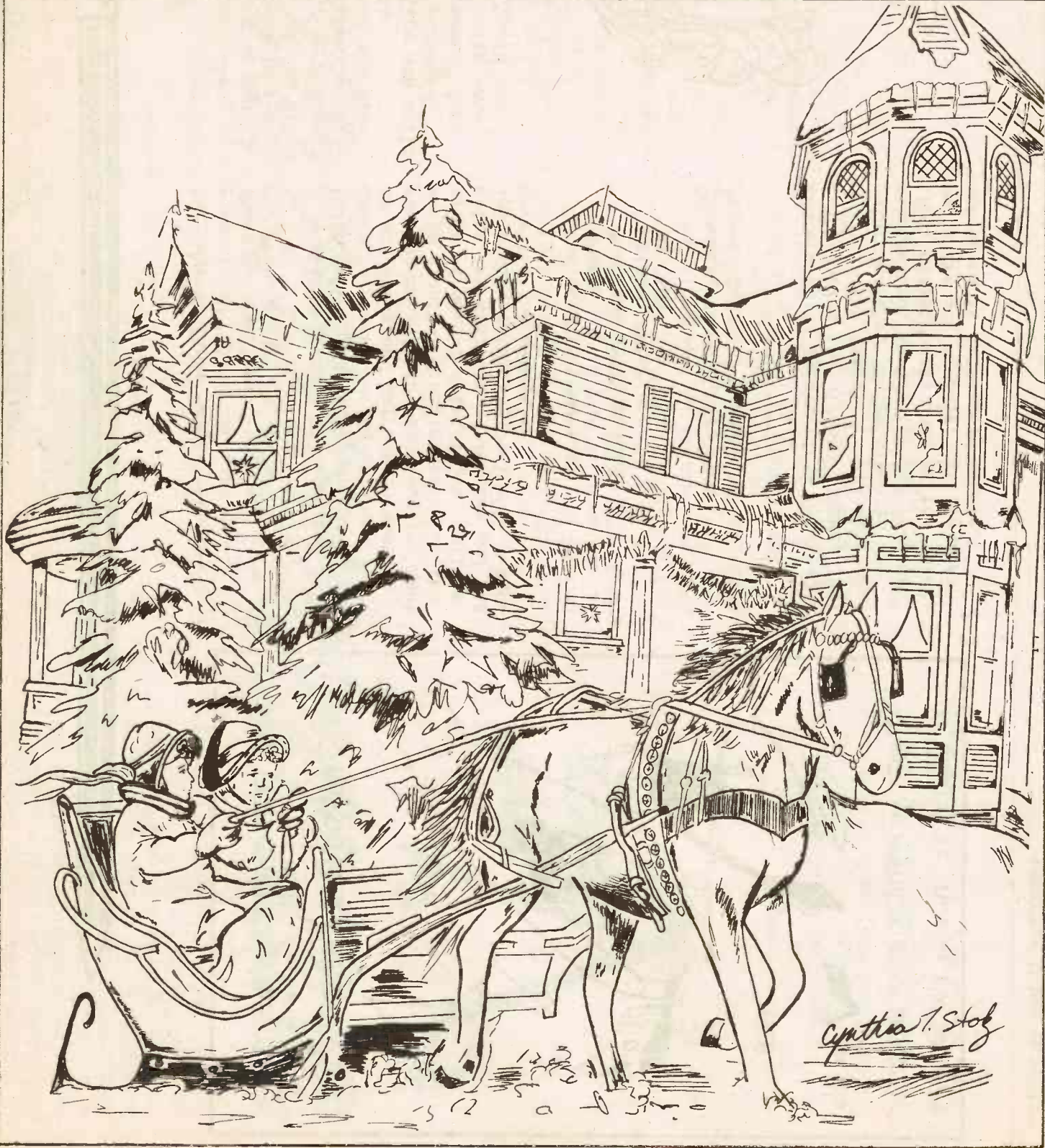


Northern Woman Journal

\$1.50

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Thunder Bay, Ont.



The Superior Art Collection

Press Release

You've heard of tailor-made suits, custom-made cars, personalized license plates and designer sheets...

Now, some lucky person can get a valuable designer custom-made work of art in a novel fundraising effort announced by the Northern Women's Centre.

It's called the Superior Art Collection and involves four local women artists. Three of the works were on display at the Meet-The-Artists Night in October. One was missing...because it hasn't been made yet.

That's because fabric and tapestry artist SASHA MCINNES plans to go to the winner's home, inspect the room and its atmosphere, and then design a wall-hanging specifically for that room.

McInnes started in the 60s studying weaving in a small village in Peru. Since then her work has been hung extensively in southern Ontario galleries and exhibits and even Premier David Peterson's office. Now a resident of Thunder Bay, she sits on the Ontario Arts Council and the advisory committee for the National Film Board of Canada. Over the years, she has donated over \$25,000 worth of art to feminist organizations.

However, this is only the second time the artist has donated a custom-designed piece. "I did this once before in London, Ontario and the idea really caught on," said McInnes.

There will be three other winners in this raffle as well.

Local visual artist LORI GILBERT, whose work focuses on portraits influenced by television and old movies, will be donating a portrait of Marlene Deitrich. Gilbert graduated from Lakehead University in 1985 with an honours bachelor of arts as a painting major and participated in many local exhibits including the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Native artist REBECCA BELMORE studied at the Ontario College of Art and won the 1984 Special Juror's Award from the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. She integrates the modern world and the native experience with wit in her art, evident in titles like "I'm a High Tech Teepee Trauma Mama." Belmore will be donating a drawing.

The fourth local artist LYNN SHARMAN is currently displaying her work at the Definitely Superior Art Gallery. She will be donating a colour collage.

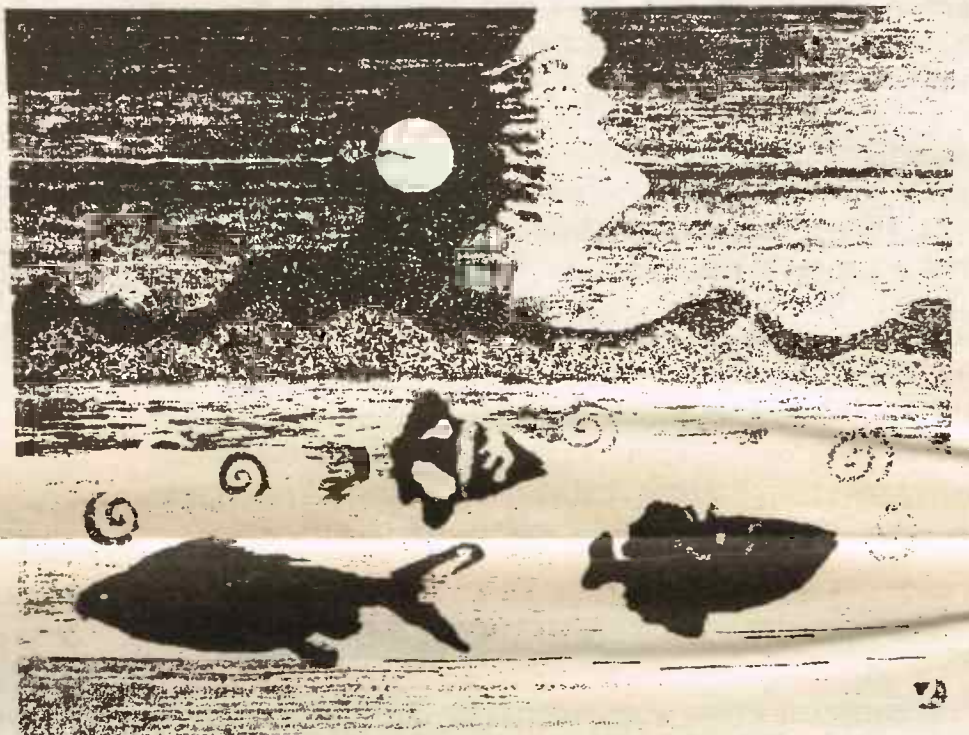
The draw date for the Superior Art Collection is May 24th, taking place at 8 p.m. at the Women's Centre 184 Camelot Street. There will be a total of four winners—one work of art

each. The winner need not be in attendance. Tickets are \$2 each and are available at: the Northern Women's Bookstore or from any Northern Women's Centre volunteer.

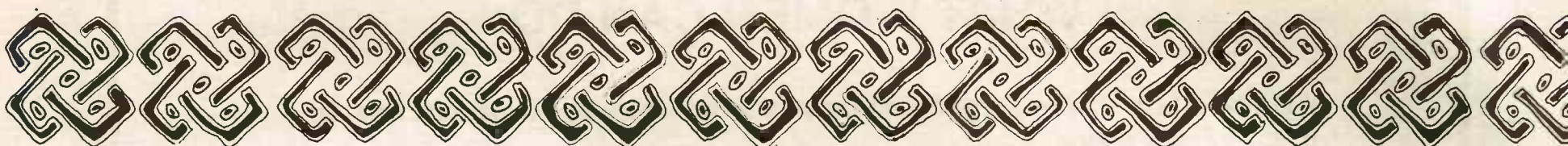
This is the first major fundraising event of the reorganized Women's Centre in an effort to broaden their revenue base beyond government funds and "get more involvement from the community," said Joan Baril, project coordinator.

The Northern Women's Centre, established 1973, is a lobbying and support organization for area women.

For further information contact Joan Baril at 475-6368 or 344-6708, or call Carol Rusak at 475-6382.



By SASHA McINNES



V your
VOICE

Dear Northern Women!

