

# Country Women

## Learning



### THEME

So You Want to Publish . . .  
Feminism and Learning

### Karate:

Learning the Art of the Open Hand

Apprenticeship: Learning from Scratch

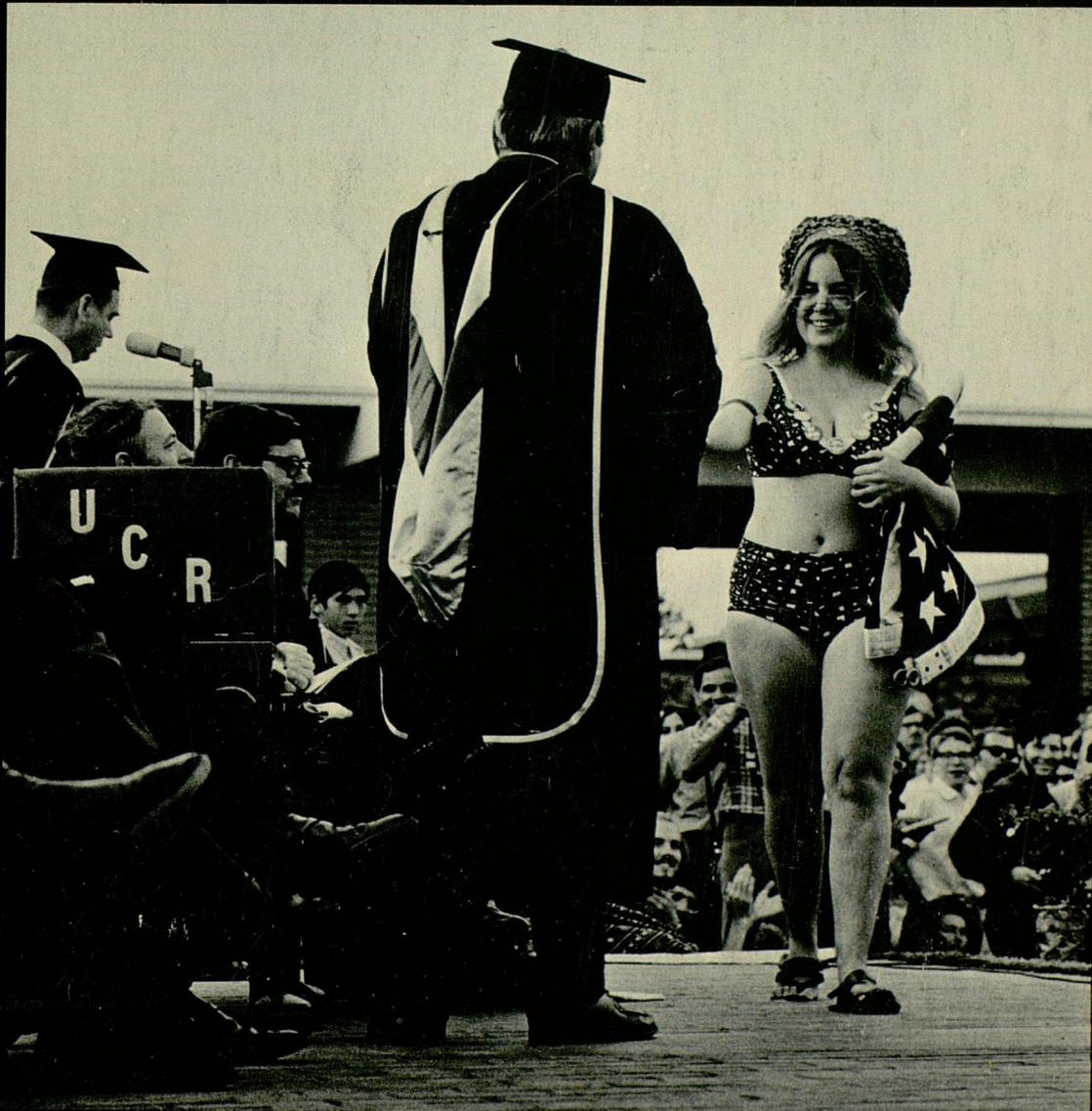
### PRACTICAL

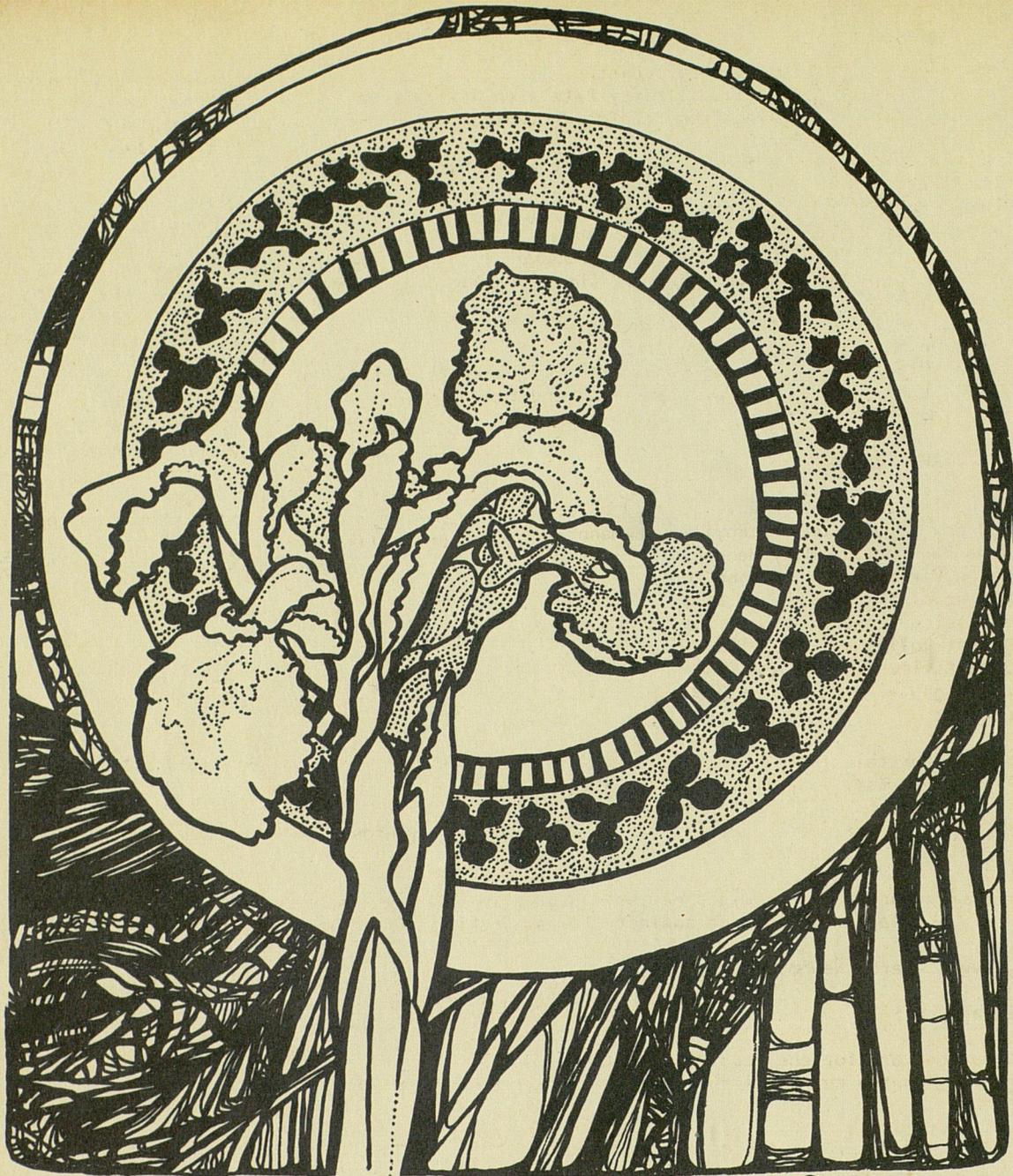
How Now Brown Cow

Home Brewing

Interview with Women Foresters

High-Altitude Arid Gardening





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WHERE ARE THE SHIELDS WE FOUGHT BEHIND ?  
WHERE ARE OUR MOTHERS' ARMS ?  
HOW DO WE DISSIPATE THE POWER OF OUR SEX ?  
TELL US THE STORIES AGAIN, OLD WOMON.  
THERE ARE LESSONS STILL TO BE LEARNED.

*Sea Gull Womon* \_\_\_\_\_

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Back Cover: Carol Newhouse

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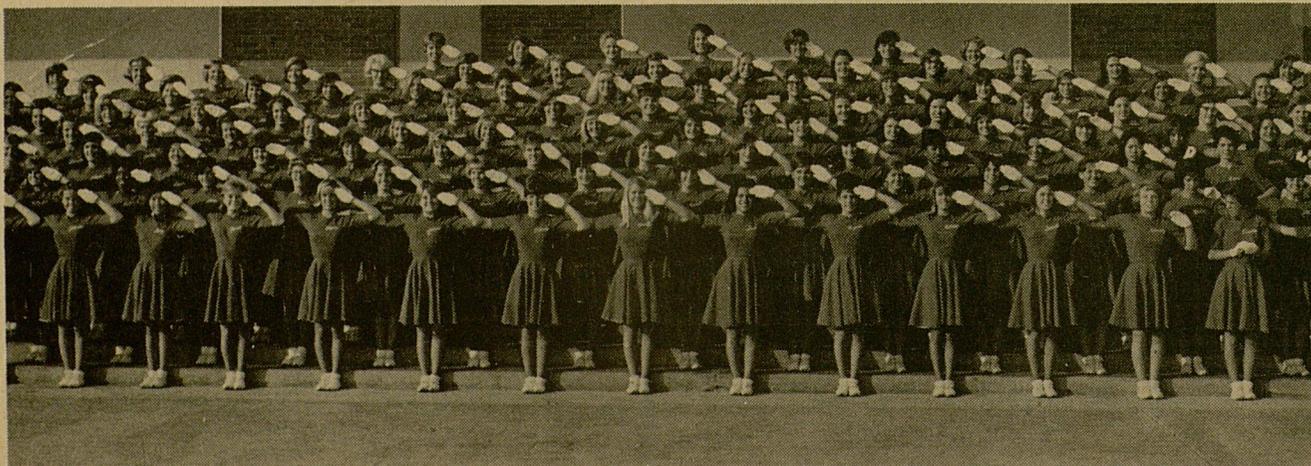
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# ♀ FEMINISM ♀ LEARNING:

Piecing  
Together  
An  
Alternative  
Culture

BY MEG BEELER



My relationship to education has involved a process of moving in and out and back into established institutions. And my sense of the learning process interconnects, parallels, my experience with feminism: as I was learning to be a teacher, I was also organizing my first women's group; as I unlearned the concepts of hierarchy and expertise, and began to find out how to have an egalitarian, shared process of learning, I was also delving into myself, the sex roles which didn't feel comfortable, the relationships which were not taking care of me. I would like to trace my process of evolution and revolution around these issues, and to make clear the basic values and assumptions which motivate my thinking.

\* \* \*

I started being a "teacher" in the midst of the Vietnam war. There were some powerful learnings for me in the beginning, about race and class and economic oppression, and the aliveness of the teenagers I worked with was crucial to my being able to endure the deadening effects of the war. I found myself using traditional methods in the process of teaching: I was expected to lecture, provide all the information, punish with threats of low grades, be in control of both the questions and the answers. I realized frequently how inappropriate those methods were. I was, for example, teaching world history to a number of students who had never traveled to the other side of Washington, D.C., and who therefore had little concept of "Egypt" or "Europe" when they listened to me or looked on a map. This was in a time (1968) when people were beginning to write about alternatives, but there was essentially no practical information on how to arrange things differently.

So I began a process of thinking about how I could make the material more relevant, and be more humane in an environment which was nearly as oppressive to me as to the students. What I liked about teaching was the contact I had with individual people, talking about our lives and experiences, discovering different perspectives. I was working in a different subculture - urban, black, poor - and wanted to find ways of tapping that resource. But I learned that what I valued as a teacher was discounted by the institution, which valued order and authority above all. The more I struggled, the more trapped I felt.

For the next few years I escaped to a more sedate, humane suburban school, where I lost the vitality of learning from another culture, but gained the space and support to really work on my teaching process. During that time, I evolved both practical and theoretical ways of making the classroom more egalitarian, and of organizing it so that I could work individually and in small groups, rather than lecturing to an audience of whom only 5% were tuned in.

As I became more confident in my teaching process and style, a new dilemma arose. I needed to talk about the issues I saw, wanted feedback,

and yearned for some peer sharing. When I tried to talk with the other teachers, for example, those who complained about the absurdity of grading, we would agree on the problem and get stuck when I suggested changing methods. I began noticing a pattern. Those who would talk to me would at some point get excited and emotional, would freak out, and then would want to end the discussion.

It was quite a few years before I realized that the *existence* of different ways is a fundamental threat to the established, accepted way of doing things. For a time, when I was trying to learn new ways and unlearn old habits, it was terrifying to hear that "what you are talking about is not possible". Those people were "successful", they were "experts", and they acted as if they knew what they were talking about. As I got some real experience with my set of values and as I learned to pay more attention to the underlying assumptions, I realized that one mode was based on the *authority* model: some people have power over others, and the other mode was based on the *cooperative* model: people share power.

This recognition that basic values and assumptions color people's motivations and willingness to change was also coming to me from more external political conflicts. The Berkeley Free Speech Movement had embroiled me in conflict and dialogue around the issues of relevance and authority and "real" learning. As the civil rights struggle moved north in the form of economic issues I learned that southern prejudice was not the root cause of racial oppression. And the Vietnam war made our rhetorical statements of peace and justice and self-determination look foolish.

I was getting the same message from a lot of parts of my life, and I wasn't able to hear it fully. What I did hear was my own need to *live* the values I had: to work with my peers in a school, to have more balance and wholeness in my work, to include feelings and creativity as well as intellect - be a teacher of clay and gardening as well as of history - in how I spent my time, and to try to build connections between people.

My solution to all these needs was to find an alternative school to work in (it never occurred to me that I could do those things outside the context of work). It is significant, in retrospect, how I perceived and wrote about this goal in 1974:

*"My focus in a learning community is to facilitate others in exploring alternative ways and tools for balancing, integrating, and doing what makes sense in their lives. I see learning as a process of de-orphaning: a process of connecting with and feeding into the parts of ourselves and the alternatives of other people which are being denied to us in our dominant cultural institutions."*

One of the things which happened to me at this school (an urban alternative for people 14 to 18, five years old when I joined) was that I unlearned my long habit of thinking in terms of others; as we slowly built our trust and sense of collectivity, I found that I no longer had to be superwoman. The pieces of the woman roles I had learned, to nurture others, to pay attention to people's needs, to be aware of many things at once, to be ever alert, and to deny my own needs even to myself, began to fall away as I experienced an alternative. And I saw how I had been creating inequalities even while aiming for sharing: how I had not allowed others to care for me or often to know me. In mid-1976 I wrote:

*"I was so concerned about 'equality' that I gave it to others without giving it to myself; I didn't say what I believed, or make demands on people, and then let them take the responsibility of reacting and deciding what to do. Thus I unconsciously created an unequal situation, where I was handing equality out, like men in our society do, rather than letting people create their own. I believe that this quality of taking responsibility for other people, or mothering, is based on an underlying assumption that I have it more together than others. But since I didn't actually feel this way, it was clear that I had to change."*

There were three key factors during this time which facilitated my process of change: the sense of community at school, the feelings I experienced as we mutually worked through issues and experiences, and the support and intimacy which were developing in my women's group. It was very hard to let go of all the learned "I can do it myself" responses which filled my life: scary to rely on others, to let people see real feelings, to believe enough in the concepts of mutuality and sisterhood and sharing to try to actualize them. I have come to see this process as one of living on the edge: seeing a more fertile way across an abyss, taking some sort of 'leap of faith' into unmarked territory. For it has become more and more clear that as women leaving roles and training behind, and as teachers and learners seeking more gentle ways of sharing knowledge and skills, we really do create new ways. A friend spoke with me recently about the loneliness I must feel as a pioneer, and I have thought a lot about that since. I don't perceive myself as a pioneer, yet see that I probably am one, along with many others, and it makes sense that this journey is lonely and fraught with tangles and unclarity and times of stuckness.

I am finally understanding that there are two arenas in which our struggles go on. One is external: the status quo, the ways we were raised, the laws and habits and customs which make up the culture. Real people perpetuate this culture and make it hard for us to grow and change; part of our work involves trying to change the

people and institutions which get in the way. The other is internal: the messages of guilt and blame which we impose, often unconsciously, on ourselves.

Working in the collective and becoming friends with a group of women, I was acting both to create an alternative institution and to change the parts of myself which kept me from living my values fully. With my women friends I experienced shared nurturing and healing - we were creating a mutuality of caring, and were using our skills without anyone having to do all the work. Being in a collective involved the working out of all kinds of conflicts, telling our feelings, and making shared decisions. I learned things about my philosophy, my realities, my strengths and weaknesses. In seeing things more clearly, I was able to focus on what I wanted to change, say it, and get support for my struggles to grow.

At the same time I began to realize that doing a school is in some ways in conflict with feminist values, especially in terms of who initiates, takes responsibility, puts energy in, shares the work. I wrote in my journal about these issues:

*"People take as much responsibility as they can, and still we're not equal. Some people are paid, some aren't; there are two age groups rather than mixed ages and experiences, making for a dualism; the adult people have much different goals for and in the school than the young people do. So we're not all working for the same things. I'd like to move my energies to a communal space where deep personal growth and social change - facilitating each person to be co's self and to be empowered to create forms which will support further change - is the way of life. In a school there is still dominant individualism and there is little commitment to community. People may be searching for some alternatives, but they are more in a place of trying on different modes than being sure of what they want."*

*I finally see that this is part of the nature of a school. It is much different here than a public school where there are clear authorities and no attempt at equality or cooperation. We are an in-between of public school and a community, I suppose. But I never understood the limits of school before.*

*Support is also mostly one-sided here. We are helping people learn how to be open and be conscious of each other, but it's slow. Most of them return to families who buy into competition and individuality and hierarchy and reason and profit (get what you can for yourself). So they have few skills in*

*being mutual or cooperative; we don't get much support back.*

*It makes wonderful sense for us, the adults/teachers/facilitators, to make this school. We are learning how to build community, to work collectively, to grow new skills, to care for each other in emotional and intuitive and psychic and sensory ways. Yet we don't know how to sustain this institution, the place which gives us our livelihood, which uses our energy. We don't know how to make it viable in the long run; an alternative needs money, and a broad community need, and consistent energy and support. None of us can sustain this intensity and also deal with economic scarcity and minimal outside support."*

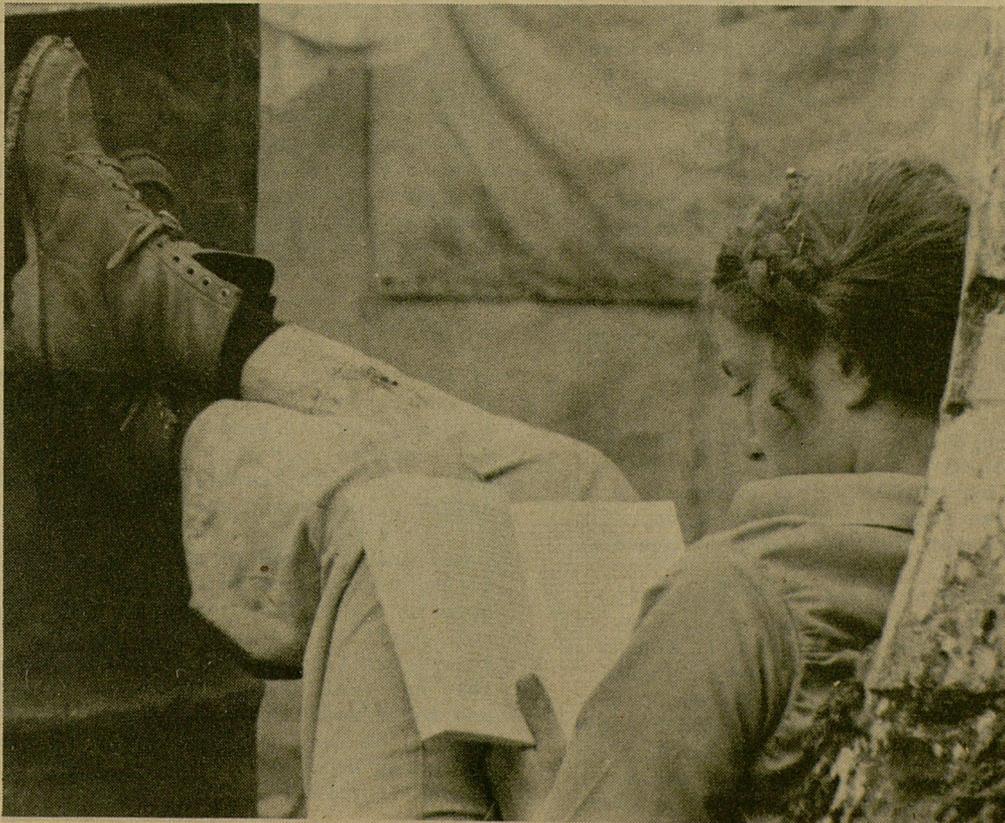
I am no longer trying to create a school. My learning process has led me into a kind of dualism, where I am again trying to work within institutions (for economic survival reasons) and am putting my building energies into my community - the continual struggles to sustain bonds and develop deeper and more widespread intimacy; into my extended family; into political work based on feminist values and process; and into a consistent attention to my internal self, especially the creative, intuitive, psychic parts of me which get the least attention and the least validation from my still puritan framework.

I feel differently in the institutions now. I

experience a lot of internal power: I have been true to myself, I can speak from experience of alternatives rather than from abstractions, I see my choices. And I know I have the support and love of friends; I am no longer alone, isolated, without peers. Now I struggle more with a conscious sense of my difference; my lifestyle and values are really very far from those of my co-workers. Sometimes this is scary (how can I survive?) and sometimes it's powerful (I'm not trapped). I do not know, in the long run, whether my rhythms will change again.

It is hard to admit to myself that I have spent so much of my life energies in trying to create alternative learning modes and feel, still, that I have no answers. I do have pieces and fragments of learning to pass on. I imagine us making a patchwork quilt in this issue, slowly connecting our herstories and feelings and experiences like our foremothers sewed pieces of someone's dress, an old blanket, a shirt, into their quilts - along with their feelings and gossip and experiences and the events which shaped their lives.

As we keep looking at the pieces of our lives, we will continue to confront the issues in something like waves; every few years a new set of issues arises. Some of us really work on those issues and share our learnings with the others before and after us. We build on what has come before and add to the shared learnings so that the younger women can take certain things for granted and move on. In so doing, we are slowly piecing together a new culture.



SUSAN LOGAN

# Tai Chi: A Learning Cycle

BY MARTY PATE WITH JILL WILSON

A few years ago, I became frustrated with a twelve year nursing career, feeling my participation in established medicine was doing more harm than healing. Two and a half years ago I started studying Tai Chi, a Chinese healing exercise that can become a moving meditation. This training helped me regain my balance and perspective of my place in the universe. It had been my dream to share my knowledge of Tai Chi. This article is written with one of my first students, Jill. The conversations woven into the article hopefully will give a sense of the circular flow and endlessness of the learning process.

Tai Chi helps us get into who we are right now and lets us see our own preciousness, helping us to accept ourselves as whole worthy persons. The physical movements follow a process of extending our energy outward and drawing it back in. Experiencing the world and returning to our center, we feel a continuous flow.

Because the form is a complete cycle, it reconditions us to meet life with a sense of continuity. The Chinese believe it cultivates "chi", the life force energy flowing through our bodies and gently washing away the blocked points. It opens areas that are very sensitive, often causing students to quit early in the process. When learning Tai Chi we often make mistakes, make a wrong move, or block - not knowing what to do next. Instantly, we can see our attitude toward learning, see where we get hung up, whereas this is not so obvious within a mental learning process.

Marty: "To learn something new with our body requires keeping our mind still and concentrating on first following, then gradually and independently experiencing the movements. We must surrender to not knowing, to feeling awkward. By learning a little bit at a time, something happens to your will that makes you want to go ahead and learn what your body doesn't know but knows it could do. It's a challenge."

Jill: "You also begin to see that the only way to do it is the way you do it, that you can move only with your own rhythm. This gives you a different feeling about learning to do *anything*. You begin to respect your own learning process."

In Tai Chi we often hold our hands in a ball position, holding our "chi", our own energy, in front of us, stretching and pulling it apart, pushing it out and bringing it back in - surrounding ourselves with it. We can see that indeed we do control our own energy and because we're so self-involved, we learn to be much less affected by others. We learn to panic much less at the unexpected. Also in the pro-

cess of concentrating on breathing, we can actually learn to "stop our minds". Even a moment on that level allows us to see how much tension we create for ourselves and how possible it is to stop that process. We don't need to be invisible or to hide. When we do, we are unprepared for anything that might happen and it catches us off guard. If you think you can't be who you are, you feel overwhelmed by the world.

Recently I had an experience which my Tai Chi training gave me the strength to get through. I decided to visit my mother after over ten years of cutting off that relationship and burying it in negativity. Of course, I was frightened but I kept remembering to breathe and keep my inner sense of balance. At one point, I was leaving for a walk. My mother expressed concern about it being a dangerous world to walk out into. I saw how for years I'd felt guilty and frightened when I satisfied my need for adventure. At that moment, I could appreciate her concern and yet know I was whole and able to deal with the world. I could forgive her without having to give myself up. It was exciting to find that I could like my mother.

About a year ago I became inspired to share my learning of Tai Chi with my friends and started classes. Of course opening myself up to many new friends and a whole new level of learning. At first I was nervous because I'd only been doing the form for a year and a half and I wasn't sure how to teach. But quickly I realized that I wasn't teaching as much as letting go to the process of which Tai Chi was the teacher. I learned to work from an almost unconscious state - concentrating on the form and the individual's body getting it. My classes are held in natural space and are open to new people at all times because I feel that each of us has our own rhythm and time for self-discovery. Often there may be six people all learning different parts. It gives me a chance to learn to concentrate on the person I'm working with. It's amazing how good it feels to just learn a few steps on your own, each step building to a whole, and each learning experience building self-confidence and a stronger self-image.

I was once invited to demonstrate Tai Chi to 60 first, second, and third graders. So I took the opportunity to have them move their hands in a ball position and experience their own energy. It was exciting to talk with them about how they had their own body and spirit and mind, and the freedom to move. I explained that when practicing Tai Chi all I was doing was moving my energy around my body and in the process exercising every part of my body. We also

talked about it being a Chinese healing exercise. They seemed so tuned in that I invited them to do the form with me. Many of them completed the whole form, and one little girl stood right in front of me doing a perfect mirror image Tai Chi. She was concentrating totally. Many of the little girls surrounded me afterward saying how they loved the way it felt in their bodies. The boys really enjoyed the exercises but wanted "kung fu".

Marty: "In the big classes that my teacher taught, it was very exciting for me to watch 30 to 50 people actually learn to change their posture and their attitudes and become more expressive just within 3 months. Just being in the environment with everyone learning and moving and breathing together seemed to make all our spirits higher. There is an aspect of staying with Tai Chi that allows a person to give themselves a little credit. Why did you stay with it, Jill?"

Jill: "Because I got hooked on knowing I could come that far, and I wanted more. For me it wasn't an overwhelming body challenge. I didn't have to deal with my body's resistance as much as remember how all the parts fit together. I think that Tai Chi teaches a lot about what life is - that you may venture out and spiral up but there's always the same spot you come back to."

Marty: "I thought it was interesting that you said you had a hard time stringing all the sequences together. One of the most powerful effects of having Tai Chi in my life has been that I can allow myself all my parts and feel them working together. Once I discovered a process of unwinding when I had gotten lost in the sequence. It consisted of going backward until my body discovered when it had reached the point where I'd gone wrong. It's very hard to go backward, so I learned very quickly to concentrate better, to be still if I didn't know what was next and to stay with myself. I think we all hate to go backward - it's like admitting that you're wrong. To get beyond that and see it all as process was exciting to me."

