

Pandora

Lifting the lid off

Volume Two Number Three March, 1987 Halifax, Nova Scotia

Inside

Collins House...3
Who should do the fundraising?

Maverick Mother...7
Betty Peterson comes home!

More babies...9
Being an elderly prima gravida

Women who write...11
An 8 page Literary Supplement

Lesbian legalities...20
Looking at terms of endearment

Felicity Redgrave...25
Images and logical processes

Shackwacky women...27
Alone in the country in the winter

I've discovered that pregnant women in film and on television are non-existent. From now on, I'm going to have a pregnant woman in all my films.
— Lulu Keating
pregnantly on stage at the Patchwork concert at QEH



I'm discovering the real special gift of being a parent. Everything I've heard about the burden of responsibility just goes out the window with the joy of being with this new human being that I've had a part of bringing into the world. — Lulu Keating, mother of Calhoun

NS Women's Action Coalition settles on values, vision, basis of unity, convention

Diane LaRue

From an Ad Hoc Committee of women's groups to the October 22nd Public Forum at Henson College in Halifax to the November 22nd Provincial Action Committee in Truro, Nova Scotia women have

been attempting to organize a grouping to deal with the Nova Scotia government's lack of action or concern about women. (See Pandora, December, 1986, Vitality, Winter, 1986/87).

On February 7 (originally sched-

uled for February 14) in Truro, this loose grouping of concerned women met again.

From November to February several regions had the responsibility to meet and hash out, on a preliminary basis,

possibilities of visions, goals, membership and structure.

These 'reports' formed the basis for discussion at the February 7th meeting.

About 80 women from all areas of Nova Scotia attended this February 7th session. There was initial discussion on how to deal with the proposals brought in.

Although there seemed to be pressure to actually decide on visions, strategies and structure that day, there was no clear way for everyone to decide on these things quickly.

Much of the divisiveness was semantical; 'caring, sharing and nurturing' evoked the usual arguments of "let's throw those terms away, we're tired of being the world's tit" to "we need to define those terms ourselves and be proud of them."

There was discussion and eventually a vote on whether the organization should be 'solely' a lobby group or 'primarily' a lobby group (the latter carried).

Many felt a structure could be settled in a few minutes, others of us were appalled that the proposed structure as brought to the meeting was the classic hierarchical one of a restricted membership and a board elected by members.

Many women felt it was important to spend the time needed to really build a grass roots organization so the lobby function would be integrated and powered province-wide.

On a personal level, I was disappointed. I had not attended the October 22nd Forum, but I had seen the video that was made of it. That video travelled Pictou County and was seen by lots of women in living rooms and at the Women's Centre. It was unpolished, but we could pick up on the excitement.

The second meeting was well organized in terms of splitting into smaller groups, then reporting back to the larger, on a time schedule.

I felt the basis for a solid women's organization was being formed; everyone's views were

expressed; they melded into larger concerns.

But I left this third meeting feeling the gains that had already been made in building a strong network were diminishing.

Perhaps my goals are not the same as the organizing women.

These meetings arose out of frustration with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

When I heard various times on the media last fall that perhaps women had made enough gains that an Advisory Council was no longer needed, I seethed.

I hope we can form an organization that is representative of women's issues and that we will create and build the organizational structure to enable us to address our own concerns in our own ways.

There is an 'interim committee' to further work on structure and membership, so my concerns may be premature.

Accomplishments: the values, vision, basis of unity basically agreed on but needing discussion; strategies based on a coalition of women's groups and building a women's movement in Nova Scotia agreed on; objectives similar to NAC agreed on with some dissension on some points; the name: Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia.

An interim committee has been formed with representatives from throughout Nova Scotia to meet and come up with an organizational structure.

The next meeting will be the Founding Convention, in Halifax, April 11-12, 1987.

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Diane LaRue, formerly of Sheet Harbour, now lives in rural Pictou County.



"Our vision is of a world of justice, equality and peace. We come from widely diverse experiences, but as feminists, we are committed to justice and equality for all people. We strive to make changes in our selves and in society to free us from all forms of oppression and to affirm the right of all women to live in dignity and autonomy. We seek to create a model in our

organization of a society where there is self-determination, both individually and collectively, and where caring, sharing, and nurturing are the central organizing principles." Summary of vision/basis of unity as compiled at a joint meeting of women from Antigonish, Guysborough, and Pictou Counties.

(Photo by Lori J. Meserve)

Project looks at "Promises to Keep"

We are a small group of Nova Scotia women working in various organizations to implement the "equality, development, and peace" objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women.

We have received funding from Secretary of State Women's Programme for our community outreach project "Promises to Keep: Forward Looking Strategies". Our purpose is to:

1. Provide Nova Scotia women's groups and young women in the province with information on the Decade and the Forward Looking Strategies (FLS) agreement to achieve the Decade's objectives by the year 2000, signed by Canada and the other UN member nations in 1985 at Nairobi.

2. Provide information on how

the issues and objectives of Nova Scotia women's groups and young women relate to the global issues of the Decade and FLS.

3. In consultation with interested women's groups, develop and provide workshops (based on a kit from Status of Women Canada) to help women's groups and young women identify ways they can use Canada's FLS commitments to plan, find resources for, and carry out their activities and projects.

We can also help group members themselves to plan and give workshops to their own and other organizations. Workshops and workshop materials are free of charge.

This project is aimed at young women, to give them resources to identify their own issues, in the

context of their own lives.

The young women who attend the workshops will potentially be better able to make informed decisions about their present and future plans.

The project also offers information on what is happening for young women locally, nationally, and internationally.

Such information could give young women a better understanding of the similarities and differences that exist between themselves and women of other cultures, as well as what that understanding means in their own lives.

The project is a seed for future achievements. One product of the Promises to Keep project will be the development of a network of young women for future activities.

Potentially, a provincial conference could be organized by these young women to address their needs.

The project has two field workers who will be happy to give you more information about the project or discuss other ways we might be of use to your group.

Call Lynn MacKinlay (who will be working particularly with young women), 424-2526, or Barbara Roberts, 425-6979.

If your organization has several branches, or a provincial office or newsletter, please pass on this information to them.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Lynn MacKinlay
Barbara Roberts

**Women's
Action
Coalition
of
Nova Scotia
is
planning
a
Founding
Convention
in
Halifax
April 11-12
424-2526**

Collins House should benefit from the people's fundraising — taxes

Jackie Barkley

On February 12, I attended a rally called to protest the closing of Collins House. Collins House, we had been told on the news, was to be closed because of a lack of need for its emergency shelter services.

Speakers at the rally pointed out, of course, that it's not the absence of need for emergency shelter, but the absence of sufficient money to serve that need which is what will result in the closing of Collins House.

Individuals who spoke forcefully pointed out the need for appropriate funding for services to cope with even the most basic amelioration of the abject poverty and hunger present in our community.

But some people also suggested that should the municipal and provincial governments graciously concede to fund agencies (in this case, Collins House), we should do our bit by undertaking systematic, supplementary fund-raising activities. And this is where I differ, fundamentally, and wish to plead the case for community groups and organizations not to do our bit by fund-raising. Why not?

In the past ten years, taking their lead from the Margaret Thatchers and Ronald Reagans, not-so-progressive conservative governments have been deluging us with propaganda about the deficit and the need for cutbacks in government (read social) services.

We are told it's time poor people, women and oppressed minorities redirect their efforts toward gaining the financial support of the broad community and the private sector.

But the "broad community" is us! It's the very people, poor, working class, and middle income people, whose paychecks are slashed by the level of taxation collected to fund the political and economic objectives of the private sector.

The working poor, single parents, trade unionists, and middle income families are already "giving at work", so to speak, and at far higher rates than the wealthy.

So we have concerned and progressive people who serve on the boards of essential service agencies spending time in pursuit of

exciting and imaginative fund-raising activities to extract the tax-deductible donations from the very people who already succeed in not paying the taxes needed to fund the essential services we're fund-raising for!

We're told to go to the "private sector" for money to pay for emergency housing, food banks, community health services, and community legal services.

But this is ludicrous. It's the private sector which lays us off and throws us on UIC in order to increase profit. It's the private sector which extorts money through speculative real estate and keeps the supply of housing low so they can make high rental profit.

Surely we have not bought the lie that the deficit is due to high government spending on the poor; not when we watch the federal and provincial governments donating our tax money to rescue their friends.

When we do fund-raising, are we not in practice accepting the ideological viewpoint that taxes should be collected for something other than paying for the services people need?

We can't possibly have the time and energy left to protest, organize, research, and demand rights and services when we spend our time tripping over each other selling tickets, hiring fund-raisers, baking cakes, and competing for charity bucks.

And all this activity is very welcome in government and economic seats of power, whether local or national. If we're so busy in our fundraising activity, our anger and our skills are very successfully diverted from mobilization for effective struggle.

My intention is not to suggest that progressive organizations and agencies should never organize any activities to raise money for promoting the fight against sexism, racism, poverty, and exploitation. By all means, we should dance, sing, eat, and share a sense of community and commitment.

But I believe we must stop diverting scarce time and energy in fund-raising for essential services. Rather, we must begin again to demand that our tax money be spent to meet our needs. And this

can only be done by political, educational, lobbying, mobilizing and organizational tasks — not bake sales and \$100 per plate dinners.

In a very funny, satirical monologue, Bette Midler sings,

"Women are the waitresses at the banquet of life." That's bad enough. Let not women (or anyone else, for that matter) become beggars at the banquet!

The money is there. We have a right to it. Let's organize to

demand it. Keep Collins House open.

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Jackie Barkley is a social worker who has been involved in various community organizations for about 15 years.



"I have been a resident of Collins House twice in the last two years. As a single mother, I have experienced homelessness. I have known what it is like to be evicted and homeless with two small children. I turned to Collins House and I found support and strength. I was given a chance, in a world where low-income women get very few

chances, to get back on my feet and resume a life with my children. Collins House is not just a shelter. It is a vital part of this confused society that we live in." Statement by Johanna Cromwell, MUMS, made at the public meeting February 12 to protest Collins House closing. (photo by Lori J. Meserve)

—Some facts about Collins House—

- In 1985 224 women and children were admitted to Collins House
- In 1986 379 women and children were admitted to Collins House
- In 1986 the average nightly occupancy was 95 percent
- In 1985 Collins House received 490 distress calls
- In 1986 Collins House received 439 distress calls
- In 1986 Collins House was unable to accommodate 262 women and children
- In 1986 50 percent of the families at Collins House were a woman and one child

- In 1986 Collins House conducted a weekly survey of rental accommodations advertised in the Mail Star. Out of an average of 400 accommodations only 20 - 30 of these units were affordable and/or available for families staying at Collins House.
- Provincial Shelter Allowance increased \$5 per family — less than a 2 percent increase
- In 1986 average rent increases in apartments were 5.4 percent
- In 1986 there has been a significant increase of families dependent on food banks (Information from the Collins House Committee)

A follow-up committee has been formed since the February 12 rally. Anyone interested in joining the committee, or getting more information on Collins House, and the struggle to keep it alive, contact Jenny Fearon, at 425-5477.

One voice for human rights and liberties

Black Women's Congress organizes in Metro

Elaine White

Black women in the metro area have united to form a chapter of the Congress of Black Women of Canada — the only such chapter in the Atlantic Provinces.

More than 40 women met on January 24, 1987 at the North End Library on Gottingen Street to form the Halifax-Dartmouth Metro Chapter of the Congress.

Chairperson, Elaine White, said the group's objectives include providing a means of bringing black women in Nova Scotia and Canada

together as one voice to achieve human rights and liberties for black women in the country.

Other objectives include providing opportunities to discuss issues which affect black women, their families and community, and planning and instituting educational programs within the communities.

Membership is open to all black women 16 years of age and over and the group also wants to extend its membership across the province by developing other chapters of the Congress.

Communication lines are extended to other local, national and international organizations whose aims and objectives are in keeping with the Congress.

Once the core group is established, the Congress will address such issues as education, housing, employment, health, and pensions, to name a few.

If you wish more information, please contact Elaine White at 469-7213 after 6 pm.

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Elaine White is the Chairperson of

the Black Women's Congress and has been involved with it since September.

She is a wife as well as a mother of two children. She's involved in community work and is a part-time student at the Maritime School of Social Work.

Her long-term goal is to have her own counselling service. Her main objective is that the Black Women's Congress will work this time.

She believes in starting small and then branching out.

Pandora

Pandora is published four times a year by Pandora Publishing Association, a non-profit organization of women in Nova Scotia.

Pandora is a newspaper produced by, for and about women. We actively seek participation on any level from women who do not have access to mainstream media. We welcome submissions — written and photo/graphic. We cannot accept material that is oppressive or intolerant. We are, however, committed to working with women to help them express their experience in a non-oppressive way. We encourage women to tell us when we do not meet our own standards. Not everything submitted can be included and we do reserve the right to edit, especially for length.

Our editorial guidelines continue to evolve. See Issue 1-4 (Summer, 1986) for more details and let us know if you have concerns about material that appears in the paper.

Co-ordinating Committee

Pat Dingle, Joanne Jefferson, Jeanne Thibodeau with Betty-Ann Lloyd

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Contributors:

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Please note that Pandora is changing their mailing address to: Pandora Publishing Assoc.

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Second Class Mail Registration No. 7122

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.

Cover:

Photos of Lulu Keating and Calhoun Alexander Busby Keating-Malay by Kathleen Flanagan. Photo of Lulu Keating on stage at Connie Kaldor concert by Lori J. Meserve. Father credit: Roddy Malay

Printed by Dartmouth Free Press Limited

Transitions make room for challenge and unity

Coordinating Committee

As we write this editorial, and we really mean "we", the seventh issue of **Pandora** is almost finished.

International Women's Day is nearly upon us, and we are trying to rationalize our decision to have a coordinating committee by saying it goes well with the theme of "Celebrating Our Diversity." Actually, the theme wasn't chosen when **Pandora** women made the decision to have a committee.

During numerous meetings, we discussed the various possibilities for taking on the coordinating task from Betty-Ann Lloyd: rotation of editors, one coordinator, a five-woman committee, no coordinator, letting **Pandora** die, etc.

Pat Dingle, Joanne Jefferson, and Jeanne Thibodeau (that's us!) bravely volunteered, with promises of help from other women.

The transition has not been easy; that's the fairest way to say it. The infamous 2 a.m. panic attacks have indeed lived on, and may have become even worse, since there are more of us to have them.

The committee has not been completely smooth. We've had disagreements, silences, difficult meetings, frustrations, and feelings of isolation. We've also had laughs, dancing, good food, hugs and efficient working sessions.

Our differences have provided us with both pain and pleasure. Working well as a committee requires recognizing our differences and drawing on them as a source of strength.

Despite any difficulties, we have pulled together to produce a good, interesting paper again, and there are still committed women working hard at copy, photo, design, advertising, administration, distribution, outreach, phone tree, group process, and production.

Unfortunately, many of these groups are made up of the same women. We thank them for staying with **Pandora** through what has proven to be a somewhat difficult, but finally rewarding and successful issue.

Some of our most experienced women have left **Pandora**, at least in body, to go off in different directions, pursuing different dreams. Our thanks go to these women for the work and inspiration they have provided us with in the past. We hope we can live up to their standards and examples.

Now, we need new help! We need women who are willing to make a certain commitment to **Pandora**, to offer whatever they can. Enthusiasm is the major prerequisite.

Pandora is now using desktop publishing technology to produce the paper, but we don't want women to be intimidated by this. We're all at different learning levels, and we can all learn from each other. It's a tremendously empowering process, and we offer lots of workshops.

We have regular meetings, every second Wednesday evening, at Veith House. These meetings are times when the whole **Pandora**

group gets together, so if you're thinking of joining us, it's a good opportunity to meet women and decide what areas you would be most interested in working on.

Pandora is evolving, and will continue to evolve. We attempt to reflect the community at its best, and challenge it at its less than best. Our editorial guidelines are still in place, and still developing.

One of the focal points of the paper, since it helps us provide a place for community discussion, is the letters page. We're excited that so many women are writing. We have decided, as a result of several anonymous letters arriving in our mailbox, at least two women from **Pandora** need to know writers' names, even if letters or articles are published anonymously.

Legal liability is one reason for this policy, as is a sense of commitment and responsibility to our readers. One of the things **Pandora** should not be is a forum for the venting of personal disagreements.

An exciting new part of **Pandora** for this issue is the Literary Supplement. Women have sent us prose and poetry on a variety of topics, from a variety of lifestyles and perspectives. We will be

working on a Photography Supplement for the next issue, so we hope women will respond.

As you will see in the following pages, **Pandora** is surviving quite well. We have received articles from women on topics important to the community, humorous opinions, challenging letters, and interesting personalities.

The paper is in good shape financially. We are receiving subscriptions daily, but we'd like to remind women to fill out the forms we have inserted. Renew, and buy a friend a subscription!

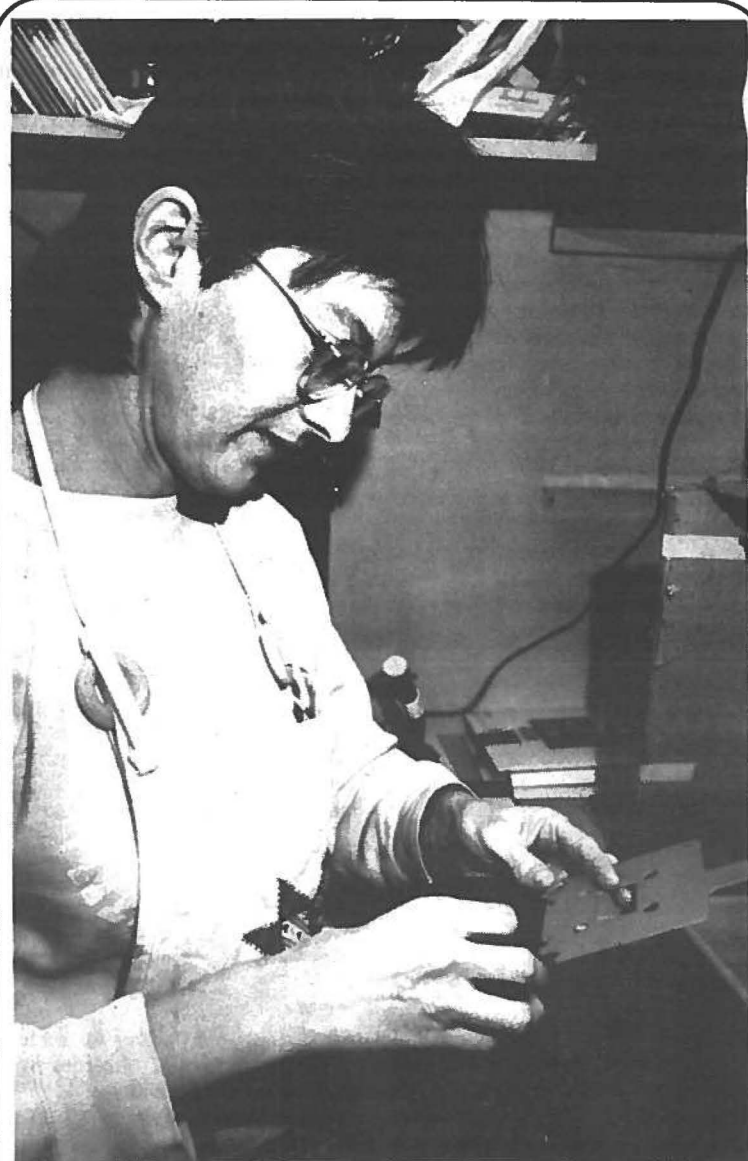
Pandora would like to wish everyone a happy International Women's Day. Thank you to all our subscribers and supporters for their help in providing the community with a great paper.

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Pat Dingle is presently struggling with the perils of full-time employment.

Joanne Jefferson is, conversely, struggling with the perils of freelancing, and is appreciating her partner's support.

Jeanne Thibodeau is enjoying her new apartment, her job, and her passion for paperclips.



Sara avMaat works in her little darkroom, attempting to keep the cats out. Sara is one of many women who bring specific skills to **Pandora**. As a photographer, and coordinator of the photo group, Sara makes sure that all the women in the photo group are busy taking pictures to go with the stories the copy group has decided will be in an issue. Not all women need to have such definite skills when they come to **Pandora**, though. Many of us have learned as we've gone, picking up design knowledge, editing tools, computer skills, etc. Come join us if you're interested. (Photo by Lori J. Meserve)

Letters

Elitism, classism labels shouldn't be used loosely

Pandora:

The question of middle class privilege raised by Darl Wood in the last issue of Pandora is one I have been grappling with for as long as I have been thinking about social issues. Although Darl does not define middle class, she does list a number of attributes.

To turn this around, I assume this means she has the opposite set of attributes for membership in the "lower" class. Thus, a "lower" class person would be ugly, unable to express her thoughts in an understandable fashion, wear ratty clothes, slouch, have no money, no power, no employment (or at best "shit" employment such as cleaning toilets), no positive attitudes about anything, no opportunities for advancement in job or education, and, it seems, must belong to certain (unspecified) types of spirituality groups.

