



NOW

THE *broadside*

HOUSTON CHAPTER
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

Vol. 4, No. 6

BROADSIDE

June 1973

Conference Set For June 29 - July 1

Mark your calendar NOW for the 1973 Southern Regional Conference which will be held from June 29 through July 1 at the Executive Park Motor Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. While the cost is minimal (four persons to a room will pay \$6 a night), the program should be maximum feminism. Wilma Scott Heide will be there to give the keynote address, for example.

Workshops will abound. Among those from the Houston Area chapter who are slated to present workshops are the following: Helen Cassidy who will tell NOWers everything they always wanted to know about meeting the press; Marlyne Kilbey who will defend her ideas on how a chapter can have a healthy fight, and Darrell Wells on the masculine mystique. If anyone else wants to conduct a workshop (or could be persuaded for that matter) send off a fast note to Jackie Frost, 5017 Malibu Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina 28215.

Marlyne Kilbey is checking out the price of transportation. If you are interested in going, please call her and state your preference: air or bus. If we go by bus, one suggestion is that we pick up members from other chapters as we go along, and if we are to do this, we need to act fast. So please call Marlyne at 664-4121 (home) or 664-2313 (office). Leave word if you can't get her.

minutes

Brel Benefit

Jacques Brel is alive and well and coming to Houston for a NOW benefit at the Alley Theatre. The Brel act is a one-man show of songs done in the tradition of the French street song. To insure the success of the fund-raiser, NOW members will be asked to buy at least two tickets apiece to be resold. (Of course, you can keep them and enjoy Brel yourself.) The benefit will be on either June 28 or June 29. A cocktail party for "donors" will be planned either before or after the show. For more information, call Harla Kaplan at 772-4987. (See review of Brel concert in this Broadside.)

Theresa Hovis from the United Farmworkers visited the May business meeting to ask NOW members to support the farmworkers in picketing and boycotting Safeway. Safeway and A&P are the largest stores in this area which still carry non-union lettuce and grapes.

July is election month for NOW officers. Parrish Hirasaki is the chairperson of the nominating committee. If you wish to nominate someone for a position, please call Parrish at 332-4247.

From now on, structured, adult-supervised child care will be available at program and business meetings. Since the film festival is in summer recess, the Women's Center will now be open on Friday evenings for socializing. We may even get a ping-pong table with our trading stamps!

broadside

SIMULTANEOUS DISCHARGE OF ALL THE GUNS ON ONE SIDE OF A WARSHIP . . . ANY STRONG OR COMPREHENSIVE ATTACK, AS BY CRITICISM . . . A SONG, CHIEFLY IN 16TH- AND 17TH-CENTURY ENGLAND, WRITTEN ON A TOPICAL SUBJECT, PRINTED ON BROADSIDES, AND SUNG IN PUBLIC . . . , BY A PROFESSIONAL BALLADEER . . .

THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, UNABRIDGED EDITION

Comment

the same dull useless chore
 my hands perform
 without cooperation of the whole

the same gray lifeless flesh
 my arm of ash
 the body worn in mourning for the soul

(please call me as a phoenix)

the same charade of death
 I draw my breath
 botching even absence as I fall

a phoenix burning same
 my breath my flame
 in days of drabness I be always called

-bkm

BROADSIDE STAFF

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 P. O. Box 58202
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Have a question? Call:

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748-5369	524-5743
664-4121	332-4247
	748-5369



JOIN **NOW** SUBSCRIBE TO THE BROADSIDE (Members receive issues free)

- I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF NOW (\$15)
- I WANT TO JOIN BUT CAN AFFORD ONLY \$_____ (\$2.50 MIN.)
- I AM NOT A NOW MEMBER BUT WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSPAPER (\$3.00)
- I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION OF \$_____ TO NOW
- I PLEDGE \$_____ A MONTH FOR THE WOMEN'S CENTER

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ ZIP _____

Mail to: NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN
 P. O. BOX 58202
 HOUSTON, TEXAS 77058

TASK FORCE REPORTS

CHILD CARE

"Don't just pull your child out of a bad child care center. DO something!" advises Bonnie Burnett of the Child Care Task Force. If you have a complaint about a child care center, call 738-2327 or write to the Licensing Department
 State Dept. of Public Welfare
 3137 Old Spanish Trail
 Houston, TX 77054.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

The first priority for this task force will be to produce a handbook for divorce proceedings. An attorney will be available to deal with the legal aspects of the handbook. Personal experiences by those persons having gone through a divorce will also be used.

