

on our way

the women's center newsletter
17 JANUARY 72 volume 1 no. 6
from 595 mass. ave. camb. 661-9650



Dear Sisters.

I've just got back from London, where I hung out a little at the Women's Liberation Workshop, and talked to some of the women in the women's movement there. I want to write about the Workshop organization because I think they've managed to create a real woman's politics, based on trust and equality. And they get things done.

The Workshop is an umbrella organization which allows 30 - 40 small groups in the London area to coordinate, make decisions, and support each other. To belong to the Workshop, to have a vote in the 'Office Collective' meetings, which make the decisions for the Workshop, you have to be in a small group. This is any group of more than four who've been meeting at least six months and subscribe to a very general statement of direction drawn up for the entire women's movement in England last year and called the Four Campaigns: 1) equal pay and opportunities 2) equal education and training 3) 24-hour nurseries 4) free contraception and abortion on demand. You can attend the Office Collective meetings and speak if you're not in a group, but you can only vote as a representative of a group. Each group is supposed to send a representative to the Office Collective meetings which are held once a month. In fact, on the average, only ten representatives out of the forty or so groups actually show up at a given month. The representatives are chosen any way the particular group desires. Usually it is a volunteer, and usually it is the same person each month. (I think this is bad. I think it should definitely be rotated. According to what I heard, most of the groups just let their most 'active' or 'political' member do it, because, after all, no one wants to go to meetings, so the others don't get involved at all.) When there are important decisions to be made, the Office Collective works out the wording of a vote and sends it round to the groups. People then vote as individuals.

Although the Office Collective, meeting once a month, has final say on all decisions, that is not quite enough for day-to-day coordination, so a group formed called the Working Party, completely open and composed of anyone who wanted to be in it. That group makes day-to-day decisions about the office, and calls emergency meetings. Each week the Working Party composes, types, and mimeos the Workshop's newsletter, one mimeographed sheet, and sends it out in bulk through the mail to the small groups. It reports only internal news - times of meetings, people who want to start groups, results of votes, etc. Whenever there's work to be done in the office and there aren't enough volunteers, the Working Party does it. If the office worker has any questions, she asks the Working Party.

At the moment the Working Party has about eight people in it. Anyone who doesn't like what it's doing joins it and changes it. However, it obviously has a lot of potential for manipulation, and in practice, it sometimes makes people feel there's an elite running things. A lot of women in small groups feel the women in the Working Party are the heavies.

In a way, the Working Party reduces the potential for conscious or unconscious manipulation, because it is strictly accountable to the Office Collective. It also provides a collective framework for those women who want to work on organization. The Working Party seems to provide the benefits of accountability without having to have elected officials.

After experimenting for about a year with volunteers, the Workshop finally decided to pay one woman to be a fulltime office worker. Having a paid worker has a couple of great advantages. There really is someone there all the time. Once people realize this, they use the office a lot. Calls come in from people who want abortions, who want to join the movement, who want a speaker, who are in from out of town, who want to know if anything's being organized to protest something that's just happened. In London, the problem was that there was too much for one or two people to do. The second great advantage is that the office worker really knows what's happening, and can connect the people who want X with the people who've got X. A lot of information an office worker has is stuff she's picked up from people calling about one thing and mentioning another.

The advantages of reliability and coordination are balanced a bit by: 1) fewer people volunteer when there's a paid worker (though 3 volunteers came in one day when I was there) 2) the office worker is in a position of great power, both because she possesses all the information and because she can consciously or unconsciously manipulate decisions (for this reason, I don't think any office worker should stay for more than 3 months.) 3) the office worker can come to look on the office as her domain 4) after a while, people expect the office worker to know everything and handle everything, and they let the entire burden of the women's movement slip onto her shoulders 5) the particular politics of any given office worker might freak some people out.

The responsibility for *Shrew*, their magazine, rotates every two months to a different small group. *Shrew* tries 1) to express women's thoughts about themselves and the women's movement 2) to explore a different problem or a different action project that the group has taken (e.g. child care, small groups, housewives, night cleaners) 3) to reach out to other women not now connected with the movement. Recently it has added two pink sheets in the centerfold containing women's movement news. I really like reading *Shrew*. And I think passing it from group to group is a terrific idea. Like the other ways the Workshop works, it brings everybody into the action. Women don't feel isolated, and know they can express themselves.

There are dues of one pound a year (c. \$2.60), which, along with the cost of the newsletter (2 pence - 5¢ a copy) and any copies of *Shrew* (7½ pence - 20¢ a copy) people want to order, is gathered and sent in collectively by the small group. People who can't pay are supported by their groups.

We should look pretty carefully at the question of how important groups are before we decide on a structure like the London one which pretty much forces people into groups. More and more people, after their first six- or nine-month consciousness raising, aren't in a group any more. Just on the basis of what I've seen, I think the structure is a good idea. The London definition of a group isn't very strict, and I think we need some pushing to overcome our individual isolation. A lot of people have fallen back into pre-women's movement patterns. Being in a group is powerful.

I'm writing this with a feeling of urgency. The London experience is very exciting. People make the decisions in their own groups; they share with each other and they understand each other. I talked with a lot of people, and everyone felt connected, no-one felt cut off from decision-making, everyone was involved and active.

We need something like this in Boston. What do you all think?

Love,

Jane de Long

(This letter has been extensively edited to fit it into the newsletter. The entire letter is available for reading at the women's center office)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Linda Gordon will speak on 'Racism and the Birth Control Movement', on Thursday, Jan. 24, at 8 pm, as part of the Feminist Studies Program of the Cambridge -- Godard Program. 1878 Mass. Ave., 2nd fl., near Porter Square. Open to all women.

WORKSHOPS: Caravan Theatre women's workshops and men and women's workshops using techniques adapted from theatre games and improvisations to explore relationships, re-examine sex roles, try alternative behavior, explore whatever personal issues we have. First workshop - Feb. 5th. Please let us know if you have campus contacts. Call Bobbi Ausubel, 861-8737

Women interested in therapy groups:

Radical therapy groups, rap groups, theme-oriented groups, etc., will start in the Women's Center when it opens. Any interested leaders, members and women interested in finding out more about Women's therapy, leave your name and phone number at the Women's Center Office, 661-9650 -- 595 Mass. Ave., 2nd fl.

Lesbian Liberation meetings Wednesdays at 8 pm -- at the Women's Center Office and/or Media Center, 2 Brookline Street, Cambridge, On Wednesday, Jan. 26, all interested women should come to discuss/decide upon ways of using gay space at the Women's Center.

Friday night is gay night at the office. Women wanting to know more about or get into gay women's liberation or wanting to be more in touch with gay women, come to or call the Women's Center Office between 6 and 10 pm;

Meeting for women interested in a WOMEN'S YELLOW PAGES: directory of services in the Boston--Cambridge area. Wednesday, January 19, at the Boston YWCA; Copley Square, 7:30 p.m. or call 536-7940, ext. 55.

Courses for women at the Boston YWCA, 140 Clarendon St., beginning January 24, lasting 10 weeks: 'Car Repair' (given by the Somerville Women's Car Repair Collective), Tuesdays, 1:30 -- 3:30 pm (\$20); 'Home Repair', Tuesdays 7 -- 8:30 pm (\$20); 'Woodworking with Hand Tools', Wednesdays 3-5 pm (\$26); . Women can arrange for their preschoolers to stay in the supervised YWCA playroom for a nominal fee. Call 536-7940 for more information.

Women's commune beginning in New Hampshire, 500 acres, big old house. Farming and maple sugaring begin in March and April. Crafts shop may open this winter, women political activists and hardworking women welcome. Berries and wild fruit everywhere. Come visit or call anytime. Martha Burgess, New Boston Road, RFD 1, Franklin, N.H. 603/934-3597.

PLAYGROUP openings for two girls between 3 and 4, near Central Sq. 9:30-5. Parent co-op (both when feasible), \$15/week. 2 teachers in morning, parents in afternoon (1 aft./week). Church basement, good equipment, free atmosphere. Call Toni, 547-9299, after 5.

SUPERVISED PLAYGROUP for children between 3½ and 5½. Run by a Cambridge mother with pre-school teaching experience. Large yard, quiet street, between Harvard & Central Squares. Pay according to your income. 868-0179

Feminist library student from NY, 24, seeking roommate(s) with apt. in Boston or Cambridge. Hopefully non-cigarette smokers. To begin anytime in Jan. Call station-to-station at night, collect OK. NIKKI' (212) 877-8064.

CORRECTION to the last issue of the newsletter: the (smudged) telephone number for the women's history group is Karen, 354-4343; that's 354-4343.

MORE NEWS ABOUT THE WOMEN'S CENTER:

Some women are working on plans for a mass meeting (date not yet set.). This hopefully will be the meeting where we decide the organizational structure of the new Women's Center.

In the November 29th, Issue No. 4 of the Newsletter, there was a proposal for how the Women's Center could be run: copies of the newsletter are available at the Women's Center Office. Also check out the letter in this issue about the running of the Women's Center in England. Any ideas, proposals/criticisms of the already proposed running methods should be brought to the Women's Center Office so we can print it before the mass meeting. To hold the chaos level down as much as possible, it's very important that there be some concrete suggestions for us all to read and think about before the meeting.

Also -- we'd like to hear from groups or individuals who are interested in using space or have ideas about how space should be used, so we'll have some idea of what space demands might be.

THE WOMEN'S CENTER IS HAPPENING. IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET CONCRETE. IF YOU HAVE IDEAS (about the mass meeting, proposals suggestions, etc.,) PLEASE WRITE THEM UP AND/OR CALL AMBER AND JUDITH AND NANCY -- 354-5412, or 623-2513 or the WOMEN'S CENTER OFFICE-661-9650.

THE OFFICE NEEDS STAFF: COME ON IN AND ANSWER THE PHONE AND MEET SOME PEOPLE

STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE: JUDY BRUNELLI, ALISON IRÈNE -

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29 JANUARY 72 - Volume 1 no. 7
from 595 mass. ave. camb. 661-9650



Waitresses at Cronin's are on STRIKE!

We are striking because contract negotiations have broken down. We have been negotiating since mid-December and Cronin has refused categorically to bargain on our most important demands—those that revolve around wages, overtime pay, and the fact that we have to pay for customers who walk out without paying. The strike will only succeed if people help us picket and do other necessary work.

We will picket from 12:00 noon until closing every day until the strike ends. If you wish to picket, either come down to Cronin's or call to see when your support will be needed most. We can also use help doing other work. Phone numbers are 547-6674 or 354-7179. - Lorraine -

the building is ours!

The house is located at 46 Pleasant Street, off River Street in Cambridge.

Before it can be used, decisions have to be made about how it will be run, etc. Come talk about it, everywoman!

SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY FEB. 5 and SUNDAY Feb. 6

On Saturday and Sunday we will be meeting to decide how to run the Women's Center and how to allocate the space. It seems like it will be impossible to make decisions about which groups get how much space until we work out a democratic way for such decisions to be made. Therefore, on Saturday we will be discussing organization - hopefully coming to decisions by 6:00 P.M. that night.

At 1:00 P.M. on Sunday - no matter what's still left to be decided - we'll have to stop our discussions on organization and find at least a temporary way to allocate space so we can start using the building without delay.