Although I exaggerate, Darl's perception of what it is to be poor strikes me as patronizing and insulting to the "lower" class. By some of these same criteria, Darl herself would not fit, although she places herself there.

Because Darl's piece seems to me to be very personal, I respond in a personal way. Where do I fit on the class lines? I dropped out of high school at age 16, was married at age 17 in an effort to escape a destructive (poor working class) home environment, had a child when I was just barely 18, got divorced when I was 20. I worked at "shit" jobs until I took a secretarial course, paid for by Canada Employment. I continued to work at slightly higher level jobs, while being a single parent and paying day care, until at around age 26, I learned of a program that might allow me to go to university. To qualify for this program, I had to be so "privileged" as to be a high school dropout and a single parent living below the poverty line.

After a couple of years, I also dropped out of university since it seemed to be more intent on teaching students to fit into the system than to think about the system. It did, however, give me a connection which allowed me the "privilege" of getting a job working nights and weekends for a social service agency. This job, although it did manage to raise my income to just above the poverty line, didn't provide me with any great benefits. Some people were impressed because the work I was doing was "socially useful".

As time went on, I met and moved in with a doctor. This did improve my standard of living considerably, but did not provide me with any greater security. We are all familiar with women who, when they leave their doctor or lawyer husbands, suddenly find themselves very poor indeed. What belongs to one's partner is not one's own, no matter how generously it may be shared. What is mine goes with me if I go, and my partner's income doesn't. As a lesbian, I have even less security

in such a partnership.

Now, this doctor had the "privilege" of going to university for seven or eight years, of working 100 or more hours a week during internship, and is at other people's beck and call 24 hours most days. She does not have the privilege of going on unemployment as many of the rest of us do; or of using unemployment as a salary to keep us housed and fed while we do other political work. This doctor also gives me, and other women, the privilege of going to a feminist physician, a rare privilege indeed, and one which is covered by MSI.

I don't deny that elitism and classism exist in the women's movement. I do think, however, that we need to be careful who we throw those labels at. It is quite possible that I am able to express myself well for reasons other than being middle class, just as Darl can. And it is possible that my strength and ability and determination to survive come from having survived, not from having been privileged, and certainly not from seeing myself as a victim.

Megan Ardyche

Realistic solutions necessary for obvious divisions

Pandora

Thank you for publishing Darl Wood's thought-provoking article (Privilege silences poor womyn) in your last issue. It contains a lot of pertinent information. Unfortunately, it was possible to read the article as an accusation on privileged women rather than one to provoke action and change. If one chose to interpret it as "pointing the finger" that impact could, perhaps, be multiplied by the ironic coincidence of having advertisements for a "stress reduction centre" and expensive legal services on the same page.

Perhaps it was not the best way to present the information, and maybe in the future, Pandora could encourage Darl and its readers to present some realistic and productive solutions to the obvious divisions that exist within the women's community. There are a lot of things we have to work on, and this includes listening to and respecting each other's points of view.

Above all, it's crucial that women become a unified group. It may call for compromise and a lot of mutual understanding, but not necessarily more than we can handle. Change is slow but we have the pieces. Let's put them together.

**In sisterhood,
Megan & Zab**

We all work hard but rewards vary with privilege

Pandora:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Megan Ardyche's letter in this same edition. First, I want to thank Megan for her letter and for being so candid about her life and experiences and, of

course, for her comments on my last article in Pandora. I read her letter very thoughtfully and with care. However, my assessment of class behaviour and attitudes stand as is, based on both my own intellectual, emotional, and spiritual observations as well as the overwhelming response from womyn who have expressed to me in person similar thoughts and experiences.

There seems to be an underlying assumption that I see all poor womyn as victims. Although I agree all poor womyn have been victimized (or they wouldn't be poor), I have never in any way suggested it followed that they choose to or do remain in their situation. I am not a victim. All I am trying to say is — here are some very real ways womyn of privilege in the womyn's movement, by their attitudes and actions, are making the battle very hard. Because I point out behaviour patterns and attitudes of middle class womyn, it does not logically follow that poor womyn's lives are the antithesis of that assumption.

I strongly suspect the reaction from womyn of privilege would have been significantly different had I challenged racism, sexism and heterosexism by saying: "Here are the ways sexist attitudes and behaviours affect me as a womyn and womyn in general in society," or, were I a womyn of colour had I said, "Here are the ways racism and bigotry affect me and here's how you oppress me and womyn of colour in your movement," or, as a lesbian (which I am very proud and open to proclaim and take the risks in doing so), "Here are the ways I am being oppressed by heterosexual womyn and here is how heterosexist behavior and

attitudes affect me and all womyn in general."

We all work hard in one capacity or another but we certainly don't all start from the same economic basis nor are the rewards for our labours the same. I appreciate there are sincere womyn out there who do share their privileges. One need only take personal offense if a sensitive nerve has been exposed.

Allow me to quote the FURIES, from a collection of their essays called Class and Feminism (Diana Press, 1974), "The issue is how will we eliminate the cause of the divisions — classist behavior, class power, and class privilege — not how to shut up those who are bringing the problems out of the closet... [It is] not divisive because those on the short end of the stick begin to scream."

Darl Wood

Deveric catalogue available free from metro office

Pandora:

Just a short note to express our appreciation for the article in the last issue on Women in the Revolution (Nicaragua) which included a list of resources that we have here at Deveric.

It is encouraging when we see these acts of solidarity expressed by local women. Thanks again.

If your readers would be interested in a FREE copy of our 1987 catalogue of resources, they can give us a call at 429-1370 or 429-1378. We welcome people to drop by the centre at 1649 Barrington Street and borrow our resources or preview some of the A/V material.

Keep up the good work. We look forward to receiving each issue.

**In solidarity
Marion White
Verda Rochon**

We need to set priorities based on our needs, choices

Pandora:

I recently had the opportunity to hear Suzanne Hewlett, author of the book, *A Lesser Life*, speak about her life-long involvement in the feminist movement. She spoke about family and children having been seen as part of the problem as oppressors, and how neither were included in any of "our" subsequent solutions to that oppression.

She felt that the original priorities were to clone the male image, and in doing so we left behind choices in our lives. The choice to have a family life over a career is very often looked down upon, or very difficult because of the lack of support services, reasonable rates for day care, standard and adequate maternity leaves of absence, work share programs, etc.

Hewlett quotes that only seven in 100 women have a career and a family in appropriate balance throughout their adult life, while (approximately) 80 per cent of the male population have been able to fully enjoy both.

Hewlett also has statistics on the number of women who are employed in stereotypical jobs (kitchens, laundry, waiting tables) as compared to the number of women who are well-educated and in the earnings bracket of some \$30,000 per year. It appears we have a "pink collared majority" whose need for wage parity and family support services are largely unmet.

I agree with Hewlett's call for women to unite to meet the needs of all women, to set new priorities and to set them by the needs women have and the choices we want to make.

D. Pettipas

Photo Supplement



photo by Sara avMaat

This is the last call for women to send their b&w or color prints for Pandora's photo supplement.

Deadline April 1, 1987

Pandora, Box 1209, North Postal Station, Halifax B3K 5H4

REALW rumblings... doors creak open again

Joan Riggs

At last, something is happening in Ottawa that will affect all women. Recently it was announced that Secretary of State would not be funding REALW. On the face of the denial of their \$1 million request, we all drew a collective sigh of relief and went our merry ways, sensing that the Women's Programme of Secretary of State was safe and hadn't been manipulated (they call it lobbying up here) into financing an anti-woman, anti-choice organization. Yet, the rumblings have begun again and your Ottawa sisters are worried and need help.

In fact, when David Crombie, the Minister for Secretary of State, said he would not provide them with funding, he did not mean forever. He has opened a number of doors for them to walk into:

1. He, along with a committee, will evaluate the mandate of the Programme which presently exists to promote equality for women. REALW are pushing for this mandate to encompass them. In effect, this would make the programme potentially open to any women's group, regardless of whether they support women or not.

2. He explained to REALW that ongoing funding cannot be given to groups who have not yet received project funding from Secretary of State.

So who are these women and why are feminists so upset about them? Not because they have a differing point of view from us, but because they actively seek to annihilate the progress that has been made by women in the past 20 years. They do not support uni-

versal day care, the Charter of Rights, equal pay for work of equal value, access to contraception, divorce, and homosexuality.

Many of their platforms are based on half-truths and their written attacks, particularly on lesbians, have been nothing short of hate literature. Some of their viewpoints include:

•Against homosexuality: They view homosexuality as a psychosexual disorder. Homosexuals are pedophiles, seduce the young, practice sexual perversions including sadomasochism and bestiality, and undermine the moral fabric of society.

**What is
REALW,
really...**

ety. There is no mention of the fact that over 95% of sexual assaults against children are by heterosexual men on girl children; that the American Psychiatric Association has removed homosexuality from any psychological disorder list; or that the above mentioned perversions have been promoted by the heterosexual pornography industry.

•Against universal day care: They view it as forcing women to put their children in day care, instead of giving women the option to use public child care. They view day care as an unhealthy form of child care. Instead, they feel that if women had the option, they would all want to marry, have children, and stay at home to raise their children.

•Against equal pay for work of

equal value: The idea is to ensure that the value of work is not determined by sex, but by skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. They propose instead that the value of our work be based on such things as marital status. Thus the woman with no wedding band and three children doing the same skill job as a man recently married is just plain out of luck. Again, they are imposing a rigid nuclear family structure.

•Against divorce: Instead they would prefer that the federal government foot the bill for counselling the family. This includes the family comprised of batterer, battered wife, and abused children ... sexual abuser, rape victim, and incest victim. These crimes, in their view, have been brought on by feminism.

They have also identified divorce as the main cause of the feminization of poverty. They obviously did not notice the world economic recession, jobs become redundant due to increased technology in the workplace, and the historical ghettoizing of women workers into low-paying sex-stereo-typed jobs.

•Against the Charter of Rights: They interpret equality under the law to mean elimination of maternity leave or compulsory sex integration for team sports. To date, the Charter has not meant that anything be compulsory, but rather that the option be open to include women. They also feel that the Charter of Rights will deny women our "special rights" like the opportunity to collect child support. Yes, these are the same child support payments that many of us

Send this letter...

Honourable David Crombie
Minister for Secretary of State
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 0A6

Dear Mr. Crombie,

I am aware of a growing campaign on the part of R.E.A.L. Women and others to insist on your government's cutting back on funding to feminist organizations in the country.

I am also aware that radical feminists and lesbians have come particularly under attack. Not only the work that they have done, but also their personal characters have been called into question.

I wish to express my concern over the threat to funding to feminist organizations, and over the objections expressed that radical feminists and lesbians form a part of these sometimes funded organizations.

Yes, women have been radical, in that radical change is needed. How can one say differently, as long as women are being beaten, raped, and killed? The situation of women in this country is still deplorable, and those women providing the support at these centres know better than anyone how much damage is being done.

And yes, many of the radical feminists are lesbians. Lesbians have always cared about the situation of women, and have worked hard to set up this network of services. I am aware of attitudes in this country that promote the persecution of lesbians, and am familiar with the role that REALW take in this form of discrimination.

If the government is interested in human rights for all of its citizens, I trust it will not overlook the danger of the narrow-mindedness expressed by the REALW toward lesbians, and continue to ensure that there is no government funding behind their organization. To fund the REALW would be to encourage further persecution of individuals who have been working to benefit this country.

I commend the government for acting ethically and intelligently on these issues by refusing funding to REALW and hope that it will continue to do so. Radical feminists and lesbians may be in the minority in this country, but they are carrying a double load. I am calling for full funding for feminist organizations and the inclusion of lesbians in the Human Rights Code at all levels of government.

Sincerely,

(Adapted from Lesbian Amazons)

are "privileged" to receive and for which 75% of all men default on.

•Against abortion: They view a fetus as an unborn child, a human being that has the same human rights as any other human. Interestingly enough, their keen interest in maintaining and nurturing this "human life" does not extend to after birth. Then it is the sole responsibility of the family.

•Against contraception: They believe that women will have more sex outside marriage if they know about contraception. They truly believe that if women were not informed, then no one would want to have sex until after they were married. However, the incidence doesn't necessarily change ... but the safety factor does.

Many of the recommendations put forward by REALW are not new to feminists. We have presented some of these ideas and fought hard for many changes and yet they have presented themselves as the saviour of the woman at home, as the first group to discuss issues like:

•Women should have the choice to remain at home and raise their children. The international organization, Wages for Housework, has been actively lobbying since the early 1970s for women to be financially recognized for the work they do at home. The Quebec Advisory Council on the Status of Women estimated that women's work in the home is equal to 50% of the Gross National Product (all the goods and services produced in Canada). The Canadian Advisory Committee of the Status of Women, in 1978, produced a report looking at the needs of women at home and proposed concrete legislative changes to make it economically viable for women to stay at home should they choose to.

•The batterer should be the person who leaves the family home and the women and children should

remain. Since 1970, when Erin Pizzey introduced this idea in Britain, it has been one of the most sought after demands. However, even when it has been granted, men often do not respect restraining orders.

•That both spouses benefit equally from accumulated assets and that pension benefits continue after a marriage breakdown. Studies done by Monica Townsend and Louise Delude have produced various alternatives to insure that these things occur. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women have lobbied heavily for these two demands.

•Increased flexibility at the workplace ... flexible hours, benefits for part-time employees, and job sharing. These have not only been MAJOR issues that the women's movement has fought hard for, but also that women in the labour movement have fought hard to achieve, and have been successful in many cases.

REALW are dangerous. They do not create programs nor do they support women. They spend their time preparing hate literature against individual feminists and women's organizations and actively lobby for the dismantling of the many programs that concretely support women today.

If they care so much for women, particularly women at home, then where were they when the feminist movement was out fighting for mother's allowance cheques to not be indexed? Why aren't they creating innovative programs that can concretely assist mothers to stay at home and still get the support and nurturing they need as human beings? After all, their platform is to promote human rights, and unless I'm mistaken, women are still human beings ... with equal rights to the same things as all other human beings. Right?

NATO base threatens lifestyle

Innu women look for support

Pandora:

I am a politically active Innu woman. I want to inform people about the social impact of the Nato Base at Goose Bay on the Innu people, especially the woman, of Sheshatshit, Labrador.

Thirteen Innu single women between the ages of 16 and 26 have had babies born to military men and are left alone to support their children without receiving any financial support from the fathers. They must raise the children by themselves and are assisted through Social Services. Half the time, parents and relatives of the women have adopted the children because they themselves have no money and no jobs.

The single Innu women are being taken advantage of because the Military guys just leave and go home. The children are born half-breed, having American, German, and English blood. As teens, the children will want to know who their fathers are. The Innu do not like the Military guys taking advantage of their daughters, since they are then left to support their daughters as well as their children.

I am concerned about the health effects on the people of the area and especially on young women of child-bearing age from low-level flying aircraft and radar installations necessary to guide them.

There have been numerous studies done showing that the disturbance of the atmosphere from low-level flying aircraft and the radiation from the radar is dangerous to the health of the people. It can cause such possible health problems (depending on the amount of exposure) as increased miscarriages; chromosome breaks resulting in birth defects; increase in heart disease, leukemia, and cataracts; problems that stem from irradiation to the central

nervous system such as migraine headaches, depression, chronic insomnia, loss of memory and resulting work and personal problems.

Although there is a minimal health study being done, I am concerned that the decision will go ahead with the NATO Base before even that is complete. The only research that the Newfoundland government has commissioned is a study on the impact of military jet noise on human health. This three-person study was established by the Canadian Public Health Association. The interim report, released on July 25, 1986, doesn't include research on social impact as well as the health impact from sonic booms.

I feel that the decision will not be fair unless a complete final report has been finished. I am concerned that the Innu have not and will not be properly informed of the possible dangers to the health from such a base and will, therefore, make a misinformed decision. They will become unknowing victims of the effects of this base.

You can help by: taking part in the letter-writing campaign to NATO countries or to the Minister of National Defence; presenting your views or making resolutions at your meetings about stopping the NATO Base from being stationed in Goose Bay, Labrador, writing to me at R:205 Squires Residence, Paton College, M.U.N., St. John's, Nfld., A1B 3P7.

Thank you,
Cecilia Rich

(Note: A local group which may be contacted for more information about this issue is Nova Scotians in Solidarity with Native Peoples at 435-3958 (Hannah Cowan) or 423-2339 (Alan Surovel). There is also a video tape and study guide available at Deveric.)

Come up and see me sometime

Maverick Mother home at last!

Betty Peterson

It is winter solstice on my daughter's farm down east in Maine. Through my treetop window, my eyes follow swiftly-moving lead-grey clouds from horizon to horizon, over the skyline of the Blue Mountains to the north. The dull glare of ice from every tree and field is enough to keep me storm-stayed for a day of reflection...

My daughter's house... from all sides are the colourful festive signs, ancient and pagan every one, of a Swedish Christmas. Thoughts fly to holidays at an earlier time, when my own children were the ages of my two little grandsons colouring at my feet. Am I that mother, or the daughter, or grandmother? Where is my place today? And what is my role?

All this seems a far cry from my new little space in the heart of the Citadel City. There, in the Halifax Women's Housing Co-op, I have moved to a sunny and — to me — spacious apartment, with room for a long-cherished dream, an office. Files on the women's community, peace activities, and Native concerns crowd around me. My bedroom now is a place of rest and dreaming and no longer a *nightmare of relentless activity*. Over the last six months, hundreds of trips to my third floor walk-up, with a lot of help from my friends, have completed my move-in. Home at last!

But not so easy. There have been questions:

—Can a woman of the outdoors make peace with a busy neighbourhood of day and night comings and goings? Yes, indeed; and through my windows I can see harbour lights, the Citadel, the different races, cultures and lifestyles around me. I feel the pulse of the city and respond fully to the movement of new life.

—Can a fiercely independent and very private person survive in a women's co-op, where living together requires more meetings, group process, consensus, co-operative actions, and rolling up sleeves to fence paint, shovel snow, and make repairs? Who needs all this added to an already over-filled life? But yes, such group effort really works, it builds community; privacy is respected above all. It is a mutually supportive relationship that I have long sought and have now found with great satisfaction.

—Will my lifestyle be accepted and respected? After all, I do wear lipstick and a bra, as I warned early on, tongue in cheek. And, in contrast to others, I am a middle class widow, living on pension and small interest income. Yes, we are each accepted for who we are and where we come from. We share what we have and what we bring to the effort. And I have so much to learn from their class and political consciousness; from their struggles with job-hunting; with finding acceptance and love. For it is not all happiness and harmony; one is deeply aware of loneli-

ness, and frustration, and the joy/pain that we all feel at times.

—And what can I bring to the Co-op effort? I, a woman who is at least 35 years older than anyone else around me? How will I be accepted? Not for nothing did I maintain from the beginning that I would not move in "trailing clouds of wisdom", as the experienced older woman. Rather, I have come as a growing, learning, experimental human being, who is open to life as is everyone else; I just happen to have experienced more years of that life.

—Can I continue to learn as a new door opens? I find myself reflecting on my 35 years of commitment to my husband: wonderful years which I would not exchange for anything. He was truly a "woman's man" in his support and encouragement and TLC. Even so, for years it was always a see-saw in my head between being a supermom with family and community responsibilities and an "uppity" woman with several demanding jobs. Today, I regret that we did not know enough to face directly and squarely equal division of labour and responsibility; for too long I struggled with my load of guilt and frustration, even resentment, so recently eased. I was a feminist, ahead of my time. Yes, I have learned. **Liberation!**

As well, I have never been the "typical" wife and mother. I was not sure what my problem was. Perhaps early childhood traumas and losses had forever made me the outsider, the rebel, the misfit, the maverick, the gadfly, the

seeker and never the finder, so I thought. Nor to this day, as I write, am I the traditional grandmother, not even to my little Joshua and Gabriel. Should I just be a-rockin' and a-knitting, instead of teaching them stars and the natural world and Native lore and mysterious but essential serendipity?

Who am I? A stereotype in a box, or a living continuum? I am a developing "woman in process", who has lived deeply in some joy and much pain, who has known grievous loss as well as glorious fulfillment. I have accepted that as part of life's learning and I would not change it.

Today in this woman's community, though it struggles and is far from perfect, I continue to learn from those around me and from my inner self. I am discovering that fierce independence and rigid self-discipline can be confining and empty; I find that it is fun to relax and laugh and "waste time". I feel alive as a woman in warm and expressive ways that I have never known before. I thank the Women's Housing Co-op and others for that gift.

These thoughts rise to the surface as an attempt to sort out my responses to my new life in this beginning New Year. I have just read recent *Pandora* articles portraying heart-warming relationships between several mothers and daughters, mothers who try to understand their daughters' experimental lives. For me, it has always been the reverse: daughter and son trying to come to terms with Maverick Mother.



photo by Sara avMaat

Betty Peterson relaxes amidst her green friends

My lovely daughter, a wife and mother who is deeply into Transcendental Meditation, music, dance and drama, today has been sharing new awareness of women's ways and weavings. She has listened to these thoughts on my new directions in personal and social change. She accepts me as more than mother: —as human being and friend. It has been a new home-coming for me, here in Maine, and in the Halifax community.

