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Spring Issue

Pandora

Volume One, Number Three

Spring, 1986

Halifax, Nova Scotia

International Women's Day



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Teenage mothers looking for fair chance

Christine Lucas

At the present time there have been many facts investigated and reported on behavior, family upbringing, and other related situations leading to young men and women becoming single parents. There is a taboo about being a single parent that existed in the past, that exists in the present, and that could exist in the future.

Single parents are still looked upon as a sin, a disgrace, a social outcast, and every parent's nightmare. In summary, a "burden on society".

I know this. I myself am a single parent, and have been labelled all of the above by friends, neighbours, and several members of my family. Each one has offered nothing but pity and

ridicule. No one has offered understanding.

Nine times out of ten, young women (aged 15-21) who suddenly find themselves pregnant do not want to be. They may have become pregnant by dabbling in the adult game of love, experimental sex, or prostitution. Their choices are as follows: abortion, adoption, foster homes,

keeping the baby, and, in some cases, marriage. Many choose to keep the baby — a small, innocent life.

In the eyes of the church, premarital sex is a sin, but pregnancy is an even bigger sin. All of us were at one time taught that if you ask the Lord he will always forgive you for your sins and wrongdoings. In the Bible, God spoke: "Come, little children, suffer unto me." For the life of me I can't understand why the Church, a representation of God, is so critical when the Almighty is not.

Then there are the parents of the young women and, in many cases, the young men. They are ashamed, they have been disgraced, let down, and disappointed. Why? Because Susie and Billy were doing bad things and now Susie is pregnant. Oh, what ever will they do?

Dad yells, and Mother cries, "We've given you everything you ever wanted, and look, just look, what you've done to us. YOU HAVE DISGRACED THE WHOLE FAMILY."

The single parents of today don't want to be made to feel ashamed, or sympathized with. They just want to be given a fair chance. No one wants to hear, "If you have that baby, you're going to ruin your whole life," because this is not so.

The decision to have a baby is just as delicate as handling a piece of precious porcelain. You do what is best for the child and mother. There are many programs set up to help guide the young parent, as well as the grandparents, to deal with the situation one day at a time.

A certain percentage of young parents continue their education, others seek employment or allow their parents to legally adopt the child, and the remaining draw welfare. This is where the phrase "burden on society" comes in.

A friend of mine once sought the help of a social worker in regards to obtaining financial assistance in the form of welfare. Instead of help, she got a lecture about the "tax payer's money." The government set up this fund for unfortunate people who cannot provide for themselves or their families. Why should one be made to feel guilty for requesting, and receiving, help?

There are a lot of misunderstandings about obtaining social assistance. It is not as easy as it sounds. It is much like a job interview. There are numerous applications, and you basically sign away all of your human rights. The government must know about your personal life from conception to the present, how you met the father of the child, and

whether or not he is aware of the child's existence. Someone then sits down in front of a computer, punches in your name, and up pops everything from your medical history, to your income (if any), to your family status.

The bond between mother and child begins at conception. To experience that first kick or the flutter of hiccups is a great feeling. The life you helped create now becomes a reality. It is hard for any woman to carry a baby for nine months and then suddenly have to give it up. Are these feelings supposed to be different for a young person?

Don't get me wrong. I'm not giving every teenager in Canada permission to get pregnant, and I'm not saying that if they do become pregnant that it's all easy sailing, because it is not. It's just that it would be nice to stomp this form of prejudice that society has been so willing to promote. Let's try to find some good in people. I really do believe that it exists.

Christine Lucas is a twenty-one-year-old mother of a three-year-old son. She lives in Shearwater with her parents, and is planning to return to school to pursue a career in social work.



High school centre makes a difference

This year has seen some very useful public recognition of the needs of young mothers. St. Pat's High School in Halifax is home to a daycare that not only looks after students' children, but that has become part of the daily life of high school students. In this photo, Thomas Aaboe and Andrea Wilson are having fun with their daycare worker Bernadette Donnelly.

There are currently 25 children at the daycare, ranging in age from 8 months to five years. Nine of

the children have parents attending St. Pat's and nearby Queen Elizabeth High School.

According to worker Bromwien Richardson, the daycare has made a big difference to young parents who had no other support because they are now able to continue high school and to care for their children.

As well, it encourages responsibility since teenagers can see first-hand what having a child is all about. Five workers are employed at the daycare and they are often assisted by students from the child studies program. (photo by Sara avMaat)

Women writers work is wanted

donalee Moulton-Barrett

Opportunities are seldom handed to women on a silver platter but that's how Barb Cottrell, Sue MacLeod and I felt recently when publisher Lesley Choyce asked us if we'd like to take over editing and publishing **The Pottersfield Portfolio**. It took us about 30 seconds to say, "You bet."

The Pottersfield Portfolio is the only annual literary anthology of new writing from Atlantic Canada and is an important outlet for the creative voices of this region's writers — at all levels.

A fundamental part of that voice is the voice of women. Unfortunately it is a voice that all too often goes unheard, especially if the voice belongs to a black woman, a native woman or a poor woman. On behalf of **The Pottersfield Portfolio** editorial collective, I am encouraging all women in Atlantic Canada to submit their poetry, short stories, plays and essays. We want to hear what you have to say.

Now, if, I might grovel for a minute. **The Pottersfield Portfolio**, like most literary endeavours, needs money. Our subscription rates are cheap: \$12 for three years. If you can afford it, please subscribe.

Submissions and subscriptions should be sent to: **The Pottersfield Portfolio**, c/o 19 Oakhill Drive, Halifax, N.S. B3M 2V3

Atlantis
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REVUE D'ETUDES SUR LA FEMME

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Tenure a hard-won prize

Elizabeth Bosma

A lot of women have been keeping their eye on a tenure case that's been under review at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

A well-respected feminist sociologist, Angela Miles, was refused tenure earlier this year. Various reasons were given, including the quality of her teaching and her ability to handle opposing positions.

In late February the refusal was overturned. Her job is now secure.

Women have been stunned by the allegations of the tenure committee. Miles' ability to hold the attention of large groups has been demonstrated over and over again here in the Maritimes. And it's largely because her ideas — and

are paid less.

"The trend is to segregate women in academia into part-time, or in short-term contract work. Women are seen as cheap labour."

Part-time academics are usually paid a fraction of the market rate

the same, many male academics see feminists as a threat to their power.

"In some departments men are open to work with women, but some are very threatened. They don't want to deal with women as equals."

**You can't expect much from these men.
It's not inconsistent for them to feel
threatened by feminists**

for teaching the same courses as tenured professors. They receive little or no benefits and are not protected by faculty unions.

Academics on contract are paid the market wage but they have little control over the renewal of their contracts.

"There are still many academics that can not see the significance of women's studies. Even if a woman focuses on women she is identified as a feminist studies person. Men define feminist work as not academic work."

Since faculty applying for promotions, contract renewal, or tenured positions rely on other department faculty for support, many feminists have been denied opportunities for advancement because the question of the credibility of their research came up.

Jones worries that finding fault with feminist teachers may increase as students become more conservative and male students become more threatened by a feminist professor's gender analysis.

"I know of feminists that were not promoted or their contracts have not been renewed or even their contract was reduced because someone criticized their teaching."

But despite the obstacles that women face in academia, Jones hopes that the recently released CAUT's (Canadian Association for University Teachers) "positive action plan" encouraging universities to address the fact of full-time women faculty will offer guidelines to achieve that representation.

Elizabeth Bosma is a freelance journalist working out of Halifax.

Feminist methods of teaching and doing research are not easily accepted by malestream academics

the way in which she expresses them — are so accessible.

Women in Prince Edward Island are still talking about her talk on "Why a woman would want to be a feminist?" given last year. Teachers at Acadia have asked to videotape her classes in order to catch not only her woman-positive message, but the unique way in which she delivers it.

Miles did her doctoral thesis for the University of Toronto on "The Politics of Feminist Radicalism: A Study in Integrative Feminism." She has continued to work with the idea that feminism is not a single, static theory, but is, instead, dynamic. Feminism is constantly changing and evolving as women and their consciousness change and the woman movement becomes more complex.

Miles is breathing easier now her tenure application has gone through. If she had been refused tenure, she would have lost her job — and jobs for feminist academics are few and far between.

She realizes her politics played a part in the trouble over her tenure application. Even if there was no overt hostility towards her feminist beliefs, feminist ways of teaching, of doing research, are not accepted by the mainstream (read malestream) universities.

Miles realizes that her experience is not unique.

While women's enrolment in universities has increased dramatically in the last 10 years, the number of women faculty hired — and more particularly the number of women given tenure — has been far from impressive.

Where women still make up less than 20 per cent of the tenured faculty in Canada, women academics must fight the white ivory tower's sexism and allergy to feminism.

Rhonda Jones (not her real name), a feminist teaching in the maritimes, says when universities do hire women, they usually offer them part-time or contract work. She says it benefits the universities to hire women for these positions because they are temporary and

"There is no protection. There is no one to fight for you if you want your contract renewed. Perhaps if it is a blatant case of discrimination the union might take on the grievance. But you don't make any friends pursuing a grievance and if you want tenure at the same university later you will need support from departmental members," says Jones.

Karen Flicke, a French professor at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, says she's not surprised that men are not sympathetic to feminism, considering how men dominate the number of full-time faculty positions.

"In both Saint Mary's and Dalhousie calendars, women only make up 14 per cent of full-time faculty. You can't expect much from these men. It's not inconsistent for them to feel threatened by feminists."

Jones agrees. Although she does not think all departments are



Making time for making art

Sixty-five women juggled their timetables and braved a Saturday blizzard in February to meet each other and talk about "Making Time for Making Art" at Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery. Gallery director Mary Sparling addresses the group while gallery officer and organizer of the event, Heather Dawkin, looks on. Standing behind both and looking at himself is Muscleman, one of 13 freestanding plywood cut-outs by Sackville, N.B. artist Rebecca Burke. (photo by Jan Skeldon)

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Pandora

Pandora is published four times a year by Pandora Publishing Assoc., a non-profit organization of women in Nova Scotia. Our editorial policy is straightforward: We want to provide women with an alternative to the mainstream media.

Pandora has no single voice. There is no collective opinion, no editorial position. Each article reflects the views of the woman, or women, who wrote it.

Submissions are welcome. Pandora Publishing Assoc. does, however, reserve the right to edit — usually on the basis of length. Submission does not guarantee publication. Discussion of submitted material is encouraged. In fact, we hope to work as facilitators for the publication of material produced by women who are without writing experience, especially for those without access to any other form of media.

Co-ordinating Editor:

Betty-Ann Lloyd

Copy Group:

Nancy Brister, Linda Brown, Margaret Davis, Joanne Jefferson, JoAnn Latremouille, Betty-Ann Lloyd, Valerie Mansour, Judith Meyrick, Eleanor O'Donnell

Outreach:

Sara avMaat, Jo-Anne Fiske, Maureen MacDonald, Gwen Matthews

Design:

Elizabeth Bosma, Brenda R. Bryan, Lois Corbett, Betty-Ann Lloyd, Debbie Mathers, Jan Skeldon

Photography:

Sara avMaat, Jan Skeldon

Graphics:

Dawna Gallagher, Katherine Kechnie

Production:

Sara avMaat, Elizabeth Bosma, Nancy Brister, Linda Brown, Brenda R. Bryan, Lois Corbett, Barbara Cottrell, Margaret Davis, Shelley Finson, Jo-Anne Fiske, Joanne Jefferson, Marilyn Lamb, Betty-Ann Lloyd, Valerie Mansour, Debbie Mathers, Jan Skeldon

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May Spinney

Administration:

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Mary Lou LeRoy, Sara avMaat

Distribution:

Leah Nomm, Mary Lou LeRoy and a cast of thousands including Joella Foulds (Sydney), Nancy Wright (Guysborough), Oona Landry (Antigonish), Katherine Kechnie (Charlottetown), Sharon Fraser (Montague), Alex Keir (Pictou County), Macha MacKay (Wolfville), Second Story (Bridgewater), Carolyn Emerson (Newfoundland)

Cover design:

Brenda R. Bryan, Jan Skeldon

Photos clockwise from left: Margot Parker by Sara avMaat, IWD poster picture by Jan Skeldon, Carol Millett with camera by Sara avMaat, Inga As with crystals by Sara avMaat and Margaret Davis at terminal.

Pandora welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. We have regular meetings every second Wednesday, we have smaller committee meetings for things like distribution, lay-out, story editing, photography. We also have short-term tasks that require no meetings at all. Our next issue deadline is May 7, we will start working on it immediately.

Correspondence and Subscriptions:

Pandora Publishing Assoc.

5533 Black Street

Halifax, N.S. B3K 1P7

messages: 902-455-1287

Second Class Mail registration pending

Supporting subscriptions are \$5.00 for four issues. There is a sliding scale. Women on limited income, send what you can. We ask women who can afford more to provide a contributing or sustaining subscription.

Presswork by Kentville Publishers

Lip service to equality needs financial backing

Valerie Mansour and Betty-Ann Lloyd

All Canadians are being affected by government spending freezes and by cuts announced in last week's federal budget. But, as usual, some are being hit harder than others.

The Globe and Mail reports that many bureaucrats were especially pleased to be in Paris for the francophone summit meetings. They managed to slip away before discretionary spending in their departments became a thing of the past.

Closer to home, some women will not be able to cross town to take part in International Women's Day celebrations. The IWD committee grant from secretary of state is in limbo somewhere in Ottawa.

The federal government freeze is the most drastic in recent history. The Federal Civil Service is not hiring and, according to figures from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, female employees are the largest group affected. Replacements are not being hired, which means fewer jobs, and those remaining are carrying a heavier burden.

Federal departments are not being allowed to use up the remainder of their budgets as they would normally do as the end of the fiscal year, April 1, draws near. This is the ruling that has been especially hard on March 8 celebrations.

Until recently, Secretary of State's Women's Program was the resource women's groups could turn to for funding. The Halifax International Women's Day Committee was counting on Sec State funding to assist them with ex-

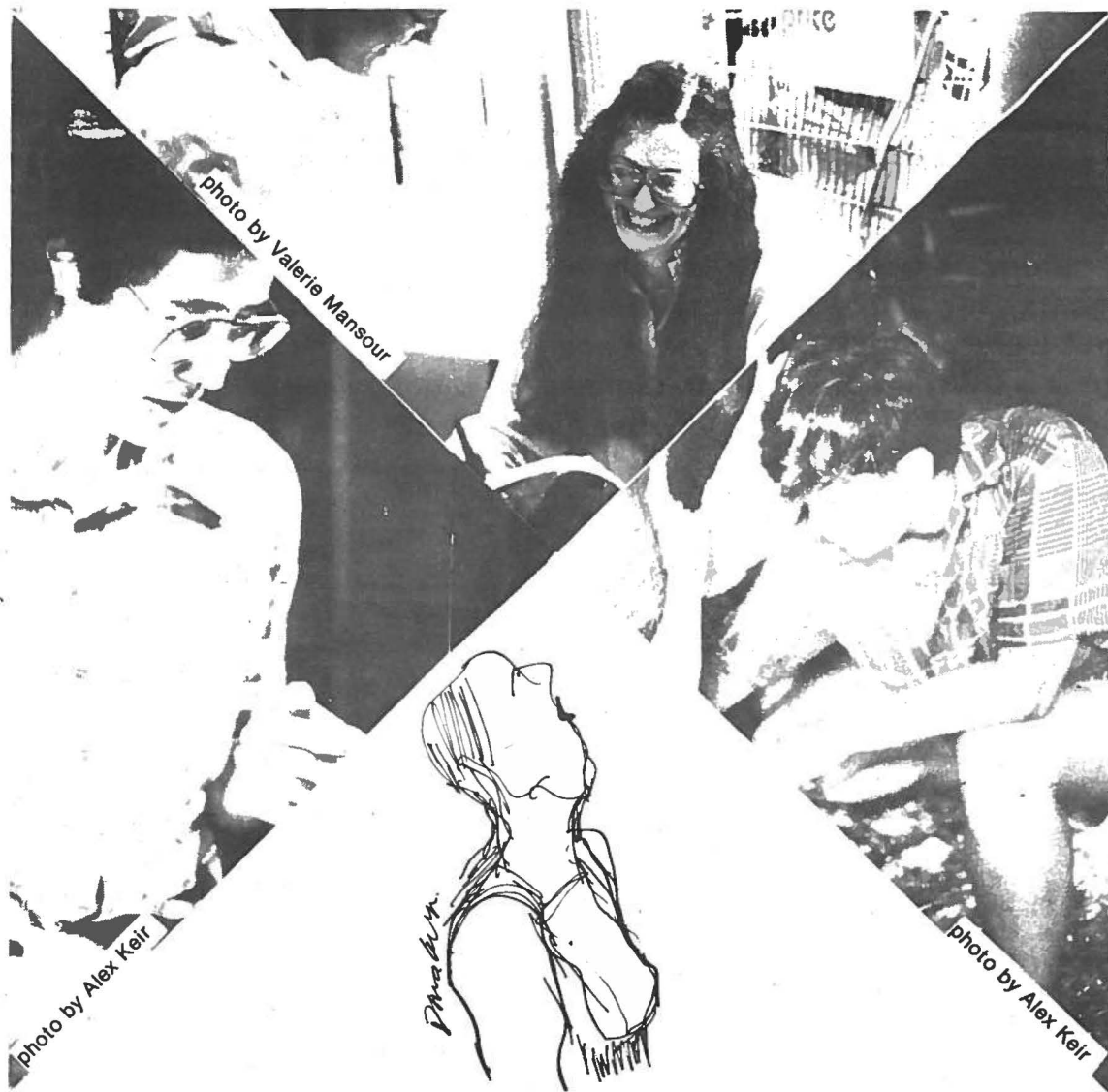
penses for this year's activities. Cathy Busby of the IWD committee tells us events themselves are not in jeopardy — but only because of the goodwill of various women who have loaned money to cover necessary expenses.

