

OtherWise

A Feminist Newspaper at U of T

Volume 2, Number 6, April 2, 1986



Lisa Kristensen sews an addition onto the Women's Centre's banner for the International Women's Day March.

Celebrating IWD

Full House at the Women's Centre

by Helen Fallding

International Women's Week brought U of T students, staff and faculty together to celebrate with a series of noon-hour events sponsored by the Women's Centre, OPIRG and the Women's Studies Student Union. These were the first events held in the Women's Centre since it opened in January, and organizers were thrilled with the daily turnout of 35 to 75 people.

The week started with a timely discussion on pay equity. Ceta Ramkhalawansingh of the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues detailed their concerns about the

Ontario government's proposed pay equity legislation. Pay equity policies address less than 20% of the many factors responsible for the wage gap between Canadian men and women, said Ceta. She noted that without broader definitions and an independent tribunal to resolve disputes, the provincial legislation could be particularly weak. Pay equity information kits are available at the Toronto Women's Bookstore. Also, the Women's Centre has a copy of the Advisory Council's recommendations.

Paula Caplan, chair of Women's Studies at OISE, gave a

Continued on page 8

Ask Your Mother or Ask Us

The After Effects of DES Exposure

by Anne Brunelle

DES (diethylstilbestrol) is a synthetic female hormone (estrogen) which was prescribed to women for prevention of miscarriage between 1941 and 1971. It was given to those who had a history of miscarriage, slight bleeding or diabetes. It was, however, not effective in preventing miscarriage. Since then, various medical problems have surfaced in women who were treated with the drug, as well as in their offspring.

Anyone who was born in this time period should check to see if her/his mother was given any medication during pregnancy and try to find out what it was. If this medication was prescribed, the mother and her daughter or son may be DES exposed.

Many daughters born to the women who took DES have changes in their vagina, cervix and/or uterus. Most of these changes are not dangerous, but all DES daughters should be checked regularly by a specially trained gynecologist. The examination is similar to a regular pelvic exam but it is more detailed, though not more painful. This screening should start when a young woman has her first period, or at the age of 14, whichever comes first.

A small number of DES daughters have developed a rare form of cancer—clear cell adenocarcinoma. This cancer is very uncommon and will affect only 1 in 1000 to 1 in 10,000

Continued on page 6

MORE OTHERWISE...

Rock Without Cock

Toronto's Women's
Bands

T. Smith, p.3

Posters Mean Business

Graphic Feminism

Dowson, p.5

Grab Yourself
Some Art

Sex, Art
and Representation

A.M. Smith, p.4

From The

Imagine: a woman falls off her bicycle in downtown Toronto and suffers a bad cut to her head. In a nearby emergency ward a doctor prepares needles and sutures to give her twelve stitches. Before beginning, he asks her what she thinks of extra billing. What can she say?

Doctors hold a great deal of power over our lives. As the only individuals in our society who can legally prescribe medical treatment, doctors monopolize and control our health care system. Luckily, we live in a country which has embraced a "socialized" health care system (unlike our neighbours south of us). The basis of this system is health insurance, monthly payments of premiums which insure us with the right to "free and accessible" health care ...most of the time.

But, this system does not always work. Some individuals in Canada are not eligible for health insurance (i.e. people on work visas or who are homeless). As well, not all health services are covered by this system and, of course, Ontario doctors can charge over and above the rates established by OHIP. All of these factors serve to make some health care services inaccessible to those who cannot afford them.

In December, the provincial government introduced a bill which would end this last practice and ban "extra billing" by doctors in Ontario. The result has been a series of protests by Ontario doctors against this proposed legislation. In Sarnia last month five doctors resigned from the only therapeutic abortion committee in the area, to protest the legislation against extra billing, leaving local women completely without access to legal abortions.

In response to the doctors' protests, feminists, labour groups and senior citizen's groups have rallied together in support of

the government's proposed ban. The Coalition Against Extra Billing held its first public forum to address this issue a few weeks ago.

At first glance, extra billing may not seem to be a "women's issue" and, in fact, it is an issue for all Canadians not just women. But as feminists, we recognize that every issue has socio-economic, racial and gender-related implications which need to be examined and understood. A broad analysis of all aspects of our society is essential to a feminist analysis of women's lives.

Extra billing is of particular importance to women for a number of reasons. Extra billing by doctors results in certain health care services being inaccessible to the poor and the elderly (most of whom are women). Because they are under-paid for their work and have fewer benefits such as pensions and work-related medical insurance, women depend on health insurance such as OHIP for accessibility to many medical services.

Women tend to be the major users of our health care system because it has tended to make women more dependent on it by defining them as "ill" more often than men. As well, because it is primarily women who are responsible for child-rearing in our society, women are more likely to be the ones "visiting the doctor" with their children in tow. Moreover, the medical profession's definition of women's reproductive functions as pathological has resulted in women's dependence on the health care system for birth control and child-birth services.