From early childhood I have repeated that old saying from my Pennsylvania Deutsch forebears: "Too soon old and too late smart". But it is never too late to learn, and I aim to prove that saying false! With a little help from my friends.

~~~~~  
Betty Pete is sorting out her various lives and files in peace, environment, social justice, and women's issues. She invites any and all to "come up and see me sometime" in her rooms with a view.

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## Apples prove risky investment

# Conflict of interest revealed

Judith Meyrick

In the beginning, god created Adam, or so the story goes. And after Adam came Eve, a disobedient and wilful person whose lack of self-discipline had cataclysmic and permanent consequences for the millions of poor wretches who came after her. The human race has been marked by sin, ravaged by guilt, stigmatized, or so the story goes, all because of an apple.

The question that arises from all this is: what was so important about those particular apples? Did god need them to make divine applesauce? Would his deep-dish apple pie be found wanting without them? What was it that made THAT tree so special? This story has always lacked a certain logic, for the consequences of eating an afternoon snack seem to be a trifle extreme, somewhat out of proportion to the magnitude of the crime (appletheft).

So it is quite possible that the original transcriber of that incident got the facts wrong, or perhaps omitted certain key events. And given that the story as it has been passed through the ages does not make a whole lot of sense, it would seem that there are other scenarios which were not only possible, but perhaps more probable. In fact, it is my personal belief that god had a vested interest in Eve eating that apple, and I think that the story probably went much more like this.

Firstly, Paradise was most prolific in the fruit tree department, so Eve and Adam were not at all

put out by the request that they not eat apples from one particular tree. The only cause for concern was that, to the uninitiated, apple trees look fairly all the same, and mistakes can be made. So Eve decided to put a sign on the tree to clearly identify it.

Eve and Adam continued romping happily through the garden of Eden, beginning the human race in a state of happiness and perfection. Meanwhile, god was walking through paradise, contemplating the future, looking forward to countless years of being needed, of providing support to the human race through the hard time ahead; times such as wars, famine, pestilence, plagues, and poverty, when he came upon a tree bearing a sign which read: "God's Apples — Please Do Not Eat".

God was downright distraught when he saw this. His projections of the future were based solidly on the premise that "Original Sin" would mar the innocence and perfection of this infant human race.

Suddenly, his entire future was at risk. His vision of himself as the mainstay of countless generations to come was now threatened by perfection. He was faced with eternal boredom, of infinite years of watching the human race blossom and grow in a state of grace and happiness. Nothing for him to

do! Forever! Gone was the anticipation of the odd wondrous miracle, the excitement of butting heads with Lucifer, of the battle for souls. Souls which would spend their immortality adoring him, and who would generally treat him with adulation and worship.

Now, god didn't perceive himself as a seven-day wonder. A day

believe that Lucifer spent his time disguised as a poisonous snake hanging round apple trees, waiting to tempt hapless apple pickers. To a skeptic such as myself, this scene has the smell of a setup.

It has been presented to us that Eve stood and chatted with a snake and that this snake (Lucifer in disguise) managed to convince Eve to pick the Forbidden Fruit. And rumour has it that she then used her feminine wiles to seduce Adam into eating the apple. This has always been a particularly weak link. After all,

both Adam and Eve were supposed to be romping around in a state of innocence. Why, suddenly, would Eve become manipulative and seductive over an apple? Just how gullible does this storyteller think we are?

It is my view that Eve had nothing to do with Adam biting into this wretched apple. After all, she had no vested interest in that tree. There were tons of apple trees in Eden, and it has never been proven by any writings since that Eve even liked apples.

So, if it wasn't Eve who convinced Adam to commit this heinous crime, we have to look further afield to find out who else had a stake in these two humans falling from grace.

And it seems that we don't have to look far. There are not too

many bodies in the story so far, and the snake theory has to be discounted as just plain improbable, so who does this leave? That's right, the big "G" himself!

Driven by fear of unemployment, and by a need to be needed, god had masterminded the entire apple scam.

It was he who lured Adam under the tree, who made small talk while nonchalantly picking a couple of apples to "stave off hunger", and it was he who watched Adam take a bit.

Poor Eve! She must have been beside herself over the events that followed the Infamous Biting. And history has not been kind to those of the same sex who came after.

Scorned and ridiculed, the female sex since Eden has been viewed as morally inferior.

Well, it is now time to set the record straight. Adam ate the damned apple, and Eve wasn't even around at the time!

There is a fundamental question raised by all of this. What was the original sin? Was it really the eating of the apple, or was it the deception involved in staging this eating? And let's not ignore the resulting coverup which set the political foundations for future generations. Or the fact that fifty percent of the world's population was successfully rendered inconsequential and frivolous!

Perhaps we need to request access to any existing tapes of those events so we can expose the coverup for what it was. Edengate!

**Driven by fear of unemployment, and by a need to be needed, god had masterminded the entire apple scam.**

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# Motherhood key to secret connection

Sandy Greenberg and Rebecca Jordan are elderly prima gravidas, first-time birth mothers over 35.

Sandy sings with Clearing By Noon (a four-woman Halifax group) and clowns with Rose Vaughan as half of 'Rosie and Sora.' She had Lise Evangeline Cormier on September 20, 1986. Lise's father, Thomas Cormier, studies acting and singing.

Rebecca is doing a master's degree in education and works with the International Education Centre at St. Mary's University. Joel McReynolds Jordan was born September 17, 1986. Father Ted Jordan is a music teacher.

Unfortunately, Rebecca and Joel missed the photo session with Kathleen Flanagan, but they arrived in time to talk with Betty-Ann Lloyd, Sandy and Lise about the experience of being an "older mother."

**Betty-Ann.** Why did you wait so long?

**Sandy.** I couldn't find a man who wanted to have kids with me, that's why I waited so long! When I finally got involved with somebody that wanted to have a baby, we just said, "Well, what are we waiting for?" and it happened really fast.

**BA.** Did you ever think of having a baby without having the right man around?

**S.** Yes, I thought about it and rejected it because it's so much work. I would be a single mother on welfare, struggling, like I see a lot of my friends struggle, and I just didn't want to take it on. There's no guarantee of the future, but at least I'm starting off with some optimism that I'm going to have somebody to share this with, somebody who is as much in love with her as I am.

**Rebecca.** I think a big difference for us was going to St. Vincent [in the Caribbean] and being in a place where children are not considered responsibilities, they're just part of everything. It was being there for a period of time that made us think that, yeah, children are more important than

we realized. It's like, you've gone about as far as you can go in terms of developing some part of yourself and then you need this other challenge.

**BA.** What's it like being a 37-year-old woman walking down the street with a baby — as compared to being a 37-year-old woman on her own on the street?

**R.** People open doors for you. They give you special little smiles. When I see other mothers looking at me with that little smile, I get this sense of being connected to something that's really kind of bigger. I didn't realize this secret society was out there. It's no big deal, but yet, on

**I got quite  
pissed off  
when I read  
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whatever  
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word is...**

the other hand, it is — you're also doing this thing that's been done — belonging.

You know, I can see a point in my life when I might have considered that that diminished me, that it just made me a Mother. I don't care about that now, it's not threatening to my identity. Maybe that's a nice thing about being an elderly prima gravida!

**S.** Right from when I was pregnant, I got a lot more attention, but nice attention. From both men and women. They know what it's like to be pregnant or have a pregnant wife, and they know what it's like to go through the birth and they know what the miracle of that feeling is and they know all the

hardships and they know about staying up at night. They look at you, they know all that stuff and they respond. It gives me a sense of being legitimized, you know.

**BA.** What do you think would have been different if you were 27 or 17 instead of 37?

**S.** Right now, I'm not married and, even at 37, it was hard for my family to accept that. But it would have been way harder at 27 and it would have been impossible at 17. We're talking about all the social approbations we're getting now which make it easier, which make it nicer. We would have gotten the exact opposite which would have made it harder, made it awful.

**R.** At 27, it would have been a really lonely thing that I would have not done very well, I'm sure. I would have been in Dallas, Texas, and the whole mentality would have been different — even though I was in a relationship with the same person all those years. But back then we weren't that committed to each other. That took a while to grow. Plus Dallas is not a place you know people in the same way that you do here.

**BA.** What about the fears the medical profession has. Were you worried about having a baby at 37?

**S.** No. I read all the stuff. They just said it was harder. I couldn't find anything to be scared about in particular and I certainly don't feel old. I got quite pissed off when I read I was considered an elderly whatever that ridiculous word is...

**R.** Prima gravida.

**S.** Prima gravida. Because, then I started to feel bad and thought, "Oh no, I'm an old lady. What am I doing having a baby?" I had a long, hard labor and my cervix wasn't dilating and, afterwards, I thought, well, you know, it makes sense because I'm so old — and yet my friend Theresa, who was the same age as me, had her baby in five hours.

**BA.** And I had a baby 10 years earlier and I had the same problem.

**S.** And Rebecca went five or six hours. The main problem that I see is the risk of mongolism and the

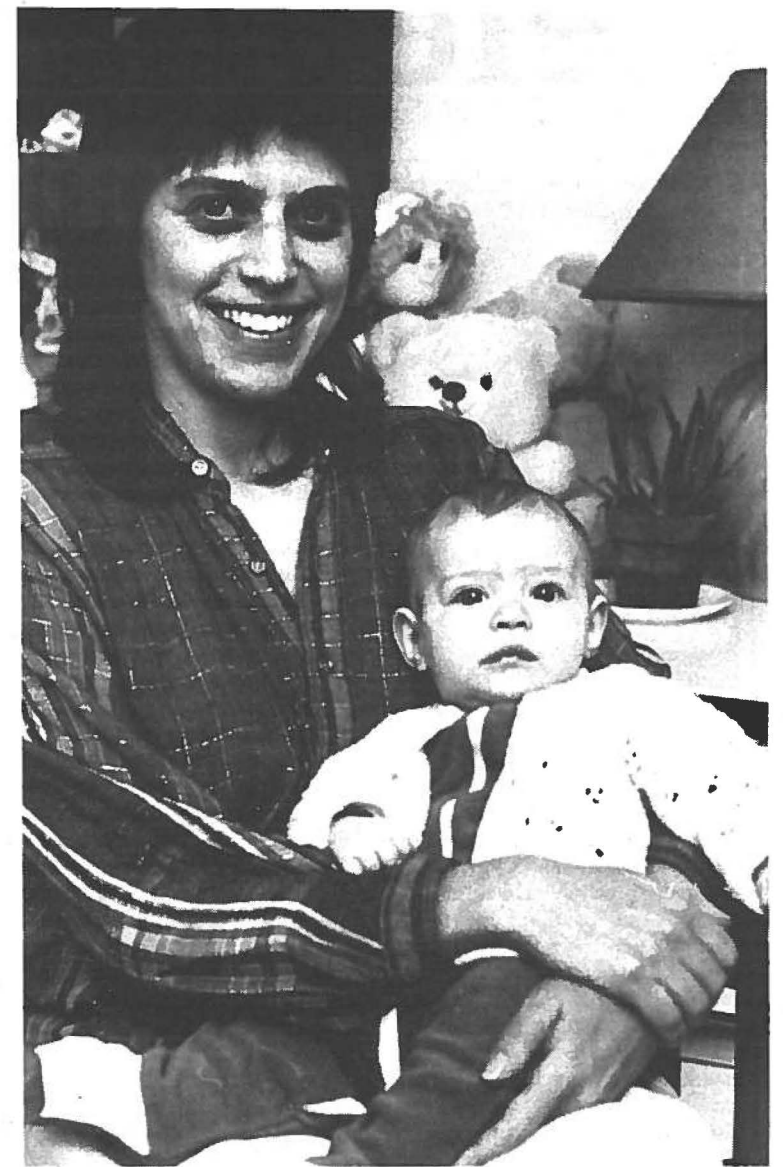


photo by Kathleen Flanagan

Sandy Greenberg and Lise Cormier

moral dilemma that that puts you in. We have a chance of finding out ahead of time and then have to decide whether to have an abortion. And that's one reason why, if I'm going to have another one, I want to have it soon because the risk is less. I won't be as likely to have to face that situation.

**R.** The amniocentesis was the hardest thing in the whole pregnancy. It was a hard decision to make, whether to do it or not. I couldn't deal with thinking about possible problems until the time came.

**S.** Next time I'm going to try to get a test that's done at 10 weeks. You can't get it here yet, you get it in the States. So then if you decide to have an abortion, you're

not having a saline abortion at 20 weeks.

**BA.** Do you have any advice for 37-year old women who want to get pregnant?

**R.** My advice is to have help — you may have enough money, or some sort of ability, to arrange something where being a mother is not something you're doing full time. Ted's gone all morning, all afternoon and three nights a week up until 9 o'clock and there was no way I could do it alone all that time and feel good about it.

Once I physically had some energy, it was just incredible to be with the baby and do all this neat stuff in the morning and then in the afternoon for him to go somewhere else and for me to get a chance to use my brain. October and November was the best work I've done on my thesis, period!

**S.** I think having put all that time and energy into paying my dues in my chosen career and getting to a level of competency before having her is great. Now if I get a job, I can just go do it and come home. I'm not spending hours practicing.

And, if you can, have somebody to do it with. It doesn't have to be the baby's father — just someone to share it with. I'm so lucky that I can stay home with her. And I'm so lucky that Thomas is around during the day so I have lots of relief and backup and, you know, if I really want to go out or need to go out to work, I can. And if I'm strung out or I just want to do something else, or he wants to see her, then he takes her.

I wouldn't have missed it for anything!

~~~~~  
Betty-Ann Lloyd is a Halifax mother who was a middle-aged prima gravida at 27.



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Dr. Leah Nomm

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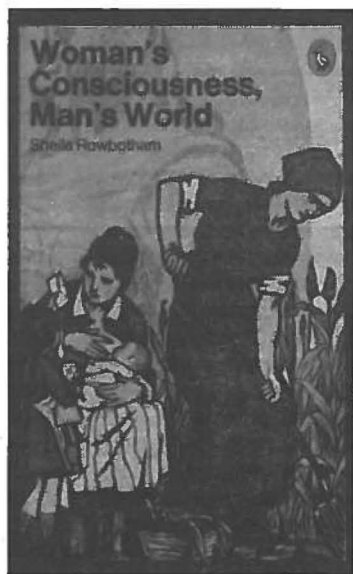


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Celebrating Diversity —



"...In order to create an alternative an oppressed group must at once shatter the self-reflecting world which encircles it and, at the same time, project its own image into history. In order to discover its own identity as distinct from that of the oppressor it has to become visible to itself. All revolutionary movements create their own ways of seeing. But this is a result of great labour. People who are without names, who do not know themselves, who have no culture, experience a kind of paralysis of consciousness. The first step is to connect and learn to trust one another..."

Sheila Rowbotham, *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World*; p.27.

"...Much as the women's movement of the late Sixties and early Seventies had its roots in the earlier civil rights struggle and the New Left, both the increasing number of women who define ourselves as Jewish feminists and our growing activism against anti-Semitism within and outside the women's community owe a significant debt as well to the emergence in the last decade of a broad-based Third World feminist movement in this country. Women of colour, especially lesbians, have been in the forefront of creating a theory and practice that insist on the importance of differences among women and on the positive aspects of cultures and identities. With "identity politics" as a

basis, feminists of colour have been able to link analysis with day-to-day political activism, as they lay out a range of ways in which individual and institutional oppression works.

The concept of identity politics has contributed greatly to the political thinking of other women who share both a positive identification and a specific oppression....

For feminists as a whole, as well as for distinct groups of feminists — Jewish, Third World women, lesbians, for instance — such self-affirmation has been tremendously valuable in moving women to define and carry our political strategies...."
Elly Bulkin, *Yours in Struggle*, pp. 98-99.



A FEMINIST QUARTERLY FIREWEED

Native Women



"...Loneliness, alienation and feelings of abandonment are prevalent among our people. This is attributable in part to the fact that Indian women have in the past been separated from their parents and tribe and raised in foster homes or orphanages. Isolation and loneliness are powerful influences which can be dispelled by sharing and confiding in others. These human emotions and responses cannot overpower our spirits when we open our hearts in confidence with other women. Only when these subjective fears are brought to light can we see the reality of our commonness in suffering and despair. Because we rely on others to share our pain and loneliness we must make ourselves available to heal and support our sisters in their time and need. In this way, a burden shared is half a burden, and sorrow spoken is released and dispelled..."

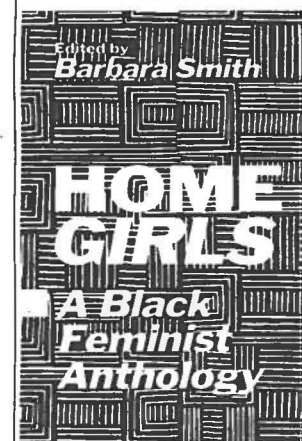
From "Summary of The Gathering—Day 1", part of an article "The Indigenous Women's Network Gathering. A Meeting of Spirits and a Healing" by Winona LaDuke in *Fireweed*, A Feminist Quarterly, special issue on Native Women, Winter, 1986.

"...I think that we have to begin by trying to form again a kinship circle that is simply a circle of women and of children. I don't think that we can form that necessary larger circle, which includes men, until we have found our courage to assert with great clarity (and of course with more than words) that we do not belong to men. If only the men who felt unequal in that ancient society had known to alter it by insisting, "We, too, should be in the circle that welcomes the newborn". If only they had known that they could insist, "We are not that different from you".

But they altered their situation instead by bursting the circle asunder. By teaching each child: "You belong to me now". And by forcibly teaching each woman: "You do not belong among your sisters; you belong to me". So we have to learn first to assert: "No, we do not belong to you. We are who we are".

And to truly learn who we are, we have to turn to one another again. We do not belong to others, but our lives are linked; we belong in a circle of others. We learn best to listen to our own voices if we

"...The concept of the simultaneous oppression is still the crux of a Black understanding of political reality and, one of the most significant ideological foundations of Black feminist thought.



We examine our own lives that every there was I behinds — sex, and I We saw no rank oppress many force Black commu have us do, that sexism, the "isms" w pening to us... This approach to

THE POLITICS OF REALITY: essays in feminist theory MARILYN FRYE

"...A great many people, female and male and of every race and class, simply do not believe that woman is a category of oppressed people, and I think that this is in part because they have been fooled by the dispersal and assimilation of women throughout and into the systems of class and race which organize men. Our simply being dispersed makes it difficult for women to have knowledge of each other and hence difficult to recognize the shape of our common cage. The dispersal and assimilation of women throughout the economic classes and races also divides us against each other practically and economically and thus attaches interest to the inability to see: for some, jealousy of their benefits, and for some, resentment of the others' advantages.

To get past this, it helps to notice that in fact women of all races and classes are together in a ghetto of sorts. There is a women's place, a sector, which is inhabited by women of all classes and races and it is not defined by geographical boundaries but by function. The function is the service of men and men's interests as men define them, which includes the bearing and raising of children. The details of the service and the working conditions vary by race and class, for men of different races and classes have different interests, perceive their interests differently, and express their needs and demands in different rhetorics, dialects and languages. But there are also some constants...

Whether in lower, middle or upper-class home or work situations, women's service work always includes personal service (the work of maids, butlers, cooks, personal secretaries),* sexual service (including provision for his genital sexual needs and bearing his children, but also including "being nice," "being attractive for him," etc.), and ego service (encouragement, support, praise, attention). Women's service work also is characterized everywhere by the fatal combination of responsibility and powerlessness: we are held responsible and we hold ourselves responsible for good outcomes for men and children in almost every respect even though we have in almost no case power adequate to that project.

*At higher class levels women may not do all these kinds of work, but are generally still responsible for hiring and supervising those who do it. These services are still, in these cases, women's responsibility..."

Marilyn Frye, "Oppression" in *The Politics of Reality: Essays in feminist theory*, pp. 8-9.

