Chapter 5

"We Here Work as Hard as We Can": The Farm's Sexual Division of Labor

In the spring of 1975, Patricia Mitchell, her preschool son, and her lover, Don Lapidus, arrived at the entrance to The Farm, hoping to join. They had read about the burgeoning commune in its book-length recruitment brochure, *Hey, Beatnik,* and after much discussion, had packed their possessions in their car. At the front gate, a man with a clipboard described the hippie village as a monastery of householder yogis where Stephen Gaskin's teachings guided daily labor and family life. Gaskin's students, he said, agreed to live together nonviolently, to consume a strictly vegan diet, and to hold all money and property in common. After some time at the gate, the three were admitted as "soakers," soaking up the new life that was The Farm.[1] 1

A member of the gate crew drove the new soakers to their host households. The Mitchell-Lapidus trio were welcomed into a structure consisting of a large army tent (recall the frame–and–canvas structures in the television comedy *M*A*S*H*) flanked by two Caravan-vintage school buses, where twelve people made their home. For the duration of their time as soakers, the family slept on a couch in the tent.[2] They arrived in time to help with preparations for dinner. Patricia joined women in the kitchen area of the tent, washing potatoes from the previous year's harvest.[3] 2

Over dinner, their hosts reminisced about The Farm's beginnings. A man observed that the "ladies" worked as hard at home as did the men on the crews. Don and Patricia found it puzzling that spiritually attuned, socially conscious hippies divided the work this way. Their polite question about this arrangement prompted several responses. Theresa said, "Ladies gig [work] at the phones [the commune's telephone exchange] and at Canning," as if to say**:** But women *do* work outside the household. Mary explained that "a lot of us have nursing babies," hinting, perhaps, that the nature of the maternal-infant bond and the contingencies of nursing made men inadequate replacements.[4] 3

The next morning the men, including Don, departed for a day with the farming crew. Still puzzled (as were many visitors, including scholars and reporters), Patricia asked Mary again: Why only the men? The busy "lady" responded with rich ambiguity: "Look, we here work as hard as we can; and when we need to rest, we rest." She might have chosen to explain the tantric complementarity of knightly *yang* and sacred *yin,* and that the best way to follow "the juice" was for women to devote their days to anticipating men's needs for a clean house, hot food, and well-cared-for children at the end of the workday. Women's rewards for 4

following the juice were not only that husbands would work hard outside the home to provide for their families, but that they would also attend faithfully to the emotional and spiritual needs of their wives and children during the evening, and follow their female "helmsman" in tantric loving. Some Farmies extended the tantric formula Stephen had given in the Monday Night Class to describe the commune's sexual division of labor: "The husband is the helmsman by day, and the wife is the helmsman by night." But Farmies distrusted too much talk about abstractions that took them out of the here-and-now, and Mary short-circuited Patricia's search for rational explanation by pointing to the equal effort required of both sexes, as if to say: If you stick around a while, you'll understand better. Until then, we have work to do.[5]

5 In this chapter, I will argue that Stephen and his followers created a tantric sexual division of labor at The Farm consistent with their desire to honor the sacred power of women's reproductive *yin* and to tame men's "hyper–John Wayne" tendencies (of course, without blunting men's productive "*yang* creative energy"). As far as we know, the legitimacy of this arrangement never faced sustained challenge from within the commune, even though it prompted mordant criticism by outsiders.[6] This stable division of labor may well have contributed more to the longevity of the Farmies' experiment in religious communalism than the commune's jerry-rigged political and economic structures, even as the population grew rapidly. To set this gender economy of productive "knights" and fertile "ladies" in context, I begin with a sketch of The Farm's evolving physical and social structures. The very first challenge faced by the expatriate Psychedelphians was to establish their intentions with their new neighbors.

Relations with the Local Community

6 Late in the spring of 1971, after many weeks of searching for suitable land in the upper South, the hippie flotilla of Caravan buses arrived at a farmstead in Summertown, Tennessee. By happenstance, a Mrs. Martin, absentee owner of an unoccupied farm there, had met some of Stephen's followers in Nashville. Impressed with the group's spiritual purpose, she agreed to rent her land in Summertown to them for a dollar per year until they found a permanent site. Mrs. Martin had sent ahead word of the group's impending arrival, asking that local authorities "take good care" of her new friends. Word spread quickly among area residents, along with rumors that the transplants were, variously, ex-convicts, drug dealers, sexual "perverts," or members of the Charles Manson family.

7 Sheriff's deputies managed traffic for three days—and took a shotgun away from Homer Sanders, caretaker of the Martin property, who at first intended to drive the "invaders" from the county. According to some versions of Farmie folklore, the newcomers quickly charmed Sanders. Then, when a neighbor objected to the hippies' use of a right-of-way onto the Martin property, Sanders threatened to use

his shotgun again—this time against the neighbor, with whom he had been engaged in a long-running feud. To avoid a "shootin' scrape," the new arrivals cut another road onto the property, pushing their lumbering vehicles over the stumps and through the mud toward higher ground.[7]

8 Sanders' close observation of the Martin tenants bore out his initial impression that they were deeply religious, and he soon found them to be both hardworking (if unskilled) and honest to a fault. He defended them against detractors, which prompted further gossip. It surprised many that Sanders quickly turned his loyalty to the hippies to his pecuniary advantage. Hard-pressed in an economy where no single skill provided steady income, Sanders was a jack-of-all-trades. He owned a sawmill (constructed from salvaged parts, and powered by an automobile engine), but frequently could not hire enough helpers. He struck a deal with Gaskin and his followers: in exchange for hauling logs and sawing lumber, the communards would receive half of the lumber produced. At the Sanders mill, urban hippies began to acquire the skills and an appreciation for the outlook of old-timers like Sanders.[8]

9 The hippies more than reciprocated Sanders' neighborliness. Stephen[9] sought to cultivate good relations with the neighbors at every opportunity, knowing that to do otherwise would spell certain failure. At his insistence, his students did their best to observe local customs. Among themselves, hippie argot, laced with drug references, was perfectly acceptable, but when interacting with Summertown folk, "We had to say, 'Howdy,' and once we got good at it, try something like, 'Think it's gonna come up a storm tonight?' We had to translate 'stoned' into 'down-home.'"[10]

10 At the same time, Stephen understood that respect had to be reciprocal. When the new road into the Martin farm had been upgraded, he instructed a crew headed by Leslie Hunt, a fellow Caravaner and ex-Marine, to string barbed wire along the property lines and to construct and staff a gate to restrict access to the new commune. Although some followers thought this an off-putting gesture, Gaskin insisted that good fences would make good neighbors. A staffed front gate graced their permanent residence on the nearby Black Swan Ranch as well.[11]

11 In addition to good manners and good fences, Stephen extended his hand to the local power structure. Not long after arriving, he welcomed the sheriff of Lewis County, T. C. Carroll, to his school bus. Playing a hunch, Stephen requested that the sheriff serve the commune as he would other constituents, the subtext being that his was not a group of lawless longhairs. From all accounts, the appeal worked: the two men developed a close relationship. In other matters, however, Stephen shrewdly urged his followers to maintain a distance. For many years, the Farmies avoided alienating neighbors and straining the budgets of local

government by schooling their own children. The group's longstanding policy of refusing welfare benefits and their decision not to register as voters served to further minimize the impact of their presence. (Years later, with their reputation secure, the Farmies entered local politics and ended the reign of the local "fixer.")[12]

12 As The Farm grew, its leadership made further neighborly gestures, treating elderly residents at its clinic, transporting them to Nashville in its ambulance, and occasionally providing food and fuel to families in distress.[13] Operating under the principle of karma, the Farm's contracting crews honored the letter and spirit of business deals with a scrupulous honesty that won local admiration. "Under-bid projects were dutifully completed. Mistakes were made right, even if it meant jackhammering up a new slab or agreeing to [supply] thirty pepper pickers for a month." Although rumors and gossip about the commune continued to circulate, these efforts built an essentially cordial relationship with the surrounding towns, and a reputation that kept the community in the good graces of its creditors during financial difficulties in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[14]

Population and Infrastructure

13 The Farmies purchased land of their own—the 1,100-acre Black Swan Ranch, near Summertown—early in the autumn of 1971. The following year, they seized the opportunity to purchase an adjacent parcel of 750 acres.[15] If The Farm's acreage expanded rapidly, its population grew even faster, increasing by roughly 600 percent between 1971 and 1982. According to Peter Jenkins, a visitor with access to the community's business records, the original population of about 250 to 300 had tripled by the autumn of 1974, with 160 couples, 180 single adults, and 251 children in residence, many of them born at The Farm. Of the adults, 228, or 46 percent, fell between the ages of nineteen and twenty-seven, while 102, or 20 percent, ranged from twenty-nine to thirty-nine years of age. Only eight were older than forty.[16] Two years later, according to Rupert Fike, the number of residents had reached 1,100, with an astounding 14,000 visitors, 6,000 of whom stayed overnight. In 1982 the commune reached its peak population of about 1,500, and a staggering 20,000 visitors came to the gate.[17] As early as 1973, Stephen encouraged the establishment of satellite Farms in other states, in part to alleviate population pressure in Summertown. By 1982 these sustained an additional 1,400 Farmies.[18]

14 For the first two years, many of the former Caravaners continued to live in vehicles driven to Tennessee. In late 1971, they reported to the local community in a full-page advertisement that they had completed construction of one large permanent house, and that "foundations for eight more are started."[19] However, the lumber earned from Sanders, or scavenged from local demolitions, was

insufficient to provide frame housing for all residents, so most of the first stationary quarters consisted of tents like the one that sheltered the Mitchell-Lapidus soakers. These structures housed up to twenty persons. They were heated by wood stoves and illuminated by kerosene lamps. Inevitably, these conditions resulted in a number of fires. In an effort to reduce this risk, in 1975 the Farmies experimented with low-voltage illumination powered by automobile batteries.[20] Large houses occupied by up to fifty people eventually replaced the shanties—but slowly. The minutes of a meeting of the board of directors in 1977 announced a plan to replace many canvas roofs with tin, and noted that a greater number of houses were underway than ever before.[21]

15 The tent-shanties and the houses that replaced them sprouted along the system of roads cut through the wooded property. Some families and groups opted for relative isolation, while the majority formed a densely populated village around several large service buildings. The first of these was a sorghum-processing mill, erected in September 1971 as part of the commune's first commercial venture: production of a sorghum syrup marketed under the name Old Beatnik.[22]

