

Lifting the lid off

free!

but CHARGED

# Kandora

Volume Three Number Three

March, 1988 Halifax, Nova Scotia

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“Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a foetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations, is a profound interference with a woman's body....”

# Students reclaim power: Graffiti embarrasses university professors

**Brenda Beagan**

I'd like to share with you a story of organizing to deal with sexual harassment. The department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University now has an internal committee on sexual harassment in addition to the one at the university. As a member of the departmental committee, I am in a position to know its history.

One morning in December, 1986, faculty, staff and students arrived at the sociology building to discover the

harassment that had been taking place in the department and said they were no longer willing to tolerate the situation.

Immediately, a committee was formed to "investigate the issue" (the Canadian way of problem-solving!) It is now a permanent departmental committee and includes representatives of faculty, staff and students. I am one of the student representatives.

One of the first things we did was call a meeting of women students to discuss sexual harassment. During that meeting we drew up a list of examples

making it easier for women to avoid sexual harassment, or to resist it when they face it. Of course, these changes did not go unopposed. But after many meetings and much argument, all our recommendations were approved — though unfortunately some were watered down a bit in the process.

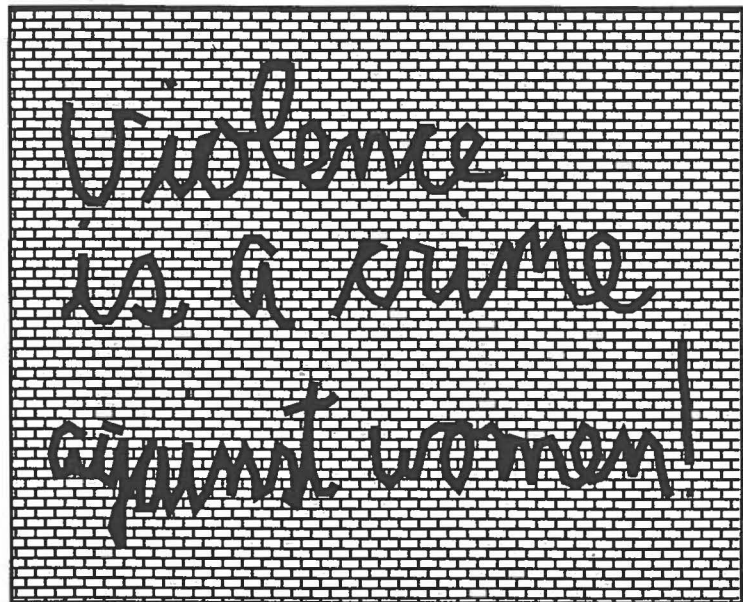
We now have an "open-door" policy — faculty must keep their office doors open when students are in their offices, unless both agree otherwise. We now have a "double-marking" system — a student who is having problems with a professor can have her papers/exams graded by someone else. Without this safeguard, a student was unprotected and the fear of failing could prevent her from charging her professor with harassment through the "proper" university channels.

We have revised our course evaluation questionnaires (which evaluate the course and the professor), to include questions on sexual harassment. Finally, we have had speakers come to address both faculty and students, separately, discussing what harassment is and what channels exist for those who are being harassed. We have also distributed similar information to all of our classes.

There have been a variety of reactions to our activity around sexual harassment. Some male professors were genuinely concerned that they might unknowingly be acting in ways which made students uncomfortable. Others seemed hostile to the whole issue and denied that there was a problem at all. Some expressed alarm that the students were getting "out of hand." The overwhelming response was concern that the department should not look bad — at least no worse than any other department on campus. (Apparently if it's going on everywhere then it really isn't a problem and nothing need be done about it!)

of women's actual experiences of harassment in the department. These examples were really helpful later, when the committee submitted our recommendations — most faculty members were so horrified by our descriptions of some rather gross experiences that our proposals were approved with very few objections!

We have made some changes that we hope will improve the situation, by



words "Sexual Harassment is a Crime Against Women" spray-painted, in large black letters, on one male professor's office door. (Understandably, no one has ever taken credit for the graffiti... which was painted over and covered up by 10:00 that morning.) At the same time, professors found under their office doors a memo from an anonymous group of women students in which they described the sorts of



"HELLO, DARLING. WE'RE CONDUCTING A POLL ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT."

(Cartoon from Reflecting Men)

As is often the case with feminist political activity, it was difficult to keep from fighting on their terms, to insist on the priorities we identified. For example, there was a lot of discussion about the right of professors to teach what they want, how they want, free from scrutiny; there was surprisingly little discussion about the right of women to study what they want, free from sexual insults and advances.

Also, there was strong resistance to seeing this issue in terms of women's oppression. The sexual inequality and power imbalance at the base of sexual harassment needed constant reiteration. The fact that sexual harassment is a problem faced overwhelmingly by women (in every aspect of our work lives and personal lives), and very rarely faced by men, was ignored or denied. As a result, everything had to be put in gender-neutral terms and our committee had to have equal representation for men.

I've drawn some conclusions from our experience over this past year, which may be useful for women attempting similar activity:

1. It's essential to keep talking to

one another, as women. That was the first step toward power for us. As individuals we had individual problems which we had to face alone; as a group we had a collective concern, fear became anger, and we began to insist on our right to be free of harassment.

2. Embarrassment can be very effective! Whoever did the spray-painting got the ball rolling and made it clear the issue had to be taken seriously. (It also seemed to make most of the men vaguely self-conscious and uncomfortable for a while... a rather nice change.) Also the embarrassing descriptions of experienced harassment really helped silence opposition.

3. Don't be satisfied with the setting up of a committee; unless you can make it work for you, it may be worse than useless. Worse, because it makes those in power look good — they've done their bit and needn't do anything more.

4. It's surprising how much you can accomplish if you just keep making a nuisance of yourself!

♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

Brenda is a Sociology student at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

Nova Scotia



**Advisory Council on  
the Status of Women**

"We must celebrate even small victories  
in order to strengthen ourselves  
for the rest of the long slow walk  
to full equality"

**Celebrate International Women's Day  
March 8, 1988**



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# No consensus reached during abortion debate

**Brenda Beagan**

On February 8, 1988, I attended the debate "Beyond Morgentaler: The Legal, Social and Medical Consequences of the Supreme Court Decision" at Dalhousie Law School. I was unnerved at first by the lack of familiar faces and the abundance of business-suited men in the audience. But then the law school is not my usual turf.

Moderator Richard Devlin, assistant professor of law, introduced the panelists, saying the debates about abortion to date have created a lot of heat, and shed very little light.

The first panelist Wayne McKay, professor of law, attempted to summarize the Supreme Court's decision. He thought the dissenting judgement, which limits Constitutional protection to those rights we have "normally" protected, was a backward-looking view of the Constitution. The majority decision was based not on jurisprudence, not on abstract ideas of liberty, but on the real lives of women under

the old abortion law. That law violated women's right to security of the person, physically and psychologically. Its application, with unequal access and arbitrary delays, was procedurally flawed. On these bases alone it had to be struck down.

Only Justice Bertha Wilson found the notion of any legislation limiting women's reproductive rights problematic. McKay quoted Wilson's claim that "it is probably impossible for a man to respond, even imaginatively" to abortion. Interestingly, most of the men in the audience laughed at this.

Nina Ross, National Alliance for Life board-member, objected to the Supreme Court's creating social policy, rather than simply interpreting the law. She criticized the emphasis on women's rights: "What happens to fathers' rights if we allot all rights to one member of the family — the mother?"

(A disturbing distortion of reality, I thought). Ross did, however, go a bit beyond the usual rhetoric to emphasize the need for social support for all those involved in a "crisis pregnancy" — the mother, father, and fetus. She did not elaborate on this.

Professor of philosophy Nathan Brett concentrated on the difficulty of choosing a framework within which to conduct the abortion debate — a necessary step before creating just legislation. The central issue, he claimed, is whether the fetus is a person. It is impossible to adjudicate between religious views. Furthermore, scientific evidence of life from conception is insufficient: "life" is not necessarily a person with rights. The difficulty in the

abortion debate, Brett concluded, is the ambiguity of the term "human being."

Kathy Coffin, National Vice-President of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL), opened by saying, "I've been called many things in the past week. I want to make it clear that I am pro-life, pro-birth, pro-family, and pro-choice". Coffin avoided debating the issue on the usual (fetus-centered) terms, even when faced with hostile questions. She maintained an analysis of abortion as one aspect of women's reproductive rights, focussing on what CARAL would like to see happen next.

Coffin said there is no need for most (uncomplicated) abortions to be performed in hospitals, and that free-standing clinics, and women's health clinics might be cheaper, safer, and more humane. She emphasized that women themselves prefer early abor-

**...it is probably impossible for a man to respond, even imaginatively, to abortion**

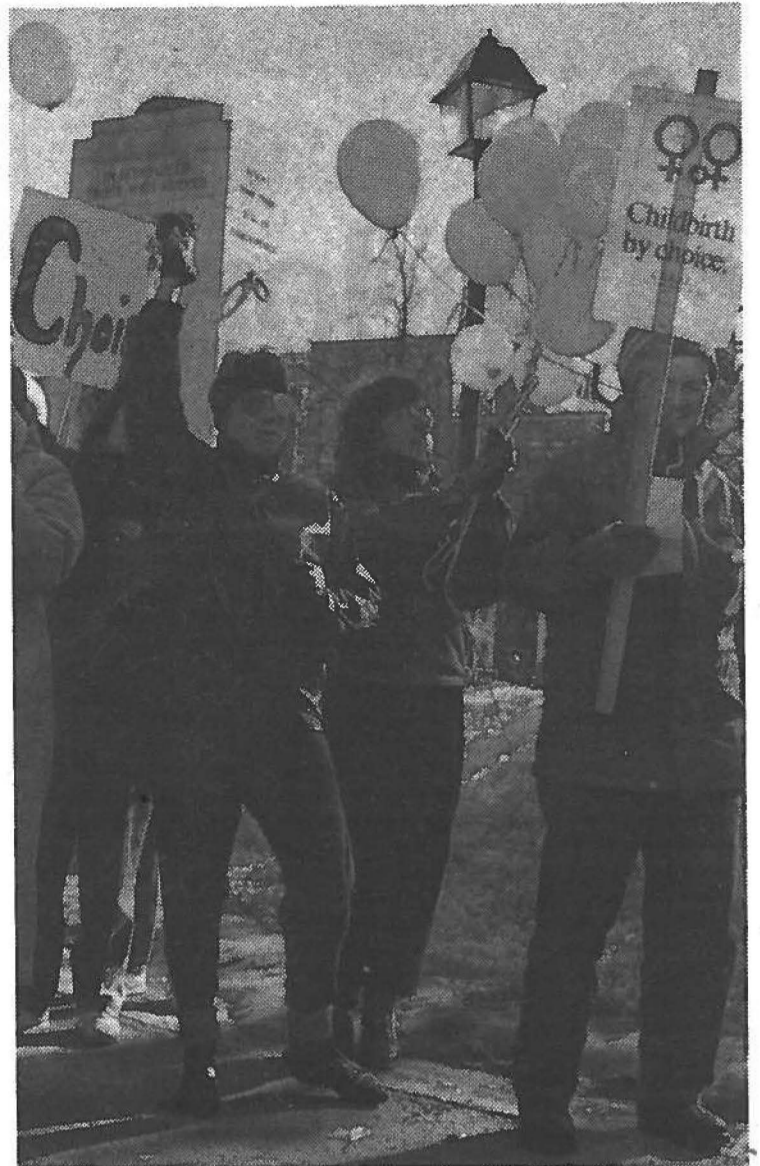
tions, and stressed the need for sex education and safe, effective contraception. Coffin argued against further legislation at this point, at least until we have examined access to abortion, abortion rates, and comparative data on clinics vs. hospitals. She said she has no faith in legislators, and would prefer to put her trust in the hands of women.

Major Eleanor Johnston, Executive Director of Grace Maternity Hospital, made her anti-abortion stance clear throughout her discussion of the impact on the health care system. Johnston focussed on the urgent choices to be made by hospital boards, health insurance boards, doctors, politicians, and voters — choices which will have costs. She questioned whether we are prepared to spend a great deal of money "on the few [women needing abortions?] to the detriment of the many." She questioned whether we will accept increased taxes "to pay for the increased activity" (she seemed unable to say the word

abortion). Johnston concluded that we must make these choices and live with our consciences.

One issue raised during the question period is worthy of note. Colleen MacKey, a second year law student, questioned the assumption that the state has a justified interest in the fetus at any point during pregnancy, asking what exactly that state interest is. She pointed out that the state takes no comparable interest in any organs other than reproductive ones, and in no other instance requires by law that any person take comparable measures to maintain and protect another person's life.

Apart from Ms. MacKey's inter-



Women rally in Halifax the day after the Supreme Court announced its decision on the Morgentaler case. (Photo by Brenda Conroy)

vention, an explicitly feminist, woman-centered perspective was regrettably absent from this debate. In fact there were no surprises here. The positions were predictable, given the academic setting. Sorry Richard, this debate neither created much heat, nor shed much light on the consequences of

the Morgentaler decision.

□□□□□

Brenda Beagan is a sociology student at Dalhousie University. Lately she seems to spend far more time doing things like writing this article than she does doing school work!

## Choosing health care workers requires questioning, evaluating

**Alexandra Keir**

"Well, s/he must know," many of us will say of our doctors. We really want to believe that we are in the hands of a superior health care worker. This may not be so. In an emergency, we may have little control over what treatment or doctor we have, but in choosing our regular doctor, dentist, therapist, obstetrician, gynecologist, we can have a lot of control.

The attitudes and perceptions held by our health workers about health, class, race, sexuality, aging and women, to name a few, can certainly have a great effect on the quality of health care that we receive.

The presumption that the whole world is heterosexual (heterosexism) and the fear of homosexuality (homophobia) particularly affect the health care that lesbians, bisexuals, celibates, and transsexuals receive. Many of these women may be very cautious about revealing their lifestyle to anyone, including health care givers, because they cannot be sure of the response.

It becomes quickly obvious that going to a doctor may be more stressful than living with a particular ailment. Experiences of negative, hostile or moralistic responses may inhibit her from seeking health care in the future. The relationship between a woman

and her doctor is rarely one based on equality. Information has power, and many doctors work to maintain the imbalance. An example of this is when we are called from the waiting room by our first name by someone we may address as doctor.

For women on a limited income, a prescription may well exceed her budget and she may leave the office unable to follow the treatment and unable to say so.

The language of medical science and of alternative health practitioners can also work to maintain the power imbalance. Health workers who persist in using this kind of language may have clients who leave the office without understanding the diagnosis.

Recently, in a childbirth education class, a woman who was scheduled for a Cesarean section didn't know why one was necessary.

Many women have difficulty dealing with doctors and choices about treatments. Some of us have come to the point of seeking out two or three opinions so that we may select the treatment that sounds right to us.

Although we are all looking for health workers, we do have different needs and expectations of our relationships with them. A place to start can be asking friends who their health workers are and what their experiences have

been with them. Some women find it helpful to interview a few doctors at a time when they don't need one. Doing this with a friend can be useful for support and for evaluation.

It is important for us to find and support those health workers with whom we can have a relationship based on mutual respect.

Some evaluation questions that some women use after a visit or interview with a doctor are: Did s/he listen to me? Did s/he make stereotypical presumptions about me? Did s/he take her/his time? Did I feel rushed? Did s/he explain things slowly and clearly? Did s/he let me know of options in treatment? Did s/he tell me about possible side effects with medications? Was s/he clear about how and when medication should be taken?

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective has a file of answers to questions like these written by women about their experiences with different health care workers. This file is available to other women who are looking for a health care worker. Perhaps one day Halifax will have a similar file.

□□□□□

Alexandra Keir lives in rural Pictou County, teaches childbirth education and works on other health issues of concern to women.

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Join us for a week-long celebration of International Women's Day, March 4-11, 1988

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**"Women In Development" public lecture** with Susan Brown, Canadian International Development Agency. Monday evening, March 7, Seton Academic Centre  
**International Women's Day Rally** dancing, singing, story-telling, theatre Tuesday, March 8, noon-2 p.m., Auditorium B, Seton Academic Centre  
**All-day Film Festival** Wednesday, March 9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Art Gallery, Seton Academic Centre  
**Worship services** Tuesday and Wednesday, March 8 & 9, 4:15 p.m., Our Lady of Wisdom Chapel, Evaristus Hall  
**Pub Night — Women only** Thursday, March 10, 7:30 p.m., Vinnie's Pub, Rosaria Centre



Call for details: 443-4450, ext 123  
 Mount Saint Vincent University

# 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 reserve the right to edit, especially for length. However, we will let you know if we make substantial changes. Please write to us.

Our editorial guidelines continue to evolve. See Issue 2-4 (June, 1987) for more details and let us know if you have concerns about material that appears in the paper.

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#### NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS:

Pandora is now being distributed free to various locations throughout the province, due to a lack of womanpower to do the distribution to and follow-up of bookstores. The editorial committee also feels that free distribution will allow us to make the paper available in other outlets such as libraries, health clinics, etc. (If any of you women out there would be willing to do distribution in your areas, please let us know.) This is in no way a statement that Pandora has so much money that it no longer needs to charge for the paper. We are, in fact, hoping to get more subscribers this way. If you want the paper mailed to you, 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 to help support the paper.

Cover: Photos by Brenda Conroy

Presswork by Kentville Publishing

# We don't want to put our energies into promoting men's work

One of our hardworking members said to me recently that she'd been having an argument with some people who think we're not being fair by refusing to let men be involved in and write for Pandora. "Aren't we being just as bad as men if we exclude them?" "Oh," I groaned, "I can't even be bothered wasting my time arguing with men about this." "Well actually," she said, "these were women."

Well that brought me up short. I don't see it as a waste of time talking to women about the philosophies of Pandora.

Is there anyone who doubts that women have much, much less opportunity than men to express themselves?

Start looking around you at the newspapers that come out daily. Start listening to radio stations, even the alternative ones.

It is mostly men who write and talk and make music and take photographs. And that is no accident. We live in a society which encourages men to take themselves seriously and which encourages women to diet.

We live in a society which gives the good jobs to men, which pays them more, which values their activities and which gives women the monumental tasks of taking care of the home and children whether or not they also have minimum wage jobs outside the home. The fact that most women bear this double burden doesn't give them a lot of time or space to be creative.

It is true that things have changed since the current rise of the women's movement. There are a few women in good jobs, a few women broadcasters and journalists and photographers, but the fact remains that the overwhelming presence in the media is male. And, as Sharon Fraser pointed out at the

Women in the Media panel (see last issue), those women who do work in the business have little choice but to concentrate on subjects defined by males as important. Better not try to do "women stuff" too often if you are not to be ridiculed (or worse).

A male friend of mine commented that it was interesting to see women in all the photos in Pandora—quite a change from most newspapers. That prompted me to do a small counting exercise of women and men in our two local newspapers.

I only did four days because I soon got bored with finding that only one in five of the people in the photos were women. A stranger to this planet might very well believe (as I heard a broadcaster say the other day) that women were a "minority," if she took her information from our local rags.

I find this sort of counting exercise interesting if depressing. For example, try counting women and men on television or movie credits, as singers of songs or presenters on the radio, or any number of other ways in which the media impinges upon our lives. Our local CBC news presentation with three women and one man is the exception, not the norm.

Pandora comes out once every three months; that is only four times a year. And it is the result of a few women working very hard in their precious spare time for no money—because they want to give women a voice. If we could manage to put the paper out once a week it still wouldn't be enough to redress the balance of male bias in the media. I honestly can't take seriously the accusation that we're not being fair.

But for me, fairness isn't the only issue. If you let men in, they take over. Dale Spender, whose excellent book

Man Made Language debunks the myth of women as the talkative sex, tape recorded hundreds of mixed-sex conversations.

She found that men always talked more, interrupted 99% of the time, and insisted that the conversations proceed according to their definitions. Armed with this knowledge, she taped some of her own conversations with men where she tried as hard as she could to talk at least 50% of the time. The men were outraged, accused her of being rude and aggressive, and sometimes stomped away in disgust. The most she ever managed to talk, despite her unladylike tactics, was 42%.

I know from my own experience that she is right. In any group situation, classes or meetings for instance, though the men may be in the minority, they always talk for a far greater proportion of the time than their numbers would indicate, and even hardened feminists like Dale Spender find it hard to combat this way of things which we've been trained in since birth.

Sisters, if you want to get together to discuss women's issues, beware of letting men into your groups, lest you find them defining your agenda and your problems, and then proceeding to "solve" them for you.

Brenda Conroy

The Pandora collective is pleased to inform our readers that we have turned down a 6 X 7 inch advertisement for this issue because the person being advertised has publicly stated his opposition to freedom of choice on abortion. Having principles can be costly, but standing up for them is more valuable than any mere financial income.



Some members of the M.U.M.S. helped us to package and distribute the December issue of Pandora. Shown here are Frances Butler and Darlene Dacey. We are always in need of volunteers to help with this task. If you are interested, please contact Pandora. (Photo by Brenda Conroy)



## Self-insemination an option

**Pandora:**

Yvonne De Roller's article about her experience of artificial insemination, which mentions the Grace Hospital's decision to offer AI only to married couples who use the husband's sperm, prompts me to tell another story.

A close friend of mine in England is a lesbian mother. She was part of a group of lesbian feminists who met

together to work out a way of artificially inseminating themselves. They charted their fertility cycles, organized donors, inseminated themselves and got pregnant.

As a group, they continued to support each other during the early years of being parents and they offered advice and support to other women trying to get pregnant without a man.

