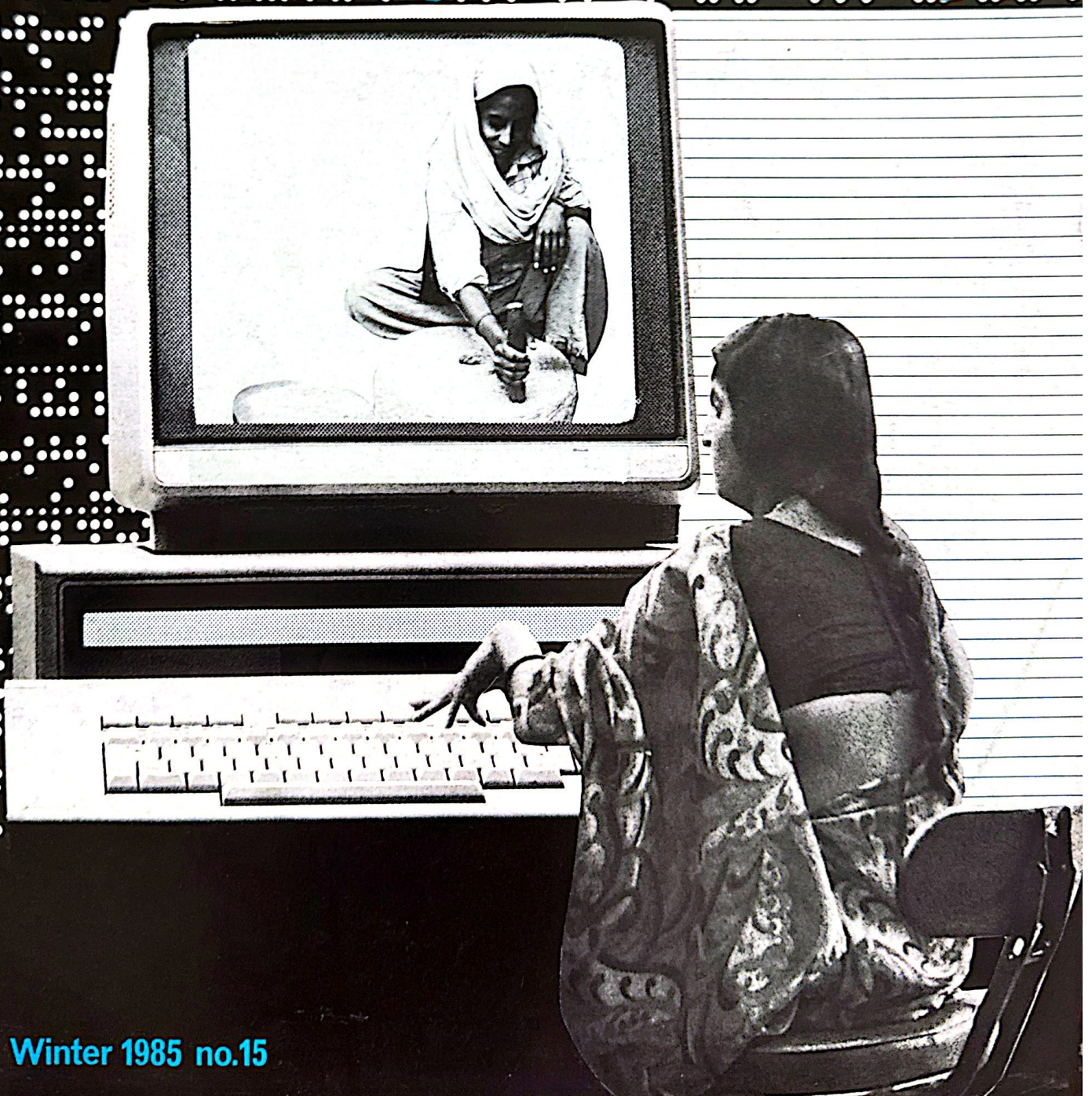


Connections

An International Women's Quarterly

Changing Technology



Winter 1985 no.15

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Statement

Connexions is the collective product of feminists of diverse nationalities and political perspectives committed to contributing to an international women's movement.

We want to go beyond merely providing facts and information, and hope that by passing on—as directly as possible—women's writing generally unavailable in the U.S., we will be helping women here to understand and connect with the experiences and viewpoints of women in other parts of the world. We also want to contribute to the growth of a worldwide network connecting women working on similar projects by researching, establishing contacts and exchanging information with other women's organizations.

To a large extent, the economic and political conditions under which we live determine the issues to which we give priority. Women do not live in a vacuum, but in what is still largely a man's world. It is essential for us to understand the working of that world if we are to understand each other. We hope that *Connexions* will be one step toward building an international women's movement.

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Changing Technology

Is technology gender-based? Are changes in technology the result of *pure* scientific research? Clearly, despite the benign image of dedicated researchers pushing forward the frontiers of knowledge, scientists, who are predominantly white and male, do bring their own ideologies to bear in choosing and pursuing research topics. To an even greater degree, those who fund and thereby control the directions of science, are also white and male. Sexism and racism are inherent in this military/industrial/technological science.

People's basic needs such as health, housing and employment are still unmet, yet "science" moves on to star-wars, spending millions of dollars for yet another military application. Where does this scientific technology-philosophy lead us? Where has it taken us in the past?

The motives for pursuing or not pursuing scientific possibilities are not always apparent. For example, one purportedly beneficial avenue is the "Green Revolution" of hybrid seeds whose stated aim has been greater crop yields. Actually, many Asian countries have to buy the hybrid seeds (since they don't reproduce themselves) and the required fertilizers from American and German seed companies, thereby increasing their dependence and the companies' profits. Another example can be found in which reproductive technologies are being explored as infertility options. Egg fusion, which has been possible in both mice and frogs—but necessarily creates a female—has not been one of these options. Indeed, in general the social ramifications of reproductive technologies have not been sufficiently examined for their effects on women. Why is it that the latest bio-technological "advances" are spot-lighted, while the failure of society and technology to develop affordable medical care is overlooked?

Large-scale changes in technology have always brought about concomitant changes in economic structure and in the ways people work. The industrial revolution transformed the agrarian economy into a capitalist-based one. And now the infra-structure of society is changing again because of information technology. It has been said that this technology is based on the elimination of work. If this is true, what will this mean for the relevance of unions and other organizing strategies? Where will workers' leverage come from?

Today, the so-called communications revolution has made it possible for corporation headquarters to be in one country while actual factories are spread out over the globe. These so called "Free Trade Zones" are in effect sovereign corporate states where national labor laws do not apply and protection of individual workers' rights is almost non-existent. This corporate structure has been promoted as a miraculous development strategy for countries in South Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. What actually happens is a reverse host-virus relationship, where the "less-developed" host country becomes increasingly dependent upon the imported technologies of the "more-developed" country. This is not a coincidence, but the inevitable result of prior agreements that multinationals generally make with the host country.

Development processes all over the world are deeply linked to the advancement and implementation of new

technology. The tools and hardware used in rural water systems, the fertilizers made for crops, and the methods employed for food preservation are just a few examples of areas in which technology has a strong impact—both positive and negative. Some of the most important questions facing women today are: how to make informed choices about which technologies will serve or harm them, how to both direct and integrate technology compatibly into their daily lives, and how to obtain appropriate technology given their very limited resources. Furthermore, women must be actively involved in the politics of development in order to ensure that their nation's planning and importation of technology responds to their needs and contributes to their independence, not dependence.

Is feminist science possible? We're not sure, given the strong resistance to feminist thought in universities and in industry—the present sites of technological development. Certainly, we are only beginning to find out as more women are choosing to become involved, to become scientists, engineers and technicians. Women, though, have never been welcome in the field of science. Witches, the doctors and scientists of their time, were burned alive. Today the impediments are more subtle but we applaud every woman that goes through the training process and still emerges a feminist. Yet change from within is not the only method available to us. All women can join efforts to promote a more feminist science from without, by being aware, commenting and criticizing. □

Further Reading:

- *Gender and Class Relations in Technology* (work in progress), c/o Cynthia K. Cockburn, 83 Bartholomew Road, London, NW5 2AH.
- *The Technological Woman*, Jan Zimmerman, Ed., Praeger, 1983.
- *Rain: Journal of Appropriate Technology*, Vol. 9 #4, 1983, by Mimi Maduro, Rain Umbrella Inc. 2270 NW Irving, Portland, OR 97210.
- *Health At Work* (booklet series—working environment in high-rise offices), Programme sante au travail, CLSC Centre-Ville, 1199 Bleury, Montreal, Quebec H3B 3J1.
- *Your Job in the Eighties*, Ursula Huws, Pluto Press, 1982.

Film:

- *"I Want To Be An Engineer"*, National Film Board of Canada, P.O. Box 6100, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5.

Contact:

- *Assoc. for Women in Development*, c/o Ellen Fenoglio, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20006.
- *Women and Technology Network* c/o Judy Smith, 315 South 4th St. E., Missoula, Montana 59801.
- *Science Policy Research Unit*, Felicity Enwood and Christine Zmroczek, (collecting information on Women and technology in Europe), University of Sussex, Mantell Bldg., Falmer, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 9RF, England.

Let the Robber Barons Come

Free Trade Zones

(The following article by Eileen Sudworth is from *Manushi*, an Indian feminist monthly, #22/1984.)

Women Workers In Free Trade Zones

I would like to begin by presenting a profile of the average worker in a free trade zone. She's female, young, and lives in the third world. Aged between 15 and 24, she is usually single and taking a paid job for the first time. She is also likely to come from a rural area—driven out of her village by poverty and rural stagnation and neglect. She's probably very happy to be earning a wage—any wage. She wants to help her family or help put the other children through school. She is happy at the prospect of a bit of independence that having a paid job can bring her.

For those unfamiliar with free trade zones—they are specifically designated sites for factories, generally wholly or partly foreign-owned, producing manufactured goods strictly for export.

The concept has been promoted by such institutions as the World Bank, the IMF and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). By 1980 more than 55 countries—stretching in a chain through Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia—had established or were planning to set up free trade zones.

Of the more than 50 zones then in operation, 22 were in Asia—11 in Malaysia, three in the Philippines, three in Taiwan, two in South Korea, two in India and one in Sri Lanka.

Many others were planned. The Philippines have made plans for another 12 whilst Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Thailand have moved into the planning or implementation stage. China has also recently embraced the free trade zone strategy with the creation of three special economic zones in Guangdong province close to Hong Kong. A slightly wider definition of free trade zones would include the whole of Hong Kong and Singapore as giant free trade zones.

Why are free trade zones important even though they employ a small proportion of people relative to the mass of the third world's rural poor or an estimated third world labour force of some 840 million? Because they represent a model of development increasingly urged on developing countries as an escape from their dependence on the export of primary agricultural products. Free trade zones represent the tip of the iceberg of the export-oriented industrialisation strategy

which has replaced import substitution as the conventional economic wisdom. Through an examination of free trade zones, it is possible to discern a pattern of industrialisation and a method of operation of transnational corporations which has serious implications for both first and third world, and particularly their women.

Proponents of the free trade zone strategy claim that free trade zones will create employment, increase foreign exchange earnings and thus ease balance of payments deficits, transfer technology and upgrade skills, and thereby act as a catalyst to industrialisation.

Key to the strategy are massive injections of foreign capital. In order to attract investment, free trade zones offer a standard package of incentives which include 100 percent foreign ownership of companies; few, if any, restrictions on the repatriation of profits or the transfer of investment capital out of the country; tax holidays for five, sometimes 10 years; exemption from customs and import duties.

Other attractions often include low rental for factory buildings; government-provided infrastructure and communications; subsidised energy; investment subsidies and subsidised credit. And, of course, cheap labour. In the words of Sri Lanka's prime minister Mr. Jayawardene, "Let the robber barons come."

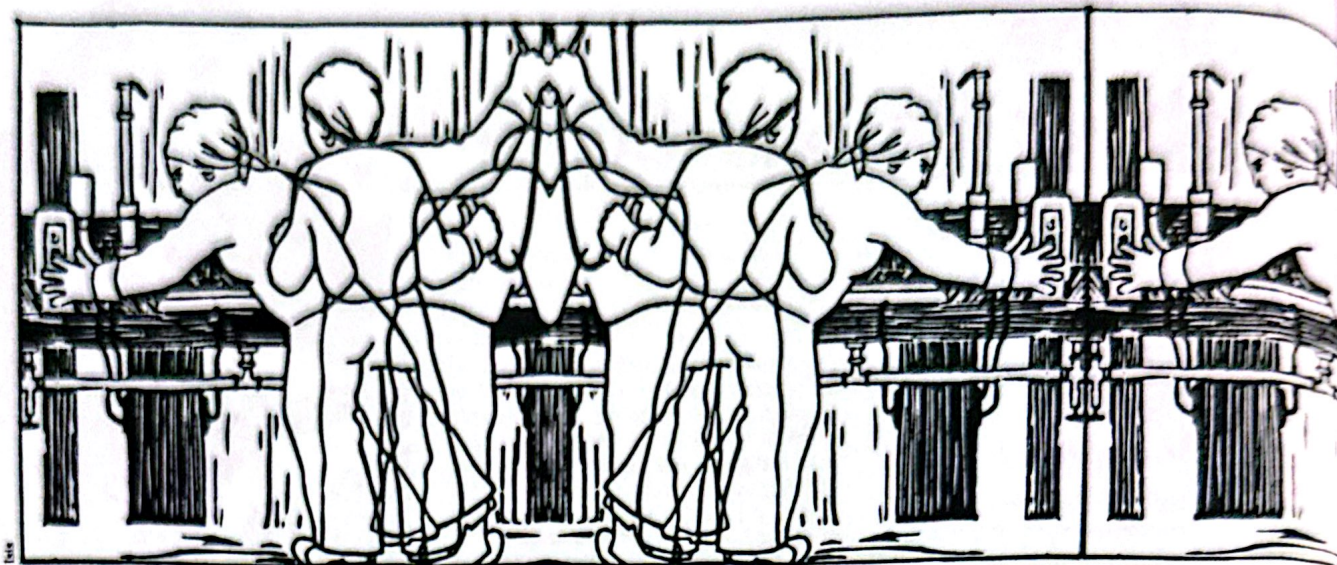
Among the criticisms of free trade zones and export-oriented industrialisation are:

1. that "free trade," the cornerstone of the strategy, is largely a myth urged on developing countries by industrialised countries who themselves conspicuously fail to practise it;
2. that the *economic miracles* of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong are exactly that—miracles—and cannot be repeated by all developing countries, producing the same limited basket of goods, in a very different world situation;
3. that developing countries have simply swapped one kind of economic dependence for another. The rural plantations and estates have been replaced by the global factory.

But even the advocates of the strategy are beginning to question the wisdom of the advent of the robber barons. Whilst foreign exchange earnings certainly rise as a result of increased exports, the picture is not as rosy as at first glance. Offset against this are (1) an escalating import bill, (2) costs incurred by the host government in



Isis, *Women in Development*



providing factories, infrastructure, subsidised energy and so on, (3) loss of potential revenue through exemption from taxes and customs duties and through the repatriation of profits, and (4) the accounting mechanisms of transnational corporations such as transfer pricing. Ultimately the cost of labour—whose major attraction is its cheapness—may be the only element of domestic value added. And this is usually little more than 20 percent.

There is little evidence either that free trade zones act as a catalyst to industrialisation through creating *forward and backward linkages* to the domestic economy. In practice, free trade zones import virtually everything they need and, by definition, export everything they produce. In effect they remain enclaves within the domestic economy.

Creating a haven for transnational corporations may also act as a disincentive to local production as domestic producers find themselves unable to compete with giant corporations.

There is also little evidence that skills and technology are transferred. The majority of jobs in free trade zones are assembly line production processes requiring minimal skills and little training. Technology remains jealously guarded by the transnationals and by the developed countries. The little technology that is transferred through foreign investors is hedged around with conditions and is designed to be obsolete within a few years.

With regard to employment, a UNIDO working paper points out: "To the extent that these industries simply draw into the labour force a group of workers who were not previously economically active, it does little to reduce the unemployment rate of prime age males who are considered to form the bulk of the unemployed." It is the female worker that these industries seek.

Nimble Fingers

They seek her for her nimble fingers,

her docility, her willingness to perform monotonous tasks and for her *natural ability* to do fiddly jobs. Her government, in its promotional literature and advertisements, boasts that she is eager to work, disciplined, educated—and above all, very cheap.

Developing countries have simply swapped one kind of economic dependence for another. The rural plantations and estates have been replaced by the global factory.

Her male supervisors and bosses treat her at best like a child—needing permission to go to the toilet or to take an aspirin, needing to be humoured when she is feeling ill or *hysterical*. Away from her family, she is seen by supervisors—and sometimes male coworkers—as easy prey for their sexual advances. A bit of fun with a factory girl.

She is among the most exploited workers in the third world—working for a pittance, often forced to do strenuous overtime, performing her tedious tasks in often hazardous conditions. She has little awareness of labour laws or her rights as a worker. She often lacks job security—employed as a casual worker or as an apprentice, subject to frequent layoffs and plant closures when business is slack. She comes from an invisible workforce to swell employment statistics for a few years—only to return to the invisible workforce in her mid or late twenties.

Women workers are the guinea pigs in this highly dubious experiment. They are working for daily wages which, according to a 1982 survey, range from 80 cents in Sri Lanka, through around \$3 in the Philippines and Thailand, to \$7 in Taiwan and \$10 in Korea. More important than these absolute figures, most workers do not earn

enough to support a family, according to even the basic minimum laid down by their own governments. Many workers, employed on an apprenticeship basis—and often sacked at the end of their six to 12 month apprenticeship—do not earn this much.

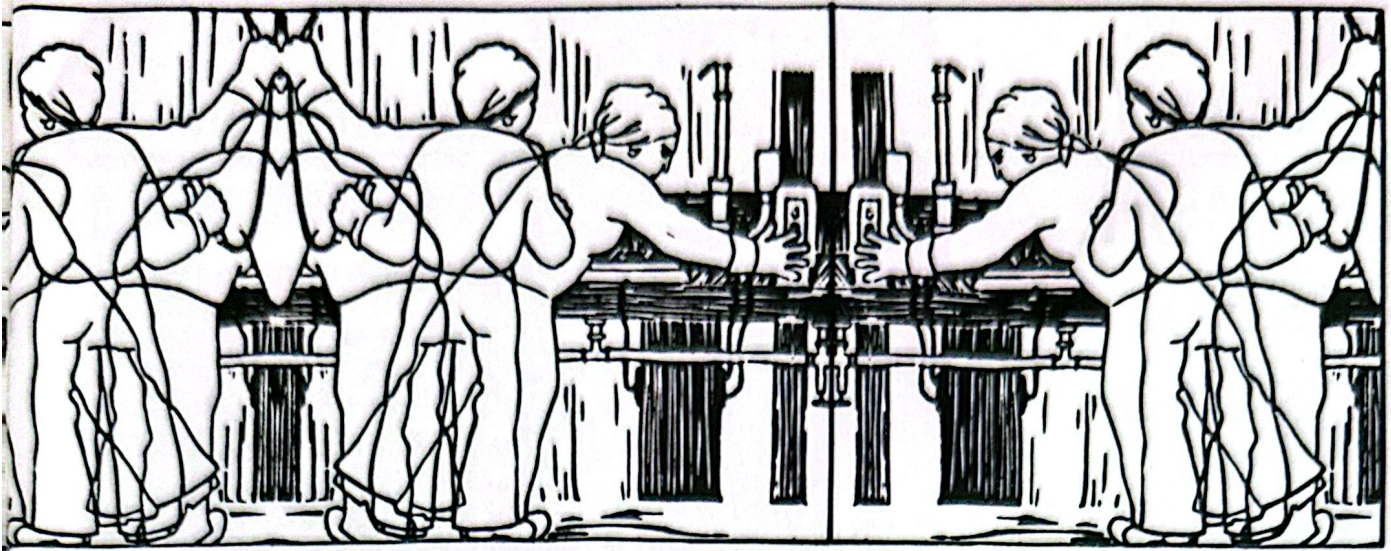
There is little job security—in the Bataan export processing zone in the Philippines, only about 50 percent of the workers have permanent jobs. Layoffs and temporary closures occur regularly—particularly in this time of world recession. A report from an electronics worker in Penang free trade zone in Malaysia of January this year said: "Lately I have heard that the factory will be closed again for two months—without pay. We were warned not to speak about this to anyone. Anybody caught doing so might be sacked. There are quite a number of factories here that are closed for a day or two in a week due to shortage of materials."

