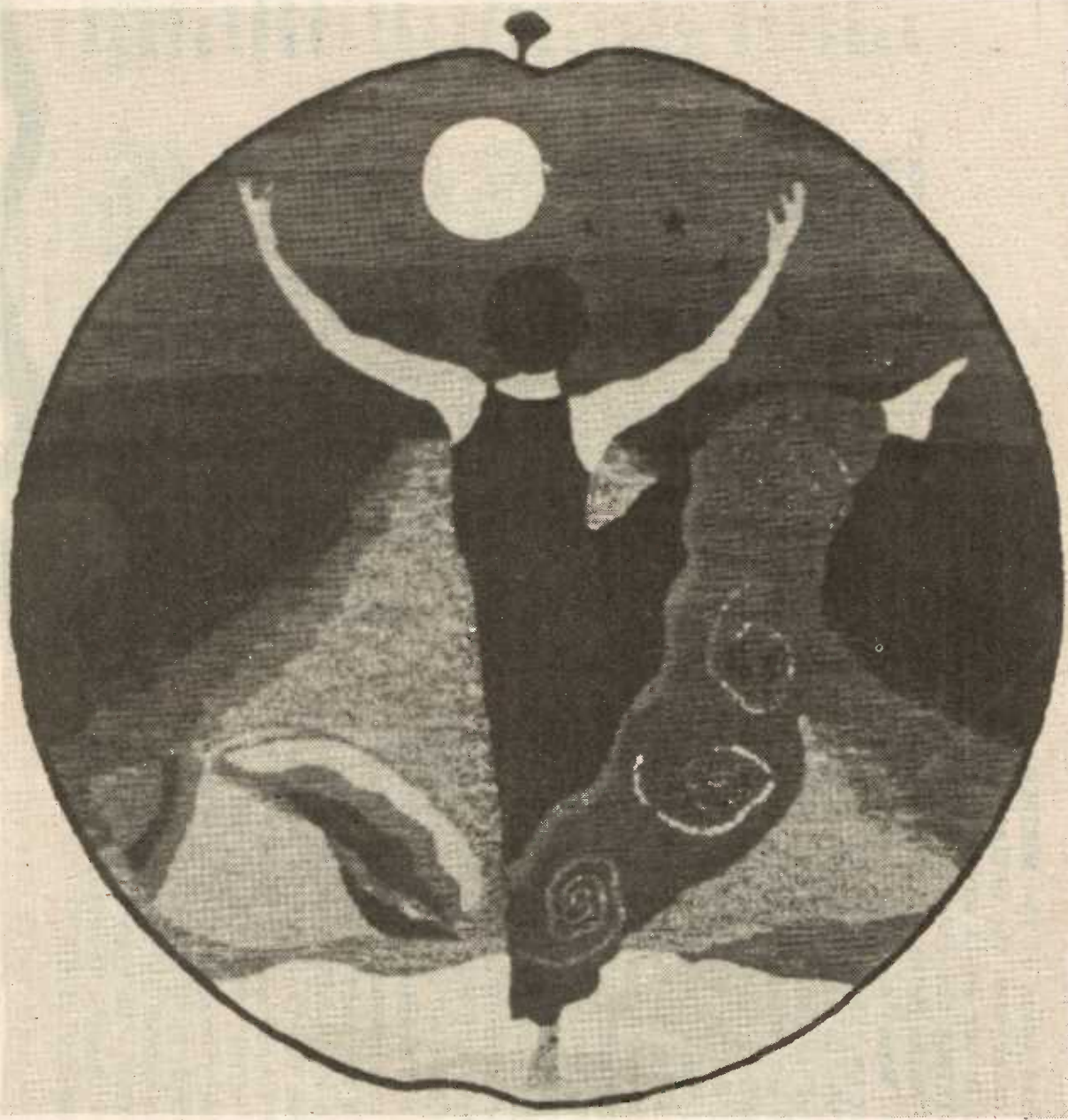


\$1.50

# Northern Woman Journal

November 1986, Vol. 10 No. 2, Thunder Bay, Ontario



Esimohi3

# Editorial

This issue of the NORTHERN WOMAN celebrates the artistry of women. In our small way we try to make VISIBLE the creativity of women. As Sasha McInnes (Interview p7) states "Women's art is images that empower us, that tell the TRUTH about who we are, who we can be, where we've come from not just about how we are viewed and treated in this malestream culture, but about who we are in the depths of our souls. These images are so deeply threatening in their truths and potency to the patriarchy that they have insidiously worked to eradicate them every time they have re-surfaced throughout history. Be sure that their invisibility is no accident of historical circumstance, certainly not due to some inability on the part of women to produce beautiful and meaningful works of art but a comprehensive and determined move on the part of patriarchal powers to eradicate the female principle from the face of the earth - to murder female energy - that of ALL women, white, black, red, yellow, from every socio economic stratum, everywhere in the world."

In searching for new forms of expression - be they visual or literary - women's creativity enriches and empowers us all.

## WOMEN'S CENTRE \$

In the last issue of the NORTHERN WOMAN (Aug. '86) we described the attack on Women's Centre which culminated in a City "administrative review" following a City Council meeting where the Right to Life Association of Thunder Bay appealed their grant decision and their spokesman John Carroll was permitted to use the Council forum to attack Women's Centre. (The Right to Life Association subsequently disclaimed association with Carroll, and Carroll apparently now indicates he does not represent Right to Life -- however this contradiction seems to be lost upon Council).

The report of the "administrative review" was presented to Council in late August. The report was little more than a summary of Women's Centre's financial information and program data for the past 5½ years. The "pro-abortion" and "pro-lesbian" charges which brought about the review were not addressed.

Without discussion or comment Council referred the report to the 1987 Financial Assistance Review process.

We ask again WHY this review was undertaken. The answer may lie in the realization that to accommodate the review Women's Centre were obliged to waste weeks of precious time responding to City bureaucratic requests. Such diversion of women's energies deserves analysis!

Now that the review is complete will the issue go away? Not very likely! It is to be expected that the Right to Life Association will continue to take every opportunity to oppose Women's Centre. But, as we have stated previously, the essential question is whether City Council will permit its offices to be the forum for Women's Centre bashing?

This experience calls into question the whole issue of government funding for alternative services. How much necessary feminist work is subverted, how much energy diverted, by dealing with malestream funding agencies? Yet feminists are taxpayers too, and shouldn't we enjoy some of the benefits of our hard earned tax payments? This is not a new debate. But the time is ripe for the Thunder Bay feminist community to again analyze this issue.



## Your VOICE

Dear Women:

This is post from Switzerland, from a woman, who would like to go to Canada for about one year, from April '87 until spring '88. I've got your address from GAIA'S GUIDE. I'm 21 and until now I've done different things, so I haven't got a profession yet. To meet and work with women from another country would be a great experience for me! So if you know about anything in Canada, where there's a possibility to go, please write me back! I'd be very happy to get an answer from you!

Thanks a lot.

Eva Keller  
Im Lee 13  
CH-8400 Winterthur  
Switzerland

Dear Friends,

I recently had my name changed back to my maiden, surname, Sherette. It has been a desire for so long and of course quite a lot of resentment when I found out there never was a reason to have a name change with marriage. A pretty well kept secret by the "good old boys".

A little late to be sure. I was 69 years old June 25, 1986, but anything that made me feel this good can only be right.

Lawyer Patrick Smith made the change in 10 minutes. I thought it would be weeks or months. How many times has the same story been told in the past year or so?

I appreciate the Northern Woman Journal so much and feel guilty because I am unable to give any of my time. The days are all too short.

But I feel happy and secure to know there is a Northern Women's Centre support group.

Thanks and Love,  
Lester D. Sherette.

## Women in History

Open the window, push aside the heavy curtains and beyond is the most fabulous vista- scenes of love, death, striving and creation beyond the twentieth century imagination. There are many windows into history, but the saga of women's lives gives us the richest and deepest understanding of the complexities of women's lives today.

The course at Confederation College starts on Wednesday, January 14 at 7pm. Participants need not have taken any other history courses. The sessions will make full use of slides, films, pictures, videos and lectures as well as ample time for group discussions.

For further information phone Joan Baril at the college (474-6336) or at home (344-6708) or watch out for the college callendar of night courses "The Owl", which will come out on November 26. Registration will start at the college December 1. Since this course is also a college credit course for college students, the class fills up quickly. The cost is \$56.25 for fifteen evenings.

Cover Credit:  
Detail of MENARCHE  
Tapestry  
Sasha McInnes

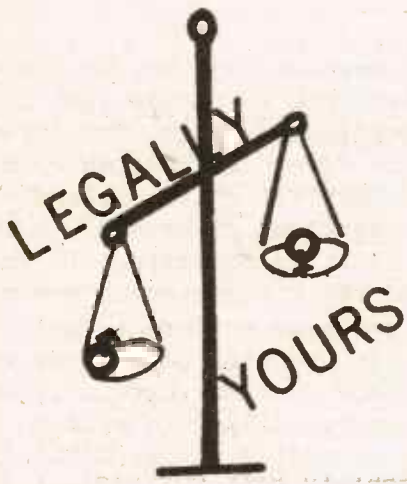
Apology:

The credit of graphic used on Page 3 of our August '86 issue should have read: the Newsmagazine by Alberta Women.

HOME TO SHARE

Home to share co-operatively in Current River. with another non-smoking woman. Will consider children. Phone 807-683-5669 or write c/o Northern Woman Journal

# Family Law \* Reformed Again



by LYNN BEAK

*The two part article on Family Law now has been separated into three parts. This issue will deal with divorce and the next issue will address the new Federal and Provincial Support Enforcement agencies.*

In 1986 Canada received a new Divorce Act. It was the first major amendment to divorce since 1968 and it is an interim measure in an ongoing sociological and legal revolution, that will in time alter the nature of marriage and divorce significantly. The intention of the new legislation was to make the process more humane and the results more responsive to people's practical need. In the past the divorce laws have been part of the problem rather than part of the solution, for women facing marriage breakdown and the intention was to make significant improvements.

The most notable change is the elimination of fault oriented divorce, at least partially. There are now three grounds for an application for a divorce: the first is living separate and apart for 12 months; the second is adultery; and the third is physical and mental cruelty. The Federal officials are hoping that since litigation on the fault grounds (adultery and cruelty) is so costly, emotionally messy, and would probably take more than a year to get through the Courts anyway, that the one year separation is going to be a serious alternative.

Secondly, the new Divorce Act attempts to move toward mediation rather than litigation as the forum for resolving disputes concerning the marriage breakdown. At this time mediation is not mandatory but must be suggested by the lawyers acting for either spouse. If at a later date standards have been established for mediation services across the country then it is possible that mediation would become mandatory.

The new Divorce Act also contains a provision allowing the two spouses to make a joint application for divorce when the grounds are living separate and apart. Another improvement is the elimination of the necessity of a trial in uncontested divorces. Therefore if there are no contentious legal issues in the divorce and both parties want the divorce, then neither will have to attend at Court in order to obtain the divorce.

The new Act also shortens the time it will take to obtain a divorce. In the past in areas outside of Toronto where the Supreme Court did not sit regularly, there was often a significant waiting period for a trial date. Once the hearing had been held, there was a further 90 day waiting period before the divorce was final. Now, an uncontested application for a divorce can proceed speedily since the parties will not have to wait for a trial date and the order is final 30 days after it has been signed by a Judge.

In order to clarify what is meant by living separate and apart for 12 months, the new Divorce Act has clearly stated that attempts at reconciliation during the 12 month period will not start the waiting period all over again. The parties can agree to resume cohabitation for periods as long as they do not exceed 90 days in duration in total and if reconciliation is the primary purpose for resuming cohabitation. Therefore if a couple have separated and want to try to save the marriage, they can live together for periods of up to 90 days and, if it doesn't work out, they can still proceed with the divorce at the end of 12 months.

