intimidated, they would lose some of their toxicity.

But, on the whole, this is no laughing matter. The divisive damage this causes is widely scattered. It factionalizes many women's organizations. It is used to create in-groups and out-groups. Women from a local self-help clinic told me that in an economic crunch gayness was used to determine who was a real feminist and who wasn't. Those who weren't considered "lifelong feminists" — that is, gay — were fired when the clinic ran low on funds. You don't need to be heterosexual to get ostracized, though. Bisexual women, viewed by manhaters as fence-straddlers, fear discussing sexuality with gay women, fearful of getting trashed for their heterosexual "privilege." Even other gay women steer clear of the angry, anti-male set and become aloof from feminism. Explained one, "I don't want to tow a party line." And as I noted earlier, anti-male attitudes convince men that there is nothing in feminism for them but castration.

Whatever their degree of male dislike, it appears that some women have found in the women's movement a vehicle for manhating. They have interpreted feminism to mean "women only" and it has provided them with a powerful political doctrine which can be used to sanction anti-male sentiments as a valid expression of woman-loving. This isn't feminism: this is reverse sexism. Personally, I don't take a feminist seriously unless she has a reasonably positive attitude about at least one male friend. That assures me that her feminism is probably founded on woman-loving and is not merely reactionary manhating.



"The New Working Class"

*\* Sylvia Davis, feminist, looking for a communal living situation with political people, reports being shocked by a question asked her during one interview. "They asked me, 'What did your father do for a living?' I told them it was none of their damn business. Apparently they don't want any middle-class feminist roommate, only working class will do."*

Because feminism radicalizes, that is, changes at the root, a person's social opinions and attitudes, it naturally radicalizes their political ones, too. Consequently, many feminists consider themselves to be members of the political Left. When asked for their ID nametags,



any variety of ideologies are espoused: Marxist feminists, Socialist feminists, Generic Communist feminists — and I know one woman feminist who defines herself as a pagan socialist. There are any number of ways to be Left!

However, it is precisely this opportunity for variety and self-definition which lends itself to a corruption of feminism by political factionalism. The Left is in disarray right now — no one is exactly sure where Left is any more. Since we do not have a central focus, where Left is relative. Many groups swear that Left is where they stand, while others say Left is nowhere. The Left membership is in the process of deciding just who it is, and since feminism is inextricably a part of the current leftist philosophy, just what real feminism is gets bounced around in this debate. Feminism is the tennis ball of the politically chic, and the concepts get batted about by competitive Lefter-Than-Thou players in the big game of deciding who's really politically right-on, who's really Left.

This corrupts feminism by dividing us up into camps, camps very often made distinctive only by jargon and hairsplitting ideological differences, not true, significant theoretical differences. Such differences usually reek of competitive intellectualizing, men and women doing macho brain battling trying to have the last definitive word. For instance when a woman I used to work with left my collective and joined a new one she announced, "We have major political differences."

"Oh," I begged, "what are they?" I wanted enlightenment, not wanting to be politically passé. So far the only response I've gotten is some garbled generalizations about class differences and anti-imperialism. She won't be specific about what these class differences mean and how it all fits in with anti-imperialism, but apparently it means we can't talk to each other and it means she's more political than I am.

This class difference politic, from what I can see, is the next major cause of feminist factionalization after the gay/straight split. It's very in right now to have a complete theory of class analysis justifying your work. And it's very cool to be from working class roots, and if you can swing it, to come from some ghetto. The flip side of this, is that it's very out to be middle, especially upper-middle, class. Oh, curse that suburban feminism. The reason for this, of course, is based on the Marxist philosophy that the people, the workers, will start the Revolution, as they were the most oppressed people. Therefore, those on the Lefter-Than-Thou Left have simplistically concluded that the working class is the true bed of the Revolution and that just having a working class background qualifies one to be a true daughter, or son, of the Revolution. I say simplistically because in American society, classes are not easily and neatly defined, and the lines between the bourgeoisie and the working class are blurred. Feminists who adhere to the philosophy that working class is best apply this standard to feminists, too: "the new working class" feminist has become the fashion plate of the movement, she's the true feminist, the true revolutionary. But she's not really working class at all. If you look closely, you're likely to find she's a middle-class, or upper-middle-



## SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW HELEN REDDY. WELL, THINK AGAIN.



Whatever your musical tastes, you must be aware of Helen Reddy. Because Helen Reddy is more than a vocalist. Helen Reddy is vocal. She makes a statement. Whether it be performing at colleges and state fairs or on stage at Las Vegas' MGM Grand Hotel; on television as host of the highly-rated *Midnight Special*; on film; or in song, on one of her Capitol albums. And her statement says, "I represent an attainable goal... that a woman can make it in the world and still be true to herself."

class, woman with working-class aspirations.

The consequences of this working-class glorification provide some tragi-comedy for the observer. One chuckles watching people weave dramatic tales of working-class hardship when, in fact, their daddy was a doctor, or a bureaucrat, or a lawyer, or whatever middle-class occupation he had which has now ruined his child's Left credentials. The tragic part is watching this sort of class competition alienate middle-class and working-class women and men from a movement which needs them and they it. Add to this the bias of the bad press such factionalism gets—the media leap at every chance to make feminists look like bickering old maids—and we find a most distressing phenomenon: both middle-class and working-class women are put off by feminism.

Middle-class women are put off because they perceive it as a put-down of all they are. They understand it will require them to give up all they ever stood for and believed in—men, family, their politics. The snotty attitude of some Leftist feminists toward our sisters in suburbia and middle-income land is alienating, and not representative of the majority of the feminist movement. The New Working Class sees these women as softies, those who have lived the easy life, and whose feminism is liberal. Middle-class women leave this brand of feminism alone—they can tell where they're not wanted. Besides, what does this hard-line political feminism have to offer a middle-class woman but bad vibes and putdowns?

The new working class alienates real working class women too. They are intimidated by these middle class women talking knowledgeable of working class oppression and consciousness. But talk and experience are not one and the same and working class women can spot the phonies and they're not impressed. Complained a real working class woman to me, "I have a lot of differences with their middle class ideas of the working class, but I'm afraid to speak up. They're very insistent and they think they're right." The new working class responds to such complaints disdainfully: they believe working class women are uneducated, inarticulate, have low consciousness, and don't know anything about politics. So, the real working class tends to steer clear, when possible, and allow their voices to be drowned out by the vocal power manipulations of their more comfortably articulate middle and upper-class sisters.

#### Plastic Feminists

*\* Laura Kane, feminist, met charming Carl Dancer, at a party. He swept her off her feet by saying, "I'm a feminist, too. Women really have had it bad." He thrilled her by pointing out the sexist behavior of other men at the party, while quoting Brownmiller and Marx. "He was warm, nurturing, and didn't pressure me for sex," Laura recalls. "As soon as sex happened, though, wouldn't you know it, he accused me of wanting a relationship when all I wanted was a fun roll in the hay. Some men become possessive. But Carl acted like I was carrying a bridal veil in my pocket and a ball and chain with his name on it behind my back. It took me a while to realize how sexist he was. When I told him he shouted me down." Laura angrily concluded, "He's a 7-11 feminist — pretty but plastic."*

As happens with every popular movement, there are those people who participate in it like they would in any fad. They don't feminism, then, with the same enthusiasm as they do Gucci shoes or pre-washed Levis. The men who profess to be feminist do so because it provides them with "liberated" sex and the image of being a nice guy, un-macho. (It's macho these days not to be macho.) The women who profess to be feminist do so because they know it is fashionable and they know that men are turned on to their free-wheelin', liberated image.

Plastic feminists look like the real thing. They sound good, appear genuine. They are convincing because they themselves believe in their sincerity. They are not consciously scheming people. They are consumers who have adopted an attitude superficially, didn't bother to explore the depths of it, and are even unaware that there are depths to be explored.

Because men are able to make an easier distinction between an intellectual belief and a gut one, they are often absolutely convinced that they are feminists, supporters of women's liberation, because they *think* they are and because they intellectually accept its rightness. But typically, their understanding goes as deep as: women should get equal pay for equal work, pay their own way on dates, and be sexually liberated. That is, available and aggressive with no questions asked, and birth control (preferably the Pill) taken care of. These men's guts, however, have not changed. It takes getting personally close to these men, as close as having sex with them, to realize this. Then, ouch! the lady gets burned.



Linda Etkoff 1970

POEM IN WHICH MY LEGS ARE ACCEPTED

Author unknown

Legs!

How we have suffered each other,  
never meeting the standards of magazines or official measurements.

I have hung you from trapezes,  
sat you on wooden rollers,  
pulled and pushed you  
with the anxiety of taffy,  
and still, you are yourselves!

Most obvious imperfection, blight on my fantasy life,  
strong,  
plump,  
never to be skinny  
or even hinting of the svelte beauties in history books  
or Sears catalogues.

Here you are — solid, fleshy and  
white as when I first noticed you, sitting on the toilet,  
spread softly over the wooden seat,  
having been with me only twelve years,  
yet  
as obvious as the legs of my thirty-year-old gym teacher.

Legs!

O that was the year we did acrobatics in the annual gym show.  
How you split for me!

One handed cartwheels  
from this end of the gymnasium to  
the other,  
ending in double splits,  
legs you flashed in blue rayon slacks my mother bought  
for the occasion  
and though you were confidently swinging along,  
the rest of me blushed at the sound of clapping.

Legs!

How I have worried about you, not able to hide you,  
embarrassed at beaches, in high school  
when the cheerleader's slim brown legs  
spread all over  
the sand  
with the perfection  
of bamboo.

I hated you, and still you have never given out on me.

With you

I have risen to the top of blue waves,

With you

I have carried food home as a loving gift  
when my arms began unjellying like madrilenne.

Legs, you are a pillow

white and plentiful with feathers for his head.

You are the endless scenery

behind the tense sinewy elegance of his two dark legs.

You welcome him joyfully

and dance.

And you will be the locks in the new canal between continents.

The ship of life will push out of you and rejoice  
in the whiteness,  
in the first floating and rising of water.



The little scenario at the beginning of this section summarized an example of the plastic feminist male's behavior. He is a Jekyll and Hyde. As Jekyll he is charming, nurturing, patient, and sporting a high consciousness. But as soon as intimacy — that is sex — is experienced, Mr. Hyde the Sexist surfaces, mostly in terms of double standards and sexist expectations about women. It is this kind of man who often provides the justification for the anti-male feelings of separatists and more moderate anti-male women. "Snakes in the grass" is how a woman in group described Mr. Plastic Feminist.

The same Jekyll-Hyde qualities apply to a female plastic feminist. She looks, talks, walks, like a sister, but in times of scarcity, or times of trouble, her true colors show: she runs for where the boys are, and supports them all the way. It took me a long time to be able to understand this behavior because for years I assumed that feminist meant sister, and that included every woman without question who said she supported women's liberation. But I found out the hard way that every feminist is not a sister.

A plastic feminist woman is feminist because it is fashionable to be a feminist. She's a woman who follows the flow of power and she's as willing to take advantage of her so-called sisters as she is of the men she usually depends on. A major ulterior motive of hers is that she wants to attract those men who are attracted to the image of the trendy, independent, sexually liberated women because such men are powerful and exciting. She may be economically independent, sexually free and be considered a "liberated woman," but she's not necessarily a feminist.

In fact, she openly prefers men to women's company. When she's depressed and needing a lift, she'll habitually seek out men rather than women for a pick-me-up. When she wants to have fun, she first seeks a man. And when she meets a man and plunges into a crush, her women friends may not see her for weeks, until the crush is over and her heart is broken. She then calls on her sisters to piece her back together. She may use women for sympathetic counseling in times of trouble, but she goes to men for the advice she follows and the strokes she really values.

Plastic feminists reveal their disregard of other women by saying telling things like, "I'm a liberated woman, but women bore me." But the amount of boredom and abuse they'll tolerate from men is sometimes mindboggling. To illustrate how deeply ingrained in women is a higher dependency and value placed on men than on women, I will use an extreme and graphic example: the use of anger by a woman who was raped. I used her response because the situation, run on raw emotion, clearly showed how sexist is the socialized, ingrained female response to women vs. men. In everyday life, it often takes numerous small incidents to understand this, but this situation showed it at once. I do not intend by using this example to further hurt this woman or suggest that she did anything wrong in her post-rape state of fear and con-

fusion. I use it to show how deep runs sexism and how cruelly it keeps us apart.

This woman had just been brutally raped. She called herself a feminist, but she refused to call the local rape crisis center for counseling and support. So I took her under my wing. It seemed as we went through the day together that what she didn't dare say or do to men, she did to women. When women clumsily tried to offer her sympathy by recounting their own rapes, she angrily repulsed them. But she never expressed anger at any of the men involved or around her — including the rapist. Rather, she expressed concern regarding the mental condition of her rapist; for her male lover, who told her getting raped was principally her own fault (he said she wasn't centered) she mentioned only a fleeting twinge of anger; and she praised the kind policeman who interviewed her in the hospital. But for the women who offered her sisterly care, she had rote thank yous and angry outbursts. As a result, not only I but the many women who cared for her, felt hurt and angry in the end, our generosity and care disregarded and of little value. In anger she left the guest room we offered and returned to seek comfort from her male friend. That women could not reach each other at such a painful time which so tragically showed the violence of sexism and the need for feminism, made it clear that sisterhood is powerful, but sexism often more so.

Plastic feminists, male and female, corrupt feminism like any group of consumers who attach themselves to a fashionable idea and with their lack of real involvement vulgarize and caricature it. There is no such thing as the perfect feminist, but there is a gut awareness of feminism which is very important. That actions speak louder than words may be a trite thought, but certainly true, regarding the understanding of feminism. It is action in personal relationships which separates sincere feminists from the plastic variety.

#### Uncle Moms

\* "What has feminism done for you?" a reporter asks Jane Muir, older woman, prominent psychologist and writer who is riding high on the crest of the women's movement: "Absolutely nothing," blurts sister Jane. "I made it on my own."

Uncle Moms, or Queen Bees, are the elder stateswomen of feminism, the women who made it to the top like men did, using individual initiative and competitiveness. They gained power — became important people, like heads of departments, prominent doctors, successful businesswomen, writers, artists, and so forth. Women, learning to be powerful and independent now, look to these women for role models and examples of how to win. But Uncle Moms reject the women's movement and the women in it who admire them.

We look to them as our idols, these are our heroines, our mentors. They are the strong, pioneering women who did wonderful and inventive things long before a movement was formed. We

read their herstories, see their works, hear their viewpoints. We are inspired. Their examples give us courage and strength to be as persevering, to count on success. We love these women. They are our universal mothers and grandmothers.

So it is painful when one of these older women disavows the value of the women's movement and says feminism hasn't done anything for her. This is particularly so when she denounces the very women who have given her popularity and support, those women who are feminists, those women in the movement. It hurts feminism when Uncle Moms denounce feminists as nagging, helpless, young and spoiled, and when they make it clear they support a few individual women, but not the movement as a whole.

I can sympathize, or at least understand, why they do this. As Ruby Lee, a 76-year-old bronco-riding champ of the 1919 National Rodeo, saltily states, "A woman's always been able to do what she damn well pleases. I always have. Only man I ever listen to is my doctor." Ruby Lee, like many other spunky women, made it without sisters. She did it alone in a man's world. It was a long hard climb and women like her take pride in wanting their experiences recognized for what it is — a triumph of the individual against the odds. Supporting the women's movement can take away that shiny badge of independent achievement, make her appear one of many, rather than one unique.

But such aloof, competitive behavior to prove her point shows a lack of understanding of feminism and a myopic vision of her own road to success. That road which she views as a narrow, unpaved one which she traveled along alone but for a few rides from powerful men, was not absent of other women. Many women have been down that road before and smoothed and widened her way. Women have been together for centuries, as witches, midwives, suffragettes. And behind every apparently individual woman's success story were strong mothers and daughters and sisters and grandmothers and nannas. Women weren't officially organized, they weren't given social recognition, and they hardly knew the others out there struggling for women. No woman made it all by herself. Another woman, other women, helped her, even if she didn't see them, even if they only cleared one pebble from her path — she benefitted from their efforts.

So today, when an Uncle Mom announces feminism has done absolutely nothing for her, she forgets herstory, she offends the goddesses, she walks on the graves of her pioneering foresisters. It is true she succeeded without an organized force behind her, without her weekly CR group, without an awareness of sexism. "But the facts are," an older feminist put it, "it sure would have been more fun and a lot easier if I had sisters supporting me."

Feminism is woman-loving. Feminism is support for all women and men to become equals, to become free of sex roles. The corrupters of feminism would make us believe otherwise, but we must stop listening to them. Women are not yet free: we need the strength of our movement. Feminism is powerful. It is unity! It is future. It is a force in and of itself. And we cannot let it be taken from us.