Saturday, Feb. 5, M.I.T. building 14E, room 304 (Go in main entrance to M.I.T. on Mass. Ave. near river, ask for Bldg. 14, it's a long walk, then 3rd fl.)
BRING LUNCH

- 10:00 - 11:30 Bldg. 14 E, room 304. General meeting to discuss agenda, additions, subtractions, etc.
- 11:30 - 3:30 Break up into small groups to discuss agenda. By 3:30 each individual should decide how she feels about each of the questions on the agenda. The group should pick one person to tally up the decisions of all the people in the group (just a straw vote; not binding) and report them at 3:30 to the meeting committee (Amber, Jane and Nancy).
- 3:30-- 4:00 Break.
- 4:00 - 6:00 General meeting, beginning with the report of the meeting committee on where all the groups were at. MAKE DECISIONS FINAL!
- 6:00 - 8:00 Supper (at Women's Center if someone volunteers to help make it).
- 8:00 - 10:00 PARTY!!!! Unless, of course, there remain some decisions to be made. Then, back to the grindstone at Bldg. 14E, room 304.

Sunday, Feb. 6, MIT building 14E, room 304

- 10:00 - 12:00 Discussion and decisions on the use of space in the Center. (Unless some organizational decisions still need to be made, please, no)
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 - 5:00 Decisions on space.

Bring the newsletter when you come

A Proposed Agenda for Saturday, February 5

Nancy and Amber and I, after talking about it for a long time and talking to people we knew, decided that almost everybody had in mind some kind of coordinating committee for the making of basic, day-to-day decisions in the Women's Center, and that the big problems in people's minds were who was the committee to be made up of, and how much power would it have.

The alternatives to some sort of coordinating committee seem to be 1) elected officers or 2) a system in which all decisions were made either in mass meetings or by whoever is working on something at the time. We felt that although those two ideas are good in some situations, neither of them would get much support from the women at this meeting, and it would be better, after checking out that that was a correct perception, to go on to the problems of figuring out what kind of coordinating committee we should have. However, if anyone feels that there is considerable support for one of these alternatives, she should bring it up and discuss it.

Deciding on "some sort" of coordinating committee isn't much, though. The questions that we individually should come to a concrete answer on by 3:00 are these (in order of the ones we think should be decided first for the others to make any sense):

1. How many people, maximum, should be on the coordinating committee?
2. How should the people on the coordinating committee represent the women who use the Center?
 - a. Which specific groups using the Center should send representatives?
 - b. How would numerically larger groups be fairly represented? (Concretely, should any specific groups get two representatives?) How would the small groups be represented? (Concretely, which groups should be joined together for purposes of representation?)
 - c. How would new groups come in? Concretely, what should be the procedure for admitting new groups to the Center? Should there be any guidelines (eg. Proposal I: "Any consciousness raising group that chooses to associate with the Center by doing some Center work, gets represented on the committee.")? If so, what should they be?
 - d. How would individuals not in any group be represented?
3. How much responsibility should the coordinating committee have? To make this concrete, we've figured out five different types of committees, ranging from one with practically no responsibility to one with a lot of responsibility. If these don't cover the field, just add any others you think of.
 - a. makes only obvious bureaucratic decisions and leaves any decision with any potential controversy in it to a mass meeting or referendum.
 - b. makes no policy decisions. Makes day-to-day working decisions only when there is full consensus on the committee. When there is no full consensus, the decision is referred to a mass meeting or a referendum.
 - c. makes policy and day-to-day decisions under guidelines determined at a mass meeting or through a referendum. When there is no full consensus on the committee on what the guidelines direct, it sends the decision to a mass meeting or referendum.
 - d. makes policy and day-to-day decisions by consensus. Works out the guidelines. When there is no full consensus on any matter, refers the decision to a mass meeting or referendum.
 - e. makes policy and day-to-day decisions by majority vote.
4. How should the total group decisions be made—by mass meeting, by referendum, or by some combination?
 - a. If by mass meeting, how should these be structured—evenings, day-longs breaking into groups, weekends?
 - b. If by referendum, how would these be conducted? Who should be allowed to vote, if not everybody? Should decisions be taken by majority vote?

So, the idea is to come up with concrete answers to all of these questions by 3:00.

Jane

PROPOSAL NUMBER II (with strong inspiration from the Chicago Women's Center)

The steering/coordinating committee would be made up of representatives from each functioning group in the women's center. It should be a revolving committee which stays together three months plus another two weeks to help the new steering committee fill in gaps, etc.; the old committee would have no power in votes, etc.

The committee would decide all questions brought to it, by consensus. At the point that consensus fails, reps of groups would go back to the people they represent, present the problem as completely as possible, and find out how they want the problem resolved. There would then be another committee meeting where the reps try once more to reach consensus. If consensus is not reached at this time, a vote is taken, with names in order to see the breakdown. Notes of this meeting with the specific suggestions and proposals voted on would be sent out to the membership at large—or a mass meeting would be called by the coordinating committee. The coordinating committee would work out an agenda, publicize, and attend the meeting. If this too fails, then a vote/referendum would be sent out to everyone.

Anyone would be encouraged to come to the committee meetings. Everyone there would be allowed to speak, and general debate could take place. At a time decided beforehand, the debate would stop and only reps would continue. If the reps reach a consensus but a group of people feel strongly opposed to the decision, they could call a mass meeting to re-evaluate it. Until the meeting, the original decision would hold. There should also be a mass meeting about once a month, planned and coordinated by the committee, to fill in the whole women's center on what's happening.

Regarding office staff—there would be a permanent office group composed of volunteers. In addition every month each group on the committee would send a different person to work in the office, at least, once a week. Hopefully the group could ensure that a group of people do not become women's center bureaucrats. It would equalize the work load and keep each group filled in on the general workings of the women's center.

Regarding a welcoming committee—this would also be a permanent part of the women's center. Its function would be to get to know new women. The welcoming committee would be structured like the office staff. Their function would be to get to know the new women, help acquaint them with the women's center, help them to contact people with similar interests, and follow up by calling them within a month. Welcoming committee women would each hold a dinner every two weeks, on nights convenient for new women.

This worked very well in Toronto: it kept older women's movement members in personal contact with new women, gave new women a better way to ask their questions and to feel that it wasn't totally up to them to push their way into a new group. These women's names should be added to a separate mailing list because, assuming a referendum, women not involved in the center through one of the groups would not vote. A woman not in a group should constantly get information but should not vote. It is up to the welcoming committee rep to speak for these women.

Amber

COMMENTS

.... The more actively a woman is involved in the movement, the more information she possesses; the more information she possesses, the more capable she is of making working decisions. Some women can only involve themselves in a limited way. This is for a variety of reasons: lack of organizational experience, or even—and this is as good a reason as any other—because they lack the necessary confidence or aggressiveness. These women are excluded from the decision-making process.

.... Women who do not have other commitments—children, jobs, etc.—are enabled to spend more time involved with the movement. These women naturally gravitate to positions of greater responsibility and hence greater power. Power in this sense means that they are in the position to make decisions and pursue courses of action that will affect the community.

.... It seems that the primary responsibility of those who are in "power" positions is to structure themselves in such a way that new women (and women who because of their oppression have part-time participation) can more easily become realistically involved.

.... Any consciousness-raising group that chooses to associate with the Women's Center, by doing some Center work, gets represented on the coordinating committee.

*** (It seems) that women who want to become involved in the Women's Center should be able to do so, that anything that encourages ingroup-outgroup divisions should be avoided if at all possible. Mass meetings may be an example. Women who have been around for a while and know each other tend to dominate the meetings; "new" or more isolated women, feeling they don't know enough about things to speak or intimidated by the many unfamiliar faces and the self-assurance of the women who do talk, end up feeling even more out of it. If for some reason a mass meeting seems necessary, it should be organized so that it won't have that effect. Limiting how long a woman can speak and how often would help--as might dividing into small groups.

*** Women should be able to contribute what they want. New responsibility should be divided among women not having it (but willing) rather than those already having some. When groups seem full, some way of starting new ones should be effected.

*** The following are some suggestions

1. A woman who is not a member of an established group should be represented on the coordinating committee. She should vote in referendums.
2. The membership of the committee should be rotated, say, on a monthly basis with some sort of transition period where the old committee members can work with the new, sharing knowledge and experience, and then relinquish it.
3. If necessary, women who cannot make full commitment should have "stand-ins" on the committee with full powers and responsibilities.
4. A review of the functions of the coordinating committee should be held periodically (especially in the beginning).
5. Communications about the activities of the committee members, collectively and singly, should be frequent (activities should be published in the newsletter, newsletter staff should take notes at meetings).
6. Meetings of the committee should be open.
7. Members of the committee should not be responsible for arranging representation. New groups should automatically be represented, bearing in mind that no group will last forever.
8. Members of the committee should represent only one group at a time.
9. Preferably, representatives on committee should only be in one group.
10. There should be a time period in which individuals (regardless of the number of groups they are in) will not be on the committee.

Announcements

Would like to move into a women's collective soon, gay or straight. Interested in doing amateur women's theatre. Also, searching theologically. Please write to Deborah Berson, 159 Yale Street, Roslyn Heights, New York 11577 and send phone #.

We are 4.5.6. who have begun to organize a woman's garage, the FEMINIST GARAGE. We're holding together but are pretty disorganized-- things are going slowly. We have use of a two car garage in Cambridge free of charge but it needs work. We have tools and are very able with tune-ups and brake-jobs, and would like to help people with other repair work. We are learning and want to have people come and learn and work with us. We also are looking for women who know about cars and are interested in working seriously (with us) in the garage.

We hope to start teaching a free course soon on Saturdays at the garage. Please call us: Evelyn 776-6740, Carol 354-7179, Lucy 625-3243, Margie 625-6768, Irene 354-3374.

Three or more bedroom apartment desperately needed for two women and six children in Cambridge around \$200 per month. Needed by March 1st. Phone 492-5964.

Staff for these pages are: Elizabeth, Linda, Jane, Mary Jo, Irene, Ellen, Jackie, Judy, Marilyn, Brunelli, Tara!

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the Women's Center Newsletter
22 February 72 volume 1 no. 8
from 46 Pleasant St Cambridge

354-8807

ORGANIZATION

On February 5 and 6 there were day-long meetings on organization of the Women's Center. We needed to decide some things in order to feel the Center could be run, used. Tentatively, we agreed upon the following:

Coordinating Committee

There will be a coordinating committee made up of one representative from each of the following nine project areas (groups that will be using space at the Women's Center were combined by project areas so that the Committee would be a workable size). Office (including financial, newsletter, etc.) Lesbian. Health. Women's Center School. Other educational groups, Child Care, Welcoming Committee, Orientation, Legal (including Justice for Divorced Mothers, Prisons), Media. Other groups that want representation should ask for it. It was agreed that the Anarchist Amazons, a group that felt unrepresented, could have a rep on the Committee.

Those guidelines for inclusion/exclusion of groups were set up: Groups should have at least 5 members (exception: groups with potential for more members); IS, SWP, PL/SDS, YSA, CP, WOMEN IN REV may not be represented (a committee will prepare a statement on political differences with these groups); other groups than these if turned down by the coordinating committee can appeal to a larger meeting.

It is the responsibility of each project area containing any groups that are using space at the Women's Center to send a rep to the Coordinating Committee meetings. Other represented groups must send a rep unless they decide they no longer need representation. In that case, they have to say so and explain before stopping.

Coordinating Committee Meetings

Coordinating Committee meetings will be open. Routine business should be taken care of first. Reps may decide to limit the period in which non-reps may participate. The newsletter will include detailed descriptions of each meeting.

The Coordinating Committee should call open informational-social (non-decision-making) meetings when needed.

Reps

The terms of reps should be decided by the group they represent (suggested time: 2 or 3 months). A rep should feel committed to attending meetings during her term, rather than sending an alternate, so there can be a consistent group working together.

