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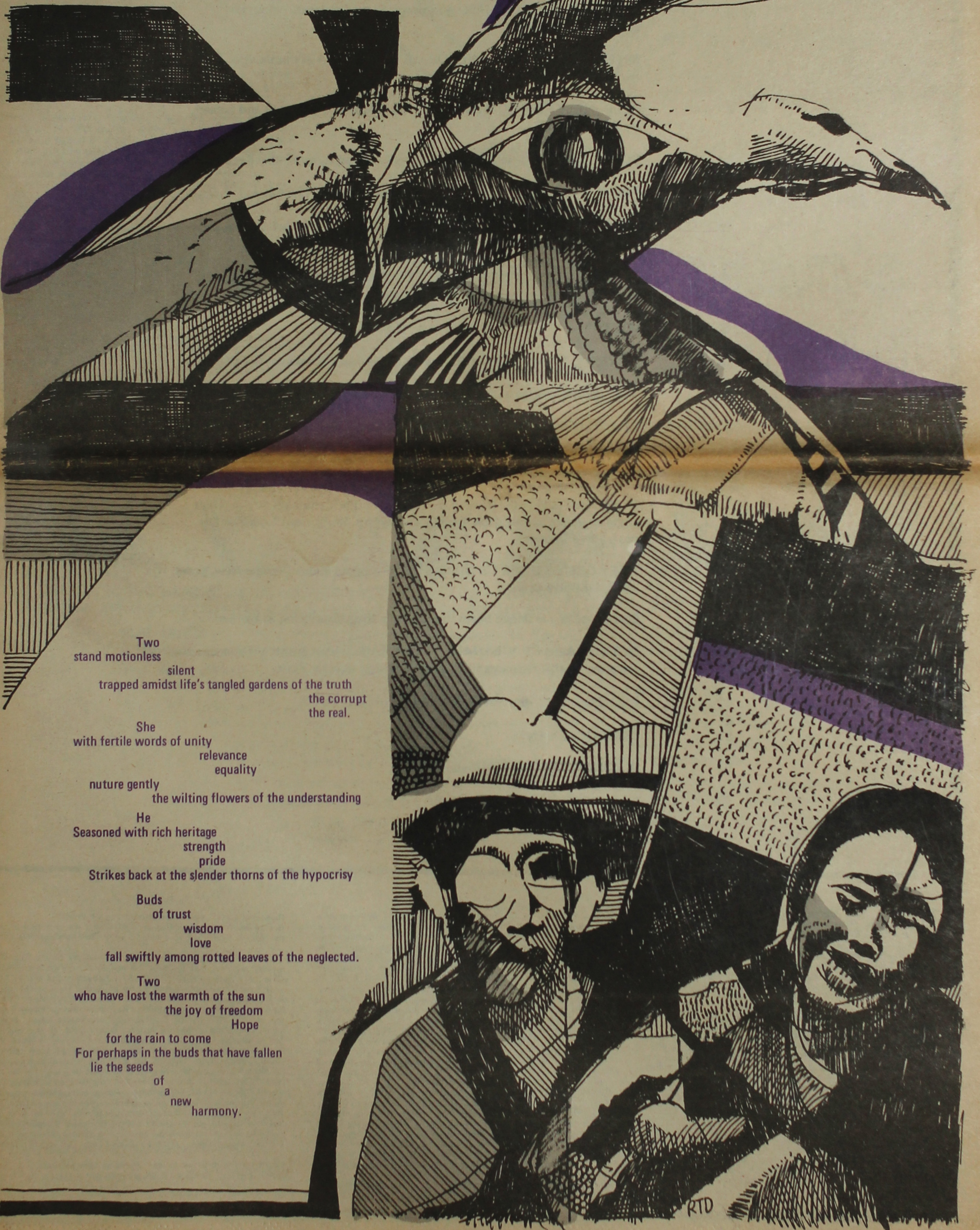
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Los Angeles, Calif. 90018

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Gidra, Inc.



Two
stand motionless
silent
trapped amidst life's tangled gardens of the truth
the corrupt
the real.

She
with fertile words of unity
relevance
equality
nature gently
the wilting flowers of the understanding

He
Seasoned with rich heritage
strength
pride
Strikes back at the slender thorns of the hypocrisy

Buds
of trust
wisdom
love
fall swiftly among rotted leaves of the neglected.

Two
who have lost the warmth of the sun
the joy of freedom
Hope
for the rain to come
For perhaps in the buds that have fallen
lie the seeds
of
a
new
harmony.

RTD



MONTHLY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

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It's been awhile since we've been so excited, energetic, frustrated, disappointed, confused, down and up so many times in working on a single issue. This April issue was originally planned as another women's issue focusing on bringing in many different perspectives and relating that to alternatives and social change. The sisters were excited about this issue and started planning for it months ahead. They had meetings that mixed business and good times and planned an ambitious list of articles but all without any input from men. Of course, men would be involved in writing a few articles and in the mechanics of putting the paper out but the planning and coordinating were to be handled entirely by the women without too much thought for the token or "shit" position they were giving the brothers. So at one of the final last-stage meetings, one sister questioned the validity of an issue without any real input from the men. After all, the women's struggle shouldn't be separate from the rest of the total struggle. The women should be working as

equals with the men. The women realized then that somehow in trying to be super-women trying to put out a super-issue, they set aside the basic concept of mutual responsibility and support. They discussed it and decided to ask some of the brothers to come in and discuss it. Together. The beginning of a new issue—not just an issue on women but one on men and women. The majority of the articles are still about women and they explore many areas that should be of great interest to both men and women but we brought in more articles on men and the roles of men and women. But most importantly, the spirit of the issue changed. It was no longer women struggling alone but women and men struggling together. On an intellectual level, that was a great feeling—knowing that we were in it together. But on a gut level we had our doubts. Some of the brothers had some bad feelings because they had been left out while the issue was in its early planning stage. The late change in the focus of the issue seemed to have a greater effect on the sisters. Many of the brothers still suffered from a lack of enthusiasm while the sisters seemed to have felt their sense of sisterhood break down with the change. Ideally, we should have felt good about brothers and sisters putting out this issue but then we all don't feel the right way about alot of things. (Pretty confusing, huh.) Perhaps we could have expressed feelings of mutual support and responsibility verbally but somehow saying and doing and feeling are not always the same. That's probably why we've been excited, energetic, frustrated, disappointed, confused, up and down. But

then that's what this whole struggle is all about. Before we forget...with this issue of Gidra, we now plunge into our fourth year. It's sure nice to know that you're still with us.

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Cover by Richard Tokunaga. Poem by Doug Aihara. April, 1972. Volume IV, Number 4.

AN EXCITING STORY

We at Inter-Pacific are pleased that you inquired about our services! We hope to help you find the girl of your dreams. Our files contain the names of hundreds of sincere, attractive Japanese girls and women of many and varied occupations: Students, entertainers, office girls, teachers, technicians, interpreters, models, secretaries, typists, waitresses, nurses, clerks, maidens and widows. All are eager to correspond! As you read this, perhaps someone from our files is hoping to hear from someone exactly like you! Many are hoping for that special letter that will lead to the kind of life that you, too, have been dreaming of!

There is no need to let the world pass you by! We can locate the girl of your dreams. Regardless of your age, requirements, we are able to tailor make a list just for you!

Oriental women are different. They are among the most respected in the world. They are famous for being unselfish, faithful, kind, trusting and obedient. They are dedicated to pleasing their man, who is their whole life. Ask anyone who is fortunate enough to be married to one, and thousands upon thousands of Americans are! You, too, can have a lovely, unspoiled and feminine Japanese wife! You, too, can truly be alive and know the meaning of happiness!

Our files contain the names of hundreds of absolutely exquisite Japanese girls, along with many details about personalities, appearances, backgrounds, interests, etc. Matching this detailed information with your personality, likes, requirements and interests, we select only the girls that are compatible with you. You are then sent your special list of girls who are waiting to be contacted. Quickly, you are in touch with some of the loveliest creatures in the world! A whole new life will be yours!

All of our lady members speak and write English with a great deal of skill. Many have learned the language in their formative years. You will be impressed by their sincerity, honesty, kind and sensitive attitudes that we believe no other women anywhere can imitate.



*the key to a
whole new world*

Do not expect pages and pages of names. You will receive an honest, up-to-date list of girls who have recently expressed the desire for correspondence and an early marriage. We do not buy names, and we are not name merchants, dealing in carbon copy lists that are years old containing defective addresses and girls no longer eligible. The girls in our files want to meet the average American, and you can be in touch quickly! Remember, love and understanding mean more to an oriental girl than any financial consideration. Japanese girls have been that way for centuries! You can become acquainted with some now!

All material is sent promptly and as described. Your name is confidential and will never be circulated without your permission.

YOUR SPECIAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Your having an Inter-Pacific identification number indicates to lady members that we vouch for your character and integrity. Only gentlemen who are Inter-Pacific members will receive replies. Also, your number quickly identifies you with us for prompt service.

AN ATTRACTIVE GIFT FROM THE ORIENT

With your membership you receive an attractive ancient oriental symbol of "double happiness," reproduced in metal with an antique gold finish.

YOUR NAME CIRCULATED IF DESIRED

On occasion, our girl members request names for direct correspondence. If you wish, your name will be made available. However, we will not send your name to anyone without your written permission. Please indicate on the application if you desire this free service.

MEMBERSHIP GOOD FOR TWO YEARS

All privileges described here are yours for 24 months, beginning with the date you join.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN TODAY!

You are cordially invited to join Inter-Pacific and enjoy the many advantages of this unique club. Fill out the "Matchmates Questionnaire" now! Don't waste a single day! Be sure to include your \$25.00 enrollment fee.

it's a
man's
world

SEND \$25.00 TODAY WITH YOUR ENCLOSED APPLICATION AND FIND OUT HOW EXCITING LIFE CAN BE!



A SAMPLING OF THE HUNDREDS OF LOVELY, ATTRACTIVE GIRLS (ALL AGES) IN OUR FILES. MATCH THE ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, WITH THE DESCRIPTIONS BELOW.

1. MISS CHIEKO N. This pretty girl teaches English in Kyoto, is 27, 5'2," weighs 107 pounds. She loves to swim, cook, keep house. Seeks mature, older gentleman.
2. MISS NAKAKO S. A private secretary in Yokohama, she is 32, 5'3," weighs 115, has black eyes. Likes to fish, hike, play the piano and sketch in charcoal.
3. MISS HIROMI K. She is 28, 5 feet tall, weighs 98 pounds, is a typist for an insurance company, collects dance music, loves children all ages, longs for marriage.
4. MISS SUNOOK M. This attractive girl is 21, 5'5," weighs 126 pounds, is a hair-dresser, loves the country and nature, is an accomplished musician.
5. MISS MICHIKO U. An 18-year-old telephone operator, she loves football, baseball, gardening, fishing, sailing, is 5' tall, weighs 100 pounds. Seeks kind gentleman.
6. MISS CHRISTMAS J. This Chinese-Irish girl is 20, works as a typist, is 5'5," weighs 119, enjoys dancing, travel, home life, American novels, animals, nature.

"Let me say, at the risk of seeming ridiculous, that a true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love."

Che Guevara

It will probably come as no surprise to most people that individuals in this society will often take advantage of people admitting their weaknesses or loneliness. For some, it will come as no surprise that these people will try to capitalize on such occasions in the name of goodness and concern. In the January issue of *Gidra*, 1971, the third page spread covered a leaflet that was being distributed to numerous veterans and GI's. The leaflet, soliciting for interested "buyers" of Asian women encouraged "how to obtain Japanese ladies and girls for: Maids, Domestic, Female Servants, Social Housekeepers, Cooks, Household Workers." The leaflet, printed as an example of the exploitation of Asian women, was used in hopes that such material would not be seen in print again.

One year later, a similar advertisement is spotted:

"GIRLS FROM JAPAN desire friendship, marriage! Send \$1.00 for beautiful photographs,

descriptions, questionnaire, names, guarantee! Inter-Pacific, Box 304-SM, Birmingham, MI 48012."

This time, acting supposedly in the interest of "girls who have recently expressed the desire for correspondence and an early marriage," the leaflet appeals to "gentlemen" of "good moral character,"—"no hippies, yuppies, subversives or others so inclined," wanted.

With seemingly encouraging words, the leaflet continues, "Oriental women are different...They are famous for being unselfish, faithful, kind, trusting and obedient. They are dedicated to pleasing their man, who is their whole life."

What may seem to some as genuine concern for these Asian women, appears in the end to be nothing more than a money-making venture. Only later does the \$25 enrollment figure appear in print.

This leaflet is not only an example of the racist stereotyping labeled against Asian women, it reflects the empty self-image Asian women in this country have been oppressed into believing about their own existence as

human beings.

Letters, agencies, "sympathetic" individuals who promote "sales" such as these, need to be confronted and re-educated as to the degradation and humiliation that is perpetuated by their existence. It is not a humane society that encourages profits from human vulnerability. It is not a sane or sincere system that encourages the subjugation of one human being for the satisfaction or comfort of another.

The price paid for one's self respect and human dignity is often a painful and frustrating battle. But human beings must be supported and encouraged to believe that they have this capability, this strength to control the direction of their lives. It is out of compassion for these women who desire human recognition that these profit-oriented agencies should and must be destroyed. This struggle is not only necessary for these women already vulnerable to exploitation by fantasy-prone men, but for the future men and women who deserve and have a right to feel the power of their own strength and self-determination as healthy, loving human beings.

—Patti Iwataki

THE ASIAN AMERICAN:

Caught in a Media Massage

The media reinforce and make difficult (but not impossible) the breakdown of racist and sexist stereotypes and attitudes.

ELECTRONIC SELF-HATE

Many of us evade the issue. Uncomfortable at seeing ourselves on television, in movies, magazines, we are embarrassed. We are uncomfortable if the individual is not an innocuous, yellow Sidney Poitier (so as not to be personally embarrassing) or satisfied if he is a silly Sammy Fong (of "Bachelor Father") or crazy Jack Soo ("Valentine's Day, Flower Drum Song"). After all, that's not YOU—or is it?

What is apparent is an electronic manifestation of self-hate. We cannot accept ourselves as three-dimensional individuals. Now, we too, see the stereotype as real. But in the process we have disengaged ourselves from the portrayal. Almost. If the portrayal begins to come too close to reality, i.e., and intelligent, feeling, verbal Asian American (and not a remote "foreigner"), we are quick to either reject or criticize the actor or actress. "Who does he/she think she is?" saying the actor is wooden, looks phoney or we just squirm with uncomfortable nervousness. Why? Because we know that other non-Asians don't discriminate between individual Asians. They see us as indistinguishable from each other. When we reject the electronic portrayal, we are not only rejecting ourselves we are also trying to tell non-Asians, "Look at me. I'm not like that. Don't lump me with all the rest." We are not rejecting the image as much as we are rejecting what non-Asians will assume about all of us. It is easier to pretend that this electronic reality does not apply to us if the person is a foreigner, a spy

Medium (plural, media) means a "middle state of degree...an intervening thing through which a force or act is produced." Communications media (e.g., television, books, advertising, newspapers, films, etc.) are the "middle state" of reality. It is the "intervening thing" through which reality is produced. What happens is a three-dimensional reality becomes a two- or even one-dimensional image—called a stereotype.

Now the question becomes, if everyone, Asians, blacks, Native Americans, Chicanos and whites are stereotyped, what's the problem?—since everyone suffers equally. So it may appear—on the surface. For example, white housewives are made to appear compulsive cleaners, white husbands are stupid Archie Bunkers, and white children are crazy teenagers. But there are also brilliant white lawyers, sophisticated white socialites, hard but brave white cops, and silly but pure Doris Day's. The range of variation is all inclusive. If a white doesn't want to identify with one, there's always another model—or a combination of several available.

But what about Asians? We are caught between Hop Sing (the Chinese Stepen Fetchit) and Mrs. Livingston (the ultimate mother-good wife figure: understanding, comforting and quiet). And with the new interest in China, the ever-exploitive medium of television has a resident "Red" Chinese agent on "Hawaii Five-O" and a Suzi Wong prize for the white loser in a ping pong match.

or other non-American. But when the reality comes a shade too close to the truth, we become uncomfortable and highly critical.

THE COMMERCIAL HOAX

The true racist and sexist attitudes of America towards Asians is no more cruelly apparent than in commercials. Men are impotent, silly, or karate fiends. Women are sexy teasers.

Commercials reflect roles, fantasies, stereotypes more than they create them. By nature advertising is conservative. By definition, commercials respond to money: commercials are done for sale or profit. The ruling philosophy is, "If the method sells the product, use it." This indicates an amoral culture; in the sense that morals mean standards of right and wrong, good and evil. The moral value of something is measured in popularity. This translates: "If it sells, it must be good."

THE COMMERCIAL ASIAN

A brief look at several commercials concerning Asians points out two themes—for women: quaintly exotic sex; for men: impotently deceptive strength, i.e., slyly impassive with hidden potentials for sudden explosions of violence. For example, the actor Mako's (*Sand Pebbles*) car commercial where he gets the last word with, "I always had a yen for a little foreign car..." meanwhile dressed in a baggy suit, cameras and a silly grin; which indicates the silly but clever-sly image which can get the upper hand. And there's another auto commercial where a Japanese karate expert bows quietly then suddenly pounces into a car yelling and chopping furiously at the interior of the car. He stops, climbs gently out and bows softly—the impassive crazy man. For women there's the Chevron girl (Wiki-wiki) and the lei-clad "Ring around the collar girl"—both offering the lure of exotica.

What is most disturbing about these stereotypes is that advertising, as stated earlier, does not create images—it only reflects what people will be willing to believe.

THE ASIAN WOMAN IN THE MEDIA

Looking specifically at Asian women and the roles they are given to portray as a reflection of this media "reality" we find the "Professional Handmaiden" concept—the ever supplicant, willing helpmate. Basically, there are three white, male oriented media images and fantasies of Asian women:

- 1) the Geisha—who represents soft sex,
- 2) the Dragon Lady/Suzi Wong image—who represents hard sex,
- 3) the Housekeeper—the comforting, all understanding mother-image.

These media images are transformed into worldly stereotypes. The Geisha and Suzi Wong fantasies become the basis for many Asian women "kept" as mistresses or viewed as prostitutes. The housekeeper becomes the good wife: quiet, hard-working, self-effacing and modest. The housekeeper image is also transformed into the professional worldly stereotype of the efficient and trustworthy secretary or teacher. Both are sympathetic, clean, subservient but supportive, of some intelligence (enough to know when to keep quiet) and gentle.

CONCLUSION

Why do these stereotypes exist? Based in a covert fear of the unknown—the Mystique of the East—the Occidental "fears" the sneaky, potentially violent Asian male and envies "his" seductive, mutely strong women. So he demasculinizes the men and prostitutes the women—exactly what has been going on in Southeast Asia for too many years and in Japan, the Philippines and China in the years (centuries) before. And exactly what is happening on television and in the movies in America.

But what difference does that make? After all, that's not you. You know that. And all your non-Asian friends know that.

But, according to the 1970 census of the population, only about .7 percent of the U.S. population is of Asian descent and .5 percent live on the West Coast (including Hawaii). How many non-Asian Americans will have the opportunity to dispel their stereotypes by personal interaction with Asians? How many more of the 95 percent of Americans (including Asians) who own a television will believe the one-dimensional electronic "reality" of our souls?

—Karen Ito Chan



Now Lenny, C'mon Man...