# MEN'S LIBERATION

Jack Nichols

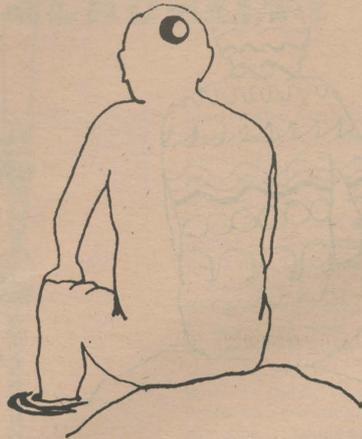
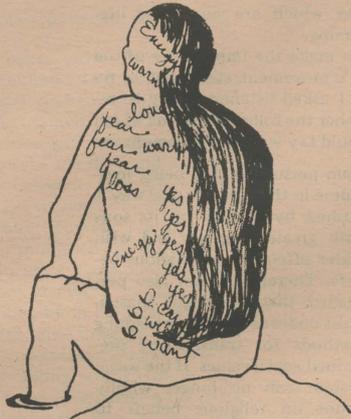
Over a year and a half ago when my book, *Men's Liberation*, was first published, Penguin Books asked me to go on a coast-to-coast tour for publicity purposes. On the surface it was a simple request. In fact I was glad, desperately glad, at the opportunity to go. The tour took me from Florida to New York to Washington, Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Hartford, and Princeton. Along the way when I wasn't speaking to TV and radio moderators, I spoke to congregations of Unitarians face to face. These people helped me keep an eye on the kind of personal responses I was evoking.

The tour assumed an awesome significance for me at the time, for reasons I will now explain. Men's Liberation had been based on my personal experiences rather than on academic research. I had graduated deservedly only from Somerset Elementary School in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and whatever I had learned since graduation day had been the result of what life had taught me, combined with feverish reading done mostly in my late teens and early twenties. But the bulk of my perspective had been vouchsafed to me by an extraordinarily beautiful man, whose comradeship and love I had been fortunate to share for eleven years. His name was Elijah Hayden Clarke (he was better known as Lige) and it was to him that I had dedicated *Men's Liberation*. He had seen the dedication and had helped me proof the book only a few days before he went on a short vacation to the east coast of Mexico. There, on a dark road near Vera Cruz, he was machine-gunned to death by a group of roving bandits. And only a few days later, Penguin Books called and asked me to be ready to tour. "Indeed," I said, "I am ready."

My sense of alarm could have been acute. But Elijah had instilled in me his wonderful knowledge that Life is taking care of itself. I stood at my loved one's graveside on the top of a Kentucky hill, and listened to comforting words spoken by a spirited country woman who intoned what she knew would have been my lover's counsel to any one who had cared for him: "Smile, for I am just away." Thus, it was not difficult for me to smile as I travelled on behalf of the book containing the ideas he had taught me. I knew that his spirit had overtaken me completely and when I spoke, I could feel the warmth of his nurturing laughter in my tones.

Before leaving on the tour nationally, I thought it might be wise to give my men's liberation speech locally, in my own backyard, so to speak. I was living at the time near Spaceport in Cocoa Beach, Florida. I asked the public

library there if, upon publication of *Men's Liberation*, they might be interested in hearing me speak. They welcomed the thought. I said to myself that if I could address a heterogeneous group of mostly conservative Floridians—people who lived in sunshine under spacious skies, who walked the soothing beaches and who were accustomed to the wide aisles and well-stocked bins of grand supermarkets—that I'd be ready with what I had to say to Americans in many locales. I recall during that time that when I would listen to the evening news, hearing Gerald Ford's halting voice, I felt that he was Nero and that he was merely fiddling while Washington (my own home-town) burned. But I knew that I would not be an effective representative for the cause of men's liberation if I were to attempt to communicate an alarming thought like this. No, I would have to communicate something else—something that spanned the political, religious, and economic perspectives that could so easily have put a gulf between me and most people I would address. Whatever I might say, I decided, must be filled not with negative criticisms and alarm, but with my heartfelt assurance that men are not innately violent, competitive, or domineering, and that we have, in fact, tendencies to mutual aid and cooperation. These tendencies, I would find myself saying, have played a more significant role in social life than has been realized (see the works of the great historic anarchist, Peter Kropotkin—especially in his *Mutual Aid*) and have been blocked today by negative values in our outmoded sex role conditioning that is given blind support by society's major institutions.





I reserved my critical diatribes for ideas which insist on looking to the so-called dark side of men's natures—a side created in great part by my masculinist training. Everywhere I went I found people responding eagerly as the vision transmitted to them promised New Males shorn of false bravado, inexpressiveness, and tough, combative, competitiveness. I did not stress what I was against, but what I was for, and it was soon clear to me that a positive spirit filled each room with joy and confidence, a confidence that others knew to be lying under the debris of acculturation. I realized that people had been fed unceasingly on liberation raps that depressed them with reminders of oppression, inequality, violence, and disaster. I saw that they were well aware of how confusing, threatening, and unsettled were their horizons. I knew that they were sick of negativism and so I did not say "I am *against* sexism." I did not talk about the coming struggle, the need to fight. Instead I said: "The time has come for men to recognize in themselves the existence of the androgynous being so that they can wield what acculturation has too long denied them: the great strengths and the spirited capabilities of both genders."

It was easy to show that the insidious aspects of the male role as taught had been carried beyond the image of the blustering, stereotypical brawler, and where physical muscularism was no longer necessary to social survival, traditional masculinists had re-emerged on new levels, proving their "masculinity" through intellectual posturing and combat, technological dominance and control, and narrowly empirical definitions of reality reducing experience to measurements and statistics. It was not hard to show that the hysterical flight by masculinists from virtues and capabilities associated with women (virtues and capabilities that rightfully belong to both sexes) have made the traditional male role lethal. No one objected when it was explained that men had renounced natural balances by reason of childhood socialization: unquestioning, undiscerning assignment to women of the best loved virtues of humankind: tenderness, empathy, loving kindness, and receptivity.

I found that by concentrating on these virtues (robbed from men in their cradles by insidious sex-role trainers) I was able to call to the best in people who secretly hoped

that these "new ideas"—men's liberation—which are really as old as Lao Tzu, at least) could do *something* to accomplish the realization of a peaceful, spirited culture. I did not pretend that I had all the answers. But I did say what I firmly believe: that the men's movement holds great promise as part of an overall process toward human liberation, being a major vehicle among others for the transformation of values which are no longer life-affirming.

To make the importance of the men's movement stand out in relief, I asked listeners to try to remember the following words which I would say with special emphasis:

I am persuaded that being masculine in the conventional way is pushed by society on its sons with greater urgency and with wider effects than religious beliefs. Therefore, I am also persuaded that the vague masculinist codes as taught are reigning methods for transmitting prescribed social values. If the social system can no longer wholly count on religious beliefs to transmit values, it can still count on a handing down from parents and institutions of sex-role conditioning. This conditioning is more insidious, more limiting, and more anxiety provoking than is any other kind I know about.

I said that the conditioned male's personal agonies had spread outward from himself to the social arena, and that anyone seeing masculinist training as a prime source of social conditioning could assist by exposing that conditioning as a hotbed of negative values. They could help bring about social change.

It was not hard for me, as I spoke, to feel certain that the men's movement will enjoy invincible support from every quarter as it grows. It is, after all, for want of a better word, a kind of spiritual movement. It is a secular vehicle for values which have religious sanction: gentleness, tenderness, sensitivity, empathy, calm, non-violence. The opponents of the men's movement must range themselves against these values as positive developments for men, at best a dreary opposition.

I found increasing assurance and strength as I travelled from city to city clarifying new role options for men and speaking not only of the drawbacks of traditional role training, but more specifically of the wonders and benefits that will arrive with the miraculous resurrection of the androgynous spirit.

For me, this first tour was an education. I found interviewers taking kindly to these thoughts. Angels came out of the woodwork to assist. I returned to my writing bench happy and relieved. I returned also to a year of preoccupation with my personal life, completing at the same time a book entitled *Welcome to Fire Island: Visions of Cherry Grove and The Pines*, a writing exercise for me which meant to put into practice what I'd suggested in a more formal format in *Men's Liberation*. I've dubbed this new book a mystical/political travelogue.

As I read the men's press today I scan its pages for evidence of the joy, cooperation, and compassion I know is deeply embedded in this youthful cause. I'm seldom discouraged when I see intellectualized political posturing, combative argumentation, theoretical harangues, and anti-this and anti-that stances. To me it seems that the men's movement is at a stage of development similar to that passed through by the gay liberation movement prior to 1964 when it ministered quietly to individuals, educated its membership inwardly, brought in so-called experts and authorities to make speeches, and did research. Generally speaking, the men's movement today is still listening. It has not yet begun to talk. But the day when its tireless supporters will be heard from is not far off.

The various subgroups within the men's movements are necessary to its claim to be a movement, that is a non-static social perspective with broad appeal. I hope to see it attract Baptists and Buddhists, Conservatives and Communists. These people can be linked by common realizations: the new male (Futuremale) is walking across the horizon toward the 21st century. Masculinism is due for a major overhaul, being restrictive and destructive. If some men have not yet extended this perspective to its political dimensions, preferring instead to develop and concentrate on what Walt Whitman called (personal) *adhesiveness*, that is their business. Others will keep the movement conscious of political extensions and implications, and, I believe that it will attract those who see the lie in competition, and are ready to cooperate in non-hierarchical settings. Such men, walking hand in hand with either gender, will make compassion, peace, and loving attraction the realities they are under the fast disappearing encrustation of negative appearances. ★



# SEXISM and MALE SEXUALITY

Michael Singer

"Ask yourself what does a woman expect from a man? Clearness, decision power, action."

Adolph Hitler

When the boys in my crowd were initiated into manhood, they were taken to a whore house. I was no exception. An older woman came into the well-lit sleazy hotel room. I immediately had an erection and immense anxiety. She inspected my penis. Then she took my money, opened the door, handed it to someone I could not see. She undressed. She slipped something into her vagina and told me to get into bed and to climb on top of her. I did and she put my penis inside her. After what seemed like ten seconds, she asked if I was finished. I said that I wasn't but as soon as I finished saying that, I came. Then I felt terrible. She got up and left the room. That was it.

That was the beginning of what I assumed was a very conventional sex life. I slept with women regularly in college, and afterwards I never thought much about what was happening in bed. I didn't think my sexuality was something to be explored, only experienced. Since nothing very strange or bad seemed to happen in bed I wasn't troubled.

When I was 27 I was living in New York. I turned on the radio one day and listened to a conversation two women and a man were having about the difference between clitoral and vaginal orgasms. I realized I didn't know what they were talking about. I didn't know what a clitoris was.

I remembered a woman with whom I had had a long affair; she had never been able to have an orgasm when we made love. I had always just assumed she was uptight because no matter what I tried, nothing seemed to change. I didn't know she had a clitoris and she didn't either, or she wasn't saying. We did not stop seeing each other because of the sex, but I wondered what might have happened had we not been in the dark. How many other relationships might have been different? What had the women I had slept with felt? We never really talked about it.

In addition to my personal confusion, I began to understand that the problem was not only mine. The society I lived in didn't really offer up the information people needed to begin to enjoy or know our bodies or our sexuality.

Having been in many men's consciousness-raising groups, I know many men have stories to tell similar to mine. They are the norm in our culture. After realizing there was something in it for me, I began to explore some of the questions raised by these experiences. In no way do I feel expert, "on top of it," or together. Further, I want to acknowledge that the orientation of this article is heterosexual. I am heterosexual and do not pretend to

speak about or for any other kind of sexual experience. That is not an apology but a statement of fact. I am indebted to my gay friends whose political courage inspires me. They have been in the forefront of the revolt against sex role oppression, and many have paid dearly for it.

## Internal Oppression and Bad Sex

As males grow from boyhood into manhood we internalize many messages spoken to us at home, school, church and the media. These messages are injunctions and commands, the do's and don'ts of manly behavior. (For a more elaborate list of sexual injunctions for men and women, see the SAR Guide, published by the National Sex Forum.) A sample list of do's for men includes: initiate, be responsible, be in control, get it up, perform, give orgasms to women, know everything, make love to pretty young women only, be a great lover, score, have a big penis. The don'ts for men include: fail, quit, play, be passive, childish, let go, accept pleasure, turn down sex, be vulnerable, gay, feel.

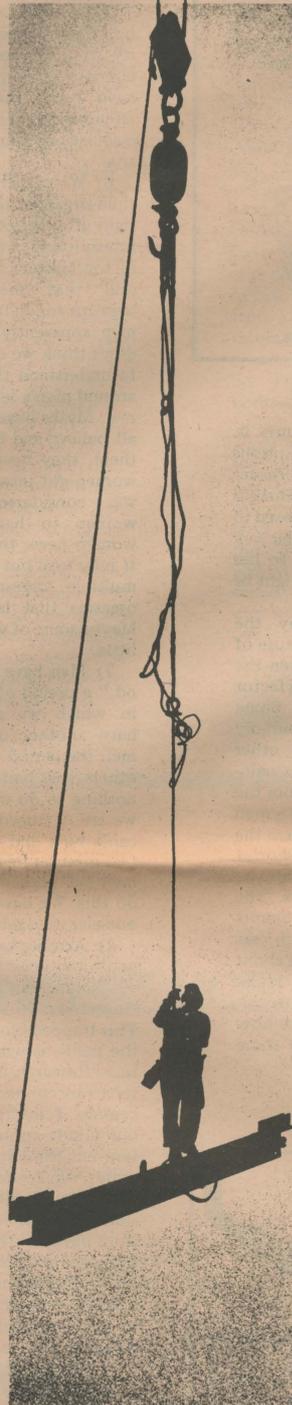
Most of us men have trouble with intimacy. It is no accident. Men tend to reveal less about themselves. We often equate self-disclosure with powerlessness. Any kind of loving, in this case between men and women, demands knowledge of the needs and the characteristics of the loved person and that comes from self-disclosure. If we cannot let ourselves be known, women cannot love us because we are just abstractions.

For men, sex can work as a trap because it is the only place where we feel we can get tenderness, warmth and intimacy. We often lack the skills to evoke these experiences in sexual interactions. There is nothing in the rest of our lives which trains us to do this. So we come into a sexual situation where we don't know how to get what we want the most.

For most of us, everyday life and work is devoid of intimacy and sensuality for which we are starved. Because our experience is so limited we tend to miss sensual or intimate possibilities when they are available, or we sexualize them immediately. This sexualization of experience often feels to women like pressure to fuck, which makes them angry. And the pressure is real. For men, sex becomes a goal we pursue. We want to get our penises inside women. When we go for that in the way we are trained to reach for any goal, we ignore the process, the sensual intimate possibilities with this sexual partner, and we concentrate only on one thing, getting off. Often we miss the person completely.

## Sex Therapy

Sex therapy is a relatively new industry in America. I don't believe there is such a thing as a "sexual" problem. We cannot understand sexual dysfunction separately from other issues between partners such



as: unequal power, not talking straight, not asking for what you want, or sex-role assumptions, just to name a few.

Most "responsible" sex therapy in this country is based on some scientific research into sexual behavior. The scientific method tends to break down phenomena and isolate activity from its environment in order to study it. Consequently, therapies which develop from this kind of research tend to view sexual problems as exclusively mechanical.

At the crudest level this stance toward sexual dysfunction stimulates the business community to create new commodities which offer non-solutions. A product has

been created for men who ejaculate prematurely (i.e., faster than they would like). It is a gel which contains, among other things, a surface anesthetic which desensitizes the penis. I used such a gel once and indeed it desensitized my penis. But it didn't help me deal with the nervousness I was feeling about being with this particular woman. In fact, I felt more removed from the emotional issues between us. It was not helpful in any satisfying sense. To use a gel is to give up your power to a commodity from which someone is making a profit, a profit from your discomfort, your emotional life. In this way capitalism penetrates the most intimate aspects of our everyday life. The personal and the political are connected.

Masters and Johnson's research is a more complicated example of the same problem. Their work has had an impact on the women's movement and our thinking about sexual dysfunction generally. They created permission for women to seek orgasm in ways other than fucking men. They made it possible to expect that sexual dysfunction could be demystified. They affirmed the importance of the clitoris in women's sexual pleasure. But to read their work, one would think they worked outside history. There is no sense in their work of the relationship of sexuality to other issues. Their work has made an enormous contribution and they do help people. At the same time, those who look to them for answers are robbed of a deeper understanding of the power struggle going on between men and women, and what relationship that struggle has to the large economic and social forces in this society. To withhold that understanding from people is to take away their potential power to help themselves and each other, their power to change the society which generates the problems in the first place.

I would like to pass on some of Masters and Johnson's findings, which demystify folklore about sexual behavior that men carry around in their heads:

1) 70% of the men questioned in the research said they came more quickly than they wanted to. A statistic like this takes this phenomenon out of the personal realm and makes it social. Often social issues become understandable when many people who experience them begin to share the details of their lives. Assumptions about sexual relating make it a pressure-filled experience for many of us. The pressure is not relieved when our competitiveness keeps us from sharing our experiences with each other and demystifying them.