"The vision of Radical Third World Feminism necessitates our willingness to work with those people who would feel at home in *El Mundo Zurdo*, the left-handed world: the coloured, the queer, the poor, the female, the physically challenged. From our blood connections with these groups, we women on the bottom throughout the world can form an international feminism. For separation by race, nation or gender will not do the trick of revolution. *Autonomy*, however, is not separatism. We recognize the right and necessity of colonized peoples throughout the world, including Third World women in the U.S., forming independent movements toward self-government. But ultimately, we must struggle together. *Together* we form a vision which spans from the self-love of our colored skins, to the respect of our foremothers who kept the embers of revolution burning, to our reverence for the trees — the final reminder of our

Literary Supplement

WAITING

*waiting
for time
for space
for a pen that works
for a desk
for the sun to shine
for some huge hand to come out of the sky*

*and
guide mine
thru the task of writing my book*

*waiting
for a beginning
for an ending
for the right words
the right voice*

*waiting
til there is enough separation
between then and now
so that I can look at the past
without the pain and the fear
that paralyzes my brain
and my hand
into immobility*

waiting

Diane Freed

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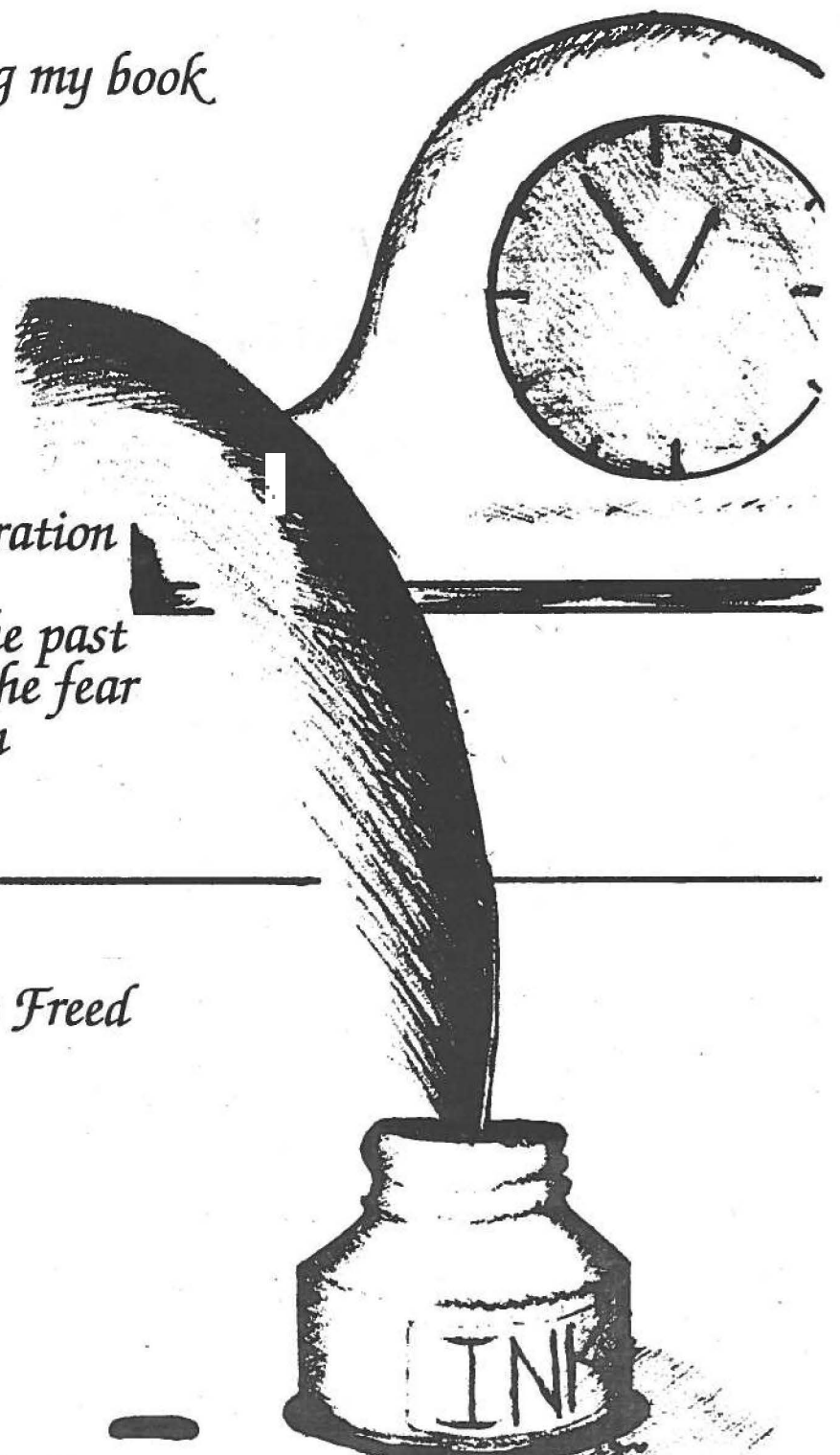
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graphic by Lori J. Meserve

on the bus: September 26

I saw a woman in the sky tonight,
over the Common.
It was she, and not the radio weatherman,
who told me about the hurricane
coming to us from the south.
Her cloudy hair flew behind her
and she ran to the east,
away from the September sunset.

Watch for the sky-woman.
She warns of bad weather,
wind and water from the air.
She warns of damage;
of torn doors and broken trees
and abandoned beach towns.

Joanne K. Jefferson

NEW TRINITY

Rosie in her bulky winter coat, Rosie five months pregnant, balking in construction boots that balance now on the slopes, now in the troughs of the bulging, rutted ice. As she nears the church Rosie hears, above her own rasping breath and the grind of snow under her boots, haunted voices. A soft breathy soprano holds a long Gregorian-chanted note, supported by a bass drone. Strange...where is she? Rosie looks around her, trying to steady herself, careful to balance and counterbalance her belly. Above her the sky is green. To her right stand dark houses. To her left, cars are parked in the lot that runs the length of the church. In the alleyway: ice, and herself, trundling home from an evening of warm conversation and red wine.

The world is quiet as a graveyard, except for the choir. What is a choir doing, practising at this hour? The clock on the church spire says twenty minutes to six. Suppertime. Rosie knows for a fact that it's well past midnight. Why are church clocks always wrong? Most of them stopped long ago. Maybe they're too old or expensive to fix. Maybe nobody bothers trying.

Why doesn't the choir turn the lights on? The stained glass windows that show Stations of the Cross during the day are black and dead now. In a minute, if she isn't careful, Rosie will picture the choir singing in the dark pews. Their faces are pale, empty of hope. Like the faces of pilgrims she saw once, at Lourdes. Full of faith in God and a desperate fear of death. God versus death: their battle made Lourdes a haunted

place. The haunted choir, singing — but warm conversation has left Rosie drunk as a buffer, and the wine must have been a bumper crop, because she decides suddenly, almost in spite of herself, and with a feeling that she might be committing a crime, that the days of scaring the pants off herself with her own imagination are over. Her imagination like a receptacle, obedient, accepting everybody else's monsters and demons. Her imagination fed and shaped by the religion she was given to read like a gothic novel every Sunday morning. It's over, she thinks. I'm eating for two now, she tells herself in her mother's commonsense voice, and laughs a muffled laugh into her scarf.

Rosie's decision deftly reduces the haunted choir to boilers and other machinery in the church basement, sighing and rumbling monotonously.

The green sky grows greener. Since when is city light green? She stands still and looks up. There, visible even through the bright veil of Commerce, shift curtains of aruora borealis, fluttering, blossoming with a true green roar. Aurora: dawn. A new beginning. A good name for the little girl Rosemary had never been, a name for the baby she would have. Aurora would be the baby's second name. The baby's first had lit like a firefly in Rosie's head once, a long time ago. Lucy, after her little sister. Lucy after a cat she petted once on a sunny afternoon in an orchard while a cat-shaped cloud pounced overhead and the world was before Eden.

Claudia Gahlinger

Womanskin

Women
we keepers and sharers of ancient secrets
of loving
and making homes of houses
of loving
and making love
of loving
and making our men whole
of loving
and being women, wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, lovers,
strong, aunts, free, grandmothers, constant, nieces,
women, and Black
we women of colour
distant daughters of
the Nile, the Sahara, Kenya, Zaire, Sudan
the Serengeti
we dance the body-music of light and shadow
we share the palette spectrum
the obsidian sunshade
burnished blue-black brown tantan sepia
coffeecoffee cream ebony
delight of womanskin
strong in
alive in
free in
loving in
working in
laughing in
sharing in
mothering in
growing in
aging in
this skin
this night shade of many shades
this womanskin
we women
keepers and sharers of ancient secrets.

Maxine Tynes

metamorphosis

I was a caterpillar,
a very pretty caterpillar,
stretching my pale greenness
in the soft spring sun.
Covered with fuzzy hairs,
all velvet with gentle clefts
and hollows that opened
to the soft spring sun.
And I felt the warmth
and my own quiet power,
and my pale green beauty,
as I made my way
down among the new grass.
Sweet earth smells rising
enticing me and me answering,
fascinated.

Yes, I want to know
the touch of the sweet earth:
what my pale green beauty
will do to the sweet earth
and what it will do to me.

Suddenly, from out of the air,
a finger and a thumb
plucked me from the green grass
as I crawled my way to sweet earth.
I knew to clench and curl
in all my pale greenness.
I knew to bristle fuzzy hairs
and freeze.

But I couldn't freeze forever.
Even far from the fragrance
of the sweet earth
I needed to know
what my pale green beauty
could do.
I uncurled.
I crawled along the outstretched index finger.
I lay curled in the cupped palm.

And after a while,
a caterpillar while,
it wasn't so bad.
The hand was sort of warm.
It had its own kind of smell.
And I began again
to stretch my pale greenness
in the soft spring sun,
to make my way
with my own quiet power
from finger to twig
to covered glass jar
with a few, very few,
green blades of grass
and a dried up stick
with no smell at all.

What I needed to know now
had nothing to do
with pale green beauty
or soft fuzzy hairs.
Instead, I stretched inward
and steadily spun
a restful silken space.
And after a while,
a caterpillar while,
it wasn't so bad.
But I began to remember
the sunlight,
the smell of the sweet earth.

So all that was inside,
I pushed it out.
I unravelled from within.
And the first time,
the very first time,
that hands stooped to cup
and admire my colors
I froze, stopped still.
Then crawled, slowly crawled
along yet another outstretched index finger
until I reached the end.

Then powerfully,
beautifully,
I flew away.

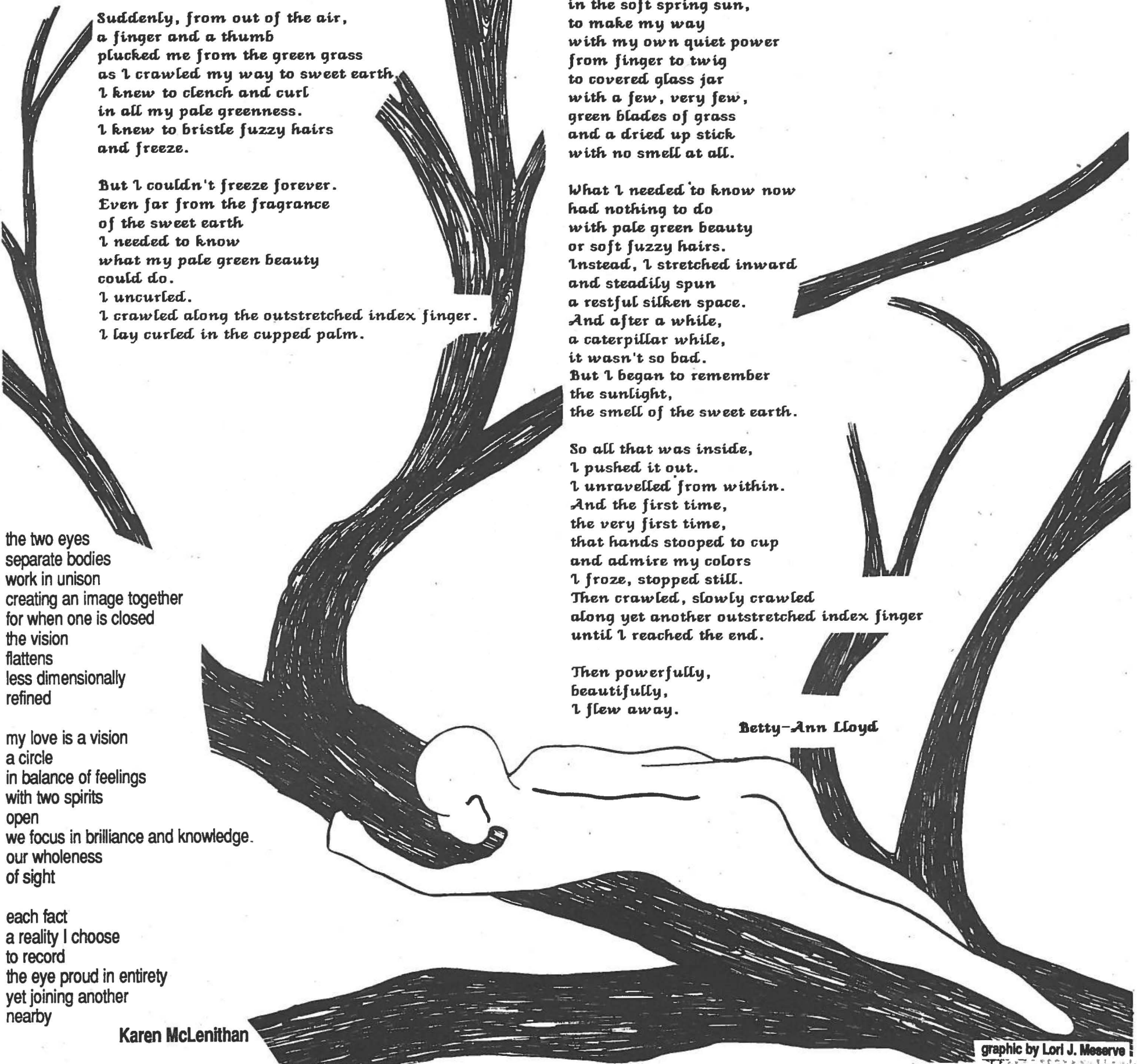
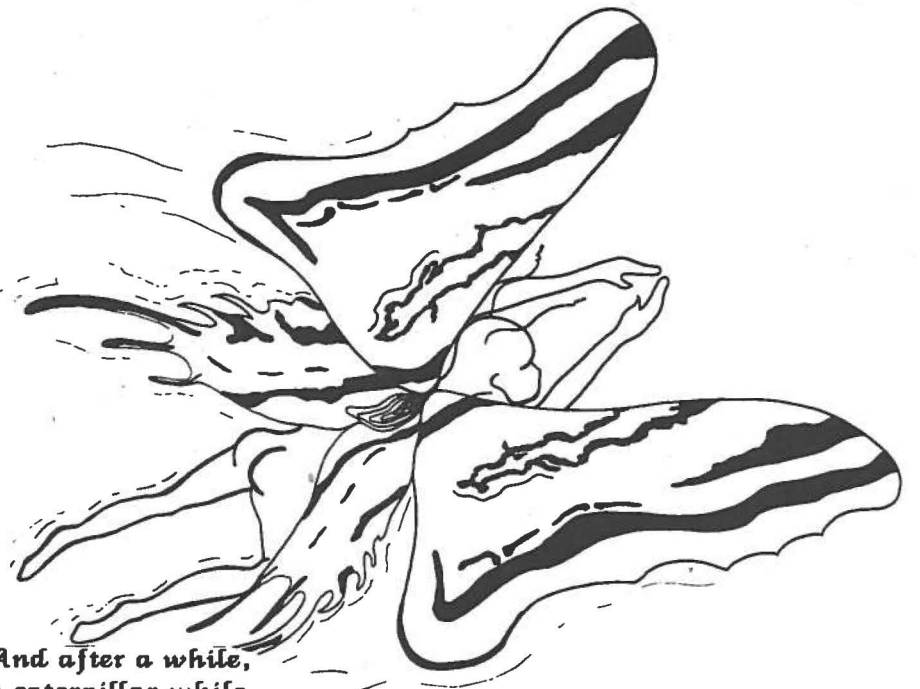
Betty-Ann Lloyd

the two eyes
separate bodies
work in unison
creating an image together
for when one is closed
the vision
flattens
less dimensionally
refined

my love is a vision
a circle
in balance of feelings
with two spirits
open
we focus in brilliance and knowledge.
our wholeness
of sight

each fact
a reality I choose
to record
the eye proud in entirety
yet joining another
nearby

Karen McLenithan



graphic by Lori J. Meserve

A Woman From the Sea

INTRODUCTION: When my daughter Meghan was born, the first emotion I experienced, after relief, was that of utter astonishment. Lying on the table, between my shaking legs, was a living human being. This was power. Real power! Like wind and water and fire. What had this to do with those frothy, baby doll maternity clothes? Why didn't women look like Amazons when they were pregnant? Why had I never seen a pregnant woman swagger? Why hadn't I?

Then, from the introduction to Germaine Greer's *Sex and Destiny*, came the words ...

(From amongst her skins Sedna takes out a small mirror. Chimes are heard. They continue softly, sporadically throughout the scene.)

Sedna: Look into the mirror.

Almira: No!

Sedna: Just a quick glance.

Almira: NO...

Sedna: There's nothing to be afraid of.

Almira: There's the dark ... ghosts ... senility ... losing someone...

Sedna: (persisting) Look into the mirror Allie.

Almira: (transfixed) Friends. (Looking away.) I'm afraid of making friends.

Sedna: That's just a little one. (Again she places the mirror in front to Almira.)

Almira: I'm afraid of dreaming. I'm afraid of tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. I'm losing my mind! (Sedna forces Almira to look in the mirror.) I don't want to be alone.

Sedna: Excellent. That's that then! Let's eat. (Pausing.) I forgot. Kneel on the cushion.

Almira: (dismayed) I don't see any cushion.

Sedna: I'm getting too old for this. (From the dune she pulls a pink brocade shell-shaped cushion.) Kneel! Almira Murdoch, I christen thee Pearl.

Almira: What's wrong with Almira?

Sedna: Don't interrupt.

Almira: I like my name.

Sedna: Here you take a new name. It's part of the ritual. Like the mirror.

Almira: Why?

Sedna: Who remembers after three million years? Now you've made me lose track...

Almira: And where are we?

Sedna: (getting out a silver tea tray. On it are teacups, a pot, sugar, milk, honey cakes, and asparagus tips.) A floating island. Somewhere between the sea and the shore.

Almira: In Japan they have whole districts devoted to beauty and pleasure. They are called floating islands as well. (Pause.) It's a glorified red light district really.

(The boom.)

Sedna: (Diving behind the dune, she rolls infantry-style and returns to Almira with two World War II combat helmets.) You better keep these handy. (The boom.) During the time when man fought man it wasn't so bad for us selkies. You left us to bear and rear our pups in peace. (The boom. Then the sounds of whales singing.)

"madness ... living inside a body ... a body that creates life but cannot control the fate of that creation."

As I lifted my eyes to the sea that forever surrounds me in Nova Scotia I started to hear a story. One of destruction and birth and the endurance and power of women's love. A love which must be far greater than the magatons of destruction released by a single nuclear explosion. And riding the crests and troughs were the women of Greenham Common. They waved. And I tried to wave back.

Sedna: Oh that's just the whales. They get melancholy and start remembering. (Both women listen to the sounds of the great creatures' songs.)

Almira: What do they remember that's so beautiful.

Sedna: In the war...the one you call the second...their songs were mistaken for the sound of the submarine sonar... (The boom.)

Sedna: Pow! No more whales. (Silence.) But they still sing. And like myself they still return for whelping.

Almira: Whelping?

Sedna: It's February.

Almira: February.

Sedna: Why else would we be here?

Almira: Something happens in February.

Sedna: This is the time when we selkies take our positions for lying in.

Almira: There are no other selkies here.

Sedna: It wasn't always like this. It's an old habit. (Looking around the island she notices how empty it is.) Without much meaning I suppose...seeing there's only one island and myself and the ghosts... (Pause.) And you!

Almira: Don't look at me. I can't help you.

Sedna: Milk? Sugar?

Almira: Milk. (Noticing that the tea is blue.) No. Yes. Sugar.

Sedna: This is a party.

Almira: A wake.

Sedna: New life is a wonder. And should be celebrated. A baby brings love into the world.

Almira: Oh no.

Sedna: After all it's February. Selkies love to party.

Almira: I don't believe it.

Sedna: What? What? What?

Almira: This is a baby shower!

Sedna: A baby shower?

Almira: Yes, a baby shower.

Sedna: What a wonderful idea. A fallout of babies!

Almira: No, a baby shower.

Sedna: What is this wonderful thing I've never heard of before?

Almira: A bunch of women get together and by devious means trap an unsuspecting woman...

Sedna: (fearful) ...Go on...

Almira: They make you open presents.

Sedna: Presents? (Laughing.) Tell me more.

Almira: As you open each gift you have to stick the bows on your head. Good friends only put one bow on their present. After that...

Sedna: There's more?

Almira: ...Everyone takes off her wedding ring. Puts it on a thread and holds the ring over their bellies. Back and forth means a boy...a circle a girl.

(As she speaks Sedna circles Almira's belly with her finger.)

Almira: (abrupt) Then they drink lots and lots of tea!

Sedna: Remarkable.

Almira: I'm not finished. Have you ever tried to see how many clothespins you can hold in one hand while flipping wet clothes onto your shoulder with your feet?

Sedna: Couldn't you just pick them up?

Almira: Not with another baby on your hip! (Pause.) Sixteen is the highest I've ever seen. Then you play Bingo. (Sedna shouts "Bingo" as if she has played.)

Almira: Most likely, though, you'll drink more teas and eat some lighthouses.

Sedna: That's what's happened to all the lighthouses!

Almira: You don't know what a lighthouse is? Lighthouses are a dessert made with a Ritz cracker, a layer of jam, a marshmallow, and a cherry on top. And that is a baby shower!

Sedna: I am amazed.

Almira: Wait til George hears this.

Sedna: So we keep the same rituals still.

Almira: (realizing her predicament) What if I never see George again?

Sedna: (offering the honeycakes) Try one of these little cakes.

Almira: No thanks.

Sedna: Honey cakes are always eaten at whelping.

Almira: No poison?



