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ON MARCH 15 A SHOT RANG OUT IN KENORA THAT ECHOED THROUGH THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE WOMEN OF ONTARIO. OUR DREAMS, OUR HOPES, AND THE CONFIDENCE THAT WE WERE SUCCEEDING, CRUMBLLED. WE WEPT, WE RAGED, WE QUESTIONED.

AGAINST THE TIDE OF MORE THAN A DECADE OF WORK BY WOMEN FOR THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN; A WOMAN DIED. THE VIOLENCE WHICH WE HAVE STOOD AGAINST, SHATTERED THE LIVES OF THE WOMEN OF KENORA AND TORE INTO THE BEING OF EVERY WOMAN COMMITTED TO THE SAFETY AND SUPPORT OF HER SISTERS.

WOMEN WENT TO THE PLACE OF OUR INADEQUACIES AND WE STOOD NOT UNITED IN STRENGTH BUT STUNNED BY A PAIN THAT WE HAD ALWAYS KNOWN COULD COME. FACED WITH THE REALITY OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED, EACH OF US WAS SHAKEN BY THE SENSELESSNESS OF THE TRAGEDY.

ELIZABETH WAS TO THE WOMEN OF KENORA, A FRIEND. TO OTHERS SHE WAS THE REASON FOR OUR WORK, OUR COMMITMENT, THE SHAPE OF OUR LIVES. MANY OF US DID NOT KNOW HER FACE BUT WE KNEW HER SOUL.

OUR GRIEF HAD NO PATTERN TO FOLLOW. OUR HEARTS ACHED FOR HER CHILDREN AND THE FAMILY WHOM WE COULD NOT REACH. THE ISOLATION OF OUR DISTANCE OBSTRUCTED THE SUPPORT WE NEEDED TO GIVE THE RESIDENTS AND WORKERS OF THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE. THE CIRCUMSTANCES BLOCKED OUR NEED TO KNOW AND TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

HE REMAINED INVISIBLE, UNTOUCHED BY OUR ANGER.

UNABLE TO KNOW, TO REACH, TO TOUCH, TO VENT OUR RAGE, WOMEN OF COLLECTIVE POWER WERE OVERWHELMED BY A POWERLESSNESS.

WOMEN FELT FRIGHTENED. A FEAR THAT NEITHER LOCKED WINDOWS, SCREENED CALLS OR BARRED WINDOWS CAN EASE. IT IS A FEAR OF TRUST. A MOMENT OF TRUST HAD BETRAYED ELIZABETH. TRUST HAS BEEN AT TIMES BOTH OUR FRIEND AND OUR ENEMY. WE BECAME FEARFUL TO TRUST OTHERS, OURSELVES, OUR ACTIONS, OUR JUDGEMENTS. IT IS A FEAR WE NEED TO OVERCOME. TO FIND A BALANCE OF TRUST AND TO SEARCH FOR ANSWERS WE HAVE NOT FOUND BEFORE

THE TRAGIC EXPERIENCE OF ELIZABETH WILL FORCE US ALL TO EXAMINE OUR EVERY MOVE, OUR PHILOSOPHIES AND PRACTICES. AND MUST DO THIS IN AN EXACTING AND CONSTRUCTIVE WAY FOR PROTECTION OF WOMEN. WEIGHING THE RIGHTS OF EACH WOMAN, THE RIGHTS OF ALL WOMEN. WE NEED TO FIND OUR STRENGTH AGAIN. IT IS THE VOICES OF WOMEN THAT WILL HELP US.

The Voice of Their Fear

"I was really afraid one night."

"I was afraid he'd kill me if it got any worse."

"I used to pray that my husband would hit me, or do whatever he was going to do to me. I figured the pain couldn't be worse than living in constant fear."

The Voice of Their Pain

"Hitting, pounding, kicking, these things hurt your body and that leaves some scars but mostly your body heals." "What hurts even more....I never had a chance to do anything with my life."

"Bruises and bones heal but this ache never goes away."

The Voice of Their Confusion

"I was flattered by his jealousy at first - I thought it meant that he loved me."

"But he really needs me. I guess that's why I keep going back."
"He makes me feel important."

The Voice of Their Needs

"I just don't know what to do sometimes, especially when you don't have any money."

"I think of other people first all the time. I'm the most important person, but I forget that."

"I really want to go back to school."

"Every time I looked for a place and said I was on social services, they said it was taken."

The Voice of Their Pride

"There is so many things I thought I could do." "I can be what I want to be."

"I don't have to live for somebody else. I'm my own person - I can do what I want."

Their Voices About the Houses

"When you come, they're always so glad to see you. It makes you feel good."

"The reason I think transition houses are so important is that they can be many things for different women. For one woman they can be a way to physically survive, for another they provide shoulders to cry on. For another they introduce her to things she can do to make it on her own. You can't lump battered women and their needs together. You need just about as many solutions as there are battered women. No answer is right for everyone."

And Finally

"It's like they almost give you strength to go on."

AND WE WILL BE STRONG AND WE WILL GO ON. EACH OF US ACCORDING TO OUR INDIVIDUAL SOURCES OF ENERGY, OF STRENGTH, OF SPIRITUALITY AND BELIEFS, WILL DRAW UPON THE COURAGE NEEDED TO MOVE AGAINST THE VIOLENCE WE CANNOT ACCEPT.

TOGETHER WE WILL START FROM THE STARTING POINT OF THE VISION, A VISION THAT HAS BEEN BLURRED BY DOLLARS, BY POLICIES AND BY PROGRAMS. A FAR BIGGER QUESTION THAN HOW ELIZABETH DIED, IS WHY DID ELIZABETH HAVE TO DIE. THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION LIES IN THE VISION.

TOGETHER WE WILL FEEL THE POWER TO SPEAK AGAIN, TO MARCH AGAIN, TO HOLD SOCIETY ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE MADNESS THAT ALLOWS WOMEN TO BE BEATEN, DEGRADED, HUMILIATED AND MURDERED.

*Against our will, despite our strength
Opposed to all we tried to be
Walls and friends could not protect
Elizabeth's struggle for dignity*

*Asking only to correct
A time of violence, marked by tears
To build a future, share the dreams
Of life without the pain and fear*

*With women and children we carry on
Less one we've lost to death
We vow to change, protect and care
Now, in the name of Elizabeth.*

submitted by: THE VIOLENCE SUBCOMMITTEE of the NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S DECADE COUNCIL

The Story of Esmerelda

BY JOSIE WALLENIUS

Esmerelda was a white woman who lived in white land. One day she woke from a long sleep, and found her mother dying. Esmerelda loved her mother. In fact, she could not live without her, so she started to find out from what her mother was dying.

Not long after she began this investigation, she came across a small truth, and spoke it. To her great surprise and dismay, she was called black for telling this truth. Not having a clue what black was, except it was black, she looked it up in the dictionary and found it described as rather white. With great curiosity she then looked up white, and it seemed to her very black, blacker than black, because amongst other things Esmerelda had been brought up in church.

However, Esmerelda forgot about this for a while, as when you have been brought up to believe black is black and white is white, its pretty difficult to unbelieve it.



Kathy Lenhart in The Kwan Yin Book of Changes

Some time later, Esmerelda went to a great gathering of women, and met some new sisters that were brown and also daughters of her mother, and found out another surprising thing. These women were from white-lands too, but were trying to go black and were being resisted by the white. In fact her sisters were suffering the most frightful misfortunes in their struggle to change colour, and Esmerelda felt badly. She felt so badly in fact that she fainted clear away when she heard their stories.

When Esmerelda got back from this gathering, she forgot about all this as the air in white land was very white indeed, and she was used

to what came over it, which kept on saying white was white, and nobody had a problem in breathing it. For a while, Esmerelda felt quite well, just as well as ever, except her mother was still dying, and everybody was getting more and more unhappy and not looking into each others eyes anymore like they used to in days gone by.

Then one day Esmerelda read a book, called "Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee", and she found out that until very recently the white land she lived in had been owned and filled with Brown people, and it had been ancient black, and Esmerelda began to get breathless attacks as she read it because the story was dripping with red from the white, and what made her more breathless was she knew the white had not meant her to read it. However, Christmas was coming, and she began to feel better, as Esmerelda loved Christmas, and wanted to shop. So she went to a lovely shopping mall and began to get REALLY breathless as the air in the mall was white smog playing Silent Night in the white air, and she saw red running from earrings and skirts. In fact hard as she looked she could see nothing that wasn't red white.

However, Esmerelda was no spring chicken, and put it all down to old age, and went her way, keeping out of malls and going down to the lake through the trees, where somehow or other, come rain or shine, the air seemed black and easier to breathe. Of course it must be noted that Esmerelda was very privileged to be able to do this as she did not live in an urban squat.

One day, as she was sitting on a bit of black, a rock, she got an idea to go to a country of brown people who had just gone black as she wanted to help. When she got there she did not get breathless at all, not even in a shop, and forgot all about her breathlessness till she came back, and landing at the airport began to choke. A kindly white man, who obviously at some time had breathed black air, helped her to a chair, where she recovered enough to get home in a taxi.