2) The research showed the most effective ways for women to reach orgasm generally are, in order: masturbation, oral stimulation, and intercourse. This information should be of interest to us. We often approach sexual relations with a pressure to perform which translates into panicked intercourse to give our female partner an



orgasm. The odds are against it. Further, we make assumptions about what gives a woman pleasure without checking with her. There is no law that says we are supposed to know intuitively the particular way in which a woman comes to her pleasure. We can ask. She might be pleased by the question.

3) Because of the way the vagina is structured and because of its elasticity, for most women the size of a man's penis is not a factor in the amount of pleasure. Some women's cervixes are pleasurable sensitive to pressure. For other women the same pressure is painful. The cervix protrudes from the back of the vaginal canal, so a man with a smaller penis may reach the cervix of a woman with a shorter vaginal canal. The cervix can also be stimulated with the fingers. The point is that anatomy is almost never as much the issue as our fears about it. If you have worried about the size of your penis you know now what most women go through all their lives, worrying about how their body measures up to some male ideal of perfection.



4) 10% of men questioned by Masters & Johnson experience tremendous pain after orgasm and must remove their penises from women's vaginas. No reason for this has been put forth; but understand that if you have this experience, you are not alone.

5) Masters and Johnson found no difference between the sensitivity of a circumcised and an un-circumcised penis. There is a myth I have heard that men with un-circumcised penises control their ejaculations much better. It's not true.

6) Women are able to have multiple orgasms; that is, orgasms one right after the other with almost no intermittent period. Some women in the Masters and Johnson study said that they could sustain orgasms for up to sixty seconds. We men apparently can't do that, or don't think we can. It is important to understand that the limitations around men's sexuality may not be real. Myths have grown up that we all believe and because we believe them, they become truth. Before women got into their sexuality, it was considered impossible for women to have orgasms. Most women never thought they could. It may turn out that men can have multiple orgasms or can have orgasms that last sixty seconds. Maybe some of you do. We know so little.

7) Men have a "refractory period," a period of time after orgasm in which we apparently cannot have another orgasm. For some men the period is five minutes, for others it is half an hour. This has nothing to do with how masculine we are. We need not feel bad if we can't fuck and then fuck again in two minutes or five minutes. Some men get pressure from women to do this. We have a right to explain ourselves and relax.

8) Arteries bring blood into the penis and veins take blood out. As we become aroused, valves partially close down the veins in our penises. This trapped blood, which congests the penis, is what creates an erection. Research has shown that the valves are connected to higher brain centers. I interpret that to mean our minds control erection. Erection has something to do with our minds, our feelings, and our hearts.

All of us should feel total permission to be unable to get it up. If we can't have an erection, it is a signal from our body that something does not feel right. Instead of seeing it as a failure, we can take it as a message to begin to look and feel what is going on with us and our partner.

#### It Can Get Better for Us

What follows are some of my thoughts about how to enhance the possibility for more satisfying sexual experiences:

1) To feel good about sexuality, a man needs to have been complimented on it sometime by someone. When you sleep with a woman who doesn't offer the information, you might ask if you are pleasing her and how. Real information is useful.

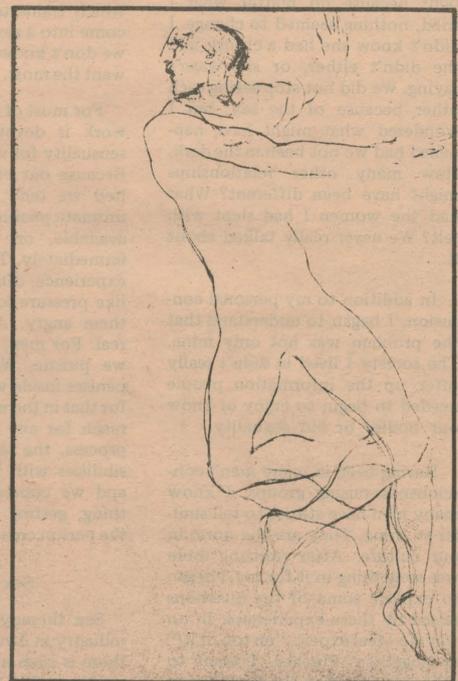
2) Men who are not under performance pressure—from themselves or their partner—have a better chance for enjoyment.

3) Men who feel responsible for their partner's experience and for what happens between them, transform sex into work. Sex is a 50-50 proposition. Those of us who deal



with this pressure by trying to give women their greatest sexual experience often feel ripped off or uncomfortable later. We have been so concerned with giving the pleasure, and with how it is being received, that we have forgotten about ourselves and what we want. To take responsibility for both people often makes it impossible for us to figure out what we want from women. Traditionally women have complained that men only used sex to have orgasm and took no responsibility for what their female partners were feeling or what they wanted. Now some men are starting to have overcompensated and experience feelings women have been having for a long time.

4) It is critical that men who want to have good sex like and respect women. That may seem obvious, but there are many men who don't like women, don't respect them and don't know it. Feelings of anger and resentment toward women often come from the oppression of our sex roles. We are afraid to admit to them because we fear this will isolate us further



from the one source of pleasure we are taught to pursue, women.

5) It is important that men be in touch with the part of themselves that likes to play, to be mindless, sensual, silly and open to experience and imagination. Playing is hard for us. Play demands that we ignore goals and just enjoy the concrete detail of the process we are involved in at the moment.

6) If you feel that the head of your penis is the location of all pleasure in your body then you are missing much of what your body has to offer you. The problem with such a limited pleasure experience is that it determines and structures everything you will want sexually and sex often becomes a routine.

7) Men who can suspend their self consciousness—which keeps them distant and monitors their experience instead of being in it—have a better chance for pleasure. On the other hand, it is important for us to be aware of what does and does not feel good. We should know if we are doing more than our share or doing something we don't want to do. We need to be able to stop what is happening, explore it and not just go on. If you are feeling bad, she is probably feeling that way too, or at least is aware that you are.

As men we are supposed to want to make love all the time and women are always supposed to be available. Because we are lacking all

the affection we need, we often get involved sexually and move full steam ahead and ignore our feelings. Men who can talk about their feelings and who are interested in their partner's feelings can build intimacy. Such men want to know what the particular nature of that woman is who they are with, how she is responding to what is going on, what it feels like to her, how she cares about you or doesn't care about you, what she likes and doesn't like. Some men are interested and willing to hear all that. Some men are willing to give up their way of doing things to cooperate and create something mutually pleasing. If all your sexual experiences with different women are all the same, then you are controlling them.

What is really critical in all this, is that we understand we can change and there is something in it for us to change. But change is difficult. There is no model in this society, no incentive to be any different. There is no model for us to be vulnerable, open, humane and powerful at the same time. We have to create that model ourselves. And our sexuality is as good a place as any to begin.

Sexuality always has the potential to be a source of intimacy for us. That is part of its power. We need intimacy, it gives us strength, it affirms our humanity and helps ameliorate our alienation. If we can enjoy our sexuality, give and re-

ceive pleasure, we deepen our links with each other. We are then less dependent on commodities for our pleasure. But when sex, like so much of our lives, is taken from us, packaged and sold back to us, we can be confused. The time has come to reclaim our sexual powers.

In the last decade the women's movement has succeeded in politicizing everyday life. One effect of this politicization is that many of us who want to build a revolutionary culture and movement in America are scrutinizing our lives, our work, our behavior towards ourselves and each other. We want to understand the sources of our oppression. To the extent that we have responsibility for the oppression (for instance, when we as men behave in sexist ways), we want to stop and know why it is in our interests to do so. We must try to create a process of struggle which has within it the values we want realized in a revolutionary culture.

To struggle successfully (to win!) we need love and strength. We need to generate our own power, a power which does not rest on the oppression of others but grows from our ability to treat ourselves and each other equally and with compassion, to realize ourselves as fully as we can now—in our work, in our relationships, in our sexuality.

(Many thanks for support and ideas from Ani, Beth, Claude, Henry, Jack and Victoria.)

## 2nd MIDWEST

# RADICAL THERAPY CONFERENCE

The Second Annual Midwest Conference will take place on Friday, May 27 through Monday, May 30, 1977, in central Iowa. Mark it off on your calendar now. A brochure will be available in February. To receive a brochure please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to:

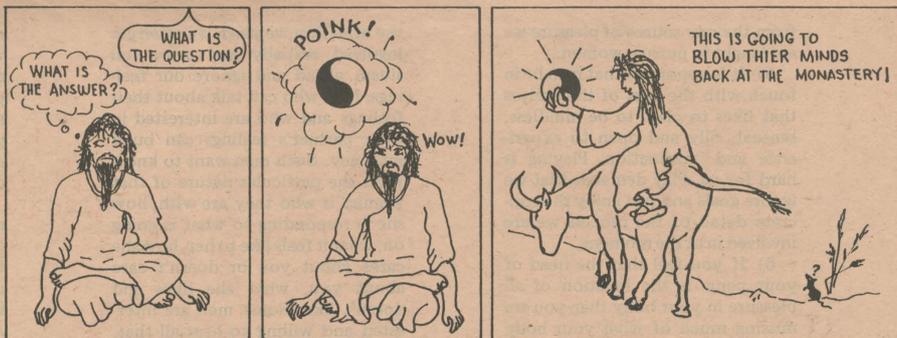


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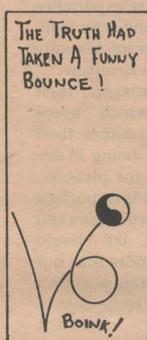
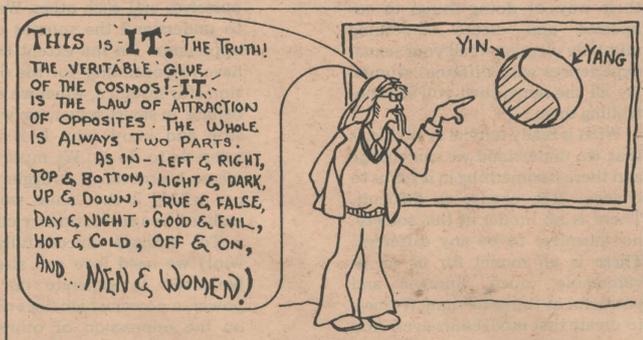
If interested in presenting at the conference send your ideas immediately to the above address!

# A Yin Yang Story

By Bruce Dodson\*



A FEW THOUSAND YEARS LATER IN A CLASSROOM AT BERKELEY...



\* Inspired by Hogie Wyckoff's "Between Women and Men." (IRT reprint #4)



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 Recently a group of women and men in the Bay Area have organized a center for bisexuals. They wish to provide a base of strength and sense of community for people who do or wish to relate to both women and men. For information about the center, how to become a member and receive the Bimonthly Newsletter, write  
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**Events**

"HOLISTIC HEALTH AND THE LAW" is the topic of a talk led by Dana Ullman (holistic practitioner who was arrested for the practice of medicine without a license), Jerry Green (Ullman's attorney), and Bill Gray, M.D. (holistic physician). The talk will discuss many legal issues that concern non-medically trained and medically trained health practitioners.

Dana Ullman will provide the perspective as a non-medical practitioner. Bill Gray will give the medical perspective. Jerry Green will provide the overview for both approaches.

This talk will serve as an introduction to an on-going study group that will focus on ways the many new health practices can gain legal recognition.

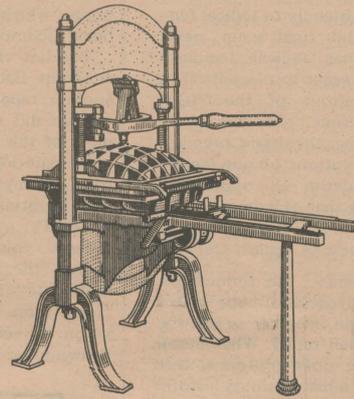
This event will take place on **SUNDAY JANUARY 16th, 1977** at 7:45. It will be held at the **BERKELEY UNITAS HOUSE** at 2700 Bancroft (at College Ave.), Berkeley. This talk is coordinated by the **HOLISTIC HEALTH ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**, a non-profit educational organization. A donation of \$4 will be asked.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS EVENT OR DANA ULLMAN'S ARREST:**  
 Holistic Health Organizing Committee  
 1030 Merced St.  
 Berkeley, CA 94709  
 415-841-6500, ext. 142

**NEW**

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**IRT PRESS**



# CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM:

A HANDBOOK by GRACIE LYONS



**Bob Schwebel**

In November, IRT will be publishing Gracie Lyon's book entitled *Constructive Criticism*. In the past few years, a number of books and anthologies have been written by people in the radical therapy movement and turned over to big publishers. Now, IRT has decided to take some power back and start our own publishing company.

Gracie Lyon's book is a practical manual written for people who want to do politically meaningful work in a supportive and cooperative way. The initial printing of 1,000 copies will be in a soft covered edition and will sell for \$2.95.

The first part of Gracie's book outlines the goals and principles of criticism and self-criticism. Next comes the major section of the text which presents practical guidelines for the giving and receiving of criticism and for the prevention and handling of defensiveness to criticism. It also includes some concrete exercises that people can do to develop the skills of constructive criticism. The last part of the book offers the history of criticism and self-criticism.

The project began to develop about two years ago when Gracie printed a short leaflet outlining some of her ideas about criticism and self-criticism. Many people were excited by this publication, and it spread from person to person in the Bay Area. Bob Schwebel asked Gracie if IRT could re-print it as part of our Fall 1974 issue on cooperation. She happened to be working on expanding her manuscript and it was much longer and much more complete than the

initial pamphlet. She showed us the expanded edition and gave us permission to use the sections that interested us. We saw the great importance of her work and asked if we could publish the entire text as a book. Gracie agreed and thus began our first publishing venture.

The process of publishing a book turned out to be much more time-consuming and much more complicated than we imagined. We started from scratch. All we had as a guideline in terms of a contract was the standard one used by publishers. Of course this is written so that few people can understand it. Gracie translated it into English so we knew what we were dealing with. Finally, we used the standard publisher's contract although it was modified according to some suggestions Gracie made.

Claude Steiner and Bob Schwebel did the editing of the text through several revisions. A lot of emphasis was placed in making this a book that many people would find useful, and one which is not directed merely to the intellectuals of the left. A professional editor was hired for the final careful reading. We took the manuscript to Archetype in Berkeley where all of IRT's work is typeset. Mary Selkirk did the detailed final proofreading and Darca Nicholson was in charge of design and layout. She made some original graphics for this work. Jude LaBarre, Jane Aiken, and Candice Hoke worked on layout.

Before printing the book we were faced with a number of decisions regarding: the quality of the paper, the style of the type, the

type of binding, the quality of the cover, the number to be printed, the method of distribution. One major constraint was that we started with very little money (all of which was a small personal loan). We found that bookstores would not handle the book if it were merely folded or stapled, so it had to be "perfect bound." We wanted the book to be inexpensive, but we also wanted it to be attractive, durable, and readable. Currently,

Sid Brown is printing the book for us in Portland, Oregon. We hope that Book People in Berkeley will handle our distribution in bookstores.

We think the book *Constructive Criticism* is an important contribution to radical literature and social revolution in the world. We are hoping that a lot of people will read this book. To order it, see the ad on page 31. ■

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Kathy McCrea and  
Charlyn B. Frog

Never before has the media been so friendly to radical feminism. But then again, never before has radical feminism been so eager to place itself at the forefront of the "fight against crime," wholeheartedly supporting the basic premises and institutions of our society that underlie all oppression, including that of women.

Alison Edwards  
*Critiquing Against Our Will*

The prevalence, the seriousness, the repressiveness of rape affect every woman, whether or not she has ever been raped. What Susan Brownmiller does in *Against Our Will* is give a male-defined historic account of that situation.

We learn that rape is not an isolated act of a weirdo for sexual satisfaction. Rape is degrading and often contains the threat of death, whether spoken or not. We learn that the devastation comes from having your most personal space invaded and abused, and that both the law and individual men do little to take seriously and stop the abuse. But we only get a faint hint that the fact that rape continues is somehow tied in with how men are supposed to act if they follow their conditioning, and what women are supposed to accept if we follow ours.

In *Against Our Will* we finally have a chronicle of rape that does not show women enjoying it. It is still, however, only a chronicle of rape which hardly shows women at all except as the nameless and countless victims of this horror. Brownmiller shows us that women must deal with the reality of rape throughout our entire lives. But the book leaves a great void in not showing *how we do deal* with it.

Susan Brownmiller occasionally mentions how the existence of rape, continually portrayed to us via advertising, movies, pornography and abusive details (such as cat calls and jokes with women as the joke), seeps into our consciousness. We begin to believe that this is reality and therefore accept it because it is all that we are exposed to. But the bulk of material in *Against Our Will* consists of hundreds of rape anecdotes, cases and myths showing women as little more than helpless "victims" and pawns in the terrorizing of whole populations, as in white imperialist wars. Men are seen as not only the perpetrators, but the "authorities" on rape.