I tell this story because I want to illustrate that it is possible for women to inseminate themselves without any "help" from the medical profession. Most women can fairly easily figure out when they are fertile and there are various non-traditional ways of getting semen into the vagina. What is probably most difficult for heterosexual women on their own, lesbians, or even heterosexual couples where the man's sperm won't work, is finding donor sperm and sorting out all the many personal, practical, medical and legal issues which arise as a result (for the woman, her partner, and the donor).

I know of two books which go into all these issues (and more) in detail and there may be others. One of them, *Having a Baby Without a Man*, by Susan Robinson and H.F. Pizer can be found in the Halifax Main Branch Library. The other book on getting pregnant on your own was inspired by the experience of my friend's lesbian mothers group and is available from the Women's Health Information Centre, 52 Featherstone St., London, England EC1Y 8RT. (Sorry I don't know the exact title or the price.)

Brenda Conroy,  
Halifax

## Pandora's letter policy

Pandora's policies are constantly shifting and evolving to effectively meet the needs of our paper. The following is an outline of our present policy relating to letters submitted for publication.

\*\*\*

Pandora reserves the right to publish only letters that fall within the guidelines of our editorial policy: letters must be written by women and be women-positive; we do not accept material that is intolerant or oppressive.

We prefer that letters are in direct response to an article or current concern. Should it refer to an article appearing in Pandora, the author of the article will be contacted and given an opportunity to respond.

We will print letters anonymously, but at least two women in Pandora must know the woman's real name and have a contact number for her.

Pandora reserves the right to edit for length; however, the writer will be notified should this be necessary. We request that all letters include a phone number so we may contact the writer should it become necessary.

## Reader expresses concern over "mainstream" news

**Pandora:**

As an activist on women's health issues, I am writing to express my concern about two articles dealing with health issues in the December Pandora.

Brenda Conroy's news flash, Down's Syndrome Test Available Within Year, although interesting news, seems a very mainstream medical approach — reporting without comment.

That women already scheduled for (or as the article says "about to have an abortion") are asked if they will volunteer for chorionic villi sampling leaves me wondering when women are asked. Although the procedure is perhaps not painful to most women and perhaps has few known side-effects, how much are women told? That CVS has been accepted in the USA and in England in no way assures me that it is safe as this article perhaps suggests.

The other article is "Examining your breasts could save your life" by Willi Broeren. First, the title is misleading, as Ms Broeren points out in her article, "there is no concrete evidence that BSE decreases mortality", it does appear that early detection and treatment may prolong life; however recurrences are common.

This article, too is mainstream news. It is certainly valid as the medical approach, however I feel that in an "alternative to mainstream media" alternatives must appear.

My expectations for Pandora are high, and on health issues I need feminist alternatives to mainstream medical media.

In strength,  
Alex Keir, Pictou County

## Feedback appreciated

Alex, I agree with your comments on my article. I consider myself to be fairly radical on health matters. When I was pregnant, I spent days reading and soul-searching before I decided not have amniocentesis.

But as a woman who'd had a baby

after the age of 35, I was very interested to learn that an alternative to that test, which can be performed earlier, easier and with faster results, existed. I hadn't heard about chorionic villi sampling in the mainstream media and I thought other women in my age group would be interested in hearing about it. But I didn't have the time or motivation to do a lot of work on an article, so I wrote it 'straight' rather than not at all.

Thanks for taking the time to write, Alex; we too rarely get critical feedback.

Brenda Conroy

## Intent was to provide information

Mainstream news, perhaps, but not to be found in Canadian Living or Chatelaine. While I admit that the article was mainstream news, my purpose is simply to provide women with useful and understandable information about issues relevant to their health, with an emphasis on preventative medicine.

One need only see a single patient with an ulcerating breast mass (i.e. terminal disease) who neglected to see their family doctor to regard such an issue as relevant. However, I am certainly open to suggestions about health issues not dealt with by mainstream medical media.

Willi Broeren

## Headlines are Pandora's responsibility

Pandora must take any blame if heads are misleading. Headlines for articles are composed by the Pandora editorial group when the paper is assembled. This is usually done near the end of production, when tempers are short and time is even shorter. If any intrepid woman out there is particularly interested in writing headlines, we could sure use the help.

## Halifax privileged to have Pandora

**Pandora:**

I would like to renew my subscription and let you know my new address.

It is really incredible that Pandora happens. Halifax is such a unique gathering of people. London could never muster the cooperation and vitality it

takes to put out something like it (pity!).

Looking forward to the next issue; it's a taste of my real "home."

With best wishes over the holidays and for the new year,

In peace,  
Maureen Temme  
London, Ontario

## Coming Together conference helps to break isolation

**Pandora:**

Thanks and congratulations to the organizers of "Coming Together: a Conference By and For Lesbians" (Halifax, December 4-6)! All you lesbians who didn't make it, you missed a great weekend. Unfortunately, I had to miss some of it, but I'd still like to pass on my reactions.

The Friday night showing of "Still Sane" was a powerful opening. And Sheila Gilhooley there from Vancouver to talk with us afterward — wonderful. (Every lesbian I talked to fell in love with her on the spot!)

I was a bit disappointed with the discussion, though. We concentrated on the problems of the mental health system, a focus I would have expected from a mixed audience; I thought, a lesbian audience would be more willing to tackle the issue of how "Still Sane" applies to all of us, as women, as lesbians. Did it hit too close to home?

The workshops on Saturday seemed to be well received — some were certainly well attended. Thanks for having the courage and conviction to offer the "Man-Hating Lesbians" workshop. It was great.

The variety show and dance at Veith House Saturday night were terrific. What a celebration! So many talented lesbians! Hearing our songs, our poetry, sharing and celebrating our culture together ... ahhh, what a wonderful change.

I overheard one woman at the conference saying, "There are so many of us here, it feels like we're the majority for once." So true! As lesbians we are

too often forced by circumstances to "pass" for heterosexual. And the isolation that causes can sometimes be overwhelming.

That's what made the conference so exhilarating and empowering — all those lesbians breaking the isolation and "coming together." Dykes of all different sizes and shapes, ages, races, religions. Like it says on the conference notepaper, Lesbians Are Everywhere!

Ironically, I cannot sign this letter. Like so many of us, there are still people I can't risk being "out" to. Lesbianism is threatening to an awful lot of people, and that can have very real consequences for lesbians. That's why events like this are so important — many of us can only let down our guard and feel truly safe with other lesbians.

Again thanks!

A grateful lesbian

P.S. Terrific editorial in the last issue. Right on!

## Thanks to Pandora

**Pandora:**

This is my third year with your newspaper and I hope Pandora will go on for years to come.

I find it very interesting, never boring, and I'll be looking forward to my next paper. Thanks a lot.

Yvette M. Landry  
Richmond Co., Cape Breton

nearby major city which is well known to have thousands of gay men?

There must have been, and yet I never knew that lesbian culture existed. And I look back knowing what I know now, and still I can find no evidence of a lesbian community in my memories. A lot of agony might have been prevented, not only my own, if I had known, found and fit in with women like me.

Instead, I struggled with coming to terms with who I was attracted to, why sex (with men) was boring, with marriage, with wondering what was wrong with me.

And even after 25 years of struggle and beginning to search for lesbians in N.S., I still couldn't find any — my homophobia was in deep, so I just never asked. I just bumbled along, subtly inquiring.

As it turns out, I was in a room at a conference a couple of years ago with four or five lesbians, and I didn't know. And then, "one of them" reached out to me and all sorts of things tumbled into place.

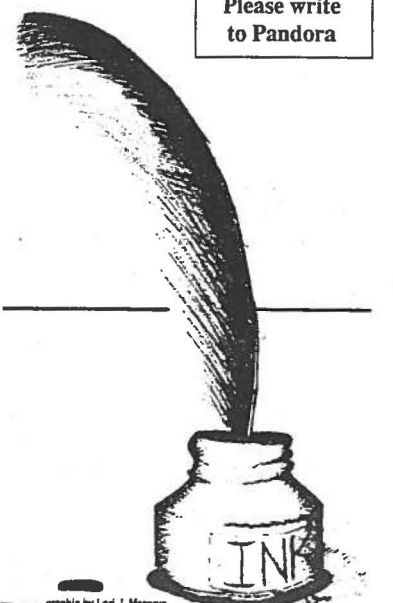
No. I owe nothing to heterosexuals. Because homosexuals are kept hidden by the norms and assumptions of society's definitions of sexual, reproductive and labour roles, I spent a lot of my life in agony and bewilderment.

And even after I became very much aware of the lesbian community, it took a year to struggle with my own homophobia, a struggle that is still there. But I can now say "I am a lesbian and I love it." I feel "home" at last.

I wish I could sign this, but I am, like so many others, in a vulnerable situation in the world out there.

Name withheld

Please write to Pandora



graphic by Lori J. Moore

# Reader challenges feminist glorification of motherhood

**Pandora:**

Since reading the various articles about motherhood that have been in Pandora recently, I have had a number of reactions. Why, at this particular time in the feminist movement, are we involved in a glorification of motherhood. No matter what the topic, we need to discuss the impact it will have on other women, and why it is important to have the discussion. If we are going to discuss motherhood, we also must include in that discussion why some of us are not mothers.

I have been told that I really cannot discuss mothering because I have never been a mother. For me that means our definition of motherhood is limited only to those with the ability to conceive or adopt a child. I think this definition is far too limiting for feminists who are trying to redefine our vocabulary and our world. Any definition we conceive of must include how women who are not having children can be mothers by taking responsibility for children. It also needs to examine the role of mothers in other cultures and with poor women. Presently, our view of motherhood tends to be based on a white middle class analysis. This means we need to take the traditional motherhood definition out of the context of the nuclear family. We will have to be willing to take enormous risks. Of course, when we re-define motherhood, we also have to re-define the

role of children. By this I mean we can no longer think of children as objects to be owned.

Last year, I tried unsuccessfully to become pregnant through alternate — a more positive term than artificial — (I wonder for whom the insemination is artificial — certainly not the woman) insemination. Because I am unable to conceive, I have had to re-examine my views about motherhood. I realize it is difficult for me to separate my feelings from intellectual thinking on this subject, which is one of the main tenets of the feminist movement — the personal is political.

I am still grieving for the child I will never know. When I found out that I could not conceive, I took long showers, the water poured over my body as the tears poured out of my eyes. That memory came sharply back when I read Yvonne De Roller's article. She writes that she "...is incredibly lucky." Is it luck that some of us conceive, or have good incomes, so that our children grow up in comfort? Some women choose to become pregnant; for others it is not a matter of choice. Lots of babies are conceived in violent situations. Are those women lucky?

My doctor suggested that I relax and then I would become pregnant. Being able to conceive has nothing to do with being "uptight" as De Roller says; otherwise, battered women and women who are raped would not be-

come pregnant. No matter how relaxed I became, I would never have conceived. I cannot have a child because my tubes are very badly scarred. Does my inability to become pregnant make me unlucky?

De Roller is responding to the Salvation Army's decision not to continue artificial [her word] insemination except when using sperm and ova from a legally married couple. De Roller feels "...outraged for all the married couples (my emphasis) who cannot conceive without a donor. I am outraged for all the lesbians, like myself, single women, and women in "common-law" relationships who will also not have the opportunity to conceive because of the Salvation Army's view regarding who qualifies as parents.

This letter is, I hope, a beginning dialogue that feminists must have regarding motherhood. I know my thinking is not as clear as I would like it to be, but it is a beginning for what can be an important discussion for feminists.

Thank you for giving me a forum for expressing my thoughts and feelings.

The poem "The Lifeless Womb" is a personal statement. Sitting here thinking about it, I realize that although I am addressing mothers, I am really having a dialogue with the part of me who is a mother and the part of me who still defines motherhood in traditional ways.



## Women's Committee alive and well

**Pandora:**

The Women's Committee at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design has finally been re-established. The committee consists of eight members who are responsible for a variety of activities around the school. Our major goal is to provide a forum for voicing women's concerns in the college. Those activities don't necessarily include only the college students — we greatly appreciate participation from all members of the community outside the college.

The Brown Bag series is held each Thursday at noon in different locations in the College. Information on each event is posted on bulletin boards throughout the school. The Brown Bag series offers material on a variety of topics, including speakers from N.A.A.G.'s (Never Again Affinity Group); discussion of performance work and strategies; films, i.e. 'Firewords,' 'Portrait of an Artist as an Old Lady' and much, much more.

The Lifesize Film Series is organized by the Women's Committee as well. The films will be feature length and directed by women — showing on March 4, 18 and April 1 at the N.S.C.A.D. Bell Auditorium. Schedules are posted at numerous places: The North End Library, Central Library, Rumors, Eye Level Gallery, Dalhousie University, Centre for Art Tapes, Wormwood, etc.

Anyone interested in sharing information is welcome!  
N.S.C.A.D. Women's Committee

# Betty P is travelling again, but for a different purpose

**Pandora: Feb 12, 1988**

On January 24, I left the Atlantic region for training in non-violence before departing on the 29th for Nicaragua with Witness for Peace. This American-based program begun in 1983 has a Canadian counterpart to which I wrote for information in October 1985. To my surprise, in December, 1987, I received a reply inviting my application; despite my language deficiency, I have been accepted.

Over the years I have travelled extensively, yet, as I begin to prepare myself in depth, I find that this trip is quite different in purpose. It is surely not for sight-seeing, nor even for fact-finding and study; it is a spiritual witness, an identification, if possible, with the misery and terror and grief of the Nicaraguan people under siege.

We will live for a major part of the two weeks in the mountains in an area recently under attack, putting our bodies where our mouths are. We will worship with these religious people, we will help with reconstruction, and, above all, we will listen and observe and report and identify with them.

A large part of our commitment upon going and returning is to publicize to the media and government, to the committed and uncommitted, what we are doing and why.

Many participants are sponsored by a group that can help to spread the word. This is difficult in Halifax where people are going to Central America all the time from Oxfam, Tools for Peace, Amnesty International, the churches and the universities. They have their own agendas and we all support them.

But I have to ask myself what is

different about Witness for Peace? It is that we go to bear witness in a spiritual way; dedicated to non-violence ourselves, we go into areas of conflict to stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers where they are most vulnerable.

There is growing interest in non-violent direct action or deterrent force. Most of our material on nonviolence is based on the Quaker action group, Movement for a New Society; many study resources on Nicaragua are from the American Friends Service Committee. It feels like home!

On the Canadian homefront, Alaine Hawkins and Claire Galbraith have returned from PBI (Peace Brigades International) in Guatemala and will brief me. I would like to visit them and the Friends Peace Centre in Costa Rica (linked to Halifax Meeting) and the Miskito Indians on the Atlantic Coast for QCNC. But one cannot do everything on this single-purposed intense Mission.

However, CFSC will give me letters of introduction and briefing on Friends Peace Centre, the Pro-Nica Mother's Milk Bank and the Olaf Palme Health Centre in Managua, all of which CFSC helps to support.

But what is my immediate support/sponsoring group? Am I right in hoping that it is Atlantic Quakers now that I have let you know about it? I would like to feel that you stand with me in your thoughts and prayers until I return on March 18. Witness for Peace personnel stress the necessity of preparing one's self psychologically, emotionally, spiritually and physically for going to do a "labour of peace" in a country of

violence. Indeed, I am finding it a sobering experience. This war of attrition and state terrorism is particularly painful for me as one who has recently renounced US citizenship, yet who still recognizes my own, her own, complicity and complacency over this outrage. I need your help in remembering that of God in everyone, friend and foe.

May I request your collective and individual thinking on these things.

For me, there is a direct connection between the maelstrom that is Central America and the restrictive immigration bills that may be passed in Canada. I can use this trip as groundwork to bolster, with first-hand experience, the adamant stand of Nancy Pocock and others on behalf of refugees from war-torn countries that we all help to perpetuate.

I personally do not need another "cause" just now among so many, particularly among Natives. But to me, it is all one cause of repressed people, and, since the opportunity to witness in Nicaragua has presented itself to me and not by accident, I feel led to give it my all.

In peace with justice and love,  
Betty Peterson

P.S. You might well ask why I alert you now at this late hour, when I have known for some time. Answer: I have been winding up other responsibilities and have only just now begun to immerse myself in what lies ahead. Sorry.

In the words of Lilla Watson, Australian Aboriginal, "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time, but, if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then, let us work together."

### The Lifeless Womb

Yet another poem about mothering,  
Another article  
What is this?  
Why do we need these reminders?  
Are we all become mothers?  
Is there no room for the empty womb,  
the scarred womb, the unavailable womb?  
What about the womb that will never have a baby inside,  
the lifeless womb, that has no warmth?

Tell me, tell me what do I say to my empty womb that will never feel the life of a child you mothers who so carefully chronicle your pregnancy and the birth of your children?

Tell me, what do I do with my pregnancy books that give me no answers for my empty womb?

How do I explain my scars that prevent conception?  
Tell me mothers, past, present and to be,  
tell me how I can feel such emptiness?

There will be no child come from between my legs.  
There will be no wondering is it a girl or a boy,  
no baby shower,  
no need to plan for day care.  
There will be no stolen moments to look at a baby asleep,  
No baby to see herself in my eyes.

Tell me how to accept the lifeless feeling in my womb?  
Do not assume my empty womb has not wanted to feel life.

Catherine Lambert  
(I would like to thank Carol Millett and Megan Ardyche for their support and encouragement of my writing.)



# Support for prostitutes is their mandate

## Education, advocacy, direct services are the methods

Anne S. Derrick

Women's Alliance in Support of Prostitutes continues to exist as a small but active group working in support of women in the sex trade. Established in December 1985, WASP received Secretary of State funding a little over a year ago for the purpose of increasing public consciousness around the issue of prostitution and developing support for working women. WASP is indebted to the community support received for our funding application and was heartened by the genuine expressions of interest and concern for women on the streets.

In the year since the funding was approved, WASP has been busy and productive due to the efforts of a small core of volunteers. The first major project was a popular education workshop held in November 1986 to which a variety of women were invited.

Popular education methodology has been used with dramatic results by housing and labour activists, native groups, and community organizations. The ideas and skills demonstrated at the workshop have since been used in welfare rights work in Nova Scotia in organizing women on welfare.

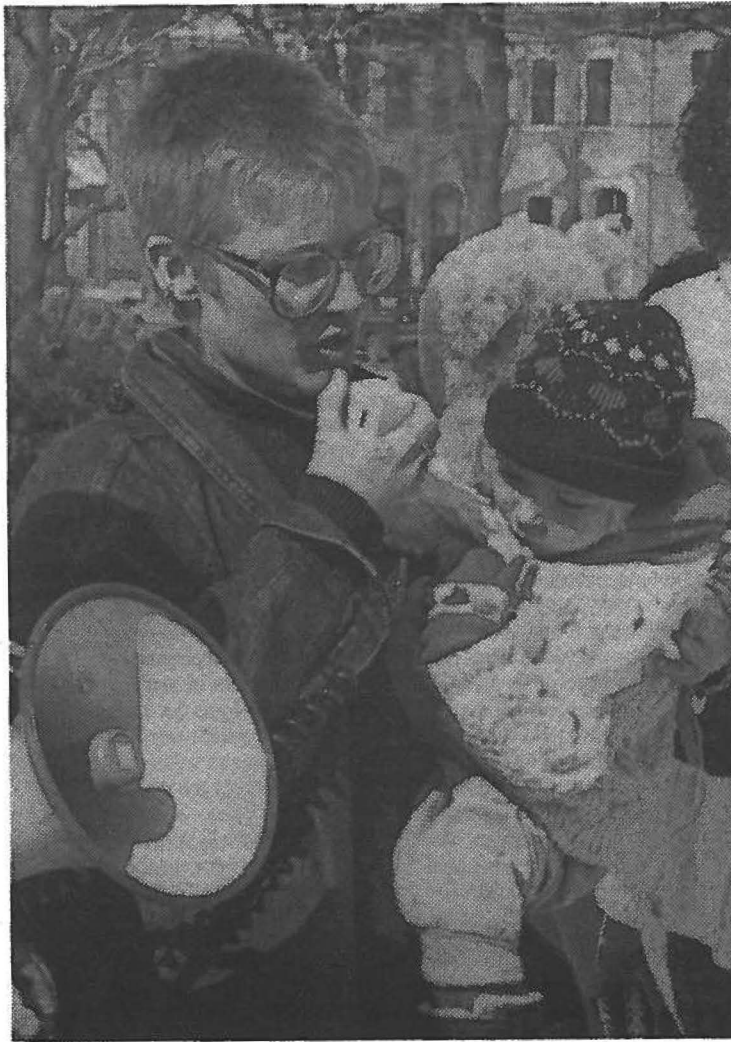
WASP hopes one day to be able to utilize this methodology as a means of developing communication with and amongst women on the streets, ultimately with a view to assisting in and

supporting a prostitutes' union.

WASP also hired a woman on a contract basis to make contact with working women, a process largely accomplished through the courts. From January 1986 to the end of May 1987, women were being charged for communicating for the purpose of prostitution as a result of amendments to the Criminal Code. Women were regularly processed through the courts and contact with them at the time of their court appearances was possible. (On May 22, 1987, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal declared these amendments to be unconstitutional as they violated Charter-protected rights of freedom of expression and association.)

WASP has continued contact with working women and has identified the establishment of a drop-in centre as the most significant priority. Store-front drop-in centres are the focal point of most prostitutes' rights work in other parts of Canada and England. Even the most rudimentary facility provides the opportunity for a meeting place, food distribution, shelter from the cold, and on the most basic level, coffee, a bathroom, and an opportunity for a break in the routine of work.