Leonard H. Lavin, President
Alberto-Culver Products
2525 Armitage Avenue
Melrose Park, Illinois 60164

Hey Lenny baby,

Caught that faaaar-out spot of yours on the old boob-tube (Get it, Lenny? Boob-tube.). Yep, we all caught it. Watching the Super Bowl. Watching the Winter Olympics. Millions saw it. You know the one. Yesiree. The commercial. The Command hairspray commercial. You haven't forgotten? These two guys are playing ping-pong. One is white. The other is yellow. Right. Nothing like cappin' on current events, Lenny—you rascal, you. Well, the sneaky Chink, or whatever he is, is getting it on in the scoreboard department (points in the game, Lenny, not broads). Anyway, the slant eye is beating the honky baaaad. The guy musta been cheatin' or somethin'. Such is life nowadays. How do you deal with *those* kinds? You just can't win, at least not in some stupid game. So the white guy probably says, "Fuck it all." And then what does he do? No, he doesn't quit. He puts some hairspray on his Gene Shacove twenty dollar special. You know the one. The haircut for today's man. The cut with a personality. Twenty bucks for a rinse, cut and set. My, my, my. Sure is different from the good old barbershop days. I guess you know what I'm talking about. Right. A

haircut just like yours. He puts the stuff (your company's stuff) on his hair and keeps on playing. And the little yellow fellow with the soup-bowl mop on his head is sweatin' like a motherfucker. He's lookin' like some kinda awful mess with his hair goin' every which way. Eeeeeeeeeeeck. Meanwhile, this long-haired, voluptuous, long-limbed, Suzi Wong type (and I do mean type) is sitting in the peanut gallery thinking. Hmhmhmhmhm. You know the kind. How should we say it? Er, ah, well now, let's see, er.....a woman.....a promiscuous woman. A Chinese dragon lady with the hots. The kind of chick that we have grown to know and lust for after years of watching the silver screen and re-runs on the boob-tube. You get the idea. She's sitting there pondering a non-eternal, non-question with her index finger up to her silky-smooth cheek. The ping-pong game ends. The hordes congratulate the yellow fellow. The white guy has lost but wait.....the Suzi Wong type strolls over to the honky and walks off with him. Then some voice like from a Smuckers jam commercial softly says, "It's not if you win or lose. It's how you play the game." Final fade-out. And the funny thing about this particular commercial is that it is still being shown.

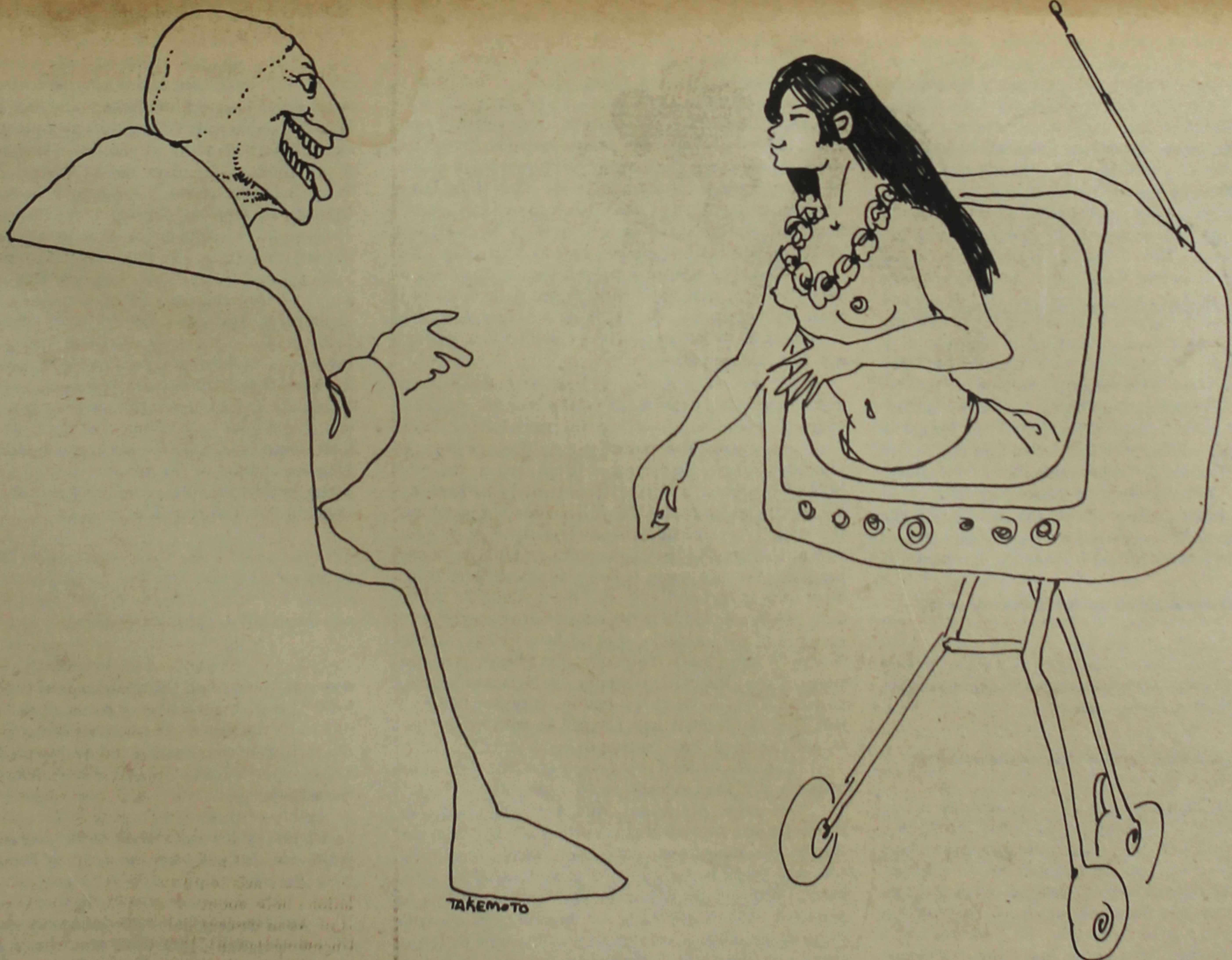
Now Lenny, come on, man. Here you are—a big president of a big time cosmetic company. A real big shot. It sure ain't like the old days but you still gotta take care of the store. You still gotta be responsible like a big boy. So all right already. So what are you doing? You pay all kinds of money to a big ad agency

for pushing the hairspray and then even more to get the thing on the air. So what's wrong with that? The commercial sucks. There are alot of Asians in this country and a *whole* lot of Asian women that don't dig it. And to put it mildly, they are madder than shit.

These people are human, man. They don't dig the image. The no tickee, no laundree man. The Fu Manchu. The Odd-Job karate killer. The Charlie Chan and his insipid sons. The kamikaze pilots. The quiet gardener. The list goes on and on. And now watch out. There are some Asian females that are getting hip to what's goin' on. They'd just as well scratch out your eyes than look at an Asian woman portrayed again to be some almond-eyed and mysterious and seductive while submissive and quiet obedient pussycat. Let's get the record straight.

The Chicanos don't want no Frito Bandido. The Blacks don't want no smilin' tap dancer. The Indians don't want no Tonto. And the Asians don't want no ping-pong playing mini-eunuch or no Suzi Wongs. Lenny, you're a big boy now. If the company wants to sell more hairspray or more VO-5, use some imagination. Playing off cheap images of people is too easy. For you, hawking a product in a consumer sovereignty is life. For us, selling short an ethnic race in a commercial media is murder.

Alan Ota
P.O. Box 18046
Los Angeles, Ca. 90018



I first met Jeannie Joe when I worked in the New World Guerilla Theatre along with Warren Furutani, Larry Kubota, Gladys, Annette, Roberto, Michael—some beautiful Third World sisters and brothers. This was in 1969.

When I was assigned to interview a woman in the arts, the first person I thought of was Jeannie. I saw her as a woman who was able to maintain her dignity and integrity and exercise creative self-determination in her work in the face of many odds. I like Jeannie as a person and I respect her for her strong faith in the talent of Third World people and her perseverance and commitment in building an alternative theatre for our people.

I wanted the interview to bring out the continuity in Jeannie's personal life, her beliefs and her work—for I believe this is largely what enabled her to maintain her strength in a field that looks upon women only as a commodity. What we wanted to do was to establish Jeannie's uniqueness as a truly Asian Woman in theatre, but yet at the same time convey her common experience as an Asian Woman. I think that Jeannie's story encompasses all this and more.

—Linda Iwataki

... Nobody Was Really They Were Only Inter

When I was born in Chicago, my mother was involved with the idea of the theatre. She was a housewife, but she learned Chinese opera, dance, and music. As a way of communicating with me, she taught me these things...I really enjoyed that a great deal and I guess that was a very important thing, because I was able to get a real feel of being an Asian rather than a confirmed "American." And then of course I went to school and learned to speak English and began to try to identify with Sally, Jane, Dick and Spot. But they were fairy-tales in fact everything was a fairy-tale. The only thing that was real was when I went home and spoke Chinese with my mother and related to my immediate environment, which was Chinatown.

Up to the time you went to school you only spoke Chinese?

Right, I didn't speak any English at all. Then of course you get laughed at because you have a Chinese name. So my mother changed my name to an American name. First it was Shirley because Shirley Temple was popular...and cute and she thought it would help. But my father couldn't say it because of the r's and l's; so finally they called me Jeannie. But my legal name is Ying Ying; I never used it.

I never forgot that I was Chinese. During my whole grammar school experience I was in the Chinese rhythm band and I studied dance further...I learned ballet, tap, etc. I was never able to forget that I was Chinese because my dance teacher would always create a special dance for me called "something Chinois," you know. And they never let you forget for a minute that you're different. Mine and my mother's attitude was that I'm different, but in a very special kind of way...nobody else can do the kind of dances I can do and sing the songs I can sing. Then I moved out to California—of course to San Francisco Chinatown. And the majority of people are all Asian so you don't feel that you're left out or that you're suppose to be different or anything. But I chose to go to George Washington High school, a "better school." We were the minority and suddenly again I was different. I wanted to continue my interest in drama, so I took drama in high school and I discovered that the teacher couldn't find any scenes for me to do because she couldn't see that I could do any scenes but those that would be "appropriate for me"—whatever that means. And so when the school play came, even though I read well, I didn't fit into the characters so she "allowed" me to be stage manager. And I felt hurt and wondered why, but of course I knew why and that was

"Somewhere, somehow, I was going to be able to find a way for a Chinese American woman to express herself through the theatre, through the arts."

because I was Chinese. Then I had the problem of my mother—she didn't mind my having drama as a hobby, but to go into it as a career and a profession was a whole different cup of tea. So she said you can do extracurricular type of things at school, that's all. You could do something secure and financially steady. Something that would give you a good reputation. So I decided that I would be a teacher. You know, that's safe, it's secure, it's got a good salary, it's something a woman can get into, it's respected.

And in the meantime my outlets were in school assemblies, and in theatre productions, and I would direct or I would play a tiny part or I would choreograph some-

thing and all the time I would go back to my Chinese background because that was the only background that I had, that I could relate to and that I could bring my expression to.

Well after teaching school for one year in San Francisco, my frustration and all the creative juices that I had were ready to pop so I decided that I had to try it once and for all. Somewhere, somehow I was going to be able to find a way for a Chinese American woman to express herself through the theatre, through the arts. So the first thing I did in my research was to find out that Lisa Lu had attended the Pasadena Playhouse. So I said, "Well, if she had gone through it, that means they accept Chinese." You see, I was very conscious that I was Chinese. I had written to many stock companies, introducing myself, sending them my resume, my pictures, and I'd get either no answer or an answer that said we don't have any parts appropriate for you...and you know what *that* means. So I had to be careful as to whether or not a school or a company had had any experience with an Asian person before. And since Lisa had gone to Pasadena Playhouse, surely they would understand my "problem."

So I wrote to them and applied for summer session. And I was accepted and I competed for the Talent Finder Scholarship and I decided to quit teaching and go into the study of acting...ala western style.

Okay, when I got into the actual semester, sure, I went to classes, I learned acting principles, but when it came to the projects, they didn't know what to do with me. Different teachers and directors have a certain stereotyped idea of what an Asian person should be doing. So, my first project was *Teahouse of the August Moon* which, of course, I needed like a hole in the head. I did *Lotus Blossom*, naturally, and I learned how to speak in another language, Japanese, and learned how to be sweet and charming which I had learned how to be already. But what I thought I needed was *depth* because there was so little depth in Asian parts and I hoped that somehow if there was an actress who could do a deeper thing they would write something for her—I don't know where I got that misconception.

My second project was *Come Back Little Sheba* and I was cast as the neighbor...because the neighbor could be anybody. And then one after another, I was doing these parts...they were trying to keep me in something that they could accept. I finally had to go to the head of the school and say, "Look, you know I've got a scholarship which means I have some kind of talent and I'm coming here because I want some kind of training. And you're ignoring me, you're putting me in these dinky parts and I'm not going to learn anything from them. What am I doing here?" So, they were telling me things like, "Well, you will have the same difficulties when you go out into the industry. You might as well get used to it now." And I said, "You know that's highly presumptuous of you. What if I'm learning this because I'm going to Hong Kong to be in the film industry over there. I still need the training and I would be with *my* people, would it make you any happier to know that?"

So I was switched over to directors who were more open about it and I was able to do *other* parts.

I became Antigone. And I became Greek or Shakespearean because that gave them enough *distance*. But by the second year I was with teachers and directors who began to realize that theatre is really a suspension of disbelief...so anything goes. I was then able to play lead parts in western roles. And many people who came as an audience said that they were able to forget that I was Chinese after the first 5 minutes. Of course, they all had to "get used to it" first. But the fact is they realized that as an actress I was playing a part and if I was playing a part—that meant I could play *any* part.

Anyway, the problem came up again, because graduation time came and I graduated magna cum laude

and got the top honor of the class and all that stuff. But I was faced with the prospect of no job. And the kids would come up to me and say "what are you going to do? You know you can't do *Flower Drum Song* all the time." And that was a good question...what was I going to do? Well, I went to Hollywood and I struck the pavement and I got an agent. Of course his whole point of view was for me to be a sexy woman—nothing else. I came in as a young Chinese American woman to be interviewed and I was told that I would never get a part looking like that, and that I would "because I have the looks—get my false eyelashes, my make-up, my tight dresses, wear my heels—do the whole bit." Okay, so I said, "Well what the heck, I'll try it." And I went on various interviews and I was to give the impression that I was very sexy, because after all that's how you sell movies.

At first it bothered me but I wasn't sure why—except that it wasn't the real me. But I finally decided after a year and a half of trotting around and getting terribly disappointed anyway *that nobody was really interested in me as an actress, they were only interested in me as a commodity!* And secondly I found out that the parts I was up for was always some stupid idiotic part. . . some giggly sexy girl or some very naive young thing from the farm. In other words, it was either a Nancy Kwan or a Miyoshi Umeki.

So I found that I was caught in something that this industry was not realistic at all, did not have any parts that I would even care to play, so I was discouraged about that. But in the meantime I was with the East-West Players and they were writing their own plays. Soon Taik Oh wrote plays about Korea and China and I played roles in both of the plays that he wrote. We also did things that were originally Japanese or translations. And through the East-West Players, I was able to experience some rather fulfilling acting experiences and also other theater experiences—lighting, stage managing. I really felt that East-West Players gave me substantial moral support during this early period and also a great deal of experience. And it was also the place where I met Jack Jackson of the Inner City Cultural Center. He wrote the music for *Martys Can't Go Home* which is one of the plays that Soon wrote. He told me about the whole interracial idea of the Center and the goals that it had set for itself being in a minority community, directing itself, focusing its goals toward demonstrating and exhibiting the abilities of the minority communities, to train young people from these communities in the arts, and to encourage writers from these groups.

Were the people who were working with ICCC and the theory or philosophy behind it, people who were conscious of the kind of discrimination and stereotypes that were imposed on Third World People?

Right. Exactly. And, in fact, they were people who had experienced the same kinds of frustrations that I did. We were always being put in a position where we had to be amateurs. But here we are in a professional situation, doing professional and quality productions and looked upon by the rest of the community with some respect.

So it's one of the major steps in building an alternative institution that will meet the needs of Third World People in the arts?

Exactly, exactly. And during my stay here, I've tried to experiment with various art forms to meet this need for alternatives. And one of them, of course, was the New World Theater which I hope to revive as soon as my baby grows up a little more. I've already begun re-writing the script that we had, as well as writing a new script. I think that Larry Kubota really is responsible for the germ of the idea. I had thought about it in

Interested In Me As An Actress, Interested In Me As A Commodity

passing—that we needed some kind of alternative, but I didn't really know how, and Larry came up with, "Well let's get a guerilla theater together." And I said, "What's a guerilla theater, it sounds nasty somehow—mean and violence." And he said, "No, it means something outside of the forms that are; and an opportunity to speak out!" We met at his place several times and we tried to discuss what we wanted to say, and how we could say it, and who should say it. I think we had some very important disagreements as to the answers to those questions unfortunately, being an impatient person, I wasn't ready to discuss it forever, so I said, well, we'll just have to jump in and do it.

I went to the library and tried to get representative poems by various Third World groups and I tried to show how these various groups had something in common—universal to Third World People, to all. The way

"People say, 'You have to eat,' and I say, 'You also have to sleep.'"

I envisioned it and the way it turned out was that everyone would speak together in all the poems and then it would be expressed through the individuals—but all of us would be black even though we're not, all of us would be Asian, even though we're not. This was so the people who were watching, who were identifying with any one racial group, would say "Oho! In fact, I am also black and I am also yellow and I am also brown because of our common experiences. Instead of fighting each other, we really should be united. We should start looking at each other as a whole, instead of trying to compete with each other to get the crumbs that the white establishment throws at us. They know very well that if we're divided they will always be the majority. But if we could get ourselves together, we would realize that we are the majority."

The other thing I wanted to point out was our Asian American experimental college two summers ago. Even though the class sort of dissipated at the end, I was really excited about the idea of Asians coming together and learning about the Chinese theater. Looking back into my own roots, and for the first time sharing it with someone (I've always had this information kind of all by myself—you know, wandering through life, wondering who I'm going to share this information with) made me really glad to have that class. "Chinese Theater in Eight Easy Lessons, I think that's what we called it [laughs]."

Just a question about your being an Asian woman in the theatre. Has that been kind of an isolating experience, you know, have you recognized—no, I know you recognize some of the stereotypes that are put on Asian women, but how have you dealt with that? Or how have you been forced to deal with it?

I have refused [pounds table] to cop out and take those parts! People have said, "Well they have the bread" and all this kind of thing. . . who needs the bread? People say, "You have to eat," and I say, "You also have to sleep."

I mean, can you sleep after you've done a part that's so crummy, so artificial, so insulting, in fact. I'd rather collect unemployment or whatever, or do something else altogether, create something.

People have asked me, "should actors be followers because they are the puppets of the director and therefore shouldn't be a leader, and shouldn't be involved in politics." And I said nonsense to that (I could use a stronger word too). *The actor and actress is a member of society and he has a responsibility to himself and to his*

society. If he isn't going to make the changes, if he is not going to serve as the change agent, then he's copping out. The actor is becoming more and more important and he has to be a leader. He can't just sit back anymore and say, "Okay director, tell me what to do," because then you are saying that he is a totally uncreative person.

