

SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE

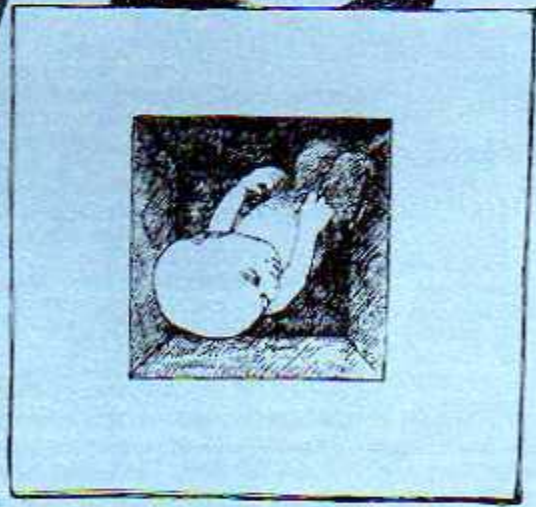
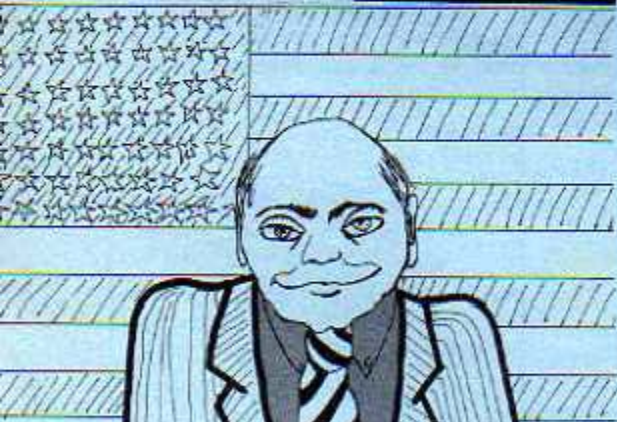
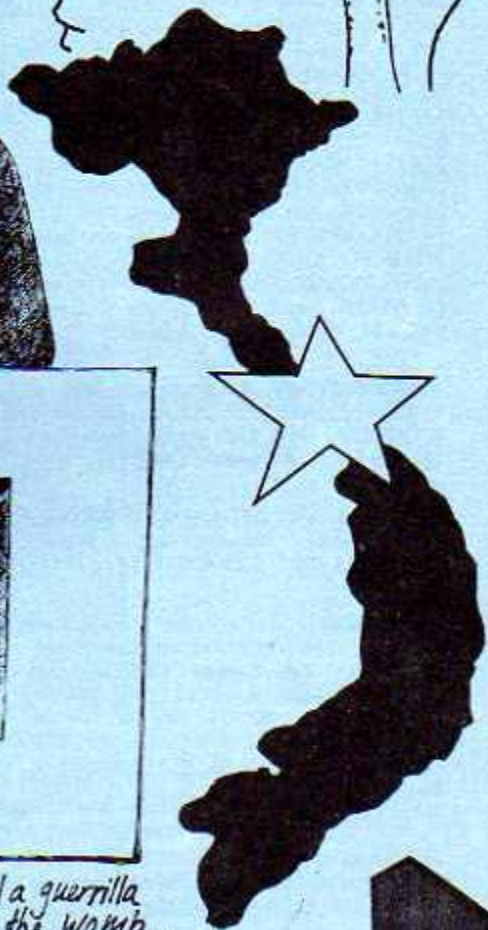
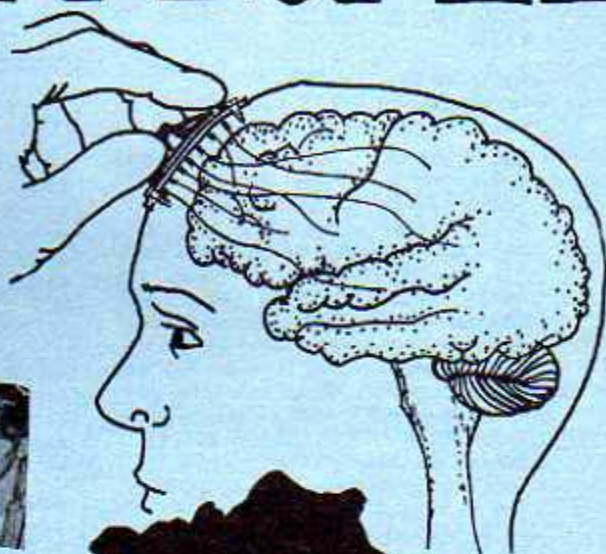
From Vietnam to DNA: SftP 1969-1979

Book Review: For Her Own Good

Advent: A Community Struggle

AAAS and Argentina

Regional Conferences



*"It's easier to kill a guerrilla
in the womb
than in the mountains."
Che Guevara*



CHAPTERS AND CONTACTS

Science for the People is an organization of people involved or interested in science and technology-related issues, whose activities are directed at: 1) exposing the class control of science and technology, 2) organizing campaigns which criticize, challenge and propose alternatives to the present uses of science and technology, and 3) developing a political strategy by which people in the technical strata can ally with other progressive forces in society. SftP opposes the ideologies of sexism, racism, elitism and their practice, and holds an anti-imperialist world-view. Membership in SftP is defined as subscribing to the magazine and/or actively participating in local SftP activities.

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Science for the People

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about this issue

In this issue we present two firsthand accounts of the struggle of a group of residents in a working-class area of Cambridge to halt the pollution of their air with styrene, an unpleasantly pungent and hazardous chemical emitted by a nearby factory. Several members of Boston SftP have been directly involved and were able to provide scientific support. We feel that this involvement has been important for SftP because it gave us a chance to learn a lot about community concerns, organizing, and making and changing strategies. We also confronted our own racism and elitism, while at the same time were able to put some of our technical skills to good use. Furthermore, we built or strengthened ties to community organizations where they were previously weak or nonexistent.

The struggle itself — like many of its kind, for example, that around the construction of the MASCO power plant in Boston (see *SftP*, Vol. 9, No. 2) — is important not just for its short-term specific goal, but also because it reveals that acute problems of daily life are the direct result of a system built on production for profit not people.

What is the direction of US contraception research? Who carries out such research and who makes policy decisions? In the testimony of Judy Norsigian as presented at Congressional hearings, she raises this and other important questions. These are significant inquiries. We feel, however, that the links between the medical establishment, the drug companies and the government need further elucidation so as to expose the true orientation of medical research and its applications. This orientation is quite apparent in present contraception research, which is based on a medical model geared to providing technological services to individuals, when in fact birth control and the population “problem” are essentially social issues.

While we agree with the author that concentrating on barrier methods may represent science in the interests of the people (at least, in the particular case of contraception research), we are skeptical of the strategies suggested here for turning around the direction of US science. In particular, we have little faith in verbal persuasion and logical argument when it comes to congressional committees, and are too aware of the cooptive power of federal funding. A better strategy, we feel, would rely on organizing the people to demand

change. This latter strategy has been a major concern of the women’s health movement, which has been an important force in organizing women to bring about change.

The article, “Science for the People: A Ten Year Retrospective,” marks the 10th anniversary of SftP. Given the rapidly changing political climate in the US today, it is an appropriate time to reassess where SftP has been and where we are headed.

The article highlights major activities of SftP over the past 10 years, without attempting to be comprehensive. It also begins to answer the question: “Why has SftP succeeded, or at least survived, as long as it has?” A more complete answer to this question would be of interest to a much broader audience than just SftP members, since there are many valuable political lessons to be learned from an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of our past political practice. We also need to examine the important role that our critique of science and technology under capitalism has played both in attracting people to the organization and in educating the general public.

We hope that the appearance of this article will stimulate a fuller discussion of the history of SftP. We need to learn from our past so that we can achieve a better understanding of where we are at now, and become even more effective over the next ten years.

The piece by Carlos Pereyra is a response to the report of Emilio Daddario, president of the AAAS, on his Dec. 1977 fact-finding trip to Argentina to investigate repression of the scientific community. Daddario’s article glosses over very real problems. Pereyra sent his letter to *Science* to present aspects of the situation in Argentina that Daddario ignored or rather gave little credence to; it was not published. This episode reveals the hypocrisy of *Science*, in one breath both proclaiming support for human rights and covering up violations against one segment of the population that holds different political views. The repression of scientists and intellectuals in Argentina has been well documented (see *SftP*, July/August 1977). This cover-up is consistent with the US government’s policy of espousing the importance of human rights while at the same time shoring up oppressive governments. We question why *Science* is contributing to the cover-up by denying that any violations of human rights exist. Perhaps we already know. □



letters

WHICH WAY TO GO?

Dear SftP:

A common complaint against *Science for the People* is one I am going to again voice in this letter: Where are its politics? The September/October issue on "Nuclear Power: The People's Reaction" is a fine case in point. There was no political theory or serious political analysis in the entire issue. While the issue was fairly decent radical journalism, nowhere was there anything more than lip service to "class struggle" and, certainly, there was no serious political analysis. In other words, one aspect of "people", the political, was ignored.

In addition, science was ignored. While the imagination can stretch and see issues of technology as a tool of profit in this issue, it was really not science or technology, but industry that was the focal point of the articles.

I believe this represents an unhealthy trend of *Science for the People*. In an attempt to distill science and technology and discuss their impact on society within the framework of a more-or-less Marxian thought, it has lost sight of both the science and the thought.

In addition, there is a need among scientists to examine their own work within a political framework, but also within a forum that is appropriate for those with a greater degree of factual knowledge than the average citizen or comrade. For those who cry "elitism," I

can only point to the People's Republic of China, which is returning to a system where it is recognized that "experts" must be able to share ideas among themselves if scientific advance is to proceed, both theoretically and in terms of social and political relevance.

What is really needed are two journals: *Science for the People* (that includes science and people) and perhaps something called the *Journal of Radical Science*(???). In the immediate future, *Science for the People* must decide which way it wants to go.

A second issue: I recently received a letter from the Ann Arbor Science for the People chapter requesting support for the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua. In the past, I've also received a similar request for support for the Zimbabwe Nationalist Union. This brings up a moral dilemma. On the one hand, both groups are Marxist in orientation and are attempting to overthrow oppressive, capitalist regimes. On the other hand, both groups utilize acts of violence to achieve their aims, at least in part.

Personally, I am a pacifist, and I could not, in good conscience, support either group financially, although I empathize with their struggles. More importantly, I feel that *Science for the People* must decide for itself, as a national organization, whether or not it will support these and similar revolutionary groups. My feeling is that any support of groups advocating or participating in armed struggle will lead to a major loss of *Science for the People's* potential power base, and will minimize *Science for the People's* attempts to raise the people's scientific and political consciousness. I hope to see more debate on this point.

Peace,
Ken Solomon
Richmond, VA

RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

Dear SftP,

We use many of the articles in SftP for a monthly bulletin board that we prepare for the community pharmacy here. We also use material for our weekly radio show and just generally find SftP well-researched and well-written. Certainly helps make our job easier. Smash capitalism. Health care for people, not profit.

In Health,
Mifflin Community Health Ctr. Staff
Madison, Wisconsin

HELPING PEOPLE'S RADIO

Dear SftP,

Your work is absolutely invaluable to Pacifica's science news programming. *Science for the People* has performed a crucial historical function in the US for several years, demystifying science and politicizing the scientific process. KPFA's science public affairs series "Science Story" won the highest award in broadcasting, the Peabody Award, this year. Many of the facts and perspectives presented in the series were gleaned from your publication. The Peabody Committee congratulated KPFA for its irreverence in its treatment of science — an irreverence it found refreshing in a society increasingly dominated by scientific priorities placed in a capitalistic context.

—Laurie Garrett
Science Editor
KPFA News
Berkeley, California

COMMON AIR, COMMON GROUND:

Cambridgeport Residents

vs.

Advent Corporation

by *Linda McPhee*

It's six a.m. in Cambridgeport, an integrated, basically blue-collar neighborhood in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In the row of triple deckers on Brookline Street, Gwen Woods and her neighbors awaken simultaneously. At that tender hour, Advent Corporation's Emily Street plant is already venting styrene fumes into the homes of its neighbors.

Styrene (vinyl benzene) has a remarkably pungent odor, detectable when diluted to fewer than ten parts per million. It is the odor most people identify as "like plastic" or "like fiberglass". It irritates the skin, eyes, throat and lungs, and induces nausea. It is linked to blood disorders and liver damage, and is a suspected carcinogen. On Brookline Street people inhale its fumes sixteen hours per day, six days a week.

Advent manufactures stereo components, but the product that recently netted them national publicity (on the cover of *Time* magazine) is the Video Beam television, a luxury item which projects television images onto four-by-six foot screens. The styrene fumes Cambridgeport is so painfully familiar with are by-products of television screen manufacture in the Emily Street plant.

Fumes were deliberately vented to the outside of the plant in response to worker complaints to OSHA, the federal agency whose jurisdiction includes safety in the workplace. Once beyond factory property, however,

OSHA can enforce no measures to bring relief to residents.

Gwen Woods lives only a few yards from the Emily Street plant. Since 1976, when the fans were installed, she has learned more about styrene than she ever cared to know. She knows, for instance, that styrene is a suspected carcinogen, that styrene oxide is a proven carcinogen, and that public health officials in Rutherford, New Jersey are suggesting a connection between this chemical and over thirty cancer cases identified in an area surrounding a factory there. Like all her neighbors, she knows what it is like to live with a pervasive, constant stink.

The Committee on Advent

Cambridgeport, the area surrounding Advent Corporation's plant, is a community of about 10,000 people. Bordered by a declining industrial area, and sandwiched between three major universities, the community possesses a unique mixture of poor, working class and professional people, multiracial and multicultural, living shoulder to shoulder in a very densely populated area. Nonetheless, the area maintains a strong sense of itself as a neighborhood. Several small local groups organize residents, and an internal network connects the groups, despite diverse memberships and

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Cambridgeport residents on their way to pay a surprise visit to DEQE (Mass. Dept. of Environmental Quality Engineering).

goals. In the fight against styrene pollution, the cohesiveness and resourcefulness inherent in this network have been essential.

Throughout the past year, three organizations in particular have worked together on the newly-formed Committee on Advent: The Health Care Policy Council, the Cambridgeport Alliance, and Science for the People.

The Cambridge Health Care Policy Council is a small local committee supported by a federal antipoverty program, which first involved itself in the styrene pollution issue in 1977. The group assisted residents through the established channels of action and complaint. Together they discovered OSHA's shortcomings and the weakness of city ordinances. Having failed to remedy the situation, they approached the Cambridgeport Alliance.

The Cambridgeport Alliance is a grassroots organization composed of representatives from eight neighborhood groups.⁽¹⁾ Members of Alliance organizations are scattered throughout the community — geographically, economically and socially. Through its member organizations, the Alliance increased local awareness of the seriousness of the hazard. Concurrently, Alliance representatives and friends expanded the original committee, both physically and in terms of expertise.

Members of Science for the People became involved through informal contacts with the Alliance.

The benefits of cooperative action were significant.

When the Committee on Advent decided to research the scope of the contamination, Homeowner and Tenant Association members pulled out their tried-and-true canvassing system. When John Desmond, then Regional Director of Air Quality Control, a division of DEQE, told participants in a sit-in in his office that his staff could only test for styrene with their noses, a woman from Science for the People pulled a universal air tester from her purse. When the committee needed information on styrene's effects on health, the Health Care Policy Council and Science for the People located the expertise needed to investigate.

The combination of talents enabled the group to cut through the technological rhetoric so commonly used to deter people struggling against powerful agencies and corporations. Knowledge and resources kept local people from being deceived and pacified by "band-aid" solutions.

The Massachusetts Division of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) classifies styrene as a "bad smell" on a par with fumes from a chocolate factory — a nuisance, but not a health hazard. This stance apparently reflects the prevailing tone of environmental protection law throughout the country, which regulates particulate pollution but not vapor.

After realizing that appealing to the conscience and logic of Advent officials was futile, the neighbors brought their complaint to the Cambridge City Council. The Council passed an order demanding that Advent

Our Lives, Their Profits: The Necessity for Collective Effort

The widespread pollution of our rivers, lakes, oceans and air is a fact of life familiar to every American. Although this pollution has numerous and well-documented adverse effects on our health and well-being, it is often difficult to link a particular effect (for example, a given case of cancer) with its causes. In the case of the pollution of a section of Cambridgeport with styrene by Advent Corporation, however, the source of the residents' discomfort and feelings of ill-health was easily identified. This situation has engendered a two and one half year struggle with Advent and the state air pollution regulatory agency (DEQE) that is described in the accompanying article.

The Advent struggle has been very revealing of the nature of our society. To begin with, it has brought into the open the contradictory interests of Advent and of the community out of which it operates: Advent, like all other corporations, serves only its owners by striving to maximize its profits — in all cases at the expense of its employees, in this case, at ours, as unwilling recipients of what air pollution authorities callously call "fugitive emissions." The fact that Advent produces a luxury item with absolutely no value to the community underscores this point.

Our struggle has also unearthed the unhappy fact that Massachusetts DEQE is more concerned with ensuring a healthy business environment for Advent than a healthy physical environment for Cambridgeport. Such agencies seem to be, in reality, little more than fronts for corporations like Advent: the half-hearted (and, inevitably, relatively cheap) modifications they sometimes require of corporations do not solve the real problems but rather serve to legitimize the anti-people practices of the corporations and the regulatory process itself.

The process of appealing to, and later confronting, DEQE also thoroughly debunked for us the notion that

DEQE bigshots were possessed of unassailable scientific and legal expertise. This paralyzing image was gradually destroyed with the growing realization that the "professional" veneer of this agency actually hides a great deal of incompetence, duplicity and stupidity. Unlike Advent itself, DEQE has not been a powerful enemy.