However, after this experience Esmerelda did not seem able to recover and took to her bed, quite ill, gasping for air all the time. Ill as she was though, Esmerelda still worried terribly about her mother and went on listening to the white air waves, which made her nauseous as well as breathless, and one day heard over them that the dream of the country she had been to was quite deliberately being strangled by the white nightmare which had long experience in strangling dreams, and Esmerelda felt full of absolute DREAD. She took a gasp of breath and jumped out of her sickbed and ran through the trees where the air was blacker than black to the green blue black lake and sat on her raven rock. She looked up at the golden black sun, and waited for the silver



black moon and stars to come out, and the only white thing she saw was a gull, and that was black white. So Esmerelda decided to go black too, as for her it was the only way to breathe any more, the only way to resist the white, the only way to be a sister to those women at the gathering, and the only way to heal her mother.

The funny thing was, AND THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY, that nothing seemed to change. She heard no drum roll and say no mountains topple, though she did just hear a flute begin to play.

Nobody started ordering her around and nobody seemed to care. Esmerelda started to clear away some dead wood but the main thing was that she woke in the morning feeling better, and did not get so breathless in the STILL white air.

Esmerelda knew now that the way the white nightmare kept people in white land white, was making them fear black, and that was the trouble. Yet Esmerelda believed in dreams and knew other people in the white did too.



Womnews, Philippines

MATCH

by Cynthia King

MATCH is a Canadian-based women's organization, committed with our Third World Sisters, to a feminist vision of development. Such a vision requires the eradication of all forms of injustice, particularly the exploitation and marginalization of women.

This is the philosophy statement of MATCH International Centre, the first non-governmental organization anywhere in the world, and the only one in Canada, devoted exclusively to promoting the development efforts of women.

MATCH was established by two Canadian women, Norma Walmsley and Suzanne Johnson, following the United Nations International Women's Year conference in Mexico City in 1975. This conference provided a forum for Third World women, especially from Latin America, to voice their concerns about the effects on women of the development programmes being implemented by governments and by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These efforts, which purported to raise the living standards for communities as a whole, were in fact bypassing women and their needs.

Women make up 50% of the world's population and one third of the official labour force. Yet they do 2/3 of the world's work, grow 1/2 of all food-stuffs, earn only 1/10 of the income and own less than 1% of real property. In the rural areas of the Third World the picture is even more grim, 18 hour work days are not uncommon. One result; almost 2/3 of the world's illiterates are women.



International Women's Day

This is the challenge which faced MATCH in the beginning and which continues to challenge the organization as it celebrates its Tenth Anniversary.

During the past decade, it has been very satisfying to see many other non-governmental, governmental and international bodies allocating greater resources to programmes designed to ensure that women participate in and benefit from development programmes. The women's movement in Canada and overseas has changed during this time as well, with the growing realization that we all have much to gain by joining forces with our sisters in other countries. As MATCH's environment changes, we too must adapt and focus our resources for the

greater benefit of women throughout the world.

MATCH has financed, with the support of committed Canadian women and men, a wide variety of activities of Third World women's groups each year: income generation, health promotion, agricultural production, occupational training, awareness building and organizational strengthening. In the future, we will be expanding this form of support to include integrated programmes involving Third World and Canadian women. MATCH programmes will support a variety of activities such as research, publication, training, exchanges and educational tours, and conferences/seminars.

Each programme will be built around a theme identified by the women involved. The themes we are now considering for further development are violence against women, women in the workforce, especially domestic workers and free trade zone workers, the sex trade, including prostitution, pornography and trade in women, women in agriculture and women in the media. We hope that this method of programme development will increase the impact of the work we support.

We want to approach proposed programmes with a view to addressing women's strategic needs and not only women's practical needs. Strategic needs relate to the root causes of women's subordinate status in society - attitudes, laws and practices which discriminate against women. Practical needs result from this discrimination - poor health, illiteracy, poor working conditions, lack of paid employment. It is obviously important to meet such practical needs. MATCH believes, however, that long term change for women can only be brought about if practical and strategic needs are linked in programmes that will challenge the root causes of women's subordination.

MATCH has supported a number of "strategic" projects in the past. For example, in Nicaragua we assisted women in a trade union to identify their special needs. The women received training to prepare them to assume positions of responsibility within the union. In Peru and Mexico MATCH has supported domestic workers to organize to demand fair wages and working conditions. In Zambia, MATCH funds have helped a group of women to examine sex stereotyping in popular songs with a view to improving the image of women.

MATCH embarks upon its second decade knowing that there is still much to do. It is up to women to organize themselves to bring about change - not to replace men and do as they have done, but to achieve an egalitarian society where all seek fairness and have an equal, recognized role to play.



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO STATUS OF WOMEN INITIATIVES 1973-1987



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Ontario
Women's
Directorate

UPCOMING EVENTS

PAY EQUITY AND JOB EVALUATION

One day workshop at Confederation College
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. May 27th
To Register - Contact Patti Bain at 475-6494

NORTHERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Sault Ste Marie, Ontario
Contacts-Elaine Switzman
(705) 736-2324
-Gail Broad
(705) 949-8912(evgs)

Theme - Accepting One Another. A bilingual conference for Native and non-Native women to build a bridge between the three dominant cultures in Northern Ontario.

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION AGAINST FREE TRADE

June 12th 1988

FAMILY LAW SEMINAR

Date to be announced
Kenora, Ontario
For more information contact
Lynn Beak (807) 345-6084

FAMILY LAW SEMINAR

Date to be announced
Sault Ste Marie, Ontario
For more information contact
Lynn Beak (807) 345-6084

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH

November 1988

For the fourth year, grants will be awarded to community groups sponsoring local public education/awareness events. Application forms will be sent to groups next month. If you do not receive an application or would like more information contact Rae Anne Honey, 345-6084

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

November 1988

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

June 1988

For the first time this year, funds have been set aside for organizations to provide public education/awareness in their own community around this issue. Contact Rae Anne Honey at 345-6084 for more information.



OWD COMMUNITY GRANTS

This program continues for 1988/89. The Grants Review Committee meets April 27 to review the first group of applications received. If your organization has a special project in mind which will enrich the economic, legal and social equality of women in your community, please call Rae Anne Honey at 345-6084 for more information and/or an application.

Beginning this year, grants of \$5,000 or less will have a shortened review process which will allow funds to reach you sooner.

ROLE MODELING PROGRAMS

PATHMAKERS and OPEN DOORS are both innovative programs designed to counter sex role stereotyping and promote education equity. These programs work by example and provide information to interest high school girls in a wider range of career options.

PATHMAKER role models are university and college women who are training in the sciences, trades or technology. OPEN DOORS roles are women already working in their chosen fields.

For high school girls about to make crucial curriculum and career choices, role models offer important encouragement and can motivate female students to explore their options and make informed choices.

Role models are available to speak to classes, at career events or participate on panel discussions.

Thanks to a local working committee these programs are in both public and separate school systems.

The Directorate has commissioned a video to encourage potential role models and working committee members to participate in these programs. Next week the production company will be in Thunder Bay and the video should be available by summer.

OWD PUBLICATIONS

CAREER SELECTORS are a series of seven booklets listing career options with education requirements, probable salaries, etc. soon to be available in French

JOB SEARCH is an excellent tool to work through an action plan for women who are planning to enter the workplace for the first time or return after an extended absence.

(English and French)
FREE TRADE AGREEMENT is the Directorate's publication stating the impact on the economic position of women in Ontario.

FAMILY LAW INFORMATION KIT-This kit provides information on recent changes in family law. Available in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Cantonese, Vietnamese, French and English

WOMEN OF ACTION is OWD's new poster celebrating the significant contributions of some Ontario women over the past 140 years. (French and English)

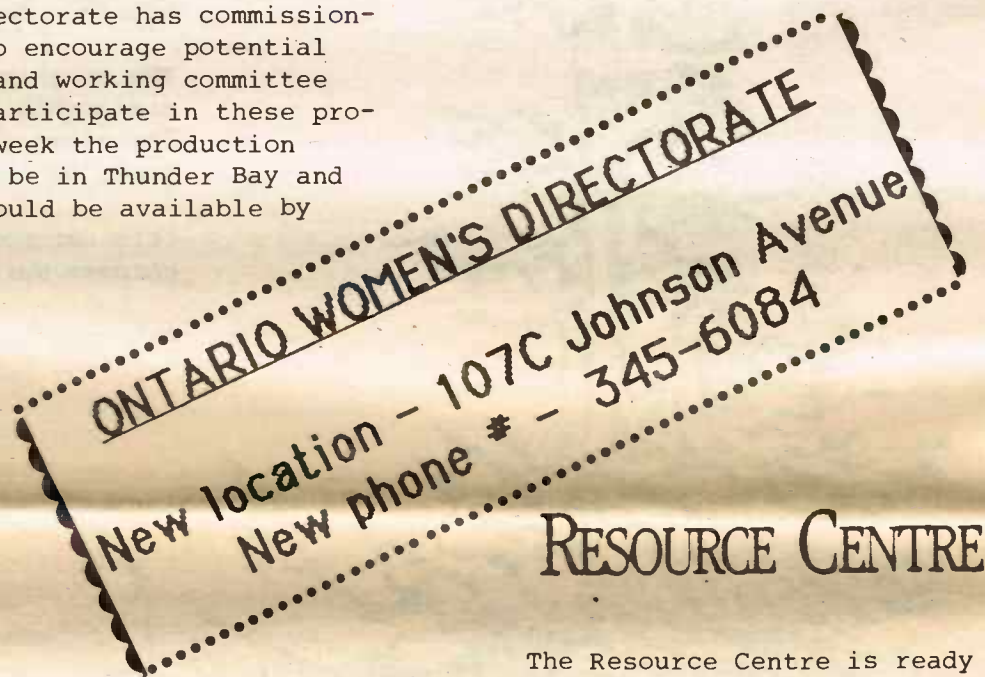
CHANGE AGENT PROJECT REPORTS:
Equity at Work -

Physical Testing Demands
Women in Road Paving
Union/Management Collaboration
Employment Equity for Women;
How Does Your Company Measure Up?
Women into Construction: A Blueprint for Action
Gender Equality Indicator.