Job insecurity is further heightened by the footloose nature of transnational corporations operating in the zones. Companies tend to shift operations from country to country in search of lower costs and higher profits. For example, the U.S. toy company, MATTEL, began off-shore operations in Mexico. As wages rose, the company shifted operations to South Korea. Following labour disputes, the company moved to Bataan free trade zone in the Philippines. There are reports that the company is now considering shifting operations to Sri Lanka where labour is even cheaper.

Heavy Health Toll

Low wages and job insecurity are further compounded by the very considerable health hazards suffered by women workers. Constant headaches, backaches, kidney problems, chronic fatigue are common complaints among assembly line workers—particularly those who spend their days peering through microscopes.

Stringent quotas, night shifts and forced overtime add to the health toll. I spoke to workers in the Philippines last year



from a textile factory in the Bataan free trade zone who had been forced to work 36 hour shifts to complete a rush order—with only a few minutes break here and there and with two hour's sleep. A common enough story.

Add to this inadequate safety standards, poor ventilation and careless handling of acids and toxic chemicals, particularly in the electronics industry. Respiratory ailments, nausea, dizziness, eye irritations, burns, ulcers, vomiting are the frequent results. In Hong Kong, in January this year, 196 workers had to receive hospital treatment as a result of a gassing incident in an electrical factory. Government enquiry found ozone and phosgene (a poison gas used during World War I) present. One of the women lost the baby she was carrying and 13 others who are pregnant fear for their unborn children. An industrial safety organisation in Hong Kong estimates that more than 40 industrial chemicals—which may cause cancer—are commonly in use in Hong Kong.

They seek her for her nimble fingers, her docility, her willingness to perform monotonous tasks and for her natural ability to do fiddly jobs.

Or there is the case of Elfreda Castellano from the Philippines. She worked for two years for an electronics company, Dynetics. Elfreda's health began to suffer after a year—a combination of the effects of chemicals and stiff quotas—she had to soak between 12,000 and 22,000 integrated circuits into pots of chemicals each day. After more than a year's illness, Elfreda died in November last year. The cause of her death: "cancer of the lymph nodes with leukemic transformation." Elfreda was 21.

And women have little legal recourse. It is no accident that a "stable climate for foreign investment" often goes hand in hand with authoritarian regimes which, to keep labour cheap and thus maintain their competitive edge, repress genuine workers' organisations. Trade unions are often banned and strikes prohibited as industries are decreed vital to the national interests. Where unions are allowed, they tend to be company controlled or government manipulated. Where strikes do take place, they are ruthlessly broken up and leaders arrested, sometimes beaten and imprisoned. Such was the case at last year's strike of workers at Control Data in Korea, protesting the company's withdrawal from the country. Three women, according to the latest reports, are still in prison, one of them seriously ill with TB.

Despite this, women workers are continuing to organise, are becoming aware of their rights. There have been a number of success stories—such as the recent strike of textile workers in Sri Lanka or the unprecedented strike in June last year in the Bataan export processing zone. Triggered by a strike by workers at Inter-Asia Container Industries, in protest against impossible quotas, the strike was soon joined by thousands of workers from 23 factories, which left 80 percent of the zone's operations paralysed.

The pressing need for solidarity action—which I hope this presentation makes clear—is not, alas, the end of the story. It is not just women in Asia or the third world who are at the mercy of this transnational system. Women in the first world are directly affected.

The UNIDO working paper, mentioned earlier, points out: "One of the most striking facts in labour intensive industry branches which are under strong competitive pressure on the international markets is the large employment of women, both in developed and developing countries. Indeed, female intensity of employment in an industry in the developed countries usually is a strong predictor of this industry's

propensity for redeployment. In the U.S., for example, women form over 90 percent of all production workers and operators in the two industries which have been most heavily redeployed to developing countries—electronics and wearing apparel."

For example, Atari, makers of video games and home computers, recently announced that they intend to shift production to Hong Kong and Taiwan from Silicon Valley, California. Silicon Valley employs a disproportionate number of migrant workers and has a workforce of which only six percent are unionised. In February Atari laid off 600 workers and by July 1, 100 more will be released. The reason—cheaper labour costs in Asia compared to \$5-\$6 an hour for its U.S. non-union employees.

Thus women, in both developed and developing countries, are at the mercy of a system over which, at present, they have little or no control or influence, victims of a logic based not primarily on the well being of the many but on the increased profitability for the few. And it is women who are paying for these profits—with their labour, with their health, with their unemployment.

In this scenario, concerted international action is called for. Action which goes far beyond pious appeals to some notion of corporate responsibility or paternalistic efforts of "programmes to raise the status of women," as the foreign affairs minister recently put it. International action which demands increased militancy—and the acquisition of power—by women and for women. □

Further Readings:

- Women in the Global Factory, by Annette Fuentes and Barbara Ehrenreich, Institute for New Communications, 1983.
- Of Common Cloth, Ed. by Wendy Chapkis and Cynthia Enloe, Transnational Institute.

Let's Work Let's Not Let's Live

(From *Girl's Own*, no. 14, March/April 1984, an Australian women's newspaper.)

Let's Work Let's Not Let's Live is a video on six young women, un/employment and choices.

It is about living rather than existing; doing what you want to do in the hope that one day you'll get paid for it; working for others and losing yourself; needing a reason to get out of bed, and being too old to make cappuccinos.

The tape, made by the Technical Girl's Collective, is a collage of their life and work experiences. The Technical Girl's Collective was formed in mid-November, 1983, upon the application and approval of a wage pause grant from the Office of Special Employment, which was applied for by Aquarius Youth Services.

Six young women were employed to produce information on women and work, aimed towards higher secondary students and young women in general. The Technical Girl's Collective decided it was important to produce this information, to give an alternative and realistic view of life after school. We also wanted to suggest career opportunities open to young women entering the workforce.

The information is presented in a kit which includes a combination of visual and audio material, i.e. photographs, postcards, posters, booklets and audio tapes. The kit covers such topics as:

- creative unemployment
- unemployment, depression and alienation
- self image
- school to work—expectations
- the relevance of secondary school curricula to life after school
- boredom and unemployment
- services available from community organizations, i.e. child care, health services, low cost housing information etc.
- personal responsibilities for their own lives.

The kit was finished at the end of May 1984. The technical girls have produced and are currently distributing a calendar depicting issues concerning women and work. □



Girl's Own

A YOUNG WOMAN'S GUIDE

TO POSITIVE ACTIONS

How to Get Job/Work Satisfaction

- Take your hobbies seriously and expand job choices.
- Join trade unions and become involved in decision making within your work place and unions.
- Operating **COLLECTIVELY** means a unit of workers run jointly by workers. Worker involvement and control of work management promotes self-motivation and job satisfaction and eliminates the need for a pecking order.
- Sharing skills and equipment breaks down mysteries surrounding non-traditional work areas for young women: e.g. mining, sciences, builders, labourers, technicians, drivers, etc.
- Non-profit, labour intensive co-operatives run with all the original capital outlay used to run the service, pay award wages and cover costs. All profit returns to the co-op's funds.
- Self sufficient places of work are able to provide for the communities needs in a co-operative or collective environment with little or no use of private enterprise services. ■

Retrained

Uruguay

(The following was translated and compiled from the April and July 1984 issues of *La Cacerola*, an Uruguayan feminist quarterly published by the Guild of Uruguayan Women GRECMU.)

La Cacerola is a new Uruguayan publication. We have included sections of their introductory editorial.

The *cacerola* [soup-pot] is a symbol of traditional domestic work. It has been made out of clay, iron, aluminum and steel. It simmers in caves, straw huts, castles and even sky-scrapers. It is a luxury in times of scarce resources; it offers a summer's heat during the cold of winter. Today we reclaim the *cacerola* not as a symbol of oppression, but as a path to liberation. The important idea is not to abolish the object of our daily, humble work-place, but instead to find for it new uses and significance.

The mother teaches her *niña* the lessons of life as dictated by the husbands, fathers and brothers of her society. Women of the working class are doubly exploited on the basis of class and gender, but sexual discrimination does not take the shape of a specific political or economic system. Only now are we becoming aware of the societal mechanisms, conditioning and training which extend class divisions and determine our role in society.

More than 40% of Uruguayan females over the age of twelve work exclusively in the home. It is a job fundamental to the national economy and to society in general. But it is a secret job—invisible, humiliating and ignored. It is not a coincidence that kitchen pot and pans have recently been taken up as instruments of protest by the Uruguayan people. Remember, only one half of this noisy protest would be heard without our hands striking against the *cacerola*, our modern symbol of liberation.

Occupational hazards of the technological revolution

Computers, electronic calculators, those fantastic typewriters with memory, word processors... New electronic technology is upon us, directly affecting our lives. Just go to any bank or factory to see what has already arrived. Even more, one of our studies indicates that the application of technology is producing effects similar to those seen in more developed countries: displacement of workers, changing requirements for employment, disappearance of office communiques and certain assignments, unemployment, involuntary reduction of employee work-days, a process of

Not Fired

de-humanization seen at the workplace, and related mental and physical health problems.

We emphasize the effects of this changing technology on our lives as women. Micro-electronics is being introduced into the field of information-gathering: creating, processing, storing and transmitting data. Women make up the majority of those working in activities relating to the manipulation of information. We are the secretaries, stenographers, cashiers, librarians, receptionists, telephone-operators, etc...

A good stenographer writes 60 words per minute. How can she compare to a machine that processes 540 words in the same time and in the long run costs the employer less? We are therefore faced by a new technology which will de-skill, reduce or even completely do away with existing jobs.

It is not difficult to see, then, which positions will be eliminated and which will be strengthened. A call for highly-specialized workers will be sent out requiring familiarity with electronic machinery and training in the field of quantitative (i.e. natural) sciences. What real possibilities do women have to advance and be hired as computer programmers or systems-analysts, without receiving further training or instruction?

The majority of women who work outside the home work part-time, and thus are erroneously considered accessory or transient employees of a given business. Low levels of unionism among female laborers or office-workers translates into a poor bargaining position. Domestic responsibilities further limit us from receiving the necessary additional courses, work-shops, or training programs available during "off-hours."

Traditionally, women who go on to institutions of higher education have been oriented toward literature, the humanities and fine arts, as opposed to mathematics or physics. We must over-come the stereotypes presented about our capacity to retrain ourselves, and meet the new tasks at hand. We demand equal access to training programs, basic science and math courses, career counseling and placement in these new fields of study and work. We will attempt to prepare ourselves adequately in order to make use of this change and share the experiences of other countries. We will continue to demand equal access to the new forms of technology and will not listen to those who tell us we are not capable of understanding and/or operating the highly technical machinery. We reserve the right to be re-trained, and not fired. □



La Cacerola

Ova Easy



England

(Compiled from *Outwrite*, no. 28 and *Spare Rib*, no. 144.)

In 1982, the British government set up a commission, chaired by Mary Warnock, to look at issues raised by new reproductive technologies such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF), womb leasing, freezing of human embryos, artificial insemination by a donor (AID), and techniques for identifying the sex of foetuses. The Warnock Report which summarized the findings of this commission, was released in the summer of 1984.

The following discussion is mainly the response by the Women's Reproductive Rights Information Campaign to the Warnock Report. Responses from other women's groups have also been included.

The Warnock commission has recommended that a statutory authority be set up to monitor reproductive technology research and treatment. This will inevitably mean that money will be transferred from other areas of the Health Service. If expensive technology is being prioritised, it will be at the expense of other women's health services. These are already being cut by the government. Doctors and scientists are often more concerned with personal and professional prestige than with the less glamorous but crucial services women themselves want.

Many of the causes of infertility, such as IUDs and sexually transmitted diseases, can be prevented by better contraceptive advice. This kind of action has the potential to reach a far greater number of women than in vitro fertilization which involves the fertilization of eggs outside a woman's body. The report does not challenge the right of the medical profession to make decisions about the allocation of health resources for us, only that their activities should be monitored by the authority.

Heterosexist and Racist

Neither does the report challenge consultants' rights to decide who receives treatment and who does not. It endorses the medical profession's view that only heterosexual couples should be helped and goes on to recommend that consultants should have the discretion to refuse anyone treatment. The implications of this are clear; lesbians will definitely be denied access to these services and black, disabled and poor women, who are already more likely to be offered abortion or sterilisation (as they are considered 'unfit' mothers),

will be more likely to be refused treatment.

These techniques should be available to all women. There is a big difference between choosing not to have children and not being able to have children. Women's failure to have children, whether by choice or because of infertility, results in social ostracism, divorce, and even wife-murder in all societies, including our own, and it is not to be taken lightly.

On the other hand, according to Women in Medicine, this technology doesn't substantially increase women's right to choose. They point out that women are pressured by society to have children and that "at no point in her journey through the infertility clinic is a woman offered any alternative viewpoint; it is never suggested that infertility may not spell the end of everything..."

More Control Over Women

The report goes on to recommend that AID (artificial insemination by a donor) be strictly controlled by the new authority, and that any AID which takes place without their licence be a criminal offence. AID is quite simple and can be organised by women for themselves. These proposed restrictions would result in less control for women over their own bodies. The possibility of making AID and self-insemination more widely available was not considered.

The concept of surrogate motherhood, in which an embryo is implanted in the body of a woman who is not the biological mother, was rejected by the committee which recommended it be made illegal. While this is to be welcomed—because of the enormous potential for exploitation of poor women—the failure to distinguish between private and profit making agreements means it would be illegal for a woman to bear a child for a friend, sister or lover.

Nazi Undertones

As such, this represents less choice for and more control over women. Technology has made it possible for IVF embryos to be maintained outside the womb. They can then be used for research.

This is open to huge abuse; firstly by creating a market for embryos, and secondly by the type of experimentation likely to be performed. Many women have expressed concern about research to create the perfect baby because of the obvious Nazi undertones. Once this type of research is started it is difficult to see where it will

end. Do we trust these men not to do research into how to breed more white, male babies who will definitely be socialised into being heterosexual?

The report does not discuss these issues but considers only the rights of the embryo. It recommends 'strict controls' on such experiments but does not say what these will be; this is to be decided by the new authority. In order to prevent the widespread sale of embryos, the report states that only small projects should be allowed. However, as a minority sub-report points out, once allowed, such experiments will be impossible to control.

As for the techniques for identifying the sex of a foetus, they provide no real choice as long as the belief in the inferiority of women (and the resulting preference for boys), remains a worldwide phenomenon. We understand that white women are routinely [told the sex of the foetus], while women from Third world cultures (including Asian women living in Britain) are not told. We consider this racist because it gives white women credit they don't deserve. White cultures are no less anti-woman than others.

Effects on the Third World

What the report totally fails to consider is the effect of this technology on the third world. All the proposals to prevent abuse are concerned only with Britain; there are no measures to prevent the exploitation of poor women in other countries. Once again western scientists have spent millions of pounds on research which has no relevance to the needs of the third world and will only serve to increase misery and suffering. Wealthy westerners who are unable to pay a woman here to have a child for them will pay women in Africa, Asia and Latin America a pittance instead. This has already happened in the USA. Embryo manufacture will take place there rather than here, where women have the benefit of a licencing authority to 'protect' them.

On the whole, [we know that] it is from a position of powerlessness that we comment at all. At the same time, we are aware that we cannot call for there to be no sterilisation on the grounds that there is widespread sterilisation abuse. What we can and must do is oppose those techniques which we believe are against our interests, demand controls which prevent abuses, talk about alternatives which we believe will better serve our needs, and encourage that research which we believe will help us in the long run. □

To Womb It May Concern

England

(Reprinted from *Mukti, Asian Women's Journal*, a British feminist quarterly, Issue 2, Spring 1984)

I went to "New Reproductive Technology", a women's conference in Leeds, and just as I discovered I was the only visible Black woman attending, one of the organisers (I presume) sidled up to me to ask if I would be speaking as a "Black Woman". Well I had to resist the temptation to ask what else she expected me to speak as—AN ORANGE OR SOMETHING??

As we arrived we were given a hand-out about the latest medical reproductive technology, what we all learned was terrible and horrifying.

Yet it seemed to me that the organisers and the majority of the participants were more concerned about fighting for the "benefits" of this technology to be made available to everyone for free on the National Health Service—regardless of culture, race, class, or sexuality. However I feel that the primary, vital and totally urgent issues are the implications of this technology for the lives of Black and Third World peoples.

Let me try and explain as briefly and clearly as I can...

Hormone Fertility Injections

If a woman is infertile because her egg sacs are not releasing eggs, gynaecologists can inject her with hormones which will cause them to do that. But as they are still incredibly ignorant about how much exactly each woman can be injected with and what the specific side-effects will be, many eggs can be released simultaneously, sometimes all of them will be fertilised and the foetuses can be carried to full-term!

In Vitro Fertilisation

In this process, known as IVF, the doctor-scientists can extract human eggs from a woman and then fertilise them in testtubes with the sperm of the man of her "choice."

However, because this is such a delicate process, the embryos may not survive the transfer, so they try and increase the possibility of a live birth by actually removing several eggs, fertilising ALL of them and then returning them to her womb.

Now in both situations not only do the women have to go through the dreadful trauma more than once before there is any hope of real "success", but also they are quite likely to give birth to six or even more babies. This is usually not explained fully to the families involved and they are left to cope with this reality FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES. Meanwhile the irresponsible doctors are given accolades and even more money for themselves and their research!

Think about which women are currently being forced to give birth and rear this many children simultaneously and

meanwhile which women are forcibly being injected with Depo Provera or sterilised...

Through IVF it is also possible for embryos to be implanted into the womb of a woman who is not the original donor. Thus in the past when a couple could not have a child between them because it happened that the woman, not the man, was actually infertile, they may have organised for the male partner to have a child with another woman. This child had usually been adopted by the original couple (of course this has caused emotional upheavals for everyone involved as well as fierce legal battles). However the major factor has been that the biological mother was usually from the same racial origin as the adoptive mother. Now with this development, the woman who carries the child to full-term and gives birth does not even have to be the genetic parent. Doctors involved in this technique have stated that the health of the "host" mother does not even have to be good. This is truly terrifying for Black and "Third World" women for it has become yet another ghastly way for further exploitation of us.

As we already know, generally we have very few choices or economic options so we will be forced to sell our bodies once again for our survival and that of our peoples. Sometimes we don't even have that little "control." For experiments such as this are always carried out in prisons and psychiatric institutions, where we, in overwhelming numbers, are locked away.

We in the "Third World" sometimes live in lands ruled by unscrupulous leaders who are allowing the dumping of unwanted and defective products of chemical technology on us such as powdered "milk" and contraceptives. We also are still being sold either to service male tourists or as slave-brides for men who can then take us back to countries where we are totally helpless victims of torture, mutilation and murder. NOT ONLY HAVE WE SUCKLED, NURTURED, AND RAISED WHITE CHILDREN, NOW WE WILL EVEN BE GIVING BIRTH TO THEM...