The successes we have had — principally, the installation of the filter and the initiation of the suit against Advent — are due solely to our own *collective* efforts. When isolated phone calls and individually registered complaints gave way to coordinated sit-ins, pickets and leafletting, we experienced the power that people can wield when organized and united. Our unity has cut across divisions of age, race and occupation, and has built strong ties of trust and friendship in the community. This can only make us stronger in the future, whether with respect to further struggles around Advent, or in whatever ways we choose to assert our right to control our environment and all other aspects of our lives.

As a result of our long fight with Advent, we have a better understanding of American society and our place in it, are better prepared to work together on any problems which affect us as a community, and have greater confidence in our ability to come to grips with and to control collectively the forces that shape our lives. It is our personal feeling that while we may, after many long and tedious years during which we have received considerable exposure to the stench and the hazards of styrene, finally win, it is all too clear that similar problems will not go away elsewhere and may easily recur here. The only way to really win is to build a movement to take control of the factories and our neighborhoods away from the rich and their front men in the corporations and the government, and put it where it rightfully belongs: in the hands of the people.

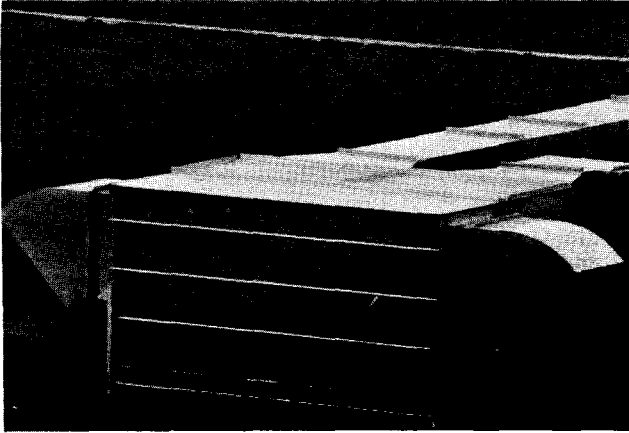
—Peggy and Jim Lester

desist polluting or close down, an order they have no power to enforce.

At DEQE's regional office, John Desmond suggested that the styrene scent could be masked with another odor. Residents awoke one spring morning to the unimaginable stench of styrene mixed with artificial banana! No health factor could have been considered when this solution was experimented with.

The Committee on Advent pushed the case from John Desmond's office to that of Dr. Anthony Cortese, Director of the State Division of Air and Hazardous Materials, then to Evelyn Murphy's office of Environ-

mental Affairs via picket lines. State and Federal bureaucracy finally dumped the case on the Attorney General's office, where an "unofficial" refusal to act on the complaint was passed on to the committee. Jose Allen, Assistant District Attorney for Environmental Affairs was quoted by the Cambridge Chronicle as remarking: "Apparently, they live in a commercial district, and when you live in a commercial district you have to endure certain things you wouldn't have to endure in a Class A neighborhood." When the Committee threatened to take action against the Attorney General's office, the State filed suit against Advent, demanding an



The "filter" Advent said would solve the problem.

end to the styrene pollution. The Committee is currently investigating ways to participate in that suit.

In the meantime, the Committee on Advent is sensitive to Advent's threat to relocate away from an area which desperately needs blue-collar jobs. Identifying the threat as a ploy designed to prevent cooperation between factory workers and the groups, the Committee has produced informational leaflets in the four languages commonly spoken inside the plant. The workers produce a pro-union newsletter amongst themselves (there is, as yet, no union), which is supportive of the Committee's efforts. Advent workers and neighbors are beginning to realize that locating the plant in another community, or country (as has been suggested) will not eliminate the problem, only shift it to another community which will face the same dangers. Like the banana scent, OSHA and DEQE solutions are distractions, not cures.

Common Actions: Boycott Advent

Many individuals initially assumed that appeals to the proper governmental department would bring relief and assistance. The long paper chase endured by the group first brought disillusionment, then anger, then militancy. Action became centered around the streets of Cambridgeport rather than the sluggish state boardrooms.

In increasing numbers, neighborhood people began visiting the plant on especially "bad days" to complain en masse and demand relief. The Committee on Advent began organizing pickets of the homes of corporate officers and board members, a tactic borrowed from the tenants' organization which used it against slumlords. Leaflets explain the picket lines to residents. The Committee is also organizing a boycott of all Advent products, a move which is steadily gaining momentum.

Words of their determination are being passed to Advent stockholders and local stereophiles: "Don't buy Advent products, sell your Advent stocks."

Throughout the building of the Committee on Advent, a process of growth of understanding has been remarkably evident among individuals in the group. In the two year struggle, each new person, without exception, has envisioned success around the corner. Faith in DEQE's current promise, or the court case, or any particular action, caused each new member to embrace a "wait and see" or "let's write a letter" argument and initially to express some unease with the group's developing militancy. But as the collection of broken promises and refusals to act grew, people dropped their passive stances and came to terms with the necessity for direct action. Other members reaffirmed their own transformation and growing awareness that, in the end, the struggle will be won by a community determined to act. □

Linda McPhee is a Cambridgeport resident who has been active in community issues for a number of years.

REFERENCES

1. Cambridgeport Child Care, Inc., Woodrow Wilson Tenants Council (public housing), Morse Community School, Webster Community School, Morse PTA, Simplex Steering Committee (a planning group), Cambridgeport Planning Team, Cambridgeport Homeowners and Tenants Association.

SPRING IN ANN ARBOR SftP National Conference

Finally after years of anticipation, SftP people from all over North America will be formally convening for the first time this spring. This promises to be no conventional convention. Mark this date on your calendar: March 23 to 25th, 1979 (Friday to Sunday) in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Ann Arbor chapter is coordinating preparations. A tentative agenda has already been published in the December Internal Discussion Bulletin (IDB). The February issue of the IDB will carry modifications and additions to this agenda and proposals to be discussed at the conference. Please send your ideas and proposals soon for dissemination and discussion. The deadline for submissions for the February IDB is January 8th. After this date (until February 21st) please send your contributions directly to Ann Arbor for distribution to conference registrants. All material is or will be available from Ann Arbor SftP (4104 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48109) or Boston SftP (897 Main St., Cambridge, MA 02139).

If you are interested in attending the conference, please register by March 1st so that adequate preparations can be made for food, accommodations, and transportation.

resources

Please send your items and suggestions for this column to Tallahassee SftP, c/o Progressive Technology, P.O. Box 20049, Tallahassee, FL 32304.

Black Health. We want to spread the word about a few recent titles that deal with the health of black people.

Surgeons to the Poor: The Harlem Hospital Story. Aubrey de L. Maynard, Appleton-Century-Crofts/Medical, 1978, 258 pp., \$15.50. Maynard, a black doctor now retired, was director of surgery at Harlem Hospital and professor of surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.

Medicine and Slavery: The Diseases and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia. Todd L. Savitt, University of Illinois Press, 1978, 304 pp., \$12.50. It includes an informational chapter on the alleged medical differences between whites and blacks — differences often translated as racial inferiority and used to justify slavery.

Mental Health: A Challenge to the Black Community. edited by Lawrence E. Gary, Dorrance & Company (35 Cricket Terrace, Ardmore, PA 19003), 1978, 365 pp., \$10.00. It presents a Black perspective on social interaction within the Black community and between Black and white people.

Hoodoo Medicine: Sea Islands Herbal Remedies. Faith Mitchell, Reed, Cannon & Johnson (2140 Shattuck Avenue, Rm 311; Berkeley, California 94704), 1978, 108 pp., \$4.95. The island chain called the Sea Islands extends from the coast of North Carolina, along South Carolina and Georgia, to the northern edge of Florida, bordering the Atlantic Ocean. Both historically and in contemporary times, the inhabitants have had a distinctive Afro-American culture.

Textbook of Black-Related Disease, edited by Richard Allen Williams, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975, 896 pp., \$35.00. This is the first medical book written chiefly by Black physicians on the subject of Black health. It treats topics such as Voodoo Medicine, never before included in a textbook of medicine. Also featured is an in-depth discussion of genetics in relation to racial differences.

Cahiers Galilee (Centre Galilee; B.P. 160, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), published quarterly, 200 BFr/year. It is published in the French language by a Belgian organization named Centre Galilee. Its aims are to facilitate ways to make science and technology serve the people. Special issues have been published about science teaching, division of labor, military scientific research, genetic engineering, nuclear power, scientific vulgarism, etc. The Centre Galilee also has a library/resource center and has permanent contacts with several ecological, political and trade-unionist groups.

Privacy Journal, PO Box 8844, Washington, DC 20003. An Independent Monthly on Privacy in a Computer Age. It reports on increasing demands by citizens for individual privacy and of the impact of this on the collection of personal information. Normally a subscription goes for \$45/year but for a limited time the publisher will offer a reduced subscription rate of \$15/year to SftP readers if prepaid by personal check. Tell them where you found out about them.

AIMS Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the American Institute for Marxist Studies (20 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016). \$5.00/year. It is very bibliographic — telling about articles, books, dissertations, symposiums, etc. that are of interest to progressive folk. Many of the references are in line with the goals of SftP so do check it out. It's a good ongoing political education tool.

U.S. Farm News is subtitled "Peace, Parity and Power to the People" and is published monthly (\$3.00/year) by the U.S. Farmers Association (P.O. Box 496, Hampton, Iowa 50441). It is a folksy little newspaper that critiques agribusiness and governmental farm policy and espouses progressive politics.

Women, Science and Society is the special issue title of the Autumn 1978 (Volume 4, Number 1) issue of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (University of Chicago Press; 5801 Ellis Avenue; Chicago, Illinois 60637). \$4 per single copy, \$15 per year to individuals. Quarterly. It is a well documented gold mine of feminist thought on such topics as sociobiology, evolution, reproduction, sex differences, women in science, and much more.

Development Education. The Development Education Centre (121 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2G3 Canada) has an exciting catalog for 1978-1979. It is a good source for books, pamphlets & films that offer alternative educational perspectives on education for development in Canada and the Third World. Do check it out.

Marxism & Science. *Science and Nature: The Journal of Marxist Philosophy for Natural Scientists* is the name of a new journal. It is published by the Dialectics Workshop (130 St. Edwards Street, 14c; Brooklyn, New York 11201) and will appear twice yearly. \$10/year (includes membership), \$2.50 per single copy. Interesting, includes articles, quotes, reviews, bibliographic notes, etc.

Bibliographies. Two recently published bibliographies are worthy of note. One comes from Denmark but is published in English.

Women and Mathematics, Science and Engineering. Else Hoyrup (Bogevj 8; DK 3500 Vaerlose; Denmark), Roskilde University Library, 1978, 62 pp. No price was mentioned so you will have to write to the author for that, but that's OK since she is anxious to correspond with others who are interested in this sort of thing — especially women and mathematics.

Energy Bibliography: Annotated, Dorothy Barnouw and Irene Dickinson, National Intervenors, Inc. (1413 "K" Street, N.W. 8th floor; Washington, DC 20005), 1978, 60 pp, \$2.00 per copy. Intended as a guide for the general reader, the annotations and lists serve as an introduction to the issues, people, journals, and organizations involved in the nuclear power controversy and the search for alternative energy systems.

BOOK REVIEW

FOR HER OWN GOOD

reviewed by Nora Mitchell

For Her Own Good: 150 Years of Experts Advice to Women
by Barbara Ehrenreich and Dierdre English (New York: Doubleday, August 1978)

One of America's first physicians could not convince his patients that they should pay for his services. They thought it appropriate to pay for the drugs that he supplied, but not for his attention and time. It seemed natural for one person to care about another, not to charge for it. This incident, related in Barbara Ehrenreich's and Dierdre English's new book, *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women* (Doubleday; August, 1978), stands at the center of their history.

Rather directly, this anecdote demonstrates that our present understanding and experience of the medical establishment is unique to our time and place. Modern medicine, as the authors show, is not an objective given that we must accept. It has its roots, its biases and its historical limits. For a start, medicine has not been a profession for very long; physicians had to fight to make it one, as opposed to a concern of the community and of the home.

With particular reference to women Ehrenreich and English detail the development of the "helping professions" in the United States. They focus on the conflicts raised by caring adequately for people in a money economy, and on the interaction between ideology, theory and economic pressure. This history is preceded by a clear, if brief, summation of their feminist and historical outlook in the opening chapter.

Sexual Romanticism

Among feminist theorists their approach would be considered socialist, because it is rooted in socio-economic analysis — although what type of social change they advocate is not altogether clear. They insist that patriarchy pertains to the feudalistic order that was overthrown in Europe and America by the Eighteenth Century revolutions, and that what emerged from the upheaval of those times and of the Industrial Revolution was a masculinist order which was paralleled by an ideology the authors call sexual romanticism. Its tenets were quite straightforward. Women should be situated

in the home and men in the marketplace. Working women are therefore valued less and thus their labor is cheaper. The home should balance the marketplace by proffering the emotional and physical sustenance denied outside. The private and public spheres are separate. All of these factors contributed to an overall belief-system that reduced women and buttressed the new economic order.

Under the old patriarchal order the woman had an important economic role in society. She ran a center of manufacture. The essentials of family life had to be made: clothes, butter, soap, bread. She also cared for the sick, using knowledge of remedies that had usually been passed down from mother to daughter, along with what she knew of each patient. Certain women who were particularly skilled or knowledgeable might tend to the more serious cases.

These healers had no formal education, but did have experience. The remedies they used had no rational explanation to back them; instead the healers based their craft on empirical evidence. Although their facility was limited, they rarely harmed patients, and they did not take dangerous chances. Their patients were their neighbors and they were accountable in a personal sense.

The herbal brews the female healer might prescribe were, for the most part, gentle, and she knew when to draw back and wait out a difficult delivery or an obstinate fever. Knowing her patients as neighbors, she knew also the disappointments, the anxieties, and the overwork which could mimic illness or induce it. If she could not always cure, neither could she do much harm, and very often she was able to soothe. (p. 39)

Nora Mitchell is a feminist and radical who has participated actively in the women's movement and the larger movement for social change. For several years she has been a participant in and helped plan Northfield Conference, a yearly ecumenical conference for people of all ages. She lives in Somerville, M.A.



SK / Red Apple Art

History portrays them as witches and their remedies as “old wives’ tales”. The healers themselves have been recorded as threatening and mysterious figures and yet their skills have been dismissed as superstitious nonsense.

Under the new masculinist order, the woman lost many of her economic functions in the home as they were supplanted by industry. With the new pressures she also lost her role as healer, as medicine moved into hands of men in the marketplace to become a profession.

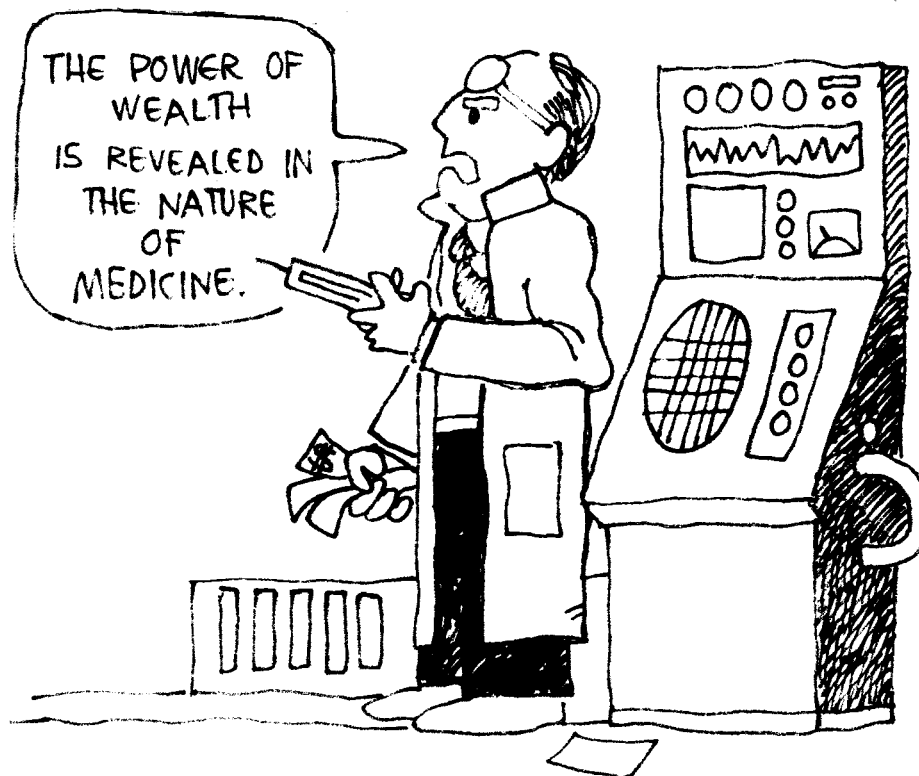
The Medical Model

As medicine migrated from the community into the marketplace, it underwent some startling changes. Healing became a commodity. Since it was a profession in an unsettled society and economy rather than a social duty, doctors had to make a living. And thus they had to convince a stubborn clientele to pay for services rendered rather than just for drugs. This pressure, in combination with the rational theory of disease, spawned what is known as “heroic” medicine. It was not based on the empirical data of lay healers, but on scientific theories. For example, if a patient was sick, the blood was bad — so logically, rid the patient of some of that bad blood. Bloodletting, leaching, and plastering are all techniques that had widespread use among early professional men of medicine.