A great wk-end with Noreen has put me in the mood to embrace you, if not physically at a distance. It was wonderful to share with her growing network of women in this area who, without too much effort on my part use me as a resource for woman

talk. This has come about entirely as result of the poetry and of course that very prestigious award. I find myself in the position of being taken for granted that I am (1) political, (2) Radical Feminist, which I affirm, (3) Having Crone sight for the spiritual. With all of this I have an interesting journey before me. Many avenues of personal growth in the old religion to explore and the part Dominion Over has played in our oppression. I write letters to the Editor under the pen name Minerva. I can tell both church and state to get their sticky fingers out of our reproductive organs with out getting stoned which could very well happen in this province. My spare bedroom is well used by sisters from out of

town just starving for feminist conversation, my bookshelf is current, Sonia Johnsons, Going out of Our Minds and Dalys Pure Lust. As well as Mother Wit and Starhawks wisdom. The Unitarian Church is very open to the new age they use my poetry for some services and I have a little space in their monthly newsletter. The poetry group I belong to no longer write moon june and flowers they are into justice and domination great stuff. Was happy you lost your funding, life is boring when it is predictable.

all my love to the Northern Womb that born me

Gert Beadl

EQUALITY AT RISK?

THE MEECH LAKE ACCORD

The following article has been provided by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Constitution.

WHAT WOMEN'S GROUPS ARE SAYING

Women's groups across the country have welcomed the Meech Lake Accord for explicitly recognizing Quebec in the Constitution and for acknowledging that Quebec is a distinct society in Canada. But women are insisting that our government clarify the Accord's language and remove any potential risks to our rights.

WHAT HAPPENED AT MEECH LAKE?

Our governments agreed how to recognize Quebec in the Constitution. They agreed in clause 1 of the Accord that Canada's English and French speaking cultures are a "fundamental characteristic" of Canada, that Quebec is a "distinct society" within Canada, and that federal and provincial governments have roles in maintaining these characteristics.

Then, in response to concerns raised by multicultural and native groups, they agreed in clause 16 of the Accord that future interpretations of these provisions must not affect the rights of these groups.

SO HOW IS IT THAT WOMEN'S RIGHTS MAY BE AT RISK?

After the Accord was signed on June 3, 1987 and after it was ratified by Quebec on June 23, two things happened that our governments didn't anticipate.

First, some Constitutional experts became convinced that the Accord's language puts at risk rights in the Constitutional Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Because some Charter rights (native and multicultural) are given special attention in Clause 16 and others aren't, normal legal practice would mean that other rights as guaranteed in the Charter would not have to be applied to clause 1 with equal care. In fact it is argued that these rights just might not be applied - because elsewhere in the Accord, if the Charter is intended to apply, the Accord says so!

(Some governments' advisors have said the rights protected in clause 16 are collective, cultural, and give direction on interpreting law in a cultural and linguistic context. This, they argue, makes them different from women's rights and that's why women's rights aren't mentioned in clause 16. Some experts disagree and also point out that the Courts make no such definitive distinctions - so why should the Accord?)

Second, on June 27th, in "the Ontario Bill 30 case", the majority opinion of the Supreme Court of Canada said that sections of the 1867 Constitution Act which are part of the "fundamental compromise" of Confederation are "immune from review", or unaffected, by the Charter of Rights.

This may mean any time any government is operating within such sections, including any activities added by clause 1 of the Meech Lake Accord, it might be able to affect Charter-based equality rights.

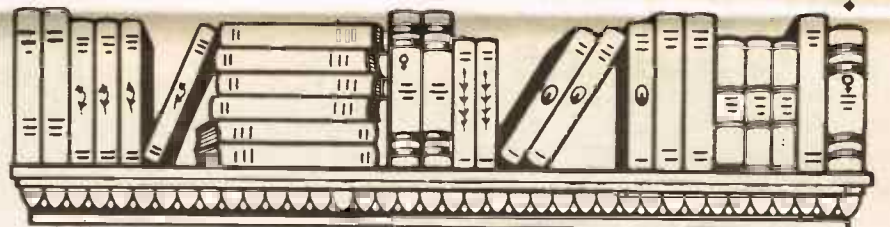
CONCLUSION

Women believe that the Accord may risk our rights. We cannot conceive of any reason why Canada's governments should wish Canadian women to bear any risk to our rights, no matter how small some may think this to be. OUR GOVERNMENTS HAVE A DUTY TO FIX THE ACCORD BY CLARIFYING ITS LANGUAGE TO ENSURE OUR RIGHTS.

Editor's Note. We understand that the Ontario government will hold Hearings on the Accord early in 1988. Women's groups should prepare now to make presentations to the Hearings. For more information contact the Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution, 118 Spruce St., Toronto, M5A 2J5, phone Pat Hacker or Linda Nye (416) 960-8417.

Most Important Books

by MARGARET PHILLIPS



People who are "readers" love to know what other "readers" are reading. The casual question "What have you read this month?" or "What is your favourite novel?" can promote hours of animated conversation. With this in mind I decided to do a small survey for the Journal.

I called a number of readers I know and suggested the following scenario: "Imagine that your entire personal library has disappeared. However, two friends are going to start re-building your library by giving you books for Christmas. What two books will you choose? Why?"

Here are the responses. (I do apologize to my friends who became panic-stricken at the thought of losing their libraries.)

Joan Baril: MAN MADE LANGUAGE by Dale Spender "because it unlocks the mystery of exactly how men have oppressed women through language". and NOT IN GOD'S IMAGE by Julia O'Faolain, which "is the best analysis I have read ... has an excellent grasp ... a historical sweep."

Donna Phoenix: DREAMING THE DARK by Starhawk, "an empowering book .. made me feel I can do anything", MISTS OF AVALON by Marion Zimmer Bradley, "...took me away... and changed history."

Lisa Bengtsson: FEMINIST THEORISTS, edited by Dale Spender. "History unfolded. I keep going back to it." SALT AND YEAST by Gert Beadle "... is symbolic, the spirit of the times, and the connections I made with women all over Northwestern Ontario."

Teresa Legowski: MISTS OF AVALON by Marion Zimmer Bradley. "I just loved it .. it's so well written, well researched. It's MAGIC. It has everything I like about a book. THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK by Doris Lessing "is so powerful... very deep in exploring the psyche... fascinating from all aspects."

Josie Wallenius: HOW THE OTHER HALF DIES by Susan George. "George wanted to understand for herself what was wrong with development, so she closeted herself and read and read, and she felt compelled to write a book about it. Everyone should read this." I, RIGOBERTA MENCHU "is a personal testimony of a Guatemalan woman about her life and the Indian people's struggle. It was hard to read this book but I'm glad I did. There is a message... and I heard the message."

Helen Halet: MOTHERPEACE by Vicki Noble and THE GUIDE TO THE I CHING by Carol Anthony "because these are the tools I use and need on my journey down the path of life."

Donna Gilhooly: BURGER'S DAUGHTER by Nadine Gordimer "...really awakened me to the issue of apartheid. Gordimer is one of the best writers alive." THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS by Gertrude Stein, "gave me personal insight into the lives of writers and artists of a famous period ... and still has impact today in terms of painting I like and what I read."

Prue Morton: THE STONE ANGEL by Margaret Laurence, "gives a wonderful picture - in relationship to their former lives - of the difficulty experienced by no longer being independent", and MIDDLEMARCH by George Eliot "is a truly wonderful book."

Karen Maki: A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF LOVE by Anais Nin, "...it's like an intellectual conversation with herself ... I was fascinated because when I re-read this I found it completely different from the first time I read it."

Finally my own choices: THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK by Doris Lessing, which caused me to begin to understand the universality of all women's lives, an analysis I keep trying to mature; and SURFACING by Margaret Atwood, for the same reason, and besides it is so wonderfully Canadian.

Bill 7: Real Protection for Lesbians?

by Cindy Moriarty

Reprinted from "breaking the silence"

On December 18, 1986, after a year of discussion, debate, vicious attack and spirited support, the Human Rights Code of Ontario was amended to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The new legislation guarantees homosexuals rights to housing, employment, services, contracts, and membership in vocational groups such as trade unions and professional associations.

As a lesbian working in the office of the MPP who introduced the amendment Bill 7, to Ontario's Human Rights Code, I was privy to a unique view of the lobbying that occurred beforehand. Across Ontario, there were equal numbers of proponents and opponents. Since my boss, Evelyn Gigantes (NDP, Ottawa Centre) introduced Bill 7, her support was guaranteed. Those supporting the Bill wisely chose to direct their lobbying efforts elsewhere. The opponents, however, were another story. Our office was inundated with calls and mail voicing fear, hate, distortion and every once in a while, hostile civility.

..little thought to lesbians.

Opponents saw homosexuality, at best, as unnatural; at worst, as the root of all evil, responsible for the destruction of society, and as the leading cause of child molestation. Among this homophobic insanity one thing was abundantly clear: people thought the bill concerned gays; they gave little thought to lesbians.

