

cayenne

DECEMBER 1985

No. 5



a socialist feminist bulletin

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The editorial and production team for this issue included Linda Briskin, Bev Crossman, Marie Lorenzo, Christina Mills, Judi Stevenson and Lynda Yanz. Also thanks to Amy Gottlieb, Sue Kerr, Susan Prentice, and especially to Jenny McIntyre for original graphics.

Who We Are....

We are socialist feminists who are committed to producing a bulletin of socialist feminist news, analysis and debate. We encourage **Cayenne** readers and supporters to contribute to this process.

Lynda Yanz, Christina Mills, and
Marie Lorenzo

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cayenne

a socialist feminist bulletin

cay·enne (kī-en'), n. [<native Braz. kynnha], 1. a very hot red pepper used widely in India, China and Caribbean; 2. a female spice; 3. a long-lasting irritant; 4. hot stuff.

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Cover graphic: Manushi, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi

Cayenne banner by dian marino

Editorial



Nicole Hollander

Issue number 5 brings to a close our first year of publication. As we look back over the range of issues raised in this first volume, we see that it has been a good year for *cayenne*-- but a mixed year at best for the women of Canada, and elsewhere in the world.

Cayenne has set as its goal the promotion of debate and dialogue among socialist feminists in Canada, and the spread of news about women's events and struggles in the 1980s. It feels like a good beginning. We have succeeded in persuading a number of women to reflect on their experiences as organizers and activists and creators, from Cate Cochran and Shuster Gindin talking to Marie Lorenzo about their production of a series of alternative doll houses, to Penni Richmond reporting on the battle within the Public Service Alliance to keep women's issues central to the progressive wing of the union.

As part of our campaign to raise strategy discussions, we have brought you the thoughts of Judy Rebeck, of Nancy Adamson and Susan Prentice, and of Peggy McDonagh on the abortion struggle, and have added another perspective on reproductive choice

via the report on the growing strength of the midwifery movement in Ontario.

One of our greatest sources of satisfaction is in bringing you news of the world-wide insistence of women of every age and race, not to be silenced any longer: from Guatemala to the Philippines to South Africa, they continue to fight and to inspire us.

We need the inspiration. When we look at the content of our articles so far, we realize that the 80s are rife with loss and threats of more loss to Canadian women. Toronto's Action Day Care has been stripped of its funding. Metro Toronto's library workers were faced with 107 takeaways of existing rights by their employer. Air Canada tried to push a segment of its labour force (mostly women) from full into part-time work. The Whitehorse Women's Centre has been forced to prepare for the decimation of its financial base. The jury acquittal of Henry Morgenthauer was overturned by the Ontario Court of Appeal. And so it goes.

In 1986 *cayenne* hopes to promote anger and action among Canadian socialist feminists by continuing to inspire more women to write about

their experiences and analyses. We'd like to have correspondents like Jan Langford, not only in Whitehorse but all across Canada.

Unfortunately, we also have to admit that we're in debt. We're badly in need of financial support--donations and subscriptions. Your response to the sub drive has been great, and we thank you. But don't stop now--we need all of you to

This is Survival?

Judi Stevenson

Cayenne readers will be relieved to hear that an organization called "Survival for Women" has come up with a way to protect us from "thieves, muggers, rapists, etc.," at least those of them so foolhardy as to "prey on us when we are stranded in our cars". Their contribution is a (wait for it) handy-dandy, durable plastic, folding banner, which says CALL POLICE in rather large letters.

This wonderful invention comes equipped with double-sided corner tapes so it can be pressed to the rear window of your car when needed--that is, if you're not too busy with the activities of the thief, mugger or rapist at hand. The price is only \$3.95, post paid of course. No doubt you will want one for every member of your family. Or collective household. Or women's group. Maybe as Christmas presents. The possibilities are endless. They are available from, (of course), California. Hurry with your order, supplies are limited.

This advertising information, which cayenne received in a letter addressed to "Dear products editor", would be funny if it didn't insult so

continue working with us to increase our cayenne network.

We ask those of you who have been with us for a year now to note the "RENEW NOW" on your envelope. We can't afford to send another notice, so please don't lose us in your "in" basket.

Most importantly, thanks to all those believers who have made year one of cayenne a step forward.



Angela Martin

deeply the concern that feminists everywhere have for the physical safety of our sisters. The utter failure of "Survival for Women" to grasp the serious threat of male predation on women alone left all of us (at cayenne) speechless. Their foolish "solution" is reminiscent of some of the worst of R.E.A.L. Women--but at least R.E.A.L. Women is not trying to make money from a vulnerable constituency. Only in America....

Barbara Smith in Toronto

Christina Mills and Makeda Silvera

Barbara Smith is a writer who has been active in the Black feminist movement since 1973. She is co-editor of All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies, editor of Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology, and co-author of Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism. The two anthologies are firsts in the history of Black women's writing in the U.S. Smith was also involved in the founding of the first and, so far, only women of colour press in the U.S.--Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press (sister and inspiration to Toronto's Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press).

Smith was in Toronto in October

to speak about feminism and women of colour. About one hundred women, one-third of them women of colour, plus a handful of men, heard her speak at A Space. The event was somewhat disappointing to those who had looked forward to hearing her talk about Black feminism, anti-racist work, and the issue of forming coalitions with white feminists. Instead, she made a few brief remarks and read from some short stories she is currently writing, then asked for questions from the audience. Her reading was wonderful, full of humour and insight, underpinned by a rare political clarity, and delivered in a simple, direct, un-academic, almost conversational manner.

But we wanted more! More analysis, more information about how feminists, Black and white, are fighting racism in the U.S., more about relations between U.S. women of colour and Third World women, more



Photo by Stephanie Martin



fact that lack of previous opportunities for Black women writers made it necessary for her to take a more active role as editor of Home Girls: rather than just asking for submissions and waiting to pick the best of a flood of offerings, she had to seek out women, persuade many that they could write, and participate actively in the development of many of the contributions. The lessons of that experience could apply to any women's publishing endeavour, but are particularly relevant to two current projects: the Feminist Periodicals Conference's followup committee to investigate ways of increasing the participation of working class and minority women in our publications, and the Women's Press's forthcoming anthology of short stories by Canadian Black women (ed. Dionne Brand and Makeda Silvera).

Smith's visit to Toronto was too short to allow her to meet more intimately with some of the collectives undertaking anti-racist work in the women's movement here. Let's hope there will be another opportunity.

about her vision of how to combat the tangled web of racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression, more nuggets from the treasure that is her extensive experience as a Black woman in struggle.

She did get into more political nitty-gritty the next day at OISE, where a smaller room and crowd (about 35) gave the meeting more intimacy. The questions asked also seemed to be more thoughtful and thought-provoking than those of the night before. The question period turned into a real discussion, a relative rarity at such public events.

We would have liked to hear more about Smith's experiences with Kitchen Table. She referred to the

Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press distributes No To Sexual Violence. by Jamaica's Sistren Collective. For information write Box 217, Station E, Toronto, M6H 2E2, or call 532-9868.

Gay Bashing in Whitehorse

Jan Langford
Whitehorse

In early October the minority NDP government tabled a Human Rights Bill. Currently there is no Human Rights legislation in the Yukon save the Fair Practices Act, which applies only to accommodation, employment and the provision of public services, and prohibits a limited number of kinds of discrimination.

The new NDP bill includes protection from discrimination on the basis of race, colour, nationality, ethnic background, religion or creed, age, gender or sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation or preference, marital or family status, criminal record, political belief, association or activity, and physical or mental disability. The proposed act also includes an exception clause for affirmative action programmes and a section on equal pay for work or equal value.

By far the most controversial issue to date is the inclusion of sexual orientation and preference. Ministers and priests have responded (through newspapers and on radio shows) with the usual objections to homosexuality on the grounds of sinfulness and degenerate moral behaviour. Others have trotted out the old homophobic myths that homosexuals are sick, perverse and would corrupt or molest children if allowed to be teachers. So far, only an anonymous gay man and a few feminists in the women's community have responded publicly against the homophobia.

It's a tough battle, too. Our own NDP Justice Minister showed his lack of commitment to the cause when



1978

RICHARD FIALA

"It's my parents. Quick, help me think of something heterosexual to say."

he stated that the issue of homosexuals teaching in schools was a "grey area", and that perhaps the government would have to make an exception and discriminate in these circumstances!

There is no lesbian and gay community as such in Whitehorse. There are lesbians and gay men here, but most are in the closet, and not organized. Socializing is done in small closed groups, and it is hard to develop contacts outside of the group. Within the feminist community it has only been within the last two years that women have had to deal with lesbian relationships in their ranks. Typically lesbian feminists have failed to find support in Whitehorse and have left for larger centres in search of that support and sense of community. Some few feminist activists (including those lesbians before they left) have tried to make Whitehorse a less homophobic place to live--for ourselves, our friends and for the lesbians and gay men who currently live in isolation.

Now we wonder how to mount a campaign to support the sexual orientation and preference clause. So far we have been writing letters to the editor of the newspaper. We wonder about a public education forum with a film or guest speaker. We will have at least a few months as the government is planning to set up a committee to receive public input on the proposed act.

Some southern support might aid us tremendously. The NDP could use a shove in the form of congratulations to keep them on track. You can write Roger Kimmerly, Minister of Justice, Yukon Legislative Assembly, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Any suggestions for our campaign can be sent to Jan Langford, Box 5546, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 5H4.

Women Organize Eatons: The Video

You've no doubt heard about the strike at Eaton's in Toronto. You've seen short news clips or noticed the buttons and signs. Well, the strike is over, and the videotape documentary is ready for its premiere.

The tape was produced by Emma Productions is a feminist media production collective dedicated to women's labour-oriented audio-visual production. Our goal is to document the struggles won and lost, and make the records available to other groups to build action and outreach.

The tape No Small Change: The Story of the Eaton's Strike was produced after 6 months of location shooting at rallies, picket lines, meetings and personal accounts of the strikers' experiences. The groundswell of support from women's groups which followed the Christmas boycott of Eaton's brought home that this was a women's strike. By the end of it, the strikers had gained a new awareness of their position as women in the retail sector, and knew that they could count on the strength and solidarity of the women's community. The tape portrays the changes which the strikers went through in their fight against the



Eaton's empire, as well as their introduction to trade unionism and to the women's movement.

No Small Change will have its premiere screening in Toronto on Friday, November 29th, at 8 p.m. in the Steelworkers' Hall, 25 Cecil Street. Tickets are \$5/\$3, available in advance from the Women's Bookstore and DEC (229 College St.).