16 Other early buildings housed a motor pool, where a crew of men kept the community's vehicles in running order, and a general store that distributed allotments of food, clothing, and household supplies, located at the convergence of the village's network of roads near the gate. The family residence that predated the Farmies became the commune's offices. An outbuilding, once a roadhouse for the Natchez Trace stagecoach line, was first used as a community kitchen, and an adjacent tent housed a dining hall.[23] (The communal kitchen served those whose work assignments brought them out of their households before breakfast and those whose dwellings could not support a kitchen. Most households, however, prepared their own food.) The kitchen was later converted to a flour mill. The original barn, which sheltered a team of workhorses, provided accommodation for Stephen's Sunday-morning religious services during inclement weather. As the only large structure with electricity, it doubled in the early years as the rehearsal space for the Farm Band, an integral part of the commune's recruitment efforts.[24] Over time, barns for produce storage and agricultural equipment, a soybean-processing laboratory, a canning and freezing facility, a clinic, a cinderblock structure for telephone switching equipment, a school, a laundry, a community center, and several buildings housing cottage industries rose on the property. The Farm became a hippie village.[25]

17 The village required maintenance on the same scale as a small municipality—or a very large campground. A tank truck circulated regularly, vacuuming the contents of the outhouses, while another sprinkled water on the roads to control dust. Until the introduction of running water, another truck delivered water to households. In 1972, Vanderbilt University donated a disused water tower, which supplied the

communal showers once Farmie shade-tree mechanics devised a way to power the pumping equipment with an automobile engine. There was no formal police force, although Farmies Leslie Hunt, and later, Johnny McDaniels, functioned as security officers—the latter was summoned, for example, in 1983, when residents reported Farm teenagers joy-riding in a pickup truck.[26] Later developments included the installation of electricity and telephone service in each residence.

Such improvements cost a great deal of money, as did medicine and supplies for 18
the clinic, parts for the many vehicles and farm implements, and food and clothing for a rapidly growing population. Over the years, The Farm cobbled together an ungainly financial structure that, somehow, supported the members' desire to share all things in common amid a society devoted to private ownership.

Finances and Governance

During the summer at the Martin farm, the new community began the long 19
process of giving substance to their shared beliefs. As a community-on-wheels, they had evolved a number of common agreements and procedures to keep the Caravan in working order. However, they departed San Francisco the second time with only vague notions of how to structure the religious community they wanted to create. Of course, Stephen and the members of his four-marriage (which had expanded to become a six-marriage at some point on the Caravan) would lead, and certainly, leaders and followers would continue to raise their level of collective consciousness, or "group head," as they had on the road. But the commune's specific form had yet to be decided. They brought to Tennessee not plans, but hopes and principles.[27]

The distance between an agreed-upon principle and its application quickly became 20
apparent as the former Hashburians settled into their temporary encampment on the Martin farm. Even the most mundane decision could become the subject of debate. Rupert Fike, for example, fashioned a temporary shelter from sheets of plastic and put down a floor of planks salvaged from a local barn. "Some of the more conservative [members] were openly critical," he recalls. They suggested that laying a floor might represent an egoistic search for comfort, when their principles exhorted each member to prioritize the collective good. "The astral conservatives," he remarked—those who interpreted the agreements in the most literal terms—"were out in force that first summer. It was still getting figured out, how exactly to be 'spiritual.' We were watching each other very closely, all of us insecure about being spiritual students." Word of the controversy reached Stephen, who, after a brief inspection, decreed for unspecified reasons that no more wooden floors be built.[28]

While the former urbanites pondered the application of their principles to new 21
circumstances, Stephen and his inner circle declared the group's purpose to the

wider world by incorporating the commune as a "family monastery," governed by the Farm Foundation, on 8 June 1971. This assertion of status as a religious community provided the group with an exemption from property taxation, facilitated their claim of federal nonprofit tax status, and vested Stephen with the civil authority of a minister, including the right to perform marriage ceremonies.[29] Incorporation required the formation of a board of directors, but it appears that this body exercised little real authority in Farm affairs for a decade, since its members achieved their positions as active members of other decision-making bodies, and became directors by default.

22 The transplants immediately confronted the question of how they would support themselves in their new home. They possessed neither knowledge of farming nor of many of the other survival skills required in a rural environment. They proceeded by trial and error. While a soaker, Patricia Mitchell heard that an agreement emerged from the earliest community meetings that each adult would devote one day per week to labor for the collective. They further agreed that, as householder yogis, work was to serve the spiritual growth of the individual. At first, this meant eschewing what skills one might already possess in favor of unfamiliar work that would induce humility. Nurses and teachers might find themselves pulling weeds and pushing wheelbarrows.[30]

23 By the time that they took up permanent residence at the Black Swan Ranch, however, they realized that they had vastly underestimated their new village's labor requirements. Soon, ten- or even fourteen-hour days, five or six days per week, became the routine labor contribution. The communards also became increasingly convinced of the practical advantages of labor specialization. More or less permanent assignments became the norm for workers possessing critical skills. The first straw boss of the motor pool selected the members of his crew at what member John Coate describes as "a seminal men's meeting" held at the horse barn.[31]

24 The number of work crews proliferated as Stephen and his followers reluctantly acknowledged that farming, alone, could not meet all of the community's needs. The question was how to earn cash in a local economy that provided few opportunities for steady, waged employment. The Farmies proved highly inventive in their adaptation to these circumstances. At the behest of the first "Bank Lady," Kay Marie Wheeler, they created a temporary-labor agency, Farm Hands, in response to local farmers' and contractors' needs for hands. The commune's carpentry crew worked diligently to create frame housing for the hippie village as materials became available, but they generated income by expanding into commercial work, hiring their services over a wide swath of the upper and middle South. In the early years, the carpenters led all Farm crews in cash earnings.[32]

25 Although the personnel of individual crews became more specialized, the crews operated, at first, as quasi-autonomous entities. Each invented its own bookkeeping system and established its own bank accounts and lines of credit. Straw bosses could seek funds from the Bank Lady, who managed the cash held in common. Yet quite often, crew members found it necessary to take jobs as temporary laborers to raise funds for essential projects, such as the farming crew's spring planting.[33] During the first two years or so, Stephen and Wheeler served as the commune's business officers. The straw bosses of the various crews reported directly to Stephen, as did Wheeler and the financial director, who managed the Foundation's financial assets. The midwives reported to Ina May and, as exemplary wives and mothers who presided over the sacrament of birth, they exercised considerable influence over day-to-day relations among community members, as will be seen in the next chapter.[34]

26 The Farm derived income from a variety of other sources. The marketing of Old Beatnik sorghum syrup was not a resounding success, but members continued to experiment with other forms of cottage industry. The Book Publishing Company, which evolved from the pre-Caravan effort to publish *Monday Night Class,* designed and printed volumes on Stephen's spiritual teachings, and distributed them internationally. It also offered a list of books on vegetarianism, manuals on citizen's-band radio, the enormously popular *Hey, Beatnik,* and multiple editions of Ina May's renowned *Spiritual Midwifery.* Another enterprise was the construction of radiation detectors, an outgrowth of Farmies' participation in the movement against nuclear power. The commune also participated in the invention or popularization of soybean-based food products. Farm Foods, the marketing division of the community's soy dairy, distributed soy milk, soy ice cream, and a number of other products to hip cooperatives and health-food stores.[35]

27 Donations from members and their families supplemented the earnings of the various crews and enterprises. The original members had made the down payment on the land by pooling their liquidated personal property and savings; to these funds were added proceeds from the sales of *Monday Night Class.* At some early point, the Farmies formalized this dimension of membership, requiring new residents to sign a legally binding vow of poverty that made the individual's assets the nonrefundable property of the Foundation. On occasion, recruitment, inheritance by an established member, or outright donations resulted in a windfall of cash or property. For example, the house that became the Alexandria, Virginia headquarters of Plenty, a humanitarian outreach agency founded by The Farm, was donated by a well-to-do couple. However, because the Internal Revenue Service classified the Foundation as a communal religious organization, such donations were not tax-deductible.[36]

28 The Farm was, of course, a religious organization not only in name, but in spirit.

In keeping with his admiration for the Mahayana (literally "great-boat") Buddhist approach to enlightenment, Stephen urged the Farmies to conceive of their community as a sanctuary for all those in need. Farm publications and handbills offered free prenatal and obstetrical care to pregnant single women, as an alternative to abortion. Some members "rescued" elderly relatives from nursing homes; ex-convicts, juvenile delinquents, and patients discharged from mental hospitals were granted sanctuary as well.[37]

29 In one Sunday-morning service, Stephen told his followers that his goal for his students was that, if he were to allow a "fairly disturbed" person to pass through the front gate unannounced, each of them would interact with the newcomer with a compassion and truthfulness that would promptly cure him or her. This musing reflected his faith that an approach to mental health modeled after the "sudden school" of Zen could cure most of the disorders that modern medicine had classified—he believed, incorrectly—as illnesses. One former member testifies that, in fact, serious mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, proved impervious to this approach. Yet he calls Stephen's teaching on this point a "small-*t* truth," noting that the community's consistent application of it to cases in which former mental patients had been misdiagnosed, and had come to believe their diagnosis, yielded impressive results. "It took about a week, and people were absolutely as normal as anyone else. I saw that a lot."[38]

30 As a village comprised of an increasingly heterogeneous population of onetime tripping hippies, sanctuary cases, and new members attracted to spiritual community, disputes and misconduct were inevitable. While low-level mutual criticism, which the Farmies called a "sort session," addressed most of these perturbations of the group head, Stephen also exercised quasi-juridical authority in the early years of the commune.[39] At times, during the Sunday-morning services he called the community's attention to individual behavior—a public shaming intended to prompt reflection and reform. Men who exhibited "hyper–John Wayne" tendencies might be asked to spend time in a single men's residence called the "rock tumbler," named for its function of knocking off rough edges. Another punishment was called "relativity." Those who, in Stephen's judgment, needed to spend time away from the commune in order to re-evaluate their commitment to integrating with the group head might be asked to spend a week or a month on the road, distributing Farmie books or performing other valuable service. Only on very rare occasions were members expelled.[40]