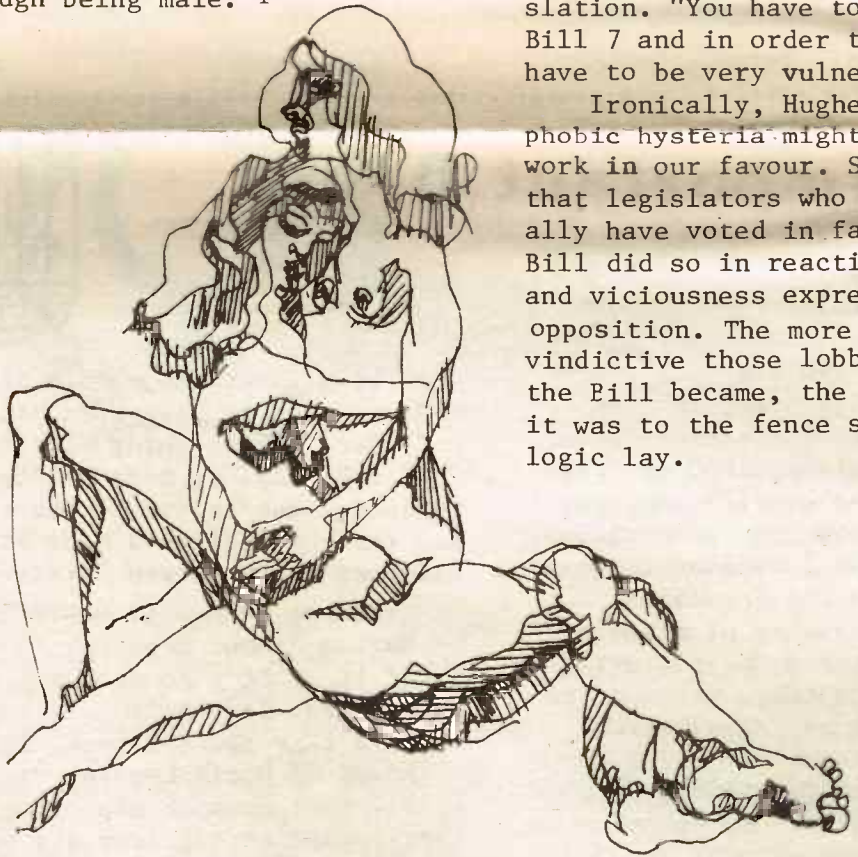
Over the years I have learned, personally and politically, all about lesbian invisibility, but it has never been so clear to me as during the lobbying process. As a feminist, I've been speaking and educating and rabble-raising for years. I've dealt with all sorts of confrontations and attacks for my beliefs. As my life has changed, I have gained the "privilege" of dealing with issues on a quasi-intellectual level. Reaction to the Bill eroded my intellectual armour and everything was brought down to gut-level emotions. I was exposed daily to raw hate and fear that bordered on panic. The ugliness and distortion often made it impossible to comprehend the limits of human tolerance.

No knowledge, intellectual understanding or analysis hits home like knowledge of the heart. For me that knowledge came with identifying myself as a lesbian. Lesbians are women, and women have never been a big deal (except to other women). Men were the big deal. Gay Men. Depraved men assaulting young boys. Assaulting young girls and women has never been a big deal.

The lobby against the amendment was closely connected to the anti-feminist movement. In the Ontario Legislature, Evelyn Gigantes said:

"The sexual pecking order is intimately linked to the economic pecking order of our society. Any man who declares that he is not a full-blooded man of whatever macho notion is, simply, a traitor to the most important system. It is the ultimate act of treason to the system. The system is one which connects the notion of men's "ownership" rights and role in the family structure, with the rights and privileges of owners in the economy... women don't rate as traitors. They can be rebels against authority, but not traitors because it's not their system.

...There are 125 elected representatives in the Ontario Legislature; 10 are women. If the sexual numbers and the social powers were reversed, I believe the clauses of section 18 relating to sexual orientation might not even be necessary. ...It is the maleness of economic and social domination of our society that is threatened by this reform, not the womanness or the childness, but the maleness that so profits by its domination through being male."¹



From R.E.A.L. Women to religious and business coalitions, the opposition stormed Queen's Park, but like all storms their protest blew over and the skies cleared with the passing of the Bill.

Does the new legislation mean protection for gays and lesbians under the Human Rights Code? I believe the legislation has provided us with a battle-ground and not necessarily a victory. The onus remains on us to complain against discrimination to the Human Rights Commission.

While the Bill provides a signal to employers, service deliverers and legislators, it does not solve an age-old problem. Rather, it provides a starting point for discussion and reform.

It brings the issue out of the

closet, but a lesbian has to be pretty much "out" to lodge a complaint with the Human Rights Commission. The woman whose personal security is threatened unless she keeps her life style private, will not be able to walk into her office and ask that her lover be covered under the pension plan. Landlords and employers can always find other avenues of discrimination and other reasons for dismissal or eviction. The law does not protect us against exile and family outrage. Often, we will be on trial and we will still have to prove our "innocence."

..qualified optimism.

EGALE (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) is a national lobbying group based in Ottawa that co-ordinated a tremendous campaign around Bill 7 and is continuing its efforts on the federal level. Debbie Hughes of EGALÉ expressed qualified optimism. She sees Bill 7 as helpful, but is not convinced it will change much without federal legislation. "You have to be out to use Bill 7 and in order to be out you have to be very vulnerable."

Ironically, Hughes says homophobic hysteria might ultimately work in our favour. She explains that legislators who might not normally have voted in favour of the Bill did so in reaction to the hatred and viciousness expressed by the opposition. The more hysterical and vindictive those lobbying against the Bill became, the more apparent it was to the fence sitters where logic lay.

And what impact will Bill 7 have on the Charter of Rights? Speculators wonder about past provincial cases and the implications of Bill 7 before the federal courts. Federal government policy says that "sexual orientation is irrelevant to whether one can perform a job or use a service or facility." Further, "sexual orientation is not grounds for denial of security clearance, or basis for discrimination within federal jurisdiction."²

Discrimination continues in employment practices, particularly within the RCMP and armed services. Federal policy may not be law, but I would wager it's one of the few federal government policies that can be so blatantly ignored by its own ministries.

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Swimming Up Stream

Keynote address to the INTERWEAVE Conference held October 1987, by Mariana Valverde

The title of my talk tonight is *Swimming Upstream: Women's Collectives and Class, Race and the State*. I would like to begin by relating an anecdote, a common incident, and unpacking that to get at the larger problems of trying to organize women's collectives in a social system that encourages neither women nor collectives, much less the combination of both.

A few years ago I went with a couple of other women from my group (the International Women's Day Committee in Toronto) to open a bank account. The clerk got out some forms for us to fill out. We were first asked if we were a business. "Not really" was the sheepish answer. "We're more like a non-profit organization, and we're not incorporated". She looked at us and said "Well, all right. Then I only need the signature of the president, vice-president and secretary." So we looked at each other, smiled, and quickly came to an arbitrary decision about who would put her name to each of these alien categories. The clerk, needless to say, couldn't understand why we were amused.

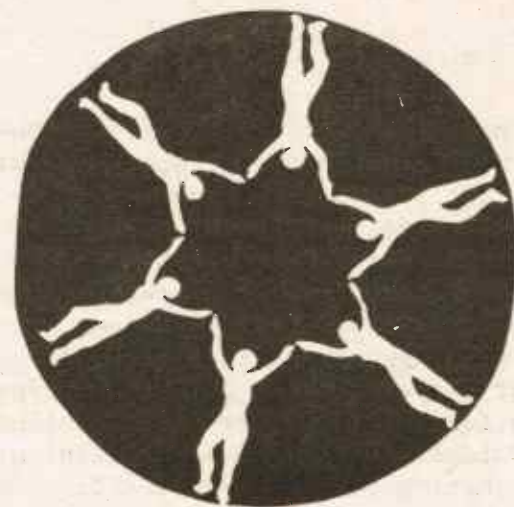
Two conclusions arise from this. First, the bank does not exist to serve customers like us. It is there to make profits by providing a service, primarily to other businesses and secondarily to individuals. With the remarkable flexibility of modern capitalism, it does allow for the existence of alternative forms among their customers, such as non-profit, non-incorporated groups; but it first has to symbolically destroy our collective structure and replace it by the hierarchical form which is the only valid one in its books. Secondly, the bank not only fails to recognize collectives, but, more importantly for the clerk, it is itself not a collective.

One could go on to analyze our interaction with the bank to reveal other levels of anti-collective and anti-woman structures. For instance, we could find out how the government's agencies for financial institutions reinforce the bank's insistence on hierarchy through laws and regulations that define who the bank can deal with and how. This would lead us into the terrain of "the state". Then, while standing around at the counter, we could note that not everyone at this bank does the same work or has the same authority - certain people sit at desks and have their own office and phone, while others stand all day and process papers according to what appear to be routine procedures rather than intelligent decisions. Having noticed the texture of class relations, we could go on to note the ethnicity and gender of the two main class groups in evidence, i.e. clerks vs managers, and begin to theorize the relationship between class on the one hand and ethnicity and gender on the other.

In the incident I have described, gender was not the main dividing line. There were no men present (at this particular branch even the manager is a woman), and whether our group was mostly men or mostly women was not relevant - though of course it would be very relevant in other contexts. But the crucial contradiction here was not between women and patriarchy but rather between a highly sophisticated capitalist structure (the Canadian Imperialist Bank of Commerce, to be precise) and a small organization based on the rejection of both individualism and hierarchy, the twin organizing principles of capitalist social relations.

It's important to realize that many of the problems we experience in trying to function according to "feminist" principles are not caused by our own failings as individuals or as groups, nor are they due to inadequacies in feminist theory. Rather, most of what we think of as "our" problems are inevitable results of the social structures of bourgeois society, which I would define as a society in which the economic and cultural values of the bourgeoisie appear to be everyone's values, universal values. Bourgeois society imposes serious limitations on our ability to organize. It does not do so (usually) by the use of brute force against groups like ours. (Although it must be noted that force is always there in the background - for instance, the leaders of CUPW recently faced going to jail for defying back-to-work legislation; and more relevant to my example of opening a bank account, the new legislation states that anyone defying it cannot hold union office for five years - a clear case of the government imposing a certain form of organization on a group.) But direct force is seldom used in our society; it doesn't have to be used. The structures of capitalist economic relations and bourgeois social relations are like the walls of the houses we live in, or like the design of streets and sidewalks - we are so used to them, and they are so cleverly disguised as aids to facilitate safety and order, that we forget that they confine us, that we forget to ask who put them there and for what purpose. It is by surrounding us with social structures that appear as natural and normal that the bourgeoisie can continue to rule with the consent of the ruled - for who will rebel against what is natural and normal?

