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Woman Shaping the World for Peace
A Feminist Analysis

Feminists have something essential to offer the discussion of how to achieve peace. Peace is not just the absence of war. It is not the absence of conflict. It is a conflict resolution strategy based on certain values and experience. In our culture, and many others, women have been raised with these values and experience. As a result, women are further along the road to peace habits. But women have also paid a price—often we have sacrificed our selves and our autonomy as part of our practice of peace habits. Feminist analysis of power is important for a balance to be found between personal autonomy and relationship to others. If we are to achieve peace, it will not be by continuing the sacrifice of women in the name of saving humanity from war but by empowering women as individuals and a group; by creating a new vision of human relationships to other humans and to the natural environment; relationships based on respect and cooperation rather than domination.

"It has become clear to us that resistance to war and the use of nuclear weapons is impossible without resistance to sexism, to racism, to imperialism and to violence as an everyday pervasive reality. There is a profound relationship between the fact that individual women are commonly attacked and beaten up and that a nuclear war threatens the entire world."

Piecing It Together: Feminism and Nonviolence
Feminism and Nonviolence Study Group, England

from Peace Habits article
Seneca Peace Camp

A new form of peacework by
women in this country was begun
with the establishment of the
Women's Encampment for a Future
of Peace and Justice, near the
Seneca Army Depot in upstate New
York. The opening celebration on
July 4 was the culmination of a
year of planning by an ever grow-
ing network of women in the North-
east. The network's nucleus was a
group of women from nearby Ithaca
that had been meeting to discuss
issues related to the arms race.
Some participated in the Women's
Pentagon Action in November 1981
and were inspired by the example
of women's peace camps in Europe,
especially the Greenham Common

During the week, the population
at the camp, which is located
averages 75-100 women,
while the weekends see a large
influx of visitors. The women
there are predominantly white,
young and middle class but there
are some older women, women from
other countries and women of color
present. Women are encouraged to
come for hours or weeks and to
"bring dreams, ideas, skills,
resources and creativity to make
the Encampment...a strong com-
unity."

There is also a steady flow of
visitors through the farm each day
as passersby stop to talk, or
just watch the day's activities.
They are encouraged to do so by
a sign near the road:"Hello, can
you stop for a talk?" Positive
relationships with the residents
of the area is a major concern of
the women at the camp. To this end
a local peace alliance is making
available a fact sheet about the
depot's employment situation -
particularly the tie between skill
level and residency details of
employees. According to my sister,
who spent a week there, the highly
skilled and high salaried jobs
at the base are filled by Army
employees from all over the
country. The jobs available for
local residents are predomin-
antly lower skill and wage posi-
tions.

This and other outreach activ-
ities have apparently had mixed
results thus far. Residents of the
area have stopped to leave bread
or mow lawns but others have jeered
and harassed the women, particu-
larly during their activities at
the base.

An often heard question at the
farm house is "But why all women?"
Some of the organizers believe that
women's socialization as mothers
and nurturers especially strengthen
our capacity for nonviolent action.
And many men in authority positions,
such as base personnel, perceive
women as nonviolent and are thus
less likely to use violence them-
selves.

By making the camp totally a
women's project, participants are
learning and using skills more
easily than they might in a mixed
situation. This includes carpentry,
land management, group planning,
fundraising and site maintenance.

Part of the camp's purpose is
also to make real now visions of
a more peaceful, healthy future.
This includes conscious support of
diversity and non-hierarchical
communication and decision making.
However the consensus process has
created problems, according to my
sister."They are trying to be
totally open with everybody that
walks onto the land.So a woman
there for one evening has the same
input as a woman who has been
there for weeks or longer."

The women at Seneca initially
planned, as the Greenham Common
women have done, to have no single
spokesperson in their dealing with
the media. But this has apparently
contributed to a lack of clear and
deliberate messages in the local
media. So in mid-July the women
were in the process of choosing
spokesperson.

Activities at the base are var-
ed. Personal creativity and sponta-
naneity are encouraged. And althou-
gh a large, planned civil disobedience
action was held on August 1, women
are encouraged to pursue whatever
each finds appropriate. This has
included planting a rose bush at
the depot entrance, and a three
day dry fast there by three Budd-
hist women.