CONGRATULATIONS

-to Women's Health Information Network, Northwestern Ontario Regional Child Care Committee and Women's Committee and Thunder Bay District Labour Council. These organizations held conferences recently - all were filled with excellent information, enthusiastic participation and strategizing around the issues.

-to RAE MERCIER and the first Career Counselling Course for Francophone Women graduating class at Confederation College. Thank you for the opportunity to attend the wonderful breakfast ceremony.



RESOURCE CENTRE

The Resource Centre is ready for you! A desk is available to do research in this large, wonderful bright room. Materials may be borrowed for a two week period.

We spent an afternoon at the Northern Women's Bookstore and with Margaret Phillips' help, we have acquired many books. Feminist Theory, Family Violence, Employment, Child Abuse and Native Women are a few of the categories that have these new editions.

Other new additions are:
Immigrant Women in Canada: A Policy Perspective, CACSW, January 1988

Pension Facts for Women - Women Information Group, Red Lake, Ontario Spring 1987

Working Together for Change (3 Volumes) produced by Women's Self-Help Network, Courtenay, B.C.

Access to Trades and Professions in Ontario, Abt Associates, May 1987

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Poetry

SUICIDE

You will not need to cut me.

You think of yourself as a master Sculptor, chiselling a rough block of stone into the image of Perfect Woman. (Remember that the amateur cuts just as deeply, if not always as well.)

I will not make you cut me. I will chisel away at my own personality, destroying that which fails to please you. When I bleed, you can think you are innocent. I will do anything to hold you, give up any part of myself, as long as there is enough left to go on breathing, to go through the motions.

You will not achieve Perfection. You will achieve a miniature not in keeping with the stature of the stone, at best your own chosen image out of all possibilities, a reconstruction limiting the potential of the stone.

Another hand might choose to polish and smooth, enhancing the stone's natural beauty. But you do not appreciate this form. Perfection is not found in nature. Perfection is Man-made.

The rough stone is the vessel of my love. Each cut diminishes the size of the vessel, each cut threatens its strength, its very existence. As the pieces drop away, my love lies fragmented. Will you be angry then?

It's not your fault. Your hands are empty. The changes were mine.

But remember as you walk away: I did it all for you.

Susan Collins



TAPESTRY

EYE BALL TO EYE BALL

He knew her better than she knew herself was his standard weapon for control when her thought deviated from his norm. She could never convince him that stupidity in her was innate and her imagination so gross that she could have thoughts that offended his vision of her. You are good and kind he told her hopefully this is not a person I can love, this bitchy, selfish-malcontent is confused you have been talking to women again. Thus we conceal the person we are to fit the expectations of wishful thinking. Only the male has the legitimate right to be obnoxious within the frame of conversation, so the female can practice her role of forgiveness and understanding. He will have it no other way, the woman glaring at him is an aberration, a stranger to herself, she can't seriously mean to tell him to F... off.

Gert Beadle

A Matter of Choice

Abortion in Canada is legal. We intensely hope that by the time this Journal is in your hands this statement is still true!

Two months have passed since the landmark ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada, which declared Canada's abortion law unconstitutional because it contravened the Canadian Charter of Rights. We have long known that the abortion law, enacted in 1969, was unjust. Politicians have also long known that the abortion law was unjust. Pro-choice representatives, and even the government's own study (the Badgley Report 1977) demonstrated clearly the inequity and injustice of Section 251 of the Criminal Code. But governments could not be moved to repeal the law. Instead they used the smokescreen that the law was a "compromise" between pro-choice and anti-abortion positions. (It is the perspective of this writer that the 1969 law had much more to do with population policy than with accommodating antagonistic positions - but that is the subject of another article.)

Reasoned approaches through the political process failed. Thus, the abortion issue became a legal fight --- a seemingly endless legal fight --- propelled by the extraordinary determination of Dr. Henry Morgentaler, whose committed struggle has culminated in the historic Supreme Court ruling.

What was the basis of the ruling? Section 7 of the Charter of Rights say "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with principles of fundamental justice."

The Supreme Court found that the law violated Section 7 of the Charter ... "Section 251 (of the Criminal Code) clearly interferes with a woman's physical and bodily integrity. Forcing a woman by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a fetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person." (Comments by Chief Justice Brian Dickson and Mr. Justice Antonio Lamer.

These judges further stated "One of the basic tenets of our system of criminal justice is that, when Parliament creates a defence to a criminal charge, the defence should not be illusory or so difficult to attain as to be practically illusory. The procedures and restrictions stipulated in Section 251 for access to therapeutic abortions make the defence illusory resulting in a failure to comply with the principles of fundamental justice."

It is instructive to note that only Madam Justice Bertha Wilson found that "The deprivation of the Section 7 right in this case offends freedom of conscience guaranteed in Section 2(a) of the Charter. The decision whether or not to terminate a pregnancy is essentially a moral decision and in a free and democratic society the conscience of the individual must be paramount to that of the state."

"Section 251 (of the Criminal Code) clearly interferes with a woman's physical and bodily integrity. Forcing a woman by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a fetus to term unless she meets certain criteria... is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person"

Chief Justice Brian Dickson

We must not be lulled by a false hope that the January 28th ruling enshrines that a woman has a constitutional right to determine her reproductive future.

It is important to understand that the abortion law was struck down not because the Court believes that the state does not have a right to interfere with women's right to choose whether to carry a fetus to term, but rather that the state's intervention must be equitable (which it was not under Section 251).

Thus the headlines glaring in every major newspaper - WOMEN GET FREE CHOICE; THE BIGGEST STEP SINCE WOMEN WON THE RIGHT TO VOTE; RULING PLACES ISSUE BETWEEN A PATIENT AND HER DOCTOR have changed. Now we see HNATSHYN PROMISE NEW LAW; MOVE TO CURB SOME ABORTIONS MULRONEY SAYS and ABORTION: TALK ABOUT FREE VOTE.

The euphoric and celebratory response with which we greeted the Supreme Court decision has given way to hard realism. The patriarchy will not tolerate the possibility of women really having CHOICE.

And so the struggle moves again from the courts to the political arena. There is much to suggest that the federal government will move quickly to enact new legislation restricting abortion. The rationale for quick action is to try to make the issue "go away" before the expected fall election. It is not in the best interests of the politicians, we are told, to have women's reproductive rights clutter the election campaign.

The new legislation will seek to be a "compromise". It may be decided by polls or pollsters. (The fact that poll results depend significantly on the way a question is asked can only add to the chaos.) The compromise that is speculated is a pregnancy stage restriction. (You are not a criminal if you abort at 10 weeks, you are a criminal if you abort at 14 weeks?)

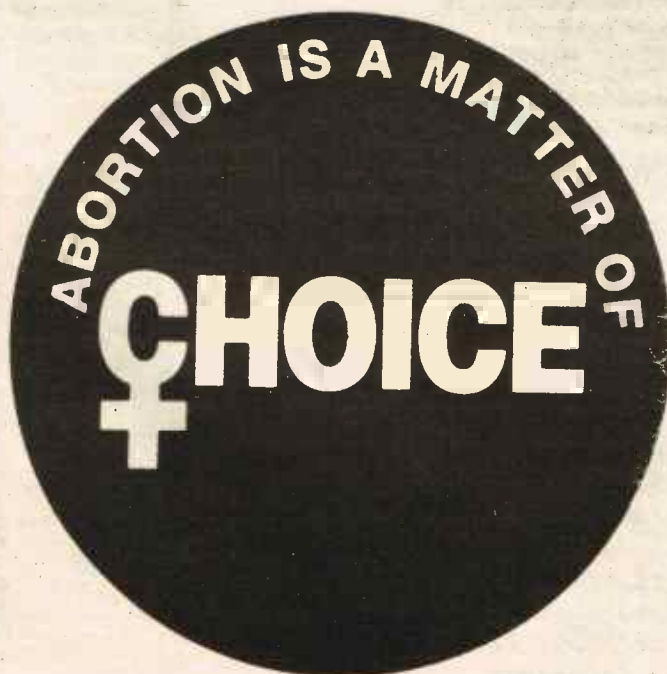
ABORTION IS NOT A CRIMINAL ACT. Our position must be clear and unequivocal. NO LAW is the only acceptable stand.

