

AMAZON

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This is the second issue of the Amazon, Milwaukee's Women's newspaper. We've moved from purple ditto and two hundred copies to mimeo and a couple thousand copies. Hopefully, newsprint is next, and from there, who knows, we may become a daily.

RAPE

Rape is a women's issue. Rape is an overt manifestation of male loathing for the female in this culture. Rape is the perfect crime--the victim cannot rape back. There is little information concerning rape available and therefore women must educate themselves about rape.

Milwaukee NOW has been attempting to raise rape consciousness by presenting panels on the subject and the Madison Women's conference discussed it as a key issue. Some thoughts on a subject which occurs every 14 minutes nationally (reported only):

The decision whether to prosecute a rapist is a very difficult one. The cops, the courts, and the whole of society is against the victim. Even five minutes deliberation will be held against you in court--"Why didn't you report the rape immediately if you were really raped?"

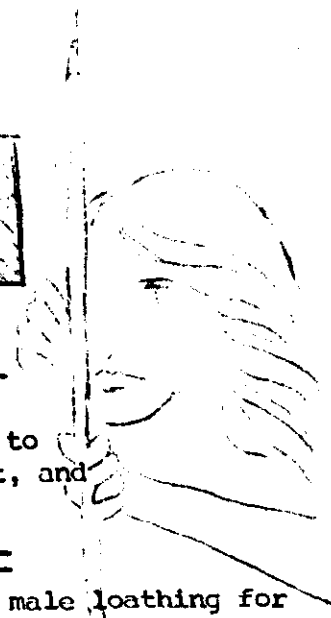
Is prosecution effective? The legal terminology of rape is the same as for any other crime against property, however; unlike a person who prosecutes another for theft, the moral and social disapproval is against the women who prosecutes a man for rape (unless the rapist is Black or Latin). If your tv is stolen you have a good case; if you are raped, you do not. To win a rape case it is necessary to have it together in the courtroom since you must prove conclusively that a rape occurred against your person. This is often difficult to do. In a number of states, including New York where rape is as common as sexism, a witness is necessary to prove rape. Think about that for awhile.

Cops harass you, treat the crime lightly, ask you if you got off on it. The courts expose every "relevant" detail of your private life, and if you are not a virgin, weren't wearing underwear, or take birth control pills, your complaint becomes less justified. Society leads you to believe that you shouldn't have been hitchhiking or out alone in the first place and that you were asking for it. In short, if you are raped you yourself must be guilty of something--of refusing to shut yourself up in a windowless room and of being a woman, a crime in itself.

The rape contradiction is that People's justice demands that men who rape must not be allowed to rape again, while ruling class legal structures force women to submit to the mortifying and debasing experience of police/hospital/court. A women's squad should deal with a rapist, as women in China have done since the revolution. Until this happens, conviction of rapists in courts is a poor albeit available means of dealing with rape.

It is necessary for women to organize rape counselling which should be on call at all times. This service would see that a woman who is raped is accompanied by another woman to the hospital and to the police station, should she wish to go there. This kind of solidarity would lead to less harassment and intimidation by police. Women should have support in the courts also, where we are as much on trial as the man who assaulted us. If you are interested in working with this kind of organization, please contact the Amazon. Nation-wide, the incidence of reported rape is astounding, and every raped woman needs a sister with her.

Some suggestions:



1) Keep your wits in a rape situation. Self-defense is another important issue. Men expect women to be passive and to succumb easily to their force. I was once told by a woman who studied karate that to get yourself in first karate position (even if you make it up) and yell something can be a possible deterrent to rape advances. Screaming is another. If weapons are used, the danger is obviously heightened, yet even at knife or gunpoint, you can be thinking ahead. Make note of characteristics of the man to aid later identification. Note the details of the situation, since even the most minor considerations will be explored by the courts, and since it is necessary to prosecute the right man, if prosecution is undertaken.

2) If you are raped and wish to prosecute through the courts, call the police immediately, as time-lapse is suspect to courts.

3) Do not take a bath or change your clothes. It makes your case better if there is visible evidence of attack.

4) Until some rape organization is available, call another woman who will accompany you if you are going to the hospital and police station. Call the Amazon and the Bugle (at least until Amazonian circulation is bigger) to report men who hassle you hitchhiking etc. If you are familiar with a rapist, get a picture of him and we will print it.

5) Talk to other women about rape. Talk to men about it too. If men are aware that rape consciousness exists, they might think twice about doing it.

6) Women who have cars--please pick up women hitchhikers. This would be a major contribution to the control of rape since a huge number of them involve hitchhiking.

7) Expose the rapist. Most rapists are known to some extent by the victim and she is therefore in a position to make the criminal known to others.