Extra billing often exists in "specialized" fields of medicine such as gynecology and obstetrics, thereby denying women the right to accessibility of essential health care services. This has been a major reason in Ontario why abortions have not

been accessible to some women. By extra billing for therapeutic abortions doctors increase the inaccessibility of abortions.

The connections between extra billing and the medical profession's attitude towards women need to be addressed by feminists. The incident in Sarnia exemplifies these connections. In cutting back non-essential services, the doctors picked a "non-essential" service - therapeutic abortions, over any other service to protest extra billing. In protesting this legislation, services for women were cut back and women were the only individuals targeted and affected. Fortunately, the abortion committee has since been reinstated.

Medical care should not be a privilege but a right in our society. The health care system in Canada attempts to make services accessible to all, but it does not always succeed. It has been suggested that extra billing creates a better medical system by providing more options (for those who can afford it). For example, rather than waiting for three months for a hospital service at OHIP rates, an individual could go to a doctor who extra bills for immediate service.

But, extra-billing is not the solution to improving our present system. More funding for health care, more flexibility in providing services, socialized dental care, the establishment of legal abortion clinics, the legalization of midwifery, the allocation of more funds to non-urban centres; these are all part of the solution to improving our health care system.

As feminists, we recognize that a socialized medical system is essential in insuring our right to universally accessible health care. Extra billing only serves to reinforce the already prevalent rift between "those that have and those that have not". *OW*

From Our Readers

To the editors:

We protest the malicious and sinister smear against the Trotskyist League of Canada you printed in the 25 February 1986 issue of *OtherWise*. The article, "An Appeal for Feminists and Socialists to cooperate", authored by one Chris Leafloor, slanders our organization for "allegedly CIA-influenced behaviour."

We do not know Mr. Leafloor or the political company he keeps. The technique behind his classic smear job is, however, all too familiar. Allying with the most sinister tsarists the social democrats in Russia accused Lenin and the Bolsheviks of receiving gold from the German Kaiser. In the 1930s Trotskyists were accused by Stalin of being agents of Hitler and the Mikado and then murdered.

Today, in the reactionary

climate of Cold War North America, with the state building up its arsenal for repression, Leafloor's cop-baiting libel feeds into the hands of the government's secret police for whom cop-baiting is one of the "preferred" techniques for poisoning and disrupting relations within the workers movement. In short, this vicious slander is designed to make the members and supporters of our organization into non-people about whom anything can be done.

We also protest Leafloor's attempt to set up the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) for the same treatment by falsely accusing it, as well, of being "CIA-influenced". What's ironic is that Leafloor has the same method as CPC-ML, whose cop-baiting of political opponents stands behind a long and sordid history of thuggery and gangsterism against the left.

Continued on page 7

We Are OtherWise

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The Heratix: From left to right, Pat Jeffries, Harriet Hume, Jocelyn Grills, Barb Taylor and Paula (pronounced Peregrine) Uienka.

by Tori Smith

Do women want into the corridors of power or do they just want to play power chords?

Would Emma Goldman dance to The Slits?

If enough woman's bands play gigs at Grossman's will the patriarchy crumble?

From what famous all-woman band did this newspaper unintentionally steal its name?

Way back when the women's movement was just a gleam in Gloria Steinem's eye, a different kind of revolution was taking shape; and though it didn't have much hope of changing the world, it did prove durable and is still occasionally called subversive. Of course it was rock and roll, which over the years has spawned many offspring - hard rock, acid rock, punk rock, pop, heavy metal, new wave, and so on - but since this article isn't about musicology, we'll skip the details and get to the point. Rock music has always been a boy's rebellion or - more accurately - a man's business. There have always been notable exceptions, like Janis Joplin or Grace Slick, but the people calling the shots - from behind the mixing board, the drum kit, or the boardroom table - have always been men. However, it is beginning to change. More and more of the 'big acts' are women, and more of those women are in greater control of their music and its presentation. Even more exciting than the number of Madonnas making it in the mainstream, however,

Joanne Mackell, Sherry Shute, and Cathy McKay to put Otherwise together in the early seventies. Since this was when Toronto's local music scene consisted of about three bars, they spent most of 1972 through 1974 touring small town Ontario. Not surprisingly, an all woman rock band was a new experience for most of their who audiences expected them to play soft and sentimental standards such as "Spanish Eyes". Instead, Otherwise did cover versions of ZZ Top and Creedence Clearwater Revival, with the occasional Jimi Hendrix thrown in for good measure. Still they usually won the audience over, and, as Joanne Mackell remembers, received qualified praise: "Hey, you guys are pretty good for chicks."