These drastic remedies served an economic function. They made it clear that the doctor was doing some-

thing and that he was working hard. Also they were different than the old remedies and based on scientific principles of the day. The doctors could charge for their services.

It is important to note though, as the authors often fail to, that medicine was far more than an economic enterprise, but a well-meaning one as well. Very few of the doctors would have designed practices just to ensure their own welfare. They must have considered the practices of lay healers antiquated and insufficient, and hoped to use their scientific training to develop a more systematic approach to healing. While medicine’s development as a profession allowed doctors to devote full time to it, this changed their social status and removed them from easy access to those they hoped to serve. Preventive and holistic medicine did not fit into this new professional structure and did not develop; doctors saw patients at crises, increasingly divorced from the contexts of their lives. Sickness came to be treated rather than the person, and the medical model we know now gained hold: the patient was sick, the doctor healthy; the patient ignorant, the doctor knowledgeable. Moreover, medical men assumed underneath it all that the cause for sickness could and would be found, understood, and conquered. They did not assume as the lay healers did that you used what worked and afterwards pulled back to let the body and nature do their own work. As the authors point out, nature was for those doctors something to be struggled against and overcome.



The biases of society in conjunction with the biases of medicine operating within a competitive market made women of the middle and upper classes the particular targets of medical attention. Sexual romanticism dictated that women were separate and different, and thus an enigma to medical men. Moreover, they were objectified by this ideology. Whereas any patient entered into an unequal relationship with a physician, women were already considered inferior as women. With this double indemnity, women were peculiarly vulnerable to doctors.

This vulnerability was most marked in women who were better-off financially. For one thing, they, or their husbands, could pay for medical services. Furthermore, these women were filling a specific economic function in the home and family. They did not work, but created the home atmosphere for men and children. In Victorian times this lack of an active economic role came to be linked with frailty, both mental and physical. Despite this supposed physical weakness women were still considered to be ruled by physical laws, while men were ruled by mental ones. And because all her other options had been ruled out, a women's primary function was reproductive and emotional.

Femininity as Disease

The ideology of rationality prevalent in medical circles required causal explanations, so women came to

be explained in terms of a series of overriding principles that were primarily sexual and reproductive. For instance, during much of the 19th century women's emotional and nervous "disorders" were attributed to the influence of the womb. We still use the words that emerged from that theory: hysteria, hysterics, hysterical. Not surprisingly in a society that reinforced its belief in female frailty with enforced inactivity and physically harmful corsets, women acted out their parts. Frailty often resulted in perpetual invalidism. Women's bodies had become one locus of conflict concerning the role of women in society: corporeal conditions supposedly created female nature, and the control of reproductive and sexual organs had to be enforced. Femininity itself came to be considered a disease.

The belief that women were by nature frail and sickly supported the medical profession. The fact that lower class women continued to work hard, and thus defied explanation within the paradigm, mattered as little as their welfare in a society ruled by profit. But, medical theories were foiled by invalidism itself. Women, despite the learning and best efforts of doctors, did not get better, indicating that their defined nature did not suit them. It has even been suggested that invalidism was one means of rebellion; one could resist the doctor and one's family by failing to improve.

This whole area of sexual politics is the specialty of these two authors. In two previous studies, *Witches, Midwives and Nurses* and *Complaints and Disorders*, many of the abuses which arose from the interaction of

romantic ideology, medical theory and medical practice were explored. Their familiarity with and control over the primary material is astounding, just as some of the facts are astonishing and disturbing. Perhaps what is most emphasized here is the capacity of morality and values to be twisted and to twist themselves and people; they do not shake free of the times, nor of the pressures of bigotry and self-centeredness. Medical practices of the time seem incredible today, and yet they were carried out by principled as well as unprincipled men.

Other Experts

Following the medical history the book focuses upon other experts — home economists, child-raising experts and psychologists — in the lives of women. The direction of the book also becomes less clear. In a way there are two books, the first on medicine in which the authors' grasp and analysis of the material are powerful, and the second in which they chart new territory with less certainty. The authors attempt to make sense out of a diverse range of material — from social-Darwinism and economic development to the 20th-century crisis of masculinity.

The medical model, however, is a unifying concept with its conflict between benevolence and authority, between patients' interests and economic forces. The opposition between doctor and patient, particularly the female patient, served as the model for generations of experts that followed. For all these experts women were the objects to be studied and worked on, not because of individual problems or concerns, but because they were women. Indeed, women have been treated by experts of many sorts as though they had problems that they could not solve for themselves. Their lives have served as raw material for many fields.

In our own century, the inherent sickness of femininity has been considered to be an inherent part of the psyche itself. Rather than her body, her psychological make-up became the locus of conflict of ideology, theory, morality and practice. And because the effects are not physical, the abuses are often more subtle and less easily described.

Ehrenreich and English give Freud little attention. It is the application of neo-Freudian theory to women in America that is under scrutiny. With startling abandon professionals have expounded upon what women should be, what they should feel, what they should do. Focus upon the home as emotional sanctuary for the working man altered slightly: home should be clean, healthy and efficient, but mother herself is supposed to be the succor for her children, rather than the home she creates. Psychoanalytically, this was explained in terms of the woman's psychological needs: to be a mother was the ultimate satisfaction and fulfillment for all women. Every other type of achievement for women paled beside

motherhood, their biological, psychological destiny. If a woman was unhappy, or even if she was happy but employed full-time, she was resisting her feminine nature. She was sick. Complaints themselves were symptoms, and even without such outward signs to give her away, a woman could always be her own best accuser. All of these psychic demons still have their holds.

Psychology has taken some extreme turns. Since World War II women have been extolled for self-sacrificing, total motherhood, and then condemned for over-protecting their children and for hidden hostility.

Underneath, the medical model has remained at work. Psychologists, like doctors, are considered sources of wisdom and authority. They have even been likened to priests — a telling indication of the overlap of theory and morality.

Moral Imperative

In the final section Ehrenreich and English undertake the analysis of the contemporary popular psychology and self-improvement movements on the one hand and the backlash towards sexual romanticism, the right-to-life and anti-ERA movements on the other. In this section some underlying assumptions of the book that were not spelled out become clearer. While their analysis of these movements is valuable, the force of their argument comes to rest finally upon a moral imperative. The authors are morally outraged.

This clarified other aspects of the book that had been somewhat confusing and even disturbing: what may seem like belief in conspiracy theories, intimations of evil, a drift away from structural socio-economic analysis. In seeking a solution, they abandon their own structural analysis and place too great an emphasis upon a finer moral system — one that would make the helping professions genuinely caring, one that would not be oppressive but uplifting. They also seek to make medicine, psychology and other professions discussed truly social and public. Since the effects are social, not just private and isolated, they must be placed in the forum for public debate and removed from the market.

The moral call which constitutes their conclusion is stirring, even inspiring, but it weakens on examination in the terms they themselves have used. Morality throughout their study reflects the biases and systems of the times. It can never be an absolute aside from some fundamental commitments; moral outrage will not suffice. The struggle to understand, to communicate, and to change what harms people is more important. Despite its forcefulness their conclusion is really a departure from the overall direction of the book. The study is above all a fine attempt to examine and to understand powerful influences in the lives of women, and to stretch the reader's understanding to question existing structures.□

AAAS Deceived by Argentine Junta

by Carlos Pereyra

The following letter was written by Dr. Carlos Pereyra in reply to Emilio Daddario's article in *Science* February 3, 1978, about the status of scientists in Argentina. Mr. Daddario went to Argentina in December 1977 at the request of the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility. His purpose was to show the concerns of the American scientific community for the precarious situation of their Argentinian colleagues, many of whom have been imprisoned, exiled, tortured, abducted, or killed. Daddario noted that there is "a bad scene in Argentina". While Daddario noted the atmosphere of fear and repression, he also claimed that it is easing up in gradual moderation "within the attitudes of the present government." He gave as an example being "personally assured by Admiral Emilio Messara," a member of the ruling military junta, that 500 prisoners would be released in the near future. His report concluded by saying essentially that although things are not so good, they are not so bad either, and "we" (especially the Argentinians) have to make the best of it. Dr. Pereyra's letter presents a more realistic appraisal of what is going on in Argentina. *Science* refused to publish his letter and so it was sent to us in order that the full story be published.

Mexico, April 1st, 1978

To the Editor of *Science*:

The visit of Mr. Emilio Daddario, President of the AAAS, to Argentina, should be hailed as a positive sign expressing the concern of the American scientific community for the situation of scientists in Argentina.

Unfortunately, besides its positive value, the visit has served the purposes of the Junta, by having its line transmitted to the American scientific community by an important spokesperson, thus presenting a distorted and false view of the Argentine situation.

Which is the Junta's line? First, that the March 24, 1976 coup was a popular coup, because the population was tired of right and left wing terrorism and of the obvious decomposition of power of the Isabel Peron government. Therefore, the military seized power reluctantly in order to restore law and order, but they were and are now solidly supported by the majority of the population. Second, that the plight of the scientific community and of intellectuals in general is but the consequence of excessive antiterrorist activity by the repres-



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sion forces and not the result of a deliberate policy in the fields of culture and education. Third, government officials are concerned with this situation and thus it will improve.

We shall try to show that an opposite reading of the situation in Argentina can be legitimately made, and that it can be done without even visiting Buenos Aires. All that is needed is a careful reading of the carefully self-censored Argentine press.

That Argentina is living through what we shall call an hegemony crisis, meaning that the ruling classes can no longer rule through traditional methods, should be clear to anyone. What is less clear is that there is not just one possible solution to a crisis: there might be a reactionary solution and a progressive solution. What is also unclear is the role of the military. While they claim that

they are just knights of honor, who were forced to seize power in order to prevent chaos, we suggest that the leadership of the Armed Forces acted as a tool of the most privileged, reactionary and obscurantist forces of the country, basically the agrarian and financial bourgeoisie. The military had seized power in 1966 and were forced to give it back to an elected government by mounting popular resistance that threatened to lead toward a popular insurrection, as shown by the Córdoba events in 1969. Once the military were expelled from power in 1973, they started to conspire to seize power again, and they contributed to creating the climate for yet another coup through the organization of paramilitary groups formed by members of the Armed Forces. They did not organize alone, but had the help of the financial and landed oligarchies. The lack of spine of the elected government and the mindless terrorism of the armed left groups aided the process. They seized power in order to prevent popular mobilization for a progressive solution to the crisis, a mobilization that had started to gain momentum in 1975, in order to impose the "solution" of the most reactionary. What that "solution" was could be seen the day after they seized power: they unleashed an unprecedented wave of terror, directed basically at the working class and at intellectuals, in order to submit the working class to an economic policy that would substantially reduce its standards of living. They also intended to reconstitute through terror the power of the ruling ideology, which had nearly collapsed.

Towards these ends the Junta's policies operate at differentiable but clearly connected levels: 1) through "legal" repression, which includes measures such as having thousands of political prisoners in a state of indefinite imprisonment without trial, in most cases for years; the outlawing of strikes and seizure of unions; religious persecution; banning of publications and publishing houses, burning of books, etc.; 2) illegal repression, i.e. the organization of paramilitary gangs formed by members of the Armed Forces and the police, which plunder, kidnap, torture and murder thousands of political and union militants and leftist intellectuals whom the Junta might consider as potentially dangerous; 3) educational and cultural policies, which tend to rigidly control all schools and universities, even the private ones, to limit access to the public school system and even to let it fall apart, to have parents and teachers converted into agents of "civic action" pantomimes under Armed Forces control; 4) and last but not least, a cynical public relations offensive aimed at foreign public opinion, for which the Junta got help from some Goebbels disciples sitting at the Manhattan firm of Burston-Marsteller (*Proceso* magazine, Mexico, 2.27.78 p.56) which had previously taken such honorable jobs as convincing the American public that genocide never occurred in Biafra. This public-relations offensive includes

such a known extravaganza as the World Soccer Games, the Cancer Congress and the less-known educational exchange agreement between the Buenos Aires provincial state government and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (*La Opinión*, Buenos Aires 3.14.78).

Let us give a concrete example of repression. The educational policy of the Junta requires smashing the union of schoolteachers (*Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina*) in order to carry out its policy of strangling public schools. To this end the authorities deny salary raises to the teachers in the midst of 170% yearly inflation, while they force the teachers to participate in "civic action" activities and to teach new subjects of a militaristic content, such as "Civil Defense", to grade school children; they liquidate the job stability of teachers and end guarantees against arbitrary transfers, etc. Then the Junta hoodlums do their part by kidnapping the schoolteachers' union leader Eduardo Requena in July 1976 and scores of provincial union leaders and local militants. Incredibly, the union manages to survive and to elect a new leader, Alfredo Bravo, who is first kidnapped and then put under a *disposicion del Poder Ejecutivo*, meaning a state of indefinite arrest without trial, in September 1977. Thus the same goals are pursued against a single organization by a combination of "legal" and illegal methods. In the meantime, while an estimated 20% of the teachers quit by mass resignations and early retirement requests, a figure that reached 30% in Buenos Aires provinces and 50% in some proletarian areas of the same province, the authorities negotiate an educational exchange agreement with the American Association of State Colleges, in order to cover their obscene actions with the perfumes of Madison Avenue.

Of all the points raised by the Daddario report two deserve careful examination: 1) that there is a general approval of the Junta by the people; and 2) that there are signs of gradual moderation in the Junta's attitudes, as shown by the pious hopes expressed to him by known torturers and assassins in high positions.

On the problem of "popular support" it would be necessary to define what we mean by support in a situation in which all dissenting political action is considered a crime. Even if we do not want to go into details we might agree that striking is not a sign of support when strikes are outlawed and strikers are threatened with up to ten years of prison in addition to the kidnappings and assassinations carried out by the Junta hoodlums. Neither is sabotage a sign of support, all the less so if a law passed by the Junta (Law 21264, published the day of the coup) provides the death penalty for sabotage and authorizes the repression forces to first shoot suspects of sabotage and ask questions later. Now if under such conditions, which recall those of Europe occupied by the

Nazi armies, there are still strikes which involve hundreds of thousands and mass sabotage actions, we may begin to doubt whether popular support for the Junta exists. And reports of these strikes and mass sabotage actions are not hard to find; they are found by reading the Argentine press, which also reports the incredible conditions under which they are carried out, such as the military occupation of the factories. Let us give a few examples: practically all automobile factories were struck several times between August and November 1976. In September 1976 there were strikes at chemical plants, in the food industry, rubber, meat packing, big metallurgical and textile factories, and so on. In March and June, 1977 again there were strikes in automobile factories. In October and November 1976 work slowed down to 30% of normal in Buenos Aires harbor. In October and November there were slowdowns and work stoppages by 30,000 workers of the power utilities, which continued in an intermittent way until February 1977. In October 1977 there were strikes in urban transport, subways, railways and again the power plants.

In addition to the strikes we should note the development of mass sabotage actions. Sabotage reduced production to almost zero at times in the automobile industry and slowed down dock work by destruction of conveyor belts and intentional fires during the longshoremen's conflict. In the electrical industry there were sabotage actions both at the power plants and against power transmission lines, which disrupted the subways, water pumping, elevators, air conditioning, and television, and caused traffic jams, etc., during the whole summer of 1976-77. In the gas and oil industry the government had to import gas from Uruguay in March 1977 because the distribution plants at La Plata, Dock Sud and La Matanza had "technical problems" of unexplained origin (*La Opinion*, 3.27.77 p.1), while the refineries at La Plata and Campana were simultaneously stopped because of "maintenance tasks".

What all this tells us is that under extraordinary repression a working class that has lost most of its leadership because the militants are either dead, in prison, underground or in exile, continues nevertheless to engage in a bitter and powerful mass resistance.

Are things improving? What is the relation between the smiles of the hoodlums that were trying to have the naive *gringos* swallow their gimmicks and the real situation? It seems to us that there have been a few encouraging signs, such as the termination of military control over what is left of the San Miguel Physics and Technology Institute. But most signs point in the opposite direction. Let us mention a few facts. The emigration of qualified personnel goes on: one third of the technical personnel of the National Institute of Statistics resigned in the first nine months of 1977 (*Clarín*, 10.30.77), as did technical personnel of the petroleum, telephone and

railways state companies. The unfinished campus of the National University at Tucuman was taken over by the Army, which will use it for a military high school (*La Prensa*, 2.27.78). The state government of Córdoba banned long hair in the schools and established a special day for hair length inspection (*Clarín*, 3.12.78). Admission to the universities has been drastically cut to 42,000 in 1977, while it was 128,000 in 1974. Professor Alfredo Tagliabue, Director of Private Institutions at the Ministry of Education, made a raging public speech on November 2nd, 1977, demanding action against Marxist infiltration in Church affiliated schools and against judges who are "soft" on it. The Ministry of Labor required that union representatives should have "good behavior" certificates given to them by the police (*La Prensa*, 2.21.78).

What about the situation of the political prisoners? On January 21 (*La Opinion*) it was announced that ten prisoners who were *a disposicion del Poder Ejecutivo* were freed while forty-six others were arrested and placed in the same situation. On February 11 three were freed and 26 were arrested. On March 11 twenty-five were freed and 48 arrested. On February 18 fifteen Jehovah's Witnesses were arrested, on March 29 thirty more. Sixty more members of a banned religious group were arrested in Mar del Plata, and it was announced that the religious dissenters will be tried by the Federal courts (*idem*, 2.20). On March 14th the authorities announced that they had put down a riot in the Villa Devoto Federal prison in Buenos Aires. Sixty prisoners died, several of them political prisoners, while not even one prison guard was injured. No independent inquiry is possible under the circumstances. Another physicist, Mario Villani, is kidnapped; he was the former Academic Secretary of the Physics and Mathematics School at the National University at La Plata.