The tape is also available for rental or purchase from Emma Productions (416) 537-6207.

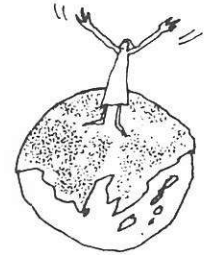
Beyond the Decade

Maureen Simpkins
and Pramila Singh
Toronto

"Beyond the Decade", a women and development conference, was held in Guelph, Sept. 26 - 29. The aim of the conference was to review the issues raised at the NGO (non-governmental organizations) Forum held in Nairobi this summer, (see cayenne 4), as well as look at the commonalities affecting women in Third World nations and Canada.

In assessing any conference we usually ask the age-old question, what can conferences achieve? And do people leave feeling motivated to bring change about? Typically this is not the case.

The "Beyond the Decade" conference held in Guelph came close. We found the workshops and general atmosphere of the conference extremely stimulating and thought-provoking. People were motivated, verbal and open to new possibilities. The workshops were invigorating, with many dynamic women and lively discussions. Unfortunately, not much happened as a follow-up to the workshops. Attempts were made to pass resolutions, but the discussion was usually too broad and diffused.



Many speakers made glowing tributes to the achievements of development agencies in the African countries. This was followed by critical comments on the traditional approaches to development--a more promising direction. Marie Berge from the Cooper Institute in P.E.I. was particularly refreshing. She pointed out that no one was talking about the root of the problem--a world dominated by the male capitalist order. Only when we challenge this as feminists will change begin.

We had hoped for some critical review of the experiences of women that went to Nairobi. However, over and over again the Nairobi NGO Forum was referred to as a joyous experience, which is certainly not an adequate assessment.

It was surprising that none of the speakers addressed the difference between the "energising force" of the NGO Forum and the concurrent official conference. There was no mention of the tremendous wealth of information, experience, analysis of women in national struggles and in migration. But there was no way in which the discussions in various workshops could have even a minimal input into the official conference. We would



have liked to have heard if the NGO Forum analyzed inequality, underdevelopment and war--since equality, development and peace were the themes of the U.N. Decade for Women.

The Nairobi experience is a complicated one to assess. Admittedly the Forum was designed to bring women from all over the world to talk and share. But there was no possibility for action since the NGO Forum was not part of policy development taking place under the auspices of the official U.N. conference.

There were striking similarities between the Forum '85 and the conference in Guelph. Burning issues were raised and then dropped. The Guelph conference did not result in any action either. The disassociation between discussion and strategy was very disconcerting.

Everytime there is a meeting of people of this nature there is a possibility of applying pressure for progressive change. We believe it is very important that these forums don't remain just another great personal/individual experience. We acknowledge that we were not at all the workshops and so some resolutions or plans of action may have resulted. In fact, we did hear after the Conference that a resolution was passed supporting the pro-choice movement, and that a letter to that effect was sent to the federal government. But it is telling that we only discovered this several days later.

Generally speaking though, like Nairobi, the Women and Development Conference provided only new contacts and a stimulating atmosphere. It fell short of real change.

RITES

for lesbian and gay liberation

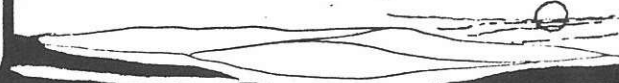
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Voices Spoken, Voices Heard - An International Event Against Violence Against Women

Donna Scagliotti
Toronto

On November 25th, 1980, Patricia, Minerva and Maria Teresa Mirable were on their way to visit their husbands in prison in the Dominican Republic when they were detained, tortured and assassinated by military intelligence. In memory of these three sisters the Dominican delegation to the First Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Meeting (Columbia, 1981) proposed November 25th as an International Day Against Violence Against Women.

This year in Toronto a coalition of women's, community and immigrant groups is marking the International Day Against Violence Against Women with a two day event, **Voices Spoken, Voices Heard**. It will attempt to make public the reality of violence against women, and also provide time and space for women to share information, experiences, ideas and analyses of the issue.

The opening session will be held at Harbord Collegiate Institute on Friday, November 29. Charlotte Bunch, a feminist organizer, writer, and co-editor of International Feminism: Networking Against Female Sexual Slavery, will speak on violence as a personal and international issue. The evening will also feature a performance on women who have disappeared in Chile by the Ruah Dance Theatre.

A full day of open workshops has been planned for Saturday, November 30, at Jorgenson Hall in Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. Participants are invited to take control of the workshops, to determine their size, the issues

being discussed, the focus and the direction of the discussion. Four workshop areas have been set up: violence in the home, sexual assault, state violence, and organizing.

A cultural celebration at the end of the day will include song, dance, art, and displays. We hope you will join us on November 29 and 30.



Tickets for the Friday evening are \$6, \$4 for students, seniors and unemployed. Advance tickets are \$5, available at: DEC Bookroom, Women's Bookstore, SCM Bookroom. Tickets for the day event are \$10; \$5 for students, unemployed and seniors. Lunch is provided. Subsidies are available. If you are interested in attending please contact Ferne at 961-8100.

Talking Dirty

Christina Mills

"Sisters are doin' it for themselves." Aretha Franklin/
Annie Lennox

"Let it go." Luba

"I yam what I yam." Olive Oyl (get lost, Popeye!)

* Bette is a long-time activist in the women's movement who feels defensive about the fact that she lives with and loves a man.

* Dorothy is a 45-year-old lesbian who believes in non-monogamy but is starting to fear she may be in for a lonely old age.

* Paula is a bisexual woman who thinks that she shouldn't have to make a once-and-for-all choice to love only women or only men, but still feels under pressure from lesbian friends who think she wants to have her cake and her pie too.

* Norma describes her past as "promiscuous" and now just wants a long rest from sex.



* Audrey sees the world from a wheelchair, but the world often does not see her as a human, much less as a sexual being.

* Eve has told her husband that, for an indefinite period of time, she does not want to have penetration, although she still wants other forms of contact. He is angry and hurt, and cannot understand how she can love him and believe he loves her and still see penetration as violation.

* Debby believes in monogamy; her lover does not.

* Donna thinks she's too fat to ever be attractive; Pam thinks she's too skinny.

* And so on, and so on...

These are some of the 300 women who attended Coming Together: a Women's Sexuality Conference, on the weekend of October 4 to 6 (the names have been changed to protect...). It was billed as "affirming and strengthening our sexuality in a feminist context, exploring the commonalities and differences of our sexual/affectional preferences and moving us towards a sexual expression consistent with our feminism."

Whatever its net success in terms of those aims, it was a notable achievement to have brought together lesbians, bisexuals, and straight feminists to spend a whole weekend talking about our sexuality. Especially given our tendency to keep to the safety of those who share our

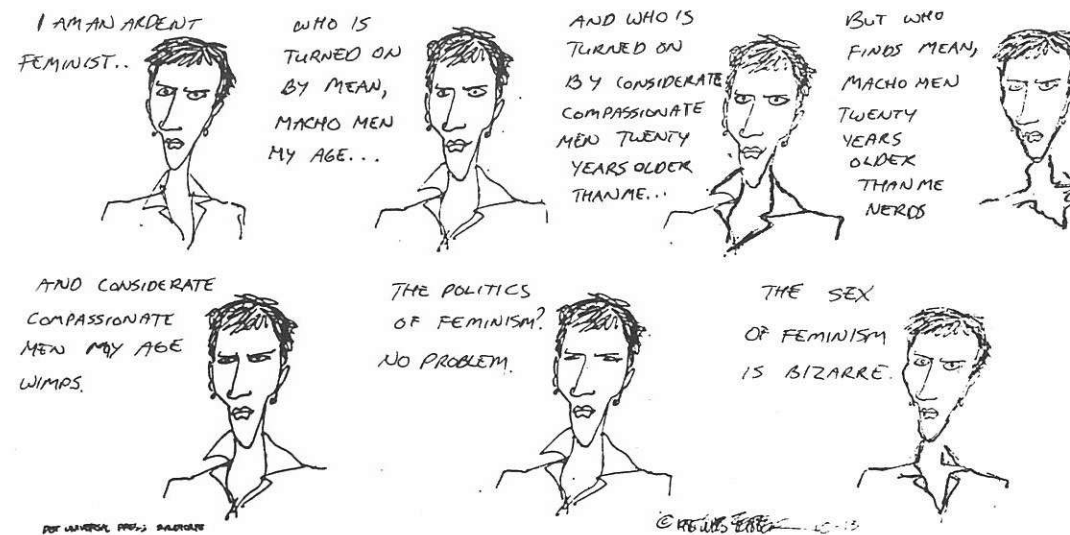
values and to avoid discussion of anything which might make explicit our differences and lead to, horrors, conflict.

There seemed to be something for everyone among the thirty-three workshops on such varied topics as intimacy, breaking up, anger, coming out, and raising sexually healthy children. Apparently there were some rumblings to the effect that the conference was dominated by lesbians and that there were very few workshops of interest to straight women, but when I looked over the programme I found that, in fact, the vast majority were of general interest, except for two workshops specifically for straight women, two for bisexual women, and three for lesbians...not what I would consider a heavy bias. The quality of the workshops seemed to vary considerably: those I attended ranged from one which was almost worth the registration in itself to one which seemed a sad waste of two hours of a perfectly lovely autumn day. I was quite disappointed that

Varda Burstyn's workshop was cancelled; given the recent controversy over her interview in Penthouse Forum, it promised to be particularly lively.

The keynote speakers were more consistently successful than the workshops. Susan Cole had me so enthralled at the opening session that I forgot to take notes; playing her own devil's advocate, she challenged herself and us to envision what sexuality would be like once we shed the burden of patriarchal sexual values. Connie Clement suffered in dignity through numerous technological problems and held our attention (even when a wall started to move in the back of the auditorium) with a thoughtful and honest exploration of multiple issues around growing up, intimacy, identity, and sexual imagery.

The third speaker was JoAnn Loulan, author of Lesbian Sex. The audience loved her, laughing or gasping with pleasurable shock throughout. Her evocation of the "little girl with the broken heart,"





BEACH BLANKET BINGO

the damaged part of each of us which somehow makes us choose partners who are bound to hurt us, touched a chord in many women, judging from the number of references to her in the workshops, but afterward I realized that compared to the other two speakers she had really said very little that was new or challenging. It was oddly disappointing--I felt that I'd been snowed by her rather spectacular performance skills into not listening critically.