The freeze is not just affecting IWD activities. Any women's funding applications that have had the unfortunate fate of sitting on a bureaucrats desk awaiting final approval are still sitting. (Including, we might add, Pandora's application for provincial networking aid.)

Groups are being told to re-apply in April but that amounts to a cutback in next year's budget. And the federal budget included new cuts in non-statutory programs, such as grants to volunteer organizations. How many women's organizations are not voluntary? Unless, of course, they are government spokeswomen.

The National Action Committee has written the government requesting clarification of the fate of funding applications. Women's groups are being asked to trace their grants to see what stage of approval they were in when the freeze was announced.

But most important, women must protest loudly and clearly. Write Secretary of State with a copy to your MP and to Mulroney. Tell them how crucial the funding of women's activities are to your community. Tell them that their lip-service to women's equality is worth nothing without the proper funding to support activities by women's organizations.



Pandora women invite you . . .

Pandora looks waaay up at three of the many women who read and work with the paper. Pictou County farmer Jane Robertson, Halifax writer and journalist Eleanor O'Donnell and Pictou County doctor Rose Johnston are **Pandora** women. You are invited to join them — and us — either by subscription, by writing or by helping out with production and distribution. We

especially like to receive letters in response to issues raised in the paper. Our address is 5533 Black Street, Halifax, B3K 1P7. Our meetings are every second Wednesday (and sometimes in-between). Check the calendar of events for dates. We'll be carrying our banner in the IWD march on Saturday, March 8. Please join us.



Writer feels judgement not sisterly act

Pandora:

I would like to respond to Sharon Fraser's comments about my piece on the Women's International Peace Conference. (Deborah's article in Issue 1, Sharon's column in Issue 2, Ed.) Ms. Fraser felt that my article needed editorial comment, in order to help make political connections between women's oppression in Canada and women's oppression in countries such as Nicaragua or El Salvador.

I want to suggest that, on page 12 of that first issue, I had a second article that demonstrated I am making the political connections — through the Dartmouth Community Action project that I was involved in during recent municipal elections.

Also, obviously I continue to believe that one doesn't need a degree in political science to figure out that living in Canada is on most levels better than living in places like Nicaragua or El Salvador.

I do not apologize for, or retract, one word of what I wrote.

Having got that off my chest, I still need to say that the comments in Ms. Fraser's column struck a very sensitive nerve. A nerve that rouses my anger. With whom? Ms. Fraser? Not particularly. This emotion is something that existed before her column. Men? No! I am often angry, however, with some women's attitudes towards battered women. And here I made some connections between the column and my life.

It is very easy for some women to say things like, "Battered women, why do they put up with it?" Women who obviously have no concept of what it is like to have your spirit drained bit by bit, until there is almost nothing left. Women who don't know that leaving is the easy part. Then you have to cope with the fact that you have no place to live, no job, and no idea of how or if you are going to survive. I am angry with women who look down at us because we, through no fault of our own, are victims of violence in our homes, whether it be emotional or physical.

And I am angry with women who, instead of offering support and encouragement when we do get away, want to replace our dependence on our husbands with dependence on them. Women who call themselves feminists, yet seem to think that we should conform to their concept of what our role as a female should be.

Last summer a woman I knew in Cape Breton was beaten to death by her common-law husband. She was a kind, gentle woman, and now she's gone. The previous night she had him put in jail because of his violent behaviour. When they asked him

Letters

Pandora would like to see pages of letters each issue. It's one way we have of knowing you're out there. We will consult all writers before letters are edited for reasons other than length.

why he did it, he said, "I was drunk." Her nine-year-old son witnessed it. Why did she let him back in the house? God, how I wish we could just tell other women and have them achieve instantaneous enlightenment! It doesn't work that way. Awareness comes in layers. It comes to each of us at her own rate.

For my friend it didn't come in time. That's reality, and no amount of wishful thinking can change that.

Battered women experience the most desolate feelings of isolation. How can you admit to your family and friends what a fool you are? Ms. Fraser talked about a woman who described these feelings of isolation, without analysis or helpful information. In my opinion, stories such as hers are invaluable to women who are experiencing these same feelings but may not know just what they are feeling or why. They can help other women to reach those important initial stages of awareness. I agree that there should be information included as to where women can get help.

Wife battering is commonplace. It happens every day. Battered women are housewives, professionals, rich and poor, and come in all shapes, sizes and colours. No one is immune.

For obvious reasons, the perpetrators don't want to talk about domestic violence; and the men who aren't actual perpetrators don't want to know that the same torture, mutilation and murder of the spirit and body that takes place in Nicaragua and El Salvador takes place behind closed doors of quiet suburbia, with the same fear of reprisal, "if you tell anyone". They don't want to know that other men are capable of such horrendous treatment of women and children. They are embarrassed and ashamed. Battered women don't want to admit to themselves that they are allowing themselves to be abused.

Some of you may think I am being overly emotional. All I can say is, traumatic events require dramatic language. It upsets me. It makes me angry and frustrated and very, very sad. If we are ever going to begin to prevent domestic violence, we have to feel permission to talk about it openly and freely in our individual ways. Those of us who are able to, must speak out about it. We must force ourselves and others to see what we don't want to see.

And we need other women to be there for us. To accept our reality as we have to — without judgement and criticism.

**Deborah Preeper
Halifax**

Library offers food for thought for offenders

Anonymous Jane

Well, the good news is we are planning an Amnesty, March

Women just kept asking . . .



On the front page of the last issue are Pandora women gathered for a potluck dinner after a heavy day of production. Standing, from left, Dianne Crowell, Mary Lou LeRoy, Marilyn Lamb, Megan Ardyche, Debbie Mathers, Sara avMaat, Jan

Skeldon. Sitting, from left, Betty-Ann Lloyd, Eleanor O'Donnell MacLean, Brenda R. Bryan, Carol Millett, Leah Nomm, Shelley Finson. (photo by Jan Skeldon — you can see the blur from her hand holding the cable release for the camera.)

Network policy too limited?

Pandora:

Many thanks for the second issue — such a wonderful and rare treat to enjoy a paper so thoroughly! A few comments and more, since you are asking: I would be glad to have my name and address passed on to other groups — I am not opposed to unsolicited mail from any type of women's organization, or any organization offering information.

I am, however, slightly puzzled by your blow to CARAL and NAC and am curious as to why you have singled them out for exclusion. While it is true that both of these groups frequently request funds, they also offer some very valuable information. Surely, we

are capable of ignoring, throwing out, or passing on requests for money if we are unwilling or unable to donate.

Another alternative, and perhaps a more fair one, might be to ask those groups to send information only: that is, if your readership and editorial board are so strongly against donation requests. Just a thought!

Thanks again for your efforts in creating such a much needed and enjoyed medium.

**In sisterhood,
Jane Wright
Halifax**

Socialist women like us a lot!

Sisters

I was delighted to read in The

New Maritimes that there is now a magazine for women in the Maritimes. I should like to subscribe to it, both for myself and for our office.

I live in Nova Scotia much of the year, and am currently doing research on issues connected to women and illiteracy so I will be interested in seeing your information on Nova Scotian women's issues. Others in our research group are also interested in your paper as we produce a socialist-feminist newsletter — Cayenne — out of this office.

Congratulations and good luck with the newsletter!

**Best wishes,
Jenny Horsman**

(Cayenne can be ordered from 229 College Street, Suite 303, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1R4)

8-16, in conjunction with the Metro Food Bank. Your returns won't be entirely free, however. Borrowers are asked to bring in a donation of canned or dried food for the Food Bank.

The bad news is your books are critical to the contents of the library shelves and they are missed. The Library receives requests — and complaints — from the public every day for materials held overdue by others. Library staff are attempting to provide services in numerous areas and there is never enough funding to buy everything, nor in enough copies, to please everyone.

The loan period is part of the solution to balancing the individual's need to use materials with the community's need to have it passed on to the next person. The basic problem is that individuals tend to only see things in terms of the "few" materials they have out overdue.

Those individual overdues, however, have to be multiplied by the thousands — and statistically they are more likely to be in the most popular areas.

It's really very basic: a public library is a community information resource and lending library. When materials are kept overdue by individuals, they cease to be available to everyone else. A lot of public funding goes into choosing, purchasing and cataloguing those

materials and when they are not returned they are lost.

So, all we really want are the books, cassettes, records and videos back. If you can't afford the fines at the time, just bring us the materials. We will give you a bill and you can pay later.

Hoping to see you in the library again!

**Sincerely,
Susan MacLean
Coordinator
Adult Lending Services**

This letter is in response to a Jane Doe article in the last issue of Pandora that described the author's increasing distress over over-due books!

Dalkon Shield users should claim now

After long and dramatic court battles, A.H. Robbins Co., maker of the Dalkon Shield is alerting women about its dangerous intrauterine birth control devices (IUD). To date, Robbins has paid \$378 million to 9,300 people seeking compensation for injuries related to the Dalkon Shield and may be paying more to women who have been made seriously ill or sterile by this IUD.

This IUD has been linked to such medical complications as: perforation of the uterus, cramps, bleeding, pelvic inflammatory

disease (PID) and miscarriages, some of which ended in permanent sterility or death. Eighteen young women have died of Dalkon Shield related complications.

If you are still using an IUD inserted in the mid 1970's, this message is for you. Many women had a Dalkon Shield inserted during that time. It is important that each Dalkon Shield be removed as its continued use may pose a serious personal health hazard.

If you know you are using a Dalkon Shield IUD or if you are unsure of the type of IUD you are using, call your doctor or health clinic for the information.

All women who feel they may have been injured by the Dalkon Shield or who feel they may be injured in the future or anyone who feels they may have been injured due to another person's use of the Dalkon Shield may make a claim against AH Robbins Co. by sending a postcard or letter to Dalkon Shield, P.O. Box 444, Richmond, Virginia, 23203, USA stating their full name, complete address, and a statement that they want to make a claim against AH Robbins Co. They will receive a questionnaire and further instructions for processing their claims. The questionnaire must be received by July 30, 1986.

This information has been supplied by women at the Pictou County Women's Centre — 752-4865.



SMITTEN WITH LITTON

PEI women questioning Litton value

Friends:

We are a group of PEI women from many backgrounds who have gathered together in our concern over the possibility of Litton Industries moving to our province.

Once again, Islanders are forced to make a difficult decision regarding development in their home province.

Litton Industries of California is proposing to build a factory in the West Royalty Industrial Park (near Charlottetown) to manufacture components for radar

systems.

Premier Lee and his government are enthusiastically supporting this proposal but we feel there are many questions that must first be answered.

How much money or subsidy is the government offering to this US-owned company to locate here?

How many jobs will be actually given to presently unemployed Islanders?

How many permanent jobs could be created by putting the same dollars into existing resource-based industries on the

Island, i.e. agriculture and fisheries?

Our objections include:

- This unknown amount of money will promote high-tech industry while our traditional resource-based industries are deteriorating.

- The radar systems that will be produced in this plant will be used in the "defensive" military equipment and we feel this promotes war and an increase in militarism.

- Litton Industries produces the guidance system for the cruise missile; by supporting Litton In-

dustries we are contributing to the global nuclear arms race.

- A fact sheet compiled from many sources is available from our group. Please let us know if you would like a copy. If you or your group would like more information regarding any aspect of this issue, please contact:

The Island Way
Voluntary Resources Council
81 Prince Street
Charlottetown, PEI
Telephone 892-3790

Sincerely,
PEI Women for Peace

How about some feminist stories for children

Pandora:

I am writing to congratulate you on the second issue of *Pandora* and I am looking forward to seeing the March issue. I have enclosed a cheque for \$10 to cover my subscription and will be anxiously awaiting its arrival in my mailbox.

As a childcare worker, I am very much aware of the struggle women continue to have to gain the respect they deserve for the jobs they choose to participate in. I was amused with the article "In search of role models, Princess: 1, Feminists: 0." The children I work and play with are exposed to princesses long before they ever hear the word feminist.

Perhaps some children's stories appropriate for preschoolers could be put into publication that would expose their curious minds to feminism in a positive light.

Sincerely,
Bernadette R. Sullivan
Halifax

Princess Ida does her best

Alfred Lord Tennyson is hardly considered a feminist writer. Gilbert and Sullivan — of operetta fame — are even less likely candidates. At the end of May, however, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Nova Scotia will give us an opportunity to look at an adaptation of what was considered, in its time, to be a very pro-woman story.

In 1847, Tennyson wrote his poem "The Princess" to reflect his concern about the social pro-

blems of his time. He was aware that many women wanted equality in education, and that they felt men purposely kept them uneducated as child-like playthings.

In 1846, Tennyson's friend, Rev. F.D. Maurice, opened Queen's College in London as a first step in giving women access to higher education.

Tennyson goes a step further, as his Princess Ida takes her own steps to solve the problem. She founds and leads her own all-woman university in secluded Castle Adamant. Inspired by the goddess Minerva, Ida is seen as all-knowing, all-powerful.

Men — "nature's sole mistake" — are banned.

Unknown to Ida, however, she had been betrothed as an infant to Prince Hilarion. Deciding to claim her, the prince and two cohorts infiltrate the castle disguised as women. Ida, when she discovers

them, begins to flee, loses her footing, falls into a river and is rescued by — guess who.

Steadfast to her purpose, however, the princess shows no mercy to the male intruders and has them arrested and imprisoned.

Hilarion's father, King Hildebrand, arrives with his army and Ida's father and three brothers as hostage. And the storyline begins to degenerate.

Ida agrees to let the brothers fight the intruders to decide her fate. The three brothers lose and she is forced to yield to Hilarion. Since this is a comic opera, however, the princess has fallen in love with the prince, so all is well.

Tennyson's final message — that women or men, however strong, remain unfulfilled without the other — is not common feminist currency today. In 1847, however, the plot was considered quite unusual and the Gilbert and Sullivan adaptation, "Princess

Ida," sticks pretty close to the original.

It will be playing at Neptune Theatre May 28 to 31. Before April 15, tickets are \$10 and \$8. Add another dollar after that date. For more information, call the Gilbert and Sullivan Society at 423-7020.

This information was provided by Marion Priestley, a member of the Publicity Committee of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Nova Scotia.

Mother shares precious moment with our readers

Pandora:

Congratulations! *Pandora* is a very interesting, informative paper.

Enclosed is a poem written by my 14-year-old daughter shortly after I recovered from major surgery and a separation from my husband of 22 years. I'd like to share this poem with other mothers in similar situations in hope that these mothers will realize the intensity of a young girl's feelings. Hope you can publish it in your paper.

Sincerely,
Gloria Clifford
North Sydney

Dedicated to my mother, there is no one I love more

My mind travels
I think about death
If she died my soul would die too
Being totally dependent on her
I've come to love no one more

I think about it much too often
It keeps me awake
Sometimes crying in the night
Visions of her death.

Where would I go
What would I do
How can I live without her

I tell her I love her
She loves me back
So much . . .

Jennifer Lynn Clifford

Pandora article captures the sexual essence

Pandora:

We recently saw your article on Coming Together: A Woman's Sexuality Conference in the December issue of *Pandora*. We wanted to write and say that it was a pleasure to read an article that captured the essence — both the ideals and the general feeling — of the weekend.

Will you please send us two copies of the December issue as we would like to have the article for our files?

Also, we are interested in receiving information about your publication dates, circulation, ad prices, and free community event listings. We are presently planning the next sexuality conference (to be held November 7, 8, and 9, 1986) and would like to publicize it in *Pandora*. Thanks.

Keep up the good work in *Pandora*.

Maggi Redmonds
Side by Side
Canadian Feminist Resource
Group of Toronto



Cora Shani Thayer, age 6, at the pool on the Brook Road, Bear River.

bless this child with an ancient woman's wisdom too

sisters of the wind
bless this child with an ancient woman's wisdom too
take this daughter's spirit
and always keep her your loving child
give her a heart of a woman
keep it stronger and as graceful as your wildest flower
let her grow by the creator's designs
and let her seek no man's false love for comfort
teach her the language of sweet solitude
and uplift her heart as she stumbles and falls
sisters of the wind
bless this child with an ancient woman's wisdom too

sisters

stand tall indian woman
and let your spirit walk softly upon this earth
bear the sun within your soul
and whisper prayers in the solitude of your heart
oh cry to the winds my red sisters
dance with the rising of the morning star
and sing with the mystery of the moons
in all reverence to our creator
may your beauty shine from within and without
be humble but proud that you are an indian woman
walk softly upon this earth
be with our creator's sacred rhythm
and bear the sun within your soul
stand tall indian woman
and let your spirit walk softly upon this earth

**These poems
are from an
unpublished
collection of
work by Louise
Martin, a
30-year-old
member of the
Millbrook
MicMac band
currently living
in West
Branch, Nova
Scotia. Louise
writes that she
sees her poetry
as a way of
linking her
native past
with the future,
as a way of
reducing
alienation.**

Bar booze not kids

Women's benefit not available to all

Peggi Thayer

I was figuring up my budget today, as I do almost every month in the vain hope that I will somehow find a few extra dollars. Out of a total income of \$817 per month, I pay \$525 rent, \$80 for a lunchtime sitter (cheap by Halifax standards and if you don't believe me, I invite other single parents to submit their own testimony).

As a full-time university student I pay a minimum of \$40 per month for transportation, \$12 a month for laundry, \$20 a month for the telephone, (which comes in very handy in an emergency but is still not considered a necessity by Mothers' Allowance, never mind the fact that it is the only thing at times which keeps me from feeling totally isolated).

With a \$40 a week food budget from which I must extract other necessities such as clothing and school supplies, and adding on my baby bonus cheque, I am left with \$12 a month in disposable income.

Now, I'm not saying this just to bemoan my "plight" as a below-low-income parent. Were it not for something that happened to us within the women's community recently, I certainly would never feel compelled to make a public confession concerning my private life. But I'm fed up . . .

A few days ago I saw a poster advertising a women's event, a show with original comedy, tap dancing, music, acting. In short, it promised to be a rare and special evening out with my daughter and, what's even better, one that we could afford at \$3 for non-wage earners.

I certainly did not expect that I would be asked to leave because I had brought my daughter to an event which hosted an unadvertised bar. And I was not the only parent in that situation.