Support orders for both spousal and child support can be obtained during a divorce if these matters have not been resolved before the application for a divorce.

The conduct of the parties is no longer a factor to be considered when assessing the amount of spousal support. The assessment now will be based on the needs of the parties and will assist the parties to move toward self-sufficiency. Obviously, the length of the marriage and functions performed during it are relevant when deciding on the amount of spousal support.

A woman who has performed house-keeping functions during a lengthy marriage will have greater difficulty finding a place in the work force and thus achieving self-sufficiency. Similarly a short term marriage, or one in which the woman worked during the marriage, will lead to short term orders for spousal support since self-sufficiency has already been established. This has put the Federal Divorce Act in line with the Provincial Family Laws and represents a recognition that both men and women have an independent obligation to support themselves.

In the matter of custody, the new Divorce Act specifically sets out "joint custody" as an option to sole custody for one spouse. There have been few cases of joint custody in the past, and it has not been imposed upon unwilling parties. However, if mediation leads to less emotionally disruptive separations, then joint custody may become a viable option for more parties.

The simplified divorce rules may lead to one problem. Many women do not know that they must make a claim for division of family property before or during a divorce. A claim for family property may not be commenced after a divorce, since the parties are no longer spouses. If a woman obtains a divorce on her own, and then tries to make an application for division of property, she may be too late. It will remain important for women to have legal advice to ensure that they are not jeopardizing any interest in property or funds that they may have.



# Update

by PAT WILSON

••• The Social Assistance Legislation Review Committee, which is reviewing Ontario's welfare system will hold public hearings in Thunder Bay on December 10, 1986.

The overall direction of social assistance will be examined, and objectives set for program changes to meet the needs of the future. The review will also examine specific questions such as: is there sufficient direct support provided to social assistance recipients; is assistance available to all who should receive it; is assistance provided in a fair and efficient manner; what role do and should emergency food banks and hostels play.

The review will cover the municipal welfare system, foster parents allowances, disability pensions and single parents assistance.

Groups and individuals wishing to have input into the review should attend the public hearing and/or submit briefs or letters to the Committee. For more information contact the Social Assistance Review, 2195 Yonge St., 10th Floor, Toronto, M4S 2B2.

••• Atikokan Transition House, having recently purchased a building are now busy winterizing, renovating and decorating the House. Anyone who would like to help please contact Eva Shields at 597-2868 •••

••• Hoshizaki House, Dryden, have received funding to enlarge their paid staff. Within the near future they hope to be employing an outreach counsellor, part-time child care worker and part-time House coordinator. The House will also be receiving the assistance of two students through Canada World Youth •••

••• Josie Wallenius of the Women's International League for Peace and Friendship is hosting 'Nuclear Alert', a series of six monthly programs on peace-related issues that will be shown on the cable tv channel. The first program 'Back to Basics' airs October 30th at 8 p.m., followed on November 27th by 'Seeking Alternatives'. •••

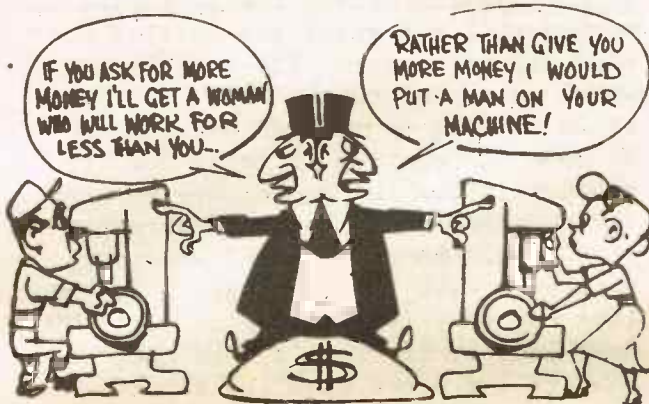
••• The Northwest Enterprise Centre has developed a non-traditional learning model for women who are considering small business as a career option. Susan Loppacher, of the Enterprise Centre stated "Women who are attempting to re-enter the job market are recognizing that they have fewer employment opportunities in the traditional employment generating industries. As a result, many women are considering self-employment as a career option. The six month program will cover financial management, business research, marketing, advertising, employee relations and communications skills. Anyone requiring further information regarding starting dates and cost of the next session contact Susan Loppacher at (807) 475-6400.

An interesting footnote: More women are now starting their own businesses, but numerically there are still more new male entrepreneurs - however - when it comes to bankruptcies male owned companies far outnumber female owned businesses going bust •••

••• Ontario Attorney-General Ian Scott stated on September 3 that the provincial government will introduce

legislation this fall that will require private business to pay women the same wages as men if their work is considered to be of equal value. Mr. Scott has just released the report of the Pay Equity Commission. "The report indicates significant support for pay equity" stated Mr. Scott but he further added "however, the legislation must respect the interest of private enterprise in maintaining its economic edge".

The Equal Pay Coalition, a lobby group representing a variety of women's and labour organizations feel the government is hesitant to bring in strong laws that would open the way for women in a wide range of jobs to achieve pay equity. It is about time that the subsidization of employer's profits by women's low wages was ended.



••• The Canadian Coalition on Depo Provera are requesting funds to assist them in their fight against the federal government's move to license Depo Provera for general use. Send your contribution to the Coalition c/o 25 Sixth St., Wards Island, Toronto, M5J 2C2 •••

••• C.A.R.A.L. is seeking funds from all who believe in the freedom of choice. Donations will go to the C.A.R.A.L. Ottawa Lobby Fund and will enable the league to make plans for a strong presence in Ottawa this fall. Our Ottawa lobbyist will be able to provide educational material to the politicians immediately as our issue comes up. Send donations to National office, 344 Bloor St. West, Suite 306 Toronto M5S 1W9 •••

••• Have we another Crown Attorney trying to make a quick name for themselves? A Portage la Prairie woman has been jailed for contempt of court for refusing to testify against her common-law husband, who is charged with assaulting her. Crown Attorney Linda Giesbrecht said the woman was charged with contempt because she continually failed to appear in court and refused to swear on the bible the times she did appear. The 20 year old woman is serving a three month sentence •••

••• Take care when referred by your doctor to an out of town specialist. Get your doctor to double check that the specialist is certified by the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons, as only specialists so certified are covered by the Health Travel Plan grant. It has come to the notice of the local MPPs that some patients have been refused payment of the health travel grant. MPP Gilles Pouliot has contacted the Health Minister Murray Elston but to date there has been no response. •••

••• Newfoundland has become the second province in Canada without a legal abortion service. The first was Prince Edward Island, when in June, the only hospital on the island to perform abortions disbanded its therapeutic abortion committee. In Newfoundland the circumstances are not exactly the same - there is still a therapeutic abortion committee, but the province does not have a gynecologist who is willing to provide the service. According to Dr. Robbins, medical director of the General Hospital in St. John's, doctors in Newfoundland are subject to intimidation and harassment for carrying out abortions and they don't want the hassle. As things stand at the moment most women from these two provinces requiring an abortion travel to Montreal at the cost of \$870 •••

••• As of October 1st, 1986 the minimum rate of pay in Ontario will be increased. The general hourly rate will be \$4.35, learner \$4.25, students (under 18) \$3.50 •••

••• In mid-August sixteen Canadian women left for a two week study tour of Nicaragua. Organized by the brigades committee of Canadian Action for Nicaragua, the Simone de Beauvoir Tour will be hosted by AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan women's organization. Organizers believe this is the first all-woman tour to visit Nicaragua from Canada. The group includes educators, artists, journalists, and women with a wide variety of experience in community, solidarity and women's organizations •••

••• After watching various Democratic women candidates lose the 1982 election because of lack of funds, Ellen Malcolm became the founder and president of EMILY's list. EMILY is an acronym for Early Money Is Like Yeast - it makes the dough rise. EMILY's list formed explicitly to raise money early enough to ensure women candidates successful campaigns. So far \$183,000 has been raised. Spokeswoman Kathleen Currie says "We use many of the political networks of the women's movement to assess a candidate's viability, then we talk to both the candidates and their staff. The candidates we choose have to be progressive, pro-choice, pro-ERA women who are viable candidates for a Democratic seat in the Senate. Curry feels the EMILY's list is "an interesting maturation of the political aspect of the women's movement. We've learned how to run a campaign, how to get out the vote, how to canvass." But Malcolm notes "We have to master the money issues, we hope to be able to support statewide races eventually."

••• A former Progressive Conservative candidate, Sharon Wolfe, has been named by Prime Minister Mulroney as the new Adviser on Women's Issues. Although active in organizations such as the Canadian Committee for Soviet Jewry and the Canadian Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Ms. Wolfe has not been associated with any women's organizations. Time will tell how she feels about women's issues •••



# Friendship

by SUSAN G. COLLINS

I want to tell you about myself and about my love affair; but where to begin?. For you to really understand, I'd have to start with my childhood. I wasn't starved or beaten, but I was a latchkey child in a troubled home, until I became a ward in a foster home. And then I met someone who promised me marriage, a home and a university education, and I swore an oath before God to love him and be faithful to him until death, because I thought I had to in order to avoid damnation. And then when he deserted me, five years later that oath came back to haunt me; and through the years of single parenthood and between the nervous breakdowns, the men came and went but I had them without wanting them, without caring for their efforts or their promises except as a salve to a broken spirit.

So what was one more affair? The difference maybe wasn't in him; maybe he was no more special, or compatible with me, he didn't appreciate me, I should forget him. The difference was in me. I was divorced some years and ready to care again. I had no illusions; as he told me once, I played no games. I didn't need his promises; he never made any.

That was his defense, when he severed our relationship: "I never said I couldn't replace you," he said. I never said...and so on. Was that supposed to make me feel better? I thought. I had never expected I would ever live with him, but somehow I thought he would always be there for me: we were friends. Love, I had learned, doesn't last forever; but friendship, I believed, lasts a very long time.

I was glad at first that he didn't ask me to meet his friends; I had my independence, I had my own life, and my time with him was spent alone with him. I wanted to be alone with him; I wanted to get as much of him as I could, and not have our relationship diluted or diffused with other people. But when he became really special to me...well, then he went back to an old girlfriend, and they spent time with friends and family, and then it hurt me that he acknowledged her, that she was "legitimate" in a way that I was not.

I keep a diary, and I recorded some of this relationship, like when I saw him and he said that he would no longer see me. There is so much that never went on paper, but sometimes I tried. Like this entry:

August 27 19--

Sandy is coming Saturday!

Last night Sylvie stayed over and I made a vanilla cake with apples and took the extra to friends.

Got pretty much caught up on my sleep as Sylvie sleeps late. Joseph phoned and woke me up.

Talked to psychologist briefly about Dan. Supposed to call him (Dan) tonight but he'll be late I bet.



Missing Dan isn't just his kisses, his muscles, his gentle voice and awful jokes. It's also not ever seeing the sun come up from his house, or trying to cuddle in his queen-sized bed, or fighting with his cat--the trappings, the specialness of the everyday. Nobody but Sylvie seems to understand the deep regret for all the things we never got to do as well for the ending of those things we did.

I sure will be glad to see my little Sandy again, after two months. He was camping with Joseph and according to Joseph he had a good summer.

And oh, those mornings were special. Every other day, he was up early for work, while I, night person that I am, slept as late as I could manage. But at Dan's place I was up with the dawn, seeing the light filter through his curtains, opening the door to the cool of the country morning and the smell of the dew on the grass and in the bush nearby. I knew his schedule, and I dragged him from bed while he whined and groaned and called me a nag.

Even after he went back with Dorothy, Dan would see me occasionally; and when I misplaced my diaphragm, I had it replaced, expecting him to come back to me. The crisis came when my period was late and I was on the verge of failing all my Christmas exams. Let him worry too, I thought. I pushed him for an answer--would it be me or Dorothy?