31 Expansion of the scale and scope of Farmie business and charitable operations accompanied the rapid increase in the commune's population. In terms of the hippie village's structure, growth prompted the emergence of new layers of organizational hierarchy. By the late 1970s, with widely scattered satellite communities connected via ham radio, and the decision to venture into

large-scale commercial agriculture, the Summertown flagship became the center of diversified, corporate-scale enterprise. Albert Bates suggests the complexity and intensity of economic activity, writing that the farming crew operated around the clock in shifts during the Summertown autumn harvest. That task completed, the crew loaded equipment onto semitrailers for winter vegetable production in Florida. According to Bates, The Farm evolved a crazy-quilt economic structure, "tied together by homebrew computers, sideband radio and ham television, and by dovetailed holding corporations, subsidiaries, and business divisions."[41]

32 Growth in population and organizational complexity carried implications for members' everyday experiences as well. By the time the Mitchell-Lapidus family passed through the gate, a significant number of the commune's adults had not shared in the powerful bonding experiences of the Monday Night Class and the Caravan. At least some of these, including Mitchell, had never experimented with psychedelics. Her account of one Sunday-morning service reveals how difficult it was for members of her "second generation" of Farm folk to absorb some of the elements of Stephen's teaching. Moreover, the infrequency with which she and Stephen engaged in direct conversation meant that, while her commitment to following Stephen's path was as sincere and steadfast as the next Farmie's, her map of that path was necessarily incomplete—opening the way for her, and others like her, to fill in the blank areas on their own. While we could certainly observe the Rashomon effect at work among the founding elite as well, its influence is more clearly noticeable among those for whom The Farm's origins were folklore. By the late 1970s, there existed, in a sense, two, three, many Farms.[42]

33 By the early 1980s, the crazy quilt began to come apart at the seams, as escalating debt, overpopulation, and an agricultural depression combined with the Rashomon effect and other factors to precipitate the catastrophic 1983 decollectivization known as "the changeover." I will treat the changeover at some length in the next chapter. For now, let's focus more explicitly on the sexual division of labor that, initially, so puzzled Don Lapidus and Patricia Mitchell.

The Sexual Division of Labor

34 The Farm's sexual division of labor was not straightforward. As Mitchell's hosts indicated, women did indeed "gig" at Beatnik Bell, as the telephone exchange was called; they also worked in the commune's fields, treated the sick at the clinic, presided at the birth of children, and managed the allocation of cash and housing space—both scarce resources. Her hosts also pointed to another dimension: women with nursing children stayed close to home. Peter Jenkins' statistics make plain the demographic factors that had contributed to the Farmie baby boom: most adult residents of The Farm were passing through their peak years of fertility and household formation. For much of the communal period (1971–83),

young children comprised half of the population.[43] Mothers' work in the cottage industries, agriculture, teaching, finance, and midwifery was facilitated by a partial collectivization of childcare in "kid herds."

35 Nevertheless, The Farm was also a community in which feminine fertility and nurturance carried high spiritual value. Birth was a sacrament; Stephen and the midwives regarded abortion and "artificial" forms of contraception as practices contrary to the "natural" flow of *qi,* the holy life force. The constant tension between the need for *yang* productive labor and the high religious value of nurturant *yin* yielded a labor system in which women were neither strictly confined to the home nor wholly liberated from primary responsibility for social- and sexual-reproductive labor. Stephen's teachings required married men to support their wives by acting as "knightly" providers and fathers. Single men and women, sometimes referred to as "monks" and "nuns," fit themselves into households centered around married couples as best they could, and took on many social-reproductive tasks in addition to the daily requirements of productive labor outside the household.

Manhood and Labor

36 Unfortunately, sources on the communal period provide only scattered impressions of everyday work-related interactions. This is especially true for Farmie men, because the commune's publications on childbirth were the ones that offered the most detailed accounts of individual interactions. *Hey, Beatnik!* gave an overview of the commune's economy and governance, but one that was highly idealized for purposes of recruitment.[44] Oral-history interviews and the collective memoir *Voices from The Farm* allow us glimpses of men's struggles to provide for a constantly expanding hippie village while trying to live out Stephen's exhortation to "make work a meditation."[45]

37 A brief examination of the means and ends of meditation shows what a significant departure it was from the straight workplace culture of American men to approach work from the Farmie perspective. In one session of the Monday Night Class, Stephen described the consciousness of the individual as a conduit for *qi.* One's attention determined the ultimate destination of the life-force thus channeled. An undisciplined mind allowed its focus of attention to wander from object to object. This lack of focus dissipated energy. While such individuals might be prodigiously productive in the narrow, capitalist sense, they tended not to manifest on the material plane much that raised consciousness of Spirit. Undisciplined attention also carried another consequence: the less one focused one's attention, the less one could learn about the surrounding world, since "to know what goes on you had to have been in on it since the beginning."[46]

38 Stephen taught that meditation was not the diametrical opposite of this

wandering focus—not a rigid, willful forcing of focus to the exclusion of all distractions. Rather, since it was the nature of human attention to wander, meditation was the discipline of calmly *noticing* when attention wanders, and bringing it back to a consistent object of focus. To develop this discipline, one might practice any number of yogas: a common monastic practice was to focus on one's breathing while maintaining the lotus position, with the later addition of a mantra or *koan* to short-circuit the rational intellect. Gaskin's householder yoga developed a different route to the development of meditative concentration: "Don't ask for a mantra," Stephen told his students. "Just hit the ball." By focusing in the here-and-now on useful work, one overcame, first, one's typically American lack of disciplined attention, and then, at later stages of growth, one's attachment to ego.[47]

39 Clearly, making work a meditation—a means of spiritual uplift—involved overcoming the common American association of physical labor with lack of intelligence and loss of dignity. For men, it also involved overcoming their "hyper–John Wayne" socialization to physical labor as drudgery enlivened by highly competitive tests of the "real man's" capacity to endure pain, court danger, and out-produce and out-swagger his fellows. Historian Joshua B. Freeman studied one of the more extreme cases of blue-collar manliness in the workplace when he sought to explain why so many construction workers demonstrated in support of Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy in 1970. These "hardhats," loosely supervised and concentrated at urban worksites in close proximity to pedestrian traffic, were notorious for their sexual harassment of women and their resistance to both gender and racial integration of the construction industry. Their workplace relations with one another, says Freeman, featured highly sexualized and racialized cursing, craft vocabulary, nicknames and joking. Hardhats also indulged heavily in pornographic imagery and—if opportunity arose—in voyeurism. This misogynist, racist culture, says Freeman, promoted the rapid, intense bonding that enabled itinerant workers to trust that their coworkers would not carelessly injure or kill one another in dangerous work sites.[48]

40 The contrast between this "hyper–John Wayne" approach to work and the Farmies' meditative ideal becomes vivid in a visitor's account of his day with the commune's carpentry crew, where he found members' constant attention to his mental state unnerving. "Physical privacy was the least of it," wrote John Rothchild. "There was the lack of emotional privacy, all those eyes staring at you for the slightest sign of torment, all those hundreds of people jumping out to correct you." What seemed to him a natural reaction when he hit his thumb with a hammer—a loudly exclaimed expletive—brought a quiet rebuke: "You shouldn't yell like that. That's a very heavy reaction for the little thing that happened to you."[49]

41 Another means by which men might make work a meditation was to cultivate a "tantric" relationship with machinery. If, as Stephen taught, the universe was ultimately a field of energy, and the solidity of matter an illusion, then the proper relation between man and machine was not one of mastery, as among Freeman's hardhats, but tantric attunement. An enlightened man should become one with tools and processes, concentrating his attention to apply precisely the right amount of energy to accomplish a task, and to organize work to expend the minimum possible energy. The tantric worker "helped" the task to finish itself, just as the tantric husband helped his wife in childbirth. William Santana, for a time the straw boss of the farming crew, recalls that one member of his crew stood out as exemplary because of his intelligence, humility, self-discipline, and willingness to share his knowledge with others. Joanne Santana chimed in, saying that the tractors this man operated became perfectly responsive extensions of his body and mind.[50]

42 Of course, Farmie men achieved this degree of spiritual attainment far less often than they hoped. Many had been raised in suburbs and had spent most of their lives in school. They had to rediscover what, for them, were the lost arts of agriculture and a life among machines. When a Cistercian monastery in Georgia donated a large bread-dough mixer to the Farm bakery, the men sent to retrieve the gift marveled at the monks' apparently effortless loading of the ungainly contraption onto their truck with a winch. "Tex and I," writes Rupert Fike, "had been prepared to lift, grunt, holler, yell 'whoa' a hundred times, all the things we did everyday on The Farm." Similarly, in 1971, luck, not tantric attunement, brought the first water tower to the commune. A former engineering student miscalculated the tolerances of a homemade derrick used to load the tower onto the Big Pickup—a cut-down Caravan bus, on which a cargo deck replaced the passenger seats. Fortunately, when the derrick's wooden members snapped, the tower fell, unguided, into the cradle mounted on the Pickup. Alas, both luck and tantric attunement deserted members of the farming crew in 1974, when, in a hasty attempt to load a potato harvester for transport to the Wisconsin satellite, the expensive device was ruined in an unceremonious tumble to the ground.[51]

43 As The Farm grew, the Rashomon effect became visible among the quasi-autonomous work crews and cottage industries. Each developed its own workplace subculture, at least one of which appears to have diverged decidedly from the ideal of tantric manhood. According to John Coate, the men of the motor pool drifted beyond the pale when their noontime touch-football games generated heated quarrels. They also sold scrap radiators one year—not to finance a work project, but to rent a television to watch an auto race. Their subculture developed "secret handshakes, practical jokes," and "buying and drinking near-beer even though some of us hated it."[52]

44 Coate traces these developments to an initial realization that the trade magazines and promotional calendars that they received from parts suppliers were filled in equal proportion with "shiny trucks" and bikini-clad "shiny girls." The concentration of men skilled in auto mechanics—and enculturated into the mystique of the automobile—contributed to this development as well.[53] Coate contends that the development of this subculture was symptomatic of the larger causes of the commune's eventual decollectivization. Rapid population growth reduced the motor pool's bond to the community as a whole. Nevertheless, these Farmie "bad boys" (my term) observed certain limits: they took care to arrive at the Sunday services in clean clothing and with the requisite contemplative humility.[54]

45 Any such manhood acts as the Farmies may have developed took their place alongside genuine acts of brotherhood. Some men evinced not only a tantric connection with machinery, but the kind of selfless generosity that exemplified the community's ideals. Brian Klaski speaks of a friend who, on a cold night, under no compulsion other than the welfare of his fellow communards, waded into deep water in order to repair a fractured water line.[55] At other times, working closely allowed men to share transcendent moments. Michael Cook and a man named Willy spent a long night repairing a cultivator. The Farmies could afford only second-hand farming equipment, making up for its reduced reliability through constant repairs. Unlike a commercial shop, the motor pool could not afford to maintain inventories of new parts; fixing a broken machine often involved salvaging required items from disabled vehicles, improvising work-arounds, or rummaging through barrels and boxes of unsorted parts already scavenged from other machines.