In history, artists of all kinds have always been the one who mirrors society, you know, the one who reflects, show's what's going on. He's also the one who projects and since we believe in the media so much—movies, tv, and what not—the change that we create in those media, in the things that we see will help to make the changes that are necessary. And if more people like Momoko Iko would write, I think the change would occur faster. That's one of the alternatives I suggest—writers keep writing. Asians should write about Asians for a change, try not to cop out and pretend to be writing about something else, because if we don't write about ourselves, then someone else will and they won't be writing it accurately. They haven't been writing it accurately for the last I don't know how many years.

Specifically though, as an Asian woman have you found it harder in the theatre?

Yes! It's hard. There is an isolation. Number one, there's the isolation from your friends, the friends that you had anyway. Because they wonder about a person who would go into theatre or into the arts anyway—they're usually kooky-eccentric or what is the other stereotype—lewd and obscene or . . . immoral, that's the word.

The other isolation is because you are a woman, it's much more difficult to be in theatre, because of the assumption that somehow you're an immoral commodity. Then as an Asian on top of that, you are faced with parts that are unrealistic, inadequate, poor stereotypes, and then you are expected to make it live. But when you try to make it live, it doesn't fit their stereotypes, and they don't want it. "No, no, you're supposed to say l for r's and r's for l's" and things of this sort. Who talks that way? And there are so many other stereotypes: the fu manchu thing, etc.

I object to the Sakini character that was the key issue of the Brotherhood of Artists pickets. A lot of the actors were mad because his role was played by a caucasian, now I do object to that. *But I further and more importantly object to the whole idea of the Teahouse of the August Moon and Lovely Ladies and Kind Gentlemen.* I was angry to find out that some of the actors actually would have taken the part had they been given the part. That wasn't their objection at all, it was just that they lost out on the part that they picketed. And that made me mad!! And many of them went for Charlie Chan, too. It's the idea that they should be mad about — not who lost what part. Of course, if it's an Asian part, I think an Asian should be considered, but many times I think we should have said, "no, until you can write something decent, we don't even want to see that." But of course, what are the actors going to do for their next meal, that's what they keep asking. And I'm sympathetic to the fact that there is no real work for them...unless we create it ourselves.

How do you see the theatre fitting into society? Do you see a microcosm of American society only exaggerated... with the same types of discrimination although heavier?

Let's see, how can I answer that. The theatre can be viewed in several ways. When you talk about the theatre, most people are talking about the white middle class entertainment which boils down to musicals, some repertoire companies sprinkled throughout the country, and some summer stock, and the film industry. But then what you're really referring to is something that belongs

to the whites. It's been expressing their viewpoint, always has. Now there have been other theatres, there was a black theatre even during colonial America, but they always separated it from the mainstream somehow. And of course there's always discrimination, burning down theatres, etc. to the point where famous "negroes" (as they called them then) were forced to leave the country and go to England to become famous. Today, of course, the black movement has come up with their own theatre, their own playwrights; they are now fulfilling those alternatives we were talking about. But you still see them not part of the American mainstream. And the Asians, Chicanos and American Indians haven't gotten that far yet. I wish they would stop looking at the black movement as something to compete with. "The blacks had enough people on tv, now it's our turn." I really wish they would stop doing that. Because it's not the blacks that are the target, and it really shouldn't be a competitive kind of thing, but it is the white establishment that is to blame, it is the industry that should be attacked.

Even the few things that are happening are still on the outside. Okay, there are a lot of black parts now, on tv. They might be regulars, but they're still the second, third, fourth buy on the series. They're not really part of mainstream-prime time.

So what do I see theatre as being able to accomplish — I really feel that it is through the arts, and theatre being one of the arts, that we can first get our people doing something together. That is to produce a show, do a concert so our communities will come to see these

"But of course, what are the actors going to do for their next meal, that's what they keep asking, and I'm sympathetic to the fact that there is no real work for them... unless we create it ourselves."

things and be a part of the experience. In this way we will be able to bring the Third World together, show the majority society that we can do it as good as if not better and start to become the changing factor, and start to provide those alternatives. Communication gaps need to be bridged and we're hoping through the arts, through theatre, through music, dance and all the programs we present, that we can do this interchange, that we can do this intercommunication that is so desperately needed. And also provide the expression for our various peoples — we never had this outlet before.

The arts in the ethnic communities have always been a means for survival. It's very visibly true with the blacks — for example, the blues, jazz, hymns — have helped to pull them through slavery, discrimination and prejudice, Ku Klux Klan and what not. And it's the same with all the other communities too. We have held on to these means of expression as a way to survive and keep our identity. Survival and identity both. We know we're Asian because somehow we have a feel for those kinds of arts and the same with all the other groups too. And I think that until you go that route, that is going back to the roots, then and only then can you know who you are, and then look at the alternatives.

self help

My crotch was definitely irritated, but I wouldn't give it a second thought. It was just that itchy yeast again, I thought, one of those vaginal infections I tolerate because I take birth control pills. Well, all these messy female inconveniences usually clear-up, I'll just practice a little extra hygiene for a while. But my irritation would not go away. Instead it became painful to urinate and I thought it might be Trichomonas instead of the Minelia, or yeast as it is commonly called. This infection was nothing new, either, and I decided to wait and see if it really was Trichomonas. Besides, those gynecologist bills were a luxury that was adding up to between \$15 and \$20 a visit. Especially when he would tell me the same things I had been thinking myself. But my condition became worse and the pain felt strange. "What was happening to me?" I had this feeling that somehow I shouldn't be this sick. Finally, I confided my anxiety to a woman I knew quite well. She asked me if I had examined myself to see what the irritated area looked like.

"Looked like? I wouldn't even know what I was looking at!" I replied.

So she stood outside the bathroom door while I figured out how to check the symptoms of my genital area with a mirror. Wow, the external genitalia was definitely red and inflamed. No wonder it hurt! Then I momentarily forgot the pain, as I gradually became aware of my body for the first time. It was fascinating to study my own anatomy and see what those Health Ed. diagrams were really all about. The right labia was swollen and when touched, generated those pain flashes I had thought was Trichomonas. Between the major and minor labia I saw small lesions reflected in the mirror. I was horrified! Were those gonorrhea lesions, or the plague, or some other scourge of womanhood that I had to suffer just because of my sex? Instantly, I relayed the horrifying facts to my friend. She matter-of-factly gave me an, "I thought so, it's the Hyperes."

"The what, the crabs?"

"No, Hyperes, Hyperes Symplex, a painful viral infection that usually attacks mucus membranes and looks like the common cold sore," she replied. "You can catch it from the air like a cold or the flu."

But, why me and why in my crotch? I try to keep clean and prevent v.d. and things like that. I already suffer those other infections from birth control pills; what more do I have to endure? Sometimes I think that is what I get for being a woman. Men don't have to put up with pills and side-effects and I'm sure they don't suffer as much pain as I am from this virus.

My gynecologist could not offer me much help or emotional support, since he had never experienced labial Hyperes Symplex. He said there was no cure for the virus, that no one knew exactly what cause the Hyperes, and that it would go away in a couple of weeks. But the infection was growing rapidly, and I decided to see another doctor, this time a woman gynecologist. She recognized my painful condition. Under her care I received codiene for the pain, antibiotics to weaken the virus, and corn starch plasters to dry out the lesions. And just as urgently, she gave me reassurance about the emotional seriousness I was feeling toward the infected area.

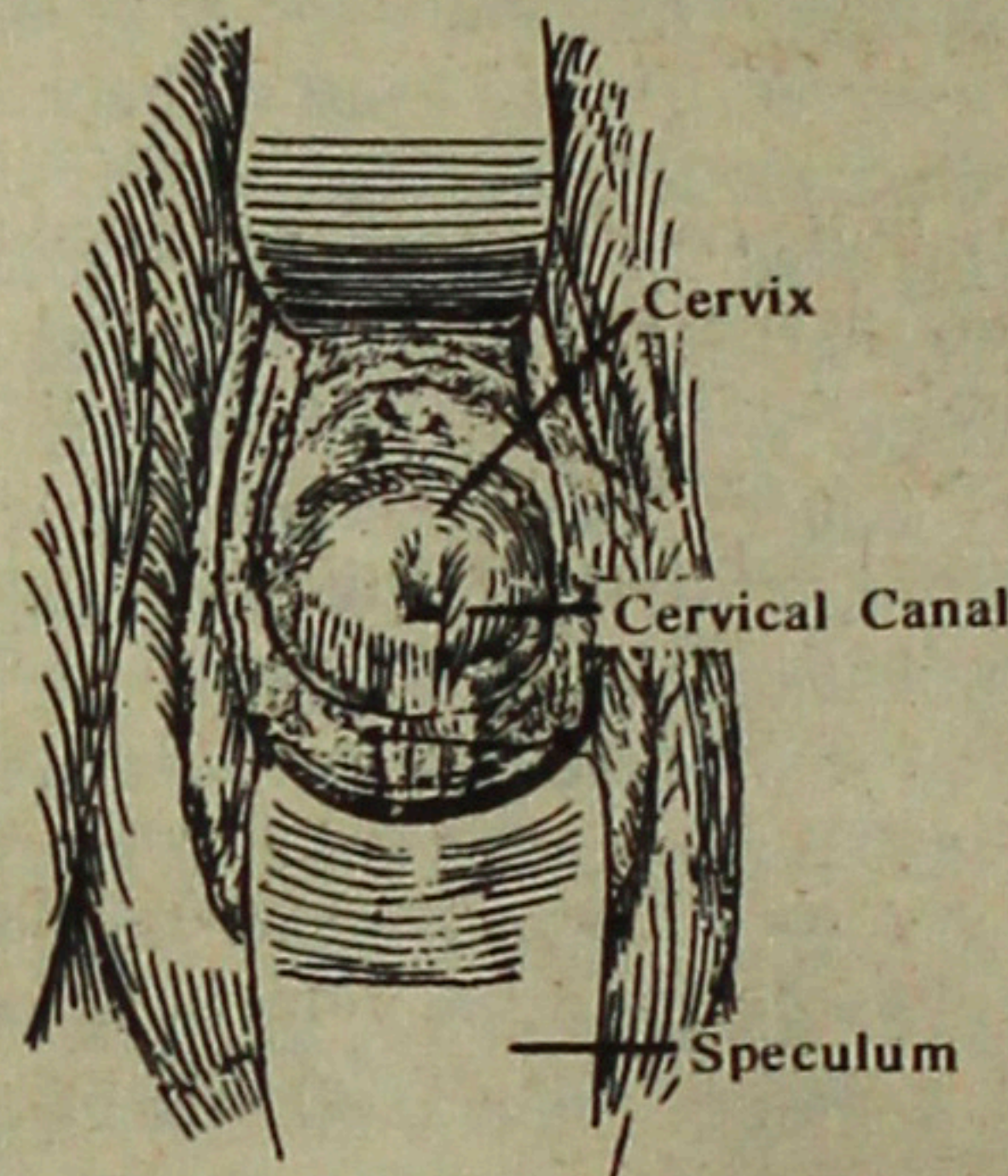
I was bedridden for a month and had to apply medication to the infected area daily. I was forced to extensively examine myself and I became quite familiar with my external genitalia as well as the symptomatic progress of the "Hyperes."

I began to understand what the concept of self-examination was and what it could mean to women. I knew what a frightening experience it is to endure a strange and painful illness in one's genitalia and not know what is happening in your own body. I realized how carelessly I was treating myself and how negligent I was. I began to talk to other women who also felt similar symptoms. The pill appeared to be an indirect variable associated with the women who appeared to have had the "Hyperes" virus about the same time that I came down with the disease. One woman's doctor caterized, burned, the lesions closed. And she was not even informed that this virus keeps occurring once you contract it. Only one other woman had even looked at her infected area. They were just as ignorant about their bodies as I was. We women probably knew more about a man's sexual anatomy than about our own.

During one of my conversations with a woman who was also concerned about the female's inadequate knowledge about her body, she told me about the Self-Help Clinics conceived and conducted by other women deeply concerned with the problem. She said that the open-door clinics were run like group meetings where women came together and shared their personal experiences with each

other and tried to relearn about their "femaleness" from other women, instead of from the male medical profession. I was enthusiastically waiting until I was well and could attend one of their meetings.

There were fifteen women attending the meeting that night. They were between the ages of fifteen and forty. One woman had a ten year old daughter who suffered from yeast, a vaginal infection, because she was diabetic. Another group of women were preparing to start their own self-help clinic in Lancaster and had been attending these sessions. Some of us felt hesitant, a few, embarrassment, and all of us felt very curious to see what this self-help idea was all about. Our guide that evening, Colleen, was warm and enthusiastically discussing the concept of self-examination with us. It all sounded theoretical until someone volunteered to show us what it was all about. She got on the table and dropped her feet into a saddle position, and inserted a plastic speculum into her vagina. Colleen handed her a hand mirror and held the tensor lamp to illuminate the vaginal area held open by the speculum. The young woman on the table maneuvered the mirror until she was looking at her own cervix. Then we looked into the speculum and discovered the cervix with her; suddenly I understood how I too could examine myself. We learned that this dome-shaped structure of tissue we were seeing was the cervix, and the dimple or hole in the middle was the os, or opening into the uterus. I decided to try to do it. Colleen showed me how to manipulate the speculum and guide it into my vagina properly and open it. I was handed a mirror and met my



own cervix for the first time. My cervix was pink, smooth, and very firm looking. I was discovering my body and thought it was beautiful. My cervix was about one to one and a half inches in diameter (the cervix will be larger and colored differently if you've had a child.) The vaginal walls were pink, firm looking, and ridged. They were not terribly sensitive to the touch. I saw that mythical hymen through the plastic speculum as a ridge of tissue along the walls of the vagina. Within the vagina there were secretions which were whitish like skim milk. These secretions are normal to the vagina and vary with each woman. Then the other women looked at my cervix and I could feel my excitement regenerated in their eyes. This was what my cervix looked like, sensitive, life-giving and beautiful. I felt reunited with my body and with my sisters with whom I was sharing this experience. My embarrassment faded as I came to realize that we had all come to the clinic for a common purpose: to learn about our bodies, to seek the knowledge that has been kept from us from birth by medical professionals who perpetuate the stigma of ugliness we have learned to associate with our bodies.

After the self-examinations we talked about what goals we as women wanted to achieve as a group.

What could we as women do to begin to provide better medical care for ourselves and each other? How could we know more about our bodies, and learn to diagnose and treat them? How could we join with other women to accomplish these ends?

I was beginning to understand that I as a woman could not fully learn about my body or comprehend the significance of this knowledge in terms of furthering my own—and all women's—self-determination by myself. It was the collective effort toward knowledge and trust that would help us again turn insights into our femaleness. We wanted to talk about sexuality because it was important in the process of learning to relate to our own bodies. We discussed the embarrassment we felt about our bodies, and we related our feelings and personal experiences about sex, birth control, and the side effects we suffer as a consequence of various methods. It was emphasized that we as women must learn about every available method of contraception so that we are not at the mercy of the doctor. We want to be able to have a choice and participate in our own birth control. There was so much for me to learn about—the numerous I.U.D.'s, types of pills, the diaphragm, condoms, spermicidal agents, and sterilizations. And even more about trusting our ability as women to participate in our own birth control. We could only learn to break down the mystique and authority of medical professionals collectively, giving each other needed support for expanding our knowledge—and our trust.

SELF EXAMINATION

The group situation at the Self Help Clinic gave me the opportunity to see many normal healthy women, so I could learn to recognize what is normal, giving me more skill in recognizing the abnormal or unusual. The cervix changes in appearance, color and size during the menstrual cycle. There are changes in the vagina and vaginal secretions. Just before menstruation the vaginal walls may become swollen and tender and the cervix swollen and bluish with veins. These changes are not the same for every woman. I was told that I should learn to recognize the normal changes in my own body, so that I could recognize any unusual changes such as inflammation and soreness of the vaginal walls, color changes, texture and odor of the normal secretions. By recognizing the particular qualities of the discharge caused by different infections I would be able to detect and treat them early.

Again it was emphasized that when you are familiar with your body, you can detect an early pregnancy by noting unusual changes or lack of normal changes. If your cervix does not appear as it usually does just before menstruation, you would be able to recognize this and watch it. If you do not start menstruating when you should, you could be pretty sure you are pregnant. The most important thing is to learn what is normal for you.

The basic tools you will need are a hand mirror and directional light from a lamp or flashlight. The plastic speculum is the only specialized tool you will need for a self-exam. You might be able to get it through a women's health clinic or you can have one mailed to you by sending two dollars to:

Self-Help Clinic One
c/o Women's Center
1027 Crenshaw Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019

You will also need lubricating jelly such as K-Y jelly to lubricate the speculum before insertion (never use vaseline as it disturbs the natural balance of the vagina) and PhisoHex to clean the speculum after use. Each woman will need her own speculum to eliminate the transfer of infections.

MEDICAL MICROCOSM

The problem of shoddy, callous and outrageously expensive health care in the U.S. is a microcosm of the other injustices plaguing both our country and the world community, with common causes and similar symptoms. The medical industry in all its aspects: drug companies, insurance companies, hospitals and medical supplies, is the second largest profit making business in the country. The drug companies alone net a 5 billion dollar profit each year selling drugs which often make people more seriously ill than before they took them. 1,500,000 people are treated each year solely for reactions to drugs prescribed to them by physicians.

As with all other businesses, the medical professionals are concerned more with the health of their profits than the health of the people they supposedly serve. The A.M.A. exerts great political pressure, maintaining the largest and richest lobby in Congress, to keep costs high and trained personnel scarce. Between the doctors, drug companies and insurance rip-offs, we have to shell out whatever fees are demanded and take whatever treatment is offered from people who seldom give a damn.

For women, the poor, and people of color, the situation is even worse. We have special health needs which are largely ignored or even made worse by the white, male, rich medical profession.

As for myself, I was forced to turn to the idea of self-help for women as a last resort measure. I was shocked and frightened at my own ignorance about my body and my feelings toward it. I knew I could no longer stay indifferent to women's preventive health care, not after experiencing a painful, and to me, horrifying illness. At least I was forced to seek out an alternative to those doctors who cloak the knowledge about my body—my self—in a false mystique and who cannot give women emotional reassurance or even adequate care in terms of a female affliction. We as women must begin to feel what it is like to directly participate in the decisions that affect our own lives, to take the power of health and disease from a profit oriented institution and direct it ourselves.

If you as a woman feel committed toward the self-determination of all women over our own bodies, and want to learn how to start your own self-help clinics, send for information to Self-Help One, at the address given above.

—a sister

women's abortion referral service
free pregnancy counseling &
abortion referral
(213) 936-7466
call 24 hours

BIRTH CONTROL



This article is not meant to deal with the issue of genocide or abortion reform. It is an article dealing with a problem faced by many concerned women: safe, sane and adequate birth control methods and dispensation. It is also an article about an Asian woman who is deeply involved and dedicated in her job as a counselor for Family Planning.

Mrs. Shima, who has been dealing with birth control and related problems for the past seven years, feels that one important aspect of birth control is sex education and that the present "lectures" on this subject are inadequate. "Parents should be educated in this area as well as their children. Some parents are blind to the fact that the sexual urge comes years before maturity!"

He feels that the reluctance of many Asian people to see advice on birth control is the stigma of embarrassment and fear. Any female over 18 may come in for counseling and treatment without parental consent, and any young lady under 18 may come in if accompanied with her parent or legal guardian.

Mrs. Shima is also quick to note that there are many bilingual doctors and counselors of Family Planning which will eliminate any chances of misunderstanding, whether in the area of language or cultural background. Being Japanese, Mrs. Shima is well aware of the close-knit background of the Asian people, even here in America.