This process of disguising what is good for business as what is good for everyone is what is known in Marxist theory as "hegemony" - the subtle process by which a ruling class generates consent rather than opposition. Patriarchy too is most effective when it can rule through hegemony, rather than through the direct coercion of



women. And in a capitalist patriarchal system as sophisticated as the one in which we live, it can take a great deal of effort to expose the mechanisms of hegemony - to give a small example, it took me a while to unpack the interaction that took place between the collective and the bank.

There are some women, some feminists, who are not interested in challenging the mechanisms of hegemony. Many people would rather not question these allegedly neutral structures, which do indeed facilitate business transactions such as opening an account, and which even allow us to have a collective, as long as we don't question the structures of capital. Some feminists want to be allowed access to the system as it exists, to share the economic and social power now exercised primarily by men. But I, and I suspect most of us here, are more interested in changing both the SOURCES and the STRUCTURES of power.

And that will involve destroying the structures that have determined and limited our political work, and replacing them by truly democratic structures that empower people. Our goal is women's liberation (as opposed to women's access to the status quo, which is not liberation but merely participation). This goal necessarily involves not only modifying but revolutionizing the economic structure of our society. In our society human needs are only met if, and insofar as, meeting them happens to create a profit for corporations. The profit motive needs to be replaced by the only legitimate motive of economic life, i.e. meeting human needs. Once we determine our goal in economic policy, we can devise new structures that facilitate this goal.

This does not mean that we all have to take Karl Marx for our Bible or believe that the Soviet Union is paradise. Marx himself said that to be a socialist was "not to create recipes for the kitchens of the future" but rather to clearly oppose the inhuman aspects of capitalist society. Feminists may or may not be Marxists, may or may not think that so-called socialist societies have improved the condition of women: but any feminist who wants to change the structures of power as opposed to participating in them has to be anti-capitalist.

cont'd on pg. 13

Update

By Joni Mace

The Ministry of Community and Social Services announced recently that a new set of provincial guidelines have been set up, and are in effect as of November 1, 1987. The new provincial guidelines create a change in the implementation of welfare workers responsibilities, which included inspecting the homes of recipients for signs of live-in companions. Pre-Guideline rules forbade recipients from sharing residence as the live-in companion was assumed to be contributing to the welfare recipient's income. Any recipient found to be living with someone, immediately had their welfare income cut.

The guidelines change this in that it now allows the recipient to have a live-in companion as long as they reside together less than three years. After three years the relationship is considered common law, and the couple is legally obliged to share support.

Ontario is the first province to enact the policy which has particular significance to women. These guidelines prevent inspectors from using a woman's sex life to determine her eligibility for welfare. A single woman can now be denied welfare only if she lives with someone who is legally obliged to support her or her children or provide a significant economic contribution to the household. About 50% of municipalities who administer welfare oppose the policy complaining that it will cause increased workloads and encourage "cheating", as it is possible for one person to be employed full-time with another in the same household collecting public assistance. The changes are expected to extend eligibility for benefits to 9,000 sole-support parents in Ontario by spring of 1989.

A new national action group wants to help 95,000 Canadian women who missed filing a claim against the manufacturer of the Dalkon Shield. Dalkon Shield Action Canada was begun after an unsuccessful attempt to have the filing date of April 30, 1986 extended. The group is trying to reach the women who missed the date. The lawyer appealing the decision is optimistic, and is supported by a growing national membership in Dalkon Shield Action Canada.

For further information write Dalkon Shield Action Canada c/o Vancouver Women's Health Collective 888 Burrard St. Vancouver, BC V6Z 1X9.

Thunder Bay resident Susan Collins whose work has appeared many times in Northern Woman Journal, has had a short story accepted for publication recently. The Labour, a piece that appeared in the Journal a few years ago was accepted by Fitzhenry and Whiteside for their Canadian Anthology titled Celebrating Canadian Women. We congratulate Susan, and wish her luck with future work.

The National Organization for Women in its 20th anniversary year has produced a video cassette commemorating two decades of progress for women's rights, as well as a look to the future.

The NOW news release describes this video, based on the December 1, 1986 show featuring more than 100 actors and entertainers, as a serious, yet humorous look at women's lives over the past 20 years. The film features celebrities describing landmark events. Interspersed with historical film clips, two major film essays narrated by Marlo Thomas (one on the Vermont state ERA campaign and one on Title IX), a monologue by Lily Tomlin and an inspirational speech by NOW President Eleanor Smeal.

Also in the video are five musical numbers-- "Miss Celie's Blues" performed by Mariette Hartley, "I am Woman" performed by Helen Reddy, and "Sisters are Doing It For Themselves" performed by Mara Getz and Alaina Reed, "All Girl Band" performed by Edie Adams, Alaina Reed and Jackee Harry, and "Together We Can Make the Dream Come True", a song written especially for the show by Melissa Manchester and Carol Bayer Sager, and performed by Ms. Manchester -- all accompanied by a 31-piece orchestra conducted by Peter Matz.

The show was written specifically to include historical glimpses of the whole period and many issues of the women's rights movement. The videocassette itself is a part of living history -- suitable for classrooms, public events and individual entertainment.

Inquiries may be directed to:

Peg Yorkin Productions
8105 West Third St.
Suite #1
Los Angeles, CA
90048

Every two years, since 1984, women involved in feminist publishing meet at an International Feminist Book Fair. The first fair was held in London in 1984, the second in Oslo in 1986, and the third is being planned for June 14-21, 1988 in Montreal. Bringing together editors of books, magazines and newspapers with writers, translators, distributors and booksellers from around the world, the International Feminist Book Fair provides a unique forum for feminists to network and discover each other's work at the same time as making feminist authors known to a wider audience. The event permits an exchange across continents, languages and disciplines.

The third Fair remains committed to the international character of the previous fairs, reflecting the plurality of woman's experience from various cultural and economic backgrounds. As this is the first time it will be held on the American continent, a special invitation is extended to women from Latin

America. The two official languages will be French and English but we hope to hold some events in Spanish. We are committed to facilitating fruitful and thought-provoking exchanges amongst feminists and lesbians through the conferences, readings, and panels that will be held during the week. We wish to provide a forum in which a diversity of voices can be heard, especially those which are so often censored elsewhere.

In order to organize this event the fair organizers are urgently in need of funds. Your contribution can help send out press releases, make the necessary international contacts and pay the Xerox and phone bills. Government grants are pending, but private funds will be vital to the success of the Book Fair. Needless to say, the sooner the better! Contributors' names will be published in the official program of the Fair unless requested otherwise. (Send donations to: International Feminist Book Fair, 420 est. rue Rachel, Montreal Quebec, H2J 2G7, or call (514) 844-3277). (Broadside, Oct. 1987)

The Gallerie Annual is a new women's publication devoted to women's art and women artists. Gallerie will be published once a year, with the first issue appearing in June 1988.

The magazine will feature approximately 40 women artists. Most of the publication will be filled with photographs of their work, alongside their own descriptions of their art and their philosophy. Gallerie will also include articles addressing issues of lesbian culture and history, women's cultural organizations, our autonomous culture and women in popular culture, the avant-garde, and mass media.

Gallerie will also publish announcements and advertisements from women's presses, women's galleries, women's music distributors, and other cultural organizations that promote and encourage the work of women artists.

Gallerie is now calling for entries from all women artists regardless of medium. Information on how to submit can be obtained from Gallerie Publications 2901 Panorama Dr. North Vancouver, BC V7G 2A4

Healthsharing



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**Ontario
Women's
Directorate**

With this issue, the Ontario Women's Directorate commences its sponsorship of this page in the Journal. We intend to provide news items on issues of interest to women in the north - and hope to receive help. If you have any information to go on this page, (or even a title for it) please call us collect at 475-1481.
HAPPY READING - Lynn Beak, Rae Anne Honey and Judy Decicco



**CONGRATULATIONS
WOMEN'S PLACE KENORA**

After working for years for women in the north, Women's Place finally has a PLACE - it's large, warm and wonderful. Thanks for asking us to be part of the official opening. Congratulations to all who have worked so hard for so long. May you continue in the spirit of women.

OWD COMMUNITY GRANTS

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM funds community-based activities which enrich the economic, legal and social equality of women. Priority issue projects such as employment, family violence, child care should target the needs of women - northern, native, low income, visible minority, immigrant, disabled and elderly women.

This year funding has been provided to the following:

Rural Women's Network - a conference attended by approximately 80 rural and urban women, was an information sharing and support system for a network of women in the Rainy River/Fort Francis district.

Women's Centre Interweave conference of provincial women's centres focused on the future of centres.

Les Elles du Nord-87 franco-phone women from Geraldton, Nakina and Longlac gathered to share information, experiences and provide encouragement in decision-making on women's issues.

Sasha McInnes received funding to assist in the completion of her works to be on display at the London Regional Art Gallery and Ontario North.

Northwestern Ontario Regional Day Care Committee Forum regional representatives met in Thunder Bay to strategize around the day care issue.

Women and Disabilities conference held in April focused on identified concerns with workshop on assertiveness, communications and sexuality.