A glance at the assembled participants revealed a mere handful of women of colour. This is not just a shortcoming of one conference but a much broader phenomenon in the (white) women's movement, and it's time we took a look at why it happens and what can/should be done to bridge the gap. Not surprisingly, the question of racism and sexuality was never raised, to my knowledge. Class issues were given specific mention in some workshops and in Sunday's panel, but there could have been much more.

I have a few nits to pick about daycare (it was great, but blocks away and I had to miss part of a great workshop in order to get there before it closed), the venue (OISE air is deadly!), and the lack of a real wrap-up plenary. My final

complaint is that the performances, Sexual Acts, were held at the same time as workshops. I resented having to choose between workshops and what turned out to be a highlight of the weekend.

All things considered, however, the conference was an impressive first effort by Side by Side, a non-profit feminist resource group which seems to consist of only two women, Maggi Redmonds and Natalie Zlodre. When a woman pointed out that \$40 is a lot of money for an unemployed woman (\$80 for employed) to pay to register and suggested the organization should have applied for outside funding, Natalie Zlodre responded that granting agencies are unlikely to hand out money to two women without credentials who want to bring together a bunch of lesbians, bisexuals, and straight feminists to spend a weekend talking about sex! With Coming Together now under their belts (so to speak), they definitely do have credentials. Let's hope that it's enough for them to get grants for their next project so that it will be more accessible to lower income women. Congratulations to Side by Side for a fine debut.

LABOUR

Affirmative Action: Making It Work

Marion Pollack
Vancouver

I came home from the recent CLC women's conference elated and recommitted.

The conference was held in Ottawa at the end of September. Over 500 people participated and another 150 were turned away.

The strength of the conference was a series of workshops where women had a chance to explore issues and share ideas. The weakness of the conference was its lack of power: the conference could not send resolutions to the next CLC conference. All we could do was make recommendations to the CLC executive council and fervently pray for their favourable disposition.

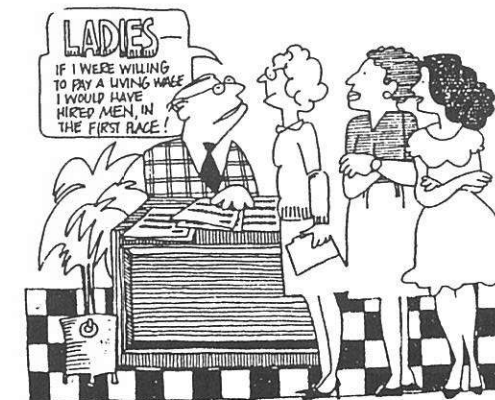
The purpose of the conference was to discuss affirmative action. This was broadly defined to include not only access to jobs but also equal pay for work of equal value, paid parental leaves, reduced working time, childcare, benefits for part-time workers, protection from the impact of technological changes and sexual harassment clauses.

The discussions were exciting. However, the conference was not strategic. In some workshops, we discussed the nuts and bolts of an affirmative action programme, but failed to discuss the larger framework. It is a major weakness because we end up with lots of enthusiasm and information but without a strong analysis in which to develop tactics for implementation. Coming from B.C., I found this particularly frustrating because I need to talk about how to fight for women's rights, when the government is slashing the public sector,

attacking the labour movement, and cutting back on social, health and educational services.

The CLC and most Federations of Labour have affirmative action programmes for their executive councils. This was not reflected by the representation at the conference. The vast majority of the delegates were not local Presidents, but secretary-treasurers, shop stewards or committee members. This rank and file representation was one of the strengths of the conference, but it also reflected the fact that women are still not equals in the trade union movement. At the final plenary there was a suggestion that the CLC require that all its affiliates develop affirmative action programmes. This was not universally supported, but it is an important debate for the future.

The conference underscored the need for labour solidarity. A woman from the Communications Workers of



Canada spoke about their successful six-month strike against the Newfoundland telephone company, stressing the importance of support from other unions. Two strikers from the Bank of Commerce Visa Centre spoke and asked for our support. Finally, in a way which reflects the experience of women everywhere, conference organizers emphasized the need for participants to build up their own personal support networks.

Judge Rosalie Abella spoke about her Royal Commission into Employment Equity. Delegate after delegate spoke angrily, wondering why the government had ignored the recommendations of her report and instead introduced their own Employment Equity Legislation. This promotes mandatory reporting and voluntary affirmative action. It's a weak and meaningless law.

For me the highlight of the conference was seeing the strength of women unionists from all across Canada. It was inspiring to know that the UAW-Canada requires mandatory women's committees in all its locals. (It left me wondering if such a thing was possible in my union). It was so nice to see women who are really working hard to ensure that men and women in their workplaces start at the same base rate. It was both reassuring and sad

to talk to various women about exactly the same problems we face getting recognized in our locals. And I was interested to learn about how other women had addressed the problems my local faces in terms of sexual harassment and other issues.

The sheer spirit of the women uplifted me. I was especially moved by an older woman in my workshop. A former battered woman and divorcee, she had only recently become active in her union. She talked about how she now sees herself as a strong, capable woman as opposed being afraid of her own shadow. Two young women from the UAW were infectious in their enthusiasm.

The conference was important in that it made me determined to continue the fight. But we need more than biennial conferences. Right now, we need to build all-out support campaigns for the striking VISA workers. If they win, so do working women. We need to continue to pressure the CLC to implement a nation-wide campaign for the shorter work week, without which affirmative action campaigns cannot succeed. And we need to fight for a militant campaign against privatization and de-regulation. The women at this CLC conference showed themselves ready to fight.

Grenfruit: A Women's Co-op in Grenada

Susan White
Winnipeg

In November of 1983, the U.S. Marines landed in Grenada. One of their first acts was to close the Pope Paul Ecumenical Centre and imprison its director, Judy Williams, for interrogation. They also closed the Grenfruit cooperative factory, an offshoot of the Centre. The eight women who worked there found themselves on the street, jobless and frightened. They were barred from their stock of dried fruits, representing weeks of work--stock which might have been sold to support their families and pay the farmers who were owed for their produce.

The Marines claimed to have a letter from the local Bishop of the Catholic Church, which owned the land, giving them permission to close it down. They offered the excuse that the Pope Paul Centre had been "harbouring Cubans".

Very soon the Bishop began to hear from supporters of the Grenfruit women from around the world, including protest from development agencies like the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, which had given the co-op grants to build the factory. The Bishop bowed to international pressure and allowed the women back into the factory, but they were told that the Church was claiming back the land and would pay the women no compensation for their factory.

Judy Williams remembers the heartbroken women asking her in tears, "All those stones we carried for the foundations, all our work, can they take it all away?"

Williams, who had lost 10 years work and most of her personal belongings when she was arrested and who was emotionally brutalized by her experiences, nonetheless encouraged the women to fight back.

In November 1984 the women took the Catholic Church to court to fight for the factory which was their livelihood and the symbol of their pride in themselves and their achievements. "It was almost unimaginable", says Williams, "that uneducated rural women, unemployed single mothers, would challenge the hierarchy of the Catholic Church."

In predominantly Catholic Grenada the Church is drawn from the island's wealthy elite, and they had sided with the U.S. invaders. The women and the Pope Paul Centre were seen as 'subversive' because they had been involved in community education and skills training, and had supported the 1979 revolution which brought so many new educational and employment opportunities to Grenada's poor majority.

The court dispute has not yet been settled. The Church has offered some compensation, but well below the value of the factory, which the women will have to rebuild elsewhere. Payment continues to be denied for seized and destroyed equipment.

But the women keep on working--and growing. Since unemployment has soared and prostitution boomed under the U.S. and Caribbean military occupation, jobs and training for women are even more critical than before. Grenfruit has trained 12 new members and introduced new worker benefits such as health insurance and a small savings and loan fund. They have expanded production to include ground spices and other new products.

MIDDLE AGES



and have opened new markets in Trinidad.

Judy Williams lost beloved friends and trusted political leaders to assassination in the political crisis which preceded the invasion. She saw, and continues to see, the dreams of a lifetime die as the people-oriented programs of the revolution are swept away by the U.S.-imposed government. She sometimes wonders whether she can start all over again, organizing women in a climate of repression as she did under the Eric Gairy dictatorship overthrown in 1979. But she draws strength from her women co-workers, as they do from her, and so she goes on. The factory has taken over part of her new home, and she steps over drying ginger in her living room as she works to establish a new community development agency.

The Grenfruit women plan to fight until they win. And



occasionally there are reminders that they aren't forgotten. In March 1985, Toronto women decided to buy them much needed equipment from the proceeds of International Women's Day activities.

You can write your encouragement to Grenfruit, Grand Roy Post Office, St. John's, Grenada.

(Ed.: Susan White talked to Judy Williams in Grenada in March of 1985.)

Colombia: Domestics Organize

Christina Mills

Domestic workers in Colombia are demanding social security and health benefits as well as important improvements in their working conditions.

A programme sponsored by the Union of Domestic Service Workers (which only recently won legal recognition after years of struggle) has involved 7000 domestic workers in five cities over the last three years. Its main function is to support domestic workers in negotiating salaries and working conditions; both the individual workers and the union have been strengthened in the process.

Besides various activities designed to educate the public about the legal norms governing domestic labour and to ensure their fulfilment, the programme offers employers workshops which can almost

be described as consciousness-raising sessions. Besides explaining their legal obligations, the workshops encourage participants to think about the vertical power relations between women of different classes, and about the relation between paid and unpaid domestic labour.

Three thousand employers have been persuaded to enroll their employees in the state-operated social security and health insurance plan since the programme's inception. This has been possible legally since 1982, but is still a rare occurrence. In addition to educational work with employers, the Domestics' Union is organizing mass actions to pressure the government to make enrolment in the social security plan compulsory, and to ensure coverage for women who work part-time for several employers.



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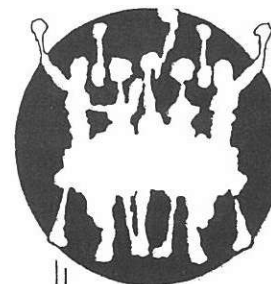
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CHOICE

Update on Toronto Morgentaler Clinic

Christina Mills

The Ontario Court of Appeal's recent decision to order a retrial of Dr. Henry Morgentaler was, of course, a disappointment, but it came as no surprise to pro-choice activists who had been following the proceedings.

