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# Pandora

Lifting the lid off...

Volume Four Number Three

March, 1989

Halifax, Nova Scotia

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IWD, PEI, WHEN, Dykes

"What's a  
nice little old  
lady like you  
doing in jail?"

"Why, setting  
an example  
for my  
grandsons,  
of course."

Rambo  
Grandmother,  
Betty  
Peterson,  
talks about  
her initiation  
into old age.

(Photo by Sara avMaat)





# Abortion clinic desperately needed in Eastern Canada despite politicians' claims

Kathy Coffin

Women bear and raise children under conditions of inequality. Women in Nova Scotia have unequal access to contraceptives, contraceptive information and abortion services. Women in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Newfoundland have virtually no access to abortion services. While access may not be a problem for some women in the Halifax-Dartmouth area, it is still a grave concern for women in other urban and rural areas of Eastern Canada.

Consider the following:

- Over 80% of all abortions in Nova Scotia are performed at one hospital which has a quota of 35 abortions per week.

- There is a waiting period of at least two weeks to get an appointment for an abortion at the Victoria General Hospital. They won't do abortions for women who are not Nova Scotia residents or women under 19 years of age (unless they have parental consent.)

- 451 women from the Atlantic Provinces had to travel to Montreal for

abortions in 1988. Many more travelled to Ontario.

- Between 3,000 and 6,000 Canadian women still go to the United States for abortions annually. Many of these women are from Eastern Canada.

- The Supreme Court of Canada struck down the old abortion law because it provided unequal access.

- Women in Nova Scotia who call the Abortion Information Referral Service (AIRS) state that their main problem is finding a pro-choice doctor who will refer them to a hospital which performs abortions. Many doctors are unaware of what services are available and many are unwilling either to help or to refer them to doctors who will help them.

- The AIRS line receives approximately 500 calls a year from women needing information and/or referrals for abortions.

News of the possibility of Dr. Henry Morgentaler setting up a clinic in Nova Scotia spread quickly through the media and the women's community. Although the politicians are uni-

fied in their opposition, others have mixed feelings. Doctors are warning us not to disturb the status quo; the general public fears clinics in general and Dr. Morgentaler's in particular. Some want to wait until we can own and operate these clinics ourselves. I say, most emphatically, we cannot wait.

Polarization of views like this has caused problems in the past. It has forced the pro-choice movement to expend its energy arguing for abortion services only rather than the broader issues like women's clinics, family planning services, sex education in the schools, etc. It has sometimes effectively stopped the dialogue on the things about which we can and should agree. However, the problem of access to abortion services is ever with us.

Can there be any doubt that we must support a clinic and support it now? I don't doubt for one second that women will be provided the best health services there are to offer. It will be up to us to force the Nova Scotia government to cover the costs (through medical insurance) of abortions in clinics just as is

now done when one of us goes to a Nova Scotia hospital.

Clinics in the United States and Canada have proven themselves faster and safer places for getting abortions. The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) supports the concept of free-standing, non-profit, community-based clinics providing medically safe and insured health services.

We are far from this ideal. Abortion services in Nova Scotia are under constant threat. We appear to be stepping backwards in time.

The women's movement must support Dr. Morgentaler's plans to set up clinics. As it now stands, abortion services are at the whim of hospital boards and self-righteous politicians.

It is a critical time for us to pull

together to ensure that all women have access to safe, legal, medically insured abortions.

We need to start thinking about ways to support a clinic. We need to consider escort services and safe houses. Nurses and doctors need to step forward and work in these clinics.

We need to ensure that legislation is not passed that will once again make criminal a health procedure. We need to sit down together — women from labour groups, women's groups, women's centres, all women — and plan strategies to deal with the rabid, anti-choice minority who would deny all women abortions.

If you want to help, please call the AIRS line at 422-3123. We need to act now.

## Women in unions have chance to do problem solving

Working women across the province will be able to do some collective problem solving next spring thanks to a Secretary of State grant received by the Federation of Labour.

The grant was received by the Federation's Women's Committee for a series of workshops on working women's concerns.

The workshops will provide a basis for networking and allow women to share their knowledge and experience with others.

The main goals of this project are to boost the presence of women's committees in labour unions and to help them develop strategies for action.

A sub-committee has been established to deal with the planning of these 1 1/2-day workshops which are targeted for late April and early May. Mary Morrison has been contracted as project co-ordinator and Sisters Carmel Maloney, CAW; Paulette Sadoway, UFCW; and Ann Betts, PSAC will serve on the committee. The workshops will focus on process rather than specific issues.

This is the first time that a grant of this nature has been given to any labour organization and the co-ordinators say they are committed to its success. (Reprinted from The Nova Scotia Worker, October, 1988)

## Women in power speak out about abortion legislation

Barbara MacDougall  
Conservative MP

"There has been a lot of talk in this Chamber about the morality of abortion. There is no question that is a moral issue. The question is, who is to make that moral judgement — the court in its red robes and ermine? The church in its silk robes and rings? Or the politicians in the green chamber, people like us, men and women of ideas and principles?

Why are many of us in a position to make this judgement best? Why is

this woman who is carrying a child not the person who can make this judgement best? Do we honestly believe that she who has the life within her will make a worse decision than us?

We must respect people's ability to make choices. Women know that there are people who want to adopt a child. Women know that a handicapped child has the same rights as others. Women know that children born in less than perfect circumstances can still have a happy and successful life. They do not make these choices without knowing

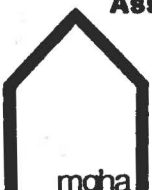
the things that we in this Chamber know. We cannot make a better choice than they can..."

Mme. Justice Berta Wilson  
"It is probably impossible for a man to respond, even imaginatively, to such a dilemma not just because it is outside the realm of his personal experience (although this is, of course, the case) but because he can relate to it only by objectifying it, thereby eliminating the subjective elements of the female psyche which are at the heart of the dilemma."

### ATTENTION! HELP NEEDED

MGHA is seeking live-in support people for their apartment program, which provides support to people who have experienced mental health problems. The role of the live-in support is to be a roommate, friend and advocate. Benefits include friendship, free apartment, free utilities, monthly financial incentive, and experience working in the mental health field.

Metropolitan  
Group Homes  
Association



Please call Cindy Atkinson,  
420-1515

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### A Guide to Feminist Expertise

#### The CRIAW Bank of Researchers

A computerized database of feminist researchers working in various fields and committed to the advancement of women. The Bank allows you to identify researchers with whom you may wish to network or who are working in fields in which you may be seeking expertise. An indispensable tool for journalists, professors, action or community researchers, policy makers and conference organizers.

IT WORKS  
~fo||~o||~

#### CRIAW

Canadian Research Institute  
for the Advancement of Women

151 Slater, Suite 408  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3  
(613) 563-0681

N.B. We encourage all  
feminist researchers to  
register in the bank.  
Application forms available  
from CRIAW.



# Women's Studies Society protests as MSVU students support racist, sexist homophobic jokers

Brenda Thompson

On February 10, members of the Women's Studies Society held a protest demonstration outside Vinnie's Pub to protest Student Council's decision to hire the comedy team Lambert and James. This comedy team is well known for their racist, sexist, homophobic jokes. Lambert and James call their humour "off-colour."

Last year when Lambert and James appeared at Vinnie's Pub, there was a barrage of letters to the editor of the *Picaro*, the student newspaper, about the offensiveness of the comedy team. Student Council was asked to follow the example of Dalhousie University, McGill University and many other universities across Canada and ban Lambert and James from performing again at Mount Saint Vincent. It was discovered last month, however, that the Student Council decided to invite the comedy team back again.

The Women's Studies Society decided to try and stop the arrival of Lambert and James at MSVU by sending their student council representative, Suzann McCarthy, to present their case against the comedy team. The Student Council voted her motion down by one vote. The only option open, the Women's Studies Society, decided, was to hold a protest demonstration and make their anger known.

On the Friday afternoon of Lambert and James's appearance, about 40 protestors (only one of whom was male) shouted and marched during the show. The pub was packed with approximately 120 people, and discouragingly enough, most of them were white women. Lambert and James kept up their "off-colour" humour and made

racist jokes, sang the gay version of "The Rodeo Song" and joked about gang rape. And the people inside, the women especially, all laughed.

The protestors outside kept up the noisy demonstration by singing and chanting and everytime the pub door was opened, they would scream in unison "Out, out, out!" It made an impression inside.

Despite all the complaints last year about Lambert and James and despite the formal complaints made to Student Council by the Women's Studies Society, members of the Student Council told the media that concerns about the comedy team were not brought to their attention before they hired them. Members of the Women's Studies Society know this to be an outright lie.

Some protestors, such as Michelle Case, Lorene Dobbie, Andrea McIntyre and Barbara Levy stayed outside and protested for an hour and a half, chanting, singing, and asking people not to go inside.



Lillian Allen

Contributed photo

## LEAF brings Roadshow to Halifax

A mainly women audience filled the Rebecca Cohen Auditorium in Halifax on Friday, February 3, to see a bevy of Canadian performers. However, the ticket price of \$25 kept many other women away.

Toni Goree picketed outside the auditorium in the

wind and snow with a sandwich board. Her sign asked, "Where is the unwaged price?" The Halifax price was apparently reduced to reflect Maritime reality — or at least a part of it. Certainly it says something about reality elsewhere in Canada — or at least a part of it.

## Funding, education/employment kits available

A "Guide to Provincial Funding for Women's Centres" and an education/employment workshop kit entitled "Focusing Forward" have just been published by the Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW). Funded by the Secretary of Women's Programme, The "Funding Guide" and "Focusing Forward Kit" are the result of two projects for women in small cities and rural areas of Nova Scotia carried out by CCLOW from January - September 1988.

The workshop kit and funding guide are part of the on-going activities of CCLOW, a national, voluntary, feminist organization with four member groups in Nova Scotia, to expand learning/educational opportunities for women.

After researching the educational, training and employment needs of women in four rural areas and small cities, a one-day workshop was developed to address the needs identified in the research. The "Focusing Forward" workshop was put on in Sheet Harbour,

Port Hawkesbury and Guysborough in April and May. Out of the workshop evaluations, a model on how to implement a workshop on education, training and employment issues developed. This model for implementing a workshop has been produced as the "Focusing Forward Kit."

A second part of the CCLOW project was to identify funding needs of the five women's centres in Nova Scotia and research provincial funding sources. As a result of the research, CCLOW has published a "Guide to

Provincial Funding for Women's Centres in Nova Scotia."

This Guide is a review of funding guidelines and discretionary grants from twelve provincial government departments including an overview of the provincial government structure.

Thanks to the support of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, both the "Guide to Provincial Funding" and the "Focusing Forward Kit" are available free of charge to women's groups from the Advisory Council.

We've moved!

### Women's Employment Outreach

is now located at  
5639 Spring Garden Road,  
3rd Floor,  
Halifax, NS

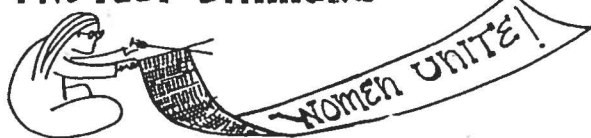
Free employment  
counselling services  
for women

For more information,  
phone 422-8023

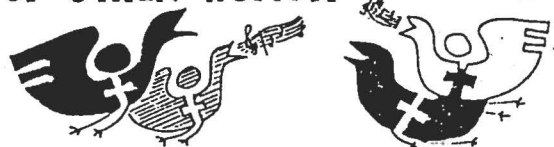
AND THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR POTS  
AND PANS INTO PRINTING PRESSES



AND WEAVE THEIR CLOTH INTO  
PROTEST BANNERS



NATIONS OF WOMEN SHALL LIFT  
UP THEIR VOICES WITH NATIONS  
OF OTHER WOMEN



NEITHER SHALL THEY ACCEPT  
DISCRIMINATION ANY MORE

— MARY CHAGNON —

A Woman's Place is in the Union  
Unite to Fight Discrimination

Canadian Union  
of Public Employees  
Local 2305

### Centre for Art Tapes

An Artist-Run Space Specializing in Electronic Media.

March 1, 8 pm, "A Few Questions"  
a video Eva Manley

A woman has been living in Canada as a refugee for over a year. One day the police decide she must be interrogated. This video raises questions which will be discussed by a panel following the screening.

March 2-18, Performance/video workshop  
with Frances Leeming.

Evening & weekend workshop: Frances, a Toronto performance artist who works from a critical feminist position, will teach the process of creating a multi-media performance which analyzes an existing film or play. The "analysis" will be performed by the workshop group on March 19 at 8 pm. For more information on the workshop, contact Liz at 429-6399.

April 5-29 Gay & Lesbian Video Exhibition

2156 Brunswick Street, Alexandra Centre, 3rd Floor  
Halifax, N.S., Tel: 429-7299, 429-6399



# 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.

#### This issue was produced by:

Brenda Conroy, Betty-Ann Lloyd, Yvonne Manzer, Debbie Mathers, Marie Paturel

#### With help from:

Shelley Finson, Brenda Thompson  
(Our apologies to Shelley for omitting her name in this space last issue)

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Brenda Conroy, Yvonne Manzer

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#### Distribution:

Nancy Wright (Guysborough), Oona Landry (Antigonish), Alex Keir (Pictou County), Debbie Trask (Bridgewater), Dianne Crowell (Yarmouth), Carolyn Emerson (Newfoundland) and many, many, others

#### Contributors:

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Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4  
messages: 902-454-4977  
Second Class Mail Registration No. 7122  
ISSN 0836-723X

#### 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 felt that free distribution would 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 (see detailed information on the calendar page). 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: design by Debbie Mathers

Presswork by Kentville Publishing

## Why is it that women do not let us know what they are doing? Can we change? Can they change?

I recently attended a conference in Halifax sponsored by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW). Approximately 170 people attended one or more of the events being held.

One of the comments that seemed to come up again and again was the lack of information women have about what other women and women's groups are doing.

"How can we find out what other women are doing?"  
"How can we let other women know what we are doing?"  
"Our group doesn't have enough money to publicize our information."  
"How can we get the media to pay attention to our concerns?"

I must admit I was a little disturbed at these questions. There are resources around right now that women can use to get publicity. Pandora is one of them.

Every issue we ask our readers to let us know what is going on in their communities and their groups. We get very little response. Only occasionally do we receive a press release.

The International Women's Day organizing committee left leaflets at the conference asking women to let them know what is happening in their communities so the information could be passed on. They have not received any communication from anyone.

Maybe women do not understand how Pandora works; how we obtain the stories we publish in the paper.

First, it is important to understand that the women who work on Pandora do not write the stories themselves. We act as facilitators — we give women a space for and, whenever possible, advice on writing.

When we have our first story meetings, we talk about what is going on in the community: what are the issues in the news, what events are taking place, what topic hasn't been covered recently. Then we brainstorm about who we could ask to write about the subject. We prefer to have a woman who is actually involved do the writing — they are the ones who really know what is happening, what the problems and satisfactions are, what the important information is. We don't.

So if we don't know about something happening, we cannot ask a woman to write about it.

Not that a woman needs to be asked. We sometimes get stories or articles in the mail. These "freebies" are welcomed at any time.

We prefer the story to be personal, to use the words "I",

"we" and "you" frequently. We suggest that you write as though you were writing a letter to a close friend. We find that this makes the story more accessible, more interesting to the readers.

We could have a great symbiotic relationship. We need you and your information and you can use us to publicize your concerns. Just write to us.

Pandora isn't the only resource you can use. The N.S. Advisory Council on the Status of Women puts out a newsletter. The Womanist, a national women's newspaper from Ottawa, is always on the lookout for information on what is going on around the country, including Nova Scotia. There are also many special interest publications such as Health-sharing, Diversity, Vitality.

□ □ □ □ □

A disconcerting thing happened at one of the workshops at the CRIAOW conference. One of the participants thanked the sole man in that workshop for being there and commented on his courage. How often are women thanked for participating in something when they are in the minority? How many black women are thanked when they are in the minority? Lesbians? The disabled? The hearing impaired?

□ □ □ □ □

In our continuing effort to try to make our practice fit our theory, we turned away an ad this issue. As we have done in the past, we asked for ads from various government representatives — the "Congratulations on IWD" standard.

Upon reflection, however, we realized that Dartmouth mayor John Savage's ad had once been refused after he made his anti-choice stand on abortion public knowledge. This time, we had an ad from Premier John Buchanan that we decided not to run because of his anti-choice stand.

Both NDP leader Alexa McDonough and MP Mary Clancy have indicated that they are pro-choice. However, Alexa McDonough has not publicly denied media reports that she is opposing a free-standing abortion clinic in Halifax. Despite some requests to Mary Clancy's office that she take a stand on free-standing clinics, she has remained silent.

Because of past pro-choice stands, their ads are included in this issue. We hope they follow through and indicate their continuing support of women's choices by coming out in favour of the clinics.