Genetic Manipulation

Now we are told that this technology is making it possible to prevent "mutations" which result in hereditary imperfections including such disabilities as "mongolism" from being transmitted. The scientists say that they remove the nucleus (that part of a cell which has the genetic family characteristics) from a cell and replace it with a new and better substitute.

However, it is still modern chemical technology that has also resulted in nuclear weaponry which is being created from uranium which is mined, produced and stored in the meagre, desolate lands allocated to the indigenous people of that country, such as the "reservations" of the American Indian people or the aboriginal people of Australia. Meanwhile, in the Pacific Region nuclear testing takes place. In all these situations everyone living there is suffering from massive doses of radiation poisoning while our children are being born with gross abnormalities. Yet absolutely no concern is shown by these very same genetic "humanitarian" scientists or others for the plight of victims of ARTIFICIAL hereditary and genetic mutations!

We are also informed that this experimentation in genetic biology will create a new better world, one in which no-one need suffer from, for example, infertility. Yet are they interested in preventative measures such as investigating why and how people are BECOMING infertile and finding ways of cleaning up the pollution in the environment?

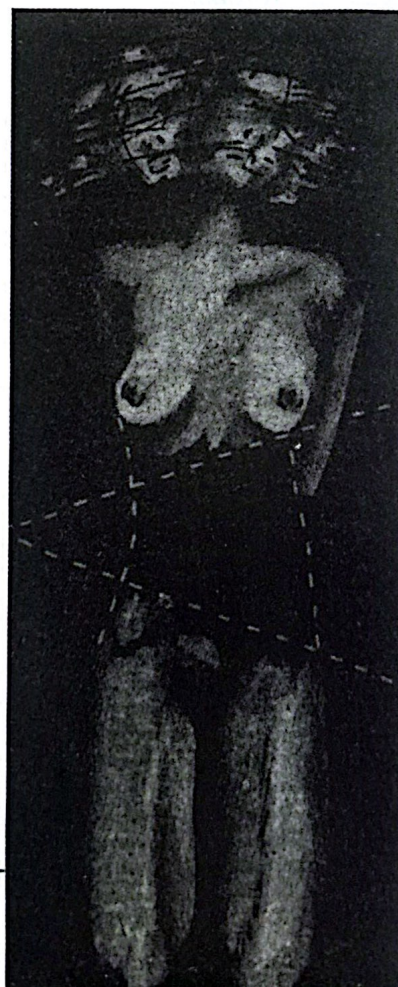
Remember too, some people see differing sexualities, "black skins", features of body types that are not "Caucasian" and "Aryan" as MUTATIONS AND INFERIOR.

It is eerie to contemplate what kind of people those in total power want to create.

Meanwhile in an economic situation where life is becoming harder and harder for the vast majority to live, we see millions being spent on research like this. These allocations are taken in many cases from prenatal and postnatal clinics and from the departments of obstetrics and gynaecology in public hospitals—the ones that are actually managing to stay open.

Are we going to passively let this continue happening to us...?

UMA, London, April 1984 □



Gerardo Ruiz, FEM

Expanding the Greenbelt



Reafforestation is crucial in Kenya, as well as in most African countries, since the main energy source is wood fuel. Eighty to 90 percent of the Kenyan population live in rural areas and depend on wood for daily life. Recently, deforestation and subsequent desertification have become life threatening problems for rural people. Contrary to the belief that rural people are causing the deforestation, it seems that demands of the urban population are the problem. Rural people do not cut down the trees, but rather the branches. Charcoal, which is the major fuel source for the urban population as it is 10 times cheaper than electricity, demands the use of the entire tree. But the greatest deforestation is caused by land clearing for commercial agriculture.

The desert is a serious threat in Kenya. The land is dry and about two-thirds is arid, semi-arid or desert. The Sahel region, which is the southern edge of the Sahara, crosses the north of Kenya. Deforestation extends the boundaries of the desert. For women, deforestation means that they must get up earlier and walk farther and farther to collect the day's wood. This prevents them from doing more constructive work, such as food production. In addition, lack of wood causes people to turn to animal manure for fuel which means that the soil does not get nourished and, therefore, crop yield deteriorates.

Wangari Maathai, an associate professor at the University of Kenya and a principal organizer with the green belt movement, emphasizes mobilizing community involvement in reafforestation. She believes that reafforestation cannot be done by the government alone—it has to be done by the people. What follows is excerpted from an interview by Charles Drucker with Wangari Maathai.

It started almost by accident. I think it started mostly because there was enthusiasm in the early 70s about the environment, and some of us happened to be caught up in it. By sheer chance, I happened to be interested in creating jobs for the urban population—I had to respond to some people who had helped me and they wanted jobs. I felt planting trees in Nairobi could create jobs, but it didn't work out that way. Eventually the idea did develop into planting trees with the people to reverse the desertification process that we realized was threatening this country.

"...reafforestation cannot be done by the government alone—it has to be done by the people."

We initially called it "Tree Planting Harabi," because *harabi* means pulling together and working towards a common objective. It has been growing slowly, without any deliberate plan, without any preconceived procedures; it has developed allowing for people's attitudes, aspirations and hopes. Eventually, we decided that what we needed were demonstration plots—very small plots on schoolgrounds, church compounds and other public lands. We thought we would plant trees around the boundaries of schools or churches, so that we would fence them in with this belt of trees thereby creating a wind break. In many public institutions, you get the roofs blown off any day of the week, especially during the dry season. So we thought we would dress up these compounds with belts of green trees, and that's how the idea of the green belt came about. By planting we are breaking the desertification cycle, first by raising public awareness, second by arresting soil erosion and finally by replacing trees.

What the FAO [Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, which has given money for reafforestation] has been calling community forestry is what

we are doing, but not exactly what they are doing. What they are encouraging is commercial forestry. Now if you encourage commercial forestry, or reafforestation through institutions, then you are really not getting wood to the women who need it for domestic energy and cooking use. Instead, you are probably supporting industries which rely on wood. In this country the farmer is not contributing so much to deforestation—many of them are not even allowed to get into the mature forest reserves. It's the commercial farms that are involved; many governments need the foreign exchange that is earned through these commercial enterprises, so they condemn deforestation while they approve deforestation by the commercial farms.

What amazes me is that the commercial enterprises have no responsibility whatsoever, either imposed by themselves or by the government, to reafforest what they cut. They are free to cut trees which have grown for the last two, three hundred years and nobody holds them responsible for reafforestation.

Perhaps the best way to explain how the green belt movement works is to follow it from the very beginning. We use the press and mass media to reach the people. Once a person hears of the green belt movement, they will write to us at the headquarters in Nairobi and we will send out forms telling the community or farmer or individual how to participate. A person may participate by establishing a green belt, which means planting a certain number of trees. A public green belt must have 1,000 trees, but if it's private, it may have as many as the farmer can afford to take care of.

A community may also apply to establish a community tree nursery. These nurseries are managed by a group, usually a women's group or a youth group. The women and the youth are usually trained during a one to two day workshop so they know how to manage a nursery and how to raise seedlings to the point where they are about three feet tall and can be distributed. Then the green belt movement buys the seedlings from them at a low price. So this becomes income generating for the women and therefore they are encouraged to raise seedlings. And we have found that, by not spending money to hire people to produce seedlings, we produce more seedlings and the survival rate is better.

On the school and church compounds and in public compounds in general, we are particularly concerned about animals. There is a lot of demand by people to graze their animals on the compounds. Training people that trees cannot survive if they are left to the animals is very important as we know that much of the desertification process has been caused by animals, especially goats. So our follow-up people are retained within the community so that the community knows that we are not just doing an exercise of planting trees, which is kind of the habit in this country where trees are planted and then abandoned.

By the time we leave these trees, it is our experience that people are so motivated they are not likely to abandon the trees. Membership in the green belt movement is based on establishing a green belt and maintaining it. So instead of people giving us membership fees, we encourage them to plant a tree and, as long as they take care of that tree, they are members of the green belt movement.

It's very inspiring to see people respond to the call to plant trees. It's inspiring to see the people understand what the problem is—to see them develop a sense of self-confidence, self-worth, self-fulfillment. I have seen people comment that the trees are beautiful, that they never really saw trees before. People now see that this country is actually threatened by the desert. This has been satisfying because, in the final analysis, development must mean communal development, not individual development.

If we are only concerned about ourselves, if we are not concerned about the environment around us, then there is a tragedy in that—we cannot survive alone. People need to realize that the butterflies, and the elephants, and the human beings are all playing a part in a cycle that they don't quite understand. They are lying to themselves, to a certain extent, when they think that they, because they are human, are the most important in the process of creation. By pretending that, we humans can destroy ourselves. □

Further Reading:

- African Women: Their Struggle for Economic Independence by Christine Obo, Zed Press, London, 1980.





Giving Themselves Credit

India

(Compiled from *We, the Self Employed*, July, 1984 and excerpts from an interview by Jane Cottingham with Lalita Krishnaswami of SEWA in *ISIS Bulletin* 28, International Women and New Technology.)

Large scale industrialization is a phenomenon of the last 50 years in our country. Even today only 11 percent of the workforce is engaged in an employer-employee relationship recognized by the law. The rest are all fending for themselves. They are self-employed. The vast majority of these self-employed people are poor. They are the sufferers from the processes of concentration of resources, commercialization, industrialisation and written dealings.

SEWA means Self-Employed Women's Association. In Indian languages it means service. Its aim is to further the socio-economic uplift of women in self-employed illiterate categories. We have 18,000 members, who are divided into three categories. First are home-based workers like incense stick workers, cigarette workers, hand-block workers. Second are small traders and vendors, and third are old garment vendors. In organising these workers we come across various problems. Our most important goal is to make these women visible. We have to struggle with policy-makers, institutions and the like. Struggling to organise—the women organise themselves.

The most common problem these women face is lack of capital, no access to credit facilities and no equipment. This was the most important thing that came up in our organising. A woman would need to borrow money and would be forced to pay 10% per day to a money lender. So women got together and said, "we want our own bank." They were illiterate, and people said, "how can you have a board of directors who are illiterate?" So overnight women learnt to write their names. We now have 500,000 rupees. Women take loans for equipment. For identification, they have a photo taken with the number of their account. They present this when they go into the bank. This prevents fathers, sons and husbands

from withdrawing money. Often the women did not have any place to keep money safely. By providing this, the bank has encouraged the habit of saving. The bank is run entirely by women and we have 95% recovery from loans. It is also a mobile bank—one woman goes to areas to collect installments.

The membership fees for SEWA are five rupees per year. We have a social security system which provides:

1. Maternity benefits for agricultural workers. From six months of pregnancy onwards, women get medical treatment. The child is inoculated, and the mother receives 100 rupees for one week off work and one tin of ghee.
2. Widowhood assistance. A woman cannot leave her home for 10 days after the death of her husband, so SEWA provides 100 rupees to compensate her for loss of wages.
3. Death assistance which is also 100 rupees, given to the family to perform funeral rites.

SEWA also provides training and upgrading of skills. We work on research and development of equipment, occupational health hazards, etc. The training programme deals with how to run a cooperative, how to keep accounts, and upgrading skills. For instance, block printers: the women were just printing cloth and giving it back to the merchants. The training scheme converted the workers into entrepreneurs, dealing with anything from mixing the dyes to selling the products which were made. This by-passes the middle men, which of course makes them angry, but SEWA tries to help with that also. For example, we have been organising patch quilt workers, who were making quilts from textile waste. One middle man paid 60 paise per quilt. But when women organised, they claimed higher pay. At the last moment the trader backed out, so SEWA got the material directly from the mills. We had to confront traders and get a retail outlet. We hold exhibitions to sell goods—we hosted a

national exhibition in Ahmedabad in October of this year.

Most of our organising campaigns are neither complete successes nor total failures. They tend to go through a roundabout process which requires a lot of persistence for very small gains. But that is another story. □

Further Reading:

- *We, the Self Employed*, SEWA, Ahmedabad, 380 001, India.



A worker making bids

Sheba/Manushi

From the Despotic Factory of...

(Excerpted from *Voice of Women*, the English language version of a Sri Lankan quarterly, No. 4, July 1982.)

In 1978 Sri Lanka established the Investment Promotion Zone (one of the many names for Free Trade Zones) at Katunayake, adjoining the Sri Lanka International Airport. Its first factories began production in 1979. There are now 47 factories, 27 of which manufacture garments for export, in keeping with the many Free Trade Zones in the world. The other 20 factories manufacture non-garment items, namely shoes, electrical goods, fishing gear, jewelry, cashew kernel oil, tea bags, and rubber goods. The FTZ has employed 22,000 workers to date, of which approximately 86 percent are women.

An interesting feature—perhaps an emerging international trend—is that the foreign collaborators of almost half of these firms are countries such as Hong Kong, India, South Korea and Thailand.

The *Voice of Women* carried out a study of women workers in the Free Trade Zone to examine the conditions they face as employees of the factories there. The following letter (translated from Sinhala) was sent to the research team of the journal by a female worker in the FTZ [no name given].

From the despotic factory of.....

We are employed in the factory called..... in the FTZ. We female employees have decided to bring to your notice a multitude of matters concerning the difficulties prevailing in this factory. We took jobs in this factory in order to have a means of livelihood and relief for some of our problems. Instead, the only thing we have received is a day by day loss of physical energy.

We are being made to work both day and night, like buffaloes tethered to trees. Not a single moment of the day is there for rest—neither for the machines nor for the workers. The motors of these machines heat up like furnaces. No one can guess what amount of the female workers' energy is wasted. The supervisory staff and the management are never satisfied, no matter how much we work and produce. Please focus your attention on the sufferings of the poor female workers who are being subjected to harassment and harsh treatment by the management and supervisors.

The only intention of the management is to extract more and more production output so that they gain more benefits for themselves. The female workers get no wage increase, or special allowance, no matter how much they increase production. The managerial staff, of course, draws to the tune of Rs. 5,000 to 6,000 monthly as salaries. The female workers are paid at the rate of Rs. 20 per day. Out of this, fines are

recovered in case of short production, absence due to sudden illness and for various other petty things. A month's wages are around Rs. 500, and once the deductions have been made by way of fines, what is left is much less. Many expenses have to be met with this salary. Boarding fees alone come to about Rs. 275 to Rs. 300. Thus, the female worker is not in a position to meet her obligations to parents, brothers and sisters, or to have any savings. In the long run, the only thing we have to look forward to is a debilitated and emaciated body.

A quota which is impossible for a female worker to deliver in an hour is always targeted. Fines are imposed when the quota is not delivered on time. Furthermore, we are made to work outside working hours. Even a beast knows whether it is possible to work continuously for 12 hours in the same posture, seated on a four-legged stool—not even a chair is provided. The female worker is not granted leave even if she falls ill. A little medicine or a cup of coffee is not available to us even if we faint while at work. During the night shift, the female workers here enjoy no facilities at all. Only a half an hour break is allowed for meals.

The gentlemen who come from the outside to look into the grievances here are misled by the falsehoods of the management who conceal the grievances of the

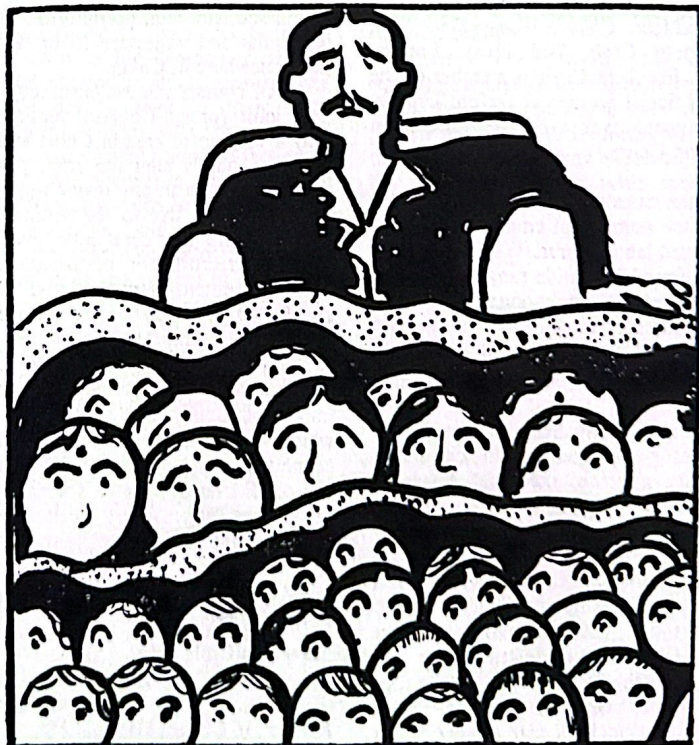
workers. They are also given bribes.

You may be aware of the fact that many female workers employed in the Katunayake FTZ are from villages far away from the FTZ. The suffering they undergo without proper residential facilities is immense. In many of the dormitories, each room has two beds and one cot; two female workers share each bed and one is given the cot. But these five persons are employees of five different factories. Their working hours may be at five different times. So you can imagine whether there is any peace in the boarding house. One returns from work to enjoy some rest, but often the dormitories are like the devil's workshop.

This information is brought to you in writing by a group of female workers employed in..... We are not going to include our names and addresses. The reason is that in case the management finds out about this, we will have to face various problems. Therefore if you could be so kind as to present these issues before Parliament, so that they can be resolved, we will all esteem you as a deity. Thanking you, Female Workers of..... Garments. □

Further Reading:

- "Sri Lanka: The Economics of Capitulation," *Race and Class* XXII, Autumn 1980, #2.



Jolly/Manushi

The Business at Hand



Vice-Mayor Mu Guochun (right) at the state-owned Nantong No. 2 Cotton Mill

Women of China

(Excerpted from *Chinese Women Since Mao*, by Elisabeth Croll, Zed Press, London 1983. Dr. Elisabeth Croll, a member of the faculty of Social Studies at Oxford University, has spent over a decade engaged in research on China.)

In the cities and towns of China there are very few women not employed full-time in the waged labour force. Working women are to be found in a wide range of occupations including the professions, skilled and unskilled factory work and the service industries. Textiles, weaving and other light industries and services employ a high proportion.

The most immediate problem facing the present government in the cities and towns is the unprecedented high levels of unemployment among young school leavers. Of the estimated 30 million unemployed in the past five years, 60 to 70% were young women. There is currently a high priority on developing industry in the cities and, thus, creating employment. Light industry and service industries have the advantage for the government in that they do not require large investments for their establishment and they can achieve quick returns.

The current expansion of these sectors of the urban economy should expand employment opportunities open to women. But in recent years, as unemployment has become more serious, it has been suggested that married women workers should return to their homes and be replaced by unemployed single women or male labourers. The three major areas of the urban economy targeted for expansion are production co-operatives, individually-owned enterprises and the introduction of joint-foreign Chinese production ventures.

The introduction of special economic zones in China and the encouragement of foreign or joint foreign-Chinese enterprises is a major innovation of the present leadership which potentially affects the range and conditions of women's employment. The establishment of special zones in 1979 and the attraction of foreign capital, technology and systems constitutes one of the major policy decisions taken by the Chinese government in recent years. Foreign investment is viewed as one of the means of speeding up China's socialist modernization.

The central role of textiles, light industries and handicrafts in the special zones has meant that a high proportion of the labour force in the new factories is made up of women. Eighty percent of the work force is made up of young single women who are mostly accommodated within specially built dormitories. The work is popular and wages are 20 to 30% higher than elsewhere in China.