Very few of her cases were of Asian descent five years ago, but Mrs. Shima has noted that the number is growing and that approximately 5 percent of her close to 3,000 cases are Asian.

"Most people are not aware that Family Planning is also vitally involved in research in the area of better

and improved methods of birth control. We now have a 'microdose pill' and we are constantly improving the material used in the manufacturing of IUD's. Did you know that we also have 'Infertility Clinics' every Thursday at noon? We're also trying to form a regular clinic in the area of vasectomy."

Mrs. Shima is one of six registered nurses trained to specifically deal with the problems of family planning. Mrs. Elliott, another R.N., is available for discussion, groups and community rap sessions on the subject of birth control and related problems. If Mrs. Elliott is unable to attend, Mrs. Shima will go in her place.

The cost is minimal—a mere \$20 or less per year for birth control. Besides the counseling and dispensation of birth control devices, Family Planning also deals with family counseling and has referral information in the areas of venereal disease, gynecology, adoption and sexual interaction.

"If there is a need for birth control in your life, you should use it. There are too many girls who are turning to abortion as a way out. I would like to see the 'problem' solved before it becomes a problem." Mrs. Shima further states, "I would be most willing to help any young girl who has questions concerning birth control and I urge them to make the call to Family Planning and if they would feel more comfortable speaking with me, I am always available for counseling."

The following is a partial listing of the many clinics and their services which are available for birth control and abortion information in the Los Angeles area. We have only listed the major clinics which have been investigated and recommended by members of the Asian-American community.

FAMILY PLANNING, CENTRAL L.A.
2960 WEST 8TH STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
386-1970

Counseling and referral services, minimal cost, bi-lingual personnel. Among the services offered: birth control methods and dispensation, birth control research program, infertility clinic, abortion, adoption and V.D. referrals.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD, CENTRAL L.A.
3100 WEST 8TH STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
380-9300

Fees adjusted to income. Initial visits are set up with trained counselors and nurses. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30; Wednesdays at 1:00; and Saturday mornings at 8:30.

Teen Rap Sessions (a youth group fighting for community involvement in securing better sex education and V.D. information) held every Tuesday at 4:00 pm.

Offices in Baldwin Park, El Monte, La Puente and Pomona, in addition to the Central L.A. office.

FREE CLINIC
115 NORTH FAIRFAX
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
938-9141

The sign-up hours for medical consultation are: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:30, Monday through Friday evenings at 6:00 and Saturdays at 12 noon.

Plans are in the final process for a Chinese Community Free Clinic. More information will be given in a later issue of *Gidra*.

Call 576-1626 for the address and phone number of the Free Clinic closest to your area.

PROBLEM PREGNANCY
322-8787

Not a birth control information center, but excellent abortion referral service. The "Help" line is open 24 hours a day.

COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICES also have clinics for birth control, abortion, adoption and V.D. information. Requirements vary from district to district and it is best to check with your local branch of the County Social Services.

—Kathy Kurose

FROM A SISTER WITH LOVE

Too many times I have felt manipulated, exploited, and used, especially in relation to the opposite sex. When situations would get out of control, all I could do was hope for the best. It got to the point where I became disgusted with myself and with what other people were trying to do to me. But things changed when I moved into a house where a collective-type mentality was trying to be achieved. Each member shared a feeling of responsibility and unity towards each other with a common goal of education and understanding ourselves.

I began to take a more active part in my life without waiting for someone to tell me what to do. I had to deal with my problems, my hang-ups, and my sexist attitudes. Instead of looking at guys as potential boy-friends or husbands or even as "a good time", I saw them as having the same struggles and pressures as I did, although the needs, priorities and ways of dealing with them differ.

I was cautious at first, not knowing what to expect. But as we talked, joked around, interacted, and did things collectively, I felt a sense of belonging and a strong "brother-sister" relationship beginning to develop. It's hard to explain, but even the little things like cooking, cleaning, eating, and talking together helped me to see my weaknesses and strengths.

Being sheltered and pampered for all the years of my life and to be looked upon as weak and "cute" has done a lot of damage to my ego and self-consciousness. I was always mommy and daddy's little girl, or my sisters'

and brother's kid sister, or someone's girlfriend, always hiding behind the roles and games I was playing.

Once not long ago, I built my world around one person and I thought I had finally found myself—who I was, and where I was going, and what I wanted—so I thought.

We were partners, able to share ourselves. I challenged his masculinity and he questioned my weaknesses. We played games with each other—testing, probing, searching, teasing. We shared each other's thoughts, schemes, dreams, hopes, fears, and love. We felt each other's happiness, pain, and frustration. And somehow, I kept thinking that I was still me, able to be myself. But when he died, it was as if I had died too. I never realized how dependent I had been on that one person for my own identity, for my emotions, for my own existence and purpose—I was nothing without him.

When I looked back at the past years, I saw Rodger Young Dances, nice cars, wearing perfume and make-up, curling my hair, having clothes that reveal (what I don't know), saying "yeah, I really like that kind of music" (when I couldn't even get into jazz, blues, and hard rock), waiting for him to pick me up on Friday and Saturday nights, trying to be cool so no one would know I was from the Valley, trying so hard to please and giving in most of the times, having a hard time saying "no" to whatever he was initiating. . . that was me, that was my identity.

And when he asked me to move out and live with

him, I wanted to and the idea sounded great, but, but, but, . . . I felt somehow tied to my parents, I felt unsure of myself, and of what I was getting into, and I didn't think he was strong enough to take care of "me". I made up all kinds of excuses instead of trying to deal with the fact that I was afraid. Maybe it was because I was never given any responsibilities, never treated as a mature individual, and never had enough self-confidence to think I could succeed at anything new. But when he passed away, I was left with just my thoughts and memories and guilt—memories of what could have been. And for the first time, I understood what he had been trying to say, "if you really feel it—do it." Make up your mind and don't be afraid. Take a stand and begin to live. My perspectives on life changed, and all the experiences and trips I went through, put me "in the dunes." I began to question everything: my parents, my friends, my goals, expectations, and life. My parents were too restrictive and and protective; my friends were too interested in themselves and their social affairs, my goals began to look very unrealistic and meaningless; and my life had no direction.

Everything seemed worthless—I had nothing to lose and nothing to gain and at times even death seemed a plausible alternative. I finally decided to stop feeling sorry for myself and be my own person and direct my own life.

So I gathered up all the courage I had and said bye mom and dad. . . I'm leaving to try and find myself—don't wait up for me.

—Teri

relationships

[Sam and Jack are sitting on the steps of the L.A.C.C. library. It's noon and people are getting out of classes.]

Jack: Man, that sure is a fine chick. I sure would like to get some of her ass.

Sam: Wow, that sure is funky, talking that kind of shit about a sister.

I flash on that and I see myself sensitive to that sister as a human being, a person with feelings and ideas, of dreams and hopes of fulfilling those dreams. I also see myself in Jack, hornier than hell, seeing that same sister as a sexual object, with my sexual fantasies, sexual hang-ups and frustrations.

[Time has passed. Sam is with his girlfriend, Joanne, at her mother's.]

Joanne: ...what do you mean I'm too possessive!? Because I don't want you to see other girls that I'm being possessive. I love you and I need you. When I think of you with someone else, it really hurts me.

Sam: But you are... I mean, I can't be your whole life. I don't want to be your whole life. You can't depend on me that way. I have a life to live and so do you—your own life. I think we can share our lives, but we can't own each other.

Joanne: Do you mean share lives or share beds? I think that the only thing that you really want from me is sex. You just come around when you want a piece of ass and the rest of the time I'm supposed to just wait around until you're horny enough to see me.

Sam: That's insane, where're you coming from?

Joanne: Yeah, I'm insane and you can go to hell! *And so now I'm hurting and feeling really bad, singing the blues. No longer horny, no longer frustrated, just sitting inside a rock.*

[It's summer time. Sam and Jack are at Hermosa Beach; they're getting ready to split.]

Jack: Say, there's a party tonight down at Seventeenth Street. I hear there's going to be some fine chicks down there. Do you want to go?

Sam: Yeah, well... maybe.

[Later on that night, at the party....]

Jack: Check out that chick.

Sam: Yeah, she's pretty cute.

Jack: I was almost going to say, "what a nice piece of ass," but I remember the last time I said it you got kinda uptight. But wow man, do you mean you really wouldn't want to go to bed with that chick? I mean she is fine.

Sam: Naw, it ain't like that. It's just that that's not all she is, just something to make love to. [pause] Well, let's say I did go to bed with her, and I found that I didn't really like her, then what? ...I just shine her on.

Jack: Well, that ain't no big thing—she's only a chick. Big deal, so you go find someone else.

Sam: I don't know, but I don't think I could do that and still feel good about myself.

Jack: Wow, this ain't the same dude I knew before. I remember when you was always partying and didn't give a damn. I remember when you used to talk fast and walk slow and wear a mohair suit.

Sam: Maybe that's how I know that I can't deal with sisters that way anymore. And maybe that's why I can't get into this party. It's getting cold out here, I think I'll go inside.

[There's a sliding glass door that faces the beach, as you open the door the Stone's "We all need someone to bleed on" and the noise and heat of the people escape to the cold night air.]

Girl: Hi, weren't you at the beach today, down at 22nd Street?

[It's the girl that they were checking out, outside.]

Sam: Yeah...

Girl: You know you're a pretty good volleyball player. I wish I could play like that, but I'm so clumsy.

[Chicago's "I'm a Man" is on the hi-fi]

Sam: Would you like to dance?

Girl: Sure.

Wow, this is far out. She's really friendly, and the way she dances, every motion seems so sensual. Man, she moves right up against the beat, rubbing it up and down, ...wow, I must be horny.

[The music intensifies and he loosens his thoughts.]

Sam: Who did you come down with?

Girl: My girl friends, they are really a drag. They come to parties and expect the guys to come throw themselves at their feet, they are't going to get anywhere like that. . . .

[She pauses and flashes on what she has just said and smiles, Sam thinks and smiles too.]

Girl: It's a nice night; would you like to go walk down to the beach?

Sam: Sure, it is a nice night. . . .

[Walking outside, they pass Jack.]

Jack: Hey, I thought you said it was cold outside!? [laughs.]

Sam: Put your hands back in your pocket and just worry about yourself.

My blood is running fast, my palms are getting sweaty, my stomach feels really spacy. I know what I'm anticipating, but I still doubt whether this is what I really want. Can I deal with her as a person? Do I want to really get to know her as a personality, or just as a body?

Girl: What are you thinking?

Sam: I don't know, maybe I'm projecting too far, but I guess we can talk about it. It's like I feel close to you in one way and at the same time very distant. I sense your sensuality as a woman and I feel my body responding to it. In that way I feel close to you, sharing feelings or something. But I am also feeling a distance in that we don't really know each other—our lives are probably different, we probably see each other much differently than we see ourselves. I guess I have a lot of doubts about this situation and it's hard for me to just flow and accept whatever happens. I guess my past experiences with situations like this is where my doubts are coming from.

Girl: Well, if you're feeling uncomfortable with me, you know you don't have to be here with me.

Sam: It's not like that, I guess my coming off like this must really be a drag. What I'm talking about is my hang-ups, and to put them on you is really off the wall or something.

Girl: I'm not really sure what you mean.

Sam: I don't think I know either.

Girl: It's getting cold out here, shall we go back inside?
[They open sliding glass door, Laura Nyro's "You Don't Love me When I'm Crying" fills the room with the noise and the heat. Sam walks in bringing in the cold.]

Sam: Would you like some wine? I think I saw some Chianti on the table.

Girl: Sure, I could use something to warm me up.

[She looks up at him and smiles, he feels distant from her, the smile he returns looks like grimace. Sam turns around and walks toward the kitchen.]

She sure does come on strong. I really wished I knew what I was doing. Fuck it, whatever happens, happens. I may as well flow with what's happening.

Girl: Mmm, this is good.

[She reaches over and puts her hand on his. It's warm and soft. They sit back on the couch drinking their wine, knees touching on the table behind them. He leaves his arm on the back of the couch letting it slide down around her. He flashes on some guilt feeling, but pushes it back, not letting any images form. His arm around her, she cuddles up next to him, they are on, sharing each other's warmth.]

Sam: You know you're a lot different from most of the girls I've known. I don't know if it's your forwardness or what. I can't put my finger on it.

Girl: Don't sweat it. You know I used to wonder what I came to parties for, and I guess I still don't know. But whatever parties are for, I think we found what it is for us.

Sam: "Don't sweat it," that's sure cold.

Girl: I didn't mean it like that; don't be so defensive. Anyway why don't we split? With this party you can only go so far.

Sam: Ah, sure.

Girl: Did you drive?

Sam: Yeah, I came by myself.

Girl: Hold on let me tell my friends that I have a ride.

Something is happening here that I don't know about. But the more I look at her the finer she gets. Wow, things are going pretty fast. This is unreal.

Sam: I'm kinda hungry. Would you like to go and get something to eat.

Girl: Sure. Why don't we go to my place? I just picked up some wine the other night. [Whispers.] And I have some really fine hash.

Sam: Well, [pause], sure, sounds good.

[They leave the party; they're going down Artesia toward Gardena.]

Girl: You know, I really think you're alright—you hang loose, you don't get all hung-up over girls. Some

guys, you go to bed with one time and they think they own you.

Sam: Yeah [hesitantly].

[The next morning]

Girl: Hey, wake-up; I have to split pretty soon. My boyfriend and I are going to Big Sur today. You'll have to split.

[Sam puts his clothes on.]

Sam: When will I see you again?

Girl: I don't know.

Sam: This is kinda funny to ask now, but what's your name? Mine's Sam.

Girl: That's nice.

[Sam is driving home on the Harbor Freeway]

Wow, she saw me as a sexual object! I guess I've had women so bagged as always being passive, that all that time she was hustling me I wasn't even hip to what was really coming down. I guess all those changes I was going through really didn't mean too much. I mean here I am driving down the freeway, tomorrow I have to go back to work. Summer school will be starting next week, I mean what does it all mean? Ain't nobody gives a damn about nobody, anyway. Fuck it.

[A few years have passed, Sam has long forgotten those moments of despair. He has quit school, started working in his own community, developing a political awareness. He's living in a collective. He sees the world much differently, he sees himself much more differently. But some things don't change quite so fast. He's sitting in his bedroom at the collective. Ken, Keiko, Jim and Jackie are with him.]

Jackie: Hey, Sam—you look like you're in the dunes. What's wrong?

Sam: I don't know.

Ken: I know, you're singing the blues over Carolyn.

Sam: Yeah, I guess so.

Jim: I didn't know you were relating to Carolyn.

Jackie: What does that mean?

Sam: You all know that I've been working with Carolyn over the past five or six months setting up programs together, putting a few articles together, you know. Through that interaction we learned to be out front with our feelings about most things. We've shared good times and bad times. We've established a pretty good relationship.

Jim: So what's the problem?

Sam: Well, I'm kind of hesitant to talk about it.

Jim: You know that the basis of our collectivity is the ability to talk about our feelings and ideas together.

Sam: Okay, it's just that, well, I'd like to have a physical relationship with her.

[Keiko giggles]

Jackie: Come on Keiko, if you have something to express, say it. . . . You know we all have to be out front with ourselves.

Keiko: I know, but it's hard to, especially for a girl.

Jackie: I'm a girl, I know what you mean, but we have to struggle with it.

Jim: You're such a macho too.

Sam: Hey, come on, constructive criticism only.

Jim: Go on Sam.

Sam: Where was I, oh yeah, I'd like to relate to Carolyn physically, and she thinks that it would interfere with her work. I mean I can relate to what she's saying and everything, but I don't know what I'm going to do with myself, with my feelings and needs.

Keiko: But Sam, you used to see girls on weekends and stuff.

Sam: Yeah, but it's really kind of weird, all those sisters I related to were outside of the movement. It's like my physical needs I take care of with those sisters, and the rest of my personal needs and interactions go on at this house and at the office. I mean that's a contradiction. The way I see those sisters on weekends is really shitty and for as long as I've been relating to women there's always been this double standard bullshit. I don't know how to break it down and get out of those negative patterns by myself.

Ken: I can really relate to that, but you don't have to deal with it by yourself.

Jackie: Really. We live in a sexist society. Your negative attitudes and insecurities are things that all of us who are trying to create an alternative life style are confronted with. A society which will destroy lives in Vietnam for economic gain further degrades human relationships by perpetuating limited, sexist roles for women and men. Part of our struggle is to escape from almost everything we were ever taught to be—to escape from being our own oppressors.

—Brian Wakano

NISEI SINGLES

A NEW PERSPECTIVE



This is a true life happening in the lives of themthe establishment.....mom/dad.....the other/olderthe Nisei (Quiet Americans?).

Is it our fault that we allow ourselves to become so alienated from those we love and depend upon; or is it simply impossible to avoid that "_____ gap?"

What is this?

I have an aunt who has remained single all her life. Unlike the stereotyped "single lady" she seems very content. She is kind, generous, understanding, well-balanced, even-tempered, and from what I can perceive, not at all disappointed about never marrying. In Mother's words, "she prefers it that way."

Anyway, what's important about this reference to my aunt is that last year she started going out a lot with just her single friends to parties and dances. Before, she used to spend her free evenings dining out with married friends; golfing, yoga exercise lessons etc. I guess it didn't really hit me until the day she asked me to teach her the "Funky Chicken." It's not that I didn't want to teach her how to dance the "Funky Chicken," in fact I thought it was great that she wanted to learn.

"Auntie..., you sure you wanna learn the 'Funky Chicken'...the 'Funky Chicken'...Right! I thought that's what you said. Auntie..., I don't know how to do the 'Funky Chicken'."

"I'm surprised. That's the latest dance. You gettin' to be a 'square'?"

I suddenly noticed that although she had always seemed to be a pretty perfect human being, there was something new about her that wasn't there before: Enthusiasm. "What brought this on Auntie?" When I began to seriously look into the new "goings on," I found there was a new club called the "Nisei Singles" - a primarily social organization for 35+ and that's where she'd been 'steppin out' to. I remember thinking, "wow."

Months later.

When the *Gidra* decided to do an issue on "Sexism," I thought an article about Nisei Singles would show some of the changes and alternatives that some members of the Japanese Community are going through.

When I made an appointment to interview a few members, I had no idea ten would come. There was an equal representation of the sexes - seven were divorced, two widowed, and one was a bachelor. They were very gracious and quite willing to talk about the organization, although, understandably hesitant to discuss their past histories.

"Nisei Singles" is not the only club for singles: it was formed out of another club known as "We Are One." In 1969 Reverend James Sasaki, then a minister at W.L.A. Methodist, was counseling four recently widowed mothers. From his counseling he realized there was a need for some organization where single parents could get together and share some of their similar thoughts, problems and experiences and eventually support one another in the difficult task of raising children alone. And so "We Are One" was started. Since then, the club's activities have included: speakers forum, family outings, and service projects. The membership has also grown to forty.

Lucy Yoshihara recalls that at one installation dinner for "We Are One," James Ogawa, who had been conducting dance classes for singles, asked her if any of the women would be interested in joining. She found that very many of them did. These same people then went on to form Nisei Singles. It was not long before the club grew in size to approximately 140 members besides giving impetus to other clubs.

One wonders why such a vigorous organization was not formed earlier. I think there exists a code of behavior in the community which says, "It's all right to go out dancing once in a while with your husband/wife, but if you are alone and with children at home, your place is at home." There is an equally oppressive more which implies that if you're divorced, you've "failed once" and "no one's going to want to take a chance with you." But perhaps it is a sign of changing times in the community that the kinds of responses members receive from family and friends are generally supportive, even from the Issei.