Photo by Brenda Conroy

Come join in IWD '89 celebrations!



# Thanks Katherine and Sharon for welcome contributions

## Pandora:

Thank you for sending me the December/88 issue of Pandora. As usual it gave me much food for thought and information.

I must say that I did miss reading Katherine Lambert's contributions. Her writing never fails to make my emotions jump in a variety of directions. I must add that I usually read the articles without taking note of the author and this time I began scanning the paper looking for Katherine's writing. Please tell her she must write two articles for the next paper to make up for what I and other readers (I'm sure) missed.

I'd also like to comment on Sharon Fraser's article. Sharon, you were brave to have assisted that woman then as a graduate nurse and braver still to keep helping/fighting for women who are sexually abused in institutions. While I was reading this article I was saying to myself, "Why do I have to read this stuff when I know this goes on — why don't those who are in power read this stuff and do something." I got my answer at the end of the article — "Male editors felt that women in their 80s would not be seen to be credible witnesses." Why were these male editors so concerned about "credible witnesses"? Does this mean they were running a Kangaroo Court? Am I angry? You bet!

I want to say STOP writing these

articles — I don't want to read about the injustice any more! Yet I read each and every one looking for a glimmer of hope that the battle is being won somehow. Sharon is a glimmer of hope. She was then as a graduate nurse handling situations in "a rather unorthodox way" and now as a writer. She must not give up.

I am not easily moved to write letters to the editor. I hope that by writing, the Sharon Frasers and Katherine Lamberts will continue to write for me and others to express what we cannot choose to say.

Sincerely,  
Betty Ann Rousselle  
Amherst, NS

## Mount St. Vincent University appears to rely on image rather than feminist practice

### Pandora:

The mission of the Mount, begotten from the Sisters of Charity, now is forgotten by the brotherhood of males in authority at the University.

Mount Saint Vincent University's mission statement contains the words "...concerned primarily with the education of women..." and "...a high degree of personalized education..." but everyday university life contains little evidence of pro-equality for women, except having a majority of female students.

The national image of MSVU as pro-feminist inspired me personally to leave my home province to study at a women's university despite the added costs of this decision.

My naïveté was soon dispelled. My first day on campus I met the male heads of my degree society; noted the door signs reading "Chairman"; learned to be cautious in mentioning words like feminist; and later discovered that most of the faculty were male and earned more on average than those of the other gender.

From my personal experience and accounts from other students, sexist comments (and language) are common in class and sexism is especially abundant in the male-dominated student newspaper (The Picaro). I agree with the statement made at the Mary Daly lecture: There is a lot of anti-feminism at the Mount.

My next surprise was the protests against the women-only event planned for International Women's Week last year. The cancellation of this celebration was "justified" as possible discrimination against male students; they could feel "left out".

A few weeks later, a male student was voted in as Student Council President and the Picaro showed a full front-page picture and headline: "Times Have Changed"! Since what day on our history have times changed? Males taking power positions has always been the norm.

The following semester, I expected to read something on day-care issues as promised in the student election. Yet the only issues of the Picaro I saw expounded on the Council President's efforts to allow male visitors into the female residences.

Mary Clancy's letter to Pandora was well-written and admirable, but not quite realistic.

As A Student commented in her article in the last issue of Pandora, the Mount is still offering traditional (low-paying) degree programs to women. In addition, the Mount's salary scale for their own clerical and secretarial positions is shamefully low-paying. And the choice of course offerings in the Women's Studies Program is extremely limited and inadequate.

I feel frustrated that the University appears to be relying on its image as a feminist university rather than actually being one.

Like the writer, A Student, I, too, feel it is not safe to sign my name.

Another student.

## Women appreciate special on violence against women

### Pandora:

Hello and congratulations to all at the Pandora collective. The September issue of Pandora was fantastic! The energy amazing!

I don't know how many of your readers let you know how badly needed are such direct statements of truth as screamed out from the poster page of New Vision. Here at the Prison for Women, I opened the issue and found myself reading aloud to several other prisoners who had stopped by the office. I think for all of us it was the first time we have encountered the feelings of anger and outrage at violation and

oppression exhibited in a public forum. Within our walls, any expression of anger is viewed as "deviant" and becomes punishable with an ever escalating range of penalties.

We would certainly appreciate having some of the New Vision posters for display in our office and living units. I would appreciate if you could send along five.

But most of all, a very big thank-you for putting out such an excellent, energy-filled publication.

In solidarity and sisterhood,  
Jo-Ann Mayhew, Editor Tightwire  
Kingston, Ontario

## Advisory Council urges women to apply to Boards, Commissions

### Pandora:

In 1977 the Nova Scotia Women's Action Committee determined that more than 80% of Nova Scotia appointments to Boards and Commissions went to men. Ten Years later, women remain greatly underrepresented in these important decision and policy making positions.

Many of you may have noticed the government call for applications and nominations which appeared in newspapers ads throughout the province last fall.

Women constitute 53% of the Nova Scotia population and in all fairness should be equally represented on all Boards and Commissions in this province. We urge you to consider making application to the numerous boards, commissions and agencies mentioned in newspaper ads.

For more information, contact Advisory Council on the Status of Women, P.O. Box 745, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2T3 (902) 424-8662.

Sincerely,  
Debi Forsyth-Smith



Deanna and her son, Greg (Photo by Anita Martinez)

## Survivors thank friends for support after ordeal

(In November, fire struck the house of a single mother with three small children. The heat caused the bedroom door to swell so firefighters couldn't open it. Because of personal abuse and the high crime rate in that area, wire mesh had been installed on the windows of this ground-floor public housing apartment.

Two children were in that bedroom.

Women in the community were angered and sympathetic. Angry at the media which first reported gossip and innuendo as truth and later had to correct their stories. Sympathetic toward the woman who was working hard to get a better life for herself but lost two children anyway.

Since everything had been lost in the fire, a request was made for clothing, furniture, and household items. Unlike other personal tragedies, there has been no public outpouring of help. The media is ignoring her plight. Bryony House and the women's community were the main groups to respond to the appeal.

Deanna would like to respond in writing but is now in such distress over the deaths of her children that this is impossible. She has verbally expressed her appreciation to all who helped her.

Following is a thank-you from her mother. —Pandora)

Thank you!

Two small words, when said, never seem to be enough.

I have lived 45 years, brought up four girls, went through a divorce in '73, had a wonderful son, lost my Mom and Dad, put on 135 pounds, and lost 10 years of my life by staying in the house. After trying every diet possible, I decided to have a major operation... a gastroplastic.

A couple of years down the road I lost a lot of weight and felt great about myself. I was out enjoying life again and felt just wonderful. And much of my joy came from spending time with my grandchildren.

Then boom... a fire and two of my little babies, two of my daughter's children, were taken from me. I will never understand why tragedies like this happen.

There are friends in a person's lifetime, and then there are true friends. A lot of people I thought of as "nice" people showed what they are really like by the mean things they said and the terrible and mean gossip they spread.

But there are true friends who were there when my daughter and our family needed friends the most... especially my true friend who took the time to leave home in good old Cape Breton and Jerry and Nancy and lovely Anita. There are many others, too numerous to mention but you know who you are. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Ann

P.S. From one grandmother to other grandmothers: Love those little children now because we never know when they will be gone. The ache-I have to hug and to hold can only be understood by those who have gone through the same thing. Hug your grandchildren today.

## Thanks for participating in Take Back the Night march

Thank you:

To all women and children who participated in the Take Back the Night March on October 14, 1988 in Halifax, NS, a thank-you from SSAV

Approximately 150 women and children marched to

reclaim the night. It was our first effort at sponsoring the march and we consider it a success. We couldn't have done it without you, the Marchers.

—Planning committee for Take Back the Night and SSAV



# CBC TV needs to be accountable for images of women in recent news item

The following letter was sent to CBC, Halifax on February 4, 1989.

Dear Gentlemen:

I am writing about the clips used for an item about Dartmouth Council and strip clubs. This item was aired during the six o'clock news on Thursday, February 2, 1989.

The clips showed a woman stripping on stage at one of the clubs. She began by dancing, dressed. As the item continued she was shown in various states of undress. At the end of this segment of the item, she was crouched on the floor, in something of a kneeling position, with her ass sticking up into

the air. As I recall, her ass was virtually bare. There was, perhaps, a g-string running up the crack between the two cheeks of her ass.

I was in my living room, watching the evening news with my 12-year-old son. After I called the station to express my concern, we discussed some of the issues raised by the airing of the piece. These issues included:

(1) The news value of the item.

How new was the story. How central was it to the local, regional and national news scene. How much time had been spent on other stories in the newscast. Why would this story get the extent of coverage that it did. How

would it be followed up.

(2) The process of assigning news stories.

What discussion would have occurred during the story meeting. What tone would have been used by the participants. How would they decide to assign this story. Who would make the final decision. What reporter would the item be assigned to. What instructions was this reporter given.

(3) The production values of the item.

Why did the reporter decide to play the story as a "clever" contrast between council and the club. Why would he use the woman dancing inside the club and why would he linger on her bare ass, particularly when she was in a position that suggested anal intercourse. What kinds of production values were brought to the other clips. What other stories during the newscast had visual clips. Which stories did not have clips.

(4) Social justice issues in the item.

Whose concerns did we hear about. Who was given as authority. What kind of analysis was given around the visual clips. Who would be comfortable, entertained or informed during the item. Who would be embarrassed, confused or upset. Who has the power to choose the item and the values. Where were these people located in the story. Were they participants, observers, commentators or invisible. What race and class did the various participants have. What economic status. What sex were they.

(5) Feminist issues as one of the social justice issues.

Was a proportionate amount of time spent on male strippers as women strippers. Would the same news and production values apply to the man's bare ass as to the woman's. Would he have been shown in the receptive position for anal intercourse. What position would he be shown in. Would men and women feel the same about the item. Who would feel like they had more power after the item. Who would feel like they had less power. Would it have made any difference if a woman had been regional director for the Maritimes, director of television, executive producer television news and current affairs, assignment editor, reporter or host. What if even one of those positions was held by a woman. What would happen if she had the desire or the power to comment on what was going on without fear of harassment.

(4) What did we learn from this item.

What did we learn about the municipal situation. What did we learn about business, consumer and performer rights. What did we learn about women. What did we learn about men. What did we learn about the CBC. Who regulates the CBC. How do they respond to viewers' concerns. Where else do we have to go to raise our concerns. What does it mean to be self-regulating. What does it mean to be lobbying the CRTC right now to be

self-regulating. Who are the selves who are doing the regulating. Whose interests do the lobbyists represent.

I have spent some time working in the media, including two years as an associate producer of CBC radio current affairs in Halifax. I have experienced what it is like to raise social justice issues, particularly issues that might appear feminist, at the CBC. I do not want to debate the process that leads to how decisions are made, carried out and then justified.

Instead, I would like to suggest that the six of you meet with me, with five other women of equivalent social power to yourselves and with some 12-year-old boys and girls. We can then watch this item in the context of the newscast and you can experience what actually happens with some of your viewers. You could then spend some time answering the kinds of questions raised above. We might learn something, and you might learn something as well.

I anticipate your response. Sincerely,

Betty-Ann Lloyd, Halifax  
c: Robert Oxner, CRTC  
The office of the portrayal of women — CBC Ottawa  
Debbie Forsyth-Smith, Advisory Council on the Status of Women  
Pandora Publishing  
Heather McLeod, MediaWatch  
Mary Clancy, MP

## Women work against violence against women

Cathy Mellett

Erin Goodman's December article, which outlined Rachael Osborne and friends' struggle against sexual harassment, showed their perseverance and initiative in carrying through with the charges against the St. Mary's University football team. I commend them on their strong actions.

What also really warmed my heart was the effort of Vicki Wood, then sexual harassment advisor at St. Mary's, in showing creativity and demonstrating feminist analysis in trying to educate the whole football team within the constraints of a patriarchal institution and an inadequate sexual harassment policy which could not deal effectively with a complaint laid against a large group.

Since Erin's article dealt with Rachael's struggle, I'd like to take this opportunity to draw the community's attention to what Vicki Wood tried to accomplish.

Too often, women struggling daily in difficult work circumstances to live out their feminist politics are overlooked. It is encouraging to know that Vicki is bringing that struggle to her work.

I find it disheartening, but not surprising, that Rachael and her friends in 1987 are still facing the same kind of oppression that Vicki and I faced at Acadia a decade earlier — despite all of women's best actions. An incident of harassment involving a voyeur in the women's washroom, evoked the same anger in us, and Vicki reported the identity of the man to our dean. We, too, experienced the frustration of absolutely no action being taken, knowing this man would be allowed to take a responsible position as a Baptist minister with no reprimand, counseling or education that may have made him think for one second before harassing and exploiting women again.

Vicki Wood did not drop that growing awareness. In Halifax the next year, she was at the forefront of forming the first group of Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW), Halifax's Reclaim the Night march, and the first public exposure of violence against women in Halifax.

That same creativity and commitment was apparent in mediation with the SMU football team. It is important to point out that as a sexual harassment advisor, Vicki's responsibility was to educate and mediate a settlement, although she was not empowered to impose penalties nor could she alter the flaws which are obviously present in the university's sexual harassment policy.

For those of you who missed Goodman's article, I want to recount the spirit of the mediated agreement. Each member of the team was to donate \$25 to the Association for the Mentally Handicapped and \$25 to Bryony House. This amount is only symbolic, but it does represent the mediator's attempt to educate by drawing a parallel between the actions of the team and the nature of violence against women as well as the damage such violence causes.

The team members were also restricted from free access to the university pub where the harassment took place. This, no doubt, was the first time in these boys' privileged lives that they had any restrictions of movement placed on them and their loss of free access demonstrates how their harassment takes access away from women all the time.

In any flawed system, what more creative goal is one left with but to use the confines of your job to try to educate those 38 boys/men who, probably for the first time in their lives had their actions named for the sexism and oppression it was? They had more education made available to them in those mediation sessions than the football field or classroom had ever offered them.

The women who pressed the charges had the courage and conviction to unmask and expose the sexual harassment perpetuated by the football team. How discouraging it must have been for them to have the senior administration of the university overturn the penalties proposed by the Sexual Harassment Committee who recommended a range of penalties including expulsion of five team members. Nonetheless, these women will, like Vicki Wood, carry their conviction and anger against sexism into their future lives and careers.

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Department of  
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# Low-income women work for real change

Anne McCormick

Who says we can't?

Sound familiar? Well, OCLISS has proved that not only can we do almost everything we've been told that we can't do, but we've surprised even ourselves. We specialized in the impossible.

OCLISS, also known as the Ottawa Council for Low Income Support Services, is amazed to have celebrated our 20th anniversary.

While this may not seem to be a major milestone for some organizations, it is for an uppity political poverty rights group like us. For some reason, not many corporations, church groups or even politicians fight to give people like us money to make real political changes. Our continued existence is a tribute to the many volunteers who founded this organization and those who continue to selflessly contribute their time and energy to us.

Historically, we started out as a group of public housing tenants meeting for coffee and discussing our problems and trying to find possible solutions, any solutions. Our original goals were small, like our children, and grew along with our awareness of ourselves and our community.

We started off by trying to find a safer place for our children (rather than the highway), to tackling the provincial housing authority (our landlord). Sometimes it felt (and still does) like we were the damsel in distress tied to the railway tracks by good ole Simon LeGree.

As public housing tenants, we had few rights and no way to enforce the few rights we did have. We had no political clout because we were poor women and children, also known as "those welfare bums." Of course, we

were isolated because of our poverty and this was compounded by our "middle class" neighbours who seemed to feel that poverty and the black plague were equally contagious.

It'd be great to be able to say that none of these problems exist anymore, but unfortunately that's not the case. However, a lot of battles have been won and we've definitely made a difference.

One of the advantages of being around for 20 years is that you see changes take place over time. It gives you some hope when you feel that you're a rearguard action against a bureaucracy that makes a turtle look like a cheetah. Many times we get discouraged. Most of this frustration wouldn't exist, of course, if common sense was as common as the name implies.

Maybe we are the ones who have the problem because we can't grasp the logic that it's more valuable to society that we produce sweet-smelling soaps, faster cars or even smaller sanitary napkins than it is to raise healthy happy children. We can't understand how Lee Iococca of Chrysler can be worth \$17,000,000 and a single parent raising two children is living off the fat of the land on less than \$13,000 per year on assistance. Or even why families in public housing who pay rent are subsidized but the prime minister who doesn't pay rent while making us pay his interior design budget isn't subsidized.

Someday we may accept and understand this logic, but hopefully we'll be able to get them to see ours instead.

While we haven't yet won the war in the past 20 years, we are at least learning how to confound the enemy. We are losing our naivety but under-

standing how to bend the rules to our advantage. You may feel that enemy is too strong a word, but we are fighting for our survival.