All American scientists, all intellectuals should think about these actions of a dictatorship that will most probably be remembered among the most savage in a continent racked by brutal regimes. They should reflect on why the American press, which has extensive resources to find out about Soviet dissidents, has so little interest in the Argentine situation. They should reflect about the "ideological infiltration" trial going on against Argentine professors, and so on. They should reflect on what the American Association of State Colleges has been doing. And they should act to help the victims of persecution and to isolate the hoodlums, not to spread their lies.

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SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE — A TEN YEAR RETROSPECTIVE

by Kathy Greeley & Sue Tafler

Several months ago, when we were first asked to write a brief history of SftP, we accepted without realizing just how difficult that task might be. SftP had done so many different things, it had involved so many different people with differing political opinions at different times and different places, that we could have written a book. It was only after we began to organize the material we collected that we realized the history of SftP could not be understood as a simple linear chronology. Rather it is an intricate web of people, issues, politics and activities. What gave this history coherence was the conception of the role of science and technology in our society that has evolved within SftP over the past ten years.

The economic affluence of post-World War II America sparked a boom in science and technology, and it became clear that these elements would play an increasing role in our lives. The question was what kind of role would that be, who would have control over it, and who would it benefit. SftP was the only organization that began to develop a radical critique of science and technology. SftP came to understand that science, although grounded in objective, material realities, is nonetheless neither “neutral” nor “value-free”. The way science is used — the kinds of questions asked, the kinds of research funded, the application of scientific theories — is determined by those controlling the purse-strings and values of each society. In our society, science serves the class interests, both materially and ideologically, of a small elite group that values profit over people and private property over human well-being. The elite mystique of wisdom and infallibility built up around science and scientists — and the widely held and deliberately fostered belief that only such experts can know what is best for society — effectively serves to obscure the class nature of the practice of science.

Many factors contributed to a general political awakening in the 1960's. It was the Vietnam War though, that really catalyzed the birth of SftP. In January 1969, a caucus of dissident physicists introduced an

antiwar resolution at the American Physical Society convention. At the same time, a group of industrial-based engineers began meeting in Boston. In March, 1969, scientists and students joined together to force MIT to stop all war-related research on campus. That same year, a California group, Scientists for Social and Political Action (SSPA, later changed to SESPA with the E for Engineers), began publishing a national newsletter. This created a communication network among individuals, caucuses and study groups across the country. From this, a movement was born whose slogan became “Science for the People”.

The early activities of this new organization naturally focused on the Vietnam War and weapons research. SESPA members participated in the November, 1969 antiwar march. SESPA members also marched and distributed leaflets against the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM). Berkeley SESPA circulated a pledge at various scientific meetings stating:

I will not participate in war research on weapons production. I further pledge to counsel my students and urge my colleagues to do the same.

In 1972, the Berkeley chapter published the leaflet “Science Against the People”, an expose of the Jason project, a symbiosis between the university and the military complex. Jason helped develop the automated battlefield and in general cultivated academics as advisors to the Department of Defense. SESPA also supported Karl Armstrong during his trial for the unintended fatality in the bombing of the Army Math Research Center (AMRC) in Madison, Wisconsin, and the Madison chapter published the booklet “The AMRC Papers” demanding the closing of the Center.

While the truths about the war sparked moral outrage among many, some people began to see it as part of a growing pattern of U.S. imperialism. These people realized that the end of the war did not mean the end of U.S. involvement in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, or even other Asian nations. Nor would it signal the end of the exploitation of blacks and other minorities, women or working people in this country. The people in SftP wanted to build a movement that would fight sexism, racism and elitism around the world, and specifically within the scientific community.

Kathy Greeley and Sue Tafler are long-term members of the Boston chapter of SftP. Sue has worked a lot with the Food & Nutrition and Science Teaching Groups since their inception. Kathy is a former Office Coordinator and former member of the Editorial Committee and Alternative Technology Group.



AAAS

In December, 1969, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) invited some young scientists and graduate students to talk about their research at their annual conference in Boston. Instead, this Boston group decided to hold a symposium entitled "The Sorry State of Science". The title itself started a series of confrontations with the AAAS. Attendance at the AAAS brought together these symposium planners, SESPA, and others, vitalizing and enlarging the membership of SESPA in Boston.

The AAAS is the largest and most diverse association of people involved in science and science-related work. While the AAAS represents a bastion of establishment ideology that seeks technological solutions for social and political problems, it was a useful political arena and a place to meet other sympathetic scientists. SftP has attended nearly every AAAS convention since 1969. Reorganization of the AAAS itself has been one immediate goal of SftP. Efforts to democratize the structure in order to eliminate the intimidating, elitist nature of sessions have ranged from meetings with AAAS officials to open the conference to the public, to rearranging chairs into circles to encourage more discussion. At the 1970 Chicago convention, resolutions were presented which opposed the use of scientific work for political repression, called for support for leftist sci-

entists and academics fired for being outspoken, and demanded an end to discrimination against women scientists. Eight resolutions toward "Equality for Women in Science" were prepared by a caucus of SESPA women. SftP continued to participate in caucuses of women scientists and at the 1972 American Chemical Society meeting, two SESPA women dressed in lab coats and draped in chains got up and read a statement about the problems of women scientists.

SftP also went to the AAAS meetings to expose particularly reactionary research. Critiques were distributed at these targeted sessions and members insistently pointed out the political nature of the work. Needless to say, SftP was not welcomed with open arms by the AAAS officials nor by certain participants. In 1971, one SESPA member was attacked with a knitting needle by the wife of Garret Hardin (the population theorist) when Hardin's speech was interrupted. At that same meeting, Daniel Moynihan cancelled his talk to avoid a confrontation. At the Washington meeting in 1972, when some SESPA people tried to set up a literature table, the AAAS called in the police to arrest them. They were later released as the police felt SftP did have the right to distribute literature and were not creating a nuisance.

SftP's strategy at AAAS conferences included organizing alternative sessions, although it was not until

1976 that they were officially recognized. These workshops were organized to encourage questions and discussion, to raise political awareness, and to develop the concept of a People's Science. These sessions were enormously successful, often drawing larger participation than the traditional ones. A paper was distributed at the 1970 AAAS that discussed the connection between applied and "pure" research, the interest of government and corporations in research results, and the consequences of so-called "neutral" research. It tried to begin the development of the idea of what would be a true "science for the people."

People's Science

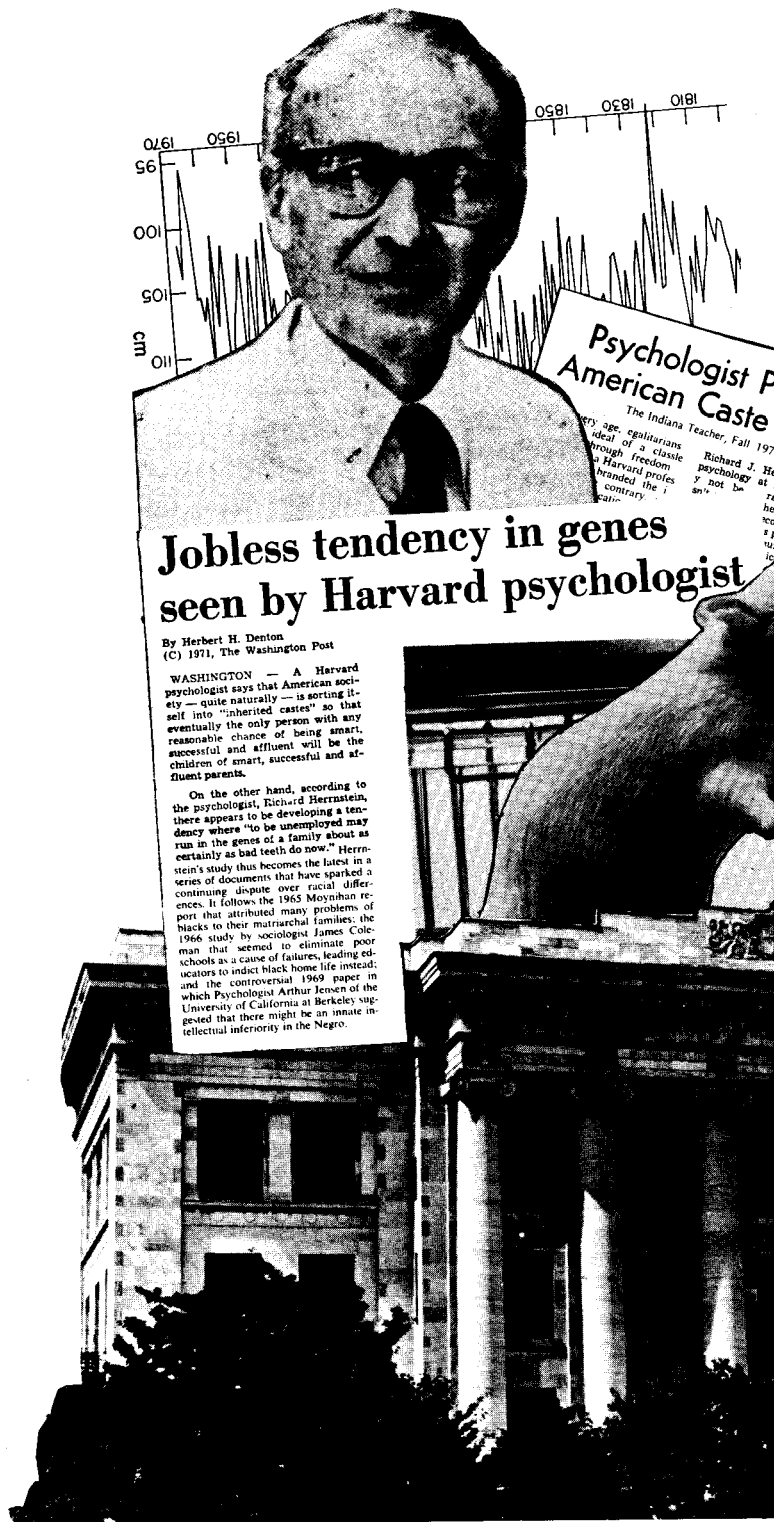
As the organization grew, so did its scope of activities. In Boston, SftP tried to implement people's science through the Technical Assistance Project (TAP) in cooperation with the Black Panthers and other local groups. The idea behind TAP was to demystify technology by teaching people basic technical skills, like working on automobiles, sound systems, chemical analyses and self-defense mechanisms. This was the beginning of returning control to the people. Unfortunately, the project was never really successful for a number of reasons, including the fact that TAP members ended up doing all the work themselves instead of teaching others.

Another people's science project was motivated by the desire to contribute scientific services to national liberation struggles. SftP meetings in the summer of 1971 led to the creation of the Science for Vietnam project. Science for Vietnam had chapters in several cities and cooperated with similar movements in Europe by sending textbooks and technical information to North Vietnam.

Another aspect of developing a science to serve the people was demystifying science and explaining it so people could understand how science affected them. SftP's early interest in science teaching brought it to vocal attendance at the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) conferences in 1971, 1972 and subsequent years. Issues raised at the NSTA included the role of science education and tracking in society, and the "hidden curriculum" of social myths being conveyed in science textbooks. A small group in Boston began to meet in conjunction with SESPA to develop alternative curricula and resources for high schools. Veterans of several NSTA conferences, they began staging their own one-day conferences for local teachers. The March 1973 and December 1974 conferences included workshops on teaching political issues in science classes and creating science and society courses. The April 1977 conference entitled "Inequality and Schools" attempted to respond to the Boston school busing crisis. Science Teaching Groups doing similar work have since sprung up in several other chapters as well.

IQ, Genetics, and Biological Determinism

SftP has applied its analysis to many issues in science and technology: energy and the environment, occupational health, imperialism in the Third World, the plight of scientific workers as well as professionals and science teaching. But the organization has played a par-



ticularly important role in the genetics and IQ controversy. Genetics research is the Establishment's latest hope for a technical panacea for society's ills. On the other hand, biological determinism has a long history of trying to find "scientific proof" of the inferiority of women, blacks and working class people. Since 1971, with the outpourings of Herrnstein, Jensen, and others claiming racial bases of intelligence, SftP has led the fight against this latest attempt to justify racism and the status quo. SftP made sure the IQ issue was not ignored at the International Genetics Congress in 1973.

Another use of biological determinism was appearing in the form of assertions that XYY males were genetically predisposed to criminally aggressive behavior. The Genetic Engineering Group of the Boston chapter took action to discredit these assertions and succeeded in stopping Harvard University research with newborn XYY males in the winter of 1974. In 1975, the Genetic Engineering Group moved from the XYY research issue to a public campaign against the dangers of Recombinant DNA research. They spoke out within the scientific community which was wrestling with the creation of guidelines for research funded by the National Institute of Health. This SftP group (now the Recombinant DNA group) also testified at the Cambridge, MA city council hearings in 1976 on the need for public control of potentially dangerous biological research. The Science for the People chapters in Amherst, MA and St. Louis, MO were also active in bringing the Recombinant DNA issue to the attention of their city councils.

Biological determinism again reared its ugly head with the publication and popularization of a massive book by Harvard's E.O. Wilson, *Sociobiology: The New Biological Synthesis*. Groups opposed to sociobiology started meeting within the Boston, San Francisco and Ann Arbor chapters of Science for the People. In the fall of 1975 the Ann Arbor chapter spon-

sored a conference at the University of Michigan on biological determinism. The various speakers attacked this new ideology, disguised as an objective scientific theory, for being merely a rationalization of the bourgeois status quo. The conference speeches were gathered into a book, *Biology as a Social Weapon* (Burgess Publishing Co., 1977). Science for the People groups continued to work at discrediting sociobiology, both as bad science and as reactionary ideology, sponsoring public forums at Stony Brook and Boston in 1977, and a symposium at the February 1978 AAAS meeting in Washington, D.C.

China Trip

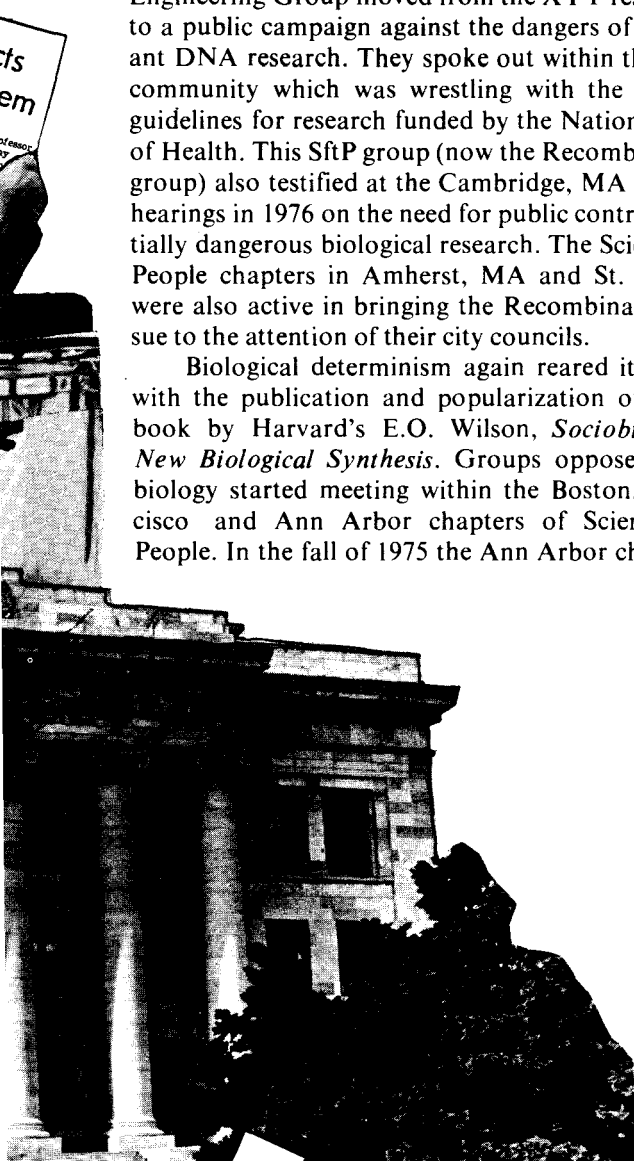
One of the notable events in SftP history was the visit in 1973 of ten SftP members to the People's Republic of China. China had been the focus of considerable study in SftP because of the Chinese commitment to developing a nonelitist science that would serve the interests of the people. The SftP delegation was one of the first to travel to China from the U.S. after the Cultural Revolution. They visited research institutes, universities, factories, agricultural communes, and even a mental hospital. They discussed social and political issues — who decides what kind of research is pursued, how these decisions are made and how they are implemented. Upon returning from China, the ten authored a book called *China: Science Walks on Two Legs*, that described their experiences and gave many examples of People's Science actually being practiced. A second delegation has recently returned from the PRC. The focus of their trip was agriculture, and food production and distribution.

Current Directions

SftP has been fairly successful working within professional academic circles. However, 1977 marked a move, spurred on by the women's caucus, towards activities rooted more in the surrounding communities and less university oriented. More effort has gone into working in coalitions with groups like INFAC, Mobilization for Survival, and United Farmworkers, as well as local groups. Various chapters have offered workshops and forums in places like food co-ops and public libraries, and some are developing resources for people to use who need information but do not have scientific expertise.

