

Chapter 6

"Like a Good Horse Follows a Rider": Shaping Tantric Manhood in Marriage, Sexuality, and Childbirth

Be tantric . . . with your lady—be subtle enough in touch with her that when she tries to steer you, you feel it and follow her like a good horse follows a rider. . . . If you do that, she'll trust you and get you high.

—Stephen [Gaskin]

Stephen and his students of long standing believed that LSD had revealed to them a tantric universe, in which human beings could change the world, with or without the aid of drugs, by disciplining their attention, speaking truth, and treating others with compassion. The journey toward enlightenment began with the individual's choice to seek direct experience of Spirit. Yet that free-will choice was, of itself, insufficient. Except for the occasional avatars who found their way to an ongoing connection with the Infinite without assistance—Stephen most often mentioned Gautama Buddha and Jesus as such—most seekers required considerable support. For The Farm's householder yogis, heterosexual marriage was the primary social relationship within which knightly husbands received, variously, the warm encouragement and "sort-session" feedback of a marriage partner. Women's gift of "juice" helped men to progress along the spiritual path. Men were to show their gratitude for the gift by reciprocating it.

1

This chapter documents the Farmies' efforts to make men into "good horses" who followed their "rider" in marriage, sexuality, and childbirth. Because Stephen taught the complementary equality of the sexes, women on The Farm—in particular, the midwives—found daily opportunities to "steer" men. While this undoubtedly deterred some men from joining, others joined precisely because the commune's vision of lifetime accountability to women and children appealed to their perhaps inchoate sense of fairness far more than either the free-love model of the sexual revolutionaries or the conventional morality of straight America—the latter so frequently honored, they felt, only in the breach.

2

Yet, as scrutiny of the commune's sexual division of labor has already revealed, The Farm was not a feminist utopia. In fact, while Farmie publications proclaimed the commune's gender egalitarianism, they also fulminated against radical feminists' arguments that abortion and "artificial" methods of contraception were essential to the liberation of women. When a rash of reports of intimidating behavior on the part of some Farmie husbands surfaced in early 1977, Stephen's response to the complaining "ladies" highlighted the limitations of an equality grounded in a veneration of women's categorical difference. Moreover, despite the vibrant activism of the gay-liberation movement in the early 1970s, The Farm's leadership never reflected on the exclusively heterosexual iconography of its

3

belief system, and gay Farmies remained in the closet until after decollectivization in 1983.

"There Was Great Incentive to Get Married"

Upon arriving in Tennessee, the Farmies discovered that their spiritual teacher already met the requirements of state law to function as a minister. The commune's incorporation as a tax-exempt religious organization satisfied authorities that their church was legitimate. Stephen could now confer legal recognition upon most of the spiritual marriages formed during the Monday Night Class and the Caravan.¹ 4

I say *most*, because, of course, the state recognized only monogamous marriages. The commune's four-marriages continued without legal recognition—as did Stephen's, which had, in fact, become the group's only six-marriage shortly before their arrival in Tennessee.² Group marriage was, like tantric loving and the sort-session, an extension of the fundamental principle that "we are all One." Based on that principle, there was no upper limit to the number of people who might be integrated into a marriage, as long as it contained equal numbers of males and females. Ideally, the entire Farm—and then, the adults of the entire human race—would manifest their Oneness on the material plane by joining in tantric group marriage. For Stephen, this was one of the many means by which to fulfill the mandate of the Lord's Prayer: "thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."³ 5

Stephen and his students also adopted group marriage for what seemed, at the time, to be practical reasons. Stephen warned the Monday Night Class that monogamous "marriage in two," whether among his students or Americans generally, was potentially a recipe for the psychically strong to dominate the weak. As we heard in the previous chapter, he told his students that group marriage kept men's tendencies toward hypermasculine dominance in check. This teaching did not lead to a sudden scramble among couples to merge with other couples; spiritual marriage had "fallen upon" Stephen and his Haight-Ashbury housemates, and his students had to wait for a similar sign of spiritual bondedness to befall them.⁴ 6

Most Farmies who entered four-marriages with high hopes quickly discovered that the arrangement exponentially increased the complexity of married life. The result was not generally greater harmony, but the opposite. Sorting out emotional difficulties—especially jealousy—among four marriage partners involved seemingly endless argument. Apparently in response to the many reported difficulties, Stephen halted the formation of new group marriages in 1972. In order to replace group marriage's function of preventing the dominance of one marriage partner over the other, Stephen capitalized on the fact that many 7

Farmies already chose to live in large households. He further encouraged the practice, hoping that spiritually "together" couples could guide those in their household experiencing difficulty.⁵

This approach seems to have had the desired effect on Don Lapidus and Patricia Mitchell, who arrived at The Farm as an unmarried couple. They continued to court as they adapted to communal life, but for some time they hesitated to marry, neither feeling certain that their bond was a spiritual marriage. One evening, after a long day at work, the couple retired to their "bedroom," a curtained area in a multifamily tent on Dogwood Lane. Don listened quietly as Patricia expressed her dissatisfaction: they were not challenging each other to develop, emotionally and spiritually, as much as they might. Don defended himself, pointing out that he worked hard at the Farm's flour mill, took care to pay loving attention to Patricia's son, and helped out around the house. That was as far as the discussion progressed that evening. Mulling this over, Patricia decided to consult an established Farm wife, Mary Louise (perhaps midwife Mary Louise Perkins), who lived nearby. She supported Patricia, saying, "If you want a marriage agreement, it's fair to ask for one."⁶

8

Patricia resumed the discussion with Don in their "bedroom" on a Sunday afternoon, but in a complaining tone. A tent-mate, Michael, picking up the "vibe" from the conflicted couple, called out, "How you guys doing?" and stepped inside their curtain. Tweaking Patricia's bare toe in a friendly, joking manner, he "laid a bunch of juice" on his communal brother and sister, reassuring them that "Hey, it ain't that heavy." Seeing Patricia brighten, Michael stepped outside the curtain. This brief, light intervention affected Don also; afterward, he more frequently spoke to Patricia of his love for her. Some time later, Stephen married the couple.⁷

9

Don had been trying hard to be a knightly provider, but had found it difficult to move "the juice" between himself and his partner. Mary Louise's support for Patricia's desire to marry focused him on the frustrating blockage. Michael had interpreted Patricia's complaining as a sign that she, too, was stuck. She was trying too hard, and Don was resisting her imbalanced effort. By tantrically "laying some juice" on them both, he helped them (at least, as they would have seen it) find their way to a higher state of mutual compassion and deeper commitment. Farmies routinely offered such assistance to their brothers and sisters, and we can look back on such efforts as, in part, a process of producing knightly men.

10

Many single men joined the commune unaccompanied by a courting partner, and for them, as Gary Rhine so aptly put it, "there was great incentive to get married." Unlike Lapidus and Mitchell, who fell into a gray area between marriage and single status, single "monks" (and "nuns") did not enjoy priority for even the

11

amount of privacy afforded by a curtain; they had to fit themselves in wherever they could. Some of the men found a bunk in a single men's tent. Others slept on couches or floors, in the attics of the new frame structures, or in Caravan buses. Even these marginal spaces could disappear if the Housing Ladies needed them for a family. Marriage could reduce the likelihood that one might suddenly have to start over in a new household.⁸

Marriage marked individuals as having progressed along the spiritual path, and this gave single men and women another important incentive to marry. Upon joining The Farm, single people were advised against becoming romantically involved with anyone for the first six months or so. Collective wisdom had it that newcomers were not ready to distinguish a genuine spiritual union from infatuation with the beauty that graced any person who had soaked in The Farm's "juice" for awhile. But, as Rhine recalls, individuals who remained single for an unseemly length of time beyond this initial period—say, perhaps, a year—would inevitably become the subjects of conversation. If a single man's "aura" had not sparked attraction in any of the single women, the reasoning went, he must be "too trippy"—carrying too much psychological baggage to be able to integrate Stephen's teachings at a reasonable pace. A single man's reputation as a "tripper" influenced the advice that married heavies like Mary Louise might give to him, or to a woman he might be courting. Trippers were reputed to make difficult marriage partners, and one such seen to be courting a single woman might be taken aside and advised to reduce his "subconscious" before seeking marriage.⁹

The Farm offered very little privacy. Until electrical service was extended to the cramped households (and even after its availability brought radio and television to the commune in later years), gossip served as one of the main forms of entertainment. Thus, writes Rhine, the sight of single men and women together might generate talk about their "courtship," whatever the pair's actual intentions. This intense scrutiny made every move in genuine courtships an exercise in image management.¹⁰ Added to this was the limited leisure time available to single people, whose responsibilities to a cottage industry or crew, and to their households, left little time for courtship. Moreover, no one on The Farm had (or, at least, was *supposed* to have) spending money, and very few had easy access to vehicles. Even if a ride was available, there was little for single people to do in Summertown. On Sundays, after services in the meadow or the horse barn, single people might take long walks in the woods—in groups.