Poverty is one of the most violent ways there is to control people, especially women. There's nothing worse than watching your children do without the basics of life or to watching their dreams slowly die. When you have nothing to lose, you either fight back or die physically and/or emotionally.

OCLISS is made up of people who have been or are presently on assistance. Most of us are single parents who've learned the hard way that being polite or good doesn't get you anywhere. We've learned to fight to survive and we're using those skills to work toward social change. We intend to give our kids back their dreams and ours.

In order to do this, we have done a number of things over the past 20 years. For instance we started the first legal clinic in Ottawa, the Ottawa Women's Credit Union, a small business called Airstop, demonstrated against unfair policies such as the de-indexing of the baby bonus, organized an alternative housing conference called "Take Back the Flats" during the International Conference on Shelter for the Homeless, written presentations and submissions to legislative committees, etc. Of course, this list is incomplete but gives some idea of our versatility.

At the moment, we are working on making a 20-year dream become a reality. We have started a community economic development company, run for and by public housing tenants. After less than a year, we have created 11 full-time jobs through a \$263,640 training program. Not many companies can say that. Another of the many things we were told we couldn't do.

OCLISS can be contacted by writing 95A Beach St., Ottawa, Ont or call (613) 232-2677.

□□□□□

Anne McCormick is a board member of OCLISS and former community organizer. She is now working on the creation of the economic development company called Tenant Community Enterprises.

(Reprinted from *The Womanist*, September 1988)

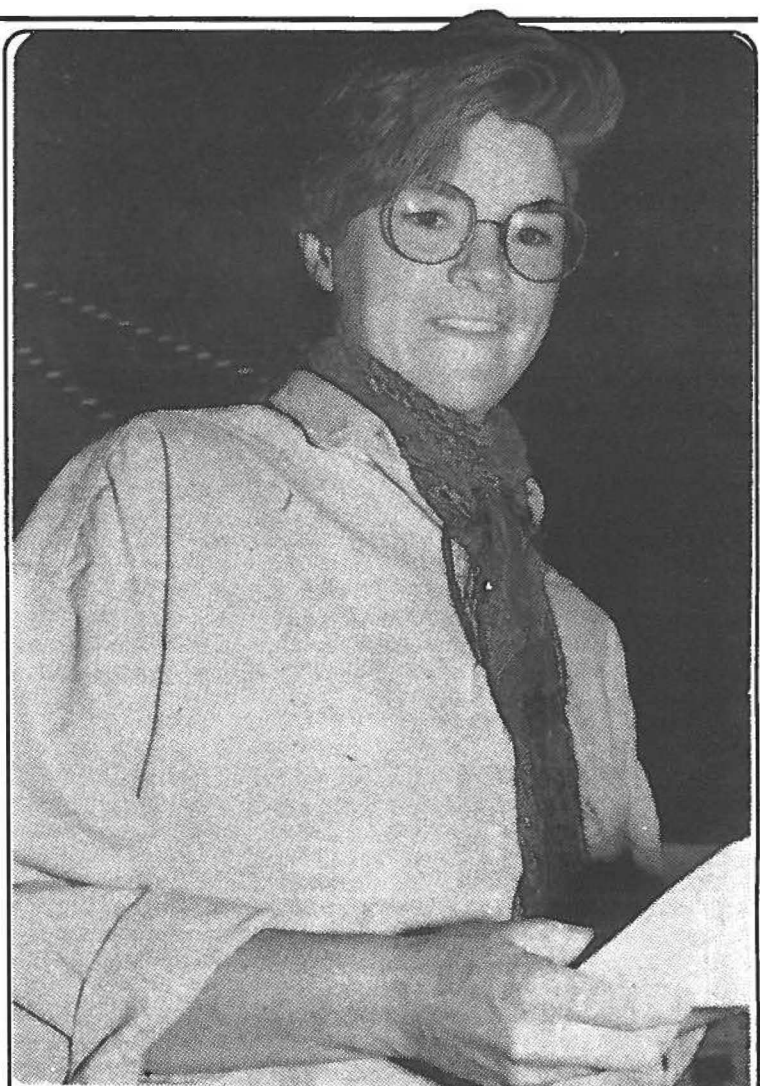
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Andrea Curry reads one of her poems at a poetry reading held during Gay and Lesbian Pride Week. Another reading was held this year during Pink Triangle Day (February 14.) (Photo by Brenda Conroy)

## The Day I Told My Mother Who I Am

the day i told my mother who i am was a plain day. I was tired and distracted, my mind crowded and blank, the restaurant was half-empty. she was quietly waiting and ordering food.

fear: sharp as unwanted light.  
i peer at her through the slats  
of our small talk. what is it that  
she saves me from? i speak, fumbling  
in and out of focus.

then,  
politely, she asked,  
tell me, dear,  
are you lesbian?

the word: a protruding root she trips  
on. her mind is squinting, her heart  
suspended. i control my panic, caught  
like a breath in my throat.

yes,  
i am.

scrambling around now  
for the beginning of this story.

i continued: visions, practicalities,  
justice and intimacy. love made  
more real with women, trust come  
undone with men. she asked  
intelligent questions. in between  
tender and dangerous moments, a  
waitress brought us lunch and coffee,  
cleared away plates.

my body: a loose bundle of shivers,  
shaking out my words: words which  
refuse to speak out of my body.

several years of stumbling in a fog  
of what we thought we knew, ended,  
without ceremony. the tension  
gathered itself up and left. we  
wiped the corners of our mouths  
with the linen napkins.

she: anchored by motherhood. i  
wobble and float in the space  
i have bravely cleared.

i stood up and put on my coat,  
light-headed, as if i hadn't  
just eaten. as we left the restaurant,  
she composed a grocery list out loud.

—Andrea Curry



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(Public Archives Canada PA 111473)

Pauline Johnson

# Nineteenth century poet Pauline Johnson captured heart of the British empire

Carol McLeod

Today, Pauline Johnson is nearly forgotten. Ninety years ago, however, she was one of the British Empire's most acclaimed poets.

Born in 1861 at "Chiefswood," a lavish estate on the Six Nations Reservation near Brantford, Ontario, she was the daughter of George Johnson, an educated, affluent Mohawk chief, and of his wife, Emily Howells, an upper-middle-class Englishwoman.

Pauline received her early education from her mother and from her grandfather, Smoke Johnson, a Mohawk warrior who fought with distinction for the British during the War of 1812. While her mother focused on English literature, her grandfather concentrated on the history and legends of the Mohawk people.

Pauline also learned much from her father, whose speaking ability and devotion to preserving native culture earned him an international reputation. The long walks he and Pauline took

together through the forests of the reservation developed her love of nature — a love which manifested itself in the poetry she began writing as a teen-ager.

For many years, Pauline wrote for her own enjoyment. Then, after her father's death in 1884 left the family without enough money to live on, she began submitting poems for publication. Magazines quickly accepted her work, but the pay was never equal to her needs.

Finally, in 1892, the Young Men's Liberal Club of Toronto invited her to read her poetry at their "All Authors Night." She became an immediate hit and more performances followed. The Toronto Globe raved over her recitations, describing them as touched with a "pathos that gave the reader a chance to exercise her musical and flexible voice most effectively."

Certainly the timing was right for launching a career as a performing poet. Few Canadian cities enjoyed live theatre and the day of motion pictures

had yet to dawn. The only source of entertainment for most people was touring artists who appeared in halls across the country. Such tours were often extremely profitable and Pauline's were no exception.

Success followed success, and by 1894 she had earned enough to visit England. Her first book of poetry, *The White Wampum*, was published in London during her stay and appeared to glowing reviews. Casual readers enjoyed the rhythmic style of her poems, which usually dealt with love, nature or native life. Critical readers, on the other hand, appreciated the rich but restrained imagery that infused her work with a strong visual quality.

By the time Pauline began her London performances, fascination with her Indian heritage had reached such heights that she decided to capitalize on it. Using her Mohawk family name, Tekahionwake, and appearing in full Mohawk dress, she left the public clamouring for more.

The approach was equally popular in Canada where she packed houses from coast to coast during a tour the following year.

From that point on, Pauline divided her time between performing and writing. Inevitably though, the pressure of constant travel reduced the quality of her poetry and much of her later work dealt with contemporary issues that appealed to audiences but not to critics. She died of cancer on March 7, 1913 — three days before her 52nd birthday.

□ □ □ □ □

Carol MacLeod is a writer living in Riverdale, New Brunswick. She has written for many Canadian and Maritime magazines and journals including *Harrowsmith*, *Financial Post Magazine*, *Atlantic Insight*, *Macleans*, *Horizons* and *New Maritimes*. She has also written four books including *Legendary Canadian Women* and *Wives of the Canadian Prime Ministers*.

## Accessibility needed in new shelters

Shirley Masuda

DAWN CANADA Researcher

The federal government has allocated \$40,000,000 to six federal departments and agencies to expand and modify their activities in addressing the causes and effects of family violence.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp (CMHC) will be spending \$22.2 million over the next one and a half years to create new shelters for battered women and their children. The operating costs of these shelters will continue to be administered as they are now — through the cost-shared Canada Assistance Plan.

The new transition house project that will be administered through CMHC is called Project Haven. Community groups will be applying to CMHC for funding to set up new shelters by building or buying new structures and buying and converting existing space. These houses will provide shelter for women and their children for up to six weeks.

As women with disabilities, we have special concerns about how these

dollars are to be spent. We want all of these new houses to be fully accessible to us, both attitudinally and physically. Furthermore, we want every presently existing house to be accessible to us.

It is very traumatic for a woman and her children to have to go to a transition house. To have to leave one's community and change the children's school because the house in her community is not accessible is yet another assault.

Women with disabilities need more than the six weeks limit to stay at the shelter. Finding accessible low-income housing in six weeks is a nightmare. Pressure to leave and fear of losing her children because of the lack of community support services will force women to return to abusive and

unsafe homes — or to never leave them.

DAWN BC has already written to the Honourable Jake Epp asking him to ensure that no money be given to establish any new transition houses that are not fully accessible to women with disabilities and that monies be made available to existing houses to make them accessible.

Our letter was forwarded to the Honourable Stewart McInnes, who assured us by letter that CMHC will give priority to new houses that serve the special needs of disabled women and native, immigrant and rural women. There was no mention of existing houses.

DAWN CANADA encourages all

DAWN groups and individual women to express your concerns about this project. Demand that the needs of women with disabilities be met.

We encourage you to contact the transition houses in your area and ask about accessibility. If possible, visit the house and see for yourself. Many houses that profess to be accessible are not. Remember that even if the physical space is not accessible, the services can be made to be if the will is there. Our goal, of course, is to make all services and spaces accessible. Be adamant!

(Reprinted from Thriving, newsletter of DAWN CANADA, 776 E. Georgia Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2A3.)

## Greetings!

March 8, 1989  
International Women's Day

As we  
celebrate  
our solidarity  
with women  
everywhere!



Alexa McDonough, MLA  
Halifax Chebucto  
Leader, Nova Scotia NDP

## Volunteers


The basic upgrading (literacy) program  
at the North End Library  
(Tuesday and Thursday mornings)  
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(Monday and Wednesday evenings)  
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# Cosmetics—we're still buying their line

Nancy Kempton

Shopping for women's cosmetics is an exercise in both humiliation and chauvinism.

I discovered that, for a mere \$210.65 (plus tax) every month, I can look completely natural. I asked the retailer why I should bother buying all these cosmetics if I ended up looking the same as when I started. With some annoyance, as if the answer was obvious, she said a real woman deserves to be pampered. A full beauty regimen makes a real woman feel fulfilled.

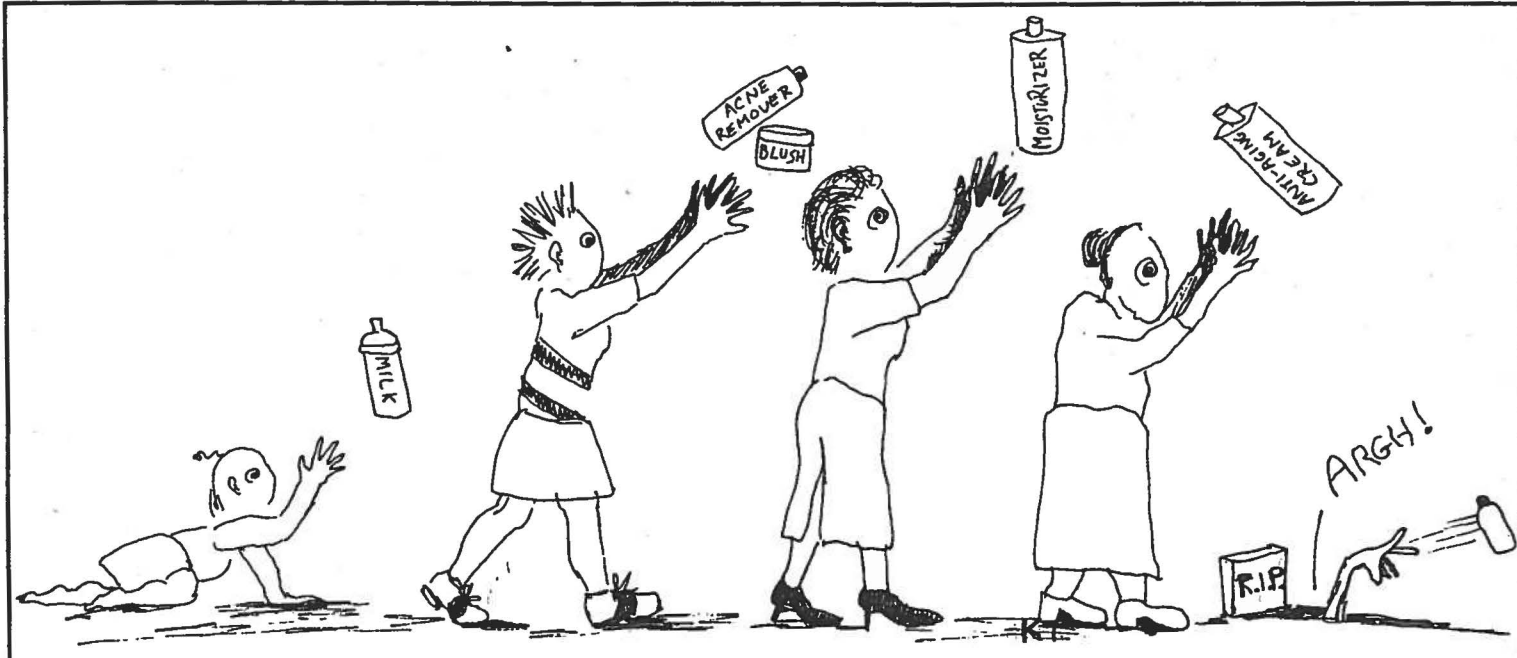
I enjoy a good, fulfilling pampering as much as the next self-centered woman of the 80s, so I decided to buy the package.

I awoke the next morning to a face in the mirror that resembled the pile of crumpled sheets and pillows I had just slept on. After pushing my features back in place, I surveyed the array of bottles and jars containing the secret ingredients of female fulfilment.

My first reaction was one of mild disgust as I dipped my finger into a jar of green goo that threatened to swallow my entire hand. I quickly jerked my finger out of what was surely Stephen King's greatest inspiration.

There had to be some redeeming qualities to these products. I began reading the labels. With such exotic-sounding ingredients as Repartin 3, Petrolatum, LHP Oil Complexing Agent, Faceted Bullets of Microsphere Colour, I knew something had to happen. To figure out exactly what the products would do, however, requires a degree in chemical engineering from the Disney School of Fantasy.

There were promises on the labels of micro-bubbles technology, non-comedogenic activation, hypo-allergenic combinations. I figured if my face didn't explode first, I would surely end up looking like an advanced species of life form. A species in which, according to product testimonials, wrinkles would magically disappear, lips would drip wet sensual colour, skin would drink in moisture and de-flake itself, hair would repair and sculpt itself, lashes would part but never clump, eyelids would radiate vitality, cheeks



would laugh with subtle shading.

My skin promises to become smart, my eyes would speak for themselves, my lips would be brash and sassy, my hair would think for itself. Who needs a brain when your face can do all of this? I looked at my features and wondered what they would do with their new-found independence.

Following the directions, I carefully smoothed on the facial cleanser with small circular motions designed to open the pores and release the surface dirt. To remove that nasty, hard to reach residue left behind from yesterday's make-up, I rubbed on an abrasive facial scrub with real pieces of apricot. Pores now gaping wide open and skin raw from exposure, I dabbed on ointment designed to close the pores.

When I stopped screaming, I looked in the mirror with utter fascination at a face wearing skin one size too tight. Hoping to prevent any tearing, I quickly dotted on moisturizer, designed to replace the essential fluids I had just stripped away. I took another look in the mirror. So far the cosmetic producers had delivered on their promise: completely natural looking skin.

And it did seem to have a life of its own as it pulsed from the pain.