Since then, attitudes towards women's bands have improved. Naturally, the women's movement has continued to help, allowing women greater freedom to choose unconventional avenues of expression. Another significant boost came from the punk explosion of the late seventies. With it the music scene became open territory with bands being formed overnight, countering the slick formula rock and super star system which dominated the business. The emphasis in punk was not on production values and technical expertise, but on energy and anger. Women were no longer intimidated, because as Elaine Stef, guitarist in Demi-Monde, says "All of a sudden you didn't have to be a virtuoso. You didn't have to be some boy who started his guitar lessons when he was six

**I saw a boy with a plastic gun
He was playing war to have some fun
He said: "I'm only eight, will they let me fight?
When they drop the bomb
Will it be alright?"**

© Marian Lydbrooke
Demi-Monde

is the number of soon-to-be-really-famous women who are working together to create a new music which sounds like, and says, something different.

All-women bands aren't a completely new idea. Quite some time ago, women musicians realized that the best way to get a chance to play was not to wait around for the guys to ask them to a jam, but to get together with other like minded women and start a band. That was the theory that prompted

years old and got really good by the time he was sixteen." Since boys were getting away with little experience or skill, women could do the same; and once women were on the scene there was no getting rid of them.

In Canada there has been a steady stream of women's bands since the late seventies: Mama Quilla II, Hamburger Patti and the Helpers, Angel Stacatto and the White Rebels, and the No Name Band of Toronto; the Moral

Rocking the Patriarchy: Women's Bands in T.O.

Lepers of Vancouver; the Ruggedy Anns from Winnipeg ... the list goes on and on. At present in Toronto there are at least five all-women bands, and perhaps ten others where, so to speak, 'girls rule'.

Of course women's bands are not all made from a single mold. The all women band Apple Viper of Toronto plays cover versions of hard rock songs in bars like the Gasworks. Joanne Mackell and the Yahoos, play country music, transforming those really pathetic victim songs into ironic songs of defiance: Bratty's music shows more ska and calypso influences. Fifth Column, Word of Mouth Band, the Heratix, and Demi-Monde play a range of musical styles difficult to describe, mixing in different degrees punk, new wave, rock and pop influences. Generally the band members are hesitant to label their music. Elaine Stef describes Demi-

boyfriend. Folk on the other hand is technically accessible, portable, and acceptable for women to play. As an added bonus, you can hear the lyrics. Also, over the past ten years, 'women's music', especially in the States, has become somewhat of an institution, supported by festivals and independent production and record companies. But as Marian of Demi-Monde points out, women's music can be more than "strumming an acoustic guitar, singing I shall be released."

This doesn't mean that it is an either/or situation, but that as feminists, we should pay attention to the different types of music women are trying to create. Marian sees the main difference lying in the energy of the music, with punk and rock expressing a more militant - and perhaps urban - energy. Rita McKeough, drummer for Demi-Monde, notes the specific politics of choosing to play rock in that they are breaking stereotypes by giving women a loud and aggressive voice. Furthermore, it is the reclaiming of a rebellious music, which as the Heratix point out, was often used by men to 'get mad at their mothers'. In women's hands, they hope, it will still be used to say fuck off, but the target will be more worthy.

It's important to note that being political doesn't mean being dogmatic, nor does it mean that the quality of the music takes a back seat to the message. In fact, for most women's bands the opposite applies - innovation and skill is a priority, as is an emphasis on creating lyrics which are poetic, narrative and personal, rather than political sermons. But by choosing to write about topics such as child abuse, or the fear that women experience at night, bands like the Heratix and Demi-Monde vent a lot of the anger and frustration women feel. The combination of this content and innovative styles of rock is both challenging and fun. So keep your ears open, girls, and dance.

OW

**Lowest caste in every society
Just part of the property
Centuries of silence and slavery
How did you get this power over me
Wake up brother you'd better listen
There's a revolution cooking in the
old slaves' kitchen!**

© The Heratix

Monde's sound as "nice ladies music." The Heratix call their music "Cathy".

Knowing that women can and do play rock, the question remains - what's in it for feminists? Many of us think of the songs Holly Near sings, as our political music, while punk and rock belong to rowdy boys. There are some good reasons for this. Rock musicians like the Rolling Stones have contributed more than their fair share of sexist lyrics, and the technical aspects of rock seem daunting to most women. Even now, many women musicians report being asked in music store if they are there to pick up something for their



Demi-Monde: Marian Lydbrooke, Elaine Stef, Rita McKeough, Gabby Vandervelde and Susan Sturman.

Sex, Art and Representation

by Anna Marie Smith

"I like it/ I hate it--but, of course I know nothing about art."