Farmie men managed the many difficulties of single life in various ways. Some, like Jerry Hutchens, resisted the temptation to marry as soon as possible, waiting for the right time to ask his sweetheart. In his case, the result was a warm, satisfying marriage that was still vibrant two decades later. Others seized on their first opportunity, and some of these relationships did not last. Stephen and his

students had not contemplated the possibility that divorce might become a necessity; they interpreted as literal the promise to accompany a partner along the spiritual path for a lifetime. But some spouses' inability to "work it out" proved sufficiently disruptive that divorce was the only practical solution.¹¹

Stepping back to survey this evidence, we can already see that the community's strong linkage of marriage to social rewards rested on unexamined assumptions about human sexual nature. The Farmie institution of marriage presumed the harmonious complementarity of "opposite" sexes, heterosexuality as the normative form of sexual identity, and the universality of human desire for sex and procreation. For those who could not conform to these presumptions, the only option available inside the gate was life as a perpetual monk or nun—which was unappealing in terms of workload and prestige. We cannot know whether these assumptions would eventually have been uncovered and deliberated if the hippie village had been able to sustain itself as a communal entity for a longer period. What we can say is that under the changed circumstances following decollectivization in 1983, homosexuality, at least, has become a respected identity. The consequences following from these unexamined assumptions will become apparent throughout the remainder of this chapter.

15

Sexuality and Contraception

Much western loving would be stopped by the eye of truth.

— Stephen Gaskin

We have already encountered Stephen's teachings in the Monday Night Class on "tantric loving," in which men and women could move polarized sexual energy back and forth to elevate the consciousness of both. In *Hey, Beatnik*, he clarified confusion over the meaning of tantric receptivity. Most people, he argued, hearing the dualism *creative-receptive*, wrongly likened *creative* to a bolt of lightning, and *receptive* to passivity, as a bowl passively receives water. In sexual terms, "hyper-John Wayne" American men tended to think of women as passive receptacles for their discharge of sexual energy; likening their erections to a lightning bolt, men might misconstrue Stephen's teaching as a variation on the all-American belief that the man was, as he put it, "the cat with the juice." But in fact, said Stephen, *both* partners had "juice": woman's receptivity, he argued, would be better likened to an electromagnet that *draws up* the male erection. In order for this to happen, men should initially allow women to take the lead.¹²

16

In light of this different-but-equal model of sexual relations, it behooved Farmie men not to swagger as the bearers of the phallic thunderbolt. While this ethos shielded Farm women from sexual harassment to a degree, there was a subtle cost for this protection: Stephen also argued that, given women's electromagnetic power, "it's easier for the cats to take off their six-guns and stop being macho *if*

17

the ladies don't polarize them into doing that." The sorting-out of unchivalrous sexual behavior might as easily lead to an examination of *women's* behavior as men's.¹³

The midwives held women's meetings from time to time, and some of these addressed sexual practice. In a session described by Michael Traugot, Ina May responded to complaints she had received from men that their wives too often withheld sexual consent in order to gain leverage within marriages. She "encouraged the women to really try to satisfy their men—assuming, of course, [that] the men had been considerate and supportive—and [said] that this would make for . . . a more harmonious community." Traugot reports that the midwives noticed a surge in the commune's birth rate approximately nine months later. In order to give shape to Farmie masculinity, Ina May and her sister midwives also worked at shaping women into tantric "ladies" who opened themselves sexually to the life force.¹⁴ 18

If we make the same assumptions about human sexuality and gender that Stephen made, then Ina May's advice seems both sensible and politically astute. Reading between the lines, I deduce her position to have been that a few women's uncompassionate nonresponsiveness to men's natural desires risked the erosion of men's willingness to serve as knightly providers. The world beyond The Farm's front gate was, too often, a domain of sexually irresponsible men like the unsavory ones who left the Caravan when Stephen declared marriage a sacrament. If women wanted men's respect and support, they had to reciprocate with respect for men's genuine desires, expressed in the context of a loving commitment to life-partnership. 19

If this was Ina May's reasoning, then I would urge readers to admire its impartiality and integrity of intent, before applying feminist criticism to its premises (as I will do later). She hoped to end the battle of the sexes by revitalizing marriage as an earthly institution grounded in power and principles that transcended the self-interest of individuals, the latter being, in her view, all that remained in the absence of faith in Spirit. Here, I note for later interpretation the striking similarity between this approach and the Catholic Church's recent declaration that it favors collaboration and mutual understanding between the sexes, seeing this, rather than feminist militancy, as the genuine realization of the will of God. 20

If resistance to knightly sexual advances ran contrary to the flow of "the juice," then so too did methods of contraception that involved chemical or physical barriers. "Stoned" pregnancy and parenthood enhanced a couple's status in the pronatalist social system of The Farm, but couples had to balance the desire for children against the demands that pregnancy and child nurture would make on their time and energy. The only sanctioned option for limiting fertility was the 21

Billings Ovulation Method, devised by Drs. Evelyn and John Billings in Australia after the Second World War. In search of a way to enhance the effectiveness of the rhythm method for Catholic families, Billings and Billings added to the usual charting of basal temperature and menstrual duration a test of the viscosity of cervical mucus, changes in which signal women's increased fertility. Sources differ on the Method's effectiveness under ideal conditions. When couples receive adequate training, and when men cooperate in avoiding penis-to-vagina contact during periods of fertility, some authorities rate the Method's failure rate as low as three percent, while others set it as high as twenty.¹⁵

Apparently, Margaret Nofziger came across the Billings Method in library research on alternatives to "artificial" contraception. Given the parallels between Stephen's teachings on the sanctity of life-force energy and Catholic doctrine on contraception, it was not difficult to reframe the Method in Farmie terms, as Nofziger did in *A Cooperative Method of Natural Birth Control*. 22

The basis of this method is the *agreement* to pay close attention and lovingly abstain for a bit in order to not conceive. . . . This way, when you *do* make love, it is complete and open to all the life force energy there is. And when you are not prepared to conceive, you don't do what causes conception. Now, don't give up loving altogether. There are many ways to show your love besides the usual way. With love and imagination, those few days a month can be as fulfilling and repairing as the rest. Learning how to cooperate on this issue tends to draw a couple closer together.¹⁶

Practice of the Method (it was always called "natural birth control" on The Farm) presented Farmie men with another opportunity to hone their skills in tantric receptivity. In a note to male readers, Nofziger set down in print a teaching she had offered many a time to her communal brothers: along with his wife, the man was "assuming responsibility" for the couple's "combined fertility." In order to make the Method work, the husband had to be willing not only to abstain at times, but also to take care not to exert pressure on women for sexual access during those periods. A man might also participate in the data collection necessary to make the Method work—or he could "leave that up to her and just trust her to tell you what's happening." Taking on these responsibilities was "the safest way you can regulate your combined fertility. Following this method gracefully . . . will mature your relationship."¹⁷ Learning to take pride, and even pleasure, in sexual restraint also advanced the knightly man on the road to higher consciousness. 23

The Farm's ideological commitment to gender complementarity, so clearly expressed in its sexual division of labor, sexual practices, and emphasis on marriage, shaped tantric manhood as much by its silences as its pronouncements. It charted no course other than celibacy and silence for those moved by same-sex desire. Many former residents recall strong pressure deterring homosexual 24

disclosure and behavior. This pressure was not derived from Asian Buddhism; it most likely reflected the homophobia of American culture. Today, gay-affirmative groups make their presence felt among American Buddhists.¹⁸ During the period under study, gays and lesbians were far less visible within such communities. Still, The Farm coalesced during the florescence of gay liberation, and so Stephen's virtual silence on the subject proves historically significant.¹⁹

Informants offer conflicting views on whether exclusive heterosexuality constituted Farm policy or a blind spot that hindered realization of the commune's ideal of Oneness. Historian Pat LeDoux, who conducted extensive interviews with past and present Farm residents, states flatly that homosexual relationships were forbidden during the commune's collectivist period, but presents no evidence that this was an edict coming from the upper echelons. Elsewhere, a former member testifies that the proscription against the expression of homosexual identity and desire was broken only in the postcommunal years, when several members finally came out. Yet Jean Klaski, who grew up in the hippie village, recalls some homosexual relationships during the communal period. Did she know about them then, or is it only in hindsight that she can deduce their presence? Unfortunately she does not elaborate on this point. William Santana speculates that life was difficult for the gay minority on The Farm, but both he and wife Joanne attribute the community's disapproval of gay relationships to the homophobia that Farm members brought into the commune, and not to anything Stephen ever said or did. In my conversations with ex-Farmies, many have expressed regret that the community so thoroughly silenced its gay and lesbian members.²⁰

25

If The Farm's tantric manhood required cultivation, then no group of women wielded more authority in the discipline of men than the commune's midwives. This was especially true during observance of the sacrament of childbirth, when a man's tantric receptivity was most in demand. The husband's *yang* should ebb while the *yang* of his wife and the midwife surged, and the knightly husband was expected to cultivate his *yin* receptivity and retire from the spotlight.

