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Women of the Year

Thank you for the Women of the Year articles (January/February 1996). I was deeply moved and inspired as I read about the struggles, sacrifices, and triumphs of the women that you honored. As so often happens with Ms., I couldn't stop saying, "Right on!" My thanks go out to all these women for what they have done and continue to do to make this a world where I am proud to be a woman and a feminist.

I especially appreciated the article on Shannon Faulkner (and the awesome photo that accompanied it). Now there is a young woman who knows what it means to fight for what she believes in! Contrary to what others may think, in my mind Faulkner is a winner. She fought long and hard to make her point, and when she had done the best she could, she had the strength to let herself stop—a decision that I imagine took more courage than the rest of her fight. In my book, this makes her a hero, and a woman who should be held up as an example to us all.

Eve Michael
Corvallis, Oreg.

I really enjoyed reading your Women of the Year issue. All of your choices are excellent examples of women who, through their words and actions, have elevated our collective consciousness. I was particularly gratified to see that you had chosen Mimi Ramsey as an honoree. My organization, Soroptimist International of the Americas, is very concerned about the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), as both a human rights issue and a health issue. Our organiza-

tion's magazine focused on FGM in a recent issue, and Ramsey provided the first-person account for the articles. I was struck by her courage and her willingness to speak out about such an intensely personal and painful subject. Her comments resonate with a power that could only have come from firsthand experience.

Darlene Friedman
Philadelphia, Pa.

Candace Gingrich for dyke of the year? Come on, Ms.! I think it's wonderful that Gingrich has come out and been able to provide a foil for her loathsome sibling, but your choice of her as the only out lesbian in your Women of the Year issue is a slap in the face to visible lesbian activists whose accomplishments this past year have little to do with their lineage or media fascination, and a lot to do with the substance of their work.

Why not Mab Segrest, who gave us perhaps the most powerful antiracist work by a white woman of the second wave, in *Memoir of a Race Traitor*? Why not Urvashi Vaid, whose *Virtual Equality* provides a new road map for queer liberation? Why not Julie Dorf, who, as director of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, organized the fabulous and revolutionary lesbian tent at this year's international women's conference in Beijing?

Fess up, you blew it.

Jaime M. Grant
Washington, D.C.

Reading about Willow Farey in your Women of the Year issue, I was flooded with excitement, anger, jealousy, sadness. I have been haunted