Nikki Colodny, speaking at a rally following the decision, pointed out that calling the defence argument of a medical emergency (each week of delay in obtaining an abortion increases risks by 20%) "immaterial" amounts to saying that "what happens to us as women doesn't count" but that "judges have been quite consistent in denying women's reproductive and sexual freedom."

Apart from reinforcing the "Canadian tradition" of marriage and compulsory motherhood (according to the Court), the decision has frightening implications for civil liberties in general. The decision rejects the power of a jury to choose justice over an unjust law, a power deeply rooted in the very legal system the Court is defending. But it seems to be a matter of priorities; if the jury's verdict were allowed to stand, effectively overturning the law on behalf of the pro-choice movement, it would set a precedent for all social movements which could seriously endanger the status quo.

Meanwhile, the clinic stays open. It appears that the State sees no advantage in moving against it at this point; at least, Ian Scott has said that he will not attempt to close the clinic pending the appeal. OCAC (Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics), undaunted, is stepping up its efforts in order to forestall the



usual demobilizing effect of having an issue tied up in the courts. The courts are far from immune to social movements, so part of the current strategy is to continue to apply pressure and educate public opinion so that when the appeal finally is heard the balance of forces will be strongly in favour of choice.

Across Canada pro-choice activists are organizing to broaden the movement and make it truly bi-national. A series of tribunals are being planned to put the abortion law itself on trial, in Toronto, Halifax, Winnipeg, Alberta, Ottawa, Montreal, Saskatchewan, and elsewhere. OCAC is coordinating the tribunals bi-nationally and has formed a committee to plan the Toronto tribunal. Anyone interested in working on the tribunal committee should call OCAC at 532-8193.

It is crucial that we not be demobilized by the setback in the courts. We must continue to organize, to educate, to put the issue of abortion rights in the broader perspective of reproductive rights, to extend the base of support of the pro-choice movement. The forces which would return us to the days of the back street abortionist are backed by powerful institutions and abetted by the courts, but we are the majority. We must not, we will not go back!

(With thanks to Nikki Colodny)

Uruguay: The Abortion Debate

Two private members' bills to legalize abortion have aroused the anger of Uruguayan women, who feel that the topic has been introduced as a smokescreen to distract the media from the civilian government's failure to call a Constitutional Assembly, as promised when it took over from the previous military government. The uproar around the bills has divided opinion at all levels and they have been packed off to a committee for "study", effectively putting an end to the legalization process for now.

The men who prepared the bills did so without consulting the Women's Condition Committee of their own party or taking into consideration a document on health issues prepared by the Women's Alliance, a non-partisan national women's organization. Not surprisingly, neither piece of legislation provided for sex education and family planning programmes.

By now the media and parliament have forgotten about the issue and gone on to other things, but the right-to-life movement is papering Montevideo with posters saying, "Abortion is a Crime" and blitzing schools with "The Silent Scream". Meanwhile, women's groups are continuing to discuss the issues and work on a strategy for winning reproductive choice, so cynically held out to them only to be snatched away by political opportunism.

International notes prepared by
Chris Mills; information from Mujer-ilet, No. 51, October 85.



Argentina: Women Get Results

During the month of September hundreds of women staged weekly sit-ins stopping traffic in front of the Congress of Argentina, in order to pressure legislators to pass a law providing for parents to share equal responsibility for children.

As in most countries in Latin America, Argentinian law provided for fathers to have sole decision-making power concerning their offspring, for everything from travel to consent for surgery. The text of the law providing for shared power had been passed seven months before, but the Senate was inexplicably dragging its feet. Unrelenting pressure by women finally resulted in the law being proclaimed on the last day of ordinary session.

CULTURE

Wallflower Collective Ends

Marie Lorenzo

We are at a point historically where many groups are wondering what the best structure/organization is for political action. This is especially true of women, who for years have been proud of their departure from traditional, hierarchical, and exploitative structures. It is important to evaluate the usefulness of collective structures, consensus decision-making, and the process by which these principles are applied. Many groups have experienced paralysis when they were unable to incorporate leadership, special talents or capabilities, or the strength of different experiences into their collective practice.

The traditional association of art with inborn ability (talent), and the fostering of individuality and competition in the cultural field makes it especially difficult to promote cooperation.

For this reason I was curious to hear about the experience of the Wallflower Order Dance Collective and



their recent split into two different groups.

The Wallflower Order Dance Collective was formed by five women in Eugene, Oregon in 1975. The group performed among women, left, and solidarity groups in the United States and Canada for over nine years, using dance to explore social and political issues.

The effect of a political women's dance group was riveting, and over Wallflower's nine-year history the demand for their performances increased to a fever pitch. Suddenly trying to run a viable cultural enterprise and keeping to collective feminist principles became a strain.

"We were like a family, together all the time. The conditions were horrible. Financially, we were barely surviving. The demands on us were incredible. Work, work, work. Nothing else. Our whole lives were work, and we were always together and isolated because we were always on the road, so we didn't have friends. We'd be home one month, two months out of the year, living in a hell-hole, a sublet room. So the conditions were really stressful," says Nina Fichter, a founding member.

"I think the collective process made those conditions worse. The demands on us as a group were becoming greater and greater because we were performing a lot more, travelling a lot more, and the collective structure couldn't keep up with it. We couldn't make decisions fast enough, we were always behind. Originally when we weren't performing a lot, it was really relaxed, so we could take a month to decide something. But at that point, after 10 years, collectivity was not working.

"There was disagreement from newer members who wanted to keep the

collective the way it had been. The older members wanted to define jobs more, have directors, and people specifically in charge of certain areas. Krissy and I wanted everybody to be in charge of different areas, we wanted to delegate. Things were not getting covered, we would have a workshop and nobody would show up to teach it. That kind of stuff. So one group wanted to change the structure and the other resisted."

Tensions mounted and after trying to work things out, the group finally split, ending up in a bitter



PRESENTS....

Wildflower Brigade

legal battle over the use of the name they had built over the last nine years.

One thing is clear to both: the differences became irreconcilable. Why? What happened to that early feminist vision of collective practice?

"Well, it's a hard thing to explain, but I feel it's a reflection of the society we live in. We're raised with a lot of competition and

I felt what happens in relationships happened in our group."

Wallflower's experience raises question for all of us. Whether or not leadership or delegating are irreconcilable with a basically collective approach? Perhaps competitiveness makes us too insecure to accept leadership from people in areas they are good at. And the fear of overt domination has sometimes clouded our goals.

There are no easy answers to the issue of political structure, but maybe we can learn from experiences of other struggles, other countries. One of the experiences that most impressed the Wildflower Dance Brigade in the last year was their trip to Nicaragua.

"I was much more of an anarchist before I went to Nicaragua," says Nina, "and going there you can see that organization is really important. The tendencies toward collectivity in the United States run along the anarchist lines, you know, if everybody has an equal say, then that makes everybody equal. Whereas in Nicaragua that's not exactly what happens. There is--"

"--a democratic centralist structure," interjects Krissy

"Yeah, there are leaders, there is leadership, and there's a reason for it. And I think that's probably had an effect on us."

Wildflower Dance Brigade, the breakaway group formed by Krissy and Nina, has chosen to be really clear about the division of labour. They bill the group as being under their artistic direction. However, their program still contains many pieces that are choreographed collectively. It will be interesting to see what the change will mean in terms of their creative and collective process.

"True Confessions of a Romance Junkie"

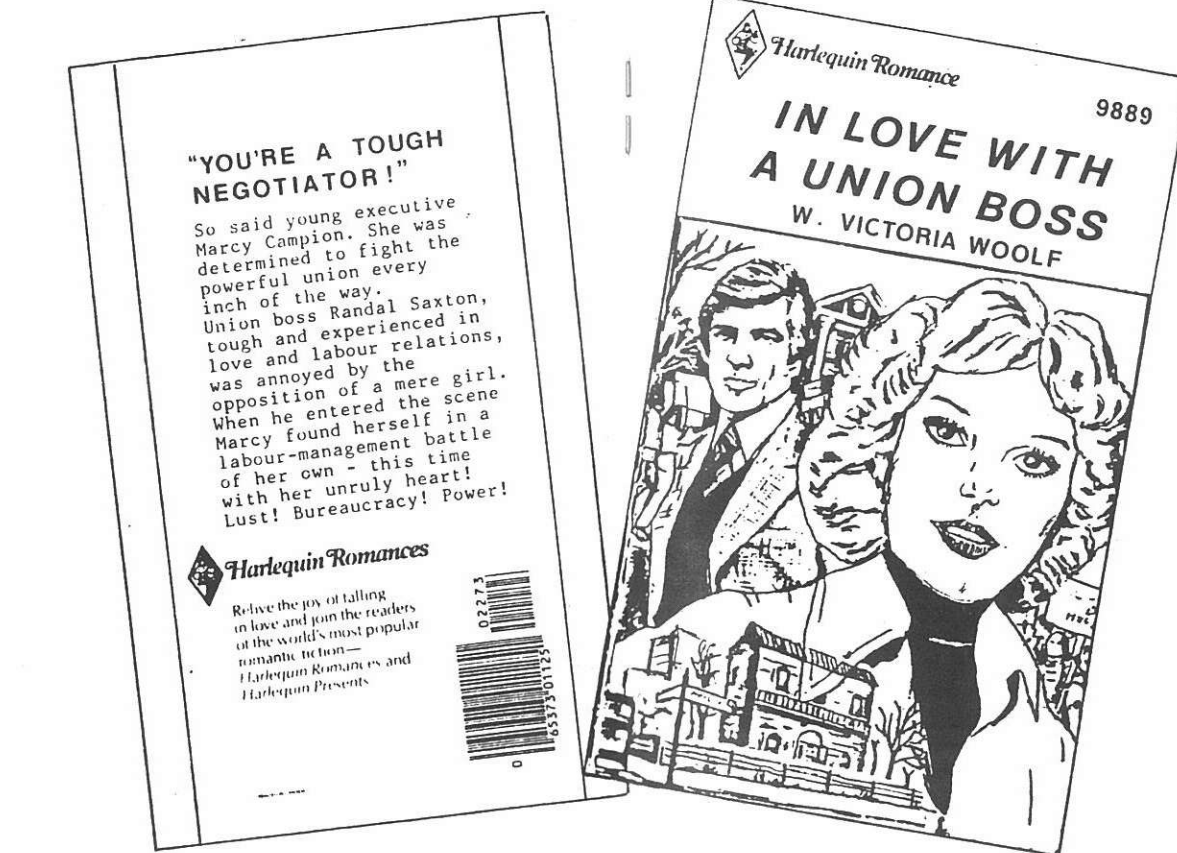
Bev Crossman

I am a romance junkie. I'm not an expert, analyst, sociologist or philosopher of romance. I just like to watch soaps. The disaster prone Ginny Blake of General Hospital, Felicia Gallant, romance novelist extraordinaire of Another World, the powerful Alexis Carrington Colby Dexter of Dynasty fame and hard drinking Sue Ellen Ewing from Dallas "entertain" me every week. At other times I can be found reading bestseller romances, and in a pinch, second-hand Harlequin Romances at 10 cents a copy will do.