Among the steady stream of vis-
itors, improvement projects on
the land, and actions at the depot
are interspersed a wide variety of
workshops and discussions. The
women-only environment provides an
unusual opportunity for women to
exchange ideas and create new
visions. Hopefully the experiences
and insights gained at the encamp-
ment will be expanded upon, across
the country, in the future.

Montana Women's Resource/3
W.I.N.D. Train Blockade
by Kim Calender

Three months later the WIND (Women Initiating Nuclear Disarmament) train blockade of May 22, 1983, is still alive in people's minds and present for comment in the letters to the editor.

I feel that we were successful in this anti-nuclear action. Large numbers of people heard of the action not only in this state but others as well. Not everyone agreed with what we did but they did think about the issue of nuclear arms and Burlington Northern's involvement. Many people were openly supportive of our action and congratulated us on our courage to take a direct stand against nuclear arms build-up.

New concepts are easily misinterpreted. We, as well as many others, are working to discover in ourselves, our relationships, community, state, nation and world what peace really means. We started with ourselves and made decisions based on group consensus. A serious disagreement came up at the last minute. We were able to come to a resolution by going around the circle of women and having everyone state their feelings with the help of a facilitator. I was amazed and felt a great sense of relief that we were able to do this in a short amount of time. We were able to resolve conflict on the personal level that was respectful of everyone. Once we learn how to do this, we can apply it to our means of governing, as well.

Our government has been ignoring the voice of the people concerning nuclear arms build-up. We passed an initiative to restrict the transport of nuclear material in our county. That vote has not been respected. We are claiming our power as individuals to challenge our government's actions. We need to be willing to take responsibility for making our government responsive to our needs.

Many people are coming together and building networks that empower the individual. We are learning new ways of working together and accomplishing change. Much of this is a direct result of the feminist movement's exploration of structure and its focus on the personal as political. Process is being examined. Acts of civil disobedience and non-violent action are methods of change where the process is the end goal. The two are very connected.

It is exciting to see and hear how quickly these ideas are spreading through our country and with people in other parts of the world.

A future women's anti-nuke action is being planned for September. If you would like to build a web of life around the "Romeo 29" missile or be part of a civil disobedience action, call Kim Calender at 728-7306, Missoula.
Letter written 3rd day in jail

Dear Craig,

I'm in jail—judge gave us fifteen days. So...sorry I won't make it to my reading. Can you reschedule? We need letters, poems. Send some.

It all happened so fast; in the courtroom the judge angry because we didn't obey her and pay our fine, handcuffed together, dragged off, stripped one by one, given a coverall for the week, brown rubber sandals, fingerprinted over and over. Ragdoll, be quiet.

Instead we sing, look them straight in the eye, displease because we ask questions: Ask: How are you? What are our rights? Thank you. Light in our eyes, smiles on our faces.

Locked doors behind us. Over and over. Slam-shut, keys jingle into the night, the doors continue to open-shut, the sounds of keys announce them.

We eat, sleep, murmur, eat, sleep, sing, clean the cell, bathe, read, shit in front of each other, eat, sleep, write, hug, sing, read to each other, listen to aggressive-angry-bitter women, share our healing power, sooth, comfort, eat, sleep. Time rolls by inanimate...one after the other, heavy chimes of the County Courthouse clock ring the hours, with only laughter to interrupt them.

Finally, we get to make one phone call, later see two people. Someone sends us flowers, we only get the card; prepare a party. We will dress in our white mattress slips for skirts, pale worn towels for tops, empty shampoo containers for bongs, hair brush against window grating for rhythm; dance, sing, and jump for life!

They are confused. How to treat us? They begin to talk to us, make friends; they trade politeness for hostility, smiles for stares, teasing, good nature. . . Respect. Respect is the basis for Peace.

With love,
Bettina

Puget Sound Women's Group

The women's encampment near the Seneca Army Depot in upstate New York is not the only women's peace camp operating this summer. On June 18 women established a peace camp near the Boeing production plant in Kent, Washington. With decreasing demand for civilian production the plant is focusing increasingly on defense contracts, including the Cruise missile, currently under construction.

According to one participant the primary concern of the group is to emphasize the connection between the harm from our military budget, the psychological harm of militarism and nuclear dependency, and other forms of violence in society, especially against women and other minorities.