46 The two men completed repairs just before dawn and drove the cultivator out to the fields. As they arrived, the sun rose. Even the urgency of making up for lost time did not deter the men from marveling at its beauty. They shut down the lumbering machine and stepped away to more fully admire "wonderful shades of gold, orange, and pink. . . . Just as the sun was cresting the hill, we could both feel the rising energy. Willy turned to me with a huge grin on his face and said, 'Who needs grass?'"[56]

The Reproductive Labor of Men and Boys

47 In some households, boys too young to join work crews assumed tasks delegated by adult women. During his grade-school years, Peter Bargar washed dishes once a week. At twelve, he cooked dinner for his large household once a week. Boys raised on The Farm understood the tantric decorum of helping out the "helmsman by night." Those who clumsily disparaged or disrupted women's execution of their household responsibilities might encounter considerable criticism. Richard Lanham, a road-hardened, teenaged runaway who stayed at The Farm for a while

with his mother's blessing, found himself immersed in a sort session when he questioned Farmie women's methods for preparing hash browns. In another incident, Patricia Mitchell was cooking one afternoon for the gate crew and a large number of visitors when a young man entered the kitchen, asking to make popcorn. (Popcorn seasoned with brewer's yeast was a common snack food.) Mitchell suggested that the man help her by making enough for everyone; the man agreed, but then only made enough for himself. Seeing him sitting and munching while others depended on her, Mitchell told him that if he was not interested in helping, he should leave the kitchen. The man complained to the straw boss of the gate crew, Leslie Hunt, that Mitchell had hurt his feelings. Hunt simply stated that "she's making lunch for a lot of folks. She has bigger things to worry about than your feelings." Women welcomed adult men's help with cooking when offered in the spirit of knightly receptivity. An expectant mother recalls awakening one morning to labor contractions; she got up more slowly than usual, trying to determine whether they were a false alarm. To her great relief, her husband had already roused the children and prepared breakfast.[57]

48 Some household chores routinely fell to men and boys. Provision of firewood was one such task. A crew of ten men worked year round to supply cordwood to community households; the men of the households cut, split, and stacked this supply, and carried it indoors as needed. Peter Bargar recalls that, at the age of fifteen, it was something of a coming-of-age ritual when his father allowed him to pick up the chainsaw. Men and boys also mopped the rough plywood floors of the tent-shanties and houses. As was frequently the case in the rest of the United States, men made repairs around the house.[58]

49 In an interview with Farm wife Dale Evans, historian Pat LeDoux recorded a striking exception that proved the general rule: one day, when a household ran out of propane during preparation of the midday meal, the women there fell back on their routine response, that a man should be summoned from the fields to change the tank. Evans seized a wrench, wrestled the heavy tank into place, and relit the water heater. Her proficiency amazed the other women, because "this was a man's work, not woman's."[59]

50 Men's efforts to make work a meditation, both on and off The Farm, gave substance on a daily basis to the commune's chivalrous masculine ideal. But of course, masculinity is not an independent social structure: it is, in Connell's terms, an emergent characteristic of gender, a culture's organization of the reproductive arena. To complete our analysis of The Farm's sexual division of labor as an important factor in shaping its tantric masculinity, we now turn to the reproductive work of women.[60]

Women's Labor

51 Within practical limits, residents of The Farm structured household labor to maximize women's exercise of their nurturant *yin.* As a manifestation of *yin,* routine household labor took on significance as women's spiritual obligation. Margaret Nofziger, Stephen's legal wife and a member of his group marriage, considered tasks such as cooking and cleaning "a holy duty," and she intended her words to serve as a guide for other women to follow.[61]

52 The women of the various households organized the endless round of housework and childcare according to agreements they negotiated among themselves. The women of the Long House scheduled a day in advance. For this household of fifty residents, every day one woman cooked, another cleaned; a third cared for the household's "kid herd" of (probably preschool) children, while a fourth attended the toddlers who had been weaned. Women, or a "monk" if one was about the house, walked to the storehouse (access to vehicles being limited) to claim the household's rations of cooking oil, soap, margarine, sugar, and other items. This pattern, in various permutations, appears to have been quite common among Farmie households.[62]

53 In view of the commune's constant demand for labor, the minimal participation of mothers of very young children in labor beyond the household indicates the centrality of sacramental motherhood to the organization of The Farm's labor system. Barbara Cordette, who lived in a house called the Adobe, affirms that the mothers of children in diapers remained at home almost all of the time to care for them. This practice grew out of the Farmies' belief in the importance of maintaining the unique, "telepathic" connection between mother and child, and their strong emphasis on the importance of breastfeeding.[63] Stephen advised that infants and toddlers were not entirely separated from their mothers' "auras," and thus needed constant access to mothers in their early years.[64] In the second edition of *Spiritual Midwifery* (1978), Ina May warmly endorsed the work of pediatricians Marshall H. Klaus and John H. Kennell, champions of the concept of attachment, who claimed that deprivation of mothers' attention early in life left children vulnerable to a wide array of psychological disorders.[65]

54 Mothers not otherwise occupied could leave the household to volunteer for work on the farming crew, at community kitchens, the soy dairy, the canning-and-freezing facility, the community's school, and the telephone switchboard. In place of a dial tone, Beatnik Bell's users heard a message prepared daily by the system's operators, detailing items available at the store, as well as the labor needs of various work crews and cottage industries. Women's labor both inside and outside the household contributed substantially to the community, because The Farm attempted to make up for its relative lack of capital by mustering many hands.[66]

55 Partly as a consequence of work outside the household, and partly in keeping with the religious emphasis on the importance of women's motherly *yin,* Farmie women developed their own relationships with tools. The midwives recognized that childbirth required physical conditioning. Drawing on evidence from other cultures, Ina May wrote that general fitness and sensible exertion during pregnancy made birth less arduous.[67] Women available for manual labor on the farming crew swung hoes and pickaxes in the fields alongside men.[68] I surmise that Farmies did not regard these activities as unfeminine, because they either enhanced or did not interfere with women's primary functions of childbearing and child nurture. I am aware of no expressions of men's discomfort with their participation.

56 It appears, however, that this flexibility in task assignment had limits. Jobs requiring highly specialized skills, such as carpentry, or the repair and operation of heavy machinery, seem to have been closed to women. Anthropologist Bryan Pfaffenberger relates an instance when an unspecified party granted a woman permission, "over the objections of some men and women," to train as a tractor driver. For reasons that Pfaffenberger does not make clear, she "did not hold [the position] long." He attributes the resistance to the primacy of fertility and child nurture in the Farmie belief system.[69] We cannot know whether the tractor driver was single or married, nor whether or not she had children. But even if we presume that she was single and childless—the circumstances most favorable for taking such a position—the midwives might have objected that she was destined for marriage and motherhood, and that the responsibilities of tractor operation (especially at peak seasons of planting and harvesting) would compete with the inevitable demands that infant and toddler care would make on a Farmie wife. From a farming-crew perspective, observance of the primacy of child nurture would have interfered with the development and application of skills by women who were mothers of infants or toddlers. One might entertain other, less generous possibilities about ingrained sexism among the critics, but the woman *did* get permission at least to try. Still, this points to the larger question that will concern us at the end of this chapter: Why did this woman evidently lack the control of her fertility necessary to accommodate the demands of the season—and why did her desire to drive not count as an occasion to re-examine the commune's belief in the primacy of fertility and nurture?

57 In other occupations, it is more difficult to explain the relative absence of women or men. Perhaps by virtue of previous training, of the eleven printers at the Book Publishing Company in 1975, only one was a woman; of the Company's twelve graphic artists, only two were men. Men dominated the photography department, while the editorial work appears to have been carefully balanced between women and men for the first edition of *Spiritual Midwifery.* For the second edition, the two men who served as editors did so in the capacity of medical consultants. Five

women discharged the other editorial duties.[70]

Motherhood and Administration

58 The Farm's sexual division of labor encompassed the elite area of commune administration. A minority of women, such as the Bank Lady, sat on governing boards. Women's presumed affinity for resolving interpersonal conflict appears to have predisposed the appointment of women to manage the commune's cash. Similarly, a crew of women managed housing allotments, doing the best they could to create households of compatible individuals. Two residents of Kissing Tree Lodge remember that harmony prevailed in their household; they rarely called on the Housing Ladies to work out problems there—a call that was routine in some households. Midwifery, an almost exclusively female domain, will be treated below. Initially, only women served as Telephone Ladies on The Farm's switchboard, acquired in 1974, although Cynthia Holzapfel hints that "several guys" joined the crew "later." Men took on the tasks of telephone and switchboard repair and line maintenance from the beginning.[71]

59 Available sources generally do not comment on the process by which individuals attained these positions, and seldom on their conduct. However, a vignette in *Spiritual Midwifery* does shed some light on how the sacramental status of motherhood affected women's performance in administrative capacities. One of the many stories in a section of *Spiritual Midwifery* entitled "Amazing Birthing Tales" is that of the birth of a son, Angus Luigi, to Mildred, then The Farm's accountant and financial manager.[72] Like the other tales, this story testifies to home birth as the Farm woman's ultimate fulfillment. However, only through a postscript by Ina May do we learn that Mildred's full appreciation of this miracle came after an unsettled period during which Angus failed to thrive.

60 Mildred was engaged in the thankless task of trying to bring The Farm's cash income in line with its monthly expenses—according to Michael Traugot, a feat rarely accomplished.[73] Ina May tells us that the pressures of this position drove Mildred to work until just before Angus's birth, and to return to the job two days later.[74] Still, says Ina May, Angus initially thrived on the cosmic energy generated by what Mildred described as a "stoned" birthing.[75] But the "high" of parturition did not last long. Ina May recalls that when she saw Angus again, a week later, he seemed pale and underweight. Despite his good health by objective measurements, the boy continued to languish, causing Mildred and the midwives great concern.