The above efforts have used up most of WASP's financial resources and what little is left is being devoted towards the production of some self-help pamphlets for the working women



Anne Derrick speaks to marchers about WASP at the 1987 International Women's Day March. (Photo by Brenda Conroy)

addressing legal and medical issues. Drafts of these pamphlets have been prepared but a final production date is still some months off.

WASP members have also been busy attending conferences both as observers and participants, engaging in public forums and media interviews. Such opportunities enable us to challenge many of the myths surrounding prostitution and women who work in the sex trade.

WASP continues to see its role as a

radical one, advocating for the rights of women in the sex trade with an emphasis on women working as street prostitutes. We remain committed to advocacy and whatever direct services we can provide. Our developing grasp of the issues is enhanced by discussions and reading and is contributed to most significantly by women with experience on the streets.

Women interested in supporting or assisting WASP should contact Anne Derrick at 422-7411.



## CRIAW defines its objectives, accomplishments and projects

Linda Christiansen-Ruffman

The purpose of CRIAW (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women) is to co-ordinate and disseminate research into women's experience. In the past, generalizations about Canada, its people, its economy and its politics, have too often been based on research by men about the experience of men. Until the experience of women has also been studied and evaluated, we will have a limited view of Canadian reality.

CRIAW's objectives are:

- to promote the advancement of women through feminist research;
- to encourage and facilitate communication and information exchange among academic women, community workers, women's groups, and concerned individuals;
- to disseminate research results;
- to sponsor and assist research into areas of vital interest to Canadian women.

In Nova Scotia, CRIAW-NS accomplishes its goals through monthly meetings, task forces and special projects. The meetings, which focus on policy-oriented, action-oriented, or scholarly research, foster the involvement and collaboration of those who do the research and those who are interested in the results (community workers, women's groups, concerned individuals).

Recent meetings have included such topics as "Women and Spirituality," "Birth Technology," and "Women and Sport." The Task Forces present briefs or information sessions based on research on matters fundamental to the advancement of women. Recent special projects of CRIAW-NS have included the production of a video tape about pornography, a research study conducted in the Halifax/Dartmouth metro area to document women's feelings about pornography, and co-sponsorship of a task force on the Meech Lake Accord. CRIAW-NS is a member of WAC-NS (Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia).

Membership in CRIAW National automatically includes membership in CRIAW-NS and costs \$15 per year. We may have something to offer you. Why not call Barbara Cottrell 423-9654 or Stella Lord 477-0094 or come to one of our monthly gatherings? Details of meetings can be found on Pandora's Calendar page.

## National Lesbian Forum founded at CRIAW conference

Jeri Wine

A lesbian daughter was born at the annual CRIAW conference in Winnipeg, November 7 and 8, 1987! The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women is an organization consisting of some 1000 women, academics and activists, from every province and territory in Canada. Over 400 of these women met in Winnipeg in November to attend presentations and workshops on Women and Wellbeing.

As is common in Canadian women's organizations, and has been true for CRIAW at most of its conferences, there was no lesbian content on the agenda. As is also true in most women's organizations, a sizable proportion of the CRIAW membership is lesbian, and many of them were attending this conference. An impromptu meeting called on the first day of the conference was announced in the dining room where the 400+ delegates were having lunch. Initially called the "Lesbian Invisibility" session, the "in" was dropped, and it became the "Lesbian Visibility" session.

Twenty-seven women showed up for that first meeting. Some of the issues discussed included: difficulties involved in coming out, being lesbian in rural communities, the threat posed to the lesbian community by the present homophobic Saskatchewan government, untenured faculty teaching lesbian content and providing support to lesbian students without revealing one's lesbian identity, lesbian mothers and custody, the need for greater lesbian visibility at CRIAW, the need to network with lesbians across Canada with similar interests.

It became clear that a common need was to provide some ongoing organizational structure. Rather than become yet another "lesbian caucus" in yet another women's organization — a caucus which must then engage in conflict in order to be heard, and if history is a good teacher, will probably be marginalized — the group decided to form its own organization — the National Lesbian Forum.

As its objectives, we determined to have a visible presence at as many feminist organizational conferences as possible throughout the year. We agreed

to hold meetings of the Forum itself, as well as holding workshops related to lesbian existence within the context of the work of the particular feminist organization.

We collected names of the individuals present who were interested in becoming NLF members, as well as their areas of interest, and for those who felt safe in doing so, their names and interest areas will be mailed to others on the list. The women present came from six different provinces and one territory.

The following day a second meeting of the National Lesbian Forum was announced. We collected more members, more than 30 in total over the two

days, and strategized further. We agreed to apply for membership in the National Action Committee and each submitted a \$3 NLF membership fee to pay for the NAC group membership and for mailing costs of the networking list. With additional members — and therefore more funds — there is a plan to produce a newsletter. We also agreed to hold an NLF meeting at the CRIAW meetings in Quebec City in November, 1988, to

firm up an organizational structure and do further planning.

Since the CRIAW conference, application has been made to NAC for membership for the National Lesbian Forum. As the lesbian caucus of NAC has recently been having serious difficulties and seems to have, in fact, disbanded, it is doubly important that a lesbian organization have a visible presence in this national women's groups umbrella organization.

The Forum is an exciting opportunity for lesbians to create an organization to serve our needs, an organization that can assume a form and develop an agenda that will reflect our concerns and diversity across Canada. It is still in its newborn state; there is ample opportunity to influence its shape and growth.

Lesbians who are interested in joining the National Lesbian Forum can send their name, mailing address, interests and \$3 membership fee to the address in the box. If you would prefer that your name not be sent to other members of NLF, simply state that in your application. If you have regional information that might be included in the newsletter, please send that along.

NLF  
Box 8973  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
S7K 7E7

# Government funding questioned

Coming Together Organizing Committee

The 1987 lesbian conference "Coming Together" took place December 4-6 in Halifax. This was a meeting by and for lesbians and therefore totally outside the guidelines for funding by the Secretary of State Women's Programme. Along with organizers for abortion rights, it would appear that we are outside the category of women. By being State-funding pariahs, we gained many advantages.

The first was that we didn't have to plan over a year in advance. A few of us decided that we'd like to go to a lesbian conference, so we got together with some more lesbians and started planning. We allowed enough time to advertise, encourage participation, and look for a meeting place. It took five months, five meetings, and several pizzas.

The conference planning was flexible to the very end. If someone said, "Let's discuss..." we did it — just by a short conversation with the rest of the organizing group. The only people we had to consult were women we knew were interested in the conference.

No one said, "But maybe we won't get our funding if we discuss this is-

## Feminist groups must recognize advantages, disadvantages

sue." Self-policing is a characteristic of government funded groups. The funding determines decisions and slows down radical thinking and actions. Being adventurous can threaten your group's funding. We don't even do what "they" want, we do what we think "they" might want. We've been part of government funded feminist organizations where whole days have been taken up with "What if 'they' don't like it?" It became boring, frustrating, and encouraged us to go do other things.

We could be open and honest because we didn't have to use euphemisms — lesbian meant lesbian (admittedly, not an easy title to define, except about oneself). There are times when omission and euphemism are part of our relationship to government (as is their relationship to us). For feminists in need of State funding, even our language and thinking has to mirror theirs.

We weren't concerned about our

professional qualifications and neither was anyone else. There was no suggestion that someone a little less emotionally involved, less close to the experience, whose qualifications were on paper and amounted to at least a degree, would be more acceptable to the funders. Nor did we have to give each other titles like Chairperson or Treasurer. We each offered and did the tasks we felt willing and able to do.

To rule the world paternalistically, it would make a lot of sense to fund potentially radical groups. Keeping to "He (sic) who pays the piper calls the tune," and organizing advisors to suggest to the Radicals the structure and content would please a paternalistic government. That way, there would be some control on what happened because advisors would kindly steer the Radicals away from anything controversial or against government policy. Radicals could meet in comfortable, agreeable surroundings but not openly

attack the Government and State. The Radicals would be asked to complete lots of paperwork in great detail, with several revisions (it should be time-consuming in case they did something radical instead, and, of course, so as not to appear to gain funding easily).

Government officials would keep fat files of records. This would reveal who was engaged in what politics, projects, groups, organizations: who was politically skilled, had leadership potential, and who could be dangerous to the status quo. It would be cheaper and more effective than putting the real police on the job — and supply accurate information because the Radicals and their groups would inform on themselves.

There were drawbacks to being without State funding. Being lesbians, we had difficulty finding a place to meet. The places that would speak to us wanted more cash than we could find. This meant we could have had a more comfortable conference site if we'd had more money.

It could be argued that, as an oppressed group, lesbians needed to meet in a place which gave us a boost to our self-image. But first, we needed to provide a meeting place.

We were forced to fall back on the gay and lesbian community and our sisters — not a bad move. GAE and Rumours gave us a place to meet. We gained a \$1000 grant from the KIMETA Society (an organization which supports some gay and lesbian events). This meant that we could meet advance costs and had the luxury of

flying in Sheila Gilhooly to share her experiences of being made mad by being classified as a lesbian by the psychiatric system — and how she not only survived, but came to encourage us to flaunt our lesbianism. The Feminist Lesbian Caucus lent us some money left over from the social at the last International Women's Day. And through Pandora, we could also rent Veith House.

Government funding has played a very important part in getting feminists together — it pays Air Canada (another government organization?) to transport us. In some ways, they should fund us because they fund other women's groups (isn't that the REAL women argument?). It is potentially very, very divisive for government to fund only some feminists. The result is that those who accept the money uncritically, or uncreatively, are also accepting the blatant discrimination against us because they are only funded through excluding us. A hierarchy of acceptable and excluded feminists has been created without any of us wishing for it. Feminists who want and/or need Secretary of State funding are forced to self-police their projects against mention of lesbians (or abortion).

We've been involved in many conferences. Organizers generally end up fed up, but this time we had fun. With only our sisters to please, we could organize quickly, even efficiently, and enjoy it.

There will probably be another lesbian conference this year. We're even looking forward to it. We won't be asking for government funding. We will be inviting lesbians to be involved in an event of our own, and a celebration of ourselves. Who knows, maybe one day government will come begging to give us money; just to find out what lesbians do...

## Alternate source of reading materials available in N.B.

Laura J. Richards

The Reading Room, located at 384 Queen Street, Fredericton, NB, officially opened its doors on February 8, 1988. Run as a workers' co-operative, the Reading Room is expected to be the forerunner of many things to come from the women's community here.

Elizabeth Belaney and Nancy MacFarland, two of the women who belong to the co-operative, are excited about the opening and are hoping to see support from the community. "I hope that eventually the community will come to support the Reading Room," says MacFarland. "I don't think it's realistic to imagine that we could keep it going on our own steam and from our own pocketbooks indefinitely."

"We're not depending on government funding," says Belaney. "Government restricts the activities that we can do and restricts the information we can pass out. Therefore we have to rely on what we have ourselves."

The women attending the open house all agreed that the Reading Room is a great idea, that they will be using it and lending their support. "I love the Reading Room," says Barb Martin. "I see this place as having a lot of potential. Me — I'm a book-lover, I want to be here."

"I think it is a very good way for women to get together to discuss the areas that are important to us," says Leslie Reed. "It's also nice to see people I know from eight different areas come together to talk about the issues that they may have, in a more specific form."

The Reading Room is a non-profit information, resource and referral service for women. "I felt a need for a space and some place that is comfortable in terms of being safe, where I can go and not feel like a totally anonymous being," says MacFarland, "some place that's not like a public library where you go in and you're a number on a card. Some place that has material speaking to my life and to my truth."

The literature that lines the shelves of the Reading Room is from many sources — the Canadian Conservation Council's library, the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre and from MacFarland and Belaney's own book shelves. The women will be approaching people within the academic communities (Fredericton is the home of Saint Thomas University as well as the University of New Brunswick) to donate or loan material which has only been available to people who study or teach at the universities.

The aroma of hot coffee filled the room as much as the laughter, good conversation and the sounds of women gathered together to enjoy each other's ideas and wisdom. Support and encouragement were given to Belaney and MacFarland as well as many thanks for seeing the project through.

"I don't know how we'll be received by other people in the Fredericton area," says MacFarland. "Now whether the space will be utilized — only time will tell. I think we can only be here to fill our own needs and the needs of our circle of friends and acquaintances. If we are filling a need, then we will spread."

Most women hope to see the Reading Room expand to become a women's bookstore. "This is a place that women really need," says Starlene

Matchette. "It is hard to get quality reading material in the bookstores in Fredericton. If you are taking university courses focussing on women, you buy your books at the university bookstore for an elevated price or you can't find them, period. So here is a place where we can go to back up what we do and the kind of research that we need."

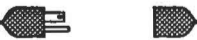
Although the Reading Room is specifically for women, Belaney would like to see men going in to browse the shelves and read the material, too. "I'd like to see men here because I like to see men support a feminist perspective, theory, practice and publications... to show that they are interested."

The Reading Room is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm and Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 pm. For more information, give Nancy or Elizabeth a call at 450-2924.



Laura J. Richards is 29 years old and a graduate of St. Thomas University. She is a member of the Steering Committee hoping to set up a women's centre in Fredericton. She is also helping to set up a woman's newsletter for distribution in Fredericton. She plans to go to a School of Journalism... then set the world on fire.

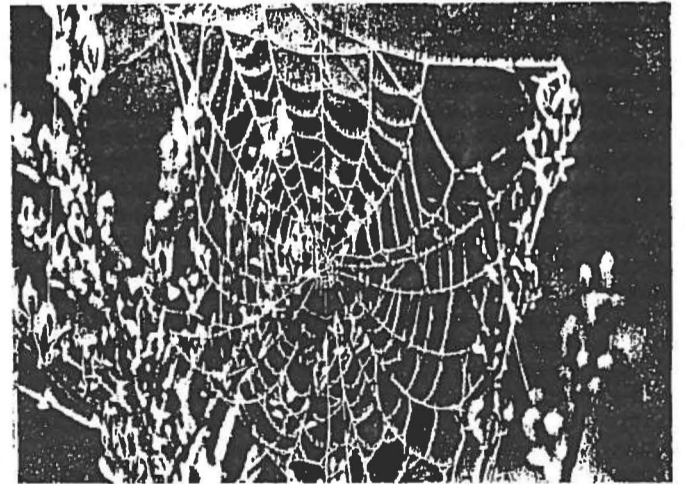
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We may be asked for our subscription list by groups interested in passing on information. Each request is discussed by the editorial group. Please indicate if you do not want your name included. \_\_\_\_\_

Pandora, P.O. Box 1209, North, Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4



# MUMS founder describes her new social action group

Heather Schneider

My decision to leave the MUMS came about because of my poor health and because I needed time to assess my future goals. So I retired to the peaceful North Shore with my partner and with my close and dear friend, May Ocean (Spinney), nearby.

My one clear realization while working with MUMS was that working the front lines is hard and exhausting work, and many burn out under this stress, myself being no exception. I also realized that it was easy to lose direction, incentive and ways in which to deal with the issues while working on the front lines. It is so important to take a step back and review ways to change your direction and thrust, if your efforts are to have any impact at all on your community and on the government.

I am very pleased, as I know many must be, to see that MUMS have pulled themselves out of their slump and are becoming active again. The very existence of this group is a tribute to the MUMS original founders for having the inspiration to develop and coordinate such a worthwhile organization which has helped so many. Their praises will never go unsung: it took a lot of determination and courage to sustain MUMS against the odds and criticism from within and outside the group.

I salute the strength and courage of MUMS past, as I send out my best wishes and encouragement to MUMS present. I hope they will continue to maintain with pride and dignity the non-violent direct action against the injustices meted out to low-income women. The MUMS founders fought hard and at a great price to establish their presence in our society. Those of us who have moved on to fighting the battle from a different angle know that the battle has only just begun and will go on for a long time yet.

It has always been my vision to witness the day when women in all walks of life and from every nationality join hands around the globe to make the changes that will make the difference. The time for senseless bickering is past, the time is now for women to stand together, back to back to defend each other.

\*\*\*

On December 9 and 10, I was invited to Ottawa by the federal government to take part in a Consultation of Innovators. Eighty people from across Canada were invited, all recognized innovators in their fields. Each person had come up with new ideas and sustained those ideas with hard work to make their dream a reality. Of the 80 people invited, 60 attended — 55 men and five women.



Heather Schneider, with other MUMS members, speaks to supporters at a rally in March, 1986. She is still involved in groups promoting social change (Photo by Brenda Conroy)

The objective of the consultation was to look at the employment situation in Canada and to attempt to find innovative ways of creating jobs across Canada. Our suggestions would then be passed on to the Minister of Employment.

During the two days in Ottawa, we heard of global attempts and failures to stimulate and maintain employment. We also heard and saw high-technology developments that would get everyone, including the disabled, back into the work force.

The conference was very positive until one of the disabled men attending the conference began to speak. This man was paralyzed from the neck down and had been chosen to demonstrate the high-tech development of blowing through a straw in Morse Code. He had been confined to a bed, unable to move, for years, and this development had given him a new lease on life. He could communicate so well he had been able to obtain a job at Xerox Canada prepar-

ing a paper for that company.

My heart bled as he described how he was cut off welfare because he took that job. This disabled young man had come from being unable to move to being able to produce a paper that took him five times longer than would have taken someone who was not disabled.

When the paper was completed, welfare refused to allow him back on the system because he was then capable of being employed. He spoke movingly of the horrendous welfare cycle and how it provides no incentive to work and punishes those who do.

Once again I was face to face with the ridiculous unfairness of the welfare system and the way in which it hampers and constricts the lives of people struggling for survival.

\*\*\*

With the help of many close friends and family, I am now in the throes of the birth of a new group. This group, called M.U.S.T. (Mothers United for Social Transformation), will be a pro-

vincial group and welcomes members from every walk of life: poor, welfare recipients, the disabled, middle and upper income people, anyone who has a keen desire to work towards revolutionary change in our society. Our first task will be to take a close and careful look at the Free Trade Deal being proposed by Mr. Mulroney and see how it will affect the lives of people living below the poverty line. In the future, we also plan to look at the welfare system, Children's Aid, and parenting problems, to name a few.

MUST members presently include, besides myself, May Ocean (Spinney), Terry Drysdale, Patricia Erickson, Jeannette Alladin, and other members from Tatamagouche, River John-Pictou area, Truro, Halifax and Dartmouth.

The founding meeting is presently being organized and will be held in the near future. If you want more information on MUST, please contact us at 351-2776.

MUST has been developed to help women reclaim their power and their strength. We send out our strength and love to all Pandora readers and welcome everyone to join us for our founding meeting.

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As we celebrate International Women's Day, we celebrate our accomplishments and carry on the struggle.

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Explores the world of mothers and children from the pre-industrial village to the post-industrial Canadian city through objects, photographs and art.

Saturday, 5 March, 1-5 pm Workshops: Decisions by Mothers and Others — Having Children; Child Care; Securing a Nest with keynote speaker Elizabeth Crocker

Sunday, 6 March, 3 pm Opening: Dr. Marie Hamilton, with her daughter Sylvia Hamilton and her granddaughter Shani Hamilton-Greenlaw

Sunday, 27 March, 3 pm Reading: Marguerite Andersen reads translations from her prose poems, which reflect on the mother/daughter relationship

Phone 443-4450 for further information.

# NDP

New Democratic Party Women's Rights Committee

423-9217

See calendar for study group information



Bernadette Christmas talks to an interested audience about the effects of Bill C-31. (Photo by Sara avMaat)

# Bill C-31 has not been the expected panacea

Jo-Anne Fiske

When the Federal Government passed Bill C-31 to amend the Indian Act, we breathed a sigh of relief. A hard fought battle to end sexual discrimination against native women had ended, we thought, in victory. Canadian aboriginal women would no longer lose "Indian status" by marrying non-Indians. Surely women as well as men were now free to pursue their private lives without sexist interference from the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA). That was in 1985.

It was a hollow victory, as we learned from Bernadette Christmas of Membertou.

Speaking to a February 4th meeting of Nova Scotians in Solidarity with Native Peoples, Bernadette described the complex and divisive ramifications of Bill C-31.

It is true that marriage to a non-Indian will no longer strip a woman of her Indian status. Women who did lose status can regain full Indian status and band membership. Their children may also regain status, by being registered on the Indian list in Ottawa, and may

apply to their mother's band for band membership.

It is also true that the federal government provided some funds to help women regain status and to return to their bands' reserves. However, this money is insufficient to help all the women who need it. Women who cannot live on their home reserve cannot receive the social services of their band. Without sufficient grants, bands cannot provide non-residents with housing.

Bill C-31 has not ended sexist interference. Non-Indian women who gained status by marriage to Indian

new codes of membership, which can only take effect with approval of Indian Affairs and which will require legal advice. And, they must do so with ridiculously small sums of money. In a mixture of laughter and anger, Bernadette announced that her band was given just \$8,000 for this task. An immunity clause protecting the DIA from legal action makes the bands very vulnerable and reluctant to proceed.

Bill C-31 has opened up new dilemmas and created new tensions between native women and men. Now the fight is within the aboriginal community as women seek assurances that aboriginal

government and membership codes will comply with the Charter of Rights and Freedom.

## Bill C-31 has set new rules for determining status

men prior to 1985 retained that status. They pass on full status to their children and through to their grandchildren. Reinstated women cannot pass on full status and their grandchildren will have no status. (DIA now has two categories of status depending on having one or two registered parents.)

Moreover, Bill C-31 has set new rules for determining Indian status. Unless a mother declares that her child's father is status Indian, DIA assumes he is not. Without an affidavit of paternity from a status Indian, a woman's children are not granted full status. As Bernadette Christmas said, "Why is DIA looking through the keyhole of our bedrooms?"