Sedna: *(eating one)* Delicious. *(Almira takes one and nibbles.)* Women of the sea believe that this is a time for rejoicing.
 Almira: And sorrow.
 Sedna: That too.
 Almira: For what?
 Sedna: For the great mystery that is ours.
(Pause.) You like them?
 Almira: They stay down!
 Sedna: More tea?
 Almira: A woman has to be careful about food.
(Pause.) Myself sometimes I'll be cooking up a pan of mushrooms and this thought will just jump into my head. I think, someone has just rounded up the dearest, sweetest, little cock tips and here they are sauteeing in my pan of butter. Puts me right off.
 Sedna: *(fanning herself)* Warm isn't it?
 Almira: George doesn't understand. I know it's crazy. But you watch for it. I haven't touched a mushroom since...it shouldn't run your life. But it does. Food, I mean.
 Sedna: At whelping parties it's important to eat foods that represent the forces that fertilize. *(Almira, giggling, waves a piece of asparagus.)*
 Sedna: A reminder of our humble beginnings.
 Almira: Lust! *(Almira chomps the asparagus.)* George's smell used to drive me crazy. I loved it. Heavy with oils. As if I were in a foreign market filled with unknown and forbidden scents. One whiff and my stomach would flip. What a wonderful sensation...desire. Be aware of desire and the lunacy of love. Look where it got me.
 Sedna: I envy you.
 Almira: Don't be foolish.
 Sedna: Oh Almira, most of the real pleasure in the world for men and women is still provided by children.
 Almira: *(sighing)* And the burden.
 Sedna: The work's in raising the husband not the children.
 Almira: I've been through the 60s. George and I are equal. Just because he's useless with cars, and he doesn't know the first thing about nailing two planks together. Why should he? I know he's helpless if he cuts his finger, or gets a cold. But that doesn't make him a dependent! For heaven's sake...I'm a feminist!
 Sedna: I had dozens of litters. If I hadn't passed the age for bearing...Who knows?
 Almira: You are crazy!
 Sedna: Wanting more?
 Almira: Wanting more.
 Sedna: *(lying on her back she scratches seal-like)* Young pups are delicious. They bring a lot more pleasure than mates. *(Sedna brings out of the folds of her clothes a wineskin.)*
 Almira: I like George.

Sedna: *(drinking)* Then you are twice fortunate.
 Almira: I don't understand him that's all.
(Pause.) Do selkies marry?
 Sedna: We're here to talk about you.
 Almira: I only wondered.
 Sedna: I am half human. Wine?
 Almira: I thought maybe you didn't do that sort of thing.
(Silence.)
 Sedna: It was a long time ago.
 Almira: Ahuh!
 Sedna: Ahruh!
 Almira: I thought so.
 Sedna: I was human. All I could do was marry.
 Almira: What happened?
(Softly Sedna's music enters into the background.)
 Sedna: I refused every male that appeared at my doorstep.
 Almira: But not everyone.
 Sedna: No. *(smiling.)* One day a most beautiful man came to my father's doorstep. Such eyes he had. Black as night. He told me he would cherish and honor me with a home and warmth and food. He also promised me a room of my own. So I married.
 Almira: And lived happily ever after.
 Sedna: I murdered him.
 Almira: George doesn't know how lucky he is.
 Sedna: He lied!
 Almira: "'Til death do you part."
 Sedna: You should have seen that place! It was worse than a nest; full of feathers and mouse-droppings. Talk about crumbs in the bed!
 Sedna: *(Behind Sedna the music builds. Layering the many voices of the sea.)* Before the sun had set, my father had heard of the murder and came to take me back to his house. Suddenly, while crossing the water, the sea became fantastic. The wind rose, the waves grew monstrous. My father, thinking that God was angry at my actions, offered me as a sacrifice and tossed me overboard into the sea. *(Shouting.)* Coward! What a coward you were, father!
 Almira: He left you to drown?
 Sedna: I clung to the gunnels. Taking out a small hunting axe my father hacked at my hands.
 Almira: *(taking Sedna's hand in hers)* Oh Sedna...
 Sedna: The first blow tore off the first joints of my fingers. As they dropped into the sea from each was born a dolphin. Do you believe me?
 Almira: Of course.
 Sedna: On the next were born the seals and the walrus. On the third and final blow I dropped to the ocean floor. Then from all around me, from my flesh and blood, were born the whales. They swam beneath my father's small dory till the sea boiled...

Almira: He drowned?
 Sedna: I think it's time for more wine.
 Almira: I'm sorry.
 Sedna: *(Bitterly.)* I rid myself of a husband who would have all my power drained in preparing his nest, his food, his clothes, and a father who bartered with my life. They prepared the scene for their own finish. *(Pause.)* As we all do.
 Almira: So peace and quiet!
 Sedna: What do you think it's like being the very last selkie in the world?
 Almira: No past...no present...no future. Heaven!
 Sedna: Heaven is overrated. My whole race lost forever.
 Almira: I wish mine was.
 Sedna: You sound very certain. No one to remember you, no future generation to mourn you, no one to miss you. All the good that you have said and done lost forever.
 Almira: And the evil. We are a deformed and demented race.
 Sedna: Fool!
 Almira: *(Softly.)* You're the murderer.
(A long silence.)
 Sedna: Alright. *(She knocks the garland from Almira.)* I will show you what it is to have all that love would create destroyed in one stupid act. *(The lights shift as Sedna begins to weave her spell. George dresses in a wool jacket and watch cap. In one hand is a harpoon in the other is a small axe. [The same one as Sedna's in scene 6.]*
 Sedna: Long ago
 The Earth's Spirit was everything
 That walked, swam, crawled
 On her surface.
 That bond is broken.
 And once...
(Having slipped off the kimono Sedna crawls onto Almira's back as she lowers her to the floor. They become one.)
 Sedna: Fishermen and the creatures of the sea
 Believed
 That the Spirit of Man
 And the Spirit of Animal was one.
 That bond is more than broken,
 It is forgotten.
 Why?
(They both adopt the movements of a seal.)

Cindy Cowan has been resident in Guysborough for the past six years, where she has worked with Mulgrave Road Co-op Theatre as a writer and actress. A Woman From the Sea was produced by the theatre in 1986 and is published in Canadian Theatre Review Fall 1986. She has also written for Canadian Theatre Review various articles including "Feminism and Theatre in Atlantic Canada".

Temporary Insanity

You come at me,
green eyed and full of rage.

In my meekness,
I wonder why?

And when you have finished
I lie broken on the floor,
like a doll that has been bashed against
the wall by an angry child.

You come to me again,
this time blue-eyed and teary.

In your frustration
you wonder, why?

Never again you promise and plead.

So, once again I hold you,
and say it's alright....

I lie in your bed and tremble.

I pray that you sleep,
just sleep.

But soon I feel your body stir,
and you turn at me,
green-eyed,
and full of lust.

I am taken —
not by my submission
but by my own fear.

When you have finished,
and the violent rhythmic pounding
has stopped
the stench of stale alcohol fades
as you release me from your grasp.

You roll away from me
and sleep the sweet dreamless sleep
of a man with no fears.

I sit upright in my bed,
with the light of the moon
shining in on me, casting
a shadowed mask across my eyes.

I think,
just for a fleeting moment,
how easy it would be
to cover your face with my pillow

and put me out
of your misery.

Candace Hillier

DAWN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Whiskey Sister telling tales
Of lost trails
In a land long ago.
How much
The fantasy of booze?
How little
Reality?
Tell us Whiskey Sister,
Show us the truth;
We have the right
To know.

No more the blank stare
From glassy eyes;
You're dead;
You always were.
Now I see beyond the grave
The years of
Hard, loose lies;
I'm free of your hell;
God damn you,
I don't believe in zombies!
Jennifer Snair

Women and Children First

It was called a chivalrous age.
When the order was given to abandon ship...
"Stand by men, we're into the boats —
remember — women and children first."

.....

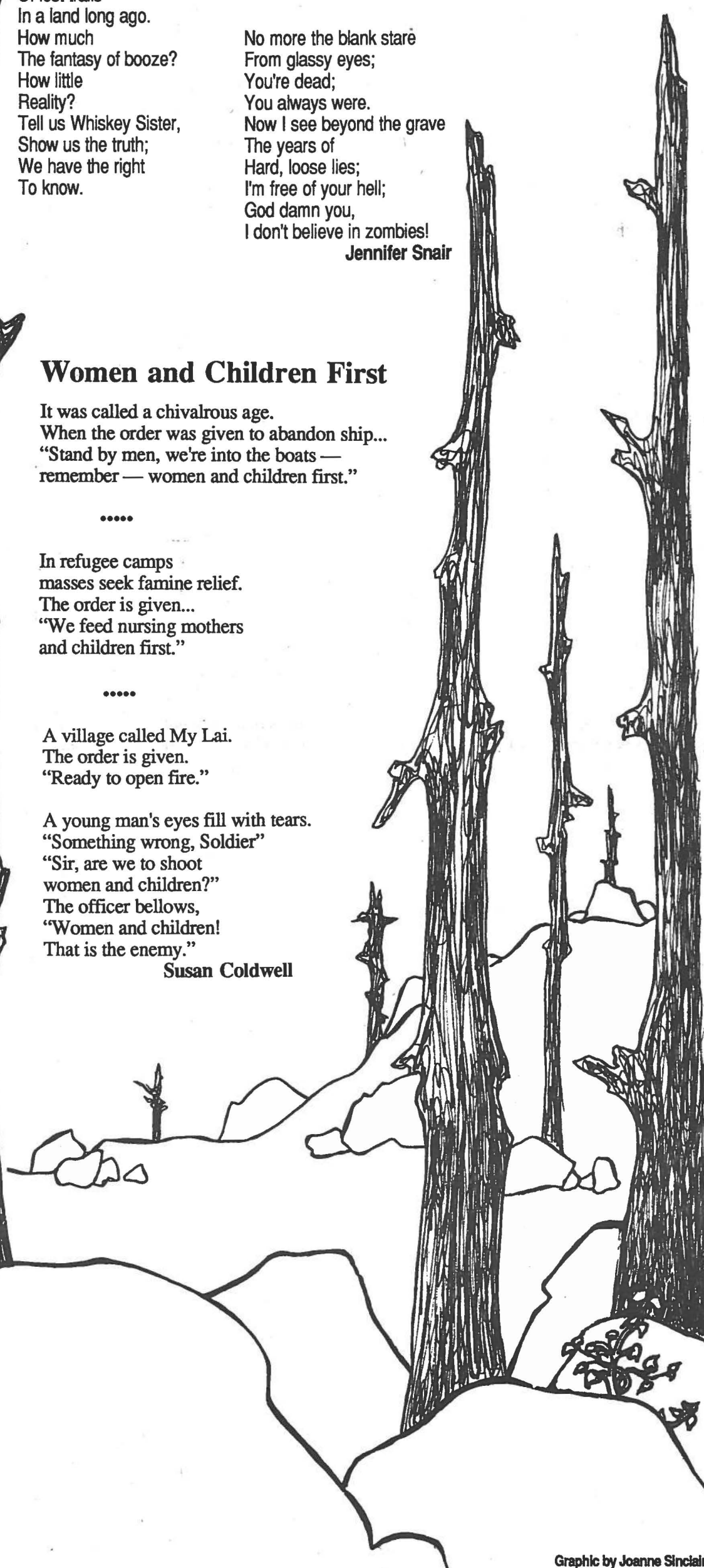
In refugee camps
masses seek famine relief.
The order is given...
"We feed nursing mothers
and children first."

.....

A village called My Lai.
The order is given.
"Ready to open fire."

A young man's eyes fill with tears.
"Something wrong, Soldier"
"Sir, are we to shoot
women and children?"
The officer bellows,
"Women and children!
That is the enemy."

Susan Coldwell



Graphic by Joanne Sinclair

GRATITUDE

Her husband recently passed away. Her five eldest are at school, her four youngest with her. My mother — penniless, weary, adrift on acres and acres of spring-thawed farmland — decides to visit friends in town.

"The children were so well-behaved," she wrote later, in the journal she kept for a while, hooking together events on the chance that they'd make some sensible, warming article. She had lost her talent for feeding herself but the children's need was clear, and constant, and sometimes desperate, so when her friends surprised them with a big lunch she recorded it for posterity: "Roast beef. Scalloped potatoes. Corn. And for dessert: Peaches."

At night she often dreamed of the ocean voyage back home, which meant Failure. At dawn she went down into the basement to start the wood furnace so that the littlest ones, who loved to rise with the sun, wouldn't freeze their feet. As she loaded chunks of hardwood into the cavern, my mother considered for the hundredth time giving the children away to a better mother, one who knew What For.

Supper alone. A husband not really a husband is away for the week at work. I'm free, I have money, no children except for these unfinished stories that require constant attention, involvement, freedom to become what they are. I try until I'm queasy to weave ideas into sense. I've baked fish, made rice and coleslaw. And for dessert: Apple crisp (sprinkle chocolate chips on top, put it in the oven so they'll melt. That makes it seem like a treat.)

I keep a journal for dreams, on the chance that they will begin to weave some useful and revealing fabric between them. One dream that recurs, although I haven't flown for years: There are airport corridors. There's a woman on her hundredth business flight. She can't for the life of her remember her destination. Fluorescent-lit ozone, despair at 30,000 feet — but here comes the stewardess with plastic supper trays. Meat patty. Duchess potatoe. Green beans. And for dessert: pink cake. The woman is grateful as I am humble as my mother and I meet in the strangest places. So much work to do in order to fly over such deep chasms of doubt. Sometimes, I think, my mother and I, we've travelled the same nightlanes, flown the same tunnels, after all.

Claudia Gahlinger

THE OTHERS

On the other hand
In a no-man's land
Live the ones who matter to me
Those who best give substance and rest
To that which they cannot see

They find it droll
That I should recall
Each phrase they have ever spoken
But in my dreams and through my schemes
Their words the fire has stoken.

It greets my sight, that inner light
Shining behind those dear faces
Whether wrinkled, spectacled
Greying or freckled
Beauty of time's graces

The young ones are someones
They grow in diversity
Until the day they encounter perversity
Perhaps tomorrow they shall be free
For playful creation "You can't catch me"
Giving in time their warming caresses
Brushing my cheek with the maple's tresses

H.B.

graphic by Lori J. Meserve

Mother love
bursts forth in me
when
I tend your strength and beauty
when
I encourage your pure light
laser-like
slicing in innocence
the putrid, societal, backlash

Sister love
bursts forth in me
when
I believe in your commitment
to the myriad
rainbow positives
of our
woman commonality
our womanlove

Daughter love
bursts forth in me
when
I encourage your gentle open
ever warm
soft, wet, dark life-force
soothing and flowing
echoing
the saline mysteries
thru the history of
another place

My love
bursts forth in me
when
I sense your dreams
star bursting
thru
radiant grey iridescent
hope
fearful and tentatively powerful
inmoveably free

for woman
you are
my lover,
sister,
daughter,
mother,
friend.

Shirley Limbert

TO REACH OUT AND TOUCH A DEAD MAN

To reach out and touch a dead man
Is knowing what it's like to fight
To keep yourself alive.

To reach out and touch a dead man
Is to know what life really is...
And how little you have.

To reach out and touch a dead man
Is to learn that he was human
And not a living god.

To reach out and touch a dead man
Is to know that he taught you well...
When he was your father.

Jennifer Snair

A Collection of Films Dealing with Women's Well-Being

THE WOMEN'S BODY POLITIC

D.E.S.: An Uncertain Legacy

55 min. 1985

Between 1941 and 1971, a synthetic estrogen, diethylstilbestrol or D.E.S., was prescribed to pregnant women to prevent miscarriages. This practice resulted in numerous cases of reproductive and genital abnormalities. This film looks at the development, marketing and medical consequences of D.E.S.

The Best Time of My Life: Portraits of Women in Mid-life

58 min. 1985

Reflecting a wide range of income levels, lifestyles, careers and backgrounds, ten women in their middle years share their experiences of menopause.

Is It Hot In Here?

A Film About Menopause

36 min. 1986

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

Abortion: Stories from North and South

55 min. 1984

Of the estimated 30 to 50 million induced abortions performed annually, more than half are illegal, and an estimated 84,000 of them result in death. Filmed in Ireland, Japan, Thailand, Peru, Colombia and Canada, this film is a survey of the realities of abortion.



Spirit of the Kata

28 min. 1985

Five women, all black belts of world-class calibre, discuss how an ancient martial art has transformed their lives.

Turnaround:

A Story of Recovery

47 min. 1984

Five women were brought together by a common illness — all had a dependence on alcohol, prescription medication, street drugs, or a combination of these. Living in Aurora House, a residential treatment centre in Vancouver, these women are learning to face painful truths.

The Recovery Series

Related to *Turnaround: A Story of Recovery*, this series of four films focusses on individual women who are recovering from drug or alcohol dependency.

Debby and Sharon

15 min. 1985

Recovering alcoholics, two sisters talk about their battle to shake alcohol and drug addiction. A factor contributing to their sense of self-worth and helping to maintain their sobriety is a renewed commitment to their Native Indian culture.

Delia

12 min. 1985

Delia spent years counselling women to confront their alcoholism and drug addiction while ignoring her own alcoholism. Finally she quit her job and sought the treatment that enabled her to gradually build a new life for herself and her son.

Lorri

14 min. 1985

Humiliated by her inability to control her drinking, and feeling confused and suicidal, Lorri committed herself to a psychiatric ward of a hospital, where she recovered.

Ruth

14 min. 1985

At 14 years of age and in search of an escape from painful memories of childhood physical, mental and sexual abuse, and prostitution, Ruth turned to alcohol and drugs. After 18 years of addiction she joined Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Next Step

A series of three films that deal with the nature and scope of woman-battering and the support services victims need to rebuild their lives.



Sylvie's Story

28 min. 1985

Sylvie recreates her experience as a battered woman seeking help at a Montreal transition house. This film emphasizes the importance of women speaking out and points out the role of the transition house as a safe place for sharing experiences, obtaining support and counselling.

A Safe Distance

28 min. 1985

Filmed in Thompson and Portage La Prairie in Manitoba, and West Bay Reserve in Ontario, the film looks at providing shelter and services for battered women in rural, northern, and native communities.

Moving On

28 min. 1985

A co-ordinated effort by police, lawyers, doctors and social workers has resulted in an effective response to woman-battering in London, Ontario. Services for victims and therapy for offenders are part of this city's attempt to break the cycle of violence.

These films are available for free loan in 16 mm from all National Film Board offices in Canada. Video rental, in VHS format, will also be available from NFB offices as of March, 1987. For more information, contact the NFB office closest to you.



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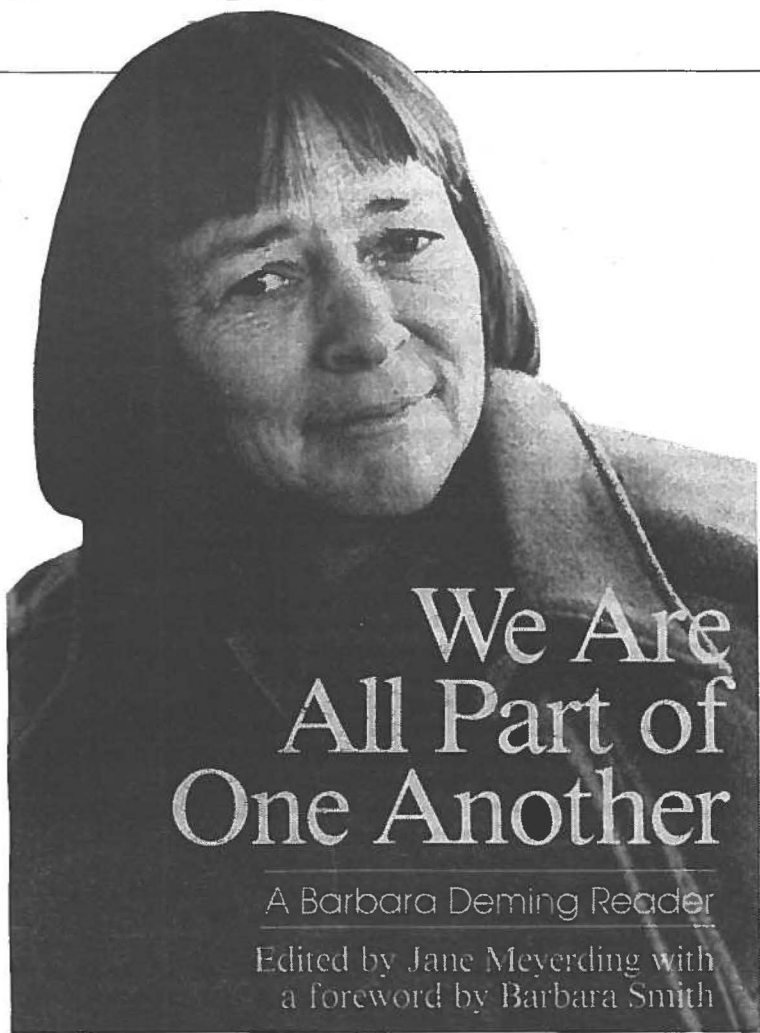
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- IWD '87

to are listening at the same time to a other women — whose stories, ir- for all our differences, turn out, if I we listen well, to be our stories at too. Their anger, which they ch begin to acknowledge, we recog- id nize as our anger; the strength r- which they have doubted, but an which that very anger hints at, is to our strength too.