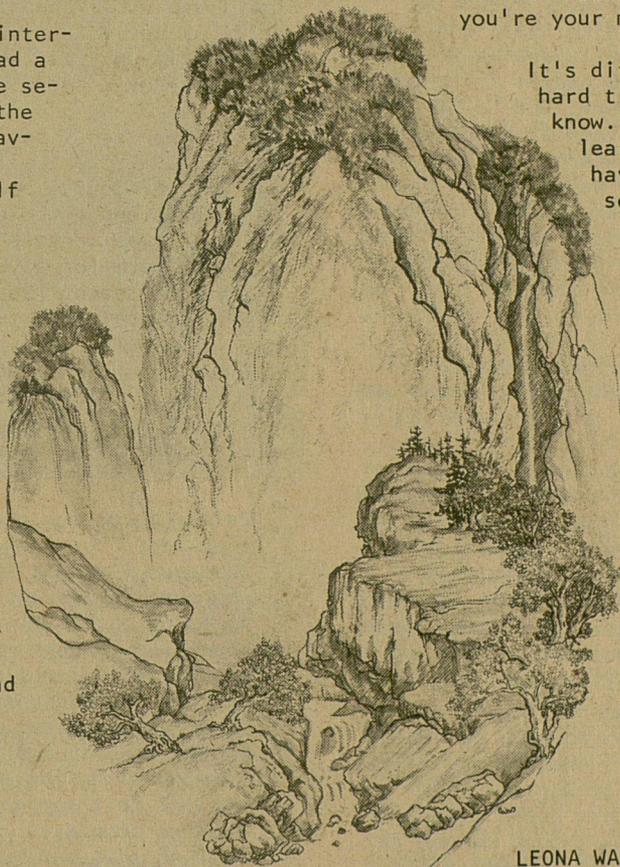
Tai Chi is helping me learn that it's OK to step away from your life and family and let go to timelessness for the 30 minutes it takes to do the form. I know it's hard for most of us to justify taking time for ourselves until we realize that a calm state of mind can accomplish much more than a frantic one.

When people have areas that need healing, they discover them in Tai Chi - often you have to get sick before you can get well. You have to meet your resistance as well as yourself. One student quit Tai Chi during a difficult phase in his life because he saw Tai Chi as good and himself as bad. He had to face that whole box in his head. It's a powerful process to break through these boxes we've created often from a very young age. I personally went through a process of having to totally change my diet because my digestive tract would no longer allow junk food habits. I saw that I was subtly destroying my health and sense of well being.

Through teaching, I've learned much about my ego - learning not to judge myself, from people watching me do Tai Chi - allowing myself to stumble, to soften - seeing the flow as more important than any particular part or how I was doing it.

Jill: "It seems essential to learning that you're your most open, beginning self."

It's difficult for people who have a hard time admitting that they don't know. I have people come to me to learn Tai Chi and instantly they have to face that fact. I've seen that my job as a teacher is to tune a person in to themselves, not to my support. It's a fine line and a great challenge. For me, it is truly a form of body-work-healing that satisfies my need for sending caring energy into the universe. It's exciting to look into each person's body and spirit and help them get what they want - all non-verbally. It's a good feeling to give away Tai Chi.



LEONA WALDEN

Disillusioned and disgusted with formal education, I quit university after a year, making for myself an ultimatum to never return to college. Carrying through with a naive absolutist attitude, I directed myself toward another ideal: structureless, self-taught education. The grand world outside the classroom, I heartily believed, held many yet unlearned lessons. This truth guided me to life situations that I came to learn a great deal from. In two years of living collectively, alternately working crummy jobs and travelling, my emotional growth had soared, and I had proudly acquired many basic survival skills. My life's foundation shook ominously, however, when I began to emerge as a political lesbian, and at the same time, I was forced to take a job washing dishes.

Groping for something that fit my potential and desire to work a decent job someday, I walked into an office called the Learning Web (alternative education), an organization which found semi/unpaid, non-union apprenticeships for people in the area, and following an urge, asked for a carpentry apprenticeship. My nonchalance in making such a decision without much thought startled me some, for before I passed through the door of the office, I had no idea I knew what I wanted. The preoccupations of puberty, jr. high school home economics, and high school literature, had neatly buried my childhood love of tinkering with tools and wood, and fairly well stilled my early desire to learn carpentry, until then. These people listened attentively as I related my story, and to my amazement, they asked questions aimed at discovering my needs. This excited and scared me, because they pleasantly forced me to be honest in describing my capabilities and knowledge in order to place me realistically. In the past, without exception, at important life crossroads, others had insisted on abstracting my ability to fit a computer program.

Within two weeks, they had arranged for me to start work with a lesbian sculptor/carpenter who regularly taught skills only to women. Still working full-time odd hours in the city, she picked me up every morning to take me to the country. This refreshed and invigorated me, and working 16 hours per day gave me a pleasant tiredness and sense of completion when the day ended. In the first month, we finished the downstairs of a barn she had been singlehandedly converting to her living space for several years. She explained the mental processes as best as possible she used in calculating the work, asked me to follow her through that physical process, and gave me a similar problem to work out when possible. For example, she showed me why it was necessary to place boards half-way across a stud so that in laying the next board, there'd be something to nail to. She showed me how to measure and cut, place and nail boards, taking divergences into consideration, and asked me to continue under her occasional supervision. Sometimes she gave me the conditions of a particular job, for instance in the making of a door; and while I was incapable of doing it myself, she

# APPRENTICESHIP:

BY CONGA



LYNDA KOOLLISH

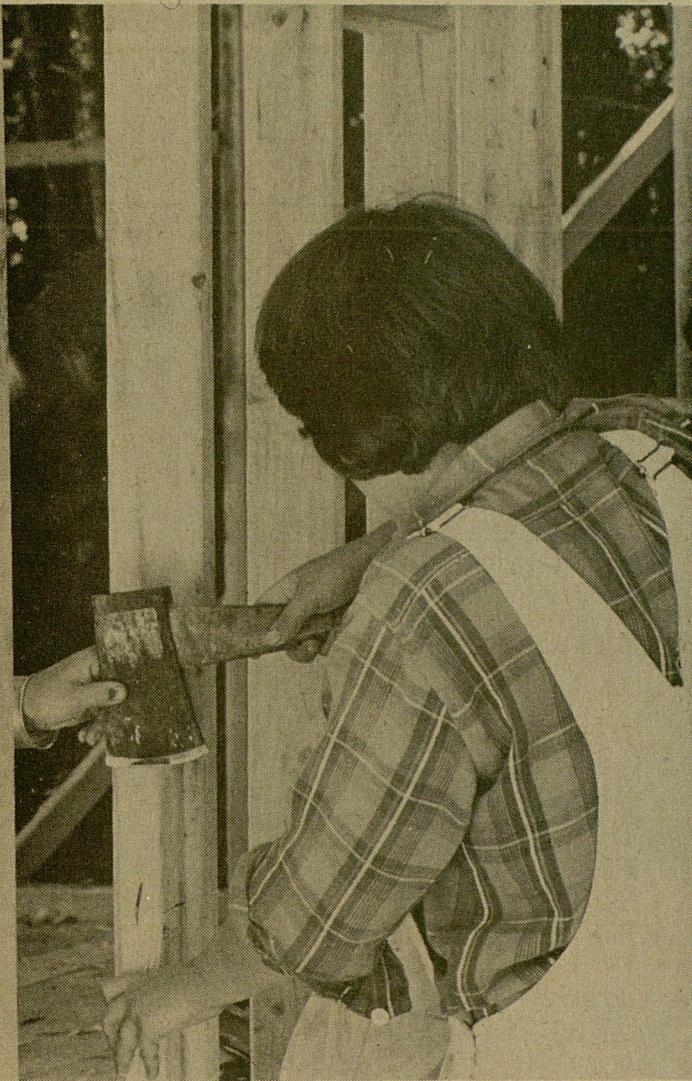
relied on me for the proper measurements and figurings, doing together in minutest detail whatever I didn't know, and leaving me to it whenever it was a simple matter of drilling holes or putting in screws. She transferred her knowledge through my hands in a supportive and gradually self-reliant fashion. In this way, I learned basic carpentry skills, as well as how to drive a tractor and use a chain saw. My bodily balance and overall physical strength climbed alongside of increasing mental knowledge until I felt competent in my whole being. Later, when we completed the project in the summer and fall of this past year, we worked with another woman carpenter, and during this time I became more comfortable using power tools and sharpened my skills, often working alone, with one of them available to consult when I could not fathom a problem for myself.

# Learning From Scratch

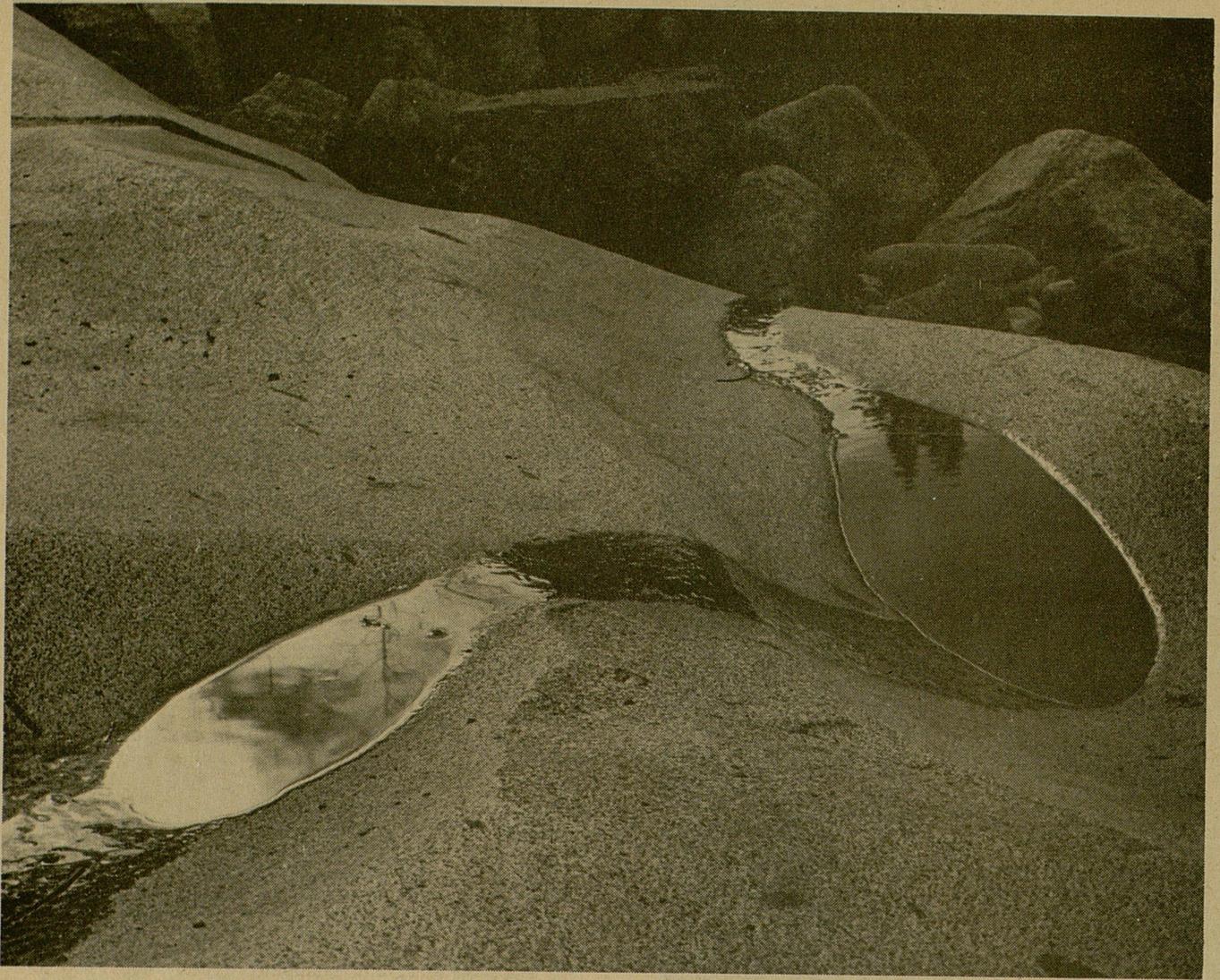
ing fusion of mind and body and this unity led me to an identification through and with this work, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

When I left school, I miserably rejected book-learning and all impersonal structured educational forms. I now understand that the structure didn't work because I was framed with another's ideas of what my education should entail, with no allowance for personal discovery. Books and courses can serve well as tools, but make lousy masters. Now I know that I am able to form my own learning plan according to my needs and grounded in my own reality. This is equivalent to taking the power to direct my life positively. As a child, I romanticized the master/apprenticeship relationships of the middle ages and early America, dreaming that I might find the kind and knowing tradesfigure who would take me on. Apprenticeship (from French verb "apprendre", to learn) was the only humane form of education I'd heard of. The past and present history of apprenticeship rarely exhibits this ideal, and the father-son tradition sustained high selectivity in and mystery surrounding the trades, to this day. The herstory of women in apprenticeship reeks of drudgery and indenture.

With the strength I gained from women's alternative education, I felt capable of tackling the hurdle of a union apprenticeship to further my skills. So, when the president of a large contracting company tried for the first hour of an interview to break my determination using any tactic, I remained unmoved and was guaranteed an apprenticeship. Women have long been denied access to the oldest, most exclusive and legitimate form of mastering a trade. Apprenticeship with a union, well-paid on the job training, has only a minute percentage of women in non-traditional trades. For the first time, as of January 1, 1978, a new, hard-won federal affirmative action law spells out a 3% goal for women on federal construction contracts of 10,000 or more, applying to all aspects of the labor force in construction. This goal will be increased to 5 1/2% in 1979, and 7% in 1980. These goals are based on how many women actually show up and apply for apprenticeship lists, so the more women that sign up at unions, the better our chances at having higher affirmative action goals made into law. All this means that if you've mulled over the idea or once even tried getting into a union, the time is ripe for all you women (any age if you are determined) to enter the trades, especially those of carpenter, plumber and electrician. I suggest finding another woman with whom you can run through preliminary forms, possible testing, contacting and job-hunting. This process is involved and often alienating, but it is the path to excellent jobs and training kept well out of our reach for centuries.



Learning with women in the country opened my world in ways I hadn't dreamed of. The work-learning relationship that we shared molded a natural and unwavering bond of trust between us. Through the mirror of her criticism and belief in my ability in the intimacy of a woman-on-woman apprenticeship, I learned the vehicle to my own self-criticism and self-validation. In an ever-lightening view of self, I peeled back the layers of defenses built in my academic years to withstand the general derision of women who choose to work with their hands, as well as the pressure to pursue on the strictly "higher" intellectual plane, to see with increasing clarity my present capacities and limitations. Learning happened of itself when I became the process of attaining those skills; not, I am learning carpentry, but, learning carpentry is me! I came to know myself in a deeply satisfy-



KAREN GOTTSTEIN

# Collage

BY LYNDA FORD

*The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping,  
I dreamt I held you in my arms,  
When I awoke, dear, I was mistaken,  
And I hung my head and cried.*

During this long, rainy winter, my three-year-old son learned the words to "You Are My Sunshine", often asking me to sing it - "Do it again, Mom" - and it has come to be an anthem for the light that we found in these grey days. This winter has brought together not only the light and darkness, for me, but the dream and the waking realities. There are moments of focus; in Gestalt psychology they are called the "Aha!", a sudden coalescence of past aware-

nesses that bring a new birthing or knowledge. My experience recently is that these moments may come during sleep or while awake. I have learned to understand that through the metaphors of our dreams we have access to learning the truth from our unconscious. The unconscious has no defense mechanisms. It is only the conscious mind which works to cloud our awareness of the truth in the process of creating the illusion of a "secure reality". But even in the conscious

state we can learn to read the metaphors of our experience, if we can be totally present/awake in the moment of that experience. Blending the dream and the day, the moment as the only reality, the only true learning. Like beads on a string, the following events have illuminated this reality.

\* \* \*

When I awoke, Dear, I was walking along a country road with a small boy, skirting puddles, as he told me that the birdies were going to take a bath in their bathtub.

Tiny red flowers were budding on the bush across the road from our house, after weeks of rain, and he asked if we could take some home. Just a few yards farther along, the same yellow flowers were blooming that I had been picking while carrying him, one day almost two years ago.

That day, I awoke to darkness, unaware even that my consciousness had gone through a change. There was only the darkness and the pinpoint of light that was my returning awareness.

I hadn't heard a car coming, nor had any foreknowledge of the impact, almost as if two distinct time planes had intersected without warning.

I could do nothing but try to understand what had happened to me. No control.

"Where's my baby?" was my first question. I was assured that he was all right; they had found me, although unconscious, curled around him, breaking the impact.

Now I had to let people take care of me. I had to lie in the hospital bed and experience pain and immobility. In contrast to my stance of "Yes, we can," the banner I'd carried for so long as my part of my marriage contract, it was a relief to not be able.

I understood that all I could do was accept - my immobility, my inability to care for my child, help from other people. It was the beginning lesson in surrender.

But no cars could hurt us today. We stopped down the road to watch robins in an old apple tree, shaggy with moss, looking up under their orange bellies.

The wind grew cold as we emerged from the trees to the great, grey panorama of ocean and sky. It whistled, more than whispered, through the limbs behind us. Over the crest of the hill, I shielded him while we walked, my body responding as any animal mother to break the impact of the elements on her offspring.

He stopped to say "hi" to the sheep and, although those well-clad beasts had their backs to the wind, I could see in their meadow, dime-sized daisies already emerging.

\* \* \*

When I awoke, dear, I had just finished renouncing my first husband, whom I haven't seen in eleven years, telling him that I am a revolutionary.

He had been reading to me, in the dream, from something I had written, illustrating to me my wrong thinking and self-righteously awaiting my acquiescence. And this time, though the feeling began - that empty, sad, lonely space that says, "alright, I'll shape up, to please you, even though shape up means shut down, shut up, die a little" - I refused.

"No," I said, "No, I am a revolutionary and I meant what I wrote. I am committed to change."

He was hurt, like my mother used to be hurt when I didn't do what she wanted me to do, be who she wanted me to be. And, in the dream, I tried to deal with his hurt, but he held it, like a bludgeon, between us. I saw that his hurt didn't diminish, while it began to infect me, and so I walked away. Finished with a man who insisted that I be like him.

\* \* \*

I awoke, dear, from a dream visit with a dear brother, a magician, a sage, a bum. He had been sitting and reading, with characteristic composure. Suddenly, he decided to show a child a piece of magic.

There appeared a floral bouquet, soft and lavish in wondrous, mouth-watering shades of lavender, blue and rose. I was the child, in awe of such a display.

I expressed my delight, but he was impatient with my shallowness, and snapped, "Look into it!" and when I did the flowers dissolved and I saw a standing figure. The lines were long and graceful; the head slightly bowed and a golden light glowed from the entire form. I was beyond awe.

\* \* \*

I awoke, dear, to a poignantly beautiful day, making love as the light suffused the darkness. Tiny birds who wear dark hoods over light bellies, covet the wheat I'm sprouting on the deck, making them brave enough to approach the glass door. After I grind the wheat for bread, I throw the remaining kernels on the deck. This afternoon they're gone.

The wind is stilled on this brightly lighted day of respite between winter storms and spring rains.

My son and I picked yellow daffodils and fragrant narcissus on our walk to the post office this morning. This afternoon, as we eat popcorn together in the warm of the sun, the narcissus perfume the air and I feel my passions rise from the stillness, as the yellow flowers raise their heads from the soft green spring grass.

\* \* \*

When I awoke, dear, the circle had not only held, but it had joined. It had become a new organism: metamorphosed. Some thirty of us have been meeting every two or three weeks since September - four months, with the vision that each of us would be heard.

The beginnings were cacophony - a jumble of voices and directions, accusations and suspicions, pomposity and long-windedness. Yet, we continue to meet because some of us could sense and others know reasons why, that if we don't attempt to take responsibility for local government now, this county would no longer be a home for us in the near future.

We came to the country because we were tired of the directions of our previous experience. Most of us had left behind any faith we once had in the processes involved in electoral politics. The question behind our awkward beginnings now seemed to be "Can the existing system of government be changed from within and represent a means of change in itself, if we use a different process to approach it?"

American government has been based on the concept of majority rule, so that a vote, in this country, is assumed to be the fairest means of decision. Thus, a portion of the population is always unrepresented in the decision.

This was not always so on this continent. When our predecessors, the native people of this continent, sat in circle in order to arrive at decisions, each one spoke in their turn until all had been heard, and as the energy revolved, the voice of the circle emerged. Each, within their own consciousness could hear that voice and make the response that their heart told them. As the second wave of feminism grew, women saw the power in the circle. They embraced and developed it and began to share it with other communities.

Yesterday, in Comptche, thirty people sat in a lovely, soft old room. Each of us brought our best. Two good people asked the group which of them should run for office. The time was short, and feelings ran strong. Personalities jostled which had sometimes irritated. But the seed of consciousness had been nurtured sufficiently in each member, that the circle was more important, more exciting and vital than any one of its participants.

Once around the circle for clearing. Each spoke from her/his heart. A time for questioning both of the candidates, each one sharing as much of the essence of their abilities as possible. Around the circle again. Many people committed their support and gave their reasons. Reasons came from many channels - political experience, community action involvement, intuitive consciousness. Each was respected.

That circling showed a drift, but the process was not complete. A passing of the power, from

one speaker to the next, discussion, opened more voices, until we knew that every one of us had spoken and the question was called. The voices joined around the circle, like the increasing velocity in a crack the whip game, until each person had chosen to agree to the same candidate. Everyone had participated together.

And the circle was one; and the energy in the room as the sun's rays grew long, was greater than the sum of its parts. And each of us knew if our vision could survive this far through perseverance and good will, that the real possibility of change exists beyond this moment, as long as our commitment is to the process.

\* \* \*

When I awoke, dear, I was moving through the moonless night, surrounded by a huge inverted bowl, black velvet scattered with bright dots of fairy dust.

Cloud shadows hung behind me as I climbed the hill, and the closest thing to me was the sound of rain water rushing down the ditch along the side of the road. Behind that was the crash of the surf below the cliffs and floating in on the wind, the moan of the lonely buoy in the harbor.

My own shadow was barely distinguishable, in the darkness, by the light of the beer sign in the store window at the bottom of the hill against the road as it rose up the hill.

I let a car pass without sticking out my thumb, in order to taste more of the night, watching the red glow of its tail lights disappear around the curve beyond me. At the crest of the hill, the wind pressed against my chest, and I leaned into it, feeling more surely the part of the darkness that was me.

Lights in two houses at the top of the hill were glaring intruders into the subtleties of the night. I was relieved when I passed beyond them into the quiet, dark trees, as I am relieved when the sound of a chain saw quits.

From the soft shadows of the trees, I could once again reach into the stars and a feeling of love for this place that has helped me face my fears and pass through them, brought tears to just beneath my eyelids. That must be what people mean when they speak of "home".

Creaking in the trees coincided with the memory of childhood fears of what couldn't be seen in the dark and running with a chill up my back, just to empty the garbage in the back yard after dark. I let myself feel it, to measure my place in this night.

Then I turned into the soft, dark tunnel of dense trees leading to the glow of the lights from my house, no longer a child apart from the darkness, but a woman a part of it.



PRAIRIE JACKSON

# Learning: unique as a snowflake

INTERVIEW BY SHARON HANSEN

*The Albion Whale School is an alternative elementary and middle school which is in its sixth year of existence. This article was transcribed from discussions on learning processes with Pam Abell, the prime coordinator of the school.*

The school is made up of about twenty-five children between the ages of six and fourteen and nine adults, at least five of whom are present for each day of classes. The basic set-up of the school is a small, comprehensive unit of mixed ages. Everyone who is interested, both children and adults, is invited to take part in organizing the school. One of the main processes by which the school is self-governed is through meetings. Any student or adult may call or participate in a meeting. Each morning, school begins with a meeting, using the circle form. This helps children realize from a young age that they have something to do with the society that they live in, and that they live in, and that they have some control over it.

Children have free time, lesson time, contracts for extended lessons or projects, equipment for carrying out long and short term projects. The older children, ten years old and up, have requirements, and about half their time is scheduled. The younger children have individual arrangements with teachers, and there's very little "have to" time for them.

Classes are determined by what the students ask to learn, and what adults can offer from the fields in which they are competent; subjects which parents and staff feel would be beneficial are also taught.

The above describes the school's external aspects. What about the internal processes? How do people learn? They learn in different ways. Some learn by doing, others by listening or observing, others by talking about their experiences, and still others through some combination of the above. Some learners need a well-defined structure or task in which to learn while some thrive in an open, unstructured environment. The main answer to the question of how people learn is that it's as unique as a snowflake.

The importance of learning is not in its product; learning and teaching are valuable because they create a good focus for living. Learning has to do with staying aware of the place where the soul meets the body, the place of aliveness. The process is also a good model for finding purpose in life, for getting into contact with "heroic dimensions."

Young children will become involved with almost anything that's alive and vital. They will stay involved for a long time with projects that engage their intellectual, physical and emotional

capacities. For example, take a child learning to repair and maintain her own bicycle. She utilizes her mental powers in understanding the mechanics involved, discovers and develops physical strength in the actual manipulation of the tools and the bike, and deals with her emotional responses around the work, the excitement of discovery, frustration, pride.

Such holistic projects, rather than something which isolates the individual capacities, are the best kind for very young children. At around age ten or twelve, isolating those capacities is good and feels like a natural process. It's exciting for them to begin to see the difference between feelings and thoughts. They're also learning about liking to do something and not liking to do it, but wanting to be able to do it anyway, for a different reason than just because you like to.

When they are ready, the older children take classes that they are committed to for a given time period. They are given choices as to what classes they will take. To do this, they need to know the difference between working and playing, need to know what is entailed in making a contract, need to know how to estimate their abilities. They also need to accept that it is O.K. to make mistakes. They can either take on a project and finish it, or give it up, knowing why they gave it up, and then discuss this with their teacher. Staying tuned-in to their own interests, the children develop decision-making and orientation skills, and begin to understand why they want to learn things and why they don't. They begin to see whose influence is behind their motivation, and whether their desire to do it comes from inside themselves or from some external source.

When we're talking learning, we're also talking relating. When an adult is interacting with a child to teach them something, the personality interaction is the predominant thing happening. It's my feeling that we create our lives out of the beliefs we have, and that we teach belief, all the time. When an adult is interacting with a child to teach them something, the personality interaction is the predominant thing happening. Certain beliefs can help teachers be honestly in the moment so that they can be a model for being honestly in the moment. The main thing is to go where the child is, to learn real acceptance of her/him. If the little ones are playing "Living Dead", go do some "Living Dead" theater with them, perhaps make appropriate masks, offer yourself, your interest in what they're doing.

I don't believe in blocks to learning. The organism is always struggling to grow, and perhaps is not taking in certain information you're directing toward it because it's learning something else.



LYNNE WEINERMAN

It's my feeling that we create our lives out of the beliefs we have and that we teach beliefs all the time. These beliefs change often just like thoughts and emotions, even though we don't think they do. Emotionally where learning happens is at the point where the individual confronts her soul, other people, the world, the Creator. When it happens it's magic. The steps, the skills, they're different, they're mechanical. Maria Montessori has done genius work in breaking certain types of learning into physical mechanical steps so that it becomes a game. Everything that's mechanical is a game and has rules, dimensions, and limits. Children love games; that's where you can make learning interesting.

We can't help but teach the values that we hold. When we put children into a particular social order, they'll learn that order. I think the job of education is to teach people to be conscious of the fact that they're creating their environment. I don't want to teach propaganda, even the propaganda I believe in. The crux of the educational process is giving children the tools for making viable choices. Then they will be able to keep in touch with the learning process throughout their lives, can keep touching in at that place where illumination happens. I want an environment that gives you the freedom to question continually.

# TEACHING WOMEN'S STUDIES

BY EDITH CHEVAT

In the fall of 1974, I decided to submit a proposal for a course dealing with women and literature because both these subjects were omitted from the curriculum of the alternate, interdisciplinary college in which I taught. When in the process of consideration of several courses by the curriculum committee, mine was the only one to receive negative comments ("a course on women might be divisive," the real struggle is the class struggle not women's rights"), I put it down to an infantile leftist outlook or too ingrained unconscious traditionalism (academic and male), attitudes that would be overcome. I did not take much notice of the fact that I was the only woman on the curriculum committee or that there were only eight full-time female faculty out of a total of thirty.

Eight months later, the course having been approved by the school's curriculum committee, I prepared to begin to teach. I had chosen a textbook, *Images of Women in Literature*, to fulfill literary and academic goals, and I had added *Growing Up Female in America* and *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* to deal with the variety and reality of women's lives in the United States. I wanted very much to avoid a bull session atmosphere and the criticism that might result, i.e., that academic learning does not take place in women's studies classes, that interdisciplinary women's studies was somehow politically necessary but academically illegitimate. But I also wanted to be involved in a class in which the process of learning took precedence over specific learning outcomes, in which the great divide between literature and life was bridged, and in which I was neither Pandora nor Pygmalion but a person who had various experiences as a woman and as a teacher. I knew that I would be watched by my colleagues and by the administration, but I did not take into consideration internal politics and what it could lead to. I knew that I would be watching and observing, but I did not consider the perception of the students or the possibility of being impelled from a position of benevolent but distant facilitator to that of activist. In no way did I imagine that the entire experience would serve as a liberation or that I would become the chief learner.

By September 20, 1975 I'd had four sessions with the class - an introduction, a lecture on stereotypes and archetypes based on the introduction to the textbook, a lecture discussion of basic vocabulary words related to feminism and literature and a discussion of two short stories each

having to do with wives. I was not happy. I had the strong feeling that something was wrong in the class. Having the students sit in a circle, encouraging comments and keeping myself out of it, did not help.