My hair was next. Feeling quite vain and haughty, I decided to by-pass the shampoo for 'normal' hair. I discovered, however, that normal in cosmetic jargon actually means optimal, as the other choices are 'oily and limp' or 'dry and brittle.' Surveying the wreckage of a \$95 perm, brittle, if not drought-stricken, seemed the right description. I shampooed my hair and the explosion on my head settled. Having removed all dirt and residue, I applied conditioner which leaves thick residue behind.

Hair now heavy and limp with layers of chemicals, I dried it, curled it, sprayed it, moussed it, and gelled it, in order to restore the lift. My hair was indeed now natural looking, with the added bonus of being completely bullet proof (a must for today's working woman.)

Make-up was next. I smoothed foundation creme over my entire face. Now iridescent, I dabbed on powder to remove the shine. Having just removed all colour and contour, it took lip liner, lipstick, blush, mascara, eyeliner, and

eyebrow pencil to paint it back on. I once again recognized the face in the mirror as my own. I now looked about the same as I did when I started.

Now thoroughly exhausted, I dressed and left for work. I sincerely hoped my face would be smart and my hair would think because the rest of me was too tired to care.

There was one dilemma, however, I did want to solve. Where, in all of this, was fulfilment? Why did I not feel pampered by the laborious process I had just completed? Was I a real woman? I panicked. Then it hit me.

I realized that I was supporting an industry that was, in fact, one big make-work project. What one product takes off, another puts on. What sun-tanning booths destroy, anti-ageing cremes restore. What residue make-up leaves behind, cleansers remove. What limpness conditioners cause, sprays and gels lift. What sagging all the rubbing and dabbing causes, face lifts rejuvenate.

What would the unemployment rate really be if women stopped supporting the entire cosmetic industry? Is the cosmetic industry really just a chau-

vinistic ploy to prevent the many women now employed in it from competing with men in other industries? Are we really liberated from an age when women were mere showcases of femininity, fragile dolls that fell under the manipulations of men? Have we been sold a line? If so, we've willingly bought it — jar, bottle and tube.

## Helen Keller— Did you know this?

It's odd how some people become famous without our knowing very much about them.

That's the sad fate of Helen Keller. Born in 1880, she remains one of the inspiring legends of our time, a continuing symbol of the power of an individual to overcome multiple disabilities and achieve world stature in several areas of accomplishment.

Yet virtually nobody knows that Keller was a militant unionist who promoted the democratic ideals of the labour movement for most of her life.

In 1904, Keller graduated from prestigious Radcliffe College. She soon became a leading advocate of votes for women, peace, and of the defiant unionism of the colourful Industrial Workers of the World. Keller was a rebel with a cause and became a leading advocate of industrial health and safety and public health as a means of preventing disabilities.

Also among the causes that Keller embraced were feminism and women's rights. Her physical and personal struggles for self-expression gave her a profoundly modern sense of the challenges of the movement. Again she linked her development to the promise of the labour movement.

"So long as I confine my activities to social service and the blind, the newspapers compliment me extravagantly, calling me 'archpriestess of the sightless' and 'a modern miracle,' but when it comes to a discussion of poverty and I maintain that... the industrial system under which we live is at the root of much of the physical deafness and blindness in the world — that is a different matter."

Helen Keller died June 1, 1968. (Reprinted from Bread and Roses, newsletter of the PSAC, AFPC and Thriving, newsletter of DAWN CAN-ADA)

## 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 sixteen 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 34 member groups, including the Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia, transition houses, women's centres, counselling services, and women's committees of 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 12-15, 1989.

To apply for membership, write:

Anne Molgat, Membership Coordinator  
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:

Susan Hyde, Representative for Nova Scotia  
c/o Box 515, Sydney, N.S. B1S 2T6  
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**YOUR LINE TO GOVERNMENT**



# Betty Peterson discovers the beauty, freedom through civil disobedience and Native m

## Betty Peterson

Time was, the surest way to make me bristle was for adults to call me Granny or to ask my age, or to say, ever so kindly, "But you look so tired," or "Be careful — you're not as young as you think you are."

"Give me a break," I inwardly seethed. "That's ageism, a put-down, a stereotype. Next thing, I'll be put out to pasture."

Today I can say (if only to myself): "Sure, I'm tired. Who wouldn't be. These wrinkles are signs of hard knocks, of character, so they say... and of survival. Yes, I'm a survivor. Me — old in years and proud of it!"

So why the change, the self-acceptance of the obvious fact? Well, something funny happened to me on the way to old age — I acquired a touch of Native wisdom.

To back-track, as Chair of the Quaker Committee of Native Concerns Canada, I invited Chief Bernard Ominiyak of the Lubicon Cree to speak at our Yearly Meeting held in Alberta in August. His account of the stalemate

over a reserve after 50 years of broken promises and betrayals was electrifying, as were the horror stories of the rapid deterioration of his people in the 10 years since some of the largest oil and gas deposits in Canada were discovered under their traditional lands. Moose and trapping have disappeared, reducing the food and economic base, while 400 oil wells have sprouted within 15 miles of their formerly self-sufficient community.

When he asked for our support at the coming October blockade to declare jurisdiction at Little Buffalo Lake, we named a Quaker Witness Team of three, to go, including Elaine Bishop, formerly of Halifax, and me. The Society of Friends has a tradition of championing social justice and peaceful direct action, with a long history of concern for honest dealings with Indians. Therefore, we set up non-violence training with the classic components of Gandhian philosophy, role-playing, study of oppression, group sharing and affinity building.

We alerted the "other side" — the

police, the 80 oil and gas companies, and every M.P. and Alberta legislator of our intended actions and the reason for them. (Civil disobedience is only a last resort when all else fails and we were convinced the Lubicon had their backs to the wall.) We prepared the Natives for our Witness and our willingness to do anything short of violence.

## We have a new name for you Rambo Quakers!

Three of us arrived at the remote settlement in northern Alberta, self-sufficient in food and gear, a bit self-conscious as to our welcome. We were almost total strangers and from a foreign culture, one not to be trusted. Out of a brief awkward silence, Chief Bernard, with a twinkle in his eye, reached out. "Hi, we have a new name for you — the Rambo Quakers!" After a moment's startle effect, we all were seized with infectious laughter. It was as ludicrous as referring to your son as a baby when he is seven feet tall! Down came all barriers and we were accepted.

But we really had to earn that acceptance: sleeping in a tent with our Lubicon friends at the Bear Trap Blockade; slicing meat from a haunch of newly-shot moose, which went into a stew on the open fire; boiling all water for 20 minutes. The Natives themselves seem immune from the bugs in the surface water delivered by truck in barrels — which once held Captan! Our intent was to issue a permit to each vehicle, forcing them to admit that it was indeed Lubicon land.

As the days went on, RCMP helicopters hovered overhead taking pictures and, though we laughed a lot, tension and rumors mounted: Would Peace River, 60 miles away, cut off our food, our electricity, stop welfare cheques or medical assistance? Would angry hunters, oil workers and townspeople rush us, as threatened?

But, overall, we were strengthened by the arrival of busloads of supporters, Native and non-Native, Chiefs and Elders and internationals. Miles Richardson, Chief of the Haida Nation and Jim Fulton, NDP Indian Affairs critic, joined us in our tent and our sharing with Bernard, with each other, and with the Great Spirit, was up-lifting.

When the attack actually came in the pre-dawn darkness, it was unreal. RCMP advanced toward us with drawn rifles, some in the distance in camouflage with sub-machine guns. I lost my cool and... laughed!

## Boys, put away your toys!

"Boys, put away your toys." They were not amused! They read the injunction to us by headlight, and when we declared that we stood on Lubicon land, thus refusing to move, we were charged with contempt of court and carried off. Twenty-seven of us were arrested at two blockades, flown to Peace River and jailed. Stripped of all personal belongings and isolated in the women's cell, we three women sang, "We're standing with the Lubicon, we shall not be moved" to the men squeezed into tiny cells down the hall.

The next 14 hours was thinking time: I remembered my Native brothers whom I visit in the prisons of Dorchester, Springhill and Renous. (Yes, they

laughed and cheered to see me on TV and carried off to jail.)

I thought of Rambo. Now I've been a "fighter" all my life, though no one ever called me "Battlin' Betty." I've been a survivor of the Great Depression and World War II, and a battler against the Viet Nam War, the War on Poverty, illiteracy, destruction of the environment, nuclear power plants, spruce budworm spraying, cruise missile testing, war and military takeovers, free trade and injustice due to race, sex, poverty, age and disability. Why?

They say that feelings against an oppressive and rejecting father can fuel a chronic rebellion against all authority. Did my early powerlessness and oppression lead to a lifelong identification with the oppressed — now the Blacks, Natives and refugees? It must have been more than that, but if true, I accept it, celebrate it. Lucky me, I have been able to constructively work it off.

## My negatives have become positives over the years

But Rambo? Well, no way. My negatives have become positives over the years. And there is another way to "Speak truth to power." The cell clicked open and I went to the trial hearing more centered and strengthened and resolved. Like the others, I would refuse to plead guilty and pay the fine, but would return for later trial, prepared to go to jail indefinitely. I had purposely closed my Cape Breton farm for the winter two months early, just in case. (Charges have recently been dropped and negotiations continue.)

I must have been the first out of the courtroom, running straight into the waiting media from all over the world. "Why did you do it?" Somewhat rankled by the local whispers of "outside agitators/Communists" (the usual ploy), I leaned into the crowd and declared, "Well, I'm no hippie, I'm a 71-year old grandmother, a Quaker from Halifax, who's come all this way because I believe this cause is right and I should be here."

## Coming out of the old age closet

There was no turning back, and from then on, it's been "Rambo Grandmother" all the way.

I knew I had come out of the old-age closet when the newly-declared Lubicon Nation held a "Welcome Home (from Canada)" feast at 1 a.m. after our release. We stood in the long line leading to mounds of food featuring moose, bannock and tea. A bent-over woman, in colorful dress and full of years, motioned me up front to take her place. I vigorously resisted until she leaned close, whispering, "You must! You're even older than me!" Speechless, but joining her in giggles, I was pushed ahead, and I knew then that the word was out and my world was changed. The age and name has followed me every since.

I also knew that I had been privileged to play a small part in important history. And my cup ran over when, shortly before my departure, Chief Bernard quietly handed me a piece of paper:

"Rambo Grandmother! We wish you will accept your new name, 'Grandmother of the Lubicon' in good spirit. Thank you." Signed:

Chief Bernard Ominiyak, Lubicon Nation.

I felt as if it was the Order of Canada! And in December when I went to Labrador to tent-camp with the protesting Innu at the foot of the Goose Bay runway, I was shyly welcomed as "Grambo." But I left nine days later as "Kukuminash" or "Old woman with a big hug."

So, when Pandora called, half-fearing my reaction, and asked, "What's a nice little old lady like you doing in jail?", I laughed and said, "Why, setting an example for my grandsons of course."

And at Christmas time, I carefully explained to them why: "You see, every one of us, whether seven or 71, at some time in our lives will face a 'No' point, a time to stand up and say 'This is wrong. It must be changed.' And you will know when it comes and what to do about it." They gravely nodded and were silent.

In more complex terms, I believe that the accumulation of all my life experiences leads me to say at this stage of life (or any other), "What have I got to lose?"

That's the beauty of age, one is responsible only to one's self, is free to

risk, to be committed, to press for social change. Besides, I'll never forget my chagrin when I dared not be arrested in Halifax with AMIE (Against Military Industrial Expansion) for fear of deportation. As a new citizen, I now can wrap myself in the maple leaf in safety, unless I become a casualty of Free Trade!

In thinking about old age, had I been conjuring up stories of old women of the Arctic, setting themselves adrift on ice floes so as not to be a burden on the community? In contrast I found Indian elderly to be a necessary part of the ex-





# Freedom of aging marks of respect

ibicon tended family, listened to, cared about, each playing her role according to her changing abilities and needs. Children are often given to grandparents to help them and, in turn, to be counseled in their growing years.

I, "older even than them," have learned from their patience, from their spiritual identification with their mother, the land. And from their jollity, even when I couldn't understand them. In the process I have learned to accept myself in a new role, able to give in new ways.

As an example, two contrasting scenarios come to mind. In Nicaragua I re-

fused an offer to climb into the front seat of the truck heading up into the war zone. So, tired to the bone, I struggled into the open flat-bed with the others and stood for three hours, exposed to the baking sun and dusty wind. No concessions for me. If the rest can do it, so can I! Phew!

Nine months later, I hailed a truck and eager Innu hoisted me into the back, exposed to winter elements and a wind chill of -29 degrees. Again, on the return home, there was the urging to take a protected place up front. Who? Me? No, Ma'am! But there was a gentle pressure on my arm, "Mark of respect, Kukuminash." Silence. I went quietly and sat with the elders, thinking long thoughts.

There will be other Rites of Passage ahead on my journey. But these have brought both honour and humility and, I hope, just a touch of Native wisdom and serenity.

**"They rape our daughters and they rape our mother earth"**

## The Innu said to me: Tell our story!

Betty Peterson

There it comes in the night again and my teeth grind and my fists clench! Will it come right through the shaking tent this time? But no, the deafening roar screams past as the big American cargo jet lifts safely off the end of the runway not far from our camp.

My breath forms ice on my sleeping bag and I cannot return to sleep. It is -42 degrees.

Women sleep beside me as I camp with the Innu in Goose Bay, Labrador. They have been strong in this protest against the low-flying planes which shatter their traditional way of life. They have led eight separate marches through the razor wire and onto the runway, carrying their cross and rosa-

ries and babes-in-arms while singing hymns. Women elders in their eighties have trudged two miles in the rain and some have gone to jail.

Mary M. arises in the dark and tosses evergreen tips into the small box stove as she has done countless times in her long life. The fire blazes, lighting the high cheek bones of her gentle, patient face before she crawls back into the warmth of her blankets.

### Unseen, unheard until the shattering sound

Overhead, the shadows of the thawing Arctic hare and snow-white partridge flicker against the tent. Today in the deep snow we must gather more boughs for our sweet-smelling floor, as well as traditional medicines to show David Suzuki when he comes to talk with the elders. Will he understand the Innu fears for their threatened future? Can he help?

These are the last nomadic people in North America to come out of the bush, for only 30 years ago they lived in these tents year round in the forests and barrens of Labrador/Quebec. They hunted their caribou, trapped and gathered berries on this very runway and on the bombing range, now marked "No trespassing," where 1,000 pound dummy bombs are dropped for target practice.

In the last 10 years, the government of Canada has rented out air space to the West German, British, Dutch and, it is rumored, the Italian air forces. Here they train the pilot of the dreaded jets which skim 100 feet overhead at 600 miles per hour, unseen and unheard until the shattering sound flattens everything below.

There were 7,000 such sorties last year between April and November, flying over 100,000 square kilometers of Labrador/Quebec.

Now Canada entices NATO to build a great base here which would increase military activity to 40,000 flights annually. At a time of military de-escalation, must we prepare for World War III on Canadian soil, or anywhere?

Last night in the tent at the first women's meeting, I sat in shadows cast by a single candle. After an opening

prayer, Innu women began to voice their fears for the future, at first hesitantly, then with rising passion:

"Why do those military police watch us day and night. Don't they know this is our land that the Great Spirit instructed us to protect? We fear the drugs, alcohol and prostitution around. Will our children become like white people?"

"We can't hunt or fish or cut wood on our own land without a permit. Our men have nothing else to do! We are taught to respect the land and the animals, but will my grandson become a pilot to bomb Ntesinan (our Homeland)?"

"They rape our daughters and they rape our Mother Earth. I'm camping here to show our children that we will never give up our land. We've been here for 9,000 years! I'm afraid the police will come in the night and burn down my tent. The men always go to speak in the outside world — why not us? It's scary out there, but we have to make them understand."

There was much else that suffered in translation.

I remember that many, perhaps most, Native Nations were once divided into matriarchal clans where strength and wisdom and leadership was thought to reside in women. The coming of European culture changed all that: clans were deliberately broken; land that was sacred and shared by all was seized, fenced, sold, exploited; native culture and traditions were forbidden, destroying their government and reducing the role of women as in the white society. Every woman can identify with the powerlessness they have felt.

### Endless round of women's activities

It is dawn and my reveries cease; the endless round of women's activities begin. E. arises, folds her blankets and begins to make bannock in a fry pan on top of the stove. Mary M. prepares the rabbits, peeling off the skin like a glove, in one deft stroke. Soon it is time for feeding children and wood chopping.

It is hard to be a single parent. One of them is the widow of a man who has

committed suicide, a new phenomenon now reaching five times the national average. Another has gained the courage to turn out her husband of many years, for the alcoholism and abuse had become unbearable. But it is not easy, with 10 children, to manage inside and outside work alone or to face community consternation.

Another woman returns to scraping caribou hide with an instrument like an Inuit "ulu," then she tans it over burning juniper smoke to make moccasins and jackets. An elder intricately strings bearpaw snowshoes, while another prepares caribou for the Suzuki feast. At home in their box houses, they watch TV in boredom.