The issue of choice has not been won. We must again embark on the distasteful process of lobbying our politicians. We must make clear to all politicians that a new abortion law is unnecessary and unacceptable. We must also demand that equitable access to abortion services must be available to all women. We must also continue to press for community-controlled women's health centres that provide comprehensive services.

Finally, we must focus on an integration of reproductive rights within a total economic and social agenda for women. Rape, violence, economic insecurity, day care, employment equity, pensions, reproductive rights, are not separate issues, and we must not let politicians treat them as separate issues ... and in doing so divide us.

The following pages provide a retrospective of the pro-choice movement as we perceive it has evolved. Suggestions are also given for what each of us can do to ensure that freedom of choice becomes a reality for Canadian women.

Abortion is surely the most personal and private decision a woman will ever have to make. How far we are from affording women that privacy. The lawyers, the doctors, the journalists, the politicians, the priests, the pollsters, are certainly having their say and threaten to drown out women's voices. So we must take whatever individual or collective action we can, for until all women are free, none of us are free.



"In this country, access to abortion requires a travel agent - and money." June Callwood (Globe & Mail Dec. 3/86)

"The law has treated women as though they were children who had to be protected from their own irresponsible impulses - and then suddenly noticed that they were all grown up. Now, the judicial door has been pried open wide enough to let the reality of women's lives enter..." Anne Collins (Maclean's Feb. 8/88)

Historical Perspective

excerpted from an article in
BROADSIDE Volume 2 #4, 1981

In all societies throughout history abortion has been part of women's experience. Women have always attempted to control their reproductive capacities regardless of societal controls or sanctions. Several factors determine the status of abortion in a particular culture at a given time: the definition of the beginning of life, the perception of ideal population size, and the influence of the medical profession.

Until the late 19th century no society punished abortion in the early stages of pregnancy. The Greek city states and ancient Rome made abortion the basis of a well-ordered population policy. Christianity infused the fetus with a soul but debated for eighteen centuries exactly when the fetus became animated by the soul, thereby making abortion a serious crime. Early Christian theologians defined the beginning of life as 40 days after conception for a male fetus, and 90 days after conception for a female fetus, although no methods of sex determination were specified. By the 13th century abortion was tolerated as a less serious sin

up until the time of "quickening", usually the fifth month when a woman could feel the fetus move. It wasn't until the mid 19th century that the Roman Catholic Church tightened up its official stand against abortion. Pope Leo XIII at that time declared life to begin at conception and as a result abortion became defined as murder.

This decision was rationalized in a number of ways. First, a mid 19th century wave of humanitarianism pressed for abortion laws to protect women from infection and death at the hands of male medical practitioners. Until antiseptic techniques became prevalent, an abortion in the first three months of pregnancy was 10 to 15 times more dangerous than delivery at full term (today legal abortions are one-eighth as dangerous as childbirth at full term). Second, biologists began to understand conception, and women were therefore able to practice more effective birth control - a good motive for tightening of abortion laws. This had ramifications for all countries where large families were essential to farming communities. Third, and much more subtle, English puritanism flourished in the 19th century and espoused the idea, still current today

that sex for pleasure was bad, that pregnancy was a punishment for pleasure, and that fear of pregnancy would reinforce degenerating modern morals. It was in 1873 that a US federal law

banned from the mails all literature, medicine or article to do with contraception or abortion. The 20th century has seen a series of movements directed toward the repeal of the 19th century laws prohibiting abortion.

Access to abortion in any culture is directly related to its economic needs and therefore to its perception of an ideal population size. Historically, nomadic peoples have always limited their population by whatever means available, yet in pre-industrial agricultural societies large families were an economic asset and abortion more difficult to obtain.

A major influence on access to abortion was the emergence of the male medical profession. Until the development of scientific medicine in the late 18th and 19th centuries a wide range of healers performed medical tasks. The female "witch healer" and midwife played important roles in the community. As European medicine became firmly established as a secular science, it was increasingly threatened by women healers, and the profession played an active role in the witch trials which spanned more than four centuries. By the 18th century male practitioners had also made inroads into the last preserve of female healing - midwifery. The invention of forceps enabled male professionals to claim that a surgical instrument must be used by experts. The job of the midwife - who had been, for most women, the only source of information on childbearing, contraception and abortion - was narrowed in scope, downgraded and confined to the women of the poor. Matters of reproduction among the middle and upper classes was transformed into a lucrative business and remains so today.

*It would be great to celebrate
this lifting of an ancient curse
two thousand years and more of tyranny
without recourse to law or purse
It would be nice to say "it's over"
for the deed was truly done
when justice met intelligence
democracy for us was won*

BUT

*This is not about abortion as much
as power and the pre-eminence of male seed
over nine months of female gestation
It is about religious fascism in our time
and two thousand years of Christian misogyny
rooted in its interpretation of sexual
pleasure as illicit and evil unless
it replenished the earth.
It's about race and the reluctance of white
women to reproduce on command for the fathers
It's about ownership and Dominion over
that crumbling dynasty of church and state
and the separation of these two monoliths
And it is primarily about those who choose
not to know the reality of our lives
That dark night of the soul with the
trauma of decision and the challenge of
personal responsibility as free women
It is about the sold outs harassing the hold outs
and the concealed anger of the sold for
a choice they resisted that resorts them
to a noisy demonstration of superior morality
and finally it's about moving in the direction
Of each other for nourishment and bonding
as free women in common.*

SO

*It would be nice to celebrate the
rising consciousness of the Supreme court
Paying Homage to the female input.
Those who have not paid their dues to innocence
will continue to harass the court and
kiss the shoe of their oppressors
We have better things to do with our lives
than return the harassment of ignorance
we choose to turn the other cheek.*

Gert Beadle



from KINESIS

"The only time you're sure what abortion is is when you're pregnant."
Marion Powell, Bay Centre for Birth Control worker.

Pro-Choice .. Thunder Bay

The history of the pro-choice movement in Thunder Bay begins in the late 60s with the formation of the Women's Liberation Group, who considered reproductive rights a high priority and concerned themselves with both political action and direct service. The group organized the Birth Control Clinic, which operated at the University. An early press release indicates the Clinic distributed free pamphlets on birth control and venereal disease (remember the Birth Control Handbook?), made library resources available to the public, gave speeches to "improve community awareness" and provided counselling on birth control and abortion.

An April 1971 Chronicle-Journal article on the Clinic indicates "400 local women have arranged to obtain abortions since January" and ... "Although an estimated 6% of these abortions are performed in local hospitals and are classed 'therapeutic' the greatest number are referred to New York where abortions are legal."

The Clinic became the local chapter of the Canadian Women's Coalition to Repeal the Abortion Laws (presumably a forerunner of CARAL). Historic files (which make fascinating reading) illustrate the extensive network that existed amongst birth control clinics. Petitions abounded. Articles were written. Abortion study guides were produced. Politicians were lobbied.

And then there was the Abortion Caravan's journey through Thunder Bay. Beginning on the west coast the Abortion Caravan travelled across the country gathering support and momentum for their Ottawa protest of the abortion law (1970). Meetings were organized along the way and Caravan members and local women gave personal testimony to the need to repeal the law. Apparently the Caravan's western stops had been supportive but uneventful... the gatherings mostly committed pro-choicers. Then they reached Thunder Bay. The Women's Liberation Group in their enthusiasm and idealism had widely promoted a public meeting... and the crowds came ... the small basement church hall was overflowing ...

primarily with pro-choice supporters, but including a small, vocal group of anti-choice women and their "brothers" who persistently disrupted the meeting's agenda. Apparently frustrated by the pro-choice speakers calmness and logic, the anti-abortionists broke up the meeting with a vitriolic display of verbal abuse... which spilled out into the streets where deflammatory accusations of a personal nature nearly caused a riot. Totally stunned by this amazing experience the Abortion Caravan continued on to Ottawa apparently blanking out this experience as the Thunder Bay stop is omitted from all of the Caravan's historical accounts. Women's Liberation meanwhile matured their political sophistication.

The value of the Birth Control Clinic cannot be overstated. For more than three years it provided a supportive and necessary service. But key organizers moved on and the Clinic phased out.

Impetus for pro-choice activism surged again following the 1973 Northern Women's Conference. An unstructured pro-choice group met regularly from 1974 on, and became an official CARAL chapter in 1979, and have been involved in public education, political activism, as well as providing support to individual women.

The Northern Woman Journal has also played a significant role. Since its birth in 1973, the Journal has been an on-going vehicle for up-to-date information about the pro-choice movement locally and nationally.

The mid/late 70s saw the beginning of a structured anti-choice movement in Thunder Bay, with local Right to Life, Birthright, and (later) Campaign Life groups organizing. It is instructive to note that while the early anti-choice activities were developed by women, recent leadership is predominantly male.

The early work of the anti-choice group focussed heavily on speaking to school groups, and on lobbying federal politicians. This lobby has been intensified since the Supreme Court ruling.

(Anti-choicers seem to love to demonstrate. CARAL was able to counteract one rather nasty picket, when CARAL presented Iona Camponola, then president of the Liberal Party, with a bouquet of roses, thus defusing the pickets' unpleasantness to Camponola, who supports choice.)