Marriage and Divorce also plans to put together a handbook for those about to be married. This booklet, like the divorce handbook, will include both legal advice and personal experiences.

This task force is also preparing a study of the existing judges in area domestic relations courts. The completed study will be presented to the NOW membership and left on file at the Women's Center.

WOMEN IN THE ARTS

This is a new task force which is still organizing and wants women interested in the arts as well as those participating in the arts. All forms of art are going to be dealt with. For more information, call April Raines at 682-4097 (home) or 225-1841 (work). The next meeting of this task force is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, at 7:30 PM in the Women's Center.

REPRODUCTION

The Reproduction Task Force has a great amount of work ahead and needs as many women as possible to help. If you really want to get involved in making some big changes, please contact Jeanne Nècaise. This task force is a MUST for those of us in Houston who wish to see a great change in health care for women.

Film Festival Is Only Sleeping

The Feminist Film Festival sponsored by NOW will continue this fall. The NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund has approved the Houston Area Chapter's proposal to present the second half of the Feminist Film Festival as an educational project. (THAT means that they'll give us some of our money back to pay for it.)

With three months advance notice, the Film Committee is planning an intensive publicity campaign, a few changes in program (The Bigamist will be dropped in favor of Meshe of the Afternoon), and expects to see the Science and Research Building, UH, Room 116, packed come the September Cinema Season.

TASK FORCE REPORTS COORDINATOR

Brenda Cooper 524 - 7810
 224 - 5226

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CREDIT TASK FORCE
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REPORT

Susan Butler, head of the Credit Task Force, reports that Joske's has changed its credit application form. It now has a blank for "Name" and for "Spouse."

She urges women to apply to Sakowitz for credit, listing the woman's name first and the husband's name last. If you do this and obtain a credit card, please report to Susan about whose name was used. According to Susan, Battlestein's is the only store that still has not answered her inquiries about credit.

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Next BROADSIDE Deadline

JUNE 15

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EVOLUTIONARY NOTES

By Pippin

A HUMAN MOVEMENT

There is much talk in the feminist movement these days of "masculine" oppression of women. I think this talk is, at best, a blame sadly misdirected; at its worst, a stumbling deeper into the quagmire that is American sexuality today. I will admit that at least on a superficial level men do seem to play a dominant role in engineering society into the unfortunate state of affairs that exists today. In a way they are oppressive; not only to women, but to everyone, themselves included. Due to its nature and depth, this is a dilemma that demands a sensitive, thoughtful approach if a solution is to be found.

A word about Sexism. A man is not born a sexist. A society of men and women instill within him those characteristics which start wars, oppress women, and sicken his own life. The point is that women too play a role in creating this oppressive nature in men. Far too often I find that women are not satisfied unless I play a sexist role.

If you tell me that consciousness raising workshops for women, raising your children in a more sane manner, lobbying, and demonstrating are the answers, I would agree with you. But what we all must realize is that these are only partial answers. If the Women's Movement is to be a truly legitimate step toward solving the present dilemma of sexuality, it must see itself as a Human Movement.

All movements, at least in their initial stages, adopt an esoteric character which tends to give a secure feeling of solidarity and camaraderie to its members. Very often movements have died from the lack of courage to both expand their horizons and broaden their memberships.

There are quite a few men who empathize with their oppressed sisters. We would like to work with you; yet, too often, we feel a reluctance on the part of some women to want us in THEIR movement.

For all of our sakes, extend to us your hands and pull us aboard. Men must be liberated too.

BROADEN THE REVOLUTION

RECOMMENDED FEMINIST READINGS

THERE'S A CONTRADICTION INSIDE

by April Raines.

The first public critique of There's a Contradiction Inside came from Channel 11's Steve Edwards who called the author, Linda April Raines, "a gentle revolutionary". Since then there have been more emotional reactions, from tears of expectant mothers to snickers from businessmen.