The effect of Bill C-31 has been to divide the peoples of the first nations. Bands must now tackle the thankless chore of granting or denying requests for band membership. They must mediate in the struggles between long time residents and non-residents seeking social services. Bands must also assume responsibility for writing

As Bernadette Christmas good-humoredly drew laughter from her audience by describing the legislative and financial absurdities, we shifted uneasily in our seats. We had come to express our solidarity with the declared needs of the aboriginal people. But we left realizing that we must do so very carefully. Unless the first nations are given the resources to resolve their current dilemmas we could find ourselves mistakenly supporting another "solution" which may be no more than another unwarranted intervention by DIA into the lives of native women.

□□□□□

Jo-Anne Fiske teaches Sociology at Saint Mary's University.

Bernadette Christmas is a member of the Membertou band, Cape Breton. She is an active member of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association.

Nova Scotians in Solidarity with Native Peoples meets the first Sunday of each month at the Deveric Centre on Barrington Street, Halifax.

# Osteoporosis can be prevented Proper precautions will help

Willi Broeren

Osteoporosis, which is defined as porous or brittle bone, is the most common skeletal disorder affecting women. Osteoporosis affects one in three women over age 65. Generally, it has a lengthy latent period and hence does not become obvious until older age. The most common symptom is low back pain, and common complications include fractures of the spinal vertebrae as well as the hip and wrist. Some women also develop a curvature of the spine, with a prominent hump. In order to reduce the symptoms and complications of osteoporosis, prevention is critical since there is no known cure for this condition.

The cause of osteoporosis is unknown but many factors are involved. Persons at risk of osteoporosis are those with a slim body build, fair skin, sedentary life style, no children, early uncomplicated menopause and a strong family history of the disease.

Nutrition is also a key factor. Good calcium intake throughout life is important in preventing bone loss. Calcium is required by the body for many life-sustaining processes, and an inadequate diet may result in the body using up reserves from the bones)

This need for calcium increases with age. For young adults, the recommended allowance is 750 - 1,000 mg. each day. Healthy pre-menopausal women over thirty need 1,000 mg. per day, while pregnant women and women over fifty need 1,500 mg. Breast-feeding women need 2 grams each day.

Dairy products are the main source of calcium. An eight ounce glass of milk supplies 250 - 300 mg. of calcium,

and cheese is also an excellent source of calcium. Other good sources include salmon, sardines and broccoli. Supplements are not necessary unless a woman does not have an adequate diet.

If supplementation is required, various sources of calcium are available. Calcium carbonate provides the greatest source of elemental calcium. The effect of supplements on bone loss may only be minimal, and supplements should not be taken in excess of the recommended guidelines. In some cases, such as women with kidney disease, supplements are not recommended.

During the winter months, Vitamin D is recommended. Vitamin D is required for maintaining normal calcium levels. Vitamin D is derived from diet as well as from exposure to sunlight. The recommended dose is 400 i.u. daily for adults and 800 i.u. for the elderly.

Another equally important, if not more important, factor for maintaining bone mass and strength is regular physical activity. The amount of

weight-bearing activity necessary to preserve bone integrity is not known but a daily program of such activity, including a thirty minute walk, is recommended.

In an effort to prevent osteoporosis, it has become common practice to prescribe estrogen replacement for menopausal women. Estrogen plays a key role in preserving bone and appears to prevent the accelerated bone loss which occurs around menopause. The timing and duration of such replacement is still controversial. Estrogen alone is associated with an increased risk of uterine cancer, but if given cyclically with a progestagen, this risk is eliminated.

In conclusion, an adequate diet and regular weight-bearing physical activity are two means women have to prevent osteoporosis. In addition, women should avoid smoking and excessive caffeine and alcohol ingestion which are all associated with accelerated bone loss. Osteoporosis may not be curable, but with these measures, it can hopefully be prevented.

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## Premier's Message

On behalf of the people of Nova Scotia, I extend sincere good wishes to all women on March 8, 1988 — International Women's Day

Sincerely,

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



# Long-term drug costs perpetuate dependency

Susan Coldwell

Schwachman's Syndrome is a disease so obscure it is not written up in standard medical texts like Bellson's Encyclopedia of Pediatrics. However, for my family, and notably for my youngest daughter Julianne, age five, it is an illness she will have to live with all her life.

It is a congenital disease of the pancreas. She was diagnosed at the age of four, although she had always experienced digestive difficulties and inflammatory bowel problems. She was seen by a specialist at the age of fourteen months and nothing specific was found.

Shortly after her fourth birthday, she developed a variety of illnesses, lost weight, suffered abdominal pain and began to complain of headaches. She needed excessive amounts of sleep, and I often found it extremely difficult to wake her.

It is difficult to convey the months of anxiety, when I would rock her to sleep and look at her and know that something was really wrong, despite test results. Finally a biopsy revealed the problem to be an enzyme deficiency in her pancreas.

While there is no cure, her condition can be controlled. This control consists of a vigilant life-style, diet, rest, care and medication. She requires quantities of pancreatic enzymes with every meal and snack. As the disease also affects her white blood cell count, she is open to other illnesses which require antibiotics.

I am fortunate that with her medication and care, Julianne can expect to

live a "normal" life.

But drugs for this normal life will cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. This has become the focus of my frustration. Initially I paid the cost for her medication, \$78.50 for a 10-day to two-week supply. As she grows, these drugs must be increased. She has had two such increases since she began taking the enzyme supplements. These costs alone will be \$60,000-80,000 by the time she is 20. It is appalling that in Canada, in Nova Scotia, anyone should have to struggle to obtain life-maintaining drugs.

At the time her illness came to the fore, I was in the process of opening my own small business. As such, I was already financially overextended.

When I first approached Municipal Social Services, the response was that they could not help me because I was not on social assistance. They did give me a drug card, used to pay for medication and have done so on a month to month basis.

Initially there were delays and I was admonished that this card could not be provided on a long-term basis. I could not seem to make it clear that my daughter's condition was very long-term and the costs would always be beyond my means. I also demonstrated to them the efforts I was making to secure coverage for her drug costs. (They have since assured me that the drug card will not be taken away — as long as I remain poor, that is.)

In two and a half months, I repeatedly phoned every government department which I hoped would be able to assist: Department of Health, Health



Susan Coldwell is shown here with her two children, Julianne and Linden. (Photo by Sara avMaat)

and Welfare, MSI, Blue Cross, Metro Drug Commission. In the interim, I began fending off creditors, contacting the Department of Consumer Affairs, and applying for Orderly Payment of Debt, in an effort to keep my business clear of encumbrances.

I came closest to despair when I had to apply to Municipal Social Assistance, feeling that everything I had worked for was falling away and the possibility of ever providing for my children (Julianne and Linden) was becoming ever more remote.

Ironically, I had also contacted the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, as she requires the same drugs as CF children, only to be denied because she does not have a CF diagnosis.

I approached service clubs, whose members were sympathetic, but who

felt that a government body must be responsible in a case like this. However, they assured me they could provide some temporary assistance in a crisis. (By this time, I was feeling that my whole life was a crisis.)

Every day, I tell myself that we are fortunate. So many diseases leave a child physically and/or mentally ravaged. Julianne responded very well to medication and people seeing her for the first time would say (almost reproachfully) "She looks so healthy!"

I actually believe this was a denial of the seriousness of her condition. I even explored rather far-reaching ideas, such as having her costs covered under the N.S. Nursing Homes Act, to no avail.

Financially, every day continues to be a struggle to even have a marginal

standard of living. It is very important for Julianne's overall chances to remain well that she be properly and adequately nourished, clothed, sheltered, and that I be able to give emotional support, all the while remembering that I have two children.

Learning your child has an incurable disease is very much a grieving process. Emotions run the gamut of fear, guilt, anger, denial, frustration, and, finally, hope. Always hope for the future.

□□□□□

Susan Coldwell is looking into starting a support/advocacy group for people with chronically ill children. She also continues to juggle responsibilities for the Leedham Cottage Tea Room, parenting, and social/political activities.

## Mother of chronically ill child continues despite difficulties

It's been my failure or at least that's how I feel. This is my first reaction to talking about my battering experiences. I guess it seems like one failure after another — my relationship with Bud and then Joe. And this sense of failure can still drop me into a fit of depression even today.

I find it difficult to talk about Bud or Joe other than to say that the both of them should be "shot with a ball of their own shit." Actually I just say that to be humorous. It's important to keep a sense of humour. If I didn't have that I'd be dead by now.

When I was in these relationships I was always put down and controlled. There were those constant statements: "You're no good"; "You're not a good wife"; "You're a failure, you're weak and you can't cope." I believed it was true; after you hear it long enough you start to believe that it's true. I stayed in the relationship way too long. It was scary thinking about making it on my own with two kids.

I'm on my own today — hooray! It's not easy looking after a child with special medical needs; it wasn't easy being in battering relationships; it hasn't been easy being a single parent, but compared to my history it's heaven. Part of being able to cope with looking after my son is to be able to find some

respite from the ordeal of looking after him day after day. I haven't found respite yet. Normally I have to forfeit giving him his tube feed in order to have other people agree to look after him a few hours at a time. Most people won't agree to look after him with the involved care — they're nervous about it. I guess it's the fear of the unknown.

Brent doesn't want to or isn't able to take in enough calories daily in order to sustain his life so he has to be fed via a gastrostomy tube. My son has had surgery in order to have a tube permanently placed in his stomach into which high calorie liquid is fed to him twice a day and all night long for a 14-hour continuous feed. There are so many aspects of my son's illness; there's the kidney disorder; unusual fluid requirements; behaviour problems; all night nursing duties; wet beds; vomiting. He's also up through the night wanting to drink buckets of water.

I end up feeling tired, isolated and frustrated. It's hard to find anyone who can care for him adequately or who can take over most of my duties. It's hard to find anyone who is willing to get to know him and get to know his "ins and outs." I need someone I can "depend on" on a regular basis and who Brent knows. This will also allow me a little time so I can feel almost human and

feel equipped to go back into my home feeling capable of coping again. I guess if I could pay someone enough money I could find someone, but I'm also on a very fixed income. There seems to be no respite care available for kids who are in my son's condition in this city. I have no idea why I'm frustrated!

I also have an older daughter Kathy who is twelve years old — eight years older than my son. From the time that Brent was a baby, he required 24-hour care. There have also been multiple long term hospitalizations ranging from the medical to surgical to psychiatric wards, which all required my being out of the home and at the hospital. Time that Kathy was used to getting was there no more. She didn't understand this and at first felt that I didn't love her anymore — she felt that all that mattered was the baby. Now that Brent is a little older, a little less care is required, and now that I am more efficient at doing more work in less time, Kathy is much more settled and secure. Some of the residual resentment is still there but we're working things out.

□□□□□

This article was written by a woman who wishes to remain anonymous for fear that complaining will jeopardize family unity.

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# Calendar of events



International Women's Day Rally, 1985  
(Photo by Brenda Conroy)

**March 16**  
Women's Health and Medicine meeting. Call Elaine Wright, 422-7698, for more info.

**March 18**  
Women's Health & Medicine film series: "Counselling the Sexual Abuse Survivor." 12:45-1:30, Tupper Building, Dalhousie University.

**March 18-20**  
Women and Development: Working for Social Justice — a forum sponsored by St. John's Oxfam Canada and St. John's Status of Women Council. For women involved in trade unions, community organization and women's organizations. For more info, call Lee at 422-8338.

**March 23**  
N.S. Association of Women and the Law meeting. New members welcome. Call Maria Franks, 423-7154, for info.

**March 25**  
Women's Health & Medicine film series: "To a Safer Place" a film about childhood incest. 12:30-1:30, Tupper Building, Dalhousie University.

**March 25-26**  
Conference on Language and Sex: Differences in Tone. Keynote speaker — Mary Daly. Mount St. Vincent University, Halifax. \$15 registration.

**March 29**  
Financial Planning for Women. 7 pm. Halifax City Regional Library, Spring Garden Road.

## April

**April 5**  
Women's Health and Medicine meeting. Call Elaine Wright, 422-7698, for more info.

**April 7**  
N.S. Status of Women annual meeting. Guest speaker Roberta Ellis-Grinfeld, Manitoba Pay Equity Commissioner.

**April 8-9**  
Conference: Working Together: Women in the Non-Profit Sector held in Toronto. Keynote speaker will be Charlotte Bunch. For information contact: Community Resources and Initiatives, 150A Winona Drive, Toronto, Ont M5G 3S9, or phone (416) 658-1752.

**April 9-11**  
Annual General Assembly of Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia. Halifax, exact location to be announced. April 9 & 10 will be the main assembly; April 11 will be the lobby. Call Marilyn Keddy, 454-9637 for info. Member groups that have resolutions for the AGA, please forward by April 5 to Lucille Harper, R.R. #1, Antigonish B2G 2K8 or Marion Matheson, 84 Union St, Sydney, B1P 4X8.

**April 21-24**  
Childcare: Meet the Challenge, a national conference addressing the issue of childcare in Canada will be held at the Skyline, Ottawa, Ontario

**April 21**  
Women's Health and Medicine meeting. Call Elaine Wright, 422-7698, for more info.

**April 26**  
Financial Planning for Women. 7 pm. Halifax City Regional Library, Spring Garden Road.

**April 29-May 1**  
WHEN Conference, Truro, N.S. at N.S. Agricultural College will include workshops on massage, reflexology, coping with allergies, self-defence for women, as well as many new offerings. Signing, childcare available. For more info, see spring issue of Vitality or write Box 99, Debert, N.S. B0M 1G0. Subsidies available.

**April 29-May 1**  
Conference on Women and the Church. Co-sponsored by Mount St. Vincent University and the Women's Inter-church Council.

**April 29-May 1**  
NDP Women's Rights Committee. Conference in Ottawa for women who are seeking Federal nomination. Contact Maureen Vine 423-9217 or 434-1573.

## May

**May 4**  
Dealing with stress. Guest speaker Irene Smith, Mental Health Halifax. 1:30 pm Halifax City Regional Library, Main Branch, Spring Garden Road, Halifax.  
**May 6-8**  
National Conference of Women in Politics, organized by Canadian Women for Political Representation, a non-partisan group working to promote and support women in politics. Contact: Box 2202, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5W4 or call Janie Fortier, Chair, (613) 567-8739

**May 13-15**  
National Action Committee on the Status of Women's annual general meeting will be held in Ottawa. For information, write 344 Bloor St. West, Suite 505, Toronto, Ont, M5S 1W9

**May 24-27**  
No More Secrets: Conference on Child Abuse, in Toronto. Designed for professionals who work in the area of child abuse and adult survivors of child abuse. Presenters include Lucy Berliner, Sandra Butler, Diana Russell and Lucie Blue Tremblay. For info: Community Resources and Initiatives, 150A Winona Drive, Toronto, Ontario M6G 3S9 or call (416) 658-1752.

## IWD activities in Bridgewater and area

**March 7**  
•7:30 pm, Central United Church, Bridgewater, with Debi Forsythe-Smith. International coffee and deserts

**March 8**  
•afternoon, Muriel Duckworth will talk to students at Parkview Education Centre about International Women's Day and the history of women

**March 7-11**  
• Second Story Women's Centre will display the Match poster

**March 7-15**  
•3:30 and 9:00 pm. Second Story Women's Centre and cable TV (channel 9) will show Women's Body Politic

**March 8**  
•Selected restaurants throughout the area will offer free coffee. Posters and flyers will announce participating restaurants  
•11:30 am, meet at the Second Story Women's Centre to walk to bridge and release balloons announcing International Women's Day

## June and on

**June 14-19**  
Third International Feminist Book Fair, University of Montreal campus. A major rights forum for publishers and unique opportunity for feminists to discover each other's work. Open to public from the evening of June 16 until June 19. Seminars, panels and readings will be held. (Note: The International Women's Film Festival takes place the week before, and the International Jazz Festival takes place the week afterwards.) For more info, contact Women's Press, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ont., M5T 1R4.

**June 15-20**  
Sara Bright, Cine Mujer from Columbia will be in Halifax and wants to meet with women's groups interested in making feminist films. Sara will teach a mini-course at Saint Mary's University on the 16th and 17th of June. For more info, call Linda MacDonald 420-5489.

**June 22-26**  
Leadership and Power: Women's Alliances for Social Change. National Women's Studies Association tenth annual conference to be held at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Contact: Sally Gordon, NWSA '88, University of Minnesota, 217 Nolte Centre, 315 Pillsbury Dr. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455.

**July 29-Aug 1**  
Lesbians and Gays of Colour-Toronto is planning the 5th International Lesbians and Gays of Colour Conference in Toronto. Theme is Grass Roots. For info: ILGCC, Box 6597, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X4 or phone (416) 588-2930.

**November 11-13**  
12th Annual Conference of Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIA) in Quebec City. Theme: Women from Here and Elsewhere. Deadline for conference proposals is **March 10, 1988**. For info contact Faculté des sciences sociales, Bureau 3446, Pavillon Charles-De Koninck, Université Laval, Quebec, G1K 7P4, (418) 656-2832

## IWD activ Halifax ar

**March 1-30**  
Other Art will have a showing of 10 women 422-9464 for info.

**March 2**  
•7 pm Myrna Kostash, author of No Kiddin adolescent women, will hold a reading at R •4-5:50, Informal discussion of health issue Club with Mary O'Brien  
•7 & 9 pm, Not a Love Story, a film that of from men and women who earn their living at NFB theatre, 1571 Argyle Street. Admis: 18 or older

**March 4**  
• Noon, Myrna Kostash will talk about her i Kidding, at Dalhousie Education Departme: •12:45-1:30, Women's Health & Medicine about menopause. Tupper Building, Dalhous

**March 6**  
Oxfam Canada/Deveric and Dalhousie Stud Day with a Dance-a-thon to raise money fo Mozambique and Northern Ethiopia. Films/ pm at MacInnes Room, Dal Student Union more info, call Verda at 429-1378 or Lee at

**March 4-11**  
Mother and Child exhibit and workshops, A Centre, Mount Saint Vincent University

**March 7**  
•8 pm Debate: The glorification of motherh With Mary Clancy & Jackie Barkley at Pul  
•Women and Development, lecture by Susa Academic Ctr, MSVU

**March 7-11**  
Black Cultural Centre and Oxfam Canada v South African Women. 1149 Highway #7, C N.S.

**Tuesday March 8**  
**International Women's Day — Celebrate**

•Dorothy Smith will speak at Dalhousie Sch Feminism, Public Policy the Problem of the Mechan Auditorium, Killam Library, Dalho  
•11:15 am. Status of women present a procl  
•12 noon: balloons (Province House garden  
•12-2 pm MSVU rally, Seton Academic Ce singing, story-telling, theatre

•12:30-2:30 open house at Status of Women  
•Women and Development, lecture by Susa University  
•Women's night at Rumours 8 pm

**March 8-13**  
From the Heart, a video about nine 20th cer University Art Gallery. For times call: 424-  
**March 9**

•10 am - 5 pm. Film Festival (includes I've Word in Disguise; Portrait of an Artist as an Academic Centre, Mount Saint Vincent Un  
•8 pm To a Safer Place, a film about incest, sion after) free admission

•Informal pot-luck supper with Dorothy Sm  
**March 9-30**  
Struggle for Choice, videotape showing at C Brunswick St, 3rd Floor, Alexandra Centre

**March 10**  
8 pm - 12 midnight, Women's Pub night, V Mount Saint Vincent University

**March 10-13**  
Workshop and conference on Women and I proach, Saint Mary's University. For more i Ruffman, 420-5886

**March 11**  
•12:45-1:30 Women's Health and Medicine a film on breastfeeding, Tupper Building, D  
•8 pm Heather Bishop concert, Cunard St T  
•8 pm Jane Siberry concert, Cohen Auditori  
**March 12**

•Women's Day March. 2 pm gathering at S School, 6455 Norwood Street, (just behind i Quinpool Road to Queen Elizabeth High Sc  
•8 pm Women's dance at Veith House, 311: waged/\$2 unwaged

**March 12 & 13**  
Documentary video workshop with Nancy I Brunswick St, 3rd Floor Alexandra Ctr

# Notices

## Activities in and area

men's work. 2094 Gottingen St. Call

ling, a book about the attitudes of Red Herring Bookstore  
ues of Women and Aging at MSVU

offers insights and perspectives  
ng in the porn-trade, will be shown  
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nent Learning Resources Centre  
e Series: Is it Hot in Here?, a film  
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for Oxfam Canada projects in  
ns/prizes/speakers/fun. 10 am - 10  
n Building. For sponsor sheets or  
: at 422-8338.

, Art Gallery, Seton Academic

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Pub Flamingo \$3.00  
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7, Cherrybrook Road, Westphal,

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century women artists. Dalhousie  
24-2403

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(an Old Lady), Art Gallery, Seton  
University

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Smith. Arranged by CRIAW

at Centre for Art Tapes, 2156  
re

, Vinnie's Pub, Rosaria Centre,

d Development — A Feminist Apr-  
re info call Linda Christiansen-

ine Film Series, A Moveable Feast,  
, Dalhousie University  
: Theatre (Sold out)  
orium, Dalhousie

Sir Charles Tupper Primary  
d Oxford theatre) marching along  
School cafeteria. Refreshments.  
115 Veith Street. Admission: \$4

y Nicol, Centre for Art Tapes, 2156

### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

•Ts'eku Collective is a native Indian women's group compiling an anthology of indigenous women's writings in North America. The theme is "Native Women: Celebrating Our Survival." Submissions are invited from indigenous women that celebrate, in a political way, their survival despite the problems of racism, assimilation and their serious repercussions. The collective is also seeking submissions "about the many who have not survived. We must tell these stories of our resistance, not only contemporary, but the history of our mothers and grandmothers." Submissions can be short stories, poetry, essays, oral narratives, graphics or b/w photos. Contact Ts'eku Collective, 603 Powell St., Vancouver, BC, V6A 1H2.