61 Ina May consulted with co-wife Margaret Nofziger on Angus's gaunt appearance, so unlike the early months of Mildred's older child. They concluded that Mildred's job had distracted her from the emotional needs of her infant son: a rainy month had depressed income from the crews, creating greater than usual strains on the

commune's finances. But the midwives developed another hypothesis as well, which they broached during their consultation with Mildred. They told her that she related to the newborn in an inhibited manner, that she was cautious in her displays of affection and was refusing to allow herself to enjoy nursing him, in order to avoid any hint of incestuous sexual pleasure. Stephen happened by during this conversation (as he seems so often to have done in The Farm's prescriptive literature). According to Ina May, his quip to Mildred that "a little incest is cool up to about age twelve," and that "someone's got to give him some ['juice']," broke the ice of Mildred's resistance. She "cracked up laughing," writes Ina May. Incredibly, the midwife asked her readers to believe that her advice "was just what [Mildred] wanted to hear."[76] Released from her inhibitions, Mildred gave Angus all of the "juice" that he needed to thrive. Miraculously (these were, after all, *Amazing* Birth Tales), the baby gained weight, the rains ceased, and the financial crisis eased. Such was the power of motherly *yin.*[77]

62 Fictional elements aside, the moral of this story is *not* that Angus's recuperation depended on Mildred's abandonment of her position. Employment of mothers was not categorically prohibited among the Farmies, as it was in some other communal groups of the period.[78] Rather, the story highlights what the *priorities* of working women should be: the spiritually attuned mother must find a way to maintain the maternal bond while working. To do otherwise would indulge the adult woman's ego-investment in career at the child's expense. As a work of prescriptive literature, *Spiritual Midwifery* framed the choice in unambiguous terms, quoting one Farm "lady" as saying that she found feminist demands for access to male-dominated careers incomprehensible, since, in her experience, breastfeeding her baby was "heavier than being a corporation president."[79]

63 Given the primacy of *yin* nurture, it was much easier (but not easy) for men to fulfill their "knightly" obligation to meet the demands of professional or managerial work than for women with children to balance the competing demands of profession and motherhood. Men headed the majority of Farm work crews. Both of the commune's attorneys were men. Farmie Brian Klaski developed specialized skills as the community's waste-water engineer and laundry manager; he earned money to maintain the commune's laundry facility as a maintenance contractor for a number of commercial laundries in the area.[80]

64 Although men predominated in most administrative areas, the elite cadre of midwives enjoyed a status and corresponding freedom of movement and community-wide influence exceeded only by Stephen. Perhaps no other dimension of The Farm's sexual division of labor more clearly demonstrates the centrality of women's sacred fertility in the community's configuration of gender practice.

Midwifery: High-Status Labor

65 The Farm's midwifery crew constituted a female elite who aspired to the highest standards of professionalism on the material plane, while simultaneously striving to exemplify the ideal Farm wife as mother and practitioner of Stephen's spiritual teachings. Along with Stephen, the midwives stood at the center of The Farm's system of labor organization. The importance of their work meant that midwives enjoyed a degree of access to resources unusual for any Farmie, male or female. Because their duties took them to remote corners of The Farm at all hours, midwives had first priority for use of pickup trucks equipped with citizens'-band radios, and for mechanics' services at the motor pool. The Farm also created a small but impressive medical facility. Starting in 1971, the midwives, with the advice of resident doctor Paul Meltzer, steadily assembled equipment, including isolettes, warming lamps, and oxygen for a neonatal intensive-care unit.[81]

66 The practice of midwifery on The Farm entailed considerable training. While a few Farmie women joined the community with skills in the life sciences or nursing, and eventually won a place among the elite after demonstrating their bountiful *yin,* the first midwives combined on-the-job training with self-study. Ina May's and Stephen's only training in midwifery consisted of careful reading of obstetrics texts, supplemented with advice from sympathetic general practitioners.[82] This meant that midwives enjoyed more time with books than could most other Farm residents. Midwives even escaped the limitations of an early agreement not to wear jewelry, because watches enabled them to monitor the intervals between laboring women's contractions.[83] When added to the fact that many women found obstetrics, child development, medicine, and counseling fascinating, the midwife's many privileges and responsibilities made midwifery an attractive, if demanding alternative to the more mundane labor of most women on The Farm. Many more felt the call than were chosen.[84]

67 As Ina May had learned from attending the first births on the Caravan, and from her own searing experience of losing her premature son during a Nebraska blizzard, the midwife shouldered the responsibility of life and death. This meant that the stakes on both sides of the dialectical process of reconciling Stephen's ideology with obstetrical experience were especially high. The commune's continued existence depended on the midwives' skill. Local authorities' tolerance of Farm midwifery (in other venues, then frequently regarded as the unlicensed practice of medicine) depended on the midwives' expert performance, as well as on the communards' good relations with area medical authorities. They certainly succeeded: in 1975 and 1978, the commune published statistics showing their rate of Caesarian births, toxemia, breech delivery, premature delivery, and neonatal mortality to be well below national averages. I am not competent to evaluate these; however, Ina May Gaskin's presidency of the Midwives' Alliance of North America, and the naming of an obstetrical procedure after her, suggest an exceptional degree of competence.[85]

I will present further evidence on the midwives' skill, ingenuity, and authority in the following chapter. Here, I will turn to the question of equity in The Farm's sexual division of labor: Did Farmie men reap the patriarchal dividend posited by materialist feminists (see chapter 3, par. 53), or did the gender complementarity of Stephen's teachings result in a substantively egalitarian sexual division of labor? 68

Pronatalism: "Unassailable and Sacrosanct"

We cannot know what reservations about The Farm's sexual division of labor Patricia Mitchell's host, Mary, might have expressed under circumstances promoting extensive reflection and candor. Nor can we know whether those same conditions might have prompted the woman who argued that nursing a child was "heavier" than holding a corporate presidency to voice a more nuanced account of her experience of the commune's strong emphasis on childrearing. Yet it would not be surprising if both women had made the same statements under such altered circumstances. If, from the perspective of Farmie elites, a labor system organized according to Stephen's principles was, *ipso facto,* proportionate and just, many other Farmies remained at the commune despite harboring unexpressed reservations. 69

To understand why, it helps to compare The Farm's complex yet stable, flexible-within-limits sexual division of labor with the practices of other contemporary American communes that, like The Farm, appealed to hip spiritual seekers. Among the members of the collective that anthropologist Ilse Martin pseudonymized as the "New Age Brotherhood," the charismatic leader's precipitous shift from Asian asceticism to a heavy dependence on the Bible resulted in an expectation that the daughters of Eve would meekly "submit to their lord" in marriage. Consequently, women's exclusion from positions of authority in the group was nearly total, although that near-totality resulted partly from the departure of several women and men who objected to this exclusion. The Shiloh Farms community observed by anthropologist Barbara Mathieu also insisted on marriage, but in contrast to the Brotherhood, their doctrinal emphasis on the formal equality of the sexes rendered their sexual division of productive labor roughly as flexible as The Farm's. However, they resembled the Brotherhood in their insistence on wifely submission in the household. In contrast to both of these, Stephen, who drew on Biblical *imagery* more than on Christian *doctrine,* emphasized the equal importance of *yin* and *yang,* designating both husband and wife as "helmsmen" of the household. In these ways, The Farm offered an attractive alternative to both men and women looking for a spiritual community where household headship followed a modern, formally companionate model, the labor system followed spiritual principle, and where parenthood was positively encouraged.[86] 70

71 If it was reasonable, in the 1970s, for many Farmies to regard their village as a beacon of gender justice, today some former members voice a mixture of admiration for the commune's seriousness of effort and disillusionment concerning inequities visited on women. Some offered brief, undigested commentary: Kay Marie Wheeler commented laconically to her interviewer that while women *did* work in the fields, the community never addressed the inequity of women taking primary responsibility for childcare, and having to accept limited participation in work crews as a consequence. She let the matter rest there, however.[87]

72 Like Wheeler, Linda Hunnicutt at first offered a straightforward sex-role assessment of Farmie women's lopsided burdens. Yet when asked about the education of children, she responded instead by calling the women's greater responsibility for childcare "sexist role-playing." She noted that the partial collectivization of childcare within households and in some cottage industries did help. But the stresses of childcare, combined with strong pressure to marry and bear many children, and the difficulties that women faced in pursuing more specialized and interesting work, all foreshortened women's horizons.[88]

73 Brian Klaski delved even more deeply into questions of work and substantive equality. When asked about the distribution of responsibilities in households, he tersely described it as sexist, agreeing with Hunnicutt on pressures toward early marriage and childbirth as reducing women's options within the community. Later in the interview, he returned spontaneously to this theme, declaring that the unequal burdens borne by Farmie women tended to age them beyond their years. Men's interest in machines and far-flung projects was rewarded, in his view, at the expense of making women's daily lives less manageable.[89] Klaski's testimony identifies a patriarchal dividend in all but name.

74 These disillusioned insiders offer us clues to how a dividend at variance with the commune's doctrine of gender complementarity came into being. They focus on what historian Louis J. Kern calls The Farm's "pronatalism"—the structural and spiritual importance of fertility and feminine nurture, such that there was strong insistence that "having a baby" constituted women's "ultimate fulfillment."[90] This brings us back to Mildred and the would-be woman tractor driver. In a social system where the formal equality of the sexes was so central to members' understanding of how the universe worked, why could these women not exercise the control over their fertility that would have permitted them to accept the challenges of highly skilled work—accompanied, of course by further efforts to reorganize work patterns to accommodate their ambitions?[91] Why were Mildred's difficulties in balancing the demands of administrative work and motherhood, the tractor driver's desire to learn a skill, and other such emergent problems, not occasions for the reappraisal of pronatalist ideology?