Before Nisei Singles, a few women who were widowed early were left to raise their children alone. Since foremost in their minds was to provide for their children's emotional and material needs as best they could, their lives revolved around activities like housekeeping, church, recipes, PTA, and Boy Scouts. This meant becoming so involved in the role of housekeeper that they were forced to neglect their needs as women. They began to see that much of their potential remained unfulfilled while their energies were poured solely into parental responsibilities. Though they were very happy as mothers, they also needed to be women. As one put it, "I was an It. I lost all concept of myself as an individual, as a woman."

It was not impossible for them to go out, but their social lives centered around other married friends that

they had known for years. After they had lost their husbands, their friends usually took some responsibility to look after their social lives by inviting them to parties and introducing them to other singles. But although they were grateful, there was always the feeling of *gimu*.

When Nisei Singles first started it was the first opportunity for singles to interact on their own again. Yet at the same time, it was the most difficult thing to get up enough nerve to go to those first few parties. After years of not playing that game everyone felt stricken with that awkward feeling of "what should I say?" The ego is once again opened up and vulnerable and naive.

Fortunately, everyone is a lot wiser for years and experiences. The group all agreed that the reason they stuck around was that everyone tries to be more honest and sensitive. They all realize that they share that same vulnerability and naivete. No one is "out on the make." Women aren't out to grab the first man that comes along and make him their husband. What Nisei Singles provides is an opportunity for those who share a commonality of experience to have a more well rounded social existence. They all agreed that it was a very "friendly and sociable group."

In closing the interview I couldn't pass up the opportunity to ask, "If you were to give advice to some young people about love and marriage what would that be?" The unanimous response was "keep those communication lines open!" It seems to me that that could be said about a lot of relationships.

Nisei Singles means a great deal to me. Although I probably disagree with almost everything that was said during the course of the interview, I did learn that what we shared were some very basic needs to share, love, realize our own identities, have fun. Now as I look into the future, my role as a woman at least does not look quite as bleak. Rather than living out the lives of my children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews—constantly deferring to the "youth culture" there will be a great many more positive humane and natural alternatives available. Nisei Singles provides a step in that direction. Now regardless of what I decide to do—marry, once, twice, three times; have babies, not have babies, stay single till death do I depart, at least I (in the words of a very beloved sister) won't feel like the Lone Ranger.

—Vivian Matsushige

so many words
shit
where do they all come from
where do they all
go
look in the mirror
well, kiss your ass
what did he say . . . ?

"accept naturalness without self importance;
if you never assume importance
you never lose it..."

say you're mad
up it
come on, sister
go ahead and scream

who put you on that pedestal
who took you down
but you loved it
didn't you
didn't you

YOU
point your finger
at your mirror image
does it make you feel good?

the sister talks
see her mouth move
but
hell
it's all backwards
spinning
round and
round

Alice in wonderland
that's not you open your eyes
your ears

shit
where are you at
where are you goin'
come on . you yellow-livered baby—BURN

break down
fuck you
break down till it hurts
break down
break
down

NO! no
the image
it's gone!
no it's just your tears
blurring your mind

point your finger
at your mirror image
raise that hand high, sister
watch it rise
on you
no it's gone . . .
the sun
its gone . . .
the day
gone . . .

jan

To Lloyd

A leaf
drifting away
Free
but alone
in strange surroundings

The tree
standing upright
sad at its loss
but it will not fall
its roots

firmly implanted

A new leaf
springs up
but the old one
will never
be replaced.

Tom

have you seen the blind man walking the streets?
how would you feel searching
for the right way
without a brain
three hundred lost yellow souls
at a crowded gig at blarneys
searching for an end to the monotonous journey
of life

thirteen OD's searching for peace
and fifteen-hundred freaks
jiving for jive
'cause there's nothing to do

Jive on, Jive on, Jive on
Jive on righteous yellow man
and watch your two-old child
search as you have searched
for an end to the agonizing screams
of castration

men, brothers, sisters, women
we are people who need each other
or comfort and love each other
as people, as humans
not humanoids
not walking zombies
of red, white and blue manufacturers
of greedy, faceless cutthroats
and

we will continue to live, to love
to jive

Jive on, Jive on, Jive on, Jive on!
jive on yellow soul
and pick up your balls in the rain.

Gary

There is a child
inside me, yearning to be loved, comforted,
to be let go of, and become an honorable part of the
everyday me.

I am ashamed of him,
this little boy inside me. Forced to hide himself,
he's been pushed down for twenty years and more.

He doesn't want to be so, so strong.
So, so composed, and
adult.
He was forced to grow up
too quickly.

He wants to cry, cry, and cry still,
until all his tears are dried up.
May be even more than that. He wants to let go
of himself
and float
and feel safe and comfortable.
snuggle to some
warm, womanly body, and not feel
ashamed.

He's very afraid
of coming out. Several times before, when he tried to
peek out and perhaps feel out the
outside world, it was scary.

All that pent-up, accumulated feelings came,
oozing out, through the small opening, tentatively and hesitatingly
allowed. The shape and the contour of his face was very distorted.
So much so that it scared the other, and even himself (me).

Quick! He's gone down again,
deep, deep down,
down.
I could hardly see him, or feel his need
until the
next time around.

Big empty Space within, (two months now).
A void. A numbing sense that my days are lived deadness.

Crawl out of this hole!
get torn off. Even if my fingernails

Shinya

Hello there
all you Punahou brats

how does it feel to be the elite, the handpicked aristocracy of our land?
what is it like

to be superior to your neighbors and elementary school buddies
to be whitewashed and groomed to love the mainland as the center
of the world,
to want to go to college there, so you can find that pot of gold
all those missionary stories tell us of.

what's it like studying on the hills of Tantalus looking down on your city
and surf. . .

to be trained by the best teachers right out of the ivory towers of
Princeton and Harvard?
to sit on the other side at football games and hurry warily back
to your car after the game

to earn your civic pride in Candy Stripes or Waimanu Children's Home
and even have a credentialed contingency from public schools visit your
campus once a year

is America so beautiful, can the melting pot really be true, are we in the
same reality?

dear Punahou brat

I don't love you because you are rich, because you are in college on the
mainland, because you are going to be something someday, or because you
want to do something for our beloved land tomorrow.

Neither do I hate you just because your fathers own the land, own the
businesses, are in the military, or work for mainland corporations.

i need you because you live in Kahala, bank at First Hawaiian, eat at Canlis,
work summers on the beach at Hilton Hawaiian Village, and go to the Crater
Festivals.

we need each other because we surf the same spots, eat the same plate lunches,
chugalug the same Primo, wear the same aloha shirts, wave to each other
at luaus, and enjoy every drop of life.

What happens to our life when only you can afford sashimi, only you can golf
at Waialae, only you can hire unemployed, only you can buy a Christmas
tree, only you can change things around

and I work for the State, fish every weekend, feel the quakes from Kahoolawe
bombs, breathe the smoke from your plant, swim in the refuse from your factory,
listen to whistle of your jets every five minutes, buy your imported "Hawaiian"
wares, avoid your city traffic, and hide in my room in your country.

What's happened, Punahou brat?

where has our life gone, now that I am alone and so are you
now I have nothing and you have all, yet you have little either.
where has it gone?

Can America be so good, can America be so beautiful, can America be so true?
Do you remember when we weren't America?

Colin Kurata

Guilt

*I thought I was being democratic:
sometimes you on top, sometimes me.
Our hair used to get in out eyes and mouths
and the sheets were always covered with it
in the morning.
Both ways were fine with me;
how about you?
Okay it seemed; I mean I thought,
but lately I've been reading
so much about
faked orgasms and everything--
I get a little paranoid.
(But I hate to sound all macho too. . .)
Sometimes I don't know which way to go.
But
we're not doing it anymore so
I guess
I guess
it doesn't matter.*

*I am a person
You a person
without you
i am not a person,
for only through|you
is language made
possible and only through
language is thought
made possible,
and only through thought
is humanness made
possible,
you have made
me important.*

i'm glad you were born. . .

chris

... a myth of the Asian woman as the ideal sexual partner, the "good wife," the devoted servant, and hard worker has developed and been institutionalized in American literature, media and even comic strips.

A THOUSAND BURDENS

1972 has seen a proliferation of courses on many California campuses, including UC Berkeley, San Francisco State, Mills College, San Jose State, and UCLA, on Asian women. At UCLA, we subtitled our course "a thousand burdens." In addition to the racial and economic discrimination we as women of color in America face, we shoulder the additional burdens of sexism. It was these three types of oppression we hoped to study and confront in our course.

When we first proposed the course last October to UCLA's Council on Educational Development (CED), a special experimental division of the university, we observed that many classes at UCLA dealt with American history and foreign policy in Asia. Many were concerned with the political, economic, and sociological effects of this foreign policy on both the "American way of life" and the white American. Only a handful of experimental classes on Asians in America considered the effects of these policies on Asian-Americans or undertook a treatment of the history of Asians in America. In addition, only one course began to discuss the importance of women in American history and society.

Our course, Asian Women in America, proposed a new view. As in other American minority communities, the Asian-American woman has a major role in raising her children, and thus her people. Yet in many ways her role and position have been defined and restricted by American perceptions and stereotypes of Asians and of women, and by certain aspects of East Asian culture that have been maintained in America.

Historically, a myth of the Asian woman as the ideal sexual partner, the "good wife," the devoted servant, and hard worker has developed and been institutionalized in American literature, media and even comic strips. These stereotypes and the continued American economic and military involvement in Asia which fostered them have a considerable effect on how America perceives Asians both abroad and at home. Moreover, they reinforce racial, economic and sexist discrimination against us both in Asia and in America. Our course took a look at these stereotypes as a point of departure for tracing the history and situation of women in East Asia and America foreign policy in Asia to the immigration policies that have affected women in the Asian communities in America. The genocide of Asian women and children in Vietnam is common knowledge, and the proposed legislation to sterilize all Japanese-American women in the relocation camps in 1945, which lost by a single vote in Congress, provides a shocking parallel. Such acts which

affect the Asian woman and family cannot help but have larger implications for the political and social position and self-concept of Asians both abroad and in America.

In the course, we tried to define the Asian woman's experience and position in the spheres of her home and family, her background and culture, her community and people, and her place in American society.

There is a unique quality of Third World women's movements that has not been significantly covered by current white women's studies and movements. The concerns of women's liberation at UCLA seem to center around a literate, college-educated, middle or upper-class individual. White women are seeking equal opportunities and pay mainly in professional fields, some are seeking permission from their husbands to work at all—all are striving to define themselves as productive, useful human beings. These are important issues for all women, but they do not speak directly to the priorities and immediate needs of non-white and working-class women in the ranks of unskilled labor, doing piece-work in sewing factories; welfare mothers, often heads of large families; or intelligent, well-educated women in low positions because they cannot speak English and do not have the time or money to go to school. In the course, we tried to define the Asian woman's experience and position in the spheres of her home and family, her background and culture, her community and people, and her place in American society. Our objective was to combine fairly, disciplined research, reading, and analysis with a creative articulation of the passions and human experience that define and affect the Asian woman's role. We rejected the coldness and irrelevance of the traditional academic setting as much as possible, but we also tried to avoid the self-indulgence of sensitivity sessions. A series of films was shown to supplement lectures and group discussions. Students in the class produced a variety of short essays, creative writing, research papers, and media material.

Teaching the course was an exciting and yet exhausting personal and political experience. We learned a lot. The course was both special and important because the main goal was to "teach" a *process of thinking*, a kind of thinking that leads to commitment and action. The success of this kind of course cannot be measured solely by

final exams, this-is-the-end evaluation reports, or anything else so terminal. Since the course was experimental, we tried to be as flexible as possible in meeting student needs and inviting student participation, but there were many difficulties and limitations. The class was very large: there were seventy or more students and auditors, almost all Asians, many Asians who had never "related to" other Asians, a mixture of generations, nationalities, economic background.... Most of the students were women (60-65%). Obviously a course that met only a couple times a week for three months could only be the beginning of Asian political awareness and commitment. It was important to orient the course towards concrete alternatives and actions which would materially exemplify the concepts of collective effort, self-reliance, and self-determination we discussed. This was hard: the glaring gap between theory and practice in the "movement" and in our own words and actions invited criticisms of hypocrisy. Still, some very positive and hopeful things have happened.

...the main goal was to "teach" a process of thinking, a kind of thinking that leads to commitment and action.

As "teachers," we tried to bring a variety of resources and information to the classroom to encourage and facilitate student involvement. Students and community events and announcements were a regular part of each class meeting. *Gidra*, *Chinese Awareness*, *Kalayaan*, and other publications were discussed and sold. Nixon's China Trip and other current events affecting Asian-Americans were raised and debated. Some students received credit for helping to organize the pilgrimage to Manzanar, the site of the relocation of 10,000 Japanese-Americans during World War II. One group of six students pulled together an impressive and elaborate group project, a light show depicting the history, roles, and images of Asian women. Another group of students hope to form a new student organization for Asians at UCLA.

"Asian Women in America" at UCLA is now over; perhaps it will be offered again next year. But hopefully the kind of perspective and analysis, the practice and application of the theories presented in the lecture hall are only beginning to be realized by students and visitors to the class. The growth and development of courses on Asians and on women should be recognized as potent forums for more relevant education and the continued mobilization of Asian students.

May Ying Chen
Karen Ito Chan

A Role of a Woman

I believe the first time I really felt that I was a bonafide member of the adult community was when I married and assumed the role of a wife with all the duties and responsibilities of a wife to the husband, his family, his business associates, the neighbors, and the maintenance of a home. This sense of having become an adult came rather late to me. I was past twenty-seven years of age.

I left my home shortly after I became sixteen, after my mother's death, to attend an out-of-town sectarian school. Then about eight months later I came to the United States to continue my study. I was separated from my family for ten years. I lived those ten years in the United States more or less as a transient student with no real ties either to the Japanese community here or to the American community. I made

I was losing my sense of identity and I could no longer feel the enthusiasm I once felt for pursuing my study.

friends but they were mostly students and it was a

transitory kind of friendship. By the time I was completing my graduate study in New York, I was beginning to wonder what I was studying for. I had a career in mind but, although I was an American citizen, I knew that decent jobs in the United States were not available to the Orientals at that time unless one had some very special talent. And I did not know what kind of fields other than teaching were open to women in Japan if I went back there. The more I thought about these matters, the more I realized how rootless I had become with no sense of belonging to anyone or anywhere, living a kind of perpetual student life on campus reservations. I was losing my sense of identity and I could no longer feel the enthusiasm I once felt for pursuing my study. I decided to go back to Japan not only to renew my ties with my own family but also to find some direction to my life.

Within a short time after my return to Japan, I became aware of how much my outlook on life had changed during the preceding ten years in the United States. I could adjust to the living style easily enough but I found I could never again accept the Japanese cultural and social systems completely, especially its

rigid class system and attitude toward women. Ever

...I have lived with this sense of confused cultural identity - neither completely Japanese nor American.

since that time, I have lived with this sense of confused cultural identity - neither completely Japanese nor American. However, as soon as I found a job in a news agency, I plunged into it hoping to find some niche for myself in the society which would give me a sense of belonging. But this new role of working woman did not bring me a real feeling of joining the adult community. Perhaps this was due to the fact that in Japan at that period, single women, no matter how independent, really had no social status. I suppose this was why I could feel that I had become an acknowledged adult only after my marriage.

I later heard that my father had been worrying about me - his twenty-seven year old daughter with two college degrees!

-by a woman in her late fifties.

FEEDBACK

A PUT ON?

Dear Editor:

I am an American male of Chinese ancestry—do I need an Asian-American “self-image”??? I say NO! A major problem it seems with many young Asian-Americans who are politically aware is this “need” for some type of “yellow identity.” Nonsense! Why? Because such an identity...a proposed “self-image” would be self-restricting...confining to personal growth. Failure on the person's part to match up with the “self-image” would foster low self-esteem. Such a “self-image” would encourage typed behavior and thought patterns. What would the source of this image be...Americanized Maoism...maybe Yellow “niggerism” to counter the stereotyped lack of physical and sexual prowess...or the New Amerasian-ism to infuse “racial pride.” As for myself, the answer is: Individualism! “I am not a Chinese (or whatever) man...I'm me.”

For example, I personally prefer white women. I consider them sexier, more attractive than yellow women (with their Suzie Wong trip). Or black women, whom I'm rarely attracted to. Am I a honkie-lover? A traitor to my race? A “Uncle Tong”??? The “impotent, little yellow man” who hungers for the “forbidden fruit.” Hmm. Or am I just me.

I'm writing a novel based on my Asian-American experience...my experience! Entitled *One Hung Low* done a la Henry Miller. Racked with sex and violence... from the streets of New York to the jungles of Vietnam. I would welcome personal replies to the above statements from both the editorial staff and the readers. Thank you.

Yours truly,
J. Pong Huie

[Ed. note: When this letter first came in, we noticed the author had written something to us previously. His other letter, printed in the October, 1971, issue of *Gidra*, and printed again below, was clearly a contradiction to the one above. But because we do not know him, we don't know which one is the real J. Pong Huie. If he means what the bottom letter says and the other one is five, we feel he should realize that sharing our true feelings and true convictions is more helpful to our growth and sensitivity than trying to put people on. If the author is really serious about the top letter, then he must have gone through some heavy changes.]

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Enclosed is a poem... a “yellowized” from Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*,

I have followed *Gidra* for the last several issues and have been more than overjoyed to see a paper that is not afraid to attack the white power structure nor the “uncle toms” within the Asian communities. My sincere thanks.

Yours truly,
J. Pong Huie

Ah-So on Ice

To my yellow woman...

To my Yellow Queen. Mother of all Yellow Men.
Giver of Life. Mistress of the Yantze. Lady of Mt. Fuji.
Duchess of the Mekong Delta.

Forgive me as I stand with bowed head in white man's Amerika... with my gonads slashed... my brains in his cruel pale hands

Forgive me when I stood afraid in War Zone C... while the honkies and 'tomming' niggers raped the life out of you... I stood shaking with a loaded M-16 in my hands... my lips silent.

Forgive me as I sat quietly in the school library while the blonde-haired, blue-eyed honky fucked you in his pad because I was not man enough to win your love.

Forgive my father... his father before him... and his father before him—for binding your feet... for murdering you after your first breath... for forcing our lust upon you... for treating you less than a dog... for perpetuating the evils of feudalism and the capitalistic exploitation of your body.

Forgive me, my love.

My thanks to the brothers and sisters,
An Asian Amerikan male

HALFWAY HOUSE

As an incarcerated inmate at California Rehabilitation Center and a former resident of a halfway house, I'd like to explain a little about them.

When a brother or sister gets out of the “joint” (prison, jail, etc.) and has no place to go, the only alternative is a halfway house. The house is run by the State and is usually an old motel or dormitory. The rent is \$21.00 a week and the People without “bread” work details in the house to pay off the rent.

The label “Halfway House” is just what it implies, one foot in and one foot out of the joint. The feeling I had there is no different than the feeling I have here at CRC. There is a “bull” (pig) on duty 24 hours a day who works for the Department of Corrections. He essentially serves the same purpose as a joint officer. Packing a pair of handcuffs in his back pocket, he paroles the house going in and out of each room through the day asking “where should you be?” I was 23 years old at the time and had a 10 o'clock curfew, so the feeling wasn't much different.

To start the day off, “kick out” (time to get up and out of the house) begins at 7 a.m. Breakfast is served, then you're given a sack lunch and sent on your way. But where's there to go when you have no car, no money, or bus tokens?!!!