•Call for submissions for a book on women's erotic writing about women. Gynergy Books (an imprint of Ragweed Press) publishes exclusively feminist and lesbian fiction and poetry. Please submit short prose, prose poetry or poetry in English, maximum length 1000 words or 5 typed double spaced pages. All submissions must be signed, but pen names, pseudonyms or anonymity can be chosen. Please include a stamped self-addressed envelope and a brief biography. Unpublished material is preferred. Deadline is March 15, 1988.

•Gallerie is a new women's publication devoted to women's art and women artists. The first issue will appear in June. It will be published four times a year. Subscription rates (until March 15) are: \$8 for the first issue; \$14 for a one year subscription; \$50 for a "Friend of Gallerie" 6-year subscription. Send subs and inquiries to: Gallerie Publications, Box 2901 Panorama Drive, North Vancouver, BC V7G 2A4.

•Various resource lists on various subjects of interest to women are available at the Halifax City Regional Library. Subjects include: Women and Depression: Causes and Solutions, Premenstrual Syndrome, and Women at Mid-Life. For copies, contact the Halifax City Regional Library at 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, 421-6983.

•Recently published: Women and Aging by Ellen Gee and Meredith Kimball. \$15/160 pages/published by Butterworths.



International Women's Day Rally, 1985 (Photo by Brenda Conroy)

•Listen to Sister Sounds (women's music in a feminist context) on CKDU 97.5 FM at 8 pm Sundays.

•FEMINIST DEBATING SERIES. Pandora is thinking of sponsoring a feminist debating series in 1988. Some suggested topics are: 1) Jesus was a feminist, but so what?; 2) socialism vs feminism; 3) sado-masochism; 4) feminism and patriarchy — how much is our responsibility?; 5) feminism and patriarchal concepts of romance — Is there room for romance in feminism?; 6) Can you be heterosexual and feminist?; 7) feminism and political correctness — is there pressure to conform? These are rough working ideas only! Any women who have ideas for debates and/or suggestions for debaters, write Megan Ardyche, 5535 Black Street, Halifax, N.S. B3K 1P7, or call 453-6364.

•MediaWatch holds its regular monthly meetings on the last Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at National Film Board, 1571 Argyle St. For further information call Carol Millett at 454-0570.

•M.U.M.S. meet every second Sunday. Call Darlene Dacey, 466-6321 or Brenda Thompson, 464-9651.

•The Abortion Information Referral Service is now operating. Women

seeking information on abortion services in Nova Scotia can call 421-4123.

The telephone line is sponsored by CARAL/Halifax. The number is listed in the White Pages under AIRS and CARAL/Halifax and is also listed in the Yellow Pages under Counselling and Information Services. Contact CARAL/Halifax group, 835-9435.

•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 Time (news and interviews about women's issues) on CKDU 97.5 FM, Thursdays at 5:45 during the Evening Affair. Any community women's groups who would like to announce their events, call Connie at 424-6469

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

•CARAL (Canadian Abortion Rights Action League) meetings, Amanda, 835-9435.

•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.

•Veith House requires volunteer help for its Literacy programme. Tutoring takes place with adults on a one-to-one basis

and/or small groups. For more information please call 453-4320.

•Women's Employment Outreach will be holding a four-part pre-employment workshop for women. It starts the first Tuesday of every month, 9:30 - 11:30. Phone 422-8023 to register.

•Veith House requires volunteer help for its Outreach Tutoring programme. Tutoring takes place on a one-to-one basis with school aged children between grades 1 and 12. For more information, please call 453-4320.

PLEASE NOTE: I think the calendar is an important part of Pandora. I like to think it helps keep women across the network informed about what is happening in the community. But it is a LOT OF WORK for one person to try and keep tabs on everything that is going on. PLEASE ... won't you call and let me know the dates of important events? Anita at 425-1340.

The next issue will come out June 1, 1988. The deadline for submission of material for inclusion in the June calendar is May 15th.

•We at Pandora don't know everything that goes on in the Maritimes. Any woman out there who attends an event you think others would like to know about, please write a short piece (500 words or less) to report on it. We would like you to use Pandora to network with other women. Let us hear about what is going on out there.

## IWD activities in Indian Brook, Victoria Co., Cape Breton

all activities take place at the Indian Brook Fire Hall  
March 12

- workshops on child care, home care, pregnancy care, self-care
- films
- latest Canadian women's books on display
- information tables on health and women's issues
- special films for teenage women
- song and dance to complete the evening
- special entertainment for kids
- Call Deanie at 929-2766 for info



International Women's Day placards, 1987

(Photo by Anita)

# Morris' trial mystifies observer — what's it all about, Eddie?

Debbie Mathers

When I arrived at Edmund Morris' trial, I found many of Brenda Thompson's supporters already present. One woman mentioned that there was as much, or more, attention to this trial as there would be to a sensational murder trial. I felt this was appropriate as the results would be more widespread and important than an individual attack and subsequent court action.

I sat at the very back of the courtroom, trying to understand what was going on. It was the first time I had attended a trial, and I was unfamiliar with the ebb and flow, the meanings of the motions and objections.

Some things were easy to understand. I understood that Mr. Morris was trying to get the case thrown out of court because he felt that he was not a member of the Department (of Social Services). Other things were hard to understand — how could a minister of a department not be a member of that department? I guess I wasn't alone with that question.

I couldn't understand why Mr. Morris' lawyers insisted that it was relevant and important to ask Ms. Thompson all kinds of personal questions about when and where and why she applied for social assistance. I kept thinking that maybe, as the trial continued, I'd find out why it was so relevant. I never did.

In fact, it felt wrong that such personal information was brought out, especially since that was the reason for the court action in the first place.

With interest I watched the "scrimmage" at the breaks in the trial. Numerous members of the press would huddle by the door waiting for Ms. Thompson and Mr. Morris to exit the courtroom. With microphones, tape recorders, video cameras and lights, they would hover vulture-like at the door. Keeping Ms. Thompson or Mr. Morris in sight, all the reporters would walk backward,

constantly hurling questions at them.

During the trial, a woman who worked at social services was questioned. Later, several reporters took the stand. I couldn't understand why Mr. Morris' lawyers asked one of the reporters a multitude of questions on how the social services department was run, and how much their budget was, and how many people were served by social services. Why did they ask the reporter? Why didn't they ask someone

Next came the sentencing. Both sets of lawyers talked to the judge about what the terms should be. Anne Derrick, Ms. Thompson's lawyer asked for the maximum fine \$2000, while Mr. Morris' lawyer asked for the minimum, \$300, as well as a discharge. Luckily, Anne Derrick was really on the ball on this one. She immediately informed the judge (who was specially appointed from a superior court to handle this politically sensitive case) that a discharge was impossible in this matter. The judge had no choice but to concur.

As anyone who has been following the case or who heard the news after the trial knows, the judge imposed a \$100 sentence, lower even than the minimum. All of Ms. Thompson's supporters gasped in disbelief. The judge said he imposed that fine because Brenda's original story was possibly libellous and/or slanderous and certainly provocative. He also talked about Edmund's upstanding reputation in the community and his years of public service.

That's another thing I don't understand. How can a judge impose a fine lower than the minimum? I thought that was what minimum fines were for. It seemed as though the judge, while required by law to find Mr. Morris guilty, didn't really feel he did anything wrong.

And, even if Ms. Thompson's story was provocative, does that give Mr. Morris a right to break a law and reveal confidential information? It certainly seems that way. At least, if not a right, certainly he paid little in the way of penalty.

After the trial, Brenda said she felt like she'd been put through a rape trial. I felt that was an apt analogy. In times past, the justification for rape was provocation; now the judge seems to be saying provocation is, indeed, a legitimate excuse for breaking laws. I can

only presume from the results of this trial that if you're provoked enough, you can do almost anything with a minimum penalty.

The government has recently announced that it will pay for Ms. Thompson's legal fees. This was the fair and equitable thing to do, since, as a welfare recipient, she has no money for that expense. She cannot receive donations personally without the amount being deducted from her welfare payment.

Legal Action for Women on Welfare (L.A.W.W.), had been accepting donations for Ms. Thompson's legal fees, and encouraging everyone to write to the Premier and the Attorney General to pressure them into paying Brenda's legal fees. They have raised over \$4000 towards this expense. They will now give contributors a choice between taking their money back or letting it stay in the organization's general fund.

Brenda Thompson, a welfare mother, got angry when Edmund Morris, said in the legislature that there were no starving children in Nova Scotia. She wrote a letter to the *The Daily News* expressing her anger at him and his policies. The paper printed this letter as a column.

It seems that Morris presumes a person on welfare is incapable of writing coherently and articulately and thus needs someone else to write for them. Morris, after reading this column, complained in the legislature about the existence of NDP ghostwriters.

When reporters, concerned that Morris was referring to themselves, asked him about the NDP ghostwriters, Morris responded by telling them personal details about Thompson's life and particularly about the questionable paternity of her child.

Ms. Thompson decided to sue Morris for breach of the confidentiality section of the Freedom of Information Act. Morris tried to have the suit thrown out of court because, as Minister of the Department of Social Services, he wasn't a member of the department. The judge rejected that argument, so it finally came to trial.



## Stereotyping causes welfare mother to be condemned by critics

Brenda Thompson

Now that all the fury and fire of the "Welfare Mother versus Edmund Morris" case is finally dying down, and now that the spotlight is fading away, I am able to reflect upon one of the most valuable lessons I have ever learned.

Every time I went out in public, I got stares and whispers directed at me. The radio stations have all done talk shows about the trial and my personal life and I've had a few occasions when I've been called a whore or slut for being an unwed mother and for being on welfare.

During this whole experience, I encountered a number of emotions and

feelings, but there was a feeling of anger that I couldn't put a name to. That was, until I met a black woman from Pretoria, South Africa. As I told her what I was feeling and the ignorant reaction of people who knew I was on welfare, this woman summed it all up for me in one word: racism.

At first I disagreed with her; after all, I'm a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, white woman in a country ruled by white (male) people.

"Do you think anyone would have listened to your criticisms of welfare if you weren't white?" she asked me. "People listened to you because you are white and you defied all their stereotypes of welfare recipients and this made them angry. You painted 'welfare' all over your skin and people started recognizing you as 'that welfare mother' and applied all their stereotypes because they were scared to think that you are just like them. It's just like someone who looks at the black skin of a woman and judges her morality, intelligence and integrity by all the myths that have been conjured up about people with black skin because they want to believe that they are somehow better."

Needless to say, I thought long and hard about her comments and I came to the conclusion that maybe she was right. I'm not claiming to know how it feels to be black or Indian. I'll never know how it feels. But just this small glimpse of what racism feels like makes me feel a constant rage for people who don't think. I also realize just how lucky I am. Time will pass, people will forget, and the word "welfare" will fade from my skin and people will stop judging me by rumours they have heard.

I have handled more than my fair share of classism and sexism, but this feeling is something that has changed my life dramatically. I think I am a bit more open-minded and sensitive now, and I think that will grow as I continue to grow. (Too bad we couldn't say the same for Buchanan and Morris.)



Employment and Immigration Canada

Emploi et Immigration Canada

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### Language and Sex: Differences in Tone

A regional conference of the Institute for the Study of Women  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
March 25-26, 1988

Keynote address: **Mary Daly**  
"Be-Thinking, Be-Speaking, Be-Spelling:  
Re-Calling the Archimagical Powers of Women"  
Friday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.  
Auditorium C, Seton Academic Centre  
(coffee house following)  
\$5 admission/\$3 students and unsalaried

For further information on the conference, call  
**Dr. Marguerite Andersen**  
Distinguished Chair in Women's Studies  
Mount Saint Vincent University  
443-4450, ext. 172

Beware the glass figure:

# Mother earth shows us how to heal ourselves

Karen Paul, Native Women's Association of Canada

I write this for the women who have walked before us. I write this for the children that we have borne, for those that we have yet to bear, and for those that live within us. I write this for you, my sisters: for those who have been hurt, for those of us who are hurting right now and for those who will surely be hurt in the future. I write this for my people, I write this for myself.

The 'glass figure' represents those of us who are shadows of what we once were, of what we are, of what we may become. It represents those of us who have hidden or are still hiding within, behind, and underneath the glass. Some of us are still hiding.

Some of us have edged backward, far enough to have begun to see our own reflection. There are also those of us who have moved back, further still, to the point where we can be ourselves and accept that. In the latter case, 'our glass figure' represents the healing process of a sober sister made visible. Remember this, for contained within my writing is hope, for all of us.

"The surest way of killing a people is to kill the spirit that lives within." Being the 'proud' Native people that we are, we are very conscious about protecting the spirit that lives within us, from those who would take it from us at any price.

Unfortunately what we fail to see is our own hand in the matter. Each time that we reach out to take that glass, to bend our arm, to place the glass be-

tween our lips, to empty its contents within us, we fail to see that we are not only killing our own spirit but we are also killing the spirit of 'our' people. We can no longer lay blame on the outside; we must begin to 'see' what we are doing to ourselves.

There was a time in the life of our people when our spiritual connection with the Creator was the driving force behind all that we were, all that we did and all that we prepared for. Our people 'knew' that there was a spirit in all things because all things are connected to the Creator. Embodied in our physical selves is our spiritual selves; therefore, the Creator lives in each of us. At this time our people had self-respect.

Our former driving force has been replaced by the 'almighty' dollar, for it is the dollar that gives us access to 'our glass figure,' in one way, shape or form. Self-respect has now been replaced by selfishness. Instead of relying on the power of the creation in each of us, we have come to rely upon 'our glass figure.' We began to believe that all that we are, all that we do and all that we prepare for is contained within that glass.

There was a time when we knew with clarity what our purpose was. It was to protect life, the earth and all of the creation.

Now, so many of us wonder what life is, and while we are wondering, our people are dying, our children are being taken away, our brothers and sisters are being locked up in cages and our first mother, the earth, is being

probed, stabbed, raped and destroyed.

All this goes on around us because we value our 'glass figure' more than we value our self, our children, our elderly, our people, our life, the life of the earth, the life of the Creator in all things. If we do not take seriously our responsibility to protect them, who will be left to protect us when the time comes?

There was a time when our people were taught our values, roles and responsibilities by example. What lessons are being learned through the examples we set now?

We must begin to realize the vital role that we play, that we can play, that we must play, in our communities. As women, we are the givers of life and carry the responsibility in much the same way as our mother, the earth.

She has the gift of sustaining life and we have the gift of sustaining the life of our people. When our mother hurts, we hurt. When our mother quivers, we quiver. When our mother is dry, we are dry. When our mother is dying, we are dying.

Always remember that 'all things are connected.' When our mother is strong, we will again be strong, our people will again be strong. When she is healthy, we will be healthy. When she is happy, we will be happy.

Our mother the earth needs our help now! Our children need our help now! Our people need our help now! We need our mother, we need our children, we need our people now!

Let us begin the healing process now, by helping to heal ourselves, by helping to heal one another. Let us empty our 'glass figure' once and for all, so we can live in a 'good way' and those around us can benefit from our courage, our strength and our energy.

We must throw up the poison in order to clean out our system, to talk about the hurts, to empty ourselves so that we can begin to fill ourselves with healthy food, healthy feelings, healthy energy, healthy thoughts.

We cannot change the past, but we can effect a change in our future. Remember, all things happen for a reason. If you are angry, don't hold it in, don't take it out on yourself, or others who don't deserve it. Unleash that anger, harness it and use it in a constructive way, not a destructive way. Reframe it by turning it into a building block rather than an anchor.

Form a women's healing circle, to talk, to listen, to offer support, to share the joy and the pain with one another. Ask for help from other people and groups in your area. Remember, none of us are alone. Remember that everything we need to survive lies deep within each and every one of us.

□□□□

Karen Paul is a Maliseet from the Woodstock Reserve in New Brunswick. She is on the Council of The Native Women's Association of Canada and is a tireless sister and supporter of the Native Brotherhood in the prisons of New Brunswick and the Native Sisterhood in Kingston, Ontario. (This piece was originally written for The Bulletin, the newsletter of The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council.)



constance chevrier trains to ensure she is in top shape to succeed in her plan to bicycle across Nova Scotia. (Photo by Sara avMaat)

## Enthusiastic cyclist won't give up plans

constance g. chevrier

In June of 1982, a cyclist from B.C. raced from British Columbia to Nova Scotia just hours short of fifteen days. Last June, a crew and I wanted to be the first team to break that record. BRAC (Bicycle Race Across Canada) Challenge 1987 never became a reality due to a lack of funds.

The project theme, Ordinary People Doing Ordinary Things, was to inspire women to be the best that they can possibly be. 'Project BRAC' lost round one; yet, it still remains a reality.

The cancellation left me psychologically, physically, and spiritually devastated — like a shrivelled up conditioned world class athlete with oodles of enthusiastic energy and no project to expend it on.

Past training sessions haunted me briefly thereafter. I remembered ice-cold, lonely winter nights in my sleeping bag on a wooden floor.

I dreamt of myself in the race and would wake drenched in sweat, my muscles burning and aching, with knees clenched to my chest, rocking silently.

Then my expensive bicycle was stolen! I started questioning my values and beliefs and re-assessing project goals and objectives. I wondered if the project could still be a reality.

I had to realize that circumstances were out of my control. I realized that the project didn't have to end; that it could continue, smaller, perhaps, but with just as much meaning.

The feeling of being at peace (as opposed to feeling a lonely loss) has left me contented.

To yearn deeply for something is one thing, but to expend all one's energy into it at all costs is another. To push oneself to the absolute limit is to experience satisfaction for its own sake.

Now I'm planning to bike race across Nova Scotia next summer in the hope of raising awareness of 'BRAC Challenge '89' as a possibility. With the support of Jack Nauss Bicycle Shop (who gave me a bicycle and continues to support the project) and Dalhousie's Sportsplex (who gave me a free membership), the reality of the race is a strong possibility.

I am still looking for women crew members and I'm approaching local businesses for equipment and vehicles that will be necessary for a project like this.

□□□□

constance is an athlete-in-training, who is doing research on women in sport.

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Healthy diet and lots of B-vitamins are the key:

# Vitamin therapy used to overcome addictions

Leah Nomm

Much has been written in the last few years about the addictive personality. Accordingly, many individuals who are addicted to harmful substances such as cigarettes, alcohol and drugs have wondered if they are, perhaps, suffering primarily from a psychological problem. Many treatment programs now emphasize the psychodynamics behind habit formation with good results.

On the other hand, it would be unwise to forget that chemical substances are involved and that in every case, one's body has become increasingly dependent upon these chemicals.

The degree of dependency varies from person to person and also from substance to substance. Sometimes sudden or even a gradual stopping of the chemical will result in extremely uncomfortable sensations—headaches, nausea, dizziness, cold sweats, heart palpitations and anxiety.

Sometimes these sensations can be "lived through," but at others, the sensations are so devastating that one feels compelled to stop them by the only sure method—reintroduction of the offending chemical. Once the horrible sensations have subsided, the emotional

guilt begins. And so a vicious circle is set up that is difficult to overcome.

There is a way to make things easier and that's through some preventive and supportive nutritional measures.

I have divided this program into a "Before" and "During" category.

The "Before" regime is to prepare the body for the upcoming enormous chemical change which will occur when the addictive substance is withdrawn. The regime should last from two to four weeks.

## Before

Immediately cut down on all caffeine-containing beverages such as coffee, tea and cola. If it is your custom to drink six cups of coffee a day, aim for reducing it to three per day by the end of the first week. Whatever your caffeine intake, reduce it to half the first week and in the remaining three weeks, hold yourself to a maximum of two cups per day. Chocolate, which contains caffeine, should be eliminated altogether.

Increase your intake of "complex carbohydrates". This means basically unrefined starches, such as whole wheat, bran, brown rice, millet, buck-

wheat, lentils, peas, beans and starchy vegetables. These are not exactly common foods and they certainly are not available in most restaurants, so you may have to plan ahead a bit and make up some casseroles that can be used all week.

If you are concerned that these foods have too many calories, then cut back on meat and fried food and replace them with the complex carbohydrates for the duration of the "Before" period.

Get rid of all snack foods that you have in your house or at work that contain sugar. This means cookies, cake, ice cream, puddings, canned fruit if it is in syrup, jam, jelly, and commercial peanut butter. This seems pretty drastic, but all these foods affect your blood glucose levels and the last thing you'll need when you stop smoking or drinking or whatever, is the physical and emotional roller coaster ride that can result from too much sugar.

For the time being, stock up on nuts and fruit and whole grain crackers. Frozen banana can taste a little like ice cream.

And finally, begin taking some nutritional supplements. You'll need a bottle of "B-Complex" with a minimum of 100 mg. of niacinamide along with an assortment of other B vitamins in the tablet.

Some formulas will have 100 mg. of all or most of the other B's (ie. B-1, B-2, etc) and some will have different milligrams of each type of B. What's important is that the B-3 content (the niacinamide is 100 mg or more).

If the formula says "Time Released" on the label, it can be taken in the morning. If it doesn't, then you should break the tablet in half and take one half in the morning and one half in the evening.

It would also be helpful to get a good multi-vitamin and mineral tablet that contains calcium, magnesium and chromium. The health food store varie-

ties usually have higher potencies than the ones sold in the drug store. At this time, it is best to get the higher potency.

This regime should last a minimum of two weeks and can go on as long as four weeks before you start the "During" regime. If you are having a hard time cutting back on the sugar and caffeine, then you should do this for four weeks.