Health Class

Jennie Orvino is organizing a health class--Pregnancy and childbirth: Our bodies and Ourselves--focusing on touch relaxation, comfort techniques, exercise, nutrition, and how to have a baby. Although the main focus of the class is pregnancy and childbirth, it is not directed only at pregnant women. If you're interested, call Jennie at 271-6074. The tentative place is the Margaret Sanger Clinic-1035 E. Waverly--starting in July.

City-wide Women's Meeting

July 29, 6:30 pm at the Vietnam Summer Institute, UWM campus. Potluck barbecue--bring some food and have a good time.

Abortion Law

Anyone interested in working to change the abortion laws call Caroline-332-2490.

Summer Locations

A room in the Vietnam Summer Institute is being organized into a feminist center for the summer. The Downer St. Library is moving in and the Amazon will operate from there. The phone is 963-5407. Someone will usually be there on Monday to Thursday from 12 to 10 and Sunday from 6 to 10. The Institute is located just south of the Downer woods on the UWM campus. If you want to contact the Amazon and can't get through at the Institute, call Joan at 224-0972.

Amazon Distribution

We are discontinuing our mailing list due to the high cost of postage, but Amazons will be available at various spots in the community, ie Margaret Sanger Clinic, Outpost, Fertile Dirt Eatery, Vietnam Summer Institute, Community Center, NOW headquarters, Rhubarb Bookstore, YAWF headquarters, Children's Co-op--and anywhere else they are wanted (call Joan 224-0972)

Feminist Media Lab

Some women in the city are going to set up a feminist media lab, working with video and film. They have access to equipment and people willing to give instruction in its use. If you're interested call Andi at the Children's Co-op--961-0323 on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons.

Throw a Party

Recently I have been going to women's parties. Had to deal with numerous sexist hang-ups before attending the first one (I have better things to do than go to a women's party) but now I'm hooked forever. The idea of spending time with other women, relating to each other as people, and having fun, is incredibly liberating and revolutionary. Without men and without drive to get something done or organized (PTA, women's studies meetings) the atmosphere is relaxed and non-competitive. Women friends--havn't had them on a pure friendship level since I was nine and had bloodsisters...We'd like to see more of it happen. Perhaps pot-lucks with real por happening all around the city or just summer get-togethers at various spots. Respond please to the Amazon or to your women friends.

Women's Studies Major

If you are a student at UWM, you can become a women's Studies Major under the newly-established Interdisciplinary major. You need to get two teachers to sign your forms and do some other hassling and there you are. Women's Studies Departments are opening up in colleges across the country and one upshot of this is to create jobs for women. At UWM, since women's courses are few (there are some; we'll publish the list next issue) you mostly take alot of independant reading which I found much more stimulating than sitting in classes taught by men who did not respond to criticism concerning their sexist attitudes. If you want women's studies major advising contact Peggy after August at 964-5936 or Angela Peckenpaugh in the English Department this summer.

Papers

Along this line, if you have done any kind of research on women and have papers, we would like very much to put them in the Downer Street Library. Also the UWM Library might be interested in them. See Edi Bjorklund, Acquisitions Librarian.

Feminist Puppetry Collective

A feminist puppetry collective has been formed to perform puppet shows which will emphasize strong women characters. We are presently at work on our first skit with rod puppets, in which Griselda learns from a good witch how to find her own strength and escape from the ogre's castle. This is your golden chance through puppets to say everuthing you always wanted to say. We need people who have such skills as writing, puppet creation, scenery, drama, music, as well as people who want to learn these skills. Call Sue at 342-2427 or 273-1523.

Men's Consciousness Raising

I feel that this article will find some attentive ears because a male wouldn't be reading this publication if he wasn't interested in the women's struggle. Anyway, it seems to me that women can raise their own consciousness and that's good but if that level of consciousness exceeds that of the males they relate to, the issue is dead. Therefore, men must also raise their consciousness regarding women and if you're interested, some form of ad hoc "rap session" can be instituted for men who want to get out of the "locker room" attitude. So, my name is Bob and I can be reached at 964-5936. We'll see what we can get together.

Prison Program

A group of Milwaukee women are beginning a women's prison program. Our first organizational meeting will be Thursday, June 8 at 7:30 pm at 1139 N. 21st street. The specific projects we will do will be discussed and decided within the next few weeks. Any interested women please call Margie Rosnik at 276-1733 or Barbara Cotton at 933-3034.

Music

We'd like to see some women's musical groups get together. If you play an instrument or like to sing and would like to come together for some music, contact (once again) the Amazon.

Women's Center

I would like to see a solidly-based, independently funded women's center to serve the needs of campus women, community women's groups, and other groups affiliated with national women's organizations. With the assistance of women lawyers involved in the movement, perhaps we can form a non-profit organization to collect funds from subscribers to support an office and buy equipment to be used by all women's organizations in Milwaukee. The office would be someplace information could be collected from and dispersed to women in the community. Volunteers could staff the office. If we can rent a house, maybe a couple volunteers would exchange their services for housing accommodations.