This goal is achieved mostly through pamphlets, workshops and discussions. A series of pamphlets was created that link the various elements of this discussion together. The women are trying to reach as large an audience as possible. So their leafletting has included not only Boeing employees but also a Seattle pornography shop, the unemployment office there and the applied physics lab at the University of Washington. This lab does a variety of defense-related research. Workshops were planned throughout the summer to which all were welcomed. The women have also done some street theater and shown related films in Seattle. At the end of August no civil disobedience was planned, but the organizers did not rule it out as a possibility.

The camp's population averages twenty women each night with a total of 500 visitors expected over the summer. The women have received some harassment from Boeing employees and local residents, according to Carla, an organizer who lives in Kent. But as of mid-August it was not a crucial problem.

The mayor of Kent, a woman, supports the camp and her mail has mostly been supportive also. The land the women are camped on is leased from Kent and the lease was to expire September 9. But the group is searching for a new site.

Current information on the camp's status is available from NRC.

by Elizabeth Marshall

Montana Women's Resource/5
"Reweaving the Web of Life" gathers many voices from the feminism and nonviolence dialogue. They speak with hope, anger, faith and frustration of feminist nonviolence as a tool for encouraging social change and as a philosophy for defining new relations and behaviors.

The material, a total of 54 contributions, spans a wide range of formats, subjects, and perspectives among the contributors. Some of the experiences and backgrounds of the writers include Native American, Jewish, Black, white, lesbian, pacifist, Quaker, and Catholic.

Through analysis, personal and historical episodes, poetry and fiction, many aspects of this broad topic are discussed.

As part of an introduction, the attempts to create a shared working definition of feminist nonviolence is one thread that ties many of these pieces together. That this foundation is still being created speaks of a relative newness of this discussion in the women's community at large. Whatever the particular definition, most contributors agree that nonviolence has potential strength and vitality, in strong contrast to the docile passivity often associated with it. The nonviolence discussed in these women's visions is closer to satyagraha, Gandhi's concept of active commitment to the force of truth.

The connection between patriarchy and violence is examined at length. While some contributors believe that women are automatically capable of creating a better world, others criticize this assumption. But it is agreed that this and other cultures define "successful" masculine behavior as aggressive competition that dominates other people and the planet unfairly. At the same time "female" behavior of sensitivity, cooperation, and flexibility are devalued.

The results of one behavior pattern prevailing over another is connected, in the minds of many contributors, with the physical and economic violence against women and other minorities and abuse of the planet's resources and nuclearism.

There is much history in this anthology from the Black liberation, women's liberation and peace movements. It is clear that each movement has spilled over frustrations and inspirations into the others for at least a century. While some women in the nineteenth century emphasized only women's rights, others also connected sexual oppression with racial oppression and their relation to militarism.

There is a stirring account of Ida Wells' work for the end of lynching in this century, and the double barriers she encountered as a Black woman. There is some discussion of the frequent lack of cooperation between some early suffragettes and abolitionists.

The connections between these three concerns was highlighted again when the Civil Rights movement propelled the '60s into a decade of activism. There was a ripple effect as white female participants in voter registration drives left to work elsewhere as the Black community strengthened. Many moved into anti-war work. But sexism was a problem in most early anti-war groups which caused many disgruntled women to leave and form their own activist groups. From there it was a small step to the re-birth of the women's movement. This history will be especially fascinating for women to whom the '60s are more history than personal experience.

Other topics discussed include Gandhi, utopian visions, and self-defense in light of both feminist and nonviolence concerns.

But an understanding of violence and visions for the future are not complete without more detailed exploration of the economic roots of physical and other forms of violence, especially as they affect People of Color. This is one section of the book with many thoughts that deserve further exploration although there are some contributions from Native American and Black women. Alice Walker poignantly explores how Black anger can spawn hope for an end to all whites, through any means. But any such event would also touch her own people.

Her's and other's message is that there's gotta be a way'. Hopefully this is just the first of many discussions that will make deeper, more inspiring connections among women, drawing us into determined and hopeful action.
Peace Habits

1. Acknowledge conflict as part of human experience
   - develop nonviolent conflict resolution strategies

2. Decrease otherness
   - negotiating differences
   - resisting polarization
   - acknowledging areas of commonality
   - maintaining diversity: creating relationships with variety of groups, placing self in various environments, develop awareness of different cultures, etc., develop personal bonds with members of other groups.