26

The Authority of Midwives

The main qualification of the midwife was demonstration of her capacity to personify the group's ideals of wife and mother.²¹ Wives were to call upon their predominantly *yin* nature to create a nurturing home life for husbands and children. Ina May declared that "to be a real midwife," a woman "must be able to consider someone else's viewpoint, and in her daily life take care of those around her. . . . At birthings the midwife must be able to . . . teach a couple to be tantric." In order to accomplish this, "she has to really know and love her husband, be his best friend and know how to give him some ['juice']." Cara O'Gorman's path to the midwifery crew shows her fulfilling these prerequisites, beginning with marriage and two pregnancies. She testifies that after the second,

27

her perspective shifted dramatically, such that she felt more responsibility for the fate of humanity and dedicated herself to shouldering it. Subsequently, a crew member invited her to "help at birthings."²²

The midwife, the quintessential Farmie "lady" of bountiful *yin*, nevertheless held the lives of laboring women and neonates quite literally in her hands. She was therefore expected to develop the normally subordinate *yang* side of her nature to an unusual degree in order to make quick, accurate decisions under pressure. Just as the mother was to draw on her subordinate *yang* during labor to face the ordeal without complaint, the professional yet still spiritual midwife, in Stephen's words, "should be the yangest thing in the room."²³ 28

Midwives used their authority and skill to maintain the community's spiritual discipline and facilitate individual members' spiritual growth. In the charged emotional atmosphere surrounding pregnancy and birth, midwives frequently found opportunities to firmly but compassionately confront both husbands and wives with the ego-attachments that blocked their spiritual path. These moments were "sort sessions," but midwives held the authority to go beyond sorting, to commanding, when they saw fit. 29

Discipline of Husbands

The midwives intervened when a pregnant woman was profaned by a man's less-than-knightly behavior or attitude. Doug Stevenson offers us evidence on this point. He and his wife joined the Tennessee commune in 1973, but soon moved to a satellite community in Kentucky. A few years later, on their return, they moved from tent to tent in search of a congenial household, at last finding shelter with an established couple. But as the Stevensons soon discovered, the host husband "ran the show with his dominant Southern male flavor. His wife took the brunt of his intimidation tactics . . . on a daily basis." The Stevensons attempted to sort out the man's "trip"; to their surprise, the wife felt threatened by their efforts, rather than supported. When friends, one of whom was pregnant, arrived from the New York Farm, the Stevensons invited them to move in. Stevenson comments that the tripping husband's attempts to dominate the pregnant lady quickly came to the midwives' attention. Stevenson does not tell us precisely what action they took—but not long afterward, the errant couple chose to leave The Farm.²⁴ 30

Of course, few Farmie men proved as openly recalcitrant as the Stevensons' tripper. Many young men joined the commune with enthusiasm and worked diligently to establish themselves as householder yogis. Despite their best intentions, they sometimes came to appreciate the totality of the commitment they had made only at a moment of high drama, such as the birth of a first child. At such moments, the midwives demanded more selfless devotion and clarity of 31

focus of these young men than anyone they had previously encountered, and they sometimes responded with protestations of the impossibility of meeting such demands.

One particularly vivid instance comes from a husband's testimony to his spiritual growth during his wife's labor. Rudolph begins his story at the point when Ina May arrived to attend to his wife Marilyn. Apparently things were not going according to plan. In response to Rudolph's awkward behavior, the midwife told him to leave. He went away for a time, but returned no more able than before to meet Ina May's expectations: he seemed more focused on his own needs than on his wife's. The labor stalled because neither of the parents-to-be seemed to understand how to make good on their obligations. Stephen arrived to help, and Rudolph's discomfort grew even more as he watched the scene unfold from an emotional distance. Everyone else seemed empathic with his laboring wife, and he felt jealous of Stephen's capacity to connect with her. Stephen commented on his clumsiness, observing that Rudolf had passed him a jar of soy milk with far more force than was actually needed.²⁵ 32

Ina May once again told Rudolph to go outside for a while and concentrate on becoming more receptive to his wife's needs. Leaving the van where the birth was taking place (this must have been early in the commune's existence), he admitted to himself that he feared fainting at the sight of blood, and felt ashamed of that fear at a time when he was supposed to be supportive. Alternately pitying and berating himself, he sprawled on the ground for a while. These solitary steps toward being honest with himself proved therapeutic, allowing Rudolph to release his ego-attachment. He told himself that this process was really about the baby being born and about his wife, and not about his fears. He focused outward, on the beauty of the night that was enfolding him. It was time for him to "help out."²⁶ 33

Feeling more relaxed, he re-entered the van. He spoke earnest words of encouragement to his struggling wife, telling her that this was the time when she would have to try harder than ever before. His new confidence proved inspirational; after an interval of strong contractions that "felt like [the] rushes that happen [while] making love," the baby was born. Farmies frequently used psychedelic and religious imagery to describe the process of birth, and to Rudolph, meeting his son felt "like there was no space or time barrier to anything, and we were in Holy times in Holy land." Having grown spiritually, the couple's second experience of tantric childbirth proceeded along much more harmonious lines.²⁷ 34

In the previous chapter, I questioned some aspects of the story that Ina May told about Mildred, the financial manager, suggesting that some of the midwife's claims seemed a bit too miraculous to be true. This raises the question: Can 35

scholars trust the "Amazing Birth Tales" at all? The sense I have developed about them is that as descriptions of events, they are reasonably accurate—they seem credible when set alongside other evidence about The Farm. I find that the interpretive passages are where my eyebrows begin to rise—when, as a reader, I am asked to take improbable claims on faith, such as Mildred's purported desire to hear Ina May's and Stephen's advice. I therefore rely on the "Tales" for their descriptions of events and carefully attribute claims about the metaphysics of birth to the speaker, as I have done with Rudolph's story, so as to separate Farmies' metaphysical claims from my own.

On another occasion, a husband even more flustered than Rudolph found it impossible to maintain the composure and receptivity expected of him during the birth of his daughter. Ina May drew on her experience of counseling many Farm couples and devised assignments intended to harmonize the struggling husband and wife, including the astute suggestion that they sing a song together. The song touched a responsive chord in Linda, while headstrong William stubbornly devoted himself to the task of getting the accompaniment right on his guitar. William's emotional distance hurt Linda's feelings. When Ina May and Margaret pointed this out to him, his pique was noticeable. Ina May told him to go outside and run for a while. He complied, and the midwives carried on with their work; the birth was imminent. When William returned, Ina May, protective of Linda, asked if he had "changed his vibrations" so that he would not further disrupt the birth. Discovering some residual anger, she and Linda agreed that it would be better if William were to leave until after the birth. When he did, the tension in the room dissipated.²⁸

True to *Spiritual Midwifery's* didactic purpose, this story, like all others, ends, magically, in repose. Stephen and Ina May visited William later the same day. He admitted that his lack of compassion for his laboring wife had made the birth more difficult. Satisfied with William's response, they told him that he had learned important lessons that he would draw upon at the births of later children.²⁹

In cases such as these, midwives made alliances with birthing wives to enforce the community's principle that men should respect women's strength and fertility. It is important to note, however, that midwives did not hesitate to hold laboring mothers to equally stringent standards. During the course of the same birthing, midwives might discipline not only the errant husband, but the wife also, that she might face with courage this extraordinary moment when, as Stephen taught, the entire universe moved over to make room for a new Buddha or Christ.³⁰ Only through such wholehearted commitment could women tap the metaphysical energy that served as the basis for their claim to full gender equality—and thus, to knightly respect and support.

Disciplining Women

Stephen preached that, much as it had been necessary for him to develop character in order to reap the spiritual rewards of LSD, character development prior to a woman's first birth would enable her to experience birth as a time of spiritual growth to be embraced, not a painful ordeal to be dreaded.³¹ The midwives remained watchful for signs of women's self-doubt and self-indulgence during pregnancy, much as they guided women along the tantric path during labor. 39

When labor began, one aspect of this tantric coaching involved women's response to pain. Like other advocates of natural childbirth at the time, they counseled women that pain became a part of the process of birth only as a result of mind-body alienation. Farmie midwives urged laboring women to reinterpret the contractions of labor as surges of the life force (in hip drug argot, *rushes*), and to place their faith in the quintessentially feminine capacity to "channel" this energy. As one Farmie mother put it, "If you cop to the level that they hurt, then you'll tense up and not be able to completely relax . . . and you won't have any fun either. It is a miracle to be able to create more life force, and there is no room for complaining." It was Farm practice to avoid use of anesthetics during labor. Like "artificial" contraceptives, they were believed to inhibit the flow of *qi*.³² 40

While the "Amazing Birth Tales" included in both the original and revised editions of *Spiritual Midwifery* tend to confirm the commune's spiritual perspective, Ina May also included ample illustration of how the compassionate midwife should deal with women for whom childbirth came as a moment of spiritual reckoning. Despite their indoctrination concerning the holiness of birth, some women recoiled as they contemplated labor without anesthetics, or quailed at the responsibilities of motherhood. Usually this fear and doubt manifested in low-grade complaints or irritability. In an extreme case, however, one terrified mother screamed that she did not want to have her baby, and that she wished to die.³³ In every case presented in the "Tales," however, the midwife found a way to overcome women's self-alienation, thus transforming the experience into one affirming women's metaphysical power. 41

In Farm midwives' experience, the demands of childbirth could also reveal structural weaknesses in the relationships between marriage partners. A wife named Mona recounts that during a protracted, start-and-stop labor, she and her husband Eugene began to quarrel. Understanding that this was not desirable, Eugene called the midwives, and two ladies arrived to sort out the couple's relationship. They criticized Mona for failing to give her husband juice. Mona's complaints about minor irritations tended, the midwives said, to make him emotionally detached and distant. They counseled her to massage Eugene on a regular basis.³⁴ Reforming the wife figured as the prerequisite to reforming the husband. 42