(What was advertised on the poster was that it was a benefit for women artists and I did wonder, as I am also an artist, if I could come to enjoy those benefits?)

As a single parent without the benefit of relatives, I am as anxious as the next person to take a break from my responsibilities now and then. But I don't always feel the need to "get away" from my child. From my experience, most forms of entertainment in our society are geared to the adult world. Rarely do we get an acceptable family-type movie, (even Disney is violent), and where does that leave me with my need to let someone else do the entertaining, affording me the opportunity of enjoying my daughter in a way that I seldom get the chance to do?

From my point of view, a society that does not value its children above all else is surely inflicting upon itself the penalty of destruction. It is incumbent upon us all to value not only our own nation's children, but those of other nations as well. No one should understand this better than those of us who deal daily with the genocidal tendencies of our own society.

I am fed up with being turned away by landlords because I have a child. I am fed up with the myriad of other ways in which low-income people are made to feel excluded, not the least of which is the notion that because we can not contribute our "fair" share of our wages toward the consumption of goods and taxes for whatever reason, we are a burden on society and lesser human beings.

And God forbid if we have children! As a consequence of our even lesser status as single mothers and our economic bonds, it is no bloody wonder that some of us succumb to the pressure and learn to think of ourselves as inferior, rarely questioning the societal attitude that "blames the victim."

I, for one, will never find this situation acceptable, for myself or for anyone else. I not only have the hope but will assert my right to expect more than just lip service from any quarter, the government, the nation, its women and its men, parents or not.

And I will continue my resistance to being "categorized" into a "set of specific issues" which will then become the responsibility of women to lobby for, and which enables their dismissal from the agenda.

I realize that I have raised more than one important question here that deserves further action, but to return to my original point — since charity begins at home, the challenge here is for the women's community to gear a larger portion of its activities toward loving and appreciating the children so that their love and appreciation can grow. If we don't, who else will?

That night at the show just as I was leaving (and thinking how best to deal with my daughter's feelings of rejection), I felt like screaming, SO, CLOSE THE BAR!!! Now I say — at least until the show is over.

Peggi Thayer is a single parent of Oglala background and she speaks from her native heritage when she speaks of family.

Organizer apologizes

Carol Millett, a member of the Electra Productions group, writes:

My most sincere apologies to Peggi and her daughter, to Judith and to Jeanette, for your being denied access to the women's evening and benefit of January 25. You must have felt hurt, embarrassed, angry and probably confused.

A number of years ago Jackie Barkley and I were involved in a similar struggle over recognition of the needs of mothers and for the necessity of providing childcare so that women could participate in the revolutionary struggle — or any struggle for that matter.

I don't seem to have understood.

Of course, this is only my perception of the situation and obviously doesn't deal with any of the particulars or any surrounding issues. I trust others will.

Consensus: violence is pornographic

Women's views change once they take a look

Adele McSorley

"What do women think of pornography?"

"How does it affect our lives?"

These were the two basic questions that the Women and Pornography Project wanted to explore through interviews with women in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. Thirty-two women, aged 19 to 81 spoke to us at length about

In answer to the question: "Do you think pictures of women in magazines like Playboy affect the way women think about their own bodies?" 89 per cent said: "Yes, it affects them negatively." Some responses were:

"Yeah, it makes you think that you're supposed to look really

Even more women (93%) that men were negatively affected by pornographic images of women. Men do not know what "real" women look like and therefore are dissatisfied with what is normal. This in turn makes women feel even more insecure and uncomfortable with their own appearance. Here's how some women thought pornography affected men's views of women:

"I think it does affect the way men feel towards women. I think it makes them; look down on us as far as that goes." (50, married, market researcher)

"And a lot of men look at it (pictures of women) in the same way and say, 'Well, my wife doesn't look like that.' It seems like they're put in one category and the women in the magazines are put into a better category, like that's what a woman should look like, when in fact it isn't true." (20, single, unemployed)

"I'm living with a fellow right now and that's all he sees, like on t.v. something will come on and the first thing he sees is boobs . . . I tell him I don't want to listen to it because that's all he sees of any woman on t.v. That's all he notices. And he uses the word 'gorgeous.' That's how he describes all women . . . I tell him he uses the wrong adjective to describe — one adjective to describe all women. I think that kind of magazine does affect what men think anyway because after awhile they only see women in one view." (23, single, geologist)



Mainstream advertising

their definitions of pornography, self-image, men's views of women, the effect of pornography on female/male relationships and its effect on children.

Pornography is a word notable for its lack of agreed-upon definition. The term as used by the media and in much research has so many meanings that the validity in any reported opinions and research findings is questionable. We were interested in finding out what the word meant to women and the degree of consensus, i.e., does everyone have their own definition or is there some degree of agreement? We asked, "What is your definition of pornography?"

Before viewing a variety of pictures with sexual content, definitions emphasized sexual explicitness, degradation and nudity. Afterwards, the concepts which had been most important in designating material as pornographic were violence or implied violence or lack of violence (92%), and coercion or choice, equality or dominance-submission.

Noteworthy for its complete absence in any woman's definition, either before or afterwards, was the word "erotic," a term greatly favoured in pornography research.

The most significant result concerning defining pornography is that consensus exists about the meaning or definition of pornography when actual material is used. There is also consistent agreement on what is most objectionable: violence.

Milder forms of pornography were seen to be objectionable as well. Women's self image was thought to suffer from unsatisfactory comparisons with Playboy-type models. Feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and unrealistic expectations of women from both women and men were all mentioned as negative effects from exposure to pornography.



Hardcore pornography

Ninety-four percent (94%) of all the women felt that pornography affected all female/male relationships negatively. The major effects were that men had unrealistic expectations of women and distorted views of sex and its role in relationships. Descriptions of how female/male relationships were affected included:

"Women get pressured into doing some things . . ." (27, married research assistant)

"Men are sometimes kinky from seeing violence and bondage." (26, married, nurse)

"It makes sex look dirty. Couples become dissatisfied. They have to have all that satisfaction that is supposed to, you know, that the movies say you get in a sexual relationship." (53, married, bookkeeper)

"Perhaps subconsciously a man, whether he wants to or not, still sees a female as somebody

who likes to take her clothes off and pose and do whatever he wishes, type thing, because in those magazines and some of the movies, that's how a lot of women are portrayed . . ."

As far as we know this has been the first project to explore women's experiences and feelings about pornography. May there be more to come.

Copies of the report are available from the Women and Pornography Project, c/o Dr. S. Shaw, School of Recreation, Health and Physical Education, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. B3H 4J1

Adele McSorley worked as project co-ordinator for the Women and Pornography Project. She is a part-time teacher of speech and drama at Mount Saint Vincent University.

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A straightforward reference

Porn survey designed to be read, acted upon

Eleanor O'Donnell

When I think of bibliographic surveys, I see long, mirrored corridors interrupted at pleasing intervals by finely bevelled glass doors which, if one were to open any one of them, would lead down equally long, mirrored corridors . . .

Now this occasionally enjoyable experience, albeit vaguely bewildering and unsettling, doesn't just happen to me when I think of literature surveys. I have asked the same embarrassing, unanswerable, heretical question in the middle of Trivial Pursuit games, in university courses, and in shopping malls: "What is the purpose of all this?"

Pornography: A Feminist Survey didn't make me feel like that. Images of ourselves and others affect the very core of our being; this is a straightforward reference for people who want a sampling of what feminists have been saying about pornographic images in particular.

Fifty-one Canadian, American and British sources include government documents, the academic press, the mass media and "alternative" press. In this booklet, a description of the Fraser Special Committee's two heavy volumes on pornography and prostitution takes up little more room than notice of Margaret Atwood's short but illuminating piece for Chatelaine.

Missing from the booklet (but I think also from most of the literature) is a look at the groups

have so many more positive images that they are not disadvantaged by it.

The back of the booklet contains an excellent list of alternative, smaller publishers or distributors. If the item appeared in a periodical, the number of

This publication includes both the program for a one-day educational workshop for women and a leader's guide for facilitating the workshop. It is designed to give women participants an opportunity to explore their intellectual and emotional responses to por-

No time left for wandering, pondering complexity and diversity

pages is noted, but unfortunately this was not done for the books, nor are their costs at time of publication listed. This would have further assisted the person wishing to order some of the material.

Specialists, far better informed than I, may quibble with the selection of items surveyed, but the general reader will find this a helpful guide.

The design, cheap and very readable, lends itself easily to revision: typescript pages and numbered entries suggest it may have been done on a word processor. A striking black and yellow cover reminds me of the old Coles Notes (come to think of it, we should all ask why this kind of publication isn't in the stores next time we're in Coles), and it also reminds me of some equally loud yellow-and-black stickers that screech "THIS EXPLOITS AND DEGRADES WOMEN," seen from time to time slapped on particularly offensive ads . . . The booklet looks as if it is meant to be read and used, not sit politely on display on the coffee table.

The booklet format (not perfect bound, with no spine) means as well, however, that it can't be found easily on a bookshelf — usually a problem. One possible solution for the reader may be to get one of those cardboard periodical organizers with "READ RIGHT AWAY" or "ACTION!" on it.

But what kind of action? Before Pornography: A Feminist Survey appeared, its authors had already done a tremendous service to those concerned with the issue by producing The Pornography Workshop for Women. In it, they stressed the urgent need for education, not knee-jerk reactions.

Many women's groups have taken action — often in uneasy alliance with each other — over pornography. And so has Justice Minister Crosbie, with consequences for us all. So there isn't time now to wander down endless literary corridors pondering over the complexity of reflections and diversity of points of view.

I suggest you invest \$4.95 in a pretty good guide and floor plan (Pornography: A Feminist Survey, by Margaret Smith and Barbara Waisberg (1985) Toronto: Boudicca Books), and then consider exploring two of its entries:

Smith, Margaret, and Waisberg, Barbara. **The Pornography Workshop for Women.** Toronto: Birch Associates, 1984.

nography and focus on their own sexual values, needs and dreams. The leader's guide uses feminist adult education principles.

Burstyn, Varda (editor). **Women Against Censorship.** Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1985.

The articles in this book are by feminists who oppose censorship as a means of dealing with pornography. Among the authors are June Callwood, Myrna Kostash, Lynn King and Lisa Steele, as well as Ann Snitow and Carole Vance. They are concerned that state censorship of pornography will lead to the suppression of civil liberties and limitations on varying forms of sexual expression and activity.

Pornography demeans men as well as women, but men have so many more positive images that they are not disadvantaged by it.

or business interests behind the pornography business, or a look at those benefitting financially or otherwise from it.

Somewhat more puzzling was the omission of Judith Posner's simple but useful article with accompanying images, "Advertising Pornography" (Canadian Forum, August/September 1983) or Thelma McCormack's "Making Sense of Research on Pornography" (Department of Sociology, York University, 1983).

The reason I think the latter might have been included even in a short bibliography is for McCormack's clear statement that a cultural milieu in which women are always perceived as sex objects contributes to the devaluation of women.

Goals such as greater participation in public life, equal pay for work of equal value, daycare, etc., are that much more difficult to achieve without the strong positive images that establish credibility. Pornography demeans men as well as women, but men

Is pornography or censorship the clear and present danger

The debate which has polarized feminists was brought to Halifax by Varda Burstyn, editor of **Women Against Censorship**. Burstyn, well known for her radio broadcasts and writings on feminist issues and for her teaching of film, was brought to Halifax as a speaker in a Nova Scotia College of Art and Design film series, **Lifsize: Women and Film**. On December 10 she addressed an audience of 75 in the Bell Auditorium. Jo-Anne Fiske attended the event and reports to Pandora:

Censorship cannot stop the flow of pornographic images. It can, however, repress feminist expression. So warned Toronto artist Varda Burstyn, editor of **Women Against Censorship**, to an Art College audience in Halifax recently.

The response of the state to the anti-pornography call for censorship has resulted in a narrowing of the definition of obscenity to a single national perception of "community standards" which disregards cultural plurality, she said.

State censorship of "pornography" has focussed on explicit sexual imagery rather than on representation of violence and degradation, the issues opposed most strongly by feminists. Moreover, the state has stretched its definition of "publication" to include toys and thereby has found justification for banning genitally shaped toys.

Censorship of pornography, Burstyn insists, is not an autonomous issue. It is part of a move toward greater state regula-

state is not publicly accountable for its judgement of images.

Given the polarity of women's reactions to pornography from Dworkin's assessment of it as a "celebration of cruelty" to Burstyn's analysis of its range from the benign through to the "truly misogynist, truly brutal", one anticipates that Burstyn's lectures would spark animated debate. This, however, was not the case in Halifax.

Vocal amongst her surprisingly small audience (75-100) were members of the cultural industry who fear that "the chill is on" and that they will suffer most from censorship practices. Like Burstyn, they also interpret the weight of government concern over pornography as a diversionary tactic to draw the public eye away from the current socio-economic crisis. They share the worry that they will be "busted" if they go public with their work and therefore they will be confined to elitist production for gallery audiences.

Absent from Burstyn's audience were vocal proponents of censorship. Burstyn's argument that "for women freedom lies not in accepting censorship but in repudiating it" went unchallenged.

Jo-Anne Fiske is a lecturer in sociology/anthropology at Mount Saint Vincent University.



Varda Burstyn

tion of sexual behaviours or representation: the NDP attack on Morgentaler, censure of gay erotica, and the new prostitution laws which force sex workers out of their safety networks on the street.

Uneasy about the apparent agreement between anti-pornography feminists and the state, Burstyn points out that there remains a profound gap between feminist goals and state mandates. Feminists struggle for change. The state strives to maintain the status quo.

Labelling pro-censorship advocacy as naive and dangerous wish fulfillment, she says the real danger lies in the fact that the

PORNO-GRAPHY

A FEMINIST SURVEY

...

Margaret Smith
Barbara Waisberg

Support services seriously underfunded

Margaret Davis

We're all familiar with the saying, "It's the thought that counts". While this may be true of the purple teddy bear earmuffs your auntie gave you for Christmas, it doesn't apply to government programs.

The Nova Scotia Department of Social Services, in conjunction with Health and Welfare Canada, has just announced a media campaign to counter the abuse of women by the men they live with. The wording of the campaign theme is telling: "Wife Battering: Let's break the silence".

Not so long ago, the province took a similar approach to another serious social program, child abuse. The media, with typically mixed motives of genuine concern and an eye for a sensational story, took the issue and ran with it. The resulting flood of child abuse reports surprised many, including health professionals, social workers — even, I suspect, the government.

Last February, I began researching and writing a series of stories on child abuse for a local weekly. The series aimed to identify some of the causes and symptoms of child abuse but, more important, to help rural residents find their way through a maze of social agencies to receive assistance.

As I completed interviews with social workers, educators, police and hospital personnel, a clear but frightening pattern began to emerge. All the authorities felt hampered by the lack of support services and facilities in rural communities.

Transition houses in Halifax may be overcrowded, but on the Eastern Shore they're non-existent; social workers have such heavy caseloads it is physically impossible to reach all the children in need; male RCMP officers find

themselves acting as counsellors to young female victims of sexual abuse.

Perhaps because of the child abuse series, last spring I was asked to join a committee seeking to form support networks for victims of battering. It quickly became

evident that all the good intentions of our collective membership would come to nothing without the provision of adequate counselling services and transition safe houses for victims.

The government's anti-child abuse campaign certainly raised

public awareness of the problem, which is the avowed goal of the "Let's break the silence" campaign. But along with raised awareness come raised expectations — the perfectly understandable expectation that help for the battered women is readily

available.

Unfortunately, acknowledging a problem exists is not necessarily the same as solving it. For many women in rural communities, help is more than a simple telephone call away.

Thanks to the high visibility of its anti-battering campaign, the province gives the appearance of acting on behalf of suffering victims. Yet as long as helping agencies remain understaffed and underfunded, government is doing only half the job.

What's worse, this promotion could raise the hopes of hundreds of women whose needs may never be met. That, too, is cruelty.

Margaret Davis is a journalist living on the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia. She has edited weekly newspapers in several Maritime communities.

Directory updated

Women's resources listed

A women's directory of services and organizations in the Halifax-Dartmouth metro area is now available. The directory lists names, addresses, phone numbers, and contact people for 84 groups as well as giving a brief description of each group's activities.

The project began in 1984 as a collaboration between the now defunct (and greatly missed) Women's Information and Referral Centre (WIRRS) and the community services department of the Halifax City Regional Library.

Through a Section 38 grant, the HCRL finally finished the research and had 1500 copies printed by the end of 1985.

It's the first directory for the library and we will be the first to admit that it isn't perfect. In fact, let this serve as the first update — insert to the Women's Directory!

Changes:

Adsum House phone number should be 429-4443.

Extra Support for Parents (ESP) has been closed due to funding cuts.

NAC and CARAL, contact, Kit Holmwood's work phone number is not correct.

Wen Do should be added: Contact Carol Millet, 454-0570, 2678 Fuller Terrace, Halifax, N.S.,

B3K 3V7. Self defense training especially for women.

WHAM — Women, Health and Medicine should be added. Contact Judy Mills, 425-4514, or Angela Hallet, 422-7698, P.O. Box 400, Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building, Dalhousie

University, Halifax, NS, B3H 4H7.

The list of groups and services is listed alphabetically and then indexed and cross-referenced by subject for easy use. It is available free of charge, while supplies last, at any branch of the Halifax Regional Library.