The Magazine

Science for the People magazine is nearly as old as the organization itself. In 1970, with the eighth issue of the SESPA newsletter, people in Boston decided to change the format of the newsletter to that of a "news-magazine" that would include articles of increased depth and analysis. The new format, it was hoped,



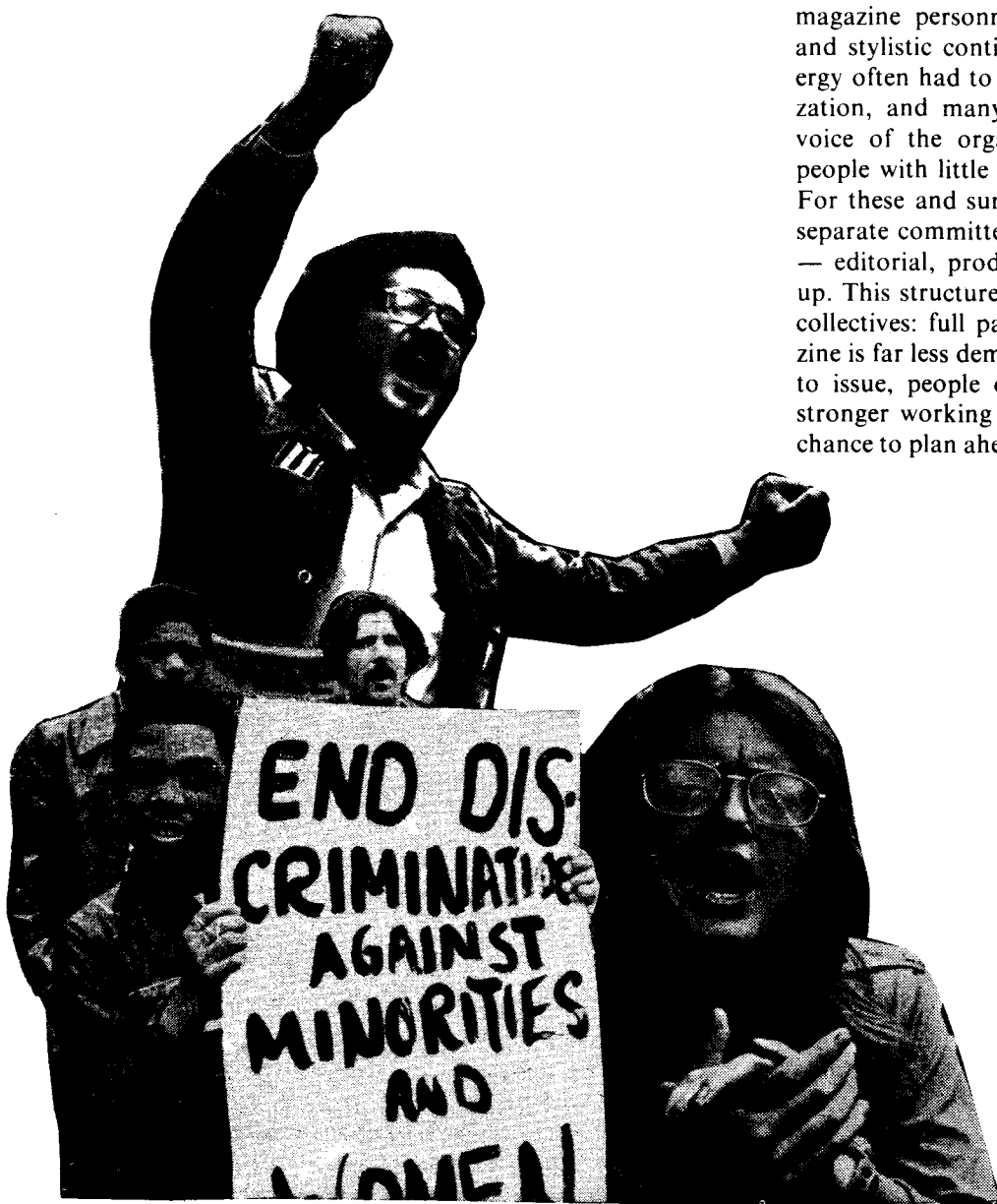
would appeal to nonmembers and attract new people to the group while continuing to act as a forum for discussion of organizational activities. Early issues included articles about scientific and technical workers organizing, critiques of establishment science and exposes of the abuses of science and technology.

This more extensive format required more time and organization than the old newsletter. Rotating collectives of 4-6 people took on the responsibility for production of one whole issue from start to finish. This structure ensured that people would learn a wide range of skills (typesetting, layout, etc.) while demystifying the production process and avoiding dependency on or control by any one person or group. Of course, there were varying degrees of commitment to putting out the magazine. Some people worked tremendously hard on

one issue, burned out and were never seen again. And although volunteers worked on production on an ad hoc basis, it was because of a handful of dedicated members that the magazine always came out.

As the magazine grew in size and circulation, it became increasingly evident that a group of people holding full time jobs could not produce a quality magazine in their spare time without significant help. In 1973, a Magazine Coordination Committee (MC²) was set up, and a paid position of magazine coordinator was created to aid the committee in establishing stability and continuity in the magazine and in organizing production.

Although the editorial collectives seemed to be a good idea they proved to have many drawbacks in actual practice. Too much time and energy went into recruiting each new collective, while wholesale replacement of magazine personnel was thought to prevent political and stylistic continuity. Moreover, new labor and energy often had to be recruited from outside the organization, and many members objected to the national voice of the organization being determined by new people with little familiarity with its history and goals. For these and sundry other reasons, late in 1974 three separate committees with slowly rotating memberships — editorial, production, and distribution — were set up. This structure has proven more successful than the collectives: full participation in the work of the magazine is far less demanding, there is more continuity issue to issue, people on a committee are able to develop stronger working relationships, and there is more of a chance to plan ahead for future issues.



The magazine has been a crucial activity of the organization as it has tied together the various chapters and isolated individuals scattered throughout the country and has been the primary tool of outreach for the movement as well. It has been the general feeling, however, that it is important for chapters outside Boston to become more involved in magazine work. But the logistics of this have never been worked out satisfactorily. The Stony Brook chapter did produce two issues of the magazine (in 1974) and a number of individuals outside Boston contribute editorial work, but the magazine has predominantly been an activity of the Boston Chapter.

Over the years, the content and style of the magazine have changed considerably along with the production process. During the early '70's, many articles naturally targeted war-related research. The language was confrontational, often rhetorical, and the appeal was mainly to people who already shared our political perspective. In the last few years, there has been a real effort to speak to a broader audience. While we still maintain a radical analysis, we now try to avoid articles that are overly technical or steeped in political jargon. We are also more concerned to show how the scientific issues to which we address ourselves relate to the conditions and struggles of the nonscientific working population. Feminism has also come to play an important role in the magazine, both in the number of articles that specifically concern women and in the expression of a feminist point of view around a variety of issues.

Organizational Structure

Science for the People is organized as a loose federation of chapters. Each chapter is autonomous in that its activities are determined by the needs and interests of the members. Many chapters are divided into groups that focus on specific issues like energy, nutrition, genetic engineering, etc. But, because there is no mechanism for nation-wide discussion and decision-making, the organization as a whole has not actually taken a position on any of these issues.

Regional conferences have played an important role in binding together and overcoming isolation of chapters. They were originally called in order to define our politics more clearly and to develop a wider organizational base with an eye towards organizing on a national level. The conferences (Eastern — 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978; Western — 1973, 1978; Midwestern — 1974, 1977, 1978) have built a stronger network of communications between the chapters and have hosted some important discussions around activities and problems of SftP and the magazine. While the changes have been slow, over the years there has been some progress made towards more coordinated actions, and a national conference has been planned for March, 1979.

The establishment of a Science for the People office in Boston has been an important factor in stabilizing the organization. It has functioned more as a central clearinghouse for information than as a national headquarters, however, and has provided a fixed location for production of the magazine. Initially, the "center" was located in donated space in a house owned by one of the members. Office work was done on a volunteer basis. In 1972, after considerable debate about having any "paid workers" and about job description, the membership decided to have a "compensated" office coordinator to organize and teach people about office tasks, define problems and weaknesses, and work with the steering committee (representatives from each activity group plus at-large members). In 1974, the office was moved to rented commercial space and then again in 1976 to its current, more centrally accessible and somewhat larger space.

The office, the magazine and the two part-time staff people (the second being the magazine coordinator, first hired in 1973) have provided the organization a center and a focus. The fact that this activity — and thus much control over the organization as well — is located in Boston has created a considerable imbalance of power among chapters. While people have tried to be sensitive to this, and numerous schemes and resolutions have been proposed to involve other chapters more directly in magazine work and organizational decision-making, it is only recently, with the number, size and strength of other chapters growing, that there is serious (and welcome) challenge to the "Bostocentricity" of the organization.

Politics of Science for the People

At certain points in our history the issue of establishing a definite political identity dominated our time and energy, but for the most part our politics have remained unformalized and implicit in our actions. To some people viewing us we seemed to avoid politics all together, and yet to others we have seemed overly political.

Since we were founded as a "non-organization" with no constraints on membership, our members have spanned the left spectrum and have included Marxist-Leninists progressive-liberals, anarchists, democratic socialists and many others. With a few significant exceptions, Science for the People has tried to be an organization in which most left-progressive people would feel comfortable.

However, some of us have felt dissatisfied with our amorphous political image. Shouldn't we have a political program both to present to prospective members and to specify our own priorities? One attempt to establish principles of unity was made in 1974-1976 by a

group of members who came to be called the Unity Caucus. The Unity Caucus proposed a draft of principles of unity based on an anti-imperialist and leadership-by-the-working-class analysis. Other members of Science for the People reacted very negatively to the struggle for adoption of these principles, feeling pushed and fearing that any set of strict principles would be used to limit membership and to exclude long-time members from the organization. Also, the concept of working class leadership raised questions about the role professionals should play. Some resistance to the principles of unity came from the academic background of many of our members who were personally uncomfortable with the self-criticism implicit in the principles and who wanted to avoid any group definitions. Many people opposed the way the Unity Caucus put forth their politics, their insensitivity and inability to relate them to the particulars of SftP. Some members felt that the Unity Caucus' belief in their own position being the best and only way to define Science for the People would lead to cleavage rather than unity. It is important to note that the Unity Caucus included some strongly committed and influential founding members of the organization. When the Unity Caucus failed in their struggle, they left the organization.

The experience of Science for the People with the Unity Caucus led to an unfortunate backlash against virtually any political discussion from which the organization is only now starting to recover. Reacting to the feeling of being pushed to define a definite political line, members in post-Unity Caucus days have been wary of any sense of the "right way." In this political vacuum, many of us have backed off from sharing our experiences and political views and from defining our organization explicitly even as anticapitalist or prosocialist. As the organization grows larger and other chapters besides Boston grow stronger, however, there is more and more interest in developing a national decision-making structure or at least a stronger network. Increasingly over the years some members have felt the need for the organization at least to develop a more detailed and coherent analysis of science and to define our goals and strategies for reaching them more explicitly. At the same time, we want an organization which allows for the expression and discussion of different points of view. That there is room in SftP for people to differ has been one of the strengths of the organization.

If the growth of a national organization is to continue, some important questions must be raised about our goals and strategies. We do not expect many of these questions to be resolved; maintaining a consciousness of the issues has been an important process for the organization. Through evaluation and self-criticism, we hope to learn from our past experiences and increase the effectiveness of our work.

One question is who should be in Science for the People? In the popular media we are usually portrayed as a small group of professional academic scientists. While some of our members are indeed academics, SftP has a broader base which includes students, high school teachers, health workers, industrial scientists, and many people who work outside science are all part of the group. But, SftP, although committed to supporting women, Third World and working-class struggles, has remained predominantly a white, college-educated, professional organization. This to some degree reflects the class composition of the science world, but it also reflects just how little impact our work in SftP has had on the nonscientific public.

We have supported many progressive struggles such as those of the United Farmworkers, the J.P. Stevens textile workers and the unionizing efforts of technical and medical workers, but with varying amounts of energy and attention and without any systematic approach. We have also looked within the communities we live in to find what are the issues which we want to support, but we have not been integrated into our neighborhoods as a place community people often come to or look to for help.



To whom are we addressing ourselves? Who is our audience and constituency? We have consistently and successfully targeted the scientific worker, but we are also concerned with talking to other workers in the contexts of their workplace and their communities. This task has, to date, received comparatively little of our energies, however, and has been met with a corresponding degree of success.

How should our political viewpoint be reflected in our organizational structure? SftP has long been committed to working as a collective or group of collectives with no one member vested with more power than any other. Decisions are made democratically, and almost always by consensus. There are no officers, no directors, no bosses. Working this way entails controversy and struggle. It can be time consuming and frustrating. But it is also a crucial aspect of developing mutual respect for one another, commitment and responsibility to the organization, and generally raising the level of political understanding.

Problems of sexism, racism and elitism have emerged repeatedly in our work as well as in the internal process of the organization. Self-proclaimed radicals can still be elitist, sexist and racist and act in ways that discourage participation of non-whites, women or people without college degrees. We realize that changing this takes time and continual struggle — especially for many of us who come from backgrounds (particularly academic) that foster such attitudes and encourage an isolated, individualistic workstyle. But in order to change society, we must transform ourselves in the process.

Progress has been made, especially in the area of sexism. In the early years, women had to struggle to be heard on this issue. Some women left the organization to devote their energies to fighting sexism elsewhere. More recently, other women have succeeded, through the support of women's caucuses, in making the organization take seriously the whole issue of personal process. It has become clear that workstyle, tone of meetings, and such have been barriers to effective political action in many radical organizations. It is therefore essential to change the ways of interacting that we bring into the organization from the outside society by concerted and consistent evaluation and criticism of our own process.

Impact of SftP

It is difficult to assess the importance or impact of SftP. It will probably never be clear, for example, what our effect was in the anti-Vietnam war movement. Even our role in the separation of Department of Defense research labs from universities such as MIT is of unknown significance, in light of the continuation of the same research in now independent military research labs.

In the scientific community, our critique of "bad science" has produced controversy and made other people more critical. The AAAS itself has become more open to political issues — a change for the good and one for which SftP deserves much credit. The AAAS will pass resolutions now which ten years ago it would not even discuss. Our effect is also clearly seen in the form letter now received by all organizers of AAAS symposia which spells out how to handle disrupters!

We have tried to show that no one issue in science exists in isolation. Unlike other groups who have fought the IQ and genetics issue, for example, SftP did so not on an issue-by-issue basis but from a general critique of science under capitalism. The same may be said of our work against sociobiology, which has been an important factor in the discrediting of this "discipline" among many scientists. At the same time, it must be noted that school curricula and college texts have started to include sociobiology as the "accepted wisdom" even as academics are backing off.

Science for the People has also had an important impact on its own members. One significant reason for our survival is clearly that the organization has been rewarding enough to some members for them to persist in putting great effort into its continuity. Over and over long-time members have told us such things as "involvement in Science for the People has balanced my professional work" or that "my activity group kept my mind working so I am not just following the typical career path". We have been told that SftP has offered a chance to "develop a new life style and to work according to my politics".

Of course, SftP has been far more than a comfortable support group for its members. In its activities and publications it has served as a forum for the development of a radical critique of science and its applications. This is an important task in a world in which the role of science is enormous and becomes larger every year. But SftP has, at the same time, come to appreciate the vital importance of internal process and the application of its political theory to its own practice.

Most organizations that originated during the Anti-War years have long since come and gone. SftP has not only survived, but has grown, in part because it was based on an understanding of the crucial role of science in supporting that war and the imperialist system generally. Obviously, neither imperialism nor the science and technology used to maintain it ended with the victory of the Vietnamese. But the key strength of SftP may be that it has not only offered a credible analysis, but has also provided alienated scientists, technical workers and others a framework in which to take action on scientific issues as they effect our jobs, our schools, and our communities. □

The photocollages for this article were created by Steve Karian, a Cambridge artist who is a member of Red Apple Art.

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Red Apple Art, a Marxist cultural group presently involved with graphics, oral history, and children's literature is looking for new members and new ideas. In the Boston area, contact Seth (628-3987), Carol (492-8076), or Steve (492-3267).

news notes

News about politically significant events in science and technology.

PBB INCOMPETENCE

A Michigan judge has ruled that the aftermath of the state's PBB disaster — during which over a million contaminated farm animals were destroyed — was not the fault of the chemical agricultural co-op companies involved, but rather of a few “incompetent and dishonest” farmers, scientists and lawyers.

Many animals exposed to large amounts of the toxic fire retardant, accidentally mixed with cattle feed in 1973, became ill and died, and it was recently learned that the chemical continued through the food chain, eventually affecting eight million Michigan consumers.

About 500 claims against the Velsicol Company have already been settled out of court. But these claims involved cases of high-level PBB exposure. Then a dairyman named Roy Tacoma, who unknowingly gave his cows feed contaminated by low-level PBB residue, contended that although the cows showed PBB levels below Food and Drug Administration guidelines, they were still sick and dying.

But Michigan Judge William Peterson didn't agree. He said cows exposed to low levels of the chemicals were needlessly destroyed, victims of irrational fear and “the self-justification of people with potential claims.” He even chided the chemical and co-op companies for having contributed to the atmosphere of “rumor and exaggeration” by agreeing to generous out-of-court settlements. And he ordered Tacoma to pay the court costs, estimated between \$16,000 and \$20,000.

Farmers and consumers calling themselves the PBB Action Committee have organized a legal defense fund to farmers, including Tacoma, who wish to

carry their low-level exposure claims to court. For more information, contact PBB Legal Action Fund, PBB Action Committee, P.O. Box 135, Reed City, MI 49677.