I have in mind asking for \$1 a week and aiming for 200 subscribers. This would give us about \$800 a month to work with.

The Center could be a place that;

- 1) maintains a hotline for women in trouble
- 2) provides a women's library and reading room
- 3) provides a place for women's groups to hold meetings
- 4) provides equipment, supplies and space to put out a newspaper
- 5) could develop an outreach service for poor and minority women
- 6) provides a counselling service for women wanting to start or continue college work.
- 7) other projects that concern women

The streets are unsafe; bus transportation is expensive and inconvenient. We should think in terms of purchasing a Volkswagon bus to provide transportation for women so they are able to get together.

I am not against a women's center or office on the UWM campus. However, I like the idea of making our own rules. We should turn down all grants (fat chance) unless there are no strings attached. We will probably always need an independently supported Center to do the things we must, but which may not have the approval of big daddy--Arlene Zachar.

--Note--Contact Arlene at the Student Counseling center in the School of Ed.--963-5142.

FREE BENITA!

Benita Orozco was showing her solidarity with the Attica brothers at a demonstration called by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Youth Against war & Fascism, September 18, 1971. Benita, a PSC leader, and long active in the struggles of the Latin community, was one of four adults singled out in this planned bust by the police, who attacked her and dragged her away by her hair. They then turned around and charged her with battery to a peace officer and resisting arrest, which could amount to three years in jail.

On May 9th Benita went to trial, before Judge O'Connell, the same judge who sentenced the Milwaukee 3 (three Black Panthers) to jail for 30 years on frame-up charges of attempted murder. From the very beginning it was clear to each person attending that Benita would never receive a fair or just trial. Each person attending had to wait in line, and face a thorough and extensive search by members of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department before entering the courtroom. Both men and women were examined and all items on their person were looked at; they went through purses and wallets and also a metal detector was used. All this was done in the presence of the perspective jurors. No radios or cameras could be brought into the court and what's more they only let in a portion of the people who came to attend the trial. It was clear that they did not want too many people witnessing their courtroom procedures and their brand of "justice."

Once inside the courtroom, Benita was continually denied any rights that the constitution was supposed to grant her. Her lawyers and herself had agreed to ask for a continuance, so that Benita could retain new counsel. O'Connell flatly refused this continuance, denying Benita the basic right to counsel of her choice. Inside the court, there was a photographer taking pictures of each person attending the trial, also members of the tactical squad of the Milwaukee Police Department were present. These measures were taken by the state in an attempt to intimidate Benita and all her supporters. But no one left the courtroom, all the supporters stayed in solidarity with Benita, many waiting outside, until seats became available.

The most blatant attempt to railroad Benita to jail came after the lunch break. Benita, because she had to wait in line and face a very complete and lengthy search after returning from lunch, came into the courtroom nine minutes late. The judge immediately had Benita put under custody for a bail violation which would mean that she would be forced to remain in jail the duration of the trial. A long recess followed this act but people continued to remain in the court, showing Judge O'Connell that this unjust act would not go unnoticed. It was only because pressure was put on the court by people filling it that the judge finally reversed his decision and released Benita from custody.

Benita's case would have proceeded in this same unjust manner, except that during the long afternoon recess the state's key witness, fell down and injured his collarbone and would have to spend 6 weeks in the hospital. The state asked for a continuance and got it. The trial is now set for September 7, 1972 at 9 AM, in Judge O'Connell's court. The women's Defense Committee and the PSC will be continuing the fight against attempts by the state to lock Benita up. We urge everyone to attend the trial on September 7 and to stop this racist frame-up. For further information contact: Women's Defense Committee, 150 E. Juneau, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202, 273-8089

Women and Work

Last Thursday evening a conference entitled "Illegal Employment Discrimination Against Women--The Law and How to Use It," was held at the UWM Civic Center Campus. Sponsored by the School for Workers, UWM Extension, the Federal Bar Association, and Freedom Through Equality, Inc., it provided information to help women who are being cheated by illegal employment practices. Some of the points covered:

--Strong federal and state laws against employment discrimination based on sex are in effect and obtaining results.

--Federal guidelines and proposed state rules are successfully being used to uphold women's rights in maternity leave cases. However, this must now be done on a case by case basis until the Industry, Labor and Human Relations Commission lays down final rules in September. (Author's note: In interim period, Milwaukee employers have been talking out of the sides of their mouths. If you are working and pregnant, be sure to check into this area yourself to ascertain your rights.)

If you suspect you are getting screwed, find out what your rights are and what you can do by calling:

1. Equal employment Opportunity Commission- 224-1111, 342 N. Water St.
2. Wisconsin Equal Rights Division- 224-4384, 819 N. 6th St.

If you can't get it together right now to call an agency, call Linda at 964-5936 for general information.

Another handy coupon:

The Amazon is born but it must be kept alive
Send what you can to:

Joan

1829 N. Oakland

Milwaukee, Wisconsin