Decision-making

The Coordinating Committee should make decisions by consensus (everyone agreeing). If there is no consensus, dissenting members can decide if they are willing to accept a decision. If so, a decision can be made. If not, the Coordinating Committee has to call a Mass Meeting. A mass meeting should also be called when the Coordinating Committee feels a topic is important enough to meet about. Women not on the Coordinating Committee can call a mass meeting if they strongly oppose a decision of the committee or feel it is badly needed. When a mass meeting is called, the problem that needs to be worked out, and the different points of view about them on the committee will be presented in the Newsletter. A voting form will also be included in the Newsletter, so women not coming to the meeting can be heard. Their votes will be tallied and the results presented at the mass meeting for consideration.

At mass meetings, decisions will be made by consensus when less than 50 women are present, by four fifths majority vote when more.

If a decision can't be reached, and members of SWP, IS, PL/SDS, YSA, CP, WOMEN IN REV are present, they cannot participate.

Powers of the Coordinating Committee

There should be no external political statements from the W.C. as a whole. If groups come to the committee asking for support or statements, the reps will encourage struggle around questions in the groups they represent. Each group should explain its own position. Detailed statements from the groups would take the place of a general statement from the Women's Center. . . The Coordinating Committee should make policy and week-to-week decisions under the guidelines that have been set up. Further guidelines may be set up by the Coordinating Committee.

THERE WILL BE A REEVALUATION MEETING ON MAY 6.

Space

Rooms were assigned for use by various groups according to their projected needs. For now there will be: 1st floor - library/lounge, kitchen, and office space; 2nd floor - health groups' space, child care/classroom, and another child care room; 3rd floor - lesbian lounge, lesbian office, and 2 free space rooms (will be used as classrooms, game rooms, rooms to be signed up for); basement - free store, crafts & media, and carpentry; garage - general workshop; porch roof - greenhouse fantasies.

Groups using rooms should consult the c.c.c. before making major renovations.

Carole and Mica and Joey are a temporary maintenance committee.

A good way to do general maintenance would be to have each group represented on the coordinating committee donate a person to help each week.



GRUN Cronin CH

The struggle at Cronin's Restaurant continues. Waitresses are still out on strike. Picketing is going on from 5:30 until closing every night. The picket line has kept many people out of the restaurant causing Cronin's business to decline drastically. Picketing is the only effective tool we have to use against Cronin. And as a result he has taken steps to stop it. On Tuesday, February 1, he obtained a temporary (lasting 5 days) restraining order to stop us from picketing. He claimed that our picket was illegal because we were standing in front of the door blocking customers from entering and verbally abusing customers. None of that is true, but if Cronin can get a judge to believe him, then that is what counts.

After the injunction went into effect, no one named on it picketed, but supporters did picket. So on Wednesday all those named on the injunction - 9 waitresses and 4 lawyers and law students -- received court orders to appear Tuesday, February 8 on charges of contempt of court.

In the meantime, Cronin, escalating his battle, fired all of the striking waitresses. The firings are illegal and are being appealed.

On Monday, our attorneys filed a petition to remove the case to Federal Court. We feel that the case should be heard by Federal Court because Cronin claims in the injunction that our entire strike is illegal because we want more than the 5.5% wage increase allowed by the Wage Price freeze. (We claim that the strike is legal because any increase is allowed in order to bring a worker up to minimum wages.) We made \$1.10 an hour and are asking for \$1.35 an hour. Wage price issues are in the jurisdiction of the Federal Court. We feel we would get a better deal in Federal Court, since a Federal judge is a bit removed from local politics where Cronin has a lot of influence.

As a result, when we went to Court on Tuesday morning, the State judge didn't rule on the contempt charges and won't unless a Federal judge decides the case should not be held in Federal Court. Also, the injunction was lifted on Tuesday, so waitresses are now back on the picket lines -- but Cronin is trying to get another injunction.

What is happening at Cronin's is a crucial beginning of a struggle of waitresses to get some control over their lives by setting up an alternative to the male-dominated sell-out AFL-CIO. We need your support -- we need picketers and we need money. If you can help, call Pat at 547-6674 or Lorraine at 354-7179.

Film Benefit

A film benefit for the Harvard Square Waitresses Union and the Women's Center will be held on Friday, March 3, at Emerson Hall, Harvard - Room 210 - ~~7-9:30~~ 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$2.00 (H.S.W.U., \$1-W.C.) FILMS to be shown are:

'It Happens to Us' -- Made by... 'A new, all woman film company called Anomaly Films and headed by Amalie Rothschild... 'It Happens to Us' is a stirring documentary on abortion. The film gives the views and attitudes toward the abortion of women in a wide age range who have experienced it... brings all the facts and fantasies about abortion into the open.' (New York Times Review - Sunday, February 13) FIRST AREA SHOWING

'Loving Couples' -- a feature length film by former actress, now producer-director Mai Zetterling. Set in Sweden during World War I, "Loving Couples" is an assault on the domination of women by men during a period of social change. The theme unfolds and is powerfully portrayed by flashbacks in the lives of 3 women -- a woman living with her Aunt, a prostitute, and a maid -- all awaiting birth of a child in a hospital.

'Anything You Want To Be' -- a short documentary by Boston filmmaker Lianne Brandon. "Anything You Want To Be" candidly, humorously and very poignantly enters the lives of high school girls.

All three films have been selected for showing at the International Festival of Women's Films.

Starting March 5 ~ the Women's Center School!!

Courses will be Women's History, Introduction to Women's Liberation Literature, Economics, The Family, Black History, Women and Their Bodies, Art Skills, Nutrition, Lesbian Liberation, Fix-It, Jewish History and Culture, Writing, and European Revolutionary Movements.

Classes will be informal and as flexible as possible, with everyone participating in course planning and evaluation. Registration: Open House Sunday, February 27, 1-5 p.m. Also the following Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 1-4, 7-9 p.m. \$2.50 contribution is requested. For more info call 354-8807.

Announcements

Need Room-mate with apartment or someone to look for an apartment with. Into puppet theatre and film and getting to know myself. Call Rita 267-5738.

Lesbian Mothers' Union -- The first newsletter of the Lesbian Mothers' Union, recently formed in California, has been received, along with additional information on their activities. There will be some copies of the newsletter at the Women's Center. For additional information call Mary Jo at 666-1694.

Women planning (or wanting) to teach or take classes at the Women's Center that are not part of the school (e.g., auto mechanics, skills) please call Nancy 354-5412.

Wanted: Someone to find and share a house or apartment, preferably on the Cape. I'm a woman with a 3 year old boy and a 2 month old girl and on welfare. Please call Bobby at 661-8898 or 566-7877 if you are interested.

Lesbian Liberation meetings are Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at the Woman's Center. On March 1 we'll talk about lesbian projects, use of space, etc. On March 8 topics for (small) group discussions will be 'racism' and 'one night stands'.

Sign up to work in the office so the house can be open 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. daily

Staff: Jackie Tina Margaret Judy Irène

ON OUR WAY

the Women's Center Newsletter
7 March 72 Volume 1 no. 9
From 46 Pleasant St. Camb.

354-8807

Hey! Hey! Women's Day!

March 8, International Women's Day, will be celebrated this year in Boston by a demonstration and rally on Saturday, March 11. The rally will begin at 12 noon on the Boston Common, opposite the statue of Ann Hutchinson on the State House lawn, and will be followed by a march through downtown Boston, past the Charles St. Jail, the welfare office, and the shopping district, and ending at Government Center.

International Women's Day was first celebrated in this country in 1908. It became an international socialist holiday in 1910. Its celebration in Petrograd in 1917 sparked the first Russian revolution. Today it is celebrated by women all over the world. Last year's International Women's Day march culminated in the seizure of a Harvard owned building as a women's center. The building was held for ten days.

The Women's Day celebration will continue in the evening, with a Women's Rock Concert beginning at 8 p.m. at the Boston University School of Public Communications auditorium, at 640 Commonwealth Avenue. The concert will be a benefit for the Women's Center which has just opened at 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, and for the Boston Feminist Press. Donations will be \$2.00.

Urgent warning: read this!

Dear Sisters:

This is an urgent message.

As a result of reading unauthorized and misleading articles in Everywoman (Menstrual Extraction, October 26, 1971, etc.) and the Spokewoman (December 1, 1971), many sisters are writing us for "do-it-yourself abortion kits" or menses extraction kits. There is no such thing as a safe "do-it-yourself abortion kit." Much of the information in several of the articles was false and dangerous. The Self-Help Clinic does not teach self abortion and disclaims any affiliation with any group which does.

WARNING: DO NOT ATTEMPT THESE METHODS.
SAVE OUR SISTERS PLEASE SPREAD THIS WORD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

Self-Help Clinic
Orange County Women's Center
and/or Los Angeles Women's Center

In healthy sisterhood,

DECISIONS FROM THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Decisions from Coordinating Committee Meeting were:

Maintenance committee will be notified to change locks on front and back doors, and locks for windows.

Fund raising and maintenance committees should send someone to Coordinating Committee meetings to report. Sign up sheets for these committees will be at the Women's Center.

Tape recorder should be brought to meetings for minutes.

Third world and community women's groups have a clear priority in use of the space at the Women's Center unconditionally.

Future coordinating committee meetings should be held at the Women's Center for convenience and discouragement of ingrouping. The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 7 at 6:00.

Decisions From The Newsletter

Some decisions made by newsletter staff were:

— that we consider ourselves a core group committed to putting out a newsletter regularly in the hope that having somewhat the same group will end confusion as to who and how the newsletter gets done. In no way do we feel ourselves to be an exclusive group, and we will continue to welcome any help from other women.

— In general we feel women who wish to write statements in the newsletter should sign their first name. We feel that it is important to know who is saying what, because articles are written by individual women and not nebulous voices. Also, we feel that we should be able to comment on statements and articles either collectively or individually.

— We feel that if an article needs editing, the woman who wrote the article knows best what can be changed and therefore writers should be contacted regarding any changes that staff wants to make. We should also contact the writer if we feel an article is unclear, to try and work out clarification, etc., that because of the amount of work involved in doing the newsletter, any articles over 250-300 words will have to be typed out by the writer or something. It should be done on a composer or super small print typewriter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: *KE*

Roommate needed for gaywoman living near the Women's Center in Central Square. If you are looking for a place to live, call and we'll talk about it. Carol 661-8961.

If you'd like to join a discussion on radical child rearing, come to the Women's Center Fridays at 7 p.m. For more information call Bev 861-0327. Also if you would like to help set up the child care rooms, contribute equipment, do child care, or help with a party for neighborhood kids.

Lesbian middle class women - consciousness raising and discussion to talk about middle class backgrounds and CLASS in general. Mondays at 8:00 at the Women's Center.

Lesbian liberation meetings are Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at the Women's Center. On March 15 we'll talk about projects, use of space, etc. On March 22 topics for discussion will be "class" and "legal hassles."

Deadline for articles for the next newsletter is Friday, March 17 and announcements should be in no later than Sunday, March 19. Articles can be left at the Women's Center office.

Women who would like to develop a library, donate books, or suggest books, call the Women's Center 354-8807.

Meeting to plan a women's assembly Wed. March 15th 8:00 p.m. Call 864-7138

In The Beginning...



This was written to women who were involved in the 888 Memorial Drive building takeover last year with the idea of evaluating some of what we learned from that experience; but we also hope that what we're saying will be clear to other women and that all women will feel free to respond.

Sisters

It's been a year since our occupation of 888 Memorial Drive, and we've been reminiscing about it. We wanted to share some of our thoughts with you.