In the early days of this second wave of the feminist struggle, g, very many women who had never le before really listened to other If women began to — formally and ey informally, in planned conscious- r- ness-raising sessions and spon- taneously — to listen to friends, on to strangers, to themselves; n- seeming, often, to hear them- ou selves as other women spoke. y And talking with one another at n: last, more and more of us began ur to dare to believe that we can ve decide for ourselves who we are; o, we don't need to look to men to re define us, by giving us approval e, or disapproval. We belong to our- selves — we begin to dare to er remember this..."

Barbara Deming, "Remembering Who We Are" in *We Are All Part of One Another*, A Barbara Deming Reader.



simultaneity of a Black feminist y and, I believe, ological contribu-

examined our lives and found everything out was kicking our s — race, class, and homophobia. aw no reason to ppressions, or, as forces in the community would is do, to pretend exism, among all ms" was not hap- to us....

s multi-issued ch to politics has

probably been most often used by other women of color who face very similar dynamics, at least as far as institutionalized oppression is concerned. It has also altered the women's movement as a whole. As a result of Third World feminist organizing, the women's movement now takes much more seriously the necessity for a multi-issued strategy for challenging women's oppression....

Approaching politics with a comprehension of the simultaneity of oppressions has helped to create a political atmosphere particularly conducive to coalition building. Among all feminists, Third World women have undoubtedly felt most viscerally the need for linking struggles and have also been most capable of forging such coalitions. A commitment to principled coalitions, based not on expediency, but upon our actual need for each other is a second major contribution of Black feminist struggle..."

Barbara Smith, "Introduction," *Home Girls, A Black Feminist Anthology*

third our eo- El ded the ally on- we out nal ice, the my, ec- of the rld de- lf- we her om ns, ers on the our

THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK

WRITINGS BY RADICAL WOMEN OF COLOR

EDITORS
**CHERRIE MORAGA
GLORIA ANZALDÚA**
FOREWORD
TONI CADE BAMBARA

Winner Of The 1986
BEFORE COLUMBUS
FOUNDATION
AMERICAN BOOK
AWARD

the alchemist and the welder, the magician and the laborer, the witch and the warrior, the myth-smasher and the myth-maker....

Combined we cover so many oppressions. But the overwhelming oppression is the collective fact that we do not fit, and because we do not fit we are a threat. Not all of us have the same oppressions, but we empathize and identify with each other's oppressions. We do not have the same ideology, nor do we derive similar solutions. Some of us are leftists, some of us are practitioners of magic. Some of us are both. But these different affinities are not opposed to each other. In *El Mundo Zurdo*, I with my own affinities and my people with theirs can live together and transform the planet..."

Gloria Anzaldúa, "El Mundo Zurdo" in *This Bridge Called Our Back*, pp 196 and 208.

"...Even for those of us with backgrounds as political activists who had thought we had some handle on sex and its variations in this society, the revelation of shame, fear, and guilt that we produced was overwhelming. Women talked about years of celibacy, self-hatred, rejection, and abandonment by lovers, helplessness after rape or incest, social censure and street violence, family ostracism and constantly — the fear of what our desires might mean. Even though we had set up the group to avoid judgements, we would still depressingly ask: "Do you think I'm sick?" The great strength of the group was the emphasis placed on how to turn those fears and experiences to a source of insight rather than confusion. That we could feel safe while being so vulnerable to each other was a constant source of energy and power. Every forbidden thought that was spoken enriched us. Every terrible desire that we shared suddenly assumed human dimensions, and our meetings were full of warmth and laughter.

How might our lives be different, I began to ask, if we were not being constantly subjected to this fear of ourselves and each other? What kind of women might we be if we did not have to worry about being too sexual, or not sexual enough, or the wrong kind of sexual for the company we keep? More and more I have grown impatient with the limitations placed on bringing this kind of discussion out of the closed group and into the public debate that continues among feminists. Not addressing these issues reinforces the rage and fear we all hide, while supporting the status quo of sexual oppression.

Instead of speaking out in favor of sex, most feminists seem

"...Institutionalized rejection of difference is an absolute necessity in a profit economy which needs outsiders as surplus people. As members of such an economy, we have all been programmed to respond to the human differences between us with fear and loathing and to handle that difference in one of three ways: ignore it, and if that is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, or destroy it if we think it is subordinate. But we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals. As a result, those differences have been misnamed and misused in the service of separation and confusion.

Certainly there are very real differences between us of race, age, and sex. But it is not those differences between us that are separating us. It is rather our refusal to recognize those differences, and to examine the distortions which result from our misnaming them and their effects upon human behaviour and expectation.

Racism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance. Sexism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one sex over the other and thereby the right to dominance. Ageism. Heterosexism. Elitism. Classism.

It is a lifetime pursuit for each one of us to extract these distortions from our living at the same time as we recognize, reclaim, and define those differences upon



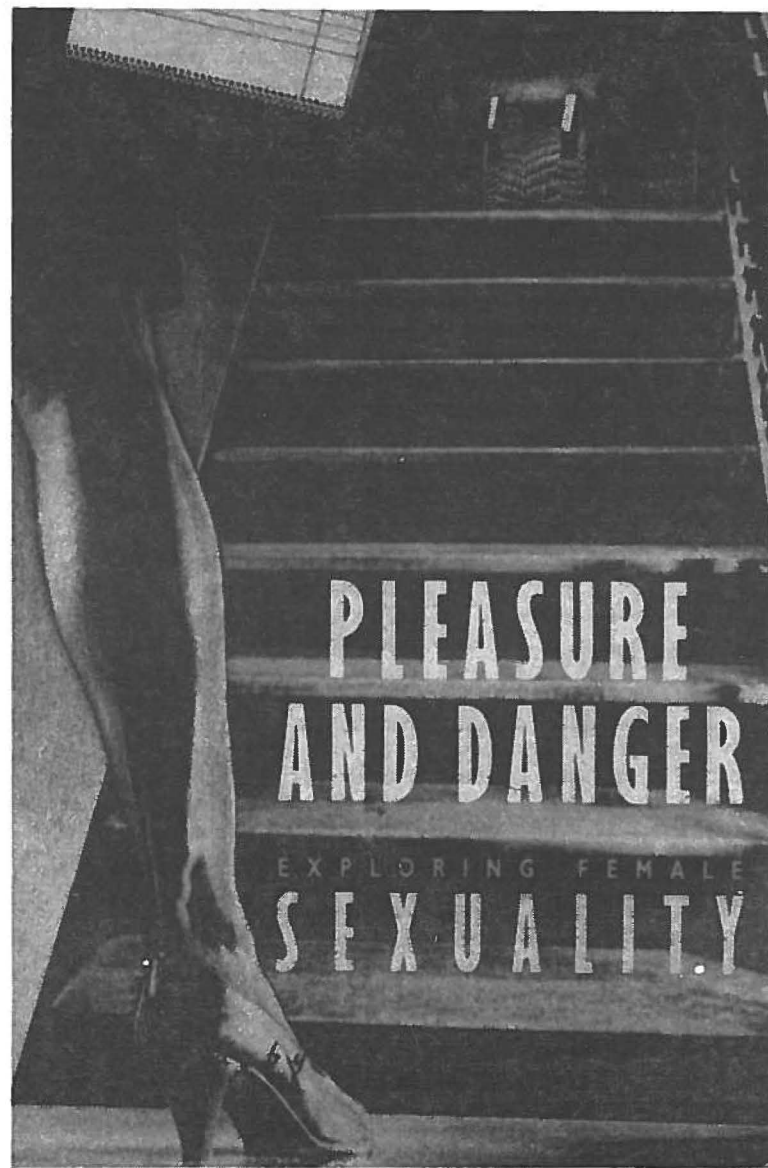
which they are imposed. For we have all been raised in a society where those distortions were endemic within our living. Too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and exploring differences into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers, or that they do not exist at all. This results in a voluntary isolation, or false and treacherous connections. Either way, we do not develop tools for using human difference as a springboard for creative change within our lives. We speak not of human difference, but of human deviance...."

Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" in *Sister Outsider*.

to avoid this discussion in any way possible. It is too dangerous, too painful, too hopeless — like racism, class, anti-semitism, and all the important issues that require so much of us. Everyone is afraid of what might be revealed about our personal fears and desires. It is easier to dismiss any

discussion of sexuality as irrelevant or divisive than to have to look at all the different ways we have denied and dismissed each other...."

Dorothy Allison, "Public Silence, Private Terror" in *Pleasure and Danger, Exploring Female Sexuality*, pp. 112-113.



Legal consequences warrant attention

Lesbian terms of endearment lacking

Anne S. Derrick

In our society, the law does not prohibit lesbian relationships, but it does not protect them, either.

The law protects conventional relationships and this has come to mean that what protection and structure the law provides, it provides principally with respect to lawful marriages. Ground is being gained by heterosexual couples in common law relationships, but, in Canada at least, the law has developed little in the way of safeguards for women in lesbian relationships.

It is important to regard this article as providing general information only. If you have a particular problem or concern with respect to your own situation, you should seek the advice of a lawyer.

This article is not meant to be relied upon and is intended only to give readers an idea of some of the broader legal issues and principles that may apply to lesbians.

The following are some of the questions I have been asked over the years by lesbian women seeking some general information about their legal status in relationships.

Marriage

Can I legally marry my lover?

No. In Canada, only men and women can legally marry. The significance of this is not only that lesbians cannot enjoy the same pomp and ceremony as heterosexual couples, but that they are thereby excluded from enjoying some of the protections that conventional marriage provides.

If I am married, can my husband divorce me if he finds out that I am lesbian?

Yes. Under the new Divorce Act, 1985, your husband's grounds would probably be cruelty, as grounds of adultery only apply with respect to sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. Homosexuality in and of itself was a grounds for divorce under the old Divorce Act (repealed in June, 1986) which meant, in some cases, a painful and unnecessary exploration of a woman's sexual experience for the purpose of proving the homosexuality.

Custody

Can my husband dispute custody and attack my suitability as a mother on the basis that I am lesbian?

This is a very difficult issue. Strictly speaking, being lesbian is not a bar to having custody of your children. However, the Courts have as their paramount concern "the best interests of the child". In light of this, a woman's sexual preference or orientation may well be considered relevant.

This issue is made more difficult by the fact that there are not very many reported custody cases

involving lesbian mothers.

The issue becomes even more difficult if a woman is living in a lesbian relationship. In a conventional custody dispute, a woman's lover will likely become involved in the custody proceedings. The Court will want to know with whom the children will be living and consider it within their jurisdiction to assess the character of either parent's co-habitee. A lesbian intending to assert a custody claim should immediately seek legal advice.

Living with a Lesbian Lover

My lover and I intend to move in together and will be pooling our property. Can we have a contract to provide for the division of this property and any more that we acquire in the event that the relationship breaks down?

This is where the advantage of being able to legally marry becomes apparent. The Matrimonial Property Act of Nova Scotia provides that married people can enter into a marriage contract either before their marriage, or at any time during.

No such structure exists for contracts between lesbians. Although it would be possible to draw up such a contract, the Courts may be resistant to dealing with them and will enforce only those aspects which are set out in the clearest, most defined terms.

Such contracts, however, may be useful in introducing some clarity and certainty into the relationship with respect to issues of money and property, and may force you and your partner to think through how your affairs are to be resolved in the event that the relationship does not work out.

This may be particularly essential if you are purchasing a home together to which both of you are contributing. In my experience, failure to deal with these issues while the relationship is strong and stable usually exacts high emotional and financial costs if the relationship breaks down.

My lover and I are considering the purchase of a property together. Should we be concerned about anything other than having a lawyer handle the transaction?

In my opinion, you should certainly talk to your lawyer about having an agreement drafted reflecting the true nature of the acquisition. One of you may be contributing more to this purchase than the other and this should be reflected somewhere by agreement.

Furthermore, you will want to get legal advice before you decide how you are going to take title to the property. There are implications in deciding to take title as "joint tenants", "tenants in common" or in one person's name.

My lover and I are going through the break-up of our relationship. We have been together for some time and have acquired a certain amount of joint property. If we cannot agree on the division of this property, how will it be decided?

Again, because you are not married, you cannot benefit from the provisions under the Matrimonial Property Act. If your dispute over the property cannot be resolved by agreement or with the assistance of lawyers or mediators, you will have to consider whether you take it before the Courts, who will decide who is entitled to what. Such issues as the contributions made by each party to the acquisition of the assets are considered.

The Court will probably look further than simple contributions of money: for example, if you have stayed at home and looked after children and your lover has worked throughout the relationship; the duration of the relationship; or such issues as one party supporting the other in furthering her educational career.

The precedent for these types of cases would be the small body of law which is starting to develop around long-term common law relationships between men and women who are not married but who have acquired common property and are trying to resolve its division.

In trying to resolve these kinds of disputes, you should certainly give consideration to having the dispute mediated while retaining the advice of your own lawyer to ensure that you don't enter into a prejudicial agreement.

Illness and Death

My lover and I would like to ensure that, in the event of one of us becoming ill, the other one would have the legal ability to make decisions concerning operations, medical consents, etc. Can we do this?

This is another very difficult and unsettling issue. A married woman's next of kin is her husband; he has the legal ability to make medical decisions affecting his wife in the event that she is unable to.

A lesbian partner has no such legal authority. A lesbian's next of kin is her husband or her family, as the case may be. Some families may be quite respectful of a partner's moral right to make these kinds of decisions in the interests of her lover.

However, it is likely that in the event the family wishes to intervene, the lesbian lover will not be in a position to over-ride them, unless she is successful in having herself appointed as her lover's guardian, a potentially costly and uncertain process.

Powers of Attorney appear to

give authority to deal specifically with property and in my opinion cannot provide a partner with the legal authority to give medical consents.

My lover and I are living together and have acquired common property. Should we have wills?

Yes. In Nova Scotia, if you do not have a will, your estate will be distributed in accordance with the Intestate Succession Act. This Act provides for a statutorily defined division of a person's assets to her husband, children, or parents, as apply in the particular case.

If a lesbian dies intestate, there is no provision under the Act for her partner to receive anything from her estate as her partner does not qualify as a lawful spouse.

A will enables you to leave everything to your lover once your debts are paid.

A legally valid will executed by

a competent woman who does not fail to provide for any dependents is not likely to be successfully challenged even by an irate family.

There are a great many other legal principles and issues that could be discussed in the context of lesbian relationships. Women in lesbian relationships cannot afford to disregard the legal and economic consequences of their partnership, and should not be oblivious to the legal context in which these commitments are made.

□□□□□

Anne S. Derrick is a Halifax lawyer, involved in many social issues. She has been practicing both general and family law for five years and is currently working in partnership with two other women lawyers at Buchan, Derrick, and Ring.



Dreams and Shadows

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Solidarity affirms common problems, causes, struggles

Beth Abbott

"...In a world in which New York firms are already sending secretarial work to women in the West Indies by satellite, international organizing is not a luxury, but a necessity which would be suicidal to overlook." (Tricia Lootens, *Off Our Backs*)

Now, eleven years since the United Nations proclaimed the Women's Decade for "Equality, Development, and Peace", we are increasingly aware of the global nature of women's oppression. As control of the international economy becomes concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, the connections that exist between women in Third World communities and in Canada (particularly in underdeveloped regions like the Maritimes) are becoming clearer.

In agriculture, women around the world often work for no pay, few benefits, and almost no recognition for their labour. There is a rapid increase in the employment of Third World women by multinational corporations, but this work is typically characterized by low wages and dangerous working conditions.

Meanwhile, women in Canada continue to work for two-thirds of men's wages and to bear much of the brunt of technological change. Around the globe, societies and cultures function in a manner which dictates a particular role for women — that of subordination to men.

Obviously, this is not to say that women the world over view themselves as an oppressed majority. Nor does this common bond mean that all women experience life in the same way. Sex interacts

with class, race, religion, culture, and a multitude of other factors. (There is little point searching for signs of "global sisterhood" between Margaret Thatcher and Winnie Mandela.)

Women share with men the brutal effects of discrimination based on class, race, etc. However, it is only with other women that we share the particular discrimination based on patriarchy.

The pervasive nature of patriarchy has tremendous implications for those interested in supporting the struggles of women in the Maritimes and around the world. The idea which best captures these world-wide linkages is the concept of solidarity.

The late Mozambican President Samora Machel defined solidarity as "not an act of charity, but mutual aid between forces fighting for the same objectives". When Canadian women work together with Third World women on a concrete project of mutual concern, each can gain from the ideas and strategies of the other. Solidarity recognizes not only common problems, but common causes and common struggles for change.

In the past, most Western efforts to "help" Third World women had no such understanding. Certainly, many North American and European agencies have been guilty of basing their assistance on traditional notions of charity and Western assumptions about what constitutes "development".

The role of women in this whole process has been dictated by the agencies, government representatives, and the male power structures in individual communities.

The lack of a feminist perspective in many development organi-



This photo was taken by Lee Seymour of Oxfam/DEVERIC during a recent trip to Nicaragua. Lee and Jane MacMillan, a government payroll clerk and union activist, will be speaking on "Working Women in Nicaragua" at the Lutheran

Church, corner of Windsor and Allan Streets, Halifax at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, March 25. Slides will also be presented. For more information, call 429-1270.

zations has meant that Third World women's concerns are often not thought to bear any resemblance to those of Canadian women. In fact, the role of women in Canadian society has often been held up as the ultimate goal towards which Third World women should strive.

Attempts to change this traditional aid relationship by building solidarity links between women and women's organizations in different parts of the world are becoming more common. These efforts are not easy.

A major barrier to solidarity among women results from the very real divisions created by class, racial, and cultural differ-

ences. These differences mean that even the first step towards solidarity — gaining an understanding of women's lives in other places — can be a major undertaking.

Although common experiences of oppression provide women everywhere with many of the same struggles, the priorities placed on particular issues, and the methods used to organize, must depend on the specific situations in which women live and work.

Effective solidarity work is further hampered by the very feature which makes it so exciting — distance. Establishing and maintaining communications between small groups of women around the world is an enormous challenge.

In spite of these barriers, examples of international solidarity among women are on the increase. A growing number of women's organizations and development agencies in Nova Scotia are actively participating in projects which link together women with common experiences.

•With the help of OXFAM, a group of eight women from the Atlantic provinces recently visited Nicaragua, hosted by the women's organization of the Agricultural Workers Association. The Canadian women spent several weeks visiting and working with their counterparts — women active in trade unions, daycare centres, and women's organizations. The tour will plant a seed for future work between women in Nicaragua and Atlantic Canada.

•The women's development agency MATCH has had considerable success over the past ten years linking Canadian women's organizations with women involved in co-operatives, health education programs, battered women's shelters, and women's media in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

•In May, Sistren, the women's theatre collective from Jamaica will visit Cape Breton for the international Standin' the Gaff popular theatre festival. This will be a unique opportunity for Canadian women involved in the use of educational theatre to share experiences and ideas with Sistren and other performers from around the world.

Each of these efforts is a beginning — marking the first stages of a "mutual aid" relationship among women whose lives are seemingly very separate. International solidarity is an exciting and challenging way to strengthen the struggles of women for equality — around the world.

□□□□□

Beth Abbott is a member of OXFAM's Atlantic Board and the Latin America Information Group.

International Women's Day

March 8, 1987

The contributions women make to our society are often unrecognized or overlooked. It is therefore appropriate that one day of the year is set aside to acknowledge the roles that women play. On this International Women's Day, I salute you.

Stewart McInnes, M.P.
Halifax



Throughout the years, labour issues have played a large part on the agendas of International Women's Day. The struggle continues today in our attempt to eliminate discrimination in the workplace through the implementation of PAY EQUITY

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"Fairness, not a lot to ask for"

Backscratching third option in relationships

Leah Nomm

What are the characteristics of a healthy intimate relationship? We all know the symptoms of an unhealthy one, and while we don't usually put into words exactly what's wrong, we know that something is amiss if we feel we must try to be who we are not around our loved ones; if we are fearful of expressing our true emotions and opinions; if we feel we are always giving in or always getting our way; or if there is too much dependency exhibited by ourselves or our partners.

Many women who are breaking free of patriarchal oppression are concerned with the issue of dependence. Much rhetoric is expressed in feminist circles about how to avoid dependence in a relationship of equals, how much dependency is "too much", and about the supposed inevitability of dependency accompanying intimacy.

First of all I think it is important to distinguish between practical dependency and emotional dependency because, although they may feel the same, they involve different issues.

If two people who have contracted to form a partnership (for whatever reason) bring different privileges to the partnership — and if both people are to benefit from the privilege — a dependency necessarily results.

For example, if two women decide to renovate a house, and one woman is much taller than the other, then the shorter woman would naturally depend on the taller to work at the higher levels.

If a partnership exists between a person who is blind and one who is not, then the sighted person would naturally expect to provide information to the one who could not see.

If a man and a woman are to share expenses for a house and the man earns twice as much money, then it would naturally follow that one partner would depend on the other to contribute a greater portion to the household expenses.