Native women everywhere, I feel your returning strength and your insistent expectation to be heard. Powerful women elders at Little Buffalo passionately charged their people with protecting the land for the future of the race.

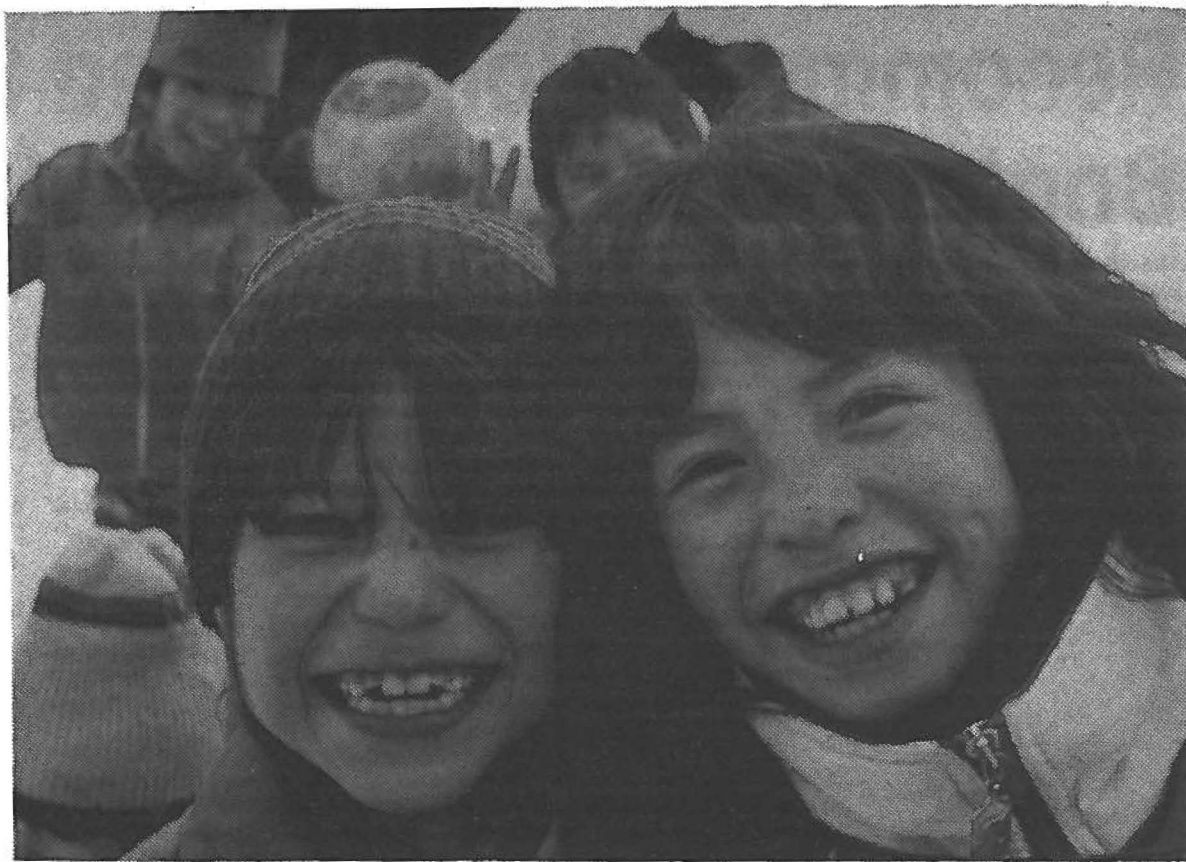
### You must be acknowledged and respected

You and your fine men, who welcomed our European ancestors as the first boat people and who gave them a reason for their first Thanksgiving, you must be acknowledged and respected as the First People of Canada. From the ghettos of the Third World in this country, you cry out, your patience eroding.

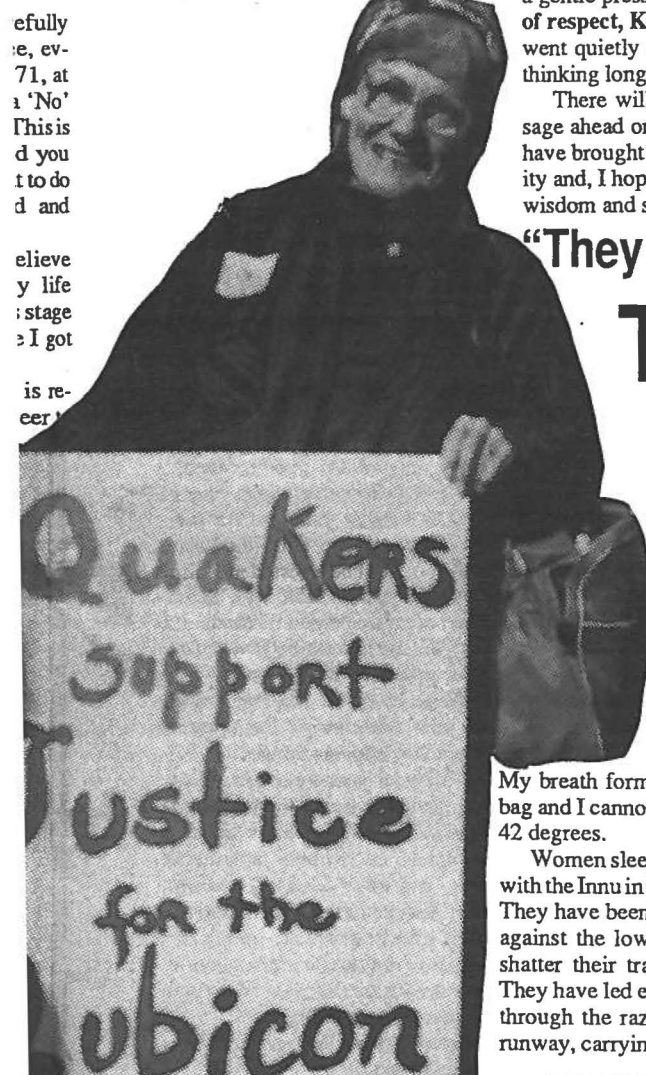
1992 heralds the "celebration" of 500 years of white civilization in North America. Let us make it a true celebration by granting self-government and aboriginal rights in our Constitution and by seriously addressing Native land claims. This is long overdue and an idea whose time has come. The time is now. Native women, we salute you all on International Women's Day 1989!

Action: The Innu ask for support actions across the country sometime between April 1 - 8. On April Fool's Day, the Department of National Defense makes the Goose Bay airfield fully military. Then the low-flying season begins. The Innu plan a protest encampment again, and 21 Innu, arrested for protesting last fall, go on trial. They said to me, "Tell our story!" And so I have.

Pandora March 1989 Page 11



The photographs on this page were taken by Betty Peterson





# Recommendations offered to help Feminist Bookfair deal with racial, ethnic differences

The following is a statement read by Black women at plenary session, June 19, Third International Feminist Bookfair, Montreal, June 14-19, 1988.

I read this on behalf of women of colour and indigenous women who have met, some of us meeting each other for the first time. Yesterday, during the readings of indigenous women, Joe Harjo said that this was indeed an historic occasion for it provided the space for indigenous women to share their stories and build on their memory, that subjugated memory which we are continuously replenishing. The space for this happened because of this conference. It is in the spirit of that sharing that we invite you to listen to the message which we bring with openness and a recognition of the spirit in which it is offered.

As women of colour, we are not a homogeneous group. We have different experiences of racism, colonialism, and imperialism, and of religious and caste hierarchy. We are lesbian and heterosexual and have had to struggle with difference amongst ourselves. We are not the homogeneous, exotic 'Third World' women whom the 'West' has constructed.

We have had a great deal of discussion in the last three days about the meaning of racism in political struggle. What does racism have to do with political struggle? How in the 1980s can we understand the subtle and not so subtle working of racism so that we can be involved in the kind of coalition politics necessary to bring us into the 21st century? How can we forge political practice whose foundation is not simply assumed on the basis of gender and sexuality but comes with active engagement in political struggle? Why is it necessary to establish a hierarchy of oppression... Your oppression is more significant than mine; your nationality or language is more important than mine; sexism is more pervasive than racism...

As women of colour, we recognize that the major systems of oppression all emerge from the same source and mutually reinforce each other. For us, experiencing the ways in which racism, sexism, heterosexism and class affect us separately and together help us to understand and structure our politics. For us, race, class, sex and sexuality are intertwined.

We want to reaffirm the spirit with which the Third International Feminist Bookfair has made a solid commitment to deal with racism. Some of the major problems we have experienced over the past few days relate to racism and Eurocentric ways of thinking. But dominant history is not the only history and for an international gathering to be truly international, it must bring to the centre the histories of peoples who form two-thirds of the world's peoples. These are 'Third World' peoples and indigenous peoples.

Racism and Eurocentrism helped to produce the following:

- 1) Women of colour were treated as other, not as equals. We were kept out of the decision-making for this conference.
- 2) Black women were viewed as a monolith. There were no panels, for instance, where Francophone Black women could talk about their experiences. These are not the same as Kenyan women. Anglophone does not necessarily specify the experience of

Black women or women of colour.

3) Differences of language were neither dealt with consistently, sensitively, or politically. All translations were organized around French and English, the two major colonizing languages.

4) There were no communal spaces for women of colour and indigenous women to share our mutual concerns. Simultaneous panels were organized so that women whose central experience was colonialism could not learn from them. For instance, we had to choose between competing panels on South Asian women and women in the African diaspora.

5) The meaning of class was not adequately addressed either in terms of conceptual understandings, political strategy or the cost of the conference.

No attention was paid to the differently abled, sessions were not signed. What does this say about our ability to deal with difference?

6) Cultural practices were not acknowledged. How can we be expected to do this intense level of emotional work without providing basic necessities such as food?

7) There were also certain artificial separations which need to be addressed:

i) academic panels were the large ones with huge lecture halls. Writers from whose work we have drawn strength and who have helped us through painful rememberings were cramped into smaller spaces. What does this say about the kind of knowledge we think is important?

ii) the politics of publishing, who pub-

lishes, and what gets published are all feminist concerns and ought not to have been narrowly focused on the 'trade' days. Also publishers, particularly those from small alternative presses need not have been trapped and isolated in publishers booths.

In view of what we have expressed here, we would like for the following to be adopted by the Third International Feminist Bookfair:

i) that the text of this document become part of the planning for the fourth bookfair.

ii) that there be considerable input from indigenous women from the country where the next conference is held.

iii) that working class women, indigenous women, women of colour, and differently-abled women be involved in all levels of planning for the confer-

ence.

iv) that conference planners adjust for the insidious inequities of class and provide scholarships for indigenous women, women of colour and those least able to defray the economic costs.

v) that in thinking about the stories we construct about ourselves, the oral tradition be honoured.

In adopting these principles, this conference has been able to achieve what its predecessors have not been able to do.

We have underscored our commitment to develop pro-active, anti-racist, anti-imperialist, feminist strategies. This is a working document from which we can move forward and of which we can be proud.

(Reprinted from *Broadside*, Dec 88-Jan 89.)

## Learning to recognize the problem:

# Self-education first step in fighting racism

This article is written by a white woman and is addressed to white women.

This article is about how to stop racism, but before we can stop it, we must learn to recognize it. Many of us think that we are not racist only to discover that in ignorance we too have expressed racism.

To stop racism, we must begin by educating ourselves to increase our awareness of our own racism. Below are some ways of raising our awareness:

1. Use the media. There are many good books and articles written by feminists readily available at alternative bookstores, women's resource centres, or even the library. Also watch television documentaries and movies that deal with racism.

2. When you or another person refers to a third person who is non-white, do you describe them by her/his colour? Ask yourself, "Was it necessary to describe this person by her/his race? What impact did that have on the description? Did it emphasize stereotypes?"

3. Once a day examine the events that have happened to you. How would

the day have been different if you were Black, Native, Jewish, Pakistani, Korean, Chinese, etc? Would you have been treated differently by others in particular situations?

4. Take a look at the recreational clubs, work organizations and other institutions you attend/belong to. How welcome would you feel if you were non-white? Would you be the only one? Would you be given "special" treatment? What would your reaction be to receiving this "special" treatment?

5. Check out the words and expressions you use. Words can be subtle but powerful. Ask yourself, "How did White come to equal Good? eg. white-wash, little white lie. And how did Black come to equal Bad? eg. black-listed, black sheep of the family, etc?"

6. Confront racist jokes. The joke isn't funny if the person you are telling it about doesn't laugh. Racist jokes are humorous at the expense of those joked about.

7. Be honest with yourself. Do you react to people of colour differently than you do with white people? Where did that reaction come from? Most of us do have some of these reactions inside

ourselves. Recognizing them is the first step towards changing them.

8. Don't waste time feeling guilty about having racist values: our society teaches us racism at school, at work, in entertainment, etc. Instead, put your energy towards tangible, personal change.

9. Keep informed about related issues. Who do we let into our country? Who do we jail? How do we systematically keep our native people oppressed? Who gets jobs? Who has the poorest health? These questions apply to situations in Canada and around the world.

10. Do you assume Asians to be of Chinese origin, Blacks to be Jamaican, etc? These are stereotypes.

11. Ask yourself, "Do I unconsciously expect non-whites to be foreigners? Most of the people of colour you see on the street are Canadian."

The suggestions above work well for individuals who want to confront racism in their daily lives. Here are some ways to confront racism with a group of people:

1. In a discussion group setting, you can initiate discussion by saying, "I feel uncomfortable with that statement.

Was it necessary to single her/him out as a person of colour? I feel it adds to the stereotype." This kind of comment leaves room for discussion and understanding and it does not set you up as an expert. You do not need all the facts and stats to combat racism.

2. Arguing with people about whether a stereotype is accurate or not is futile. As soon as you consider the validity of a stereotype, you are caught in a question that has racist origins.

3. Discuss racism that you have witnessed or participated in with those around you. Be determined to understand for yourself what you saw.

4. Write letters to the newspaper editor, your Member of Parliament, etc. when they express racism.

5. Volunteer your help in a group that is racially different from your own.

Finally, imagine how beautiful our world would be without apartheid, ghettos, and other forms of racism. The first thing you must have to combat racism is a desire to end it.

These are only some of the ways to stop racism. Please share any ideas you might have with us at Pandora.

(Reprinted from *Women's News*, Ottawa, Ontario)

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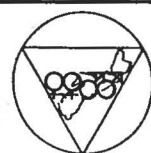
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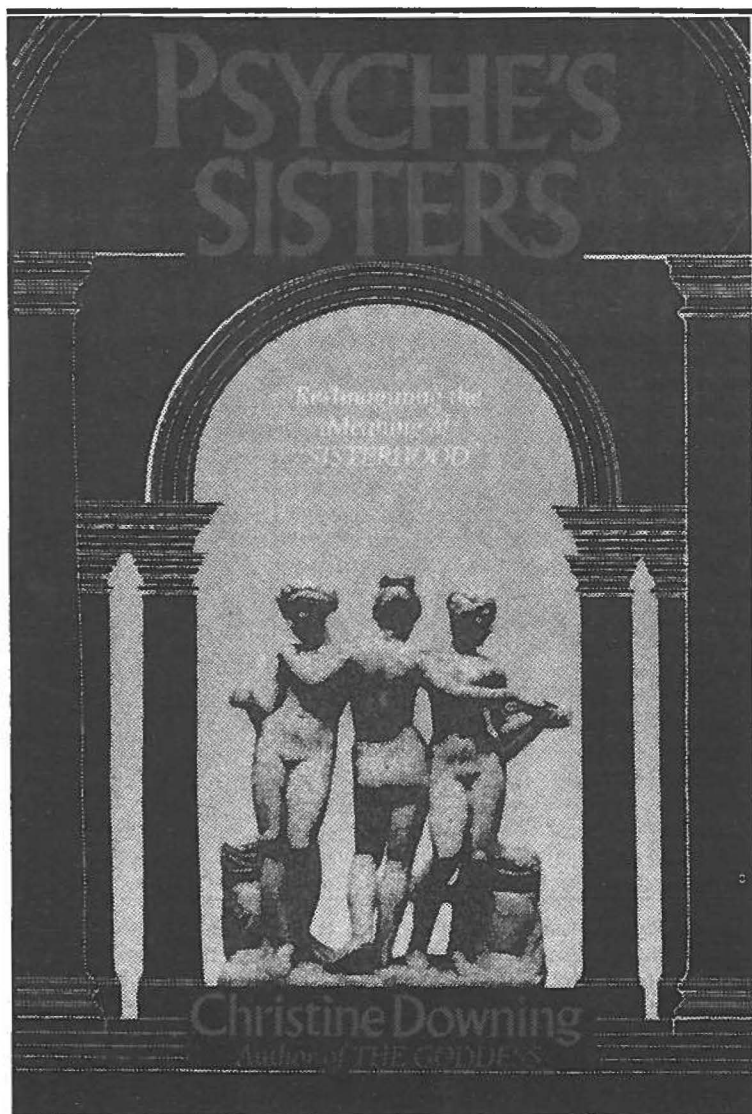


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GALA 423-2292  
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# Psyche myth can help us re-imagine our sisterhood

Hildred Martin

Sisterhood may be women's most significant relationship. For many of us, our search for wholeness takes the form of a female quest to discover the Sister.