The main thing that's struck us over and over since we left 888 is how many women we reached through our struggle. We're continually meeting and hearing about women all over the Boston area who were turned on by the action. A lot of them couldn't come to the building for all kinds of reasons—like having families and jobs that demanded all their time—but dug the risks we were taking in the name of Sisterhood. The fact that we were willing to take those risks, plus the obvious strength of our numbers, gave a real meaning to our claims that "Sisterhood is Powerful." Our seizing a building from big bad menly Harvard illustrated in concrete action what our women's movement is about: taking back control over our own lives, and challenging—and eventually beating—the powers in America that presently seek to control all of us. In our action we also tried to give some reality to our claims of support for the struggles of Third Worldpeoples. In our active support of the Riverside community against Harvard;

After we left 888, we remember people talking about how important it was that our struggle had been real as opposed to symbolic. It's true that we took something we actually needed in our lives, but looking back on that week, we've also been thinking about the powerful ways the

action was symbolic. Eventually our actions will be all concrete, but for now, our symbolism shows a vision of the future. Our choice of Harvard as a target was symbolic—we didn't destroy Harvard, but we launched an attack on this microcosm of white american male power. Our telegram of support to Mme. Binh in Paris was also symbolic—a link between us in 888 and the Vietnamese people. Creating struggles that both symbolically and more immediately and concretely show our hatred of American imperialism and power defines and builds our movement. It's this revolutionary movement itself that's the real, not symbolic, threat to the United States and to any domination of one group of people over another.

Remembering the week in 888 naturally includes remembering the end. Our tactical retreat was definitely a victory, but we also have to think about the run-down of energy that occurred in the last day or so in the building. Exhaustion, cold, and the constant threat of a bust accounted for a lot of it (our opponents in this country are formidable enemies—i.e. shutting off the heat), but we've been thinking that we made a mistake right in the beginning that contributed to the draining of energy at the end. We're talking about the demands we issued on the second day of the struggle, and about the subsequent interminable talks about secret negotiations with Harvard. What we were about was clear before we tried to write it down as demands, and by making written demands we opened ourselves up to temptations from Harvard—hints of offers of buildings and money that had the effect of raising false hopes and obscuring the battle lines. (Harvard tried to separate us from the Riverside community by hinting at offers of a building for us without meeting the Riverside demand to negotiate with Harvard about housing. This did not work!) We finally did beat Harvard by ignoring all that corporate intrigue, but it had already turned a lot of energy away from the work of spreading out from the center to meet and reach new women, and setting up our temporary programs there.

Now that our new Women's Center is getting together, providing some services and an opportunity to meet and work with other women, we felt a need to remind ourselves and others of the history of militancy behind the center. We should constantly be trying to understand and help support the struggles and projects going on around Boston—in communities, schools, and prisons. A large part of defining ourselves as a revolutionary Women's Movement consists of understanding ourselves as a source of concrete support which other groups and individuals can really use. And we can really benefit from the energy and learning we can get from relating to other struggles! The militant tradition of 888 is of primary importance in the Women's Center. We should never stop looking at the center as part of an offensive against the state, and we should always be trying to find new ways to extend that offensive. 888 lives on and on!

Staff for this week:
Jackie, Margaret, Irene
Sue, Tina, Myra, Linda
Elizabeth, Judy.

"My wish is to ride the tempest,
Tame the waves,
Kill the sharks,
I want to drive the enemy away to save our people.
I will not resign myself to the usual lot of women."

— Trieu thi Trunh
Sisters in struggle, Laura and Joan

on our way

the women's center newsletter
22 March '72 volume 2, no. 1
from 46 Pleasant St. 354-8807

FREE



The picketing at Cronin's continues. There is now a sign-up sheet at the Women's Center so that individuals or groups can find out when picketers are most needed. (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays are now the least covered times.)
Another way to support the waitresses is to go to Courtroom no. 2 at the Cambridge Superior Court from 10 am on this week. To check on progress, call Annie 547-3941 or the Women's Center.

Women's Liberation is Liberating Ourselves and Our Sisters

It looks like the women's movement/center better start concerning itself with some specific women's problems. We can theorize all we want, but we're never going to make revolution, or even change happen, if we don't all have our basic needs taken care of.

- 1) RIDES - There are a lot of us with cars. If you can volunteer to drive, maybe once a week, please call Sue at 491-8756, or leave your name on the list at the women's center. I will try to coordinate, or find someone to.
- 2) Emergency MONEY - A fund has been started to provide sisters with money (maybe up to \$10) when they need it. For instance, there is a sister on methadone maintenance who needs transportation to East Boston every day. We're paying her subway fare right now—a ride would be even better. Please put some of the money you don't need into it.
- 3) FOOD - Bring food to the Women's Center for a food exchange, probably to be set up in the pantry.
- 4) BABYSITTING - If you would like to babysit, or talk about it, please sign the list at the Women's Center or call Sue at 491-8756.
- 5) LAUNDRY FACILITIES - We have a washing machine here. It needs a new plug. What about letting women use it for 5 cents an hour, or free?
- 6) WAITRESSES' STRIKE - The waitresses at Cronin's are involved in a real life struggle. They need sisters to picket. Come to the hearing, donate money to the strike fund, etc. Call Lorraine at 354-7179 or Pat Walsh at 547-6674.
- 7) CLOTHES - There are clothes here, but they need sorting for a real clothing exchange.
- 8) BOOKS - Women are trying to set up a library here. Bring old books, or contribute to buy new ones. Also write a book, or make a non-sexist children's book for the children's room.
- 9) CRASH PADS - It would be good if we could make space for a crash pad here. We need to fully understand the legal hassles and also problems with drugs, etc. If you want to talk about this, please sign at the Women's Center. Also if you can take crashers in your apartment, please leave a notice on the bulletin board. We get at least one call a day from someone needing a place to live.



~ Sue ~



Radcliffe's Where It's At

The Schlesinger Library of Women's History at Radcliffe is open to all women 9-5, Mon.-Fri. It has all the copies, from the beginning, of It Ain't Me, Babe, Ain't I a Woman, Off Our Backs, Everywoman, Up from Under, Women: A Journal of Liberation, RAT (since it became a women's newspaper) and a lot more like Aphra, The Ladder, Hysteria, and The Women's Press that start somewhere after vol. 1, no. 1.

It takes a few days to skim quickly through all of these, but any group that is thinking of getting together a handbook on something (like health, or fix-it) might want to look in these for useful articles. Also, it's really fun just to hang out there and read all the good things we've written.

The library is on Brattle Street about six blocks from Harvard Square, in the same building as the Radcliffe Institute.

Anonymous Suggestion



In the past few weeks with so much going on at the Women's Center, myself and a few others found that there weren't enough nights for us to squeeze in all the meetings we wanted to go to. So one night upon being somewhat out of our normal minds—or were we actually in our right minds—anyhow! Someone came up with this idea of Extraday. We began to elaborate on this thought and decided to give it to everywoman and her sister. Extraday should begin at 12 midnight Sunday and run through 4 am Monday. This would allow 4 hours for people to come to the center, meet and begin to continue on their normal Monday schedule.

Coordinating Committee Meeting - No. 2

Welcoming committee will distribute a monthly leaflet containing a schedule of events and is planning a potluck supper April 2 at 6 pm for women new to the Center or wanting to get in new groups.

Women's library: Donations of good books are requested to get the library started.



Clean-up: groups using specific rooms are responsible for cleaning them. groups represented on coordinating committee will take care of generally used areas (kitchen, halls, stairs, etc.), the responsibility rotating weekly from one group to another.



Representatives: Whether three groups—renovations, newsletter and fundraising—should be represented was discussed. If any of these groups want reps they should request it at a coordinating committee meeting. (The general feeling seemed to be that real groups should be represented.)



Available information: It was agreed that each group should write out information about what they're doing. Groups not now represented, i.e. newsletter, renovations, women's press . . . , should do it also. Info will be in a folder in the office and should be kept up to date. If a group wants to speak for itself and doesn't want to be described, that information would be in the folder.



Waitresses: The waitresses are still striking; the Women's Center is not giving much support. (Currently gay male liberation and SDS/PL are giving the most support.) It was felt that the represented groups should commit themselves to picket for a 2 hour time period weekly.

Next Coordinating Committee Meeting: Tuesday March 21 at 6 pm at the Women's Center

Announcements

Middle class lesbians' discussions about class backgrounds, class and race in general will meet in the Lesbian Lounge Sundays (not Mondays) at 8:00.

Emotional Counselling Meeting: Rape Squad, Drugs, Tripping Hot Line, etc. will be on Tuesdays at 8:00.

Four women of 'Women in the Arts' will be reading their poetry Friday March 24 on the Catch 44 television program (channel 44) at 9 pm. They are Mary Damon, Meridith Goldin, Susan Wilkins and Karen Lindsay.



The Women's Hot Line is not yet in effect.

There is a lesbian phone at the Women's Center. The number is 354-8695. Staff is needed for it. Sign-up sheet is at the Women's Center. It's now very irregularly staffed.

Lesbian get-acquainted meetings for new or other lesbians who want to get to know each other. Wednesdays at 6 pm at the Women's Center.

Lesbian Liberation meetings Wednesdays at 8 pm. March 29 business, discussion; April 5 topics 'coming out' and 'macho—what is it—when is it good'. At the Women's Center.

WOMEN'S COURSES AT CAMBRIDGE YWCA

Women—Our Bodies, Our Selves

Home Repairs for Women

Ms Fixit

Self Defense

For more information call Sandy Scott at the Cambridge YWCA, 491-6050.



Begins April 10. Monday eves at 8 pm. For and by women to learn more about themselves.

Begins Wed. March 15, 7:30-9 pm. 8 wks. \$20

Begins Mon. March 20, 9:45 am. 8 wks.

on-going, Mon., Wed., Fri. 1-2:30 pm

Staff for this issue: Lana, Jackie, Margaret, Marilyn, Judy, Heather, Mary Pat, and Linda

ON OUT WAY

the Women's Center Newsletter

10 APRIL 72 Volume 2 no 2

From 46 Pleasant St. Cambridge

what - me feel guilty?

or.... (the importance of feeling important)

A woman at the door of the Women's Center. I open it; she says "are you open?" Me? Confusion. What is she expecting? Am I the women's movement? Where does that leave her?

If someone is in the building, it is open. Women come, wondering what is happening that they can connect with. Which is fine, but I feel that what is very important is that each of us feels she can make things happen, not just join what is happening.

The women who come to the Women's Center should be allowed to feel that they can and should decide what they want to do. Instead they are told, "you should picket," "you should babysit," "give money," "think about the needs of your sisters."

At least for me, my involvement in a rap group two years ago led me to feel that I am as important as anyone, my opinions are as valid, that I do not have to deny myself everything while giving, giving, giving.

Women coming to the center are important, where they are is important, and not just for what they can contribute. It is hard not to feel, under the circumstances (most women are not picketing, etc.) that when women come, needing, and are told to give, they can't.

A lesbian coming to a Lesbian Liberation meeting wants something, instead is told someone else's needs are more important than hers. What can she say? She is not important, so her opinion is not either. How can she argue? Women without money, babysitters, whatever, should have those things. But there are very real limits to how much other women can give, especially if they feel used, disregarded.

Telling someone what she should do only reinforces her feelings that she cannot be trusted to make her own decisions, and that what she "should" do is more important than what she feels like doing.

Judy

It is conceivable that one implication of women having to put others' interests before their own (which, to me, is simply an extension of a societal role) could be that some women who will, for reasons of their own, take advantage of that willingness to renounce their needs.

One real concrete example of this behavior is the manipulation of what can be called political guilt feelings. These are feelings related to class and race backgrounds. Women who, say, are coming from an upper class or middle class family, having parents high in the economic structure, etc., may feel guilty about the advantages which they may have through their class status.

Politically, the guilt feelings are in a sense desirable because they incur in the people feeling them the desire to change a system responsible for allowing class and race advantages to exist. But guilt trips are a great manipulatory weapon. And from what I can see, when women from oppressed classes use their oppression to hide behind like merit badges, use it to justify anything they do, say, propose to do, etc., and manipulate and/or intimidate other women by laying guilt trips on them, they become the oppressors. Everything is turned upside-down, the oppressed becomes the oppressor and so what else is new in this society?