3. Reduce threat
   - meeting survival needs
   - reducing aggressive language, behavior, etc.
   - promoting self defense

4. Encourage empowerment experiences
   - developing survival skills
   - developing assertive communication skills
   - developing alternative leadership/followership models
   - promoting cooperation and shared responsibility in decision-making
   - teaching win/win strategies for conflict resolution
   - changing achievement motivation to "doing the best I can" rather than "doing better than someone else"

5. Extend the morality of care
   - providing educational experiences that develop morality of care

6. Negotiate conflict on the basis of respect
   - analyze own part in conflict
   - analyze own power in situation

7. Relate to others on basis of strengths rather than weaknesses

8. Involve men in childraising

(This list was developed in the "Feminism and Peace" course, Winter, 1983, Women's Resource Center, Missoula Montana)

WOMEN'S PLACE

to volunteer to help women in crisis. Working with women in collective setting, on feminist issues and communication skills. A comprehensive training for new volunteers starts in October. Call Deirdre or Darcy before Sept. 27 for more info. 543-7606

New Location!
127 E. Main, Rm. 218
Missoula, Montana 59802
Office Hours: 9-3 Mon.-Fri.

24 Hour Crisis Line
543-7606
Peace Habits
by Judy Smith, Sheila Smith and Leslie Burgess

This article arises from discussions in a women's studies course entitled "Feminism and Peace." We explored the definitions of feminism, peace, war, violence, conflict, etc. and the roles of each in our society. We asked the questions: "Is peace possible?" and "What individual and institutional changes need to be made in order to lead to peaceful, feminist futures?"

Our society is one with war habits. We tend to think in sides, identify ourselves with groups opposed to other groups. Violence is a fact of life in our society, and many of us have violent habits.

Developing peace habits is essential to developing a peaceful society. We each need to become aware of what our present habits are, to work toward changing the ones that are not conducive to a new peaceful society and to develop new behaviors and practice them until they become our natural habits. We will then carry them with us into our personal relationships, to our jobs, our political and social work and to the institutions that we come in contact with.

DECREASING OTHERNESS

Our culture and in fact, all of western culture, perceives the world dualistically. We tend to define everything in terms of contrasts. We emphasize distinctions rather than similarities. It is always what is different that grabs our attention and holds it. Thus, the endless research on female and male differences. This focus on dissimilarity is not by itself deleterious; however, when it is combined with an ethno- or androcentric value system, the dissimilarities are paired with judgments of "good" and "bad".

Our society categorizes, segregates and discriminates on every social level and in every institution, beginning in the family. We've been socialized to see people of different races, cultures, religions, political persuasions, and sexual preferences as primarily different rather than basically similar. Again, difference is equal to "other", which is usually perceived as "bad".

We have learned this type of reaction and we can replace it with a different response. In order to decrease the kind of polarization that results from "otherness", we must cultivate new behaviors.

Diversity is acceptable. We must recognize that we do have different experiences, perspectives, lifestyles, than others, and we need to learn to see this as acceptable. We can learn to appreciate the richness and diversity of the human race, and that we cannot attach our value systems to what we do not understand.

Define areas of commonality. We must realize the basic humanness of ourselves and others. Even if we can never understand certain experiences, or agree with particular philosophies, we do not need to relegate those persons to the status of object.

Peaceful negotiation. We must use peaceful negotiation to resolve our differences. We cannot assume a situation is hopeless, but must take steps to further open and assertive communication. We must work to resolve conflict by peaceful means: analyzing the problem, deciding what resolution we want to see, negotiating compromises, seeking positive alternatives for conflict.

Decreasing sex role polarization. We cannot prescribe sex roles for individuals without creating a barrier between women and men. It is because men see women as "other" that they inflict violence on us with such regularity and brutality. Surely no one can say peace is possible as long as women and female children are being victimized by individuals and institutions.

We can learn to allow and accept "other", that is, to cultivate new responses to differences. We can learn to find differences intriguing or interesting, rather than threatening. We can exchange ideas freely between cultures and recognize our commonalities. We can make a commitment to resolve conflict, we can resist polarization by refusing to allow all of our identity to be swallowed up around the issue.

REDUCING THREAT

Almost all of our nonpeaceful actions are done in reaction to a perceived or a real threat to our existence. If we are to reduce threat, everyone's needs must be met. This includes material needs for survival, as well as safety and security needs. We need to recognize and remedy the violence of
poverty and starvation. We need to be assured of a clean environment, one free from all threats of violence against us, whether they are personal or institutional, whether they are directed at us as individuals or as a nation.