In other cases, the midwife discovered that the disruption to the "natural" harmony and complementarity of the sexes within marriage originated not in a wife's cowardly complaining, but in what, under Farmie metaphysics, counted as a wife's unfeminine aggression. Ina May discovered the following instance inadvertently. First, however, an important point of context: as a matter of standard practice, Farm midwives stimulated the laboring woman's breasts, and sometimes the cervix, to intensify uterine contractions and cervical dilation. Having provided a demonstration, they then encouraged husbands to continue this stimulation during labor. "Sometimes," writes Ina May, "I will see that the husband is afraid to touch his wife's tits because of the midwives' presence, so I touch them, . . . [and] talk about how nice they are, and make him welcome. . . . *A marriage should be reliable, fun, and uninhibited.*"³⁵ 43

So, when Ina May stimulated one wife's breasts, her husband's surprised and envious facial expression prompted the midwife to ask why. He answered that his wife would never allow him to do the same. Ina May told the woman in labor that she had intimidated her husband, and that she would have to relent.³⁶ 44

In this account, Ina May proceeds, untroubled by the possibility that this wife's "intimidation" of the husband might have originated as a defense against the widespread masculine sexual aggression then being documented by radical feminists. However, in this prescriptive account, we hear the birthing mother reassure us of Ina May's acumen. "It was one of those times when the truth was so real that the sun came out . . . and lit up everything—kind of saying, Yes, yes, for everyone to know. It changed our relationship . . . and made us more together."³⁷ 45

Our last example concerns maintenance of discipline within the ranks of the midwives themselves. To carry out their mission, they had to sustain a high level of decorum before the community. Jean Klaski recounts the stories her parents told her about her own birth: that it was a difficult labor, requiring the presence of several midwives, who also had to contend with what at least one of them felt was her father Brian's lack of spiritual receptivity. He was asked to leave. But unlike the published birthing tales, this story of a man's expulsion does not end with knightly repentance and reform. Brian encountered Ina May after his ejection, and when he related the circumstances that had brought him outside, she concluded that the problem lay with an ego attachment on the part of her junior colleague, not with him. She returned to the birthing with him and sorted out the situation. While the spiritual midwife possessed the authority to make men shine their armor, her obligation was to exercise that authority with compassion.³⁸ 46

In sum, Farmie midwives sought to hold the community's women to high standards of spiritual discipline. That discipline served as the basis of what Louis 47

J. Kern calls "a communal sisterhood," dedicated to "valoriz[ing] natural . . . childbirth as a basis for the reclamation of maternal dignity."³⁹ In so doing, they also shaped "knightly" manhood, in part by articulating the boundaries of acceptable masculine behavior, and by rewarding men who conscientiously observed those boundaries.

The Farm and Radical Feminism

Starting with basic principles of how the universe worked, which they believed they had discovered during explorations of the astral plane through LSD, the Farmies developed a social system to venerate the sacraments of tantric marriage, sexuality, and childbirth. Yet suspicion that the commune's religious principles perpetuated male supremacy followed Stephen and Ina May wherever they went outside the community. They responded by stressing in their publications their dedication to gender egalitarianism. "Some folks want to know," stated an anonymous Farmie in *Hey, Beatnik*, "are our ladies treated free and equal[?]" Ina May's down-home response was that men treated her and her sisters "exceptionally good." She went even further in *Spiritual Midwifery*. There, she articulated the midwife crew's consensus "that returning the major responsibility for normal childbirth to well-trained midwives rather than have it rest with a predominantly male and profit-oriented medical establishment is a major advance in self-determination for women." She even claimed women's right to take that responsibility as one of the unenumerated powers reserved to the people by the Tenth Amendment. In 1989, six years after the changeover, she remained as convinced as ever that by "unlock[ing] the great riddle of birth . . . , we have found a way that women can live with men without being exploited."⁴⁰

These claims, the systematic reshaping of knightly masculinity by both men and women, and the formal equality of the male and female principles in Farmie religious teaching, might tempt us to conclude that The Farm advocated a distinctive form of feminism. Certainly, the midwives' assertion of women's right to control over childbirth qualify as such under Linda Gordon's rule of thumb for distinguishing feminist agency in the historical record: "feminism is a critique of male supremacy, formed and offered in the light of a will to change it, which in turn assumes a conviction that it is changeable." But we must also note Nancy F. Cott's caution that "not all women's activities in the political arena—not even all activities undertaken by women who claim to have 'women's interests' . . . at heart—are, by that token, feminist." She draws on historian Temma Kaplan's construct of *female consciousness* (which Cott glossed as "a consciousness among women stemming from their shared sense of obligation to preserve and nourish life") to argue that feminist consciousness in history can only be accurately distinguished in contrast not only to female consciousness, but also in contrast to women's *communal consciousness*, arising out of "solidarity with men and women

of . . . one's own . . . class, ethnic, racial, geographical, religious, or national" identity.⁴¹

While The Farm's advocacy of returning control of childbirth to women was genuinely feminist, more often a complex mixture of female and communal consciousness seems to have shaped the community's sexual politics. It helps to locate the Farmies in relation to the activism and ideology of more familiar groups: with the exception of The Farm's forays into midwifery, its gender ideology most closely resembles the collaborative, cooperative relationship between the sexes recommended in a 2004 letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to Catholic bishops. In it, then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger argued for "a just valuing of the work of women within the family" and equal pay for women who work outside the home, combined with contractual, legal, and social provisions that recognize women's primary obligations as mothers, so that working women might not be forced "to choose between relinquishing their family life or enduring continual stress."⁴²

Of course, similarity of gender ideology does not mean that the two bodies advocated identical theology or institutional policy. In terms of spiritual doctrine and institutional practice, the theistic Church, which still refuses to ordain women and attributes blame for the fall of humankind to the actions of Eve, was sharply distinct from the doctrinally omnivorous Farmies, who invested midwives with hierophantic authority and attributed to neither sex responsibility for the decline of humankind into ignorance of Spirit. But both entities attached supreme value to motherhood and saw a return to Godliness as the balm for the battle of the sexes. The similarity between their positions on sexual politics is remarkable.⁴³

The similarity becomes even more remarkable when one considers Stephen's caustic opposition to abortion. Immediately following Ina May's declaration in *Hey, Beatnik* that women received "exceptionally good" treatment at The Farm, he assailed the women's liberation movement for equating abortion with liberation. "Talk about women's lib, how about unborn babies' lib?" On one of his tours, he had shown images of groups of Farm women, each carrying an infant; he claims that feminists in the audience had reacted viscerally, hissing the message they heard (not necessarily the one Stephen had intended to convey): that a return to *kinder, kuche, und kirche* was the road to women's equality. That response, said Stephen, profaned the sacred life force. Blasphemous, too, he argued, were abortions for other than medical reasons: they were immoral self-indulgences that cost the unborn their lives.⁴⁴

If it appears that Stephen was not practicing the virtue of compassion for opponents, as he urged his followers to do, it was, once again, because he believed that his journeys on the astral plane had given him access to ultimate Truth. In his understanding of earthly politics, closely parallel to Catholicism's, the

oppression of women was *epiphenomenal*: it was a symptom of the larger problem of humankind's alienation from Spirit. Many New Leftists of his day advanced a secular version of this understanding: if they did not simply dismiss "the woman question" as a nonissue, they classified it as a secondary contradiction. While important enough to merit struggle within the ranks of the revolutionary cadres, it was in the primary interests of both men and women to keep this secondary problem in perspective and work together on the root cause of all oppression: private ownership of the means of production.⁴⁵ Similarly, Stephen saw restoring the human connection to the Godhead as the primary interest of both men and women. The struggles and inevitable errors involved in the effort to become knightly or ladylike should remind men and women how low *all humankind* had fallen. Such errors should not set men and women against one another in a battle of the sexes that neither could win.

Although radical feminism owed more to the counterculture than most historians have recognized, that movement drew its various political analyses of the subjection of women predominantly from traditions that traced power to earthly, not metaphysical sources. By 1970, with Kate Millett's formal redefinition of the political as inclusive of all "power-structured relationships," including the private realm of sexuality, many Euro-American radical feminists, and many feminists of color as well, had adopted identity politics as their analytical lens, even though the term had not yet been invented. Millett and many others developed their understanding of women's oppression by analogy to Black Power's explanation for the persistence of racial inequality within the American liberal polity. In this view, male supremacy, like white supremacy, persisted because liberalism defined power as public and institutional in nature, and equality as the formal right of participation in public institutions. Seeing the personal as political, the feminists who were the objects of Stephen's ire uncovered the pervasiveness of battery, sexual assault, and sexual objectification, and moved toward a theorization of women's oppression as analogous to, but only partially explained by, Marxian notions of social class.⁴⁶

54

White radical feminists were a diverse lot, and factions among them shared important characteristics with Stephen and his students. Some took as their project the elaboration of a woman-centered metaphysics, and many rejected separatism as political strategy. Yet, broadly speaking, the feminist politics of identity saw *struggle against hegemonic male power* as absolutely essential to the liberation of women as a sex-class. It was a politics that rejected as falsely optimistic (if not self-interested) approaches like Stephen's, which posited women's sexual consent and consent to marry as sufficiently unproblematic, and the sexes' common interest in revitalization of Spirit as sufficiently strong, to permit immediate resolution of sex-class conflict through communal cooperation and the sacralization of feminine nurture.⁴⁷

55

This distinction between metaphysical and secular understandings of power and politics helps us to understand Stephen's response to suggestions, in 1977, that he reconsider his approach to dealing with men who intimidated ladies. His response reveals the limits of The Farm's different-but-equal approach to sexual politics. 56

The Intimidated Ladies' Meeting

Justice is the hardest thing for man to give to woman. They will be lenient, affectionate, generous—anything and everything but just.