Now ask the same woman to look at a sexual image. Chances are, she will have a strong opinion, pro or con, and without reservations or qualifications.

In the case of "art", that is, visual representations regarded as possessing aesthetic worth to the extent that they are classed as "high" cultural products, our approach tends to be reverent. Art galleries are rarely warm, community-oriented environments. Even in the "alternative" spaces, the viewer's voice often drops to a hush, exhibiting the sort of deference usually reserved for the approach to shrines or altars.

Our criticism of art, as "uneducated" viewers, is cautious. We stand timidly before the work, filled with the sense that we are somehow crashing an exclusive party without an invitation, and we could be found out at any time. We strive not to offend through our silly opinions.

Michelangelo, Picasso, expressionism Andy Warhol--we nod and say, yes, that's art. The Group of Seven, Joyce Wieland, Emily Carr--without a Bachelor of Fine Art, several trips to Italy and the right clothing, we dare not engage in any simplistic and reductionistic criticism. This is the sacred territory and we would be stepping all over it.

When it comes to viewing so-called "high" art, I think we should drop the reverence and be willing to track mud onto the carpets and hardwood floors of the "finest" Toronto galleries and alternative spaces alike. Even John Bentley-Mays of the *Globe and Mail*, Toronto's most noted art critic, literally learned on the job without any prior training. (Complete gallery listings are available in sources such as *Now Magazine*.)

While the reverence has to go to make way for more relaxed and less self-effacing viewing, I do think that we should retain our general reluctance to distort the meaning of so-called "high" art through reductionistic criticism. However, when we come to the most common feminist criticism of "low" art and culture and especially to feminist criticism of sexual images, it is exactly this reductionism which predominates.

tive sexual images. I think some of her comments bear repeating and further discussion.

Diamond argues that there is a fundamental distinction between feminists who see a direct link between images and reality, and those--primarily artists--who see this link as being problematic. The first group can be rather loosely collected under the banner "Porn the theory, rape the practice". Their basic principle is that porn causes violence, which they support with behaviourist psychology research studies. Pornography is a model for male control of women, and reduces women entirely to the status of sex objects. The relentless male pursuit of power over women's sexuality constitutes the fundamental organization of women's lives. The powerless woman is trapped in this hegemonic relationship, which is furthered and legitimated through pornography.

This group of feminists have adopted, of course, an anti-porn stance and form the core of the pro-censorship section of the feminist movement. Because pornography is seen by this group as an essential foundation of male power over women, they devote a lot of energy to organizing politically on this issue.

Ironically, however, those women who have spent so much time and so much debate on pornography, which is largely visual, have done little to advance our understanding of visual images. Diamond states that for these feminists, "Pornography itself is understood as a form of violence and coercion, whatever the content of the actual image."

I could list the number of films I picketed -- without seeing--with WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Women) several years ago. The criticism of sex images by anti-porn feminists tends to center on the all-pervasiveness of the patriarchal representation of explicit sex, with or without violence. That is, the context is patriarchal, control of sexuality is its foundation, therefore all explicit sexual images like all aspects of the culture inherently bear the essential stamp of sexism.

Not all pro-censorship feminists hold this view which,

extreme reductionism, has lost any claim to validity among feminists. The call is issued for erotica, not pornography, a "women's erotica".

When anti-porn women are presented with the new alternative sexual images, however, the traces of reductionism remain prominent. Diamond finds that this group demands that "new sexual images should conform directly to the new reality feminists want to structure." In short, they maintain their image-causes-real-actions agenda and impose it on the visual work. Their ideal of erotica is correspondingly realist in form and unproblematic in interpretation. The social meaning or psychoanalytic content is extracted from the visual image, reducing the complexities of the visual text to suit their agendas. Images which do not explicitly follow the realist form and the overall agenda are dismissed as non-progressive at best, sado-masochistic or patriarchal at worst.

There is, however, a very loosely-defined second group of artists who reject this entire structure of criticism of alternative sexual images, and of visual images in general. These artists draw from various schools of art criticism, psychoanalysis, sex theory and communications theory. For Diamond, this group holds that "all images are produced and that each media has, as well, its own process of production, which must be understood to understand the image. (Their criticism) centers

The uncritical realist production of lesbian erotica tends to frame a single, politically correct and culturally okay lesbian sexuality.

on the structure of images as well as their overt content." An understanding of the image further requires the recognition that images contain their own reality but not TRUTH.

Interpretation becomes a problematic exercise, a practice which must include the consideration of the different and possibly opposing languages used by the author of the image and the viewer. These languages are not neutral but act to codify images and provide a pre-theory of understanding. In this direction, interpretation becomes the problem of translation between two languages, and a perfect translation is only an ideal which can never really be attained.