These are practical dependencies which may change as privileges change and which, when entered into on a contractual basis (you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours), do not threaten anyone's autonomy.

Emotional dependence, on the other hand, implies that one has given one's prime responsibility — that of creating one's own happiness (contentment, peace of mind, purpose for living, etc.) — over to another person.

The dependent individual's mood rises and falls according to someone else's words and deeds.

I've asked several women to define "dependency" and each one had a somewhat different reply. One person said, "dependency is when I find myself doing everything the other person wants, feeling frustrated by this, but doing it anyway so that I don't risk their displeasure".

Another responded, "dependence means I can no longer enjoy a beautiful autumn day if my boyfriend has chosen to go fishing with his friends instead of spending the time with me".

And yet another woman answered "dependence is when my self-esteem lies in my lover's opinion of me, and I forget my own resources".

The common theme is that dependence makes one feel incomplete, and therein lies the danger — because no matter how stable an intimate relationship is, there will always be a parting (unless both partners are killed simultaneously).

Women are often so afraid of developing an unhealthy dependency that they view any reliance on their partner as a sign of weakness. One woman told me with a note of panic, "now that my lover has moved in with me, I always want to be home in the evenings. I'd better watch it or I'll get too

dependent!"

So how does one decide how much is too much? How can dependency and interdependency be differentiated? I think the first step is to ask one's self (and perhaps one's partner) a series of questions.

1. Do I feel that my partner and I are together for mutual benefit?

**Am I confusing a desire
to be close, to be comforted,
to be understood, with dependency?**

Am I having some of my needs met and can the same be said for my partner?

2. Am I confusing the expression of vulnerability with dependence? Being able to open up and show all parts of ourselves to our loved ones is an important requisite of intimacy. Afterwards, however, (especially if we have embarrassed ourselves) it is usual to question when we can trust the other person with this information.

3. Am I confusing the desire to be close, to be comforted, and to be understood, with dependency? One of the reasons people couple at all is to experience the occasional "warm fuzzy". Wanting this experience is not dependency; needing it — especially when it becomes an addiction — is.

4. Has my partner expressed concern that I am too needy, too

clingy, too demanding, too intrusive, too overbearing? Is this concern new in the relationship or part of an old pattern? Is my partner overly sensitive to my developing a dependency?

5. Is it possible to ask friends who know both of us whether I am exhibiting signs of dependency that I may be unaware of?

Fortunately, dependency is a curable condition and there are several self-help resources available. In his popular book "Feeling Good — the

New Mood Therapy", Dr. David Burns describes a technique known as "pleasure-predicting." He maintains that many people expect they will be unhappy or lonely if they have to rely on themselves and go to an event alone.

He suggests that you guess on a scale of 1 to 10, "How much pleasure will activity X bring me?" before experiencing it, and then to check afterwards if you were accurate.

A dependent person may find out that "yes, I did have an awful time by myself" and then she could practice many kinds of solitary experiences — walking, swimming, going to a movie, eating in a restaurant and so on, until she begins to feel pleasure and contentment in doing so.

Another strategy to help develop autonomy is to create a cognitive, or thinking, challenge

to unwanted behaviour. When a feeling of neediness arises, a person could first ask herself, "If my loved one was not in my life right now, what could I do to help myself out of this situation?" Then if it seems practical, she could follow through with the behaviour.

Finally, to avoid a feeling of dependency, it is important to keep contact with friends and relatives (who are often neglected at the beginning of a new relationship); to keep old interests and develop new ones; and to take time to expand one's inner resources by reading, therapy, spiritual quest, meditation, prayer, or whatever activity affirms one's power and strength.

A healthy intimate relationship, according to Janet Woititz in her book, "The Struggle for Intimacy", happens when you have created an environment where: I can be me; You can be you; We can be us; I can grow; You can grow; We can grow together.

A healthy relationship is one in which each individual has the freedom to be themselves and, by being so, they build a closeness out of their shared values and beliefs. Such a closeness acknowledges a healthy interaction and interdependency, affirms autonomy, and promotes continuing growth.

□ □ □ □ □

Leah Nomm is a holistic health practitioner in Halifax who is happily interdependent (and realizes it takes a lot of time and effort!).

International Women's Day

March 8, 1987

The citizens of Dartmouth
are pleased to join with
all people of good will
in celebrating
International Women's Day.

In this year,
the United Nations Year
of Shelter for the Homeless,
it is particularly important
to understand the significant role
that women play, both in Canada
and the developing world. It is my
sincere wish that we can celebrate
International Women's Day
by participation of women
in a much greater way
in the life of our City,
in all those issues
that affect human existence.

John Savage
Mayor
City of Dartmouth



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Trip presents harsh lessons in awareness

Gwyneth Matthews

Six-fifteen in the morning. I sat in the bathroom, staring at my mirrored reflection. To my eyes, I looked a bit green.

Cheer up, I told myself. You're only going to Ottawa for the weekend.

Oh, yeah? sniffed the nasty little voice of experience. You might as well be on your way to Outer Mongolia, and well you know it. How did you let your Pandora friends talk you into this?

"This" was the National Consultation on the Feminist Periodicals Conference, a weekend brainstorming meeting with feminist publishing representatives from across the country. I'd recklessly agreed to go; now, at the very last minute, I had cold feet.

Don't get me wrong; I love travelling. But I usually have the swift, seasoned help of my husband. Going somewhere on my own is always nerve-wracking; occasionally, it's disastrous.

Especially since I developed chronic spinal pain, I'd been sticking close to home.

"Gwyn! Taxi's here!" shouted Bill. I tore down the hall to the bedroom, my stomach lurching sickeningly. Grabbing my much-amended list, I rummaged madly through my suitcase. (It looked as if I had enough packed for a month in Mongolia, but I'd kept it to the bare essentials. For any disabled person, solitary travelling demands a staggering amount of organization.) I'd spent two months planning, scheming, and worrying. Now, I was positive I'd forgotten something.

Familiar voices in the kitchen:

Betty-Ann Lloyd and Joanne Jefferson. Such unsuspecting companions.

Banishing the thought, I hurried out to greet them. Half my mind exchanged Good morning's and How are you's, while the remainder struggled over an endless array of Remember to's, Don't forget's and Beware of's.

Avoiding strain on my troublesome back, I asked Bill to lift me into the taxi. For the next three days, I'd have to rely on strange cabbies. Not a reassuring thought.

We got to the airport with time to spare. I'd expected to transfer into an airport chair, but when I looked around for the neat red job designed for pushing disabled people down plane aisles, I didn't see it. Two clerks insisted I get into a standard-sized one. That seemed strange, but supposing they had their reasons, I complied.

Whenever I travel by air, I'm prepared to check my own chair along with my luggage. Still, after 20 years, I'm never quite happy to see it whisked away. A wheelchair is baggage, and baggage has a nasty habit; it tends to get lost.

Perhaps I worry too much, but I doubt any able-bodied woman would want to land in Newfoundland, only to hear, "Sorry. Your legs are en route to Vancouver!" (I suspect she wouldn't be thrilled.)

We were due at our gate, so I suppressed my fears. Betty-Ann and Joanne proceeded through the metal detector, but since I'd drive every alarm berserk, I waited to be searched.

When we got upstairs, a male official was waiting to help with pre-boarding. "You'll have to get



When disabled women travel, they can expect almost anything to go wrong. As Gwyn, Betty-Ann and Joanne discovered on an eventful trip to Ottawa, different folk have different

conceptions of what constitutes an accessible washroom. In the second part of her article, Gwyn will talk about that frustration, and a few more! (photo by Sara avMaat)

into this," he said, indicating the red Air Canada chair I'd expected earlier. I could have done without this extra transfer! They'd been warned to expect me, and I was better organized. Amazing.

The same official sidled up to Betty-Ann. "Can she walk the few steps to the first row?" he whispered.

I heard Joanne gasp, but I was watching BA. In an instant, her complexion shifted from pale to puce. She looked like an outraged emu.

"Ask her! She can talk!" she spluttered. Angry as I was, I couldn't help laughing; I knew that hapless fellow had asked the wrong person!

Icily, I informed the man that,

no, I could not walk to my seat. Unable to meet my eyes, he nodded and hurried away.

"Good thing you can laugh," said BA.

"That doesn't mean it doesn't hurt," I replied.

I can laugh at mere physical problems, but despise being treated as if I were less than human: as if I didn't have a mind or a voice of my own.

I feel, however, that the best way to deal with such treatment is to hang on to my dignity, no matter what.

Others may disagree, but to me, visible tears only invite pity from observers, while open fury begs resentment from the perpetrator. Such incidents are common, but if

I were to break down every time, I'd spend much of my life sobbing or storming. Which does no one any good. (I wasn't going to allow that chap to excuse his behaviour by dismissing me as a nasty little bitch.)

Instead, I choose to hold my head high and hope that people learn from their unconscionable actions. Next time that official deals with a disabled individual, he might address her directly.

With no further difficulties, we boarded the plane. Informing the flight attendants how I wanted to be lifted, I gave careful instructions. The last time I'd flown without Bill, a maintenance man had picked me up by my shoulders and dragged me to my row! I had no desire to repeat that experience.

Transfer accomplished, I sank gratefully into my seat. Already, I was feeling worn out; my poor, dear friends had had some rather harsh lessons in disability awareness...