—Lucy V. F. Smith⁴⁸

As we saw in the case of Doug Stevenson's tentmate, the tripper husband, individual Farmies brought community pressure to bear when men intimidated their wives or other women. But in more serious cases, Stephen exercised his quasi-judicial authority as spiritual teacher to enforce the agreements. Although the rock tumbler and relativity were punishments, they were intended more as forms of strong spiritual discipline consistent with the group's commitment to pacifism. While Stephen applied these forms of discipline to many forms of misconduct, serious cases of wife-battery and wife-intimidation were infractions that particularly warranted strong intervention, for they profaned women's *yin*. Such cases demonstrate The Farm's substantive commitment to its principle of gender equivalence. That commitment contrasts favorably with the then-common law-enforcement practice of treating wife-beating as a matter best left to private resolution.⁴⁹ 57

In spite of this commitment to upholding the ideal of gender equivalence, some degree of wife-beating and other forms of spousal intimidation persisted at The Farm. The evidence is too fragmentary to calculate a frequency rate for comparison to the larger society; similarly, it is impossible to determine whether or not most of the aggressors were relative newcomers only partially integrated into the community. What we do know is that in some cases, witnesses to abuse failed to respond. In one case, it is clear that a husband's blatant violation met with no protest from at least one witness. An informant of anthropologist Bryan Pfaffenberger reported that he had seen a fellow Farmie husband, frustrated that his wife had not made enough bread to serve unanticipated visitors, strike her quite hard on the head. The informant reported that no one in the house challenged the aggressive husband, but that perhaps she or he had been the only witness to the assault.⁵⁰ 58

It is within this context that Stephen's response to closely spaced complaints about spousal intimidation in 1977 instructs us on the limits of gender equality at the commune. Upon returning from a tour with the Farm Band, he and Ina May found themselves immersed in sorting out longstanding marital conflicts that had 59

escalated during their absence. In a 30 January sermon later published as "The Theory and the Practice," Stephen reminded his followers that "the first thing this Farm has got to be, is free . . . nobody is supposed to get intimidated." The guiding principle of their collective life, he said, was that they were a community of truth-tellers who believed that all people were One, manifestations of the Divine, who could live peaceably in crowded conditions that allowed both economy of scale and close collaboration. Believing that all were One entailed a commitment to take care of one another.⁵¹

But the recent spate of lady-intimidation suggested that the Farmies were slipping in their commitment to these first principles. To indicate the seriousness of some of these offenses, he told the assembled members that several of the abused women had been on the verge of leaving The Farm. He suggested that he might give the names of the men involved. Instead, choosing his words carefully, he repeated the warnings that he had issued privately to the errant husbands, for the benefit of the entire community: "If you feel a necessity to intimidate your lady, go do it to someone else's wife and *see what it gets you*."⁵² 60

Stephen's rhetorical challenge indicated his expectation that a swift response to all such egregious infractions should be forthcoming from witnesses, as well as from him and the midwives. And yet, the very fact that he was addressing this problem before his congregation meant that some men, like the one reported by Pfaffenberger's informant, had already discovered that others might not even cop to seeing a man *hit* his wife. He turned his attention to this breakdown in communal enforcement, prodding his followers to save the day, like Mighty Mouse, rather than waiting for community heavies to carry that burden. "If stuff like that goes down when I'm not around, where is Mighty Mouse? Where is he? I thought he lived in all our hearts." While the sting of this pronouncement was still fresh, Stephen sounded out the women present on the extent of the problem, asking how many felt intimidated by husbands. After a show of hands, he retorted, "How about that? We have twelve or fifteen ladies here with a severe enough case that they'll snitch their old man off here in church."⁵³ 61

I agree with Bryan Pfaffenberger's characterization of this barbed jest, "snitch," as "ridicule of the intimidated women."⁵⁴ I would add, however, that Stephen intended this gibe to awaken the Mighty Mouse that presumably lay dormant *in each of the intimidated ladies*. The remainder of his sermon concerned *women's* equal responsibility for the distance between Farm theory and practice. If intimidation, and even wife-beating, occurred at The Farm, an important part of the solution to this problem was for women to examine *their own actions* for failure to create, through devotion to spiritual practice, a social context that would make intimidation impossible. Sensing that many of the so-called "snitches" had not yet asked for the help of others, Stephen wagered that "*none of these ladies*" 62

. . . *live out of reach of somebody on the Farm to ask for assistance in that case.*" While willing as ever to discipline belligerent men, he insisted that women not fall into what he saw as the error of believing that the problem lay with men alone. "Intimidation on the Farm is really un-sane; un-sane because you [women] have the most help and the best chance to get out from under it here; this is where you're going to find the most people dedicated to not being that way."⁵⁵

These are strong words from teacher to students, warning that all of his students bore responsibility for the problem, and that only a collective rededication to first principles could resolve it. From my point of view, however, Stephen's hostility to radical feminism as a secular, confrontational, life-denying approach to the problem of masculine aggression cut him off from a more effective framing of this problem, which informs the following analysis.⁵⁶ He deserves credit for seeing the problem of male aggression *as a problem*, but he misdiagnosed it as a problem of insufficient understanding and commitment among both men and women that had to be remedied through coeducational teaching. 63

But this was a problem of women's collective oppression, not merely a problem of lapsed spiritual practice. As a subordinated sex-class, women on The Farm could have brought forth the Mighty Mouse response Stephen desired only if they had forged a more thoroughgoing feminist consciousness, the kind of sisterly, but *oppositional* solidarity that enabled women at Black Bear Ranch to, in the words of one male resident there, "bust the male work ethic" and negotiate a more equitable sexual division of labor. Ideally, that solidarity would have become both more comprehensive (that is, not limited to changing the division of labor, as it was at Black Bear), and thus at least as strong as their bonds to the men of the community, including their teacher.⁵⁷ There *was* a form of sisterhood on The Farm—the non-oppositional, spiritually based sisterhood identified by Kern, dedicated to the celebration of childbirth as the basis of women's worth. But it was inadequate to the task of forging the kind of solidarity that could have foreclosed the abuse Stephen decried. As powerful as the midwives were, and as strong as was the bond between the midwives and the commune's women, the midwives' authority ultimately derived from Stephen, for he was the enlightened one. Masculine aggression almost certainly *was* less common on The Farm than in most other communities in America. Yet the women of The Farm still were not sufficiently organized to address it. 64

There is more to this story. According to Kern, Stephen convened an "intimidated ladies' meeting" later the same week. Forty women showed up to communicate their grievances directly to The Farm's spiritual leader, presumably in the absence of other men. Kern tells us that the women "argued that the emphasis on the obligation of women to set the moral tone of the community and to maintain its emotional balances weighed too heavily on them. When . . . there were inevitable 65

disagreements and dissatisfactions, women tended to be blamed."⁵⁸ This certainly amounted to a criticism of the latter portion of Stephen's Sunday sermon. Kern does not indicate the remedy that the women sought, but his gloss of the complaints implies that it entailed a revision (certainly not a wholesale abandonment) of the agreements—perhaps, as we shall see in a moment, by creating an enforceable system of rules more sharply delineating the boundaries of "knightly" behavior. Predictably, Stephen would have none of this. According to Kern, he "expressed sympathy for the women but pointed out that the intimidation they felt was in some sense owing to their failure to liberate themselves from a subordinate mind-set rooted in the vestiges of their precommunal life-styles."⁵⁹

If either Stephen or the women in attendance recorded their views in their own words in the aftermath of this meeting, they have not yet come to light. We do know, however, that on other occasions Stephen resisted pressure for the elaboration of formal rules. During a subsequent Sunday sermon, he noted the existence of opposed viewpoints on how to reduce conflict in the daily practice of householder yoga. One involved the articulation of rules, to relieve individuals of uncertainty about what forms of behavior violated the agreements. His favored alternative involved the exercise of greater self-reliance by individual members. As he had taught in the Monday Night Class, it was always possible for the individual of raised consciousness to distinguish truth from falsehood. He maintained that a genuine understanding of Spirit would enable every member to take on the persona of Mighty Mouse with supreme confidence.⁶⁰ He also rejected expulsion as a method of resolving conflicts within the community, regarding it as contrary to the "great boat" approach to spiritual uplift. "We aren't trying to get this hassle out of our thing," he concluded. "We're trying to . . . get the hassle out of this person."⁶¹

66

Thus, if the intimidated ladies sought heavier penalties or an elaboration and formalization of the agreements regarding spousal abuse, they found the community's spiritual leader unwilling to countenance such changes. For Stephen to concede these changes would have been to concede that his brand of householder yoga was insufficient to the task of changing men's hearts and minds. He stood his ground, while reiterating that women experiencing intimidation could always call on him for assistance.⁶²

67

The Next-Best Time Is Today

I understand history as a kind of conversation between the past and the present in which we . . . examine the cultural assumptions—and the possibilities—of our own society as well as societies that came before us.