From these presuppositions, this second group of artists "argue for more flexibility in the construction of alternative sexual images." The uncritical use of realism is questioned by these women. Realism gives the viewer the illusory expectation of "truth", which allows this "truth" to become an authoritative statement. In the case of alternative lesbian sexual images, especially in the context of the reductionistic legacy of the anti-porn feminist criticism, the "truth" that is often extracted is the essence of lesbian sexuality. That is, the uncritical realist production of lesbian erotica tends to frame a single, politically correct and culturally okay lesbian sexuality.

Following from their criticism of the view which states that there are inherent truths and single meanings of visual texts, these artists advocate the use of realism in a satirical manner, and the use of transgressive imagery. Starting from the assumption that there is no

single women's or lesbian sexuality, but many sexualities, they "see value in providing images that transgress assumptions about sexuality in the culture, that examine the role of the deviant, confuse boundaries, play with sexuality/roles and provide a challenge on

An understanding of the image further requires the recognition that images contain their own reality but not TRUTH.

various levels."

Does this transgression mean that "anything goes", that any image is "okay", that political responsibility is irrelevant in the production of sexual images? Yes and no. To the extent that norms and standards have become structures for censorship (be it the Toronto Women's Bookstore or the Ontario Censor Board), self-censorship, reductionistic criticism and the guides in the extraction of essential truths and a fixed definition of sexuality (lesbian or otherwise), they must be discarded. We should also break down our tendency to create "experts" who we ask to identify the "good art" for us even under the guise of "alternative" art dialogue. Reverent silence is as much out of place in front of alternative sexual imagery as it is in front of so-called "high" art.

With the current production of alternative sexual imagery, we need to openly discuss what we like, what we dislike and our reasons for the distinctions. At the same time, we must understand that these images are not produced in a vacuum, outside the political and social realm. As much as we emphasize the necessity of giving attention to the text itself, its composition and form, the visual image is always within a social context; a contemporary history. The production of sexual imagery in some sort of apolitical reverie, without being informed by radical politics, is not our goal here. Nor is the liberal demand for tolerance of eccentricity our aim.

To challenge assumptions about sexuality, to recognize and explore the perverse and to break down rigid categories of sexuality is to engage in social activity, and not abstracted theorizing, non-political art production or individually defined gratification or desire. To produce alternative sexual images is to engage in alternative sexual practices, which, as transgressive social practices, possess the promise of resistance. The positing of these challenges to held assumptions and categorizations involves interaction and communication among perverts and interaction and communication between perverts and the rest of society.

We are not engaging in these sexual practices, the viewing and production of alternative sexual imagery, for the revolution. We do it because we enjoy it. And yet, far from moving towards an individualistic relativism--"that's okay for you, this is okay for me," and "there's no relation between our two 'preferences'"--we're talking (and creating) radical sexual-political change. **OW**

Anna Marie Smith is a Masters student in Political Science at U of T, who, as a photographer and Ruthann Tucker's partner in the *Flying Femmes*, would be making more alternative sexual images if it weren't for four term papers, a seminar, and two final exams.

Special thanks to the Toronto Gay Community Appeal for the impetus to write on this topic.



The Flying Femmes

It is the peculiar legacy of the anti-porn movement in English Canada and the U.S. that this reductionism receives widespread legitimation. Sara Diamond, in her welcoming address to the conference, "The Heat is On: Women On Art On Sex", held recently in Vancouver, presented several interesting ideas on the relation between different analyses of pornography and different strategies for producing alterna-

collapses into an anti-sex stance. Some feminists used to reject the entire idea of creating alternative sexual images, stating that the creation of these images is impossible in a patriarchy. Of course, their argument could be extended to read that alternative sex practices, that is, sex without patriarchal coercion, with men or women, is similarly impossible. This argument, because of its

Graphic Feminism Sixteen Years of Illustrated Struggle

by Jeannette Dowson

A poster can catch your eye and depict a message in one glance. Add to this a relatively low production cost, and a powerful medium with which to reach a wide audience is created. When used for advertising, posters publicize anything from a new product in the market place to a political event.

Since the French Revolution, they have been used by political organizations to publicize newspapers, magazines, events and demonstrations. At that time the cries of street vendors the revolutionary lyrics of popular songs and the slogans of political posters reinforced each other.

The poster guides and demands; invites participation or incites denunciation. Posters asserting "Choice" or "Women Against Racism From Toronto to South Africa" become part of the public image of a movement which is often denied

Feminists have been working to create their own images in the visual arts.

coverage by the mass media. The symbols and slogans found on political posters tell us of positions and tensions around issues. They can be used to gage and understand what is happening in a political movement.