"I'm not in love with you," he said.

Three years it took him to say that. The mornings watching the sun come up, the nights we wrecked the bed... "We're just friends," he said: and I thought, "what else is there?"

I'm playing it cool now, lots of male friends but no one special. Lately I've been interested in a guy named Mike, I've known him three years but you know we were both involved with other people. He's Sylvie's old boyfriend. You know he's never asked me out, but now he's free I think I'll ask him.

Love, I guess I've always known, doesn't last forever; but friendship, I still hope, can last a long, long time.

*breaking  
the  
SILENCE*  
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\* \* \* \*

It's sad, and funny.  
Right to the bitter end,  
I ran my colours  
into your palate.  
The murky brown  
didn't faze you much.  
I guess, as an artist,  
you're used to creative mishaps.

Is this a curse, or a prayer?  
Fading you out  
into distant friendship,  
imagining our paths will cross  
hearts open, again, when  
life adds bright warmth  
to greying temples.

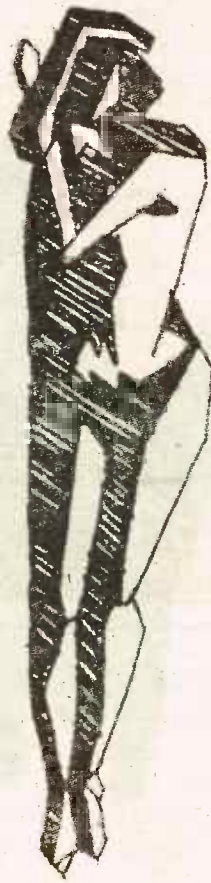
\* \* \* \*

Tossing and turning in the half glow  
of memory's frail image,  
between windblown touch  
and terror  
as tenderness is swept into dust.

Hey man, gonna drown?  
Crouched inward  
by woman's breaking out  
of soft shell into  
Volcanic Force,  
can't you handle it?

Your quivering chest betrays  
the neatly packaged iceman.  
Your emotions, disguised as thoughts,  
simmer  
until heartache pierces  
the calm  
catalyzing violent storms.

Suelynn



### TWO WOMEN MEET

Old in my shell  
young in my heart  
walking when I want to dance.  
you run me over  
as you race fast  
shaking mortality  
in search of identity  
Look see my eyes  
shining with the birth of words  
how the wind is in my hair  
separating each silver strand  
Do you see me?  
I see myself in you  
young daughter, sister,  
travelling companion  
completing each cycle  
entering each new passage of light  
my heart soars with passion  
undaunted by this slow shell  
which now houses me  
I shall continue  
as me, as you

Rosalyn Taylor

## Employment Equity

by MYRNA HOLMAN

Employment Equity in Thunder Bay appears to be off to a good start with the establishment of five Employment Equity programs. The City of Thunder Bay, St. Joseph's Hospital, the Lakehead Board of Education, the Lakehead Separate School Board and Lakehead University have hired coordinators to develop and implement Employment Equity strategies.

Funding for the five programs comes from the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ministry associated with each organization. Unfortunately, the funding for the School Boards, Lakehead University and St. Joseph's Hospital ends December 31, 1986.

It is important for the government to continue funding these programs. The need for Employment Equity in Canada has been well researched and documented. Many institutions and businesses in Thunder Bay should establish Employment Equity Programs. As well, Employment Equity funding should be expanded to include people with disabilities and visible minorities.

Since the establishment of the five programs in Thunder Bay the Northwestern Ontario Employment Equity Network has been formed. NWOEEN was established to meet the needs of practitioners in the north and of the northern community. NWOEEN members are available to give presentations to groups interested in Employment

Equity. The members have written a brief to the Honourable Ian Scott, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, which outlines concerns about funding for Employment Equity and makes recommendations.

Also of note in Thunder Bay is the Equal Opportunity Management Program which is being offered by Confederation College for the second time. This program is unique in Canada and has attracted students throughout Ontario and from other provinces. The course includes three months of classes followed by a three month work placement. Graduates of the program are qualified to develop and implement Employment Equity programs.

If you would like more information about Employment Equity, a member of NWOEEN can be contacted by phoning any of the organizations listed above and asking for the Employment Equity Coordinator.

WANTED: WILD WOMEN WHO WRITE  
New lesbian/feminist press seeks material for possible publication, especially short stories and novels. For more information or to submit, please contact: Impertinent Press, Box 397 918-16 Avenue N.W. Calgary, Alta. T2M 0K3.

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I am interested in Thunder Bay Advocates for Quality Child Care. Please send more information

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to:  
Thunder Bay Advocates for  
Quality Child Care  
Box 144,  
Thunder Bay P7C 4V5

# INTERVIEW

Sasha McInnes is a natural media artist recently moved to Thunder Bay. She is currently trying to maintain her sanity while living amidst boxes, dust and carpenters while waiting for her studio to be finished in order to continue work on a series of 13 tapestries which will become the focus of a film by Studio D, National Film Board of Canada and which will be exhibited at the London Regional Art Gallery, opening All Hallows Eve, 1990. Sasha talks with Rosalyn Taylor, Donna Phoenix and Carolyn Greenwood about women in/and art, women's spiritual roots, rites of passage and power.



R. Where shall we begin?

S. I'd like to begin with the present because most of my life is in such disarray at the moment due to my recent (and happy) move to Thunder Bay, that I need to ground myself in what is happening right now.

R. Okay, what's happening right now?

S. Because my current series of tapestries involves the cycles of women's lives, I had planned to travel to Ireland in the spring of 1987 in order to experience the sacred wells, standing stones and caves as well as to participate in a number of earth festivals relevant to women. However, since making the decision to move to Thunder Bay, I recognized the folly of going to a country which is perpetually foggy at that time of year after spending my first winter in the north. Coincidentally, an artist friend from the U.S. invited me to meet her in New Mexico next spring to collaborate on a few pieces as well as to do some rituals together and attend several festivals. We want to do a cross-cultural collaboration in the belief that women around the world share deeply in common symbology and common celebration. So I will take special symbols and natural materials from Thunder Bay and we will integrate them with others from New Mexico, documenting our rituals both through photography and through imbedding the elements of our ritual into wall pieces. We're both inspired by the stories of Spider Woman and Spider Grandmother, who, according to the Navajo, brought weaving to the people and these stories will be our point of departure - or our point of return, depending on your perspective.

rites and celebrations - just as they appear to be happening within the native communities in the north - stemming, I believe, from their desire to reclaim their traditional cultures and to become more centered in their rituals, but I think that you would know more about what is going on here than I do.

D. I don't. R. I don't either.

S. Well, for example, there is a new native cultural centre in Thunder Bay - Nanabijou on Archibald St. - which, in my view, is very important. Oddly it's funded by the Children's Aid Society - clearly the Thunder Bay CAS is more enlightened than others. Two CAS women, Peggy Keesick-Palkert and Dorothy Bird lobbied successfully for the centre because they believe that native families need to have a space in which they can become more grounded in their culture. They recognized how very critical it is for an oppressed people to reclaim its symbols and rituals so the centre will be undertaking Sacred Circle meetings, native language classes and art groups along with support programs such as baby-sitting and playgroups for their children.

Since moving here I'm discovering that indigenous people everywhere seem to understand that their artists play a major role in helping centre them in their culture, providing them with affirmation and strength through making visible the symbolic language which reflect their beliefs and values. I'm excited about this because I resonate deeply with their fundamental belief in the power of symbols to enhance and transform reality which is what real power is all about and, as a feminist, I believe that our movement must integrate the cul-

as a retreat from political action. To me, culture - which includes art and spirituality - and politics are inseparable. The lies about the nature and function of woman that are intrinsic to patriarchal religion and art have formed the legal, educational, political, economic and medical/psychiatric systems of our society and are accepted as "natural truths" by even the most modern and/or atheistic citizens!

I was an artist before I became a feminist and I found my fullest aesthetic expression as a feminist and also found my most far-reaching and meaningful political expression as an artist. I agree with Robin Morgan who has written somewhere that a political revolution that does not

take seriously its artists, and does not see the aesthetic vision as inseparable in integrity from all political action, is, by definition, a patriarchal revolution.

R. Does this have anything to do with women's art being unnoticed or diminished?

S. Yes, I believe that many of us have adopted male identified attitudes - which shouldn't surprise anyone once they consider what we learn about ourselves and who we learn it from. One of the great challenges of feminism is to move beyond the confines of patriarchal thought and methodology and narrow, constricting roles to become whole.

And yes, I believe that the recognition of the power of symbols has a great deal to do with women's art being largely unnoticed - in fact largely invisible. If what you mean by "women's art" is images that empower us, that tell the TRUTH about who we are, who we can be, where we've come from, not just about how we

I resonate deeply with their fundamental belief in the power of symbols to enhance and transform reality which is what real power is all about and as a feminist, I believe that our movement must integrate the cultural work of their sisters into feminist analysis and practice. Images tell us who we most profoundly are and can be and it is folly to ignore or diminish their importance to our work.

D. When did all this happen?

S. Michelle Morris and I have been corresponding for a number of years now but our plan to work together is a recent one - over the past few weeks. There are so many things going on in New Mexico that are interesting and compelling to both of us - many to do with women's

tural work of their sisters into feminist analysis and practice. Images tell us who we most profoundly are and can be and it is folly to ignore or diminish their importance to our work.

It's been my experience that too many feminists criticize our work as a form of cultural nationalism or

are viewed and treated in this mainstream culture, but about who we are in the depths of our souls. These images are so deeply threatening in their truths and potency to the patriarchy that they have insidiously worked to eradicate them every time they have re-surfaced throughout history. Be sure that their invisibility

is no accident of historical circumstance, certainly not due to some inability on the part of women to produce beautiful and meaningful works of art but a comprehensive and determined move on the part of patriarchal powers to eradicate the female principle from the face of the earth - to murder female energy - that of ALL women, white, black, red, yellow, from every socio economic stratum, everywhere in the world.

I read something recently that really energized me - Paula Gunn Allen in her book THE SACRED HOOP suggests that feminists don't have to look very hard in our search for evidence of matriarchal existence because they had existed all over the northern, central and southern hemispheres until the arrival of the Europeans and, while threatened, continue to exist within a handful of

Goddess worship, so widespread in ancient periods, was gradually suppressed and obliterated by later religions that worshipped male deities and which were mobile, warlike, ideologically sky oriented and indifferent to art. This period of patriarchy began about 5000 years ago.

bands despite the attempt to bury them completely through acts of cruelty and matricide. She suggests that if we, white feminists, don't recognize this history and learn from it, if we deny its existence because of our patriarchally imposed modes of learning, then we are a racist movement. And I believe she is right. I believe that we have a whole lot to learn from native women, we have much in common, especially with those women who are trying to reclaim their culture. We share so many things, not the least of which is our efforts to ensure peace in the world and a loving, mutually supportive and respectful existence for all living things, an end to violence and to the power-over dualistic thinking of the patriarchy. For this reason it was a very simple thing to change my plans to go to Ireland. My recent discovery of the similarities between my pre-Christian heritage as an Anglo-Irish and that of indigenous women convinces me that I will find the same female spirit in New Mexico as in Ireland. To me, that is a wonderful revelation!

D. But you wanted to go to Ireland because that's the only place where the Goddess wasn't destroyed and is stronger?

S. Initially I wanted to go to Ireland because that is my heritage and the Goddess is present there despite the christian efforts to annihilate Her. But I hadn't looked in my own back yard and when I did I found that She hasn't been destroyed here either - we can see this from the literature of the past decade as well as by the mere fact of our coming together to talk about Her. She certainly is present in this vast and gorgeous Northwestern Ontario!