75

These are questions about power. To answer them, we must examine the origins of The Farm's pronatalism and the defenses of its legitimacy. The community's emphasis on pronatalism originated in what Stephen and his most dedicated fellow trippers deeply, sincerely, and passionately believed were their direct experiences of the Godhead, through the medium of LSD. These were refracted through the myriad personal and cultural influences—including, most critically, deeply ingrained presumptions about the naturalness of gender—that they brought to bear on their efforts to create an interpretive framework for those experiences. For these seekers, these revelations constituted ultimate Truth. We should note that Stephen and his inner circle did not organize themselves as the exclusive keepers of these mysteries: they insisted that every believer must experience that ultimate Truth for themselves, rather than relying blindly on the word of any guru. What Stephen most wanted to impart to seekers was a determination to develop the kind of spiritual character and integrity it took, first to experience and then bear witness to that Truth, even when doing so undercut one's fondest illusions about oneself. In other words, he wanted his students to make the commitment that had sustained him in his struggles with the "black magicians" of the Haight. He once told his followers, "I can show you . . . books about how I do my thing, but if you haven't done your homework, you can't even study my books. . . . If you want to know if I'm just a . . . poolshooter who has run down a great scam on all these people for the last ten years, the only way you can check it is to teach yourself to *go over the problems and the work for yourself. . . .* That's the only way I ever learned anything I ever believed." From within the perspective of Gaskin's metaphysical worldview, this is the same challenge that moved science beyond the confines of medieval scholasticism: cherish books, but test their claims in the laboratory of nature.[92]

76

As much as I admire this egalitarian, positivistic dimension to Stephen's teaching, I do not share his faith that it was God that he experienced on his LSD travels. Standing outside his worldview offers a perspective from which to observe that, while he claimed access to a universal Truth that, like water, "runs in every creek and falls out of the sky" for all to imbibe, the sources of that truth lay on the "astral plane." They lay beyond independent verification by those who did not share his faith. I am not alone in insisting that universal truth-claims must be verifiable from standpoints independent of the faith of the claimant. Anthropologist Bryan Pfaffenberger, who observed the Monday Night Class and interviewed members of The Farm, has argued that "what we behold in the case of The Farm is the power of religion and ritual to define social relationships in mystical terms and therefore render them unassailable and sacrosanct."[93] Now, this is not to say that Gaskin and his inner circle adopted a metaphysical epistemology *because* it would render their authority unassailable and their principles sacrosanct. Rather, they adopted it because *they truly believed.* Nevertheless, from a perspective outside Stephen's faith, the available evidence

seems to bear out Pfaffenberger's charge, because Stephen's epistemology was unassailable and sacrosanct by virtue of its foundation in metaphysics.

77 For our purposes here, the relevant unverifiable knowledge-claim concerned women's categorical, yet complementary difference from men—*yang* and *yin* as manifestations of what Stephen called "the principle of gender: [the] male and female kind of trip, that maleness and femaleness extends throughout the universe, that it's always with us" in the Monday Night Class.[94] Mildred and the aspiring tractor driver could not control their fertility sufficiently to pursue the work they wanted to do because, until at least 1978, The Farm's leaders prohibited "artificial" methods of contraception, out of concern that those methods interrupted the "natural" flow of life-force energy between male and female, *yang* and *yin.* Those leaders did promote what they believed was a "natural" method of contraception, without barriers and without chemical and hormonal intervention.[95] As we will see in the next chapter, this approach, while more effective than the rhythm method, could be mastered only through trial and, for women, costly error. Its less-than-stellar rate of actual effectiveness, and the ideological pressures to bear children, yielded Farm men the patriarchal dividend in precisely the ways to which Hunnicutt and Klaski testify.

78 Was it a large dividend? In relative terms—in comparison to that enjoyed by straight, white, American men—the Farmie dropouts' dividend was probably small. In some cases, straight men in the post–World War Two era drew a triple bonus. Many benefited from the custom of paying men the family wage. Some straight breadwinners worked in industries or professions where the postwar expansion of women's employment made even the workplace more homelike (or afforded expanded opportunities for sexual harassment) for male superiors and co-workers. Some men, especially those labor aristocrats whose wives combined household labor and paid employment, could claim an even more generous share of the unprecedented leisure time afforded by American postwar prosperity. Farmie men lost many of these advantages when they signed the vow of poverty.[96]

79 To understand the mechanisms at The Farm that tended to reduce the patriarchal dividend even as they sustained it, we turn now to an analysis of sexuality, childbirth, and marriage.

Notes:

Note 1: Patricia Mitchell Lapidus, *Sweet Potato Suppers: A Yankee Woman Finds Salvation in a Hippie Village* (Savannah, Ga.: R.S. Press, 2003), 36–37. Throughout this work, I will refer to Patricia as Mitchell unless referring to events after her marriage to Don Lapidus.

Note 2: Ibid., 37.

Note 3: Ibid., 37–38.

Note 4: Ibid., 38–39.

Note 5: Ibid. For other contemporary inquiries, see Jim Hansen, "Gaskin Critiqued," letter to editor, *Northwest Passage* 11, no. 3 (8 July 1974): 3; Kate Wenner, "How They Keep Them Down on The Farm," *New York Times Magazine,* 8 May 1977, 74 et seq.; and 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), 172–210.

Note 6: The term "*yang* creative energy" comes from Stephen Gaskin, transcript of meeting, Tennessee, 6 July 1973, CCS transcripts, folder 181, SCDLR, p. [2]. Outsider criticism of Farmie gender organization can be found in the sources cited in n. 5 above (excepting Lapidus); see also Virginia Cava-Rizzuto, "Holy Childbirth as a Psychedelic Trip?" Review of *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., by Ina May Gaskin, *Majority Report* 7, no. 19 (18 February 1978): 6; Heleena van Raan, review of ibid., *Healthright* (New York) 4, no. 2 (Spring 1978): 10.

Note 7: Pat LeDoux, "The History of a Hippie Commune: The Farm" (D.A. dissertation, Middle Tennessee State Univ., 1992), 44–50; Michael Traugot, *A Short History of The Farm* (Summertown, Tenn.: the author, 1994), 15; Peter Bargar, interview with Courtney Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 11 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 165, SCDLR, 9; Rupert Fike, "Martin Farm Summer," 10, and Stephen Gaskin, "Landing in Homer's Back Yard," 6, both in *Voices from The Farm: Adventures in Community Living,* ed. Rupert Fike (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1998). (This collective memoir is cited hereafter as Fike, *Voices from The Farm.)*

Note 8: LeDoux, "The Farm," 47–48, reports gossip unfavorable to Sanders, but, understandably, does not record its content. David Friedlander, "A Backwoods Vo-Tech School," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 7.

Note 9: Because both Stephen Gaskin and Ina May Gaskin figure prominently throughout the rest of this book, I will refer to them hereafter by their first names.

Note 10: Rupert Fike, "Dan Rather Meets the Wolfman," in idem, *Voices from The Farm,* 116.

Note 11: Traugot, *Short History,* 17.

Note 12: Stephen Gaskin, "Sheriff T. C. Carroll"; idem, "Like a Frozen Asimov Robot"; both in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 24–25.

Note 13: For consistent testimony about The Farm's relations with neighbors, see Bargar, interview with Shanks, 7–9; Charles and Linda Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 9 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 161, SCDLR, 31–32; Louis J. Kern, "Pronatalism, Midwifery, and Synergistic Marriage: Spiritual Enlightenment and Sexual Ideology at 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; Vicky Montagne, interview with Shanks, Summertown, 13 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 139, SCDLR, 10; [William] and [Joanne] Santana, interview with Shanks, Summertown, 12 January 1996, folder 166, SCDLR, 18; Kay Marie Wheeler, interview with Shanks, Summertown, 9 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 160, SCDLR, 24–26; LeDoux, "The Farm," 71; gate-house log entries, 3 June and 14 January 1978, reprinted in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 37, 43.

Note 14: Rupert Fike, editorial commentary on Paul Heavens and John Coate, "Battle of Tullahoma," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 134. For a contrary view on relations between the Farmies and the local community, see Greg Monson (pseud.), telephone interview with the author, Waynesboro, Tenn., 1 September 2005. On persistent rumors of bizarre sexual practices at the commune, see Bargar, interview with Shanks, 7; Barbara Cordette (pseud.), interview with Shanks, Summertown, 13 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 137, SCDLR, 13.

Note 15: Fike, "Martin Farm Summer," 13–14; Fike et al., introduction to *Voices from The Farm,* ix.

Note 16: Peter Jenkins, *A Walk across America* (New York: William Morrow, 1979), 193. Jenkins visited The Farm for eight weeks in the autumn of 1974; he claims to have had access to the community's files. Albert Bates offers similar aggregate figures for 1974, in Albert Bates, "The Changing Economy of The Farm," *Green Revolution* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1993–94), 1. Fike et al., introduction to Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* x, provide a similar tally, but for 1975. For a different accounting, see Kern, "Pronatalism," 202.

Note 17: Fike et al., introduction to Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* x. Other ex-members assert that the population peaked earlier, and that a population decline preceded the decision to decollectivize taken in 1983. See for example Gary Rhine et al., "Psychic Cracks," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 146.

Note 18: Lynette Long, "The Farm Was a Sea of Mud," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 42; Kern, "Pronatalism," 202. Verification of the foregoing statistics awaits the opening of the commune's records. Albert Bates adroitly finessed my request for access (Bates, personal communication to author, 24 April 2001), while generously directing me to published sources.

Note 19: Advertisement reprinted in "Steve Gaskin's Farm," in *Utopia USA,* ed. Richard Fairfield (San Francisco: Alternatives Foundation, 1972), 94.

Note 20: Patricia [Mitchell] Lapidus, "The Letting Go and the Taking Hold," and Doug Stevenson, "Up-Close Relationships," both in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 48, 57. The glacial pace of shanty replacement reflected Stephen's interpretation of the Mahayana ("great boat") philosophy of ensuring the minimal needs of all sentient beings before improving one's own condition. Thus The Farm launched its charitable foundation, Plenty, in 1974, long before all residents moved out of the tents; see Fike et al., introduction to Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* ix–x; Albert Bates and Timothy Miller, "Evolution of Hippie Communal Spirituality: The Farm and Other Hippies Who Didn't Give Up," in *America's Alternative Religions,* ed. Timothy Miller (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1995), 374–75. Stephen argues that, since Plenty and The Farm were separate corporate and tax entities, Plenty never competed for resources with The Farm (interview with Geoph Kozeny, Summertown, 16 March 1991, CCS transcripts, folder 122, SCDLR, 18). For a different view, see Linda Gavin and Michael Gavin, "If You Love, There Will Always Be Someone There Needing That Love," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 110.