This book — *Psyche's Sisters* — grew out of Christine Downing's personal quest to understand what sisterhood meant to her. She shares her journey generously, weaving her own story into a vivid tapestry of sister-tales in mythology, Greek tragedy, fairy-tales, "depth" psychology, and contemporary writing by feminists/therapists.

My biological sister is the individual who is most like me in all the world. At the same time, she is fundamentally different. I am Other to her. She is Other to me. We must work out our separate identities by pulling away from each other and by emphasizing our differences.

At the same time, however, we need to see this process as only the first phase. As Christine Downing points out, this emphasis on either similarity or difference is where the fairy-tales leave us. We have no other "models" than those of either complete polarization, (the good sister and the evil sister)

or of an undifferentiated "harmonious" relation.

The focus for Downing's book is the Greek mythological character, Psyche, and her relationship with her two sisters. In this book, however, Psyche is not simply the beautiful object of a male god's attention. She is more than the women who must undergo great hardship in order to finally gain her heart's desire.

While the traditional story is still part of the book, our interest is engaged by the living woman, wrapped in a dream of love that arouses her sister's jealousy. We see how Psyche's sisters insist that she join the real world and "encourage her to become conscious... though they may do so out of envy and with seductive guile."

There are three ways in which Downing uses Psyche's story as a way of searching out the meaning of sisterhood. The first way is through a discussion of literal sister(s) — women who share a mother and/or a family with us. The second way is through looking at surrogate sisters — women who act as our sisters, although we do not share a mother or family.

The third way is to look at the sister(s) within us — the archetype. The archetype is my inner sister, the soul-guide who draws me on my solitary journey towards spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Christine Downing helps us to see that for woman, as for man, this inner guide is dreamed as a female figure. For us as women it is both ideal and shadow.

Downing, acknowledges that Freud and Jung taught us to recognize the "inner and symbolic significance of primary relationships." She points out that we also learned to read the bias and assumptions of a male psychology, and so to move beyond them to a feminist perspective. Rejecting the "mothering" role model between adult women as "oppressive and misleading," Downing proposes a sisterly relation, one that can offer a mutual fostering of growth and change.

Surrogate sisters are all around us.

They are our imaginary playmate of childhood, our same-sex cousins and school chums, the many women we encounter all our lives who embody the sister image for us. This is the sister not just like me, but the one who helps me be all I truly am.

Under patriarchal rule there are special bonds of mutual sistering. Downing uses the tragic story of Philomela and Procne as an example. She says this is the "situation of sisters oppressed by male power, betrayed, raped, rendered voiceless, grievously restricted in their capacity to retaliate, yet utterly committed to each other, able to find a way of communicating (weaving), courageously ready to risk the violation of universal taboos..."

In the final chapter, "Our Sisterhood," the paradigm of sisters shows our connectedness to all others — to those in close relation with us and to all the beings, human and creature, who share the world with us. These connecting bonds are at the same time strong and fragile, as between sisters who long for intimacy yet are fearful of it.

Both the sister's encouragement and the sister's malice brings me to a mature, painful, necessary, self-knowledge. And this maturity of self-acceptance also marks for me a more responsible interaction with the earth herself, as sister. I am moved to act now as an equal, rather than as a heedless child in relation with Mother Earth who bears all and forgives all.

I find this conception of belonging especially attractive. From my journey with Christine Downing, I understand more clearly my own relationships with my sister and my daughter, and even my granddaughters. And though I wonder if the unique power of the mother-daughter relation can so easily be challenged, I like the author's authoritative image of sisterhood, and believe it does reveal much of value and interest to us.

□□□□□

*Psyche's Sisters*, Christine Downing. Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1988

## Getting rid of sexual assault myths useful first step in defining action

Service for Sexual Assault Victims (SSAV)

The purpose of this article is to define sexual assault, dispel some of the myths of sexual assault and provide the steps/options a woman can take if sexually assaulted.

**Sexual assault:** What is it? Sexual assault is a criminal offense and can be defined as any sexual contact including but not necessarily restricted to kissing, fondling, touching, vaginal, anal or oral intercourse without consent or when consent is obtained by force, manipulation or fraud.

Sexual assault is not a crime of passion or sex but a violent act involving power, dominance and control over a woman.

There still exists today a great number of myths about sexual assault. Often these myths are deeply rooted in culture, religion or the values of a dominant society. In order to effectively eliminate sexual assault, we must first dispel these myths.

**Myth #1:** The typical sexual offender is a stranger.

80% of the sexual assaults committed against a woman are by someone the woman knows.

**Myth #2:** Men sexually assault because of loss of control.

The majority of sexual assaults are premeditated. Men can control their sexual urges and it is their responsibility to do so.

**Myth #3:** Men who sexually assault do so because they are mentally or emotionally unbalanced.

Research indicates that most sexual offenders are considered normal by friends and colleagues.

**Myth #4:** Women are sexually assaulted in dark alleys, parks, cars or at night.

While these scenarios do provide a definite threat, most sexual assaults occur in the home.

**Myth #5:** Women who are sexually assaulted must have asked for it.

No woman wants or enjoys a sexual

assault. A woman has the right to say NO and be taken at her word.

(Taken from London Sexual Assault Centre, Myths and Realities.)

**Options for a woman who has been sexually assaulted:**

1. Get to a safe place where you feel secure and won't be threatened.
2. Call a friend, family member or the Sexual Assault Centre. In Halifax SSAV's Crisis Line is 425-0122.
3. Get medical attention, either through a hospital's emergency department or your family doctor. In the Halifax/Dartmouth area, either the Halifax Infirmary or Dartmouth General.

4. Do not bathe, shower, douche or change your clothing. Take spare clothing with you to the hospital as yours will be taken as evidence.
5. Contact your local police or RCMP detachment.

There is no "right" way to handle a potential assault. Trust your instincts and judgement. It is your most effective weapon. Choose a strategy for the situation you are in and if it doesn't work, try another. Remember, do not blame yourself. It is not your fault.

For more information contact SSAV: Crisis line 425-0122; Business Line 425-4240.

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# Medical expenses can be devastating for women, children on social assistance

Barbara Blouin

(Note: This article is the second part of a condensed version of a brief that was presented to the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Health Care in May, 1988. Our first installment appeared in the December 1988 issue of Pandora.)

Social assistance workers in municipalities with restrictive policies often find themselves caught in a bind. Their primary function is to provide financial assistance to families and individuals in need; however, they are answerable to their supervisors, who in turn are answerable to their social service committees.

Although little is known about the precise role of social service committees, it seems that all too often their function is to keep a lid on the municipal tax rate. And there are more than a few vocal taxpayers who resent having their money used to support the poor.

Although some social assistance workers are generous in authorizing payment for special needs, many are reluctant to help. One woman, whom we'll call Annette, had great difficulty when she asked for help with a prescription for her child. She called her worker on Christmas Eve, after her child had been vomiting for several days.

"You're on Family Benefits now, aren't you?" the worker replied. "Well, I don't see how we can help you. You've got a budget surplus."

Annette repeated her request, add-

ing, "She's really sick." Again the worker refused. A third time, Annette asked for help, telling her worker that she had no money at all. "We'll help you this time," the worker said, "but don't expect it again."

Since this humiliating incident, Annette has not asked for special needs for herself or her four young children. She was unwilling to go through such a degrading exercise a second time.

Jessie was cross-examined by her worker when she asked for money for a prescription. The worker refused to accept that her request was legitimate. "Do you really expect me to believe that?" Finally, the worker phoned her doctor for verification.

Barb's request for money for a prescription for her child was refused outright. Her son, who was running a high fever, had a convulsion. When she took him to the emergency room, the doctor prescribed an antibiotic. But when she called the municipal office, the worker refused her request because she was receiving Family Benefits. Barb had to borrow from a friend's mother to pay for the antibiotic.

Whether a woman is reluctant to ask for a special need because she has found the process humiliating (and there is no guarantee of success), whether she has never asked because her worker has not made her aware of her rights, or whether she has been turned down, the outcome can be the same. She either uses her own money

(which is already insufficient to cover essentials) or she borrows money, or she and her children have to do without.

Anything "extra" that is a necessary expense comes out of the food budget. Even if the food allowance is not being depleted for other needs, it is not enough to buy an adequate amount of nourishing food for one month. When a woman has no choice but to use her food money for drugs, an already difficult situation can become a nightmare.

A worker at a shelter for homeless women was visiting the home of a single mother and heard a child crying in a bedroom, asking for some bread. The mother replied, "You can't have anything to eat tonight. There's just enough bread for morning."

This woman was working part-time and receiving assistance. Her children were sick and she had used up her food money for medicine because her request for help had been refused by a municipal assistance worker.

In the second type of situation, women and their children do without medicine, eyeglasses, dental care, and so on. Doing without can result in a number of negative consequences. In some cases, the consequences are immediate.

Rita said, "My teeth are rotting out of my head." She was in pain much of the time because some of her teeth were in an advanced state of decay. When she asked a municipal worker for help,

the worker refused. Then she asked the supervisor and was refused again. "I fought and I fought and I fought," she said, but finally she had to give up. When her Child Tax Credit came, she used it to have her decayed teeth extracted.

Children of poor mothers are sick more often than other children. The relationship between poverty and poor health has been well documented.

It is often painfully clear that a certain amount of serious chronic or acute illness — as well as the less serious but debilitating colds, coughs and flus — could be avoided entirely if children and their parents did not have to live in poverty. A social worker at the Izaak Walton Killam Children's Hospital has seen mothers bringing their babies into the emergency room with diarrhea and vomiting.

They tell the doctors that they have been feeding them diluted whole milk, or Similac diluted at twice the normal amount. Their welfare cheques were not enough to allow them to buy Similac, which costs around \$60 a month, or to buy enough of it. These mothers are not aware that their efforts to stretch an inadequate income have led to their babies' illnesses.

Even when children of low-income women become seriously ill, their mothers may not have enough money to pay for medicine. This dilemma becomes especially acute when chil-

dren are in hospital. The following example is taken from situations that have arisen at the Izaak Walton Killam Children's Hospital, as described by three social workers on staff in January 1988.

A child has asthma. The medications and Medi-Mist he needs cost between \$80 and \$100 a month. But \$80 or \$100 a month is far beyond the means of his mother. The tragic consequences for this child and others like him is that he is not getting the treatment he needs.

When asthma is poorly controlled, a child is much more likely to suffer from attacks of life-threatening breathlessness. Hospitalization may follow such a crisis. The child may have to spend approximately ten days in hospital before his asthma can be brought under control. Then the vicious cycle is likely to repeat itself a few weeks or months later when once again the child's parent is unable to afford the treatment he needs.

Hidden expenses connected with having a child in hospital can completely drain a parent's meagre resources. If, for example, a mother brings her child to the emergency room, she has to pay for cab fare at the very least or for an ambulance if she does not have the money for a cab. Ambulance service, while extremely expensive, is billed to the customer, so it can be paid for later.

The province of Nova Scotia has done a great disservice to the poor by putting so much of the burden of their health care costs on the backs of the 66 municipalities. Special needs policies vary widely from municipality to municipality. Social assistance recipients, as well as the working poor, are at the mercy of a system that is shockingly inconsistent. Under such a system, how much help one gets, if one gets any help at all, depends on where one lives.

Finally, the current system leads to a squandering of health care resources, not only when health problems of the poor become chronic, but in many other ways as well. A thorough restructuring of the social assistance system is needed to put an end to this arbitrary and needless waste.

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Barbara Blouin is a social worker who has been recently researching single parents and the social assistance system in Nova Scotia. (This article was reprinted from *Status of Women News*, Summer 1988)



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Women find relaxation in martial art

# Tai Chi effective for fitness, therapy and stress release

Bethany Keddy

Co-ordination. Self-defence. Flexibility. Strength building. Resistance to stress. Meditation. Internal energy balance.

These are among the benefits of Tai Chi. The centuries-old Chinese martial art is believed to be derived from natural movements of animals that were developed into an interwoven series of defensive postures. A total of 108 gentle flowing movements comprise "the set."

Women have found Tai Chi to be effective therapy for various physical ailments. The concentration it demands alleviates stress and improves perception. Tai Chi is a form of meditation for advanced practitioners.

"I think it's something that women can achieve to the same extent as men," says Sandy Downey, who has been practicing Tai Chi for five years, and teaching it for three. Downey notes that in other martial arts, men tend to be higher achievers.

"I find it has actually improved my physical health. I also find it a challenge," she says. Sandy has a weak, shortened tendon in her right leg as a result of polio in childhood, but Tai Chi

has increased her leg's flexibility.

She had been on daily medication for asthma, but during an intensive Tai Chi weekend workshop she forgot to take it. By the end of the workshop she realized her oversight while simultaneously realizing that she had survived the weekend without drugs. "Ever since then I never took another drop of medication," she says.

Sandy practiced Tai Chi throughout a recent pregnancy, adapting the movements to her abilities and energies. She experienced a lengthy labour when her daughter was born, but she considers her stamina and reserve energy as a benefit derived from Tai Chi.

Michele Millar is another Tai Chi student and instructor who discovered the martial art by looking under Yoga listings in the yellow pages. "It (Tai Chi) has similar internal effects on your body," she says. "I like the philosophy of it. It's very individual. You don't have to hurt yourself doing it."

Michele says many women aren't aware of their internal strength. She recommends Tai Chi as a means to discover and develop internal energies. She says Tai Chi is an efficient exercise for busy women because it combines

physical toning, self-defence and meditation.

Michele points out that the self-defence aspects of the non-violent martial art are subtle and are developed as time goes on. It also takes time and patience for students to reap the benefits of the meditative aspects of Tai Chi.

Tai Chi has cured back problems for Michele who had scoliosis of the spine and a disc problem. Since starting Tai Chi four years ago her spine has straightened.

Tai Chi is very much a spiritual experience for Sylvia McCormick, "When I got to the (Tai Chi) club, it was something I knew would be a way of life for me," she says. "It has increased my ability to concentrate to a great extent." Tai Chi has also helped increase Sylvia's self-confidence and has improved her physical fitness. Sylvia's arthritis was quite severe when she started Tai Chi five years ago, but the student/instructor has been relieved of much arthritic pain. "Tai Chi has kept it in check very well because of moving the joints continually."

Tai Chi is mainly an individual experience, but it's beneficial for students to work together and learn from each other. Certain exercises such as "push hands" are designed to be done with a partner. Tai Chi is appropriate for all ages. It provides excellent exercise for senior citizens since it entails no pounding or extreme physical exertion. Movements can be adapted for people with physical disabilities. Tai Chi allows women to get in touch with their own bodies, a phenomenon not experienced in many popular forms of exercise.

Tai Chi is slowly spreading across the Atlantic provinces. For more information and to find out where the nearest classes are offered, contact the Taoist Tai Chi Society, 1649 Barrington Street, Halifax, N. S. Telephone: 422-8142. Meditation classes are offered at the Society's Halifax quarters.



Bernice Purdy practices Tai Chi at the Taoist Tai Chi Society in Halifax. (Photo by Bethany Keddy)

More than a holiday:

## Mother's Day a plea for peace and harmony

Catherine O'Bryan

Mother's Day, as we observe it in the 1980s, is a commercially promoted tribute to mothers. We have lost sight of the true origins and original purpose of this special day.

Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910) was a nineteenth century activist who co-published an anti-slavery paper, the Boston "Commonwealth." After slavery was abolished in the U.S., she concerned herself with prison reform, women's suffrage and the cause of peace. During the American civil war she cared for the wounded. As a result, and in reaction to these experiences, she crusaded for a Mother's Day for Peace. Here is her statement issued in 1870:

*"Arise all women who have hearts...say firmly: we women of one country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to injure theirs. In the name of womanhood and humanity I earnestly ask that a general Congress of Women, without limit of nationality, promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace."*

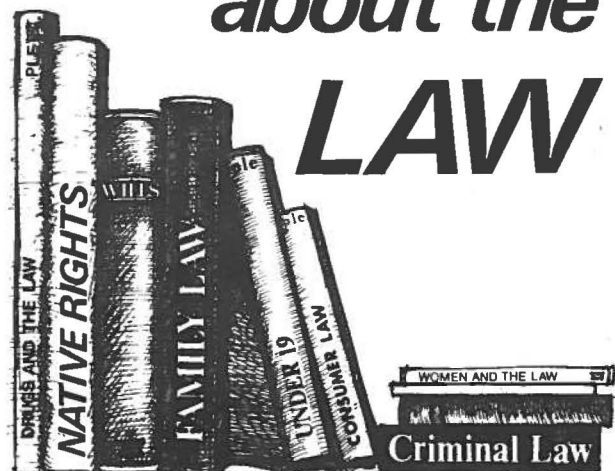
Though the words may sound old fashioned, her cry to all women is vital today. The need for us to work for peace in a nuclear-armed world is urgent. The Voice of Women organization promotes peace through education and awareness raising about all aspects of violence and aggression. We support a ban on war toys and war games. We support democratic rights for all, especially women. By lobbying politicians and educating them in peace issues, we influence national decisions.