Of course, the establishment of these new joint foreign-Chinese ventures affect only a very small area of China and, therefore, can hardly alter the employment patterns of women in any major way. [80% of Chinese people live in the countryside.] At present there has been little investigation into the recruitment of labour and the terms of employment in these economic zones and their relation to those practised elsewhere in China and in Southeast Asia. If the zones are to be expanded in China, the precedent that has been created is an important one. The exploitative way in which women are treated in the free trade economic zones elsewhere in Asia makes the conditions of women's employment in the China zones very relevant. Can a government incorporate women's rights into negotiations with foreign investors and establish terms which will benefit the women workers?

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(The following article is excerpted from *Women of China*, March 1983, a monthly women's magazine.)

Recently staff reporters from *Women of China* visited the city of Nantong of Jiangsu Province. Lying in the lower reaches of the Changjiang River, the city is quite near Shanghai. They interviewed Vice Mayor Mu Guochun who is in charge of industrial development. She briefed the reporters on what the city has achieved in developing industry and the role women have played and continue to play.

Vice-Mayor Mu Guochun: "I am a native of Nantong. Before liberation, Nantong had only three medium-sized factories, all textile mills. There were a dozen small factories for processing rice, flour, oils and fats, and for manufacturing matches and paper. Today the city boasts more than 370 enterprises. The textile industry holds an important place among these. In all, there are 28 textile mills, equipped with 300,000 spinning machines and 8,000 weaving machines. The output of the textile industry accounts for 50.4 percent of Nantong industry's total output. The mills produce 800 different varieties of textiles including pure cotton, chemical fiber, wool, printed knits and rayon. The chemical, machine, and electronic industries have quickly been developed from the ground up. With good management, the enterprises have prospered greatly. The gross industrial output has been steadily increasing in the past three years and per capita income has reached the equivalent of \$1,000.

"Nantong is a major port. Recently two 10,000-ton berths were built near Langshan. They will soon be open to foreign trade by order of the State Council. Eight more will be built, making Nantong a modernized port city with well-developed light and textile industries.

"As Nantong's industry has grown so quickly, all middle school graduates are able to find employment. The rate of employment (including pensioners) in the city stands at 77 percent of the local population of 210,000.

"Nantong's textile industry has a history of more than 80 years. Because women as a rule comprise the majority of textile workers, their contribution to Nantong's development has been considerable.

"In 1895, towards the end of the Qing Dynasty, Nantong built its first cotton mill. Most of the women workers came from the surrounding rural areas. They were part of the first generation of the Chinese working class. They lived a hard life, were the most exploited, and at the same time they were the most rebellious.

"During the 40s, I taught in the Nantong Girls' Normal School. At that time I was also a member of the Chinese Communist Party and was doing some under-

ground work. It was a time of social upheaval, with large numbers of women textile workers walking off the job on strike and protesting in the streets. Many women workers of the mill travelled to the New Fourth Army then actively engaged in the revolution and fighting in the province. Many remained to keep on with the struggle within the city.

"In 1952, three years after liberation, democratic reforms were introduced in factories throughout the nation. The overseers left over from the old days were condemned and dismissed, body search of the workers was abolished, the check points at the gate were torn down and the 12-hour work day was changed to an 8-hour system. For ten years I worked in the mill [now known as State No. 1 Mill] as Party committee secretary, and became well acquainted with the older workers. The enthusiasm and spirit they brought to their work after liberation impressed me deeply.

"Now I work in the municipal government, in charge of industrial development. Nantong's industry is progressing at a high speed pace. For example, State No. 2 Cotton Mill has been cited as a nationally advanced unit. At the end of 1979, with the help of a foreign loan, work was begun which should double the factory's output. Shi Yong-suan, an engineer, led the whole project. She was assisted by a group of professional and competent women in executive positions.

"Recently the factory has been commissioned to set up a woollens workshop in a joint venture with New Zealand investors.

"Another example is the Nantong Television Factory which employs 900 workers. Its 14-inch television sets sell well in 15 different provinces. In an effort to satisfy the growing needs of a modern industry 70 percent of its technical forces have been shifted to the production of industrial TVs.

"The electronic industry, which emerged in China at the end of the 70s, is also young in Nantong. The major problem has been a lack of qualified workers with technical know-how. Many engineers and technicians from other parts of the country

have been invited to join the workforce. Among them are two outstanding women engineers Zhu Yujun and Lu Chuan'e. Many of the workers in this trade are women and recently the factory has hired on and relocated 20 couples from Shaanxi Province.

Training Women Cadres, A Must

"Many women workers who were formerly underground Party members have become leaders of medium-sized or small factories in the city. Of the 370 factories in Nantong, only 11 are big or medium-sized. The rest are all small ones each with less than 1,000 workers. With years of factory experience behind them, they are quite at home managing factories of moderate size. Women cadres in these two categories do not have a high educational level, but they have learned their professions gradually through practical work.

"Evening schools were set up in various factories in our city in the early days of liberation to wipe out illiteracy among workers, especially among women. Later, some women cadres promoted from among the workers were sent to universities for higher education. Zhou Shiliu, now deputy director of the State No. 2 Cotton Textile Mill who began working in the factory as a child laborer in 1946, was sent to study in the Textile Engineering Institute in Wuxi. After graduation she became an engineer and is now in charge of the production and management of the factory. Cadres like her form the backbone of the larger factories. However, many of her contemporaries did not get the chance to study because they were badly needed then in their work places. Today, 20 years later, they are not qualified to lead a big modernized factory.

"Although there are many women cadres in Nantong, very few of them are heads of factories, and still fewer are leaders in the economic sector of the city government. Only ten percent of Nantong's engineers are women. To bring about equality between men and women, special measures must be taken to raise women's political understanding, educational level as well as scientific knowledge before they

become organizers and leaders in China's modernization, and not just a labor force.

"The State No. 1 Cotton Textile Mill, where the great majority of the workers are women, has set up a school system for those who want to improve their education, whether at the primary, secondary or university level. And the municipal government operates 250 kindergartens and over 100 nurseries, which facilitate the studies of many working mothers.

"Yet apart from the fact that women generally have a lower educational level, they are still discriminated against in other ways. Discrimination is sometimes in evidence in recruiting new factory workers or enrolling new students, and some administrators tend to think that women cannot handle the workload if promoted to leading positions.

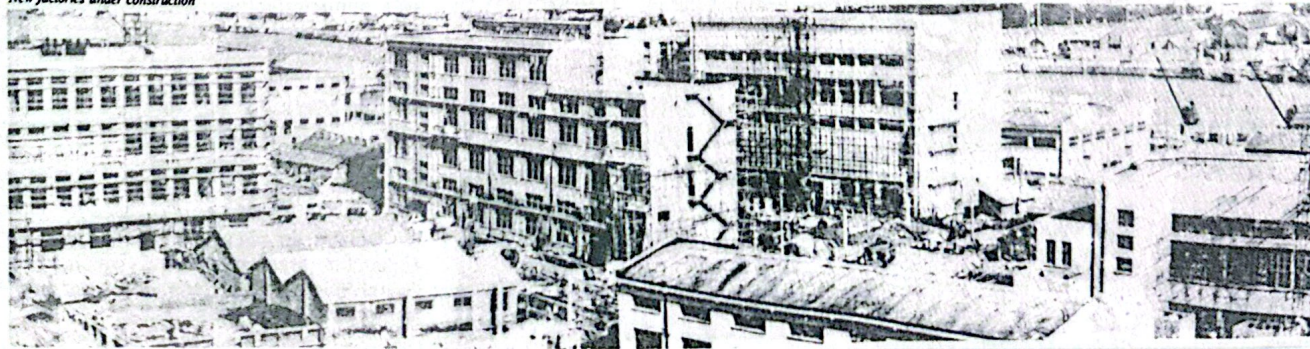
"Ying Huiling defies this chauvinistic view. For some time, the carbon factory where she worked had no director. She herself is an engineer and very popular among the workers. When it came to selecting a director, Ying was made the factory's Party Committee secretary instead of its head. The only obvious reason for this choice was that she is a woman. Upon review of the situation, several deputy mayors of Nantong recommended that she be appointed director. Since her appointment, she has proven herself to be quite capable. If more women cadres are given responsibilities and encouraged to make achievements in their work, they will be recognized for their skills and true ability.

"In a word, women can only win equal rights and status through work. Only when they take an active part in China's modernization, as their predecessors did in the revolution, can they expect to be placed on an equal footing with men in all spheres." □

Further Reading:

- Chinese Women Since Mao, by Elisabeth Croll, Zed Press, London, 1983.
- Feminism and Socialism in China, by Elisabeth Croll, Schocken Books, New York, 1978.

New factories under construction



Women of China

Women Target Development:



Zambia

(The following article
by Olivia Muchena

was excerpted from *Woman's Exclusive*, #2, 1984, an English language monthly published in Lusaka, Zambia.)

Development is a process of change and growth toward the realization of the potential of a person or a nation—a process that takes place within an ideological framework, be it socialist or capitalist. Despite the fact that women in southern Africa are involved in subsistence production, are members of rural elite as nurses and teachers, and are factory workers, secretaries and professionals, the overwhelming majority are not integrated into the development process, that is, are not part of mainstream growth.

Although African women have always been involved in development through agricultural production—shouldering most of the workload and making rural life tick in the countries of southern Africa—production is not regarded as an economic activity according to the market economy definition of the term. Women's activities in subsistence production have not been included in national statistics.

Power, or the ability to influence decision making, is at the centre of the question of ownership, control, and distribution of resources for development. The reasons why women are not yet involved in the mainstream of development and decision making are ideological, cultural, and in part due to women's own negative self-images and their responses to marginal positions.

Women in southern Africa have attempted to respond to their status, with little impact or success, through the auspices of women's organizations and international women-in-development agencies. Within the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) region, women's groups have organized along three lines. First, there are the countries with one all-embracing women's organization, often the women's wing of the ruling party, such as the Organization of Mozambican Women and the Organization of Angolan Women. Second, other countries, in addition to the party women's wing, have organizations such as the Association of Women's Clubs and the YWCA, which have international affiliations. The third category is the women's organizations of indigenous origin.

Although women have made substantial achievements and contributions at the personal, family, community and national levels, how significant have these been? What structural changes can women's organizations institute in a given society? Institutions working for women's progress have concentrated more on welfare and ameliorative changes rather than alterations in the structural position of women in the economic, political and social spheres. This is apparent from the examination of virtually any women's program. The prevalent approach to solving women's problems, be they social, economic, or political, is through knitting, sewing, hygiene, nutrition, and "income-generating activities."

A second reason why women's activities have not made an impact on the economic aspects of their lives is the "project approach" to development. The answer, it is said, is to create peripheral, piecemeal projects through which women can generate income. These include handicrafts, poultry projects, market gardening, and tie and dye activities. They are peripheral because they are not part of the mainstream of national development, or even that of local districts. The projects are conceived in isolation from the local econ-

omy. For example when poultry projects are launched, no feasibility studies are undertaken to determine whether there is an adequate infrastructure—roads, vehicles for transporting women and produce to market, water supplies, etc.. Therefore, in an effort to generate income, more burdens are placed on already overtaxed women. Often there is no relationship between the women's projects and local or national plans.

A second aspect of the project approach that does not contribute to meaningful economic change or gains in women's lives is the small-scale or "income generating" mentality. These projects are usually so small that virtually no income is generated, despite the amount of effort expended. If it is generated, it is for short periods of time only. Donor agencies and government have come to think of women in small-scale terms. Small may be beautiful, but it can also be powerless and frustrating, and a perpetuator of marginality.

It appears that rather than analyzing our own situation and priorities, we find it easier to imitate or respond to the prevailing band wagons. Income generation via tie and dye or other projects may be the latest approach, but clean water supplies might better be our priority.

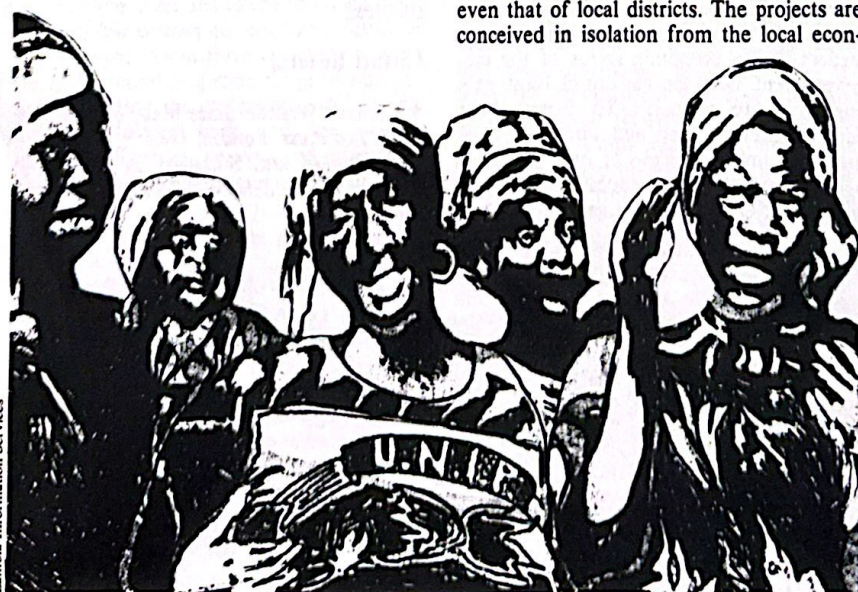
A first step for women, therefore, is to study the concepts that govern economic and political life in their countries in order to understand what they are dealing with. We are talking about power—economic and political—and yet we do not understand how to get power and use it. Proper conceptualization is a pre-requisite to planning.

We should also abandon the piecemeal project approach and adopt a long term, coordinated perspective to planning. Governments and businesses spend months working out their development strategies. They seek to ascertain whether they have the resources, and whether the components of the plan are complementary. If women's efforts are to make an impact, more time should be spent on planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Men do perceive women as a potentially powerful force—hence their defensiveness towards efforts to emancipate women. Women, on the other hand, do not seem to be aware of their potential for power. Women raise the children and have the ability to influence future generations' attitudes toward women. Women also possess numerical strength in most SADCC countries, particularly in the rural areas. Women must be educated to act as pressure groups, to realize the power of their vote and the way it can be used to bargain for equal political, economic, and social opportunities. □

Further Reading:

- Women in Development, a resource guide for organization and action, *ISIS International Womens Information and Communication Service*, 1983.



Zambia Information Services

Zambia & Ghana

Ghana



(The following is excerpted from a letter to *Connexions* from Dr. (Mrs.) Esther Ocloo. Currently she is one of the directors of Nkulenu Industries Limited, a bottling, canning and packing company in Medina, Ghana.)

"Changing Technology" is of great interest to me because of what I see every-day in my development work with women—especially with those at the grass roots level. Over 80% of our women in the rural areas cannot read or write, and yet it is these women who form the greater percentage of small farmers who grow the food to feed people in the city and urban centres. Apart from their lack of access to credit which would allow them to enlarge the acreage of their farms and thus earn more money to help the family, they also have acute water, fuel and housing problems.



blatter des iz3w



A rare picture of a woman receiving training in the use and maintenance of a modern plough, Upper Volta.

J. Van Acker/FAO

There are a number of concerned people and organizations who are anxious to use the most effective methods available in solving these problems, and one of these solutions is appropriate technology. Since this need has been recognized a lot of work has been done, and appreciable success has been realized. Ideas have been collected, money has been directed towards conferences and exhibitions, and a quantity of new equipment and farming implements has been invented for the use of women in their homes and on the land. The question I would like to ask is how do we get these scientific ideas and tools to the target women so that they can be put into practice? In some cases the women have been exposed to the ideas, or have had the opportunity of attending meetings, conferences and exhibitions where the ideas were imparted to them through lectures, or demonstrations, but implementation is left uncared for.

I shall give you an example. During the month of July and August I organized some courses in food preservation for some women groups. We bottled tomatoes—a rare commodity during the dry season, but abundant from July to early September. The jars I used for the demonstration came from Germany. They were obtained last year as a result of a contact I made in Germany during the food crisis. The women were very enthusiastic during these courses, and several more women's groups are still after me to come and teach them how to preserve their food. I have to decline because there are no more jars. The government is having foreign exchange problems. Ironically, while the government is calling for more food to be grown and

stored, no money has been made available for preservation and storage programs.

Regarding the social implications of technology, the application of technology is putting women out of jobs not only in offices but also on the farm and in other work places. This is a situation which cannot be averted. If anything, both governments and voluntary women's organizations (NGO) should take up the challenge of unemployment by intensifying education of the target women and helping them to upgrade their skills. Also, various economic ventures must be undertaken which will enable women to take advantage of the technology to which they are being introduced. At present, they have hardly any access, and where they do, the equipment is too expensive. Finally, science education is very important, and this should be stressed to parents in developing countries. □

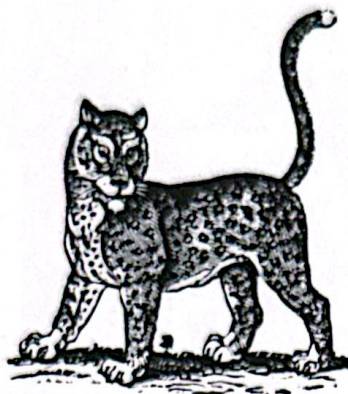
Further Reading:

- Blacksmith, Baker, Roofing-sheet maker..., Employment for rural women in developing countries, Marilyn Carr, *Intermediate Technology Publications*, 1984.
- Appropriate Technology for African Women, Marilyn Carr, U.N. Economic Commission for Africa/African Training and Research Centre for Women (UNECA/ATRCW), P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1978.)

BIG SCIENCE

VS

Wild
Nature



Anagan is a new West German magazine produced in Berlin by a collective of women who identify themselves as part of the independent women's movement, but generally prefer to reject any labels. Their articles carry no by-lines, as they wish to keep their identities anonymous. The magazine offers bold discussions of issues they feel are important, though from a cynical and somewhat irreverent perspective, a combination born from the experience of living in West Berlin. Their first three issues were devoted to the topic of technology. The next issue of *Connexions* will have an interview with women from *Anagan*, talking about their magazine in more detail.

This translation is excerpted from an 11-page examination of gene technology research, which appeared in *Anagan*, May 1984.

(Translated and excerpted from *Anagan*, #1, May 1984, a West German autonomous women's bimonthly.)

Order Is Half Of Life

The diversity of a chaotic Nature, the random products of genetic recombination are too wild and uncontrolled—as are the sites of their production—women. It's "efficient" that the production of life be transferred to the scientists; that is, to the men. Childbirth-envy would finally be eliminated; human beings would be bred in test-tubes and adapted precisely to the needs of this civilization. The arrogance of scientists allows them to declare that the genetic results are totally ascertainable and controllable. Living things are now being produced which never would have come forth in Nature. And the ultimate effects are not known. The biological bomb can backfire, hardly a calming thought, yet perhaps it is more calming in the face of mass-produced Orwellian-age beings....

Through chemical treatment of embryos, changes or deformities can be created which could serve a specific function in the brave new world. If it becomes possible to produce living beings that fit into the profit and power interests of the ruling class, then the highest level of

perversion will have been achieved—oppression perfected. When we see what today's technology already offers, it is clear that what might soon be reality is the science fiction that gave us chills down our backs yesterday.

People With the Stamp of Quality

The planners are at work. Sperm banks (and in the near future embryo banks) have existed in the U.S. since the early 70's. In Germany, sperm is still stored in universities and other institutions, but soon a commercial sperm bank will be opening in Duesseldorf.