Note 21: Board of Directors, minutes, 30 November 1977, in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 137–38.

Note 22: Stephen was a decade older than most of his followers, and at times expressed a preference for "beatnik" as a form of self-reference. See 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, 142. See also Albert Bates, "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, 2. At other times, he quite willingly identified as a hippie: see, e.g., his interview with Kozeny, 3.

Note 23: Rupert Fike, "The Community Kitchen," in idem, *Voices from The Farm,* 35.

Note 24: For a photograph of services conducted in the barn, see Edward B. Fiske, "Marijuana Part of Religion at Commune in Tennessee," *New York Times*, 17 February 1973, 27. For excellent photographs of outdoor services, see Stephen Gaskin, *Sunday Morning Services at The Farm* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., [1977]); Ina May [Gaskin] and the Farm Midwives, *Spiritual Midwifery* (Book Publishing Co., 1975), 308. On the Farm Band, see Philip Schweitzer, "The Music Is the Message," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 26–28; "A Good Look at The Farm," *Mother Earth News,* March–April 1980, 141; and Lynette Long and Michael Traugot, "Kissing Tree Lodge," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 40. For a journalist's account of a stop during one of Stephen's tours, see Linda Reed, "Commune of 750 Self-Sufficient: The Farm Visits Ann Arbor," *The Sun* (Ann Arbor, Mich.) 3, no. 15 (17 July 1975): 4. For a photograph revealing the gender distinctions evident in performers' costumes in the Farm Band, see Stephen [Gaskin] and The Farm, *Hey, Beatnik! This Is the Farm Book* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1974), [58].

Note 25: Information about The Farm's built environment lies scattered about the various sources. Fike, *Voices from The Farm* and S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik!* provide

good descriptions of living quarters and facilities such as the laundry, motor pool, flour mill, the community kitchen, and the switchboard. I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed. (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1978) describes the clinic in detail, 24. The telephone system, dubbed "Beatnik Bell," was the gift of the town of Leoma, Tennessee, in 1974, when the Bell System integrated the independent company into the national network (Jenkins, *A Walk across America,* 186; Cynthia Holzapfel, "Beatnik Bell," in Fike, *Voices,* 59–63).

Note 26: Philip Schweitzer, "The Hippies Come Clean," 15–16; David Friedlander and Steven Levin, "How We Dropped Our Water Tower but It Landed in the Right Place," 16–18; and Rupert Fike, "VW Spring Pump," 18–20; all in Fike, *Voices from The Farm.* P. Bargar, interview with Shanks, 9.

Note 27: S. Gaskin, interview with Kozeny, 9–10. On the expansion of Stephen's four-marriage, see Kern, "Pronatalism," 203.

Note 28: Fike, "Martin Farm Summer," in idem, *Voices from The Farm,* 12.

Note 29: LeDoux, "The Farm," 50.

Note 30: Lapidus, *Sweet Potato Suppers,* 38; Fike, "Martin Farm Summer," in idem, *Voices from The Farm,* 12.

Note 31: Coate, "When Something Belongs to Everybody," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 111.

Note 32: Albert Bates calls carpentry The Farm's second-largest business, but he refers to the period after the commune had invested heavily in a commercial agricultural venture in 1978 ("Changing Economy," 2).

Note 33: Michael Cook, "That's the Farming Crew Meeting Over There," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 82; Wheeler, interview with Shanks, 10–11; Fike et al., introduction to *Voices from The Farm,* x.

Note 34: Wheeler, interview with Shanks, 11; Kern, "Pronatalism," 213, 215–16.

Note 35: Board of Directors, minutes, 30 November 1977 (reprinted in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 137–38), mention national and international distribution of publications. The gatehouse log for 14 June 1978 records the departure of a busload of skilled Farmies for a protest against the Seabrook, New Hampshire, nuclear power facility ("The Front Door," in Fike, *Voices,* 38). Several Farmies offered their services to Greenpeace, serving as radio operators on the organization's ship, the *Rainbow Warrior* (David Friedlander, "Uncle Bill Changed The Farm's Perceptions of Old Folks," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 70). On soy production, see Fike et al., introduction to Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* x–xi.

Note 36: Vow of poverty, 9; on the acquisition of the Plenty headquarters, see John Coate, "Birthing the Bronx Center," 122; for an account of a cash windfall, see Henry Goodman, "I Had Serious Regrets Then," 132; all in Fike, *Voices from The Farm.* Michael Traugot explains the tax status of the Foundation in *Short History,* 28.

Note 37: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d. ed., 448; see also S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik,* [83]. In *Monday Night Class,* Stephen contrasted the Mahayana school of thought, which in his view, emphasized the importance of working to bring enlightenment to all human beings, with the Hinayana ("small-boat") school, which—again, in his view—advocated a self-interested pursuit of enlightenment that countenanced indifference to fate of those left behind. Stephen [Gaskin], *Monday Night Class,* rev. 3d printing (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Book Farm., 1971), [2–3]. Theologian Richard S. Cohen has argued that the terms are vital and useful, but reduction of them to diametrical opposites, as Gaskin did, obscures much of the richness of the history of Buddhism. See Richard S. Cohen, "Discontented Categories: Hinayana and Mahayana in Buddhist History," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 63, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 1–25.

Note 38: S. Gaskin, *Sunday Morning Services,* 17. Quotation from Rick Blaine (pseud.), interview with the author, 1 October 2005, 69–70. The sudden school of Zen holds that seekers attain enlightenment in an unpredictable instant of transformation, rather than through a gradual process of reflection and purification of practice. Many Zen masters

draw from both schools, in response to the needs of individual students.

Note 39: The term *sort session* requires definition. As we have seen, the transcendence of isolated, individual consciousness and the development of a "group head" were important features of this collective's efforts at social change. Individuals were supposed to provide feedback on their fellows' ego attachments. Furthermore, disagreements between individual members were supposed to be aired fully and immediately, to prevent the development of what Stephen called "subconscious" (resentments, jealousies, and self-centeredness) among individuals, which would inhibit the flow of *qi* ("the juice") through the group. Individuals developed reputations as being "easy" or "hard coppers" depending on the degree to which they resisted admitting to their attachments when someone "got up in their thing." See S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik,* [20–21].

Note 40: On public shaming, see C. Hunnicutt and L. Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 21; on the "rock tumbler," see Kern, "Pronatalism," 208, Pfaffenberger, "Husbands and Mothers," 207, and Marilyn Friedlander, "It's a Farmie Thing," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 3. The latter also serves as a source on "relativity."

Note 41: Bates, "Changing Economy," 1. See also S. Gaskin, interview with Kozeny, 14–15.

Note 42: Lapidus, *Sweet Potato Suppers,* 48–51. Stephen refers to multiple "generations" of members in his interview with Kozeny, 14–15, 30–31, as does Brian Klaski (pseud.), interview with Courtney Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 4 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 162, SCDLR, 9.

Note 43: See Jenkins and the other sources cited at n. 16, above.

Note 44: For corroboration by an former Farmie involved in *Beatnik*'s production, see B. Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 17; see also "The Front Door," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 36.

Note 45: An anonymous author—perhaps a resident of The Farm—wrote that "The Tennessee folks . . . don't recommend that anyone spend all his or her time chanting mantras and praying. Instead, they believe that human beings should put most of their energy into doing something for others and 'make *work* a meditation'" ("Good Look," 139).

Note 46: Stephen [Gaskin], *Monday Night Class,* [19–20].

Note 47: Ibid.; "Good Look," 139.

Note 48: Joshua B. Freeman, "Hardhats: Construction Workers, Manliness, and the 1970 Pro-War Demonstrations," *Journal of Social History* 26, no. 4 (Summer 1993): 726–35.

Note 49: John Rothchild and Susan Berns Wolf, *Children of the Counter-Culture* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 186.

Note 50: [W. and J.] Santana, interview with Shanks, 19.

Note 51: Kathy Fike and Rupert Fike, "Tantric Monks with a Boom Truck," 87; Friedlander and Levin, "How We Dropped Our Water Tower," 16–18; and John Coate, "Fallen Yellow Mastodon," 101–2; all in Fike, *Voices from The Farm.*

Note 52: Coate, "When Something Belongs to Everybody," 113.

Note 53: David L. Lewis, "From Rumble Seats to Rockin' Vans," *Michigan History* 80, no. 2 (1996): 72–79; Julia Marusza, "Skill School Boys: Masculine Identity Formation among White Boys in an Urban High School Vocational Autoshop Program," *Urban Review* 29, no. 3 (September 1997): 175–87.

Note 54: Coate, "When Something Belongs to Everybody," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 113.

Note 55: B. Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 43.

Note 56: Michael Cook, "Grass Fast Sunrise," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 35. Because the commune lacked machinery sufficient to permit multiple operators to cultivate or harvest by day, the Farming Crew pressed the available equipment into use around the clock, working six days per week, in shifts (34). The "grass fast" of the title refers to Stephen's nine-month incarceration, along with three other men, for cultivation of marijuana. The Farmies maintained a "grass fast" in solidarity (34).

Note 57: Bargar, interview with Shanks, 3–4; Richard Lanham, "I Gave In and Got to Be a Real Kid," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 92; Lapidus, *Sweet Potato Suppers,* 119; I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 159.

Note 58: Bargar, interview with Shanks, 3–4; [W. and J.] Santana, interview with Shanks, 7; Doug Stevenson, "Up-Close Relationships," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 58.

Note 59: LeDoux, "The Farm," 138–39.

Note 60: R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1995), 71–72.

Note 61: Margaret Nofziger, quoted in S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik,* [78].

Note 62: Joan McCabe, "Enchiladas for Fifty from Scratch," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 65–66. For variations in the pattern of household labor, see Bargar, interview with Shanks, 3–4; Cordette (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 5; C. Hunnicutt and L. Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 13–15; Vicky Montagne, interview with Shanks, Summertown, 13 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 139, SCDLR, 4–5.

Note 63: Cordette (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 5; on breastfeeding, see Stephen's essay, "Man Does Not Live by Bread Alone" (positing "energy transmission" as an essential part of the nourishment received during breastfeeding), in I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 317.