Individual steps are crucial to achieving global peace. It is necessary that we learn new responses for handling our fear, anger and conflicts. We can implement new responses by first analyzing our current behaviors, educating ourselves on other options, and practicing these "peace habits" until they become a useful part of our repertoire of behaviors. We can learn to protect ourselves while learning to treat others in a respectful and peaceful manner. We need to recognize how many of our needs are created by our knowledge of and access to technology. The "back-to-the-land" movement has happened as a result of people becoming aware of false needs created by technology.

EXTENDING THE MORALITY OF CARE

Women define morality as responsibility in relationships, while men define morality in terms of individual rights to noninterference. For a woman, a moral choice would be one that takes into consideration responsibility for others as well as the needs of the self.

One way to extend the morality of care to men is to involve them fully in childrearing. Involving men in caretaking responsibility for children would teach males the skills of caring for dependents, provide role models of nurturing males to children, allow fathers the opportunity to redefine their existence in terms of relationships to others, and remove women from the sole position of "other" in definition of self.

CONCLUSION

At this point it should be clear that we are not suggesting women have a "natural" proclivity for peace, but rather that women have cultivated some particular skills which we see as related to peace. And further, we see that the feminist movement is basic to any peace movement. Without achieving feminist goals we can come no closer to achieving real peace.

In a world where patriarchy asserts itself as capitalism, imperialism, and in institutionalized violence against minorities, women and children, we will not have peace. The basis of all of these systems of power is violence—of poverty, of the police and military, of rape, battering and incest. If we are to do away with hierarchy and domination in our international relations, we must learn to practice peace habits at home as well as abroad.

No where have we stated achieving a feminist (peaceful) world would be easy. We must continually examine ourselves, our relationships, our social structures. We can never achieve a world without conflict, but we can recognize a world where conflict is resolved by peaceful means, and where every life is valued. The future of humankind, and perhaps of our planet, depends on creating a new set of relationships as the basis of our existence. We believe that women, that feminists in particular, will be the ones to implement peace. Peace is women's work.

This is an excerpt from an article which may be obtained from the Women's Resource Center
Want to Read More?

These books and organizations might interest you. We tried to limit the list to books by and about women but a few others are also listed due to their relevancy.

(* available at WRC)
John J. Berger, Nuclear Power: The Unenviable Option; Ramparts Press, 1976
(Palo Alto, CA 94303)
Rachel Carson, Silent Spring; Fawcett Books, N.Y. 1962
Virginia Cooper et. al., Resource Manual for a Living Revolution; New Society Press; Philadelphia, PA
*Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism; Beacon Press, Boston, MA 1978
Barbara Deming, We Cannot Live Without Our Lives; Grossman Publishers, 1974
*Andrea Dworkin, Pornography: Men Possessing Women; The Women's Press 1981
*Emma Goldman, Living My Life; Dover Publications, 1971
Anna Gyorgy and friends, No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power; South End Press, Boston, MA
William Leiss, The Domination of Nature; Beacon Press, Boston, MA 1974
*Feminism & Nonviolence Study Group, Piecing it Together: Feminism & Nonviolence; Calvert's Press, England 1982

ORGANIZATIONS
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1213 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19107
American Friends Service Committee - Women's Network - 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102
United Indian Women
113 NE Thompson, Portland, OR 97212
WARN (Women of All Red Nations)
P.O. Box 2508, Rapid City, S.D. 57709

Tomorrow Within
among the mountains,
i follow my shadow
weaving into the
cold July night.
into the energy
barraging
of fast cars, snapping neon lights
(who reads them at 4 AM anyway?).
i carry within
the seeds
of my own destruction
as of my own formation.
as do my sisters and brothers
as do we all as a people.
if we have not tipped the balance
too far.

by Elizabeth Marshall

Her
I've said it to myself many times:
she feeds on me, she grows in my cracks.
However, I don't feel her, I hear nothing.
Yet she continues
petulant and dark
circling round in my world
until she reaches the place
where no one has yet begun.

Juana Melendez de Espinoza
translated by Bettina Escudero
Rivers run through me
mountains bore into my body
and the geography of this world
begins forming in me
turning me into lakes, chasms, ravines
it is opening me like a furrow
filling me with longing to live
to see it free, beautiful,
full of smiles.