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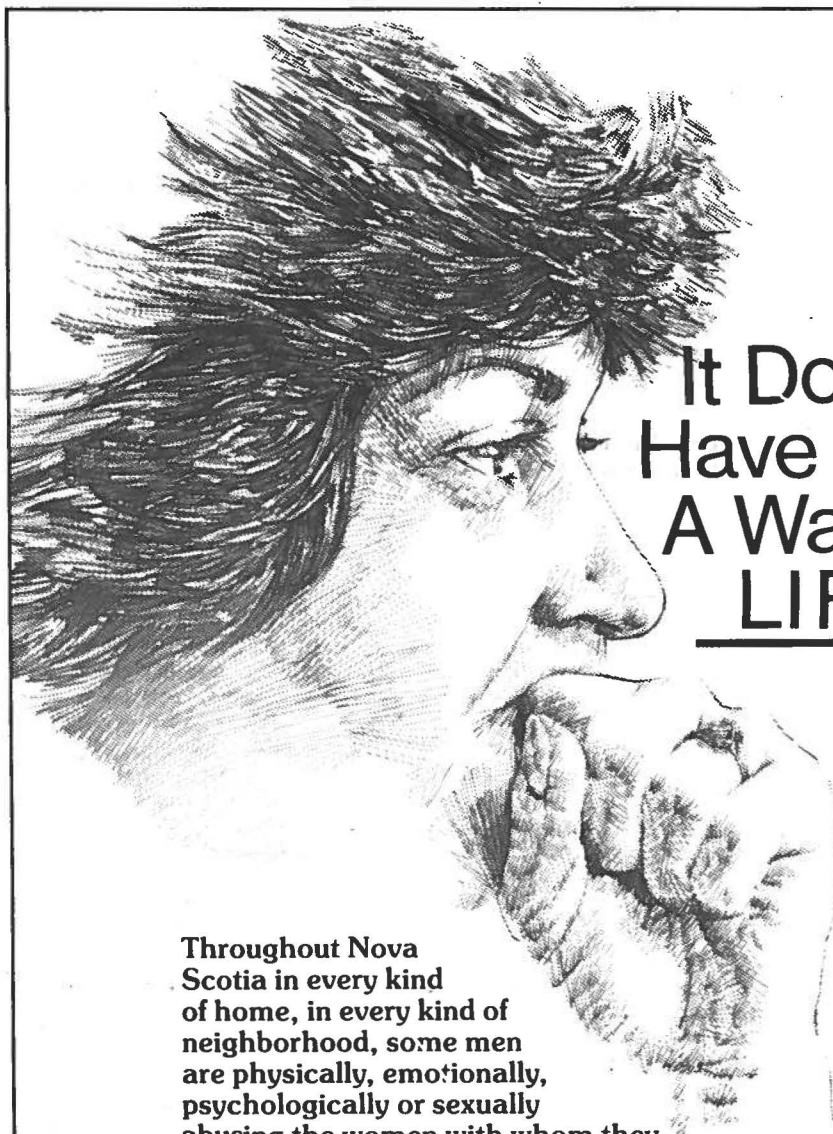
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Wife battering is a hidden crime. It usually gets worse as time goes on, and may continue from one generation to the next unless we take action.

**Wife Battering:
Let's break the silence**

Nova Scotia Department of Social Services

Health and Welfare Canada

Santé et Bien-être social Canada

Women's experience powerfully expressed through fabric art

Interview by Joann Latremouille

In the spring of 1985, Verle Harrop was one of a small number of Nova Scotian artists commissioned by the Sheraton



chain of hotels to prepare works for their new building on the Halifax waterfront. Her fabric triptich, "The Voyage", now hangs in the main lobby of the Halifax Sheraton.

Verle's recent works entitled "The Politics of Confusion" are on display at Gallery 1667. She will be among the six fabric artists exhibiting their works at Mount St. Vincent University from August 22, 1986.

Q. Although it was not always the case, in Western culture today fabric is primarily a woman's medium. Do you feel that in the making of your fabric collages you are a part of a women's tradition?

I think very much so. In history, quilting has always been something explored by women. All of my work is based on something traditional: the fact that I work with squares and use what is known as the "log cabin". I start with something traditional to make my work intelligible for people.

In the traditional setting of the "log cabin", the centre signifies the hearth, the home light, and the bars reinforce that particular structure. What I'm fascinated in

doing is taking that structure and making it disintegrate. It amuses me too; it's sort of teasing in a way. I start out with the hearth and I move right along to a different set called the "court house steps". It's a way of playing. The important thing about working in art is that it isn't abusive. I think things can be powerful without being abusive.

Q. Can you give me an example of an art that is abusive?

I think Mark Prent's Line Up at the Super Market was fairly abusive but it was also strong. He did an imitation of a supermarket with parts of human bodies instead of cuts of meat. You can have strength and energy and impact without offending people, without being cruel. It can be something that helps push them along as well.

Q. So you're saying that you have a faith in your viewers, that they don't need to be slashed open?

I don't think that they do. I think that my pieces are strong enough that there's a certain amount of energy there. There is something to interact with, but people don't have to defend themselves.

Q. Your arrival on the cultural scene in Halifax has been somewhat out of the ordinary. What was your background in art up to the Sheraton Hotel commission?

Basically, non-existent. Which is why the Sheraton commission was so wonderful. In a way I really regret not having a background, never having gone through the traditional steps. But in another way I think it leaves me much freer, much truer, because I don't have to get rid of anything in order to go ahead, other than what I'm working on.

Q. What effect do your children have on your work?

Less time for it, a lot less time for it. I think my work provides me with insight into the direction my life is taking as a whole, which makes me better able to flesh out my relationships with them.

Q. Is there a creative interchange with them?

Not at all. My work, for me, is fairly abstract. It's a very personal journey. I suppose there may come a time if one of them died, or something when I would have to deal with death, injury or illness. My art might deal with those specific issues as a theme, but I'm not cutting up their pajamas.

Q. No, that wasn't what I was trying to get at. It was more a quality of mind.

The quality of mind. Well, my second child, she explores things in themes, just seeing how far she will go. She has come up with a new system of measurement. Seeing her play with the whole concept of measurement in a very free way, that kind of freedom to approach a subject, to swim through it, she certainly has input. I ab-

solutely marvel at her sense of colour. I take it all back. Yes.

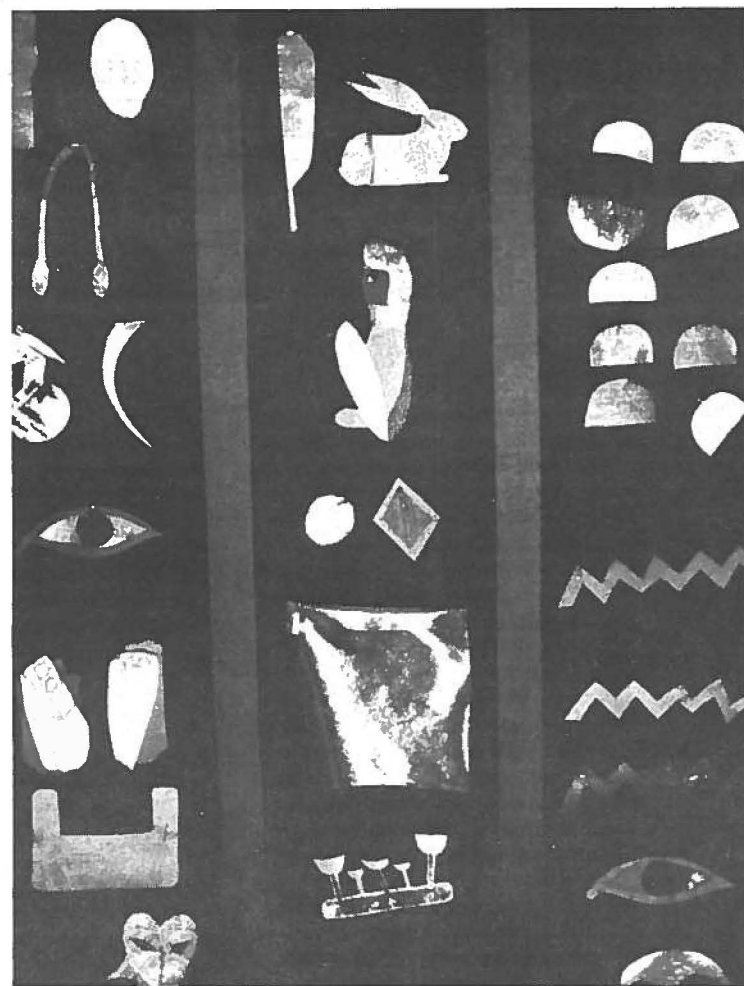
Q. Will you talk about your experiences of colour?

I find it incredibly intense. It affects me on almost every level. I think throughout history, people's choices in colour, what they've been sensitive to, is an indication of the direction that society at large is taking. This evening I was thinking about the colour "institutional beige", that flesh colour from a time when people were outside their bodies. They abdicated responsibility for their bodies. Now we're into grey, designer grey. When I wear grey, I'm invisible. It's a reflection of how people feel, not committed to anything. Grey is such a safe colour. Our culture says red is sexy but to me when I think red, I'm frightened. I associate red with menses, with having one's period. I think there's an association at some level between red and rape. It's presented to women in our society that red is sexy, so we'll see it as being desirable that we're raped. And it must have something to do with being a virgin, being a buddingpubescent because as soon as you've been "taken" or "deflowered", the sexy colour is black.

My preoccupation with colour is really exploring a lot of the ways in which our culture tries to manipulate our perception of colour. When you stop to think about it there are a lot of paradoxical things going on. I was thinking of the colour green. At one point green must have been everything to us, being sensitive to the stages of growth. Now what are we into — asphalt grey, designer grey.

Q. If colour is the essence of your work, do you think that you could get the same effects with painting or glasswork?

No. This goes back to my sense of history and the culture behind



working with fabric. Women have always worked with fabric. For me, it's the sense of touching, feeling the fabric, keeping in touch with the tactile sense. For me to go through the journey that I set out in the squares, to explore something internal, I have to use the safeness of the external. The sense of touch going on outside because of the work is very reinforcing and safe. And I think for women touching is very much a part of our culture: touching children, holding children, touching in that way reinforces.

I like the idea, too, that the working with fabric increases your sense of history. Just finding out, for example, when they started using certain dyes. It's a framework with which the world around you becomes more intelligible. It increases a sense of personal history too. You associate scraps of this and that with certain periods, certain needs, certain thoughts.

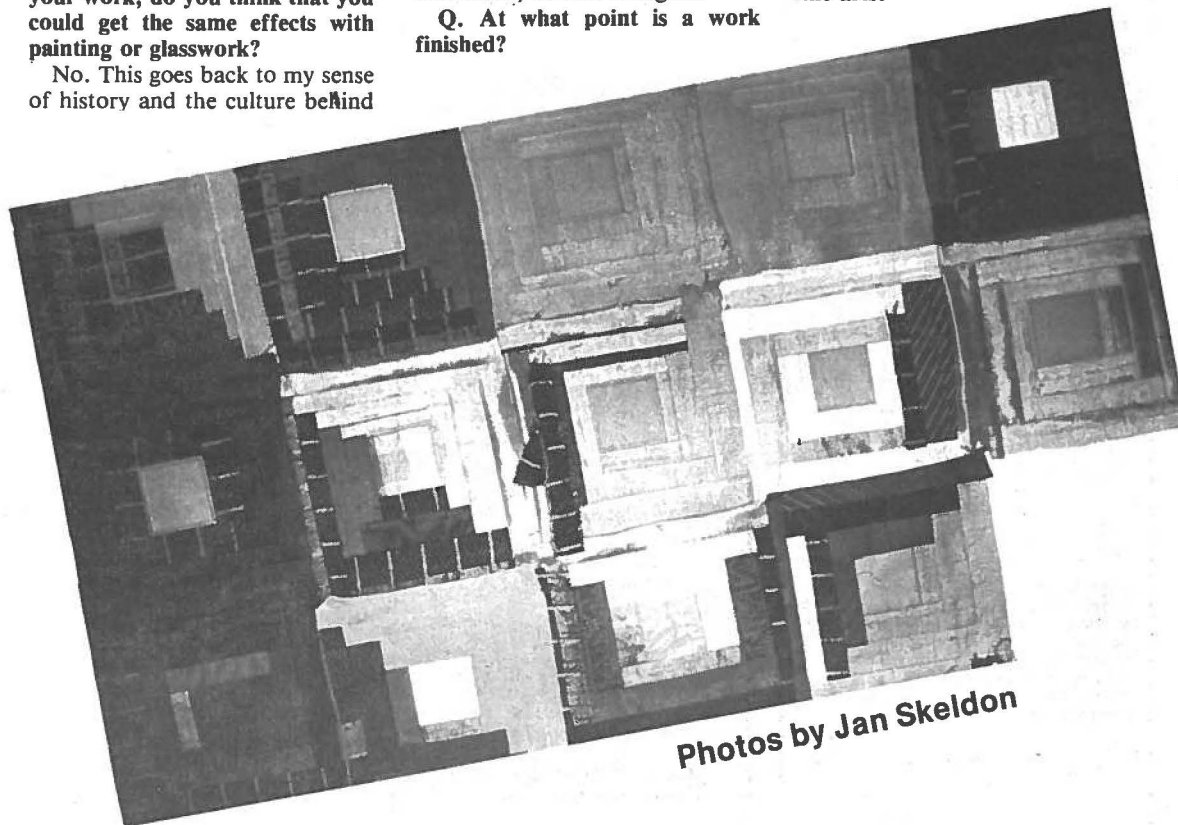
Q. At what point is a work finished?

Well, I work in units. These units seem to add to something. There's a point at which what I'm working on becomes, or func-

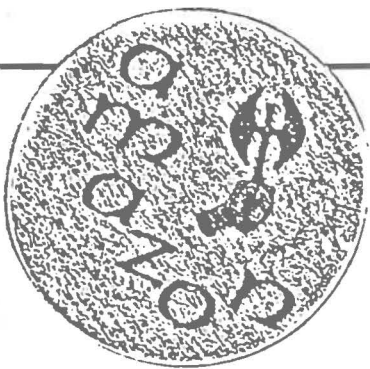
Well, I work in units. These units seem to add to something. There's a point at which what I'm working on becomes, or functions, as a whole, and the whole is greater than the concept itself. The piece takes on a certain energy that is larger than life.

Working with fabric is so slow. It's a challenge. It's as if the piece has a message coded there. It is a very specific message, but instead of something written down, it's coded, it scans. It's just a kind of experience to be gained from the image in the same way that you gain experience from a printed page.

JoAnn Latremouille has her own business as a landscape architect and is a freelance writer on the arts.



Photos by Jan Skeldon



International W

"Shelter, health, employment. These issues have these in place then we can't get ahead national Women's Day committee member this year's activities. The committee has re included other organizations' activities in t mises to be an exciting week of celebration"

Shelter Health Employm



Arlene Mantle will perform at the Halifax YWCA, Friday, March 7 at 8 pm. This artist/educator/political activist, based in Toronto, sings a brand of folksy, bluesy music. She has performed at labour conventions, peace rallies and benefits for numerous community groups.

Union support work, Latin and South American solidarity work, support for women's and welfare organizations — Arlene Mantle sings of her own experiences and those of the people around her. In November, she led a group of 200 striking bank workers in union protest songs at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in Toronto.



These are the Clichettes! This three-woman Toronto group will kick off the "Audio by Artists Festival", Monday March 3, at the Misty Moon, beginning at 9 p.m. Their lip-synching comedy act brings satire to such institutions as North American mating rituals. Don't miss it!

**SUNDAY
MARCH 2:**

7p.m. Coffee house with open mike. Start the week with celebration! Sponsored by Women's Alternative. Grawood Lounge, Dalhousie SUB. Free admission. Call 455-4419.

11:30-1:30 Dalhousie Women's Alternative booth in SUB lobby.

**MONDAY
MARCH 3:**

8 p.m. Gender Bender featuring the Clichettes, feminist lip-synch champion The Misty Moon, 1595 Barrington St. Admission: Advance \$4, Door \$5. Call 455-4419.

**TUESDAY
MARCH 4:**

11:30-1:30. Dalhousie Women's Centre opens, 4th floor, Student Union Building.

12:05. Video: "Women and Development" at DEVERIC, 1649 Barrington St. Free admission, refreshments provided.

7:30 p.m. Health workshop. Reproductive rights; DES; Women and Aging. Tupper Medical Building, University Ave. 425-1081.

**WEDNESDAY
MARCH 5:**

12:00 p.m. Film "If You Love This Planet" at the YWCA, 1239 Barrington St.

7:30 p.m. "Women's Special Nutritional Needs" — Diet and osteoporosis, menopause and pre-menstrual syndrome. Speaker is Carol Milligan of the NS Halifax Main Branch Library, Spring Garden Road. Call 421-7673.

**THURSDAY
MARCH 6:**

12:05 p.m. Film "South Africa Belongs to Us" about women in South Africa. Interview with Winnie Mandela. (1980, 35 min.) DEVERIC, 1649 Barrington St.

1 p.m. Dalhousie Gazette publishes the "Gazette Women's Day Supplement".

7 p.m. Women and Technological Change — film "Quel Numero? What N Electronic Sweatshop" and three speakers: Cheryl Simons of CUPW, Joanne and Paulette Sadaway, United Foods and Commercial Workers. Labour Temple, 1000 Spring Garden Road. Childcare covered to a maximum of \$8. Call 455-4419.

**FRIDAY
MARCH 7:**

11:00 a.m. MUMS (Mothers United for Metro Shelter) will be at the Dartmouth present a citation to Dartmouth mayor John Savage. They will then travel to 1 to present a booklet of case histories at Province House. Call 435-1567.

2:30 p.m. After Graduation: The Reality of Women's Employment. Speaker: sponsored by Dal Women's Alternative, Dal SUB room 100.

7 p.m. Film: "The Life and Death of Freida Kahlo". The story of this Mexican activist, Bell Auditorium, N.S. College of Art and Design, 5163 Duke St.

8 p.m. Concert featuring Arlene Mantle and Four the Moment, followed by YWCA, 1239 Barrington St.

**SATURDAY
MARCH 8:**

1-3 p.m. Rally and parade. Meet at Victoria Park, corner of South Park St. and Spring Garden Rd., proceed to Parade Square at Barrington St. Bring your banners!!

3-5 p.m. Gallery Reception: "Second Sex, Third Sex", a mixed media exhibit by Pam Pike. Anna Leonowens Gallery, 1891 Granville St.