—Peggy Pascoe

Lori D. Ginzberg's reflections on the enduring historical significance of the nineteenth-century conflation of gender ideology and belief in women's essential moral purity (see the opening paragraphs of chapter 2) suggest that that conflation was very much in play during in the post–World War Two discourse on women's place and the "crisis" of masculinity. I have just led readers through an unsentimental analysis of the limits of the gender equality that could be realized through Stephen Gaskin's strong emphasis on women's essential difference. To be fair to him and his followers, we must acknowledge that they, like nearly all of their contemporaries, were not wholly prepared to grapple with the inequalities in the sexual division of labor that emerged at the commune, because they could not have fully grasped the legacy with which they wrestled. Lacking awareness of that legacy, they were also unprepared to respond effectively to men's aggressive behavior. As Peggy Pascoe reminds us, the point of revisiting their lack of preparedness is not to disparage them, but to remind ourselves of *our own* shortcomings, three decades after the intimidated ladies' meeting, despite our access to much better accounts of this history.⁶³ According to a proverb attributed variously to Chinese or African sources, the best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago; the next-best time is today. If the Farmies did not show us how to "get the hassle out of this person," then what is it that we *do* learn from their example?

In order to learn from the Farmies, we must resist the temptation to reduce Farmie men to their sexism. Surely, they were capable of enacting toward women, and toward one another, the terms of Martin Buber's *I-It* relation—Stevenson's "tripper" and the intimidating husbands offer the most intense expressions of that capacity, and no doubt, there were many subtle expressions of it at The Farm as well. But as Buber himself pointed out, *I-It* and *I-Thou* are not discrete social systems; they are potentialities that coexist in us all, and we resort to both, even if the *I-It* of the manhood act is so much more systematically rewarded.⁶⁴

With this in mind, we can appreciate the considerable degree to which, at their best, the efforts at The Farm to make men "knightly" attenuated men's tendencies toward *I-It* relations, and acknowledge that these efforts also reduced the patriarchal dividend awarded to Farmie men through the commune's sexual division of labor. Given how easy it is to despair of the possibility of a social order free of sexism, the appeal of Farmie life to some men, even if that life fell short of feminist equality, should encourage us to continue to try to invent gender justice.

We can also reinforce what we learn from the Diggers' resistance to hierarchy by noting that, whatever the inequities of the Farmie political economy of gender, it was a stable structure. That stability made childbearing and family life coherent possibilities over the long term, until the financial crisis of the late 1970s and the

erosion of Stephen's charismatic authority. Digger anarchy provided even less stability. Future utopian experiments would do well to cherish this affirmation of the need for structure, while also heeding Farmies' postcommunal regrets that they did not attend more systematically to broadening the horizons of women's aspiration, so that bearing a child did not have to constitute the main route to every woman's "ultimate fulfillment." The "winch-winding women" of Black Bear Ranch generally found it preferable to acquire the skills involved in what was conventionally regarded as "men's work" on their own, to avoid men's sexism. But some communes—for example, Twin Oaks in Louisa, Virginia—eventually concluded that full gender equality meant investing the time to train women in "men's work," and vice versa.⁶⁵

Given the impossibility of testing metaphysical truth-claims, I might warn against the mingling of utopianism and religion. Realistically, though, given the tenuous hold of socialism and other forms of secular radicalism in the American context, it seems likely that spiritual belief will continue to propel a significant proportion of American experiments in long-term social change. So, in light of The Farm's history, I would hope that future cultural radicals would keep Laurence Veysey's caution in mind:

72

If . . . a mixture of *communitas* and structure provides the best formula for human life, then even the most seemingly ill-fated efforts to achieve *communitas* in twentieth-century America must be applauded for helping to correct a flagrant imbalance. . . .

Yet . . . this recipe ignores what has been one of the most omnipresent and disturbing ingredients in radical movements. . . . Hero worship, not passion itself or the impulse toward passionate fellow feeling, is the truly unfortunate element in the legacy of romanticism. . . . Charisma, in its extreme forms, intensifies enslavement rather than bringing about liberation.⁶⁶

Stephen Gaskin was not the most extreme example of charisma in the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s. His Achilles heel, not entirely unlike Rockin' Jody Morningstar's, was his inability to let his students graduate. When they could not do so gracefully, they executed the spiritual equivalent of a coup d'état.

The Changeover

In November 1976, The Farm's governing body reported the results of a lengthy study of the commune's financial affairs. Having for the first time centralized financial information from the various crews and cottage industries and the Farm Foundation's records, they had discovered a collective debt of over half a million dollars. Given the dramatic increase in population and the extension of aid to sanctuary cases, single women avoiding abortion, and nonmember couples

73

seeking obstetrical care, the commune's cash flow of a million dollars a year was insufficient to cover its operating expenses. The report proposed several reforms. First, the authors recommended an increase in the size of the off-Farm labor force to generate more income. Addressing inefficiencies in the current structure, they suggested the creation of a management system for shifting labor into income-generating activities as opportunities arose, the institution of continuous budgeting and centralized financial management, and the creation of a marketing department to evaluate and promote the products of Farm cottage industries.⁶⁷

Despite determined efforts to achieve financial solvency, The Farm's indebtedness continued to increase over the next six years. Macroeconomic forces were partly to blame: like so many of America's farmers, the commune was ill-prepared to deal with the collapse of agricultural commodity prices in the late 1970s, at a point when the Farm Foundation had just gambled significant capital on an expansion of commercial farming operations in several locations. The "Reagan recession" of the early 1980s also prompted a dramatic decline in housing starts, which undercut the earnings of the carpentry crew, the commune's single largest cash generator. This double misfortune brought The Farm to the brink of insolvency. The governing body responded with austerity measures, searching desperately for ways to cut spending and increase revenue. Faced with this desperate situation, influential members of the community played what they saw as their last card: the concentration of substantive power in the hands of the Farm's corporate board, which, until that time, had existed only because it was a legal requirement. The Farmies held a community-wide election of board members in 1980.⁶⁸ 74

With the future of the community at stake, it appears—from limited evidence—that two major factions emerged in the election campaign. Challenging Stephen's leadership was a group predominantly composed—according to Stephen—mostly of relative latecomers to the community. These second-generation Farmies, he believes, had never been called upon to commit themselves to countercultural radicalism to the same degree as had his own generation of "street" hippies and LSD pioneers. The essence of their position, in his view, was the word "incentive": that holding all things in common, and the practice of the "great boat"—sacrificing one's own material comfort to provide for the sake of all—put community members in a position where working hard only encouraged others to persist in their lack of ambition.⁶⁹ 75

Judging by the retrospective views of several ex-members, the composition of the factions proved more complex than Stephen allows. Many who have criticized his leadership in post-changeover interviews were founding members (we cannot be sure that all of these were members of the "incentive" faction in 1980), and their complaints derive not primarily from a superficial understanding of the 76

community's original vision and principles, but from deep familiarity with his leadership style and policies.⁷⁰

In matters of policy, they argue that Stephen pushed the community to expand—both its population and its businesses—beyond carrying capacity. This impaired the community's ability to realize its goal of becoming a stable, persistent model for others to emulate. Former member Gary Rhine writes that despite his comrades' accumulated skills, their energy and resources were sapped by the financial crisis, the ever-increasing number of sanctuary cases requiring constant supervision, and the demands of the international charitable work of Plenty. He sums up the irony of the situation by saying that "we were so close yet so far." In this regard, Stephen appears to agree, at least, that he attempted to accomplish too much, too quickly. Many critics also argue that Stephen persisted in his role as spiritual teacher long past the time when his students needed one.⁷¹ 77

The opposition faction won the majority of seats on the new board. At an undetermined point in 1983, they issued an appeal to all able-bodied adults to find employment and contribute \$150 per week to the common treasury. Only a few members responded to this appeal, and it remains doubtful that many could have complied, given the dearth of paid employment in the Summertown area. The board decided that it had exhausted its options within the framework of sharing all things in common. In September 1983 they voted to decollectivize as of 1 October. After that date, The Farm would function as a cooperative, in which the Foundation would hold only the land in common. Houses, businesses, and personal effects would become private property. Every resident would be required to pay his or her own bills, as well as monthly dues to the Foundation to maintain the infrastructure. The population fell to about 400 by 1986, and to about half that number eight years later.⁷² 78

The remaining residents saved their much-altered community, retiring the debt in its entirety, in only three years. Today, many of the 250 residents are self-employed, work in the privatized cottage industries, or hold paid employment in the surrounding area. The community's governing structure has become both more streamlined and more formal, with regular elections to the governing board.⁷³ 79

The word *traumatic* cannot begin to describe the pain involved in breaking apart the dense relationships of communal life. Those who left tended to remain close to other "expatriates." Having owned so little for so long, they arrived at their new destinations carrying only a few clothes, a few tools, and emergency funds gathered from outside sources. While grieving the loss of their communal dream, they resolutely began the long process of rebuilding their lives in an unforgiving straight economy. 80

Stephen and Ina May might have responded to the rejection of their leadership by joining the stream of people who departed after decollectivization, but they chose to remain. Ina May has pursued a career in midwifery and has continued to lead the ongoing struggle to achieve both an end to the control of midwifery by medical professionals and a more cooperative relationship between the two professions. With Stephen, she edits the *Birth Gazette*. He unsuccessfully sought the Green party's nomination as its candidate for president in 2000. His platform included planks on universal health care, the decriminalization of marijuana use—and, significantly, passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and gay rights legislation.⁷⁴ 81