The first good discussion took place a week later on *The Sky is Gray* by Ernest Gaines. It is a story concerning a self-sacrificing black mother and a little boy. With the stories on wives, only the two older married women had had strong reactions; one read the story twice - the first time in her life she had ever done so. My own feeling was that the problems in the first two stories are more pervasive. All women who have a relationship with a man need to deal with defining the limits of their individual boundaries as in any relationship and also with deciding to what extent they are defining themselves in terms of the man. It had never occurred to me before that the more pervasive a situation is, the more difficult it is to perceive and deal with. In *The Sky is Gray* there were no males as such, a boy is a child and so still defined by the mother, who in the story functions as both mother and father. She is the strong adult who defines her own limits and her own roles within the larger and vaguer contexts of society. As a result it was hard to determine if the change in the discussion was the result of a change in group dynamics or heightened consciousness. Perhaps the discussion of the story was freer because I felt less constricted by the need to have a feminist approach (and ended up by having one).

Some good questions arose from my attempt to get the students to understand the story, rather than to have them "see" a particular approach. They were not far from, "What is the significance for blacks in that God is white?" or "What is the significance for people of God being male?" Chris, a student, crossed herself at the first question, and after the second asked, "How do you dare ask such questions?"

While the next discussion (on *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*) was better than I expected, I didn't feel it went anywhere. I was afraid to introduce a more structured format but I was not comfortable with one that was so open-ended.

In the third week, I began reading their journals. They should have had seven entries. I didn't know whether to count or what. I was more than a bit apprehensive.

Chris' was the first. She was 52, Catholic, a grandmother, a first year student. She expected the course to revolutionize her thinking. She raised questions about the effect on her marriage of raised consciousness. What did she need it for? She adored her husband, she wrote. Her daughter had had to get married. She said it was the first time she had ever admitted it to anyone else, and that her husband didn't even know it to this day even though their grandson was nine.

Lisa, also Catholic, was 20 years old. She had a 31-year old brother who had come out of the closet two years ago and a mother who had not yet accepted him and blamed herself. Her mother thought one was a woman only if one could still have a child; her mother no longer could have children and so thought of herself as no longer a woman.

Lisa wrote of an experience on her way home. A man had called out to her, "You got a beautiful ass and beautiful hair. If I had money, I'd buy you." She had recorded the incident without comment.

Donna, black, hair pulled straight back, very proper, had written only about the assigned reading, nothing personal. There were four entries instead of the required seven, obviously reworked and rewritten. Even so, I could not help but note the errors in technical English.

Patti was about 21 and had been in the two year school for three years. She had written about and verbalized her boredom. According to her, she had been a prostitute, a lesbian, had played the roles of submissive woman and man-hater and was now back to being a full human being. I could not help but think, no wonder she's bored, then admonished myself not to be flip. Patti wanted an unstructured class. She wanted me to deal with real people and situations rather than the regular education stuff. She thought the fight against racism was more important than the fight against sexism.

Carlos was Cuban and in the United States for eleven years. His journal had clippings and photographs. He had written a note informing me that he could not do a required number of entries a week. He wrote mostly on the need to free the oppressed, and that the struggle against oppression was first and that against sexism second.

Several of the students had limited journal entries. Among these were Marguerite, Puerto Rican, who commented on class discussions only; Ethel, a Jewish grandmother in her sixties, whose first semester this was; Ewart, a West Indian, who wrote that the emphasis on literature reminded him of ninth grade English. He couldn't and wouldn't read it. I had the distinct feeling he hated me. He had written, "Mothers are to be feared as much as loved."



LYNDA KOOLISH

We were well into the second month of the class and I had not expected the level of avoidance that existed when I tried to discuss *Her Sweet Jerome*. Was it the subject matter or the emotion that caused the tension? I sensed anxiety in the class. Was it mine or theirs? Was it the result of change taking place; was it resistance to change? I made note of some of the comments on the story:

Ethel: "A woman is always in competition with other women."

Patti: "Black women have to work harder than white women."

Chris: "Harder for a woman to grow old than for a man."

Shirley: "Black women need to assume male roles; that's the black woman's dilemma."

Gwen: "Nothing more dull than sitting around listening to other women."

By mid-October, I had told two students to drop the course, had warned three others about grades.

I continued to question the validity of my approach. I felt the students needed more structure, more information, more readings of a theoretical nature. They seemed ignorant of what I took to be realities (e.g., Chris' comment: Men go to prostitutes for deviant sex only). But I didn't know what to do. Even when I reprinted articles, they weren't read, and when they were, their meaning was lost. It seemed to me that too many students had not yet grappled with themselves as learners. Yet, there was some good give-and-take discussion. Also, some change was taking place but I didn't know what it was. More and more leadership was being assumed by the two grandmothers, Chris and Ethel. Patti, Carlos and Tony, the young activists, were becoming increasingly quiet.

The conference that had taken place when journals were returned became more personal and less private. Thursdays were becoming the day for informal discussion of topics not covered or not covered enough. Some students began to focus on the more personal.

Gwen came to see me on the last day of October. She cried and was upset. At times she resented her children; at times she didn't want her husband home. She seemed to be in a state of crisis, intensified by effects of Librium and Valium taken interchangeably, but evoked by a remark I had made in class about how long could we blame our mothers for what we were and what we did. When did we begin to take responsibility for our lives, for the fact that we did have choices. I recommended counseling.

Chris came in. She wanted to know if I was aware of the impact I was having on people. I told her

I had an impact only on those who were ready to be impacted upon. In the next breath, she mentioned the possibility of her dropping out, of her need to go to work and bring in money.

Ethel came by a number of times, anxious. How was she doing? Was her journal up to par? She kept reminding me that she was older than the other students and that it was therefore harder for her.

It was mid-semester and I tried to take stock.

When I had started to teach the course, I was concerned with whether it could work, i.e., could academic material combined with life experience produce a new kind of learning? At mid-point I was not sure.

The students who formed the core group (those who came regularly, participated in discussions, wrote in their journals) were learning academically in the sense that they did a great deal of reading, discussing and writing about material that is considered academic, e.g., literature by well-known authors. However, my aim was not traditional academic learning but a combining of traditional academic material with the students' own lives to produce a new kind of learning and to effect a change in the learner. (That was my aim even though I could not describe change in the learner, and had only the vaguest ideas about this new kind of learning. I knew it was something that could not be separated from the active involvement and participation of the learner and that it could not be compartmentalized into separate skills, areas or disciplines. It was a process; and so subjective as well as objective. It did not appear on demand or schedule. I visualized it as something like a moving sidewalk, where one could board at different places for varying time periods. The motivations were different for different people at different times. For the people in this course the motivations may have been the course topic. I knew that once the process had been entered, the sidewalk boarded, there would have to be the experience which made the change. But how could I know when this happened, if it could not be tied in a neat package of behavioral objectives, criterion reference, and test scores?

I decided I would have to rely on the journal as the vehicle for both the process and the change. The journal was forcing students to record observations and to deal with their reactions to various happenings. Students would come to pick up the journals, read my comments and then begin a discussion. I realized later that the journals might have proved even more effective as a link to other students if I had thought of a way to share some of the entries. Yet, although I wanted additional interchange among the students and some relief from the sole focus position as teacher, I was still hung up on the idea that to do so meant abrogating my responsibilities. What would happen if I were not responsible, if there was no control?



AMY LOU HARAKIS

What would happen if I were responsible - for upheaval, for radical change, for decisions made? I knew teaching was risky, risky not only for the learner but for the teacher. A teacher can get fired or be given the business by the administration - realistic, practical risks. A teacher can also get involved and make mistakes. There were times when my concern with helping others learn was restricted and constrained by the protective strategy I had learned: Don't be personal - it may be used against you. Don't get too involved - they'll want too much.

I realized that much of this was not a problem related to teaching only, that it was part of role and function of images in literature and in life, particularly in relation to women, and it was through teaching that I would have to work through the problem, that it was in teaching that I was more bound by shoulds and oughts, by fears of eliminating boundaries created by roles.

After the middle of November, I had little choice as to whether or not I was willing to be part of the learning process; to, in fact, use my life, for learning. I was fired.

When I first received my letter of non-reappointment, I was in a state of shock. The faculty knew that five people would not be reappointed. The thought had crossed my mind that I would be one of them: I had been involved in the fight against the Dean; but the course was very popular and there had been petitions circulating to add extra sections. My student evaluations were good, my observations were good, even the annual evaluation by the Dean for the year before was superior. So, when the letter came I was shocked. And I was angry. I somehow felt it was my fault; it would be perceived as my responsibility.

I worried about the students' reactions. What would they do? What would happen to the class? When it became clear that four of the five teachers not reappointed were women (two black, two white) out of a total of eight full time women faculty members, the class seemed even more directly involved.

It was this concern for the students that ultimately helped me. I took notes of my reactions so that I could share it with them. It was their concern for me that led them to warn me not to trust the male faculty members, to recount experiences and relate information about previous "firings" of women, about behavior of specific faculty members, of what I could expect from the administration (nothing), of what I could count on (nothing). It was I, on the other hand, who felt the need to put up a fight for *their* sake. I was distressed at their willingness to believe that women can't win, that "you can't fight City Hall", and that change could not come about by playing by rules set down by those in power. (They are right, of course).

It was their concern for the class and their own continued growth that made the class go on and that forced all of us to be more concerned for each other and for our continued growth and learning.

So we went on. Early in November, in preparation for the second half of the semester which was to focus on women in life, I decided to do a questionnaire on the students' knowledge of real women. The results were surprising. When the thirteen students present were asked to write the names of three living American women considered people of influence, there were 18 different women listed with Abzug, Chisholm and Jackie Kennedy leading. When the students were asked to name three Americans, male or female, considered persons of influence, there were 19 different responses with only one woman who got one vote, Steinem. I decided that my focus on women in real life was not only appropriate and justified but necessary. I would deliver a lecture on some relatively unknown, influential, non-traditional American women and begin assignments in *Growing Up Female* immediately.

It was at the time when the impact of *Shoulder to Shoulder*, a women's history, was beginning to make itself felt. This program, the focus on biography, the showing of movies such as "Six Become One" and "Women Get the Vote" led me to believe that we were finally on the right track. My non-reappointment became another important fragment of the raw material of the course.

Reports on real women were made and submitted. A take-home final exam was made up and completed. Some students elected independent studies relating to women for the next semester. All the students who participated in the work except for two, received an A; those two received B's. Some students dropped the course; some students dropped out of school; two students received incompletes. These are the quantitative results. What happened to the students?

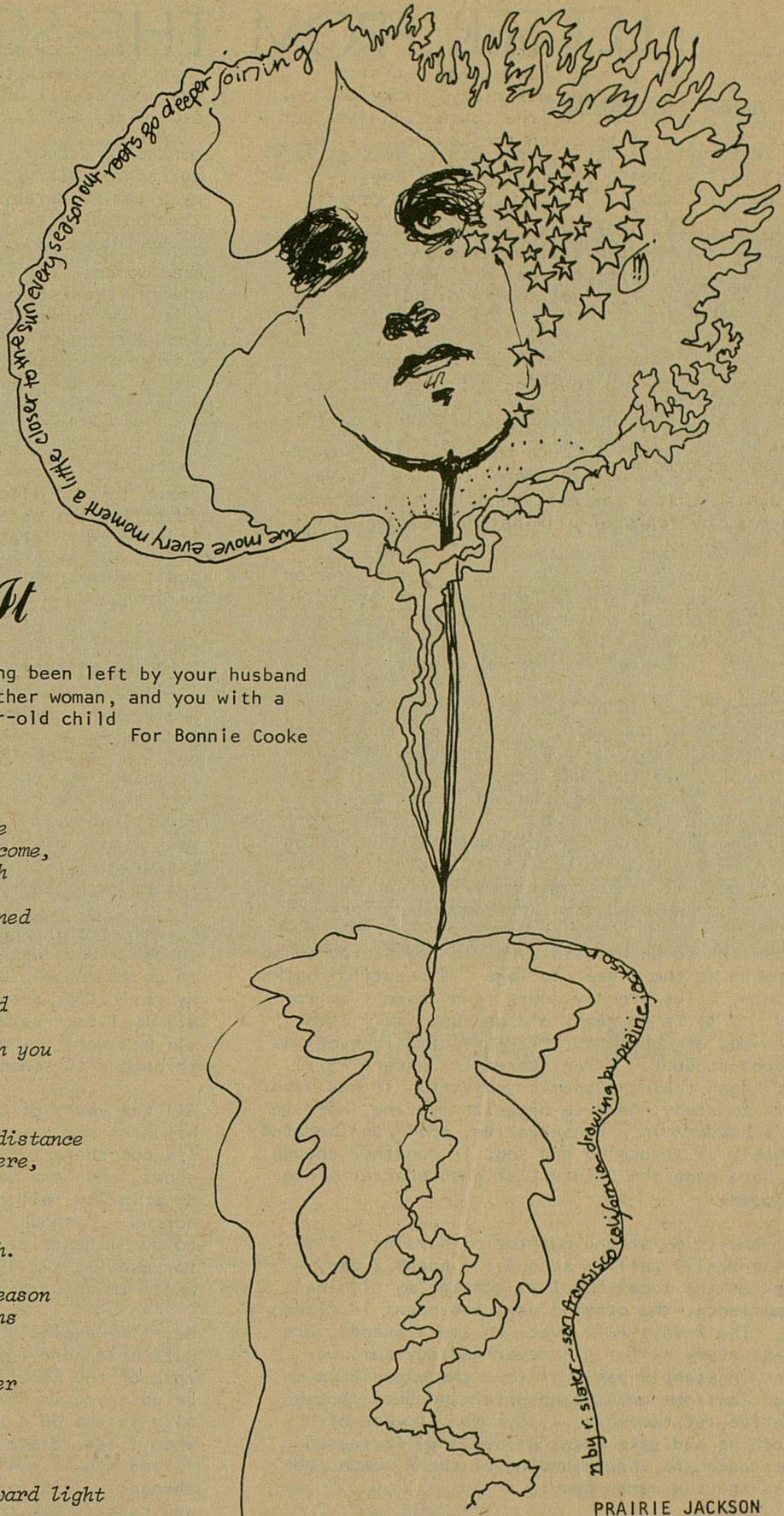
It is now a year later. Chris sends cards on holidays, calls to ask how things are, has left school and is working full time. Her relationship with her daughter, husband and grandson has never been better.

Lisa is a full time student in a four year traditional college and hates it. She plans to go to alternative school. She reread her journal after a year and called to say how much she's grown.

Tony works on Wall Street. He wanted me to know he was engaged in a campaign to keep his co-workers from using the word "broad" for women.

I am still teaching, including women's studies, to urban high school students.

A process is dependent and grows out of inter-related, often immeasurable, elements. A process is something that goes on.



## Making It

On having been left by your husband  
for another woman, and you with a  
two-year-old child  
For Bonnie Cooke

Exploring the space  
between who you were  
and who you will become,  
you feel doubt brush  
against you, sharp  
and quiet as a thorned  
bush.

Seeing the breach  
between what you had  
and what you want,  
you let anger leaden you  
like storm-drenched  
earth.

Still, knowing the distance  
between here and there,  
you take seed.  
You flower  
and bear the fruit  
of your new strength.

Hope is the fifth season  
and necessity hastens  
your change.  
For now, you  
are like the oleander  
and grow best  
alone.

You survive  
because you push toward light  
and make room.

RONDA SLATER

PRAIRIE JACKSON

# LETTER FROM THE SOUTH

BY JOAN FERNANDEZ

'Write an article for *Country Women*," Harriet said. Just tell us about your changes and how it is to be back in school. What's it like to reverse your life and change all your priorities - an unedited version will do."

We live in the South, my husband Richard and I - on an old farm, 90 acres, in an old house built 125 years ago. Mid-Georgia, they call it. A strange place for us - a couple of older beatniks, hippies, consciousness-raised people - what would we be called today? I don't know. But we came here 4 years ago, Richard a craftsman and me (Joan) a weaver, saleswoman, wife, friend and feminist.

For the past 12 years, we had made and sold jewelry at craft fairs, and ran a shop one summer in Colorado and another for a couple of years in Griffin, Georgia. We left our home on the Northern California Coast 4 years ago following the death of our daughter - who, seeking peace, I believe, took her own life at age 22 - hard for those left behind to recover.

In December of 1976, I was finally and harshly faced with my own self. I had experienced many years of therapy, a superb experience of consciousness raising, had talked of finding my own economic independence, and all the verbal garbage you can imagine. But I hadn't really done anything yet - lots of talk and not much action. The time had come to act. Little did I realize the impact it would have on my life and on the life of my husband, best friend and partner.

I applied to an Associate Degree Registered Nurse program at the 2 year college, 14 beautiful back-country miles from my door. And there I am today. I'll be 46 years old on June 1st. I've been out of school for 27 years, and I never was a good student. I registered in January 1977 and began taking academic subjects. It was hard. Hard to study, hard to organize my time, hard to be a *student* in a conservative, small, unliberated school. I struggled and kept it together enough to have made the Dean's List each quarter since I began.

I'm now in my second quarter of Nursing. I'm doing really well in school - I spend 2 days a week at the local hospital getting my clinical experience; the other 3 days are spent in classes. The 2 days left over, on the weekends, are spent studying for the never-ending exams we must constantly pass. I love the experience - the classroom and the hospital and even though I gripe and complain, I love the process of learning and take great pride in my increased knowledge and understanding of the disease process and the human body.

I kept a pretty low profile for the first 10

months in school, but I've blown it now. I've turned my instructors on to my vegetarianism, my vitamin therapy (zinc clears up acne better than antibiotics 90% of the time, yogurt inserted vaginally daily prophylactically while taking antibiotics will keep you from getting a yeast infection, lecithin rubbed on burns and infections heals them even better and faster than Vitamin E, etc., etc., etc.) and *Prevention Magazine*. (They are not ready for *Country Women*.) I have demanded that they stop referring to me as a *girl*, I stand up in class, ask questions, disagree, talk about women's rights, nurses as practitioners and not as doctors' servants, comment on the dangers of medications and procedures and the egotistical behavior of doctors. I hope I won't get thrown out! My classmates and instructors talk of my being different and it fascinates them even though they don't always understand. People here can't understand how I can love being alone.

My head is filled with *now* but I spend some time planning my future. Medical school excites me. I always wanted to be a doctor but *girls* weren't you know... Midwifery seemed right in the beginning but I'm so taken with both "Geriatric Nursing" and "Holistic Medicine" that I constantly change my fantasy. I really want to write a book about "patients' rights" and even have an old friend willing and ready to work on it with me. I have always been a *healer* of sorts, been prescribing without a license (vitamins, no sugar, herb tea, yoga) for over 15 years anyway.

In all of this there have been some hard changes though - one must also look at those. In order to go to school, we sold our land - our security. My desire for security has been a big hang-up all my life - somehow dollars in the bank meant all was well - what a joke! By the time I'm through with school, it'll be gone.

All the years of our marriage, Richard's trip has been *our* trip and now, since January 1977, I'm not there to sell the jewelry, set up the shows, and be a partner in our ongoing business. My priority, all of a sudden, has become *me* and not us. A shock. A shock to me and to him and to our lifestyle. Richard is in California now for awhile. At 49, he has to figure out what he wants to do with his life.

Me, I'm keeping busy with the woodstove as it gets cold here in the winter - 14, 16, 18 degrees most of the mornings when I get up at 6 AM to be bright-eyed in class at 8. This area is culturally in the 50's and I have only a few women to whom I can relate openly but they keep me sane. I find myself pulling and pushing women into changes. It's hard work and I've only begun to see results but there are some who have a new awareness.

I go through this new experience, viewing myself each day as a mature woman, just passed through a mid-life crisis and out the other side. I'm working on being self-sufficient, self-sustaining, economically independent, doing a service in a profession where women dominate, and hoping to make positive changes in that profession.

I have no exam this Monday. First time in a while I can play. I learned to sail last summer and I love it. My friends will be sailing this weekend so I'll go along. Of course, my Microbiology text will go with me. There are so many things I want to do, when I grow up. I hope I'll have time to do at least some of them.



LIBBY HOPKINS

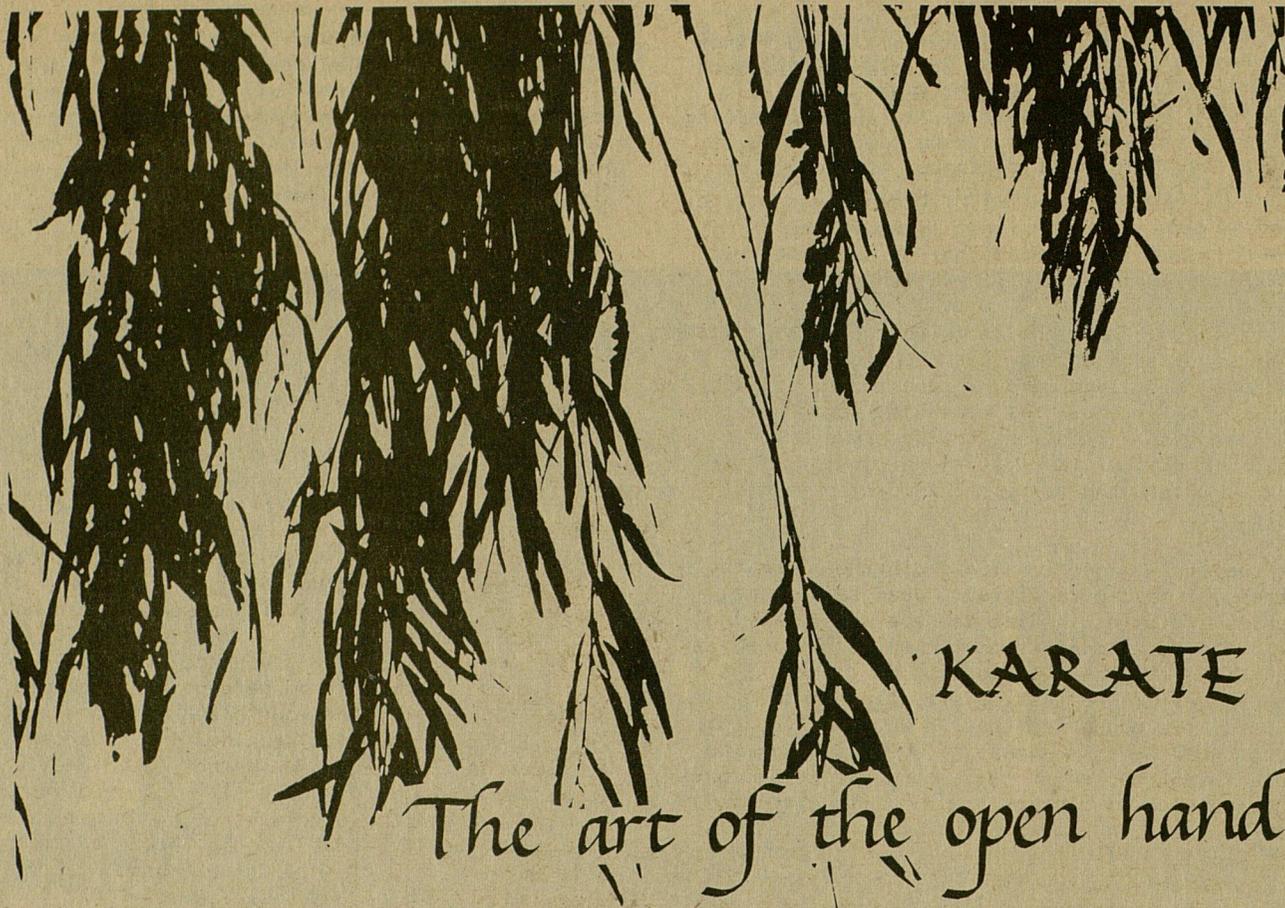
*russet leaves scatter  
in a burst of wind  
their motions absurd  
as those of headless chickens--  
frantic lies that they still live;  
whirling near my eyes,  
they stop me splitting wood;  
cold sweeps my bones, I feel  
a vast migration from my marrow,  
a futility at this task  
of piling up fuel,*

*but then  
the gust collapses, I know these  
moments of desperation are,  
after all, only seasonal, and,  
shaking off the chill, I grip  
the ax-handle, returning to  
the rhythm of the blade,*

## *Splitting Wood*

*the deliberate bites of the head  
deep into the meat of the wood,  
my own sinews relaxing  
with the final crack of each log;  
this work is good, it warms  
small wings caged in my ribs,  
safe from winter's talons.*

MARGARET ANDREWS



## KARATE

# The art of the open hand

LYNNE DELANO

Five years ago, having been moved by various events to recognize the need for self-defense, and in order to find a way to cope with my prevailing fear of man the attacker, I began training in martial arts. I have learned a system of self-defense and in some measure have learned to live with my fear. In addition, I find myself engrossed in what is a lifelong passion, an understanding of what it means to work towards inner peace by daily work at perfection of physical technique. This is, essentially, a bonus. One can study a martial art and just get the martial out of it; ah, but the art, the art is the "do!", the way of living which will make you the superior in any confrontation. The experiences of becoming a martial artist must relate to many other learning experiences, especially those in which women are attempting to get knowledge which has been reserved by men forever.

The first six months to a year of training are both the most difficult and the most exhilarating. For every hundred students who begin training, two make it to black belt. For me, the first year was frequently agonizing: I was 28, had never done any sport or athletics and was not only out of shape but had never been in. Classes were so rigorous that there were nights when it finished that I would be lying on the floor waiting until I could breathe again so

**BY BETTY BRAVER**  
that I could get dressed. At the same time, I was learning so much so quickly; it was all new and exciting to me. Not only was I learning that I could use my body, but I was learning to use it in meaningful ways that would ultimately give me weapons. This was also the time of consciousness-raising groups and beginning to feel the power of women and support systems.

For many women the most difficult part of training is walking into the male domain of the dojo (karate school), wondering if you can keep up with them, if you can do a push-up, if you will be machoed into doing what you are not comfortable doing, if they will hurt you. I don't know if I could have continued training if I had not begun with a friend, Jean, and had her support and enthusiasm to feed into and mirror my own. Especially important were the nights when I really didn't want to go to class but had to go for her. I didn't say that though and she didn't tell me that she was really going for me...it became a pattern. Together we brought other women to the dojo and created a comfortable space for ourselves to train. My first independent karate act of will was to honor my commitment and keep going after Jean moved away. It was real hard.

It was not long, a matter of months, until the effects of karate practice began to show in

other parts of my life. I found myself calmer, with a growing sense of being able to do things which had always seemed impossible. I had been immobilized all of my life with a fat little girl self-image and had always stayed on the sidelines of physical activity. When I went for a walk I was afraid to go alone; climbing on hills, I knew I would fall. Gradually, as I got stronger and began to trust my body, seeing myself as capable, I became active and steadier. I stopped being afraid of everything.

In this first year the learning curve is at its rapidest upward movement as technique after technique is added to your repertoire. Still, you are a white belt, a beginner, safe from expectation of perfection, not to say even being good. This year is exciting, a constant high, taking in all the newness and working yourself hard.

At the first promotion I had diarrhea from the stress, I was so terrified. Jean said to me, people are dying in Viet Nam and we are having diarrhea over a karate test - this statement has calmed me through every promotion since. One of the values of the testing situation is the stress. We recognize that if we cannot do our techniques in this situation, we will never be able to do them on the street. Testing promotes our training in concentration; it is a meditation. I have also learned that Karate Test is not TEST in the western sense; it is not designed to catch you, show you up, see if you will fail. The instructor does not suggest that you test until she believes that you are ready - after all, your performance reflects her teaching. You and the instructor are on the same side and a test is a time for learning, teaching, and promotion.

After a year or so, depending on the amount of time you have put in, you become a green belt. This is the first serious promotion in most schools and for me was very important. It was a symbol that I could do this, visible recognition of the success of not having quit. After some months green belt becomes a very hard time, a plateau where there is very little new material being offered, you have essentially seen all the basics and now have to work on them. At this point you need encouragement from your instructor to keep working and to begin looking at the process of perfecting a single technique as a lifetime event.

Green belt is difficult but it is also safe. You are levels away from black belt (which looks like perfection but is in reality so far from it) and you clearly still have much to learn. This was a real hard time for me because I got kicked out of the dojo over an incident which started over money and became one of power: when my teacher told me to leave he said, "I'm not going to teach *you women* anymore". The women of the school were not organized and did not support me which was very painful. When Barbara did go to him he just told her she could leave too - which is, of course, why we put up with so much shit from these guys - they have the

knowledge, they are few and far between, especially in rural areas, and to cut ourselves off from them means not getting the knowledge.

This is difficult to understand for anyone who has not made this kind of commitment. I have told women about things that have happened in the dojos where I've trained and they can't understand why I haven't left. I can't. No one else can teach what I need to learn and this is why I and other women have chosen to take so much. I found another teacher, earned another green belt (which only helped me get my basics down better, in the end) and kept on.