4:30 p.m. Films: "The Wilmar 8" — eight bank workers initiate the first bank strike in Minnesota (1981, 55 min.) "The Treadmill" — an examination of the exploitive system of women doing piece work at home (French with English subtitles) Bell Auditorium, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1563 Duke St.

8:00 p.m. International Women's Day women's dance, YWCA, 1239 Barrington St., \$2.

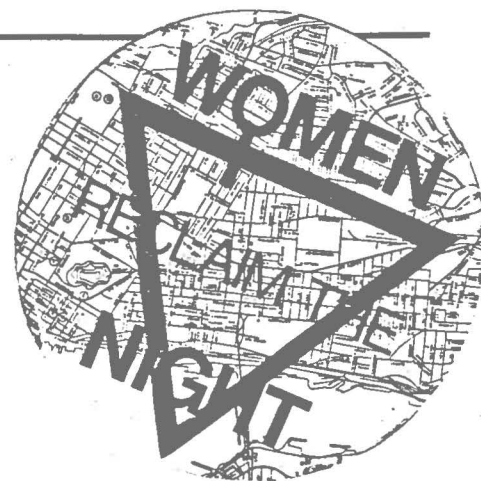
And all week, the town crier, Rose Adams, will be prepared to recite your messages to the public!



Oyez! Oyez! Rose Adams is your messages during Inter Week. (photo by Jan Skeld)

Women's Day

issues are basic to survival. If we don't lead in any other way." That's how Inter-ber Cathy Busby explains the theme for s reached out to the community and has in their list of week-long events. It pro-tion and struggle.



ment

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International Women's Day Celebration, 1985

(photo by Brenda Conroy)

Lesbians, abortion rights activists question their deliberate exclusion

This space is blank

March 8 is a day of celebration. It is a day when all women can feel proud of our militant struggle against oppression in all its forms.

It was in 1910, at the International Socialist Convention, that Clara Zetkin proposed March 8 be set aside in recognition of the women textile workers who, in 1857, demonstrated against poor working conditions and unequal treatment. These women were dispersed by police, many were trampled, some were arrested. They continued their struggle, however, and three years later formed their own union.

Over the years, labor women have continued to celebrate their victories. They have been joined by women of color, disabled women, lesbian women, older women, women fighting for abortion rights and women fighting against violence against women.

For many, the day has become an

affirmation of their choice to name themselves as strong, independent women. It has become an affirmation of the spirit that radically, politically, fights back against the establishment.

Homophobia is deliberately condoned Anti-choice positions are consciously supported

This feeling of sisterhood, this affirmation, does not come easily. Over the years, groups of women have felt themselves isolated within the celebration or ignored altogether.

This year, many lesbians and many women working for abortion rights feel their struggle as feminists, as activists in the women's movement, has been devalued. This feeling comes from the deliberate decision of the Halifax IWD committee not to use the words "abortion" and "lesbian" in their statements.

Women are learning, slowly and painfully, that black women cannot be ignored in order that white women may feel comfortable. Low income women cannot be excluded so middle class women may feel at

home. Physically disabled women cannot be made invisible simply because finding accessible space is difficult. Mothers cannot be left at home because no one had time to organize childcare.

Yet lesbians are being asked to leave their need for affirmation at the door so homophobic women will choose to walk through. Women who risk so much to work for abortion rights are deliberately not named so anti-choice women can be included. Homophobia is deliberately condoned. Anti-choice positions are consciously supported.

Lesbians are asked in the name of solidarity with heterosexual women to compromise during this week of celebration. I suggest that it's not our turn. When have heterosexual women demonstrated their solidarity by denying their sexuality, their culture — by naming themselves lesbian.

I suggest that those who support the IWD committee's action consider what would happen in the women's movement if lesbians stopped donating their ideas, their skills, their labor, their support for events where we are asked to be invisible. What would happen if we were invisible in fact, as well as in name.

This space is blank because I do not have the consistent, deliberate support of my sisters — inside the feminist movement or out — to name myself. Without that support, naming myself publicly means risking shelter, health, employment.



ams is ready to cry out
International Women's
(Skeldon)

"Linda Joy" touching, but more details needed

Leah Nomm

Linda Busby wanted to make a film documenting her triumph over cancer. She died before it could be completed and the film "Linda Joy" begins to tell her story. This is a biased review. I knew Linda personally, knew what she had hoped the film might be, and knew the incredible mental anguish that accompanied parts of the filming.

"Linda Joy" is a 24-minute work put together, after Linda's death, by a colleague Bill MacGillivray. Most of the footage was originally produced by Linda, but later assembled in a collage.

Anna Leonowens Gallery

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design

The War Room, curated by Abigail Solomon-Godeau. The exhibition is a collection of photographs that suggest the approach taken by the U.S. in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A panel discussion entitled Speaking the War Room will be held in conjunction with the exhibition with panelists Abigail Solomon-Godeau, Bob Bean, Heather Dawkins, and Donna Smyth on Wednesday March 5 at 8 pm.

ARTISTS RECORDS AND TAPES FROM THE NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN LIBRARY: RECENT ADDITIONS, curated by Micah Lexier in conjunction with the Audio by Artists Festival. This is the third year Audio by Artists has presented material from the N.S. College of Art and Design's library archive. The library has an extensive collection of artists' records and tapes and the exhibition will include many rare, limited editions, signed, historical and special packaging items. This year's exhibitions will highlight recent additions to the collection. Excerpts will be played in the gallery throughout the exhibition.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| March 4-22 | The War Room, curated by Abigail Solomon-Godeau |
| March 4-8 | PAM PIKE, 2nd Sex, 3rd Sex, a mixed-media installation |
| March 11-22 | HOLLY HAMES, experimental photography - AUDIO TAPE COLLECTION |
| March 11-15 | LOUISE MICHAUD, paintings |
| March 18-29 | KYE-YEON SON, jewelry and other objects in metals |
| March 25-29 | CONNIE HATCH |
| March 25-29 | ALISA SNYDER |
| April 1-5 | ROSE ADAMS, a garden installation, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 1-5 | MARIO DOUCETTE |
| April 1-5 | MARLENE IVEY, fibre work |
| April 8-12 | PETER LEGRIS, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 8-12 | COURTNEY ANDERSON, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 8-12 | STEPHANIE JOHNSON, Primitive Belief, portraits |
| April 15-19 | CELESTE ROBERGE, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 15-19 | HARRY SYMONS, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 22-26 | LORENE BOURGEOIS, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 22-26 | JIM DROBNICK, MFA graduating exhibition |
| April 22-26 | KATHLEEN MCCONNELL |
| April 30-May 10 | Night Shift, work of the Continuing Education Department, NSCAD Opening Reception: Wednesday, May 5, 8pm. |
| May 13-31 | JUDY DAVIS, Barge/Limited, recent sculpture |
| May 13-17 | JANE REACH, BFA graduating exhibition |
| May 20-24 | SARA PARSONS |
| May 27-31 | SANDRA SORENSON, LINDA GARON |

Gallery Hours:
Tuesday to Saturday 11:00 to 5:00 pm
Thursday evenings 5:00 to 9:00 pm
Address: 1891 Granville Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
422-7381 ext. 184 or 223
All openings take place on the Monday preceding the above dates of exhibitions at 8:00 pm. When this falls on a holiday, the opening will be on the Tuesday at 8:00 pm. The Gallery is open to the public year-round.

From a technical point of view the film has some interesting features — the most prominent being the "black out" phases. We are shown Linda's face, directly toward the camera, as she reveals an intensely personal moment about her family's reaction to her breast cancer. This is followed by a few seconds where the film goes completely black. There is an eerie after-image of Linda.

This happens several times during the film and with each repetition the technique becomes more meaningful.

As far as the content is concerned, I feel disappointed that we are given so little in the way of detail. It must have been a difficult task for Bill MacGillivray to review all the footage that Linda had accumulated, sort out which he felt was relevant, and construct the film around those choices. Nonetheless, I have the sense that unless one actually knew the real story (as Bill did and as I do) one might be confused.

Why, for instance, did Linda seek one type of cancer operation over another? Why was that choice so desperately necessary that it drove her to seek out several surgeons? And why was it that only after weeks of consultations did she decide on a surgeon in another city? Did this delay actually result in the subsequent spread of her cancer?

The film does not address any of these questions and the receiver is left with the impression that Linda may have been some sort of "health nut" who made an unwise decision. She most definitely was not a "nut." I'm concerned, however, that if this film is used as a teaching tool at various medical and nursing schools (as is the hope of the film's distributor) it may be used to illustrate the following maxim: "See, this is what happens to patients who are allowed to follow their own wishes in regards to treatment. Doctor knows best."

The filmmaker romanticizes Linda's last days with a dramatic voice-over describing his last visit with her as she lay dying in the hospital. While every attempt was made by those close to her to let Linda "die with dignity," they never lost sight of the tragedy they were witnessing.

On the other hand, the film leads us to believe that this was a

"beautiful death" and that Linda was a self-chosen sacrificial lamb championing the rights of patients to choose their own treatment programs.

While it is true that Linda did make her own choices, her story is much more than that — it is a story of the emotional chaos caused by the initial diagnosis of cancer, the conflicting opinions about appropriate treatment that she received from numerous physicians, and the effect of her cancer on the people she loved.

As a beginning of this story, "Linda Joy" makes a fine start. The film, when shown on CBC's Inquiry, generated tremendous public response. It is impossible to see this production without being moved, but it needs to be expanded to include more details about the person Linda Busby and the filmmaker Linda Busby, who had a profound message to share.

Leah Nomm is a holistic health practitioner who is working on a booklet that will accompany the film when it is used for educational purposes.



Linda Busby

Women's stories needed for abortion advocacy

Kathy Coffin

The Halifax Herald has twice refused to carry paid advertisements for the Pro-Choice Defence Fund. Incidents like this make it so difficult for women interested in the pro-choice movement to get their message across.

Two out of every five Canadians live in communities where abortion services are not available.

Canadian abortion law is uncertain, unjust, and is unequally applied. Older women, and women of means, have access to abortions, while rural women and younger women who are sexually active and at risk of unwanted pregnancies face the greatest difficulties in obtaining abortions. At the same time, Nova Scotia denies social assistance to single mothers under 19 years of age.

Every year the number of hospitals doing abortions declines. Many hospitals with therapeutic abortion committees (TAC) have made their criteria more rigid, many do no abortions at all.

What does pro-choice mean? Deidre English, in her article "The War Against Choice", puts it well: "No one is forcing anyone to have an abortion, no one is circumscribing the freedom to have and to

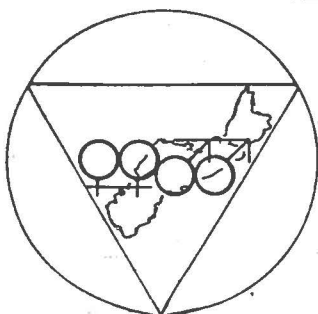
teach ethical or religious beliefs which prohibit abortion. What is solidly at question is the other woman's legal right to make this decision for herself."

Public opinion has changed. In nearly every poll from Chatelaine to Gallup, the majority of Canadians are of the view that the abortion decision should be a woman's own. Pro-Choice groups, women's organizations, labour groups and church leaders have called for the repeal of Canada's abortion law (Section 251 of the Criminal Code).

More than ever, we need to stand up and be counted. We need to support local, provincial, and national actions to ensure access to safe, legal abortions across this country. We need to tell our stories aloud.

The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League wants to hear from women about their personal experiences of abortion. To find out more, contact CARAL at (902) 455-8170 or write in care of P.O. Box 101 Station M Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3L4.

Kathy Coffin is a Halifax resident and member of the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League.



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Brave young womyn do come out

Lesbian activist validates their choice

Darl Wood

If the word lesbian sends waves of silent dread through the heart of our straight liberal community, then lesbian youth sends them scurrying to do a post mortem on their dusty volumes of Freud. After all, if they're young enough they can still be cured.

Can there really be teenage lesbians? I assure you, lesbian youth exist and one of the greatest pro-

womyn to make love until they are over 21) and peers are taught and encouraged to hate and ridicule lesbians.

What kind of legacy will we be able to offer our young lesbian sisters? One of healthy lesbian pride and lavender culture, or one of double lifestyle which confines them to self-hate and fear.

There are a lot of reasons why this invisible population of young

humorous and confront the lies in such a way that they become obviously as ludicrous as they are.

Yet, if we really examine all the causes and explanations of why we are lesbian, no girl would ever grow up to be heterosexual. Lesbianism is caused by: a dominant mother/passive father — dominant father/passive mother — lack of a father — lack of a mother — too close an identification with the mother — unless it's too close an identification with the father — excessive sibling rivalry/jealousy — too much aloneness/no sibling interaction.

My personal favourites are: "lesbianism is a crime against nature and a sin against God" (who just happens to be male); "all lesbians are ugly and can't get a man" even though "lesbians aren't real womyn but pseudo-male." Does that make us gay men? I'm confused! And so are a lot of young people, needlessly.

(For a complete list of myths, causes and explanations, see **Stepping Out of Line**, by Hughes, Johnson and Perreault.)

Unfortunately, we all grow up in a culture that sees lesbians in terms of myths that lie about who

go back into the closet for the next 10 or 15 years or more, or they try to find other options, like coming out.

When these brave young womyn do come out, what they often face at home and school is heartbreaking. I've talked to a number of young womyn who have been both beaten up by their parents and kicked out of home.

to deal with that than lesbianism).

"There is a direct correlation between lesbians and attempted suicides because there is absolutely no validation for their lifestyle. They think they are the problem, and that society is saying there is something wrong with them."

The good news is that, in spite of the patriarchy which teaches us to hate ourselves and the fear we

My parents said come back at 21 and tell us you're still a lesbian — but at 15, we find it a bit hard to believe. (15)

OK, some people would put that (lesbianism) down as childhood and teenage natural feelings. Fine! But then they say "you'll grow out of it." My parents said that when they found out. God, was I mad. I don't want to grow out of it. (15)

blems they face is a validation for their choice.

How come no one ever suggests that girls who go out with boys come back at 21 and tell us that they are heterosexual?

What does it mean for a young womyn to be lesbian in a world so blatantly geared towards heterosexuality that they virtually become invisible? The good influences of lesbian adults are denied young womyn. Teachers, social workers, counsellors and youth workers are suppressed by the educational system and other institutions for fear of losing their jobs.

Religion tells these young lesbians that they are sinners; the medical community tells them they are going through a phase, that they will grow out of it. The legal system will not protect their civil rights (it is illegal for two

womyn tends to stay that way. Society gives these kids messages that say it is not okay to be lesbian and that they are sick. It is a scary thing for young womyn, this whole question of sexual identity, especially when what they know and hear about themselves is an accumulation of negative myths and homophobic concepts.

I feel like the "first ever born in captivity" — some sort of zoological curiosity. School referred me to a psychologist or psychiatrist on the pretext of being "worried about my work." They mentioned EEG, then ECT, then I ran away from home. (15)

When I talk about lesbian rights, whether it be in a university classroom or to individual young womyn, I encounter the same problem over and over — incredible lies and myths about lesbianism. To a certain degree I attempt to be

we are. Young lesbians, like all young womyn, internalize all that hatred, those lies and end up, naturally or unnaturally, confused and filled with fear.

There is no place for these young womyn to go, so they either

We used to deny that we were lesbian — we didn't know what it meant and didn't think to look it up and we wouldn't know where anyway. (age 18)

My problems at school included teasing, harassment, threats of violence, having my bicycle tampered with, having food thrown at me ... (age 20)

I can no longer be anything but myself, feeling like a butterfly, which has to escape the isolation of its cocoon. (17)

This is not as uncommon as we would like to believe.

Homophobia tends to view lesbians strictly in terms of sexuality. If there is no one for teens to talk to about their sexual identification, their response will be a very negative self-image. One social worker I talked to while doing research for this article has some very chilling facts.

"What we see in the child welfare system is isolation. An acting out of these fears can result in everything from truancy and drug problems to bizarre heterosexual practices. In an effort to convince themselves that they are straight, they become what society would call promiscuous — but I don't."

"It's an effort to try to prove to themselves that perhaps they are not lesbian. They date as many boys as they can, hide behind pregnancy. (It's easier for parents

older lesbians have of taking risks for them, there is a wonderful resiliency and resistance in some young lesbians who refuse the negative as a given. They are coming out in numbers.

Young people are beginning to see the beauty in loving womyn. So if we are to leave a legacy to young lesbians, let's hope it is one that validates their choices. Then maybe all young lesbians will be as free as fifteen-year-old Ellen:

"Lesbianism is already a large part of my lifestyle and it will probably remain that way for the rest of my life. I love it. It makes me feel good. I guess it's Living-Life-to-the-Full."

Darl Wood is a Nova Scotia writer and outspoken lesbian rights activist. She has worked for many years in both the womyn's movement and the peace movement.

Resources:

Nothing can replace positive role models, live role models, for young lesbians. However, there are some books that are available, even at local libraries. If you can't find these books there, and you can get to Halifax, Red Herring Co-Op Bookstore has many lesbian-positive books.

Some are listed below.

You can also get in touch with the Gay Alliance for Equality to find out if there are any youth group happenings, or just to find someone to talk to. The telephone number is 454-6551

Sandra Scoppettone has written a book somewhat like **Annie On My Mind**. It is called **Happy Endings are All Alike**. Dell Books.

The Lesbian Primer by Liz Diamond is published by Women's Educational Media, Inc. It is funny, factual and very good at dispelling myths. **Another Mother Tongue, Gay Words, Gay Worlds** is an

excellent mix of facts and personal experience about lesbian culture. Judy Grahn talks about why homosexuals are believed to wear green on Thursdays, where the words "gay," and "dyke" come from, why the color purple is our color.

ANNIE ON MY MIND Nancy Garden



Lesbian novel has new positive image

Darl Wood

Annie on My Mind is fun, it's sad, it's tender and full of life. Two healthy young womyn falling in love. They are disarming and straight forward in their affection and exploration of each other as people, friends and lovers.

I am excited about this novel. It reads like the lives of so many of the young people who have shared their story with me in my work and research.