What is most disturbing about such a situation is that it pretty soon becomes a matter of dogma and in my opinion, dogmatic thinking is rigid thinking with no place for people in it. Let us face it: all women have needs (whether they are obvious or not...) and to assign priorities to them is unfair.

Anne

THE TROUBLE WITH KIDS

The Women's Center has recently been subjected to harassment by a group of community boys, ranging in age from about seven to twelve. Their tactics have involved creating a general disturbance by hanging around on the front porch or peering into windows, and have also resorted to vandalism resulting in broken windows, gaining entrance to the building and ripping off money, keys, etc.

There seem to have evolved several lines of attacking the problem, ranging from attempting to deal with the boys' needs to "kicking their asses." The latter proposal is disconcerting in that it is an attitude which has been expressed directly to the boys and has inspired them to more hostility and general hysteria.

Instead of reacting to the problem impulsively, we should try to deal with it in a responsible manner, since obviously the welfare of the center as well as all the women who use it is at stake. Women who have expressed their own personal anger and hostility toward "the little pricks" have increased the problem and have successfully demonstrated their immaturity in dealing with kids.

The following suggestions could be considered as a possible means of solving the problem.

1. Women who do not wish to constructively deal with the problem should keep their derogatory expressions to themselves.
2. Women who are interested in getting together and dealing with the boys directly should sign up in the Women's Center as soon as possible.
3. Until some sort of decision or solution is arrived at, the boys should NOT under any circumstances be allowed entrance to the building.
4. Women should not attempt to staff the office alone.
5. Women who can sleep in the building (perhaps three or four at a time) should do so, at least until we can reduce the threat of vandalism.

Linda

Coordinating Committee Meeting - Tuesday March 21 - 6 p.m.

A New Group.

A woman came to ask for space in the Women's Center for depressed overweight jobless women to come to exercise together and try to help each other with writing resumes, sewing, feeling more secure about job hunting. Everyone agreed that was a good idea. Women interested in joining the group can call Joan at 354-7626. It will meet at the Women's Center Thursdays at 8 p.m., also possibly at times during the day if the women involved can and want to.

Strike at Cronin's.

What can be done about the lack of support for the strike from the Women's Center? Women who might picket don't because they don't know enough about what is going on. A small support group for the waitresses formed, to work on and put out a paper presenting all the details of the strike, to visit classes to encourage support, and to plan an open meeting with some of the waitresses. Everyone felt we could more easily support the strike if we concentrated on a specific time slot and from 6 to 8 p.m. daily was agreed upon.



A Dancing Class.

Wanted to use the lesbian lounge for classes Sunday night from 6 to 8. The lesbian rep will bring it up at the next meeting.

Coordinating Committee Meeting - Tuesday April 4 - 6 p.m.

Waitresses' Strike.

6 to 8 p.m. is a critical time to have picketers at Cronin's. If each woman from the Women's Center would commit herself to picket one night a month, we could cover that time slot. There is a sign-up sheet at the Women's Center and there are flyers to give out while picketing.

Hours.

Office staff rep stated that staffing the building from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. is more than the women currently staffing can manage. It was suggested that groups using the center should be responsible for staffing for specified time periods, and reps will bring that up when their groups meet. It was agreed that for the present, the office staff will keep the building open definitely from 12 to 4 p.m. daily, with other times dependent on people signing up. There is a sign-up sheet for women interested in staffing for any time period.

Library/Lounge.

To what extent should the lounge/library room be a library? Most women present agreed that it should be primarily used as a lounge, that some feminist books, newspapers, magazines, should be in it, other books kept somewhere else (by the stairs, in the basement...)

Care of the Building.

Women using the building are responsible for CLEANING UP any rooms they use. (Who else?)

Next Coordinating Committee meeting on Tuesday April 18 - 6 p.m.

Announcements

Sunday potluck suppers at the Women's Center at 6 p.m. Open to all women. Bring food, friends. For women to meet other women, find out what's happening. Discussions afterwards (beginning at about 7:45).

Lesbian get-acquainted meetings - Wednesdays - 6 p.m. - Women's Center

Lesbian Liberation meetings - Wednesdays - 8 p.m. - Women's Center

Abortion and Birth Control Laws

Open discussion for Cambridge women at Y.W.C.A., Thursday, April 13, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. Sponsored by Y.W.C.A. Public Affairs Committee and Cambridge League of Women Voters. Discussion topics will include:

1. Do you consider Massachusetts statutes on birth control and abortion to be just laws?
2. Why do unwanted pregnancies occur?
3. Is it society's right and duty to establish rules concerning reproduction?

All Cambridge women are welcome to participate. Nursery available. Refreshments. Call 491-6050 for more information.

Auto Mechanics for Women

A course in Auto Mechanics for Women is being offered at the Cambridge Y.W.C.A. The course offers instruction both in how the car works - what operates what - and also in repairs and basic maintenance - changing tires, setting points, timing, etc.

The course will be offered at two different times: beginning Monday, April 10, 9:30 - 11:30 for 8 weeks at \$17. and beginning Tuesday, April 11, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. for 8 weeks at \$10. For more information, call the Cambridge Y.W.C.A.

A WEEKEND OF FILMS

To be shown at Tufts University, April 14-16. Free/donations requested for Tufts day care center. Discussions following films. Child care available Sat. and Sun. afternoons. Call Tufts Day Care Center (628-5000 x 518) by April 12 for details.

1. Women at Work - ADAM'S RIB; THE WOMAN'S FILM, Friday, April 14, 1:30 p.m.
2. Women's Political Struggle - SALT OF THE EARTH; HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY. Sat., April 15, 1:30 p.m.
3. Women at Home - JULIET OF THE SPIRITS; JANIE'S JANIE. Sat., April 15, 7:30 p.m.
4. Women and Sexuality - RACHAEL RACHAEL; ABORTION; MAKEOUT. Sun., April 16, 1:30 p.m.

Cambridge - Goddard Feminist Studies Program presents an open lecture series Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 1878 Mass. Ave., Cambridge. Free, everyone welcome. April 13 Miriam Palmer reading her poetry. April 20 (?) Ginger Golder, "Psychic Survival, Toward a Radical Psychology". Call 492 - 0700.

Staff: Irene Brunelli Linda Jackie Margaret Judy Jane Elizabeth



on our way

the Women's Center Newsletter
12 May, '72 Volume 2, No. 3
from 46 Pleasant St. 354-8807

FREE

DIVERSE FACTS, opinions, views | you write it: we'll print it

Several weeks ago a Craston R.I. School Committeeman named Aram Garabidian made vicious attacks on a woman he does not know and on the people who sponsored her visit to a classroom of forty students. This woman is a prostitute.

In weeks preceding the woman's visit, the students interviewed a number of people who also come from hard line jobs like herself. Jobs that are a hell of a lot worse than being a prostitute. Judges, pigs (as in police) prison wardens, junkies old and new and convicts, who are produced by the judges, police and prison wardens. They interviewed pigs who in their line of work find unnecessary reasons to arrest and brutally beat people and jail them. And they are society's idea of a good man doing a good job! are these sick men protecting us against prostitutes? They interviewed judges who take twenty years out of someone's life because the judge thinks it will straighten her/him out, straighten out a twenty year old with a twenty year sentence. And the judges are on our side or are they? And what about the prison wardens who put black people in max, not because they have done anything but because the wardens are racists pigs and have the power to do it and get away with it! Are these three types of professional people protecting us?

This woman is a mother of two children, and is on welfare. Like many other women who are on welfare and who have children, she doesn't get enough money to support herself or her children. She has to go out on the street and sell her ass. If she got a legal job welfare would either take her off or cut her check. Why was this woman so ridiculed, why her and not the men in their lines of work? Or how about your every day house wife who is also being a prostitute for her husband, keeping the kids in their places and having clean shirts for him and his meals ready for him. So now she's done all these things for him and maybe she might get a new coat or even a car. But nobody ever says anything about that but it's the same fucking thing as this woman is doing to survive.

Why is Mr. Good so upset? has he seen this woman somewhere before? maybe some night when he told his wife he was going out with the guys he was out with her. If not, why then is he so upset with her visit to the classroom?

I'm not concerned about how she makes her money! I'm concerned about her being fucked over by forty students, being interviewed and looked at like some kind of leper. I'm not concerned about those kids being exposed to her they see their mother every day don't they?! I'm concerned about the true reality of where this woman is coming from and who put her there in the first place! WHY can't women support their kids without being prostitutes????

- Mel -

WAITRESSES FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Some of our goals:

1. Break the isolation of waitresses from one another.
2. Provide in our meetings an atmosphere of free discussion in which waitresses as women can articulate and define their feelings about themselves and their roles, such as their relationship to the customer, boss, other waitresses, etc.
3. Discover ourselves and make the public aware of the conditions that waitresses work under and the laws to protect service employees which are not enforced such as: breaks, walkouts, uniforms, minimum wage.
4. From our meetings develop certain ideas and policies about our jobs and ourselves and seek political and legal endorsement for those policies.

are the ones who signal the weapons, the ones who are the main casualties.

A 23 month old baby is senselessly electro-shocked into unconsciousness. Where does this come from in the American psyche? These perversions are the products of the mentality of rape. The mentality that produces the kind of war they continue to fight starts at home. Let's run down a few unknown facts about rape - about male sexual violence.

Susan Griffin in an article called "The Politics of Rape" found that official crime statistics tell women that forcible rape is the most frequently committed violent crime in America. Now let's once and for all smash the white male propaganda that says most crimes of rape are committed by black men on white women. Historically and statistically this is a lie. 90% of all incidences of rape do not cross racial lines - these crimes of sexual violence are usually committed by men against women of their own race.

Another myth: the rapist is a lonely creep who sees a woman without male protection and is suddenly overpowered by his innate craving for sex. **BULLSHIT!** 83% of rapes by men in two's are premeditated. 90% of all group rapes are premeditated. 58% of single rapes are premeditated. Rape is not a crime of passion; it is an act of aggression - an undeclared war against women.

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

Let's just examine two more aspects of rape - keeping in mind that all these things about rape are symptoms of a male dominated culture which feeds on the combination of sex and violence. The myth that some men protect you and some men rape you is false. First of all, the rapist is an average man. But secondly, every man in this society gets male benefits from the existence of rape. These armchair rapists have their potency and masculinity vicariously confirmed thru rape - witness the number of pages given over to violent sex crimes in men's adventure magazines. Another way all men have their power enhanced by rape is the need then put into women for protection - the ancient chivalry racket, men protecting women from other men. It's not unlike the protection relationship which the mafia established with small businesses.

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

What does all this have to do with Vietnam?

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

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

The passion with which we perpetuate this war is beyond belief: war crimes no longer war crimes but genocide; violence promoted to contain a war we have no hope of winning. How else to explain this but by understanding the phenomena of male, sexual violence in Western culture. Germany in 1944 and 1945 was without hope of winning the war but nonetheless went on building bigger ovens and crueler technologies to destroy with.

It cannot be stated too strongly that: **THE CRIMES OF VIOLENCE WE HAVE BEEN SHOCKED BY IN VIETNAM CAN ONLY HAVE BEEN CREATED AT HOME IN THE U'S**, in a country which trains young men from birth to connect violence with sex. Ann Froines has written that the popular culture - magazines, movies, books - in South Vietnam now promotes a model soldier stripped of all human values or political understanding. He never talks about Vietnam in patriotic terms. He kills to survive, then seeks pleasure afterwards through sex. An integral part of this culture is the glorification of American "natural instincts": sex, violence, and the desire for money.

