

## OUR VIEW

## Honor Women

Pierre de Brantome said famously that "A world without women would be like a garden without flowers."

Perhaps it's only fitting that Black History Month (February) is followed by Women's History Month (March). You could argue that as Blacks/Africans were the first people on earth—and thus the most important progenitors of the human race—that women are the backbone of all those civilizations.

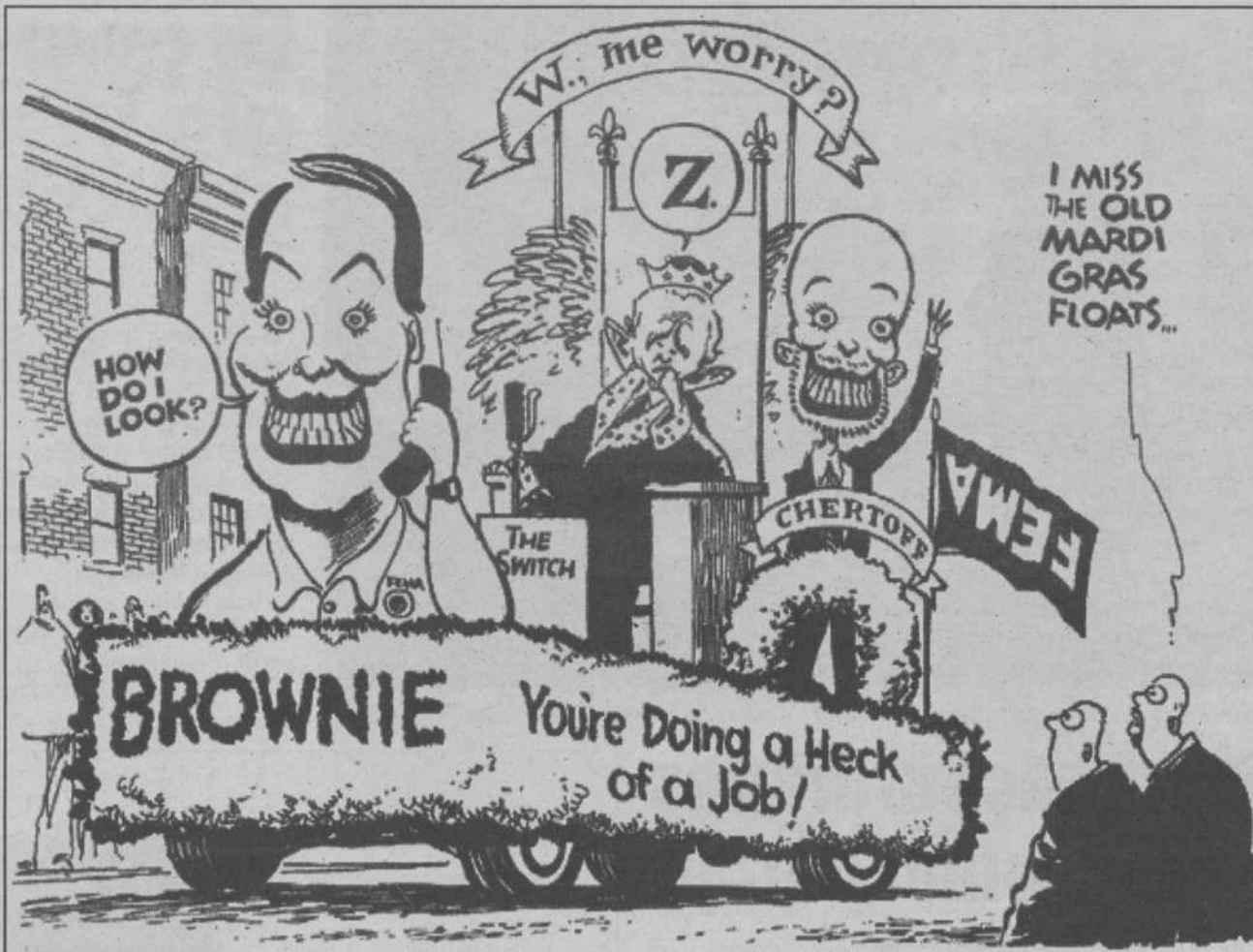
Women's History Month traces its origins to "Women's History Week," a weeklong celebration started by the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women in California in 1978. The week coincided with International Women's Day, established in Europe on March 8, 1911. In 1981, Congress approved a resolution creating National Women's History Week. The five-day celebration turned into a month-long one in 1987, as the National Women's History Project championed a lengthier homage.

A great resource for anyone wanting to learn more about the contributions of women to the world is Thomson Gale, a subsidiary of the Thomson Corporation. Thomson Gale excels in e-research and educational publishing for libraries, schools and businesses and has produced accurate and authoritative reference content as well magazine and newspaper articles and more than 600 databases.