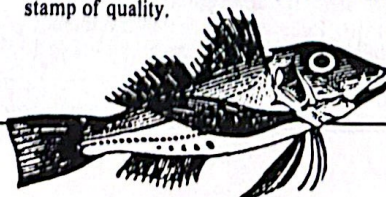
As the sperm banks become better stocked, it is probable that clinical inseminations will become more selective. Sperm donors are increasingly being chosen from specific personality profiles, in order to guarantee certain qualities or characteristics. It is improbable that characteristics such as temperament, beauty and intelligence could be genetically controlled, since these qualities are so dependent on surroundings and socialization. In spite of this, there are many hard-nosed scientists that believe, for example, that intelligence is 80% inherited. And they seem determined to carry this theory through—to create a person with the stamp of quality.

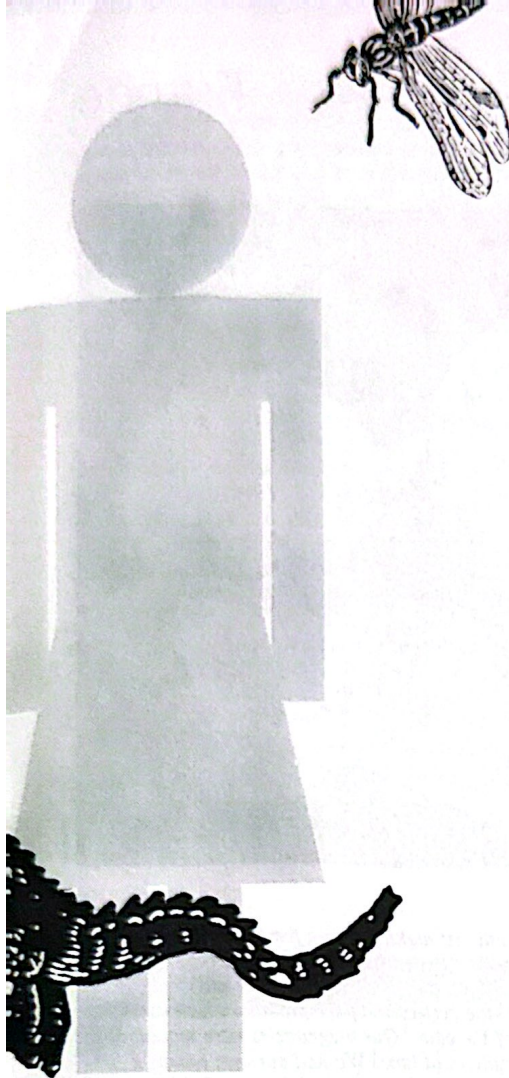
The master scientists argue that because of modern medicine, natural genetic selection is being lost; sick people are living longer and are even passing on their diseases. If this keeps up, they warn, we will soon be at the gene twilight of humanity. They contradict their own efforts to "cure" infertility by complaining that more and more women and men with "defective" genes, who were once infertile, can now reproduce, thereby no longer leaving reproduction to blind chance.

A Tailor-Made Workforce

In the future there will be more and more genetic advisors, both before and after birth. If eugenics becomes a broad societal practice, a new type of registration will be necessary—registration of genetic data.

These data would be of special interest to firms and insurance companies which deal with biological fitness tests for employees. As early as the 1960's, company physicians for Dow-Chemical used specific diagnostic methods to conduct a massive examination, in order to select out workers who they deemed particularly susceptible to carcinogenic substances. In Germany, women working for a ceramic company were fired when an increased lead content in their blood was found. These diagnostic tests served as grounds for firing (or not hiring in the first place), with the





of power that the new technology would give the political and industrial leaders, there are still the very simple dangers that the technology itself poses. What happens when a "harmless" intestinal bacterium implanted with a carcinogenic gene escapes into nature? How should humans, animals or plants fight recombined viruses and bacteria when they have absolutely no defense mechanisms against such new disease-causing organisms? How can the already upset ecological balance respond to the sudden massive presence of living organisms with completely new characteristics?

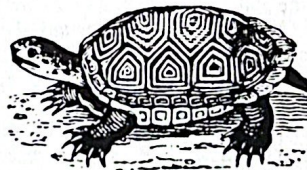
Scientists who deal with gene-manipulation have long been aware of the dangers they are producing. A few, acknowledging the potential dangers, have destroyed many species of bacteria with which they experimented, thereby also destroying their research results. Most, however, research further, with the argument that because no exact dangers are known, the freedom of research should be allowed to continue.

At the Center of the Maze:

It looks like the powerful have almost reached the key to life, the threshold to a new people—the gods are attainable. The scientists who are determined to find "truth" in the service of humanity, wash their hands of guilt. The utilization of knowledge, carefully divided into "use" and "misuse" is not their concern. Military use, for example, was never intended by them.

However, neither "truth", nor "progress", nor "technology" are neutral; they are products of the relationships in which they are defined. In this sense, "science", as an institution, functions to preserve the interests of those in power. The institution of science is a part of society, reflecting through its structure, its function and its ideology, the society in which it has grown.

I glance at the concrete housing blocks over the Berlin Wall and think about laboratory-bred bacteria species, swimming in their culture solution, leading us to such bull-shit uniformity. With bacteria, the "wild" ones are more resistant than the laboratory creatures. Nothing is worse for civilization than wild growth.



So...give up? "Nah," thinks the uncivilized part of my organized grey pile of cells. As long as I still have anger it would be a shame to give up. This old life can still get pretty exciting when we lose our fear of getting wilder. Maybe they'll get rid of us all anyway... but at least we'll make it as difficult as possible. The principle of hope, this? Oh god no...spite. □

Further Reading:

• The New Politics of Science, David Dickson, Pantheon Press, 1984.

justification that their body constitutions were not suited for a certain job.

Workers, for insurance purposes, have also been divided into various groups according to their genetic data. Many insurance companies have refused to cover sickle cell anemia carriers at normal premiums; many airlines have refused to hire them.

The rejection of certain individuals from specific jobs is not all that's going on. Some occupations are requiring a very specific qualification. For example, the think tank of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has suggested that gene-engineers will possibly be needed to immunize our soldiers against stress, as they do now for diseases, and that the design of military equipment will take this aspect of human technology and conditioning into consideration.

Big, Big Science

With this research, irreversible facts will once again be established. In 1938 the atom was split, in 1945 the first bombs already fell, and today we have nuclear missiles on our doorstep.

Now genes are being split in the interest of science. People are looked at merely as a substance, and gene scientists are observing them asking only how they can be most effectively changed.

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—Susan Griffin, Utne Reader

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(Translated from a story by Evelyn Le Garrec, printed in *Courage*, a West German feminist monthly, July 1981.)

On the wall-sized panorama screen, two good-looking prehistoric western heroes shot at each other. Suddenly, the shooting fell silent. A robot guard appeared on the screen interrupting the film. His authoritarian voice forced Hadrian awake from the happy state of numbness that had accompanied the movie.

"Attention! Attention! News Bulletin! A full uterus was stolen last night from the Factory of the Sons. The thief is a female-worker; her number is 75015. The tattoo on her forehead may not be visible because she is very likely wearing the black cape of a prostitute. If you see her, do not shoot. The stolen product may be damaged. Repeat: Do not shoot. Press an alarm button to alert the nearest guard. He will neutralize her. Please, do not panic! It is only a matter of time before the criminal is arrested."

They said the same thing every time this happened, but so far they hadn't caught a single fugitive. For the past two years these outbreaks had increased in the Factory of the Human-Females, as well as in the Factory of the Sons. Although no one knew the exact count, the increase in incidents had been alarming. This was the first time, however, that a female-worker had managed to escape from this particular Factory of the Sons.

Hadrian nearly fainted. He touched a button on the armrest of his easy chair to cut off the computer-robot's voice which would repeat its message for hours. The shock was so intense that cold sweat accumulated on his face. He felt sick. Hadrian had been "expecting" for eight months already, and was not allowed to become overly excited.

"No. 1: The factory of the elite, for the elite."

"No. 1: The factory from which it is impossible to escape."

This was how the Factory of the Sons had always advertised itself. When his time had come to become a father, Hadrian had, without reservation, chosen the services of this factory. All the Hadrians, from father to son, had been produced in this institution. It was known to be the most expensive and had the best reputation. It was reserved for the aristocratic elite of the 500 citizens of Paris-City. A sperm robot had made a house call and had respectfully taken the sperm from Hadrian that would produce a son for him nine months later.

Hadrian had forgotten what could happen during these nine months; he had been caught up in the ecstasy of "expecting." No father wanted to think about *that*. Nobody talked about it either. It was considered not only inappropriate behavior, but also obscene and dangerous for one's mental health. Those who gave into such broodings had to consult the shrink-robot to avoid going crazy. But how could he, now after this incident, avoid considering the awful reality of the birth process? *What if it were my son in the hands of this criminal worker?*

Of course, he didn't know the identification number of the worker who had received his sperm into her womb to breed his offspring and the heir to his name. The female producers were not allowed outside the fence of the factory. The streets were off limits to them. Everyone in the outside world pretended that they didn't exist. Hadrian, as a normal homosexual, didn't even visit the sex center. Thank god! Just thinking of a human female filled him with so much disgust that he felt like throwing up.



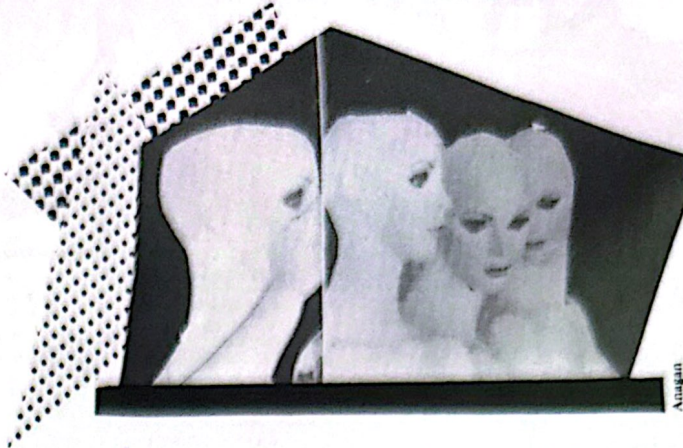
I am 75015. Until last night, I was a female-worker in the Factory of the Sons—a position envied by many human-females. We were chosen from among the best, and had the right to special treatment. This was necessary for the perfection of the products which came from our wombs: the sons of the elite. Our pregnancies were spaced; at age 25, I am pregnant for the third time. We had our own rooms, a panorama screen and a big garden for the obligatory health walk. The food was plentiful and good. There was nothing to complain about. I really enjoyed watching the movies on TV. They showed how a father received his son from the hands of a distribution-robot. I was moved by their happiness, and was proud to have contributed to it through my work. Every morning I swallowed the happiness pill given to me with breakfast. I didn't ask myself any questions. For example, I never wondered why they always showed us the movies but never any news. I am not sure if at that time I even knew what 'news' meant.

On the day before her dismissal from the Factory, No. 75014 talked to me about these things. At age 30 she was too old to produce any more sons, but she was in too good of shape for the shot of permanent sleep. She attended retraining classes in the sex center. She was to become a prostitute-worker.

I liked her. During our daily 'communication hour' we had often talked to each other, but only on the evening before her dismissal did she tell me the story of the prehistoric times. At first I didn't believe her. She was not at all surprised about this. "I know that you don't believe this. But please just do this one thing for me; something very simple. When they bring you the happiness pill tomorrow, don't swallow it, just pretend you do. Afterwards, you will find freedom." Freedom? I didn't understand what that word meant.

"Freedom is when you can't stand the walls around the garden, because you feel such a desire to climb over them, to go on to the even higher wall spiked with lasers; you feel as if nothing can hold you back any more. Many have succeeded already, but we don't hear about it because they cut us off from any news. The test tubes are nearly functional, and pretty soon they won't need us anymore. You'll have to search the wall; under it, in a hole, you will find a prostitute's cape. One of the workers from the sex center will deposit it there. Put on the cape and go through the hole under the wall; don't worry, it's big enough. When you get to the statue of St. Levin, you must lift up the cement plate that is right in front of it. But before you go, don't forget to talk to another female-worker as I've talked to you, so that the chain doesn't break. Will you remember everything?"

The prehistoric time ended in 1980, nearly 100 years ago, with a discovery by the genius, St. Levin. He wasn't considered a saint in his own time. He practiced in a now non-existent town named Louisville in the U.S.A. Like many other inventors, he couldn't foresee the possible ramifications of his research. In former times, it had been his modest aim to help couples in which the woman was sterile. He wanted to enable them to buy a child like a car. In those primitive societies the father didn't live by himself; the father lived with a human-female, who was called "wife." Pre-scientific categories classified these creatures as human beings. In the old religion, even the priests acknowledged, after lengthy discussions, that these creatures had a "soul." These "wives" gave birth to children, like the workers do today in the Factories of the Sons. But despite the fact that the father gave his name to the children, the "wives" also possessed the children and had the task of raising them. As a result, they wanted to keep the children for themselves. Those times were filled with trouble and fear for the men. Until then, the fathers had not shown much interest in their children—no more than for their other possessions, like furniture. But when they felt that they were about to lose this particular possession, and when they noticed that their name, their insurance against mortality, was threatened with extinction, they suddenly discovered the pleasant side and the honor of fatherhood. Fathers went on hunger strikes in order to force their pregnant "wives" to reimburse them with the product of their sperm. Organizations for the defense of fatherhood were established. There was a renaissance of film and literature whose themes celebrated the special bond, the holy connection between father and son.



But success was really due to a discovery by Dr. Levin. He had the idea of fertilizing an anonymous woman with the sperm of a man whose wife was sterile. The woman signed a contract stating that she would remain anonymous and that she would give away the fruit of her pregnancy. As a reward for her services she received a \$5000 check. (for more information, please refer to the prehistoric archives of *Le Monde*, a French newspaper from June 11, 1980.) Many poverty-stricken women accepted this offer.

This revolutionary practice led to the differentiation between pregnancy and motherhood. Pregnancy became a profession. The public got used to the idea that fathers could have children without "wives." This all led to the present population of single fathers. They had to keep the human-female as long as the even cleaner, more sterile test tube was not yet perfected. The human-females were locked into factories, and robots began performing all the tasks which in former times had been performed by humans. The number of humans on the earth was reduced to one million. These humans, all very healthy, distributed themselves into the remaining cities.

The fathers now spent their time playing chess or politics and watching prehistoric Westerns on TV.

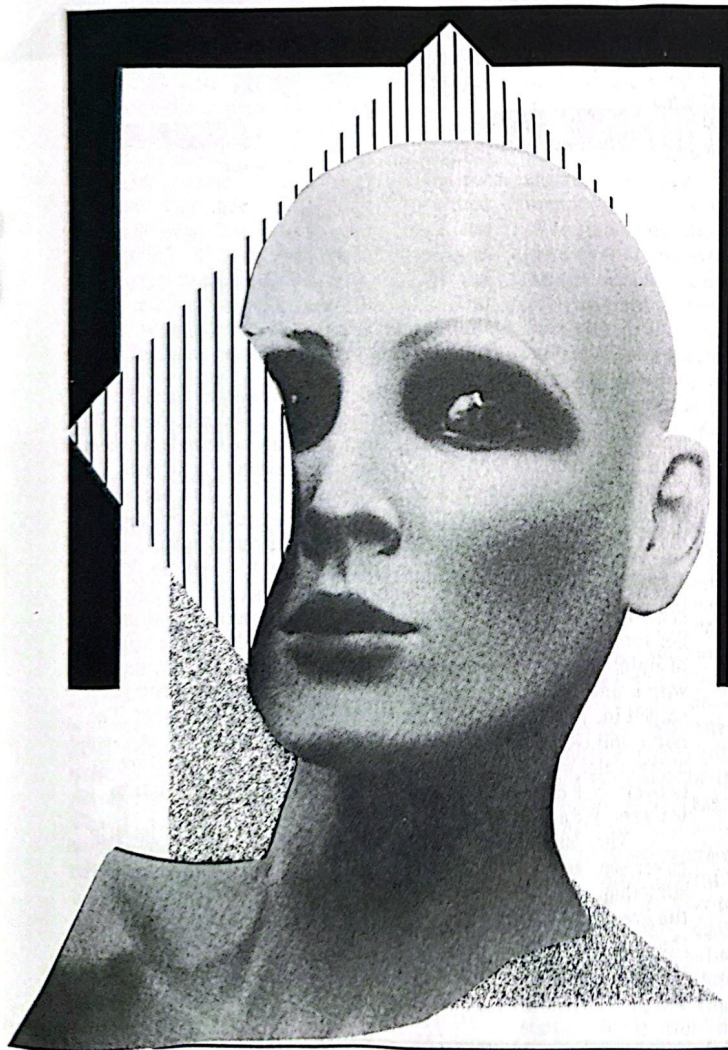
The big event in each father's life is the "expectation" and the arrival of his son. This can happen only once for him in his lifetime, because everyone has the right to only one heir so that the population balance isn't disrupted.

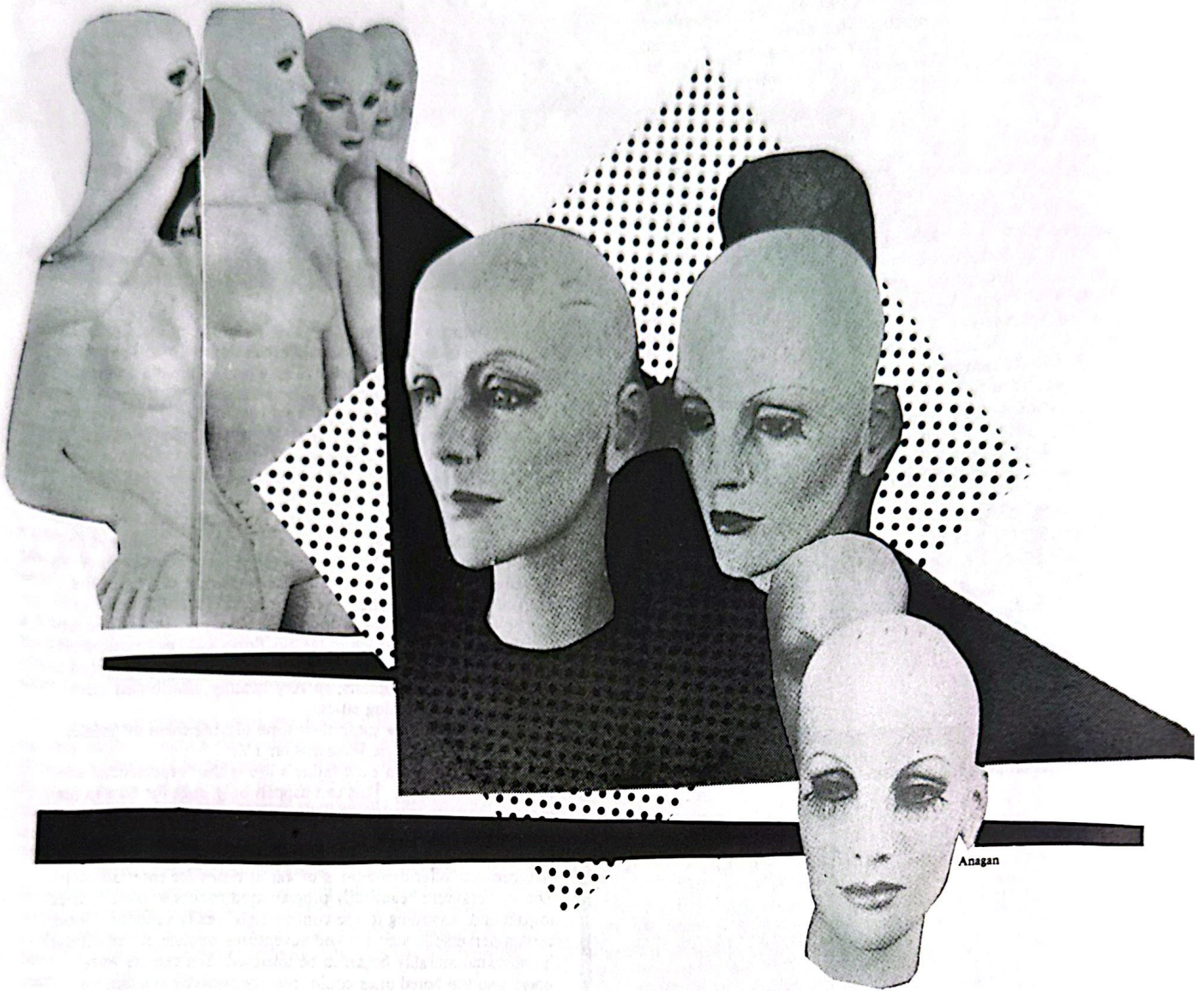
However, endless leisure became boring so the chiefs of the clan began to offer exhibitions of war at times for entertainment. The soldiers were beautifully programmed robots who bled, cried in pain and, according to the commercials, really suffered. Soon, certain perverse tendencies and adventures outside of the official homosexual morality began to be tolerated. Sex centers were opened so the bored ones could treat themselves to a human-female. It was also possible to call a prostitute into one's house in order to have some fun. As a result, the prostitutes were the only female-workers allowed to walk in the streets. But they had to wear long black capes covering their faces, and swing a rattle as they went.