This book has the one thing I looked for in all the Nancy Drews, Donna Parkers, and Harlequins I read growing up ... strong lesbian characters and content. The book would be important for this reason alone, but it's much, much more because nowhere in our society is there a place for young lesbians who are examining their sexuality to turn. There are no role models, no resources, there are few people to validate how they feel, to tell them: "Look, you are normal and it's okay to feel the way you do about another womyn."

It is not hard to understand why young lesbians have problems sorting out a sense of who they are when all they are allowed are myths and stereotypes. **Annie on My Mind** affords the opportunity for young womyn to see lesbianism as it is, womyn loving womyn.

The characters in the book are very realistic — I've run across too many them in my life. To assume the situation and characters are "exaggerated" denies or makes light of the homophobia lesbians face daily.

The book has a number of flaws, however, including Garden's idealistic approach to class differences. There is also no real attempt to emphasize or examine why everyone is so upset about the two womyn's love for each other.

She does make us feel strongly and captures us in some of the most confusing/positive feelings and circumstances any two healthy young lesbians can find themselves in.

Garden takes me back and it feels good. Not since **Patience and Sarah**, by Isabel Miller, have I read anything so endearing and it made me feel sooo ... good!

VOW sponsor sisters in solidarity – MUMS

Betty Peterson

About 65 women from every province in the Maritimes met in Halifax in February for the seventh annual Day of Renewal of the Voice of Women. It was a time of joyful camaraderie, of sober reflection and of shared pain and questioning. It meant reassessment in the midst of continual activity.

Among many moving stories, perhaps the most gripping to everyone was that of MUMS Heather Schneider and May Spiny. They shared their group frustration over their perceptions of the lack of caring and concern for them from women's organizations and the wider community. Support has come for their many public demonstrations and government submissions, but personal follow-up has been lacking, they felt.

Frank stories were told of the indignities of personal abuse, of discrimination and put-downs because of race and of being on social assistance. Outright refusal

of housing is often the result of being single mothers with children and on welfare.

(Many of these stories/documentations will be published and given to each member of the Legislature during International Women's Week.)

Hardest of all for them has been the seeming lack of concern of groups of women who profess bonds of sisterhood and equal rights as their watchword. The MUMS felt that many react with emotion and sympathy to the telling of personal "horror stories" and applaud their persistent courage and successful demonstrations. But where are caring women when dark and discouraging moments come, when energy fails, when morale needs a lift, they ask. Tears and cheers are not enough; on-going caring and sharing are in short supply.

Gratitude was expressed for the MUMS persistently seeking support despite repeated discouragement and rebuff and often deaf

ears.

Their message was deeply heard.

It would seem that there are needs at several levels:

• **Political and public** — support at demonstrations, government appeals, Housing Coalition. Letter writing, group or personal intervention. **ALERT:** On March 7, an award will be given to Mayor John Savage of Dartmouth at City

themselves, face extremely unstable living conditions, temporary housing, threats of imminent eviction, low income and the emotional drain of being single mothers bringing up children. Direct moral and physical support of this key group is needed to maintain the stability of the MUMS. In a time of women's affinity groups, this would seem to be a timely challenge. Turn the

check-out of give and take. It is assumed that this would be a two-way street of shared responsibilities, strengths and weaknesses.

Another suggestion was women who might assume a grandmother role to children who have no such family stability.

Voice of Women has already begun to respond to these challenges at different levels for

A two-way street of shared responsibilities, strengths, weaknesses

Hall, 11 a.m. Women will then assemble at the Dartmouth ferry, 11:30 a.m. They will march to Province House for a 12 p.m. presentation of case-history pamphlets. **COME!**

• **Physical support** — transportation, money for a baby-sitting fund, food and clothing supplies, attendance at MUMS meetings at Veith House every other Sunday afternoon at 1 o'clock. Call 466-4525, or 435-1567 for more information.

• **Personal** — there is a core group of 10 to 12 MUMS who go each week to the transition houses to give hope and to try to organize single mothers and battered wives into action with the MUMS.

They take phone calls and give emergency help day and night to desperate women who are given courage through their example. They give interviews, make public representations and do the organizing of MUMS.

And, in addition, they,

"they" into "we".

Out of the growing awareness and understanding at Day of Renewal, tentative suggestions were made, among which several seemed to speak to these expressed needs.

Committee of Care has been a Quaker practice for over 300 years, arising from a time when men, women, and children were persecuted, put into prison and sometimes put to death for being faithful to their consciences and spiritual beliefs rather than to the official religions and state practices.

Committees of Care were formed to help the sick and the families left behind and to share chores, burdens and resources. Could such direct involvement set a model, adjusted to present-day realities, in this situation?

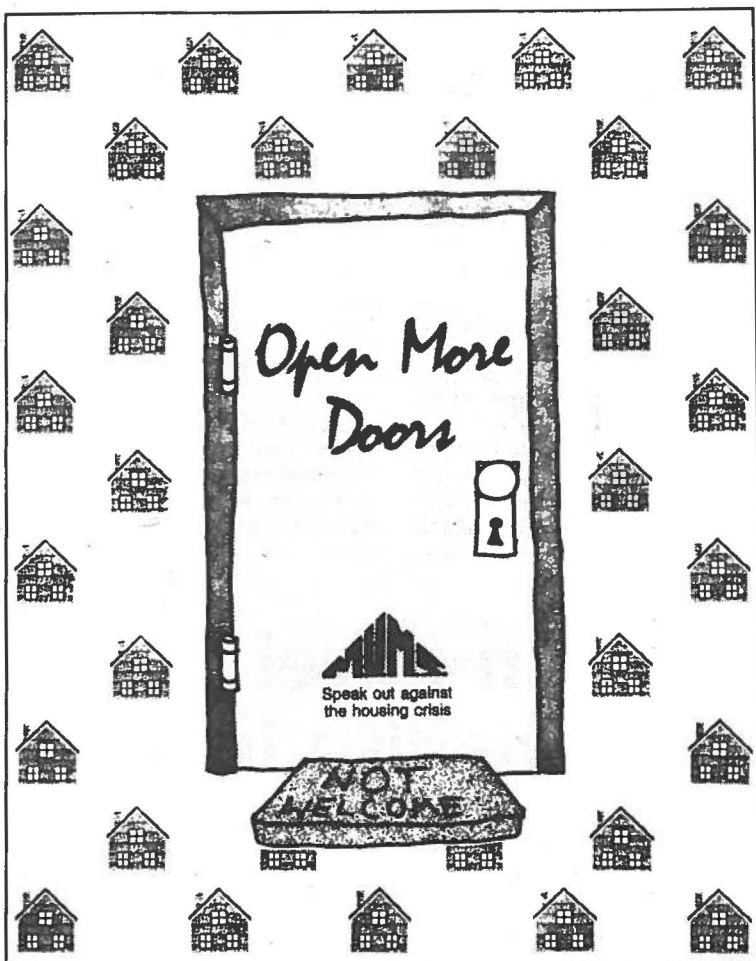
An outgrowth or alternative might be Sisters in Solidarity and Support in a one to one relationship — a daily or semi-weekly

we see again how money and effort needed for social services and private needs is being expended on the military in preparation for war.

We issue a call to the Women's Caring Community to lend support at this critical time. MUMS need visible caring as women, as sisters and as mothers of children. Write to Sisters in Solidarity, Box 3231, PO Station South, Halifax, B3J 3H5.

As the MUMS say: "We've got to stand together. Women are only a divorce away from all this. It doesn't matter if you're rich, middle class or poor, we're all women. In a lot of ways, we have to face the same problems and it means that we should stand together and try to fight this oppression for ourselves and for each other."

Betty Peterson is a well-known peace activist, public speaker, writer, all-round woman in solidarity with other women.



MUMS document women's stories

Elizabeth Bosma

For people living in Halifax and Dartmouth the words, housing crisis, are familiar. But for low-income earners, single mother's and older people the housing crisis is a grim reality.

A newly released book — **Open More Doors: MUMS speak out against the housing crisis** — communicates that reality. Produced by the International Women's Week shelter committee, the book contains interviews with over 15 mothers who have struggled to get affordable housing for themselves and their children.

The MUMS offer hope and support to women who are facing the housing crisis. As one member says in the book, "We've been there."

The book will be released during International Women's Week and will be presented to government officials at Province House March 7 at 12:30. All women are asked to support this book by marching with the MUMS on the seventh as well as by purchasing copies.

Additional copies can be purchased at the Red Herring Book store in Halifax.

Elizabeth Bosma is a member of the International Women's Week shelter committee.

International Women's Day March 8, 1986

International Women's Day is an important day in our community because of the increased understanding of the role that women play in our present society.

The City of Dartmouth hopes that greater understanding of the role of women will grow and we believe women should have greater opportunities and increased participation in our city life.



John Savage
Mayor
City of Dartmouth

Council challenged to advise on priorities

Pat Kipping

Just as the last issue of *Pandora* was at the printer's, making my article on the Politics of Housework inaccessible for revision, I was surprised to pick up a leaflet put out by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, called *The Status of Housework*.

As I read it, I was pleased to see the case for re-evaluating housework stated strongly with some clear analysis of why housework has been made women's work: "not because they are inherently destined to it, but because the economy benefits from their unpaid labour."

As I read on, I found I could agree with the Status of Women's

"women cannot have equality until housework is considered work and not women's work."

Considering that I have never felt particularly allied with the Advisory Council on the Status of Women during my 10 years of involvement with the local women's movement, it was quite a new experience to feel this agreement.

Alas, it was short lived. The last paragraph of this short leaflet read: "Housework occupies the position it does because of history, tradition, economic expedience and attitudes. History is past [but it's still killing us]; tradition can be overcome [sure, it just takes thousands of years]; economics can be negotiated [not with this current wave of capitalist

Province of Nova Scotia to implement social housing policies which will create good, low-cost housing for all women and their families.

I challenge them to advise the government to improve the social assistance practices in the province to pay single mothers and mothers on social assistance what they need to adequately provide for their children. Stop punishing them for having loved and given birth.

I challenge the Advisory Coun-

cil to advise the government to put more money into making better daycare available to more children and to improve the wages and working conditions of daycare workers in the province.

Finally, I challenge them to advise the government to stop wasting thousands of dollars on extravagant displays of military might such as the Nova Scotia Tattoo and start instead to attract tourists to see our beautiful, innovative housing co-ops, com-

munity gardens, peace festivals . . .

Now I'm dreaming. But, really, that way we might have a chance to come closer to — and I quote the leaflet again — "the strong, positive attitude about the vital work we do."

Pat Kipping gets angry at a lot of what she sees and hears. She also lives and works in Halifax and is mother of two pre-school children.

"If the perspective is expanded from a preoccupation with the eight or ten hours a day that wage workers spend in wage labour to a consideration of the complete twenty-four-hour cycle of daily life of the working class as a whole, then it becomes clear that domestic labour is one of the central labour processes of industrial capitalism." (Meg Luxton)

arguments that paying wages for housework would not be an adequate solution: "Housework will be reaffirmed as 'women's work' and a part of their 'proper' role in marriage. . . . Would the husband then become the supervisor or would the government appoint inspectors to ensure the housework wage was earned according to a prescribed standard?"

I was further heartened to read that the task force concluded that

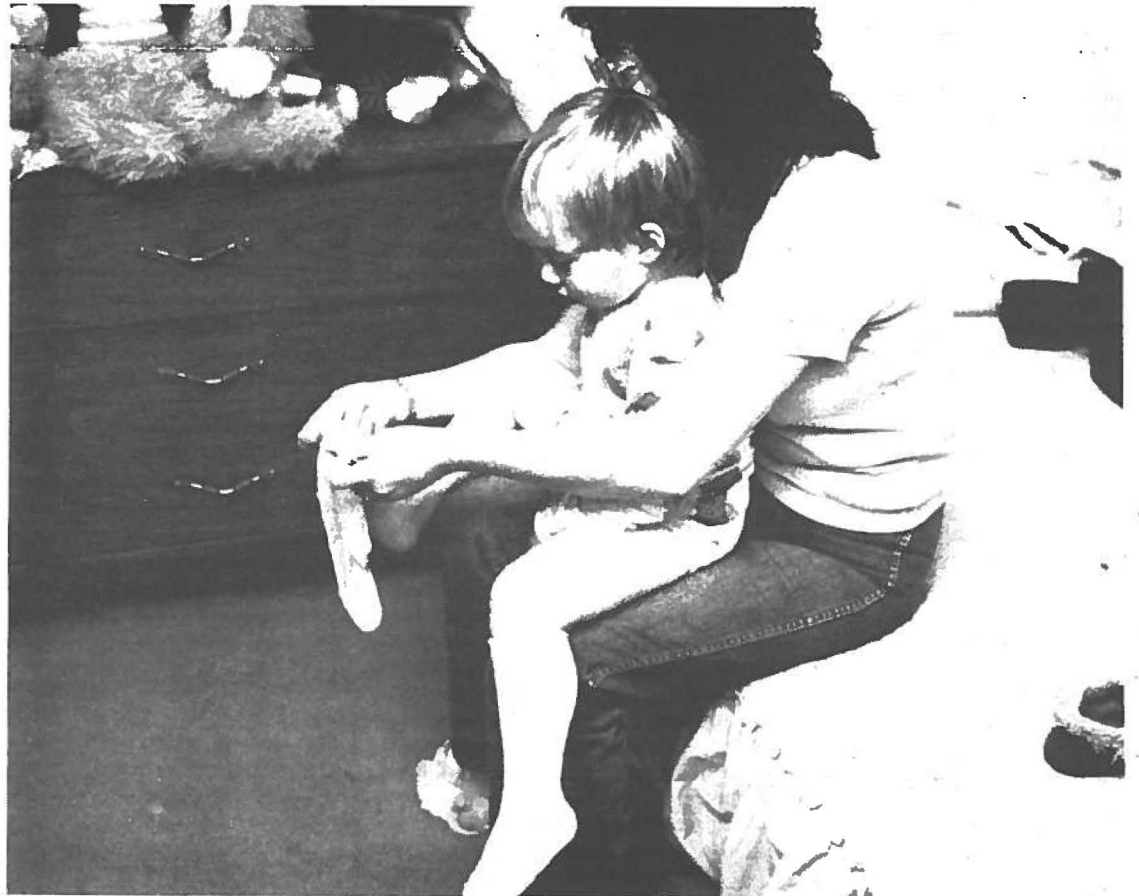
rightists it can't.] But none of these changes can occur without a change in attitude on the part of women themselves." [!!!!!!]

I can't say how infuriated I get when I read that or hear it! That women could say to other women that "they" have to change their attitude and presto — "their" problem will be solved.

When has a "change in attitude on the part of women themselves" ever made one inkling of change in the practices of politicians, businessmen (sic) and military strategists?

Where the attitudes must change is with the women who write this stuff and who have the ear of the governments who appoint them. They must start demanding that policies, and payments, start being made now which will free women from poverty and threats of violence and war.

I challenge the women at the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women to advise the



The Family in the Context of Childrearing

Susan McEachern is an assistant professor of photography in the design division of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax. The above photograph was part of her recent exhibition *The Family in the Context of Childrearing*.

The project included texts from authors such as Meg Luxton (left) and details of her own family experience. This is a part of

the process by which she tries to remove the distance that normally exists between a photographer and her subject.

Susan McEachern concentrates on the home as the original seat of culture and socialization. She therefore incorporates the cultural contexts surrounding work in the home so women, their work and their surroundings are seen as a whole.

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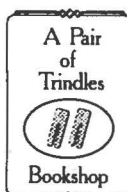
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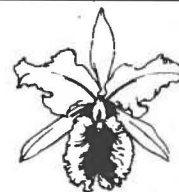


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Networking key concept for rural women

Nancy Wright

While explaining the style guidelines for submitting articles to **Pandora**, co-ordinating editor Betty-Ann Lloyd said "write as if you're writing to a close friend." My lips said "fine," but my head said "never." After several weeks of delaying the task, I finally faced the fact that this style goes against my grain.

While working as a journalist for several years (some of that under the scrutiny of Betty-Ann), I tried my best to write in neutral — not from a female point of view, but not male-oriented; not too heavy, but not too light; investigative, but not speculative; political, but not partisan.

After striving to maintain proper balances, it's hard to throw it all away and begin by saying "I . . ." Please bear with me if I fall into "news talk" now and then.

I don't usually enjoy having the tables turned on me, but at the Rural Women's Conference held in Antigonish in January, it was welcome. I planned to attend the event as a silent observer, hoping to learn if there are ways in which I can, in my new role as municipal

councillor, be better informed on women's issues.

Rather I realized that I am also a rural woman and was quickly drawn in to the life of the conference, the sharing of ideas, feelings and problems that are common to women who live in small communities in Nova Scotia.

Whether we are career professionals, mothering home-makers or a combination of both, rural women were assured of their value to the community and to each other.

It is not unusual for women in small communities to be members of several volunteer organizations that run the gamut from church to theatre. Where the numbers are few, the pressure to overlap is great.

Rural women can't always afford the luxury of choosing their causes or support groups. They are all vital and need to be dealt with. If you want Scout and Brownie programs, good day care, recreation or cultural options, the responsibility lands on the shoulders of the people to make it happen.

I was not surprised during the conference wrap-up session when Guysborough women agreed unanimously that we don't want another group. Who needs another monthly meeting, another stint as treasurer, more phone calls, suppers and generally another iron in an already blazing fire?

We were pleased to note that we have very good women's groups already in place that extend their support beyond the functional boundaries to be concerned about the needs and cares of other women.

What women in Guysborough County want, however, is communication with each other as groups. After hearing the word "networking" several times, I adopted it as the method for achieving our goal. There are common grounds between women's groups which need to be developed. Work has begun.

For many women from this end of the province, the conference was their first experience with participation in a women's event. Several commented, and I agreed, it was a relief that the conference was not a male-bashing session, but rather, a positive reinforcement that women are important, vital voices not only in their homes, but in the workplace, the community, the province and the country.

It's hard to plead ignorance in the face of the Voice of Women, Women's Institute, Women's Health Education Network and the peace movement. You can't turn back once you've learned that you are the key to the future.