We know that each step towards peaceful living that we take for ourselves and our children will keep us

moving on the road to global harmony. Please join us. V.O.W. meets in Charlottetown on the last Thursday of every month, 7:30 pm at the Voluntary Resource Centre 81 Prince Street, Charlottetown (892-3790). In Halifax contact Lisa Campbell at 425-2640 for information.

(Reprinted from *Common Ground*, Vol 7 # 3-4)

## LEARN about the LAW



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**Public Legal Education Society of Nova Scotia.**

## Mary Clancy, M.P.

joins  
in the celebration  
and wishes Pandora  
and her readership  
all the best on this

## International Women's Day



# Poetry and Prose by Immigrant and Refugee Women

To mark the 40th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Education Centre at St Mary's University in Halifax held an exhibit of visual art, poetry and prose by immigrant and refugee women. We reprint here a small selection of the work.

**Sylvia Sokoyi-Bushwana**  
(South Africa)

Yesterday mother Earth was a place of joy  
Today there are no more rays from the sun.  
Now my home is covered by the blanket of darkness,  
Tomorrow maybe sun and moon will return.

Yesterday you were part and parcel of us  
Today only your shadow is left.  
The enemy's bullet claimed that precious 'YOU'  
And today Nkosana Bahumi's blood is no longer circulating in his veins.

My heart aches, when I remember the day,  
What crimes did you commit to deserve such treatment?  
I hate that bullet and that merciless murderer.  
Perhaps they shot you because you wore that dark pigment.

They profess to maintain peace and harmony,  
but their bullets continue claiming sacred souls.  
Is that protection or destruction?  
But Nkosana is no more an S.C.M. member.

Your soul has cracked the solid rock,  
creating a channel for your followers to creep through  
Young and energetic to be fruitful to the nation.  
But Nkosana (Nation) is no more an S.C.M. member.

Comrades though be motionless  
speechless  
helpless

Your blood will nourish the tree of freedom.  
We shall remember you!

## Eye Level Gallery

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March 7-25

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Lani Maestro  
-installation  
Dyanna Werden  
-mixed media work

April 4-22

Opening April 4 at 8pm  
Lorene Bourgeois  
-monotypes

Hours: Tues- Sat, Noon to 5 pm  
Thurs, Noon to 7

Eye Level Gallery is located at 2182  
Gottingen St. Halifax. 2nd Fl. 425-6412

## A Very Fine Lady

**Barbara Cottrell**  
(England)

The retired  
Dean of Women  
who lives  
across the road  
and goes shopping  
in silk suits  
and her BMW  
invited Mother  
in for tea.

My Mother  
who remembers  
hiding in the woods  
with the family cow  
when the Cossacks came

and remembers  
eating  
nettle weeds  
and potato peels  
(if they could get them)  
when Stalin  
ordered famine

and remembers  
working  
for the Germans  
(and doing, no doubt,  
whatever women had to do  
to feed their children,  
although she does not  
mention that)

and remembers  
running in the night  
to catch up with them  
when they retreated  
(what else could a  
traitor woman do?)

and remembers  
walking  
until her bones  
screamed  
and lying, begging  
stealing  
food for us

and remembers  
marrying a man  
she hated  
so we could have  
food  
and an education

My Mother  
who remembers  
all this,  
says,  
"How can I  
have tea  
with such  
a fine lady?"

## Fetching Water

**Suresh Kumar**  
(India)

The village girls,  
balancing water urns on their proud heads  
with deliberate calm gait.

Caught suddenly by droplets of rain,  
heavily landing on the hot, parched mud,  
dust leaves the ground.

White teeth and wet braided hair  
caught delightedly unaware,  
pushing,  
long steps,  
screaming and wet,

Deserted water urns,  
cracked and half-filled with rain  
lying in the mud.

Running foot prints nearby  
filled with muddy water,  
ah, the smell of summer rain!

## Culture Shock

**Sarita Karve**  
(Kenya)

Culture shock is not necessarily what one may suppose it to be. It manifests itself in ways both mundane and sublime. Witness here an example of the former.

An Asian immigrant arrives at Toronto International Airport. She is young, educated, with a veneer of sophistication; she speaks fluent English and has read and heard enough about the Western world to assume that her transition will not be an easy one. But small events conspire to remind her that this is not the world she grew up in. The airport is clean, antiseptic. People hurry past without meeting anyone's eyes. She wheels her luggage along in a shiny cart and is confronted by an escalator. Well, it looks easy. Hefting a heavy suitcase in each hand with another bag over her shoulder, she steps on.

The sudden motion throws her off balance and it is only due to the press of the crowd that she does not fall. But now comes the difficult part. She has to step off. The floor draws closer — she cannot do it. Her bags tumble over as she half throws them off; but she cannot step off. A minor traffic jam is caused but she is too afraid to notice. Finally, a gentleman takes her by the arm and half lifts her off the escalator.

It is a long time before she will step on one again: for three months she does not shop on the upper level of her local department store for fear of having to use the escalator.

Later, in a large car swooping down the Don Valley Parkway, she feels she is entering an "alien landscape." It is early spring and the ground is scrubby or patched with snow. Thousands of lights cheat the night sky of darkness. (She is amazed to learn that those lights burn all the time because it costs too much to turn them off and on again.) Most disconcerting of all is the absence of noise. She cannot hear any of the other vehicles speeding by. The car is smooth, fast, warmed, cushioned and sealed up.

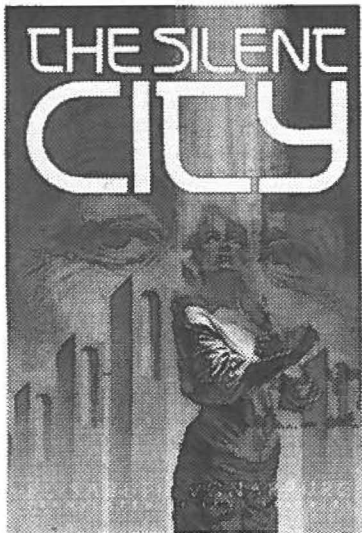
From it she steps into the dimness of an underground parking lot and then into the mirrored elevator of her hosts' "luxury" apartment building. She, who has never been in a building taller than five stories, is now being carried up to the 35th floor. She spends a long time gazing out of the sealed window before falling asleep that night. Could people really live like this, in shoe boxes — however spacious — breathing electrically-controlled air, dependent on a wire-suspended cubicle to get them down to earth and back up again?

Well, one gets used to it all, even learns to enjoy it; but there is a price to pay. At the very least, a feeling of never quite belonging; at most, a pervasive alienation, a rootlessness which undermines any true assimilation into the new country.



# Canadian Book Information Centre tells us about new book releases

Compiled by Jocelyne Marchand



## The Silent City

Elisabeth Vonarburg

Almost a fable on free will and the exercise of power, this novel translated from the french, combines SF realism with intense psychological drama. The result is an extraordinary achievement.

0-88878-77-2, \$9.95

Porcupine Books

## Paradise Cafe & Other Stories

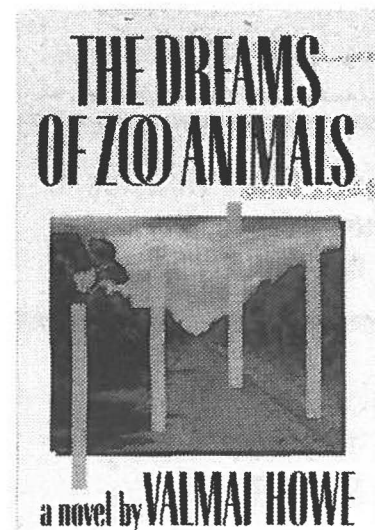
Martha Brooks

The teenagers in these stories are struggling to learn the rituals and meaning of love in their lives and those of their parents.

This is a collection of moving and compelling stories for young adult readers and for adults who remember their own coming of age. They tell of boys and girls coming of age in a variety of time periods and capture the mystery and uncertainty of adolescent romance.

0-920633-57-9, \$12.95

Thistle-down Press



## The Dreams of Zoo Animals

Valmai Howe

A novel of friendship, love, discovery and disillusion set in the wilds of Australia in the 1960s. The 17 year old heroine is powerful and engaging. She defies conventionality and the subtle traps she watches those around her succumb to.

0-921833-08-3, \$12.95

Nu-Age Editions

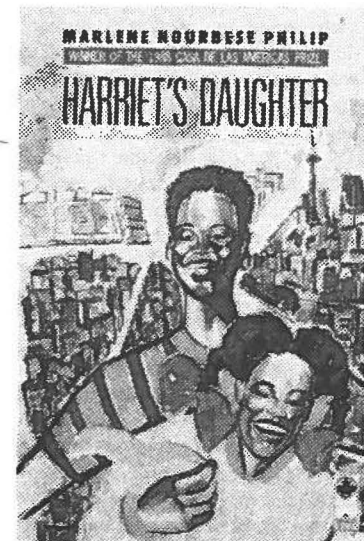
## Justice: Fictions & Prose Poems

Beverley Daurio

The author skillfully explores various aspects of interpersonal relationships played out against a backdrop of Canadian cityscapes. She blends surrealism with startling insights into love and hate, joy and despair.

0-920259-18-9, \$7.95

Moonstone Press



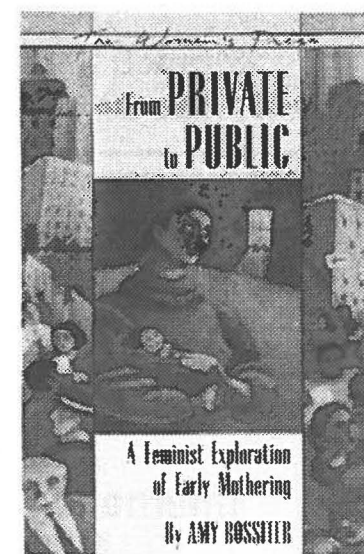
## Harriet's Daughter

Marlene Nourbese Philip

A charming, humorous and perceptive tale of adolescence that explores the friendship of two young black girls. It focuses on the wider issues of culture and identity relevant to teenagers of all races and colours.

0-88961-134-3, \$7.95

Women's Press



## From Private to Public: A Feminist Exploration of Early Mothering

Amy Rossiter

Focusing on her own experience as well as on the accounts of three other first-time mothers, Rossiter identifies the contradictions of mothering. She concentrates particularly on pinpointing those factors that oppress, isolate and subjugate women.

0-88961-128-9, \$15.95

Women's Press

## Best Kept Secrets

STORIES



Pat Krause

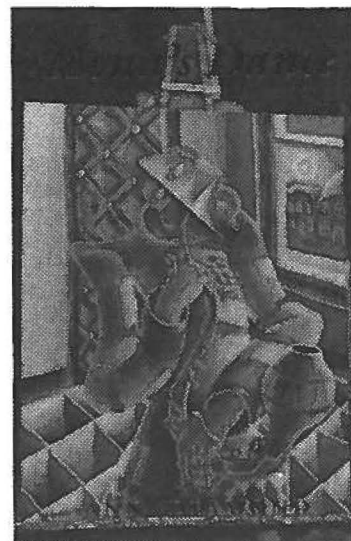
## Best Kept Secrets: Stories

Pat Krause

An entertaining collection of short stories by a popular Regina author. Her lively sense of humour has produced a remarkable assortment of characters, which linger with you.

0-919926-84-3, \$8.95

Coteau Books



## Mona's Dance

Ann Diamond

A comedy chronicling the picaresque adventures and outrageous opinions of the heroine Mona, a striptease artist in Montreal and New York. The novel begins in a traditional journal form, passes through a psychiatric case study and ends in a surreal dance of death.

0-919627-98-6, \$10.95

Quarry Press

## The Tasmanian Tiger

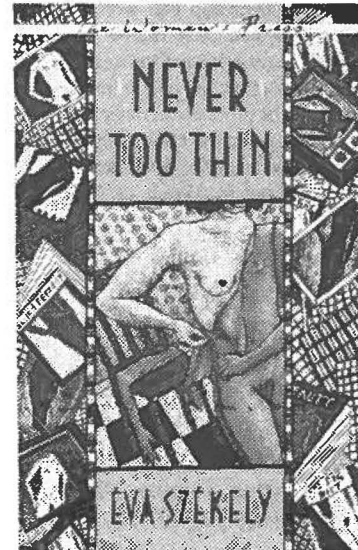
Jane Barker Wright

This is both a mystery story and a story about mystery. A Vancouver couple leaves a secure, routine life in search of the elusive and perhaps mythical, Tasmanian Tiger. What they find changes them forever.

The reader walks unsuspectingly into a sunlit story and is led through layers of shadow, the mysteries of our lives that confront us when we let them.

0-919591-31-0, \$12.95

Polestar Press



## Never Too Thin

Eva Szekely

The author of this book contends that feminist literature on anorexia has failed to grasp individual development consistently in social terms. Eating disorders should be seen as part of a continuum in any culture where the pursuit of thinness is part of women's daily lives.

This society is killing its people; it's killing its women. It says, "If you can't conform to this image we don't want you!"

0-88961-127-0, \$13.95

Women's Press

## BOOKS

for  
by  
and  
about



All of these books can be purchased from your favourite book-seller. For more information, contact the Canadian Book Information Centre nearest you.

In the Maritimes, CBIC is located at 1741 Barrington Street, 4th Floor, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2A4, (902) 420-0688. The CBIC does book displays anywhere in the Atlantic Provinces. Just give a month's notice.

The National Office of the CBIC is located at 260 King Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1K3, (416) 362-6555.

The Western Office is located at 1622 West 7th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. B6J 1S5, (604) 734-2011.

The Prairies Office is located at 100 Arthur Street, Suite 205, Winnipeg, Man., R3B 1B3, (204) 943-3767.

**Halifax Tai Chi Association**  
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Halifax, N.S.

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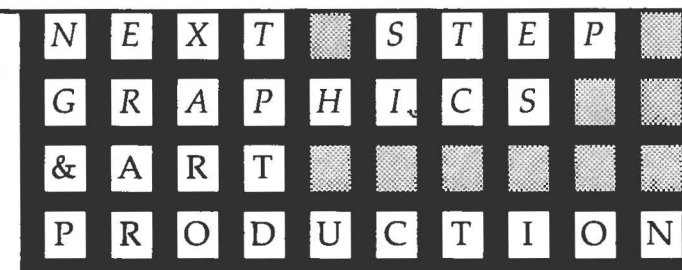
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- Improve your health?
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902 422-6654

1820 Hollis Street 4th Floor Halifax Nova Scotia B3J 1W4

Physically disabled lesbians interested in forming a support group: Call Jennifer at 469-9179 afternoons/evenings.



# ♀ International Women's Week ♀

Prepared by Jocelyne Marchand  
Source: Agenda 1978, Notes sur l'histoire des femmes au Québec, Les Editions du remue-ménage.  
Translation: Gisele Blanc-Lavoie and Jocelyne Marchand

March 8, 1857: Textile workers from the lower east side of New York march

in protest of twelve hour workdays, low salaries and bad working conditions. When their march takes them from the working districts to the more affluent ones, the police intervene and attack the protesters. Many are arrested and some, in the confusion which follows, are trampled by the horses. Three years later in March of 1860, these

women form their own union.

**March 8, 1908:** Thousands of women involved in the sewing industry again demonstrate in New York. After 50 years, their demands are the same with some added ones, protesting the use of children in the labour force and demanding the right of women to vote.

**1911:** In Copenhagen, at the Second International Communist Congress, Clara Zetkin, a leader in the German socialist party, gains approval for a motion presented by militant American women proclaiming March 8 International Women's Day. It is meant to commemorate the violent strike of textile workers in New York. On March 8, 1911, International Women's Day is celebrated in Germany, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland and the United States.

**March 8, 1914:** A group of women, including Clara Zetkin, organize a demonstration where thousands of women protest the war in Germany and the arrest of Rosa Luxembourg, a militant socialist.

**March 8, 1917:** Textile workers in Petrograd (now Leningrad) strike to protest the poor working conditions, starvation and long bread lines. Other workers join them and soon there is a general strike. Eight months later, in October, the Russian revolution begins.

**1950s:** March 8 takes on aspects of Mother's Day everywhere in the world, including the U.S.S.R. Men are reminded that it is "gift giving" time for women, "these marvellous educators, these incredible housekeepers who create comfort and a good atmosphere within the family."