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

On May 8th Nixon announced he had mined 7 harbors in North Vietnam, risking confrontations with the Soviet Union and China to preserve "American honor." I.F. Stone said last week there is a possibility Nixon would finally use nuclear weapons to blow Vietnam to bits rather than be caught with his pants down at the Moscow summit conference; genocide of a whole people in order to save male face. **THIS IS THE HEIGHT OF WAR INSANITY!**

We are faced with an imperative. Without a feminist analysis we will never confront some of the deepest motivations behind the waging of aggressive wars. The same men and power structure who victimize women are engaged in the act of raping Vietnam, raping Black people, and the very earth we live upon. Rape is a classic act of domination where the emotions of hatred, contempt, and the desire to break or violate personality takes place. This breaking of the personality characterizes modern life itself. No simple reforms can eliminate rape. As the symbolic expression of the white male hierarchy, **RAPE IS THE ULTIMATE ACT OF OUR CIVILIZATION**, one which Valerie Solanis warns is in danger of humping itself to death.

STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE: BECKY, JUDY, IRENE, MARLA, JUDITH

MASS MEETING SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1972: 1:00

We've called this meeting because the structure set up at the last mass meeting-- a co-ordinating committee made up of representatives of the groups using the center, is not working, and because of the low energy level around most women's center project groups, and around the center as a whole.

This is the proposed agenda for the Saturday meeting:
Proposed by Rochelle, Ann, Jane, Judy, Linda, Joey, Tess, Marla
How to make the co-ordinating committee work:

- a. Should we have a paid office worker?
 - b. should we have people living in the center?
 - c. how do we handle maintenance? fundraising?
2. community relations

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA ARE WELCOME

SUNDAY, May 14, 1972 1:00

We have scheduled this meeting for people who want to get involved in projects or who want more information about projects at the center. People can meet with representatives from each of the projects listed below:

WELCOMING COMMITTEE
NEWSLETTER
HEALTH GROUP
CHILD CARE
LESBIAN LIBERATION
COMMUNITY RELATIONS
EMOTIONAL COUNSELING
WOMEN'S CENTER SCHOOL

on our way

the women's center newsletter

26 may, '72 vol. 2 no. 4

from 46 pleasant st. 354-8807

FREE ♀

DIVERSE FACTS, OPINIONS, VIEWS

YOU WRITE IT: WE'LL PRINT IT*

Dear Sisters,

I really don't understand where Judy and Anne are coming from. First of all, it really pisses me off that such a big stink was and is being made about the rap that went down at one meeting. One time people start rapping about their needs and for a month now they have been criticized about "laying guilt trips" on people and "becoming oppressors." Really now! That whole rap is good old scientific logic like ABC. Anne got herself a pretty far fetched conclusion. I mean, how revolutionary is the Women's Center supposed to be? It was gotten in a revolutionary manner and I would presume the prevailing atmosphere to be revolutionary. Talking about oppressed as oppressor is pretty reactionary to me. I mean, that's what the whole thing is about isn't it? A lot of people have to spend alot more energy meeting physical needs because a few people are over-using all the resources and don't have to spend any time meeting physical needs. Isn't that what we're working to change? That's what I'm working to change.

Another thing - laying guilt trips on people. First of all, nobody lays a guilt trip on anybody. Somebody presents a situation to someone and if the second person reacts with a guilt trip, that's their problem - not the person's who's presenting the situation. I personally feel guilt trips are a waste of energy and I was at that fucking meeting too, and I was just as inert as everybody else, but I did not feel guilty about it.

I am beginning to realize that one of the major differences between middle class and working class or whatever is guilt. Middle class people use their left over energy to feel guilty about having left over energy. Working class people use any left over energy for anything but guilt.

Kathleen

Dear Sisters,

(I'm not making apologies for this 'not being a finished article etc. I wrote most of it during coffee breaks at THE OFFICE, (not the Women's Center office), the great secretary-consuming office of the USA')

This is in response to the Women's Center Newsletter April 10, the second article (signed Anne); my response is also related to the article above it.

I am a white working class lesbian. I consider myself to be part of the gay women's movement and have been attempting to "deal with" my class feelings openly within that movement for about one year.

This article is the closest to outright "red-baiting" on class lines that I've seen in women's writings. It shows up the classic, well-ingrained middle-and-upper class prejudices and fears of poor people. Of course poor women "want something out of you", of course they would manipulate you if they could. There are ways, subtle and un-subtle, to keep "them" from becoming so dangerous. Keep them separated, for instance. Of course, it's a moral "merit badge" to be oppressed. And if you're unfortunately not so oppressed, you suffer guilt, which, to some middle-class dreamers, is worse than mere material oppression. (Who wants to be "Materialistic"? lckl)

Well, I have been economically oppressed most of my life, and as for "using my oppression — I really can't use it; I'd like to not feel it. Is it "using" your oppression to get food stamps from welfare? That's a bad example, cause middle class know-how really helps in dealing with Welfare. Is it "using your oppression" to try to get something you have a right to? Is it "using my oppression" when I say: "I am from working class culture, you really relate to me in middle class language and cultural what not; I don't understand or can't relate to what you just said, and I put the burden of explanation on you."

I don't believe that guilt is good motivation for doing political work. Guilt is such a self-centered, self-indulgent, down, draining frame of mind. How can someone on that trip be helpful to another, except in dealing with others' guilt feelings? I do think that women who feel that White American middle class guilt is a problem for them, should get together themselves and talk and try to get behind this feeling guilty. But guilt is a self-centered self-evaluation. They can NOT blame economically oppressed women for "laying guilt trips" on them. If the guilt is there, it's there. And blaming us (working class women) for it will not make us feel guilty so we'll "stop doing it." Cause we don't operate like that. We do not behave according to middle-class patterns. We get pissed off.

Anyhow, I fail to see how the elimination of "guilt trips" or middle class guilt, would solve a lot of problems. Freedom from guilt feelings doesn't sound like much to me. That's why I can't understand these Jesus-freaks and their equation of "true freedom" with "freedom from guilt." If I had not much to worry about, I might worry about such abstractions. But being chronically broke and insecure keeps me busy these days.

On self-justification and dogmatism:

It's very hard, I would say impossible, for middle class women to know the needs and motivations of working class women except if they take us at our word. Look at how different are our reactions to a situation. There are scenes that middle class women can breeze through that I can't because of the insecurity and paranoia I feel as a result of my economic oppression. Not that all working class women share my reactions exactly. Some, I am glad to see, react with anger where I react with paranoia. Being scared doesn't make me feel very strong. Scared is a real feeling but I don't call it the right motive to act on just because it's a feeling. Where middle class women feel threatened, feel "unimportant" — the feeling is real, yeah, but the analysis can be realWRONG.

J. D.

I am a woman, a lesbian and a Man Hater. Dig it. And I've been through allotta shit to get here. And now women, Lesbians are callin' me sexist. Well I haven't always been a man-hater and I know that likin' boys, gay boys or whatever, is a real energy drain. Oh yeah, I used to deny it and I defended my gay boys, right down the line and I can see now how it drained me, how it sold me out. And it hurt like hell to realize that. My women people lost my energy to pricks. And one night at Jacques a woman I love and I and others were rapping then this gay prick sat down and shit if he didn't demand her attention till I couldn't get a word or a look to her. And I was pissed. Okay, so if you like boys okay. But Don't, DON'T call me sexist for not feeling affection or tolerance for my enemy.

Kim

FIRE !

A fire broke out in the basement of the Women's Center last Friday night (May 11). Some guys from the neighborhood saw smoke coming out the windows around midnight, called the fire dept., and broke into the house to see if anyone was trapped inside. (No one was there.) The fire dept. put out the fire pretty quickly, but they had to knock some holes in the floor and walls, and break a lot of windows to get hoses in. The deputy chief said the fire was caused by something small like a cigarette that smoldered for an hour or two before bursting into flame (it was definitely not caused by faulty wiring or by kerosene or anything like that.)

We don't have any estimate of the damage yet. We have insurance for the building, but probably not for the contents (books, furniture, mimeo machine that were in the basement and were damaged). Some of the beams under the dining room and kitchen floors especially were charred, so meetings should not be held in those two rooms for now. Also, the electricity, gas and water were shut off, and stay off till they've been repaired and inspected.

We need help getting things back together. There's a lot of mess to clean up. And we've got to board up the broken windows so kids can't break in. We can't start doing actual repairs till we get the go ahead from the insurance company, but when we do, we'll need licensed electricians and plumbers (and/or gasfitters and/or steamfitters) to repair the wiring and plumbing as well as carpenters. If you know anyone with these skills who'd be willing to work free or cheap, leave a message on the 'bills' shelf at the women's center office.

MASS MEETING OF LAST MAY 13 - 14

This meeting was called because the structure set up at the last meeting - a coordinating committee made up of representatives of the groups using the center - is not working, and because of the low energy level around most women's center project groups, and around the center as a whole.

CORE GROUP: It was agreed that the coordinating committee be replaced by a 'core group' made up of women willing and able to spend time and energy keeping the center open and functioning. Anyone who wants can be a member, the group will meet regularly every 2 weeks at open meetings, and minutes will be posted. Reps from project groups will be notified if a decision that seems to be controversial needs to be made, so they can participate. The next meeting will be Monday May 29 at 9:00 pm at the women's center.

PAID OFFICE WORKER: We agreed to hire someone to staff the building for 25 hours/week for the summer, who can do it if she's paid \$50/month.

WOMEN LIVING IN THE CENTER: For now, most women felt it would not be a good idea.

MAINTENANCE, CLEAN-UP: a list of women willing to do repair work should be available. Groups using the center should be required to do a certain amount of cleaning.

THE COMMUNITY, THE KIDS: What can we do to get the people in the area to feel less alienated? Welfare rights counselling, juvenile legal rights counseling, helping the kids find a place to use were 3 suggestions.

WHO IS THE CENTER FOR, WHO IS IT TRYING TO SERVE? This discussion was left until Sunday. I don't think there were many conclusions, but it was good to start talking. There are problems and conflicts and hasn't been any situation set up for rapping together about them.

RE-EVALUATION MEETING: set for September 9 or thereabouts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

School meetings - Fridays at 8pm at the women's center - in process of setting up summer session (begins June 18)

Friday, June 2 at 10pm - Women's Prose, Poetry, and Songs - 1 hour special - on WGBH (radio) women's program. will be repeated Sunday June 4 at 4:30 pm.

CLEAN-UP ETC. - SUNDAY MAY 28, 11 A.M. ON, ALSO SUNDAY JUNE 11

Lesbian liberation meetings Wednesdays - get-acquainted, 6pm - business and discussion, 8pm.

Playgroup needs 1 girl, age 1½ (18-20 months) by June 1st, or close to that date. There are 5 children in the group now. For more information call Ann Cris 868-0170 or 666-1694 / Adrienne Jellinghaus 354-2826 / Louise Rice 661-3036.

HOW TO MAKE A WOMAN will play Tuesday, May 30 at 9PM at 1555 Mass. Ave. Cambridge. \$3 (flexible, group rates) discussion leaders, ushers are needed, can come for free (call ahead) . Call for reservations or more info. at 868-8520/491-9579.

We are beginning a feminist theater group at the Women's Center. We don't have a lot of preconceived notions, so you can help decide what we can become. If interested, call Lyssa at 241-8290.

Health group meetings - Thursdays at 8:30 at the women's center

Looking for used cassette portable tape recorder \$15-\$25 range, for used adjustable camera -can trade my automatic \$10-15, and for a used bicycle, man's or woman's, \$30-\$80. Also need a used icebox or refrigerator, \$20-\$50. Call Martha 241-8290. Someone please teach me to read music....and looking for a ride to Utica, Albany, Rochester or vicinity-- Call Martha 241-8290.