It is instructive to note that the more recent anti-choice focus is opposition to a variety of women's services. (See article on Women's Centre, NWJ Vol. 10 #1) Feminism is now the target. This "anti-woman" movement must be clearly understood.

Access to abortion for Northwestern Ontario women has always been restricted, and heavily dependent on geography and economic status. Only Thunder Bay and Kenora hospitals had therapeutic abortion committees, leaving women hundreds of miles from an abortion service. The problems encountered in accessing service here have made it necessary for many NWO women to travel to Minneapolis or Duluth. While these free standing abortion clinics have provided excellent and supportive services, the cost has been prohibitive for some women.

The lack of access, the T.A.C. hassles, the delays, and, in some cases, insensitive treatment of abortion patients, has been all too evident in Northwestern Ontario. Consequently, support increases, not only for de-criminalizing abortion, but for the provision of community-controlled women's health centres, including abortion services. Only with such centres will there be the assurance of the sensitive and supportive environment that women undergoing an abortion need.

For more information about local pro-choice activities, write CARAL, Box 3134, Thunder Bay.

LIFE IN THE VALLEY

Sometimes the smoke makes it hard to breathe in this valley, they must be burning the heretics in the hills this week. Some poor woman stripped and thrown to the christains must have had a mole on her back-side and more intelligence than is allowed in the kingdom. I try to stay down wind, God wants them to roast a gay next week. Memory is so short it seems like only yesterday we threw them to the lions.

Gert Beadle

"As far as our responsibilities are concerned we intend to provide the leadership that is required on this issue."

Federal Justice Minister Ramon Hnatshyn, Feb 2, 1988. Globe and mail.

"We must support legislators who protect us from complicity in the moral crime of abortion."

Archbishop James Carney Feb 11, 1988, Vancouver Sun.

I have been made aware by many Albertans that they resent having their taxes used to pay for abortions when these are done with contraception irresponsibly being conceived in the joy of sex.

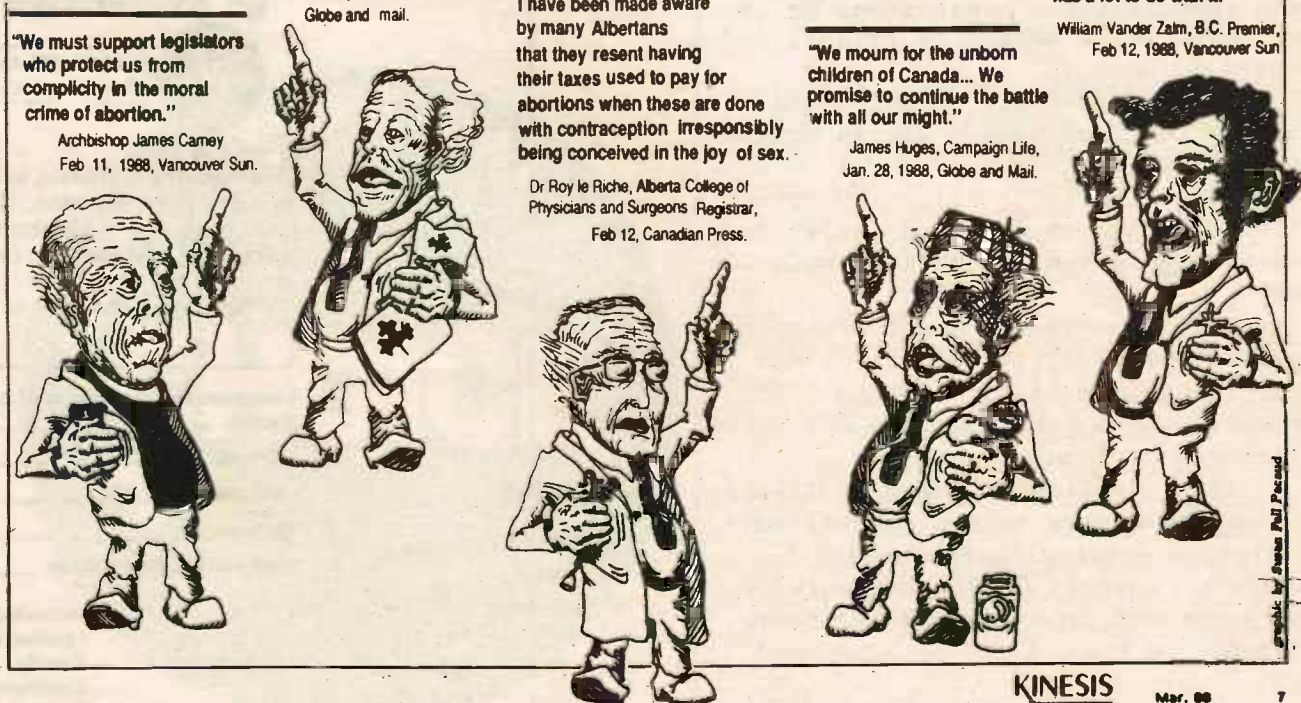
Dr Roy le Riche, Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons Registrar, Feb 12, Canadian Press.

"We mourn for the unborn children of Canada... We promise to continue the battle with all our might."

James Huges, Campaign Life, Jan. 28, 1988, Globe and Mail.

"There are any number of reasons for abortion but in broad terms selfishness has a lot to do with it."

William Vander Zalm, B.C. Premier, Feb 12, 1988, Vancouver Sun



KINESIS

Mar. 88

7

CHILDBIRTH BY CHOICE

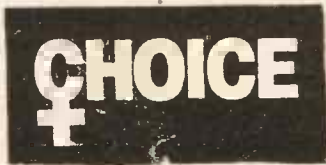
Childbirth by choice means freedom of choice in planning one's family.

It means a woman should not be pressured to bear a child against her will.

It means a woman should not be pressured to have an abortion against her will.

CARAL believes that women should have the freedom to choose whether or not to continue an unplanned, undesired pregnancy.

Our position is the one taken in the United Nations Human Rights Declaration of 1968 (signed by Canada): "Every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education and means to do so."



The Law That Was

The following is the relevant portion of Section 251 of the Criminal Code that was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada.

251(1) Everyone who, with intent to procure the miscarriage of a female person, whether or not she is pregnant, uses any means for the purpose of carrying out his intention is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for life.

(2) Every female person who, being pregnant, with intent to procure her own miscarriage, uses any means or permits any means to be used for the purpose of carrying out her intention is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for two years.

(3) In this section "means" includes:

- (a) the administration of a drug or other noxious thing
- (b) the use of an instrument, and
- (c) manipulation of any kind.

Exceptions (4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to

(a) a qualified medical practitioner, other than a member of a therapeutic abortion committee for

any hospital who in good faith use in an accredited or approved hospital any means for the purpose of carrying out his intention to procure the miscarriage of a female person, or

(b) a female person who, being pregnant, permits a qualified medical practitioner to use in an accredited or approved hospital any means described in paragraph (a) for the purpose of carrying out her intention to procure her own miscarriage, if before the use of those means, the therapeutic abortion committee for that accredited or approved hospital, by a majority of the members of the committee and at a meeting of the committee at which the case of such female person was reviewed,

(c) has by certificate in writing stated that in its opinion the continuation of the pregnancy of such female person would or would be likely to endanger her life or health, and

(d) has caused a copy of such certificate to be given to the qualified medical practitioner.

Morgentaler's Struggle

The 1969 Canadian abortion law has been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada. This culminates nearly twenty years of legal battles by Dr. Henry Morgentaler. The chronology of this struggle is:

1968 Morgentaler performs his first illegal abortion in Montreal.

1969 Parliament amends the Criminal Code (which previously prohibited all abortions). Abortion remains illegal unless approved by a therapeutic abortion committee for an accredited or approved hospital.

1970 Charges of performing an illegal abortion are laid against Morgentaler at his Montreal clinic.

1973 A Quebec jury acquits Morgentaler on the 1970 charges.

1974 The Quebec Appeal Court overturns Morgentaler's acquittal and substitutes a conviction. He is sentenced to 18 months in prison, and serves 10 months.

1975 In a split decision the Supreme Court of Canada denies Morgentaler's appeal.

1975 (While in prison) Morgentaler is tried on a second charge in Quebec and is again acquitted by a jury.

1976 The Quebec Court of Appeal upholds Morgentaler's acquittal and accepts his use of the defense of necessity as a justification for terminating a pregnancy.

1976 Parliament makes it illegal for appeal courts to (in future) substitute a conviction for a jury acquittal. (Appeal Courts can only order a retrial, not reverse a jury decision.

1976 The federal Justice Minister orders a new trial on the (first) abortion charges. For a third time Morgentaler is acquitted by a Quebec jury.

1976 (Dec.) The Quebec government decides the abortion law is not enforceable and drops all outstanding charges against Morgentaler.

1983 Morgentaler opens a Clinic in Winnipeg in May, which is closed after police raid the Clinic. Morgentaler and eight others are charged with "conspiring to procure a miscarriage of females."

1983 The Harbord St. Clinic opened in Toronto in June. In July Dr. Morgentaler, Dr. Robert Scott and Dr. Leslie Smoling are arrested and charged.

1984 The Ontario Supreme Court rejects the doctors contention that Canada's abortion law violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

1984 (Nov.) An Ontario jury acquits the doctors. (The Ontario government later appeals.)