The true confessions of a romance junkie do not come without social pain. It's just not that easy to admit that you spend hours in front of the TV soaking up daily and weekly soaps. But I do not despair for I know I am not alone. Every year more and more women I know openly discuss their interest in characters such as Ginny and Alexis.

Our difficulty lies in finding an answer for the politically correct "progressives" who denounce our brand of entertainment as "anti-female, pro-capitalist and mindless propaganda". I became interested in developing a rationale for romance watching when I decided to stop pretending I didn't watch or read them.

There are hundreds of thousands of women who spend many hours a week watching daytime drama and the prime time soaps. Have all these women been duped by the system into feeling entertained by images of their own exploitation? Or is there something else to be learned here about women and popular culture? I think there is, and it lies in the specifically "female" character of the soaps (and other romances) themselves.



Daytime drama is "female" in that the major sources of activity, suspense and laughter are its characters' emotional lives. These dramas pay attention to what women feel, and legitimize emotions as the motivation for actions and decisions. Plot sequences focus on lovers, friends and families.

Daytime dramas provide on-going stories about characters who develop relationships to each other based on shared experiences of days or years before--just as real human beings do, and not as in prime-time drama, where

is, but so are the car chases and good-guy-always-wins fights in any police or detective show. If we're looking for a reflection of ordinary people's lives, we had better leave TV out of the search.

Daytime television is usually about middle- and upper-class Americans. There are no factory workers or electricians, and not many clerical workers. But women don't watch the soaps to see a reflection of their struggles to meet the mortgage payments or buy new shoes for the kids or keep the house clean. They watch in order to imagine what life could be like if all the bills were paid, you had money left over, and someone to help look after your kids and clean your house.

One of the more interesting aspects of soaps is viewer control. In virtually no other form of television are viewers able to write in, express their preference for the fate of a character and have it come true. Not too long ago viewers brought back Tony Jones on General Hospital from sure death, and most dramatic of all, achieved the return of Fallon to Dynasty. Even though the original actress no longer wanted to play her, the creators of Dynasty listened to their audience and brought back the character.

The form that soap operas take also reflects a reality in women's lives. Those who watch a soap once or twice will find them "repetitive" or "disruptive." That's quite correct.

Many women are cooking dinner, doing dishes, laundry or ironing when the soaps are on. That means that their attention isn't always on the screen. So repetition is important to plot development. A viewer may be changing a diaper or chasing a child during a crucial plot development and

characters appear to have forgotten what they said or did the week before. Of course, an increasing number of prime time TV shows now do build on experiences between characters, and ongoing story threads have begun to appear in some episodic TV. They learned it from the soaps.

Very little on-screen shoot 'em up violence hits the stage of daytime drama. Any murders here generally take place off screen, and people tastefully die elsewhere, or in a clean hospital with very little blood. Unreal you say? Of course it

just to make sure that nothing is missed the information is repeated in some way.

Soap operas are virtually the only television form that reflect and address the real way that women's lives are structured. They treat women as a serious viewing audience and work in a pattern that can fit into women's lives.

Prime time soaps introduce some other elements. Plots in these dramas often focus around the struggle for power, both economically and personally. Alexis of Dynasty is interesting to watch because she is a woman with her own economic power. Sue Ellen of Dallas on the other hand has absolutely no power--at least not right now. But next Friday or the Friday after that, I'm confident she will rise from her alcoholic stupor and be strong--on her own--again.

Finally, I'd like to briefly discuss soaps and social issues. Contrary to popular (i.e. non soap watchers) belief, many important social issues are dealt with in the soaps.

Growing up in small town Saskatchewan didn't occasion much discussion of abortion. But Another World did. My first exposure to abortion came from skipping school on Friday afternoon to watch Marianne--a pregnant teenager--decide her fate. When all around me, young women were getting pregnant and subsequently marrying and having babies; Another World showed us an alternative. More recently, AW dealt with the issue once again in a sensitive manner when a young woman was trying to choose whether to have a child or not. (Not many other forms of mass media do that!)

AW continues to deal with important social issues. Not long

ago they ran a plot sequence around the manufacture and sale of synthetic drugs, its legalities, and its affects on people's lives.

Every week openly gay Steven Carrington struggles with himself, his lovers and his family for recognition, understanding and openness. His family sometimes struggles to change him, at others to accept him, but always to love him. (Where else and how often is it even an issue?)

It is true that soaps are not about social change in the progressive sense. They are about things that are important to women though, and that has to be taken seriously. We have much to learn from soaps, and more to understand about their positive aspects. We cannot write off a form of popular culture directed and supported by millions of women. I do not argue that soaps are without serious political problems, but critics can always find those. What we need to do is look beneath the surface.



Guatemala Art Project: "The Road of War"

Freda Guttman
Montreal

The power of art lies in its connection of the ability to make with the ability to see--and then its power to make others see that they too can make something out of what they see, and on out it ripples. (Lucy Lippard)

About a year and a half ago, I began a project about the Mayan Indians of Guatemala. In content and in form, the project is something of a breakthrough for me--a union between two threads of my life that once were separate: art and politics. Other women artists have struggled, and are struggling, toward a similar goal, but here is how it happened for me.

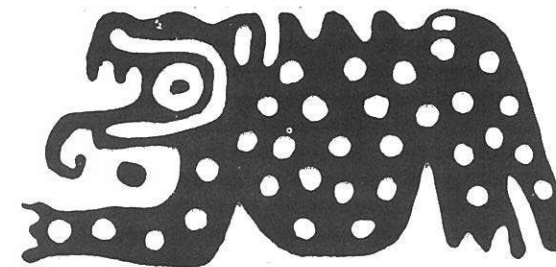
For many years, my work was "feminist" only in a representational way. That is, I made images of women remaking themselves and recreating the idea of 'woman'. Later on, more obliquely, my work made reference to newly valued art forms such as embroidery--the silent works of women through the ages. I saw my work as self-expression. It made me happy, but it didn't do much for others.

At the same time I was active politically in other ways, and I believed in the importance of political action, but I wasn't yet convinced that art had the power to move or change people. It was a slow learning process for me, partly because of my own insecurities and my inability to take myself seriously. There was also the residue of my early education.

At art school in the 1950s, I was nurtured on the orthodoxy that

any attempt to make political art was doomed to aesthetic failure. Images of "Yasha on the Tractor" and other such Norman Rockwell horrors of Socialist Realism were conjured up as warnings. Not that I or anyone else was eager to make political art, for this was the heyday of Abstract Expressionism, art for art's sake with a vengeance. Its supremacy seemed to make overt human experience and its representation completely irrelevant to art.

Abstract expressionism in its highest form was understood as the output of a few tormented geniuses, male of course. The hegemony of their style was policed by the galleries and critics of New York and Paris, who dictated "taste"--and price--from the late 40s until the mid 60s.



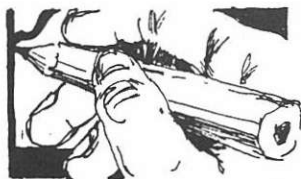
Ironically, although art was seen as an endeavour of great purity and disinterest, it was nonetheless clear that the artist was producing yet another commodity for a consumer society. Each new style was appropriated into the "art-as-money-and-fame" machine, which needed a dizzying array of new fashions to

gobble up. And by its cooptive strategies, the system insisted on compromise or outright capitulation, so that the artist had to choose between striving after success (open to only a few tormented male geniuses) or being in the wilderness.

Things changed in the late 60s and the 70s. Artists and critics on the left examined their practice and began to understand the role of art in upholding capitalist ideology. Not only was the making, buying and selling of art a market practise, but the very images served to get the ideological message across. (A book written in 1983, How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art by S. Gilbert, documents the connections between US cold war politics and Abstract Expressionist ideology.)

New art modes came into being, predicated on the belief that art need not be the prerogative of a few white males or the right, but was in reality a powerful tool for self-expression; it could express the strivings for social justice and political equality of blacks and women and other groups.

A new pluralism arose and gave birth to a multiplicity of approaches, the blurring of boundaries between the various art disciplines and completely new art forms such as performance and installation. Working outside the system, artists set up and ran their own non-profit parallel galleries,



thereby providing alternatives to the mainstream. That meant that many more artists could participate, and the dictatorship of style was to a large degree dissipated.

As in our other struggles, the women labouring to redefine art sought to find our own voices, and as a result, many strains of a distinctly feminist art were developed, as well as feminist art criticism. But women were crucial in all phases of the politicization of art. The analysis by the women's liberation movement of the marginality of women deeply affected both the process of making art and the images themselves.

An important turning point for me was organizing the Anti-Nuke Show with four women from Powerhouse Gallery, a women's gallery in Montreal. The show toured the parallel galleries across Canada last year. We decided early on that we did not want representations of violence such as mushroom clouds that might serve to reinforce our feelings of passivity. Rather we wanted to do work that was directly confrontational, that forced people to think, and that spoke directly to the issues of militarism. I learned a great deal in this experience, and was able to clarify my ideas about how to intersect my political involvements and my art practice. I began to believe that I could use art as a means to an end.

My interest in Guatemala began in earnest after I saw the film, "When the Mountains Tremble", which is about the genocidal practices of the government of Guatemala towards the Mayan Indians who make up about 70% of the population. After that I read all that I could and made what was for me the radical decision to do a large body of work, of a directly political nature.

My aim was to inform people about Guatemala as fully as I could through the conventions of art, using both text and images. I wanted to deal with the history of the last thirty-one years, since a CIA-arranged coup unleashed a new era of repression (after a ten year period of mild reform which had looked like the beginning of social equality), as well as the recent atrocities since the 1980 militarization.

My work deals as well with some aspects of the Mayan culture, how the Mayans are fighting back, and what that means in their culture. I have used the huipil, which is a loose poncho-like blouse woven and worn by the women, as a symbol of their identity and their culture. For the Indians, their clothing is their identity. Each village has its own huipil patterns and colours, distinctly different from those of other villages. The exhibition will bear witness to the fate of some of these villages and the people of them.