I want to explode with love
and let my guts finish with the oppressors
to sing with voices bursting my pores
and let my song be contagious;
let's all get sick with love,
with longings for justice,
let's all brandish our heart
never fearing it will burst
for a heart as large as ours
resists the cruelest tortures
and nothing placates its devastating love
which grows
beat by beat
stronger,
stronger,
stronger,
deafening the enemy
who hears it break through the walls
sees it shine in every eye
sees it coming closer
with the force of a great tide
in every morning when the people arise
to work on lands that don't belong to them,
in every wail of parents who have lost children,
in every hand that joins with other hands.

by Gioconda Belli
translation: Bettina Escudero
Women in Latin America
by Bettina Escudero

When the Spanish arrived in Mexico, the Aztec culture had a myth that a white, blonde god would someday arrive--when Cortez reached the shores of Veracruz in Mexico, the Indians greeted the Spanish as gods. There was no resistance. But the Spaniards didn't act godly. They enslaved the people and raped the women. In little over a century, the Indians of the entire continent had been decimated.

The story of the dichotomy of the Latin American woman begins here. The Spaniards raped the Indian women and as time went by, the children of these women and Spanish men, these mixed bloods, the "mestizos" grew in a world of mothers and children, the Spanish men coming only to use their mothers, the Indian men enslaved in the mines. And from here stems the bitterness towards women. You love her and yet she is plundered by what you hate. Women in Central and Latin America are everything to a man, while at the same time are the object of his deepest scorn and bitterness.

Women's involvement in the revolution is a result, in the first place, of their class condition. If you are a peasant or lower class woman, you work from sun-up till way past sundown, taking care of your children, and most likely providing a meager income.

Women in revolutionary struggles like Nicaragua and El Salvador reveal their commitment to integrate their own liberation movement with the more general struggle of people fighting against oppression.

Let me quote Dora Maria Tellez, a commander of the Sandinista army. Before the revolution she was a medical intern. From a story about the first child she brought into the world:

"The next step is to break the material bond which has united the child to its mother for nine months.

I cut. A stronger bond remains, the bond of love which is difficult, if not impossible to cut.

... Will his body survive? And what about his hopes? Have I completed my mission by aiding his birth?

I must say NO. Our work will be done when we can give these young ones a new world, a different world.

I must be committed to the birth of that new world, which like every delivery will be painful and at the same time joyous."

Women in Central America restate again and again that the option of women's liberation separate from the Revolution is not a reality. Latin American women understand that their liberation from oppression and poverty cannot come until their own countries are freed from the oppression of United States' transnational corporations.

We want them to conform to our image of peace. What is our image of Peace? "Peace is our Profession", says a huge sign outside Malstrom Air Force Base at Great Falls. Do we really believe we can achieve peace through military might and force? Or is subjugation by force only intimidation?

Benito Juarez, the Mexican President that was in office concurrently with Abraham Lincoln, said, "respect for another's rights and freedom, that is peace."

Do we have the strength as a nation to show respect?

This article is excerpted from a talk by Bettina Escudero on KUFM on July 14, 1983 for Central America, the Montana Connection.

To contact "Montanans for Peace in El Salvador" call:
Suzanne Aborefadl 549-0392
Michael Kreisberg 721-4757.
Missoula Women for Peace
by Flo Chessin

In the early 1960's a group called Missoula Peace Group formed (composed of women and men) when our country and the Soviet Union were testing nuclear weapons in the atmosphere. Among other activities we put on an exhibition of the pictures and artifacts from our nuclear bombing of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These were displayed in a store on East Main street in downtown Missoula for a period of two weeks. The mayor of Missoula, Mr. Waldbillig cut the ribbon for the opening ceremonies.

The group was unable to continue when half or more members moved away to new jobs the following year.

In 1977 or 78 Women Strike for Peace in Missoula formed to help inform high school students who were being recruited by the military but not given information on their rights and options concerning the draft. We were able to get conscientious objectors rights and information displays in the school libraries. The draft was threatening the lives and future of young men from 18 years to 26 years of age.

Missoula Women for Peace began in January of 1970. We actively opposed the Vietnam War, educating ourselves about the war and its history. We spoke with and wrote letters to our senators and congressmen emphasizing our opposition to the Vietnam War, specifically the bombings and the draft.

Our group sponsored speakers for public meetings and showings (TV too) of films like War Without Winners and Hearts and Minds. Fundraising parties provided the money for our group activities including support for "Peace" candidates. We also contributed to other organizations which were actually working for peace and an end to the Vietnam War.