Leah Nomm

## During

This regime begins the day you decide to cut back or cut out your addictive substance. It should be followed until you feel safe from withdrawal symptoms and then another month afterward, just to be sure.

The caffeine and sugar restrictions continue. Increase water intake to six to eight glasses per day. If you've been using the sugar substitute "aspartame" (also known as Nutrisweet or Equal) eliminate it (this is because, in certain individuals, it has been known to cross over into the brain cells and cause irritability). If you feel overwhelmed by a desire for something sweet, suck on frozen fruit pieces or have a teaspoon of

maple syrup (not corn syrup). Continue with the high intake of complex carbohydrates. By now, you may have come to enjoy some of these.

Increase your B vitamin tablets to two per day. Continue with the multi-vitamin/mineral tablet preferably taken before bed and add 200 mcg. of chromium. This is sold as "Chelated Chromium" or "GTF Chromium." Both of them contain chromium, but if you have a lot of allergies, you'd be better to take the "Chelated Chromium." This tablet should be taken in the morning. Although the addition of these supplements can be very useful in aiding your body to recover from the shock of withdrawing from a familiar chemical, they could be harmful if taken in excess. The idea that if one tablet is good, then two must be twice as good does not apply here. If you are reading books that suggest higher dosages than these, have medical advice before you start increasing.

One special word: if you have diabetes, please check with your doctor before starting to take chromium as it can influence your insulin levels.

I apologize for the somewhat "preachy" format of this article. There is a lot of information to cover and while I would like to explain all the reasons behind the advice, I'm sure you understand that this could become a book. In fact, there are several books already written on this subject. The library has some of these.

Overcoming an addiction can be one of life's greatest challenges. The support of family and friends, education, perseverance and self-understanding are all important. By applying some good nutritional habits, you can give the whole process a boost. Good luck.

□□□□□

Leah Nomm is a holistic health practitioner in Halifax.

## Help wanted:

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# The myth of Pandora

Earth-mother had given the mortals life. This puzzled them greatly. They would stare curiously at one another, then turn away to forage for food. Slowly they found that hunger has many forms.

One morning the humans followed an unusually plump bear cub to a hillside covered with bushes that hung heavy with red berries. They began to feast at once, hardly aware of the tremors beginning beneath their feet. As the quaking increased, a chasm gaped at the crest of the hill. From it arose Pandora with her earthen pithos. The mortals were paralyzed with fear but the Goddess drew them into Her aura.

I am Pandora, Giver of All Gifts. She lifted the lid from the large jar. From it She took a pomegranate, which became an apple, which became a lemon, which became a pear. I bring you flowering trees that bear fruit, gnarled trees hung with olives and, this, the grapevine that

will sustain you. She reached into the jar for a handful of seeds and sprinkled them over the hillside. I bring you plants for hunger and illness, for weaving and dying. Hidden beneath My surface you will find minerals, ore, and clay of endless form. She took from the jar two flat stones. Attend with care My plainest gift: I bring you flint.

Then Pandora turned the jar on its side, inundating the hillside with Her flowing grace. The mortals were bathed in the changing colors of Her aura. I bring you wonder, curiosity, memory. I bring you justice with mercy. I bring you caring and communal bonds. I bring you courage, strength, endurance. I bring you loving kindness for all beings. I bring you the seeds of peace.

From *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece* by Charlene Spretnak (Editor of *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*)



# Prisons deny human dignity, self-respect

Jo-Ann Mayhew

I am writing to you today from the Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario. I have long held writers in awe, and as I haltingly take steps to follow the examples of my private models, I find the exercise exhausting. The struggle for me lies in wrestling a flow of mind ideas into forms that are coherent and meaningful through clumsy fingertips and a rigidly awkward alphabet.

Today I have found that energy by allowing myself to sink into a seemingly bottomless well of sadness that rests inside me. Today is the wedding day of my eldest daughter. Here in prison in Kingston, I will not see or hear or feel or touch a single moment or breath of her day of commitment and celebration. Like many other women, my attachment to my first born child is especially profound. Despite the passing of 23 years, the event of her birth remains clearly etched in my own soul as a birth of glorious joy.

She knows of my feelings. But I am in Kingston, a thousand and hundreds of miles from her wedding feast in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Gentle public, lawful readers, this is, oh, so very sad. I can honestly say I was once much like you. I tended my family's needs. I cooked most loving meals and more dutifully washed the clothes and tended the home, assisted on the family farm and worked for wages.

A dear partner and I lived lives of external productivity, fueling our energy and fantasies with the soul poison of alcohol often disguised in glittering shards of crystal goblets. Our pleasure grew to be a problem and the problem unfolded and in turn engulfed us in addiction.

Maybe it was absolute despair and self-loathing: we were kindred spirits — both Gemini — sometimes lovers,

always friends, but in May 1985, I shot and killed this man.

The RCMP charged me with second degree murder. The Crown Attorney prosecuted the case. The jury disregarded alcoholism as a mitigating factor and found me guilty as charged. The judge was obligated by Canadian law to sentence me to life in prison. I may be considered for parole after serving ten years.

Now, readers, I am no longer like you. Nor am I much like the person who previously lived an unaware, uncommitted existence. I seem to have slowly evolved a sober strength that I cannot yet love, for the price paid by myself and others is too dear. My

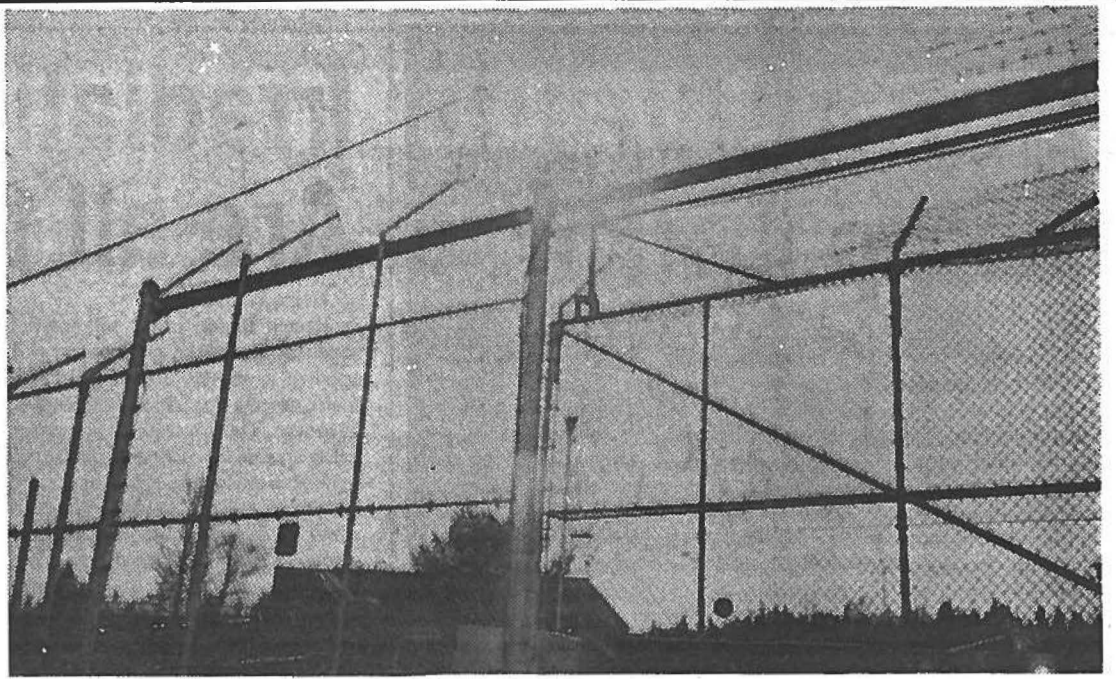
**I was sent to Kingston because I was a woman...**

power to write has been paid in blood. I will use the honesty of that admission, the pain of guilt and remorse, the pain of my separation from my

daughter on this day, to fuel the words that need to be said and read. I write to alert, to warn and to alarm a dangerous unconsciousness into considered positive action.

Readers, I desperately believe we are engaged in a battle to save individual rights and basic human dignity from becoming archaic elements of a dimly remembered past. I arrived at the Prison for Women in the fall of 1985. I had few, if any, preconceived notions of what prison was or should be, beyond stereotyped images from B movies and a generalized idea that I was being punished on my way to rehabilitation as a safe individual. The fact that I was female seemed rather irrelevant to the whole procedure (in my eyes). How totally wrong and ignorant I was on all these counts!

I was sent to Kingston because I was a woman. The province of Nova Scotia, indeed the entire Maritime region, has no facility for female offenders sentenced to prison for two years or more. My deportation was predetermined. I



Women serving long-term sentences cannot serve their time in a Nova Scotia facility.

They are forced to go to the Kingston Prison for Women. (Photo by Sara avMaat)

have since learned that during the last ten years or more, Provincial Transfer Agreements have been signed by the federal government with most provinces (Ontario being the sole exception). A recent visitor from an Advisory Committee to the Solicitor General of Canada, James Kelleher, appeared mildly astonished that these paper agreements were not in operation. One can only wonder at how well connected Mr. Kelleher can be to the realities of this prison in the absence of accurate reports.

The fact is, I write in Ontario while my daughter marries in Nova Scotia. The fact is, my best friend is agonizingly attempting to be allowed to serve her sentence in British Columbia, close to a husband recovering from a major cardiac arrest. Her request for a humanitarian transfer on compassionate grounds is being denied. The fact is, Native women from the Prairie Provinces are most commonly singled out, earmarked, for transfer to Kingston because they are native.

Both federal and provincial governments claim that there are not enough funds available to incarcerate women in their home provinces. The fact is, it is costing you, the tax-payer, between \$60-70,000 per year for each female prisoner, housed in Kingston, away from family and community, in a living situation of combined cages and recycled army barracks with only a superficial semblance of programming.

I was confused, disoriented and distressed upon my arrival at this prison. I was allowed to go to the Psychiatric Treatment Centre. This is a quasi-medical unit located at Kingston Prison (KP), one of the oldest prisons in Canada and now dedicated to handling protective custody inmates, frequently men who have demonstrated severe attitude problems toward women. Women have been allotted five cells in what is best described as a setting for a Gothic horror movie. This represents a recent compromise between a proposed psychiatric hospital complex and nothing.

After several winter months in such surroundings, I was pleased to return to the Prison for Women. I was given work as a cleaner and permitted to brush up the typing and word-processing skills with which I had previously been acquainted.

My own single interest was in receiving help/treatment for alcoholism. I attended AA meetings and was dis-

mayed to find them cancelled if their scheduling conflicted with bingo or a dance. I would not ignore the seriousness of my addiction and found the passive acceptance of so little programming in this area very hard to understand. The administration took time to explain that their function was to incarcerate not rehabilitate — apparently efforts (?) in that direction had proved unsuccessful.

However I inadvertently learned that male prisoners in this same area of Ontario were being offered an extensive substance abuse rehabilitation program called "Brentwood" while serving their sentences. With the self-serving determination quite characteristic of the alcoholic, I attempted to propose a similar program be offered to women at the Prison for Women.

At about the same time, I was ap-

pointed to the prisoners' magazine, *Tightwire*. My personal observation confirmed that about 80% of the women at P4W had been affected by substance abuse. Similar grim statistics also revealed that 60% or more of this prison's population had been victims of incest, rape or battering.

With renewed purpose, I pursued the "Brentwood" concept until, through a wonderfully inadvertent meeting, I was introduced to members of Women In Sobriety. This is a relatively new women's self-help concept basically dedicated to promoting what I call active sobriety.

It took many months to have this positive program introduced into this prison. The entire project was almost abandoned for "lack of available funds." The visiting moderators had asked for a bi-monthly fee of \$65 to cover their travelling costs from Ottawa to Kingston and back.

Keeping in mind the \$60,000 cost per year and the magnitude of the substance abuse problem, this "lack of funding" would be ludicrous if not so tragic in human terms.

Finding alternative ways in which a person can serve a sentence in a positive framework such as in a Community Residence while accessing needed life skill programs and remaining economically productive, has long been proposed by organizations such as Elizabeth Fry, the Church Council on Justice and Corrections, the Canadian Campaign for Prison Improvement as well as by many private individuals.

Alternatives to prison do exist. It is time to implement them.

Jo-Ann Mayhew is a former resident of Antigonish, Nova Scotia now serving a life sentence at the Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario.

**It has long been acknowledged that prisons rarely rehabilitate...**

as well as supplements to interrupted education and practical job training had been in place. Why has the Correction Services Canada

(CSC) resisted implementing these?

Simply: LUST OF POWER. The dominantly male CSC hierarchy does not want to and will not let go of the power image created by the "fortress" image of prison. The physical presence of these macho monsters of fear is needed, not so much to protect the public, as it is to defend a false doctrine that prisoners are "subhuman and different" and must be shut away. Community residences do not portray these messages. But cells and bars do.

Moreover, concrete and steel establish a basis of helplessness and fear, very quickly masked by "cold indifference." The hundreds, if not thousands, of rules and regulations are screws turned at random to increase prison hardship. The power of each individual guarding the prison is marked by the number of kinds of screws he or she is allowed to turn. Deceived by a uniform and brass coated buttons, basically decent people are led to believe it is OK to treat other people in this fashion. In fact, their job security may depend on how many turns of the screw they make. Lured by high salaries to degrading work, they become economically dependent on these jobs. They are as imprisoned as the prisoners they guard.

Alternatives to prison do exist. It is time to implement them.

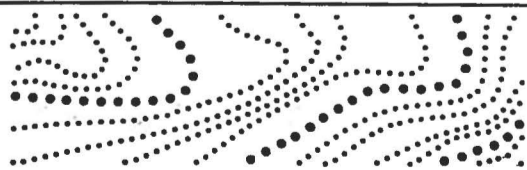
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Jo-Ann Mayhew is a former resident of Antigonish, Nova Scotia now serving a life sentence at the Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario.

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# Irradiation of food — Are all the facts known?

Helga Hoffman

Recent reports in the newspapers state that the federal government will approve a greater use of irradiated foods, despite opposition by a number of groups. The government is thereby going against the recommendations of the House of Commons Consumer and Corporate Affairs Committee, which after studying the issue, stated that the safety of irradiated foods was not proven.

Advocates of irradiation state that radiation, when properly used, will prevent potatoes and onions from sprouting; will prevent fruit from ripening before getting to store shelves; will kill bacteria and insects in fruits, grains and spices; and will destroy a variety of micro-organisms, such as trichina worms in pork, salmonella in chicken and bacteria in fish. (The main result would be to extend the shelf life of these foodstuffs, and thus reduce the losses incurred by middle "men" in the food business.)

However, this method of sterilization does not kill the botulism bacteria, which will be better able to multiply in an environment free of competing micro-organisms.

Another problem is aflatoxin production, which occurs in moldy grain, and which actually increases when irradiated. Aflatoxins are very powerful cancer-causing agents.

Vitamins get destroyed in varying degrees, depending on environmental factors and radiation dosage. Particularly sensitive are Vitamins A, C, and E and some of the B vitamins.

Irradiation can also cause bad taste in meat, eggs and cottage cheese, and can change the texture of food, for example, tomatoes become mushy when irradiated.

While the proponents of irradiated food acknowledge these problems, they minimize them by pointing to similar concerns with other methods—canning for example also causes vitamin loss.

More fundamental problems, dismissed by the irradiation industry, have been brought up by a number of researchers. Radiation breaks down the bonds in food molecules, creating free radicals and, through re-arrangement of molecules, unique radiolytic products (URPs).

Free radicals are very reactive and are considered a factor in cancer formation. URPs are a concern because they are formed in larger numbers during irradiation than in other processes, and the possible hazards associated with them are unknown.

Radiation affects more complex organisms to a greater degree than simpler organisms. Thus, a small dose of radiation may be enough to kill a large animal, but will do little harm to bacteria, except to encourage the bacteria to mutate.

While advocates of irradiation like AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) deny or minimize the validity of studies critical of food irradiation, several studies have been reported which raise concerns about this method of preservation.

In particular, there is the often-maligned 1975 report in the *Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, which describes a feeding program in India, where out of 15 malnourished children, one third were fed on freshly irradiated wheat, one third were fed on stored irradiated wheat, and the rest were given non-

irradiated wheat. Those fed freshly irradiated grain had the highest number of abnormal cells in blood tests. The study was replicated in 1978 with monkeys, with similar results.

One concern many people have is whether the food becomes radioactive when irradiated. It appears that only minimal radioactivity is generated when the "appropriate" radiation dosage is used. This is said to quickly disappear due to the short half-life of the isotopes created.



Logo identifying irradiated food

The question remains however, if higher than recommended doses are accidentally used in the irradiators, what consequences would that have for the food and for consumers?

Until now in Canada, food irradiation was classified as an "additive" and was subject to a range of toxicological tests. While these often are inadequate, the government and industry now want to make irradiation a "process", like canning or freezing. The significance of this change is that it means less testing.

The main promoter of this new technological fix in Canada is AECL, also the world's largest supplier of industrial irradiators.

AECL's CANDU reactors are used to produce Cobalt-60. The gamma rays

given off by Cobalt-60 can be used to irradiate food. (In the U.S., Cesium-137, a by-product of nuclear weapons production, is used as a source of gamma rays.)

Given how difficult it is for AECL to sell its reactors, food irradiation is for them a partial solution to their problems. AECL also presents the fact that fumigants like ethylene dibromide (EDB) are being withdrawn because of cancer-causing properties as an additional incentive to promote irradiation as an alternative to rid fruits and vegetables of unwanted micro-organisms.

While one may get diverted into analysing the pros and cons of a variety of methods of food preservation, the principle issue is the direction this technological quagmire is taking us. Present food production methods are geared towards the maximizing of profits, and involve large amounts of pesticides, food preserving chemicals, transportation over long distances, long storage periods associated with nutrient losses, etc. — getting us further and further away from wholesome basic foods. Rather than more technology, we need a re-orientation towards local production, geared towards local needs and thus eliminating the need for massive food preservation. Food irradiation would then become a non-issue.

Sources: Ascent (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) Vol. 6, no. 1, 1985.

Harrowsmith No. 68, July/Aug. 1986, "Immortal Chicken".

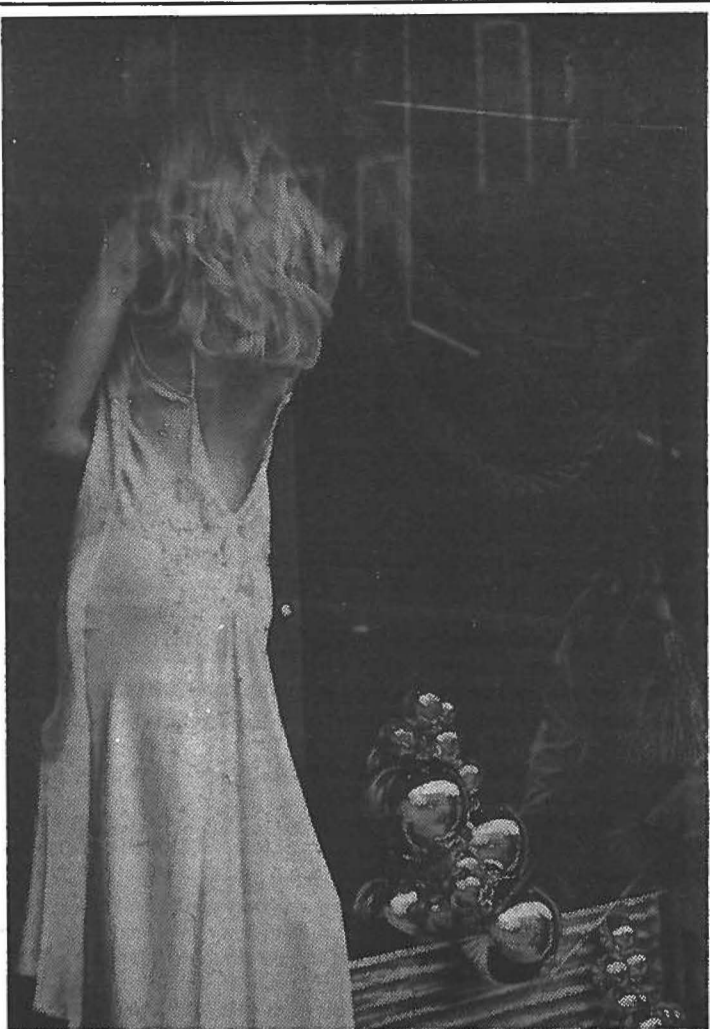
New Scientist, 19 February 1987, "Radiation meets the public's taste".

Science Council of Canada, *Issues in Food Irradiation*, by Susan Mills, April 1987.

This Magazine, Vol. 21, No. 1, March/April 1987, "The Blast Supper".

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Helga Hoffman is an active member of the North Shore Environmental Web, an environmental group based in Pictou County, Nova Scotia.



(Photo by Lorraine Schmid)

## Mannequins

Heather Levy

There are people who argue that the fashion industry exploits men and women evenly. As a feminist, I have come to expect heterosexist and degrading images of women in the advertising industry, and my expectations were confirmed when I took a walk through the shops on Spring Garden Road.

Mill's Brothers featured a video - "Diary of a Colour Story Fall 87 Mezzotints". Behind this redundant and ridiculous title was a million dollar Estée Lauder marketing campaign. I saw women having their heads turned, twisted and manipulated by an ubiquitous white hand. This offensive Broadway fantasy of the female mannequin brought to life repeats every twenty minutes in stores across Canada.