I am nearly finished the project, and have now arranged shows in alternative galleries across Canada throughout 1986, and am trying to arrange more for 1987. So far the show will be going to Ottawa, North Bay, Moncton, Quebec City, St. Catharines, Calgary, Saskatoon, Vancouver, and Montreal. In these cities I have made connections with Latin American solidarity groups to organize parallel events which will complement and extend the message of my show. Such a series of events should reach and engage more people than an art show in an arts context ever does.

Not all artists in the parallel system do political art, but many do. Certainly political art is in good health, and it will be a long time before anyone has to be apologetic

about it. In fact, much of the best art being produced today is political, tackling issues such as sexism, censorship, pornography, militarism, racism, workers' problems and so on.

I believe that the stranglehold that once applied to the making of art does not function for those who refuse it. For one thing, it is harder than ever to make any money doing art. But more importantly, refusal to participate in the mainstream--and even exclusion from it--brings a certain kind of freedom: the freedom to be an unstinting social critic. The fact that women are underrepresented and undervalued in the official art establishment, and even sometimes in the parallel system, is at least in part a good thing. What happens to women in the art world happens to them everywhere, and that shared experience of exclusion helps women artists see things as they really are. It also helps us avoid the dangers inherent in success and cooptation.

This is not to say that the system does not go on as before. In fact, in this age of Reagan, there is a return to the idea of the heroic, individual voice of the artist, once more male and suffering from angst. The difference is that women artists can now function, if we wish, in a parallel system. We can think of ourselves as cultural workers making alliances with other workers and groups, and we can contribute to the betterment of society, expose its ills and move people to action.

Anyone interested in having the show come to their community can reach me through cayenne.

"When the Mountains Tremble" can be rented from DEC Films, 229 College St., Toronto, M5T 1R4.

Women Strip-Searched in Armagh

Cecilia Morgan
Niagara-on-the-Lake

The prospect of arrest and imprisonment by the state is not a reality many Canadians contend with on a regular basis. When such a possibility crosses my mind, I visualize it as a dehumanizing and frightening experience; however, it remains a remote possibility. But for many women in Northern Ireland, arrest and imprisonment are a reality--a reality which has become even further dehumanizing by the brutal strip searches conducted in Northern Ireland's Armagh jail.

The practice of strip-searching female prisoners has been routine at the jail since November 1982. Prior to this date, strip-searching was not performed on women, even though internment without trial in the 1970s produced a higher female prison population than that of the 1980s.

Although the majority of women subjected to these searches are those arrested for political offenses, any female prisoner in Armagh may be strip-searched. The searches are performed upon a woman's arrival at and departure from Armagh and on her way to and from court, the hospital and inter-prison visits. It is primarily remand prisoners, women who are awaiting trial and must appear in court constantly, who are strip-searched. Remand periods are of variable lengths and some have lasted for two years. During this time prisoners appear in court regularly, often once a day, five days a week. For many women in Armagh, such appearances may involve ten strip-searches per week, one before leaving the jail for the court, one upon their return.

A woman is taken from her cell to a cubicle, ordered to strip naked and remove any sanitary napkins or tampons. She is visually "inspected," both from the front and rear by a minimum of six female warders. One warder then picks up her palms and soles for scrutiny and gathers up the women's hair to check the nape of her neck. If the woman has long hair, warders have been known to run their fingers through it as part of the search.

From the moment she enters the cubicle, the woman is in full view of the warders. Women who refuse to strip or remove menstrual protection face beatings, forcible stripping, and solitary confinement of up to sixty days.

One woman, five months pregnant and facing the prospect of a strip-search upon her release from Armagh (I cannot help but wonder at the logic of this particular security precaution), was told upon making a formal objection to the Armagh governor that any objections to the search at the time of her release would result in a forcible strip-search, despite her pregnancy.

In a statement released by Armagh prisoners in September 1983, the strip-searches were described as a form of "degrading, demoralizing, and immoral violation" similar to rape. Several Irish psychiatrists agree with the women prisoners and have warned British authorities that the prisoners' health is endangered. The British Embassy and Nicholas Scott, Minister for Prisons in Northern Ireland claim that the searches are conducted with "sensitivity" and "in privacy"! Prisoners' report that warders



conducting the searches make derogatory comments about their bodies, forcibly remove menstrual protection, and that there is a complete lack of privacy, and beatings and punishment upon a woman's refusal to strip.

The British government's claims that these searches are necessary security measures are questionable. Women going to court do so under armed escort in a closed van, and have no contact with any members of the public at any time. Two thousand strip-searches over a period of three years have yielded one 5 pound note, a phial of perfume, and a personal letter. Although metal detectors have been installed in Armagh, the prisoners' requests that these be used instead of the strip-searches have been refused. The authorities have refused to allow the Board of Prison Visitors, independent psychiatrists and doctors, to witness and report on the searches.

Despite the government's efforts to deny the women's reports, a campaign to end the strip-searching

has been growing steadily over the past three years. This campaign has united various groups in both Northern Ireland and in the Republic. Catholic clergy (many of whom condemn their church's hierarchy for their silence on the matter), labour representatives, feminists, Sinn Fein activists and politicians, socialists and civil rights activists have participated in street demonstrations, vigils, leafletting and petitioning campaigns, pickets, and the establishment of exhibits dealing with strip-searching. Meetings and rallies have been held across Northern Ireland and in the Republic, at which ex-Armagh prisoners have explained the strip-searching process and described their own experiences.

In England, these women have been interviewed by London Broadcasting and the BBC, and have met with British Labour MPs, student groups and organizations such as the Asian Collective and the Black People's Socialist League. In response to the campaign, Irish Senate members, British and Dutch members of the European Parliament, British Labour MPs and the British Labour Women's Conference, Irish Urban District Councils, and the Irish Council of Trade Unions have condemned the strip-searches and have called for an immediate end to them and an inquiry into the use of such methods by Britain. Sean MacBride, co-founder of Amnesty International, has condemned the searches as a "fundamental breach of human rights" and suggests that Amnesty should investigate strip-searches.

In spite of these condemnations, authorities have been recalcitrant. Scott has dismissed criticisms of the searches and stated that present prison policy would remain unchanged. In May of this year Armagh authorities began describing the

searches as "reception searches," an extremely misleading term since it suggests that the searches only occur upon a prisoner's initial entry to Armagh and that it is a clothed body search rather than a strip-search.

The Armagh strip-searches present feminists with various issues: the British government's violation of human rights; their attempt to manipulate women's bodies in order to humiliate and subordinate them; and, the fact that the primary targets of these searches are women denied political prisoner status but accused of crimes of a political nature against the British government. The importance of this last issue should not be overlooked in any assessment of the government's motives in ordering the strip-searches.

In the words of Noirin Greene, executive member of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, the Armagh strip-searches must be seen as "no different" than the treatment received by political prisoners in South Africa and Central America. Finally, although the searches continue, the uniting of Irish labour, women's groups, socialists, and Irish nationalists in the anti-strip-searching campaign may have implications for the future construction of a "united front" which could co-operate in the establishment of a truly egalitarian, non-sexist society in both Southern and Northern Ireland.

Thank you to Dara Neary and the Armagh Support Group for providing some of the reasearch material. CM.



WISCA Interviews a Filipina Activist

Maria Villariba, coordinator of the Center for Women's Resources in the Philippines, was recently in Toronto. Chris Mills had an opportunity to speak with her about the Center's work. We feel her comments raise important issues for women committed to anti-imperialist struggles and thus thought the interview an important contribution to our WISCA column.

WISCA: Tell us about the Center.

Maria: We started in 1982 with a very big idea of what women's work was all about. First we set up a committee of women who were already initiating work with women or who were interested. And we established an office so we could more easily locate each other. Our first production was a brochure to advertise who we were and where women could find us.

There was a shortage of women's materials in the country, not academic studies and articles but resources with a coherent vision in terms of women.

We decided to begin that process by doing some research, and travelling throughout the islands investigating and talking to women. The first product of our research was an audiovisual show in which we wanted to share the women's perspective.

Since those first projects our work has multiplied. We conduct what we call sectoral studies that then form the basis for organizing in

those sectors. We also animate in terms of specific issues which amplify the national problem, and at the same time highlight women's situation.

For example, there was strong feeling against the military buildup, but we wanted to pose it in terms of its impact on women. There was a need to discuss it also in terms of rape, its impact on children and so forth, rather than just giving statistics of villages being put under military rule or going into a list of political prisoners.

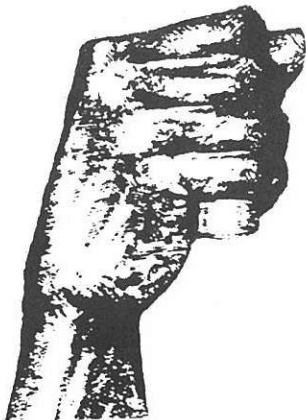
As a result of our research and organizing work, it was possible for us to establish the Center as a source of initiatives and also to help other sectors build up their programs. For example, in 1982 the March 8 campaign was initiated by a committee set up by the Center. It took three years to make it a national and annual event. Now people know about March 8 and recognize it as a necessity. And now there is much more of a commitment to project women's perspective in other national campaigns.

We are however involved in a number of community-based newsletters, and right now we're putting a lot of energy into initiating small community groups. Once they are established we pull back, but continue to play a role in terms of education and referrals for funding.



We start by setting up symposia or study groups in different communities. If the group decides to keep meeting they usually focus on training and education. Sometimes they decide to put out a newsletter to help educate and expand their membership. We may provide assistance in getting funds, but it's their paper: the editorial policy, everything is decided by the community-based group. They often ask us to help with editing or specific articles they want to include. It's a two-way process: our continuing connection with them helps us to remain anchored in community news and issues, and they get access to other kinds of news and analysis from us.

As yet we don't produce regular publications as a center. We believe that publications should be created in the midst of organizing, as organizing tools. Right now having our own publications is not a priority.



W: Could you tell us about the women's movement in the Philippines both prior to and after the formation of the Center for Women's Resources?

MV: By 1970 some political women already saw the importance of women's liberation, but when martial law was declared many of them had to go underground, and the aspiration to establish a women's movement had to wait.

Since 1980, and especially after the Aquino assassination, more and more women have seen the need to get organized or at least to participate in many of the political events. Once we saw that the national struggle was coming on strong, then the stage was set for really building the women's movement, and we started organizing women.