—*Environmental Action*,
November 18, 1978

HIGH VOLTAGE PROTESTS

City-based energy activists, farmers and American Indians have joined to fight the 800,000 volt power transmission line being constructed from Underwood, N. Dakota to Delano, Minn., by Cooperative Power Association-United Power Association. This high priced gambit to transport power from a distant, nonunion coal source (North American Coal Co.) is opposed because: 1) there are unresolved health dangers from high-field low-frequency electromagnetic radiation, 2) the line is unnecessary to meet demand in this region, 3) its cost is to be borne by local consumers.

The 150-180 ft high towers will occupy 8,500 acres of farm land. The anti-power line alliance has developed over the past four years despite harassment from private cops and government agencies. Protests have led to over 200 arrests for interference with construction and trespassing. Most recently, on Oct. 29, 20 were arrested for trespass in support of Minnesota farmers resisting the power line's advance. Subsequent agitation focused on the punitive bail assessed and the approaching trial, and included a hunger strike on the part of those still in jail. The power companies, meanwhile, offer \$50,000 reward for information leading to conviction of people responsible for the toppling of transmission towers. For more information and giving support, contact: Northern Sun Alliance, 1513 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404, 612-874-0373.

INTERNATIONAL VOICES OF SCIENCE CRITIQUE

Last March, representatives of six European publications which share a militant, critical stance on the role of science in capitalist countries, met to discuss strategies, common goals and cooperation. (Four other journals, including *SftP*, were invited but not represented.)

The participating publications were: *Impascience* (Paris, France; 3000 circ., 600 subs.); *Radical Science Journal* (London, England; 2500 circ., 750 subs.); *Revoluon* (Nijmegen, Holland; 600 circ., 300 subs.); *Wetenshap en Samenleving* (Maarsse, Holland; 2000 circ., 1200 subs.); *Cahiers Galilee* (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique; 700 circ., 300 subs.); and *Sapere* (Milano, Italis; 30,000 circ.).

Several of these journals are produced by collectives: *Radical Science Journal*, *Revoluon*, *Cahiers Galilee*, and *Sapere*; *Wetenshap en Samenleving* is the organ of two unions of science workers. The topics covered in discussion included 1) style, language, level of presentation and readers' response; 2) personal and professional aspects of militant, political activity related to science; 3) how broadly science should be covered.

There was general agreement that more coverage should be given to the use of science in political control — particularly cases of repression, and to the social context of science — especially more concrete analyses of case histories and counterexamples to simplistic social models. Besides deciding on cooperative arrangements, the group also agreed to sponsor another meeting during April 1979 to be held in Switzerland.

For more info contact SftP, 897 Main St. Cambridge, MA 02139.

REDIRECTING CONTRACEPTIVE RESEARCH

by Judy Norsigian

The following is testimony presented on behalf of the National Women's Health Network, at the March 8, 1978, Hearings on Contraceptive Research before the Select Committee on Population of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Research Priorities

First, as you may know, contraceptive research at present focuses heavily on hormones, drugs and invasive devices, such as hormone-releasing IUDs, prostaglandins, injectable progestogens, silastic hormonal skin implants and antipregnancy vaccines. At the same time, there is relatively little research on safer and cheaper mechanical and barrier methods, on contraceptives which act locally rather than systemically, or on methods which require no mechanical intervention whatsoever. Examples of such safer methods include the cervical cap, diaphragm, contraceptive sponge, ovulation method and thermal sperm control.

The safer contraceptive methods also tend not to require physician intervention, thus providing low cost, easily accessible birth control for more people. Particularly good examples are the contraceptive sponge, which requires no fitting, and the ovulation method, which requires no mechanical intervention.

Those of us active in the women's health movement are concerned that present funding is too heavily weighted toward drug and device research. Too often such research has exposed human subjects, mostly women, to serious adverse consequences. In cases where insufficient research has resulted in premature approval of contraceptive methods, much larger female popula-

tions have been exposed unnecessarily to dangers. The sequential Pill and Dalkon Shield are two well-publicized examples of this, although all Pills and IUDs might well be classified as unjustifiably hazardous in light of the extensive and increasing documentation of Pill and IUD risks. This latter point is further corroborated by hundreds of letters sent to those of us who coauthored *Our Bodies Ourselves*. In addition, adverse consequences of contraceptive drugs and devices account for a surprisingly large number of hospital admissions, which are both expensive and traumatic for the women involved.

It is alarming to note that in 1976 out of \$70 million spent worldwide on contraceptive research outside of the drug industry, only \$50,000 was spent on barrier method research.(1) Safe birth control methods do not receive priority by those who control the research dollars, while potentially dangerous methods do attract the majority of funds. We urge a major reordering of priorities, so that research on the safer birth control methods mentioned above receive the greatest emphasis. New priorities would also include research on better ways to communicate information about birth control methods. How well a method is understood weighs heavily on how effectively it is used. Too much emphasis has been, and continues to be, placed on the presumed passivity of women and on the desirability of methods requiring little or no active participation. Too little attention is now paid to basic body education and to those settings in which we learn best. For example, the self-help model used in many women-run health centers improves use-effectiveness of barrier methods as well as the ovulation method. Also, the intensive education model used with teenage women in some family-planning clinics demonstrates that existing barrier methods, like the diaphragm, are much more effective than previously thought.(2)

Judy Norsigian is a member of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective and co-author of Our Bodies, Ourselves, as well as a member of the board of directors of the National Women's Health Network.

Male Researchers

With respect to the question of who does research, I call your attention to a 1976 GAO report to the Congress entitled, "Federal Control of New Drug Testing Is Not Adequately Protecting Human Test Subjects and the Public." This report concludes that lack of adequate monitoring and lack of compliance with testing requirements has failed to protect thousands of human subjects from unnecessary hazards of new drugs and has failed to guarantee that test data used in deciding whether to approve new drugs for marketing is accurate and reliable. I quote from page nine, which discusses a special FDA survey completed in 1974: "Our review of the inspection results indicated that, of the 155 clinical investigators inspected, 115 (74%) failed to comply with one or more requirements of the law and regulations." We believe that this problem of noncompliance exists in the narrower area of contraceptive drug research.

In this context it is interesting to note that most contraceptive investigators are male and hence have little direct understanding of the practical impact of their research on women. According to the inventory of population research projects listed in the NIH report, *Inventory and Analysis of Federal Population Research*, over 80% of federally funded investigators in the areas of contraceptive development and contraceptive evaluation during 1976 were males. It is of no small significance that these male investigators will never have to use the methods that they develop. Moreover, we believe that their focus on the biological model and their fascination and involvement in the research process sometimes overshadows their concern for the well-being of research subjects.

In our opinion, there needs to be more research conducted by community-based women's health centers which have worked directly with those who are intended to benefit from this research. Furthermore, subjects should play a major role in designing and/or approving the research design. We believe that such an approach would result in stricter adherence to research protocol. Research of this kind is already taking place at several women's health centers, but on a limited scale.⁽³⁾ It should be expanded and should receive further support from both public and private sources.

Male Policy Makers

Our third area of concern is policy-making. Private organizations like the Population Council, Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, Planned Parenthood, and drug companies, as well as the federal government, sponsor practically all current contraceptive research, setting priorities for this research as well. Policy-makers for these organizations are also primarily males, who make decisions with little or no input by the

many users of contraceptives, who supposedly benefit from the research. I call your attention to the composition of the Interagency Committee on Population Research, established in 1970, which makes federal policy recommendations regarding population research. Among the eighteen Committee members listed in the *Inventory and Analysis of Federal Population Research*, only one is a woman. Similarly, in the case of a private organization, only 4 women sit on the 18-member Board of Trustees of the Population Council.

An example of policy recommendations that almost totally ignore the areas of safer research we are advocating may be found on page 40 of the *Inventory and Analysis of Federal Population Research*:

1. Development of male contraceptive methods and techniques, including studies of combinations of known drugs and new delivery systems.
2. Synthesis of new chemical agents for the regulation of female and male fertility.
3. Expanded screening capabilities as well as accelerated assessment of new and old chemical entities.
4. Critical biological assessment of biodegradable drug delivery systems.
5. Investigation of new methods for reversible and permanent sterilization of both males and females.
6. Development of a long acting female contraceptive method.
7. Increased research on intrauterine devices.
8. Support of clinical studies required by FDA to expedite the availability of new methods.
9. Assessment of the mode of action of post-ovulatory contraceptives.
10. Development of technology for the detection of ovulation and utilization of such technology for family-planning purposes.

These recommendations were submitted by the ICPR Committee, composed of 17 men and one woman. We doubt if a committee composed primarily of women — consumers as well as researchers and government administrators — would have presented a similar list of recommendations.

It is our position that women should be creating policy on behalf of women, at the very least, and that all users of contraceptives should have a significant voice in determining what kind of research is funded. To the extent that birth control is still primarily the responsibility of women, and that women are the ones who bear the major consequences of childbirth, as well as the risks and serious complications of birth control, women should have a major voice in determining which contraceptive research priorities will best meet their needs.

Currently, the National Women's Health Network (NWHN) is conducting a nation-wide survey of over 100 women's health centers and women's health education groups to establish what women's health organizations see as their contraceptive research priorities. When complete, this study will be a first-of-its-kind, revealing what kind of research women want and expect the government to fund.

The Network is particularly concerned that the whole issue of contraceptive research be viewed in the context of the rising incidence of sterilization abuse. The widespread absence of safe and effective birth-control methods and the promotion of newer, more hazardous contraceptives, coupled with the withdrawal of abortion services, especially for poorer women, has forced more and more people, both men and women, to submit to sterilization as the solution to fertility control. At this time, we urge a moratorium on all funding for new experiments with new sterilization methods and recommend further investigation into the consequences of current methods of sterilization.

The medical establishment, including government and private organizations, universities, and industrial supply corporations, presently promote research which emphasizes patents, profits, and the development of new technologies. The NWHN recommends a shifting of priorities so that safer contraceptives, for both men and women, can be developed and marketed in a timely manner. Towards this end the NWHN would be pleased to work with members of this Committee on the development of specific recommendations to Congress.

Following are some questions submitted to Ms. Norsigian following her testimony, along with her responses.

You state that over 80% of the federally funded contraceptive research projects are conducted by males. Do you know for a fact whether or not large numbers of women actually applied (or apply) for such research grants and did (do) not get them? In addition, you state that these investigators are people who "will never have to use the methods that they develop." Isn't there a fair amount of work being done, and I assume that it is being done by men, in the area of reproductive biology of and contraception for men?

No, I do not know for a fact whether or not large numbers of women applied for research grants. I would guess not, as they now represent a fairly small percentage of all researchers. I refer you to *Personnel Needs and Training for Biomedical and Behavioral Research*, 1977 report of the National Research Council (NAS): see chapter 8, "Minorities and Women" (including information in the Appendix). This report notes that women in the biomedical and behavioral sciences are

likely to encounter greater problems in the utilization of their training than men.

In 1976 in particular, there was considerable funding in the area of male contraception. However, the majority of research, especially now, is still focussed on women. I am not sure that this is inappropriate, since women are the ones who ultimately become pregnant and give birth. I do think that far more women must be involved in the research process.



Our Bodies, Ourselves/cpf

In your testimony you emphasize that current research "focuses heavily on hormones, drugs, and invasive devices, such as hormone-releasing IUDs, prostaglandins, injectable progestogens, silastic hormonal skin implants and anti-pregnancy vaccines." While it is perhaps understandable that pharmaceutical companies would so direct their research efforts, you also note that only a small fraction of the funds spent worldwide on contraceptive research outside of the drug industry have been devoted to barrier method research. How do you explain this strong general bias towards drug research?

There are probably a number of reasons for the bias towards drug and invasive device research. In the scientific community one tends to gain prestige by developing more sophisticated and technologically complex solutions. There is no glamour in pursuing more effective barrier methods, which do not, by and large, draw from the "exciting" recent advances in basic biomedical research. Unfortunately, the research which represents the most interesting scientific challenge does not necessarily produce the most socially useful results.

Yesterday witnesses were asked to suggest an appropriate balance of priorities between hormonal and non-hormonal contraceptive research, considering the increasing concern about risks associated with hormonal methods. One opinion was that, as long as a majority of women are using these methods, the research efforts should continue to focus on development of hormonal technologies. Could you please comment?

Women are using hormonal methods primarily because they are encouraged to do so. Please note the comments of Robert Hatcher, MD, in the article, "Update on Birth Control" (*Modern Bride*, April/May, 1978), as well as remarks made by other physicians. We could just as well focus our efforts on less risky methods. At the very least, we could put equal resources into further development of barrier methods and into their more effective use.

REFERENCES

1. From a fact sheet prepared by the staff of the Population Council (1978).
2. Lane, Mary E., et al., "Successful Use of the Diaphragm and Jelly by a Young Population: Report of a Clinical Study." *Family Planning Perspectives*, March/April 1976.
3. For further discussion of this, see "Emergent Modes of Utilization: Gynecological Self-Help," by Sheryl K. Ruzek, in the Proceedings of the Conference on Women and Their Health: Research Implications of a New Era (U. of California, SF, August 1975).

Upjohn, Depo-Provera and the Third World

The National Women's Health Network, representing both women's health groups and individual consumers and providers from across the country, has been protesting efforts of the Upjohn Company to seek FDA approval of Depo-Provera as a contraceptive. Use of this injectable contraceptive, a known carcinogen associated with serious risks and harmful side effects, represents a major threat to the health and well-being of women, and possibly to their offspring as well.

Many serious side effects of the drug Depo-Provera are well-known including the fact that Depo-Provera has in the past:

- 1) Been shown to cause malignant breast tumors in beagle dog studies.
- 2) Shown evidence of increasing the risk of cervical cancer in women who use it.
- 3) Been shown to increase the incidence of irregular bleeding disturbances, necessitating the administration of estrogen to control the bleeding.
- 4) Been associated with a risk of congenital malformations in humans exposed to the drug during pregnancy.
- 5) Been shown to cause long-term infertility and possible permanent sterility in many women after they have ceased taking the drug, and
- 6) Been linked to numerous other undesirable side effects such as weight gain, acne, hair loss, severe mental depression, etc., as shown in over 125 affidavits from women who have received the drug for contraception in the Los Angeles area.

To date, the long-term safety of Depo-Provera has not been established, and yet, according to Philip Corfman, Director of the Center for Population Research, it is estimated that "3 to 5 million women presently use this drug as a contraceptive worldwide." This represents another massive experiment like those of the Pill and DES, which have caused severe and unnecessary damage to thousands of women.

Furthermore, in some countries, lactating mothers have been urged to use Depo-Provera despite the fact that infants may suffer from the ingestion of Depo-Provera in breast milk. Promotional material for this drug distributed by Upjohn in parts of Africa is particularly irresponsible in this respect: One brochure recently

sent to the Network depicts a mother breastfeeding her child, along with the caption: "Now, when she most desires dependable contraception."

As the following remarks of the chairperson of the National Council of Women of Kenya indicate, women in Africa are concerned about the widespread and indiscriminate use of Depo-Provera:

We are told that few women in developed nations are on the injection — (Depo-Provera), yet we have evidence that this method is now being used almost indiscriminately in our country. Claims of strict control by the Ministry of Health appear very questionable. What control does the Ministry have over Private Doctors who advise large numbers of women?

We need urgently and sincerely to ask ourselves whether we would jeopardise the health of our nation in our effort to control 'the population explosion'. It is crucial that we establish our own research and even encourage direct and independent research into the whole area of Family Planning, as to long-term effects of modern Family Planning methods. We must never become the dumping ground for any half-baked methodologies and drugs which the originators (for reasons well known to themselves) are unwilling to administer to their own people.

(—*Kenya Woman*, V.1, No. 6, 1978)

On behalf of women in both the United States and other countries the Network has been urging the FDA to maintain its current position on Depo-Provera, that is, to reject Upjohn's new request for FDA approval of Depo-Provera as an injectable contraceptive (via an appeals mechanism). The Network also urges other individuals and groups to write to Donald Kennedy, Commissioner of the FDA, to make their views known. Anyone wishing further information on this should contact the Network, c/o Judy Norsigian, Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Box 192, West Somerville, MA 02144. Or: The Institute for the Study of Medical Ethics, Box 17307, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

Reports from Two SftP Conferences

I. MIDWEST REGIONAL

The Midwest Regional Meeting of Science for the People took place in East Lansing, Michigan on November 11 and 12, 1978. There were about 20 members present from St. Louis, Champaign-Urbana, Chicago, Ann Arbor and East Lansing.

On Saturday morning we set up the agenda for the meeting based upon the written suggestions proposed by the Ann Arbor chapter. We decided to discuss the magazine in the morning and to have a discussion of four different but related topics in the afternoon, preceded by chapter reports. These topics were:

1. Sociobiology, its relation to sexism and national oppression and a discussion of sexism in science vs. sexism in society.
2. The Bakke decision and SftP.
3. The conflicts between National Liberation movements and the Women's movement.
4. Sexism in SftP.

It was further proposed that we set up two work groups: one on the magazine and one on principles of unity for SftP. It was further agreed that the work groups would produce written proposals.

Then we agreed upon Sunday's agenda which was to be a discussion of the reports of the work groups and a discussion of chapter building.

MAGAZINE DISCUSSION

A member reported that he has been on the editorial board for 8 months but has had very little correspondence from Boston. It was remarked that at the last Midwest Regional we had made a proposal about an editorial committee, to attempt to systemize editorial work, but apparently these suggestions were not followed up. One member stated that it was his opinion that many of the problems originate in Boston, while another

person stated that he thought that the problems with the magazine's editorial policy also arise from the lack of responsibility of the chapters outside Boston. Another suggestion was offered, that the editorial work be done with a system of reviewers and editors spread throughout the chapters, where reviewers would state their interests and editors would have the responsibility to both solicit articles and send them to reviewers for consideration.