Brown belt is the end of safety zones, coming after a surge of learning in the upper green belt ranks (in my system there are three levels of green belt and two of purple belt before the brown belt). Testing for brown belt in our school is the same if not more rigorous than for black belt. You must demonstrate that you know all the basics in a grueling hour and a half of individual performance (which also means an hour and a half of endurance). After that you spar everyone in the dojo. If you are ever not going to pass it is here. From here on what you are doing is preparing for your black belt and that is it. You are perfecting, learning advanced application of previously learned technique, and beginning to have responsibility for teaching. I loved being a brown belt. For the first time I began to believe that I could become a black belt and I was spurred to intense practice of details. I also began to tell myself that I didn't care if I never became a black belt, that this was really it. Always preparing to take a fall. It was a lie.

It is approximately a year until the black belt test. My system gives the rank of Semi-Shodan first, student black belt, which gives you about six months to grow into your new rank. It is very humbling to become a black belt. Before the test you are sure that you're not ready, still thinking of it in terms of being perfect and not as one more step in the process. At the same time, after four years of work, you want it and it is the logical next move. When you wear a black belt everyone assumes that what you do is right and it's hard to live up to. There are ten ranks of black belt; one of my instructors used to say that until black belt you are an embryo, growing and developing, being nurtured. At black belt you are hatched, weak and on shaky legs, ready to learn to get around on your own. This is a long way from the American point of view where everyone who starts says, how long 'till I'll be a black belt, as if it were the last step instead of the first.

There is criticism that karate is very violent. In fact, the true art of karate is totally non-violent. In its perfection, when one has achieved mastery, the practitioner is so in tune with the opponent that she can anticipate every move and the first blow is never executed. We are taught to do everything possible to avoid a fight, even losing face or honor, because to engage in a fight is to be totally committed.

That is, when you fight you must be prepared to fight to the death. This sounds brutal. What it is saying is that it is only worth fighting when your life is actually in danger. The lovely paradox of karate is that in order to achieve the art of nonfighting you must master the art of fighting. Throughout the work of perfecting the physical art, the mind and spirit are constantly growing. We begin each class with a period of meditation designed to clear the mind of all except karate; the ultimate goal of practice is to develop total concentration and objectivity.

Nobody told me any of this neat stuff, they just told me to get up and spar - against other *people*, mostly men. I was then - and frequently still am - afraid of sparring. Learning to fight is so difficult for women. The permission to fight, grapple, hurt another has never been given to us, we are still being told that if we are assaulted we should not resist and make him angry enough to *really* hurt us. I learned to fight against women in class and not be afraid - I could trust them not to hurt me. I am now able to face men who are not too big and see an opponent whom I can evaluate in terms of skill. But when I see a big man in front of me I see an enemy and become not a fighter but a defender. This is another problem women have with sparring: we are so conditioned to fear men that we can't see them as equal opponents but only as enemies. We know we can defend against the attacker but know equally well that we can't fight him. Frequently this is valid. When the attacker is ten inches taller and a hundred pounds heavier, it is not a fair fight.

I have had one serious fight since I've been in karate, with a black belt man who took my request to spar as a challenge. He beat the shit out of me, methodically and coldly. I was machoed right into it and continued to get up and face him each time I was kicked into a wall or thrown to the floor. At the time I was angry, hurt, lost confidence. (Understand, this was not a self-defense situation, this was fighting with technique - I couldn't poke his eyes out or stomp his instep. I was never shaken in believing that I could defeat someone with self-defense technique - this was a "fair fight"). Now I remember this and take a remarkable lesson: a big, skillful man hit me as hard as he could and I got up again. I did not die from being hurt, nothing broke, I had the spirit to keep going. This is one of the important things women have to learn, to take pain and keep going. Sue Katz encourages her students to develop a look of total impassivity so that if you receive the opponent's hardest blow and don't show pain you have taken away the psychological advantage. What do you do when you have done your best and see no effect? In sparring, we are given the opportunity to overcome pain and concentrate on what is happening. I am not suggesting that we should not quit when seriously injured (a rare event) but that we get in touch with our real sources of strength. All of us assume that in times of trouble our adrenalin will provide that extra thing to keep going. In karate we learn how to use that without giving in to the fear.

The first night that Jean and I ever went to class I didn't know if I would live through it. At the end the students lay down in a line and we looked questioningly at the instructor. "Oh, girls don't have to do this", he said. We ran and lay down only to find that all of these men were going to run on our bellies while we yelled - this was to make us tough and our abdomens strong. It has been hard not to take womens' privilege. With each of my instructors I have felt myself in a fight for equal training. To have taken just what was offered would have meant to take less; this is a man's art and they guard it jealously. They resent women in it even if they won't say so. They put us down in a hundred small ways and are shocked when confronted with that. They all think they are the greatest libertarians because they "let" us train in their schools. If we are better than they are they use their strength and muscle to let us know we really aren't; they put less emphasis on the skills we are better at. In fact, karate was designed for small bodies and women are good at it. There is nothing more threatening to a man than a woman who is trained to fight for she is challenging the base of power. Ultimately it is physical power which allows men to oppress women; take that away and they must find another way to relate.

I hate and am tired of being symbolic. If I make a mistake, women can't do karate; if I do something well, I am exceptional. I am noticed when there, obvious when absent. This may be the fate of all women who succeed in men's arts but I feel that my growth and process of development is invalidated by making me a symbol.

Given the overt sexism and discrimination I have experienced in karate I have dreamed over and over of a women school, a safe harbor. Yet at this point it no longer seems important to me, although I would like to have a woman teacher. Ideally, I would like to see women teaching men and women together. I value that I have so often had to face men - it is men I fear, not women. There is a realism to the practice that I feel missing in the women's schools I have visited. Also, realistically, there are few women with the knowledge now.

In karate one has multiple learning opportunities. As you learn to use your body you are involved in learning defensive tools, in developing concentration, in discovering inner sources of power (chi). Self-discipline grows and the peacefulness of having a lifetime task colors the rest of your life. I have never known anyone who did not feel better about themselves while practicing karate. It is also great fun; there is much excitement in connecting with other women through this practice and a small but strong network of women martial artists is growing in this country. The most significant lesson I have learned in martial arts training is that I do not know what my limits are, physically or spiritually and through training I am constantly being pushed to discover how much further I can go.

# WOMAN

by Dianne Macdonald

Wings on fire  
awaiting transformation

She gathers her power

To be reborn  
of ancient dust

It's quiet now  
All noises gone  
Soothed by a gentle silence  
I retrace my steps  
to an inner chamber

Beginning to hear  
a distant rhythm

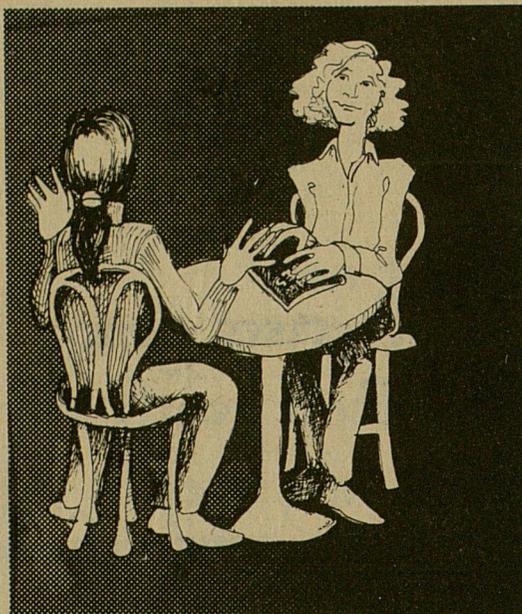
You don't know me  
I come from the sea  
A mythical beast  
Concealing my fire

You hide in dead places  
Clutch at my skin  
I shed it like rain  
And leave it for you

You thought I'd stay  
knowing my torture  
I thought I knew you

# So you want to publish...

BY SHARYN VENIT



BARB BROWN

"Listen to me. I've been struggling in this business for five years. I know what you're getting into." She smiles and turns to answer a question posed by one of the women who works with her distributing newspapers and magazines in New York (a fully women-owned/operated business). "Let me share my knowledge with you."

I am dumbfounded by her generosity; I know her time is precious - she works constantly, either in her distribution business or as co-publisher of *Majority Report*, the women's newspaper for New York. We've just met. "How did you recognize me?" she asked when I found her, dressing her salad at the Women's Coffeehouse.

She had described herself perfectly over the phone. Her dark hair was tied back from her face, as suits the task of leaning over stacks of periodicals and sorting them for distribution. Her body's strength relaxes in the chair now after a day of demanding activity.

Behind the glare of glasses her eyes show none of the strain one might expect after two of her three trucks broke down earlier that afternoon. She had to leave an important discussion about finances, and change the time of our meeting, in order to drive to New Jersey for the truck parts.

I hadn't come looking for it, but I needed all

the advice I could get. I'm a technical writer with a master's degree in economics and no spare skills to speak of. Suddenly I'd gotten a crazy idea that I could do anything I wanted to do (as we each can), so I quit working for the oil companies and began applying myself to teaching general science to the youth of America.

Initially the work suited me perfectly: researching and writing - the only skills school ever taught me. Starting with a relevant topic which had readily available examples in everyone's daily environment, I spent the first two months reading about rocks.

How immediate, I thought, to start with garden rocks and gravel and trace the history of technology from pyramids to skyscrapers. After two months I became discouraged that I was still unable to identify most of the rocks in my neighborhood without going back to the field guides.

Next I landed on the rather esoteric topic of magnetism, and before I finally admitted that most people couldn't care less about it, I was totally committed to a 36-page comic book on the subject. I still think that magnetism is the single most important key to our new (future) technology, so I'm not really apologizing. (I know I apologize too much at times, and I'm sorry).

Now I find myself plunged into the politics of publishing and distributing. Distribution, I am finding out, is the key to success as a continuing periodical. Wide distribution means that a publisher can ask higher rates for advertising and sell at a lower cover price.

For my own low-budget series, I need to circulate 400,000 to keep the price at 50¢ per copy and still not need advertising. As publisher I might get 40% of the cover price for each issue sold.

With circulation figures closer to the norm for underground comics - one print run of 20,000 - I'll need a \$1 cover price, which most of my target audience (urban adolescent comic fans) would not afford.

Why is underground distribution so low? Even if an underground were shown to have wide popular appeal, most small publishers can't afford to deal with large national distributors who des-

troy unsold copies rather than return them, and pay only for the number sold - as reported by the distributor.

The small publisher is left with the prospect of slowly building distribution by personally contacting local distributors and retail stores. Distribution is usually confined to the publisher's local area and a few major cities.

In the process of looking for outlets for these science teachings, I am meeting some wonderful women, starting with the great cartoonists who agreed to work with me, and including a growing network of experienced women teaching each other the skills which previously only male experiences taught. Now Joanne Steele, a pioneer in women's publishing history, is offering me the hard-formed precious jewels of her knowledge.

I fidget with my right hand and carefully examine the fingernails to avoid meeting her eyes. I still retain the old habit of avoiding eye contact, as many women do, though for months I've been trying to change it. The eyes convey an important part of the communicated message. Joanne's eyes exude warmth and reassurance, even when her words are warnings.

"Have you been to the Foundation Library, here in New York? Go and ask about grants available for science, junior high schools, innovative educational projects.

"What about journals for librarians? Do you know that there is a state library convention somewhere in the United States at least once a month? You could get a booth to carry your magazine. Don't get a booth yourself - it's too expensive.

"Have you talked to any school systems yet? You might get one to agree to try it in all their science classes. Let's see what you've done so far."

I offer the brown photo album which I've been holding on my lap. Her hands still showing traces of carbon after handling newsprint all evening, she drags them over her napkin and reverently clears a space on the table before her. "Don't look so frightened," she might have said as I handed her the book.

I start to mumble a few apologies - this is just a rough draft, the words have to be changed here, this page I did myself using press-type and it looks awful - but I manage to quiet myself and let her see for herself.

Unfolding before her are 36 pages of terrific illustrations for the proposed educational comic book, presenting general science in a way which is both entertaining and involving. I've been working on the project for six months, and tak-

ing things a bit too seriously. I haven't really laughed about it since October. Now I sit studying her face and the way she turns the page, nervously awaiting her reaction.

Oh god, I like her incredibly. She's such a strong woman with high energy and real accomplishments to prove it. I'm beginning to see that a large part of the drive to "achieve" is the desire to please admired peers. I want to succeed with the comic as a way of rewarding Joanne and the other women who are doing so much to help me.

Am I merely starstruck? Was she ever starstruck? Who were her role models when she started moving into the world as a woman-identified initiator? Can she see herself historically? Is she reified by those who admire her? Does she like science?

Does she see how commercial the comic can be? I know nobody seems interested in general science any more, but this is *entertainment*. We've mixed sixteen pages of science education with sixteen pages of science fiction. Don't you think the kids will love it? Look at the cover - sheer drama! Very compelling. Even the science looks like fiction - no one will escape without learning something.

"It's hard for the first issue of any periodical," she smiles. "They usually say that if you sell 30% of what you put out you're doing well. I don't want to sound discouraging, but you should know what to expect so you won't be disappointed."

Now I assure her that I really don't expect much, and that anything she can do will be more than I expected. I catch myself starting to nibble my longest fingernail, and press my hand around my coffee cup. I want to ask her out to dinner, but she just finished eating.

As she speaks I sit with my eyes now glued to hers, soaking up information and feeling exhilarated by the process of growth I feel within me. I have learned more from Joanne in two hours than I could have learned in weeks of research "about" distribution practices or a semester class on publishing. (Is there such a class? There should be!)

"Look, I'll take 1,000 copies. More than that I can't do - and I'll probably sell only 300. I'll pay for what I sell and return the unsold copies, whatever their condition after a week or two on the stands."

"And by the way, I like what you're doing. I think you're doing a very good thing."

It is through helping each other that we are making our revolution in all parts of our system.

# The Joyous

*In the unknown town  
extinguished by the night  
the children traded us  
hours beyond their knowledge  
for song.*

*The child inside me  
heard the song  
and moved.*

*At the crossroads,  
hair blown by winds of change  
you speak to friends today,  
part, and walking  
where once I carried you,  
sing to yourself.*

LISELOTTE ERLANGER

# Youngest Daughter

*Dressed in outworn childhoods  
she leads a hearsay dog  
and swims  
in icy lakes  
with pictured summer's children  
forever.*

*Sisters offer discarded friends  
and sorrows  
chalked against their walls of weeping  
sweetening all  
with penny candy.*

*Tilting the prism  
of other pasts  
she catches  
jade springs  
the apple-red of falls,  
and drops it  
to run  
into the meadow  
of her life.*

LISELOTTE ERLANGER



BETSY GALT

## Aphorisms

BY CYNTHIA ORR

"Life is so hard because it gives us the test first, and then the lesson."

--Anonymous

We must respect what we know. Judy Chicago did a slide presentation which evoked tears and rage from many of the women who saw it. The images reminded them of work they had made and *rejected* because male teachers sneered at it.

Mastery of a specialized vocabulary is often confused with real understanding and ability.

Boldness is one of the finest attributes of a learner. After four years of college followed by library work, I started diamond cutting school. I was on unfamiliar ground, overly cautious, and all of my cutting was timid and tentative. I taxed the master diamond cutter to exasperation when he shouted: "Don't tickle the damn thing, cut it!" Best advice I ever received.

Western male culture has placed so much emphasis on logic, our psychic and intuitive powers have been neglected. When we develop these powers, we are called witches.

When Judy Chicago taught young women art students she *demand*ed they give *everything* they had. This is a luxury many of us do not know. Without rigorous expectations, we do not learn our capabilities.

Just as we have much to learn, we have much to unlearn. In the process of undoing much of what we have been taught, we must acknowledge that the process of unlearning is long, hard, and often frustrating.

Learning is a process and we must respect it. William James, talking about the time lag in learning, said we learn to ice skate in summer and we learn to swim in winter. We must trust that the process is going on, even though we are not aware of it.

We can learn from our collective and our individual past. The tactics and lives of the suffragists can teach us just as our own mistakes can teach us. Unless we analyze and understand a mistake, chances are excellent that we will repeat it.

"Until women throw off reverence for authority, they will not develop."

- Maria Mitchell (1818-89)

# FIDDLE LEAF

Now that I have lived in a rural area for a year, it is becoming more natural for me to connect my psychic growth with the fertile imagery of plant life - with the earth rhythms of digging the soil, planting the seeds, weeding, watering and fertilizing, and finally harvesting. After a long time of being out of touch with this reality, I found the path back to it through an image that I adapted from the plant world.

A fantasy about a plant began to tell itself to me about a year and a half ago, while I was in the process of deciding to quit my job and take up the insecure life. It was a plant with a double reality: on one side, it was a fiddle leaf fig, an easy-to-please, carefree plant with large upright leaves; on the other, it was an angel wing begonia, a plant with drooping leaves that needed filtered light and acid. It was only recently that I realized that this plant served as totem for me. The word totem comes from *ototeman*, a word from the Algonkian tribe which originally meant "her/his sister/brother kin". The connection between the totem and the individual or the clan is both mystical and reciprocal. The individual protects the totem wherever s/he finds it, and in return, expects protection and guidance from the totem.

I named the plant Fiddle Leaf Fig, gave it female gender and began to write her story:

*Sometimes I would get restless being rooted in the ground, and would sit there wiggling my roots, trying to find a more comfortable place to settle. One day the ground must have been especially moist. I was feeling bored and moved my roots around more strongly than usual. Suddenly I found myself lying flat on the ground, with my roots completely out of terra firma. I felt a tingling in the root hairs that were now lying fully exposed. I wondered if I could be accused of indecent exposure. A passing breeze tickled what I think of as my feet: two sturdy fibers at the end of my roots shaped something like a human foot.*

*I became aware of a lifting motion throughout my central stalk and found myself tilting slightly to the angel wing side and slowly, slowly felt the pull of gravity drain from me. I had never felt heavy before, but at that moment I experienced fleetingly the full heaviness of being bound to the earth. As I left its density and rose into the air, each leaf, each root, each root tendril fitted itself effortlessly into the wind, and I began my flight.*



# LEAF FIG

BY CAMILLE PRONGER



The image of a plant leaving the earth and riding air currents was initially a strong, even shocking, one to me. But I seemed to need a powerful image to help me make big changes in my life, and from inside me, one appeared. The paradox lies in the fact that though the plant was fragile, she could survive profound experiences.

I kept writing this story before, during and after I quit my job, and as allegory it helped to give me courage for the unknown. If a fragile plant could survive a flight through an element foreign to itself, endure having one of her leaves chewed by a calf, fly with ducks, meet and accept such a strange creature as an insect-eating plant, then maybe I could give up job security, move from an urban environment to a semi-rural one, travel to a foreign country, re-discover myself.

Sometimes Fiddle Leaf's experiences preceded mine: sometimes they were reflections of things I had already gone through. Initially she was passive. As I became more active in determining the direction of my life, so did she. Her fearlessness, in no way echoed by me, opened her up to the new in a way that was far beyond what I was able to do at that time. In some psychically underground way, she made it possible for me to later take steps that broadened my vision of myself and my image of what I could do. She had insight about herself and was able, at times, to see the humor in her predicament or in her own actions. This quality was healing for me. My airborne plant served for me a function similar to a child's invisible playmate: she companioned me through a difficult learning period, down a path whose end could not be seen.

As a result of this journey with Fiddle Leaf, I now realize that change and growth are part of a learning process, which I can foster through actively preparing the soil (looking at old habits and attitudes and becoming more open to change), finding seeds to plant (noticing where my attention goes, the flash of interest or excitement), weeding (eliminating unrelated activities), fertilizing (being around people developed in areas that interest me, reading books, listening to music, looking at art), and watering (doing whatever makes my inner soil soft and receptive at any given time).

Something that Rilke said in his book, *Letters to a Young Poet*, seems to me to relate to our growing cycle: "It is necessary - and toward this our development will move gradually - that nothing strange should befall us, but only that which has long belonged to us." My plant totem was the spirit guide who led the way into that strange, yet at some level already known, country, both inside and outside, that I needed to explore, so that in growing I could become more of what I already was.

CARMEN GOODYEAR

# CHANGING FOCUS

BY SUNLIGHT

I'm sitting on a sandy shelf on a cliff over the Pacific Ocean, watching the sparkles of the sun reflected in every ripple the wind makes on the water. I have come back to her after 30 years away, when (in the language of the fairy tales I used to read with such conviction) I went out into the world to seek my fortune. I didn't realize then that the adventures were only supposed to be for men, nor to what extent that world was made by and for men, according to their definitions and beliefs and what they consider to be their needs. I know it now, so I've come back not only to the sun and the sky and the earth, but also to my sisters and myself. These will be my teachers from now on.

The pilgrimage in that foreign land really began, I suppose, when I went to kindergarten. All the years in school were part of it - learning to read in their textbooks, the white-middle-class-male mythology, learning to live by their values, in their institutions - which were the only ones around. My fantasies got shaped by them. I read about Pasteur and Koch, Madame Curie and Florence Nightingale. I would become a doctor or a scientist when I grew up. And when I did grow up (or first thought that I had), I started out along those paths toward nursing, then medicine, and finally, biology. That was supposed to have to do with living things. As a child, I had loved watching armored pill-bugs (like tiny armadillos) roll up and unroll to walk away on many legs, watching dragonflies emerge from the chrysalis, unfold their wings and fly, watching seeds give rise to green growing shoots, and morning glories open in the sun.

But experimental science took me away from this. I lived in cities, where the universities and research institutes are and where all living things have to struggle to survive. Most successful were the cockroaches, pigeons, and rats in the inner cities, with moss sometimes growing in the sidewalk cracks.

In the laboratories, I moved to ever smaller entities - cell physiology and later, molecular biology where life is seen as replicating strands of DNA. I really got into it. For a long time, I enjoyed designing experiments and doing them, taking the readings, counting the colonies, plotting the results and drawing the curves; feeling the joy when something worked the way we had hypothesized or knowing the excitement of discovery. It was a pleasure to watch the progress in this expanding new field, reading and hearing about ingenious experiments and clever theories, seeing questions answered. However, during those years, experimental biology was using increasingly complex instruments to make increasingly refined measurements. The very nature of research changed and oftentimes got bogged down in machinery and methodology. Also, it was shocking and sad to see the com-

petiveness of most scientists as the institutions and government grants which supported them measured the volume of their output more often than the quality. Indeed, these places of learning reflected all the values of the larger patriarchal culture: orthodoxy, authority, faddism, as well as production and technology.

I was changing too. I quit my job for two years and discovered lesbian feminism as a new way of being and as a new culture being born. Academic research had seemed like an underpaid profession - working for love and a certain amount of freedom instead of money. Now I was working for love closer to my life, total freedom and no money at all. I found that I could live very simply on very little and that what was good for me was also good for the earth - consuming less and less. Then I moved to the country for awhile and another world opened up. Everything was there. It didn't need to be examined and measured and explained. It just was. Is. It knows itself and all of the interrelationships - the earth and all of the creatures of the earth, the sky and all that it holds. I felt a part of it. The wildflowers in the meadows and the trees in the woods were my sisters, so were the moon and the stars at night. In science, men stand outside nature and look at it objectively - they pride themselves on that. In the life I was discovering, I - *woman* - was in it, of it. There can be no separation. Mind and spirit are one - with each other and with all that surrounds us.

Scientists take a tiny wedge of the universe and look exclusively at that. If it doesn't follow man's one-dimensional path of logic, it isn't valid. If it doesn't fit into the physical laws they've formulated, it isn't considered real by them. Suddenly I clearly saw the limitations of science. I don't want to be limited. I don't need laws to proscribe my experience - it has no limits if I refuse to impose them.

When I had realized this, it was hard to go back to New York City and research - although I did for a couple more years until I could find a way out. Then I ever more keenly felt all the waste of resources in that high technology research and the damage to the environment as toxic chemicals washed down the sinks and into the river, or poisonous gases go out into the city air, as radioactive wastes are being buried in the earth. I saw sincere, good people there using their skills and long-acquired knowledge, often for the sake of humanity, as they saw it. But my reality had begun to move to someplace else and what they were doing no longer seemed to me worth doing. I was working in a medical school lab then and felt that if I got sick I wouldn't want a part of their discoveries. I wouldn't want their drugs or machines or hospital beds. I would want to be in a healing

circle, in the arms of my sisters and mother - earth. And whenever I die, it will be because I'm ready to, because this phase of the cycle is completed for me and it's time to go on to whatever will be next.

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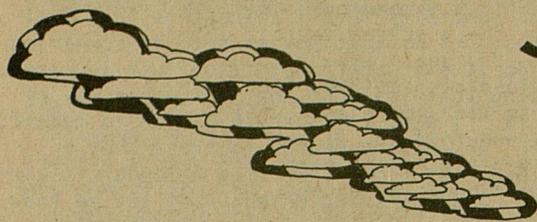
The period back in that tightly framed world gave me the time I needed to allow my beliefs to catch up with what I'd come to understand, to become entirely ready to move, and to let the sense that everything would be all right sweep over me and give me the courage to go. And then it was quite simple. The way I found to get out was just to cut my bonds and leave. I walked away from the city and all it held for me: loving friends (and knowing their love would come with me even though they did not), and security in the guise of a good job and a comfortable low-rent apartment. I walked away from science, to follow my longing back to the country again, believing that it would teach me what I need to know.

It's difficult, though, to let go of some of the ways I've worked and thought for such a long, long time. Almost automatically, I do experiments and controls. Now I think this is a limitation too. If my instinct says to do something then to do it six other ways also, just in case, is doubting that instinct and is another way of killing it. I want to learn to listen to myself, to nature, and having heard, to trust what I hear. Then next time it will be a louder, clearer voice. The beans and onions will let me know if they don't want to be planted side by side, as soon as I will tune into their thoughts.

So, learning for me now is a process of opening up and letting what I know appear, peeling away the crust grown thick with many layers of externally-imposed beliefs accumulated through just living in the patriarchy for so long. This knowledge comes in the shape of dreams, through a pendulum, a feeling of intuition, a voice that speaks to me in meditation - a protective, healing, guiding voice. I am coming to trust that inner knowledge, to believe in that inner force and act on it. It is a part of our birthright. This could be a basic lesson for our growing womonculture.



PAM SPAULDING



# High Altitude Gardening

BY CHRIS HUSTED

I live with my husband and two daughters (ages 5 and 7) in a pinon/juniper forest in New Mexico. Our acre is at an altitude of 7000 feet in an expanding neighborhood, where our water comes from a community system owned and run by all of us. Many people here garden for a year or so in the poor rocky soil; only a few garden longer. The annual rainfall is about 14 inches, mostly occurring in July and August. Hot days and cool nights complicate the growing season of 130 to 140 days.

Some of the problems and solutions I've encountered: **WATER** - In order to have spring bulbs or early vegetables supplemental watering must begin in February. For this reason, I no longer try to grow anything needing extra water that isn't edible or useful in some way, i.e., erosion control, natural dyeing, or food for animals. To establish seedlings, watering must be done every day without fail. Covering the seeds with grass clippings, rabbit manure, or other light mulch helps, as well as planting deeper than recommended, but still the watering must be daily at this stage.

I water by hand with a hose or with buckets to make sure I'm not watering the cactus and rocks surrounding my gardens. I dig planting holes in the unfenced part of my garden and build up dikes around each hole to contain the water. I tried lining the bottom of the holes with plastic (garbage bags, bread sacks) but don't think I will continue as the benefit seems temporary (in the rainy season the other big plants caught up and the plastic was too deep to help seedlings) and I'm not sure how to dig the holes for next year without chewing up the plastic.

To save household water, I use low pans in the sinks to catch rinse water and put this on my house plants and deck planters. I wash vegetables outside in a bucket, returning that water to the garden. We have "potty runs" to use the toilet. First one in gets to holler for others, last one gets to flush. I'm encouraging my daughters to take pride in saving water.

At present, a lot of our water is going into rock work on our huge chimney. Our total monthly usage in summer is about 4000 gallons. This drops to 2000 gallons a month in winter - with weather too cold for gardens or mortar.

I'm reluctant to save the water that washes from our roof during the heavy summer rains because

of our asphalt shingles. I don't know what we'd be getting with the water. People with tin roofs here often have cisterns and collect the runoff. Our next house will definitely have a more usable roof.

**WIND** - To compound the water situation, searing winds sweep across the state in the dry spring. Shelter and shade become important when placing plants. Few cultivated plants can tolerate the "full sun" called for on seed packages when combined with dry wind. In my planting holes, I pound a dead branch and lean a heavy board against it at an angle to block direct wind and the noon sun, if possible. If the plant seems to adapt I can remove the board and put it back under more threatening conditions. In my main garden, trees provide partial shade and wind protection. The trees here rarely get above 25 feet, allowing the plants to get plenty of sunshine.