According to Thomson Gale, women have been doing their thing in ancient times: 4000—3500 B.C. According to Sumerian legend, the goddess Tiamet created the universe. 2700 B.C.: Merit Ptah was the earliest recorded female doctor. 2640 B.C.: Si Ling-shi, empress of China, is credited with developing the process for removing thread from the cocoon of the silk worm. 2500 B.C.: Pyramid construction begins in Egypt. 1570 B.C.: Queen Nefertari, known as "God's wife," helped rule Egypt with her husband, King Ahmose. She participated in temple rituals along with male priests and advised her husband on various building projects. After her husband's death, evidence indicates that she ruled with her son. 1490 B.C.: Queen Hatsheput rules in Egypt, claiming rights of pharaoh. 1360 B.C.: Queen Nefertiti rules in Egypt. 1200 B.C.: Fu Hao, woman warrior in China, leads military expeditions. 1180 B.C.: Spartan Queen Helen kidnapped by Paris. 1150 B.C.: Deborah leads Israel in victory over the invading Canaanites. c.625 B.C.: Spartan women are the most independent of all in the ancient world; Sappho, Greek poetess, flourishes on the island of Lesbos. 51 B.C.: Cleopatra VII is queen of Egypt. c.30 A.D.: Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth; Christian faith established.

For those who like their history more current, there's this: With the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920, U.S. women get the vote. 1924: Nellie Tayloe Ross is elected first woman governor in U.S. (Wyoming). 1928: The first woman to swim the English Channel is U.S. swimmer Gertrude Ederle. Women compete for the first time in Olympic field events. 1932: Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to fly across the Atlantic alone. 1933: Frances Perkins becomes Secretary of Labor, the first woman cabinet member in U.S. history. 1958: Swedish diplomat Agda Rössel is the first woman to head a permanent delegation to the United Nations. 1981: Sandra Day O'Connor appointed first woman U.S. Supreme Court Justice. 1994: Executive Ann Marie Fudge is named head of Maxwell House, a unit of Kraft General Foods. 2002: Halle Berry becomes the first African-American woman to win an Academy Award for best female actress.

And for those who like their history closer to home, there's a treasure trove of information on women who pioneered here in the Las Vegas Valley, including several who were honored at a recent event by political action committee the Caucus of African American Nevadans: Alice Marie Key worked with former Gov. Grant Sawyer to oversee the creation of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission; Ida Gaines has been a politically active community stalwart for a decade. Even closer to home: there's the grandmother, mother, aunt, cousin or sister who enriched your life. So, during Women's History Month, remember to honor the women in your lives.



## Black womb: Genocide, abortion

By Dora LaGrande  
Sentinel-Voice

Genocide. It is the killing of a people through various means. It is acts committed with the intent to destroy any national, racial or religious group through the killing of members or the entirety of a group. Acts of genocide include the deliberate infliction of serious bodily or mental harm upon members of the group, adversely affecting the group's overall condition of life to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.

This includes imposing measures to prevent births within the group. Abortion is a process of destroying a people and has far-reaching spiritual consequences.

When you look at the various forms of genocide that are running rampant in our communities, decimating it, we must take some responsibility, especially for the rising rate of abortion.

We have Black-on-Black crime at an all time high, which ensures the incarceration of one in eight Black males.

We have AIDS disproportionately annihilating the Black community as the leading cause of death in Black men and women between the ages of 20 and 40. Much is preventable since it is mostly transmitted by sex partners, acts by choice.

Then, we have the biggest killer of all: the abortion of Black babies.

In Deuteronomy 30:19 the



## ON THE RECORD

By Dora LaGrande

Lord says to us "I have set before you life and death, blessings and cursing, therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live."

If we are admonished by the Creator to choose life, why are there 1,452 Black babies aborted every day? Why have there been more than 14 million Black babies aborted since 1973?

If we continue along the path that many are on our very existence as a people is threatened.

Why does the abortion count for just three days surpass the number of Blacks that were lynched between 1882 and 1968? Why do three out of every five Black women who get pregnant opt for abortion? Why has the abortion industry received over 4 billion dollars from the Black community?

While Blacks make up about 12 percent of the population in the United States, why is that we account for 32 percent of the abortions performed in this country? Why is it that more than twice as many Blacks have died from abortion than from heart disease, cancer, accidents, violent crimes and AIDS combined?

These alarming statistics

come from "Destiny of the Black Race" by Carlisle Peterson, U.S. Center for Disease Control Abortion Surveillance Report in 1999 and CDC National Vital Statistics.

What the Ku Klux Klan could only dream about we are doing to ourselves. More Black babies are killed by abortion than the total number of Blacks killed by the Klan in its entire history. What are we doing?

We were held in bondage for decades, the Black man forced to serve the White man. Our humanness was non-existent and even ruled out by the laws of the land and what were then social norms. Our only function was to serve and advance the slave owner's prestige and

economic gain. Every effort has been made over the years to destroy the Black family, because if you destroy the family, the Black man is powerless.

In spite of everything ruling society did to us, we hung on. The 1960's saw the dawning of civil rights legislation which brought some equality but not much changed for the Black man, woman and child. Prejudice and poverty now kept us in a powerless state. But our ancestors would never give up, but we, today, seem to be never growing up.

The womb of the Black woman is the new battleground for oppression. There was a time when Blacks couldn't get pregnant fast enough for their White slave masters, producing more bodies for their free labor force.

For a people that were victimized by the brutalizing effects of slavery where families were pulled apart and

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