D. Do native people have Goddesses?

S. Let's back up a bit and consider Her for a moment. According to Merlin Stone, the American sculptor, a long, long time ago, in the very beginning of human life, in Europe, Asia and Africa, people revered the mother of all life. Just as they'd been born from their own mothers, they envisioned a mother who had given birth to the cosmos and the very first people in the world. The Creator was the first mother.

Goddess worship, so widespread in ancient periods, was gradually suppressed and obliterated by later religions that worshipped male deities and which were mobile, warlike, ideo-

logically sky oriented and indifferent to art. This period of patriarchy began about 5000 years ago. As male gods took precedence over the ancient Goddess and her female clergy, men assumed the right to make all the major decisions, because the male god had given them that right. What was left of the powerful images of the Goddess was diffused in the beliefs of classical Greece and Rome, where She was fractured into many parts, each subservient to the male god Zeus. The father had replaced the mother as the ultimate deity.

In her book WHEN GOD WAS A WOMAN, Merlin Stone traced the image of the very first mother back to the times when She had come to be known as the earth and all of life. From the small Venus figurines of the Paleolithic age, some 40,000 years ago, to the multitude of clay, bone and

stone statues of the earliest Neolithic and Chalcolithic cultures, there is evidence that for thousands of years, our ancestors revered a Goddess as their creator. On the tablets of ancient Sumer, they wrote of Her as Ama-tu-an-ki, the mother who gave birth to heaven and earth. She had different names in different parts of the world but She was one. Until about 10 years ago, that story had been suppressed and largely forgotten.

To get back to your question Donna, according to Paula Gunn Allen, until the coming of the Europeans, women in native cultures were also very powerful and revered as creators - there were many symbolic representations of female spiritual power just as there were on other continents - the Pueblo people knew Her as Spider Woman, the Hopi as Huring Woman, the Navajo as White Shell Woman and Changing Woman, the Athapaskan's of Western Canada called Her Asintmah, the Bella Coola people of B.C. had Soma-galags, She was Sun Sister to the Eskimo. When the Europeans arrived on the continent they found people who had strong connections to Her and women who had enormous power within their clans and they set out to systematically destroy them, using the same approach so successful on other continents thousands of years earlier. It was at the will of the women of the clans that their sons and husbands held powerful positions - if they did

not approve of what the men did they had the power to impeach them! The Europeans refused to deal with the women and would only negotiate with native men. Many people believe that this is why the indigenous people of North America got such a raw deal - the Indian men had little experience negotiating political issues and just signed everything away!

R. But then, going back to Ireland, according to the NFB film Nuns: Beyond the Veil, there is a point where the Goddess imagery was replaced by the whole hierarchy of the church and made invisible. I never knew about any of this until I saw the film.

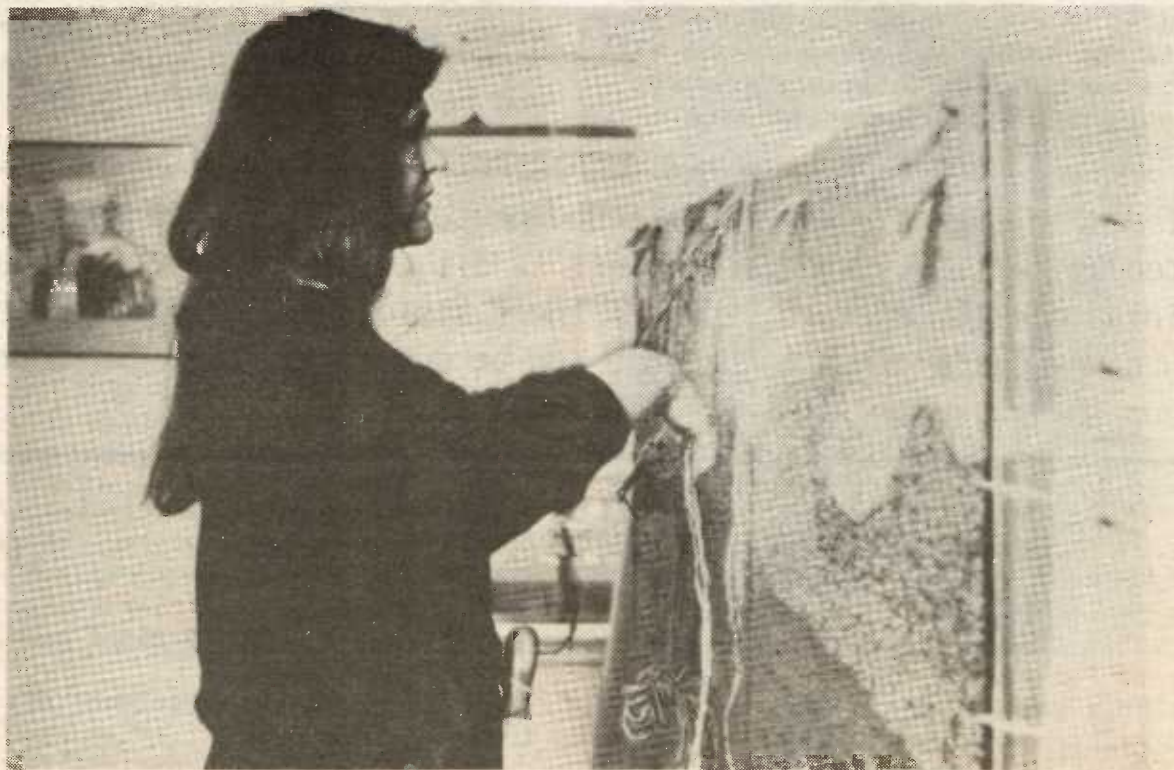
S. Yes, the christians were very clever in choosing the methods with which to annihilate the Goddess. While they exerted enormous physical power (some scholars claim that 9,000,000

women were burned alive by the christian church) in their attempts to obliterate the women-centred religions, they correctly recognized that in order to maintain control they would have to co-opt our symbol system as well (the same way they do today through cultural censorship - keeping information from us through their refusal to publish, exhibit, record, and so on). By removing, replacing and subtly transforming our models for self determination, physical force was not needed to maintain control.

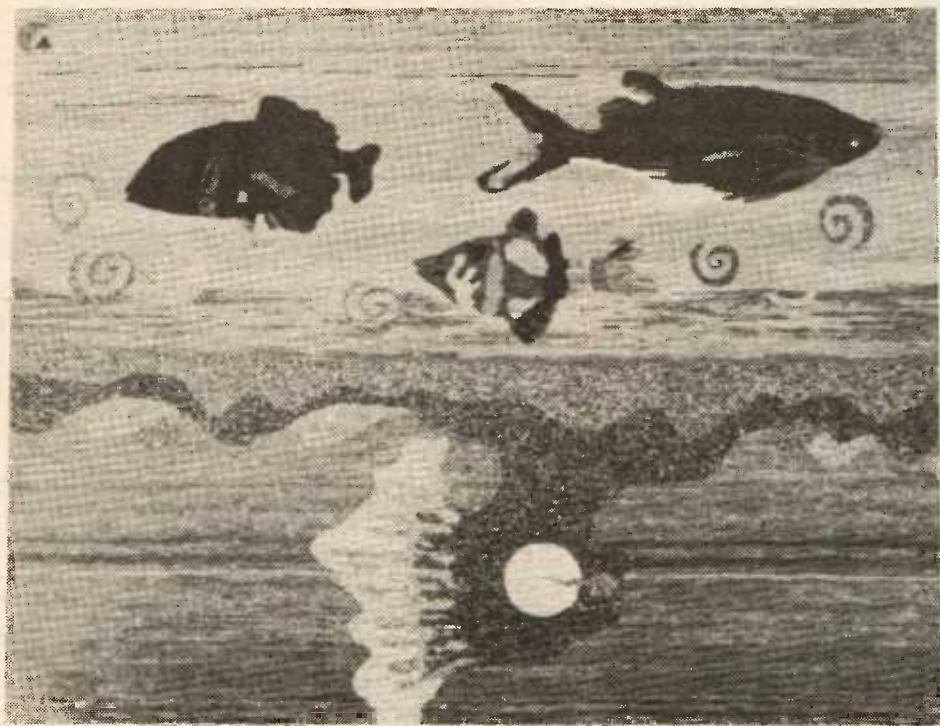
R. How does this work?

S. Religion is a system of symbols which act to produce powerful and long lasting behaviour and attitudes in a people of a given culture. Because they have both psychological and political arrangements that correspond to the symbol system, force is not necessary to keep them in line. Once people have internalized the symbols of a particular system those symbols function as internal police and the threat of violence or punishment is enough to trigger obedience. We see this everyday in the power the pope has regarding birth control and abortion for example!

It is because religion has such a compelling hold on the deep psyches of so many people that feminists cannot afford to leave it in the hands of the fathers. As feminist scholar Carol P. Christ has pointed out, symbol systems cannot simply be rejected, they must be replaced. Where there is







"Gaea Mon Amour"  
Tapestry  
Sasha McInnes

no replacement, the mind will revert to familiar structures at times of crisis, bafflement or defeat.

C. You were saying earlier that you need seven more tapestries for the film and exhibition.

S. Ten more - I'm doing thirteen in total - one for each cycle of the moon, one for each menstrual period.

D. Have women always used the number 13 or did we get it when men became afraid of it?

S. Fear is a good word to describe their relationship to the number 13 since in Tarot the number of the Death card is 13, the magical lunar number of witchcraft and the religion of the Goddess. A year is composed of 13 lunar months. It was patriarchal culture that abandoned the 13th month, contrived the solar calendar and put an aura of bad luck around the number 13. Once the most sacred of numbers, signifying the end and the beginning, the number 13 now makes people so uptight that a hotel can't have a 13th floor! This speaks to me clearly to the distortion that has taken place

in our culture over the issue of death because of patriarchal fears of and efforts to control nature

Before the advent of electric lights and the nuclear family, when women lived and worked together as a collective unity, they also bled and ovulated together with the light and cycles of the moon - the cycle was 13 - perhaps this is another reason why the number has become taboo.

D. I've noticed still that when women get together they menstruate together.

C. I went to Michigan one year and everyone was menstruating at the same time.

S. I love it! Can you imagine the power at the festival?

C. It was incredible - we were there for four days - you could really feel the energy!

S. Blood everywhere - everybody washing out their sponges!

D. Women have been trying to explain what happens to us during our cycles for a long time. Have you given this any thought?

S. It is not easy in this day and age to imagine the shamanistic power inherent in menstruation. With many women in this country suffering from PMS and relating to their menstrual cycles as troublesome, painful or fundamentally negative, the idea of "psychic power" or "feminine potency" associated with menstruation may seem incredible. Yet healer Vicki Noble has shown that until recent history, a woman in her bleeding time was considered to be in a heightened

state of awareness and wisdom. In ancient and "primitive" cultures, women went "underground" into what native people call the Moonlodge for 3 days and did not act in ordinary ways. They tuned into their innate psychic abilities at this magical time, opening to oracular messages from the spirit realm. They did this listening within for the benefit of the entire community, acting as shamans or healers, rather than as individual persons.

In THE CULT OF THE GODDESS Lawrence Durdin-Robertson says that the first blood at the altar was women's menstrual blood, a potency given in a natural and living way in her monthly courses. He suggests that the entire ethics of religion rests on the question of from where the necessary blood is gotten. Ancient matriarchal religion, he says, got it naturally. When that religion was wiped out and replaced all over the world with patriarchy, the blood had to be gotten in other ways. Animals and humans were slain for the precious life force, a practice that continues today.