**MAIN GARDEN** - My main garden is fenced to keep out wild rabbits and the neighbor's dogs. It's roughly 10 x 20 feet, arranged in three tiers in a natural clearing. The first year we planted grapes and raspberries in planting holes individually terraced. Besides being hard to water well, the ground was hard to dig to allow room for growth. I gave up when I discovered about 60 white grubs per plant with no way to get to them without tearing up the roots. This year we dug three terraces down the eastern facing rocky slope. We took out the rocks, clay and cactus. I sifted much of it through hardware cloth mounted on a sturdy 2 x 4 frame. I put back the "soil" with grass clipping from lawns in the city (Albuquerque - 25 miles away) rabbit manure free for the hauling from a neighbor, pine needles, oak leaves and whatever humus I could dredge from under the juniper trees. After all this, I was informed by a long-time gardener that oak leaves and pine needles retard growth. I haven't noticed that to be true; the soil tests neutral in an alkaline area so perhaps the leaves and needles are actually helping the pH. This year I've dug one grub in the sifted and fenced area, but found a clump of 40 in one of my planting holes. Perhaps they just relocated, or perhaps I disturbed their habitat enough when sifting to kill off the ones in the fenced garden.

**INSECTS** - The white grubs seem to be my only insect problem, thank goodness. I don't plan to

spray for control ever, but then I've never had much of a problem... I think this is due to the small scattered gardens and arid climate. Other gardeners here have been bothered by tiny flea beetles. I had a short episode with them but picked the covered leaves and dropped them in my fish tub. The goldfish loved them. Occasional large insect intruders are squashed and left for the birds I encourage.

**BIRDS** - To encourage insect-eating birds, I made a freeform (dug out a pit in our sandbox) cement bird bath and sunk it in an open area so our cat can't sneak up easily. I keep emergency summer rations in the bird feeder hanging outside our dining room window. I put in it handfuls of wild bird seed, dried bread, bits of fat and some dried cat food our cat didn't like. I don't need to worry about the birds getting any beneficial insects; we don't have them.

**WORMS** - The thin, dry, mountain soils don't support wild earthworms. To house my Mother's Day gift of a pound of worms, I dug out a seven foot long pit down to clay at 11 inches (to encourage the wrigglers to stay put). I sided the pit with whatever planks and cinder blocks I could find and filled it with our red soil, grass clippings and lots of oak leaves. I have since read that worms don't like oak leaves either, but the potatoes I planted on top sure do. The 12 culled supermarket potatoes produced luscious growth that shades the worms and keeps the soil cooler, and hopefully will produce some spuds.

**RABBITS** - Nearby, under our deck, are the rabbit hutches. I have three young meat/fur rabbits (two does and a buck). They are already providing for some of their keep by producing the only manure that can go on a garden fresh, without burning. I got them after my rabbit-raising neighbor moved away. I use about half their output on the worm bed to build up the nutrients.

I cool water left from steaming our vegetables for the rabbit's vitamin-enriched drinking water. They get commercial pellets and the greens from our garden that we don't eat. I also feed them some of our rare weeds like lambs' quarters and purslane. When the weeds are young, we also eat them - purslane raw in salads, lambs' quarters cooked with spinach.

I don't need a section on weeds because we have so few that aren't useful in some way. Also, I mulch fairly heavily and carefully water only the cultivated areas. I also think planting intensively helps.

**NATURAL DYE PLANTS** - I use native plants in dyeing, thus reserving my limited prime space for vegetables and herbs. I've had lovely colors from juniper, mistletoe, oak leaves, (they really get a workout around here!) and galls, and prickly lettuce.

**CONCLUSIONS** - It's been hard work gardening at 7000 feet in a rocky poor soil and attempting to

finish building our house. The results have been worth it to me from a learning as well as eating standpoint. However, our attitudes have changed enough in the past few years that my husband and I want to try again. We've bought 40 acres of grazing land also at 7000 feet. We want to build a smaller, more energy-efficient home, possibly underground. I want to have fruit as well as vegetables and herbs. The soil is sandy silt, the land level except for a hilly area for the house. And there are no rocks to be found on the entire 40 acres.

Plants which did well for me:

beans - pinto, wax, snap

beets - varies according to location. I added mortar sand to our heavy soil.

herbs - anise, fennel from seed easily; catnip, lemon balm, spearmint, wild peppermint, English thyme, mother o' thyme, from transplants. Transplanted two bushes of cooking sage from town with ease.

lettuce - does well in heavy shade, better in Fall garden.

onion - both seeds and sets do well

peas - snow peas came up late but really produced.

peppers - two varieties of hot chilis, yellow and green

potatoes - getting baby potatoes in July

spinach - needs lots of shade and water

tomatoes - Earliana sets a lot for August. Larger fruit varieties do well if large plants are set out mid-May.

Some that did poorly:

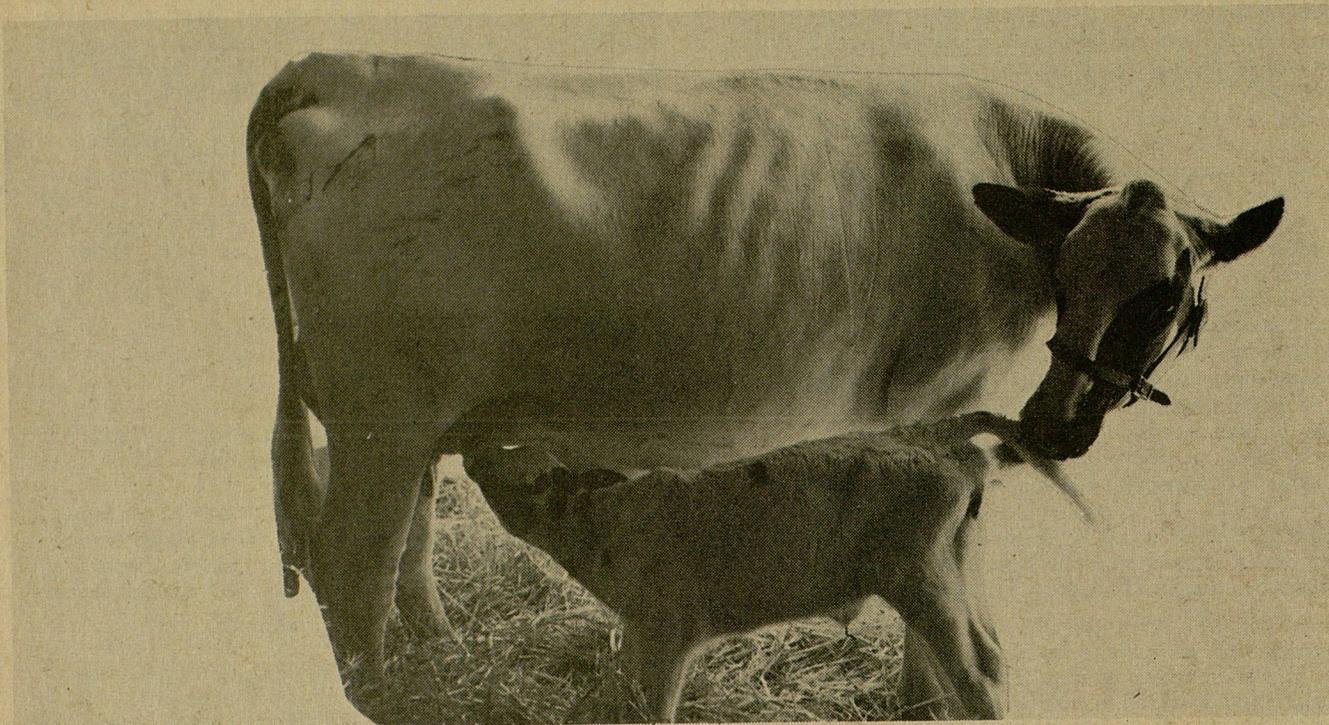
carrots & parsley - couldn't keep seeds damp enough; needs more humus to keep soil damp longer.

Jerusalem artichokes - plants are small, need lots of water to keep from wilting. Can't judge yield yet. All sprouted readily in poor soil though.

squash - something (birds?) ate every single squash on six different varieties.

Planting Dates:

Mid-April	Mid-May	June
potatoes	peppers	beans
snow peas	tomatoes	squash
pod peas	(transplants)	gourds
carrots, beets		
lettuce, spinach		
onions		



PATRICIA CUMMINGS

## HOW NOW BROWN COW

BY PHYLLIS NEWMAN

When we looked into her soft brown eyes, we knew Mabel was going to be a member of our family, should I say families, since Marianne and I decided that this was a joint venture. Marianne, you see, is my neighbor and we had decided several months ago that it would be fun to get a cow, but I never thought that it would really happen.

That's how it all started, over five months ago. "What on earth are you going to do with a cow?" people would ask. "Milk her," we would respond calmly. "But that's so much work! Don't you realize that you will have to milk her twice a day? And you can't forget either!" People were so encouraging. The farmers and dairymen that we spoke to just laughed with that sort of "Dumb broads!" smirk. You could just hear them muttering under their breath, "Talk to me in a couple of months when you won't want to look at an udder again!"

Nevertheless we decided to go through with it. One thing that helped us keep our courage was that we always had the option of selling her if it didn't work out. After all, we were not in this for life. It was not an irreversible de-

cision. My biggest problem was getting my husband's approval. He was only afraid that he would get stuck milking when I had had enough. (I can't say that his argument was without foundation, since he willingly feeds my horses, my dogs, and my daughter's cat.) But he refused to go along with another animal. So he very pointedly vetoed the whole idea. Over his dead body would he buy a cow! Bob and I had usually agreed on just about everything we would buy. Very little in our home was not a joint decision. But this cow would be mine, and if I stuck to my promise that I would be responsible for her upkeep and pay for her feed then I could see no reason why I shouldn't have a cow. Being a liberated woman and having my own personal checking account helped confirm my decision. This would be strictly my decision even if Bob didn't approve. The cow was bought from my money. Bob could only stare speechlessly when she arrived.

Marianne and I had spent several months researching the idea. The only encouragement we got was from one of her friends who had had a cow for three years and was still enjoying the work. We had agreed that since the financial end was divided, the work load would also be divided and

vacations would be workable. We read books on dairy farming and talked to many dairymen in the area who, after they stopped scoffing, were quite helpful.

I checked the paper every day for signs of gentle milking cows. We had decided upon a Jersey because they are known for being small in size, producing the least amount of milk but the richest, as compared to a large Holstein who produces tons of milk a day but whose milk is not as rich with cream. This would help cut down on feed costs as well.

The day arrived when we saw our first ad claiming a "very, very gentle Jersey." We rushed to the address listed and saw Mabel. She looked like an overgrown deer, tannish in color with big brown eyes. They brought her over to us. She was very gentle. She was also very young and had only been handmilked once, which was for a kindergarten class demonstration. She now was nursing two hefty calves, one of her own and one a drop-calf from the auction. Both of them looked big and healthy. Mabel looked run-down though. Her ribs showed and the little amount of food they were giving her confirmed that most of her energy was going to feeding her calves.

Being totally new at this, we were firm about getting a veterinarian to check her to be sure that we were getting a healthy animal. What to look for in a milk cow was over our heads. The vet came out that afternoon and told us that she was healthy and that she had already been given a blood test for tuberculosis and brucellosis (undulant fever), the two most dreaded diseases in milk cows. Both diseases were of epidemic proportions not so long ago, and people still shudder when they hear of raw, unpasteurized milk. Many city friends couldn't even imagine that people drink milk "straight from the cow" without boiling it or pasteurizing it. They've been so indoctrinated on how dangerous it can be that they don't even consider it to be a safe possibility. My mother was a prime example. "You mean the children actually drink the milk without pasteurizing it first? Are you sure it's safe?" The fact that I drank the milk was greeted with skepticism, but her grandchildren drinking it was another story. That was going too far!

We took Mabel home several days later. That was not a problem since I already had a horse trailer and she was so gentle she went right in when she saw a bucket of grain waiting for her. Up until now, Mabel was fresh with milk because the calves were taking it several times a day. Now it was up to us to keep the milk flow going, and that was to be done that evening and every twelve hours thereafter. We were looking forward to that moment with great anticipation and much nervousness. It was really the case of the blind leading the blind. Mabel had never been milked (except that once) and we had never milked. Terrific combination!

During the few days before Mabel's arrival, Marianne got some quick lessons on milking from her friend and taught me what she knew - which wasn't much, we found out later. Getting the milk out was one thing, but having a working relationship with Mabel was quite another.

We were ready for her now! Bob, who had finally resigned himself to Mabel (and had actually thought she was cute) hastily put together a stanchion to hold her head. (I knew he would get into the swing of it!) We led Mabel into a horse stall that we had prepared for her. Nugget, the stall owner, a big chestnut gelding, looked very disgusted with us as we told him to leave for awhile. We led Mabel by her halter into the stall, walking her in a circle so that her head would fit comfortably into the stanchion. We began feeding her grain. We didn't want to give her too much at first because she hadn't been getting much from her previous owners and it would be a shock to her system if she got too much at once. However, it didn't quite work out like that and it's a wonder we didn't kill her right off! Marianne and I each got on one side of her (something we found out later that not too many cows allow). Lucky for us she didn't know any better. We put the bucket between us. Mabel stood there calmly enough at first, that is, until she ran out of grain! Then she started squirming and a back leg shot toward us! Crash! There went the milk! Her foot was caught in the bucket! How do you lift a cow's foot? It's stuck in the bucket! Back to the sink to wash the bucket! Damn!

Back to our places. The problem with milking was that once we got the milk out, the trick was getting it into the bucket. That first night we found there was more milk on us and on the floor than in the bucket. Aiming those teats was an acrobatic maneuver.

By the end of the first milking we had become quite skilled in grabbing the bucket before she could get her foot into it. And she tried several more times that night. We also figured out that as long as she was being fed grain she was quiet, sooooo... we fed her more grain. And the race was on - only she was winning! She could eat faster than we could milk, and she learned very quickly that moving her leg around signaled the end of the race. Quick! More grain! Hurry! She must have finished off two buckets of grain that night! Whew! I'm glad that's over. Proudly we took our white, creamy treasure and poured it into a gallon jar. We were wet from milk and tired, but so proud of our half-gallon of milk. Who said this was a dumb idea?

The next morning we were ready to go again. We walked Mabel into the stall which was already loaded with grain, and began to milk her. Again the race against time. Would we milk her faster than she could eat, or would she begin to kick at us for more grain? She won again! This time the children were piling grain down her and also



SUE ROETHELE

petting and talking nicely to her - anything to keep her distracted so that we could get the milk out. Three-fourths of a gallon this time! We must be getting better!

The next couple of days went smoothly enough. Mabel was gaining weight rapidly and her milk was getting richer with cream and filling more of the bucket. We were almost up to a gallon.

The children tried their hands at milking, and within a couple of days there were four people around her - one at each teat. Mabel put up with a lot those first few days. However, the grain, although delicious, was not enough to take all her attention. She began to squirm more quickly now and was beginning to think that she'd had quite enough of us. Her back foot nearly got us and she had already knocked the bucket over at least once. We were pretty proud of how agile we were becoming. We could grab that bucket at the slightest flutter and save the milk from disaster. A couple of times we both grabbed for the bucket at the same time and found ourselves pulling against each other!

After a few days, Mabel was really outsmarting us. She began kicking when we approached her, with her front as well as her back feet. In desperation we tried kicking her back a couple of times but that only made her angrier and produced another kick in return. She wanted us out. And we were on the verge of agreeing with her. We found ourselves leaving the bucket and jumping back to save ourselves instead of the milk. We were getting scared!

That night, nearly a week later, we realized that the situation was no longer funny, but dangerous! This very, very gentle cow was becoming a problem, and we knew we were the cause. We had to get some help. We called our neighbor, an old hand at milking. He came over, sat down, and proceeded to milk like we never saw milk come out of that little cow. It was like he turned on the faucet! The bucket filled so fast it made our heads spin. Whenever Mabel tried to kick, he quickly and easily slipped his hand between her legs and blocked her kick. It looked so easy! He showed us how to do it. The next day we tried on our own. Believe me, we were nervous - but determined! We sat down and kept our arms tightly between her legs. It must have taken us an hour to milk that day since we were each using only one hand to milk and one hand to hold her legs. But we did it! She tried to kick out but we were able to block her this time. We began to feel more confident and more relaxed.

That seems like a long time ago. We've become fairly proficient since then. Now Mabel walks into the stall and makes her own circle without our having to lead her. The routine is down to a science now. It takes us approximately fifteen minutes to get a gallon and a half of milk. The kids help me with the evening shift, and Marianne milks in the morning. We fill in for each other a lot and we've each been able to get away on a couple of vacations over the summer. Bob still hasn't learned how to milk (he seems to disappear around milking time), but he does feed Mabel, and thinks she's the cutest thing going - especially when she licks him affection-

ately with her tongue. It's really been an excitingly fantastic experience for both families and one that we'll remember as long as we live, even when and if we go back to commercial milk one day.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

You may be wondering if we've been able to make the milk safe for human consumption. As long as Mabel is checked for disease on a regular basis and reasonable precautions are taken, there is little chance of contracting anything. We talked to many people in the area who were brought up on raw milk and had no trouble.

We've found that our milk - straight from the cow and refrigerated - will keep about two weeks without turning sour. When you consider that store-bought milk is several days to a week old when you buy it, we feel that this is quite an improvement. And it tastes so much better, too.

We've learned to sterilize EVERYTHING before we use it by washing all utensils in soapy water, rinsing them in a bleach solution, and letting them air-dry. Everything that touches the milk gets this treatment - spoons, jars, lids, etc. Bacteria begins to form as soon as the milk leaves the cow and if it's poured into sterile containers the bacterial growth is retarded considerably.

Our neighbors have especially enjoyed our surplus milk and we have had more than enough milk to feed two families and to make all sorts of milk products such as whipped cream, sour cream, yogurt, buttermilk, butter, cottage cheese, Ricotta cheese, and ice cream. (Recipes for these are included.) Before this experience, I had taken all these products for granted and simply never even imagined that they could be made at home. The difference in flavor is incredible. When I taste store-bought products now they almost taste like cardboard.

Mabel's milk had been consisting of approximately 20-25% cream, which averaged out to one quart of cream per gallon. This gave us the chance to make gobs of things from the cream. As it turned out, however, both families held the cream as a precious gem.

Typically, milk cows are bred every year in order to keep them producing milk. To our amazement, most of the breeding is done artificially. When Mabel came into heat, we were told to call our local breeder (whoever that was). Since cows are only in heat for several hours once a month, he came out that day. In his little truck he proudly boasted of storing 5,000 frozen sperm from prize bulls (some over 10 years old). He handed us a catalog of various bulls, complete with photo, and told us to select one that would meet our needs. He advised us to breed Mabel to a beef bull so that we could get a more meaty calf to raise. The breeding was successful and Mabel is due to calve soon. This will be her

second calf and her milk should increase from 3 gallons a day to 5 gallons a day. What we'll do with all that milk is beyond me. Our neighbors should appreciate it, anyway.

For any of you who have ever thought of getting a cow, the following suggestions may be helpful:

#### MILKING CLEANLINESS

1. Wash and sterilize all utensils by washing in soapy water and rinsing in a solution of water and bleach. Rinse and let air-dry. Do NOT touch.
2. Place filter paper in funnel in order to filter out any impurities in the milk.
3. Wash udders with bleach solution before milking.
4. Squeeze out several drops of milk before letting milk fall into bucket to eliminate any impurities.
5. Dip teat into the antiseptic after milking because germs have a greater chance of entering the udder canals right after milking, causing mastitis.

#### DAILY FEEDING

2 flakes alfalfa, 2 flakes oat hay daily  
12-14 pounds dairy mix with 16% protein added.

The general rule-of-thumb is based on making sure that the animal shows no signs of weight loss. This can be checked visually and by looking for any signs of change in eating habits. Undigested grain in the manure is an indication that the animal is getting too much to eat.

#### HEALTH CHECK

Blood test for brucellosis and tuberculosis every six months. Mastitis check on stain paper done at home every week by simply dipping the milk on to the paper.

#### BASIC DEFINITIONS AND PROCEDURES

RAW MILK - "Straight from the cow". Unpasteurized, unhomogenized, literally untouched.

PASTEURIZED MILK - The milk is heated briefly to kill harmful bacteria. Then it is chilled rapidly. Pasteurization has only a slight effect on nutritive value and flavor of milk.

HOMOGENIZED MILK - The fat is uniformly distributed throughout the milk and will not separate even when stored.

WHOLE MILK - The milk without any cream removed. It can be either raw or pasteurized. We usually get 20-25% cream, which is exceptionally rich.



LYNNE WEINERMAN

Commercial milk is usually 4-5% cream. The milk must be shaken (if not homogenized) before using because of the cream separation.

**LOW FAT MILK** - All but 2% of the cream removed. Approximately 2 1/2 oz. per gallon of cream is returned to the milk after removal.

**NONFAT MILK (SKIM)** - All the cream has been removed from the milk.

#### PASTEURIZING THE MILK (IF DESIRED)

Milk can be pasteurized in three ways. It can be heated for a second to a rolling boil; heated to 170°F for 15 minutes; or heated to 150°F for half an hour. The best way to avoid a cooked taste is to heat it over water to 150°F and to hold that temperature for the half-hour. Automatic pasteurizers with timers and thermostats take the effort and guesswork out of pasteurizing, but at a high price.

#### SEPARATING THE CREAM

Once the milk has cooled in the refrigerator the cream will rise to the top and be distinguished in color and texture from the rest of the skim milk. A sterilized spoon or ladle can easily scoop out the cream into another container to be used or accumulated.

A cream separator can be bought as an antique (hopefully) which works on centrifugal force. If you need to remove great quantities of cream, say several gallons a day, getting one would be helpful. We borrowed one for awhile but decided that the amount of pieces and parts that had to be sterilized and washed each day was not worth the advantage of immediate separation.

#### MAKING BUTTER

Most farmers and dairymen we had talked to churn their butter with manual or electric butter

churns that hold a gallon of cream at a time. Although blenders only hold 3 cups of cream at a time (without overflowing) they are much faster and make delicious butter in approximately 3-4 minutes rather than in 40-50 minutes in a churn.

Cream is the only thing that I ever pasteurize because I found the butter would only keep three days instead of several weeks before turning sour otherwise.

Fill the blender container with 3 cups of sweet pasteurized cream. Blend the cream until it whips and then breaks down into butter and buttermilk. You will know when this happens because the yellow butter (and it is yellow) rises to the surface. Strain the butter and save the skim milk that is left.

Washing the Butter: It is necessary to wash the buttermilk (this is not the same as cultured buttermilk) from the butter because it is the milk that is responsible for turning the butter sour. Therefore, the more you rinse and the clearer the water, the longer your butter will keep.

Rinse the butter in clear water by placing the butter back into the blender container and agitating it until the water turns clear. Several rinsings will be necessary before the water stays relatively clear, indicating that the last of the milk is gone. Pack the warm butter in containers (I like plastic sandwich boxes) and divide into bars with a knife. After it is cooled in the freezer it can easily be snapped into bars for wrapping and storing back in the freezer. It can be kept frozen up to a year.

Another method for rinsing the milk from the butter is by putting the butter into a wooden salad bowl. Refrigerate about 20-30 minutes. Then rinse with cold water, a little at a time, using your hands to squeeze out extra milk.

Salted Butter: Salt can be added to the rinse water and agitated in the blender to get a smooth consistency and distribution. Rinse as usual. Use about 1 teaspoon salt to 1 pound butter.

Use the remaining milk for making buttermilk, cottage cheese, or just drinking as skim milk. Remember that it is already pasteurized and therefore whatever you make will keep longer in the refrigerator.

#### MAKING COTTAGE CHEESE

Homemade cottage cheese is really a delicacy. There is little resemblance between the tasteless store-bought kind and the fresh-tasting cheese that is made at home.

Using the milk left over from making butter makes excellent cottage cheese because it has already been pasteurized and will keep longer in the refrigerator. I found cottage cheese works best if homemade buttermilk is used as well.

1 gallon skim milk (or whatever remains from making butter)  
1/2 cup cultured buttermilk (commercial or home-made)  
salt to taste

Heat the milk to 86°F, stir in the buttermilk. Let the mixture stand at room temperature overnight, or for 12 hours, while the milk mixture incubates and forms a curd. You can tell the curd has formed when the top is firm-looking and it moves away from the side of the pot when a knife is pressed against it. Cut the curd with a gentle slicing action using a long knife to cut repeatedly through the curd, creating something on the order of a pot full of 1/2 inch cubes floating in whey.

Slowly heat the curds and whey, stirring a bit to prevent burning. When the temperature gets up to 100-104°F the curds will begin to get firm. Keep stirring until the curds are firm enough not to break apart easily when they are pressed together. Too much heating at this point makes them squeaky-hard. When they seem firm enough but not tough, strain the curds from the whey. Rinse the curds with cool water and let drain. When they have stopped dripping, add salt to taste. Makes about 1 pound.

Note: Save the whey to make Ricotta cheese.

BUTTERMILK - Buttermilk is so easy to make that I can't understand why it isn't made at home more often. It is usually made from skim milk, but low fat and whole will produce a very rich, thick drink if you prefer.

Place 1/2 cup cultured commercial buttermilk in a quart jar. Add 3 1/2 cups skim milk to the jar. Shake well and place on top of water heater overnight or for 12 hours. Place in blender container and whip for a few seconds to get a smooth consistency. 1 quart commercial buttermilk can give you 8 quarts homemade buttermilk, and it is so much better.

SOUR CREAM - I find it is particularly convenient to make sour cream the same time I make cottage cheese by adding 1 cup sweet cream to the skim milk and not using it for butter. This way the cream sours with the cottage cheese and rises to the top. It can be easily distinguished by its pale yellow color and merely needs to be skimmed off with a spoon.

#### MAKING YOGURT

1 quart milk (whole, low-fat, or non-fat [skim] may be used)  
1/2 cup non-fat NON-INSTANT dry milk (Do NOT use instant dry milk. Non-instant can be purchased at health food stores)  
3 tablespoons unflavored commercial yogurt

Place 1 quart cold milk in pot with dry milk. Stir until dissolved over low heat. Heat the milk mixture slowly to 180°F in double boiler, stirring constantly for about 45 minutes. The

longer the time, the firmer the yogurt will be. Cool the milk to 110-115°F. Remove 1/2 cup of the warm milk and thoroughly blend it into the commercial, unflavored yogurt. Blend this mixture into the remaining warm milk. Strain and pour into heating container(s). Let ripen for 8-10 hours. The longer the time ripening the sharper, more tart the flavor.

Yogurt can be incubated in several ways:

Commercial Yogurt Maker: This way is the easiest because of the thermostatic control. Just plug it in and forget it. A good one costs under \$10.00.

Thermos: Pour warm yogurt mixture into thermos (widemouth preferred). Put the lid on and wrap the thermos in two or three towels. Then set in a warm, draft-free place overnight. (On winter nights, over the water heater is a good place).

Oven: Place yogurt mixture in a bowl covered with a towel and place in a warm (100°F) oven with the heat off. Let set overnight. Gas stoves with pilot lights work the best.

Heating Pad: Set an electric heating pad on medium temperature and place in the bottom of a cardboard box with a lid. (A shoebox works well.) Fill small plastic containers with warm yogurt mixture; put on lids. Wrap heating pad around containers as much as possible, then cover with towels to fill box. Put lid on box and let sit undisturbed overnight.

Sun: Pour warm yogurt mixture into a glass-lidded bowl or casserole. Place in the sun on a warm summer day and let sit 5-6 hours. Watch it to make sure it isn't shaded as the sun moves.

## RICOTTA CHEESE

The only time I had ever tasted Ricotta Cheese was to use it to make Lasagne. Homemade Ricotta is quite different. It has a sweet, nutlike flavor and soft curds similar in texture to cottage cheese.

Ricotta means "cooked once again" and is just that. The whey, which is leftover liquid from the cottage cheese, acts as the basic coagulant instead of buttermilk. One-third of the calcium in milk is left in the whey in the cheese-making process and also contains most of the milk sugar. In the finished ricotta cheese, however, only 3 percent lactose remains, so it is particularly good for those on a low-carbohydrate diet.

Since you need a good deal of whey to make Ricotta, store and freeze it in milk cartons until you have enough.

1 gallon whey  
6 cups whole milk  
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar  
salt to taste

Heat the whey until a layer of cream rises to the surface (165°F). Stir in whole milk, then continue to heat until JUST UNDER THE BOILING POINT. DO NOT BOIL!

Allow to stand off the heat until curd forms. As soon as curd rises and pulls away from sides of pan, stir in vinegar thoroughly. Skim off curds as soon as they rise once more and scoop them into a strainer. Let drain. Salt to taste after draining. Chill before serving. Makes about 1 pound.