The end of The Farm's first communal phase⁷⁵ did not result in members' abandonment of efforts at social change. Both expatriates and those who remained have, like Stephen and Ina May, expressed their pacifism in innumerable ways—by engaging in Green politics, organizing a Peace Roots Alliance, and lending their energy to the development of ecologically sustainable forms of energy production, agriculture, and housing, to name a few. Gary Rhine became a documentary filmmaker deeply involved in Native American struggles for religious freedom until his recent, untimely death. Albert Bates directs The Farm's Ecovillage Training Center, which assists communities in several parts of the world in developing sustainable economic ventures and low-impact, energy-efficient housing forms.⁷⁶ If more gradually than before, this is still a community "Out to Save the World." 82

Inventing a New Plot

In 1942, Virginia Woolf portrayed Isa, a leading character in her novel *Between the Acts*, as a woman who chafed at the contradictions and constraints of women's lives. "It was time," Isa muses, "that someone invented a new plot, or for the author to come out from the bushes." Without doubt, the Farmies' sexual politics offers us no radical departure from the plot that gave us the battle of the sexes, for despite their eclectic, religious bohemianism, their guiding assumptions about gender remained firmly rooted in the logic of the nineteenth-century perfectionism to which they were heir. In turn, we today have, in Lori D. Ginzberg's words, "inherited, not resolved" that legacy from them. Reconstituted as it is in temporally specific terms in each generation, we are, collectively, as they were, the only authors who might emerge from the metaphorical bushes. Today, with radical feminism a movement in abeyance, we are rapidly losing familiarity with the far-reaching perspective and bold imagination that might have cleared away the legacy, in order that we might invent a genuinely new way in which men and women might live together.⁷⁷ 83

If the story of The Farm offers no decisive break with the gendered past, the richness of the experiment does offer us hints about the possibilities of such a 84

break. We should not fail to notice that at least some Farmie men sincerely devoted a decade to finding an alternative to the "hyper-John Wayne" male trip. They sought to live in good faith with women and children, committing themselves for a lifetime to making the welfare of those so recently considered chattels in common law as important as their own. Those who would pass on, rather than resolve, the old legacy of conflation have always declared the inevitability of the battle of the sexes, and ridiculed those who try to experiment with new plots. The Farmies' shaping of men may well turn out to be a priceless legacy if the hopefulness of their efforts, tempered by unsentimental analysis of its manifold imperfections, inspires us to keep on inventing.

Notes:

Note 1: Stephen [Gaskin] and The Farm, *Hey, Beatnik! This Is the Farm Book* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1974), [77].

Note 2: Albert Bates, personal communications to Louis J. Kern, 10 October 1986 and 10 January 1991; cited in Louis J. Kern, "Pronatalism, Midwifery, and Synergistic Marriage: Spiritual Enlightenment and Sexual Ideology on The Farm (Tennessee)," in *Women in Spiritual and Communitarian Societies in the United States*, ed. Wendy E. Chmielewski, Louis J. Kern, and Marlyn Klee-Hartzell (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1993), 203.

Note 3: Stephen quoted the prayer directly in an explication of his metaphysics; see Stephen [Gaskin], *Monday Night Class*, 1st ed., rev. 3d printing (Santa Rosa: Book Farm, 1970), [44].

Note 4: *Ibid.*, 93–94. For discussion of dominance in relationships, see *ibid.*, 8–9, and Mary Cantwell and Amy Gross, "I Want Us to Get Real Good Understanding and Real Good Love and Peace and Brotherhood and Just Hang Around, Man," *Mademoiselle*, March 1971, 208.

Note 5: Kern, "Pronatalism," 203 (no sources cited); Doug Stevenson, "Up-Close Relationships," in *Voices from The Farm: Adventures in Community Living*, ed. Rupert Fike (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1998), 54 (this collective memoir will be cited hereafter as Fike, *Voices from The Farm*); Bryan Pfaffenberger, "A World of Husbands and Mothers: Sex Roles and Their Ideological Context in the Formation of The Farm," in *Sex Roles in Contemporary American Communes*, ed. Jon Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1982), 207–8.

Note 6: Patricia Mitchell Lapidus, *Sweet Potato Suppers: A Yankee Woman Finds Salvation in a Hippie Village* (Savannah, Ga.: R.S. Press, 2003), 116–17. Again, I will refer to this author as Mitchell unless discussing events subsequent to her marriage to Don Lapidus.

Note 7: *Ibid.*, 117, 134.

Note 8: Alan Graf, "I Inhaled: Rantings, Ramblings, and Ravings of a Hippie Lawyer," unpublished memoir, n.d.; manuscript available online at www.hippielawyer.com (accessed 9 January 2007), n.p. See also Gary Rhine, "There Was Great Incentive to Get Married," 50, and Patricia [Mitchell] Lapidus, "The Letting Go and the Taking Hold," 48, both in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*. Vicky Montagne, interview with Courtney Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 13 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 139, SCDLR, 5; Stevenson, "Up-Close Relationships," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 54.

Note 9: Rhine, "Great Incentive," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 50.

Note 10: *Ibid.*

Note 11: Jerry Hutchens, "Falling in Love," 51–52; Rhine, "Great Incentive," 50; both in

Fike, *Voices from The Farm*. Ina May Gaskin, interview with Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 13 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 136, SCDLR, 9–10; Charles Hunnicutt and Linda Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, Summertown, 9 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 161, SCDLR, 12; Kern, "Pronatalism," 205. For a photo of Hutchens tending the Book Publishing Company press, see See Michael I. Niman, "Out to Save the World: Life at The Farm," *High Times*, February 1995; article available online at www.thefarm.org (accessed 9 January 2007).

Note 12: S. [Gaskin], *Hey, Beatnik*, [75].

Note 13: *Ibid.*; emphasis added

Note 14: Michael Traugot, *A Short History of The Farm* (Summertown, Tenn.: the author, 1994), 25.

Note 15: For the Billings' formulation of the Method, see John J. Billings, *The Ovulation Method: The Achievement or Avoidance of Pregnancy by a Technique Which Is Safe, Reliable, and Morally Acceptable*, 4th ed. (Melbourne, Australia: Advocate Press, 1972). The high figure on effectiveness of the Method comes from Christine Cheater, lecturer, University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia, to H-Women discussion list, 8 June 2001, available online at h-net.msu.edu (accessed 9 January 2007). The low figures derive from Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Bodies, Ourselves, for the New Century: A Book By and For Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 307. Farmies and ex-Farmies seldom mention contraception in their reminiscences, so we cannot assess its actual effectiveness. Ina May testifies that on the whole, it worked well—that there were few unintended pregnancies, and that in those few cases, parents adapted to the reality and did not impart to the children a feeling of being unwanted. Another couple recalled that it took three unwanted pregnancies to master the Method. According to Kern, the prohibition on "artificial" methods of contraception was rescinded in 1978, but he cites no source for this claim, and I have not encountered it elsewhere. See I. Gaskin, interview with Shanks, 10–11; [William] and [Joanne] Santana, interview with Courtney Shanks, Summertown [Columbia?] Tenn., 12 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 166, SCDLR, 11; Kern, "Pronatalism," 205 (no source cited).

Note 16: Margaret Nofziger, *A Cooperative Method of Natural Birth Control* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1976), 13, emphasis original.

Note 17: *Ibid.*, 59.

Note 18: Leonard Zwilling, "Homosexuality as Seen in Indian Buddhist Texts," in *Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender*, ed. José Ignacio Cabezón (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1992), 203–14. On homosexuality and American Buddhism, see Sandy Boucher, *Turning the Wheel: American Women Creating the New Buddhism*, 2d ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993); see also the statement of principles by the Gay and Lesbian Buddhist Group, Bo Hyun Son Dharma Center, Los Angeles, in J. Gordon Melton, ed., *Encyclopedia of American Religions: Religious Creeds*, 2 vols. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1988), 2:455.

Note 19: Stephen Gaskin devotes a chapter of his *Haight Ashbury Flashbacks* (Berkeley, Calif.: Ronin, 1990) to an unflattering portrait of a "black magician" he calls Psychedelic Bob and his whining, effeminate partner (141–49). He has also reflected on the diverse, same-sex eroticism that he observed in prison, in *Rendered Infamous: A Book of Political Reality* (Book Publishing Co., 1981), 137–53 passim. In the latter source, he recalls an incident in which an openly effeminate man who had committed an especially vicious series of murders against family members silently confronted Stephen, to test whether the latter's pacifist ideals extended to a recognition of the humanity of men like himself (145–46). Stephen's account centers on his acceptance of the humanity of this individual, but offers no analysis of the place of same-sex eroticism in his teachings.

Note 20: Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 38; LeDoux, "The Farm," 99; C. and L. Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 38–39; Jean Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, [Oregon and Washington?], 5 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 164, SCDLR, 14; [William] and [Joanne] Santana, interview with Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 12 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 166, SCDLR, 9.

Note 21: Kern, "Pronatalism," 215.

Note 22: Ina May [Gaskin] and The Farm Midwives, *Spiritual Midwifery* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1975), 338–39. O’Gorman’s path into midwifery appears at 50–56, passim; quotation at 56.

Note 23: *Ibid.*, 120.

Note 24: Stevenson, "Up-Close Relationships," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 54–57; quotation from 56.

Note 25: Ina May Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed. (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1978), 44.

Note 26: *Ibid.*, 44–45.

Note 27: *Ibid.*, 44–45, 47; emphasis deleted.

Note 28: *Ibid.*, 41.