The socio/historical relevance of poster art has long been noted and it was for this reason that Graphic Feminism, a project of the Canadian Women's Movement Archives was undertaken. The main purpose of this project is to compile, access and exhibit graphic work produced by and for the Canadian women's movement. Such an exhibit would make accessible and reflect the feminist movement in Canada. Posters previously mounted on telephone poles and bill boards will be preserved along with representative buttons, banners and magazine covers. Once compiled, the material can be



Canadian Women's Movement Archives

examined, not only for its political content but for its approach to design, and for its aesthetic appeal. Feminists have been working to create their own images in the visual arts. While working within a "fine arts" context, they are creating a new "visual vocabulary". This "visual vocabulary" communicates women's concerns to the public

at large and exploring it is one of the main goals of Graphic Feminism.

An exhibit of Canadian feminist graphic art of this kind has never before been mounted in Canada. Collecting the material for the show proved to be a major undertaking in itself. Fortunately, the holdings of the archives proved to be a rich and informative starting place.

The criteria for submissions were broad and simple: 1) the work had to be produced by women involved in the women's movement, 2) the work had to reflect the feminist movement in Ontario.

Now that the project is underway the response has been tremendous and enthusiastic. A major obstacle in producing a representative show has been the difficulty in acquiring material from outside Toronto, as well as material from the early women's movement. Still the amount and range of submissions has been remarkable and Graphic Feminism should have a wide base of appeal. It should interest not only feminists but those who are interested in the history of a significant social movement, as well as those who appreciate original graphic design.

According to art historian Carlo Arturo Quintavalle, "A poster should never be thought of as a painting; it should be considered only in the context of a specific publicity campaign." It is his opinion that one must reconstruct the context in which a poster appears. Who is better qualified for such a task than feminists? By reconstructing the context in which these posters were produced, we are forced to look at ourselves. Graphic Feminism will help with the process of understanding our own "visual vocabulary".

OW

Graphic Feminism:
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W.A.R.C.

Working For Art's Sake

by Luanne Karn

The Women's Art Resource Centre originated out of the need to document Canadian women's art work and to actively generate feminist art theory in Canada. In general, women's art and feminist art criticism are not well known in the art world, the women's community or the general community. Knowledge about Canadian women's art is particularly limited, as women's culture has been consistently ignored and lost. The Women's Art Resource Centre (WARC) was formed in an attempt to counteract that process.

The overall objectives of the centre are: 1) to develop a more thorough history of art by collecting information on women artists and women's cultural activities; 2) to actively generate feminist aesthetic theory; 3) to create a support structure for women artists by arranging study groups, lectures, artists' visits and skills exchange programs; and 4) to encourage contact between women's art groups

and other community organizations.

Since its inception, the response to WARC from the women's community in Toronto and elsewhere in Canada has been enthusiastic and supportive. WARC was made possible by a grant from the Explorations Program of the Canada Council and since then has received funding from job creation programs, fund-raising events and generous donations.

In January 1985, WARC moved into a small office space next to the Canadian Women's Movement Archives. The centre has initiated reading groups for local women artists, public discussions and gallery presentations by women artists exhibiting in local galleries and women's cultural networking meetings to share information among artists and women's arts organizations.

Past topics for reading groups have included "Passion and Pictures", women's sexuality and the problematics of its

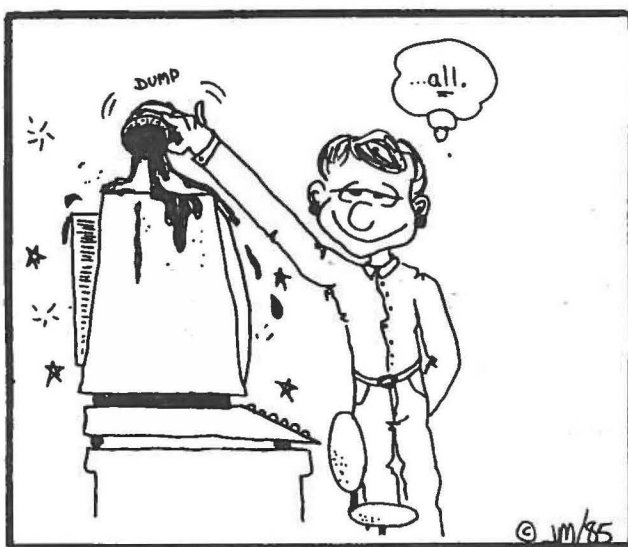
representation, and "Is There French Feminism After Lacan?", an examination of theoretical explorations of women's sexuality in relation to current psychoanalytic texts. Reading groups scheduled for the future may include "Feminism and Film", "Deconstruction and Construction - Strategies of Canadian Feminist Artists 1960-1980" and "Current Developments in Canadian Women's Art 1980-1986".

Knowledge about Canadian women's art is particularly limited, as women's culture has been consistently ignored and lost.