Thanks to this contact with the outside world, prostitutes were able to accumulate knowledge otherwise unavailable to us female-workers from the Factory of the Sons. The customers had revealed the truth about those times which the men called "unenlightened." Evidently, they couldn't refrain from giving speeches after the sexual act. They were convinced that the prostitutes wouldn't understand their language anyway. But the prostitutes understood very well indeed, and thus the escape route was organized.

"I did what 75014 asked me to do; I didn't swallow the happiness pill. Immediately, I felt the strong desire to look over onto the other side of the garden fence. I lifted the concrete plate and found stairs which led me to underground tunnels. Supposedly, these tunnels had served in prehistoric times to enable large numbers of citizens to travel under the city in trains. The fathers sealed the entrances and, with that, forgot about the existence of what had been called the "Metro." They didn't notice the cracks in the concrete plates...

I walked for a long time through the darkness, following the reflecting arrows which had been painted there by the female-workers who had escaped before me. I saw the beginning of a stairway leading up. I climbed the sagging stairs very slowly, because my full womb was heavy and pulled me down. I was tired and afraid.





Anagan

75015 stepped into the fresh air on the other side of the laser-spiked wall. Since the creation of the walls, the men hadn't risked getting close to them, out of fear of the unknown surrounding the city like a cocoon. (They were unaware that the tunnels of the old "Metro" ended at suburban stations and so had not been sealed because they were outside the walls. In former times, this particular place had been called "La Defense." It was a temple of sacrifice to work imprisoning thousands of men and women during the day in enclosed glass towers. Now, the vegetation had burst them open and turned the towers into soft hills scattered throughout the forest.)

Indeed, it was Hadrian's son that had been stolen. His friends supported him throughout the ordeal. They managed his finances, canceling his order for the infant robot and the three top-quality education robots. In Hospital No.1 Hadrian got an injection for temporary sleep. As he lost consciousness, and his memory started to fade, he mumbled: "They should be publicly burned so that none of those witches are left in the city." His friends were surprised to hear the word "witches," but they just assumed that the shock had confused poor Hadrian. However, an attack of fear came over them, for they knew that from then on none of them could feel safe from such harm.

75015 looked, nearly blinded, at the world unblocked at the horizon by any wall. At the bottom of the hill she discovered little wooden houses, and in front of them a group of female-workers with little creatures who were crying and pushing each other. Children? She had never seen any except on TV. She had never touched them. Female-workers were always knocked out during the birth and never saw the children that they produced.

75015 walked toward the group and said: "I am No. 75015. I was a female-worker in the Factory of the Sons No. 1." At the same time she lifted her cape and showed the number tattooed on her forehead. The other women laughed: "We don't like any kind of number here. We will remove this sign from your forehead with a tincture. As soon as you get used to being here and get settled in, you'll have to find a name for yourself. A name. The name will die upon your death. You will not transfer it, nor name anyone else with it. And your child, which is obviously close to delivery, will carry its own name. Finally, we are not female-workers. We are women, and you are too."

They laughed, and 75015 was astonished because she had never seen anyone laugh before. But she felt the laughter meant something good and something happy. She walked shyly up to the group and pointed her finger in the direction of a newborn that a woman was holding in her lap. She put her finger to its cheek and noticed that this flesh had the same quality as her own.

□

Disturbance In The Field

Norway

(The following paper was submitted to *Connexions* by the author, Elin Kvande.)

There is today—in Norway as elsewhere—an increased interest in official circles in recruiting more women to higher technical education. In 1982, 24% of the students who began at the Technical University of Norway were women. Women are seen as a "reserve army" of technical talent which can be used to achieve industrial and technical expansion.

Earlier research, especially in the USA, has defined women as "deviants" or "conformists" in relation to the standards of behavior deemed appropriate for engineers in our society. Men have been taken as the norm. It appears, however, that women's values in relation to technology are different from those of men. What are the possibilities of women's values becoming predominant?

A debate exists as to the values held by women entering "non-traditional" fields such as engineering. The disparity between the "masculine" characteristics associated with professional work and the traditional "feminine" value orientation is taken for granted. The questions frequently asked are: will only "deviant" women enter the profession? If not, will growing numbers of women represent a disturbance in the value profile of the professional? And finally, what impact, if any, will the attitudinal differences between males and females have on institutions?

Not only is much of the data on such questions inconclusive, feminist scholars in many branches of the social sciences have begun to challenge the presumed universality of the assumptions, theories and methods used to explain and define the behavior and psychology of women. They argue that much of this research has had a "male perspective." They say it focuses too much on the interests and achievements of men, and that the findings of such studies are then unquestioningly extended to women. Furthermore, research on women is confined to particular stereotypical areas examining women primarily by their relations to men, or more specifically by their *degree of difference from male models*. Clearly, as long as the characteristics of women are evaluated by their degree of deviance from male models, women will lose or be seen as "incomplete men." The dominant perspective in research on women in the Scandinavian countries today is that many of the traditional female values and characteristics are important and should be maintained.

Women's values are based on a socialization process that stresses responsibility for others. This socialization tends to orient women more toward different aspects of the quality of work rather than productivity and efficiency. It has been pointed out that as a result of this, women may represent a potentially critical force against "a limited technical rationality" which is predominant among men.

Women, through their socialization, have learned to show responsibility and concern for other people. The majority of typical female jobs have very strong elements of these types of values. Ten to fifteen years ago, girls given the choice of professions answered overwhelmingly that they wanted to be nurses or social-workers because they could do something for other people. Today, girls answer more that they want to be lawyers and psychiatrists but they give the same reason.

These same tendencies are present in women who choose to work in the fields of engineering. Claims have been made that women think more about the consequences of technological development, and have a more overall and social view of technology. Among female engineering students, subjects that attract them the most are those belonging to the "soft" fields of technology such as biochemistry, biophysics and planning. The males by contrast choose subjects associated with the "hard" field of technology such as production or construction. The women, when asked to give the reasons for their choices, say they want to specialize in areas related to social, environmental or human needs rather than in pure technology. Not surprisingly, it is the women who push for more courses related to the social conditions of engineering. Moreover, it was the female students who reacted most strongly against the rigid work discipline, fixed tasks and "cramming" at the university, which gave no time for independent thinking or interests outside technology. The male students who accepted these conditions were seen by the women in terms of the female stereotype: as uncritical, passive and dutiful.

Because women might represent a critical force against "a limited technical rationality" they also tend to stress different aspects of the quality of work. They emphasize the importance of personal satisfaction in the work and cooperative working conditions rather than high salary and status. While this does not mean that

money is less important for women than for men, it is a sign that they want more humane working conditions. The female students were very critical towards the males for what they felt was a "narrow-minded" outlook. One of the women put it this way:

"Already during the first year they start talking about how much they will earn as engineers, and this is the main topic all the time we are at NTH (The Technical University of Norway). When recruiters from different firms come to give information, the only thing the men ask about is how much their salaries will be; they never ask about working conditions. By the last year [at school] it develops into one great competition amongst the men about who has gotten the highest offer of salary."

The traditional career for engineers from NTH is to advance from technical jobs to more influential positions in management. But this climbing "the organizational pyramid" often implies swift job changes, a lot of travelling and overtime work. The female students on the whole were critical towards this kind of job situation. Several of them referred to their fathers who were also engineers saying that they did not want that kind of job; they wanted time to do other things as well.

While women may represent a potential challenge to the dominant values and types of behavior within the engineering profession, the chances of women's values becoming predominant are slight. Firstly, because women who enter "non-traditional" professions are expected to conform to the dominant values. Exhibiting other values can quickly lead to exclusion. Secondly, the pressure to adapt will be quite strong. It has been found that the attitudes of women engineering students were "modified" in the direction of their male peers and of practicing professionals during the years at university. Thus the institutions have a significant re-socializing effect. Finally, women engineers are few and are, therefore, often present only as "token" members of subordinate status in groups. They are related to as symbols of a category rather than as individuals, and their ideas are thus easily disregarded. □



Sisters of Invention

Philippines

(The following review written by Susan Claire Ceniza is excerpted from a publication of Approtech Asia, based in Manila.)

The "Asia and Pacific Women's Small Technologies and Business Forum" was organized during the "Third Technology for the People Fair" held in Manila from November 21-27, 1983. The unique feature of the Women's Forum was that it was held in conjunction with an international technology fair meant to showcase "technology for the people." Thus, it was a rare opportunity for women to speak with the designers and manufacturers of these products and to closely appraise various technologies meant to benefit the majority of mankind.

The Forum had four major objectives: to study the roles of women in busi-

ness and how to enhance their contribution to the areas of technology now denied them; to search out practical, affordable technologies, or new systems that upgrade old activities, as well as how to put all these on a commercial basis; to explore how women in business and women's organizations in industrialized countries might become joint venture partners or advisors; and to develop a North/South exchange as well as consultation in the Asia and Pacific region itself.

One prime concern articulated in the many discussions during the Forum dealt precisely with the design of technology. Most designers do not have women in mind despite the fact that, more often than not, women will be the end-users of the technologies they design.

The differing needs of women in developing and developed nations was apparent within the Forum itself. Women delegates from developed countries underscored such concerns as equal rights, establishing viable businesses, the need for more women in top-level positions, development of intermediate technology, etc. The prime concern of those from developing countries was to help women obtain the basics of survival, i.e. food, clothing, shelter, health and basic education.

Concerning business, in particular, the point was raised that only when basic needs have been met, can we start talking of capital mobilizations, at any level. Therefore, women will most likely enter into basic businesses and will need the support of many sectors—government, development groups and funding institutions. But such support may not be forthcoming. Programs for the poor are not necessarily profitable and funding institutions are not inclined to offer continued support.

Tacked on one wall of the Forum's meeting room was the following piece of wisdom: "Essentially, the basic function of business is to satisfy human needs."

Women who enter business must develop a multi-faceted strategy which enables them to survive economically while, at the same time, they are developing the new skills and abilities which they need. This is not to say that the basic assumptions of the present economic structures are good. Clearly, women must strive for more than merely wanting to be involved at higher levels.

(Excerpted from *Sisters of Invention: A report on the Asian and Pacific Women's Small Technologies and Business Forum*, Manila, Philippines Nov. 21-27, 1983.)

The Filipino Women Inventors Society

One of the workshops at the forum was this presentation by the Filipino Women Inventors Society: "Asia contains hundreds of millions of women, spread over many square miles, divided among many nations and political systems and distinguished by deeply embedded religious traditions. For centuries, women have been relegated to household activities and to producing and rearing children. The so-called business and technological enterprises have been a male-dominated world and if ever women come to the fore, it is on the cover of fashion and sex magazines or in advertisements."

"In the Philippines, a group of women is proving, by themselves, that an inventive mind knows no gender."

Technologies presented by these women inventors included:

- the Samonette hydraulic plunger, a do-it-yourself plumbing device;

- Siroca cooking fuel, a non-liquid made of pure alcohol, turned into a wax-like substance that is packed into a can and is smokeless and odorless when burning. It produces no fly ash to pollute the kitchen;
- various products using sorghum, including using its grain for flour, its stalk for paper-making, and its fibre for handicrafts;
- Neilcor ice shaver, used to produce ice chips, as well as food chips from bananas, potatoes and other vegetables.

(Rachel Polestico of Xavier University was a participant at the Forum. She sent this letter explaining the impact of the Forum on her work.)

1 February, 1984

"After the Forum, I eagerly went back to my laboratory and worked out some experiments with my students. I think I have found a way of simplifying green charcoal production [a viable alternative energy source]. I have also utilized rancid, and otherwise useless, copra-meal by-products from our small-scale oil processing plant as a base for modifying Siroca fuel, since oil is already present in the copra-meal. This gives us a new product line."

"I tried using crab proteases, as recommended by Christina Soedjarwo and Yayasan Dian Desa [a firm in Indonesia], for oil extraction from coconut. I got a higher yield (320 ml of oil for every kilo of coconut meat, as opposed to 150 ml yield using the traditional method), but I still need to rid the product of the crabby smell."

"On the business side, I was able to interest a woman in investing in the 'Osmosol Method' of fruit preservation. We are in the process of building the solar dryer and tasting our first products."

—Rachel Polestico, Appropriate Technology Centre, College of Agricultural Complex, Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. □

Contact:

- Ruth Lechte, World YWCA, So. Pacific Region, Box 623, Nadi, Fiji.
- Lilia Oblepías-Ramos, Approtech-Asia, PBSP, Yutivo Building, Dasmarinas St., Binondo, Manila, Philippines.

NETWORKING

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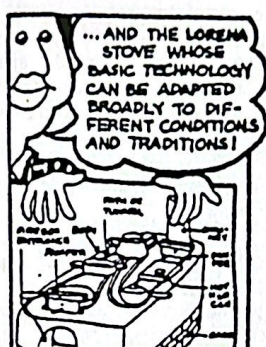
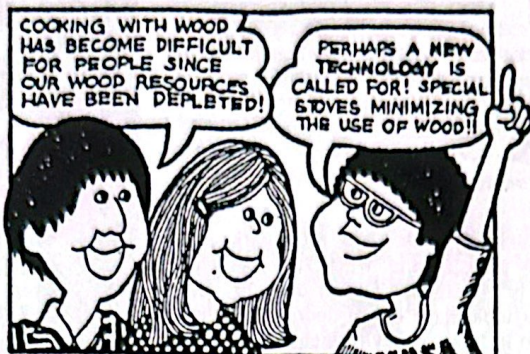
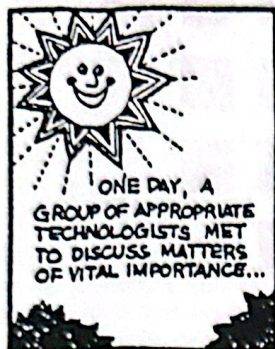
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Women at Work, Australia/ISIS

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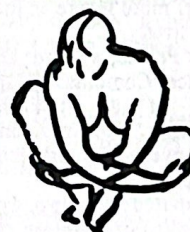
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■ Safe

■ Urban

■ Space

Urban environments and public transportation have rarely been designed with women's needs in mind, but as more feminists are entering the planning and engineering fields, this is slowly changing. This article illustrates how changes in design could positively affect women's lives.

(From *Women and Environments*, Vol. 6, no. 2, April 1984, a Canadian feminist quarterly. The following article was written by Gerda Wekerle.)

In August 1982, a task force on Public Violence Against Women and Children was created with a mandate to make recommendations about changing the urban form to increase women's security in public areas. Earlier that summer half a dozen savage attacks on women in Metropolitan Toronto—in parks, on the street, at transit stops—had prompted women's organizations to demand that something be done to make the streets safe for women. Consequently, the chairman of Metropolitan Toronto appointed a taskforce to investigate ways women could feel more secure as they went about their daily lives.

Headed by Jane Pepino, a lawyer and member of the Police Commission, the appointed members of the taskforce represented women's organizations, women's bureaus in government, criminologists, the police and politicians.

The taskforce started with two days of public hearings in October. *Women and Environments* submitted one of the few briefs on violence and physical form. We talked about the importance of public transportation for women and the extent to which women are often harassed both by male passengers and the images of male aggression and control in subway ads. We described the possible problems created by building design and siting which minimizes surveillance. We made recommendations for research and action. There were almost no other submissions on design—although the issues of pornography, advertising, policing, and crisis centers received a lot of attention.

The Metro Police Department produced a special analysis of the environmental circumstances of 29 cases of violent assaults and the subcommittee on urban design made site visits to all the locations.

Findings from visits to the sites of violent attacks against women found that 21

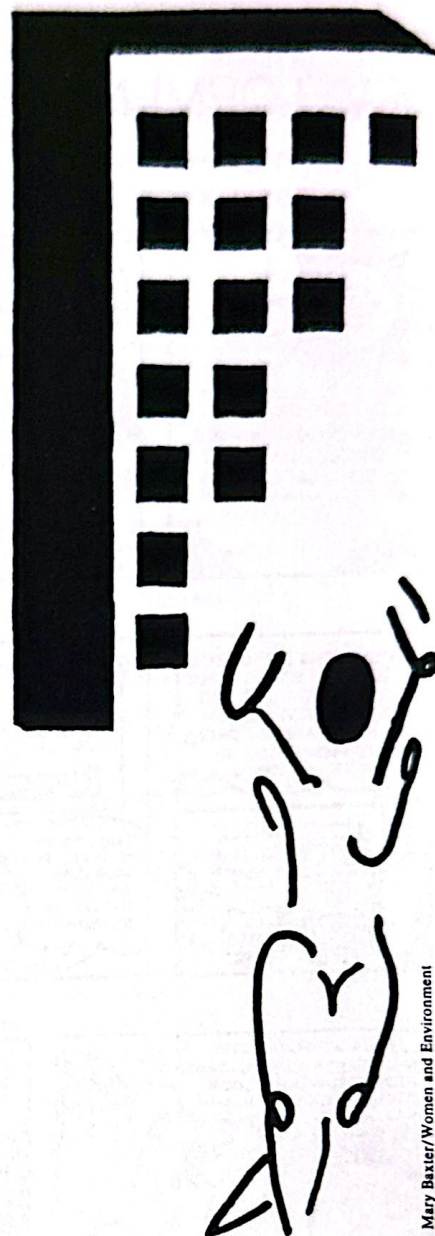
of 29 assaults took place after dark, the majority after 11 p.m. when street surveillance is minimal. Twenty-one of the assaults took place out-of-doors, one third of them in high density residential areas. In twenty of the outdoor incidents, the attack took place at a gap in the building frontage along the street, at school yards, ravine entrances, beside vacant lots, in commercial parking lots, in spaces beside apartment buildings, and on a university campus. Of the eight assaults indoors, three were in subway stations, four in parking garages, and one in a laundry room. Six of the assaults were transit related and took place either in subway situations or at a transit stop.

According to the subcommittee report, land use planning practices in the postwar period have created environments which increase the risk to women by reducing street activity and surveillance: large homogeneous industrial areas were removed from residential areas, retail and service businesses were grouped in shopping centres surrounded by parking areas; large school and park sites in the suburbs increased the gaps along streets.

Transportation planning also contributed to the problem. To promote neighborhood safety and protect residential amenities, large traffic free superblocks were created with wider spacings between main arteries. Houses face inward to an internal street and arteries are screened by trees and fences. As a result arterial streets tend to be empty places for waiting, embarking transit passengers and other persons on foot. Parks also received criticism. From the point of view of women users, problems include open spaces which are unnecessarily large, poor lighting, inadequate surveillance, poor positioning in relation to residential areas.