1985 The Ontario Court of Appeal orders a new trial. Morgentaler and colleagues appeal the order to the Supreme Court of Canada.

1986 (Oct.) The Supreme Court concludes its hearings.

1988 (January 28) The Supreme Court rules in favour of Morgentaler declaring the Canadian abortion law unconstitutional.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE



CANADIAN ABORTION RIGHTS ACTION LEAGUE (CARAL)
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR LE DROIT A L'AVORTEMENT (ACAUA)



The Purpose of CARAL is to ensure that no woman in Canada is denied access to safe, legal abortion. Our aim is the repeal of all sections of the Criminal Code dealing with abortion and the establishment of comprehensive contraceptive and abortion services, including appropriate counselling across the country.

"We regard the right to safe, legal abortion as a fundamental human right."

I support the statement of purpose of CARAL and wish to become a member.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Occupation: _____

Name of Federal Riding: _____

Individual Member	\$10.00
Limited Income	\$3.00
Family	\$15.00
Sustaining	\$25.00
Donation	\$ _____

RETURN TO: CARAL, Box 3134, Thunder Bay, Ont.
P7B 5G6

The Case Against Criminal Sanctions

excerpts from a position paper produced by the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, March 1988

ABORTION AND HEALTH

The world over, modern thinking on abortion is moving away from focusing on criminality and towards focusing on the health of women and their families. Abortion is properly seen as a matter of health; no woman should face criminal charges for making a decision which furthers her physical or mental health.... Just as there is no legislation governing other medical procedures and the decision for medical care is based on good medical practice, the decision to have or not have an abortion should be left to a woman and her doctor.... We encourage people to take responsibility for their own health; taking such initiative should not result in the laying of criminal charges.

At all stages of pregnancy a woman's life or health must be protected above all else.

Even under s.251 there was no gestational limits on the performing of abortions, and for good reason - namely, that at all stages of pregnancy, a woman's life or health must be protected above all else. Nonetheless, some people are under the impression that new legislation must be enacted in order to restrict abortions in the later stages of pregnancy.

But, just as there were no limits under the old law, it is not necessary to have a new law prescribing limitations according to the length of the pregnancy. The huge percentage of abortions are performed within the first 12 weeks of gestation. Statistics Canada figures for 1985 indicate that only 0.2 percent of abortions are performed after 20 weeks. There is no reason to believe that these numbers would increase without a new criminal procedure.

There are a number of reasons why abortions are sought after the first trimester. Lack of access to service may cost a woman valuable time; money may be a problem; young women do not know that they are pregnant. The anti-choice movement itself puts obstacles in the way of women

obtaining an early termination: they set up phony clinics which delay a woman's search for abortion, they harass women at legitimate clinics, and they de-insure the procedure under provincial medical schemes, thereby forcing women to search for money to pay for the abortion.

Most importantly, however, a woman receives a late-term abortion because a pregnancy endangers her life or health or because severe fetal abnormality has been diagnosed. Conditions which are a threat to a woman's life include cancer, heart failure, hypertension, uncontrolled diabetes, suicidal depression, and AIDS. Amniocentesis, by which fetal abnormalities such as Down's Syndrome, Tay-Sachs disease and anencephaly are diagnosed, cannot be performed until the 16th week of pregnancy and it may take until the 19th week to make a diagnosis; then comes the search for access to the procedure, and more delay is introduced.

The answer to later abortion is not further restrictions - the answer is access early on in the pregnancy. Sex education and birth control counselling reduce the need for abortion per se but also reduce the number of late abortions. Ready access to an abortion facility eliminates delay. And full insurance coverage means that women must not spend time looking for money to pay for the procedure. Thus, people who oppose these measures are, in fact, contributing to the incidence of later abortions.

Finally, however, there will always be a need for later terminations if women's lives and health are to be protected and if a woman or a couple is to be allowed to choose whether or not to bear a handicapped child. And this is a decision that must be made by a woman in consultation with her doctor. Where a doctor is uncertain as to what constitutes the best medical practice under the circumstances, he or she will seek an opinion from another doctor - the usual practice for any medical procedure. There is no need to reinforce this practice with criminal sanctions.

and tell them that abortion is not a criminal act and that the government must not enact new criminal legislation on abortion. Make your views known now. Send a copy of your letter to your local MP. Remember that postage is not required on letters to the federal government.

You can also join CARAL and work with them to ensure Canadian women do have freedom of choice. Send your membership to CARAL, Box 3134, Thunder Bay, P7B 5G6

ABORTION AND THE LAW

Aftermath of the Supreme Court of Canada Decision

It is not accurate to say that there is now no abortion law. The Criminal Code still retains s252, which prohibits the supplying of a drug, instrument, or other "noxious thing" to procure an abortion. This section can be used to prosecute back-alley abortionists. Provincial regulation also remains: all provinces have legislation which prohibits the practice of medicine by people who are not doctors and establishes good medical standards for doctors. (In Ontario this legislation is called the Health Disciplines Act.)

There is no need for special legislative provisions governing abortion alone of all medical procedures.

There is, therefore, no need for special legislative provisions governing abortion alone of all medical procedures. A doctor who is uncertain as to the proper practice in a given instance will consult another doctor for a second opinion. This is done routinely in medical practice; it is not necessary to mandate such consultation in the case of abortion.

Finally, if section 251 were replaced, the provision would have all the same problems as s. 251 had: the standards would be vague and would vary from place to place; the system would inevitably cause delays; and juries may well again refuse to convict doctors who believe that this is a bad way to practice medicine. Moreover, the law would have to take account of exceptions - termination would still have to be allowed to protect the life or health of the woman. Such a law would, in the final analysis, only create delays for women and make abortions even later.

Abortion and Health Care Insurance

After the Supreme Court of Canada decision, some provinces used that decision as an excuse to limit coverage of abortion. ...The practice of de-insuring an important health care service must be stopped.

Under the Canada Health Act, the federal government contributes money to the provincial health care insurance plans if these plans meet certain criteria, among them comprehensiveness, universality, and accessibility. Where a plan does not satisfy these criteria, Cabinet is empowered under the Act to withhold all or some of the contributions it makes into that plan. Clearly the federal government must use this power to withhold funds from provinces seeking to de-insure contraceptive and abortion services (as, indeed, they withheld funds from provinces which allowed doctors to extra-bill). Similarly, provincial politicians must be convinced that their mandate does not permit them to deny essential health care to its taxpayers.

What You Can Do

What can you do? You can write a letter, send a telegram, or telephone:

Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

and

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn
Minister of Justice
Justice Building
Kent & Wellington Sts.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H8

Update

New Women's Resources

The National Film Board of Canada is offering a workshop titled Transforming Myths; Using Film To See Ourselves in New Ways. This workshop is for those interested in Women's changing image and changing women's image. It offers an opportunity to view the sexist myths which film has historically reinforced and to re-write the script. Clips from 42 years on National Film Board films along with appropriate group exercises enable participants to experience how to transform limiting myths into positive images through the medium of film. The workshop which features a 27 minute film titled Images of Women in National Film Board Films 1945-1987, has earned high praise from educators, film/video makers, and community groups.

How to book the workshop!

In the West

Marion Dodds
#4-31 West 11th St.
Vancouver, BC
V5Y 1S6

In the East

Rosemary Sullivan
1965 St. Armand Rd.
Pigeon Hill, Que.
JOJ 1T0

Aids and Female Genital Mutilation Campaign-Annual Review.

Hanna Edemkpong, Nigeria, West Africa

Dear Sisters:

The campaign we launched against Aids and the practice of female genital mutilation in November 1986 has reached one year of age. The campaign was launched because of the staggering figure of Aids carriers in Africa, moreover, the overwhelming majority of western victims are male homosexuals and intravenous drug users who share dirty hypodermic needles, but the reverse is true in Africa where the majority are women. Moreover, recent research findings have confirmed that the practice of female genital mutilation opens genital sores and as a result of these operations as well as other sexual practices by men that may result in lacerations and the flow of blood in the genital area an easy gateway is provided for Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted diseases to enter the bloodstream where they rapidly multiply among white cells, thus Aids has many opportunities to reach women in Africa. In addition, the campaign was prompted by our profound belief that while most of our African women are suffering under ignorance of traditional practices and dying of diseases is because of lack of practical information that could change their lives. Apart from raising the issues of female genital mutilation and Aids at International

Conferences by some African women there has been very little of no local initiative to stop the practice and the widespread of Aids.

As a self help, non-governmental women's organization with limited funds, our greatest problem has been lack of funds to run the campaign. Thus we had to make appeals to concerned women, feminist and women's bodies, groups and organizations to come to our urgent help. Although a majority of women who read our appeals failed to respond, few concerned women responded by way of donations. By this support, we were able to cover over 100,000 square kilometres of our countryside and had been able to meet with 5 million rural women whom we dissuaded to partake in the practice of female genital mutilation and spread of Aids. All the women we met have shown penitence and willingness to refrain from the practice in order to safeguard themselves against Aids. We have also contacted 2 million women by radio and television and another 1 million by newspaper and literatures. Arrangements have also been completed for the launching of the campaign in other African Countries in 1988 if we have enough financial support from our friends.