The Cycle of Violence conference coordinated by the Inter-agency Education Organization was held in October to create greater awareness, understanding and sensitivity about the issue of family violence among the helping professions.

Women's Health Information Network (WHIN) will be hosting Healthy Horizons in late January 1988.

RESOURCE CENTRE

The Northern Office has an extensive collection of publications, articles, books and audio-visual materials. Items may be borrowed from the centre for a period of two weeks. The most recent publications are in boxes waiting for the move to our new space on Johnson Avenue. Some of the new additions are:

Women and Mental Health in Canada: Strategies for Change. CMHA, April 1987.

Proceedings of the National Consultation on Women and Drugs, Health and Welfare Canada, 1987.

Economic Status of Native Women in Ontario

Marriage as an Equal Partnership, A Guide to the Family Law Act, Ministry of the Attorney General, 1987
Support and Custody Enforcement Program, Ministry of the Attorney General, 1987.

Where Do I Stand? A child's legal guide to separation and divorce, Ministry of the Attorney General, 1987



UPCOMING EVENTS

Women's Health Information Network-
2nd Annual Health Conference
HEALTHY HORIZONS
January 29, 30, 31, 1988
Ramada Inn

Training seminar on PAY EQUITY-
co-sponsored by Ontario Women's Directorate, Lakehead University, City of Thunder Bay and the Industrial and Business Training Department of Confederation College
January 22, 1988
Seminar Centre of Confederation College

Northwestern Ontario Regional Day Care Forum 1988
February 5 and 6
Red Oak Inn

Family Law Workshop for Ethnic Women
Saturday March 5 from 9:00-1:00
Shuniah Building, Confederation College

Women in Unions: Participation, Power, Payoff District Conference
March 11, 12 and 13
Valhalla Inn

Planned Spring conference of Northern Ontario Women - WATCH FOR TIME AND PLACE



FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Directorate will again be awarding grants to community based groups to sponsor local events during FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH.

Grants allow groups to continue to heighten awareness about wife assault and to mobilize support from the community in an effort to prevent this serious social problem.

Last year funding was provided to projects ranging from panel discussions, advertisements in local media, production of brochures, to posters and videos.

SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

On November 30, 1987 women trying to locate spouses who have defaulted on alimony or child support will have access to federal government data banks to assist in locating the defaulter. The Support Enforcement office in Thunder Bay (1-800-465-6828) can obtain this information.

Next year, women will be able to garnishee unemployment insurance payments, tax refunds, pension cheques and other federal benefits for unpaid support.

NATIVE FAMILY VIOLENCE

HELLO! WE NEED YOUR HELP.

The Ontario Native Women's Association is currently conducting preliminary research into Native Family Violence. If you are aware of any research, material or conferences scheduled in the past, present, or for the future, please call us COLLECT at (807) 345-9821...Philip or Jessie.



1987 EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AWARDS

The Directorate has been encouraging the planning, development and expansion of employment equity programs in Ontario's public and private sectors.

The winners of the 1987 Employment Equity Awards have implemented employment equity programs that fit the needs of and benefit both employees and employer. They are:

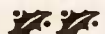
- .WATERLOO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
- .CITY OF OTTAWA
- .GENERAL MOTORS OF CANADA LTD and THE CANADIAN AUTO WORKERS UNION
- .DUPONT CANADA INC.



SUMMER EXPERIENCE 1988

The Directorate is hoping to have funding for Summer Experience student grants in 1988. In the past, we have funded a student who researched the needs of ex-residents for Faye Peterson House, a student who coordinated a conference for the Women's Health Information Network and three students who developed child care programs in the crisis centres for battered women in Atikokan, Dryden and Sioux Lookout.

If your organization is interested, contact our office for further information in March 1988.



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HOME VIDEO
equation(s) un dying

Caresse are revolutionary.
If there were three sexes
I would be...triactual.

I slip through the ice
to caress your foot
(counting the bones
in my hand
I lose sight of
your other words).

The opening grows and
I am at your knees
reaching up slowly
to draw a breath
on you. I put
my tongue on your
(breath) and begin
to pull, back and
forth, to be
shouldered on
an even
flight above the
surface of the thinly frozen
water we divide.

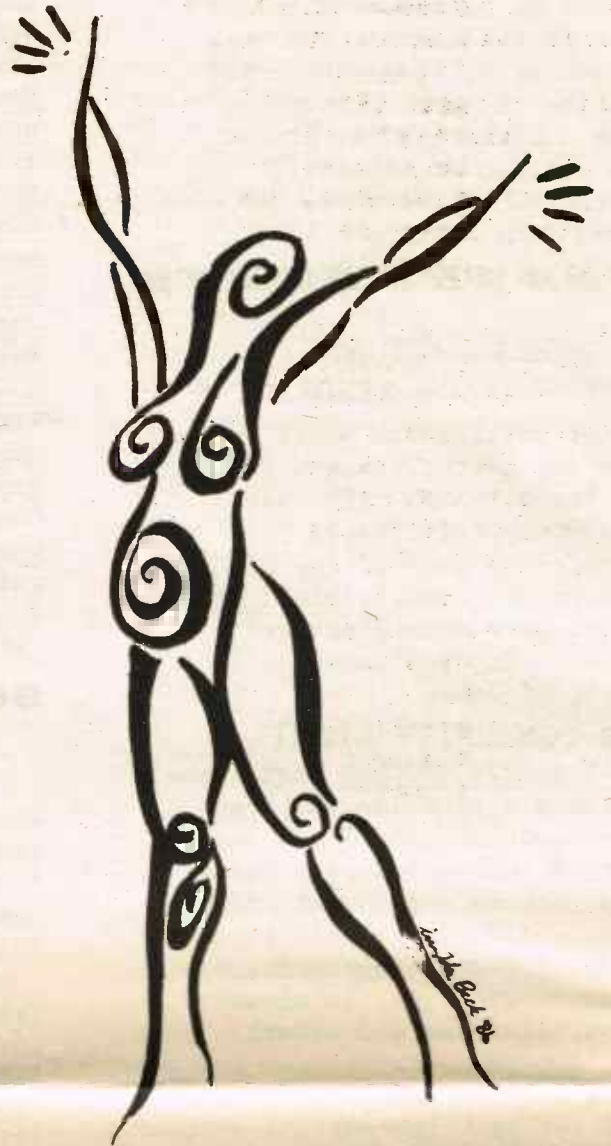
You ask me if
I fished as a child
and I look
behind your eyes.
The pike streaming
its way across
your lake bottom
glows and fans
a trail of ack-ack
torpedoes (milk drops).
We are fish
on manoeuvre.

Above the water
line the two
people look
for condoms
knowing the
Shakesperian
"to die"
"to die in your arms"
means I could die
you could die.

Dying to know
who killed us
Narcissus moves
into fourth gear
on all terrain.

Your flight
into my fancy
has all the
grace of
a tank
muffling
the noise
of its warring
advance with
chamois treads
a pair of never-ending
skin mukluks
that rotate and
grind the earth
without a sound.

I am lying here
in the earth
smelling the wind
until you decipher
the true meaning
of the word camouflage.



1964

I hide behind
a rock
disguise myself with
grey stone face/
lattice lichen hair
I hover while you advance
on your true course..
glancing at the
control panel,
turning what you think
are the right knobs
to the East
to the West,
a book lying
open in your
palm lap.

I am earth.
I have begun my
descent to the
bottom-most layer
of my mother's
crust.

I will rise
again and with
my spirit eye
my fingers
will push forth
green sprout buddings
& raw red bleeding
flowers will
heal the snow.



If you blast them
with fire,
flame-thrower,
I will reach around
the damp underside
of a rotting log
and place
clots of decomposing
wood on your eyes
until you heal.

You throw your voice.
The lines you quote
in dense support
of your open book theory
are the same ones
that suffocated
your mother, now
at work, unseen.

I ask simply
that you place
your hands on
the outer edge
of a northern swamp
make a triangle
with your index fingers
and thumbs
and (facing North)
consider your source.

sharman (lynne) 11/28/87
Thunder Bay
Ontario

DAY CARE NEWS

By MARGARET PHILLIPS

After four years in the making, the federal government, on December 3rd, 1987, finally unveiled its new child care "policy". Sadly, it is not a policy that will in any way solve the day care crisis that Canadians are experiencing. In fact, the implementation of this policy could be a serious set-back to the development of the comprehensive, quality, child care system we have long been advocating.

\$5.4 billion dollars to be spent over seven years. Sounds like a lot of money doesn't it? But when we also hear that \$54 billion will be spent on submarines the perspective becomes clearer. Even the \$5.4 billion figure is misleading because when you subtract (a) the \$1 billion already in the system, and (b) the \$2.3 billion allocated to tax breaks, it leaves only \$2.1 billion to be spent on day care.



We're told that over seven years this will create 200,000 new licensed day care spaces .. i.e. 28,570 spaces per year. Yet, at this moment, over 2,000,000 Canadian children require non-parental care for at least part of each week. Considering that only 50% of families might choose licensed day care it still means that 1,000,000 new day care spaces are needed right now. And we are expected to be grateful for 28,570 spaces?

It is clear that the government chose not to listen to the recommendations made by day care parents and advocates. Having attended the Special Committee on Child Care hearings both in Dryden and Thunder Bay, I know what Northwestern Ontario parents said. Consistently, NWO representations advocated a comprehensive, high-quality, non-profit day care system. A system that provides a range of services to meet the needs of children of all ages and abilities. A system that is accessible to all families irrespective of their eco-

nomie status, employment status or geographic residence. A system that is sensitive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society. A system that values the work of child care staff and rewards staff with adequate wages and benefits. A system that ensures parental involvement. In short, Northwestern Ontario parents want a COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM. Not one Northwestern Ontario representation recommended tax breaks. Yet more new \$ are going to tax deductions and credits than will go to a day care system.

