

# HER SAY NEWS SERVICE

## 30,000 Native American women sterilized

The mass sterilization of Native American women is continuing with the approval of the Federal government.

A 1976 General Accounting Office report revealed nearly 30,000 Native American women had been sterilized, many without their consent.

Now, Lehman Brightman, a spokesperson for the United Native Americans, is charging that despite 1976 publicity, little has changed at hospitals operated on reservations funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and that the mass sterilization of women has not been halted.

Brightman is calling on President Carter to launch an immediate investigation into the alleged sterilizations.

## One-fourth approve beatings

A researcher into family violence says that about one-fourth of the American population believes that it's all right for a person to hit his or her spouse. Dr. Suzanne Steinmetz of the University of Delaware says that

violence within the family is reaching epidemic proportions in the United States.

Steinmetz reports that one national poll found that at least one violent episode occurred in one out of six intact families within a one-year period. Seven percent of the women in the poll were reportedly beaten "to the point that they needed medical attention."

According to Steinmetz, family violence triggers future violence because other surveys have found that children who witness spousal abuse or who are abused themselves are twice as likely to grow up believing that violence is an acceptable way to solve family problems.

## Luckily, his cab wasn't hurt!

A San Francisco cabbie who was fired from her job after being raped on the job by a fare she picked up has been rehired. The taxi driver, Rosemary Belson, was originally fired by the Falcon Cab Company so that she could find safer employment. The owner of Falcon said he wouldn't rehire Belson because, "I can't afford to take any chances. I'm lucky the cab wasn't hurt."

When Belson, however, charged her dismissal was discriminatory, and threatened to take her case to the U.S.

Employment Opportunities Commission, the owners agreed to "give her a second chance."

## Illnesses increase from herbicide Thanks, Dow!

A physician from a rural northern California clinic has told a Congressional hearing that illnesses at his clinic more than tripled after the area was sprayed with the toxic herbicide 2,4,5-T. These illnesses, he said, led to increased miscarriages and birth defects among the offspring of his patients.

Doctor Irving Tessler told the House Subcommittee on Oversight he screened patients at a Redway, California, clinic two weeks before and two weeks after the aerial spraying of the herbicide 2,4,5-T. In the weeks following the spraying, Doctor Tessler said, there were three times as many complaints of stomach disorders, bladder infections, uterine bleeding, and general "malaise." Tessler said he believed all these symptoms were caused by the spraying of the herbicide 2,4,5-T.

2,4,5-T contains a chemical called dioxin, which is a powerful cancer-causer. The herbicide was banned for aerial spraying on the forests by the Environmental Protection Agency last March because it was suspected of causing high numbers of miscarriages among women in Alsea, Oregon.

## Women's groups passed up on grants

Women and girls don't get a very big share of community foundation grants.

That's according to a newly-released study by a group called Women and Foundations, Corporate Philanthropy, or WAF/CP. WAF/CP studied 10 community foundations and what they did with their give away money last year. Of the ten, the community foundation most generous to women with its unrestricted funds, handed out only 11.9 percent to programs aiding women or girls. The other foundations have proportionally less.

Three community foundations had restricted funds which were earmarked by their donors to be spent specifically for aid to women and girls. WAF/CP says, however, that significant portions of even these funds were given away to general purpose organizations, rather than to groups specifically serving females.

One of the three foundations, WAF/CP said, left a chunk of money allotted for women and girls programs unspent.

WAF/CP says it plans to do a lot more checking up on what foundations are doing with their money, and to lobby for more foundations support for women.

# REVIEWS

—By Mitsi Palmertree

WOMEN WORKING—An Anthology of Stories and Poems

By Nancy Hoffman and Florence Howe  
Illustrated by Ann Toulmin-Rothe  
Published by The Feminist Press in coordination with McGraw Hill  
271 pgs. \$5.95

In this anthology Nancy Hoffman and Florence Howe have chosen 34 short stories and poems that provide glimpses from the past two centuries of women at work. From the joyless toil of a bond girl in 1753 to the more satisfying endeavors of a typist in contemporary society this volume covers a wide range of women's work including the unpaid ventures such as student, artist, social activist, housewife and mother. Indeed, over half of the anthology deals with tasks women have been performing for centuries without pay. Women have always worked in one way or another and this volume of stories and poems is an attempt to balance out the inadequate picture literature so far contains, of women at work.

The editors and their friends searched over a year for the material that compiles this book. The result of their search has produced a very fine, powerful collection of fiction that has

been arranged into four sections—oppressive work, satisfying work, family work, and transforming work. An introduction by Hoffman and Howe is included before each section, that raise questions such as, "Is being a housewife work?" and "Is there such a thing as a happy worker?" All 34 selections have a biographical sketch of difficult-to-find information for each author. The authors included range from unknown writers buried in the past to well known artists such as Nikki Giovanni, Marge Piercy, and Willa Cather. Also, pictures of the authors and original artwork are included.

It seems in their efforts to compile WOMEN WORKING that Howe and Hoffman have managed to fill several needs at once. Not only have they managed to put together a volume that successfully, and realistically, pictures women at work, but they have also assembled a socially revealing women's history, restored many lost women writers to American literature, raised relevant questions concerning women's work, and finally, they have put together a treasurable collection of fiction. WOMEN WORKING should greatly enhance what has been American literature's picture of women at work.

GIVE ME YOUR GOOD EAR

by Maureen Brady  
Pub. by Spinsters Ink  
141 pgs. \$4.50

"There are some things I need to tell you...if only you'd lend me your good ear." And Maureen Brady does have something to tell in her moving portrayal of a young woman trying to come to terms with both her past and her mother. Ms. Brady's need to tell this story was so great, she helped establish the small press, Spinsters Ink, in order to make sure she was heard.

A simply told, but powerfully narrative, GIVE ME YOUR GOOD EAR takes its name from the coincidence that the main character, Francis Kelly, her mother, and her grandmother all had a hearing defect in one of their ears. The story is set in modern day New York City, and in a small town of Francis's childhood. Francis is a strong woman, who is trying to find independence in today's patriarchal society. But Francis must first shrug off her own mother's restricting philosophy, "You might as well make the best of it, mother always said, it being whatever life circumstances you found yourself

stuck with. She spent almost all her life trying to live that statement, and I, being an eager acheiver, took this education much too seriously." But her struggle for independence does not die, as Francis tries to separate the contents of her mother's life from her own, and to unravel the threads of this harmful education.

GIVE ME YOUR GOOD EAR touches upon many of the conflicts that face women today, especially for the woman who is trying to break free from traditional roles. It is a book that has hit upon one of the main reasons society finds these roles necessary, and explains, in simple terms, why parents tend to condition, if unconsciously, their children for these roles. GIVE ME YOUR GOOD EAR gets at the roots of female problems and readers of Marge Piercy (Small Changes) will especially enjoy Ms. Brady's new book.

Although this is the author's first novel, she has also written several stories that have appeared in CONDITIONS and in SINISTER WISDOM. Maureen Brady is now living in upstate New York, and besides being a writer and publisher, she is also a practicing physical therapist.