FROM THE PLATFORM

The speech included in the newsletter was written by lesbian feminists. It was given on May 6th at an anti-war rally here in Boston. All publicity prior to the rally listed an all-male roster of speakers. Women were contacted at the last minute and were then met with blatant sexism. A crowd-pleasing rock concert mentality was more than reluctant to put women speakers on the platform. We were not announced until after many people had left and then only because women in the audience shouted for a woman speaker.

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

Amber Hollibaugh, Nancy Von Bretzel, E.G. Crichton, Judith Lindbloom

VIETNAM: A FEMINIST ANALYSIS

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

For years the male theorists of the anti-war movement have spoken about the reasons America is involved in Vietnam: the imperialist search for profits in the war in Vietnam, and the American corporate need for a war to maintain a domestic stable economy. This analysis of the war, while correct, has never gone far enough. It has been unable to explain the unprecedented sadism which is the overriding characteristic of this war: What is the rationale for the obsession we find in the universities, corporations, and military institutions of America with increasingly hideous and perverse methods of death as applied to the people of another race and land.

Through the years, scientists and professors have been inventing things like flechette pellets - tiny steel arrows with larger fins at one end - which enter the body enlarging the wound and lodge in the blood vessels - they're designed to shred the internal organs. White phosphorus, a more sophisticated version of napalm that usually has to burn its way down to the bone before going out; The area denial program where they flood whole areas with hundreds and thousands of mines designed to look like leaves or animal droppings and to make the area totally uninhabitable for humans. Thousands of square miles of territory in Indochina are now flooded with little mines which are manufactured for the sole purpose of blowing off a foot. They can't blow up a truck or anything else; they are only designed to make life impossible. While white-collar boys sit in their labs inventing these atrocities, the army recruits from its male youth the manpower to prove the potency of its weaponry on the battlefield.

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

A 23 month old baby is senselessly electro-shocked into unconsciousness. Where does this come from in the American psyche? These perversions are the products of the mentality of rape. The mentality that produces the kind of war they continue to fight starts at home. Let's run down a few unknown facts about rape - about male sexual violence.

Susan Griffin in an article called "The Politics of Rape" found that official crime statistics tell women that forcible rape is the most frequently committed violent crime in America. Now let's once and for all smash the white male propaganda that says most crimes of rape are committed by black men on white women. Historically and statistically this is a lie. 90% of all incidences of rape do not cross racial lines - these crimes of sexual violence are usually committed by men against women of their own race.

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What does all this have to do with Vietnam?

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STAFF FOR THIS ISSUE: BECKY, JUDY, IRENE, MARLA, JUDITH

On our way

the women's center newsletter
 46 PLEASANT ST. CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 02139

If you've been by the Women's Center lately you have noticed that the building is receiving a coat of fresh paint. Inside the Center there is an aura of a fresh start after what seemed to be a period of dormant energy. Proof positive that the movement is very much alive and well — did anyone doubt it?

We're getting the newsletter 'out of bed' too — here's a tentative editorial policy (which, of course, is open to change depending on whoever works on the next newsletter.)

- (1) This isn't a newsPAPER because we don't have enough money . . . the spirit is willing but the pockets are empty . . . if people would like to see a women's paper out of the Center what is needed is money and peopl's energies to make it happen.
- (2) Because it's not a newspaper what we can include will be limited by space. Hopefully we will be able to include poetry, stories, articles, graphics? so do not hesitate to contribute. It's been suggested by this issue's staff that people who contribute articles, etc., also try to contribute some time on the issue their piece will appear in — especially if the piece contributed is lengthy. Please try to limit your writings to 250 words.
- (3) About articles — letters — there was much criticism of the last set of newsletters. People were writing about individuals and discussing their problems in a personal way instead of a more generally meaningful way. Example: 'I was upset last week that J. said this to M. . . .' This sort of letter excludes everyone who doesn't know J. and M., and seems clique-ish. Political disagreement and discussion is important and should be aired in the newsletter as well as other places. Please try to keep your letters more general, less personal so that people who are unfamiliar with you and/or the Center don't feel excluded and/or bored.
- (4) If we can't get in touch with a person who contributes an article that we (the staff) feel is somehow unclear we may take the liberty to edit. But we will try our best to talk to the author beforehand.
- (5) The primary function of this newsletter is to serve as a means of information about activities that are going on at the Center. We had no problem finding news for this one — we're 'on our way'!!!

Come do the next newsletter if you're interested — another opportunity to work together, learn together.

Last Spring there was not much activity at the Women's Center. There was often no one there, or only one person. Groups were having a lot of trouble getting projects going, and some 'disbanded'. The fire May 18 left the building without electricity or gas, and was very demoralizing. The building seemed very vulnerable when empty, particularly at night. Whoever was willing would sleep over as often as she could (but there was not much enthusiasm about it).

As summer began, there was a person staffing regularly weekdays from 1 - 6 p.m. and women who had been travelling were crashing at the Center. Now each weekday there are 2 women staffing from 1 - 6 p.m. About 6 women who haven't come to the Center before come by each afternoon. A library has been started. The outside of the building is now being scraped, repaired, and painted most afternoons, including weekends. It's a big job, and whoever would like to participate should come on over! (call first)

Owning and maintaining a building has been a new experience for us. Women generally do not own property, and those women who through the patriarchal family structure belong to property-owning classes, are usually systematically denied knowledge about repair work, which is men's work. We have been in this house since January, and we're beginning to learn how to fix it up, especially how to fix windows.

It has turned out to be really difficult to make a settlement with the insurance company, which is necessary before most repairs can be started. We have gotten an incredible runaround, which has been compounded by our lack of experience and the Cambridge summer doldrums. The insurance company, probably figuring that we were a bunch of silly, gullible women, has offered us a settlement which would not allow us to repair even half of the damage. The gas is on again, and one electrical circuit, and hopefully, the rest of the electricity will be on soon.

By next month, there will be 2 women (one with her child) living at the Center. The decision to have someone living here is based on the belief that it is absolutely necessary, to discourage vandalism, at least at present. The women who are crashing will be leaving, because more space is needed.

The Core Committee, which is open to any interested women, is responsible for maintaining the Center. It meets every Monday at 8:00 p.m. We need more members, so come by if you have time.



WEEKLY MEETINGS AT THE CENTER		
sundays	7 pm	introductory committee
	8 pm	introductory meeting
mondays	6 pm	every 2 weeks from Oct. 30 -- staff
	8 pm	core
wednesdays	6 pm	information - communication
thursdays	8 pm	lesbian meetings
fridays	8 pm	every 2 weeks from Nov. 3 - school committee



The Information Committee is trying to communicate with as many women as possible about what's happening — or could happen — at the Center. We want to let women know about the projects that are going on, just starting, and those that are still being dreamed about.

This newsletter is one part of the communication. The attached project sheet is another. The bulletin board and the Center staff have all the information that is available. But it's up to all of us to keep that information up to date and circulating, to keep our addresses at the Center current, and the Committee informed of what is happening, what is being planned and what we would like to see happening.

We hope that in the future, the Women's Center will become a center for women's activities in the area, a medium through which the different groups and women's projects can coordinate efforts. Right now we need to know more about what those activities are, so please tell us.

If you have suggestions or would like to help, please call

Carline 787-2899

Harriet 354-7833

Susan 965-3171

Cindy 787-5685

ALL WOMEN ARE WELCOME AT the Introductory Meetings Sunday nites at 8 p.m. The same 2 women moderate 3 consecutive meetings of the same group, with new groups starting every week. CONVERSATION ABOUT the history of the Women's Center, current Center projects and organization, and anything else group members want to talk about. MEETINGS ARE TO introduce women to the Women's Center and the Women's Movement, and help them feel a personal connection with it; also to help women open up and know one another, share common concerns. (If you want to help moderate a series you can work with a woman who has done this before; come to the open Introductory Committee meetings 7 p.m. Sunday nites or see the enclosed project sheet.)

from this can grow

CONSCIOUSNESS—RAISING GROUPS: Hopefully, after 3 consecutive meetings with the same people, there will be women who like each other and decide to continue meeting in their homes. The Consciousness-raising group is a SMALL GROUP of women who meet to discuss problems relating to our womanhood. (Helping women find a satisfying group is difficult. Whether formed thru sign-up sheets or thru Sunday-nite meetings or even thru friends, sometimes a group won't work. It may take several tries before something feels right.) The groups vary greatly in how they function, what they talk about, what needs they meet. Some end up political-action groups — some emotional-support groups — it all depends on the needs of the group members. The core of the consciousness-raising group is the realization of WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON AS WOMEN.

That experience, of finding out that other women feel some of the same things that we do will always be precious to me. Problems which we thought personal/individual prove to be political problems growing out of our common oppression. Mutual support, trust, and strength come from learning to talk with and like other women. Suddenly the isolation is ended and we know we're not really crazy



THE WOMEN'S CENTER IN CAMBRIDGE —

is having open house on the first Saturday of every month.
Come by, make some friends, find out what's happening.

- Since the enclosed project sheets were put out, the following new ones have been started:

SILKSCREENING: Li Min Mo 492-7021

SELF-HELP CLINIC: Ellen 354-4785

RAPE SQUAD (SEE BELOW): Carline 787-2899

WELFARE AWARENESS (SEE BELOW): Susan 965-0739

Anda 868-8559

DEAR SISTERS:

I think the time is LONG OVERDUE for Boston women to band together in a SERIOUS ATTEMPT to DEAL WITH RAPE! For starters we could publicize the idea of getting women to notify other women when raped, compile a list of dangerous areas in which to hitch or walk, develop a hotline, compile information on the legal aspects of rape, possibly develop a rape patrol, and start a discussion of police attitudes in response to rapes.

Leslie and I want to get together with any of you interested as soon as possible. CALL.

Carline 782-2899

or Leslie 266-5137.

WELFARE BEANS and rice.

About a year ago I decided to throw my guilt-tripped preconceived notions aside, concerning whether or not to apply for welfare. I needed to find some financial assistance somewhere or end up mooching off my friends for a long time. I went to a Welfare Office in a Midwestern town where I was living and gave them my whole life's story, of why I needed welfare. I got on it.

I had some money to survive on for a while, even though 11 1/2 cents per meal per day isn't exactly what I call going first class. They told us how much rent to pay. And it really amazed me when they told us approximately how much food we would eat per month; I would eat \$23.00 worth and my son (1 year old) would eat \$16.00 worth. I would wear \$6.00 worth of clothes per month and he would wear \$4.00 worth. When my son had pneumonia last winter the pharmacy told me that we couldn't get the medicine we needed because the welfare cards wouldn't provide enough money at a time for one person.

I have since moved to Massachusetts and applied for welfare in Newton. My first experience was one totally terrifying to me. I was accused of lying several times. My son was being glared at with those 'Boy-would-I-like-to-throw-you-into-the-orphanage' eyes. I had to give this old conservative pig my life's story in 50 words or less, while she tried to slip me up on my story several times.

I thought about how lucky I was, that I could read and write. My next thought was how important it is for people to know their rights — as poor people in Massachusetts

(cont'd.) (next pg.)

users in the first place.

Today I called the Welfare Dept. again -- in need of food and rent money. Two weeks ago they had tried to stall me on a bogus piece of red tape. I had to wait 15 minutes on the phone for a social worker to come to talk with me. Finally, I was told I would be visited today. I was really nervous. But then I thought about it for a while and realized my nervousness was a programmed reaction to my own oppression. Soon a shy, young woman came to the door and asked for me. I let her in and turned down the 'Joy of Cooking' just enough so that we could hear each other talk.