Sir Andrew's aims for elegance, so I did not expect to find anything alarming behind their oil paintings of steel-plated Huns in busy courtyards. But two advertisements in the leather coat and two hundred dollar trouser section caught my eye. The men in the ad hold a woman who wears only a waist-long black leather coat and matching ankle boots and socks. They hold her above their heads like a prize bird. The men are taking a newspaper from her hand. Her mouth is open in red-painted alarm, her eyes are wide, and she is pinned. The newspaper falls from her hand to the ground. The symbolism is alarmingly direct.

Sir Andrew's does not have mannequins. The clothing is displayed on hangers or neatly folded in wooden chests. Advertisements show dignified men in libraries or sporting men with only their hands and faces exposed.

Women's shop rely largely upon mannequins of the red open-mouthed, polished variety. Hands are always extended in an enticing way. All of the mannequins have bountiful breasts and erect nipples, a "feature" introduced in the seventies. Female mannequins have a steel support bar that is fastened to their left buttock. (It's interesting that the only male mannequin that I found on Spring Garden Road was in LeChateau. He did not have support prongs and was entirely self-supported.)

Life Styles, another shop in Spring Garden Place, carried an ad for women's pantyhose. These nylon stockings, which are already oppressive moisture traps and circulation restrictors, were used as yet another vehicle of male violence. The advertisement showed a woman lawyer with her skirt blown up around her ears. The ad is shot from such an angle that the woman appears to be sitting on the spire of a courthouse. Her mouth is heavily lacquered in red lipstick and is open in what appears to be enjoyment. This ad was eventually replaced with Mexx designs that feature women with Shirley Temple curls holding leashed chimpanzees. The woman and the chimpanzee sprawl in brightly coloured clothing while a capable man hails a cab.

It is not surprising to find male-owned companies that have millions of dollars in their advertising budgets. The lowest priced mannequins retail for seven hundred dollars. Wigs alone sell for seventy-five dollars. Makeup for these mannequins is thrown in free of charge.

Women's clothing should be displayed on its own merits. What can we do to reach this goal? We can refuse to buy from shops that rely upon sexually exploitative marketing techniques. We can also inform these shops of our buying power and our collective influence. Shopkeepers will gradually be forced to remove offensive advertisements and companies will have to pay lip service, if nothing else, to positive graphics.

Manikia once was a Dutch word that meant little man or dwarf. Ironically it is women who have borne the brunt of this diminution. Another cruel historical pun.

# Greetings!

March 8, 1988  
International Women's Day

As we  
celebrate  
our solidarity  
with women  
everywhere!



Alexa McDonough, MLA  
Halifax Chebucto  
Leader, Nova Scotia NDP

# Rediscovering the Goddess— women learn to love themselves

## The Morrigan

In recent years, my discovery of the Goddess has meant a major change in how I perceive myself in the world. When I first heard about the Goddess, I was astonished, not by the fact that there was ever such a consciousness, but that it was so well suppressed. It was also astonishing to me how recent the "Father God" (rule of the Father) was in relation to matriarchal cultures and religion of the Goddess.

The first books I read were Merlin Stone's *When God was a Woman* and *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*, both of which were a wonderful introduction to what became my ongoing research in literature on the Goddess.

The most important aspect of this knowledge of the Goddess was respect for the female body and its functions. Living as we do in a culture which has a strong woman-hating theme, it is extremely hard to envision ourselves as worthy of respect and, dare I call it—divinity. God as a woman was incomprehensible! Nobody ever told us—for obvious reasons!

After all, the Goddess was suppressed, quite violently in many cases. When I read Carol Christ's essay, "Why women need the Goddess," it made perfect sense to me. In the opening paragraph, she quotes Ntozake Shange as rising up to the cry, "I found

God in myself and loved her fiercely." For me, this was a profound statement: for women to be able to love themselves, thus, and to join together collectively and honour each other was a source of tremendous power. No wonder this was withheld from us under patriarchal rule!

Having spent the greater part of ten years working with women, seeing the effects of rape, incest, sexual harassment, violence and discrimination of every kind levelled at women, it was easy to see how much we had internalized this hatred. How could we value ourselves? How could we learn to love ourselves when we saw all around us the contempt in which women were held?

To quote Carol Christ, "Religions centred on a male God create moods and motivations that keep women in a state of psychological dependence on men and male authority, while at the same time legitimizing the political and social authority of fathers and sons in the institutions of society." God, the divine, the great spirit, whatever or however we would like to name it, did not have to be male or female...

But for me and for many women to reclaim the Goddess has been the most empowering experience of our lives.

Simone de Beauvoir has said, "man enjoys the great advantage of having a God endorse the code he writes and

since man exercises a sovereign authority over women, it is especially fortunate that this authority has been vested in him by the supreme being. The fear of God, therefore, will suppress any impulse to revolt in the downtrodden female."

Ntozake Shange's statement is saying in essence, "the saving and sustaining power is in herself—that she will no longer look to men or male figures as saviours. In honouring the Goddess, we are honouring ourselves and each other—the Female Principle and our life giving qualities.

"Women who no longer choose to believe in a male god may not be free of the symbolism of God the Father. A symbol does not depend on rational assent... it functions on levels other than the rational, hence, women are replacing these symbols with the female and in so doing are getting in contact with their power as women and finding their place in creation... and this world..." (From Carol Christ, *Why women need the Goddess*)

The internationally acclaimed novelist Monique Wittig captured the novelty and flavour of this affirmation of female power in her mythic work, *Les Guerilleras*. "There was a time when you were not a slave, remember that. You walked alone, full of laughter, you bathed bare bellied. You say you have lost all recollections of it,

remember... you say there are no words to describe it, you say it does not exist. But remember, make an effort to remember or, failing that, invent..."

When we think of women's spirituality and the return of the Goddess, of the female principles of creation, it is a celebration of the lives, lifestyles and values of women and their participation in the cycles of the earth and universe and women's working toward making a better world.

We must remember and we must invent. As women struggle to create a new culture in which women's bodies, power, will and bonds are celebrated, they will be able to remember and reinvent this spirit of Isis, oldest of the Goddesses from whom all becoming arose.



Egyptian Goddess Isis  
(graphic from *The Great Cosmic Mother*)



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## National Action Committee

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) is the largest women's organization in Canada, representing over 500 non-governmental women's groups whose combined memberships total about 4 million Canadian women.

NAC's priorities include housing, social services, family law, minority rights, health, reproductive rights, childcare, employment policies, lesbian rights, violence against women, peace, pornography, and prostitution. For fifteen years now, NAC has researched, written and submitted position and background papers to government agencies and the public on all those issues as part of its lobby and education efforts. All NAC briefs are available at nominal costs from the Toronto office, address below.

In Nova Scotia, NAC has 27 member groups, including transition houses, women's centres, counselling services, and women's committees of churches, labour unions and political parties. If your group isn't a member, join us. We need you. And you need us. If you have ten or more members and subscribe to NAC's objectives, you can sign up. Fees start at \$20. If you are already part of NAC, remember that your group can send delegates to the Annual General Meeting in Ottawa, May 13-16.

To apply for membership, write:

Maxine Hermolin, Membership Co-ordinator  
National Action Committee on the Status of Women  
344 Bloor Street West, Suite 505  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1W9

For more information about NAC, write or call:

Patricia Campbell, Representative for Nova Scotia  
65 Argyle St. #1  
Sydney, N.S. B1S 2V1  
564-8929 (home) or 539-5300 ext 345 (work)

January 28, 1988 is a day I'll remember for a long time. The Supreme Court brought down its decision in the Morgentaler case and struck down the abortion law as unconstitutional. That day I celebrated with my sister abortion rights activists. Today, the struggle for access to safe abortion goes on.

What follows are thoughts of just a small handful of the women from across Canada who have worked and will continue to work for reproductive freedom for all women.

Some wrote before the decision came down, others wrote after the verdict was known. All are dedicated feminists in the struggle for women's equality.

Amanda Le Rougetel

## Powerful, united movement needed

# Abortion rights fight

Colleen Levis  
Katy LeRougetel  
Montreal, Québec

There is a growing offensive against democratic rights on every front. Union-busting laws and back-to-work legislation, the offensive against French-language rights won by Québécois in the past two decades, police spying and disruption of unions, reactionary laws to stop immigrants fleeing bloody dictatorships from taking refuge in Canada, and racist-murders and frame-ups by the cops are on the rise.

The attack on women's right to abortion is part and parcel of this offensive. The Canadian government and bosses are trying to deepen divisions among working people in order to wring more concessions and make more profits from us. For example, the Canadian rulers aim to undermine women's confidence in themselves as full participants in work and political life and to prevent men of the working class from seeing women as their allies in the struggle against the bosses. That is the purpose in making abortion a crime, in harassing and arresting doctors who perform safe abortions and women who seek them.

To win women's right to free abortion on demand, an important part of

controlling their own bodies and lives, we need a powerful and united movement across Canada which demands repeal of sections 251 and 252 of the Criminal Code. But every blow to the democratic rights of any section or layer of the working class weakens our ability to build such a movement. That is precisely the effect of the anti-Québécois Meech Lake Accords. They have deepened divisions among organizations fighting for abortion rights and other women's rights.

It's in the interests of the trade unions and the NDP to champion the fight for women's right to abortion on demand as a central part of defending all working people today. Abortion rights activists must seek to broaden and deepen support for this fight among the ranks of the unions and of the NDP. And they must build a united, pan-Canadian response against every attack on women's right to abortion.

Colleen works with the Quebec Coalition for free abortion on demand and the Revolutionary Workers' League. Katy works with the Young Socialists.

©/1982

Carol Simpson

DO YOU SUPPORT ABORTION ON DEMAND, GLORIA?

FRANKLY, A POLITE REQUEST SHOULD BE ALL THAT'S NECESSARY!



## Access = choice

# Struggle must continue

Nikki Colodny  
Toronto-based doctor

In 1969, the Canadian Parliament passed a law that was touted as abortion reform. In actuality it had more to do with protecting doctors than with enfranchising women's right to control our fertility. Since 1969 the abortion rights movement has continued organizing. We should be very proud of the length and breadth of Pro-Choice activities. The movement has organized campaigns around Thera-

peutic Abortion Committees and hospital boards. We have lobbied provincial and federal legislators. We have held public meetings. We have planned and carried out demonstrations.

We have been building bridges to other organizations like the trade union movement, churches, the YWCA and the NDP to make the power of our voice stronger and better heard. We have kept the clinics in Ontario open. Besides providing abortions to thousands of women from all over the country in a safe and supportive setting, these clinics have also been a crucial organizing tool.

They have provided the focus for letting people know about the real crisis of access to abortion. Just by existing, they have won the support of thousands of people who rallied to their defense in demonstrations against the government and against the anti-choice.

At this writing, we await a Supreme Court judgement that will set the stage for our continued efforts. It is very unfortunate that conditions have not been favourable for organizing a major demonstration in Ottawa — a March for Women's Lives. I believe that we must be prepared for such a major undertaking in order to insure that the judgement will not create a set-back for the women of any province.

Our struggle to win control of our reproduction and our sexuality is as historic and fundamental as the struggles that have taken place to win the right to unionize and the right to vote. They didn't just give us those rights either.

Our opponents, the government and the anti-choice, are very strong. No matter what the decision, we must continue to organize for our right to full access to free abortion.

Without access, there is no choice.

## Movement sustaining

Alice Crook  
Charlottetown, PEI

Access to abortion in PEI declined steadily from the late 70s until 1982 when the last abortion was performed here. Hundreds of women leave the Island each year to obtain abortions, primarily in Montreal or Maine. (The situation is especially dramatic in PEI because we have the dubious distinction of being the only province without even one Therapeutic Abortion Committee.)

The pro-choice movement has won many important battles but as long as such access as there is continues to decline and/or become concentrated in major centres, we are not winning the war.

Speaking from PEI, there will be no reestablishment of access until the TAC requirement is removed from the law. (Part of the blame for this undoubtedly lies with the medical profession. Although a small number of doctors deplore the situation privately, not one has publicly protested the absence of a TAC, or the resultant need to refer their patients to other provinces or the

United States.) It appears depressingly impossible to mobilize public support (whether from politicians, doctors or the general populace).

My hopes for significant progress lie in three directions.

One is, obviously, a favorable Supreme Court decision. Another is coalition-building. Our provincial government appears to equate the pro- and anti-choice, regarding both as radical fringes to be ignored. We hope they will be less able to disregard concerns presented by a united front of women's groups.

The third, and perhaps most intangible, is the increasing number of feminists entering the political arena. Imagine being able to work and vote for someone who already shares one's point of view (instead of expending vast amounts of energy lobbying totally non-responsive beings).

Being a pro-choice activist in a smaller centre can be discouraging at times. To know that one is part of a larger movement, each member of which is fighting for access for all women, is a very sustaining thought.

## Optimism reigns

Wendy Williams  
Newfoundland and Labrador

Up until January 28 the law said abortions could only be done in a hospital with the approval of a therapeutic abortion committee (TAC). Even though there are 46 public general hospitals in our province only three had TACs. Thus a woman had only three possible places to even ask for an abortion. There was no way she could know if her reasons for wanting one would fit with the criteria the committee had set for granting an abortion. The Supreme Court ruling has changed all of this.

Now women do not have to get approval from such a committee for an abortion. In fact the existence of such approval committees has been unconstitutional. All three hospitals with these committees quickly complied with the decision and dissolved their TACs. These hospitals will continue to perform abortions. But now, all our hospitals could legally offer this service. We know this will not be

the case as two hospitals in St. John's have already said they will not allow physicians on their staff to do this. But this leaves 44 hospitals which could.

Women will have to find a physician who is qualified to do an abortion. The physician and the woman would then talk about the woman's situation and her alternatives. If the physician and the woman agree that an abortion is the best solution for her at this time, then the procedure can be done according to the best medical procedure.

Where, when and how the abortion will be done will now be a decision between a woman and her physician. This court ruling will allow women to get abortions in this province. Thus while the actual number of abortions done here will go up, it will not mean more Newfoundland women are having abortions. It just means an unjust law was struck down and we can get this procedure at home where and when we need it.

## Stand up and be counted

Kathy Coffin  
National Vice President of CARAL

Two weeks after the Supreme Court decision on the case of Doctors Morgentaler, Scott and Smoling and I am still delighted with the decision because it is such an affirmation of women's dignity and rights.

What has happened since January 28th has already set the agenda for the future work of the pro-choice movement. Events have also made the issues clear.

The debate is not just about choice on abortion but the more fundamental question of who controls conception. We need to answer this and to answer it now in one clear voice. It is time to stand up and be counted.

When we came together on the 29th in the Parade Square in Halifax, I looked out, with some sadness, over the 100 or so familiar faces and wondered where the pro-choice support keeps itself.

Since then, the Honourable Ray Hnatyshyn has received 300 calls

weekly from the anti-abortion lobby. Thousands more have demonstrated while we, through inactivity, could lose hard-won gains.

I began work on this issue 18 years ago helping women get "legal" abortions in the United States. Isn't that what we are still doing in 1988! Access has improved but we are still

made to grovel for the service. It has taken 19 years to remove the regulation of abortion from the Criminal Code. Women are not criminals but are caring and thoughtful people.

Let us once and for all erect fences around our bodies, as Madam Justice Bertha Wilson suggests, "over which the state will not be allowed to trespass."

## Memory remains vivid

Norma Scarborough  
National President of CARAL

On an early spring evening 44 years ago I stood by helplessly as a young woman died from an illegal abortion. The memory of that moment remained with me and many years later when I connected with the women's movement, I decided that whatever time I could give would be with a group working for reproductive freedom for women.

There are very few women of my generation — born in the 1920s — who could not recount a story of a friend or family member who either died or suffered serious complications as a consequence of a self-induced or otherwise illegal abortion. Many women of my generation would have enjoyed the luxury of planning our pregnancies instead of feeling subject to the whim of our biological function.

It is important that the pro-choice movement look for support from that generation of women who remember what it was like when there were no legal abortions available in Canada. The pro-choice movement also needs to remember that women of my generation may respond to the gut reaction of the experiences of their own lives and not to what other may consider to be a more "politically correct" interpretation of the oppression of women. It is these experiences that keep me connected to the struggle for choice.

## The Justices say...

"State interference with bodily integrity and serious state imposed psychological stress, at least in the criminal law context, constitute a breach of security of the person. Section 251 clearly interferes with a woman's physical and bodily integrity. Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a fetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations, is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person. A second breach of the right to security of the person occurs independently as a result of the delay in obtaining therapeutic abortions caused by the mandatory procedures of section 251 which results in a higher probability of complications and greater risk. The harm to the psychological integrity of women seeking abortions was also clearly established."

Beyond gold and glitter:

# Artist jeweller transcends ornamentation

Martina Urbas talks with Joann Latremouille

Martina Urbas has not become your standard jeweller. With a childhood spent between Calgary, Austria, Algeria and Ottawa, that was inevitable. Now Martina stands at a pivotal point in her career: recently graduated from N.S.C.A.D., she is about to return to Europe for rest and relaxation immediately and then...

Last year you may have seen Martina's work in the Student Craft Exhibition at FireWorks. Her one-person show, **Formulas for Conjuring: Jewellery and Sculpture** was one of the highlights of Anna Leonowens' 1987 season. She was also invited by the Metal Arts Guild of Toronto to participate in the 1987 show, **A Closer Look**.

**Q:** What's the difference between the jewellery you make and what someone can go down to Birks and buy?

**A:** That's a big question. It goes back to the education and starting to study with someone like Pamela Ritchie. When I went into the Jewellery Department at N.S.C.A.D., I probably had a fairly average outlook on what jewellery was. It involved status symbols and working with the materials: gold and gemstones. I had very little understanding of jewellery as an art form, although I had seen bits and pieces.

When I got to N.S.C.A.D., my eyes were really opened as to the possibilities of what jewellery could be, not just what it was. My outlook broadened and the more that happened, the more I left behind conventional attitudes that had never satisfied me anyway. I was never attracted to jewellery for just the way it looked. There was always something more that had to do with why people wore it and what happened to them when they put it on. There was a whole psychology of jewellery which fascinated me. The more I understood my interest in it, the more my work started to reflect the thing that I became concerned about through education, education was enlightening me.

In Pamela Ritchie, I had someone who could show me millions of ways to look at something. My work reflects my self and what I'm interested in.

That's the major difference.

**Q:** What then are your particular interests with jewellery as an art form?

**A:** There is quite a bit of interest in the technical sense of it, the material process. I'm deeply attracted to metal and stones and all things that come from the earth, organic things, and how you can change them, the process of transformation. If I'm interested in the transformation of the material, I'm also interested in how the transformed object relates to the wearer of the object.

My hope is that people are attracted to the objects I make for more than just superficial reasons.

What I make works with symbols. I try to appeal to a psychological or intellectual aspect of the person. I try to get a process going so that they come to understand why they are attracted to something that I make.

Initially my interests are paramount but that gets transformed into the piece I make. Something happens to me while I'm making it. Then there's a big jump to the other person's attraction to the piece. Why do they want it. There's a communication. I see a circle developing that shows itself in the pieces I make.

I'm interested in making healing pieces and using materials that have symbolic meaning that's passed down through the ages. All that pertains to women who have traditionally been healers.

**Q:** There is an old tradition of wearing stones for healing or to balance the energies of the body.

**A:** Yes, I'm trying to do something with my pieces for the person other than just increasing their status. It says something about the person as well if they choose a spiral over a square.

With healing, I'm hoping to pass on something to someone in the piece. A couple of months ago, I did a piece for a young boy who's dying of cancer. What's he going to do, pin it on his night shirt? So I made an object that was a piece of bone, bird bone (the spirit, transcendence), used metal, silver, a very pure kind of thing, and hung an amethyst crystal off of it. It slid down the silver. He could hold the



Martina Urbas in her studio

(Photo by Kathleen Flanagan)

object in his hand and play with it. There was an element of sound. He could hold it up and light could pass through it and the message that the material brought. He could do what he wanted with it. That's what is satisfying for me.

**Q:** Do you work with non-traditional materials like hair and bone and wood in order to move away from creating status symbols?

**A:** In a way. But in other cultures those materials are status symbols. For an Indian chief, feathers or precious wood indicate a lot of status. In our culture they don't. It's more an expression of someone's individuality. Often times people can't find the things that will truly say something about themselves because they are not available. I go to other materials because that's what I respond to. It's important that I have a commitment to the things that I manipulate and work with. For me, plexiglass is very alienating. As much as I would like to work with it sometimes, I don't handle it well because I don't have an integral relationship with it.

Also by working with materials that are not status symbols, I give them a status. I can make them precious through the use I make of them.

**Q:** You've recently moved into a much larger scale. Do you see sculpture as a natural progression from jewellery?

**A:** In our critiques in the jewellery department we talked a lot about the body playing a very important part in jewellery. I kept thinking that wasn't really happening. We were still ornamenting. I wasn't satisfying my desires to really incorporate the body other than using it as a back-drop or support system for what I was making. It gets boring after a while showing wrists or necks or backs or ankles.

I decided to go larger because that demanded that I and my body get more involved with what I was doing. The scale reflected my scale. I started making pieces that were shoulder width.

That had to do with the arms and the carrying of something. There was a relationship between what I was making and the body's involvement in it.

That got even larger in terms of how the body could form over what I had made. I had made a structure called the "Breath Vessel." Now, breath originates in the organs. It sustains the body. When the viewer looks at it, their whole body gets involved in it. Not just their wrist or their neck or their finger. This

piece is ornamenting space perhaps. I wanted something more to happen between the viewer and the piece.