The remnants of recognition of female blood power can be seen in the ways in which patriarchal culture defines menstruation as "unclean" and pathological. Western culture expects women to go ahead with "business as usual", rather than take time out to tune into themselves. Feminists have sometimes taken the position that women have no problems during their menstrual periods, nothing should prevent them from being Prime Minister or whatever they might want to do. This is a very shortsighted view, in my mind, that requires rethinking and much discussion. If women take traditionally male positions and act them out in male-identified ways, then we are bound to experience menstrual problems such as PMS. However, if we were to replace men as leaders and power-holders, and to operate in inherently female ways, taking time out for sacred psychic work to make decisions from the deepest possible place, we would likely see real change in the fabric of our society.

The menstrual cycle represents healing power - a transformation - an exchange of the inner and outer powers, in balance - a time for going within.

D. Now it's called the "curse" or the "rags".

S. Yes, we have so few visible rites of passage in our culture - this is one reason why I wove "Menarche" - it was a very important celebration for me and I will continue to celebrate deliriously my cycles.

When I enter menopause I'll send out hundreds of gold embossed invitations to all my friends so that they will come to my party and celebrate with me as I enter crone time!!

D. Let's bring back the menstrual hut! I don't call it menstruating any more - I call it "bleeding" ...

S. ... yes, the bloods, moon-time. Some native people, those who have not been overly influenced by the Europeans, have an interesting perspective on women who are bleeding. White people believe that Indians view women who are bleeding as dirty and that this is why women are forbidden to enter the sacred sweat lodge during their menstruation. The truth is that they believe bleeding women to be so incredibly potent that they will throw everyone else off kilter should they participate in the sweat.

R. I had always assumed that the stories whites tell about this were true!

S. Clearly some native people have taken on white male attitudes just as some women have taken on patriarchal attitudes and behaviour. However, I believe that many contemporary Indian people are, like all women, survivors of patriarchal woman-hating and are working to reclaim the truths of their culture just as feminists are. Fortunately, many of their elders are still alive and so they don't have to sift through centuries of old and hidden documents to find their truths.

D. You are saying, in a sense, that our elders are our Goddesses, the women who have gone before - our role models, the women who we know were strong. They are our elders and we are trying to listen to what they had to say and we're trying to bring back truths that were lost.

S. Yes, in many ways that's true for me yet on some levels it hasn't been so conscious. For example, in 1976 I had an exhibition in which the tapestries were based on a series of books by Evangeline Walton about pre-Christian Ireland. It was claimed by the publisher to be a fantasy series - you know, one person's fantasy, one person's myth, is another person's history. Often women's history is categorized as "myth", especially pre-Christian "history" thereby diminishing it and suggesting subtly that it's not to be taken too literally. Anyway, at the opening of the exhibition, a man came up to me and said something like "You are obviously into Robert Graves, you obviously have read his The White Goddess". I had no idea what he was talking about and so intrigued and fascinated that I bought the book and what I learned was utterly exciting and affirmed my emerging belief in ancestral memory and the collective unconscious.

I discovered that women in every part of the world had been using the symbols I had used in this series of tapestries - totally without awareness. I learned that forever and always women have been using universal symbols in every culture - the moon, the chevron, spiral, circle, inverted triangle, animals such as frogs and turtles, trees, water, shells - for one reason or another they all relate to the Great Goddess. I was so energized by this discovery - it literally changed my life and since that time other discoveries have come to me that have helped me in various ways to understand my heritage and my position in contemporary society.

For one thing, the fact of our common symbols is used against us by

cultural agencies, the art establishment and the boys who run it. They seriously diminish our work by stating "it's been done - it's dated" thereby dismissing it without consideration. If it's been done, I ask, why don't most of us know about it? Why haven't we seen this work? Why hasn't it been exhibited in our galleries and interpreted in our art press? What are they afraid of?

If truth be told it is my view that the ancestral memories of our cultural workers compel them to deny our work because if it were truly considered and if its visibility were facilitated, contemporary men and those who cater to them would have to confront and deal with their complicity - through silence - in the violence and matricide which women have had to endure these past 10,000 years. If the cultural establishment, the gatekeepers of our symbolic language, those who practice cultural censorship with such "professionalism", were to permit us through the gates, they would have to deal with their own fears of our potency, they would have to confront and deal with their own woman hating, their own weakness, their own dependency. I, for one, don't believe for a minute that they could cope with the horrendous guilt - the consequences they would have to bear for denying

us our lives for so long, for inventing and spreading atrocious lies about us, for condoning, through their censorship and silence, unspeakable acts of violence against us and their children - it just runs too deep.

Starhawk once told me that young boys and girls were made to watch as their mothers and other female relatives were burned alive at the stake and I have thought a great deal about what this would mean for the women and men who have followed - their children and children's children, all the way down the line to 1986.

Can you imagine watching your mother burn? Can you contemplate the horror? Can you allow yourself to consider the messages that this would give you about what it means to be a woman or a man in this world?

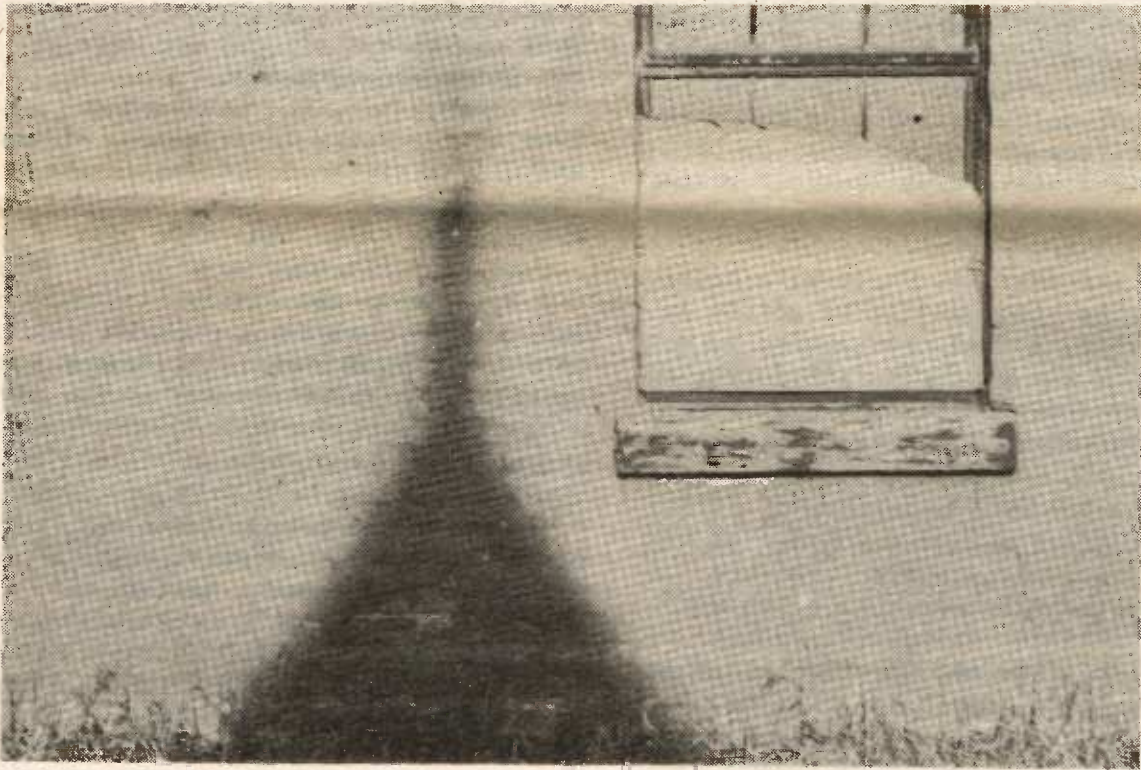
If you would, for a moment, suspend disbelief and consider the idea of ancestral memory - the notion that we remember, through our very bones, events that occurred to our ancestors. The realization that men and women carry memories inside them today is very instructive and revealing. It would explain to me why so many women deny the reality of our/their lives and refuse to join us. It would explain why so many men work so hard to deny us our lives, to deny the truths of our power - even

to themselves - for if they were to do so, their shame at the recognition of what has been done to us by their brothers, and continues to be done, in the name of their god, would simply propel them - en masse - into Lake Superior.

Women who have influenced me: Andrea Dworkin, Kathleen Shannon, Starhawk, Carol Christ, Georgia O'Keefe, Nelle Morton, Hildegard of Gingen, Nor Hall, Emily Carr, Michelle Morris, my maternal grandmother Molly Craig, my mother Mary McInnes, Vicki Noble, Paula Gunn Allen, Mary Daly.

Favourite books: (at the moment)  
The Journey is Home - Nelle Morton  
The Moon & the Virgin - Nor Hall  
I send a Voice - Evelyn Eaton  
Music and Women - Sophie Drinker  
The Crone - Women of Age, Wisdom and Power - Barbara Walker  
Four Essays in Feminist Ethics - Marcia Freedman  
When God Was a Woman - Merlin Stone  
Einstein's Space and Van Gogh's Sky, Physical Reality and Beyond - Lawrence Leshan and Henry Margenau  
The Sacred Hoop - Paula Gunn Allen  
The Silbury Treasure and the Avebury Cycle - Michael Dames  
anything by E.M. Broner, Andrea Dworkin, Susan Griffin, Mary Daly, Anne Cameron, Adrienne Rich, Barbara Walker, Paula Gunn Allen, Vicki Noble, Starhawk.

Carolyn P. Greenwood



I'll start by telling a little about myself. I am a woman photographer, feminist, 31 years of age and recently returned to Thunder Bay. I studied photography at Ryerson in Toronto. I went there not to become a commercial photographer but to learn the technical skills necessary to express myself in my chosen media. I had been aware for some time that I had a need to express myself through an artistic medium. Painting didn't seem to be the answer. I found that the anchor to the concrete, the realism photography offered was what I needed. In order to be free to explore I needed some constrictions. Believing as I do that you cannot express an artistic view until you master the skills necessary, I studied to free myself.

I first started working in black and white, dealing with the isolation I felt, both emotional and physical, living in an urban environment. The silver process expressed this better for me than colour would. Even though I wanted the realism photography sug-

gested, I wanted to step back a little from it. As my vision evolved and the focus of my work changed I realized I needed something different than black and white. I became interested in different historical processes and because of this was introduced to Kwik-Printing. The Kwik-print process is photographic in nature. A large negative(s) is made and from this the image is printed. It is a colour process in which the colours are put on in layers (somewhat like silkscreening) or in particular areas.

I was attracted to the process because while it is in colour, it is colour that I have total control over. Both in choice of actual colours themselves and placement. The way in which I use colour is extremely important to my work. I can colour things as realistically or surrealistically as I like. While I like the realism offered by a photographic process I need the freedom to explore offered by Kwik-Printing. I like the idea of a manipulated reality. The camera records what is placed in front of it.

I manipulate that record. I do this through the manipulation of the actual piece and also because my work is staged. I don't photograph "slices of life". Each individual piece is created for that moment. In a way each piece is a still-life, created as an individual but also meant to be seen as part of a whole. The whole being that particular body of work. A body of work as a form of storytelling.

The stories I tell are personal, based on emotional responses to mine own environment. The colours I use are taken from my dreams and memories and are meant to evoke an emotional response in the viewer. The symbolism I use is also dream related and again is meant to awaken a recognition on behalf of the viewer.

I am presently working on a body of work still in the birthing process. It deals with the past year of my life, my responses to my feelings about family, connections between people and places.



# Gert Beadle Honoured

Our nation's highest honour, the Order of Canada, has been awarded to Gert Beadle, feminist poet and long time Northern Woman Journal member.