We were based in Metro Manila, the national capital region, but we found out that simultaneously women on the other islands were also thinking along this line so we decided to organize a March 8 event and get in touch with the labour unions, youth, even indigenous women from the tribal groups.

What we had was more and more women almost spontaneously becoming more committed to the idea of a women's movement. And since they came from different classes and different sectors, the movement already had a mass dimension. From then on there has been a very aggressive campaign to get communities organized along sectoral lines, including special initiatives in organizing women.

In our language we call women a sector. Starting this year it's really being called a mass movement, which means that it has already taken shape, and many progressive groups recognize the women's movement as a very vital part of the national struggle.

W: What is the relationship between the women's movement and the rest of the opposition?

MV: Of course there has been a lot of debate. We do have different kinds of feminism. Some feminists insist on autonomy from the national movement, they fear that even if the women's perspective is taken up before political power is seized, women are sent back to the kitchens afterwards. But for most feminists that's not valid, because they think in terms of the concrete experiences of women and men in the Philippines, which they feel is pre-empting the women's movement on the autonomy question. Then there are some women who believe that women's liberation can only mature through national liberation. These women, whether or not we call them feminists, are in a position to create public opinion in favour of the national struggle.

So there has been some tension among women. But it's a healthy tension because that's how a movement grows. If we were all on the same track, if it were a monolith, it wouldn't be a movement.

Our central vision is that all women and men should be free from oppression, but the strategy and process will depend on actual events and the participation of women in great numbers, their capacity to do solid work, to base themselves in the complete needs of the people, and to have foresight. If women have this anxiety about being sent back to where they were before, it means that we must do more educational or cultural work aimed at both women and men.

It's one thing to do protest work: exposing human rights violations, rapes, and so forth, but the other side of the problem is how to educate women and men and change



their attitudes, their habits, and their ways of relating to each other. That's what we're trying to do, what we call internal work among progressive groups and organizations. We encourage them to examine their relationships and if need be, change them.

So there is what we call an internal or educational process in the movement wherein relationships are made based on certain principles or convictions. Some of us no longer subscribe to Catholic dogma; there are different norms now for courtship, for initiating relationships. We feel that it is every woman's right to choose her partner. The Spanish norm was to wait until someone asked for your hand; you had no right to shop around or test relationships, you had to get married right away; it was a lifetime risk.

We are trying to promote the idea that divorce, which is illegal in the Philippines, is a woman's right. Many political women establish relationships and get

married, not legally, but in the eyes of the movement. It is the emerging norm, the emerging society; the ethics it has developed are ones many of us identify with. When people say, "Oh, but that's immoral or illegal," we say, "But from whose point of view?"

W: Does this change extend to questioning whether relationships necessarily must be heterosexual?

MV: That is still a very sensitive area. In fact there are many gays and lesbians who don't express it in terms of choice. We've always recognized that homosexuality is a product of society, but it is difficult for many people to accept that men can love men and women can love women, although they can understand deep friendships without sex. Open homosexuality is associated with the flamboyance of the entertainment world. When gays and lesbians become very political they are respected because of their political commitment but they are not encouraged to have open relationships. Some do assert their identity, but it is still not commonly seen as part of the emerging norm, and there is no deliberate organizing to raise consciousness around the question.

W: How are women of different classes involved in the opposition movement?

MV: Women in factories do their main political work in their unions, fighting for just wages, a decent living, the right to strike, and so forth. These women are now beginning to at least include a gender component in addressing issues but it will take some time before things like the right to equal



opportunities, or the right to have nurseries in the factories, or full maternity leave and pay will be on the unions' agenda. But at least it's beginning to perk up.

Unions are not the only organizations open to women. Women participate actively and in great numbers in many community organizations. Many Filipino women are not permanently employed, so they form community or craft organizations; their demands are becoming more and more gender oriented. Demands such as housing, health care, education, safety, and peace, are increasingly seen as women's demands. Of course, men too have an interest in promoting such things, but many communities are basically run by women, since men often migrate overseas and in any case are usually absent from their communities during the day when they are away at work. The concrete needs of the family are taken up by the women, so when we organize women in communities they are more anchored in gender analysis.

Then there are very articulate women in the professional sectors who are able to shape public opinion, by virtue of an education that provides them with skill in analysis and expression. We have a lot of women joining us who are in a position to promote women's literature, women's

views, and some of them have been quite influential in doing so.

We feel that professional women have a role to play in the women's movement, but we caution against setting them up as a vanguard, because they might not be able to take it when repression hits. It is to our advantage to have a multi-sectoral dynamic movement in which women from different classes are able to articulate their issues, but at the same time unite around a national vision.

We haven't reached a stage where the demands are as clear and distinct as the national movement's because right now it is imperative for us to express the national demands. But as the women's movement grows in numbers and in its capacity to understand the problem on different levels then the stage is set for us to be able to present a cohesive plan of action.

We insist on claiming women leaders; we are tired of following men, and would rather initiate and put forward our own program of action. That means that women leaders have to be at par with national leaders. It's a very demanding role, because you may have children to take care of, a family to consider. Part of the responsibility of our women's movement has been to consider the children's movement as integral. It should be a national undertaking, the people's



undertaking, but right now only the women's movement can give shape to the care and preparation of another generation.

W: How do these changes among women affect personal relations between men and women at the same or different levels of political responsibility and so on? For example, if a man in a leadership position lives with a woman in the rank and file, does his work always take priority over hers?

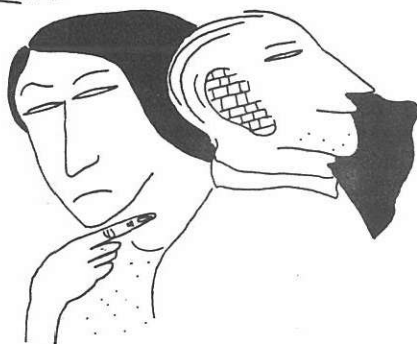
MV: For many of us it is very difficult to relate to men who are not political. In fact, it's even unheard of. If you get involved with an apolitical person you're likely to just be stifled and end up in the kitchen or have to sacrifice the relationship because it isn't going anywhere.

We want companeros who recognize the validity of our aspirations as women. It takes so much patience and time, because being dominating is very deeply engrained in even progressive men. It's hard for them to relax and be open to any change of power, or to have no power at all over their partner. It's often subconscious; many men would not admit it. They say, "Of course I treat you as an equal! Aren't you part of a committee that takes care of all the planning and implementation? You're just as responsible a member as I am, so what's the difference?" But men are often more at home in politics, and so they take on very responsible positions and don't worry about families, about children, housing or a steady income--they have "urgent" things to attend to, and their partners are left to take care of the rest. All that takes time with the result that women don't have time to hone their political skills.

Some women try to reduce the tension by giving in, saying, "It takes time, it's a process; meanwhile just get on with your work and I'll attend to the children, especially when they're very young."

We have noticed that if the woman does not just struggle on her personal terms but involves other people in helping to decide on the problem, then the tension is really resolved. If people just keep it to themselves the situation becomes very volatile and they both suffer. And it does not convince the man of the

Ears have Walls.....



Angela Martin

principles we have already pointed out. The process of educating the man has to be a very structured one; it cannot be left to an individual or personal initiative. A lot of women come to us for help. I've sat in on many discussions between companions. We've been doing that for years, but the tension gets to be too much. Sometimes the couple even refuses to talk about it any more; they feel that verbally nothing is resolved, but of course there are changes. Women are more and more convinced that educational work has to be very slow.

In terms of people outside the organized movement, the prevailing view is still to dominate women. In some ways we're not as dominating as

hispanic peoples; our way of dealing with inequality is to streamline, by being quite gentle and tender. It's subtle sometimes; a lot of attractive men might just tease or crack sexist jokes, without physically expressing inequality.

Many middle-class women say that in their relationship there is no oppression because our men are not so big on being overtly macho. It's more subtle, and therefore harder to combat and change.

W: Do male militants prefer to have an apolitical partner so they don't have to deal with these problems?

MV: There are some. But normally the collectives or people in the community would address the situation. They'd say, "Are you neglecting your wife? Are you not providing her with a political perspective?" Five years ago people would just keep quiet about it, thinking it too personal to inquire about a wife staying at home. Now there are men who approach us and say their wives could benefit from knowing us. But there are also men who say, "It's nice getting to know you, but I hope my wife doesn't meet you." I usually counter that with, "Well, she might not meet me, but she'll find her way, so you'd better watch out; even if you don't wake up, she will!"

W: What would you project happening in Philippines over the next five years?

MV: In the next five years we're going to reach a certain climax, and with that a higher militancy among women and men, a higher form of commitment. We know we have to be prepared to weather the death throes of the dictatorship and a U.S.

intervention. But despite what we are up against we believe that the problem will reach its logical conclusion, and set the stage for an emerging new order to prevail.



Dan Wasserman

We're putting a major effort into building a very strong anti-intervention movement. Since our solidarity work has been closely connected with the solidarity movements with other countries, and with the peace movements, it just might be possible for a more peaceful resolution to the problem. But we must prepare for both that and a more climactic resolution. Our people have been tempered in the struggle and they will understand the sacrifices demanded of them in the coming years.

One source of great anxiety is our children. Children are very important, very tender, and since we have a very large population under the age of fifteen, we hope they will commit themselves to this movement so that the future can really be theirs. Of course it will also be ours. I would like to remain in the process and enjoy the celebration of a new order for women.

I expect a lot of support and militance from other countries to

stop U.S. intervention. The Canadian and American people are staunch friends. We've never been anti- the American people; we've always addressed ourselves to the central target of U.S. imperialism. We also know that by spearheading their own struggle they will be fragmenting the U.S.'s capacity to mobilize a war machinery. We'd like to lend more support to that struggle, but since we are facing our own, very formidable responsibility, we need to focus all our strength on our own struggle. That's our contribution to the overall effort of winning peace and genuine development. And in spite of our isolation in terms of bodies of water, perhaps we can provide people with some inspiration to give birth to their own struggle, we think that would be an important victory.

Personally, I'm very interested in the problem of the construction; right now our main task is to dismantle the dictatorship; the next stage will be the construction of a base for real democracy. That aspect has been discussed in our program of action, but it's a very general program. We want to give it more depth in terms of how it will take shape in our lives, in our communities. It's what you call forward planning, but our work now must also focus on building towards that; we hope the women's movement here will be able to lend us concrete support in that aspect. It's a question of long-term support, to be able to build and sustain the work of construction.