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### EXPENSE ACCOUNT

MABEL	\$275.00
Halter	4.50
Stainless Steel Bucket	23.00
Stainless Steel Milk Funnel/ Strainer	14.00
Dairy Thermometer	4.00
1 Gallon Glass Jars	.50 Ea.
Refrigerator to Store Milk (Used)	85.00
Milk Filters	1.50/100
Bag Balm, Medicated Petroleum Jelly for Teats	1.50
Teat Dip, Antiseptic to Prevent Mastitis	3.75 Gal.
Mastitis Pads, To check for Mastitis	1.25/100
Breeding Fee	15.00
Oat Hay	5.00/Bale
Alfalfa	5.00/Bale
Dairy Mix (16% Protein Added)	7.70/100 Lbs.

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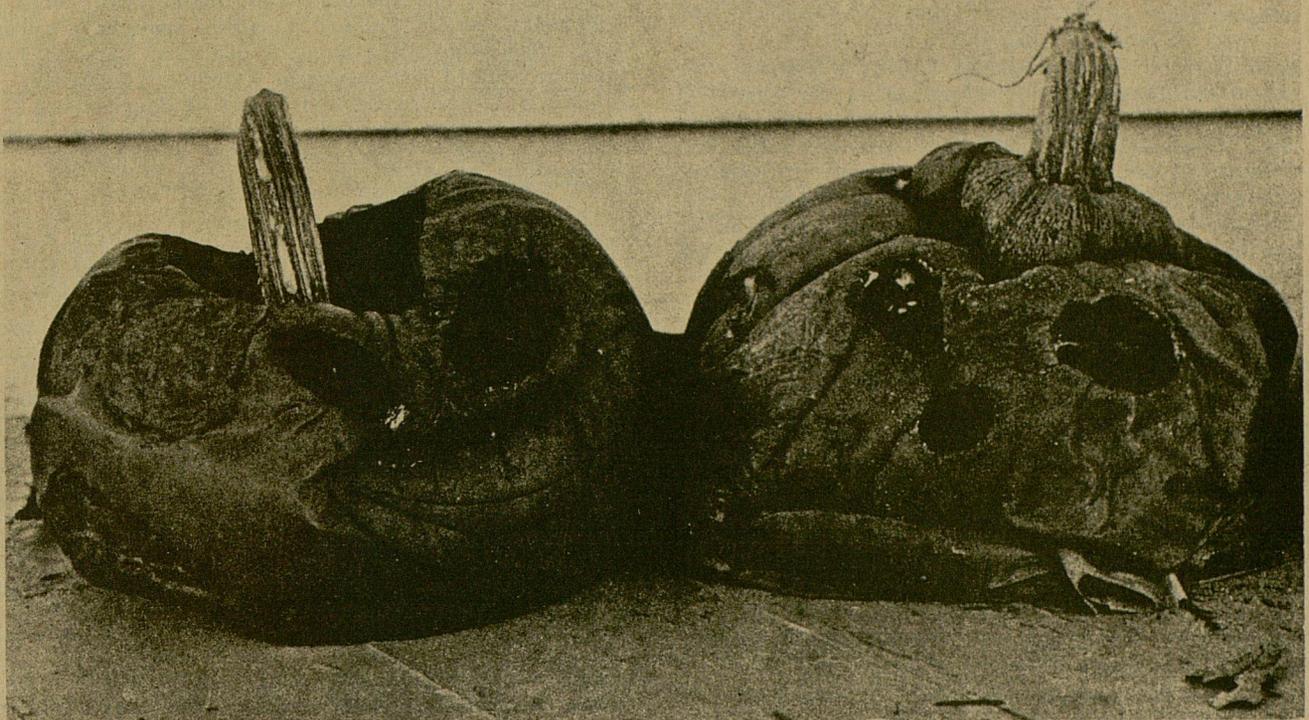


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# HOME BREWING



POLLY JOAN

BY MARY MENCONI

Home brewing is basically a simple process. Unlike many hobbies it requires small monetary investment, little specialized equipment, and no special talents or skills. It has an advantage over the more prestigious wine making in that results are more predictable and quicker, so that a brewer can develop her or his own proven recipes in a short time and enjoy the product much sooner!

For equipment you can use any plastic or ceramic container of slightly larger capacity than your brew, covered with a plastic sheet if no lid is available (I use a 20-gallon plastic garbage can with a snap-on lid). Mark the sides of this to indicate 5 gallons, 10 gallons, and 15 gallons so you won't have to measure each time; a 2-gallon kettle, enamel or stainless steel - iron or aluminum may react with the brew - 5-gallon water bottles or plastic "cubitainers" (available for \$2 or so) the number depending on how much beer you plan to make. Get about 5 feet of clear plastic siphon tubing 1/2 inch in diameter for transferring and bottling the beer, and while you're at the hardware store see if they have crown caps and cappers - put out the money to get a sturdy one as they have to take a lot of hard wear and a good seal is essential. The last two pieces of equipment you'll need will probably have to be bought at a beer store: a hydrometer and fermentation locks. Hydrometers

measure the specific gravity of a liquid - its weight in relation to water. They aren't absolutely essential to beer making, but they give you an exact measurement of the stage your beer is at and the proper time for transferring and bottling. If you plan to do any experimenting with your recipes, they'll help you get the percentages right. You can buy a cheap hydrometer that has a red line to indicate bottling time for about \$3, but the more expensive ones will tell you alcohol content, percentage of sugar by volume (called "balling scale") and specific gravity and they only cost a couple of bucks more.

Fermentation locks are used in secondary fermentation. They allow pressure (from carbon dioxide) to escape but prevent air from entering the fermentor. You can make one by using a rubber stopper with a hole in it. Shove a piece of rubber tubing into the hole so it fits tightly or use a section of glass pipe and attach the tubing to it, then run the other end of the tube into a cup of water. Lacking a rubber tube or stopper, you will have to buy the lock, but they aren't expensive.

Besides this, the only other things you will need are bottles. Use only returnable-type cappable beer or soda pop bottles. Screw tops don't seal well enough, and mason jars can't take the strain.

Exploding glass can be very dangerous, so get friends to save bottles for you (my favorites are Buffalo - and the cases are great) or contact a bar and talk them out of some.

Beer is made from malt, yeast, and water. Proportions of these ingredients vary, and others are used as well, but these three are always present.

*Malt* is food for the yeast. It is a simple sugar (maltose), easily digested by the one-celled organism. "Malt" is actually malted barley. The barley is soaked in warm water for 8-10 hours until it begins to sprout. Sprouting converts the starch in the grain to sugar, resulting in a sticky sweet *Malt Syrup* when the grain is mashed and boiled. You can mash barley yourself, but excellent malt syrups are available so it hardly seems worth it. Try some of the British syrups. They're more expensive, but give you a variety in malts. Blue Ribbon (American malt syrup) is available in many grocery stores. If you want to add extra malt flavor, use *Crystal Malt*, a barley that has been sprouted and dried so it retains a whole grain appearance, *Black Patent* or *Roasted Malt*, a sprouted barley that has been roasted black to add a burnt taste characteristic of Stouts and Porters, or *Dried Malt*, a golden colored powdered malt, used in making very light beers.

*Yeast* is a one-celled plant that, quite simply, eats sugar, exhales carbon dioxide, and shits alcohol. The type of yeast used depends upon the type of beer made. *Lager yeast* is bottom fermenting. That is, it settles to the bottom of the brew and ferments there, leaving little head on the surface. It is particularly suited to cold temperatures, between 32 and 55 degrees. *Ale yeast* is used for heavier beers, Ales and Stouts and is top-fermenting, leaving a nice head of foam on the fermenting brew. Each type of yeast imparts particular flavors to the beer. Bread yeast can be used, but it is more unpredictable and often leaves an odd, yeasty flavor. You can save yeast from batch to batch - skim it from the brew, either from the top or bottom, depending on the kind of yeast used, and store it in the refrigerator in a sterilized bottle plugged with a piece of cotton. Use it within a few weeks to insure potency.

Another way to add yeast to beer is called "krausening". This is the original method developed in Germany centuries ago. It involves taking the head from a fermenting batch of brew and adding it to a new batch. It is impractical for the home brewer, unless you make your batches in close succession, but is interesting because of its traditional roots. Anchor Steam Beer is made this way today. Anchor Beer is also the only brewery that uses natural carbonation. Carbonation is another function of yeast. It takes place after the beer is bottled. Most commercial breweries filter fermented beer to remove the yeast then shoot carbon dioxide through the sterile beer to make it fizzy (like soda pop). Natural carbonation can be recog-

nized by a fine, powdery yeast sediment in the bottom of the bottle.

Before I finish on yeast, I have to mention one more thing. Use a yeast starter with commercial yeasts. This insures that your yeast is viable, and gives it a head start. Make it up a couple of days before you make your beer. Sterilize a 2-quart jar or jug and dissolve some malt syrup or corn sugar into about 1 quart of water. The water should be temperate - above 110 degrees will kill the yeast and below 32 degrees will make it inactive. Put the yeast into this, cover it lightly, and keep it in a warm place. Then add this mixture to your brew.

The other ingredients used in beer making are added for flavor, to increase the alcohol content, to improve the head, or to clarify the beer.

*Corn sugar* (dextrose) is another simple sugar that is used to produce alcohol without changing the flavor or color of beer. Table sugar (sucrose) can be used, but dextrose breaks down more easily and will not leave a sweet taste. German breweries are prohibited by law from using sugar in beer - all alcohol comes from the malt, and a much more flavorful beer is the result. American breweries depend almost entirely on sugar for their product, resulting in "malt-flavored" beer.

*Hops* are added to some light beers, and are an important addition to Ales and Bitters. They were originally used in beer as a preservative, and the taste caught on. Hops are related to marijuana, and if you use a lot of them you may notice a high from them quite distinct from the alcohol influence. They give beer a slightly bitter taste. Malt syrups are available hop flavored, and hop extract is also available.

*Ascorbic acid* is sometimes added to beer as an antioxidant. I don't use it because I don't keep beer around long enough for it to spoil. Homebrew probably will keep for 3-4 months without losing flavor, but I've never tested this.

Another extra addition is *brewer's salts*, a chemical that serves to stimulate yeast growth. It is mostly unnecessary and good to avoid if you want to keep things simple.

*Heading liquor* is useful in dark beers, which have a tendency to be a little flat. It helps put a nice head on poured brew. I've heard licorice root does the same thing, but I've never tried it.

*Salt* and *Gypsum* are sometimes called for in an Ale recipe. Ale is traditionally made with hard water, and they add to the mineral content.

To clarify your brew so that it has sparkle rather than sludge, *gelatin finings* are used. They are added during the second stage of fermentation, and attract small suspended particles, pulling them to the bottom of the fermentor.

Various other grains are sometimes used to flavor beer, the most common being corn. It's sold as *flaked maize*, and is rolled flat like oatmeal.

OK - down to making the stuff. All your equipment should be sterilized before you begin with a mixture of chlorine (bleach) and water. Add maybe a cup to a sinkful of warm water. Rinse things twice in hot water to insure no after taste. Add malt syrup, malt, 1/2 the total quantity of hops, ascorbic acid, salt and gypsum to 1-2 gallons of water in your kettle (omit any ingredients you're not using). The malt should be crushed (in a blender or with a rolling pin). This mixture should be boiled together about 1 hour to sterilize it, and to break down certain proteins in the hops. Add the other 1/2 quantity of hops in the last 10 minutes of boiling. This develops flavor - some resins are brought out by boiling and some are destroyed. This way you get both. Place corn sugar in your crock or garbage can (called *primary fermentor* - sterilized, yes?). Strain hot beer over it and stir well. Add balance of cold water. When beer is room temperature, add yeast mixture (called "pitching the yeast") and stir well. This fermenting malt, water, sugar, and hops mixture is called the *Wort*. *Primary fermentation* is now beginning. Measure the specific gravity and potential alcohol. If specific gravity does not match exactly with the recipe, don't worry. Different malt syrups give different results. Cover fermentor and keep it at a steady temperature. A cool place is best; fermentation takes longer but the quality is better; the temperature must be steady (don't put it in a shed or outside) and above 32 degrees. This stage takes about a week. When specific gravity is 10 degrees, it's time to transfer the beer. I should mention now that the last two numbers on the hydrometer are the ones used. For instance, 1.032 is a specific gravity of 32. 1.000 is the same weight as water. So, when it says 1.010, that's when *secondary fermentation* begins. The purpose of secondary fermentation is to allow the beer time to age without contact with air. Originally oak barrels were used, but this is a little out of the home brewer's range, although if you can get hold of one you might want to try it. Wine books will tell you how.

Siphon the wort into sterilized cubitainers (called secondary fermentors or carboys) being careful not to let the siphon tube touch the bottom of the primary fermentor. This insures that you get as little sediment as possible. The easiest way to siphon is to put the wort on a table or toilet seat to insure a good flow, but be sure to let it settle again for a couple of hours before siphoning. Leave an inch or so of beer in the bottom of the fermentor to avoid the sediment there. Dissolve the gelatin finings in about a cup of water. Boil it so it dissolves, and pour this mixture into the brew. If the carboy is not full, top it off with water and affix the fermentation lock, filling it 1/2 full with water.

Secondary fermentation takes about 2 weeks, or until specific gravity is 0 (1.000 - same as water). A specific gravity of 0 indicates that the yeast has converted all of the sugar to alcohol, and that fermentation has finished. The beer is now ready to be primed and bottled. Put your carboy up again, and siphon the beer back into the primary fermentor (sterilized, remember?) Draw off about 3 cups of the brew and add 2 cups of corn sugar to it. Heat it to boiling and dissolve the sugar well. Pour this mixture back into the beer and stir it thoroughly so that the sugar is well distributed. Adding sugar at this stage (priming) gives the yeast more food to eat, and fermentation begins again, building up pressure in the bottles. This is known as natural carbonation, and leaves the powdery yeast sediment characteristic of home brew. The beer is now ready to be siphoned into sterilized beer bottles, filling them to the base of the neck. Filling beer bottles is a messy job, but if you fold the tubing about 3 inches from the end, you can start and stop the flow as you move from bottle to bottle. Cap the bottles with sterilized crown caps - this is much more easily done if you can bolt down your capper. Apply pressure to the caps until a small round depression is made in the middle, and you will be assured of a good seal. Store the bottles in a cool place where the temperature is between 50 and 70 degrees. The beer will be carbonated in 10 days, but few people care to drink it that soon. Optimum aging depends on the starting specific gravity. Age the beer 2 weeks for every 10 degrees of specific gravity. Dark beers take longer; a Stout of 40 SG would be aged for 2 months. Don't be impatient with it - a rich, mellow beer is worth the time taken.

Here is a recipe I use. Start small. Quantities are for five gallons. Save 2 cups sugar for bottling.

#### *Light Lager or Steam Beer*

Lager is fermented at cold temperatures, Steam Beer at room temperature. Steam Beer gets its name from the head of steam produced by warmer fermentation. It is the only truly American beer, developed in California during the Gold Rush.

1 can light hop-flavored syrup  
4 pounds corn sugar  
1 pkg. lager yeast

Follow procedures given previously.

Starting Specific Gravity: 42

Fine with 1 tsp. gelatin (use Knox unflavored) per 5 gallons.

If you want to know more about brewing, an excellent book can be bought for about \$1.50. It's called *A Treatise On Lager Beers* and has the best information I've seen.

# WOMEN FORESTERS

Text and graphics by YVONNE PEPIN

"Hey, bee-u-tee-ful woo-man, come and check my roots."

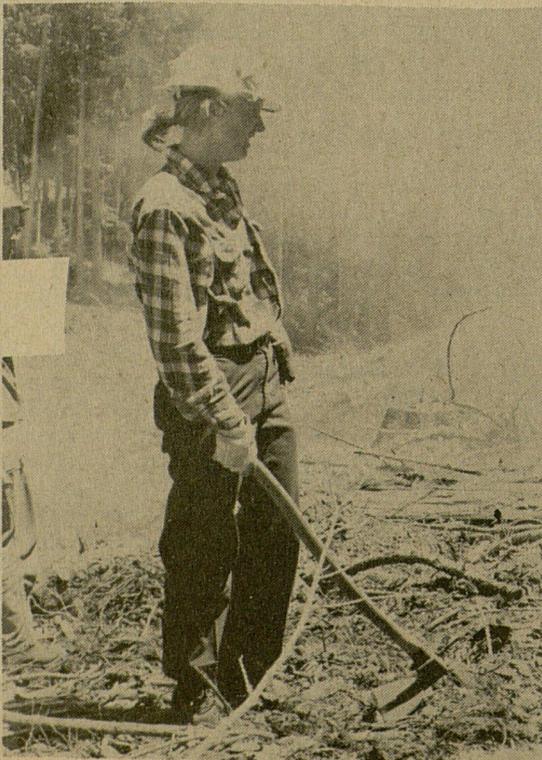
Dressed in a plaid shirt, boots, jeans, and hard hat, Shelby traverses the replanted Oregon mountainside to the side of a young male Chicano who eagerly extends the curved roots of a seedling toward her knife. The other 31 tree-planting Chicano men see this as an opportunity to take an opportunity. A chorus of "Hey, bee-u-tee-ful woo-man" puts Shelby to work.

On a neighboring replanted clearcut mountain, Martha, who is inspecting the seedlings, balances carefully on a log and swears beneath her breath. Only one miscalculation in her foot work would send her plunging from this natural balance beam into devil's weed, thorn bushes that grow as tall as humans.

Meanwhile, back at the Rangers Station, Shelby and Martha's supervisor is being asked about the changes he could foresee as more women enter into the Forest Service.

"Well," he leans back in his swivel chair, thumb on chin and contemplates a response. "Well, maybe if we had a woman District Ranger we would have," he points to the windows, "nice curtains on the windows instead of those old blinds."

The supervisor brings his gaze from the windows to the next desk where Marsha, the other of the



three women forest technicians in the Sweet Home Forest District, prepares for work. She fills her briefcase full of grids, maps, pencils, charts, and the notebooks that register the growth of our national forests. She takes one last survey of the office where green-suited men mill around before she grabs the rest of her gear and walks into the parking lot.

"Good morning," she says to the two men she will supervise on this morning's reproduction survey. "I'm taking the truck with the radio; you guys take the other one," and she nods toward the other green forest rig.

"No, we won't," comes one of the men's replies. "Yes, you will," retorts Marsha, leading the way into a game of verbal ping pong. "No, we won't." "Yes, you will. I'm in charge here." "No, we won't. We don't believe in any of this #\*#!\*##! women's lib stuff."

Marsha walks back into the Rangers Station to recite the problem to a supervisor who is definitely not interested. When she returns to the parking lot, the truck she wanted is being driven away by the two men.

Inside the rig she didn't want, Marsha maintains a concrete cover over her anger. "It happens all the time here. They won't listen to me because I'm a woman. Either you play their games or walk away." She gives a puny laugh. "When I'm laughing on the outside, I'm screaming on the inside."

Aside from their re-forestation work, Shelby, Martha, and Marsha work at dealing with their anger, and the anger directed at them by the men threatened by their developing powers.

Out in the forest Marsha locates the men and the first section of replanted clearcut mountainside to be inspected. All around her lay patches of land like scars over the remaining rich green mountainsides. Empty winds, having no branches to rustle, blow through these areas designated to provide for the nation's lumber appetite. Timber is our most renewable natural resource, and clearcutting the most economical method in timber harvest. This is Marsha's job, to examine the growth rate of replanted clearcut sites.

She extends the tape clipped to her waist and measures a diameter of 11 feet, then counts the trees of that circumference.

"One, two, three, four, five Dougs." She jots this fir figure into her notebook along with the seedlings' condition. The trees seem to be free from disease and any animal or insect damage.

Another few scratches in her notebook and the state of another American forest is recorded.

At 11:45 she breaks for lunch in the shade of a few large firs left standing, hovering over stump acreage like elongated tombstones. After a morning of climbing brush-covered mountain slopes and trying to maintain her equilibrium among the attitudes of the men she works with, Marsha is ready for a rest.

Ten years ago, women employed in the Forest Service did not walk mountainsides inspecting trees, surveying land or driving trucks. They remained in the office, behind desks. Ever since President Harrison proclaimed the first forest reserves in 1892, women have been involved in the Forestry Service. But up until ten years ago, women held primarily clerical positions.

Shelby, Martha and Marsha are a new line of women entering into an old line of work traditionally encompassed by men. All three women, in their early twenties, have run the gambit of "shit jobs".

They no longer want to do factory work, wash dishes, or make beds. Now all three are looking to careers as forest technicians. As women training in this field, their jobs lie in the management, supervision, and utilization of our forests.

Something is wrong with the way our national forests are being cleared of timber. Marsha, Shelby and Martha sense this and want to have a voice in the decisions affecting everyone's land, decision-making that previously women have been excluded from.

It's tough, this program, like any other traditional field of work, the Forest Service maintains "a high competitive level, sexist attitudes, and power tripping!". But something good comes from coping with all the trials. Shelby explains, "Any woman with persistence enough to get through the training has persistence to do anything else."

The many positions available in the Forest Service require different lengths of training. A two-year program of classroom and field training would qualify a person for the most basic situation in forestry management. But four years is the amount of time in which to get a minimum of fundamental and professional courses needed in order to command real opportunity positions. Accredited forestry schools in the country teach significant concepts in, and a working knowledge of, five areas of knowledge. Classes in forest biology, forestry in social context, forest resources inventory, forest ecosystem management, and forest resources administration prepare one for the next step of requirements.

Foresters are chosen from an eligible list made up of candidates who have passed a Civil Service examination with satisfactory grades. Admission

to the Civil Service list is a matter of education, character, citizenship, and physical fitness. An education in forestry could really "round a woman out".

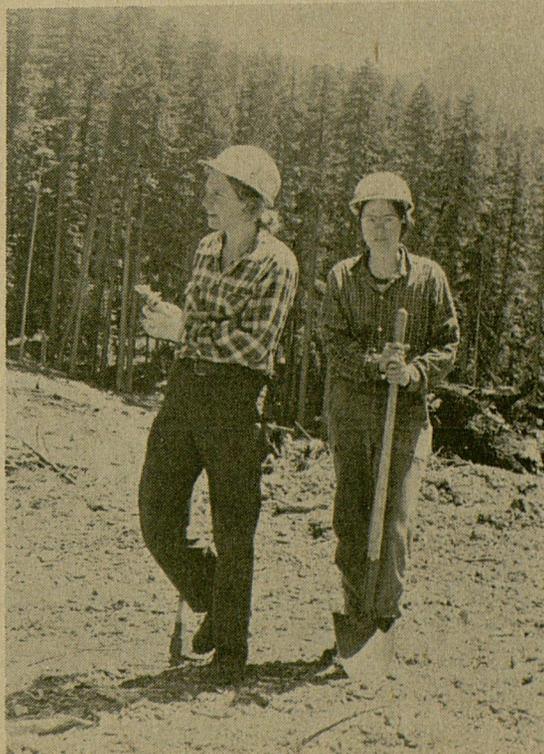
At 7:50 in the morning, Martha bends over the drinking fountain across the hall and within earshot of the rangers' office. Inside the carpeted room hangs a plaque of this man's predecessors. The names of fifteen previous district forest rangers come before the name of this man, the head of the Willamette National Forest. This man has a lot to say about the 1.8 million acres of Oregon forest available for timber harvest. He is being asked about women in the Forestry Service. Accidentally overhearing some of the questions put to the ranger, Martha becomes very thirsty.

Question: How long have you been hiring women in your department?

The ranger answers: "About ten years now. More now than before because of the emphasis placed on human rights."

Q: Do any of these women hold positions of authority?

The ranger shuffles some papers on his desk and pulls from this array of processed tree skin, a copy of the heads of his department. On the list of twenty-nine full season employees, four are women and they work in business and management. He explains, "The lack of women in these positions is because women have not had enough depth or breadth of experience as men have had. Because many of these positions require ten years of training, women are just beginning to meet



the requirements. We select from the lists and they usually are all men."

Q: Do you feel women foresters are as well prepared as men?

Ranger: "No, because men have been previously conditioned for much of the work here and their base level skills are broader."

Q: Is there any special training to accommodate women?

Ranger: "No, either everyone makes the grade or is washed out. If they are washed out, it's because of physical disabilities."

Q: Do you feel women's consciousness is taken into consideration within the instructional literature in your department?

Ranger: "We've had no requests to change any of the literature. (During a forest fire-fighting film the other day, some slides of bikini-clad women had been slipped in with the other instructional slides to arouse people's attention, which served to arouse Martha and Shelby's anger.)"

Q: How do you see the addition of women foresters affecting the program now?

Ranger: "Most men are very threatened at seeing women coming into what has been traditionally a man's field. Women are bringing in a new perspective, a different sensitivity level. I think they are more receptive to retaining scenic qualities."

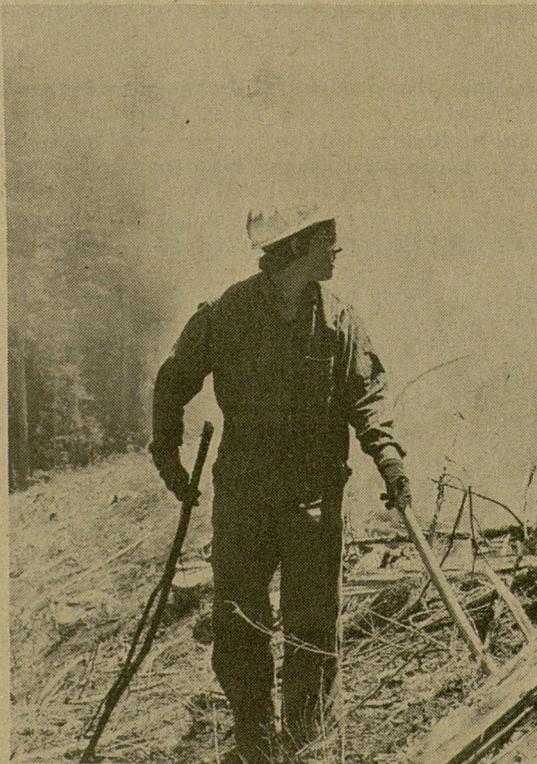
Martha finishes drinking, then walks outside and

piles into a van with 11 other people on their way to set the forest on fire...just for practice.

The drive through the Willamette National Forest is as beautiful as it is blemished. The land is barren except for a few tree stumps, through which the wind blows desolately. Creeks run like silver streaks through the blackened and defoliated terrain. Ground life does not clamber over the charred stumps. The ranger's words, "I think women are more receptive to retaining scenic qualities," run through this woman's mind. She thinks that clearcuts not only represent sections of land made barren for economic reasons, but they are symbols of man's technical abilities.

Everyone is responsible for the forests being cut down. Trees are just another harvestable crop in large demand and the Forestry Service is utilizing their abilities to provide a public hungry for the 4,000 wood by-products. Unfortunate for nature though that her aesthetic beauty and cycles have to be interrupted so abruptly.

Forests are not just cut down: Five years of planning, figuring, calculating and examining the conditions of an area, and the adverse effects on plant and animal life, go into an area before any cutting is done. The Resource Planning Act is supposed to ensure our forests' well-being. This Act, passed in 1974, requires that any clearcut area must be re-forested within five years. But one would wonder, as they look out of the van's window at some slopes lying so steep and naked of vegetation that the sun-parched top soil blows away in gusts of wind, whether or not



some of these areas will ever bear trees again.

The van rolls to a stop in the middle of a wasteland; section after section of charred and uncharred tree stumps framed by distant green mountains. The crews pile out. Thirty-six people here today to learn about controlled fire. Nine are women. All wear hard hats and heavy clothing to protect them from the flames they will come to know.

Just as forests are toppled under control, the remaining slash is given the same consideration before it is set on fire. Martha and Shelby spend all morning learning about the degree of moisture in the slash, how to calculate humidity, and the direction of the wind before they start digging. In lines of 11, and spaced 6 feet apart, these people pick, dig, and shovel a trench around the area in which they will contain a fire. Shelby blisters her hand on the hazel hoe.

By noon the fire line has been constructed and the crew boss yells, "Let's go. Space yourselves six feet apart." Thirty-six people, their tools slung over tired shoulders, march back to the trucks looking like a multitude of the seven dwarfs.

The tools lie in a straight line. The crews sit on the dirt behind them. The head honcho lectures. "Be conscious of everything around you," he shouts, pacing up and down the line. "We can't stress safety enough." He is preparing these people for a real fire where they may have to work 18 hours a day carrying 50-pound tanks of water up a mountain, toting chainsaws, and fighting fire. Under intense stress, these people will rely on their strength and physical stamina to keep them alive.