The Houston Post called There's a Contradiction Inside a 24 year old woman's emotional look at her world.

The book has been caught in between the Women's Movement and the rest of the world, and even April doesn't know which side is going to claim it. It touches the cruel routine of "housewifery" and futile ambitions while it flutters through the joys of feminine vanity.

According to April, "This is a very vulnerable book. Every woman seems to feel that her emotions are laid out for all to see."

The book is divided into three parts: "Her and Herself", a simple retrospective search; "Her and Him", a salty and sweet series of man-woman relationships; and "Her and His World", a rebellious look at woman's role in the world man has created.

The cover and five color plates are reproductions from original paintings by April. (The originals will be on display at the Kipling Gallery in June.) The originals are acrylic on stretched canvas. All color separations were made directly from the paintings showing some of the finest color work in the publishing industry.

There's a Contradiction Inside is totally a feminine work from financing to layout. The only part of the product handled by a man was the title page and the titles on the cover, a visual assault to the feminine continuity of the rest of the book. According to April, "That will definitely be changed in the next printing."

An active member of Houston NOW, April is a copywriter at Ogilvy and Mather Advertising in Houston. Copies of her book may be obtained at most Houston book stores for \$4.95 each or at NOW meetings. A healthy percentage of the profits will come to Houston NOW.

FANTASTIC LESBIANS

BY BONNIE MOORE

"People have come when they need the center. Then as their personal lives continue and develop they stop coming. I don't think we'll ever be 'big' for that reason. We're just here for people who need the center." Door-person at Montrose Gaze had that to say about the community center at 504 Fairview. The center is a lonely old house where people amuse themselves pretty much as they see fit. People who want to teach instruct people who want to learn. Sometimes there are dances or dinners. There's a stereo, a television, a pool table, a piano, several conversation areas, soft drinks, and reading material.

The center was conceived partly as a social alternative to the bars and partly as a community action. Many of the group who initially provided the energy

to create the center have moved on. It is "run" by weekly meetings which are open. In fact, open describes the center very well. I've never been inside a community building of any sort in which I felt so little control by some authority other than simply whatever part of the community happened to be present.

One of the early members (he did the painting, fund-raising, and organizing stages) now does not go there. He says he just doesn't like to hang out. "It's a lonely place, and lonely places frighten me." It is a lonely place. It's no one's home yet anyone can temporarily be at home there. As a community center it's the most successful I've seen and I recommend it to anyone who needs a boost to their sense of community. The center is open from 6 to 10 PM and meetings are on Wednesday nights.

NOW JOB OPENING

The chapter receives many calls from women who are looking for jobs. Unfortunately, there is no set referral system in NOW.

The essentials are there for an effective job bureau, but a "Bureau Chief" is needed. No experience is necessary, only a willingness to work. The Bureau Chief reports directly to the President and is paid the same 5-figure salary (\$50,000) as the NOW officers.

Basically, the Job Bureau will operate as follows: (1)Resumes of interested persons will be kept on file. (2)Government contractors and other large companies will be notified to submit job openings to the Bureau. (3)Selected openings will be published in the Broadside. (4)All openings will be posted at the Center. (5)Persons submitting resumes will be notified of openings in their fields.

Apply immediately to Parrish Hirasaki, 332-4247.

THANK YOU.....

JOAN RITTER for donating and installing the window shades.

APRIL RAINES for her book, "There's a Contradiction Inside", and for her donation of 10% of the profits to NOW

RUTH MILBURN and EXXON for the office furniture for the Center.

AMY KILBEY and GLENDA MCKINNEY for providing child care at the monthly meetings.

JEANNE ALLEMAN for suggesting this column.

Please notify Parrish Hirasaki of people who should be thanked for their contribution to NOW.

- WANTED: ART DIRECTOR. MUST BE WILLING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAYOUT AND PASTE-UP OF MONTHLY WOMEN'S NEWSPAPER. WILL TRAIN. APPLY TO SARA MCDANIEL, 523-1413.

HEALTH FORUM

by wendy meyer

THE PLANNED PARENTHOOD MEETINGS

The American Association of Planned Parenthood Physicians held their annual meetings in Houston April 11-13. This organization is, by definition, made up of men and women who have been in the forefront in developing and researching methods of population control.