**Q:** Does size alone account for the greater relationship of the body or does design itself change?

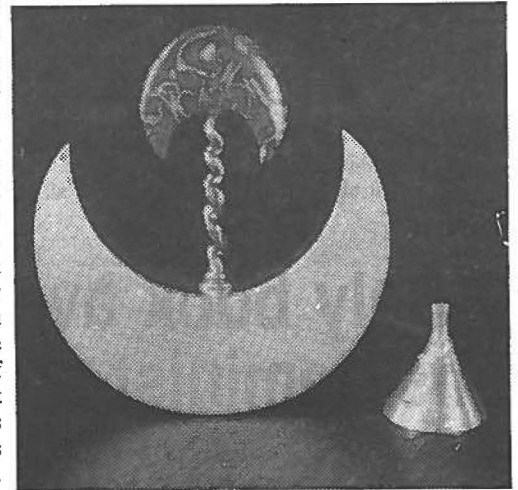
**A:** Size does have something to do with it because you become more aware of all your body parts in relation to a larger piece. You become aware of where that piece meets you if it is body size. What part of your body do you put in touch with when you experience it? The cradle front of **Breath Vessel** has sharp points. It rocks. Motion adds more levels to your experience.

**Q:** When you move into a larger scale, do the skills you've learned as a jeweller translate into sculpture?

**A:** Sure they do. But there are problems, too, the time element. It takes a lot of time to finish an edge on a piece of steel that's ten feet long. The degree of finesse varies as well. If I want a perfectly straight edge, there are big tools that will give me that quickly. Whereas in jewellery, if I want a perfectly straight edge, I can have the perfect tool, but I need a lot of manual skill as well. I start to question how important the degree of finish is in the larger pieces. Whereas I know in jewellery the small-

est imperfection is perceived as huge. But the tools are similar, just bigger.

Sometimes it is physically exhausting working on a large scale, things resist what I want to happen. It can be like a thirty-minute aerobic workout to



Perfume vial (Martina Urbas)

bend a thick coil of steel wire.

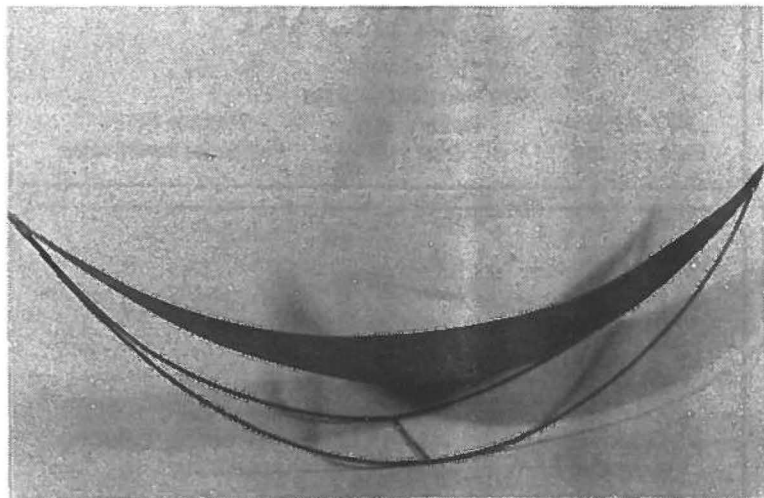
What I particularly like about the larger scale is that sometimes it can have the same quality involved as in the jewellery: fluidity or a breath, something ephemeral expressed by something that is steel.

**That interests me.**

**Q:** Is there a particular movement in jewellery art today?

**A:** There are many movements. I could use a lot of "ism" words that might not be appropriate here. The concerns of jewellers have changed radically. Everything is a concern now. Environmental issues are a concern. There are people who won't work with materials like ivory or bone.

People are expressing political ideas in jewellery. They are making comments on society, on sexuality. People make jewellery about AIDS. Jewellers are dealing with all the issues that other artists are dealing with. There's all kinds of fuel. Just because it's jewellery doesn't mean it's condemned to one arena.



Breath Vessel (Martina Urbas)

## IWD

Check out the IWD activities listed on the centrespread of this issue.

It's our day to celebrate our successes!

# Vigilance essential for child with chronic illness

Susan Coldwell

The Heart of Joshua, by Dawn Winkleman Fuller, is aptly described in the sub-title as a "story of hope for all parents of children with chronic illnesses."

In her own words, "I wrote this book because I wanted to tell our story to others who have found themselves riding the roller coaster of chronic illness. I wanted them to realize that their need to come to terms with their experiences is shared by many... You are not alone."

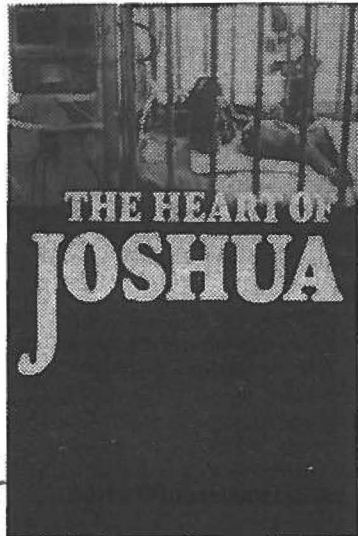
As a parent of a child with a chronic illness, I was eager to begin reading: Shortly after his birth, in February 1979, Joshua Fuller suffered heart failure, the result of congenital heart disease. This signalled the first of a series of operations, long hospitalizations, and years of crises. Joshua's mother, Dawn Fuller, writes with candor, effectively using the diary format which allows the reader to understand the chronology of events.

What she describes as the "roller-coaster effect" carries parents on an oscillating curve of emotional highs and lows; fluctuating between despair and hope, anger and acceptance, grief and joy at every obstacle surmounted, every challenge met. There are moments when the author concedes, "I can't take any more!" and then finds the resources to continue.

The grieving process is never an easy one. When dealing with a life-long condition, one might expect the

resolution to be even more difficult or prolonged. The author admits that guilt is very near the surface of daily living. Beyond her self-blame comes the questioning. "Am I doing all that can be done?" and even when answering in the affirmative, she knows it may not be enough.

Although the situation and circumstances may be different for each parent, the emotional content is the same.



I found this book articulate and echoed many of my own thoughts. She hopes to raise Joshua with the confidence and self-esteem he will need to meet the future with the care and responsibility that he will require. We all hope this for the well being of all our children, but

for a child with a chronic illness, such vigilance means their very life.

She covers every facet of experience, such as coping with both well-intentioned and thoughtless remarks: "Your child looks so tired... so pale... so sickly."

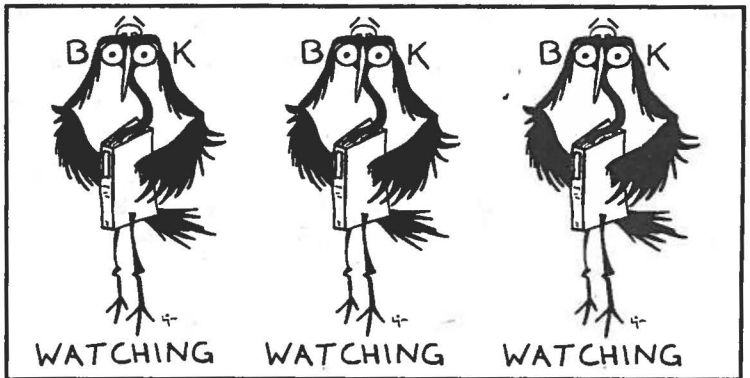
The author also shares with us, with a surprising lack of emotional content within the context of the story, the experience of undergoing an abortion when Joshua was 10 months old. In one sentence, the abortion takes place two days after Christmas. It is a sacrifice, one of many, she makes to preserve her resources and reserves of strength to enable Joshua every opportunity to live.

Fuller refers several times to the financial aspect of caring for a chronically ill child. She was fortunate to have a strong network of friends and support from them. Had she lived in the United States, the outlook for Josh's future might have been less assured because of the financial burden.

From a practical point of view, she underscores the need to be informed, to learn as much as possible about the illness or disease and to follow the adage, "Be prepared."

For myself, this reading proved cathartic and I believe it would be so for other parents. It should prove enlightening for health professionals.

The Heart of Joshua, by Dawn Winkleman Fuller, is published by The University of Toronto Press \$30 cloth, \$12.95 paper.



## Book brings abuse out into the open

The Violent Years of Maggie MacDonald by MacDonald and Gould. Published by Prentice-Hall.

Residents of Bryony House

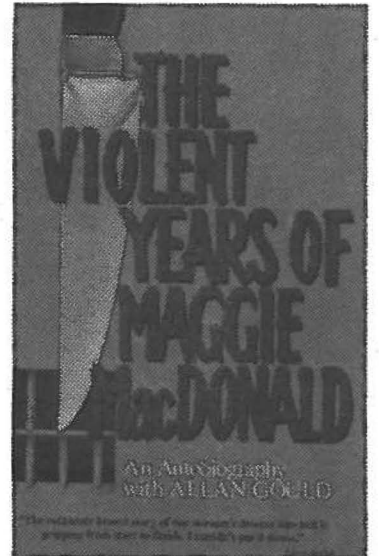
"I expected to read more about the violence," said one resident of Bryony House after reading Maggie's description of her life. Appalling? Not at all. It was simply an honest expression of that particular survivor's inability to identify abuse in its many forms.

This leads us to perhaps the most important contribution made to the understanding of victimization by this devastating account of emotional deprivation and brutality. Maggie's story is a chilling recounting of a bleak and emotionally arid childhood devoid of the nurturing, approval and cherishing so necessary to the growth of self-value.

The overwhelming response to the book by those who have endured many of the forms of abuse inflicted upon Maggie MacDonald, is gratitude. Gratitude for bringing into stark relief the plight of an abused woman, and most especially the plight of an abused mother. Granted, the reader is cognizant of the fact that Maggie endured her violent years prior to many of the legal and social changes driven by female forces in our society.

Under Bill C-127 of 1982, women and children do have more rights in Canada. However, if Maggie were to face the same situation today, she would realize, as the women of Bryony House do, that it is frequently the application of the law and not the law itself that determines outcomes.

The book evoked many emotions among its readers in Bryony House. Foremost among these was admiration. Admiration for Maggie who had grown emotionally, despite all adversity, to a



place in her life where she could talk of being unloved, neglected, abused, prostituted and vilified, degraded and imprisoned — a place in her image of herself that allowed her to speak honestly of drug and alcohol addiction, lesbian relationships, and abortion — of things which frequently evoke virulent responses in our society. Maggie MacDonald and Allan Gould have succeeded in doing what most of us fervently seek to avoid, telling the story without seeking to analyze, explain or deny.

Perhaps what is most important to us is that Maggie survived, and her story celebrates the unquenchable spirit of females to survive from time immemorial.

□□□□

Reviewed by residents of Bryony House, a transition house for women from violent relationships.

## Mary Daly book available to re-fuel dreams, feminist ardor, or have fun

Marguerite Andersen

Mary Daly's books always seem to arrive at the right moment of her story. The Church and the Second Sex (1968) and Beyond God the Father (1973) opened for many of us the path to a philosophy of women's liberation. Gyn/Ecology (1978) gave this movement new and world-wide food for thought. Pure Lust (1984) joyfully broke terrible taboos against lesbians and other shameless hussies. And now the Wickedary picks up the linguistic and thoughtful skeins of all of these books to weave them into a magic carpet on which to spin off and away from patriarchal dictionaries, foolosophy and stag-nation, into the be-friending and m-using of women and words freed from the cages and prisons of patriarchal patterns.

The Wickedary is a sourcebook in which to quench your thirst for new words, old and reclaimed words, weird words, lusty words, irreverent words. It slashes patriarchy with its witty-wicked double axe, the Labrys, a biophilic witches' hammer. And, of course, these words not only name, they also question, challenge old laws and realities; they guide us on our flight through the wild reality of wicked witches and wise women.

It is not a book which you will read diligently from beginning to end, it is not a book to be ploughed through during an "academented" reading-week.

No. It is a book to be opened when you feel like it, when you feel a need for the pleasure of new and weird ideas, when

you need to re-fuel your dreams, your feminist ardour, your elemental spirit or, simply, when you want to have fun. Not the clean fun some people advertise but rather an untamed, be-witching one. Throw away your copy of Trivial Pursuit, if you have one, and invite your friends for a game of Wickedary.

\*\*\*

Mary Daly will be speaking of this book and her other travels in the company of women, in Halifax on March

25, 8 p.m. at Mount Saint Vincent University. See calendar page for more information.

\*\*\*

Breaking Fatherland Rules — Befriending Words and Women. Webster's First Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language. Conjured by Mary Daly in cahoots with Jane Caputi, illustratively enhanced by Sudie Rakusin. Boston: Beacon Press, 1987, 310 pp., \$22.50

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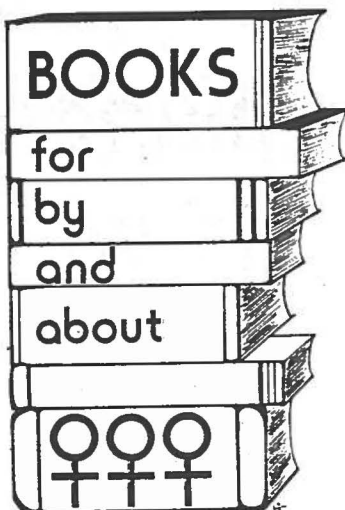
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# What's new, interesting in Canadian women's books



A Fine & Quiet Place, Nora Keeling

A Fine and Quiet Place, Nora Keeling. This is Nora Keeling's third book. In it, as in her two previous books, she explores the cool, precise prose that she has made her own, a world in which women live on their own terms, making use of men much as men once made use of women. Seven stories, written with consummate grace and skill. ISBN 0 88750 684 4, 96 pages, \$11.95 paper Oberon Press.



Sister Goose: Feminist Nursery Rhymes & Cautionary Tales, Dorothy O'Connell, illustrations by Catherine O'Neill.

A wonderful new version of the nursery rhymes we learned as children. These satiric modern verse are based upon the traditional rhymes of Sister Goose's maternal ancestor, Mother Goose. As well, there are tales that caution against the most common pitfalls of progressive groups. For adults and other advanced children. ISBN 0-88791-036-x, 80 pages, \$7.95 paper Steel Rail Publishing.

Quebec Women: A History, The Clio Collective. Translated by Roger Gannon and Rosalind Gill.

For the first time, here is a detailed examination of women's lives in Quebec from the early seventeenth century until the end of the 1970's.

It begins by looking, with women's eyes, at the establishment of religious orders and the patterns of family life during the period of exploration, white settlement and the Ancient Regime.

It continues into the radical transformations of the nineteenth century brought on by industrialization and the struggle for education and women's organizing efforts in the twentieth century.

The Clio Collective came together to write this book because they were unwilling to let the history of men and a few illustrious women be passed off as the collective history of a whole population. ISBN 0-88961-101-7, 400 pages, \$19.95 paper The Women's Press.



The Measure of Miranda, Sarah Murphy.

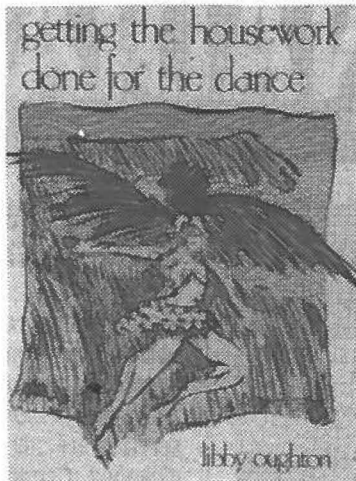
The life of an idealistic Canadian university student is profoundly affected when she sees photographs of victims of a right-wing death squad.

Miranda's moral outrage at the waste of human life sets the tone of Sarah Murphy's powerful and disturbing first novel.

The novel chronicles Miranda's loss of innocence as she becomes progressively involved in the revolutionary struggle in Central America. Amparo, her Chilean room-mate who was a victim of torture, is the catalyst for Miranda's feelings of complicity and responsibility.

Her belief in the value of human dignity culminates in her 'noble' sacrifice.

ISBN 0-920897-26, 240 pages. \$8.95 paper NeWest Press.



Getting the Housework Done for the Dance

Getting the Housework Done for the Dance, Libby Oughton.

The author, well known in feminist circles in Canada but especially in the Atlantic provinces, shares with us the progression of her life, through her poetry.

Libby Oughton was born of Phyllis in Women's College Hospital, helped into this life by the able hands of Dr. Marion Hilliard.

She has had many lives as child, student, researcher of sharks, mother of Gillian and Andrew, stripper (of negatives), printer, arts administrator, editor, journalist, publisher (Ragweed Press), and peace activist. This is her first published work.

ISBN 0-88795-064-7, 64 pages, \$9.95 paper Williams-Wallace Publishers.



Too Few to Count: Canadian Women in Conflict with the Law, edited by Ellen Adelberg and Claudia Currie.

A revealing collection of articles, by women in various fields of work, which lays the groundwork for a feminist analysis of women in conflict with the law.

It challenges traditional theories of women's criminal behavior and explores the consequences for women of a criminal justice system designed, created, and controlled by and for men. The interviews with women in prison gives the book its life and clarity; their message will touch you.

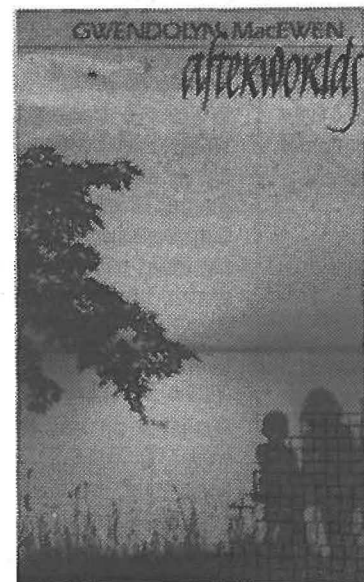
ISBN 0-88974-009-7, 253 pages, \$14.95 paper Press Gang Publishers.

Work in Progress, Building Feminist Culture, edited by Rhea Tregebov.

Critical and controversial, this anthology begins to explore the ways in which the arts have responded to the challenge of feminism over the last decade.

Literature, film, video, the visual arts, theatre and architecture are examined in this ground-breaking collection of essays which gives voice to the struggle Canadian women have experienced positioning themselves as women, feminists, and cultural producers.

All of the writers capture the excitement of new visions being forged for, and by, trail-blazing feminist artists. ISBN 0-88961-101-1, 180 pages, \$9.95 paper The Women's Press.



Afterworlds

Afterworlds, by Gwendolyn MacEwan

This is the last work of one of Canada's best known poets. It has just won the 1987 Governor General's Literary Award for poetry and has sold out its first print run (not an easy feat for Canadian poetry). The poems range from simple lyrical statements through nostalgic comedy to deeply moving meditations. The author died November 29, 1987 at 46. Although she had published 20 works including novels, children's books, travel works and poetry, she died sick and poor.

ISBN 0-7710-5428-9, 125 pages, \$9.95 McClelland and Stewart

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Brazilian Journal, P.K. Page

In 1957, award-winning poet, P.K. Page, went to Brazil with her husband, Canada's ambassador to that country. They settled into the pink ambassadorial palace, with its lavish gardens and eccentric staff, and between ponderous (and sometimes mystifying) official duties they made extensive tours of that exotic land. Page fell in love with Brazil, and her impressions and adventures are recounted in this vivid, sympathetic, and intensely personal diary. ISBN 0-88619-180-7, 241 pages, \$22.95 Lester & Orpen Dennys



Transfigurations

Transfiguration, Janice Kulyk Keefer.

This is the second collection of short stories by a major new voice in Canadian literature. Keefer has won the CBC Radio Literary Competition twice, and is a finalist for the 1987 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-fiction for Under Eastern Eyes: A Critical Reading of Maritime Fiction. The stories in Transfiguration range from the Acadians of Nova Scotia's French shore to the private dramas of academics, from the threatening tensions within families to the malaise of the nuclear age. ISBN 0-920304-74-5, 125 pages, \$12.95 paper Ragweed Press.

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# NEW FILMS AND VIDEOS ABOUT CANADIAN WOMEN

## DAUGHTERS OF THE COUNTRY

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

## DAUGHTERS OF THE COUNTRY 1 (IKWE and MISTRESS MADELEINE)

C 0186 138 114 minutes



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

C 0186 139 115 minutes

## PRAIRIE WOMEN

C 0187 009 45 minutes  
The little-known story of the vibrant social and political organizations founded in the 1920s and '30s by Prairie farm women. Best Documentary over 30 minutes, 40th Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival, 1987.



## FIREWORDS

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

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

## DOCTOR, LAWYER, INDIAN CHIEF

C 0186 532 29 minutes  
Five native women who have successfully forged non-traditional careers share their experiences and reveal how they drew on the strength of native Indian culture. A French version is also available: *L'Avenir est entre nos mains*.

## ENTERPRISING WOMEN

C 0187 063 27 minutes  
The stories of five female entrepreneurs relay the pitfalls and the joys of running a business. The women profiled head companies involved in pasta, lumber, fish, silk-screening, and a business academy.

## THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A LITTLE LONGER

C 0186 513 45 minutes

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



## IS IT HOT IN HERE? A FILM ABOUT MENOPAUSE

C 0186 043 38 minutes

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

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

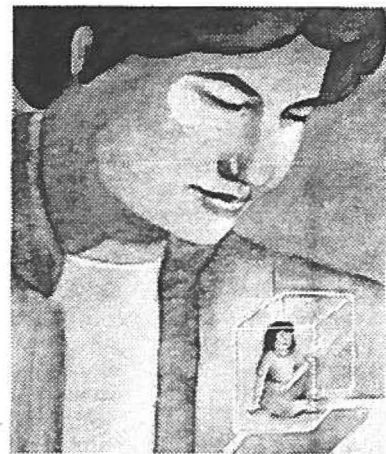
C 0185 102 58 minutes

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

## TO A SAFER PLACE

C 0187 067 58 minutes

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



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