I exist in a loud silence  
 here at the bottom of the well.  
 I hear myself singing as though  
 I could straddle a high note and ride  
 beyond myself to where the game is.  
 Everything is too neat here,  
 the agenda of my possible trip  
 was writ before my time,  
 when ladies sat on cushions  
 and only boys could climb.  
 I beat my head in anguish against  
 the rocky wall of love,  
 and pray for wings to lift me  
 to the elements above.  
 Oh! careful, careful is my life  
 and narrow is my portion,  
 and I who die to ride the river,  
 single-handed on a raft,  
 must pretend to be a violet  
 shrinking to avoid the draft.  
 (1936)

Emerging in 1974 to finally share four decades of hidden writing, Gert has delighted, excited and inspired not only her Northwestern Ontario friends but countless others through her readings and her published works. As the introduction to her first volume of poetry Salt and Yeast describes... "we found her questioning the roles of woman as child, as mother, as grandmother, and finally as feminist who could look in retrospect and see herself in transition, not as a new feminist at last, but as one who concealed herself in the poems she hid .... she cemented her philosophy, the true courage, the great heart and the common oppression".

## WOMAN'S SONG

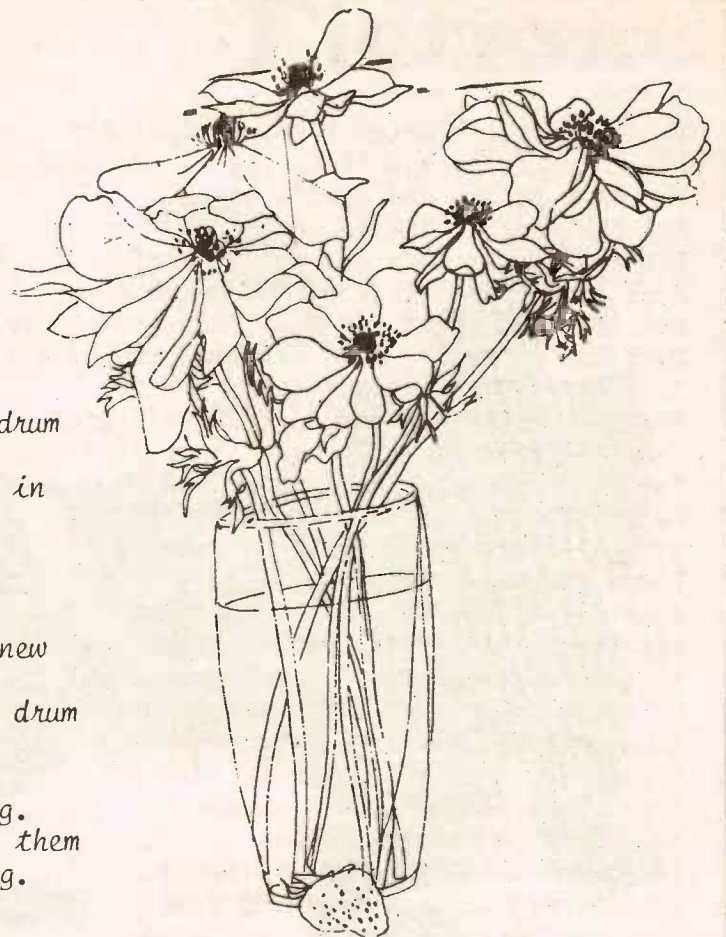
I want to go, for broke.  
 I want to risk it all,  
 feel the day I'm in,  
 hear tomorrow call.

The kernel in the straw  
 is what I'm after,  
 I want to peel the orange  
 and crack the nut of laughter.

I want the love in loving,  
 I want the salt in tears,  
 I want the sweat in striving,  
 I want no wasted years.

I want to walk beside you,  
 matching you, stride for stride,  
 I want to be separate, together,  
 not half of a dream that died.

Salt and Yeast, published in 1977, was followed by Rising in 1980, and her most recent volume The Resisting Spirit in 1985. In each instance Gert has directed the proceeds from her publication to assist women's caused in Northwestern Ontario. The Journal, the Northern Women's Centre and Faye Peterson Transition House have all benefited from Gert's generosity.



I.W.Y.

What if the drum  
 that beat  
 the old year in  
 and out  
 was hollow,  
 we danced.

What if we knew  
 the people  
 who made the drum  
 and called  
 the shots  
 were laughing.  
 To hell with them  
 we're dancing.

For we will  
 make our own drum  
 and beat it too,  
 we'll write  
 the music  
 and the words  
 and keep on moving,  
 step-step  
 shuffle-whirl  
 and hustle.

Gert left Northwestern Ontario a year ago for the gentler west coast climate but Gert's northernness is as integral to her being as her feminism.

## NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Are we a different breed, has this  
 abandoned bastard child of the pampered east  
 seasoned us for the struggle of recognition  
 conditioned us to rooting deeper  
 in this stubborn soil of poverty and pot holes  
 Having no need for servile gratitude  
 Have we become more truly ourselves, with  
 nothing to lose but the pretensions of rank  
 and the lip service of delinquent politicians.  
 Do we feel freer to challenge the bureaucracy  
 on its policies of rape without consent  
 and its patriarchal rules of thumb.  
 Behind this Northern Shield we practice  
 the old arts of survival, our arrows  
 fly east as a matter of principle,  
 pricking their sensibilities into awareness  
 that we are not impressed by paternalistic  
 gestures from the decadent regimes.  
 We shall not be taught, or bought, or bribed  
 to surrender what this north has told us.  
 We are the non conforming inheritors  
 of a culture that made it's own music.

The Journal, and all your NWO friends salute you Gert, on this most recent and prestigious achievement. We expect this experience to gender much new writing.

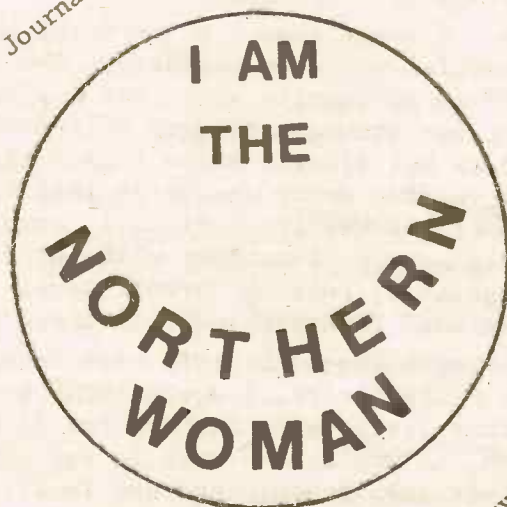
## CHILD BRIDE

They asked me:  
 "When  
 Can we  
 Dance  
 At your wedding?"

And I thought:  
 "No one  
 Will  
 Dance  
 At my wedding."

Susan Collins

support the Journal



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## A KIND AND GENTLE MAN

We were married which seems so long ago  
The torment through the years no one will ever know  
He was a loving and gentle man  
All the more harder to understand  
For emerging within him was a beast  
Once surfaced my life began to cease  
Knowing this about him I quickly learned to blame myself  
What had I done to make him this way, for he showed kindness with everyone else  
It started out so beautifully  
The house, the children filled with glee  
Then our first real argument came that stopped me in my tracks  
For about my head and face he gave some powerful smacks  
My first instincts were to take the children and go  
With his stinging words and flying fists he changed my mind with blow by blow  
I was trapped with no way out, for who could understand  
Afraid to stay, afraid to leave this kind and gentle man  
Afterwards he'd hold me in his arms and tell me that he cared  
That he'd always love me and we had our lives to share  
He's say with a tear, I'll never do it again  
I am so sorry that I caused you such pain  
Please don't leave me, don't ever go  
I love you so much and need you so  
This went on for many years  
Inside me a river of unshed tears  
For I could no longer cry or feel  
The nightmare I lived was so unreal  
Who could possibly understand  
To others he still seemed such a gentle man  
There were no more sorries, just threat after threat  
For if I ever left him, I would not live to regret

For if I ever left him, I would not live long enough to regret  
So with a knife at my throat and fire in his eyes  
I felt my mind explode as he said his good byes  
I heard the baby cry and the other holler, daddy please don't  
An inner strength grew inside as I hollered to her, he won't  
As I grabbed the children and ran I prayed, God please let me make it to the door  
Once out side the door I knew not what to do  
It seemed forever since I'd had a friend to say I care about you  
There was a kind old woman standing in the hall  
She had heard my cry for help, from the distance I had called  
Opening her door she said I understand, please come in here  
For I've seen many times in your eyes the loneliness and fear  
For I too lived for many years as a battered wife  
You can also through a helping hand build a better life

Bonnie Agnew

## NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S DECADE COUNCIL



- Supporting individual women and organizations as they work together for equality for women in education, employment, the home and community.
- Working to eliminate the barriers that prevent local and regional women from reaching their full potential.
- Lobbying on issues to improve the quality of women's lives in Northwestern Ontario.
- Providing resources to existing and emerging status of women's organizations.
- Networking area women's organizations to share ideas and concerns.

Decade Council meets bi-monthly with representation from many regional communities. Our activities and priorities are designed to reflect the issues presented by Northwestern Ontario women.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

**NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO  
WOMEN'S DECADE COUNCIL**  
221 BAY STREET  
THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO P7B 1R1  
(807) 345-3606



## BOOK REVIEW:

by LYNN HAUTA

Lily Briscoe: A Self-Portrait by Mary Meigs, 1981, Talonbooks, Vancouver, 260p.

Mary Meigs is an American artist, now living in Quebec. This, her first book, is autobiographical, describing her growth as a person and artist. She provides tantalizing glimpses of her life as a young girl growing up in a wealthy, politically influential family in Washington, D.C. The scope of her privileged, isolated state can only be guessed at by most readers. Imagine if you can, not knowing until you're in your twenties that people exist who are poor, do not have servants and do not invite the president to supper. This family background became an enormous source of guilt to her since painters typically have to "suffer" in some way in order to bring their art to life - a fact that other artists and art critics seldom failed to mention. She appears to be extremely insecure, constantly defending herself throughout the book. The

fact that she prefers women to men adds to her emotional distress. It is not until late in life (she wrote the book at 60) that she could accept herself as a lesbian without putting the words "sort of" in front of the word. Although she says that she has resolved her problems, I still find her at the end of the book defending herself and her life with the only difference being that she has added death to her list of things to worry about.

I found that I enjoyed the book especially at the beginning. She writes eloquently about her feelings and her struggle to gain self-confidence but after a while I grew tired of reading about anecdotes that illustrated her insecurity. I found myself getting impatient with her for constantly putting herself down. I was also disappointed that there was not more about her life with Barbara or Marie-Claire. I would think that after living with Barbara for 15 years she would have much to say about their relationship and how it affected her, and yet we are only given

glimpses of it. The six years she lived in a triangle relationship with Barbara and Marie-Claire must have had a great influence on her emotional state and her painting but it is glossed over with a few lines.

What she does write about her private life left me intrigued and wanting to know more, but it's not there. This book would be superb reading for anyone that is interested in self-analysis and enjoys reading about other people's thoughts. Personally, I would have preferred to read about more concrete incidents in her life rather than what she dreamt at night and what the dreams could be interpreted to mean. The book must have been a catharsis for her, to help her straighten out her feelings about herself, but the general reader, unless going through the same process of self-discovery, will find some of the book tedious.