W: Most of us know much less about the struggle in the Philippines than about South Africa and Central America; what would you say the lessons are of your situation for us here?

MV: Well, one thing is that we have focused our energies on one central target and built mass movements to fight that. It's been my observation that there are many women activists in Canada who are not connected solidly on a clear program of action. I think it is necessary for women to examine closely the bonding that they can establish and to address themselves to a program of action that can be realized within a certain framework. For example, if what you've got are feminists who are socialists, and feminists who are not socialists, and socialists who are not feminists, then you have to find a basis for coalescing. You can distinguish it in terms of a broader base, and later crystallize it in a higher basis of unity. But it's important for many women to connect; otherwise the problems just multiply, and you'll be addressing yourselves

to one segment or one particular problem but not hitting a central target. We've learned how important it is to always address and evaluate our work in terms of a central target.

For example, I believe very strongly in the need for a daycare movement. We need that. But that cannot be a central priority at this time, given the situation that we are in. Another example is that we fully believe in the importance of the struggle for women's right to be able to choose and have power over our own sexuality and reproduction, but at the same time, our situation demands that our primary choice be to be free from domination from the powers that be, and in the process to also be able to exercise that choice in terms of our own social needs.

Women's Brigade to go to Nicaragua

Canadian Action for Nicaragua (CAN) is planning a women activists' coffee harvest brigade for January 20 to February 16, 1986. The trip will include 2½ weeks of work in Nicaragua's coffee harvest and



1½ weeks of travel in the country and meetings with various organizations. There will be opportunities for many discussions with members of AMNLAE, Nicaragua's women's organization. The cost of the entire trip will be approximately \$1200.

All women interested in participating in the brigade should call Magaly at 534-7273 or CAN at 534-1766.



NICARAGUAN WOMEN: Unlearning the Alphabet of Submission

A moving, broad-ranging compilation of articles documenting the reality of different women's lives since the Nicaraguan revolution, including the Participatory Research Group's own "We Have the Capacity, the Imagination and the Will". Published by the Women's International Resource Exchange (WIRE), 2700 Broadway, New York, NY 10025. Available at better bookstores.

REVIEWS

Sweet Dreams

Marie Lorenzo

Sweet Dreams is a movie about working-class dreams that sometimes come true--and normally don't. It is a moving, heartbreaking, and very funny film about the life of country singer Patsy Cline, who hit the big times in the late 1950's and early 1960's. She was one of the first women country and western singers to record a million-dollar seller ("I Fall to Pieces" and then "Sweet Dreams.") She was killed in a plane crash in 1963.

I don't know much about the real person, but the screen Patsy Cline (played beautifully by Jessica Lange) is a laughing, strong, witty, incredible woman determined to take control of her life and make something of it. She tells her mama early on that she wants to make money singing so she can buy herself a big house with yellow roses growing in the front yard. But later in the movie it becomes clear Patsy Cline wants to be the biggest country and western singer possible. At a time when women were busy looking for husbands, she wants to be another Hank Williams. And she clearly had no other intention but to make it on her own--husband or no husband.

It helped that she had a terrific voice and an inimitable style. (All the music in the movie--and there's lots of it--is original Patsy Cline, and Jessica Lange does terrific lip synch!) But unlike Loretta Lynn (Coal Miner's Daughter) Patsy Cline takes control of her marketable skill right from the beginning. It is the resulting economic independence that provides

the framework for her relationships with the men in her life.

Her first husband appears as no more than a leaf in a windstorm against this dynamo; she just has too much verve for him. It's not long before she finds Andy, her second husband (sympathetically portrayed by Ed Harris). Their relationship is nothing if not passionate and volatile.

Cline continues to pursue her singing career on her own and their life is not easy. Her unexpected pregnancy adds to the tension and one day Andy hits her. She wastes no time in moving back to her mother's place.


Though they reconcile, it is clear she doesn't have to take anything from anybody. Two children and many recordings later, she has established herself in the industry and it is clear she is on her way up. When he beats her the second time, in the house she has bought, for Cline it is one time too many.



One of the many remarkable things about Cline's life is her intense relationship with her mother, who was her constant emotional support. Her mother is portrayed with a wonderful blend of maternal concern, Southern working-class warmth, and youthful admiration for her daughter. Cline's relationship to her is like that of a close sister, her lifetime confidante.

Even though she becomes a successful recording artist, her life is plagued by tragedy. Her sudden death in the flowering of her career ended a vibrant life that surely would have touched millions.

By far the best thing about this movie is Jessica Lange's performance as a strong, tough woman; she conveys a contagious zest for life and for dreams. After all, no matter how bad it all gets, you can always find something to laugh at. You will laugh with her and hurt with her and fall in love with her. And the music just clinches it.



**"Looking Forward,
Reaching Back"
Women's Archives
In Canada Project**

The Canadian Women's Movement Archives has been collecting material on the women's movement in Canada since 1977. The bulk of archival material, though is being saved by individuals and women's groups across the country.

During the next year, the CWMA will be researching and compiling a directory of Women's Archival Collections in Canada. A collective member will be travelling across the country to meet with individuals and women's groups.

If you or your organization have any material on the women's movement in Canada, please contact the CWMA. Help ensure that our history is saved.

Canadian Women's Movement Archives
P.O. Box 928, Stn P, Toronto, Ont. M4T 2P1 (416) 597-8865



What Do Women Want?

Berkeley Books, 1985

Linda Briskin

I am ambivalent about pop psychology books. Secretly I hope that they will provide the ten easy steps to whatever they promise: happiness, success, confidence, assertiveness, perfect relationships. At the same time, I have serious political concerns about their basic premise: the belief that individuals are wholly responsible for their own success, confidence, etc. This is an unacceptably liberal and individualistic assumption about the world, and its corollary is that when we don't succeed, we have only ourselves to blame.

So it was with some trepidation that I read What Do Women Want. Recommended by several friends, it is written by Susie Orbach, author of Fat is a Feminist Issue, and Luise Eichenbaum, who was instrumental in starting the Women's Therapy Centre in England. This book does not have a 'ten easy steps' approach, nor does it fail to take into account the complex socio-economic and cultural reality.

What Do Women Want fundamentally challenges our ideas about dependency, and in particular, what we might call the female/male dependency division of labour. In the first place it challenges the premise of The Cinderella Complex, a popular book by Claudette Dowling. Dowling argues that progress toward equality of the sexes is hampered by a learned dependency that goes with growing up female. She sees dependency as the refusal to accept responsibility.

Orbach and Eichenbaum see the Dowling view of women's dependency as a dangerous myth. It suggests to women that we can pull ourselves up by the bootstraps, if only we would stop complaining and stop depending on men. And it leaves us feeling inadequate if we cannot. Orbach and Eichenbaum argue for a more complex view of dependency which begins by acknowledging that everyone has dependency needs. If these are met in childhood, it is easier for us to go out into the world as whole people --confident and strong. They suggest that boys have their needs met in a more positive way than girls do, and that this different treatment sets up their adult patterns.

"Women are indeed fearful of independence and success. But this is not because they have been raised to depend on others. It is precisely for the opposite reason: women are raised to be depended upon; to place their emotional needs second to those



of others. While women have traditionally been dependent economically, they have always been the emotional caretakers of the family. At the same time that women are depended upon for emotional support and nurturance, they learn to behave dependently. (pg. 19)

...while girls and women are raised to display dependent behaviour--which is in reality more of a deference behaviour, a looking up to a man--they are cautioned against showing their real emotional dependency needs. Girls learn early that in the most profound sense they must rely on themselves, there is no one to take care of them emotionally. They cannot assume --as can the man--that there will be someone for them to bring their emotional lives to. (pg. 24-5)

...men's emotional dependency needs are, in fact, more consistently catered to than women's, and this fact has a direct correlation to (men's) ability to be more 'independent'. (pg. 19-20) ...his needs for emotional nurturance are addressed without him having to especially confront them or spell them out. (pg. 23). ...Both women and men co-operate in this process of keeping from view men's dependency needs. The true dialogue of women's and men's dependency on each other is not acknowledged. (pg. 20)

This set of insights exposes the reality of the dependency relationship between women and men, and women's disadvantaged position in it. Women care for men who rarely acknowledge this caring. As a result



of the fact that men's dependency needs are met by women, first by mother and then by wife or intimates, men are more easily able to be independent and confident. Because their needs are met generously and often unconsciously, men are often oblivious to women's needs (how often men say that they do not understand 'what women want'). Women's needs meanwhile, are not being met, and we come to despair of men's ability or desire to respond to us emotionally.

As women come to be less dependent on men economically or for sexual legitimacy, the flaws and discrepancies in the emotional exchange between men and women are increasingly exposed. Until men acknowledge their dependency needs on women, and women realize their right to emotional support, the

relationships between women and men, already almost paralysed by patriarchal values, will be fraught with conflict and miscommunication.

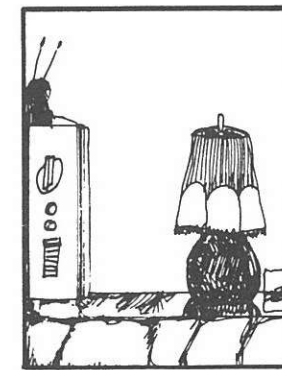
The authors deal not only with the pattern of dependency in relationships between women and men, but also in those between women and women. For example, they explore the merger that can occur in lovemaking between women, a merger that can touch off fears of loss of identity. They connect this experience to the childhood separation of girls from their mothers.

"...the process of girls separating from their mothers is a difficult one. Mother, because of her shared gender identity, relates to her daughter as though she were an extension of herself. This makes it hard for the daughter to know herself apart from her mother... [The] daughter then moves away from the mother with trepidation, not terribly sure in her own boundaries, feeling somewhat

insecure and shaky about her sense of self as different from her mother. When two women open themselves to each other in a close sexual relationship, they may both be touched by echoes of that early merger with mother. They may both long to be reunited now, in this adult way, with a warm, soft, loving, accepting woman. They may be overwhelmed by how much pleasure they experience and by how easily their boundaries dissolve and they feel the possibility of merger." (pg. 140-1)

Drawing on extensive case studies, What Do Women Want uses this viewpoint to look at intimate relationships between women and men, and between women. In fact the authors integrate a discussion of lesbian relationships into each section of the book.

I found What Do Women Want frighteningly revealing, and I highly recommend it.



Nicole Hollander



Christine Roche