The danger is that this limited view and the saturation of examples will only, in itself, perpetuate the consciousness that "this is reality," therefore perpetuate rape and fearful acceptance of it. If we are going to expose, with the desire to end, the humiliation and prevalence of rape, we need to simultaneously expose the *context* (how and why rape can exist in some cultures and not others, and the ignorance of our daily conditioning which allows for its acceptance).

Also, Susan Brownmiller points out the raunchiness, the insidiousness of the media's describing women who have been raped only in terms of their good looks or age (i.e., "attractive nurse," "brunette, 26, found slain in a village

flat"). But the book never tells us much more about women and their identities, so we come away with only the very same statistical images which she has alluded to as being incomplete and unfair.

The last chapter, called "Women Fight Back," begins with still another rape story in which the woman did not fight back. And most of the chapter is concerned with male logic and laws and history and myths that keep women from fighting back. This type of material overshadows Brownmiller's solution which is to change the police apparatus to "integrate" 50% women; and to create more "sympathetic" legislation to convict more rapists. Brownmiller could go further. We

we have at this time, as civilized retribution and as a deterrent against the commission of future crimes."

She needs also to be much clearer that women regaining power over our own bodies is our most effective immediate solution to rape.

*Against Our Will* is the first serious historical account of rape but it is still a very one dimensional and unbalanced portrayal of the facts. There are other publications analyzing rape, its history, cause

# AGAINST

## Two v

### Against



must create alternatives to the criminal justice system which challenge and change the sexist attitudes which create rape. Rape cannot be legislated away. Supporting the criminal justice system serves to strengthen a power which is easily turned against us and which is a repressive tool against primarily poor and 3rd world people. Prisons are known to reinforce and foster violence by their very structure; this is hardly a powerful answer to rape.

Brownmiller needs to make clearer and stronger that we need to change our entire social and cultural consciousness which fosters and supports rape. She spends most of her energy examining the "law and order" solutions which she sees as "a just and lawful societal solution to the problem of criminal activity, the best solution

and prevention, that would be excellent to read in conjunction with or in place of *Against Our Will*. These publications convey more helpful action-oriented perspectives on rape:

*Women in Viet Nam* (Arlene Eisen Bergman, published by Peoples Press, 2860 21st Street, San Francisco, CA, 94110, \$2.95 per copy, 25% discount for orders of 10 or more; special rates available on request) is a powerful look at rape as a tool in war, also an extensively documented book showing rape from a woman's point of view.

*Rape, Racism and the White Women's Movement: An Answer to Susan Brownmiller* (by Alison Edwards, Sojourner Truth Organization, P.O. Box 8493, Chicago, Illinois, 60680, \$.75 for single issues) is an important publication

on the history of rape as a tool of racism, and on the racism of *Against Our Will*.

Prisoners Against Rape (Prisoners Against Rape, Inc., P.O. Box 25, Lorton, VA, 22079) publish an important analysis of cause and prevention of rape and the experience of rape from men's point of view.

Santa Cruz Women Against Rape (P.O. Box 711, Santa Cruz, 95060) has written a letter to the Anti-Rape Movement, critiquing working within the Criminal Justice System.

Santa Cruz Men Against Rape has written a working paper entitled *Men's Responsibility for Rape* discussing rape in a context of men's sexism and how men need to take responsibility for this political problem (P.O. Box 2186, Santa Cruz, 95063).

# T RAPE

## ews of Our Will

Claude Steiner

I bought Susan Brownmiller's book *Against Our Will* (Bantam, \$2.25) at the Philadelphia airport in anticipation of one of those awful six-hour flights. I had been aware of the book for months and there must have been something inside of me that avoided it. I was to discover why that was later, but now here it was, in paperback, fat and juicy, ready to serve as an escape from the impending coast-to-coast blues.

I walked off the plane transfixed. I had not finished the book but I had not been able to put it down, even as I picked through the micro-waved chicken teriyaki. I usually eat airplane fare with inexplicable gusto; this time I could barely get it down.

I am not a book reviewer and what follows is more a gut reaction than an objective analysis. Brownmiller's book is a thorough historical, sociological and psychological study of the subject of rape. It is that, and in addition it is well written with a high sense of drama. For me, the tension built slowly and relentlessly as I read her systematic *tour de force* of centuries of violence against women.

I am not a newcomer to accounts of brutality. As a Jewish child in Europe I barely got away from Hitler. After the war my family moved to Mexico. Recent developments of wholesale torture and persecution in Latin America are of great concern to me and I am in anguish over them. Reading Brownmiller I realize that if being a political prisoner is horrible, being a female political prisoner adds a whole new dimension to the horror of it.

Reading about the rape of young girls by the Nazis reached right into my guts. I have a thirteen year old daughter; the book aroused hair-raising images.

The book goes on relentlessly. Scores of thousands of women in Bangladesh raped, whose husbands then rejected them because they had been made "unclean." The Vietnamese war—where, as it turns out, the rape and murder of Vietnamese women by our clean-cut, all-American boys was a daily occurrence.

It isn't that I had not known about rape. My women friends speak often to me about living with the ever-present fear of rape. Rape has affected people all around me. I have known the *facts* of rape and have considered myself emotionally enlightened, responsive and properly involved in the subject. But a new dimension of understanding was forced upon me by

### Rape Poem

There is no difference between being raped  
and being pushed down a flight of cement steps  
except that the wounds also bleed inside.

There is no difference between being raped  
and being run over by a truck  
except that afterward men ask if you enjoyed it.

There is no difference between being raped  
and being bit on the ankle by a rattlesnake  
except that people ask if your skirt was short  
and why you were out alone anyhow.

There is no difference between being raped  
and going head first through a windshield  
except that afterward you are afraid  
not of cars  
but half of the human race.

The rapist is your boyfriend's brother.  
He sits beside you in the movies eating popcorn.  
Rape fattens on the fantasies of the normal male  
like a maggot in garbage.

Fear of rape is a cold wind blowing  
all of the time on a woman's hunched back.  
Never to stroll alone on a sand road through pine woods,  
never to climb a trail across a bald  
without that aluminum in the mouth  
when I see a man climbing toward me.

Never to open the door to a knock  
without that razor just grazing the throat.  
The fear of the dark side of hedges,  
the back seat of the car, the empty house  
rattling keys like a snake's warning.  
The fear of the smiling man  
in whose pocket is a knife.  
The fear of the serious man  
in whose fist is locked hatred.

All it takes to cast a rapist to be able to see your body  
as jackhammer, as blowtorch, as adding-machine-gun.  
All it takes is hating that body  
your own, your self, your muscle that softens to flab.

All it takes is to push what you hate,  
what you fear onto the soft alien flesh.  
To bucket out invincible as a tank  
armored with treads without senses  
to possess and punish in one act,  
to rip up pleasure, to murder those who dare  
live in the leafy flesh open to love.

By Marge Piercy  
from *Living in the Open*

Copyright © Marge Piercy. 1976.

Brownmiller's style, the skillful building of tension and, of course, the wealth of facts that she presents.

As the nausea and despair became practically unbearable she made the whole thing completely real to me by introducing and driving home the subject of homosexual rape. This destroyed all that remained of my emotional detachment from the subject. She managed to vividly portray for me the anguish of sexual violation. In the specific world of the prisoner, a man is stung by his own poison; as men vent their frustration and rage they become the victims of a

specific form of violence usually reserved exclusively for women.

Enlightened men's usual reaction to rape is indignation, anger, gallant offers of beatings, shootings and other retaliation against rapists. We react with sympathy and respectful attention though we may vaguely wonder, without saying so, whether she "asked for it" in some way or another and has some responsibility in it. But we do not as a rule react with terror, and it is terror that rape is. It is terror that the presence of rape injects into women's lives daily and nightly. Susan Brownmiller has finally made that clear to me.

Whether Brownmiller planned it or not, the structure of her book, which climaxes as it does in homosexual rape, couldn't have been better designed to reach a male audience. From that point on follows the anti-climax. There are theoretical discussions of the liberal male's conflicts in the presence of the rape of white women by black men; of the myth of the rapist as a hero; of women's conscious rape fantasies; and of that outrageous myth that "she was asking for it." The final chapter, "Women Fight Back," was like water to a man dying of thirst. I passionately wanted to read about solutions to this awful phenomenon in our lives in any form in which Brownmiller could offer them. Upon finishing the book I had crossed a significant threshold in my life.

For almost a decade sexism has been my enemy. I have had scores of arguments with liberal sex therapists who insisted that while, of course, men oppress women, "It's not as simple as that; women oppress men as well," or, "It's human liberation, not women's liberation that we need," or "You're making men not O.K."

I began in the women's movement with the customary guilt and self-effacement of the white liberal. I thought that women were more loving and more sensitive than men. Their sexuality was more powerful. They were more alive than men. Men were emotional cripples, neanderthals. I was a vigorous defender of women, and nurtured and supported them and their work. I stayed out of their way. I accepted their criticism and tolerated their anger. This was all to the good, but it was somewhat mechanical as it was done from the intellect and lacked an understanding of the vast gulf between women's and men's experiences. One of the components of that gulf is how differently rape is experienced by men as opposed to women. Reading *Against Our Will* has humbled me before the task of feminism. Violence perpetrated by men upon women—which is symbolized by rape but which occurs in thousands of different ways ranging in the degree of violence from assault, threat, insult, discount of feelings, stroke and sexual rip-off, and mind-rape—has acquired a new urgency for me. For whatever reason, whether biological or learned, violence perpetrated on a weaker individual, aggressive violence, is largely a male form of behavior. The fact that most men never RAPE a woman (forcible, violent intercourse) can easily distract us from that fact. If we are willing to see violence wherever it exists, then we are forced to admit that rape, sexual violence against women and women hating is not so foreign to us. I, as a man, have to admit that violence against women was part of my upbringing and my everyday life for years, and remains in my consciousness after a decade of active feminism.

To my great shock, when I read Brownmiller I found myself participating in the subtle discount of what the rape really represents. For instance, reading about a woman who was raped and not beaten I found myself thinking, "Well, that wasn't too bad." Or reading about the rape of a teenager who got into a car while hitchhiking, I heard a

voice in the back of my mind saying: "Women shouldn't hitchhike." In both cases the facts of the rape were being discounted in favor of an almost irrelevant reflection upon its circumstances. My first reaction to these thoughts is guilty shame and repression. I fear being attacked for sharing these thoughts with readers of this review. I also know that the thoughts are part of the male conscious experience which oppresses me because it removes me from the sympathetic and angry emotional reaction which I want to have and which I want all my brothers to have.

Susan Brownmiller's book is a masterpiece of research writing and theory making about rape. I do take exception with what I interpret to be one of her main conclusions. The disagreement does not come from a need to argue with her, but from a feeling coming from my male depths that there is something about what she says that does not fit. I want men to be seen in as critical but also as real a light as possible. Only in that way can we continue to learn about rape and eventually do away with it.

It appears that Brownmiller postulates that rape is invariably an act of pure aggression based on men's perception of women as objects of property. She takes great pains to demonstrate that rape has very little to do with sexuality. First of all, I think it is necessary to accept that what a rapist is conscious of doing is to be taken seriously—Brownmiller herself says of the Boston strangler that "as far as De Salvo understood De Salvo, he was unhappily blessed with a powerful sex drive and he petulantly whined that if his German-born wife and the mother of his two children had not 'denied my rights as a husband' things might have worked out a little better." If questioned men will say that rape is related to sex. I am sure that in some cases, especially in the case of wars where bitter hatreds develop, rape can be a case of pure aggression and revenge, but even there and certainly in the cases of urban rape in the U.S., rape is not just that.

Women are subject to violent behavior because they are thought of as objects to be owned and fought over. That is a fact. But I believe that some of the motivation for rape has to do with thwarted, frustrated sexuality. Men are not only crippled in that they see women as objects to be treated as property; they are also riddled with greed, impertinence and presumptuousness, the assumption that they are free to grab what they want. But I also believe that what they want when they rape expresses however distortedly their need for warmth, love and contact with the only acceptable source of warmth and love: a woman. After all, rape requires an erection and an erection has to be related, however primitively or perversely, to sexuality. The very same society which establishes women as lesser human beings to be treated as objectified sexual property and gives men the right to grab for them is also responsible for the desensualization of men, the alienation of men from their bodies which focuses all of their pleasure-seeking and power drives upon their genitals, and the exclusion, therefore, of men as sources of satisfaction for



their needs for love. The same society then proceeds to frustrate men's needs for warmth and pleasure by creating an uncrossable gap between himself and the only, to him, acceptable source of satisfaction—a woman.

I first became aware of this heartbreaking gap across which the "battle of the sexes" is fought when working at the Ann Arbor Veteran's Hospital. The large majority of the men on our floor were assembly line workers from the various Detroit automobile factories. They spoke of how their wives would only have sex with them twice a month, on payday and only if they came home directly without stopping off to cash and partially spend their checks at the bar. The men were desperate—for warmth, love, relaxation; the women equally so; love between them was unattainable. We, the hospital staff, I am ashamed to say, analyzed their dreams and childhoods, and thought of their wives

as castrating bitches. The men spoke laughingly of rape . . .

I realize that this sounds dangerously close to the argument often used to explain away (and justify) rape; that men's sexuality is an irresistible force needing of expression; hence sexual frustration quite naturally leads to rape. I have no sympathy for that point of view. I don't feel men's sexuality is any more intense or needing of expression than women's. And even if it were, there is nothing that justifies the taking of another's body to satisfy one's needs no matter how intense.

I am simply saying that the need for human contact, badly thwarted in man by his incapacity to relate in a loving manner to other human beings and channeled into his genitality, is a component of rape. The proportion of that component to other factors such as revenge, the need for power, self-aggrandizement varies with the specific instance of rape. At times it

may be absent altogether.

My intense reaction to Brownmiller's book has caused me to impulsively speak out on the very intricate and fearful subject of rape. I know that I am taking the risk, by committing my thoughts to print, of expressing thoughts open to attack which I may later regret having made. Several times in writing this I wanted to give up. Nevertheless I feel men need to speak on rape and I'll take the chance:

Rape will be diminished when men stop seeing women as objects. That alone is a large change. Men's perceptual impoverishment, which causes them to see women as soulless shells of adequate or inadequate dimensions and discounts their intelligence and power, will have to change. Only in this way can men cease to think of women as their or another man's property.

Rape will be diminished when men learn that their rights are equal to women's and that they must not use force to get what they want when they want it. Their greed and competitiveness will have to be replaced by desire and skill to cooperate. Only in this way can men cease to think of women as prey.

Also and also very importantly, rape will be diminished when men learn to be loving; when they learn to be nurturing, to exchange tenderness and warmth with other men, to love themselves by caring for their own bodies, to reclaim their senses by learning to enjoy and feel all over rather than just in their genitalia. Only in this way can men become true partners to women who will then gladly embrace them rather than reject them or be submissive chattel to them.

Finally, rape will be diminished when all men take responsibility for their part in rape. Mind-boggling as it may seem, Brownmiller's statement that "rape is a conscious process of intimidation by which men keep all women in a state of fear" has a great deal of truth of it. Men must face their responsibility in this process and find how it applies to them and put their energies into stopping it. For me, the responsibility lies in keeping my nerve endings raw to rape and sharing this awareness with other men.

#### CONFERENCE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

On December 4th and 5th, several Bay Area women's organizations will be sponsoring a WOMEN'S CONFERENCE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. The purpose of the conference is to explore the many kinds of violence in the lives of all women. The conference program will include a dance, films, music, drama, self-defense demonstrations, poetry, and twenty-three workshops including: Battered women and wives; Motherhood; Self-hatred and suicide; Rape; Religion; Prostitution; Media; Psychiatric assault; Women in prisons; and Third World and Native American Women.

The Conference will be held at Grace Cathedral and Cogswell College in San Francisco. It is being sponsored by the following Bay Area organizations: Black Women Organized for Action; Lesbians Organized; Chicana Rights Project, M.A.I.D.E.F.; La Casa de las Madres; Golden Gate Chapter, N.O.W.; San Francisco Women's Centers; and the Women's Studies Program, San Francisco State College.

Over a thousand women are expected to attend. For more information call: (415) 431-1290.

# Listening to ...

Bob Schwebel

When my friends started getting involved in "body therapy" I thought this was going too far! First you see a therapist to solve emotional problems, then you see a body therapist to fix up your body. What a luxury! And if this weren't enough resistance on my part, there was yet another major obstacle: I believed that the human body was so complicated and so incomprehensible that it would take years of medical school education to learn information that would be usable.

I soon discovered, though, that body awareness is not a luxury but rather a necessity and also a shortcut towards feeling good. The body holds all kinds of important psychological information. It is all there inside of our skin, because after all, "we are our bodies." I have since found that body messages are easily accessible to anyone who will take a little time. In this article I want to share some simple techniques and common-sense approaches which can be used to feel good in mind and body.

The ways we abuse ourselves in our day-to-day lives, and the ways others abuse us, all have counterparts in our bodies. For example:

-If we don't express our anger we may have headaches.

-If we overwork we may get high blood pressure.

-If we work in an office we may have back pains, eye strain and a general lack of muscle tone.