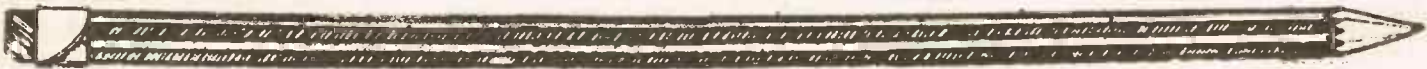
# MATCH THE MASTERPIECE

by JOAN BARIL

1. Aurora Leigh
2. Laughing Forest
3. The Book of the City of Ladies
4. The Woman's Bible
5. The Edible Woman
6. The March of Women
7. Unshackled
8. The Awakening
9. Greatgrandmothers
10. Three Guineas
11. Herland
12. Child of the Dark
13. Not Waving But Drowning

- A. Novel: Kate Chopin
- B. Poem: Elizabeth Barrett Browning
- C. A 15th Century defense of women: Christine de Pisan
- D. Science Fiction: Charlotte Perkins Gillman
- E. Suffragette song: Cicely Hamilton
- F. Diary: Maria Caroline de Jesus
- G. Poem: Stevie Smith
- H. Painting: Emily Carr
- I. Film: Studio D, National Film Board
- J. Autobiography: Christabel Pankhurst
- K. Novel: Margaret Atwood
- L. Essays: Elizabeth Cady Station
- M. Non-fiction: Virginia Woolf

ANSWERS: I, B; 2, H; 3, C; 4, L; 5, K; 6, E; 7, J; 8, A; 9, I; 10, M; 11, D; 12, F; 13, G



## WOMAN WORDS

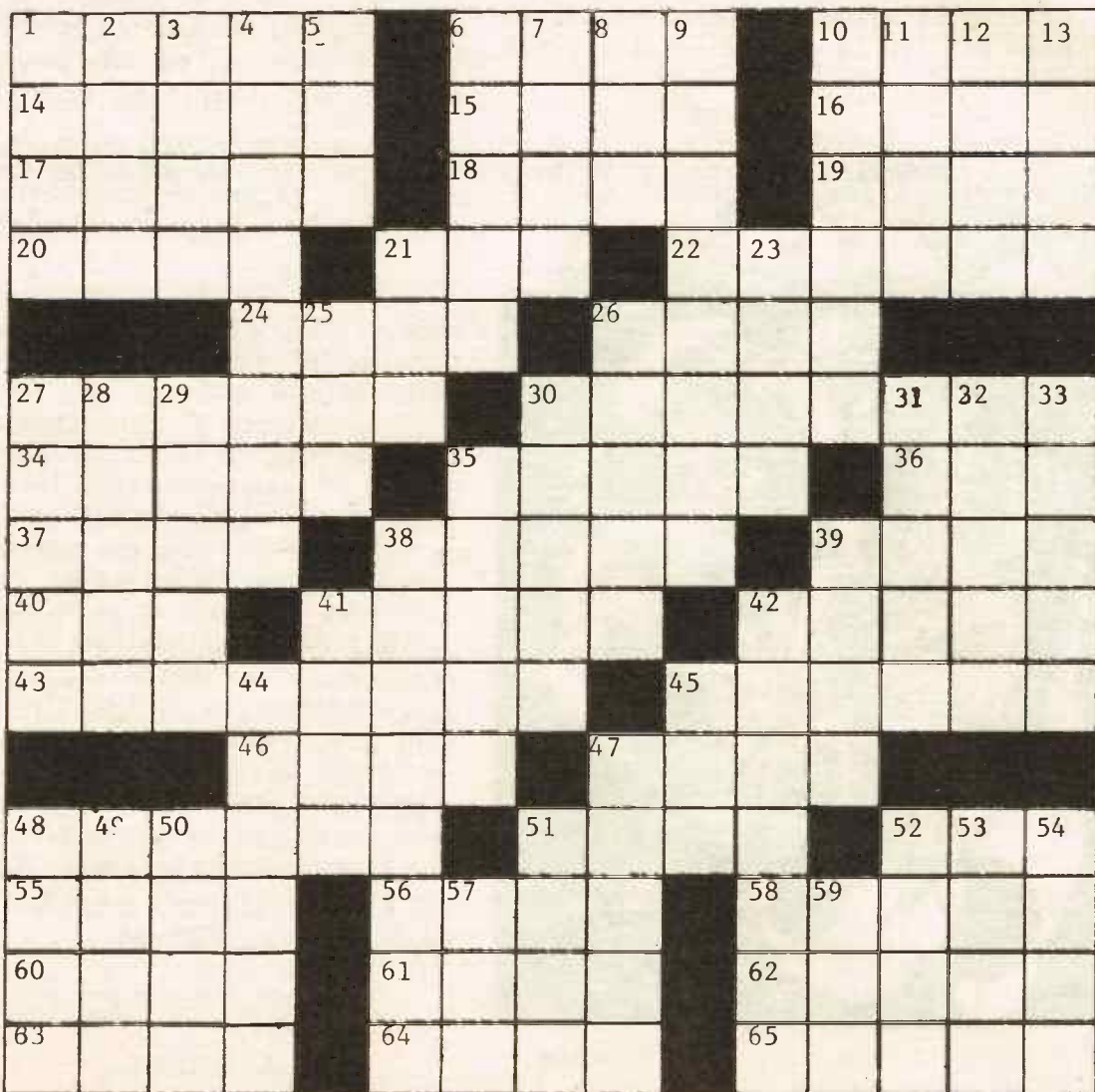
ACROSS

1. The Journal celebrates her.
6. Ibsen character.
10. The Big Boss in Syrian patriarchal religion.
14. Rapidly
15. Fusses
16. The zenith
17. Assassinated president of Egypt.
18. Charged atoms.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ mite: rock
20. Asked earnestly.
21. A massacre of the sons of women.
22. Pilot
24. \_\_\_\_\_ Blayton: author of children's stories.
26. "Desert of the Heart" author.
27. What a woman is expected to do in male-dominated society.
30. Anti-censorship spokesperson.
34. The Eskimo people
35. Liberals
36. Unit of square measure.
37. Subjected to abuse by Ike.
38. What P.M.S. used to be called.
39. Goddess of Nature
40. And so forth
41. A Latin American worker.
42. A social group based upon respect for all the things our Mother gave us.
43. Prepare for public appearance.
45. "And Now We \_\_\_\_\_": A. Milne children's story.

46. Type of cheese.
47. Pairs
48. Carded
51. Cad
52. The entire amount
55. Woodwind
56. Implement of torture made obsolete by perma-press.
58. The four folds of the vulva.
60. Archaic word for impudent --associated with women.
61. Top-notch
62. Essential reproductive gland.
63. \_\_\_\_\_ of Laura Mars: movie
64. For the removal of unsightly body hair
65. Tops of heads.

DOWN

1. Stinging insect
2. Australian gem
3. Produced
4. Where a lot is discussed but little is done.
5. Trap or entangle
6. Sea nymph
7. Insipient scent
8. Only Nancy could love him?
9. Attacks
10. Fergie's mate
11. Log barrier
12. South American weapon
13. Soon
21. Lily Tomlin, Lyn Cockburn or Kate Clinton.
23. Minor complaints
25. Louse offspring
26. Illicit RCMP activity
27. One who chooses locations.
28. "Women \_\_\_\_\_": feminist anthology
29. Collective noun
30. A term of deference for older women.
31. A women's centre in any town.
32. Antelope
33. Spay
35. A peculiar show of affection between men.
38. Before "The Color Purple".
39. Wraths
40. And so forth
41. Cut down to size.
42. One of the terms used to denigrate women.
44. Newts-
45. Reverential fear
47. Dogma
48. What some women do after the first year of marriage.
49. Obsolete masculine term for mutual respect.
50. Greater
51. Fine-tune
52. Blind as \_\_\_\_\_.
53. Italian money
54. "Play it as it \_\_\_\_\_" by J. Didion.
57. Poor woman's caviar
59. \_\_\_\_\_ Gardner



... Resources Against Pornography has an action-oriented workshop series which they are prepared to offer women's groups. Workshop 1 'Pornography Lies' encourages the individual to acknowledge their personal responses to pornography, and ends positively with an exploration of alternatives to pornography. Workshop 11 is Making Connections - the connection with rape, incest, wife battering, sexual harassment, reproduction, prostitution and women's economic inequality. Workshop 111 'Yes I Can!' There is something you can do about pronography. Group members are invited to discover their own resources for combatting pornography. Workshop IV 'Yes We Can!' We can all work together to fight pornography. Group members share their individual action experiences and receive moral support for future efforts. A detailed brochure about this workshop series can be obtained from Northern Women's Centre, or you can write Resources Against Pornography, Box 695, Station C, Toronto M6J 3S1.

... New publications/reports of interest -

A recent study entitled "An International Survey of Private and Public Law Maintenance of Single Parent Families" reviews the economic situation of the single parent family in Canada. This paper, by Karen Bridge, examines the various problems met by single parents; the awarding and enforcement of maintenance orders; constitutional difficulties; current federal and provincial initiatives; and the conflict between the private and public law support systems. (available from Status of Women Canada, Documentation Centre, 151 Sparks St. 10th Floor, Ottawa, K1A 1C3.

The Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CLOW) has just released 'The Decade of Women: Special Report'. This collection of 22 articles examines the themes of the Decade - Equality, Development, Peace, from the perspective of how they have influenced women's education, training and employment issues, in Canada and in Third World nations. (CLOW 47 Main St. Toronto M4E 2V6.

'Reproductive Hazards in the Workplace: Some Cases', a new booklet produced by N.A.C.'s Employment Economy and Health Committees, is particularly designed as a training manual for unions and other interested groups. (NAC 344 Bloor St. W., Ste. 505, Toronto, M5S 1W9 - \$1.50)

A unique manual has been prepared by the Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre. 'Working With Survivors of Sexual Assault' provides knowledge which will enable helpers to approach this subject with more assurance. Other publications from the Victoria group include 'Let's Talk About Sexual Assault' and 'Reservations for One: A Woman's Guide to Safe Travel. (Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, 1045 Linden Ave., Victoria, V8V 4H3.

Anyone interested in the 1985 World Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, and Forum '85 should pick up the Spring/Summer issue of Canadian Women's Studies, published by the York University Project. The whole issue is by and about women of all nations who attended these two conferences.

A new publication encourages battered women to seek financial compensation for their injuries. The booklet, 'Compensation for Battered Women' explains, in an easy to read format, how an abused woman can go about getting compensation either through civil lawsuit against her attacker or through the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. The booklet was put together by law students at the University of Western Ontario under the direction of Professor Connie Backhouse, and is available free of charge from University of Western Ontario, Faculty of Law, London, N6A 3K7 ...

... The National Film Board has announced the release of 'Feeling Yes, Feeling No', a program on the prevention of child sexual assault. This program is available in both film and video formats, and includes a comprehensive guide, classroom plans and activities. An adaptation for use in the home is available in VHS and BETA formats. The film is offered at a special price of \$24.95 plus tax, or is available at the NFB offices.

MATCH, the only Canadian development agency concentrating its support exclusively on women through overseas project funding and education, has produced a video entitled 'Women; All One Nation', composed of images of women worldwide and tightly woven together with a lively narration and evocative music.

'Women: All One Nation' explores how women are disadvantaged at work - unpaid in the home and underpaid in the work place - how this contributes to the global feminization of poverty. It also portrays women's exclusion from most decision making structures, and documents the pervasiveness of sexism in all societies. The conclusion focusses on women's emerging consciousness, solidarity and organization. (Contact MATCH, 401 - 171 Nepean St., Ottawa, K2P 0B4)

Two new films of particular interest to women - 'Working Girls' and 'Loyalties'. Lizzie Borden, writer, director, producer, and editor, made Working Girls, set in a middle class Manhattan brothel, to de-romanticize and de-mystify prostitution. Borden spent many years researching the background for Working Girls, and from this research has attempted to make an honest down-to-earth film reflecting the lives of prostitutes and their customers. According to Borden it is a film about "love or the lack of it, it is about passionless power, and options, or lack of them".

If you live in Quebec you will be able to see 'Working Girls' but unless two cuts are made, we in Ontario will not get the same chance. Are we that much more immature in Ontario, or is the Ontario Film and Video Review Board frightened that our sensibilities would be shocked by real life. At the moment of going to press this decision is under appeal.

'Working Girls' received its world premiere last May as an official part of the Cannes Film Festival, and at the Montreal festival screening drew rave reviews.

'Loyalties', directed by Canadian Anne Wheeler, is about aspects of Metis life in Canada, involving the friendship between an upper-class British woman and an uneducated Metis woman. Critics have called this movie "a wonderful, heartwrenching film" ...