Nancy Wright is a mother of three, municipal councillor, part-time journalist, photographer, caterer, retail salesperson and a promoter of family day care.

Nancy Wright is too many things.



What happens now?

Second Story Women's Centre chairperson, Sharon MacDonald, (right) and co-ordinator, Phyllis Price (centre) proudly display the centre's new publication on teen pregnancy, **What Happens Now?** to Agi Stokes of Dayspring.

The author's goal was to write the 20-page magazine-format booklet in a style particularly appealing to young women. Its aim is to

provide information regarding alternatives for pregnant teens, health and legal advice, where to obtain help, as well as suggestions for dealing with one's emotions at this sensitive time.

Individual copies cost \$1.50 each, plus postage and handling; bulk rates are available on request. For more information contact Second Story Women's Centre, 9 Dominion Street, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, B4V 2J6, phone (902) 543-1315.

Feminism and civil liberties discussed

On March 12, Thelma McCormack, chair of women's studies at Mount St. Vincent University, will speak on "Feminism and Civil Liberties". This free public lecture, will be at the Seton Academic Centre, Auditorium A at 7:30 pm.

Thelma McCormack has come to the Mount from York University, Toronto, where she is a professor in Sociology. She is well known for her research and publications in women's issues including women and culture, women and the economy, women and politics. She is currently teaching one course, Women and Social Policy.

Feminists will be interested in her views on censorship and pornography and the role of women artists within a feminist movement for social change. In addressing the issue of women, Thelma is concerned about the manner in which we relate to third world women whether they live in our country or elsewhere.

During her tenure at the Mount, she will conduct research on a number of feminist issues: the ethical concerns of reproductive technology; the possible impact of the woman's movement on public policy — how it can relate to government without endangering its integrity; the relationship between the nature of knowledge and culture in a post-feminist world.

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NOVA Dance Theatre tries to break the mould

Eleanor O'Donnell

For women especially, a thin if not anorexic appearance seems to be the prerequisite for a professional dancer. Jeanne Robinson, Director of Nova Dance Theatre, certainly does not fit this mould. I spoke to her recently.

Q: Do you have a cattle call and look at people's bones?

Only with ballet is that an absolute. It depends on the artistic director of course, but that happens mostly in the world of ballet. In the world of modern dance, the point is to throw away the ballet shoes.

There is no absolute, and I refuse to accept that there has to be an absolute tall, height, or short frame, bones, or anything. I look at them as a whole, three-dimensionally — not only technically, how they're performing, but if they have an ambience about them or a manner in which they can project.

My company is called Dance Theatre for a reason. I really incorporate a lot of theatre in my work. I like a company of individuals, and that includes bodies. I don't have a company of look-alikes.

The ballet tradition — in particular Ballantine — started the trip which by the '60s had resulted in incredibly long necks and long, long, long legs, long torsos and long arms. And he evolved this look, this female body type, along with the style of the day — Audrey Hepburn, Twiggy — you know, the '60s — and started the sale, the hype about the female body being like a 14-year-old boy: no hips, no breasts.

And I'm an Italian Portuguese, there's no way I'm going to be without either because of my genes! And I'm not ashamed of who I am or what I look like.

From the time I was 11, I knew I was going to be a choreographer but I wasn't sure where I would fit with my body type. By the time I was 18, I knew it was going to be modern dance. It has far more room for individuality.

Q: The harmony and diversity of performers you have choreographed has been striking... One of your pieces several years ago left this incredible feeling of beauty and sunlight and hope —

Did it have eight women? That was called Hey Rhythm, with music by Meredith Monk. It was a tribal, ritual feeling, just women. Yeah, I was challenging myself to make a motional piece, just a movement piece that had underneath it an underlying ritualistic flavour, so that it would be an emotional line to you, the audience, but not in the sense of a linear story.

They were foot-pounding, stomping, physically strong and capable women, and Meredith Monk was singing "Hey-ye-ye, Hey-ye-ye." You know, it was tribal, ritualistic.

Q: What is one of your successes in bringing together dancers of different body types and artistic expression?

I like a piece I created called "Grecia," which incorporated singing as well as movement, and it had a really strong emotional line. There was one male character in it, but it's a non-gender piece,

not a vignette of a male-female heterosexual relationship.

It's a lush, lyrical piece where the backdrop is an ocean, where you can hear the water and see the lights flickering. And a group comes in singing, in beautiful white costumes wrapped around them, almost Grecian.

Over the course of the 13- or 14-minute piece, the dance slowly builds. And what it is in my mind, is, when I was a kid in Cape Cod, there was a king tide in August and I lived on an island, Lieute-

nant's Island. And only on the king tide in August when the full moon was there and the tide was higher than any other month of the year, the causeway went away; and Lieutenant's Island became an island.

And on that night my friends and I (I was about 18, and everything's so wonderful as you start to explore the world), we sort of made a ritual of going into the water that night. It wasn't any night....

So we made this whole little

dance and had this whole ritual about jumping in. You don't just jump in — so we sing, and we sing and then we dance and then we slowly — it's a slow-paced dance that slowly, slowly builds in pitch, it builds so fast that you won't believe how fast it is by the end, and at the very end, we all stop; facing the water, tossing sand into the water.

And then slowly, as the light starts to fade, we unwrap our clothes. You can't see us get naked, but you see the suggestion of:

it's time now to take off our clothes and jump in the water together. It's just a very simple idea....

In the spring, there will be a special retrospective of the work of this woman who conveys so many pleasures and truths in her use of colour and light and movement and sound.

Eleanor O'Donnell (MacLean) is a writer and researcher who lives in Halifax.



Jeanne Robinson, artistic director of Nova Dance Theatre, watches a rehearsal of company member Leica Hardy's new work: "Shakin' the

April 10 to 12 at the Dalhousie Arts Centre. From left: Jeanne, Leica, Nancy Happel and Suzanne Miller.

(photo by Sara avMaat)

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YOUR LINE TO GOVERNMENT

Police graduate deserves to get her job but traditional roles also warrant respect

Sharon Fraser

Here on Prince Edward Island, the name Gladys Kickham is becoming a household word. Gladys is a young woman who graduated from the police academy at Holland College, applied for a position with the Charlottetown police force, and was turned down.

She filed a charge with the human rights commission on the grounds that the interview procedure was altered to ensure she would not be hired as the force's first woman officer. That case is being heard publicly, right now.

Naturally, I'm in full support of Gladys' right to be a police officer and — come to think of it — I'm

entirely in favour of Charlottetown women having a woman on the force to bring a different perspective to policing habits.

A woman's perspective in many of the traditionally male jobs is very valuable to our society. I've found though, that in the past few months, my feminist views on attitudes in the "workplace" are going through a transition.

In the '60s and early '70s, when many women my age were just awakening to this particular phase of feminism, we had two major goals: the first was to identify ourselves and connect with other women through consciousness-raising; the second was to gain equality with men.

That equality, we felt, would be partially gained when we had the same opportunities as men, and had access to the same schools, the same professions, the same trades — in short, when we became good at the things that had the highest value placed on them in a male-oriented society.

I have never been comfortable with this. In my first career, I was a nurse. I have a niece who has always been quite an admirer of me and, as a little girl, when she was asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, she always said, "a nurse, like Sharon."

I must say, I resented it terribly when well-meaning people would say to her, "You don't have to be a nurse. You can be a doctor if you want to." Hey! I wanted to yell. There's nothing wrong with being a nurse and I never wanted to be a doctor!

The point is, of course, that nursing and doctoring are two very different professions and the fact that one is more valued (both in money and prestige) than the other is purely a matter of gender. I don't want young women who aspire to a nursing career to be made to feel that nursing is second-best when it should be respected, as all hospital professions should be respected, as complements to one another.

The next time I found myself uncomfortable with this concept of equality was when I realized that the only time women's art is accepted as "real" is when it takes a form that traditional (male) standards designate as art — oil painting, steel sculpture, water colours. The work that women have done throughout the centuries — sewing, weaving, potting, crocheting, tatting, embroidering, and quilting — is, of course, called craft and is pushed aside as insignificant and unimportant in the world of male art.

Art, too, is valued not according to its intrinsic beauty, design, or message, but according to who sets artistic standards. Guess who?

Perhaps the issue that finally made me feel I was looking at things backwards, is the issue of women in the armed forces, and the question: "should women be

society than taking care of children, nursing the elderly, or being a secretary.

If Gladys Kickham wins her case before the human rights com-

Why are our female traditions so easily discarded in the name of equality

allowed to take part in the combat of war?"

Well no, I said. And neither should men.

It seems so simple, doesn't it? And yet from the day I said it, all my attitudes took a change in direction. Why do we believe that it is we who should be changing? Why are our (female) traditions so easily discarded in the name of equality?

My mission now is to help women believe that our traditional occupations are the more valuable ones, and part of our struggle should be to make sure that value is recognized. But we have to recognize it first ourselves.

It's all right with me if a woman wants to become a plumber or a heavy equipment operator or a coal miner. I don't think such accomplishments are worthy of a feature story in a newspaper though, and I refuse to accept that those jobs are more important to

mission, and I hope she does, it will be both a personal victory for her and a larger victory for the community. It will be hailed, however, as a great victory for women everywhere.

In my new view, becoming equal with men is only desirable in a few areas. I feel it will be a much more significant breakthrough when women's work, art, taste, and sense of humour are valued for themselves and not because they have been twisted to be more like men's.

And — if we needed one — that's another good reason for having a women's newspaper!

Sharon Fraser is a journalist and commentator who has worked with community newspapers on the Miramichi in New Brunswick and as a freelancer with CBC radio throughout the Maritimes. She is currently editor of the Atlantic Fisherman in Montague, Prince Edward Island.

Greenham trip needs support

Nancy Brister

Now more than ever we must take personal risks for change. The media has pronounced the spirit of the women's peace camp at Greenham Common, England, dead over and over again. Each time it has risen like the phoenix. An appeal has recently gone out to the women of the world from Greenham to help carry on the work of being a constant presence and a rebuke to the American and British military.

One woman in our local peace movement has taken up the challenge. Darl Wood hopes to leave for England around the first of June. She plans to stay the good part of a year but needs our help to do it. Darl is now busy trying to raise funds for the trip as well as finding sponsors who will assist her in continuing on there.

She says, "I have no illusions or romantic ideas that the conditions over there will be easy. In fact I hear stories that really scare me. But I want to turn around the military mentality and to do that I'm going to have to go beyond my fears and take some personal risk."

"I understand it if people don't feel the circumstance is right for them to go to England at this particular time in their lives — but I'm hoping maybe some will feel they can do it by proxy in supporting me financially and a whole lot emotionally."

In order to raise money to support her trip, Darl is selling most of her book collection. This is a good opportunity for women to add to their feminist library. The book sale will take place at Veith House from 2 to 5 pm on Saturday, April 19.

Later the same evening there will be a women's celebration and dance starting at 8:00 pm with all the proceeds going towards Darl's expenses in getting to Greenham.

For more information, or if you would like to help with the benefit, please call Nancy Brister at 465-4502.

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Would you like to have information arrive in your mail box?

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Do you belong to a group that would be interested in becoming part of an information network?

Pandora has applied for a Secretary of State grant with the following objectives:

To complete a comprehensive mailing list to stimulate interest in Pandora; to acquire space to facilitate these activities; to contact established groups in order to broaden the distribution and provide a means for more inclusive participation by women and groups throughout the region.

We are now starting the process of putting together an information bank and we would like you and/or your group to become part of it. We are asking you to send in this initial contact form and we will send you a more detailed questionnaire to be filled out by you or your group and then entered into our computer.

Contact Form

Name of group (or individual): _____
Contact person: _____
Address: _____ Postal Code: _____
Community: _____ Phone numbers: _____
Areas of concern/issues: _____

Please indicate other groups or individuals you may know of who would be interested in becoming part of this information bank. Include name and address of contact person if available.

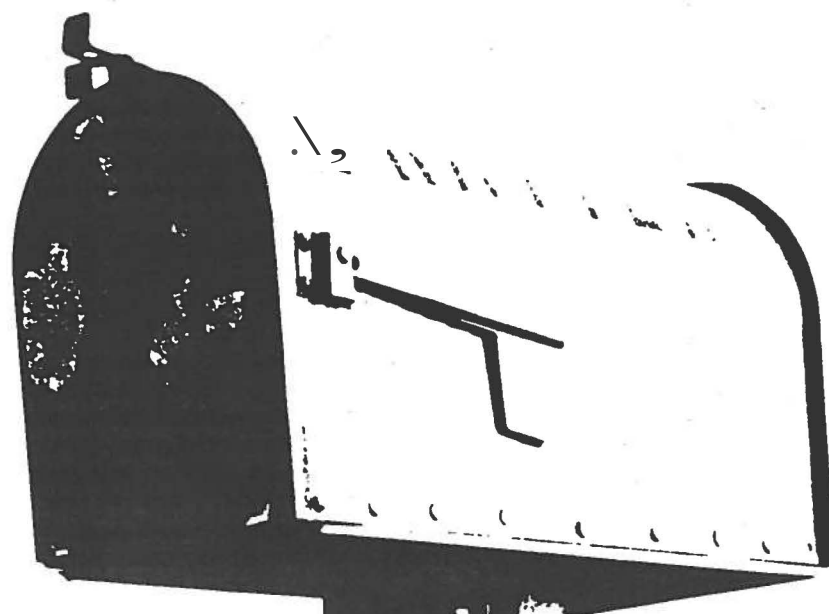


Photo: Sara avMaat

Women 80 per cent of Dal Legal Aid clients

Government cuts back on public advocate

Lois Corbett

A single mother who used Dalhousie Legal Aid says the Nova Scotia government's decision to cut almost \$90,000 from the organization's budget is an attempt to silence a "strong voice of the small people" and a sharp rap on the knuckles for "being too noticeable."

Jackie Turcotte, a mother living with her three children in Halifax, says she first went to Dal Legal Aid when she was threatened with an eviction notice from her

Caseload with housing related issues has skyrocketed to over 50 per cent of clients

landlord last spring. Without the lawyer from Dal Legal Aid, Turcotte says she would not have been able to find someone to help present her case.

Turcotte went to Dal Legal Aid on the recommendation of the Nova Scotia Legal Aid Commission.

"They sent me there because they told me they didn't handle evictions."

Premier John Buchanan defended the cut in Dal Legal Aid's budget by saying his government will set up a new community law clinic and spend more money on the province's legal aid commission.

Social services minister Edmund Morris announced the cuts, \$70,000 from the attorney general's office and \$20,000 from his department, on January 31, giving Dal Legal Aid no notice of the decision and failing to consult with the university's law school, which offers the service.

Morris said Dal Legal Aid "became a political training ground for NDP candidates, to the detriment of the poor and disadvantaged."

But Turcotte says that wasn't her experience.

"My landlord was evicting me on the basis of his personal bias against single mothers. I went to Dal Legal Aid all prepared with a written statement about what was going on, and they threw their whole hearts right into it. Even though we (Turcotte and her lawyer, Darrell Brown) couldn't get into the meeting about my appeal, it certainly helped having a lawyer around."

Turcotte says a lawyer gave her "extra credibility" when dealing with her housing board and the ci-

ty's Tenancy Board.

"It gives you that extra bit of power. They looked at me and said 'that woman must have some smarts, she's brought a lawyer with her.'"

Terry Drysdale, a single mother with four children, jokes about how much help she has received from Dal Legal Aid: "I've given Dal Legal Aid half of their work."

In December, 1984, Drysdale went to Dal Legal Aid for help on a custody battle: "I was fighting to get my house back and my children back."

She says people she met through Dal Legal Aid were helpful because they had dealt with so many cases similar to hers.

"They have a really good system there. They seem warmer and more sincere in dealing with problems. Some lawyers will treat you as just another case, but not the ones at Dal Legal Aid."

To Drysdale, if the government cutbacks mean Dal Legal Aid has to cut services, she will be out in the cold.

"To me it means there won't be anywhere to go if you need legal aid. Where else can you go for a lawyer, especially if your husband is dealing with Nova Scotia Legal Aid. There will be no place to turn to, and the amount of money to hire a private lawyer could run into hundreds of dollars."

Over 80 per cent of Dal Legal Aid's clients are poor women. Barb Harris, a worker at Dal Legal Aid, says most of their clients are on social assistance, or people who have had that assistance cut off, especially women with housing related problems.

"Our caseload with housing related issues has skyrocketed — so much so that over 50 per cent of our cases now deal with housing problems."

Dal Legal Aid helped organize Housing for People, a coalition of organizations that recently presented a blueprint to Dartmouth and Halifax city councils demanding more metro public housing.

Harris says Dal Legal Aid also fought the government's decision

to cut teenage mothers off from social assistance.

"When that was about to become law, we tried to fight it, because a lot of our clients are teenage mothers. We continued to fight it after it became law, and the government doesn't like that."

A big part of Dal Legal Aid's work is recognizing trends and causes of problems, she adds.

"The work we do here is not straight legal work — straight in the sense that all you do is listen to the individual problem and deal with it and then let it go. We do all that, but if we see a pattern in the problems we take that on as well."

Two years ago, Dal Legal Aid noticed a pattern in cases brought

to them by people with complaints with the Nova Scotia Power Commission. Harris says the commission was cutting off people's power without giving them legal notice, and once cut off a woman's electricity because her estranged husband did not pay his bill.

Joan Dawkins, the director of Dal Legal Aid, said they helped change the "draconian policies of the power commission."

"Occasionally we have the opportunity to take an issue forward and attack it on a broader sense."

Premier John Buchanan has denied the cutbacks to Dal Legal Aid will hurt poor people's, the majority of whom are women, access to legal aid. "What we're doing is going to strengthen it," he

said. "It's just a way of making the system more efficient."

But Turcotte says the system already works. Poor women need Dal Legal Aid to turn to when they face discrimination on the basis of their sex or marital status, and the government cutbacks are representative of the low priority the Buchanan government gives to women.

Dawkins says the cut in government funding will not close Dal Legal Aid. The organization is trying to raise money through other sources. "We've received a supportive response from the university in philosophical terms. Whether that turns into money or not is up in the air."