They ask too many questions no matter how you look at it. But finally after telling her what I ultimately had to, I was told that we would get a food voucher and a grant in about 5 days. My checks would come on the 16th of the month. She said goodbye and gave me her phone number and told me if there was anything she could do for us to call. She was nice. I was flying, because I knew what I was going to do about food and rent at least for the next few months.

I don't like to be catalogued by the government. Does anyone? But at this point I have no choice. I read an article by Johnny Tillman on Welfare Rights. It was inspiring and depressing. In Boston and Cambridge I know of only third-world people doing welfare rights organizing in South Boston and Roxbury. We need more people involved.

I am interested in starting a project group concerning 'Welfare Awareness' with anyone who has the interest, need, information or solidarity to work with some energetic sisters to gather information and circulate it in the community. We are interested in supporting groups working on actions surrounding welfare issues. CALL: Pinto Beans at 965-0739, or sign up at the Women's Center on the bulletin board -- or call and leave your name and phone number at the Center -- 354-8807.

OTHER CENTERS, ESTABLISHED AND GETTING STARTED

ANDOVER

Open November 14, hotline open the 13th, top floor Public Library, Elm Square, Andover, Massachusetts. Until then, write or call c/o the Library, 475-6960, 9-9 daily and Sunday afternoons.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Just opened 10-9 daily, 4th floor Newman House, Bay State Road, Boston. Open meetings Thursdays, 4 pm, 353-4240.

CAPE ANN

A group of women working on consciousness-raising, in high schools on sexuality, trying to get day care and working with the Nuva hotline 1-233-0000 for drug and pregnancy counselling. Contact: Kathy Shubeck, 49 E. Main Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930 1-281-0610.

NORTH SHORE

Mostly setting up consciousness-raising, meet the last Tuesday of the month at Salem State College (see below), contact:

Pat Watson, 58 High Street, Rockport, Massachusetts, 1-546-2080.

SALEM STATE COLLEGE

Center open Tuesday and Thursday from 12:15; Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 4 pm. Meetings every Tuesday at 12:15 and every other Tuesday at 8 pm starting October 23. Contact through Salem State College, Salem, Massachusetts 01970.

VALLEY WOMEN'S CENTER

200 Main Street, Northampton, Massachusetts 1-586-2011.

WORCESTER WOMEN'S CENTER

905 Main Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

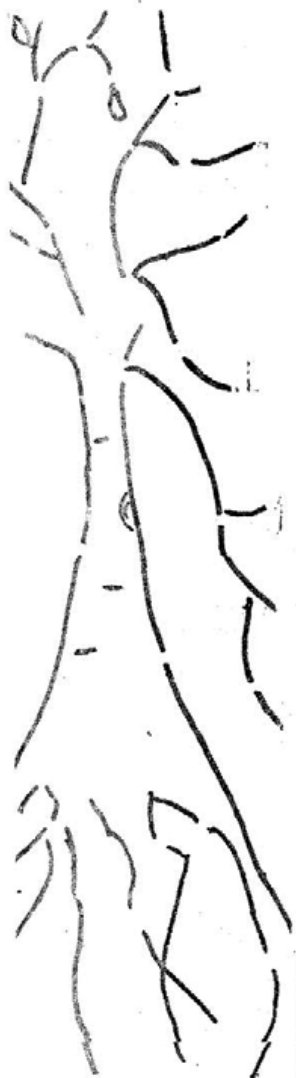
Lowell,

There are Centers forming in Hanover, New Hampshire, Lowell, Massachusetts, and New Bedford, Massachusetts. Call the staff at the Center in Cambridge, 354-8807, for information. Please let us know if you hear of others.

On Saturday October 28 from 2 pm to 5:30 pm in the BU Law Auditorium was SPEAK OUT RAGE.

Speakout Rage. Speak Outrage. Where women testified about crimes against our reproductive systems. Forced to bear children when we don't want to. Sterilized without our knowledge or consent. Raped and made to feel guilty/responsible for it. Treated as animals not thinking human beings, by medical people and legislators. Kept in ignorance about our bodies, birth control, and our rights as clients of our doctors. Used as guinea pigs by doctors, medical students, surgeons, and drug researchers.

PS. Speakoutrage was taped by WBUR & will be aired sometime but we don't know when; check with us or Female Liberation (491-1071)



123 Mt. Auburn Street, Cambridge, 02138 547-9861

Placement of children in day care centers, help in starting playgroups; job listings on boards; not over phone.

I AM WOMAN RADIO SHOW —

Saturday mornings at 9 on WBZ-FM 106.7, produced by Female Liberation. Please call with ideas: 491-1071.

published by FEMALE LIBERATION

AFSC CHILD CARE PROJECT —

A group of women at the Friends Service Committee are researching the involvement of large corporation in the newly profitable business of child care franchising. CALL: Cookie or Georgia @ 864-3150.

N.O.W. GENERAL MEETING ON EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION — November 20, 8 pm, Christ Church, Zero Garden Street, Cambridge.

THE CAMBRIDGE-GODDARD FEMINIST STUDIES PROGRAM —

is tentatively planning Wednesday night open meetings. Look for announcements in local papers and newsletters.

→ Cambridge Rent Increase ←

An across the board rent increase has been decided on by the Cambridge rent control board. The September 1967 rents are to be used as the levels above which rents will be raised. Therefore 1972 rents will be 30% higher than 1967 rents. The increases will probably go into effect sometime in January.

You can find out what your September 1967 rent was by calling the rent control board (661-0400) located at 678 Massachusetts Avenue. At present the legal levels for rents are the March 1970 levels. You can find out what your rent was then at the board too. If you need more help or want to work with CTOC to fight the increase call them at (354-2064). They're located at 595 Massachusetts Avenue.

An issue was brought to the core committee recently of having a paying playgroup of about five children in the house from 9-1 weekdays for one year. There would be one woman paid and one parent daily. The group would need a playroom where things could be left and a sleeping room which could be used for other things. Some people may feel that this kind of use of the Center would restrict it to being primarily a service organization rather than the most effective political group possible.

A second issue was raised about having the male parent caring for the children at times. Even if you believe that child-care is the responsibility of both women and men, you might feel that the Women's Center should remain a place for women only.

The core committee decided that it was not in a position to offer space to this particular group, partly because the committee does not know the feelings of women who use or will soon use the Center. Please give us feedback, either written or verbal, during staff hours in order to help the committee make such decisions in the future.

WE RECEIVED A NEWS RELEASE FROM THE FEMINIST HEALTH CENTER in Los Angeles which talked about their recent dose of sexist oppression — the following is part of the release — you can read it in its entirety at the Women's Center —

" On the EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 20, 1972, THE FEMINIST WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER AND THE L.A. WOMEN'S CENTER WERE ENTERED BY THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT. AS STATED IN THE SEARCH WARRANT SIGNED BY JUDGE CANNON, THEY CONFISCATED ALL MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND PATIENT RECORDS AND SEARCHED BOTH PREMISES FOR SIGNS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY. WARRANTS WERE ALSO ISSUED FOR THE ARREST OF COLLEEN WILSON AND CAROL DOWNER. THE WARRANT ACCUSED COLLEEN AND CAROL OF COMMITTING SUCH ACTS AS SHARING WITH OTHER WOMEN THE USING OF YOGURT TO RELIEVE THE ITCH AND IRRITATION OF YEAST INFECTION, USING A SPECULUM TO EXAMINE THE CERVIX, GIVING PELVIC EXAMS TO SISTERS, AND BEING PARAMEDICS, WHICH HAVE BROUGHT SUPERIOR CARE TO WOMEN WHICH WAS CONSTRUED AS PRACTICING MEDICINE WITHOUT A LICENSE, FALLING UNDER SECTION 2141 OF THE BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL CODE."

IT IS IMPORTANT to support these sisters — they need help in the form of money, publicity, possibly organized political actions — any help, ideas, money should be sent to:

FEMINIST WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER
746 Crenshaw Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90005



ANYONE INTERESTED IN WORKING ON GETTING UP A SINGLE-SESSION PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ON WOMEN'S OPPRESSION AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FOR A COLLEGE CLASS — THE COURSE CONCERNS CURRENT PROBLEMS/SITUATIONS — CALL JILL 876-6368.

*Living someplace else is wrong,
in Jerusalem the golden
floating over New England smog,
above paper company forests,
deserted brick textile mills
square brooders on the rotted rivers,
developer chewed mountains.*

*Living out of time is wrong.
The future drained us thin as paper.
After the revolution
we would be good, love one another
and bake fruit cakes.
In the meantime eat your ulcer.*

*Living upsidedown is wrong,
roots in the air and
mouths filled with sand.
Only what might be sang.
I cannot live crackling
with electric rage always.
The journey is too long
to run, cursing those
who can't keep up.*

*Yes, for some time we might contemplate
not the tiger, not the eagle or grizzly
but the snail who always remembers
that wherever you find yourself eating
is home, the center
where you must make your love,
and wherever you wake up
is here, the right place to be
where we start again.*

*Give me your hand,
Talk quietly to everyone you meet.
It is going on,
We are moving again
with our houses on our backs.
This time we have to remember
to sing and make soap.
Pack the Kapital and the vitamin E,
the basil plant for the sill,
Apache tears you
picked up in the desert.*

*But remember to bury
all old quarrels
behind the garage for compost.
Forgive who insulted you.
Forgive yourself for being wrong.
You will do it again
for nothing living
resembles a straight line,
certainly not this journey
to and fro, zigzagging
you there and me here
making our own road onwards
as the snail does.*

Marge Piercy



I am looking for the names and addresses of single mothers interested in receiving or contributing to the newspaper of MOMMA. An organization of single mothers in L.A. — Their address is
926 Marco Place
Venice, California 90291 | or call JR at 787-1469

A Letter

Women in collectives are being exploited once again in the name of sisterhood by women who do not find any way of getting by other than parasiting on the hospitality and genuine good will of collectivists. There are a number of ploys the professional crasher can use to enter and stay on indefinitely in collectives.

One of these is the class guilt trip. Since the crasher is poor and homeless, that is, since she refuses to obtain money by any means, including getting on welfare or ripping off her parents, she can be 'pure,' renounce her possibly middle or upper class background, and avail herself of the extra space of the collectives with no strings attached. To ask for a specific duration for her stay would put her in a time vise, and she is answerable neither in terms of chores, since she is a guest who volunteers her services, nor money, since her every penny is vital to her survival.

Another way of staying on is to praise the collective: 'You are the first collective where sisterhood is a reality.' This makes any refusal to continue sheltering the crasher seem to shatter her rediscovered ideals and belief in feminism; most collectivists, evangelists at heart, would prefer not to be the ones who estranged a sister from the movement.

Still another technique used in more desperate straits is the counter-offensive. The crasher intimates that the bad feeling she has engendered in the house has arisen because the other women have not accepted some trait in her, out of snobbery, whether because of her age, class, sexuality, friends, or whatever else is convenient. The collectivists are intimidated into not broaching the subject of her leaving again.

In the case of our collective, all of these techniques were used by two crashers, operating as a team. We were divided and indecisive, so that the two crashers who caused the upheaval took advantage of the split and stayed on in the apartment after the rest of us had split. As a result of their dogs (used in technique number 3: 'you aren't accepting our dogs; therefore, you are animal-haters.') those of us on the lease are being taken to court to pay for damages done to the floor. The two women have left town.

Exploitation of this kind thrives when another sisterhood myth is in operation: that each of us in the collective has an equal commitment to all in the house, irrespective of whether the women have contributed time, money, or good spirit towards making the collective work. As long as collectivists do not make a definite commitment to each other, at least in consulting each other before welcoming potentially destructive professional crashers, it will cost them the life of the collective.

Martha