Public facilities are not designed to encourage visual surveillance. Common planning mistakes are made in the design and location of bus stops, subway entries, parks and playgrounds, parking lots and garages. Often entrances are not well related to public streets, unnecessary architectural features and shrubs serve as screens and provide lurking spaces. Children's play areas are located in secluded corners and away from direct sight lines from residential buildings.

The report proposed that priority be given to the establishment of a committee in each Metro municipality to review street



Mary Baxter/Women and Environment

illumination, landscaping and the location of transit stations and stops. Particular attention should also be paid to transit routes servicing universities, community colleges, high schools offering night courses, hospitals, large industries and employment centres where female students and shift workers must use transit at late hours. The report also proposed that the police collect statistics on the environmental features of sites where public assaults occur.

A final report can be obtained from Task Force on Public Violence against Women and Children, 590 Jarvis Street, Toronto, M4Y 2J5. □

Further Reading and Contacts:

- *Planning and Women Quarterly*, Planning Unit, Polytechnic of Central London, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW11, England.
- *Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR)*, 1700 Westwood Boulevard Suite 100, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

Technology's Here To Stay...

(Compiled and translated from *Vi Mänskor*, a Swedish women's quarterly, #3, 1983, and *Hertha*, a bimonthly women's revue, #2, 1983.)

Most women are afraid of, hostile to and uninterested in technology. Through a new consciousness we can break the foreignness. We can learn to steer, to influence. To understand, comprehend.

Women today stand for the most part wholly outside of both technology and technological development. It is men who are the builders and producers. Women are users and consumers. Techno-culture has its roots deeply planted in one of the male culture's biggest strongholds: the military. Engineering was from the beginning a military concern, and the word meant "masters of war."

"Technology isn't 'masculine' in itself," says Louise Walden, who worked on a project at the Swedish Museum of Technology called "Women's Culture—Men's Culture—Techno-culture." Walden was also responsible for the exhibit, "Technology Seen through the Eye of a Sewing Machine." "It is male-dominated, and has a 'masculine' tradition. Male culture and female culture have dissimilar goals and meaning in life. In male culture, the Establishment—for its own sake—is what is important. In female culture, concern for the individual is the daily responsibility—the most important one. One can ask oneself what this one-sided male dominance has done for technology and the development of technology."

Women's relationships to technology often reflects disinterest, foreignness, dread and hostility. What does this stem from? "Tradition, among other things," answers Louise Walden. "Technology as a science builds on logical, linear and mathematic cogitation, and has nothing to do with feelings and relationships. Technology is also associated with a long series of qualities that are regarded as unfeminine; one connects technology with men's way of being, that is, rational, structured and instrumental. In our culture, it is still charming for women to be 'untechnical'."

There is no scientific proof that girls should be less gifted in technology than boys. Nevertheless, girls choose to study the humanities to a greater extent. This is perhaps dependent on the fact that the subject matter and the work habits [in this field] are more in line with what we traditionally call feminine. Another explanation is that there are few female role models. Only 10% of technologists in Sweden are women. Among these, nearly all are found in the lower posts; they are design assistants, lab assistants, etc. Only 4 to 6% of engineers are women. In private industrial life, the percentage is lower.

"Women's identification is important and cannot be underestimated," summarizes

Louise Walden. Women who stake it out in technological development become "deviants" in two worlds. They become deviants in the world of women through their profession, and in the technical world through their sex. They're a minority in both worlds. It becomes a problem to unite the two roles.

In France, there are many women nuclear physicists, and one of the explanations for this is Marie Curie. Women physicists identify with her. The photo of Marie Curie portrays someone who is a physicist, woman, and mother. She was not intimidating. In Louise Walden's opinion, "Women technicians are very interesting. They are women at the same time that they control technology. With them lies the seeds of change."

But there are too few of them. Though they enjoy a highly exposed position, they don't have the same matter-of-fact support as, for example, women scholars, many of whom have their anchor in the women's movement. How, then, can the common woman influence technology? Louise Walden talks of a new consciousness, and an active way of relating to technology. And what does she mean by this? "By drawing from within ourselves, we can take a position and make judgements about technology and technological development. If we are aware that technology replaces human activity, then we can guide and develop it."

Technological development always has a double perspective—two poles. Technology facilitates, improves, unburdens. But the flip side is destruction of the environment, isolation, unemployment, impoverishment. The automatic mixer takes care of the heavy dough, but robs us of the lovely sensation of kneading and baking. With centralized heating, we escape the anxiety

of an oil shortage; at the same time we become more dependent.

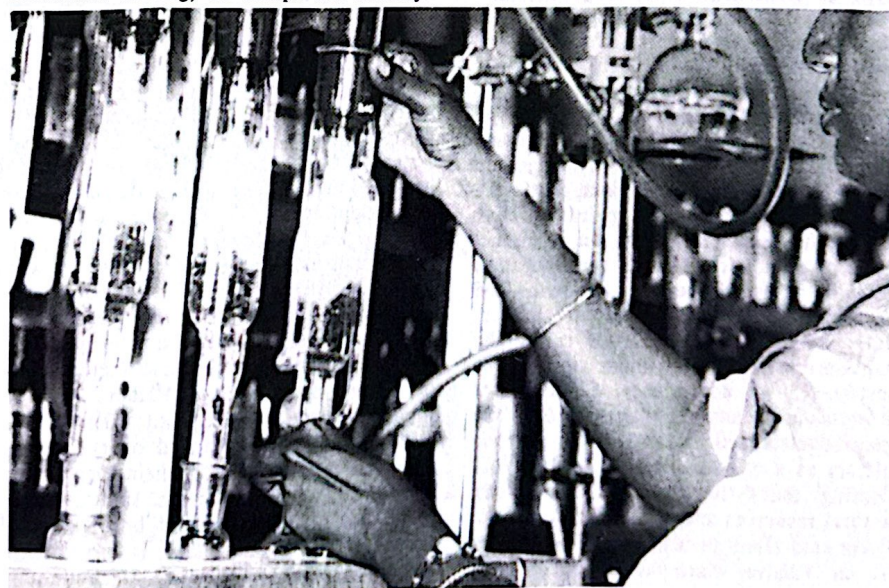
There is an expectation from the women's movement that women will formulate questions about technology, economy, and politics arising from personal experiences. Women have control over a large part of consumption, and in daily life they can react against a wrong turn in technological development. If women learned to trust their own consciousness, they could begin to affect the development of technology in those areas where women are a major part of the work force and in terms relative to the female experience.

"To place oneself outside of technology, to become hostile to it, is to confine oneself, and transfer the responsibility to others. The cure is knowledge, knowledge that comes from one's own condition. If one protests against nuclear power, one is accused of wanting to return to the caves. In order to counter this attempt to shame [those who do not accept the status quo], we must have in-depth knowledge of the subject, and be familiar with what the concept—appropriate technology—implies," states Walden.

It is not only women's alienation from the world of technology that must be overcome. Women must take it upon themselves to have impact on the changes technology is bringing to their work-place; the perception of women as peripheral or expendable to the work force is incorrect. Without increased awareness about the impact of new technology on women's lives, women's concerns can not be taken seriously. □

Contact:

• Eva Gunnarsson, Swedish Center for Working Life, Box 5606, 11486 Stockholm, Sweden.



Union of Burma Applied Research Institute, Food Technology Laboratory.

A Throw-Away Work Force

Mexico

Historically, rural working-class families in Mexico have migrated from ranches and isolated communities to more centrally located and prosperous towns and cities in search of shorter work days, the conveniences of modern life, and access to education and health services not always available in the country-side. That lifestyle, once so attractive to the rural farmworker and artisan, does not hold the same appeal today. Urban deprivation, cultural alienation and impoverished household economies characterize the reality of the 1000 migrant laborers who arrive daily in Mexico City.

The economic structure of Mexico City is a cash-based one. In 1980, however, 42% of Mexican males were active participants in the national economy and 14% of the females were economically productive. Although science and technology can be used to enhance human resources, and ultimately the comfort and quality of life for the 80 million Mexican people, we have not seen the Mexican state follow such recommendations. Instead, current state policy favors industrialization and modernization in apparent disregard of the high social costs paid by the Mexican people. Long term economic considerations have also been 'over-looked' by the Mexican state in exchange for foreign capital investments which improve the gross national product, but not the living conditions of the vast majority of Mexican people.

Is the social impact inherent in this type of technological exchange desirable for the governments and the people of the developing countries? Do Mexico, and other peripheral, 'third world' countries have any remaining options? Carmen Lugo, a Mexican feminist and lawyer specializing in issues of international cooperation, addresses this question: "Latin America is a dependent continent. Each country, some more painfully than others, has sores and scars on its structures of economics, science and education as inflicted by a dependent existence and development. The so-called 'under-development' of our countries cannot be explained without first understanding the relationship of dependency. Countries of tremendous economic strength oppress the non-industrialized nations. Due to our history as a colonized people, we are still fighting today for our autonomy, our natural resources and our dignity." (Reprinted from an article by Guillermina V. de Villalva which appeared in *Latin*

American Women, #57, 1983. It is based on research carried out by the research team at the *Centro de Orientación de la Mujer Obrera* in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. The women researchers and de Villalva, who is the director of the center, all worked for at least 7 years in the foreign-owned enterprises located along the Mexican/US border commonly referred to as the *maquiladoras*.)

For two decades the Bracero Program encouraged immigration from Mexico. The US canceled the program in 1964, suddenly making Mexican immigrants illegal, and causing a massive expansion of the urban population in the border towns. In response, a Frontier Industrialization Program was set up in 1965 to cope with the appalling level of unemployment, which had reached 50% in northern Mexico. The aim was to create jobs, promote the transfer of technology, and to stimulate internal consumption within Mexico.

However, the actual result of this program was the massive incorporation of women into the work force in the border regions, since their low wages guaranteed the profitability of the new enterprises known as *maquiladoras*. These women were a clearly-defined group. Their productivity was extremely high, in some cases as much as 40% above that of their North American counterparts; their total period of employment was rarely longer than 10 years; and above all they were very young.

The Frontier Industrialization Program clearly created jobs, but at the same time, it did not absorb the large numbers of unemployed men—mainly between 16 and 45 years—that it was set up to do. Rather, it created a new work force of young women, to whom it offered little formal training and no long-term prospects. Thus bringing women into the work force was hardly an act of emancipation. One of the major reasons women were selected was because of their 'docility'; they took paid employment in most cases because the men of their family were unemployed or underemployed, and because there was a short-term demand for their labor.

In surveys carried out, 73% of the women interviewed handed over between half and three-quarters of their wage to the family budget. Forty percent said that neither their fathers nor their brothers were earning. On an average, these young women were, with one other family

member, supporting a household of a least six people. Given these figures, it is hardly surprising that 92.5% of those interviewed said that they could not afford to leave their jobs.

This category of young women was traditionally never even included in the statistics of the economically-active population. What happens to them when they no longer fit the job description for employment in the border industries, given that the age of the *maquiladora* workers never seems to rise? Despite ten years on the job, they find their experience does not qualify them for other forms of employment. As one woman put it: "Though the industries created more employment, there is now greater unemployment."

While it is clear that the jobs themselves do not require high levels of education, the employers are often quite explicit that they use education and good presentation as a filter to select out 'the cream of the crop.' Only one or two out of every ten applicants are actually selected for work. The rationale seems to be that attractive women will certainly get married and not wish to remain permanently at work, and that those with more education will work better. It is clear that the actual education itself has nothing to do with their position, since the men that work in these industries have in almost all cases fewer years of schooling, and yet they earn more than the women, with more possibilities of promotion, and more job security. [Female applicants are compelled to undergo medical examinations; pregnant women will not be hired.] Absenteeism among the women is low, there is little in the way of union organization, and they work extremely hard.

These industries are subject to enormous fluctuation, [e.g. world recessions, devaluation of the peso, lending restrictions and interest rates as mandated by international lending institutions] causing sudden unemployment and frequent relocation of centers of operations in order to acquire a new and inexperienced work force. The women who are made redundant have few alternatives open to them: either they can take up petty trading or domestic services, particularly in the US, or they can migrate and take up industrial employment far from home in the US, using the knowledge they have acquired in Mexico. Though reliable statistics do not exist, my personal experience suggests that, whatever they do, their means of earning a living are extremely precarious and short-term.

The Mexican government has done little up to now to make use of the experience of these workers. On the whole they have more years of schooling, more work skills, and an impressive level of work discipline compared to male workers in the same regions. Surely they should be given employment opportunities to use this experience for the benefit of the Mexican economy as a whole. □

Organizing in the Maquiladoras

(The following article is reprinted from the April 1984 newsletter of MATCH, an agency based in Ontario, Canada which provides international support and resources for projects dealing with women and development. The author, Joanne Walton, is a Canadian freelance writer.)

On the Pacific Coast [of northern Mexico], the Zenith radio corporation operates two plants with 11,500 employees. Last November, 11,000 of these— 85% women— staged a spontaneous walk-out. They demanded the release of an imprisoned fellow worker, a salary increase, and the firing of their union representative. It was the first time women staged a mass protest. They were not politically prepared nor organized for the walk-out, and did not have a lawyer.

How did it happen? The story comes from Luisa Rivera, who works for a Mexi-

can, non-governmental development agency, The Civil Service Association for Development and Peace. The agency began as a Quaker organization and is now working with women's groups in the area to analyze and improve their working conditions. With MATCH funds women participate in non-formal educational programs covering the following topics: occupational health and safety, sexual harassment, labour legislation and the status of women in Mexico as organized by the local agency. Rivera works with women electronic workers through a program called *Mujeres y Fronteras* [Women and Borders], which three years ago began to bring women together to talk about their work problems.

In the first meetings of the group, Rivera explained that the women would sit for hours saying nothing. Gradually they began to share their experiences and realize their situations were not isolated. When the women heard their complaints echoed by co-workers, they began to analyze and eventually criticize their working conditions.

The women first talked about their fear of being fired if they didn't work the extra hours demanded and submit to sexual harassment which ranged from verbal teasing to physical aggression. It took another year before they began to discuss work-related health problems such as headaches, monthly colds and irritated skin.

Called the "merchants of death" by

the Mexican workers, Rivera said that multinational corporations operating in Mexico don't offer health and safety information to their employees. Instead, they often deliberately mislead workers about the dangers of handling certain chemicals, to keep production going.

The work hazards there can be far more dangerous than in the textile industry. Women have suffered from cancer, sterility, and have given birth to deformed children after working with trichlorethylene, a chemical banned in the U.S., but still used for cleaning electronic parts in Mexican factories.

But what angers Rivera the most is the stress induced by the pressure for an incredibly high production pace. Statistics show that Mexican women produce 30% more than American workers in the same jobs.

She related the story of a 21 year old woman who spent three months in a psychiatric hospital after exploding from the stress. In their groups, the women tell of awakening in the night with cries of, "I won't make it!"

"They use these women; they get them while they're young, so they can squeeze everything out of them like an orange," said Rivera angrily.

Rivera was in Mexico City when news of the strike reached her. The strikers had learned that workers in another electronics plant were earning 4,000 pesos more for the same work.

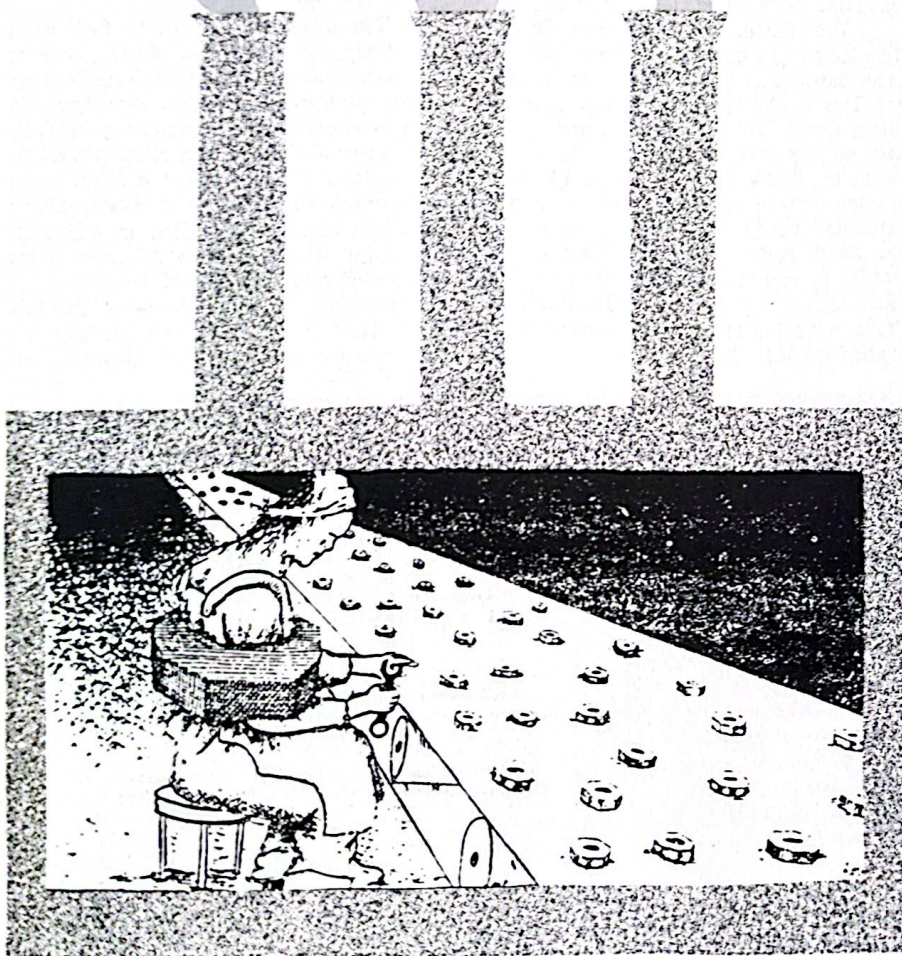
When a male worker returned from Mexico City, where he had made the workers' protest known to the president of the union, he was taken from the factory and imprisoned. The women watched his arrest, and together left the factory demanding his release.

As a result of the strike, the union has called new elections to replace the local union rep who had ignored the women's demands. A 29 year old woman candidate is representing the women workers, and has been accepted by most of the male employees.

Rivera said the strike represents the first move by the women to oppose general conditions in the plant. Until November [1983], they focused on individual injustices, getting 18 women reinstated for firings without reason. For the first time, women are opposing the conditions in the factories and they are winning. □

Further reading:

- For We Are Sold, Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, 1983.
- "Aspects of Emigration and Feminism at the California Border," Iris Blanco and Rosalia Solorzano, FEM, #34, 1984.
- Sex and Class in Latin America, Nash and Safa (eds.), 1980.
- Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women. Lindsay (ed.), 1983.



Rofha/Mujer Ilet

shorts

Dear Sisters,

Welcome to the Feminist International Network on the New Reproductive Technologies. We hope you will be able to do the following:

1. Please get as much information on reproductive technologies into feminist publications as possible.
2. Monitor newspapers, magazines and journals for articles on the reproductive technologies. Send to the network. We particularly need information on the status of research in these areas: egg and embryo freezing; embryo twinning (division of embryos); the use of donor eggs; experimentation on embryos including genetic manipulation, attempts to grow embryos for the purpose of transplanting embryonic organisms and the testing of drugs on embryos; the artificial placenta; sex predetermination and selection; and reproductive technology research on animals.
3. The address for the network is: Janice Raymond, Women's Studies Program, Bartlett 208, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA 01003

A Women's Emergency Conference on the New Reproductive Technologies (RTs) will be held in Lund, Sweden from July 3-8, 1985. Current plans call for the following conference schedule:

- Day One: Presentation of information on existing technologies and exchange of information.
- Day Two: Discussion of the social context. Who controls the technology, and how is it promoted and funded? How are women represented?