I wish on behalf of myself and all our women to express our profound appreciation and gratefulness to all of you and all women who concerned themselves with our plight and contributed in cash and kind for the running of our campaign through which we were able to make such tremendous progress. We have been very much encouraged by your support and solidarity in our uphill walk towards the emancipation of our women from ignorance and disease. We wish to appeal to all of you that our task is such that cannot be accomplished overnight therefore we hope that you will endeavour to give us more support in 1988 so that we may be able to cover our budgetary deficit of \$25,000 in our 1988 budget proposals of our campaign programme.

Once again, we thank all of you who contributed towards the success of our programme this past year in the interest of international feminism; for those who act to solve problems one small step will make the decade a success not those who spend their time planning and programming the sector.

For sending of donations or inquiries write to: Hanna Edemkpong Women's Centre, Box 185, Eket, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, West Africa.

In Sisterhood,

Hanna Edemkpong

National Women's Studies Association 1988 Annual Conference will be hosted by the University of Minnesota June 22-26, 1988, in Minneapolis. The NWSA conference, "Leadership and Power: Women's Alliances for Social Change," will explore culturally diverse leadership models and empowerment among women. Over 1,500 women are expected to at-

tend the 10th annual NWSA conference and to celebrate the Association's 11th anniversary. Three conference plenary will highlight American Indian, international and lesbian issues.

"American Indian Women: Diverse Leadership for Social Change," will feature American Indian women authors, a lawyer and an activist in Indian health issues.

"Alliances for Social Change: International Voices," will feature women from developing countries who will discuss networks and issues common to many women in rural communities.

"Lesbian Alliances: Combating Heterosexism in the 80s" will feature noted lesbian authors, artists and activists who will discuss cultural, economic, racial and sexual factors perpetuating heterosexism.

There will be 250 workshops and many cultural events scheduled for the conference including a book exhibit, intercultural exhibitions and entertainers.

For further information contact NWSA '88 Conference Office 237 Nolte Center 315 Pillsbury Drive S.E. Minneapolis, MN 55455-0139 (612)625-8803

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT - Quebec City, April 21, 1988. From November 13, 1988, some 500 women from all over Canada, United-States, South America, Europe, Asia and Africa as we will gather in Quebec City to discuss on the theme "Women and Development". This event, organized by the GREMF (Groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire féministe) of Laval University will be in fact the 12th Symposium of the Canadian Institute for Research on Women.

Participants will be offered the opportunity to discuss about their lives as women as well as the different development means at their disposal: equal employment opportunity, community programs, etc.

Anyone interested in subjects related to woman activities and their concerns, is invited to attend the symposium which will constitute an interesting platform for the benefit and personal development of women on the Canadian scene and beyond. On the other hand, the event will allow participants to set up new solidarity networks, whereas a program of cultural activities will favor the meeting of participants on an informal basis.

French and English simultaneous translation will be available as various services to handicapped people.

For registration, please contact: Service des communications, Faculté des sciences sociales, bureau 3446, pavillon Charles-De Koninck, Université Laval, tél: (418)656-2832.

International Feminist Book Fair

The 3rd International Feminist Book Fair will be held in Montreal, June 14-19, 1988. This is the first time the Book Fair has been held in North America.

Two hundred of the world's finest writers will be gathering in Montreal this summer to read their work, debate the crucial feminist issues of the 1980's. A rare opportunity for the Canadian public to discover writers who are household names in their own country but largely unknown to North American readers the Third International Feminist Book Fair will feature: Miriam Tlali, South Africa's only published Black woman novelist, still living in Soweto; Angelica Gorodischer, prize-winning Argentinian author of fantasy and fiction; Nell McCafferty, a leading Irish journalist whose outspoken views have recently been muzzled under Ireland's state security laws.

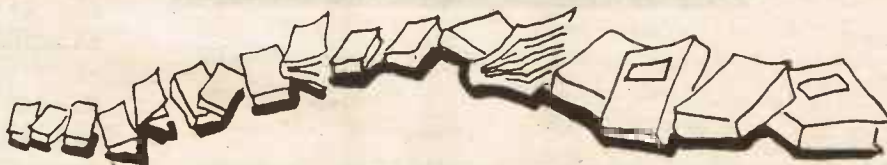
A biennial celebration of women's writing, the Feminist Book Fair was first held in London in 1984, then in Oslo two years later. The Montreal edition promises to repeat these two earlier outstanding successes with panels on: Writing as a dangerous profession; Eroticism; Feminism and Islam; Feminism in North American Native traditions; Pornography and Prostitution; Dreams, magic and symbolism in Latin American literature; Women confront the Medical Establishment; Mystery and Sci-Fi: Redefining Violence?; Censorship; Poetry is also a weapon; Writing in Exile.

The Fair has also generated a series of parallel events including art exhibits, theatre, performance, music and other entertainment to add to the festivities.



Combining commerce and culture, the Fair brings together publishers, writers, booksellers and related professionals with the aim of expanding the feminist book industry.

For more information about the Fair contact the Northern Woman's Bookstore, 344-7979.



Book Womb Travels to Fair

Have books, will travel and Winnipeg's elusive wimmin's book service are both key phrases which describe THE BOOK WOMB. Since its conception in 1985 THE BOOK WOMB has grown and changed in ways that reflect the spirit of its partners, Jahnet Hewsick and Shirley Walker. The values, interests and needs of the wimmin's community are reflected by our ever-increasing and diverse stock of feminist and lesbian writings. We also carry a selection of records, tapes, cards, buttons, postcards and crafts - all wommon-made.

Mobility is a key asset and so is The Wombmobile. In June, THE BOOK WOMB will take to the open highway/congested freeways as it travels to Montreal to be part of the 3rd International Feminist Book Fair. Jahnet will be taking her pretty silver mini-van (dubbed the Wombmobile) to seven eastern cities - Thunder Bay, London, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa and Montreal. Each of these cities is home to a wimmin's bookstore which Jahnet will be visiting to promote the Book Fair. She will also be having a workshop at the Fair for those interested in the concept of going mobile with books.

The BOOK WOMB herstory begins in 1984 with five wimmin meeting on a regular basis to talk about starting up a wimmin's bookstore in Winnipeg. The only other wimmin's bookstore in Winnipeg had been Brigid's Books. It had been housed in the Women's Building and when the Building closed its doors in 1983, feminist and lesbian literature became scarce again. The five of us were avid readers and book buyers. We liked to travel and to attend feminist conferences and when we went to such places as Toronto, Vancouver, Minneapolis and the Michigan Women's Music Festival we always "hit" the local wimmin's bookstore to stock up. For

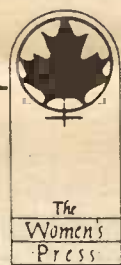
us and many other wimmin, the importance of feminist and lesbian literature that reflects and validates our lives, as well as challenging us to grow and change, is crucial to our lives. And we wanted to have access to this literature in Winnipeg. We didn't have much money but we were flush with ideas. So began the process of endless discussions around the issues of structure, philosophy, time and energy commitments... and of course how to get the financial resources to make this a reality. Because of other commitments three of the original five founding mothers withdrew from the BOOK WOMB.

The first opportunity to display and sell books publicly came at the Canadian Women's Music and Cultural Festival in August of 1985. It was fun and exciting and the response by those who attended the Festival was very enthusiastic. Since then the BOOK WOMB has been present at many wimmin's conferences and special events.

The original idea of having a store has more and more given way to the idea of a book service that travels around, making books available to wimmin who don't have regular access to a bookstore. THE BOOK WOMB has travelled to The Pas, Thompson, and Saskatoon. Travelling and meeting new and diverse wimmin are wonderful side benefits to the business of selling books.

Sometime, somewhere, Jahnet envisages a permanent location. But for now, "the gypsy in my soul, gets to have her fun".

Jahnet and THE BOOK WOMB will be visiting Thunder Bay in early June on their way to the International Feminist Book Fair. Contact the Northern Woman's Bookstore for more information.



Lesbian writers!

Fiction
Non-fiction
Erotica
Poetry
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BOOK REVIEW:

LIONHEART GAL by Sistren with Honor Ford Smith, The Women's Press (U.K.)

reviewed by MARGARET PHILLIPS

"Without life, our lives must go on.
Without hope, we're not hopeless.
Without education, we shall be
educated.
Without food, we shall be fed.
Without a home we shall be sheltered.
Without a reality, we shall emerge
from captivity.
Without all we can stand tall, firm
and strong
in what we believe in."

These few lines from a poem, 'Won't Go Without' by Barbara (p140) illustrate the spirit of LIONHEART GAL. The stories the Sistren tell are filled with courage, with strength, with wisdom, with dignity.

I have been trying to review LIONHEART GAL for more than six months. I opened the book and could not put it down. I start my review. I read... I write.... I pause to reflect... I re-read a story... I re-read the introduction. I put my review aside... come back to it again and again. I am so incredibly moved by this writing but I simply cannot find the words to do it justice.

LIONHEART GAL is compelling because we HEAR the voices of the women speaking. This is real. These are oral her-stories put to print, of fifteen Jamaican women sharing their experience --- their experience of exploitation, oppression, isolation, poverty, -- of work, of health, of sexual initiation, of child bearing and rearing, of relationships, of violence. And of the evolving politicized collective awareness of these women.