"All right, let's eat," and the crews move to bag lunches at the instructor's command. Martha and Shelby don't even have time to digest their hearty lunch of peanut butter, banana and strawberry sandwiches, before the instructor's call

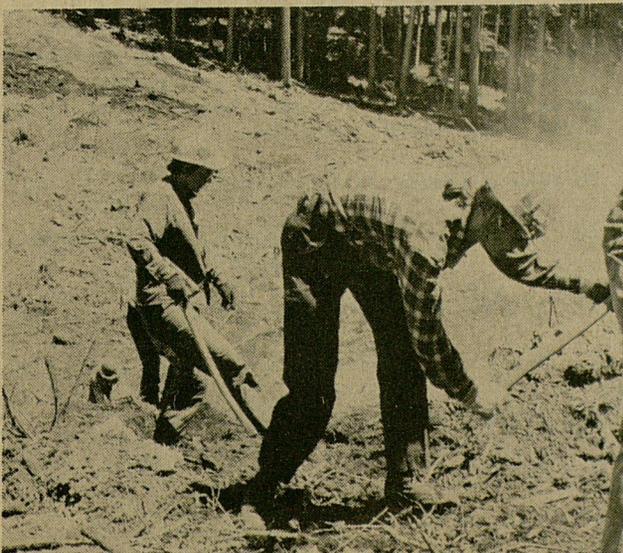
rouses them from the shade of some trees, back out into a sun-baked unit that someone has thoughtfully set on fire.

Strategy. A few minutes consultation above the burning site enhances the crew's efficiency to successfully contain the fire. Once again the crews chop, dig, and hack a trench around the flames, trying to isolate four acres of flame with hoes, shovels, and axes. Shovels-full of dark mineral soil are uncovered after the top soil is dug away. The subsoil is thrown on the flames lapping close at the legs of both women. The wind shifts and blows smoke into their eyes and thick billows cover the sun to haze the sky ochre. Sweat rolls down her face as Shelby rolls over a flaming log, chopping out the blaze with an axe. The canteen being passed around is dry by the time it reaches her. She straps the empty vessel on her back until time permits her to run to the creek below for a refill. The flames continue to flare.

"You get your pace down after the initial excitement's over. The fire gives you a lot of adrenalin," says Shelby, slackening her pace to a steady rhythm. She pushes back her hard hat with the wilted bunch-berry bush attached to the brim, and adds, "When I was working right alongside the fire, even my clothes got real hot."

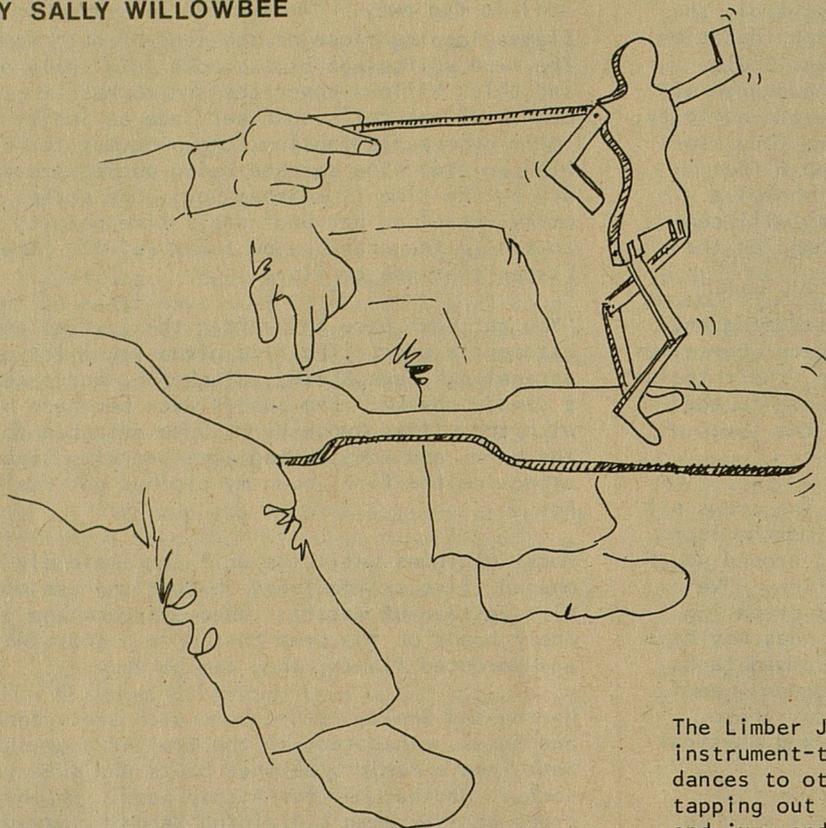
Work continues until the unit is completely dry-mopped (fire extinguished through the use of dirt instead of water). When everyone can place their hands on the area that only a short while ago sprouted flames, they can go home.

Martha and Shelby return home with sooty hands and faces, exhausted, to the trailer they share. Both remove their blackened boots and sweaty socks. Martha goes for a cold beer. Shelby grabs her "Fireman's Training Manual", waves it in the air, her cheeks now flushed from more than the hot flames, and says, "I'm sending this to the ranger. There were women out there today too."



# How to make a Limber Jill

BY SALLY WILLOWBEE



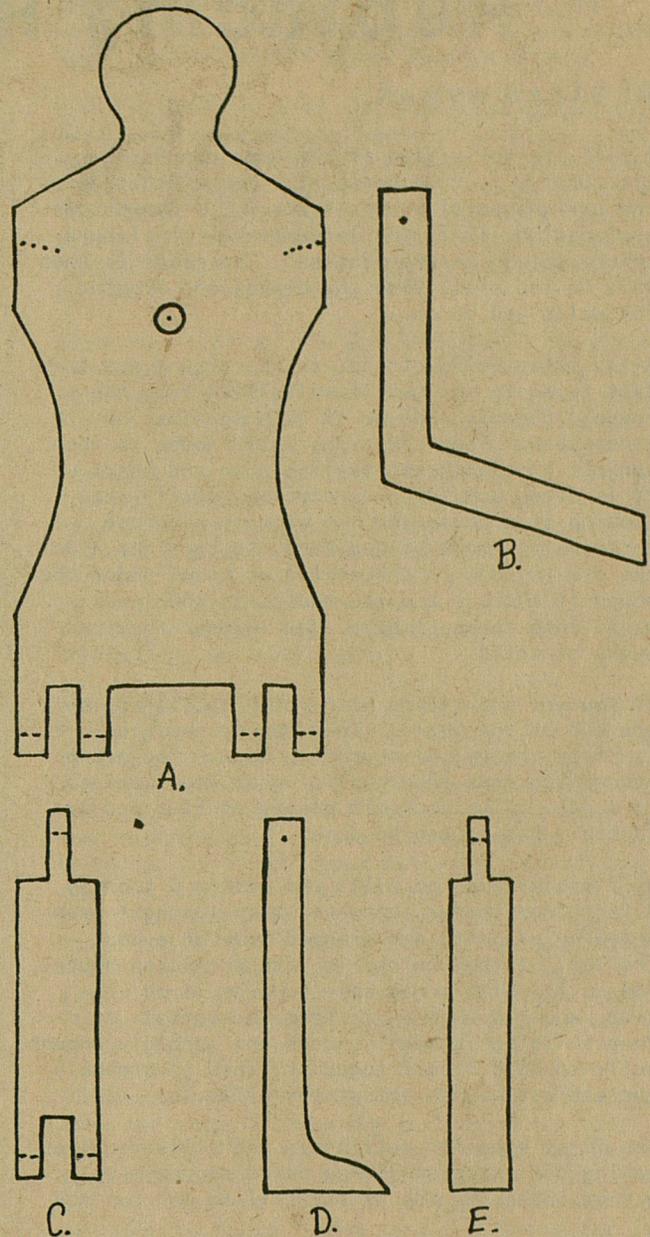
The Limber Jill is an Appalachian folk-music-instrument-toy (also called Limber Jack). She dances to other musical instruments, her feet tapping out the rhythm. Limber Jill can dance and jump and swing her arms - Limber Jill is a lively woman - wild woman - she makes you laugh, she makes you dance.

To play the Limber Jill - you sit on one end of the playing board; hold the Limber Jill by the dowel with one hand so her feet lightly touch the board. With the other hand, tap the board rhythmically. Make her arms swing, make her dance to her knees and make her kick her feet high. Experiment, have fun.

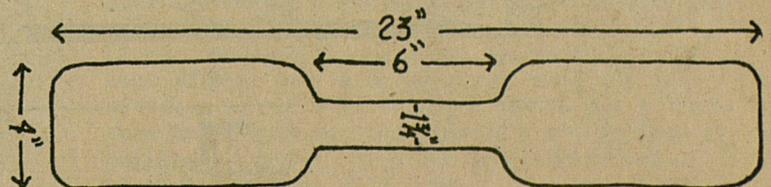
To make a Limber Jill, you need:

1.  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 2 x 14" board (maple, teak, mahogany, pine).
2.  $\frac{3}{16}$ " x 4" x 23" indoor, finished plywood.
3. Drill and drill bits  $\frac{1}{4}$ ",  $\frac{1}{16}$ " and  $\frac{3}{14}$ ".
4. Jigsaw, coping saw or band saw.
5.  $\frac{1}{4}$ " dowel - 14" long.
6. Wire nails 1" - 18.

1. Lay pattern (A, B, and C) on the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " wood. Draw around the pattern of the body, two thighs, and two arms, and cut out each piece. Lay the side view pattern of the foot (D) on the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " piece of wood and draw around the pattern for two feet. Cut out. Using pattern E (the back view of the foot) draw the notch and cut out.
2. Cut out the playing board (dimensions are  $\frac{3}{6}$ " x 4" x 23").
3. At this point, sand the Limber Jill parts and the playing board.
4. Use the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " drill bit and drill a hole at the center of back side of body (where marked) for the dowel. Do not drill all the way through.
5. Use  $\frac{1}{16}$ " drill bit and drill from the side, through arm, through notches on body, upper thighs and lower thighs, and upper foot.
6. Use  $\frac{3}{64}$ " drill bit - position arms on the side of the body and drill into shoulder. You may want to angle the hole down - so arms hang free.
7. Use 1" - 18 wire nails. Put nails through arms and hammer into body. Arms should swing freely.
8. Push the nails through leg notches on the body and through upper thigh. Connect the thighs and feet. Leg parts should swing freely. Bend the end of the nail back on itself and pinch together tightly (so the point won't catch on anything).
9. Glue dowel in the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hold - use Elmer's glue or wood glue.
10. Rub the finished Limber Jill with either linseed or cooking oil, shellac her, varnish her, or just leave her natural.



- A. Body - front view  
 B. Arm - side view - cut 2  
 C. Thigh - front view - cut 2  
 D. Foot - side view - cut 2  
 E. Foot - back view - showing notch



Playing Board

# Replacing Rotten Sills

BY SARAH WYMAN

A sill, by definition of the American Heritage Dictionary, is "the horizontal member that bears the upright portion of a frame...". By further explanation, it is the large timber or timbers which rest on the foundation. The floor is then laid on the sill, then the plates and framing for walls and so on.

Sills often being closest to the ground are the last thing to dry out if walls leak into the house, if roofs leak or if rain splashes up underneath. They rot. The whole house is then subject to sagging or falling down and apart. It is often something to check carefully when looking at a house you may want to purchase. Rotten sills must be replaced, so consider that, and ask to look in the cellar or crawl under the house if there's a space and stick your jack-knife into those timbers. See whether they're punky or solid.

If you get a building with rotten sills, it isn't the end of the world. They can be replaced. It is dirty, heavy, discouraging work. You often accomplish less than half of what you imagined in a day. Give yourself plenty of time and patience. But it can be done.

My first attempt at sills was with a 6 foot by 8 foot four-seater outhouse which I bought from a nearby property and dragged home on a boat trailer. I then turned it into a chicken house. Due to its size I was able to turn it on its side, and I worked on it from the bottom. If your building is small enough and strongly enough built to hold itself together, this is probably the easiest way to get at the sills.

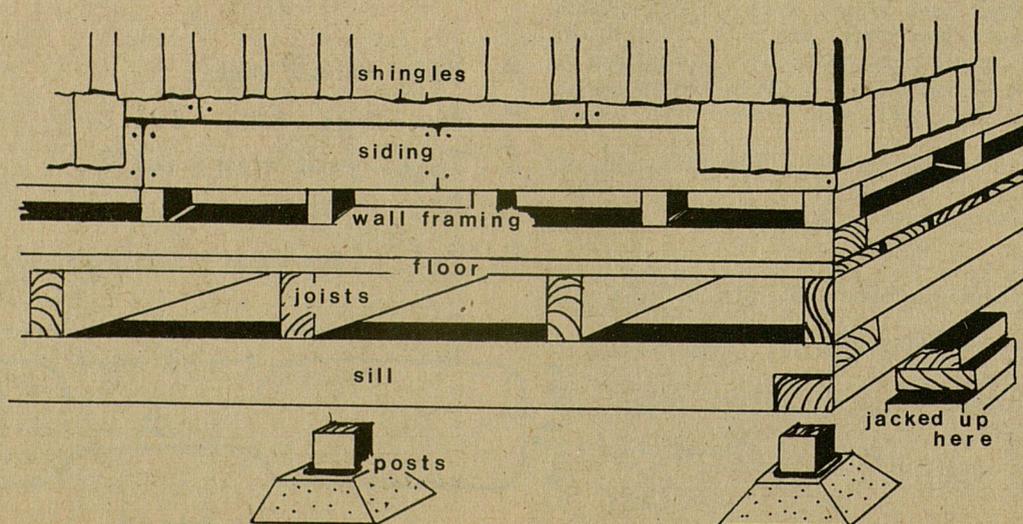
The first step for getting to the sills requires taking off exterior siding up to approximately a foot above the top of the sill so you can see

where the framing joins the sill. I ended up pulling up the floor also because of having to reconstruct the inside of the building for a new use.

By comparison, my next sill job was on a much larger building. I was cleaning out a building I planned to have for a pottery studio. As I removed trash from the back room I discovered the roof had leaked for an unknown number of years, keeping the floor wet, and now it was rotten. I tore up the floor with a wrecking bar and a hammer and discovered a sill to be rotten also. In this case, I had to jack up the building and then put granite blocks and wooden blocks under adjoining sills, leaving the rotten sill 4 inches off its foundation.

To begin, beg, borrow, rent or buy a 7 to 8-ton building jack. Place the jack under a sill other than the one you wish to remove and jack up and then block up with rock or pieces of wood to a height you think you can pull the sill out. This is a slow process, for to prevent damage to the building you will need to jack an inch or so, block it, then move the jack to another spot or to the other side and jack an inch or so repeating these steps. You may need to jack up the entire building which may require jacking and blocking slowly in many places so as not to cause undue stress on any one part of the floor or walls. Jacking the whole building level which in my case I did at the end, took a whole day. If your building falls off its blocking, it may damage the building or you; so it is important that you block it carefully and securely.

Once your sill is off the foundation, begin by pulling off siding and trim boards until you have a clear view of the sill and the floor and wall studding. You can also see if anything

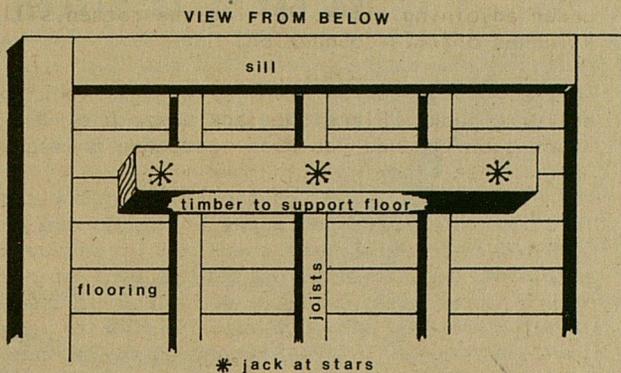


CARMEN GOODYEAR

else needs replacing. It seems as if there's always something you hadn't counted on to be done on an old building.

Now in both cases, the small building on its side with the siding torn off or the large building jacked up, you'll have to remove every nail you can that's holding the thing together. There are nails in every stud which holds the wall up. With a catspaw and hammer you can pull out the old nails. Also the floor boards will be nailed to the sill and they must come up.

If it seems simpler, you may want to remove the floor, or as in my case, it may also be rotten. If your floor is too large or in healthy condition, get some timbers that will support the floor and its joist system and place them inside of the sill underneath the floor. Jack up and block this support system until you're through with the sills.



When all that's left holding the sill on are the spikes holding it to the neighboring sill, go get a sledge hammer. If you've given yourself enough room pulling off siding, you may be able to slam down on it at each end, and it will begin to come apart. Or use a wrecking bar and wedges and drive it away from its neighbor with the sledge.

Doing this whole job is certainly not as easy as writing about it. I remember with my first building I would get to a point each day that I felt I hadn't the knowledge or the physical strength to do what needed to be done next. I would end up in a rage of tears and frustration. Sherman (the man I share a life with) would come home and somehow patiently show me how I could do it myself - for which I am eternally grateful. My previous experience with a man involved not showing but doing it for me, which took away my immediate pain, but I never learned. By the time I got to my second sill job, I had times when I still felt like crying but I was able to stop - step backward and look it over again. Maybe I'd take a lunch break. Then I would tell myself, "You can do it, one step at a time - one nail at a time, one board at a time, one swing of the sledge hammer will move it 1/16th of an inch, but that means in 16 slow, carefully aimed swings it will come off. Let the sledge do the work - raise it and drop it.

Muscles change too. They get stronger the more jobs you tackle. The first time you hammer nails will be very different from 3 to 6 months later having done it a few days each week.

I did the entire sill job alone the second time except for putting the new sill in place. It was heavy and needed extra hands to hold it and fasten it. When I remarked to a male friend at the end of the project that I had done it all alone, he said, "Most men who work as carpenters have a helper". I began to think about what expectations I had placed on myself.

After the sill is off you'll probably have more nails to pull out. If you can't get them out, hacksaws cut metal. Get one and cut them off. You'll need a clean surface everywhere to put the new sill into. When all the nails are removed, get a timber the same size as the one you removed, measure it, cut it to fit into the old space and creosote it all over. Let it dry a day and then bolt it or spike it in place. Creosote is a wood preservative which will prevent rot and insects from eating away at it. Hopefully within your life time you won't need to replace the sill again.

After the new sill is in place, nail the wall framing and the floor joist back into it. Then if you pulled up the floor, cut boards for laying a new subfloor and then a permanent floor over that. Siding will have to be put back on now over the sill. Have the siding and the shingles (if that's your exterior siding) hang down at least 2 inches below the bottom of the sill - hoping that this time water won't get to it. Then if you haven't already let your jacks and supports back down, do it now - one at a time, a few inches at a time just as you jacked it up, or again you'll place too much stress on the building.

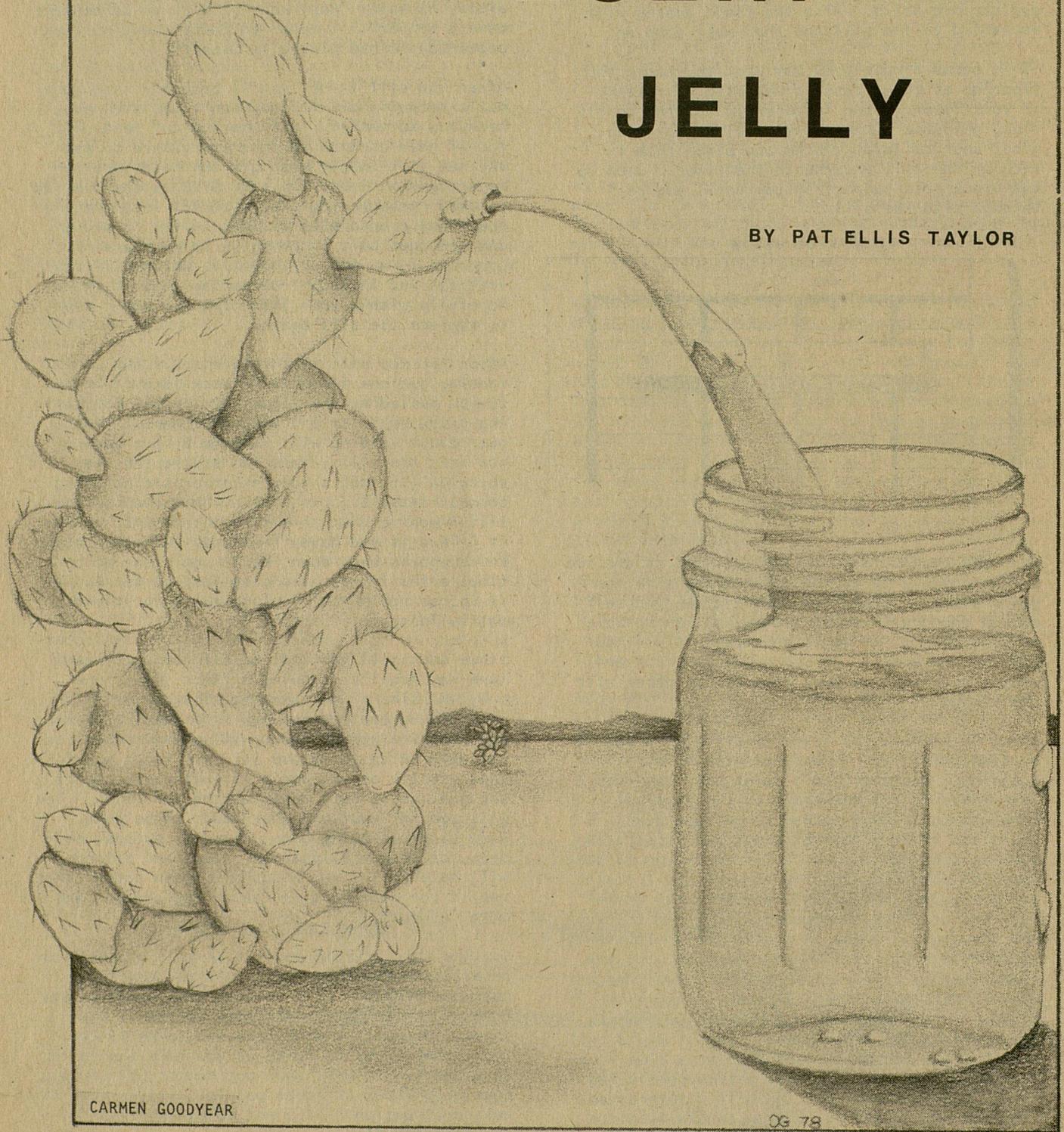
Since each sill job will be slightly different (one may require removing a floor first, one only the siding, another the sill may be held from above, another notched from below), I cannot describe how each one will work or what you may have to do to remove it. All I can say is that usually as you begin to pull pieces apart and pull nails out, reassess the job often. You will see for yourself what needs to be done. Crow bars, wrecking bars, hammers, wedges, chisels, catspaws, nail pullers, jacks and friends will help you. Two heads are often better than one if for nothing more than encouragement and moral support.

Somehow this article doesn't seem long enough or detailed enough to describe all the hours and days and growth I went through to accomplish the feat of replacing the sills on two small buildings. However, I encourage you to do it too. Look at what you're doing as you take the building apart. It will show you how to put it back together. Look at other people's sills, look at new construction. It's not so overwhelming if you take one step at a time.

# DESERT

# JELLY

BY PAT ELLIS TAYLOR



CARMEN GOODYEAR

OG 78

Although the Southwest desert doesn't seem the place to find wild fruit for making jelly, Mexican plant lore has combined with traditional Anglo jelly-making expertise over the years, and the results are delicious. I learned how to make two kinds of desert jelly from Jewel Babb, one of the hardier women in the Rio Grande area who, at 78, still herds her own goats and uses many of the desert plants in her daily diet. The first recipe uses the apple or tuna from the versatile prickly pear cactus; the second calls for berries from the aguavilla, a species of arbutus which grows plentifully along the Rio Grande.

Sometime around the end of July or the first part of August, the prickly pear apples begin to turn a bright purple; they're completely ripe and ready to pick when the purple brightens, becoming almost luminous with color. They break from the cactus fairly easily, but because of the thorns a pair of gloves and a paring knife help in the gathering process.

When enough have been gathered, simply wash them and put them in a large pot with water to cover. There really isn't any need to cut the thorns off just so long as the apples have been thoroughly cleaned. Bring the water to a boil; while the water is boiling take a potato masher or large spoon and mash the apples up. As soon as the water becomes a bright red, remove the pot from the heat. This is important, because if you cook it longer, the color will begin to leave. At this point, pour the sauce through a straining cloth twice in order to get a clear, wonderfully red juice, which can be used in any standard jelly recipe.

Here is one method using commercial pectin, which is necessary unless the ripe apples are mixed with some less ripe ones, which tends to detract from the flavor:

1. Mix 3 1/2 cups of juice with 1 package of powdered pectin
2. Bring to a boil
3. Add 5 cups of sugar\*
4. Bring to a boil again and boil hard for one minute
5. Pour into half-pint scalded jars and seal

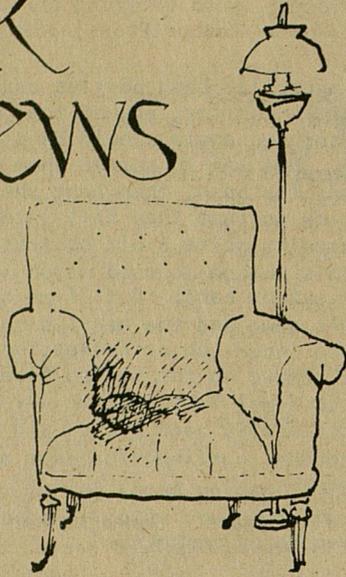
The aguavilla bush berries usually begin to ripen a little earlier, around the first weeks of July. The berries again should be picked when very ripe. One way to gather them is to put a sheet around the bush, then beat the berries off with a stick so that they fall into the sheet. There is usually quite a bit of trash with the berries if this method is used which is difficult to pick out by hand. But if an open-ended towsack is wet down and the berries rolled through it into a large tub or bucket, most of the trash will adhere to the burlap fibers. This, according to Jewel Babb, is the way aguavilla has traditionally been picked and cleaned. The same procedures outlined for pear apples can then be used for making berry jelly. There is another method, however, which is popular in the area, called Berry Sunshine.

To make Sunshine, mix 4 cups of washed berries with 4 cups of sugar (or honey) and 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Heat over slow heat, stirring constantly to prevent burning, until the mixture comes to a boil; then continue boiling for five minutes. Pour the hot mixture into a large shallow pan and cover with a pane of glass. Then set it outdoors in a spot which receives sunshine all day. Stir the berries occasionally, and bring them in at night. Also be careful in picking your spot. The first time I tried the recipe my pan was too accessible to ants, which in a matter of hours were using my Sunshine for a swimming pool. The second time I used a pair of saw horses to set my pan on, which worked very well. Two days of Southwest sunshine is usually enough to cook the berries to the right thickness. Then pour cold into scalded jars and seal.

Much of the pleasure of making these jellies comes from learning how to use the desert plants, how to look beyond the seeming sterility of the desert to discover how bountiful the area really is.

\*Honey may be substituted for half of the sugar.

# Book Reviews



JUDY OLIVER

BY SHERRY THOMAS

*Womenfriends, A Soap Opera*, by Esther Newton and Shirley Walton: This book is a dialogue of journals - two women/friends keeping and sharing their journals through 1971-72. "Rebecca" during those years is a radio broadcaster, married, pregnant, a mother. "Pauline" is a college professor, gay, in the closet/coming out, a blossoming writer. Their talks with themselves/ to each other are the conversations that too often didn't happen in those splintering days of the women's movement. The book is painful, powerful, exhilarating, as present tense as it is historical. Even the form, the interweaving of two journals, speaks of the inventiveness of Feminists, of the very best of the women's movement: it validates what is personal, what is ours. (Friends Press, 520 W. 110th Street, New York City. \$4.50, you should probably add postage.)

*The Quilters, Women and Domestic Art*, by Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Buford: This is a book about "the relationship of the art of quilting to the lives of the quilters," a collection of interviews with women in Texas and New Mexico, most of them in their 70's - 90's. It is a deeply moving book, which gives us back a bit of our history. Country women, as well as women artists, will find encouragement and support as these women speak of farming, building houses, raising food, burying children, as well as making art. The book is divided by the periods of a woman's life: childhood, youth, middle years, old age; speakers are not identified. This universal/ every woman quality is both a strength and a weakness of the book - one becomes involved and then wants more. The color plates of the quilts are superb, especially because the quilts are displayed against their natural settings: on a fence gate, a cabin wall. It becomes clear how directly the abstract art which is quilting

derived from the colors and shapes of the countryside which surrounded these women. *The Quilters* is a treasure. (Doubleday, 1977. Hardback, \$12.95)

*Images of Women in Fiction*, edited by Susan Koppelman Cornillon: This is a collection of essays of interest to any woman writer, and probably to many women readers. The essays cover images of women in traditional fiction, the process of writing, emerging feminist esthetics and women as heroes in recent literature.