The women's cultural network meetings were organized to fulfill WARC's objectives of encouraging contact between women artists, women's art groups and other community organizations. Proposed topics for future workshops include issues such as "The Importance of Women's Culture to the Fem-

inist Community", "Questioning the Collective Structure" and "Funding Women's Culture: Who's Responsible?".

In addition to the on-going programs described, the coordinating committee and staff at WARC are responsible for the maintenance of three inter-related services. A biographical file system about Canadian women artists was set up primarily for research purposes. All Canadian women artists are invited to submit material to the files. A skills exchange registry which indexes names and skills of women artists who work on a free-lance basis is being developed. Presently, referrals of this kind operate informally and incoming job openings are posted at the centre. Finally, a reference collection is open to the public which consists of books, periodicals, articles and audiotapes about women artists, art theory and issues. OW



JENNIFER MCINTYRE

Sister Vision

by Nalini Singh

Sister Vision, Toronto's Black Women and Women of Colour Press is currently compiling a lesbians of colour anthology. The collective writes: "We are encouraging lesbians of colour to write and develop new forms of expression. We want to work with women who have not identified themselves as writers before and who have not had support for their work. We encourage all writers to contribute to this exciting anthology."

They are interested in receiving many different forms of writing: diaries, short stories, letters, oral histories, journals, poems, autobiographies, theory, science fiction, essays and interviews; as well as visual work such as photographs, humour, cartoons and other graphics.

The deadline for submissions is June 15, 1986 and the anthology's expected publication date is sometime in the fall of this year. Interested women should contact Sister Vision, Black Women and Women of Colour Press, P.O. Box 217, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 4E2. OW

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DES Exposure continued from page 1

DES daughters. If found early, this cancer can be effectively treated. Some DES daughters have also experienced problems becoming pregnant and carrying their pregnancies to term. In addition, there is some controversy as to whether there is an increased health risk for DES daughters who use the Pill. Since there have been no studies done in this area, many DES daughters choose to use other forms of birth control.

There are also some problems which may occur in the reproductive tract of DES sons. They should do regular Testicular Self-Exams and see a urologist if any changes occur. Lumps are usually benign but should be checked. There is also a possibility that sons may experience fertility problems.

One study has suggested a possible increase of breast cancer in DES mothers. Therefore DES mothers should be

especially careful about doing monthly Breast Self-Exams.

A group, devoted to the concerns of the DES exposed, was formed on a national level in 1981. This group, DES Action, is a non-profit consumer organization whose Toronto branch was formed in 1981/82. They provide such services as DES information packets, physician referrals and peer counselling. In Toronto, call 968-2844. OW

Letters continued from page 2

The Trotskyist League is a Marxist organization with a ten-year history of work in Canada. We take false accusations against our organization very seriously. At stake is not only our reputation as Marxists, but the safety of the members and supporters of our organization. We have faced more formidable forces than Mr. Leafloor--and we have won. Our comrades in the Spartacist League/U.S. have successfully fought attempts by the Secret Service, the FBI and the sinister right-wing cult of Sun Myung Moon to set us up for deadly victimization. In Canada, we stopped William Lau Richardson, the self-declared "intelligence director" of the Ku Klux Klan and a former CIA agent who also worked with the RCMP, and his Nazi sidekick, George Graham, from legally lynching two supporters of the Trotskyist League, postal workers Paul Schneider and Mike Mares. Schneider and Mares were charged with "assault causing bodily harm" for defending a labor-endorsed abortion rights demonstration in October 1983 against intimidation, harassment and provocation by the fascists Richardson and Graham. This attempted frame-up was stopped cold by a TL-initiated defense campaign. Hundreds of unionists, including the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics and prominent representatives of left and minority organizations rallied to demand that the charges against Schneider and Mares be dropped.

We are old-fashioned Leninists and Trotskyists who are quite forthright and outspoken about our Marxist views. In the context of a full-scale ideological mobilization for war against the Soviet workers state we stand out for our sharp-edged defense of the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution and for our program for the independent mobilization of the working class at home and abroad. To be sure this embarrasses and irritates the reformist left and rad-libs, who have been in full-scale retreat to the right, desperately seeking an alliance with some mythical "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie.

We don't know what or who influences Mr. Leafloor. Nor do we know what axe *OtherWise* has to grind against our organization. After all, it was a member of your editorial collective who contacted us for inclusion in your "Feminism and the Left" supplement--viciously advertised as "Trots, Commies and Pinkos on Campus."

You have printed a deadly smear against the Trotskyist League and we demand that you retract it.

Jane Clancy
National Chairman (sic)
Trotskyist League of Canada

Dear *OtherWise*:

Although the Alliance for Socialist Action appreciates

your effort to survey the views of the University of Toronto left on the relationship between feminism and socialism, some of the comments attributed to me in the Feb.25 issue do not accurately reflect our perspective nor what I said in the interview.