Note 64: S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey Beatnik!* [82]; Stephen's authorship of the passage determined from reference to "Ina May and I," *supra.* Stephen's assertions are original in their particulars, but grew out of countercultural discourse on the meaning of maternity. See Lauri Umansky, "The Body as a Holy Land: Feminism, Childbirth, and the Imprint of the Counterculture," chap. 2 in *Motherhood Reconceived: Feminism and the Legacies of the Sixties* (New York Univ. Press, 1996). See also Kern, "Pronatalism," 212.

Note 65: I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 243, citing Marshall H. Klaus and John H. Kennell, *Maternal-Infant Bonding: The Impact of Early Separation or Loss on Family Development* (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby, 1976). More recently, Ina May has expanded her argument on the importance of breastfeeding; see *Babies, Breastfeeding, and Bonding* (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1987). For an excellent analysis of the sexual politics of Klaus and Kennell, see Diane E. Eyer, *Mother-Infant Bonding: A Scientific Fiction* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1992). Eyer does not doubt the need of infants for stable, nurturing relationships; she merely detects intent to discourage women from work outside of the home in the interpretation of this need as one that a biological mother alone can fulfill. Eyer counters with the recommendation that *work*, not women's engagement with it, be reorganized in ways that would conform it to the needs of mothers. Klaus and Kennell claimed to have validated the central hypotheses of attachment theory—or, as it was called at its inception, *maternal deprivation theory.* Core works in that theory are John Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss,* 3 vols. (New York: Basic Books, 1969–80), and a series of empirical observations by Bowlby's associate, Mary D. Ainsworth, beginning in the 1960s.

Note that the Farmies took a broader view than Klaus and Kennell of who constituted a "mother," in keeping with the principle that "we are all One." Cordette (pseud.) notes that lactating women breast-fed one another's babies (interview with Shanks, 14); when single mothers accepted The Farm's offer of free obstetrical care as an alternative to abortion, some elected to leave the child with the Farmies. These children were mothered by Farm women. See L. Gavin and M. Gavin, "If You Love," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 104–10.

Note 66: McCabe, "Enchiladas," 65; Holzapfel, "Beatnik Bell," in Fike, *Voices from The*

Farm, 61; Pat McCarthy and Shawn McCarthy, interview with Shanks, Summertown, Tenn., 12 January 1996, CCS transcripts, folder 148, SCDLR, 5.

Note 67: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 230.

Note 68: See the photograph in S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey Beatnik!* [27]. While we cannot tell from photographs alone how frequently women engaged with conventionally "masculine" tools (after all, the Farm's publications put the community's best foot forward), it remains significant that the commune's leadership considered such images as showing their best face. They did not feel compelled to defer to the feminist sensibilities of the time: see the discussion of radical feminism in the following chapter. See also Ina May's emphasis of that part of the Hippocratic Oath proscribing abortion (*Spiritual Midwifery,* 336).

Note 69: Pfaffenberger, "World of Husbands and Mothers," 208; source cited in text only as "an ex-member" of The Farm.

Note 70: I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 380; I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., [480].

Note 71: A heading in The Farm's promotional publication described this function in gender-neutral terms as "the bank" (S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey Beatnik!* [19]), but the accompanying photograph shows a "lady" at work, patchwork skirt flowing over the arms of an office chair. On Housing Ladies, see Kern, "Pronatalism," 213; Friedlander, "Uncle Bill," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 70. Ina May names Stephen as a member of the midwifery crew, and refers to him as a "guest catcher" (*Spiritual Midwifery,* 8). On the Telephone Ladies, see Holzapfel, "Beatnik Bell," in Fike, *Voices from The Farm,* 60.

Note 72: The financial manager's duties differed from those of the "Bank Lady." The latter managed the petty cash dedicated to daily subsistence. The boundaries of the financial manager's duties are hazy, because, at least initially, individual crews handled their own finances. What we can say is that the financial manager did not exercise complete control over the commune's business assets until late in the 1970s.

Note 73: Traugot, *Short History,* 52, reports that the commune's weekly income only once matched its weekly expenditures of $10,000.00.

Note 74: I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 278.

Note 75: Ibid., 277. For the Farmies, this term was not figurative. Still, the "high" of childbirth did not originate in the use of drugs; rather, it derived from their capacity to remain in contact with Spirit through the practice of Stephen's teachings. See the discussion in chap. 4 of the group's move away from synthetic hallucinogens.

Note 76: Ibid., 279.

Note 77: Ibid., 280.

Note 78: See for example Ronald M. Enroth, Edward E. Ericson Jr., and C. Breckinridge Peters, *The Jesus People: Old-Time Religion in the Age of Aquarius* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 212. For communities evidencing somewhat less rigid sexual divisions of labor than the above group (yet still more rigid than that of The Farm), see Ilse Martin, "Inequality, Chastity, and Sign Endogamy in the New Age Brotherhood," in *Sex Roles in Contemporary American Communes,* ed. Jon Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1982), 82–110, and E. Burke Rochford, *Hare Krishna in America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1985). Nearly a century before, John Humphrey Noyes had rejected the notion that women were too fragile to engage in hard work or complex thought. See Spencer Klaw, *Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community* (New York: Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1993), 134–35. Stephen concurred. But the two men made different sense of this conviction. Noyes minimized the sexual division of labor, while Stephen relaxed, but did not abandon, the conventional division of his time. See Lawrence Foster, "Free Love and Community: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Perfectionists," in *America's Communal Utopias,* ed. Donald E. Pitzer (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1997), 262.

Note 79: Tana, quoted in I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 145.

Note 80: B. Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 16.

Note 81: I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 19–20, 23–24.

Note 82: Ibid., 23–24.

Note 83: C. Hunnicutt and L. Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 30. The agreement not to wear jewelry did not spring from an avoidance of personal adornment. Rather, Stephen regarded conventional jewelry as a concentration of wealth in the hands of an individual, contrary to the Mahayana spirit. Adornments with no commercial value, such as embroidery added to second-hand clothing, he termed "pretties." These he appreciated as expressions of Spirit, so long as they did not signify ego-attachment. See S. Gaskin, *Sunday Morning Services,* 107–8.

Note 84: Pat McCarthy, a registered nurse and a certified schoolteacher, recalls her exclusion from the midwifery crew and from teaching at The Farm school with some resentment. Her first employment at the commune was in the soy dairy, while others with no formal training continued as midwives. Eventually, she did advance to an unspecified, medically related position, with Ina May's blessing (interview with Shanks, 18–19). One of Pat LeDoux's informants, David Brown, relates that his female partner left the commune when she discovered that prerequisites to becoming a midwife included marriage and the experience of childbirth (LeDoux, "The Farm," 136). Joanne Santana maintains that one unmarried woman, Ruth Thomas, belonged to the midwife crew, but I can locate no information about her ([W. and J.] Santana, interview with Shanks, 8).

Note 85: For early training in midwifery, see I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 19–20. For statistics, see I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 376; 2d. ed., 474–75. For initial contacts with Tennessee health authorities in 1971, see I. Gaskin, *Spiritual Midwifery,* 2d ed., 22. Ina May held the presidency of MANA as of the date of publication of Liz Warwick, "The Essence of Birth," *The Gazette* (Montreal), 6 May 1996, sec. E. On the maneuver sometimes referred to as the "Gaskin technique," designed to free a baby's shoulder when it becomes lodged during delivery, see Joseph P. Bruner, Susan B. Drummond, Anna L. Meenan, and Ina May Gaskin, "All-Fours Maneuver for Reducing Shoulder Dystocia during Labor," *Journal of Reproductive Medicine* 43 (May 1998): 439–43. Some sources report that Gaskin invented this technique, but she credits women of Mayan ancestry in Guatemala as its inventors; she observed its use during hurricane-relief efforts by The Farm's charitable foundation, Plenty. See Michael I. Niman, "Out to Save the World: Life at The Farm," *High Times,* February 1995; article available online at http://www.thefarm.org/general/hightime.html (accessed 9 January 2007).

Note 86: Martin, "Sign Endogamy," 82–90; quotation at 86; Barbara Mathieu, "The Shiloh Farms Community: A Case of Complementarity in Sex-Role Dualism," 160–71; in *Sex Roles in Contemporary American Communes,* ed. Jon Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1982), 160–66.

Note 87: Wheeler, interview with Shanks, 27.

Note 88: C. Hunnicutt and L. Hunnicutt, interview with Shanks, 35–36, 3, 12, 19.

Note 89: B. Klaski (pseud.), interview with Shanks, 14, 41.

Note 90: Kern, "Pronatalism," 211, quoting I. [Gaskin] et al., *Spiritual Midwifery,* 191.

Note 91: Recall my discussion of Diane E. Eyer's response to the attachment theory of Klaus and Kennel, n. 66 above.

Note 92: Stephen Gaskin, *Mind At Play* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1979), 15. I draw the opposition between scholarship and scholasticism from Kathie Sarachild [Kathie Amatniek], "Consciousness Raising: A Radical Weapon," in Redstockings of the Women's Liberation Movement, *Feminist Revolution: An Abridged Edition with Additional Writings* (New York: Random House, 1978), 145.

Note 93: S. [Gaskin] et al., *Hey, Beatnik,* [6]; Pfaffenberger, "World of Husbands and Mothers," 209.

Note 94: S. [Gaskin], *Monday Night Class,* [45]; original ellipses deleted.

Note 95: Kern, "Pronatalism," 205. Kern cites no sources in support of this claim. He notes the mention of "some few instances of uses of IUDs" in the first edition of *Spiritual Midwifery* (1975), but his citation points to only one instance—and in that case, the IUD was implanted before the woman's residence on The Farm, and, in my reading of this text, it is not conclusive that she retained the device after joining the commune. In any event, this story did not appear in the second edition (1978). One informant indicates that, while she stopped using her diaphragm when she joined The Farm, she could have continued to do so, despite the formal prohibition (Cordette [pseud.], interview with Shanks, 12).

Note 96: On the gendered expectations accompanying the employment of women, see Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1983). Men's treatment of women workers and students as their personal sexual servants was, of course, not universal, but it was so widespread as to force women to seek redress through the courts. See Augustus B. Cochran, *Sexual Harassment and the Law: The Mechelle Vinson Case* (Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2004). On the persistence of the "second shift," see Anthony McMahon, *Taking Care of Men: Sexual Politics in the Public Mind* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999); for a sense of labor aristocrats' leisure opportunities, see Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, introduction to *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930–1980* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1989).