Published in 1973, it missed most of the new wave of Feminist publishing, but still serves as an excellent introduction/overview. Joanna Russ on what heroines can't do, Cornillon on the "fiction of fiction" as men have written it, Tillie Olsen on writers' silences: these essays are worth the price of the book, for anyone interested in what literature is about. (Popular Press, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. \$4.00)

*Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston and *Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution* by Agnes Smedley (The Feminist Press, Old Westbury, N.Y.) Read as companion pieces, these two books illuminate each other. *Woman Warrior* is subtitled "memories of a girlhood among ghosts." Ghosts are anyone who is not Chinese. In it, Kingston tells stories of her family in China before the revolution, and of her own girlhood in California. It is a sharp, horrifying picture of the position of women in Chinese culture - from the aunt who was stoned to death for bearing an illegitimate child, to the psychic warfare Kingston experienced. But while the book is essentially a cultural indictment, it is never polemical or rhetorical. It is a political story told through tales and myth, with such precision of language that it is literature.

The Smedley book, *Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution*, is composed of short pieces she wrote while traveling as a journalist attached to the Red Army. One needs Kingston's book to truly appreciate where the women Smedley describes have come from. But it is Smedley's book that places *Woman Warrior* in its full setting. While Smedley's women were full partners in fighting for their own liberation, Kingston was growing up in a transplanted Chinese culture as patriarchal and misogynist as ever. It is Smedley's book, with its stories of peasant girls and aristocratic ladies all committed to building a revolution, that gives us hope for the future and offers a model for how deeply a culture can change.

*For Men Against Sexism*, edited by Jon Snodgrass: This is a collection of essays and articles on male sexuality, men's role conditioning, men's liberation and the women's movement, working class, third-world and gay men's experiences. It's the best collection of its kind I've seen so far and should be of interest to any non-

separatist feminist, as well as mandatory reading for men living with feminists. The section on male sexuality which opens the book (particularly the articles by Jack Litewica and John Stoltenberg) is the deepest exploration of male sexual conditioning I've seen, thoughtful, stimulating and ultimately hopeful. The section on men's liberation and the women's movement provides a critical appraisal of the men's movement's potential for reinforcing the domination of men. Though occasionally didactic and rhetorical, most of the writing in this book is the kind of personal exploration/statement familiar to feminist women. I highly recommend it to women who want to know what men are doing. (Times Change Press, c/o Monthly Review, 62 W. 14th Street, New York City 10011, \$5.75 plus 50¢ postage)

*Father Journal, Five Years of Awakening to Fatherhood*, by David Steinberg: *Father Journal* is included here partly in hopes of reaching the fathers of the children whose mothers read *Country Women*. It's a small book (96 pages), deceptively simple from the outside. Inside is a deeply moving chronicle of a man learning to parent, often as the full-time homemaker during the five years the book covers. David's insights into life with an infant child, the changes and fears that brings, should be as meaningful to women as to men. His reflections on the changes brought by either parent working full-time outside the home, provide a frightening picture of "normal" family and work patterns, in the price paid by both child and parents. *Father Journal* is a warm, personal, lively record of a relationship too often minimized or ignored; it's a hopeful look at the possible. (Times Change Press, see address above; \$2.75. Minimum order is \$4.00. Write Times Change Press, Albion, Ca. 95410 for a free catalog of their other publications).

*Androgyny* by June Singer: This book often makes for difficult and slow reading, is less than the perfect book on androgyny. Yet, for feminist women who feel that androgyny best describes their life experiences, it is a good beginning. Singer's thesis is basically that sex-role identification and polarization is a cultural creation, that humans span an infinite spectrum of talents, traits, inclinations, skills, without regard to gender. The lengthy first section of the book "Yesterday," provides historical, literary and religious evidence to prove that this is true (something feminists take for granted). The second section, "Today and Tomorrow," draws on Singer's experience as a Jungian therapist, and discusses the difficulties and potentialities of androgynous experience today. Though she makes a clear statement that androgyny has nothing to do with sexual preference, one finds that her most androgynous clients are gay and bisexual: those who have stepped outside traditional sex role identification, by choice or necessity. Much of the historical material seems a justification for Singer's psychoanalytic community,

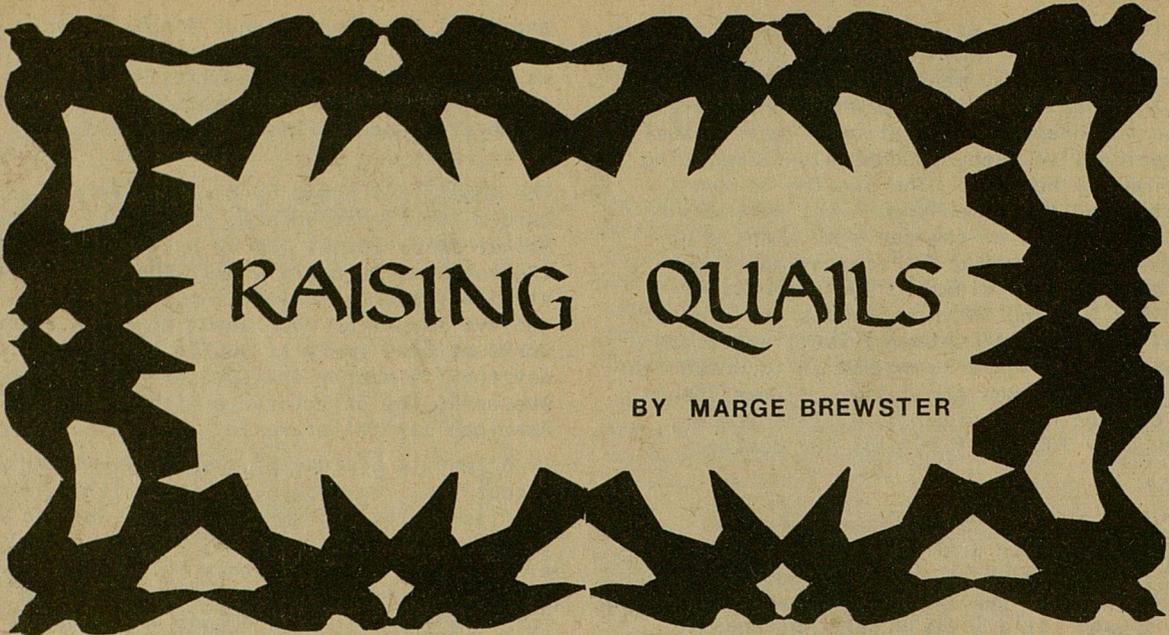
and I get the feeling that Singer is writing ahead of her own experience. But for those of us busy exploring the totality of our human-ness, *Androgyny* is an exciting and affirming book. (Doubleday/Anchor Press; paperback).

*The Managerial Woman* by Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim (Doubleday/Anchor, paperback) and *Games Mother Never Taught You* by Betty Lehan Harragan (Rawson Associates, \$10.95): These may seem strange books to include in *Country Women*, yet they've taught as much about how this culture works as many feminist publications have. I'd say they're nearly indispensable for any woman who works in, or interacts with, the traditional American capitalist world. *Managerial Woman*

is primarily a study of twenty-five women chief executives. In looking at their life histories, it illuminates a great deal about women's attitudes toward work, careers, success, competition. I found it amazingly helpful in understanding the feminist collective I worked with for five years. *Games Mother Never Taught You* is more clearly directed towards women in traditional (though perhaps for women, non-traditional) jobs. It's an honest, realistic, useful appraisal of how America is run, and it is a strongly pro-woman book. Whether one wants to play the game or not, it's useful to know that it exists. Most women don't, and find themselves breaking all sorts of "rules", without consciousness or choice. These books have been part of a turning point in my own recognition that I will spend my whole life working. I recommend them to any woman who finds work to be a central issue in her life, whether inside or outside the system.

*Moments of Being*, by Virginia Woolf (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich; \$8.95) and *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume 1* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich; \$12.95): *Moments of Being* should be of interest to most readers. It contains previously unpublished autobiographical writings by Virginia Woolf, concerning primarily her childhood years before she moved to Bloomsbury. "Reminiscences" and "A Sketch of the Past", from that book, place the novelist and feminist-to-be squarely back in her Victorian childhood, and leave one with a great admiration for who she became. The book is a delight to read, full of Woolf's witty, wry, ironic humor. *The Diary* may only be of interest to real Woolf fanatics; I can't tell, as I am one myself. It covers the years 1915-19, beginning just before her first major breakdown and ending just after World War I. The diary grows as Virginia does, becoming increasingly introspective and social commentating; promising, I hope, great things for the remaining four volumes. It provides a day by day look at the lives of a great many people who lived at a high pitch of creativity and intellectual curiosity.

*Postscript*: Libraries are one of our most under-utilized resources. Encourage your library to buy or borrow those books you can't afford yourself.



# RAISING QUAILS

BY MARGE BREWSTER

KATHRYN BROWN

As city gals, working demanding jobs (clinical biochemist and physician) we were quite hesitant to add the responsibility of animals after moving to our 40 acre Arkansas mountaintop. After the initial two-year surge of clearing and planting, and becoming committed to the organic way of life, our homestead seemed to demand the addition of animals. We wanted to produce some of our own meat, perhaps some eggs, and knew the garden, orchard, vineyard, and berries would benefit greatly from added manure. The other unspoken desire was to have live animals to further enrich our lives. We settled on quail as requiring a small enclosed area and little initial investment or time. Perhaps chickens would have met the same requirements, but neither of us wanted to *touch* chickens - they lacked the factor of personal appeal. Having read in *Organic Gardening Magazine* of the better feed-to-egg ratio and larger size eggs of the Japanese Quail, the Coturnix, we searched for a source. A bulletin from Rodale Press\* listed sources of this variety. A North Carolina breeder responded to our inquiry with the following prices (1976):

Eggs : \$15.00/100  
Chicks : \$25.00/100 (1 day old)  
          \$30.00/100 (1 week old)  
Breeder: \$ 2.00 Each

As we knew nothing of hatching eggs, we ordered week-old chicks in the spring, learning the usual way (through the pocketbook) of the enormous air freight cost for live birds (parcel service will not handle). Being wiser now, I would order fertile eggs and have them hatched locally (\$0.10/egg). As a relative had once raised Bob-White quail for a time, I obtained a metal cage and use of an incubator (partially working), so the initial purchases required were a brooder (to warm the young chicks), plastic watering lids to fit on quart fruit jars, and chick feeder trays. The bulletin mentioned earlier was

invaluable for information on space requirements, cage-building, hatching, feeding, breeding, and cost considerations.

Finally they arrived, and I responded warmly to their busy cheeping as I brought them home and installed them in their new quarters in our barn. Many happy hours were spent watching them grow and acquire new colors and personalities. We tried not to name them or adopt any favorites, knowing that the time would come when they could no longer be pets. They did express some cannibalism, however, wounding each other, and inevitably the wounded ones we separated and doctored daily touched our tender spots. We learned to clip their upper beaks and avoid the head and tail-pecking actions. The sexes could be distinguished at 6 to 7 weeks of age, the females having brown and white speckled throat feathers, and the males having orange streaks. They became quite beautiful, with colors reminiscent of pheasant. Also about this time, the males began to sound off (a very squawky and unmelodious Japanese version of "Bob-White") and the females began to lay their eggs.

The birds seemed to appreciate a sandbox made from a two-gallon oil can with one side cut out and sharp edges folded down. They fluffed their feathers in this sand, preventing mites, and many also used it as a nest box (seldom one broke despite much use). As we wished to hatch more quail, males were left with females (1 male to each 2 females), and excess males were butchered for the freezer at age 10 weeks.

Butchering was the hardest part. Only the self-admonition that one shouldn't raise animals if they can't be sacrificed made this action possible. Finally a neighbor - an experienced bird-hunter - offered to show me how. Although it sounded gruesome, his method was quick and painless: hold the body in one hand and jerk the head off with the other. Throw the head in a

plastic sack, hold the body, neck down, for blood to drain, and then open the skin in the chest, from abdomen to neck. Cut off wings and feet, and peel off skin, feathers and all. Cut off (not into) the preening gland at the base of the tail, open the chest cavity and remove all internal organs. Place the carcass into cold water for final cleaning later. Once mastered, this entire operation required about five minutes per bird. Their flavor would probably be better if the quail were cooked and eaten right away, but somehow we've never been able to eat the quail until a decent interval of time has passed.

Carting the quail manure to the compost pile was a Saturday morning chore. As the summer heat climbed, the aroma of the compost pile also climbed, requiring its location to be moved further and further away from our outdoor sitting area. We obtained free sawdust from a local mill, and used it lavishly under the cages to keep down the odor and the flies. Addition of diatomaceous earth to the quail feed, which thereby incorporated it into the droppings, seemed to decrease the fly problem by its abrasive action on the fly body.

Our experience so far has been an average of 0.7 eggs per bird per day for the first six months, slightly less for another six months. The size of the eggs varies greatly, and no two have the same color or markings - truly an Easter delight for the entire mountain's grandchildren.

We feed turkey pre-starter crumbles, with 30% protein. Feed with antibiotics added contains less powder than feed without, but we have noted no difference in disease susceptibility on either feed. Being organic "farmers", we prefer not to add unnecessary antibiotics to our meat, eggs, and compost. Lower protein feed definitely results in smaller birds and smaller eggs, although egg production is not impaired. Our birds consume (and waste) slightly less than 0.1 pound of feed each per day. A state certificate, exempting the feed from sales tax, was easily obtained and well worth the effort.

During the summer months, we gathered eggs, fed and watered daily, removed droppings weekly, and clipped beaks bi-weekly. The smaller, less aggressive males were most prone to being pecked by females and other males. The meaning of "hen-pecked" became apparent. When too much beak was clipped, severe hemorrhage occurred, resulting in death. (We were able to acquire some bone wax, which has been our only successful remedy for a bleeding beak.)

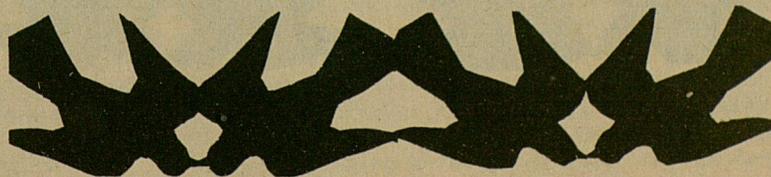
We carried the quail in wire cages inside our barn through a terrible winter for the south - 45 days of ice and snow - using 100 watt light bulbs suspended close to the cages, and perching the brooder over one cage, old blankets over everything to keep in the small amount of heat.

All birds survived, although the wire froze and their feet also froze, resulting in swollen and bleeding, permanently injured, ankle joints. Fortunately during this time I was at home recovering from surgery, and so could exchange water for ice several times a day, or we might have lost them all.

We were able to visit a commercial breeder of Bob-White quail, and saw that they raised each batch in a wire-enclosed room, with an infrared light bulb suspended at variable heights above the floor. When the quail were very young, they enclosed them in a small area directly under the heat bulb using a cardboard fence, and gradually this fence was expanded and the bulb raised higher, until the quail could safely roam the entire room and the heat bulb was then only used during cold weather. They covered the floor with sugar cane residue - bagasse - which is very absorbent and needs to be removed only once a year, when the batch of quail is sacrificed.

This visit, and the summation of our past experience, convinced us that our labor-intensive method of cage-raising the quail was not the best way, so we proceeded to convert an unused horse stall to such a wire-enclosed room. We placed chicken wire over the sand floor, covered this with hay, and finally, bagasse. Our inattention to detail was apparent several days later, as a "varmint" - probably mink or rat - had tunneled under the sand floor, found the one part of the floor we hadn't wired, and killed 90% of the quail. After *completely* wiring the floor of the stall and replacing the few remaining quail, we noted a very satisfied-appearing cat emerging from the barn. Sure enough, he had apparently climbed the wire to the roof where there was an opening, and calmly lunched on the bedraggled remainder of our flock. Despite the difficulties in making our pen "varmint-proof", we are determined to make this approach succeed, allowing the quail more room, a more natural environment, usage of larger food and water containers, and removing the odor, fly, and manure hauling problems.

Our records of expenses and of egg and meat production are given here as a guide to others. We kept only enough quail to provide eggs for a



household of three, and we did not breed frequently for maximum production. Using our old incubator with poor temperature control, 60% of the eggs hatched. The all-important ratio of females-to-males ranged from 1.25 to 0.5, obviously affecting the economic returns for feed and time expended. Assuming that predators do *not* wipe out the flock, quail need only be purchased once. Due to our misfortunes, we put all of the quail purchase expense and the (avoidable) air freight expense into the first year. We have amortized the permanent equipment over a five year period, and have included the cost of our own labor:

EXPENSES

Equipment: (over 5 years) ---- \$10.23/year

1 Brooder	\$43.00
4 Waterers @ 0.35	1.40
3 Feeders @ 1.59	4.77
1 Toenail Clipper	2.00
	<u>\$51.17</u>

Quail: ----- \$55.05

Initial cost, 50 week-old chicks	\$25.00
Air Freight	\$30.05

Feed: ----- \$135.90/year

0.62 lbs/bird/week @ \$0.11/lb.	
36 quail fed for 12 months	= \$125.90
10 lbs. Diatomaceous Earth	= \$ 10.00

Electricity: (@ \$0.026/kw-hr) --- \$32.13/year

Brooder (600 watt, or 0.6 kw)	
Raising young chicks, 267 hours	
Heat in 10°F weather, 1500 hours	
Total = 1060.2 kw-hrs.	

Lighted Room (40 watts)	
4380 hours, or 175.2 kw-hrs.	

Total kw-hrs. = 1235.4 @ \$0.026

Labor: ----- \$416.00/year

4 hours/week @ \$2.00/hour

TOTAL EXPENSES ----- \$649.31  
(Incl. Labor)

\$233.31  
(Excl. Labor)

RETURN

50 Quail sacrificed for meat @ \$1.50	\$ 75.00
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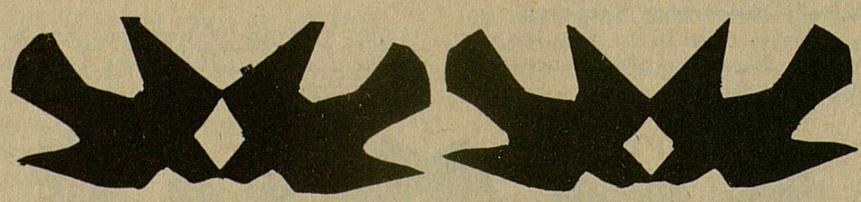
661 Dozen eggs @ \$1.00/Dozen	<u>\$661.00</u>
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TOTAL RETURN \$736.00

Thus, despite our novice approach, un-intensive breeding program, and many mistakes, the quail made a profit this very first year. Perhaps the best return of all, unmeasurable in dollars, was the good times we had socializing with friends over quail eggs and bloody marys at Sunday Brunch on the mountain!

We gaze across our snow-covered mountainside, ordering the seed for this spring's well-fertilized garden, anticipating the arrival of a clutch of eggs with which to start anew this satisfying part of our homestead cycle.

\* "Raising Coturnix Quail for Eggs and Meat", by M. Podems, edited by B. Bortz, Research and Development Report #1, Rodale Press, Inc., 33 East Minor St., Emmaus, Pa. 18049.



# COUNTRY WOMEN

is all of us

## Writers !!

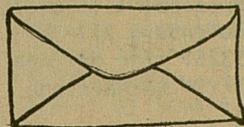
*Country Women* is our forum. Some of the women who write for the magazine are not "writers." If you're not comfortable writing an article, you might tape record and transcribe a conversation with a friend about the theme or go out and interview a neighbor. We also continually need practical articles. Almost every woman who reads the magazine and lives in the country could write at least one practical article about something she knows well (for example, dyeing wool, raising ducks, windmills, skylights, plumbing). Won't you do it?

## Change of Address

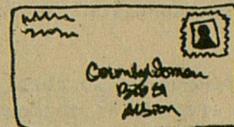


Please send change of address notices promptly. We can't afford to mail your issue twice.

Also send old address with new address because our files are in zip code order and we can only find you by your old zip code.



## Letters to the Editors



A Letters to the Editors column will begin in the next issue if you send us your letters. Send opinions of articles in Country Women, news from your area, dialogues you would like to have with other readers.

## Advertising??

Rather than raise magazine prices again, *Country Women* is seriously considering taking advertising. We are looking for women with experience in advertising to consult with concerning price and procedures. Please contact Arlene, c/o *Country Women*.

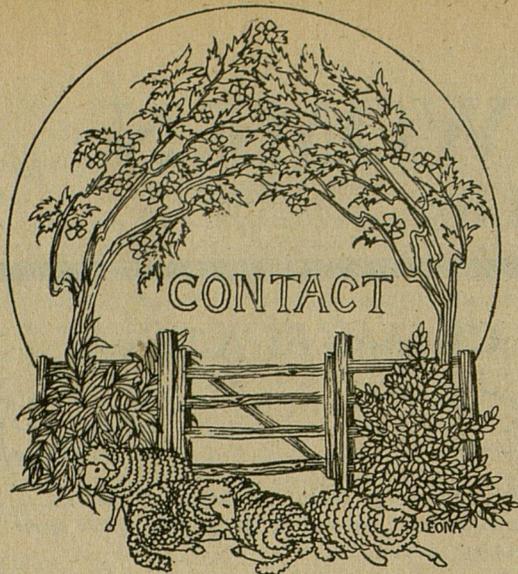
## \$\$ Grants \$\$

We are looking for women with grant or foundation information/experience. We need names and addresses of places to apply to and women who can help write applications.

## Artists

We also have a continuing need for photographs and graphics. Because we shoot the whole magazine at 80%, photographs need to be larger than standard snapshot size. We can only use black and white photos, with clear focus and good contrast. In particular, we need photographs of all types of farm animals (or of women working with farm animals). We would also like more photos of older women, long-time country women, and third world women.

In graphic arts, we welcome pen and ink drawings, block prints, etchings, engravings, sumi brush drawings, and pencil drawings with clear lines and shading. Xerox copies are only usable if they completely and accurately reproduce the original. All artwork and photographs will be returned after they have appeared in the magazine and we are happy to send complimentary copies to contributors. Since we are using an original cover design for each issue, we also need graphic art for the covers.



Lesbian Defense Fund works to help Lesbian mothers keep their children. It is a new organization, non-profit and tax-exempt. Write for information. Lesbian Defense Fund, P.O. Box 4, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452.

A community in rural Maine is looking for members. We are social change oriented, working against nuclear power with other local groups, learning to live non-violently. Feminism, poverty and peace work are some of our concerns. We'd like more feminists to join us, as keeping an equal balance of women/men is important. Our living situation leaves room for political work and homestead skills as we manage a garden and heat with wood. We also are vegetarians and live with 3 cats. If women are interested in visiting us and talking about joining us in our work, write for more information to: The Foraging Woman, c/o L. Dansinger, Route 1, Newport, Maine, 04953.

The Northwest Women's Music Festival will be in Portland, Oregon, at the Neighbors of Woodcraft building, July 7,8, and 9. For further information contact; Carole Jackson, P.O. Box 20472, Portland, Oregon, 97220. Phone listed in her name.

*Country Experience for Young Women* is a feminist camp for young women ages 7-14 held in Northern California, from July 16 through 30. The women who will plan and be at the camp full time will all be lesbians. Lesbians and women who define themselves as feminists will do the workshops. Women interested in planning, doing workshops, fundraising, and working on the camp are urged to contact us. For young women interested in attending, the fee for two weeks will be on a sliding scale ranging between \$90 and \$150. Some scholarship funds will be available. Women who can afford it are urged to give donations in order that as many scholarships as necessary can be provided. For further information or to send donations, write: Sage Mountainfire, 3100 Ridgewood Rd., Willits, CA 95490.

Leavitt Hill Farm, New Vineyard, Me. 04956, has 250 acres; ten clear, rest medium growth mixed woods. Predominantly southern exposure ideal for orchards and vineyards. Land held in trust; 99 year leases. Seven adults and nine children compose a loose community. The land is our strongest tie. Community orchard is another bond. Much building to do. Gardens, greenhouses, aquaculture, forestry. Area rich with talented people, freeschool, women's group, active political awareness, co-counselling, college, etc. There is room for a great deal of diversity here. Seeking feminists, activists, farmers, craftspeople, etc. Age and sexual preference unimportant.

The Fifth National Women's Music Festival will take place in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, from June 13 through June 18. This festival will offer workshops and concerts celebrating women-powered music. Workshops focus on many technical and philosophical aspects of women's music. Registration before June 13 is \$30, after is \$40. Contact: National Women's Music Festival, P.O. Box 2721, Station A, Champaign, Ill. 61820 Phone 217-333-6443, Barb Schoolenberg 217-367-6551, Mary Van Horn 217-328-3325. The National Women's Music Festival is truly a cornerstone in women's music. Join us.

We are doing an article on Vegetarian communes and collectives. If you wish to contribute any information, please contact: Vegetarian World, 8235 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 216, Los Angeles, CA, 90046.

I live way off the beaten path, in northeast Iowa, and I'd like to widen my circle of gay women friends who share my interest in dogs. I breed and show English Cockers, I write children's books, and there's room for a dog-loving summer apprentice. Lynn Hall, Touchwood, Route Two, Elkader, Iowa 53043. 319-767-3645.

Gertrude's Cafe is looking for women to work full-time in a collective women-run restaurant. Basically vegetarian cooking. Some wages available. Experience preferred. Inquire: 1161 Lincoln, Eugene, Ore. 97401. 503-343-0366.

## LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Country Women,

I haven't been in touch with you for a while because I was upset about the letter you printed criticizing my article. I had many bee people read my article and carefully researched and checked my sources. I will not have someone cite my "lack of experience" when I never mentioned my age, profession, education, etc. in my article.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen DeBold

Ed. Note- Country Women stands corrected. In the future we will make sure that the original article truly needs correcting before printing criticism. Thanks for keeping us aware.

# FUTURE ISSUES

**HUMOR:** What is women's humor, examples, stories, analysis, cartoon strips. Mime improvisational theater, humor that mirrors our feminist fancies and foibles. What is the cutting edge? Humor as a political tool, as a means of survival. We want to include a parody called "Country Girl" so sharpen your satirical pens. Deadline is May 15

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

We want to solicit material primarily from women outside the United States, but including Native American and Canadian women. What issues face feminists in other countries? How are they organized? How do they relate to the problems of employment discrimination, child care, abortion, aging, health care, violence against women, class differences, environmental issues? What part do international feminists play in their national government, national issues? International issues? What are international lesbian communities like? Examples of female bonding in other cultures. If you have contacts outside the U.S. please encourage them to write. If you know of periodicals we might use to solicit material from, let us know. We are beginning to work

on this issue early so as to assure a wide range of response. For further information, or to offer suggestions, contact: Terry, Box 220, Albion, CA 95410. Deadline is July 7.

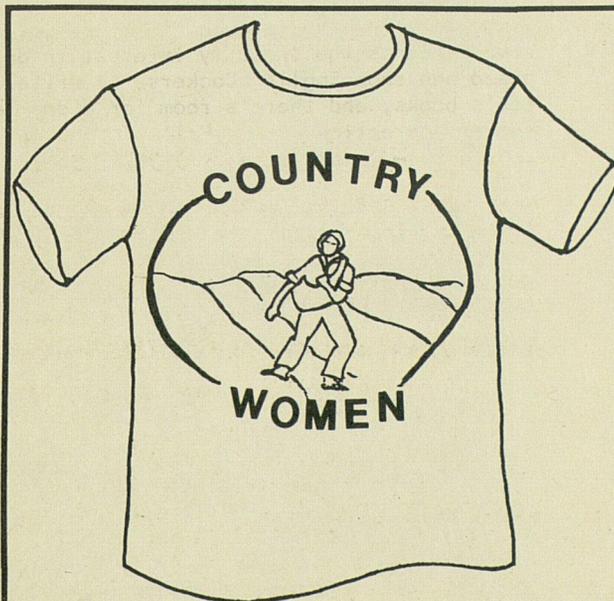
**FARMING WOMEN:** Who are we? Young and old? What are the realities of our lives, our history, our farms? Even if you are not a farmer yourself, here's your chance to interview a woman farmer and write an article about her life. Let's make sure our history is not lost this time. Consider writing the interview in the first person narrative rather than question/answer form. Of the skills or knowledge you brought with you to the farm, which has proved most useful? Do you sometimes have fantasies about other ways you might spend your life? Was farming your choice? If country life was your fantasy, how closely has the fantasy corresponded to the reality? Deadline Sept. 7.

## UPCOMING ISSUES

WOMEN AS MOTHERS: WOMEN AS DAUGHTERS

RACISM

FEMINISM AND LESBIANISM



## COUNTRY WOMEN T SHIRTS

## BACK ISSUES

Choose any 5 copies of back issues #10 - 21 for \$3.00 plus 50¢ postage. Single copies of issues 10 - 22, \$1.00; #23 - 26, \$1.25.

- #10 Spirituality
- #11 Older Women
- #12 Children's Liberation
- #13 Cycles
- #14 Foremothers
- #15 Sexuality
- #16 Women Working
- #17 Feminism & Relationships
- #18 Politics
- #19 Mental and Physical Health
- #20 Food
- #21 Woman as Artist
- #22 Country - City
- #23 Class
- #24 Personal Power
- #25 Fiction
- #26 Violence and Anger

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