You can look at things the other way around too, starting with what is going on in your body and working your way back to your life. For example, if you have a headache you can see what in your life may have caused it—and the same with sinus problems, arthritis, lower back pains, or just about anything. This, of course, deviates from the common medical approach which is to "find the pill which will end the ill" (but don't think about the cause).

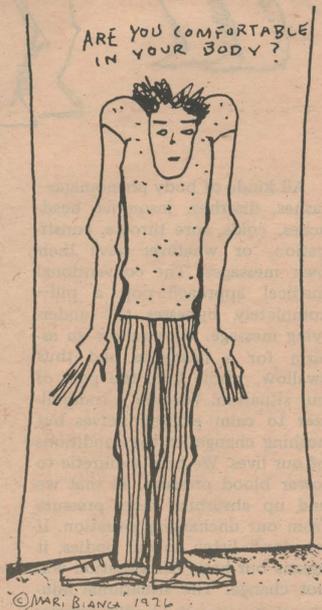
Tensions and injuries (aches, strains, pains, breaks, tears, etc.) in the body relate to the tensions and injuries of life. Because we live in the same culture, we share common experiences. Thus although individuals may differ in their injuries, there are certain injuries that are common to many of us and typical of our culture. Some of them are discussed below.

From the fashion world we get the bad posture of those who sport high heels, or the pinched toes of most of the rest of us who wear typical shoes. We also have the constricted muscles of people who wear tight clothing.

From school we learn to sit still, rarely moving a muscle except maybe the neck, just slightly, to get a better view of the blackboard (but certainly never so much as to talk with a friend who is sitting next to us). This is good preparation for office work, where the same conditions prevail. In an office a person sits all day

slouched over, barely moving except maybe to shuffle some papers across the desk or to get up to drink some coffee.

In this culture, women and men are assigned certain roles according to their gender. These sex roles sometimes show themselves as injuries to the body. This can be seen in the rigid posture and tight shoulders of men who are supposed to be "tough," "responsible," and "on guard." With women, it can be seen in the underused arm and leg muscles of the sex which is supposed to be weak.



## your Body

This list of cultural injuries could grow and grow as we add such things as: *Aching stomach muscles*: They are often associated with years of "sucking in" and trying to hide bellies which are frequently bloated by the super-starchy, nonnutritious American diet. *Tight jaws*: They are often associated with holding back from saying what you feel. People are especially discouraged from expressing any negative feelings or criticisms. *Sinus problems*: They can be caused by holding back tears.

### Basic Body Messages

The human body, indeed, carries some very important psychological messages. Staying tuned in to our bodies keeps us aware of what we are feeling. Knowing what we feel helps us realize the impact that the world is having on us and helps us figure out the best course of action for ourselves.

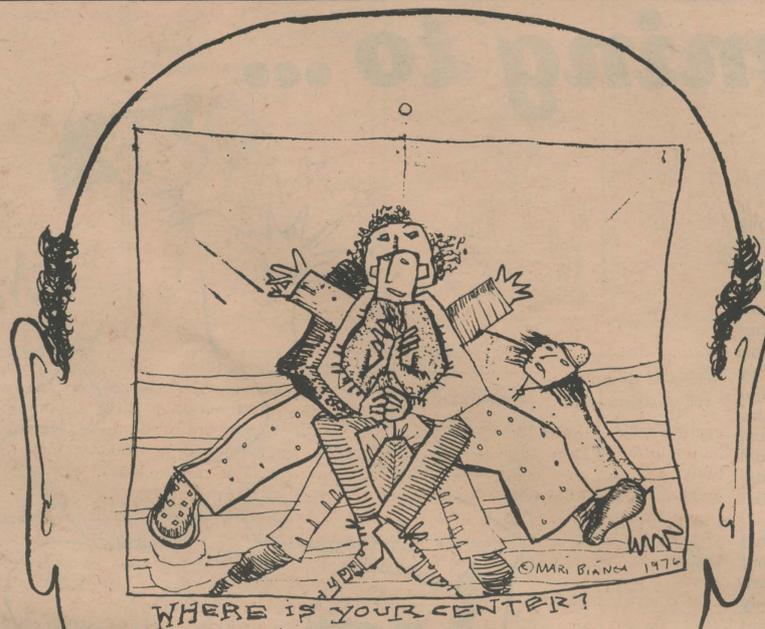
Fortunately, it is not difficult to get in touch with your body. I have outlined a few basic steps which people can take in order to tap the wealth of information held in their bodies. The first four steps are: *look at your body, feel your body, think about your body, and listen to your body*. These steps help you gain awareness. Gaining awareness is an important move towards well-being, but this needs to be followed up by action. The fifth and crucial step is to *take what your body says seriously*.

Fortunately, body awareness can be a very compelling form of knowledge. This is because body knowledge is "in the guts," "under the skin," "in our blood." The body never lies, and it speaks loud and clear if we will only listen. So, the key point—*take body awareness seriously and act upon it*—has to be included as a component of all the things suggested to do in this article.

One simple and powerful approach to body awareness is to *look at your body*. This can be done by looking at yourself in front of a mirror. Try it and see what you notice. For example: are your shoulders held up high? Are your jaws tight? Are your lips sealed tight? Do you tilt in one direction? Do you slump over? Does one hand hang lower than the other? Are your knees locked? Where is your body asymmetrical? When you are breathing, watch where your body moves and note where the breath doesn't appear to reach. Look for places that are tense in your body.

Some people have benefitted from drawing a picture we call the "body pig." This picture exposes their meanest, most critical view of themselves.

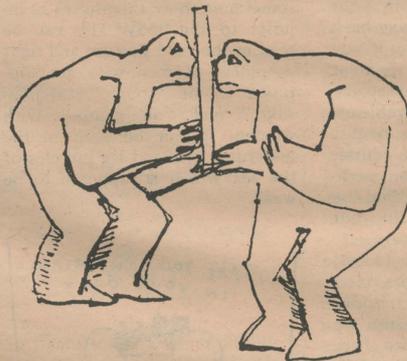
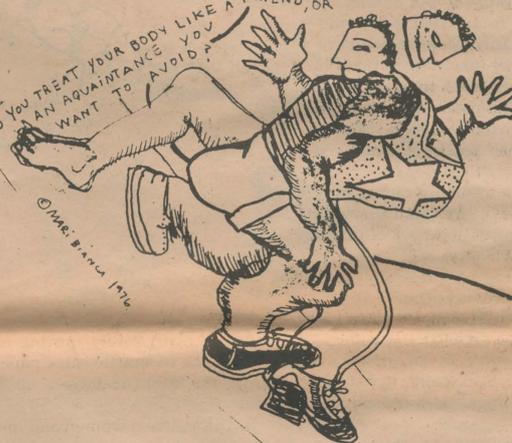
Another powerful approach to body awareness is to *experience and feel your body*. Pay special attention to your breathing. Feel where your body is alive, feel where the breath "reaches." You can feel where you are tense. You



Do You THINK ABOUT YOUR BODY?



Do You TREAT YOUR BODY LIKE A FRIEND, OR AN ACQUAINTANCE YOU WANT TO AVOID?



can feel where the muscles are tight. Where do you hold your tension? You may be surprised to discover that places where you hold your tension coincide with places that have been injured. For me, I carry a lot of tension in my shoulders and in my knees. I also have a history of injuries in these places. When muscles tighten, they lose the resilience needed to resist wear and tear. Actually, a great way to reduce injuries is to learn to relax in your body. Notice where your body is injured and where it feels tense. You can set up a week-long experiment. From time to time during the week, stop and ask yourself: "What do I feel in my body?" See how it varies with your emotions and your particular situations.

#### Body Thinking

Try to think about your body historically. Did you decide at some time in your life that your body didn't count? Did you decide to grow big muscles? Did you decide that your breasts are too small? Did you decide to neglect parts of your body? What do you hate or dislike about your body?

Think of what you like about your body. How did you develop good feelings about it? What's your favorite part of your body? Where do you allow yourself pleasure and where don't you allow it? Think of important historical events in the life of your body.

Now, try to figure out what your body is communicating. Things you have noticed in your body and things you have read in it, felt in it, or remember about it, carry important messages. All the tensions, aches, pains, injuries, etc., have things to say. Now it is time to communicate with your body and hear what it is saying.

When you have a headache, it may be your body saying, "Don't strangle me. My neck is getting awful tight. This situation is tense. Get me some space to relax in."

If you have high blood pressure you body might be saying, "Hey, slow down, take it easy. This hard work and pressure is getting to me. I need more vacations and more rest. I need more sex! You better take me seriously." In order to hear these messages, though, you must stop to pay attention and listen.

All kinds of body phenomena—rashes, diarrhea, insomnia, headaches, colds, sore throats, constipation, or whatever—have their own messages. The conventional medical approach—pop a pill—completely bypasses the underlying message. We swallow an aspirin for a headache and thus swallow, whole hog, the pain of our situation. We take a tranquilizer to calm excited nerves but nothing changes in the conditions of our lives. We take a diuretic to lower blood pressure, so that we end up absorbing more pressure from our unchanging situation. If we don't listen to our bodies, it means our basic life situation will not change. The situational injuries that cause the bodily injuries

will continue. Or, as I have heard lately, the "status" will remain "quo." Below are some examples of how people changed their lives from what they learned in their bodies.

#### Changing Lives

In reading his body in the mirror, Harold noticed that he always stood kind of "sloppy like" with his head looking down. He tried a very useful technique to get a clear statement of what his body was saying. He made believe that he was his slumped-over head and then, speaking from the point of view of his head, verbalized what his head had to say. "I don't want people to notice me. I don't want to be sexy, presumptuous or

# LISTEN...



threatening. People around me can feel safe." After he brought this monologue out of the dust of oblivion into consciousness, he realized that, in a sense, he had been lowering himself to the lowest common denominator. Instead of associating with people who were not threatened by his full power, he made himself boring and "wimpy" so as to be "safe" for all. He decided to work on his posture and at the same time decided to turn loose his full power and stand tall in the world.

When Marsha noticed how she always used her stomach muscles to pull in and hide her tummy, she used the same technique. She made believe that she was her stomach muscles and revealed this information: "I've gotta be squeezed tight. This way people will like me. I'll look skinny. It's very important to me to get others to like me. What others think is very important. I've got to go through this pain and distort myself in order to be liked." After becoming aware of what was going on, she worked on "letting her tummy be." She decided that it is true that she wants to be liked by people, but not at this expense. She realized she could do without people who don't like her because of the size of her stomach.

Using the same method, Kevin talked for his uplifted shoulders. They said, "I'm here to take care of people who are less fortunate than me. I have broad shoulders. If you need something, just ask. I'm always available, I'm tough." Kevin finally decided that if "being tough" means heaping this sort of abuse on his body, he didn't want to be tough anymore! He wanted to be good to other people, but now he realized that this has to be balanced with being good to himself.

Someone pointed out to Michael that he fidgets a lot. Michael had been completely unaware of this habit of his. For the next few weeks he paid attention to his body and he identified times in which he was fidgeting. In each case he realized there was something on his mind that he was not accounting for to himself. The suppressed "taking care of business" energy was released through unconscious fidgeting. His body was saying, "You're not taking care of the things on your mind. I will try to shake it off." Now, though, he uses his body as a cue. If he feels himself fidgeting he says, "Aha, there must be something troubling me. I'm going to tune into my inner self very carefully, find out what it is and take care of it."

## Body Wisdom

There is another very useful exercise that I know which may help you figure more of what your body has to say. Think for a moment about what position you would like to put your body into. Then, get into this position. When you are in this position, say what



your body wants to say. When I did this the first time, I knew immediately what position I wanted to assume. I stretched out on my tummy with my head turned to the side. My body wanted to rest and it said this: "You're working me too hard. I want to sleep." I listened closely and spent most of the next weekend in bed. It was great!

As I have come to respect the wisdom of the body, I have learned ways of harnessing its power for decision making. The body is really one of the key sources to be tapped for making decisions. Our heads can play back and forth between one pole and another, and a world full of advice and "shoulds" can be confusing. Now, when a decision is at hand, I like to lie down and relax, and maybe even do some deep breathing. Then I think, "What do I really want? What does my body want? What will feel good in my body?" This same approach even applies to decisions "in action." Sometimes all I have to do is close my eyes, wherever I am, and in three seconds or so, after asking myself "What do I really want?," I usually make the decision that is right for me.

In order to truly feel your inner sensations, you have to consider what food you put into your body. One way to drown out sensation is to force a lot of food into your system. When you do this, all

you can feel is numbness and indigestion. Processed non-nutritious foods serve this function particularly well. There are also the everyday drugs people take to drown out sensation. Alcohol, coffee and sugar are probably the most common. When the consumption of these drugs is cut down or eliminated it is a lot easier to make the decisions which will be most responsive to the real needs of your body.

When you get right down to it, "listening to your body say ouch" means giving yourself love. One of the most loving and nurturing things that people can do is to comfort one another when they are hurting. We can comfort ourselves and our bodies just the way we comfort other people. As a starting point, you look at, feel, and listen to what your body says. Then you take care of it. Give your body the things that it needs. Don't drown out body sensations with bad food and drugs. Remember this crucial question: "What does my body want now?"

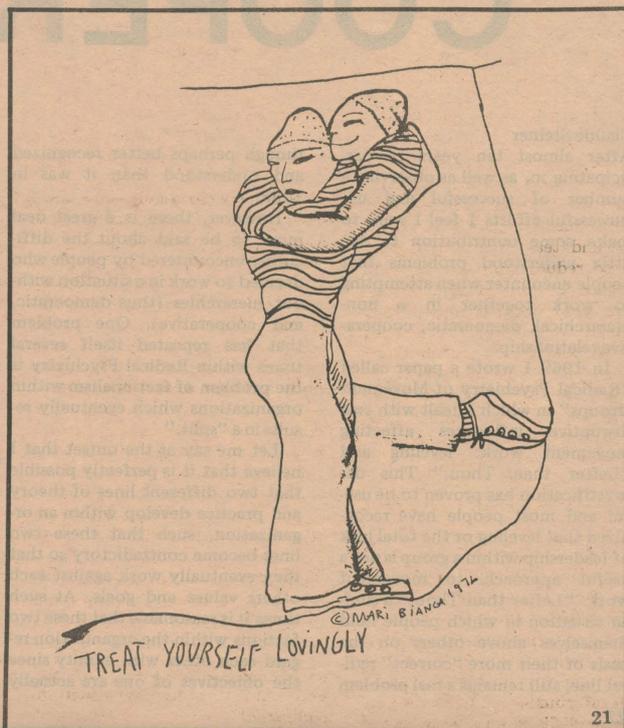
## Social Problem

If you are like most people, then you probably haven't given much thought to the question: "What does my body want now?" Knowing what you feel in your body is powerful stuff; it means knowing what feels good and what feels bad. This power has been systematically taken away from us. Some of these messages may be

familiar to you: "Never mind what you feel, just do it"; "Stop complaining, grow up"; "If work were fun, you wouldn't get paid for it"; "You must sacrifice"; "Be a man and take it"; "It's a woman's role, don't complain"; "Don't make waves." We are not supposed to know or care about what feels good to us and what feels bad. We are trained to accept mediocre and oppressive work situations and social relationships. Thus, our lack of love of our body is more than a personal problem; it is a social problem. In this society, people need to be alienated from their bodies in order to adjust properly and most of us are.

But there is an important corollary. The more we reclaim the power of our bodies, the less well adjusted we get, and the more we demand that things change. And, the more we demand that things change, the more we reclaim the power of our bodies. It's like an unvirtuous circle.

So, take some time out to be especially loving to yourself. Rub your body where it hurts. Splurge and get yourself a full body massage. Give yourself the luxury of some restful deep breathing. Think about some special treats for your body, maybe some good skin lotion or that sleep or exercise you've been missing, or a long-deserved vacation, or just a plain old refreshing bath. Each day, think about what will feel good to your body. What will be a treat for your body? Your mind will appreciate it, too.





Children at Play, Edwardsville, Illinois Bruce Dodson

# WORKING COOPERATIVELY

Claude Steiner

After almost ten years of participating in, as well as observing a number of successful and unsuccessful efforts I feel I want to make some contribution to the little understood problems that people encounter when attempting to work together in a non-hierarchical, democratic, cooperative relationship.

In 1969 I wrote a paper called "Radical Psychiatry of Movement Groups" in which I dealt with two disruptive influences affecting movement work: leveling and "Lifter than Thou." This demystification has proven to be useful and most people have recognized that leveling or the total lack of leadership within a group is not a useful approach to movement work. "Lifter than Thou," a similar situation in which people hold themselves above others on the basis of their more "correct" radical line, still remains a real problem

though perhaps better recognized and understood than it was in 1969.

However, there is a great deal more to be said about the difficulties encountered by people who decided to work in a situation without hierarchies (thus democratic, and cooperative). One problem that has repeated itself several times within Radical Psychiatry is the problem of factionalism within organizations which eventually results in a "split."