While the child care tax deduction may be a politically popular move it must be understood that this deduction does not reimburse the child care fee, it simply reduces the amount of taxable income. Consequently this deduction is of most benefit to high income earners; low income people will receive little, if any, benefit. Further, tax deductions only serve families who are presently using receipted care (in the main those using licensed services, as baby-sitters rarely give receipts). Thus it primarily helps families using existing day care services... it will do nothing to increase the availability of licensed, quality care.

Then there is the matter of the tax credits .. available to low income families who don't use day care or use unregulated care.

Let me state clearly that I am not against tax reform. Nor am I opposed to mothers who work only in the home being monetarily compensated for their valuable - and long unrecognized work. Although \$100 a year is such sheer tokenism that it can scarcely be considered recognition. (In fact this \$100 merely gives back the money that was taken away when family allowances were de-indexed.)

What I do object to is including tax breaks under the guise of day care initiatives. Tax reform is the jurisdiction of the Finance Minister. Child care is the jurisdiction of the Minister of Health and Welfare. They are separate concepts and must be viewed so.

The result of lumping these concepts together is to pit at-home mothers against mothers in the labour force. Pitting women against women serves only the (male) politicians. It does not serve women. It certainly does not serve children.

Listening to the public debate that is now flourishing about the federal policy I am struck by the focus of discussion on mothers/parents. How easily we ignore that what this is all about is children.

What does this new child care policy mean for Northwestern Ontario? It means that we must again scramble for whichever of these piece-meal measures might provide us a little help. The most positive initiative announced is the federal contribution to capital costs .. to be shared 75%-25% with the provinces. Hopefully some Northwestern Ontario communities can benefit from this program.

An initiative has also been promised for rural, native, special needs, and shift work programs. However the \$ allocation is insufficient to address this priority need and will do little more than provide a few "pilot projects".

The impact of the new policy is somewhat unclear in respect to commercial day care, with the issue being placed in the hands of the provinces. Some analysts suggest that the doors have been opened wide for commercial expansion. Clearly, this situation must be monitored closely and the Ontario government pressured to prevent the problem of commercial care developing in our region.

Because of the federal government's piece-meal non-solution to the day care crisis, NWO day care advocates must continue to be vigilant in pressing for day care reform and new initiatives that will meet our needs.

The new federal policy (along with provincial and municipal concerns) will be the subject of discussion at the Northwestern Ontario Regional Day Care Forum to be held in Thunder Bay in February. Readers interested in more information about the Forum should contact NWO R.D.C.C. Box 144, Thunder Bay, Ont.



Reviews

MUSIC

Reviewed by JOAN BARIL.

THE INTENTION, THE BLUE, by KIM ERICKSON

Her voice is liquid crystal. The piano lines are as clear and spare as a northern winter night. Kim Erickson, in her first recording, uses that voice and piano to blend blues and New Age into something startling and unique. She mixes in nature sounds, African beats, and zen-like chimes into a minimalist accompaniment.

Kim is one of the few Thunder Bay women musicians who have been independently produced. Previous to this disc which was originally recorded in Ottawa in 1982, Kim has worked with Sneezy Waters, Ian Tamblin, Lois Garrity and Laurie Conger.

Kim is a classically trained musician like her friend Laurie Conger, and she is a wearer of many hats - singer, composer, performer, piano teacher, as well as wife and mother of daughter Reija, 2½. At present she is studying with acclaimed voice teacher Annechien Menso in Holland, made possible by a Canada Council award.

"The slow blues", Duke Ellington once said, "are the hardest thing of all." On the flip side of the disc, Kim sails through four traditional blues numbers with matchless phrasing and soul. The first side consists of her own compositions including the lovely instrumental, "The Intention", as well as her own arrangements of traditional tunes such as Corinna. The mixes of new and traditional beats, African and Zen, result in an almost mystical synthesis.

"Kim is more than a performer" says long-time friend Estella Howard. "Her music comes from the spirit, from a strong place within her. It's part of her study to go deeper to the centre. Her music comes from a strong centre but it's full of the spirit, full of heart."



BOOKS

Reviewed by DIANA-MARIE KORBISSER STOLZ

BEING PREGNANT CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN by Daphne Morrison



RFR

I would not recommend this book to any pregnant woman. The idea, conversations with women on being pregnant, is good and the foreward by the author, Daphne Morrison, is warm and inviting. It is a moving account of fifteen women's experiences of pregnancy and childbirth but the overall tone is too sharp with unresolved sadness, tragedy and despair.

All of these aspects and more may be a part of any pregnancy. I have heard too many fairy tales and am a strong advocate of dispelling myths but, at such a tenuous and vulnerable time in a woman's life, I think it is essential that truths be told constructively. We need support to help us overcome the shock of discovering that we have been lied to.

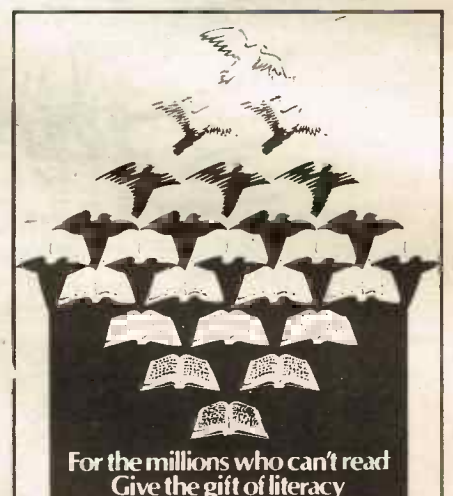
This crucial element is missing, making the book too harsh and depressing as prenatal reading.

I do recommend it for reading as a frank case study of women and pregnancy representative of different ages, cultures, ethnic backgrounds and social strata. The verbatim accounts are personal and powerful glimpses of the lives and struggles of women who have conceived, deliberately or unintentionally.

You will be moved and struck by their honesty and courage. You will be stunned and outraged by some of their circumstances. Read it - well before or after your pregnancy.

ANSWERS to MATCHING QUIZ Volume 10 #4

Character	Author	Novel
Minn Burge	Marian Engel	The Honeyman Festival
Evelyn Hall	Jane Rule	Desert of the Heart
Naomi Nakane	Joy Kogawa	Obasan
Rose	Alice Munro	Who Do You Think You Are
Isobel Cleary	Audrey Thomas	Songs My Mother Taught Me
Chiclet Gomez	Dorothy O'Connell	Chicket Gomez
Marian McAlpine	Margaret Atwood	The Edible Woman
Pauline Archange	Marie-Claire Blais	The Manuscripts of Pauline Archange
Felicity	Janet Turner Hospital	Borderline
April Raintree	Beatrice Culleton	In Search of April Raintree
Anne Gray	Anne Cameron	The Journey
Stacey McAindra	Margaret Laurence	The Fire Dwellers



More than four million adult Canadians can't read well enough to fill out a job application or understand the directions on a medicine bottle. You can help. Give money, volunteer with a literacy group, write to your MP, and read to your children.

For more information, contact:

Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation
34 Ross St., Suite 200,
Toronto, Ont. M5T 1Z9
(416) 595-9967

The Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Campaign is a project of the book and periodical industry of Canada, in partnership with Telephone Pioneers of America, Region 1-Canada.

The task force on the implementation of midwifery in Ontario released a report recently that was enthusiastically received by feminists, midwives, parents and childbirth educators.

Canada is currently the only industrialized western country that has no provisions for midwives. In early 1986, then health minister Murray Elston announced the government's intentions to establish midwifery as a recognized part of the provincial health care system. Thus, the task force was created to discover issues such as midwifery practice, means of education, guidelines for entrance, operating procedures, and midwife/doctor relationships.

The resulting report outlines 70 recommendations and predicts the legalization of midwifery in the province by as early as 1990. The report has provided the government with an excellent tool with which to integrate midwives into the health care system with recommendations such as: direct-entry midwifery education, making midwifery a self-regulating profession, developing a system of thorough assessment, licensing and integration of currently practicing midwives, provisions for midwives to work in hospitals, birthing centres and in the community including home births.

The association of Ontario midwives is the current governing body for all practising midwives. The recommendations will legitimize the association as well as set up a college of midwives. The report suggests that midwifery education be at the university level, and that a course be accessible to Northern Ontario residents by recognition of course credits obtained at other universities.

The legalization of the practice will make midwifery financially feasible for everyone. Where the fees for midwife services have been as much as \$1,200, the legalization will allow for coverage under O.H. Midwives will have more legitimate medical back-up both in hospital and home settings.

THE WIFE WILL HAVE TO TAKE RETRAINING

The Judgement.

See the pretty girl.
She says she is a deserted wife.
No one could possibly leave her.
Therefore,
He must have had a good reason.

See the pretty girl.
Anyone would want her.
She could have had every guy in town,
Therefore,
I assume she did.

See the pretty girl.
She wants support for herself,
She wants support for her child.
She's barely old enough
To be in the workforce,
And she wants to be pensioned off!

I will not grant support.
Her husband has debts to pay:
He has to pay for his car
He has to pay for his stereo
He has to pay for his color T.V.
Besides;
It would only come off of her Welfare.



Go home, Pretty Girl.
Your marriage was only a joke,
And you fell for it.
Go home, Pretty Girl,
So we can stop laughing.