They are the scientists who Merle Goldberg of the National Women's Health Coalition likes to call the "geometric guys" -- because they are, she said in an interview, trend-setters who put research and continuing education above personal profit, men and women (but, alas, mostly men) who introduce and test techniques which are then picked up by geometric progression all over the country.

The "geometric guys" included on their program this year, in addition to their scientific reports, voices from irate female consumers of obstetrical and gynecological services. Two of these women were scheduled speakers; three demanded and were given time to express their views.

First, from the Establishment. At a luncheon chaired by the grand old man of Planned Parenthood, Alan F. Guttmacher, the speaker, Evalyn Gendel, MD, Director of Maternal and Child Health, Kansas State Department of Health, urged her colleagues to give women patients full knowledge of all office, surgical, and lab procedures, to meet women "eyeball to eyeball" as one human being to another (and not to meet her first, by the way, in the examining room with her naked.)

In her talk entitled "The Women's Movement and Family Planning: Conflict or Constructive Challenge," she said doctors must recognize feminist health concerns. Women, she said, must have choices and must be informed in order to make intelligent choices. She explained why it is important for women to understand their pelvic structure, why it is difficult for them to do so -- their structure being protected and hidden whereas men's genitals hang out for inspection.

Women, she insisted, should be encouraged to visualize cervixes.

Now, the anti-Establishment. Merle Goldberg, executive director, National Women's Health Collective, found this meeting particularly significant. First of all, she was on the program as an official discussant following three reports on a large series of early abortion (referred also as mini-suction, menstrual induction, endometrial aspiration, and instant period).

Goldberg, who has spent years working to get licensed abortion clinics that used atraumatic menstrual extraction, noted that this was the first public presentation by highly-respected doctors reporting hundreds of these abortions as safe.

The technique (with minor variations) consists of passing a flexible plastic cannula (or tube) through the undilated cervix into the uterus and sucking out the contents with a syringe or vacuum pump. Old methods requiring dilation require use of a rigid instrument which not only may perforate the uterus but necessitates anaesthesia. Evidence was given by University of North Carolina investigators that out of 590 patients given general anaesthesia, 8.2% had complications directly related to the anaesthesia.

Conclusion from these and other studies: despite the old saw to the contrary, a woman can indeed be "slightly pregnant" and the slighter, the better! Early (within 8 weeks of the last period) uterine aspiration by flexible cannula has been shown, said Edward Stim, MD, to be a safe, convenient, cheap office procedure. To which, in her discussion, Merle Goldberg merely said, "Amen!"

The unscheduled speakers were Carol Downer of the LA Feminist Women's Health Center and Kay Weiss and Belita Cowan of Advocates for Medical Information, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Weiss and Cowan's biggest gripe was the dispensing of dangerous experimental drugs to women without informed consent, including not only the "morning after" pill but the regular birth control pill. Another gripe: the garbage some

male ob-gyns give med students about women's "core traits," which are, according to J. R. Wilson's 1971 textbook, "narcissism, masochism, and passivity." The AMI group burned this book last week before 400 people at the University of Michigan Medical School Library.

All three women urged that Planned Parenthood be given back to women, as it was originally conceived by Margaret Sanger.

Carol Downer demanded, in a "Remember Margaret!" plea that feminists be represented on all PP clinics, that self-help concepts be included, that physicians be excluded from policy-making decisions except for technical advice, that women be informed of all available methods of contraception and of the side effects and experimental nature of all of them.

EXTRACTIONS

Here are some brief bits from the reports given at the meeting.

IUD RESEARCH: There have been some 30,000,000 IUDs inserted since 1959. Reports from three different centers indicate that the addition of copper to conventional IUD plastic devices not only decreases chances of pregnancy but decreases bleeding, one big drawback of the IUD. Studies also indicate that while copper corrodes while in place, it is not absorbed by body organs. Present recommendation: on an investigational basis, copper IUDs should be removed and replaced after 3 years.

Dr. R. T. Ravenholt, director of the Office of Population for the US Agency for International Development, downgraded the statistical results of IUD use in developing countries, showing that the pill had been much more effective in bringing down the birth rate. There are now 50 million women in the world using the pill (ten million in the US), he said, and he endorses the recent recommendation of the International Birth Control Federation that the pill be available without prescription and as available as aspirin. This point was debated.

