

Quoted from the Editorial for this issue: "Because the United Nations located its 1985 World Conference in Nairobi, Kenya - and Forum '85 took place there as well - what we have is a Third World-centred publication, with a particularly strong emphasis on Africa. The number of African women who attended the Forum was a political statement in itself. For many 'Western' feminists who went to Nairobi, it was a watershed: we have integrated a much more global perspective into our feminism. The poverty that exists in the world has given women's struggle a special edge. Women produce most of the food in many societies, which gives them a powerful commitment, not only to social and economic justice at the governmental level, but to the day-to-day survival of their families. This issue took shape around the material in a way that was self-evidently right, and the articles we have chosen reflect the spirit of Nairobi. Non-Western women have indicated their dissatisfaction with the "international division of intellectual labour," whereby they are "the providers of 'raw data' and the recipients of finished products in the form of 'theories' and development programmes" (AAWORD). The mistake made in the past by Western women was to assume that their problems were universal. In Nairobi, we learned differently. Third World women offer us exemplary models for translating scholarly research into energetic action for social change, as our contributions from Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and many others show. The African contributions were particularly compelling, in their quality and scope. African feminism focusses on food production and property rights as keys to women's full equality. The continent's colonially-created poverty and its loss of food self-sufficiency have shaped an urgent feminist concern with economic issues and with empowering women to perform their traditional tasks with requisite rights and freedom - through grassroots social change"

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