- Day Three: Discussion of the personal context. The issue of motherhood will be a central focus.
 - Day Four and possibly Day Five: Strategies for action.
- Women applying to attend the conference are asked to bring information from their respective countries and/or to prepare a paper/presentation on some aspect of the new RTs. Applications are available from the network address above. □

(Submitted to *Connexions* by the author, Diane Goodwillie.)

Have you ever thought of "money" as a new technology? In the small Pacific Island states where a rapid change from subsistence economies to reliance on cash is occurring, the concept of money, the adequate management of it and the use of modern facilities such as calculators and banks can be quite overwhelming.

At a recent Financial Management Workshop we ran a "mini" one day workshop for women's club leaders. Most of the 25 participants had never written a cheque or had a cheque account and many had never had a passbook or savings account. We taught things like simple business arithmetic, club receipts and records, management and planning and how to use a calculator. One grandmother said, "My husband and brother use these but before the workshop I was too frightened to even touch one. Now I'll be practicing on theirs."

The Financial Management Workshop led to a further request for training in small business or income generating activities. This was held with great support by the International Labour Organisation who have an extensive programme in the South Pacific to assist women's groups and leaders develop skills in this area. Their simple but extremely useful book *Making Money in The South Pacific* was like a Bible as we learned to apply the formula Making Costs (Raw Materials + Labour + Overhead) + Profit = Selling Price to things like selling snack food or fresh fruit juices. □

letters

Aloha No:

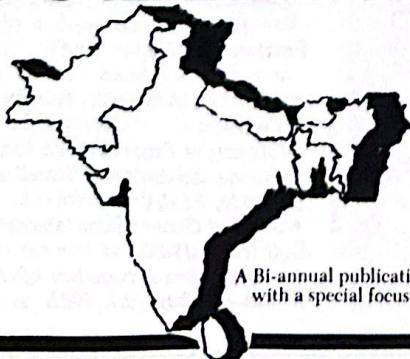
We just received this Action Alert and we thought that you might be able to help! We enjoyed the fall issue of *Connexions*. Keep up the good work.
Mahalo Nui, Ms. Puanani Fernandez

Rape Victim Appeals for Aid

Hilda Narciso, a 38 year old woman was arrested in March 1983 by the military. Hilda was brought away by car, blindfolded and, with her hands tied behind her back, taken to an undisclosed place. While inside the car, her two escorts started to abuse her sexually. When they were inside the house, she was left alone with one man in the room where he forcibly had sexual intercourse with her.

The complaint of Hilda has been picked up by the Davao Lady Lawyers Association who said that her case is only one of the many reports they have received from women political detainees. In fact, with the help of this group, Hilda has taken courage and bravely faced the humiliation and consequences of cross examinations and court hearings. She filed an Affidavit-Complaint, with supporting documents, for charges of rape and acts of lasciviousness against some military personnel in July 1983. However, to date there has been little response from the authorities, apart

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from an expression that the case be heard in a military and not a civil court.

Please send letters to:
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Malacanang Palace
Metro Manila
Philippines

Defense Minister
Ponce Enrile
Camp Aguinaldo
Quezon City, Philippines

Please include the following points in your letter:

1. A quick hearing and trial for Hilda Narciso.
2. That Hilda's case be heard in a civil court where the testimonies of all concerned can be heard publicly and freely and in doing so, practise the principles of democracy.
3. That the sexual abuse of all women prisoners be stopped immediately.

Dear Sisters,

Yessie A. Macchi Torre was born on July 14, 1946 in Montevideo, Uruguay. Accused of belonging to the National Liberation Movement (MLN-Tupamaros), in 1972 she was sentenced by a military court to 45 years in prison, 12 of which she has already served.

On May 15, 1983, Yessie was visited by a doctor, who is also a psychiatrist, from an international Red Cross delegation that inspected Uruguay's jails for political prisoners. Moved by Yessie's failing health, that delegation asked the prison administration to provide urgent medical attention for her serious ailments; in particular they requested immediate physical therapy at the Military Hospital. Yessie has scoliosis (spine deviations with several radicular compressions in the cervical and dorsal regions) for which on only very few occasions has she been excused from forced labor; she has advanced osteoporosis (bone fragility), advanced gingival pyorrhea which has caused her to lose teeth, staphylococcus aureus in the respiratory tract, repeated infections and gastritis. One of her legs is shorter than the other as a result of an untreated femur fracture. Her general state of weakness is also manifest in a notable loss of weight and extreme paleness.

Fear for the physical integrity of my sister motivates my appealing to you to ask for your interest in her case and your support in sponsoring a campaign for her freedom.

Letters and petitions should be sent to the current military authorities:

General Gregorio Alvarez
Presidente de la Republica
Casa de Gobierno
Montevideo, Uruguay

Coronel Frederico Silva Ledesma
Presidente del Supremo Tribunal Militar
Montevideo, Uruguay

Coronel Papillón
Director del Establecimiento Militar
No. 2 de Punta de Rieles
Montevideo, Uruguay

I am deeply grateful for any action you may take on behalf of my sister.

Yvelise Macchi
Insurgentes Sur 3493, Edif 20/302
México D.F., 14020

Dear Women:

I have recently had the opportunity to look at the Summer 1984 issue of *Connexions*, Women's Words. It seems like a fine piece of work and will certainly be helpful to us in our efforts.

What I must question is the exclusion of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press from the context where we naturally belong. We are the first publisher for women of color in North America. By lumping together Third World women who live in the US, either consciously or unconsciously assuming that our access to privilege and media is the same, and therefore refusing to present information about us in *Connexions*, in effect keeps us away from our sisters all over the world.

Perhaps because a token few US women of color have gotten some recognition as writers, you think that all of us are better off than any woman, whatever her color, living elsewhere. It should be kept in mind that these authors who have gotten some degree of attention are all published by huge commercial presses. As an alternative publisher composed primarily of out Lesbians, the amount of media exposure we are allotted is fractional in comparison.

Your not including Third World women from the US in this issue is not merely indicated by not inviting Kitchen Table's participation, but is shown even more blatantly by your all white list of "Further Readings" following your introduction. An article on European feminist publishing from US *Off Our Backs* and a bibliography of Third World women writers from US *Womanews* written by a white woman who consulted with me before she completed this article and who knew very little about her subject before she started are obviously "better" choices than any of the ground-breaking work done by US Third World feminists involved in writing and publishing. Finally, on the last page of the issue Kitchen Table does not even qualify as a resource.

A consciousness needs to be developed that progressive women of color/Third World women in the US not only see ourselves as viscerally linked to our people and their struggles everywhere they are occurring, but that in fact with the exception of this country's indigenous people—American Indians—all of us came here or were brought here from all over the Third World.

Sincerely, Barbara Smith for Kitchen Table
Press P.O. Box 2753 New York, N.Y. 10185

Connexions' editorial policy is to focus on and make heard the voices of women from beyond US borders. This is because we, too, feel closely linked to women around the world and are often dismayed by the lack of contact we have with them in this country.

While this policy has satisfied our goal of redirecting the flow of information from the "inside out" to the "outside in," it does, indeed, accept the political boundaries that imperialism has defined for us. We agree that these delineations must be questioned and that the redefinition of our communities must be a priority if self-determination and stronger links between us are to be achieved. The work being done by Third Worldwomen of color, both in this country and beyond, is of vital importance toward this end.

We welcome the valuable criticism and issue raised by Kitchen Table Press, and hope that this will mark the beginning of a dialogue out of which the consciousness you speak of will continue to grow. We regret the omission in our summer issue of Kitchen Table as an important contact in this country for Third Worldwomen of color—indeed, all women—both here and abroad.

Respectfully, Connexions

Suggested Readings:

- This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, Kitchen Table Press, 1984.
- Many Voices, One Chant: Black Feminist Perspectives, Feminist Review #17, Autumn 1984.

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resources

Agence femmes information (French), monthly news service, 21 rue de Jeuneurs, 75002 Paris, France

Agora (Japanese), twice-yearly Japanese feminist journal, c/o BOC Publishing, 1-9-6 Shinjuku, Shinjuku, Tokyo 160, Japan

Anagan (German), autonomous women's bi-monthly, Eisenbahnstrasse 4, 1 Berlin 36, West Germany

Asian Women's Liberation, Japanese feminist publication, available in Japanese and English, Shibuya Coop, Rm. 211, 14-10 Sakurataoka, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150, Japan

Brujas (Spanish), monthly feminist magazine, Apdo. Aéreo, 49105 Medellín, Colombia

La Cacerola (Spanish), c/o GRECMU, Juan Paulier 1174, Montevideo, Uruguay

Cahiers du GRIF (French), Belgian monthly journal, Rue Blanche 29, 1050, Brussels, Belgium

CRIF (French), feminist quarterly, 1 rue des Fossés-Saint Jacques, 75005 Paris, France

Cidhal Noticias (Spanish), quarterly women's news bulletin, Apdo. 579, Cuernavaca 62000, Morelos, Mexico

DIVA (Dutch), bi-monthly lesbian publication, Postbus 10642, 1001 EP, Amsterdam, Holland

Emma (German), West German feminist monthly, Kolpingplatz 1A, 5 Köln 1, West Germany

fem (Spanish), Mexican feminist bi-monthly, Av. Mexico No. 76-1, Col. Progreso Tizapan, Mexico 20, D.F., Mexico

Fireweed (English), Canadian feminist quarterly, Box 279, Stn. B, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2W2, Canada

Girls' Own (English), Australian feminist bi-monthly, Box 188, Wentworth Bldg., Sydney Univ. 2006, Australia

Herizons (English), Canadian feminist monthly, 125 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 1Y4, Canada

ILIS (mostly English), Int'l Lesbian Information Service, Box 1305, Vika, Oslo 1, Norway

International Labour Reports (English), bi-monthly labor report, 300 Oxford Rd., Manchester M13 9NS, England

ISIS WICCE Women's World (English), quarterly international feminist publication, box 2471, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland

ISIS International Women's Journal (English and Spanish editions), international feminist publication, via Santa Maria dell'Anima 30, 00186 Rome, Italy and casilla 2067, correo central, Santiago, Chile

Kommentar (Swedish), bi-monthly journal focusing on third world news, Box 5220, 10245 Stockholm, Sweden

Kvinder (Danish), Danish feminist bi-monthly, Gothersgade 37, 1123 Copenhagen, Denmark

Kvinnejournalen (Norwegian), Norwegian feminist bi-monthly, Boks 53 Bryn, Oslo 6, Norway

Kvinno Bulletin (Swedish), Swedish feminist bi-monthly, Snickarbacken 10, 111 39 Stockholm, Sweden

Lesbisch Archief (Dutch), lesbian feminist publication, Postbus 4062, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

Lesbenstitch (German), bi-monthly lesbian journal, Postfach 304149, 1000 Berlin 30, W. Germany

Lysistrata (English), womins peace magazine, 11 Princes St., Brighton, Sussex, England

Manushi (English and Hindi), Indian feminist bi-monthly, C1/202 Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi 110024, India

Maria, Liberacion del Pueblo (Spanish), Mexican feminist monthly, Apdo. 158-B, Ave. Morelos 714, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico

"Mujer" CEFEMINA (Spanish), Costa Rican feminist monthly, Apdo. 949, San Jose, Costa Rica

Mujer/ILET (Spanish), Latin American Women's News Service, Casilla 16-637, Correo 9, Santiago, Chile

Mulherio (Portuguese), Brazilian feminist monthly, rua Amélia de Noronha, 268, Pinheiros, 05410 São Paulo, SP, Brazil

NOGA (Hebrew), Israeli feminist quarterly, P.O. Box 21376, Tel Aviv 61213, Israel

Opzij (Dutch), Dutch feminist monthly, Kloveniersburgwal 23, postbus 1311, 1000 BH Amsterdam, Holland

Outwrite (English), English feminist monthly, Oxford House, Derbyshire St., London E2, England

Resources for Feminist Research (English and French), Canadian feminist resource quarterly, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6 Canada

Spare Rib (English), English feminist monthly, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AT, England

Tercer Mundo (Spanish), bi-monthly news journal focusing on the third world, Apdo. 20372, 01000 México DF, México

Torajyra (Finnish), lesbian publication, Akanat PL 55, 00511 Helsinki 51, Finland

La Tortuga (Spanish), Peruvian feminist monthly, Huancavelica 470, Oficina 408, Lima, Peru

La Vie en Rose (French) French-Canadian feminist bi-monthly, 3963 St. Denis, Montreal, Que. H2W 9Z9, Canada

Vi Mankor (Swedish), Swedish women's journal, Barnsgatan 23, 11641 Stockholm, Sweden

Voice of Women (English, Sinhalese, Tamil), Sri Lanka Journal For, Women's Emancipation, 18/9, Chitra Lane, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka
Vrouwenkrant (Dutch), Dutch feminist monthly, Postbus 18180, 10012B Amsterdam, Holland

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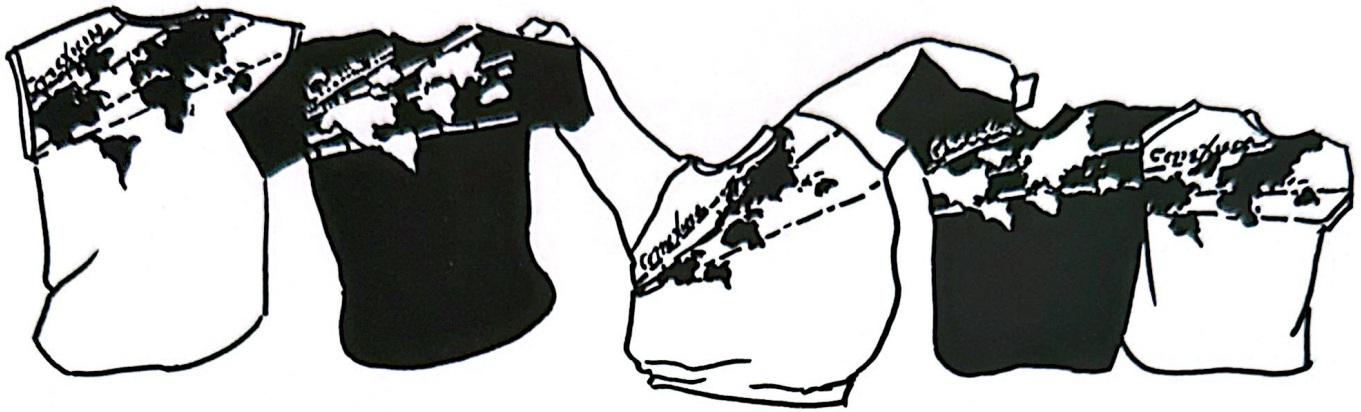
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Connexions thanks all of the authors and publishers who have sent us review copies of their books. Books received:

- *Live Art and artists' pages* published by Anne Marsh and Jane Kent, 442 Morphet Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000
- *Living Our Visions—Building Feminist Community* by Donna Hawxhurst and Sue Morrow, Fourth World, 110 West Geneva Drive, Tempe, Arizona 85282
- *Other Women* by Lisa Alther and *Coming to Terms* by Roberta Israeloff, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1984.
- *Places of Interest to Women 1985—Women's Travel Guide USA, Canada, Caribbean* Ferrari Publications, P.O. Box 35575, Phoenix, Arizona 85069
- *Stage V: A Journal Through Illness* by Sonny Wainwright, Acacia Books, P.O. Box 3630, Berkeley, CA 94703
- *To Bury Our Fathers—a novel of Nicaragua* by Sergio Ramirez, Readers International, Inc., 9 East 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017
- *Women and Words—The Anthology* Harbour Publishing Co., LTD., P.O. Box 219, Madeira Park, British Columbia V0N 2H0
- *Women Who Loved Women* drawings by Tee Corinne, Giovanni's Room, 345 S. 12th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

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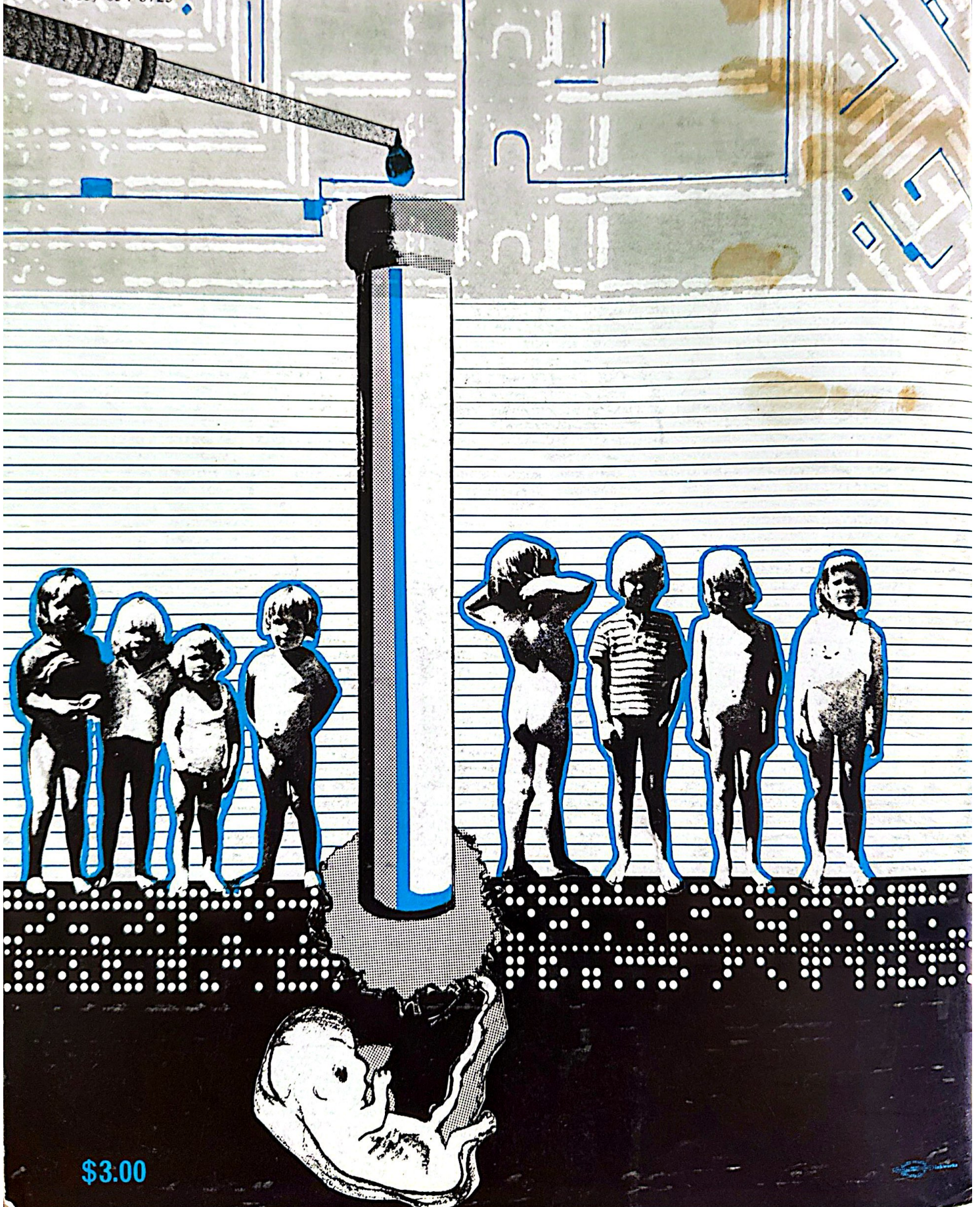
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