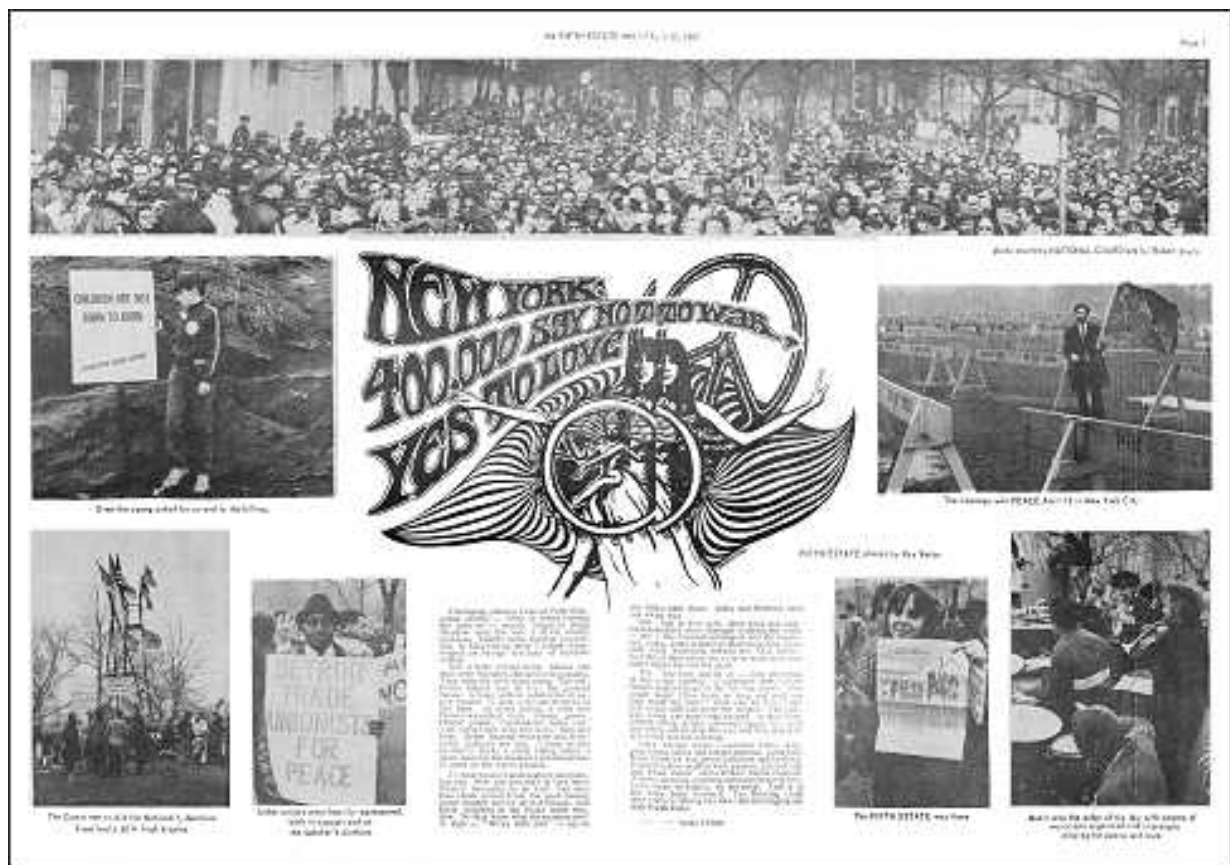


# New York: 400,000 Say No To War, Yes To Love

Vicki Felton

1967



Thronging pulsing Central Park thousands strong—some in trees viewing the love-in—march. Begin in Sheep Meadow near the vendor of fat crunchy pretzels. Twenty cents and that's a pretzel. It fills you up after 3 salami sandwiches, an orange and lots of turnpike coffee.

Not a baby crying here. Babies and kids love marches and turn on to parades. They help the love thing along. The daffodils helped and so too, the painted faces. A huge yellow submarine in paper mache. A suit, a tie and flowers in the hair. An army jacket, a robe and flower-wreathed halo. Flower power, flower power, Psychedelic bells and

Viet Cong flags ring and wave. Sing and beat. Drum beating militants and prayerful Quakers are one. A baby on his mother's back; a child hiding under a skirt and only the sneakers and dungarees to show on the warm ground.

To look was love and laughter and dancing too. How can you turn on hate when there's humanity to be had? And then this chick waved from the posh beauty salon window and we all waved back. And little children in the Plaza Hotel window. Do they know what the reasons are? A sign—"We're with you"—up on the fifth floor. Bells and flowers, love not war.

And at five p.m., after King and Carmichael were through rallying the rally—the Cornell contingent and the teachers, some in their graduation gowns, were still marching toward the East River. And then came the rain to wash down the — signs but not the glow.

The love stayed on—even drenched in the subway. A confused New Yorker finally led us to the 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. local. "How could I live here so long and still not find my way?" How can we live a life and still not know the reason? The subway car rush hour packed. Soaked from pelting drops smeared signs that still cry out to stop the war and that children are not for burning.

Parade Route—Carnival Time. Skipping steps and bright buttons. Long hair, flowers and peace balloons and leaflets. Pockets stuffed with papers, pretzel salt and sweat. Arms linked, hands clasped. A dancing chanting demonstration of concern so public, so personal. Feel it in the baby stomach. The floating child who's talking his own talk and singing out with fists.

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