GENETIC COUNSELING: New techniques now allow accurate prediction regarding health of the child in utero. Amniotic fluid removed at 16 weeks of pregnancy can be analyzed for chromosomal abnormalities and sex, allowing pregnant women over 40 (over 1% of them will produce offspring with Down's syndrome or mongoloidism) and women who are carriers of chromosomal disorders to have therapeutic abortions.

THE GREAT MOTHER

BY MARTHA MCFERREN

A god requires a mother. The image of a female deity changing the diapers of a male deity is ever with us. Isis, Aphrodite, Rhea, and Juno all faced the problems of celestial child care.

Yet, man first saw God in the form of a woman, the Great Mother, since woman performed the miracle no man could duplicate -- she gave birth. (This opinion has been assumed by anthropologists in recent years.)

Not only did she perform this miracle, she did it apparently without any help. Even today some primitive tribes still believe that a man has nothing to do with pregnancy. Some believed that when a woman bathed in a river the embryo swam up her. And, when intercourse was recognized, this act was only to unblock her passage and let the spirit of the child fly easily into her.

In performing this solo miracle of birth, woman was one with the earth, budding forth each spring, the symbol of the creation. Being one with creation is a fine occupation, but it is unlikely there were any woman-ruled societies, as advocates of matriarchies would like to believe. Man still had the aggressive nature and controlled the culture.

The oldest-known sculptures, tiny figurines found in paleolithic caves, are of women with small blank heads and enormous, well-defined breasts and bellies. Those were fertility goddesses, man's oldest concept of woman.

In time, man caught on to the fact that woman was getting a little help in producing those babies and a complete reversal of the situation occurred. Man considered himself the sole creator and woman was merely the incubator who carried the child man had placed in her. The new god was the phallus and woman's social status dropped to neolithic rock bottom.

Previously, genealogy had been traced through the woman since she was the only legitimate parent. If a male figure was required, her brother stepped in. The man she lived with only played with the children and did not consider himself related to or responsible for the children.

With the beginnings of paternity came the necessity to lock women up to insure a man's "own breed"; thus, the systems of human property evolved. God became a jealous god, not only the dominator but a patriarch.

The only activity that retained any sacred status for women was the act of breast-feeding. To the child, its mother was the vast, all-powerful supplier of food, security, and affection -- the great good place, Heaven itself.

On the other hand (or breast, as the case may be), the mother could also deny the helpless child these necessities if she so wished. This fear affected the behavior of man once he came to power. In cultures more dependent on the nuclear family structure, the "fear of Mother" was even more pronounced. The Great Mother might be repressed, dormant, displaced, but in every male subconscious was the fear that she retained the awesome control of love and deprivation.

Every patriarchy displays this fear of the Great Mother, even while it worships the state of childhood.

Man required woman to be lame, shackled, under control. Thus, she was a wife, dependent on him for support.

As far as woman is concerned, the Great Mother desire affects every woman. At some time in her life she hopes to give birth to another god.

In the book, *A Tree Grows In Brooklyn*, the young heroine admits, "That's why they sit so quiet ... waiting. And why they aren't ashamed the way they are fat. Each one thinks that she might be making the real little Jesus."

Child-bearing is a miraculous experience. With each pregnancy, each woman is once more as much of a goddess as she is allowed to be. It is wonderful to be a limited goddess -- if you can accept being feared, and perhaps hated.

The Great Mother and the Terrible Mother Can a woman be one without being the other?



Jacques Brel is *Alive and Well and Living in Paris* is not a traditional American musical. Since there is neither plot nor dialogue, the show is really a concert -- a unique concert. It is the result of the desire of three men to present Brel's work in English to the American audience without losing his meaning. Nat Shapiro produced the show while Eric Blau (a stage-writer) and Mort Shuman (a song-writer) translated or adapted the 22 chosen songs. They then asked Moni Yakim to stage it. Yakim is an Israeli actor and mime, whose skills give the show an almost choreographed effect. Brel's lyrics are mostly personal and often assault one's feelings; the organization of the show and Yakim's staging somehow make the whole experience easier to understand.