In the last few years, March 8 has regained the sense of its cause, the struggle, especially in Quebec. It is a time to point out our common exploitation, to pay homage to the women who have fought for and with us. It is a time for young women to ask older women how they managed and for older women to ask younger women what is happening now. "Is anything changing or is everything still the same?" It is a time to understand our struggle, to evaluate our past efforts and to decide on positive action for the coming year.

From the Women's Studies Program, Berkeley Unified School District (Ms., March 1983): Over the next sixty years (from 1910), March 8 was celebrated mostly in socialist countries. By 1967, the day began to be celebrated by some groups in the United States. In 1970, owing to the growing women's liberation movement, events were planned to celebrate the day in most major cities of the United States. In the past five years it has become a widely celebrated day for most women's organizations and groups. Rallies, forums, panels, conferences, demonstrations, radio programs, media shows, and school programs were part of the 1983 celebration of women's rights and their contributions to the history and culture of the world.

## What's happening in Halifax:

## International Peace begins at home

Following is the list of activities we were informed about as of press time:

**March 1**  
4-6 pm Official opening — Metro Area Family Planning Association and Planned Parenthood Association at 5541 Russell Street. Call 455-9656

**Tuesday March 7**  
8 pm to 9:30 pm. Spirituality evening at Veith House. All women and children welcome.

**Wednesday March 8**  
**5-7:30 pm:** Open House at the Office of Nova Scotia Status of Women, Suite 207, Purdy's Wharf, Halifax. Phone 424-8662. The office has balloons for anyone who would like some.

**7:30 pm:** Celebrating Women and Our Talent concert at TUNS School of Architecture 5410 Spring Garden Road. Pay what you can.

**Saturday March 11**  
**12:00 noon:** International Women's Day March/Walk. For more info call Susan Atkinson at 425-0631

**1-4 pm:** Fair at St. Patrick Alexander School, 2277 Maitland St. All women welcome.

**9 pm-1 am:** Women's Dance at Veith House, 3115 Veith Street. Wheelchair accessible and childcare provided. \$3.00 unwaged \$5.00 waged.

## Conférence Lesbienne "Être Soi-Même"

avec Anne Cameron  
"Two in Twenty" roman-savon lesbiennes  
ateliers, soirée dansante,  
spectacle d'amateurs

accessible aux personnes en chaise roulante  
l'interprétation pour mal-entendants

Pour informations en français appelez  
429-6373 ou écrivez: P.O. Box 1209, North Halifax,  
N.S. B3K 5H4

le 17 au 19 mars

## Lesbian Conference "Being Ourselves"

with Anne Cameron  
Two in Twenty soap opera video  
workshops, dance, talent show

wheelchair accessible  
sign language interpretation

Contact  
P.O. Box 1209, North, Halifax, N.S.  
B3K 5H4 (902) 453-9475  
425-1340 (TDD equipped)

March 17-19

## 6th annual P.E.I. Women's Festival

Friday April 28-30  
Rodd Royalty Inn,  
Charlottetown

with

writer:  
Helen Fogwill Porter

singer, songwriter:  
Lucie Blue Tremblay

feminist, speaker,  
writer: Sonia Johnson

workshops,  
displays  
Saturday night cabaret

For more information,  
contact  
P.E.I. Women's  
Network  
Box 233  
Charlottetown, PEI  
C1A 7K4  
(902) 368-5040

## WHEN conference Women as Care-givers

N.S. Agricultural College  
**April 28-30**

\$30 (includes banquet)  
child care provided

contact: Jan Catano 422-6123  
or: Box 99, Debert, N.S. B0M 1G0

"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, 1989

Join us at our  
OPEN HOUSE  
on Wednesday, March 8, 1989  
from 5 - 7:30 pm or drop in during the week.



**Advisory Council on  
the Status of Women**  
Suite 207, Purdy's Wharf,  
1959 Upper Water Street  
Halifax, N.S. Phone: (902) 424-8662





# Notices / Calendar

**PLEASE NOTE:** We think the calendar and notices are important parts of Pandora. We 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 to try and keep tabs on everything that is going on. PLEASE... won't you call and let us know the dates of important events? Call Pandora at 454-4977. The next issue will come out before June 1, 1989. The deadline for submission of material for inclusion in the June calendar is May 7th.

## EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

•Women's Employment Outreach has moved to 5639 Spring Garden Road, 3rd floor (above Valu Fair) in Halifax. WEO offers free employment counselling services to women including workshops on resume writing, interview skills, and the hidden job market. Individual counselling is also available to women on improving their chances at getting better jobs through upgrading and skill training. For more information call 422-8023.

•CUSO has been asked to recruit a documentalist for the Manuela Raamos Women's Movement in Lima Peru. This is a two-year placement beginning in October. For more information contact CUSO, Selection Desk, 135 Rideau St., Ottawa, Ont, K1N9K7

•CUSO has been asked to recruit a Graphic Artist for the Manuela Raamos Women's Movement in Lima Peru. This is a two-year placement beginning in April. For more information contact CUSO, Selection Desk, 135 Rideau St., Ottawa, Ont, K1N9K7

•Eye Level Gallery is looking for a Community Outreach Coordinator. Position lasts from April 1 to Nov. 3. Applicant must be receiving unemployment Insurance benefits. Call 425-6412 for more information.

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

•Playwrights' Workshop Montreal is looking for women playwrights and women writers who may be interested in writing for the stage. Contact Svetlana Zylm, P.O. Box 604, Postal Station Place d'Armes, Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 3H8, (514) 843-3685.

•A Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Policy Issues is being prepared. Ideas for project development and help with funding would be welcome. Contact Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg, Project Co-ordinator at Canadian Council for International Co-operation, 1 Nicholas Street 3rd Floor, Ottawa, Ont, K1N 7B7, (613) 236-4547.

## PUBLISHED MATERIAL

•A Guide to Provincial Funding for Women's Centres and an education/employment workshop kit *Focusing Forward* have just been published by the Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW). These materials are available free to women's groups from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

•Women, Sport and Physical Activity—Research and Bibliography published by the Ministry of Fitness and Amateur Sport is a feminist critique of the literature on women in sport and physical activity. Copies may be obtained from: Women's Program, Fitness and Amateur Sport, 365 Laurier Ave West, Ottawa, Ont K1A 0X6

•Montreal Health Press has a new 52-page publication called a book about menopause and la ménopause in the French version. Copies are available

for \$4 payable to Montreal Health Press, P.O. Box 1000, Station Place du Parc, Montreal, Que H2W 2N1.

•A new PMS newsletter, *In Control*, is now available. Its purpose is to empower women to control their own well-being and demedicalize female physiology. Published by the Canadian Asso. for Understanding Premenstrual Changes. Subscriptions are \$20/6 issues, payable to In Control, 4815 Bessborough, #4, Montreal, Que, H4V 2S2 (514) 485-7950.

•*Women's Directory 1988* has been published. This directory contains bilingual information of nearly 3,000 groups and organizations. \$14.95 plus \$1.00 shipping. Les Editions Communiqu'Elles, 3585, St. Urbain, Montreal, Que. H2X 2N6 (514) 844-1761.

•*Directory of Women's Media* now includes a 30-page section "Women Working Toward a Radical Restructuring of the Communications System" in their recently released 1989 edition. The publication now has 1,873 entries, including 702 women's periodicals (almost one-half of which are outside the USA), 111 women's presses, 93 bookstores and mail order services, 518 media women and media-concerned women, 86 special library collections on women and more. Published annually since 1975, the Directory is available for \$15 (US) — \$11 low income—from Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3306 Ross Place, N.W., Washington, DC 20008 USA (202) 966-7783.

## EVENTS & GROUPS:

•Third Place Transition House has recently opened in Truro. Contact The Third Place Transition House, P.O. Box 1681, Truro, N.S. B2N 5Z5 (902) 893-3232.

•To mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women, CCLOW-NS has applied for a Secretary of State Grant to research and publish an Anthology of the History of Women's Groups in Nova Scotia. If you would like information about your group included in the history, or if you know of any defunct groups, please call Linda Roberts at 422-8023 or 455-8013 or Barbara Cottrell at 423-9654. Also watch for publicity: we plan to hold a "Celebrating Our History" conference in June.

•Voice of Women Nova Scotia is looking for more women to become involved in the peace movement. They specifically want women who will work on the co-ordinating committee, the newsletter, distribution of press releases, as well as administration. Contact Marion Kerans, 425-3573.

•The Transition House Association holds regular weekly support groups for abused women in Charlottetown, Montague and Summerside, P.E.I. For info contact 892-0895. Collect calls will be accepted.

•Outreach Abuse Prevention is a non-profit organization providing seminars and workshops that focus on sexual abuse prevention for all ages. Educational materials, books and a newsletter can be ordered. For a free catalogue contact Outreach Abuse Prevention, P.O. Box 1271, Stn B, Oshawa, Ont., L1J 5Z1 (416) 728-3163.

•North Branch Women's Group meets every Wednesday 10 am - 12 noon, Halifax City Regional Library, North Branch, Gottingen Street.

•LAIG (Latin American Information-Group) meets 7:30 pm the first Tues-

day of each month at the Oxfam-Deric 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 424-6479

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

## PHONE LINES

•Victims of Spousal Abuse has a telephone line where you can reach a friendly voice, anonymously if desired. The volunteers are survivors of spousal abuse. Call any time, any day. 462-6228.

•GAE has an info line on gay and lesbian events and groups. Call 454-6551.

•Dial-a-Law: a toll-free, non-profit service which offers taped information through the phone. General legal information on more than 75 topics. Hours: Mon-Fri, 10 am to 2 pm. 420-9000.

•The Abortion Information Referral Service 422-4123. Sponsored by CARAL/Halifax.

•The Pictou County Women's Centre in New Glasgow, N.S. has established a Rape Line. This line offers confidentiality, anonymity, information, and peer counseling for female victims of sexual abuse, incest, and rape. The line is staffed by volunteers. Phone 752-2233.

•We at Pandora don't know everything that goes on in the Maritimes. Any woman out there who knows of 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.

## CALENDAR

### March 2

•Halifax Area Regional Meeting of Women's Action Coalition. 7:30 pm Henson Auditorium, 1261 Seymour St. Guest speaker: Mary Clancy. For more information contact Marilyn Keddy 454-9637 or Mary Petty 423-0299

•The Christian Basis of Racism, noon, Halifax City Regional Library, main branch, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax.

### March 7-25

Eye Level Gallery: Women's Art. See ad in this issue.

### March 8-11

International Women's Week! Hurrah! Theme: In Halifax: International Peace Begins at Home. See page in this issue for details.

### March 10, 11

Counselling Adult Survivors of Sexual Violence. 9 am to 5 pm. Henson College. \$175. Contact Lynn Day 424-3789.

### March 13

Lecture by Carol Smart on "Power and Problems of Child Custody." 9 pm Saint Mary's University. Contact Gail Kellough 420-5400.

### March 16

Vision TV: National Film Board movie *Holding Our Ground*. In Halifax this show will be broadcast at 9 pm and midnight.

### March 17-19

Lesbian Conference, in Halifax. See ad in this issue or contact 453-9475 for more information.

### March 23

•Vision TV: National Film Board

movie *Daisy: The Story of a Facelift*. In Halifax this show will be broadcast at 9 pm and midnight.

### March 30

Vision TV: National Film Board movie *D.E.S. An Uncertain Legacy*. In Halifax this show will be broadcast at 9 pm and midnight.

### March 30-April 1

Multi-cultural Health—Realities and Needs, a national conference in Toronto. Contact CCMH Conference Committee, 1017 Wilson Ave., Suite 407, Downsview, Ont. M3K 1Z1 (416) 630-8835.

### March 31

Survival Skills for Children, a program to woodproof children. Main branch, Halifax City Regional Library, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax. 7:30 pm. Contact Heather MacKenzie at 421-6986.

### March 31-April 3

Beyond Survival: Women Addiction and Identity, a national conference in Toronto, Ontario. Contact Ani Amott, Registration Co-ordinator, Community Resources and Initiatives, 150A Winona Dr, Toronto, Ont., M5G 3S9, (416) 658-1752.

### April 1

Youth and the Law Series: Criminal Law: Know your Rights, a youth program, Main branch Halifax City Regional Library 1:30 pm, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax.

### April 5-29

Centre for Art Tapes: Gay and Lesbian Video Exhibition. 2156 Brunswick St., Third Floor, Halifax.

### April 7-10

Conference on Beyond Survival: Women, Addiction and Identity. Centre for Christian Studies, Toronto. Contact: Community Resources and Initiatives, 150A Winona Dr, Toronto, Ont, M6G 3S9. Ph: (416) 658-1752.

### April 8

Youth and the Law Series: Teenage Rights, a youth program. Main branch, Halifax City Regional Lib. 1:30 pm, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax.

### April 15

Drugs and You, a youth program. Main branch, Halifax City Regional Lib. 1:30 pm, 5381 Spring Garden Rd, Halifax.

### April 19

Reading by Rita Joe. 10 am, North Branch, Halifax City Regional Library, 2285 Gottingen St. Halifax.

### April 20

Reading by Maxine Tynes. 2 pm Mainland South Branch, Halifax City Regional Lib., 10 Kidston Rd, Spryfield.

### April 22-24

Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia Annual General Assembly and Lobby, Henson College, Halifax. Contact: Mary Petty at 423-0299

### April 28-30

•Sixth Annual P.E.I. Women's Festival, Rodd Royalty Inn, Charlottetown. Call or write for festival brochure/registration form: P.E.I. Women's Network, Box 233, Charlottetown, C1A 7K4 (902) 368-5040.

•Women's Health & Medicine Conference "Women as Care-Givers" N.S. Agricultural College. Childcare available. Cost \$30 includes banquet. Contact Jan Catano 422-6123 or write Box 99, Debert, N.S. B0M 1G0

### May 17-June 4; July 1-9

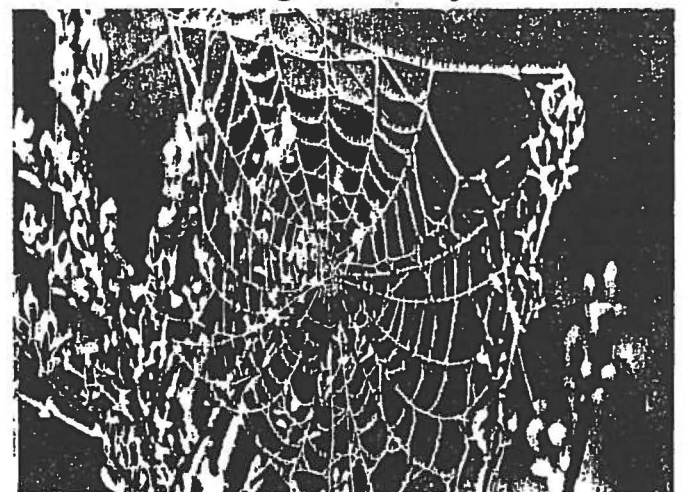
Outward Bound courses for women. Tuition: \$1095 (tax-deductible). Thunder Bay, On. Contact 1-800-268-7329

### May 18

Getting Ready for the Workforce, 1:30 pm, Mainland South Branch, Halifax City Regional Library, 10 Kidston Road, Spryfield.

Check out National Film Board for great movies about women.

## Get entangled! Buy a sub.



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Is this a renewal?

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



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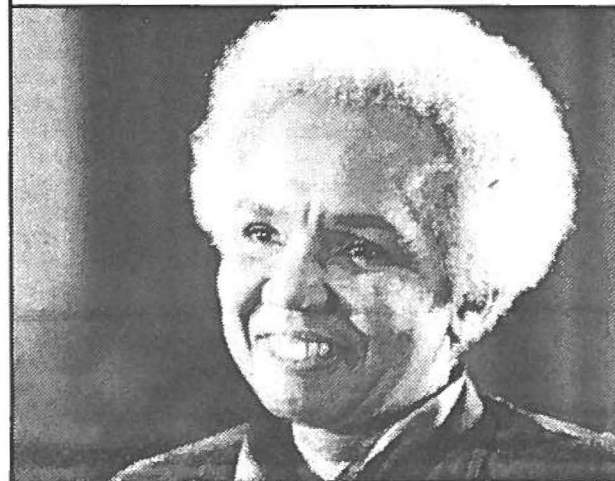
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### I'd like to know more about NFB films for women

- ☐ Please add my name to your mailing list announcing new releases and send me a copy of your video rental catalogue.
- ☐ Please send me your new catalogue of films for women (available in early 1989).
- ☐ Please send me the new publication *Women Breaking Through*, a 28-page audio-visual guide for secondary schools.

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

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### MAIL TO:

National Film Board of Canada  
Women's Marketing Representative  
1571 Argyle St.  
Halifax, N.S.  
B3J 2B2  
(902) 426-6014



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