Let me say at the outset that I believe that it is perfectly possible that two different lines of theory and practice develop within an organization, such that these two lines become contradictory so that they eventually work against each other values and goals. At such times it is reasonable that these two factions within the organization regard each other with enmity since the objectives of one are actually

being defeated by the other and vice versa. A parting of the ways and subsequent political agitation against each other would then seem to be reasonable and even perhaps desirable since their differences come out of a serious contradiction.

On the other hand, I have repeatedly observed the development of factions within an organization and subsequent vicious animosity between these factions when the theory and practice that characterized both of them was certainly not one that warranted enmity and at times did not even involve actual contradictions. Often the differences were based on an overstatement of minor contradictions or simply on different areas of interest. Nevertheless, tremendous amounts of energy were wasted in moves and counter-moves, accusations and counter-accusations, agitation, back-biting, gossiping, and

lying, much to the detriment of the work of both of the factions, and much to the embarrassment of the organization in the eyes of the local radical movement community and the community in general. Often these breaks seem to be motivated by personal quarrels and competitive struggles between powerful members within the two factions who are joined by others so that "sides" develop which are then bolstered by ideologies created for the occasion which eventually are used to justify the animosity between them. To begin with I would like to address myself to those situations, which I shall call "splits," in which there develops within an organization a communication barrier (rather than a serious contradiction) with people aligning themselves on one or the other side and expending a great deal of energy fighting each other.

### Ideology

The visible aspects of the splits which I am describing are usually two fold. On one hand there is usually a battle of ideologies. In Radical Psychiatry one such split was manifested by the following ideological division: Side I—"We are interested in building a mass movement with the working class as our main focus. You are petit bourgeoisie and though well meaning have an inadequate political analysis of the realities of the revolution." Side II spoke as follows: "We are interested in getting results now with the people with whom we are working. We are not working class and do not want to organize them as they do not want to be organized by us. You are headtrippers and "Lefter than Thou" players who will never get anything done."

I deliberately call these two points of view ideologies rather than theories because they do not qualify as theory based in practice but they are rather a vaguely constructed set of unclear theoretical objections to the work and approach of another group of people. Were both of these factions to approach each other with a clearly delineated theory and a practice to accompany it they would in most occasions find that either their points of view are not as contradictory as they seem, or the contradictions can be resolved so that their work could proceed together or alongside each other without necessarily spelling out a break involving enmity. Undisciplined, competitive, purely theoretical, one-up, rigid and undialectical thinking are the hallmarks of such a split.

### Personal Hatreds

Splits usually crystalize around one or two powerful people who for one reason or another become at odds with each other over such personal issues as aborted sexual relationships, leadership, arguments over material possessions or other forms of raw or subtle competition. Animosities between these powerful people become the foci of disruption and are fed by the things that people say to and about each other and are then transmitted by second or third persons. These transmissions are invariably distorted so that two parallel paranoid systems develop, one for each faction. For instance: a collective of women and men are working together. Women's liberation awareness is followed by the resulting women's separatism. Quite naturally some of the women in the organization decide they don't want to relate to men both personally and sexually and that they want to become woman-identified women. This is followed by a painful process of sorting out who is who. Some of the women are either in relationships with men or are simply not willing or interested in excluding the possibility of personal or sexual ties with men. Still, they would like to maintain personal and even sexual contact with the women in the separatist group and feel hurt and put upon by this development. Two women who have been close friends, one who is a lesbian and another who is

primarily heterosexual (though she thinks of herself as bisexual) have a violent argument and withdraw from each other. Let us call these women Mary and Joan. Mary, back at home, says to Susan, a member of the Collective, while very upset and in tears, "It's just as I thought it would be; as long as Joan is relating to Jack she will always in the end go to him; she is with him right now. I just don't see how she and I can work together as long as she is into Jack as much as she is."

Susan, who has been jealous of Mary and Joan's relationship for a while, soon runs into Michael who is Joan's friend and says, "Mary told me that she can't be friends with Joan as long as she is relating to Jack." Michael now goes back to Joan and says: "Mary said that she will have nothing to do with you until you stop relating to Jack." Joan is extremely upset by this. Her relationship with Jack isn't going that well anyway. She loves Mary as a sister but she experiences this as an arbitrary and unfair decision on Mary's part. She angrily says to Michael: "Well if she feels that way, I guess we won't be able to work together anymore." Michael, next time that he meets Susan, says, "Joan is really angry and isn't willing to work with Mary anymore." Susan then goes to Mary and says, "Joan said that she hates you and she is going to quit the Collective."

Next time Joan and Mary meet, they are both operating under paranoid systems each based on a grain of truth which create so much anger and suspicion between them that at the very next Collective meeting they fly into an argument and the meeting ends in an uproar. The argument is about separatism, and whether separatists and women who relate to men can work together. They decide that they would like to continue the discussion but further discussions degenerate even further; anger and paranoia mount; in the end Mary and Joan become the leaders of two factions in a split complete with ideologies which for the next two years constantly bicker, hurt each

other, interfere with each other's work and become an embarrassment to other workers in the community.

It is clear that both of these women are good women who are interested in principled struggle. However, because they have had no experience (as no one else really has) with the development of factionalism which is so common in movement groups, and because of their competitive and individualistic proclivities, they are unable to continue principled struggle. The fact that there are other similar situations with similar ideological splits in other groups feeds the notion that this type of break (over separatism or any other difference) is pre-ordained, has to occur and cannot be avoided and that there is no point in fighting against it.

### Innocent Bystanders

People who are marginally involved or who have little power in the factions undergoing a split are extremely important in the way in which the split develops. They are sucked, as it were, into the vortex of controversy and conflict as a way of getting allies and confirmation for the righteousness of the positions held. They have no way of knowing the truth or falsity of the rumors that are flying around and have no reason to assume anything but that what they hear is going on with the other side is true. To them the paranoid systems that develop are undistinguishable from reality. Because they don't understand the way they develop they have no reason to doubt them. They will repeat them as if true adding their own embellishments for their own personal reasons and before long the paranoid system does indeed become real and the split becomes final.

People who align themselves with one or the other side are often people who feel powerless in the organization and see here an opportunity to have some agency in the events to follow. Their distortions fueled by their personal motives feed right into the split.

Bystanders who resist taking

sides are often not appreciated for their objectivity. They may be called "liberal" and Christ's dictum will be used against them: "If you are not with me, you are against me." Unwillingness to participate in the enmity between the groups is seen as a hostile act friendly to the enemy. Such people often leave in disgust or are actually forced out of both sides of the split.

The larger the barrier and the communication gap between these two groups, the larger the paranoid systems, all based on actual grains of truth, the more difficult to defeat, the more self-fulfilling and vicious the circle that develops; once these barriers are built up it is very difficult to mend fences except, perhaps, after a large period of withdrawal (lasting at least six months to a year). Often there is enough good will remaining between Mary and Joan so that it will eventually prevail. I have seen such splits reconciled in a very satisfactory way, years after the initial conflict. Meanwhile however, their work has suffered and they have lost credibility and faith in the eyes of the community.

### Warning Signs

Certain observable events usually accompany an ideological (rather than realistic) split.

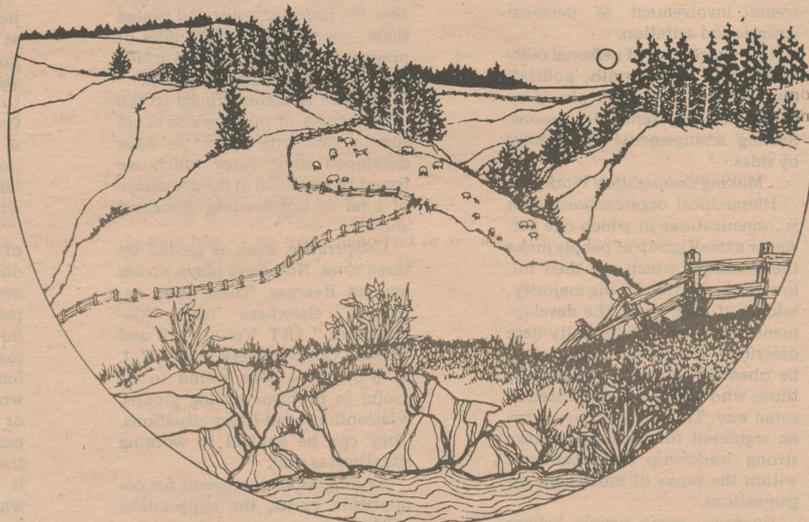
1.—Gossip. A great deal of discussion, outside of meeting about what people said or did with regards to other people.

2.—Caucusing. Discussion and decision making outside of Collective meetings or even perhaps at secret meetings.

3.—Name calling or "pigging." Political or personal insults, labels or adjectives become plentiful in conversations. "Liberal, Lefter than Thou, chauvinist, racist, sexist, Rescuer, Victim, power player, uncooperative, typical man, man hater, revisionist, reactionary, pig, unprincipled, individualistic" (Add your own favorites).

4.—Blame for difficulties being placed exclusively on the other side. No self-criticism for one's part in the problem.

5.—Stories which sound unbelievable; accounts of actions





which are so bizarre or so outrageous that they boggle the imagination in which people do things which are out of character or which you yourself would never do.

6.—Talk of “political differences” which is not made concrete. Self-righteous political attitudes which do not regard the other side’s possible political validity—political discount of the other side.

7.—Pressure from some of the more intensely involved parties in the split to take sides and intimidation when one doesn’t.

8.—Comparable parallel and escalating but similar accusations and paranoias being made from both sides of the split.

9.—Productivity greatly diminished. Endless meetings studying theory, seeking unity, leading to no solutions. Outside of meetings extreme involvement in personal struggle and agitation.

10.—Cessations of personal communication and warmth, political discussion at meetings replaced by stilted and frightened discussions. Seating arrangements at meetings by sides.

#### Making Cooperation Work

Hierarchical organizations, that is, organizations in which one person or a small group of people make the decisions which are then followed obediently by the majority, seldom if ever allow the development of the type of difficulty here described. People are expected to be obedient to the leadership and those who aren’t are eliminated in some way. This fact is often used as an argument for the need to have strong leadership and obedience within the ranks of movement organizations.

However, some people believe

that this type of organization is inherently oppressive and can only lead to oppressive outcomes and prefer to work on a democratic non-hierarchical basis. When they do they will encounter tendencies that have been socialized into their personalities which make it virtually impossible to cooperate with each other. We are unskilled in working as equals, and when we are given this opportunity our competitiveness, our individualism, our tendency to lie and power-play and place ourselves either one up or one down to other people conspire to make it almost impossible for us to work together cooperatively. In Radical Psychiatry we have had a history of splits and factions. As we work together and encounter many and often enormous difficulties we are learning the elements of success. We have had splits and healed them; people on opposite sides of previous splits are now working together successfully once again.

Because it seems crucial to the effectiveness of our work to avoid such unnecessary splits we have developed some rules which we found to be useful in the avoidance of kind of hopelessness described above.

Cooperative work is guided by three rules. No power plays, no lies and no Rescues. These rules explained elsewhere (see “Cooperation,” IRT Vol. 1, # 3 and “Living Cooperatively,” IRT Vol. 4, # 3), have been found to be useful in problem solving groups, relationships and living situations. They can be applied to working situations as well.

As long as an agreement for cooperation exists, the expectation will be:

1. That abuse of power to coerce others (power plays) will not be used or allowed.

2. That no one will do anything that she doesn’t want to do, that no one will do more than his share of the work (no Rescues), and

3. That everyone will be truthful and speak openly of criticism, resentments and paranoias (no lies). The expression of held resentments and paranoias can become part of every meeting and the openness to these as well as the commitment to a self critical attitude are an important component of cooperation.

#### Truthfulness

Lies are extraordinarily corrosive to organizations, especially those organizations which work on an assumption of truthfulness. We are raised in an atmosphere of lies and are all susceptible to lying at one level or another. In addition, lies have been used consciously and very effectively by enemy groups to disorganize movement groups. Our knowledge and control of lying in our organizations can be a powerful weapon against such attempts and our tendency to collude with them.

We have become acutely aware of the distortions which are introduced as one person reports an event to another which is then passed and further distorted on down the line. As part of our agreement to be truthful we make it a habit to include with any report whether it was actually witnessed or whether it was hearsay; we ask people to be careful to repeat what they witnessed exactly as they saw it without any embellishment, whether there were any people present, and to state whether their

report is hearsay and what level hearsay it is (second, third, or fourth). We assume that anything will be perceived differently from how it actually is and that every added level of hearsay will include a distortion, either willing or unwilling.

When we report on an event we witnessed we will probably unintentionally distort it. If we report someone else's experience we are on dangerous ground. Third level hearsay (a report on someone else's report) is as good as useless. Part of our responsibility to be truthful is to report what happens faithfully and to check on hearsay. For instance in the above example, Joan needs to call Mary and ask: "Mary, I hear from Michael that you said that you hate me and you are going to quit the Collective. Is this true?"

Part of our obligation to not Rescue involves asking for details and seeking verifications of rumors and reports and to pursue and expose possible distortions, half-truths or lies. Also we believe it is important as part of truthfulness to make public any significant conversation held outside of meetings—their general content and timing.

#### Criticism

Ideally, critical feedback, whether it be held resentments, paranoias or criticism, will contain within its lines a demystification of the tendencies that underlie the behavior being criticized (sexism, ageism, class, prejudice, etc. See Gracie Lyon's book *Constructive Criticism* from IRT Press for a thorough description of this process). However, realistically this is not always the case, and the critical feedback will often simply be a matter of personal reaction, hurt, anger, dislike and unclear feel-

ings which need to be accounted for.

Openness to the exchange of criticism is an essential aspect of cooperative work. This requires regular meetings with enough time for criticism or special meetings for that purpose. The holding back of critical feedback is one of the most disruptive forms of behavior in cooperative work because it is a lie which undermines trust and creates paranoias. Mao speaks disapprovingly of this in his essay "Combat Liberalism."

"To indulge in irresponsible criticism in private instead of actively putting forward one's suggestions to the organization. To say nothing to people to their faces but to gossip behind their backs, or to say nothing at a meeting but to gossip afterwards."

On the other hand, the refusal to hear, to be available and to thankfully accept and reflect upon critical feedback is equally problematic.

The development of a good cooperative working relationship will be revealed by an improvement in the quality of criticism and its acceptance. When this happens people become eager to hear criticism which, because it is delivered nurturingly, is also accepted gladly. Eventually criticism becomes a form of loving communication rather than a frightening exchange of bitter medicine which it often is at first. The capacity for self-criticism develops concurrently with this.

#### Power

Power Plays or abuses of power can take crude or subtle form in working situations. Crude power

plays such as "I quit (unless you do it my way)," or "You're out (unless you go along with me)," or yelling, or banging ("If you won't listen to reason you'll listen to violence"), or sulking ("You can't make me"), or interrupting are fairly obvious non-cooperative maneuvers. More subtle abuses of power can be coupleism (the irresponsible or unprincipled use of the power stemming from one's allegiances with others in the group), talking too much (by jumping in just as someone else stops talking) or talking too fast, or talking in terms which mystify others, or giving up power and responsibility (in order to let others "hang themselves").

Criticism can be used in power plays. Harsh criticism that is intended to hurt or intimidate rather than to enlighten or self-criticism that is intended to prevent criticism by others are examples. Discounting or ignoring people's statements and, of course, lying can be power plays.

All of these maneuvers are contradictory to cooperative work and need to be criticized and struggled against. The assumption in the cooperative struggle against power plays is that everyone asks for everything they want all of the time (no Rescues, no lies) and that people will respond cooperatively so that everyone will be ultimately satisfied without the use of power plays.

This has been a sketchy presentation of a topic which needs much clarification. We are learning as we slowly shed our competitive, hierarchical tendencies, to develop a new mode of working relationships. In this way we can begin to embody in our every day lives our hopes and aspirations for a truly socialist society. ●



Illustrations by Leona Walden from *Country Women*  
by Sherry Thomas and Jeanne Tetrault.

# Reclaiming Mysticism

Bruce Dodson

## Everyday Mysticism

Metaphysics is defined as: 1. Of or relating to the transcendent or supersensible; 2. Supernatural; 3. Highly abstract or abstruse. Since the word in itself is such a mind boggler I have put the words "every day" in front to calm things down a bit. I guarantee that the reading of this article will not enable one to see auras, astral travel, or transverse the cosmic void. If that's your trip, stop here, you're going the wrong way. What I want to talk about is the true common spirituality of women and men and the mystification and oppression of that spirituality. My subject has never in history had a really good press. When it was openly attacked, religion took its strongest forms. Now it is openly condoned, and at the same time corrupted by those who purvey it as a means to their end.

Many of us got our first bad taste of religion in early childhood. Some will remember the threat, "If this continues, we're going to have to go and see the preacher, maybe he can talk some sense into you." How many of us can remember sitting on a hard pew one incredibly beautiful summer Sunday afternoon. Remember how your feet couldn't touch the floor? We squirmed and wiggled, vaguely aware of the preacher's drone as we listened to noises outside the church. Every dog's bark and sound that came through the window was tangible proof of something we were missing. That's heavy programming. Religion = Boredom. I was almost thirty before it occurred to me that Sundays were not inherently boring, but that I had always expected them to be.