Jacques Brel's songs are certainly in the tradition of French street songs -- or songs about the people of the streets and those who prey upon them. In modern times this tradition can be traced to Aristide Bruant, the turn-of-the-century songwriter who was celebrated in Toulouse-Lautrec's *fin de siecle* drawings. (He's the fellow in the wide-brimmed black hat and long red scarf.) There have been many

BY LINDA BOWEN

noted writers and performers since, but probably this kind of song is best known through Edith Piaf's fame.

Brel's songs are love songs, perhaps in an existential way because he dwells on the dark side of life; he battles self-deception and false romanticism. He gives us graphic pictures of the old and the desperately alone -- always pointing out that we are like them, we have been there or we will be. He condemns our ignorance of them:

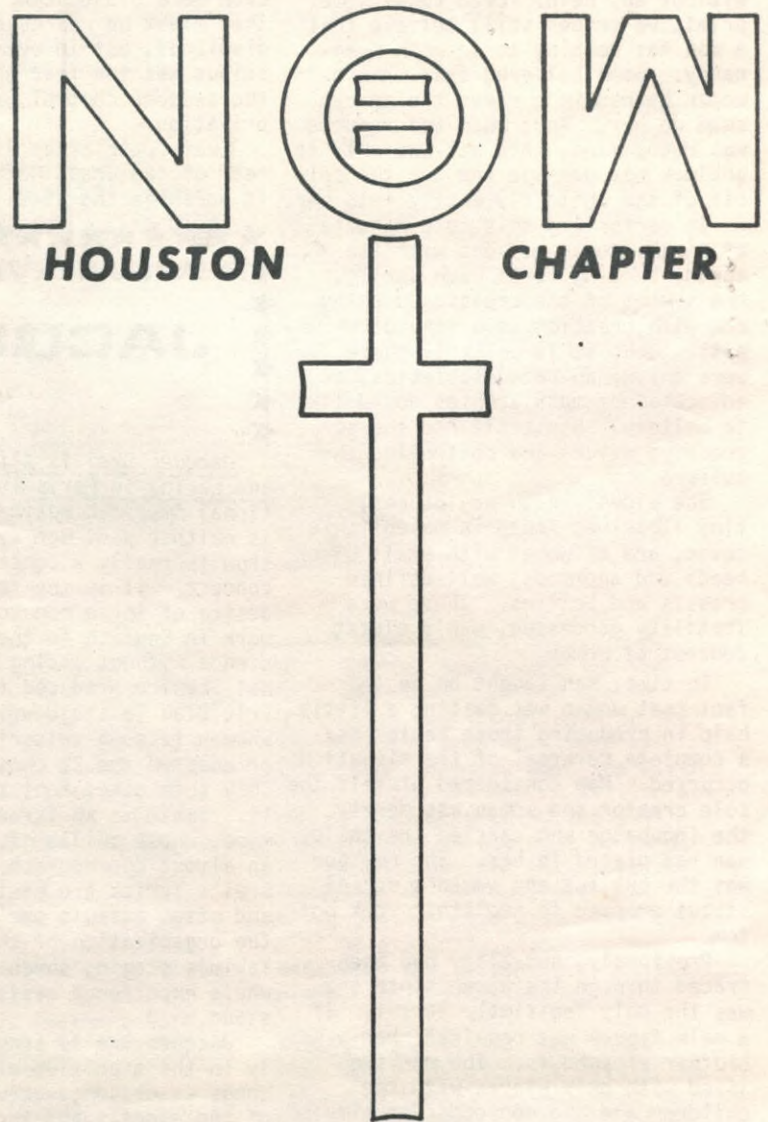
Let he who threw the stone at them stand up and take a bow
He knows the verb 'to love,'
but he'll never know how...

He speaks of the ambivalence of human emotions, of disappointed dreams, and of our ever-present death. He makes us aware once again of the ironies in our society.

It all sounds depressing, but the lyrics and music are compelling and somehow invigorating. Perhaps this is because Blau and Shuman chose to end the show with Brel's most hopeful song which, possibly, tells us why he sees life as he does.

If we only have love, then we'll only be men
And we'll drink from the grail to be born once again."

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