"(we) talk about woman and work and woman and politics. We discuss what is politics and how it affect woman. After we done talk ah get to feel dat di little day-to-day tings dat happen to we as women, is politics too. For instance, if yuh tek yuh pickney to hospital and it die in yuh hand - dat is politics.... If yuh man box yuh down, dat is politics. But plenty politicians don't tink dose tings have anything to do wid politics." (p253)

WHAT'S NEW IN THE BOOKSTORE

More and more wonderful women's literature pours off the presses. Here is just a small sampling.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: Aboriginal Women Speak Out as told to Janet Silman... "I think what really kept us going is our determination to seek what is rightfully ours.... We were fighting for our BIRTHRIGHT."

A PASSION FOR FRIENDS: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection, by Janice G. Raymond... "A challenging new theory of female friendship as the basis for feminist purpose, passion and politics.



cover detail from Lionheart Gal

from KINESIS

In 1977 a group of working class women from an employment program came together and talked about doing a play... "We want to do plays about how we suffer as women. We want to do plays about how men treat us bad"... So the Sistren collective was born, and has since gained international recognition for its use of theatre and popular education.

While the introduction to the book describes the premise and process of the Sistren collective, the impact of Sistren comes clearest from the words of the women themselves.

"When we form di group ah began to meet and talk wid odder women. Ah hear dem experience and ah hear dem view. We sit and talk we problem. We improvise and mek plays. After a time we start draw pictures too. After doing dese creative work, we always discuss. Dat is how ah come to find out how and why certain tings happen in me life, how ah can work on di problems and how ah can make it better."

"We are planning to do a play... based on our experiences as women from the ghetto. We come together and talk our life story and put it in a lickle scene. The rehearsals make all of us think about our lives. Me did really pass through plenty. Dem should a have some process fi help girls to know what to expect when dem turn woman."

MYTHS OF GENDER: Biological Theories About Women and Men, by Anne Fausto-Sterling... "required reading for all who would understand the sexual politics of science".

THE SECRET TRAUMA: Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women, by Diana E. Russell... "will be invaluable in helping to combat the denial of incestuous abuse and remediate its effects".

WOMEN AND SELF-ESTEEM: Understanding and Improving the Way We Think and Feel About Ourselves, by Linda Tschirhart Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan.

Lots of fiction for your leisurely summer reading as well.

CHILD OF HER PEOPLE, by Anne Cameron.

"We create our own material. All me do is just look back in me life, focus on a lickle situation just paint di picture natural and pretty in words and movement. All life, me did haffi act in order to survive. Di fantasies and ginnalsh were ways of coping wid di frustration. Now me can put dat pain on s and mek fun a di people who cause

The book evolved from a planned documentation of the theatre collective to be introduced by testimony from the Sistren. But the testimony "would not sit neatly into an introductory section. They refused to become supporting evidence of predetermined factors... so we gave up trying to silence them..." Consequently we have this book of remarkable stories.

As can be seen (from quotes above) many of the women's stories are written in Patwah, which initially makes difficult reading. It is worth the time it takes to study the glossary become familiar with the terms. Also you will soon find that the rhythm of the writing helps you to transcend language difficulties.

The importance of writing in Patwah is sensitively outlined by the editor. Ford-Smith explains that while Patwah is written for performance... "it is not written for reflection... yet we know... the reflection is part of the process of gaining control over one's own life." She goes on to say "... the language issue is a political issue because language is central to all power relations. It expresses the soul of a people. In our experience the development of Patwah expresses the refusal of a people to imitate a coloniser, their insistence on creation, their movement from obedience towards revolution."

The stories flowed from each woman answering for herself three questions - "How did you first become aware of the fact that you were oppressed as a woman? How did that experience affect your life? How have you tried to change it?"

And we are given stories of childhood, of motherhood, of relationships, of families, of isolation of migrating to the city for a 'better' life, of disappointments, of perseverance, of learning, of growth of strength.

Although these stories are unique, in a sense they are universal. For they are stories of women's courage.

It is a privilege to read this book.

CROSSING THE MAINSTREAM: New Fiction by Women Writers, edited by A. E. Laison and Carole A. Carr.

THE MONARCHS ARE FLYING by Margaret Foster (mystery).

OF LOVE AND SHADOWS by Isabel Allende.

SOMETIMES THEY SANG, by Helen Potrebenco.

Everyone concerned about education will be interested to read Lynn Davies (South Gillies) analysis SKIPPING SCHOOL IN EARNEST: Just Out for Leaving a Mired System... "More than a book about education... valuable for all who are concerned about children and about the future... a voice of sanity and common sense... clear-sighted, refreshing, powerful

WORD SEARCH



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WOMAN WORDS

Answers from last issue.

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COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Do you have a problem and don't know where you can find help solving it? The Community Information and Referral Centre can tell you where you can find that help, and we take care to ensure confidentiality.

Do you need to contact an organization and can't find the number in the telephone directory or can't remember the exact name? The Community Information and Referral Centre has extensive files and tries to keep them up to date. We can usually give you the answer within seconds.

Do you need information on senior citizens services? The Community Information and Referral Centre keeps extra information on those services so that seniors can get the help they need promptly and appropriately.

Our services are free and our purpose is to provide information to everyone. We also publish a directory of community services (which costs \$12) and an interagency newsletter, and we host interagency meetings. We keep statistics and report gaps and inadequacies in services to appropriate organizations and government departments. We are a program of the Lakehead Social Planning Council and are located at 221 Bay St. phone 345-4009.

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FROM THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

NEW FILMS AND VIDEOS ABOUT CANADIAN WOMEN

DAUGHTERS OF THE COUNTRY

From the historic encounter between Indian and European in the Canadian northwest emerged a mixed-blood nation, the Métis. Here, in a four-part dramatic series that spans two centuries, is their proud story, told from the point of view of courageous Métis women. Winner of three 1987 Gemini Awards: Best Pay TV Dramatic Program, Best Writing, and Best Actress in a Mini-series. Lillian Gish Award for best mini-series, Women in Film Festival, Los Angeles; Blue Ribbon for Original Drama, 29th American Film Festival, New York; Best film, 1987 International Women's Film Festival, Montreal.

DAUGHTERS OF THE COUNTRY 1 (IKWE and MISTRESS MADELEINE)

C 0186 138 114 minutes



DAUGHTERS OF THE COUNTRY 2 (PLACES NOT OUR OWN and THE WAKE)

C 0186 139 115 minutes

PRAIRIE WOMEN

C 0187 009 45 minutes

The little-known story of the vibrant social and political organizations founded in the 1920s and '30s by Prairie farm women. Best Documentary over 30 minutes, 40th Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival, 1987.



FIREWORDS

Three half-hour segments, each profiling a leading Quebec feminist writer. Part 1 focusses on Louky Bersianik and her satirical use of language; Part 2 introduces Jovette Marchessault, who works to unearth the ideas of women that history has erased from our collective memory; Part 3 reveals the work of avant-garde poet and post-modern feminist writer, Nicole Brossard.

Available on one reel or videocassette: C 0186 072, 84 minutes; separately, Part 1: C 0186 073; Part 2: C 0186 074; Part 3: C 0186 075; or in French under the title *Les Terribles vivantes*: C 0286 072.

DOCTOR, LAWYER, INDIAN CHIEF

C 0186 532 29 minutes

Five native women who have successfully forged non-traditional careers share their experiences and reveal how they drew on the strength of native Indian culture. A French version is also available: *L'Avenir est entre nos mains*.

ENTERPRISING WOMEN

C 0187 063 27 minutes

The stories of five female entrepreneurs relay the pitfalls and the joys of running a business. The women profiled head companies involved in pasta, lumber, fish, silk-screening, and a business academy.

THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A LITTLE LONGER

C 0186 513 45 minutes

Women with a range of physical disabilities demonstrate how they have overcome obstacles in their careers and their personal lives, and what services are still needed by the handicapped. Captioned for the hearing impaired. A French version is also available: *Le Vent dans les voiles*. Honorable Mention at the Third Medikanale Internationale Festival, Parma, Italy.



IS IT HOT IN HERE? A FILM ABOUT MENOPAUSE

C 0186 043 38 minutes

One of the least understood of women's experiences is menopause. This is an informative, sometimes humorous, look at social attitudes, symptoms and treatments.

THE BEST TIME OF MY LIFE: PORTRAITS OF WOMEN IN MID-LIFE

C 0185 102 58 minutes

Ten women from a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles share their experiences of menopause and mid-life, describing how this turning point affected their lives and freed them to explore exciting new directions.

TO A SAFER PLACE

C 0187 067 58 minutes

An inspiring account of how one woman has overcome the trauma of being a victim of incest. Now in her thirties, Shirley discusses childhood memories of sexual abuse and family violence with her mother, brother, and sister. A film that encourages incest survivors to break their silence.



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These and other NFB productions are available in 16 mm and VHS video. Reservations can be made in person, by phone or by mail.

Note: The NFB will send videocassettes by mail to viewers located outside NFB distribution centers. All NFB productions can also be purchased in 16 mm and all video formats.



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