

SEE YOUR DOCTOR

"Breast cancer kills! See your doctor." Get a pap smear at least once a year. "Vaginal infection, see your doctor." "Anyone can get VD. See your doctor." So when I got a card saying I was due for a check-up I went to see my doctor.

Fine. All and all it was satisfactory, until I started getting the bills.

\$16.00 for "Medical Laboratories." I thought he said \$8.00. Well, that must include the pap smear. I paid it. Then I got the bill. \$20.00 for the check-up and culture smear. And \$12 for something called CBC, Canadian Broadcasting Company? It wasn't included in the little explanation of initials below the bill. Today I get a bill from another laboratory for \$5.00 for the pap smear. All and all that comes to \$53.00 for a fifteen minute check-up.

What does this mean to a woman in New Orleans? If she's a teacher or a nurse it means more than two days take-home pay. If she's a secretary earning \$350 a month, that's \$16.00 a day; she has to work more than three days to pay for a check up.

Is my doctor unusually expensive? He says he isn't. He says he's charging less now than he did at his previous practice. Is he perhaps one of the two or three most famous doctors in the city? He hasn't even been out of his residency a year!

And what about the labs? Do they have to charge that much? Who knows?

What can we do about it? I don't know. But I'm going to complain. Someone suggested paying only half the bill. Since collection agencies cost the doctor and labs, perhaps they would eventually lower their rates. But the woman's movement in New Orleans is too small for a boycott. If you have any suggestions, please write us and share them.

Free pap smears are available to all women through January at pop clinics being set up by the New Orleans Area Unit of the American Cancer Society. Note the following schedule for the clinics in the city:

Jan 16-18: Flint-Goodrich Hospital, 2425 Louisiana Avenue, noon-4 p.m.
Jan 22-24: Kingsley House, 914 Richard St., 4-9 p.m.
Jan 25-26: Helen Levy Health Center, 3400 Florida Avenue, 4-9 p.m.

Also in Jefferson Parish at the Parish Health Centers, 111 N. Causeway Blvd. and 1901 Eighth St. in Harvey, Jan. 17, 19, 22, 24, and 26 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

In St. Bernard, 7517 W. Judge Perez Dr., Arabi, Jan. 21 from 1 to 5 p.m.

The free pap smears are part of a four year campaign by the local Cancer Society against uterine cancer. Dr. Friedrichs Harris, chairman of the Uterine Cancer Task Force, claims that Louisiana ranks last in terms of women who have a pap test even once. He also says that if women would receive regular pap tests (once a year), uterine cancer deaths could be virtually eliminated.

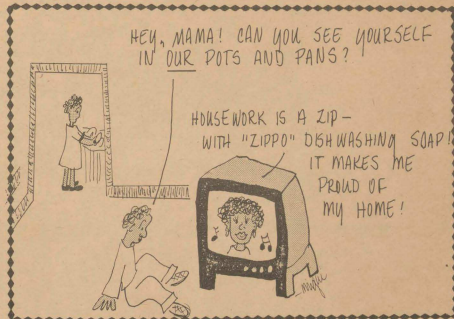
IV. Realization

by Myra HARRIS:

The distant night calls me. I thought it was you.
The stars plead with you to meet my embrace
and each breeze might be the rustle of your garments.
I want to hold the moon in my arms this night:
it seems to be so close to my hands...
And you will not come, Krishna.



A contestant on Jeopardy gave his occupation as "househusband," a story being that his wife worked and he stayed home and took care of the children. Art Fleming smiled and then asked, "Well, when you're not being a househusband, what is it you really do?"



UPPER ROOM
by Sheila Hope Jurnak

A Change of Light
by Loraine Despres

My mother lies
in the room over my head
She shrieks at me
to hold her wrinkled flaps of breasts
elbow wings and drooping buttocks
close against my belly.
She hopes
to climb between my round thighs
and begin again.

I wake up this morning
Gobs of Louisiana sunlight
Shone in diamonds on my wall.
Insistently a bird called
Bobwhite, bobwhite.
I lay still looking at the wall
And suddenly I realize...
I don't love you any more.

In the yard
the flames
crackle along the piled twigs
turn to spatters and smoke
at the wet green spots.
Slowly or fast
the flames
eat the wood.

I still see your face,
That faint half-hidden smile is playing
But I feel no pain.

O mother whom I have hated
O mother whom I have loved
say goodbye.

To check I sort of skip into the bathroom.
The girl in the mirror smiles at me.
Gone are her haunted eyes
Those deep wells of sadness
Dripping 'onto her face,
Turning her complexion gray.

Instead I see cheerful old me
Reaching for a toothbrush
Trying to repress a hum.



Be on the lookout for Florence Kennedy who will be speaking at LSUNO sometime in March.

Womanpower.
It's much too good to waste.