Halfway houses are also known for drug traffic. There is continuous dealing throughout the house and a bust or shakedown is a regular occurrence. So, when I entered the halfway house I returned to the same scene that I left.

Today in California alone, there are over 300 Asian brother and sisters incarcerated. There are also 700 Asian brothers and sisters that do not have Asian surnames, but Spanish surnames like Filipinos, happa, Hawaiians etc. This makes a total of 1,000 Asians incarcerated. The number may be small but if there was only one “Asian Brother or Sister” incarcerated, that would still be one too many.

I think it's about time for Asians in the community to start seeing the need for organizing and begin creating some kind of program or house for the brothers and sisters coming out.

As you probably know, there are five basic needs of life and adequate housing that are necessary for survival. These “basic needs” I talk about are the things people take for granted on the streets. Such needs as shelter, employment, food, and clothing. These are some of the things we strive for, but can't always get.

We know that Joint Communications in the L.A. area is working on funding for an Asian house. I hope that you can get all the Asian Brothers and Sisters together and implement a strong program. I also hope other Asians in various groups and organizations will give their support and help in making an Asian house a reality. Hopefully, together you can form a strong “unity.” I strongly feel that “unity” is the answer for better results on the various projects and goals we strive for.

Get it together, people, and give your support.

Mike Saito, Chairman
Asian Hard Core
CRC Chapter
P.O. Box 535-½
Carona, CA 91720

HELP!

An open letter to my brothers and sisters—

As all of you are, I too am a victim of Amerikan society—a society based on human weaknesses of greed and selfishness, a society which perpetuates dog-eat dog competitiveness and deterioration of humanness and soul of the individual, a society which suppresses creativeness of human values.

Yeah, I'm a brother who is into the “movement” but like I'm sure most of you have encountered, I am at a time of confusion and indecision. I see contradictions in myself and what I'm supposed to stand for. Being “liberated” and aware of myself as an Asian is as much a part of me now, as waking up in the morning. But although I recognize this system as bourgeois, materialistic and plastic, I am not free from it. I am against materialism because of its evils, but cannot free myself from Dat-sun 240-Z's, 8-track tapes, color television, stereos and nice new clothes. You see, I am a living contradiction. True, I am a victim of Amerikan society, but how can I free myself from these evils.

Revolution is one answer. We can turn to socialism and/or communism, where class structure is altered. Where in both of these philosophies, undoubtedly all of my once bourgeois luxuries would disappear. That means

giving up all my materialistic natures, habits, and wants. Changing my life of capitalism—changing my entire life style.

Which all comes back to the question of my commitment to Asian people. Whether I am willing to give up all these things—shiny new firebirds, leather pieces, wall to wall comfort, and double knits. Things I have lived with all my life. I guess these questions will just have to be answered as my experiences with people, places, and my environment expand in my life.

But that's why I'm writing to you brothers and sisters. I need help. I'm a victim of society just like you. Maybe I'm just politically and mentally not aware, or maybe I'm on a level you have already conquered with yourself. I am truly mixed-up as far as my ideology is concerned so I come to you for help. Help me grow and expand as we might learn from each other. Defeat the system and society that binds our heads. All Power to the People!

G.F.—A high school brother

PLAYBOY BOO BOO?

Dear friends,

I would like to call your attention to an advertisement in the February issue of *Playboy* magazine which I feel is highly insulting to the Asian community. I am referring to the ad opposite page 184 placed by Yes Art Posters of New York. The ad offers a caricature poster of President Nixon with slant eyes, an obvious racial slur of the meanest level. The accompanying caption reads: “Trickeee Dickee. Nixon with Oriental eyes.” Of course, the writing is in fake bamboo style.

I feel that such crude and thoughtless insults such as tastelessly displayed in *Playboy* should not go unchallenged by the members of the Asian community. Asians in this country, probably due to their relative numerical insignificance, are seemingly fair game for all ignorant, racist institutions in our racist society. I appeal to the readership of *Gidra* to act to bring an end to this anti-Asian racism. If a larger minority such as our Black brothers were the targets of blatant racism in such an international publication as *Playboy*, the NAACP and other brotherhood-type organizations would bring an avalanche of legal actions against Hugh Hefner, et. al. that would threaten to bring down the Hefner empire. The Chicanos, bless their hearts, got the Frito Bandito knocked off TV and the Italians got “Momma Mia, dats uh ssspppiiccyyy meata ball” commercial banned. Where are all the Asian attorneys? Like the American Indians who are no longer going to tolerate negative caricatures of their culture to be perpetrated against their characters, the Asians are going to have to stand and fight. The self-hate of assimilation cannot be allowed to render this generation of Asians timid and impotent.

Peace,
Lance A. Ito
Los Angeles, California

[Ed. note: Upon investigating the ad for a poster of Nixon with slanted eyes, we noticed another poster in the same ad just a few inches away entitled ‘Miss Japan.’ Racism cannot be seperated from sexism (the belief that one sex is superior to another; that women are mere objects for display and sexual gratification) because they have a common root: in a society where material profit for a few is held above the value of human beings, we are taught to look at each other in terms of stereotypes and images, rather than as fellow human beings. This helps to keep us apart, and keeps us from understanding that we are all oppressed—Third World people and whites; women and men, and must fight back together. We must remember that no one is free until everyone is free.]



Y91. MISS JAPAN.
Color photo 23 x 29
\$2.00

Interview with an NLF WOMAN



Although Nixon has withdrawn most U.S. ground troops from Vietnam, the war has not wound down for the Indochinese people. Besides escalating the U.S. air war, Nixon has stepped up the "pacification" program, which is the key element of his Vietnamization strategy.

Under Nixon the U.S. is trying to solve the problem by eliminating the rural population through the forced migration of peasants to the cities and U.S. base areas produced by massive bombing and use of artillery and defoliants, as well as by gun-point round ups. Although the U.S. hoped that forced relocation of the peasants would destroy the NLF social and political structure, as even the *New York Times* has reported, the NLF and PRG are very much intact in the urban areas and the strategic hamlets of South Vietnam. "Forced relocation" has produced a Trojan Horse.

Under Nixon, war crimes against the Vietnamese people have increased with the U.S. relying on more and more barbarous methods to hold on to South Vietnam as U.S. troops are withdrawn. In 1969, when Nixon began the "accelerated pacification" program, Nguyen Thi Xuan Mai was incarcerated in a South Vietnamese prison for trying to leave her strategic hamlet and return to her native village. In prison she and her baby were tortured.

I met Mai at the PRG embassy in Hanoi, where she had recently arrived from the South. She is a beautifully strong woman of great dignity, who tells here of her life in the liberated areas and then in the occupied territory under U.S. and Saigon rule.

When did you join the struggle?
In 1964

What made you join the struggle?

Because I had seen with my own eyes my people killed by the American bombing and my village burned by American G.I.s so I came to have a great hatred toward the American aggressors.

Did you join the guerillas or a mass organization?

I worked with the people of my village. When the enemy herded the population of my village into the strategic hamlet, we were deprived of our land, our housing and our means of subsistence. It was impossible for us to go on living in the strategic hamlet. So we struggled in order to go back to our native village, our native land. I, together with the people, joined the struggle to return to my native village.

Did you return to your village then?

Yes, finally we were successful in our struggle and we went back to our village.

Had this village been liberated before the people were taken to the strategic hamlet?

It had been liberated since 1963.

Could you compare life in the liberated village with that in the occupied area?

Life for the people in the strategic hamlet was as follows: Every morning at six, the gate of the hamlet was opened to allow people to go out to do field work. They worked in the field until five in the afternoon and then everybody had to come back. Anyone lingering outside would be branded as an element of the VC or a sympathizer to the VC. In terms of life within the strategic hamlet it

was very miserable. People had to live in very deplorable conditions.

In an area still under enemy control people had no chance to study. They had no schools and in fact there were more prisons than classrooms. In terms of the land, the puppet administration gave to each peasant a sao of land (500 square metres). All the rest of the land was confiscated by them and sold by auction. For the poor peasants, who had no money to buy land, they starved. But when the liberation force came to liberate the area, some of the land was taken back and given to the peasants, and we had enough land to cultivate. They also opened schools and classes for the young people to come and study. Evening classes were opened for the elder people, for the adults. They became more and more literate.

What about medical care?

When the area was not yet liberated, in terms of medical care everything depended on money. If one wanted to have a disease cured or to have some medicine, one had to pay a lot. But when the liberation force came, they formed and opened medical clinics at the hamlet, village and district levels and everybody could have medical treatment at these centers. Also the liberation cadres had campaigns every year to inoculate the people against several kinds of diseases in the area.

What kinds of organizations were there in the liberated zones?

There were children's organizations, women's organizations, young people's organizations, and guerilla organizations.

American women are particularly interested in women's organizations in Vietnam and how they change the lives of Vietnamese women.

When the area had not yet been liberated the life of women was, of course, very miserable. They were considered inferior and it was said that women knew nothing and that all they could do was the cooking. They were oppressed and held in contempt. When the village came to be liberated, women were given a new role. Together with their compatriots in the village they shared the common responsibilities.

How did your view of yourself change?

Of course I became very much enlightened when the village was liberated. In terms of my cultural level, for example, I was almost illiterate when the village was not yet liberated, and my thinking toward myself was that because I was a woman, a girl, I would just play the role of a girl and that I should not do anything else and that I was inferior. But when the village was liberated I was given the opportunity to study and reach the fourth grade. I came to realize that I must have responsibilities in the common work.

Was it difficult to change the attitudes of the men?

Yes, we had of course to struggle because formally men had thought that women were just inferior, that women were the weak sex and that women couldn't do anything concerning the struggle for independence and freedom. They thought that only they could do that. We had to struggle and after a long time men had to realize that we too could become good fighters, and could become heroines even.

When were you and the other villagers forced into the strategic hamlets?

I was herded into the strategic hamlet in January, 1966. I spent nearly four years in the hamlet and then I was put into the prison by the puppet administration. That was in 1969.

What happened to you in prison?

I was brutally tortured by the puppet agent. I was beaten on the hands and tortured with the electric wire. Sometimes they kicked me.

How long were you in the prison?

Over one year—until May 1970. I was put into the prison of Qui Nhon and I was put into a cell which was 12 meters long and five meters wide, in which there were 356 prisoners. The cell had only one small door and no windows. The atmosphere was very close because so many people were jammed in. The floor was made of concrete, and sometimes they would torture a woman and then throw her back on the floor and it would take quite a long time for her to come to.

What reason was given for putting you and the other prisoners in jail?

Those people who refused to go to the strategic hamlet or to remain there were put in the prison.

Let me tell you about life in the prison. Besides torturing the prisoners, the puppet agents there also forced the detainees to salute the flag of the puppet state. But of course everybody refused and we were also tortured for refusing to salute the flag. And also the puppet agents forced the women to work as servants for the officers. That meant that they had to leave the cell and work at the houses of the officers. So in that period our struggle was to oppose saluting the flag and oppose being servants for the officers. And we also struggled to demand that the puppet authority build another camp, that they divide the prison into two camps so that the detainees could have more space.

The puppet authorities retaliated by locking the door of the cell for two or three months and, of course, we struggled by shouting, by knocking loudly at the door and everything. And finally they had to open the door, but they retaliated by beating brutally those who were not seriously ill. For those seriously sick people, they also beat them, saying that they were just pretending to be sick. During that year alone, many detainees died and got seriously ill, so we continued our struggle to demand that the local authorities set up another camp. At first the chief of the province dared not come. He was quite afraid. But finally they had to promise they would build another camp.

I knew of many cases in which the women detainees were brutally tortured. For example, I knew of a girl whose name was Huen. She was put into the prison and was beaten many times. She was tortured by electric machine and she was dunked in the pond. Many times she lost consciousness and got very ill. I, myself, was brutally tortured and quite often I got very ill and lost consciousness.

So the people struggled to demand of the local authorities that they bring us to the hospital for medical treatment. And many times they refused but in the face of our growing struggle they had to bring us to a sort of isolation room—not quite a clinic but an isolation room. There we had more space, more air. At this room, I was given no medicine by the prison authority. Some religious people of the nearby village passed by me, and I explained to them my situation and they secretly gave me some medicine.

When I was put in prison my baby of 23 months was also put into prison with me. Even my baby was tortured with the electric wire and fainted. They asked me, but I had nothing to explain to them. So they tortured the baby and he lost consciousness and I was very angry and felt great pain, and I cried and shouted for help.

What happened to your baby?

When my baby received the electric shock he fainted and was motionless, lying on the ground. And I shouted; I called the local puppet agent but nobody came. When they did come, they beat me too, and I, myself, lost consciousness. When I came to, I found that my baby was no longer there. I didn't know where they had taken him.

And you haven't seen your baby since?

No.

—Banning Garrett
Asia Information Group, Berkeley

WOMEN OF CUBA

For the last three years North Americans in large numbers have been able to travel to the only liberated territory in the Western hemisphere, Cuba. This has been done through the Venceremos Brigade, a political educational project which bases itself on four political objectives:

1. To develop solidarity with the Cuban revolution and the people of the Third World.
2. To promote and develop the political formation of the progressive forces in the U.S. through the brigade process in Cuba and in the U.S.
3. To educate the U.S. movement to an anti-imperialist consciousness and to the necessity for and the possibility of unity in strategic terms.
4. To facilitate dialogue among different U.S. movement groups as they work in the context of a common and constructive task.

Cuba provides the setting in which North Americans from all areas of the movement come together to work and learn. Thus far there have been five brigades of North Americans to Cuba; they have participated in the sugar harvest of 1969, 1970 and 1971, they have also assisted in the growing citrus industry and helped in the crucial area of constructing new schools.

North Americans have gone to Cuba searching for answers that would help push the struggle forward here. North American women were especially interested in the advancement of Cuban women; too often white women's liberation advocates came to Cuba with pre-conceived notions and attitudes of cultural chauvinism. Third World women could not relate to this position and sought answers that were more relevant to the liberation of all oppressed people.

In order to understand the impact that Cuba has on us as Third World women, we must understand the important role that women played throughout the independence struggle and their importance in socialist construction.

The history of the struggle of Cuban women is directly tied to the independence struggle of Cuban people. The year 1492 is significant in Cuban history for this marks the entrance of Spanish colonialism. Shortly after this, the importation of slaves from Africa began. Slave rebellions took place constantly, but by the end of the 1860's the struggle between landowners and Spain became dominant.

The war of independence was signalled when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes freed his slaves. On April 10, 1869, the leaders of the insurrection proclaimed the first Cuban constitution. At this time, a woman patriot, Ana Betancourt, demanded the acknowledgement of the civil rights of Cuban women. At this time, women had no rights to dispose of their holdings or product of their work. They had no civil rights and were denied access to all citizenship rights. In essence, they had no human rights.

The struggle for independence continued but unified action of all rebellious forces became impossible with the death of the leaders. Spain took advantage of this situation and offered an armistice. The fight continued and in 1897, Spain granted Cuba autonomy. But this gesture came too late for the people no longer wanted reforms, they wanted total independence.

The U.S. enters at this time and places Cuba under its domination through the Platt Amendment. The status of women remained the same, they were still denied all human rights and were dependent on a poverty-ridden, insecure male population. The pseudo-republic did not change this.

The fighting spirit of the women continued to grow and a new word began to be heard—suffragism. In 1912, the Feminist National Party was founded. It later merged with the Suffragist National Party. Their main intention was to fight for women's right to vote. Many other feminist movements occurred in later years, but the majority of them were petit bourgeois and unconcerned with the overall revolutionary movement.

In 1934, Cuban women won the right to vote and their material rights were recognized in the Workers' Maternity Security law. This whole era was marked by menial reforms. Also in 1934, the Women's National Union was founded and at the Third National Women's Congress working and country women participated for the first time. Also for the first time, they publicly voiced the best development of the Workers' Union and their feminist sections.

1940 marked another liberal breakthrough—a new Cuban constitution was drafted and women's rights were included:

1. equal work, equal pay.
2. discrimination due to sex was illegal.
3. married women were accorded full civil rights

and protection.

4. protection of maternity was regulated. This was not enough to liberate women because the law did not conform to reality—discrimination and oppression of women continued.

The Federation of Democratic Cuban Women, a branch of the International Federation of Women began in 1946. They openly fought for the few rights that women had won.

The 1950's ushered in a new reign of terror as the military dictator Batista seized control of the government. In 1953, a group of courageous young people (both men and women) attacked the Moncada garrison, one of Batista's strongholds. Although they were defeated, this defeat was temporary for it raised the consciousness of the people and marked the beginning of the end of U.S. imperialism. Haydee Santamaria and Melba Hernandez were two of the women present in the Moncada attack. They were two of many who came forth to wage the struggle in the countryside and in the underground movements in the cities.

Women participated as fighters, teachers, nurses, and messengers. Towards the end of the war, Fidel organized the Mariana Grajales platoon which was made up of all women. They successfully accomplished all of their missions and gained the respect of the other soldiers. Because of the heavy cultural influence of *machismo* in Latin America, most of the soldiers felt that the women were incapable of any fighting. This platoon proved the contrary and provided a solid foundation for the advancement of women.

Since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, Cuban women have progressively moved forward in all aspects of life—political, economically, socially, and culturally.

In 1966, Fidel Castro explained:

If we consider capitalism, women—that is women from the working classes—were doubly exploited because she was poor, because she was a member of the working class; even her own class looked down on her and underrated her. Not only was she underestimated, exploited, looked down upon by the exploiting class, but even within her own class, she was an object of numerous prejudices.

To deal with these problems, in 1960 the Federation of Cuban Women was formed to unite all Cuban women who followed a revolutionary path. It is a mass organization open to all women. Its main task is to integrate women into the revolutionary process. At the present time it has a membership of over one million women.

In its first year, 1961, it actively participated in the campaign to eliminate illiteracy in Cuba. It was also during this time that the Federation became actively involved in all areas of education, from school age children to adult evening schools.

Women also became active in the area of public health—they organized first aid classes and developed the Medical Auxiliary Corps of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. Many of these women helped defend their country when the U.S. invaded Playa Giron (the Bay of Pigs incident).

Because unemployment is no longer a problem and

the country needs more workers, women are especially encouraged to enter the productive labor force.

The conditions for the liberation of women, for the full development of women in society, for an authentic equality of rights, for an authentic equality of women with men, in society, require a material base, they require the material foundation of economic and social development.

(Fidel Castro, 1966)

The material base that is necessary means freeing women from chores at home; particularly in the area of child care. A whole network of *Circulo Infantiles* (Child Care Centers) are available to women at their factories and in residential areas. They provide food, clothing, education and medical attention for free. The FMC continues this attention to education and social needs through primary and secondary schools.

The Federation is organized on a block basis so they are firmly rooted in the community. Thus, they are actively involved in the lives of the people and can be called on to help women find employment, talk to families about the revolution and why women are needed; they also work with youth who have behavioral problems and they participate in mass health programs, such as vaccinations. While they carry out these tasks they always point out how much progress has been made since the revolution and how much more needs to be done.

Women are actively involved in all areas of life, from governmental and ministry positions, to the armed forces, and most importantly in production; women are in charge of the entire poultry plan for the country. Special schools have been established to promote the technical development of women, schools to teach how to operate machinery that is commonly associated with men. Half the students training to become doctors are women; there is an exemplary women's cane cutting brigade.

Another important aspect of the struggle of Cuban women is their identification with the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America in their fight against U.S. imperialism. One way in which they have expressed this solidarity is the activities around Mother's Day in 1968 when they paid homage to all Vietnamese mothers.