Susan Gail Collins



Where are you Old Canadian Sisters
Now that I would settle for good conversation?
Where are you, whose virgin soul
has not been penetrated by men's phantasy?
Whose rites of passage were through
the mine fields of feminism
Are you lost among the blue hair of
the traditional grandmere
Whose silence need never be bought.
Are you dying among the Savages
who created planned obsolescence and
the barbaric custom of funeral processions?
Have you ground the essential YOU
beneath the rubbish of socialization
Has the Crone in you spoken rebellion
as the proper posture for females.
Shall we plan to meet in some meadow
with flowers in our hair and rings on our toes
and talk about what we might have told them
if they had asked us?

Gert Beadle

This is what I think 'the class question' in the women's movement is fundamentally about. There has been an unfortunate tendency to think of class merely in personal terms; am I middle-class? do I have privileges because I live in a nice house? how can I get along better with my working class sisters? etc. I am certainly not denying that personal privilege is important -- for instance, if women lawyers and academics are thought of as natural spokespersons, then class privilege is at work and must be challenged. However, much energy can be wasted in excessive personalizing of issues such as class. When we coined the slogan "the personal is political" I don't think it was intended that the political should be reduced to the personal.

Class is not a personal attribute, even if it is linked to personal attributes; class is a structure, a basic structure of our society. It should furthermore be pointed out that the obsessive personalizing of political issues is a particularly middle-class and North American pastime. An anti-capitalist women's movement is not one dedicated to the personal criticism of middle-class lifestyles, but rather one dedicated to building strong links with labour, with socialists, with anti-imperialist groups here and in the Third World, with a view to creating a powerful coalition for the defeat of both capitalism and patriarchy.

In this struggle women of colour are playing an increasingly key leadership role, both in Canada and elsewhere. This is a crucial difference between the movement of five years ago and that of today. As a movement, we have barely begun to integrate an anti-racist perspective into our work, so I am going to speak more personally about what I have learned from listening to and working with people of colour. I first learned that racism cannot be reduced to a side-effect of either capitalism or patriarchy: it has its own reality and its own dynamic, and the struggle against it is not a subset of some other struggle. Theoretically this caused me problems: just as I was beginning to glimpse how one might combine a feminist analysis with a socialist one, I realized that there was a third term which could not be reduced to the two I already had. It was at that point that I gave up my pursuit of the perfect theory, and decided to undertake (in my scholarly work) concrete analyses of the interrelations between racism, sexism and capitalism at particular points in history. I want to see how they actually interact in a specific context, rather than trying to freeze history in order to draw an abstract map of the structural connections between them.

In my political practice, I began to see that the hitherto usual practice of "including" women of colour here and there was reinforcing the ethnocentric and racist structures we were supposedly attacking. I noticed women of colour being put in the position of telling personal experiences, experiences which were interpreted as the particular problems of women of colour - the general books on motherhood, sexuality, etc.,

were still written from a white (Anglo) perspective. And I concluded that I too had been guilty of seeing women of colour as having particular experiences that could be narrated for "our" enlightenment. I learned that white experience is just as particular, and should be analyzed as such: for instance, how did Adrienne Rich's whiteness affect her experience and therefore her analysis of motherhood? How did the whiteness of Nellie McClung affect the Canadian suffrage movement? These are the questions I am now trying to answer. Women of colour have often been "included": but usually they have been put in the role of inspiring "us", of enlightening us about what it's like in far-off places. In general they have been invited so as to add a touch of colour. This kind of inclusion makes the brown and yellow and black women who make up the vast majority of the world's women, into objects for the white feminist gaze.



Some organizations are now, for the first time in the history of feminism, consciously trying to change this: women of colour are taking their rightful place as subjects, not objects, actively organizing the movement, defining the issues, and using their experience to draw some general conclusions about gender oppression. And what some white feminists are beginning to do is attempt to integrate an anti-racist perspective not only into the more obvious issues (e.g. the situation of Native women in Canada's North, women in South Africa) but into our work as a whole. I personally have done some soul searching because I now realize that my book on sexuality (published in 1985) did not make a serious effort to think through the relation between race and sexual identity. What I was probably thinking when I wrote it was that the sexual experience and sexual consciousness of women of colour is obviously intertwined with their experience of race and racism: but it did not dawn on me that whiteness is as much of a colour as brownness, and that one's feelings about one's body -- which underlie all sexual experience -- are to an important extent determined by the social construction of one's race.

In collective terms I am sure that many of you are currently going through turmoil around the question of whether white feminists and women of colour can or should work together and if so how -- so I certainly have no recipes, but as a historian of feminism perhaps I can give you the comforting thought that what we are all trying to do, under the leadership of women of colour, is truly unique in the history of the women's movement.

One thing that we have learned is that we cannot naively think that all women are potential members of all women's groups. Native women, black women, Asian women, disabled women, women in particular sectors of the economy will have certain interests in common and will want to use autonomous groups both to put forward their specific political and to give their members a safe place to be, a circle of non-oppression. How these collectives or organizations will cooperate still remains largely a question mark: the mainstream women's organizations (egNAC) are certainly changing, but the heritage of racism and bourgeois hegemony weighs very heavily on our collective shoulders, and it will be years before we all think of 'the leadership of the oppressed' as the normal process to deal with class and race differences. The tokenistic approach is still the usual response, it is what somehow 'comes natural': we don't want to look bad, so we find a visible-minority woman to speak in order to avoid having an all-white cast (which is assumed to be the normal outcome unless one specifically plans otherwise). We have to think hard about the organizational questions that are often dismissed as either boring or bureaucratic: an anti-capitalist perspective, an anti-racist perspective, will not flourish in the women's movement unless there are consciously designed structures to make it happen. We can't pretend that structures are neutral; otherwise we'll re-enact the interaction I had at the bank, by expecting all groups of women to fit into the apparently neutral forms of organization that were developed in the course of oppressing those very groups we now want to ally with.

In trying to organize both small collectives and larger coalitions, we also have to be aware of how deeply the state structures our interactions. This does not happen only when direct funding is given for a particular project and the organizers 'naturally' make their work fit the categories of the funding proposal; it happens even before we ask for funding, even before we form a group. The state sets out the framework for social and political life. It divides society into competing "interest groups" all at the same level -- instead of oppressed and privileged groups. Labour is not seen as representing the claims of the working class as a whole against capital: it is seen as just another pressure group, on a par with R.E.A.L. women or with the National Citizens' Coalition.

Women too are not seen as the oppressed majority but as merely an interest group, and not an especially powerful one at that. Women are further subdivided and set off against each other through a myriad of programs which claim to help us but, in the long run, divide us: mothers on family benefits are put in one department, Native women seeking Native rights are put under Indian Affairs, mothers needing day care are told to speak to this other ministry, and so on. It is as though the state fragmented us -- not just into different groups, but even fragmented the same person into bits -- and said, now, this piece of you needs to interact with this arm of the state, and so on. The state -- as I'm sure Carolyn Egan will tell you in her workshop -- is not neutral: among other things, it disorganizes us right from the beginning, even while apparently giving us certain benefits.

Let me now try to move toward what I hope will be an upbeat conclusion. The structures of racism, of patriarchy, and of bourgeois society make it extremely difficult to work non-competitively. If we spend eight hours a day in the imperialist bank, obeying orders or giving them, silently competing for scarce promotions and so on, we cannot leave all that at the door of our women's meeting. What we can do is recognize it and try to subvert it -- but a utopian, naive denial of the individualist and hierarchial structures within which we function during most of our lives will only result in resentments, silent recriminations, feelings of disappointment and betrayal, and other problems which have plagued women's groups. We also need to face the difficulties we have, as women in a patriarchal society, in building solid relations of work and friendship -- as Adrienne Rich has pointed out, men have had "a man's word", a man's honour, and gentlemen's agreements to help them bond with each other in business and in war; but women have been told that our only loyalties are based on our instincts as wives and mothers, instincts which supposedly create our bonds to men and children. We have not thus bonded with other women, we have not been used to making intelligent (as opposed to instinctual) commitments to work and to politics. The absence of traditions of female bonding, together with the lack of self-confidence in our work and our thought, can create an unreasonable desire to sweep all conflicts under the carpet; we fear that any expression of disagreement will lead to

volcanic eruptions in our groups and in our psyches. It is true that there are some women who are as egocentric and obnoxious as the worst man; but in my experience, for every one such woman there are twenty who do not speak up when they should for fear of appearing to be egocentric. The ethic of politeness and self-sacrifice does not work in the long run: rather, it leads to burnout, which is probably the most significant problem in the radical women's movement today.

Let me end by giving a small practical suggestion to deal with these difficult questions of personal interactions in groups: I propose that we abolish "niceness" in the women's movement. Let me explain. When I moved to North America at the age of 12, my siblings and I were quite struck by the constant use of the term "nice" among North American adults, particularly ladies. We would mimic my mother's friends and neighbours, saying "isn't this niiice?" whenever something unpleasant happened. We commented on the fact that the word nice did not seem to have any stable meaning, and it certainly could not be translated into Spanish. But after twenty years of life in North America I have finally figured out what "nice" means. It means: let us pretend we are all unselfish, while firmly supporting our husbands in their ruthless struggle to get our family ahead of the Joneses.



It means: politeness is more important than truth or justice. It means: we don't care if false politeness makes for stilted interactions and destroys any possibility of working together, for after all, women don't really work together, we just chat. It means: let us never admit that we feel passionate about our politics, about our ideas, about our loves -- for passion is destructive and nasty; it's not nice.

But I don't want you to go away thinking I advocate nastiness as a replacement for niceness. My point is that those two modes are not the only possibilities -- in fact, niceness and ruthless competition are the two sides of the same Anglosaxon bourgeois cultural coin.

