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Ex-Ms. Magazine editor, 57, dies

By **FROM MEDIANEWS STAFF** and **STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS** | MediaNews

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OAKLAND — Margaret Sloan-Hunter, a former editor of Ms. Magazine who was a leading black feminist and vocal civil rights advocate, died Sept. 23 at Summit Medical Center after a long illness, her daughter Kathleen Sloan said. She was 57.

Ms. Magazine co-founder Gloria Steinem said Ms. Sloan-Hunter united feminist and black identities.

“She used to say, ‘I’m not black Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and a woman Thursday, Friday and Saturday,’” Steinem said. “She really made clear that the black woman could be, and had to be, loyal to both her race and her gender.”

As a youth, Ms. Sloan-Hunter became involved with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and marched with Martin Luther King Jr. She founded and was the first chairwoman of the National Black Feminist Organization.

She also worked with Jesse Jackson’s Operation Breadbasket as a coordinator of the Hunger Task Force team.

“She was accepting, loving and supportive,” said JoAnn Loulan, who knew Ms. Sloan-Hunter for 30 years. “No matter what, she’d stick by your side — she didn’t care about your gender, your color, your orientation. She gave so much to so many people.”

As a poor, black woman, Ms. Sloan-Hunter was practically forced into giving up her daughter when she became a mother at 18, Ms. Loulan said. It was a decision she immediately regretted, but she was made to wait a year-and-a-half before she was able to get her back.

“She was such an amazing mother,” Ms. Loulan said. “They were best friends, an incredible team.”

A Web site devoted to notable quotes by women includes this one from her in 1974: “We women are the best thing going — we are warm, passionate, we cry and we live! Let’s celebrate!”

A native of Chattanooga, Tenn., Ms. Sloan-Hunter attended Chicago City College, Malcolm X Community College in Chicago and graduate school in women’s studies at Antioch University in San Francisco.

She moved to Oakland in 1975 — in part to give her daughter a better life in California — and became an organizer for the Berkeley Women’s Center and the Feminist School for Girls. She also was co-founder of the Women’s Foundation and served on the board of directors of the Women’s Alcoholism Center in San Francisco.

Kathleen Sloan said her mother brought her up surrounded by love. She said her mother gave her the most interesting, exciting, love-filled life.

Ms. Sloan-Hunter also was a lecturer and writer, publishing her collected poems in the book “Black & Lavender” in 1995.

According to a biography compiled by family and friends, Ms. Sloan-Hunter became an activist early in life, joining the Chicago chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality at age 14. Three years later, she founded the Junior Catholic Inter-Racial Council, a group of inner-city and suburban students who worked against racism.

In addition to her daughter, survivors include her mother, Virginia Wilson of Chicago, and a sister, Barbara Cross of Sedona, Ariz.

A memorial service is scheduled for 6 p.m. Oct. 29 in the Montclair Women’s Cultural Arts Club, 1650 Mountain Blvd., Oakland.

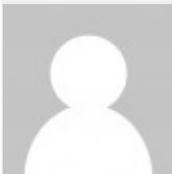
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