Cuban women represent the aspirations of women all over the world. Their heroic examples have given other women strength and inspiration. This statement from the 4th Plenary Session of the FMC reinforces their concern for oppressed people everywhere.

Our people do not want peace at the price of war against other peoples; this is why the women of Cuba reiterate before the entire world that our solidarity with the peoples that are struggling is active, material and moral and that we will remain firm in our own front line against imperialism with our rifles always ready as we advance victoriously on the road to socialism.

The women of Cuba, more Cuban and more internationalist than ever before in their nation's history are advancing confidently toward the future, in the midst of a continuing struggle against evils and prejudices inherited from the past.

—Sandy Maeshiro

SCPC: UNITED IN STRUGGLE

The two Black sisters, Anita and Jackie, hurried down the steps of the school building and headed straight for the restrooms. It's lunchtime and the head seems like a crowded subway. The air smells like the urine has been clogged in the toilets for days.

Anita lit a cigarette and took a hit. "That fuckin' test sure was hard," she said.

"No shit," Jackie said while lighting up a cigarette herself. "That fuckin' Buddhahead in front of me didn't even let me cheat off of him."

Anita replied, "Yeah, those Buddhaheads think they're so smart. Dumb ass Japs!"

"They may be smart, but they sure don't know what's happening," continued Jackie. "Hey, I wonder if any of them can wear contact lenses?"

Anita answered, "They probably do, but I bet they they're shaped like their slanted eyes." They both laughed.

On the yard, Cathy and Sheryl, two Asian sisters, walked with a steady pace to their lockers. They both gave a little smile and a quick wave to a brother passing their way.

"He's kind of cute," observed Cathy.

"Yeah, but he's got pimples," said Sheryl.

A group of Black brothers were standing near their lockers when they got there. They were talking about a party last week and from the sound of it they had a pretty good time.

Cathy and Sheryl silently eyed each other as they were putting away their books in their lockers. As they were walking away Sheryl exclaimed, "Damn, those fuckin' Niggers are loud! You'd think they were at home!"

Cathy replied, "Well, shit. If I lived in houses like they lived in I wouldn't be quiet either."

They both laughed.

Cathy was on her period, so she wanted to go to the head. She said she would meet Sheryl at the benches they usually sat at during lunch.

Cathy entered the head and found herself squinting her eyes because of the smoke. She normally didn't go to the heads, but this time she had to.

Anita and Jackie saw her when she came in and were both thinking the same thing. Cathy was trying to find an empty stall but was stopped short by Jackie.

"Say, you got a quarter I could hold?" snorted Jackie.

Cathy didn't say anything but nodded no. She tried not to look in the eyes of the Black sister.

"Aw, come on. Let me get some money," insisted Jackie.

"No," said Cathy. She was a little scared and a little mad.

This time Jackie pushed Cathy while Anita pulled her hair.

You know the rest of the story. It's happened at your high school and it happens at ours, which is Los Angeles High School. It's not necessarily just Blacks and Asians. It's anyone and everyone at high school, teachers included. This is how it was at L.A. High...

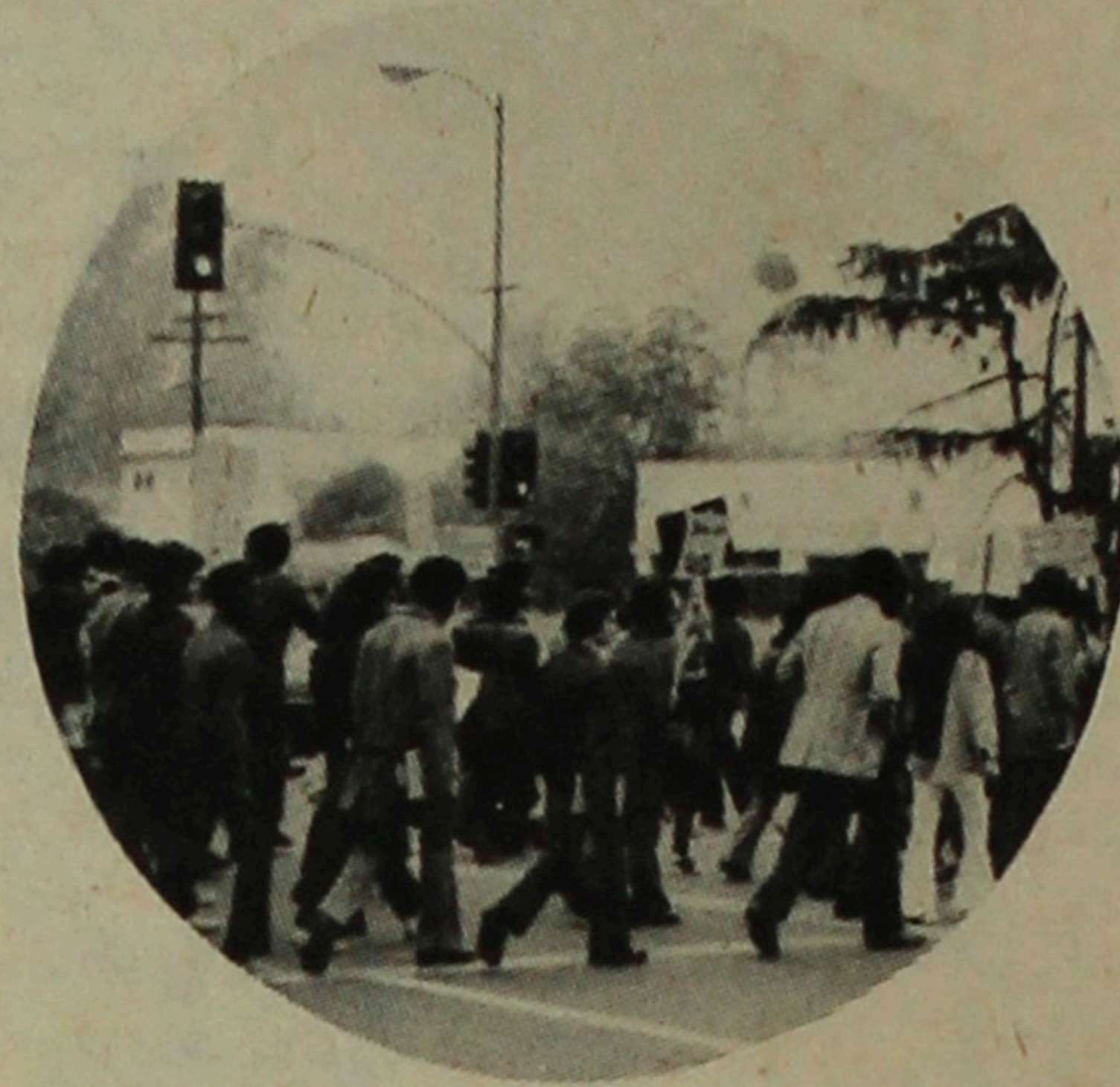
There definitely existed a problem at L.A. From September, 1971 on, there were at least thirty-seven assaults on students and at least twelve on teachers. These were all official and documented assaults, so you can imagine all the "unofficial" ones that happened.

Besides the assaults, the feeling towards everything in and related to school was very low. There were more students out of class than in. There was definitely something wrong.

About the middle of January, a few students learned of the assaults and decided to do something about it. Representatives from the Black Students Union, and the newly formed United Asian Students, and Leadership Class got together to form the Student Coalition for Progressive Change. We felt it was time for the students to voice their opinion in affairs related to their own school.

The coalition analyzed the assault problems and went far deeper than just the assaults. The assaults were seen as only symptoms of an entirely screwed up school. Why were brothers and sisters jumping on each other? Why did approximately four hundred students cut class every day? Why did people have to get loaded just to bear the boring classes? Where was all this hatred, fear, and frustration coming from? The S.C.P.C. found the entire "system," and more specifically the administration at L.A. High guilty!

The administration was lead by a new man, Mr. McGlothen. He was Boys' Vice-Principal for quite awhile



when the old principal, Dr. Schacter, was principal. Well, Dr. Schacter left the school this semester, so McGlothen got his big chance. It was felt that he would know how to run the school. So far, though, he has fucked up pretty good. It isn't that it is all his fault though, because the school, like all other high schools, has always been fucked up.

Well, the students got kind of tired of the bad conditions on campus, so they started to organize. The S.C.P.C. developed a five point proposal plan. These proposals were presented on February 7, during a Board of Education Community Advisory Committee Meeting. This meeting was attended by parents, students, members of the community, and administrative people. The proposals were as follows:

I. We want a thorough review and reorganization of the security program by a committee composed of students, parents, faculty and administrative people.

The administration wanted more pigs to control the assaults, but the students were against an army of pigs on campus. We want quality rather than quantity. It is not a question of stopping the assaults when they occur, but a question of getting to the roots of the problems. The roots are obviously the screwed up conditions at school.

II. Representatives from the student body have the right to attend all faculty and administrative meetings.

This is the only proposal that has been met so far.

III. We want increased cooperation from the principal and the rest of the administration.

We are sick and tired of getting "around-the-issue" talk from them. We don't want to hear Mr. McGlothen talk about how hard he is trying, or how he has certain guidelines through which he has to follow. We want action, not talk.

IV. We want a reinforcement of constitutional rights for the students and faculty.

We are requesting our basic rights of freedom of the press, speech, and expression be given to us. Many students don't realize that these basic rights are being denied. And the administration is not about to tell them, either. Many teachers cannot voice their opinions on "controversial" issues because of administrative pressure. It is an actual fact that teachers have been harrassed and threatened with their job status for supporting anything "against the grain."

V. We want due process implemented by students through student court.

We want a student review board that would interpret, and implement school policies and student related affairs. It is our right to have a voice in an institution designed for us.

During the committee meeting (mentioned before), Mr. McGlothen was literally up against the wall. We set a two week deadline for our proposals to be dealt with positively. Mr. McGlothen called for meetings and for committees to be formed to work with them. First we



thought this was cool and that we were going to get things done. But we soon found out otherwise.

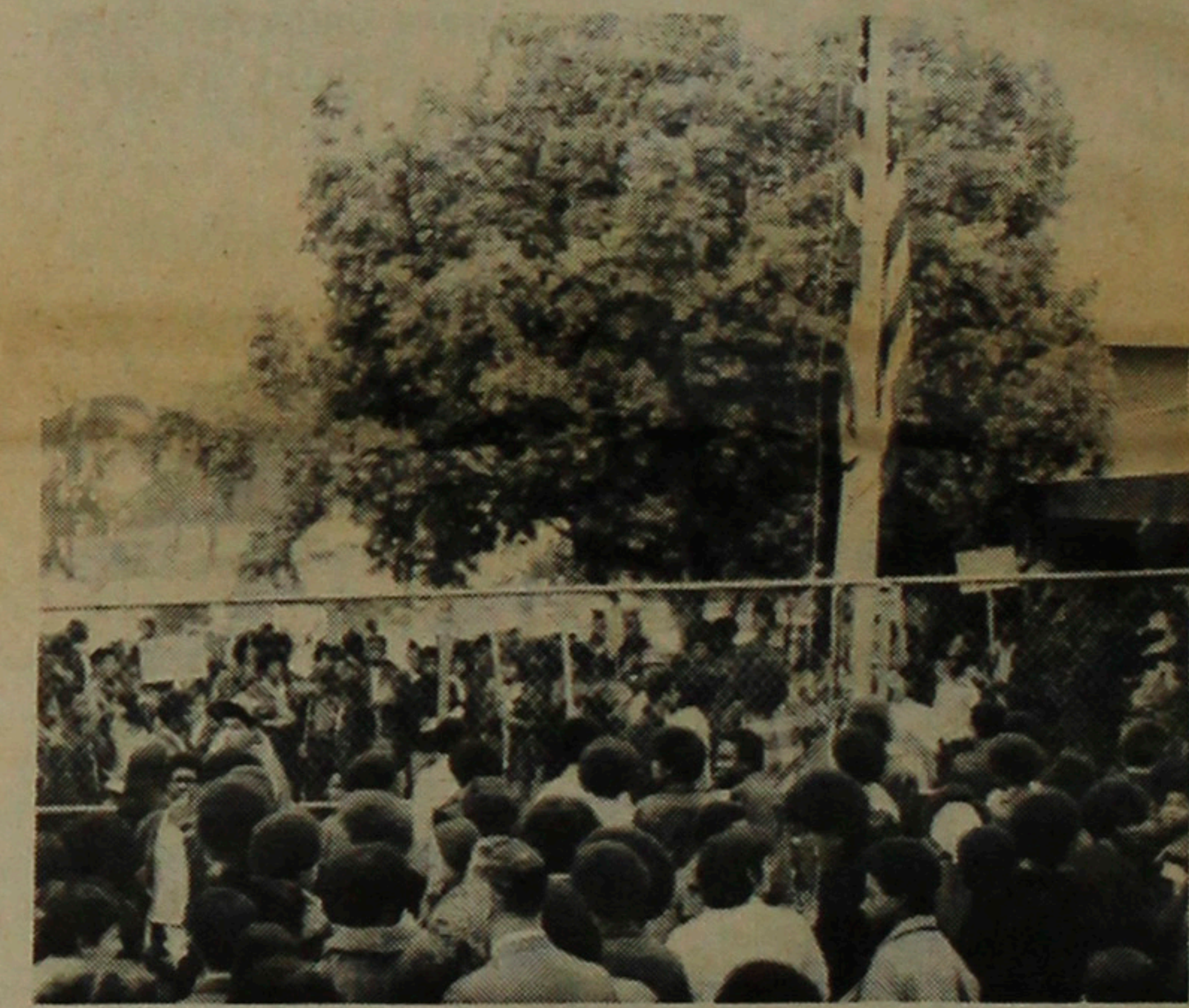
Overall, we had about six meetings with the principal and all his lackeys. And everytime, the students were snowed over and kicked in the face. There was too much administrative bureaucracy. We got so fed up that we even walked out of one of these meetings. The original two week deadline was extended another two weeks to give them one last chance. But again, we were fucked over. The thing that really shook us was that Mr. McGlothen was sending letters to the Board of Education and the rest of his "controllers" saying that everything was going fine. After many dead ends and countless bullshit, the students finally decided to take action.

We petitioned and leafleted the school and community stating what was going down. We gained the support of our fellow students, the Community Advisory Board, and some parents. From the very beginning, the S.C.P.C. had planned alternative actions if the administration would not meet our proposals.

For nearly two weeks, the Coalition planned the strategy for a mass student walk-out. Many things were checked into, such as legalities, lawyers, community support, and student support. This was no off-the-wall thing being planned. We built up and tore down our strategy constantly, because we wanted as little mistakes as possible.

The walk-out took place on March 7, exactly one month after we had presented our proposals. At its height, the walk-out pulled about 800 students. The news media was wrong when it said there were only about 300. The news and the administration also said it was only an Asian movement, but we're not so dumb as to get caught by more tactics of "divide and conquer."

In its entirety, the walk-out lasted about an hour. The crowd was dispersed when some pigs showed up



and students started getting excited. Actually, we should have stayed. But there was a mix-up in organizing and we screwed up. This was a peaceful walk-out and nobody wanted anybody to get hurt.

The walk-out was used to demonstrate three points to the administration and the community:

1. We wanted to show the people that the students had exhausted all peaceable means to deal with the administration.

2. We wanted to demonstrate to everyone that we were not playing around anymore.

3. We wanted to reveal the true nature of the screwed up institution. It was not that students walked out because they didn't want to learn, but because they wanted school conditions to improve so they could get relevant education in a well-ordered school.

The funny thing about this whole incident is that the administration only laughed at the walk-out and called it a flop. This is irrelevant though, because they themselves know that they are running a fucked-up school. If 800 people walk out of school there is something definitely wrong with it. No longer will the students at L.A. just take what is handed to them and not know any better. No longer will we be ignorant of the world around us because of institutional conditioning.

As it is now, the "man" is not meeting the needs of the people. If he is not meeting the people's needs, then he must be replaced. The students will continue their fight with all oppressed people against a system which doesn't meet their needs, is insensitive to them, controls them, and systematically destroys them. We realize that schools are only tools for the system to channel people into the capitalistic machine. We will not take this shit. It is a new day and a new time and a new need.

-Student Coalition for Progressive Change

THEY CAME TO SEE US ON DISPLAY

—Betty Chen

Reprinted from March, 1972 Chinese Awareness.

little red rods exploding
white faces
shirk and squirm
in the mild winter air
a floating gun powder smell...
nice evening
for a stroll with father and cousin Wen-Chung
a day of family re-union

park your cars here for \$2.00
signs everywhere
big night
big night for the shop owners, cash registers,
and police officers

for the curious who can afford to entertain their
latest fancies. Yes, driving across town, cross
culture, cross the tracks with a blinding sense
of humanity, they come in hordes to see...

Hill street
lined with pale faced invaders
greedily snapping up every post card image they see
Kodaked memories
of the local folk

in time comes the L.A.P.D. motorcade
leading off the Chinese New Year parade
along with uniforms, helmets, bullets, and guns
they announce themselves with a loud siren
flashing red lights, flashes green
they toy with 'em riding machines
and from time to time,
the bikes would let off a poisonous fart
into the procession of dignitaries that follows:

consul general from Taiwan waves for the last time
to a crowd who looked the other way
drums and bugles marches by most patriotically
a perfectly performed tune where none stepped out of line
next is the police department marching band
the R.O.T.C. marching band
the U.S. army marching band
not to mention the U.S. Navy gun boat float with
a marine straddling on top of the oversized cardboard
cannon cocked in the direction of our
1972 beauty queen, it seems
meanwhile, in the crowd, plain-clothesmen swarmed about
trying to look secretive with their walkie-talkies

I turn to father, "A police state, isn't it?"
the remark surprises him, (and his response is equally unexpected),
he bursts out laughing—rather excitedly for someone his
age. He repeats the words 'police state' and had a few
more chuckles to himself, making it apparent that this is
all he wished to say on the subject for now. Though he
remains rather amused, perhaps even pleased. And that
is enough for me.

I decide to join in the good humor of the moment
after all, this is Chinese New Year and
at this very moment grandfather is dying in Taipei
after a century of being a slave
and not knowing it

no big issue
nothing new
just the LAPD on display
no different than any other day

hey! hey!
pop corn, pom pom, red white and blue
speakers, spot lights and TV crew
piece of bubble gum got stuck to my shoe
MuuuuuuWOOooooo, MMuuuuuuWOOoo

finally comes a candy striped van to save the day
the sign reads "L.A. Chinatown Senior Citizen Club"
I perk up to see what I could see
as familiar faces sail into view
"Ah!" The few Chinese scattered among the spectators
begin to applaud—a very special applause. The old people's
smiles open up at what they saw. They start waving
excitedly as we in the crowd return their greeting with
equal enthusiasm. My heart began to swell.

Leaving father and Wen-Chung behind, I follow the bus
down the street, stopping only when the crowd grew too

thick. Feeling good inside, I find myself nodding pleasantly
at all the passers by. Suddenly,
a face comes into view
touching me with a chill
it is a Chinese woman at least twice my age.
we have seen each other in alley ways, though we have never
found the occasion to say hello
perhaps today is the day

As the woman comes closer, our eyes meet. With an
open smile I wait for hers. I wait until her stare begins
to make me feel uncomfortable. Our eyes hooked,
she stops just a little over an arms length from me.
I can feel in her an anger that is approaching madness
Looking through me, she focuses her attention somewhere
in the dark distant night. Her eyes moist like a
dirty window all fogged up inside.
She is not celebrating tonight.
My head falls limp and remains lowered until she is rushed
out of sight by an onslaught of sight seers.

little red rods exploding
white faces
shirk and squirm
"Oh honey, I just hate that terrible noise of them fire crackers!"