Specifically, I refer to Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" to which the A.S.A. does subscribe.

It is a distortion to reduce "permanent revolution" to "over-throwing the Capitalists and their army...giving the guns to the workers."

Rather than a simplistic military prescription, permanent revolution is a pre-eminently political and strategic conception. It holds that in the underdeveloped societies only the working class, supported by the mass of the poor peasantry, can accomplish the tasks identified with the bourgeois revolutions of the last century (namely: land reform, industrialization, and national independence). This combination of democratic and socialist tasks, including the struggle for women's emancipation, demands a revolution that will grow over capitalist bounds -- permanent revolution.


In the words of Nicaraguan revolutionary leader Sandino, "only the workers and peasants will go all the way". Permanent revolution is a strategy based on working class leadership and non-reliance on the propertied classes, to achieve human liberation. This perspective is relevant not only in the "third world", but obviously where ever the oppressed confront injustice.

Sincerely,
Anne Brunelle,
Alliance for
Socialist Action

Dear *OtherWise*,
Re. your editorial of Feb.25, 1986. Where does the idea of rejecting "the capitalist dream of individualism and material wealth" fit in to feminist goals? While socialism does indeed embrace an ideology of equality and equal opportunity -- so do many "capitalist" societies, for that matter -- the actual practice of those ideas is a far cry from the theory. One need only have a glance at the socialist countries of Western Europe and Asia. Have there ever been any women in the Politburo? Or in the party hierarchy of Chinese government? I am simply pointing out that the ideology of equality in these countries has not managed to overcome the traditional patriarchy and sexism that has always existed there. Furthermore, since dissent is usually not tolerated in socialist states, feminism as a movement has not fared well there. As an example, I point to the four feminist activists deported from the Soviet Union just prior to the 1980 Olympic games. They (the government) were "cleaning up" their act, that is to say removing signs of dissent from the view of the media and the foreign spectators. On the other hand, however much you have to fault Margaret Thatcher for, it is undeniable what she represents for the feminist movement: that change is possible in our time, even within the present framework.

Yours truly,
Gregory Gransden
Woodsworth III

OtherWise welcomes letters to the editor. Due to space limitations, we reserve the right to condense and select letters.




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Women's Centre continued from page 1

lively talk the next day about her recently released book, *The Myth of Women's Masochism*. By labelling women masochistic, psychiatrists avoid having to examine the real reasons why women are often forced to remain in painful situations, Paula said. She warned that the American Psychiatric Association is about to introduce new diagnostic categories which will negatively affect women, for example, 'Premenstrual Syndrome', 'Paraphilic Coercive Disorder' (need to rape), and 'Self-defeating Personality Disorder' (masochism). She urged people to protest by signing the petition available in the Women's Centre.

Mariana Valverde, who teaches in the Women's Studies department at U of T, read from her hot-of-the-press and highly controversial book; *Sex, Power and Pleasure*, on Wednesday. There is a lack of consensus about what constitutes a feminist approach to sexuality and Mariana analyzes the two antagonistic camps in an effort to get past the name-calling which has sometimes resulted. She identifies as "sexual pessimists", those who see something inherently violent in men's physiology or psychology and the "sexual libertarians", as those who minimize the impact of social structures on our sexual choices. Mariana calls for a dialectical approach that sees us both as subjects and objects.

Thursday's film, 'You Have Struck a Rock', focussed on women's resistance to the pass laws in South Africa. It was a moving reminder of the extraordinary power which a mass of "ordinary" women hold when they refuse to be controlled.

On Friday, Phyllis Sereda, a Women's Studies graduate who is now with Education Wife Assault, shared her slides and experiences of the UN Decade for Women Conference last year in Nairobi. Despite media coverage which focused on conflict, Phyllis said that there was an overwhelming sense of solidarity at the non-government conference, which



Participants spilled out into the hall at the first series of events held at the new Women's Centre.

closed with a spontaneous outdoor celebration.

On International Women's Day itself, the Women's Centre hosted a pre-rally brunch attended by about 75 people and subsidized by the U of T Staff Association.

The concluding event in the series was a forward-looking forum sponsored by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women. They requested feedback on their recent report in order to make revisions and move ahead towards its implementation. Concerns were raised that the report could use more input from service unions and that a further analysis of the impact of racism on women at the university is needed. The Ad Hoc Committee welcomes new members from all constituencies in the university.

International Women's Week was an energizing experience and provided an opportunity to celebrate the work of women on campus and around the globe in our new gathering place at 49 St. George St. The Centre is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and until 8 p.m. on Wednesdays. Your participation is enthusiastically welcomed. *OW*



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