The discussion then shifted to the content of the magazine. One member suggested that some articles are rejected because they are too long and that serializing longer articles may allow the magazine staff to recruit more contributors. This was challenged on the basis that it might wreck the balance that the magazine now has (in terms of variety of articles and features of the magazine). Another member suggested that we might try to create a theoretical journal which could include longer articles which go into more depth than is appropriate for the magazine. It was also suggested that the magazine could have more on alternative technology and 'how to' articles.

Magazine distribution was then discussed. Members reported that actually going to bookstores every two months has been a successful method of distributing the magazine. Another member said she thought that local grocery stores might be a good place to try to distribute the magazine. Then it was suggested that we might look into how much it might cost to advertise in sympathetic national media. Another member suggested that we might try to swap advertising space in the magazine with similar space in other radical journals. It was also pointed out that radical publishing groups already exist and that we could try to contact them.

That concluded the discussion of the magazine. We then had a short discussion of principles of unity in order to try to direct the principles of unity work group. The major features of that discussion were that we might want to republish the different sets of principles of unity which were proposed several years ago, and that the work group focus on a minimal set of principles which reflect the reality of the unity we have already achieved in SftP and then try to deepen our unity during the course of our SftP activities.

AFTERNOON SESSION, SATURDAY

Chapter reports followed. St. Louis and Ann Arbor submitted written reports included elsewhere in this report. Champaign-Urbana reported on its activities which included: an economic study group; a course on science for the people; a miner support committee during the strike; working with anti-apartheid groups; working with the Prairie Alliance and other anti-nuke groups.

It was also reported that the Champaign-Urbana chapter was able to facilitate interaction between different left groups, but this has caused a confusion between the name "Science for the People" and the chapter's actual practice. This has combined with a general loss of contact with the "outside world" which, hopefully, will be re-established when the chapter begins outreach again.

The Chicago chapter reported that it has started to do work, but haphazardly. A nuclear power work group has started as has some preliminary work around affirmative action programs and remedial math courses at Chicago Circle. At the time of the meeting both projects were floundering, but not dropped. The Chicago chapter has about 10 members and is growing.

The East Lansing chapter reported that they are just starting and that they have about 5 or 6 people at their meetings. They presented a slide show about China, where about 20 people attended.

A member of the chapter wanted to know how to distinguish between programs which were mainly educational and programs which were aimed at recruiting new members. She also talked about how sociobiology is being pushed at MSU while the affirmative action programs had been undercut by many tactics including generating phony data for a computer study. She reported, in addition, that there is a split in the Women's Studies program and the Minorities' Studies programs at MSU and wondered about how to repair this split.

This concluded the chapter reports.

IDEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

One member suggested that the participants try to relate the discussion to their actual experiences and/or organizing projects.

The discussion of sociobiology was initiated with the observation that sociobiology is replacing the IQ-race-sex myth as the major ideological weapon to be used against women's and minorities' demands for social justice. Different administrators at the University of Michigan are seeing the claims of the sociobiologists as the reasons for the failure of their affirmative action programs. This is particularly important since the federal government is paying a great deal of attention to university affirmative action programs at the present. It was also pointed out that Wilson's new book, *On Human Nature*, was clearly designed to appeal to the 'cocktail circuit' — that is, the book has its main appeal in the executive-managerial strata, not necessarily in the technical-scientific strata. A member suggested that SftP might look into high-school science textbooks to see how sociobiology is/will be used in the schools to propagandise students.

The discussion then shifted to the role of sociobiology in supporting sexism in our society. Members pointed out that since sex itself is rooted deeply in biology, sociobiologists are attempting to portray sex roles as having the similar biological roots. This also appears in the attempt to define a 'normal' woman — i.e., a woman with children — which is being used as an excuse to prevent childless women from obtaining certain jobs.

A reason for this peculiarity is that a great many women who hold either feminist and/or other leftist views are seen as frequently being childless. The film, "Sociobiology: Doing What Comes Naturally," used the kibbutz in Israel as an example to show the 'genetic basis' of sex roles. The idea was that when the kibbutzim originated there was equality of the sexes, but now 30 years later most women on the kibbutzim have reverted to more traditional roles. The idea that the role reversal might be due to obvious political and economic forces was never considered in the film.

The Champaign-Urbana chapter reported that it had tried to establish some ties with the Society of Women Engineers, but failed because the Society has no political base — it is mainly seen as a service group. A member of the Chicago chapter stated that he thought that the people who are potentially affected by the claims of the sociobiologists may see the threat as being indirect at best and that our role is to make the issue more concrete.

Another member stated that he thought that the whole issue of sociobiology was not that important because most minorities and women would never believe such a theory. He claimed that the theory mainly benefits the ruling class. He also stated that Wilson's major appeal is to professionals, not to the broad masses of people. He claimed therefore that scientific criticism will not defeat sociobiology but that political criticism is the correct form of criticism. One person replied that she thought that sociobiology would be used at the point of struggle to delegitimize the mass movement and that is why we must take the struggle against sociobiology to the people. Another member added that she thought the arguments of the sociobiologists must be refuted point by point because these arguments are presented as 'facts' and this propaganda is used to undermine the confidence of oppressed people in their own just struggles.

Because of the time the discussion proceeded to the next item on the agenda: the Bakke decision. A member who has been involved in anti-Bakke work gave a short history of the Bakke decision, how the Trustees of the University of California had suggested to Bakke that he sue them for 'reverse discrimination', how they had lied in court

in claiming that the medical school at Davis had never discriminated against national minorities in the past, and this lie had paved the way for the Bakke case all the way to the US Supreme Court. One person pointed out that there are really 2 types of affirmative action programs: one type which opens the way to professions and another which opens the way to less skilled jobs. She wondered if this difference should affect our work. A person replied that he thought that the main problem here was to correct past discrimination and, although these differences exist, discrimination is the major enemy and not defending all affirmative action programs could divide the movements for national and women's liberation.

Two members expressed the idea that many of the problems encountered by minorities and women really start in high school and before, and in fact that by the time these people get to college it is too late. Maybe SftP should, therefore, get involved in organizing in high and elementary schools. Another member replied that we cannot ignore the people in our society who want an education and have not received it. To deny these people entrance to college is to deny them their last hope for a decent education, thus one of our thrusts should be to insure that adequate remedial educational courses are available. Questions were also raised on how SftP, a mainly white organization, can initiate programs around affirmative action. A member of the Ann Arbor chapter reported that faculty members at the University of Michigan have had some battles with the administration around the admission of women to the faculty and that one of these struggles had been successful through the threat of a lawsuit. It was also pointed out that university administrators twist the facts to suit their purposes — e.g. no matter what is claimed, money is always available if the program is considered a priority. A member of the Champaign chapter recounted how the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana was forced to create affirmative action programs in 1968. These programs were under the direct control of the students involved and were doing very well (including math tutoring), yet these programs were cut back or eliminated by the administration.

The question of the role of SftP in these struggles was raised again. One member suggested that besides actively participating in these activities we should attack on an ideological level — show people how the ruling class benefits from oppression. Furthermore it was pointed out that ideologies like those hidden in sociobiology or reflected in terms like 'math anxiety' are used to keep women and minorities out of the sciences. A member of the St. Louis chapter reported that sex roles are clearly defined in his lab, and that he sees this as being a common practice in other labs.

It was noted that political oppression very commonly results in a lack of self confidence and that as members of universities, that is one of the major forms of oppression that we observe. Another member pointed out that teachers can unconsciously undermine the confidence of his/her students and we need to determine how to spot this in order to expose it.

Time again terminated this discussion and we moved on to topic 3, conflicts between the women's movement and movements for national liberation. This discussion was started with the observation that different SftP chapters have played a role in trying to unite these two struggles. It was also pointed out that sometimes the left opposes liberal reforms like the ERA which does damage to any unifying efforts. Another member reported that it has been her experience that the above two movements are sometimes pitted against one another. Someone else stated that he thought that both movements are basic and cannot be satisfied under capitalism and that is why some reforms, like ERA, should be strongly supported.

The discussion shifted slightly when a member remarked that sometimes differences occur in practice and cited his experience in dealing with unions. He went on to suggest that in order to avoid disunity with different organizations involved in joint work, different chapters may have to loosen certain of their positions. Another member stated that he thought that sometimes the disunity that occurs in practice is the result of conflicts over goals, not short term projects and stated his experience with working with a gay group — apparently there was little political agreement between

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the two groups and much sexism was evidenced among non-gays.

A member of the Champaign-Urbana chapter stated that we should not look at the end product of affirmative action programs as the goal, but rather see the fight for affirmative action as being part of a longer struggle. He then went on to suggest that his chapter should focus more on sexism.

A member of the St. Louis chapter said that his priority is around sexism. His experience is that groups who deal with racism are less likely to deal with sexism than groups who deal with sexism are likely to deal with racism. He thinks this may be due to the facts that men and women have so much day-to-day contact with each other that sexism is so common as to go unnoticed, while members of different races have much less contact with one another so that racism is more clearly perceived.

A member of the Chicago chapter reported that the women's clinic that she belongs to sometimes makes short-term tactical alliances with other groups. Another woman reported that in Cuba institutional racism has been eliminated, but not institutional sexism.

Another member claimed that SftP has never dealt with gay issues. He stated that working class people are affected by gay issues more than one might suspect, but because working class people are not allowed the same freedom of sexual expression as middle

class people, homosexuality in the working class is less recognizable than in the middle class.

Another member stated that she believes that sexism is part of the culture of oppressed minorities. Thus, when national minorities fight for their rights and for the liberation of their culture, the sexism which is traditionally associated with the culture also comes out.

Finally a member stated that the oppression of gays is also fundamental in keeping the system going.

The discussion turned to the last topic, sexism within SftP. One member stated that there are so many meetings to go to that this sometimes gets in the way of taking up issues and cited conflicting meetings between some women's groups and SftP. Someone else stated that he thought sexism could be conquered in SftP the same way racism in SftP can be conquered, by recruiting more women and minorities into the organization and tackling both issues, at least as they occur in science. Another member brought up that the midwest regionals have always dealt with sexism, but hardly ever racism. This is, he contends, because of the petit bourgeoisie base of our organization — not because of under representation of minorities.

Another member stated that he thinks that SftP has not made much progress in dealing with sexism inside the organization. He feels that the personal

aspects of sexism have never been challenged. We have a very macho style reflected in the aggressiveness of the verbal and written approaches of many of our male members. The rest of this discussion is very hard to accurately piece together in that the note taker became too involved. The major ideas seem to be that not all of the women in the organization feel comfortable in meetings with so many competitive males. That some men see the criticism of their 'aggressiveness' as attempts to water down their politics. While other people pointed out that the criticism was one of style, not content. It was pointed out that, at least in St. Louis, women's leadership has changed things around a lot. Lastly another person suggested that some of the attacks against jargonism and aggressiveness sometimes seem more like veiled anticommunism.

MORNING SESSION, SUNDAY

The principles of unity work group read their proposed minimal set of principles for SftP. A member of the committee suggested that a summarization of the history of SftP would be helpful in the principles, to which was replied that such a summary would be more appropriate in an introductory flyer. The discussion then proceeded on two different topics: the principles of unity, and the introductory flyer. The flyer discussion will be summarized first. A member thought that the flyer should have broad appeal and suggested that therefore words like 'class' should be avoided. Several members replied that they thought that social classes are a reality and that we should seek to educate people to their existence. It was also suggested that a history of SftP could not only explain the role of social classes in our society, but could also show people concretely how the past experiences of SftP have led naturally to the inclusion of such notions in our literature.

Not all the chapters even agree with the principles expressed in the magazine, so unifying our organization should be a national priority. We cannot really write a flyer without a minimal set of unifying principles. A member of the Ann Arbor chapter suggested that we were really discussing four topics:

- 1) evolving principles of unity
- 2) minimal principles of unity
- 3) principles stated in a SftP flyer
- 4) principles stated in the magazine.

Further discussion defined more clearly the purposes and differences between these four categories of principles.

Evolving principles should be elucidated regularly in the IDB and/or the magazine (inclusion of such debate in the magazine is still open to debate). Principled political disagreement will exist and should be openly addressed.

Minimal principles are the principles that in fact all members of SftP accept. Minimal principles may be more detailed and extensive than what we would wish to publish as an introductory statement in the magazine or a flyer.

Statements in the flyer and magazine should accurately present the political perspectives of the organization but need not necessarily go into the sort of detail that exists in category No. 1 or 2.

Continuing, a member of the East Lansing chapter said that many members of SftP in Boston and Amherst would leave the organization if being prosocialist were a principle of unity and that that is an important consideration in defining principles of unity. Another member recalled that this very same issue (disagreement with socialist principles) also appeared the last time that this discussion occurred in SftP. He also wondered what it means to be an organization for social justice with 10 years of experience which cannot even agree on the existence of social classes let alone some form of socialism as a desirable goal.

Several other members pointed out that achieving unity among the midwest chapters would be useful even if that unity cannot extend beyond the midwest. A member cautioned that SftP is a mass organization which focuses on working on specific issues and we must be careful not to suppress ideas in the organization, for this would cut away at our base. It was also suggested that we may not have to stress specific agreement with a set of principles as a condition of membership, but rather agreement and/or acceptance of the general thrust of a set of principles. Another person pointed out that there is a difference

between the principles which already exist and the principles which we want to exist. Someone else said that there is no way to determine what principles actually exist without proposing some ourselves. We then moved on to proposing a rough set of topics which we all agreed should be incorporated into a set of principles. There were 14 specific points, which could be divided under three separate headings. They are:

Science and Society as They Now Exist

1. Science is not politically neutral.
2. Science is directed by the Bourgeoisie.
3. The lack of broad participation in science distorts the nature of scientific information and theory.
4. Sexism, racism and elitism divide the working class
5. Science cannot 'serve the people' under capitalism.

Goals of Science for the People

6. Science should respond to human needs.
7. People should have free access to scientific knowledge and training without regard to background.
8. Science should be demystified.
9. Science for the People is pro-socialist.

Strategy of Science for the People

10. SftP should support progressive reforms.
11. SftP is anticapitalist,
12. SftP is profeminist and anti-sexist,
13. SftP is anti-imperialist,
14. SftP will try to facilitate an alliance of the technical strata with other progressive forces.

The magazine workgroup next read its report (which, unfortunately, is not included here). As I remember, the report was an editorial reform proposal designed to bring more of the chapters outside of Boston into the editing of the magazine, thereby reducing the work load on Boston. A discussion followed which is meaningless without the document.

The meeting concluded after a short discussion on chapter building and the creation of the Midwest Regional Coordinating Committee and the formalization of the principles of unity and magazine work groups into ongoing projects.

II. EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

On September 29 and 30th, representatives of SftP chapters from Boston to Tallahassee met at the State University of New York at Stony Brook (Long Island) to discuss issues, prepare for the national meeting and renew old friendships. In contrast to previous regional meetings, very little preparatory work had been carried out with regard to the agenda, so a tentative agenda was prepared at a meeting on Friday night. Perhaps because the previous regional meetings have by now established a rhythm for the weekend, based on a plenary-workshop-plenary structure, the committee was able to come up with an overall plan for the meeting on quite short notice.

The Saturday morning plenary (full session) opened with a series of chapter reports describing a broad range of activities. The Washington DC chapter reported on educational activities around science and teaching in Cuba, a socio-biology workshop and work with public interest groups on energy issues. At Amherst, previous work with a committee set up by the town government to study the dangers of recombinant DNA research is being replaced by an interest in occupational health and safety issues among technical workers at the University of Massachusetts.

Tallahassee SftP started a chapter of the Catfish Alliance, a Southern anti-nuke group, and worked on educational projects such as a "Health Week" and a Sociobiology conference. They are also engaged in gathering books and educational materials for Dominica, an ex-British colony in the Caribbean, and they produce the "Resources" column in the magazine. The New York City chapter held a series of forums on topics such as "Women in Science" (Freda Salzman spoke) and "Health Hazards for Art Workers". The forums were

usually well-attended, but the core group remains small. The Stony Brook chapter has had scattered successful events around Sociobiology, food and nutrition, and China. They have also been engaged in an ongoing effort around energy issues, including a public debate with representatives of Long Island Lighting Company and Westinghouse on the virtues of and need for the Shoreham and Jamesport nuclear reactors.

Boston's main activity has been the magazine, with special emphasis on increasing distribution. Educationally oriented activities, such as new general study groups and a "Science for the People" course offered at the Food Coop and at public libraries, have brought in some new members. Unfortunately, some older groups, such as the Science Teaching Group, have dissolved or appear to be in danger of doing so.

A group active on China-related issues discussed activities that would result from the recent trip. These include a book on how decisions are made concerning the funding of scientific research in China, slide shows, and articles for SftP, Nature and other magazines.

After a brief and inconclusive discussion of the agenda, we moved into a discussion of SftP's ideology and practice. Various speakers recalled our early leadership on a broad range of specific issues, many of which are now the subject of mainstream debate, and contrasted this success with our recurrent inability or unwillingness to get organized, as exemplified by the non-implementation of many of the resolutions voted on at previous regional conferences. There followed considerable discussion about the difficulty of maintaining a reasonably high level of political debate without alienating newcomers or succumbing to factional rigidity. Our success as a "nucleating

center" for activities around particular issues as they come up was again emphasized, but the debate swung back towards the notion of consistent politics. Several people pointed out that we had had socialism "on the agenda" since a resolution describing SftP as pro-socialist was passed at the 1974 conference, that we should be more forthright, and that times have changed and socialism is no longer such a dirty word. Opposition was raised that newcomers might be discouraged by such an emphasis, while others stressed that what we do is more important than what we call ourselves. This then led back to discussion of how various SftP activities in nuclear power or health care could have been more effective had we had a more clearly defined line, which both related directly to the issues and provided a larger context in which to place the analyses of immediate struggles.

