

# MOTHER JONES

607 MARKET STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105

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Dear Reader,

In the past year or so, I've begun to feel increasingly desperate about American society, and where it's headed.

And yet at the same time I've started to feel hopeless about anything ever changing. I find I've withdrawn more and more into myself, into my friends, into small things that seem to make up - if only a little - for the world "out there".

Politics, if it means choosing between two old alternatives again, just doesn't interest me. And yet a few years ago I was deeply committed to another vision of politics - a politics as if people mattered - that seemed to me the most important thing in the world. I've learned a lot in the intervening years - about myself, about a whole new range of interests I never had before, about how I relate to people (and how I don't) - all sorts of things that make me realize how much I've changed, and how much I like those changes. And I've begun to discover how many people there are who feel the same way I do, but have no place to turn to except ourselves.

I'd like to be able to care again, feel that my life and the things important to it mattered. I don't think I'm ready to go marching or get my head bashed in at a demonstration. I know I'm not going to head off for the hills, to seek refuge on a farm, because I can't support myself with prices for land and food and everything else gone mad. But I know that I'm tired of the society I live in, and can't honestly support it - and would like to find enough other men and women like me to make a difference again.

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Dear Reader,

Let me start again. If what I've just written describes some of the things you've been feeling recently, I'd like you to read a bit further. They're

certainly the things I've been feeling - and, now slowly, I am beginning to see a way out.

A group of people like you and like me have joined together to start a new magazine, called MOTHER JONES. Most of us are veterans of the Sixties, and all that implies. Like many of you, we were actively involved in the McGovern and McCarthy campaigns, found ourselves marching against the insanity of Vietnam, worked actively in civil rights. Some of the women here are already veterans of the women's movement, and all of us - men and women alike - have learned a great deal more from personal experiences than we ever thought possible a few years earlier.

MOTHER JONES is a magazine for the rest of us, for those people today who think that the veneer of this society has finally worn too thin, who never thought WIN buttons would do the trick, who want to make a difference, but are not ready to turn backward in time to the easy and quick solutions that used to seem so obvious.

MOTHER JONES is about politics, literature, psychology, art, music, (from rhythm and blues to Beethoven), joy, homecooking, gardening, a fair amount of anger, and a good deal of dedication to making sure that in fact the Seventies don't turn back into the Fifties - despite the dedicated efforts of some to do so.

I would like you to try MOTHER JONES, to see if we are what we promise, and if we're what you want. And you don't have to send any money. All you need to do is return the enclosed card.

(A Note on Things Past)

When we first set about planning MOTHER JONES nearly a year ago, we decided that for it to be authentically new, and more important, worth reading, we'd have to do three things.

First, we have to be honest with ourselves in order to be honest with you. Right now a lot of established magazines seem to be changing character like chameleons, not because they necessarily care about what they tell their readers, but because their publishers want to turn profits. Profits aren't by definition abhorrent, but they can very definitely get in the way of telling the truth.

For example, we're disgusted with the oil companies, and seriously wonder whether defending "free enterprise" at all costs means that we're going to have to keep swallowing their super-profits forever. There are other routes - return of excessive profits, government operation of federally-owned oil lands, even nationalization - that we plan to explore. We don't have the answers, and may in fact discover that the disadvantages of such routes are more trouble than the present system - but we want to be able to ask the questions, and do so without being hypocrites.

So we established ourselves as a non-profit foundation, and also decided to take salaries well below what most of us could earn in conventional publications. Not because we want your sympathy, and not so we could cry poor, but because we wanted the independence and integrity necessary to ask some hard questions other people don't seem ready to ask.

Second, we decided that any magazine that talked exclusively about "politics" was a bore, since none of us lives such a life 24 hours a day, and we assume, neither do you. So we also set out to make sure that poetry, music, interviews, reviews, news, fiction, education, film, psychology, religion, sex, economics, travel - and a lot more - are at the core of MOTHER JONES. We also decided that to make the magazine exciting meant finding writers we respected and enjoyed. So we've signed up men and women like....

....Robert Coles. Elinor Langer. Grace Paley. Michael Arlen. Noam Chomsky. Robert Jay Lifton. Martin Duberman. Paul Krassner. Tillie Olsen. Wilfred Sheed. Pat Watters. Christopher Jencks. Edgar Friedenberg. Nat Hentoff. Denise Levertov. And dozens of others.

Finally, we decided that none of the magazines we knew provided some kinds of information we wanted - and thought you might want too. Such as articles that also tell you more about what you can do, where you can get more information, what other people have done or are doing about it. The "it" might be a low-cost daycare center, a close look at agribusiness rip-off, an article on group therapy, or a guide on how to grow you own. Or none of these.

We'll have a "news section", that not only lets you know what you can't find elsewhere, but also gives you a perspective you can't find elsewhere. That tells you how the New York Times delayed a piece exposing the Cambodian invasion until after the invasion had started. Or that lets you know how Spiro Agnew has made a fortune in the year since he left office. Or how a right-wing Texas millionaire is trying to corner the world silver market.

We'll also have a digest section, to help you beat the I've-got-too-much-to-read blues. We don't think we've got any monopoly on insight, and assume that a lot of other magazines do a lot of things better than we can - such as outstanding literary magazines that print top quality fiction, tiny film reviews that do the best reviewing around, foreign magazines and newspapers that offer the best insights on their area of the world you'll ever read - but don't read now because you can't afford the hundreds of dollars you'd need to subscribe to all of them.

Plus regular features like public interest classifieds, that offer you part time or full time jobs that aren't alienating, demeaning or just down right

boring. Or trivia, on nothing meaningful at all, but worth including just because it's fun. Or....

(Enough Said)

I'm going on too long. If you've followed me this far, I think you realize now what we're offering you. It's a bit of a lot of things, welded together not entirely without rhyme or reason, but with a reflection of where many of us are today. Aware of what we don't like. Learning slowly about what we do. But most important, committed to the principle that whole lives can be built in this society of ours, despite all the roadblocks that society has determinedly put in our way.

It's a bit of the Whole Earth Catalog, but not quite; a bit of the old Ramparts, but not quite that either; in fact, it's a blend of a whole fistful of magazines, newspapers, journals, catalogs, books that we've grown to admire over the years, but that taken alone, never quite reflected the complexity, the richness or the range of our lives.

We think you'll enjoy MOTHER JONES. We've grown more and more excited by it, and so have most of the hundreds of people we've talked to as we've asked for their thoughts, criticisms, suggestions, insights. We can't promise that it will bring about the changes we hope for, or even bring together the people we care about - but it's the first real try that anyone has made. And right now, of all times, it seems like the effort is worth the chance of failure.

We will make one promise, though: if you subscribe, and for any reason you decide that MOTHER JONES is not what you want, we'll refund every cent you paid. With no questions asked.

One more thing: it won't cost you anything to try MOTHER JONES. Just return the postage-paid reply card. We'll enroll you as a Charter Subscriber and bill you after you've received your premier issue.

The cost is just \$8 for the year (10 issues) - a 33% saving off the regular subscription price. And as a Charter Subscriber, you will be able to renew (and order gift subscriptions) at the lowest available rates in the future.

Will you take the chance?

Yours,



Richard Parker

For the Editors of MOTHER JONES

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