Lois Corbett is an unemployed journalist living in Halifax.

Sheet Harbour women's centre hires first full-time worker

Margaret Davis

LEA Place, the Sheet Harbour, N.S., women's centre, celebrated its first birthday February 11 with the introduction of the centre's first fulltime administrative co-ordinator.

Jean Webb of Tangier, a 1984 graduate of Acadia University with an honours B.A. in sociology, assumed the seven-month position early in February. The hiring was made possible by a grant of \$18,156 from the federal Secretary of State Women's Program, through which LEA Place has also hired part-time clerical worker Mary-Jean MacKinnon.

Webb, who wrote her degree thesis on female offenders in Nova Scotia, was previously employed by the Coverdale Foundation, which provides services to women in conflict with the law. She acted as a researcher and court worker and a report based on her findings will be published shortly by the federal solicitor general's department.

The new co-ordinator, who grew up on the Eastern Shore, is enthusiastic about the potential of LEA Place, which is sponsored by Eastern Shore Learning Opportunities for Women (ESLOW).

"The women's centre is something I've always wanted for Sheet Harbour because of the isolation that women in rural areas face," Webb comments.

Among programs under discussion for the coming months, Webb lists lectures on divorce and separation, pornography, women and the law, women and insurance, stress management, and drug and alcohol dependency. A spring concert may be the centre's major fundraiser, while at the end

of the seven months Webb hopes to organize a weekend conference in Sheet Harbour for women's organizations around the province.

She says one of her long term goals would be to see the establishment of a transition house in the area.

According to ESLOW President Margot Comeau-Metcalf, the group is pleased with the qualifications of both the co-ordinator and her clerical assistant. Comeau-Metcalf notes that LEA Place was founded in February of 1985 with a five-month Secretary of State grant. Since May 31, 1985, its activities have been run by volunteers.

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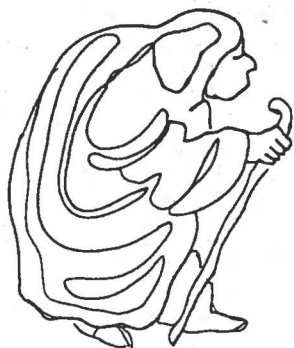
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New prostitution laws concern for all women

Anne Derrick

Traditionally, women have been, both socially and legally, the property of their fathers and then of their husbands. Men have always been aware of the economic benefits of buying and selling women's bodies through pornography and prostitution and women's sexuality continues to be a commodity that makes men rich while women stay poor.

Women's sexuality continues to be a commodity that makes men rich while women stay poor.

Jess Wells, in *A Herstory of Prostitution in Western Europe* (Shameless Hussy Press), traces mercenary prostitution — the selling of sexual intercourse — to 594 B.C. In ancient Athens, the government ran brothels to assist in financing the Greek military. Down through the ages, governments and the church regulated prostitution and benefited from the revenues generated. Women were kidnapped, bought and sold.

Women who attempted to work on their own, outside the houses of prostitution supported by the state or church, were severely treated. Whipping and exile being popular punishments.

The trend in the early seventies had been to decriminalize prostitution. In 1972, the Liberal government repealed the infamous vagrancy provisions (Vag C) in the Criminal Code which made prostitution a status offence whereby a woman could be arrested simply for being a common prostitute who was unable to give a good account of herself. In its place, soliciting for the purpose of prostitution was made an offence. The Supreme Court of Canada decided that soliciting had to be pressing and persistent to be criminal.

In the 1980's, despite the activist attempts of women's groups and prostitution rights groups, the

government was persuaded to act punitively in relation to street prostitution. Prostitution became a constitutional issue. It was determined to be part of the federal parliament's exclusive powers to make criminal law.

In December 1985, the criminal law was amended to make, amongst other things, the "communicating or attempting to communicate for the purpose of pro-

stitution" a criminal offence. As the bill passed through the House, prostitute women were murdered in Halifax in the course of their work.

The amendments to the criminal law have broadened the range of conduct and expression that can attract arrest and prosecution. The state has expanded its ability to punish and harass women who seek an alternative to conventional criminal activity, to welfare and to low paying, menial jobs.

The result is that women who are already disadvantaged socially and economically are penalized further — brought to court, identified as prostitutes, given a criminal record, humiliated and fined.

The other result of the amendments to the law has been to drive street prostitution further underground. Women who work as street prostitutes are already highly vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Forced to hide their activities for fear of arrest, there is a greater likelihood that women will be assaulted, robbed, beaten and murdered.

The recent amendments to the Canadian Criminal Code, by insidiously increasing police power, have strengthened the powers of the state in relation to the rights of the individual.

These amendments should be of concern not only to feminists, but also to civil libertarians. Prostitution per se is still not illegal in Canada, but talking about it can be.

Feminists and prostitutes must consider challenging the law under the Charter of Rights — particularly in relation to the vagueness of the wording of the amendments and possibly in relation to the potential violations of a woman's fundamental freedom of expression in selling sex.

Legalization of prostitution has been advocated in Canada and implemented in other jurisdictions. This should be seen, however, as another way in which the state would exercise further and greater control over women's sexuality and its expression. Women's poverty and exploitation would be further institutionalized.

By dictating mandatory health inspections and work hours and controlling work conditions, and by collecting the money from the women's sex-work, the government becomes the pimp, and the

Forced to hide their activities for fear of arrest, there is a greater likelihood that women will be assaulted.

oppression of prostitutes is entrenched and legitimated. Women working in legalized brothels in Germany and the United States have described tremendously long hours, low pay, little in the way of vacation and employer spying. These are the omnipresent evils that oppress women in the workplace everywhere.

Feminists and prostitutes have not been natural allies. Many feminists still look down on prostitutes and other women in the sex trade — and prostitutes in turn have a suspicious and angry attitude toward the feminist movement because of its domination by educated, middle class, affluent women.

proposals, programs and law amendments. We are also committed to providing direct services to the working women.

WASP had its first meeting in December and has had several meetings since then. We are presently in the process of defining our fundamental philosophy and our objectives. The group consists of eight women, all of us involved through our work with prostitute women in the criminal justice system, employment outreach programs, emergency housing and community legal work.

WASP has also discussed establishing a legal defence fund for prostitute women being prosecuted under the Criminal Code amendments and we would like to see a constitutional challenge to the law. These kinds of efforts require a great deal of money and community support. We are exploring further how we may play an activist role as a support group for prostitutes.

Women interested in learning more about WASP should contact Anne Derrick at 422-7411.



"This new spot won't offend the neighbourhood."

Even poorer women often look down on prostitute women. It is their attitude that they haven't had to stoop to selling themselves, that somehow they have coped and survived without going on the street.

The struggle by prostitutes for self-determined sexuality and social and economic justice in our society is the struggle of all women. Prostitutes' demand for respect and protection of the law is no different from the dug-in

What many women lose sight of is that prostitute women trade sex directly for money, whereas many women engage in more indirect exchanges or provide sex for free. How many women prostitute their sexuality in exchange for a roof over their heads and support for themselves and their children? How many women are prostituted in menial jobs, sexually harassed by their employer whose ability to fire them keeps them silent?

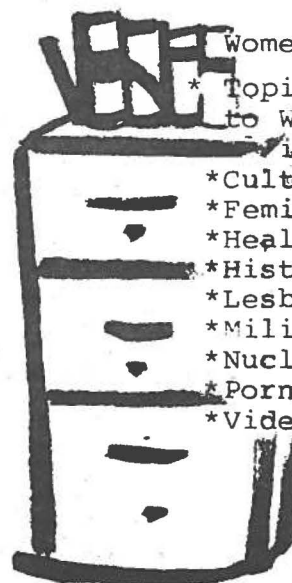
fight by the women's movement generally to obtain wages for housework, better protection for battered women and their children, equal pay for equal work.

We need to say to prostitute women: "We are your sisters; your struggle is our struggle."

Anne Derrick is a feminist lawyer whose work involves advocating for the rights of prostitute women.

The Women's File

A public resource of women's cultural and political issues.



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** Located on the 2nd floor of the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design library. At Duke and Hollis streets.

WASP form to actively support local prostitutes

Anne Derrick

WASP is a new and evolving women's collective prepared to advocate and agitate for prostitutes' rights. This article should be seen most appropriately as a personal expression of what I, as an individual member of the collective, would like to see develop as the group's philosophy and objectives.

I have been inspired by the women in the English Collective of Prostitutes. They run a centre that provides volunteer legal services and support to prostitute women near King's Cross in London. It offers the services of volunteer lawyers, publishes legal rights pamphlets, accompanies women to court and intercedes with landlords, social services and child welfare authorities.

I see WASP as a group committed to supporting working prostitutes, ex-prostitutes and those in transition. Until we have an active core of prostitute women in our group, I would not see us as spokespersons for prostitute women. However, we see ourselves responding to government policies,

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



MARCH

- Susan Feindel: Intensive Care Series depicting the "imagined arena in which the forces of life, death, consciousness and unconsciousness converge." DesBrisay Museum, Bridgewater. Until March 31.
- Alice Reed: Watercolour Landscapes exploring "the balance and harmony of nature found in the outdoor environment." University College of Cape Breton Art Gallery, Sydney. Until March 23.
- Fate of the Earth Mini-Conference. For information call Liz Calder 425-5201.
- March 3**
 - Audio Cabaret featuring the Clichettes, Tanya Mars, Dan Lander. Misty Moon Cabaret, 1595 Barrington St., Halifax. 9pm.
 - My American Cousin, directed by Sandy Wilson, Canada, 1985. Wormwood's Cinema. 7:00 and 9:15 pm. Until March 13.
- March 4**
 - Why Women in Development? First of three part series of lectures by Gloria Nikoi. 7:30 p.m. Call 424-2375
 - The War Room. Photographic documentation of the effects of nuclear weapons. Curated by Abigail Solomon-Godeau. Anna Leonowens Gallery, NSCAD.
- March 5**
 - Women's Special Nutritional Needs, 7:30 pm at Halifax City Library. Discussion will focus on: calcium and osteoporosis, diet and pre-menstrual syndrome, diet and cancer, and the needs of post-menopausal women.
 - Speaking the War Room, panel discussion with Abigail Solomon-Godeau, Bob Bean, Heather Dawkins, Donna Smyth. 8pm Anna Leonowens Gallery.
 - If You Love This Planet, film featuring Dr. Helen Caldicott. Noon. YWCA, 1239 Barrington St. 423-6162.
- March 6**
 - Communicating Openly With Your Child About Sex, a 3-part series led by Anne Bulley of the Planned Parenthood Association. 7 pm, Mainland South Branch Library, Spryfield.
 - The Adsum House Annual Open House. 2-6 pm. 2421 Brunswick St., Halifax. 429-4443.
- March 7**
 - Save South Moresby and the Haida. Caravan and program. Contact: Neil Livingston 423-5116.
 - Women's Employment Seminar. After Graduation — the Realities of Women's Employment. 2:30-4:30 in the MacMechan Auditorium of the Killam Library, Dalhousie University.
 - Introductory Forum for the Dalhousie Women's Resource

Centre will address the question "What is the role of a women's resource centre." 5:30-7:00 in the MacMechan Auditorium of the Killam Library, Dalhousie University.

March 10

- Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) meeting, 7:30 pm. Provincial Archives Building, corner of University Avenue and Robie Street.
- Recent Addition. Artists records and tapes from the collection of the NSCAD Library. 8pm Anna Leonowens Gallery, 1891 Granville St., Halifax. Until March 22.

March 11

- Craftswoman, Carol Oliver, will demonstrate the art of spinning and weaving at the Woodlawn Branch of Dartmouth Regional Library at 10 am. Woven articles by Carol will be displayed.

March 12

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax). Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.
- Opening of Festival of Hands presented by the NS Designer Crafts Council at the Public Archives Building, 6016 University Ave., Halifax until September 30. Permanent Collection of NS crafts on exhibition, plus demonstrations, displays and workshops. Contact: 423-3837.
- Why Women in Development? Third of three lectures. Call 424-2375.

March 14

- Purloined Portraits: Women in 19th Century Photography. The politics of visibility, domestic labour and representation. Curated by feminist historian Heather Dawkins. At Mount St Vincent University Art Gallery until April 6.

March 16

- CBC Stereo Theatre presents *From the Belly of Old Woman*, by Anne Cameron. This lyrical work interweaves a contemporary story with native West Coast mythology to show how mythology empowers us. 7:05 p.m.

March 17 and 24

- CBC Radio's Ideas presents *Drawing the Line: Reproductive Technology*, at 9:05 p.m.

March 17

- Commissioned Audio Tape Premiere. 8:30pm. Centre for Art Tapes.

March 18

- Bibliographer Lynn Murphy will discuss Newspapers in Nova Scotia at the Woodlawn Branch of Dartmouth Regional Library at 10 am. Call 421-2312 for information.
- Annual Meeting of The Association of Women's Residential Facilities (Adsum House) 7:30pm St. Peters Hall, Maple St., Dartmouth.

Successful: Be Self-Employed, and Career Opportunities for Young People. 421-6987

- Televised Introduction: Purloined Portraits, an illustrated lecture by Heather Dawkins on the representations of 19th Century domestic labour. 10:30 am ASN Channel 4. Repeated Monday March 24, 8:30 pm.

March 25

- Terrorism or Freedom Fighter? A three-part series on Perspectives on Global Violence starts at Halifax City Library, Spring Garden Road at 7:30 pm. 421-7673.

- A Workshop On Self Image and Self Esteem will be held at the Woodlawn Branch of Dartmouth Library. 10 am. 421-2312.

March 26

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax). Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.
- Free Income Tax Services for Senior Citizens, 6:30-9 pm at the Mainland South Branch Library in Spryfield.

Resource: Lois Kunkel, staff of Project North. Discuss Innu, Haida, possibly form Native Support Group. Call Betty Peterson at 423-3887.

April 13

- Mount Saint Vincent Art University Art Gallery, 3:00 p.m., Heather Spears will give a reading of her poetry (Canada Council supported).

April 14

- Crimes Against Women: Abortion Law on Trial, Public Archives, 7:30 p.m. CARAL is sponsoring one of a series of tribunals to be held across Canada. By hearing women speak out about experiences, we can demonstrate to the government that its anti-abortion laws continue to take a devastating toll on women's health.

April 15

- Divorce: The New Law. 12:15-1:00 p.m., YWCA, 1239 Barrington St., Halifax. Presented by Public Legal Education and the YWCA, this session will look at the changes to the

Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.

May 21

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax). Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.

NOTICES

- Women's Program at Halifax Library North Branch, Wednesdays, 10-12 noon. Join the women from the area to discuss issues of community concern, hear guest speakers, get to know each other and the community. Call 421-6987
- The Pictou County Women's Centre in New Glasgow, N.S., has established a Rape Line. The line will offer confidentiality, anonymity, information, and peer counselling for female victims of sex abuse, incest and rape. The line will be staffed by volunteers. The phone number is 752-2233.
- The second edition of "Understanding the Law: A



See pages 12 and 13 for International Women's Week events

APRIL

April 5

- The Ecology Action Centre's annual auction, in the Unitarian Church, 5500 Inglis St., 7:00 p.m. The centre's Annual General Meeting will take place prior to the auction, same place, at 4:00 p.m., followed by a pot luck supper for members and friends. For more information, call Debra at 422-4311, or Liz at 425-5201.

April 9

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax). Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.

April 10-12

- Spring concert performances by Nova Dance Theatre at the Sir James Dunn Theatre. For more information and tickets, call N.D.T. at 423-6809.

April 11-12

- Development conference. Phone Susan Aliphat, IEC office, St. Mary's.

April 11-May 4

- Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery (upstairs): Drawings from the Newborn, by Heather Spears, Vancouver. Drawings and poems reflecting the artist's meticulous observation of the newborn in a Copenhagen hospital.

April 12

- Workshop on Native Concerns, Archives, 10-4, brownbag lunch.

divorce laws, which are expected to be law by the spring of 1986. Free. For registration, call Margaret Murray at 423-6162.

April 16

- World YWCA Day: Women Working for Peace. Speaker: Muriel Duckworth, member of the Order of Canada, and the National Mission for Peace in Central America. Presented by the YWCA Cooperation for Development Committee. Free. 12 noon, at the YWCA, 1239 Barrington St., Halifax. 423-6162.

April 19-20

- National Film Board Theatre presents *Bus Stop*, 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. each evening. 1571 Argyle St., Halifax. 422-3700.

April 23

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax). Call 455-1287 for information or ride. Everyone welcome.

April 25-May 1

- GAE will be sponsoring a series of workshops with Yvette Perrault, co-author of *Stepping Out of Line*, at Radclyffe Hall. These workshops are powerful consciousness-raising experiences on lesbianism and feminism. Limited spaces available, costs arranged on a sliding scale. For more information, call 455-0193.

MAY

May 7

- Pandora meeting at 7:30, Veith House (3115 Veith St., Halifax).

Guide for Women in Nova Scotia" is now being distributed. The booklet is written in clear, non-technical language, is free, and is intended for use by women in all walks of life, and in all parts of the province. Distribution is being handled by the Public Legal Education Society of Nova Scotia, 1127 Barrington St., Halifax, 423-7154.

- The Metro Birthing Organization, the Halifax-Dartmouth branch of the Prepared Childbirth Association of Nova Scotia, is holding 7-week pre-natal classes. The classes will be in the evenings, in the homes of teachers. For information and registration, call Carol Obritsch, at 861-1498.

- Call for testimony: CARAL is sponsoring one of a series of tribunals to be held across Canada. The Halifax tribunal requires the participation of women who will speak out about their abortion experiences. Please consider sending CARAL a submission. It may be signed or anonymous, your own story or one you can help us document. Send submission to CARAL, P.O. Box 101, Station M, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2L4. Or call 455-8170 (Kit), or 423-6552 (Jane) for more information.

- The CANSAVE country director from Peru will give a presentation on women and development in Peru. Date in April to be announced. For further information, call Vicki Trainor at 422-2350.