The familiarity of this discussion emphasizes its importance to the organization, but realizing that it will occur again at the national meeting, people turned to organizing the format and content of the afternoon workshops.

MAGAZINE WORKSHOP REPORT

Discussion in the magazine workshop centered around the issue of involving chapters and members outside of Boston in magazine work. Several goals and ideas were developed in the course of the workshop which, if implemented, should result in a considerably better magazine.

The most important suggestions concerned the dispersal of editorial work to members outside of Boston: to the extent possible, each chapter should designate two members to maintain contact with and function as members of the Boston Editorial Committee. These members will solicit articles, both from members and nonmembers, write book reviews, look for appropriate articles to reprint or translate, and send in newsnotes. Each member of the Boston Editorial Committee should have a "buddy" or "pen pal" from another chapter to provide one-to-one contact.

To improve communications, the Boston newsletter will be used to keep outside Editorial Committee members posted on articles that have come in or

are in the process of being reviewed and on planned topical issues of the magazine. Also, a description of magazine mechanics should be prepared — providing timetables for editing and production, the procedures for acceptance and rejection of articles and communications with authors and other important aspects of the process of preparing the magazine.

The importance of collective discussion of the politics of articles was stressed, along with the problems this raises for outside contributions to the editorial process. Workshop participants felt that substantive editing should be done by at least two people, and that those people should also try together to develop comments about the articles for "About This Issue": the problems this raises for outside editorial work were discussed, but only resolved to the extent of stressing the desirability of having two or more EC members in a chapter.

With respect to content, the workshop felt that the coherence provided by topical issues of the magazine (such as on education or health care) was desirable and that the increased focus might make it easier for other chapters to take on the whole editorial process for a single issue, as Ann Arbor is doing now with the May-June issue on food and agriculture.

The possibility of putting out a Spanish or bilingual edition was discussed, and the question referred to the distribution committee. Finally, the workshop endorsed the possibility of bringing in work teams from other chapters for a weekend to help with magazine production.

WORKSHOP ON NATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

We discussed the following topics, came up with proposals, and presented them to the Sunday morning plenary:

1) *National Conference*: We discussed the need for a national conference. Everyone supported the idea, with the strongest support coming from members of smaller or outlying chapters. People felt that any decisions arrived at such a national conference should be binding, i.e., should carry more weight (and override, if necessary) decisions made by the Boston chapter

and/or regional conferences. What everyone most strongly felt, however, was the importance of adequate preparation, without which the conference was not worth having. For this reason, people felt the conference should be postponed from December, as originally planned, to March '79 or until adequate preparations could be made. Issues should be discussed well before the conference, with position papers prepared in advance and circulated. The agenda should be set two months in advance and circulated. As far as planning, coordination and decision-making for the conference, people felt that an arrangement modeled on that used by the various SftP China groups to plan for their trip could be used. This would entail a network of contact people from each chapter or group who use the mail and phone to make collective decisions. Any chapter could initiate a proposal and get it ratified by sending copies of this proposal to all the other contact people and waiting an appropriate length of time for responses and votes. The Tallahassee chapter volunteered to assist Ann Arbor in whatever coordination may be necessary for the conference, especially with regard to facilitating communication with the Eastern Region through this kind of mail network. We presented a summary of the above discussion to the Sunday morning plenary session and there was general agreement on it.

2) *Regional Decision-Making*: We talked about the need for a minimum decision-making process or structure that could be used in times where it was not possible to use the general method of arriving at a decision on the regional level (which is first to thoroughly discuss the issue within chapters, then to send it in to the IDB, and finally to discuss and adopt it at a regional conference). One example of the kind of decision that might come up is the recent decision by the Boston chapter to raise the price of the magazine. In this case, and other cases, *not* to make a decision is in effect to make a decision. We suggested to the plenary session (which accepted the suggestion) that in such instances the mail-and-phone network used by the China groups in preparing for their trip be adapted as a model. The process of establishing this regional decision-making structure could itself be carried

out through the use of this same structure. The Tallahassee China group volunteered to write up for reference the details of the communications network used by the China groups.

3) *Third Staff Position*: People felt that continuing to have a third SftP staff person was a good idea, if it were feasible financially. However, the possibility of having this staff position located outside the Boston area should definitely be explored, with a call to other chapters, especially in the West and Midwest, to consider having a staff position located in their area. Chapters that are seriously interested should write up proposals justifying such a position and explaining how it would be used. People felt that if there were three staff positions, one of them could perhaps concentrate on organizing and outreach. This discussion was presented to the Sunday plenary, to general agreement.

FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

The financial workshop met, with representation from New York, Stony Brook, Washington, and Boston. We discussed the financial situation of the organization and made some resolutions to bring to the National Conference.

Fundraising

Peggy Lester reported on some of Boston's successful fund-raising efforts: (1) a pledge letter, (2) obtaining tax-exempt status, (3) a garage sale, (4) better magazine distribution.

We recognized that many active members aren't aware of the financial problems, so we designated one person from each chapter to be a contact person with responsibility for bringing up the issue of fundraising in his/her group.

Since the magazine is by far the most lucrative activity, we should put much more effort into its distribution. The magazine aids outreach, and we should encourage all active members to subscribe through Boston and make more of an effort to get book stores to carry it.

All publications of Science for the People subgroups or chapters should have the Boston address and a plug for the magazine.

Third Staff Position

We discussed the temporary position and tried to decide whether it should be

made permanent. Our final recommendation was yes, at least until after a final vote can be taken at the National Conference. The cons are that this will increase Bostocentricity. The pros are that it will allow more energy to be spent in fundraising, and allow coordinators to participate in the organization which they now have little time to do.

WORKSHOP ON RACISM SEXISM AND ELITISM

We spent most of our time discussing racism and what we can do about it. As a way of using our experiences in dealing with another issue to help us get started, we briefly traced the history of the organization's struggle against sexism. The following points came out in tracing that history:

1) The organization's most recent concern with sexism began with the formation of a feminist caucus at the 1977 Eastern Regional, which pushed people in the organization, who sometimes resisted, to recognize the extent of sexism both within Science for the People and in the larger society, and the need to oppose it in both spheres.

2) In the years prior to the 1977 conference, women in SftP had continuously struggled against sexism within the organization and had put together a special women's issue of the magazine.

3) Women in Science for the People, their numbers now increased (perhaps because of improvements in the organization's practice and in its support of women's issues), have continued to press the importance of antisexism; many men are more supportive than was true in the past, although problems remain — as is sometimes evident, for example, in the dynamics of our meetings.

4) For the last two years, there has been at least one article dealing with women's issues in each issue of the magazine.

5) Women within SftP feel more comfortable in the organization than they had previously.

The discussion then turned to racism. We felt that for Science for the People, an important difference between sexism and racism is that while there are significant number of women in the organization, there are very few Third World people. This means that if we are serious



about working against racism, it is necessary that whites in Science for the People take the initiative themselves. The organization cannot wait for members of the oppressed groups to push the issue as was possible (although not necessarily desirable) in the case of sexism.

Some people felt uneasy about addressing racism without the direct participation of Third World people: somehow it did not seem legitimate and could possibly be interpreted as patronizing. Others pointed out, however, that these feelings were more reflections of our own fears and anxieties concerning race than of political reality. In fact, Third World people — like women and all oppressed groups — need all the allies they can get, and it is in our own and everyone's interest to work to build a united left. Furthermore, even though Third World people and groups have not come to us, we cannot assume they would reject or resent overtures on our part. Although at first we may make some mistakes and step on some toes, the related tasks of opposing racism (in ourselves and the larger society) and building a united left are so important that we must be willing to take risks, to confront our internalized racism, to eliminate all forms of racial chauvinism.

We came up with the following list of concrete steps we can take to oppose racism:

1) Solicit and run on a regular basis articles that challenge people's racism and expose the economic, social and political basis of racism in our society.

2) Publicize Science for the People issues and activities to a broader community.

3) More explicitly explore the relevance to racism of the issue we work on; this is a good way both of aiding our understanding of the links between issues and reaching out to Third World people (an example of this was a forum on "Sociobiology and Racism" which was held in Cambridge and attended by many blacks).

4) Establish contact with Third World groups.

Although we did not have enough time even to begin discussing elitism, we did note that many people felt their understanding of elitism had been enhanced lately by analyses and exposures (e.g. through the magazine article on nursing) of how elitism often backfires and hurts those who had considered themselves beneficiaries of the elitist structure. So-called "middle-level professionals", such as nurses and technicians, have been discovering that their professional status, which often encourages identification with management rather than labor and stigmatizes organized opposition to management, means that they are impotent to pursue their interests. In terms of wages, benefits and job security, they have sometimes been surpassed by so-called "low-level" but organized workers.

We all felt that a good, simple way to improve and evaluate our work is, as was suggested by Bob Broedel, mechanistically to ask, "How does this work

relate to sexism, elitism, racism, imperialism?" Although this may seem trite, it is unfortunate that too often it is neglected.

WORKSHOP ON IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

We first held a general discussion on the nature of and necessity for political principles, and on the nature of (but not the necessity for) SftP. We then developed a specific proposal: that we make the political identity of SftP more definite, or at least express it more clearly. The workshop felt that increased clarity about our political identity, whether it involved actually changing that identity or simply expressing what is already implicit in our activities, would only help in both outreach and in internal activities such as organization building.

With this end in mind people wished to adopt as a starting point or base the "political principles" of the organization as currently expressed on the inside front cover of SftP magazine. These say that one of our purposes is "to expose the class control of science and technology" and that "SftP opposes the ideologies of sexism, racism, elitism and their practice, and holds an anti-imperialist world-view". People agreed to these "principles", and wanted to add further points, the main (or most controversial) one being that SftP was an organization fighting to bring about socialism. "Socialism" was defined using the basic, original and specific definition of the term: "common ownership of the means of production", to which we added the phrase "collective control of the means of production" as well. We also wanted to make the point that we are working to change our society into one structured in such a way that no one individual or group can accumulate a profit off of the labor of others, a society based on human needs rather than the needs of private profit.

Other points not having to do with socialism, but just as important to our political identity, were that SftP encourages people from *all* parts of the progressive political spectrum to participate in our activities and to become members of the organization (i.e., we are not exclusionary) and that a main focus of our activity is educational (both political and other kinds of education).

We presented a summary of this discussion at the Sunday plenary, but there was almost no time for discussion of our proposal, and so it was left that the proposal should be sent to the national conference and IDB for discussion, not as one adopted by the regional conference, but as a proposal coming from one of its workshops.

WORKSHOP ON POLITICAL WORK

Most of the discussion in this workshop centered on how to relate to other groups such as political organizations, public interest groups, or unions. Some individuals expressed a desire to stick to what SftP has traditionally done best: exposes of the political nature of scientific issues, consciousness raising in the scientific community, and technical assistance to political organizations. Others expressed a desire to see SftP expand its interests to include theoretical political writing, active participation in militant political movements and coalitions, and labor organizing around occupational health and safety issues.

During the discussion almost everyone had a story or two to tell about the benefits or disadvantages of work with other groups. These testimonials ranged from accounts of mutually beneficial, lasting relationships which encouraged political growth and tactical effectiveness to tales of SftP projects being swallowed whole by other organizations.

Some general guidelines for political work emerged from the workshop, but due to lack of time these were not ratified by the entire conference. They included maintaining the scientific and technical orientation of SftP in all our work, insuring that SftP subgroups maintain their autonomy when servicing other groups, encouraging more theoretical political discussion within SftP and renewing our efforts to reach a broader constituency by identifying scientific and technological needs in our local communities.

WORKSHOP ON NATIONAL ORGANIZING AND OUTREACH

Three main topics were discussed: relationships with other groups (alliances), organizing new chapters, the role of attending AAAS and NSTA meetings.

The first discussion centered on creating an alliance between SftP and

Clams for Democracy (CFD, a subgroup of the Clamshell Alliance). Several members of CFD were present and discussed the merits of CFD, why such an alliance would be desirable, and what form such an alliance would take. They suggested: a) technical assistance, b) sending "fact-finding" representatives to their Oct. 21 meeting in Providence, c) creating a SftP affinity group. The discussion broadened to encompass the larger problems of creating alliances: first we must define more who we are (what our goals are) before we can ally with other groups. We must also define the ways in which we can relate (in the past we've related to other groups by supporting them with articles in the magazine, the involvement of individual members, and the active support of local chapters), how would forming a "national alliance differ or add to the movement. What are the criteria for relating to other groups, how do we decide which alliances would be most fruitful? Some people suggested that SftP really can't ally with other groups until we've established more "principles of unity" and have come up with a national decision-making process by which we could take stands as a national organization. It was suggested that SftP participate in alliances as an active participant and form a critical perspective, raising political issues and infusing a political perspective. One member brought up the importance of outreach/alliances with union groups.

Organizing new chapters was discussed briefly. We began by asking what the purpose of starting new chapters was, i.e., how could we start new chapters until we had more "principles of unity"? One person said that he got the magazine for a while before realizing that there was an organization behind it and thought there should be more discussion of chapter/organization activities in the magazine. We didn't have time to discuss more concretely the organizing efforts of the DC and NYC chapters, so it was left for more informal discussion later.

We discussed AAAS and NSTA in the context of our organizing effort. Everyone agreed that they were good forums for our ideas, that we had a natural constituency there that no one else was reaching, and that they were fun. So we felt that we should continue attending but not make them a major focus.

CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary on Sunday consisted mostly of workshop reports and minimal discussion of issues and proposals raised in the reports.

Financial Workshop

It was agreed that one person from each chapter should take responsibility for magazine distribution and fundraising. This should be proposed for the whole organization at the National Conference.

It was resolved that the Eastern Region shall recommend to the National Conference that the third staff position be made permanent. The position shall last at least until one month after a final decision is made at the conference.

Workshop on National Organization and the National Conference

It was agreed that a proposal to locate the third staff person outside Boston should be placed, along with a job

description, in the IDB. Chapters should write proposals that justify having the third staff person in their area.

A regional decision-making process based on the China group model (see section on this workshop) should be set up. The China group will write up a proposal and Tallahassee will coordinate implementation.

A national conference should be held in March or April of 1979. A proposed agenda should be circulated for approval and revision at least two months in advance. A decision-making process for the national conference should be decided upon in advance. It should not exclude the mass of members (most of whom won't be at the conference) — perhaps the China group model could be adapted. Tallahassee will help Michigan coordinate the conference, in particular with regard to the Eastern Region.

Magazine Workshop

There was discussion of how decentralized the magazine process can and should be. There was considerable

disagreement. It was felt that the editorial process as well as the content and role of the magazine should be important topics of discussion at the National Conference.

No conference resolutions came out of the other workshop reports and there was almost no time for discussion of their content.

Conclusion

The session closed with a short period of reflection on the conference itself. As usual, people voiced a good deal of frustration — that more had not been accomplished, that no definitive manifesto had come out of the conference, that the conference had lacked coherence (perhaps mirroring the organization). Yet people also said that they had learned something, that they had enjoyed meeting with comrades from other areas, and that they felt some of the modest resolutions coming out of the conference would help us in our future work. Special thanks were given to Mary Verdon of Stony Brook, who did much of the logistical planning and work for the conference. □

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

The goal of **Science for the People** is to examine the role of science and technology in society, in order to encourage progressive political activity.

Articles in **Science for the People** come out of the experience and interest of its readers. We urge everyone to contribute to the magazine. We welcome articles written collectively. Good articles can evolve from collective and individual political work, from research, or from other activities. Articles can take the form of book reviews, personal accounts, reports of events, analytical essays, etc. Writing done for another purpose can often be adapted for **Science for the People** and is welcome.

Contributions to the magazine should: 1) deal with issues of science and technology from a radical perspective; 2) sharpen political awareness; 3) stimulate political action on issues of science and technology. It is important to use straightforward English and to keep technical terms to a minimum.

Procedure: 1. New articles: submit 3 copies (manuscripts are not usually returned, so don't send originals unless

you have kept a copy for yourself). The Editorial Committee works hard in revising articles and discussing them with authors. You may want to send an outline of a proposed article to the Editorial Committee in advance for response to content and emphasis, and suggestions for source materials. Final substantive changes are cleared with authors. In the "About This Issue" column, the Editorial Committee may describe the range of opinions on a particular issue, point out unexplored questions, or draw some additional implications from the articles.

2. Articles written for another purpose: submit 3 copies, along with a letter describing the article's origin, and whether or not it may be adapted.

3. Current Opinion: Submit 3 copies. Contributions should be about 500 words, tightly argued positions on timely subjects, including occasional contributions from the Editorial Committee. The Editorial Committee may discuss with authors changes which clarify debate.

4. Readers are also encouraged to contribute letters, News Notes — news

items on the social and political role of science and technology, and especially reporting people's activities around these issues, Chapter Reports and SttP Activities — brief summaries essentially assured of publication, and graphics — cartoons, designs, photographs, etc., not necessarily original but with credits.

Science for the People is a collective effort of the Editorial, Production, and Distribution Committees (volunteer) and the Magazine and Office Coordinators (paid). All committees are accountable to the membership of **Science for the People** through the annual Eastern Regional Conference. Members of **Science for the People** outside the Boston area are encouraged to participate (by mail or in person) in the work of the Editorial Committee. People interested in reviewing and editing articles should contact the Magazine Coordinator through the Boston SttP office.

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