All of us have had religion used on us at one time or another. More often than not it is a kind of "Holier than thou" one upmanship. Andrew Greeley referred to it as "Moral Superiority" in an article he wrote for the "San Francisco Chronicle." He listed several of the payoffs: "1. You are dispensed from the ordinary rules of the pluralistic game and are above criticism and above responsibility for all that your own kind does. 2. You can engage in moral blackmail against others, either blaming them for what happened to you in the past or suggesting that they are about to do it again. 3. You have a license to hate—and that's a marvelous advantage. When hate becomes virtuous, you are really in the driver's seat." He goes on to say, "You get to be morally inferior by not being a victim."

## Religion and the Left

The left has traditionally taken a jaundiced view of spirituality. It is referred to as "Pie in the sky," and "The Opiate of the people." Marxist-Leninism takes a strongly scientific point of view and prefers to deal only with the rational and visible. The large organized churches and their vast holdings have been another thorn in the side

of the left. The sad thing is that the religion or spirituality they are objecting to is only a corrupted substitute; a marketable plastic model of the real thing. It's interesting to remember that Christ was executed primarily as a political threat. The bourgeoisie seemed to be the least attracted to his ideas. It was the same with Mohammed, the same with Gandhi.

The vendors of 20th century mysticism know better than to use words like God, religion, and spirituality. They use instead a quick run around the left end. They've been scoring like crazy. They use words like "supernatural" and "the mysteries of life" which sound a lot more exciting and have left to prior bad tastes in our mouths . . . yet.

Mysticism is now beginning to be big business. In the fifties we got a shot of Buddhism along with the Beat movement and many of its writers. People became more interested, and more books became available on the subject, but somehow Buddhism didn't lend itself to the money changers. They couldn't squeeze a product out of it. With the Hippies, Haight Ashbury and 1967 we got Hinduism, the super supernatural and finally, products. Big business (as product producers) finally got its foot in the spiritual door. We got loads of books, some that had never been translated before. The *I Ching*, translated by Wilhelm and Baynes and published by Bollingen Press, is an excellent example of what can happen to a metaphysical book. It was first published in 1950, a Taoist work with an introduction by Carl Jung. It commanded a moderate but lasting interest from the public and was reprinted by Bollingen in 1952, 1955, 1962, and 1964. In 1966 there were two reprintings. They were selling a hell of a lot of books and that was good, it's a really fine book—at least the Bollingen edition is. The thing that happened next was what always seems to happen to the best things in our society. The peddlers came, and all of a sudden there were several different translations all by different publishers. Everybody wanted part of the action.

Of course all of these books are different from each other in one way or another. They had to be in order to beat copyrights and avoid being sued for plagiarism. The second book on the market had only one other work (the Bollingen edition) to be different from. There

are now at least ten different editions of the *I Ching* on the market. This means that whoever wrote the tenth version had to re-translate and re-write the original *I Ching* in a way that was different from the way nine others had done the same thing before him. As a result there are a large number of people who think they have gone through the *I Ching* but in reality have only seen a book that's something like it. Someone has even produced a deck of *I Ching* cards, I suppose for people who don't have time to read.

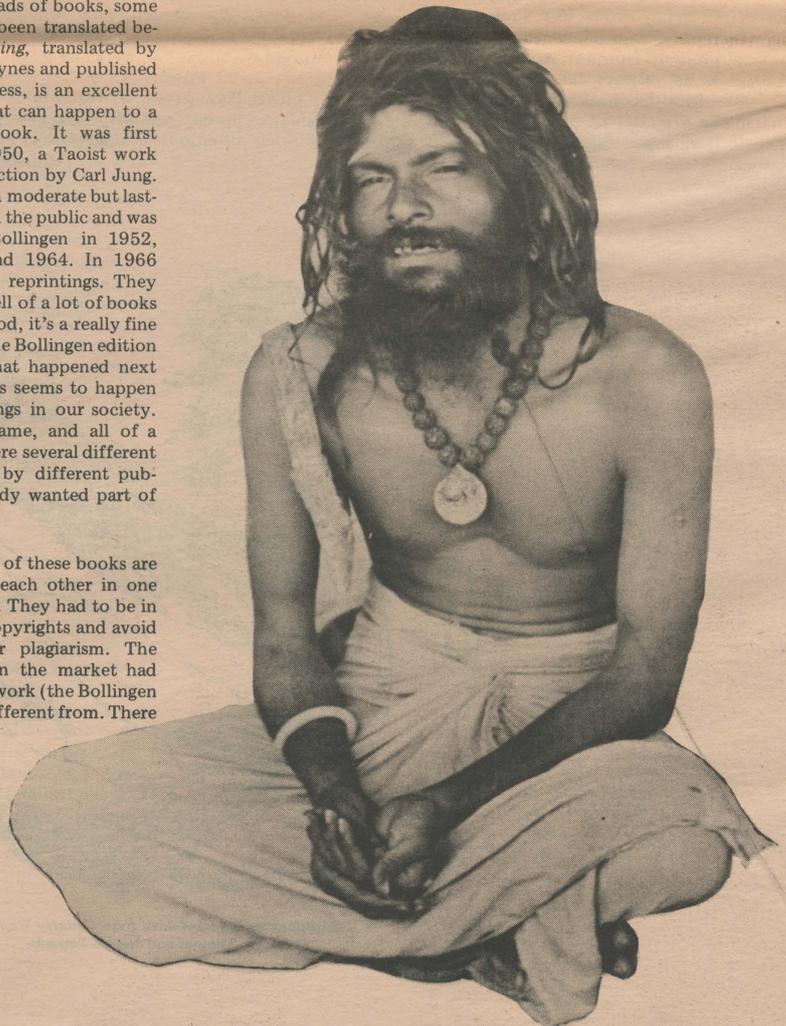
The book has been so highly commercialized and misused that it is now experiencing deterioration of status and finally public distrust. Someone reads a poor or even stupid translation, written by a hack, out to make a dollar, and says (rightfully), "What trash." He or she then discounts and has a negative attitude toward something never truly experienced. The really bad part is that one may never look in that direction again, thinking he has already covered the ground.

After the books came posters, incense by the ton, bells, candles, clothing, and music. The Hippies were buying their own thing back from the people they were trying not to be like.

Then came the Gurus with their respective promises. The main promise would seem to be that they "know," and that's where things begin to get dicey. Surely everyone would like to have access to a Guru, someone who "knows" what's up. How to find one, that's the rub. Most books on mysticism infer that if we are truly looking, one will turn up. It use to be that not many turned up and that was a bummer for some people. They felt they had failed in their quest.

In 1976 I can safely predict that a Guru will turn up at least once a week if you keep your eyes open. I can promise two or three a week for those of us living on the west coast. Within two months of my return to San Francisco I was aware of: Two Sufi Gurus, two spiritualists, an on-going seance group, a psychic class, two astrologers and a couple of fortune tellers (their little cards appear mysteriously under my windshield wipers and into my mailbox without the aid of a stamp).

In two months I am aware of ten people who have "the answer" (we keep forgetting the significance of "the question"). Each of these ten is plugged in directly to God or at least, "the other side."



A friend of mine was visiting here recently and we went to a psychic class. During the class the medium, or psychic, told her that she had only five or ten years to live (she is 42 years old). I was surprised that anyone would give a person this kind of information, and even more surprised that my friend bought it. In fact she went back a second time and was given the same information again with even more impact. She is now firmly convinced and tells me she is starting to replan her life accordingly. It will take five or ten years to find out if the psychic was right. I suppose if my friend believes the prediction strongly enough she might even be able to make it happen. A kind of instant programming.



It's hard to question or disagree with self-proclaimed Gurus. I'm sure that many of us have seen therapy group members valiantly save, defend and rescue a group leader (therapist), who happened to be totally wrong and confronted by a single group member with the courage to call him or her on it. The Guru is in an infinitely more powerful position than any therapist, and things can get pretty uncomfortable for one who expresses doubts or disagreements in the wrong time or place.

In 1973 I went to northern India for a few months. My purpose was to visit some holy cities there, to see the Ganges, and to experience the psyche of the Indian people in their own environment. While I was not seeking a Guru (I have been a rather corrupt Bhakti Yogi for some ten years now), it certainly occurred to me that it would be nice if one appeared. There were plenty there. There were crazy ones, naked ones, hemp smoking ones, learned ones, and even gay ones. With one exception, they all asked for money.



I didn't find "my" Guru. One morning I was sitting by the Ganges watching the river and suddenly realized that I had had a number of Gurus in my life but had not been aware of it. The trouble was that I had been misled (by advertisement and commerciality) into looking for something I did not have the proper definition of. I will share my new definition with you, and if you like it you might use it to identify your own Guru.

1. The Guru will know more about the subject of interest (your question) than you do. The teaching will be clear, and you will understand what is being said. If you go out more confused than when you came in you may well have been talking to the wrong person.

2. My Gurus have always been someone who cared about me. Sometimes it was because I showed an interest in a subject she or he loved (If you don't love what you're doing it is impossible to become good enough to be a real "Guru" of it). Very often their interest in me had no apparent reason at all. They didn't want my money and they didn't want me to become some kind of extension of themselves. They had nothing to gain from me in any material way. They just liked me, and cared about me. Of course I felt the same towards them.

3. What they gave, taught, or imparted to me worked. Whether it was information or a skill, it was something that I wanted and could put to use.

4. They were not perfect personalities. Some had fat egos (they were all pretty damn good at one thing or another, and knew it). One was, frankly, a bit cantankerous and had few friends, but somehow we hit it off and I learned as much from him as any other.

5. None of them "one-upped" me. Each allowed me to think and have doubts. They gave me the space to say what I felt.

6. None of them ever told me they were a Guru or a master. I'm sure all would have denied it had I made such a suggestion.

If you are learning or have learned from someone with these six characteristics, I think you have experienced your very own Guru. More often than not your love and respect have been enough to pay the bill. Enough about Gurus.



I bought one. I sent in my check and a few weeks later received a small black box (a little larger than a pack of cigarettes). It looked like a cheap Japanese radio and had a thin plastic headband with gold wire wrapped around it in several places. The box contained a small speaker and a little red light that was supposed to light up when one was in the alpha state.

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I got the headband woven through my hair (the gold wires had to be in contact with the scalp), and turned on the speaker—thrilled at the prospect of hearing my own brain at work. All I got were little electrical squitters, a noise not unlike a tree full of porpoises. My red light didn't come on at all.

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I assumed that my brain was simply incapable of making the alpha state but soon found out that my friends were also incapable of lighting the red light. Finally we had our first alphawave enlightenment. We discovered that the machine was screwed up. I sent it back to its makers. A few weeks later it came back again with a new light and sincere apologies from the factory.

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Now we got squittering along with a rapidly blinking light. I soon decided that even if I was able to get into the alpha state the noises were irritating enough to bring me out of it. I was also disconcerted by the fact that the speaker produced just about as many alpha noises and red light with my headband hanging in the air as it did on my head. I



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After the great guru influx we got hit with still another spiritual product. It was a natural for Americans, it put science and technology into the act. Man had invented the electrical Guru, bio-feedback. The alpha brainwave had been discovered and it was noted that when the brain was emitting this particular wave one's state of consciousness was similar to that of the Hindu yogins in a state of deep meditation.

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wrote another letter to the factory. They replied that alpha waves were also in the air. Terrific!

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I kept reading more about the subject and noticed that when people wrote about alpha wave training they invariably seemed to use several thousand dollars worth of lab equipment (oscilloscopes, etc.), along with the little black box. I sent a last letter to the factory and asked them if they would consider taking their device back. They said they would, but would have to discount for depreciation. The night before I mailed it back our pet cat, Pancho, chewed up about a third of the plastic headband and in the end my experience cost me about sixty dollars. It could have been worse.

As soon as we get involved in a transaction where money is being exchanged in return for the promise of increased spirituality, we find ourselves on very shaky ground. I feel that astral travel, seeing auras, and communication with the dead must be considered magic (either black or white), and tend to be taught by magicians rather than the spiritually adept. Let the buyer beware—of imitations.

Real spirituality is primarily concerned with our feelings and dealings with our brothers, our sisters, and our selves. A Bhakti might say that spirituality is simply love being expressed in each of those directions, plus a fourth (the fourth being our feelings about life itself). It's a kind of an "I'm OK, You're OK, They're OK, It's OK." The "It's OK" position not being that life is a bowl of cherries, but that it is, in the end, a rich and meaningful experience, well worth the living.

There is a huge reservoir of power and strength in this OK<sup>4</sup> position. It is for the most part greatly untapped by this society, but surely those of us who seek to understand ourselves and each other are turning on the faucet.

I will end with a poem collected by my mother in her schooldays. Its style seems clumsy and naive to me, but it says a lot, in a very simple way.

About Ben Adhem  
by Leigh Hunt

About Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase),  
Awoke one night from a dream of peace,  
And saw within the moonlight of his room,  
Making it rich like a lily in bloom,  
An angel, writing in a book of gold;  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
"What writest thou?" . . . The vision raised its head  
And with a look made of all sweet accord  
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."  
"And is mine one?" said About. "Nay, not so,"  
Replied the angel. About spoke more low,  
But cheerfully still; and said, "I pray thee then,  
Write me as one who loves his fellow men."  
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great wakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

May your tribe increase.



## BOOK REVIEW

### Hidden Injuries of Class

Richard Sennett and  
Jonathan Cobb  
New York, Vintage, 1973.

At a conference last May, Marxist Social Scientists disagreed among each other about how to speak to American workers. On one side, people argued that if we as Marxists wanted to speak to members of the working class we would have to adopt a style and a language they could relate to. We would have to move away from jargon and theoretical debate. Otherwise we'd continue to speak mostly to ourselves.

The other group argued that among ourselves we should maintain high-level theoretical debate. We were, they reasoned, members of a petit-bourgeois academic intelligentsia—so what we had to say would on any account be irrelevant to the experience of working class Americans.

Though this was surely an authentic dispute, it now seems to me that both sides shared certain assumptions about different classes. Both views seem to agree that working class Americans have no taste for "mind games," "head trips," or high falutin' culture. Neither view questions for a sec-

ond the division of people into groups which are "cultured," "educated," "enlightened," and those who are not. The so-called "silent majority" of "middle Americans" allegedly don't ponder "deep theoretical issues." Both views, in short, embody one of the most damaging stereotypes about class—that the inner life of certain individuals is richer than that of others and that class is somehow a mark of personal inner qualities.

In slave societies this notion is lacking. Being an untouchable or a slave is not thought to bear on a person's inner qualities. You are born into a caste; your caste has nothing to do with your abilities. But within the American myth of equality of opportunity, social failures aren't born, they're made.

### Class as a Badge of Ability

*Hidden Injuries* explores this inner dimension of class in America. Class as we experience it is not just an arbitrary division. We are taught to feel that it's not a matter of luck that some people acquire power and privilege while others don't. It's not just luck that makes one person a Supreme Court justice and another a janitor—everyone knows that. If you've got what it takes and you

apply yourself, you can be a justice. If you don't make it, you have no one but yourself to blame. Privilege is not a matter of luck: it is earned by exceptional individuals who have the "creativity," the "motivation," the "capability" and the "intelligence."

Consider the sorting process. Your inner capacities are measured—"objectively," you are assured—by grades, competitive examinations, IQ tests and the like. Against all this it's exceedingly difficult to mount a defense. On one level you may know that class is a matter of luck (and there is considerable cynicism about politicians and capitalists), but particularly in the mysterious position of the professional it's hard to doubt the conventional wisdom that ability is responsible for success. Time and again in *Hidden Injuries* we hear a blue collar worker saying, "If only I wasn't such a stupid shit. . . . No that's not it. If I'd applied myself . . . I know I don't have to be like I am now." In the face of a system of merit and reward, you are more likely to doubt your own worth than question the system.

This is what emerges from this sensitive and compelling study: the injury inflicted by the class system is that before we doubt the justice of the society we doubt the worthiness of ourselves.

—Michael Votichenko

# BOOK REVIEWS



## Women Loving

Ruth Falk  
Random House/Bookworks paper-  
back, 1975.

While writing this review I realized that my writing style has been molded in the crisp, linear "objective" mode made popular by intellectual journals and English professors. That style contrasts so markedly with Ruth Falk's in her book *Women Loving* and makes more obvious the book's importance because of its contribution to what I see as a different, feminine, non-linear style of writing.

When we first meet Falk she describes herself as having almost "made it"—that is, according to her external-made-internal values. She was well educated and had a well-paying fairly prestigious job with signs pointing toward a secure, upwardly mobile future. There was one goal, however, that she had not achieved which she was made painfully aware of in her daily life. She did not have a man. Not only that, but there seemed to be a constant nagging fear that she did not want one! Maybe (gulp) *women* gave her more of what she wanted and (gulp, gulp) possibly it was committed, loving relationships with both women and men that she sought! It was that one little (!) chink in the structure—the flaw in the otherwise perfect (!) plan—that let Falk begin to chisel away, from the inside out, at that mold. She also began to seek a more supportive environment helping her to work from the outside in, to find her strong, clear, loving self.