Note 29: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed., 41. As with Rudolph and Marilyn, this couple’s second experience of tantric birth reportedly went much more smoothly (*ibid.*, 41–42).

Note 30: Signed, untitled entry in I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery*, 9.

Note 31: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed., 87.

Note 32: See I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery*, passim; quotation at 19. This perspective on the pain of childbirth well predated the founding of The Farm: perhaps Ina May found inspiration in Grantly Dick-Read, *Childbirth without Fear: The Principles and Practice of Natural Childbirth* (New York: Harper, 1944). On the adoption and reinterpretation of this concept by the counterculture, see Lauri Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived: Feminism and the Legacies of the Sixties* (New York Univ. Press, 1996), 57–59.

Note 33: I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery*, 70.

Note 34: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed., 104. An earlier version of the same account appears in the first edition, 267–72.

Note 35: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed., [443], emphasis original.

Note 36: *Ibid.*, 55.

Note 37: *Ibid.*

Note 38: J. Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 9.

Note 39: Kern, "Pronatalism," 214.

Note 40: S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik*, [78]; I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery*, 2d ed., 11; idem, "Midwifery and Women’s Power," *Woman of Power*, no. 14 (Summer 1989): 28.

Note 41: Nancy F. Cott, "What’s In a Name? The Limits of ‘Social Feminism’; or, Expanding the Vocabulary of Women’s History," *Journal of American History* 76 (December 1989): 826–27, quoting in part Linda Gordon, "What’s New in Women’s History," in *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1986), 29, and citing Temma Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona, 1910–1918," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7 (Spring 1982): 545–66.

Note 42: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and the World," quoted in Daniel Williams and Alan Cooperman, "Vatican Letter Denounces ‘Lethal Effects’ of

Feminism," *Washington Post*, 1 August 2004, A16.

Note 43: Kern, "Pronatalism," 208. Note that I intend my choice of words to distinguish between the church hierarchy's view of gender equality and the critique of it by Catholic feminists who seek the ordination of women and many other reforms.

Note 44: S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik*, [78].

Note 45: See for example Weather Underground Organization, *Prairie Fire* (n.p.: Red Dragon Collective, 1975). For a sympathetic discussion that acknowledges women insiders' critique of the organization's sexism, see Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (Oakland, Calif.: A. K. Press, 2006), 183–95.

Note 46: For a preliminary assessment of radical feminism's debts to the counterculture, see Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, chap. 2. Kate Millett's articulation of a broad definition of the political, in *Sexual Politics* (New York: Avon Books, 1970), 23, marked an important moment of transition, when what we now recognize as *identity politics* moved from its original status as a largely taken-for-granted perspective among Black Power advocates who needed no term for it, to its broad application to many forms of oppression that had heretofore remained only partly visible. See L. A. Kauffman, "The Anti-Politics of Identity," *Socialist Review* (Oakland, Calif.) 20, no. 1 (January-March 1990): 67–75. For the earliest use of the term *identity politics* in print (at least, of which I am aware), see the Combahee River Collective Statement, April 1977, reprinted in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. Barbara Smith (New York: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983), 272–77 (thanks to Hester Eisenstein for identifying this as an earliest use in print). For an incisive treatment of identity politics as a critique of the limits of liberalism's understanding of power and polity, see Cressida Heyes, "Identity Politics," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta; article available online at plato.stanford.edu (accessed 9 January 2007). For an overview of the agenda of radical feminism in the 1960s and 1970s, see Ruth Rosen, "Hidden Injuries of Sex," chap. 5 in *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking, 2000).

Note 47: For examples of radical-feminist metaphysics, see the work of Mary Daly, e.g., *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), and Starhawk [Miriam Simos], *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979).

Note 48: Lucy Virginia French Smith, diary, 11 May 1863, Tennessee State Library and Archives, quoted in Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 135.

Note 49: Susan Schechter, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1982), 157–61.

Note 50: Quoted without attribution or date in Pfaffenberger, "World of Husbands and Mothers," 205.

Note 51: Stephen Gaskin, "The Theory and the Practice," in *Sunday Morning Services at The Farm* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., [1977]), 112, 114 (quotation), 110–11.

Note 52: *Ibid.*, 112; emphasis original.

Note 53: *Ibid.*, 113–14.

Note 54: Pfaffenberger, "Husbands and Mothers," 205.

Note 55: S. Gaskin, "Theory and Practice," 115, emphasis original; *ibid.*, 117.

Note 56: This isolation was not total. The Farmies' participation in the antinuclear movement certainly brought them into contact with feminist peace activists. Albert Bates makes passing reference to "Farm special missions . . . sent . . . to run . . . battered women's shelters in the rural South"; see "J. Edgar Hoover and The Farm," paper

presented to the International Communal Studies Conference on Culture, Thought, and Living in Community, New Harmony, Ind., 16 October 1993, box Farm-Fin, SCDLR, 3. While urban shelters in states such as Massachusetts and California, with vibrant local movements of battered women, were operated (at least initially) on explicitly feminist principles, rural groups had to downplay their feminist politics. Thus, in the rural South, the pragmatism of local activists meshed with the Farmies' dedication to charitable voluntarism. This pattern also prevailed in the movement against rape. See Schechter, *Women and Male Violence*, 84; and Nancy A. Matthews, *Confronting Rape: The Feminist Anti-Rape Movement and the State* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Note 57: Tim Hodgdon, "'The Male Work Ethic was Busted': Manhood, Feminism, and the Sexual Division of Labor at Black Bear Ranch," *Communal Societies: Journal of the Communal Studies Association* 23 (2003): 95–120.

Note 58: Kern, "Pronatalism," 207. Kern cites no sources for his account of this meeting.

Note 59: *Ibid.*, 207.

Note 60: Stephen Gaskin, "Fast and Fluid," in *Sunday Morning Services*, 32; emphasis original.

Note 61: *Ibid.*, 32.

Note 62: Kern, "Pronatalism," 207.

Note 63: Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874–1939* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), xxiii.

Note 64: Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Gregor Smith, 2d ed. (New York: Scribner, 1958).

Note 65: Hodgdon, "Male Work Ethic"; Zena Goldenberg, "The Power of Feminism at Twin Oaks Community," in Chmielewski, Kern, and Klee-Hartzell, *Women in Spiritual and Communitarian Societies*, 259.

Note 66: Laurence Veysey, *The Communal Experience: Anarchist and Mystical Counter-Cultures in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 478.

Note 67: Farm Foundation, Basic Budget Report, November 1976, quoted in Traugot, *Short History*, 50–51.

Note 68: Traugot, *Short History*, 51–55; Bates, "Changing Economy," 2; S. Gaskin, interview with Kozeny, 26.

Note 69: S. Gaskin, interview with Kozeny, 26–31. Ina May renders the "business faction" with greater sympathy; see her interview with Shanks, 19–20.

Note 70: LeDoux, "The Farm," 161, reaches similar conclusions.

Note 71: The Farm still exists, and so distinctions between current and former members cut across the factionalism under discussion here. Gary Rhine, "So Close yet So Far," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 157; S. Gaskin, interview with Kozeny, 16, 32; Wheeler, interview with Shanks, 35–36; Cordette (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 9–10. LeDoux encountered similar perspectives in her interviews of Farm residents ("The Farm," 150–51).

Note 72: LeDoux, "The Farm," 161–66.

Note 73: Traugot, *Short History*, 55–56. Population figure from The Farm's web site (www.thefarm.org; accessed 9 January 2007).

Note 74: Susan Greene, "Greens Give Nader the Nod: Denver Convention Nominates Activist," *Denver Post*, 26 June 2000, A-1; for the campaign platform, I relied on a document that is no longer available on the Internet: "Stephen Gaskin, Outlaw," formerly

available from www.stephen2000.org (accessed 30 November 2001). This brief overview of The Farm's postcommunal phase cannot do justice to the vibrancy of its continued activism. See Cynthia Holzapfel, "It's Far from Over," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 158–59; Albert Bates, "Blowin' in the Wind," afterword to Fike, *Voices from The Farm*, 160–61; Traugot, *Short History*, 60–69; and The Farm's web site (www.farm.org) for more thorough accounts.

Note 75: The Second Foundation is a recent effort by a group of Farm residents to revise the original Foundation's experiment with all-things-in-common. Its fundamental agreement is not the old vow of poverty, but a hybrid system in which members pool their income, but each gets back a portion of their contributions. Thus, members enjoy a smaller measure of the collective security and buying power of pooled resources, while also enjoying some rewards for individual effort. See "The Second Foundation," 2005, document available online at www.thefarm.org (accessed 9 January 2007).

Note 76: On the Peace Roots Alliance, see www.peaceroots.org. For examples of Rhine's activist documentaries, see *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations*, VHS (Los Angeles: Kifaru Productions, 1992); *The Peyote Road: Ancient Religion in Contemporary Crisis* (1994); and *A Seat at the Table: Struggling for American Indian Religious Freedom* (2004). See also the Kifaru web site, www.kifaru.com. For Albert Bates' work, see "Ecovillage Training Center," n.d.; document available online at www.thefarm.org. All accessed 9 January 2007.

Note 77: Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1941), 215; Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990), 216. I borrow both the term *abeyance* and the judgment about the present state of radical feminism from Verta Taylor and Leila J. Rupp, "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism: A Reconsideration of Cultural Feminism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 19, no. 1 (Autumn 1993): 32–61.