We visited with our senators and congressmen here in Missoula once or twice a year to discuss our views on the military budget and issues related to our concerns for peace in addition to writing them on specific legislation.

Once the war ended our members dwindled but we maintained a core group of 15 to 20 women. The need for activism continues to this day.

Almost as soon as President Reagan came into office, his rhetoric and actions caused great consternation and our membership burgeoned again. We attracted many young, alert active women (and a couple of men). Necessitating our group to start an evening session as well. It was a very active and professional group but disbanded last winter. We hope to revive it this fall of 1983. Two years ago we became a branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

We welcome all who are interested in learning more about the Peace Movement and who would like to know what they can do to further the cause of Peace.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 10am at the University Congregational Church, 401 University Avenue.

For more information about Missoula Women for Peace call Flo at 549-9408. If you are interested in night meetings, call Jenny at 549-0659.
"One Struggle ... Many Fronts" was the theme of the 5th annual conference of the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCASA), July 27-30 in Minneapolis, MN. I attended the conference as a representative of the Montana Incest Prevention Coalition and the Women's Resource Center, along with approximately 600 others representing organizations such as rape crisis or battered women's shelters from more than 30 states.

The National Coalition Against Sexual Assault was formed in 1978 to ensure the continued provision of quality services to sexual assault victims through public education and information sharing. NCASA members represent 47 states and serve the victims of all types of sexual abuse, including rape, acquaintance rape, child sexual assault, incest and battering.

Artist and writer Beverly Smith spoke Thursday morning to kick off the conference on "Violence: The Veiling of the Human Spirit". She stated that violence and oppression cannot be separated, that violence against women and against other minority groups are acts of terrorism. She blamed the existence of such violence on our adherence to hierarchical systems, in which some people are seen as more valuable and more important; our tendency to view differences from the ruling class as inferiorities; and our measurement of human beings by what we can produce. She pointed out that people die from racism, sexism, capitalism and homophobia.

"Our society is not built on a human scale," she said. "People are seen as objects to be exploited and controlled. Fighting racism and sexism is not just a matter of unenlightened attitudes. It is endemic, widespread and condoned--it is rooted in the structure of our society. It is not just a little flaw. Society must be changed.

According to Smith, there are two necessary things to be able to continue our political work: 1) we must have an analysis of the issues, and feminism provides that coherent and comprehensive analysis; and 2) we must have people to work with, to support us and to help us accom-
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Available soon at the Women's Resource Center (or by mail)—
1984 Western Herstory engagement calendar featuring 53 new stories
about historical and contemporary women of the Western United
States: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana,
Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. They
make great Christmas gifts!

Mammyth Bakery Cafe
We have fresh quiches, sweet cinnamon rolls,
cold fruit smoothies, salads, fresh bagels, and
bread, brownies, soups, hot coffee and herb teas,
two-handed sandwiches, fresh-squeezed
lemonade, and more, and more, and more.....
that we make ourselves each day!
Come join us every Friday for Mexican Night
(a different special each week!)
5:30 - 9 p.m. 131 W. Main St.

Montana Women's Resource/15
### Fall Schedule

--- **Assertiveness Training for Women.** Learn to communicate more effectively and feel better about your interactions with others. Instructors: Susan Nose, Sheila Smith. Cost: $30 (barter option). Length: 7 weeks. Call the Women's Resource Center for further info.

--- **Journal Keeping for Personal Growth.** Designed for women with previous experience in groups emphasizing personal change, (assertiveness training, career workshops, etc.). Facilitator: Leslie Burgess; MFA in Creative Writing. Starts second week of October. Length: 6 weeks. Cost: $30 (barter option). WRC, 243-4153. Will meet at WRC.

--- **October 22: World Solidarity for Nuclear Disarmament Day.** At the capital grounds, Helena. Sponsored by Montana Citizens to End the Arms Race, and others. To focus attention on the Cruise and Pershing missiles. Local and international speakers including women. For further details: 586-3568.

--- **October 29: Reproductive Freedom Celebration Day,** in Missoula. Speakers and music are planned. WRC for more details.

--- **November 9:** The Women's West. A one woman show about the history of women in the West. Performed by Susan Schmidt. At the University in Missoula. WRC for more info.

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The Montana Women's Resource
Women's Resource Center
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

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