...and we hadn't even left the ground!

~~~~~  
Gwyneth is a free-lance editor and writer, wife and mother of two Siamese cats. She enjoys travelling, but admits that it's hard on the nerves.

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## TUNS

# Leadership often a mixed blessing

Professional lesbian: a state of mind and/or set of activities often following the coming out of a lesbian feminist, often reflected in an extraordinary burst of community work within the lesbian/women's/gay community, involving the organization of one's life socially, politically, sexually, and maybe even spiritually, around that one feature to the virtual exclusion of any other reality; hence, the "professional" lesbian.

You do not sign a contract to become a professional lesbian; you are not usually signed from the junior leagues (or the Junior League), so to speak. Nor do we as a community sit down and select our intra-community workers/leaders. They/we are largely self-selecting.

So, how does a political lesbian emerge? For me, until I was brought into a lesbian-feminist context, I was a nice middle class feminist. Suddenly, I was transfigured.

From an unfocused, scattered being, I became focused, coherent light — with laser-like power and abilities all centered on feminist lesbianism. In short, a classic, religious conversion.

What does the newly rampant professional lesbian do with all this energy?

In this state of radiantly righteous bliss, she will attend/organize groups, marches, conferences, dances, socials and write or perform news on women's cultural events.

She will, if lucky, have one or more lovers, though her political work may well become a lover substitute. School, work, UI or social assistance, her economic basis is paid the minimal attention; she is likely getting the minimum wage.

The initial results: meetings. Every evening. Supper meetings before the evening meetings; lunch meetings; breakfast meetings; chats over tea/coffee; earnest discussions anywhere (even in bars); frantic phone calls. All this often produces an embattled crisis mentality.

She may or may not be thrust into the harsh visibility of the 'all-occasion-media-lesbian' if her self-perceived public duty to speak out on issues makes her less reticent than most of the lesbian community. If so, she will jeopardize present and future employment, housing, and custody of children.

This leadership by default situation can prove to be a mixed blessing. It may be gratifying, but there will be little praise. Both the professional lesbian and her community will harbour unrealistic expectations of each other. These will be expressed in the name of 'sisterhood'.

The professional lesbian will be frustrated by the lack of support and the abundance of armchair critics, watching (she feels) through binoculars from their closets.

At the worst moments, she will actively resent her closeted peers whose political position has not guaranteed marginality and poverty for ever.

The individual women who make up the community will expect a professional, on-going representation of their varied and, often, contradictory interests. These interests may never have been voiced, which makes their representation somewhat harder.

The final results? At least one burn-out, depending on how often the professional lesbian puts herself through the cycle. Some

women leave, never to return; some return, and have to work to overcome their own guilt for burning out, and the community's long memory.

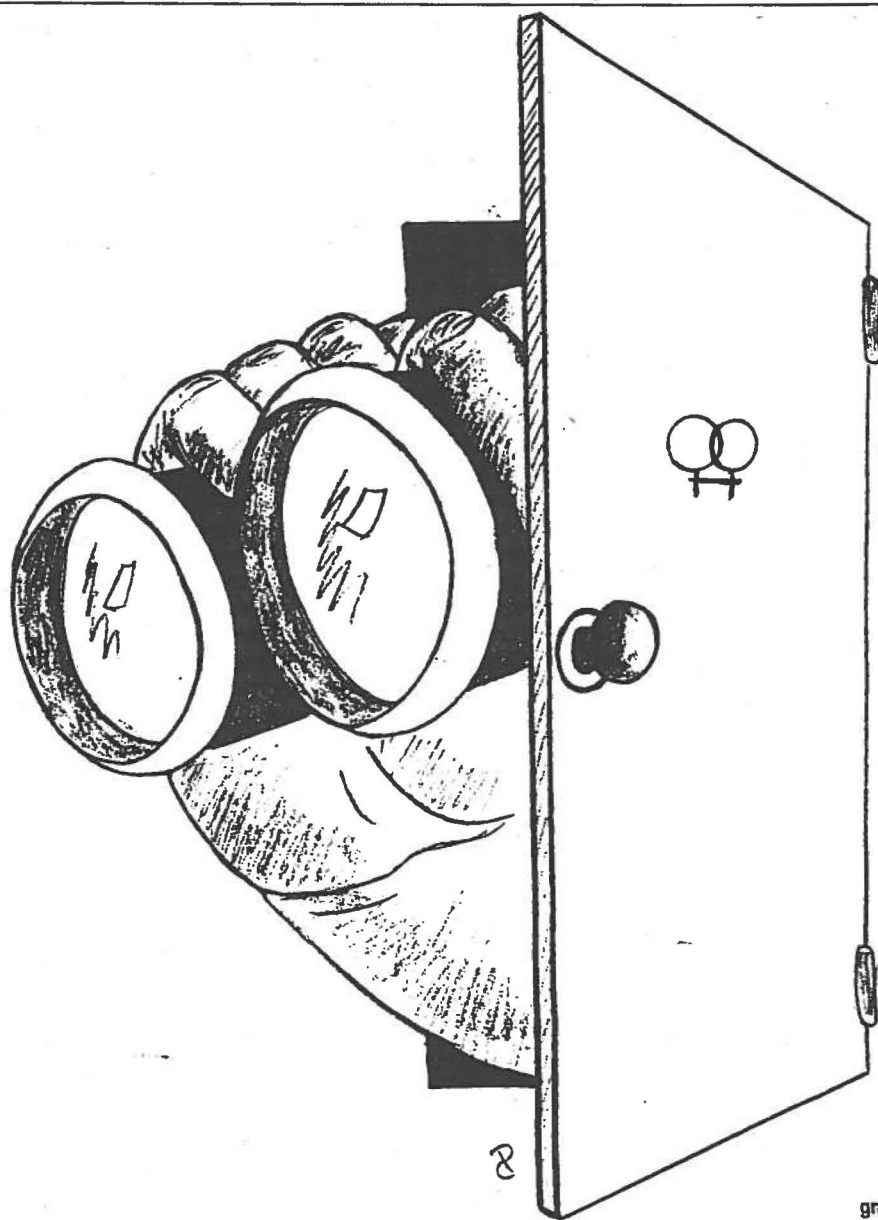
A solution? I haven't seen a workable one yet. As a community, we use our leaders badly. The best of us must often migrate, in hopes of rehabilitation and a more active community. (At least, perhaps there are more burnt out ex-professional lesbians to commiserate with!)

This is a simplistic, personal view of a complex situation. Questions still remain. How can we, as a community, be more supportive of our workers and leaders? How can we channel those initial bursts of enthusiasm into committed political work?

As for myself, I am now an ex-professional lesbian. I have joined Meetings Anonymous. I control my community activity day by

day. I have turned my attention to not becoming an educated bag lady in my old age. I hold a mainstream job: this piece is therefore unsigned. I am still lesbian, still political, but now I can support my political habit and plan for a future. Am I too compromised? I hope not.

□□□□□  
The writer is presently active in only one group and invites comment through Pandora.



graphic by Pat Colp

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March 7, 1987

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Part of International Women's Day celebrations  
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### FEBRUARY

February 27 to March 1, 7:00 and 9:15.

#### ROSA LUXEMBURG

GERMANY, 1986

Dir Margarethe von Trotta, 122 mins., Subtitled.  
AWARDS: BEST ACTRESS, BARBARA SUKOWA, CANNES FILM FESTIVAL, 1986  
West German Director Margarethe von Trotta (SHEER MADNESS, MARIANNE AND JULIANNE) has tackled a project that was on Rainer Werner Fassbinder's drawing board at the time of his death: a dramatized film biography of the great Jewish-Polish-German pacifist Rosa Luxemburg. She spent most of World War I in a German jail opposing the war, and when her Marxist German Social Democratic Party briefly assumed power in the early 1920's she continued, to editorialize against both oppression and violence. Von Trotta wisely manages to keep the action from being buried beneath the weight of the historical material; it appears that Rosa Luxemburg was revolutionary in both her political and personal lives. As a feminist prototype, she has left an intriguing yet still controversial legacy, not the least to Margarethe von Trotta, to whom she is an obvious inspiration. "A world has to be overthrown but every tear, even if wiped away, is an accusation." — Rosa Luxemburg.

### MARCH

March 30 to April 2, 7:00 and 9:00.

#### LAS MADRES: THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO ARGENTINA, 1985

Dir Susana Munoz, Lourdes Portillo, Colour, 65 mins.  
Nominated for an Academy Award as Best Documentary. "I hope never to hear a chant like the one spoken by a mother at the beginning of LAS MADRES. The subtitles say 'Where are our children? Help us, please' but the sounds transcend their language, as if spilling from a bottomless well of human anguish. Since 1978, every Thursday in the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, the mothers have collected to parade the photographs of their missing children. The military responded with charges of 'Marxist subversion' and Argentine society, as in THE OFFICIAL STORY, looked the other way. In seven years of horror over 30,000 people disappeared, many of them idealistic children and, as one mother insists, 'It's normal to be idealistic when you're young. If not you're already old.' — from David Edelstein, The Village Voice. In the end, perhaps the most disquieting aspect of this heartfelt work is that, even with the introduction of a civilian government, very little has been done to correct the injustice.

1588 BARRINGTON ST. HALIFAX 422-3700



# Images transcend logical processes for Redgrave

War bride, mother, art student, junior high art teacher, artist: like so many women of her generation, Felicity Redgrave's life is a succession of roles that have become increasingly more public. With solo exhibitions at Harbourfront, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and the galleries of Mount St. Vincent and St. Mary's Universities, Felicity, in her latest career, has emerged as a vital contributor to the body of Canadian painting.

In 1984, a Canada Council 'B' Grant enabled Felicity to make her first journey to Greece. She plans to return there this summer. You can see works by Felicity Redgrave regularly at Studio 21 on Spring Garden Road.

Joann Latremouille talked with Felicity Redgrave in February.

**Q.** There are several media you might have chosen. I know you were interested in music and dance. Why did you choose painting?

**A.** I was quite musical when I was young. When I got to grade eight, I went up to London once a month for lessons. It was expensive. We were living in Wales. Something was said like, "We don't want to waste your money." Not that crudely, but the better pianists were taken up.

I suppose, inside, if you're turned off, if somebody says you're no good, either you fight it or you don't. You realize the truth of it. With music and with dance, I realized it was true. If people had said that about painting I wouldn't have admitted it. I would have said, "It's not true!" and gone on. Something is tough there.

**Q.** Were you painting before you came to Canada?

**A.** No. I came to Canada right after the war. At first I was raising children. Then I started writing book reviews for a library. When I had more time, I started painting.

As soon as I got some money, I went to Sheridan College in Oakville.

As a student I was lucky to be able to tell myself to be open, although I probably didn't use that word. I could take criticism and correction. I went on to the Universities of Guelph and Toronto, but before I came to Halifax I had only painted as a student.

I had my first show, *Images of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland*, at Harbourfront in 1978. It was two years' work, a response to the landscape here. I painted like a fiend to produce it.

**Q.** Do you feel you are at a disadvantage having started painting later than most artists?

**A.** As a young person I was very energetic. I didn't reflect much, I'm afraid. Later I picked up where I wasn't able to see the way before. My mother was an artist. She did mostly landscapes, oils and water colour. She didn't have much time, of course. I remember her rushing around in her little car delivering work to local shows. She died when I was twelve.

When your life's interrupted by a death, it is interrupted. I think I have been able to pick something up, something I might have done earlier, but not everyone does it at the programmed time. It's not so simple as saying, "My mother did this. Isn't that interesting. I think I'll try." I feel I have had a gift, a curiosity because of her, about learning the skills and techniques until they become second nature. You can't do anything until they are second nature.

**Q.** For me, your show *Night/Spaces* seemed to be the record of a quantum leap in consciousness. How did the work for that show begin?

**A.** In 1982 there was a weird aurora borealis display in August. I was out in the country and got



Felicity Redgrave at home in her studio with a radio 'Couple and Night Radio' and 'Woman and Night Radio.' (photo by Kathleen Flanagan)

all fired up by it. Then I took the astronomy course at St. Mary's University. I could only attend half the classes, so I didn't do very well. I audited astronomy the next year because I knew I didn't understand enough. I came at the subject from a factual angle rather than from a romantic or sentimental angle.

**Q.** One of the curious things about the show was your use of imagery from the Western Mysteries, the tile board, the curtain/veil. Was that a conscious choice?

**A.** No. You have to find your own symbols. You don't always make a conscious choice. If you use symbols they either work or don't work. To find personal imagery requires activity, a close attention to process. You tend to use the symbols that make energy for you. On the conscious level you are just wondering whether a particular image might work. You are not quite sure what to do next. If they don't work for you, you don't have the energy to do them.

Using early astronomical instruments in the drawings and mixed media works was part of a code. I was coming to understand the external objects in the night sky.

The instruments signify the systematic measuring of objects and movement. Astronomy restricts our attention and then defines the limits of the area we seek to isolate in order to understand it more fully. The instruments are also the antithesis of the night sky: formal sky-viewing, sky-measuring versus transcendental space.

Often things happen beforehand. Psychologists have said that if you are going to make a change in your life, you often buy clothes to make yourself look like what you are going to be. That's extraordinary but it's been documented.

I think that might happen with symbols. I was using images from Greece before I actually travelled there. These images are very strong for me. They symbolize the building up of logical thought.

Right now I am using night skies juxtaposed with radios which signify communication. Sometimes the radios are new, current communication. We still don't understand what we are being told or what we are trying to say. With an old radio, you introduce time, communication then. It was all fouled up then, or it was more interesting then, or it was more

specific or less specific then.

**Q.** Until two years ago, you never used human figures in your work. Now as I look around your studio I see many canvasses with figures. How did this change come about?

**A.** *Woman and Night Radio* was the first painting with a human figure. It has the three elements of communication. With the comet I'm dealing with the eternal although I just hate that word. Maybe it's the imminence of the ecosystem. And the communication is to somebody. Is she really listening, or is she listening just because she's waiting, or is the radio just there, so she's listening. With the organic person you have someone who has been trained to take in communication and to give it, as opposed to the specific, constructed communicator, the radio. It's so difficult now to communicate. I'm saying, I hope in a quiet way, what everybody is saying when they are screaming and yelling against war and bombs and poverty. I can't do it that way, but I'm saying it just the same.

Joann Latremouille is a landscape architect and is a freelance arts writer.

## Maritime Magazine



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## Looking to be somebody else

# Women who drink need help from selves, community

Jeanne

In August of last year, my older brother, Johnny, died of acute alcohol poisoning. I never realized how alcohol caused so much damage to friends and family.

He started out as an occasional drinker, but gradually it grew and grew. The same thing was happening to me, and when he died, it really scared me. I took a good look at myself and decided that I didn't want the same thing to happen to me, my friends, and especially my family. I started believing that I could stop, or at least slow down, my drinking, taking it one day at a time.

Many women have drinking

problems but it's too painful to face. We're supposed to be in control of ourselves all the time. I knew I had a problem when I couldn't say no to a drink any more. I'd go down to any bar and start drinking right away. I'd drink just because I needed to fit in; I didn't feel good about myself.

When you drink, you don't have to be yourself; you can be anyone you want to be. I didn't have to deal with my problems. That's fine for a while but then everything catches up to you. At the end of the evening I'd stagger home. The next morning I'd wake up feeling sick and miserable and my problems were still there.

After a while, I started drinking at home because I didn't want people to know how much I drank. In some ways it was easier because I could drink at any time day or night; I didn't have to wait for a bar to open and I didn't have to leave at closing time.

As far as I can tell, many women do the same thing. Women have to stay home and deal with so many responsibilities like taking care of kids, cooking, cleaning, and general housework. There are as many women alcoholics as there are men alcoholics but it's easy to understand why women are not so visible or even recognized as having problems.

Men can go out every night if they choose to. At work some employees have special programs designed for those who want help. Most women have to deal with their own problems themselves, taking it one day at a time.

If anyone ever tells you that they need help, the worst thing that you can say is "Do you think that you need it?" It's hard enough admitting that you want help without having someone question your decision.

People should look at the reasons why they drink and work on some kind of solution or understanding. The struggle is long and hard but if you don't start helping yourself now, who will?

I am feeling better about myself now. I know that the struggle will never be over. In the past few weeks, I've slipped a few times, but I won't lose hope.

□□□□□

Jeanne is dealing with her alcoholism one day at a time. She's finding it hard but very rewarding.

## Feminist magazine funds withheld by government following right wing lobby

Herizons, the women's magazine published in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is contacting women across Canada to help in their lobby effort to keep the magazine alive. They are in danger of closing their doors due to pressure from right-wing groups.

Herizons has received, for the past few years, an operational grant under the Department of Employment and Immigration's Local Employment Assistance and Development program.

The magazine has been told it can not reapply, however, and the government official in charge of the grant has said that the decision was made in reaction to continual pressure from anti-abortion and other right-wing lobby groups.

Herizons has been working towards financial self-sufficiency. The women who work on the magazine feel they should continue to be funded under the L.E.A.D. program until they have reached that goal, probably about two years away.

Feminist periodicals in Canada make a unique and valuable contribution to the cultural and social fabric of Canada. Herizons

is one of those periodicals, and they feel they should be judged on their quality and their financial status instead of being hurt because of political bias.

Herizons has been fortunate to receive funding since they became a national periodical, but the magazine will have to shut down if they can not continue to receive federal assistance.

Herizons is asking women for support. Please write to Benoit Bouchard, Minister of Employment and Immigration, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0C8, urging him to reconsider the decision about Herizons' funding.

## Premier's Message

On behalf of the people of Nova Scotia, I extend sincere good wishes

to all women on March 8, 1987 —

International Women's Day

Sincerely,



John M. Buchanan, P.C., Q.C.  
Premier of Nova Scotia



## Breaking of silence is a Class Act

Alexandra Keir

Arlene Mantle is a singer and songwriter long associated with labour unions, welfare rights and the women's movement. Her latest release, CLASS ACT, is an album of experiences — women's experiences in the 1980's, and valuable documentation of these times.

Arlene is a performer of tremendous strength and energy, qualities very tangible in a live performance, but difficult to achieve on a recording. However, with solid instrumental backup from the Social List, her deep, full-bodied voice comes through loud and clear. The fine sax of Jane Ellerton and intense keyboarding of Marilyn Lerner support Arlene by adding to the jazz - blues feeling of this album.

Class Act records the Shadow Project of 1986, racism, violence against women, women loving women, and the plight of farm labourers. Despite the intensity of the issues involved, the underlying tone conveyed in Class Act is one of hope and strength.

"Sister, Friend, the struggle's long and hard,

you're tired and your spirit's sinking low.

Take a moment, sit back, put your feet up and relax,

reflect on the love that's in your world.

Political\*\*\*\*\*

Entertainment \*\*\*\*

This album is available at Red Herring Bookstore in Halifax, the Pictou County Women's Centre in New Glasgow, or by writing On The Line Music Collective, 692 Coxwell Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M4C 3B6. 416-469-3405.

□□□□□

Alexandra Keir is a rural feminist from Pictou County who works with women's health issues.

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# Shack Wackies howling for companionship

Dianne Crowell

It's that time of year again. Shack Wacky time! Perhaps some of you recognize this state as cabin fever. Cabin fever is much too tame an expression for me.

An example of Shack Wacky? Well, I was visiting a friend who also lives alone in the country (although not as isolated), watching the movie "Silence of the North". In one scene, the womyn character, having been without adult interaction for several days, starts hearing howling voices and runs outside, howling, herself. My friend was perplexed and asked what was happening to the womyn. I glanced up from my book (I'd already seen the movie): "Shack Wacky".

"Huh?" my eloquent friend asked.

"Well, sometimes when the silence becomes too loud, a womyn can go a little stir crazy and do things that might be considered unusual, like hearing voices and joining in the chorus."

"Oh", she replied. A big talker,

my friend. I could tell she wondered how I so easily recognized the symptoms, and quickly returned to my book to avoid further questions. After all, it was an evening of companionship and popcorn and I didn't really want to dwell on those belly-bowl deep times when I had succumbed to the Shack Wacky snapdragons.

What I avoided telling her was about the time I howled so loudly the neighbour's dog came a mile and a half to investigate, or the time I waded through waist deep snow to say hello to my surprised friend. We got totally strung out on coffee and talked at each other for a couple of hours. But, it had been well worth the struggle and renewed my yearly pledge to buy snowshoes.

Now, there are signs that one is close to an encounter with the Shack Wackies. I suspect these differ for each of us solo backwoods dwellers, but I'll share a few of my own warning signals.

The preliminary, relatively harmless, symptoms are things

like being startled when your phone rings, having casual conversations with your pets (I have two fluent dogs), personifying your vehicle (I haven't yet named my truck), and chatting with Peter Gzowski as if Morningside was happening in your kitchen. Cause for concern is when a superficial conversation with a salesclerk makes your whole week; you're not sure which is more, your phone bill or your rent; your mother (if she lives close by) offers you money to go away for a weekend; you start feeling as if

you've lost a friend when you finish a novel because you become so attached to the characters; Joan Crawford's character on the late show looks friendly; you stay so late at work you make friends with the janitorial staff; your friends are irritated because you're sure you've already discussed an issue with them (you have, but they weren't present) and, well, I could go on, but you know you're in real trouble when people you've never considered attractive start looking possible.

There are certain precautions a

womyn living alone in the country can take. Have extra reading material and an extensive variety. Don't drag yourself down always trying to read the "politically correct" feminist theory. A few tacky novels should be close at hand. Try not to take friends' casual promises to visit soon seriously.

Visits can be too important to someone living alone and isolated and so, unless you have an exact date, such promises can be very disappointing.

Be aware of community groups. It may not be appropriate to join, but quite often these groups have little extras that can be done by outsiders. Plan something important at least once every two weeks. Finally, if the Shack Wacky snapdragons do envelope you, go with it. Personally, I've become so adept at howling, I'm convinced I was a wolf in a past life. If all else fails, pack it in and head south. I am.

Since returning from Vancouver three years ago, Dianne has been a solo backwoods dweller in a beautiful old farmhouse in Yarmouth County.



Dianne and JesSea

photo by Sara avMaat

## Networking puts women's groups on-line

Pat Dingle

Pandora's Networking Project has changed focus. Initially, the project concentrated on updating contact and mailing lists from women's groups and individual women, as well as from the mailing and subscription list that we had developed at the paper.

These lists would be put together into a small computerized

database on Pandora's newly acquired Macintosh.

After our first mailout, it seemed clear that womens' groups in the province didn't have a lot of new names to enter on the coalition list. Instead, they wanted to be able to gain access to the compiled list of names, to update their own lists, and possibly to try out a Macintosh.

To that end, Pandora has opened its own series of computer education workshops to other women in the community.

These workshops have offered a hands-on experience with the Macintosh and with various Macintosh applications, to facilitate letters, mailing lists, mailouts and desk top publishing. Workshops, as needed, are planned for later in the

spring. Pandora's own mailing list is computerized as of this issue.

For more information, please contact Pat Dingle, Networking Project, c/o Pandora, P.O. Box 1209 North, Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4

(This project was made possible by a grant from Secretary of State.)

### WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH

2nd Floor  
5194 Blowers St.  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
422-8023

Sponsored by  
the Halifax YWCA  
Funded by CEIC

#### Offers free workshops for women in

- Resume writing
- Job search techniques
- Interview skills
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- Assertiveness training
- Confidence building

For more information  
422-8023  
(free childcare)

### This summer at Saint Mary's

First Session: May 13 to June 25, 1987

Second Session: July 6 to August 18, 1987

- Management courses in marketing, personnel and finance.
- Degrees and professional certificates may be obtained entirely by part-time study in the evenings.
- Normal entrance requirements are not applicable to mature students.

For a copy of the 1987 Summer Program, contact:

Continuing Education  
Saint Mary's University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3H 3C3  
Phone: 429-9780

## Greetings!

March 8, 1987  
International Women's Day

As we  
celebrate  
our solidarity  
with women  
everywhere!

Alexa McDonough, MLA  
Halifax Chebucto  
Leader, Nova Scotia NDP





# Notices/Calendar

Would you like your meetings, events, and general goings-on listed in Pandora's Calendar?

If so, please contact Amanda at 835-9435 or leave a message at 454-4977.

The deadline for material for the June calendar: Friday May 8.

## Notices

•Women's Employment Outreach, 422-8023, job hunting workshops, 9:30 am March 3, April 7, and May 5.

•North Shore Environmental Web urges the public to contact the forest management group venture in their immediate area, the local Lands and Forests Office, Scott and Stora, and appropriate politicians and demand that community public meetings be held where both sides of the B.T. spraying issue can be heard. The Web will be prepared to speak at democratically organized community meetings on the forestry, health and environmental reasons why B.T. should not be sprayed on our forests. Contact Joanne Kohout, 752-5108 or Bernadette MacDonald at 485-8202 for more information.

•Spring and Summer session courses, Mount St. Vincent University: "Intro to Women's Studies", "Focus on Women", "Women, Violence and Social Control, and others, too. Call 443-4450.

•M.U.M.S. meetings now every Sunday, 1:00 pm, Veith House. Everyone welcome. For information call 435-1720 or 466-6321.

•For information on gay and lesbian events and groups, call 454-6551. Gay Alliance for Equality.

•Atlantic Gays and Lesbians in health care and social services is a group which offers support and information to each other about issues affecting us and our gay and lesbian clients. For more information call Liz at 422-3785 or Ken 425-6967.

•Coming Forward, a group for lesbians, meets every second Monday at Radclyffe Hall, 5559 Macara St, Halifax at 7:30 pm.

•Feminist lesbian caucus meets to discuss issues around living as lesbians in a heterosexist society. Some of us are also interested in direct action projects. Call 455-1287 for more information.

•The Abortion Information Referral Service has been revived!! by CARAL/Halifax for women seeking

information on abortions (how to obtain one, what the options are, etc.) The line will be in effect within a couple of months: the number is listed in the White Pages (1987 version) under AIRS and CARAL/Halifax and is also listed in the Yellow Pages under Counselling and Information Services. Contact CARAL/Halifax group, 835-9435.

•CARAL (Canadian Abortion Rights Action League) meetings, 7:30 pm, Archives, University Ave. March 25, April 29, May 27, June 24, Sept. 23, Oct 28, Nov 25/87. Amanda, 835-9435.

•Basic upgrading courses in reading, math, English at the North Branch Library, Gottingen St. Minimal cost. 421-6987 or 421-6988.

•Call Karen, 454-7006 for next meeting of "Students Taking Action for Nuclear Disarmament" (STAND).

•Volunteer tutors required to assist adults and students in elementary and junior high school subjects. Phone Veith House Outreach Tutoring Services, 453-4320.

•Patchwork Community Women's Resource Centre, Dalhousie University, will offer lunchtime films every Thursday for six weeks starting January 22. Subjects to be discussed include young women, image and women in society, older women, and native women. Call Patchwork, 424-2526 or drop by the basement of 1247 Seymour Street in Halifax.

•LAIG (Latin American Information Group) meets 7:30 pm the first Tuesday of each month at the Oxfam-Deveric office, 1649 Barrington Street, Halifax.

•Coalition Against Apartheid meets at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month at the Oxfam-Deveric office, 1649 Barrington Street, Halifax.

•Listen to Women's Music on Sundays 7-8 pm on CKDU 97.5 FM in Halifax.

•Women's Times, a 15-minute radio show about women's issues on CKDU 97.5 FM Tuesdays at 5:30 pm in Halifax.

•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.

•The Pictou County Women's Centre in New Glasgow, N.S. has established a Rape Line. This line offers confidentiality, anonymity, information, and peer counselling for female victims of sex abuse, incest, and rape. The line is

staffed by volunteers. Phone 752-2233.

•The second edition of "Understanding the Law: A 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 DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN) of Nova Scotia invites all women who are disabled, or who wish to work with disabled women, to call Marg Hiltz, 5651 Ogilvie Street, Apt. 1016, Halifax B3H 1B9

•Halifax Professional Women's Network monthly meeting, Sheraton Hotel, 5:30 pm. 1st Monday each month 429-3131

## March

March 3

•"Women and Post-Partum Depression". Dr. Patti Pearce, Camp Hill Hospital. Halifax City Regional Library, 5381 Spring Garden Rd, Halifax, 7:30 pm.

March 4

•CRIA (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women). Women and Sport: presentation and discussion. Pat DeMont, 443-4450.

•Movies: Nuclear Addiction and Behind the Veil: Nuns at 7:00 pm at National Film Board, 1571 Argyle Street, Halifax. Free

March 5

•Informal session and discussion: Divorce: Separation and Family Maintenance; 7:30 pm, North Branch Library, Gottingen Street

March 7

•Celebrate International Women's Day at the Women's Fair at Bloomfield School. Call Patchwork Women's Centre, 424-2526.

•IWD women's dance at Veith House, 8-12 pm, childcare, wheelchair accessible, \$2 unwaged, \$4 and \$6 waged.

March 8

•It's International Women's Day ... Hurrah ... Hurrah ... Sisterhood is powerful!!!

March 10

•Dr. Pat Beresford and Debbie Kaetz: Presentation and discussion on Pre-Menstrual Syndrome, 7:30 pm, Halifax City Regional Library, 5381 Spring Garden Rd

March 11

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith Street. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info

•Halifax Professional Women's Network: "Taking the Myths out of Buying a Computer", 7:30 pm, Pearson Institute, 1321 Edward St, Halifax. 429-3131.

•Three films on women in politics, The Lady from Grey County, Flora: Scenes from a Leadership Convention, and The Right Candidate for Rosedale at National Film Board Theatre, 1571 Argyle Street, Halifax, at 7 and 9 pm. Free

March 16

•Women's Health and Medicine (WHAM) 7:30pm, Health Professionals' Lounge, Charles Tupper Medical Bldg, Dalhousie.

March 25

•Halifax Professional Women's Network: "Our Own Entrepreneurs", Citadel Inn. 429-3131.

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith St. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info.

March 28

•Voice of Women: Day of Renewal, Unitarian Church, 5500 Inglis St Registration 9:00 am. Brown bag lunch, pot-luck supper.

March 30

•Media Watch meeting, 7:30 pm, National Film Board office. Joan Semple, 469-3741.

•CCLOW meeting 7pm, YWCA, 1239 Barrington St. "Community Colleges: What does NS need?"

## April

April 8

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith St. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info, etc..

April 11-12

•Founding Convention of the newly-formed Women's Action Coalition of N.S. in Halifax. Call Patchwork, 424-2526.

April 20

•Women's Health and Medicine (WHAM), Health Professionals' Lounge, 7:30 pm, Charles Tupper Medical Bldg, Dalhousie.

April 22

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith St. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info, etc.

•Halifax Professional Women's Network: Finding our Unique Potential in the Workplace, Sheraton Hotel. 429-3131.

April 23

•Concert by Kin Lalat, Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, 8 pm. Part of a

Guatemala Cultural Tour. Tickets \$8/\$5. DEVERIC, 429-1370.

April 24-25

•Conference: Alternatives to the arms industry, speaker Solanges Vincentat. Voice of Women or Suellen Bradford, 423-7706.

April 27

•Media Watch, 7:30 pm, National Film Board, Halifax. Joan Semple, 469-3741.

•CCLOW meeting, 7 pm, YWCA, 1239 Barrington St., Halifax. Topic: Financial assistance for mature and part-time students.

## May

May 1

•May Day! Celebrate the solidarity of workers everywhere....

May 1-3

•Women's Health Education Network (WHEN) conference on Our Environment, Our Selves, Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S. 542-4158, or write P.O. Box 832, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0.

May 6

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith St. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info

May 8-11

•National Action Committee on the Status of Women annual general meeting and lobby, Ottawa, Ontario. Deborah Poff, Atlantic Rep, 443-4450 or 423-9476.

May 18

•Women's Health and Medicine (WHAM), 7:30 pm, Health Professionals' Lounge, Charles Tupper Medical Bldg, Dalhousie.

May 20

•Regular Pandora meeting, 7:30 pm, Veith House, 3115 Veith St. All women welcome. 454-4977 for ride, childcare info

•Halifax Professional Women's Network annual Members' Trade Show, Lord Nelson Hotel. 429-3131.

May 25

•Media Watch, 7:30 pm, National Film Board. Joan Semple, 469-3741.

# THIS IS IMPORTANT!

Pandora's phone number and address have changed.

Please call and/or write:

**Pandora**  
P.O. Box 1209  
North Postal Station  
Halifax, NS  
B3K 5H4  
902-454-4977

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Community \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a renewal? \_\_\_\_\_

A supporting subscription for 4 issues is \$5.  
Outside Canada, \$10, institutions \$15

Please indicate if you do not want your name included on our mailing list for women's groups \_\_\_\_\_

## We have received some anonymous letters

Pandora will print letters, even articles, that women feel they cannot sign.

At least two Pandora women must know the woman's real name, however,

they must have a contact number for her.

We must also understand the reason why she is writing anonymously.

While we obviously prefer that women

write under their own names,

we also recognize that various oppressions

often make this impossible.