A modish couple swings around the corner as I try
frustratingly to scrape the sticky blob from my shoes.
"Where are all the Chinese tonight anyhow? I haven't
seen a single one yet..."
The couple continued their conversation in a loud voice
as if they owned the place.

As they head for the passage-way where I am
(not seeing me of course), I stop playing with my feet
and watch them
with an intense interest that even I cannot understand.
Just before they reach the spot, I ease over casually
to the little open space,
blocking it completely.

Somewhat taken aback, the man mumbles something.
I glance down with a look to let them know
that I have no intentions of moving (surprising myself
a little). Then returning my attention to the darkness
above where the old woman was looking.

"Excuse me, we just want to get by."
shaking slightly inside, doubts flashes through my mind
without moving, I check out the immediate surrounding:
not a familiar soul in sight! Only the pale faced invaders
who are all beginning to look this way.
All of a sudden I feel weak, as if indeed some inferior
reasoning is taking hold of me. Perhaps I AM being
childish, small, abnormal, undesirable, questionable...
"Would you please move a little so we can get by?"
One of them announces in a civilized manner, making
very sure that not only everyone hears us, but that
THEY are the RIGHTEOUS!

soft, uncertain, but angry inside, I hold a still pose
my head and neck trembling involuntarily
the spectators are now waiting like vulture now
as the pair make stylized signs of disgust to each other
and their mob

seconds dragged by in unbearable pain
slowly, my senses begin coming back
as I get ready to kick the man in the balls and bash
his partner across the temple—if they should try to
force their way
with a clinched fist
I feel cleansed and begin clamming down inside

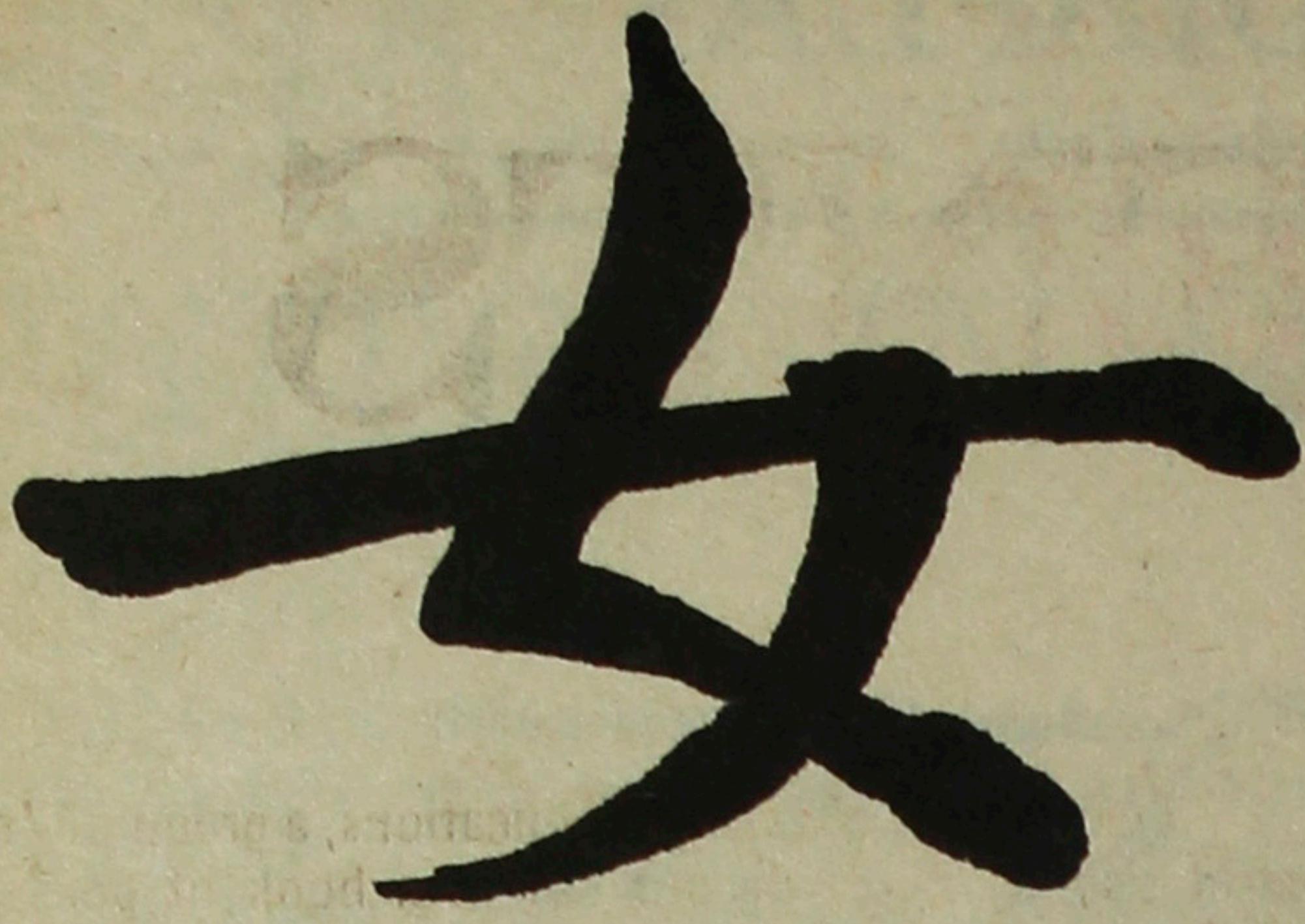
above me, the dark night
shadows of children climbing a shingled roof
are about to light up more firecrackers
one of them spots me and waves
I feel a resoluteness

little red rods exploding
white faces
shirk and squirm
as the couple retreats in search of another passage

in the mild winter air
a floating gun powder smell...

nice evening.

Drawing by Ray Tasaki.



This article is reprinted from *Onna*, a newsletter from women in Japan, which is expected to come out four or five times in the coming year. If you would like to receive copies of *Onna*, you can send \$1.50 (to cover paper and postage) to:

Onna
c/o Koda Kyoko
No. 7 Izumi Co-op
2-26 Totsuka, Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo, Japan

THE WHO AND WHY OF ONNA

We are a small women's group—of several nationalities, but mostly Japanese—who have been meeting together for over one year. We have each come to identify ourselves as women more and more, and that is why our group chose its name as *Onna*. When we shared our own particular backgrounds of discrimination and oppression,

we began to realize that what each woman experienced was not her own individual problem, but part of the common experience of oppression which women of every culture and class background have historically lived. We came to understand ourselves by sharing with each other in a spirit of openness, not only with painful things, but also each one's strength as well. And having discovered "us" we want to make a quite new "us," a new woman. We are continuing and deepening this process together—trying to squarely face the problems, of which language and child care are only the most obvious—and we are learning a lot.

One of the things that struck us and moved us to send this newsletter is our lack of awareness of Asia. All of us in the group have come to maturity after the war and the American Occupation. The post-war "security" arrangement which the Japanese ruling class entered into with the U.S. ruling class affected directly, and indirectly, almost every sphere of life: the economy, education, culture, etc. As a result, we feel a distortion in our life styles and in our very selves. More or less, for better or worse, we have all come under the influence of America. Nevertheless, we Japanese sisters are Asian.

What does all this mean as far as the women's liberation movement is concerned? It does not mean that we shun contact with non-Asian sisters—not at all. We want to get to know our Western sisters' movements better and so share more deeply with you what we are doing and thinking. The differences between our experiences and ways of thinking, which arise out of our thousands-of-years-of history and customs warns us to be especially careful not to fall into making glib appraisals of each other the way, for example, male chauvinists all over the world are doing. When the male-chauvinist press in Japan reported the emergence of the women's movement in the U.S., we did not laugh with the men at the American sisters' actions; we understand that those sisters are in touch with their own reality, and we say

"right on." Likewise, we hope that sisters from abroad will understand our seriousness and not be quick to judge us superficially. If we seem sensitive about this point, it is only because of the history of the past few hundred years of Asian relations with the West; a history none of us wants to carry in to our future. In the past, we Asians have rarely spoken about what we feel, think, or experience as Asians—that is true even today. Yet we are the objects of never-ending evaluation from the European and American point of view. We want to unite with our European and American sisters. Let us grow closer together as sisters.

And what about our attitude toward our Asian sisters? Clearly it is up to us, for whom the women's movement has become so vital, to do all we can to break down the barriers which the U.S.-Japanese system has erected between us. For, of course, the reverse of the post-war U.S. orientation referred to above is the systematic dislocation in the natural relationships which should be ours as Asians. Needless to say, what is true of our people generally, is doubly true of the women who, even within our own societies, are alone, the ones with "nothing to say." Now we can only guess at your respective realities; some of you are fighting for survival against an aggressor who is receiving active support from Japan; some of you are engaged in what seems to us like a tremendous human revolution which we would like to learn from; we suppose many of you must be feeling quite isolated in your struggles...but the silence between us is such that we really know nothing at all of each other's lives. It would be nice if we could meet each other face to face; but we can't. We want to use this newsletter to talk with you. We also hope it will help us become clearer about our own identity as Asian women. Please write to us and tell us about yourselves, what you are thinking, about the situation of women where you are. We will try to tell you what Japanese women are thinking and doing about making new women.

in the name of Vietnamese orphans

New York—Ten South Vietnamese students came to the United Nations from all over the United States on February 10th, and occupied the South Vietnamese Observer Mission. During their brief takeover they made three demands "in the name of the Vietnamese orphans, widows, disabled veterans, prostitutes, uprooted peasants, political prisoners, and other victims of this barbaric war waged by the United States." The demands were: the immediate release of Mrs. Ngo Ba Thanh, Mr. Huynh Tan Mam, and other political prisoners suffering unspeakable tortures in South Vietnamese prisons; the immediate resignation of Thieu; and the immediate dismemberment of the Thieu regime and replacement by a coalition government.

The students were arrested by New York City Police. Subsequently, such groups as Asian Coalition (whom we thank for sending us these communications) expressed their solidarity and concern for these students, and opposed any action which would deprive them of their human rights.

Statement to the police and other foreign authorities:

Please don't interfere.

We are not seizing American property. We are not raping American women. We are not forcing American men to kill each other and other human beings. We are not turning millions of American women into prostitutes. We are not making 150 million Americans become refu-

ges forced to live in abject misery and hunger. We are not murdering and maiming 20 million American men, women, and children. We are not supporting a barbaric and repressive regime which puts 3 million American men, women, and children in prison as political prisoners.

We are not committing any other crimes that the U.S. government has committed against our country in the name of freedom and democracy.

We are simply occupying a piece of our own property—a property which has been acquired at the cost of countless Vietnamese lives—to make known the magnitude of the crimes being committed by the U.S. government against our people.

Please don't take part in these crimes.

END THE WAR - APRIL 22

April 22 is the day of the National Moratorium on the war in Southeast Asia as organized primarily by the National Peace Action Council (NPAC). We understand NPAC's emphasis in the Moratorium as the withdrawal of all US personnel and equipment and the ending of US bombings in North and South Vietnam. It is less emphatic on the issues of imperialism (aggression into another nation's domain), racism (the atrocities against Asian people), and sexism (the exploitation of Asian women as prostitutes and servants).

As Third World people, as Asian people, our emphasis and perspectives differ from NPAC's in relation to the Moratorium. It is by necessity that we have to consider things even more broadly and point out the direct links of the war in Vietnam to the conditions of Third World people in the US. All Third World people are affected directly by the racism and sexism that is perpetuated in this imperialistic country and which extends into other lands. As long as a war machine and a war-based economy exists in the US there will be no end to the war—there will be other "Vietnams".

As people opposed to the war we must support the Moratorium even if we feel disillusioned by the effectiveness of demonstrations, rallies and marches. We must use this time to try to reach other people with the issues as they directly affect us. This will be a massive event—the power of the people can be demonstrated. In solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Vietnam and Asia we must utilize every effort to end the war.

**STOP THE BOMBINGS! END THE WAR!
SMASH THE SYSTEM!**

Concerned Asians are organizing an Asian contingent to march on April 22, in Los Angeles. The Asian contingent is a completely autonomous contingent. We will not give tacit consent by remaining silent when the war has not ended, and Asians are being bombed by US planes.



ASIAN CONTINGENT

ASSEMBLE: Bronson and Wilshire, near Crenshaw 10 A.M.
MARCH: Wilshire 11 A.M.
RALLY: MacArthur Park 1 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the summer of 1971, a journal entitled *Asian Women* was published at U.C. Berkeley. The journal included a broad survey of personal impressions, Asian Amerikan women's history, philosophical essays, political statements, poems, photographs, short stories, literary and media reviews which provided a sensitive baseline perspective for evaluating the plight, needs, and new aspirations of Asian women in Amerika. In the year since its publication, *Asian Women* has initiated efforts among Asians all over the country to examine more deeply the roles and position of Asian women in Amerikan society.

As a result of the new inquiries into the problems of Asian women in Amerika, a group of Asian Amerikan women in Los Angeles, consulting with the sisters at U.C. Berkeley, is preparing a second journal for publication this fall. Articles on the following topics are being solicited:

- 1) Asian and Third World Women's Movements vs. White Women's Liberation: *what are the similarities and differences in issues, goals, tactics, etc.?*
- 2) The Roles of Asian Women in Amerika: *a research and statistical study. What are the social roles or models for Asian women within their homes, in their communities, in the labor force?*
- 3) Amerikan Institutions and the Asian Woman: *a study of one specific institution (child-care, employment, medical care, etc.) and its effects on women in Asian communities. Is there a need for alternative services and institutions? How can these be developed?*
- 4) Asian Amerikan Women's History.

5) Philosophical and Political Strategies for Asian Women in Amerika.

6) Art Work: *photographs, drawings, wood-cuts, other graphics, etc.*

The articles will be published in a special issue of the *Amerasia Journal on Asian Women*, Fall '72, vol. II, no. 3. In addition, the possibility of a more extended commercial publication (text or anthology) is being considered for the future.

If you would like more information, or want to contribute manuscripts for consideration, please contact one of the following people at the Asian Amerikan Studies Center, 3232 Campbell Hall, U.C.L.A., CA 90024 (213) 825-2974 or 879-3576.

Lucie Cheng Hirata
Karen Ito Chan
May Ying Chen
Lowell Chun Hoon

Third World Women's Publications, a group of 3rd world sisters, is putting out our own book of poetry, graphics, songs, photographs, fiction, prose, short stories, political essays...and other creative expressions. We invite all 3rd world sisters to submit their works to:

3rd World Women's Publications
P.O. Box 1959
San Francisco, CA 94101

For return of material, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

CYC presents—

"taking tiger mountain by strategy"

—a revolutionary Peking opera,

showing in L.A. for the first time—

at the Fairfax High School Auditorium
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April 7th: 7:00 & 9:00

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Okinawa

"We'll never give up an inch of our land!"

A feature-length drama of the struggle of the Okinawan people.

Monday, April 10 8 P.M.

Inner City Cultural Center

1615 W. Washington Blvd.

Donation

沖縄

The beautiful seas around Okinawa have been polluted by radioactivity; the fertile land has been contaminated by poison gases from US military bases. The people of Okinawa have been victims of robbery, rape and other crimes by Amerikan GIs for the past 25 years. The bases have all been enlarged, and now number over 100; sugarcane fields have turned into military roads. The whole island is becoming a stronghold for US imperialism's nuclear strategy. Farmers, whose land has been taken, now must depend on those very bases for their living. They are now forced to survive by building and maintaining airplanes and ammunition used to kill people in Indochina. Their farm life has been uprooted.

This May 15th, the "reversion of Okinawa" from US to Japanese control is supposed to happen. But that 'reversion' doesn't really mean self-determination for the Okinawan people. By gaining control over the tiny island and the military bases there, Japanese imperialism will have a strong grip on the control of Southeast Asia. So far, Japan has regained control it lost in WWII over other islands of Ryuku, and has sights on Korea and Taiwan. They are exploiting the discontent of the Okinawan people in order to expand their control over as much of Asia as they can.

But what does all of this mean? First, it means the probability of more Vietnams—Japanese style. This means Asians killing Asians to protect the mutual economic interests of the US and Japan. But a more important second, it means that the current US-Japan economic competition will intensify to proportions as explosive as that competition was in 1942.

Already, we see billboards in places like Arizona that read, "REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR! BUY AMERICAN!" as well as the sudden revival of the old 1940's war movies on the late, late show.

Although the island of Okinawa is far across the Pacific, the struggle over there is not as remote as it might seem to Asians in America.

We, at the Bookstore feel that this film is an important and relevant one for us to examine.

Tickets available at: Amerasia Bookstore 313½ E. First St., L.A. 680-2888.

amerasia bookstore



"The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigor and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed in you."

—Mao—

18 x 24 black & white poster w/ quote by Mao, \$1 (above)

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SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

						1 GFB, SBAI, Phrog, Asian Sisters, Youth & Drugs Present: <i>Liquid Theater & Dance</i> (with Hiroshima) 7:30 - 1:30 only \$2 Gardena Y, Western/ Redondo
2 EASTER SUNDAY	3 Asian Sisters Meeting IACS office, 125 Weller St. 7:30 every Monday	4 Alright, all you cosmic kiddies...It's SBAI get together night at the SBAI Drop-In Center. 16408 Western Ave. in wonderful Gardena. 7:30 every Tuesday	5	6 Bobby Hutton Murdered - 1968	7 "New Face of China" - a film showing. April 7&8 7 p.m. at Alpine Gym "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy" - a modern revolutionary Peking opera. April 7&8 at Fairfax High School call CYC for info.	8 BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY. "Happy Birthday Buddha"
9	10 Amerasia Bookstore presents a film "OKINAWA" at the Inner City Cultural Center, 8pm only \$1.00. Go to it! Lenin's Birthday	11 Chinese invent the Cheeseburger 1379 a.d.	12 Chinese give the recipe to a Scotsman named MacDonald.	13	14 Sigma's Dance at....uh,uh....oh yeah...Blarney's	15 This is the very last day of the Storefront Tax Assistance Program
16	17	18 SBAI presents a symposium on ASIAN STUDIES and its relation to the community Call 324-2245 for further information.	19	20 Gardena Pioneer Project holds its regular meetings on this night (and every Thursday) at the Gardena Pioneer Center, 15350 S. Western Ave, Soul City.	21 Practice your marching technique for tomorrow.	22 NATIONAL MORATORIUM AGAINST THE WAR..... Asian Contingent to march in Los Angeles. Assemble: 10am at Bronson & Wilshire (nr. Crenshaw) March: 11am Wilshire Blvd. Rally: 1pm MacArthur Park.
23 Believe it or not... this is International "Get your shit together" week.	24	25	26 Hector Hiroyama attempts to swim to Japan from ELA but gets lost on the Harbor Freeway. 1964	27	28 This could be the most important day of your entire life....but it probably won't be.	29
30 Chinatown Community Services Day at Castelar Elementary School at 11 a.m. Open to the community.	This is the last day of April.....but don't worry cuz tomorrow is the first first day of May.	Second Wildest Rumor of the Month: Another Pancake Breakfast is coming.....!	Wildest Rumor of the Month: Cincip is coming.....!			CALENDAR ENTRIES Individuals, groups, etc. may submit notices of interest to the community by the third Tuesday of each month.....



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to grasp,
to control
the changing
of the
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