The tapestry that Falk weaves for us is a unique and personal account of her struggle in her relationships—with lovers, friends, co-workers and herself. The story is hers but the feelings and issues are all of ours. As Falk shares her own patterns I re-experienced that aching emptiness in the pit of my stomach when my close woman-friend made it clear that men, or a man, were more important to her than I was. I recognized the longing to be lovingly caressed by that soft, nurturing, feminine body, yet knowing that rejection would come if I asked. I too feared and denied my body's messages that told me I was turned on to women and that that was good.

Discussing these and other experiences leads Falk to face the results of a competitive and sexist society and deal with the biases that we have all internalized: competing with other women, dis-

counting and fearing the love we have for women, searching for "Mr. Right," denying and fearing our angry and assertive selves which could help us know and get what we want, and becoming numb in our bodies in order to avoid the pain.

This is a terse explanation of what is actually a flow of complex and spiraling discussions of emotional and gut reactions as well as rational observations. Falk's style is part of her process. She moves, connecting past and present, speculating, hoping about the future; re-examining, analyzing and making new connections, gaining new insights. We can share in her experiences, the familiar details, seeing how her pleasure and pain, holding on and letting go, moving forward and falling back, all contribute to her growth and self-awareness. She de-mystifies the external reality of her life because she shares her inner process.

What is so exciting about this approach is that it validates the intuitive and emotional parts of us, the parts of us that know that we do not move linearly from one point to another, but in many directions and coming from many places. What is *not* exciting about Falk's approach is that in what I see as her attempt to be completely open and honest, leaving out nothing, Falk ends up writing a long and often repetitious book.

In many ways the form of *Women Loving* is a political statement because it reflects Falk's somewhat self-indulgent, middle-class background. I think it is her class privilege that makes it a priority to sit and talk about herself, thinking that through this analysis and understanding alone, problems will be solved. She brings this bias into her book when she says in her Preface, "I made the decision that if I went deep into my feelings I would touch upon something in everyone." I am not sure that this worked.

Falk's easy-to-ready style may be criticized as simplistic but I feel that from an historical perspective it is often necessary to go to an extreme in order to become separate from the ideals that have guided us thus far. With her less complex style, she can stay on a feeling level in order to reach that part of us. As Falk says of her style: "If I have over-emphasized the internal it is because the external is so over-emphasized in society. We have been indoctrinated always to look outside ourselves." Falk's inner saga "toward becoming an independent woman" is an important journey to record and its familiarity—both painful and joyous—along with Falk's unique story, sustained me throughout most of her many pages.

—Mary Waldner



Faina Silbur 1969

# LETTERS

## FRIJOLES

Dear IRT:

We were happy to see our play FRIJOLES as the centerfold in your Spring issue—but we were very unhappy about the editing job. When we talked about an "edited version," or "excerpts," we assumed you would make some indication of where you were editing; three dots to indicate deletions, or a summary of parts left out. But you jammed the beginning of the play up against the ending, practically leaving out the middle, with no clue to the reader. So your version seems to read smoothly, but makes no dramatic sense. Please print this disclaimer.

Yours truly,  
San Francisco Mime Troupe  
855 Treat Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110



## A RESPONSE TO "STEPHEN'S FARM"

[This letter was written to an IRT worker from her sister in response to the article on the Farm appearing in the Summer issue. The worker has given us permission to publish it.]

Dear Carmen:

Thanx for sending that article. I don't know the guy who wrote it, but he doesn't know much about what's happening down on the Farm, I can tell you that. But then, he only stayed overnight and barely that and I was here over a year before I felt like I knew what was happening.

The article was so inaccurate that I wanted to write a response. I won't even try to go into details, but maybe sometime you can see what you think of the place.

My life is so full that sometimes I feel like I'm barely treading water. Two kids are a trucking gig, but not enough to satisfy me by itself. So I joined the bank here and 4 days a week Cara and I go up to the Foundation offices and do book-keeping, balance checkbooks, give out petty cash for things people need to buy in town, and solve whatever problems come up during the day. We are quite a business organization, and we are climbing out of a hole that we dug ourselves into by handling big money without business brains steering the boat. We've been running in the red for a while and it's getting hot. I dig being part of that kind of action and I'm so thankful we have some smart people around. A few lawyers and a couple of businessmen are teaching us all a lot.

The Farm has a lot of people who are pretty crazy; we take them on sanctuary and I often wonder how they ever make it to the Gate. They get saner here, though. We mix it up—get households real strong with very nice sane people and then move in a couple of trippies. It adds excitement to every house and there's nothing so effective as a tripper to help you keep our own shit together. I mean, if you trip out it's be really crazy. People do get saner here.

Anyway, there are two ladies at this house who are on sanctuary (that means they don't necessarily cop to Stephen as their teacher or nothing—they just need help and a place to get it together).

One day a week I babysit eight 2 and 3 year olds and cook supper for about 30 people. That's always a truck and I'm always thankful to go back to work the next day.

The ladies on the Farm are coming together as one force. We have big meetings where we talk about exactly what we need and how to get it. We want enough day care centers to cover all the kids so we can all go to work. We want to be able to do any job that turns us on and have six kids covered in a spiffy scene full of toys and ladies who like to do kids a lot. Already we've gotten 2 centers together—another 2 or 3 would fix us up. I've applied for Sarah to go to one but there's no room yet. I'm still asking, tho. She loves it—all kinds of kids, sinks just her size, mops and brooms her size, and toys galore. It keeps her so busy that she doesn't have time to boss other kids and get into hassles.

I like it here because I can get out and work and the kids are covered really well. I don't know if I can do that on a smaller farm.

Stephen's gone to Guatemala, then to New York. The Farm runs without him most of the time—it feels good to have it that way. Secure. He's like a good friend to go to when it gets heavy and a father-figure to a lot of folks. We just support him as our teacher and it works. One of the main things he teaches is that you have to find God within yourself—no one can tell you how to do it if you don't come up with your own juice. He can tell you where you might be going wrong, and he can help you see yourself better, but he can't tell you how to be. That's up to each person. He really believes in one man—one karma. That's why it only blows my mind when people say the farm is full of people living Stephen's mind. We're all trying to live our own minds and sometimes he helps us see how to do that.

I read Claude's article on communal living and it was good. He said everything that I've learned and found necessary to make it work.

Love,  
Stacey  
The Farm  
Summerville, Tenn.

## Response to Stephen's Farm letter:

Regarding your comment on my length of stay at the farm. I talked with your people ate your food, and saw your houses, land, and living conditions. I took over sixty photographs and made two hours of tape recordings of conversations I had with people there. I spoke with others who visited the farm before and after me, and spent ten hours in Southern Illinois University library researching what others had said about the farm. I bought and read the books you yourselves wrote and published about the farm. My experience of the farm was not a shallow one.

Bruce

## IN RESPONSE TO ANGER

Dear IRT:

Your article about the meaning of anger struck me as interesting but narrow in its perspective. Somehow the state of being mad was confined to a person's own perspective and individual condition, and the solution of this madness seemed to be based mostly in that individual's initiative and will power. Far too little exploration and analysis was given to the circumstances that force and keep most of us into a state of continual anger and madness.

I teach school and am familiar with people from ages three to eighteen. Most of them have really very little power over how much anger they have, inasmuch as I believe that most anger comes from economic oppression. Granted that there is something one can do, and perhaps this is the limited scope of the article, but in general most of us are unable to stop the conditioning that repeatedly causes us to be in a state of anger. For example, how does an unemployed person stop feeling angry, indefinitely, in this society? How does that person stop expressing that anger, which usually means being angry at those around at the time? And if that person has children, they receive the anger and transmit it on. And if that child is Third World that anger takes on a new dimension, filtered and fueled by racism.

An awareness of sexism usually enrages both males and females. But how do women stop feeling angry, when they're subject to constant verbal and physical abuse?

Sexism, racism, and economic oppression and their role in anger could make three articles. Hopefully they can be incorporated into future discussions of madness.

As an afterthought, what about the use of anger in overcoming these problems? Not only in personal confrontations but in demonstrations against apartheid in South Africa, in boycotts against Gallo wine, in strikes, in guerrilla warfare? If individual anger is only caused by other individuals then its solutions may only be in personal relationships, but if individual anger is caused by widespread (class?) oppression then it must be dealt with in a similar fashion.

Mel Martynn  
1228 Cornell  
Berkeley, CA 94706

## BOOK STROKE

To Whom It May Concern:

I've just finished reading *Readings in Radical Psychiatry* in which this address was given. It is one of the most positive, assuring books I've read in a long time. I am presently enrolled in an undergraduate social welfare department and am engaged in a constant battle to resist their brainwashing and socialization, directed toward molding us to be complacent, status quo, oppressive social workers.

Again thank you for publishing such an excellent, open, stimulating book. It is such a comfort to know that there are others sensitive to the oppression surrounding and within us, and further than that, are actively involved in trying to combat it.

Sincerely,  
Susan Berman  
550 Hudson Avenue  
Albany, N.Y. 12203

## ANOTHER BOOK STROKE

Hi!

Picked up Summer 1976 IRT today. Nothing too exciting at first glance. (This may sound awful, but I haven't seen anything really interesting in IRT in about a year.) Anyway, what should to my wondering eyes appear but *Love, Therapy, and Politics: IRT The First Year*, edited by Hogie Wyckoff. The first year was fine reading indeed. Glad to see it back available. Good work!

For the revolution/  
love/life,  
Bruce Huebel  
1815 18th Avenue  
Seattle, Wash. 98122

## MORE STROKES

Editor:

I'd like more articles on the treatment and abuse of people incarcerated in mental hospitals/institutions and psychiatric centers. Also perhaps a feature on Anne Schaeff's work with feminist therapy (she's a Boulder-Denverite). Really enjoyed the issues I got, especially Sara Winter's articles. You are a needed breath of fresh air in psychology/psychiatry. How 'bout something on the biology of treatment (not sure what I mean—but some integration of biology and therapy)—I'm a budding biologist and lots of the work I see being done is interesting and disturbing (especially in neuropharmacology).

IRT is fantastic—one of the most alive and interesting things that I get to read.

In peace and joy,  
Linda Blum  
Box 3681, Vassar College  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601



## RT ABROAD

Dear Friends:

For the past six or seven months I have been leading the only Radical Therapy Group in Italy. The experience has been moving, difficult, fascinating, immensely satisfying and rewarding... the women... in a word... beautiful.

There is also another Therapy group I thought you might be interested in. They would be more than happy to furnish an article. They're a Rome collective of both sexes—psychiatrists and psychologists struggling against Establishment Psychiatry here and its oppressive ways. They are admirable and in many ways remind me of everything RT has done.

If there is any other kind of info you could use from Italy from an RT point of view, feel free to solicit it from me.

Thank you for the beautiful paper!

In sister/brother/hood,  
Stella Renee Amfitheatro  
Rome, Italy

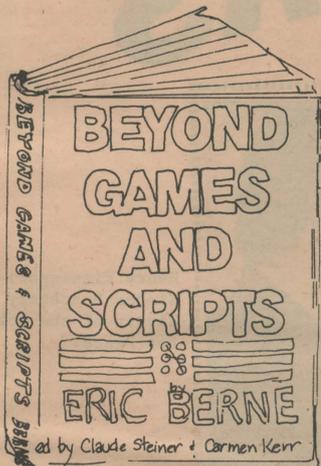
## STROKE FROM ABROAD

Dear Radical Therapy People,

Since I live in Holland I only manage to read a few of the issues of your beautiful paper. We have taken the radical therapy methods into our feminist issues, and your paper has a real good attitude on women, and it really provides some good information.

Lots of good feelings,  
Gna Berkenbosch  
Kingerstraat 13  
Amsterdam

# NEW BOOK

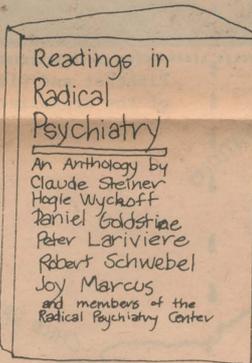


This 340 page book is a collection, painstakingly selected by Claude Steiner and Carmen Kerr, from Eric Berne's complete works. It contains five sections, each preceded by a commentary by Claude Steiner: 1. Introduction, 2. Ego states and transactions, 3. Scripts, and 4. Group dynamics. In addition, the book contains a complete annotated bibliography, a T.A. glossary and a short biography of Eric Berne. Help IRT by buying a numbered autographed first edition of this important reference work through us and we will pay postage and taxes.

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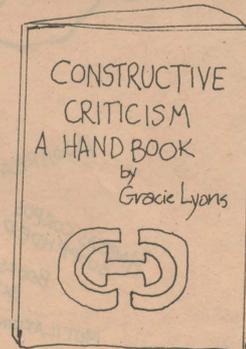
Also available from IRT: *Love Therapy & Politics, Issues in Radical Therapy - The First Year.* Edited by Hogie Wyckoff.

IRT offers you this softbound, 270 page book of articles by Hogie Wyckoff, Claude Steiner, Anita Friedman, Steven Karakashian, Rick DeGolia, Aldebaran, Joy Marcus, Carmen Kerr, and Susan Tatum.



*Readings in Radical Psychiatry.*  
 Anthology edited by Claude Steiner.

IRT offers you this softbound, 200 page book of seminal writings in radical therapy, which first appeared in the "Berkeley Issue" of *The Radical Therapist*.



see page 15 for book review!

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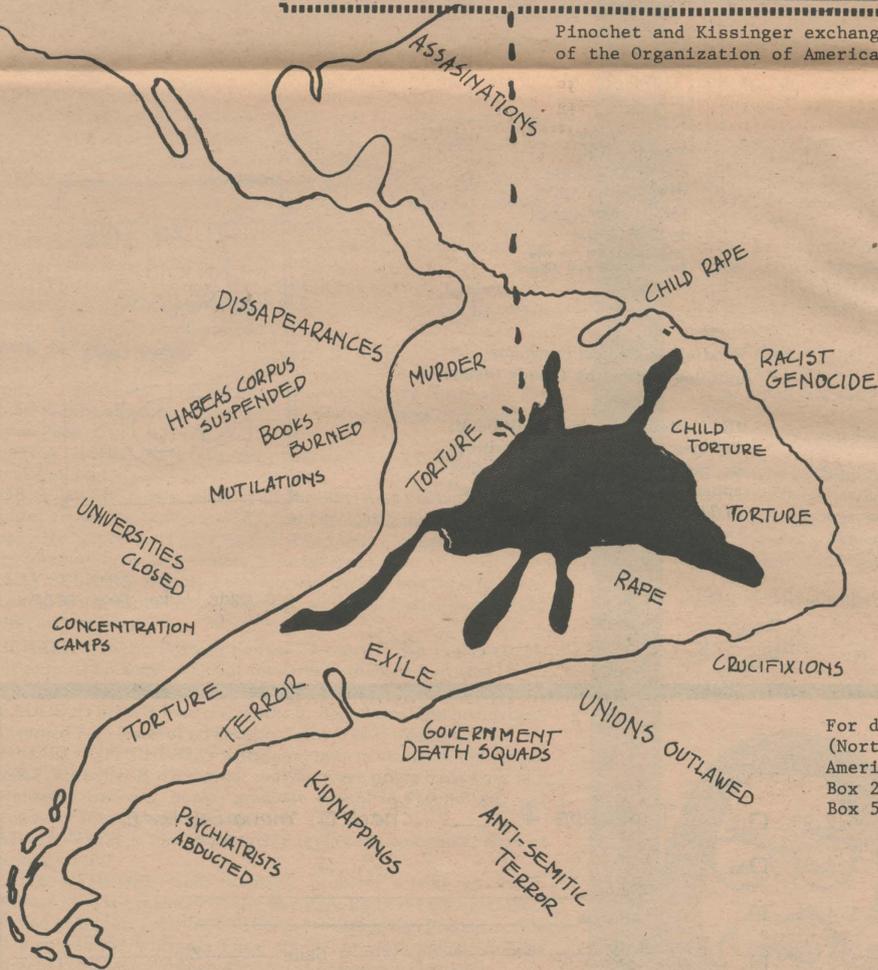
# BLOOD BROTHERS

Gen. Augusto Pinochet: Mass murderer and torturer. Traitor to Chile's Constitutional government.



Henry Kissinger: United States Secretary of State. Winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Pinochet and Kissinger exchange warm handshake at the meeting of the Organization of American States in Chile (1975)



For documentation write: NACLA  
(North American Congress on Latin  
America)  
Box 226, Berkeley, CA 94701 or  
Box 57, Cathedral Stn, NY, NY 10025

Write to your representative in Washington D.C. asking that all U.S. aid be stopped to countries that violate Human Rights.