I am suggesting that we look somewhere else for a new concept of how to interact. Where I personally have found a very different, and totally useful, model of collective political and personal interaction is my visits to Nicaragua. The first time I was there, I was struck by the constant reference to "love". "affection" and "tenderness" (amor, carino, ternura). I was translating for a group of trade unionists, and I had to tell them (in English, and in embarrassing tones) that this important male trade union leader was actually saying "solidarity is the tenderness of one people for another". The Canadian trade unionists, typically, did not make the slightest facial expression. But by the end of the trip, even the most hardened Anglo was giving impromptu speeches ending in heartfelt shouts and even hugs and kisses. Solidarity really had become the tenderness between peoples. This tenderness, this kindness, does not sweep conflict under the rug as niceness does; but it makes sure that the conflict is talked about with respect and love. This process, this way of being and working with people, is absolutely essential in the struggle of the Nicaraguan people against an incredibly powerful enemy. It is this love and tenderness, for one another and for oppressed people the world over, which keeps them joking even in the midst of death. It is this love and tenderness which helps them to survive the burn-out of eight years of constantly swimming upstream in the mighty river of imperialism. I have learned a lot from Nicaraguans. I have learned how to work so that we are empowered in and by our struggle instead of being exhausted by it. So I am bringing you neither slogans nor recipes: I am bringing these words -- love, tenderness, affection -- hoping that you will be able to find their meaning, and let it empower you in your struggle.



WOMAN WORDS

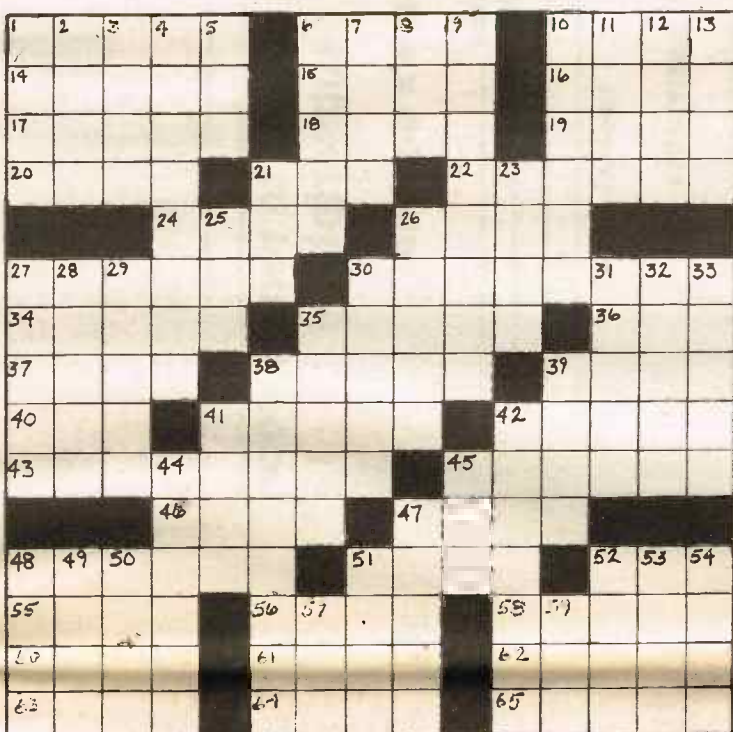
ACROSS

1. Women teachers: School _____
6. Trendy _____
10. Raced _____
14. Expect _____
15. Absent without leave.
16. Lowest woman's voice.
17. Belgian marble.
18. A reigning Hindu woman.
19. Gaze intently.
20. "Extraordinary lie designed to make people unfree" (Angela Carter 1983)

21. Norse goddess of the sea.
22. One who tips.
24. Object of infatuation.
26. Exclusive _____
27. Bundle of wood used to burn witches in 15th & 16th century.
30. _____ convergence.
34. _____ of Many Colours. Dolly Parton tune
35. He caused the Trojan war by kidnapping Helen.
36. Arrangement (abr)
37. Maize _____
38. Fountains _____
39. Familiar northern fish.

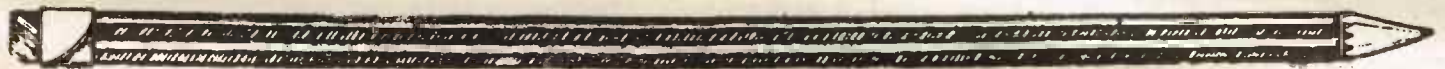
40. Wrath _____
41. _____ Lill. Canadian playwright "The Occupation of Heather Rose"
42. Roman goddess of grain & harvest.
43. Bread _____: Theme for International Women's Day.
45. Have _____.
46. Worthless scrap of food.
47. And others.
48. Central cores.
51. Should be "ah-woman"
52. The 27th U.S. constitutional Amendment.
55. Pertaining to the mouth.
56. To repair or patch.
58. Cut into wedge-shaped pieces.
60. One who is brutal & feared.
61. Mine opening.
62. Toothed leaf edge.
63. Require _____
64. "well adjusted" woman in a patriarchal society.
65. Ceases activity.

8. Electrically charged atom.
9. Centre of immature orgasm in women.
10. Poet of Lesbos.
11. To drop with a sound of something striking water.
12. To be. (Fr.)
13. One who does.
21. What Reagan talks.
23. A theory or doctrine.
25. Tiny round mark.
26. Group gathering for some common purpose.
27. External border.
28. Fruit of the oak.
29. Injured by bull.
30. Ends of the forearms.
31. Monetary unit of Nigeria.
32. One who irks.
33. Top of a wave.
35. Corn _____: southern U.S. food.
38. Feast or holiday.
39. Rind _____
41. Past tense of wear.
42. _____ and the Changed: Chris Williamson album.
44. Moved on wheels.
45. Goddess personifying men's blind impulses.
47. Void _____
48. Zenith _____
49. Impel _____
50. Concern _____
51. Among _____
52. Son of Aphrodite.
53. The others.
54. Fruit drinks.
57. Woman's name.
59. Rock containing valuable substance.



DOWN

1. Woman teacher; see 1 across
2. At a distance.
3. Declaim vehemently.
4. _____ Womyn's Music Festival.
5. Saint (fem. abr.)
6. Proponent of choice. (acronym)
7. Monetary unit of South Korea.



BILL 7 continued from p4

As the new legislation takes hold we can hope to gain true equality and a sense of freedom in the lives we lead. While the nature of the law will be muddy for some time, the passing of the Bill clearly signals an acknowledgement of and disagreement with homophobia.

The phones in my office are still ringing. A woman calls, outraged, trying to instill some "sense" into my head and warning me of the dangers of homosexuality. "Would you

want one of those people teaching your kids?" "Would you want one of those in your home?" "You bet!!!"

CALL TO ACTION: To support EGALE, you can donate your time or money (or both). Write or phone your MP and encourage her/him to support an amendment to the constitution that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Call or write the Minister of Justice and the opposition critics to voice your support for the amendment.

For more information:
EGALE
P.O. Box 2891, Station D
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5W9

- ¹Hansard, November 25, 1986
- ²Toward Equality Report, March 4, 1986

Editors Note: This article appeared in 'breaking the silence' Summer 1987 prior to the Ontario election, when, unfortunately, Evelyn Gigantes was unsuccessful in her bid for re-election. Consequently some of the references are out of date, yet the message given is still very timely.



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WOMEN ARE AGAINST FREE TRADE



WHY FREE TRADE WILL HARM WOMEN:



It is vital that women speak out against free trade because we'll be most affected and can least afford bearing the "cost" of free trade adjustments.

It will mean:

JOB LOSS

The reason women will lose more from free trade is because working women are concentrated in industries which will be most adversely affected.

In manufacturing most women work in textiles, clothing, food processing, electrical and electronic products, and other consumer industries. Even government studies admit that the jobs in these industries are most at risk.

In the service sector, where the majority of working women are concentrated, jobs are threatened because many restrictions on the provision of services from outside the country will be removed. For example, in the case of data processing, there are many laws which require that data be processed and stored in Canada. When these are removed, many clerical jobs for women will be lost.

LOWER WAGES AND POORER WORKING CONDITIONS

Even in those places where women don't lose their jobs, increasing competition will force firms to reduce costs through cutting wages,

ignoring health and safety, and fighting legislative protection which ensures equal rights for women.

They will do this because their major competition under the agreement will be located in U.S. states with no minimum wage, poor labour legislation and very low levels of unionization.

POORER ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROGRAMS

The Canadian tradition of providing services to people through publicly supported facilities is jeopardized.

The agreement says that U.S. firms must be given equal treatment in Canada and implies that they must be given equal access to public funding. The result will be a great drain on our tax dollars and an increased tendency for certain services, such as health care and child care to be shifted to the private sector.

When services are delivered through private means, they tend to be less accessible and more expensive.

WHAT WOMEN CAN DO:

It is important that everyone understand what free trade is about. You can help in many ways.

- distribute or post this flyer where you work and in your community
- tell your local M.P. or M.P.P. of your opposition to free trade
- give your support to activities in your community against free trade
- help NAC fight free trade through a financial contribution

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT FREE TRADE AND WHAT TO DO CONTACT:

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women
344 Bloor St. West, Suite 505, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1W9
(416) 922-3246 (Toronto)
(613) 234-7062 (Ottawa)

Your District Labour Council or Chapter of the
Council of Canadians

La Coalition québécoise d'opposition au libre-échange
(514) 598-2273

The Coalition Against Free Trade
(416) 534-3523

The Pro-Canada Network
(613) 233-1764

MAIL TO:

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