#### THE MISSING LIMB

I see you, in my mind  
As clear as the picture  
That I carry:  
The missing limb is still felt.

My heart reaches out  
To this Flesh T

O  
R  
N

Yet From my own

Existing separately.

Susan Collins



Kinesis

#### PINK TRIANGLE NORTH PRESS RELEASE #1

Pink Triangle North Consists of gays of the North concerned with homophobic opinions which recently appeared in the media.

Homophobia is described as varying degrees of fear, dislike, and hatred of homosexuality. These feelings often result in prejudice, discrimination and hostile behavior toward people believed to be gay.

Pink Triangle North members are gay and proud. We would like to hear from others who support equality for gays/lesbians. Donations will be greatly needed.

Through factual information, homophobia can be reduced. We are offering information and support to those insulted by homophobia. Because of our lack of rights, confidentiality is definitely insured.

Please write:  
PINK TRIANGLE NORTH  
BOX 2311  
TIMMINS, ONTARIO.  
P4N 8E7

# Bill 7

As we go to press Bill 7: An Act to Amend the Ontario Human Rights Code, which includes a clause (Section 18) which will ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, is being debated by the Ontario legislature.

The debate has included an opposition filibuster which has delayed passage of the Bill. More seriously, the debate has prompted a type of media response that can only abet homophobia. An analysis of this response is important, thus the Northern Woman Journal is departing from our policy of publishing only woman-authored material to print the following thoughtful statement prepared by Gays of Thunder Bay.

## HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO: A CALL FOR HONESTY, FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY

The following remarks are a response by the Education Committee of Gays of Thunder Bay to the current debate on Bill 7. This release is dated Saturday, November 29, 1986. At this time, a vote on final passage of Bill 7 in the Ontario Legislature has not occurred.

For the past week we have witnessed an accelerated debate on Bill 7: An Act to Amend the Ontario Human Rights Code. Bill 7 contains a clause, Section 18, which will ban discrimination in Ontario on the basis of sexual orientation. It is this sexual orientation clause that has galvanized public attention and become the focus of the debate.

In the Legislature, the case in support of Bill 7 was initially presented by Attorney General Ian Scott and Evelyn Gigantes. Ms. Gigantes originally moved the sexual orientation amendment to Bill 7 when it was in committee, where the amendment received all party support. In the days following Mr. Scott's and Ms. Gigantes' presentations, other members of the Ontario cabinet and NDP caucus members spoke in support of the Bill. Without exception, the contributions to the debate in support of the bill have been characterized by brevity, generosity and an attention to detail. Again and again they strove to bring the focus of the debate back to the actual Bill itself, what it says, what it will and will not do.

The nature of the debate in opposition to Bill 7 has been characterized by fear, distortion, bigotry, irrelevance and at times, simple ignorance. On the floor of the Legislature we have seen and heard fear and hatred addressed toward gay men and lesbians. We have heard pious statements about how gays should be treated the same as anyone else, followed by distortions of fact and misrepresentations of the implications of the Bill.

Locally in Thunder Bay, some of the media have echoed most of the worst elements of the legislative debate. Published statements have included the following:

- "Homosexuals may work where they wish and cannot be fired for their sexual preference." This is simply false. Gay men and lesbians

have been fired from their jobs for decades in Ontario. We have factual cases of this happening in Thunder Bay. Further, such cases and other examples of discrimination against gays were documented in a brief presented to all members of the Legislature, titled 'Ontario Human Rights Omission'.

- Bill 7 will give homosexuals "special rights and enshrine their lifestyle and behaviour". It will do nothing of the kind. The Bill seeks to address an imbalance in the human rights granted to citizens of Ontario. Currently gay men and lesbians can be lawfully discriminated against in areas of employment, housing and public services without recourse to appeal. These are rights already shared by other citizens of Ontario. The Bill will extend those rights to the gay community. These are not special rights. These are the same rights other Ontarians already have. We have not heard anyone speaking in opposition to Bill 7 explain what special rights they are talking about. This is a specific point of distortion utilized to fan fear and righteous indignation. As to the issue of lifestyle and behaviour, the Ontario Human Rights Code does not now - nor will it when Bill 7 is passed - enshrine anyone's lifestyle or behaviour. Anyone's behaviour that breaks the law is subject to the conditions and punishments of the Criminal code of Canada. Bill 7 does not alter that fact.

- "Homosexual behaviour and lifestyle is against Christian morality" and threatens traditional family values. This has nothing whatever to do with Bill 7. Yet it is frequently raised as a flashpoint issue in the debate. Ontarians live in and share a pluralistic society. Hindus, Moslems, Jews, Buddhists and Sikhs or atheists cannot be discriminated against because their lifestyle may be - and more than likely is - in conflict with Christian morality. To suggest homosexuals should be discriminated against because they threaten Christian morality might be grounds for religious discrimination in reverse: the triumph of the self-righteous.


- Bill 7 will force workers and neighbours "to put up with .. unwelcome association with homosexuals". Yes. In areas of employment, housing and public services, discrimination will not be allowed. The journal that published this statement immediately added: "Friction, and probably violence, will surely follow". (emphasis added). That a responsible journal would make such an inflammatory remark, escalating fear and loathing of homosexuals, is almost unbelievable. No justification either in fact or logic was offered in support of that statement. The truth is something altogether different. Quebec has had in place similar legislation for almost a decade. Friction and violence have not "surely followed". As well, certain municipal governments in Ontario have had similar bans against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in place for areas under their jurisdiction. The result has been largely that people get along with each

other. The spectre of wild, repugnant and unwelcome behaviour by the suddenly legislatively "freed" liberal homosexuals is a sham. It is shameful and a disgrace that responsible journalists repeat this lie.

In the final analysis, what is being attacked and condemned in this debate is homosexuality itself. Intolerance, bigotry and hatred are openly being utilized to encourage fear and loathing of homosexuals on an unprecedented public scale. It has become, in fact, the unacknowledged focus of the debate. And in the zealous rush to generate and inflame greater fear toward gays and lesbians, sight is lost of just what Bill 7 - the legislation - is: an act to extend human rights in Ontario.

In the long run, after Bill 7 has been voted upon, regardless of which way the vote goes, we will still be here. There will still be homosexuals. Society will still go on. We must still live next to each other. The Bill will not change this. But the debate has already changed the conditions of life after Bill 7. The hatred and fear that is being generated now has done real damage to lesbians and gay men in Ontario. The inflammation of fear and ignorance has worked toward undoing years of progress toward tolerance and equality. And it is an ugly legacy to be given to the young in society: a legacy of bitterness, fear and hatred. The opposition to Bill 7 has done a disservice - in the manner and tone of how they've presented themselves - to the health of society. It cripples our abilities to live in tolerance and fairness, qualities necessary for life after Bill 7.

*Editors' note: The amendments to Bill 7 were passed by the Ontario legislature on Dec. 3/86. This is only the beginning of the struggle to eliminate homophobia that has allowed the above mentioned comments to be made in what we are asked to believe is a free society.*

A Women's  Newsletter

**TELEWOMAN**  
P.O. Box 2306  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

send \$2 for sample issue

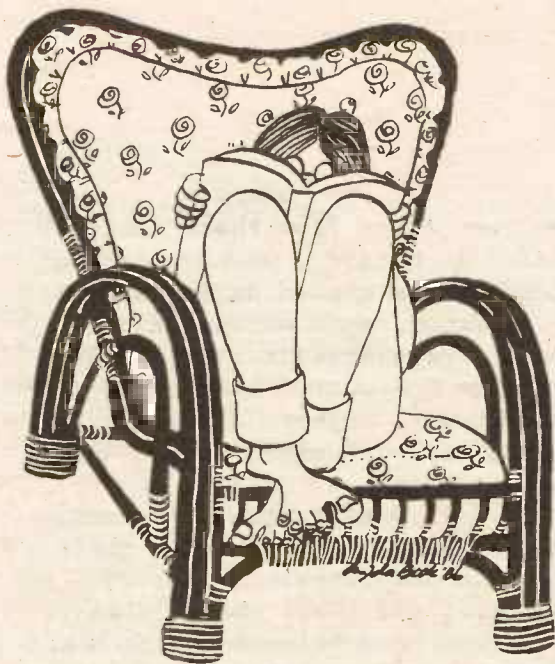
*Telewoman* is a national lesbian networking newsletter with an emphasis on resources & contacts for women who write poetry and fiction, women in the arts and photography, and women whose spiritual perspectives are central in their everyday lives. Book reviews, exquisite graphics, outstanding cover art by lesbians, links between country and city lesbians. Subscriptions \$20.00/yr.

WHAT'S NEW  
In the BOOKSTORE

Those who have been delighted by Vicki Noble's MOTHERPEACE: A Way to the Goddess through Myth, Art & Tarot, will certainly want the companion Astrology and the Motherpeace Cards: THE MOTHERPEACE TAROT PLAY-BOOK, by Vicki Noble and Jonathan Tenney (Wingbow Press). The PLAY-BOOK gives detailed explanations for expanding the use of the Motherpeace Tarot Cards and will be useful to both veteran or novice Tarot readers.

We're pleased to advise that Beatrice Culleton's exceptional novel IN SEARCH OF APRIL RAIN TREE (Pemmican Publications) is back in print. Other interesting titles by Native American women are THE WOMAN WHO OWNED THE SHADOWS by Paula Gunn Allen (Spinsters Ink), THE SUN IS NOT MERCIFUL, short stories by Anna Lee Walters (Firebrand) and A GATHERING OF SPIRIT, edited by Beth Brant (Sinister Wisdom).

The Women's Press provide an impressive selection of new books this season including DY(KE)VERSIONS: Lesbian Short Fiction, edited by the Lesbian Collective "... makes a significant contribution to the growing body of ne women's literature. Fifteen writers... craft an anthology that interprets the diversity and intricacies of lesbian lives. With joy and sensitivity the writers



provide finely honed and vibrant fiction that is both affirming and powerful". OUT OF BOUNDS, Women, Sport and Sexuality, by Helen Lenskyj "...examines the relationship between sport, and our concepts of women's femininity and sexuality during the last century... OUT OF BOUNDS provides a wonderful portrait of women and sports". ADVERSE EFFECTS: Women and the Pharmaceutical Industry, edited by Kathleen McDonnell "... this provocative anthology looks at such concerns as women, mood-modifiers and the elderly; hormone manipulation; DES; depo-provera; and drugs and population control. ADVERSE EFFECTS is an important expose that needs to be read by all".

FIREWORKS: The Best of Fireweed, edited by Makeda Silvera, brings together highlights from the past eight years of Fireweed,

To keep track of yourself next year we offer the 1987 EVERYWOMAN'S ALMANAC (this year the theme is Women, Physical Fitness and Sport) HERSTORY 1987, the Canadian Women's Calendar; or the WOMEN WRITERS DESK CALENDAR 1987. These date books make wonderful gifts as do the variety of Women's Notebooks. For your music loving friends how about Heather Bishop or Connie Kaldor albums. Your younger friends will love Heather's BELLYBUTTON or PURPLE PEOPLE EATER. South Gillies author/illustrator Freda Kamstra Aedy's new book BIRD BITS will also be a favorite with youngsters.

Come browse at the bookstore - you may be tempted by a good selection of health, theory and international books that are now on sale (10% - 50% off). For out of town readers we remind you that the Northern Woman's Bookstore offers a mail order service. Happy reading!



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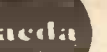
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Sharing and Caring Project  
Box 79, Gore Bay, Ontario  
POB 1140

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Elaine Goodwin, Carolyn Greenwood,  
Mary-Ann Kleynendorst, Anna McColl,  
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Rosemary Pittis, Pat Wilson.

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